

THE ARTIST

**Alexander Weimann**

PERFORMS ON THE  
KENNETH JONES TRACKER ORGAN  
AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

TUESDAY AUGUST 6 AT 1:00 PM | CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

**BACH'S CLAVIER ÜBUNG III  
THE GERMAN ORGAN MASS**

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750):  
*from*  
**Clavier Übung III**

**Prelude**

Præludium BWV 552/1  
(pro Organo pleno)

**Kyrie**

Kyrie! Gott Vater in Ewigkeit BWV 669  
(Canto fermo in Soprano à 2 Clav. et Ped.)

Christe, aller Welt Trost BWV 670  
(Canto fermo in Tenore à 2 Clav. et Ped.)

Kyrie! Gott heiliger Geist BWV 671  
(à 5, Canto fermo in Basso Cum Organo pleno)

**Gloria**

Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr' BWV 676  
(à 3, Canto fermo in Alto)

**Credo**

Wir glauben all' an einen Gott BWV 680  
(in Organo pleno con Pedale)

**Agnus Dei**

Improvisation on "Dona nobis pacem"

**Postlude**

Fuga BWV 552/2  
(à 5, con pedale, pro Organo pleno)

Pre-concert chat with  
host Matthew White at 12:15:

**Alexander Weimann**



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# PROGRAMME NOTES

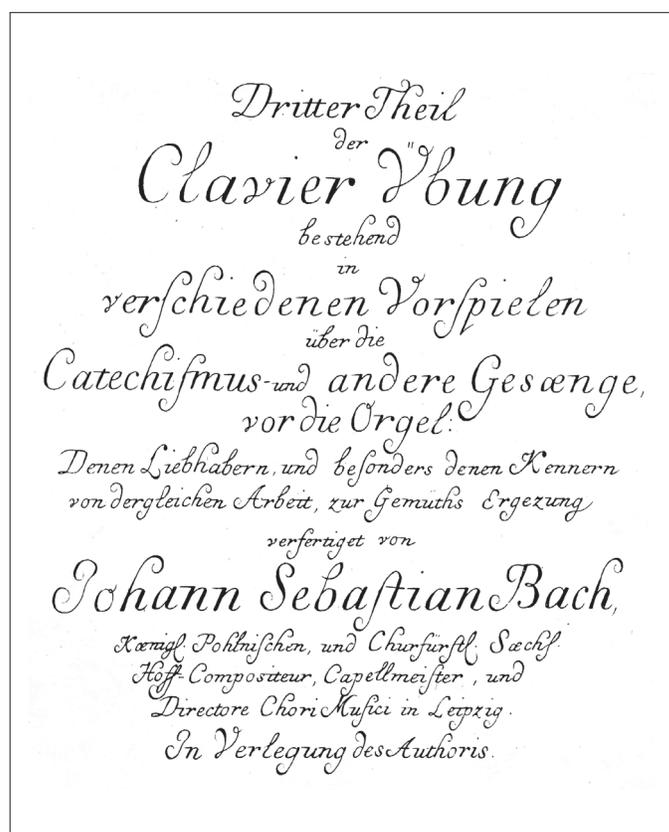
BY CHRISTINA HUTTEN

Johann Sebastian Bach gave the name “Clavier Übung” (Keyboard Practice) to the volumes of his most extensive publication venture. Clavier Übung I (1731) contains six harpsichord partitas, Clavier Übung II (1735) the Italian Concerto and French Overture for harpsichord, Clavier Übung IV (1741) the Goldberg Variations. Clavier Übung III (1739), the focus of today’s concert, is devoted to typical central-German organ repertoire. It has sometimes been called “Bach’s Organ Mass”, linking it to a tradition of liturgical publications by master organists like Girolamo Frescobaldi and Nicholas de Grigny, whose music Bach had collected for his personal library. Bach explained something about this collection’s function on its title page:

Third Part of the Keyboard Practice, consisting of various preludes on the Catechism and other hymns for the organ. Prepared for music-lovers and particularly for connoisseurs of such work, for the recreation of the spirit, by Johann Sebastian Bach, Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon Court Composer, Capellmeister and director of the chorus musicus, Leipzig. Published by the Author.

