



**Bach and the South German Tradition  
Vol. II**

aud 92.548



[American Record Guide](#) 01.03.2012 (William J. Gatens - 2012.03.01)



This is the second disc from organist Martin Neu illustrating the stylistic connections between the organ works of JS Bach and German composers of the preceding generations. The first one (Audite 92.547) explored Bach's links to masters of the North German school like Georg Böhm (1661–1733) and Dietrich Buxtehude (c1637–1707). This one looks at the influence of South German organist-composers like Georg Muffat (1653–1704), Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706), and the even earlier generation of Johann Caspar Kerll (1627–93) and Johann Jakob Froberger (1616–67).

If Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck was the dominant influence on the North German school, his southern counterpart was Girolamo Frescobaldi. As young men in the service of the court of Vienna, both Froberger and Kerll were granted financial support to study with Frescobaldi in Rome. In the early 1680s, Muffat studied in Rome with Bernardo Pasquini, who was much influenced by his close study of Frescobaldi's works. Pachelbel meanwhile absorbed the influence of Frescobaldi through his studies with Kerll. Bach was familiar with the works of these composers and Frescobaldi himself, and this was an important source of the Italian influence found in his own organ works.

The program opens with Bach's Toccata in F, so notable for its canonic writing over a sustained pedal—common in Pachelbel's toccatas. The double fugue in F that is usually linked with Bach's toccata was probably composed independently. It concludes the program. Muffat is represented by one of the toccatas in his important publication *Apparatus Musico-Organisticus* (1690). These consist of a sequence of short sections that vary in texture and tempo.

Pachelbel's fugues on the Magnificat were intended to be performed in alternation with the singing of verses from the canticle. A complete suite would consist of six fugues, but Pachelbel's autograph is lost, and surviving manuscript copies do not contain complete suites. For this performance a suite has been compiled from fugues in a Berlin manuscript copy; and for the final fugue in the Doxology, JS Bach's Fugue on the Magnificat (S 733) is used, though it is based on the *Tonus Peregrinus* rather than the First Tone. For this performance the intervening verses are sung by tenor Wilfried Rombach. Kerll's toccata, like those of Muffat, consists of several contrasted sections, while Froberger's Capriccio in F displays the unmistakable character of the Italian canzona.

The greater part of the program is played on the 2005 Metzler organ at St Francis Church, Stuttgart-Obertürkheim. It is an instrument of two manuals and pedal with 25 stops. In a brief essay, Andreas Metzler explains that the organ is essentially baroque, but with no attempt to copy a particular historical instrument or style. "Instead, we attempted to realize a baroque idea in a new and personal manner." The result is extraordinarily attractive as heard on this recording. The full plenum is brilliant but not strident—a major achievement for any builder. Neu plays the Bach Fugue in F on full organ with the 16-foot Bourdon of the Hauptwerk and chorus reeds. On many organs—including some historical ones—this would produce a chaotic jumble of sound, but here Bach's intricate

contrapuntal argumentation is distinctly audible from start to finish. The quieter registers are also very attractive. On hearing the opening movement of Bach's Trio Sonata in C, I thought the music might sound more cheerful with a lighter and more delicate registration. Neu's detailed registrations are not printed in the booklet, but they can be obtained in PDF format on the Audite website. On consulting that, I am not sure he could have found a better combination for the movement.

The earlier pieces by Kerll and Froberger are played on the historic organ at St John's Church, Laufenburg, Switzerland. It is a singlemanual instrument with eight stops built in 1776 by Blasius Bernauer. As one might expect, its tone does not have the heft of the Metzler, but it too is attractive and well suited to the music.

Martin Neu's performances are a delight. It is refreshing to hear early organ music treated as music, not just so many historical artifacts subjected to brittle and dispassionate playing in the name of historical performance practice. Neu is never anachronistically self-indulgent, but he displays great sensitivity to the flow and phrasing of the music and chooses registrations that suit its character, especially in the multi-sectional toccatas. In each of Pachelbel's Magnificat fugues, the registrations capture the character of the verses represented.

