

obtains a polyphonic quality without imitative and fugal treatment. Keller and Schweitzer give less weight to the Buxtehude influence and believe that in the five-part *Cravement* Bach was more stimulated by the Italian motet style.
—Joseph Braunstain

About the Performance and Recording

Anton Heidler (1923–1979) was one of the great organists of his time. He was also renowned as a keyboard improviser in the tradition of Bach himself, as evidenced in many of the recordings he made for *Vanguard Classics*.

Born in Vienna, he studied composition and keyboard performance at the Vienna Conservatory and in 1945 became a professor of organ at the Vienna Academy in the department of church music. Continuing to concretize, his brilliant technique and interpretive artistry, on both the organ and the harpsichord, established him as one of the foremost performers and recording artists of the era. As a composer, his work won increasing admiration in European circles and was performed in Venice, Paris, and London, as well as at various festivals.

Heidler had a unique conception of the sound he wanted to hear for any specific repertoire, and he chose the instrument that would best bring that conception to life. For the performance on this recording, he selected the organ at the St. Mary Church at Helsingborg in Sweden.

Recorded at St. Mary's Church, Helsingborg, Sweden, 1964
Original Recording Producer: Dr. Karl Wölleitner
Original Recording Engineer: Peter Willemoes
Original LP Release: BC 674/70674
Originally Released on CD: OVC 2005

SA-CD REMASTERING INFORMATION

SA-CD Producer and Remix Engineer: David Baker
SA-CD Mastering Engineer: Jen Wylar
SA-CD Authoring Engineer: Woody Brupitalsuk
Original Two Track Recording Remastered May & June 2004 at Sony Studios, New York City
Tapes Used: BC-70674 A & B, marked "Stereo Original".
Additional material audited from tapes marked HM 73 "Original".

Vanguard Classics' SA-CD remastering seeks to make the finest quality copy of the original master tape. No additional channels will be added in the creation of the SA-CD cutting master. During this remastering process, a new master was also created for the standard CD layer of the SA-CD, so listeners enjoying the CD layer will also hear the music in increased clarity and warmth.

Photo Credit: The Main Organ at Saint Mary's Church, Helsingborg, Sweden.

ORIGINAL RECORDING INFORMATION



J.S. Bach - Organ Works

Prelude and Fugue in E Minor "The Wedge" - Prelude and Fugue in A Major
Passacaglia and Fugue and C minor - Fantasy in G Major

ANTON HEIDLER, organ

VANGUARD CLASSICS
— Recordings for the Connoisseur

VANGUARD CLASSICS SUPER AUDIO CD

PROGRAM NOTES

From the original LP release

Although the date of the **Prelude and Fugue in E minor, BWV 548**, can not be exactly determined it is assumed that Bach composed this extraordinary piece in Leipzig between 1729 and 1734, when he had begun the ascent to the high peaks of his last contrapuntal works. Speaking of this work, Spitta contended that only the designation "organ symphony in two movements" would be adequate to give an idea of its grandeur and power.

Space forbids presenting even a short analysis of the prelude in which three musical ideas (A, B, B1) are manipulated. B and B1 are descendants from A. This entire structure can be described as follows: A-B-A-B1-B-A-B1-B-B1-B-A. The fugue, running through 231 measures, is the boldest and technically most difficult Bach ever penned. It discloses three clear-cut divisions: A (meas. 1-59) — B (60-172) — A (173-231). While the A section presents two elaborations in the subject, the fugal process is stopped in the B division which occasionally alludes to the fugal theme without subjecting it to fugal treatment. It is from the extended B section, which seemingly interrupts the customary fugal procedure that the nickname *The Wedge* was derived. Yet Bach's procedure was neither an arbitrary act nor did it constitute a violation of the law of the fugue. He actually aimed at blending together the fugue and the pattern of the da capo aria. Thus the "wedge" is not a dividing factor but an element of synthesis and a symbol of supreme craftsmanship.

The **Prelude and Fugue in A major, BWV 536**, has come down to us in two versions of which the earlier one, preserved in autograph, originated presumably in Arnstadt (1704-1706) while the later one which is extant in several contemporary copies appears to be the result of a revision which Bach in all likelihood

undertook only in Weimar. The revision was thorough. Almost every measure shows alterations and improvements. The fugue originally in 3/8 time was rewritten in 2 and shortened by three measures at the end.

