

# TWENTIETH-CENTURY ORGAN MUSIC



Edited by  
**CHRISTOPHER S. ANDERSON**



# TWENTIETH-CENTURY ORGAN MUSIC

This volume explores twentieth-century organ music through in-depth studies of the principal centers of composition, the most significant composers and their works, and the evolving role of the instrument and its music. The twentieth-century was a time of unprecedented change for organ music, not only in its composition and performance but also in the standards of instrument design and building. Organ music was anything but immune to the complex musical, intellectual, and socio-political climate of the time. *Twentieth-Century Organ Music* examines the organ's repertory from the entire period, contextualizing it against the background of important social and cultural trends. In a collection of twelve essays, experienced scholars survey the dominant geographic centers of organ music (France, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, the United States, and German-speaking countries) and investigate the composers who made important contributions to the repertory (Reger in Germany, Messiaen in France, Ligeti in Eastern and Central Europe, Howells in Great Britain). *Twentieth-Century Organ Music* provides a fresh vantage point from which to view one of the twentieth century's most diverse and engaging musical spheres.

**Christopher S. Anderson** is Associate Professor of Sacred Music at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, USA.

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**To the memory of Robert T. Anderson (1934–2009)**



# CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Contributors</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xiv</i>
Introduction	1
<i>Christopher S. Anderson</i>	
1 The Organ in the Twentieth Century	10
<i>James L. Wallmann</i>	
2 The German-speaking Lands	43
<i>Hermann J. Busch and Martin Herchenroeder</i>	
3 Max Reger (1873–1916)	76
<i>Christopher S. Anderson</i>	
4 The Idea of <i>Bewegung</i> in the German Organ Reform Movement of the 1920s	116
<i>Peter Williams</i>	
5 France	140
<i>Hermann J. Busch and Martin Herchenroeder</i>	
6 Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)	171
<i>Peter Bannister</i>	

**viii** Contents

7	The Netherlands <i>Hans Fidom</i>	194
8	Scandinavia <i>Sverker Jullander</i>	219
9	The United States <i>Sharon L. Hettinger</i>	243
10	György Ligeti (1923–2006) <i>Kimberly Marshall</i>	262
11	Herbert Howells (1892–1983) <i>Larry Palmer</i>	286
12	Twentieth-Century Organ Music in the Christian Liturgy <i>Benjamin A. Kolodziej</i>	308
	<i>Index</i>	338

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# PREFACE

Anyone who has visited the Burchardikirche in Halberstadt (Germany) since September 2001 will have stepped into a performance of John Cage's *Organ<sup>2</sup> / ASLSP* ("As Slow As Possible"), a remarkable piece of twentieth-century organ music which, in the version currently underway, will conclude in 2640, 639 years after it was initiated on the composer's eighty-ninth birthday. The architects of the Halberstadt realization have derived that particular time frame (the score gives none) from Michael Praetorius's description, in the second volume of the *Syntagma musicum*, of the great Gothic organ in the city's cathedral, completed in 1361. With the turn of the millennium as an axis point, the 639 years between 1361 and 2000 are being projected forward in time, thus celebrating an important milestone in organ history while creating the parameters for the most ambitious performance of *ASLSP* yet attempted. Enveloped in a single, sustained sonority, the listener might easily fall into a typically Cageian web of questions that raises fundamental considerations about the nature of music, the limits of human perception, the philosophy of time, indeed about life itself and how one chooses to live it. The requirements of Cage's work, originally composed in 1985 for piano but happily transcribed for organ two years later on the initiative of Gerd Zacher, correspond well to the organ's ability to realize sustained sound, and the resulting slowness (or perceived stasis) in the ancient walls of an eleventh-century edifice sets into radical relief the tempo of our lives, influenced as it is by the turbulent century of modernism and technological revolution out of which we all have emerged. Indeed, one may imagine a good catch-all designation for the twentieth century that communicates just the opposite of Cage's intention: "as fast as possible." It is the end of that century that is punctuated by the beginning of *ASLSP*.

For a book about organ music of the twentieth century, there is perhaps no better departure point than Cage's singular work, particularly in its adventurous

Halberstadt rendition. Like *ASLSP*, twentieth-century organ music harbors both deeply traditional and provocatively innovative elements. As suggested by the location of *ASLSP* in the Burchardikirche, a ruin that has long since given up its ecclesiastical function, the music examined here inevitably continues a longstanding association with the Christian heritage even while finding its place in the post-Christian arena. And like the inherent impossibility of a faithful rendition of Cage's piece—Is the 639-year version any more or less faithful to the instruction “as slow as possible” than a 640- or 1,640-year performance? How does one interpret “possible” in the context of infinity?—so too we are confronted with the impossibility of a faithful portrait of the twentieth century's organ repertoire in all its facets. But, as with the organizers of the Halberstadt event, we ought not allow circumstances to discourage a good attempt and what can be learned from it, and it is in this spirit that the present volume is offered.

The contributors have aimed at several points. Students of the organ will find here a survey of the music available to them, some of it treated in depth, some of it garnering only a passing comment. The student should come away with a sense of the sheer breadth and depth of a musical landscape formed in more places by more creative minds driven by more diverse motivations on more disparate instruments than in any previous period, all of it examined here as a whole for the first time. Nevertheless, contributors have generally avoided exhaustive, catalog-style listings of composers and works. For both experienced scholars and advanced students in graduate seminars, the volume offers nuanced studies not only of the various geographical repertoires and certain key composers, but also of the complex and often dissonant circumstances—social, political, aesthetic, theological—in which they arose. The authors have not hesitated to situate the music in a multidimensional context, a particularly valuable approach in the case of the organ: a persistent myth presents an old-fashioned picture of the organist-composer, peering indifferently from the loft and producing music irrelevant to the world outside the church's impermeable walls. As in earlier periods, the organ's music has had as much to say about the values of its culture as has the music of any other twentieth-century repertoire, just as composers of the most advanced turn of mind have continued to be interested in organ composition for reasons that resist the simplistic dichotomies of “sacred” versus “secular” on the one hand, and “academic” versus “practical” on the other. Indeed, a third group—students, scholars, and musicians whose work does not intersect the organ—will find here critical, original contributions to a history of twentieth-century music generally.

I believe that I speak for all the contributors in remarking this study's long yet rewarding route from the first ideas to the final production. The authors are owed a debt of gratitude for their patience, professionalism, and open-mindedness through the arduous processes of writing and revision. Thanks are also due to the readers who examined the initial proposal and offered valuable feedback. I have enjoyed the gracious support and insight of the *Studies in Musical Genres* series

editor R. Larry Todd, the sure guidance of Constance Ditzel and Michael Andrews at Routledge, and what seems the boundless patience and understanding of my family as the project has come to fruition.

During the book's final stages, the scholarly community suffered the loss of a valued and productive colleague to an untimely death: Hermann J. Busch, long-time Professor at the Universität Siegen and co-author of Chapters 2 and 5, passed away on December 28, 2010. Chapter 2 gratefully honors his memory. The dedication of the book itself applauds the work of Robert T. Anderson, who championed the organ repertoire of the twentieth century with singular energy in a long, distinguished career as performer and teacher. In his passing on May 29, 2009, as work on this volume was developing, organists lost one of the staunchest and most consistent advocates of the repertoires discussed in these pages.

Christopher S. Anderson  
Dallas, Texas, June 2011

# INTRODUCTION

*Christopher S. Anderson*

In 1509, at the outset of a profoundly transformative century on the European continent, Erasmus of Rotterdam wrote his *Moriae Encomium (Praise of Folly)*, where in a discussion of the arts he observes that it is “Folly to whom you owe so many of life’s major blessings, and the nicest thing of all is that you have someone else’s madness to thank for your enjoyment.”<sup>1</sup> Today, we live with the rough-and-tumble twentieth century in our collective rearview mirror even as it continues to resonate in our lives. With respect to the music of the time, we might well speak with Erasmus that we have inherited the fruits of the past century’s madness—its breathtaking and breathless change on every front of human existence, its rancorous politics, its wars of unprecedented scope and dehumanization, its social movements, its enormous strides in the sciences and technology, its intellectual vigor—in which we have seen the very best and the very worst of what humans have ever wrought upon each other and the planet.

A study that aims to survey the music of this mad century, even when limited to the music of a single instrument, embraces a task that inevitably reflects the revolutionized ways of seeing and interacting with the world. Music in all its disciplines—composition, performance, analysis, criticism, aesthetics, historical studies, pedagogy, marketing—was of course not immune to the dizzying developments that have transformed the human landscape. It is hardly surprising that twentieth-century music witnessed its own revolutions: the saturation of the tonal system, alternative ways of organizing or disorganizing sound, and the influence of folk and popular idioms from every part of the globe, so that received distinctions between “art” and “popular” music were blurred or even erased. Just as the burgeoning discipline of positivist musicology organized the history of music into narratives based on periodization, twentieth-century audiences eventually became familiar not only with historical repertoires, but also with “neo-Baroque”

music, “neo-Medieval” music, and “neo-Romantic” music. And just as issues of social and ecological justice have stepped forward in the global consciousness, music has begun to reflect those issues as never before.

To a greater extent than any of these factors, however, the advent of recorded sound and its progressive commercialization on a worldwide stage has resulted in the most fundamental of shifts in the way music is experienced, performed, and composed. The far-reaching implications of art as reproducible and hence as commodity—the otherwise nonsensical file label “My Music” on modern computer screens articulates the notion well—caused Walter Benjamin in 1936 to pen his landmark essay “The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in which he trenchantly observed that “the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility.”<sup>2</sup> Benjamin develops the point that any art’s original basis of valuation, and hence the source of its authenticity, issues from its “cult value,” or its contextual function in societal ritual. With mechanized technologies of reproduction, the authority of ritual is inevitably undermined by the politics of reproduction. A “negative theology” of art is the result, where the mere “exhibition value” of the artwork sets the parameters for its status. Benjamin’s thesis certainly must have something substantive to say about the music of the organ, that medieval instrument that has remained married to the cultic ritual of Western Christianity even as it, its music, its players, and its composers have found themselves caught up in the commercialization of an age in which fortunes are made on the sale of music for mobile telephone ringtones.

Whether or not one agrees with Benjamin about the deleterious effects of mechanistic reproduction on art, the organ, organists, and organ music of 2000 are not at all the same as their equivalents of one hundred years before. The age of modernism, mechanization, urbanization, and digitization, of historicist movements and experimental composition, of nationalist ideologies in conversation with a growing internationalism in culture and art, and of fundamental shifts in Christian liturgical theology—all this would prove consequential to organ music and the contexts that fostered it. Indeed, by the turn of the second millennium the very image of the organ has expanded well beyond the noble, monumental instrument of institutionalized religion to reflect the priorities of an anxious and increasingly secularized age. The received notion of J. S. Bach sitting inspired at the organ bench while gems of counterpoint and harmony spring fully formed in service of the Almighty, or the impression of the organ’s music in Emily Dickinson’s masterful poem from the 1860s, in which she recounts

I’ve heard an Organ talk, sometimes  
In a Cathedral Aisle,  
And understood no word it said—  
Yet held my breath, the while—  
And risen up—and gone away,  
A more Bernardine Girl—

Yet – know not what was done to me  
 In that old Chapel Aisle.<sup>3</sup>

—that is, of an instrument that moves the soul to charity and hospitality toward one’s neighbor (“Bernardine”) even as one must stand mystified and awestruck before its language—these images were more and more discarded, or at least augmented, by a thoroughly updated picture, decidedly less pious and serene, giving voice to an anxious cynicism characteristic of the century’s intellectual landscape.

If anything, the organ and its music became less conventionally dignified and more sinister. It made appearances in murder mysteries. It became the house instrument of choice for Erik, the macabre villain of the Paris Opéra cellars played by Lon Chaney, Sr. in the 1925 silent film adaptation of Gaston Leroux’s *The Phantom of the Opera*. The ubiquitous opening bars of J. S. Bach’s Toccata and Fugue in D minor BWV 565, whether or not intended by its composer as an organ piece, became a cipher for theatrical evil of all kinds, in transcriptions from Leopold Stokowski to Mötley Crüe. Such developments furnish a lens through which to read verses written in 1978, just over a hundred years after Dickinson, to introduce the final movement of William Albright’s whimsical *The King of Instruments*. There, the listener is introduced to “The Organist,” that is, the contemporary one, in poetry laced with angst and sexual innuendo:

Over the keys his fingers dance.  
 Across the pedals his tootsies prance.  
 He huffs and puffs; he frets and sweats.  
 Up and down the bench he slides  
 As over the beastie he presides.  
 He rips his seams; his girdle pops.  
 At last, he’s pulled out all the stops.<sup>4</sup>

On examination, it is possible to distill from these subversive lines most of the salient themes that form the background to the twentieth-century organ and its music. They will return, in one guise or another, in the subsequent chapters that contextualize both instrument and repertoire by composer, geography, and period.

First, then, on fingers dancing and tootsies prancing: In 1913, the English organist Walter Galpin Alcock (1861–1947) introduced his method book *The Organ* with the provocative claim that “no instrument encourages bad musicianship so readily as the Organ, for it offers every inducement to ‘trifle,’ so much variety of tone and power being available with so little expenditure of energy and serious thought.”<sup>5</sup> Of course, “energy and serious thought” is what Alcock intended to underscore as the core of an organist’s education, a training that included repertoire playing and, to a greater extent generally than at the end of

the century, fixed-form improvisation and composition. A superficial “dancing” and “prancing” was not part of a picture that assumed the “serious” holistic task of the organist/composer/church musician. An upstanding Anglican organist was to earn his—and it was most often his—daily bread upon craft rather than keyboard pyrotechnics, fanciful registrations for their own sake, and other aberrant musical manifestations of worldly vanity at odds with the venerable character of the Church’s instrument, the very conduit of the *sapientia Dei*. And certainly not only in Britain: in 1949, a composer with as open a mind as Aaron Copland wondered in his diary why the Roman Catholic Church permitted Olivier Messiaen’s improvisations at the Église de la Sainte-Trinité, with their “Radio City Music Hall harmonies in the treble” and “the ‘devil’ in the bass.”<sup>6</sup> At about the same time in Germany, the sought-after Frankfurt teacher Helmut Walcha categorically excluded Max Reger’s music from his curriculum on the equally categorical argument that the composer’s way of writing was foreign to the organ, the universal “essence” of which lay in strict polyphony, not in nineteenth-century pianistic models imported into organ composition, with their octave doublings, gradual dynamic swells, and the like.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, one is confronted with Seneca’s sobering admonition *Res severa verum gaudium* on the case of the 1981 Schuke organ in the Leipzig Gewandhaus to this day.

As the twentieth century came into its own, at least two factors mitigated against such thinking. The first was the growth of a progressive internationalism and cross-culturalism that recognized the creative potential of musical idioms traditionally at home beyond the walls of mainline institutionalized Christianity. Messiaen, both devout and theologically astute, saw no contradiction in searching out Truth where he could find it, whether it be in the harmonies of Berg’s *Wozzeck*, the theological implications of Wagner’s *Tristan*, Hindu rhythm theory, birdsong, or indeed in the salacious corridors of Radio City Music Hall. Composers found and continue to find that the instrument of Bach could not merely accommodate jazz, gospel, blues, and Latin rhythms, but it also could manipulate them in original and compelling ways, from the music of Jehan Alain to that of Albright. Avant-garde composers like Györgi Ligeti and Giacinto Scelsi recognized the instrument’s enormous potential for an exploration of sound itself, conceptually separate from the parameters that normally shape it—melody, counterpoint, harmony, rhythm. In music from Daniel Pinkham to Hans-Ola Ericsson, electronically synthesized sound and *musique concrète* were exploited to great effect. By the end of the century, vocally based counterpoint, fugal technique, and traditional harmony had become compartments in a much larger compositional toolbox, a dramatically expanded picture of what the organ could do.

The second contributing factor to that picture was the rapid growth of conservatory-style education, which produced increasingly specialized musicians, organists not least among them, focused on realizing the most transcendental challenges of the repertoire with breathtaking precision. As new music presented new technical problems, the virtuoso organist solved them. As the

instrument itself absorbed the newest technologies, electrically driven winding made sustained practice on the organ possible without the engagement of a bellows pumper. Key actions were freed of their mechanical origins, and stop changing devices were made more efficient and more numerous, allowing the conservatory-trained organist to play music from every period with ease, at any tempo and with any number of stop changes. Informed composers for the instrument, many of them organists themselves, came to expect the efficiencies allowed for by such developments in organ building, and they integrated them into their scores. Quite what the possibilities of electrically driven winding systems at high pressure, electric key and stop actions, and MIDI technologies have to do with various historical repertoires from about Reger backwards is admittedly another question, and one that should be asked more insistently than it is.<sup>8</sup> Dancing fingers, prancing feet—in short an unprecedented standard of virtuosity—became a hallmark from Virgil Fox to the “serious” concert and church organists of the later twentieth century. If, say, the pedal passage at the beginning of J. S. Bach’s Toccata in C major BWV 564 is a fair picture of the requirements of the most advanced pedal technique of its time, then one might find its equivalent today in pedal solo renditions of Rimsky’s *The Flight of the Bumble Bee*. Any number of criticisms could be and have been leveled at this situation—that such training has exacerbated the breach between performance and academics; that the conservatory aesthetic is unduly focused on satisfying the perfectionist expectations of the recording industry (an extension of Benjamin’s argument); that, for organists, such exclusive energy directed toward repertoire playing marginalizes or ignores altogether the competencies of a church musician (theology, improvisation, service playing); that the conservatory has given rise to a leveling effect whereby individualism and national distinctions in interpretation are minimized; that so-called authentic performance is compromised as critical scholarship is downplayed, and as twentieth-century virtuosic standards are projected backward onto earlier music—but conservatory-dominated curricula had undoubtedly contributed much to what it meant to be a competent organist by the turn of the second millennium, for better and for worse.

On fretting, sweating, and related disciplines (huffing, puffing, ripping, popping): The professional organist of 2000 had to master a repertoire with a longer history than that of any other keyboard instrument, to which twentieth-century composition added significantly. In large measure due to the influence of musicology and the Early Music movement, a really comprehensive training came to presuppose at least a basic mastery of organ music in the roughly 550-year period from the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch* through the latest works of important living composers, including some knowledge of the remarkably varied sorts of instruments on which these repertoires were first played. Moreover, the expectations of the modern concert stage were increasingly transferred to organ performance: in 1920, for instance, Marcel Dupré presented J. S. Bach’s complete organ

works—or what in 1920 counted as J. S. Bach’s complete organ works—in an unprecedented series of ten memorized recitals at the Paris Conservatoire. With advances in transportation, the phenomenon of the international concertizing organist became a more common sight. As early as 1904, Alexandre Guilmant had appeared at the St. Louis Exposition in an acclaimed series of forty recitals.

All sexual overtones aside, there is no question that the girdle has popped. Twentieth-century organ music itself is more stylistically diverse and more geographically varied than in previous centuries, and it requires an expanded palette of playing techniques drawn from virtuoso pianism and the avant-garde. To play Ligeti’s *Volumina* or Xenakis’s *Gmeeeoorh* or Albright’s *Organbooks* or Gubaidulina’s *Hell und Dunkel* requires approaches utterly beyond those necessary to the most advanced music of Reger or Howells or Demessieux, all techniques which the intensively focused training of the modern conservatory has been in a position to cultivate. More information is available to us about the music of the last century than about earlier music, in part because of our proximity to the time, in part because the communication explosion has left us with more documentation written by more people about more music, and in part because of a modernist tendency among composers to feel the need to explain—or defend, as the case may be—the uniqueness of what they do. Much of the repertoire has explicit connections to contemporary extramusical issues in ways that earlier organ music does not, or at least such meanings are less apparent as their social contexts become more distant. To study a work like the Czech composer Petr Eben’s *Job*, a brilliant cycle of eight movements composed in 1987 on texts from the Biblical narrative, is not only to master thoroughly original music of the highest caliber; one is likewise asked by its composer to ponder “the unimportance of personal sorrow in relation to world events,” a “social and theological revolution”<sup>9</sup> at the time of its writing and a question of immediate relevance not only to a composer from an Eastern Bloc nation, but also to a world with a grossly imbalanced distribution of resources, despite every modern advance still subject to devastating war and despotic suppression of basic human freedoms. Such a work, which insists on the pertinence of an ancient story to present-day injustices, has no equivalent in program music for the organ of previous periods. It is a sort of music German writers today tend to call *engagiert*—engaged with the sociopolitical landscape—and it demands an approach beyond that of *ars gratia artis*.

On presiding over the beastie: In a characteristic fit of idealism, around 1906 the thirty-something Arnold Schoenberg began an essay titled *Die Zukunft der Orgel* (“The Future of the Organ”). One senses an outsized self-assurance on the part of its author, who admits no technical knowledge of the instrument, and who in any case left the piece as a fragment of just over 400 words. In it, Schoenberg declares that the organ, “the colossal apparatus,” must change for the better if composers are to be interested in producing music for it. The instrument has too many resources for a single player to manipulate optimally, and its overabundant timbres “are nevertheless relatively little differentiated.” Schoenberg writes

that an organist who singlehandedly presides over such an instrument enjoys an “aristocratic pleasure”: the organist is “like a ruler who plays with destinies,” a misappropriation of power when one realizes that “the reproducer [that is, the performer] is only in a very indirect way an artist at all.”<sup>10</sup> Much later, in a letter of May 10, 1949 to Werner David, Schoenberg recalled that, had he completed the essay, he would have proposed an organ with up to four consoles for as many simultaneous players, with timbres reduced to between two and six, a range expanded to seven or eight octaves, and dynamic expression for each tone. Further, the whole instrument should be no larger than “about one and a half times the size of a portable typewriter.”<sup>11</sup>

Of course, Schoenberg’s sweeping plan was never realized—one is tempted to count the modern synthesizer, although Schoenberg never envisioned a non-winded organ—but in both its original version and its reaffirmation some forty years later, the proposal suggests how susceptible the organ was, to an extent the modern piano never was, to various ideologically driven agendas in the century of modernism, mechanization, and electronic technologies. It must be said that much of what happened to the instrument after about 1890 was nonsense: the “orchestral” behemoths to which Schoenberg reacted, with stops of little individual character and tuttis on ridiculously high wind pressures; eclectic organs that claimed equal integrity for the music of Frescobaldi and Franck; various half-baked incarnations of the sound (but not the key actions, winding principles, pipe composition, or case design) of earlier eras, or, more accurately, of what builders believed earlier organs sounded like; an undisciplined revisionism that obscured or destroyed the integrity of older organs in an effort to bring them in line with progressive industrialism; and so on. On the part of both performers and scholars, these developments have done much to hinder an understanding of nineteenth-century and earlier repertoires, and they are by no means behind us. Yet for twentieth-century organ composers who assumed a particular sort of modern instrument—creative minds as aesthetically diverse as Messiaen and Distler—such organs are more than misguided experiments or curiosities of history: they became part of the authentic fabric of repertoires and compositional approaches that are substantive in their own right. One must engage the apparent quandary that the beastie of today will become the autonomous artistic statement of tomorrow, if for no other reason than the value of what such an instrument has to say about the music written for it.

And finally, on pulling out all the stops: The present volume examines the organ and its repertoire over the entire twentieth century, contextualizing it against the background of the multifarious trends of the time. But it does not pretend to pull out all the stops—that is, it does not present anything approaching a comprehensive narrative survey of the period, instead preferring a collection of more or less focused snapshots which, considered together, demonstrate the complexity of issues and range of styles in which the music has been fostered. Certain bright lights among many have been singled out for closer examination: Max Reger, whose creativity

reflects the intensely debated questions of German musical nationalism at the century's opening and brings the organ's music into the restive arena of German modernism; Olivier Messiaen, who directed toward the organ some of the most advanced compositional techniques of the century, an integral part of the broad spiritual and theological trajectory in the composer's work; Györgi Ligeti, whose attention to the expressive palette of organ sound brought the instrument to the fore of experimental composition in the second half of the century; and Herbert Howells, who offers in his organ music an original synthesis of craft and ravishing harmony, works that in their avoidance of mere Romantic epigonism deserve closer readings than they have generally received. And, for a century in which cross-national influences made geo-political boundaries ever less germane to all matters musical, five chapters nevertheless consider the music of important geographical centers: the German lands, France, The Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, and the United States. Three contextual essays significantly enrich the resulting picture. James Wallmann examines how the organ itself—the beastie—changed in the face of emerging technologies and competing aesthetic ideals. Benjamin Kolodziej's pioneering chapter parses the durable association of the organ with Christianity, exploring how the liturgical environment and its various theologies have continued to shape the repertoire in the post-Christian era. Not least, the volume offers a reprinting of Peter Williams's 1994 essay on the German *Orgelbewegung*, exploring both the assumptions that underlie the central organ historical movement of the century and the depth to which they pervade thinking about the organ and its music still today, quite beyond German borders.

And yet, for all this, the reader in search of an all-embracing survey of organ music will not find it here. Because there is no dedicated study of eastern Europe, for instance, the present collection does not address the significant contributions of Petr Eben (1929–2007), composer not only of the *Job* cycle mentioned above, but also of the *Nedělní hudba* (*Sunday Music*), *Faust*, two marvelous fantasies on Czech chorales, the *Labyrint světa a ráj srdce* (*Labyrinth of the World and Paradise*), *Okna* (*Windows*, for trumpet and organ based on Marc Chagall's *Jerusalem Windows*), and several other major works for solo organ and for organ with other instruments. Because Great Britain does not receive its own survey, there is no significant attention paid to the work of Kenneth Leighton (1929–88), music of the highest craftsmanship and lyricism, including the *Missa de Gloria* op. 82 and the *Veni redemptor* op. 93, certainly among the very best works the United Kingdom gave the organ in the twentieth century. And because Canada is not here, the reader will miss a thorough discussion of the important pedagogue and composer Healey Willan (1880–1968), whose voluminous output for the organ, a continuation and expansion of the late Romantic idiom of his training, belongs in any treatment of the period and is justifiably a part of any organist's library.<sup>12</sup> There are many others, including composers of engaging new music from Asia and the African continent, quarters not at all traditionally associated with the organ in past centuries, but which may well have an important voice in the new one.

Above, I claimed as the subject for this collection “the entire twentieth century.” As a way to acknowledge the artificiality of divisions based on century marks, it has recently become fashionable to speak of “long” centuries. By some accounts, for instance, the so-called long nineteenth century is supposed to have extended from about the beginning of the French Revolution through the beginning of World War I. We could invent a similar scheme for a long twentieth century which, like the boundaries of 1789 and 1914, in the end only amounts to the substitution of one sort of synthetic history for another. The year 2000 is hardly a universal watershed in music history, no more or less than 1900 is, and it is easy to imagine that some future author will argue that music being composed at the time of this writing falls within the conceptual orbit of the twentieth century. To be sure, the contributors to this volume have not hesitated to discuss a twentieth century that overflowed its boundaries on either side. And as we look back from our position on this side of those boundaries, the studies that follow go some way toward a fresh vantage point from which to view one of the twentieth century’s most diverse and engaging musical spheres, one which has contributed meaningfully to the ground on which we stand today.

## Notes

- 1 Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Praise of Folly and Letter to Maarten van Dorp 1515*, trans. by Betty Radice (London: Penguin, 1971), 42.
- 2 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in Hannah Arendt, ed., *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), 224. The original essay appeared in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 5/1 (1936). Benjamin speaks here primarily of the visual arts.
- 3 Poem 183 in Thomas H. Johnson, ed., *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955), 87.
- 4 The poetry for Albright’s *The King of Instruments* was written by the composer and Eugene Haun, at the time serving on the English faculty of Eastern Michigan University. See further Chapter 9.
- 5 Walter Galpin Alcock, *The Organ*, “Introduction” (London: Novello, 1913).
- 6 Cited in Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise. Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 446.
- 7 Helmut Walcha, “Regers Orgelschaffen kritisch betrachtet,” *Musik und Kirche* 22 (1952): 2–14.
- 8 By the same token, much can be learned about the music of a Leo Sowerby from the meticulous restoration of an Ernest M. Skinner organ, or about Messiaen’s music by an examination of Victor Gonzalez’s revisions of Cavaillé-Coll’s aesthetic.
- 9 Petr Eben, prefatory remarks to *Job for Organ* (London: United Music Publishers, 1989).
- 10 The German fragment is reproduced in Arnold Schoenberg, *Sämtliche Werke Abteilung II Reihe B Band 5* (Mainz: Schott, 1973), 1. The translations are mine.
- 11 The relevant portions of the letter are reproduced in *ibid.* See also Glenn E. Watkins, “Schoenberg and the Organ,” *Perspectives of New Music* 4/1 (1965): 119–35.
- 12 But see the treatment of Willan’s liturgical organ music in Chapter 12.

# 1

## THE ORGAN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

*James L. Wallmann*

The twentieth century saw more change in organ styles happen more quickly than any other time in organ history. Furthermore, unlike earlier periods, the twentieth century witnessed different trends existing and developing side by side. For example, nineteenth-century traditions continued in the early 1900s alongside the development of the progressive symphonic organ. Shortly after the middle of the century, in some countries a newly built *Orgelbewegung* instrument with mechanical action could be found near a new organ with electro-pneumatic key action designed in an eclectic style. In the century's final decade, the eclectic organ predominated, but at the same time one could find new instruments built along strictly historical lines, as well as neo-symphonic organs inspired by trends from the early twentieth century. This survey first examines the seven broadly conceived building styles that inform the twentieth-century organ, then considers the same period in a review by geography.

### **Styles of the Twentieth Century**

As will be clear from the seven twentieth-century organ styles discussed here, these trends often developed independently from one another. One may contrast this situation, for example, with the development of organs from the late Renaissance to early Baroque to high Baroque to early nineteenth century, where a single thread predominates. Study of developments in a particular region at a given time in the twentieth century will sometimes yield a single prevalent organ style, but it is just as likely to reflect two or even three different trends.

### *The Nineteenth-century Organ in the Early 1900s*

The organ of the late nineteenth century continued through the first quarter of the twentieth, when it was modified to become the early reform instrument. Three national schools of organbuilding dominate the period—Anglo-American, French, and German—and developments in other countries can be understood in relation to these. Common to each was a broad, warm sound dominated by 8' pitch. Upperwork and mixtures, if present, supported and were subsidiary to the unison tone. Although this style of early twentieth-century organbuilding is often called Romantic, symphonic, or orchestral, the first term is reserved for trends in the mid- to late nineteenth century, while the latter two terms are used here for the so-called symphonic organ found primarily in North America and Britain.

There were differences among organs in Great Britain and North America built in a traditional nineteenth-century style, but the similarities are much greater. The Great division featured the Principal chorus, often with two or more Open Diapason 8' stops. Mixtures and reeds on the Great were not uncommon.



**FIGURE 1.1** The English builder Hill & Son exported this organ in 1910 to the Pitt Street Uniting (formerly Congregational) Church in Sydney, N.S.W., Australia. Thirty-one stops (five of which were prepared for but added later) are arranged in a traditional stoplist over Great, Swell, Choir, and Pedal with tubular pneumatic action. The case is fairly wide, of pine but finished to resemble mahogany, and in a simple neo-Renaissance style with gilded pipes arranged in three towers and four flats. The instrument remains in substantially its original condition. Courtesy Kelvin Hastie, Organ Historical Trust of Australia.

The Swell division included one or more 8' string and flute stops, the main reed chorus of the instrument, and sometimes a secondary Principal chorus. Softer 8' flute and string stops were found on the Choir, clearly a subsidiary division. Bass stops at 16' pitch predominated in the Pedal. Mechanical key actions were found, primarily on smaller instruments, but tubular pneumatic actions were common and generally reliable. In comparing two organs in this style from 1885 and 1915, for example, one would probably hear a thicker and less transparent sound on the latter instrument, even if both had similar stoplists.

The 1906 Peter Conacher & Co. organ in the parish church of St. Luke, Whitfield (Glossop), Derbyshire, illustrates these trends.<sup>1</sup>

Great – 8.8.8.4.4.2

Swell – 16.8.8.8.8.4.III.8.8

Choir – 8.8.4.2.8

Pedal – 16.16.8

Except for tubular pneumatic key action in the Pedal, the Derbyshire stop and key actions were mechanical. The Great had both a Large Open Diapason and a Small Open Diapason. A larger instrument could have a mixture, reed, and Open Diapason 16' on the Great, a 2' stop and a full reed chorus at 16', 8', and 4' on the Swell, more 8' and 4' flues on all manuals, a 16' reed in the Pedal, and tubular pneumatic action throughout. In the Anglo-American regions, the smaller and farther away from London, New York, Boston, or other major metropolitan area the organ was, the more likely it was to be built in a conservative late nineteenth-century style, even in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The profound influence of Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811–99) on organbuilding in France was felt well into the twentieth century. Indeed, the three great composers of the French Romantic school—César Franck (1822–90), Charles-Marie Widor (1844–1937), and Louis Vierne (1870–1937)—all knew and composed for Cavaillé-Coll organs built in 1859, 1883, and 1868, respectively: instruments that suited organ music composed in France for much of the twentieth century. The design of Cavaillé-Coll's organs evolved over the years, to be sure, but the instruments were similar and characterized by the *jeux de fonds* (Montre 8', Flûte harmonique 8', Gambe 8' or Salicional 8', Bourdon 8') and dominated by brilliant reed choruses. Mechanical key actions with Barker levers were standard and ventils allowed the organist to add or subtract upperwork, mixtures, and reeds from any manual or pedal division. Combined with the ability to move from one manual to another, and having at least one manual division under expression, the organist could quickly increase or decrease the desired sound. Charles Mutin (1861–1931) carried on the traditions of Cavaillé-Coll in the early twentieth century, and new instruments were built in the traditional style until they were superseded by *l'orgue néo-classique* in the 1930s.

An increase in 8' stops on German organs was already apparent by the middle of the nineteenth century. Cone chests, or *Kegelladen*, and tubular pneumatic

action allowed even more 8' stops to be added to the German organ in the two or three decades before and after 1900. Eberhard Friedrich Walcker (1794–1872), Friedrich Ladegast (1818–1905), and Wilhelm Sauer (1831–1916) were the great German organbuilders of the nineteenth century. Of this triumvirate, only the Walcker family continued the organbuilding tradition well into the twentieth century: Ladegast could not sustain a successful business into the next generation, while Sauer's operations were acquired by the Walcker family after his death. The German organ of 1900 was designed around many 8' and 4' flue stops, giving the player a nuanced variety of sounds in the *pp* to *f* range. The few reeds on the German organ provided color, not power, and the sound quality of full organ was similar to the sound of the instrument at a moderate volume, only louder. This type of organ was "characterized by a specific sort of unity: one basic tone colour could be varied in multiple shades and degrees of loudness, [and] any transition to another shade or loudness could be realised smoothly."<sup>2</sup> Manuals were graduated from loud (Man. I) to medium loud (Man. II) to soft (Man. III) to very soft (Echo or *Fernwerk*). This was the instrument familiar to the mature Max Reger (1873–1916) and Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877–1933).

It is tempting to find a French organbuilding influence on Sauer, but there is little to support this view. It is true that Sauer spent time in Paris with Cavaillé-Coll, and Flûte harmonique and Voix céleste stops are common on Sauer's instruments. But even the occasional Trompette harmonique built by Sauer does nothing to change the fundamentally German character of his organs. The Stadthalle in Görlitz is home to op. 1100 of the Sauer firm, built in 1910.<sup>3</sup> Although a concert instrument, the design just as easily could have been found in a large church or synagogue.

I. Manual – 16.16.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.4.2.II.III.III–IV.16.8

II. Manual – 16.16.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.IV.III.8.8

III. Manual (in Swell box) – 16.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.III.8.8

IV. Manual (*Fernwerk* in Swell box) – 16.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.8.8

Pedal – 32.32.16.16.16.16.16.10<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.8.8.8.32.16.8.4

Even for such a large instrument, the wealth of mixtures and reeds on a German organ of the period was unusual. The entire organ was enclosed in a Swell box and had pneumatic key and stop action, three free combinations, four fixed combinations, and a *Rollschweller*, a mechanical device by means of which the foot could introduce or retire stops in a predetermined order. A fourth manual was found only on the largest instruments, as in Görlitz; a three-manual organ was sufficient for almost all purposes.

### ***The Symphonic Organ***

Found almost exclusively in Great Britain and North America, the symphonic organ had its origins in the late nineteenth century. Such instruments are noted

for their expressivity, multiple Swell divisions, an emphasis on the unison tone, and few, if any, mixtures. Expressivity was the key characteristic and highly prized, as one organist effused regarding the Kimball organ in Temple Beth Elohim, Washington, D.C., “The tonal disposition of this [organ] ... is a scientific placing of tone colors distinct and strongly individual for the skillful performer to display effects of all manner and degree of shading.”<sup>4</sup> Often only a few stops provided the symphonic instrument’s power. Tonal innovations included high-pressure reeds, solo and imitative reed stops, flues on high wind pressures, new flue stops, double-mouthed flues, and diaphones. Mechanical developments included reliable electric or electro-pneumatic actions, consoles that could be placed far from the organ, console devices and registration aids, and double touch on one or more manual keyboards, although this last feature, whereby depressing the key past its normal contact point produced *sforzando* or other special effects, while not uncommon on theater organs, was rarely exploited in standard organ music. Naturally, the difference between a true symphonic instrument and an organ built following late nineteenth-century models with few mixtures, many 8’ stops, and a couple of high pressure ranks is only a matter of degree.

One may identify four distinct manifestations of the symphonic organ. First, Robert Hope-Jones (1859–1914) was responsible for many of the technical and tonal developments leading to the symphonic instrument, and indeed the Hope-Jones “unit orchestra” or theater organ as reflected in the “Mighty Wurlitzer” displays many of the characteristics of this style. The extremes found in the Hope-Jones approach—keen strings of diminutive scale, wide-scaled stopped flutes like the *Tibia Clausa*, powerful reeds on very high wind pressures, leather-lipped Open Diapsons, and a huge dynamic range—have been derided by many since but were highly appreciated in his day. Indeed, the 1908 Hope-Jones instrument in the Ocean Grove Auditorium, New Jersey, was praised by one contemporary who announced that “[w]e have heard the great Tuba at Ocean Grove, on 50-inch wind pressure, so reduced in strength that it formed an effective accompaniment to the tones of a single voice.”<sup>5</sup>

Second, George Ashdown Audsley (1838–1925) was an important theorist as the author of *The Art of Organ-Building* (1905), *The Organ of the Twentieth Century* (1919), *Organ-stops and Their Artistic Registration* (1921), and *The Temple of Tone* (1925). Audsley desired each division of the organ, Pedal included, to have its own expressive Swell box and advocated stops that imitated their orchestral counterparts. Unlike many in his day, Audsley recognized the importance of mixture stops to the chorus of an organ. Notwithstanding his writings, which were widely known and received with respect, few instruments were built following Audsley’s designs, although his theories were selectively implemented on some organs. Forming the core of the famous instrument now in the Wanamaker store in Philadelphia, the most notable Audsley design was the 140-stop organ built in 1904 by the Los Angeles Art Organ Company for Festival Hall, Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, Missouri.



**FIGURE 1.2** Festival Hall of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, California, was home to opus 500 of the Austin Organ Co. built in 1915. This four-manual symphonic instrument of 110 stops had five manual divisions (Great, Swell, Choir, Solo, Echo) and Pedal with pipes voiced on five, ten, fifteen, or twenty-five inches of wind pressure (127 mm, 254 mm, 381 mm, 635 mm). Symphonic organs were hidden behind simple pipe fronts or screens, as here in a vaguely *Jugendstil* or Art Nouveau style, or in more elaborate cases to match ecclesiastical interiors, or even behind decorative fronts or architectural grills with no pipes at all. After the 1915 fair, the organ was moved to the new Civic Auditorium in San Francisco. A handful of changes were made to the instrument over the years, but it was infrequently heard in later decades before it was damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The organ has been repaired and is presently in storage. Courtesy Vic Ferrer Productions, Inc.

Third, Ernest M. Skinner (1866–1960) was the leading organbuilder in the United States in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Few major installations in churches, educational institutions, and concert halls did not go to Skinner during this time. His organs were well built and reliable. His tonal views were decidedly along symphonic lines, combining a rich Principal chorus with a wide variety of solo and chorus reeds and a large number of flutes, strings, and hybrid stops. A large Skinner organ is probably the optimal vehicle for transcriptions of orchestral music. The 1931 Skinner organ op. 820 in Our Lady, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Cathedral, Toledo, Ohio, is a good example of Skinner's symphonic style.<sup>6</sup>

Great – 16.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.IV.IV.16.8.4

Swell – 16.8.8.8(II).8.8.8.4.4.2.V.16.8.8.8.4

Choir – 16.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.III.16.8.8.Harp.Celesta

Solo – 8.8.8.4.16.8.8.8

Pedal – 32.16.16.16.16.16.16.16.8.8.8.8.4.IV.32.16.16.16.8

The Great has two mixtures: a “Chorus Mixture” and a “Harmonics” containing  $1\frac{3}{5}'$ ,  $1\frac{1}{3}'$ ,  $1\frac{1}{7}'$ , and  $1'$  on low C, breaking back an octave on  $d\sharp^2$ . In the Pedal, only five of the 32' and 16' stops are independent; all other Pedal stops except the Mixture are extended from these five ranks or borrowed or extended from manual stops.

In England, Harrison and Harrison created what has been called the “imperial organ,” the fourth type of symphonic instrument.<sup>7</sup> The 1908 organ at Ely Cathedral boasted a Great division with a “massive Principal chorus,” a Harmonics V mixture containing a tierce and a septième (“a kind of Cornet, bridging the gap between the fluework and the arrival of the reeds”), a Mixture V with only unisons and quints, and a chorus of Trombas of “ultra-smooth tone”; a Swell with a “brilliant Mixture” and a reed chorus “considerably thinner and more fiery than the Great Trombas”; a Choir “developed as a miniature Great Organ”; an enclosed Solo with “expressive and orchestral colour” and a “commanding” Tuba; and a Pedal with only four independent ranks, the “Open Wood and Ophicleide ranks [being] characterised by great weight and smoothness.”<sup>8</sup> Two decades later in Australia, the 1929 Melbourne Town Hall organ by Hill, Norman & Beard boasted many of these same characteristics with even more color effects, such as an Echo organ in two sections and an “Orchestral String Organ,” as well as 32' stops of prodigious scale.<sup>9</sup> By the late 1930s, the symphonic instrument fell out of favor and was superseded by the eclectic organ, only to be revived in modified form in the 1990s with the neo-symphonic style.

### **Early Reform Trends**

Over a period from about 1910 to the late 1930s, the nineteenth-century style of organbuilding gave way to one of several early reform types in Germany. Dissatisfaction with the factory-built organs produced in Germany led some organists and organbuilders to seek reform. Three distinct movements in Germany and France define these trends: the Alsatian organ reform, the German pre-war *Orgelbewegung*, and the French *néo-classique* instrument.

The organist and theorist Emil Rupp (1872–1948); the organist, musicologist, theologian, physician, and humanitarian Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965); and the organbuilder Oscar Walcker (1869–1948, nephew of Eberhard Friedrich Walcker) are responsible for much of the Alsatian organ reform. Schweitzer’s 1906 essay “Französische und deutsche Orgelbaukunst und Orgelkunst”<sup>10</sup> is often credited with launching the organ reform, but Rupp’s criticism of high-pressure reeds in 1899 provides an even earlier data point.<sup>11</sup> Most of Schweitzer’s essay compares and contrasts German and French organs and how they were built and played. According to Schweitzer, the German organ was for the most part inferior to the

French instrument. He did not like the then-standard pneumatic key actions on larger German organs and wished to see more and better-designed mixtures on all manuals. Schweitzer praised antique organs and their affinity for Bach's music, but he also wanted to play modern French music and expressed his admiration for Cavallé-Coll. Economic considerations meant that mass-produced factory organs were the norm; Schweitzer desired artistry in organbuilding but recognized that this was a more expensive proposition.

Both Rupp and Schweitzer identified old instruments as models for modern organbuilding. In particular, Silbermann was held up as the example to be pursued, although it was not always clear whether the reference was to Gottfried in Saxony or Andreas and Johann Andreas in Alsace. In fact, most of the historic organs in Alsace praised by these men had been altered in the nineteenth century and no longer produced their original sound—which is not to say that the altered sound was bad, but only that it was not the sound intended by the eighteenth-century builders. Modern innovations like cone and membrane chests with non-mechanical actions were perfectly acceptable for the Alsatian reform organ, an instrument with more mutations, upperwork, and mixtures than the comparable German organ but not always substantially fewer 8' stops. In 1909, the Alsatian builder Dalstein und Härpfer constructed a representative instrument in the Sängershaus in Strasbourg, while in the same year the Walcker firm under the direction of Oscar Walcker introduced this style to Germany with an instrument in Dortmund, St. Reinoldi, and again in 1912 with a massive instrument in Hamburg, St. Michaelis. Further, the Walcker organ originally built in 1916 for the Nieuwe Zuiderkerk in Rotterdam reflects many of the goals of the Alsatian organ reform.<sup>12</sup>

Manuaal I – 16.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.III–V.V.8

Manuaal II (expressive) – 16.8.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.III–IV.V–VII.16.8.8.4

Manuaal III (expressive) – 16.8.8.8.8.8.8.8.4.4.2.II.III–IV.8

Manuaal IV (Echo, expressive) – 16.8.8.8.8.4.III–IV.8.8

Pedal – 32.16.16.16.16.16.16.16.10<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.8.8.8.8.8.4.V.32.16.16.8.4

Ten of the Pedal stops were independent ranks, and all others were borrowed from the manuals. The instrument had four free combinations and many couplers, including those at the super- and sub-octave.

Like the Alsatian organ reform, the German pre-war *Orgelbewegung*<sup>13</sup> was launched by theorists, in this case the musicologist Wilibald Gurlitt (1891–1963), the dramatist and organ expert Hans Henny Jahnn (1894–1959), and the clergyman and musicologist Christhard Mahrenholz (1900–80). Unlike the three principals of the Alsatian organ reform, however, Gurlitt, Jahnn, and Mahrenholz did not collaborate with each other and in fact espoused widely different ideological approaches. But common among them was an attempt to recreate Baroque sounds on an instrument able to perform the North German organ repertoire. Many also felt that this type of organ was best for the German Lutheran liturgy.



**FIGURE 1.3** Albert Schweitzer and Emil Rupp were two of the four members of the organ committee responsible for a new instrument in the Sangerhaus (now Palais des Fetes) in Strasbourg, France. Touted by Schweitzer as the first large organ to heed the call of “Back to Silbermann” (Schweitzer 1909, 11), the three-manual instrument with pneumatic key and stop action was built by Dalstein und Harpfer, one of the organist’s favorite builders. The 56 stops were found on Manual I (14 stops), Manual II (expressive, 13 stops), Manual III (expressive, 19 stops) and Pedal. Wind pressures were low for the period—from 70 to 120 mm. German nomenclature was used on the console, although stop names were converted to French in 1958 when the console was replaced by a moveable electric example. The organ case was designed in a traditional style by the hall’s architect. Apart from the changes in 1958 and two stops added in 1912, the instrument, although now in poor condition, retains its original pipework and much of its early twentieth-century mechanisms. From Schweitzer 1909 (private collection).

Nomenclature, stoplists, and pipe scalings were taken from early theorists and, to a limited extent, historic instruments. Builders constructed a few slider chests with mechanical key actions, but these traits were not felt to be integral in the face of an overriding concern for “true” sound and correspondingly correct stoplist. Significant instruments were the so-called Praetorius organ at the University of Freiburg/Breisgau (1921, modest, and built by Walcker to Gurlitt’s design) and

instruments in Göttingen, St. Marien (1926, built by Furtwängler und Hammer to Mahrenholz's design) and Hamburg, Lichtwarkschule (1931, built by Kemper to Jahn's design). The organ was far from an isolated phenomenon in these circles, and the academic and social underpinnings to the early reform movement in Germany cannot be ignored.<sup>14</sup> The major figures and their disciples mounted a series of conferences in Hamburg/Lübeck (1925), Freiburg i. Br. (1926 and 1938), Freiberg (1927), Berlin (1928), Amsterdam (1931), Strasbourg (1932), and Utrecht (1934) to consider questions of organ design and the place of the instrument in European culture. In a related development, from 1927 to 1936 German publishers reprinted early treatises on the organ by Werckmeister, Praetorius, Biermann, Adlung, Ludwig, Schlick, Sorge, and Bedos de Celles.

The French *néo-classique* movement began later than the other two early reform movements. The organbuilder Victor Gonzalez (1877–1956), the organist André Marchal (1894–1980), and the organist and musicologist Norbert Dufourcq (1900–90) were the principal figures behind *l'orgue néo-classique*. The goal was to recall elements of the classical French organ, minimize the Cavaillé-Coll influence so dominant in French organbuilding, and produce an instrument able to play Bach's organ works "authentically," as that notion was understood at the time. The Gonzalez instruments in Rheims Cathedral, built in 1938, and in the Paris Palais de Chaillot, a Cavaillé-Coll organ rebuilt likewise in 1938, characterize this style.

The early German *Orgelbewegung* organ as it was known before World War II was transformed after the war into the *Orgelbewegung* instrument familiar in the third quarter of the century. The Alsatian reform organ, already an instrument able to handle much of the repertoire, developed into the eclectic organ. Similarly, the *néo-classique* style moved seamlessly into the eclectic French organ.

### **The Eclectic Organ**

In continental Europe, the universal or eclectic organ grew out of the early reform instrument, particularly the Alsatian reform style and *l'orgue néo-classique*. Indicative of a desire for such an organ, one Swiss organist writing in 1947 praised reform efforts in his country for creating an instrument capable of the "authentic interpretation of German as well as French organ music" with a universal Hauptwerk (Man. I), a German Baroque Positiv (Man. II), and a French Récit expressif (Man. III).<sup>15</sup> Thus the primary motivation for the eclectic organ was organists' desire for an instrument able to accommodate all major repertoire from the important schools. Further, such an organ was increasingly perceived as a suitable instrument to accompany a traditional church service. Over time, there came to be a wide variety of approaches: the eclectic organ could have modern (non-slider) windchests and electro-pneumatic action, or slider chests with mechanical key action. Its stop action was almost always electric or electro-pneumatic, supplemented by a combination action. Large post-war *Orgelbewegung* instruments

with a Swell division reflect these eclectic ideals. Finally, builders in the late twentieth century applying an historically informed approach could produce an eclectic instrument by beginning with a traditional Great or Hauptwerk division and adding additional 8' stops to it, at the same time ensuring there was a substantial Swell division with French reeds.

What came to be known as the American Classic organ<sup>16</sup> was primarily the brainchild of G. Donald Harrison (1889–1956), an English organbuilder who came to the United States and joined the Skinner (later Aeolian-Skinner) Organ Company in 1927. His approach differed markedly from the symphonic style of Ernest M. Skinner, and by 1931 Harrison had displaced Skinner to take artistic direction of North America's leading organbuilding firm. Whereas the stops of a Skinner organ had a wide dynamic range and great tonal variety, instruments constructed in Harrison's American Classic style had stops with a relatively narrow dynamic range that blended easily together. As Harrison expressed it in a 1949 letter, "the finest ensemble is produced by many ranks, none of which is loud in themselves."<sup>17</sup> Early examples of the American Classic organ appeared by the mid-1930s, and Harrison developed the style over many years. His instruments were hardly identical, but in addition to the focus on ensemble and blend, certain common elements are found on most organs: reedless Great divisions, Principal choruses on most divisions, French reeds on the Swell division, mutations on the third manual division, and independent Pedal divisions. The third manual division could be a Choir, a Positiv, or a Choir-Positiv; large four- and five-manual organs often had Bombarde and Solo divisions. Walter Holtkamp, Sr. (1894–1962) took the same eclectic approach in the 1940s and 1950s but within narrower boundaries. For example, no new organ built by Holtkamp had more than three manuals, whereas Aeolian-Skinner routinely built four- and five-manual instruments. Holtkamp preferred exposed pipework, rather than an organ case or pipe façade, and his stoplists varied little among instruments of similar size.

In England, the reform represented by the eclectic organ arrived later and less gradually than in North America. Ralph Downes (1904–93), an organist and influential organ expert, was responsible for the large concert organ of 1954 in London's Royal Festival Hall. Built by the English firm Harrison and Harrison (no relation to G. Donald Harrison) to the design of Downes, the instrument was intended to play all organ repertoire. More than any other organ, it brought the eclectic style and a Continental sensibility to England.

French organbuilders were confronted with introducing the sounds necessary for Buxtehude and Bach into *l'orgue néo-classique* while retaining traditional French elements. The Gonzalez approach of the 1930s continued through much of the remainder of the twentieth century. On the other hand, Germany was dominated by *Orgelbewegung* instruments in the period after World War II, and thus the eclectic organ as such made little headway. Some large *Orgelbewegung* instruments from the 1950s and 1960s had eclectic touches, but it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that the desire of German organists to play French music



**FIGURE 1.4** Unlike most of the instruments of Walter Holtkamp, Sr., which were completely new, over a third of the stops on the 1950 organ in Setnor Auditorium of Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York, were recycled from earlier instruments. The organist Arthur Poister worked with Holtkamp to design this three-manual instrument. From left to right about the attached console at the base of the case are the pipes of the Positiv, Great, and Pedal divisions, with the Swell high above. The tower of Pedal pipes behind the Great adds an effective accent to the otherwise functional layout of exposed pipework, a Holtkamp trademark. Other builders of eclectic organs sometimes put all or part of an instrument's pipework in the open, but were more often content to use a traditional pipe screen or, later in the twentieth century, to build a true encased organ. The Syracuse instrument remains in its original condition. Courtesy Christopher Marks.

led to a German eclectic organ<sup>18</sup> closer to what was found in France or North America a generation earlier.

The 1952 instrument at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Ohio, was perhaps the favorite organ of its builder, Walter Holtkamp, Sr.,<sup>19</sup> and represents his fully developed style. As such it illustrates well one American's strategy for an eclectic organ.<sup>20</sup>

Great – 16.8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.IV.III.8

Swell – 8.8.8.8.4.4.4.2.III.IV.16.8.4

Positiv – 8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.III.8

Pedal – 32.16.16.16.8.8.4.4.III.32.16.16.8.4

The Positiv is a real independent division to balance the Great, as in the eighteenth century. Other builders had conceptual problems with the third manual and designed something resembling a nineteenth-century Choir. The Great division operates on a slider windchest; all others are typical pitman examples. The 32' "reed" in the Pedal is a synthetic stop called Cornet 32' consisting of ten different pitches and five independent ranks: 16',  $10^{2/3}$ ', 8',  $6^{2/5}$ ',  $5^{1/3}$ ',  $4^{1/7}$ ', 4',  $3^{5/9}$ ',  $2^{10/11}$ ', and  $2^{6/13}$ '. The Cornet 16' is extended from the 32' stop. The selection of reeds is typical of Holtkamp, with Trumpet and Posaune stops on the Great (8') and Pedal (16' and 8'); a Cromorne 8' on the Positiv; a Basson 16', Fagott 8', and Rohr Schalmey 4' on the Swell; and a Schalmey 4' on the Pedal. All reeds were ordered from Giesecke, the German specialty supplier to the organ industry. The Polyphone 32' on the Pedal was borrowed from the Soubasse 16' beginning at tenor C; the bottom octave, now discontinued, was a "cube" imported from the English supplier Compton in which a single compact device produced the lowest twelve notes of the 32' octave.

## The Orgelbewegung

While the term *Orgelbewegung* (English, organ reform movement or organ revival) was used between the wars to describe reform trends, the reference here is to the post-World War II mechanical-action instrument originating in Denmark and later adopted throughout Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. Some inroads were made elsewhere but builders from the named countries, particularly Germany, exported *Orgelbewegung* instruments throughout the world. These organs are characterized by bright, assertive, open toe voicing; low wind pressures; an emphasis on upperwork and high-pitched mixtures; geometric case designs; the use of modern materials such as plywood, aluminum, and plastic; a vertical tonal pyramid, whereby there are no more 8' stops than 4' or 2' stops; and balanced, not suspended, key actions. At times, the *Orgelbewegung* approach could be dogmatic, leading to the wholesale replacement of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century organs and some disastrous restorations of historic instruments.<sup>21</sup>

The principles of the *Orgelbewegung* were first described in 1952 by Sybrand Zachariassen, head of the Danish Marcussen firm:<sup>22</sup>

- "So far as possible all pipework must stand directly behind the case front."
- "The pipework should be built into the shallowest possible cases, open only to the front."
- "The pipework should be so erected that its ranks run parallel to the case front."
- "The depth of the organ behind the front of the gallery should depend on the height of the organ."
- "We do not want copies of any organ whatever."
- "Principal choruses of the various divisions must stand at octave intervals from one another."

- Horizontal reeds create a “very beautiful tonal effect.”
- The slider chest with mechanical key and stop action is best.
- “[F]ull wind voicing with open pipe feet generally has [an exceedingly favourable influence] on blending, tone quality and clarity.”
- A “beautiful organ front” can be created by “insert[ing] the pipes of the largest principal in that division in the framework of the front, divided into large and small pipe fields.”
- As pipe metal ages, the tone improves: “the pipe metal becomes gradually so influenced by the sound vibrations that the metal and air resonances more and more coincide.”



**FIGURE 1.5** Rudolf von Beckerath (1907–76) was one of the leading organbuilders of the German *Orgelbewegung* and his firm completed the large four-manual instrument with mechanical key and electric stop actions in the church of St. Andreas, Hildesheim, Germany in 1966. From bottom to top, the manual divisions are readily distinguished (with the pitch of the lowest Principal rank): 8' Rückpositiv, 4' Brustwerk (behind Swell shades), 16' Hauptwerk, and 8' Oberwerk. The 32' Pedal is on the gallery rail, a situation also found on historic instruments of North Germany. With its geometric case, the Hildesheim organ is clearly a product of its time, although the wing-shaped side towers add an attractive and fresh element to an otherwise functional design. The organ survives in its original condition. Courtesy Fa. Beckerath Orgelbau and St.-Andreas Gemeinde, Hildesheim.

Neither builders of the day nor Zachariassen himself consistently followed these rules, which in any case do not reflect historical practice. Despite the claim that copies were not the object, it is nevertheless true that builders in the 1950s and 1960s were crafting new instruments they thought were supposed to sound like historic organs.

An avant-garde faction operated within the *Orgelbewegung* as well. Uncommon mutations at pitches such as  $8/9$ ,  $8/11$ ,  $16/19$ , and  $1^{1/15}$  appeared on some stoplists. Builders likewise developed new pipe shapes such as Trompetenmusette, Glockenschalmey, Gedackttrompete, Glockenposaune, Koppelzink, Kegelpfeife, Trichterrohrflöte, Summbass, Superoctatön, Dezimatön, and Septatön.<sup>23</sup> The 1972 Walcker organ in Sinzig, Germany, was a notable example of pushing boundaries with unusual mutations, new mixture designs, new pipe shapes, a *Tastenfessel*,<sup>24</sup> and percussion stops.<sup>25</sup>

The 1953 Frobenius organ in St. Jacobs Kirke, Copenhagen, is a good example of the *Orgelbewegung* style.<sup>26</sup>

Hovedværk – 16.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2/3</sup>.2.IV–VI.III.8

Rygpositiv – 8.8.4.4.2.1<sup>1/3</sup>.III.8

Brystværk – 8.4.2.1.II.II.16.8

Pedal – 16.16.8.8.4.2.III.16.8.4

Principal stops of the four divisions stand an octave apart—Principal 16' (Pedal), Principal 8' (Hovedværk), Principal 4' (Rygpositiv), Principal 2' (Brystværk). There are many mixtures and few 8' flue stops. Both key and stop actions are mechanical. The stoplist is unquestionably inspired by North German examples of the late Baroque, but the instrument is no copy.

### ***Restoration and the Historically Informed Organ***

The road to the so-called historically informed organ<sup>27</sup> was opened when organists and organbuilders began to ask why new organs did not sound as good as old ones. Critical to this development were both good and bad experiences with restorations of historic organs. The century witnessed misguided restorations throughout France and Germany, and even in the Netherlands, restorations in Groningen (De Koff 1938), Leiden (Van Leeuwen 1946), and Haarlem (Marcussen 1961) saw much valuable historical material lost and left many listeners with the impression that the organ, even with its nineteenth-century alterations, sounded better before it had been “restored.” On the other hand, good results with restorations meant that organbuilders had respected the original material. Examples include organs in Alkmaar, the Netherlands (Flentrop 1949), Westerhusen, Germany (Ahrend & Brunzema 1955), Zwolle, the Netherlands (Flentrop 1955), Adlington Hall, England (Mander 1959), Nieuw Scheemda, the Netherlands (Metzler 1968), Houdan, France (Boisseau 1974), Innsbruck, Austria (Ahrend 1975), and Groningen, the Netherlands (Ahrend 1984).<sup>28</sup> Isolated examples of an historically

informed approach applied to new organs appear as early as the 1950s and 1960s, but the movement did not blossom until the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The Swiss organbuilder and organ historian Friedrich Jakob has posited these elements in the progression of the twentieth-century organ from its earliest days of reform to historically informed instruments.<sup>29</sup>

- specification: rediscovery of Principal choruses and mixture stops
- scaling: rediscovery of wide scalings; use of Johann Gottlob Töpfer's normal scaling discontinued
- windchest type: reintroduction of slider windchests
- action type: reintroduction of mechanical key action
- voicing: without nicks, open pipe feet
- case and façade: reintroduction of case enclosing instrument, pipe façade with natural pipe lengths
- wind supply: "living" wind, use of regulators discontinued
- temperament: rediscovery of unequal temperaments

To Jakob's list may be added:

- materials: use of solid woods (no plywood) and historic pipe metal alloys
- manufacturing processes: pipe casting on sand, hammered pipe sheets, shaved pipe metal
- copying techniques: building in historical styles, copying historic instruments in whole or in part
- the organ as an integrated whole: acceptance of the limitations of building in a particular historical style

This last point is the key element of an historically informed approach to organ-building, because building an instrument following a single historical model by definition excludes all other types. Fidelity to the principles articulated in an organ by Gottfried Silbermann, for example, means that any foreign or non-Silbermann elements would be at odds with the prototype instrument. The historically informed style therefore rejects the eclectic ideal.

The firm of Ahrend & Brunzema of Leer-Loga (Ostfriesland), Germany, was established in 1954 and pioneered the historically informed movement in Germany. The partnership dissolved in 1971. Jürgen Ahrend (b. 1930) continued the workshop in Germany and went on to be acknowledged as the leading restorer of Arp Schnitger's organs, while Gerhard Brunzema (1927–92) emigrated to Canada where he worked with Casavant Frères for several years before founding his own shop.

In the Netherlands, the Reil brothers and the Verschueren, Flentrop, and Van den Heuvel firms all built in historic styles, the last inspired by Cavallé-Coll. John Brombaugh (b. 1937) led the way in the United States, followed by



**FIGURE 1.6** The Augustinerkirche (Augustinian Church) in Vienna, Austria, houses a “Bach organ” built in 1985 by Gebr. Reil of the Netherlands. The Dutch builders took central German models by Gottfried Silbermann, Tobias Heinrich Gottfried Trost, and Zacharias Hildebrandt as inspiration for this two-manual instrument with Hauptwerk (10 stops), Oberwerk (9 stops), and Pedal (5 stops). The case follows historic examples with gilded pipe shades and carvings above the Pedal towers and Oberwerk flats and tower. Key and stop actions are mechanical, of course, but such historic features as a shove coupler for the manuals and limited compasses of C, D–e<sup>3</sup> for the manuals and C, D–d<sup>1</sup> for the Pedal are also present. Courtesy Orgelmakerij Reil b.v.

Taylor & Boody (George Taylor, b. 1942, and John Boody, b. 1946) and Paul Fritts (b. 1951), and, for some of their output, the Fisk firm (founded by Charles B. Fisk, 1925–83) and Gene Bedient (b. 1944). Almost all historically informed work by the Americans was in a North German or Dutch idiom. In Great Britain, Goetze & Gwynn (Martin Goetze, b. 1951, and Dominic Gwynn, b. 1953) and William Drake (b. 1943) followed English traditions with sympathetic restorations and new organs in historic styles. Beyond Ahrend and the Dutch builders, other Continental organbuilders making such instruments were either small craft shops or traditional builders who pursued occasional work along these lines. As an example of the historically informed style, Taylor & Boody built an instrument modeled after the organs of Schnitger for the Ferris Girls’ School, Yokohama, Japan, in 1989.<sup>30</sup>

Hauptwerk – 16.8.8.8.4.4.3.3.2.2.1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.IV–V.8.8  
 Rückpositiv – 8.8.8.4.4.2.1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>.II.IV.16.8  
 Brustwerk – 8.4.3.2.II.III.8.Glockenspiel  
 Pedal – 16.16.8.8.4.2.<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.IV.16.8.4.2

Related to the historically informed style is the practice of placing historic organs from redundant churches in new homes. Many nineteenth-century instruments from England have been placed in churches on the Continent. The Organ Clearing House in the United States has done the same for organs in North America, to the point of saving the unaltered E. & G.G. Hook three-manual organ op. 553 (1870), moved from its original home in Woburn, Massachusetts, for eventual installation at the Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche in Berlin-Kreuzberg, Germany.<sup>31</sup>

In recent decades, more intense attention to historic instruments has spurred research to better understand the originals. In addition to the examination of old organs, researchers have begun to explore church archives and study historic treatises. The Göteborg Organ Art Center (Sweden) has taken the leading role in the scientific investigation of old instruments, culminating in 2000 with the construction of the large organ in Schnitger style in Örgryte Nya kyrka, Göteborg.<sup>32</sup>

### ***The Neo-Symphonic Organ***

Just as the historically informed movement sought to recreate sounds from historic organs, so the neo-symphonic school has looked to the symphonic period of American organbuilding for inspiration. Developed—or rather rediscovered—in the last decade of the twentieth century, the neo-symphonic instrument was cultivated almost exclusively in North America, with the leading exponent being Schoenstein & Co.'s president and tonal director, Jack M. Bethards (b. 1940). One finds the characteristics of the symphonic organ in the neo-symphonic instrument, although the extremes of the former that led to its disappearance are avoided and elements of the American Classic or eclectic organ are present. In a sense, the neo-symphonic style begins where Ernest M. Skinner left off. Bethards describes his approach to neo-symphonic tonal design:

Combining individual stops into groups, we think of them in these categories: first, traditional choruses of diapasons and reeds; second, stops of moderate power from all tonal families serving in both accompanimental (manual and pedal) and in solo rôles; third, ethereal stops—the extremely soft and delicate tones of the flute, string or hybrid type; fourth, bass stops of exceptional depth and power; and fifth, heroic solo stops.<sup>33</sup>

As with the symphonic style, expressivity and complete control of the instrument's resources by the organist are fundamental. While large neo-symphonic



**FIGURE 1.7** Schoenstein & Co. built the Lied Organ of First-Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, Nebraska along neo-symphonic lines in 1997. Its 95 ranks are distributed over four manuals and pedal in Great, Swell, Choir, Solo, Celestial, and Pedal divisions. Among its symphonic characteristics are stops such as Stentor Gamba 8', Böhm Flute 8', Cor Séraphique 8', Éolienne 16'; a separate enclosure inside the Solo box for the Celestial division; wind pressures from 3¾ to 15 inches (95 to 381 mm); a III Tuben 8' (draws independent Ophicleide 16', Tuba 8', and Tuba Clarion 4' stops at 8' pitch) and III Clarinetti 8' (same for Bass Clarinet 16', French Clarinet 8', and Cor Sopranino 4'), and an enclosed Pedal. The case in the chancel certainly impresses with its overlength pipes and is designed to complement the church interior. No particularly “symphonic” style of organ façade has developed, and this design could easily frame a large eclectic organ in another American church. Courtesy Schoenstein & Co.

organs have drawn the most attention, modest two-manual instruments reflecting this style have also appeared.

Bethards has built what he calls a “symphonic organ in miniature” in Wynne Chapel, Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas (1993).<sup>34</sup>

Great – 16.8.8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.IV.8.8

Celestial solo voices on Great – 8.8.8.4.8.8

Choir – 16.8.8.8.8.4.2.IV.8.8

Swell – 8.8.8.4.4.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>.2.1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.16.8.8

Celestial (floating) – 16.8.8.8.8.4.4.8

Solo (floating) – 8.8

Pedal – 32.16.16.16.8.8.8.8.4.4.16.8.4

Borrowing and extensions are used liberally on this three-manual instrument: there are only three independent ranks on the Great—even the IV Chorus Mixture is borrowed from the Choir—and only two in the Pedal. The Solo division has two stops, a *Vox humana* 8' and a *Tuba* 8', enclosed separately inside the Celestial box and providing a rare example of double expression. The two-rank *Celestiana* 8' (“Soft, bright but ethereal echo flute character”) and the *Voix Sérénissime* 4', also two ranks (“Soft, but very bright string”), are new stops developed by the builder. The console is designed to give the performer complete control over the organ with the goal of maximizing the instrument’s expressivity.

## Internationalism and Regional Developments

In the mid- to late nineteenth century, one can perceive hints of an international style, at least in the sense that instruments by a builder in one national school sent organs to another country. Good examples are the Cavallé-Coll instruments in Sheffield, England (1873), Amsterdam, the Netherlands (1875), Manchester, England (1877), and Moscow, Russia (1900, by Cavallé-Coll-Mutin), and the Walker organ for the Boston Music Hall (1863). Often these foreign instruments were met with opposition from local organists and organbuilders who felt that native hands could have produced comparable or superior results. Economic conditions, war, and national pride prevented the development of any international styles in the first half of the twentieth century. In the second half of the century, the United States and, to a lesser extent, other English-speaking countries were open to *Orgelbewegung* instruments, an idiom that arguably approached international acceptance. In the final two or three decades of the twentieth century, large eclectic organs for concert halls and other notable venues routinely crossed national borders, thereby establishing the eclectic instrument as the international style of organbuilding.<sup>35</sup>

### *Britain and North America*

The leading British organbuilders at the end of the nineteenth century were Hill, Lewis, and Willis, all producing instruments in a conservative, nineteenth-century style. Progressive trends in the symphonic style needed to wait for builders like Norman & Beard (later, Hill, Norman & Beard) and especially Harrison and Harrison. Few new instruments of note were built in the first half of the twentieth century, the most important work being the rebuilding of Victorian or Edwardian organs in cathedrals, Oxbridge chapels, or major parish churches. A common theme in these rebuildings was the removal of the most objectionable aspects of the previous style no longer popular, to be replaced with the latest fashion.

For example, in the first quarter of the twentieth century, a Victorian organ might be altered by adding symphonic sounds, while in the 1960s, Romantic and symphonic accretions would be removed, only to be replaced by neo-Baroque stops, if not a completely new Positif division having little in common with the rest of the instrument. The Royal Festival Hall organ of 1954, as noted above, changed the British organ scene and paved the way for eclectic organs and, a generation later, historically informed instruments.

In North America, large instruments in educational institutions and leading churches followed the latest trends. The symphonic organ reached its peak in the 1920s, while more conservative instruments following nineteenth-century examples were still being built in the first two decades of the twentieth century. G. Donald Harrison's American Classic style emerged in the 1930s, and most other builders introduced eclectic elements to their organs shortly thereafter, and in all cases by the 1950s. After World War II, the American Classic instrument became the dominant style, with *Orgelbewegung* organs—generally imported from Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands, but some by North American builders—making inroads in the three decades after the mid-1950s. Although these *Orgelbewegung* organs never constituted more than a fraction of the total number of new instruments installed, they often enjoyed a high profile given their placement in universities, colleges, conservatories, and prominent churches. Slider chests and mechanical key actions began to appear on eclectic organs by the early 1980s, although most churches continued to favor instruments with electro-pneumatic key actions. For specialized tastes, historically informed instruments came on the scene in the 1970s. The neo-symphonic style emerged only in the last decade of the century, although never in more than small numbers.

### ***France and Southern Europe***

French organbuilding retained the traditional instrument of the late nineteenth century well into the 1930s, by which time *l'orgue néo-classique* became ascendant. Although Norbert Dufourcq called the Cavaillé-Coll instrument *l'orgue symphonique*, true symphonic organs of the kind common in North America and Britain were almost nonexistent in France. The French *néo-classique* organ represented one branch of the early reform instrument in the period before World War II, as well as the French version of the eclectic organ. Dufourcq was so influential from the 1930s to the 1980s that many Cavaillé-Coll instruments were altered along neoclassic lines, while the few remaining classic organs from the eighteenth century not already rebuilt by Cavaillé-Coll were modified to be more suitable—or so it was believed—for the music of Bach and Franck. The eclectic style remained dominant in the second half of the twentieth century. *Orgelbewegung* instruments were constructed by a few French and Alsatian builders, sometimes with a nod to the classical French organ, and eventually resulted in a number of historically inspired instruments in the last decades of the century.

Developments in Belgium followed the situation in France, but German influences were likewise operative, as evidenced by the eclectic 1933 Klais organ in early reform style in Tongerlo. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, Belgian builders learned to appreciate their region's traditional styles, and historically inspired instruments began to appear as a consequence.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, local builders continued to produce small, conservative organs in remote areas of Italy. Furthermore, the traditional Italian *ripieno* was still appreciated in the 1920s and 1930s when the Principal chorus topped by a mixture was neglected in other countries. In the decades before World War II, builders such as Ruffatti and Mascioni added 8' stops, reed choruses, and Swell divisions to the Italian organ to produce an expressive instrument more traditional than symphonic. A Positiv division oriented along German Baroque lines might be integrated in some Italian instruments in the 1950s or 1960s to produce a respectable eclectic organ. As elsewhere, the *Orgelbewegung* had an influence, but Italian builders had many historic organs from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (and earlier) in good condition to inspire them. Eclectic instruments often included classical Italian elements to give the organist the ability to play French and German repertoire alongside Italian organ music.

Outside of France, Spain claimed more Cavaillé-Coll organs than any other country, perhaps unsurprisingly because the French builder had family roots in Spain. The firms of Cavaillé-Coll-Mutin and Merklin built instruments in a conservative French style in the early twentieth century, although Walcker from Germany delivered organs to Spain as well. Small organs could have mechanical key action and slider chests with an old-fashioned stoplist. Symphonic influences were absent in the early twentieth century. As Spain opened up in the last quarter of the century, influences from abroad were noticeable in instruments from foreign builders and the introduction French and German styles. Mechanical key actions with slider chests reasserted themselves. Even organs in an eclectic style frequently had traditional Spanish reed batteries projecting from their façades as builders acknowledged the Iberian heritage. Developments in Portugal tracked the situation in Spain.

### ***Germany and Northern Europe***

German instruments of the early twentieth century by Sauer and Walcker continued nineteenth-century trends without embracing symphonic influences as dramatically as in England or North America, although high-pressure stops and progressive console devices were occasional features. The need for reform was evident as early as 1906 with Schweitzer's discourse comparing French and German organs. Twenty years later, organists were still unsure what direction to take, with one writer suggesting a new type of organ, on which "old and new German and French music can be properly, that is authentically, interpreted, while avoiding the many disadvantages of the modern organ,"<sup>36</sup> and another finding

inspiration in the instruments of Silbermann and Schnitger, at the same time desiring an organ able to play music by pre-Bach composers and Reger.<sup>37</sup>

The Great War seems hardly to have disrupted the evolution of the German organ. In contrast, World War II led to new thinking in German organbuilding, with the *Orgelbewegung* instrument quickly becoming the paradigm. Factory methods previously used to build large instruments with pneumatic actions were applied to reform instruments in geometric cases with mechanical key actions. Such organs were sold in great numbers throughout Germany and, indeed, around the globe.

After a quarter century of *Orgelbewegung* instruments, organists in Germany wanted something more. Two trends came to the fore in the last quarter of the twentieth century. The first was an interest in the universal or eclectic organ, particularly one that could play the French Romantic repertoire. In contrast to North America, the eclectic instrument in Germany was almost always an encased organ with mechanical key action and slider chests. The other development was the historically informed instrument, or at least an appreciation that the *Orgelbewegung* did not accurately reflect what seventeenth- and eighteenth-century organs were supposed to sound like. In this regard, restorations became important as German organists and scholars learned to appreciate the country's historic instruments.

Organs in Austria followed developments in the Catholic areas of Germany, meaning that instruments were generally more conservative than in the Protestant north. In the early years of the twentieth century, organs were traditionally Romantic, while in the 1950s and 1960s one would be more likely to find an instrument with an eclectic stoplist and a non-mechanical key action than an *Orgelbewegung* model.

Dutch organbuilding in the twentieth century reflected conservative native traditions as well as influences from abroad. In the late nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, Maarschalkerweerd and Adema built in a style influenced by Cavaillé-Coll, although the former gradually adopted German technical and tonal fashions. Organs from Walcker, Steinmeyer, Sauer, and Klais brought German trends to the Netherlands in the 1920s and 1930s, including early reform tendencies. After World War II, the *Orgelbewegung* swept the Netherlands with important instruments from Marcussen and Dutch builders inspired by the Danes such as Flentrop, Van Leeuwen, and Van Vulpen. The influence of Dirk A. Flentrop (1910–2003) was greatest outside the Netherlands because of his extensive export business, and supporters in the United States like E. Power Biggs (1906–77), Fenner Douglass (1921–2008), and John T. Fesperman (1925–2001). Dutch builders were influenced by the many historic organs around them, and by the 1970s were producing instruments based on historic models. For example, the organ for the Prinses Julianakerk in Scheveningen built by the Reil brothers in 1973 copied the Schnitger instrument in Uithuizen. There was little interest in eclectic organs in the Netherlands, and mechanical key actions with slider chests became common in the 1950s, although

Catholic builders such as Vermeulen and Verschueren continued to build non-mechanical actions and windchests into the 1960s. On the other hand, by the last decade of the twentieth century, a more ecumenical understanding of Dutch organ history meant that instruments from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were returned to their original condition by removing neo-Baroque additions from the 1950s or 1960s and, if applicable, restoring an original tubular pneumatic key action. Indeed, even some *Orgelbewegung* instruments from the 1950s are now considered historic and receive the necessary government protection.

A large two-manual organ by Cavallé-Coll was built for the Jesuskirken in Valby (Copenhagen) in 1890. This French instrument remained the exception in Denmark, as local builders continued conservative Danish traditions through the first three decades of the twentieth century. New *Orgelbewegung* organs from Marcussen, Frobenius, and other Danish builders replaced most older instruments in the 1940s through the 1960s. Eclectic instruments began to appear in the 1970s, historically informed organs by the 1990s.

Two important Swedish organbuilding firms in the early twentieth century were E. A. Setterquist & Son and Åkerman & Lund. The former built mostly in German idioms, while Åkerman & Lund showed distinct French elements. The early reform was felt in Sweden, but the *Orgelbewegung* style came somewhat later to Sweden than it did to Denmark, with Danish builders supplying many instruments in the new style to its neighbor. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, eclectic and historically informed organs became common.

In Norway, German traditions prevailed among local builders through the first half of the century. Local builders and consultants resisted the *Orgelbewegung* until the last third of the century, when Danish and Swedish instruments began to be acquired in greater numbers.

### **Other Countries**

Countries with a strong colonial past followed trends of the mother country. In Australia and New Zealand, for example, organs were generally similar to those found in Great Britain, although builders usually avoided the extremes of the symphonic style in the early twentieth century. South Africa played host to British influence as well, but numerous instruments from Germany were also imported before 1940. Enterprising local builders in these countries introduced reform trends—Ronald Sharp (b. 1929) of Australia comes to mind—to supplement *Orgelbewegung* organs from Europe, primarily Germany.

In Mexico, Central America, and South America, few organs came from local builders. It was more common for instruments to come from Europe or, less frequently, the United States, with installation assistance by native personnel. Argentina presents a remarkable situation. In the first four decades of the twentieth century, organs from Germany (primarily Walcker), Italy, and France

(including Cavaillé-Coll-Mutin) are well represented here and reflect the national styles of the foreign builders. Only a handful of new instruments from the second half of the century are found in Argentina, rebuilding by local builders being more common during this time.<sup>38</sup>

With small Christian populations—the Philippines constitutes the exception—and no tradition of church music using the organ, Asian lands have come to the organ as an instrument of western art music. The few organs found in Japan before 1940 were from American or European builders, but real interest started in the 1960s and 1970s when economic conditions allowed important concert instruments to be installed by major builders from Germany, Switzerland (especially Orgelbau Th. Kuhn), France, Austria, and the United States. Local builders studied abroad with leading organbuilders and instruments in historically informed styles appeared as early as the 1970s. The situation was similar in Taiwan, although developments only emerged in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In Korea, a larger native Christian population meant organs became known as church instruments, with the attendant installations by foreign builders. Study by Korean, Japanese, and other Asian organists at leading music schools in the United States, the Netherlands, and Germany has exposed these students to good and in many cases historic instruments, the sounds of which are sought in new instruments in the home countries.

## Final Considerations

The technical developments most often associated with organs of the twentieth century—pitman windchest, electro-pneumatic key action, combination stop action, and rotary blower wind supply, among others—originated in the nineteenth century. What did happen in the twentieth century is that these technologies were refined and became reliable parts of the symphonic, eclectic, and neo-symphonic styles. Computer technology was applied to the organ in the last two decades of the century, leading to multiple levels of combination action, playback capabilities, and the incorporation of MIDI (musical instrument digital interface). These developments may have made life easier for organists but have meant almost nothing to tonal design or the music written for the organ. A substitute for the traditional wind-blown organ dates from 1934 in the form of Laurens Hammond's "electrical musical instrument" (United States patent no. 1,956,350). By the end of the century, digital applications such as sampling were commonly employed in electronic organs. Apart from the Hammond organ's use in popular and jazz music, these electronic substitutes have always sought to imitate the traditional organ, and the electronic organ has not developed into a new style of organbuilding.

A few fortunes were made by organbuilders in the early twentieth century, but economic conditions changed during the Great Depression and since that time the men—and it has almost always been men—making organs have usually done

so for artistic reasons, not because it was a path to riches. Electronic imitations, on the other hand, became a commercial product subject to market forces. The traditional organ has always been an expensive object, but one speculates that factory methods made the organ the least expensive it ever was, comparatively speaking, in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century.

As interesting and important as the symphonic and *Orgelbewegung* instruments are to the history of the organ in the twentieth century, the characteristic style of that century is the universal or eclectic organ. The music of Buxtehude, J. S. Bach, Franck, and Reger requires dissimilar organs, but the eclectic instrument does its best to give the organist a vehicle upon which music of all major schools can be played, albeit with varying degrees of fidelity. For those organists who did not play an up-to-date instrument, the organ at hand had to make do. Organs outside of major metropolitan areas were more likely to be old-fashioned or small enough in size that creativity in performing the latest music was essential. Then as now, organists make the most of the available instrument when performing organ music from whatever period and school.

## Literature Cited and Selected Bibliography

No general survey of organs of the twentieth century has yet appeared, and the interested reader is left to search among many different publications for this account. The organ historian needs to focus first and foremost on the extant instruments, as writing about organs requires that one engage with the instruments being described, both as a player and a listener. In addition to this first-person experience, a variety of published works informs this chapter, including books on organbuilding, general and period histories, country and regional studies, monographs on organbuilders and individual instruments, and periodicals from the various style periods.

Developments in much of the twentieth century can be followed in the organ periodicals of the day. For North America:

*The Diapason* (1909–)

*The American Organist* (1918–70)

*Organ Institute Quarterly* (1951–64)

*The Tracker* (1956–)

*The American Organist* (1979–; formerly *Music: the A.G.O. & RCCO magazine* [1967–78])

In the German-speaking countries:

*Zeitschrift für Instrumentenbau* (1880–1943) [Leipzig: Paul de Wit]

*Musik und Kirche* (1929–)

*Ars organi* (1953–)

And in other countries:

*The Organ* (1921–) in Great Britain

*Het Orgel* (1886–1900, 1903–) in the Netherlands

*Bulletin trimestriel des Amis de l'Orgue* (1929–38), continued by *L'Orgue* (1939–) in France

The symphonic, early reform, American Classic, *Orgelbewegung*, and historically informed trends were extensively discussed in articles and letters to the editor in these and other periodicals. The general lack of secondary literature on twentieth-century organ history (except for the early reform and *Orgelbewegung*) highlights the value of these original sources.

## Notes

- 1 Tomkins 1998, 212; National Pipe Organ Register ([www.npor.org.uk](http://www.npor.org.uk)), no. N02070 (accessed December 31, 2010). The instrument has survived to the present day.
- 2 Fidom 2002, 173.
- 3 Falkenberg 1990, 257–8; *Görlitz Stadthalle* 1991, 2–3. The restored organ is in original condition.
- 4 Walter 1900, 7.
- 5 Miller 1909, 49.
- 6 Ambrosino 2009, 188–93. “Op. 820 remains one of the few relatively large Skinner organs to remain tonally and technologically intact, with not only the pipework but all original console and relay mechanism intact.” *Ibid.*, 186.
- 7 Bicknell 1996, 298.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 311.
- 9 *Grand Concert Organ* 1931. The Melbourne instrument was rebuilt in 2000.
- 10 The essay originally appeared in the periodical *Die Musik* (Schweitzer 1906a). An off-print with minor changes appeared under the title *Deutsche und französische Orgelbaukunst und Orgelkunst* (Schweitzer 1906b). A reprint of the 1906 booklet with a postscript by Schweitzer appeared in 1927 (Schweitzer 1927).
- 11 Rupp 1899.
- 12 Besselaar 1916. The instrument was moved to the Martinikerk in Doesburg in the early 1970s and remains in substantially original condition.
- 13 Although the term “*Orgelbewegung*” was used at the time to describe the organbuilding trends in pre-World War II Germany, I distinguish here between the pre-war reform, sometimes called *Orgelbewegung*, and the post-war *Orgelbewegung*. Although related in the sense that both movements claimed to look to the past, the two styles were distinct and should be considered separately.
- 14 See Peter Williams’s contribution to the present volume, Chapter 4.
- 15 Hardmeyer 1947, 72. The notion of a “universal” Hauptwerk is Hardmeyer’s.
- 16 The term was embraced by G. Donald Harrison but apparently originated in the 1940s with Emerson L. Richards (1884–1963), an organ expert of great understanding and wide influence. Invariably called “Senator Emerson Richards” because of his position in the New Jersey Senate, Richards is today remembered as the designer and proponent of the gargantuan instrument built by Midmer-Losh from 1929 to 1932 for the Atlantic City Convention Hall. Articles by Richards in *The American Organist* during the 1930s and 1940s informed readers of current developments in organ design and described historic instruments in Germany, thereby helping to popularize the type of organ being built by G. Donald Harrison.

- 17 Letter of January 14, 1949 to Ralph Downes in Callahan 1990, 277. Harrison refers here to his new instrument in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.
- 18 Derisively called by some in Germany a “compromise organ” (*Kompromissorgel*) because of its inability to accommodate any repertoire authentically. The term was current as early as the 1920s.
- 19 Ferguson 1979, 66.
- 20 Ferguson 1979, 123–6; Ambrosino 2009, 108–17. The organ “remains as the pioneering organbuilder’s ear knew it.” Ambrosino 2009, 112.
- 21 The literature on the *Orgelbewegung* is large, both in books and articles from the day and in secondary scholarly literature. Some sources also discuss early reform trends in the pre-war period. Phelps 1967 is interesting less as an historical survey—Phelps treats the pre- and post-war *Orgelbewegung* trends as a single movement, an approach not adopted here—than as an organbuilder’s evaluation of developments through the 1960s. The post-war experience in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands is examined in Brouwer 1981, Blomberg 1986, and Fidom 2006b, respectively. One should also note Pape 1978, Reichling 1995, and Summereder 1995.
- 22 Zachariassen read a paper titled “Aktuelle Orgelbaufragen und Möglichkeiten zu ihrer praktischen Lösung” (“Current Organbuilding Questions and Possibilities for Their Practical Solution”) before an international conference on church music in 1952 (Zachariassen 1953a). His paper was published at least four more times in the 1950s (in German [Zachariassen 1953b, the first complete publication; Zachariassen 1955a], Dutch [Zachariassen 1953c], Swedish [Zachariassen 1955b]), four times in the 1960s (in English [Zachariassen 1960; Zachariassen 1969], German [Zachariassen 1963; Zachariassen 1969], Dutch [Zachariassen 1964]), once in the 1970s (in Italian [Zachariassen 1972]), and twice in the 1980s (in Dutch [Zachariassen 1981] and Danish [Zachariassen 1986]). The quotations here are from Zachariassen 1960, which was later used as the English translation in Zachariassen 1969.
- 23 These particular stops appear in Bouman 1982, 43–56.
- 24 The *Tastenfessel* was a device to lock keys to create chords or tone clusters. The French *sostenuto* device from the early twentieth century was designed for a different type of organ but had the same function.
- 25 Eggebrecht 1975, 12–13.
- 26 Andersen 1956, 293; Olesen 2005, 17. This stoplist does not appear in Andersen 1969. The instrument is extant, although an *Untersatz* 32’ was added to the Pedal in 1987.
- 27 Of course all organs are informed by organ history in one way or another. The appellation “historically informed” is not meant to denigrate other styles but rather refers to instruments built with a deliberate orientation to a particular historical style.
- 28 Isolated examples of sympathetic organ restorations in the early twentieth century can be cited, but these exceptions prove the rule that fidelity to historic instruments was generally important only in later decades of the century. See, for example, Steinmeyer’s sympathetic restorations in 1914 and 1922 of the Karl Joseph Riepp organs in Otto-beuren Abbey (Wörsching 1959b, 12; Wörsching 1964, 12–13) and J.W. Enschedé’s successful efforts in 1921 to preserve the 1762 Johan Heinrich Hartmann Bätz instrument in The Hague (Enschedé 1923). One organist’s comments on the Otto-beuren situation illustrate remarkable views in the first third of the century. Of the 1764 Riepp organ he wrote: “Steinmeyer restored the organ to its original condition. Such a task is only possible when the organbuilder denies his own ego and immerses himself completely in the art of earlier times. The organbuilder Steinmeyer treated this distinguished and representative masterpiece in this spirit, making possible the preservation for posterity of this monument to early organ art, something that is unfortunately found less and less.” Sauer 1930, 147.
- 29 Jakob 1990, 52.
- 30 Edwards 1992, 127–47.

- 31 Pape 2007.  
 32 Davidsson 2000; Jullander 2003.  
 33 Bethards 2002a, 9, 11.  
 34 Highland Park 1993.  
 35 Books surveying the history of organs in a particular region are common and hundreds of such titles have appeared in the twentieth century. Relatively few historians have accepted the challenge to survey the organ history of a particular country. Four who have are: Friis 1949 and Friis 1971 for Denmark, Ochse 1975 for the United States, Kolnes 1987 for Norway, and Bicknell 1996 for Great Britain. Of these four, only Bicknell had the luxury of surveying almost the entire century in his history. Furthermore, Bicknell was especially even-handed in his evaluation of the various twentieth-century organ styles in Britain. One waits for book-length surveys on the organ history in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, among other countries.  
 36 Biedermann 1929, 6.  
 37 Ramin 1929, 36–7.  
 38 Juárez 1996.

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# 2

## THE GERMAN-SPEAKING LANDS

*Hermann J. Busch and Martin Herchenroeder*

*Hermann J. Busch in memoriam*

### **The Post-Romanticists**

At the outset of the twentieth century many German composers did not feel the need to dissociate from the aesthetics of the nineteenth century and remained almost untouched by progressive and neoclassical tendencies. At the most they strove for further development of the nineteenth-century heritage by more or less innovative means. Naturally, many composers of this orientation have fallen into oblivion, but three figures of exceptional quality have begun to attract renewed interest.

Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877–1933), with Max Reger, is among the most significant German composers for organ of the early twentieth century. In 1897 he began composition and piano studies at the Leipzig Conservatory and became teacher of composition there in 1919. His music has attained popularity, hardly diminished since then, especially in England and the United States. In 1932, however, a concert tour through North America ended in disappointment when an ill Karg-Elert presented himself as an insufficiently professional concert organist. He demonstrates a subtle sense for instrumental color in his compositions for organ and harmonium. Since 1904 numerous compositions for the latter instrument originated from contact with the Berlin publisher Carl Simon. Comparing Karg-Elert's to Reger's organ works, one finds commonalities as well as differences. For example, the chorale fantasies, chorale preludes, and character pieces of both composers frequently relate to historical models. But Karg-Elert was more innovative in the breadth of musical influences, the ingenuity applied to each work, and the use of material, partly due to his longer lifetime. While for Reger prescriptive registration hardly played a major role, Karg-Elert utilized with great finesse the sound potential of the late German Romantic organ, and accordingly,

registration amounts to an essential element in his compositions. Moreover, Karg-Elert's melodic ideas are inventive and of great variety, different from Reger's works, where instead the development of often inconspicuous motives is presented in an imaginative and skilful manner.

Among Karg-Elert's free concert music are many relatively short compositions in the manner of Romantic character pieces, including the *Zehn charakteristische Tonstücke* op. 86 and the *Drei Stücke: Three New Impressions* op. 142. Alongside these he wrote more than a hundred chorale paraphrases, like those of the *Choral-Improvisationen* op. 65 from 1909 and 1910, and the *Zwanzig Prae- und Postludien. Choralstudien* op. 78 from 1912. Op. 65 particularly demonstrates a profound knowledge of the color resources of a Romantic organ as well as a high degree of fantasy in the handling of a given melody. The forms range from brief preludes intended for liturgical use to larger concert works. In the three *Symphonische Choräle* op. 87 of 1911, the composer uses Reger's chorale fantasies as points of departure for his own concepts, like the setting of *Jesu, meine Freude* in three movements rather than as an uninterrupted piece, and the incorporation of voice and violin in *Nun ruhen alle Wälder*. References to plainchant can be found as thematic quotation (*Cathedral Windows* op. 106, 1923) or as free derivation, for example in the *Triptych* op. 141 of 1930. Karg-Elert was the only German organ composer of the period who overtly integrated impressionistic tendencies, as in *Drei Pastelle* op. 92 of 1911 and *Seven Pastels from the Lake of Constance* op. 96 of 1923, and symphonic configurations, as in the *Drei sinfonische Kanzenen* op. 85 (1911) and *Sinfonie* op. 143 (1930). Detailed writing like that shown in Ex. 2.1, the opening bars of the op. 96 collection, shows the composer's characteristic attention to color, extended chromatic harmony, and quasi orchestral scene painting.

In the *Homage to Handel* op. 75b (1922) Karg-Elert shows himself a master of the art of variation. His writings address points in the theory of harmony and issues of performance practice for organ and harmonium. Some of these remain in manuscript, but the most frequently remarked is the harmonium treatise *Die Kunst des Registrierens* op. 91.<sup>1</sup>

The many-faceted performer and composer Franz Schmidt (1874–1939) was not engaged meaningfully as an organist, but his music makes a significant contribution to the Austrian organ repertoire of the interwar years. He studied cello and composition in Vienna and served as cellist in the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. He appeared as a performing pianist and taught cello, piano, counterpoint, and composition at the Vienna Academy of Music. Schmidt often designs his organ works as if they were conceived for orchestra: characteristic elements are a full texture, the integration of solo lines into simple accompaniments, and the disposition of the whole in groups of sound. Nonetheless he vigorously rejects the orchestral organ in certain writings, as in the preface to the Fantasy and Fugue in D major, the polemics of which probably allude to the Rieger organs in the Vienna Musikverein and Konzerthaus (1907 and 1913

EXAMPLE 2.1 Sigfrid Karg-Elert: *The Soul of the Lake* (*Seven Pastels from the Lake of Constance* op. 96 no. 1), mm. 1–6.

*Andantino soave.*

Sw. Liebl. Ged. 8' Fugara 4'

MANUAL

Ch. Dule. Salicional S'

Harmoica 16' Sw. coupled

PEDAL

*tranquillo*

Sw.

Ch. 8'

Gt Flute Harm. 8' Solo

Sw. 8' 8: 4'

*rit* (prepare Ch. Reeds)

*rit*

respectively). The tonal concepts of such instruments did not aim at the polyphony that constitutes an essential element of Schmidt's style.<sup>2</sup> Among his organ compositions there are seven major works of considerable dimension. Besides the *Variationen und Fuge über ein eigenes Thema (Königsfanfaren aus der Oper Fredigundis)* of 1916 (revised 1924) and the Chaconne (1925) are the Toccata in C major (1924), the Fantasy and Fugue in D major (1923), the Prelude and Fugues in E flat major (1924) and C major (1927), and the Toccata and Fugue

in A flat major (1935), all of which demonstrate the reshaping of the traditional two-part genre with concepts imported from sonata form. The four parts of the Chaconne, in the Aeolian, Lydian, Dorian, and Ionian modes respectively, correspond to the character of a symphonic cycle. On the other hand, the early variations on a theme from Schmidt's opera *Fredigundis* still follow clearly a traditional variation procedure but are otherwise already fairly characteristic of Schmidt's tonal concept, with their full texture and saturated sound quality. Popular among the 1928 *Vier kleine Präludien und Fugen* is the "Hallelujah Prelude" in D major, the title referring to the final chorus of Schmidt's grand oratorio *Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln*.

