

# Charlottenburg Schnitger: 1706—1931—2011

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IN 2003 CORNELL UNIVERSITY COMMISSIONED a mid-sized baroque-style organ—eventually dedicated in the spring of 2011—from the Gothenburg Organ Art Center. The instrument was to be inspired by two famous organs of the north German master of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Arp Schnitger. The specification would be based on Schnitger's 1706 Charlottenburg chapel organ, and the case on his 1701 instrument at Clausthal-Zellerfeld, though made smaller on account of the architectural setting of the Cornell chapel and the fewer number of pipes the new instrument was to contain. Those charged with the conception of the project, myself included, were driven partly by the sensible desire not to be bound in every detail—themselves often illusory—to original historical antecedents.<sup>1</sup> In drawing somewhat freely on two outstanding examples of Schnitger's work, we spoke of a “fantasy reconstruction.” The phrase was meant to capture the notion that we had embarked on historically-informed study of the past that would help create something of the present that would continue to appeal far into the future. In varying proportions, that recipe is probably what motivates all people foolhardy enough to embark on organ construction projects, endeavors that are costly in time and money and often set for themselves extraordinarily high hopes.

In our confrontation with the famous Charlottenburg organ we hoped to provide the logistical and scholarly framework within which master-builder Munetaka Yokota could pursue his plan—and ours—of reanimating the sound and feel of that instrument. Having been both hardened and enlightened by the authenticity debates of the 1980s and '90s we were under no illusion that exact

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<sup>1</sup> My partners in the project were David Yearsley and, at GOArt, Munetaka Yokota and Paul Peeters (as well as Joel Speerstra, Johann Norrback and many others). The organ was built by the Gothenburg team, in collaboration with Richard Parsons and members of Parsons Pipe Organ Builders, and, in Ithaca with cabinet-maker Christopher Lowe. This essay owes much to David Yearsley with whom I conceived its earlier version, given at the March 2011 conference to inaugurate the organ.

reconstruction was possible—nor desirable.<sup>2</sup> What was less well-known to us at the beginning of the project was that both the rediscovery of the Charlottenburg organ in the 1920s and attempts to reconstruct it after World War II had been attended by vigorous debates turning likewise on the tension between historicism and musical progress. Revisiting these heated polemics now, in the aftermath of our more recent engagement with the Charlottenburg organ, can not only help us understand the historical antecedents of the new Cornell instrument, but will also—if we are intellectually honest with ourselves—color the ways in which we use and hear it.

# I

In 1944 the baroque City Palace in the heart of Berlin, the Stadtschloss, was massively damaged by successive waves of allied bombing. Many of its magnificent interior spaces, its lavish decorations, its priceless art works were lost, although its walls were substantially left standing.<sup>3</sup> In one of the building's many basements, a precious artifact had been stowed with the aim of keeping it safe from the air raids. The organ built by Schnitger for the Charlottenburg castle chapel, a few kilometers away, had, a year earlier, been painstakingly dismantled pipe by pipe, carefully packed and stored in what was thought to have been a safer place. But that instrument too—the metal pipes, the wooden wind chests, and even the leather-lined bellows—fell victim to the bombs.

The Stadtschloss had been much less badly damaged than Schloss Charlottenburg, which was left in ruins by the bombings. In 1950, however, instead of building on what was left to restore the palace in Berlin's center, the East German socialist government decided that this remnant of Baroque monarchical power should be blown up to make way for a parade ground and for a new "Palace of the Republic." In West Berlin, by contrast, it was decided that the charred remains of Schloss Charlottenburg should serve as the basis for a

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<sup>2</sup> The classic treatments are Richard Taruskin, "On Letting the Music Speak for Itself," *Journal of Musicology* 1 (1982): 338–49, and his *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Laurence Dreyfus, "Early Music Defended against its Devotees," *Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (1983): 297–322; Peter Kivy, *Authenticities: Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1995); John Butt, *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> See Goerd Peschken, *Das königliche Schloß zu Berlin*, 3 vols. (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1992–98) and Hela Zettler, *Das Berliner Schloss: eine Fotodokumentation der verlorenen Stadtmitte* (Berlin: Argon-Verlag, 1991).

painstaking reconstruction. This attempt to create a facsimile of the original palace—and its organ—quickly became a symbol for the recovery of West Germany's cultural confidence and prestige.

In 1951, the year after the much-deplored raising of the Stadtschloss, Theodor W. Adorno (who had returned two years earlier to Frankfurt after his wartime exile in the United States) wrote his essay “Bach Defended Against his Devotees,” an iconoclastic challenge to the entire project of historical reconstruction. Even as Germany itself (both West and, to a lesser extent, East) underwent massive rebuilding, Adorno, looking at what he saw as the fetishization of a particular kind of historical past, excoriated its parallel in the world of music: the “authentic” performance of the music of J. S. Bach. On the occasion of the ritualistic Bach celebrations of 1950 commemorating the 200th anniversary of the composer's death, Adorno warned against what he saw as a near-inhuman emphasis on historical correctness at the expense of the musical artwork:

Historicism has excited a fanatical interest that no longer concerns even the work itself. At times one can hardly avoid the suspicion that the sole concern of today's Bach devotees is to see that no inauthentic dynamics, modifications of tempo, oversize choirs and orchestras creep in; they seem to wait with potential fury lest any more humane impulse become audible in the rendition.<sup>4</sup>

In their single-minded commitment to the reconstruction of the musical sounds of the past, and especially to J. S. Bach—the aural equivalent of the great baroque architectural monuments, and the composer most closely associated with the organ—his devotees had, according to Adorno, “turned [Bach] into a composer for organ festivals in well-preserved Baroque towns, into ideology.”<sup>5</sup>

That Adorno's critique of musical reconstructions, with their stated goal of “authenticity” or worse, “objectivity,” might have been inflected by the tense realities of the political reconstruction taking place in early 1950s West Germany has been insightfully suggested by Mark Berry: “Heritage,” Berry writes, “was compartmentalized, a jealously guarded museum, replete with visitor center, rather than a lumber room from which one might take and adapt what one

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<sup>4</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Bach Defended against his Devotees,” *Prisms*, trans. Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber (London: Neville Spearman, 1967), 133–46 (at 142–43). The essay was originally published as “Bach gegen seine Liebhaber verteidigt,” in *Prismen: Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft* (Berlin, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1955). For a useful reflection on Adorno's position with respect to “authenticity,” see Max Paddison, “Authenticity and Failure in Adorno's Aesthetics of Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Adorno*, ed. Paddison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 198–221.

