

Vorwort

Noch immer ruft bei einer bestimmten Zuhörerschaft wie auch bei so manchen Interpret*innen das Genre der Orgel-Transkription ein widersprüchliches Echo hervor. Dabei ist doch die Entstehung der frühesten bekannten Orgelmusik mit dieser Thematik eng verbunden, auch wenn es sich dabei zuerst meist um Bearbeitungen von Vokalmusik, sogenannte Intavolierungen, handelt. Johann Sebastian Bach selbst hat mit seinen „Schübler-Chorälen“ (BWV 645–650) nicht nur eigene Werke aus Kantaten-Sätzen für die Orgel beispielhaft umgeschrieben, sondern daneben auch Orchester-Concerti vornehmlich italienischer Meister für Tasteninstrumente arrangiert. Dabei mag die Intention solcher Bearbeitungen durchaus verschiedene Ursachen haben:

Während beispielsweise bei den sogenannten Motettenkolorierungen von Heinrich Scheidemann (1595–1663) die Orgel ursprünglich wohl als Ersatz für den abwesenden Chor fungierte, ging es Bach vielleicht eher darum, qualitativ hochwertige Orchestermusik oder eigene Kantatensätze quasi auch als Solist für Tasteninstrumente ständig verfügbar zu halten. In späterer Zeit war für reisende Orgelvirtuosen wie beispielsweise Edwin Lemare (1865–1934) die Orgel ein Medium, berühmte Musik wie etwa Overtüren aus Wagner-Opern jederzeit einem breiten Publikum auch ohne Orchester nahebringen zu können.

In dieser Tradition hat Wolfgang Rübsam nun zwei große Werke von Johann Sebastian Bach für Orgel transkribiert. Die Zahl der bisher publizierten Bearbeitungen von **BWV 1067** ist überschaubar. Meistens handelt es sich dabei um Fassungen für Flöte und Tasteninstrument, um das populäre Werk auch ohne Streicher interpretieren zu können.

Eine autographe Partitur dieser Suite konnte bisher nicht aufgefunden werden, es existieren aber Orchesterstimmen aus den Jahren um 1738/1739, einer Zeit also, als Bach wiederholt die Leitung des Leipziger Collegium Musicum übernommen hatte und dieses Werk vermutlich bei den Konzerten im Zimmermannschen Kaffeehaus zur Aufführung brachte. Lebhaftige Dialoge zwischen Tutti und Soloflöte bringen einen besonderen, die Struktur auflockernden Aspekt bereits in die Overtüre. In der anschließenden Tanzsatzfolge wechseln sich traditionellere Stücke wie Sarabande, Bourrée und Menuett mit eher moderneren, galanten Elementen wie Rondeau, Polonaise und Badinerie ab. Erstaunlich ist, dass Bach der Tonart h-Moll, der er so viel ernste und schmerz erfüllte Musik zugewiesen hat wie etwa das Kyrie der h-Moll-Messe BWV 232, hier einen völlig anderen, zumeist heiter-gelösten Duktus gibt.

Noch seltener zu finden sind Transkriptionen zu **BWV 1068** mit Ausnahme des zweiten Satzes, des berühmten Air, eines der populärsten Stücke der klassischen Musik überhaupt, welcher heute in vielfältigen, sogar vokalen Bearbeitungen existiert. Die Faktur des Satzes lässt vermuten, dass diese Orchestersuite ursprünglich wohl in einer Fassung ohne Bläser existierte, da diese wie die Oboen die Streicherstimmen meist nur verdoppeln oder wie die Trompeten lediglich Themenköpfe und Kadenzen klanglich hervorheben. Auch dieses Werk entstand wohl in Zusammenhang mit den Aufführungen des besagten Collegium Musicum.

Die vorliegenden Orgel-Fassungen Wolfgang Rübsams bereichern nun das Repertoire für das wahrhaft vielseitige Instrument um zwei gewichtige Werke des Leipziger Thomaskantors.

Die Bearbeitungen gehen von einer zweimanualigen Orgel mit Hauptwerk und Positiv aus. Mittig zwischen den Manualsystemen stehende Werkangaben bezeichnen das Spielen beider Hände auf dem angegebenen Manual.