The light and bright quality of the prelude is matched by the lyrical and pastoral character of the fugue, which is related to the prelude through the simple triadic figurations of the counter voices.

Composed in Weimar 1716/17, the **C minor Passacaglia** marks the climax of the organ works created during this period. Although the manuscript indicates the possibility of playing the piece on the harpsichord or organ (*Cembalo ossia Organo*) it is obvious that a harpsichord with pedal is only an insufficient token or makeshift for the powerful organ.

The word passacaglia is derived from the Spanish *pasacalle* or *pasacalle* which denotes a music played or sung on the street or in short music for a serenade. Originally it was a quick piece mostly but not exclusively in time with guitar accompaniment. At the turn of the 16th century the guitar passacaglia was transformed into the variation passacaglia for keyboard instruments.

The variation form on a basso ostinato of four or eight measures in triple time was fully developed around 1700 and also introduced into music for string ensembles and the sonata da camera. This development was paralleled by the evolution of the related Spanish Chaconne (*Chacona*) which, stemming from America, and with lascivious character ascribed to its guitar form, achieved respectability in the 17th century. Passacaglia and Chaconne cannot always be separated, and Curt Sachs has emphasized that "the seventeenth century used the two terms without any apparent discrimination."

In the C minor Passacaglia, Bach deviates from his precursors in that he introduces the eight-measure theme alone. Andre Pirro,

the renowned French Bach scholar, has shown that the first four measures of the theme were derived from a little pascalle by Andre Raison, one of the important French organ composers at the end of the 16th century, whose music available in two books (1687 and 1714), Bach presumably knew. Raison's ground is only four measures long and Bach realized the potentialities of the theme if it is prolonged in the opposite direction or, put precisely, if the rising line of the melody is matched by falling steps. Bach surrounded the melody with an aura of solemnity and this quality is strictly maintained. The theme is never subjected to rhythmic modification and remains immutable in twenty variations, with two exceptions. After it has appeared in the alto in Var. XIII. It is indicated in the following two variations in figurations and arpeggios with the change of the harmony on the weak beat. The theme returns to the pedal in Var. XVI. This the three preceding variations that lack the pedal bass form an intermezzo and with the entry of the 16th variation the basic mood seems to change from seriousness to defiance. The motion increases in the following variations and tension is building up. Steadily mounting the strain demands a release which is ultimately effected in a fugue of 125 measures. The ostinato melody now becomes the *thema fugatum* which, provided with counterpoint in hammering eighth-notes and flowing sixteenth-notes, appears on different degrees of the C minor tonality. Summing up the preceding melodic and contrapuntal events, the fugue with the final turn to C major is the apotheosis of the variation chain of the passacaglia.

The **Fantasia in G major**, composed in Arnstadt in 1705/6 or in Weimar where Bach had gone in 1708 as organist and *Kammermusicus*, poses a bibliographical riddle on account of its French tempo indications: *Tres vivement* — *Cravement* — *Lentement*. It is the only such case in Bach's entire instrumental

output and is matched only once in the field of vocal music, namely the Cantata No. 61 "Nun komm der heiden Heiland" (Weimar 1713-14). Hermann Keller offers an explanation in his excellent study of Bach's organ music. Bach, in his Weimar years (1708-1717), not only studied Italian ensemble music but also works of French composers. He copied among others the *Livre d'orgues* by Nicolas de Grigny (c. 1670-1703), organist at Rheims, which appeared in 1712. The study of French organ music might have prompted Bach to use French expression.

Our piece has nothing in common with the contrapuntal 16th century fantasia which is one of the ancestors of the fugue. It is improvisatory in character. At the same time for all its style of extemporization, the fantasia clearly shows a three-sectional design. The center of gravity lies in the extended middle division (157 measures) which is framed by glittering passages of virtuosic character.

