



The Gabler-Organ in the Basilica Weingarten

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Alte Musik Aktuell Nr. 9
(Wolfgang Hübinger -
1997.09.01)



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[American Record Guide](#) 6/2003 (Mulbury - 2003.11.01)



The great organ in the Basilica in Weingarten (near Lake Constance), completed by Josef Gabler in 1750, is a wonder of the organ world; and it is difficult to decide whether the immense, elaborate case or the resplendent sound are more magnificent. The young German Gerhard Gnann's deft performance of a thoughtful and well-chosen selection of works expertly demonstrates this grand instrument, one of only two by this builder still extant.

A fascinating and unusual component of his program is Guy Bovet's arrangement for organ of Vivaldi's Concerto in B minor, No. 10 from L'Estro Armonico, arranged after the manner of Bach used in his own organ transcriptions of Vivaldi's concertos. It is a brilliant and mercurial work that sounds especially delightful on this organ, and Gnann's playing of it is impeccable. A Pachelbel chorale partita with 14 variations offers an apt showcase for an assortment of the unique registers of this organ and makes one wish that Gnann's registration had been included in the booklet.

The curious Knecht Sonata and a sleepy performance of Mozart's Andante, K 616, closer in tempo to Adagio, prove less felicitous. The Muffat Toccata, however, is given an ideal reading, full of French baroque exuberance; and the Bach trio movement is finely played, a difficult organ and room for intricate trios notwithstanding. But Bach's lavishly ornamented version of 'Allein Gott' is weighed down by a dreadful plodding tempo, and the A-minor Prelude and Fugue will disappoint all those who expect something beyond fast and loud.

The sound has been expertly engineered. The organ was milked in a way that minimizes the extreme reverberation of this spacious room. Well recorded, well played recordings of well selected repertoire on this wondrous organ are not easy to find, so this deserves a recommendation, caveats aside.

Concerto 5/94 (behe - 1994.05.01)

Klangliche Monumentalität und architektonische Leichtigkeit charakterisieren...

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Early Music Review Febr. 1997 (Andrew Benson-Wilson - 1997.02.01)

Even confirmed organ-haters should give this one a try - and the magnificent Weingarten organ is, of course, a must for any organ-lover. Spread between, beneath and above (including a little Kronpositive high in the vaulted ceiling) the six west end windows of this sumptuous southern German baroque basilica, the organ is one of the architectural, engineering and musical wonders of its day. It is a wonderful experience to play - the organ console must be the most sumptuous ever made, with beautiful inlaid wood and ornate carving, and the organist can look over the music desk down the entire length of the church. Above the player's head are a carillon of bells, designed as large, pendulous grapes on a vine (Weingarten). The programme is well suited to the instrument and the playing is confident and stylish. Organ builders and players (not to say listeners) will sympathise with the story that Gabler sold his soul to the devil to get the vox humana stop to work - the devil clearly gave good advice on organ-voicing

Organ 2/98 (Jean-Claude Kaegi - 1998.02.01)

Der Orgel-Professor am Fachbereich Musik der Universität Mainz hat sich bereits...

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