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Orgues

THE MAGAZINE FOR ORGAN
AND MUSIC ENTHUSIASTS

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TABU

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Karol Mossakowski organ

improvisation

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Panel to be announced

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Sabine Quindou moderation

Sat, Jan. 10, 11 am

Family concert

A WALK IN THE FOREST

Gabriella Smith

Orchestre national de Lyon

Franck Ollu conductor

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Sat, Jan. 10, 6 pm

Symphonic

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4 **SPECIAL REPORT**

- The organ in Italy
File compiled by Rodolfo Bellatti

15 **LITERATURE**

- Italian keyboard music
Luca Scandali
- Organ music in Italy in the 19th century – Marco Ruggeri
- Marco Enrico Bossi – Nicola Cittadin

20 **CONVERSATION**

- Jean Langlais and Italy
Marie-Louise Langlais

22 **FEEDBACK**

- Stefano Bonilauri – Pascale Rouet

23 **THE ORGAN**

- Romain Legros – Andrea Macinanti

24 **CONVERSATION**

- Domenico Severin – Viviane Loriaut
- Marta Gliozzi – Viviane Loriaut

26 **Music booklet**

- Italian music from the 16th to the 19th century

28 **FEEDBACK**

- Mandolin clubs in Italy
Camilla Finardi

29 **EDUCATION**

- Music education in Italy
Viviane Loriaut and Pascale Rouet
- L.F. Tagliavini – Viviane Loriaut
- Playing Frescobaldi... – Paolo Crivellaro

30 **THE ORGAN**

- The Pistoia School – Umberto Pineschi
- The organs of the Basilica di San Petronio in Bologna – Matteo Bonfiglioli
- Sicilian multi-console organs
Diego Cannizzaro
- Theatre organs in Italy
Federico Lorenzani

32 **FEEDBACK**

- The protection of historic organs in Italy – Umberto Forni
- The 'route royale des orgues' – Xavier Sant

34 – SWELL BOX

36 – NEWS ON DISPLAY

Between breath and light

*Cut the mistletoe! Cut the holly!
It's Christmas, let your hair down...*

No mistletoe or holly for this issue, we're afraid, but a beautiful rosehip that takes us to the heart of our journey: Baroque Italy, a land of contrasts and clarity, where the organ has found one of its most unique and fascinating homes.

From the tribunes of Rome to the Ligurian valleys, via Pistoia and Bologna, Viviane and Jean-Louis Loriaut invite us to discover a world of sound where each note is a breathtaking landscape, where each registration transports the mind to a sublime scene, a breathtaking piece of architecture, or a soothing sliver of the sky

If, as Paolo Crivellaro points out, 'the 16th century was the golden age of the organ in Italy,' we then discover a diverse range of instruments throughout these pages, from small positive organs (some very old) to monumental organs. But always, regardless of its size, the Italian organ remains an instrument of light, rhythm and breath, an instrument that makes its *Principali*, its *Flauti*, its *Voci Umane* sing without heaviness or emphasis. And what a treat it is to hear the tinkling of the *Campanelli*, the trumpeting fanfare of the tin reeds, the inimitable military evocation of the *Banda Militare*, or the chirping of the *Uccelliera*, reminding us, if we needed reminding, that Italy is indeed the home of opera.

To interpret Frescobaldi, Pasquini, Zipoli or Bossi is to leaf through the pages of the past, of course, but also to rediscover an art of the time: that of a readily rhetorical, inventive, sometimes improvised discourse, often underpinned by the volubility so characteristic of the local language, which immediately transports us to horizons with mythical accents. For this is something that each of us has undoubtedly already experienced: one need only open an Italian score for the golden light of the transalpine Baroque churches to begin to shine over them...

This issue invites you to immerse yourself in this flamboyant universe: only a few personal encounters, we're afraid (may our great Italian organists, Lorenzo Ghielmi, Andrea Marcon, Roberto Antonello and so many others who would have been perfectly at home here, forgive us, it's only a matter of time...), but instead you can find splendid instruments and a breathtaking repertoire.

Christmas is coming! Beyond the organs, this above all is a spirit that we want to celebrate in these particularly troubled times: that spirit of music, whether it comes from Italy or elsewhere... Music that brings people together, uplifts and relaxes us, just like the feast of the Nativity itself.

*Cut the mistletoe! Cut the holly!
And a wonderful end to the year to you all.*

PASCAL ROUET
Managing Editor



Rosehip in Tuscany.

SPECIAL REPORT

THE ORGAN IN ITALY

The Alps have never been an obstacle. Hannibal's elephants made light work of them.

Italian culture made itself known by means of the Rhône axis, Avignon, the County of Nice, Leonardo da Vinci. France has often tried to find a home there: François I, the young Bonaparte, a good example of this. From Aosta to Syracuse, the character of each province is

proudly preserved. Political unity only dates back to 1861!

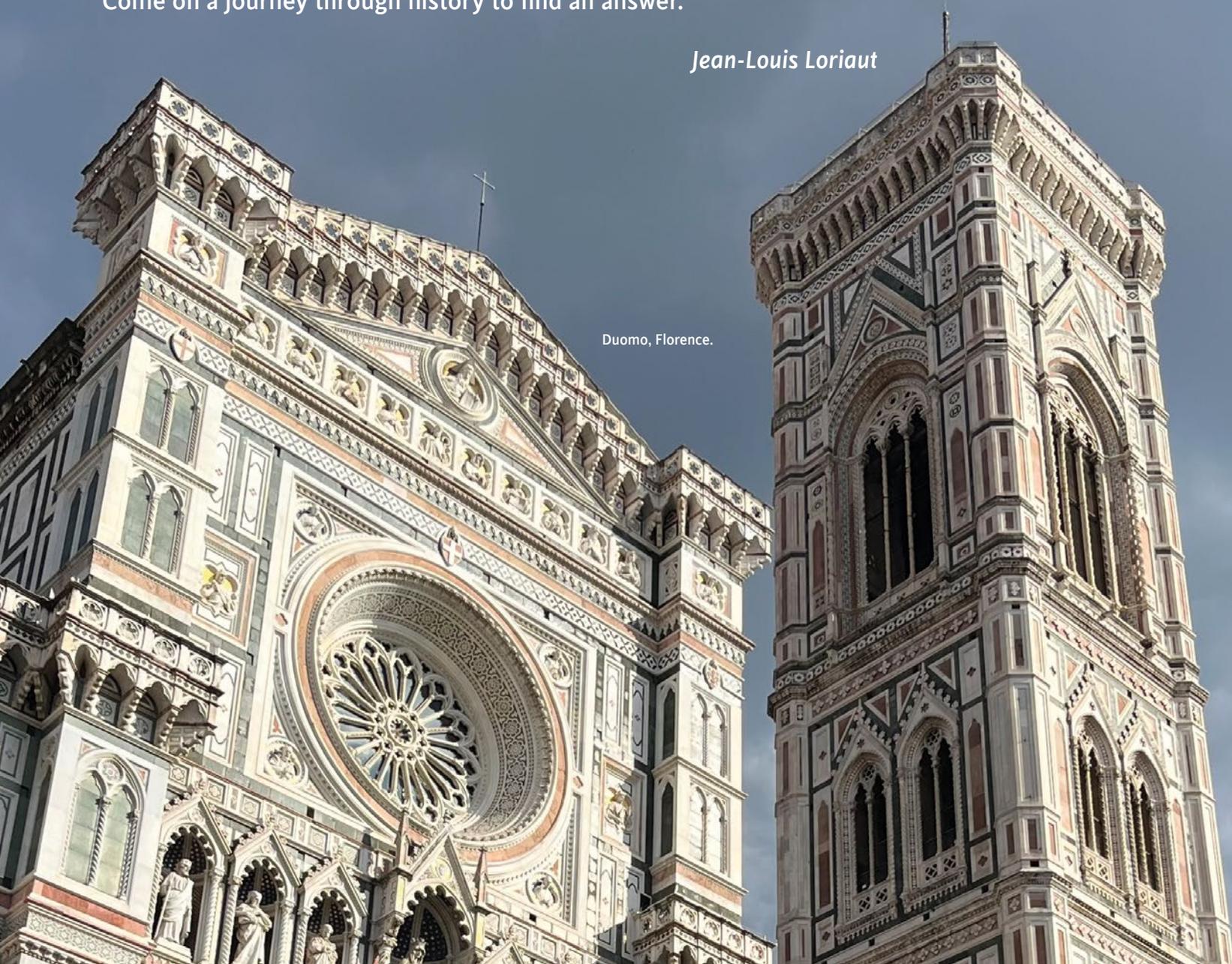
Why did this country need to maintain the tradition of the organ? Was the light of singing, an earthly reflection of the heavens, not enough? The power of the Vatican was the driving force. The *Ripieno*: hieratic, disarmingly simple and transparent. It quickly reached perfection.

The two major and sacred rivers that both flow from Gotthard soon divided their waters. Wagner in the north, Verdi in the south. The organ followed, imitating the orchestra.

Today, the pressing question remains: when was the advent of the modern organ here? Come on a journey through history to find an answer.

Jean-Louis Loriaut

Duomo, Florence.



THE ITALIAN ORGAN: A PURELY THEORETICAL IDEA

FILE
COMPILED BY
**RODOLFO
BELLATTI**

ISSUE
COORDINATED
BY
**VIVIANE
LORIAUT**

Traditionally, the view taken on the Italian organ (especially outside Italy) has been purely theoretical: it is an instrument with a single manual, a delicate sound, very low air pressure, a *Plein Jeu* made up of separate ranks, a few colour stops, a few reed stops, and a rudimentary pedalboard...

René Saorgin's famous recordings from the 1970s brought to light the charm and versatility of nineteenth-century instruments, but unwittingly focused the Italian organ of the Romantic period's image solely on the Lombard-Piedmontese school of Serassi aesthetics.

While it is true that Italian-style organs share some common characteristics, the reality is far more complex and varied. There are significant differences according to historical periods and geographical areas, leading to the manifestation of differences in the repertoire and the use of the instruments themselves.

It is important to remember that Italy was not unified until 1861. As a result, the different regions, subject to dissimilar governments and influences, experienced very diverse economic and cultural developments. This diversity also affected both music and organ building. To better understand the common characteristics and differences of Italian-style organs, it is necessary to distinguish between geographical areas and historical periods.

The *Ripieno*

Ripieno: A term literally meaning 'full'. Synonymous with the *Plein Jeu* in French or the *Lleno* in Spanish, it expresses the very essence of the pipe organ: the addition of successive ranks to the fundamental, reconstituting and filling the entire sound spectrum. The *Ripieno* is therefore not a stop, but a blend of several other stops. Each rank is designated by the interval between the note heard and the fundamental. For example: *Decima quinta* (XVth, 2'), *Vigesima sesta* (XXVIth, 2/3).

Serassi organ, Asti Cathedral, console.



One constant: the *Ripieno*

One of the main characteristics of Italian organs is the *Ripieno*, a combination of pipe ranks with no repeats up to 1/8th of a foot, the maximum height at the time. When the pipe reaches this height, the pipe rank jumps down one octave lower. Historically, the ranks of Italian *Ripieni* are made up of octaves and fifths, very rarely including a third harmonic coming from foreign influences (as in the Tuscan and Ligurian schools). From the first half of the nineteenth century onwards, the repeats may occur every 1/6ths of a foot. This particular arrangement may lead to numerous doublings in the upper part of the keyboard. The ranks can be grouped by 2 or 3.

The Italian *Ripieno* has a rather bright, silvery tone compared with the German *Mixtur* register, but is not suitable for counterpoint: given the particular layout of the repeats, it tends to blur the actual pitches of the notes, particularly in the middle and upper areas of the keyboard. The *Ripieno* is traditionally based on the *Principale* register, designed to support the voices of a few singers, but not to accompany large congregations - which is more characteristic of organs of Protestant culture.

Basilica della Santissima Annunziata, Florence.



THE RENAISSANCE ORGAN

During the Renaissance, there were already both common characteristics and disparities between the various instruments. Among the latter, we note, for example, the tendency in Lombardy to separate the *Ripieno* ranks. This was unlike in Tuscany, which groups them in pairs or offers them in a single block. (fig. 1).

However, there are other recurring features: the facades are mainly divided into five sections, but are sometimes divided into three mitre-shaped groups. Organetti Morti (mute pipes) are located in the upper part on both sides of the front of the case (fig. 2).

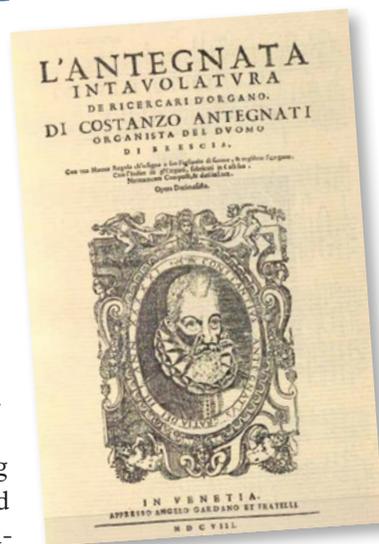
The basic composition consisted of one or two *Principali*, the *Ripieno* (sometimes doubling or even tripling the ranks for a greater range of sound) ranging from the *Ottava* to the XIXth or XXIXth, colour registers limited to a few *Flauti* (VIIIth, XIIth, XVth) and, more rarely, a reed stop (of which no examples have survived); in Lombardy, there was the *Fiffaro* or the *Voce Umana* (undulating stop of the main *Principale*). There could also be a Tremolo register and a few other effects like bird calls¹.

Some registers could be divided into basses and trebles (usually *Principale*, *Ottava* and *Flauto*), 'for dialogue', as Costanzo Antegnati² wrote.

The tuning system adopted was meantone; the keyboard range, initially from f1 to a4, shifted from c1 to c5 with a short bottom octave. Broken keys (e flat/b sharp and g sharp/b flat) were used to allow chords and keys impossible in meantone. The pedalboard was generally coupled with the keyboard (fig. 3).

1. A description of the stops and accessories on the website.

2. Costanzo Antegnati (1549–1624) was an organist, organ builder and composer.



1. Cipri Organ (1560) of the Basilica di S. Anastasia, Verona.

2. Chiesa di S. Pietro Somaldi, Lucca (1687).

3. Organo di Claudio Merulo (sixteenth century), Parma Conservatory.

4. San Petronio, Bologna (organs from 1596 and 1475).



VIVIANE LORJAUT

Epistle organ and Gospel organ³

The tradition of the *organi gemelli* (twin organs) emerged at the end of the 16th century in the great religious centres of northern and central Italy - Venice, Bologna, Florence, Milan - where musical and liturgical needs demanded a spatialisation of sound⁴. Among the most famous models are those in the basilicas of San Petronio in Bologna (see p. 52) and San Marco in Venice, where two side galleries contain organs face each other above the choir.