Philipp Spitta sees in this fantasia the influence of Buxtehude to a degree never reached by any other of Bach's works. "With insatiable enjoyment he (Bach) repeats those doubled suspensions, chords of the ninth, diminished intervals, wide-spread harmonies, melodic phrases raptuously ascending and outsoaring one another — an entranced delight in the ocean of sound that never pauses to ask what the end will be." Gotthoff Fritscher in his monumental *Geschichte des Orgelspiels und der Orgelkomposition* (1935) also stresses the influence of Buxtehude, resorting to the term *durezza*, which indicates tied notes with dissonances and unprepared suspensions. He interprets the *Cravement* as an "enormous *durezza*" with harmonic complexities and polyphonic concentration. True Bach combines here harmonic and polyphonic writing, yet it is at the same time highly remarkable that the unexcelled master of fugal technique dispenses with fugal writing in the Fantasia and

FINDING THE STORIES

Master Tapes + Chicken Soup = A Label's Journey to Find Itself

"There's a story with each of these tapes," Maynard Solomon told me when we inspected the now half-empty tape vault that used to house Vanguard's entire collection of classical master tapes. "These are Seymour's children," his wife Pearl told me as we introduced ourselves, a slight hint of mist in our breath, in the barely heated vault.

This disc is among the first of a series of highly regarded Vanguard Classics masters to receive a first-class reissue treatment—including a restoration of the master tapes. Artemis Records purchased the Vanguard Classics master tapes from Omega Record Group in February 2003. At that time, I undertook a journey to piece together all of elements that would tell the story of many of these fine recordings.

When we purchased the master tapes, we discovered that they were beautifully organized according to catalog number in a small room next to Omega's offices. Referred to as "the tape vault," it was really an old storage closet that held 7000 reel to reel tapes, from a Scotch Magnetic Tape box that held the original BG 501 master tape to the DATs and Sony 1630s that became the standard a decade ago for manufacturing compact discs.

My first job was to create a complete inventory of the tape collection. This glamorous task meant I was to be locked in a small room in a "colorful" (also "seedy") Upper West Side hotel. The tape vault smelled like decaying 35 mm film (thanks to some badly damaged and decomposing film stock stacked in the corner since the early 1990s) to count and categorize 7000 master tapes, was climate-controlled by no apparent heating system and an ancient in-window air conditioner and protected by a burglar alarm that was constantly going off (and which we learned had been

disconnected four months earlier). And it was evident that some of these tapes hadn't been touched in a decade.

I counted and categorized for two weeks during the coldest February in five years. While I did find the job occasionally fascinating and I was amazed by the vastness of this archive, after the first few days, the highlight of this particular task happened each morning around 11:30 when the barbeque restaurant directly underneath the Vanguard tape vault began cooking the chicken dishes that were its lunch special, and I basted for hours in a chicken flavored steam room.

With the death of Seymour Solomon and the scattering of Vanguard employees, the idea of maintaining corporate memory became important to continuing to run the company. During his last ten years, the staff would follow the instructions of the founder, walk into the tape vault, grab the necessary tapes, and that would be the process of creating a new master. Without a human hard drive to consult, we not only needed to house the tapes, but we needed to categorize them so future use could be efficient. A database system was devised in March 2003, and this process was begun immediately. Despite our initial estimates that it would take two months to complete, this task took fourteen months.

Much of the original artwork, though saved in enormous envelopes by the Omega staff, was utterly unusable due to dust and decay over time. Most of these envelopes had not been touched in many, many years, and moving them stirred up a decade of dust and gave me to a temporary case of "Vanguard black lung" that hung on for a month. Seymour Solomon's personal collection of Vanguard LPs ultimately became the most valuable artwork resource. His wife Pearl proved enormously generous with her time and seemed to hide her worry in lending us these extremely valuable resources.

The photo library might still be hiding in plain sight, if I had not taken a wrong turn and ended up in Seymour Solomon's study instead of the kitchen of his apartment in November 2003. Considered long lost after the sale of the company in 1986, we resigned ourselves to working without a photo archive from Vanguard's fifty years of existence. However, upon walking into Seymour's study, his wife mentioned that there were some old boxes that she hadn't gone through in years under his desk. I started to go through some of them and found old clippings and not much else. Then I pulled out two old boxes and found a collection of old photos, both personal and professional from the late 1950s through the early 1970s. In some circumstances, there are very important photos that we will begin including in our reissues immediately.

