



audite

ISZT

The Friend and Paragon

Organ Works by

Ritter

Müller-Hartung

Jadassohn

Sulze

Töpfer

Anna-Victoria Baltrusch

CARL MÜLLER-HARTUNG (1834-1908)

Sonate für Orgel Nr. 2 f-Moll

„Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten“

- I. Im Zeitmaß des Chorals 4:00
- II. Sehr getragen 7:27
- III. In gleichmäßiger Bewegung, streng gebunden 6:06

JOHANN GOTTLÖB TÖPFER (1791-1870)

Sonate für Orgel d-Moll op. 15

- I. Allegro maestoso 6:19
- II. Andante 4:07
- III. Finale. Allegro vivace 4:34

BERNHARD SULZE (1829-1889)

Concert-Fantasie F-Dur op. 63

- I. Einleitung 1:47
- II. Variation I 1:13
- III. Variation 2 1:05
- IV. Variation 3 1:13
- V. Variation 4. Pastorale 1:45
- VI. Variation 5 1:31
- VII. Variation 6. Adagio 2:22
- VIII. Variation 7 3:37
- IX. Molto maestoso 1:08

SALOMON JADASSOHN (1831-1902)

Fantasie für Orgel g-Moll op. 95

- I. Praeludium (Kanon).
Allegro moderato 3:29
- II. Aria. Adagio 4:01
- III. Fuge. Allegro 3:15

AUGUST GOTTFRIED RITTER (1811-1885)

Freies Choralvorspiel

„Herr Gott, nun schleuß den Himmel auf“ 2:13

Sonate für Orgel Nr. 2 e-Moll op. 19

- I. Rasch und entschlossen 2:54
- II. Ruhige Bewegung 2:44
- III. Lebhafter 1:21
- IV. Vorige Bewegung 0:59
- V. In freier Bewegung 0:51
- VI. Rasch und feurig 4:28



Having spent years as an itinerant piano virtuoso, in 1848 Liszt settled in Weimar to devote himself more to composing and conducting. At the time, Weimar was mostly drawing on the past greatness of Goethe and Schiller. Liszt managed to re-establish the city as a musical centre of European standing, for instance by putting on performances of Wagner's operas and also by attracting numerous artists to the city who also frequented his home. Most of his symphonic works were written here, but also his organ works, for it was in Weimar that he met important organ virtuosos and composers who introduced him to this complex instrument, influenced him, but were also inspired by him. The works on this CD testify to these interactions.

The oldest of the organists represented here, Johann Gottlob Töpfer, born in Apolda, lived and worked in Weimar as a teacher of music theory and organ. He enjoyed such an excellent standing as town organist, pianist and improviser that Franz Liszt, a great admirer of his, led his funeral procession. However, above all, Töpfer had acquired an outstanding reputation as an organ-building theorist and organ expert, and he had written a manual of organ building on which Ladegast, Sauer and Walcker, among others, based their work. As a composer, he shaped the genre of the romantic choral fantasia, in which he took up the cyclical multi-movement form rolled into one single movement, which Liszt established in many large-scale compositions, including his Piano Sonata in B Minor.

However, Töpfer's only Organ Sonata in D Minor still marks a moderately romantic starting point for the range of works presented here. Probably written around 1845, it was not printed until 1852. The influence on Töpfer's work of Mendelssohn's famous Sonatas Op. 65, published in 1845, seems undeniable. The opening *Allegro maestoso* can be interpreted as a romantic interpretation of the baroque concerto grosso form, with ritornellos for the tutti ensemble alternating with concertino passages, scored for a small group of soloists. The antiphonal interchanges between the contrasting sections move ever closer together during the course of the movement before the reprise-like return of the ritornello in the home key. The second movement, *Andante*, seems – for all its polyphonic loosening up – almost classical in its periodic phrase structure. The tonalities alone, ranging from F major to D flat major, also testify to the romantic spirit of this movement. The third movement, entitled *Allegro vivace*, is written in sonata form with its development section conceived as a fugato. The condensed lyrical secondary theme is remarkable: setting out in the relative major key of F, then moving to D major in the recapitulation, it seems after a few bars to lose itself in questioning self-doubt before the stormy impetus regains the upper hand.

August Gottfried Ritter studied piano and improvisation in Weimar with Johann Nepomuk Hummel before becoming organist in Erfurt in 1831. This was interrupted to accommodate his studies in (amongst other things) musicology with Carl von Winterfeld in Berlin. Shortly after returning to Erfurt, he was appointed cathedral organist and royal music director in Merseburg, and finally cathedral organist in Magdeburg. Interested in musicology, he published old organ music in collections such as *Das Orgel-Archiv* and helped to increase a new awareness of, and interest in, the organ during the nineteenth century. Of his own organ compositions, it was first and foremost his four sonatas, in D minor, E minor, A minor (dedicated to Franz Liszt) and A major, which found their way into the repertoire.