Karl Höller (1907–87) was a student of the Reger pupil Joseph Haas.<sup>3</sup> From 1949 Höller taught composition at the Munich Academy of Music, where he became Director in 1953 and President in 1954. His musical language combines traditional counterpoint on the models of Bach and Reger with impressionistic color and an often adventuresome harmonic language that does not transgress tonal boundaries. Höller's few organ works—*Partita "O wie selig seid ihr doch, ihr Frommen"* op. 1 (1929), *Zwei Choralvariationen über "Helft mir Gottes Güte preisen" und "Jesu, meine Freude"* op. 22 (1936), *Ciaccona* op. 54 (1949), and *Choral-Pasacaglia "Die Sonn hat sich mit ihrem Glanz gewendet"* op. 61 (1963)—require large instruments in the symphonic style.

### The "Leipzig School": Hoyer, David, Raphael, and Distler

The Leipzig tradition of Protestant church music remained alive in the nineteenth century, with an ever more intense focus on the music and cultural value of J. S. Bach. The principal exponents were St. Thomas Church and the Conservatory, the latter founded in 1843 on the initiative of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The public perception and presence of the Conservatory's organ class was significantly enhanced by the well-known Berlin organist Karl Straube (1873–1950), Organist and later Cantor of St. Thomas, and teacher at the Conservatory from 1907. Reger had taken over a composition class at the Conservatory in the same year, and a number of able composers issued from that circle. Largely from Straube's efforts, the Institute of Church Music (*Kirchenmusikalisches Institut*) was established at the Conservatory in 1921, aiming at a comprehensive education of church musicians by "the students' thorough instruction in all relevant areas of musical knowledge and skills, and in the retrieval [*Hebung*] of our old church music treasures."<sup>4</sup> Several teachers and graduates of this Institute have developed individual compositional styles based on the inspiration of those "old church music treasures." Four of them made significant contributions to the organ's music.

First, the gifted organist Karl Hoyer (1891–1936) studied organ in Leipzig with Straube from 1907 through 1911, and composition with Reger.<sup>5</sup> From 1926 he worked as organist of the Leipzig Nikolaikirche and taught at the

Conservatory, and he was among the earliest advocates of Karg-Elert's music. With the Ladegast/Sauer organ at St. Nicholas (1862/1903), Hoyer had a large instrument of the late Romantic tradition at his disposal, which under his direction was enlarged according to neo-Baroque standards. A parallel can be found in the development of his organ music. In the *Passacaglia und Doppelfuge* (1911), the Sonata in D minor op. 19 (1920, published 1921), *Memento mori!* op. 22 (1921, published 1922), and the *Variationen über ein geistliches Volkslied* op. 33 (1922), the model of Reger is clear. Later, Hoyer's writing becomes increasingly more transparent and the harmony more simple in an approach that comes close to neoclassicism. The *Kanonische Variationen und Fuge über den Choral "Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist"* op. 44 (1931), the *Präludium, Fuge, Chaconne und Doppelfuge* op. 59 (1936), and the Trio Sonata op. 64 (1936, published 1937) are examples of Hoyer's later language.

The Austrian Catholic Johann Nepomuk David (1895–1977) came from different quarters. David grew up in the *Bruckner-Stift* (monastery) St. Florian, studied in Vienna and was teacher of theory and composition at the Leipzig Institute of Church Music from 1934 to 1945. It probably was his compositional contribution to the "retrieval of our old church music treasures" that familiarized him with Protestant church musical spheres. Two of his early extensive works, the Chaconne in A minor from 1927 and the Toccata and Fugue in F minor from 1928, are in large part still informed by the late Romantic, orchestral organ style. Until about 1937, David wrote polyphonic organ works for which Bach is a clear model, even to the point of thematic relationships. The creation of the *Choralwerk*, a twenty-one-volume collection of works on chorales composed from 1932 through 1973, nearly spans David's creative career. Its first books contain mainly short preludes of various types like that shown in Ex. 2.2; later David developed more voluminous partitas, as with *Unüberwindlich starker Held* of 1945.

The works of the productive period following 1937 are based on an expanded tonality influenced by Hindemith's *Unterweisung im Tonsatz* (*The Craft of Musical Composition*). Chromaticism becomes a more essential feature, and still later, twelve-tone oriented series appear. David's work utilizes and updates techniques associated with the Franco-Flemish School, Palestrina, Schütz, Bach, and Bruckner. In particular the monothematic structure forms the basis for David's compositional procedures. He applies both the cantus firmus technique, whereby a work is designed on the basis of a melody as a whole or in part; and dynamic development, whereby the whole work unfolds from an initial motive. A dense, abstract style dominates his late larger works, of which *Hölderlin. Ode – Elegie – Hymne* op. 70 (1970), *Thomas von Aquin* (1972), *Franz von Assisi* (1972), *Partita über B–A–C–H* (1964), and *Zwölf Orgelfugen durch alle Tonarten* op. 66 (1967) are the best examples.

Günter Raphael (1903–60) was raised in Berlin in the tradition of Protestant church music as grandson of Albert Becker, cathedral choir director and

EXAMPLE 2.2 Johann Nepomuk David: *Choralwerk*, Vol. 1, *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*. *Kleine Partita*. No.II.

## II

Etwas bewegter  
Man. I

Man. II

composer, and as son of a church musician. He first studied in Berlin, then with Arnold Mendelssohn in Darmstadt from 1925 to 1926 before joining the faculty at the Leipzig Institute of Church Music in 1926. By the Nazi regime's nomenclature, Raphael was declared "half-Jewish" and therefore denied the post for racist reasons in 1934. After World War II, he returned to teaching, in Duisburg and Mainz from 1949 until 1960, and also from 1957 at the Cologne Conservatory. The genres in which Raphael composed are clearly oriented towards the classical organ repertoire: Partita on "*Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein*" op. 22 no. 1 (1930), Fantasy in C minor op. 22 no. 2 (1930), Prelude and Fugue in G major op. 22 no. 3 (1930), Introduction and Chaconne in C sharp minor op. 27 no. 1 (1931), Variations on the Basso continuo of J. S. Bach's Organ Chorale "*Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt*" op. 27 no. 2 (1931), and Toccata in C minor op. 27 no. 3 (1934). A distinct dependence on the music of Bach, often coming close to a stylistic imitation, marks the works of this period, which, however, are consistently disrupted by strong dissonances. The late Sonata op. 68, composed in 1949, shows a marked stylistic turn, especially concerning the choice of material: an integration of tonal and modal elements oriented toward polytonal and polymodal sonorities replaces the "disrupted" Baroque. The engagement with the traditions of tonality and classical genres also shapes the 1936 Organ Concerto op. 57. The first movement is dominated by the contrast between a chaotic abundance of dissonance and an archaizing modality. The following thirty-eight ostinato variations in "old style" end in an apotheosis of the chorale *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*.

Finally, Hugo Distler (1908–42) is perhaps the most interesting and tragic figure of the Leipzig circle. Distler studied composition at the Leipzig Conservatory and in 1931 became organist of the Lübeck Jakobikirche, where he found a major instrument of the seventeenth century at his disposal. His aesthetic is dominated by the ideals of contemporary German movements for the renewal of church music, especially as they apply to the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Distler's historicist orientation was motivated by a drive to reclaim the ideals of a distant past as the remedy for a culturally and spiritually bereft modern German society.<sup>6</sup> Following the "bankruptcy of the individualistic system [and] the terrible experience of the World War with its incisive consequences," Distler perceived the return to old organ culture as an expression of "new intellectual life and guiding principles." Hence, he felt the need "for a new ethos of community, a new religious awakening and cultic will for formation, . . . finally for an active re-seizing of traditionally obsolete, intellectual properties of the blooming heights of our national culture that have been buried for centuries."<sup>7</sup> With respect to sound, Distler's compositions are closely related to two instruments. Whereas the two Partitas op. 8 nos. 1 and 2, on "*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*" (1933) and "*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*" (1935) respectively, and the *Kleine Orgelchoral-Bearbeitungen* op. 8 no. 3 (1938) are composed for the 1636/37 Stellwagen organ of the Lübeck Jakobikirche, Distler's secular organ works from 1937 and

1938 were inspired by his residence organ, a two-manual, fifteen-stop instrument built by Paul Ott in 1938: these are the *Dreißig Spielstücke für die Kleinorgel oder andere Tasteninstrumente* op. 18 no. 1 and the Sonata op. 18 no. 2 (both 1938). Burdened with professional and war-related pressures, Distler committed suicide on November 1, 1942.

### Catholic Organ Music: Ahrens, Schroeder, and Kropfreiter

During the interwar years, German Catholic composers for organ were confronted with a situation different from that of their Protestant colleagues. In Catholic circles, the revival of “classical” church music had not sought its sources in the vocal and organ music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Rather, the ideals of Palestrina’s vocal polyphony were decisive in this respect, an extension of nineteenth-century Caecilianism. By comparison with the Protestant models, this orientation resulted in the assigning of a simpler, more subservient function to the organ within a strictly predetermined liturgy. The Church frowned upon the organ as an elaborate solo instrument in liturgical contexts. Significant in this respect are the positions of two earlier prominent German Catholic composers for organ active in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Josef Rheinberger (1839–1901) and Max Reger (1873–1916). The former wrote numerous organ works for concert use—the twenty Sonatas foremost among them—none of which relate directly to the liturgy. Reger’s organ works were scarcely anchored in plainchant and liturgical practice, but rather in an intensive study of Bach and the nineteenth-century heritage, resulting in a highly personalized yet “Bachian” language.<sup>8</sup> This direction soon led him into the sphere of the Protestant liturgy and, particularly, the Protestant chorale. German Catholic organ composers have followed similar paths over the remainder of the twentieth century, but inspired primarily by plainchant and its tonal material.

Prominent among these figures is Joseph Ahrens (1904–97), who studied in Münster and Berlin before teaching at the Berlin Conservatory beginning in 1928. In 1934 he became organist at the Catholic St. Hedwig’s Cathedral. His prolific organ work is inspired principally by the Catholic liturgy. The free concert works composed between 1934 and 1945 are clear contrapuntal structures with modal harmony and distinct reference to plainchant and German Catholic hymnody. After World War II, Ahrens strove for ecclesiastical music of high artistic standards. Significant for this approach is his collection of fifty-six chorale preludes *Das Heilige Jahr* of 1948–50, multifaceted and structurally dense miniatures. The three volumes of *Cantiones Gregorianae*, composed beginning in 1957, offer extensive paraphrases of Gregorian melodies (Ex. 2.3).

From about 1960, Ahrens developed cyclic works with the dodecaphonic technique. He furnishes elaborate explanations of his musical language in *Die Formprinzipien des Gregorianischen Chorals und mein Orgelstil*<sup>9</sup> and *Von den Modi zur Dodekaphonie*.<sup>10</sup>

**EXAMPLE 2.3** Joseph Ahrens: *Et incarnatus est* from *Cantiones Gregorianae pro organo*, vol. I beginning

*c.f.*



Et in - car - na - tus est de Spi - ri - tu San - cto ex Ma - ri - a Vir - gi - ne: Et ho - mo factus est.

Triolenviertel = 69

II 8', Trem.

I 8''

P. 8', 4'

+ 2 1/2

II - 2 2/3

+ 2 2/3

Hermann Schroeder (1904–84) studied at the Cologne Conservatory, where he taught music theory beginning in 1946 after having worked as teacher and church musician in Cologne and Trier. Schroeder composed more than a hundred organ pieces, which for a time were probably the most often played among the works of German Catholic organ composers of the twentieth century. The first larger organ works—the Prelude and Fugue on “*Christ lag in Todesbanden*” and the Toccata op. 5a, both from 1930, and the Fantasy op. 5b of 1931—are still dominated by fully chromatic harmonies and stand as Bachian documents in the spirit of Reger. But Schroeder soon began to compose collections of small, less technically demanding pieces, some of which treat Gregorian melodies or German hymns, and some of which are free pieces suitable as interludes or postludes to the Catholic liturgy. These works made him popular among the organists of his time. Examples include the *Kleine Präludien und Intermezzi* op. 9 of 1932, the *Sechs Orgelchoräle über altdeutsche geistliche Volkslieder* of 1934, *Die Marianischen Antiphone* of 1953, the *Präambeln und Interludien* of 1954, the *Pezzi piccoli* of 1960, and the *Gregorianische Miniaturen* of 1965. All these pieces draw upon Schroeder’s characteristic style, regulated by an advanced tonality enriched by dissonance and harmonic planing, motor rhythms placed asymmetrically to the meter, and a preference for linear writing. In his late creative period, Schroeder composed both in traditional genres (*3 Orgelsonaten* 1957, 1966, 1970; *Choralfantasie “O heiligste Dreifaltigkeit”* 1956, *Partita “Veni creator Spiritus”* 1959) free pieces (*Motiv-Varianten* of 1972, the *Fünf Skizzen* of 1978), as well as several works for solo instruments and organ.

A final figure among the Catholics is Augustinus Franz Kropfmeister (1936–2003), who, after completion of studies in Vienna in 1960, became a successor to Anton Bruckner as organist of the Augustinian monastery of St. Florian. The unique atmosphere of the “Bruckner monastery,” a deeply rooted religiosity, and references to the fine arts inform his works. Kropfmeister builds on traditional structures in his organ music: preludes and partitas on Gregorian and German chorales, eight sonatas, and an Introduction and Passacaglia composed in 1961. According to Kropfmeister, his influences include Paul Hindemith, Johann Nepomuk David, Frank Martin, and Jehan Alain, from whom he adopted his polyphonic language and sense of color. His harmony moderately departs from functional tonality, incorporating chords of several polytonal layers with characteristic added seconds. Sometimes twelve-tone themes arise. Frequent changes of meter create the impression of floating rhythms. His most successful organ piece is the spirited *perpetuum mobile Toccata francese* of 1961. Kropfmeister’s distinct sense of tone color informs numerous works for miscellaneous solo instruments and organ.

## The “Neoclassicists”: Hindemith, Genzmer, Pepping, and Heiller

Among those composers who convincingly reconciled original musical thinking with the historicizing tendencies and *Sachlichkeit* of the period, Paul Hindemith

(1895–1963) contributed a substantive if small corpus of music for the organ. Hindemith taught composition at the Berlin Conservatory from 1927 through 1936, after which he resigned his position when performance of his works, labeled degenerate or *entartet*, was prohibited by the Nazi regime. His path to further creative activity in Germany blocked, Hindemith emigrated to Switzerland, and, in 1940, to the United States. His organ music is entirely secular in character. The three Sonatas, the first two from 1937 and the third from 1940, form part of Hindemith's project of writing sonatas for every instrument.<sup>11</sup> These three important works, now much played, demonstrate the composer's ambition to develop the sonata genre beyond the nineteenth-century tradition. The two movements of the first Sonata are subdivided multifariously in contrasting characters. The three movements of the second are especially popular and offer in turn a playful concerto, a pastorale in the Romantic vein, and a very free, bizarre fugue with BACH motives (Ex. 2.4).

The three movements of the third Sonata *nach alten Volksliedern* develop three secular German folksongs. In addition to the Sonatas, two commissioned works represent Hindemith in his early and late periods. The 1927 Concerto for Organ and Chamber Orchestra op. 46 no. 2 (*Kammermusik* no. 7) was composed for the inauguration of a new organ of the broadcasting station in Frankfurt/Main. The Concerto for Organ and Orchestra of 1963 resulted from a commission by the New York Philharmonic Society, initiated by Anton Heiller, for the inauguration of the four-manual Aeolian-Skinner organ in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. Hindemith's two compositions for an autonomously playing organ operated by paper rolls, both lost, demonstrate his interests beyond the conventional: these are *Das triadische Ballett* of 1926 (after Oskar Schlemmer) and the *Suite für eine mechanische Orgel* of 1927 (the second part of *Musik für mechanische Instrumente* op. 40, an arrangement of the Schlemmer ballet music).

Harald Genzmer (1909–2007) was a student of Hindemith from 1928 to 1934 and taught composition at the Freiburg Conservatory from 1946 through 1957,

**EXAMPLE 2.4** Paul Hindemith: Sonata No.2, movement 3 (Fugue), mm. 29–40.

and in Munich from 1957 to 1974. His concert works are dominated by a playful character and show clear formal and stylistic references to his teacher. Quite in the sense of Hindemith, Genzmer combined obsolete forms with a free tonal language by drawing upon classical genres. Also like his teacher, he composed three organ Sonatas (1953, 1956, and 1963), alongside other works for the instrument. Genzmer wrote numerous works for organ in combination with other instruments, including Sonatas for trumpet (1970), violoncello (1974), trombone (1977), two trumpets (1990), flute (1992), and oboe (1993).

Ernst Pepping (1901–81) studied at the Berlin Conservatory from 1922 to 1926, teaching at that institution from 1947 to 1968. Pepping is considered one of the most important exponents of twentieth-century Protestant church music, due in great part to his sacred choral output. In his book *Stilwende der Musik*<sup>12</sup> he postulates an alternative to dodecaphony by applying certain features of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music—linearity, strictly polyphonic textures, Baroque forms—to an extended tonal language based in part on the modes. Pepping’s chorale arrangements stand at the center of his organ works. These include the *Kleines Orgelbuch* of 1940; the three-volume *Großes Orgelbuch* of 1939; the *Praeludia/Postludia* to eighteen chorales of 1969; Partitas on “*Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten*” (1932), “*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*” (1933), “*Ach wie flüchtig,*” “*Wer weiß, wie nahe mir mein Ende,*” and “*Mit Fried und Freud*” (the latter three from 1953); the *Böhmisches Orgelbuch I* and *II* of 1953; and finally the 1941 Toccata and Fugue on “*Mitten wir im Leben sind,*” the composer’s most well-known organ piece. Pepping’s idiom combines contrapuntal artistry—see especially the characteristic Four Fugues of 1942, Two Fugues of 1943, and Three Fugues on BACH, likewise composed in 1943—with a musical, playful character that underscores neoclassical tendencies, particularly in the two organ Concertos, both from 1941.

The Viennese organist and composer Anton Heiller (1923–79) became organ teacher at the Vienna Academy of Music at the young age of twenty-two. In 1952 he won first prize at the Haarlem (Netherlands) International Competition for Improvisation and taught at the Haarlem summer courses beginning in 1955. Due to his commitment to the mechanical slider chest organ and a corresponding technique, Heiller emerged as an energetic force in the Austrian organ reform. As a widely traveled concert organist and a teacher with many international pupils, Heiller inspired audiences and students with his interpretations of Bach and Reger. Maintaining contacts to renowned composers like Hindemith and Martin, he developed a distinctive, ambitious musical language. His most well-known work, the *Tanz-Toccata* of 1970, shows Heiller’s sense of humor and a rhythmic experimentalism. The rewarding four-movement cycle *In festo corporis Christi* (1957) documents Heiller’s commitment to ambitious music for the Catholic liturgy. And deserving of particular mention is the *Fantasia super “Salve Regina”* of 1963, perhaps Heiller’s most ambitious and significant organ work.

## The “Independents”: Kaminski, Bornefeld, and Reda

Three composers developed musical languages of such idiosyncrasy that they resist categorization. The first of these is Heinrich Kaminski (1886–1946), who, as a result of Nazi policies, in 1933 resigned his position as composition teacher at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin, where he had succeeded Hans Pfitzner. Performances of his works subsequently suffered a ban by the regime. His esoteric musical aesthetics remained untouched by contemporary tendencies such as the Second Viennese School, neoclassicism, and the *Orgelbewegung*. Kaminski’s musical material is predominantly diatonic, at the same time quickly shifting or concealing tonal centers. His compositions are characterized by polyphony, broad use of massive chords, floating rhythms, and brittle sonority. The 1923 Toccata on “*Wie schön leucht’ uns der Morgenstern*” contrasts with Reger’s fantasy on the same chorale op. 40 no. 1, with which it may be instructively compared. At the outset, Kaminski cites motives from the chorale, oriented toward a D minor context; then, the Adagio-Trio allows the chorale melody to shine through, in order finally to present it in a splendid apotheosis in D major. The *Choralsonate* of 1924–25 is subdivided into several differently shaped parts based on three chorales. The 1939 Toccata and Fugue presents tempestuous harmonic and dynamic contrasts in flexible tempi.

Second, Helmut Bornefeld (1906–90), after having completed his studies in Stuttgart, held only one position until his retirement: the office of choirmaster-organist in the provincial town Heidenheim an der Brenz. Bornefeld’s biography points to an individualism which shunned the ambition of the musical market. The majority of his work consists of music for the liturgy or music bound to the Protestant chorale. His organ and sacred choral output is collected in the multi-volume *Choralwerk*, organized according to pedagogical considerations. His linear style is inspired by his interest in Baroque music and his study of the works of Bartók, Stravinsky, and Chopin. Bornefeld composed a considerable number of works for organ with other instruments, as well as many organ arrangements of other composers’ music. The domains of organ building and organ music form a unit in his work. He planned and conducted construction projects of more than eighty instruments of unconventional character, particularly due to colorful mutation stops and mixtures. His book *Orgelspiegel* outlines Bornefeld’s ideas related to the organ and its music.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, a friend and artistic companion of Bornefeld was Siegfried Reda (1916–68), who strove for the integration of contemporary secular stylistic trends into church music. After having studied composition with Pepping and, for a short period, with Distler, he became head of the Institute of Protestant Church Music at the Essen Folkwangeschule in 1946. Additionally, in 1952 Reda became organist at St. Peter’s Church in Mühlheim/Ruhr, where he initiated the construction of a large organ with a colorful specification and various stylistic elements.<sup>14</sup> Reda’s legacy comprises primarily chorale-based organ music, but also

liturgical preludes—the *Vorspiele zu den Psalm-Liedern des evangelischen Kirchengesangsbuchs* of 1956—and broadly designed concert works in which the influence of both Stravinsky and dodecaphony become apparent. Particularly worthy of study are the *Meditationen über das Passionslied “Ein Lämmlein geht”* (1964), *In meditationem “Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr”* (1965), and the *Meditation und Fuge “Wir danken dir, Herr Jesu Christ”* (1959–60) for mixed chorus and organ. Among Reda’s free major works rank the *Marienbilder* of 1951. Exploiting wavering tonal centers, this five-part cycle makes the peculiar attempt to picture in music isolated motives from the iconography of the Virgin Mary rather than specific works of art. The 1960 Sonata develops several forms and genres, among them the pas-sacaglia, fugue, and sonata. The short, aphoristic *Sieben Monologe* of 1953 are Reda’s most advanced music (Ex. 2.5).

### Dodecaphony: Schoenberg and Krenek

During the National Socialist dictatorship, composers of Jewish origin and exponents of the avant-garde experienced serious restrictions in Germany and Austria. Performances of their works were prohibited, and some of them, like Schoenberg and others already discussed, lost their positions. Others even had to fear imprisonment, and consequently many left the country. Thus, in the space of only twelve years most of the avant-garde was silenced.<sup>15</sup>

Because many of the exiled settled in the United States, it is significant that two important organ works conceived by Austrian-German composers during this period were written in America: Arnold Schoenberg’s *Variations on a Recitative* op. 40, and Ernst Krenek’s *Organ Sonata*. Both composers were exponents of

**EXAMPLE 2.5** Siegfried Reda: *Sieben Monologe*, No. II, end.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the end of the second movement of Siegfried Reda's *Sieben Monologe*. Each system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass staff. The notation is complex, featuring a variety of rhythmic values, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. There are numerous accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and dynamic markings such as *pp* (pianissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The first system shows a melodic line in the upper voice of the grand staff, while the second system is dominated by dense, rhythmic textures in the lower voices, with some melodic fragments in the upper voice.

Viennese modernism, known particularly for their works written in twelve-tone technique. Both had become famous in Europe during the 1920s. Schoenberg (1874–1951), one of the great innovators and teachers of his time, had developed the dodecaphonic method by 1923 and had been appointed Professor of Composition in Berlin in 1925. Krenek (1900–91), who after the sensational success of his opera *Jonny spielt auf* op. 45 in 1927 became one of the best known contemporary composers, had adopted dodecaphony in 1932. They both wrote their first organ works in 1941 at the request of the H.W. Gray Company, which was developing a contemporary organ music series by commissioning new pieces.

Schoenberg had just conceived the beginning of two movements of a twelve-tone sonata when William Strickland, chief editor of Gray's *Contemporary Organ Series*, asked him for a set of variations. Schoenberg abandoned his plans and began to work on the new piece; the Sonata remained a fragment and was not published until 1973. But the *Variations*, although making full use of chromaticism, is not a twelve-tone piece: the harmonic and melodic material, in part still tonally bound and making frequent use of quartal chords, bridges the gap between Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 1 op. 9, composed in 1906, and his non-tonal works. Every variation is dominated by a distinct motive and uses the entire recitative theme. The piece concludes with an inversion fugue looking back on the great tradition of organ music and Bach's *Kunst der Fuge*, and at its climax quotes the BACH formula.

Schoenberg was neither familiar with the details of organ building nor interested in the instrument's colors. Additionally he complained about the organ's lack of dynamic flexibility, a crucial parameter for him in the lifting out of melodies. Therefore, in his manuscript he simply notated the dynamics and pitches as he wanted them to be heard, exceeding the range of the keyboards several times. For the publication by H.W. Gray in 1947, the organist of the first performance, Carl Weinrich, realized a practical edition, notating all the pitches within the limits of the organ and realizing lower and higher octave levels by 16' or 4' registrations. Weinrich also incorporated many additional registration suggestions that correspond to a four-manual, American symphonic instrument. Schoenberg did not appreciate Weinrich's edition, since it obscures the difference between his own ideas about pitches and dynamics and editorial suggestions concerning color. Further, Weinrich's degree of specificity problematizes an adaptation of the score to other types of instruments. Today the performer can choose between the first print—that is, Weinrich's edition—and a diplomatic edition from 1973 that reproduces the notation of Schoenberg's manuscript, as can be compared in Ex 2.6a and b.<sup>16</sup>

It was Krenek, not Schoenberg, who for the first time cautiously adapted dodecaphony to an organ work. His Sonata op. 92 of 1941, a non-tonal six-minute piece of high structural and formal density, makes free use of Schoenberg's technique. In the frame of a sonata form with the exposition of two themes, a development, and an abbreviated recapitulation, it simultaneously

EXAMPLE 2.6a Arnold Schoenberg: *Variations on a Recitative*. Ed. Carl Weinrich. H.W. Gray Publications. Theme.

Solo Gamba 8'  
Sw. Salicional 8', Gamba 8', Flute 4', Oboe 8'  
Gt.  $\text{U}$

Ch.  $\text{U}$   
Ped. Echo Lieblich 16', Gamba 16'  
Sw. to Gt. 8'

Edited by  
CARL WEINRICH

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG  
Opus 40

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system is for the 'MANUAL' and 'PEDAL' parts. The 'MANUAL' part starts with a tempo of *Lento* (♩ = 54) and a dynamic of *Sw. mf*. It includes instructions to 'add Principal 4' Piccolo 2'' and 'f poco accel.'. The 'PEDAL' part has an instruction to 'add Cornopean'. The second system continues the 'MANUAL' part with dynamics *ff* and *dim.*, and instructions to 'add Trumpet 8' and Clarion 4'', 'off Trumpet and Clarion', and 'poco a poco rit.' with 'Cornopean off' and 'Oboe off'. The third system is marked '10' and 'VAR. I != 64', with dynamics *a tempo*, *PPP*, and *P*. It includes instructions like 'Sw. Salicional alone', 'Ch.', 'Solo to Ped.', and 'Ped. D'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

realizes a sonata cycle with a slow movement and a combined scherzo-finale. Unlike Schoenberg, Krenek found his way back to the organ several times. After the almost serial *Organologia* op. 180.5 of 1962 and a set of chorale preludes op. 211 composed in 1971, *Orga-Nastro* op. 212, likewise from 1971, combines the organ with electronic sounds from a pre-recorded tape. The organ part is designed in a free twelve-tone technique, comparable to Krenek's next organ work, the

**EXAMPLE 2.6b** Arnold Schoenberg: *Variations on a Recitative*. Ed. Christian Martin Schmidt. *Sämtliche Werke*, series A, vol. 5, Schott. Theme.

Lento (♩ = 54)

1 2 3 4 poco accel. - - - -

5 6 7 8 poco a poco rit. 9

10 11 12 13

VAR. I ♩ = 63

a tempo

*ppp* *p*

*ppp*

*Four-Winds Suite* op. 223 of 1975. Both pieces show the influence of contemporary American organ music, which in the early 1970s explored combinations of organ and electronic music and the use of clusters. In his last years Krenek composed several works combining the organ with other instruments—orchestra, violin, horn—dedicated to the Austrian organist Martin Haselböck and oriented toward a small neo-Baroque organ with distinct colors and mechanical action.

## The Experimental Avant-garde

Due to the artistic isolation caused by the Nazi dictatorship, organists and composers who had remained in Austria and Germany between 1933 and 1945 were practically cut off from new developments elsewhere. Advanced music was neither composed nor performed. However, even after World War II, when political restrictions on the arts had been abolished in Austria and West Germany, it took another seventeen years for organ music to catch up with advanced contemporary tendencies. While New Music,<sup>17</sup> supported by broadcasting stations and festivals, developed rapidly with novel methods like serialism and aleatory, almost no comparable organ music resulted. Not even Schoenberg's and Krenek's pieces came before the public in Germany, and neither did the latest works of Olivier Messiaen, which reached a larger public only in the 1960s. Additionally, there was no notable connection between organists and young avant-garde composers which could have produced organ pieces on the principles of post-war aesthetics.

It was on May 4, 1962 that this situation changed. In a concert at the German broadcasting station Radio Bremen, three new organ works were premiered that had been inspired by the techniques and styles of the avant-garde and therefore differed from everything previously heard from organs: György Ligeti's *Volumina*, Mauricio Kagel's *Improvisation ajoutée*, and Bengt Hambraeus's *Interferenzen*. Instead of listening to harmonies, melodies, and counterpoint, the audience was plunged into vast masses of sound never before heard. The sonic result was reminiscent of electronic music and seemed to sever the connection to traditional organ composition. The concert became the starting point of a new organ style which was to influence compositions all over the world.

Although differing in concept and elaboration, the three works share some innovative characteristics. They use non-traditional material such as clusters and noises and therefore require new playing techniques. To produce clusters the organist has to use the forearms and elbows, the palms and sides of the hands. Sometimes, instead of playing on the manuals, the performer must manipulate the stops while fingers or weights fix the keys. Another innovation was the use of reduced wind pressure, effected either by pulling the stops only partially<sup>18</sup> or by turning off the motor. Finally, in all three pieces cited above, the assistant assumes a more central role: for example, an assistant must pull and retire stops in determined rhythms or fix keys with weights. At time, performers are free to choose stops within limited preconditions and in this way become responsible for the sound architecture in performance—an actively creative role.

Most of these new procedures aimed at exploring and shaping organ sound instead of inventing melodies and harmonies. Although newcomers to organ music, they had been prepared by innovations of the earlier twentieth century, for instance by John Cage's pieces for prepared piano or by Edgard Varèse. Further influences came from serialism, electronic music (for example, the technique of filtering sound areas from a cluster), and, as for guided improvisation, aleatory.

A central personality for the adaptation of advanced contemporary procedures to the organ was Bengt Hambraeus, who had experimented with clusters and new composition techniques on the organ already in the 1950s. His innovative *Constellations I* of 1958 was the point of departure for his own work *Interferenzen* as well as for Ligeti's *Volumina*.<sup>19</sup>

Many of the new techniques resulted from an experimental approach to the instrument. Composers analyzed the organ in an unprejudiced way and did not exclude what until then had been unknown or undesirable, like noises. Thus, by making optimal use of specific organ features, they found qualities with previously unconsidered potential. In this sense, they learned the new organ music from the instrument itself, composing sounds which were completely new to the listener but had been latent in the organ for centuries. While *Interferenzen* focused on interferences and on unusual, quasi-electronic stop combinations, Ligeti in *Volumina* concentrated on exploring the compositional potential of clusters, creating a monumental, formally amorphous, but dramaturgically compelling masterwork.<sup>20</sup>

Mauricio Kagel's (1931–2008) *Improvisation ajoutée* from 1961–62 is based on a predetermined organ part consisting of complex chords, short figurations, and clusters. The registration is improvised by two assistants according to certain limits: for example, Kagel notates the rhythm of stop changes, but not the stops themselves, or vice versa. Therefore the registrations are “added”—*ajoutée*—as are utterances of the performers (whistling, singing, crying, coughing, clapping hands, and speaking). These utterances form an independent layer of sound giving a semantic touch to the piece which interferes with the chords and clusters (Ex. 2.7).

Some of the sounds may even be understood as composed commentaries of a listening public: speaking, clapping, and whistling alienate the organ's sound in a way never attempted before, breaking up the composition's character as an “artwork” and purposely compromising the majesty of the instrument and the solemnity of the place.

*Improvisation ajoutée* breaks taboos, characteristic for Kagel's music of the period. The composer had come to Germany in 1957 and immediately made his way into the avant-garde with provocative, even irritating, combinations of voices and instruments, pieces where vocal utterances hover on the border of expressiveness, meaning, and pure sound. In his next organ piece, the 1967 *Phantasie für Orgel mit Obbligati*, Kagel reversed the concept of *Improvisation ajoutée*. The basis of this work is a tape, prerecorded by the organist according to certain rules and containing sounds from his or her everyday life: an alarm clock, breakfast, hurrying to church, and so on. During the performance the organist “comments upon” the tape with half improvised, half composed organ music, stylistically similar to *Improvisation ajoutée* and guided by a notation which is always rhythmically precise but only occasionally demands concrete pitches. Whereas *Improvisation ajoutée* is an organ composition with added vocal and other improvisations, the *Phantasie*

EXAMPLE 2.7 Mauricio Kagel: *Improvisation ajoutée*, mm. 30–31 (p. 12).

**CHOR**

1 KIATSCHEN LACHEN SINGEN  
*mf* *mf* *f* *mp*

2 SPRECHEN SPRECHEN  
*f* *mf* *f*  
 AJOUTÉE AJOUTÉE AJOUTÉE AJOUTÉE AJOUTÉE AJOU-TEE A - JOU -

3 KLATSCHEN PFEIFEN  
*mf* *f* *gliss.*

**REGISTRANTEN 1+2**

Manuale 3 HUSTEN LACHEN  
*f* *f*

4 LACHEN SINGEN  
*f* *O*

Pedal

*\* Die angegebene Anzahl von Impulsen ist hier approximativ.  
 Beide Assistenten spielen gleichzeitig, aber nur bedingt rhythmisch zusammen.  
 Wenn möglich, jede Aktion mit 2 Händen auf verschiedenen Registerzügen ausführen.*

**P** *istesso tempo* (♩ = ♩)

30 auf die Hauptzeit

resembles an audio drama<sup>21</sup> with added organ improvisations. However, the effect is comparable: both pieces demythologize the organ and place the instrument amid sounds from everyday life.

Kagel's last organ solo work from 1980–81, *Rrrrrr...*, continues to play with the semantics of organ and church. The titles of all eight pieces in this collection begin with the letter *R*, thus forming a kind of sounding dictionary of musical expressions. The movements import music of extra-liturgical provenance into the church: a *Rága* and a *Ragtime-Waltz* question the organ's traditional liturgical function, and croaking *Rossignols enrhumés* ("nightingales with a cold") mock the well-known bird pieces as well as the unwritten law not to laugh in a holy place.

Noises and music originating in various sound sources around the instrument are also thoroughly explored in Dieter Schnebel's (b.1930) *Choralvorspiele I/II* (1966–69). The twenty-minute, two-movement piece combines "normal" organ music played traditionally on manuals and pedals with electronically amplified noises from inside the instrument (action movements, wind, and so on), a pre-recorded tape with sounds resembling the mechanical noises of the organ (for example, traffic, trains, human breathing), and various additional instruments (primarily simple pipes and percussion, and some brass). These sound sources work together in a complex amalgam which hints at the polyvalent character of the organ as machine, organism, and musical instrument. The "actual" music is composed of short, often unidentifiable fragments from chorale melodies and other religious songs (hence the title "chorale preludes"). These chorale fragments and the abundance of different sounds form an idiosyncratic musical landscape. On the one hand, the work demystifies the organ as an untouchable symbol of the sacred by showing its machine-like character. But on the other hand, it restores the instrument's value as a perfect tool—an *instrumentum*—for carrying the message of the Church into everyday life, the sounds of which are present in the church's building by means of the tape recording and the composed noises. As the sound of the organ is surrounded by sounds from outside itself, the instrument seems to have left the holy space for the streets, showing where religion must fulfill its tasks. In this regard, the organ provides universal material for religious singing, delivering *Choralvorspiele* for any thinkable tune (Ex. 2.8).<sup>22</sup>

Schnebel, composer, theologian, and musicologist, was active as Professor of Experimental Music at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin from 1976 to 1995, having taught theology and worked as a minister before that period. He composed two further organ pieces, *Zwischenfugen* (1985) and *Toccata mit Fugen* (1995–96), which mix passages in complex fugal techniques with long free parts. As in *Choralvorspiele I/II*, in which Schnebel interprets a traditional genre (the chorale prelude) in an unusual way, these large-scale pieces freely and creatively engage in a time-honored principle of composition closely associated with the organ.

## Performers and Composers

The New Music for organ emerging after the 1962 Radio Bremen concert could not have developed without organists willing to perform such new pieces and

EXAMPLE 2.8 Dieter Schnebel: *Choralvorspiele I/II*, rehearsal X2 and X3 (p. 21).

**HW/NW**  
**Ped** 8' 8 16  
**F**  
**AI**  
**AII**  
**NI** (LFL)  
**Blechbläser**  
**Tb** (Atemvorgänge (Forts))

**X<sub>2</sub>**  
**X<sub>3</sub>**

Umregistrieren! Die Kurven meinen kontinuierliche Farb- und Intensitätsveränderungen

tonlos ins Instrument blasen  
 quäkend  
 stöhnend, aber tonlos anblasen  
 allmählich bis zu den Orgeltönen hinaufblasen dann langsam absinken lassen (leicht nachblasen)  
 Tonband auslaufen lassen

M, Z, P, accents, *Sik.*

to learn new playing techniques. In Germany, one of the first was Gerd Zacher (b.1929) who not only performed contemporary organ music—he introduced Messiaen to German audiences—but also inspired generations of composers to write new works. Many important personalities of the avant-garde dedicated pieces to him, including Cage, Kagel, Ligeti, and many others. Zacher had worked as an organist in Santiago (Chile) from 1954 through 1957 and in Hamburg from 1957 through 1970. Subsequently he served as Professor of Organ in Essen (1970–91). But he was not only a performer. Zacher also wrote his own compositions, commencing even before 1962 with the early works *Trio* and *Diferencias*. Both works originated in 1961, the latter using *intervalles-durées*, analogous to Messiaen's *sons-durées*.<sup>23</sup> Some of his creations blur the border between composition and creative performance of an existing piece, as in his realisation of Cage's *Variations I* (1958). There, he introduced balanced key pressure on a tracker organ, producing a refined scale of sound qualities from clear tones to noises in order to differentiate the complexity of overtone structures Cage demands for this aleatoric composition. Needless to say, Zacher was influential for both performers and composers.

Like Zacher, other performer-composers not only premiered and promoted new compositions but also contributed original works. Two of the most important in Germany were Werner Jacob (1938–2006)—organist at St. Sebald in Nürnberg from 1969 through 2003 and Professor of Organ in Stuttgart from 1976 through 1998, also well known for his energetic performances of Bach and Reger—and Zsigmond Szathmáry (b. 1939), a virtuoso interpreter and improviser who after years as organist in Hamburg and Bremen became Professor of Organ in Freiburg in 1978, retiring in 2005. Both initiated and played first performances of important new works: for Jacob, works by Bengt Hambraeus and Dieter Schnebel; for Szathmáry, compositions by Peter Eötvös, Vinko Globokar, and Heinz Holliger.

Jacob's first composition, the 1963 *Fantasie, Adagio und Epilog*, is a vivid twelve-tone piece with alternating contrapuntal passages and free sound fields. By 1971, in *Improvisation sur e.b.*—a musical homage to the Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch—his style had changed. The piece uses typical material and techniques drawn from New Music, like clusters, reduced wind pressure, and guided improvisation. *Drei Metamorphosen über Themen aus Max Regers Phantasie und Fuge d-Moll op.135b* witness Jacob's contact with Hambraeus's quotation pieces from the 1970s, varying and combining motives and themes from Reger's op.135b in a remarkably virtuoso manner. His late works, like the *Capriccio e Recercare sopra ...* of 2001, combine elements from these different periods.

Szathmáry's organ music often evolves from his improvisations, which employ the playing techniques and methods of sound generation developed during the 1960s and 1970s. The resulting compositions are vivid and fanciful, often composed in short contrasting parts, full of new sound combinations produced by a seemingly inexhaustible imagination. As an example, the 1990 *B-A-C-H "Hommage à ..."* explores various kinds of treatments of the BACH motive—in

clusters, tremoli, chromatic figurations, surrounded by thick drones, embedded in vibrating textures, and so on—but the motive itself is never heard as a distinct entity. Instead the listener is guided through a thrilling landscape of new sounds and strange figures. In *Strophen* of 1988 (revised 2001), Szathmáry adds a pre-recorded tape which contributes noises, further instruments, and additional organ sounds to create “an imaginary story without specific content.”<sup>24</sup> Ten contrasting parts and a coda present a brilliant theater of different characters ranging from the gloomy and eerie to the funny and grotesque. Already in his first printed organ work, *Dialog* (1971), Szathmáry made use of a meticulously differentiated wind pressure, a feature which remains central for many of his later pieces.

## Between Cultures

In the 1950s and 1960s, due to its flourishing New Music scene with festivals and summer academies (especially the *Darmstädter Ferienkurse*), new works commissioned by wealthy broadcasting stations, and many virtuoso performers specializing in contemporary music, Germany became an attractive place for composers from all over the world. Like Kagel and Ligeti, many came and stayed for a lifetime. Some of them combined the composition techniques of Western contemporary music with influences from their home countries, like the South Korean composer Isang Yun (1917–95). In the 1950s Yun came to West Berlin with a scholarship; he was appointed Professor of Composition in 1970. His techniques derive their methods from the Western avant-garde. For example, his first organ work *Tuyaux sonores* (1967) uses a special kind of graphic notation to differentiate several types of clusters and complex chords (Ex. 2.9).<sup>25</sup>

Yun was inspired to this composition by Zacher’s performance of Cage’s *Variations I*, in which the distorted organ sound produced by half-depressed keys had reminded him of Korean instruments. But beyond this more technical aspect, Yun’s musical thinking proves to be deeply influenced by Asian music. This can be seen in *Fragment*, a work from 1975. The piece organizes all musical activity around central tones or chords dominating a longer section, richly varied and ornamented by figurations, trills, tremoli, and other effects. This mirrors the Asian idea that already a single tone or sonority provides the thematic content of a piece and that musical development is the artful variation of that sonority. Thus, the listener perceives the work as a delicate, beautiful journey in musical space which, when it reaches the very high and the very low pitches, evokes the ancient Asian opposites of *Yin* and *Yang*.

## Tradition and Innovation

New Music for the organ not only amounted to a large number of strikingly unorthodox works, but also influenced composers who had a much closer affinity with tradition. This can be traced in the organ works of Jürg Baur (1918–2010). Before

EXAMPLE 2.9 Isang Yun: *Tuyaux sonores*, p. 4.

The image displays a musical score for Isang Yun's *Tuyaux sonores*, page 4. The score is arranged in three systems, each with a piano part and a flute part. The piano part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The flute part is written in a single staff with a soprano clef and a 'C' time signature. The score features various musical notations, including dynamics such as *fff* (fortississimo), *f* (forte), and *mp* (mezzo-piano), as well as articulation marks like slurs and accents. The piano part includes several long, horizontal lines, likely representing sustained notes or glissandi. The flute part is mostly represented by a line with a 'C' time signature and some specific notes and markings.

World War II Baur began to study in Cologne, where he received a solid education in traditional composition techniques. After the war he immediately resumed his studies and soon became Professor of Theory and, in 1965, Director of the Conservatory in Düsseldorf. In 1971 he was appointed Professor of Composition in Cologne. His first organ works are still tonal and show the influence of Hindemith and Stravinsky, who, after Germany's isolation during the Nazi period, were among the first composers to be rediscovered by the younger generation. In

1965, the *Chorale Partita "Aus tiefer Not,"* much more dissonant than Baur's previous organ works, makes use of twelve-tone techniques and inversion structures in the manner of Webern. The *Choral-Triptychon "Christ ist erstanden"* (1970) opens up to avant-garde techniques, mixing polyphonic twelve-tone fields and motivic work with polyrhythmic ostinati, glissandi, clusters, and passages under reduced wind pressure. The result is a three-movement piece of wild expressivity which takes its material from the chorale "Christ is risen" (Ex. 2.10).<sup>26</sup>

As here, many of Baur's works quote music from former centuries, thus mirroring his close relation to musical tradition. His material includes chorale melodies, themes (*Drei Ricercare über das Thema des Musikalischen Opfers von Johann Sebastian Bach*, 1977), or even entire passages from earlier compositions. In the 1977 *Meditazione sopra Gesualdo*, quotations from Gesualdo's madrigals form the backbone of a symphonic process which unfolds a wide range of characters and a dense, emotional dramaturgy. The piece shows that Baur integrates avant-garde elements and techniques in his compositional repertoire in order to reach a maximum of expressivity. In this regard, he uses such an approach more nearly as a special kind of musical language than as sound material per se.

Another composer who combines traditional with avant-garde elements is Wolfgang Stockmeier (b.1931). Organist, scholar, and composer, Stockmeier was Professor of Organ and Improvisation in Cologne from 1962 to 1993. His voluminous *œuvre* for organ comprises free pieces (toccatas, inventions, and the like), variations on themes by Bach and Schoenberg, chorale preludes, and character pieces (for example, *Tänzerin hört Orgelmusik in einer gotischen Kathedrale*, 1990). Stockmeier's works are grouped around ten organ Sonatas, each of which presents a different concept of cyclic form. Stockmeier began as a twelve-tone composer (Sonata No. 1, 1961); the following works adapt aleatoric procedures (Sonata No. 3, 1970), free atonality (Sonata No. 6, 1986), and quotations (Sonata No. 9, 1991). Without adhering to the aesthetics of provocation, and independent from any dictate of avant-garde thinking, Stockmeier makes use of any contemporary procedure he finds adequate for a new work, which is often inspired by literature or art. But his music is always conscious of tradition, integrating new elements into old forms (for example, the voluntary in Sonata No. 5), which on the other hand are often treated in an original way: the fugue theme in Sonata No. 6 consists of one tone only.<sup>27</sup> Several pieces are conceived or suited for liturgical use, thus contributing to the breaking of new ground in church music after 1962.

## Composing Under the Conditions of Socialist Dictatorship

After 1945, unlike Austria and West Germany, East Germany went through a second period of isolation. As part of the Soviet Union's sphere of influence, its cultural life became increasingly subject to heavy restrictions. Music, literature, and the other arts were censored, and contacts with new developments in the West remained exceptions. And since the country was governed by an atheist

EXAMPLE 2.10 Jürg Baur: *Choral-Triptychon "Christ ist erstanden,"* movement 2, rehearsal G (p. 10).

bato **G** Auf- und Abbau von Clustern

The score consists of three systems of piano and bass staves. The first system features a piano staff with a *pp* dynamic and a bass staff with a *p* dynamic and a *quasi ostinato* instruction. The second system includes a piano staff with *pp*, *molto rubato*, and *espr. p* markings, and a bass staff with *pp* and *espr. p* markings. The third system shows a piano staff with *pppp* and *pppp* markings, and a bass staff with *pppp* and *pppp* markings. Performance instructions include *(unhörbar einsetzen)*, *(8va - - - -)*, *(während der letzten Takte—Strom ab)*, *abklingen lassen*, and *allmählich in Geräusch übergehen*.

*pp*

*quasi ostinato p*

*(8va - - - -)*

*pp* *molto rubato* *ppp* *espr. p*

*espr. p*

*pppp*

*pppp*

*pppp*

*pppp*

*(unhörbar einsetzen)*

*(während der letzten Takte—Strom ab)*

*abklingen lassen*

*allmählich in Geräusch übergehen*

regime, organ music existed under particularly awkward conditions. The situation changed only at the end of the 1960s: in the course of the emerging “policy of *détente*,” cultural contacts between East and West were revived beginning in 1969, and at the same time the regime rediscovered the organ as a popular instrument, building new concert hall instruments and restoring historic organs. All of this had a remarkable effect on organ music, as can be seen in the work of Ruth Zechlin (1926–2007) and Tilo Medek (1940–2006).

Zechlin was named Professor of Composition in 1969 and member of the East German Academy of Arts in 1970, after her works had become more and more successful in the GDR and abroad. Her first pieces still circulate between tonality, bitonality, and free tonality and make use of more or less traditional motives and declamation. Beginning in the 1970s her compositions integrate “Western” techniques, like rows, clusters and aleatorics. Examples are the *Wandlungen* of 1972 and *Spektrum*, composed in 1973. Although she had been able to pursue her career in the Socialist system, Zechlin remained sensitive to its problems. In the fall of 1989 she joined the democratic opposition and contributed the organ piece *Wider den Schlaf der Vernunft* (“Against the Sleep of Reason,” referring to Goya’s aquatint print “The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters”) to a service in the East Berlin Erlöserkirche dedicated to the victims of governmental abuse of power. Massive clusters, sharp dissonances, and an insistent, long final tone mirror the unbearable tension of these last days before the opening of the Wall. Two soft chorale-like insertions arise in turn, points of comfort in the tense sound masses.

Tilo Medek, on the other hand, came increasingly into conflict with the authorities. When he signed a protest note against the denaturalization of the singer-songwriter Wolf Bierman in 1977, he himself was exiled. He settled in West Germany to work as a freelance composer. Already his early organ works, like *Verschüttete Bauernflöte* of 1969, make use of Western avant-garde techniques like clusters and reduced wind pressure. The central work of this period is *Gebrochene Flügel* (1975) which in two “waves” organically develops from a monophonic, then bitonal, two-voice beginning into cluster passages and, after a wild storm of chords and clusters, ends unexpectedly in a subverted C minor chord denatured by a switched-off wind supply. The first organ works Medek composed in West Germany elaborated this stylistic idiom: they use vivid rhythms, sudden formal breaks and powerful eruptions, and increasingly complex chords instead of clusters, thus differentiating the harmonic colors, as in *Rückläufige Passacaglia* of 1979. His late works return to a more moderate, partially even tonal writing, as in the 1989 *Quatemberfeste*.

Isolation and restrictions dominated the cultural situation in the whole of Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Though by distinct means and in differing degrees, every country of the Eastern Bloc exerted pressure on the arts. Censorship based on the aesthetic principles of Socialist Realism determined whether a piece would be performed or not. Therefore, during the decades following World War II, many composers, writers, and artists left their countries for the

West. In this process, composers from the Soviet Union, too, settled in Germany, for instance Arvo Pärt (b.1935), and Sofia Gubaidulina (b.1931). In both cases, aesthetic divergences with official cultural politics as well as questions of religion played important roles.

The Estonian Pärt, after neoclassic and dodecaphonic periods and experiments with collage techniques, realized in 1968 that all these methods did not really correspond to his personal musical ideas. During a long crisis extending until 1976, he studied Gregorian chant and early polyphony, finally developing his own style which he called *Tintinnabuli*, from the Latin word for bells. Its basis is a two-voice texture in which a tonal melody is accompanied by a second part that outlines the tonic triad above or beneath. Pärt's musical inspiration is deeply connected with his Christian faith; when this became obvious to the authorities in the Soviet Union problems arose which finally resulted in Pärt's leaving the country. He has lived in Berlin since 1982. Among the first works in his new style were two organ pieces: *Pari intervallo* and *Trivium* (both 1976). In *Pari intervallo* the main melody in the alto is doubled by a second voice sounding two octaves and a third lower in the pedals, an arrangement which is indicated in the name of the piece: the secondary voice follows the primary one at the "same interval." Similarly, there is one *tintinnabuli* voice above the melody (soprano) and one in the middle (tenor), as shown in Ex. 2.11. Pärt has composed two further organ works: *Annum per annum* of 1980, a kind of organ Mass *en miniature*, and *Mein Weg hat Gipfel und Wellentäler* from 1989, which adopts the *tintinnabuli* style to a six-part texture.

## New Paths

During the last years of the century, contemporary organ music in Austria and Germany took various paths, abandoning the avant-garde as its primary orientation, and often aiming to win back traditional expressive qualities. Some interesting works prefigured this trend, for example Hans Werner Henze's (b.1926) *Toccata senza fuga* of 1979, an organ adaptation of the Hades scene in his ballet *Orpheus* which uses free dodecaphony as a structural network, giving shape to music of extreme expressivity. Comparably, Wolfgang Rihm's (b.1952) organ works, individual and often eruptive pieces which sometimes integrate allusions to tradition (especially *Bann*, *Nachtschwärmerei*, 1980), show a strong and very subjective musical personality demonstrating an uncompromising orientation towards expression in the postmodernist era.

While German organ builders reacted only reservedly to the needs of contemporary organ music—for instance by constructing means to manipulate wind pressure—composers during the last two decades discovered the special features of historic instruments as a source of inspiration. A good example is Klaus Huber's (b.1924) *Metanoia I* of 1995, which uses the microtonal potential of a meantone organ.

EXAMPLE 2.11 Arvo Pärt: *Pari intervallo*, mm. 36–74.

The musical score for Arvo Pärt's *Pari intervallo* (mm. 36–74) is presented in five systems. Each system contains a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. The vocal line consists of a single melodic line with a consistent interval of a second between notes. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like '(f)'. The first system shows the vocal line starting with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The piano accompaniment starts with a half note G3 and a half note G4. The second system continues the vocal line with quarter notes D5, E5, and F5. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The third system shows the vocal line with quarter notes G5, F5, E5, and D5. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The fourth system shows the vocal line with quarter notes C5, B4, A4, and G4. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The fifth system shows the vocal line with quarter notes F4, E4, D4, and C4. The piano accompaniment continues with quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5.

## Notes

- 1 On op. 91 see Hayden 1987. Among a burgeoning literature around Karg-Elert, his music, and his historical position, see particularly the various contributions in Schinköth 1999.
- 2 Schmidt was no mere traditionalist, however. The often cited quip of the pianist Theodor Leschetizky—"Whoever is called Schmidt should not become an artist."—has unfortunately proven indicative of the composer's reception generally. See further Ottner 1992.
- 3 Haas (1879–1960) himself produced a number of organ works during the century's first decades. These include the 1905 Ten Chorale Preludes op. 3, the 1907 Sonata in C minor op. 12, the 1911 Variations on an Organ Theme op. 31, and the Eight Preludes of 1936, some of which are modal. Haas's works for the instrument warrant comparison with those of his mentor Reger, probably the strongest single influence on the composer.
- 4 Karl Straube, address delivered at the opening of the *Institut für Kirchenmusik* on October 23, 1921, cited in Goltz 2001, 20.
- 5 A good introduction to Hoyer is Hilmes 1996.
- 6 On the complex subtexts of the German *Orgelbewegung*, see Chapter 4.
- 7 Hugo Distler, "Die Orgel unserer Zeit," *Musica* 1 (1948): 152. The translation is mine. The most important discussion of Distler in English remains that of Palmer 1967.
- 8 On Reger, see Chapter 3.
- 9 Heidelberg: W. Müller, 1978
- 10 Heidelberg: W. Müller, 1979.
- 11 Hindemith was not an organist, although he played the piano and all the standard orchestral instruments.
- 12 Ernst Pepping, *Stilwende der Musik* (Mainz: Schott, 1934).
- 13 Helmut Bornefeld, *Orgelspiegel. 100 Thesen in 5 Artikeln*. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1966).
- 14 See further Summereder 1999, 247–51.
- 15 Concerning the wholesale condemnation of those personalities and works discussed here, it is important to recognize that the organ itself was laden with the skewed cultural program of the regime, a state of affairs which of course influenced the character of "acceptable" organ music. See especially Kaufmann 1997.
- 16 Concerning Weinrich's arrangement and the complicated editorial history of the *Variations*, see Giesen 2005, especially 23–4.
- 17 In its capitalized form, I use the term here and in what follows to denote music not merely of recent date, but rather of an advanced compositional character consistent with the musical avant-garde of the period.
- 18 Of course, the manipulation of the wind supply to the pipes by means of partially drawn stops presupposes mechanical stop action.
- 19 On Hambraeus, see further Chapter 8. On Ligeti, see Chapter 10. Ligeti himself points out the crucial role of Hambraeus' piece in his article *Die Orgel sprengt die Tradition* (Ligeti 1966).
- 20 For a detailed analysis, see Herchenröder 1999, 29–79.
- 21 See Schnebel 1970, 202–3.
- 22 An instructive musical analysis in combination with a theological interpretation of Schnebel's composition is given in Zeller 1973.
- 23 In the sixth movement of his *Livre d'Orgue*, Messiaen combines every specific sound with a specific duration, comparable to the procedures in his famous piano etude *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*. Zacher "translates" this system into a stable combination of durations and intervals. For details see Philippi 2002, 115–39. On Messiaen's *Livre*, see Chapter 6.

- 24 Zsigmond Szathmáry, CD booklet *Hungarian Contemporary Organ Music*, Hungaroton HCD 31858, 4.
- 25 The edition (Bote & Bock 22 117) provides suggestions for realization by Zacher, who premiered the work.
- 26 Almut Rößler delivers a more detailed discussion of this central piece, as well as of Baur's other major works, in her contribution to Hesse et al. 1993 (40–50).
- 27 Heinemann offers a survey of Stockmeier's sonatas in his article in Heinemann et al. 2006, 30–51.

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# 3

## MAX REGER (1873–1916)

*Christopher S. Anderson*

When Max Reger died unexpectedly at a Leipzig hotel during the night of May 10–11, 1916, he set an abrupt end to a career that was still developing at the breathless pace it had assumed by the early 1890s. In the twenty-five years that separate Reger's 1891 Violin Sonata in D minor op. 1 and his death at forty-three, the composer had produced a catalog of 146 opus numbers alongside a voluminous *œuvre* without opus designation, the latter including both original works and arrangements of his and other composers' music. Reger's output for the organ comprises twenty-eight opus numbers, or nearly twenty percent of his catalog, amounting to no fewer than 217 independent pieces.<sup>1</sup> Added to this are some fourteen original solo works without opus, at least thirty-one transcriptions of pieces for solo piano (Liszt) and harpsichord (Bach),<sup>2</sup> transcriptions of Reger's own works in other mediums, fourteen arrangements of Hugo Wolf's Lieder for voice and organ,<sup>3</sup> and several other original works that involve the organ in concerted contexts both with and without opus number. Finally, we must take into account the twenty-seven organ works of J. S. Bach transcribed for the piano between 1895 and 1901,<sup>4</sup> as well as the two overwhelmingly beautiful arrangements of the iconic chorale prelude *O Mensch beweine' dein Sünde groß* BWV 622 for violin and organ and for string orchestra, both from 1915.

The sheer quantity of the music and the accelerated pace of its composition attest to Reger's close relationship with the organ over the course of his creative life. Still, those who are accustomed to think of Reger first as an organ composer would do well to consider his engagement with the instrument in context of his complete *œuvre*, where, for instance, chamber music claims pride of place with forty-two complete or partial opus numbers, nearly thirty percent of the catalog. Similarly, between 1890 and 1916 Reger composed over 300 Lieder, for the most part distributed over thirty-one opus numbers,<sup>5</sup> works that witness a fascination with the expressive potential of text still largely unexplored today. And the piano

works occupy a place next to those for organ, with twenty-one opus numbers of solo piano music, eight opera assigned to four-hand works, and some twenty pieces without opus. Taken together with transcriptions and arrangements, the pianist can find some 300 independent pieces among Reger's works, an imposing output similar in quantity to the organ music.

This chapter will consider Max Reger's opus-bearing works for organ solo (Table 3.1), an incomplete yet representative picture of his relationship with the instrument and its heritage. Such a list immediately suggests several characteristic

**TABLE 3.1** Max Reger: solo organ works with opus number

<i>Opus</i>	<i>Work</i>	<i>Composition</i>	<i>Publication</i>	<i>Publisher</i>
7	Three organ pieces	1892	1893	Augener
16	Suite no. 1 (e)	1894–95	1896	Augener
27	Chorale fantasy <i>Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott</i>	1898	1899	Forberg
29	Fantasy and fugue in C minor	1898	1899	Forberg
30	Chorale fantasy <i>Freu' dich sehr, o meine Seele!</i>	1898	1899	Aibl
33	Sonata no. 1 in F-sharp minor	1899	1899	Aibl
40	Two chorale fantasies <i>Wie schön leucht't uns der Morgenstern</i> and <i>Straf' mich nicht in deinem Zorn</i>	1899	1900	Aibl
46	Fantasy and fugue on Bach	1900	1900	Aibl
47	Six trios	1900	1900	Aibl
52	Three chorale fantasies <i>Alle Menschen müssen sterben; Wachtet auf, ruft uns die Stimme; and Halleluja! Gott zu loben bleibe meine Seelenfreud'</i>	1900	1900	Aibl
56	Five easy preludes and fugues	1901?	1904	Aibl
57	Symphonic fantasy and fugue	1901	1901	Aibl
59	Twelve pieces	1901	1901	Peters
60	Sonata no. 2 in D minor	1901	1902	Leuckart
63	Monologue. Twelve pieces	1902	1902	Leuckart
65	Twelve pieces	1902	1902	Peters
67	Fifty-two easy preludes on the most common protestant chorales	1902	1903	Lauterbach & Kuhn
69	Ten pieces	1902	1903	Lauterbach & Kuhn
73	Variations and fugue on an original theme	1903	1904	Lauterbach & Kuhn
79b	Thirteen chorale preludes	1901, 1903	1904	Beyer
80	Twelve pieces	1902, 1904	1904	Peters
85	Four preludes and fugues	1904	1905	Peters
92	Suite no. 2	1906	1906	Forberg
127	Introduction, <i>passacaglia</i> , and fugue in E minor	1913	1913	Bote & Bock
129	Nine pieces	1913	1913	Bote & Bock
135a	Thirty little chorale preludes	1914	1915	Simrock
135b	Fantasy and fugue in D minor	1915–16	1916	Simrock
145	Seven organ pieces	1915–16	1915–16	Oppenheimer

points—for instance, that Reger’s relationship with his publishers was a less than straightforward affair (no fewer than ten publishers for twenty-eight works); that works of decidedly large dimensions (the chorale fantasies, fantasies and fugues, sonatas, and so on) stand alongside less demanding pieces organized in collections, in three cases integrating “easy” or “little” in the title; and that the composition history of the organ works falls in three periods: the mid 1890s, from which arose the early pieces opp. 7 and 16; the intensive engagement with organ composition from 1898 through 1902, tapering through 1906 and comprising opp. 27–92; and a final preoccupation with the instrument from 1913 through 1916, producing opp. 127, 129, 135 a/b, and 145.<sup>6</sup> No other single twentieth-century organ repertoire has occupied the German imagination so consistently over the past hundred years. A number of overarching stylistic trends unify Reger’s music, for organ and otherwise, but perhaps more interestingly, one may perceive in these works certain deep contradictions characteristic of the composer’s personality and aesthetic sense. Many such points have been much discussed and stem from the image Reger himself helped forge: the so-called second Bach and *Fugenmeister* who nevertheless did not hesitate to air an acrimonious dislike of learned criticism and scholarship; the devout Catholic who empathized deeply with the Protestant chorale; the self-proclaimed Brahmsian “absolute musician” yet passionate advocate of Strauss and Wagner; and the composer who insisted on Mozartian clarity, yet who struggled mightily with musical and personal excess. These dissonances bear themselves out not least in Reger’s organ music, the genre with which he achieved his breakthrough.

### Beginnings and Early Works

Among the most curious points in the reception history of Reger’s music is the nearly automatic association of his name with the organ, an extraordinary correlation for a composer who in fact spent minimal time playing the instrument, and who himself often said so. The composer’s most intensive contact with the organ in fact dates from 1886 through 1890, from the time the thirteen-year-old Reger enrolled at the preparatory school in his hometown of Weiden (Oberpfalz) until his departure some four years later for studies with Hugo Riemann (1849–1919). During that period the young Reger, who grew up in a conservative Catholic household, took up playing the Roman liturgy in the local Stadtpfarrkirche St. Michaelis, a part-time duty which would have been treated as an aspect of his keyboard lessons with the local school teacher Adalbert Lindner, erstwhile pupil of Reger’s father Joseph and organist of the parish.<sup>7</sup> The regular Sunday and feast day masses must have provided the framework for Reger’s first appearances as a performing musician, in fact somewhat predating his debut as a pianist and presumably consisting of both improvised and composed music in service of the liturgy.<sup>8</sup> There, he played a two-manual instrument built in 1564–65 that had retained its casework through renovations in the eighteenth and nineteenth

centuries.<sup>9</sup> Not unlike other organs with which Reger had contact during these formative years—for instance, the single-manual Steinmeyer practice organ of the Weiden preparatory school and an instrument by the same builder in Erben-dorf—it had mechanical action and a disposition more akin to the classical principles of previous generations than to the orchestral effects of the next.

Recalling some thirty-five years after the fact, Lindner describes a bold keyboard style to be heard at feast-day masses, characterized by thick textures and experimental harmony he attributes to Wagner's influence.<sup>10</sup> But whatever his stylistic eccentricities, it is clear that the young musician's ear was uncommonly attuned to the uses and abuses of the organ already in the 1880s. In an observant letter of 1887 to Lindner, Reger describes the experience of mass in the vast Gothic edifice of Regensburg Cathedral, supported by the organ playing of the Cathedral organist Josef Hanisch:

On Sunday August 7 I listened to a sung mass in the Cathedral. I didn't much care for it ... The organ is not well winded. I don't understand how, in a center of Cecilian church music, one can content oneself with such an organ. The acoustic situation is very unfavorable.

The Cathedral organist plays a bit fast. In Weiden his playing would seem magnificent. But in Regensburg?! When he plays the cadence in E-flat major very slowly, the notes of the E-flat major chord continue to reverberate. But next he takes an A-flat sixth chord. Now the tangle of notes. Now B-flat major and again E-flat major. But the first E-flat major chord is still reverberating. So you can imagine what sort of an infernal music this is, in which all the notes of the four chords continue to sound.<sup>11</sup>

Reger directs his criticism not toward the textbook progression, but rather toward how it sounds when played without regard to a big acoustic on an organ lacking sufficient wind. Even if the composer's as yet largely unschooled musical instinct was ready to explore "chords and chord progressions of ... unprecedented daring" in the drier acoustics of a modest parish church, as Lindner remembers,<sup>12</sup> he was not willing to accept a pedestrian progression obscured by a miscalculated tempo in a reverberant room, a fact modern performers of Reger's dense textures might profitably bear in mind.

Such experiences certainly will have shaped Reger's musical sense from a young age, though to what extent they informed his composing, for organ and otherwise, is difficult to say. For the organ at least, one may guess that the few years spent working out harmony at the little organ in the Weiden Stadtpfarrkirche was at least as influential as Reger's often cited visit to Bayreuth in August 1888, where he experienced *Parsifal* and *Meistersinger* for the first time. In any case, when in 1890 the seventeen-year-old Reger left Weiden for study with the musicologist Riemann in Sondershausen, and shortly thereafter in Wiesbaden, he took with him a keyboard technique built in part upon regular practical experience at the organ, a kind of experience he would not have again.

The five years Reger spent in Riemann's immediate circle proved both profitable and problematic. On the one hand, the dominant Protestantism of Sondershausen and particularly Wiesbaden presented Reger with a culture markedly different from that of his provincial Catholic upbringing, and such an environment would have encouraged, among other things, an attention to the historical significance and musical potential of the Protestant chorale that would quickly prove consequential. On the other hand, it is clear that Reger ultimately received Riemann's methodologies as too pedantic (phrasing theory) and too partisan in matters of contemporary style (Brahms over Wagner), and from his teacher's approaches particularly to phrasing and historical performance, he took a lifelong suspicion of academic music.

But Riemann, too, had demonstrated a more than casual interest in the organ, having authored an *Orgellehre* in 1888, which Reger surely would have known.<sup>13</sup> Upon his arrival at Wiesbaden, Riemann had enough confidence in his pupil's abilities to effect a modest appointment for him as instructor of piano and organ at the Conservatory, a position Reger would retain until well after his mentor's move to Leipzig in August 1895.<sup>14</sup> By April 1892, Riemann and his colleague Franz Mannstädt were able to claim in a certificate written for the German military that "as an organist he has already an appreciable virtuosity and expert knowledge."<sup>15</sup> Whatever the nature of that virtuosity, though, it was in this environment that Reger began to shift his interest toward the intense honing of a fluent compositional technique under Riemann's tutelage—a regular church position was not part of that picture—and thus the early 1890s fostered a quick succession of works beginning in the winter of 1890–91 with the Brahmsian Violin Sonata op. 1, continuing through the Three Organ Pieces op. 7 and the Suite in E minor op. 16 from 1892 and 1895 respectively.

The works of Reger's first organ opus—a Prelude and Fugue in C major, a Fantasy on the Te Deum, and a double Fugue in D minor, all dedicated to the Dutch organist/composer and Riemann associate Samuel de Lange—originated between 1890 and 1892. In a letter to Lindner of December 1890, Reger sketched the initial three bars of the D minor piece, which he announced in characteristic exuberance as the beginning of a triple fugue with a subject designed to work in stretto.<sup>16</sup> No doubt under Riemann's eye, he eventually realized a more sensible double fugue with contrasting second subject and a brief free section that introduces the combination of themes, the climax of which in fact depends on an effective stretto in a six-part texture with double pedal, harmonized in Brahmsian sixths and thirds. The principal subject (Ex. 3.1) announces a composition attuned to the historicizing sentiments of the time, set alla breve in the ancient *modus primus*.

**EXAMPLE 3.1** Reger: Fugue in D minor op. 7 no. 3, principal subject.



The triplet of its second bar guarantees rhythmic interest further on and recalls similar hemiola effects in Brahms and particularly Schumann.<sup>17</sup> The rhetoric of the Prelude and Fugue op. 7 no. 1 is reminiscent of other such C major music in Bach: the descending sixteenth-note triadic figures of the Prelude's opening appears to reference the Praeludium BWV 545, whereas the iambic fugue subject, with its characteristic octave leaps in brilliant style, echoes its equivalent in BWV 531. The Fantasy on the Gregorian Te Deum, perhaps the most appealing of the collection, surely draws upon the spirit of Reger's Weiden improvisations tempered by Riemann's schooling. The London firm of Augener, with whom Reger had begun to publish on Riemann's recommendation, had rejected the Three Organ Pieces by October 1892 on the grounds of being "too serious for England," and Riemann himself made an unsuccessful subsequent appeal to C. F. Peters.<sup>18</sup> By December, Reger found it necessary to defend himself to Augener against the reservations of W. T. Best, who earlier had declined the C major work as an independent offering to his edited series *Cecilia*. "In my opinion (which Herr Dr. Riemann shares)," asserts Reger in a revealing passage,

we have made *no* progress in organ style since J. S. Bach. We have regressed in this area—for instance Mendelssohn has passages here and there in his organ things that are not completely suitable to the character of the organ—this way of writing was continued by Rheinberger, and Liszt wrote directly "contrary to the organ." I have thus sought to link my organ things to Bach—and therefore the remark of H[err] Best that the pieces would not be interesting enough (for today)—I have simply refrained from writing for the organ in the modern way. In my other things I stand of course on modern ground—but *not Wagner*.<sup>19</sup>

Reger would later learn to nuance this one-dimensional assessment, which sounds like an *ex cathedra* pronouncement from Riemann's classroom, and indeed to write "in the modern way" for the instrument. By the end of the following year he conceded to the critic Otto Lessmann that "in these things [op. 7] I do not wish to make the slightest claim of originality,"<sup>20</sup> and he would probably have been content with an English critic's generous observation that op. 7, "though it may have something of the letter, is also filled with the true spirit of Bach."<sup>21</sup>

First mention of the Suite No. 1 in E minor op. 16—"my best work thus far"<sup>22</sup>—appears in a letter of November 16, 1894, where Reger calls it a "sonata for organ (Introduction, four-voice triple Fugue in E minor, Adagio in B major on the chorale 'Es ist das Heil uns kommen her,' and Passacaglia in E minor)."<sup>23</sup> By the time he completed the work on July 23, 1895, that plan had taken on a third movement, an Intermezzo (scherzo and trio) in A minor interpolated after the Adagio, which itself came to quote two additional chorales in its middle section: the first phrase of *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu Dir* and the first Stollen and Abgesang of *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*. The ambitious dedication of op. 16 "to the manes of Johann Sebastian Bach" attests a seriousness of purpose beyond that of the composer's pre-

vious works,<sup>24</sup> and indeed the Suite would play a key role in Reger's musical and professional advancement. Its points of contact with certain iconic works of the surrounding musical landscape are more or less obvious: the E minor tonality with Bach's monumental essay in that key, BWV 548, which Reger prepared at the time for Augener in both solo and four-hand piano arrangements, and with Brahms's Symphony No. 4 op. 98 and Rheinberger's organ Sonata No. 8 op. 132, both works of the 1880s; the closing passacaglia (the first of five such works in Reger's organ *œuvre*)<sup>25</sup> with BWV 582, likewise issued by the composer in a four-hand piano arrangement in 1896, with the solo violin Chaconne BWV 1004, and with the E minor passacaglias that close Brahms's op. 98 and Rheinberger's op. 132; and the ornate treatment of *Es ist das Heil* in the outer sections of the second movement with Bach's chorales in the same vein, particularly *O Mensch, beweine* BWV 622 with which it shares the tempo designation *Adagio assai*.<sup>26</sup>

Of particular interest for Reger's development is the integration of the three chorales, not least because it marks the beginning, with the two independent chorale preludes on *O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid* and *Komm, süßer Tod* (1893–94, without opus), of a remarkable relationship with the Protestant chorale that would bear fruit particularly in the chorale fantasies, preludes, and other organ works of the coming years, but also in the Piano Concerto op. 114, where, as in op. 16, three chorale citations appear in the slow movement. The particular alchemy in op. 16—the Christmas chorale *Es ist das Heil* framing the penitential *Aus tiefer Not* and the Passion chorale *O Haupt*, the latter two of which ultimately combine their first phrases as a transition back to the former (Ex. 3.2)—encourages the imposition of theological programs (the Incarnation contextualizing human suffering and redemption, and so on), but it is important to realize that Reger almost certainly took the melodies from the seventy-nine untexted chorale tunes in Riemann's *Handbuch des Generalbassspiels*, which introduces each with a text incipit only.<sup>27</sup>

Whereas this does not disallow speculation about extramusical motives of the composer, who at the time in fact was entering a period of intense personal and

**EXAMPLE 3.2** Reger: Suite No. 1 in E minor op. 16, second movement (*Adagio assai*), mm. 36–37. The first phrases of *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* and *Aus tiefer Not* appear in the soprano and bass respectively, followed by a decorated version of *Es ist das Heil* (*Tempo primo*, soprano, not shown).

The image shows a musical score for Reger's Suite No. 1 in E minor, op. 16, second movement, measures 36-37. The score is in E minor and 4/4 time. It features three staves: a soprano staff, a bass staff, and a decorated bass staff. The tempo is Adagio assai. The score includes dynamic markings like 'mp' and 'ritenuto', and performance instructions like 'die Melodie hervortretend'. The music shows the first phrases of 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden' and 'Aus tiefer Not' in the soprano and bass respectively, followed by a decorated version of 'Es ist das Heil'.

professional crisis, it is at least as pertinent to observe Reger's appreciation of the chorale both for its musical potential and as that particular sort of material which would tie his work to the Great German Heritage. Indeed, with op. 16 Reger made a conscious attempt to set himself apart, as the "serious" German, from contemporary French and English approaches. The clever contrapuntal manipulation of chorale material may thus be read more nearly as a modernist Credo to the dominant *Kulturprotestantismus* of the Reich than as any quasi objective theology.<sup>28</sup> By 1909, Reger would advise the organist Karl Breidenstein to play op. 16, if at all, as an Introduction and Passacaglia, excising the two middle movements and the fugue of the first.<sup>29</sup> Whatever he was trying to do with chorales in 1895, he seems to have rejected it fifteen years on.

But Reger was right to recognize the significance of the Suite for his musical trajectory. In 1896 he was convinced enough of its worth to prepare a four-hand piano arrangement, ultimately rejected by Augener and published only in 1999.<sup>30</sup> Already in the autumn of 1895, he had sent a copy of op. 16 to Richard Strauss as an example of his best work, and on April 9, 1896, he went a step further and bravely made contact with Brahms himself in the same manner, with the request to dedicate a symphony to the older composer. Brahms's initial reply, which must have thrilled Reger, acknowledged receipt of the Suite as "a work . . . the all-too-audacious dedication of which terrifies me!"<sup>31</sup> There quickly followed a second exchange, now lost, in which Brahms evidently commented on the younger composer's organ work, words proudly reported by Reger to Hugo Riemann in July 1896: "In the second letter he wrote that he would be the most grateful recipient of my works—but he believed 'a mere shout of hurrah for your works satisfies neither you nor me; I hope we can talk personally.'" <sup>32</sup> If Reger does not exaggerate Brahms's remark, it suggests a master composer who had seriously examined op. 16 and found enough worthwhile material to justify further conversation. But the exchange must be considered in light of circumstances in Brahms's own life of which Reger would not have been aware. Clara Schumann had survived a serious stroke in March and died on May 20. By the beginning of May, surely under the influence of Clara's declining health, Brahms had produced a profound meditation on life and death in the Four Serious Songs op. 121, which would have been in composition when Reger's op. 16 arrived in April. By the end of June—that is, probably after the second reply reported to Riemann in mid-July—Brahms had composed, or otherwise compiled from earlier material, the eleven organ chorales that would be published first in 1902 as op. post. 122. It seems at least possible that Brahms, confronted with Clara's and then his own impending death, took the unlikely step toward organ chorale composition in part through his reading of Reger's Suite, particularly the second movement's treatment of chorales, one of which (the so-called Passion chorale) he set twice in his own swan song collection.<sup>33</sup>

In any case, Reger would treasure the exchange with Brahms for the rest of his life. What he took as his idol's positive assessment (as well as that of Strauss, Busoni, and others) emboldened him to strike an autonomous artistic path that veered increasingly away from Riemann's orthodoxy while the press was either silent or

hostile toward his work. But the Suite in E minor would open at least one more door of overriding consequence for the young, still relatively unknown composer.

### Breakthrough: The Protestant Chorale and Its potential

In the spring of 1893, hoping to attract critical attention to his pupil's work, Riemann had sent some of Reger's published pieces to Heinrich Reimann (1850–1906), who pursued a multifarious career in Berlin as critic, composer, organist, musicologist, pedagogue, and from 1893, curator of the Royal Library. At the time, Reimann wrote for the Wagner-friendly *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, and on July 7, he published there the first critical discussion in German of any of Reger's work (the chamber music, Lieder, and choruses of opp. 1–4 and 6).<sup>34</sup> The young Berlin organist Karl Straube (1873–1950) had studied with Reimann since the late 1880s, absorbing Reimann's particular blend of university-trained historical study alongside a subjective approach to the performance of old music, the latter originating with Reimann's organ teacher Moritz Brosig. Straube likewise took from Reimann a keen interest in new music, so that when in 1896 his teacher made him aware of Reger's Suite op. 16, the young organist learned and premiered the work on March 3, 1897 in a momentous Berlin recital Straube's early biographer Johannes Wolgast claims “signified the beginning of his virtuosic mastery and simultaneously ... the end of his Berlin years.”<sup>35</sup> The conservative critic Max Loewengardt, unimpressed, registered a devastating review in which he dismissed the work as “unpleasant music, more unpleasant than music.”<sup>36</sup> But apparently undeterred, Straube took Reger's Suite to Frankfurt on April 1 of the following year, where he used it to close a program that purposively featured two further iconic passacaglias: Bach's BWV 582 at the beginning and Liszt's *Weinen, Klagen* variations in the middle.<sup>37</sup> Reger himself came from Wiesbaden, and the meeting of composer and performer would initiate an enduring friendship, not without its peaks and valleys, that became arguably the single most consequential collaboration of the composer's career.

The encounter with Straube could not have come at a more distressed point in Reger's personal and professional life, and hardly at a more positive time in the young organist's burgeoning career. Not quite a year earlier, Straube had left Berlin for his first important appointment, that of organist of the St. Willibrord Cathedral in Wesel (Rhein). There, he would preside over Sauer's magnificent three-manual organ op. 650 of 1895, and he had begun to pursue a successful performance career that by 1903 would lead him to the organ bench of St. Thomas Church/Leipzig, the premiere organ post in Protestantism by virtue of its association with J. S. Bach and others. The same-aged Reger, on the other hand, arrived in Frankfurt in fragile mental and physical condition, plagued by insurmountable financial difficulties, alcoholism, depression, a self-imposed punishing workload, and a composing career that had stalled under the weight of negative reception. Exacerbated by a fatal combination of sparse affirmation and an excess of

ambition, his condition apparently did not allow him to attend the other two recitals on Straube's Frankfurt series, and by June 19 an unstable and completely defeated Reger was forced to leave Wiesbaden altogether and return to his parents' home in the Bavarian Oberpfalz, his future uncertain. But once installed in the quiet surroundings of his upbringing, Reger began to compose at a feverish pace, and by August he had produced not only a number of smaller piano and vocal works, but also the organ Fantasy on *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* op. 27, dedicated "to his dear friend Karl Straube," who promptly learned and premiered it in Wesel on September 20.<sup>38</sup> There followed a steady stream of organ works that would take pride of place in his Weiden output and continue beyond Reger's move to Munich in September 1901. The autumn of 1898 alone produced a further Fantasy on *Freu' dich sehr, o meine Seele* op. 30, originally partnered with *Ein feste Burg* as op. 27b, and a Fantasy and Fugue in C minor op. 29 dedicated to Strauss, who paved the way for Reger to the publishing houses of Forberg (Leipzig) and Aibl (Munich). The former carried opp. 27 and 29, the latter all the organ works from op. 30 through the monumental Symphonic Fantasy and Fugue op. 57 of 1901.

Straube's fierce advocacy of Reger, as well as that of other prominent organists who soon followed his example,<sup>39</sup> did much to propel the composer to the front lines of German musical culture in the crucial years around the turn of the century, and Straube's work ethic proved the equal of the composer's. In a remarkable succession of recitals between September 1898 and February 1902, the prodigious organist of Wesel would introduce his audiences to Reger's opp. 27, 29, 30, 33, 40 no. 1, 46, 52 nos. 1–3, 57, and pieces from op. 59, much of it in the late Gothic edifice of St. Willibrord but increasingly in the centers of Essen, Dortmund, Munich, Berlin, and Heidelberg. So central was Straube's collaboration that Reger prepared two autograph scores, one each for performer and engraver, of the ten major organ works composed between 1898 and 1900: the seven chorale fantasies opp. 27, 30, 40 and 52; and opp. 29, 33, and 46. The scope of this survey permits an examination neither of the complex source situation produced by this idiosyncratic working method nor of the many ways Straube's influence manifests itself in Reger's music and the performance tradition established for it over the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>40</sup> In the present context, though, one may bear in mind three related points.

First, that a German composer in the wake of Brahms and Wagner could achieve his breakthrough with organ music is an exceptional circumstance that grew from several interrelated factors. The encounter with Straube is among the most immediate and therefore most frequently remarked of these, but a comprehensive picture must also take into account the pervasive historicism of the period and the enhanced awareness of J. S. Bach generated by the ongoing publications of the Bach-Gesellschaft and Spitta's groundbreaking biography.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, it is difficult to overestimate the charged nationalist climate of a unified Germany and the ideals of so-called bourgeois cultural Protestantism, which since the 1860s had sought to "bring the

German Protestant churches into ‘full harmony with the cultural development of [the] age’<sup>42</sup> and maintained important circles of influence in both Straube’s Berlin and the Oberpfalz of Reger’s youth. Finally, advances in German organ building, a manifestation of the *Reich*’s innovative spirit, brought the aesthetic of the contemporary orchestra to the organ, and the organ to the concert hall. Reger was by no means the German equivalent of his French colleagues who made their homes in the organ lofts of Paris. The peculiar success of his organ works in Germany—or, to put it another way, the fact that the organ was made a vehicle for serious new music there—has as much to do with the particular cultural and intellectual fabric of imperial Germany as with Reger’s own strengths as a composer.

Second, Reger’s embrace of the chorale in op. 27 may have resulted in part from conversations with Straube, who came from a family of Protestant ministers. But this is only an assumption, one that is perhaps too frequently made. What is certain is that op. 27 is a continuation of a direction initiated in op. 16, namely, an exploration of chorale composition and the principle of variation. In a letter of September 1898, Reger cited op. 27, like op. 16 previously, as “the best of what I have written thus far,” and points out that, “as concerns the *style*, the Passacaglia from my op. 16 gives you insight, except that op. 27 is much *more concise* and much more ‘fluid.’”<sup>43</sup> The ideal of the succinct, transparent musical argument would stay with Reger for the rest of his career, and it well may reflect Straube’s concerns: op. 16 had required about forty-five minutes’ performance time. That the Catholic Reger selected *Ein feste Burg*, the flagship battle cry of Protestantism with text and tune by Luther himself, as his first foray into chorale-based variations probably says something important about what he thought he was doing: with its overtones of the casting off of the foreign (Roman) yoke, no hymn is more evocative of the tenacity of the German nation, God on its side. And beyond any nationalist saber-rattling, Reger may have recognized in Luther’s right-against-might rhetoric something of his own struggles as an artist. As with the other six chorale fantasies, it is indeed clear that the composer made his choices not merely on the basis of the musical possibilities inherent in the tunes, but also for the expressive potential of the poetry and the organ’s ability to realize that potential. Unlike the few earlier works with chorales, the chorale fantasies integrate the texts into the scores so that the organist may meditate on the text-music correspondences in detail and thus arrive at a more convincing performance. One might argue that this constitutes a real advance over the treatment of the chorales in op. 16, where the impression is more nearly that of a clever technical exercise.<sup>44</sup> In any case, organists should consider that the Lied, with its compositional challenges precisely in the realm of text interpretation, was the other genre of choice for Reger in the period that produced the organ fantasies,<sup>45</sup> and thus that the composer’s attitude toward text-music relationships, though largely unexplored, is germane to a study of opp. 27, 30, 40, and 52.

Third, the web of motivations and influences contributing to Reger’s return to the organ must include Straube’s mentor Reimann. In 1894 the Berlin scholar-musician had authored a series of essays titled “*Orgel-Sonaten: Kritische Gänge*,”

in the first installment of which he spoke of “true” organ style contrasted with the music of Widor (“trivial”) and Guilmant (“poverty of invention and hollow bombastic pathos”). “I admit,” ruminated a narrow-minded Reimann, “that we Germans judge more strictly in these matters than our Romanic neighbors. But we have a right and responsibility to do so, because Bach was a German.”<sup>46</sup> The following year, Reimann published an example of what he meant: a Fantasy on *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* op. 25, comprised of an extended introduction leading to a continuous setting of two chorale strophes, their texts integrated in the score. The whole is followed by a fugue, its subject derived from the *Morgenstern* tune, to which it is joined in double counterpoint at the conclusion. Lindner recalls:

We had the work sent to us and studied it thoroughly. The form and content of this very noteworthy creation, in which the various chorale strophes are developed in free variation with text underlaid ... must have mightily stimulated Reger, and above all it must have led him to a greater immersion in the Protestant hymnal. During my frequent visits to his study I often came upon him while reading and studying these spiritual texts and melodies, and when our conversations came to this subject, he often exclaimed, “The Protestants do not know what they have in their chorales!” Soon I would learn the object of his reflections and strivings for one evening, in a joyfully excited mood, he brought me the first pages of his ... *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott!* For me an unforgettable evening!<sup>47</sup>

Reger’s works in the same vein—in addition to opp. 27 and 30 of 1898, a return to Reimann’s material in *Wie schön leucht’ uns der Morgenstern* op. 40 no. 1, the Psalm paraphrase *Straf mich nicht in deinem Zorn* op. 40 no. 2, both from autumn 1899; and the op. 52 collection on *Alle Menschen müssen sterben, Wachtet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, and the obscure nineteenth-century chorale *Halleluja! Gott zu loben bleibe meine Seelenfreud’* from autumn 1900—all of these sought to surpass Reimann’s work, which according to Lindner Reger judged “far too dull, not monumental enough; ... too Mendelssohn-like, insufficiently suited to the organ, the closing fugue too tame.”<sup>48</sup>

In his works of the period, chorale-based and otherwise, Reger would have ample opportunity to demonstrate his correctives to the “tame” music of his contemporaries. In a letter of 1897 he had remarked that

in my view, the organ is precisely the instrument that tolerates the most pungent turns [*die schärfsten Wendungen*, i.e. of harmony] due to its inflexible, firm sound—and “relatively” absolute tuning [*Stimmung*]. Proof. J. S. Bach, G-minor Fantasy [BWV 542]. If you transcribe this for orchestra, it will sound “impure” in places, due to the nature of the wind instruments!!!<sup>49</sup>

The chorale fantasies offer many instances of such “pungent” strategies, harnessing harmony, texture, registration, and form in the service of text. In these seven works, it is Reger’s great accomplishment to have been faithful equally to the poetry’s emotional potential and the demands of musical and dramatic unity: in

good performances, one rarely has the impression of an arbitrary succession of strophes, but rather of the long musical arch, often shaped with an uncanny sense of timing.<sup>50</sup> There is variety as well in the chorales themselves—opp. 27, 40 no. 2, and 52 no. 3 are Psalm paraphrases; opp. 27, 40 no. 1, and 52 no. 2 address points of the liturgical calendar; and so on—and in the formal strategies that shape their presentation. Three (op. 40 no. 1, op. 52 nos. 2 and 3) imitate Reimann's model with a closing fugue that joins its subject to the final chorale strophe. Also recalling Reimann, all of them except op. 27 use free introductions to establish an atmosphere out of which the chorale's first strophe emerges.

The opening bars of the Fantasy on *Wachet auf* op. 52 no. 2 (Ex. 3.3) illustrates how the composer imaginatively molds music to program. A brooding introduction, beginning in the organ's nether regions ("very 'dark' registration 16' 8'") with a head motive that recalls the third phrase of the chorale tune's *Abgesang*, is interrupted twice by irascible outbursts of thick chords culminating in the secondary dominant F sharp seventh on the full organ at m. 7. Instead of an orthodox resolution to B, the chord seventh is retained over the bar and claimed by the bass. A version of the initial E minor music returns, quietly but insistently, after which the motion turns downward to introduce the open pedal fifth at m. 11. The first strophe now surfaces in the parallel major *pppp*, imbedded in a cloud of harmony, the antithesis of the work's opening ("very 'light' registration in both manuals"). The ensuing interludes return to the "dark" *Affekt*, its characteristic motive now entirely abandoned, as the music illustrates the poetic-theological program of light transforming the darkness of the human condition. Gone is Reger's Riemannian, anti-Wagner stance expressed to Augener some eight years earlier. Here, and in works like it, the young composer has learned to "stand ... on modern ground" with a personal synthesis that projects Wagnerian elements (texture, color, motive) onto material mined from a more distant past (here, chorale and fugue).

The work continues by setting the first two of its three chorale strophes as a continuous escalation of dynamic and tempo, in keeping with the anticipated arrival of the divine Bridegroom. But in an unexpected affective shift in the middle of the second strophe, unique in the chorale fantasies, Reger drives to the full organ at the words "*ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf*" ("your light becomes bright, your star arises"). This is followed by a richly ornamented, "slow-movement" setting of the *Abgesang*, *Adagio con espressione* at bars 70–80, illustrating the invitation of the soul to Christ at his approach and dissolving in the intense, hushed statement "*Wir folgen all zum Freudensaal und feiern mit das Abendmahl*" ("We all follow to the chamber of joy and celebrate together the Eucharist"). Overtones of *Parsifal* mingle with the instinctive sacramental theology of Reger's Catholic upbringing to produce both a substantive exegesis and a musical foil to the previous long arch of intensification. The whole is relieved by a fugue which, in contrast to everything that has come before, is constructed on Baroque *Fortspinnung* figurations that drive incessantly forward to combine at m. 142 with the final strophe as the celestial Jerusalem comes into view for the believer.



EXAMPLE 3.3 Continued

-ve  
-dackl 8'

(II) *pppp*

lure tore

+32

-32  
+8

*Sostenuto (quasi Tempo des Chorals)*

*sempre assai legato*

III 8'4"  
sehr "lichte" Registrierung in beiden Manualen  
*sempre pppp*

II nur 8'

"Wa - chet Lu - ruft uns die  
mir fürst zeh' hervorbrelend

*Un poco piu grave*

*poco lillando*

sehr "dunkle" Registrierung (III)

quasi Tempo des chorals

8'4" (III)  
sehr "lichte" Registrierung in Manualen

II nur 8'

Sinn me der

**EXAMPLE 3.4** Reger: Fantasy on the Chorale “*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*” op. 52 no. 2, fugue subject.



Like the historicizing fugue subjects of op. 40 no. 1 and op. 52 no. 3, the naïve modulating subject of the *Wachet auf* fugue (Ex. 3.4) itself does not provide much interest—the fall from  $d^2$  to  $e$ -sharp<sup>1</sup> is the only departure from routine—but the point is that it need not: musical interest is concentrated precisely in the contrast between it and the dense Wagnerian proceedings of the previous eighty bars. When the chorale tune makes its appearance in the bass at m. 142, one hears it in a stylistically new light, just as the believer is taken up in the eschatological vision of Nicolai’s poem.

The chorale fantasies offer many further instances of Reger’s musical instinct informed by textual sensitivity, some of them more or less madrigalesque—the fiercely difficult setting of “*Rette mich aus jener Pein der verdammten Seelen*” (“Save me from the pain of damned souls”) from the second strophe of *Straf mich nicht in deinem Zorn* op. 40 no. 2, with its virtuosic descending chromatic thirds and sixths, double pedal trills, and the like—and others demonstrating a more subtle manipulation of material, as in Ex. 3.5, the sixth strophe of *Halleluja! Gott zu loben* op. 52 no. 3, setting the words “He, the Lord, it is who lovingly gives the blind their sight; the crippled [and] sick find with him strength, comfort, and light.” Atypically, the tune appears in the alto, only to emerge in the soprano at the top of the melodic arch at “*Gebeugten*” (crippled, or bent): the most sublime effect achieved by the simplest means, entirely attuned to the text’s rhetoric.

Remarkably, Reger did not return to the chorale fantasy as such after op. 52, although he directed the experience gained in those works toward at least two important outlets: the several sets of variations-plus-fugue of the following years, among the most convincing of which remains those on Mozart’s own variation theme from K. 331, composed for orchestra in 1914 as op. 132; and the composition of chorale preludes. By 1902, Reger was able to offer his new publisher Lauterbach & Kuhn “my 50 Chorale Preludes for the Organ op. 67 ... *None ... are technically difficult*, and the melodies have been collected by an organist of 30 years’ experience. I can surely say without any arrogance that since J. S. Bach, no such collection has been published!”<sup>51</sup> Reger had been considering such a project at early as 1893.<sup>52</sup> Both the number of chorales, which by the time of publication had grown to fifty-two, and the musical approach—brief, many without interludes and held to four-part writing in cantional style—force comparison with the forty-six chorales of Bach’s *Orgelbüchlein* BWV 599–644. The emphasis on technical accessibility, a typical concern in Reger’s smaller works, is repeated in a title (*Zweiundfünfzig leicht*

**EXAMPLE 3.5** Reger: Fantasy on the Chorale “Halleluja! Gott zu loben bleibe meine Seelenfreud” op. 52 no. 3, mm. 80–88.

(sehr "lichte" Registrierung!)

*molto espressivo*

Er, der Herr, ist's, der den Blinden reich geschenkt das Gesicht; die Ge-

ten, Kranken finden bei ihm Stärke, Trost und Licht. Seht, wie

beug -

*Un poco più lento.*

ausführbare Vorspiele zu den gebräuchlichsten evangelischen Chorälen) that tries to argue for the work's legitimacy and thus ends up saying too much.<sup>53</sup>

Reger rightly took pride in both the liturgical practicality of the miniature dimensions and the sensitivity with which many of the settings support their textual *Affekt*, the latter an extension of what had been learned in the fantasies, though here the poetry is not included. The composer would reveal something of his preferences in a 1904 letter to Straube, in which he advises his friend to play from the collection “*O Welt, ich muß dich lassen* and *Vater unser*, or otherwise one or other of the most beautiful ones” in a Leipzig recital.<sup>54</sup> Both preludes Reger cites employ the echo technique, whereby each chorale phrase is played twice, the second time retired to a softer registration *manualiter*. “*O Welt*” in particular calls to mind the final chorale of Brahms’s op. post. 122, which appeared in print in 1902 at the same time Reger’s op. 67 was going to press. Obviously seizing on a similar rhetorical notion of melancholic leave-taking, Brahms’s setting employs a double echo and a characteristic chromatic fourth, whereas Reger uses a single echo in a setting that exploits harmony over any consistent motivic development.<sup>55</sup> That Reger did not equate technical accessibility and musical simplicity is demonstrated by passages like that of Ex. 3.6, the opening bars of “*O Welt*.”