And the last resource looked the least important but ended up having the most impact. As I was packing a group of filing cabinets, I was amazed to find correspondence between Seymour and Joseph Szigeti, Gustav Leonhardt, Mischa Elman, as well as detailed correspondence and hundreds of cables between Maynard and Seymour Solomon, packed with tiny details that convey Seymour's true feelings about recordings, artists and business. I tried to find every pertinent detail, like someone searching for gold nuggets in a stream. From my immersion in this flood of innocuous detail, I created a portrait of a man I never met, but whose life work has also become mine.

Thanks as always goes to one of Vanguard's fine engineers, David Baker, who makes sure that, despite temptations, that we strive to do things the right way. And our detailed and thoughtful discussions have led us to the conclusion that altering this recording and creating a huge, surround-sound experience, would do two things we weren't happy with. The first would be to substantially increase our list price and the second would be that we wouldn't

really be improving the recording, just altering it, similar to taking a mono recording and creating a fake stereo recording. That certainly has been done before, but we decided to take a stand and politely but firmly decline to change a thing. So what you are hearing is the most accurate reproduction of the master tape possible at this time. (A sad note to this final paragraph: just as we neared the completion of our first Vanguard Classics SA-CD releases, David Baker passed away on July 14, 2004, unexpectedly at age 58.)

Is This Volume 1 or 2?

When putting together the materials for this reissue, a problem arose immediately—why is Volume 2 listed as Volume 1? And why is Volume 1 not the Volume 1 listed in our recording index? And why is no Volume 1 noted on the Volume 1 LP jacket? Devoted Vanguard followers and collectors—whose letters and emails were the deciding factor in our decision to reissue these Heiller recordings—are always eager to point out such errors.

The Organ Works of J.S. Bach, Vol. 1 was assigned to the first recording of Bach's organ must that Heiller recorded for Vanguard, Bach-Vivaldi: Organ Works, BG 637 (mono)/BG 5049 (stereo) after the title was released. The original LP packaging for this title has no indication of any volumes to come in the future.

The issue of The Organ Works of J.S. Bach, Vol. 2, BG-674 (mono) and BG 70674 (stereo) was referred to on the original tape boxes and recording "matrix cards" as The Organ Works of J.S. Bach, Vol. 1. Internal documents at Vanguard also refer to this as Volume 1. But when it was issued on LP it was very distinctly issued as Volume 2. And the recording referred to as Volume 2 was issued to the public on LP as Volume 3 (BG 675/70675).

On our cover, we have skirted the issue by simply listing the works. We have, however, placed the LP cover on the back of the

packaging to help allay any confusion. But then again, we have included a copy of the original tape box in the internal packaging to offer complete disclosure and probably create just a bit more confusion. You can always send us your thoughts at classics@artemisrecords.com.

"The Finest Organ in the World."

The other question that arose is why Vanguard trekked all the way to southern Sweden to create this recording. The materials in the Vanguard Classics' archives were relatively spare on this subject and did little to illuminate. Anton Heiller made many recordings for Vanguard Classics, but his correspondence with Vanguard was always strictly business and never veered into pleasantries of any kind. Only Dr. Karl Wölleitner's letters to Seymour Solomon indicate "there is a new organ in Sweden that Heiller loves and wants to use."

Lovers of great European organs will cringe at our ignorance (and possibly, arrogance), because it took only one quick internet search to discover that the organ at St. Mary's Church is considered one of the finest organs in Europe, and the church itself has a history of commissioning fine organs and a history of hiring fine organists. With a bow to the friendly folk at the Helsingborg Tourist Bureau for their help, St. Mary's Church is located in Helsingborg, Sweden, a city of approximately 118,000 residents. The Bureau helped us locate the web site of St. Mary's Church, and helped us to contact Mats Hultkvist, the head organist at St. Mary's Church. Mr. Hultkvist's passion and knowledge about the history of St. Mary's Church also brought about the best clue to why this recording was made here.

An appreciation of the St. Mary's Church and its history written by Mr. Hultkvist follows in these notes. In brief, I quote an

excerpt from a fine email he sent to me in regards to my request for information on the organ at St. Mary's.