<sup>5</sup> Adorno, “Bach Defended,” 136.

needed, when one needed. And enforcement would be necessary...”<sup>6</sup> In fact, Adorno had much earlier staked out a position with regard not only to the idea of reconstruction, but also to the specific context of the organ. His little-known 1934 essay “The Historic Organ” foreshadowed the later attack on Bach’s devotees with a sharp critique of the call among organists and organbuilders for a return to historic organs—instruments they believed would offer unique access to the true Bach. Partly, Adorno objected to the “shrill and rasping” sounds of the old instruments and what he saw as their expressive limitations, but much more importantly, the problem had to do with the consignment of Bach and his music to the past: “It appears to me,” he wrote, that “the claims *within* the Bach oeuvre have decided against Organ-Reconstruction. Bach is too present to be conjured up, like the dead, in the name of the past.”<sup>7</sup>

Organs engage in a negotiation between past and present more vexed than that of any other musical instrument. The greatest organs are multi-media artworks and lasting cultural monuments: expensive to build and treasured for generations, ancient but still-functioning instruments while “historical” nevertheless take part in, and are continually shaped by, contemporary life in concrete ways. The organ quickly becomes a palimpsest of changing styles and tastes, embodying the often fraught relationship between technology and tradition, and continually questioning what it means for artworks to serve a function. An organ is a vital record both of the historical moment at which it was built, and also, uniquely, of the dynamic interrelation of present and past across the centuries since its construction.<sup>8</sup>

Few instruments so well embody the organ’s tendency to put into play the

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<sup>6</sup> See Mark Berry, “Romantic Modernism: Bach, Furtwängler, and Adorno,” *New German Critique* 104 (Spring/Summer 2008): 71–102 (at 85). Berry quotes the young avant-garde composer Hans Werner Henze, who left West Germany to escape what he described as “a gradual return to the recent past, under which its appalling conditions once again became conceivable.” In the new Cold War, communists “who had been imprisoned by the Nazis, were locked up again...” Hans Werner Henze, “German Music in the 1940s and 1950s,” in *Music and Politics: Collected Writings, 1953–1981*, trans. Peter Labanyi (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 50; cited in Berry, “Romantic Modernism,” 83.

<sup>7</sup> “Aber mir scheint: die Forderungen *im* Bachischen Werk haben gegen die Orgel-Rekonstruktion entschieden. Bach ist zu gegenwärtig, als daß er gleich den Abgeschiedenen mit dem Namen der Vergangenheit sich beschwören ließe.” Adorno, “Die alte Orgel” (1934), in *Musikalische Schriften* 5, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Klaus Schultz (*Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 18), (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), 183–84 (at 184). My emphasis.

<sup>8</sup> This is a central theme in John Watson’s book (reviewed in this issue of *Keyboard Perspectives*), *Artifacts in Use: The Paradox of Restoration and the Conservation of Organs* (Richmond, VA: OHS Press, 2011).

competing claims of past and present, as the Charlottenburg Palace organ. Something of a hybrid at its birth, its seventeenth-century north German inheritance admitted of a certain galant and fashionable turn—enough so, that, whether by neglect or design, it remained remarkably unchanged throughout the eighteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century it was still more-or-less in its original form, and by the early decades of the twentieth this “historic” organ’s lack of accreted layers gave it a cachet—a paradoxical newness—that played well with the ideologies of not only the *Orgelbewegung* (the organ reform movement), but also, eventually, with darker impulses in German culture in the late 1930s. In the 1960s, in the wake of its destruction, the Charlottenburg organ found itself again the focus of concentrated attention, this time as the object of a painstaking historical reconstruction—for organ-builders a radically new concept. Most recently, a new incarnation has come into being in Ithaca, New York. Even after its destruction, the Charlottenburg organ is one whose history has been shaped by a continual interplay between old and new, historicist and progressive impulses shaping its rediscovery, reception, and the problematic project of reconstruction.

## II

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the first Prussian king, Frederick I, began an ambitious project to rebuild the old residence at Charlottenburg, several miles westward of the still-small city of Berlin. With the help of his architect, Johann Friedrich Eosander Goethe, he conjured a palace that emulated Versailles in magnificence, with rooms of great luxury and finery as well as a gorgeously decorated chapel. Strangely, however, though placed alongside the porcelain chamber and the famed Amber room, the chapel lacked its most lavish decoration: an organ. Eosander had designed the interior with an elegant second-storey colonnade which could not easily accommodate an instrument, but late in the building process, in the early spring of 1706, a commission went out to the master organ builder in distant Hamburg, Arp Schnitger, to furnish the chapel with an organ.<sup>9</sup> Notably, neither of the court organ builders (Christian Werner and Johann Nette) was approached, but instead, as a report on the

<sup>9</sup> The earliest detailed scholarly report on the organ, on which much of my account is based, is Gustav Fock, “Aus den Akten der Schnitgerorgel zu Charlottenburg,” *Musik und Kirche* 3/6 (1931): 288–91. A full account of Schnitger’s involvement with this instrument is to be found in Fock, *Arp Schnitger und seine Schule* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1974), 200–202; this is summarized, and the subsequent history of the instrument described in Berthold Schwarz and Uwe Pape, *500 Jahre Orgeln in Berliner Evangelischen Kirchen*, 2. vols. (Berlin: Pape Verlag, 1991) 1:70–79.

organ in the *Theatrum Europaeum* ten years later boasted, “the most highly skilled organ builder in Germany was employed; as a result this instrument has a sound so lovely that it is admired by everyone.”<sup>10</sup>

Arp Schnitger was renowned for designing organs for awkward spaces—and for his efficiency. Work began in his shop almost instantly, and must have proceeded rapidly; in the months of October and November 1706 Schnitger himself was in Berlin, overseeing the installation and presumably voicing the organ. Unusually, the king himself took a direct interest in the project: he wrote to his sister, the Electress Sophie of Hannover, that he had hired a “very good organ builder” to make the instrument in his new chapel.<sup>11</sup> His wife, Queen Charlotte, was also involved, and at her personal request the chapel was not to be dedicated before the organ was finished. Since the crown prince Friedrich Wilhelm was to be married in the chapel in December, time was short. Nevertheless, the organ was completed for the wedding, and shortly thereafter the instrument itself was officially dedicated. Two years later in 1708 the King honored the Hamburg-based builder with the title “Royal Prussian Organbuilder.”

