



audite

**J. S. Bach**  
**Trio Sonatas**

**Martin Neu**

Ahrend Organ, Herzogenaurach



**Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750)

**TRIO SONATA NO. 1 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, BWV 525**

- I. *Allegro moderato* 3:19
- II. *Adagio* 6:05
- III. *Allegro* 3:53

**TRIO SONATA NO. 2 IN C MINOR, BWV 526**

- I. *Vivace* 3:59
- II. *Largo* 4:38
- III. *Allegro* 4:23

**TRIO SONATA NO. 3 IN D MINOR, BWV 527**

- I. *Andante* 5:29
- II. *Adagio e dolce* 4:36
- III. *Vivace* 4:09

**TRIO SONATA NO. 4 IN E MINOR, BWV 528**

- I. *Adagio – Vivace* 2:56
- II. *Andante* 5:54
- III. *Un poco allegro* 2:48

**TRIO SONATA NO. 5 IN C MAJOR, BWV 529**

- I. *Allegro* 5:17
- II. *Largo* 6:22
- III. *Allegro* 4:08

**TRIO SONATA NO. 6 IN G MAJOR, BWV 530**

- I. *Vivace* 4:20
- II. *Lento* 6:52
- III. *Allegro* 4:00



“Six sonatas or trio for two keyboards with obligato pedal. Bach composed them for his eldest son, Wilh. Friedemann, who had to prepare himself to become the great organist that he would later be. One cannot say enough about their beauty. They were written at the author’s most mature age and can be regarded as his principal work of this kind.” (Johann Nikolaus Forkel, 1802)

“One cannot say enough about their beauty.”

Bach’s trio sonatas are not only unique in organ literature, but also some of the most beautiful works ever written for the organ. Three independent parts, divided between the right hand, left hand and feet, engage in a captivating dialogue with each other. *Cantabile* melody lines are combined with skilful yet natural-sounding counterpoint.

We find Bach at the zenith of his compositional art: he is incredibly experimental in terms of form and at the same time the proportions are wonderfully balanced. W. A. Mozart was so fascinated by this music that he arranged three movements for string trio (violin, viola and cello) (BWV 526/2, BWV 526/3, BWV 527/2 in K. 404a).

“... and can be regarded as his principal work of this kind.”

The trio sonata first emerged in Italy at the beginning of the seventeenth century and became one of the most important musical genres of the baroque period. Two equal melody parts (e.g. played by oboe, flute or violin) are set above a bass part (e.g. viola da gamba or bassoon), which is not limited to harmonic accompaniment, but also contributes thematically by imitating the melodies. Mention must be made of the Italian composer Arcangelo Corelli, who was one of the most important representatives of this genre.

In his trio sonatas for organ, Bach looked towards the Italian models, creating a form of chamber music which was new to organ music. Other important influences were Italian concertos by Antonio Vivaldi and Alessandro and Benedetto Marcello into which Bach delved during his Weimar period. All these sonatas have three movements, following a fast-slow-fast pattern. It is truly astonishing how creative Bach was in experimenting with the formal possibilities. These include the *da capo* form (D minor trio sonata, 1<sup>st</sup> movement), the *da capo* form combined with ritornello form (C major trio sonata, 1<sup>st</sup> movement), the concerto grosso form combined with a fugue-like form (G major trio sonata, 1<sup>st</sup> movement) and a strictly symmetrical two-part form (E flat major trio sonata, 3<sup>rd</sup> movement). The later a sonata movement was composed, the more the fusion of the sonata, concerto and fugue genres can be recognised, resulting in entirely new and fascinating formal techniques (C minor trio sonata, 1<sup>st</sup> movement).



But Bach does not only have the big picture in mind: he also pays meticulous attention to the individual parts. He provides them with differentiated instructions such as staccato dots and legato slurs; in addition, the pedal part is given thematic material and is treated with equal virtuosity. With these means he is able to exploit the entire palette of baroque emotions in individual movements, from melancholy pauses to dancing joy.

*“Bach composed them for his eldest son, Wilh. Friedemann, who had to prepare himself to become the great organist that he would later be.”*

The equal status of all three parts presents the player with enormous technical challenges, the like of which had never been seen before. The six trio sonatas are thus also the culmination of Bach's objective as a teacher to raise the organ tuition of his children and students to the highest level. His son Wilhelm Friedemann was appointed organist at St Sophia's Church in Dresden in 1733, leading him to leave home that year. Having studied the sonatas, he was certainly well prepared for this new musical challenge and had wonderful pieces in his luggage with which he could shine in his new place of work.

*“They were written at the author's most mature age.”*

The trio sonatas survive in an autograph which most probably dates from around 1730. In addition, we have a copy of the autograph, produced by Bach's son Wilhelm Friedemann and Bach's wife Anna Magdalena. We also encounter two pieces from the collection in chamber music works: the first movement of the E minor sonata in the sinfonia of Bach's cantata *Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes*, BWV 76, composed in 1723, Bach's first year in Leipzig. The sinfonia is scored for oboe d'amore, viola da gamba and continuo, whilst the second movement of the D minor sonata is composed for transverse flute, concertante violin and concertante harpsichord in the Triple Concerto in A minor, BWV 1044. Peter Wollny dates the Triple Concerto to after 1740.