**EXAMPLE 3.6** Reger: Chorale Prelude “O Welt, ich muß dich lassen” (52 Chorale Preludes op. 67), mm. 1–3.

The musical score shows three measures of music. The tempo is marked 'Langsam'. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The time signature is 3/4. The score is written for piano, with a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff has a melody with a fermata over the first two notes. The bass staff has a more active accompaniment with a fermata over the first two notes. Dynamics include *p*, *ppp*, and *p*. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

There, the G major center is immediately abandoned in a phrase that favors E minor, exploiting it via augmented sixth harmony (m. 2, beat 2) as a plagal cadence to B major. The echo, rather than confirm this point of arrival, seems at first to destabilize it through a radical shift downward by semitone to B flat major, after which the ear is led back to B over the succinct bass movement B $\flat$ –F–F $\sharp$ –B. Such apparent disjunction between the third and fourth beats of bar 2 might well be taken to allegorize some extramusical value, like the gulf between spirit and flesh at death. As in all Reger’s music, one must strike a tempo fast enough not to plod but slow enough to allow the ear time to absorb the highways and byways of the harmony. This goes for settings as varied as *Machs mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güte* (ornamented soprano tune as in Reger’s beloved BWV 622, with which it shares key center, certain rhythmic motives, and an affective flat sixth harmony in the penultimate bar), *Jauchz, Erd, und Himmel, juble hell* (canto in the bass over a sparkling, sixteenth-note triplet motivic counterpoint in the manuals, “extremely lively”), and *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir* (a return to one of the op. 16 chorales, here set in the bass over a four-part manual texture that reconciles the tune’s Phrygian quality with an advanced control of tonal dissonance, wisely marked “Very slowly (but not dragging)”).

Responding to the demands of the market and criticisms of his work as too complex, Reger would return with a collection of Thirteen Chorale Preludes op. 79b (published in 1904 but composed largely over the previous years and including five tunes not used in op. 67, one of them—the German *Nunc dimittis Mit Fried’ und Freud’*—set twice) and, about a decade later, the Thirty Little Chorale Preludes op. 135a of 1914, cited laconically to Fritz Stein as “terribly simple; ‘elementary school.’”<sup>56</sup> In fact, the organist finds in the latter collection good material for basic instruction, rare in Reger’s works, and some attractive service music with rather more domesticated harmony.

### Free Works Large and Small

From the fecund creative period around 1900 come several other large works from Reger’s pen, including two Sonatas in F sharp minor and D minor, opp. 33 and 60 respectively. The first from 1899—a Fantasy imitative of a French overture, lyrical

Intermezzo in the dominant with contrasting middle section, and Passacaglia (originally Ciacona) with twenty variations—is dedicated to Alexander Wilhelm Gottschalg, the Weimar court organist and member of Liszt’s circle. Its source situation is among the most interesting in Reger’s music, with an autograph score prepared for Straube replete with notes and significant revisions that suggest its having been passed back and forth before, and perhaps after, Straube’s premiere of the piece in Essen on June 14, 1899. The lively interest Straube took in the creative process seems to affirm Reger’s remark to Gottschalg that “one could call ... op. 33 ‘the Romantic’; it is entirely different from my other organ things.”<sup>57</sup> Its architecture and contrapuntal style somewhat call to mind the sonatas of Rheinberger and his pupil Philipp Wolfrum. Reflecting Reimann’s thinking in his 1894 essay series, Reger avoids the sonata form and refers to the appellation as “only a collective title.”<sup>58</sup> The same principle applies in op. 60, a work from late 1901 after the composer’s move to Munich, and one of the first major projects for which Reger departed from his practice of preparing a separate manuscript for Straube. Op. 60, which came to be played more regularly than its younger sibling, shares with op. 33 a three-movement structure, this time an improvisatory Introduction in D minor followed by an Invocation (Grave con duolo) in E major, the hyperchromatic, recitative-like pleas of which are answered by a statement of Luther’s Christmas chorale *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her* (molto espressivo and still in E: that is, displaced by four sharps from its canonic key of C major). All of this is relieved by a virtuosic Introduction and Fugue that eventually returns to the original key center and closes, over an effective stretto and coda, in the parallel major. The architectural importance of the supertonic major seems to signal an advance for Reger, whose multi-movement forms, for all their localized harmonic daring, tend to fall into old-fashioned key schemes. Predictably, among the work’s most commented aspects has been the appearance of *Vom Himmel hoch*, a refashioning of the “slow movement plus chorale” concept employed in op. 16, surfacing again later in a more subtle way in the Piano Concerto op. 114.<sup>59</sup>

Considering the young composer’s enduring rhetoric around Bach as the “beginning and end of all music,”<sup>60</sup> it appears to have been only a matter of time before Reger produced the *Lobgesang* to his idol represented by the Fantasy and Fugue on BACH op. 46, composed largely in February 1900 and dedicated to no less a figure than Rheinberger.<sup>61</sup> Quite unlike other works based on the famous cipher, Reger’s Fantasy announces itself in no uncertain terms as in Ex. 3.7.

The opening subdominant harmony, immediately destabilized in first inversion with added sixth, drives over the dominant F major and the borrowed supertonic C minor directly into E major, the defiant resting point of an opening volley that moves the ear a tritone away from tonic, itself yet unheard, in the course of four sixteenth notes.<sup>62</sup> Once the air clears, the procedure is repeated up a tone, *più fff*, now to F sharp. A third attempt is begun but thwarted, the BACH motive now laying claim to the bass line and steering the music to a dominant seventh on A halfway through m. 2, the resolution of which is denied. An impetuous work ensues in which the elements aired here—the subdominant

## EXAMPLE 3.7 Reger: Fantasy on BACH op. 46, mm. 1–2.

Grave (sempre quasi improvisatione)

I. Man. *ff* *più ff*

(C. II, III) *ff* *più ff* (+C. I.) Org. Pl.

Org. Pl. *(quasi Prestissimo)* *sempre Org. Pl.*

area, the tritone, the whole tone—play important roles. The double fugue that follows treats a principal subject that recalls Schumann’s fugue op. 60 no. 6 in its quasi-antique *alla breve* notation and the descending chromatic line of its second half: indeed, both works are acceleration fugues with two subjects.

But the brief passage in Ex. 3.7 illustrates two further points that bear themselves out well beyond op. 46. The first is the mature Reger’s tendency to write music that frequently looks faster than it is supposed to sound. Here and elsewhere, one would arrive at a nonsensical tempo if the music proceeded at quarter-note tactus in common meter, assuming even the most generous interpretation of *Grave*. The intended impression is clearly one of intensity in the first place, but Reger and those close to him repeatedly felt the need to counsel performers away from exaggerated tempi.<sup>63</sup> The second point is that the composer’s fascination with the BACH motive went well beyond any symbolic significance, exploiting its harmonic potential to effect bold modulations in sequential patterns. If anything, this is the message of the opening bars of op. 46, an audacious approach that would cause conservative-tending critics to brand Reger’s music as symptomatic of a fast-paced, industrialized modern existence in which beauty no longer counted.<sup>64</sup> But in subsequent works Reger would continue to develop two- and four-note groupings that either exactly reproduce the intervallic sequence of BACH or represent various permutations of it, as shown in the excerpts of Ex. 3.8.

**EXAMPLE 3.8** Reger: the four-note motive, quasi BACH, after op. 46.

- a. Symphonic Fantasy op. 57, mm. 11–12 (*Vivace assai*).
- b. Toccata in D minor op. 59 no. 5, mm. 30–32.
- c. Fugue in F-sharp minor op. 73, subject.
- d. Fantasy in D minor op. 135b, mm. 30–31.

a

*Vivace assai*

sempre III. Man. (8'4)

f

II. Man.

sempre poco a poco cre-

(sempre 8')

(+16)

f

scen

b

sehr kurz

Quasi prestissimo

(Org P1)

(Org P1)

sempre stringendo

(Org P1)

c **Vivacissimo**

d

The Symphonic Fantasy and Fugue in D minor op. 57, the great leviathan of Reger’s organ music, was composed in an extremely concentrated period during spring 1901. The confrontationalism of its Fantasy, a mere sixty-two bars that require about fourteen minutes’ performance time, breaks upon the listener as in Ex. 3.9.

**EXAMPLE 3.9** Reger: Symphonic Fantasy op. 59, mm. 1–3.

Vivacissimo ed agitato assai e molto espressivo

Manuale

I. Man. *ff* *sempre cre* *scen - - - do*

Pedale *ff* (+C.I.) (+C.III.)

*piu ff* (+C.II.) *sempre cre* *scen - - - do*

The image shows a musical score for organ, consisting of three staves. The top staff is the right hand, the middle is the left hand, and the bottom is the pedal. The music is highly chromatic and complex. Performance instructions include "(sehr kurz)", "(quasi Prestissimo assai.)", "Org. Pl.", "sempre I. Man. (-C. II, III.)", and dynamic markings "ff" and "ff". The lyrics "do e sempre cre - - - scen - - - do" are written below the top staff. The score is marked with "(-C.I.)" at the bottom.

As in op. 46, a pedal upbeat at *fff* issues in an opening harmony, here nothing more than C sharp diminished seventh with a double acciaccatura (D sharp and F sharp) and voiced for maximum provocation. Its goal, of course, is the D minor around which the piece is ostensibly constructed, a point of orientation which seems at least provisionally realized at the beginning of m. 3 as the pedal drops precipitously in a Phrygian resolution to tonic at almost full organ. But this proves a cynical ruse: the simple 4–3 suspension to D (major) is immediately problematized by the introduction of the flat sixth, the bass slips chromatically downward to the bottom of the pedalboard and the soprano octave Ds up to E flats, so that now a fresh diminished seventh harmony forms around F sharp, pointing away to the subdominant. The first satisfying cadence comes at m. 9, but to A flat major, Neapolitan to the subdominant and a tritone away from home. Such harmonic machinations in a context of obvious exaggeration (the hopeless *Vivacissimo ed agitato assai e molto espressivo* and sixty-fourth note pickup of the opening are but two examples) announce a musical landscape not only of tortured contrasts and unrelieved chromaticism, but also of transcendental technical demands. The double fugue that follows is no exception: based on a principal subject using eleven of the chromatic tones, it presents a concentrated web of allusions to composers in Reger’s pantheon, most obviously to Bach’s own virtuosic Fugue in D major BWV 532 (first five notes, and the sixteenth-note *Fortspinnung* with closing trill) and to the disjunct semitone sequences that distinguish the BACH fugues of Schumann op. 60 no. 4 and Liszt (the sixth through eleventh notes, which amount to a reforming of the Fantasy motive shown at Ex. 3.8 a). These relationships are shown as Ex. 3.10.

Certain unreasonable passages in both Fantasy and Fugue (mm. 27–31 of the former, mm. 72–99 of the latter) will have prompted Straube to register a complaint with the composer, reported with some pride by Reger to Joseph Loritz, “Straube is griping that op. 57 is so inhumanly difficult! I bet that in four weeks he can play it flawlessly!”<sup>65</sup> The work’s abstruse, hypertense argument earned

## EXAMPLE 3.10a Reger: Symphonic Fugue op. 57, principle subject.



## EXAMPLE 3.10b Johann Sebastian Bach, Fugue in D major BWV 532, subject.



## EXAMPLE 3.10c Robert Schumann, Fugue on BACH op. 60 no. 4, subject.



## EXAMPLE 3.10d Franz Liszt, Fugue on BACH, subject.



Reger a vituperative review by the Munich critic Rudolf Louis, who mused that “with Reger there appears to exist something like a psychological perversity of tone and sound, as a result of which he revels in cacophony, in the musically ugly.”<sup>66</sup> Reger’s offhand remark to the piece’s dedicatee Gustav Beckmann that Dante’s *Inferno* was the inspiration for its cacophonies has given rise to a tradition of assigning “Inferno” as a subtitle, but the practice probably reflects more on a modernist reception of Reger than on the composer’s intentions.<sup>67</sup>

The last of Reger’s major organ works before his return to the instrument in 1913 is the Variations and Fugue on an Original Theme in F sharp minor op. 73, completed in September 1903 at Straube’s request for a non-chorale based concert piece. The “original theme,” emerging after a *Tristanesque* forty-bar introduction, thus assumes the function of the tune in the chorale fantasies, although Reger’s theme (Ex. 3.11) bears no resemblance to a chorale (indeed, part of the point) and obeys an up-to-date variation principle much more akin to that of the Bach Variations for piano op. 81. The return to F sharp minor, also the key of the first Sonata, may echo the significance of the latter work in the eyes of both composer and performer.

EXAMPLE 3.11 Reger: Variations and Fugue on an Original Theme op. 73, theme (Andante).

The musical score is written for piano and consists of three systems. The first system begins with the tempo marking *Andante*. The right-hand part starts with a melodic line in G major, marked *pp*. A performance instruction reads: "8'4 (und 15', falls ein äußerst schwach intonierter 16' vorhanden)". The left-hand part provides harmonic support. The second system continues the theme, with dynamics ranging from *ppp* to *p*. Performance instructions include *espressivo*, *molto*, *molto crescendo*, *quasi f*, and *p*. The third system concludes the theme, with dynamics from *pp* to *ppp*. Performance instructions include *espressivo*, *poco ritardando*, and *ppp*. The score also includes the instruction "nur Koppel III" in the bass line of the first and third systems.

In a letter to Straube, Reger singles out as particularly important the soprano of mm. 3–4 (with its pickup, *espressivo*), which he calls “melancholy.”<sup>68</sup> In fact this is the theme’s only repeating element (at mm. 12–14, harmonized identically), with versions surfacing Leitmotiv-like in the ensuing thirteen variations. Other features—the asymmetrical phrases, the Brahmsian emphasis on falling thirds, the potential for hemiola effects, the BACH-like shape of the first four soprano pitches—likewise play themselves out in the music that follows and are tentatively explored in the introduction that precedes. The effect of the variations is to move the ear progressively away from the theme by isolating and developing its elements, or ideas introduced later on, while periodically returning to a recognizable feature, usually the *espressivo* motive cited above. This strategy, whereby

the theme comes into lesser or greater focus, yields satisfying musical results in passages like the transition to the final variation, where, after a flurry of dense chromatic virtuosity in the previous set of variations, the “melancholy” profile of the theme reappears, fragmented but recognizable. The fugue, on a single subject this time (Ex. 3.8 c.), is perhaps the composer’s best for the organ. Its characteristic semitone recalls the same head motive introduced in the second variation, its BACH-like second motive the shape of the theme’s opening gesture, and its falling thirds and disjunct hemiola eighths transform corresponding thematic elements. An interesting feature is the reticence of the subject to venture beyond its tonic/dominant anchors in a hundred bars of music (exception at m. 43), which amounts to an extremely stable sense of tonic by the end. The counterpoint is unusually linear for Reger, and one wonders if the fleeting parallel octave between alto and tenor in m. 51 is an oversight.<sup>69</sup> The unusual dedication of op. 73—“to Karl Straube in remembrance of June 14, 1903”—refers to Straube’s high-profile recital for the thirty-ninth conference of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein* in Basel, where he presented opp. 27 and 57 and afterwards proposed the composition of op. 73.<sup>70</sup>

Alongside the big concert pieces from the years that flank the turn of the century, Reger produced several collections of shorter and generally less technically demanding works, in part a response to the interest of publishers for music marketable to the average organist. There is much to recommend here for the student seeking an introduction—the Six Trios op. 47, cited by their composer as “instructional material”<sup>71</sup> and including an attractive Siciliano in E minor (no. 5); the characteristic Introduction and Passacaglia in F minor op. 63 nos. 5 and 6; the sentimental lyricism of the Ave Maria in A major op. 63 no. 7; the witty, transparent Scherzo in D minor op. 65 no. 10; the virtuosic Toccata and Fugue in A minor op. 80 nos. 11 and 12; the pastoral Prelude and Fugue in F major op. 85 no. 3—all of this rewards further study. But none of these collections assume the prominent place in Reger’s *œuvre* occupied by the Twelve Pieces op. 59, his point of entry for a long and significant relationship with Henri Hinrichsen and the firm of C. F. Peters.<sup>72</sup>

Reger composed the Twelve Pieces in the spring of 1901, having secured their placement with Peters by June 1, and they promptly appeared later that year in two volumes of six pieces each.<sup>73</sup> The first set comprises works of varying form and character in alternating minor and major modes: a Prelude, Pastorale, Intermezzo, and Canon precede a Toccata and Fugue pair in D minor/major. The second volume opens with the quasi-liturgical pieces Kyrie eleison, Gloria in excelsis, and Benedictus, the second of which treats a Gregorian incipit. These are followed by a Capriccio, Melodia, and a Te Deum, the latter a revisiting of the chant set in op. 7 no. 3. Op. 59 came on the heels of the big organ works that had established Reger as a progressive force in German music, and the new collection would meet with immediate success. By 1918, Peters had printed 2,800 copies in seven printings, and the Benedictus, today still the most popular of Reger’s organ works, appeared in 1908 under separate cover in the composer’s arrangement for

**EXAMPLE 3.12** Reger: Kyrie eleison and Benedictus op. 59 nos. 7 and 9, motivic relationships.

a.  
**Grave**

b.

c.

d.

harmonium (1,050 copies in three printings) and again in 1910 in its original version (700 copies in three printings). And in a project that has fueled controversy ever since, Peters reissued the so-called Organ Mass (Kyrie, Gloria, Benedictus) in a new edition by Karl Straube in 1912, “with the approval of the composer” as given on its title page, but with tempi, phrasing, and other performance markings that often vary radically from those of the original.<sup>74</sup>

As implied by Straube’s edition, the triptych of op. 59 nos. 7–9 has long been seen and performed as a unit. Its two outer movements, unlike the Gloria free of chant material, are closely bound by the network of motives shown as Ex. 3.12.

The Kyrie in E minor immediately introduces a principal motive (a.) consisting of two falling perfect fifths rising sequentially at the distance of a whole tone, joined by a chromatic passing tone. After a twenty-three bar development, the bass falls to a pedal point on D flat, over which is heard the melodic motive (b.), in fact a transformation of (a.) that retains the falling fifth sequence, now rid of its chromatic element and placed in the remote D flat major. The initial idea quickly resurfaces (m. 28), suppressing its altered D flat version and steering the music back to the sharp tonal regions where it began. When (b.) launches a series of attempts to reclaim its voice (m. 35 on E flat, m. 36 on F sharp, m. 38 on A, the

bass rising by minor third), it is answered by (a.) *agitato*, and the piece contents itself to find its way back to the original center of E, with the last partial statement of (a.) made on D, pointing to the D major of the Gloria that follows.

Like its Kyrie counterpart, the Benedictus begins with an unharmonized motive made of a series of two falling sequential intervals (c.), here a diminished fourth (which, lacking context, the ear takes as a consonant major third) iterated a minor third lower and widened to a perfect fourth.<sup>75</sup> The D flat major tonality here substantiates the otherwise odd turn to the flatted subtonic in the Kyrie. As in the earlier piece, the principal motive is developed through twenty-four bars (in the Kyrie, twenty-three), and a fughetta now launches, still in D flat and on the subject (d.). That subject manages simultaneously to reverse and build upon the principle of (c.): its opening perfect fourth, now rising (in fact the first motive in either piece to do so), is sequenced up by whole tone, the second fourth decorated by a chromatic tone and reaching the zenith of the line before falling by fifth back to the A flat on which it commenced. But the fughetta subject bears an even more direct affinity to the (a.) of the Kyrie: Reger has caused the falling fifths of the latter to invert to the rising fourths of the former, still sequenced by rising whole tone. Further, the tail of (d.) alludes directly to the corresponding end of (a.), the falling fifth of which itself has been displaced in (d.) by a rising (enharmonic) whole tone.

The result is an extremely refined manipulation of motive and harmony which has points of contact with both the New Germans and Brahms. The relationships of Ex. 3.12, in which the Gloria appears not to participate, offer a good reason why Straube paired nos. 7 and 9 in his performances, without the intervention of the Gregorian-based middle piece.<sup>76</sup> For those conversant in Catholic doctrine, they further encourage the underlay of a theological program according to which the pleas for mercy in the Kyrie of the Mass are fully answered only in the blessing of the Eucharist. The downward tending music in sharp minor is thus transformed to upward tending music in flat major, the Divine mercy inherent but hidden in the initial supplication. At the very least, the sophisticated mechanics of the Kyrie and Benedictus suggest a composer who sought to bring the most up-to-date compositional techniques to bear on music of lesser technical difficulty and, in this case, on works that could provide substantive tonal commentary on the liturgy.

## Too Big to Fail: Last Works and Legacy

After the composition of a less significant Suite No. 2 in G minor op. 92 in 1906, Reger all but abandoned the organ until he responded in October 1912 to a commission from Breslau to compose a work celebrating the city's new Jahrhunderthalle and its Sauer/Walcker instrument, with its 200 stops and five manuals the largest organ in the world at the time, and as such a showpiece of German hubris.<sup>77</sup> Quite why the composer's pen went dry of organ music for such a relatively long period is not altogether obvious. On the one hand, he was well established among organists by mid-decade, and with the Sinfonietta and Serenade opp. 90 and 95, he

had begun to turn his attention to the largely unplowed soil of the orchestra. On the other hand, several factors had given rise to a certain clouding of the relationship with Straube during precisely this time, among them the latter's dim view of Reger's performance approach to Bach and his marked criticism of certain works, especially the *Gesang der Verklärten* op. 71 of 1903. Furthermore, Reger moved to Leipzig in March 1907 to assume positions at both University and Conservatory and found himself beset with new duties in new circumstances.

By the time the Breslau commission reached him, he had relocated yet again, this time to Meiningen to become Kapellmeister to the famous ducal orchestra once led by Bülow and Steinbach. Reger clearly felt the return to organ music as something more than routine, as read from his closing of a letter to Stein—"your old Reger, 'composing around' on a new big *organ work* (!!!!!)." <sup>78</sup> The original plan appears to have aimed at a work for organ and orchestra. Instead, the composer returned to his old monumental key of E minor—the "manes of Bach" tonality in op. 16—to produce the appropriately titanic Introduction, Passacaglia, and (double) Fugue op. 127, a contrapuntal bacchanalia Paul Riesenfeld called "40 continuous minutes of experimental music" at Straube's premiere performance on September 24, 1913. <sup>79</sup> Like opp. 57 and 73, it requires an advanced technique, and it likewise is among the most complicated works with respect to the influence of Reger's old collaborator, whose suggestions can be read from the many differences between manuscript and first edition. Further, with op. 127 the composer produced his last organ passacaglia and the only one followed by a fugue, nevertheless only indirectly related to the obvious model of BWV 582. Both passacaglia (twenty-six variations) and first fugue subject employ themes constructed of eleven chromatic tones, and particularly the former gives a more abstract effect than its predecessors. As with the second fugue subject that would follow in op. 135b, the scherzo-like first subject of op. 127 recalls the airy string writing found, for example, in the first fugue of the String Quartet in E flat op. 109 rather than the quasi-Baroque concept pursued in earlier works like op. 52 no. 2. <sup>80</sup> In the latter half of the twentieth century, the effects of Straube's heavy influence on op. 127 have been evaluated critically, with organists drawing on autograph evidence to produce reconstructions of "original intent." As with similar issues entailed in op. 135b and certain earlier works (the Sonata op. 33, the *Morgenstern* Fantasy op. 40 no. 1), such efforts can present methodological and musical slippery slopes, but they likewise potentially offer relevant and appropriate perspectives on Reger's creative process. Whether one agrees with that process or wishes it had gone another way in the end is a different matter.

Since the composer's early death there has arisen a tendency to speak of Reger's "late works" and "mature style," although of course with his *œuvre* one is dealing with a compositional project cut off at midstream, demonstrating certain stable elements over time but still clearly in development. Perhaps no work illustrates this situation better than the masterful Fantasy and Fugue in D minor op. 135b, with an unusually drawn out gestation period from its first mention to Straube in late September 1914 to its completion in mid-April 1916. Like the Fantasy and

Fugue op. 29, its dedication is to Richard Strauss, undoubtedly linked to the elder composer's fiftieth birthday in 1914.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, a series of grave events in that year immediately preceded the conception: on February 28, Reger succumbed to the weight of a colossal workload with a debilitating nervous breakdown during a concert of the Meiningen Court Orchestra, a circumstance that dictated his resignation as Kapellmeister; on June 25, the composer's beloved patron Duke Georg II died, leaving the future of the Meiningen arts establishment in jeopardy, and three days later, Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo, paving the way to Germany's entry into the Great War on August 1. As with op. 127, op. 135b bears the marks of close consultation with Straube, whose opinions contributed heavily to large scale cuts in both Fantasy and Fugue.<sup>82</sup>

The Fantasy's opening bars (Ex. 3.13a) demonstrate the textural and tonal clarity Reger was seeking in his music of the period, particularly when compared

EXAMPLE 3.13a Reger: Fantasy in D minor op. 135b, mm. 1–12.

Quasi vivace

III *ppp* 16' 14' 2' *leggero*

*crescendo*

*p* *crescendo*

*sempre ritardando*

*ff* *più ff* *fff*

*ff* *fff*

adagio

ritardando

*pp* *pp* *più pp*

*p* *p* *pp* *ppp*

*pp* *ppp*

EXAMPLE 3.13b Richard Wagner: *Die Walküre* Act III/iii.

Vc. and Cb.

*pp* *cresc.* *f*

with the equivalent passage in the decidedly grumpier D minor Fantasy op. 57 of fifteen years earlier (Ex. 3.9).

Here, a single cascading line is joined to form a two-part texture, the figurations of which again recall string writing, then anchored by a pedal point on the tonic in m. 2. The initial gapped registration 16'–4'–2', unique in Reger's organ music, works with the thin texture to give a translucent basis around which other stops are progressively added. An arpeggiated Neapolitan over the insistent tonic pedal leads to a radiant cadence on D major, so that the listener is faced with nothing like the provocative tonal diversions that had introduced op. 57. The contrasting passage that follows in mm. 5–12 contain some of Reger's most sensitive writing for the organ, a meditation on a motive apparently drawn from Act III/iii of *Die Walküre* (Ex. 3.13b), arranged for two pianos four hands also in 1914 as *Wotans Abschied und Feuerzauber*. The quasi-BACH motive of Ex. 3.8d and its variants are eventually brought to bear in further contrasting sections, leading in m. 39 to a full-organ culmination on F sharp major, immediately relieved by a schizophrenic shifting of gears to an isolated dominant ninth on the organ's most

hushed stops voiced low on the keyboard.<sup>83</sup> A succinct recapitulation and coda to D major follows. The fugue argues a calm but chromatic first subject in a double exposition, *molto sostenuto*, contrasted with and joined to a more playful compound meter second subject resembling that of the Mozart Variations op. 132. The revisions of both opp. 127 and 135b suggest a composer in search of new ground, once again receptive—or vulnerable, depending on one’s view—to the musical sense of Straube, who as an organist stood at the top of his game.

Reger would compose three further collections before his death: the chorale preludes of op. 135a mentioned earlier, the Nine Pieces op. 129 from early September 1913, and the Seven Pieces op. 145 from the winter of 1915/16. His brief description of the Nine Pieces to its dedicatee Hans von Ohlendorff—“easy but very fine”<sup>84</sup>—is certainly fair, and they may reflect the character of the composer’s improvisations at Kolberg (now Kołobrzeg) Cathedral from summer 1913.<sup>85</sup> Both the Toccata and Fugue in D minor and the Prelude and Fugue in B minor, with which the collection opens and closes respectively, offer passages harmonically and texturally similar to opp. 127 and 135b. The B minor pair particularly repays study, with a thoughtful, succinct fugue built on a *Seufzer* subject and an Affekt reminiscent of Brahms’s Fugue in A flat minor WoO 8.

The Seven Pieces op. 145 return a final time to the chorale: the central four mark major points in the liturgical calendar (Christmas, Passion, Easter, Pentecost; nos. 3–6) and the outer ones speak to the war effort (no. 1 *Trauerode*, no. 2 *Dankpsalm*, no. 7 *Siegesfeier*). The *Dankpsalm* is particularly effective, dedicated “to the German army” and comprising two large musical arches, the first culminating in a setting of *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*, the second, beginning with the same music as the first, in *Lobe den Herren*. Those who can move beyond the *Dankpsalm*’s obvious display of Teutonic patriotism will perceive the astuteness with which its two chorales are brought into conversation: the acceptance of divine will in the first is answered by praise of the omnipotent God in the second, a commentary on the sacrifice of war in a Job-like perspective.<sup>86</sup> The final piece is perhaps the most difficult to hear today, a musically effective yet conceptually naïve paroxysm on military victory, obviously premature, that employs *Nun danket alle Gott* on the way to *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. Like op. 129, op. 145 appears to have arisen from improvisations, in this case those given to close wartime church music concerts Reger led in Meiningen and Hildburghausen.<sup>87</sup>

Wilhelm Furtwängler observed in 1945 that “Reger is actually a colossus with clay feet. . . . His is mock counterpoint, mock form, mock melody, everything a façade. And yet a tremendous talent and a German, noble, and chaste nature.”<sup>88</sup> Problematic though the remark is, it reveals a sentiment key to Reger’s reception history, dissonant within itself and profoundly German, namely a certain lack of faith in the music’s quality alongside an affirmation of the composer’s centrality to German culture. To draw on an expression from our own economically distressed times, Furtwängler’s Reger was too big to fail. The century saw very different sorts of responses to Reger’s music, particularly among organists who

continued to debate and perform it during times when much of the rest of his work had been forgotten. The so-called *Orgelbewegung* of mid-century presented perhaps the most persistent questions about Reger's position in the canon, with responses as varied as those of Oskar Söhnngen (the "true," that is "Baroque," organ is the key to Reger's aesthetic), Albert Schweitzer (the music's tie to German culture and aesthetics makes it impossible to export to France), Helmut Walcha (the organ works banned from the Frankfurt curriculum as unidiomatic), Karl Matthaei (the music must remain true to its "Romantic" aesthetic), and the ever-present Karl Straube, who in 1946 declined an invitation to issue a complete "practical" edition of Reger on updated norms, ambivalent about performance style yet convinced of the composer's importance.<sup>89</sup> Such approaches reflect the dissonance that Furtwängler identified, and the "Reger problem" is closely bound up with the questions that accumulated around German organ culture addressed in Chapter 4 of this study, questions that inform the composer's reception well beyond German borders and well into the present day. Indeed, Reger's organ music—the circumstances of its creation, its thoroughly modernist historicism, its exploration of the boundaries of tonal harmony, its musical and technical challenges—continues to fascinate new generations as a unique expression of one of Western history's most troubled and intriguing eras.

## Notes

- 1 I regard the three partial opera—the Thirteen Chorale Preludes op. 79b, the Thirty Little Chorale Preludes op. 135a, and the Fantasy and Fugue in D minor op. 135b—as separate in this account.
- 2 Franz Liszt, *Der heilige Franziskus von Paula auf den Wogen schreitend*, arranged in 1901 for organ solo from the second of *Deux Légendes* LW A219 for piano, appearing first in 1977 with Breitkopf; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Ausgewählte Klavierwerke*, fifteen keyboard works arranged for organ solo in 1901, including several preludes and fugues from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue BWV 903 (Aibl, 1902); and Bach, fifteen two-part *Inventions* BWV 772–86 idiosyncratically arranged with an added third voice and titled *Schule des Triospiels*. Reger also arranged for organ the Andante from the Piano Quintet in E minor op. 5 of the contemporary Norwegian composer Christian Sinding, a transcription that appeared first in 1921 in volume 2 of an *Album nordischer Komponisten für Orgel* (Hansen).
- 3 Hugo Wolf, four *Geistliche Lieder nach Gedichten von Eduard Mörike* arranged for voice and organ no later than 1898 (Heckel, 1898); and ten *Geistliche Lieder aus dem Spanischen Liederbuch* arranged in 1902 (Heckel, 1903). These and other Wolf arrangements for piano, chorus, and orchestra manifest Reger's keen admiration for Wolf and his significance, observations set down in the essay "*Hugo Wolfs künstlerischer Nachlass*" ("Hugo Wolf's Artistic Legacy") of 1903. English in Anderson 2006, 55–65.
- 4 Bach, four *Ausgewählte Orgelwerke* of 1895 for piano solo (Augener, 1895), ten *Ausgewählte Orgelwerke* of 1896 for piano four hands (Augener, 1896), and thirteen *Ausgewählte Choralvorspiele* of 1898 for piano solo (Aibl, 1900). These works reflect an interest shared with Ferruccio Busoni, with whom Reger corresponded during the period.
- 5 Some forty of these songs are without opus, and five collections (opp. 19, 61b, 61e, 105, and 137) are dedicated to songs for voice and organ, all of them on sacred texts. Reger's work in the genre noticeably outstrips Richard Strauss in quantity, though of course it does not begin to approach Schubert's output of some 100 years earlier.

- 6 Reger's original solo organ works without opus fall into the first two periods of this scheme. A single small chorale prelude on *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* appeared in print during the hiatus of 1907–12 (in Heinrich Trautner, ed., *Präludienbuch zu den Chorälen der christlichen Kirche*, Kaiserslautern 1909) but may have been composed earlier.
- 7 Lindner is the author of an important early biography, *Max Reger. Ein Bild seines Jugendlebens und künstlerischen Werdens* (Stuttgart 1923). Reger began his study with Lindner in 1884. It is probably not without significance for Reger's later engagement with the Protestant chorale that the Stadtpfarrkirche was used by both Catholic and Protestant congregations.
- 8 Reger first appeared in public as a pianist in May 1887 in context of a Weiden school recital. Popp 2000, 30. Lindner cites the music of Schumann (op. 60), Bach, Mendelssohn, and Liszt as the content of Reger's organ repertoire study at the time. Lindner 1923, 39. In letters to Hugo Riemann from the period, Reger himself mentions his playing of the fugues of Bach (Would they have been organ fugues, or other keyboard fugues adapted to the organ?) and the organ works of Mendelssohn and Schumann. Letters of December 5, 1888, and November 23, 1889 respectively, in Popp 2000, 43 and 59.
- 9 See further Walter 1974, 124–28. The instrument had a forty-seven note compass, probably with a short octave. It was taken down during the first years of the twentieth century.
- 10 Lindner 1923, 39–40.
- 11 Letter of August 8, 1887 to the Lindner family in Popp 2000, 32–33. This and subsequent translations are my own. The 1836 organ by the Regensburg builder Johann Heinssen was hidden in an unfavorable position behind the high altar.
- 12 Lindner 1923, 39.
- 13 Riemann 1888.
- 14 Reger's duties as organ instructor would have been modest. The *Jahresbericht* of 1891 indicates seven organ students and four instructors. Popp 2000, 109. The facilities were no less limited: Lindner cites only a pedal piano when Reger arrived in 1890.
- 15 Cited in *ibid.*, 116.
- 16 Letter of December 23–25, 1890 in Popp 2000, 83.
- 17 Schumann's sixth Fugue on BACH op. 60, likewise an *alla breve* double fugue that incorporates triple against duple motion, provides an effective comparison. It is difficult to avoid the perception of Schumann's BACH motive, if only in the background, in the rhythmic guise of the first four notes in op. 7 no. 3.
- 18 Letter of October 22, 1892 to the Peters firm in Popp 2000, 124.
- 19 Letter of December 8, 1892 to the Peters firm in *ibid.*, 129. Emphasis Reger's.
- 20 Letter of December 11, 1893 in *ibid.*, 165.
- 21 Review of *Drei Orgelstücke* op. 7 in *The Monthly Musical Record* (Jan. 1, 1894), 10.
- 22 Letter of July 21, 1896 to George Augener in Popp 2000, 280. Cf. also the composer's insistence, in his 1892 letter to Augener cited above and repeated elsewhere, on Bach as the foundation of any legitimate organ music.
- 23 Letter of November 16, 1894 to Arthur Smolian in Popp 2000, 214. By December 9 in a letter to Anton Gloetzner, he referred to the work as "my Organ Sonata, baptized Suite for Organ." *Ibid.*, 223.
- 24 "*Den Manen Johann Sebastian Bachs.*" One senses the fervor of the dedication in a first-edition copy, now in private possession, which bears the additional autograph inscription "*Den Manen des Einzigén*" ("to the manes of the one and only"). Op. 16 illustrates an exception to the rule of Reger's practice of inscribing works to living contemporaries. An equivalent is the Five Songs op. 12, from late 1893 and thus precedent to op. 16, "to the manes of Franz Schubert."
- 25 Reger's preference for the passacaglia has to do in the first place with his abiding interest in variation. In the organ music it resurfaces in the Introduction and Passacaglia in D minor (1899, without opus), in the Sonata No. 1 in F sharp minor op. 33 (1899), as the sixth of Twelve Pieces op. 63 (1902, F minor, preceded by an Introduction,

- no. 5 of the collection), and in the monumental Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue in E minor op. 127. From the piano works, Reger's major contribution is the 1906 Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue in B minor op. 96 for two pianos. The op. 16 Passacaglia varies the bass twenty-nine times, variations 16–21 in the parallel major. Reger either remembers incorrectly or refers to a more ambitious initial plan when he reported to Riemann in a competitive tone that "Bach in his [Passacaglia] varied the theme 21 x — I 32 x." Letter of August 17, 1895 in Popp, ed., *Der junge Reger*, 246.
- 26 Walter Frisch has explored these and other connections in detail, particularly regarding the second and fourth movements of op. 16, in Frisch 2005, 154–61.
- 27 Walter 1952, 65.
- 28 See Reger's letter to Augener of November 26, 1894, in which he emphasizes his distance from "the style of Best, Widor, Guilmant" immediately following an update on the progress of op. 16. Popp 2000, 218–19.
- 29 Michael Kube, Preface to Max Reger, *Suite für Orgel Opus 16. Fassung für Klavier zu vier Händen* (Munich: Henle, 1999), iv. A similar performance tradition exists for Rheinberger's op. 132, which has a four-movement architecture resembling Reger's op. 16.
- 30 *Suite für Orgel Opus 16. Fassung für Klavier zu vier Händen*, ed. Michael Kube (Munich: Henle, 1999). Organists will benefit from study of this version alongside the original.
- 31 Cited in Popp 2000, 265.
- 32 Reger's letter to Riemann of July 21 is, like the correspondence from Brahms it relates, lost. A portion is reproduced in Gurlitt 1937, 82–3. Brahms's assessment of op. 16 is thus reported third-hand.
- 33 With the incipit *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* as nos. 9 and 10. Brahms will have completed the first seven of the eleven chorales between May 14 and 22 in Bad Ischl, whereas the last four were put together in June, following the journey Brahms took to Frankfurt and then to Bonn for Clara's funeral. Presumably during all the stressful shuffling around between Vienna, Bad Ischl, Frankfurt, Bonn, and Bad Honnef, Brahms arrived at an evaluation of Reger's Suite. See further Owen 2007, 77–81 and 117–18. To my knowledge, no one has proposed the link between Brahms's contact with the Suite in E minor and his own final turn to the organ.
- 34 Reimann 1893.
- 35 Wolgast 1928, 12.
- 36 Max Loewengardt, Review of Karl Straube at the Dreifaltigkeitskirche Berlin on March 3, 1897, in *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* 111 (March 7, 1897), cited in Popp 2000, 294.
- 37 The recital of April 1 was the second of three back-to-back appearances of Straube at the Frankfurt Paulskirche, home to E. F. Walcker's famous instrument of 1833. The first program on March 29 offered early music of Frescobaldi, Scheidt, Bernhard Schmidt, Byrd, Dandrieu, Buxtehude, Muffat, Pachelbel, and J. S. Bach. In addition to Bach, Liszt, and Reger, the second recital included music of Moritz Brosig and Albert Becker. Straube titled the third program on April 5 "The modern organ sonata," with sonatas by Mendelssohn and others. See Schreiber 1981, 257.
- 38 *Seinem lieben Freunde Karl Straube* is the dedicatory heading to both opp. 27 and 30. Straube would be the dedicatee of three further organ works: opp. 52 no. 2, 73, and 127. The date of the premiere of op. 27 has been the source of some confusion. In an undated letter from the end of September 1898, Reger reported to Cäsar Hochstetter that "Straube played it last Tuesday in a concert 2 x (as the *first* — and then the *last* number)." Popp 2000, 347. Emphasis Reger's. "Last Tuesday" appears in Schreiber's account as September 13, but in fact Straube played the work in two Wesel recitals on September 20 and again a week later on September 27, both times at the end of the program. Schreiber 1981, 257–8.
- 39 These include the gifted Alfred Sittard (1878–1942), at the time of Reger's Weiden breakthrough a student at the Cologne Conservatory, then from 1903 organist of the Dresden Kreuzkirche; and the Leipzig native Paul Gerhardt (1867–1946), organist of the Marienkirche in Zwickau and first to bring Reger's organ music to Saxony.

- 40 See further Anderson 2003, Adams 2007, and Stewen 2008.
- 41 Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1873–80). Reger would dedicate the Fantasy on *Wie schön leucht' uns der Morgenstern* op. 40 no. 1 to the theologian Friedrich Spitta, with Julius Smend editor of the *Monatsschrift für Gottesdienst und kirchliche Kunst* and younger brother of Philipp Spitta.
- 42 Chickering 1994, 536.
- 43 Letter of September 1898 (date unknown) to Cäsar Hochstetter, in Popp 2000, 347. Emphasis Reger's.
- 44 One might likewise argue for a connection between Reger's fantasies and a work like Alban Berg's Violin Concerto of 1935, where in the second movement the first strophe of *Es ist genug* emerges out of an extended introduction, harmonized almost exactly as in BWV 60 and with text underlaid.
- 45 Through early 1901, these include no fewer than seventy-four texts in the song collections opp. 23, 31, 35, 37, 43, 48, 51, and 55; and in the choral works opp. 21, 38, 39. Straube, who wrote several reviews of Reger's works at the time, repeatedly singled out the Lieder as "highly significant" and placed the composer "without contest next to Richard Strauss at the pinnacle of modern Lied composers." Straube 1900, 268.
- 46 Reimann 1894, 519. By 1896, Reimann evidently felt obliged to publish a follow-up discussion "in order to have the desired opportunity to return in a more thorough way to my often misunderstood position on the 'French'," who, he goes on to say, "fall into a style that we more serious, Protestant Germans can only label as 'contrary to the organ.'" Reimann 1896, 360. Note that Reimann not only uses the same expression (*orgelwidrig*) Reger had used in his 1892 letter to Augener cited earlier, but also that he expressly relates the quality of "seriousness" to Protestant culture.
- 47 Lindner 1923, 136.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 171.
- 49 Letter of December 1, 1897 to an unknown recipient, in Popp 2000, 307. Reger may have had in mind certain modulatory passages like that beginning at m. 31 in Bach's Fantasy. The comment concerning *Stimmung* is significant and calls up the fundamental question of temperament in Reger's music. (What does he mean by "*absolute Stimmung*"? Does the preference articulated here reflect what Reger experienced in the organs of Weiden and Wiesbaden particularly? And so on.)
- 50 Significantly, only three of the seven fantasies (opp. 27, 52 no. 2, and 52 no. 3) set all the strophes of their respective chorales. The others represent selective streamlining (op. 30, seven of ten; op. 40 no. 1, five of seven; op. 40 no. 2, six of seven; and op. 52 no.1, four of seven strophes), undoubtedly to make for optimal musical setting while preserving the overall direction of the text.
- 51 Letter of October 22, 1902 to Carl Lauterbach and Max Kuhn in Popp 1993, 37. Emphasis Reger's. The identity of the organist is unknown. In letters of October 21 and 28 to the same recipients, Reger would repeat the association with Bach. *Ibid.*, 37 and 40.
- 52 See his letter of December 19, 1893 to Lindner in Popp 2000, 167.
- 53 Reger's autograph title is simply *Fünzig Vorspiele für die Orgel*. The two latecomers, *Jesus ist kommen*, *Grund ewiger Freude* and *O wie selig seid ihr doch, ihr Frommen*, had appeared earlier in the *Monatsschrift für Gottesdienst und kirchliche Kunst*.
- 54 Letter of February 8, 1904 in Popp 1986, 49.
- 55 The comparison had been pursued already in Reger's lifetime. See further Anderson 2005.
- 56 Postcard of September 5, 1914 in Popp 1982, 186. Emphasis Reger's. On August 21, Reger had informed Stein that he had composed eight new preludes and requested that he send a list of twenty of the most common chorales. *Ibid.*, 183–4. The working method thus resembled that for op. 67, whereby an organist was asked for a list that reflected current practice. As with op. 67, too, the project seems to have taken on two further settings before publication (8 + 20 + 2).

- 57 Letter of November 1, 1899 in Popp 2000, 457. The comment may allude to Bruckner's "Romantic" Symphony No. 4 in E flat, a work that itself went through heavy revisions. To Rheinberger he would call op. 33, with typical rhetorical flourish, "my latest crime against harmony, counterpoint, etc. etc." Letter of January 7, 1900 cited in Busch 1988, 79. That Straube came to see op. 33 as a central step in the composer's development is further suggested by the fact that he performed it on October 27, 1916 as the only organ work on Reger's memorial program at the Leipzig Conservatory.
- 58 Letter of April 8, 1899 to Arthur Edigi in Popp 2000, 406. In this regard it is relevant that Reger never completed a work in two of the major sonata forms of the period, the piano sonata and the symphony.
- 59 As in op. 16, the chorale material appears in op. 60 without appellation or text. The setting, which takes the chorale tune through a single statement in octaves, without interludes or ornamentation, represents a more straightforward integration than in the earlier work, and of course its position at the end of the movement gives it a different formal role.
- 60 As in *Die Musik* 5/1 (October 1905), 74. One may find many such statements from all periods in Reger's career.
- 61 Reger had already produced a tribute to Bach in his op. 16, and he would do so again in the Variations and Fugue on a Theme of J. S. Bach op. 81, his major work for solo piano that treats the duet aria from Cantata BWV 128.
- 62 Of course the aural shock factor depends not on the distance from an undeclared tonic so much as the semitone movement from the initial E flat minor. If E major were interpreted as the Neapolitan of E flat—that is, enharmonically as F flat major—the fourth chord could be brought conceptually into the functional world of the previous three, but this would miss the point of the cipher (in the German nomenclature, B–A–C–Ces instead of B–A–C–H).
- 63 It is worth noting that both the BACH fugue op. 46 and the fugue from the Bach Variations op. 81 for piano, both acceleration fugues, carry warnings from the composer concerning the metronome marks. In the former, they give "only an approximate indication." In the latter they are "not to be regarded as strictly binding," but rather "especially in the *moving* (fast) variations and *above all* in the fugue, for which a broad tempo always will be appropriate, [they] apply as the absolute highest *permissible* tempi with respect to 'speed' if the performance is not to suffer in clarity."
- 64 As in Smolian 1903.
- 65 Letter of July 9, 1901 cited in Popp 1986, 19. Straube evidently required more time, since he was in a position to premiere the work first on February 20 of the following year.
- 66 Rudolf Louis, review of Karl Straube at the Basel (Schweiz) Münster on June 14, 1903, *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* (June 23, 1903).
- 67 The notion was encouraged by Lindner, who claims to have lent Reger a copy of Dante's work at the time of composition. See Lindner 1923, 210.
- 68 Letter of June 25, 1904 in Popp 1986, 58.
- 69 Instances of parallels are exceedingly rare in Reger's writing and therefore stand out the more. Another example appears as parallel fifths between bass and tenor in m. 104 of the Fugue op. 57 (between beats 3 and 4), which feels wrong in the hands.
- 70 The form of the dedication is not unique: Reger would dedicate the orchestral Serenade op. 95 "to Felix Mottl in remembrance of October 8, 1905," recalling a similar event. It is perhaps a sign of Reger's growing independence from Straube that the Berlin organist Walter Fischer premiered op. 73 on March 1, 1905, two days before Straube played it at St. Thomas Church, Leipzig.
- 71 Letter of October 6, 1900 to Karl Wolfrum in Hase-Koehler 1928, 82. Op. 47 is the result of Reger's interest at the time in organ trios, which produced the *Schule des Trispiels* in 1903. See note 2.

- 72 See Lawford-Hinrichsen 2000, 120–38; and Popp and Shigihara 1995, 28–37, 46–52, and *passim*. The collaboration would lead to the publication of three further organ collections opp. 65, 80, and 85 (see Table 3.1), but more importantly to the groundbreaking Piano Quintet in C minor op. 64.
- 73 With manual designations in English and German, at Reger's request. Letter of May 31, 1901 to Henri Hinrichsen in Popp and Shigihara 1995, 46. The strategy speaks to the reception the composer's organ works had already found in England, in part through his early association with George Augener.
- 74 Straube's version appeared in 600 copies in three printings. See further Wilske 1995, 372–6.
- 75 The third falling interval g-flat<sup>2</sup>–e-flat<sup>2</sup>, which ensues after a second voice has begun its thematic answer, is less integral and used less consistently, although Reger's phrasing makes clear its status as part of the opening gesture. Note that the widening of the interval is accompanied by a lengthening of the note value (three eighth pulses for the a<sup>2</sup>, four for the f<sup>2</sup>).
- 76 Straube's premiere of selected movements from op. 59 at the Munich Kaimaal on November 9, 1901 was ordered Kyrie, Benedictus, Melodia, Intermezzo (nos. 7, 9, 11, and 3). Other performances (April 11, 1902 at Herne; December 3, 1906 at Göttingen; mid-November 1916 at Barmen) presented nos. 7 and 9 as a pair. When the Straube pupils Fritz Lubrich and Walter Buchheim played the Organ Mass in Leipzig Conservatory student recitals on May 3, 1910 and June 18, 1915 respectively, they did so as Kyrie–Benedictus–Gloria. In fact the record seems to show not a single instance of a performance of op. 59 nos. 7–9 by Straube or his circle in the order Reger composed and Straube edited them.
- 77 The hall itself commemorates the German/Prussian victory over the Napoleonic occupation in 1813. The organ was designed on the scale of the room, a vast cupolated space which seated well over 6,000 people and accommodated many more standing.
- 78 Letter postmarked April 16, 1913, in Popp 1982, 128. Emphasis Reger's.
- 79 Riesenfeld 1913. See also Walter 1974 "Entstehung," where several reviews of the premiere are reproduced. There is also evidence that the Reger and Straube pupil Karl Hasse's Suite in E minor op. 10 influenced certain features of op. 127. See Bittmann 2002.
- 80 In op. 127 the second subject contrasts the first as a quieter, no less chromatic but more *ricercare*-like theme, a situation parallel to that of the double fugues in the Quartet op. 109 and the Symphonic Fantasy and Fugue op. 57. The opposite principle applies to the double fugues of opp. 46 and 135b, and of the BACH Variations for piano op. 81. See further Walter 1974 "Entstehung," 51–2.
- 81 Reger's first mention of op. 135b appears in an undated letter in Popp 1986, 242. In April 1914, Reger had contributed comments to a "*Festheft zum 50. Geburtstag von Richard Strauss*" published in *Der Merker* 5/112 (May 1914), 394. There, he cited Strauss as "a thoroughly classical figure of the most solid ability—and once more, ability." A request to dedicate a work to Strauss, presumably op. 135b, is recorded in a letter of January 18, 1915 to the elder composer. Grasberger and Strauss 1967, 212.
- 82 See further Anderson 1999.
- 83 The passage bears the scar of a ten-bar cut which would have provided a gradual transition to the dominant harmony.
- 84 Postcard of September 7, 1913 to Hans von Ohlendorff in Hase-Koehler 1928, 270. To Straube, on the other hand, he referred to the pieces of op. 129 as "*sanfte Heinriche*," that is, of no particular importance but with public appeal. Letter of March 25, 1914 in Popp 1986, 234.
- 85 Kolberg, the birthplace of Reger's wife Elsa, was the site of the family's summer vacation in 1905, 1907, 1909, and 1913. At least in the latter three of these years, Reger improvised at the Cathedral organ. A revealing eyewitness's recollection of his

- playing is that of the Magdeburg organist Georg Sbach (Sbach 1923). On August 31, 1913, precisely the time of op. 129's composition, Reger wrote the Duke of Meiningen that he had "played organ in a concert at the local cathedral for a charitable cause." Mueller von Asow 1949, 517.
- 86 Moreover, the preceding lament of the *Trauerode* had ended with *Was Gott tut*, in the same key and at first harmonized identically to its appearance in the *Dankpsalm*. The two works, the only ones in the collection to bear dedications, thus appear to be associated in a rhetorical arch that moves from lament to acceptance to gratitude and praise.
- 87 Walter 1978.
- 88 Furtwängler 1956, 29.
- 89 The request came from Söhngen, who had aired his views on an "objective" Reger in a three-part essay titled "*Max Regers Stellung in der kirchenmusikalischen Entwicklung*," Söhngen 1941. On the other approaches cited here, see Schweitzer 1906, Walcha 1952, and Matthaei 1949.

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# 4

## THE IDEA OF *BEWEGUNG* IN THE GERMAN ORGAN REFORM MOVEMENT OF THE 1920S

*Peter Williams*

In 1928 Günther Ramin, organist of St. Thomas, Leipzig, and thus someone with great influence in the lively and energetic spheres of church music, organ-playing, and conservatory education, published one of the many essays inspired by the decade's newer attitudes to organs and organ repertory. His pamphlet includes the following remarks:

Our period is moving rapidly in regard to evaluation and reassessment of artistic complexes, and one is almost taken aback at how big and far-reaching the Organ Renewal Movement has become in the space of six years. May this [haste] not be a sign that this renaissance has come about as one of the many spiritual currents of fashion in the post-war era, rather may the true kernel and genuine enthusiasm of this process of change be preserved!<sup>1</sup>

Many themes can be discerned in these remarks, representing certain views commonly held at the time. These views were that there was a discrete *Orgelbewegung*, one that was only six or so years old at that point; that despite (probably) being a “fashion” it had a “kernel of truth” and the character of a “renaissance”; that it related specifically to the postwar period, a period of general reevaluation in Germany; and of course that it was a subject on which the organist of the Bach church could usefully offer thoughts to the musical community. Each of these themes is a subject for contemplation today, not least insofar as they still exist in the minds of musicians who seem barely aware of the broader musical interests that were being developed in other countries at that time. The *Orgelbewegung* was and is a national movement that often exposes the limitations of cultural centrism at the very moment it is being original and “enlightened.” As such it is something of a case-study for the assumptions that underlie an important, well-populated

sphere of practical music-making in the 1920s, and indeed underlie a good deal of performance inside and outside Germany over the rest of the twentieth century.

### A Discrete *Bewegung*?

That Ramin's booklet, despite the apposite nature of its contents, has been almost entirely absent from recent literature concerning the *Orgelbewegung* is itself a sign of one of the *Bewegung's* most powerful traits: just as it promoted certain attitudes about organs and organ music presented as the canonic or official view, so it created a narrow canon of literature on the subject, in particular the writings of Albert Schweitzer, Wilibald Gurlitt and Christhard Mahrenholz.<sup>2</sup>

Gurlitt's and Mahrenholz's analysis of the change in tastes in which they saw themselves as taking a leading role became, and has continued to be, a German orthodoxy for understanding a decade of monumental musical developments in which organs and church music assumed, frankly, only a marginal part. More recent German writing has modified this position only in certain details: an author might now point out that Schweitzer's credit ought to be shared by another Alsatian reformer, Emil Rupp, or that in any case Schweitzer's position has been misunderstood and that he had little sympathy with back-to-the-past interests.<sup>3</sup> In general there still appears to be little awareness of the broader background, those events preceding the German *Orgelbewegung* which were described by L. F. Tagliavini already nearly thirty years ago now.<sup>4</sup> Particularly dominated by this canon and following entirely in its footsteps have been writers in those countries traditionally dependent on established German norms, including Denmark, Holland, and (during the years of partition) East Germany. This is the more surprising because Denmark in particular was producing "historically aware" organs here and there already in the 1920s,<sup>5</sup> so that for many years, as far as new organs were concerned, one could more nearly approach the spirit of Buxtehude in Denmark than in Germany. That in effect Schweitzer and Rupp themselves challenged German orthodoxy by claiming Widor as the greatest organ-composer after Bach<sup>6</sup>—and therefore implied that his organist-type was of paramount importance to modern builders—did nothing much to convince leaders of the movement to broaden their ideas, one imagines. To them, it was such a claim as this that must have seemed provincial.

Questions about the received view of the German Organ Reform Movement can be raised under various heads. These include its attitudes towards historical performance, towards *Urtext* editions of music, and towards the work of writers elsewhere and to what extent it sympathized with extant old instruments that were too small or too quaint for the music of Bach.

On the attitude to *historical performance*: to a large extent this depends on the other attitudes (to *Urtext* editions, old instruments, etc.) and it seldom if ever appears as a topic beyond the details of organ registration. For the organist the question of timbres (stop registrations) does no doubt loom large, but it is striking

what a minor part was played in earlier phases of the reform by the questions that occupy so many pages in today's publication, such as mechanism or temperament or articulation.

On *editions of music*: it is strange that in referring to Karl Straube's collection *Alte Meister des Orgelspiels* (1904)<sup>7</sup> Gurlitt should imply approval for its editorial techniques. For if one bears in mind the standards already established by the Guilmant–Pirro series *Archives des Maîtres de l'Orgue* (1901–), Straube's editing amounted to little more than making updated arrangements. Perhaps it was politeness or partiality (Gurlitt had been a Straube pupil), but just as likely is that old French music was still regarded as too frivolous for Gurlitt to find Guilmant's work important. Nor was it only the *Archives des Maîtres* that were (as far as I know) nowhere acknowledged by the canonic *Orgelbewegung* writers, for the better German scholarly editions do not seem to enter much into their deliberations either, except as sources for popular editions. It is otherwise difficult to see why in his Pachelbel edition of 1928 Karl Matthaei should treat Seiffert's impeccable DTB volumes of 1901 and 1903 in this way. According to Matthaei, in this edition "all signs, phrasing, registration, tempo markings and so on are the result of careful study on the Praetorius organ"—Gurlitt's 1921 organ at Freiburg, stoplist in Appendix 1—and registrations have been added such as were "partly outlined" by Straube in his recitals on that organ (Bärenreiter Edition 238, preface). This sounds as if Matthaei–Gurlitt–Straube were setting out to create a received view of Pachelbel. If so, it was one that would put back the idea of performances faithful to Pachelbel, since neither the Freiburg Praetorius organ nor the old instruments known to Straube would go very far in illuminating what Pachelbel had taken for granted in Erfurt and Nürnberg.

On the *work of writers elsewhere*: important though the achievements of major new German organ monographs were in the 1920s,<sup>8</sup> they were not alone. Equally concerned with great instruments of the past, with the mature repertoires of music composed for them and, by implication, with a renewed sense of the lessons they could teach modern builders, was the work of individual writers such as Félix Raugel in France.<sup>9</sup> Various French studies of old organ cases, though perhaps superficial musicologically, also evince a respect for such lessons, as does the first great study of the organ as art-object, Arthur Hill's *The Organ-Cases and Organs of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 2 vols (London, 1883, 1891).<sup>10</sup> From time to time in such books, explicit criticism are made of the then contemporary standards of design and workmanship, and derogatory comparison is made between them and the work of the past. Such criticism is an *eminence grise* behind much of the performance practice interests of the time and became a prime mover of *Orgelbewegung* philosophy: but it certainly did not originate there, nor is it acknowledged by its writers.

On *old organs of little use to Bach*: the *Orgelbewegung's* interest in or awareness of the historic position of extant old instruments in general—other than those fit for major works of Buxtehude and Bach—should by no means be taken

for granted. The smaller old organs of East Friesland raise questions about the Movement's principles, for while the attention paid them in the 1920s by certain *Orgelbewegung* leaders was useful, nevertheless many of the fine instruments since restored there were declared by those leaders at that time to be irreparable and hopelessly antiquated.<sup>11</sup> It should be clear from the instruments particularly associated with *Orgelbewegung* philosophies—the Freiburg “Praetorius organ” and the Marienkirche, Göttingen (see Appendix 2)—that despite the claims made by its spokesmen, the Movement's organological understanding was not at all fully alerted to earlier periods. Only the stoplist of these organs and the new timbres created by the oldstyle stops suggest anything historical: the mechanism and other structural details betray no awareness that the organ as we know it is a historical phenomenon, to modify too many parameters of which is to change it beyond the definition of “organ.” (Only in the last thirty years, and only by certain craftsmen, has something of this sort been recognized for harpsichord and other keyboard instruments.) Without an understanding of the historical periods of the organ it is difficult to imagine an understanding of historical performance or those elements in it that follow as a matter of course from particular types of instrument.

### “Fashion” Versus “Kernel of Truth”

That for some time the Schweitzer–Gurlitt–Mahrenholz sequence dominated the thinking of certain historians is clear from the writing of Gurlitt's successor in Freiburg, when in 1967 the university hosted another organ conference. Showing the *Orgelbewegung* to be no mere movement for a return-to-the-distant-past, H. H. Eggebrecht isolated three elements in the broad concept of such a “movement” in the 1920s: *protest* against certain developments in the recent past, *affirmation of values* chiefly on behalf of earlier music against the “collapse” of music during the postwar years, and *the fixing of norms* in order to establish “canonic” views as to what was correct or not.<sup>12</sup> By extracting such elements in the thinking of the period, Eggebrecht is able to quote aptly from a writer of 1933:

[In this sense would] the German Music Movement come fully into its own only through the push forward of National Socialism.<sup>13</sup>

Not surprisingly, Eggebrecht also found that Adorno claimed a *Gemeinschaft* or “common purpose” between at least one musical movement (the *Singbewegung*) and fascism. But conceivably in Italy, too, the totalitarianism of that period could have provided a “climate” for a certain degree of “norm-fixing,”<sup>14</sup> and yet no new explicit organ movement emerged there. It seems that neither is conformity itself a sign of incipient Nazism nor did the *Orgelbewegung*, however much it coerced organists into conforming with what certain musicologists told them, lead to uniformity. It took another war to reduce German organ builders to a repetitious and dismal utility in their instruments, reflecting both the impasse that German organ

music had reached and the fact that for so long afterwards the enterprising builders of the West were cut off from the old masterpieces of Saxony.

The “kernel of truth” behind the “fashion” for rethinking the organ, as it showed itself in central Germany in the 1920s, was both international and by no means new. There had been signs pointing in this direction for some time. Shortly after 1900 Italian journals were carrying appreciations of the old Italian organ (particularly its *ripieno* and mechanical action),<sup>15</sup> and it would be difficult to find a more suitable summary of ideas in the Germany of the 1920s than those published in an English book of 1915:

The [old] church organs ... had that power based on sweetness which constitutes majesty. The change came on, and for the sake of louder tone, pressure of wind was doubled and trebled. The same pressure acting on the valves which let the wind into the pipes made them too heavy for the fingers to move through the keys. A machine was then invented which did the work at second hand ... Personal touch, which did so much for phrasing and expression, was destroyed.

Then fashion decreed that the organ should be an imitation of the orchestra ... but without the life that players instil into their instruments ... Modern compositions are intended for this machine, and all is well with them; but it is a revelation to hear Handel’s or Bach’s music on a well-preserved old organ.<sup>16</sup>

An important element in Arnold Dolmetsch’s pathbreaking book is that his remarks on the organ come third in his overall survey of “the musical instruments of the period.” He was enabled by experience and skill to view the organ in a context of other instruments, but this ability was virtually unknown to the *Orgelbewegung* and is still by no means common in German thinking. Nevertheless, Dolmetsch already identifies two of the themes that were characteristic of the *Orgelbewegung*: the dislike of higher (i.e., unnatural) wind pressure<sup>17</sup> and the complaint that organs imitated orchestras—which, as Mahrenholz later pointed out, was nothing new for organs.<sup>18</sup> Dolmetsch’s remarks were also aimed at performance itself, but what he said concerning sensitive action, like Raugel’s emphasis on the quality of workmanship in old French organs, took many years before finding echoes in Germany.<sup>19</sup> Earlier still, Schweitzer was speaking of the contrapuntal clarity given by older styles of organ voicing (see below, concerning the Kronenburg organ of 1908), but it took a Dolmetsch to see the picture in the round.

The tentative moves towards historical performance practice in the Germany of the 1920s rarely if ever became as focused as they were for Dolmetsch. Such a focus must have sprung from Dolmetsch’s practical experiences as both a maker and player, a combination not often found. On the contrary, in Germany in the 1920s the humanist academic-musicological training for men of influence was not practical in the same way and would tend instead to encourage broad

philosophical overviews that can appear vaguer the more they are contemplated. Arnold Schering (“today’s most prominent representative of German musicology,” according to Gurlitt in 1929<sup>20</sup>) was not alone in saying such things as:

As the music of our period approaches in many details the principal feature of baroque music ... the old organ becomes the symbol of a musical conception whose consequence lies in the future.

Schering’s “music of our period” must be far removed from most of the German repertoires of the post-Great War period and gives the impression that his readers knew nothing of the advanced music of the 1920s.<sup>21</sup> Was he thinking of the dead-end contrapuntalism of a Hindemith, as during the interwar years were so many of the advanced organists and church-composers, such as Hugo Distler in Lübeck?

Quite what a German musicologist of the 1920s such as Schering would call a “principal feature” of “baroque music” other than a certain kind of counterpoint and a certain regular phraseology characteristic chiefly of German music, is not always clear. But Schering certainly thought of the organ chiefly in connection with Protestant church practice, as is clear from another remark he made at that period:

For if we compare the near-to-earth sound of a Baroque organ with the far-from-earth of a Romantic, then it has to be inevitably accepted that the Protestantism of the Romantic period was to just the same degree as far from that of the Baroque in decisive points of the religious experience as the one sound-ideal was from the other.<sup>22</sup>

Such an attractively broad view belongs to the same national flair for the wide *aperçu* that would soon produce an Adorno—indeed, it is a view that helps to illustrate the culture that *could* produce the phenomenon Adorno. But in their lack of specificity—in their leaving the mere practical details to the artisan (*Bauer, Restaurator*)—such remarks give little guidance. Those craftsmen are left to their own devices, while academics are encouraged to survey grandly landscapes they themselves have never mapped on the ground. By no means has this situation much changed in the last ninety years, and insofar as a few recent organ builders have set standards for the restoration and understanding of old instruments (such as Jürgen Ahrend in East Friesland), little credit can go to any *Bewegung* theorists of the 1920s except as they eventually provided something for later, better educated builders to react against.

Meanwhile, however, it was not least in their language that the *Orgelbewegung*’s writers effectively influenced the future in a subtle way, in particular with the term “baroque organ.” It was and is a phrase that would otherwise have been barely conceivable—except in some art-historical or metaphorical sense—to

native English, French and Italian users. The *Orgelbewegung*'s "baroque organ" and "romantic organ" are good examples for any theory one might have that period labels have been invented to help with two of the music historian's great problems: to develop a good grass-roots knowledge (actually getting to know the label-defying range of instruments and music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) and to have to deal with vastly diverse amounts of music (a need to marshall under a *label* what it is one does know). Dolmetsch did not call and would never have called his book *The Interpretation of Baroque Music*.<sup>23</sup>

Even if a "kernel of truth" in the *Orgelbewegung* is that it helped alert musicians of one particular profession and one particular country to issues arising in the new historicism, it could be that its writers (Gurlitt, Mahrenholz) and players (Straube, Ramin), plus the new performance-practice scholars (Schering, Haas), did in effect promote a received canon of acceptable attitudes. And these attitudes would not only hold back development but would contribute to that division of labor characteristic of much German music study. Now one could claim that division of labor—keeping to one's specialism—leads to the fullest development in the long run. Early specialized experimental work in England on the history of pitch<sup>24</sup> has turned out to contribute directly or indirectly to the best of today's understanding of crucial aspects of instrument history.<sup>25</sup> Or the specialized positivistic coverage of details in Curt Sachs's handbook on instruments,<sup>26</sup> written and revised exactly over the period of the *Orgelbewegung*, forms a firm basis for today's detailed monographs written by professional organologists.<sup>27</sup> Or any professional, technical study open to subsequent detailed revision can at least lead directly to later interpretation and "truer" understanding.<sup>28</sup> But in the broad field of performance practice studies, division of labor could lead to too small a base from which to draw useful conclusions: neither a performer nor a scholar *simpliciter* would have enough experience for authoritative interpretation.

A good example of this can be found in certain coverage of figured-bass playing. The treatment of figured bass in Dolmetsch may appear to be less thorough than the comparable treatment in Schering,<sup>29</sup> where the *musicologist* has carefully selected amongst German repertoires and theorists to give the reader some historical coordinates. But Dolmetsch's coverage bespeaks the more experienced musician. In drawing briefly but tellingly upon a finely selected group of imaginative and practical authors—Praetorius, Mace, d'Anglebert, Forqueray, Geminiani (apropos Handel), and Bach (? BWV 203)—Dolmetsch gives a far livelier and inspiring view of the arts and styles involved in the art of playing figured bass. It is true, as Schering says, that no thorough coverage of the subject *auf historischer Grundlage* had so far appeared, but even when something of the kind did appear (also in 1931, but not in Germany and presumably not known at the time to Schering),<sup>30</sup> it could not improve on Dolmetsch as far as the responsive player was concerned, and it must have lain unused on the library shelves of English conservatories.

A useful comparison of these three *continuo* writers—Dolmetsch, Schering, and Arnold—can be made in the way they handled Praetorius's realization of the bass

in the second section of his motet “Wir glauben’s” (not so identified by Schering). For Schering (p. 149), it seems to be simply a four-part realization of a full-choral movement, for which he cross refers to a further theorist (Bianciardi). For Arnold, who alone quotes and translates the whole passage (vol. I, pp. 47–48, eagerly identifying parallels in the harmony!), the reference is much fuller though not as full as he intended, because he could not find (as he laudably wished to) a full set of Praetorius’s vocal parts with which to check and compare it. But for the pioneering Dolmetsch (pp. 342–441), Praetorius’s realization is more useful for the musical performer himself. It “gives a noble example [and] the working out is free ... just right for effect;” furthermore, it remains an important source because most books of the period “hardly say anything about the practical and artistic sides of the question,” which are what Dolmetsch was interested in and wished to write about.

It may be unrealistic, however, to suppose the *Orgelbewegung* to have led organists to feel involved or knowledgeable in such issues as stylistic figured-bass playing. Whether Günther Ramin or Karl Straube studied the work of Max Schneider on Bach’s figured bass, I do not know.<sup>31</sup> To that period, too, belonged D. F. Tovey’s piano realizations of Bach continuo (so admired by Arnold—see his preface to vol. I, p. xiii), and it is very unlikely that he followed the manner described by early eighteenth-century writers. These big musicians of ca. 1930 would pay no attention to a Heinichen or Mattheson. Nor do organists appear to have seen that new attempts to understand aspects of *Aufführungspraxis* meant a crucial part for old organs in the picture as a whole. Non-organists certainly did not see it, for although one might now assume *Die Orgelbewegung* and *Aufführungspraxis* to be related, neither Schering nor Haas had much to say on organs, particularly as a token for any back-to-the-past movement there might have been. Their references, generalized and not very expert, are to its participation in early repertoires. Once past the period of Abt Vogler,<sup>32</sup> Haas does not refer to organ at all, and his remarks on *neuromantische* music concern only the orchestra.

### “In the Space of Six Years”

What Haas called *neuromantisch*, Schweitzer’s erstwhile colleague and later critic Rupp called *neudeutsch*: such was the music of the *Fortschrittspartei* of Liszt and Wagner (1859), as distinct from the late classics up to and including Brahms.<sup>33</sup> It can only have been by some kind of fancied analogy that Rupp could coin the phrase *die elsässisch-neudeutsche Orgelreform*, since most of the New German composers themselves had only the most tenuous connection with the organ. Yet insofar as Rupp thought it wrong to want to return to the “Bach–Silbermann” organ or the French (baroque?) church organ, desiring instead a complex of several organ types for “us New German builders and players,”<sup>34</sup> he may have been less than correct himself, for Liszt’s own organ interests centered on late-classical instruments much less technologically developed than those admired by Rupp. Ramin’s phrase “space of six years” suggests that he was thinking not of Rupp nor of Schweitzer but of the 1921

“Praetorius organ” in Freiburg, an instrument offering little to *neudeutsche* interests. On the contrary, it was neo-baroque in the very respect that can have been only marginal to the modern composers but fascinating to the *Orgelbewegung* organists: its timbres and the taste for “old sounds” it encouraged.<sup>35</sup>

Although J. S. Bach was the spoken and unspoken household god being appeased by the true believers’ sacrifice of high-pressure orchestral organs, a longer musical lineage was most often invoked by the writers, that of Scheidt-Buxtehude-Bach-Reger. (This lineage is still fundamental to church musicians.) These four were not evaluated equally, of course, and the sequence sustained the idea of Bach as “the culmination of an era.” In Ramin’s words:

If one observes the history of the development of church music it becomes clear that the great appearance of J. S. Bach signifies a goal, a fulfillment, and that the essential steps of development are to be sought *before* him.<sup>36</sup>

Such belief led Schweitzer and Gurlitt to very different recommendations for organs, and yet both could claim to be justified by what they understood to be “the Bach organ.” Schweitzer knew the Silbermann connection to be important, but reasoned that the best of recent French-Alsatian organ building was more appropriate. If for him Bach was “a mystic, a model, and an educator for mankind,” then what was wanted was a “true” or “artistic” organ, something perhaps corresponding to the masterpieces of the 1850–1880 period (with a swell manual and good action), not some historicist reconstruction. If there was a particular historical figure for the French Alsatians to emulate, it was Andreas Silbermann, an imitation of whose pipe-voicing Schweitzer was pleased to announce already in the Strasbourg-Kronenburg organ of 1908, on which instrument fugal inner parts were “remarkably clear.”<sup>37</sup> In all such discussions, there must have been elements of geographical rivalry—Rhineland *versus* Prussia, Alsace *versus* Thuringia—and it is not difficult to suspect this rivalry to be lurking behind many apparently pure musical preferences. Thus Gurlitt, a Freiburger surely not ignorant of Alsatian organ tone, focused more on the old pure German organs of Thuringia and Lower Saxony and found in Praetorius an appropriate starting point for an understanding of the Scheidt–Bach sequence, i.e., the more purely German pedigree removed from Alsace. Because of such “geographical rivalry,” Bach devotion could lead devotees in several directions.

But there is an enormous difficulty encountered when the music of Bach is the reference point for organ builders, advisers, and players: no one knows what any of the organs he played regularly were like. A second difficulty is that virtually everything about them—size, timbre, pitch, tuning, compass, touch, playing dimensions, accessories, acoustic, the general and the specific sound—varied in the course of the half century during which Bach can be assumed to have been composing organ music. Rarely do any of the 1920s writers on organs, organ-music, or performance practice ever betray an awareness that, for example, the

Passacaglia and the E flat Prelude and Fugue were composed with very different organs in mind, or that very different organs were associated with the composer over the decades in which he produced such music. This is an approach that has still not been very thoroughly worked out, even today. Ernst Flade, author of one of the more valuable monographs of the period,<sup>38</sup> came near to it when he remarked at the Freiburg Conference of 1926 that indeed various organ types were appropriate for the various periods within the Bach oeuvre, but he compromised by claiming that the early works “could be played” on the next-generation instruments of Gottfried Silbermann. Wilhelm Fischer also explored the idea a little but necessarily suffered from the day’s understanding of the Bach chronology.<sup>39</sup> Insofar as the 1920s were aware of the chronological factor, organists seem to have recognized it only in terms of tonal character—what different stops or manuals could be found on organs respectively of the 1690s and 1740s—and not with respect to other details of performance, such as whether keyboards and therefore articulation changed in the course of Bach’s life.

In *Orgelbewegung* theory, Gurlitt’s Praetorius organ of 1921 took the player as far as the early works of Bach, while Mahrenholz’s Göttingen organ of 1926 gave one the total sequence of Scheidt-to-Reger (see Appendix 2).<sup>40</sup> Straube, perhaps bearing in mind Flade’s praise of Gottfried Silbermann and criticism of that “inborn German tendency for the speculative” which could lead to a “shoving aside of the tested-and-true of old,”<sup>41</sup> evidently became enthusiastic for Gottfried Silbermann, and re-registered his collection of old organ music according to the Silbermann organ(s) in Rötha (1718), a village only a short drive from Leipzig. (One wonders what attention Straube had paid these nearby organs before they became acceptable to the *Orgelbewegung*. His registration for the “Eight Little Preludes and Fugues” of Bach<sup>42</sup> shows no knowledge of Silbermann’s own recommendations.) Silbermann organs in Dresden, Großhartmannsdorf, Helbigsdorf, and Freiberg were visited by members of the 1927 Conference, and meanwhile a masterpiece of the northern master Arp Schnitger was also being invoked: the Jakobikirche, Hamburg (1693). This was an organ celebrated ever since it had been completed, associated with one of Bach’s job applications, admired by local experts such as Hans Henny Jahnn but now thrust into the *Orgelbewegung* limelight by Günther Ramin and Karl Straube (1923–24).<sup>43</sup>

To some extent one can see the support for Praetorius, G. Silbermann, and Schnitger as a response to the Schweitzer-Rupp emphasis on Andreas Silbermann, in particular the organ in Ebersmünster (Alsace). That there were nationalistic elements at play for at least some of the antagonists seems clear from Rupp’s preface, which is free of German references of any kind.<sup>44</sup> And for other critics, the Freiburg *Orgelbewegung* was too one-sided, even provincial.<sup>45</sup> Of course, old organs had been continuously played, and Ramin cannot have been the only musician to ask how it came about that suddenly everyone admired them (see p. 34, n1). The answer was: because an agenda was being created around them, publicized by conferences and those that dominated them.

Ramin's "space of six years," then, coincides with the opening of the Praetorius organ in the University of Freiburg and follows the interpretation of events as developed by the conferences and confirmed—a suitably canonic term—by both the cantor and the organist of St. Thomas, Leipzig. At that point, musicology and organology had not yet come together to give guidance on, for example, questions of dual pitch, transposition, and temperament such as were relevant to the organ's part in Bach cantatas,<sup>46</sup> but the general move away from the "factory organ"<sup>47</sup> would naturally lead to a refinement of understanding on many such fronts. The first of the spate of books on old organs in the German regions (Burgemeister on Silesia, Haacke on Mecklenburg<sup>48</sup>) relate or refer to another and more openly antiquarian conference, the *19. Tage für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz* held at Breslau in 1925, in which Gurlitt and Burgemeister participated and which typified the renewed interest in the older crafts generally and the museum priorities they would lead to. Without doubt, such interests were still those of a small minority, and in those same months most organists would have seen the new giant organ of Passau Cathedral (the "largest church organ in the world") as far more indicative of progress and of that technical know-how for which German organ builders had long been widely admired.<sup>49</sup> The biggest organ in the world before World War I, the Breslau Jahrhunderthalle, had required special electrical engineering,<sup>50</sup> and it cannot have been easy in the 1920s to deliberately shun such well-established and proud technologies.

But a *geistige Bewegung*, as at the time Jacques Handschin claimed the *Orgelbewegung* to be,<sup>51</sup> could consciously turn away from material excess, especially if it were the excess of southern Roman Catholicism (Passau Cathedral) or of industrial-municipal pride (Breslau Jahrhunderthalle), and towards the technical craft elements or superfine workmanship of old Protestant instruments (G. Silbermann). Thus, at the Freiburg Conference, Paul Rubardt (later director of the ex-Heyer Collection of Historical Instruments, Leipzig) called for a fundamental technical study of all the extant Schnitger work, especially its scaling.<sup>52</sup> Pipe-scale in particular interested the earliest *Orgelbewegung* writers, being a technical question they could get their teeth into. An irony of Mahrenholz's booklet on the Göttingen organ (see Appendix 2) is that there are several pages in it devoted to scaling theory while the organ itself was an unrefined compromise: electric console, Victorian gothic *Hauptwerk* and a new *Rückpositiv* very coarsely designed (after the Hamburg Jacobiorgel?). Perhaps scaling interested the *Orgelbewegung* writers for the same reason it had the Benedictine theorists of the tenth century: pipe-scale gives a scientific *locus* for the attention of humanistically trained and literate authors, while out there in the workshops the actual organ makers find and have always found so many other technical and technological details quite as pressing, if not more so.

It is tempting to think that another development of the period also helped focus attention on the specifics of organology and performance practice: the summary-like but newly comprehensive descriptions of certain musical repertoires, as represented by Karl Fellerer's two volumes on organ music.<sup>53</sup> Nothing in other

countries compared with this wide-ranging coverage of music, and in one particular respect it surpasses most *Orgelbewegung* writings: unlike them it does not merely nod towards other, non-German repertoires,<sup>54</sup> merely in order to regard Bach as the consummation devoutly to be wished. However, whether Fellerer's discussion of other repertoires did directly influence developments is doubtful, if only because even today the fullest understanding of e.g. French elements in the organ music of J. S. Bach is unlikely to be found in any part of Germany. The nationalism that was inherent in the Bach devotion of the 1920s and 30s had the effect of bequeathing a narrowness of outlook towards the beloved composer, since it demoted the non-German elements in his music and led musicians to think that they could quickly summarize them. What was written about the neo-baroque organ of Bremen Cathedral in 1939 (that it was the significance of Bach that had led to the lively re-awakening of German baroque music and its organ-ideal, hence to a renaissance of old German organ music) could still be found in a comparable pamphlet today.<sup>55</sup> Another idea still valid in German historiography is Ramin's "space of six years": 1921 and the Freiburg Praetorius organ are still regarded today as the starting points for well-researched studies of organ music,<sup>56</sup> as if a *Movement* can be so exactly dated.

## Reevaluation in the Interwar Years

Long after the events of 1933, the step between "nationally-aware" and "nationalistic" can appear very small. Is it only the associations of the Third Reich's gothic book-type in 1935<sup>57</sup> that make such phrases as *das ganze Reich* (when speaking of organ regions) or *im klassischen Lande der Orgelkomposition, des Orgelspiels und der Orgelbaukunst* seem to have taken that small step? Is it only the associations of autumn 1939 that suggest Müller-Blattau's reference at that period to Strasbourg and the Rhineland as *eine rechte deutsche Orgellandschaft*<sup>58</sup> to be bolstering certain political agendas? That it is easy to draw hasty conclusions about what is politically significant is clear from the 1927 Freiberg Conference's talk of *das deutsche Volk* and of the education *des Volkes* (Freiberg conference papers, pp. 87–88, 91 [see n.2): as it happens, these were not new political slogans at all but quotations from Schoenberg's *Richtlinien für ein Kunstamt* (Vienna, 1919), and they bore no obvious relation to the National Socialists' peculiar adoption of these words.<sup>59</sup>

But the "reevaluation" characteristic of the *Orgelbewegung* for Ramin was moral-political when it meant that its "historical strengths" (*geschichtliche Kräfte*) were there to expose the "historically alien and fickle revolutionizing and Americanizing of the organ" (*geschichtsfremden und geschichtsflüchtigen Orgelrevolutionierung und-americanisierung*) and thus to make it possible for "the German organ and its music [to become] again a genuine, leading force in European musical life" (*die deutsche Orgel und Orgelmusik wieder zu einer wahrhaft führenden Macht im europäischen ... Musikleben*).<sup>60</sup> In this way, Schweitzer's dislike of high wind pressures and electric actions would now have a spiritual dimension, since these modern devices

make it impossible for an organist to “speak the impulses of the soul.”<sup>61</sup> Cultures that produced the *americanized* (cinema) organ would be anathema, and it is difficult to believe that such views were free of political or even military overtones. In 1933, when addressing a leader of the party-friendly “Confessional Reform Movement” or *Glaubensbewegung* (the so-called *Deutsche Christen*), Hans Henny Jahnn—poet, playwright, philosopher, visionary, organ builder, and occasional anti-Semite—not only took up the theme of a Germany deplorably gripped by *Amerikanismus* but also unwittingly revealed the kind of historiography (abetted by short-cut simplifications such as period labels) that must surely have encouraged political thuggery. Any visionary who spoke in favor of a “German rebellion against Christian confinement” as it had once been personified by Charlemagne (whom he called “Emperor Charles the Saxon-killer”) and who rejoiced in a future rebellion that would originate in Baltic lands where the “Hanseatic spirit met northerly power-streams,” was playing with fire, even if on this occasion he was only giving his views on organ-building.<sup>62</sup>

That Jahnn himself was discredited by the Nazis<sup>63</sup> does not lessen the danger of such historiography, for any sense of indisputable national right conveyed by such theorists or practitioners will not remain confined to arcane arguments about mechanical organ action. Jahnn’s personal visions—particularly of the life-pervading validity of Pythagorean proportion, or of that “cosmic transmission” that was last represented by J. S. Bach, etc.—may have seemed a manifestation of cultural bolshevism to some,<sup>64</sup> but those to whom it did were the kind of people who also had their own ethereal *visions*, though of a deadlier kind. It was not necessarily a big step from describing the moral character of German music to hinting at—even encouraging—contemporary political developments. When Schütz’s music was seen as something that had signalled “the beginning of capitalist enterprise” in an Erzgebirge whose “bourgeois and courtly music-making” was developing with the “new High German language” after the original “German colonialization” of Thuringia-Saxony,<sup>65</sup> was it so big a step to go on to support a more active form of *Ostpolitik* in that period (1935)? With the benefit of hindsight, it does not appear to have been so. While the Buxtehude Complete Edition founded in 1925 may not have been planned because this “unprecedentedly healthy music” was thought at the time to contrast with the modern *Nervenmusik*, it was only a decade or so later that it was said to be doing precisely this.<sup>66</sup> An organist would play such healthy music in as healthy a manner as he could by means of a mechanical organ action—which would more easily convey its “northerly power-streams.” And the “clean lines” of an *Orgelbewegung* organ as designed and built in the 1930s would sustain the “cleanliness” metaphors. In the circumstances one is bound to wonder how far removed from this was the desire to *clean out* the synagogues.<sup>67</sup>

Whatever its connection to later political developments, the idea of “reevaluation” in the 1920s takes various forms in *Orgelbewegung* literature, and presumably the organ playing that went with it. Gurlitt himself speaks of the situation “for the youth returning from the war” and of the musical effects of the *Jugendbewegung*.

Surely not alone at the time, he also makes the point that the losers in World War I were not the “Powers of Central Europe” but the whole of Europe.<sup>68</sup> All this would not seem to have much to do with organs were it not that the writers themselves made certain connections. Thus the Göttingen Marienorgel was important to *die ganze Jugendmusikbewegung* since it offered an amalgam of German achievements in the present and the past and was thus a kind of model.<sup>69</sup> Perhaps there may not appear now a very clear relationship between organ stops and the *Wille ... in der kirchenmusikalischen Erneuerungsbewegung*,<sup>70</sup> but by 1938 the relationship was there for Mahrenholz:

In its origins, the Organ Movement is naturally a child of its time, the time after the Great World War and the collapse of our people. ... Much of that which the civilized world before 1918 had possessed with pride, appeared vain ...<sup>71</sup>

One *reaction to the collapse* meant a *return to natural things* and away from the artificial. For some, this meant a turn against machine-like instruments with their high wind pressures and organ consoles that looked like the control panel of a railway marshalling yard. For others, it somehow meant on the contrary an admiration for the large organ as purveyor of some *Gesamtmusikreich*, as J. Müller-Blattau put it at the second Freiburg Conference, now in 1938:

As the most comprehensive instrument of our musical culture, the big organ draws in to the great halls of our political festivals and ceremonies ... [It is] a total music empire ... the symbolic instrument of the community. It is a “political” instrument in the highest sense.<sup>72</sup>

Alas for Müller-Blattau, this was less likely to be alluding to the early Christian Fathers’ idea of the organ as an allegory for “the community of souls”<sup>73</sup> than to Günther Ramin playing the 220-stop Walcker organ in Nürnberg Luitpoldhalle (1936) to Hitler and his admiring crowds.

It is hardly feasible to guess how far such sentiments of 1938 were an inevitable result of a *Bewegung*’s “reevaluation” in the 1920s, but what one can say is that over this period there is no sudden change of direction, no obvious moral jolt from positive to negative nationalism. In the 1920s young musicology was taking another look at history, particularly that German Protestant music history which naturally gravitated around cantors and their worlds. This did not have to lead either to an empty historicism<sup>74</sup> or to fascism, but in helping to reestablish the organist and the organ as musical-cultural forces, it did mean resisting the “American” cinema-organ,<sup>75</sup> which in turn led to moral scorn for the popular (often black) musical idioms that went with it. Similarly, the apparently harmless call for *Hausmusik* in the 1920s became one more element in the politically correct family ideology developed after 1933,<sup>76</sup> and, unbelievable though it may

now seem, playing Telemann's recorder sonatas came to have a hidden political agenda. After all, if by 1938 the most influential musicians such as Müller-Blattau of Freiburg found themselves playing a part in reconciling music and its philosophy to the mentality of Bavarian beerhall putschists, they had the model of the Freiburg *Rektor* Heidegger before them.

In such presentations, there is only indirect reference to the *Aufführungspraxis* concerns of the period, to the fact that the *Jugendbewegung* was actually prewar in origin, and to the earlier moves towards historical awareness in musical matters that one could have found in other countries. The more the *Jugendmusikbewegung* merged into the *Hitlerjugend-Musikpflege* the less likely it was to develop any understanding of historical idioms and purely musical matters arising from trying to play them. Perhaps for many Germans the work of Dolmetsch in London or Erard in Paris had been an empty historicism, without any of the moral force of a *Bewegung*? The word *Bewegung* had long had the aura of didactic or moral improvement about it, chiefly—as far as the world of learning and teaching was concerned—through the *pädagogische Bewegung in Deutschland* of the second half of the nineteenth century. It continued to have this aura throughout the Nazi period, not least with the journal *Die Bewegung: Zentralorgan des NSD-Studentenbundes* (1933–45).

### Ramin as Organist of St. Thomas, Leipzig

It is possible that no one in the Upper Rhineland in the 1920s knew of the work of Dolmetsch or Erard in various fields of early music activity, including making harpsichords and giving historically conceived concerts? In fact, a curious element in the whole story of the *Orgelbewegung* is its apparent indifference to (ignorance of) harpsichords and the questions being asked by musicians and craftsmen working with other keyboard instruments and their equally monumental repertoires.

Several reasons for this are possible. Firstly, few old German harpsichords survived or aroused wide interest outside museums, although the Heyer Collection was presented to the University of Leipzig in 1927, the very period under consideration. Secondly, the organ world was self-contained and its *Bewegung* was inspired by professional or liturgical concerns, not therefore as part of a broader interest in historical conditions of performance as such. Thirdly, Bach's harpsichord music had become so firmly entrenched in the nation's piano repertory (the Old Testament to Beethoven's New) that organists would no more turn to the harpsichord for it than Italian organists would reject the piano for Scarlatti. And fourthly, the German organ up to World War I had become so excessive and dreary that it required more urgent attention than the organs of any other country did. This last is not expressed quite so bluntly at the time, although writers less personally committed then or now to the *Orgelbewegung*'s claims for authority have not hesitated to say something of the sort.<sup>77</sup> They could show how much more necessary it was to insist on traditional sliderchests in Germany than in England or Italy because in those countries the more recent factory-made organ chests had never become so popular.

When, therefore, Ramin writes as the current organist of the Bach church, he is giving the whole question a certain cathedral authority and stamping it as a church concern, one for which Bach is the touchstone. At the Freiberg Conference (conference papers, p. 113 [see n.2]), Gurlitt made a classic summing up of the kind that sees J. S. Bach as the “culmination of an era”<sup>78</sup> and reinforces the Protestant nature of the *Orgelbewegung*. After complaining that Sweelinck (teacher of Scheidt and thus the *deutscher Organistenmacher*) was too little valued, he points out that a study of Sweelinck supplies “a fundamental connoisseurship” (*eine gründliche Kennerschaft*) of the Netherlandish-Venetian *a cappella* style as it was “originally coined by Josquin” (*ursprünglich Josquinscher Prägung*) and as it then formed the basis of European organ art up to the late chorales of Bach. Not irrelevant to Gurlitt in this breathtaking historical sweep was the English virginal music, for with its new kind of instrumental technique it had become and “remains exemplary” (*vorbildlich bleibt*) for Protestant organ music. This kind of interpretation of history—which would surely have surprised Byrd, Bull, and Phillips—aims to show that various national schools can be briefly summed up before the real point is reached, which is: that they all contribute to a fuller understanding of J. S. Bach.

So canonic a view did this become that all too often to this day it affects how other keyboard repertoires are approached in so many German and therefore not a few American *Musikhochschulen*. Furthermore, it has also had the effect of delaying the appreciation of French elements in Bach for those readers who rely on German studies,<sup>79</sup> especially as the French *manière* is so much more a practical matter for the performer than for the scholar or theorist. Although by the time of the second edition of Hans Klotz’s organ history (1975)<sup>80</sup> writing on the Bach oeuvre has become much broader and more circumspect, the old canonicism still means that the final section of the book is devoted to *Die Orgelkunst Johann Sebastian Bachs*, as if it were for this that the reader had been waiting throughout the various gothic, renaissance, and baroque periods. The phrase “culmination of an era” is not used by Klotz, but it seems that an awareness of Bach’s cosmopolitanism—he rises *aus der mitteldeutschen Tradition ... der norddeutschen, der italienischen und der französischen Musik* (p. 375)—only confirms the same underlying idea. In the Nazi period, such interpretations must have slipped effortlessly into being politically correct: Rucker’s book of 1940 on the organs of the Upper Rhineland (see n. 58) goes through the motions of referring to other cultures (pp. 6, 8) but is at pains to confirm the *innerdeutsch* influences—as distinct from Dutch—on the organs of North Germany (pp. 93–94). This is poor history in two respects. It is superficial from the point of view of performance practice, since a major theme to explore is precisely the cross-border similarity in musical habits ca. 1500, in particular the nature of public concerts (organ recitals) at the time and the instruments used in them. And it is anachronistic in supposing that in ca. 1500 one could speak of a single “Germany” and that organs of other countries, like other elements in their culture, were marginal or could be easily dealt with.

## Postscript

Try as one might to see the *Orgelbewegung* in the broader musical context of the 1920s inside and outside Germany—particularly its focus on performance-practice issues—today’s move by certain German scholars born after World War II to find Nazi skeletons in revered musicians’ closets<sup>81</sup> is sure to make their motives appear other than purely musical. Of course, a posthumous witch-hunt might be unpleasant, but equally, any positivist or uncritical account of the *Orgelbewegung*’s aims<sup>82</sup> does seem inadequate, missing its political character and failing to illustrate the nature of the nationalistic *Moment* of the time. Musicians themselves were often quite willing to mix music and party politics.<sup>83</sup> It seems to be only now in the new anti-Nazi literature that certain basics become clear, such as that the Movement was only ever associated with certain people, of whom the unreliable H. H. Jahnn was one; there was strong resistance in Berlin already by 1928.<sup>84</sup> In turn, this suggests that the broad basis claimed for the *Orgelbewegung* by West German writers immediately after the twelve years of what is now called The Aberration (1933–45) was no more than a chimera, political wishful thinking, some kind of point-scoring.

## Appendix 1

Organ in the Institute of Musicology, University of Freiburg.

Planned by W. Gurlitt, drawing on M. Praetorius’s second volume (*De Organo-graphia*. Wolfenbüttel 1619, pp. 191–92), built by Oskar Walcker, dedicated by Karl Straube, December 4, 1921, destroyed November 27, 1944.

<i>Oberwerk (II)</i>		<i>Rückpositiv (I)</i>		<i>Brust</i>	
Principal	8	Quintadeena	8	Klein lieblich	
Octava	4	Blockflöit	4	Gedacktflöit/	
Mixtur	IV	Gemshörnlein	2	Rohrflöit	2
including Octav	2	Zimbel doppelt	II	Baerpfeiff	8
and Quint	1½	very small & sharp		Geigend Regal	4
Grob Gedackt/ Rohrflöit	8	Spitzflöit or Spillflöit	4		
Nachthorn	4	Krumbhorn	8	<i>Pedal</i>	
Schwiegelpfeiff	1			Untersatz, strong	16
Rancket, or quiet				Posaunenbaß	16
Posaun	16			Cornett	2
Gemshorn*	4			Dolzianbaß*	8

Couplers: I/II, P/I, \*P/II

\* stops not in Praetorius

Electric-pneumatic action; cone-chests; utility casework

Details taken from Praetorius include pipe measurements, materials, construction, sound and wind pressure.

Ref: A. Riethmüller, "Die Praetorius-Orgel der Universität Freiburg i. Br.", in ed. H. H. Eggebrecht, *Orgelwissenschaft und Orgelpraxis: Festschrift zum zweihundert-jährigen Bestehen des Hauses Walcker* = Veröffentlichung der Walcker-Stiftung 8 (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftl. Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1980), pp. 27–59.

## Appendix 2

Organ in the Marienkirche, Göttingen

Planned by Christhard Mahrenholz, built by Furtwängler & Hammer 1925 (enlarged in 1928)

<i>Hauptwerk</i>		<i>Rückpositiv</i>		<i>Oberwerk</i>	
Grossgedackt	16	Bordun	8	Geigend Prinzipal	8
Prinzipal	8	Quintade	8	Lieblich Gedackt	8
Viola da gamba	8	Salizional	8	Fernflöte	8
Holzflöte	8	Prinzipal	4	Prinzipal	4
Oktave	4	Gedacktflöte	4	Rohrflöte	4
Gemshorn	4	Schweizerflöte	4	Nasat	2 $\frac{2}{3}$
Oktave	2	Rohrflöte	2	Waldflöte	2
Mixture	V	Scharf	III	Nachthorn	2
Kornett	V	Sesquialtera	II	Zimbel	II
Trompete	8	Rankett	16	Dulzian	16
		Krummhorn	8	Oboe	8
		Tremulant		Regal	8
				Tremulant	
<i>Pedal</i>					
Prinzipal	16	Cello	8	Posaune	16
Subbass	16	Oktave	4	Schalmei	2
Quinte	10 $\frac{2}{3}$	Sifflöte	2	Dulzian	16
Oktave	8	Rauschpfeife	IV	Oboe	8
Gedackt	8	Bärpfeife	32	Regal	4

Seven couplers, Zimbelstern

*Hw*: originally with nineteenth-century case. *Rp*: new.