**Badische Zeitung Samstag, 3. Dezember 2011 (Johannes Adam - 2011.12.03)**

Badische  Zeitung

**Martin Neu (Orgel)**

*Bach, staubfrei*

Auf dieser Novität werden Bach und die süddeutsche Tradition beleuchtet (der englische CD-Titel aber wirkt da doch ein bisschen überkandidelt). Der in Murg aufgewachsene und unter anderem bei Gerhard Gnann in Mainz ausgebildete Martin Neu präsentiert die eingespielten Werke gut artikuliert und staubfrei – mit einem Wort: souverän. Klarheit steht oben an. Das F-Dur-Paar BWV 540 des Thomaskantors dient dem Programm als Rahmen: Frisch klingt die Toccata, die Fuge hat nicht zuletzt auf ihren Strecken im stile antico Gewicht. Sehr schön und ausdrucksstark gelingt Bachs Magnificat-Fuge. Mit Musik von Pachelbel und Bach lässt Neu den Hörer ein Magnificat abwechselnd, also in Alternativ-Praxis, mit Gesang (Tenor Wilfried Rombach) und Orgel erleben. Zum Einsatz kommen die Metzler-Orgel von 2005 in der Franziskus-Kirche in Stuttgart-Obertürkheim und die Blasius-Bernauer-Orgel von 1776 in St. Johann in Laufenburg/Schweiz (Froberger, Kerll). Bachs Orgelschaffen hat eben süddeutsche Einflüsse. Sie stehen dem Leipziger keineswegs schlecht zu Gesicht.

**Choir & Organ January/February 2012 (David Ponsford - 2012.01.01)**

**CHOIR  
&  
ORGAN**

This programme is framed by Bach's Toccata & Fugue in F, well played on a 2-manual Metzler (2005). Other Bach works include the Magnificat and Trio Sonata in C, with Muffat's Toccata sexta, Pachelbel's Magnificat primi toni, Kerll's Toccata 1 and Froberger's Capriccio XII, the last two played on a 1766 organ at A423. Martin Neu plays the lively movements well, but the slower pieces (Muffat and BWV 529/2) are rather labored. There are some fine sounds, though, despite the inevitable change of pitch between the organs, and the general thesis of this CD is well conceived.

## Einfluss der süddeutschen Barockmeister auf Johann Sebastian Bach

Einfluss der süddeutschen Barockmeister auf Johann Sebastian Bach

*Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.*

### [Fanfare](#) (Jerry Dubins - 2012.02.01)

fanfare

The album title given in the above headnote is a bit confusing. Volume 2 suggests this is a second release of Baroque organ works by composers of a South German school, while the only companion disc I find listed is titled "Bach and the North German Tradition," which, by the way, does not appear to have been reviewed here. So, this then would appear to be not a second volume of organ works by South German composers, but a second volume of organ works by German composers, the first of which features, along with Bach, North Germans Buxtehude and Böhm.

This is primarily a disc of organ music, but according to Martin Neu's informative booklet note, Pachelbel's fugues to the Magnificat were composed as organ versets for a Vespers service in which the Magnificat's verses were performed alternately by the cantor and the organ. The present recording offers a more or less—in reality, less than more—realization of such a performance, calling upon tenor Wilfried Rombach to chant or intone the alternating verses. I say "less than more" because a 1651 description of the procedure by Sigismund Theophil Staden, organist at the Nuremberg Church of St. Lorenz, gives an account in which a choir of boys was also involved in alternating with the organ and cantor.

On the disc, Bach's Fugue on the Magnificat comes at the end of Pachelbel's work, taking the position of the "Gloria Patri," so it too features a bit of chanting by Rombach. Why Pachelbel didn't provide for this last verse himself is not explained by Neu, but I gather that he decided Bach's fugue made a fitting conclusion and simply tacked it onto the end. There's no indication of any actual connection between Pachelbel's Magnificat and Bach's fugue.

The rest of the program is pretty standard Baroque organ fare. Muffat's Toccata sexta is the sixth number in a set of 12 toccatas composed and collected under the title of Apparatus musico-organisticus. Johann Caspar Kerll (1627–1693) is represented by one of his surviving keyboard works, the Toccata I. Today, Kerll is recognized mainly as a composer of organ music and an important forerunner of Bach, but much of his music, including 11 operas and many of his vocal works, are lost.

Johann Jakob Froberger (1616–1667) was regarded in his day as Germany's leading keyboard virtuoso, organist, and a composer whose influence extended far and wide. Generally credited with being the father of the keyboard suite, he is represented on the current disc by his Capriccio XII.

The Bach works are familiar, the Trio Sonata in C Major, being No. 5 from his set of six trio sonatas for organ, BWV 525–530. The Toccata and Fugue in F Major, BWV 540, may not have reached the staggering number of recordings—some 300!—of the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565, but with over 50 of its own it hasn't gone begging. Neu splits the toccata and the fugue apart, presenting the toccata on the first track of the disc and the fugue on the last.