The origins of this arrangement are twofold: liturgical, as it allows two vocal or instrumental ensembles to alternate facing each other, following the practice of *cori spezzati* (separate choirs); and aesthetic, as it exploits the spatial architecture of Italian churches to create a sonic dialogue.

Respective functions of the two instruments

The two organs, which may or may not have come from the same builder, are not strictly identical: often, one is larger than the other. This diversity made it possible to obtain echo, imitation, or responsorial effects, similar to the vocal techniques of Venetian polychorality.

During major services, two organists took turns or played simultaneously, improvising on the liturgical themes of the day. The great basilicas employed two titular organists, sometimes in a hierarchical structure: a *maestro principale* would be senior to a *secondo organista*. This division is documented at San Marco as early as the middle of the 16th century.

3. When facing the altar, the epistle organ is on the right-hand side of the choir and the gospel organ is on the left.

4. Similar cases can be found in Europe, particularly in Germany, where some churches have as many as four organs.



THE REFORM OF THE ITALIAN ORGAN

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a reformation movement favoured the abandonment of the theatrical style and the adoption of a style more closely linked to counterpoint, to Palestrina, and to foreign holy music. This was the birth of what we might call the 'reformed Italian organ': a hybrid type of instrument incorporating the fundamentals of the 19th century Italian organ (particularly that of Lombardy) with elements of foreign origin. The result was the gradual appearance of German-type pedalboards, uncut stops, lower ranks and lower repeats in the *Ripieni*, blocked 8' stops or gamba stops, and some stops in a swell box.

The organs of this period are interesting because they are experimental, each reflecting the choices of builders who, who were trained in the 19th century tradition of the Serassi organ, and had to adopt new solutions in order to achieve the objectives of an instrument which they had not yet clearly understood.

The very first attempts were made in Genoa by C.G. Bianchi for the church of the Carmine in 1879 (an organ that has now disappeared) and by G. Locatelli for the church of *NS della Consolazione* in 1880. Another important organ of the period was undoubtedly the one designed by Marco Enrico Bossi and built by Luigi Bernasconi for Como Cathedral. Its inauguration on 26 May 1888 was attended by many leading figures from the world of music, including Giacomo Puccini, who in his youth had been an organist around Lucca.

The Como organ was a revolutionary project which, starting from fairly traditional foundations, evolved into an instrument with three manuals and a 27-note pedalboard. The registers were no longer divided into basses and trebles. Two levels were in swell boxes. An ambitious project, hampered by the limited space offered by the old case (a Hermans case), it gave rise to numerous political, economic, and philosophical controversies (high costs; mistrust of the designer and his innovative ideas on the part of the clergy and organ builders), about which an abundance of literature exists. Bossi was so exasperated that in 1890 he decided to resign his post and go and teach in Naples. In 1930, the organ was replaced by an electric Balbiani, designed by Luigi Picchi.



FRÉDÉRIC MUNOZ

The advent of pneumatic action: the Italian organ of the Cecilian reform

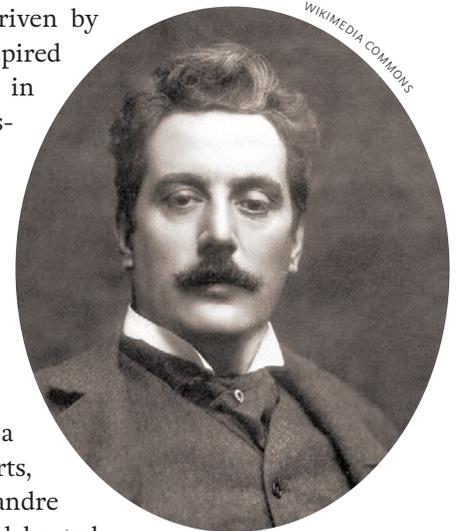
Rome, Saint-Jean-de-Latran, restored by B. Formentelli.

Important events led Italian organ building towards a new style, defined by the so-called 'Cecilian' organ.

In 1886, Nicola Morettini was commissioned to build the two organs in the apse of St John Lateran in Rome, according to the plans of the incumbent Filippo Capocci. Probably to avoid risky experiments, he decided to look directly abroad, collaborating with Paul Férat (a pupil of Barker) from Paris and adopting systems that were completely new for the time, such as windchests with pistons driven by a Barker machine and a French-inspired sound texture. Both organs are still in existence and have recently been restored by Formentelli.

Another important turning point was the 1890 inauguration of the organ in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Genoa, designed by the Englishman W.G. Trice. It was the first large Italian organ with electric transmission, divided into several divisions and controlled by a single console. The inaugural concerts, given by Filippo Capocci and Alexandre Guilmant, aroused great interest and heated debate. While some praised its qualities, others - whether out of conviction or for purely commercial reasons - saw in this model a 'Protestant' sounding organ, unsuitable for Catholic worship.

Sensing the market's direction, Carlo Vegezzi-Bossi¹ developed projects combining foreign models and Italian style. While attending concerts in Genoa incognito, he thought about how to modify the parameters of the traditional scheme without sacrificing the specific Italian characteristics: he kept, for example, the principle of the *Ripieno* (but with lower repeats and new voicing), adopted voicing systems



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Giacomo Puccini.

1. Not related to the composer Marco Enrico Bossi.

THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES



Genoa, Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, choir organ (originally played on the first manual of the great organ).

MARGHERITA LANZINI

with higher pressures and assisted transmissions, switching almost immediately to pneumatic-tubular transmission, established a two or three-manual composition model in which the 8' registers are predominant (at least two or three per division), in which the reeds can be integrated in both *piano* and *forte* modes, and in which the dynamics can be modulated by means of the swell box, as well as by adding or subtracting registers. In the end, he turned to English or German aesthetic models rather than French ones.

Among the typically Italian colour registers of this period is the *Coro Viole* (also known as *Concerto Viole*, *Concerto Violini* or simply *Violini*): a kind of multiple celestial voice, generally with five progressive ranks, which imitates the sound of the strings in a Wagner orchestra. This aesthetic was adopted by Giovanni Tamburini, Vincenzo Mascioni, Pugina, Malvestio, Rotelli, and Balbiani (among others).

After building more than a thousand instruments in Europe and Latin America, Carlo Vegezzi-Bossi went bankrupt at the end of the First World War. However, the firm's name was taken over by Balbiani of Milan, with whom he collaborated during the last years of his life.



RODOLFO BELLATTI

A graduate of the conservatoires of Genoa, Basel (Guy Bovet), and Vicenza (Roberto Antonello), and a prizewinner in 8 national and international competitions, Rodolfo Bellatti is a concert performer with a passion for instrument restoration and design. He has made a number of recordings devoted to the enhancement of historic organs. He is organist at the Basilica di N.S. della Rosa in Santa Margherita Ligure (Genoa).

The beginnings of the neoclassical and eclectic organ

In the 1920s and 1930s, several renowned organists and organologists advocated for the return of certain characteristic sounds of early instruments, notably the *Cornetto* and the *Flauto in XII*. These sounds, absent from the Cecilian aesthetic, were important for the interpretation of the early repertoire, particularly works of composers such as Frescobaldi and Bach.

From 25 to 29 July 1930, the organist and musicologist Renato Lunelli (1895-1967) organised the *first Italian Organ Assembly*. Considered a pivotal moment in the revival of the Italian organ tradition, this assembly served as a forum for debate and reflection on the need to return to the essentials, breaking with the orchestral trends of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

These principles had already been applied by Vincenzo Mascioni to the Santa Maria Maggiore organ in Trento (1928) and by Giovanni Tamburini to his instruments of the 1930s. The organ at the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music in Rome (Mascioni, 1931) was also an example of this new concept.

In the 1940s and 1950s, Italian projects continued along the neoclassical line, developing it towards the idea of an eclectic instrument with which to play the entire organ repertoire: among the many examples of this aesthetic is the Tamburini organ in the RAI auditorium in Naples in 1963, designed by Fernando Germani.



Fernando Germani.

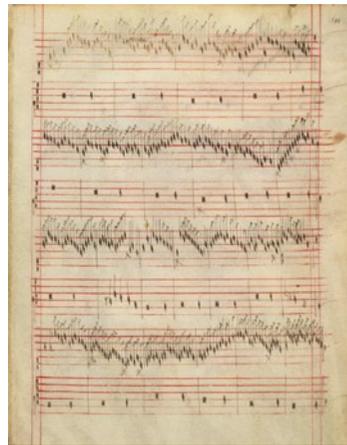
D.R.

The evolution of the language and forms of Italian keyboard music

Describing the evolution of the language and forms of Italian keyboard music from its origins to the Baroque period involves exploring a vast and complex context, revealing multiple links and interrelationships between composers and schools over more than three centuries.

Literature for keyboard instruments developed in various directions during the Renaissance. One of these, closely linked to worship, is found in reworked Gregorian chant material. A second direction focused on the transcription of sacred and secular vocal compositions: motets and songs were transferred to the keyboard; the polyphonic texture was simplified. Meanwhile the melodic lines were enriched with diminutions, passages, and ornaments, incorporating the possibilities offered by keyboard technique and the instrument itself. A third direction emerged through the adaptation and elaboration of dances and arias of popular or classical origin for the keyboard. Finally, music developed into autonomous forms such as the *ricercare*, the *fantasia*, the *canzone*, the *intonazione*, the *capriccio* and the *toccata*, characterised by the adoption of contrapuntal or improvised writing, or a combination of the two.

The dependence on vocal models that characterised the birth of keyboard literature was gradually overcome, and instrumental forms and writing gradually asserted themselves in a completely independent manner. The main forms that emerged during the Renaissance also flourished in the 17th century, in perfect harmony and interaction with the instruments that proposed the aesthetic ideals of vocal music, and then instrumental music. But instrumental music – it should be remembered – has always considered the voice as a model to be imitated and an ideal to be achieved.



The Middle Ages

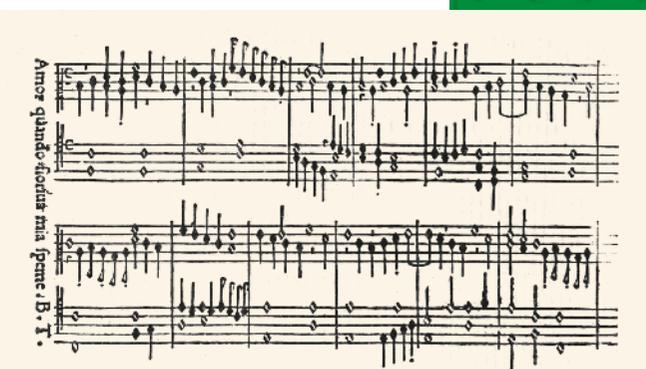
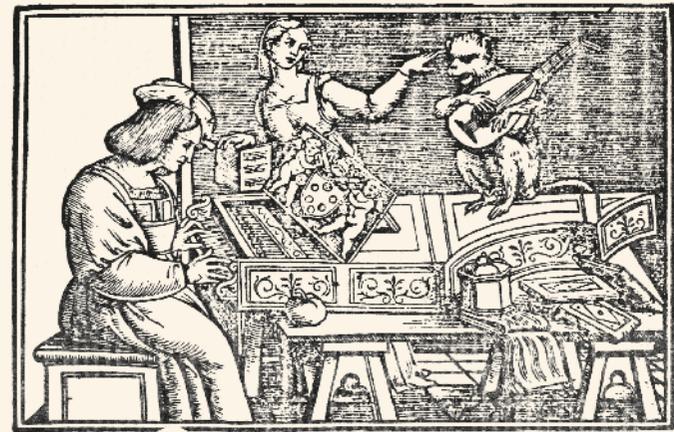
At the dawning of the repertoire, we find the *Codex Faenza 117* (c. 1410), an important collection comprising tablatures of Italian and French secular vocal compositions as well as dances and pieces for the practice of *alternatim* (the alternation of organ and choir), all for a clearly liturgical purpose (fig.1). The latter are based on the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* of the *Cunctipotens Genitor Deus* Mass and appear to be the first examples of organ compositions based on the *cantus firmus*. Furthermore, the practice of alternating organ and choir seems to have very ancient origins, which are even attested to in a passage of Dante Alighieri's (1265-1321) *Divine Comedy* (*Purgatorio*, *Canto IX*).

The Renaissance

The first collection printed specifically for keyboard instruments is Andrea Antico's (c. 1480-*fl.* 1538) *Frottole*

1. *fl.* = *floruit*; meaning "active". Used when the date of death is unknown.

FROTTOLE INTABULATE DA SONARE ORGANI LIBRO PRIMO.



intabulate da sonare organi (fig. 2 and 3), intabulate² by the Veronese composers Marchetto Cara (c. 1470-*fl.* 1527) and Bartolomeo Tromboncino (c. 1470-*fl.* 1535).

2. The frottole is a poetic-musical form that flourished in Italy at the beginning of the Renaissance. It was the predominant style of Italian popular songs throughout the 15th century and at the beginning of the 16th century.

1. Anonyme, *Kyrie*, *Codex Faenza 117* (around 1410), I-FZc MS 117.

2. Andrea Antico, *Frontispice*, *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi* (Rome, 1517).

3. Andrea Antico, *Amor, quando fioriva mia speme*, *Frottole intabulate da sonare organi* (Rome, 1517).

Marco Enrico BOSSI (1861-1925)



Recording session with Marco Enrico Bossi at the Welte company in Freiburg im Breisgau (probably in 1912).

Lauded as *The Poet of the Organ*, as his colleague Oreste Ravanello¹ (1871-1938) nicknamed him, or *The Grand Lord of Sounds*, according to his friend, the famous writer Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938), Marco Enrico Bossi was a key figure in the Italian music world. The year 2025 marks the 100th anniversary of his death, which occurred upon his return from a memorable tour of the United States. During this tour he had performed at Wanamaker's Store in Philadelphia alongside Nadia Boulanger, Charles Marie Courboin², and Marcel Dupré.

1. Oreste Ravanello was organist at the Basilica of Saint Anthony in Padua.

2. Charles Marie Courboin (1884-1973) was a Belgian-American organist who enjoyed great popularity in the 1920s and whose career was closely linked to the Wanamaker organ in Philadelphia.

Education

Born in Salò, on Lake Garda, in 1861, Marco Enrico Bossi received his initial musical training from his father Pietro, a parish organist. Then, in 1871, he continued his piano studies at the *Liceo Musicale* in Bologna. In 1873, he was admitted to the Milan Conservatoire, where he studied piano, organ, counterpoint and fugue, composition, and violin. He obtained his diploma in piano in 1879 and in composition in 1881 but refused to complete his organ studies due to the limited repertoire available for this type of study in Italy.

