

JEAN-BAPTISTE MONNOT

VOYAGE

L'orgue du voyage

Le grand orgue Cavaillé-Coll de Saint-Ouen, Rouen
Bach Brahms Franck Purches Widor

BASE2 MUSIC

JEAN-BAPTISTE MONNOT

VOYAGE





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TRACK LISTING

1. 6th Symphonie Op 42 Allegro	Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)	8:53
2. Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 659	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)	4:21
3. Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ BWV 639	Johann Sebastian Bach	3:10
4. Pièce Heroïque M37	César Franck (1822-1890)	8:22
5. Prelude Passacaglia and Lament Op 6 *	Jacob A Purches (1966-)	9:24
6. Herzlich tut mich verlangen	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	3:23
7. Es ist ein Ros entsprungen	Johannes Brahms	2:40
8. Vater unser im Himmelreich BWV 682	Johann Sebastian Bach	4:44
9. Allein Gott in der höh sei ehr BWV 676	Johann Sebastian Bach	4:26
10. Dies sind die heiligen zehn Gebot BWV 678	Johann Sebastian Bach	4:39
11. Prelude in A minor BWV 543	Johann Sebastian Bach	3:26
12. Fugue in A minor BWV 543	Johann Sebastian Bach	5:29
13. Bat song and choir at Saint-Ouen		1:13
Total time for CD and SACD		64:11

Tracks 1 to 6 are the Cavaillé-Coll grand organ, Track 7 is the Merklin choir organ
Tracks 8 to 12 is "L'Orgue du Voyage"

*Dedicated to Andrew G Purches 1939-2020

NOTE: **Multi-channel 5.1 only** - Before Track 1 there is a short 11 Hz tone for subwoofer activation.

Saint-Ouen Abbey also has a beautiful choir organ featured in Track 7.

This was commissioned by Ducroquet in 1855. It was built and installed the following year by Merklin. It was later expanded and modified by Hubert Krischer in 1888, then transformed and electrified by Georges Gloton in 1935-1936.



“Space, Time, and Saint-Ouen Abbey” by Gregg Wager.

As prominent objects of great legacy, the pipe organs of **Aristide Cavallé-Coll** (1811-1899) continue to serve frequently as attractive centrepieces for concerts and recordings. Not to be forgotten, an important element of this legacy involves balancing magnificent and innovative musical instruments with specific spaces in which they would hopefully produce music forever.

By the time he was awarded the task of renovating the organ at Saint-Ouen Abbey in Rouen, Cavallé-Coll was almost 80 years old and probably foresaw (correctly) that the finished product would be the final creation he would personally oversee (of course, his company continued under Charles Mutin after his death for several decades). Building upon 20 ranks of pipes from a pre-existing instrument that had been rebuilt and tinkered with since the early 17th century, the new instrument would require 64 additional ranks, including its notoriously thunderous 32' Contre-bombarde.

Today, organist **Jean-Baptiste Monnot** (b. 1984) encounters this great legacy, which includes the resonant space surrounding it. Saint-Ouen is one of three medieval Gothic churches in the city, along with Rouen Cathedral and the Church of Saint-Maclou. The present abbey church is the last of several on the site, and dates from the 14th and 15th-centuries. Today it is hard to appreciate its lengthy monastic history as Saint-Ouen has largely lost its associated conventual buildings and precinct. Monnot is the administrator of the abbey church, which has given him freedom to experiment and develop his ‘Orgue du Voyage’.

Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) inaugurated the renovated Saint-Ouen organ on April 17, 1890. In this particularly historic and famous recital, he is known to have compared the instrument to a Michelangelo.

Perhaps symbolically honouring that debut, the opening performance of Widor on this recording is the putative theme and variations (Allegro) he wrote as the first movement of his Symphony 6 in G minor, Opus 42, No. 2. Its sturdy, thick chords introduce a 4-squared, 32-bar theme that contrasts sharply with a meandering single-voiced cadenza slowly morphing into a driving countermelody. Distinct processes of variation and development blur as the music finds its own path between the two, seemingly establishes a fugue only to abandon it, and eventually transposes to remote keys of F# minor and A minor.