Schnitger’s organ was ingenious, a masterpiece for a royal chapel, yet it was also enigmatic. The instrument looked to the great north German seventeenth-century tradition epitomized by organs such as the massive opus he had made for the Jacobikirche in Hamburg between 1689 and 1693 and, like those organs, it possessed a relatively large pedal division which included a *Cornet 2'* as well as powerful principle choirs on each of its two manuals. But it combined the North German style with what might be thought of as a new eighteenth-century chamber aesthetic. The Charlottenburg instrument was atypical for Schnitger in a number of respects: it was at chamber pitch ( $a^1=415$ ) rather than the much higher *Chorton* of his large Hanseatic instruments ( $a^1=467$ ), and it had several wooden chamber stops, including the HW *floite dues 8'*, RP *floite dues 4'*, and the HW *viol de gamb 4'*, that were rare or unprecedented in Schnitger’s other organs, and that would become highly sought-after in the middle decades of the century (for the organ’s specification, see Table 1).<sup>12</sup> In accordance with

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<sup>10</sup> “... zu dem Orgel-Bau ward der geschicklichste Orgelbauer in Teutschland verschrieben; dahero dieselbe von so angenehmen Thon ist / daß sie von jeder man bewundert wird.” *Theatrum Europaeum*, XVI /2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1717): 251. Cited in Pape, *500 Jahre Orgeln*, 1:73.

<sup>11</sup> “...aber hier habe Ich einen guhten orgel bauer, welcher die meinige in der capel gemacht. Demselben wil wol überschicken wan es verlanget wird und ist sehr resenabel.” Berner, *Aus dem Briefwechsel König Friedrichs I u. seiner Familie*, 1901, cited in Fock, “Aus den Akten,” 289.

<sup>12</sup> On the new taste for chamber stops in mid-century organs, especially in central Germany, see George Stauffer, “Bach’s Late Works and the Central German Organ,” *Keyboard Perspectives* 3

Hauptwerk	Rückpositiv	Pedal
Principal 8'	Principal 8'	Subbaß 16'
Gedact 8'	Gedact Liebl. 8'	Octav 8'
Floite dues 8'	Octav 4'	Octav 4'
Octav 4'	Floite dues 4'	Nachthorn 2'
Viol de gamb 4'	Octav 2'	Mixtur VI
Nassat 3'	Waltflöit 2'	Posaunen 16'
SuperOctav 2'	Sesquialt II	Trommet 8'
Mixtur V-VI	Scharf III	Cornet 2'
Hoboy 8'		
Vox humana 8'		
Tremulant		
3 Sperrventile		
Compass: Manuals C, D, E-c <sup>3</sup> , Pedals C, D, E — d <sup>1</sup>		
Pitch: a <sup>1</sup> = 415		

**Table 1** Specification of the Arp Schnitger organ in Schloß Charlottenburg (1706)

this chamber ideal, the organ's two main pedal stops, Subbass 16' and Oktav 8' were made of wood, and therefore gentler than those of metal. One could argue that, freed from significant liturgical obligation in a Calvinist chapel without elaborate religious music, Schnitger could pursue a tonal design orientated more towards a musical style that would soon be called galant. The result was an instrument that combined seventeenth-century North German ideals, with those that would dominate the mid-eighteenth-century central German taste in organ sound and design. (Readers can hear the organ, in chamber repertoire with that most demanding of musical companions, the baroque flute, in performance by David Yearsley and Steven Zohn on the accompanying CD.)

Because Eosander had not envisioned an organ in his original plans, the instrument for Charlottenburg had to be fitted into a cramped balcony with the main part of the organ almost out of sight. To solve the architectural difficulties presented him, Schnitger placed the Rückpositiv, as exuberantly decorated as the flamboyant décor of the chapel itself, on the rail of that balcony so that it alone spoke directly into the high, square space. (See Figure 7 in Kerala Snyder's essay in this volume, p. 124.) But the stylistic uncertainties of the organ ap-

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(2010), 131–46.

peared so radical to some later commentators as to lead to suspicions either that the instrument—which bore no obvious signature of its maker—was not, in fact, by Schnitger at all, or that Schnitger had only become involved late in the project. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars thought that it might have been the work of the Brandenburg builder Johann Wilhelm Grüneberg or the Berlin organ-maker (and Schnitger student) Johann Michael Röder; later commentators have suggested that it might have been built independently by Schnitger's foreman, Lambert Daniel Kastens—a rare surviving example of Kastens's work—and that the documentary evidence that places Schnitger in the Charlottenburg chapel at least two months before the organ's inauguration, testifies only to his late involvement in the project.<sup>13</sup>

This beautiful organ was played, and celebrated, in the following decades. In exactly the form that it had been built and voiced it would have been heard in the chapel by the young Frederick (later the “Great”), grandson of Frederick I, who could have compared its wooden flutes with his own favorite instrument, the transverse flute. The organ was surely also an inspiration for the young princess Anna Amalia, his sister, who would eagerly learn to play the instrument herself, eventually commissioning several organs of her own in the middle part of the century and building an impressive music library; her library would contain a collection of organ music that looked back to the great “historical” composers of the seventeenth century, Dieterich Buxtehude and Nikolaus Bruhns who were so closely associated with the organs of Schnitger, even as it incorporated the newest works by the composers in her own circle, including C. P. E. Bach.<sup>14</sup> Remarkably, and perhaps a testament to the modernity of the organ when it was built, there was no call for any fashionable updates to its tonal specification even late into the eighteenth century.

There would have been ample opportunity for such adjustments. In 1760, in the middle of the Seven Years War, the palace was ransacked. “In the palace chapel the organ is ruined...,” an eye-witness lamented. “Many pipes, especially those made of tin, have been taken away and many others of the same are lying on the floor, trampled.”<sup>15</sup> King Frederick II pushed for a timely restoration

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<sup>13</sup> See Mads Kjørsgaard and Ole Olesen, “Et genopstået Kastens-orgel,” *Orglet* 2 (1979): 5–14.

<sup>14</sup> For more on Anna Amalia's pursuits as organist, and on her library, see Kerala Snyder's essay in this volume. See also Darrell Berg, “C. P. E. Bach's Organ Sonatas: A Musical Offering for Princess Amalia?” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51 (1998): 477–519.

<sup>15</sup> “Aus der Orgel sind viele Pfeifen weggenommen, so von Zinn, auch mehrere derselben so hier noch liegen, sind zertreten.” From the castle archives, “*Spezifikation* des Schadens, welcher auf dem königlichen Schlosse zu Charlottenburg durch die am 9ten Oktober 1760 Morgens



of the instrument so that he could celebrate the end of the war in 1763 with a performance of Graun's *Te Deum* in the chapel: there is no record of who undertook the work, and no changes appear to have been made to the organ beyond returning it to its original state.<sup>16</sup> The organ continued to be used over the next century but still without any significant alterations to its tonal scheme or construction, unlike those interventions that completely changed most of the best organs in Berlin's major churches. The organ was cleaned and repaired in 1868 by Karl August Buchholz, who proposed a complete, modernizing, rebuild of the instrument. The proposal was not acted upon, and the only significant change was made in 1888, in time for another royal wedding: the two manual reeds (Vox Humana 8' and Hoboi 8')—distinctive and characteristic of Schnitger's mastery of reed color—were taken out, and replaced by a Gamba 8' and Aeoline 8' in keeping with prevailing taste.<sup>17</sup> After the nuptials of May 24, 1888, the Charlottenburg chapel fell into disuse and the organ entered a long period of dormancy, more or less forgotten in its private chamber.

