

NAXOS

REGER

**Prelude and Fugue in
E minor, Op. 85, No. 4**

**Chorale Preludes,
Op. 67, Nos. 39–52**

**Prelude and Fugue in
G sharp minor (1906)**

**Chorale Fantasia
on 'Freu dich sehr,
o meine Seele', Op. 30**

**Martin Welzel
Johannes Klais Organ,
Trier Cathedral**



Max Reger (1873–1916)

Organ Works Vol. 10

	Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 85, No. 4	9:22		52 Easy Chorale Preludes on the most common Protestant chorales, Op. 67, Nos. 45–52	17:50
1	Prelude	4:27	11	No. 45 Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten (Zu ersten Liedern)	2:12
2	Fugue	4:54	12	No. 46 Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten (Zu Liedern freudigen Inhalts)	1:14
	52 Easy Chorale Preludes on the most common Protestant chorales, Op. 67, Nos. 39–44	18:02	13	No. 47 Werde munter mein Gemüte (Der am Kreuz ist meine Liebe)	1:57
3	No. 39 Vater unser im Himmelreich	3:55	14	No. 48 Wer weiss, wie nahe mir mein Ende	3:00
4	No. 40 Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her	2:50	15	No. 49 Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern	2:47
5	No. 41 Wachtet auf, ruft uns die Stimme	3:35	16	No. 50 Wie wohl ist mir, o Freund der Seelen	3:02
6	No. 42 Von Gott will ich nicht lassen (Mit Ernst, o Menschenkinder)	2:31	17	No. 51 Jesus ist kommen	1:25
7	No. 43 Warum sollt ich mich denn grämen	2:32	18	No. 52 O wie selig	1:53
8	No. 44 Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan	2:23		19 Chorale Fantasia on ‘Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele’, Op. 30	24:42
	Prelude and Fugue in G sharp minor (1906)	9:31			
9	Prelude	4:40			
10	Fugue	4:51			

Max Reger owed his earlier interest in music to the example and enthusiasm of his father, a schoolmaster and amateur musician, and his early training to the town organist of Weiden, Adalbert Lindner. Reger was born in 1873 at Brand in the Upper Palatinate, Bavaria. The following year the family moved to Weiden and it was there that he spent his childhood and adolescence, embarking on a course of training as a teacher when he left school. Lindner had sent examples of Reger's early compositions to his own former teacher, Hugo Riemann, who accepted Reger as a pupil, at first in Sondershausen and then, as his assistant, in Wiesbaden. Military service, which affected Reger's health and spirits, was followed by a period at home with his parents in Weiden and a continuing series of compositions, in particular for the organ, including a monumental series of chorale fantasias and other compositions, often, it seems, designed to challenge the technique of his friend Karl Straube, a noted performer of Reger's organ music.

In 1901 Reger moved to Munich, where he spent the next six years. His position in musical life was in some ways an uneasy one, since he was seen as a champion of

absolute music and as hostile, at this time, to programme music, to the legacy of Wagner and Liszt. He was successful, however, as a pianist and was gradually able to find an audience for his music. The period in Munich brought the composition of his *Sinfonietta*, of chamber music, and of fine sets of keyboard variations on themes by Bach and Beethoven, followed in later years by his well-known variations on a theme by Mozart.

1907 brought a change in Reger's life, when he took the position of professor of composition at the University of Leipzig, at a time when his music was reaching a much wider public. This was supported by his own distinction as a performer and concert appearances in London, St Petersburg, The Netherlands, and Austria, and throughout Germany. In 1911 he was invited by the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen to become conductor of the court orchestra, an ensemble established by Hans von Bülow and once conducted by Richard Strauss, at the outset of his career. Reger held this position until the beginning of the war, when the orchestra was disbanded, an event that coincided with his own earlier intention to resign. He spent his final years based in Jena, but continuing his active career as a

composer and as a concert performer. He died in Leipzig in May 1916 on his way back from a concert tour of The Netherlands.

The music of Max Reger has a special position in organ repertoire, and he is regarded by many as the greatest German composer of organ music since Bach. A Catholic himself, he nevertheless drew on Lutheran tradition and the rich store of chorales, the inspiration for chorale preludes, chorale fantasias and other works. The esteem in which his organ compositions were held even in his own time owed much to the advocacy of Karl Straube, also a pupil of Riemann and from 1902 organist at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig.