Aside from what French symphonists of the late 19th century required, the design of Cavaillé-Coll's pipe organs also facilitated the music and German tradition of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Monnot chooses two of Bach's simple chorale preludes to record on the featured grand organ saving other Bach fare for the second part of the recording. From the collection of 18 known as Leipziger Choräle (Chorales from Leipzig), the G-minor setting of

"Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland" ("O come, Redeemer of heathens," or in Latin "veni redemptor gentium"), BWV 659, distinctly presents this traditionally Catholic melody attributed to Saint Ambrose (c.330-397).



Grand organ by
Cavaillé-Coll 1890;
Casework 1630



A view down the vast nave

The slow ascending and descending scalar motion in the pedals serves as a continuous, almost static idea to accompany the very meditative statement of the melody and its complementing countermelody.

From the earlier collection of preludes based on Lutheran melodies known as the *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book), "Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ" ("I call to you, Lord Jesus Christ") BWV 639 sets a hymn by Luther's friend Johannes Agricola (1494-1566) and which is used in the title and opening chorus of Bach's cantata, BWV 177. Although now an obscure hymn that didn't make it into most contemporary Lutheran hymnals, Bach's arrangement makes for one of his most popular chorale preludes. The slow perpetual motion in the accompaniment (16th-notes in the left hand and 8th notes in the pedal) allows reverent presentation of a simple melody made more compelling by careful ornamentation.



Gothic Ambo (Pulpit) of Saint Ouen



Returning to the French tradition, **César Franck's** (1822-1890) *Pièce Héroïque* opens with a distinctive and relentless melody mostly in the left hand. After some development, a transition borrows from a more Wagnerian flamboyance of chromaticism and motion, with a penchant for busy and sweeping accompaniment passages. This leads finally to a middle section resembling a sombre, four-part church chorale, although its regularity appears strangely deceptive, since there is still something symbolic or operatic about its calmness in the centre of a particularly stormy musical texture. Although the opening section predictably returns without remarkable embellishment, the piece ends with a grandiose repetition of a chorale played loudly as a stirring hymn which appears to be new material although a fragment of its tune had been introduced more nonchalantly earlier in the piece.

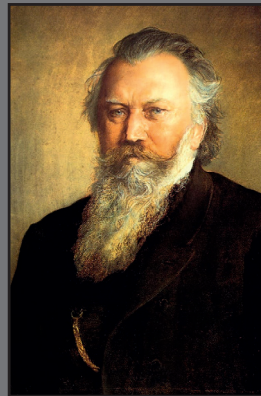
For 'Prelude, Passacaglia, and Lament' Op.6 by **Jacob A Purches** (b.1966) Jean-Baptiste Monnot performs this new piece on the grand organ, which no doubt reflects the composer's interest in employing the artistry of both organist and organ builder. Prelude presents a slow progression of rich, if not discordant harmonies which support a quiet, two-note fanfare, which becomes melodic material for the rest of the movement and even the other movements. After a reflective coda of slow harmonic progression, a jazzy Passacaglia begins without pause employing a broken-octave pattern in the pedals. Lament closes the cycle, returning to slowly unfolding poetic harmonic progressions in a similar idiom to Prelude.

The piece is in five parts:

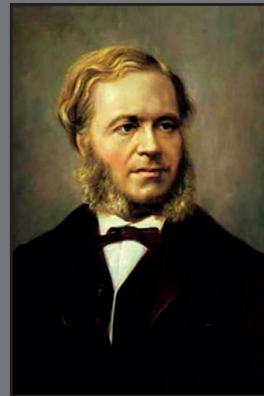
i) Prelude ii) Intermezzo iii) Pasacaglia iv) Sri v) Lament



Johannes Brahms



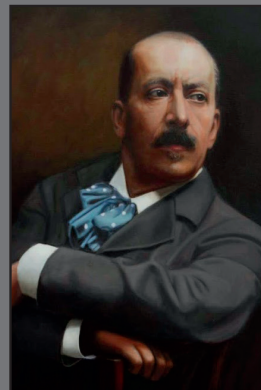
César Franck



Johann Sebastian Bach



Charles-Marie Widor



Jacob A Purches



Upon the death of his close friend Clara Schumann in 1896, **Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897) was inspired to write a collection, *Eleven Chorale Preludes*, Opus 122. The tenth sets *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* ("Affectionately I do implore"), one of the more familiar Lutheran hymns by Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612), in mournful A minor. The melody slowly unfolds in the pedals, while a busier, continuous accompaniment on the manuals allows seemingly endless countermelodies to skilfully move in and out of the texture. The eighth chorale prelude of the same set, *Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen* ("A rose has sprung up") in F major, harmonises a familiar Christmas carol and was recorded by Monnot on the Merklin choir organ of Saint-Ouen, located on the east side of the transept 90 metres from the grand organ (the two instruments are not connected and was recorded distantly to show the beautiful acoustics of the abbey).