Some movements presumably go back to earlier chamber music works. However, it is striking that the sonatas in C minor, C major and G major have similar structures: the fast sonata movements are influenced by the Italian concerto grosso, with all the final movements also revealing characteristics of the concertante fugue. The afore-mentioned fusion of the sonata, concerto and fugue genres can be recognised most clearly here. This indicates that these pieces were composed in the same creative period, i.e. around 1730, and Bach evidently conceived and composed each of them as a unified work for the organ from the outset. This is another reason why these three sonatas surely represent the pinnacle of the entire collection of six trio sonatas.



## The organ at St Otto's in Herzogenaurach

The primary considerations at the outset of each organ building project centre around the space in which it is going to be installed. That space determines the organ concept threefold: through its acoustics, its dimensions and its interior design. The acoustics at St Otto's are ideally suited to an organ, but the dimensions and interior design posed two challenges for the new instrument: an organ with 8-foot-long front pipes in the *Hauptwerk* and the inability to accommodate 16 ft pedal pipes. The gallery had to be extended into the main body of the church; however, only a limited enlargement was technically feasible and aesthetically acceptable. This meant that the large *Hauptwerk* and pedal pipes all had to be positioned in the front section of the case, which at that point is only 56 cm deep. The pedal chests are divided into front and rear halves by a passage board, as can also be found in Hamburg (Schnitger organ, St Jacobi), but with a single set of pallets. The trombone stop has its own separate channels, meaning that, contrary to North German custom, it does not need to be placed above the pallets. All the smaller pipes of these two divisions are located in the rear part of the case, which is severely restricted in height by a wooden beam and the gallery ceiling behind it. In order to accommodate the bells of the 8' trumpet in that section, they had to be carefully mitred. Due to the low height above the gallery, a *Rückpositiv* was the best solution for a second, equivalent manual. In order to minimise the overhang of this *Rückpositiv* and the space required, the lower part of the main case was positioned as far back as possible.

Due to this special gallery situation at St Otto's, the organist, without forfeiting access, is closer to the pipework than is usual with organs of this size.

Hendrik Ahrend  
Master organ builder

# DISPOSITION

## Hauptwerk C - f'''

Principal	8'
Bordun	16'
Viola di Gamba	8'
Hohlflöte	8'
Octave	4'
Nasat	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> '
Cornett ab f°	II
Octave	2'
Terz	1 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> '
Mixtur	III-IV
Trompete	8'

## Rückpositiv C - f'''

Principal	4'
Gedackt	8'
Quintadena	8'
Spitzgedackt	4'
Octave	2'
Waldflöte	2'
Sesquialtera	II
Quinte	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub> '
Dulcian	8'

## Pedalwerk C - f'

Principalbass	16'
Subbass	16'
Octavbass	8'
Octavbass	4'
Posaunenbass	16'
Trompetenbass	8'

Cimbelstern

Tremulant (auf beide Manualwerke wirkend)

Koppeln: II/I, I/P, II/P

Schleifladen mit mechanischer Spiel- und Registertraktur, modifiz. Werckmeister-Stimmung 440 Hz bei 18°C

Winddruck: 65 mm

Please see [www.audite.de](http://www.audite.de) for detailed information about registration.





## MARTIN NEU

Martin Neu studied at the Musikhochschule Stuttgart, at Concordia University Montréal, Canada, and at the Johannes-Gutenberg University Mainz. His organ teachers included Werner Jacob, Bernard Lagacé, Bernhard Haas and Gerhard Gnann. During his studies in Canada, he also attended music theory courses with Bengt Hambraeus at McGill University in Montréal.

As an organist, Neu has won numerous scholarships and awards (including DAAD [German Academic Exchange Service], Bachwoche Ansbach, Stiftung Podium Junger Künstler, Encouragement prize at International Bach Competition, Leipzig 2000). In 1993 he was admitted into the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes and in 2002 the University of Mainz awarded him the Johannes-Gutenberg Prize for outstanding artistic achievements.

Since 2001 Martin Neu is a church musician at St Peter and St Paul with St Elisabeth in Reutlingen and as deanery church musician he is also responsible for the church music in the deanery of Reutlingen / Zwiefalten. Invitations to concerts and jury duties take him to Germany and abroad (including the Treviso Organ Festival, Rapallo Musica, Academia de Órgano Cuenca, Concorso Brazzale Vicenza, Kultursommer Rheinland-Pfalz, Max-Reger-Tage Wiesbaden, Krummhörner Orgelfrühling, and the Festival Suisse de l'Orgue). Among others, he also worked with the Kunsthalle of the Hypo Cultural Foundation in Munich, the Goethe-Institut Genoa, SWR and ZDF.

Radio and CD recordings, that have received international recognition (including the Longlist of the German Record Critics' Award, Early Music Review, American Record Guide, Gramophone), document Martin Neu's interest in making music on historical instruments.



*recording:*

October 15-16, 2021 and May 31 - June 1, 2022

*recording location / instrument:*

Ahrend Organ at St Otto, Herzogenaurach

*recording producer:*

Dipl.-Tonmeister Martin Nagorni

*executive producer:*

Dipl.-Tonmeister Ludger Böckenhoff

cover: 'Oranges' Beatrix Giebel

*photos:*

Dr. Bertram Schädle (Martin Neu)

Orgelbau Ahrend (organ)

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