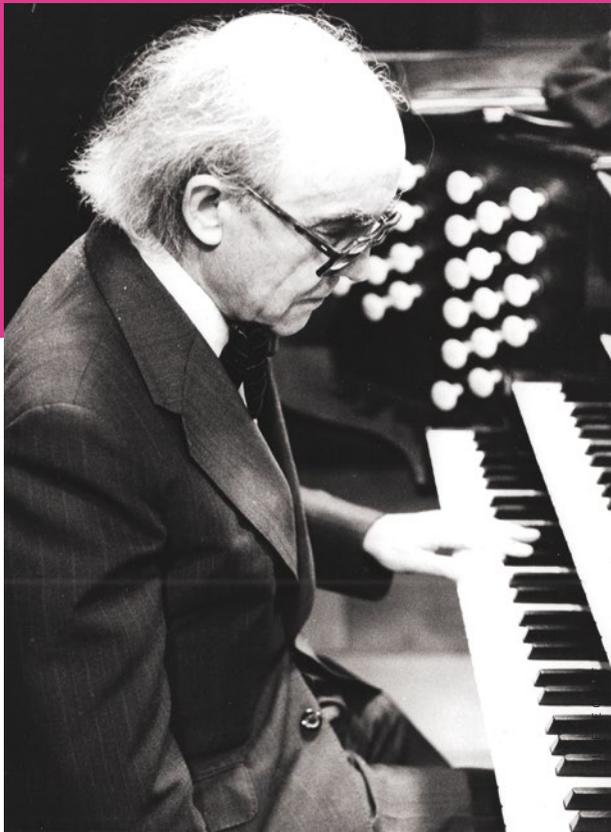
In quick succession he became choir-master and organist at Como Cathedral (1881-1889), professor of organ and harmony at the Naples Conservatoire (1890-1895), director of the organ and composition department at the *Liceo Musicale* in Venice (1895-1902), director and professor of composition at the *Liceo Musicale* in Bologna (1902-1911), and was appointed director of the advanced composition department at the *Liceo Musicale* in Rome in 1916.

Professor

The publication in 1894 by the Carisch publishing house in Milan of the *Metodo teorico pratico per l'organo*, co-written with his colleague Giovanni Tebaldini, was of paramount importance for organ teaching in Italy. Bossi reformed organ studies on the peninsula and encouraged the construction and renovation of new and modern instruments in order to enable the performance of the widest possible organ repertoire known at the time. During his teaching career, he trained many musicians, including Giulio Bas, his son Renzo Rinaldo Bossi, Giorgio Federico Ghedini, Goffredo Giarda, Maffeo Zanon, Umberto Giordano, Manuel Ponce, Giuseppe Aldo Randegger, and Alceo Toni.

Composer and concert performer

In Italy at the beginning of the 20th century, Marco Enrico Bossi was recognised for having brought about a new era of instrumental music through his production of chamber music, concertos, and operas. His



Jean Langlais at the organ of Sainte-Clotilde, 1977.

Jean Langlais and Italy

Jean Langlais (1907–1991) was one of the leading figures in 20th-century French music, alongside his colleagues at the Paris Conservatoire, Olivier Messiaen, Jehan Alain, Maurice Duruflé, Gaston Litaize and André Fleury. All born at the beginning of the 20th century, these organists and composers, each in their own style, spread the influence of the French organ school beyond our borders.

For 52 years, Jean Langlais played the famous Cavaillé-Coll organ at Sainte-Clotilde, continuing the tradition of his great predecessors, Franck and Tournemire. However, it is not in France but in Italy that a major project is currently underway: the complete recording of his organ works. His wife, Marie-Louise Langlais, tells us about this magnificent adventure.

Blind from the age of two, trained at the National Institute for Young Blind People and then at the Paris Conservatoire, Langlais developed a highly personal style and language very early on, combining free modality and chromaticism. His prolific organ work includes major cycles such as the *Trois Paraphrases grégoriennes*, the *Suite médiévale*, the *Suite Brève* and the *Neuf Pièces* - and this is mentioning only the most frequently performed.

A sought-after teacher and inspired improviser, Jean Langlais left behind a body of work marked by faith, Gregorian chant, expressiveness and an unrivalled sense of instrumental colour not to mention references to his native Brittany. As one critic put it: 'There will always be artichokes in his music.'

The 'grand' Baroque

However, it was not in France but in Italy that the idea recently arose to record his complete works for organ, some 356 compositions published by around twenty publishers worldwide over a period of 63 years, from 1927 to 1990.

Why are there so many works in his catalogue? The answer lies in the diverse purposes of these pages. Originally conceived to participate in the composition competition of the *Amis de l'orgue* in France, they were later the result of multiple commissions from French publishers, then foreign publishers until the end of his life. They were intended for educational or liturgical purposes, or even used for concert performance, but were rarely as personal as his *Cinq Méditations sur l'Apocalypse*, composed following a heart attack in 1974.

Admittedly, by 1979, the American organist Ann Labounsky had already completed this marathon in the United States for the *Musical Heritage Society*, then *La Voix du Vent Recordings*, recording 26 CDs in 24 years, mainly on American instruments. But nothing of the sort existed at that time in France or Europe. This will soon be remedied in Italy.

Initiated by Professor Giorgio Benati, a personal friend of Jean Langlais, this project was revived in 2021. Currently in progress, it will comprise

22 CDs, 15 of which have already been released, under the label of the Dutch company *Brilliant Classics*. The originality of this complete recording lies in the fact that it is recorded by several Italian organists on exclusively Italian-made organs.

Why Italy? Langlais was a keen traveller throughout his life, playing and teaching in both North America and Europe. From 21 to 24 April 1981, he gave a memorable master class in Verona on Franck's complete works for the organ, which brought together no fewer than 120 organists from all over Italy. Given such success, the composer was invited back to Verona for another master class, this time devoted to his own works, and, according to some, his teaching left an indelible mark on many young Italian organists in that country.

Giorgio Benati enlisted the help of Fausto Caporali and Alessandro Perin to complete this marathon project, releasing a box set of five CDs approximately every two years. This year sees the release of volume 3, played on contemporary organs by several current manufacturers. These include Ruffati, Tamburini, Michelotto, Diego Bonato, and Mascioni organs, in the cities of Verona, Padua, Milan, Isola della Scala, Pavia and Brescia.

A little tour of Italy that would certainly have delighted Jean Langlais. ●

Marie-Louise Langlais



MARIE-LOUISE LANGLAIS

A graduate of the *Schola Cantorum* in Jean Langlais' class, Marie-Louise Jaquet wrote a musicology thesis on the composer at the Sorbonne in 1969, before teaching at the Marseille Conservatoire, then at the *Schola Cantorum* and the CRR in Paris. Married to Jean Langlais, she was his assistant organist at Sainte-Clotilde. She has performed, recorded, written and taught in the USA and Europe on her favourite subject: *The School of Sainte-Clotilde*.

Enriching architectural space

A meeting with Stefano Bonilauri

The 20th century in Italy saw the emergence of leading composers, the most famous of whom is probably Luciano Berio¹. The 21st century also boasts renowned composers, some of whom find themselves drawn to the organ. Stefano Bonilauri is one of them. A graduate in piano, choral music, and composition, he is not an organist. However, he has composed several pieces for organ that demonstrate his desire to steer the instrument away from a nostalgic direction and towards a more genuine appreciation of a bygone era.

Is it more difficult for you to write for the organ than for other instruments?

STEFANO BONILAURI: In general, I don't like writing for a single instrument, whatever it may be. I find that the instrument then takes on too much importance in relation to the music and I feel blocked. This also applies to the organ, even though it seems to be the most complete instrument.

Putting it in dialogue with a very different instrument (for example, a monodic instrument) can create a stimulating situation for me. What interests me is achieving the same level of expressive intensity in instruments that are, by nature, very different. Trying to give the organ more flexibility, and make it breathe, for example. When I write for solo organ, I think about what remains a crucial point: the acoustics, which characterise it beyond even its particularities of construction.

When you write for organ, do you have a particular instrument in mind?

S.B.: Paradoxically, I always think more about instruments other than the organ... This allows me to achieve something original and perhaps unprecedented. Moreover, as I said, the strength of the organ lies pre-

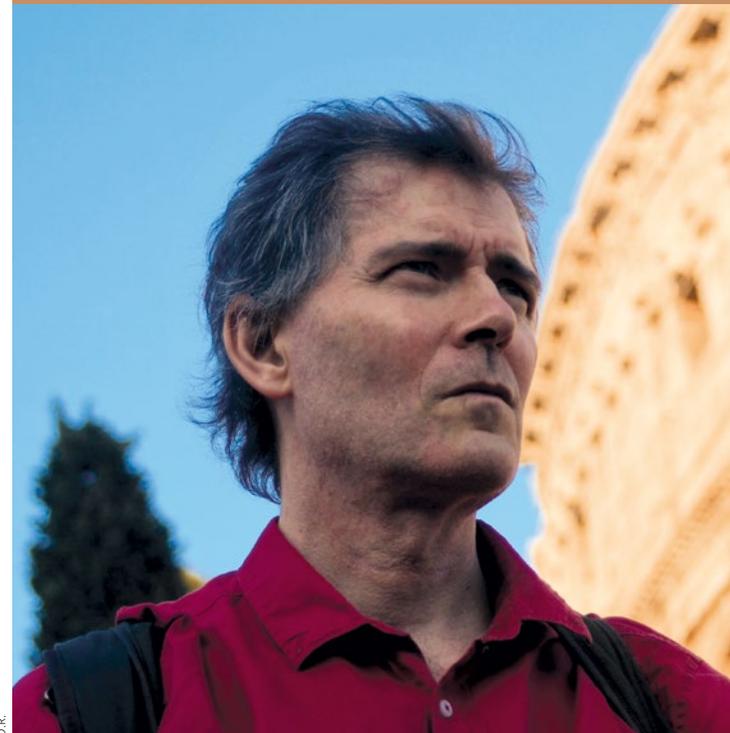
cisely in its resonance in the space where it is placed. In this sense, it is an architectural instrument: it reveals, even describes, the space in which it is located, so that for a blind person – or for someone who decides to close their eyes while listening – it becomes a 'musical guide' to the space in which it is located.

Is your music playable on a historical organ?

S.B.: In most cases, I think so, because the important thing is to try to adapt to the acoustic space, even if this means changing a few parameters. That's why I haven't given any specific instructions on registration, only on character. And I trust the performer.

What would be your ideal organ? How would you like the organ to evolve?

S.B.: I would like the organ to become an instrument that can have many sound sources and allow the listener to experience different kinds of listening without having to move around: for example, the close and intimate listening that a portable organ, even a very small one, can provide; but also listening from further away, where distance determines a different kind of experience. So, different types of organs in one, or at least brought together in the same space.



D.R.

How do you experience an organ concert? Is it a concept that needs to evolve?

S.B.: The organ developed as an acoustic architecture of the building in which it is placed (most often in churches), a building that brings together many people, but which can also bring together other instruments, as well as singers. This instrument is therefore fundamentally ecumenical, capable of dialogue with everyone.

For this reason, I believe that organ concerts should highlight this valuable characteristic and offer programmes that, as often as possible, include one or more instruments, voices or even electronic devices in addition to the organ. In this way, the dialogue would be enriched by sound sources from a wide variety of locations, allowing the listener to be immersed in a resonance that fills the entire architectural space. ●

Interview by Pascale Rouett



S. Bonilauri

• *Doppio Duo*, T. Sjöblom et M. Kandić, accordéons

• *Consumato Lume* (for five instrumentalists)



STEFANO BONILAURI

Born in 1964, Stefano Bonilauri is an Italian composer who has won numerous international composition awards, including the Évreux prize in 2010 (the Guillaume Costeley prize). In 2024, he won first prize at the 'Francisco Escudero' International Composition Competition (Zarautz, Spain). His works are regularly performed at major festivals, and he teaches harmony theory and analysis at the 'Achille Peri-Claudio Merulo' Conservatoire in Reggio Emilia and Castelnovo ne' Monti.

1. See ON69.

THE ORGAN



Organ of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Guastalla, restored by Romain Legros.

Once upon a time... there was a Corsican organ builder... who left for Italy

A meeting with Romain Legros

Romain Legros, a French organ and harpsichord builder born in 1965, has been living for a quarter of a century in the heart of the Valpolicella hills near Verona. His career as an organ builder began at the age of fifteen, when he became an apprentice in Marc Garnier's workshop. In 1986, he decided to continue his apprenticeship in Italy, under the guidance of Bartolomeo Formentelli.

In 1995, Romain decided to set up his own workshop, first in Gargagnago, then in Settimo di Pescantina (Verona), devoting himself to the restoration and construction of both organs and harpsichords. A formidable master of his craft, he applies the most rigorous principles of craftsmanship to every stage of his work.

Apart from the aspects strictly related to craftsmanship, how did you develop your musical skills?

ROMAIN LEGROS: Before discovering the fascinating world of instrument making, I had the opportunity to take part in an introductory course in organ playing led by Jacques Beraza in Corsica, my native land. Having already been immersed in the practice of Corsican polyphonic singing, which is essentially based on improvisation and oral transmission, the idea of restoring historical instruments came to me right there.

I owe the beginning of this journey to Bartolomé Formentelli's discovery of the organ of the Monticellu brotherhood and the way in which the notes were 'pronounced' on this instrument. My encounters with Jacques Beraza and other great musicians, organ builders, and musicologists helped to fuel my passion for the areas of music which interest me most: instruments, literature, research, and creativity.

Why Italy? Was it solely because of Formentelli?

R.L.: First, because of a visceral attraction to the general cradle of art which Italy is, and then to the art of Corsican organ building. In fact, most of the organs preserved in Corsica are of Italian origin, and local organ builders, after a period of training on the peninsula, settled on the island. Then there was Formentelli's Italy, a natural destination after my apprenticeship with Garnier, allowing me to return to my first passions after an adventure of apprenticeship and the discovery of different professional realities. Today, it is Italy that has chosen me, while I await a possible return to my origins... or wherever my passions may lead me.

What do you mean by restoration? What do you think of historical strata? Should there be a return to the original appearances or a respect for the course of history?

R.L.: Restoration is based on reading and understanding the elements, filtered through in-depth study and a comparison between consolidated knowledge and a flexible openness



Domenico Severin.

An Italian in Paris

An interview with Domenico Severin

Born in Italy, Domenico Severin has made France his adopted home. He shares his experience with us.

How did you get started in music?

DOMENICO SEVERIN: My musical journey began at the age of 5 with the piano, then the violin. At around 18, I decided to enrol in organ classes, an instrument which I started playing on my own and would go on to become my preference. At 23, I completed my training at the Venice Conservatoire with several first prizes, including one for organ.

During my last two years at the conservatoire, I was able to complete my training at organ academies organised by neighbouring cities with teachers such as Radulescu, Roth, Chapuis, Vogel, Tagliavini... The organ and its repertoire naturally encouraged me to explore everything related to liturgical music.

The organ helped to spark my interest in other disciplines, and it was through playing this instrument that I decided to also study Gregorian chant, composition, and the harpsichord, as well as returning to the piano...

