

Preface

Early historical documents show that organ music has been composed in England since approximately 950 AD. At the time, a first organ having 400 pipes is said to have created a furor in Winchester.

Organ music was an essential part of England's creative musical forms and had established itself from the fourteenth century in churches, abbeys and the castles and mansions of the nobility. English organ music developed in complete autonomy from music on the Continent until the mid-nineteenth century. Until that time, even large English organs had no separate pedal works or only pedal works which were attached. It was only around 1900 that some English organ builders integrated only a few registers and many couplers. A triggering effect for this development was provided by the interest of those in the British Isles for organ music in mainland Europe, in particular the organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

It is for this reason that the works in this edition are only for manualiter performance. Following the tradition found in England, the pieces here can be performed on the organ or harpsichord.

Unlike the widely known suites composed for harpsichord, the two to four movement voluntary with varying tempo markings is the most common form of English organ music.

The centuries-old love of singing still found in Britain and the influence of the early English dance forms on English organ music should provide a lively impetus to the way the works are performed in terms of articulation and agogic rhythm.

The following disposition of the Bernhard-Smith organ from 1695 is meant to provide important suggestions for registration. This was the disposition at the time in London's St. Paul's Cathedral and often served as inspiration to George Frideric Handel:

Disposition:

<i>Great Organ</i>		<i>Choir Organ</i>		<i>Echo Organ</i>	
Open Diapason	8'	Stopped Diapason	8'	Diapason	8'
Stopped Diapason	8'	Quintadena	8'	Principal	4'
Principal	4'	Principal	4'	Nason Flute	4'
Hohlflute	4'	Great Twelfth	2 2/3'	Fifteenth	2'
Great Twelfth	2 2/3'	Fifteenth	2'	Cornet	
Fifteenth	2'	Cimball		Trumpet	8'
Small Twelfth	1 1/3'	Vox humana	8'		
Sesquialtera		Cromona	8'		
Mixture					
Cornett					
Trumpet	8'				

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