Ref: Christhard Mahrenholz, *Die neue Orgel in der St. Marienkirche zu Göttingen* (Göttingen/Augsburg, 1926: Bärenreiter; Kassel, 2/1931): 1926 edn, especially pp. 9 (stoplist), 17 (case), 30ff (scalings), and 63 (electric console).

## Notes

- 1 Günther Ramin, *Gedanken zur Klärung des Orgelproblems* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1929), p. 4. "Unsere Zeit schreitet schnell in Bezug auf Wertung und Umschichtung künstlerischer Komplexe und man ist fast betroffen, wie groß und umfassend in einer Frist von etwa 6 Jahren die Orgel-Erneuerungsbewegung geworden ist. Möchte dies kein Zeichen dafür sein, daß diese Renaissance als eine der vielen geistigen Modeströmungen der Nachkriegsepoche in Aufnahme gekommen ist, sondern möge der echte Kern und die reine Glut dieses Wandlungsprozesses erhalten bleiben."
- 2 E.g. Albert Schweitzer, *Deutsche und französische Orgelbaukunst und Orgelkunst* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1906), plus "Nachwort über den gegenwärtigen Stand der Frage des Orgelbaues," (ibid. 2nd edn, 1927). A good, recent summary of Schweitzer's thinking is Harald Schützeichel, "Orgelbau und Kulturreform: Albert Schweitzer in neuer Sicht," in *Berliner Orgel-Colloquium* 1988, ed. Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1990), pp. 45–64; Wilibald Gurlitt, "Die Wandlungen des Klangideals der Orgel im Lichte der Musikgeschichte," in *Bericht über die Freiburger Tagung für deutsche Orgelkunst vom 27. bis 30. Juli 1926*, ed. W. Gurlitt (Augsburg Bärenreiter, 1926), pp. 11–42, and "Zur gegenwärtigen Orgel-Erneuerungsbewegung in Deutschland," *Musik und Kirche* 1 (1929), pp. 90–102; reprinted in W. Gurlitt, *Musikgeschichte und Gegenwart: eine Aufsatzfolge*, 2 vols., ed. H. H. Eggebrecht (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1966). Also Christhard Mahrenholz, "Orgel und Liturgie," in *Bericht über die Dritte Tagung für deutsche Orgelkunst in Freiberg in Sachsen vom 2. bis 7. Oktober 1927*, ed. C. Mahrenholz (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1928), pp. 13–37, and "Fünfzehn Jahre Orgelbewegung: Rückblick und Ausblick," *Musik und Kirche* 10 (1938), pp. 8–28.
- 3 On Rupp, see the preface by Joachim Dorfmueller to the facsimile edition of Emil Rupp, *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Orgelbaukunst* (Einsiedeln, 1929; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1981). On Schweitzer, Schützeichel, "Orgelbau," esp. pp. 49–50.
- 4 Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini, "Mezzo secolo di storia organaria." *L'Organo* 1 (1960), pp. 70–86.
- 5 For Danish, Dutch, and East German accounts, see Frans Brouwer, *Orgelbewegung und Orgelgegenbewegung: eine Arbeit über die Ursprünge und die Entwicklung der dänischen Orgelreform bis heute* (Utrecht: Joachimsthal, 1981), esp. pp. 13–35; Hans Kriek, *Organum novum redivivum* (Buren: Knuf, 1981), esp. pp. 21–32; *Wege zur Orgel: Instrument, Musik und Spieler im Wandel von zehn Jahrhunderten*, ed. Christoph Krummacher (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1987) esp. pp. 74–78. In Denmark, Marcussen made mechanical-action sliderchests from 1930 (Kriek, *Organum novum*, p. 25).
- 6 According to Friedrich Högner. "Die deutsche Orgelbewegung," *Zeitwende* 7 (1931), pp. 56–71.
- 7 In "Karl Straube als Vorkämpfer der neueren Orgelbewegung," in *Karl Straube zu seinem 70. Geburtstag: Gaben der Freunde* (Leipzig: Peters, 1943), reprinted in Gurlitt, *Musikgeschichte*, pp. 74–89. For Gurlitt's remarks on Straube's rev. edn of 1929 see Gurlitt, p. 97.
- 8 In particular, Ludwig Burgemeister, *Der Orgelbau in Schlesien* (Strasbourg: Heitz, 1975), and Ernst Flade, *Der Orgelbauer Gottfried Silbermann: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Orgelbaues im Zeitalter Bachs* (Leipzig: Kistner & Siegel, 1926). As instances of both the geographical claims of Germany in the 1920s (Silesia as part of the Reich) and its musical assumptions (Silbermann important as a contemporary of J. S. Bach), these two titles are characteristic.
- 9 In particular, *Les grandes orgues des églises de Paris et du Département de la Seine* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1927).
- 10 For the French cases, see e.g. Félix Raugel, *Les anciens buffets d'orgues du Département de Seine-et-Marne* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1928). For a belated appreciation of Hill's

- significance, see W. Heise, "Ueber die Entdeckung des Orgelgehäuses," *Ars organi* 4 (1956), pp. 106ff.
- 11 Walter Kaufmann, *Die Orgeln Ostfrieslands: Orgeltopographie* (Aurich: Ostfriesländische Landschaft, 1968), pp. 19–20.
  - 12 H. H. Eggebrecht, *Die Orgelbewegung* (Stuttgart: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1967), pp. 10–12.
  - 13 Wilhelm Kamlah, "Die deutsche Musikbewegung," *Musik und Volk* 1 (1933) and *Monatshefte für Gottesdienst und kirchliche Kunst* 38 (1933): in Eggebrecht, *Die Orgelbewegung*, p. 11. "[In diesem Sinne sei] die deutsche Musikbewegung durch den Vorstoß des Nazionalsozialismus erst ganz zu sich selbst gekommen ..."
  - 14 See remarks by L. F. Tagliavini, "L'organo nel mondo musicale contemporaneo— Note in margine ad uno scritto di H. H. Eggebrecht," *L'Organo* 6 (1968), pp. 221–30, here p. 225.
  - 15 Tagliavini, "Mezzo secolo," p. 80; cf. Tagliavini, "L'organo nel mondo," p. 224.
  - 16 Arnold Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of the Music of the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (London: Novello [1915]), pp. 436–37.
  - 17 The "High Pressure Party" attacked in Emil Rupp's book of 1929 (*Die Entwicklungsgeschichte*, p. 339) is even accused by Rupp of being politically active, denouncing opponents "during the first inflammatory war psychosis."
  - 18 Mahrenholz, "Orgel und Liturgie," p. 22, and "Fünfzehn Jahre," p. 11. Of course, the sixteenth-century orchestra, with its large proportion of winds (as so understood by *Aufführungspraxis* musicologists of the 1920s) was more suitable for imitation than that of the string-and-brass-based orchestra of the nineteenth century.
  - 19 E.g. sliderchests in Mahrenholz, "Fünfzehn Jahre," pp. 22–23, where there is also a hint, an unformed view, on the need for rethinking temperament.
  - 20 Quoted by Gurlitt in "Orgel-Erneuerungsbewegung": see, *Musikgeschichte*, p. 98. "Indem die Musik unserer Tage ... nähert sie sich in vielen Punkten dem Grundzuge der Barockmusik ... die alte Orgel wird zum Symbol einer Musikerfassung, deren Auswirkung der Zukunft gehört."
  - 21 Cf. the descriptions of *Sprechgesang* in terms of primitive, Jewish, and Gregorian musics, made by Robert Haas in *Aufführungspraxis der Musik* (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1931), during the period in which Schoenberg was working on *Moses und Aron*.
  - 22 Arnold Schering, "Historische und nationale Klangstile," *Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters* 35 (1927), pp. 31–43, here 42. "Denn wenn wir den erdennahen Klang einer barocken Orgel mit dem erdenfernen einer romantischen vergleichen, so muß ... als unabweislich angenommen werden, daß der Protestantismus der Romantik von dem des Barock in entscheidenden Punkten des religiösen Erlebens in ebendemselben Maße abstand wie das eine Klangideal vom andern."
  - 23 Cf. also the title of F. T. Arnold's book on figured-bass playing (see below, note 30).
  - 24 Alexander J. Ellis's papers from *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* (March and April, 1880); reprinted in Arthur Mendel, *Studies in the History of Musical Pitch* (Amsterdam: Knuf, 1931).
  - 25 Such as the Flemish harpsichord, in Grant O'Brien, *Ruckers: a Harpsichord and Virginal Building Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. pp. 175ff.
  - 26 Curt Sachs. *Handbuch der Musikinstrumentenkunde* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1919; 2nd edn, 1930). Sachs gives no critique of e.g. the high wind-pressure of modern organs and what it leads to, in his reference to it and other parts of the organ (final section of the *Handbuch*). One cannot say he avoids it: rather, the question does not arise in such a book.
  - 27 E.g. Friedemann Hellwig, *Atlas der Profile an Tasteninstrumenten vom 16. bis zum frühen 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Bochinsky, 1985).
  - 28 A good example is C. Mahrenholz's *Die Berechnung der Orgelpfeifen-Mensuren vom*

- Mittelalter bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1938), the medieval section of which was fundamentally questioned in Klaus-Jürgen Sachs, *Mensura fistularum: die Mensurierung der Orgelpfeifen im Mittelalter*, 2 vols. (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1970/1980). On p. 16 of vol. 2 Sachs points out that the second edition of *Die Berechnung* in 1968 “appeared without the slightest indication of a possibly altered state of knowledge” in thirty years: an omission of the publisher, perhaps?
- 29 Dolmetsch, in *Interpretation*, pp. 342–63; A. Schering, *Aufführungspraxis alter Musik* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1931), pp. 147–62.
  - 30 Schering, *Aufführungspraxis*, pp. 148–49; cf. F. T. Arnold, *The Art of Accompaniment from a Thorough-Bass as Practised in the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931).
  - 31 Max Schneider, “Der Generalbass Johann Sebastian Bachs.” *Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters* (1914/15), pp. 27–42.
  - 32 Also a topic of interest to the canonic writers: cf. E. Rupp, *Abbé. Vogler als Mensch Musiker und Orgelbautheoretiker* (Ludwigsburg: Walcker, 1932), and the Freiburg dissertation of Hertha Schweiger, *Abbé G. J. Voglers Orgellehre* (Vienna: Knoch, 1938).
  - 33 Terms reviewed by Erwin R. Jacobi, ed., in A. Schweitzer, *Zur Diskussion über Orgelbau (1914)* (Berlin: Merseburger, 1977), pp. 33–34.
  - 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.
  - 35 Eggebrecht, *Die Orgelbewegung*, pp. 21–22. Reviews of the 1921 organ when it was new speak of its “fabulous stops,” the “originality of sound,” etc.
  - 36 Ramin, *Gedanken*, p. 20. “Betrachtet man die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Kirchenmusik, so wird klar, daß die große Erscheinung Joh. S. Bachs ein Ziel, eine Erfüllung bedeutet, und daß die wesentlichen Stufen der Entwicklung vor ihn zu suchen sind.” On p. 35 is the description of Bach as the “highest perfection of a wide-ranging Christian music-culture” (höchste Vollendung einer umfassenden christlichen Musikkultur), showing the division then made between the decadent concert-hall organ and the newly classical church organ.
  - 37 On French-Alsatian styles in general: Schützeichel, “Orgelbau,” pp. 49–50, 56, 60ff. On the Kronenburg organ of 1908: Bernhard Billeter, “Albert Schweitzer und sein Orgelbauer,” *Acta organologica* 11 (1977), pp.173–225, here 176f.
  - 38 *Der Orgelbauer, Gottfried Silbermann*. In its preface, Flade says the “outward” reason for writing his book was the comments of the Alsatian Organ Reform on the “advantages and disadvantages” of Silbermann organs.
  - 39 E.g. the *Sonatas* and the *Orgelbüchlein* were both from the Cöthen years: Freiburg Conference report (see note 2), pp. 75 (Flade) and 69 (Fischer).
  - 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 156 (Mahrenholz) and 160 (Gurlitt). The Conference’s papers on Reger (Karl Hasse, pp. 122–29) and post-Regger (Hermann Keller, pp. 130–38) give an instructive view of many musicians’ preoccupations at the period.
  - 41 Flade, *Der Orgelbauer Gottfried Silbermann*, p. 157.
  - 42 J. S. Bach, *Acht kleine Präludien und Fugen für die Orgel*, ed. Karl Straube (Leipzig: Peters, 1934).
  - 43 Ramin, *Gedanken*, p. 3. Jahn’s technical papers in the Freiburg and Freiberg Conferences were in part prompted by his knowledge of the *Jakobiorgel*. On the whole, his nineteen essays over the period 1922–39 (as listed in Rudolf Reuter, *Bibliographie der Orgel: Literatur zur Geschichte der Orgel bis 1968* [Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1973], p. 103), have not received the attention they deserve.
  - 44 See facs. edn of *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte*, pp. 6–7. Rupp, for whom German behavior in Strasbourg during the war still rankled, rejoiced at the failure of certain German firms in the inflationary years (p. 359)—a rare reference in organ literature to other problems of the 1920s.
  - 45 E.g. *Die Tagung für Orgelbau in Berlin 1928*, ed. Johann Biehle (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1929). If there had been basic rivalries between the personnel and the universities of

the Upper Rhineland and those of Prussia in the 1920s, as one imagines there were, they would not have easily survived the West German monopoly of literature after the Second War.

- 46 In the Freiberg Conference papers, Friedrich Blume, Ernst Flade, Karl Straube and Christhard Mahrenholz spoke around the subject but never quite made it clear that e.g. the organ parts are notated at a lower pitch.
- 47 Tagliavini, "L'organo nel mondo," p. 225, points out that it was not the nineteenth century as such that the *Orgelbewegung* resisted (as suggested in Eggebrecht, *Die Orgelbewegung*, p. 15) but the factory production of organs during that period.
- 48 For Burgemeister, see *Der Orgelbau in Schlesien*. Walter Haacke's *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte des Orgelbaus im Lande Mecklenburg-Schwerin* (Wolfenbüttel: Kallmeyer, 1935) originated as a Freiburg dissertation under Gurlitt.
- 49 E.g. M. Tremmel. "Die neue Passauer Domorgel," *Musica sacra* 56 (1926), pp. 129–33. This was less than a generation after the building of the Hamburg Michaeliskirche organ, the then biggest, a "milestone in German organ-art" as it was called (Alfred Sittard, *Das Hauptorgelwerk und die Hilfsorgel der grossen St. Michaelis-Kirche in Hamburg* [Hamburg: Bäsén & Maasch, 1912]). Straube's only publication on organs was a booklet on the giant Breslau organ (1914).
- 50 Paul Walcker, *Die Direkte, Elektrische, Funkenfreie Orgeltraktur* (Frankfurt a.O.: Bratfisch, 1914).
- 51 Freiberg conference papers (see note 2), p. 116.
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 149.
- 53 Karl Gustav Fellerer, *Beiträge zur Choralbegleitung und Choralverarbeitung in der Orgelmusik des ausgehenden 18. und beginnenden 19. Jahrhunderts* (Straßburg: Heitz, 1932), and *Studien zur Orgelmusik des ausgehenden 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1932).
- 54 Spanish (Ramin, *Gedanken*, pp. 14, 26), Italian (Mahrenholz at Freiberg—see note 2—pp. 23f., 31), American (Gurlitt, *Musikgeschichte*, pp. 91f., 100).
- 55 Fritz Piersig and Richard Liesche, *Die Orgeln in Bremer Dom* (Bremen: n.p., 1939), p. 16.
- 56 E.g. Hermann J. Busch, "Historismus und historisches Bewußtsein in der deutschen Orgelmusik zwischen den Weltkriegen," *Acta organologica* 17 (1984), pp. 169–83, esp. 181.
- 57 Haacke, *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte*, pp. 8, 9. Haacke's Freiburg dissertation was presented in January 1934, a few months after Heidegger's famous rectoral address at the university apparently offering support to Hitler.
- 58 J. Müller-Blattau, preface to Ingeborg Rücker, *Die deutsche Orgel am Oberrhein um 1500* (Freiburg: Albert, 1940).
- 59 Nevertheless, standard terms can signify politically: references to *das echte deutsche Volk* in *Die Meistersinger* had an electrifying effect in Leipzig and Dresden in the 1960s.
- 60 Gurlitt, "Orgel-Erneuerungsbewegung": see *Musikgeschichte*, p. 100.
- 61 Hasse in the Freiberg Conference papers, p. 56. On Schweitzer, see Schützeichel, "Orgelbau," pp. 62–63.
- 62 Letter given in Rüdiger Wagner, *Hans Henny Jahnn: der Revolutionär der Umkehr* (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1989), pp. 106–10, here 107.
- 63 *Ibid.*, pp. 101–04. Also. R. Wagner, *Der Orgelreformer Hans Henny Jahnn* (Stuttgart: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1970), p. 51.
- 64 *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 29, 53 *et passim*.
- 65 Gurlitt 1935, regarding the *Schütz*bewegung: see *Musikgeschichte*, p. 140.
- 66 Quoted in Friedhelm Krummacher, "Dietrich Buxtehude. Musik zwischen Geschichte und Gegenwart," in *Dietrich Buxtehude und die europäische Musik seiner Zeit*, ed. Arnfried Edler and F. K. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1990), pp. 9–30, here 13: *beispiellos gesunden Musik*.

- 67 For a certain sympathy towards Günther Ramin's own involvement with the Nazis ("Hitler's organist") and convenient references to the *Entjüdung* of German evangelical church-music in the mid-1930s, see Manfred Mezger, "Inquisition: der 'Nationalsozialist' Günther Ramin," *Musik und Kirche* 59 (1989), pp. 289–91.
- 68 Gurlitt, "Karl Straube" and "Orgelerneuerungsbewegung": see *Musikgeschichte*, pp. 84, 91. The latter speaks of world leadership passing to *Amerika* and of the cultural implications of there now being "twice the number of mankind with coloured skins in the world of the whites."
- 69 Cf. Fritz Lehmann in the Freiburg conference papers (see note 2), p. 111.
- 70 Title of a Freiberg conference paper (see note 2), p. 4.
- 71 "Die Orgelbewegung ist in ihren Anfängen selbstverständlich ein Kind ihrer Zeit, der Zeit nach dem großen Weltkriege und dem Zusammenbruch unseres Volkes ... Vieles von dem, was die zivilisierte Welt vor 1918 mit Stolz besessen hatte, erschien hohl ..." Mahrenholz, "Fünfzehn Jahre," p. 10.
- 72 Conferences summary, in *Bericht über die zweite Freiburger Tagung für Deutsche Orgelkunst*, ed. J. Müller-Blattau (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1939), p. 146. Discussion in Albrecht Riethmüller, "Die Bestimmung der Orgel im Dritten Reich," in *Orgel und Ideologie*, ed. H. H. Eggebrecht (Murrhardt: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1984), pp. 28–60. "Die große Orgel zieht als das umfassendste Instrument unserer Musikkultur ein in die großen Hallen unserer politischen Feste und Feiern ... ein Gesamtmusikreich ... das symbolische Instrument der Gemeinschaft. Sie ist ein im höchsten Sinne 'politisches' Instrument."
- 73 E.g. Origen in his psalm-commentary (*Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne [Paris, 1857], 12.1684).
- 74 Any more than it did, according to Mahrenholz, when the Third Reich reintroduced an inheritance-legislation, which was a former law whose principle had gradually been lost (Mahrenholz, "Fünfzehn Jahre," p. 13). This was not historicism but advance.
- 75 Thus the kind of organ put in former churches (now turned into something else) in Russia: *ibid.*, p. 14.
- 76 See Riethmüller, "Bestimmung," p. 48f.
- 77 E.g. Rupp, *Die Entwicklungsgeschichte*, pp. 92, 329, 360–70; Tagliavini, "Mezzo secolo," p. 84.
- 78 I have taken the phrase from Karl Geiringer, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Culmination of an Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), but the idea is (or was) common and takes various forms. For example, it lies behind Willi Apel's remark in the preface to his *Geschichte der Orgel- und Klaviermusik bis 1700* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1967) that he does not include Bach because "earlier compositions would ... be seen ... in the lesser light of a preparation or of first steps" (English translation by Hans Tischler, *The History of Keyboard Musik to 1700* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972], p. xiv).
- 79 But at that same period, Harvey Grace in *The Organ Works of Bach* (London: Novello, ca. 1922) did not totally ignore French elements, being responsive to hints dropped half a century earlier by Spitta.
- 80 Hans Klotz, *Über die Orgelkunst der Gotik, der Renaissance und des Barock* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1934; rev. edn, 1975). Klotz was another Straube pupil, and Straube's key position as both the most powerful figure in church music of the period and someone who (for whatever motive) joined the NSDAP, is clear from Günter Hartmann's *Karl Straube und seine Schule: "Das Ganze ist ein Mythos"* (Bonn: Verlag für systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1991). Hartmann's sharp criticisms of the man, his colleagues, and his period (in turn sharply reviewed in *Musik und Kirche* 62 [1992], pp. 154–59), include documentation for the thesis that Straube's "cult of the Old Masters" and Gurlitt's "Praetorius researches" had—"laughingly"—a kind of official status through their appeal to the three ruling concepts: *German, national, and ecclesiastical* (p. 269).

- 81 See e.g. Hartmann, *Karl Straube*, or Jörg Fischer, “Evangelische Kirchenmusik im dritten Reich. ‘Musikalische Erneuerung’ und ästhetische Modalität des Faschismus.” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 46 (1989), pp. 185–234.
- 82 E.g. Wolfgang Auler, “Die Anfänge der Orgelbewegung in Berlin und die Krise des Jahres 1933,” *Musik und Kirche* 35 (1965), pp. 126–33.
- 83 E.g. the later and respected Bach scholar Walter Blankenburg wrote in the same year (1933) that political life and church life had a common goal, and went on to use the metaphor of *cleanliness* for certain music (see above, apropos Buxtehude). Thus J. N. David’s language was “much more native, real and pure” (*viel unwüchsiger, echter und reiner*) than what one usually heard, just as the old pentatonic music of the *Volk* had shunned the sentimental-chromatic. (W. Blankenburg, “Hugo Distler ‘Jahrkreis,’” *Zeitschrift für Hausmusik* 5/6 [1933], pp. 81–87.)
- 84 Fischer, “Evangelische Kirchenmusik,” pp. 189, 191.

# 5

## FRANCE

*Hermann J. Busch and Martin Herchenroeder*

French organ music of the twentieth century is predominantly shaped by three factors. First, the music depends upon the characteristic sound quality and technique of the so-called symphonic organ of Aristide Cavaillé-Coll and his contemporary French organbuilders. Second, the organ style developed by César Franck and Charles-Marie Widor sought the integration of traditional contrapuntal textures and pianistic, even orchestral techniques and genres. Finally, French organ music continued its association with the liturgical practice of the Organ Mass and its characteristic solo pieces. Such works might also find a home in the secular environments of salon and concert hall. Furthermore, the organ scene reflects a characteristically French centrism: all the notable composers received their training in Paris, and subsequently most of them worked as *titulaires* in prominent Parisian churches, often also teaching at the city's leading schools like the Conservatoire, the Schola Cantorum, and the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles (National Institute for Young Blind People).

### **The Conservatoire**

Today's Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique (CNSM) was founded in 1795 following several precursory institutions. César Franck (employed during 1872–90) and Charles-Marie Widor (1890–96) developed the French symphonic organ style and passed it on to their pupils. The Conservatoire's twentieth-century organ teachers, together with their dates of service, were Alexandre Guilmant (1896–1911), Eugène Gigout (1911–25), Marcel Dupré (1925–56), Rolande Falcinelli (1956–87), Michel Chapuis (1987–95), and, since 1995, Olivier Latry and Michel Bouvard. Because improvisation was traditionally regarded as nearly as important as the performance of written music, most organ professors

of the Conservatoire exercised a more or less profound influence on the stylistic development of nearly all French organ compositions in their respective periods. Thus, until the time of Dupré and Falcinelli, traditional compositional techniques on a high level were taught through improvisation. Tendencies towards innovative advancement or even radical change were not fostered.

When Widor exchanged his Professorship of Organ for a Professorship of Composition in 1896, Guilmant (1837–1911) took over the Conservatoire's organ class. Although Guilmant produced a considerable number of his organ works at the beginning of the twentieth century, his aesthetics remained rooted to a large extent in the spirit of the mid-nineteenth century.

Two students from the Widor/Guilmant circle moderately developed conservative traditions they had internalized at the Conservatoire. First, Henri Mulet (1878–1967) studied organ with both Widor and Guilmant. He was organist at several Parisian churches and taught at the Schola Cantorum from 1924 to 1931. His *Esquisses byzantines* (*Byzantine Sketches*) of 1914–19 were inspired by the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre and incorporated tendencies of musical Impressionism. Parts of the building are depicted in five pieces, and the remaining ones refer to the funeral liturgy and Christmas. Among the collection is the popular toccata *Tu es petra et portae inferi non praevalerunt adversus te*, which follows the tradition of the French carillon piece in its imitation of bells and chimes.

Second, Joseph Bonnet (1884–1944) was a pupil of Franck's student Charles Tournemire (1870–1939) before entering Guilmant's organ class. From 1906 to 1944 he served as organist of Saint Eustache and, beginning in 1911, the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. Beginning in 1917 he undertook concert tours through the United States and Canada, eventually moving to Montreal to teach at the local Conservatoire. In the United States, Bonnet's significance lies not least with his having founded the University of Rochester's organ department at the Eastman School of Music in the years 1921–23. Bonnet's limited number of organ works is almost exclusively devoted to the character piece, and he requires within these limits a developed technique while treating a variety of poetic subjects. The music certainly bears few personal or innovative traits. His most popular work—the *Variations de concert* op. 1 of 1908, dedicated to the American organ virtuoso Clarence Eddy—long claimed a place in the virtuoso's standard repertoire.<sup>1</sup>

Guilmant's successor at the Conservatoire from 1911 until his death was Eugène Gigout (1844–1925), a student of Camille Saint-Saëns. Gigout's compositional aesthetics remained mostly unaffected by progressive developments, and after 1900 he composed almost no further works. However, two of his pupils were active in the French organ scene of the twentieth century: André Marchal (1894–1980) and André Fleury (1903–95). Marchal was a highly regarded performer and improviser, but he remained the only French organist of his stature who did not compose. As one of Gigout's last pupils, Fleury contributed to the classical symphonic genre: his last work, the 1982 *Prélude, Cantilène et Final*

inspired by the Cavallé–Coll organ of Saint-Ouen in Rouen, may be regarded as a swan song to French symphonic organ music.

From 1925 to 1970, Marcel Dupré (1886–1971) was not only the dominant figure in France as organist, improviser, composer, teacher, author, and editor, but also undoubtedly the world's most prominent organist. Indeed, his significant presence on a world stage underscores the characteristic internationalism of the century, to which the organ and organists of course were not immune. Dupré entered the Conservatoire in 1902, where he was a pupil of Guilman (organ) and Widor (fugue), among others. From 1922 to 1924 he undertook concert tours to America, became organ teacher at the Conservatoire in 1926 and instructed all notable French organists and composers of organ music there until 1954. As Widor's successor, Dupré served as organist at Saint-Sulpice from 1934 until his death.

Active as a composer for almost sixty years, Dupré carried on and expanded the symphonic organ genres associated with Widor and Louis Vierne. Dupré's musical language spans the poles of a restrained archaism on the one hand and, on the other, an up-to-date style that fully exploits chromaticism as well as subtlety of playing technique and color. At the same time, there is an orientation towards both liturgical and secular concert contexts which nevertheless cannot always be clearly distinguished. Despite the secular ambience of some of Dupré's music, the organ remained a medium of religious significance for him, for example when he improvised on the subject of Christian salvific history on the Grand Court Organ of Philadelphia's Wanamaker's Department Store in 1921, or when he illustrated Paul Claudel's *Via Dolorosa* at the Brussels Conservatoire ten years later.<sup>2</sup> These improvisations resulted in two of his most significant works: the *Symphonie-Passion* op. 23 (1923–24) and *Le Chemin de la Croix* op. 29 (1931).<sup>3</sup> Parallel to his extensive activity as a strict pedagogue, the composer Dupré fostered didactic music ranging from simple preliminary studies to Bach's chorale preludes (*Seventy-nine Chorales* op. 28, 1931) to the virtuoso etudes of the *Inventions* op. 50 (1956, Ex. 5.1).

Despite his indefatigable nature as both teacher and performer, he never neglected his liturgical service at Saint-Sulpice. Plainchant therefore is central to his liturgically inspired organ music, works which often feature a texture tied to diatonic and modal material, as in the *Fifteen Pieces for Organ Founded on Antiphons, Versets des Vêpres du Commun des fêtes de la Sainte Vierge* op. 18 (1920) and *Le Tombeau de Titelouze* op. 38 (1942). Dupré tended not to pursue large symphonic constructions like Widor and Vierne. Like the *Évocation* op. 37 (1941) and the *Vision* op. 44 (1947), the *Symphonie-Passion* and *Le Chemin de la Croix* op. 29 may be considered as *poèmes symphoniques*, whereas the *Deuxième Symphonie* op. 26, composed in 1929, is Dupré's only straightforward contribution to the genre of organ symphony as "absolute" music. His works in the genre of the character piece are numerous, most of which are clearly intended for the repertoire of the virtuoso concert organist: along these lines are the *Cortège et Litanie* op. 19 (1922),

EXAMPLE 5.1 Marcel Dupré: *Vingt-quatre inventions pour orgue* op. 50, No. X, mm. 1–22.

**Quasi scherzando** (♩=126)

III Flûte 8  
Octavin 2  
=> II Cromorne 8  
I Salicional 8  
II

The musical score consists of four systems, each with two staves (treble and bass clef). The first system includes parts for III Flûte 8, Octavin 2, => II Cromorne 8, I Salicional 8, and II. The tempo is 'Quasi scherzando' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 126. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and the time signature is 3/8. The score is divided into four systems, each with two staves (treble and bass clef). Fingerings and articulations are indicated throughout.

*Suite bretonne* op. 21 (1923), *Sept Pièces* op. 27 (1931), and the *Deux Esquisses* op. 41 (1946). Perhaps the most popular of Dupré's organ works are his *Variations sur un Noël* op. 20, composed in 1922. In the two virtuosic collections *Trois Préludes et Fugues* opp. 7 and 36 (1912 and 1938 respectively), the composer enhances the traditional diptych by inventive motivic references between prelude and fugue.

Dupré's organ music is primarily inspired by the organs of Cavallé-Coll. Experiences with organs in the United States further refined his opinions about instruments. This resulted in the modification of Guilmant's house organ that

Dupré purchased for his villa in Meudon. In 1934, he had it supplied with a fourth manual, an electric action, an extended compass, numerous octave couplers, and accessory stops.

Jeanne Demessieux (1921–68) completed her organ studies at the Conservatoire in 1941. In the following years Dupré continued to work closely with her, even referring to her as his legitimate successor until their inscrutable discord in 1945.<sup>4</sup> Demessieux was certainly one of the most successful organ virtuosos of her time, giving concerts throughout Europe and in the United States.<sup>5</sup> Beginning in 1952, Demessieux taught at the Liège Conservatoire. As a composer of technically demanding works, she succeeded her teacher in his late symphonic style. Alongside virtuosity and a refined use of the modern French organ's resources, the spiritual character of plainchant plays an important role, as in the *Sept Méditations sur le Saint-Esprit* of 1947, the *12 Choral Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes* op. 8 of 1950, the *Te Deum* op. 11 of 1959, and the *Répons pour le Temps de Pâques* of 1963/1966 (Ex. 5.2).

**EXAMPLE 5.2** Jeanne Demessieux: *Répons pour le Temps de Pâques*, mm. 7–15.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows measures 7-9, featuring a complex texture with multiple voices in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The second system shows measures 10-12, with a change in the right-hand texture and the appearance of performance instructions: "R. <" and "+ Anches Pos." The third system shows measures 13-15, continuing the complex texture. The score includes a page number "+ 32" at the end of the second system.

The position as Dupré's successor was inherited by Rolande Falcinelli (1920–2006), who became organist of Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre after completing her studies at the Conservatoire. She taught the Conservatoire's organ class from 1956 to 1987. In her performances as well as her compositions, Falcinelli understood herself as trustee of the Dupré legacy. The title of her work for organ and orchestra is indicative: *Mausolée "à la gloire de Marcel Dupré"* op. 47 (1971–73).

### Louis Vierne and his Succession: Barié and Duruflé

Among the most bitter disappointments in Louis Vierne's life (1870–1937) were his two unsuccessful applications to positions at the Paris Conservatoire. In 1911 the conservatively-oriented Gigout was appointed, who as a composer was not Vierne's equal. Similarly, in 1925 the ambitious Dupré was chosen after having attained great prestige as a virtuoso, highly admired Bach player, and successful improviser. Thus, Vierne had to content himself with the position of assistant to Widor and Guilmant. Contending with a severe visual handicap since birth, he had been prepared for the Conservatoire at the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles, where he had studied for a short time with Franck and, after the latter's death, with Widor. In 1900 Vierne became organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral.

Vierne's six organ symphonies are rightly regarded as the culmination of the genre in the early twentieth century. Proceeding from Franck, the composer essentially developed further the chromaticization of tonality, the technique and orchestral registration of the organ, and above all the thematic integration of the cyclic form. In their tonal centers, his symphonies progress as a sequence of the keynotes D, E, F sharp, G, A, and B. Vierne himself claimed this as a coincidence,<sup>6</sup> but the striking pattern surely can be considered to harmonize with his tendency toward deliberate design, noted in his symphonic cycles as well as in other works. The Symphony No. 1 op. 14, composed in 1898 and 1899, shows Vierne still at the outset of his path from loosely sequenced movements to a conceptually tight cyclic organization. The movements of op. 14 were initially published separately, with each corresponding to established genre patterns: prelude and fugue, pastorale, Allegro vivace in scherzo character, Andante as a song without words, and toccata finale. In the Symphony no. 2 op. 20 of 1902–03, Vierne developed the concept of cyclic configuration that also governs his last three symphonies: motivic material presented in the first movement is referred to in the following movements in manifold ways. The thematic integration of movements developed here is not found in the often-played Symphony No. 3 op. 28 of 1911. But the last three symphonies—op. 32 of 1914, op. 47 of 1923–24, and op. 59 of 1930—again take up the idea of the cyclic structure.

Vierne particularly cultivated the character piece and elevated it from the sphere of quasi-religious salon music. In these works, concert or liturgical purpose is often not clearly defined, the lines between sacred and secular blurred as in the equivalent works of Dupré. Only the two Organ Masses are exclusively designed for

liturgical purposes: the 1912 *Messe basse pour orgue ou harmonium* op. 30 and the 1936 *Messe basse pour les défunts* op. 62. Unlike most of his French contemporaries, Vierne never used plainchant as motivic material, probably because its modality was incompatible with the composer's pervasively chromatic harmony. The 24 *Pièces en style libre* op. 31 of 1913 form a collection of character pieces in all the major and minor keys for harmonium or a two-manual organ. Vierne does not include an independent pedal part. A remark in the Foreword to op. 31 hints at its possible liturgical use: "The pieces of the present selection," writes Vierne, "are calculated so as to be played during the ordinary duration of an offertory."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, the four suites (that is, volumes) of the *Pièces de Fantaisie* opp. 51, 53, 54, and 55 (1926–27) comprise character pieces intended for concert performance on a three-manual organ with pedals. These are works of the most varied character and architecture, in which an Impressionistic spirit is clearly perceptible. Parallels to Debussy's piano *Préludes* cannot be ignored. The designation "suite" does not suggest any kind of cyclic coherence here. However, as in the *Pièces en style libre* all twenty-four major and minor keys are covered. The nearly blind Vierne shows a frequent, striking affinity for visual impressions. He composes a hymn to the sun and musically pictures moonlight and evening star, cathedrals, naiads, gargoyles and chimeras, as well as river scenery or even ghostly light, as shown in Ex. 5.3.

The *Pièces de Fantaisie* include what is surely Vierne's most popular organ work, the *Carillon de Westminster*, appearing as the final piece in the third suite op. 54 and characteristic of the diversity of the composer's external stimulations. On a 1924 concert tour Vierne played in London's Westminster Abbey and was impressed by the Willis instrument as well as the "Big Ben motive" that he took as a basis for his *Carillon*, dedicated to the organ builder.

Among Vierne's students, the tragically short-lived Augustin Barié (1883–1915) was regarded as a promising talent of the late French organ symphonic style. After his studies with both Vierne and Guilmant, he held positions as organist at Saint-Germain-des-Près and as a second Professor of Organ at the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles. Blind from birth, Barié composed an organ symphony in 1906–07, adopting Vierne's cyclic concept. The Prelude presents the outline of the Fugue's subject in a pedal ostinato. The first part of the Adagio encompasses chorale-like passages in the tradition of Franck, refined by harmonies in the style of Vierne. The final movement presents a major-mode variant of the Fugue's theme, linking it with the development and final apotheosis of the Adagio's "chorale" passages.

In vain Vierne had hoped that his student Maurice Duruflé (1902–86) would become his successor at Notre-Dame. Duruflé developed an extremely self-critical sense as a composer, a trait which resulted in his producing an extraordinarily small number of published works and, often, substantially revised second editions. In certain respects, Duruflé followed a compositional path different from his teacher's. Vierne used plainchant in none of his works and only once—in the *Symphony No. 1*—did he incorporate the genre of prelude and fugue. In contrast, among

EXAMPLE 5.3 Louis Vierne: *Feux follets*. *Pièces de Fantaisie*, Vol. 2, No. IV, mm. 8–15.

The musical score for Louis Vierne's *Feux follets* (mm. 8–15) is presented in four systems. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line for the G.Ch. (Grand Chœur) section. The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The first system shows a rapid sixteenth-note passage in the right hand, with a piano (p) dynamic. The second system includes a G.P.R. (Grand Piano) and G.Ch. (Grand Chœur) section, with a piano (p) dynamic. The third system also includes a G.P.R. and G.Ch. section, with a piano (p) dynamic. The fourth system features a forte (f) dynamic and a rapid sixteenth-note passage in the right hand, with a piano (p) dynamic. The score is marked with various dynamics and articulations, including accents and slurs.

Durufé's three *magna opera* for the organ, one is based on a Gregorian theme (the 1930 *Prélude, Adagio et Choral varié sur le Thème du "Veni Creator"* op. 4, dedicated to Vierne) and one cast in the prelude-plus-fugue form (the *Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain* op. 7 of 1942). The decision to integrate a Gregorian melody in op. 4 can probably be traced to the composer's studies with Tournemire, whereas the subtle chromatic harmony and systematic elaboration of motives distinctly recall Vierne's schooling. The prelude is a rondo that discreetly employs two fragments from the Pentecost hymn. A recitative-like bridge initiates the Adagio, which develops motives drawn from the chorale. The cantus firmus in its entirety first appears in

the variations, shaped for the most part by classical techniques. One might consider Duruflé's 1934 Suite op. 5 as a preliminary study to a never-realized organ symphony in Vierne's manner. The work's cyclic character does not become manifest thematically, but rather in the dramaturgy of the sonata-like first and last movements and in the song-like second movement, as well as in its succession of keys cast in rising thirds (E flat minor, G minor, B minor). In op. 7, the last of his major organ works, Duruflé centers his musical material around a sequence of pitches derived from Jehan Alain's name. Composed in 1942, it stands as a memorial to the promising composer Alain, who had met a tragic early death in the war two years earlier. In the Prelude, the theme is developed in a free, improvisatory way together with the principal theme of one of Alain's own organ works, *Litanies* (Ex. 5.4). The virtuosic double fugue reveals Duruflé as master of counterpoint and thematic concision.

**EXAMPLE 5.4** Maurice Duruflé: *Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain* op.7, Prélude, mm. 1–11.

**A L A I N**



<p>Récit: Gambe 8, Voix céleste          Positif (expressif): Bourdon 8, Flute 4, Octavin 2,          (ou Bourdon 8, Flute 4, sile Pos.n'est pas expressif)          G<sup>d</sup>Orgue:Fonds 8          Pédale: Bourdons 16-8</p>	<p>Swell: Gamba 8', Vox angelica.          Choir (expressive): Bourdon 8', Flute 4', Harm. piccolo 2'          (or Bourdon 8', Flute 4', if Choir is not expressive)          Great: Foundation stops 8'          Pedal: Bourdons 16' 8'</p>
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Allegro  $\text{♩} = 88$

MANUALE



PÉDALE




## The Sainte-Clotilde Tradition: Pierné, Tournemire, and Langlais

All of Franck's successors to the organ bench of Sainte-Clotilde were the composer's students, or his students' students, and they saw themselves as keepers of the tradition he had founded. Franck's first successor Gabriel Pierné (1863–1937) remained at Sainte-Clotilde for only eight years, and his only major organ works are the *Trois Pièces* op. 29, composed in 1893, *quasi* a symphony without finale.

Charles Tournemire (1870–1939) attended Franck's organ class in 1889 and 1890 and studied composition and fugue with him as well. After Franck's death, he completed his studies in 1891 as a student of Widor. He worked at Sainte-Clotilde from 1897 until his death. Tournemire, a concert organist with an extensive repertoire, considered himself first and foremost a liturgical organist whose task it was to comment on the Gregorian melodies of the sacred liturgy. As composer of organ works, Tournemire began in 1900 slowly to move away from Franck's language, as in the *Pièce symphonique* op. 16 of 1899. In 1910 he produced his first major work, the *Triple Choral* op. 41 in "commemoration of my venerated teacher César Franck" and as a "continuation of his Three Chorales."<sup>8</sup> Innovative in his mature late works are the texture, nuances in registration, and especially the extension of tonality, imaginative rhythm, and the creative reception of plainchant. His principal organ work, entirely liturgical in orientation, is the ambitious *L'Orgue mystique: 51 Offices de l'année liturgique inspirés du chant Grégorien et librement paraphrasés pour grand orgue* opp. 55, 56, and 57, composed between 1927 and 1932, a sequence of pieces for every Sunday and feast day of the Catholic ecclesiastical year. Each of the *Offices*, or suites, comprises five movements, each with a liturgical role: *Prélude à l'Introït*, *Offertoire*, *Élévation*, *Communion*, and *Pièce terminale*. All these pieces are meant as introductions or paraphrases to the Gregorian chant of the corresponding day, not for concert use. Tournemire likewise paraphrased Gregorian melodies in manifold ways in the *Deux Fresques symphoniques sacrées* opp. 75 and 76, composed in 1938 and 1939. In terms of the symphonic Franck tradition, Tournemire remained committed to the idea of cyclic development, as in the 1935 *Symphonie-Choral d'Orgue en six parties enchaînées* op. 69. The composer regarded this work as a "link of the old chorale with the arts of symphony" and considered it an enhanced version of his *Triple Choral* by the "riches of technical development of the modern symphony."<sup>9</sup> The four movements of the *Symphonie sacrée pour orgue* op. 71 (1936), inspired by the nave of Amiens Cathedral and succeeding one another without transition, evolve from a "*cellule génératrice*."<sup>10</sup>

In 1933 Tournemire initiated the modification of the Cavaillé-Coll organ in Sainte-Clotilde, particularly to enlarge the compass of the manuals and to add a series of mutations for more color. Already in 1932, with the dedication of the remodeled organ in mind, he composed *Trois Poèmes* op. 59. Likewise from 1932, the *Sei Fioretti* op. 60 take as subject matter the legends of the life and work of Francis of Assisi. They use the two swell boxes in a differentiated way (Ex. 5.5).

EXAMPLE 5.5 Charles Tournemire: *Sei Fioretti*, No. 2, mm. 1–6.

III Viole de Gambe 8, Flûte 4, Nazard 2  $\frac{2}{3}$ , II Bourdon 8, Ped. Bourdon 16

$\text{♩} = 38$

Poco rit.

II Boîte ouverte

Boîte  $\frac{1}{4}$  ouverte

a Tempo

(con fantasia)

Boîte  $\frac{3}{4}$  fermée

Tempo 1º

Boîte fermée

*g.* *d.* *dim.*

Boîte  $\frac{1}{2}$  ouverte

The *Fantaisie symphonique* op. 64 (1933–34) was characterized by its composer as a “quest for new sounds. A new practice of reeds. Protest against their misuse.”<sup>11</sup> In that work, a freely invented “chorale” theme takes center stage, an approach also seen in the 1935 *Sept Chorals-Poèmes d’Orgue pour les Sept Paroles du Christ* op. 67, where a single “chorale” varying pervades all movements. The *Suite évocatrice: Dans l’esprit de l’ancien style français de l’orgue* op. 74 assumes an exceptional position in Tournemire’s *œuvre* in the creative historicism of its concept and musical language. Composed in 1938, it is dedicated to Paul

Brunold, organist at the Paris church of Saint-Gervais, the organ of which was the instrument played by the Couperin family. Movement titles in the *Suite*, as well as the character of the pieces and certain registrations, recall Classical French organ music while avoiding stylistic copies.

Tournemire was a consummate improviser, known to have imbued strict musical procedures with a spontaneous sense. Duruflé reconstructed some of Tournemire's improvisations as recorded in Sainte-Clotilde in 1930 and 1931. These are the *Cinq Improvisations reconstituées par Maurice Duruflé*. Among Tournemire's important writings is his 1931 monograph on Franck, in which he addresses his own approach to improvisation.<sup>12</sup>

Although Tournemire had wished Jean Langlais as his successor at Sainte-Clotilde, the post went to Joseph-Ermend Bonnal (1880–1944). Bonnal became Tournemire's pupil after having studied with Fauré and Guilmant. His organ works bear the influence of both Vierne and Tournemire as well as regional impressions of nature, especially the Basque landscape, as in *Paysages euskariens* of 1931. By contrast, the Symphony in three movements on the Gregorian responsory *Media vita*, composed in 1932, takes the sacred sphere as its point of departure. The development of the responsory leads to nuanced tonal-modal color effects in the tradition of Tournemire's chorale paraphrases, refined by an elaborately orchestrated organ setting.

Franck's fourth successor at Sainte-Clotilde from 1945 through 1987 was Jean Langlais (1907–91). Langlais, who lost his eyesight at the age of two, enjoyed a worldwide reputation as a composer of organ works played with great frequency, such as the *Hymne d'Action de grâces "Te Deum,"* the third of the *Trois paraphrases Grégoriennes* op. 5 from 1933–34, and the *Incantation pour un Jour Saint* op. 64 from 1949. Alongside his compositional activity, Langlais was a master improviser, performer, and pedagogue. In 1917 he became a student at the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles, and from 1927 to 1930 he studied in Dupré's organ class at the Conservatoire. He attended classes in composition with Dukas in 1934 and 1935 and took additional private lessons in improvisation with Tournemire. Beginning in 1930 he taught composition and organ at the Institut National where he had been a pupil, and from 1961 he taught at the Schola Cantorum as well.

Langlais's work for the organ comprises about 300 independent pieces. Titles and dedications as well as manifold thematic and stylistic connections document a thoughtful preoccupation with his surroundings and with the music history of the thirteenth through the twentieth centuries. Accordingly, one is met with a marked stylistic eclecticism in Langlais's music. Impressionistic and neoclassical elements as well as characteristic modal archaisms are joined to modernist tendencies from the 1960s onward. In his late work, one may observe references to Messiaen's language, like the adoption of his *valeur ajoutée*.<sup>13</sup> Langlais drew considerable inspiration from plainchant and Breton folklore. Following his first visit to the United States in 1952, his strong connections in and to that country led

to music explicitly tied to American culture. Finally, an emotional, occasionally even naive religiosity finds its way into the music.

Langlais's complete organ works may be organized in groups: short pieces of lesser technical difficulty, as the *24 Pièces* of 1933–39; character pieces, often with personal or musical references, as the *Neuf Pièces* of 1942–43 and the *Hommage à Frescobaldi* of 1951; and virtuosic cyclic works for concert use, as the *Symphony No. 1* of 1941–42 and the *Cinq Méditations sur l'Apocalypse* of 1973 (Ex. 5.6). In addition, between 1947 and 1973 a series of suites evolved that allude

**EXAMPLE 5.6** Jean Langlais: *Visions prophétiques. Cinq Méditations sur l'Apocalypse*, No. 3, mm. 1–19.

au docteur  
to doctor Robert T. ANDERSON

①  $\text{♩} = 100$

TUTTI  
(full organ)

R(Sw) *p*

R/Pos  
(Sw.to Ch.) *f*

to French Classical models, pieces that combine certain patterns of registration with certain genres or characters.

In 1962, Langlais initiated a further remodeling of the Cavaillé-Coll organ in Sainte-Clotilde. The mechanical action was replaced by an electropneumatic one, and the specification was extended to sixty stops. Following drastic modifications in 2004, the organ of Jean Langlais no longer exists.

## The Independents: Alain and Guillou

Jehan Alain (1911–40) today is one of the most well-known twentieth-century composers for the organ. At the Paris Conservatoire he studied organ with Dupré and composition with Roger-Ducasse and Dukas. His classmates are supposed to have recounted that the young student composed during classes with Dupré behind the backs of his friends. As a student, Alain's interest was not kindled by academic introductions to the symphonic tradition and score-reading, but rather he vigorously pursued the development of his very personal creative voice. He met a tragic death as a French Army soldier in World War II at the age of twenty-nine. Among the qualities that set Alain's music apart from the mainstream French organ tradition are bitonality (*Intermezzo*, 1934–36) and oriental and arabesque-like melodic shapes (*Fantasy No. 2*, 1936). Further, his work employs Gregorian paraphrase in the manner of Tournemire (*Postlude pour l'office des Complies*, 1930), and allusion to Messiaen's early works (*Deux danses à Agni Yavishita*, 1932–34). Alain's most popular organ works are characteristic of his style: the character piece *Le Jardin suspendu* of 1934, the *Variations sur un thème de Clément Janequin* and *Litanies*, both composed in 1937.<sup>14</sup> In these works, the music of the sixteenth century is translated into a modern tonal vocabulary. The "hovering garden" is an impressionistic vision cast as a chaconne with unusual nuances in the registration. *Litanies* is Alain's best known piece for organ. The composer had originally intended *Supplications* as the title, following several earlier versions. When Alain received the message that his sister Marie-Odile had been killed while mountain climbing in the Alps, he chose the final title *Litanies* with the appended explanatory sentence "When the Christian soul in its despair is unable to find new words for the invocation of God's mercy, it unremittently repeats the same words." The thought makes an ideal companion to the incessant, restless motive with which the work is possessed.

In several pieces Alain proves himself master of the musical miniature. These include the *Berceuse sur deux notes qui cornent* (1929), *Ballade en mode phrygien* (1930), *Lamento* (1930), *Verset-Choral* (1931), *Complainte à la mode ancienne* (1932), *Grave* (1932), *Petite Pièce* (1932), *Berceuse* (1936), *Monodie* (1938), and *Aria* (1938). In this group may also be counted the 1935 *Deux Chorals: Choral dorien, Choral phrygien*, whereby the designations Phrygian and Dorian do not refer to the ecclesiastical modes, but rather to ancient Greek usage. Unquestionably Alain's major work is the *Trois Danses* (1937–40), perhaps conceived as an approach to

EXAMPLE 5.7 Jehan Alain: *Luttès* from *Trois Danses*, mm. 1–19.

Même mouvement. Presser peu à peu ( $\text{♩} = 100$  environ)

GO. Pos. Réc. Fonds 8 *f*

Réc. + Hautbois

Fonds 16. 8. Tir. Réc.

(GO)

5 (ad libitum) Un peu plus vite que la 1<sup>re</sup> danse

Rec.

Pos. Fonds 8 *p*

9 + Anches Réc.

Rapide, staccato ( $\text{♩} = 132$ ) ritén.

GO.

Pos. Bourdon 8. Doublette 2

Larigot 11/3

13 Plus lent Très rapide

Réc. Cor de nuit 8

Nazard 2 2/3

Pos. Fonds. Mixtures

17 staccato sempre

Poa.

Réc. Pos. Fonds doux. Mixtures

the organ symphony in the spirit of Vierne. Three movements—*Joies*, *Deuils*, and *Luttès*—present related thematic material, transformed in strongly diverging characters of unparalleled rhythmic vitality, a forceful music with only few equivalents in modern organ repertoire (Ex. 5.7).

Alain's organ style transcends the symphonic instrument of the Franck tradition. Already as a child, he worked together with his father, the self-taught organ builder Albert Alain, on the family's extraordinary four-manual mechanical residence organ, an instrument with an idiosyncratic specification of forty-two

ranks, closely related to the chamber-style organ works of the composer's maturity. The registrations of his larger works point to an instrument in which symphonic and neoclassical elements coexist. Alain avoids use of the resulting sound palette in an historicizing way but rather exploits it with great imagination and vision.

Another figure not easily categorized is Jean Guillou (b. 1930), whose teachers were Dupré, Duruflé, and Messiaen. In 1963 Guillou was appointed organist at Saint-Eustache, where in 1989 a large organ was built according to his specifications. His extensive international concert activities as well as his teaching form a considerable part of his work. Guillou's organ music is often inspired by themes from literature, never by sacred cantus firmi, liturgical function, or religious motives, thereby dissociating clearly from the French organ tradition. His aesthetics of the organ, recorded in his book *L'Orgue. Souvenir et Avenir (The Organ. Remembrance and Future)*, shows his striving for new colors and an innovative art of registration.<sup>15</sup>

Whereas Guillou's early works tend to draw on traditional forms, the later compositions show a greater freedom of gesture and often originate in improvisations. The often-played *Toccata* op. 9, published in 1966, develops the French genre by working with two contrasting themes. The brusque angularity of the first theme is typical of Guillou, as is the insistent, almost brutal rhythm, the atonal tendency of the harmony, and the high technical demands of the work. *Alice au Pays de l'Orgue (Alice in Organ Land)* for organ and narrator op. 53 is certainly Guillou's most fanciful work, based on the idea of Lewis Carroll's well-known 1865 novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. According to a text by the composer, Alice wanders around the fantasy universe of the organ wherein the interior of the instrument (action, bellows, stops) as well as single stops and groups of stops up to the full organ are introduced in dialogue with Alice "as sentient beings endowed with the power of movement."<sup>16</sup> In addition to his solo organ output, Guillou has composed several works for the organ in combination with other instruments, including concertos for organ and orchestra.

## New Organ Music after 1960

Different from the situation in Germany, where New Music<sup>17</sup> for the organ developed suddenly by a clear rupture with tradition, French organ music after 1960 evolved as a continuum with the past. Paris remained the center of French music education, where the tradition of symphonic organ music was handed down from teachers to pupils. Still, almost every organ composer was also an organist, usually with focus on either composition or playing, skilled in repertoire playing as well as improvisation. Having grown up with the works of the preceding generations, the French organist-composers designed their own music on the basis of that heritage. Additionally, the system of *organistes titulaires* helped to maintain the close relationship of organ music to liturgy and religion in an increasingly secularized

cultural environment. Publishers like Billaudot, Leduc, Lemoine, and Salabert supported the production of new works, as did pedagogical needs, competitions for performance and composition, and commissions for the inauguration of new organs. All this promoted the creation of new organ music based on a gradual transformation of the French symphonic organ style of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a clear orientation towards plainchant, and a remarkable influence of improvisation on composition. In some cases the weight of tradition led to eclectic writing with references to French Romantic music, Debussy, Stravinsky, and Messiaen.

### The French Symphonic Tradition: Roth, Hakim, Escaich

Among the composers of this tradition who are particularly well known as organists is Daniel Roth (b.1942). After studies with Duruflé (harmony) and Falcinelli (organ) he became *organiste titulaire* at the Paris Basilica of Sacré-Coeur in 1973 and succeeded Jean-Jacques Grunenwald in the same position at Saint-Sulpice in 1985. He also worked as a highly acclaimed teacher in Washington D.C. (1974–76), Marseille (1976–79), Strasbourg (1979–88), Saarbrücken (1988–95), and Frankfurt (1995–2007). His pieces sometimes go as far as to show their relation to the French organ heritage in their title, as in his *Hommage à César Franck* of 1990. They are conceived for an organ of the Cavallé-Coll type and stylistically rooted in an idiom related to Duruflé and his contemporaries. Many of Roth's works are based on Gregorian chant, as *Joie, Douleur et Gloire de Marie* of 1990. Though his music is mostly tonal and meter-based, Roth has introduced certain progressive elements in some recent works, such as bitonality and quasi-recitative *senza-misura* passages in his 2003 *Fantaisie fuguée sur "Regina caeli."*

Equally well known as organist and composer, the Lebanese Naji Hakim (b. 1955) has been especially successful in Europe and the United States. In 1975 he moved from Beirut to Paris to study engineering. After his exams he continued his studies at the Conservatoire as a pupil of Langlais and Falcinelli, leaving with first prizes in organ, harmony, counterpoint, fugue, analysis, and orchestration. He succeeded Roth as *organiste titulaire* at Sacré-Coeur in 1985 and Messiaen at La Trinité in 1993, retaining the latter post until 2008. Today he works as a Professor of Analysis at the Conservatoire de Boulogne-Billancourt and as guest Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Hakim is one of the few composers of the post-Messiaen generation whose organ music has also become popular beyond the borders of France. This may be due to his frequent use of well-known themes—mainly folk songs and Gregorian chant—and to his style, which is deliberately simple in its structures, rhythmically vivid, clearly tonal with temporary excursions into modality, and perfectly attuned to the multiple sound possibilities the organ provides. His pieces usually require a virtuoso player and, ideally, a French Romantic organ. Many of them deal with biblical quotations, a consequence of Hakim's deeply religious character.

Compared to the French organ tradition, Hakim's early works are somewhat more daring and cautiously integrate twentieth-century tendencies like atonal passages. Characteristic of this period is the *Symphonie en Trois Mouvements* composed in 1984, a program symphony dealing with biblical passages. The first movement develops an atonal unison melody, grouped according to a Fibonacci series (1–2–3–5–8 through 377 sixteenth notes). Beneath this hectic movement in the manuals, the pedals present a theme which is used as a motive for the entire symphony. In the second movement, parts of this motive serve as a counterpoint for a set of variations on a moderato theme accompanied by Messiaen-like chords, but without the use of a specific synthetic mode. The last movement is a fast dance in a free rondo form featuring elements of a virtuoso French toccata, with rapidly repeating chords, quasi-minimalist variations on short diatonic motives, and further development of the initial motive. Meter changes show the influence of Stravinsky, harmonic planning the tradition of Debussy. Towards the end, the Gregorian *Cantate Domino canticum novum* is quoted in a striking bimodal climax (Ex. 5.8).

Comparably, *Rubaiyat* ("Quatrains," 1990), on verses of the Persian poet Omar Kháyyám (1048–1131), uses a wide range of material from altered diatonic scales to non-tonal constellations. The complex interchange of short formal cells once again shows Stravinsky's influence and leads to what will become characteristic for Hakim's style: sectional forms built of rather independent elements which gather into traditional units like ternary forms (I), variations (II), or rondos (III). With *Le Tombeau d'Olivier Messiaen* of 1993, Hakim presented himself as Messiaen's successor at La Trinité, using the elder composer's modes and quotations from some of his works. Since the late 1990s his style has tended back to tonality and rather traditional language: for example, the 1996 *Sinfonia in honore Sancti Ioannis Baptistae* exploits changing tonal fields. Increasingly, his works are based on pre-existing melodies, as in *Pange lingua* of 1996, the *Ouverture libanaise* of 2001, and *Bach'orama* of 2003. Nevertheless, pieces like *The Last Judgement* (1999)—biblical program music that wanders among tonal, modal, and atonal idioms—show that Hakim has not rejected the techniques of his earlier compositions. In recent years he has opened up his source of melody to Protestant hymnody (*Mit seinem Geist und Gaben. Variationen über "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,"* 2006). Hakim's work for organ presently comprises more than three dozen solo pieces and several others for organ with instruments, including four concertos.

Though also very successful as organist, Thierry Escaich (b. 1965) sees himself primarily as composer. After studies with Falcinelli (organ literature) and Michel Chapuis (improvisation), Escaich was named Professor of Fugue and Improvisation at the Paris Conservatoire in 1992. Since 1997 he has been *organiste titulaire* at St. Étienne-du-Mont, Paris. In its polytonality and modality, his music appears to be influenced by Messiaen, whereas in its form and approach to rhythm, Stravinsky seems close at hand. According to Escaich himself, further influences come from Ravel, Mahler, Bartók, and Ligeti.<sup>18</sup> A clear affinity for tonality, combined with lyrical melody and a "postromantic"<sup>19</sup> attitude which conceives music as a

EXAMPLE 5.8 Naji Hakim: *Symphonie en trois mouvements*, III, p. 25.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system features a guitar part with 'G.O. (Gt.)' and 'Pos.' markings. The second system continues the guitar part and includes a vocal line with lyrics 'Can ta te Do mi no Can'.

Réc. :	Flûte 8, Gambe 8, Voix céleste 8'	Sw. :	Flûte 8' Gamba 8', Voix céleste 8'
Pos. :	Flûte harmonique 8	Pos. :	Harmonic flûte 8'
Péd. :	Fonds 16' seuls	Péd. :	Foundations 16'

The musical score continues with a 'Calmato (a piacere)' section. It includes a vocal line with lyrics 'Can ta te Do mi no Can'.

psychological process, creates a music which, in the composer's words, explores the musical space between "mysticism and frenzy."<sup>20</sup> The essence of his personal style can be found in his first two *Évocations*, composed in 1996. Typical for Escaich, the first piece works with two contrasting elements which undergo a gradual development and produce violent conflicts. It begins with a fragile,

fragmented single line around the central tone *g*, followed by a rhythmically complex trio which, in four waves, combines similar chromatic lines. Variations further develop both elements and lead them into a growing opposition which escalates in an explosive climax. The piece ends with a reconciliation of the two antagonists: the trio structure is presented above a drone on *g*, and after each phrase a short melody around the central tone recalls the beginning. A conclusion quotes a *pp* variation of a declamatory passage which followed the central conflict (Ex. 5.9).

**EXAMPLE 5.9** Thierry Escaich: *Évocation I*, p. 10.

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system shows a complex melodic line in the right hand with many triplets and chromatic movement, while the left hand provides a more rhythmic accompaniment. The second and third systems continue this development, with the right hand becoming increasingly intricate. The fourth system begins with a *pp* dynamic marking. It includes two specific performance instructions in boxes: "R = Fl - 4 seule" in the right hand and "4' seul en tirasse" in the left hand. The piece ends with a final cadence.

The dramaturgic process of the first *Évocation* has a semantic character which can be found in most of Escaich's compositions. The second *Évocation* grows over heartbeat-like repetitions of the pedal tone CC. Above this simple ground bass, several different elements appear and vanish: short chromatic melodies, Messiaen-like modal triads in parallel voice leading, plainchant allusions set in tonal parallel 6/4 chords, brief polyphonic textures, a mysterious Messiaen quotation. This material develops gradually, creating a growing tension which finally bursts out in dense clusters and wild chord repetitions. The primitivist stamping and wild inferno of allusions is populated by short fragments from Louis Bourgeois's 1551 melody "*Ainsi que la biche rée*" ("O my soul, rejoice, be merry," Geneva Psalm 42), lending the piece a semantic hint. The battle between opposing forces is also characteristic of Escaich's *Trois Esquisses* of 1989, written for the inauguration of the new organ of the Paris Conservatoire. These pieces reveal that Escaich conceives his organ works like orchestral music, using the characteristic colors of the French organ as well as the possibility to drown soft textures by loud ones, and playing with light and darkness. Like most of his organ compositions, they require a virtuoso player. Escaich frequently makes use of plainchant elements, for instance the hymn *Pange lingua* in his 1993 *Quatrième Esquisse* ("*Le Cri des Abîmes*"). Together with long-breathed symphonic developments and the orchestral use of the organ, aspects of texture—for instance, the typically French toccata passages in *Esquisse III*—and material—e.g. the chorale settings in late Romantic style in *Poème II*, 2002—indicate Escaich's close relationship to the French symphonic organ tradition. Besides his solo works, he has composed various pieces for organ with other instruments, including the two organ concertos of 1995 and 2006.

### **"Modernity" and André Jolivet**

What may be called "modernity" in French organ music can be traced to the mid-1930s when the group *La Jeune France* gathered to oppose the contemporary mainstream trends of *Sachlichkeit* and neoclassicism and postulated a renewal of French music based on ideas derived from the Romantic era. The impact of this group was related primarily to two of its members, Olivier Messiaen and André Jolivet (1905–74), who, although different in their aesthetic credos, were equally innovative in their musical means and sought new material and techniques. Rooted in the Romantic tradition but at the same time insisting on the primacy of their intuition, they created original new music without negating their musical heritage. Jolivet, the more radical of the two, was the first to abandon tonality unequivocally, thus initiating the modern era in French organ music. Beginning in 1927, an early interest in Schoenberg and Varèse led him to a career as composer, accompanied by positions as music director of the Comédie Française (1945–59), music manager, and, from 1966 to 1971, as a Professor of Composition at the Paris Conservatoire. About 1934 he began to

experiment with an advanced musical language: lyrical melodies and figurations freely explore atonality without the severe control of a series, the premise based instead on an intricate use of overtone structures. Complex rhythms, fast-paced developments, and abrupt changes of dynamics, texture, and color create fascinating new musical landscapes. Among the works of this period is Jolivet's first organ piece, the *Prélude apocalyptique*, composed in 1935 but first published posthumously in 1991. Referring to a verse from the Book of Revelation, the work makes important use of a rhythmically complex, harshly dissonant, atonal linear polyphony. In 1961, Jolivet revised the composition and published it under the name of *Hymne à l'Univers*. The new piece is more idiomatic and had changed in many details. For example, Jolivet replaced the final harmony of F sharp major with a chord that includes all twelve chromatic pitch classes, symbolizing the whole sounding universe. According to Jolivet's thinking, deeply influenced by extra-European spirituality, the new title points out that music is "une manifestation sonore en relation directe avec le système cosmique universel."<sup>21</sup> Comparably, the inventive and contrasting fourteen principal parts of *Mandala*, composed in 1969, depict the seven continents and the seven seas in alternation, as conceived by Indian cosmology and represented in traditional Mandala designs (Ex. 5.10).

Among the pieces Jolivet wrote for organ with other instruments, *Arioso barocco* (1967) for trumpet and organ shows best his experimental creativity using clusters, glissandi, and quarter tones.

In spite of its importance and quality, Jolivet's music was not influential in the development of a new French organ music. He stands in contrast to Olivier

**EXAMPLE 5.10** André Jolivet: *Mandala*, m. 64.

The musical score for Example 5.10, André Jolivet's *Mandala*, m. 64, is presented in two systems. The first system shows the organ part (G.O.) and a 'Tutti' section. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 88. The organ part features a complex, atonal polyphony with intricate melodic lines and dense harmonic textures. The second system continues the organ part, showing further development of the complex, atonal polyphony. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *ff*.

Messiaen, who had a double impact. On the one hand, it was Messiaen's works which became important for many composers of the next generation: influences range from his modes of limited transposition (Hakim), to his complex use of plainchant (Escaich), or his method of serial composition (Darasse). On the other hand, Messiaen's teaching inspired creative personalities who developed in strikingly different directions, as demonstrated by a comparison of such figures as Gilbert Amy, Xavier Darasse, Jean-Louis Florentz, Jean-Pierre Leguay, and Iannis Xenakis.

### **New French Organ Music after Messiaen: Amy, Leguay, Darasse, Xenakis**

The young Greek engineer Iannis Xenakis (1922–2001) came to Paris in 1947 to work with Le Corbusier. Upon attending Messiaen's analysis class in 1950, his teacher recognized his mathematical talent and recommended that he use it as a compositional tool. Thus, Xenakis began to transfer mathematical operations to music. From the beginning he rejected serial methods because they were not perceivable. Instead, he organized sound by other means, for instance by the laws of probability (stochastic music) as in *Pithoprakta* of 1955–56. As mathematical operations can be adapted to every artistic discipline, he worked in different fields, connecting and combining the various arts (*Polytope de Montréal*, 1967) as well as the arts and sciences. A good example is Xenakis's use of moving lines in the genesis of conoids to build the Pavilion of the 1956 Brussels International Exposition as well as for the organisation of glissandi in his 1953–54 orchestra piece *Metastasis*, the work which brought him his international breakthrough as a composer. Xenakis's only organ work, *Gmeeeoorh* of 1974, consists of dense tangles of lines built according to a system he called "tree structures": all melodies ("branches") are similar, although not in a strict serial or dodecaphonic sense, but rather as free variants, thus forming an "organically" coherent world of related melodic shapes. In the course of the piece these branches intertwine, build harsh bundles of dissonances, and create a nearly unbearable tension which finally explodes in massive clusters and cluster tremoli. The piece exists in two versions, one for American organs of sixty-one manual keys and one for European instruments of fifty-six keys.

After Conservatoire studies with Yvonne Loriod, Olivier Messiaen, and Darius Milhaud, Gilbert Amy (b. 1936) pursued a double career as composer and conductor. Professor of Musical Analysis at Yale University in 1982, he worked as the director of the Lyon Conservatoire from 1984 until 2000. His stylistic development initially was based on Messiaen's language and classical dodecaphony. Then, influenced by Boulez and the Darmstädter Ferienkurse, Amy integrated serial methods, aleatory, and Stockhausen's concept of *Raummusik*, more recently experimenting with musical theater as well as combinations of voice and instruments with electronic tape. His music is formally clear, polyphonic, highly figurative, and sensible with respect to color, as seen in his *Sept Bagatelles* for organ of 1975. Amy bases the pieces around a seven-tone synthetic mode which is

chromatically ornamented and which serves as a central chord as well as a quarry for melodic invention. In certain passages the pitches of the mode are combined with a mode of durations, a kind of serialism comparable to Messiaen's *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*. Each of the seven pieces forms an individual musical cosmos; together they apply the concept of Webern's miniatures to the organ. *Quasi una Toccata* (1981), a virtuoso étude, organizes the organ's colors in a detailed and effective way. The varied textures of *Trois Inventions* (1993–2001) draw their rhythmic energy from passages in regular meter.

The influences of his teacher Messiaen and Viennese modernism were equally formative for Jean-Pierre Leguay (b. 1939). Organ studies with Marchal, Litaize, and Falcinelli resulted in a first prize for organ and improvisation at the Paris Conservatoire in 1966. These studies prepared Leguay for an international career as an organist and improviser and made him *organiste titulaire* of Notre-Dame Cathedral in 1985. In 1968 he had become Professor of Organ, Improvisation, and Music History at the Conservatoire in Limoges, and from 1989 through 2003 he was Professor of Organ at the Dijon Conservatoire. His music is atonal, dissonant, highly figurative, and sometimes dodecaphonic. Leguay makes use of various avant-garde elements like glissandi and clusters and has a special interest in the detailed organization of color, by registration as well as through chord structures. His textures are transparent, often monophonic or homophonous, his rhythms mostly non-metric. Distinct contrasts and a highly economical exploitation of his material give every piece a precise and individual shape. The nucleus of his organ output is formed by three groups of works: twenty-three preludes, three sonatas, and five madrigals. The *Préludes*, composed from 1965 through 1982, are mostly brief movements in the tradition of Webern's miniatures, with material restricted to one or two elements which are carefully developed and expanded in a freely invented form. Characteristic for this group is *Prélude XXI* (Ex. 5.11), which uses only the twelve pitches between  $f^1$  and  $e^2$  and a registration of a single stop (Bourdon 8').

Two contrasting textures are presented, a lively figuration beneath a drone and fluctuating microclusters, which spread out over the piece, developing an eventful musical landscape of about six and a half minutes' duration. The *Préludes XVI*, *XX*, and *XXIII* have been integrated into the Sonatas Nos. 1 and 2 (1973–74 and 1982–83 respectively), compositions which apply the familiar idea of two conflicting materials to a contemporary setting with multiple contrasting elements and vigorous developments. According to Leguay, his Madrigals (1979–87) are "instrumental poems,"<sup>22</sup> contrasting, inventive pieces like the sonatas and preludes. The forceful gestural quality of their melodies and rhythms gives them a rhetorical, sometimes dramatic or even theatrical touch.

Perhaps the only French organ composer after 1950 influenced significantly by the organ avant-garde of Germany (see Chapter 2) is Xavier Darasse (1934–92), who studied at the Conservatoire with Duruflé and Messiaen. His double career as composer and organ virtuoso dedicated particularly to contemporary organ music led to more than forty first performances before it was brutally halted in

EXAMPLE 5.11 Jean-Pierre Leguay: *Prélude XXI* (1980), mm. 1–7.

Bourdon 8 (sans tremblant)

$\text{♩} = 132$

1976 by a serious arm injury. Afterwards, Darasse concentrated on composing, organ teaching (from 1985, Professor at the Lyon Conservatoire), managing the Centre culturel de Toulouse, organ building and restoration, and journalism. He died shortly after having been appointed director of the Paris Conservatoire in 1991. His principle organ works, all entitled *Organum*, form an eight-part series consisting of solo pieces as well as works for organ with other instruments (*Organum IV*, 1981, for organ and percussion, *Organum VIII*, 1972, for organ and brass instruments). *Organum I* (1970) is a set of twelve episodes which can be played separately, in free combination, or as a whole (Ex. 5.12). Although some of Messiaen's techniques may be identified—for instance the mathematical rhythmic structures in part A—the composition primarily mirrors a thorough influence of the organ avant-garde associated with Germany: rhythmically determined register changes, crescendi and diminuendi on held chords (A, K), clusters (B, F, G, L), a perforated *Klangfarbenmelodie* (C), aleatory (B, F, H, J), as well as complex aperiodic rhythms (G, K), pointillist register changes (G), and glissandi (G). But the pieces are not meant as a survey of contemporary techniques, although they may be used in this sense as short and effective *études* for students. They are instead character pieces which create precise and individual atmospheres. For example, the rapid stop changes in episode A, playing the Bourdon against the Montre, produce a mysterious percussion-like sound, and the massive chord attacks resonating in pale, soft single tones (D) even have a gestural dimension. A complete performance of *Organum I* requires two assistants who also play the organ.

EXAMPLE 5.12 Xavier Darasse: *Organum I*, part B.

jeux de 4 et 1 pieds

Récit

Pos  
Montre 8 prestant

SouBasse

Pédale

Cette séquence de pedale se joue seulement lorsgue A  
l'ancheux à B si non TACTE

Préparez Go plein jeu

$\text{♩} = 60$

Récit  $\frac{4}{1}$  + { GamBe  
voix celeste  
4: } →

Positif Bourdon, 2. tierce

Pédale BomBorde  
Trompette

— Anches 16.8

Récit Cornet solo

Go principaux 16-8-4 .seuls →

pos

Ped. flute 16-8 →

The image displays a complex musical score for an organ. It is divided into three main systems. The first system features a 'Récit' part with a treble clef and a 'Pédale' part with a bass clef. The Récit part includes fingerings (3, 4, 5) and a tempo marking of quarter note = 60. The Pédale part has a specific instruction: 'Cette séquence de pedale se joue seulement lorsgue A l'ancheux à B si non TACTE'. The second system shows a 'Positif' part with a treble clef and a 'Pédale' part with a bass clef. The Positif part is marked 'Bourdon, 2. tierce' and includes a registration change instruction: 'Récit 4/1 + { GamBe voix celeste 4: }'. The Pédale part is marked 'BomBorde Trompette' and includes a registration change: '— Anches 16.8'. The third system shows a 'Cornet solo' part with a treble clef and a 'Pédale' part with a bass clef. The Cornet solo part is marked 'Go principaux 16-8-4 .seuls'. The Pédale part is marked 'Ped. flute 16-8'. Various registration changes and performance instructions are indicated by arrows and text throughout the score.

*Organum II* combines avant-garde techniques and the idea of the character piece to form a coherent, colorful eight-minute composition. The work is internally subdivided into six parts which, according to Darasse, can be represented as “introduction, toccata, trio, cadenza, cantus with decorative groups, and coda.”<sup>23</sup> Compared to *Organum I*, the aleatoric freedom is reduced but the organization of sound—by registration, manual changes, and so on—is still more differentiated. *Organum III* (1979), commissioned by the Grand Prix de Chartres competition and therefore written for a large French symphonic instrument, is a virtuoso

showpiece which explores the technical limit of what organ and performer can accomplish. *Organum VII*, composed in 1988, was inspired by a passage from Dante's *Divina commedia* (*Purgatorio*, Canto II); Darasse also set the Italian text as a demanding soprano part which can be sung *ad libitum* with the organ piece.

### Bridging the Traditions: Jean-Louis Florentz

Apart from any “school,” distanced from the modernist wing of French music, but equally far from perpetuating the style of the French Romantic tradition, Jean-Louis Florentz (1947–2004) developed an individual musical language which integrated influences of various origins, comparable to Messiaen, with whom he studied at the Paris Conservatoire in 1971. Rooted in a deep religious sense, Florentz understood music and nature as parts of a divine language. Thus, he also studied the natural sciences, Arabic languages, and ethnomusicology and undertook journeys to Polynesia, the Antilles, and Africa, where he analyzed animal sounds and studied music, liturgy, and the traditions of Ethiopian Christian communities. From 1985 to 2000 he worked as a Professor of Ethnomusicology at the Lyon Conservatoire. At first sight, Florentz and Messiaen share many features—modality, the integration of bird song, multilayered textures, musical symbolism, a keen interest in non-European cultures, musical inspiration through religion and nature—but Florentz's music is decidedly distinct from that of the elder composer. He derived his modes from ninth chords, and thus they are pentatonic, non-equidistant and latently tonal, although he ornaments them chromatically. His rhythms are based on the subdivision of measures rather than the accumulation of small values, and his music is composed as a continuous stream that follows narrative strategies. Aside from Messiaen and the French symphonic tradition—the latter recurs in Florentz's music in toccata-type settings and the concept of music as dynamic process—influences come from African music (story-telling traditions, incantation-like melodies, heterophony, intricate rhythms, complex polyphony), Stravinsky (combined chords, polytonal and atonal textures based on tonal units), and Debussy (parallel harmonies, harmony as color). Thus, his music brings together ideas of the Orient, the Occident, and Africa. Its aim is expressiveness, not the development of innovative musical material in the sense of promoting “progress” in music history. In its essence Florentz's music is linear, but the melodies are often richly ornamented by tonal, modal, or chromatic means, making extended use of elaborated overtone combinations. He designed his organ compositions for a large French Romantic instrument, ideally represented in the Paris Cathedral of Notre-Dame. They sound best when mutations corresponding to 32', 16', and 8' stops are available.

Florentz's first organ cycle, *Laudes. Kidân za-Nageh* op. 5 of 1983–85, was inspired by the morning prayer of the Ethiopian church, present in the quotation of a Magnificat melody serving as a Leitmotiv. The seven movements offer powerful and vivid musical images. Already the first (*Dis-moi ton nom*, or “Tell me

your name," a call for prayer) shows the cycle's range of materials, incorporating extensive melismas which recall the singing congregation, the imitation of the East African tambourine dove, and colorful chords that sound like African stone-clocks,<sup>24</sup> all magically interwoven in a dense six-minute process of unforgettably evocative atmosphere (Ex. 5.13).

*Debout sur le Soleil: Chant de résurrection pour orgue* op. 8, composed in 1989–90, draws its inspiration from various sources, primarily the *Book of*

**EXAMPLE 5.13** Jean-Louis Florentz: *Laudes*, «Dis-moi ton nom ...», mm. 33–42.

The musical score for Jean-Louis Florentz's *Laudes* (Example 5.13) is presented in four systems. The first system (measures 33-38) begins with the instruction "Animer un peu" and features a dense texture of chords and melodic lines. The second system (measures 39-44) includes the instruction "Rec." and "Tir. Pos." and features a similar texture. The third system (measures 45-50) is marked "Plus animé" and includes the instruction "G.O. :-\'Anches 8', 4\'". The fourth system (measures 51-56) is marked "Plus modéré" and includes the instruction "Petit Plein-Jeu en 8'". The score is in G major and 3/4 time, and includes various performance instructions such as "Pos.", "Rec.", "Tir. Pos.", "Tir. Rec.", "Péd.: - Tir. Rec. + Tir. G.O.", and "Plus animé".

*Enchantments of the Abyssinian Emperor Zara-Yaq'ob* (1434–68) and the collection of homilies *Debout sur le Soleil* by the French priest Jacques Leclercq (b. 1923). The piece has a symphonic outline and takes its thematic material from both the Jewish and Christian Orthodox Ethiopian liturgies. This monumental work—one movement requiring more than twenty minutes—is replete with symbolic and numerological allusions, rich in harmonic color and registrational nuance.

Florentz's third organ work, *La Croix du Sud. Poème symphonique* op. 15 of 2000, refers to an anonymous Tuareg love poem and to the story of Moses's encounter with God as related in Exodus 33 and the Koran, sura 7. Florentz interprets the impatience of the lover in the poem as a symbol of the human waiting for God, leading to a final union. This is mirrored in a gradual calming process, interrupted by violent outbursts. Finally, Florentz planned *L'enfant noir: Conte symphonique* as a cycle of fourteen movements based on an autobiographical novel of the same name by the African poet Camara Laye (1928–80), first published in 1953. Laye looks back on a childhood in Africa in the 1930s from the perspective of a young African now living in Paris, longing for his mother and his homeland. Florentz died before he could complete the cycle, having finished only the Prelude in 2002. Florentz's forceful musical language unites the French Romantic and Impressionist traditions with elements of French modernist music, and with influences from Africa. From this perspective, he may be considered as Messiaen's successor in French organ music.

## Notes

- 1 Bonnet published his repertoire in a six-volume collection of his own editing as *Historical Organ-Recitals* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1917–40), significant for its stylistic breadth and contemporary questions of performance practice. These include the titles *Forerunners of Bach* (vol. 1), *Johann Sebastian Bach* (vol. 2), *Handel, Mozart, and Masters of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (vol. 3), *Romantic Period: Schumann, Mendelssohn, Liszt* (vol. 4), *Modern Composers: César Franck to Max Reger* (vol. 5), and *Old Spanish Masters: Cabezón to Cabanilles* (vol. 6).
- 2 Dupré improvised in Brussels on February 13, 1931.
- 3 See further Dupré's important instruction manual from 1926/1937, the *Cours complet de l'improvisation à l'orgue*, the counterpart to the meticulous *Méthode d'orgue* of 1927.
- 4 See particularly Cavanagh 2005.
- 5 Ellis 1995. The last decade of the twentieth and first decade of the twenty-first centuries gave rise to a number of general surveys of Demessieux's life and work.
- 6 Gavoty 1980, 234.
- 7 Louis Vierne, *Avertissement to 24 Pièces en style libre* op. 31 (Durand, 1914). The English appears in the edition alongside the French.
- 8 Tournemire 1936, 84.
- 9 Fauquet 1979, 88.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 49.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 39.
- 12 Charles Tournemire, *César Franck* (Paris, 1931). On the topic of improvisation, see also the important treatise Tournemire 1936.
- 13 On Messiaen, see Chapter 6.

- 14 In 1939, Alain published the three works under a single cover with Leduc as *Trois Pièces*.
- 15 Jean Guillou, *L'Orgue: Souvenir et Avenir* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1978, 1989, 2nd ed.). Two German editions exist as *Die Orgel. Erinnerung und Vision* (Schwarzach: Glatter-Götz, 1984) and, in a second expanded edition, as *Die Orgel. Erinnerung und Zukunft, Veröffentlichung der Gesellschaft der Orgelfreunde 212* (St. Augustin: Musikverlag Butz, 2005). An English-language edition is as yet not available.
- 16 Guillou, Preface to *Alice au pays de l'orgue* op. 53 (Schott, 1998).
- 17 See also Chapter 2, note 16. As in Chapter 2, I use “New Music” here to indicate compositions drawing upon the advanced techniques of the avant-garde.
- 18 Kocevar 1997, 11.
- 19 Ibid. The designation is Escaich’s.
- 20 Cited in Krawinkel 2000, 86.
- 21 Cited in Gut 1977, 56.
- 22 CD booklet *Jean Pierre Leguay. Œuvres et Improvisation pour Orgue*, Edition Lade EL CD 033, n.p.
- 23 CD booklet *L'Orgue contemporain (I). Berio–Amy–Darasse–Jolas–Boesmans*, Ricercar RIC 072051, 13.
- 24 Florentz employs a technique he calls harmonic vibrato, complex chords registered with the combined foundation stops and mutations to create strong beats.

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# 6

## OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908–1992)

*Peter Bannister*

### **Messiaen and the Organ**

It may seem surprising that the author of the most important single body of works for the organ since J. S. Bach apparently never saw an organ until his eighteenth birthday. His first encounter with the instrument which would play such a decisive role throughout his life came while visiting the Meudon home of Marcel Dupré,<sup>1</sup> to whom Messiaen had been directed by his harmony teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, Jean Gallon, who had already noticed his young pupil's facility for keyboard improvisation. A mere eight days later, according to a letter of Dupré written in 1967, Messiaen was already able to play him Bach's C minor Fantasia<sup>2</sup> from memory. He subsequently enrolled in Dupré's *cours préparatoire*, officially entering his class alongside Jean Langlais and Gaston Litaize following an examination on December 17, 1927. The organist of St. Sulpice was therefore Messiaen's sole organ teacher, leaving a lasting imprint on his playing style, not least in the application of strict legato through rigorous finger substitution, as can be seen in Messiaen's scores all the way through to the *Livre du Saint Sacrement*.<sup>3</sup> He obtained his *premier prix* from the Conservatoire on May 31, 1929, the final *concours* consisting of Bach's D major Fugue BWV 532 and three improvisations (on a Gregorian theme and a fugue subject, followed by a free improvisation).<sup>4</sup> Messiaen's first documented organ recitals took place four months later in the small village of Tencin near Grenoble.

The same year Dupré recommended Messiaen to the ailing *organiste titulaire* of the church of La Trinité, Charles Quef (1873–1931), who was looking for an assistant and potential successor. Having played for services at La Trinité since 1929, Messiaen applied for the post on Quef's death. His application was supported not only by Dupré but also by Charles-Marie Widor, André Marchal, and

Charles Tournemire. The latter's letter of recommendation was to prove particularly prescient: "The musical worth and the future of this 'Christian' organist are of the highest order: a transcendent improviser, stunning performer, *Biblical* composer... With Messiaen, all is prayer."<sup>5</sup> Olivier Messiaen was appointed to the loft at La Trinité on September 14, 1931. He would play as the church's titular organist until January 26, 1992, three months before his death.<sup>6</sup>

### The Cavaillé-Coll Organ of La Trinité

Built by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll for the as yet unfinished church of La Trinité in 1868, the three-manual, 46-stop organ was inaugurated on March 16, 1869 by César Franck, Widor and Camille Saint-Saëns and subsequently repaired by Cavaillé-Coll following damage during the Paris Commune in 1871, then again in 1891, as well as by the Merklin firm in 1901. Félix Raugel gives the details of the Cavaillé-Coll *grand orgue* at La Trinité as Messiaen would have found it in 1931.<sup>7</sup>

In 1934 at Messiaen's request, the Pleyel firm added a Barker level for the Positif and seven new stops, demonstrating Messiaen's liking for mutations and mixtures consistent with the neo-classicizing tendencies of the 1930s: a Principal 8', Cor de Nuit 8', Nasard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', and Tierce 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' on the Positif; together with a Bourdon 16', Nasard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', and Cymbale III on the Récit.

<i>Grand-Orgue</i>	<i>Positif</i>	<i>Récit expressif</i>	<i>Pédale</i>
16 Montre	16 Quintaton	8 Bourdon	32 Soubasse
16 Bourdon	8 Flûte harmonique	8 Flûte traversière	16 Contrebasse
8 Montre	8 Salicional	8 Viole de gambe	16 Soubasse
8 Bourdon	8 Unda Maris	8 Voix Céleste	8 Flûte
8 Flûte harmonique	4 Prestant	8 Voix Céleste	8 Bourdon
8 Gambe	4 Flûte	4 Flûte	8 Violoncelle
4 Prestant	Octaviane	Octaviane	4 Flûte
[4 Flûte	2 Doublette	2 Octavin	16 Bombarde
Octaviane <sup>1</sup> ]	1 Piccolo	8 Trompette	8 Trompette
2 2/3 Quinte	II-V Cornet	8 Basson-Hautbois	4 Clairon
V Cornet	16 Basson	8 Basson-Hautbois	Tirasses G.O., Pos., Réc.
III-VI Plein Jeu	8 Clarinette	8 Voix Humaine	Appel G.O., Appel Pédale
16 Bombarde	8 Trompette	4 Clairon	Octaves graves G.O.
8 Trompette			Anches Péd., G.O., Pos., Récit
4 Clairon			Copula Pos./G.O., Réc./Pos., Réc./G.O.
			Trémolo Récit

<sup>1</sup> Coignet points out that this stop is documented in other sources. Coignet 1994, 527.

**FIGURE 6.1** Aristide Cavaillé-Coll: Église de la Sainte-Trinité, Paris. Specification upon Messiaen's arrival in 1931.

Beuchet-Debierre carried out an extensive rebuild in 1962–66. Changes included electrification, the provision of a new console, the installation of six adjustable combinations, and a crescendo pedal, alterations reflected in Messiaen's printed registrations for the *Méditations sur le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité* of 1969. Eight new stops were added—a Plein Jeu IV on the Pédale; a Doublette 2' and Cymbale IV on the Grande-Orgue (the Plein Jeu also was restructured); a Fourniture IV, Flageolet 2', and Clairon 4' on the Positif; and a Tierce 1½' and Bombarde 16' on the Récit. Seven Positif stops were enclosed in an expression box. In 1991, Messiaen requested from the Ville de Paris<sup>8</sup> the addition of a Septième 1½' and Neuvième ¾' on the Récit,<sup>9</sup> a Trompette en chamade 8' and a Pedal Bombarde 32', but these changes were not implemented.

It is clear that Messiaen's works are conceived throughout with a French symphonic organ in mind, the essential substance of which was inherited unaltered from the Cavaillé-Coll instruments known to Franck and Widor, but amplified in power, brilliance, and range of timbre. However, Messiaen was pragmatic in adapting his registrations for performance on aesthetically divergent organs such as the neo-classical Beckerath of the Johanniskirche in Düsseldorf, the venue for Almut Rössler's European première of the *Méditations sur le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité* in 1972.<sup>10</sup>

## A “Theological Rainbow”: Messiaen's Theology and his Music

While full treatment of Messiaen's Catholic faith is impossible within the space of this chapter, a brief consideration of this central theme of his life's work is indispensable to an understanding of his organ music. Recent scholarship suggests that Messiaen's famous statement that he was “born a believer” to unbelieving parents should not be accepted uncritically. As Yves Balmer has recently demonstrated,<sup>11</sup> the poetry of his mother Cécile Sauvage (1883–1927) touches on sacred themes. It is likewise debatable whether his father Pierre Messiaen (1883–1958) only “returned” to Catholicism after his wife's death, as the composer asserts.<sup>12</sup> In any case, Pierre Messiaen subsequently became a militantly religious writer acquainted with prominent intellectuals like the contemporary Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, Messiaen's upbringing was by no means strictly secular: he apparently knew his catechism by the age of ten. It is moreover difficult to believe that Messiaen's early theological reading—he claimed to have begun the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas at the age of 15 or 16—resulted from his independent purchase of primary texts rather than consultation of the family library.

If Messiaen's early organ works demonstrate an affinity with other young Parisian organist-composers clustered around Dupré and Tournemire (Durufié, Alain, Langlais, Litaize), what immediately distinguishes Messiaen is his unusually broad understanding of “sacred music.” This is apparent in his treatment of explicitly religious subject matter in supposedly secular genres such as chamber music and orchestral composition.<sup>14</sup> This attitude of blurring, indeed deliberately

deconstructing the boundaries between the sacred and the profane, begins with Messiaen's first orchestral work, the *Banquet eucharistique*, and spans his entire career through to the *Eclairs sur l'au-delà* of 1987–92.

Although the fundamental importance of Messiaen's Catholic belief and practice for his music is uncontested, closer examination reveals the nature of that belief to be somewhat more complex than has often been acknowledged. His music exhibits seemingly contradictory tendencies; on one hand many passages—notably in *La Nativité*, *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* or the *Trois Petites Liturgies*—appear to inhabit a nineteenth-century world of Catholic devotionalia bordering on the sentimental.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, moments of warm adoration in Messiaen are frequently juxtaposed, to the bemusement of many of the composer's critics, with demonstratively cerebral passages. Messiaen also couples deliberate archaism with futurist experimentation, quoting ancient sources extensively—particularly the medieval authors Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Thomas à Kempis—while treating them musically by ultra-modern compositional means.<sup>16</sup> A key to understanding these and other apparent contradictions is perhaps found in Messiaen's description of his music as a “theological rainbow,” or *arc-en-ciel théologique*,<sup>17</sup> in which all colors have their place. What may to human eyes appear as utter heterogeneity is “a single reality, seen from different angles”<sup>18</sup> in the light of God's infinite plenitude.

In this complex synthesis of worshipful ardor and intellectual reflection, the relative proportions between personal “spirituality” and objective “theology”—an opposition which the composer clearly seeks to overcome—fluctuate from work to work. At the risk of generalization, it might be said that his early works give pride of place to subjective emotion verging on the mystical. In the immediate post-war years, however, in response to the virulently hostile critical reception of pieces like the *Trois Petites Liturgies*, Messiaen ostensibly repudiates mysticism, shifting abruptly towards an austere objectivity culminating in the *Livre d'orgue* of 1951. His late style from the mid 1960s onward seeks a satisfying balance between intellect and emotion, as the expressive melodic writing and harmonic richness of Messiaen's early style are integrated with modernist technical innovation.

### **From *Le Banquet céleste* to *Les Corps Glorieux*: The Establishment of Messiaen's Style**

Although Messiaen's long career is marked by important stylistic shifts reflecting both his personal development and broader aesthetic issues, a remarkable feature of his organ output is the spiritual and musical similarity of its starting and end points, *Le Banquet céleste* and the *Livre du Saint Sacrement*. *Le Banquet céleste*, composed in 1928, already demonstrates an idea which accompanied Messiaen throughout his career: the Eucharist as both a memorial of Christ's death and a foretaste of the Heavenly Banquet, uniting past, present, and future in a way that radically challenges our notions of temporality. For all his own modest

EXAMPLE 6.1 Messiaen: *Le Banquet céleste*, mm. 1–3.

R: voix céleste, gambe, bourdon 8  
 Pos: flûte 4, nazard 2 2/3, doublette 2, piccolo 1  
 G: R G Ped: tir Pos. seule

Très lent, extatique (♩ = 52)  
 (lointain, mystérieux)

G R *pp legatissimo*

description of the work as “very charming, tender, sweet and spring-like” with “nothing scandalous about it,”<sup>19</sup> Messiaen’s first composition for organ<sup>20</sup> immediately confronts the listener with a structuring of musical time unprecedented in the organ repertoire.

The use of the Voix Céleste, Gambe, and Bourdon combination seen in Ex. 6.1 is imitative of orchestral strings. According to the composer as interviewed late in life by Brigitte Massin, the piece is a partial reworking of an unpublished composition for orchestra entitled *Le Banquet eucharistique*, written during Messiaen’s time in the class of Paul Dukas.<sup>21</sup> *Le Banquet céleste* is written in the “ecstatic” key of F sharp major, which would become a favorite tonality of Messiaen,<sup>22</sup> but it also makes extensive use of the octatonic scale of alternating half and whole steps, which he would later classify as the second of his celebrated modes of limited transposition.

Presented as Ex. 6.2, these modes are first discussed directly in the preface to *La Nativité* of 1935, although it is clear that Messiaen was using them at least on an intuitive, non-systematic basis in his student years: the piano *Préludes* of 1928–29 already include passages in modes 2, 3, 5, and 6. They are formed of repeating intervallic patterns (in the case of mode 2, whole step followed by half step, or in that of mode 3, whole step followed by two half steps); “limited transposition” refers to the fact that these modes cannot be repeated more than a few times (three in the case of mode 2, as with a diminished seventh chord, four in the case of mode 3, as with an augmented triad) without yielding an identical set of pitch classes. The *Nativité* preface only mentions four modes, of which the fourth contains several variants. By the time of Messiaen’s *Technique de mon langage musical* of 1944, these had become seven separate modes. Of these, however, Messiaen only uses mode 1 (the Debussian whole-tone scale) exceptionally.<sup>23</sup>

Given its thematic similarity to *Le Banquet céleste*, it seems likely that the brief *Offrande au Saint-Sacrement* was also composed in 1928. Discovered by the composer’s second wife Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen (1924–2010) in 1997 and published by Leduc in 2001, the work features arabesque-like flute melodies that unfold over *voix humaine*/*trémolo* chords. Less easily dated is another posthumously pub-

## EXAMPLE 6.2 Messiaen's modes of limited transposition.

The image displays seven musical staves, each representing a mode of limited transposition. The modes are labeled as follows:

- mode 1: C, D, E, F#, G#, A#
- mode 2: C, D, Eb, F, G, A, Bb
- mode 3: C, D, Eb, F#, G, A, B
- mode 4: C, D, E, F, G, Ab, A#
- mode 5: C, D, E, F, G, Ab, Bb
- mode 6: C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, B
- mode 7: C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, Bb

lished work, the nine-minute *Prélude*. Its employment of manual a<sup>3</sup> and pedal g<sup>1</sup> implies an organ other than the Cavallé–Coll *grand orgue* at La Trinité, perhaps the instrument at the Paris Conservatoire, which in turn would suggest 1929 as the date of composition. It exhibits all the characteristics of Messiaen's early style—a meditative opening, shifting metrical patterns and a harmonic idiom alternating between chromatically inflected tonality in the manner of Dupré, diatonic modality and octatonic writing—building to a declamatory climax before a brief reprise of the opening material.