Reger's *Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 85, No. 4*, was the fourth of a set of works in this form, dating from 1904 and dedicated to the Berlin Cathedral organist Bernhard Irrgang. There is a certain chamber music quality about the *Prelude*, based on its opening motifs. The *Fugue* offers a short first subject, marked *pianissimo*, with the fifth voice entering in the pedals. A full close is followed by a second more chromatic subject, leading to a final combination of the two, with the dynamic climax in final bars over a dominant pedal.

The *Fifty-Two Easy Chorale Preludes on the most Common Protestant Chorales*, Op. 67, were written in 1902 and 1903 and first published in Leipzig in the latter year. The third of the three published albums, containing the last seventeen chorale preludes, was dedicated to Herrmann Gruner. *Vater unser im Himmelreich* (Our Father who art in Heaven) is based on the melody from Schumann's *Gesangbuch* of 1539, harmonized on various occasions by J. S. Bach. Reger uses echo effects, with each line of the hymn echoed at a higher register. *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her* (From Heaven above I hither come), its melody from the same early Lutheran *Gesangbuch*, is given a more elaborate treatment, marked *Sehr lebhaft* (Very lively) and in 12/8, with the melody appearing gradually in the upper part. *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (Awake, the voice is calling us), its late sixteenth-century melody familiar from Bach's harmonization, starts with a version of the chorale melody in the pedals, later to be heard in the upper part. It is followed by *Von Gott will ich*

nicht lassen (From God I will not depart). The chorale melody, also used with the text *Mit Ernst, o Menschenkinder* (With earnestness, O children of men), was taken from a secular French song, *Une jeune fille / De noble cœur* (A young girl / Of noble heart) and used as a hymn-tune in the sixteenth century. The melody is here heard in the pedals. *Warum sollt ich mich denn grämen* (Why should I then grieve) has a melody by Johann Ebeling, dating from 1666. Initially with dotted figuration in its accompanying texture, the melody is heard in the upper part, continuing in simpler rhythms until the dotted figuration returns. *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* (What God does is well done) takes a seventeenth-century melody adapted by the Jena cantor Severus Gastorius from a tune by the Leipzig musician Werner Fabricius. The melody is heard in the pedals in a lively G major prelude.

Reger wrote his *Prelude and Fugue in G sharp minor* in 1906. It has no opus number and was published in Leipzig in 1907. The *Prelude*, marked *Andante sostenuto*, starts very softly and uses the composer's characteristically chromatic musical language. The fugal subject too starts very softly in the tenor, answered by the alto and soprano before the entry of the subject in the pedals, the whole building to a massive climax before the conclusion over a dominant pedal.

Nos. 45 and 46 of the *Fifty-Two Easy Chorale Preludes* are preludes based on *Wer nur den lieben Gott lasst walten* (He who lets only dear God rule). The seventeenth-century melody by Georg Neumark is first heard in a minor mode and marked *Etwas langsam* (Rather slow), the melody in the upper part and then in the pedals. The second version has a melody in A major and is in a lively 12/8. *Werde munter mein Gemüte* (Be glad, my soul), for which there is an alternative text *Der am Kreuz ist meine Liebe* (On the cross is my beloved), is found in Johann Schop's *Himmliche Lieder* of 1642. The melody is heard in the upper part, a crescendo leading to triplet figuration, before the final dynamic climax. *Wer weiss, wie nahe mir mein Ende* (Who knows how near my end may be), with a tune by Georg Neumark, keeps the melody in the upper part. It is followed by *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (How brightly shines the morning star), its melody collected by

Philipp Nicolai in 1597, but of much earlier origin. The prelude starts slowly, the melody in the upper part, followed by a livelier section leading to a final triplet figuration. *Wie wohl ist mir, o Freund der Seelen* (How well it is with me, O friend of my soul), its melody from the *Geistreiches Gesangbuch* of 1704, is meditative, to be followed by the livelier rejoicing of *Jesus ist kommen* (Jesus is come), with top and bottom parts in canon. The work ends with *O wie selig* (O how blessed), the chorale melody by Johann Crüger, marked *Poco adagio* and bringing the whole set to a contemplative conclusion.