In 1959 there were not many large mechanical organs, and Marcussen had a really good reputation. Sydbrand Zachariassen, head of the firm at the time, regarded this organ as one of the best he had ever built, very much because of its proportions in relation to the room and the acoustics. In fact, there is a letter written by Anton Heiller, where he says something like "This must be the best organ of the world"! I wouldn't dare to put it like that - today we have a different perspective - but you can definitely regard it as one of the best representatives of the "Scandinavian organ-movement period".

The Marcussen organ was originally planned with four manuals, and the console did really have four manuals, but they didn't build the swell organ on the fourth manual until 1974. In 1980 the "Distant Section" ("Fernwerk") from the previous organ (Åkerman 1928) was connected to the Marcussen organ's first manual. That means that the first manual now serves both the "Rückpositiv" and the "Distant Section". The organ now has 63 stops, 53 in the main organ on the tribune, and 10 in the Distant Section at the attic.

—Greg Barbero, Vanguard Classics

The Organs in St. Mary's Church (Helsingborg) A Historical Background

It is conceivable that St. Mary's Church already had an organ at the end of the 16th century. Very little is known about this instrument, except that it may have been built by the Dutch organ-builder Hans Brebus.

In 1641 this organ was renovated by Johann Lorentz. The organist at the time was Johannes Buxtehude, father of Diderich Buxtehude, later to gain international fame. Two inscriptions on

fragments of wood preserved from the old organ gallery substantiate this. (This material, along with the old organ from Helsingborg, can be seen in Torrlösa Church.) Some sources maintain that prior to this the organ had undergone a minor renovation in 1628, but there is no evidence to prove this.

From 1657 to 1660 the organist of St. Mary's Church was Diderich Buxtehude. In 1662 the organ was rebuilt in North-German style and it is known that the work was inspected by Buxtehude, who had by then moved to Helsingör. The organ-builder on this occasion was Hans Christoph Fritzesch of Hamburg, who renovated a series of important instruments for churches in cities bordering the Sound: 1659 - Trinitatis in Copenhagen, 1660 - St. Petri in Malmö (preserved in Malmö Museum), 1661 - St. John the Baptist in Landskrona, 1662 - St. Mary's in Helsingborg, 1663 - St. Mary's in Helsingör. After renovation the organ had twenty four stops divided between Great-organ, Choir-organ ("Rückpositiv") and Pedal.

The 1662-organ, incorporating material from the late 16th-century instrument, was in use up until 1849 when it was sold to Torrlösa Church. Parts of this organ have been preserved and are incorporated in the present instrument.

In 1851 a new organ in the Romantic style was inaugurated. Built by Blomquist & Lindgren, it had thirty stops, two manuals and pedals.

Technical progress during the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century had its effect on the art of organ-building. In the early 20th century the Blomquist organ was considered old-fashioned and was ousted in favor of a new, large, late-Romantic organ in the continental style. It was completed in 1928 and had three manuals and pedal-board. Ten of the sixty six stops were placed in an Echo-organ in the church

attic, from where the sound was led via a seventeen-metre-long duct to an opening in the chancel. This organ, built by Åkerman & Lund, enjoyed a very good reputation during its lifetime.

In the 1920s, however, other ideals were beginning to emerge on the continent. German organ-builders advocated a return to simpler, classical ideals. They wanted to construct organs which were musical instruments rather than orchestral machines. From this perspective the Åkerman organ was outmoded right from the start.

Events in world history brought to an end the dominance of Germany as far as the development in the ideology of the organ movement was concerned. The new center became Denmark, where one of the most significant firms was Marcussen & Son. Under the leadership of Sydbrand Zachariassen, these organ-builders created a new ideal, which in spite of being historically inspired nevertheless contained innovative elements. In 1959 the thirty-year-old Åkerman organ in St. Mary's had to make way for a magnificent new instrument built in the spirit of the Danish organ reform.

The main organ (1959)

This organ was the final one planned by Sydbrand Zachariassen in his capacity of artistic director at Marcussen & Son. The façade was designed by Rolf Craae in consultation with P.G. Andersen. The Swell-organ from the original plans was not added until 1974. The Echo-organ originates from the 1928-organ. The 1959-organ is mechanically operated, with the exception of the pedal registration and operation of the Echo-organ. (Editor's note: this is the organ heard on this recording.)
Mats Hultkvist
Translation from Swedish: Jean Wagner