The critical literature has not generally been kind to Messiaen's second published organ work, the *Diptyque*,<sup>24</sup> which the composer first performed at a concert organized by the *Amis de l'orgue* on February 20, 1930 at La Trinité. In particular, the agitated opening staccato chordal section is clearly derivative of Dupré's style: the piece is dedicated both to him and Paul Dukas. Nevertheless, the *Diptyque*'s formal structure reflects an important basic polarity in Messiaen's early music between the “anguish and useless torment of life” and the “peace and charity of Christian paradise,”<sup>25</sup> a dichotomy linked to a highly critical view of modern urban society.<sup>26</sup> If the first half of the *Diptyque* constitutes some of Messiaen's least personal writing for organ, the same cannot be said of the second section, formed of a “single ascending, serene phrase”<sup>27</sup> in C major. Reworked for violin and piano, it later became one of the composer's most celebrated compositions, the final movement of the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (1941). As can be seen in Ex. 6.3a and b, the version in the *Quatuor* is in E major, with a repeated dotted-note figure replacing the sustained left-hand chords of the *Diptyque*.

The first piece Messiaen composed following his appointment to La Trinité, the *Apparition de l'église éternelle* of 1932, remains one of his most striking creations in both its musical and poetic concept. According to the prefatory poem in Messiaen's manuscript, the work's granitic dynamic arch represents the appearance of the heavenly Church, an edifice built from the “living stones ... which are the souls of the elect.”<sup>28</sup>

EXAMPLE 6.3a Messiaen: *Diptyque* mm. 121–24.

Vt *gilep* (58 = ♩)  
G. Fl. harm.

R. V. eél.

Tirasse R. seule

EXAMPLE 6.3b Messiaen: *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, VIII. *Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus*, mm. 1–4.

Gzxtgo go gp'lgpv'gv'lgpf t g'lxzcvls vg''

VIOLON

*p* *expressif. paradisiaque*

Extrêmement lent et tendre, extatique (♩ = 36 env.)

PIANO

*p*

(simile)

*Faite des pierres vivantes*  
*Faite des pierres du ciel,*  
*Elle apparaît dans le ciel:*  
*C'est l'Épouse de l'Agneau!*  
*C'est l'Église du ciel*  
*Faite des pierres du ciel*  
*Qui sont les âmes des Elus.*  
*Il sont en Dieu et Dieu en eux*  
*Pour l'éternité du ciel!*

Made of living stones  
 Made of the stones of heaven,  
 She appears in the sky:  
 The Bride of the Lamb!  
 The Church of heaven  
 Made of the stones of heaven  
 Which are the souls of the elect.  
 They are in God and God in them  
 For the eternity of heaven!

*Apparition*'s crushing use of the Cavaillé–Coll tutti at the work's C major climax in m. 35 is perhaps the first instance of Messiaen's characteristic concern with *éblouissement*, the overwhelming sense of "bedazzlement" attained by aural saturation, which he associates with the inbreaking of Divine transcendence into human reality.<sup>29</sup>

The first of Messiaen's cyclic organ works, *L'Ascension* is subtitled *quatre méditations symphoniques* in keeping with its origin as his fifth work for orchestra, following *Le Banquet eucharistique*, *Les Offrandes oubliées*,<sup>30</sup> *Le Tombeau resplendissant*, and the *Hymne au Saint-Sacrement*. Messiaen produced the organ version in 1933–34 between the orchestration of the cycle, finished in Monaco in July 1933, and its first performance at the Salle Rameau in the Concerts Siohan series on February 9, 1935. Its composition involved both transcription and the provision of a new third movement, the celebrated *Transports de joie*, replacing the orchestral *Alléluia sur la trompette*, *alléluia sur la cymbale* from which Messiaen later came to distance himself. The premiere of the organ version did not take place at La Trinité due to the restoration of the Cavaillé–Coll *grand orgue*, but rather at the church of St. Antoine des Quinze-Vingts. It is perhaps worth noting that the theme of the second movement was also used by Messiaen as the opening motif of a *Fantaisie* for violin and piano, first published by Durand in 2007. The work is dedicated to his first wife, the violinist Claire Delbos (1906–59), at whose family home, the Château St. Benoît in Neussargues (Cantal), Messiaen transcribed *L'Ascension*'s first and fourth movements. Whereas these two outer sections display the composer's rapturously slow idiom, the inner movements break new compositional ground. The *Alléluias* and *Transports de joie* both show remarkable ingenuity in the use of texture (not least in the pedal writing of the former), motivic variation, and rhythmic work.

Composed in Grenoble in the summer of 1935, *La Nativité du Seigneur* was first performed at La Trinité on February 27, 1936 at a concert of *Les Amis de l'Orgue* by Daniel-Lesur (movements I to III), Jean Langlais (IV to VI) and Jean-Jacques Grunenwald (VII to IX).<sup>31</sup> In his commentary, Messiaen identifies five main theological ideas: first, predestination realized in the Word's Incarnation (*Desseins éternels*); second, God's dwelling among us (*Dieu parmi nous*) and suffering (*Jésus accepte la souffrance*); third, the three-fold birth:<sup>32</sup> the generation of the Eternal Word (*Le Verbe*), Christ's birth in time (*La Vierge et l'Enfant*), and the Christian's spiritual birth (*Les Enfants de Dieu*); fourth, the poetic evocation of figures connected with Christmas and Epiphany (*Les Bergers*, *Les Anges*, *Les Mages*); and fifth, honoring the motherhood of the Virgin by way of the total number of movements (nine).

Messiaen's longest and most ambitious work to date, *La Nativité*, draws on a wide range of Old and New Testament sources, including Isaiah 9:5 and Zechariah 9:9 (both I), Psalms 2, 7, and 109 (IV), Ecclesiasticus 24:8 (IX), Wisdom 7:26 (IV), Matthew 2 (VIII), Luke 1–2 (II, VI, IX), John 1:1–14 (IV, V, IX), Galatians 4:6 (V), Ephesians 1: 5–6 (III), and Hebrews 10: 5, 7 (VII). The cycle incorporates a

**EXAMPLE 6.4** Messiaen: *La Nativité du Seigneur*, IV. *Le Verbe*, mm. 5–6. Succession of seven-note pan-diatonic chords.



whole range of technical additions to the composer’s musical arsenal, later systematized in the *Technique de mon langage musical* but already discussed explicitly in the preface to *La Nativité*. These include “Greek” and “Hindu” rhythms<sup>33</sup> (I, II, IV, VI, IX), *valeurs ajoutées*,<sup>34</sup> the superposition of modes of limited transposition to create a “stained-glass” coloration (II), the *accord sur dominante* (a chord containing all the notes of the major scale, IV: Ex. 6.4), the treatment of plainsong in the manner of birdsong (IX), and the innovative use of mutation stops, perhaps influenced by Tournemire’s *Orgue Mystique* (for example I, opening: Quintaton 16’, Flûte 4’, Nazard: *timbre creux*).

Subtitled *Sept visions brèves de la Vie des ressuscités*, Messiaen’s next cycle, *Les Corps Glorieux*, was completed at Petichet in the Alps on August 25, 1939, one week before the outbreak of World War II. However, the composer could try it out at La Trinité only after returning from his incarceration during the winter of 1940–41 as a prisoner of war at Stalag VIIIa in Görlitz (Silesia). As Hill and Simeone have recently indicated on the basis of Messiaen’s diary entries, the registrations and fingering included in the score published by Leduc were added around the time of the work’s first private rendition given by Messiaen for his pupils at La Trinité on July 22, 1941.<sup>35</sup> The fourth and sixth movements were then performed publicly at the Palais de Chaillot on December 28, 1941, and the first complete public performances ensued on November 15, 1943 at La Trinité and on April 15, 1945 at the Palais de Chaillot.<sup>36</sup>

While continuing the trajectory of Messiaen’s previous organ works, *Les Corps Glorieux* shows the development of the composer’s theological thinking. Characteristically, Messiaen makes use of quotations from the Gospels, Paul, and Revelation—Matthew 13:43 (VI) and 22:30 (I), 1 Corinthians 15:43–44 (I, V), Revelation 7:17 (II) and 8:4 (III)—but doctrinal reflection is also provided by the Missal (IV, VII) on the subjects of the Resurrection and the Trinity. Additionally, Messiaen’s preface focuses on the qualities of the life of the resurrected: glory (“totally luminous, they are their own light”), impassibility (“they no longer suffer and have even lost the possibility of suffering”), agility (“they can pass through obstacles and travel very far through space in an instant, with the speed of lightning”) and subtlety (“they are no longer subjected to earthly necessities such as sleep or hunger, they are spiritualized and perfectly pure”). These four attributes parallel exactly Aquinas’s discussion of the Resurrection in the *Summa Theologica*

**EXAMPLE 6.5** Messiaen: *Les Corps Glorieux*. V. *Le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, mm. 1–4.

**Très lent, lointain**

R: bourdon 16  
el oclavin

P: flûte 8

Péd: bourdon 32  
tir. R

ppp legato

Pos.

p legato

ppp

*Supplementum Tertiae Partis* (82–85), the cornerstone of medieval Catholic theology which Messiaen began reading as a teenager and which would play an increasingly explicit role in his compositions.

Messiaen points to the luminous, intense coloration of *Les Corps Glorieux* as a reflection of the light of the Resurrection. Particular emphasis is given to registrations containing upper harmonic partials (the alternation of three Cornet stops in I; Flûte 4', Nazard, Tierce, Piccolo for the pedal melody in III; Mixtures in V and VI). However, passages of exuberant brilliance contrast with their opposite; while this is most evident in the opening section of *Combat de la Mort et de la Vie* (Basson 16' in the lowest register), darkness remains present at the work's conclusion as an expression of the ineffable mystery of the Trinity. Here, foreshadowing much of Messiaen's later organ writing, two outer voices symbolizing the Father and the Holy Spirit proceed in a chromatic atonal pianissimo. Only the middle modal voice of the Son "who has approached us visibly by his incarnation"<sup>37</sup> is readily distinguishable (Ex. 6.5).

### Messiaen and the Avant-garde: The *Messe de la Pentecôte* and the *Livre d'Orgue*

Messiaen's musical language underwent a radical change in the years immediately following World War II for reasons which merit brief discussion. 1939–45 had been a personally traumatic time, marked by the composer's imprisonment in 1940–41 and domestically by the onset of the mental degeneration of his first wife

Claire Delbos. But it had been a time of great artistic productivity as well, witnessing the composition and first performances of the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (1941), the *Visions de l'Amen* for two pianos (1943), the monumental piano cycle *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* and the *Trois petites liturgies de la présence divine* for female voices and orchestra (both 1945), as well as the publication of Messiaen's *Technique de mon langage musical* (1944). Although these works met with immediate public success, critical opinion was sharply divided over both Messiaen's musical language and his effusive literary commentaries, the idiosyncratic, exalted tone of which aroused polemics of a rare virulence. The episode was analyzed in 1946 in an extensive survey carried out by *Le Figaro littéraire* entitled "Is there a 'Messiaen affair'?" ("Y a-t-il un cas Messiaen?").<sup>38</sup>

Although the composer was deeply hurt by the highly personal invective to which he was subjected within France, he began to acquire an international reputation, not least through his teaching at the Conservatoire, where director Claude Delvincourt created for him a class in music analysis and aesthetics in 1947. Messiaen's pedagogy was not restricted to Paris, with guest lectures taking him to the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik* in Darmstadt as well as Budapest and Tanglewood. This intense activity necessitated a new involvement with the latest international musical and aesthetic currents, not least due to the stimulus provided by certain radical students like Iannis Xenakis, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Pierre Boulez, and the propagation of twelve-tone technique in France via the teaching of René Leibowitz. Messiaen's interaction with the avant-garde issued in a series of somewhat experimental works such as the famous *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* for piano, regarded by many—somewhat exaggeratedly—as ushering the so-called total serialism that would characterize European musical modernism in the 1950s. In terms of his writing for organ, this penchant for experimentation is mirrored in the *Messe de la Pentecôte* and the *Livre d'orgue*. These two cycles<sup>39</sup> represent the furthest point of his engagement with the vanguard of modernism, while it might be said that the new austerity of Messiaen's musical language, eschewing the luxuriance of his earlier style, was a response to the polemics of the *cas Messiaen*.

According to the composer, the *Messe de la Pentecôte* had its origins in improvisation. Judging by a report written by Messiaen for *L'Orgue* during his military service in 1940, his modernist explorations had already begun in the first year of the war. On a recent organ with abundant yet gentle mixtures, Messiaen played "numerous improvisations, in an avant-garde style, with one solo for the 16-foot Bourdon and the Tierce on a harmonic scheme which would have frightened Schoenberg himself."<sup>40</sup> The *Messe* was completed on January 21, 1951 and originally entitled *Messe du Saint Esprit*. Messiaen gave the first partial performance at La Trinité on May 13 of the same year. The piece is structured so as to correspond to a Low Mass like the ones Messiaen played at midday on Sundays, when he was allowed to perform his own music. Five movements (*Entrée, Offertoire, Consecration, Communion, Sortie*) echo the manner of Tournemire's *Orgue Mys-*

EXAMPLE 6.6 Messiaen: *Messe de la Pentecôte*, Entrée (*Les langues de feu*), m. 26.

The image shows a musical score for three staves in 2/4 time. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a triplet of quarter notes. The middle staff is in treble clef and contains a group of seven notes labeled '7 (pour 8)' and a triplet of quarter notes. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a group of three notes labeled '3 (pour 2)'.

*tique*, to which Messiaen alludes in his discussion of the *Messe* in volume III of his posthumously published *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie*.<sup>41</sup> Messiaen's cycle, intended as a musical commentary on various aspects of the mystery of Pentecost, is an intriguingly eclectic combination of frankly illustrative passages of studied naïveté, such as the delightful dialogue of water droplets<sup>42</sup> and birdsong in *Les oiseaux et les sources*, and arcane technical procedures, by means of which Messiaen gives full rein to his delight in the bizarre. These include the distortion of "Greek" rhythms by the application of "irrational" mathematical ratios and nested triplets, as in Ex. 6.6 (7 in the time of 8 enclosed within triplet quarter-notes), and the interplay of three superimposed "Hindu" *personnages rythmiques*<sup>43</sup> (*tritīya*, *caturthaka*, *nihçankalīla*) in the second movement's extended meditation on the words of the Nicene Creed, *Les choses visibles et invisibles* ("Things visible and invisible," the latter constituting for the composer the domain of the Holy Spirit).

Messiaen's comments on this phrase as recorded in the *Traité* are especially colorful and give a flavor of the exploratory nature both of his music and of his Conservatoire teaching:

*Things visible and invisible!* But there is *everything* in these words! Known and unknown dimensions: from the possible diameter of the Universe to that of the proton—known and unknown durations: from the age of galaxies to that of the wave associated with the proton—the spiritual and material world, grace and sin, angels and humans—the powers of light and the powers of darkness—atmospheric variations, liturgical chant, birdsong, the melody of water droplets<sup>44</sup> and the black growls of the monstrous beast of the Apocalypse—finally, everything that is clear and tangible, and all that is obscure, mysterious, supernatural, everything that surpasses science and reason, everything that we cannot discover, all that we will never understand.<sup>45</sup>

In the summer of 1951 Messiaen began composing the *Livre d'orgue*, the most forbiddingly austere of all his organ works and the one in which serialism plays a dominant role, but he only completed the cycle in 1952,<sup>46</sup> giving the first performance at the Villa Berg (the studio of the Süddeutscher Rundfunk) in Stuttgart on April 23, 1953. Five of the seven pieces contain liturgical references: *Les Mains de l'abîme* for penitential seasons, *Chants d'oiseaux* for Eastertide, the two *Pièces en trio* for Trinity Sunday and *Les Yeux dans les roues* for Pentecost, but these are framed by two abstract movements entitled *Reprises par interversion* and *Soixante-quatre durées*. In these the overriding emphasis is on rarefied rhythmic procedures straining at the bounds of audibility.<sup>47</sup> The relative lack of textural and registrational variety within the trio movements,<sup>48</sup> combined with their rigorous linearity, reinforces a sense of intellectual asperity undoubtedly linked to Messiaen's involvement with the European post-war compositional vanguard in the early 1950s.

Nevertheless, the *Livre d'orgue* by no means lacks evocative power, particularly in the movements where open illustration or birdsong come to the fore, poeticizing the prevailing twelve-tone idiom. *Les Mains de l'abîme* is prefaced by a quotation from Habakkuk 3:10—"The deep uttered its voice, and lifted up its hands on high" (American Standard Version)—and was inspired by the Alpine gorge of the Infernet. According to Messiaen's commentary, the opening tutti chords symbolize the "great cry of human misery towards God," while the central section creates a sense of space by combining the lowest register of the instrument in a dialogue of desolation and consolation (Ex. 6.7).

*Les Yeux dans les roues* is a whirling fortissimo toccata based on Ezekiel's vision of the wheels accompanying the four living creatures ("and they ... had their rims full of eyes round about. For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels")

**EXAMPLE 6.7** Messiaen: *Livre d'Orgue*, III. *Les Mains de l'Abîme*, m. 25.

**Lent**

R: Voix humaine (avec trémolo),  
Nazard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ , Bourdon 16  
Pos: Tierce 1 $\frac{1}{5}$  et Piccolo 1 (tout  
seuls)  
G: Bourdon 8  
Péd: Contrebasse 16, Soubasse 16,  
Bourdon 32, et Tirasse R

Ezekiel 1:18, 20, American Standard Version). But it is the fourth movement, *Chants d'oiseaux*, which is most indicative of Messiaen's future compositional direction, since birdsong would prove crucial in the renewal of his musical language as he distanced himself from serialism after 1952. Written in the forest of St. Germain en Laye to the west of Paris, *Chants d'oiseaux* charts an ornithological progression from afternoon to evening in a manner that anticipates Messiaen's monumental *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, a work which occupied him for most of the remainder of the 1950s. Given that birds function for the composer as symbols of the resurrected life in their agility and in their return to song in springtime, it is logical that Messiaen should associate them with Easter.<sup>49</sup>

### **A Mature Synthesis: From the *Verset pour la fête de la Dédicace* to the *Livre du Saint Sacrement***

Composed in December 1960 as a Paris Conservatoire examination piece, the *Verset pour la fête de la Dédicace* may occupy only a modest place in Messiaen's output, but is significant in that it represents his return to the organ after a lengthy hiatus following the *Livre d'orgue*. The work alternates two main elements: a Gregorian Alleluia for church dedications and the singing of the song thrush (*grive musicienne*) played on a registration with a harmonic richness (Positif: Flûte 4' and Tierce 1½' at 16', 8' and 4') that foreshadows the orchestral birdsong harmonizations of *Saint François d'Assise*. Three years later Messiaen composed a short *Monodie* for a pedagogical work by his assistant organist at La Trinité, Jean Bonfils.<sup>50</sup> Recalling the first movement of *Les Corps Glorieux*, it only received its first public performance at Westminster Cathedral on May 19, 1998, played by Dame Gillian Weir.

The final three decades of Messiaen's life were dominated by monumental projects, each absorbing him for several years, broadly characterized by the integration of the fruits of his post-1945 technical exploration with elements of his earlier musical language. The nine *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité* were premiered by the composer himself on March 20, 1972 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC. Their composition followed directly after that of the oratorio *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, with which the *Méditations* share an important textual source, namely Aquinas's *Summa*. The *Méditations* are also marked by an idiosyncratic and controversial technical innovation for which Messiaen coined the term *langage communicable*, or "communicable language." In an introduction alluding eclectically to Wagnerian Leitmotiv, the Jewish Kabbala, and Aquinas's notion of communication between angels through an "operation of the intellect," Messiaen explains the principles of what he acknowledges is something of a musical game. Not only letters of a written text but also Latin case endings and the two verbs *être* (to be) and *avoir* (to have) are assigned pitches, octaves, and durations. Messiaen later admitted that the *langage communicable*, which he used only sparingly in

subsequent works such as *Des Canyons aux Etoiles*, is essentially a chance procedure,<sup>51</sup> the interest of which lay in forcing him to find ingenious ways to integrate the bizarre melodic lines generated by the technique into the overall musical fabric.

In this most overtly theological of all Messiaen's organ cycles, the *langage communicable* appears in connection with the involved argumentation of Aquinas's *Summa*. For example, in the final bars of the first movement, *Le Père des Etoiles*, the pedal line spells out the word unengendered (*inengendré*), denoting that God the Father is distinguished from the Son and Spirit by virtue of being the "principle that has no principle" (*Summa*, Book II, q.33, art.4, conclusion). In the third piece, the *langage communicable* determines the entire upper voice, transcribing the words *relation en Dieu est identique à essence de Dieu* ("relation in God is identical to God's essence," *Summa* Book I, q.28).

If the *Méditations* consciously attempt to match St. Thomas's intellectual rigor by the deployment of the full panoply of Messiaen's technical devices, the overall musical impression is nonetheless one of relative clarity when compared with the studied contrapuntal opacity of the *Livre d'orgue*. While there are chordal passages of formidable density, such as the "turning stars" of the first movement or the toccata marked *le souffle de l'Esprit* in the fifth, much of the writing is transparent. Messiaen no longer seems determined to pass all musical elements through a surrealist "deforming prism."<sup>52</sup> Plainsong, for example, now appears unadorned in the second, sixth, and eighth movements. The composer's neo-medievalism is not primarily the result of a penchant for arid theological disputation, but rather it derives from his admiration for the Christian Middle Ages' unity of penetrating intellectual reflection and devotional ardor. There are thus intensely lyrical moments of pure tonal repose, such as the radiant G major passage marked *Dieu est amour* at the end of movement V, or the pandiatonic ending of movement VIII, accompanied by the citation of Psalm 54(55): 7, "Oh that I had wings like a dove. Then would I fly away, and be at rest" (American Standard Version).

Messiaen's final organ work, the vast *Livre du Saint Sacrement* comprising eighteen movements and lasting nearly two hours, was composed with remarkable speed given its dimensions. Messiaen had reached a point of exhaustion with the completion and première of his opera *Saint François d'Assise*, which had occupied him from 1975 to 1983, after which he declared that "dusk has arrived. I've finished. I will write nothing more."<sup>53</sup> However, as Hill and Simeone have pointed out, his baggage for a stay at La Sauline only three months later already contained preparatory materials for the composition of a new *Livre d'orgue*. These included a book of plainsong, Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ* and certain theological writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar. It seems in fact that the work had been in gestation for some time: a sketch of the movement which would become *L'Institution de l'Eucharistie* points back to a liturgical improvisation at La Trinité on Maundy Thursday 1981.<sup>54</sup> Hill and Simeone have shown that Messiaen toyed with several concepts for the work, including a cyclical framework encompassing

a movement for every feast day of the liturgical year as well as a set of “Studies on complementary colors, ornaments, light and shadow” (*Études sur les couleurs complémentaires, les agréments, et sur la lumière et l’ombre*) comprising a piece on the crossing of the Red Sea.<sup>55</sup>

Messiaen had completed a fifteen-movement version of the *Livre* by June 1984, but this was not organized in the published sequence. The work underwent substantial revisions before being delivered to Almut Rössler in view of the first performance at the National Convention of the American Guild of Organists in Detroit on July 1, 1986. Three new pieces were added (*Acte de Foi*, *La Présence multipliée*, and *La joie de la grâce*) and the cycle completely re-ordered. The movement *Résurrection du Christ*, which had closed the June 1984 version, now appeared as the tenth piece, and the work’s conclusion became an *Offrande et Alleluia final*, previously entitled *La Visitation et la joie de Jean-Baptiste*.

The *Livre du Saint Sacrement* is divided into three sections. The first four movements offer meditations on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. These are followed by seven pieces based chronologically on episodes from Christ’s life, after which Messiaen allows for an interval in the event of a complete performance of the *Livre*. The remaining seven movements contemplate the mystery of the Eucharist from the present-day perspective of the life of the Church. Overall, the *Livre du Saint Sacrement* can be seen as primarily a devotional work, returning to some extent to the character of Messiaen’s pre-war compositions.<sup>56</sup> In keeping with its improvisational origins, many of the movements are perfectly usable in a liturgical setting. A less intellectual tone than that of the *Messe de la Pentecôte*, *Livre d’Orgue*, or the *Méditations* predominates. Although, as with the *Méditations*, Aquinas remains a prime literary source, Messiaen does not refer here to the *Summa* but rather to St. Thomas’s hymn *Adoro te*, written for the Feast of Corpus Christi instituted by Pope Urban IV in 1264. Furthermore, Messiaen includes texts by two other emblematic figures of medieval contemplative spirituality, the great Franciscan Scholastic Saint Bonaventure and Thomas à Kempis.

Although the *Livre du Saint Sacrement* is Messiaen’s longest organ cycle, it is far from his most complex. Here is evidently a composer free from the need to provide a demonstration of his own technique. Speculatively cerebral passages are relatively rare; the *langage communicable* is reserved for the words *Résurrection* (VII), *Apocalypse* (XI), and *La Joie* (XVIII); there is only one occurrence of a *mode de valeurs et d’intensités* (XII, opening); while Greek rhythms appear only three times (VII, VIII, XVII), and the Hindu *deçî-tâlas* are entirely absent. Much of the music is of a childlike simplicity (II, XIV, XVI), and even in passages of great force (*Acte de Foi*, *La Résurrection du Christ*, *La Présence Multipliée*) or radical dissonance (*Les Ténèbres*), Messiaen often presents his ideas in starkly concentrated form, eschewing all superfluous decoration. Nevertheless, there are also more developed movements of virtuosic rhythmic exuberance, above all *Les Deux Murailles d’eau* and the *Offrande et Alleluia final*, the two climactic points of a cycle whose arrangement ultimately remains relatively loose. In the former movement,

Messiaen offers both a vivid theological concept—the interpretation of the two walls of water at the dividing of the Red Sea as a typological anticipation of the breaking of the Eucharistic bread—and an equally gripping musical illustration in great waves of broken chords punctuated by silences (Ex. 6.8). In the latter

**EXAMPLE 6.8** Messiaen: *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, XIII. *Les Deux Murailles d'eau*, p. 104.

GPR: fonds 16, 8, 4, mixtures, pleins-jeux, anches 16, 8, 4 tous accouplements

**Modéré, un peu vif** (Les vagues dressées)

*legato,*  
*arraché*

movement, the repeated leaping motive of the opening page points to the origin of the piece in the episode in Luke’s Gospel when John the Baptist leaps in his mother Elisabeth’s womb at the visit of Mary<sup>57</sup> (Ex. 6.9).

**EXAMPLE 6.9** Messiaen: *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, XVIII. *Offrande et Alleluia final*, p. 149.

GPR: fonds 16, 8, 4, mixtures, pleins-jeux, anches 16, 8, 4

Ped : fonds 32, 16, 8, 4, anches 16, 8, 4 tous accouplements 3 tirasses

**Très lent, lointain**

*dr. dessus*

R: bourdon 16  
et octavin

P: flûte 8

Péd: bourdon 32  
tir. R

There are moments recalling both *Transports de joie* and *Dieu parmi nous*; after a brief *fff* passage in the *langage communicable* spelling out the words LA JOIE, Messiaen concludes with a series of repeated eleven-note chords. The one missing pitch class from the set of twelve chromatic tones, C, is then played on its own *fff* in the pedal, thereby bringing the composer’s output for organ to a close. Messiaen’s written introduction to the cycle gives no explicit interpretation of this ending, but it would surely be consistent with his all-embracing *arc-en-ciel théologique* to see this as a fitting summation of his unwavering faith in the Triune God who is “so complex and so simple ... infinitely simple” (*Trois Petites Liturgies de la Présence Divine*).

## Notes

- 1 Hill and Simeone 2005, 22. All pages reference the English version unless noted otherwise. Dupré's statement that Messiaen was nineteen conflicts with the chronology. Nigel Simeone and Christopher Dingle have established that Messiaen became an *auditeur* of Dupré's class shortly after Easter 1927. Dupré had acquired Alexandre Guilmant's villa in Meudon, together with his organ, which he had electrified and equipped with various technical innovations, such as a *sostenuto* button analogous to the third pedal on a Steinway grand piano.
- 2 Letter of December 27, 1967, cited in *ibid.*, 22. Whether Dupré refers to BWV 537 or 562 remains an open question.
- 3 There is however relatively little trace in Messiaen's organ works of the virtuosic pedal technique associated with Dupré. Moreover, Messiaen's performance of his own works—a topic in its own right—is marked with an agogic liberty quite foreign to the tradition of Dupré. The apparent contradiction between such interpretive freedom as displayed by Messiaen's 1956 recordings of his works up to the *Livre d'Orgue* and the extreme precision of the notation remains a conundrum, especially considering the importance of the mathematics of rhythmic duration in Messiaen's thinking.
- 4 One should note the relative importance of improvisation in the Paris Conservatoire's curriculum compared to study of repertoire. Although Dupré was extremely demanding in terms of the latter, insisting that a new work be played from memory every week, the final examination traditionally remained heavily weighted towards improvisation.
- 5 *La valeur musicale et l'avenir de cet organiste "chrétien" sont du premier ordre: improvisateur, exécutant étourdissant, compositeur biblique... Chez Messiaen, tout est prière.* French original cited in Hill and Simeone 2007, 56. English translation in Hill and Simeone, *Messiaen*, 33–34. All correspondence related to Messiaen's nomination at La Trinité is found in the Messiaen Archives of Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen (1924–2010). Tournemire's influence both as a composer and improviser upon Messiaen was considerable. Many of the leading young organists of Messiaen's generation were frequent visitors to the organ loft of St. Clotilde. Tournemire's style was in many respects the antithesis of that favored by Dupré, who emphasized strict discipline and the imitation of written composition. Messiaen's organ repertoire included portions of Tournemire's *Orgue Mystique*, which he praised highly in his articles for the musical press in the 1930s as well as in his *Technique de mon langage musical*. Ironically, Tournemire was to express himself disdainfully on the subject of Messiaen in his unpublished memoirs, although this should largely be attributed to Tournemire's increasing rancor and paranoia in his later years.
- 6 For the greater part of Messiaen's tenure his weekly duties included three Masses and Vespers on Sundays. In the 1960s the latter were eliminated and the number of Masses reduced to two.
- 7 Raugel 1927, 219–20, cited in Coignet 1994, 527.
- 8 Curiously, although church and state have been separated in France since 1905, the city of Paris remains the official owner of 130 organs in 96 religious buildings in the French capital (85 Catholic and 9 Protestant churches, together with 2 synagogues).
- 9 A letter of Messiaen referring admiringly to these two stops on the organ of the Berlin Hochschule after a performance of the *Livre d'Orgue* on February 4, 1958 is reproduced in Rössler 1986, 182.
- 10 A particularly lucid discussion of issues of interpretation can be found in *ibid.*, 145–76.
- 11 Balmer 2009.
- 12 See Massin 1989, 19–20.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 178.
- 14 It seems likely that Tournemire served Messiaen as a model in this respect.
- 15 This is pejoratively described in France as the *style saint-sulpicien*, referring to the pro-

- liferation of shops selling religious paraphernalia near the church of Saint-Sulpice. Messiaen's devotional and liturgical thought is particularly marked by the two works *Paroles de Dieu* by Ernest Hello (1828–85) and *Le Christ dans ses Mystères* by Dom Columba Marmion (1858–1923). The latter, which analyzes the mysteries of Christ through the prism of the liturgical year, was recommended to Messiaen by his personal confessor upon his appointment to La Trinité.
- 16 Messiaen's characterization of Tournemire's style as "half-Gothic, half ultra-modern" (Messiaen 1938, 26; my translation) could equally serve as a self-description.
  - 17 See Messiaen 1944/1956, 21 and 63.
  - 18 Cited in Goléa 1960, 41.
  - 19 Messiaen and Samuel 1986, 127. Translation mine.
  - 20 Not counting three pieces of unpublished juvenalia entitled *Esquisse modale*, *Variations écossaises* and *L'Hôte aimable des âmes*.
  - 21 See Massin 1989, 44–5.
  - 22 A prime example is the use of F sharp major for the *Thème de Dieu* in the piano cycle *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*. Both Franz Liszt (*Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*) and Aleksandr Skryabin (*Sonata no.5 op. 53*) provide striking precedents for the "ecstatic" use of the same tonality.
  - 23 Messiaen's use of mode is intimately connected with his concern with the correspondence between the perception of sound and color (synaesthesia). For a detailed table of the associations of mode and color, see Bernard 1994, 207.
  - 24 John Milsom's verdict that "not even Messiaen's own performance can make the *Dipytique* of 1930 seem an interesting piece" is typical. Milsom 1994, 62.
  - 25 Program for the first performance, February 20, 1930, cited in Hill and Simeone 2005, 26.
  - 26 A similar line of thought is apparent in Messiaen's programmatic description of his *Les Offrandes Oubliées* for orchestra of the same year, in which the central movement's "breathless, frenetic, relentless" plunge of the world into sin is contrasted with Divine pity and love expressed in the Eucharist. Messiaen's lifelong hostility to modern industrialization attains a peak of vehemence in the surrealistic visions of his own texts for the song-cycles *Poèmes pour Mi* and *Chants de terre et de ciel*, both from 1937; in the latter's *Minuit pile et face* the "city" is described as a "stinking eye" (*œil puant*).
  - 27 Hill and Simeone 2005, 26.
  - 28 The verse was printed only in the 1993 re-engraving of *Apparition*. It appears as well in Latry and Mallié 2008, 88. The latter offers an extensive study of Messiaen's pre-war organ works. The translation is mine.
  - 29 Messiaen's most telling analysis of this phenomenon and its theological significance is to be found in the *Conférence de Notre-Dame* and *Conférence de Kyoto*, Messiaen 1978 and 1985 respectively. *Eblouissement* is a key concept in *La Transfiguration* and *Saint François d'Assise*.
  - 30 The final movement of the *Offrandes oubliées* offers another example of the interrelationship between the orchestra and the organ in Messiaen's works, providing the harmonic and melodic basis for the movement *Desseins éternels* in *La Nativité*. See Milsom 1994, 65–66.
  - 31 However, there has been recent speculation based on remarks by Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen that Messiaen may have played certain movements at La Trinité in late 1935. Hill and Simeone 2005, 59.
  - 32 *Les trois naissances* is a notion taken directly from *Le Christ dans ses Mystères* of Dom Columba Marmion. Brigitte Massin has conclusively demonstrated the link between Messiaen's five themes and the passages in Marmion's book treating Christ's Nativity. See Massin 1989, 68–72.
  - 33 Messiaen's acquaintance with Greek and Indian music was largely theoretical, stemming from the influence of his teachers Maurice Emmanuel and Marcel Dupré, who,

- according to Messiaen's fellow student Rachel Brunschwig, made his pupil improvise on Greek rhythms. Dingle 2007, 19. It was probably during his Conservatoire studies that Messiaen became aware, via Lavignac's *Encyclopédie de la Musique*, of the medieval Indian theorist Sharngadeva's catalogue of 120 rhythms known as the *deçî-tâlas*, which would be used extensively in Messiaen's works after *La Nativité*.
- 34 This is one of Messiaen's most characteristic rhythmic innovations, generating irregularity in rhythmic patterns by the addition of a note or rest, or the prolongation of one of its notes. Generally, rhythm's treatment as an independent musical parameter is a salient aspect of Messiaen's technique, one which he may well have acquired by studying Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps*. The latter may also have provided a precedent for Messiaen's frequent use of "non-retrogradable" or palindromic rhythms whose symmetry parallels the structure of the modes of limited transposition with regard to pitch. Messiaen exhibits a fascination with symmetrical mathematical structures, to which he ascribes an incantatory, quasi-magical power, cryptically termed "the charm of impossibilities" (for example, the impossibility of transposing his second mode more than three times without repetition, or of dividing a prime number).
- 35 Hill and Simeone 2005, 114.
- 36 The question of the première of *Les Corps Glorieux* is contested within the secondary literature. Timothy Tikker has claimed that the performance at La Trinité would inevitably have been less public than that in 1945 given the German occupation of Paris. Tikker 1989, 13. Nigel Simeone has questioned the assertion of Jennifer Bate that the registrations of the first edition of *Les Corps Glorieux* reflect the first performance at the Palais de Chaillot, notably arguing that there is no reference to the fourth manual present on the Cavaillé-Coll/Gonzalez Chaillot instrument. Simeone 2000, 3.
- 37 *Toute la pièce est un pianissimo lointain et confus d'où émerge la voix médiane: seul, le Fils s'est approché de nous visiblement par son incarnation*. Composer's commentary on *Les Corps Glorieux* reprinted in "Un arc-en-ciel théologique" 2008, 61. Translation mine.
- 38 *Le Figaro littéraire* (April 20, 1946).
- 39 Hill and Simeone contend that Messiaen's notes for these two works reveal their conception as a single *Livre d'études rythmiques*. They also assert that Messiaen planned two further Masses for organ for Palm Sunday and Easter, which however remained uncomposed. Hill and Simeone 2005, 193–95.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 114. The original text of Messiaen's report for *L'Orgue* can be found in the French edition, Hill and Simeone 2007, 120. Messiaen goes on to add that the soldiers in attendance were curiously less scandalized at these unexpected sounds than were the Paris church faithful.
- 41 Messiaen 1994–2002 vol. III, 125.
- 42 Messiaen's experimentation with water effects on the organ is documented first in *Le Banquet céleste*, with its pedal line—played on Flûte 4', Nazard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', Doublette 2 and Piccolo 1' coupled down from the Positif—marked at m. 12 "staccato bref, à la goutte d'eau."
- 43 *Personnages rythmiques* is the term used by Messiaen for different rhythmic layers contained within a single texture, which are developed according to independent principles. For example, one element might proceed by augmentation, a second by diminution, with a third remaining unchanged. A famous example is the fifth movement of the *Turangalîla-Symphonie*. In Volume II of the *Traité* Messiaen once again points to Stravinsky's *Le sacre* as his template.
- 44 It is perhaps worth noting the contemporaneity of Messiaen's incorporation of musical elements from nature with his single brief flirtation with *musique concrète* in the tape piece *Timbre-durées*, made in collaboration with Pierre Henry in 1952. Messiaen's analysis of *Le Vent de l'Esprit* explicitly refers to *musique concrète* with regard to a nine-note *ffff* broken chord containing all the pitches of mode 3. Messiaen 1994–2002 vol. III, 114.

- 45 Ibid., vol. IV, 89. Emphasis Messiaen's. The translation is mine.
- 46 According to the revised dating proposed in Hill and Simeone 2005, 201.
- 47 This can largely be attributed to Messiaen's view of rhythm primarily in terms of graphically notated duration rather than perceived rhythmic pulse. For example, the concluding movement's title, *Soixante-Quatre Durées*, refers to the strictly differentiated lengths of the held chords—from 1 to 64 thirty-second-notes—but the basic unit of rhythmic construction from which these multiples are derived, that is the thirty-second note itself, is only heard once (on the penultimate page). The score is divided graphically into nominal  $\frac{7}{4}$  measures, but this is mere visual convention. For an excellent discussion of Messiaen's rhythmic technique, see Pople 1994, 31–42.
- 48 Messiaen later came to distance himself from the first trio, seeing it as a “nondescript piece of dodecaphonic music,” failing to attain his aim of evoking the mystery of the Trinity seen “through a glass darkly.” Messiaen 1994–2002 vol. III, *Les Grandes Orgues des Églises de Paris et du Département de la Seine*, 181.
- 49 See for example Messiaen's discussion of the movement *Chants d'oiseaux* (for Easter-tide) from the *Livre d'Orgue*. Messiaen 1996, 192–93.
- 50 Bonfils and Pierront 1962.
- 51 In an interview with Claude Samuel, Messiaen refers to his *langage communicable* as “a roll of the dice” (*coup de dés*), alluding to French poet Stéphane Mallarmé's experimentation with chance at the turn of the century. Messiaen and Samuel 1976, 134.
- 52 See Messiaen 1944/1956 vol. I, 32–33.
- 53 *Le crépuscule est arrivé. J'en ai terminé. Je ne composerai jamais rien d'autre*. Interview with *Libération* on November 28, 1983 cited in Hill and Simeone 2007, 431. Translation mine.
- 54 The sketch is reproduced in Hill and Simeone 2005, 344.
- 55 Hill and Simeone 2005, 342–50.
- 56 Messiaen significantly returns to one of his early literary sources, *Le Christ dans ses Mystères* of Dom Columba Marmion (VI, prefatory text).
- 57 Messiaen's remarks to Claude Samuel reveal a highly idiosyncratic interpretation of this passage, in which he sees John as “baptized” before his birth: “At the moment when Mary greets Elisabeth, the child of Elisabeth changes position and kneels. He is baptized in his mother's womb.” Messiaen and Samuel 1986, 14.

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# 7

## THE NETHERLANDS

*Hans Fidom*

The Netherlands<sup>1</sup> have always been a melting pot of foreign influences. Focused on international trade, transit and transport, this relatively small country on the North Sea coast was connected almost automatically to developments abroad. The history of twentieth-century organ music there is a colorful example of the way this circumstance influenced Dutch culture during the past hundred years.

### **Organ Music until World War II: German Influences**

In the late nineteenth century, most Dutch organ music was derived from the style of Felix Mendelssohn, brought to the Netherlands by his students Johannes Gijssbertus Bastiaans (1812–75)<sup>2</sup> and Jan Albert van Eijken (1823–68), as well as by Jan Barend Litzau (1822–93). French organ music was a second significant influence. The French style had been cautiously introduced to the Netherlands by Jean-Baptiste de Pauw (1852–1924),<sup>3</sup> who was appointed organist of the Cavaillé-Coll organ (1875) at the Amsterdam Paleis voor Volksvljht in 1879.

One of the most talented among the German-oriented composers was Julius Röntgen (1855–1932). Unfortunately he left only two works for organ, the *Choral* of 1867 and the *Sechs Praeludien und Fugen* composed from 1868 to 1870. Röntgen, born in Leipzig as the son of a violinist and a pianist, was celebrated as an infant prodigy. He moved to Amsterdam in 1877, and seven years later he founded, together with Frans Coenen and Daniel de Lange, the Amsterdam Conservatory, an institution that would become one of the leading schools for organists.<sup>4</sup>

Whereas Röntgen's organ pieces amount to pleasing but harmless music, the *Preludium en Fuga* by the blind organist Eelke Mobach (1836–98) impresses by its traditional treatment of form and its counterpoint. In 1885, Mobach was

appointed organist of one of the country's most well-known organs, located in the Oude Kerk at Amsterdam (Vater 1724; Müller 1738; Witte 1870).

A comparable quality characterizes the music of Mobach's colleague at Rotterdam, Hendrik de Vries (1857–1929). He was organist at the St. Laurenskerk, where he played the largest organ in the Netherlands, with seventy-two stops on four manuals and pedal.<sup>5</sup> De Vries had succeeded Marius Hendrik van't Kruijs (1861–1919), who in turn had been the successor of Samuel de Lange (1811–84). Both had been valuable composers of rather unpretentious organ works. But De Lange's two sons, Daniel (1841–1918) and Samuel Jr. (1840–1911), set themselves higher standards. Among their teachers were the Rotterdam musicians Johannes Verhulst and Bernhard Damcke, both of whom had studied with Franz Liszt. Samuel Jr. also studied with Liszt's student Alexander Winterberger. Samuel's music in particular is relevant in this context: it can stand with the works of the great German composers of his time, among whom he counted as friends Brahms, Schumann, and Reger. His compositions are well balanced, based on attractive motives and themes, and the attention he pays to proper counterpoint and polyrhythmic structures is typical. At the same time, De Lange was less interested in experimentation than Liszt or Richard Wagner. Trying to flee what he considered the narrow-minded Dutch culture of his day, he worked in several cities abroad, including Cologne and Stuttgart, where he became Director of the Conservatory. Representative works are *20 canonische Veränderungen und zwei Ricercare über die Melodie des 72ten Psalms* op. 66 and *Fantasie und Fuge* op. 53.<sup>6</sup>

Hendrik de Vries introduced weekly organ recitals shortly after his appointment in Rotterdam in 1897. He programmed compositions of the greatest composers and dedicated complete concerts to the works of single composers like Liszt, Widor, Guilmant, and Bossi. In this way the eccentric De Vries, who tended increasingly to sequester himself from the outside world in his organ gallery, educated his audiences and inspired the younger generation. His compositions show a wide perspective. Among them, the several Postludes are good examples of the symphonic, virtuosic way he played his beloved Rotterdam organ.<sup>7</sup>

Two young organists, Jan Zwart (1877–1937) and Gerard Bunk (1888–1958), were influenced strongly by De Vries's attitude toward interpreting music and his idea about the tasks of an organist. Zwart became one of the country's best known organists. Aware of the Dutch tradition of non-ecclesiastical repertoires—organ music was prohibited in church services for many years after the Reformation in the Netherlands—he valued seventeenth-century organists like Sweelinck and Van Noordt. At the same time, he was attracted to the liturgical work of contemporary composers like Jan Albert van Eijken and Johannes Worp (1821–91), both of whom provided village organists with complete collections of easy preludes to and harmonizations of the Psalms and some hymns. Zwart published musicological and organological studies, but his principal thrust was the education of organists and audiences. In addition to the relatively simple collections by Worp and others, he provided organists with more complex, colorful music, often meant to

encourage the development of improvisational skills. Musically most interesting are Zwart's *Sombere Muziek over Psalm 103* and his variations on the Lutheran hymn *Een vaste Burg is onze God*. Typical is Zwart's attention to canonic preludes, perhaps inspired by Litzau's and De Lange's preference for canonic counterpoint. The best example is Zwart's introduction to *O hoofd, bedekt met wonden*.

All these pieces, and comparable works of certain other Dutch organists, were published by Zwart's own publishing company, the Bureau van Uitgave Nederlandse Orgelmuziek. Among these, the *Phantasie over Psalm 33* by Cornelis de Wolf (1880–1935), Professor of Organ at the Amsterdam Conservatory, stands out as particularly excellent. The eight organ compositions by Cor Kint (1890–1944) should be mentioned in this context as well: his *Fantasie over Een vaste Burg is onze God* op. 24 recalls in an impressive way Reger's chorale fantasies. Zwart was particularly fond of the composition.

Inspired by De Vries, Zwart began weekly organ recitals in the Reformed Evangelical Lutheran Church at Amsterdam in 1914, where he had been appointed organist in 1898. The first organist to have a weekly program on national radio beginning in 1925, Zwart was able to address a large audience. Some of Zwart's students—his sons Dirk Jansz., Jaap Sr. and Willem Hendrik, and in particular Cor Kee (1900–97) and Feike Asma (1912–84)—sought to continue Zwart's mission. Asma distinguished himself by adding an emotional, at times even sentimental, touch to his recitals. The approach was effective: his concerts, often played on majestic Baroque organs in the Netherlands, were frequently sold out, which meant that literally thousands of people at a time traveled long distances to hear him play, and these audiences started to love organ music as a result.<sup>8</sup> Later, Asma included contemporary Dutch music in his programs, such as the works of Hendrik Andriessen, Marius Monnikendam (1896–1977) and Paul Christiaan van Westering (1911–91). An informative compendium of Asma's improvisational style is his *Orgelboek van de Enige Gezangen*, a collection of preludes and harmonizations of the hymns that Reformed Christians were allowed to sing.

Cor Kee chose a distinct career path. Earlier cautious experiments with dodecaphony and atonality resulted in works like *Reeks-veranderingen I* of 1968. This approach gave way, however, and was followed by the unconventional collection *Credo*, fifty Psalm arrangements composed in 1978. Kee was praised in the first place as an outstanding improviser, and his compositions are in fact models for improvisation.

Gerard Bunk, with Zwart the other organist inspired by De Vries, moved to Bielefeld in 1906 to complete his studies as a pianist, and remained in Germany until his death. Bunk became fascinated with the new 1908 Walcker organ of the Dortmund Reinoldikirche when the well-known Leipzig organist Karl Straube (1873–1950) asked him to participate in the 1910 Dortmund Reger Festival. In 1925, he was appointed organist of the church. The organ of 105 stops and five manuals was destroyed during World War II, as was its even larger sister instru-

ment in the Hamburg Michaeliskirche (1912, 163 stops, five manuals).<sup>9</sup> Bunk expressed his dedication to the Reinoldikirche organ in three large works of 1908 (*Legende* op. 29), 1911 (*Passacaglia* op. 40), and 1918 (*Fantasie* op. 57). The *Legende* shows Bunk's understanding of Liszt's narrative symphonic poems, tempered by the softer touch of Edvard Grieg, whom Bunk much admired. The *Passacaglia* is reminiscent of eighteenth-century examples. The *Fantasie* (Ex. 7.1) demonstrates Bunk's admiration for César Franck, and for the *Trois Chorals* in particular. Bunk composed several smaller works, too, such as two series of *Charakterstücke* for organ, as well as piano, choral and orchestral music. The quality of his earlier music, however, was lost in his later work. Only *Musik für Orgel* op. 81, composed in 1939, is convincing once again as an interesting blend of traditional and contemporary elements.

**EXAMPLE 7.1** Gerard Bunk: *Fantasie*, mm. 1–7.



Bunk enjoyed great attention, due especially to his steady stream of weekly organ recitals. He gave thousands of them, presenting, as De Vries had done in Rotterdam, an impressive overview of the history of organ music.

Bunk's harmonic richness might be recognized as a typical Dutch trait, a view particularly supported by Jacob Bijster's music. Bijster (1902–58) was appointed Professor of Organ at the Amsterdam Conservatory in 1929. He managed to create a rich harmonic palette characterized by five-part harmony. Bunk's harmonies, on the other hand, tend to hover between the simpler chords of Zwart and the more intriguing ones of Bijster. Particularly intriguing examples of Bijster's music are the *Toccata* of 1945, the *Triptyque voor orgel* of 1949, and the *Passacaglia* of 1954.<sup>10</sup> Ex. 7.2 shows the third variation of the *Passacaglia*, with harmony reminiscent of Sigfrid Karg-Elert and Franz Schmidt.

## Organ Music until World War II: French Influences

One cannot draw a clear line between German and French influences in Dutch music. Whereas it is safe to say that the musical line connecting Bastiaans, Van Eijken, De Lange Jr., De Vries, Zwart, Bunk, and Bijster has a German flavor—underlined by the strong networks that many of these men maintained in Germany and with Germans—all these composers were nevertheless interested in French music as well. The influence of Guilmant and Widor is, for example, evident in the music of De Vries, Bunk and Bijster.

The French style was advocated explicitly and successfully for the first time

EXAMPLE 7.2 Jacob Bijster: *Passacaglia*, mm. 7–12.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass clef staff. The music is in 7/8 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes. Dynamics markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The second system also consists of three staves. It begins with the instruction *poco piu mosso* (a little more motion) and a section labeled *III Solo*. This section features a prominent melodic line in the right hand with slurs and accents, and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The notation includes various articulations and dynamic markings.

in the Dutch organ scene in the 1860s by Charles-Marie Philbert (1826–94), an admirer of Cavaillé-Coll who had been appointed French consul in 1849. Thanks to his efforts, the Dutch organ-building firm Adema built a large organ in Cavaillé-Coll's style in the Mozes & Aaronkerk at Amsterdam in 1871.<sup>11</sup> Philbert also belonged to the group that initiated the Society to Promote Organ Music (Vereeniging tot bevordering van orgelmuziek), which managed to commission the 1875 Cavaillé-Coll organ for the Amsterdam Paleis voor Volksvljijt.<sup>12</sup> Jean-Baptiste de Pauw, born and educated in Brussels, was appointed organist at the Paleis in 1879. Among the organists who gave recitals at the Paleis were Guilmant (inaugural recital), Widor, Vierne and Saint-Saëns.

One of the first composers to adapt obviously French elements in new compositions was Christiaan Frederik Hendriks (1861–1923), a blind organist who studied with De Pauw and Daniel de Lange at the Amsterdam Conservatory. Hendriks was organist of the Paleis and the Amsterdam Toonkunstkoor, which implied many concerts at the brand new Concertgebouw, opened in 1888. He dedicated his Sonata No. 1 op. 4 to De Pauw. Some of his works are for practical use, but his later music in particular is fit for recitals, such as the *Prélude et Fugue* op. 9, reminiscent of Samuel de Lange's counterpoint, the *Toccata* op. 10, and the *Sonata No. 2*, reminiscent of Guilmant's sonatas.

Another important instrument built by Adema is the 1907 organ at St.-Joseph in Haarlem, with its French-inspired specification and German-inspired stop-channel chests and tubular pneumatic action. Two organists were appointed here successively, and both would draw a French thread through the history of organ music in the early twentieth century: Hendrik Andriessen (1892–1981) and his student Albert de Klerk (1917–98). Andriessen presents a picture comparable to that of Gerard Bunk. Like Bunk, he composed easily—both *oeuvres* are impressively large—without worrying excessively about the relative worth of tonal and atonal approaches, or about his position in music history. Andriessen wrote in a letter of 1940:

I don't want to make modern music better known because it's *modern*, but only as far as I like it; and that's the way I relate to all music. I compose this way and that way (do I know how?) because I'm not capable not to—that's the only reason.<sup>13</sup>

This attitude differs significantly from that of the important Dutch composer Alphons Diepenbrock (1862–1921), a friend of Mahler and popular in the Netherlands in the early twentieth century. Yet once Diepenbrock came to know Andriessen, he not only helped the younger composer by stimulating his career, but also acquired an appreciation of French music himself.

Although Andriessen composed for orchestra—there are five complete symphonies, for example—and other ensembles, he became especially noted for his choral and organ music. As for the organ works, his *Intermezzi* (1935/1946)

are beloved educational material and offer a compendium of Andriessen's techniques, which include concise harmonies, polytonality, and a penchant for parallel fourths. Among the larger works, the *Sinfonia per Organo* of 1940 deserves particular attention, as well as the more often played *Sonata da Chiesa* of 1926, in fact a theme with variations. Andriessen alludes explicitly to Franck in his four *Chorals*, works valued also in Paris. Ex. 7.3 offers a portion of the *Premier Choral*, in which Andriessen presents an original theme ("chorale") followed by variations. The *Troisième Choral* was published in Paris by Leduc in 1922 under the supervision of Widor.

EXAMPLE 7.3 Hendrik Andriessen: *Premier Choral*, mm. 15–24 (first variation).

Albert de Klerk was among Andriessen's most well-known pupils and, like his teacher, a fine improviser. His chorale preludes are notable, such as the 1951 *Christe, qui Lux es et Dies*, as are the *Prelude en Fuga* of 1940 and his magnum opus *Tres Meditationes Sacrae*, published in 1995. De Klerk was appointed city organist of Haarlem in 1956 and Professor of Organ at the Amsterdam Conservatory in 1964.

A second representative Andriessen pupil was Herman Strategier (1912–88), whose 1951 *Toccatina* summarizes his talents as a composer. The music is clear, easy for the ear to follow, and refers to the music of the composers he most admired, Francis Poulenc and Gabriel Fauré among them. Of his larger works, the *Voluntary for a Cathedral Organ* (1975) impresses the listener by its clear structure and extraversion. The same is true of the works by De Klerk's student Jos van Amelsvoort (1910–2003), particularly his *Choraal voor orgel* of 1939 and *Phantasia*

*Symphonica* of 1947. Van Amelsvoort also studied with Willem Pijper, but he felt far more at home with De Klerk's more classical style.

One encounters a further leading Andriessen student in Louis Toebosch (1916–2009), who won the first Haarlem Improvisation Competition in 1951. He composed over two hundred works, among them many pieces for organ. Appointed director of the Brabant Conservatory, Toebosch was a strong advocate of contemporary music. Whereas Toebosch's earlier work tends toward the secular sphere—the *Fantasie en Fuga* (1956) and *Orgelspiegel* (1975) are good examples—his later works are more clearly related to his Catholic roots, as seen in such music as the *Dominica pentecostes* (1994) and the *Meditazione* (1998).<sup>14</sup> Toebosch tests the limits of tonality within the parameters of classical forms. An apt example is his 1962 *Postludium* opus 84b, dedicated to Kees van Baaren, opening with a short alternation of pedal solos and chord structures, followed by a three-part fugue, in which the counterpoint is characterized by several near-collisions between the voices.

Marius Monnikendam (1896–1977), in his wish for a direct encounter with French music, moved to Paris after his student years at the Amsterdam Conservatory in order to study with Vincent d'Indy and Louis Aubert. His first *Toccata* (1936) shows how attractive his unpretentious music can be. In this context mention must also be made of the music of Jan Nieland (1903–63), one of the many students of De Pauw at the Amsterdam Conservatory; he was appointed organist at the Concertgebouw at Amsterdam. His *Marche Triomphale* and *Toccata* especially deserve attention; both are well composed, resembling the works of Théodore Dubois. Finally in this context belongs the autodidact Niek Verkruijsen (1925–97). Still almost completely unknown, Verkruijsen's impressive *œuvre* of choral and organ music was mainly inspired by Maurice Duruflé and by eighteenth-century counterpoint, as his *St. Paul's Psalm* demonstrates.

### **Intermezzo I: Anthon van der Horst**

Against the background of these developments, one composer deserves extra attention here: Anthon van der Horst (1899–1965), yet another student of Jean-Baptiste de Pauw. In 1935, he was appointed Professor of Organ, and later Professor of Choral and Orchestral Conducting as well, at the Amsterdam Conservatory. Van der Horst was a pioneer in the field of today's historically informed performance practice: he wanted his students to justify their interpretations based on scholarship. Regarding his own music, this intellectual tendency led to a way of composing that differed from that of all the above-named composers, who, except Cor Kee, carefully respected the bounds of tonality.

Van der Horst was the first Dutch composer to develop his own serial row and apply it in a considerable number of compositions. One of his most significant organ works, the *Suite in modo conjuncto* of 1943, is based on this "modus" (i.e. mode), as he called his row, shown as Ex. 7.4. To ensure that organists would

EXAMPLE 7.4 Anthon van der Horst: *Suite in modo conjuncto*, basic scale or “modus.”

**H.C.= Hoofdcentrum, tonique primaire, head tonic, Haupttonica.**

**N.C.= Nevencentrum, tonique secondaire, side tonic. Nebentonica.**

understand the piece’s rationale, Van der Horst prefaced the score with a short text in four languages:

Modus conjunctus is the name I gave to a suite of tones, which originated in the last ten years from my compositions (see Chorus 1931 and Symphonie 1939). As a collected and concentrated sound material, that is to say as a series of tones, this modus is a combination of the first tetrachords of two minor scales, of which the key-notes (tonics) lie at a distance of an augmented fourth.<sup>15</sup>

The *Suite* begins with a Toccata, opening with an impressive pedal solo (Ex. 7.5). Three other movements follow: Trio Capriccioso, Dialogo, and Fuga. Although one might expect otherwise from serial music, Van der Horst’s music is rather conventional and lyrical, possibly evidencing the effects of the Mahler cult active in Amsterdam at the time. Another important organ composition by Van der Horst is *Variazioni sopra La Sinfonia della Cantata Christ lag in Todesbanden di Giov. Seb. Bach per Organo* (1954), in which the composer takes an approach to notation often adopted among organ composers later in the twentieth century: each staff is assigned to a specific manual.

Many of Van der Horst’s students became composers themselves, including Bernard Bartelink, a composer of functional Catholic church music; Piet Kee; Frits Mehrtens, one of the most influential composers of post-World War

EXAMPLE 7.5 Anthon van der Horst: *Suite in modo conjuncto*, Toccata, mm. 1–10.

The image shows a musical score for a pedal solo. It consists of three staves. The first staff is marked "Tumultuoso Rubato" and "fff". The second staff is marked "Rubato". The third staff continues the piece with various musical notations including slurs and ties.

II Protestant church music; Piet Post, a talented improviser and composer of small pieces and hymn variations; and Charles de Wolff, who would become an influential orchestra conductor, and who succeeded Van der Horst as the director of the annual, highly popular St. Matthew Passion performance at Naarden.

Improvisation remained a valued way of making music throughout the century. Even the intellectually oriented Van der Horst promoted it: in 1938 he collaborated in a recital completely dedicated to improvisation, known ever since—incorrectly—as the first Dutch improvisation concert. For centuries, improvisation had been the dominant way of making music on the organ, but the way the 1938 recital was announced surely documents the fact that improvisation in concerts had become unusual by the first decades of the twentieth century. That it was indeed a significant occasion is indicated by the names of the organists who participated: Hendrik Andriessen; Jan Mul (1911–71), a student of Andriessen who formed, together with his fellow students Strategier and De Klerk, the *Tres Pueri*, a clandestine music publishing group during World War II; and Cornelis Bute (1889–1979), for sixty years organist at the Walburgiskerk at Zutphen and hence quite influential in the eastern regions of the Netherlands.

### **Intermezzo II: Henk Badings**

After World War II, Henk Badings (1907–87) became one of the most important Dutch composers. Like Van der Horst, he was indebted to the composer Willem Pijper (1894–1947), who had been of great importance in Dutch music culture in the first half of the century.<sup>16</sup> Pijper had introduced bitonality in the Netherlands, as well as the notion of organicism, according to which a composition grows from a concentrated motive, which he called *kiemcel*, or “germ cell.” Pijper expanded

upon this idea by introducing “octatony,” music based on the octatonic scale.<sup>17</sup> Pijper’s series was used by Badings as well. Typical of Pijper was the tendency to explain the ideas behind his composing techniques in various writings, a habit that both Van der Horst and Badings adopted.

Badings’s organ works explore the division of the octave into thirty-one equal parts instead of twelve, an idea originally developed by the physicist Christiaan Huygens (1629–95). Based on Huygens’s texts and his own additional research, the engineer Adriaan Fokker (1887–1972) designed an organ with thirty-one keys per octave, inaugurated in the Teylers Museum at Haarlem in 1950. The program of the inaugural recital listed music by Sweelinck, Van de Westering and Jan van Dijk (b. 1918). Badings, not only a composer but also a professional engineer, had encountered Huygens’s ideas and was hence interested in Fokker’s instrument.<sup>18</sup> He designed a new notation for playing the Fokker organ, published an introductory text for musicians, and composed two preludes and fugues for it (1952 and 1954) as well as a *Suite van kleine stukken* (1954) and a *Reeks van kleine klankstukken* (1957). Later on in his career, he chose to compose his thirty-one-tone music mainly for violin. Aside from Badings, Van de Westering, and Van Dijk, other influential Dutch composers wrote music for this organ, among them Anton de Beer (1924–2000), the Badings pupil Hans Kox (b. 1930), Ton de Leeuw (1926–96), and Peter Schat (1935–2003). The Fokker organ was moved to the Amsterdam Muziekgebouw in 2009. The Foundation Huygens-Fokker aims at reviving general interest in the instrument.

Of course, Badings composed works that could be played on instruments other than those with thirty-one-note octaves. Ex. 7.6 shows a passage from a prelude that a standard organ can accommodate. It emphasizes the major third in a way that comes close to minimalist techniques.

## Organ Music since World War II

In 1951, the Foundation International Organ Competition Haarlem presented its first Improvisation Competition for Organists. Today, the competition is one of the foremost international platforms for improvisation, stimulating organists to adopt contemporary influences in their music. The emphasis on improvisation was pioneered especially by the Austrian organists involved in the first Haarlem competition. Ludwig Daxberger, organist at Linz and member of the Haarlem jury in 1951, and Joseph Obermayr, the first director of the Summer Academy that has accompanied the competition since 1955, had both been involved in what seems to have been the very first improvisation competition, in 1941 at St. Florian Abbey near Linz. Furthermore, several later well-known and influential Austrian improvisers, among them Anton Heiller, Hans Haselböck and Peter Planyavsky, took part in the Haarlem competition as young organists and later served as members of the jury. All these musicians strove for a convincing connection of their obvious interest in the organ as such with their appreciation of

EXAMPLE 7.6 Henk Badings: *Preludium en Fuga no 3*, mm. 1–7.

current developments in contemporary music. That mission was shared by the French organists who helped design the Haarlem competition: Jeanne Demessieux, like Daxberger a member of the first jury in 1951,<sup>19</sup> and later Marie-Claire Alain and André Isoir.

Two other Dutch organists who would become influential composers took part in the Haarlem competition. Piet Kee (b. 1927) won the competition three times consecutively, in 1953, 1954, and 1955. Jan Welmers (b. 1937) competed in 1968. Kee developed a remarkably concise compositional style. Earlier works include the *Triptych on Psalm 86* and the *Fantasia "Wachet auf"* of 1960. Later music is increasingly based on clear-cut structures, demonstrated by the *Ciacona* from the *Four Pieces for Manuals* of 1966. *Bios* (1997, Ex. 7.7) shows the "seven sections of life," as Kee explains in the preface to the piece. *The Organ* (2000) refers to a painting by Pieter Saenredam (1597–1665), certain structural features of which are adopted in the music. Another typical aspect of Kee's music is his attention to spatiality and to music for organ and other instruments, in order to integrate the organ into the larger musical world. Examples are *Music and Space* (1969, for two organs, three trumpets and two trombones), *Confrontation* (1979, for church organ and three street organs), *Network* (1995, for two organs, alto saxophone and treble recorder), *Festival Spirit* (2001, for five organs), *Bios II* (2002, for organ, one violin and percussion), the *Haarlem Concerto* (2007, for organ, harmonium and orchestra) and *Performance* (2009, for alto saxophone and organ). A further characteristic is

EXAMPLE 7.7 Piet Kee: *Bios*, mm. 34–39.

34 *alla cadenza*

35 *Presto*

36 *senza rit.* *fff*

that Kee's scores are technically comparatively easy; his music may very well serve at music schools as an introduction to contemporary organ art.

Jan Welmers's works mirror even more explicitly the development of contemporary music. The *Passacaglia* of 1965, for example, shows the influence of his teacher Kees van Baaren (1906–70), who, as Professor of Composition at the Royal Conservatory at The Hague, advocated dodecapronic techniques. Among Dutch organists, Van Baaren is especially known for his only organ composition, the 1969 *Musica per Organo* (Ex. 7.8). Welmers's *Sferen '70* (1970) demonstrates the kind of expressivity of which organs are capable when parameters like variable wind pressure are included in the organist's palette. In this regard, and in its partially graphic notation, the work is related to Ligeti's *Volumina*.<sup>20</sup> In later works, Welmers uses musical quotation and combines layers of sound assigned to different manuals, as in *Reflectie* (1976) and *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen* (1988). Welmers became internationally known when he took his next step into minimalism, with careful use of complex rhythmic combinations and long lines especially reminiscent of Steve Reich's music. *Laudate Dominum* (1979), *Sequens* (1979) and *Litanie* (1988) have become minimalist classics in the twentieth-century organ repertoire. The *Movements* of 1990 represents his next period, moving away from the dynamism of his earlier scores to contemplative, almost static music. Recently, Welmers dedicated himself to a series of compositions titled *Licht en Donker*, exploring,

**EXAMPLE 7.8** Kees van Baaren: *Musica per Organo*, second movement, opening (presentation of the series on which the movement is based).

II  
( fantasia )

The image shows a handwritten musical score for organ. At the top, the Roman numeral 'II' is centered, with '( fantasia )' written below it. The score consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. A large rectangular box encloses the main melodic and harmonic material. Above the box, the tempo is marked '(♩ = ± 66)'. Inside the box, the tempo is marked 'score solo (♩ = 76)'. To the left of the first treble staff, there is a double-headed vertical arrow with the text 'fluit 8' (ged.)' next to it. Below the first treble staff, there is another double-headed vertical arrow with the text '16' 8' gedekt' next to it. The music is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The boxed section begins with a melodic line in the first treble staff and a corresponding harmonic accompaniment in the second treble and bass staves. The melodic line starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The accompaniment consists of a steady bass line and chords. The boxed section ends with a fermata over the final notes. Below the boxed section, there are a few more notes on the staves, including a final cadence in the bass staff.

for example, the possibilities of text expression: part IV (1999) is based on poems by Dag Hammarskjöld. Like Piet Kee and an ever increasing number of organ composers, Welmers likes to combine the organ with other instruments. The most recent examples are *Running* (2002), for organ and violin, and *Licht & Donker V* (2006), for organ and trumpet.

Several Dutch organists were influenced by Welmers's minimalism. One of the best results is *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen* by Bert Matter (b. 1937), composed in the early 1980s. A far more complicated minimalist piece deserving of mention here is the 1989 *Miroir* by Ad Wammes (b. 1953).

A third composer who took part in the Haarlem competitions was Arie Keijzer (b. 1932), who won the competition in 1964 and participated again in 1965. Keijzer's impressive organ *oeuvre* includes a series of five organ symphonies, based on the French model but drawing upon a wider palette of influences. In contrast to Keijzer, whose works tend toward the traditional, his organ student Piet Groenendijk (b. 1948) composes dodecaphonic organ music. In these pieces, Groenendijk is interested in rows that offer a "harmonic component."<sup>21</sup> He began to compose in the twelve-tone idiom with the seven-part *Symphony for Organ for Two to Play* (1989; its row consists of three chords each of four tones). Other titles are *Four Meditations I* (1995; four chords each of three tones), *Ligaduras* (2001) and *Passingala* (2004).

Daan Manneke (b. 1939), like Kee, Welmers and Keijzer, is very interested in improvisation. Manneke's composition teacher, Ton de Leeuw (1926–96), observes:

Manneke's compositions result from the fusion of two opposite forces rooted within himself. On the one hand the will to transform the living creative energy within, to channel it into taut, abstract sound-structures requiring time, detachment, and great technical insight. On the other hand the tendency to direct action, to translate the creative impulse into an immediate and highly-charged emotional gesture. [Further,] the sense of strong, direct contrasts, signal-like motifs and complexes, sensual, almost tangible tone-colours, and sculptural musical flourishes, as though he were writing for a theatre of mind.<sup>22</sup>

A good example of this approach is Manneke's *Organum* of 1986, conceived in five sections (Ex. 7.9). Over a chord drone—an idea that is used as well in Van Baaren's *Musica per Organo*—rapid gestures are presented, coming together over and over in static chords.

Manneke adores the human voice. He shows how organs should "breathe" in compositions such as *Pneoo* (1979). The *Symphonies of Winds* (1996, organ with organ, harmonium, or accordion) and *Prometheus* (2008, organ and voices) are further examples along the same lines.

Manneke had been Ton de Leeuw's student at the Amsterdam Conservatory.

EXAMPLE 7.9 Daan Manneke: *Organum*, mm. 147–154 (end of the fourth section).

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Daan Manneke's *Organum*, measures 147–154. The score is written on six staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom four staves are in bass clef. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including 7/8 and 6/8 time signatures, and various articulations. Handwritten annotations include "HW+RW" above the first staff, "Pedal-HW" above the third staff, and "Guaal stacc." below the first staff. The score concludes with the signature "D. Manneke" at the bottom right.

De Leeuw was a talented pedagogue, as is demonstrated by his informative book on twentieth-century music. De Leeuw himself composed some organ works, the best known of which are his *Sweelinck Variations* of 1973. Another De Leeuw student attracted to the organ is the composer and musicologist Rokus de Groot (b. 1947), although his academic work has meant that his output for the instrument has been small. In the late 1960s, he composed *Six Preludes and a Fugue*, revised in 2003, works which allude to Bach's chorale preludes. In one of them, *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*, De Groot treats the pedal division simply as an extra manual, an approach which results in a colorful trio. Yet another De Leeuw pupil who should be mentioned here is Tristan Keuris (1946–96), who was commissioned to compose the music for the inauguration of the restored Maarschalkerweerd organ at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in 1992. In the resulting *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra*, Keuris proves himself adept at searching out nuanced timbres, integrating the organ and the orchestra, but leaving ample room for the organ to present itself in all its colorful possibilities. Keuris uses his own interpretation

of Pijper's idea of the "germ-cell": independent motives are later combined in elegant melodies.

Other De Leeuw pupils to produce a significant organ *oeuvre* were Joep Straesser (1934–2004), Jan Vriend (b. 1938) and Wim de Ruiter (b. 1943). Straesser composed seven solo organ works, two works for organ and trumpet, and a few works for choir and organ. *Splendid Isolation* (1976–77) marks a change in his development, which had tended toward experimentalism until that time. Here, Straesser composed in a far more traditional manner: hence the form (a passacaglia) and choice of instrument. Later organ pieces show how Straesser developed his style further along this line: *Footprints* (2003), for example, is influenced by Johann Pachelbel's music.

In contrast to the scores of De Leeuw and those of his other students, Jan Vriend's style offers a complexity comparable to that of the organ music of Iannis Xenakis and Brian Ferneyhough. While still living in the Netherlands, Vriend composed *Huantan* (1968) for organ and wind instruments, which earned him the International Gaudeamus Prize in 1970. In 1985, shortly after he moved to England, he published the first part of his major organ work, *Jets d'Orgue* (Ex. 7.10),<sup>23</sup> with Parts II and III following in 1991. Each section begins with a "jet," that is, an explosion of sound, followed by a passage focusing on the combination of different musical layers and closed by a section devoted to effects such as virtuoso passage-work and birdsong imitations. Speaking about how to relate a specific composition to a specific instrument, Vriend has written concerning his latest organ work, *Bachanalia*, composed in 2007 for the Amsterdam Concertgebouw organ:

Contrary to Bach, whose music can be played on almost any organ, my interest goes out explicitly to the particulars of a given instrument and I find it impossible to ignore its characteristics and specifications, however much they stand in the way of future performances on other organs.<sup>24</sup>

Accordingly, *Jets d'Orgue* was written for the specification of the organ in the Bavokerk, Haarlem. Jan Hage, currently its main interpreter and one of the few Dutch organists who specialize in contemporary organ music, has just completed a recording on the instrument.<sup>25</sup>

With *Music for Organ* (1972), Wim de Ruiter won the International Composition Competition at Zwolle.<sup>26</sup> The work's clear way of presenting its material recalls the music of De Ruiter's organ teacher Piet Kee, but its aim was different: in his early music, De Ruiter strove for the elimination of the personalities of composer and performer. Later he felt free to use traditional elements in his music, and his development thus resembles that of Straesser in this respect. Examples are *Square* (1988), *Oks* (1994, for organ, three trumpets, two trombones and percussion), and *Whim* (1998, for organ and violin). De Ruiter has a clear opinion about attempts to explain his music, expressed in a commentary on his three-part organ composition *Trifid* of 1998:

EXAMPLE 7.10 Jan Vriend: *Jets d'Orgue* part I, mm. 1–6.

In general, my instrumental music does not originate from extra-musical sources of inspiration. In Nabokov's novel *The Eye*, he has one of the characters say: "Music, good music at any rate, expresses that which is inexpressible in words. Therein lies the meaning and the mystery of music." My thoughts run that way as well, so I think it is pretty much impossible to provide any kind of explanation for the inner content of my music. The music sounds the way it sounds, and that's for the listener to deal with.<sup>27</sup>

Interest in electronic music, and in playing acoustic instruments by electronic means, colors De Ruiter's later works, such as *Outer Darkness* (2007).<sup>28</sup>

The idea of connecting organ music and electronic music had been explored earlier by Ton Bruynèl (1934–98), who belonged to the circle around Kees van Baaren, together with composers Peter Schat and Jan van Vlijmen. His electronic material always resembles existing sounds. Another characteristic is his attention to sensual and saturated timbre. Bruynèl composed four organ pieces: *Reliëf* (1964), *Arc* (1966), *Kolom* (1987), and *Dust* (1992). René Uijlenhoet (b. 1961) is his most influential student and has composed organ music as well, such as *Koraalriff* for organ, live electronics and tape (2003). A further composer of note is Roderik de Man (b. 1941), particularly his *Strange Echoes in Trunks and Pipes*, for organ and electronics (2009). A younger composer is Wouter Snoei (b. 1977), who presented *Momentum* for three organs in 2009.<sup>29</sup>

Further representatives of the younger generation are Peter Adriaansz (b. 1966), Fons Brouwer (b. 1963), Willem Tanke (b. 1959), Andries van Rossem (b. 1957), and Peter-Jan Wagemans (b. 1952). Adriaansz maintains “that sound, structure and *audible* mathematics are the main ingredients” of his music, and that “in recent years an increasing interest in flexibility and variable forms can also be observed.”<sup>30</sup> A systematic, research-oriented approach is characteristic of his work. As yet only one composition is for organ solo, *Primal Gestures for Organ*, composed in 1993 and revised in 1995. Further works are *Untitled Composition* (2002–04, for organ and trumpet), *Structure VI* (2005, for “female voices, organ and male drone”), and *Structure XVI* (2005, for organ and marimba).

Fons Brouwer’s *Quintessens* of 1993 explores the minimalist idiom. *Festina Lente*, composed in 2003 for the 1511 choir organ in Alkmaar, demonstrates the remarkable way a meantone organ can sound in contemporary music (Ex. 7.11). Brouwer often combines organ and voice: *The Taw*, for example, was composed for organ and contralto in 2003. Willem Tanke finds his inspirations in world music and works with Native Americans and percussionists from Ghana, Cameroon, and India. His music is improvisational by nature, and he prefers to document it by recording rather than notation; his *Things to Come* (2007), however, is traditionally notated, dedicated to his teacher Jan Welmers and his wife. Andries van Rossem wrote *Rothko* for organ and alto saxophone (2007). “Looking at a painting by Mark Rothko,” he said in a concert introduction,

is only exciting when you’ve passed the first stage. You don’t walk on, but linger before the initially boring color forms. ... In my piece, which began based on an improvisation at a lecture about Rothko, the form develops in a comparable way.<sup>31</sup>

Peter-Jan Wagemans understands himself as the opposite of Louis Andriessen (b. 1939, Hendrik Andriessen’s son, who has composed no organ music so far). Wagemans has written four compositions for organ. *Lux* (1992) explores the acoustical aspects of organ music in the vast Laurenskerk at Rotterdam. *Fantasia super 721* (2002) is a series of variations on Bach’s chorale *Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott* BWV 721. *Gioco* (2002) was composed for the inauguration of the meantone organ in the Pieterskerk at Leiden. With *Cavaler Col* (2009) the new organ of the *Orgelpark* at Amsterdam, built in French nineteenth-century style, was inaugurated.<sup>32</sup> On his website, Wagemans writes about himself, “Further development of the musical heritage is his [sic] goal, but to be successful, all aspects, both of structural, emotional and communicative nature have to be in balance.”<sup>33</sup>

Although the organ has at least partially left behind its “splendid isolation” in the church during the past few decades, the need for ecclesiastical organ music has not vanished. One principal development in Dutch church music, begun in the early twentieth century, remains strong today. One of the first names to arise here is the Lutheran church musician Willem Mudde (1909–84), a student

EXAMPLE 7.11. Fons Brouwer: *Festina Lente*, mm. 8–9.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for piano. The first staff (measures 8-9) is in treble clef and the second staff (measures 8-9) is in bass clef. Both staves are marked with a forte dynamic (ff) and a hairpin (hw). The music consists of dense, rhythmic patterns, primarily using triplets. In measure 9, there is a specific instruction: "BW: -Quintadeen 8, -Octaaf 2, + Tremulant". The notation includes various accidentals and articulation marks.

of Jan Zwart. Mudde influenced the development of church music significantly not only by his compositions, but also his many publications in magazines and elsewhere. A more progressive composer in this context is Willem Vogel (b. 1920). Influenced by the music of figures like Ernst Pepping (1901–81), Vogel developed a personal style characterized by simplicity and clarity. The *Toccata over Psalm 150* shows Vogel's talent for invention: the composer quotes the Reformation-era *Vater unser* chorale tune, which he had discovered to be the inversion of the Genevan Psalter melody of Psalm 150.

As in secular organ music, improvisation exerts great influence on church music as well, with organists adopting famous examples as models for their own improvisations. Some of the best results were eventually transcribed and published, such as the improvisation on Psalm 43 by Klaas Bolt (1927–90) recorded in 1985.<sup>34</sup> Bolt's style was conservative, in fact prefiguring the contemporary tendency to improvise in historic styles. On the other hand, he liked to experiment with harmony along the lines pursued by Vogel, an interest demonstrated in the organ volume that appeared with the *Liedboek voor de Kerken*, published in 1973, containing wonderful harmonizations by Frits Mehrrens (1922–75), Bernhard Huijbers (1922–2003), and Tera de Marez Oyens (1932–96), to name only a few. Other composers in the same vein are Adriaan C. Schuurman (1904–98), Adriaan Engels (1906–2003) and Adriaan Kousemaker (1909–84). The common characteristic among these composers and their colleagues is their ideal of providing average organists with church music that exceeds average standards of quality, just as Van Eijken and Worp and their colleagues had done a century before. A younger organist who further develops this clear and colorful way of composing organ music is Jan van Gijn (b. 1947), who is working on a large series of hymn preludes, the *Orgelpsalter*.

## Today and Tomorrow

Meanwhile, the quest for new ways to play and present the organ becomes ever stronger. A postmodern attitude manifests itself in the Netherlands, whereby organists and composers seem ever less interested in observing artificial borders between secular and sacred idioms, between tonality and atonality, or between improvisation and composition. Ensembles like *Computer Aided Breathing*, located in Amsterdam with the German organist Kirstin Gramlich, base their music on improvisation but prepare their electronics and other parameters conscientiously. Another example is Jacob Lekkerkerker, organist at the Oude Kerk at Amsterdam, who is working on a project called *To Be a Dancer on the Organ*, integrating theatrical elements and inspirations from dance music into organ music.

Young talents are explicitly stimulated to compose by the *Orgelpark* at Amsterdam, a new venue dedicated to presenting the organ in new ways and integrating it into the musical culture as a whole, as well as by initiatives such as the *Hinszconcours*, an international composition competition that has taken place since 1997 in the Bovenkerk at Kampen around the 1743 Hinsz organ. Unquestionably promising results are the compositions *Bevrijding* (1997) by the Manneke student Saskia Macris (b. 1964), *4 Raps* (2005) by the Welmers student Jan Hage (b. 1964), and *Aer, Aqua, Terra, Ignis* (2005) by Wim Diepenhorst (b. 1971).

This chapter has avoided a central question: to what extent can Dutch music ever be Dutch at all? The reason is not only that national identity is bound to be a construct, but, more importantly, because it seems as if “Dutchness” in music can be anything, suspended between an internationally oriented nationality that defines “Dutchness” as accepting and welcoming external influences, and a nationally oriented internationality, defining it as opposed to or mistrustful of external influences. Yet it appears safe as well as useful to identify at least one typical aspect of Dutch organ culture: the breathtakingly impressive collection of large city organs from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, remarkable not only for the original state of most of the instruments, but also for the strange fact that none of them inspired musicians of their own time to compose grand organ music. Since most of the music introduced here is composed for these organs—and strikingly enough *not* for contemporary ones—one might posit that twentieth-century Dutch organ music constitutes the first convincing answer to the quest for quality that these instruments have invited since their construction.<sup>35</sup>

## Notes

- 1 The Kingdom of the Netherlands as such has a short history. Before 1830 the Netherlands was an independent republic. In that year, the country acquired the borders it maintains today and became a monarchy. Today, the Netherlands calls itself a monarchic democracy.
- 2 Mayer 1960, 207–9.
- 3 Verwer/De Kler 2005, 4–46; Verwer 2009, 218–66.

- 4 A comparably important music school was the Toonkunstmuziekschool in Utrecht, led by the composer Johan Wagenaar (1862–1941), a student of the Utrecht Cathedral organist Richard Hol (1825–1904, well known for his organ *Phantasie “Aus Dunkel zum Licht”*). Wagenaar became one of the leading men in the Dutch music scene of the early twentieth century. He composed a few works for organ, among which *Introductie en Fuga* in C minor (1885) is especially engaging.
- 5 The instrument was begun by Andries Wolferts in 1790 and completed only in 1845 by Bätz & Co. See further Fidom 1996, 284–90.
- 6 Bonger 2008, 10–12. Remarkably enough, Samuel de Lange’s music has rarely been subjected to critical scrutiny. As a student, Frits Zwart, now director of the Dutch Music Institute (Nederlands Muziekinstituut, The Hague), dedicated an unpublished paper to De Lange.
- 7 Alblas 1996, 315–17.
- 8 In addition, the Dutch Protestant organ culture later offered a comparable easy-listening type of organ music based on transcriptions of orchestral repertoire and hymn improvisations in light classical style. One of the main organists to enthuse audiences with this Anglo-Saxon-influenced way of making music was Piet van Egmond (1912–82). He managed to attract audiences as large as those of Asma, for example through his weekly popular organ recital on radio commencing in 1952. Schaap (Schaap 2003) emphasizes that Van Egmond was not merely a popular organist: he also played Buxtehude, Reger, and Reubke, for example.
- 9 In fact, the Walcker organ at Doesburg, mentioned above, is one of the very few instruments of this type that survives. Inspired by the ideals of Emil Rupp and Albert Schweitzer, it represents the culmination of the German so-called modern organ.
- 10 It is interesting to see that Bijster’s contemporary Franz Schmidt (1874–1939) focused on creating four- and five-part harmony as well, resulting in even more complex scores. Another striking resemblance is that both composers acquire a certain atonal flavor, even stronger than that of Paul Hindemith’s organ sonatas, precisely by stretching the tonal borders and pushing the possibilities of classical harmony to its limits. Cf. Van der Steen 2003 and Ottner 1987.
- 11 Raas 1994, 51–66.
- 12 The Paleis was destroyed by fire in 1929, but the organ had already been sold to the Haarlem Philharmonie, where it was inaugurated in 1924. It was Louis Robert, student of De Pauw and organist of the Bavokerk at Haarlem, who played a decisive role in the negotiations between Amsterdam and Haarlem. The instrument still exists today and was restored in 2006 by Flentrop. Cf. Verwer 2009, 108–217.
- 13 Original text: “Ik wil de moderne muziek niet bekend maken omdat ze *modern* is, maar voor zoover ik ze mooi vind; en zoo sta ik met alle muziek. Ik componeer zóó en zóó (weet ik hoe?) omdat ik ‘t niet laten kan—anders nergens om.” Translation Hans Fidom. Source: text by Leo Samama; [http://www.opusklassiek.nl/componisten/lsandriessen\\_h.htm](http://www.opusklassiek.nl/componisten/lsandriessen_h.htm).
- 14 A Flemish connection should be mentioned here briefly: Flor Peeters (1903–86) belonged in fact to the same circle of musicians and composers. Several Dutch compositions were dedicated to him, for example by Andriessen (*Sinfonia per Organo*, 1940), De Klerk (*Prelude en fuga*, 1940) and Henk Badings (*Preludium en fuga III*, 1953). On Peeters, see further Chapter 12.
- 15 Van der Horst 1945, 2.
- 16 In fact, Matthijs Vermeulen (1888–1967) is a far more interesting composer than Pijper, particularly in his explicit resistance to German influences in his work. It was not before 1939, however, that one of his symphonies was performed. The fact that this progressive composer got so few hearings is due largely to the negative opinion of Concertgebouw Orchestra conductor Willem Mengelberg, so Vermeulen’s influence on organ composers, if any, should be sought out in post-war music. Whereas

- Vermeulen did not compose any organ music, another noted composer did: Rudolf Escher (1912–80). His organ works, however, are limited in number, among them an engaging Passacaglia from 1937.
- 17 Octatonic music remained alive for a long time in the Netherlands. As late as 1968, Kees Weggelaar (b. 1947) used it in his *Tryptique pour Grand orgue (à la mémoire d' un homme héroïque)*, dedicated to Albert de Klerk.
  - 18 Badings (Badings 1978, 23) explained the concept: “The outcomes of several researchers are the same. The best approaches of the purity ideal are to divide the octave in twelve, thirty-one or fifty-three equal parts. ... Huygens knew that a division in twelve tones was very useful for fourths and fifths but detrimental for thirds and sixths, and that a division in thirty-one tones provides a entire range of acoustically valuable intervals.”
  - 19 The original jury was composed of three members, with Anthon van der Horst as the third member.
  - 20 See Chapter 10.
  - 21 The composer kindly informed the author about this aspect of his works, adding that “Schoenberg explicitly forbade this way of constructing rows”.
  - 22 Ton de Leeuw, liner notes to the CD *Archipel* (Erasmus, WVVH066). Translation of these liner notes by Julian Herman.
  - 23 Gottfried Sembdner gave the first performance of the complete *Jets d'Orgue* in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, in 1993.
  - 24 <http://www.janvriend.co.uk>; click “list of works” and “Bachanalia.”
  - 25 Hage's CD recording was issued in 2011 by the Quintone/Traditions Alive label as *Vriend: Jets d'Orgue*. Other Dutch organists who focus on contemporary music are Jos van der Kooy, municipal organist of Haarlem; and Klaas Hoek, praised by Ligeti and Xenakis for his interpretations of their music. Until her emigration, Lien van der Vliet dedicated her professional life as an organist entirely to Dutch contemporary music.
  - 26 This competition was the predecessor of the Hinsz Composition Competition at Kampen. The harvest of the Zwolle competition is small but interesting. Another Dutch composer, Jo van den Booren (b. 1935) won the competition as well, with *Quatuor* for three manuals and pedal. Van den Booren also wrote *Concert voor orgel en orkest* (1991) for the inauguration of the organ at the Frits Philips Concert Hall at Eindhoven.
  - 27 Wim de Ruiter, liner notes to the CD *New Music for the Müller Organ in Haarlem* with organist Jos van der Kooy (Et'Cetera KTC 1364).
  - 28 Many of his compositions can be heard on the composer's website, <http://www.wimderuiter.nl>.
  - 29 The latter two compositions were commissioned by the *Orgelpark*, [http:// www.orgelpark.nl](http://www.orgelpark.nl).
  - 30 <http://www.peteradriaansz.com/biography.htm>.
  - 31 Andries van Rossem, in the preface in the program leaflet for the concert on June 28, 2008, in the Nicolaïkerk at Utrecht.
  - 32 The other piece premiered at this occasion was *Bousthredon* by Klaas de Vries (b. 1944) for four organs.
  - 33 <http://www.peter-janwagemans.com/content/biography.php>.
  - 34 Klaas Bolt, *Müller Organ Grote of St. Bavokerk Haarlem*, Heemstede (Intersound LP 6818.511) 1985. The transcription was made by Dick Koomans, Annie Bank Edition (Amstelveen, 11900074).
  - 35 I am grateful to Peter Adriaansz, Fons Brouwer, Piet Groenendijk, Rokus de Groot, Piet Kee, Daan Manneke, Andries van Rossem, Wim de Ruiter, Willem Tanke, Jan Vriend, Jan Welmers and Peter Jan Wagemans for checking the paragraphs on their music; and to Frits Zwart for his help on the paragraph on Jan Zwart.

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# 8

## SCANDINAVIA

*Sverker Jullander*

In 1900, the situation for indigenous organ music differed considerably among the Scandinavian countries.<sup>1</sup> In Norway, Finland, and Iceland, there was as yet almost no significant production of non-liturgical organ music.<sup>2</sup> Sweden had seen a certain increase in organ composition in the late nineteenth century,<sup>3</sup> and in Denmark, the Danish Golden Age of the arts in the early and mid 1800s<sup>4</sup> had resulted in a favorable creative environment for new organ music. Niels W. Gade (1817–90) and J. P. E. Hartmann (1805–1900), both also prominent organists, contributed some important works.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the conservative stance of these two influential personalities in matters of organ building delayed the impact of modern European trends in Denmark and may have hampered the development of organ composition as well. The turn of the century nevertheless shows Denmark to have possessed two distinguished and prolific organ composers, Gottfred Matthison-Hansen (1832–1909) and Otto Malling (1848–1915), the latter a pupil of both Hartmann and Gade. But by 1900, both were regarded as somewhat old-fashioned, especially since their organ output was confined to narrowly defined subgenres: for Matthison-Hansen, chorale-based fantasies;<sup>6</sup> for Malling, suites of Biblical program music.<sup>7</sup>

The greatest Scandinavian composers around the turn of the century, Jean Sibelius and Edvard Grieg, showed little interest in organ music, although both had a relationship to the organ. As a young man, Grieg had contemplated becoming an organist and for a time studied the organ with his friend Matthison-Hansen in Copenhagen. Sibelius was later to become the organist of the Freemason lodge in Helsinki of which he was a founding member.

## Influences and Trends in the Early Twentieth Century

Ever since the heyday of the Hanseatic League, ties between Scandinavia and Germany have been close. The major Scandinavian languages—Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian—are not only related to German but also underwent a massive influx of German vocabulary and grammar beginning in the late Middle Ages. Further, given the hegemony of German musical culture in Europe over the nineteenth century, it was natural for gifted young Nordic musicians, wishing to finish their studies abroad, to look first to Germany. The Leipzig Conservatory, founded in 1843, had a solid reputation for high quality teaching and attracted the majority of Scandinavian students. Later, the Berlin Conservatory (*Königliche Akademische Hochschule für Musik*, founded in 1869) became an important competitor. Practically all major composers in Scandinavia before World War I, and many during the interwar period, had spent some time in Germany for conservatory studies or other kinds of study visits. German organ music was much played, primarily works of J. S. Bach, Mendelssohn, Rheinberger, and other composers of the post-Mendelssohn sonata tradition. Even before World War I, the Reger-Straube school came to exert a significant influence, particularly in Norway, Iceland, and Finland.<sup>8</sup> In the inter-war period, the German *Orgelbewegung* emerged gradually as a major influence on organ building and organ music alike, earlier in Denmark than in the other countries. This stimulated the general interest in the organ and triggered a flood of anti-Romantic, “objective,” neo-Baroque organ music in the following decades.

But not all important trends were German. The Franco-Belgian symphonic school had likewise assumed a leading position by 1900 and had become an important source of inspiration to organists and composers, some of whom even visited Paris, studying or otherwise becoming personally acquainted with leading figures like Widor and Guilmant. There were also other kinds of French influence, as in the music of Väinö Raitio discussed below. And indigenous tradition must not be overlooked. Among Nordic composers for the organ, there was also a tendency, related to the larger phenomenon of nineteenth-century musical nationalism, to turn to the vernacular treasures of folk music, like the richly ornamented variants of chorale melodies that had developed in some parishes, especially in the Swedish province of Dalecarlia.<sup>9</sup>

### A “Stockholm School”: Late Romanticism in Sweden

In 1890, Emil Sjögren (1853–1918) was appointed organist at the newly built Åkerman & Lund organ in the equally new St. John’s Church in the center of Stockholm. Already known as a composer of songs and chamber music, Sjögren soon garnered fame as an organ improviser. In particular, his extended extemporizations at the end of the Sunday evening service brought him a number of admirers. Sjögren had studied in Berlin in 1879 and 1880, and his Prelude and

Fugue in G minor of 1880 clearly reflects that century's attitude toward Bach.<sup>10</sup> His second Prelude and Fugue in A minor (1907) explores a radically different direction, conceived in a French-inspired but at the same time personal tonal language. Since 1901, Sjögren had spent several weeks every year in the French capital, where he had some success as a composer: the new Prelude and Fugue was premiered there by Guilman. But Sjögren's inspiration came less from the French symphonic school—he never composed a cyclic organ work—than from harmonic innovators such as Franck and especially Fauré.

Sjögren was an important model for younger Stockholm organists. Gustaf Hägg (1867–1925), Professor of Organ at the Royal Academy of Music, showed French inspiration in his music and was personally acquainted with Widor and Guilman. Hägg's organ music consists almost exclusively of extended single-movement character pieces with expressive melodies and advanced, Franck-inspired harmony, often with detailed registration instructions in line with the French tradition but clearly intended for his own organ in St. Clara Church.

The rapid growth of the city of Stockholm around 1900 was reflected not least in the building of churches. Among young talented organists recruited to newly erected churches were Otto Olsson (1879–1964), organist of Gustav Vasa Church from 1907, and Oskar Lindberg (1887–1955), who, upon completion of his studies in Stockholm and Sondershausen, Germany, became organist of Engelbrekt Church in 1914. Another organist of the same generation, Harald Fryklöf (1882–1919), educated in Stockholm and Berlin, served from 1908 as organist of the Great Church (Storkyrkan). All three also taught at the Royal Academy of Music. Fryklöf's *Symfoniskt stycke* (*Symphonic Piece*) of 1917, a compact single-movement version of an organ symphony or sonata, is indebted to the German tradition yet highly personal with its rhythmically pregnant main motive. Lindberg's major organ work is the rather unconventional four-movement Sonata in G minor of 1924. After an introductory funeral march (*Marcia elegiaca*) follow an intensely lyrical Adagio and a meditative *Alla Sarabanda*, until the somber mood is broken by the exuberant finale, culminating in a succession of chords reminiscent of Reger. Lindberg derived much inspiration from the folk music of his native Dalecarlia, and he clothed the typically embellished hymn tunes of this part of Sweden both in Romantic harmonies (*Gammal fäbodpsalm*, 1936) and in an austere, modal, polyphonic language (*Variationer över en gammal dalakoral*, 1933).