Dabei hält sich die Transkription im Großen und Ganzen an die Originalvorlage und stellt in diesem Sinne keine Bearbeitung dar wie etwa bei „Bach’s Memento“ von Charles-Marie Widor (Butz-Verlag BU 2160), wo in teils erheblicher Weise in den Notentext eingegriffen wurde. Vielmehr sind Verlegungen der Stimmen in andere Lagen oder auch Vereinfachungen durch Weglassen von Verdoppelungen etc. letztlich einer besseren Spielbarkeit geschuldet. Trotzdem sind besonders die Mittelteile der Ouvertüren von gehobenem spieltechnischen Anspruch und erfordern insbesondere eine profunde Pedaltechnik.

Man könnte daher auch mit Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643) frei nach seiner Bemerkung zur „Bergamasca“ aus seinen „Fiori musicali“ sprechen: „Wer diese[s] ... [Stücke] ... spielt, wird nicht wenig lernen“. Zudem werden Interpret*innen wie die Hörschaft mit wunderbarer Musik belohnt.

St. Ingbert, im April 2023

Christian von Blohn

Foreword

The genre of the organ transcription may meet with a mixed response from some listeners and performers, but in fact some of the earliest known pieces for organ were transcriptions – mostly arrangements of vocal music known as intavolations. Subsequently, Johann Sebastian Bach himself not only provided masterful organ versions of movements from his own cantatas in the form of the “Schübler Chorales” (BWV 645–650), but also arranged orchestral concerti, mainly by Italian composers, for keyboard instruments. Over the centuries, people have been inspired to make such arrangements for a variety of reasons:

For example, in the case of the motet intabulations by Heinrich Scheidemann (1595–1663) the organ was probably intended to replace an absent choir, whilst Bach seems to have been interested in making sure that high-quality orchestral music or his own cantata movements were always available for a keyboard soloist. In later years, itinerant organ virtuosos like Edwin Lemare (1865–1934) used the organ as a means to perform famous pieces like the overtures from Wagner’s operas to a broad audience, without the need for an orchestra.

Taking up this tradition, Wolfgang Rübsam has transcribed two major works by Johann Sebastian Bach for organ. There are not many published arrangements of **BWV 1067**. Most of them have been versions for flute and keyboard instrument enabling the popular work to be performed without strings.

No autograph score of this suite has been found, but orchestral parts from around 1738/1739 do exist. This was a time when Bach was regularly in charge of Leipzig’s Collegium Musicum and presumably performed this work at concerts in Zimmermann’s coffeehouse. In the overture, lively dialogues between tutti and solo flute give a special touch, lightening the texture of the movement. In the ensuing sequence of dances, more traditional pieces like Sarabande, Bourrée and Menuett alternate with more modern,

“gallant” elements such as Rondeau, Polonaise and Badinerie. It is remarkable to see how Bach uses the key of B minor, which he used for so much serious and pain-imbued music like the Kyrie of the B Minor Mass BWV 232, to impart an entirely different, generally relaxed and cheerful mood.

Transcriptions of **BWV 1068** are even rarer, with the exception of the second movement, the famous Air on a G String: this is one of the most popular pieces of all classical music and can be found in a vast number of arrangements, even for voice. The structure of the movement suggests that this orchestral suite originally existed in a version without wind instruments, since these (e.g. the oboes) mainly simply double the strings or (e.g. the trumpets) merely emphasise the main themes and cadences. This work also was probably composed for performances by the Collegium Musicum.

These new versions for organ by Wolfgang Rüksam now enrich the repertoire of what is truly a versatile instrument with two major works by the famous cantor of St. Thomas’s, Leipzig.

The arrangements are intended for a two-manual organ with Great and Positiv. Instructions for the use of manuals placed between the manual systems indicate that both hands should be played on the designated manual.

To a large extent, the transcription adheres to the original and, in this sense, is not an arrangement like “Bach’s Memento” by Charles-Marie Widor (Butz-Verlag BU 2160), which intervenes, quite substantially in some instances, in the score. Rather, where parts are moved between the octaves or doubling is omitted, this is purely for ease of performance. Nevertheless, the central parts of the overtures do pose some challenges for the player’s technique and, in particular, require very good pedalling skills.

One could therefore take up the words of Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583–1643) in his comments on the “Bergamasca” from his “Fiori musicali”: “He who plays this ... will learn not a little”. Also, performers and listeners alike will be rewarded with wonderful music.

St. Ingbert, April 2023

Christian von Blohn
Translation: Andrew Sims



Suite Nr. 2

BWV 1067

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Orgelbearbeitung: Wolfgang Rübsam (*1946)

Ouverture

Man. HW

Ped.

