

2' plus Zimbel, Regal and Schalmey. The Pedal is in two sections: 16' Subbass, 8' Spillpfeife, Posaune and Trompet; and to balance the Brustwerk there are an 8' Dulcian, 4' Regal, 2' Cornett and a 1' Bauernflöte.

The CD contains six pieces which cover twenty tracks once individual movements are taken into account; three of the pieces are by Sweelinck, two by Scheidt and one by Heinrich Scheidemann. Taken together they present an overview of the main styles developed by Sweelinck and his German pupils that had such an impact on the North German school through to J. S. Bach. The first track is a *Toccata in C* by Sweelinck played here on a bright plenum without reeds that allows the carefully crafted writing to be heard clearly throughout the compass. The piece opens with a chord that Archer arpeggiates downward, and continues with much 16th-note passagework against held or repeated chords—Sweelinck's assimilation of figures from the English and the Italian schools being developed into a highly individual style. The second piece on the disc is the *Echo* for two manuals running to almost ten minutes, taken from the second part of the *Tabulatura Nova* by Samuel Scheidt. In the first part of the piece (taken at a leisurely tempo here) the echo effect consists of chords and short phrases played alternately *forte* and *piano* on different manuals, the *forte* part being played on an 8' flute stop, and the *piano* effect on a gentle reed. In the rather more lively second part the left hand plays on quiet stops throughout, while the *forte* element for the right hand is projected on a typically Baroque gapped registration that tinkles brightly. The carefully marked phrasing is well defined here.

The third piece is a set of four verses on the seventh tone on the *Magnificat* by Heinrich Scheidemann, organist at St. Catherine's Church, Hamburg. Archer opts for a quieter approach than is usual with these pieces, but the downside to this is that the cantus firmus in the Pedal does not shine through, especially in the last verse where the manual passagework is played on 4' only. It is also particularly noticeable in the second verse where the Pedal plays more of a continuo role in the second half. In the third verse the cantus firmus played on a bright gapped combination is passed from hand to hand and sounds most effective; here the Pedal is much better balanced.

The next piece is the very short variation by Sweelinck on the English tune *Malle Sijmen*; the lively passagework in the repeats is played cleanly and well articulated against detached chords. The following set of 10 variations on *Est-ce Mars* by Scheidt is taken from the first part of his *Tabulatura Nova*, and shows how the pupil has extended and developed virtuoso requirements of the art as the variations unfold; Archer here shows many registrational possibilities, the upperwork without an 8' foundation being particularly favored. Most effective is the sixth variation, a bicinium played

with trumpet in right hand, against high-pitched registers in the left. The final variation played on a full organ also introduces the delightful Zimbelstern.

The CD closes with the magisterial *Ricercar* by Sweelinck, based on an abstract subject ripe for full contrapuntal development. The full gamut of compositional mastery is evident, and the changes of register, apart from the one in bar 108 that actually disturbs the contrapuntal line, help to maintain the listener's concentration through 300 bars; at the end one is unaware that almost 12 minutes have elapsed. Careful use of the pedals, here well balanced, brings out the subject when it is written in augmentation. This splendid piece, played with great rhythmic precision and panache, is a worthy CD closer.

The accompanying booklet provides a brief description of the pieces, but for further information on the organ the reader is referred to the college website—surely some brief comments on its provenance could have been included here. Gail Archer's playing is crisp and clean, and she deals with the formidable technical challenges throughout with great dexterity and digital agility, but does not always take advantage of those places where additional ornaments can be added successfully. While the articulation is generally convincing, sometimes the 16th-note or eighth-note figuration sounds too legato, especially in the Sweelinck *Toccata* and in the Scheidemann. The well-chosen variety of registrations (apart from in the Scheidemann as mentioned above) allows us to hear the quality of the voicing of all ranks. This CD is recommended, but at only 50 minutes it is certainly on the short side—one may ask why *Malle Sijmen* by Sweelinck was preferred over one of his (or his pupil's) other settings of secular or sacred melodies, or indeed why more contrapuntal pieces were not included.

—John Collins
Sussex, England

Marek Kudlicki. Polish Romantic Organ Music. Weigle organ in the Stadtkirche in Nagold, Germany. Polskie Nagrania PNCD 967 <www.polskienagrania.com.pl>.

Konstanty Gorski, *Fantasy*; Mieczysław Surzyski, *Improvisation on the Polish Church Hymn "Holy God,"* op. 38; *Toccata in F-sharp minor*, op. 36; Felix Nowowiejski, *Polish Fantasy*, op. 9; Felix Borowski, *First Sonata*.

Marek Kudlicki. Brahms Complete Organ Works. Kaminski organ at St. Barbara Church in Warsaw, Poland. Polskie Nagrania PNCD 626 <www.polskienagrania.com.pl>.

Here are two worthy CDs of organ music, one of which will be completely familiar to most American organists and another of splendid music probably unknown, with the possible exception of the Borowski sonata. Borowski was of Polish and British descent, but spent most of his career in the Chicago area

and became a naturalized citizen.

