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New Organ Music

Twelve Free Arrangements for Organ Solo, by James Alyward. Available from the composer, \$20.00, 69 Benton Avenue, San Francisco, California 94112, 415/333-5702.

This second collection of organ solos follows James Alyward's *Ten Free Arrangements for Organ Solo* published in 2017 and reviewed here in the April 2020 issue, page 10. Similar in concept to his first collection, Alyward uses thematic material from a variety of sources and molds them with his unique style of additions, modifications, and embellishments, cast within a French Romantic harmonic style. The result is a newer version of the old, rich in detail and impressively idiomatic.

Featured in this second volume are fairly well-known orchestral selections from Bach, Borowski, Brahms, Handel, Telemann, and Vivaldi. The Guilman rearrangement of "Intermezzo" is a true gem, whereas the "Serenade" by Goss-Custard is a wonderful introduction to the works of this forgotten but once very popular organ recitalist of the first half of the twentieth century.

Twelve Free Arrangements encompasses a wide range of affects and is a very satisfying collection suitable for concerts and church services. The art of improvisation resides in each of these pieces and is in full display for us to enjoy. This is highly recommended!

Carillon, by Herbert Murrill. Oxford University Press, 9780193559233, 2021, \$12.95. Available from: global.oup.com.

The Oxford University Press catalogue now offers a special collection of organ literature marketed as the "Oxford Organ Library," consisting of newly commissioned works, select pieces from their extensive catalogue, or enduring scores now reprinted for us to enjoy anew.

Carillon, originally published in 1949, is again in print and represents one of the finest compositions penned by Herbert Murrill (1909–1952), alongside his band arrangement for the Indian national anthem. Without doubt, *Carillon* is a showcase organ composition that combines a motoric rhythm, metrical diversification, and genre cross-overing. The energy of this toccata-fanfare is generated by its two-measure angular motive in sixteenth-note motion contrasted with tone clusters and chords as a clarion call. As well, the manuals and pedals are both active throughout the work.

An interesting component to the piece is the composer's indication for his desired effect on the final chord, and

it seems (without knowing the organ for which it was written) open to some adaptation to the performer's instrument as witnessed in several YouTube performances. This is a piece quite worthy of your time and energy to learn.

—David Troiano
St. Clair Shores, Michigan

New Recordings



Chernivtsi: Contemporary Ukrainian Organ Music

Chernivtsi: Contemporary Ukrainian Organ Music, by Gail Archer, organ. Meyer Media, MM20042, \$13. Available from meyer-media.com, gailarcher.com, and amazon.com.

Fanfare, *Benedictus*: Song of Zechariah, Bohdan Kotyuk; *Piece in Five Movements*, Tadeusz Machl; *Fantasia*, Viktor Goncharenko; *Passacaglia*, Mykola Kolessa; *Chacona*, Svitlana Ostrova; *Fantasia*, Iwan Kryshanowskij.

Gail Archer, who is college organist at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, a faculty member of the Harriman Institute of Columbia University, and director of the music program at Barnard College, also of Columbia University, plays this recital on the 1990 Rieger-Kloss organ of three manuals, fifty-one ranks in the Armenian Catholic Church, Chernivtsi, Ukraine. The church doubles as a concert hall, and the authorities of the hall paid for the organ. More than ninety percent of the population of Ukraine is Eastern Orthodox. Since Orthodox Christians do not use the organ in worship, the organ community belongs to those Catholic and secular minorities that make up less than ten percent of the population out of necessity.

The first composer, Bohdan Kotyuk (b. 1951) comes from a distinguished Ukrainian family of Roman Catholic philosophers and religious leaders. He combined his interests in music, theology, and philosophy during his training at the Lviv Conservatory. This compact disc

includes two contrasting compositions by this composer for the organ. The first, *Fanfare*, is an animated dialog between the different divisions of the organ. The second, *Benedictus*, is a meditation on the birth of Saint John the Baptist and his foretelling of the coming of Messiah. It has a bright, crisp texture and makes use of a warm interaction between the manual and pedal parts.

Tadeusz Machl (1922–2003) was born in Lviv and educated at the Lviv Conservatory, following which he became the organist of Saint Elizabeth Roman Catholic Church in Lviv. He moved to Szczecin, Poland, and then to Kraków. In the 1950s he traveled to Paris to study the improvisational techniques of contemporary French organists. These techniques are mirrored in the five miniatures that make up *Piece in Five Movements*.

The next composer, Viktor Goncharenko (b. 1959) comes from Dnipro and studied at the Kiev Conservatory. This recording features the second of his fantasias, a work in ternary form with an uneven metrical structure. It has a mysterious warmth, augmented by its highly chromatic character and rich harmonies.

Mykola Kolessa (1903–2006) hailed from Sambia near Lviv and was the son of an eminent ethnomusicologist. He graduated from the Prague Conservatory and completed an advanced degree at its School of Master Artists. He taught at the Lysenko Higher Institute of Music and at Lviv Conservatory, of which he eventually became rector. His *Passacaglia* was written in 1929 as part of his postgraduate studies. It is a highly virtuosic work, including double pedaling. The piece is again very chromatic, with a mixture of massive chords and rapid passages on the manuals.

