

The Martin Pasi Pipe Organ, op. 23

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Houston

GREAT

8' Principal
 8' Rohrflöte
 4' Octave
 2 2/3' Quinte
 2' Superoctave
 1 1/3' Mixture IV ranks
 8' Trumpet

POSITIVE

8' Gedackt
 8' Viola
 4' Spitzflöte
 2' Waldflöte
 2 2/3' Cornet**

PEDAL

16' Subbass
 8' Principal*
 16' Posaune
 8' Trumpet*

Normal Couplers

Tremulant

Suspended, mechanical key action

Mechanical stop action

Wind system with wedge-shaped bellows

*indicates transmission from Great to Pedal

**indicates double-draw with 1 3/5"



Jeffrey Cooper & Christopher Holman
 Organists



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 5.0 Surround & Stereo



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The Old Year Has Passed Away -
A New Year 2016 Organ Recital
Christopher Holman & Jeffrey Cooper, organists
First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Houston
Martin Pasi Pipe Organ, op. 23

TRACK LISTING

1	Heinrich Scheidemann (c.1595-1663)	Praeambulum in G, WV 73	5:35	CH
2	Dietrich Buxtehude (c.1637-1707)	Gelobet seist du, Herr Jesu Christ BuxWV 189	2:16	CH
3		Puer natus in Bethlehem, BuxWV 217	1:22	CH
4		In dulci jubilo, BuxWV 197	2:28	CH
5		Mit Fried und Freud, BuxWV 76	6:02	JC
6	Franz Tunder (1614-1667)	Canzona in G major	1:54	CH
7	Georg Böhm (1661-1733)	Partita on Gelobet seist du, Herr Jesu Christ	4:51	JC
8	Melchior Schildt (c.1593-1667)	Herzlich Lieb' hab' ich dich, o mein Herr	3:49	JC
9	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)	Prelude in C major, BWV 547/I	5:05	CH
10		Fugue in C major, BWV 547/II	5:24	CH
11		Das alte Jahr vergangen ist, BWV 614	2:23	CH
12		Puer natus in Bethlehem, BWV 603	2:07	CH
13		Gelobet seist du, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 604	1:45	CH
14		Vom Himmel hoch, BWV 606	:55	CH
15		Alle Menschen müssen sterben, BWV 643	1:54	CH
16		Fuga sopra il Magnificat, BWV 733	5:22	JC
17	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, op. 122/8	2:51	JC
18	Max Reger (1873-1916)	Mit Fried und Freud, op. 79b/5	3:32	JC
19	Arvo Pärt (b.1935)	Annum per annum (1980)	9:19	JC

Recorded in Public Concert 1 January 2016

Producer & Recording Engineer - John Gladney Proffitt

Master Recording in 24/192k High Resolution 5.0 Channel Surround Sound

Blu-ray Audio mastering by Robert Witrak



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A New Year Organ Recital



This live recording of a New Year's Day 2016 recital presents works appropriate to both the beginning of a new year and to a new pipe organ. While Martin Pasi's Opus 23 instrument, recently installed in Houston's First Evangelical Lutheran Church, has only 17 stops, each register produces various colors within itself, which seem to miraculously change when combined in different ways. This creates a dynamic musical soundscape appropriate to both German Baroque repertoire and that of modern times.

The northern German composer Heinrich Scheidemann's Praeambulum opens, like many of his numerous works with the same title, with a series of bright, cheery chords resulting from the imitations between various voices. In this performance, I created echo effects that are not written in the original score through manual changes, a practice common in other works from this period. One of Scheidemann's pupils was Dietrich Buxtehude, organist at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, Germany. In the Lutheran tradition during the Baroque period, it was customary for organists to improvise pieces on the hymn or chorale tunes during services, which not only served as an introduction for the congregational singing but also reminded the (at that point) largely hymnal-less congregations of the melody. The four preludes on this program are on Christmas chorales, each featuring the wonderful sounds of Martin Pasi's organ — solo stops in *Gelobet seist du* and *Puer natus*, the 4' registers during *In dulci júbilo*, and full organ in *Mit Fried und Freud*.

Many north German works were heavily influenced by Italian music, and Franz Tunder's *Canzona* is no exception. This light-hearted work by Buxtehude's father-in-law and predecessor in Lübeck takes a singular idea and places it in every combination imaginable. Even when the piece seems to reach the end of its possibilities, the same idea suddenly appears in a dance-like triple meter, concluding with the same resounding lightheartedness that pervades the entire piece.

In a similarly jubilant style, Georg Böhm's *Partita on Gelobet seist du* consists of variations that show off the wonderful colors of the Pasi organ. Böhm sets this Christmas chorale in ways typical of harpsichord writing: broken chords, quick figuration, and quick, elegant ornaments. Similarly, Melchior Schildt's *Herzlich Lieb'* shows off the various ways an organist could improvise around a chorale melody using Böhm's same tricks, combined with some of his own, incorporating even more variations of registration.

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C Major* combines well-known Baroque compositional devices, such as the beginning octave imitation in the prelude, with cutting-edge techniques, such as the harmonically bizarre chords at the end of both the prelude and fugue interspersed with deafening silences. Three main motives can be found in the prelude: the opening theme, its countermelody, and the theme that ends the piece, which, like Tunder's *Canzona*, combines

in ever combination imaginable. The fugue subject is treated similarly; as the piece intensifies, we hear the subject inverted, played backward, played twice as long, and then treated chromatically toward the end. With endless, ingenious and unique treatments of the subjects of both the prelude and fugue, combined with forward-thinking harmonic language, BWV 547 likely dates from Bach's mature Leipzig period and constitutes one of his finest organ works.

While Bach is best known for his freely-composed works, his chorale preludes remain at the heart of organ literature specifically for the church. Freely composed settings like the *Fugue sopra il Magnificat* demonstrate Bach's prowess at composing fugues with fixed chorale subjects. Other chorale preludes come from major collections like the *Orgelbüchlein*, which consists of 46 short chorale

preludes intended for beginning organists, particularly to help them with pedaling. The collection is arranged by liturgical season, and in this program we hear several chorales from the Christmas and New Year's portion, as well as the funeral chorale *Alle Menschen müssen sterben*, which in particular seeks to teach the pedal technique of pivoting.

Skipping forward several centuries, we might expect to hear a completely different musical language, yet Johannes Brahms was well versed in the rules of Baroque counterpoint, as exemplified in his setting of *Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen*. Here the melody snakes around, obscuring the familiar tune. Like the Baroque masters, Brahms calls for different tone colors on different manuals, yet unlike Scheidemann or Buxtehude, the changes are rarely echoes. Max Reger demands a wealth of tonal possibilities in his setting of the Epiphany chorale *Mit Fried und Freud*. The instruments with which he was familiar were capable of a seamless crescendo, a feat impossible on the organ until the nineteenth century. While Pasi's organ contains elements of such instruments, his largely baroque-style organ allows us to imagine such a crescendo quite effectively.

The final piece on the program by the contemporary minimalist composer Arvo Pärt was written in honor of St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music, and to celebrate the 900th year in which daily services were continuously given in Germany's Speyer Cathedral. *Annum per annum* ("Year by Year") consists of repeating the same 13-bar phrase, based on a *cantus firmus* that uses isorhythm and sequences, during which slight variations and a massive crescendo and decrescendo are made. In addition, Pärt denaturalizes the organ by turning off the wind as the organist continues to play. These modern compositional techniques, combined with all the other pieces on the program simply display the remarkable capabilities of Martin Pasi's organ, and the extraordinary capabilities of the organ and its composers, as demonstrated year after year.



Notes by Christopher Holman