How would you describe the musical climate in Italy at the time of your studies?

D.S.: My musical studies coincided with the maturing of the movement to rediscover early performance practices and period instruments. Many historic organs were being restored and copies of early instruments – or instruments inspired by such aesthetics – were being built.

The climate was effervescent. Major controversies regularly denounced the decadence of liturgical music. In a completely different context, a certain Umberto Eco was talking to us about semantics and musical semiology; new methods of analysing musical discourse were about to become established. CDs were flooding the market: a revolution!

Roughly speaking, one could say that the world of Italian organ music was divided into two camps: on the one hand, there were those who supported a kind of noble monopoly of Baroque and older repertoires; on the other, there were a few organists, including one of my teachers, Arturo Sacchetti, who strove to honour Italian composers of the 19th and 20th centuries. The latter were systematically eclipsed from the musical sphere because they were considered decadent.

You left Italy for France at the age of 27. Your destination was Paris. How did this transition go for you?

D.S.: I arrived in France with a Master's degree in the organ, a few years' experience teaching piano, a background as a young concert performer

and, above all, a great deal of curiosity about this new world that was opening up to me. Those first few years were a period of discovery in every direction: I found a society that was different and much more centralised than the one I knew in Italy; I came into contact with a new musical world, particularly the organ scene in the capital; I navigated the French administrative labyrinth...

I discovered a very active organ scene, still rooted in a 'sacred' tradition with all that that entails. However, this world was evolving and opening up. I never missed an organ concert; I discovered the organists and organs that I had dreamed of in *live* performance; I heard Messiaen's works played at La Trinité, Franck's at Sainte-Clothilde, improvisations at Notre-Dame, La Madeleine, Guillou, Chapuis, and many others.

“The climate was effervescent. Major controversies regularly denounced the decadence of liturgical music.”

What memories do you have of that time?

D.S.: I heard – and was rather surprised by – a very French way of playing Bach. I listened to Franck interpreted by those who claimed to follow a well-established tradition, but also by those who reinterpreted his music in the light of recent musicological research.

I had met Marie-Claire Alain at the Rommainmôtier courses in Switzerland. I met her again in Paris at her concerts and experienced those enjoyable moments she knew how to create with her former students. Many other people, organists or enthusiasts of this instrument, passed on to me the 'groundwork' of a terrain particularly conducive to the organ's cause. I also had the chance to play beautiful



ERIC LEGRET

From left to right: Marta Gliozzi (organ and artistic direction), Armelle Morvan (soprano), Maxime Chevrot (sackbut), Élodie Bouleffour (recorder).

The organ in colour

An interview with Marta Gliozzi

An Italian who has been firmly established in France for many years, Marta Gliozzi looks back on some important moments in her career.

Your childhood was marked by considerable geographical mobility. How did this shape your relationship with music?

MARTA GLIOZZI: My father was a physics researcher and his collaborations meant that we were constantly travelling: Geneva, Paris, Turin, Boston... We moved to a new country almost every year. This apparent instability actually gave me an incredible

cultural richness. Music was my anchor. It gave me continuity and inner stability. When I entered the conservatoire in Turin, where I was born, at the age of 13, I felt that this calling had finally found a solid foundation.

What were your first areas of musical exploration?

M.G.: As a teenager, I developed a passion for early music through ensembles where I played the recorder, cromorne and spinet. Singing also played an essential role: children's choirs, which became youth choirs, opened my eyes to the demands of collective performance and the beauty of polyphony. With *La Bottega musicale*, we had the joy of winning the Arezzo Gregorian chant competition several times. This immersion in the early vocal repertoire had a profound influence on my approach to the organ and to performance.

The organ then became your main instrument. What were the decisive encounters?

M.G.: My meeting with Jean Boyer in France was very decisive. His rigour, his openness and his vision of the organ as a vibrant and modern instrument had a profound influence on me. It was also in 1990 that I met Hervé Lesvenan, with whom I have shared my life and projects for three decades. Together, we founded *Ars'Ys*, a space for research and creation that explores both early repertoires and contemporary perspectives.

You have created several original projects. Can you tell us about them?

M.G.: I like to build bridges between disciplines. *L'Orgue des couleurs* (2008) is a show for young audiences which, through synesthesia, seeks to awaken the ear and the imagination. *Fiamma & Foco* (2015) explores 17th-century Italy, a period of extraordinary musical inventiveness. As for *Ars'Ys*, it is our permanent laboratory: we have produced creations there in which the organ dialogues with the voice, the orchestra, but also theatre, dance and video.

Teaching plays an important role in your career. How do you see this role?

M.G.: Since 2004, I have been teaching organ and chamber music at the

CRR in Brest. It is a responsibility which I am honoured to have, especially as I am following in the footsteps of personalities such as Jean Boyer, François Espinasse, and Michel Bouvard. My teaching approach is based on one conviction: interpretation comes from a receptive and conscious body. I therefore incorporate yoga, the Alexander Technique, educational kinesiology and qi gong into my teaching. This approach allows students to find a freer movement and a deeper relationship with the instrument. Damien Simon and I have also published a three-volume method, *L'Orgue aux mille couleurs* (The Organ of a Thousand Colours).

Your discography is varied. What do you see as the common threads?

M.G.: It reflects my dual loyalty to the Baroque heritage and to creation. On the heritage side, *Europa Barocca*, *Geistliches Konzert* and the Vivaldi works (*Dixit Dominus*, *Concerti per varii instrumenti*) express my attachment to the early repertoire. With *Ars'Ys*, albums such as *Arcobaleno*, *Armorica Breizh* and *Hymne aux bâtisseurs* open up new forms, combining traditions, contemporary compositions and popular inspirations. In all cases, the organ appears not as a static monument, but as an instrument in constant dialogue with its era.

After more than thirty years of career, what meaning do you give to your journey today?

M.G.: I would say that it is a path of transmission and sharing. My travelling childhood taught me to listen and to be adaptable; my musical journey has given me an artistic family that continues to grow. Italy and France are my two roots. What I want today is to continue exploring the many colours of the organ and the voice, and to pass them on to those who, like me, believe that music is a universal language. ●

Interview by Viviane Loriaut

Mandolin clubs in Italy¹

At the end of the 19th century, brass bands, choirs, philharmonic orchestras, amateur theatre troupes, mandolin clubs, and sports and recreational clubs reflected a change in the social hierarchy, embodying citizens' participation in public life through social, health, economic, cultural and philanthropic associations.

The main places of entertainment and cultural leisure for the working classes were choral associations, brass bands, and mandolin clubs. Towards the end of the 19th century, all Italian cities – with the exception of the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, where mandolin clubs sprang up sporadically but were short-lived – had a mandolin club in addition to a brass band. The link between these two groups was close.

Brass bands and mandolins

What do brass bands and mandolin clubs have in common? Several things: the need to be able to sight-read music; a similar (often identical) repertoire; the publication of specialised magazines; the practice of public competitions and gatherings; the relatively modest cost of the instruments; a public activity regulated by a statute approved by the authorities; an obvious socialising function.

However, a major difference between brass bands and mandolin clubs lies in the social background of their members: brass bands bring together workers from all walks of life, from those in very demanding manual trades to those in lighter occupations. Daily occupation determines the distribution of instrumental roles: the lowest-pitched, heaviest and least manoeuvrable instruments are assigned to musicians mainly from the working class, while the high-pitched, agile and virtuoso instruments are mainly played by people with great manual dexterity.

1. Although there are many mandolin ensembles in Italy, this is not, of course, unique to that country: they can also be found elsewhere, particularly in France and Belgium.

In mandolin circles, on the other hand, the membership consists mainly of representatives of the liberal professions or light crafts, as playing plucked string instruments requires fine dexterity in both hands, a quality associated with higher social status². During the 20th century, there was a degree of permeability between the two groups: it was common for percussionists in brass bands to also participate in mandolin circle performances, or for the most skilled brass band instrumentalists to also try their hand at plucked string instruments (and vice versa...).

Bridges and teaching...

In municipal music schools, it was possible to begin studying a wind instrument, but not a plucked string instrument – there was no officially recognised curriculum for the mandolin and guitar. For this reason, many mandolinists and guitarists devoted themselves to studying wind instruments in order to obtain a musical qualification.

Agostino Pisani, in his *Manuale del mandolinista*³ (Mandolinist's Manual), mentions 300 workshops where mandolins were made in Catania between 1880 and 1920: a growing demand for instruments obviously linked to increasingly important ac-

2. With the dissolution of free associations by the fascist regime and the obligation to continue activities within factories with the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, brass bands survived this sad political experience, albeit with difficulty, while the activities of mandolin circles were severely compromised, as most of them were not made up of industrial workers. Indeed, among the first members of the *Circolo Mandolinisti e Mandoliniste di Cremona* (Cremona Mandolinists' Circle) were engineer Giovanni Francesco Poli, magistrate Luigi Gaetani and lawyer Guido Manara.

3. Milan, Ed. Hoepli, 1898.



Camilla Finardi.

Clubs

The practice of 'cercles' is closely related to the unifying social custom of clubs, as they were called in England, where they originated and spread. Scott Joplin dedicated his famous ragtime *The Entertainer* (published in 1902; almost a self-dedication, since it was his own nickname) 'to James Brown and his Mandolin Club'.

It should be noted that music publishing also experienced strong growth during this period.

Played by both the elite – notably the *Regina Margherita* mandolin clubs in Florence and Ferrara; the sovereign herself was a lutenist, guitarist and mandolinist – and by different social strata, the mandolin thus became an instrument for the masses, synonymous for some with the desire to break down social barriers ●

Camilla Finardi

CAMILLA FINARDI

Born in 1986, Camilla Finardi has a degree in musicology and master's degrees in mandolin from Milan and guitar from Reggio Emilia. A mandolin teacher at the Niccolò Piccinni Conservatoire in Bari since 2025, she collaborates with various theatres and orchestras, plays period instruments and has recorded for prestigious labels.

Music education in Italy

Italy, the land of composers and opera, places a great deal of importance on music education. This is organised from compulsory schooling to conservatoires, with specialised courses in secondary school. Over the last twenty years, several reforms have sought to modernise this system, bring it into line with European standards, and broaden access to musical practices.



E. Viccardi :
“Reflections on
higher education
in organ playing
at Italian
conservatories”

In primary school, music is introduced in the form of listening, singing, and rhythmic concepts. The Italian innovation appears in secondary school (*scuola secondaria di primo grado*) thanks to the *percorsi a indirizzo musicale*. These courses offer instrumental learning, group practice, and theoretical basics. A reform implemented in 2023 redefined the objectives: instrumental progression, integration of music history and analysis, and reinforcement of ensemble playing. It replaces the 1999 framework, while granting each school some flexibility.

At secondary school (*scuola secondaria di secondo grado*), the *licei musicali* combine general education with in-depth artistic training: history, harmony, composition, and performance. They prepare students for both higher education in music and other university courses. Teachers are recruited through competitive examinations requiring solid theoretical or instrumental training.

The third pillar is higher education, grouped together in the AFAM (*Alta Formazione Artistica, Musicale e Coreutica*) sector, which includes conservatoires and recognised institutes. Reformed in 1999 to integrate with the 'Bologna Process', it offers first-level degrees (three years, equivalent to a bachelor's degree), second-level degrees (two years, equivalent to a master's degree), and doctorates. This model promotes international mobility and gives academic value to degrees, while preserving the traditional role of conservatoires: to train high-level performers, composers, and teachers.

This system has several advantages: early detection of talent thanks to specialised courses, a dense network of conservatoires, and a recognised

“This system has several advantages: early detection of talent thanks to specialised courses, a dense network of conservatoires, and a recognised high artistic level.”

high artistic level. The reforms also aim to harmonise curricula and ensure national consistency.

However, some challenges remain: regional inequalities in human and material resources, the cost of instruments, and a lack of specialised teachers or suitable premises. Moreover, the demanding entrance exams can discourage some students, while continuity between levels of education remains an area for improvement.

Italy, like most countries, offers a wide range of musical pathways, from introductory courses in primary school to high-level professional training. Recent reforms reflect a desire to strengthen music's place in education and affirm the country's role as a major cultural reference in Europe. ●

Viviane Loriaut



1. Enrico Viccardi.

2. Rome, Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia).

The Pistoia School: Origins and Development

From the second half of the 18th century to the second decade of the 20th century, a school of organ-building emerged and flourished in Pistoia. It gained almost immediate relevance in Tuscany before taking on a dominant role in the 19th century.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Jean-Louis Loriaut,
Umberto Pineschi,
Samuele Maffucci,
Enrico Barsanti in
Pistoia (VL, 2025).

The Pistoia organ movement incorporated the Italian organ tradition, particularly that of the Tuscan schools of Cortona (Cesare Romani) and Lucca (Ravani), but also acquired characteristics that distinguished it significantly, in many respects, from the organs of other Italian schools. This was mainly due to the colours heard by the organ builders of Pistoia in the works of Willem Hermans in Pistoia and Bernardino Azzolino Della Ciaia in Pisa.

We also know precisely how this type of organ was used. Fortunately, at least four Pistoia composers from the second half of the 18th century to the end of the 19th century accompanied their organ pieces with precise registration instructions: Giuseppe Gherardeschi, Giovan Pietro Baldi, Luigi Gherardeschi, and Gherardo Gherardeschi.

The Hermans organs of Pistoia and the Della Ciaia organs of Pisa

A Flemish organ builder, the Jesuit Willem Hermans (Thorn, 1601–Rome, 1683, see p. 8), who arrived in Italy in 1635, built an organ in

1664 for his order's church in Pistoia, Sant'Ignazio di Loyola. The instrument sparked great interest because of its difference from Tuscan organs: namely a numerical balance between the *Principale-Ripieno* family stops and the *da concerto* stops.

Although common in northern schools, this approach was unknown to the Italian school, where the organ consisted essentially of a *Principale*, followed by a *Ripieno* with separate ranks, with a solo stop (*Flauto*) or, exceptionally, two: the *Sordine* (a *Regal*) or a second *Flauto*.

For the organ builders of Pistoia, Hermans' solo stops were an undiscovered world of sound. A few details as follows: the brilliant four-rank *Cornet*, located immediately behind the *Principale* on the façade, with a striking presence; the soft, muted *Flauto*, with the same scale as the *Ottava*, reminiscent of the sound of the Dutch *Quintadena*; the *Vox humana*, regal-sounding, with a body consisting of a cone topped by a cylinder, fitted with an adjustable cover welded to its upper part; the *Mosetto*, the same shape as the *Vox humana*, but without a cover at the top; the *Trombe*, with a tin body, like the one used in Flanders.