Otto Olsson, by far the most prolific organ composer of the three, published a large number of organ works in various genres, among them two symphonies, a sonata, three large-scale preludes and fugues and a fantasy and fugue, a five-movement suite, a large-scale variation work, five canonic pieces, two sets of concert études and five trios, a set of twelve chorale-based minor fantasies, and a number of lyrical pieces with titles like *Meditation* and *Cantilena*. Although Olsson never visited France, his music owes much to the French symphonic school, and he often expressed a preference for French "clarity."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, he showed a profound interest in the expressive organ music of the New German

school, an orientation reflected in some of his compositions, including the Prelude and Fugue in C sharp minor op. 39 (1910). A penchant for advanced counterpoint is present in most of Olsson's organ works, where various forms of canon and fugue as well as double and triple, even quadruple, counterpoint are at home. Drawing most often upon the rich harmonic language of the late nineteenth century, he was likewise fascinated by the church modes and Gregorian plainsong; he published two sets of six pieces each based on Gregorian melodies—unusual in Lutheran Sweden at that time—and his second organ symphony, *Credo Symphoniacum*, treats Gregorian themes extensively. In two large-scale works, most consistently in the variations on *Ave maris stella* of 1910, Olsson accommodates his modal themes to the extent that he abandons his normal musical language in favor of an austere, diatonic, strictly white-key music.

### **Polyphonic Plainsong in Symphonic Form: Otto Olsson's *Credo Symphoniacum***

In 1916, Olsson was appointed vice chairman of a committee charged with the renewal of the music in the official liturgical books of the Church of Sweden. The committee was chaired by the musically gifted Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, known as the initiator of the worldwide ecumenical movement manifested in the Stockholm Ecumenical Conference in 1925. In Olsson's extensive correspondence with the Archbishop, the topic of what was to become *Credo Symphoniacum* appears in a letter dated October 27, 1918, in which Olsson mentioned that he was close to finishing a new organ symphony “unusual in form, as well as in content,” and which he has striven to give a “church” character. Olsson gave a brief description of the piece and asked for advice on the title—his working title was *Symphonia ecclesiastica*, but he was unsure of its appropriateness—and for permission to dedicate the work to Söderblom. In his answer three days later, Söderblom expressed his enthusiasm for the project and declared (rather than suggested) its name to be *Credo Symphoniacum*, explained as “the Christian faith, presented in the guise of a symphony.”<sup>12</sup> The work was finished in December.<sup>13</sup> In the wake of World War I, the search for an international publisher turned out to be in vain, and so the symphony was finally published in Sweden in 1927.

As the title suggests, *Credo Symphoniacum* is based on the Christian Creeds, and its formal construction, while obviously related to established models, is largely dependent on its theological program. The three movements represent the articles of faith fashioned around the three persons of the Trinity. Plainsong and pre-Reformation melodies constitute the main thematic material, which gives cohesion despite the work's stylistic breadth, with echoes from the French symphonic tradition, the New German school, and Renaissance vocal polyphony.

In the bipartite slow Introduction to the first movement, the main theme, *Credo in unum Deum*, is first heard unaccompanied, then treated in vocal-like

counterpoint followed by a massive statement on the full organ. The contrasting second section develops a somber soundscape with a slowly falling chromatic figure, reminiscent of Julius Reubke's *Sonata on the 94th Psalm*, from which the *Credo* theme softly emerges. The main part of the movement is an Allegro in relatively free sonata form with hints of fugato, where the *Credo* shares the role of main theme with a lively eighth-note countersubject.

The rhapsodic second movement begins with the hymn *Jesus Christus nostra salus*, followed by a string of contrasting sections, each based on a plainsong melody, representing the events described in the second article of faith: the Nativity, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. The *Crucifixus* melody is preceded by a dramatic intensification based on a fragment of *Jesus Christus nostra salus*. In the final section, the theme returns in full, treated in canon.

Olsson bases the third movement on the Pentecost hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* presented in two guises: as the main theme inflected with expressive syncopations (Ex. 8.1), and later as a meditative hymn.

**EXAMPLE 8.1** Otto Olsson: *Credo Symphonicum*, third movement (*Veni Creator Spiritus*), mm. 1–2.

**In tempo ordinario**

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the right hand of the piano, marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. It contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The middle staff is the left hand of the piano, featuring a series of chords with eighth-note rests. The bottom staff is the Pedal part (Pk. II), which provides a simple eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is indicated as 'In tempo ordinario'.

A new Gregorian theme, *O adoranda Trinitas*, forms a bridge to the later part of the movement, where *Veni Creator* is joined by the main themes of the previous movements. This gives rise to numerous variants of bi-thematic combinations, until finally the *Credo*, *Jesus Christus*, and *Veni Creator* themes are combined in strict triple counterpoint, made possible by a few unobtrusive rhythmic adjustments, and by altering the characteristic minor third of *Jesus Christus* to major. As shown in Ex. 8.2, a convincing musical representation of the Trinity emerges as a result. Following a passage on the full organ in which quick arpeggios alternate with heavy chords, the work ends softly with the *Credo* theme alone, more or less as it began.

*Credo Symphonicum* is written for a large symphonic organ of the period such as that of the Gustav Vasa Church in central Stockholm, where the composer was organist during his entire career. A few years before the composition of the symphony, the organ had been enlarged to sixty-four stops, including a new robust

**EXAMPLE 8.2** Otto Olsson: *Credo Symphonicum*, third movement, mm. 209–13. The third entrance of the three main themes in triple counterpoint: (1.) *Credo in unum Deum*, (2.) *Jesus Christus nostra salus*, and (3.) *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The numeric indications of themes are in the original.

Swell division reminiscent of a French *Récit* but played from the second manual, alongside the more traditional, rather soft Swell of the third manual. Detailed registration indications are given at the beginning of each movement, but otherwise these appear more sparingly and in more general terms, such as *dunkle Stimmen* (“dark stops,” second movement, m. 113). However, the composer also includes certain precise indications, betraying a preoccupation with nuanced changes of color on the soft end of the dynamic range, a tendency also borne out by Olsson’s practice as reflected in his autograph registration annotations in his own performing scores.<sup>14</sup> All three movements contain passages where the use of the general crescendo pedal is clearly intended.

## Late Romanticism in Finland

The early twentieth century saw the emergence of a vernacular Finnish musical culture. A key figure was Oskar Merikanto (1868–1924), not only the composer of the first Finnish-language opera, but also a pioneer of Finnish organ music. Like many others, he completed his studies in Germany, in both Leipzig and Berlin. More unusually, Merikanto sought to broaden his international orientation by extensive study and concert travel in the years 1900–07, which brought him to several European countries and also to the United States.<sup>15</sup> In Paris, he became acquainted with Widor, Guilmant, and Vierne, and he was befriended by perhaps the most celebrated organ virtuoso/composer of the time, Marco Enrico Bossi. Merikanto was the organist of St. Nicholas Church (later to become part of the Cathedral of Helsinki) and was active as an organ recitalist. Besides pedagogical works—including an internationally noted pedal school—and chorale preludes for liturgical use, he also published a few larger organ works, the best known among them the *Passacaglia* in F sharp minor op. 80 (1913) with a personal, partly folk-inspired harmonic language.

In the generation following Merikanto, Armas Maasalo (1885–1960), organist of St. John’s Church, Helsinki, and director of the Sibelius Academy, wrote some notable organ music, including works for organ and orchestra. Maasalo had studied in Germany but also in Paris with Eugène Gigout. His organ Sonata (1920) is conceived in the post-Mendelssohn German tradition. On the other hand, a French influence is palpable in the *Prélude* and *Fantaisie*, both published in 1926.

Apart from the work of Maasalo, organ composition remained sparse in the inter-war period, and few non-organists showed any interest in composing for the organ. Sibelius’s organ output consists of only two occasional works, the *Intrada* of 1925 and *Surusoitto* (Funeral Music) of 1931. Of special interest is *Surusoitto*, the last instrumental work that Sibelius completed before he entered into his well-known silent period. Its harmonic style breaks with the prevailing late Romantic idiom of Finnish music at the time and contains material once planned for the never completed Eighth Symphony.<sup>16</sup>

### Impressionism or Expressionism? Väinö Raitio’s Organ Music

Among Finnish composers active around World War I, Väinö Raitio (1891–1945) is particularly associated with French Impressionism, but he had an unusually broad education. Following studies at the Helsinki Institute of Music in 1916, he attended the Moscow Conservatory in the following academic year. After the war, he completed his studies in Berlin and Paris, in 1921 and 1925–26, respectively. The year in Berlin brought about a thorough change in his musical idiom, and in the 1920s he developed into a full-blooded modernist, influenced by Skryabin and interested in tone color as an independent parameter. His new style, a highly personal amalgam of Impressionist and Expressionist elements, was regarded as too modern and caused him difficulties with concert managements, publishers, and audiences. Most of his works received a cool if not outright negative reception and have remained unpublished to this day. Although Raitio returned to a more traditional style in some works of the 1930s, he remained a solitary, taciturn figure in Finnish musical life. Nevertheless, he managed to survive as a freelance composer from the early 1930s on, thanks to various grants and his wife’s income as a dentist. In recent years, interest in his music has increased; a Helsinki-based Väinö Raitio Society has been formed ([www.vainoraitio.org/ry.html](http://www.vainoraitio.org/ry.html)), and several of his works have been published.

Raitio’s interest in tone color made the orchestra his natural medium but may perhaps also account for his interest in the organ. He wrote seven works for organ, distributed over a period of twenty-six years. These compositions are neither liturgical nor based on church melodies; independent of traditional forms, like most of his other works after 1921, they are freely conceived single-movement pieces, with sometimes generic, sometimes poetic titles: *Intermezzo*, *Legenda – Poème*, *Umbra beata*, *Preludi* (Prelude), *Canzone*.<sup>17</sup> The origin of Raitio’s interest in organ composition is uncertain; he was not an organist, neither were any of his

teachers, and no contacts with organists are mentioned in biographical accounts. If Raitio was a solitary figure in the general musical landscape of Finland, he was even more so in the realm of the organ. It is difficult to relate his organ works to the specific traditions and developments of organ music. The fact that the orchestra was his main medium may be read from the unorthodox textures of his organ music, where one can find string-like tremolo, “timpani rolls” in the pedal, and arpeggios. On the other hand, he also shows an awareness of the organ’s possibilities in his frequent use of pedal points in different registers.

Because it was conceived over the course of a quarter century, Raitio’s organ music reflects the composer’s stylistic shifts during that time. His first organ work, the *Intermezzo* of 1913, is a meditative piece in traditional tonality but with a modal tinge. The *Legenda* of 1920 already offers a more advanced style, with prominent chromaticism and daring dissonances as seen in Ex. 8.3. Here harmonic complexity takes precedence over melody, and Skryabin’s influence is discernible. The piece, notated throughout in G sharp minor, ends unexpectedly with a kind of plagal cadence in A minor.

In *Umbra beata* (1934), Raitio has adopted a relatively simple, tonal style, in a pre-Impressionist French-inspired vein, with oscillations between two chords.<sup>18</sup>

**EXAMPLE 8.3** Väinö Raitio: *Legenda*, mm. 4–6. Second statement of the initial motive. The pedal G-sharp of m. 4 is held as a pedal point from the beginning of the piece.

(Adagio fantastico)

The musical score for Example 8.3 consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a melodic line in the upper register and a bass line. The second system features a series of chords in the upper register, with dynamics markings *mp*, *dim.*, and *p*. The third system shows a complex rhythmic pattern in the upper register, with fingerings 5, 6, 5, 6, 6. The piece concludes with a plagal cadence in A minor.

Finally, the 1938 *Preludi* is characterized by an amalgamation of traditional Romantic harmony with Impressionistic traits, including a full whole-tone scale near the end of the piece and even some jazz-like harmonies.

But there are also elements of continuity in Raitio's organ works, among them a rhythmic flexibility, including frequent changes of meter, and a consistently homophonic, non-contrapuntal texture. The organ pieces rely on traditional formal models, most of them built on an A-B-A plan. Exceptionally, *Umbra beata* is in rondo form. Indications of registration and manual are absent from Raitio's organ scores, and thus it remains for the performer to realize the frequent dynamic instructions. There are, for instance, in the first nine bars of *Intermezzo* eight different indications of dynamics in addition to four crescendo/diminuendo markings. Given the nuanced dynamics and the importance that the composer attached to timbre—he is reported to have declared “Music is color!”<sup>19</sup>—it seems that an organ in the German orchestral style, common in Finland at the time, would best realize the composer's concepts.

### Contrapuntal Commotion: Carl Nielsen's *Commotio*

*Commotio*, the first significant Scandinavian organ work in a style that can be associated with modernist neo-Classicism, was written in 1931 by Carl Nielsen (1865–1931). Nielsen was not an organist and had published his first organ pieces only two years earlier. Already in 1913, however, a meeting with the Leipzig organist Karl Straube seems to have opened his eyes to the expressive possibilities of the organ, inspiring him to begin composing a Fantasia for the instrument, never completed.<sup>20</sup>

Nielsen's general aesthetic view distanced his music from the Romanticism of the previous century, and his penchant for counterpoint would seem to accord well with the polyphonic, neo-Baroque mode that around 1930 was still in its infancy in Germany, and even more so in Scandinavia. Nielsen also sympathized with the efforts of his friend Thomas Laub (1852–1927) to reform church music on the model of Reformation-era Lutheran chorales and sixteenth-century vocal polyphony. Such trends may have helped to rekindle his interest in the organ, which finally came to fruition in early 1929 when he was asked by an organist to compose some small preludes for the liturgy.<sup>21</sup> The result was the 29 Short Preludes op. 51. In preparation to compose these pieces, Nielsen studied the organ music of several Baroque masters, including Frescobaldi, Scheidt, and Pachelbel. The inspiration from such composers as well as the use of seventeenth-century keyboard idioms is evident in several pieces, although Nielsen's personal language is unmistakable in his treatment of harmony, for the most part traditionally functional and mainly diatonic, but by no means pastiche-like. The thematic material is original to Nielsen; none of the Preludes are based on chorale melodies. The composer gives no performance instructions of any kind except for metronome markings.

Nielsen's preoccupation with the organ in the composition of the Preludes seems finally to have pushed him toward the decision to write a large work for the instrument, and so to realize a long held wish: several preserved sketches bear witness to failed attempts at such a project. Nielsen's ambition was to create a work that would do justice to the perceived "true" character of the organ as a polyphonic instrument, an attitude then dominant particularly in German circles; he wrote in a letter that the instrument "for a long time has been regarded as a kind of orchestra, which it *absolutely is not*."<sup>22</sup> Nielsen explained the title of the new piece, *Commotio*, as "movement, also spiritual."<sup>23</sup> He was attracted to the organ as the perfect medium for realizing music without involving the emotions. The beginning of his program notes for the work's first German performance<sup>24</sup> makes clear how his own aesthetic stance accorded with the spirit of the *neue Sachlichkeit* in general and the *Orgelbewegung* in particular:

The Latin word *Commotio* really applies to all music, but the word is used more specifically here as an expression of self-objectification.

In a major work for the mighty instrument that is called the organ, whose sound is determined by the natural element we call air, the composer must attempt to suppress all personal, lyrical feelings.—The expression becomes great and rigorous and demands a kind of dryness instead of the emotional, and must rather be *gazed at* with the ear than embraced by the heart.<sup>25</sup>

The piece is a grand monolith, its duration surpassing even the most extended organ compositions of Bach, a fact which Nielsen duly noted in a letter to the music theorist and composer Knud Jeppesen.<sup>26</sup> Nielsen's reference to Bach is certainly justified with respect to *Commotio*, where Baroque-like or Bach-inspired passages abound, including motoric movement, fugal writing, and dance rhythms derived from the gigue and the siciliano. It is even possible to discern references to individual organ works of Bach, though not actual quotation of motives: the dramatic, dissonance-rich introduction, firmly anchored in a pedal-point G in the pedal, recalls the Fantasia in G minor BWV 542, and the  $\frac{3}{8}$  motor motive in the first fugue beginning at m. 113 is reminiscent of the Toccata in F major BWV 540. The second fugue is a gigue in the spirit of Buxtehude or Bach, although based on a chromatically descending movement (Ex. 8.4). Some free runs in one hand accompanied by bar-long chords in the other, as in mm. 426–9, even recall Sweelinck.

Nielsen offers an effective solution to the formal problems involved in the design of a single-movement piece of such large dimensions. An interpretation of the work in clear sections is not unproblematic,<sup>27</sup> but however the divisions are conceived, there remains a good deal of variety in musical character, tempo, meter, key signature, and texture within sections. In the entire piece there are only two instances of a fermata followed by a new beginning—in both cases before fugue expositions—although several passages could be regarded as transitions between sections. Nielsen himself describes the formal relationships

EXAMPLE 8.4 Carl Nielsen: *Commotio*, mm. 317–21. Beginning of the “gigue” fugue.

The musical score for Carl Nielsen's *Commotio*, mm. 317–21, is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 317–318) is in 3/4 time and features a 'rall.' marking and a 'ff' dynamic. The right hand plays a melodic line with a slur and a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand plays a bass line with a triplet of eighth notes. The second system (mm. 319–320) shows a change in dynamics to 'p' and a change in time signature to 12/8. The right hand continues the melodic line with a slur, while the left hand plays a bass line with a slur. The third system (mm. 321–322) continues the fugue in 12/8 time, with the right hand playing a melodic line and the left hand playing a bass line.

within the work in botanical terms. According to him, *Commotio* is “borne up by two fugues, to which an introduction, intervening movements and coda cling like climbing plants to the tree-trunks of the forest.”<sup>28</sup>

*Commotio* contains no organ-specific instructions, but, unlike the 29 Short Preludes, it includes a few judiciously placed dynamic indications. It is obvious that the composition requires more dynamic changes than notated. Transitional dynamics play an important role—Nielsen was hardly an orthodox neo-Baroque composer—and can in certain places be assumed even when not notated. The piece seems to call for a large organ equipped with a general crescendo, and its first performance was indeed held at such an organ, the newly built instrument of Aarhus Cathedral, one of the few in Scandinavia to be built under the influence of the Alsatian Organ Reform.<sup>29</sup>

### After Nielsen: Neo-Baroque and Modernism

The 1930s issued a time of transition in Scandinavian organ composition. Some composers continued to embrace the language of the Romantic era, whereas others adopted neo-Baroque idioms, either in more conservative or more richly dissonant manifestations. The most prominent composer to rely on Romanticism was the Dane Rued Langgaard (1893–1952). Isolated from the Nielsen-inspired mainstream of Danish music, he had difficulties in finding a position until he

became organist of Ribe Cathedral in 1940. Langgaard's most important organ composition is *Messis*, a vast work of more than two hours of program music to be performed in three successive evenings. *Messis* is, according to the composer, a "drama for organ," which depicts the Crucifixion and illustrates the words of Jesus about "the harvest time."<sup>30</sup> An isolation of a different kind was characteristic of the Norwegian composer Fartein Valen (1887–1952). In the 1920s he developed a personal atonal (later dodecaphonic) polyphonic language, which set him apart from most of his contemporaries. Although not an organist, Valen was deeply influenced by Bach's polyphony, as in the two organ works from the late 1930s, a Prelude and Fugue and a Pastorale. Among the composers who abandoned nineteenth-century expressivity in favor of a neo-Baroque style suited to the new ideals was the Dane Niels Otto Raasted (1888–1966), a pupil of both Reger and Straube whose personal language developed from a heavily expressive Reger-inspired idiom to a new simplicity, a process beginning as early as in the mid 1920s and reflected in his six Sonatas.

The German *Orgelbewegung* undoubtedly stimulated organ composition in Scandinavia, and from the mid 1930s onward a great deal of new organ music was published, much of it intended for practical, liturgical use, but also a respectable amount for the concert stage. Four figures among many will serve to illustrate these tendencies. Svend-Ove Møller (1903–49), organist of Viborg Cathedral in Jutland, was a pupil of Laub and thus schooled in a church music tradition unfriendly to Romanticism. In his numerous organ works, including the Te Deum of 1949, the Renaissance-inspired traditional simplicity of Laub is mixed with a more modern idiom. The Finnish organist and composer Sulo Salonen (1899–1976) was from the beginning deeply interested in polyphonic textures. His style developed from a rather traditional, Bach-inspired language in his early works to a pronounced post-war Modernism, which, as regards his organ music, culminates in his Toccata of 1955, a work that uses serial techniques. The Norwegian Ludvig Nielsen (1906–2001), who occupied the prestigious position as organist of the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, developed an interest in composition through exhaustive studies of Palestrinian counterpoint in the 1930s. His rich output of organ music is dominated by polyphonic textures. Harmonically, he developed from a relatively traditional neo-Classicism to a more dissonant expressivity in the 1950s, although he never took the step to twelve-tone technique. Finally, Hilding Rosenberg (1892–1985), who became known as the pioneer of musical Modernism in Sweden in the 1920s, wrote a few important organ works in the 1940s and early 1950s. His *Fantasia e fuga* of 1941 is a dramatic piece with several allusions to the organ works of Bach.

### A New Organ Soundscape: The Avant-Garde of the 1960s

In 1951 the young Swedish composer, musicologist, and organist Bengt Hambraeus (1928–2000) visited the *Ferienkurse für neue Musik* at Darmstadt. As

is generally known, the purpose of the Darmstadt courses was the creation of a new musical culture unsoiled by the disastrous immediate past. Enthusiastic over the innovative spirit he found there, so unlike the conservative musical climate in Sweden, Hambraeus soon became known as the most radical of young Swedish composers as well as a tireless advocate of the European musical avant-garde, under the banner of which the idea of the twelve-tone series was being expanded and applied to the parameters of rhythm, dynamics, articulation, and timbre.

Hambraeus had begun organ study with Alf Linder in 1944 as a sixteen-year-old. Here he developed a love for organ sound and organ music that was crucial to his musical thinking and was later to have important consequences for the position of the instrument in avant-garde composition. The breakthrough for the organ as a modernist instrument came in the early 1960s. By then, Hambraeus's main interest had changed from serialism to an exploration of sound per se, as witnessed in his organ piece *Constellations I* of 1958. This piece inspired György Ligeti to his *Volumina* (1961–62), where melody and harmony are completely abandoned in favor of sound exploration.<sup>31</sup> Besides Hambraeus, another Swedish organist and composer, Karl-Erik Welin (1934–92), had a key role in the radicalization of organ composition in his unique capacity as a specialized performer. In the early 1960s, Welin collaborated closely with both Hambraeus and Ligeti, performing in an historic concert at Radio Bremen on May 4, 1962, where both *Volumina* and Hambraeus's new work *Interferenzen* were premiered.<sup>32</sup> Welin was likewise instrumental in aiding other non-organist composers in realizing their ideas in organ music.

Among the innovations peculiar to organ playing that arose during these tumultuous years, some concerned the manipulation of wind pressure, including the use of half-drawn stops and the turning off and on of the wind in the course of a piece; others concerned the use of weights or an assistant in order to sustain notes. The first piece written for organ and electronic tape, Hambraeus's *Constellations III* of 1961, also belongs to this period.

### **An Organ Speaking with Many Tongues: Torsten Nilsson's *Septem improvisationes pro organo***

The distinctive uses to which the organ was put in the avant-garde were far removed from the reality of the ordinary church musician. Neither Hambraeus nor Welin, for example, ever held positions as church organists. In the Scandinavian countries at mid-century, most organist-composers were still working in basically tonal neo-Baroque idioms. A church musician capable of absorbing the newly discovered possibilities of the organ into the liturgy was the Swede Torsten Nilsson (1920–99). In the 1950s Nilsson was well known as a prolific and skilled composer mainly of choral music in the neo-Baroque vein. As organist of St. Mary's Church in Helsingborg, he organized the first organ festival in Sweden in 1960. Among the many well-known performers invited was the Viennese organ-

ist and composer Anton Heiller (1923–79). This first contact with Heiller led Nilsson to study composition with him in 1961 and 1963. Heiller guided him into the world of serial techniques, which contributed to the radical change in Nilsson’s compositional style that was to follow. Nilsson’s new orientation, further stimulated by his contacts with Hambraeus, embraced an interest in new compositional and performing techniques on the organ. In 1963 Nilsson moved to Stockholm, where he had been appointed choirmaster of Oscar’s Church. Here, the church’s large Marcussen organ became an additional source of inspiration.

In 1964 Nilsson began to compose what was to be his largest organ work, the *Septem improvisationes pro organo* op. 27. The seven pieces comprising this cycle, with a total duration of about one hour, were generated over a span of five years.<sup>33</sup> The basic compositional idea is the combination of a freely employed twelve-tone technique and the unconventional use of the keyboard and stop combinations, with Gregorian introit melodies as a unifying factor. The “improvisations” have all the appearance of concert pieces but are liturgically conceived for particular feast days and may have originated as improvised postludes. The order of the pieces reflects their position in the ecclesiastical year (Fig. 8.1). The printed score of each piece includes a biblical motto taken from the respective feast day. For four of the pieces, that text is part of the Gospel of the day; exceptions are texts from the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles (VI, VII), and the beginning of the Cantic of Mary, the Magnificat (I).

The notation is basically traditional in the sense that conventional staves, clefs, and noteheads indicating pitch and relative duration are employed in every piece. But only the earliest piece, *Ascensio*, is traditionally notated throughout. The notational palette is successively expanded, with clusters of varying forms, appearances, and durations—static and mobile, ascending and descending, for black or white keys or both—and yarn-like threads, x-shaped noteheads without stems indicating rapid movement, and so on. Nilsson combines all of these in

No.	Title	Feast day	Biblical motto	Composed	Published
I	<i>Magnificat</i>	Annunciation	Luke 1:46–49	1968	1980
II	<i>Nativitas Domini</i>	Christmas	Luke 2:8–11	1968–69	1970
III	<i>Epiphania</i> [III]	Epiphany	Matt. 2:6, 18	1974 <sup>1</sup>	1986
IV	<i>Crucifigatur</i>	Good Friday	Matt. 27:22–23	1968	1984
V	<i>Resurrexit</i>	Easter	Mark 16:6	1967	1985
VI	<i>Ascensio</i>	Ascension	Acts 1:11	1964	1970
VII	<i>Linguae tamquam ignis</i>	Pentecost	Acts 2:1–4	1964	1971

<sup>1</sup> Version for organ solo. Two earlier versions were composed in 1968: one for tenor, percussion (three players) and organ; the other for organ and tape. Torsten Nilsson, cited in Birgitta Huld, liner notes to *Torsten Nilsson: Septem improvisationes pro organo*, Proprius PRCD 9157, 5.

FIGURE 8.1 Torsten Nilsson: *Septem improvisationes pro organo* op. 27.

EXAMPLE 8.5 Torsten Nilsson: *Crucifigatur*, p. 6.

The image displays three sections of a musical score for Torsten Nilsson's *Crucifigatur*, page 6. The top section is marked with a star and shows staves for I-II-III and Ped. with traditional notation on the left and dense, scribbled-out notation on the right. The middle section features a square graphic with three crosses and a stylized human figure, with the text "GENERALTUTTI" below it. The bottom section shows staves for III, II, I, and Ped. with a large, thick, black graphic shape that resembles a stylized wave or a human form.

ever-varying, highly suggestive forms, lending pronounced graphical qualities to such scores as *Magnificat* and *Epiphania*. The most striking score in this respect is that of *Crucifigatur*, dedicated to Karl-Erik Welin, the only piece actually dominated by such unconventional notation. Here, traditional notation is largely restricted to the rendering of the Gregorian introit melody. It is also here that we find the only actual graphical representation in the collection. At the climax of the piece the eye is led to a Golgotha scene in the form of three crosses and what might be a stylized human form at the side of the central cross (Ex. 8.5).

Nilsson intends a rhythmically free rendering throughout, as suggested by the indications at the beginning of each piece: *Molto liberamente e improvvisando*, *Molto rubato*, *Vivace Narrante e liberamente*, [no indication], *Misterioso*, *Molto rubato*, and *Rubato* respectively. However, metronome markings turn up in several places in each movement, sometimes even at the outset, together with the *rubato* indication. Even if a fluctuating tempo—often further indicated with *rit.*, *accel.*, or *stringendo*—can be assumed for the most part, there are some dance-like sections that call for a stricter approach; examples include a *danse infernale* passage in *Magnificat* and an extended staccato section in *Linguae tamquam ignis*. *Septem improvisationes* was written for the organ of Oscar's Church and thus presupposes a large, robustly voiced organ with four manuals and a variety of mutations and mixtures in all divisions. The composer supplies detailed registration indications, and the notation of extended crescendi up to the full organ seems to suggest the use of a general crescendo mechanism.<sup>34</sup>

### End of a Millennium: Pluralism and Retrospection

Characteristic of Scandinavian organ music in the later decades of the twentieth century is the existence of several parallel trends. Modernism of the post-Darmstadt persuasion continued in the 1970s and 1980s, alongside other modernist variants as well as suggestions of a new Romanticism in the wake of the rediscovery of the nineteenth-century organ repertoire and the attendant interest in Romantic organ sound. The Early Music Movement stimulated composition of organ music in historical genres. Above all, the organ music of the outgoing millennium is characterized by a new eclecticism, investigating, questioning, and even breaking down stylistic barriers and value hierarchies that had until then been taken for granted. Some of these trends are illustrated by the four works from the early 1970s briefly presented in what follows, others by Bengt Hambræus's later development.

Per Nørgård (b. 1932), today a leading Danish composer, is a modernist who, although studying in Paris, never felt quite at home with the kind of new music associated with such figures as Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez.<sup>35</sup> Instead he explored untrodden paths inspired by mathematical proportions: in the 1970s his main interest was in the golden section and the related Fibonacci series (1:2:3:5:8:13:21, and so on). His large organ work *Canon* (1971), composed in seven parts or "cycles," is based harmonically on the overtone series and rhythmically on the golden section. The latter led him to adopt a type of mensural notation which clarifies the relationship between the voices but had to be supplemented by a more conventional score in order to be realizable by the player.

The Norwegian Egil Hovland's (b. 1924) seven-movement *Suite Job* of 1973 is one of the most voluminous organ works ever written in Norway. Prior to its composition, Hovland was regarded as a radical modernist, but this work shows a more eclectic side. *Job's* idiom relies largely on free tonality, even with some

clusters, but there are also passages based on functional harmony, prefiguring the composer's later return to traditional tonality.

The Swede Erland von Koch (1910–2009), one of the relatively traditionally minded “idyllist”<sup>36</sup> composers emerging in the 1930s, wrote a number of organ pieces in his later years. In the 1973 triptych *Kontraster* (Contrasts), a stylistic pluralism manifests itself rhythmically and harmonically: quick quartal chords in ever-changing patterns of accentuation (*Ritmo*), dense chromatic harmony in slow rubato (*Misterioso*), and fanfares in parallel triads (*Giubiloso*).

Joonas Kokkonen (1921–96), a leading composer in Finland known above all for his operas, and Professor of Composition at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, wrote an organ piece in 1974, *Lux aeterna*, showing a highly personal brand of neo-Romanticism with minimalist tendencies. The piece is based on chords rather than melody. Triads follow on each other in unconventional successions, sometimes layered on top of each other.

### A Dialogue with the Past: Bengt Hambraeus's *Riflessioni*

Several of Hambraeus's organ works from the 1970s and later demonstrate strong links to history and tradition in terms of registration, texture, and performance instructions, not to mention musical allusions and quotations. The first work to explore such links was the 1973 *Toccata Monumentum per Max Reger*, composed in celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Reger's birth, with numerous quotations or allusions to the elder composer's organ works. For Hambraeus, Reger's music had a special historical significance as a precursor not only of early twentieth-century Modernism but also of serial and cluster techniques.<sup>37</sup> Other works of Hambraeus's later period were commissioned for restored historical organs or new instruments conceived in various historical styles. Perhaps the most famous example is the four-volume *Livre d'orgue* (1980–81), composed for a new instrument in French Classical style built according to the principles in Dom Bédos's *L'art du facteur d'orgues* (1776–78).

Hambraeus's last organ composition, *Riflessioni*, continues the dialogue with the past in similar ways: it is composed for the anniversary of a significant historical instrument and offers homage to an important musical personality. In this case, however, the organ represents a tradition from Hambraeus's own lifetime, the tribute is not to a composer but rather a performer, and both objects of celebration are part of Hambraeus's personal musical history. On the origin of the work, the composer writes:

In 1999, I received from the Oscar's Church parish [in Stockholm] one of my most interesting and emotionally most challenging commissions ever: to write a work for the celebration of the Marcussen organ's fiftieth birthday, to be premiered by [Oscar's Church organist] Erik Boström. My immediate and obvious idea was to let the composition be a memorial

tribute to Alf Linder, based on transformed reminiscences from his repertoire as I remember his performances, for example, of Bach, Reubke, Bruhns, Reger and Buxtehude—with modulating cross-references and associations of ideas turning unexpectedly into other composer’s [sic] work. I also imagined that the Oscar’s Church organ would perhaps have remembered by itself and stored, as if in a huge data bank, all music and all sounds that had been performed in the church during Linder’s forty years as organist.<sup>38</sup>

Alf Linder (1907–83) was a leading Swedish organist in the latter half of the twentieth century. A pupil of Günther Ramin in Leipzig and Fritz Heitmann in Berlin, he cultivated a core repertoire of Bach, North German Baroque music, and Reger, but he also premiered several new works, including compositions by Otto Olsson, Torsten Nilsson, and Hambraeus himself. Linder became internationally known with his 1957 recording of Buxtehude’s complete organ works for the Westminster label.<sup>39</sup>

The 77-stop, four-manual mechanical organ in Oscar’s Church was built in 1949 by Marcussen & Søn of Aabenraa, Denmark, at that time the undisputed leader among Scandinavian organ builders and the first in Scandinavia to apply the principles of the German *Orgelbewegung*. The Oscar’s Church organ was a landmark in Swedish organ history; in its wake, Swedish organ builders finally began to abandon the tubular pneumatic or electric systems dominant until then. In *Riflessioni*, Hambraeus makes ample use of the possibilities offered by the general crescendo mechanism and the system of free combinations, both of which were part of the moderate changes made to the organ by the Marcussen firm in 1980. The composer emphasizes that the approach to sound is completely different in this piece from the *Ricercare*, composed in 1974 for the same organ. Whereas the *Ricercare* explores contrasts in timbre and loudness among the four manuals—it is also notated throughout with separate pairs of staves for each manual—*Riflessioni* uses the organ more nearly as a unit, with frequent transitional dynamics as well as quick, dramatic changes of sound. Towards the end of the piece, Hambraeus indicates the use of the only new stop added in 1980, an *Unda maris*.

Material from earlier organ music is exploited in many different ways, ranging from direct quote via transposition to changes in rhythm and melody. The use of Reger’s Fantasy and Fugue in D minor op. 135b as a kind of “guide”<sup>40</sup> through the piece can also be seen as a self-reference; the same work is quoted or paraphrased several times in *Tocatta Monumentum per Max Reger*.<sup>41</sup> The first page of *Riflessioni* consists almost entirely of material from the initial four-tone descending arpeggio (d<sup>3</sup>–a<sup>2</sup>–f<sup>2</sup>–c<sup>♯</sup><sup>2</sup>) of Reger’s Fantasy. The right hand begins with extremely rapid, high-pitched figures based on a five-tone series with the fourth note of Reger’s arpeggio motive appearing twice, first inserted between the first and third notes, then transposed up an octave at the end, producing the series 1–4–2–3–4,



EXAMPLE 8.6d Bengt Hambraeus: *Riflessioni*, page 1, 5th system. The numbering of notes is not in the original.

*Riflessioni* also draws upon Reubke's *Sonata on the 94th Psalm*, from which Hambraeus employs not only the two principal motives—the first a descending melody with downward leaps; the second a rhythmically even, rising, partially chromatic line—but also the lyrical theme of the middle section. A third work repeatedly referenced is Bach's Fantasy in G minor BWV 542. In addition to these works and other Reger compositions, Hambraeus presents a dense fabric of quotes and allusions to other passages with chromatic content such as Nikolaus Bruhns's "Great" Prelude in E minor (11:3) and Bach's "Wedge" Fugue in E minor BWV 548 (12:1, pedal).<sup>43</sup> But he also uses motoric motives: from Bach works such as the Fugue in D major BWV 532 (final pedal solo, 2:3 ff.; fugue subject and countersubject, 11:3); the Toccata in F major BWV 540 (4:3); the first movement of the Sonata in C major BWV 529 (11:3); the Fugue in C major BWV 564 (16:5); as well as from Buxtehude's Prelude in F sharp minor BuxWV 146.<sup>44</sup> Ex. 8.7 shows motives from Bruhns's Prelude in E minor and Bach's BWV 532 and BWV 529 occurring in succession in the manuals, combined with varied material from the two main motives of Reubke's Sonata in the pedal in a trio texture.

Thus it is an organ work, *Riflessioni*, that sums up Hambraeus's multifaceted career as a composer. Although Hambraeus composed for many other instrumental and vocal genres, the organ was from early on at the center of his thinking. It reflects his faith, often expressed in his writings as well as in his music, in the continuity between past and present. For Hambraeus, new music, however radically modernist, is born into a tradition with which it stands in a continuing dialogue. In a wider perspective, Hambraeus's *opus ultimum* for organ reflects, or comments upon, several tendencies of the outgoing millennium: a retreat from certain avant-garde positions such as graphic notation, a renewed approach to tradition from a perspective other than that of the *Orgelbewegung*, and a juxtaposition of widely differing styles constituting a postmodern rejection of the "purity" toward which movements like neo-Classicism and serialism strove.

**EXAMPLE 8.7** Bengt Hambraeus: *Riflessioni*, p. 11, systems 3 (end) and 4 (beginning). The indications of themes are not in the original.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system has four staves: Organ (treble and bass clefs) and Pedals (bass clef). Brackets indicate four themes: Bruhns, Prelude e; Bach, Fugue D major, countersubject; Bruhns, Prelude e; and Bach, Fugue D major, subject. The second system has five staves: Organ (treble and bass clefs) and Pedals (bass clef). Brackets indicate two themes: Reubke, Sonata and Bach, Sonata V, 1st mvt.

## Notes

- 1 The geographical term “Scandinavia” properly refers to the Scandinavian peninsula (Norway and Sweden) but is commonly extended to Denmark, especially since the heyday of “Scandinavism,” a movement in the mid-nineteenth century for peaceful cooperation and solidarity between Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The so-called Nordic countries include Scandinavia as well as Finland and Iceland. In this chapter, Scandinavia will be used as a synonym for the Nordic countries. The political geography of northern Europe in 1900 was quite different from today. Finland, until 1809 a part of Sweden, was a Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire. Norway was still in union with Sweden under the Swedish king until the separation of the two nations in 1905, and Iceland became independent from Denmark only in 1944.
- 2 The Norwegian composer and organist Johannes Haarklou (1847–1925) was a significant figure but did not compose his most important organ works (two symphonies) until the early 1920s.
- 3 Among such composers can be mentioned the German-born Gustaf Mankell (1812–80), Professor of Organ at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Stockholm and composer of numerous organ works, among them twelve sonatas; also Elfrida Andrée (1841–1929), who had written two organ symphonies (one of them with wind instruments) and Wilhelm Heintze (1849–95), a brilliant organ improviser who also wrote a few pieces for the instrument.

- 4 Among the great names justifying a so-called Golden Age were the writer Hans Christian Andersen (1805–75), the philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55), and the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844).
- 5 For instance, Gade's *Tre Tonestykker* (1851) and Hartmann's *Organ Sonata* (1855). The latter work may be considered the most important Scandinavian organ composition of the nineteenth century.
- 6 See Jullander 2006.
- 7 See Jullander 2007.
- 8 Fine examples of Scandinavian organ music bearing the influence of Reger include two works, both entitled *Introduction and Passacaglia*, of the Norwegian Arild Sandvold (1895–1984) and the Icelander Páll Ísólffson (1893–1974).
- 9 This interest continued throughout the century and is reflected in works by composers of neo-Classical tendencies, such as Ludvig Nielsen of Norway and even Bengt Hambraeus, who, in 1981, wrote a *Voluntary on a Swedish Hymn Tune from Dalecarlia*.
- 10 Edling 2009, 154.
- 11 Jullander 1995, 474.
- 12 Olsson's letter is preserved in Uppsala University Library, the letter from Söderblom in the State Music Library, Stockholm. Translations are my own.
- 13 The printed edition contains a full-page Latin dedication to Söderblom dated September 14, 1925, the time of the Stockholm Ecumenical Conference. This has led to a widespread and tenacious misunderstanding, perpetuated also in Hans Åstrand's essay on Olsson for both the first and second editions of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, that the work was composed in 1925 for this conference.
- 14 See Jullander 1997, 304.
- 15 Lehtola 2009, 4.
- 16 Henderson 2005, 678.
- 17 Two smaller, unpublished works, *Canzonetta* and *Gaudeamus*, have been tentatively dated to the 1930s.
- 18 On such oscillations as a French characteristic, see Edling 1982, 65.
- 19 Salmenhaara 1996.
- 20 Foltmann 2006, xlii.
- 21 *Ibid.*, xliv.
- 22 Letter of February 24, 1931 to Nielsen's son-in-law Emil Telmányi. Translated in Foltmann 2006, xlix. Emphasis Nielsen's.
- 23 *Bewegung, auch geistig*. Program note draft in a letter of August 30, 1931 to Emilius Bangert, cited in Foltmann 2006, liii. Translation mine.
- 24 *Commotio* was premiered on August 14, 1931 in Aarhus Cathedral in Nielsen's presence. The performer was Emilius Bangert, a former pupil of Nielsen and cantor, later also organist, of Roskilde Cathedral. The second performance, also by Bangert, followed three days after Nielsen's death, on October 6, 1931, in the Marienkirche of Lübeck in the context of the Nordic-German Organ Week.
- 25 Program note draft in a letter of August 30, 1931 to Emilius Bangert, cited in Foltmann 2006, liii. The translation is Foltmann's.
- 26 Letter of February 26, 1931, cited in Foltmann 2006, l.
- 27 For instance, Martin Weyer (2002, 590) notes eight sections, whereas Michel Roubinet (1991, 607) sees only four.
- 28 Program note draft in a letter of August 30, 1931 to Emilius Bangert, cited in Foltmann, liii. The translation is Foltmann's.
- 29 The organ, with four manuals and eighty-eight stops, was completed in 1928 by the Danish firm of Frobenius. Albert Schweitzer was personally involved in the process from the outset. See Schützeichel 1992, 54–61.
- 30 Interview with Langgaard in *Berlingske Aftenavis*, April 21, 1936, before the first performance of *Messis* (English translation at <http://www.langgaard.dk/litt/interv/etdramae.htm>, accessed November 2, 2010).

- 31 On *Volumina* and its points of contact with Hambraeus's music, see Chapter 10.
- 32 Herchenröder 2002, 303.
- 33 Or ten, if one counts the arrangement for solo organ of the third piece, originally composed for other settings. See Fig. 8.1.
- 34 At the time of the composition of *Septem improvisationes*, the organ of Oscar's Church did not possess a general crescendo mechanism (cf. p. 246 below).
- 35 Christensen 1995, 148.
- 36 The term was coined by the musicologist Bo Wallner (1968).
- 37 Hambraeus 1970, 10–11.
- 38 Hambraeus 2002, 286.
- 39 On Linder's Buxtehude recordings and their international reception, see Marshall 2002, 294–5.
- 40 Herchenröder 2002, 321.
- 41 Other Reger works providing material for both compositions include the Introduction op. 63 no. 5, the Introduction and Passacaglia in D minor WoO, and the Introduction, Passacaglia and Fugue in E minor op. 127.
- 42 One is tempted to see a reference to Linder's forty-year tenure at Oscar's Church. Note the final sentence in Hambraeus's rationale for the piece cited above. For the relevant passage in Reger's op. 135b, see Ex. 3.13a elsewhere in this volume.
- 43 I have designated passages from *Riflessioni* as (page number:system number) according to the manuscript as printed in facsimile in *Bengt Hambraeus Orgelwerke/Organ Works 1977–2000*, ed. Martin Herchenröder, 204–27.
- 44 Hambraeus also quotes rhythmically pregnant motives from passacaglias: Bach's BWV 582 (5:3), Reger's Introduction, Passacaglia and Fugue in E minor op. 127 (5:5–6:1, 6:3), and, several times, the ornamented passage immediately preceding the final chord of Buxtehude's Prelude in G minor BuxWV 149.

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# 9

## THE UNITED STATES

*Sharon L. Hettinger*

Composers writing for the organ in twentieth-century America are as stylistically diverse as the ever-expanding landscape of American society. Whereas a precise description of what makes an American organ work American is impossible, one may draw many parallels between a representative selection of organ works and certain enduring American ideals, such as individual freedom manifested in individualistic creative expression. There are a number of well-known composers who have written one or two important works for organ, but who did not continue to compose for the instrument—Charles Ives, Aaron Copland, Walter Piston, and Howard Hanson are examples. Moreover, a significant number of composers produced works primarily for liturgical purposes. I have organized this chapter in two distinct if somewhat arbitrary periods, before and after 1945. They have written difficult, comprehensive, and large-scale organ compositions, or have otherwise contributed a unique voice in organ composition in the United States.

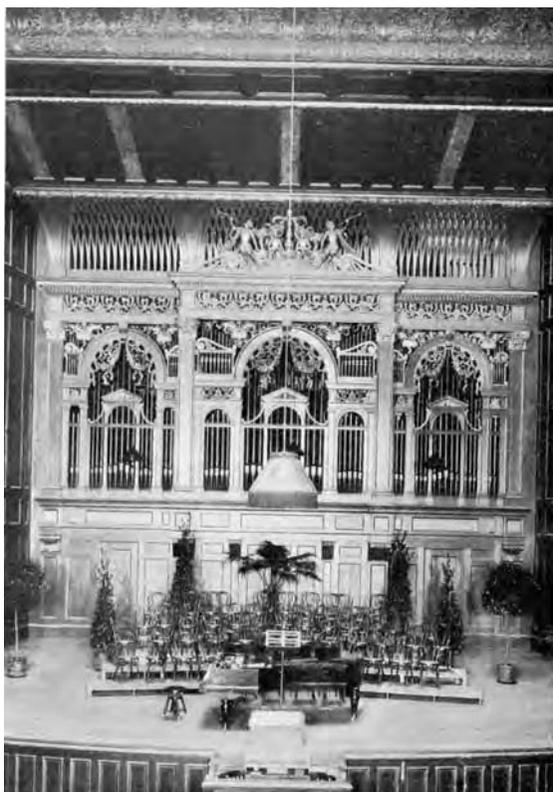
### **1900–45: Romanticism Influences New Idioms**

The first forty years of the twentieth century join styles inherited from European late Romanticism with the desire to move forward in new musical idioms. Some turn-of-the-century American composers were educated in Germany, but a large number of them also studied in France, especially with Nadia Boulanger and later with Olivier Messiaen. Both the extended, symphonic organ works of the French school and the large-scale chorale-based works of the Germans influenced American organ composers in the first part of the century.

Horatio Parker (1863–1919), who became Charles Ives's teacher, studied with Josef Rheinberger in Munich and was invited to teach at Yale University in 1894.

His 1902 Concerto for Organ and Orchestra in E flat minor op. 55 includes challenging pedal and manual passages that bridge the two centuries, incorporating both expanded technical demands on the performer and the resources of newer organs. Parker also developed an organ solo version of his Concerto. This work propels the grandeur of large-scale organ works of the Romantic era into the twentieth century.

While Parker was in Munich in May 1902, he wrote to his colleague and composer friend George W. Chadwick that his organ Concerto was completed, and that he looked forward to playing it in Chadwick's new hall should he receive an invitation.<sup>1</sup> The new Jordan Hall at Chadwick's New England Conservatory of Music housed a Hutchings organ (Fig. 9.1) on which Parker performed the premiere with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on December 26 and 27, 1902.<sup>2</sup>



**FIGURE 9.1.** Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory of Music (Boston), Hutchings organ 1902.

The concerto was also well received in Chicago the following week, when Parker played it with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. A reviewer for the *Chicago Record Herald* noted with satisfaction that, “being an organ virtuoso of first rank, it must have been a temptation for Professor Parker to have written something to display his powers in full. It is always evident that he is playing easily and that his reserve power is great.”<sup>3</sup> According to Chadwick, Parker

was fond of making paradoxical observations, sometimes rather difficult for less subtle minds to follow. Of a certain piece for organ and orchestra [op. 55] he said, “That has no business to sound so well.” This was really a retroverted compliment to the composer for making a successful mixture for organ and orchestral tone, a problem which requires an expert musical chemist.<sup>4</sup>

As Chadwick suggests, Parker writes idiomatically for the instrument, displays a fine sense of balance between the orchestra (*sans* winds) and organ, and creates a dynamic piece from several unifying motives. The Concerto opens in the unusual key of E flat minor. A tritone shift from the introductory material to the theme in A major and the ultimate return to E flat minor seem to follow earlier nineteenth-century harmonic strategies. The finale is a straightforward fugue with a pedal cadenza. Parker’s biographer William Kearns has rightly noted that “for its day, the Organ Concerto was experimental in its exploration of the tonal and technical possibilities of organ and orchestra. In spite of its novelty and generally high quality, it has been largely ignored.”<sup>5</sup>

Parker’s solo works for organ require strong pianistic skills: arpeggiations, passagework in octaves, and numerous thickly voiced chords are integral to the composer’s musical language. In his *Festival Prelude* op. 67 no. 1, originally published as op. 66 in 1910 and the first of the substantial *Four Compositions* op. 67, the chromatic runs in both manuals and pedals and an unexpected modulation from A major to D flat major and back again are two examples of his pushing forward technical and harmonic boundaries, new to American organ music of the time. Other works from his pen include the Organ Sonata op. 65 and *Five Short Pieces*, both from 1908, and the *Introduction and Fugue* of 1916.

Composers contributing concert works for organ in addition to music for the church are Charles Ives (1874–1954), Leo Sowerby (1895–1968), and Aaron Copland (1900–90). Most of Ives’s organ works, including the well-known *Variations on “America”* of 1891, were composed towards the end of the nineteenth century. Some composed in the twentieth century are lost, or only fragments of these compositions remain.<sup>6</sup> Sowerby began composing at a young age, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra premiered his Violin Concerto in G minor when he was only eighteen.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Sowerby was well-known as a composer of orchestral music before being acknowledged as an organ composer. Although he taught a number of talented composition students, Ned Rorem is unquestionably his most famous pupil.

Sowerby's works for organ were composed for both church settings and the concert stage. He wrote two organ concertos, *Medieval Poem* (1926) and *Concertpiece* (1951) for organ and orchestra, an organ symphony, and nearly fifty-five solo works for the instrument. Regarding his compositional process Sowerby observed,

One might ask a composer why he did this or that, and in many cases he could only answer that he had been impelled to do such and such, or that once the music got started it led itself on, as it were, to the various keys and themes in the various speeds. But the composer must, in his flights of imagination, use his craft to hold himself in check, and his technical equipment to preserve an order in what might otherwise be chaos.<sup>8</sup>

Sowerby often adopted classical forms, and they provided him parameters in which to write—a way to hold “chaos” in check—even while he lent those forms an unmistakably American stamp. He composed several works using a ground bass, including the Passacaglia and Canon, Chacony, and Fugue. Even though these forms are steeped in the past, Sowerby adds open-chord harmonies, demanding technique, and extended chromaticism. His language requires large instruments. Sometimes he even adds hints of blues and jazz to create a unique American sound. Early works, such as *Arioso*, *Prelude on “The King’s Majesty,”* and *Air with Variations*, incorporate jazz and blues sounds, important musical statements of the period.

Works by Sowerby that require particularly well-honed performance skills are *Comes Autumn Time*, the frequently performed Toccata, and *Pageant*, a technically challenging work that highlights the organist’s pedal facility. Because of Sowerby’s organ background, he knew well what technically demanding skills organists could manage. He also produced hymn-based pieces for the liturgical year, not at all simple to play. In these works, Sowerby likewise created fresh harmonies by using added-note chords and interpolating new rhythmic ideas, even while maintaining the sense of the hymn tune.

The large-scale Symphony in G of 1930, one of Sowerby’s most difficult organ works, is comprised of three movements and dedicated to the virtuoso organist Lynnwood Farnam. The composer expressly denied any programmatic intent for the Symphony, calling it “as much a piece of architecture in sound as any of the works of the masters of the Baroque, though I do not pretend to make any further comparisons.”<sup>9</sup> The Symphony is atypical in its ordering of movements as slow (“Very broadly”), fast (“Fast and sinister”), and slow (“Slowly”), inverting the more common fast–slow–fast sequence. Sowerby had recently ended his 1927 orchestral Symphony in B Minor with a passacaglia, and it probably proved rewarding enough for him to incorporate a concluding passacaglia into his organ Symphony in G, in fact the first movement written.<sup>10</sup> Many passacaglias are composed in minor keys, but Sowerby chose to write his in G major. Motivic

fragments from its theme play a central role in the work's development. The harmonic language here is markedly traditional, with some elements of chromaticism, but nothing that pushes the boundaries of tonality. The lengthy first movement employs a long introduction and a two-part coda as bookends around a classic sonata form. The second movement is essentially a rondo form, concluding with a pedal cadenza. There is no slow, lyrical movement as such, but the shape of the first one, which ends with nearly sixty measures of such lyrical material, may thus preclude Sowerby's predilection to include a designated slow movement.<sup>11</sup>

Aaron Copland composed only two pieces that call for organ: the *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* of 1924, and the solo *Episode* of 1940. From 1921 through 1924, Copland studied with Nadia Boulanger, who introduced him to Serge Koussevitzky in 1923. It was she who continued to mentor Copland through the process of composing the *Symphony*, requested by Koussevitzky, who frequently commissioned and promoted new works. Boulanger was the organist for the premiere. Copland underscores Boulanger's role in the compositional process when he recalls,

Sections of the *Symphony* were sent off to Nadia as soon as they were composed. Although my student days were over, it was important for me at that time to have such a highly practiced eye look at my work and make suggestions. And, of course, I was relying heavily on Nadia for correcting the organ part and providing registrations.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, Copland dedicated the work to Boulanger and likely felt her input would be crucial in the success of his first composition for the organ. The *Symphony* is a three-movement work, but not in the traditional sense. Copland describes his composition:

All three movements are loosely connected by an unobtrusive recurring theme that becomes more significant as the piece proceeds. The first big climax is in the Scherzo, a movement designed to maintain a strong rhythmic drive all the way through. This second movement interested Boulanger and Koussevitzky most, because of its rhythmic experimentation, irregular note groupings, and uneven accents. The Scherzo was my idea of what could be done to adapt the raw material of jazz. I was not yet using jazz openly and directly; nevertheless, if you listen to the Scherzo even now, you hear rhythms that would not have been there if I had not be born and raised in Brooklyn. The final movement of the *Symphony* is a modified sonata form, resembling a traditional symphonic first movement.<sup>13</sup>

Even today Copland's *Symphony* sounds newly composed, with its fresh harmonies and rhythmic verve.

*Episode* was commissioned by the H. W. Gray Company and the organist-conductor William Strickland. Composed in 1940, it was premiered in 1941 and subsequently garnered little attention. Vivian Perlis maintains that Copland did not ascribe any merit to the piece, omitting it entirely in his listing of works in his memoirs.<sup>14</sup>

### After 1945: New Ears Deliver New Energy

The 1940s to the 1980s were years marked by a number of developments to which American organ music was not immune. Events on the world stage—World War II, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam War—interrupted and shaped life for a number of composers. Further, although most composers who made a mark in American organ music were male, women's voices began to be heard: Margaret Sandresky (b.1921), Emma Lou Diemer (b.1927), Radie Britain (1899–1994), Mary Jeanne Van Appledorn (b.1927), and Ellen Taffe Zwilich (b. 1939), among others, contributed significant works for the instrument. Toward the end of the period, publishers released less concert music for organ, presumably because such music was not profitable, and because composers tended to accommodate the less skilled performer by producing fewer complex works. Moreover, in certain cases the advent of desk-top publishing has allowed composers to circumvent the traditional publishing route.

Reflecting on the heterogeneous landscape of twentieth-century composition, the composer and theorist Vincent Persichetti (1915–87) wrote,

Works of high caliber are plentiful in the twentieth century. The rich mixture of materials and styles is made up of many ingredients: rhythmic energy, vivid harmonic fabric, melodic color, and fresh linear writing. There are bold statements and delicate embellishments, moments of fancy, and developmental forces that refuse to be bound by a severe formal plan. There are daringly experimental and strongly traditional forces which bring divergent materials together.<sup>15</sup>

Persichetti began his musical studies at age five with piano lessons, followed by organ lessons and eventually theory and composition study. He became chair of theory and composition at the Philadelphia Conservatory in 1941; six years later he joined the faculty of the Juilliard School. In 1952, he was appointed editorial director for the publishing firm Elkan-Vogel, which published all his organ works.

Two of Persichetti's ten organ pieces are written for pedals alone: the 1940 *Sonatine* op. 11, published in 1955, and his 1974 *Do Not Go Gentle* op. 132, after the poem of the same name by Dylan Thomas. The former, premiered by the composer, is a three-movement piece beginning on C sharp with a recitative introduction, followed by melodic material, shown in Ex. 9.1., that recurs several times to unify the movement, ending on C natural.

EXAMPLE 9.1 Vincent Persichetti, *Sonatine* op. 11, mm. 3–6.

Andante  
add Oboe 4'(Sw.+)

The principal melody of the second movement continues with some material borrowed from the first (mm. 4–6), rhythmically altered and sometimes enharmonically respelled. The third movement appears to present new ideas, but one may argue that motivic cells from the first and even second movements operate here as well, serving to unify the piece. Persichetti observes that “a succession of chords at an opening may, in microcosm, suggest the tonal shape of the entire work.”<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the opening melodic material here lends itself to the architecture of the *Sonatine*.

Nearly twenty years after the publication of the *Sonatine*, Persichetti released *Do Not Go Gentle* on a commission from the organist Leonard Raver. The work is much more technically demanding than its precursor. Chord clusters, wide leaps, angular melodies, dissonant harmonies, and very loud segments serve to underscore the tone of Thomas’s well-known villanelle “Do not go gentle into that good night.”

Persichetti also wrote a number of works under the title *Parable*, one of which is the organ *Parable VI* op. 117. In another work, his own hymn tune PRIMAL serves as the basis for the *Auden Variations* op. 136. Persichetti’s tune is here married to W. H. Auden’s text “Our Father, Whose Creative Will” (*For the Time Being*) and appears in the first volume of Persichetti’s *Hymns and Responses for the Church Year* op. 68.<sup>17</sup> The tune unfolds in a straightforward manner, followed by thirteen distinct variations. The dramatic *Shimah B’Koli* (Psalm 130) op. 89 is Persichetti’s venture into “a non-German kind of serialism which I ‘go in and out of’ often temporarily serializing material, sometimes including all twelve tones, sometimes not.”<sup>18</sup> The composer incorporates church modes (perhaps a nod to the antiquity of Psalm 130), chromaticism, major-minor relations, and freely ordered hexachords. The overall presentation of much of the melodic material is angular, and more than an octave separates many of the pitches in a given line. Persichetti creates significant rhythmic energy by displacement of the melody over octaves, coupled with intricate divisions of the beat. Throughout he represents the Psalm text “Out of the depths” by continually presenting material that rises up from the bass and ascends with intervals often exceeding an octave (Ex. 9.2).

Harvard-educated Daniel Pinkham (1923–2006) wrote thirty-six titles for solo organ, over forty further works for organ and another instrument, and a large number of choral pieces accompanied by organ. Some seven organ pieces were

EXAMPLE 9.2 Vincent Persichetti, *Shimah B'Koli* op. 89, p. 3, top system.

Quasi recitando  
(cresc. Ped. open)

*ff* sempre piu

6

composed with electronic tape as an integral element, and several works include strings in a concerted style. Walter Piston, Aaron Copland, Nadia Boulanger, Samuel Barber, and Arthur Honegger were influential in Pinkham's development. His works are tonal, but the harmony is inflected by twentieth-century accents, and forms are crafted along classical lines. As others did, he experimented with dodecaphony but ultimately settled for a less radical language. After his earliest organ works appeared, he received many commissions for the instrument, one of the first from the National Council of Churches in 1962 resulting in *Pastorale on the Morning Star*, a work based on the American hymn tune MORNING STAR and premiered by Leonard Raver. Three decades passed before he produced another hymn-based work, *Wondrous Love: Five Variations for Organ* (1992), and later, *O Come, Emmanuel: Variations on an Advent Hymn* (1996).

Although a number of his compositions are exquisite miniatures, Pinkham wrote several large-scale works for organ, some of them Biblically inspired, such as *Blessings* (1977) and *Epiphanies* (1978). *Proverbs*, another piece along the same lines, followed in 1979. Originally a three-movement work, it was expanded, at the request of the organist James David Christie, to four movements with a final toccata, *Vivo*.<sup>19</sup> Two later works were likewise scripturally based: *Tidings* of 1997 and *The Four Winds* of 1998. Pinkham's last solo organ work, the nine-movement *Garden of the Muses* from 2006, refers to the nine muses in classical Greek mythology.<sup>20</sup> The work is not technically difficult, but with it Pinkham revisited the organ miniature a final time.

Pinkham likewise displays a gift for combining the sounds of the organ with other instruments. He wrote concertos and sonatas scored for organ and strings, winds, brass, or percussion, or even a second organ. His Concerto for Organ and Wind Quintet (2001) was one of his last large-scale compositions.

Ned Rorem (b. 1923) began writing for the organ at the request of a friend, the organist and choirmaster James Holmes. A prolific writer of both literature and music, Rorem, who is not an organist, brings an original sound to the instrument. His approach is akin to harpsichord writing: harmonies prolonged by arpeggiations, clean lines, and a programmatic influence perhaps related to the style of his prose. *A Quaker Reader* (1976), *Views from the Oldest House* (1981), three *Organ-books* (1989–90) and several other works comprise his organ *oeuvre*.

Rorem's first piece for the instrument was the Fantasy and Toccata, composed in 1946 as a gift to his teacher Sowerby. *A Quaker Reader*, one of Rorem's

most technically demanding organ works, was commissioned by Alice Tully and composed for Leonard Raver, who routinely championed new music. Raised in the quiet world of the Quaker religion, Rorem sought out new sounds to create eleven pieces based upon writings by William Penn, Walt Whitman, and others. He opens the *Reader* with the descending melodic interval of an augmented fourth, a frequently recurring gesture in conjunction with chromatic passages. The second movement features music that shifts between manuals and pedal. Rhythmic layers accumulate and, as the piece moves to a quiet end, the final chord surprises with a cluster at *fff*. The third movement uses a cell structure [0, 2, 1] which undergoes inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion. At times only the naked gesture is present, recalling the work's opening tritone passage. The fourth movement employs a number of pedal scales and a canon; the fifth is constructed from several mirrored passages. The next movement, the middle of the collection, returns to the augmented fourth idea. As the work continues, Rorem features the perfect fourth and another highlighted augmented fourth in the pedal of the eighth and tenth movements. He uses retrograde material in the ninth movement, and the final piece shows off the full spectrum of sound from high to low, including fully voiced chords and increased pedal movement.

The six-movement suite *Views from the Oldest House* is particularly idiomatic. The pieces paint a colorful picture of scenic and historic Nantucket, from *Sunset Hill* to *Saturday Night*, in which one may hear raucous car-horn effects. Although he composes tonally, Rorem employs open fourths and fifths frequently, and he uses minimal pedal in many instances. Cross-relations provide an updated approach to his basic harmonic palette.

In 1984, Rorem composed his Organ Concerto, a commission from the Portland (Maine) Symphony Orchestra and Raver. Its four movements require an orchestra of moderate size, with only timpani as its percussion. The success of Rorem's Concerto comes as the result of his previous experience composing for the organ. His gifts in creating balance and linear movement are apparent in his changes of meter, tempo, dynamics, and his familiar musical gestures.

The child prodigy William Bolcom (b. 1938) came into a personal style after exploring the twelve-tone method. Although he is not known as a strict serialist, when asked if serial music had a chance to survive with serious composers, Bolcom responded, "I still use the series now and then as an organizational principle and never felt any need to object to any style, only the imposition of any style on people by mostly peer pressure."<sup>21</sup> And indeed, as an eclectic composer, Bolcom works to blur the distinction between popular idioms—rag, gospel music, blues, jazz—and classical music. In the synthesis of these diverse elements, one may perceive Bolcom's sense of humor and his twist on highbrow classical music in his various organ works. Ives, among others, was an influence on his writing.

Dedicated to his colleague and close friend William Albright, *Black Host* for pipe organ, percussion, and tape (1967) is Bolcom's early foray into writing for the instrument. A large pipe organ is required by the score, which is accompanied

by a glossary to explain the unique notation of the piece. Albright, who performed the premiere, notes with characteristic humor and realism that

the work is not a tone-poem on the tribulations of St. Sécaire. Nor is it an exegesis on moral dualism, a dark ray of non-hope, or an uplifting sermon on the virtues of Calvinism (as it has been variously called). . . . It *is* an emotionally based piece, and if it is *about* anything, it would be fear. The score is even inscribed with the rueful words of Lord Russell: “In the daily lives of most men and women, fear plays a greater part than hope: they are more filled with the thought of possessions that others may take from them, than of the joy that they might create in their own lives and in the lives with which they come in contact. It is not so that life should be lived.”<sup>22</sup>

Bolcom combined the organ and electronic sounds with Albright’s assistance because he “knew Bill was a whiz at the organ and electronics so I wrote it for his abilities.”<sup>23</sup> After the premiere, Pink Floyd, the English band known for its progressive rock in the 1960s and 1970s, “passed a recording of *BH* on to Black Sabbath [another progressive rock band], I’m told, who were (again, I’m told) influenced by it. It was a breakthrough piece for me, especially in the frank use of stylistic juxtaposition.”<sup>24</sup>

*Black Host* begins with seven loud cluster blasts from the organ, each of which is followed by a silence of up to ten seconds. A “fast/skitter” section is followed by a more homophonic *maestoso* passage and then by other delineated sections, all comprised of glissandos, palm glissandos, and a large bass drum. The drumbeat moves into a bass ostinato, where the rubric reads “everything very deliberate, brutal.” The chimes enter when the organ sounds fade away through a reduction of stops. The air is cleared, and a *placido* passage begins, now on the organ’s chimes. The electronic tape sonorities creep in and organ, chimes, and tape seem to compete to build an immense, sonic wall. As the tape sounds run out, the Genevan psalm tune *DONNE SECOURS* is played fortissimo in the bass register of the manual while the right hand continues to play glissandos at *fff*.<sup>25</sup> Following the presentation of the “chorale,” the registration is reduced to a simple solo flute 8’ played over the accompanying Unda maris 8’. The seven chords heard at the beginning of the work return, this time played quietly and in a lower register, voiced less thickly. A drum roll interrupts this tranquility and crescendos to a thunder, only to be matched by the organ’s final entry marked “Full Organ. *Tutta forza. fffff*.” The length of the final chord is thirty to forty seconds.

Bolcom’s further works for organ include *Hydraulis* (1971), *Mysteries* (1976), *Borborygm* (an homage to William Albright, 2001), and *Praeludium* for organ and vibraphone (1969). In addition, Bolcom produced four volumes of *Gospel Preludes* between 1979 and 1984, conceived in the jazzy-blues style of gospel piano music, technically demanding of the performer yet satisfying for the listener. Each

volume was produced upon commission. Bolcom has commented particularly on rhythm in his *Gospel Preludes*:

My *Gospel Preludes* are, many of them, an evocation of Black-Church organ style, written in part to get organists to work hard on getting a rhythmic sense developed. So many players are too loose for me in that regard, which might work for Reger, for example, but not for this music!<sup>26</sup>

His latest work for organ, *Four Preludes on Jewish Melodies* of 2005, includes the tunes and the texts (with translation) for the melodies. The first two tunes, *Hinei Mah Tov* and *Yism'chu* are presented in a straightforward manner at the top of the texture. In the third piece, *Hal'luhu*, the pedal plays the tune for the initial statement, and then the melody migrates to the upper voice. Later, there is an optional part for crotales to be played by a second performer as a descant to the melody. The final piece in the collection is *Sim Shalom*, where the tune is likewise readily apparent.

William Albright (1944–98) was born in Gary, Indiana, and his composition professors included Copland, Messiaen, Ross Lee Finney, and George Rochberg. From 1970 until his unexpected death in 1998, he taught at the University of Michigan where he was head of the electronic music studio. Albright was influenced not only by his mentors but also by American ragtime, jazz, and non-Western idioms. In addition to composing for the organ, he premiered many pieces for both organ and piano, some of them composed by Bolcom, his colleague at Michigan. No matter the work, one may perceive Albright's humor and a certain sense of foreboding when the piece requires it. Albright's eclectic style is not easily defined. Much of his organ music appears improvisatory, yet he provides detailed performance instructions in his scores. Similar to Persichetti, he creates music organically. Persichetti referred to this approach as "autogenesis," a process whereby the music evolves from the first ideas on the page.<sup>27</sup> Such a strategy is operative in Albright's *Symphony for Organ* of 1986, wherein each movement is an outgrowth of the previous material.

Albright's *Symphony* is his largest solo work for the instrument, and each movement is built around the organ's different color groups: principals, flutes, reeds and mixtures, and finally foundation stops, strings and celestes. The initial movement (*Lento–Maestoso–Lento*) is sectionalized with a quiet and then very animated, insistent rhythmic section (*Molto ritmico*). There appears here an adumbration of the second movement's pitches, shown as Ex. 9.3.

This four-note cell is reminiscent of the familiar BACH motive and is found throughout the work, as are a number of ostinato figures. Boogie-woogie, one of Albright's favorite styles, marks the second section. The composer takes advantage of the full tessitura of the instrument in unorthodox yet effective ways: in the middle and again at the end of the movement, for example, he requires a 2' pedal stop that gradually works downward in register to 16' and finally to 32'. Angular lines and insistent rhythmic attacks on various portions of the beat create

EXAMPLE 9.3 William Albright, *Symphony for Organ*, first movement, mm. 1.



EXAMPLE 9.4 William Albright, *Symphony for Organ*, second movement, mm. 1, 8.



irregular pulses. The second movement, *Cantilena*, is predicated on two-against-three rhythmic patterns. A pizzicato string bass effect with flutes above elicit a haunting theme. The characteristic cell of Ex. 9.3. reappears here (Ex. 9.4).

The third movement, *Tarantella macabra*, begins in the pedals. The ensuing wild dance incorporates glissandos in manuals and pedals, including a number of frenetic palm glissandos, as Albright creates a movement of perpetual motion. Slight shifts in accents provide an edge to the rhythm. Albright employs graphic notation, often found in his scores. The tarantella ends with a bell and drum, which issue into the final movement, *Ritual*. In a comment that demonstrates the composer's awareness of the French symphonic tradition into which his work falls, Albright describes this last movement of his *Symphony* as

perhaps the one exception to what we expect from the French organ symphonies. Instead of ending with an *Allegro*, a *Finale*, or a *Toccata*, we have here an unusual *Adagio*, a slow movement in which I've also introduced a foreign element, a ritualistic element: a bass drum and a pitched gong. This is to give a processional or ceremonial feeling to this last movement.<sup>28</sup>

Albright's sense of humor is particularly borne out in *The King of Instruments*, a work from 1978 for narrator and organist. The spoken text, which comes either between or during the movements, is a collaboration between the composer and Eugene Haun, at the time a member of the English faculty of Eastern Michigan University. The piece shows off the organ's tonal colors in thirteen delight-

ful, compact gems. His *Organbooks I, II I, and III* (1967, 1971, and 1977–78 respectively) offer delightful aural feasts. Suggestive titles include *Melisma, Fanfare* (*Organbook I*); *Night Procession, Last Rites* (*Organbook II*); and *Jig for the Feet/Totentanz, Mountains, and Underground Stream* (*Organbook III*). The *Totentanz* is similar to the *Tarantella macabra* movement from the *Organ Symphony*, for which it probably served as a model. The final piece in *Organbook III, The Offering*, is an homage to Messiaen. The elder composer's *Dieu parmi nous* is quoted both at the onset and the end of the movement.

One of the most-often performed of Albright's organ works is the concert rag *Sweet Sixteenths*, of which the composer writes

*Sweet Sixteenths* is related to the series of piano "rags" written between 1967 and 1970 as an expression of joy in the discovery of how beautiful this American syncopated style is. The first version of *Sweet Sixteenths* was composed in 1974 as a part of a chamber work *Seven Deadly Sins* for flute, clarinet, string quartet and piano; it was expanded the next year as a piano solo.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the organ arrangement of 1976, Albright created a version for piano, clarinet, cello, and trombone, attesting his fondness for the piece. *Flights of Fancy: Ballet for Organ* is another highly accessible, audience-friendly work by this composer, incorporating ragtime and New Orleans jazz. Further works for organ, with their typically evocative titles, include *Juba* (1965), *Pneuma* (1966), *That Sinking Feeling* (1982), *1732: In memoriam Johannes Albrecht* (1984), *Chasm* (1985), and *Halo, for organ and percussion* (1980). Also in his catalog is an effective piece for organ and orchestra, *Bacchanal* (1981).

The noted organist Calvin Hampton (1938–84) composed organ music, hymn tunes, service music, and orchestral and chamber works. His organ study was with Fenner Douglass and Arthur Poister at Oberlin Conservatory and Syracuse University, respectively. In his relatively short life, Hampton produced nineteen solo organ works and four works for organ and another instrument. *Five Dances for Organ* (1982), *Prelude and Variations on OLD HUNDREDTH* (1970), and *Three Pieces for Organ* (1982) are often performed. Another work, *Variations on Amazing Grace* for organ and English horn (1983), has been transcribed for wind ensemble by Joe Brashier.<sup>30</sup> Hampton experimented with electronic media in *God Plays Hide and Seek* (1971) and *Procession Through a Black Hole* (early 1970s), for organ, cello, and electronic tape. Commissioned by Wayne Leupold is a collection entitled *Music for Organ: Eleven Organ Solos*. From Hampton's pen comes a Concerto for Organ and Strings in E Major for the American Guild of Organists' 1980 National Convention in Minneapolis. At the end of his life he produced the demanding *Alexander Variations* for two organs (1984), an important contribution to an understandably small repertoire for that combination. Hampton is a creative and satisfying composer, often developing rhythmic figures that grow increasingly complex. His music is characterized by rhythmic ostinatos, frequent manual and

registration changes, chromaticism, polytonality, and disciplined development of motivic cells. *In Praise of Humanity* (1981) is a playful scherzo with the unusual time signature of  $10/16$ . Taking advantage of the organ's Swell division, Hampton affects subtle gradations of volume by coupling the manuals together and opening and closing one enclosed division at a time. In other works, he creates a distinctive language through the integration of eclectic elements, including synthesized rock, gospel hymns, and traditional music.

Dan Locklair (b. 1949) is Composer-in-Residence and Professor of Music at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. His uncle Wriston Locklair, an eminent music critic for *Opera News*, *Musical America*, and other publications, was influential in his nephew's composition career, providing honest criticism.<sup>31</sup> Locklair's music bears influences of Vaughan Williams, Copland, Stravinsky, Sibelius, Ives, Britten, Hindemith, Adler, and Schwantner, among others. Elements drawn from these figures stand alongside Locklair's own complex rhythmic patterns, frequent double-pedal writing and registration changes, and carefully crafted concepts by which the character of the successive movements in multi-movement pieces are contrasted. Manipulation of the melodic and rhythmic material creates nuanced changes of mood in Locklair's music. As do many other contemporary composers, Locklair thrives on economy of musical material, often beginning with a cell or germ motive that serves as a springboard for development. Locklair's first published organ work, *Pageant for Sally* (1975), was followed by the multi-movement *Inventions* in 1978. *Constellations* (1980), a concerto for percussion and organ, soon followed. This is the sole piece incorporating organ to be a finalist in the Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards.

*Rubrics* (1988) quickly became a standard work for organists. Based upon various rubrics from *The Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church, each of the five movements reflects choreography within the liturgy. The quiet meditation "The Peace may be exchanged" is often excerpted and performed as an independent piece. When asked if *Rubrics* introduced many of the elements encountered in his subsequent organ works, Locklair replied,

It did that, but there were several earlier pieces, including one of the earliest organ pieces (from 1978) entitled *Inventions*, which laid out the ultra economical use of musical material that since has become a part of my style. *Inventions* is really a concert piece for organ, unlike *Rubrics* which can be performed both in concert and in services of worship. I then began to apply those principles to all compositions that followed, including orchestral, chamber, solo and vocal works.<sup>32</sup>

"*Ere long we shall see*" (1995–96), a "concerto brevis" for organ and orchestra, and *Voyage, a fantasy for organ* (1991) are further substantial works by Locklair. *Windows of Comfort* (1996) is a set of ten pieces in two books inspired by the stained glass windows created by Louis Comfort Tiffany in the First Presbyterian Church of

Topeka, Kansas. Recent works include the seven-movement suite *Glory and Peace* and *St. John's Suite*, both from 2008, with references to the Gospel of John.

The 1983 *Sonata in One Movement on Kalenda Maya* was Elizabeth “Libby” Brown Larsen’s (b. 1950) first published solo organ piece. In it, Larsen voices the harmonic palette and rhythmic complexity that would become her signature. The medieval troubadour song *Kalenda Maya* (Ex. 9.5) begins with a simple line of four notes.

**EXAMPLE 9.5** *Kalenda Maya*.



The notes are repeated in various rhythmic patterns and eventually the pedal plays the four pitches up a semitone. The pedal then presents a second melody, constructed in part from the retrograde of the troubadour song. The manuals echo this second melody with an ornamented version. Layers of rhythms and melodies result in a thicker texture. Then, a reduction in texture, volume, and rhythmic layering seems to bring the piece to an end when a rush of sound returns. Almost immediately, the previous calm reasserts itself and the piece concludes. The result is a work of engaging content and impeccable dramatic timing.

Larsen studied composition with Dominick Argento and Paul Fetler at the University of Minnesota. With Stephen Paulus she founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum, in 1973. Her interest in the organ began while in college, where she was encouraged to write for the instrument by her organist friends. Larsen cites her 1982 work for baritone and organ *Before Winter* as the piece that helped her discover her creative voice.<sup>33</sup> Here she employs the twelve chromatic tones in various groupings without the adoption of a dodecaphonic row. The three-movement *Aspects of Glory* was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for its 1990 National Convention in Boston. These three pieces—“Wuldor,” “My Home in Glory,” and “Tambourines”—constitute her commentary on the notion of glory. The titles are taken from various sources: Caedmon’s Hymn, an African-American spiritual, and the Black American poet Langston Hughes’s 1956 gospel play (later novel) *Tambourines to Glory*.

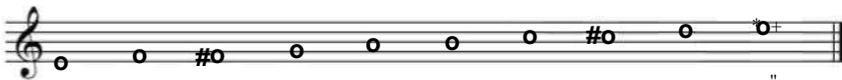
Nearly six years later, two shorter works based on hymns, *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds* (1996) and *Prelude on Veni Creator Spiritus* (1997), continue Larsen’s organ output. Her most recent organ work is a fantasy based on bell peals in Red Square, Moscow, *On a Day of Bells* (2002). Larsen takes the title from “Verses About Moscow” by the Russian poet Marina Tsvetaeva, whose life, like the magnificent bells that form the subject of the poem, was destroyed under Soviet oppression. Larsen’s work thus memorializes a female poet while lamenting the

injustices perpetrated against the Russian Orthodox Church. Larsen further comments on how she creates her distinctly American music.

Several years ago I began examining rhythmic patterns, pitch range, tempo and phrase contour in American spoken English. The example I like to use is Jesse Jackson speaking; if you were to analyze the interval of his pitch range, the tempo variations and rhythms, you would find an extraordinary musicality, uniquely American. I strive to understand how these characteristics represent our American lives and emotions, and to use these elements in my music. This, I think, is what makes it “American.” [Further] We live in a percussive world. American music would certainly not be the same without the drum set, and our own American language has beautiful rhythms in it; it is this American vernacular and the rhythm of our American life that is the language of my music.<sup>34</sup>

Pamela Decker (b. 1955) is not only a composer but also a gifted organist, currently Professor of Organ and Music Theory at the University of Arizona. Writing for the instrument for over thirty years, she has accumulated over twenty-five organ works in her catalog, both published and in manuscript. *Toccata* (1987), *Nightsong and Ostinato Dances* (1992), *Kairos* (1997), and *Retablos* (1997) were early successes. *Kairos* is constructed with one of Decker’s own synthetic modes. Taking a cue from Messiaen’s modes of limited transposition, she created a mode both original and versatile, shown as Ex. 9.6.

**EXAMPLE 9.6.** Pamela Decker: *Kairos*, synthetic mode.



Underscoring her work’s relationship to traditional modes and harmony, she explains,

A mode that I have used for several compositions is constructed by taking the ancient Phrygian mode (E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E) and adding F-sharp and C-sharp to the series, thereby creating a nine-tone mode of curiously symmetrical construction. Omitting the final E from the analysis, the mode includes four ascending chromatic notes (E, F, F-sharp, G) and four notes descending chromatically from the penultimate tone (D, C-sharp, C-natural, B); these two sets are joined by two whole-steps (G to A; A to B), thereby yielding an intervallic palindrome. A more interesting aspect of this mode is that it results in rich, colorful harmonies when used in the way that chords (especially seventh chords) are constructed from traditional major or minor scales.<sup>35</sup>

Such affinity to variations of the Phrygian mode likewise may be seen in Decker's tryptich *Retablos*, a work that employs the chants *Pange lingua*, *Ubi caritas*, and *Victimae paschali laudes*.

In a number of Decker's organ compositions, the composer draws upon dance rhythms from various cultures. In *Flores del Desierto* (1998), she uses Argentinian and Brazilian tango rhythms. Other rhythmic devices found in her music include changing meters and shifting accents, echoing the works of Stravinsky, who strongly influenced Decker's writing. Further models are Messiaen, Duruflé, Albeniz, Ginastera, Piazzolla, Distler, and Frank Martin.<sup>36</sup> Decker recently composed *El Tigre: Concerto for Organ and Orchestra* (2008), hymn-based carols *On This Day, Earth Shall Ring* (2009) and *La Pantera* (2009).

The breadth of twentieth-century organ music in the United States—in the terms of the present chapter, one might say from the early works of Parker to the latest works of Decker—offers a compelling landscape of the most varied musical styles and aesthetic motivations. In the wealth of its resources and the quality of its music, the American repertoire of the past century stands comfortably alongside other national musics examined in this volume as a fascinating corpus that repays detailed study. Like other repertoires, America's organ music has sought its innovations from within its traditions, whether those traditions have been European or indigenous. And with time, composers indeed succeeded in producing a distinctively American organ music that looks simultaneously backwards and forwards. This chapter has merely touched on these developments in the hope that organists will offer more of the repertoire to their audiences, that scholars will probe it more deeply, and that composers will build on its heritage well into the new century.

## Notes

- 1 Semler 1942, 142.
- 2 Kearns 1990, 51–2.
- 3 Cited in *ibid.*
- 4 Cited Semler 1942, 277.
- 5 Kearns 1990, 229–30.
- 6 See further Sinclair 1999 and particularly Burkholder 2002. The latter explores the organ's role in Ives's compositions.
- 7 Stover 1995.
- 8 Cited in Hines 1980, 75.
- 9 Cited Parris 1982, 1.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 14.
- 12 Copland 1984, 102.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 103.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 314.
- 15 Persichetti 1961, 9.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 250.
- 17 Persichetti 1956.

- 18 Persichetti makes the comment in a letter of August 13, 1973 to Rudy Shackelford. Shackelford 1975, 4.
- 19 Owen 2005, 84.
- 20 See the notice of the premiere in *The American Organist* 2006, 32.
- 21 Bolcom, 2009.
- 22 Albright 1971.
- 23 Bolcom 2009.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 DONNE SECOURS, associated with the metrical version of Psalm 12 in the Genevan Psalter of 1551, was a serendipitous choice by Bolcom: a portion of the Psalm text reads “Help me, Lord, for there is not one godly man left.” Bolcom has always loved the tune, but he was unaware of the connection until I inquired about his possible intent. “What a fortunate happenstance that the words fit so well to the theme of *Black Host!*” he wrote. Bolcom 2010.
- 26 Bolcom 2009.
- 27 Persichetti notes that “autogenesis is always a strong factor in my music. Many of the hymns and responses (*Hymns and Responses for the Church Year*) are related to each other in a way that is somewhat mystical; and the *Hymns and Responses* are, in turn, related to the music which followed them ... Much of the *Seventh Symphony* is a direct outgrowth of the last response (from *Hymns and Responses*.)” While composers may use the autogenesis concept within a work, Persichetti used it both within the parameters of one piece and also in the evolution from one opus to the next. See Hines 1980, 54.
- 28 Cited in Dodd 1997, 280.
- 29 Cited in Reed 2001.
- 30 See further Brashier 1987.
- 31 Cooman 2005.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Biery 2000, 76–7.
- 34 Larsen, *Frequently Asked Questions*.
- 35 Decker 2009.
- 36 Ibid.

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# 10

## GYÖRGY LIGETI (1923–2006)

*Kimberly Marshall*

When Welin turned on the motor, smoke poured from the vicinity of the pipes, followed by a horrid stench of burning rubber (from the insulating layer of the electrical wires). It was later found that all the mechanical parts made of soft metal (lead and tin) had melted. The insurance company refused to pay, because the investigation revealed that at some point someone had used a bent sewing needle in the place of a normal fuse. ... When news of the “burnt-down” Göteborg organ reached the Bremen church council, they decided to cancel the concert in the Cathedral.

*Ligeti’s account of the aborted premiere of Volumina on May 4, 1962<sup>1</sup>*

I am known in Europe as a destroyer of organs.

*Remark of Ligeti to Kimberly Marshall, Stanford University, January 26, 1993*

In the 1960s György Ligeti stood at the vanguard of a style that shaped music in new ways, with a strong emphasis on texture and color. He brought novel approaches to composition that may be seen as a reaction to the predominantly serial techniques characterizing music of the previous decade. The premiere of his orchestral work *Apparitions* in Cologne on June 19, 1960 signaled the emergence of a new compositional style marked by theatricality and the search for novel sounds. In the final section of *Apparitions*, Ligeti instructs the musicians to play their instruments in unorthodox ways; the third percussionist, for instance, is to demolish a sack of empty bottles with a large hammer. The production of new sounds, sometimes using traditional instruments unconventionally and sometimes introducing household objects onto the concert stage, was employed by other composers of the avant-garde, including John Cage, Mauricio Kagel and Nam

June Paik. But Ligeti was the first to bring to the organ these new ways of creating sound, sometimes pushing the very limits of the instrument itself.

Arguably the most traditional and inflexible of musical instruments, the organ might seem a strange choice for investigations of this kind. Its frequent placement in churches, often with the organist out of view, makes it an unlikely candidate for the application of theatrical performance techniques. After all, the organ is the oldest musical instrument, invented by Ctesibios in the third century BCE and reintroduced to the Western world in 757. Over the twelve centuries since then, organ building developed to incorporate a large range of pipe styles that produce distinct timbres, as well as ingenious devices for changing these timbres quickly. Drawing upon his vast imagination and his own training as an organist, Ligeti was able to forge new sound worlds by applying radical approaches to the way organ keys and registers were employed. By applying his innovative concepts of sound to the organ, Ligeti developed for the instrument a new language, enlarging the range and quality of its timbres.

Just as the organ appears an unlikely point of departure for a composer of Ligeti's turn of mind, the dedication of an entire chapter in this collection to Ligeti's sparse *œuvre* for the instrument may strike readers as disproportional. The organ works amount to a mere four pieces, spanning a sixteen-year period from the composition of the *Ricercare* in 1953 through the 1961–62 version of *Volumina*, revised in 1966, and culminating with the *Two Etudes* of 1967 and 1969. Yet these four works represent a remarkable development in the manipulation of organ sound and assume a significant place in the history of the organ and its music in the century of modernism. The *Ricercare* is a somewhat conventional contrapuntal treatment of a dodecaphonic row that ultimately disintegrates into the highest and lowest registers of the organ. The composer created his own notational system to reflect the clusters and textures of a new approach in *Volumina*. Known for its shock value, *Volumina* opened new vistas for the instrument's sound world and performance techniques. Instead of reproducing notated pitches as musical lines, the organist realizes a graphic score with fingers, hands, arms, and feet to create shifting sonic textures.

The *Two Etudes* of the late 1960s each exploit one principal texture and technique. *Harmonies* employs ten-note clusters played on an under-winded organ as a study for the fingers. *Coulée* presents a rapid stream of figurative patterns in the manuals over sustained pedal notes; it may be considered a musical parallel to the pointillist techniques of the post-Impressionist painter Georges Seurat (1859–91). These works show Ligeti grappling with musical space through the acoustic properties of organ sound, and they reflect aspects of pieces that he composed for larger vocal and instrumental forces. Because of his training as an organist and the influence of his organist colleagues, Ligeti chose the organ as a laboratory for working out innovative concepts of sound. Indeed, he was the only mainstream composer of the postwar avant-garde to do so.<sup>2</sup>

## Past Roots and Future Directions: *Ricercare* (1953)

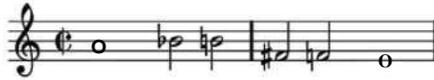
I “supplemented” and “twisted” a theme of Frescobaldi’s for him [Sándor Margittay]. Even then I had a vague notion of a sort of twelve-tone music (because it was in vogue, although in Budapest we knew neither Schoenberg nor Webern—just a little Berg from earlier, before he was totally forbidden). So I wrote *Ricercare*, half as “academic” exercise and half as parody. The chromatic musical language was already nascent in Frescobaldi’s original.<sup>3</sup>

The path that led Ligeti to his initial organ work is best understood against the broad background of his early biography. Ligeti was an extremely precocious child, the son of a Jewish socialist father and an ophthalmologist mother. A voracious reader, he developed a love of literature and an aptitude for languages. His fascination with mathematics and physics led to plans to pursue a career in science. Ligeti did not start piano lessons until 1937 when he was fourteen, although his diligent practice helped him to make good progress. He soon began to compose, purchasing two years later the first of forty-eight musical sketchbooks that he filled with his work between 1939 and 1952. These show that despite his early commitment to science, Ligeti was meaningfully engaged with music already during this period.

After passing his school examinations in 1941, Ligeti also passed the entrance examinations in physics and math at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj in Romania). But he did not pursue his studies there. Because of anti-Semitic restrictions, only one Jew could be admitted to study natural sciences at the University, and another applicant had been chosen for this place. Forced to reevaluate his options, he ultimately applied to the Kolozsvár Conservatory, whose Director chose to ignore the official limitations on Jewish students. Ligeti attended the Conservatory from 1941 to 1943, studying composition with Ferenc Farkas, a student of Respighi. To gain more practical experience, he continued his piano studies, also taking up organ and cello.

These studies were brutally interrupted in January 1944, when Ligeti was sent to a Jewish labor battalion in Szeged. He worked in the army grain silos there until March, when he and some co-workers were transferred to Nagyvárád, a city east of Budapest. His mother, father, and brother were deported to Auschwitz. Only his mother was to survive the war, a circumstance due to her medical usefulness to the Nazis. Ligeti led a precarious existence, escaping both the Germans and the Russians until he could make his way back to Kolozsvár by the end of 1944. When the war ended, he enrolled as a student at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, where he studied composition with Sándor Veress. In September 1950 he was appointed teacher of theory, harmony and counterpoint. The next year, a request for a composition by his colleague, the organist Sándor Margittay, resulted in his first organ work, the *Ricercare: Omaggio a Girolamo Frescobaldi*.<sup>4</sup>

EXAMPLE 10.1a Girolamo Frescobaldi, *Recercare chromatico*, subject, mm. 1–2.



EXAMPLE 10.1b Ligeti: *Ricercare*, mm. 1–5.



Ligeti chose as his theme the subject from Frescobaldi's *Recercare chromatico* from the *Messa della Madonna* (*Fiori musicali*, 1635), developing it into a fan-shaped twelve-tone row (Ex. 10.1) that enters twelve times at three-bar intervals. Along with the subject, Ligeti preserves much of the structure of Frescobaldi's piece, with an exposition of the theme followed by two points of stretto, the first commencing at m. 41 with six complete entries of the subject, and the second at m. 51, where augmented and diminished versions of the subject are superimposed over the original twelve-tone row. The approach is anything but arbitrary: the Frescobaldi work expands at a similar point to present the augmented theme accompanied by diminished versions. Ligeti creates great intensity by using the full range of the organ. At m. 50, he doubles the soprano entry of the subject a fourth higher, emphasizing the shrill sound of the organ's mixtures. The tight overlapping of thematic fragments in mm. 56–7 further contributes to a crescendo of voice-leading that brings the section to a close at the highest and lowest points of the organ's compass (Ex. 10.2).

EXAMPLE 10.2 Ligeti: *Ricercare*, mm. 50–57.

The image shows measures 50 through 57 of Ligeti's *Ricercare*. The notation is for piano, with a soprano line and a bass line. Measure 50 features a soprano entry of the subject a fourth higher (G5) and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 51 shows the subject in the soprano line and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 52 features a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 53 shows a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 54 features a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 55 shows a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 56 features a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. Measure 57 shows a soprano line with a 2nd fret marking and a bass line with a 7th fret marking. The piece concludes with a final chord in the soprano line and a bass line with a 7th fret marking.

The dissonances created by the part writing in this example were especially contentious, as Ligeti later explained to the Japanese composer Tōru Takemitsu. One clearly senses the sarcasm in his tone:

In communist Hungary, dissonances were forbidden and minor seconds were not allowed because they were anti-Socialist. I knew very little Schönberg, Berg or Webern . . . , but I had heard about clusters. They were forbidden, of course, as was 12-tone music. As a reaction to this, I very naively decided to write music which was built on the forbidden minor seconds (see *Musica Ricercata* numbers 2 and 10, for example). I was an anti-harmonist because harmony, tonal harmony was permitted in communist Hungary and chose dissonance and clusters because they were forbidden.<sup>5</sup>

This early organ piece displays Ligeti's skill in manipulating contrapuntal textures as well as his characteristic purposeful defiance of prescribed musical style. A cursory reading of the piece might suggest that it served merely as a study in applying contrapuntal techniques to a twelve-tone row, yet Ligeti makes clear that the work was cloaked in political insubordination at the cost of its not being heard. "Of course," he recalls, "the piece could not be performed, as all 'new' art was strictly forbidden by the Communist regime in those days."<sup>6</sup> The *Ricercare* was later adapted to the piano as the culminating work of Ligeti's collection *Musica Ricercata* (1951–53), a series of eleven pieces—all the others were written originally for piano—constructed on the arithmetic principle of adding a pitch class in each subsequent work. The opening piece uses only pitch class A in all registers until the last four bars where a D is added to create a cadence. The next piece uses three pitch classes, and so on until the last, the dodecaphonic *Ricercare* conceived first for the organ.

The systematic nature of *Musica Ricercata* made it especially conducive to mechanical performance, and Ligeti indeed authorized an additional adaptation of the *Ricercare* to barrel organ by Pierre Charial.<sup>7</sup> This was recorded by Deutschland Radio at the Funkhaus in Cologne from October 31 to November 2, 1995. The metronomic precision of the Charial interpretation and the thinness of the organ timbre are well suited to Ligeti's concept of the *Ricercare* as he described it in the notes to another recording of the piece performed by Zsigmond Szathmáry:

One could interpret the extreme monotony of this piece (and also the Beckmesser-like augmentations, diminutions and *stretti*) as a coded reference to the horrible tyranny of Stalin and Rákosi—but I would only imply such a political interpretation, not force it. In other words, this young counterpoint teacher was, to all outward appearances, very well-behaved. (But actually I harbored a deep-rooted hatred of the system, as I had of the Nazi dictatorship. I am permanently scarred; I will be overcome by revenge fantasies to the end of my days. My "Western" colleagues cannot understand this).<sup>8</sup>

Having survived the labor camp and the hostilities of both German and Russian armies, Ligeti was still in a precarious position during the political aftermath of World War II. Although antiquarian in both form and content, the *Ricercare* suggests—and given Ligeti’s remark above, one should not “force” an extramusical program here—the climate in which it was composed through the relentless procession of its twelve-tone subject elaborated contrapuntally. The organ score, published much after the fact in 1990, is marked *Andante, ben misurato*, emphasizing the importance of a steady tempo without rubato. Similarly, Ligeti gives no registrations for the piece beyond some octave designations for the chosen stops. It could be presumed from the history of the work and the indications in the score that the *Ricercare* should be registered blandly, perhaps with principals only at the designated pitches.

This was my concept in preparing the piece for a concert celebrating the composer’s music at Stanford University in January 1993. The day before the event, Ligeti came to listen to my interpretation on the dual-temperament C. B. Fisk organ op. 85 in Stanford’s Memorial Church. He was insistent about supervising the performance of his music, and he had already vetoed the inclusion of several pieces in the program based on these preparatory visits. I had been urged to do my best to please him, as the concert organizers were concerned that the program would be too short if he refused to include the organ works as well. While I played, Ligeti sat in the pews below in order to hear the balance in the room. Afterwards, when he finally appeared in the organ gallery, his first words to me were crushing: “You have not understood my music.” But thus began a very fruitful relationship, as he taught me how he intended his organ works to be interpreted.<sup>9</sup>

For the *Ricercare*, Ligeti was convinced by my neutral opening on principal stops only, but he did not wish for this to be sustained throughout the piece, as it is in the barrel organ recording. He urged me to create an explosion of color at m. 42, where the subject is introduced in the left hand in diminution and first presented in augmentation in the pedal, marked simply “16’ + 8’” in the score. Instead of continuing with foundation stops alone, he advised adding reeds and mutations, such as the Sesquialtera, to enhance the buildup of contrapuntal lines over the strong pedal statement. This culminates in m. 50 (see Ex. 10.2 above), where in the score Ligeti gives only pitch indications for the highest voices that carry the subject in parallel fourths. Following this, fragments of the chromatic theme appear in all voices, and the reeds and mutations are gradually removed so that there is a decrescendo and return to the neutrality of foundation sound. The work closes with a descending line derived from the chromatic subject in the pedal at 32’ pitch over which the subject is heard, interspersed with rests, on 4’, 2’, and 1’ registers (Ex. 10.3).

