

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DANVILLE
DANVILLE, KENTUCKY**

Opus 35, 1999

GREAT

16' Bourdon
8' Principal
8' Spire Flute
4' Octave
4' Gedackt
2 2/3' Quinte
2' Superoctave
2' Waldflöte
V Cornet
IV-V Mixture
8' Trompet

PEDAL

16' Subbass (poplar)
8' Octave
4' Octave
V Mixture
16' Posaune
8' Trompet

Cymbelstern
Wind Stabilizer

SWELL

8' Gedackt (oak)
8' Gamba
4' Octave
4' Rohrflöte
2 2/3' Nasat
2' Octave
II Sesquialtera
III-IV Mixture
16' Fagott
8' Oboe

BRUSTWERK

8' Gedackt
2 2/3' Hohlquinte
8' Regal

COUPLERS

SW / GT
GT / PD
SW / PD
Tremulant

Swell or Brust or Swell + Brust

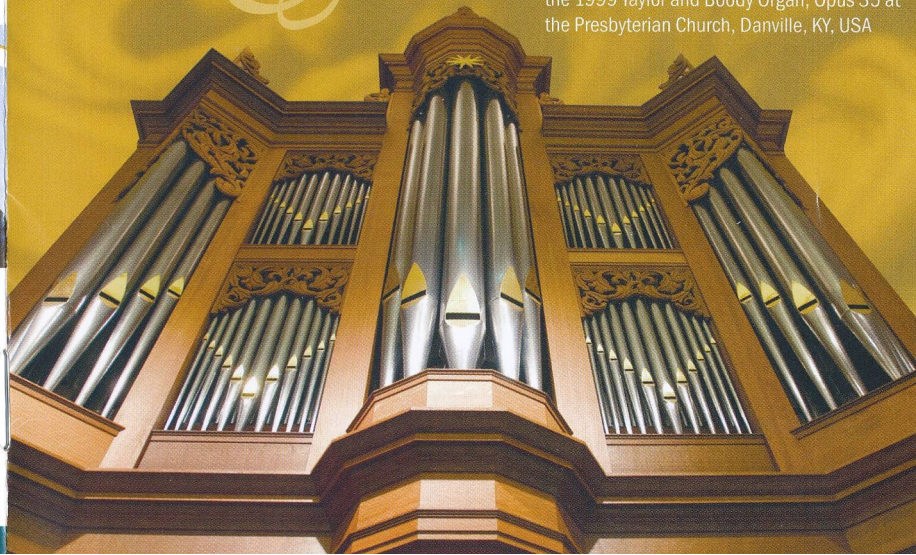


Mechanical key and stop action
Compass: Manuals 56 notes C-g^{'''}; Pedal 30 notes C-f[']
Metal pipes of hammered lead-tin alloys
Case and pipe shades of solid white oak - fumed and oiled
Windchests of solid wood
Three wedge bellows for foot pumping or blower winding
Total number of pipes: 2062

DAVID BRIGGS

Joie de Vivre

David Briggs plays organ music by J S Bach on
the 1999 Taylor and Boody Organ, Opus 35 at
the Presbyterian Church, Danville, KY, USA



Bach at Danville, Kentucky?

That might seem, to some, to be an unusual choice. Read on...



It is always a stimulating and refreshing experience when you come across an instrument which has such a strong personality and integrity that it acts rather like a teacher in its own right. In my early-twenties I was privileged to be the recipient of a six-week scholarship to study the historical (and modern) organs in Holland. Time and time again, the instruments themselves seemed to be telling you the way to register, to articulate, to phrase, and so on. More recently, recording Vierne 3 and Widor 5 at St Sernin, Toulouse on the great 1889 Cavaillé-Coll felt exactly the same – the Barker lever action, the voicing of the pipe-work and fabulous acoustics seemed to almost dictate the tempo and the style of touch. Recording Bach on the Taylor and Boody in Danville was a similarly educational and enriching experience for me and I hope you will enjoy the result on this CD. I think the Danville instru-

ment is the ideal Bach organ – clear, rich and characterful – the sort of organ where “2+2=5”. The mildly unequal temperament also helps to bring the music off the surface of the page – rather like the difference between watching TV in black and white or colour. The instrument seems also to encourage a certain improvisatory freedom of approach – it seems very likely that, when Bach played, what was written on the page was just the beginning of the story.