4

7

21

Musical score for measures 21-26. The system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the grand staff treble clef features a series of eighth-note runs and chords, with some notes beamed together. The grand staff bass clef and the separate bass clef staff contain rests throughout this section.

27

Musical score for measures 27-31. The system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the grand staff treble clef continues with eighth-note patterns and some slurs. The grand staff bass clef and the separate bass clef staff contain rests.

32

Musical score for measures 32-35. The system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the grand staff treble clef features eighth-note runs and chords. The grand staff bass clef and the separate bass clef staff contain eighth-note accompaniment.

36

Musical score for measures 36-41. The system consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass clef staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the grand staff treble clef features eighth-note runs and chords, with some notes beamed together. The grand staff bass clef and the separate bass clef staff contain eighth-note accompaniment.

Lentement

198

Musical score for measures 198-202. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It features a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The right hand melody includes several trills (tr) and is often tied across measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

203

Musical score for measures 203-207. The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The right hand melody features more complex rhythmic figures and trills. The left hand maintains a consistent accompaniment.

208

Musical score for measures 208-211. The right hand melody becomes more active with sixteenth-note passages and trills. The left hand accompaniment remains steady.

212

Musical score for measures 212-215. The piece concludes with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The first ending leads back to an earlier section, while the second ending provides a final cadence. The piano accompaniment ends with sustained chords.

Rondeau

Man.

Ped.

5

10

15

Sarabande

Man. HW

Ped.

5

tr

9

tr

tr

13

tr

Bourrée I alternativement

Man. Ped.

HW
Pos.

5

tr

10

tr

15

Polonaise

Man. Ped.

HW Pos.

tr

5

tr

9

tr

tr

Fine

Double

HW 4'

Pos.

Badinerie

Man. *non legato*

Ped. *non legato*

6

tr

11a

tr

17



Suite Nr. 3

BWV 1068

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Orgelbearbeitung: Wolfgang Rübsam (*1946)

Ouverture

Man. HW

Ped.

4

7

tr

22

tr tr 1.

This system contains measures 22 and 23. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 22 features a melodic line in the right hand with a trill (tr) over the final note, and a bass line with eighth-note patterns. Measure 23 continues the melodic line with another trill (tr) and includes a first ending bracket labeled '1.' leading to a whole rest.

24

2.

This system contains measures 24, 25, and 26. Measure 24 begins with a second ending bracket labeled '2.' and contains a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. Measures 25 and 26 continue the melodic line with eighth-note patterns and include a fermata over the final note of measure 26.

27

This system contains measures 27, 28, and 29. Measure 27 features a complex melodic line in the right hand with many beamed eighth notes and a fermata over the final note. Measures 28 and 29 continue the melodic line with eighth-note patterns and include a fermata over the final note of measure 29.

30

This system contains measures 30, 31, and 32. Measure 30 features a complex melodic line in the right hand with many beamed eighth notes and a fermata over the final note. Measures 31 and 32 continue the melodic line with eighth-note patterns and include a fermata over the final note of measure 32.

115

Musical score for measures 115-116. The system consists of three staves: a treble staff with a melodic line, a middle staff with chords and accompaniment, and a bass staff with a bass line. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 115 features a melodic phrase in the treble and a bass line with a slur. Measure 116 continues the melodic line and includes a fermata over the final note.

117

Musical score for measures 117-118. The system consists of three staves. Measure 117 shows a melodic line in the treble and a bass line with a slur. Measure 118 continues the melodic line and includes a fermata over the final note.

119

Musical score for measures 119-120. The system consists of three staves. Measure 119 features a melodic line in the treble and a bass line with a slur. Measure 120 continues the melodic line and includes a fermata over the final note.

Musical score for measures 121-122. The system consists of three staves. Measure 121 features a melodic line in the treble with a trill (tr) and a bass line with a trill (tr). Measure 122 includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.) with a fermata over the final note.

Air

Man. HW
Pos.

Ped.

4

6

1. 2.

6

7

Gavotte I alternativement

Man. HW Pos. HW tr

Ped.

6 Pos.

11 HW Pos. HW

16 Pos. HW Pos.

Gavotte II

Man. **HW** **Pos.** **HW**

5 **Pos.**

9 **HW** **Pos.**

13 **HW**

Bourrée

Man. HW

Pos.

Ped.

4

9

13

Gigue

Man.

Ped.

7

13

19