The Hermans organ introduced two other innovations: a pedal stop, *Contrabasso*, composed of stopped wooden pipes (until then, the pedalboard was only used to lower the corresponding keys on the keyboard); two accessories, which would later play an important role, namely the *Timpano*, or *Tamburo* (two pipes of about 4' detuned to produce loud beats imitating the roll of timpani) and the *Nightingale* stops (small pipes whose



MASSIMO LANZINI

Sinalunga, Collegiata SS. Trinità and S. Martino, organ Nicomede e Fratelli Agati di Pistoia (1843).

“Approximately, five major periods can be distinguished, characterised by a gradual increase in the range of the keyboard and pedalboard, as well as the phasing out of the short octave.”

ends, immersed in a container of water, reproduce the sound of birdsong).

Another instrument, the greatest undertaking in the history of Italian organ building, made a lasting impression: the organ of the *Chiesa dei Cavalieri di Santo Stefano* in Pisa (1738, 5 manuals, more than 60 stops, 3 pedals, range unknown) by Bernardino Azzolino Della Ciaia (1671–1755). He called on several organ builders to construct it. In 1871, the organ was rebuilt with two manuals by Gian Battista De Lorenzi of Verona, then renovated in 1914 by the Giovanni Tamburini company of Crema, which enlarged and electrified it in 1931.

The organs of the Basilica di San Petronio in Bologna



ON71 Playlist

Anonymous,
after A. Willaert

• *O gloriosa domina*
M. Bonfiglioli
(San Petronio,
Bologna – Italy)

Others

• C. Merulo
Toccata
M. Bonfiglioli
(Bologna – Italy)



G.A. Perti

• *Credo, excerpt from the 8-voice mass*
Choir of San Petronio
(Bologna), conducted
by M. Vannelli

• A. Bonelli
Toccata Cleopatra
L.F. Tagliavini et
L. Tammiga (Bologna)



• Bologna also has another famous instrument: the one in the Basilica of San Martino. You can find a description of it on our magazine's website:
M. Bonfiglioli
"The organ of the Basilica of San Martino in Bologna"

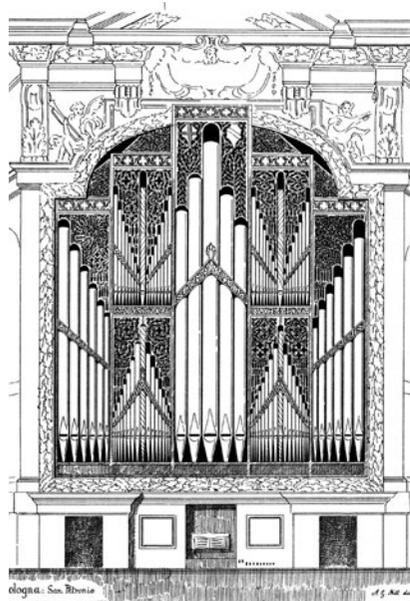
"I know of no traveller, whether a builder or not, who has not been captivated by the striking sight of the pipes on the façade of Lorenzo Da Prato's 1470 organ in San Petronio di Bologna. The pipes are aligned, inviting us to take certainty in the idea of eternal peace for souls on this earth. The largest pipes flank the smallest. The macrocosm and microcosm simply stated. A marvel, a wonder, a miracle, dispensed to a permanent silence for so long."

(Jean-Louis Loriaut, organ builder)

San Petronio was bishop from 431 to around 449. Little is known about him, but the complex context of the time suggests his social engagements, which is why the basilica is the popular temple (*tempiu civicu*) of Bologna.

The basilica

Construction of the basilica began on 7 June 1390 under the direction of Antonio di Vincenzo, but various difficulties delayed its completion for more than three centuries, leaving it still unfinished today. In the 16th century, Arduino Arriguzzi unsuccessfully attempted an extension that would have made it larger than St Peter's in Rome. On 24 February 1530, Clement VII crowned Charles V emperor there. Many architects, from Vignola to Palladio, drew up plans to complete the façade, which were never realised, and similar attempts in the 19th and 20th centuries failed. The basilica houses oeuvres by Giovanni da Modena, Cossa, Costa, Parmigianino, and Lombardi.



Arthur George Hill (1883), Frits Knuf edition.

An intense musical life

The *Cappella Musicale*, a group of musicians attached to the basilica, has been active since 1436. It has included masters such as Spataro, Cazzati, Colonna, and Perti, and instrumentalists such as Vitali, Gabrielli, Bononcini, Corelli, and Torelli, who most notably developed vocal and instrumental music in the concertante genre.

There is evidence of small organs dating back to 1393, but it was not until 4 June 1470 that Lorenzo da Prato was commissioned to build a large organ. The construction process, half of which was financed by the civil government, is confirmed by sparse details, such as the casting of metal on sand. It is believed to have been completed in 1475, and the Dijon organist Ogerio Saignand is reported to have been hired after this.

Two opposing galleries were erected near the choir. The organ was placed on the left-hand side, in a case made by Giovanni del Chierico and his son. It was placed in five bays. We know that the pipes of the *Ripieno* were

arranged in separate rows and were doubled and tripled in the high registers, and that there was a Flute. The pitch was three semitones higher than modern concert pitch. The temperament is unknown.

The original keyboard has not survived: the current keyboard dates from 1531 and is the work of Giovanni Battista Facchetti, who, among other things, rebuilt the windchest, introduced broken feints and installed an iron rollerboard. The organ builder who maintained the organ, Giovanni Cipri, added the *Flauto in XII^e* in 1563. His son Paolo succeeded him.

In April 1596, Baldassarre Malamini undertook to build an organ opposite the old one, intended for a '*musica duplex et responsiva ac alternata*'. Although the new organ was largely inspired by its counterpart, there were some differences: the *Ripieno* breaking-back points were shifted up a semitone for greater clarity; broken feints were added. The façade had five compartments, but while the previous instrument tended towards a Nordic aesthetic that avoided empty space, in the new one, a space was left above the pipes, with festoons and cherub heads.

In 1641-1642, Antonio Dal Corno Colonna replaced Malamini's 8-foot rear *Montre* with a 16-foot one, thus changing the correspondence with the other instrument. In 1659, he moved the organs to their current location: once the construction of the vaults was completed, the organs were transported with the choir to the new main chapel.

They were lifted without being dismantled, turned, transported across a bridge that crossed the church, then crossed and replaced upside down. Between 1674 and 1675, they were integrated into the current Baroque wall coverings by Giacomo Monti, decorated with musical figures, including the second patron saint of

Sicilian multi-console organs

“This very famous organ, the only one of its kind, has seven manuals. Despite all the works I have consulted, I have never found any organ with so many manuals, and I believe that none still exist today. Considering the era in which it was built, we can safely say that the ingenuity of this artist, La Grassa, was more than prodigious, it was singular.” This was the opinion of Damiano Di Pasquale, a pioneer in organ studies in Sicily, referring to the organ built by Francesco La Grassa between 1836 and 1847 for the Church of San Pietro in Trapani.



Trapani, Chiesa San Pietro, organ Francesco La Grassa, central console. The central console has three manuals, each with 70 keys (f¹/d⁵), although the first seven keys of the second and third keyboards are silent, while the first seven of the first keyboard play the 24' Principal.

The phenomenon of multi-console organs, a curious and interesting Sicilian feature, originated nearly a century earlier with the work of Donato Del Piano and continued until the mid-19th century. Excluding the one made by Francesco La Grassa, only one multi-console organ was built by other organ builders.

Donato Del Piano

At the height of his career, Donato Del Piano (1704-1785) devoted himself to the construction of the monumental organ of the church of San Nicolò l’Arena, annexed to the Benedictine monastery of Catania.

Born near Naples, he arrived in Sicily with his brother Giuseppe in roughly 1725 and began working in Syracuse and the surrounding area. Looking at some of his important organs built before the great organ in Catania,

we can see that Del Piano was very faithful to the construction standards of the 18th century, as shown by the instruments in Leonforte (province of Enna, 1740, 10 stops, 1 keyboard of 45 notes with a short octave and an 8-note pedalboard coupled to the keyboard) and San Lorenzo in Aidone (province of Enna, 1754, 11 stops, same configuration as above).

In 1755, he signed a contract with the monastery of San Nicolò l’Arena in Catania to build the grandiose organ that would make him famous throughout Europe. Donato Del Piano designed an organ with three manuals: Great Organ, Instrumental Organ and Echo. Two of these were duplicated on the right and left so that the whole instrument could be played by three organists.

Catania, Chiesa San Nicolò l’Arena, organ by Donato Del Piano (1767).



Catania, Chiesa San Nicolò l’Arena, organ Donato Del Piano, main console and right console.

The 5-manual Catania organ

The church of San Nicola l’Arena had a first-rate musical chapel, with many musicians and singers. The organ was almost never played alone. The side consoles can be considered as solo instruments added to the central body of the organ.

The central console controlled the entire organ, and a single organist seated at this console could also control the entire roster of sounds.

The work was completed twelve years later, but Donato Del Piano continued to refine and modify the instrument until his death. In 1785, Del Piano created an *Uccelliera* (‘aviary’) designed as an automatic barrel organ. Other modifications, some of them substantial, were subsequently made by his pupils Antonino Mazzone, Mariano Cinquemani and, finally, Antonino Rizzo.

The organ in Catania experienced a dark period of decline from the second half of the 19th century onwards. In 2003, the author of this article was commissioned to carry out an expert assessment. In 2004, it was restored by the Mascioni family, organ builders from Azzio, with the support of a study commission composed of, among others, Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini.

Donato Del Piano never built another organ of this type, even for prestigious commissions, preferring to devote himself to building instruments with a single window keyboard. Among the most important were the organ built in 1769 for the Church of San Domenico in Palermo, a significant commission due to the prestige of the location and its distance (both physical and cultural) from Catania, and the organ built in 1775 for the Church of San Basilio in Regalbuto.



The organ of the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia.



0N71 Playlist

G. Rossini

- *Overture to L'Italiana in Algeri* (transcription for four-hand organ) R. Bellatti and L. Ferrari (Frassinoro - Italy)

C. Fumagalli

- *Solemn Mass based on arias from Verdi's operas, Versetti per il Gloria da 'Traviata'*

- *Cadenza e versetto I*

- *Versetto II*

- *Versetto III*

- *Versetto IV*

- *Versetto V*

G. Bovet
(Castel San Pietro, Ticino, Switzerland)

Theatre organs in Italy

It is sometimes forgotten that Verdi, having been an organist himself, utilised the organ in his operas. But what characteristics did such theatrical organs need to have? How were they used and what solutions did organ builders propose in an acoustic setting that was completely different from that of churches¹?

The 'grand' Baroque

The organs are all from the 19th century. While the registrations specified by 19th-century composers in their scores for church organs are particularly rich in detail, those concerning the use of the organ in operas are very rare, as the organ was limited to creating a religious and ecclesiastical atmosphere.

Often, the registrations for the theatre were suggested directly by the conductor. However, studies confirm the use of the *Ripieno* registers – the *Principale* with the *Ottava* or the entire pyramid – while the *da Concerto* registers were not used.

1. Some of the organs built for theatres were transferred to churches, while others created for churches were installed in theatres.

The acoustics and position of the organ in the theatre are important factors in the choice of stops. Unlike churches, the dry acoustics of the venue and the presence of curtains, ropes and machinery do not favour the propagation of sound.

Nineteenth-century instruments (especially in Lombardy) had taken up the tones of the orchestra and brass band; melodramatic taste then left the theatres and spread to liturgical use, with certain mechanical devices directly imitating certain orchestral instruments.

The organ of the Teatro Sociale in Bergamo

Giuseppe II Serassi notes, in his study for the *Teatro della Scala di Milano*, that the acoustics of a building have always been a subject of in-depth study since ancient times. At the beginning of the 19th century, he points out that the art of providing sound for a church or theatre had been lost. He stated that, due to the inexperience of architects, the problem had become serious, that organs were suffering as a result, and that it was rare for them to be placed in environments with favourable acoustic conditions. He went on to write that when the acoustics were dry, due to the crowd and the tapestries, the voice of the organ became muffled and the harmonies dull.

He drew up plans for an organ in 1807. The instrument, intended to be placed with the orchestra in the new *Teatro Sociale* in Bergamo, was unfortunately never built due to lack of time.

The organ of the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia

In 1856, the brothers Giuseppe (1799-1875) and Filippo (1795-1871) Riatti of Reggio Emilia proposed the purchase of an organ. It was a medium-sized instrument with 16 stops, a fairly basic composition, with few *da concerto* stops and the provision of a *Registro sopra a Ripieno*. Considered too expensive for sporadic use, the project was rejected by the management.

A few months later, the Riatti brothers sold another organ to the *Teatro Valli*. This instrument, built by Luigi

Montesanti (1757-1830) and his son Ferdinando (1787-1860), organ builders in Mantua, was first made in 1815 for a church, then brought to the *Teatro Valli* in 1857, the year of the latter's inauguration. The organ was installed in its current location on a balcony to the left of the stage. It seems that the instrument was played for the first time in Donizetti's opera *La Favorita*.

In 1888, the Montesanti underwent restoration in order to bring it up to the international standard pitch. It was ready for Alberto Franchetti's opera *Asraël*, which was performed on 11 February 1888.

The organ was restored in 1982 by the Pedrini workshop in Binanuova (province of Cremona). It has a configuration similar to that of many organs built by Montesanti at the same time, in Mantua, Reggio, Rovigo, Cremona, etc. Consequently, apart from the change in pitch, which was clearly necessary in order to use the instrument with the orchestra, the organ was not designed for the theatre. It has the typical registers of a church organ: alongside the *Ripieno* registers, there are all the *da Concerto* registers.

The organ of the Teatro Municipale in Piacenza

The organ of the *Teatro Municipale* in Piacenza was built by the famous Serassi of Bergamo in 1827 (op. 442) on a 6-foot base. The organ was moved to three different locations in just over 20 years in the city of Piacenza. In 1859, it was installed in the municipal theatre. According to the inscriptions found on the case, it was used on several occasions: Verdi's *Otello* in 1890, Gounod's *Faust* in 1882/83, Donizetti's *La Favorita*, Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* in 1888/89, Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* in 1893, Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* in 1895, Puccini's *Tosca* in 1901, Gounod's *Faust* in 1909, Wagner's *Lohengrin* in 1911, Puccini's *Tosca* in 1913, and Gounod's *Faust* in 1920.

It has survived to this day in its entirety. In 1989, it was transferred to the Basilica of Santa Maria di Campagna (Piacenza) – where it joined Padre Davide's famous Serassi (1825-1838) – before being restored in 1991 by Giorgio Carli.

FEDERICO LORENZANI



Umberto Forni

The protection of historic organs in Italy

Our story gets off to a bad start: in 1919, the *Ministry of Education* commissioned Marco Enrico Bossi to inspect some of Italy's oldest organs in order to determine 'whether or not they should be restored in order to preserve them for history and art'. This prominent figure therefore wrote a report praising the 'sweetness of their harmonisation', which gave them 'a noble, calm and transparent sound', while deploring the mechanical imperfections and limited range of the manuals and pedals, proposing to preserve their sound quality but introducing 'modern improvements to the transmission'.