As I worked with him on the registration, Ligeti suggested removing the 4’ register in the rests two bars before the end, and then removing the 2’ stop in the rest before the final note so that the organ manual speaks at 1’ only. In this way,

EXAMPLE 10.3 Ligeti: *Ricercare*, mm. 58–62 (ending).

The musical score for Ligeti's *Ricercare*, measures 58–62, is presented in a two-staff format. The treble clef staff begins with a dynamic marking of  $4'+2'+1'$  and a  $32'$  marking. The bass clef staff begins with a  $32'$  marking. The music is characterized by a complex, disintegrating texture, with notes and rests scattered across the staves. The piece concludes with a final chord and a fermata.

the piece disintegrates into the lowest and highest reaches of organ sound. Ligeti advocated a slight detachment of the last two eighth notes ( $g\sharp^3$ – $a^3$ , m. 60) and a subsequent slowing of the pulse to the end. Thus the *Ricercare* emerges from and disappears into a timelessness that would become a distinctive feature of the composer's later music.

### Breaking Old Barriers: *Volumina* (1961–62)

It is music that gives the impression that it could stream on continuously, as if it had no beginning and no end; what we hear is actually a section of something that has eternally begun and that will continue to sound for ever.

*Ligeti speaking of Volumina (as well as Lontano, Atmosphères, and Apparitions) in an interview with Péter Várnai*<sup>10</sup>

In December 1956, Ligeti escaped across the Hungarian border into Austria. A few weeks later, he left for Cologne, where he came into contact with Karlheinz Stockhausen and the German avant-garde. The following summer he attended for the first time the Darmstadt *Ferienkurse für Neue Musik*, an association that he would continue as a teacher from 1959 until 1970. Liberated from the restrictions of the communist regime to connect with the leading composers of post-war Europe, Ligeti became a leading voice in musical aesthetics. In 1960, he published in *Die Reihe* a seminal essay entitled “Metamorphoses of Musical Form,” which describes the demise of serialism as it expanded from pitch determination to control other musical parameters such as texture and range. He especially targeted the loss of contrast that he felt sometimes resulted from an overzealous application of serialism:

The finer the network of operations with pre-ordered material, the higher the degree of leveling-out in the result. Total, consistent application of the serial principle negates, in the end, serialism itself. There is really no basic difference between the results of automatism and the products of chance; total determinacy comes to be identical with total indeterminacy.<sup>11</sup>

Having outlined the limitations of serialism, Ligeti proposes a new approach to musical form based on color, texture, and surface. “The succession of events,” he continues, “is a mere exposition of something that in its nature is simultaneous ... as one’s glance wanders over the canvas of a painting.”<sup>12</sup> Temporal relationships accordingly yield to spatial ones, and the musical interest lies in the way that aural events merge into and out of each other. The composer’s goal, according to Ligeti, is “to try and achieve a compositional design for the process of [such] change.”<sup>13</sup>

It was from this concept of musical form that Ligeti’s first large orchestral works, *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères*, were created in 1960 and 1961 respectively. In both, the composer works like a sculptor in sound, notating each part meticulously so that it blends completely into a homogenous sound where individual lines are lost. Large-scale textures and colors emerge, sometimes calm and static, at other times throbbing with intensity. The transitions between these states may be almost imperceptible, or they may be suddenly shifted. Like clouds, clusters of sound accumulate and disperse. They are composed of individual notes, like the minute water droplets of a cloud, and they may merge gradually with other notes or explode into a thunderstorm. This innovative approach to structure came to characterize Ligeti’s unique sound world, and it was easily transferred from the orchestra to the organ.

In the second movement of *Apparitions*, Ligeti first uses a technique he later described as micropolyphony, or the superposition of contrapuntal lines that are slightly varied. The basis for this may be a counterpoint of three or four voices carrying different melodies, but when each voice sounds simultaneously with many variants of itself, there emerges an intricate web of contrapuntal lines. Different effects can be achieved with this technique, depending on the instruments or voices employed and the way that the individual lines are crafted. In *Apparitions*, micropolyphony produces a bombastic statement as twenty-four violins play the same melodic sequence but with different durations. The eight violas similarly perform another sequence of notes, as do the fourteen cellos and double basses. The indicated dynamic is *fff*, with each player instructed to play with verve, so that the overall impression is one of overwhelming force. The work ends suddenly, without warning, to reveal the fluttering of wind players lightly tonguing their instruments.

The dramatic use of orchestral timbre, then, plays an important role in Ligeti’s new approach to musical forms beginning in the early 1960s. *Atmosphères* opens with the entire orchestra (strings and wind) playing a 59-note cluster *pp* and fading over the course of the first minute. As the wind instruments subside, the soft high notes of the strings become more discernible. The composer manipulates color throughout the work by requiring different instrumental groups to rise and fall in intensity, thereby shaping the sound through timbre. Like some of his colleagues at Darmstadt, Ligeti also included theatrical effects in his music. *Apparitions* involves new approaches to performance: brass players strike their

mouthpieces, the glockenspiel is played with rulers, and in the published score, a percussionist throws a porcelain tray into a metal container. These antics may have been incorporated as much for their dramatic value as for the resulting timbres, but they nevertheless illustrate Ligeti's preoccupation with finding novel ways to create sound from traditional instruments.

When Hans Otte, head of the Music Section at Radio Bremen, commissioned Ligeti to write an organ piece for the large, late Romantic organ of Bremen Cathedral,<sup>14</sup> the stage was set for the composer to apply his newly wrought techniques of textural fluidity to the most inflexible and traditional of Western instruments. This was his first commission since emigrating to the West, and Ligeti eagerly embraced the project, completing it in just over a month. The work's striking title, *Volumina*, may be imagined to reflect the voluminous resources of the organ, its unlimited sustaining power, vast range, and timbral contrasts, as well as the sense of space evoked by the piece's sound masses.

Many aspects of *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères* are found in *Volumina*, which is the result of Ligeti's concepts of continuity in composing for the organ. In the instructional essay that accompanies the score, the composer specifies that the work is "organized like a *single large arch*," without rests "and not even any real breaks or caesuras."<sup>15</sup> This continuity of sound is reiterated at seven points in the score itself where he writes "no break" or "without break." As in *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères*, Ligeti removed metrical pulse from *Volumina*. In the orchestral pieces, he had to notate this through changing time signatures and note values, so that the aural result presents the illusion of an improvised, non-metered structure. But here, without the burden of the coordination of an ensemble, he was able to leave more to the discretion of the organist. Instead of specifying metrical time, the composer indicates the approximate duration of each page of score, and in the absence of bar lines, he divides the work into forty-one sections.

Similarly, because only one player is involved for the organ piece, the precise notation of individual lines is not required to achieve textural detail. Ligeti instead adopts a graphic notation to depict the sound clusters and their evolution throughout the work.

Graphic notation was very fashionable at the time. The Americans were the first to use it, Feldman, Brown, Cage; in Europe, Bussotti also adopted it. I had some reservations. On the whole, I tend to take a good look at innovations and if I do not find any need for them I leave them well alone. In the case of *Atmosphères* the conductor had to have a score fully written out and the members of the orchestra also needed precise notation. Graphic notation or some other new way of writing down music, such as adopted by Penderecki for instance (thick black lines), does not provide enough detail. In *Volumina* an exact indication of pitch is of no importance as the texture consists of clusters, therefore all I needed to do was to define the limits of clusters and indicate how the limits change both in space and in time.<sup>16</sup>

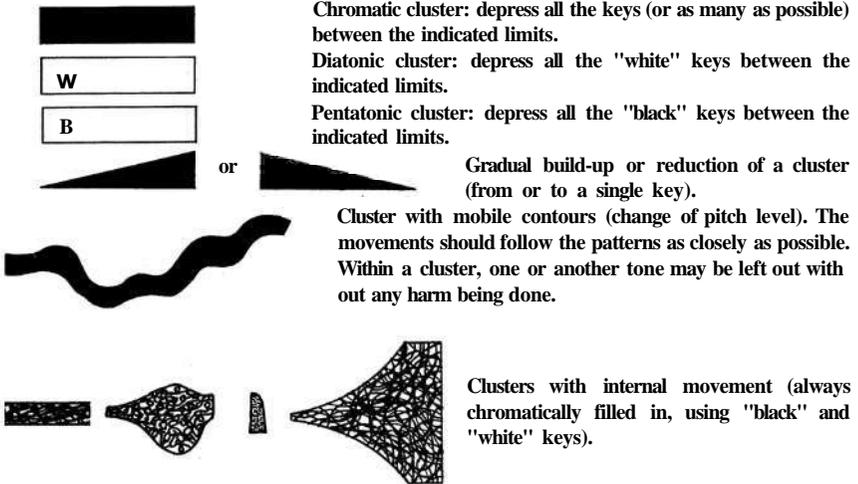
Notation of clusters.

FIGURE 10.1 Ligeti: *Volumina. Instructions for Performance*, p. 1.

In his instructions to the performer, characteristically thorough and precise, Ligeti explains how the clusters are notated graphically. The vertical axis of each staff illustrates the compass and width of each cluster, with 1 cm corresponding to about an octave span of notes. The composer thus ingeniously specifies the content of each cluster through a graphic system: solid black indicates a chromatic cluster, a black outline shows a diatonic or pentatonic cluster, and various figurative patterns denote types of internal movement within a chromatic cluster. The rationale is shown in Fig. 10.1.

Ligeti further specifies that the patterns are mere symbols that denote the movement of a passage without depicting it precisely. He developed the notation to create what he aptly terms “rubato” within the pitch structure of the piece—that is, a kind of improvisatory freedom that informs the notated structure.

The score really has precise indications, apart from the area where some flexibility is required. Any player who observes the instructions in the score will produce much the same sound. By flexibility I mean a kind of rubato both in time and space. Rubato in tempi had been in use for a long time but rubato pitch was then something new. Such elasticity of pitch becomes possible when you write music in which what really matters is not the pitch of the individual notes but the shape of the clusters, their volume and breadth. I tried to find a suitable notation for this in order to be able to note down everything with reasonable precision for the organist.<sup>17</sup>

To this end, the composer developed a remarkably varied repertoire of graphic patterns, semantically rich yet aesthetically pleasing in their own right, to suggest

the shape and technical execution of *Volumina*'s clusters. This is most elaborate in the "trio" texture of section 13, where Ligeti explains that the organist's hands and forearms are to be employed in realizing the notation: large vertical shapes require the entire span from elbow to fingertips, while smaller patterns denote movement from the wrist through the hand to the fingertips. The more precise parameter is shown with a straight line, and the less clear areas where the elbow and wrists are used are indicated with curves.

For instance, I can keep one key pressed down with my right thumb and then gradually press down all successive keys with my palm and with my lower arm; this produces an upward growing cluster. Consequently, for right hand clusters you mark the lower limit precisely with a line, whereas the upper limit is indicated approximately with a curve, which shows roughly how to apply the palm and the lower arm to the keyboard. The same applies to the left hand, the notation being the mirror image of that for the right hand.<sup>18</sup>

Through this detailed cluster notation, at once elaborate and simple, Ligeti is able to convey great textural complexity, as shown in the shifting patterns of Section 13 (Ex. 10.4).

Despite some breaks ("rests") in the manual and pedal lines, these never occur simultaneously, so that there is always music sounding. Unlike Ligeti's orchestral works, in which the blending and juxtaposition of color was carefully crafted by the composer in the individual instrumental parts, in some sections of *Volumina* he

**EXAMPLE 10.4** Ligeti: *Volumina*, section 13 (p. 10).

The image displays three staves of musical notation for section 13 of Ligeti's *Volumina*. The notation is a form of cluster notation where vertical lines and curves represent the range and dynamics of sound clusters. The top staff is labeled 'Right hand' and includes the instruction 'R. H. and L. H. on different manuals'. The middle staff is labeled 'Left hand' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Pedal'. Each staff begins with '(sempre cresc.)' and ends with 'cresc. molto' and 'fff'. On the right side, there are annotations: 'full organ; all manuals coupled to great' and 'No break in cluster' with a vertical dashed line pointing to the end of the cluster notation. Below the left hand staff, there is a note: 'Continue to sustain cluster on gear with one hand' with an arrow pointing to the end of the cluster notation.



This passage shows the virtuosity with which Ligeti achieves fluidity in moving from one texture to another. Yet at other points in *Volumina* he abruptly juxtaposes different planes of sonority without breaking the musical momentum. Sections 26–30 illustrate this vividly, as Ligeti’s knowledge of organ registration is put to good use. The high-pitched (“1’ + 1½’ only”) manual cluster with pedal staccato clusters in section 26 erupts in the following section with the right hand playing *fff* on reeds and mixtures while the left hand sustains a low cluster on soft 16’ (ad lib. 8’) sound with tremulant. In section 28 this outbreak subsides into what the composer designates as “ethereal” staccato clusters, barely audible, on 8’ or 4’ stops. In section 29, these clusters are suddenly shifted to the 2’ and 1’ range (“high-pitched mutations and mixtures”), and the texture changes as well to include “rapid internal movement.” The dynamic is still soft, but with the onset of section 30, the organist is suddenly to play *ff* with “widely contrasting differences in tone-color of individual manuals.”<sup>19</sup> The clusters return to non-legato, devoid of the internal movement heard in the preceding section (Ex. 10.6).

With *Volumina*, Ligeti took music out of time and located it in space, creating what Adorno calls a “pseudomorphism of painting in music.”<sup>20</sup> Experiencing the work is like observing a painting, looking here at a calm patch of blue sky and there at a turbulent representation of churning water. Just as such disparate features may coexist in an artwork without interruption, so the contrasting textures of *Volumina* are unbroken, sometimes dissolving almost imperceptibly into each other, and at other times clashing in a rapid juxtaposition made possible by general piston changes and an almost schizophrenic alternation of playing styles.

**EXAMPLE 10.6** Ligeti: *Volumina*, sections 26–29 (p. 15).

**26** *fff* Reeds & mixtures, etc.  
Staccato clusters  
Right hand

**27** Both hands play staccato clusters ad lib., varying in width, alternating extremely rapidly, “ethereal”, distributed irregularly over the entire manual compass.  
Soft 16’ (ad lib. 8’) with tremulant.  
g’ or 4’, ppp, barely audible.

**28** Clusters ad lib., similar to 26 but less staccato (still non legato!) with rapid internal motion gov. introduce trills, tremolo, etc., irregularly.  
Make continual leaps from manual to manual.  
ppp = p. 2’, 1’, high-pitched mutations and mixtures.

**29** Internal cluster movement, staccatissimo, prestissimo. Both hands on same manual.  
Continue without break: left hand plays stationary cluster.

Pedal registration may vary ad lib.  
\*applies only to 26 & 27

Pedal  
Staccato clusters  
Staccato clusters ad lib. as on manuals.  
Clusters ad lib., with internal movement, as on manuals.

As he had done with the brass and percussion in *Apparitions*, Ligeti here explored new ways of extracting sound from the organ, and this similarly led to aspects of theatricality. The iconic opening gesture, with all stops drawn and the organist depressing every key on one manual with both arms as the motor is switched on, marks a new concept of organ sound. Ligeti thus incorporates the winding of the instrument as a vital aspect of color in composing for the organ. Similarly, the piece ends with a decrescendo on a chromatic cluster, created by turning off the motor and letting the wind drain gradually through the pipes. This final section is of such structural and affective significance that Ligeti expanded it in his 1966 revision of the score.<sup>21</sup>

The complicated path to *Volumina's* premiere is indicative of its extreme innovation. Different accounts confuse the exact circumstances of the organs used to create the first performance. In his notes to the Sony CD recording, Ligeti remembers that Swedish organist-composer Karl-Erik Welin practiced on the organ of Göteborg Cathedral in preparation for the Bremen premiere. As he played the opening clusters, smoke poured from the pipes and the rubber insulation of the electrical wires burned, leading to reports that Ligeti's wild music had destroyed the organ.<sup>22</sup> News of the organ fire led authorities of the Bremen church council to cancel the planned premiere in Bremen Cathedral.<sup>23</sup>

Ligeti's colleague Bengt Hambraeus, on the other hand, reports that the Bremen premiere was cancelled because of a work by Hans Otte that involved dance, and that the organ damaged by Ligeti's clusters was at the Gothenburg Concert Hall:

The church authorities in the Bremen cathedral vetoed the concert in the last minute. ... Because I [Hambraeus] was at that time working at the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, it was possible to arrange, with very short notice, a recording of the three organ works in Sweden. As the most suitable equivalent to the Bremen cathedral organ, we decided to use the Gothenburg Concert Hall. ... But as soon as Welin started to play the eruptive beginning of Ligeti's work, some vital fuses blew, with resulting short-circuit in the electric transmission system. Within a couple of hours, a contingency plan had to be organized, with the result that we could have immediate access to two different churches in Stockholm (450 kilometers from Gothenburg!) and as quickly as possible move the organist, his assistants and recording technicians to the other city. The two organs were chosen because they together could provide approximately the same sound as we would have had in Bremen or Gothenburg. ... Welin recorded all three works twice on the respective organs in the St. John and Gustav Wasa churches in Stockholm, after which the technician synchronized the takes, featuring certain sonorities from respective instruments. The result: a hybrid organ emerged under desperate and bizarre conditions. ... The edited tapes were presented on May 4, 1962 in the Radio Bremen Concert

Hall (instead of the cathedral); it was therefore possible to perform also Hans Otte's work which had caused the acrimonious verdict from the clerical authorities.<sup>24</sup>

According to Hambræus, then, the short circuit happened after the Bremen authorities had cancelled the concert, and the damaged organ was not at Gothenburg Cathedral, but at the Concert Hall. To complicate matters further, Roman Summereder writes erroneously that the organ fire happened on the Magnusson organ at the Stockholm Radio, even though that organ was not built until 1968.<sup>25</sup>

Ligeti confirms that the taped premiere was presented at Radio Bremen on May 4, 1962, but asserts that Welin made the recording on the organ at St. John's Church in Stockholm (no mention of the Gustav Vasa organ), and that the tape used by Swedish Radio for the Stockholm recording was too short, so the "premiere" performance of *Volumina* was truncated several minutes before the end. A few days afterwards, Welin performed *Volumina* on the organ in the Westerkerk in Amsterdam without incident.<sup>26</sup>

The frustrating disparities between these accounts probably result from the difficulty of recalling the details of an event decades after it has taken place. But what these versions have in common is that they describe a premiere of *Volumina* in emergency conditions, thus highlighting the work's radical new conception of organ sound. The disarray associated with *Volumina's* premiere is to the organ what the riot at the premiere of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* was to the orchestra, a scandal in the performance of new music that heralded the dawn of a new age.

## Clouds in Sound: The Two Etudes

### Harmonies (1967)

The neutralized harmonies—or let us say, the eliminated harmonies, as in *Atmosphères* and *Volumina*—were very rapidly expended. ... I asked myself, how can I work with intervals or with specific fixed pitches without returning to tonal music?

*Ligeti speaking of his search for new intervallic and harmonic configurations*<sup>27</sup>

In the early 1960s Ligeti had been preoccupied with the fluidity of time, creating swaths of sound texture as heard in *Volumina*. As the decade progressed, he began to focus more on the vertical aspect of music, cultivating distinct harmonies produced by micropolyphony and microtonality. The fruit of these new explorations comes to the fore in one of the composer's most well known works, *Lux Aeterna* (from the *Requiem*), premiered in November 1966. And just as the orchestral pieces *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères* provided the context in which *Volumina* was

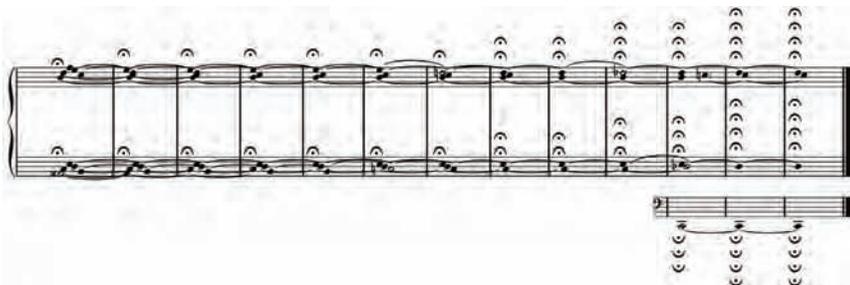
conceived, the choral work *Lux Aeterna* can be seen as a necessary precursor to the first organ Etude, *Harmonies*, composed in 1967.

To achieve layers of texture in *Lux Aeterna*, Ligeti had employed a chorus divided into sixteen parts, each of which uses the same sequence of pitches, but in varying rhythms. The first soprano moves in triplet subdivisions, the second soprano in quintuplets, and the third soprano in quarter subdivisions. This plan continues through the other thirteen voice parts so that there is a consistent flow in both harmony and rhythm. The piece is notated in  $\frac{4}{4}$  meter, yet there are no accents—although short rests inserted in each part give a muted sense of irregular pulse. Ligeti employs register changes to great effect, pushing voice parts to their upper and lower limits, yet the dynamic remains *p* and *pp* to create the feeling of distance indicated at the beginning of the score, *wie aus der Ferne* (“as from afar”). Through this intricate canonic scheme and metric organization, the composer creates a web of sound clusters that move seamlessly through time. At the end of *Lux Aeterna*, Ligeti writes seven empty bars marked *tacet* that constitute about thirty seconds of silence, explicitly notating the continuum of sound and silence into which the music has disappeared.<sup>28</sup>

In May 1967, Ligeti refashioned the pitch sequences of *Lux Aeterna* into an orchestral work entitled *Lontano* (Italian “distant”), a reference to music sounding as if coming from far away. This technique of developing an aspect of his vocal work in a new composition recalls the sixteenth-century imitation Mass, in which a theme from a motet was expanded into a new composition. Like *Lux Aeterna*, *Lontano* is a study in fluidity, this time incorporating the timbres of orchestral instruments into a work with no themes, no discernible rhythms, and delicately blended colors.

In the same year that he was exploring these musical concepts in *Lontano*, Ligeti composed his first Etude for organ. As with *Volumina*, the presence of one performer made it unnecessary to write individual lines of music to achieve the composite texture. *Harmonies* is a 231-bar series of ten-part chord clusters, the organist playing a note with each finger at all times. In each new bar, one finger shifts to a new note either a minor second above or below the one it holds. The pitch changes and durations are inversely symmetrical, suggesting a systematic approach to the clusters.<sup>29</sup> Yet Ligeti makes clear in the instructions accompanying the score that no pipe is to sound at its given pitch: the organ is to be underwinded to produce a “denaturing” (*Veffremdung*) of the sound.<sup>30</sup> In this way, the pitches comprising each cluster are not individually discernable and the harmonies are fully blended. As Richard Toop writes, “So what looks on paper like a harmony exercise turns out to be an exercise in subverting harmony.”<sup>31</sup>

Ligeti supplies no tempo indication for *Harmonies* but rather explains that “certain chords can be held longer, and others can be treated as passing chords of shorter duration.”<sup>32</sup> The entire piece is to last between six and nine minutes. The player makes the note changes as desired, provided that no sense of meter or periodicity is created. Like the vocal work *Lux Aeterna* and its orchestral

EXAMPLE 10.7 Ligeti: *Harmonies* (Two Etudes), ending.

reworking *Lontano*, *Harmonies* explores the flux of sound, arising from nothing and fading into nothing. The final surrender of sound is partially effected through a reduction in the number of depressed keys. In the last thirteen bars of the Etude, Ligeti gradually moves from the ten sustained manual keys to three, adding the lowest pedal note for the final three bars (Ex. 10.7).

*Harmonies* is dedicated to the German organist Gerd Zacher, who was an important collaborator for Ligeti. Zacher served as organist at the Lutheran Church in Hamburg-Wellingsbüttel from the late 1950s until 1970. During this time he worked to promote organ music that had been suppressed by the Nazis, and he also performed new works, including Ligeti's *Volumina* and Etudes.<sup>33</sup> For the premiere of *Harmonies*, in order to produce the desired "pale, 'vitiated' tone colours,"<sup>34</sup> Zacher hooked up a vacuum cleaner to the windchest, bypassing the organ's motor entirely. In this way, the wind pressure was greatly reduced, and the sounds emitted by the pipes bore little relation to their intended pitches. Another technique used by Zacher to reduce the wind pressure was to open the windchest, resulting in a loss of pressurized air to the pipes. In his instructions to the performer for creating the dynamics and tone color of *Harmonies*, Ligeti includes these suggestions, as well as some employed by other organists, such as Gábor Lehotka's technique of "adjusting the valve in the chief wind-reservoir ... so that the flow of air from the fan to the reservoir is impeded;" Zsigmond Szahtmáry's practice of "removing some low pipes from a pedal reed register" with "the relevant stop ... drawn and the relevant pedals ... held down throughout the piece, so that some of the wind escapes;" and "reducing the rotation speed of the fan by loading the circuit." Ligeti goes on to encourage individual inventiveness in this regard, writing that "depending on the construction of the organ and the inventiveness of the player, other ways of reducing wind pressure will be found."<sup>35</sup>

Achieving the proper wind pressure to "denature" the sound is the most critical aspect in creating a convincing performance of *Harmonies*. Although the wind reduction works in tandem with partially drawn stops in the registration and partially depressed keys in the performance, nothing can compensate for the dramatic

alteration of wind pressure. This was brought home vividly to me by Ligeti's response to my initial performance of *Harmonies* in preparation for the 1993 concert at Stanford University, discussed above in relation to the *Ricercare*. Although I had an assistant pulling half-drawn stops to produce strange, otherworldly sounds, Ligeti made it clear that this did not create enough variation within the very soft dynamic constraint. He insisted that a windchest be opened. He also suggested that a second assistant help with the stops, and that a third one turn the organ blower on and off continually, producing gentle glissandi. This interpretation thus required advance preparation of the instrument by opening the windchest before the performance, as well as adding two new members to the performance team. By altering the organ's winding at so many levels—the blower, windchest, and partially drawn stops—it was possible to achieve many layers of sound within an extremely soft dynamic, so that no one color or pitch ever predominated. The overall effect in the room was apparently haunting. Listeners found it incredible that the sound was coming from the organ, and they reported that they had never heard anything like it, that the result was strangely beautiful and calming. Ligeti himself was extremely pleased with the results and insisted on sharing his bow with the entire organ team.

This type of collaboration with an organist was nothing new to Ligeti. In some instances, he himself was part of the performance of *Harmonies*. For the CD recording with Szathmáry included in the Sony *György Ligeti Edition*, the composer recalls that “we removed the (precision Swiss) stone weights from the wind reservoir; and in their place I pressed down with all my weight, changing the position of my upper body as Szathmáry played.”<sup>36</sup> While thus affecting the wind, he was as vital to the interpretation as was the organist depressing the keys, for at its essence, *Harmonies* is a study in gradual, continual sound change as produced by the wind in the pipes.

### Coulée (1969)

How about composing a piece that would be a paradoxically continuous sound ... but consist of innumerable thin slices of salami?

*Ligeti describing to Péter Várnai the concept behind his harpsichord piece, Continuum*<sup>37</sup>

The second organ Etude, *Coulée*, was premiered by Zacher in Graz, Austria, for the Styrian Autumn Festival in 1969. The entire piece is composed of fast legato lines in right and left hands over sustained single tones and chords in the pedal. There is no meter; dotted barlines are included for alignment of the parts only. Ligeti specifies that the piece should not last longer than three and a half minutes. The two manual parts, one in each hand on different keyboards of the organ, are to be played *prestissimo* “so that the individual tones are hardly perceptible as such; the motion almost blends into a continuum.”<sup>38</sup> In these

**EXAMPLE 10.8** Implied harmonies of the two simultaneous lines in *Coulée*.

m.1      m.9      m.15      m.18      m.21      m.23      m.27      m.32

instructions to the organist, Ligeti appears to allude to the title of his harpsichord piece, *Continuum*, finished in January 1968, which similarly requires both hands to play opposite or complementary patterns as quickly as possible. Because of the speed in both works, the individual points of sound blend to be heard as repeated ostinato patterns that gradually change, creating a large-scale harmonic rhythm.<sup>39</sup> In *Coulée*, the incorporation of new pitches into the ostinato patterns produces an expanding harmonic development over the first thirty-two bars, as diagrammed by Martin Herchenröder in his study of Ligeti's organ music (Ex. 10.8).<sup>40</sup>

From the six-pitch cluster of m. 32, Ligeti increases the number of pitches incorporated in the figuration to seven (m. 35), eight (bar 36), and nine (bar 38), culminating in a full ten pitches in m. 45. Now all ten fingers are playing different pitches, similar to the concept in *Harmonies*, but without the under-winding that distorts pipe speech. Beginning here, the harmonic motion in the manuals becomes more static with a much slower rate of change, and Ligeti starts to condense the figuration in a reverse process to that shown in Herchenröder's table. At m. 65, Ligeti notes that "from this point on, the pedal registration is almost equal in volume to the manual registration, that is, it is no longer just background."<sup>41</sup> Here, the pedal is sounding two notes at the interval of a twelfth, to which a third pitch is added in m. 71. As the pedal's significance increases, the harmonic rhythm of the manual lines slows, maintaining exactly the same pattern from m. 65 to m. 89. The two manual lines incorporate only three pitches, just as the pedal sustains three pitches. The harmonic interest of the manual parts is thus attenuated as the pedal part becomes an equal musical partner. In m. 93, Ligeti further reduces the manual pitches to two, alternating them quickly in both hands and extending this arrangement for fourteen additional bars. In m. 109, a similar pattern emerges, alternating octaves on  $a/a^1$  and  $ab/ab^1$ , and this persists for another eight bars over a three-part pedal chord. Then the composer gradually reintroduces more pitches in a process akin to that employed at the beginning of the piece, preparing for a reduction in the pedal. In m. 134, there are six pitches incorporated in the left and right hand patterns, whereas the pedal is reduced to one note. By m. 140, the harmonic clusters include eight pitches, and there begins a gradual diminuendo in the pedal, which is silent at m. 145 and never reenters (Ex. 10.9). Thus, as the pedal gains prominence, the harmonic richness of the manual figuration is reduced, and as the pedal recedes into the background, the hands play patterns that include more pitches, creating linear clusters.

EXAMPLE 10.9 Ligeti: *Coulée* (Two Etudes), mm. 134–45.

Musical score for measures 134-139. The score is written for piano in three staves (treble, middle, and bass clefs). Measure 135 is marked at the beginning of the system. The music consists of a continuous melodic line in the treble clef and a rhythmic accompaniment in the middle and bass clefs. Vertical dashed lines indicate the positions of the manual registration stops.

Musical score for measures 140-144. The score continues from the previous system. Measure 140 is marked at the beginning of the system. A text annotation "(Manualregistrierung unverändert/ Manual registration remains unchanged)" is placed between the treble and middle staves. Vertical dashed lines indicate the positions of the manual registration stops.

Musical score for measures 145-149. The score continues from the previous system. Measure 145 is marked at the beginning of the system. Vertical dashed lines indicate the positions of the manual registration stops.

Ped.: allmähliches Diminuendo durch Ausschalten der Register (nacheinander), zuerst die 16', dann die 8'-Stimmen!

ped.: gradual diminuendo by cancelling stops (successively): first the 16' stops, last the 8' stops!

Musical score for measures 150-154. The score continues from the previous system. Measure 150 is marked at the beginning of the system. Vertical dashed lines indicate the positions of the manual registration stops.

Pedal tacet al Fine

Most of the manual motion from m. 145 is conjunct, but at m. 160, the right hand pitches become spaced like broken chords, and in m. 170 the left hand follows suit so that the two hands end up playing four-note arpeggios against each other, although the figurations are not aligned. Rather, the first note of the left-hand ascending patterns plays against the last note of the right-hand descending patterns. At m. 182, two bars before the end of the piece, the left hand moves to a three-note pattern that ascends chromatically until a bar of silence concludes the etude. Ligeti instructs the organist to “stop suddenly, as though torn off (last tone in both hands very short and fleeting).”<sup>42</sup> Thus *Coulée* begins and ends abruptly, without the gradual flow from and into nothingness that characterizes *Harmonies* and, for that matter, *Volumina*.

The registration enhances the effect of the second Etude. While in the instructional commentary to the score, Ligeti recommends maintaining the same manual registrations throughout “to preserve the continuous character of the piece,” he desires that these be “sharp and colorful, so that the striking of the keys is audible and thus the extreme speed of the piece evident.”<sup>43</sup> He makes clear that he does not desire a “static continuum;” this might be a way of describing the music of the first Etude with its “denatured” sound. Rather, the composer wishes for the fast key action to produce the effect of a very fast “time grid.”

In a lecture given in Hamburg in 1989, Ligeti spoke about the harpsichord work *Continuum* and the way its points of sound create harmony:

In the harmonic plan it was designed that there are some clusters, that is clouds, at certain points. There is also this idea that I have very distinct interval structures and this kind of harmony sounds vertically, even if it is played in succession. The clear harmonies lead me into a cloud, just as someone in an airplane flies into a cloud; you’re completely in the fog, and then you fly again into the sun and clear landscape. Alternation of clear and hazy periods, but clear, distinct and denser regions.<sup>44</sup>

Ligeti achieves the impression of these shifting landscapes with a *meccanico* approach that takes advantage of the harpsichord’s percussive nature. In *Coulée*, he applies a similar technique using organ sound. Like an Impressionist painter who relies on the melding of distinct points of color in the eye of the observer, the composer manipulates individual pitches so that they are amalgamated as vertical harmonies for the ear. Throughout the work, each hand plays one line of music; the only change of texture occurs in the pedal line, where the registration builds and recedes. Yet because of the perceived fluctuations in harmonic motion, the listener experiences the music as moving between “clear and hazy periods,” like the clusters in *Continuum*. The contours of *Coulée*’s harmonies likewise create a sense of space, giving the impression of flying into a cloud and back out again.

For me, spatial associations play a major role in music, but the space is purely imaginary.

*Ligeti speaking with Péter Várnai*<sup>45</sup>

The Two Etudes served as a testing ground for Ligeti's manipulation of sound in space. *Harmonies* is composed of subtly changing sound clusters on an underwinded organ, creating an otherworldly effect. The notated pitches suggest a systematic approach to harmonic change, yet this precision is thwarted by the lack of pitch definition in the pipe speech because of the insufficient wind supply. An opposite situation characterizes *Coulée*, where each pitch is distinctly heard on a clear, sharp registration. The sound is continuous and never broken, a sonic analogy to observing the countryside from a moving train through a slatted fence. With this piece, Ligeti uses the organ to generate two fast pitch streams over contrasting sustained notes in the pedal. Just as the precision of notated pitches in *Harmonies* cannot be perceived because of the organ's winding, those in *Coulée* are virtually indistinguishable because of the speed of execution. Thus the two Etudes complement each other in their compositional strategy, execution, and aural result.

But evidently Ligeti's experimental spirit around the organ was not exhausted with these works. Richard Steinitz writes that the composer had conceived of writing a further organ etude entitled *Zero* that would employ only the sounds of air escaping, avoiding any pitch. And for a fourth etude, Ligeti hit on the idea of a kind of duet in which one organist plays at the console while another works directly with the pipes inside the organ case to alter the sound.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, these works were never realized. After the Two Etudes, Ligeti focused his creative efforts on other instrumental forces and did not return to composing for the organ.

Nevertheless, the genesis of the four organ works was vital to the development of Ligeti's distinctive approach to sound generally. Through his understanding of the organ and his collaborative work with organists, he was able to explore theories of musical continuity and texture that were crucial in creating his mature style. Though composed more than forty years ago, Ligeti's organ works still resonate as novel experiments in sound. They helped to forge a unique voice in twentieth-century composition, opening many untapped resources in the King of Instruments.

## Notes

- 1 Ligeti liner notes 1997, 15–16.
- 2 But see the discussion of the Swedish avant-garde, particularly the work of Bengt Hambraeus and Karl-Erik Welin and the relationship of these composers to Ligeti, in Chapter 8.
- 3 Ligeti liner notes 1997, 11.
- 4 The best general English-language treatment of Ligeti is that of Steinitz 2003, on which I have based the biographical outline in the preceding paragraphs. See particularly 11–36.
- 5 Cited in Sallis 1996, 104.

- 6 Ligeti liner notes 1997, 11.
- 7 The Chariol barrel organ recording was later issued with *György Ligeti Edition*, Vol. 5, Mechanical Music, compact disc, Sony SK 62310, ℗ and © 1997 Sony Music Entertainment.
- 8 Ligeti liner notes 1997, 12.
- 9 A similar context had preceded the premiere of Ligeti's orchestral work *Atmosphères* on October 22, 1961. The conductor Hans Rosbaud had not understood the composer's concept. Ligeti nevertheless found Rosbaud to be "unbelievably friendly and open," as reported later in an interview with Eckhard Roelcke. Ligeti explained to Rosbaud that "*Atmosphères* is from beginning to end like a bow, which has a closed form. It must not be broken up." Apparently the conductor responded immediately and was able to convey the concept effectively to the orchestra. Ligeti exclaimed of the performance: "It was perfect!" Interview with Eckhard Roelcke, cited in Steinitz, 97–98.
- 10 Várnai 1983, 84.
- 11 Ligeti 1965, 10.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid., 17.
- 14 The Bremen Cathedral organ, the tonal and mechanical resources of which Ligeti presupposes in the first version of *Volumina*, was built in 1894 by the Sauer firm and had been refurbished by Walcker in 1959. The four-manual instrument included two enclosed divisions and a hundred speaking stops. The disposition is reproduced in Herchenröder 1999, 67.
- 15 Ligeti, *Volumina. Instructions for Performance*, trans. Eugene Hartzell (Frankfurt: Litolf's Verlag/ C. F. Peters, 1973), 1. Emphasis Ligeti's.
- 16 Ligeti in an interview with Péter Várnai, in Várnai 1983, 40.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid., 40–41.
- 19 Ligeti, *Volumina* (Frankfurt: Litolf's Verlag/C. F. Peters, 1966), 16.
- 20 Adorno 1973, 191.
- 21 The first version of *Volumina* from 1961–62 was revised by the composer in 1966. The two scores are similar, the main differences being a renumbering of the sections, three entirely new sections (30, 31 and 32 in the 1966 version), and a refinement of the graphic notation to suggest movement (sections 19–25 in the 1966 version). In addition, in the revision Ligeti elongates the final diminuendo after the blower is turned off. All these changes amount to a certain refinement and tightening of the work's architecture. Organists will benefit from a study of the original version, published in facsimile in Herchenroeder 1999, 154–75.
- 22 See the opening citation and note 1. In fact, the demanding clusters of *Volumina* had exacerbated a faulty previous repair to an electrical fuse. The damage was contained and the organ restored to full playing condition.
- 23 Ligeti liner notes 1997.
- 24 Hambraeus 1997, 129–30.
- 25 Summereder 1995, 249.
- 26 Ligeti liner notes 1997 and Steinitz 2003, 126.
- 27 Interview with Josef Häusler, in Várnai 1983, 94–95.
- 28 A point of contact with *Volumina* is striking in this regard. In that work, Ligeti likewise asks for about thirty seconds of silence after the last sounds of the organ have died away. Here too, then, the sound/silence barrier is marked in performance.
- 29 Escot 1988, 17–37. Richard Steinitz, who interviewed the composer in February 2000, reports that Ligeti did not remember creating such a systematic method when composing the piece. Steinitz 2003, 181 and 372.
- 30 Ligeti, *Zwei Etüden für Orgel* (Mainz: Schott, 1969), 4. He had used the same term to describe certain effects in *Volumina* in that work's introductory essay. See for instance the description of the sound concept at section 36. Ligeti, *Volumina. Instructions*, 4.

- 31 Toop 1999, 121.  
 32 Ligeti, *Zwei Etüden*, 4.  
 33 Zacher's recordings of Ligeti's organ music were included by Stanley Kubrick in the soundtrack for his 1968 film, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and released on the two American soundtrack recordings. Following this, his recordings on the German Wergo label were issued in the United States on the Heliodor label.  
 34 Ligeti, 4.  
 35 Ibid.  
 36 Ligeti liner notes, 16–17.  
 37 Interview in Várnai 1983, 22.  
 38 Ligeti, *Zwei Etüden*, 5.  
 39 Pierre Charial adapted *Continuum* for barrel organ in 1988. Although Ligeti allowed four minutes for performance by a harpsichordist, the mechanical adaptation lasts only three minutes and twenty-two seconds. The composer was very pleased with the greater blurring of individual notes to make the pattern shifts clearer.  
 40 Herchenröder 1999, 106.  
 41 Ligeti, *Zwei Etüden*, 8.  
 42 Ibid., 11.  
 43 Ibid., 5.  
 44 Cited in Burde 1993, 179.  
 45 Interview in Várnai 1983, 92.  
 46 Steinitz 2003, 182–83.

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# 11

## HERBERT HOWELLS (1892–1983)

*Larry Palmer*

Even if one were not besotted with the music itself, who could resist at least a modicum of curiosity about a composer whose works list includes such intriguing titles as *Thy Tu-Whits are Lulled*, *A Croon*, *Grace for a Fresh Egg*, *Boult's Brangill*, *Sarabande for the Twelfth Day of Any October*, or *Foss' Dump*?<sup>1</sup> All of these enigmatically titled pieces are, of course, by Herbert Norman Howells (1892–1983), a composer who, while offering an eightieth birthday toast to his longtime friend Ralph Vaughan Williams, described himself as “one and three-quarter inches taller than Beethoven, and a jolly sight older than Mozart, [yet] still only a very humble member of the musical profession.”<sup>2</sup> A distinguished composer whose early training as an organist formed his aesthetic, Howells wrote for the organ throughout his career. His first works stand in the full-fledged Anglo-Germanic tradition of Elgar, Parry, and Stanford, but they soon embraced the Gallic elegance of Impressionistic harmonies—Howells’s middle name is worth noting in this respect—with flexible rhythms and a free modality influenced both by the English folksong movement and sixteenth-century Tudor music.<sup>3</sup> While most other major British mid-twentieth-century composers considered the organ primarily as an instrument for the accompaniment of sacred choral music, Howells contributed a sizeable number of solo works. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) composed *Three Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes* in 1920, and the second of these, *Rhosymedre*, remains a staple of the church organist’s repertoire, but there is not much else for organ in his large catalogue. Gustav Holst (1874–1934) wrote no organ music at all. Both Benjamin Britten (1913–76) and Michael Tippett (1905–98) contributed only one short organ composition, each serving as introduction to an existing work by an historic continental composer.<sup>4</sup>

## Chronology

### *From Gloucestershire to London*

In all my music ... people and places have been a dual influence. The Cathedral in Gloucester, St Paul's and Westminster Abbey in London, Christ Church and New College in Oxford, St John's and King's College Chapels in Cambridge—these and their recent Directors of music, have been a paramount shaping force. Men, choirs, ecclesiastical buildings have become inseparably a part of that force. So too have exemplars and—acoustics.<sup>5</sup>

With such a declaration, an account of Howells's life appears essential to an understanding of this composer. “The last of the great English Romantics, whose tongues were loosened by folk song,”<sup>6</sup> Howells was not a Londoner, but rather a product of southwestern England. Born the youngest of eight children in the Gloucestershire village of Lydney on October 17, 1892, his “education may be said to have begun with the beauty he saw about him, the lovely countryside, ... the Severn River.”<sup>7</sup> He grew up shaded by the Malvern Hills. His first musical experiences came from village churches, complemented by some introductory piano lessons with an elder sister.

After elementary schooling, serious musical education began at Gloucester Cathedral (Fig. 11.1), where Howells became an articulated pupil, studying organ, piano, and counterpoint with the Cathedral organist Herbert Brewer (1865–1928). Howells later recalled that in this spacious building he experienced the two revelatory musical events of his formative years, each during one of the annual Three Choirs Festival concerts: a 1907 performance of Handel's *Messiah*, and,



FIGURE 11.1 Gloucester Cathedral. Anonymous photograph, nineteenth century.

three years later, the first performance of Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. In Howells's words,

The audience, waiting to hear Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, was kept impatiently waiting for twenty minutes and at the end of it this giant of a man—the composer [of the *Tallis Fantasia*—left the rostrum and much to my gratification, but also embarrassment, came and sat next to me. We followed the score of *Gerontius* together, and he left me his autograph on the proofs of some little things of mine I was carrying proudly about with me: the first proofs I ever received.<sup>8</sup>

In 1912, with the submission of his Organ Sonata in C Minor, Howells won an open scholarship to London's Royal College of Music, where he studied composition with Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924), had organ lessons with Walter Parratt (1841–1924), and attended the classes of Walford Davies (1869–1941) and C. Hubert H. Parry (1848–1918), the latter the Director of the College and singled out later by Howells as “the greatest man I ever met.”<sup>9</sup> Howells's student years culminated with a spate of prizes, and, in 1916, his Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists.

### ***Sub-Organist at Salisbury and Return to the Royal College of Music***

Howells accepted a position as sub-organist at Salisbury Cathedral in February 1917, but his collaboration there with Cathedral organist Walter Alcock was brief. Diagnosed with Grave's disease, Howells left the post in May, under sentence of early death, possibly within six months. One of the first to undergo radium treatments, he became a medical success story, defying a grim prognosis and living to observe his ninetieth birthday. From a diary entry on March 20, 1919 we learn that “my body lay prone in St. Thomas's Hospital with radium about it (and a dear, disillusioned Nurse beside it).”<sup>10</sup> Evidently this experience led to serious reflection, for five days later Howells's diary records this short verse:

One third of a composer's life is slept;  
 One third is thought:  
 One third is recording thought.  
 More or less.<sup>11</sup>

In 1920 Howells made two lifetime commitments when he married soprano Dorothy Dawes and was appointed to the faculty of the Royal College. He devoted much of his considerable energy to teaching and serving as an adjudicator for musical examinations, an auxiliary occupation that resulted in the composer's only trip to the Western hemisphere in 1923.<sup>12</sup> Among his elder colleagues at the

Royal College were Holst and Vaughan Williams. Together they formed a distinguished triumvirate, occupying neighboring studios in the College's basement.

### **Portrait by Lambert and Lambert's Clavichord**

Herbert Howells was only thirty when he became the next-to-youngest subject included in *Modern British Composers: Seventeen Portraits* by the fashionable photographer Herbert Lambert (1881–1936) of Bath (Fig. 11.2).<sup>13</sup> Not only a sought-after photographer, Lambert also built harpsichords and clavichords. Grateful for his inclusion in Lambert's volume as well as for the summer loan of an instrument, Howells conceived a unique token of appreciation: he proposed to gather a collection of short works for clavichord from twelve of the composers photographed in the 1923 sittings. To get the project moving, Howells completed his own offering, *Lambert's Fireside*, by mid-May 1926, actually composing the piece while a guest in the photographer's home situated in the hills outside Bath. A one-page gem, *Lambert's Fireside* is a quiet, dreamlike work that undulates gently between major and minor modes in an unorthodox key signature containing both F sharp and B flat.

After more than a year had gone by during which none of his fellow composers had submitted a contribution, Howells decided to complete the volume himself by writing the remaining eleven pieces. Each bore the name of a contemporary, but none was identified fully in the 1928 publication, a "clavichord-sized"



**FIGURE 11.2** Herbert Howells photographed by Herbert Lambert, *Modern British Composers: Seventeen Portraits* (1923).



**FIGURE 11.3** Herbert Howells at the clavichord, photographed by Herbert Lambert.

hardbound score, 10 × 6 inches in dimension, with a tipped-in, signed Lambert photograph of Howells standing at a clavichord (Fig. 11.3).

Elizabethan dances, most of them in ABA form, comprise the individual movements, named respectively for Howells's favorite poet Walter de la Mare; musicologist Edmund H. Fellowes; critics Herbert Hughes and Hugh Wortham; conductors Malcolm Sargent and Richard Terry; publisher Hubert Foss; pianist and Bach specialist Harold Samuel; Royal College of Music director Hugh Allen; and musical patron George Montague, the sixth Earl of Sandwich. The longest and most erudite of the works is a fugue in E flat minor bearing the autobiographical title *H.H.: His Fancy*.

Offered for sale by Oxford University Press in a signed, limited edition of 175 copies, this first twentieth-century music to be published for clavichord later was issued for general distribution in a full-size score, less elegant and charming than the original edition. These twelve pieces remain among the most successful of Howells's neo-Tudor compositions. While they are most effective when played on the quietest of keyboard instruments, several of the movements have been performed and recorded convincingly on the organ. The composer himself often played them on the piano, and when queried about possible adaptation for harpsichord performance, Howells made it clear that he was not opposed to having them played on any suitable keyboards.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Personal Tragedy Leads to Greater Music***

A seemingly idyllic life was upended in 1935 when Herbert and Dorothy's young son Michael contracted polio and died suddenly at age nine. Emotionally paralyzed, Howells seemed unable to create anything. His daughter Ursula helped

coax her grief-stricken father back to his composing desk. Not unexpectedly, the impact of his immense loss affected Howells's subsequent works. Primary among these, *Hymnus Paradisi*, a wrenching but ultimately radiant Requiem for two soloists, choir, and orchestra with an optional organ part,<sup>15</sup> became a major vehicle of catharsis. The full score was completed in 1938 but was so personal in its emotional impact that Howells withheld it from the public until 1950, when, at the urging of Vaughan Williams, he led the first performance at that year's Three Choirs Festival in his beloved Gloucester Cathedral, one day after the fifteenth anniversary of Michael's death.

In a radio broadcast for the BBC, Howells reflected,

The sudden loss of an only son—a loss essentially profound and, in its very nature, beyond argument—might at any time be of such impact as to impel a composer, after a time, to seek release and consolation in language and terms nearest and most personal to him. Music might well have power beyond any other medium to offer that release and comfort. It did so in my case.<sup>16</sup>

And indeed, subsequent works employing the organ have some connection to the premature death of this nine-year-old boy. One need only call to mind the hymn tune MICHAEL, which refutes a recurrent criticism that Howells did not write memorable melodies; *A Sequence for Saint Michael*, one of the steady succession of anthems, services, and canticles for Anglican houses of worship;<sup>17</sup> the anguished intensity of the solo organ *Psalm Prelude "Out of the depths"* Set II/1, as well as the several nostalgic movements from *Six Pieces for Organ* and the 1971 *Partita*; and the sustained elegiac mood of Howells's intensely moving unaccompanied motet *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing*, written on Helen Waddell's translation of an ancient text by Prudentius and occasioned by the assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy.

### ***A Return to the Organ Bench***

In September 1940 the Howells home in Barnes, just south of the Thames, was destroyed in the blitz bombing of London. The composer described the fortuitous circumstances that had all three family members absent at that horrible time, writing to correspondent Julius Harrison that he was

not the only musical Methuselah crawling up organ-loft steps these days, or persuading leg-muscles to recall their pedaling acts of 20 or 30 years ago, or making the seat of his trousers 50% more shiny than they were before war interfered with the decencies of our careers.<sup>18</sup>

This evocative vignette prefaces the news that Howells had agreed to deputize for Robin Orr, the organist of St. John's College, Cambridge, while Orr served in

the Royal Air Force. The return to active organist duty came during a period of especially inspired creations for organ and for choral ensembles. Howells's most often performed compositions, those published as the *Six Pieces for Organ* and *Four Anthems*, the latter including the organ-accompanied choral favorites *O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem* and *Like as the Hart*, were written in the years between 1939 and 1945.

Additional part-time academic positions and honors accumulated to Howells as these years progressed. He succeeded Holst as Director of Music for the St. Paul's Girls' School in 1936, continuing in this distinguished appointment until 1964. He was granted the Doctor of Music degree by Oxford University in 1937 and subsequently, in 1961, received an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University. One of the select group of composers commissioned to write for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, Howells was named a Commander of the British Empire in that year, and a Companion of Honor in 1972.<sup>19</sup>

Appointed King Edward VII Professor of Music at London University in 1954, Howells held the Mastership of the Worshipful Company of Musicians in 1959 and 1960. For this group he composed another of his most sublime strophic anthems with organ accompaniment, *A Hymn for Saint Cecilia* on a text by Ursula Vaughan Williams, resplendent with a memorable, soaring tune and descant. His stature as a major British composer was confirmed in 1959 with the granting of the third John Collard Life Fellowship in succession to Elgar and Vaughan Williams. These accomplishments distinguish the life of a tradesman's son who had battled a sense of inferiority for not having attended a prestigious preparatory school or spending undergraduate years at one of England's leading universities.

### ***Partita for the Prime Minister and an Ultimate Honor***

Howells's connection to the organ community continued with his service as president of the Royal College of Organists in 1959 and with the contribution of an occasional work for a specific patron or colleague. Among the more unusual of these was his last major work for the instrument, the 1971 Partita. The politician Edward Heath (1916–2005) was an ardent amateur musician and supporter of things musical. Howells's five-movement work honored a pledge he had made to Heath: he would compose an organ work for him if ever he should become Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. When Heath and the Conservative Party won the election of 1970, Howells set to work, producing a tightly constructed work of twenty-five minutes' duration in his harmonically pungent late style. It was premiered at the Royal Festival Hall by organist John Birch.

Howells continued his long tenure as Professor of Composition at the Royal College, where, in 1974, I interviewed him as I sought answers to some questions concerning *Lambert's Clavichord*. The genial and memorable hours spent in Room 19, his RCM studio, led to the commissioning of the *Dallas Canticles* for St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas, where I was organist and choirmaster, and to

an increasingly personal connection with the aging composer. Several subsequent visits to London kept this contact alive, and it confirmed both Howells's warm embrace of friendship and his exceptional ability for expressing himself in elegant prose and in perfectly worded, handwritten letters.

The loss of his wife Dorothy in 1975, followed by the death of his son-in-law, the illness of his daughter Ursula, and his own increasing frailty marked a melancholy decline to his own death on February 23, 1983. It was forty-nine years to the day since the death of Edward Elgar (1857–1934), and eleven years since the premiere of Howells's *Partita*. The esteem in which he was held was made evident by his burial in Westminster Abbey, the final resting place for many of Britain's most distinguished heroes, poets, and musicians. Early in June, Howells's own music, together with compositions by his teachers Parry and Stanford, reverberated through the Abbey's high Gothic arches. His anthem *Like as the Hart*, the motet *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing*, the stirring hymn tune MICHAEL, and his setting of the *Te Deum* composed for King's College, Cambridge contributed to a service of thanksgiving for the life and music of this "humble member of the musical profession." Howells's ashes were interred in the north quire aisle, near those of Vaughan Williams.

## The Organ Music<sup>20</sup>

### *Beginnings: Elgarian Romanticism*

Edward Elgar, the most prominent of British composers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was himself an organist who began deputizing for his father at St. George's Roman Catholic Church, Worcester, in 1872. But by 1886 a disillusioned Elgar would write, "I am a full fledged organist now &—hate it. I expect another three months will end it; the choir is awful & no good [is] to be done with them."<sup>21</sup> Soon thereafter Elgar no longer needed to rely on ecclesiastical employment for his livelihood, as his sturdy compositions filled with post-Wagnerian harmonies caught the fancy of the musical public. Elgar's only major organ composition, the *Sonata in G major* op. 28, was published in 1896 by Breitkopf.

Composed in 1911 in the wake of Elgar's *Sonata*, Howells's *Sonata No. 1 in C minor* was believed lost for many years, but this impressive student work survived in manuscript copies made by fellow students in Gloucester. It was played by several of them during their own Cathedral music positions, ultimately certified as the missing Howells "opus two"<sup>22</sup> and published in 1992. The sonata-form first movement stands firmly in the tradition of Elgar's op. 28 and Basil Harwood's *Sonata No. 1 in C sharp minor* op. 5.<sup>23</sup> The second movement, *Molto quieto*, foreshadows the lyricism of Howells's *Psalm Preludes*. A gentle *Poco lento* bridge leads to the sturdy, well-developed fugue that completes a twenty-six-minute piece, a significant achievement for the self-taught young composer.

Howells composed the first of the Three Rhapsodies op. 17 in August 1915 (no. 1 in D flat major, dedicated to Harold Darke) and continued the set in February and March 1918 with no. 2 in E flat minor and no. 3 in C sharp minor, dedicated to Walter Alcock and Edward Bairstow respectively. All three were subsequently published by Augener. The Rhapsody No. 1 contains five flats in its key signature but begins with an E flat minor seventh chord and spends much of its fairly turbulent ascent to a dynamic climax searching for the expected tonic key of D flat. After anchoring eventually in that home key by means of an extended tonic pedal point, the restatement of the opening theme is offered in the surprisingly remote key of B major, but the music finally cadences very softly with a D flat chord. The precarious state of the composer's health and concern for the many friends lost in the seemingly endless war may have provided inspiration for the fortissimo descending chromatic chords of the opening theme of Rhapsody No. 2, shown as Ex. 11.1 in its recapitulated form later in the work.

**EXAMPLE 11.1** Howells: Rhapsody No. 2 in E-flat minor op. 17, mm. 141–6.

**Lento, come Primo**

Largely pessimistic and unsettled, this second work, too, subsides to tranquil chords that land deceptively in C before a final affirmation in E flat major. The most compelling of these romantic essays is the third, composed in York while a guest of the dedicatee, the organist of York Minster. The only one of the rhapsodies to end loudly, it is an exciting and vigorous work, written during a single night by a composer kept sleepless by noise from German dirigibles flying over the city.

Likewise from 1915 come the Three Psalm Preludes, Set I op. 32, pieces of modest length ideally suited for use as Anglican service preludes. Howells conceived the first prelude, composed on Psalm 34:6 and dedicated to Walter Parratt, as

a student's shy tribute to a great Organist and Teacher. Structurally it is an essay in slow, prolonged, cumulative development of climax, followed by an equally unhurried descent dismissing and eliminating complexity, movement, sonority.<sup>24</sup>

As a musical treatment of the Psalm text—assurance in the face of adversity—the work is similar to the third prelude in the same set, an aural depiction of the fourth

verse from the much beloved Psalm 23, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death ...” Howells constructs this third prelude above a simple treading motive using repeated low Ds in the pedal. The dedicatee, Sydney Shimm, was a fellow student of Parratt who served as organist of the Royal Chapel between 1914 and 1915. The second piece is the least difficult of all Howells’s Psalm Preludes, composed on the hopeful text of Psalm 37:11 in lieu of a Thursday organ lesson. Harry Stevens-Davis, to whom Howells dedicated the work, was a banker and amateur organist who needed something to play for his service the following Sunday. What he received remains a gracious and abiding gift to those players who find themselves in a similar situation nearly one hundred years on.

### Mid-Career Mastery

Howells produced no organ music during the 1920s, but that silence was broken in 1933 with his technically demanding Sonata No. 2 in three movements, published intriguingly without key designation and cadencing successively in D, A, and F sharp major. The work is worthy of the distinguished virtuoso organist George Thalben-Ball (1896–1987), to whom it is dedicated. Thalben-Ball was a close friend who had played for Howells’s wedding and subsequently served as organist for the 1975 memorial service of his wife Dorothy. At age ninety-one, he would play for the composer’s own funeral. A challenging, somewhat angular and thorny extended work requiring more than thirty minutes in performance, the sonata serves up its treasures with repeated exposure. Among its elements are a pervasive, riveting use of short-long Lombard rhythmic motives and a thinner texture than had been employed in the composer’s earlier organ writing. Both are announced right away in the work’s opening bars, shown as Ex. 11.2. This

**EXAMPLE 11.2** Howells: Sonata No. 2, first movement, mm. 1–7.

To George Thalben-Ball

**SONATA**  
I

Herbert Howells

*Vivo, energico ed agitato* . 1M

**MANUAL**

**PEDAL**

major work is considered by many to be the summit of Howells's writings for the instrument.

A second set of Three Psalm Preludes followed in 1938–39, continuing the style of the first set from over twenty years earlier but with a harmonic palette richer in chromaticism. The first, composed on the despondent first verse of Psalm 130, is dedicated to John Dykes-Bower, who in 1936 had been appointed organist of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. This impassioned piece is especially suited to the spacious acoustic of Christopher Wren's great cathedral, and to the performing talents of Dykes-Bower, who like Howells had been a pupil of Herbert Brewer at Gloucester. This particular "cry from the depths" was one of many the composer uttered as he attempted to lift himself from the deep mourning for his deceased son Michael. The second prelude on Psalm 139:11, "Yea the darkness is no darkness with Thee," is centered on F sharp, with many excursions through related keys before it settles quietly in the major mode above a throbbing pedal tone at 32' pitch. The dedicatee is William H. Harris, at the time organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Howells composed the final piece, dedicated to the Hereford Cathedral organist Percy Hull, on the ebullient third verse of Psalm 33, "Sing unto Him a new song: play skillfully with a loud noise." The prelude does precisely that, ending with a final burst on the Tuba, that most commanding of English organ reed stops.

The collection published in 1953 as *Six Pieces for Organ* comprises individual works composed in 1940 (except for no. 5, dated 1945). They remain among the most performed of Howells's organ works. The extroverted ones—no. 2 *Saraband for the Morning of Easter* and no. 6 *Paeon*—were the first organ pieces by Howells to be widely known in the United States, published in David McK. Williams's *Modern Anthology*.<sup>25</sup> The joyful *Saraband* effects its shift from the opening celebratory C major to the quietly contrasting section in A flat major by means of a single extended pedal low C, the simplest of common tone modulations. *Paeon* is a rambunctious, jubilant toccata built on permutations of D-based harmony. Bearing no key signature, the opening flourishes of the piece are in the Dorian mode, and the first large section cadences in C major. After a quiet passage anchored on E (*più espressivo, rubato*), a loud chordal climactic passage suggests D major, although permeated with B flats and C naturals. A lengthy pedal point on A sets up the final exultation of D major, to be played on solo reeds punctuated by a bombastic downward surging pedal motive.

The first of the set, *Preludio "Sine Nomine,"* does not refer to the well-known Vaughan Williams hymn tune but rather indicates the piece's basis on a free, therefore "unnamed" chant-like subject. This quiet improvisation is particularly useful as a service prelude, as is the third piece, *Master Tallis's Testament*, a modal theme-based set of variations in tribute to the Tudor composer Thomas Tallis (c. 1505–85). Both are exquisite musical creations, lending credence to the composer's assertion that his compositional roots were to be found in the music of figures from the first Elizabethan period. Howells wrote the fifth piece, *Saraband*

(*In Modo Elegiaco*), five years after the others in the collection. True to its title, the work offers an elegiac dance in triple meter listed by Eric Blom in the fifth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* as *Saraband for Good Friday*—an interesting and potentially meaningful designation for this melancholy composition.<sup>26</sup> The *Fugue, Chorale and Epilogue* is the fourth and most extended of the collection. It begins quietly, building to a loud and stately chorale before returning to its *lento serio* mood, this time marked *tranquillo, mesto* over a pedal point that alternates constantly from tonic to leading tone for twenty-five measures before expanding to a solo pedal return of the fugue theme and a hushed ending in G.

Perhaps the most memorable of the 1950s organ works is the *Siciliano for a High Ceremony* of 1953, a gentle essay in the lilting compound triple meters of the pastoral dance. Howells composed the work, according to his inscription, “especially for Miss Jane McNeill, and first performed at her Marriage to The Earl of Dalkeith at St. Giles’ Cathedral, Edinburgh, on 10 January 1953.” The score is typical of Howells, replete with Italian-language directions: *Un poco con moto, sereno; con tenerezza; poco a poco incalzando; a tempo, con dignità, ma affettuoso*. Indeed, Howells’s tendency to draw upon uncommon Italian directives contributes to the unique look of his scores; only one example among the organ works—the first of the *Two Pieces* of 1959—eschews Italian in favor of an English performance indication, there “Gently, flexibly, always rubato.”<sup>27</sup>

Novello published the *Rhapsody No. 4 (Bene Psallite in Vociferatione)* and the *Prelude De Profundis* under a single cover in 1958. The first is “for John Birch,” while the second bears no individual dedication. The *Rhapsody* is a jubilant piece, beginning and ending with flourishes played on the Tuba stop, cadencing triumphantly with a thickly voiced C major chord. The *Prelude* continues the series of Psalm pieces: reflective, sad, building to a full organ climax, and dying away, *adagio*, to the near-nothingness of an F sharp minor chord above a tonic pedal note at 32’ pitch. That Howells conceived of the two pieces as a possible set is confirmed by manuscript notations listing several potential pairings and titles.<sup>28</sup>

### **Late Works for Church and Concert Hall**

The manuals-only diptych *Two Pieces for Organ* was written in 1959 for radio recitals played on an eighteenth-century organ made by the English builder Samuel Green (1740–96). The single-manual instrument of four stops was donated to St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, Aberdeen, Scotland, for use after its chancel and organ were destroyed by a World War II bomb. The two works, *Dalby’s Fancy* and *Dalby’s Toccata*, honor John B. Dalby, former organist at St Machar’s Cathedral and Superintendent of Music for Aberdeen, who was the organist for several of the broadcasts.<sup>29</sup> The *Fancy* features a wide-ranging melodic line above a largely two-voice harmonic support. The *Toccata* unfolds primarily in a two-voice texture, well suited to the gentle voicing of the historic chamber instrument that inspired these charming works.

In Howells's diary, mention of his *Partita* begins with an entry for January 15, 1971—"Worked a while on Organ piece for Prime Minister"—and culminates with the entries for September 28 of the same year—"The Prime Minister was at the Royal College of Organists Dinner 7 p.m. Savoy Hotel (dinner jacket!) I gave him the *Partita* score"—and for February 23, 1972—"John Birch to play *Partita* at Festival Hall, 6 o'clock. Prime Minister (with Detectives), H. (with Composer)."<sup>30</sup> The work is strong and athletic in its widely spaced, arpeggiated themes (perhaps a musical portrait of political survival?), like the one that opens the work's first movement shown as Ex. 11.3.

**EXAMPLE 11.3** Howells: *Partita*, Intrata, mm. 1–4.

Howells organizes the piece in five movements: *Intrata*, *Interlude*, *Scherzo* and *Epilogue*, *Sarabande* (for the 12th day of any October), and *Finale and Retrospect*. Howells's former student and most trenchant biographer Paul Spicer discussed the new organ work in 1974, noting the employment of a typical Howellsian downward "scale" from C to C, with intervening notes B, B $\flat$ , G, F $\sharp$ , E, and E $\flat$ ; the extensive use of irregular meter signatures; and the first appearance in the composer's organ output of an added tonic seventh in the work's final chord.<sup>31</sup>

Howells had vowed that anything he composed for Vaughan Williams's centenary year of 1972 would have some connection to that treasured friend. Fulfilling this promise, the emotional high point of the five-movement work is a pensive, tender *Sarabande* (spelled with a final "e" for the only time in Howells's published organ music), the enigmatic subtitle of which refers to the elder composer's birthdate. Spicer concluded his article with this stylistic assessment:

Harmonically Howells' style remains unique. Almost any bar of this music will identify its source and yet the music is more ruthless and more aggressive than before. The use of dissonance also is bolder and more continuous than in previous compositions. . . . the *Partita* is a beautifully conceived and superbly executed work . . . ; it deserves careful and sympathetic study.<sup>32</sup>

The musical manuscript decorating the published cover of the *Partita*, number eight in Novello's *Modern Organ Repertory* series, is the climactic pedal line of *Paeon*, last of the Six Pieces from 1940.

Finally, in this group of works belongs an exuberant triple-meter *Allegro gaia-mente* in C, reminiscent of the *Saraband for Easter* from 1940. *Epilogue*, composed in 1974 and published by Banks Music in 1982, is the concluding composition in a collection titled *The Hovingham Sketches*, presented by The Royal College of Organists to H.R.H. Katharine, The Duchess of Kent, an enthusiastic patron of the organ. Other contributors included Harold Darke (*An Interlude*), Eric Thiman (*A Scherzetto for the Flutes*), George Thalben-Ball (*Edwardia*), Francis Jackson (*The Sweet Rivelet*), W. S. Lloyd Webber (*Trio*), Arthur Pritchard (*Canzonetta*), and Bernard Rose (*Chimes*). Three additional works from the original tribute were published separately: *Trio* by Peter Hurford, *Puck's Shadow* by Richard Popplewell, and *Scherzetto* by Arthur Wills.

### Posthumous Publications

The first two of the miscellaneous Three Pieces for Organ, edited by Robin Wells and published in 1987, add little to the Howellsian repertoire, but they might be of interest to the specialist who has played most or all of the works printed during the composer's lifetime. Howells composed the first of them, the *Intrata* No. 2, as an eightieth birthday tribute to the Salisbury organist Walter Alcock. The second piece, dated August 29, 1969 and titled *Flourish for a Bidding*, was occasioned by a charity auction to benefit the Royal College of Organists Centenary Fund. The third piece, however, is quite another matter. Dated January 1977, *St. Louis Comes to Clifton* is evidently Howells's final organ work. It originated as a contribution for a privately published tribute to an unusual and well-respected musician, Douglas Fox, director of music at Clifton College, Bristol, who had lost his left arm during World War I. The occasion called forth a small gem from Howells. The composer based this valedictory work on a fifteenth-century French folk tune, cherished since the early years of his career. The text narrates an event from the childhood of Louis, the future French king and saint—hence the reference in the otherwise mystifying title. The elderly Howells mentioned in an accompanying affectionate letter to Fox that he had showed the tune to Maurice Ravel, who never used it.<sup>33</sup>

Howells's treatment is marked by an appropriate simplicity. Beginning with the chant-like statement of Ex. 11.4, he builds to a restrained climax and con-

**EXAMPLE 11.4** Howells: *St. Louis Comes to Clifton*, mm. 1–2.

Sempre flessibile e teneramente ♩ = c.42

EXAMPLE 11.5a Howells: *St. Louis Comes to Clifton*, mm. 47–51.

EXAMPLE 11.5b Howells: *Hymnus Paradisi*, conclusion.

cludes this three-page miniature with a spare harmonization of the tune, allowing it finally to die away to a sustained single D, reminiscent of the hushed diminuendo to the final solitary notes at the conclusion of his *Hymnus Paradisi*.<sup>34</sup> Ex. 11.5 compares the two passages.

Marked “Lydney, Gloucestershire, 4th December 1913,” a two-page *Cradle Song*, the surviving second of two organ pieces, was published first in 2010 as one of eleven works in the *Little Organ Book* of the Organists Charitable Trust.<sup>35</sup> Quiet and gentle, as befits its title, these fifty-two measures feature a folksong-like “Scotch snap” in the melodic line (Ex. 11.6) as well as a strategically placed

EXAMPLE 11.6 Howells: *Cradle Song*, mm. 1–6.

hemiola in the transition to the return of the opening strain. The work is an easily accessible addition to Howells's corpus for the organ.

Six Short Pieces for Organ, culled from the composer's unpublished manuscripts, and the Two Slow Airs for Organ, originally composed for violin and piano in 1928, are further publications edited by Robin Wells and released by Novello. Originally written as sight reading tests for piano, thirty manuals-only Miniatures for Organ published by Kevin Mayhew complete the list of Howells's posthumous publications for the instrument.

### *A Howells Organ*

For the organ music of Herbert Howells to achieve an optimal effect, the most important requirements include an ample, resonant acoustical setting and a sensitive interpreter capable of shaping phrases and delineating larger musical forms. Ideal timbres are the warm, fundamental organ sounds found in English ecclesiastical spaces such as St. Paul's Cathedral, London, or the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

In the formative years Howells spent at Gloucester, the Cathedral organ, while modest in size, surely must have formed his tonal ideal of organ sound as the instrument's timbres reverberated through the spacious nave. That three-manual instrument, originally built by "Father" Willis in 1847, was expanded in 1888–89 to include a keyboard compass of fifty-eight (C to a<sup>3</sup>) and a pedal range of thirty (C to f<sup>1</sup>) notes. The ten-stop Great division included Diapasons at 16' and 8' pitch, Claribel Flute 8', Principal and Flute Harmonique 4', Twelfth, Fifteenth, Sesquialtera III, and reeds at 8' and 4' pitch, with preparation for an additional reed at 16'. The five-stop Choir remained unchanged in the late nineteenth-century expansion: Dulciana 8', Stopped Diapason 8', Principal 4', Flute 4', and Fifteenth. The Swell division contained Diapasons at 16' and 8', as well as Salicional 8', Vox Angelica 8', and Lieblich Gedeckt 8', Gemshorn 4', Fifteenth, and Mixture III. The Swell reeds comprised Cornopean 8', Hautboy 8', and Clarion 4', with preparation for a Contra Posaune 16'. The original single-stop pedal "division" was doubled with the addition of a Bourdon 16' joining the Open Diapason 16' of the original instrument. Two additional stops, Octave 8' and Ophicleide 16', were prepared but not executed.

Shortly after the appointment of organist Herbert Brewer (Fig. 11.4) in December 1896, an appeal was launched for funds to complete the organ. With requisite money in hand, the prepared stops were installed, as was a Solo division comprising the four eight-foot stops of Tuba, Clarinet, Orchestral Oboe, and Harmonic Flute. The organ gained a new pedalboard and bellows, and it was cleaned throughout. The addition of an electric blower was rejected by the Willis firm, who preferred to keep the bellows treaders employed. Electricity was introduced to the Gloucester organ first in 1907, when the previously rejected blower was installed. Electric lighting came to the Cathedral in 1911.



**FIGURE 11.4** Herbert Brewer at the Gloucester Cathedral organ console, c. 1920.

Immediately following World War I, major changes were made to the Gloucester organ, resulting in an electro-pneumatic four-manual instrument of fifty speaking stops and sixteen couplers built by Harrison of Durham.

With the inclusion of 32' pedal stops and additional voices in the Solo division, the organ offered a full gamut of colors comparable to those called for in Howells's scores.<sup>36</sup> Whereas there is no single normative instrument or space that would allow for the ideal realization of Howells's organ music, organists who study his scores would do well to examine the character of the Gloucester instrument and others like it, as well as the relationship of those organs to the rooms for which they were conceived.

### ***The Organ as a Collaborative Instrument***

Although the organ plays a substantial role in many of Howells's choral works, the composer rarely indicates specific registrations, a situation parallel to his practice in the solo works. Instead he chose to notate the desired dynamic levels and leave the selection of tone colors to the taste of the player. An occasional exception occurs, found most often in the instruction to use a loud reed stop. But Howells was careful to indicate the places where he wished the pedals employed, and quite often, those which should be taken *manualiter*. A passage drawn from *The Dallas Canticles* (Fig. 11.5) serves to illustrate Howells's notational practice, both aesthetically pleasing in itself and exacting in what the score requires of the organ.



**FIGURE 11.5** Howells: *The Dallas Canticles*, autograph p. 11 (Magnificat, beginning of the Gloria). Note both the dynamics and the “ped” indication.

In addition to his splendid series of Anglican canticles, Howells composed one chamber work for baritone solo, violin, cello, and organ: *By the Waters of Babylon*, a ten-minute “rhapsody” completed in July 1917 shortly after he resigned from the sub-organist position at Salisbury Cathedral. The substantial organ part, carefully notated on three staves in a fifteen-page autograph,<sup>37</sup> shows some manual indications and registration suggestions (“Swell, Choir; add gradually with swell closed”). The work begins quietly, spans Howells’s customary dynamic arc, and subsides with a substantial 26-measure postlude for the solo strings and organ. It and pieces like it show an extraordinary concern for the integration of the organ as an independent expressive voice in the fabric, one of the distinguishing marks of Howells’s vocal music.

### A Personal Postscript

In 1974 when I interviewed Herbert Howells, then the dean of British composers, many of his works were already on my list of favorite pieces. As early as my first year of harpsichord study in 1958–59, the Viennese virtuosa Isolde Ahlgrimm had mentioned *Lambert’s Clavichord* as an excellent example of new music for early keyboards. Years later as a young professional, a first hearing of the transcendent anthem *Like as the Hart* in its glorious recording by George Guest and his St. John’s College, Cambridge choral forces, as well as equally memorable first

encounters with the *Collegium Regale* canticles, the *St. Paul's Service*, and the early carol anthems *A Spotless Rose* and *Here is the Little Door* confirmed a special bond with this superb choral repertoire. While my telephone call to the composer's residence as listed in the London Directory may have been a bit presumptuous, there were questions concerning the clavichord pieces that needed to be answered. So I dared to presume.

The questions indeed were answered for the most part, interspersed with colorful vignettes from more than seven decades of English musical life. Those hours spent with Dr. Howells in his Royal College studio rank among my most enduring memories, and this personal encounter led to the commissioning of the *Dallas Canticles* as well as a continuing correspondence with, and concern for, the elderly composer during the next several years. As individual and expressive in his crafting of the English language as he was with his musical vocabulary, letters from Howells were always memorable. Thus, for those who have yet to discover the endearing qualities of Howells's lustrous music, as well as for those who are already devotees, these warm and heartfelt words penned in his last letter to me, dated August 29, 1977, may continue in perpetuity Howells's commitment to his personal connection with places and persons:

I really am grateful for all things concerning your friendship for a far-away ancient-of-days. I love to dwell upon such a link as I have with you, and indeed, with all those in your midst who have sung and played works of mine in recent years. You all, I hope, understand how touched I feel about it all ...

## Notes

- 1 In order of citation: the second of the two-part choral songs "*To the Owl*," 1909; a work for violin and piano, 1927; *Minuet* for bassoon and piano, 1945; no. 7 from *Howells's Clavichord*, 1941/61; the fourth movement from *Partita for Organ*, 1971; and the sixth of the *Lambert's Clavichord* pieces, 1928.
- 2 C. Palmer 1992, 297.
- 3 Critic and musical annotator Felix Aprahamian described the "rather gentle ambivalence of [Howells's] fundamentally tonal writing" by suggesting that "a most characteristic scale to which he is drawn would read: C–D–Eb–F#–G–Bb–C." Liner notes to *The Complete Organ Works of Herbert Howells*, vol. 1, Vista LP sound recording VPS 1031, 1976.
- 4 Benjamin Britten, *Prelude and Fugue on a Theme by Vittoria* (Boosey and Hawkes, 1946); Michael Tippett, *Preludio al Vespro di Monteverdi* (Schott, 1947).
- 5 Cited in C. Palmer 1992, 400, from the composer's own notes to *Herbert Howells Church Music*, Argo sound recording ZRG 507, 1967.
- 6 Christopher Palmer, liner notes to "*Piano Quartet in A minor*, opus 21 and other chamber works," Lyrita sound recording SRCS 68, 1975.
- 7 Cited by Christopher Palmer from Marion M. Scott's description of Howells's Gloucestershire friend and fellow student Ivor Gurney. Palmer opined that these words are "... equally true of Howells." *Ibid.*
- 8 Cited in C. Palmer 1978, 11.

- 9 From the author's first interview with Howells. L. Palmer 1974, 7.
- 10 C. Palmer 1992, 78.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 80.
- 12 Following a 1921 examining tour to South Africa, the Associated Board sent Howells to western Canada in 1923. See Spicer 1998, 78.
- 13 Lambert 1923. Alongside Howells, Lambert presents photographic portraits of Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Ethyl Smyth, and Arnold Bax, among others.
- 14 L. Palmer 1974. Edward Higginbottom, organist of New College, Oxford, included *De la Mare's Pavane* and two pieces from the 1961 collection *Howells' Clavichord (Walton's Toy and Jacob's Brawl)* as organ pieces on his 1989 CD recording, CRD 3454.
- 15 Other optional instruments listed in the score include piano, celesta, piccolo, cor anglais, bass clarinet, and double [contra-] bassoon. Simon Heffer commented concerning the organ's participation, "Howells [wrote] in his notes on the score that an organ part was optional, but the one recording made without it has a void in its heart: the organ is vital, especially in the second movement [*Requiem Aeternam*], where a great chord turns the mood from darkness in a moment with a majestic burst of light." Cited in Millinger 2010.
- 16 Text recorded on December 5, 1968 and cited in C. Palmer 1992, 414.
- 17 This impressive repertoire includes seventeen settings of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* composed for choirs from King's College, Cambridge, to Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, Dallas.
- 18 Letter of December 9, 1941 in Foreman 1987, 247. Following the signature "Herbert" comes the titillating sentence "I'm writing this in a Harrogate Hotel – ass-boarding for a week." This is, of course, a reference to Howells's aforementioned activity as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal College of Music.
- 19 Howells's fifty-six-measure contribution to the Coronation Ceremony is the Introit Anthem *Behold, O God Our Defender*, dated Christmas Day 1952. It joined works from his contemporaries William H. Harris, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Ernest Bullock, George Dyson, Healey Willan, Gordon Jacob, and William Walton, as well as compositions by his mentors: the traditional entrance anthem *I Was Glad* by Parry and a *Gloria* by Stanford. The rest of the rich musical offering celebrated the nation's musical history, with works by Handel, Redford, Gibbons, Byrd, and Samuel Sebastian Wesley. All may be found in Howes 1953.
- 20 Except where indicated, Howells's organ music is published by Novello. Peter Hardwick has written extensively about Howells's organ works in Chapter 11 of his comprehensive study Hardwick 2003.
- 21 Cited in Clark 2002, 10. Elgar directed his comment to "Dr. Buck." Emphasis Elgar's.
- 22 "Opus Two" is the designation given in the published score, based on a manuscript copy by Tustin Baker, another Brewer student who admired Howells's composition. Reference works (Grove's V and beyond) refer to the "missing sonata" as "opus one," a designation quite possibly utilized by Howells for another missing composition from April/May 1911, his Sonata in B minor for violin and piano. See C. Palmer 1992, 456.
- 23 The triple-meter Allegro maestoso of Elgar's Sonata comprises 252 measures. Howells's triple-meter first movement, by comparison, is cast in 258 bars. Peter Hardwick notes the similarity of Howells's final movement to Harwood's 1886 Sonata No. 1 in the shared utilization of a slow bridge as introduction to a fugue. See Hardwick 2003, 122–23.
- 24 Howells, liner notes to Argo sound recording ZRG 507.
- 25 Williams 1949. Howells appears there as the twelfth of twenty-four contemporary composers. The first chord of the *Easter Saraband* is given incorrectly here, where the first pedal note appears as F, rather than the pedal C of the approved Novello edition.

- Further, an extra A appears in the first left-hand chord in the Williams edition; the Novello print shows only an open fifth C–G for the left hand.
- 26 Eric Blom, “Howells, Herbert,” *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 5th ed., ed. Eric Blom (London, 1954), vol. 4, 391.
- 27 The employment of Italian terms is consistent with Howells’s usage in general. In *Hymnus Paradisi*, for example, there is only a single performance direction in English, possibly a momentary slip at the beginning of the first English-texted movement, “The Lord is my Shepherd,” which begins with “in,” not “a” tempo.
- 28 See the List of Works compiled by Paul Andrews as Appendix I to C. Palmer 1992, 460.
- 29 From introductory notes in the score, published as Novello 01 0166 064.
- 30 Complete chronology in C. Palmer 1992, 460–61.
- 31 Spicer 1974, 881.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 883.
- 33 Howells used the French folk song in *Folk Tune for Small Orchestra* (2. The Tune of St. Louis of France), a Royal College of Music (Parry Library) manuscript acquisition, gift of his daughter Ursula Pelissier in 1999. A photocopy of an undated Howells autograph, *Saint Louis* (A French Chanson arranged for cello and piano) is also held by the RCM Library.
- 34 The complete letter to Fox dated only “January, 1977,” as well as the tune and text of the French folk song, are found in Robin Wells’s notes to the Novello publication of the *Three Pieces*, 01 0222.
- 35 Neary 2010.
- 36 Gee 34–48. I am indebted to Christopher Jeens, archivist of the Gloucester Cathedral Library, for supplying this information. The pages cited continue the story of the organ through its post–World War I expansion.
- 37 As yet unpublished, the autograph score is held in the Library of the Royal College of Music, who kindly provided a copy to enable the first American performance in Dallas on November 5, 1990, with Richard Poppino, baritone, and Larry Palmer, organ. The first recording of the work was issued in 2010 as part of Chandos CD 10587: *Choral Works by Herbert Howells* (Choir of St John’s College, Cambridge, conducted by Andrew Nethsingha). Paul Whelan was the baritone soloist.

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# 12

## TWENTIETH-CENTURY ORGAN MUSIC IN THE CHRISTIAN LITURGY

*Benjamin A. Kolodziej*

The pipe organ's association with ecclesiastical music bears witness to a longstanding relationship, the origins of which are only imperfectly understood. However much an accident of history that association might be, the organ has been inexorably linked to liturgical use for a sizeable part of Christian history.<sup>1</sup> Extra-liturgical composition, one may dare posit, is the exception rather than the rule through the centuries, with the concert hall instrument emerging as a viable venue for secular organ music only in the later nineteenth century. The celebrated organs at Birmingham Town Hall, Royal Albert Hall, and Boston Music Hall, all originating in the 1840s through the 1870s, are exceptional because of their secular application, well removed from the normative liturgical use. Even so, not until the advent of the twentieth century did the secular organ foster a legitimate compositional tradition in the organ works of Dupré, Hindemith, Karg-Elert, and others. Further, Robert Hope-Jones developed technology which promoted the organ's use in vaudevillian venues. The twentieth century, then, witnessed the evolution of the organ, both as machine and musical instrument, in directions not experienced in previous centuries. The organ was able to break the sometimes confining strictures of the nave to find its own voice in music written solely to exploit its compositional and coloristic potential. But this multiplicity of timbral possibilities enjoyed by twentieth-century composers perhaps obfuscated the fact that the organ remained an instrument primarily for liturgical use, inspiring new music from composers of all aptitudes and motivations.

Likewise complicating a study of the organ's liturgical use during the twentieth century is the multifaceted denominational landscape in which congregations within the same confessional tradition can utilize the organ (or not) in manifestly dissimilar ways, challenging composer and performer alike in their pursuit to provide meaningful music which enhances congregational gatherings. For the

purposes of this discussion, which is limited to the major French, British, German, and American Christian liturgical traditions, I have conceived that denominational landscape in two broad categories whereby the “sacramental” churches, of which the most obvious are the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Lutherans, are differentiated from the “free” churches. The latter, loosely conceived, stem from either the Anabaptist Reformation or those “third-order” assemblies developing out of already-reformed churches, such as Methodists. These two ecclesiastical groups, while somewhat arbitrarily and inexactly defined, nevertheless suggest distinct liturgical pieties. The liturgies of the sacramental churches, musical and otherwise, harness music as well as certain other non-verbal parameters—architecture, movement, dress, incense, and so on—to “interpret” sacramental activity. A sacrament, to use Augustine’s well known definition, is a “visible sign of an invisible reality.”<sup>2</sup> To recast that definition, then, music is here an “aural sign of an invisible reality.” Less important is how many sacraments are recognized as such, or each church’s particular rubric for celebrating them; rather, each tradition is uniquely informed by, and develops musical traditions congruent with, this sacramental theology. Such a theology embraces the notion of God’s first calling the faithful to participate in an outward and visible sign, thereby confirming the deity’s intangible action among humanity. For the churches of this first type, the significance of the sacraments and the sacramental, and hence also of the music that supports their exercise, lies beyond the symbolic: they become in an important sense the conduit for real, present divine action.

Free churches, as referenced here, are not necessarily only those which view the sacraments as symbolic ordinances—that is, as representations or reminders of past divine action and its significance—although all the churches for which that is the case are included in this designation. Rather, these groups have developed along more or less direct paths from an emphasis in Reformation-era humanism upon the didactic and the primacy of Scripture, the Word or *logos*, manifested by the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. The rituals and music of such congregations thus tend to support clear, verbal teaching rather than liturgies which seek to teach mystagogically.<sup>3</sup> Therefore Methodists, who certainly may claim a sacramental inheritance in Wesleyan theology, have nevertheless developed from John Wesley’s overriding homiletic concern that all, regardless of educational attainment, are able to understand the Word of God.

Such categorization is a precarious academic concept, for not only do some denominations bear hallmarks of each category, but individual congregations within a denomination vary remarkably in doctrine and practice.<sup>4</sup> Even confessional denominations, generally of the sacramental type, count an extensive variety of congregations among their membership, some of whom will hold more theological and liturgical proclivities with the free churches. Likewise, one is increasingly likely to run across individual congregations in the free tradition for whom teaching, while important, is secondary to, or at least equivalent with, sacramental concerns. All but the most improvisational of free churches hold to some

sort of ritualized order which, for the sake of this discussion, will be classified as “liturgy” along with its more traditional forms.

Indeed, integral to an understanding of the differences that distinguish these two broad traditions is the perception of what they share. Both place an emphasis on the Word. Both traditions are linked in their mutual concern for teaching and edification. But the free church’s communication is contingent upon a clear, verbal proclamation, while the sacramental tradition reinforces not only the spoken word, but also a transcendent reality beyond the verbal. In the latter, the music of the liturgy, with its genesis in the clear, declamatory texts of monodic plainsong, communicates this *logos* just as an expositional sermon might in a free church. Therefore, while the two seemingly dichotomous traditions hold communication as primary, their musical practices will diverge where their theology does. Dale Wood, an American composer of Lutheran background but who frequently used the gospel or folk song idiom in his arrangements, writes in the Preface to a certain collection that

true folk music is *music of the people* which is characterized by the directness and simplicity of the feelings expressed. . . . Most of the tunes on which these simple organ settings are based can honestly be called favorites of the people. Some may evoke childhood memories; others recall the revivalist’s era of the Sunday School gathering. That which we call a tune (by the very meaning of the word) *must* be a melody of simple and easily remembered character.<sup>5</sup>

Yet Wood’s perspective harmonizes well with that of a pre-Vatican II instruction manual for organists which reminds the Roman Catholic student that, “since the Gregorian Chant should be within the reach of all, it seems to us that its accompaniment should also be accessible even to those who possess, in musical ability, only ordinary aptitudes.”<sup>6</sup> Both instances demonstrate a marked appreciation for the simplicity, in terms both of listener and performer, advocated by church music of either tradition.

### The Theological Evocation of Liturgical Organ Music

The culmination of the Eucharistic liturgy is the celebration of communion, a mystery undelineated in the East but theologized much by Roman Catholic systematic theologians. Within the Eucharist God becomes manifest beyond the senses in a manner only congruent with divine revelation. Abstruse as the theological rationale may be, eucharistic theology bears great import to the practice of liturgical music in the sacramental churches. Inherent within the term *logos* is not simply a text as revealed in scripture; rather, this *logos* is, in fact, the ultimate Truth revealed, among other things, through music. In acknowledging the profound and infinite nature of God’s divinity, music, although historically always

grounded in scriptural texts in order cognitively to communicate, is not inexorably bound to a text.

In the twentieth century, the French St. Clotilde tradition emerges as the most representative of liturgical music whose atmospheric tendencies were exemplified by colorful sonorities and a generally vertical, homophonic, thick texture. Whereas the organ works of César Franck (1822–90) were vaguely spiritual in nature, even hearkening back to an established liturgical tradition with his *Trois Chorals*, his music is never connected intimately with the liturgy as Charles Tournemire's would be. Organist at St. Clotilde from 1898 through 1939, Tournemire (1870–1939) not only infused his music with a Roman Catholic spiritual fervency, but also envisioned its use within the liturgy. This view was solidified after his pilgrimage to study plainchant at Solesmes, where he encountered Dom Guéranger's extended collection of commentary upon the liturgical year.<sup>7</sup> Tournemire grounds his *L'Orgue Mystique* op. 55–57, consisting of fifty-one suites of five movements to provide music during the requisite portions of the Mass, on the appropriate plainchants. Yet, one often has the sense that the ethos of the pieces is as much based on harmony, tone color, and rhythm as on a clear plainsong theme. Tournemire saw little distinction between generally sacred and specifically liturgical music, dismissing music composed not *ad gloriam dei*. He expressed these convictions to his eventual successor, Jean Langlais (1907–91), when he wrote, "To my great joy, you are attracted by religious music, *the only music*. . . . All music, as beautiful as it may be, if it does not praise God, is totally useless."<sup>8</sup> While himself expanding the scope of Tournemire's liturgical vocabulary, Langlais remained faithful to his elder colleague's high regard for the organ in the liturgy. His *Vingt-quatre pièces pour orgue ou harmonium* (1933–39) appeared in *La musique d'église, conforme au motu proprio de S.S. Pie X*, a journal published from 1922 through 1939 which, as the title implies, sought to promulgate the edicts of the *Moto proprio* "*Tra le Sollicitudini*" by providing simple pieces for liturgical use. Ann Labounsky summarizes the goal of these two composers as she writes, "The basis of the Sainte-Clotilde tradition, then, is Roman Catholic mysticism, within its liturgical framework, expressed through lyricism and freedom of interpretation."<sup>9</sup> This music may fit a certain definition of mysticism; indeed, Tournemire's paraphrases are just that—he "comments" on the plainchant themes, aiming to arouse the emotions rather than invoke reason. In his unfinished essay "On the Exalted Mission of the Organist in Church," Tournemire cites the French critic Ernest Hello who had written, "Higher than reason, orthodox mysticism sees, hears, touches, and feels that which reason is incapable of seeing, hearing, touching and feeling."<sup>10</sup>

Mysticism or not, neither the composition, performance, nor hearing of this music represents an exercise in subjective individualism in which one is subsumed in a metaphysical relationship with the Divine.<sup>11</sup> In grounding itself to the texts and tunes of the Roman rite, such music still maintains an objectivity which mitigates against spiritual narcissism, echoing Pope Benedict XVI's eventual observation that

the life of the liturgy does not come from what dawns upon the minds of individuals and planning groups. On the contrary, it is God's descent upon our world, the source of real liberation. Yes, the liturgy becomes personal, true, and new, not through tomfoolery and banal experiments with the words, but through a courageous entry into the great reality that through the rite is always ahead of us and can never quite be overtaken.<sup>12</sup>

The persistent tendency of twentieth-century liturgical organ music to take as its starting point the texts and melodies of the liturgy—evidencing the conviction that “the great reality . . . is always ahead of us”—points to another hallmark of the repertoire, namely the potential for the organ to “preach,” an idea not limited to Roman Catholic circles. At the dawn of the *Orgelbewegung* and its concomitant revival of *Gebrauchsmusik*, Hugo Distler's pastor at the Lübeck Jakobikirche recalled that

a plan to institute church services in which the spoken word could be deemphasized to allow the organ, singers, and instruments more independence had already been discussed in the Jakobi congregation for quite some time before Distler came to Lübeck. This expresses the idea that, along with the “Spoken Word” in a narrow sense, there is also a preaching ministry of music.<sup>13</sup>

In these particular strands of organ composition at least, the organ's character as an instrument of mystagogy is as important as its ability to communicate a particular liturgical text.

### Liturgical Music as the Bearer of the *verbum Dei*

Within the Lutheran Church, liturgical music has always received its framework and content from the scriptural and liturgical texts, removed from which the music sacrifices its theological potential to an undisciplined subjectivity. From this tradition springs the chorale prelude, conceived, in the words of the Frankfurt organist and pedagogue Helmut Walcha, “for performance right before the hymn, to stimulate and enliven subsequent singing,” necessitating not only brevity, but also often the utilization of the same tempo and key of the subsequent chorale.<sup>14</sup> This pragmatic approach echoes the liturgical aesthetic of Augustine who famously writes in his *Confessions* that “I am moved, not with the singing, but with the things sung. . . . [I am] inclined rather to approve of the usage of singing in the church; that so by the delight of the ears, the weaker minds may rise to the feeling of devotion [*in affectum pietatis adsurgat*].”<sup>15</sup> This “pious affect,” though, legitimately results only from the meaning imparted by the text. Martin Luther, himself a former Augustinian monk, dedicated much of the resources of nascent Protestantism to the production of liturgical music which is useful and propitious only when, as the Reformer caustically remarks,

we have removed these idolatrous, dead, and nonsensical texts, have divested them of the fine music, and have used this for the living, holy Word of God, to sing, to praise, to glorify therewith ... that we might be bettered and strengthened in the faith through His Holy Word, driven into the heart with sweet song.<sup>16</sup>

Music in the service of the liturgy, then, is not merely an intellectual adjunct or a sentimentally abstruse means to an end, but a vehicle through which the *verbum Dei*, the Word of God, is conveyed. Therefore, the dilemma of this tradition has been the development of organ music which is artful, creative, and engaging without sacrificing its faithfulness to the liturgical and chorale texts.