### III

All the more exciting then, was the rediscovery of the Charlottenburg Schnitger in the late 1920s by the musicologist Bodo Ebhardt (whose gothic-sounding name appropriately evokes a knight errant rescuing a slumbering princess) and the organist Wolfgang Auler. The organ was restored on their initiative by the Lübeck-based builder Karl Kemper and was first presented to the public in a recital given by Auler in September, 1931. The thrill of bringing this long-lost Schnitger organ back to life is palpable in the many articles on it that appeared in 1931 at the height of the *Orgelbewegung*—the Organ Reform Movement that sought to purify German organ-building of its Romantic decadence (and was an ideological project that was certainly in Adorno's mind when he wrote on the instrument in 1934, and again in his much better-known Bach essay of 1950). With so many historic organs having been discarded and transformed in

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um 9 Uhr feindliche invasion derer Oesterrichisch Esterhazischen Hussaren, Ulanen und Cosacken verursacht worden." Cited by Karl Schuke in an unpublished essay, "Die Orgel in der Eosanderkapelle des Charlottenburger Schlosses." See also Pape, *500 Jahre Orgeln*, 75. The tin front pipes had probably been taken out to be melted down for their valuable metal.

<sup>16</sup> Fock, "Aus den Akten," 290.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. It was a change similar to this that Alexander Schuke assumed had been made to the completely original Amalien-Orgel (1755), leading him in 1960 to replace the original HW Flauto dolce 8' with a new Trompete 8', the OW original Salicional 8' with a Vox humana 8', and the Pedal Baßflöte 8' with a new Trompete 8'.

the capital city of the German nation, the long-silent organ in the Charlottenburg chapel, known at first only to a few specialists, would become an object of fascination and pride. The composer and ethnomusicologist Walter Kaufmann (who later emigrated to the United States where he taught at Indiana University) explained to readers of *Musik und Kirche*:

Only one single organ in Berlin has survived ...for over 200 years in an almost completely unaltered state, an organ practically forgotten until today; now, however, from where we stand in the time of the *Orgelbewegung*, of organ reform, and of new concern for the state of the church organ, [we recognize and celebrate] an organ of the greatest appeal for the historian, for the organbuilder and the organist: the Charlottenburg palace organ!<sup>18</sup>

The point of Kaufmann's essay was not only to generate interest in the instrument and to help raise money towards its restoration, but also to announce that, despite long doubts as to the identity of the builder, this was indeed an organ by the famous Arp Schnitger. This important discovery doubled the value of the organ as a historical object and nationalist standard-bearer. As Kaufmann intoned, "It is worth recognizing that with the preservation of this organ-monument a noble treasure of the German past lives on, to the honor of a great German artist, to the honor of sacred music, to the honor of German art."<sup>19</sup> While Kaufmann took the credit for identifying Schnitger as the builder, his brief account was expanded by the Schnitger expert Gustav Fock in the same journal later that year, in an article in which Fock made it clear that it was he who had uncovered the relevant documents, and that he had done so in 1928.<sup>20</sup> Fock provided extensive evidence from the royal archives to support his claim. The importance of Schnitger's authorship was not to be underestimated among his devotees: this North German master was now placed by organ-enthusiasts

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<sup>18</sup> "Nur eine einzige Orgel hat sich in Berlin, ... seit über 200 Jahren in ihrem Stimmenbestande fast unverändert erhalten, eine Orgel, fast vergessen bis in unsere Tage; nun aber, wo wir in Zeiten der Orgelbewegung, Orgelreform und neuer Besinnung über das Wesen der Kirchenorgel stehen, für den Historiker, den Orgelbauer und den Organisten von höchstem Reiz: die Charlottenburger Schloßorgel!" Walter Kaufmann, "Die Arp Schnitger-Orgel in der Charlottenburg Schlosskapelle," *Musik und Kirche* 3 (1931): 138–40 (at 138).

<sup>19</sup> "Es gilt die Erkenntnis, daß mit der Erhaltung dieses Orgeldenkmals ein edelster Schatz deutscher Vergangenheit weiterlebt, zur Ehre eines großen deutschen Künstlers, zu Ehren der Musica sacra, zu Ehren der deutschen Kunst." Ibid., 140. For more on the organ as an icon of German national identity, see David Yearsley, *Bach's Feet: The Organ Pedals in European Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Fock, "Aus den Akten."

beside Albrecht Dürer and Heinrich Schütz as one of the great German artists of the past.

The old, however, was to have a crucial impact on the new. In an article from that same year, 1931, entitled “Organ Sound and the Present,” Fritz Heitmann, internationally renowned performer and professor at the Berlin Academy for Church music, who would be appointed organist at the Berlin Cathedral in the following year, announced the recent revival of interest in the organ:

For some years now, the sphere of the organ has come to life. Organ conferences and organ-building conventions in various German cities bear witness to the interest that the organ inspires today. If the organ sometimes played the humble, quasi pitiful role of a Cinderella among musical instruments, the public attention she is increasingly attracting today will soon return her to her position as the Queen of Instruments. Even in the most distant circles, the organ begins to be seen and heard “correctly,” its “true” character begins to be understood.<sup>21</sup>

The Charlottenburg Schnitger was important to winning again this ‘true’ identity. Since the Freiburg conference of 1926, the seminal gathering of organ performers, scholars and builders at which the reconstructed ‘Praetorius organ’ built by Wilibald Gurlitt and Oskar Walcker in 1921 had featured so centrally, the organ had found a new role not only as the object of academic study, but also as a mediator between the achievements of the German past and the cultural dynamism of the present.<sup>22</sup> The Freiburg conference, and its 1927 successor in Freiberg, had given vital impetus to the organ reform movement, with Arp Schnitger—along with the central German master of the next generation, Gottfried Silbermann—quickly emerging as touchstones for builders interested in either restoring and recreating old organs, or in adapting the best principles of

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<sup>21</sup> “Seit einer Reihe von Jahren ist es auf dem Orgelgebiet lebendig geworden. Orgeltagungen und Orgelbaukongresse in verschiedenen Städten Deutschlands zeugen von der Interesse, das man heute der Orgel entgegenbringt. Spielte die Orgel früher manchmal die bescheidene, halb bemitleidenswerte Rolle eines Aschenbrödels unter den musikalischen Instrumenten, so wird die steigende Achtung in der Öffentlichkeit ihr nunmehr durchweg den ihr gebührenden Platz der ‘Königin der Instrumente’ widerverschaffen. Man beginnt die Orgel auch in den ihr fernstehenden Kreisen ‘richtiger’ zu sehen und zu hören, sie in ihrer wahren Wesensart zu begreifen.” Fritz Heitmann, “Orgelklang und Gegenwart,” 23 October 1932, article from unidentified newspaper announcing the new recital series on the Charlottenburg organ; from the archives of Karl Schuke.