Two different organs are used for the recording, and they're both beauties. The Froberger and Kerll pieces

are performed on the historic choir organ by Blasius Bernauer (1776) in Laufenburg, Switzerland, while the remaining works are played on the new Metzler organ (2005) in Stuttgart-Obertürkheim. Specifications for each instrument are given in the booklet.

The recording is nothing short of magnificent, and Martin Neu demonstrates more than ample technique and musical intelligence in the application of his organs' stops and registrations. I must make note, however, of just one issue regarding the accompanying booklet, and it's something I've mentioned once or twice in the past, though I don't recall if it was in connection with this particular label. The booklet's paper has been treated with some chemical that stinks to high heaven. It's probably not toxic to inhale, but if you've ever experienced the odor emanating from a mill that processes wood pulp for paper products, you'll know the sickening smell I'm describing. Setting the booklet business aside—and I mean as far aside as possible—Neu's Audite SACD is strongly recommended for excellent playing and superior recording.

## Fono Forum Mai 2012 (Friedrich Sprondel - 2012.05.01)



### Wege zu Bach

*Bach nahm so viele Einflüsse in seine Orgelmusik auf, dass sich einem neugierigen Interpreten viele Wege zu ihm auftun – und manche Aufnahme zeigt, dass auch noch neue zu begehen sind.*

Die Britin Margaret Philips bringt ihre Bach-Gesamteinspielung in Doppelfolgen heraus; jede Scheibe ist dabei einem prominenten Instrument gewidmet. In Folge sechs ist das, neben der neuen Aubertin-Orgel der Pariser Kirche St Louis en l'Île, die legendäre Müller-Orgel der Bavokerk in Haarlem; Folge sieben wurde an der Hildebrandt-Orgel von 1728 in Sangerhausen und an der grandiosen Silbermann-Orgel der Freiburger Petrikirche aufgezeichnet. Philips spielt tadellos und mit sicherem Geschmack in Tempo und Registerwahl. Interessant ist, welche der großen Orgelwerke sie welchem Instrument zuweist. So erklingen in Folge sechs die großen Präludien und Fugen in e- und h-Moll BWV 548 und BWV 544 an der monumentalen Haarlemer Orgel, Fantasie und Fuge g-Moll BWV 542 und die frühe Toccata E-Dur BWV 566 am eleganten Aubertin-Instrument; Folge VII bringt das lebhaftes G-Dur-Werkpaar BWV 541 und das "Grossomogul"-Concerto nach Vivaldi an der farbenfrohen Sangerhauser Orgel, und dem 32-Fuß-Klang in Freiberg vertraut Philips die beiden großen c-Moll-Zyklen an, Präludium und Fuge BWV 546 und die Passacaglia. Möglicherweise lassen sich die Instrumente tontechnisch noch charakteristischer abbilden; in puncto Stilistik und Lebendigkeit macht Margaret Philips aber keiner etwas vor.

Das kann auch für den Leipziger Thomasorganist Ullrich Böhme gelten. Zuletzt hat er sich die großen Orgelchoräle vorgenommen, die Bach in seinen späten Leipziger Jahren in einer Sammelhandschrift zusammenfasste. Jedem Choral stellt Böhme einen Bach'schen Choralvorsatz voran, gespielt auf der kleinen Hildebrandt-Orgel von 1723 in Störmthal, einem kraftvoll-herben Instrument, das Bach bekannt war. Den jeweiligen Orgelchoral – oder die zugehörige Werkgruppe – spielt Böhme dann auf der großen "Bachorgel" der Leipziger Thomaskirche, die Gerald Woehl im Bachjahr 2000 fertigstellte. Beide Instrumente wurden mit vorteilhafter Direktheit aufgenommen und die farbenreiche, klangmächtige neue Orgel kann neben der charakterstarken alten gut bestehen. Ein Vergnügen aber ist, zu erleben, wie die "Bachorgel" den Thomasorganisten offenbar inspiriert. Er artikuliert und registriert, bei straffen Tempi und absoluter Klarheit, mit umwerfender Spielfreude. Die höchst anspruchsvolle Sammlung wird in ihrem stilistischen Reichtum unmittelbar erlebbar: als packende Musik.