Perhaps reflecting the Lutheran Church's conservatism, this school of composition evidenced a pronounced return to neo-Classicism throughout the twentieth century, subtly rejecting the thick textures and chromatic virtuosity of Romanticism, to which Reger's chorale settings stand as a testament. Walter Buszin, an American liturgical scholar who returned sixteenth- through eighteenth-century music to prominence through his chorale translations and editions published by firms on both sides of the Atlantic, advocated the return to earlier music, for this

music was written so that its texts could be easily understood. The criteria of the 17th and 18th centuries demanded that church music be clean and clear, in contrast to much of the romantic nineteenth century. From a structural point of view, church music ... was well organized, uncluttered, plain. The music did not becloud the text, and the ideal of contrapuntal clarity was maintained in both vocal and instrumental music.<sup>17</sup>

This "contrapuntal clarity," then, leads to music that is essentially text-bound and completely in service to the *verbum Dei*. Liturgical use dictates a relatively simple polyphonic texture in the compositional practice of these composers, as Ulrich Leupold explains in the preface to *An Organ Book* of 1960 by his father, A. W. Leupold,

These preludes are written for use in the church service and are therefore of a pronounced liturgical character. They have no other purpose than that of presenting the chorale melody attractively and interestingly. ... The registration should be bright and transparent in order to do justice to the polyphonic structure of the music.<sup>18</sup>

For Leupold, "liturgical character" necessarily means a kind of polyphony uncluttered with elaborate contrapuntal devices, complicated harmony, or thick textures—in fact a certain compositional modesty that yet manages to be "attractive," "interesting," and nothing else ("no other purpose"). Moreover, the approach to performance must support the aim of the composition, in the historicizing aesthetic of the 1950s and 1960s, "bright and [evidently, therefore] transparent."

Just as eighteenth-century polyphony varied based on composer and location, twentieth-century chorale prelude compositional practice developed along similar lines, with composers imitating three strands of composition. First, some composers followed the approach of the unornamented *cantus firmus* of Pachelbel and Scheidt. A setting of *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*, the third of the *30 Kleine Choralvorspiele* by Jan Bender (1909–94) composed in 1968, represents a type of compact, polyphonic miniature (Ex. 12.1).

**EXAMPLE 12.1** Jan Bender: *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her* (1968), mm. 1–12.

A brief, four-measure introduction of *Vorimitation* material leads to a clear, unornamented statement of the chorale in the tenor, the entire composition set in three voices. This approach recalls the straightforward style of Johann Pachelbel, for example, his *Ich hab' mein Sach' Gott heimgestellt* commencing with a brief *Vorimitation* before the unadorned *cantus firmus* enters (Ex. 12.2).

Of course, one may find the strategy of an unadorned melody unencumbered by polyphonic intricacies well before Pachelbel and well outside the boundaries of southern Germany, so that Bender, Leupold, and others could claim both the musical and theological rationales of pre-Enlightenment liturgical composition. Whether the chorale melody is found on a different manual or simply set forth within the contrapuntal texture, in this strand of liturgical composition, then, it is of utmost importance to preserve the chorale tune intact so that the text may be recalled in the average listener's mind. Walter Buszin, certainly no Romantic, asserts that this polyphonic treatment symbolizes the "simple, childlike faith" which Luther had sought to restore to the Church.<sup>19</sup> Whether a legitimate

EXAMPLE 12.2 Johann Pachelbel: *Ich hab' mein Sach' Gott heimgestellt*, mm. 1–12.



characterization or not, these simple melodic settings contrast with the richly ornamented chorale treatments found in the northern Lutheran lands (Buxtehude, Böhm, and others) and in the organ music of Bach.

Flor Peeters (1903–86) represents the second strand of liturgical composition, an approach that employs lavish melodic ornamentation which at times could render the chorale tune virtually unrecognizable, as in Peeters's setting of PICARDY from 1966 (Ex. 12.3). Here, ornamentation almost completely beclouds the simple rising fifth of the opening phrase. The polyphony is still subjugated to the *cantus firmus*, which is presented with pedal accompaniment and affirmations interjected between phrases. Such a compositional style follows the model of certain chorales from the German north—Buxtehude's work in

EXAMPLE 12.3 Flor Peeters: Prelude on PICARDY (*Hymn Preludes for the Liturgical Year* op. 100, vol. 9), lines 1 and 2.

II: Cromorne 8', (princ. 4')  
 III: Spitzgamba 8', Rohrflöte 4'  
 Ped.: 16', 8'

Molto sostenuto

*mf* *p* *mf* *mf* *rall.*

FLOR PEETERS

chorale settings like *Nun freut euch lieben Christen g'mein* BuxWV 210 and *Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist* BuxWV 208—in which the chorale tune is subjected to figurative work and other extensive ornamentation. As with Peeters's setting, perception of the tune requires more skilled listening on behalf of the average congregant. Similarly, one may conjecture that in such pieces, both Peeters and Buxtehude express their own particularly Lutheran freedom to live free from legalism and Zwinglian restraint.

The third category of chorale composition represents a synthesis of the previous two, such as one may encounter in the music of Johann Gottfried Walther. Many twentieth-century composers, particularly in the latter half of the century, would gravitate toward such an eclectic model, the details and emphases of which were dictated by their inspiration. The much-played chorale preludes of Paul Manz (1919–2009) offer good examples of the approach. They frequently preserve the melody's integrity, but in long values in accordance with Pachelbelian tradition, such as in his *Praise to the Lord* of 1964 (Ex. 12.4).

**EXAMPLE 12.4** Paul Manz, *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* (*Five Hymn Improvisations*, 1964), mm. 6–11.

Alternately, Manz could treat the melody more floridly, only outlining the harmonies, as in the Adagio of his 1975 *Partita on ST. ANNE* (Ex. 12.5).

**EXAMPLE 12.5** Paul Manz: *Partita on ST. ANNE* op. 6, movement 3 (Adagio) right hand mm. 7–8.

Here, as in the other two paradigms, the harmonic language can be varied and dissonant regardless of a more or less conservative treatment of the *cantus firmus*. The harmonic structure—dissonant, chromatic, or largely diatonic—is subsumed by the treatment of the melody, whether florid or strict.

In reclaiming the language of the Baroque, twentieth-century Lutheran composers were able to revive a tradition whose *Affekt*-driven didacticism was ultimately grounded in humanist rhetoric, employed toward the illumination of the *verbum Dei*. The Roman Catholic and Anglican communions, despite sacramental

and liturgical similarities with the Lutherans, hold to a different liturgical aesthetic based on a theology that regards tradition and reason alongside Scripture as revealers of God's Word as manifest in the *logos*, Jesus Christ. The Lutheran proclamation of *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, and *sola scriptura*—that is, grace, faith, and Scripture alone—grants Scripture pride of place and, by extension, sacred liturgical texts based on Scripture. From this perspective, liturgical music which evokes personal mysticism, inciting the emotions for their own sake, is merely concert music performed in church. While such music arguably contributed to the Lutheran tradition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was largely superseded in the twentieth, as the historicist urges of modernism began to advocate musical forms which recalled the polyphonic simplicity of pre-Enlightened church music.

### The Anglican *Via media*

The creative tension between “absolute” art music as an expression of the composer's will and liturgical music as a vehicle for sacred ritual is manifest largely in Anglican circles, whose theological priorities allowed for a certain humanistic, individualized expression. Neither bound to a restrictive view of *sola scriptura* as their Lutheran neighbors, nor quite as free to explore the mystical potential of the liturgy as the Parisian Catholics, Anglican composers worked within a culture in which Scripture, tradition, and reason informed the boundaries of liturgical composition. The Englishman Healey Willan (1880–1968) represents a middle way between these traditions, and early in life he gravitated toward the Oxford Movement in its attempt to recapture the liturgical drama of the medieval church. Joining the Gregorian Association in 1910, Willan spent most of his professional life at St. Mary's Church in Toronto, where he shaped the music and liturgy to reflect his own liturgical proclivities, influenced as they were by Wagner's ideals as received through the more harmonically conservative English tradition of Parry and Stanford. Willan knew Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877–1933), who achieved a degree of popularity in English speaking lands. Karg-Elert produced chorale settings often characterized by thick, contrapuntal textures in which a tune could either be ornamented or declaimed plainly. In his 1909 chorale prelude on *Aus meines Herzens Grunde* (Ex. 12.6), he demonstrates the approach to simple, unadorned melody adopted by Lutheran composers only three decades hence.

Here at least, Karg-Elert eschews thick chromaticism in favor of the simple treatment of a single strophe of the chorale, including no introductory material, no *Vorimitation*, very little intermediary material between phrases, and only a brief coda of two measures, an approach reminiscent of similar chorale settings of the same period by Reger. This sort of texture, although certainly not the only one employed by Karg-Elert, would propel Willan's compositional thinking, as evidenced by his setting of John Goss's BEVAN from 1950 (Ex. 12.7)

Willan's liturgical composition for organ really only commences at mid-century, after which he published two sets of six chorale preludes (for a Lutheran

EXAMPLE 12.6 Sigfrid Karg-Elert: *Aus meines Herzens Grunde* (Choral Improvisationen)

KK  
*p*  
 Die beiden Mäpvensind reoht versje ieden in der Klangfarde zu registrigen.  
 I 1. H. ins H. Man.  
 Drum freu . et eueh und frei - - sat,  
 Clarinette 8' [oder eine sonore, chat ckt. Comb]  
*semprg, ligato*  
*p* 12' [Coppelz&H]

EXAMPLE 12.7 Healey Willan: BEVAN (*Six Chorale Preludes, Set I, no. 5, 1950*), mm. 3–5.

Gt. soft 8 ft.

publisher), three sets of *Ten Hymn Preludes*, and *Five Preludes on Plainchant Melodies*, the latter settings inspired by the plainchant Willan sought to restore to the liturgy of the Anglican Church. Of his ninety-nine chorale preludes, most have a four voice texture. Sixty-three of them set the tune in the soprano, twenty-two in the tenor, and twelve partially or wholly in the pedal. Seven preludes rely on canonic treatment, and two alternate the tune between soprano and tenor. BEVAN of Ex. 12.7 demonstrates a penchant for a flowing, melodic ritornello set against a clear declamation of the *cantus firmus*, with a hint of canonic treatment between the tenor and soprano. Willan's chorale settings may echo the simple melodic treatment of the Germanic neo-Classacists, but their accompaniments generally tend to more homophonic, undulating textures, utilizing more 8', foundation, or orchestral tone. The approach evidences a particularly English aesthetic borne not only from Stanford and Vaughan Williams, but more immediately from the Vaughan Williams pupil Percy Whitlock's (1903–46) chorale-based organ works, particularly those from his *Six Hymn Preludes* of 1945, among them a characteristic setting of *Werde munter* (Ex. 12.8).

Whitlock, as comfortable composing for the theater as for church or concert hall, sets these tunes in an orchestral, rich folk style with the counterpoint

**EXAMPLE 12.8** Percy Whitlock: *Werde munter* (*Six Hymn Preludes Book Two*, 1945), mm. 1–3.

Con dolcezza ( $\text{♩} = 96$ )

Manual

Pedal

disguised by the dense registration, in this case celestes and flutes accompanying a solo reed. Complementing the contour of the *cantus firmus*, the ritornello recalls those of Karg-Elert, or even Bach's iconic settings like *Wachet auf* BWV 645, in which the ritornelli are as musically memorable as the chorale tune they adorn. In none of the above instances have the composers obscured the melody, but rather the tune has been equaled either by a countermelody or an orchestral style of registration which, in the hands of a more conservative Lutheran composer, might be considered too ostentatious and therefore distracting to the text.

## The Free Church and the Didactic Tradition

Free churches, with their characteristic emphasis on teaching, homiletics, and less formalized liturgical texts, have long encouraged the production of hymn-based music. Yet, while settings of the Mass Ordinary and plainchant may be absent, there is a surprising sense of mystagogy also encouraged, although perhaps not utilizing the same terms or theological reasoning. Edmund Lorenz, an American Adventist pastor who would found the still-extant Lorenz Publishing Corporation in 1890, writes of the importance of the organist and his or her repertoire in establishing an atmosphere in which

the soft strains of the opening voluntary will quiet the minds and—may I say it?—the nerves of the most strenuous people who have gathered. ... Is there some great marshalling of forces for battle against some specific evil, the organist should pull out his trumpet stop and call to arms. No, this is not impractical theorizing. The bands on the streets have more fitness and tact in adapting their music to the occasion than nine-tenths of our organists.<sup>20</sup>

To this end, and not unlike its French counterparts, Lorenz Publishing instituted a number of periodicals throughout the twentieth century including *The*

*Organist*, *The Organ Portfolio*, and *The Sacred Organ Journal*, which published accessible, practical music mostly for amateur organists in smaller parishes. Peter Lutkin, an American Episcopalian, wrote an encouragement to the local organist who, one suspects, was too often ill-trained and ill-treated:

The organist has, perhaps, even more to do with the setting of a proper atmosphere at a church service than the minister himself, at least his voice is first heard in the opening voluntary. This may be a pretty trifle to please the ear, or it may be an earnest endeavor to establish a sense of reverence. ... Preludes, interludes, modulations and postludes should all be equally well-considered, all knit together with a definite plan in mind instead of purpose-less music makings.<sup>21</sup>

That “purpose-less music makings” by less than earnest organists was a ubiquitous situation during the first several decades of the twentieth century, at least in the United States, seems to have been a concern shared by a number of composers. This situation was aggravated by a lack of indigenous composers whose music specifically fitted the rituals of the American churches, whose liturgical concerns were as likely to be borne from a camp meeting as they were from a cathedral. In 1949, Richard Purvis addressed the need for quality American music at the outset of one of his hymn-based prelude collections:

The following pieces were written for organists who have felt the composer’s “Five Pieces on Gregorian Themes” too austere for non-liturgical services. The principle on which these preludes were composed is one suggested by Wallace Arthur Sabin ... [who] opined that music for American church services should be of a devotional nature, with a freshness and spontaneity of conception unhampered by limitations induced through a strict adherence to an orthodox ecclesiastical style, but without any suggestion of triteness or mere sentimentality descending to the level of the mundane or secular.<sup>22</sup>

The musical vocabulary might be different, but the concern for evoking a certain feeling within the ritual—and a feeling based on theology rather than ostensibly ill-defined mysticism—unites both free and sacramental churches. Even H. J. Staples, an English organist writing in an environment hardly influenced by the revival tradition, observes that “The importance of the [organ] voluntary lies in the property it possesses for establishing and maintaining ‘atmosphere.’”<sup>23</sup>

American and British composers engaged in a type of musical hermeneutic not unlike their French counterparts. After all, the blood-soaked imagery of the gospel song or the winsome texts of Victorian hymnody lend themselves to creative interpretation at least as much as a *Pange lingua* or *Veni creator*. British Congregational pastor and hymnologist Erik Routley encouraged the organist

to interpret as well as play. . . . It is not simply his [the pastor's] duty to read the Bible to his people. He must interpret it; this means, not imposing his own ideas upon it, but, as we say, "contemporizing" it. . . . You are taking those words and notes out of the printed book and presenting them to the congregation as a new, fresh, contemporary thing.<sup>24</sup>

The interpretation of spiritual texts, whether liturgical or hymnic, is certainly nothing unique in the history of organ repertoire. Yet, the development of the Cavaillé-Coll organ along symphonic lines and the concomitant development of the American organ represented by Skinner's instruments, all emphasizing coloristic stops and warm foundations, lends itself to a production of repertoire that is at once practical, meditative, communicative, and evocative of a church's particular doctrine.

### Composers' Exodus from Church to Concert Hall

The rift between music sacred and secular had been widening since the advent of the various paradigm shifts collectively termed the Enlightenment. J. S. Bach's visit to Frederick the Great in 1747 evidenced the opposing and sometimes conflicting natures between what had been the hegemony of the sacred over secular music, and the burgeoning minuets, concerti, and opera which would be required from composers who wished to earn a living, to say nothing of prestige. By the nineteenth century, the Church, long the social, artistic, and musical center of a community, found itself displaced by the technologically driven offerings of the Industrial Revolution and the developing structures of capitalism required to sustain both producers and consumers. With the Church no longer in an ascendant position, organ music, for centuries inexorably linked to its spiritual host, would continue to evolve in ways parallel to its secular, orchestral counterparts. By the early twentieth century, the pipe organ—that nefarious "unit orchestra"—would come to supplant the cumbersome orchestra in the theater.

From the symphonic stage to film and theater, twentieth-century composers were less constrained to the choir loft than ever. In 1943 Seth Bingham conjectured whether music had "lost her once proud place as the artistic handmaiden of religion." Answering this question he observed wryly, "While not personally acquainted with the church-going habits of Messrs. Barber, Blitzstein, Copland, Cowell, Diamond, Harris, Moore, Sessions, Thomson, and other shining luminaries in the modern musical firmament, my guess would be that most of them rarely see the inside of a church or synagogue."<sup>25</sup> The flight from the church music profession can be ascribed in part to practical concerns, such as the need to earn an income. Not even twenty years later, Gardner Read describes this plight when he lamented, "If serious composers want to eat, pay their children's tuition, or buy a second hand car, they are obliged to be waiters, filling station attendants, lobster fishermen or shoe clerks. They just write music as an 'extra,' because they

have to.”<sup>26</sup> And if such a “serious composer” wished to devote his or her energies to liturgical organ music, that narrow subset within a subset of serious composition, it is easy to imagine how acutely applicable Read’s observation could be. Yet despite cultural pressures consistently exerted on sacred musical practices and the attraction of secular employment, certain elements of the Church continued to patronize liturgical composers, thus maintaining the production of liturgical organ music.

Certainly one must not overstate this ecclesiastical exodus, since by no means all composers eschewed liturgical composition. Ned Rorem (b. 1923), whose *Organbook II* of 1989 sets forth solo movements on liturgical texts, optimistically perceived that

churches have been and are usually very encouraging about contemporary organ music. I’ve written a great deal of organ music and I don’t particularly like the organ. . . . I wish that the readers could be encouraged to play more and more contemporary music and not just the same standard 19th-century literature—because that’s what will keep us alive.<sup>27</sup>

Commissions have been a staple of composers’ livelihoods for centuries, but the *New York Herald-Tribune’s* longtime music critic Virgil Thomson (1896–1989), raised in the Southern Baptist faith, found inspiration in the theatrics, rather than the theology, of the liturgy. A biographer notes of Thomson that his sacred music, “which runs the gamut from simple arrangements of hymns (‘My Shepherd Will Supply My Need’ [1937], ‘Variations on Sunday School Tunes’ [1926–27]), to choral works like *The Nativity as Sung by the Shepherds* [1967], is conceived as pure theater. The ritual of the liturgy fascinated him, he says, not theological, philosophical or mystical ecstasies.”<sup>28</sup> As a teenager, the young Thomson recognized the unique duty of the liturgical organist as he chose to study church music and service playing with Clarence Sears in Kansas City, securing a facility for organ composition which would eventually also include a set of three voluntaries commissioned for the 1986 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists.<sup>29</sup> The Scottish composer Kenneth Leighton (1929–88) shared Rorem’s aversion to the organ while still managing to produce a formidable output of liturgical organ music. He acerbically commented, “I don’t like the organ very much. On this instrument, one can produce magnificent effects but I find it incapable of expressing those fine feelings which are the secret of a truly human music. It is an instrument without a heart.”<sup>30</sup>

Yet how likely are American, British, or Germanic churches to substitute their sung Ordinary with an organ setting, in the manner of the Parisian churches? The era of the *alternatim* organ Mass properly belongs to France, and the seventeenth century at that. Theological implications aside, composers are not spurred to produce music that will never be played or heard, mitigating against any type of liturgical composition that strays too far from the omnipresent hymn prelude

which sacramental and free churches alike are apt to employ. And the estrangement of the traditional plainchant as well as chorale, Victorian hymn, and gospel melodies from the general corpus of musical knowledge decrease the likelihood that composers will even know of these traditions, much less how to engage them. Naji Hakim, successor to Olivier Messiaen at the Church of La Trinité, Paris, pessimistically asserts:

Within the French Catholic cultural landscape, musical art inspired by Christianity has deserted the liturgy and taken refuge in concerts or in recordings. . . . As for the new repertoire we nowadays see—a consequence of the cultural void—an invasion of hymns with bad musical and prosodic substance that would inspire a sense of aversion in any real musician. No more Gregorian melody, no more polyphony, no more inspired folk-song, no more harmony, or modulation—a real desert for the artist and for the Christian aesthete. Organists often attend liturgies in unrelieved and total impotence. When they are not expected to accompany hymns, one expects them to give simple background music, like that in supermarkets.<sup>31</sup>

Written with a caustic lucidity privy only to one within a particular cultural tradition, and certainly antithetical to Rorem's assertion, Hakim's comments are germane to other ecclesiastical traditions, highlighting not only the dearth of musical material beyond the most prosaic, but also the limited willingness of the church establishment to tolerate—much less stimulate the production of—liturgical music of the highest caliber, organ, choral, or otherwise.

## Roman Catholic Conciliar Developments

The Second Vatican Council—convened by Pope John XXIII in 1962, concluded under Pope Paul VI in 1965, and frequently maligned by church musicians of many ecclesiastical traditions—can best be viewed in a context of negotiation as regards the organ in service of the liturgy. What happened to the centuries-old tradition of liturgical organ composition which was suddenly, sometimes surreptitiously, ejected from the Mass? To understand this question, the opinions regarding which are profuse and sundry, it is necessary to understand the unique liturgical organ tradition which had manifested itself during the first half of the twentieth century.

The Roman Catholic Church hosted various nineteenth-century reform movements which had striven to revitalize church music in general. From the Caecilian movement's attempt in the German-speaking lands to engage in musicological study and the revival of polyphonic liturgical music, to the French school developed around the Abbey of Solesmes solely to study and promote the use of Gregorian chant, such endeavors mirrored the general growth of musical scholarship and historical awareness, no doubt partly a result of latent nineteenth-century

Romantic nostalgia. Pope Pius X's *Motu proprio* "*Tra le Sollecitudini*," promulgated on November 22, 1903 and dedicated to the stimulation of sacred music in the liturgy, was therefore a logical culmination of years of liturgical renaissance. A vehement opponent of modernism, Pius X sought to reassert the Church's ultimate authority over matters liturgical, and in so doing stemmed a decline in church music which the Protestant denominations were not so fortunate to escape. "*Tra le Sollecitudini*" exalts Gregorian chant and encourages liturgical music inspired by chant, since "the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes."<sup>32</sup> The document continues in its specific prescription for compositional propriety when it warns against "theatrical style, which was in the greatest vogue, especially in Italy, during the last century. This of its very nature is diametrically opposed to Gregorian chant and classic polyphony, and therefore to the law of all good sacred music."<sup>33</sup> Church composers, then, are instructed to know the ethos and shape of the liturgy in order to craft compositions appropriately, since

[t]he different parts of the Mass and the Office must retain, even musically, that particular concept and form which ecclesiastical tradition has assigned to them, and which is admirably brought out by Gregorian Chant. The method of composing an introit, a gradual, an antiphon, a psalm, a hymn, a *Gloria in excelsis*, etc., must therefore be distinct from one another.<sup>34</sup>

The document asserts the organ's fundamental place as the primary non-vocal musical instrument, although organists are cautioned that "the singing should always have the principal place, [and] the organ or other instruments should merely sustain and never oppress it."<sup>35</sup> The *Motu proprio* may give some clues as to the abuses that had crept into liturgical organ playing, at least in Europe, when it forbids these practices:

17 It is not permitted to have the chant preceded by long preludes or to interrupt it with intermezzo pieces.

18 The sound of the organ as an accompaniment to the chant in preludes, interludes, and the like must be not only governed by the special nature of the instrument, but must participate in all the qualities proper to sacred music as above enumerated.

19 The employment of the piano is forbidden in church, as is also that of noisy or frivolous instruments such as drums, cymbals, bells and the like.<sup>36</sup>

Attempts to adhere to this *Motu proprio* resulted in a further flowering of church composition. In order to produce organists, choir directors, and composers who could promote such ideals within the parish, training institutions were founded. The Pius X School of Liturgical Music at Manhattanville College in New York

State, founded in 1916, instructed female religious students in the Solesmes method in order that they might be equipped to teach chant in parochial schools. St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, under the direction of Dom Virgil Michel, led in the efforts to teach plainchant to young seminarians and remained a center of liturgical scholarship throughout the twentieth century. In Europe, the abbeys at Beuron, Klosterneuburg and elsewhere assumed importance in exporting liturgical practices to English-speaking lands. To supply the growing need for new music publications, McLaughlin and Reilly Publishing was founded in 1906 in Boston, joining J. Fischer and Brothers in Dayton.

Carlo Rossini, an Italian musician and priest who served at St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, exemplified the concern with which the edicts of "*Tra le Sollecitudini*" were applied, having established a methodical certification program designed to educate organists who were precluded from attending an official seminary or music school.<sup>37</sup> Father Rossini's musical standards bordered on the draconian but promoted the technique and experience musicians in the Diocese of Pittsburgh were expected to evince. He composed a seven-volume set of liturgical music published by C. F. Fischer in the 1930s, including *The Liturgical Organist*, *The Ecclesiastical Organist*, and *The Gregorian Organist*. In each volume Rossini collected short pieces arranged according to key and mode, from short interludes of six measures to postludes of over a page, aimed to "provide the average organist with an orderly collection of liturgical organ pieces for church use and for possible performance on the smallest pipe organ or reed organ."<sup>38</sup> Rossini here attempts to encapsulate his vision of the organ music espoused by the *Motu proprio*.

A simple, impersonal but dignified style of organ playing ought to be the aim of every organist who understands the sublimity of his apostleship of edification and have a fair idea of what is beautiful and appropriate in church. Hence the necessity for the average organist of committing himself to some external guide, such as a reliable collection of Preludes, Interludes, Postludes, etc. composed by men of ability and reverence.<sup>39</sup>

Rossini, in his own theologically stilted way, typified Pope Pius's own anti-modernism when he espouses an "external guide" for the organist. These are no compositions designed that the congregant's heart might be "strangely warmed," in the theological vocabulary of the emotionally conscious Wesleyans, neither are they programmatic, nor do they indulge in liturgical text painting. They are objective and utilitarian, albeit not without beauty in their simplicity. Such compositions reflect a long heritage reaching back as far as Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali* of 1635. More recently they find precedent in Eugène Gigout's *Album Grégorien*, a collection of harmonized chant settings designed for liturgical use appearing in 1895.<sup>40</sup>

This pre-Vatican II ethos achieved a precarious balance between pragmatism and theology, and the dexterity of that balance would be elucidated only after the

results of the Council became clear. In 1936, Rev. George Predmore, in his *Sacred Music and the Catholic Church*, writes that

the Catholic organist should be a sincere and intelligent Catholic. A knowledge of Rubrics and various Church services is indispensable. It is not necessary that he be a *concert* organist, but it is necessary that he be a good accompanist, that he be familiar with the Liturgy of the Church, the best sacred music, and especially the Gregorian chant. This, with a fair pedal technique ... is to be reasonably expected.<sup>41</sup>

The organist, then, had an acutely indispensable and theological role in the execution of the Mass, one which could not be accomplished without a thorough grounding in Catholic theology. Only with this training could an organist function as a practical liturgical musician who, Predmore continues, will be required to play

during the High Mass, in the form of interludes, improvisations, etc., whenever the Celebrant, Ministers and choir are not engaged in singing. It can be readily seen that all these periods during the High Mass ... in singing are short and some of them very short. Consequently, the execution of a complete organ selection is hardly possible. If an organist is capable of improvising in a creditable manner, these gaps may be taken care of. If not, short interludes of four or eight measures are the only alternative, if the organ is to be used at all.<sup>42</sup>

This practical concern for brevity shaped the composition of organ literature and perhaps widened the gulf between what could be considered concert and liturgical organ music, of which the latter provided too many undesirable strictures for the potential composer to follow. Such an attitude may have precipitated Marcel Dupré's admonition in the preface to his *Seventy-Nine Chorales* of 1932, where he writes, "This is not a book of pieces to be performed by the recitalist, as their very brevity indicates. Scarcely would a few of them fill up a short interval in a religious service."<sup>43</sup> The skill required to function successfully as a liturgical organist, or composer, in such a milieu differed from that required, for example, of the French *titulaire* who had the luxury of entertaining guests in the organ loft between the *prélude*, *offertoire* and *sortie*. Yet, that the organ would soon lose its hegemony over Catholic liturgical music was foreshadowed in 1955 with the Christmas Day encyclical *Musicae Sacrae* ("On Sacred Music") promulgated by Pius XII. In this document, the Church commends instruments other than the organ for liturgical use, most notably string instruments, "so long as they play nothing profane, nothing clamorous or strident and nothing at variance with the sacred services or the dignity of place."<sup>44</sup>

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, or "The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," issued on December 4, 1963 by Pope Paul VI, again reaffirmed the organ's primary role

in the Catholic liturgy while simultaneously and implicitly sabotaging the continuance of its historic use. The Vatican Council observed, "In the Latin Church the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and to higher things," a statement which arguably confirms Pope Pius's prescient fear of modernism, called by him the "synthesis of all heresies."<sup>45</sup> Even the reason for using the organ has become inexorably linked to its effect of raising one's "mind to God."<sup>46</sup> The mandated *actuosa participatio populi*, or "active participation of the people," manifested in the vernacular liturgy and the westward-facing altar, while arguably congruent with Christian orthodoxy—and certainly with 500 years of Protestant practice—would lead to an anthropomorphism of the liturgy which would endanger the organ's position within the Mass. The vernacular liturgy would jeopardize centuries of choral tradition as well as the organ music inextricably connected to it. The Council likewise echoed the 1903 *Motu proprio* when it reiterated the use of Gregorian chant. "The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant," it proclaimed, "as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services. But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations."<sup>47</sup>

The Council documents, while repeatedly affirming the established use of choir, organ, and plainchant, nevertheless presented practical problems for the church musician. The newly organized Roman *Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae* sponsored the Fifth International Music Congress in Milwaukee in 1966, which brought together liturgists and musicians to struggle with questions of chant, vernacular changes, hymnals, the position of the organ in churches, and the training of church musicians. The gathering pit "modernists" such as Joseph Gelineau against "traditionalists," who argued that the Vatican II edicts did not address many of the liturgical changes being considered. The practices that emerged from the embittered discussion would show within a few years. Monsignor Richard Schuler, chairman of the Milwaukee Congress, writes of its effects:

As music for "special groups," originally intended for college and high school students, came to mean music for elementary pupils too, so that they could participate more fully, some liturgists promoted the writing of music by grade school children for performance at their Masses. "Living Worship," a publication of the Liturgical Conference, assured church musicians that the piano had at least four advantages over the organ as a liturgical instrument, and that ukeleles are amazingly simple for young children to learn to play.<sup>48</sup>

Rather than inspiring thoughtful, liturgical organ composition, the liturgical scene now lay fallow and prepared for the inculcation of secular culture, most notably in musical form.

## The Consequences of Vatican II and the Remnants of a Tradition

Vatican II never prescribed band combos or crooning lounge-singer cantors, nor did it relegate the organ to the status of liturgical background music. Its edicts could have been fulfilled in manifold ways, just as the sixteenth-century reformers struggled with similar issues, developing divergent yet liturgically thoughtful traditions. The uniquely modernist emphasis on the *vox populi*, at least as seen through the perspective of professional theologians, ensured that music of the lowest common denominator would replace centuries of compositional tradition. From an organist's perspective, Marie-Claire Alain observed that

most French people do not agree with those changes. We are, as you know, very much attached to our traditions and a great many people deplore the fact that we are losing our traditions—the beautiful Latin liturgy and Gregorian chants and the whole literature which was written from the Latin liturgy.<sup>49</sup>

The changes of Vatican II, though, were not intended to subvert quality liturgical music any more than the *Motu proprio* of 1903 intended to ensconce a type of vapid traditionalism, and reasoning how the French people may or may not prefer their traditional liturgical music illustrates the anthropomorphic focus which Vatican II subtly promoted. Alain further lamented that “we have not many composers interested in organ music. We have Messiaen ... but we really miss new composers of organ music.”<sup>50</sup> When the organist's position is relegated to one of subservience to the whims of a congregation, and the organ's employment in the service of the liturgy is minimized, this

will only result soon (the process has actually started) in removing all musical interest in their eyes from the liturgical functions, and consequently, because of the absence of their artistic *raison d'être*, in driving away from the service of the Church every artist of any worth who can always find scope for his talents elsewhere.<sup>51</sup>

Of course, there have been counterforces at work within Catholic circles. An organization dedicated since 1966 to the promotion and preservation of the Latin Tridentine Mass, *Una Voce* counted as members Maurice Duruflé and Olivier Messiaen.

A vestige of liturgical composition does still exist. Although published in 1951 and therefore more closely related to the nineteenth- (or seventeenth-) century tradition, Olivier Messiaen's *Messe de la Pentecôte* uses the composer's own tonal language to interpret the five liturgical elements customarily assigned to the organ in France, namely *Entrée*, *Offertoire*, *Consécration*, *Communion*, and *Sortie*, all

intended to be performed within the Mass and finding inspiration in the ethos of each portion of the liturgy. In this case, Messiaen's music was to be employed as accompaniment to the Low Mass, a liturgy variously defined through the centuries but one in which the entire ritual is spoken and the organ's music, always connected in some way to the concurrent liturgical action, provided a type of musical commentary to alleviate the monotony on the part of the passive congregation.<sup>52</sup> With the decline of the Latin liturgy and the implementation of the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, the Low Mass gradually disappeared. The texts of the Ordinary have traditionally elicited a certain compositional inspiration, but since these portions of the liturgy are usually sung or spoken when used at all, organ Masses have become more a curiosity than a legitimate composition form. The British composer Nicholas Jackson's (b. 1934) *Organ Mass*, written in 1985 and dedicated to Langlais, bears all the compositional hallmarks of mid-century French liturgical composition and improvisation, complete with atmospheric, modal harmonies and a closing Carillon with the perpetual motion of many a French toccata.<sup>53</sup> Kenneth Leighton's *Dublin Festival Mass* of 1980, likewise a setting of the Ordinary and commissioned by the Dublin International Music Festival, is a second late-century exception. But the liturgical use of such music, particularly among British and North American churches, is probably negligible.

The void left by the relatively sudden abandonment of plainchant and its accompanying repertoire led to the proliferation of the liturgical band so prevalent in many Roman Catholic churches. Recognizing this shift in musical emphasis, one popular Catholic hymnal among many acknowledges its rationale "especially for parishes whose music programs tend to utilize a greater amount of contemporary folk art music than classical organ-based music. The mix is approximately 70/30."<sup>54</sup> These trends would not go unnoticed by Protestants during the 1960s, an era of social unrest and general distrust of authority. The Lutheran scholar of religion Martin Marty evaluates the changes which Vatican II wrought on the overall liturgical landscape, writing that "[i]t is notoriously difficult to separate out and define changes which issue from Council action and existence on one hand and those which were taking place and would in any case have taken place had there been a Council or not."<sup>55</sup> At the time of the Council, the denominations of the Lutheran Church in the United States were in the opening stages of producing a pan-Lutheran hymnal, the liturgies of which particularly would show Catholic influence. Richard Hillert recalls of this time:

With no projects for the LMC [Liturgical Music Committee] immediately at hand, we explored and evaluated new liturgical music of other contemporary churches. It is interesting to recall that the late 1960s was a period of rampant unease that was to disturb the status quo in church music, especially among Roman Catholics, who were desperately seeking a "music for the people's song," and were experimenting with folk- and pop-oriented settings of hymns and liturgy, all in response to Vatican II. This search for

a new, popular (“contemporary”) music was also prevalent in some places within Lutheranism, although it had not yet reached a point of heated concern.<sup>56</sup>

The eventual resulting hymnals would represent a fuller Eucharistic liturgy, more sacramental concern, and an increasing awareness of the Triduum. They would eventually effect a renewal of liturgical scholarship which might not have arrived so soon, if at all, without the focus on liturgy brought about by Vatican II. With the need for pieces based on plainchant rather mitigated, Catholic composers have ventured into the hymn/chorale prelude genre which, while entirely Protestant in historical basis, does find practical use in any congregation that sings the Protestant *Kernlieder*. Richard Proulx, for many years at the Cathedral of the Holy Name in Chicago and a prolific composer, has contributed numerous chorale prelude settings, often published by Lutheran publishing houses, as well as short liturgical pieces reminiscent of Rossini’s *Liturgical Organist* series.<sup>57</sup> Such offerings are useful for organists of all denominations, indicating a trend toward ecumenism signaled by the resulting practices, if not exactly the doctrines, of Vatican II.

### Liturgical Improvisation: A Synthesis of Theology and Practicality

The struggles in which organists engaged in the twentieth century, although in many ways unique to their historical location, harken back to those addressed by the Church Fathers, namely invoking the question, “To where does liturgical music lead?” The liturgy of the sacramental churches is centered on proclamation of the Gospel as well as the celebration of the sacraments, while the free churches generally orient their ritual around more didactic and evangelical concerns. Both traditions can worship without music, and in many instances have done so through their history, yet both continue to employ music in their ritual, although they may not agree on the question of music’s most proper use. The organ in the French Low Mass provided nearly constant “background music” in order to connect the worshipper with the liturgical action, such an activity “establishing and maintaining ‘atmosphere.’”<sup>58</sup> Yet is this really the sole purpose of a composer’s years of study and inspirational labor—to provide some ambiguous atmosphere behind which the ritual may occur? Martin Lochner, a Lutheran, recommends that in the prelude, the organist “must create the proper atmosphere,”<sup>59</sup> while Stephen Hicks notes that the appropriate end of liturgical improvisation is “to give an atmosphere at a particular time of the service.”<sup>60</sup> Edmund Lorenz, representing the American free church tradition, would echo a similar sentiment when he argues that the organist’s offertory should reflect in sound the words of the preceding sermon, just as “the opening of the service has been carefully prepared to produce an attitude of worship towards God.”<sup>61</sup> And Erik Routley, of the British free church tradition, observed a gradual change in

the utilization of the organ within his lifetime when he writes, “In the thirties the organ and the organist were still regarded as primarily purveyors of anonymous atmosphere rather than as sources of music in their own right.”<sup>62</sup> Whether utilitarian or mystagogical, both traditions evidence an awareness of the implicit power of music, addressed already in Boethius’ *De Musica* with the observation that “music is related not only to speculation but to morality as well. Nothing is more characteristic of human nature than to be soothed by sweet modes and disturbed by their opposites.” Boethius acknowledges that this idea is not his own, for “from this may be discerned the truth of what Plato said, not idly, that the soul of the universe is united by musical concord.”<sup>63</sup> The notion of producing a musical “atmosphere,” then, has a certain tacit spiritual goal, one echoed centuries later when Abbot Suger would remark of the nascent Gothic architectural style and stained glass windows of the French Abbey of St. Denis that “the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares. . . . I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner.”<sup>64</sup> In this view, then, all liturgical art has a teleology which moves one to spiritual pursuits, and Camille Saint-Saëns would note precisely this connection as it relates to liturgical organ improvisation:

A mediocre improvisation is always endurable when the organist is imbued with the idea that music in the church should be in accordance with the office, aiding it in meditation and prayer: and if the organ in this spirit gives out nothing worthy of notation—a harmonious sound rather than well-defined music—it will be as with those old church windows which charm us more than the modern glass, although the figures are scarcely to be distinguished. It would be better, whatever anyone may say, than a fugue by a great master, because that only is good in Art, which is in its place.<sup>65</sup>

This particular practical concern for liturgical “mood music,” then, emerges far earlier than the twentieth century, but its purpose has never been mere passive entertainment, at least not in the modern sense.

The musical underlining of a prayer, sermon, or altar call in an American Southern Baptist congregation may have more in common with the mystical Parisian liturgies than with the liturgies of the more pragmatic Germanic churches, which during the twentieth century developed an elevated type of liturgical *Gebrauchsmusik*. Martin Lochner recommends that hymn preludes “must, as a rule, not be any longer than the hymn they introduce. Often it is better to play only a part of a hymn.”<sup>66</sup> Several decades later Carl Schalk would echo that opinion when he reaffirmed that

the liturgical organist plays less rather than more. When the liturgical organist does play, such playing should serve the goals of the liturgy and be

functionally and practically to the point. When there is no particular liturgical function for the organ, it should remain silent.<sup>67</sup>

This accords with the utilitarianism frequently promoted by the free churches, whose organists Edmund Lorenz would warn that “valuable time is wasted in playing over the whole hymn tune” as an introduction.<sup>68</sup> The reticence within the Lutheran tradition of divorcing music from its liturgical text, or essentially its use for anything but accompanying the liturgy, hymns, and anthems, possibly stems from Luther’s view of music as the *viva vox evangelii*, that “living voice of the Gospel” which finds its fulfillment only in intimate association with the sacred texts. It was the Lutheran publishing houses that, for at least the second half of the twentieth century, provided the chorale preludes and other practical service music which could be utilized by organists of any denomination. That this Lutheran-inspired genre evoked compositional creativity beyond the Lutheran sphere is shown by the hymn preludes of such notable composers as Charles Callahan, Emma Lou Diemer, Gerald Near, Richard Proulx, Healey Willan, Flor Peeters, and even Jean Langlais, in addition to Lutheran composers like Paul Manz, Jan Bender, and Hugo Distler, all of whose *oeuvres* contain works commissioned or at least published by Lutheran publishers.

During the first half of the century, organ improvisation in the service of the liturgy—as distinct from the more formal concert improvisation, or even the hymn festival as developed later by Paul Manz—necessitated numerous instructional treatises. The century’s first decisive offering was arguably Dupré’s *Improvisation a l’Orgue* of 1925, codifying French Roman Catholic service playing practices, but serving as much as a treatise on harmony, counterpoint, fugue, plainsong, and orchestration as anything else. Once a staple requirement of European churches seeking an organist, improvisation was subject to misapplication, a situation that seems to have elicited dire warnings earlier in the century. Carlo Rossini had counseled,

Improvisation is a great art, but unfortunately, it is too often confused with the extemporizing of a senseless hodgepodge of chords, endless progressions, cheap modulations. . . . All this can only serve to disturb the religious atmosphere of the church.<sup>69</sup>

Interestingly, Rossini then proceeds to provide seven volumes of short, utilitarian organ pieces which mitigate against having to improvise at all. Contemporaneous writers from the Anglican Church share such misgivings, leading one to wonder what sort of musical atrocities were actually being committed by the haphazard organist. One manual suggests that “ready-made chord meanderings mean nothing at all to the congregation. . . . This sort of ‘improvisation’ only encourages laziness.”<sup>70</sup> So endemic and flagrant was this misuse of creativity that one disgruntled American Lutheran pastor protested his organist’s

dragging his fingers over four or five keys, like an upward run, at least twice in each hymn stanza. He ... manufactures harmonies of his own ... he uses the tremolo too much, and drives everybody nearly to tears by his abuse of the chimes. ... He wants to play fancy chords while I read the Scripture Lessons.<sup>71</sup>

Rampant abuse might have been encouraged by the general musical ethos of an era in which church organs either epitomized a symphonic ideal or were popularized in theatrical contexts as in the cinema or radio soap operas.

The second half of the century saw a maturation in liturgical improvisation as well as an expansion of the possible uses for the organ, perhaps partially attributable to the general acceptance of other instruments in worship, a general decline of the organ's use within free churches, and a more intentional use of organ music in the churches which have retained the instrument. In opposition to the concerns addressed earlier in the century, improvisation possibly has established legitimacy for itself as a musical outlet for competent organists. In the tradition of Messiaen, Naji Hakim perceives from his own career that, "as a liturgical organist, I found out through the years that my most authentic musical offering emanates from improvisation."<sup>72</sup> Far from the apologetic treatises for, or urgent admonitions against, improvisation, later decades saw musicians work to further the skill. Gerre Hancock's *Improvising: How to Master the Art* of 1994 covers both liturgical and concert improvisation and addresses practical as well as musical needs. The Canadian Jan Overduin, in the preface to his 1998 *Making Music: Improvisation for Organists*, posits that "The most effective way for church musicians to fight the increasing pressure to replace organs and organists with technology and machines is to develop the ability to improvise in ways that will bring life and excitement, meaning and beauty to the worship services of the church."<sup>73</sup> Along similar lines, Lynn Trapp observes, "The role of the pipe organ today is being stretched in our liturgy, and pastoral musicians' concept about using the instrument should undergo similar expansion," which he suggests could involve the use of the piano and organ together, improvising a postlude in a popular style to a service which utilizes such music, or even playing along with an ensemble on the refrain of a contemporary-style hymn.<sup>74</sup> This underscores the ability of the organ as a mechanical device to adapt to the changing requirements of a liturgical tradition, a task which its twentieth-century history demonstrates its ability to manage, albeit with more reticence on the part of organists.

Liturgical organ music in the twentieth century, whether improvised or composed, whether in the service of sacramental mystagogy or didactic evangelicalism, maintained its continuity with prior centuries in its concern for communicating the divine *logos*. Like all music in service to something other than itself, its parameters were necessarily conservative, bounded by doctrinal concerns as well as by the need to move people to a spiritual and moral goal. The century's manifold theological and philosophical currents left indelible marks upon the

denominational landscape in a manner arguably unseen since the theological upheavals of the sixteenth century. On the one hand, the result was a discarding of the organ as a legitimate musical instrument by serious composers and lounge-singer musicians alike. But on the other hand, the environment saw the flourishing of liturgical organ composition by those resourceful composers who were willing to adapt to the changing landscape.

## Notes

- 1 On the alliance between the Western Church and the organ emerging during the Middle Ages, see especially Williams 1993.
- 2 Augustine of Hippo, *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 26: 50.
- 3 Here and in what follows, I use the term to designate a kind of teaching that ensues after one's initiation into the mysteries of the sacraments. In the more didactic free traditions, teaching and reflection tend to appear out ahead of, rather than subsequent to, the experience of the liturgical rites.
- 4 As with the Methodists, Presbyterian churches, for example, are historically and theologically sacramental, but American Presbyterian tradition is such that camp-meeting style worship is not uncommon.
- 5 Wood 1986, preface. Emphasis Wood's.
- 6 Preface to *Hymns by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart* (Tournai: Desclée, 1931).
- 7 Schloesser 2010, 168.
- 8 Letter, undated, of Tournemire to Langlais cited in Labounsky 2000, 107. Emphasis Tournemire's.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 128.
- 10 *De la haute mission de l'organiste à l'église*, cited in Schloesser 2005, 310. See also especially Schloesser 2010, 170. On both Tournemire and Langlais, see further Chapter 5.
- 11 This a fear Augustine shared when he only reticently allowed for textless music within the liturgy. *De Confessiones*, XXXIII: 50.
- 12 Benedict XVI 2000, 170.
- 13 Axel Werner Kuhl, "Vesper in St Jakobi," *Lübeckische Blätter* 73 (1931): 86.
- 14 Walcha 1963, 62.
- 15 Augustine of Hippo, *De Confessiones*, Book 10, XXXIII, 50.
- 16 *What Luther Says. A Practical Anthology for the Active Christian*, ed. Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 981.
- 17 Walter Buszin, "Benefits Derived from a More Scholarly Approach to the Rich Musical and Liturgical Heritage of the Lutheran Church," *The Musical Heritage of the Church* 1 (Valparaiso, IN: Valparaiso University, 1945): 19. Cited in Koriath 2003, 30.
- 18 Leupold 1960, preface.
- 19 Koriath 2003, 48.
- 20 Lorenz 1909, 368–9.
- 21 Lutkin 1930, 15.
- 22 Purvis 1949, preface.
- 23 Staples 1941, 137.
- 24 Routley 1957, 12–13.
- 25 Bingham 1943, 12.
- 26 Read 1962, 22.
- 27 Cited in Burton 2003, 1129.
- 28 Wittke <http://www.virgilthomson.org/vignettes2.html>.

- 29 These are the *Organ Voluntaries* published by G. Schirmer in 1986, dedicated respectively to Fred Tulan, Paul Sanfaçon, and Christopher Wanklin.
- 30 Hardwick 2005.
- 31 Cited in Hansen [www.najihakim.com](http://www.najihakim.com).
- 32 Pope Pius X, “*Tra le sollecitudini*,” (November 22, 1903), II/3.
- 33 *Ibid.*, II/6.
- 34 *Ibid.*, IV/10.
- 35 *Ibid.*, VI/16.
- 36 *Ibid.*, VI/17–19.
- 37 “Rev Carlo Rossini Priest 50 Years,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, May 18, 1963: A5.
- 38 Rossini 1938, preface.
- 39 *Ibid.* In addition to his own compositions, Rossini’s volumes contain music of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century composers, the obligatory nineteenth-century Romantics, as well as still-living composers.
- 40 Gigout 1895.
- 41 Predmore 1936, 5.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 160.
- 43 Duprè 1932, preface.
- 44 Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae* (December 25, 1955).
- 45 Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (September 8, 1907).
- 46 Pope Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (December 4, 1963), art 120.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 Schuler 1990, 402.
- 49 Cited in Blanton 1971, 11.
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 Overath 1969, 180.
- 52 Organ accompaniment to the Low Mass, far from being unique, was the most ubiquitous form of liturgical playing in France prior to Vatican II. Louis Vierne’s *Messe Basse* op. 30 of 1912 is another of many examples, although in most cases these were improvised. Not simply limited to France, even Zoltán Kodály composed a similar organ Mass (*Quiet Mass*, 1943) which he later arranged to incorporate a chorus.
- 53 Nicholas Jackson, *Organ Mass* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Anglo-American Music Publishers, 1985).
- 54 *Gather Comprehensive* 1994, preface.
- 55 Marty 1991, 15.
- 56 Hillert 2003, 333.
- 57 *Short Liturgical Interludes for Organ* and *Short Liturgical Interludes for Manuals* (Charlotte, NC: Brodt, 1999), presents a variety of music to be employed for practical purposes in the liturgy.
- 58 Staples 1941, 137.
- 59 Lochner 1947, 7.
- 60 Bailey 1993, 37.
- 61 Lorenz 1909, 370.
- 62 Routley 1984, 86.
- 63 Boethius, “From ‘Fundamentals of Music,’ Book I,” trans. Calvin M. Bower, in Treitler 1998, 136–43.
- 64 Cited in Frisch 2004, 9.
- 65 Cited in Conway 1948, 7.
- 66 Lochner 1947, 8 and 10.
- 67 Schalk 1993, 244.
- 68 Lorenz 1909, 371.
- 69 Rossini 1938, preface.
- 70 Staples 1941, 150.

- 71 "Lutheran Liturgists" 1934.  
 72 www.najihakim.com, accessed June 5, 2009.  
 73 Overduin 1998, vii–viii.  
 74 Trapp 2005, 24.

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# INDEX

Figures in italics indicate musical examples; the figure in bold type indicates a Table.

- Aarhus Cathedral 229  
Adema (organ-builders) 199  
Adler, Samuel 256  
Adlung, Jakob 19  
Adorno, Theodor W. 119, 121, 274  
Adriaansz, Peter 212  
Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company 20, 53  
Ahlgrimm, Isolde 303  
Ahrend & Brunzema (organ builders) 24, 25, 26  
Ahrend, Jürgen 25, 121  
Ahrens, Joseph 50, 51  
Aibl (publishers) 85  
Akerman & Lund 33, 220  
Alain, Albert 153  
Alain, Jehan 4, 52, 148, 153–55, 154, 173  
Alain, Marie-Claire 205, 328  
Alain, Marie-Odile 153  
Albéniz, Isaac 259  
Albright, William 3, 4, 6, 251–55, 254  
Alcock, Walter Galpin 3, 288, 294, 299  
Aleatory 60, 65, 68, 70, 162, 164, 165  
Allen, Hugh 290  
*Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein* 101  
Alsatian organ reform 16–17, 19, 229  
American Composers Forum 257  
American Guild of Organists 186, 255, 257, 322  
Amiens Cathedral 149  
*Amis de l'orgue* 176, 178  
Amsterdam Conservatory 194, 196, 197, 200, 201, 208  
Amsterdam Muziekgebouw 204  
Amy, Gilbert 162–63  
Anderson, Robert T. xvi  
Andriessen, Hendrick 196, 199–200, 200, 203, 212  
Andriessen, Louis 212  
*Arc-en-ciel théologique* (Messiaen) 174, 187  
*Archives des Maîtres de l'Orgue* 118  
Argento, Dominick 257  
Arnold, F.T. 122–23  
Asma, Feike 196  
Atonality 68, 155, 157, 163, 180, 196, 214, 230  
Aubert, Louis 201  
Auden, W.H. 249  
Audsley, George Ashdown 14  
Augener, George (publisher) 81, 82, 83, 88, 294  
Augustine of Hippo 309, 312  
Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (New York) 53  
Bach, Johann Sebastian 2–6, 17, 19, 20, 30, 35, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 57, 65, 68, 76, 81–82, 84, 85, 87, 91, 94, 98, 99, 99, 104, 116, 117, 120, 122–27, 128, 130, 131, 142, 145, 171, 209, 210, 212, 220, 221, 228, 230, 236, 238, 290, 315, 319, 321  
Bach-Gesellschaft 84

- Badings, Henk 203–4, 205  
 Bairstow, Edward 294  
 Balthasar, Hans Urs von 185  
 Banks Music 299  
 Barber, Samuel 250  
 Barié, Augustin 146  
 Barker lever 12, 172  
 Bartelink, Bernard 202  
 Bartók, Bela 55, 157  
 Basilica of the National Shrine of the  
   Immaculate Conception (Washington  
   DC) 184  
 Basilica of Sacré-Coeur de Montmartre  
   (Paris) 141, 145, 156  
 Bastiaans, Gijsbertus 194, 197  
 Baur, Jürg 66–68, 69  
 Becker, Albert 47, 49  
 Beckerath, Rudolf von 173  
 Beckmann, Gustav 99  
 Bedient, Gene 26  
 Bédos de Celles, François 19, 235  
 Beer, Anton de 204  
 Beethoven, Ludwig van 130, 286  
 Bender, Jan 314, 314, 332  
 Benedict XVI (Pope) 311–12  
 Benjamin, Walter 2, 5  
 Berg, Alban 4, 266  
 Berlin Conservatory 50, 53, 54, 220  
 Best, W.T. 81  
 Bethards, Jack M. (organ builder) 27, 28  
 Beuchet-Debierre (organ builders) 173  
 Beuron Abbey 325  
 Bianciardi, Francesco 123  
 Bierman, Wolf 70  
 Biermann, J.H. 19  
 Biggs, E. Power 32  
 Bijster, Jacob 197, 198  
 Billaudot (publisher) 156  
 Bingham, Seth 321  
 Birch, John 292, 297, 298  
 Birmingham Town Hall 308  
 Bitonality 70, 153, 203  
 Black Sabbath 252  
 Bloch, Ernst 65  
 Boethius 331  
 Böhm, Georg 315  
 Boisseau (organ builders) 24  
 Bolcom, William 251–53  
 Bolt, Klaas 213  
 Bonaventure 174, 186  
 Bonfils, Jean 184  
 Bonnal, Joseph-Ermend 151  
 Bonnet, Joseph 141  
 Boody, John 26  
 Bornefeld, Helmut 55  
 Bossi, Marco Enrico 195, 224  
 Boston Music Hall 29, 308  
 Boston Symphony Orchestra 244  
 Boström, Erik 235  
 Boulanger, Nadia 243, 247  
 Boulez, Pierre 162, 181, 234  
 Bourgeois, Louis 160  
 Bouvard, Michel 140  
 Bovenkerk (Kampen) 214  
 Brabant Conservatory 201  
 Brahms, Johannes 78, 81, 82, 83, 85, 92,  
   100, 103, 107, 123, 195  
 Breidenstein, Karl 83  
 Bremen Cathedral 127, 270, 275  
 Brewer, Herbert 287, 301  
 Britan, Radie 248  
 Britten, Benjamin 256, 286  
 Brombaugh, John 25  
 Brosig, Moritz 84  
 Brouwer, Fons 212, 213  
 Brown, Earle 270  
 Bruckner, Anton 47, 52  
 Bruhns, Nikolaus 236, 238  
 Brunold, Paul 151  
 Brunzema, Gerhard 25  
 Brussels Conservatoire 142  
 Brussels International Exposition  
   (1956) 162  
 Bruynèl, Ton 211  
 Bull, John 131  
 Bülow, Hans von 104  
 Bunk, Gerard 195, 196–97, 197, 199  
 Burchardikirche (Halberstadt) xiv, xv  
 Busch, Hermann J. xvi  
 Busoni, Ferruccio 83  
 Bussotti, Sylvano 270  
 Buszin, Walter 313, 314  
 Bute, Cornelis 203  
 Buxtehude, Dietrich 20, 35, 117, 124,  
   128, 228, 236, 238, 315, 316  
 Byrd, William 131  
  
 Caecilianism 50, 323  
 Cage, John xiv–xv, 60, 65, 66, 262, 270  
 Callahan, Charles 332  
 Cambridge University 292  
 Carroll, Lewis 155  
 Casavant Frères (organ builders) 25  
 Cathedral of the Holy Name  
   (Chicago) 330  
 Cavaillé-Coll, Aristide 12, 13, 17, 19, 25,  
   29–33, 140, 142, 143, 149, 153, 156,  
   172–73, 176, 178, 194, 199, 321

- Cavaillé-Coll-Mutin 29, 31, 34  
 C.F. Fischer (publisher) 325  
 Chadwick, George W. 244, 245  
 Chagall, Marc 8  
 Chapuis, Michel 140, 157  
 Charial, Pierre 266  
 Charlemagne 128  
 Chicago Symphony Orchestra 0245  
 Chopin, Frédéric 55  
 Chorale, Protestant 50, 55, 78, 79, 82, 87  
 Christ Church (Oxford) 287  
 Christianity 2  
   Anglican (Episcopal) 4, 256, 291, 309,  
     316–20, 332  
   Baptist 331  
   Calvinist (Presbyterian) 252  
   Eastern Orthodox 168, 258  
   Ethiopian 166, 168  
   Free churches 309–10, 319, 330  
   Lutheran 212, 222, 227, 309, 310,  
     312, 313, 315–19, 329, 330, 332  
   Methodist 309  
   Protestant 32, 46, 47, 50, 54, 80, 84,  
     85, 86, 202–3, 312, 327, 329  
   Quaker 251  
   Roman Catholic 4, 32, 50, 52, 80, 88,  
     103, 126, 149, 173, 174, 180, 309–  
     12, 316–17, 323–27, 328–30, 332  
 Christie, James David 250  
 Claudel, Paul 142  
 Clavichord 289–90, 304  
 Coenen, Frans 194  
 Cologne Conservatory 49, 52  
 Communism 266  
 Compton (organ builders) 22  
*Computer Aided Breathing* 214  
 Conacher, Peter, & Co. 12  
 Concertgebouw (Amsterdam) 199, 201,  
   209, 210  
 cone chests (*Kegelladen*) 12–13, 17  
 Conservatoire (Boulogne–Billancourt) 156  
 Conservatoire (Paris) 6, 140–45, 151, 153,  
   156, 157, 160, 163, 164, 166, 171,  
   176, 181, 182, 184  
*Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae*  
   (Milwaukee 1966) 327  
 Copland, Aaron 4, 243, 245, 247–48,  
   253, 256  
 Couperin family 151  
 Ctesibios 263  
  
 Dalby, John B. 297  
 Dalstein und Härpfer (organ builders) 17  
 Damcke, Bernhard 195  
  
 D'Anglebert, Jean Henry 122  
 Daniel-Lesur, Jean-Yves 178  
 Dante Alighieri 99, 166  
 Darasse, Xavier 162, 163–66, 165  
 Darke, Harold 294, 299  
 David, Johann Nepomuk 47, 48, 52  
 David, Werner 7  
 Davies, Walford 288  
 Daxberger, Ludwig 204, 205  
 De Koff (organ builders) 24  
 De la Mare, Walter 290  
 Debussy, Claude 146, 156, 157, 175  
 Decker, Pamela 258–59, 258  
 Delbos, Claire 178, 180–81  
 Delvincourt, Claude 181  
 Demessieux, Jeanne 6, 144, 144, 205  
 Dickinson, Emily 2–3  
 Diemer, Emma Lou 248, 332  
 Diepenbrock, Alphons 199  
 Diepenhorst, Wim 214  
 Dijk, Jan van 204  
 Dijon Conservatoire 163  
 D'Indy, Vincent 201  
 Distler, Hugo 7, 49–50, 55, 121, 259,  
   312, 332  
 Dodecophony (twelve-tone  
   technique) 50, 54, 56, 57, 58, 68, 71,  
   162, 163, 181, 183, 196, 206, 208,  
   230, 231, 263, 265, 266, 267  
 Dolmetsch, Arnold 120, 122–23, 130  
 Douglass, Fenner 32, 255  
 Downes, Ralph 20  
 Drake, William 26  
 Dublin International Music Festival 329  
 Dubois, Théodore 201  
 Dufourcq, Norbert 19, 30  
 Dukas, Paul 151, 153, 175, 176  
 Dupré, Marcel 5–6, 140–45, 151, 153,  
   155, 171, 173, 176, 308, 326, 332  
 Durand (publishers) 178  
 Duruflé, Maurice 146–48, 148, 151, 155,  
   156, 163, 173, 201, 259, 328  
 Düsseldorf Conservatory 67  
 Dykes–Bower, John 296  
  
 Early Music Movement 5, 234  
 East German Academy of Arts 70  
 Eastern Michigan University 254  
 Eastman School of Music (University of  
   Rochester) 141  
 Eben, Petr 6, 8  
*Éblouissement* (Messiaen) 178  
 Eddy, Clarence 141  
 Eggebrecht, Hans Heinrich 119

- Electronic music 4, 58, 59, 60, 162, 211, 214, 250, 253
- Elgar, Edward 286, 288, 292, 293
- Elizabeth II, Queen 292
- Elkan-Vogel (publishers) 248
- Ely Cathedral 16
- Engelbrekt Church (Stockholm) 221
- Engels, Adriaan 213
- Enlightenment 321
- Eötvös, Peter 65
- Erard, Sebastian 130
- Erasmus of Rotterdam 1
- Ericsson, Hans-Ola 4
- Erlöserkirche (East Berlin) 70
- Escaich, Thierry 157–60, 159, 162
- Falcinelli, Rolande 140, 141, 145, 156, 157, 163
- Farkas, Ferenc 264
- Farnam, Lynnwood 246
- Fauré, Gabriel 151, 200, 221
- Feldman, Morton 270
- Fellerer, Karl Gustav 126–27
- Fellowes, Edmund H. 290
- Ferienkurse (Darmstadt) 162, 230–31, 268
- Ferneyhough, Brian 210
- Ferris Girls' School (Yokohama) 26–27
- Fesperman, John T. 32
- Fetler, Paul 257
- Finney, Ross Lee 253
- First Presbyterian Church (Topeka, Kansas) 256–57
- Fischer, Wilhelm 125
- Fisk, Charles B. (organ builder) 26, 267
- Flade, Ernst 125
- Flentrop, Dirk A. (organ builder) 24, 25, 32
- Flcury, André 141–42
- Florentz, Jean-Louis 162, 166–68, 167
- Fokker, Adriaan 204
- Folk music 53, 156, 220, 224, 286, 287, 299, 310, 318, 323, 329
- Forberg (publishers) 85
- Forqueras, Jean-Baptiste 122
- Foss, Hubert 290
- Fox, Douglas 299
- Fox, Virgil 5
- Francis of Assisi 149
- Franck, César 7, 12, 30, 35, 140, 145, 149, 151, 154, 172, 173, 197, 200, 221, 311
- Franco-Flemish School 47
- Franz Ferdinand, Archduke 105
- Franz Liszt Academy (Budapest) 264
- Frederick the Great 321
- Freiburg Conservatory 53
- Frescobaldi, Girolamo 7, 227, 264, 265, 265, 325
- Fritts, Paul (organ builder) 26
- Frobenius 24, 33
- Fryklöf, Harald 221
- Furtwängler, Wilhelm 107, 108
- Furtwängler und Hammer (organ builders) 19, 133
- Gade, Niels W. 219
- Gallon, Jean 171
- Gelineau, Joseph 327
- Geminiani, Francesco 122
- Genevan Psalter 213
- Genzmer, Harald 53–54
- Georg II, Duke of Saxony-Meiningen 105
- Gesualdo, Carlo 68
- Gewandhaus (Leipzig) 4
- Giesecke (organ builder) 22
- Gigout, Eugène 140, 141, 145, 225, 325
- Ginastera, Alberto 259
- Glaubensbewegung* (Confessional Reform Movement) 128
- Globokar, Vinko 65
- Gloucester Cathedral 287, 291, 301–2
- Goetze, Martin 26
- Goetze & Gwynn (organ builders) 26
- Gonzalez, Victor 19, 20
- Görlitz (Stadthalle) 13
- Gospel music 4, 251, 252, 256, 310
- Goss, John 317
- Göteborg Cathedral 262, 275, 276
- Göteborg Organ Art Center (Sweden) 27
- Gothenburg (Göteborg) Concert Hall 275
- Gottschalg, Alexander Wilhelm 94
- Gramlich, Kirsten 214
- Green, Samuel (organ builder) 297
- Gregorian chant *see* Plainchant
- Grieg, Edvard 197, 219
- Groenendijk, Piet 208
- Groot, Rokus de 209
- Grunenwald, Jean-Jacques 156, 178
- Gubaidulina, Sofia 6, 71
- Guéranger, Dom 311
- Guest, George 303
- Guillou, Jean 155
- Guilmant, Alexandre 6, 87, 118, 140–43, 145, 146, 151, 195, 197, 199, 220, 221, 224

- Gurlitt, Wilibald 17, 18, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 124, 125, 126, 128–29, 131, 132
- Gustav Vasa [Wasa] Church (Stockholm) 221, 223–24, 275, 276
- Gwynn, Dominic 26
- Haarlem International Competition for Improvisation 54, 201
- Haas, Joseph 46, 122, 123
- Hage, Jan 214
- Hägg, Gustaf 221
- Hakim, Naji 156–57, 158, 162, 323, 333
- Hambraeus, Bengt 60, 61, 230–31, 232, 234, 235–38, 237, 238, 239, 275–76
- Hammerskjold, Dag 208
- Hammond, Laurens 34
- Hammond organ 34
- Hampton, Calvin 255–56
- Hancock, Gerre 333
- Handel, George Frederic 120, 122, 287
- Handschin, Jacques 126
- Hansch, Josef 79
- Hanson, Howard 243
- Harpsichord 119, 130, 250, 282, 289, 290
- Harris, William H. 296
- Harrison, G. Donald (organ builder) 20, 30
- Harrison and Harrison (organ builders) 16, 20, 29, 302
- Hartmann, J.P.E. 219
- Harwood, Basil 293
- Haselböck, Hans 204
- Haselböck, Martin 59
- Haun, Eugene 254
- Heath, Edward 292
- Heidegger, Martin 130
- Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche (Berlin-Kreuzberg) 27
- Heiller, Anton 53, 54, 204, 232
- Heinichen, Johann David 123
- Heitmann, Fritz 236
- Hello, Ernest 311
- Helsinki Cathedral 224
- Helsinki Institute of Music 225
- Hendriks, Christiaan Frederik 199
- Henze, Hans Werner 31
- Hereford Cathedral 296
- Hicks, Stephen 330
- Highland Park Presbyterian Church (Dallas, Texas) 28–29
- Hill, Arthur 118
- Hill, Norman & Beard (organ builders) 16, 29
- Hillert, Richard 329–30
- Hindemith, Paul 47, 52–53, 53, 54, 67, 121, 256, 308
- Hinrichsen, Henri 101
- Hinsz, Albertus Anthoni 214
- Hitler, Adolf 129
- Hochschule der Künste (Berlin) 63
- Höller, Karl 46
- Holliger, Heinz 65
- Holmes, James 250
- Holst, Gustav 286, 289, 292
- Holtkamp, Walter, Sr. 20, 21, 22
- Honegger, Arthur 250
- Hook, E. and G.G. (organ builders) 27
- Hope-Jones, Robert 14, 308
- Hovland, Egil 234–35
- Howells, Dorothy Dawes 288, 290, 293, 295
- Howells, Herbert 6, 8, 286–304
- Howells, Michael 290, 291, 296
- Howells, Ursula 290–91, 293
- Hoyer, Karl 46–47
- Huber, Klaus 71
- Hughes, Langston 257
- Hugues, Herbert 290
- Huijbers, Bernard 213
- Hull, Percy 296
- Hurford, Peter 299
- Huygens, Christiaan 204
- H.W. Gray Company (*Contemporary Organ Series*) 57, 248
- Impressionism 44, 46, 141, 146, 151, 168, 225, 227, 286
- Improvisation 4, 5, 60, 61–62, 65, 81, 106, 140–41, 151, 155, 171, 181, 186, 196, 200, 203, 204, 212, 213, 214, 331, 332, 333
- Improvisation Competition for Organists (Foundation International Organ Competition Haarlem) 204–5
- Industrial Revolution 321
- Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles* (National Institute for Young Blind People, Paris) 140, 145, 146, 151
- Institute of Church Music (*Kirchenmusikalisches Institut*, Leipzig) 46, 47, 49
- Institute of Musicology, University of Freiburg 132–33
- Institute of Protestant Church Music (Essen) 55

- International Composition Competition (Zwolle) 210
- Isoir, André 205
- Ives, Charles 243, 245, 251, 256
- J. Fischer and Brothers Publishing (Dayton, Ohio) 325
- Jackson, Francis 299
- Jackson, Jesse 258
- Jackson, Nicholas 329
- Jacob, Werner 65
- Jahn, Hans Henny 17, 19, 125, 128, 132
- Jahrhunderthalle (Breslau) 103, 126
- Jakob, Friedrich 25
- Jakobikirche (Hamburg) 125
- Jakobikirche (Lübeck) 49, 312
- Jazz 34, 246, 247, 251, 253, 255
- Jeppesen, Knud 228
- Jesuskirken (Valby, Copenhagen) 33
- Johanniskirche (Düsseldorf) 173
- John F. Kennedy Center (Washington DC) 256
- John XXIII (Pope) 323
- Jolivet, André 160–62, 161
- Jugendbewegung 128, 130
- Juilliard School of Music (New York) 248
- Kagel, Mauricio 60, 61–63, 62, 65, 66, 262
- Kaminski, Heinrich 55
- Karg-Elert, Sigfrid 13, 43–44, 45, 197, 308, 317, 318, 319
- Katharine, Duchess of Kent 299
- Kee, Cor 196, 201
- Kee, Piet 202, 205–6, 206, 208, 210
- Keijzer, Arie 208
- Kemper (organ builders) 19
- Kempis, Thomas à 174, 185, 186
- Kennedy, John F. 291
- Keuris, Tristan 209–10
- Key action
  - Balanced 22, 65
  - Electric 5, 14, 127, 144, 236
  - Electro-pneumatic 10, 14, 19, 30, 34, 153
  - Mechanical 10, 12, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 59, 79, 120, 153
  - Pneumatic 13, 17
  - Suspended 22
  - Tubular pneumatic 12–13, 33, 236
- Kháyáyám, Omar 157
- Kimball (organ builders) 14
- King's College (Cambridge) 287, 293, 301
- Kint, Cor 196
- Klais (organ builders) 31, 32
- Klerk, Albert de 199, 200, 203
- Klosterneuburg Abbey 325
- Klotz, Hans 131
- Koch, Erland von 235
- Kokkonen, Joonas 235
- Kolberg (Kolobrzeg) Cathedral 107
- Kolozsvár Conservatory 264
- Konzerthaus (Vienna) 44
- Kousemaker, Adriaan 213
- Koussevitzky, Serge 247
- Kox, Hans 204
- Krenek, Ernst 56–59, 60
- Kropfreiter, Augustinus Franz 52
- Kruijs, Marius Hendrik van't 195
- La Jeune France* 160
- La Trinité church (Paris) 156, 157, 171, 172–73, 176, 178, 179, 181, 184, 185, 323
- Ladegast, Friedrich 13, 47
- Lambert, Herbert 289, 290
- Langage communicable* (Messiaen) 184–85, 186, 187
- Lange, Daniel de 194, 195, 199
- Lange, Samuel de 80, 195, 196, 199
- Lange, Samuel de, Jr. 195, 197
- Langgard, Rued 229–30
- Langlais, Jean 151–53, 152, 156, 171, 173, 178, 311, 329, 332
- Larsen, Elizabeth “Libby” Brown 257–58
- Latry, Olivier 140
- Laub, Thomas 227, 230
- Laurenkerk (Rotterdam) 212
- Lauterbach & Kuhn (publishers) 91
- Laye, Camara 168
- Leclercq, Jacques 168
- Leduc (publishers) 156, 175, 179, 200
- Leeuw, Ton de 204, 208–9, 210
- Leguay, Jean-Pierre 162, 163, 164
- Lehotka, Gábor 278
- Leibowitz, René 181
- Leighton, Kenneth 8, 322, 329
- Leipzig Conservatory 43, 46, 49, 104, 220
- Leipzig University 104, 130
- Lekkerkerker, Jacob 214
- Lemoine (publisher) 156
- Leroux, Gaston 3
- Lessmann, Otto 81
- Leupold, A.W. 313
- Leupold, Ulrich 313, 314
- Leupold, Wayne 255

- Lewis (organ builders) 29  
 Lichtwarkschule (Hamburg) 19  
 Liège Conservatoire 144  
 Ligeti, Györgi 4, 6, 8, 60, 61, 65, 66, 157, 206, 231, 262–83  
 Limoges Conservatoire 163  
 Lindberg, Oskar 221  
 Linder, Alf 231, 236  
 Lindner, Adalbert 78, 79, 80, 87  
 Liszt, Franz 76, 81, 84, 94, 98, 99, 123, 195, 197  
 Litaize, Gaston 163, 171, 173  
 Litzau, Jan Barend 194, 196  
 Lloyd Webber, W.S. 299  
 Lochner, Martin 330  
 Locklair, Dan 256–57  
 Locklair, Wriston 256  
 Loewengardt, Max 84  
 London University 292  
 Lorenz, Edmund (Lorenz Publishing Company) 319–20, 330, 332  
 Loriod-Messiaen, Yvonne 162, 175  
 Lortz, Joseph 98  
 Los Angeles Art Organ Company 14  
 Louis, Rudolf 99  
 Louisiana Purchase Exposition Festival Hall (St Louis, Missouri) 14  
 Ludwig, Ernst 19  
 Luitpoldhalle (Nürnberg) 129  
 Luther, Martin 86, 94, 312–13, 314  
 Lutkin, Peter 320  
 Lyon Conservatoire 162, 164, 166  
  
 Maarschalkerweerd and Adema (organ builders) 32, 209  
 Maasalo, Armas 225  
 Mace, Thomas 122  
 McLaughlin & Reilly Publishing (Boston) 325  
 McNeill, Jane 297  
 Macris, Saskia 214  
 Magnuisson (organ builders) 276  
 Mahler, Gustav 157, 199, 202  
 Mahrenholz, Christhard 17, 19, 117, 119, 120, 122, 125, 126, 129, 133  
 Malling, Otto 219  
 Man, Roderik de 211  
 Mander (organ builders) 24  
 Manneke, Daan 208, 209  
 Mannstädt, Franz 80  
 Manz, Paul 316, 316, 332  
 Marchal, André 19, 141, 163, 171  
 Marcussen (organ builders) 22, 24, 32, 33, 232, 235, 236  
  
 Marez Oyens, Tera de 213  
 Margittay, Sándor 264  
 Marienkirche (Göttingen) 119, 126, 133  
 Maritain, Jacques 173  
 Martin, Frank 52, 54, 259  
 Marty, Martin 329  
 Mascioni (organ builders) 31  
 Mass 78, 79, 103, 181–82, 277, 311, 319, 322, 323, 324, 326, 327, 329, 330  
 Matter, Bert 208  
 Matthaei, Karl 108, 118  
 Mattheson, Johann 123  
 Matthison-Hansen, Gottfried 219  
 Medek, Tilo 70  
 Mehrstens, Frits 202–3, 213  
 Meiningen Court Orchestra 104, 105  
 Melbourne Town Hall (Australia) 16  
 Memorial Church (Stanford University) 267  
 Mendelssohn, Arnold 49  
 Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Felix 46, 81, 87, 194, 220  
 Merikanto, Oskar 224, 225  
 Merklin (organ builders) 31, 172  
 Messiaen, Olivier 4, 7, 8, 60, 65, 151, 153, 155, 156, 157, 160–64, 166, 168, 171–87, 243, 253, 255, 258, 259, 323, 328–29, 333  
 Messiaen, Pierre 173  
 Metzler (organ builders) 24  
 Michaeliskirche (Hamburg) 196  
 Michel, Dom Virgil 325  
 Micropolyphony (Ligeti) 269, 276  
 Microtonality 71, 276  
 MIDI (musical instrument digital interface) technologies 5, 34  
 Milhaud, Darius 162  
 Minimalism 206, 208, 212  
 Mobach, Eelke 194–95  
 Modes of limited transposition (Messiaen) 175, 176, 179, 258  
 Møller, Svend-Ove 230  
 Monnikendam, Marius 196, 201  
 Montague, George, Earl of Sandwich 290  
 Moscow Conservatory 225  
 Motley Crüe 3  
*Motu proprio* “*Tra le Sollecitudini*” (Pius X) 324, 325, 327, 328  
 Mozart, Wolfgang 78, 91, 107, 286  
 Mozes & Aaronkerk (Amsterdam) 199  
 Mudde, Willem 212–13  
 Mul, Jan 203  
 Mulet, Henri 141  
 Müller-Blattau, Joseph 127, 128, 130

- Munich Academy of Music 46  
*Musicae Sacrae* (Pius XII) 326  
 Musikverein (Vienna) 44  
*musique concrète* 4  
 Mutin, Charles 12  
 Mysticism 320
- Nabokov, Vladimir 211  
 National Council of Churches 250  
 Nazi (National Socialist) regime 49, 53,  
 55, 56, 60, 67, 119, 127, 128, 130,  
 131, 132, 264, 266, 278  
 Near, Gerald 332  
 New College (Oxford) 287  
 New England Conservatory of Music  
 (Boston) 244  
 New German school 103, 123, 124,  
 221–22, 222  
 New Music 60, 63, 65, 66, 155  
 New York Philharmonic Society 53  
 Nicolai, Philipp 91  
 Nidaros Cathedral (Trondheim) 230  
 Nieland, Jan 201  
 Nielsen, Carl 227–29, 229  
 Nielsen, Ludvig 230  
 Nieuwe Zuiderkerk (Rotterdam) 17  
 Nikolaikirche (Leipzig) 47  
 Nilsson, Torsten 231–34, 233, 236  
 Nørgard, Per 234  
 Notation, graphic 270  
 Notre-Dame Cathedral (Paris) 145, 163,  
 166  
 Novello (publishers) 297, 298, 301
- Oberlin Conservatory 255  
 Obermayr, Joseph 204  
 Ocean Grove Auditorium (New  
 Jersey) 14  
 Ohlendorff, Hans von 107  
 Olsson, Otto 221–24, 223, 224, 236
- organ  
 American Classic 20, 27, 30, 36  
 Baroque 108, 121–22  
 Early Reform 11, 16–19, 31, 36  
 Eclectic 7, 10, 16, 19–22, 27, 29, 30,  
 31, 32, 33, 34, 35  
 Electronic 34, 35  
 Historically informed organ 20, 24–27,  
 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 117  
 Neo-symphonic organ 10, 16, 27–29,  
 30, 34  
 Nineteenth-century 11–13  
*Orgelbewegung* 22–24  
 Romantic 44, 122  
 Symphonic 10, 11, 13–16, 27, 30, 33,  
 34, 36, 46, 57, 154, 160, 166, 173
- Organ Clearing House 27  
 Organ Mass 71, 100, 112, 140, 145–46  
 Organists Charitable Trust 300  
 Orgelbau Th. Kuhn 34  
*Orgelbewegung* 8, 10, 16–20, 22–24, 29–  
 33, 35, 36, 55, 108, 116–33, 220, 228,  
 230, 236, 238, 312  
*Orgelpark* (Amsterdam) 212, 214  
 Örgryte Nya kyrka (Göteborg) 27  
*orgue néo-classique* 12, 16, 19, 20, 30  
 Orr, Robin 291–92  
 Oscar's Church (Stockholm) 232, 234,  
 235, 236  
 Ott, Paul 50  
 Otte, Hans 270, 275, 276  
 Oude Kerk (Amsterdam) 195, 214  
 Our Lady, Queen of the Most Holy  
 Rosary Cathedral (Toledo, Ohio) 15–  
 16  
 Overduin, Jan 333  
 Oxford Movement 317  
 Oxford University 292
- Pachelbel, Johann 118, 210, 227, 314,  
 315, 316  
 Paik, Nam June 262–63  
 Palais de Chailott (Paris) 19, 179  
 Paleis voor Volksvlijt (Amsterdam) 194,  
 199  
 Palestrina, Giovanni de 47, 50  
 Parker, Horatio 243–45, 259  
 Parratt, Walter 288, 294, 295  
 Parry, C. Hubert H. 286, 288, 293, 317  
 Pärt, Arvo 71, 72  
 Passau Cathedral 126  
 Paul VI (Pope) 323, 326  
 Paulus, Stephen 257  
 Pauw, Jean-Baptiste de 194, 199, 201  
 Peeters, Flor 315–16, 315, 332  
 Penderecki, Krzysztof 270  
 Penn, William 251  
 Pepping, Ernst 54, 55, 213  
 Persichetti, Vincent 248–49, 249, 250,  
 253  
 Peters, C.F. (publishers) 81, 101, 102  
 Pfitzner, Hans 55  
 Philadelphia Conservatory 248  
 Philbert, Charles-Marie 199  
 Phillips, Peter 131  
 Piazzolla, Astor 259

- Pierné, Gabriel 149  
 Pieterskerk (Leiden) 212  
 Pijper, Willem 201, 203–4, 210  
 Pink Floyd 252  
 Pinkham, Daniel 4, 249–50  
 Pirro, André 118  
 Piston, Walter 243, 250  
 Pius X (Pope) 324, 325, 327  
 Pius X School of Liturgical Music  
 (Manhattanville College, New York  
 State) 324–25  
 Pius XII (Pope) 326  
 Plainchant (Gregorian chant) 44, 50, 71,  
 142, 144, 146–47, 149, 156, 160, 162,  
 179, 185, 222, 223, 310, 311, 319,  
 323–28, 330, 332  
 Planyavsky, Peter 204  
 Pleyel (instrument builders) 172  
 Poister, Arthur 255  
 Polytonality 49, 52, 157, 256  
 Popplewell, Richard 299  
 Popular music 34, 329  
 Portland Symphony Orchestra  
 (Maine) 251  
 Post, Piet 203  
 Poulenc, Francis 200  
 Praetorius, Michael xiv, 19, 122–23, 125,  
 132  
 Praetorius organ (Freiburg/Breisgau) 18,  
 118, 119, 124–27  
 Predmore, Rev. George 326  
 Prinses Julianakerk (Scheveningen) 32  
 Pritchard, Arthur 299  
 Proulx, Richard 330, 332  
 Prussian Academy of Arts (Berlin) 55  
 Purvis, Richard 320  
 Quef, Charles 171  
 Raasted, Niels Otto 230  
 Radio Bremen 60, 63, 231, 270, 275–76  
 Raitio, Väinö 220, 225–27, 226  
 Rákosi, Mátyás 266  
 Ramin, Günther 116, 117, 122–27, 129,  
 130–31, 236  
 Raphael, Günter 47–48  
 Raugel, Félix 118, 120, 172  
 Ravel, Maurice 157, 299  
 Raver, Leonard 249, 250, 251  
 Read, Gardner 321–22  
 Reda, Siegfried 55–56  
 Reformation, Protestant 195, 213, 227,  
 309  
 Reformed Evangelical Lutheran Church  
 (Amsterdam) 196  
 Regensburg Cathedral 79  
 Reger, Joseph 78  
 Reger, Max 4–8, 13, 32, 35, 43–44, 46,  
 47, 50, 52, 54, 55, 65, 76–107, 124,  
 125, 195, 196, 220, 221, 230, 235,  
 236, 237, 238, 253, 313, 317  
 solo organ works with opus  
 number 77  
 Reich, Steve 206  
 Reil brothers (organ builders) 25, 32  
 Reimann, Heinrich 84, 86–87, 88, 94  
 Reinoldikirche (Dortmund) 196, 197  
 Respighi, Ottorino 264  
 Reubke, Julius 223, 236, 238  
 Rheims Cathedral 19  
 Rheinberger, Josef 50, 81, 82, 94, 220,  
 243  
 Ribe Cathedral 230  
 Rieger (organ builders) 44  
 Riemann, Hugo 78–84, 88  
 Riesenfeld, Paul 104  
 Rihm, Wolfgang 71  
 Rimsky-Korsakov, Nikolay 5  
 Rochberg, George 253  
 Roger-Ducasse, Jean 153  
*Rollschweller* (general crescendo, *Walze*) 13  
 Röntgen, Julius 194  
 Rorem, Ned 245, 250–51, 322, 323  
 Rose, Bernard 299  
 Rosenberg, Hilding 230  
 Rossini, Carlo 325, 330, 332  
 Rössler, Almut 173, 186  
 Roth, Daniel 156  
 Rothko, Mark 212  
 Routley, Erik 320–21, 330–31  
 Royal Academy of Music (London) 156  
 Royal Academy of Music  
 (Stockholm) 221  
 Royal Albert Hall (London) 308  
 Royal College of Music (London) 288,  
 289, 290, 292, 304  
 Royal College of Organists 288, 292, 298,  
 299  
 Royal Conservatory (The Hague) 206  
 Royal Festival Hall (London) 20, 30, 292,  
 298  
 Rubardt, Paul 126  
 Rubato 271  
 Rucker, Ingeborg 131  
 Ruffatti (organ builders) 31  
 Ruiter, Wim de 210–11

- Rupp, Emil 16, 17, 117, 123, 125
- Sachs, Curt 122
- Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Paul VI) 326–27
- Saenredam, Pieter 205
- St. Antoine des Quinze-Vingts church (Paris) 178
- St. Bavokerk (Haarlem) 210
- St. Clara Church (Stockholm) 221
- St. Clothilde (Paris) 149–53, 311
- St. Denis Abbey (Paris) 331
- St. Étienne-du-Mont (Paris) 157
- St. Eustache (Paris) 141, 155
- St. Florian Abbey 204
- St. Florian Monastery 47, 52
- St. George's Chapel (Windsor) 296
- St. George's Roman Catholic Church (Worcester) 293
- St. Germain-des-Près (Paris) 146
- St. Gervais (Paris) 151
- St. Giles Cathedral (Edinburgh) 297
- St. Hedwig's Cathedral (Berlin) 50
- St. Jacobs Kirke (Copenhagen) 24
- St. John's Abbey (Collegeville, Minnesota) 325
- St. John's Church (Helsinki) 225
- St. John's Church (Stockholm) 220, 275, 276
- St. John's College (Cambridge) 287, 291, 303
- St. Joseph Church (Haarlem) 199
- St. Laurenskerk (Rotterdam) 195
- St. Louis Exposition (1904) 6
- St. Luke's Church (Whitfield (Glossop)) 12
- St. Luke's Episcopal Church (Dallas) 292
- St. Machar's Cathedral (Aberdeen, Scotland) 297
- St. Marien (Göttingen) 19
- St. Mary's Church (Helsingborg) 231
- St. Mary's Church (Toronto) 317
- St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Aberdeen, Scotland) 297
- St. Michaelis (Hamburg) 17
- St. Nicholas Church (Leipzig) 47
- St. Ouen (Rouen) 142
- St. Paul's Cathedral (London) 287, 296, 301
- St. Paul's Cathedral (Pittsburgh) 325
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Cleveland, Ohio) 21
- St. Paul's Girls' School (London) 292
- St. Peter's Church (Mühlheim/Ruhr) 55
- St. Reinoldi (Dortmund) 17
- St. Sebald (Nürnberg) 65
- St. Sulpice (Paris) 142, 156, 171
- St. Thomas Church (Leipzig) 46, 84, 126
- St. Wilibrord Cathedral (Wesel (Rhein)) 84, 85
- Saint-Saëns, Camille 141, 172, 199, 331
- Salabert (publishers) 156
- Salisbury Cathedral 288, 303
- Salonen, Sulo 230
- Samuel, Harold 290
- Sandresky, Margaret 248
- Sängerhaus, Strasbourg (now Palais des Fêtes) 17
- Sargent, Malcolm 290
- Sauer, Wilhelm 13, 31, 32, 47, 84, 103
- Sauvage, Cécile 173
- Scarlatti, Domenico 130
- Scelsi, Giacinto 4
- Schalk, Carl 331–32
- Schat, Peter 204, 211
- Scheidt, Samuel 124, 125, 131, 227, 314
- Schering, Arnold 121, 122–23
- Schlemmer, Oskar 53
- Schlick, Arnold 19
- Schmidt, Franz 44–46, 197
- Schnebel, Dieter 63, 64
- Schneider, Max 123
- Schnitger, Arp 25, 26, 27, 32, 125, 126
- Schoenberg, Arnold 6–7, 31, 56–57, 58, 58, 59, 60, 68, 127, 160, 181, 264, 266
- Schoenstein & Co. (organ builders) 27
- Schola Cantorum (Paris) 140, 141, 151
- Schroeder, Hermann 52
- Schuke (organ builders) 4
- Schuler, Monsignor Richard 327
- Schumann, Clara 83
- Schumann, Robert 81, 95, 98, 99, 195
- Schütz, Heinrich 47, 128
- Schuurman, Adriaan C. 213
- Schwantner, Joseph 256
- Schweitzer, Albert 16–17, 31, 108, 117, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125, 127
- Sears, Clarence 322
- Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) 323, 326, 327, 328–30
- Second Viennese School 55
- Seiffert, Max 118
- Seneca the Younger 4
- Serialism 60, 163, 231, 232, 238, 249, 251, 262, 268, 269
- Setterquist & Son, E.A. (organ builders) 33

- Seurat, Georges 263  
 Sharp, Ronald 33  
 Shimmin, Sydney 295  
 Sibelius, Jean 219, 225, 256  
 Sibelius Academy (Helsinki) 225, 235  
 Silbermann, Andreas 17, 124, 125  
 Silbermann, Gottfried 17, 25, 125, 126  
 Silbermann, Johann Andreas 17  
 Silbermann (organ builders) 17, 32, 123  
 Simon, Carl 43  
*Singbewegung* 119  
 Sjögren, Emil 220–21  
 Skinner, Ernest M. 15, 20, 27, 321  
 Skryabin, Aleksandr 225, 226  
 Snoei, Wouter 211  
 Söderblom, Nathan 222  
 Söhngen, Oskar 108  
 Solesmes Abbey 311, 323, 325  
 Sorge, Georg Andreas 19  
 Sowerby, Leo 9n8, 245, 246–47, 250  
 Spitta, Philipp 85  
 Stadtpfarrkirche St. Michaelis (Weiden/  
 Oberpfalz) 78, 79  
 Stalin, Josef 266  
 Stanford, Charles Villiers 286, 293, 317,  
 318  
 Stanford University 267, 279  
 Staples, H.J. 320  
 Stein, Fritz 93, 104  
 Steinbach, Fritz 104  
 Steinmeyer (organ builders) 32, 79  
 Stellwagen, Friedrich 49  
 Stevens-Davis, Harry 295  
 Stockhausen, Karlheinz 162, 181, 234,  
 268  
 Stockholm Ecumenical Conference  
 (1925) 222  
 Stockmeier, Wolfgang 68  
 Stokowski, Leopold 3  
 Stop action  
   Electric 5, 19  
   Electro-pneumatic 19  
   Mechanical 24  
   Pneumatic 13  
 Storkyrkan (Great Church,  
 Stockholm) 221  
 Straesser, Joep 210  
 Strategier, Herman 200, 203  
 Straube, Karl 46, 84, 85, 86, 92, 94,  
 98–105, 107, 108, 118, 122, 123, 125,  
 132, 196, 220, 227, 230  
 Strauss, Richard 78, 83, 85, 105  
 Stravinsky, Igor 55, 56, 67, 156, 157, 166,  
 256, 259, 276  
 Strickland, William 57, 248  
 Stuttgart Conservatory 195  
 Suger, Abbot 331  
 Swedish Radio 276  
 Sweelinck, Jan Pieterszoon 131, 195, 204,  
 228  
 Syracuse University 255  
 Szathmáry, Zsigmond 65–66, 266, 278,  
 279  
 Tagliavini, Luigi Ferdinando 117  
 Takemitsu, Tōru 266  
 Tallis, Thomas 296  
 Tanke, Willem 212  
*Tastenfessel* 24  
 Taylor, George 26  
 Taylor & Boody (organ builders) 26  
 Telemann, Georg Philipp 130  
 Temperament 25  
 Temple Beth Elohim (Washington  
 DC) 14  
 Terry, Richard 290  
 Thalben-Ball, George 295, 299  
 Thiman, Eric 299  
 Thomas, Dylan 248, 249  
 Thomas Aquinas 173, 174, 179–80, 184,  
 185, 186  
 Thomson, Virgil 322  
 Three Choirs Festival 287, 291  
 Tiffany, Louis Comfort 256  
 Tippett, Michael 286  
 Toebosch, Louis 201  
 Toonkunstkoor Amsterdam 199  
 Töpfer, Johann Gottlob 25  
 Tournemire, Charles 141, 147, 149–51,  
 150, 153, 172, 173, 179, 181–82,  
 311  
 Tovey, Donald Francis 123  
 Transcription 3, 15, 76, 77, 178  
*Tres Pueri* (music publishing group) 203  
 Tsvetaeva, Marina 257  
 Tully, Alice 251  
 Uijlenhoet, René 211  
*Una Voce* 328  
 Underwinding (“denatured” sound,  
 Ligeti) 277, 278, 282  
 University of Arizona 258  
 University of Kolozsvár 264  
 University of Michigan 253  
 University of Minnesota 257  
 Urban IV (Pope) 186

- Valen, Fartein 230  
*Valeurs ajoutées* (Messiaen) 151, 179  
 Van Amelsvoort, Jos 200–201  
 Van Appledorn, Mary Jeanne 248  
 Van Baaren, Kees 201, 206, 207, 208, 211  
 Van den Heuvel (organ builders) 25  
 Van der Horst, Anthon 201–2, 202, 203, 204  
 Van Eijken, Jan Albert 194, 195, 197, 213  
 Van Gijn, Jan 213  
 Van Leeuwen (organ builders) 24, 32  
 Van Noordt, Anthoni 195  
 Van Rossem, Andries 212  
 Van Vlijmen, Jan 211  
 Van Vulpen (organ builders) 32  
 Van Westering, Paul Christian 196, 204  
 Varèse, Edgard 60, 160  
 Vaughan Williams, Ralph 256, 286, 288, 289, 291, 292, 293, 296, 298, 318  
 Vaughan Williams, Ursula 292  
*Vereeniging tot bevordering van orgelmuziek*  
 (Society to Promote Organ Music) 199  
 Veress, Sándor 264  
 Verhulst, Johannes 195  
 Verkruijsen, Niek 201  
 Vermeulen (organ builders) 33  
 Verschuere (organ builders) 25, 33  
 Viborg Cathedral (Jutland) 230  
 Vienna Academy of Music 44, 54  
 Vierne, Louis 12, 142, 145–48, 147, 151, 154, 199, 224  
 Vogel, Willem 213  
 Vogler, Georg Joseph (Abt) 123  
 Vriend, Jan 210, 211  
 Vries, Hendrik de 195, 197
- Wagemans, Peter Jan 212  
 Wagner, Richard 4, 78, 79, 80, 85, 88, 91, 106, 123, 184, 195, 317  
 Wake Forest University (Winston-Salem) 256  
 Walburgiskerk (Zutphen) 203  
 Walcha, Helmut 4, 108, 312  
 Walcker, Eberhard Friedrich 13, 16  
 Walcker (organ builders) 13, 17, 29, 31, 32, 33, 103, 129, 196  
 Walcker, Oscar 16, 17, 132  
 Walther, Johann Gottfried 316  
 Wammes, Ad 208  
 Wanamaker's Department Store (Philadelphia) 14, 142
- Webern, Anton 68, 163, 264, 266  
 Weinrich, Carl 57  
 Weir, Gillian 184  
 Welin, Karl-Erik 231, 233, 262, 275, 276  
 Welmers, Jan 205, 206, 208, 212  
 Werckmeister, Andreas 19  
 Wesley, John 309  
 Westerkerk (Amsterdam) 276  
 Westminster Abbey 146, 287, 293  
 Westminster Cathedral 184  
 Whitlock, Percy 318–19, 319  
 Whitman, Walt 251  
 Widor, Charles-Marie 12, 87, 117, 140, 141, 142, 145, 149, 171, 173, 195, 197, 199, 200, 220, 221, 224  
 Wiesbaden Conservatory 80  
 Willan, Healey 8, 317–18, 318, 332  
 Willis (organ builders) 29, 146, 301  
 Wills, Arthur 299  
 Windchest  
   pitman 22, 34  
   slider 22, 25  
 winding, electrically-driven (rotar blower) 5, 34  
 Winterberger, Alexander 195  
 Wolf, Cornelis de 196  
 Wolf, Hugo 76  
 Wolff, Charles de 203  
 Wolfrum, Philipp 94  
 Wolgast, Johannes 84  
 Wood, Dale 310  
 Worp, Johannes 195, 213  
 Wortham, Hugh 290  
 Wren, Christopher 296  
 Wurlitzer organ 14
- Xenakis, Iannis 6, 162, 181, 210
- Yale University 243  
 York Minster 294  
 Yun, Isang 66, 67
- Zachariassen, Sybrand 22–23, 24  
 Zacher, Gerd xiv, 65, 66, 278, 279  
 Zara-Yaq'ob 168  
 Zechlin, Ruth 70  
 Zwart, Dirk Jansz. 196  
 Zwart, Jaap, Sr. 196  
 Zwart, Jan 195–96, 197, 213  
 Zwart, Willem Hendrik 196  
 Zwilich, Ellen Taaffe 248



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