<sup>22</sup> The organ, which had electro-pneumatic action but was highly experimental, was based on a disposition from Michael Praetorius’s *De Organographia*, part II of the *Syntagma Musicum* (1618). Destroyed in World War II, the experiment was repeated in 1954–55, at Freiburg University, this time with mechanical action, a slider chest and meantone temperament.

the old instruments into new ones. The Charlottenburg instrument, a “forgotten” Schnitger discovered in the nation’s capital city, was to become a source of inspiration for a generation of organists, church musicians and organ builders, and a crucial spur for the advocates of the *Orgelbewegung*.

While organists came to perform on the Charlottenburg organ from all across Germany, the instrument quickly became associated with Fritz Heitmann—perhaps the most influential organist in Germany of the interwar period. Not only did Heitmann perform there frequently, he also held his weekly organ-literature classes in the Charlottenburg chapel during the summer months, lectures that were attended by organ students as well as all church-music students at the Hochschule für Musik and at the Akademie für Kirchen- und Schulmusik. In the late 1920s Heitmann had declared himself skeptical of the new obsession with historic German organs, and publicly questioned the near religious devotion to the work of Arp Schnitger. He had grown up with a Schnitger organ, and, as he wrote in 1926, “With all due reverence for the instrument that set me on my life’s path and led me to my later calling,” he was unable to believe that its sound would have satisfied him forever: “The rattle of the pipes still rings in my ears today...”<sup>23</sup> He recommended turning energy and attention away from the opposition between old versus new, and focussing instead on the much more important distinction between *good* and *bad* instruments. Carefully comparing the relative merits of historic and modern organs in his 1928 essay “On the Organ Problem of the Present,” he declared himself unable to support the “damning judgments of the all-too-radical elements of the *Orgelbewegung* against modern organs.”<sup>24</sup> Yet this skeptical attitude to-

<sup>23</sup> “Bei aller Pietät für das Instrument, das meinem Leben die Bahn gewiesen und mich in meinen späteren Beruf geführt hat, vermag ich nicht zu behaupten, daß es mich klanglich auf die Dauer befriedigt hätte. Das Knattern der Rohrwerke liegt mir noch heute im Ohr...” Fritz Heitmann, “Ein gefährdetes Kleinod in der Berliner Klosterkirche. Zu einem Aufsatz von Dr. B. Ebhardt in Nr. 17 / 21 January 1926, *Tägliche Rundschau*, Berlin, 10 February 1926. Reprinted in Richard Voge, *Fritz Heitmann: Das Leben eines deutschen Organisten* (Berlin: Verlag Merseburger, 1963), 122–24 (at 123). Heitmann had grown up playing the Schnitger organ in Ochsenwälder near Hamburg, where his father was organist. See his account in his “The Organ Problem [as seen in 1930]”, trans. Alfred Mann (originally published as “Zum Orgelproblem” in *Deutsche Tonkünstler-Zeitung*, 5 June 1930), in *The Organ as a Mirror of its Time: North European Reflections*, ed. Kerala J. Snyder (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 261–65.

<sup>24</sup> “...das Verdammungsurteil allzu radikaler Elemente der Orgelbewegung über die moderne Orgel...” Heitmann, “Zum Orgelproblem der Gegenwart,” *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Akademie für Kirchen- und Schulmusik* (1928/9); in Voge, *Heitmann*, 124–30 (at 125). Proclaiming the virtues of *both* old and new organs, Heitmann cited the direct communication between player and pipe of mechanical action and the lively speech of the pipes as advantages of old organs, and, on large modern organs the lightness of pneumatically assisted action, the expressive variety and

wards historicism did not prevent Heitmann from embracing the Schnitger organ in the Charlottenburg palace chapel—as a thing of beauty in itself, as a valuable window into the sound-world of the past (and especially Bach’s music and that of his predecessors), and as a vital teaching tool. During the course of the 1930s Heitmann would become one of the foremost proponents of this instrument, and this organ would become his favorite forum for the presentation of his ideas on the great German organ art. “Many years of work with this instrument,” Heitmann wrote in 1937,

and unceasing devotion to the works of the classical organ art have deepened for me the recognition that with regard to such an instrument, we organists are the champions and heralds of the most noble artistic values that the musical culture of our nation and moreover of the whole Western world, have to proclaim.<sup>25</sup>

Heitmann praised the mechanical action, the precise speech of the pipes, the sparkling freshness of the mixtures, and the liveliness of the Charlottenburg organ’s sound, that lent itself so well to the performance of “early” music: “How self-evidently all the parameters of interpretation reveal themselves on this organ! Here one comes to the heart of things. On an instrument less tonally rich one labors with registration attempts and experiments, only to achieve a fairly unsatisfying result; but on this organ, with the help of an assistant [listening in the chapel], in a comparatively shorter time one has found nothing less than an ideal tonal composition.”<sup>26</sup> A distrust of antiquarianism did not blind the leading teacher and player of his time to the abundant riches of the instrument.

For the young American organ student in Berlin, Miss Othelia E. Bowman, the combination of Heitmann and the Charlottenburg Schnitger threatened transcendence. Heitmann’s performance on this unique remnant from the past, in its perfectly intact candlelit chapel, inspired Bowman to ecstatic description.

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independence of the performer (and the possibility of playing Reger).

<sup>25</sup> “... in jahrelanger Beschäftigung mit dem Instrument und unablässigem Bemühen um die Werke der klassischen Orgelkunst hat sich mir die Erkenntnis vertieft, daß wir Organisten an einem solchen Instrument die Sachwalter und Kündler der edelsten künstlerischen Werte sind, die die musikalische Kultur unseres Volkes und darüber hinaus des ganzen Abendlandes überhaupt zu vergeben hat.” Fritz Heitmann, “Erfahrungen an der Schnitger-Orgel der Charlottenburger Schloßkapelle,” *Musik und Kirche* 9 (1937): 32–35 (at 32).