The report was accepted and published, and it was decided to apply it to Tuscany, which had the largest number of Renaissance instruments. Many of these, although altered and in poor condition, were still recognisable as such. The minister then drew up a general guide for the "restoration" of all ancient organs in the country, and the term "reform" became common practice for adaptation to the requirements of the Cecilian movement. On the recommendations of M.E. Bossi or Ulisse Matthey, old windchests and rollerboards were removed in favour of pneumatic transmissions, adding expressive keyboards. The *Principale* and *Ripieno* were kept, but connected to new instrument bodies.

A new turning point

1939 was a pivotal year for heritage protection. The '*Direction générale des Antiquités et des Beaux-Arts*' imposed guidelines throughout the country concerning archaeological excavations, museums, urban planning, murals, and objects of historical and artistic interest.

But clearly, officials were more interested in painted stalls, doors, and buffets than in ancient instruments, which were either set aside to make room for a new organ or systematically modified to make them suitable for accompanying Perosi's masses¹. Indeed, following Pope Pius X's *motu proprio* in 1903, which welcomed and legitimised the movement, almost all Italian organists had become Cecilians, and this new taste (i.e. the new market) had prompted the most important organ builders to transform themselves into industrialists: working in standardised units, they built organs with pneumatic and then electric transmission, at least until the end of the 1960s.

Generally, only certain pipes were kept from an old organ: the *Principale*, the *Ripieno* and the Flutes. The clarity and transparency of Italian *Ripieni* continued to be praised, but they were most often reharmonised

with new pressures. The old, isolated ranks of *Ripieno* were reorganised and grouped into five-rank registers, with authentic furnishings. In the post-war period, many manufacturers, founded by former workers from traditional factories, prospered. They carried out basic repairs, which were very popular with priests because they were inexpensive, irreparably damaging any organ that was not an Antegnati or a Callido, the only manufacturers recognised as important and worthy of respect.

A difficult return to authenticity

But some officials were aware of the historical value of a well-preserved antique organ. Even before 1939, invoking a law from 1909, the superintendent of Brescia had ordered the preservation of the Antegnati organ in the church of San Giuseppe (1581), which he considered to be the oldest and best-preserved organ in Italy. It was restored in 1956 by Armando Maccarinelli, under the direction of Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini. This was the first time that a 16th-century organ had been restored in Italy. It was difficult to find a competent restorer, but, aside from a few compromises, the work was carried out with all the rigour possible at the time. The inaugural concert given by Tagliavini himself, playing one of Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali* masses, was hailed as an absolute novelty and received unanimous approval.

This was followed, thanks to the *Gruppo Frescobaldi*² based in Brescia, by a major revival through concerts and broadcasts: organologists and organists flocked to hear "the true sound of the Italian organ". In 1957, the *Commissione per la tutela e il restauro degli organi artistici* (Commission for the Protection and Restoration of Artistic Organs) was founded, made up of organists and researchers such as Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini and Oscar Mischiati, tasked with monitoring the national cultural heritage and reporting any illegal actions or unauthorised work. The commission's first action was to request the

1. Lorenzo Perosi (1872–1956) was a priest and composer of sacred music. His work is based on Renaissance polyphony and Gregorian chant. At the end of his career, he held the position of choirmaster at St. Mark's Basilica in Venice and then that of perpetual director of the Sistine Chapel Choir in Rome.

2. Founded in 1952, this group's main objectives are to promote musical literature for the organ and to defend Italian instruments.



Contes, Valoncini organ (1873).

The 'route royale des orgues'

An important transborder cultural link, the *International Route Royale Organ Festival* highlights the heritage of historic organs, while at the same time showcasing the natural and architectural riches of the region. Free concerts and numerous side events punctuate a programme that draws on the support of numerous cultural partners in France and Italy, as well as local institutions. But let's take a step back...

2. Breil organ by Francesco Maria and Giambattista Concone (1758-1760) (detail).



A little history...

Following the surrender¹ of Nice in 1388, the House of Savoy gained a maritime outlet. It continued to modernise this vital route, even turning it into a carriageway. Used to transport salt, this road brought prosperity to the villages of the Roya valley and led to the construction of eight organs in the French part (the lower part of the Roya is Italian).

The organ builders chosen were either Lombard, Piedmontese or Tuscan, going in descending order down the valley they built organs in: Tende (collegiate church, Serassi 1807, Vittino 1881; chapel, Valoncini 1873); La Brigue (collegiate church, Lingiardi 1849; heritage house, 17th-18th century portable organ without pipes) (fig. 3); Fontan (Vittino 1850); Saorge (Lingiardi 1847) (fig. 4); Breil-sur-Roya (church, Concone case, 18th century; chapel, 19th century organ to be restored) (fig. 2).

To these instruments that of Sospel Cathedral should be added (Bévéra valley, tributary of the Roya): Agati 1843, Vittino 1891². (fig. 5)

Outside the Roya-Bévéra valleys, the following Italian organs can also be found in the former county of Nice: Nice (Providence cultural centre, Concone 18th century); Saint-Étienne de Tinée (Agati 1829); Nice (Saint-Barthélemy church, Valoncini 1872); Contes (Valoncini 1874).

A musical and heritage experience

The historic organs along the *Route Royale* are both bountiful and well preserved. Original and remarkable in many ways, the Italian organs dating from the 17th to 19th centuries are the work of prestigious Lombard organ builders. They have admirable characteristics: a (cut) keyboard, unique colours and a temperament far from any standardisation. The *Route Royale* also boasts two remarkable 18th cen-

1. The deed of surrender of Nice to Savoy is a charter dated 28 September 1388, the first stage in the entry of Nice and the Pays niçois into the possessions of the House of Savoy.

2. All these instruments (including those in the Italian part) are described in detail in the bilingual (French/Italian) work by René Saorgin and Silvano Rodi: *Orgues historiques des vallées de la Roya et de la Bévéra*, Édition du Cabri, 2004.

ture French baroque instruments by the Grinda brothers: Villefranche-sur-Mer and L'Escarène.

This exceptional heritage, which attracts the most talented organists, offers an incomparable musical and heritage experience for the public.

The repertoire

After the Cecilian reform, the Italian organ became a post-Romantic instrument, and many were destroyed or modified, including the great Serassi (1848) in Nice Cathedral.

Once the Roya instruments had been restored, the main difficulty lay in finding a repertoire. Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini and Guy Bovet provided René Saorgin with English editions by Padre Davide da Bergamo and Vincenzo Petrali. René Saorgin had a revelation about the use of these instruments and was the first to record this music, before even the Italians.

I created *L'été musical de la Roya* in 1973, and after five years it was taken up again by the Friends of the Nice Organ. In 2002, Silvano Rodi, organist at Sainte-Dévote in Monaco and teacher at the departmental conservatoire, created the *International Festival 'La Route Royale des Orgues'*, which went on to be taken over in 2021 by Franck Marcon, accompanist and conductor at the Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva and Neuchâtel. ●

Xavier Sant

For further information:
larouteroyaledesorgues.com

XAVIER SANT

Xavier Sant, along with René Saorgin, was behind the rediscovery, restoration and enhancement of the historic organs in the county of Nice. He worked as a pipe maker at the *Manufacture provençale d'orgues*.

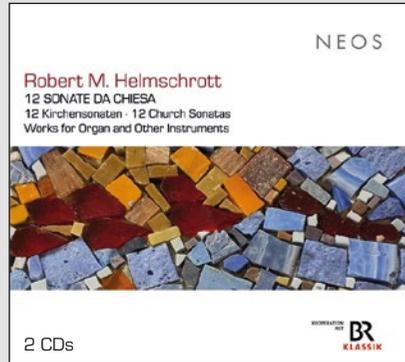


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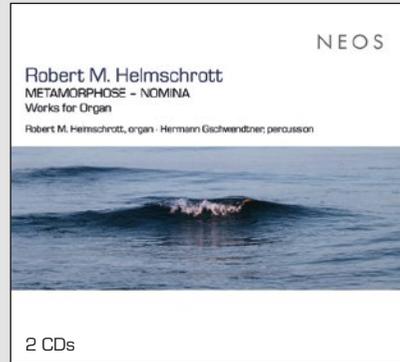
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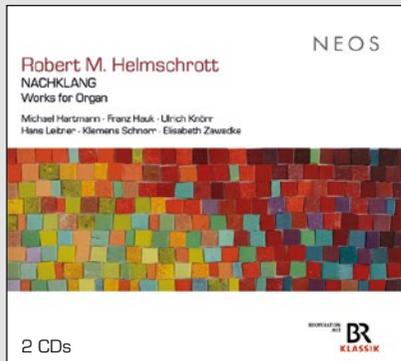


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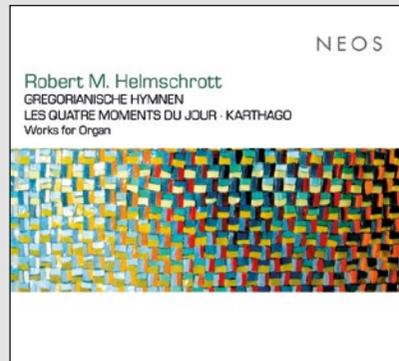


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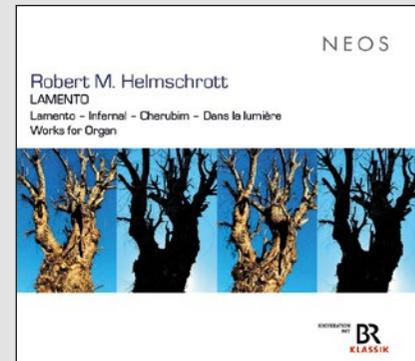
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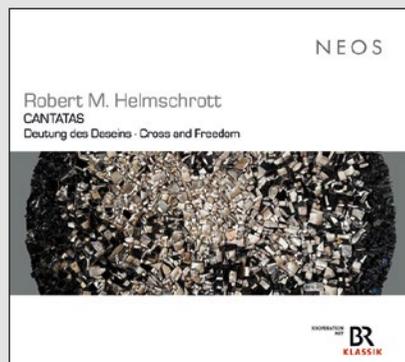


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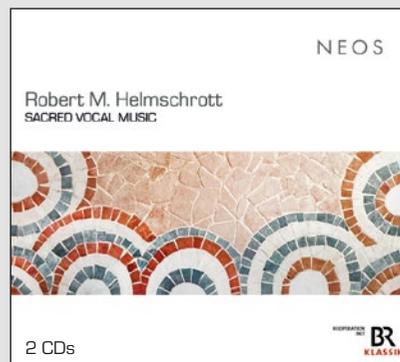


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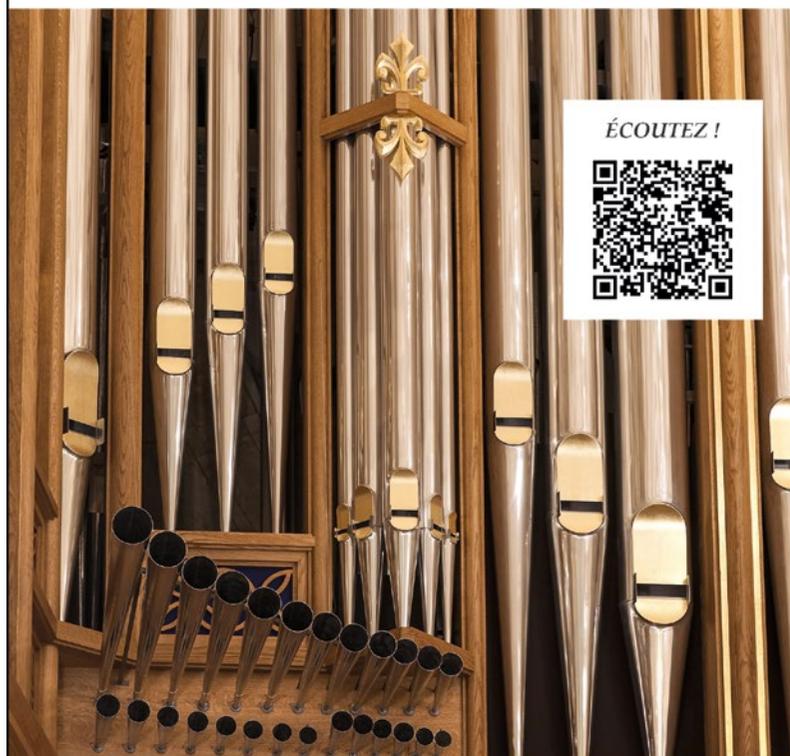


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By
Pierre Méa

APPOINTMENTS

• **Alma Bettencourt** has been appointed “artist in residence” at Radio-France, succeeding Lucile Dollat. She will have the opportunity to perform on the organ in the auditorium, alone or as part of the various ensembles of the Parisian ‘maison ronde’.

• **Adrien Levassor** has been appointed assistant organist at the church of Notre-Dame du Val-de-Grâce (Paris), after 12 years at the service of the parish of St-Jean-Baptiste-de-la-Salle (Paris).

He joins **Hervé Désarbre** at the helm of this 1853 Cavaillé-Coll organ (II - 21 stops).

COMPETITION

• **The final of the 10th Dudelage competition took place on 12 September.** The judge panel was made up of Stephen Tharp (United States, chairman), Loreto Aramendi (Spain), Winfried Bönig (Germany), and Paul Breisch (Luxembourg).

As is customary at the Dudelage competition, candidates were given a great deal of freedom in choosing their programme. For the final, a work of their choice by American composer George Baker was the only obligation in a programme which was otherwise entirely open to the choices of the candidates.

Master classes were given to candidates not admitted to the next round throughout the competition, with a final master class given on Saturday 13 September by Stephen Tharp, President of the panel, which

was open to all candidates still present.

– Song-Yeon Im won 1st prize and the Audience Prize.
– Haru Shionoya and Tyler Boehmer tied for 3rd prize.
– Song-Yeon Im will play the winner’s concert as part of the Dudelage International Organ Festival in 2026.

• **The final of the 14th Mikael Tariverdiev International Organ Competition took place in Kaliningrad (Russia) from 3 to 8 September.** The judge panel

was made up of Thomas Kientz (Switzerland/France) and 20 renowned concert organists and teachers from many countries.

– 1st prize: Sunghyun Park (Korea)
– 2nd prize: Polina Pantleyva (Russia)
– 3rd prize: Ivan Tsarv (Russia)

In addition, 22 special prizes were awarded, offering their winners the opportunity to perform in Russia’s finest concert halls.

