

Schnitger – Stade - digital

Classical Composers in the Evolution

In recorded music up to now, you come across classical works, instruments and performers, all aim at perfection and you can hardly recognize greater differences.

In these productions, there is a quite different access. The works are no longer original, the instrument (here the Schnitger organ in Stade) is transformed and you can no longer define the performer or the performers. The main tool is the computer, standing in the center, which receives and modifies the given reality, in this case the instrument and the note values

The Schnitger organ was digitized, the works also transformed in digital values (notes became numbers) and the initiator for the reproduction is a program and an algorithm.

The transformation of the mechanical organ system into the digital world is significant, comparable with the transmission of the natural tone of instruments and voices into the abstract pipework of the organ 300 years ago. Then and now there are and there were more or less audible changes. The vox humana of an organ is no longer a human voice, the same applies to the trumpet. The digitized note values are edited by the computer with his algorithms (here the program Level II by Dr. Tobenfeldt, USA) freely and without qualification. The possibilities of variations are nearly infinite, however some classical criteria e.g., inversion, changes of the registers and organ-manuals can still be recognized.

The overlapping of the notes with themselves is new. The results are not limited to the above mentioned frame but go far beyond this. In the pieces here “played”, the structure remains largely intact, e.g. in the Scherzo of the Eroica or the mutations have not yet reached a stage at which the work is disfigured beyond recognition. In addition, no organ works but orchestral compositions and a piano piece were edited for these productions.

The deeper reason doesn't lie in the typically human idea of perfection and fixed values but the concept of permanent variation and metamorphosis of given facts, here produced by applying the recent possibilities of the digital evolution which you can compare with the invention of musical notation.