<sup>26</sup> “Wie selbstverständlich ergeben sich auf dieser Orgel alle maßnahmen der Interpretation! Hier kommt man auf den Grund der Dinge. Müht man sich an einem klanglich weniger ergiebigen Instrument mit vielfachen Registrierungsversuchen und Experimenten, um zuletzt doch nur ein wenig befriedigendes Ergebnis zu erreichen, so hat man an dieser Orgel unter Mithilfe des abhörenden Assistenten in verhältnismäßig kurzer Zeit eine geradezu ideale klangliche Gestaltung gefunden.” *Ibid.*, 33–34.

The old becomes exotic, the organ is wrapped in mysticism. Reaching first for Walt Whitman she breathlessly cites

...Europe seizing inflates me,  
To organs huge and bands I hear as from vast concourses of voices,  
... Such led to thee, O Soul!  
All senses, shows and objects, lead to thee,  
But now, it seems to me, sound leads o'er all the rest.

She continues more prosaically, though hardly less effusively:

One has only to walk through the doors of the Eosander Chapel of the Charlottenburg Palace to sense the atmosphere of the centuries. The picturesque language of music-making angels and putti, wall painting and stained glass windows—all raise one voice to glorify endless harmony. Quiet candlelight induces reverence, ideal for soaking up the sounds of Buxtehude...

In Heitmann's intellectual perfection and technical facility the person is entirely forgotten as he plays, the soul wings its way upwards to the ether of eternal music. On the faces of the listeners, the profound feeling that comes only from sublime calm: silence, that is the greatest praise for an artist, praise above all praise.

Arp Schnitger's organ in the Eosander Chapel—the ideal instrument indeed on which to present Buxtehude... Its sound is very different from that of modern instruments; it possesses bitterness and sweetness together, it satisfies in a surprising way and its colors inspire intense listening.

When one has heard Dietrich Buxtehude in this way: on such an instrument as this, in such a performance as Heitmann gives, in the atmosphere of the Eosander Chapel—a wonderful conjuncture of historical past and living beauty—, one must involuntarily and repeatedly recall the immortal words of Walt Whitman:

Give me to hold all sounds, (I madly struggling cry)...  
... Utter, pour in, for I would take them all!"<sup>27</sup>

For Bowman, the Charlottenburg organ opened a window onto the past, while it induced a sublime experience that transcended time. Heitmann, however, never stopped insisting that, "historic" as it was, this instrument was no relic, but rather an organ that spoke loud and clear in the present. Heitmann

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<sup>27</sup> Bowman's account is quoted in Voge, *Heitmann*, 52–53. The Whitman quotations are from Walt Whitman, "Proud Music of the Storm," in *Leaves of Grass* [1891–92] (London: G. P. Putnam's Sons and Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1903), 314–15.

thought of himself as a progressive, and, as he praised the astringent clarity and manly strength of the organ as manifested in the exalted historical models of a Germanic lineage, his writing on organs and organ reform, and on the place of the organ in modern German culture stressed to a remarkable degree the importance of the new, even as it extolled the virtues of the old. Heitmann could not have been clearer about where he stood in the often contentious world of inter-war organ aesthetics:

We live in the twentieth century. We neither should nor want to withdraw from our surroundings in order to live in a period that has gone and will not return. We want to face the tasks of our time squarely; its frame of reference in many ways conforms to that represented by the names Schnitger and Silbermann. As glorious as it is to play and hear the organs of the past in the great cathedrals and as much as we wish to adhere to this organ ideal, we—organ builders and organ performers—must try to direct this fountain of youth into our time and use it creatively for contemporary tasks.<sup>28</sup>

The historic Charlottenburg organ was an instrument for the present, and for the future.

This organ was indeed a treasure, especially since it was an atypical example of a great artist's work. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the ideological position that underpins Heitmann's enthusiasm, and that would emerge openly in his 1943 essay whose title lauded the organ, both historical and modern (but especially in its monstrous incarnation as a participant in giant public spectacles) as "An Instrument of Our Time"—an essay which recasts much of Heitmann's earlier writing overtly within the aesthetics and political ideology of the Nazi *Jahrbuch der deutschen Musik* in which it appeared. Heitmann was a staunch National Socialist, having joined the party even before Hitler took power in 1934.<sup>29</sup>

After the first restoration of the Charlottenburg organ in 1931, the two missing manual reeds were reconstructed in 1933 (the stop labels had not been

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<sup>28</sup> Heitmann, "The Organ Problem," 264.

<sup>29</sup> Other essays in the volume included Generalmajor Paul Winter, "Musikpflege in der Wehrmacht," 55–58; Gotthold Frotscher, "Hitler-Jugend musiziert!," 59–60; and Maria Ottich, "Die Musikarbeit der NS-Gemeinschaft 'Kraft durch Freude,'" 61–63. Heitmann's political affiliations in the '30s and '40s have been largely suppressed from his biography; he directed the church music section of Alfred Rosenberg's "Kampfband für deutsche Kultur" in 1932–33, and was known as an "überzeugter Nationalsozialist der ersten Stunde." See Ulrich Bender, *Kirchenmusiker im Dritten Reich: Wilhelm Bender (1911 bis 1944)* (Rottenburg: Mauer Verlag, 2011). See also Michael H. Kater, *Die mißbrauchte Muse: Musiker im Dritten Reich* (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 2000), 313.

changed when the 1888 work had been done); the action was rebuilt in 1934 (and the old keyboards removed). The efforts of Heitmann and of other enthusiasts and experts led to a second restoration in 1938 by the Potsdam organ builder Karl Schuke. That same year, Heitmann made a recording of Bach's *Clavierübung III* in the Charlottenburg chapel, a disc (released on Telefunken) that would soon become the sole surviving sounding remnant of the historic organ. In 1943 Schuke removed the by-now highly symbolic instrument and stored it in the cellar of the Stadtschloss, hoping to ensure the instrument's survival.

