

Hildesheim, St. Andreas

Andreaspl. 5, 31134 Hildesheim, Germany



Builder	R. v. Beckerath
Year	ca. 1966
Period/Style	Neo-Baroque
Stops	62
Keyboards	4+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Equal at 440 Hz
Sampleset	<u>Sonus Paradisi</u>

Description

The organ of the St. Andreas church in Hildesheim was built in 1965-66 by prominent organbuilder Rudolf von Beckerath. It is one of the largest instruments of its kind in Northern Germany. And it must be said, it is one of von Beckerath's best instruments. It has 63 speaking stops with a total of 4,734 pipes on four manuals and pedal. The Swiss organ builder Beat Grenacher participated in the final voicing of the organ. (Grenacher was in later years head of the Goll organ company from Lucerne and was responsible for the rebuilding of the Beckerath organ of Marktkirche Hannover.) The construction of this organ has some unique and innovative features, such as the mechanical action made of composite materials that still functions perfectly after 60 years without the need for any repairs. The organ has two consoles: The upper gallery houses a large 4-manual console and the lower gallery, which offers space for vocal and instrumental ensembles, has a separate single-manual console controlling the Rückpositiv alone. In the decades since its installation, the von Beckerath organ in St. Andrew's Church has become famous far beyond the borders of the city of Hildesheim. Renowned organists from across the globe perform on the instrument and use it for radio and recordings. In 1963, the famous north German composer Hans Friedrich Micheelsen from Hamburg dedicated his last organ concerto "Orgelkonzert VII - Der Morgernstern" to Reinhold Brunnert, the organist of St. Andreas at that time, to be performed during the inauguration concert.

In recitals and through recordings, the sound of the Hildesheim organ has inspired an entire generation of organists. American organist Erik Simmons comments: "This organ was important to me when I was learning to play. I first heard it on the Bach CD recorded by Michael Murray when I was just graduating from college in the 1980s. The sound was so different from all the American organs I was hearing at that time. (The CD is on YouTube now; search for "Murray Bach Hildesheim".) Murray's playing is dated by today's standards; he was a student of Dupré, with legato playing and mathematical precision on things like repeated and dotted notes. But those were the Bach editions I learned from back then as well, and the sound from Hildesheim was both ear-opening and inspiring. We "know better" today, but this was the

standard at the time."

The organ has the typical features of its time: narrow reeds, smooth foundations voiced with an expressive "chiff", and a plethora of unusual aliquotes that represent the progressive element of organ design in search of new colors that one encounters in many instruments from this period. The reeds of this organ are often best paired with a foundation stop as part of the aesthetics of the time (the so-called "covering" of reeds). Their sound is generally too thin if used alone - though music written at the time this organ was built often has special registrations exploiting these sounds by themselves.

The organ has numerous mixtures and mutations, but unlike many other organs from the same period it is not voiced to "scream" or "pierce". The plenums on each manual are formidable, but balanced and beautiful. The arrangement of the five divisions follows the North German organ building tradition, the so called "Hamburger Prospekt". The organ is strictly built on the Werkprinzip design, so much so that there is no coupler between HW and Pedal. The organ does not need one, because the Pedal is a complete division by itself. A German organ expert advised: "It is particularly important to me that this excellent organ is preserved in its uniqueness. It is not a modern universal organ like Billerbeck or Görlitz, where you can add couplings, stops, etc. almost as desired. If you understand the principle of a baroque organ and its divisions, then you also understand this organ. And this is what you should convey to users: think, pause and recognize the principle of the divisions." The ten largest pipes of the Prinzipal 32' are seen in the façade, the C pipe is around 11m high. They were originally made of zinc, but those pipes were replaced by tin pipes in 1995. The sound of this organ unites remarkably well with the church acoustics. The reverberation time is almost 8 seconds! The generous acoustics of the church contribute to the power and beauty of the sound.

Stoplist/Disposition

Rückpositiv	Hauptwerk	Oberwerk	Brustwerk	Pedal
Prinzipal 8'	Prinzipal 16'	Quintadena 16'	Holzgedackt 8'	Prinzipal 32'
Rohrflöte 8'	Oktave 8'	Violprinzipal 8'	Holzprinzipal 4'	Oktave 16'
Quintadena 8'	Koppelgedackt 8'	Holzflöte 8'	Waldflöte 2'	Subbaß 16'
Oktave 4'	Oktave 4'	Oktave 4'	Gemsquinte 1 1/3'	Oktave 8'
Blockflöte 4'	Quinte 2 2/3'	Rohrflöte 4'	Schwiegel 1'	Holzflöte 8'
Quintflöte 2 2/3'	Oktave 2'	Nasat 2 2/3'	Schlagttöne 3-fach 2/5'	Hornaliquot 2-fach
Oktave 2'	Mixtur 6-fach 2'	Hohlflöte 2'	Scharfzimbäl 4-fach 1/2'	Oktave 4'
Gemshorn 2'	Scharf 4-fach 2/3'	Terz 1 3/5'	Regal 8'	Rauschpfeife 3-fach 4'
Quinte 1 1/3'	Trompete 16'	Septime 1 1/7'	Schalmei 4'	Mixtur 6-fach 2 2/3'
Sesquialtera 2-fach	Trompete 8'	Siffelöte 1'		Posaune 32'
5-fach 1 1/3'	Trompete 4'	None 8/9'		Posaune 16'
Dulzian 16'	Glocken	Scharf 4-6-fach 1'		Trompete 8'
Bärpfeife 8'		Klingend Zimbäl 3-fach 1/6'		Trompete 4'
		Englisch Horn 16'		
		Oboe 8'		

Additional: RP/HW, OW/HW, BW/HW, RP/Pedal, OW/Pedal, Schweller BW, Glocken HW/Pedal, Tremulant RP
OW BW

Sources

<https://www.sonusparadisi.cz/en/organs/germany/hildesheim-st-andreas-beckerath-1966.html>

<https://www.andreaskantorei.de/uebersicht/instrumente/orgel>