The playing on these discs is uniformly excellent with imaginative registrations, rhythms and all the rest. The Gorski work covers the gamut of sounds: soft to loud, slow to fast, with a complex fugal section and many toccata-like passages. Surzyski's *Improvisation* receives a stately treatment and requires much imaginative color leading to a very exciting conclusion. His *toccata* is a more typical Baroque-style piece, but attractive.

Using two Polish Christmas carols, Nowowiejski's treatment is atmospheric and lovely. Nothing is given in the notes about the organ, which I thought a bit strident in sound for this music. Borowski wrote admired program notes for the Chicago Symphony and taught at Northwestern University (science!). His admirable sonata is dedicated to Alexandre Guilmant, whose style it emulates.

There is nothing new that I can say about Brahms's organ music, except to wish he had composed more of it. These performances, played in a wonderfully resonant building, are all that one could wish. My favorite, *Fugue in A-flat minor*, is gently played to splendid effect. The familiar chorale preludes are given restrained performances. Hearing the eleven in a row is probably not what Brahms intended, although many years ago I heard Ernest White play the Bach eight 'little' preludes and fugues as the first half of a recital and the Brahms chorale preludes as the second half! Students beginning to learn the Brahms organ repertoire could not do better than listen to this mature and musical playing.

—Charles Huddleston Heaton

New Organ Music

Robert Hebble, Festive Hymns & Pieces. Warner Bros. Publications, 5380068.

This collection includes two familiar *Trumpet Tunes* by Handel and Stanley, "Rondeau" from *Symphonie de Fanfares* by Mouret, and *Toccata on "Festal Song" (Toccata con Rico Tino)* by William Walter, and six additional pieces composed by Hebble: *Amazing Grace, Celebration, Exultate Deo, Festival Piece on "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," Haec Dies Resurgam, Toccata Brevis (on "St. Denio")*.

My previous knowledge of Robert Hebble was from some of his instrumental works with organ. I enjoyed several pieces for combinations of flute, clarinet, and organ, and appreciated his understanding of those instruments. For the organist, Hebble writes with a colorful, chromatic vocabulary, changes of meter and manual, and yet retains the idiomatic "organic" style. The dancelike character he infuses into many of his own works is quite attractive.

In this assortment of pieces, the tunes stand out clearly; there are changes of textures, registrations, manuals, and meter; and there are some challenging harmonies. All pieces would require some preparation time—there's no 'quick read'!

Dan Locklair, In Mystery and Wonder (The Casavant Diptych). Subito Music Publishing, 2004, \$14.95.

Casavant Frères commissioned Dan Locklair to compose this work in honor of the organbuilding firm's 125th anniversary. Written in 2003, the pieces were premiered by a number of organists worldwide during the celebratory weekend of 13 November 2004. The works were written to be performed on organs of two manuals or larger, and the registration suggestions, although provided for a smaller instrument, are basic sonic guidelines.

Here are some of the composer's comments on his work:

Symbolism, as the basis for all musical materials, abounds in both movements and especially in the use of "C" and "F" note codes for "Casavant Frères." Since one of the main melodic ideas from the first movement, *Aria*, appears in the second movement, *Toccata*, the composition is cyclic. In order for the Casavant anniversary to be celebrated by the widest range of organists possible, a requirement for this commission was that the first movement be technically modest, with the second being more technically demanding.

The first movement is subtitled "God moves in a mysterious way . . ." and using the C and F pitches, the tonal areas move from C major to C minor, to F major and B-flat major, and other key centers—the mystery is key.

The second movement, subtitled " . . . His wonders to perform . . ." opens with full organ arpeggiations and alternating meters of 2/4 and 7/16, which serve as an introduction to a virtuosic pedal solo. A highly chromatic section "With zest" follows, with additional meters of 6/16, 10/16, and 11/16. Then, the melodic material from the *Aria* emanates, and is played on a full organ sound.

The contrast between the simple, lyric lines of the *Aria* and energy and chromaticism of the *Toccata* make the *Casavant Diptych* a delight to play. I highly recommend this work.

David Chervien, Lift High the Cross: Prelude and Postlude based on Crucifer by Sydney H. Nicholson. MorningStar Music Publishers MSM-10-726, 2003, \$10.

David Chervien is no stranger to the organ world. He has composed a plethora of chorale preludes for the various seasons of the liturgical year. An organ student of Paul Manz (and others), he learned the art of improvising and composing alternate settings for worship.

The *Prelude on Crucifer* utilizes fresh harmonies. It begins with a stately introduction; when the verse portion of the hymn enters, it is stated in the pedal, in syncopation, while the manuals provide the accompanying material. If you have small hands, as do I, this part of the piece may be uncomfortable, or unplayable, for you. The initial material returns, and the prelude ends quietly.

The *Postlude* begins with a flourish in the manuals and a pedal response, and moves quickly into a French toccata, where the pedal takes the chorale melody as the manuals feature the typical toccata figurations. Several modulations ensue and bring the piece back home to C major. Again, if you have small hands, it may be difficult to play exactly what is on the page, although a few small changes to simplify the stretches could easily be made.

—Sharon L. Hettinger
Lawrence, Kansas

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