## IV

Postwar reconstruction in Berlin was more urgent than the recovery of a precious baroque organ, but given the beauty and symbolic importance of both palace and organ, it is hardly surprising that attempts at reconstructing both would be vigorously undertaken—at great expense and in the heated environment of this front-line city of the Cold War. The reconstruction of the palace itself was already controversial, with its self-proclaimed political agenda. As Karl Schuke recalled, “Originally the plan was only to rebuild the façade of the destroyed palace in Berlin Charlottenburg according to the original. But as soon as the ruins of the Berlin Stadtschloss in the Eastern section of the city were blown up, a decision was taken ostentatiously to rebuild the interior spaces of the Charlottenburg Palace as well, using available plans and photos.”<sup>30</sup>

As part of this politicized project to show how the German cultural heritage could be reclaimed—and reclaimed for the West, with its skilled artisans and superior resources, as against the efforts of the socialist East—Schuke was asked, in 1965, to build a reconstruction of the Schnitger organ. He had taken care of the instrument since 1936; he had also been part of a project to take accurate measurements of various parts of the instrument in the 1930s, and to document it as a historical resource, detailing the scalings of selected pipes from eighteen different stops on the organ.<sup>31</sup> Some photographs of the interior and exterior were available, including an important picture of the console

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<sup>30</sup> From materials relating to the Charlottenburg reconstruction in the Karl Schuke private archive. I, and my colleagues at GOArt, are indebted to Prof. Ernst Bittcher and the Karl Schuke Berliner Orgelbauwerkstatt for generously supplying these documents.

<sup>31</sup> Measurements had been taken in the 1930s by several different experts, including Gustav Fock, and the organ builders Schuke and Rolf Strecker; their numbers differ, and give an ambiguous picture of the original instrument. Schuke claimed, however, that there were very few discrepancies in the documentation.



(before the removal of its original keyboards). Fragments of the case of the Rückpositiv remained. From this, Schuke claimed to be able to make “a copy as close as possible” to the original instrument.

The reconstruction, finished in 1970, had, Schuke claimed, been built faithfully according to the original data and the old precepts of organ building: “... of course with the original disposition and with slider chests and completely mechanical action,” but also, and more unusually, in the way the action, the wind channels and the stop labels had been designed; in the construction of a *Sperrventil* for each division, in the absence of couplers (there were none on the original organ), in the use of a *Bock-Tremulant* that affected the whole organ, and in the decision to set the pitch at a half-step below modern concert pitch.<sup>32</sup> His work was based not only on the early documentation but also on the most recent scientific research: “comparative material analyses of the tin-lead alloy were made and the crystalline structure of old and new pipes examined. The cast tin plates were not machine-planed but planed by hand, as was customary in earlier organ building.”<sup>33</sup> This was radical stuff in the 1960s, and similar in spirit (though rather different in practice) from the research undertaken by organ-builders and scholars at GOArt (and elsewhere) in recent years. Yet even in Schuke’s ‘faithful’ reconstruction of the 1706 organ, the new was mapped unapologetically onto the old: the Schuke-Schnitger’s compass is not that of the original (it is C, D–d<sup>3</sup> and in the pedal, C, D–d<sup>1</sup>); the pedal board does not follow the eighteenth-century flat model but is instead radiating; the console is ergonomically modern: “We also saw to it that the arrangement of the keyboards relative to one another complies with present-day dimensions.” The instrument was (and is) tuned in equal temperament.<sup>34</sup>

In September 1981, the 78-year-old Wolfgang Auler performed on the Schuke reconstruction to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his “reawakening” of the original Schnitger organ. The event was recounted for readers of *Musik und*

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<sup>32</sup> “...selbstverständlich in der ursprünglichen Disposition und mit Schleifladen und vollmechanischer Traktur.” Program notes for the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee recital by Wolfgang Auler celebrating the rediscovery of the original Schnitger organ, sponsored by the Verwaltung der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten, September 21, 1931.

<sup>33</sup> Karl Schuke, “The Rebuilt Organ of the Eosander Chapel, Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin,” *The Organ Yearbook* 3 (1972), 89–92 (at 89).

<sup>34</sup> Schuke received criticism for the adoption of, especially, the modern pedalboard and equal temperament from the engineer and amateur organist Albrecht Wolf, who had known the Charlottenburg organ in the 1930s, when he had studied with Wolfgang Auler, the original ‘discoverer’ of the instrument.

*Kirche* by the retired engineer and organ-enthusiast Albrecht Wolf who had studied with Auler in the 1930s and knew the original organ well. Wolf's report praised the quality of the new instrument, but betrays an ambivalent view of its claims to historical accuracy: stringently criticizing the modern pedal board and the crucial decision to use equal temperament, Wolf also remarks that in the process of voicing the new organ, some of the acoustical problems caused by the awkward space and Schnitger's placement of the organ had been successfully dealt with: "As a result, from the nave one notices virtually no difference between the strength of the plena of the Hauptwerk and the Rückpositiv; even the Pedal, which is the most distant, can be heard distinctly and clearly there."<sup>35</sup> Is the implication that Schuke's voicing was better than Schnitger's? Wolf seems to be pointing to some very fundamental changes to the basic concept of the organ. He goes on to hint, with some finesse, that the instrument only vaguely conjures the Schnitger sound: "Only the outward form of the Rückpositiv case recalls the genius of Arp Schnitger and makes the loss of the sound that belonged to it all the more painfully felt. And yet the overall design of the organ, its disposition and the pipe scaling which form the basis of the sound, also bear witness to his genius and aim for a similar degree of originality as has been achieved in the reconstruction of the room. So it is not just an illusion, when one senses a relation between this sound and that of preserved or sensitively restored Schnitger organs."<sup>36</sup> Little more than a decade after Schuke's good-faith, if compromise-laden, Charlottenburg reconstruction, doubts were being cast and praise faintly—if fairly—offered.

And what, then, of the most recent reincarnation of this instrument? It would be patently false to claim that in returning to the Charlottenburg organ for a new instrument at Cornell in the early twenty-first century we have pursued this project as an attempt to get Schnitger more right than Schuke did, or, more broadly, as a repudiation of the ideals of the *Orgelbewegung*—even if we

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<sup>35</sup> "Klanglich gelang es auch beim Zweitbau, die Ungunst des Raumes dank der Schnitgerschen Anordnung des Pfeifenwerks durch Intonation zu überwinden. So ist vom Kirchenschiff aus kaum ein Unterschied in den Klangstärken der Plena von Hauptwerk und Rückpositiv festzustellen; selbst das am entferntesten stehende Pedal ist dort klar zeichnend zu vernehmen." Albrecht Wolf, "Traumjubiläum einer Schnitgerorgel," *Musik und Kirche* 6 (1981): 297–98.

<sup>36</sup> "An den Genius Arp Schnitgers erinnerte nur noch die Form seines Rückpositivprospektes und ließe den Verlust klanglicher Bezogenheit um so schmerzlicher empfinden. Jetzt aber zeugen von seinem Genie auch noch die Gesamtgestaltung, die Disposition und die Mensur als die Grundlage eines Klanges, der die gleiche Originalität anstrebt, wie sie die Nachgestaltung des Raumes erreichte. So ist es nicht nur Illusion, wenn man die Verwandtschaft des Klanges mit dem erhaltenen Schnitgerorgeln spürt." *Ibid.*, 298.

explicitly reject not only the movement's often stilted rhetoric in describing organ sound but also, and more emphatically, the ideological underpinnings of its enthusiasm for Germanic purity.