Svitlana Ostrova (b. 1961) is the only female composer whose work features on this compact disc. She comes from Kiev and attended the Kiev Academy. A noted pedagogue, she is a keen teacher of music for children, and moreover conducts the Kiev ensemble Shchedrivochka, specializing in traditional and contemporary New Year's carols for children. Many of her organ compositions have religious themes, such as her *Symphony of Creation* and *Diptych: Golgotha and Eucharist*. Her *Chacona* consists of four variations on a single theme. It begins with a simple statement of the theme and moves through various contrasting tempi to a highly chromatic conclusion.

For her last composer Gail Archer chose a Ukrainian who is far from contemporary. This is Iwan Kryshanowskij (1867–1924), born in Kiev and a student of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. A later student of Rimsky-Korsakov was Igor Stravinsky, and Dr. Archer chose Kryshanowskij for his place in the musical tradition that influenced both contemporary Russian and Ukrainian composers. His *Fantasia* exhibits the same chromaticism that appears in many contemporary compositions and has much warmth and color with occasional bursts of excitement.

Dr. Archer comments, "It is my sincere hope that many people will take the journey to Chernivtsi and come away refreshed, renewed, and ever more curious about the musical arts in Eastern Europe today." That is certainly the

impression the compact disc leaves with me, and I thoroughly recommend it.

Editor's note: for more on organs and organ music of Lviv, Ukraine, see "Lviv Organ Art History, churches, music, and personalities," by Olena Matselyukh, June 2020, pages 12–17.



Schnitger in Norway: Hans van der Meijden on the new Flentrop organ in Dypvåg Kirke

Schnitger in Norway: Hans van der Meijden on the new Flentrop organ in Dypvåg Kirke. DVH 140325, €15.00. Available from www.dmp-records.nl.

Toccata in D Minor, BuxWV 155, Buxtehude; *Psalm 24*, Claude Goudimel; Anthony van Noordt; *Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele*, Georg Böhm; *Canzon G-dur*, Franz Tunder; *Prelude and Fugue in G Minor*, BWV 535, *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 739, *Herr Gott, nun schließ den Himmel auf*, BWV 1092, *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 1105, *Herzlich lieb hab ich dich, o Herr*, BWV 1115, *Wie nach eine Wasserquelle*, BWV 1119, *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, BWV 727, *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein*, BWV 734, *Wir glauben all an einen Gott, Vater*, BWV 740, *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, BWV 565, J. S. Bach.

This recording features the organ at the Dypvåg Kirke, which is an interesting exercise of design within constraint. (See "New Organs," December 2020, page 20.) The church in Norway is a stone building dating from around the year 1200. The organist Hans van der Meijden came originally from the Netherlands where he trained at the Rotterdam and Leeuwarden conservatories. He later moved to Norway, where he is a leading organ consultant, and was eager to obtain for the Dypvåg Kirke an organ capable of giving authentic performances of Baroque music. This is where the design within constraint model gains importance.

The church has little headroom and a rather shallow gallery, so an obvious model seemed to be Arp Schnitger's organ of 1698 in Dedesdorf, Germany. Here the two manual chests are on the same level, resulting in a front organ (Vorderwerk) and a back organ (Hintertwerk). A further advantage is that the organ can be shallower since there need be only one walkboard. One disadvantage, however, is that to be able to reach the manual reeds to tune them they are all placed at the front of the back chest, so there can be no reeds on the front organ. One advantage of the Dypvåg gallery is that there is just enough headroom for an 8' Principal in the façade, whereas the Dedesdorf organ only has a 4' Principal. In common with many small organs in the late seventeenth century the Dedesdorf organ has no independent pedal stops. By the time of Bach this was no longer acceptable, so a pedal division comprising a 16' Untersatz and 16' Posauene was provided at Dypvåg. The Dypvåg Kirke commissioned Flentrop Orgelbouw of Zaandam, the Netherlands, to build the organ, and it was completed in 2019.

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Reviews

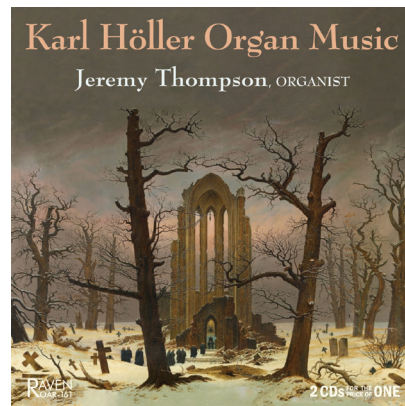
Rather unusually, most of the voicing was done in the workshop so that the pipework could be matched closely to existing Schnitger precedents. The tonal finishing in the church was aimed solely at matching the organ to the acoustics of the building. The instrument is tuned to the $\frac{1}{2}$ -comma Kellner-Bach temperament at A=440 Hz. There is a waxed oak case based on that at Dedesdorf with polished tin façade pipes. This recording is published by DMP Records, a small recording company based in the Netherlands. DMP is also currently producing a CD set of the complete organ works of J. S. Bach, performed by Pieter van Dijk on various historic Dutch organs.

