



Bach and the North German Tradition Vol. 1

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Organists' Review (Martin Clarke - 2010.08.01)

This interesting disc demonstrates Bach's place in the North German tradition of organ composition, in particular his relationship with Böhm, who was possibly his organ teacher, and Buxtehude. Much of the music will be familiar to many readers, but this particular compilation is well devised to show the structural, thematic and textural influences exercised on Bach's music by Böhm and Buxtehude. The extensive booklet notes help to make these links clear, with informative comments on the musical features and compositional background of the pieces. It is a well balanced programme, with a variety of textures, genres and registrations demonstrating the diversity of the North German tradition. Martin Neu's playing has energy and verve, with well chosen registrations that demonstrate the versatility of this relatively small Ahrend organ, which is ideally suited to this repertoire. The reed stops speak vigorously, while the Pleno is bright without being overwhelming. An impressive range of softer solo colours are well demonstrated too. Bach's famous D major Prelude and Fugue is given a dramatic and spacious performance, while the playful character of Böhm's Capriccio is well conveyed. Overall, this is an engaging performance and an effective contextualisation of Bach's music.