

THE MEANTONE ORGAN IN ZEERIJP

About the Music

1 Toccata in a, SwWV 298: Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Pieter Dirksen has written that “Sweelinck introduced the Venetian toccata to Northern-Europe. He added English passagework and polyphony to the Italian concept.” Despite its brevity, this popular toccata shows Sweelinck as the epitome of the Dutch keyboard style.

2 Poolse Almande, SwWV 330: Sweelinck

Sweelinck was known for his variation sets, which may have been originally improvised on popular tunes as part of his duties as municipal organist in Amsterdam. The tune of this variation set is also referred to as “Soll es sein.”

3 Jesu nostra redemptio, 3 verses: Hieronymus Praetorius (1560-1629)

In 1979, the musicologist Jeffrey Kite-Powell was able to attribute the anonymous chant hymn settings in the Visby Tablature (1611) to the Hamburg organist, Hieronymus Praetorius. Jesu nostra redemptio is the office hymn for Ascension. In the first verse, the melody is in the bassus; in the second, ornamented in the discantus; and the third, again in the bassus.

4 Fuga colorata, after Giovanni Gabrieli: Adam Steigleder (1561-1633)

This Italian canzona is found in four sources: 2 are unattributed, 1 is . to Giovanni Gabrieli (probably correctly), and this version, the fourth, is an ornamented version of Gabrieli’s canzona by the Stuttgart organist Adam Steigleder.

5 Praeludium in d, WV 32: Heinrich Scheidemann (c.1595-1663)

A prelude, one of many, by the great early baroque keyboard master Heinrich Scheidemann, who worked in Hamburg at St. Catherine’s Church where there was a magnificent large organ that has now been reconstructed.

6 Jesus Christus unser Heiland, 2 verses, WV 64: Scheidemann

3 settings of the communion hymn “Jesus Christ our Saviour” by Scheidemann have survived. This is the third setting, with 2 verses: in the first verse, the melody is in the bassus; in the second verse, ornamented in the discantus.

7 Ballet & Variatio in F, WV 112: Scheidemann

8 Französischer Allemande in d, WV 114: Scheidemann

9 Französischer Courante & Variatio in d, WV 121: Scheidemann

Tracks 7, 8, and 9 are a delightful set of keyboard dances which sound equally at home on the organ as well as the harpsichord. In the Variatio of the Courante, the organ’s Nachtgal (bird-song) stop is heard.

10 In dich hab ich, WV 8: Scheidemann

In this ornamented chorale setting of the hymn “In Thee, Lord, have I put my trust,” the melody passes from the treble to the bass and back again, repeatedly.

11 Lobet den Herren, WV 13: Scheidemann

This chorale setting of the hymn “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” is one of Scheidemann’s elaborate chorale fantasias, displaying Scheidemann’s mastery of embellishing a hymn making full use of the two manuals required, with ornamented melodies and virtuosic echo techniques that are the hallmark of Scheidemann’s large works.

12 Vater unser im Himmelreich III, WV 28: Scheidemann

Scheidemann also left us three settings of the hymn “Our Father, who art in Heaven.” This third setting is just one verse, but it is one of the most beautiful and poignant ornamented chorales of the 17th century.

13 Magnificat primi toni, 3 verses: Zellerfeld Tabulatur

This Magnificat is contained in a tablature called The Zellerfeld Tablatures. It has an attribution by some scholars to Hieronymus Praetorius. But the style seems too late for Hieronymus Praetorius. Some experts think it may be by the grandson of Praetorius, Hieronymus Praetorius III who died at the age of 15; a funeral ode to him says that because of his great talent, he should have been as famous as his grandfather (who had also died just a few months before). However, this mature 3 movement work is surely not the work of an adolescent composer. At present, therefore, we have no secure attribution of a composer for this magnificent piece. The first verse is melody in the tenor; the second verse, a chorale fantasia of many different compositional techniques; and the third section, another highly inventive fantasia.