Three later chorale preludes Monnot has chosen from Bach's *Clavier-Übung III* require exceptionally masterful if not often strenuous technique. With the assistance of his self-constructed modular pipe organ he dubs "*L'Orgue du Voyage*" (which resides inside Saint-Ouen in the north transept where it was recorded), Monnot is allowed to perform some of the more difficult music on familiar keyboards, finely adjusted to his technique. The first of these Bach chorale preludes, with a melody by Martin Luther (1483-1546) *Vater unser im Himmelreich* (based on a translation and lengthy commentary of the Lord's Prayer), BWV 682 displays careful and melismatic ornamentation with a descending chromatic melodic line that distinctly stands out at times. What appears at first to be canon on the fifth breaks down into imitation in a general trio sonata style (two imitative voices and continuo, with an extra voice sneaking in occasionally). Numerous quick appoggiaturas occurring on the beat as well as triplet figures make the multifarious texture busy but exactly homogenous. The second of these Bach chorale preludes sets another early Lutheran hymn, this time by Nikolaus Decius (c. 1485-1541), "*Allein Gott in den Höh' sei Her*" ("Let only God upon High be praised"), BWV 676.

(cont. page 18)



Jean-Baptiste Monnot stands by his 'L'Orgue du Voyage', a modular organ that he constructed. This organ is designed to travel, and can be transported in a small truck, to any destination desired. The Orgue du Voyage is recorded in Monnot's familiar home of Saint-Ouen, Rouen, in the north transept of the abbey. This was how it was set up when recorded in surround sound for this album. The intention was to give listeners the sensation of sitting in the midst of the organ, surrounded by the instrument's pipes.



It establishes a 6/8 dance (perhaps a gigue or even a tarantella) out of running 16th-notes with phrases gently exchanged between three voices (two hands and feet), while phrases of the melody itself are introduced as a slower cantus firmus. The final Bach chorale prelude here is based on a second hymn by Martin Luther himself, this one commenting on the Ten Commandments. The melody titled “Dies sind die heil’gen zehn Gebot” (“These are the holy Ten Commandments”) BWV 678, again supplies a slow, lurking cantus firmus for a deceptively canonic counterpoint setting in 6/4. This time the texture begins sparsely and gradually becomes faster and ornately melismatic. A three-bar drone in the pedal occurring halfway almost suggests the piece is ending early but it continues suddenly on its now familiar course.

Serving as a finale to this recording, Monnot again employs his L’Orgue du Voyage for a performance of Bach’s especially frenetic and virtuosic Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543. More of a rapid toccata than prelude, this vigorous exercise for fingers and feet, recalling the style of one of Bach’s primary influences, Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707), distinguishes itself for its speed and coordination of scales, arpeggios, and other patterns. After a 9-bar chromatically descending introduction followed by a 14-bar pedal drone as the fingers work around a four-note motive, the prelude breaks into an imitative interlude before allowing the runaway momentum to end with a satisfying four-voiced cadence. The fugue subject that follows has been the topic of painstaking research, sometimes comparing it to other works by Bach, if not Vivaldi. This is because the second part of the subject employs a pattern similar to a familiar cross-bowing technique. More likely, the 6/8 fugue develops these original (not consciously borrowed) motivic patterns freely and smoothly according to the standard form of a fugue, continuing a running 16th-note pattern until separate cadenzas in the pedal and then the hands announce a final cadence.

As a coda to the experience of recording in Saint-Ouen, the recording engineer has included a short excerpt of originally high-pitched, inaudible sounds made by bats that reside there. No doubt Cavaillé-Coll encountered earlier ancestors of this same family and may have even considered the ambience of blending overtones with their high pitches a wonderful addition to his overall design.

Gregg Wager is a composer and critic. He is the author of “Aquash’s Murder” and “Symbolism as a Compositional Method in the Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen”. He has a PhD in musicology from the Free University Berlin.

Below: Jean-Baptiste Monnot, titular organist at the console of the 1890 grand organ Cavaillé-Coll of Saint-Ouen.