• **The third edition of the ROYAN-ORGUES festival, organised by the ‘Association des Amis des Orgues de Notre-Dame de Royan’ in co-production with a number of other organisations, took place from 14 to 22 October in Royan and the Royan Atlantique conurbation (33 communes).**

This year’s festival included the 2nd International Composition Competition. The three winning works (by Romain Bastard, Haru Shionoya, and Mattéo Plassard – see ON70) received their world premieres on 20 and 22 October. In addition to the concerts and lectures, the focus was on outreach to young audiences. Louyse Gris and Joffrey Mialon, the



From left to right: Louyse Gris, Joffrey Mialon, Jérôme Pillement (conductor), Mattéo Plassard, Haru Shionoya. Musicians from the Ars Nova instrumental ensemble. Credit ©Emmanuelle Piaud

two organists in residence, played an active part in these outreach activities. The ROYAN-ORGUES festival is organised by the ‘Association des Amis des Orgues de Notre-Dame de Royan’, in co-production with the Ars Nova instrumental ensemble and L’octanphare music publishers. The competition was organised in partnership with our magazine. We’ll be coming back to this in our next issue.

ORGANS

• **The organ at Saint-Didier church in Villiers-le-Bel (95)** was inaugurated on 20 September, during the Heritage Days, under the fingers of Lucile Dollat. The instrument was completely overhauled by the Thomas company (Luxembourg): the blower was brought up to standard, the windchest was reworked and restored (with transport to the workshop), the pipework and case were cleaned, the gallery and staircase were consolidated, and the instrument was completely harmonised.

• **The Puget organ (1887) in the church of La Madeleine (Albi)** has just been rebuilt by Nicolas Lanaspèze, then blessed by the

archbishop of Albi, M^{gr} Balsa, and inaugurated by Stéphane Bois on 7 September 2025.

• **The choir organ at Nantes cathedral** was blessed and inaugurated on 29 September 2025 by the cathedral’s organists.

Built by Louis Debierre in 1896 and listed as a historic monument, it has been completely restored by Nicolas Toussaint. The new console, replacing the one lost in the fire in 2020, was designed and built by Stéphane Robert and Pascal Verdet. Roland Galtier was responsible for the overall project. It is the largest choir organ in France, with 3 manuals and 31 stops.



Orgue de chœur de la cathédrale de Nantes.

L’orgue de La Madeleine à Albi.



LEFT:
The 5 finalists (l-r):
Dr. Tyler Boehmer, Haru Shionoya, Songyeon Im, Chae Won Min and Filip Šmerda (Photo: Vera Bintener)

RIGHT:
The Dudelage competition jury and the winner, Song-Yeon Im.





From left to right: Alexandre Catau, Axel de Marnhac, Mélodie Michet and Alma Bettencourt at the keyboards of the Louviers organ.

• **The Louviers organ** was inaugurated on 20 and 21 September by Alma Bettencourt, Alain Brunet, Alexandre Catau, Thierry Escaich, Odile Jutten, Axel de Marnhac and Mélodie Michel. This instrument, built by J. Abbey in 1894, has 49 stops spread over 3 manuals and pedalboard, and is associated with the composer Maurice Duruflé, who was its organist for many years. It was restored by Robert, Jean-Baptiste Hartemann and Jean Daldosso.

FAREWELL

• **François Gaugler (1936-2025)**
"There must be predestined vocations. François Gaugler, who died on 16 July, was born in 1936



François Gaugler.

in Sickert, a village in the Haut-Rhin region in the shadow of the imposing and admirable Callinet de Masevaux. For him, mass was said. He taught for a time in Forbach, where he played the organ in the Wiesberg church (1963-1968). He then moved to Besançon, where he became organist at the Saint-Louis de Montrapon church. He remained there, alone or as co-titular organist, for more than 55 years. Able to be whatever he desired, he was sometimes a concert performer and often a teacher, but he was first and foremost a liturgical organist, if not a liturgist. An enthusiast of early music, he also played the recorder, crumhorn and cornet à bouquin in ensembles that he

brought together at his home. He was passionate about instrument making and applied various temperaments to the harpsichord he built himself, and of course he knew all about the organ, from the leather nut to the 32-footer. Organ builders (and organists), who were often and always warmly welcomed by his wife, can attest to this."

Quote from Pierre Bachmann.

• **Jean-Paul Imbert (1942-2025)**
Jean-Paul Imbert, a leading figure in the world of the organ, passed away on 8 September. An international concert artist, professor at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, substitute organist at Saint-Eustache from 1971 to 1993, he was also known for his intense activity on the Kleuker organ at Notre-Dame-des-Neiges in L'Alpe d'Huez. Appointed titular organist of this instrument in 1993, he organised numerous concerts there, attracting renowned organists from all over the world every

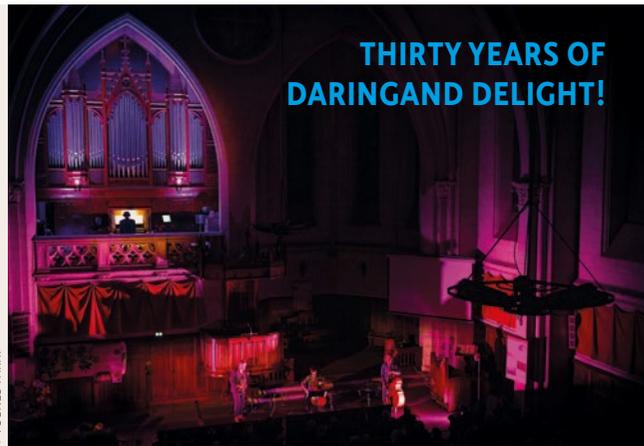


Jean-Paul Imbert.

year. But Jean-Paul Imbert was also an engaging personality, as Shin-Young Lee points out: "Jean-Paul Imbert was a discreet man, but his presence was palpable, a constant in the lives of those who met him. He was not one to impose his will, but his gentle, benevolent influence was natural. (...) He was an upright, uncompromising man, but with a rare flexibility that enabled him to always listen to others, to understand their weaknesses while encouraging them to give the best of themselves. (...) He leaves behind him an indelible legacy, not only through the works he performed or taught, but also in the hearts of those he touched."



• Read the full text by Shin-Young Lee and Pierre Bachmann



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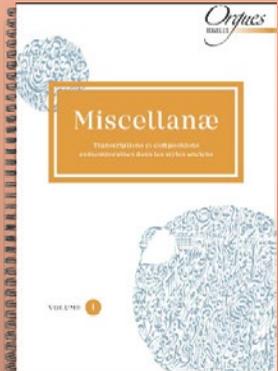
Tribute to Jimi Hendrix – Temple du Salin.

As part of its 30th anniversary celebrations, the 2025 Toulouse les Orgues festival offered a particularly inventive programme in the city's various churches on 4 and 5 October. The audience was treated to a series of daring performances, from Hans de Beer's tale revisited by Guy Bovet (*Le Voyage de Plume*) to Nicolas de Grigny. 'Hommage à Jimi Hendrix', in which four HOT ensemble musicians performed with an unusual combination of instruments: organ, bass clarinet, cello and

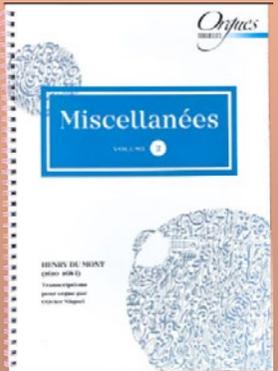
double bass; and 'Orgue et Chocolat' at the Jesus church, a delightful performance in which the organ was accompanied by master chocolatier Jean-Pierre Dujon-Lombard. The great names of the organ were also present, including Y. Rechsteiner, B. Genniaux, M. Bouvard, F. Espinasse and A.-G. Chanon. Not to mention storyteller Louise Morel. In total, the festival featured 25 concerts in 14 days, with 65 artists performing for nearly 6,000 spectators!

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You will find more detailed comments by Michel Roubinet on the "Sorties CD" page of our website.

DISCS



• **Couleurs de Vouvant**
Chamber music with the Yves Fossaert organ
Works by Camille Saint-Saëns, Franz Liszt, Éric Lebrun, Germaine Tailleferre, Nadia Boulanger, Vincent d'Indy, Gabriel Fauré, Olivier Messiaen
Éric Lebrun, organ
Jérôme Hilaire, clarinette
Édouard Sapey-Triomphe, violoncelle

Each CD from *Orgue et Musique à Vouvant* (OMV) presents the Yves Fossaert organ in a different light. This new opus showcases the chamber side of the instrument, played by Éric Lebrun and his faithful *alter egos* in a selection of works mostly unknown to the music lover, subtly arranged for clarinet or cello and organ, or all three together – such as Liszt's *Orpheus*, in a warm version by Saint-Saëns. A concentrate of stylish lyricism, an osmosis of idea and tone, all brought together by angelic singing. The same is true of the four concise, contrasting movements of *Couleurs de Vouvant* by Éric Lebrun, commissioned by OMV and gives the album its title: a whole sensory world shrouded in poetry, where mystery vies with liveliness.

• FRENCH BOOKLET
RUNNING TIME: 50' 19".
CHANTELOUP MUSIQUE,
COLLECTION ORGUE ET MUSIQUE À
VOUVANT OMV 005



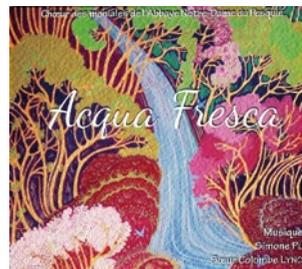
Girolamo Frescobaldi
(1583-1643)
Capricci, Balletto, Arie, Toccate, Bergamasca, Ricercare, Cento partite sopra Passacagli

Georges Guillard, Micot organ [1771-1772] from Saint-Pons-de-Thomières, Hérault, Elsa Sirodeau, mezzo-soprano

A work intended for broadening horizons. The idea seems to counter the "historicising" practice of advocating a match between a repertoire and the instrument that is essentially suited to it. Georges Guillard explores this, with wit and conviction, in his presentation and even more so in the musical result. Frescobaldi, the organist of St Peter's in Rome, shines here in an unprecedented way on the warmest of French classical organs. So many bridges between France and Italy, but also Spain through the reed choir (*Capriccio sopra la Battaglia*). Freed from the sumptuous Italian *ripieno*, the Italian master opens the work up to other tones, giving a different *feel* to his work. A sumptuous and varied programme, played with passion and ardour, to which the voice adds a dimension inseparable from Italian music, including the famous *Ricercare* 'with the obligation to sing the fifth voice without playing it'.

• FRENCH BOOKLET
DURATION: 1H 01' 28".
C SHARP SIDE CUD 251, 2025

• **Acqua Fresca**
Works for women's voices by Sister Colombe Lynch on poems by Saint John of the Cross, Francis Jammes, Paul Claudel, Léon Chancerel, Sister Immaculata Astre
Pieces for organ and piano by Simone Plé



Choir of nuns of the Notre-Dame Abbey at Pesquié, conducted by Marie-Dominique Pacquetteau
Sister Stella Jobbé Duval and Sister Anne Larroque, piano
Sister Immaculata Astre, organ

Acqua fresca, or the meeting of two religious musicians. Simone Plé-Caussade (1897-1986), a famous teacher of counterpoint and fugue at the Paris Conservatoire (her pupils included Rolande Falcinelli, Marie-Claire Alain, Xavier Darasse, Louis Thiry and Jean-Pierre Leguay), lived at the Carmelite convent in Bagnères-de-Bigorre from 1968 until the end of her life. There she met Sister Colombe Lynch (1915-1996), herself trained at the Paris Conservatoire. The latter's pages for women's voices, *a cappella* or discreetly accompanied, are matched by the former's instrumental pieces for piano and organ - in this case a German Baroque Jean Daldosso built in 1997 for the Pesquié. Extreme sobriety, clarity, elegance and musicality without the slightest affectation characterise these pages, rendered by the nuns with simplicity and a very human spontaneity.

• FRENCH BOOKLET
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ABBAYE DU PESQUIÉ NDP 06-2025

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• **Bach Pur – Marienorgel:** J.S. Bach.
• **In stylo fantastico – Langschifforgel:** Buxtehude, Schildt, Weckmann, Tunder, J.S. Bach.
• **Orgel international – Michaelsorgel:** Nowowiejski, Liszt, Halsey, Sowerby, Gade, Čiurlionis, Bruckner, Bossi, Franck.



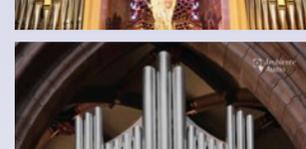
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BACH PUR
DOMORGANIST MATTHIAS MAIERHOFER



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LANGSCHIFFORGEL
IN STYLO PHANTASTICO
DOMORGANIST MATTHIAS MAIERHOFER



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Matthias Maierhofer on the Rieger, Marcussen, Metzler and Kuhn organs of the Freiburger Münster, Freiburg im Breisgau, Baden-Württemberg

An instrumental and musical compendium. Matthias Maierhofer, the incumbent organist, plays both separately and together the organs of the instrumental complex at Freiburg Cathedral, which is exceptional in its scope, aesthetic diversity and quality of construction. Stimulating the curiosity of music lovers, the repertoire ranges from a sovereign Bach (main organ), via his precur-

sors (the luminous Marcussen on the swallow's nest organ), to a highly original anthology of works that might be rare but are more than worthy of discovery. The interpretation combines breathtaking breadth and stylistic rigour adapted to the conditions of reproduction, flexible freedom of play and sensitive listening, and takes the time – an inestimable quality – to let the works, the organs and the unique venue that brings them together breathe.

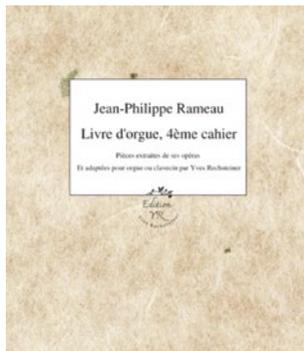
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SHEET MUSIC

Yves Rechsteiner:

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There are numerous possibilities: possibility of suggesting new transcriptions, flexibility regarding transpositions, etc.

• FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT <https://yvesrechsteiner-edition.com/>

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Evocative titles: *Escalier mobile*, *Sauterelle*, *Pharaons*, *Tunnels*, etc., enhanced by beautiful tones...

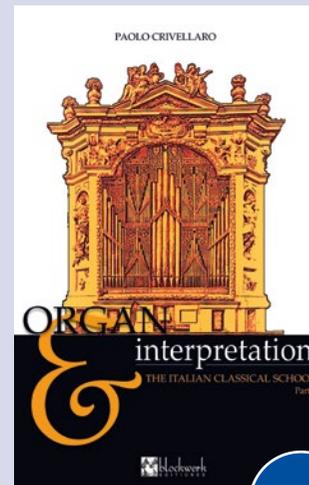
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Prepared with great care by Roberto Antonello and Jean Ferrard, with English translations by Frederick James, ECHOM 4 is closely linked to this issue. More on that later.