About the organ (from <https://www.orgelsite.nl/zeerijp-jacobuskerk/>)

In 1645, Theodorus Faber was commissioned to build the organ in the Jacobuskerk in Zeerijp (Groningen). The original contract, dated 12 August 1645, shows a disposition with 19 stops. In 1651, the mechanical spring-chest organ was completed. In the following centuries, the organ was maintained and various repairs were carried out, but hardly anything was changed. It is known that Arp Schnitger worked on it in 1695, and Matthias Amoor in 1726. HE Freytag carried out some repairs in 1843. In the years 1881/1882, the organ was rebuilt by J. Doornbos. He replaced the spring chests with slider chests and changed the disposition. In 1933, Spiering renewed the entire organ, with the exception of the case and the wind chests. Not much of the original organ could be found after this.

In 1963, the restoration of the church building was started. Bakker & Timmenga dismantled and stored the organ. In 1965 and 1966, the organ case, which had been painted completely black, was restored. In 1966, the firm Fama & Raadgever made the rugwork playable again, with the construction of 1933.

Under the advice of Klaas Bolt, it was decided in 1976 to reconstruct the organ and return it to its original state. The builders Bernhardt Edskes from Switzerland (Wohlen) and SF Blank from Herwijnen were given the assignment, after which the work was carried out in 1979. What was left of Faber were the main work and pedal chests, the Bourdon 16', two pipes of the Vox Humana and the pedal keyboard as well as some parts of the mechanism. The case with the shutters was still completely preserved.

On 17 June 1979, the organ was put back into use with a performance by Klaas Bolt and Stef Tuinstra. In December 1999 and January 2000, several sagging front pipes were reshaped by Henk van Eeken.

In 2023, the organ hung crookedly off the wall due to earthquake damage. The organ was propped up with temporary supports as a precaution. It is still playable. The tuning temperature is 1/4 comma mean tone. The pitch is $a' = 465$ Hz. The wind pressure is 73 mm.

Disposition of the Theodorus Faber/Blank organ 1651/1979:

HOOFDWERK: (CDEFGA-g2a2)

Prestant 8
Holpype 8
Octave 4
Quinte fl. 3
Octave 2
Sufflet 1
Mixtuer 4-6 st.
Cimbel 2 st.
Trompett 8
Tremulant

RUGWERK: (CDEFGA-g2a2)

Quintadena 8
Prestant 4
Fluite 4
Super Octave 2
Geemshoorn 2
Sesquialter 2 st.
Vox Humana 8
Tremulant

PEDAAL: CDEFGA-d1) 23 TOETSEN

Permanently coupled to the Hoofdwerk
Bardon 16
Dooff 8
Bas Bazuyn 16

Nachtegaal (nightingale), Trommel (drum), Omlopende sterren (revolving stars).
Manual shove coupler.

About the Performer

Recognized as one of America's leading performers on early keyboard instruments, Gwendolyn Toth performs with equal ease on the organ, harpsichord, and fortepiano. "Her interpretive skills are sensitive and intelligent, and she clearly has a gift for program conceptualization." – The New York Times. As a soloist on historical organs, Ms. Toth has performed on the 1434 organ in Sion, Switzerland; the 15th c. organ in Oosthuizen, Netherlands; the 1509 organ in Trevi, Italy; the 1531 organ in Krewerd, Netherlands; the 1649 organ in Zeerijp, Netherlands; the 1655 organ in the Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam; the 1696 Arp Schnitger organ in Noordbroek, Netherlands; and the 1714 organ in St. Michael's Church, Vienna among many others. Her numerous CD recordings of Renaissance and baroque music have been recorded on historic Dutch organs in Noordbroek, Zeerijp, Oosthuizen, Krewerd, Eenum, Ostönnen (forthcoming), and Sion (forthcoming). Ms. Toth also has a solo recording of J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations performed on a lautenwerk, a reconstruction of Bach's gut-strung harpsichord. Ms. Toth holds the D.M.A. in organ performance from Yale University and studied with Ton Koopman in the Netherlands. She is the founder and artistic director of the acclaimed American period instrument ensemble ARTEK; recordings under her direction include Monteverdi's opera *L'Orfeo*, *Complete Madrigals Book 5*, *Complete Madrigals Book 7*, and *Cantatas of Johann Rosenmüller*. She teaches at City University of New York (Professor of Historical Performance Practice) and is the Director of Music at Saint Ignatius of Antioch Church in New York City.



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