Our interest in old organs has been inspired in no small measure by visiting those "well-preserved" baroque towns in the last twenty years in the former East Germany, in the Bach country of Thuringia and Saxony, in Northern Germany, and elsewhere too. We wanted an instrument that looked back to the generation of Buxtehude and forward to Bach and even to his students. Partly, too, we were moved by Munetaka Yokota's eloquent descriptions of the Charlottenburg organ as he had heard it on that historic Heitmann recording. We were not interested in, or at least have no self-knowledge of, larger ideological impulses having to do with renewal. The organ in Charlottenburg was unusual, diverse, and gone, and lent itself to a research project (an important consideration for a research university like Cornell) that considered and brought to sounding life some of its implications; this seemed a good idea historically, but even more decisively, in musical terms. Ultimately ours was a practical decision based on personal inclination and the sense that Schnitger's instruments are highly adaptable entities, and arguably just as versatile as many later organs that claim greater eclecticism.<sup>37</sup>

Although the dimensions of the Anabel Taylor chapel are quite similar to those of many courtly chapels, the space has a very different arrangement than what confronted Schnitger in Charlottenburg, with its square layout and gallery tucked under the wall. Rather than duplicating Schnitger's characteristically creative and brilliant architectural solution to that unlikely placement for an organ, we decided to adopt the more typical arrangement for Schnitger's midsized and larger instruments; the result, we hoped, would be an instrument that would recreate as closely as possible the original sounds of that Charlottenburg organ (with a particular interest in the ones that seemed uncharacteristic for Schnitger) but would be housed in a different case, for all the complex implications of taking the specification of one organ (and one with particular architectural challenges) and giving it a different spatial layout. For this we turned to one of Schnitger's most magnificent organ cases preserved, though the rest of the organ is not, in the town of Clausthal-Zellerfeld in the Harz Mountains in central Germany. This instrument, like the Berlin organ,

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<sup>37</sup> A further organ that should be mentioned in conjunction with the Charlottenburg organ and its offspring is the instrument made by the GOArt workshop for the Korean National University of Arts, whose specification is inspired by the Charlottenburg Schnitger.



**Figure 1** Organ in Anabel Taylor Chapel, Cornell University, based on the Arp Schnitger organs at Charlottenburg and Clausthal-Zellerfeld. Built by Munetaka Yokota and colleagues at GOArt, with Parsons Pipe Organ Builders (NY) and CCSN Woodworking, in Ithaca, New York. 2011.

was installed far from Schnitger's Hamburg base, and late in his career. In contrast to the Charlottenburg organ with its relatively few visible pipes clinging to the gallery rail, the Clausthal façade rises in full view, all three divisions of the organ visually prominent.

While Karl Schuke thought he had made a faithful reconstruction but with some obvious concessions to modern standards, we are under no illusion that the Cornell instrument represents a perfected reconstruction of the sonic and physical features of the eighteenth century. Like Schuke we have made adjustments in the original concept: extending one note in the manuals and pedal; even adding a few stops to the specification and moving one of the color stops (the Hoboy) from the Hauptwerk to the Rückpositiv, so that these two chamber reeds are on different divisions and can be heard in consort and dialogue (see Table 2). The extraordinary attention to historical practise and aesthetics in the construction and voicing of the pipes of this instrument, however, are firmly rooted in the surviving monuments from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> A detailed technical account of the complete project will be forthcoming.

Hauptwerk	Rückpositiv	Pedal
1. Principal 8'	1. Principal 8'	1. Principal 16'
2. Quintadena 16'	2. Gedact lieblich 8'	2. Octav 8'
3. Floite dues 8'	3. Octav 4'	3. Octav 4'
4. Gedact 8'	4. Floite dues 4'	4. Nachthorn 2'
5. Octav 4'	5. Octav 2'	5. Rauschpfeife II
6. Viol de gamb 4'	6. Sesquialt II	6. Mixtur IV
7. Spitzflöit 4'	7. Waltflöit 2'	7. Posaunen 16'
8. Nassat 3'	8. Scharf III	8. Trommet 8'
9. SuperOctav 2'	9. Hoboy 8'	9. Trommet 4'
10. Mixtur V-VI		10. Cornet 2'
11. Trompete 8'		
12. Vox humana 8'		
Tremulant		
3 Sperrventile		
Compass: Manuals C, D–d <sup>3</sup> , Pedals C, D–d <sup>1</sup>		
4 wedge bellows		
Temperament: Werckmeister III		
Pitch: a = 415		

**Table 2** Specification of the organ in Anabel Taylor Chapel, Cornell University (2011), based on the Arp Schnitger organ at Schloß Charlottenburg (1706)

With such free play of historical objects and inferences you might well say that our project is not a fantasy reconstruction, but rather a fantasy deconstruction, and to that charge we happily plead guilty.

After my long-term involvement with the Cornell project and my present effort in this essay to trace some of the conflicts that the storied Charlottenburg organ has provoked and embodied, I hear in the Cornell instrument echoes not just of Schnitger but also of the ideologies which have shaped its reception: its symbolic potency as the king of instruments commissioned by autocratic rulers; the historicist impulse that led to the handwork revival which has enriched organ building of the last century and the present one; and the post-modern skepticism regarding historic authenticity in musical performance and instrument making. Emboldened by such relativism, I refuse to turn up my nose at the enthusiasm of Ms. Bowman, nor do I want to give the impression that I



**Figure 2** *Anabel Taylor Chapel, Cornell University.*

am in any way condescending to her candlelit rapture. Without enthusiasm like hers there would be no organs. It would also be foolish to claim that future generations will unquestioningly accept all of the decisions that our “reconstruction” project has made in grappling with the beauty and mysteries of Schnitger’s Charlottenburg organ.

Schnitger himself had to adjust his instrument to a seemingly unwelcoming architectural environment, but he found unlikely solutions. What Schuke and all others knew, and what still makes the artistic and scholarly exchange possible, is the importance of compromise—the stuff not of defeat but of intellectual possibility and artistic fulfillment. What careful listening to the lessons of the old and the parallel project of “reconstruction” have done is to put the lie to Adorno’s dismissal of the old “rasping” organs. With respect to the expressive potential of the king of instruments, Adorno got it wrong. If he hadn’t been so occupied with the valuable task of opposing the objectification of the past, he might have been moved to recognize the beauty of the Charlottenburg organ and would then have been in a position to appreciate the achievements of its latter day descendants.