Because the Prelude and Fugue in C major, BWV 547 is known only from copies Bach which made while in Leipzig, it is generally assumed to have been composed while Bach worked in that city. Some scholars, however, believe it originated in the early 1720's, whilst Bach was court musician at Weimar. The 9/8 meter of the prelude is unusual, as are the repeated notes in the midst of the rising scale that begins the theme, allowing Bach to cover the range of an octave while playing ten notes. The quasi-ostinato pedal part gives a constant reminder of the 9/8 meter and derives from the soprano voice in the second measure of the prelude. At times, the manual writing looks forward to some of the textures we hear in the Goldberg Variations.

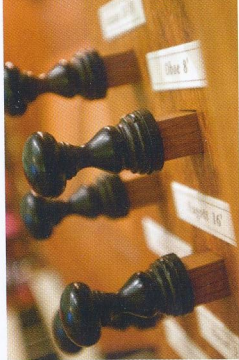
From a single-bar subject, cast in manner of the *stilé antico*, Bach reveals a seventy-two-bar fugue. This results in a highly concentrated work that is intensely imitative. Because the last note of the subject itself initiates a push to the dominant, it becomes an active participant in the developmental passages. Thus the subject is part of both the harmonically modulating and stable sections of the fugue. The harmony moves toward “flat” keys, finally resting on the tonic minor for a time. Bach delays the entry of the pedal until roughly two-thirds of the way through the fugue. When it does appear, it begins with the subject in augmentation and in *stretto* with both the primary version of the subject and its inversion. After this dramatic entry of the pedals,

the path back to the tonic begins. As if to make up for the earlier distant harmonic excursions, the fugue closes over a sustained tonic pedal. The performance on this CD is dedicated to my wife, Madge.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was, without a shadow of doubt, the greatest organist of his time, and his organ compositions influenced the future of keyboard performance and composition more profoundly than those of any other musician. Ironically, he never had day-to-day use of any of the great organs of his time. Indeed, for most of his career, as Kapellmeister at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen (1717-1723) and as Cantor at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig (1723-1750), providing organ music was not part of his professional responsibilities. It was in the years at Arnstadt (1703-1707), Mühlhausen (1707-1708), and, most of all, at Weimar (1708-1717) that most of the great preludes and fugues were written. His activities in those years included providing pedagogical materials for keyboard instruments, revising older pieces, and rearrangements. His organ output from that time reflects those concerns: the six Trio Sonatas, written in 1727 for the instruction of his teenage sons Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emmanuel; the 18 Chorales, revised from pieces written in Weimar; and the Schübler Chorales, arranged for solo organ in the late 1740's from cantata movements which he had written in the 1720's and 1730's.

The beautiful and highly ornamented Chorale Prelude *Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele*, BWV654 is one of the famous Eighteen Chorales and shows Bach in one of his most overtly expressively modes. The *Cantus Firmus* is embellished on the Cornet stop, above a rich harmonic background, where the linear nature of the counterpoint is almost vocal in inspiration.

The 'Little' Fugue in G minor, BWV578 dates from Bach's years at Arnstadt (1703-1707) and its four-and-a-half bar subject is amongst Bach's instantly recognizable and most memorable. The fugue is in four voices. During the episodes, Bach uses one of Corelli's most famous techniques: imitation between two voices on an eighth note upbeat figure that first leaps up a fourth and then falls back down one step at a time. The performance on this CD is dedicated to my daughter, Eloise – this is her favourite Bach organ piece.



A decisive event for Bach's writing was Prince Johann Ernst of Saxe-Weimar's acquisition of scores of concerti by Antonio Vivaldi in 1713. Through them Bach became acquainted with Vivaldi's masterful use of ritornello form, which would become a hallmark of Bach's organ preludes and choral works. The concerti also provided an outlet for his virtuosity as an organ performer. Using the organ's brilliant Rückpositiv manual as the concerto soloist and the more stolid Hauptwerk manual as the orchestra, Bach could dazzle his listeners by taking all parts of the concerto himself. In the Concerto in A minor, BWV 593, transcribed from Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Violins, Op. 3, No. 8, Bach not only captures, but enhances the spirit of the original. Through manual changes, both concertos faithfully preserve the alternation of solo and tutti forces found in the original compositions. The performance on this CD is dedicated to my daughters Kerensa and Miriam.