'L'Orgue du Voyage' (The travelling organ)

Conceived in 2015 by Jean-Baptiste Monnot, an international concert pianist and organist of the Cavaillé-Coll organ of Saint-Ouen, the Orgue du Voyage signifies a musical journey beyond conventional boundaries. Inspired by artistic reflections from figures like Pierre Cochereau and Xavier Darasse, and explored deeply by Jean Guillou, this organ aims to extend its performance beyond traditional ecclesiastical settings.

The Orgue du Voyage is a tangible expression of this vision with its mobility allowing it to explore new spaces connecting with the public, and fostering creativity. An ever-evolving instrument, the current version is a testament to ongoing reflections and experiments, embodying a perpetual work in progress.

The Organ:

At its core, the organ's design is modular, with each connectable element corresponding to a register. This flexibility allows dynamic recomposition tailored to the specific demands of locations and musical projects enabling a diverse repertoire.

Powered by a swift and responsive transmission supported by a robust and dynamic wind supply, the instrument features an efficient and dependable combiner. The sound equipment comprises lead, tin, and wooden pipes (approximately 650 pipes), primarily from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This intentional use of vintage and restored components adds stability and musical richness contributing to the instrument's distinctive aura.



The sound plan, curated by Jean-Baptiste Monnot, emphasizes a personalised sonic spectrum with a pronounced presence, akin to a chamber orchestra. Coupled with its mobility and modular design, the Orgue du Voyage offers remarkable versatility across different repertoires and musical possibilities, suitable for various formations. The mobile console, crafted entirely from aluminium by Philippe Celor, an engineer at EADS (Airbus), strikes a balance between tradition and innovation. It embodies the qualities of a traditional organ console while offering exceptional lightness and visibility for the performer, reflecting the instrument's international spirit.

Text: Jean-Baptiste Monnot



Biography:

Jean-Baptiste Monnot, born in 1984 in France, is the current titular organist of the Cavaillé-Coll organ at Saint-Ouen Church, Rouen. He initiated his musical journey at age 12, studying piano and organ, and entered the École Nationale de Musique of Dieppe at 13. Subsequently, at 15, he joined the Conservatoire National de Région of Rouen.

At 18, in 2002, Monnot won the 1st prize unanimously at the 4th Young Organist Competition, presided over by Marie-Claire Alain, and obtained his bachelor's degree in Music. A year later, he received the 1st prize of perfection in organ. He entered the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris at 19, winning the 1st Prize of excellence in organ. In 2007, he achieved his master's Degree with first-class honors, studying under Olivier Latry and Michel Bouvard, followed by further refinement from Bernhard Haas at the Stuttgart Hochschule für Musik.

From 2004 to 2014, Monnot served as Jean Guillou's assistant at Saint-Eustache Church, Paris. As a soloist, he has performed globally, participating in prestigious festivals and venues such as La Maison de la Radio in Paris, the Berliner Philharmonie, and the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg.

Alongside his concert career, Monnot taught organ at the Mantes-la-Jolie Conservatory from 2012 to 2016. He was also the titular organist of the historical Joseph Merklin organ of the Collégiale until 2017. From 2020 to 2021, he taught organ interpretation at the IMEP in Namur, Belgium.

Monnot is the creator and main performer of l'Orgue du Voyage. Since 2015, he has been the titular Organist of the Aristide Cavaillé-Coll organ at the church of Saint-Ouen in Rouen, hosting an international masterclass every summer. Additionally, since 2019, he serves as the artistic director of the Festival des Orgues Cavaillé-Coll.

Français: “Espace, Temps et Abbaye Saint-Ouen” par Gregg Wager

L'héritage des orgues d'Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811-1899) est célébré comme un témoignage d'innovation et d'excellence musicale. Ces majestueux instruments, souvent mis en avant lors de concerts et d'enregistrements, ne sont pas seulement des entités musicales remarquables, mais sont également intimement liés aux espaces spécifiques qu'ils habitent, un aspect crucial de l'héritage durable de Cavaillé-Coll.

Approchant la fin de sa carrière illustre, Cavaillé-Coll, alors âgé de près de 80 ans, entreprit la tâche monumentale de rénover l'orgue de l'abbaye de Saint-Ouen à Rouen. Reconnaisant l'importance de ce projet, il l'a probablement envisagé comme sa dernière création supervisée personnellement, bien que sa société ait continué sous la direction de Charles Mutin après sa disparition. Le nouvel orgue a intégré 20 jeux d'un orgue préexistant, qui avait subi plusieurs reconstructions depuis le début du XVIIe siècle, avec 64 jeux supplémentaires, incluant la redoutable Contre-bombarde de 32 pieds.