The booklet that comes with the compact disc very helpfully lists all the individual registrations used. For an instrument of only seventeen stops and twenty-one ranks the Flentrop organ produces a very impressive sound that one might expect to come from a much larger instrument. Buxtehude's *Tocatta in D Minor*, an outstanding example of the *stylus phantasticus*, provides an opportunity for the player to demonstrate a wide range of different combinations of stops, and one can hardly think of a better piece with which to demonstrate the organ. Van der Meijden then plays Claude Goudimel's tune *Psalm 42*. He follows this with three variations on the tune by Anthony van Noordt (1619–1675), organist of Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam. Good use is made of the reeds here. The 16' Dulcian is most effective in the first variation, as is the 8' Trommet in the third. Next comes Georg Böhm's chorale partita on FREU DICH SEHR, O MEINE SEELE, another setting of the Genevan Psalm 42, this time by Louis Bourgeois. It is a tune commonly sung in North America to the Advent carol, "Comfort, comfort ye my people." There are eleven variations, which again provide many opportunities to explore the different timbres of the organ. One of Franz Tunder's lesser-known organ works, *Canzona in G Major*, gives us an opportunity to hear the Vogelgeschrei (bird whistle) stop.

The remainder of the compact disc features works by J. S. Bach. The first of these is *Prelude and Fugue in G Minor*, BWV 535, and Hans van der Meijden displays considerable artistry in playing the cadenza at the end of the fugue. This followed by eight chorale preludes. With regard to registration he treats these chorale preludes in very different ways. For example, he makes no fewer than ten changes in registration in the course of *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, bringing on the Cimbels in near the end. In other cases he plays the entire chorale prelude on the same registration, sometimes using very unexpected stops. In *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein*, he plays the whole chorale at 4' pitch, using the Hinterverk Quinta a fifth lower in one hand and the Vorderverk Octave in the other, coupling both manuals at pitch to the pedal. He makes effective use of the Vox Humana in *Wir glauben all an einen Gott, Vater*. The compact disc concludes with the *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*, BWV 565. Hans van der Meijden's interpretation of the fugue is particularly interesting, contrasting the 8' Trommet with the Vorderverk flues in the echo passages.

Consultant Hans van der Meijden and Flentrop Orgelbouw are to be congratulated on an excellent installation in the Dypvåg Kirke, figuratively a "Schnitger in Norway." The Baroque repertoire chosen proves to be excellent for demonstrating the organ, and the registrations selected are interesting, though I doubt that Bach would have used such

unusual combinations for playing his own compositions. Altogether a very enjoyable compact disc that is well worth its purchase price.



Karl Höller Organ Music

Karl Höller Organ Music. Jeremy Thompson, organist. Raven two-compact disc set, OAR-161, \$15.96. Available from RavenCD.com.

CD1: *Ciacona*, op. 54; *Chorale-passacaglia über "Die Sonn' hat sich mit ihrem Glanz gewendet,"* op. 61; *Chorale variations "Helft mir Gottes Gütes preisen,"* op. 22 no. 1; *Chorale Variations "Jesu meine Freude,"* op. 22 no. 2.

CD2: *Triptychon on the Easter Sequence "Victimae paschali laudes,"* op. 64: "Improvisation, 'Amen,'" "Ricercar, 'Dic nobis, Maria,'" "Postludium, 'Amen, Alleluia!'"

The current building of Saint John's Episcopal Church in Roanoke, Virginia, dates from 1891–1892. The architect was Charles M. Burns of Philadelphia, who specialized in designing Episcopal churches. The building contains a great deal of wood, including the multi-stayed hammerbeam roof and the wooden clerestory. It also features a colorful floor of Enfield tiles, a favorite touch of the architect Burns. The result is a rather unusual acoustic environment. The organ is Quimby Pipe Organs Opus 66 of 2010, with four manuals and 79 ranks, incorporating some ranks from Aeolian-Skinner Opus 1093 of 1948. The organist on this recording, Dr. Jeremy Thompson, is director of music at First Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville, Virginia, and a well-known concert organist.

Karl Höller (1907–1987) came from a family of organists and composers. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were cathedral organists, although Karl dedicated himself to teaching, including a time as president of the Frankfurt Hochschule für Musik between 1949 and 1972. As the booklet points out, Höller's organ works are of large scale—I would say monumental—except, perhaps, for the first of the two *Chorale Variations*, op. 22. The rich forthright tone of the Quimby organ makes it an ideal instrument for playing this repertoire. I found the energized, almost euphoric, character of the *Chorale Variation* on "Jesu meine Freude" particularly interesting. Most of the pieces are rather dark in feeling. On the second compact disc the jubilant piece, "Improvisation, Amen," gives us an opportunity to hear the impressive *tutti* of the Quimby organ. The introspective Ricercar that follows provides an interesting contrast with the first movement before the final "Postludium" returns us to the excitement of the first movement. I must confess that I had not previously heard of Karl Höller, but having heard his music I have become a convert. It is my hope that these excellent recordings will help to make his music more popular in North America.

—John L. Speller
Port Huron, Michigan

Bert Adams, FAGO

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