

Schnitger – Stade - digital

Bach and Schnitger in the Underworld: Variations and Improvisations

The pieces here are based on the well-known Schnitger organ in Stade, whose manuals and pedal can be touched by the hands and feet. Hitherto, this instrument has had a development and history, resulting in some modifications of the work.

In this century, something new has happened: the concrete pipe material has been transferred into digital rows of numbers. The mediator is the new instrument, the computer. It didn't only digitize the instrument but also the note values of classical works, here of the works of Bach. The pipes and the notes are now available for a creative editing by the computer, which has the task of executing algorithms, whose structure is created in the computer itself.

All this has happened to the Toccate F-Dur and the Präludium h-Moll of Bach. Such variations (=Mutationen) can be continued endlessly, as well as changes to the assignment of the registers and manuals. Brand new combinations are generated from the original material.

A part of the improvisations can be considered as "Instantaneous Compositions" according to classical patterns (Fugue, Prelude etc.), but interfused by a sort of "sound process". The mix of stops are relatively undifferentiated. Combinations of sounds, as well as fragments emerge, which don't form a new recognizable structure. It's a process of fragmentation, an unpredictable sequence of sound quanta.

The basis of this decomposition doesn't lie in the middle dimension, which is recognizable for humans and enables us to hear structures. On the contrary, sound quanta are the basis, controlled by computer algorithms, which become intertwined or repel each other, often unpredictable.

These productions try to enter a new world, hitherto unknown to humans by means of the computer and the digitalization.