Entrez Jean-Baptiste Monnot (né en 1984), actuel gardien de cet héritage à Saint-Ouen, une église gothique médiévale de Rouen. Saint-Ouen, formant un trio avec la cathédrale de Rouen et l'église Saint-Maclou, offre un riche contexte historique pour l'exploration de Monnot avec l'Orgue du Voyage. En 1890, Charles-Marie Widor inaugura l'orgue rénové de Saint-Ouen, le comparant à une œuvre de Michel-Ange. Monnot rend hommage à cet événement historique avec l'Allegro de la Symphonie 6 de Widor, où des accords robustes et des contre-mélodies dynamiques mettent en valeur la grandeur de l'orgue.

Les orgues de Cavaillé-Coll, connues pour leur polyvalence, ont accueilli à la fois les traditions musicales françaises et allemandes, embrassant les compositions de Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). La sélection par Monnot de deux préludes de chorals de Bach - BWV 659, un arrangement en sol mineur de “Nun komm’ der Heiden Heiland”, et BWV 639, “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ” - illustre la capacité de l'orgue à traverser des paysages musicaux divers.

Pièce Héroïque de César Franck (1822-1890) se déploie avec une mélodie implacable, des transitions marquées par un flair wagnérien et une conclusion grandiose avec un choral. Puis, Monnot introduit une pièce contemporaine, Prelude, Passacaglia, and Lament de Jacob A Purches. Dans Prelude, des harmonies riches et discordantes soutiennent une fanfare calme à deux notes, qui devient un matériau mélodique pour l'ensemble du mouvement. Une Passacaglia entraînante s'ensuit, utilisant un motif d'octave brisé dans les pédales, conduisant au Lament réfléchi avec des progressions harmoniques qui se déploient lentement.

Les Eleven Chorale Preludes, Opus 122 de Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) rendent hommage à Clara Schumann. Monnot interprète le No. 10, Herzlich tut mich verlangen, et le No. 8, Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, dans des cadres respectivement mélancoliques en la mineur et festifs en fa majeur. L'Orgue du Voyage de Monnot facilite une interprétation magistrale de Clavier-Übung III de Bach. BWV 682, Vater unser im Himmelreich, présente une ornementation mélismatique, tandis que BWV 676, Allein Gott in den Höh' sei Her', offre une vive danse en 6/8. BWV 678, Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot', se déroule dans un cadre canonique.

L'enregistrement se termine avec la performance de Monnot sur l'Orgue du Voyage de Prelude and Fugue en la mineur, BWV 543 de Bach. Cette pièce virtuose, plus une toccata rapide qu'un prélude, démontre des motifs complexes et des gammes rapides, rappelant l'influence de Dieterich Buxtehude sur Bach.

Un ajout intrigant à l'enregistrement est un court extrait capturant les sons aigus émis par les chauves-souris résidant à Saint-Ouen. Cet élément atmosphérique, bien que probablement inaperçu par Cavaillé-Coll, ajoute une dimension unique à l'expérience sonore globale.

Deutsch: “Raum, Zeit und die Abtei Saint-Ouen” von Gregg Wager

Das Erbe der Pfeifenorgeln von Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811-1899) wird als ein Zeugnis für Innovation und musikalische Exzellenz gefeiert. Diese majestätischen Instrumente, die oft bei Konzerten und Aufnahmen im Mittelpunkt stehen, sind nicht nur bemerkenswerte musikalische Entitäten, sondern sind auch untrennbar mit den spezifischen Räumen verbunden, in denen sie sich befinden - ein entscheidender Aspekt des anhaltenden Erbes von Cavaillé-Coll.