His Second Sonata in E Minor, Op. 19, refers to the principle of a multi-movement form rolled into a single movement, as developed by Liszt. Ritter opens the work with the final cadence, which is also heard at the very end, and abruptly commences proceedings with a Neapolitan sixth chord of A-C-F. This is followed by a prelude section over pedal points, once again leading into the final cadence. An ascending call motif in unison introduces a recitative-like section, which is also characterised by complementary falling and rising semitones. At the centre of the sonata is a slow movement in $\frac{6}{8}$, interspersed with many chromatic lines, lively acceleration in the middle with virtuoso pedal passages, and a constant sprinkling of Neapolitan colours. The final section, entitled *Rasch und feurig* [swift and fiery], again takes up the elements of the recitative, especially the motto-like repeated call motif, rising admonishingly.

In 1865, Carl Müller-Hartung, following positions at the Dresden Opera and having succeeded his teacher Friedrich Kühmstedt as music director, court and city cantor at Eisenach, was appointed – at Franz Liszt's suggestion – church music director in Weimar, where in 1869 he also became court *Kapellmeister*. His home, "Villa Agathe", was to become a second musical centre in Weimar, alongside Liszt's house. He achieved great renown by his founding of the Grand Ducal Orchestral and Music School, with which he realised Liszt's earlier plans and is thus regarded as the founder of the Weimar Academy of Music, which is now named after Franz Liszt.

His Second Organ Sonata in F Minor is based on the chorale *Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten* [Who only lets dear God rule], which is heard in its entirety in the first movement as a *cantus firmus* in swinging $\frac{6}{4}$, divided between the treble and tenor. The third movement, an extensive fugue, introduces its final thematic entry as a counterpoint to

the return of the chorale. The dense writing of this sonata is remarkable, though this only really becomes apparent on reading the score. The second movement and the fugue seem to bear no relation to the *cantus firmus*. Nevertheless, three motifs provide close relationships between all the movements: in the first movement, a motif X is gradually developed, which in its entirety consists of the notes C-D flat-B flat-G-F-E (with an upward leap of a sixth between B flat and G). Still in the first movement, a motif Y is hinted at in the accompanying textures, which, in its ideal form, consists of a rising semitone followed by an upward leap of a fifth, e.g. B-C-G. Finally, there is a motif Z, based on the descending sequence of A flat-G-F-E, which can be derived from the text line *Der hat auf keinen Sand gebaut* [has not built upon sand] from the chorale, but also refers back to a theme by Müller-Hartung's teacher, Friedrich Kühmstedt. In the second movement, which is marked *Sehr getragen* [very solemn], motif X plays a refrain-like role in six places, whilst motif Y tends to introduce the figurations of the middle ground. Finally, the fugue theme is made up of the three motifs.

The most elusive of the composers represented here in terms of biographical information available today is the Weimar city organist Bernhard Sulze, who was born in 1829 in Wiegendorf near Weimar and was a pupil of Töpfer in Weimar, later becoming his successor. His **Concert Fantasia**, Op. 63, a set of variations on the *Hirtengesang an der Krippe* [Shepherds' song at the manger] from Franz Liszt's oratorio *Christus*, is one of the most advanced works on this CD. Sulze dedicated it to Franz Liszt and opted, following Liszt's example, for the most ambitious virtuosic treatment. The writing is increasingly dense and complex – interrupted by Variation 4 in $\frac{6}{8}$ – progressing from quavers to quaver triplets and semiquavers to highly virtuosic semiquaver sextuplets in Variation 5, which are taken up again in Variation 7 after the slowing in Variation 6 (*Adagio*). Five of the seven variations closely follow the structure of the theme, which is made up of seven melodic phrases. Variation 6, however, which introduces the theme in a minor key, omits the last two phrases and leads into the free, development-like Variation 7, in which Sulze works with individual melodic strands, weaving them together in contrapuntal fashion. Throughout the piece, Sulze consistently plays with the theme's opening motif, in which Liszt moves upwards from the sharpened second tone of the scale, G sharp, to the mediant, A, of the home key of F major. From this, Sulze derives the original key sequence, descending in thirds, for the variations: the root and final note of the theme, F, at the same time represents the raised second tone of the scale (E sharp) of D major, the key of the first variation. Its leading note, C sharp, then introduces the mediant (D) of B flat major in the second variation. As A sharp, B flat also leads to the mediant (B) of G major, the home key of the following two variations. The descending thirds continue in Variations 5, in E flat major, and 6, in C minor. Variation 7 wanders through various tonalities, only to return to the home key of F major at the end with the last two melodic phrases of the theme in panegyric elevation. For this recording, Anna-Victoria Baltrusch followed Sulze's original registrations almost to the letter, thus coming extremely close to his original sound concept.

In addition to his studies in music theory and composition in Leipzig with Moritz Hauptmann and Ignaz Moscheles, the music theorist, composer, pianist and teacher Salomon Jadassohn received thorough pianistic training from Franz Liszt in Weimar. From 1871 he taught harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation and composition at the Leipzig Conservatoire, where his students included Edvard Grieg, Ferruccio Busoni and Siegfried Karg-Elert. After accepting positions in Danzig and Bremen, he returned to Leipzig, where he would remain for the rest of his life. The progressive spirit at Weimar on the one hand and, on the other, the more academic-conservative mood in Leipzig shaped Jadassohn throughout his life. While Wagner and Liszt were important models for his harmonic idiom, he is a successor to Mendelssohn in terms of his melodic and contrapuntal styles.