Martin Neu möchte in seinen beiden Einspielungen Bach aus der Perspektive der nord- und süddeutschen Orgelkunst des 17. Jahrhunderts sichtbar machen. Er hat sich stilistisch adäquate Instrumente ausgesucht:

Die Ahrend-Orgel in Herzogenaurach überzeugt mit warm-artikuliertem Klang und gibt dem norddeutschen Repertoire – hier beschränkt auf Bachs unmittelbare Bekanntschaften Böhm und Buxtehude – lebhaft Farbigkeit; beim süddeutschen – Kerll, Muffat, Froberger und Pachelbel – nutzt Neu die intensiv strahlende Metzler-Orgel in Obertürkheim für Pedaliter-Kompositionen, die Bernauer-Orgel in Laufenburg von 1776 mit ihrem satt-obertönigen Klang für die Manualiter-Musik. Hörbar inspiriert vom lebendigen Klang der Instrumente, spielt Neu stilistisch angemessen, übertreibt weder Tempi noch Artikulation und registriert oft betont schlicht, aber dank charaktvoller Einzelstimmen musikalisch sehr ergiebig. Die suggerierte Abhängigkeit begründet Neu im Booklet-Text einleuchtend; doch wird vor allem deutlich, wie stark Bach das Aufgenommene jeweils um- und sich anverwandelte.

Carsten Wiebusch geht einen Schritt weiter, indem er sich vornimmt, Bach gleichsam durch die Ohren eines anderen zu präsentieren: Er hält sich an die Ausgaben, die der Brahms-Zeitgenosse William Thomas Best mit Spielanweisungen für den modernen Konzertorganisten und seine technisch fortgeschrittene Orgel versehen hatte. Wiebusch präsentiert damit jene Klangressourcen, die die Klais-Orgel der Karlsruher Christuskirche hinzugewann, als sie kürzlich renoviert wurde. Dabei wurde die schlanke Sechziger-Jahre-Disposition um romantische Farben erweitert, die sich in der gelungenen Aufnahme durch große Intensität nachdrücklich bemerkbar machen. Schärfe und Fülle zusammen ergeben eine expressive Klangpalette, die Wiebusch nutzt, um den Best'schen Interpretationen dramatisches Profil zu verleihen – auch den Überraschungen, die in pièces de résistance wie der Passacaglia und der d-Moll-Toccaten auf den Hörer warten. Dabei spielt Wiebusch selber überaus charakteristisch: Er meidet schwülstiges Romantisieren, artikuliert deutlich und lässt auch über die Tempobeugungen hinweg den rhythmischen Fluss nie abreißen. Wiebuschs Bach holt sich letztlich bei W. T. Best die Lizenz für ein expressiv gesteigertes Bach-Spiel – das als solches zweifellos überzeugt.

**Glaube + Heimat - Mitteldeutsche Kirchenzeitung Nr. 48**  
(27. November 2011) (Michael Klein - 2011.11.27)



**Einfluss der süddeutschen Barockmeister auf Johann Sebastian Bach**

Einfluss der süddeutschen Barockmeister auf Johann Sebastian Bach

*Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.*

**Heidenheimer Zeitung am Sonntag 21.12.2011 (Otto Paul Burkhardt - 2011.12.21)**



**Kurz vor Torschluss**

Kurz vor Torschluss

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This release by Audite is the second volume to feature Bach's organ music played by Martin Neu (the first was reviewed by Marc Rochester in April 2010). In the first, Neu combines works composed by the great composer with those by two North German organist-composers, Dietrich Buxtehude and Georg Böhm. Here, the Toccata and Fugue in F major, the Magnificat Fugue and the trio sonata for organ in C major feature alongside pieces by four composers of the South German tradition, Georg Muffat, Johann Pachelbel, Johann Jakob Froberger and Johann Caspar Kerll.

Neu uses two different organs: the choir organ by Blasius Bernauer at Laufenburg in Switzerland and a modern instrument, conceived in Baroque style by Metzler in 2005 at Stuttgart-Obertürkheim. Brief information is given about both instruments in the accompanying booklet and for further information, including details of the registrations used on this recording, we are helpfully directed to the company's website. Perplexingly there is no indication in the booklet about which organ was used for which pieces or the reasons why. However, it is fairly easy to discern when listening to the disc; both pitch and temperament vary (the earlier pieces by Froberger and Kerll are both played at Laufenburg and the remaining works on the Metzler at Obertürkheim). Tenor Wilfried Rombach makes an appearance on the recording, taking the traditional role of the cantor as he very capably sings alternate versicles of Pachelbel's Magnificat versets.