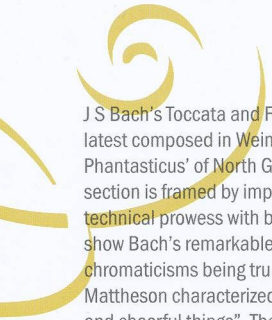
Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, BWV 689, the last of the manual chorale preludes, is a full-fledged four-part fugue on the opening phrase of the chorale, and is characterised by the clarity of the subject entries as well as the use of strettis at various entry points. At the close, the melody sounds in augmented note values over a rich web of counterpoint. This performance is played on just one stop – the beautifully expressive Great 8ft Principal.

Bach's Trio super Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend, BWV655 probably dates from quite early in Bach's career, but it was remodelled for inclusion in the Eighteen Chorales in Leipzig, in circa 1744. Here again, the principal figura from which the Trio is constructed, derives from the Chorale melody itself, which is not heard until near the end of the piece, in longer note-values, played by the pedals.

The Chorale Prelude: Kyrie Gott, heiliger Geist, BWV671 is a magnificent, five-voice ricercare, and formed part of the Clavierübung 111, compiled in Leipzig in 1739. For me, it represents the perfect and quintessential amalgamation of linear counterpoint and harmonic invention. The extraordinary final measures show that Bach was indeed far ahead of his time, from the standpoint of chromatic harmony alone.

The Chorale Prelude: Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 from the Eighteen Chorales is another example of a beautifully melismatic, ornamental chorale, which would have been often heard in Advent at the time of Bach.

In the last four years of his life, Bach made arrangements of six chorale settings to be published by Johann Georg Schübler, from whom they derive their nickname. Five of them are transcriptions of movements from cantatas which Bach wrote between 1723 and 1731. In this Chorale Prelude: Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter, BWV 650, the Chorale is heard as a Cantus Firmus on a 4ft stop, played in the pedals, which actually plays higher than the obligato part, given to the left hand. The original melody is a relatively late Lutheran hymn (1665) that Bach used on several occasions and with several different texts. In fact, the organ prelude was transcribed directly from the second movement of the cantata Lobe den Herren, BWV 137 of 1725 (a movement in which Bach sets the "Lobe den Herren" text to the melody), a little over two decades after the cantata was originally composed.



J S Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D major, BWV532 is almost certainly an early work, at the latest composed in Weimar in 1710, and is influenced to a large degree by the 'Stylus Phantasticus' of North German composers like Buxtehude. The Prelude's central 'Alla Breve' section is framed by improvisatory passages where the performer is invited to show his technical prowess with both hands and feet. The extraordinary final few bars of the Prelude show Bach's remarkable harmonic language – the frequent diminished sevenths and other chromaticisms being truly ahead of their time. In Neu-Eröffnetes Orchester (Hamburg 1713) Mattheson characterized the key of D major as ideal "for the learning of funny, warlike and cheerful things". The fugue subject, copied from a model used by Johann Pachelbel, heightens the basic mood to an almost dance-like happiness. The Fugue is a moto perpetuo of considerable energy and drive, ending with a pedal cadenza which is notorious amongst organists. One of Bach's contemporaries possibly had this fugue in mind when he wrote: "With his two feet he could perform such musical passages on the pedals, which even for the more skilful pianoforte player would be difficult enough to play with five fingers." Practicing this for an hour is the equivalent of a trip to the gym, although rather less boring... The performance on this CD is dedicated to my mother, Jane Briggs.

Taylor and Boody organs are built to the highest standards of craftsmanship following centuries old traditions. The design of each organ, while built for today, is grounded in extensive research of antique instruments, which have proven to be of surpassing beauty and timeless worth. Virtually all the parts of the organs are handmade in the local workshop, including the fabrication of the metal flue pipes and reeds. Only the finest materials are used in the organs including lumber cut and dried especially for use in organbuilding. The casework, windchests, bellows and action parts are all constructed of solid wood, carefully selected for

its function. Where appropriate, the instruments are decorated with classical moldings and carvings. Careful attention to design and manufacture produces an instrument of responsive playing characteristics, great mechanical durability and outstanding musical quality. The building of the organs, from design concepts through the final voicing, is under the direction of George Taylor and John Boody. This assures a musical instrument of unified purpose and highest artistic integrity.

The firm has completed over fifty organs in the United States and Japan, including the restoration of organs of particular historical merit in churches, universities and museum collections.