His three-movement Fantasia in G Minor, Op. 95, testifies to his tendency towards academic thinking in his composing: the opening prelude develops a strict two-part canon which is run through twice, first at the lower seventh, then at the upper ninth and with a swap of parts. A freely conceived bass joins this canon, as well as additional inner parts, which also reveal moments of imitation and deepen the canon's harmonic texture. An abrupt and dramatic Neapolitan sixth chord marks the starting point for the virtuosic climax of the final cadence. Jadassohn uses the same technique at the end of the third movement – a stormy double fugue with a rebelliously volatile first theme. For all its sweetness, the *Aria* of the second movement also has a dense texture, interspersed with numerous contrapuntal imitative moments.



ANNA-VICTORIA BALTRUSCH

Anna-Victoria Baltrusch has forged an international career as a concert organist since winning the International Organ Competition of the Bach Society Wiesbaden in 2009. She cultivates an organ style characterised by great expressiveness and pianistic virtuosity.

Born in Berlin in 1989, she studied Protestant church music (organ with Prof. Martin Schmeding, Prof. Zsigmond Szathmáry and Frédéric Champion), and piano (with Prof. Gilead Mishory) at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg im Breisgau; in October 2016 she graduated with distinction with a concert diploma in organ.

During her studies, she was supported by a scholarship from the Evangelisches Studienwerk Villigst.

After emerging as a prize-winner whilst still a teenager from the national competition Jugend musiziert, the Steinway Piano Competition Berlin and the Bach Competition for Young Pianists in Köthen, she went on to win numerous prizes at international organ competitions during her studies, such as the International Organ Competition of the Bach Society Wiesbaden, the German Music Competition, the ARD International Music Competition, the August-Gottfried-Ritter Organ Competition Magdeburg, the St Albans International Organ Competition and the International Bach | Liszt Organ Competition Erfurt-Weimar.

Anna-Victoria Baltrusch maintains an active concert schedule throughout Europe. In January 2012 she made her debut with an organ recital at the Berlin Philharmonie and has worked with orchestras such as the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the New Philharmonic Orchestra of Westphalia, the Brandenburg State Orchestra Frankfurt and the NDR Choir.

Following a district cantor position at the Evangelische Christuskirche in Bad Krozingen, from 2015 to 2019 Baltrusch held a teaching position for artistic organ playing at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Leipzig.

From 2016 to 2021 she was also organist of the old Tonhalle organ at the Neumünster church in Zurich and from 2017 to 2021 she directed the chamber choir TonArt Zurich.

Since the winter semester of 2021/22, Anna-Victoria Baltrusch has been a lecturer for artistic and liturgical organ playing at the Evangelische Hochschule für Kirchenmusik Halle (Saale), where in 2022 she was appointed titular organist of the Ulrichskirche concert hall.

DISPOSITION

Alte Tonhalle-Orgel, Neumünster Zürich

Hauptwerk C-g³

Principal 16'
Principal 8'
Gedeckt 8'
Viola di Gamba 8'
Flûte harmonique 8'
Octava 4'
Hohlflöte 4'
Quinte 2²/₃'
Octave 2'
Mitur maior 5 fach 2²/₃'
Mitur minor 4 fach 1¹/₃'
Cornett 4-5 fach 8'
Bombarde 16'
Trompete 8'

Positiv (schwellbar) C-g³

Bourdon 16'
Principal 8'
Nachthorn 8'
Dulciana 8'
Principal 4'
Traversflöte 4'
Violine 4'
Piccolo 2'
Mitur 4-5 fach 2'
Sesquialtera 2 fach 2²/₃'
Trompette harmonique 8'
Englisch Horn 8'
Tremulant

Récit (schwellbar) C-g³

Lieblich Gedeckt 16'
Viola 8'
Voix céleste 8'
Rohrflöte 8'
Wienerflöte 8'
Zartgedeckt 8'
Principal 4'
Blockflöte 4'
Quintflöte 2²/₃'
Waldflöte 2'
Terzflöte 1³/₅'
Basson 16'
Trompete 8'
Oboe 8'
Clairon 4'
Tremulant

Pedal C-f¹

Principal 32'
Principal 16'
Violon 16'
Subbass 16'
Octave 8'
Gedeckt 8'
Violoncello 8'
Octave 4'
Posaune 16'
Trompete 8'
Clairon 4'

Koppeln II-I, III-I, III-II, I-P, II-P, III-P
Kuhn-Hebel für die Manualkoppeln
Gehäuse und Pfeifenwerk alt, Technik vollständig neu
Traktur mechanisch / Registratur elektrisch
Setzeranlage mit 128 Kombinationen, Diskettenlaufwerk (2005)



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 **Kuhn**
Faszination Orgelbau