Evidently, Neu views these recordings as informative documents; he writes in the accompanying programme notes that it is possible 'to clarify trends and offer an insight into existing interrelations [between Bach's music and that of the South German tradition]'. A glance at the track list reveals that the pieces are evidently chosen for the potential of direct comparison; there are three toccatas, one each by Kerll, Muffat and Bach himself. Additionally there are pieces based on the Magnificat by Pachelbel and Bach. Bach's setting is deliberately placed after Pachelbel's series of versets; we are told that it 'thus takes the position of the "Gloria Patri" which, according to Sigismund Theophil Staden, should stand 'mighty within the work'. However, it is clear that the interrelationships between the various pieces played on the disc are far more various and further-reaching than similarity of genre or melodic theme. Neu explores the similarities in compositional approach in his lucidly written notes, immaculately translated into English by Viola Scheffel. This is a programme that has clearly been well planned and researched.

Bach's Toccata and Fugue in F have been split and placed at either end of the disc; as Neu explains, they were probably written independently of each other and so there is justification for this approach. His performance of the Toccata glitters, featuring nimbly executed ornamentation in every register. One wonders whether the use of the pedal reed through the lengthy pedal points is perhaps a little overwhelming in terms of balance. However, this shouldn't overshadow an otherwise very musical performance which demonstrates much poise, especially in some of the more agile pedal passages. The Fugue, a majestic double fugue, is played with a great sense of expansiveness without becoming ponderous, allowing the various polyphonic strands to be easily discerned by the listener.

Neu's renditions of the first and final movements of the trio sonata in C are lively, which befits the music. The tempos chosen work well; they are sprightly without being too fast for the generous acoustic of the building. The central movement is played steadily and with great musical integrity especially with regards to Neu's sensitivity of phrasing. In contrast, he chooses an upbeat tempo for the Magnificat Fugue, enabling the music to gather momentum leading towards the fabulous sounding of the subject in the pedal part at the work's conclusion.

Of the other works played here, the two performed on the historical organ at Laufenburg stand out. Kerll's Toccata is executed with a fine sense of clarity without sounding over-fussy and there is a good sense of forward movement in the passagework. Froberger's Capriccio is played with a suitable lightness of approach to articulation and using sprightly tempos, ensuring that the dance character of the music comes

across to the listener. Undoubtedly both works benefit from performance on the Laufenberg instrument, with Neu exploiting the delicate and varied resources available to him. The change from one instrument to another and back again mid-disc feels slightly unusual when one listens to the recording as a continuous programme, though this should not be counted as a particular drawback. This is a fascinating, well-executed release that is recommended to anyone with an interest in music of this period.

**Organ 02/2013 (Axel Wilberg - 2013.02.01)**

**organ** Journal für die Orgel

Neu spielt mit sicherem Zugriff, klarer Artikulation und festem Tempo. Stilsicherheit und technische Souveränität seines Spiels stehen außer Frage.

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**Organists' Review March 2012 (Nicholas Johnson - 2012.03.01)**



This SACD release from Audite forms the second volume of a collection focusing on composers, mostly documented by C.P.E. Bach, crowned with repertoire from Bach's own output. Detailed programme notes give a background to all composers, and the research is precise. Tuning and temperaments have been taken into account, for the earlier works of Froberger and Kerll performed at the choir organ built by Blasius Bernauer in 1776.

Much of the music is recorded at 2005 Metzler organ in Stuttgart – Obertürkheim. This splendid organ is first heard in organo pleno for Bach's Toccata in F, BWV 540. A compelling performance, although slightly lacking in forward movement.

Organist Martin Neu shows affinity with the style and his articulations are very convincing. The tempo choices in the more rapid toccatas of Muffat and Pachelbel are particularly fine together with stylish registrations (they can be found on line!) Neu always avoids the tendency to rush the toccatas. He really comes alive in the Trio Sonata no. 5 in C major, BWV 529, this being my favourite of his performances.

A pleasing touch is the addition of tenor Wilfried Rombach, whose shapely performance of the plainsong Magnificat verses sets Pachelbel's Magnificat in context of its performance at the Nuremburg Church of St Sebald. Pachelbel's final organ interpolation is lost and the addition of Bach's own Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV 733, as the Gloria Patri is master stroke of programming.

Bach's Fugue in F major, BWV 540, forms a dramatic conclusion to this most enjoyable recording, so thoughtfully conceived and executed. A few unsteady moments, but I thoroughly recommend this CD.

Reutlinger Generalanzeiger 16.12.2011 (akr - 2011.12.16)

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General-Anzeiger

Orgelmusik der Barockzeit

*Annäherung an eine Musik-Epoche*

Orgelmusik der Barockzeit

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