Clavier Übung III was indeed met with excitement by certain colleagues; Johann Elias Bach, J.S. Bach’s pupil and private secretary, anticipated its release, exclaiming, “It happens that my honoured Cousin will bring out some clavier pieces that are mostly for organists and exceedingly well composed, and they will doubtless be ready for the coming Easter [Book] Fair and make some 80 folios [of printed music]!” Johann Christoph Mizler, esteemed physician, historian, mathematician, and composer, declared in his review of the publication that “the author has here given proof that in this field of composition, he is more skilled and more successful than many others. No one will surpass him in it, and few will be able to imitate him.” Not only would few people have had the ability to imitate the compositional prowess demonstrated in Clavier Übung III, but few organists other than Bach’s own students would have possessed the technical ability to play much of the music in it. These are not the sort of keyboard exercises that might assist an amateur player unable to improvise his own chorale preludes or develop a young student’s technique. Why might Bach have gone to the trouble and personal expense of making this music available in print, though the market for it must have been small?

One incentive may have been the announcement and celebration of Bach’s appointment as Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon Court Composer in 1736. In acknowledgement of the honour, he had performed an organ recital on the



brand-new organ of the Frauenkirche in Dresden. Perhaps it included some of the music in the Clavier Übung III. Bach was highly renowned as an organist and especially as an improviser; another organ recital given in Dresden in 1731 had drawn from reviewer Johann Gottlob Kittel a lavish poem of praise, playing on the meaning of Bach’s name – brook.

A pleasant brook may well the ear’s delight inspire,  
As through the woods, between high cliffs, it finds its way;  
But surely one must rank that other Bach far higher,  
Who with his hurrying hand so wondrous sure doth play.  
’Tis said, when Orpheus did his lyre strings awake,  
All creatures in the forest answered to the sound;  
But sure, ’twere better that such praise of Bach we spake,  
Since he, when’er he plays, doth each and all astound.

The other motivation must have been this “recreation of spirit”, which Bach mentioned on the title page. But, who were the connoisseurs to whom Bach offered recreation and how would they have enjoyed the collection? We have no way of tracing the individuals who purchased a copy of Clavier Übung III, but the word “connoisseur” emphasizes knowledge and careful attention. Much about the collection

# ALEXANDER WEIMANN

ORGAN



calls to mind a parallel with another source of recreation in Bach's day – the *Wunderkammer* or cabinet of curiosities, a personal museum of rare and precious objects such as biological and mineral specimens and works of art and craftsmanship. Such collections aimed to astonish the viewer, create a sense of exaltation, spark reflection about the complexity of the natural world, or the culture and history that produced the artefacts. They were often a source of spiritual relief and refreshment.

The *Wunderkammer* of the Clavier Übung III is full of marvels: the *stile antico*, Palestrina-style polyphony of the Kyrie setting, the up-to-date, elegant, *galant* style of the Allein Gott trio... The ancient tune of *Wir glauben all' in einen Gott* had been used to sing the Credo long before the Reformation. Bach choose to use just its beginning as the contrapuntal subject of his chorale setting. It comes again and again and again, emphasizing "we believe..." and focusing attention on the centuries of Christian tradition. The final Prelude and Fugue remain the subject of curiosity today. Their three parts have been compared to the three Persons of the Trinity. Scholars have recognized the Golden Mean in their structure and continue to speculate about many possible examples of numerical symbolism hidden within them. Long after his death, these treasures of Bach's artistry still fascinate, inspire, and provide rich spiritual recreation. ■

Alexander Weimann is one of the most sought-after ensemble directors, soloists, and chamber music partners of his generation. After traveling the world with ensembles like Tragicomedia, and as frequent guest with Cantus Cölln, the Freiburger Barockorchester, Gesualdo Consort and Tafelmusik, he now focuses on his activities as conductor of the Pacific Baroque Orchestra in Vancouver, music director of the Seattle Baroque Orchestra and regular guest conductor of ensembles including the Victoria Symphony, Symphony Nova Scotia, Arion Baroque Orchestra in Montreal and the Portland Baroque Orchestra.

Weimann was born in 1965 in Munich, where he studied the organ, church music, musicology (with a summa con laude thesis on Bach's secco recitatives), theatre, mediæval Latin, and jazz piano, supported by a variety of federal scholarships. From 1990 to 1995, Weimann taught music theory, improvisation, and Jazz at the Munich Musikhochschule. Since 1998, he has been giving master classes in harpsichord and historical performance practice at institutions such as Lunds University in Malmö and the Bremen Musikhochschule, and at North American universities such as The University of California in Berkeley, Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, McGill University, Université de Montréal, and Mount Allison in New Brunswick. Since 2007, he has conducted several acclaimed opera productions at the Amherst Early Music Festival. He now teaches at the University of British Columbia and directs the Baroque Orchestra Mentorship Programme there.