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Paolo Crivellaro

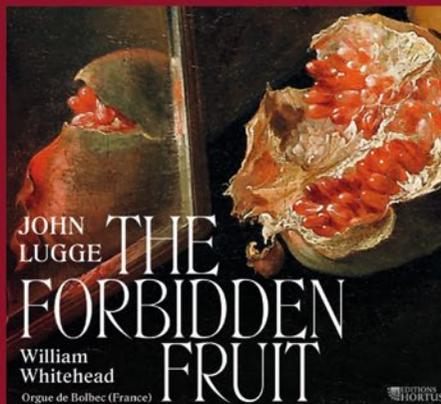
The author already delighted us in 2020 with a book on French music *Organ and interpretation: the french école classique*. He is now continuing his study of interpretation, this time focusing on northern Germany (vol. 1 and 2, vol. 3 in preparation) and Italy (vol. 1, vol. 2 in preparation). There are not enough superlatives to describe this impressive work. Clear, extremely well-documented and admirably rich, each of these works - now translated into English after an initial version in German and Italian - has received the enthusiastic approval of the leading specialists in the fields concerned. To be devoured without moderation... (PR)

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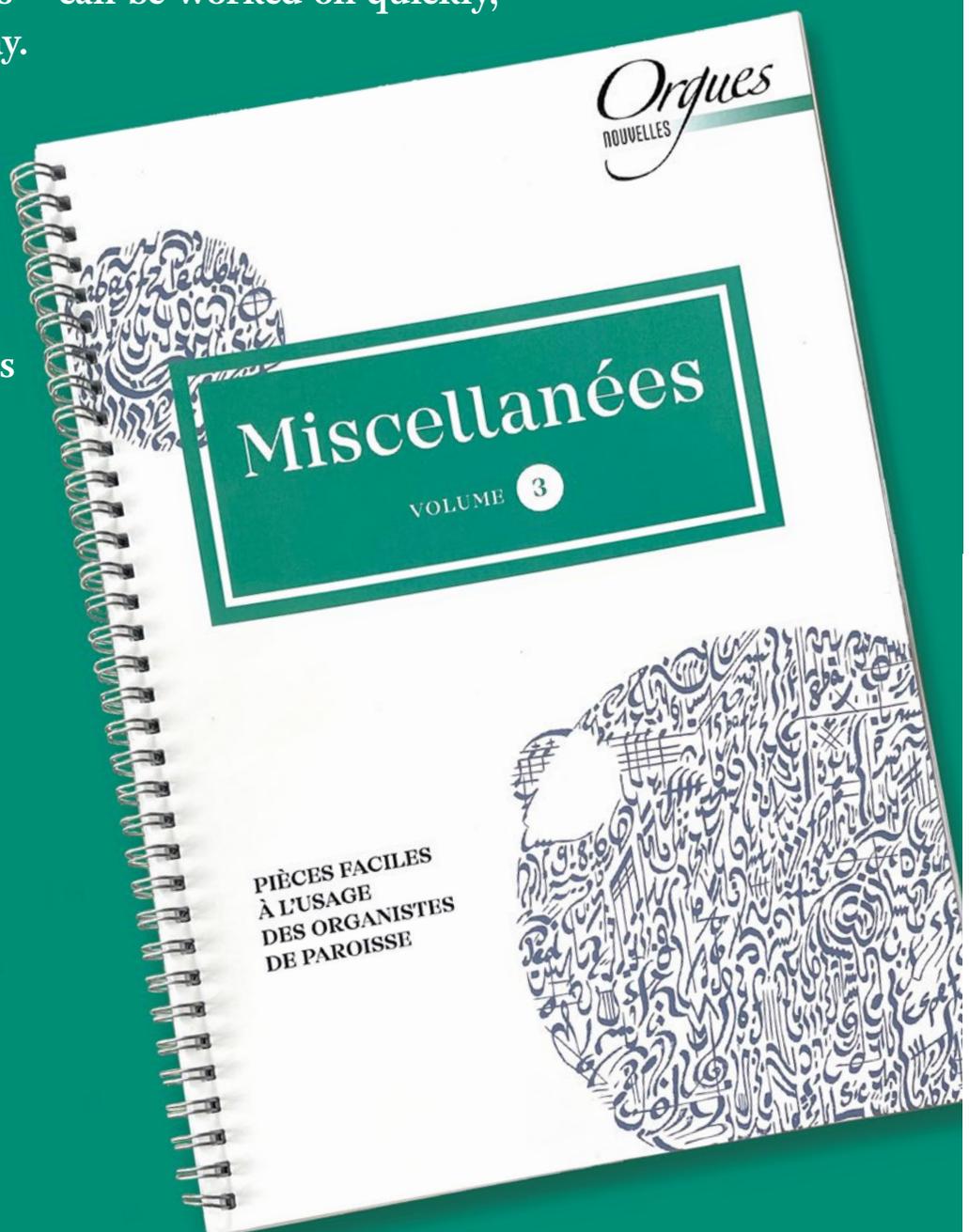
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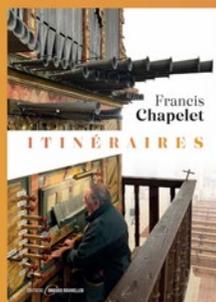
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Playlist CD 71

Giovanni ZANOTTI, *Sonatas for organ*

1. *Allegro con molto brio* 2'26
2. *Andante* 3'53
3. *Tempo giusto* 1'39

by Rodolfo Bellatti on the organ of the
Church of San Pietro in Rovereto
(Zaogli - Italy)

Anonymous, after Adriano Willaert

4. *O gloriosa domina* 4'40

by Matteo Bonfiglioli on the organ of the
Basilica of San Petronio (Bologna - Italy)

Giuseppe GARIBALDI

5. *Verse no. 2* 0'58
6. *Verse no. 3* 1'16
7. *Verse no. 11* 1'00
8. *Verse no. 12* 1'03

by René Saorgin on the organ of the
collegiate church of Tende

9. Gabriel Fatorini **UNPUBLISHED**

Ricercare del Nono Tuono 1'13

10. Anonymous **UNPUBLISHED**

Passo et mezo 0'36

Adriano Banchieri

11. *Second Dialogue* **UNPUBLISHED** 1'10

12. *Battle* **UNPUBLISHED** 1'36

13. Baldassare Galuppi **UNPUBLISHED**

Largo 1'54

14. Bernardo Pasquini **UNPUBLISHED**

Partita sopra la Aria della Folia

da Spagna 2'07

15. Giovanni Quirici **UNPUBLISHED**

Offertorio 3'05

by Viviane Loriaut on the organ
of Preganziol (Italy)

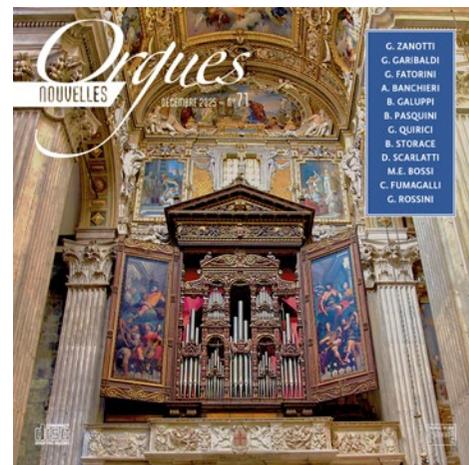
16. Bernardo Storace

Partite sopra il cinque Passi 4'36

17. Domenico Scarlatti

Sonata in G major K. 328 2'19

by René Saorgin on the organ of Notre-
Dame et Saint-Léonce Cathedral in Fréjus



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un tout et ne peuvent être vendus séparément.

Marco Enrico Bossi

18. *Ave Maria op. 104* 5'11

19. *Étude symphonique op. 78* 5'23

by Alessandro Urbano on the organ of
Dudelange (Luxembourg)

Thanks to Nico Declerck and Organroxx

Carlo Fumagalli

Solemn Masses on Verdi Opera Airs

Verses for the Gloria from La Traviata

20. *Cadenza and Verse I* 1'36

21. *Versetto II* 1'28

22. *Versetto III* 2'23

23. *Versetto IV* 1'31

24. *Versetto V* 0'37

by Guy Bovet on the organ at
Castel San Pietro (Ticino - Switzerland)

25. Gioacchino Rossini

Overture from L'Italienne à Alger

(transcription for four-hand organ) 8'52

by Rodolfo Bellatti and Luca Ferrari
on the organ of the Abbey of Santa Maria
e San Claudio in Frassinoro (Italy)

Thanks to Olivier Buttex and Clarissa Lord
for their kind permission.

TEXTS



- **Matteo Bonfiglioli:**
The organ of the Church of San Martino in Bologna.
- **Nicola Cittadini:**
Compositions performed by Marco Enrico Bossi on the organ made by Welte, for the *Æolian Company*, and for the German company *Popper* in Leipzig.
- **Enrico Viccardi:** Reflections on higher education in organ playing at Italian conservatories.
- Pierre Bachmann:** *In memoriam* François Gaugler.
- Shin-Young Lee:** *In memoriam* Jean-Paul Imbert.
- Umberto Pineschi:** The organ school of Pistoia.
- Alessandro Lorenzani:** Theatre organs.
- Umberto Forni:** The protection of historic organs in Italy.

SHEET MUSIC



- **Matteo Bonfiglioli :**
– *Pavana e Gagliarda del cucco per cembalo o organo.*

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R. Saorgin (Fréjus)
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– *Elevatione*
– *Sinfonia*
V. Loriaut (Rogliano – Haute-Corse)
- **C. Merulo – Toccata**
M. Bonfiglioli (Bologna – Italy)
- **C. Fumagalli**
– *Solemn Mass based on arias from Verdi's operas*
– *Offertorio da « Traviata »*
– *Elevatione da « Traviata »*
– *Consumazione da « I Vespri Siciliani »*
– *Marcia per dopo la Messa da « Aida »*
G. Bovet (Ticino – Switzerland)
- **V. Petrali**
Sei versetti per il Gloria
– *Allegro brillante*
– *Andante mosso*
– *Allegretto grazioso*
– *Allegro assai maestoso*
– *Larghetto*
– *Allegretto assai moderato*
G. Bovet (Ticino – Switzerland)
- **M.E. Bossi**
– *Thème et variations op.115*
R. Bellatti (Vercelli – Italy)
- **G. Morandi**
– *Introduzione, Tema e variazioni à 4 mains*
V. Loriaut et G. Bovet (Dombresson - Switzerland)
- **J. Langlais**
– *Incantation pour un jour Saint*
G. Benati (Isola della Scala - Italy)

VIDEO



- **G. Ghizzolo**
– *Canto di sirene*
Trio Soavi Accenti
- **N. Bruhns**
– *Praeludium in G*
R. Bellatti (Campomorone – Italy)
- **M. Durufé**
– *Scherzo*
R. Bellatti (Campomorone – Italy)
- **S. Bonilauri**
– *Doppio Duo*
T. Sjöblom et M. Kandic, accordions
- **S. Bonilauri**
– *Consuma Lume*
B. Polimeni (flute),
O. Manfredi (oboe),
M. Di Falco (clarinet),
M. Tubertini (bassoon),
U. Turchi (accordion),
F. Fusi (conductor)
- **G.A. Perti**
– *Credo, excerpt from the 8-voice mass*
San Petronio Choir (Bologna), conducted by M. Vannelli
- **A. Bonelli**
– *Toccata Cleopatra*
L.F. Tagliavini et
L. Tammiga (Bologna)



Après tout,
l'orgue est un
synthetiseur
comme les autres.

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HORTUS EN FÊTES !

OLIVIER MESSIAEN Livre du Saint-Sacrement

Loïc Mallié orgue

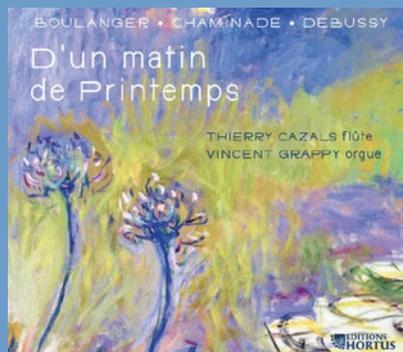
Orgue Cavallé-Coll

Beuchet-Debierre de la Trinité (Paris)

Messiaen avait choisi saint François pour son opéra, le saint le plus proche, selon lui, de la figure du Christ. Il choisit ensuite pour son dernier grand cycle d'orgue le mystère de l'Eucharistie, en qui se résument tous les mystères liés à sa foi au Christ.



Hortus 234 -236



Hortus 231

D'UN MATIN DE PRINTEMPS

Thierry Cazals flûte
Vincent Grappy orgue

Orgue Cavallé-Coll
de St-François de Sales à Lyon

Paris, 1900. Époque impressionniste, temps d'émancipation et de libertés où la nature, perçue ou rêvée, a été une source d'inspiration. L'alliance entre la flûte et l'orgue est naturelle – l'un n'est que la mécanisation et l'amplification de l'autre. Elle sert un répertoire d'une infinie poésie, témoin heureux d'une époque qui savait trouver dans l'art le moyen de se sauver d'elle-même.

Boulangier • Chaminade • Debussy • Fauré
Honegger • Bonnal • Jongen



Hortus 260-261

STREAMS

Thomas Lacôte

Orgues La Trinité et
St-Pierre et Paul de Ratingen
(Allemagne)

Improvisations

PAYSAGES INTÉRIEURS

Gabriel Marghieri

Orgue St-Bonaventure (Lyon)

7 Suites improvisées

Hortus 262



Hortus 238

L'ORGUE BAROQUE EN ARAGON

Carlos González Martínez

Orgue San Pablo de Saragosse (Espagne)

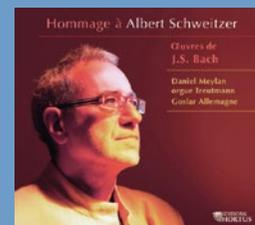
Au fil du calendrier liturgique, des *tientos de lleno*, *partidos*, *de falsas*, *tocatas*, *versets* et *glosas* des organistes les plus représentatifs du XVII^e siècle aragonais.

HOMMAGE À ALBERT SCHWEITZER Œuvres de J.S. BACH

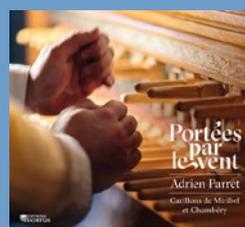
Daniel Meylan

Orgue Goslar-Grauhof (Allemagne)

150 ans après sa naissance, un hommage au célèbre docteur qui établit un rapport absolu entre les mots et les notes dans l'œuvre de Bach avec *Le Musicien-Poète*.



Hortus 247



Hortus 236

PORTÉES PAR LE VENT

Adrien Parret

Carillons de Miribel et Chambéry

Pièces écrites pour le carillon du XVIII^e siècle à nos jours et des arrangements de "tubes" de la musique classique.