Als er sich dem Ende seiner illustren Karriere näherte, übernahm Cavaillé-Coll, fast 80 Jahre alt, die monumentale Aufgabe, die Orgel in der Abtei Saint-Ouen in Rouen zu renovieren. Er erkannte die Bedeutung dieses Projekts wahrscheinlich, weil er es als seine letzte persönlich überwachte Schöpfung sah, obwohl seine Firma nach seinem Tod unter der Leitung von Charles Mutin weiterführte. Die neue Orgel integrierte 20 Register aus einer bereits vorhandenen Orgel, die seit dem frühen 17. Jahrhundert mehrfach umgebaut worden war, mit zusätzlichen 64 Registern, einschließlich der beeindruckend 32' Contre-bombarde. Jean-Baptiste Monnot (geboren 1984) tritt nun in dieses Erbe ein, als der aktuelle Hüter dieses Erbes in Saint-Ouen, einer mittelalterlichen gotischen Kirche in Rouen. Saint-Ouen, die zusammen mit der Rouen Cathedral und der Church of Saint-Maclou ein Trio bildet, bietet einen reichen historischen Hintergrund für Monnots Erkundungen mit der 'Orgue du Voyage'.

Im Jahr 1890 weihte Charles-Marie Widor die renovierte Saint-Ouen-Orgel ein und verglich sie mit einem Werk von Michelangelo. Monnot zollt diesem historischen Ereignis Respekt mit dem Allegro aus der Symphonie 6 von Widor, wo robuste Akkorde und dynamische Gegenmelodien die Größe der Orgel hervorheben.

Die Orgeln von Cavaillé-Coll, die für ihre Vielseitigkeit bekannt sind, ermöglichten sowohl französische als auch deutsche musikalische Traditionen und umfassten die Kompositionen von Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Monnot wählt zwei Bach-Choralspiele aus: BWV 659, eine g-Moll-Fassung von “Nun komm’ der Heiden Heiland”, und BWV 639, “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ”. Bachs komplexe Arrangements zeigen Monnots Können. César Francks (1822-1890) Pièce Héroïque öffnet sich mit einer unerbittlichen Melodie, Übergänge geprägt von wagnerianischem Flair und einem grandiosen Choralabschluss.

Dann stellt Monnot ein zeitgenössisches Stück vor, Jacob A Purches' Prelude, Passacaglia und Lament. Im Prelude unterstützen reiche, dissonante Harmonien eine ruhige, zweinotige Fanfare, die zum melodischen Material für den Rest des Satzes wird. Eine jazzige Passacaglia folgt und verwendet ein gebrochenes Oktavmuster in den Pedalen, was zum nachdenklichen Lament mit langsam entfaltenden harmonischen Fortschritten führt.

Johannes Brahms' (1833-1897) Elf Choralvorspiele, Opus 122, zollen Clara Schumann Tribut. Monnot interpretiert Nr. 10, Herzlich tut mich verlangen, und Nr. 8, Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, in einer klagenden a-Moll- bzw. festlichen F-Dur-Umgebung.

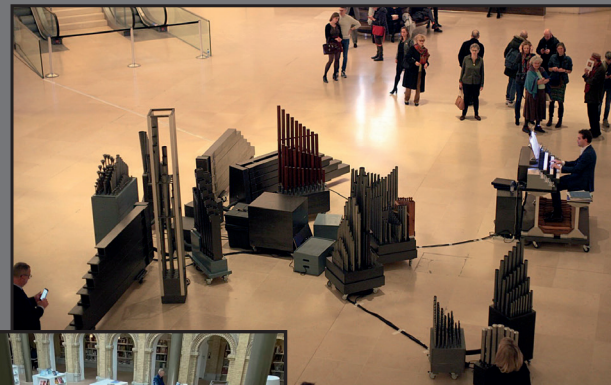
Monnots innovatives 'Orgue du Voyage' ermöglicht eine meisterhafte Interpretation von Bachs Clavier-Übung III. BWV 682, Vater unser im Himmelreich, präsentiert melismatische Verzierungen, während BWV 676, Allein Gott in den Höh' sei Her', einen lebhaften 6/8-Tanz bietet. BWV 678, Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot', entfaltet sich in einem kanonischen Kontrapunkt.

Die Aufnahme endet mit Monnots Aufführung auf 'Orgue du Voyage' von Bachs Prelude und Fugue in a-Moll, BWV 543. Dieses virtuose Stück, eher eine schnelle Toccata als ein Präludium, zeigt komplexe Muster und schnelle Tonleitern und erinnert an den Einfluss von Dieterich Buxtehude auf Bach.

Eine faszinierende Ergänzung zur Aufnahme ist ein kurzer Ausschnitt, der die hohen Töne von Fledermäusen in Saint-Ouen einfängt. Dieses atmosphärische Element, wahrscheinlich von Cavallé-Coll un bemerkt, fügt der gesamten klanglichen Erfahrung eine einzigartige Dimension hinzu.