A multiple Juno and Grammy nominee, Weimann can be heard on some 100 CDs. Recent highlights include an Opus and Juno award winning CD of Handel oratorio arias with soprano Karina Gauvin, a recording of Bach's St. John's Passion with Les Voix Baroques/Arion Baroque Orchestra, and a Juno nominated recording of Handel's Orlando with the Pacific Baroque Orchestra that was also awarded a Gramophone Editor's Choice award. . ■

A decorative graphic for White Rock Concerts. It features a central dark banner with the text "WHITE ROCK CONCERTS" in white serif font. The banner is surrounded by ornate, symmetrical floral and scrollwork patterns in a light grey color. Below the banner, the text reads: "White Rock Concerts congratulates Early Music Vancouver on its 50th Anniversary and vital contribution to the revival of early music and historically informed performance. Now in our 63rd season, White Rock Concerts Society offers a member-only series of seven concerts. More information can be found at: [www.whiterockconcerts.com](http://www.whiterockconcerts.com)" The bottom of the graphic is also decorated with floral patterns.

# THE KENNETH JONES TRACKER ORGAN AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

The organ was carefully designed and custom built by Kenneth Jones and Associates in 2003, in their workshop in the tiny town of Bray, Ireland, 40 kilometres south of Dublin. The central case, pedal towers and a beautiful console were constructed of European oak, and many of the wooden trackers and other moving parts came from factories in Germany. 1,700 of the 2,500 pipes were salvaged from the previous Cathedral Organ, (Casavant Frères, built in 1949), and live on in the present instrument.

## Great Organ

9 Principal 16' (1-5 from No.4)  
10 Octave 8'  
11 Harmonic flute 8'  
12 Gamba 8'  
13 Octave 4'  
14 Mixture IV (12,15,19,22)  
15 Cymbal II (26,29)  
16 Trumpet 8' (en chamade)  
17 Clarinet 8'  
Cimbelstern  
Swell-Great  
Positive-Great

## Swell Organ

18 Violin diapason 8'  
19 Viola da gamba 8'  
20 Stopped diapason 8'  
21 Voix celeste 8' (T.C.)  
22 Principal 4'  
23 Nason flute 4'  
24 Fifteenth 2'  
25 Mixture IV (15,19,22,26)  
26 Contra trumpet 16'  
27 Cornopean 8'  
28 Oboe 8'  
Tremulant

## Positive Organ

29 Principal 8'  
30 Rohr flute 8'  
31 Salicional 8'  
32 Octave 4'  
33 Spitzflute 4'  
34 Nazard 2 2/3'  
35 Super octave 2'  
36 Nachthorn 2'  
37 Tierce 1 3/5'  
38 Mixture IV (19,22,26,29)  
39 Trumpet 8'  
Tremulant  
Swell-Positive

## Pedal Organ

1 Major bass 32' (from No.3)  
2 Subbass 32' (from No.5)  
3 Open wood 16'  
4 Open diapason 16' (metal)  
5 Subbass 16'  
6 Octave 8' (from No.4)  
7 Bass flute 8' (from No.5)  
8 Trombone 16'  
9 Trombone 32'  
Swell-Pedal  
Great-Pedal  
Positive-Pedal

## Manuals and Pistons

Compass of manuals: CC-a 58 notes  
(mechanical action)  
Compass of pedals : CCC-g 32 notes  
(electro-pneumatic action)  
Electric drawstop action

## Thumb pistons

8 divisional pistons to Swell  
8 divisional pistons to Great  
8 divisional pistons to Positive  
8 general pistons (duplexed)  
Sw-Gt, Sw-Pos, Pos-Gt,  
SwPed, Gt-Ped, Pos-Ped

Set, General cancel, reverse\*, advance\*  
(duplexed)

## Toe pistons

8 divisional pistons to Pedal  
8 general pistons  
Sw-Gt, Gt-Ped  
Reverse\*, advance\*

\*allows sequential stepping  
through General memories (1-99)

The capture system features  
32 divisional memory levels,  
99 general memory levels  
and floppy disk storage.

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## Interested in joining the EMV Board?

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Interested in rolling up your sleeves to help one of the most active and acclaimed musical organizations in our region? The EMV board of directors is a varied and collegial group of individuals dedicated to providing support and leadership to our professional artistic and management team.

We are always interested in hearing from potential new directors and welcome energetic, positive people with broad community connections, business experience, and skills relevant to non-profit governance, including fundraising, leadership, and strategic planning. Directors serve a two-year term, meeting once a month from September to June at Hodson Manor (West 7th Ave and Birch) in Vancouver.

If you have some of this experience and if you would relish a leadership role in building something truly great in our community, please get in touch with us by emailing us your resume and a short note outlining what you feel you can contribute and why taking up the challenge of helping shape EMV interests you.

**We look forward to hearing from you! All enquiries can be emailed to [staff@earlymusic.bc.ca](mailto:staff@earlymusic.bc.ca)**

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