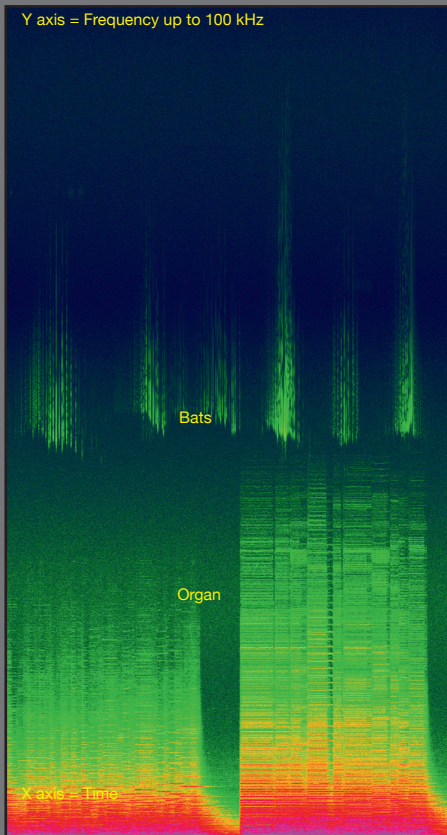
L'Orgue du Voyage is a regular of the Musée du Louvre, and the Académie Bach, Paris.



The bats of Saint-Ouen:

The spectrogram presented here provides a visual representation of the sound field captured by the Sennheiser MKH 8020 microphones. It spans from 10 Hz to 100 kHz, with time plotted on the X-axis and frequency on the Y-axis. Loudness is depicted by colour, where red signifies louder sounds and green indicates quieter ones. This graph shows the organ's tonal range from the bottom of the diagram up to the highest harmonics to 40 kHz. Above this, bat sounds, graphically resembling aurora emerge, commencing at 42 kHz where the organ concludes, extending up to approximately 70 kHz. Perhaps the bats appreciate the upper harmonics, which, naturally, they can certainly hear.

To make the bat sounds audible, the recording was slowed down ten-fold and blended with a choral lunch time concert at the opposite end of the nave. This occurred while I was setting up the microphones. Throughout the recording session of the Cavaillé-Coll organ, witnessing the live bat song atop the organ playing on the spectrogram monitor was enchanting. I couldn't resist giving the bats their moment! J.A. Purches.



Credits:

Recording producer, engineer, editing and sound design: Jacob Purches
Editing decisions and assistance: Jean-Baptiste Monnot
Photographs: Jean-Baptiste Monnot, Christophe Alary, Christopher Woolmer, Éric Pinot, Jacob Purches (main shots)
Booklet design: Jacob Purches and Gary Marsh www.marshgraphicdesign.com
SACD 5.1, stereo and CD mastering: Christoph Martin Frommen
Booklet notes written by Gregg Wager, Jean-Baptiste Monnot and Jacob Purches
Proof reading: Dr Roland B Harris
Recording location: Abbaye Saint-Ouen de Rouen, Normandy, France.
Recording dates: August 2022, August 2023 and October 2023. Mastered January 2024

I extend my thanks to Jean-Baptiste Monnot and Anne Buch for their kindness and enthusiasm, to Jean-Paul Imbert, my friend and teacher, and for his introduction to Jean-Baptiste, to Peter Allison for conducting the beta listening tests, to Vivid Audio UK facilities, Laurence Dickie and Ray Rowles, to Christoph Martin Frommen for his support and assistance, Roland Harris, who has been there from the start, and to Father Geoffroy De La Tousche, the priest of Saint-Ouen. Lastly to my wife, Sri Raharti, for her continuous support.

Recorded in 9 channels at 352 kHz 32-bit DXD using Sennheiser MKH80 series and SE Voodoo ribbon microphones on the Steinberg Yamaha AXR4 AD converter. Location monitoring on B&W Matrix CM1 loudspeakers designed by John Dobb and Stax SR-L700 electrostatic headphones with Trilogy H1 valve amplifier by Nic Poulson. Mastered in surround 5.1 and stereo on Vivid Audio loudspeakers: Giya G1 Spirit, G2, C1 center, and S12 rear surrounds and custom Vivid subwoofer, designed by Laurence Dickie at www.vividaudio.com.

Also available as a master high-definition download in DXD 32 bit in stereo and surround sound from www.base2music.store and www.nativedsd.com.