The *Chorale Fantasia on 'Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele'* ('Rejoice greatly, O my soul') was written in 1898 and dedicated to the organist Karl Straube. The *Introduction* starts *Vivacissimo* with a flourish, followed by a short *Adagio* chordal passage, before the *Vivacissimo* returns. The *Adagio* resumes, leading to an *Andante* fugal exposition, with a subject that returns from time to time

between some of the following variations. The F major chorale melody is now heard in the left hand, marked *Moderato* and accompanied by a semiquaver right-hand part on the third manual. The second verse has a varied D minor version of the chorale melody in the right hand, marked *Poco adagio* and with an elaborately chromatic accompanying texture. This leads to an *Allegro vivace* in B flat minor, in which the chorale melody, played in octaves, resumes its original key. A gradual *ritardando* is followed by an *Andante* variation, with the chorale melody varied in the pedals. The original key returns for an *Adagio con espressione* with the varied melody in the right hand. An *Andante* variation is introduced by the fugal motif. This is followed by a final *Andante maestoso* for the repeated first stanza of the chorale, ending in full chordal triumph.

Keith Anderson



Martin Welzel

Born in 1972 in Vechta, Germany, Martin Welzel received his musical training in Bremen from Michael Landsky, Wilfried Langosz and Käte van Tricht. He later studied with Daniel Roth, Wolfgang Rübsam, Kristin Merscher and Gerald Hambitzer at the University of Music in Saarbrücken, where he earned Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in sacred music and organ performance, as well as an Artist diploma in organ performance. He holds a DMA degree in organ performance from the University of Washington in Seattle, where he studied with Carole Terry. Martin Welzel's career has included numerous recitals in Europe and the United States, notably at Notre-Dame Cathedral and Saint-Sulpice in Paris, Washington National Cathedral, Meyerson Symphony Center and Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Stanford University, St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco, Berlin Cathedral, Ottobeuren Abbey and Helsinki Cathedral. In 2004, Martin Welzel and his wife, Alexandra Kertz-Welzel, formed the Emerald City Duo, exploring the repertoire of the nineteenth and twentieth century for organ and piano. www.emeraldcityduo.com

The Johannes Klais Organ, Trier Cathedral, Germany (1974)

Hauptwerk 2. Manual C – c^{'''}

Praestant	16'
Principal	8'
Hohlflöte	8'
Gemshorn	8'
Quinte	5 1/3'
Octave	4'
Nachthorn	4'
Terz	3 1/5'
Quinte	2 2/3'
Superoctave	2'
Cornett	5fach
Mixtur	5fach
Cymbel	3fach
Trompete	16'
Trompete	8'
Trompete	4'

Rückpositiv 1. Manual C – c^{'''}

Praestant	8'
Quintade	8'
Gedackt	8'
Principal	4'
Rohrflöte	4'
Octave	2'
Waldflöte	2'

Larigot	1 1/3'
Sesquialter	2fach
Scharf	4fach
Glockencymbel	2fach
Dulzian	16'
Cromorne	8'

Brustwerk 3. Manual (schwellbar) C – c^{'''}

Rohrflöte	8'
Praestant	4'
Blockflöte	4'
Nasard	2 2/3'
Doublette	2'
Terz	1 3/5'
Sifflet	1'
Acuta	4fach
Oberton	3fach
Hautbois	8'
Vox Humana	8'

Schwellwerk 4. Manual C- c^{'''}

Bordun	16'
Principal	8'
Lochgedackt	8'
Gamba	8'

Unda maris	8'
Octave	4'
Flute octaviante	4'
Salicional	4'
Flageolett	2'
Fourniture	6fach
Cor anglais	16'
Trompete	8'
Clairon	4'

Pedal C –g[']

Untersatz	32'
Principal	16'
Subbass	16'
Octave	8'
Spielpfeife	8'
Superoctave	4'
Flöte	4'
Hintersatz	5fach
Aliquotbass	4fach
Piffaro	2fach
Bombarde	32'
Posaune	16'
Trompete	8'
Schalmey	4'

Koppeln: RP-HW, BW-HW, SW-HW, BW-RP, SW-RP, SW-BW, RP-P, HW-P, BW-P, SW-P

Tremulanten: RP, BW, SW, PED

Röhrenglocken: HW

Windausslass-Ventile: HW, SW

Tastenarretierung: HW

1920 elektronische Setzerkombinationen, Registercrescendo (Walze)

Spieltraktur mechanisch, Registertraktur elektrisch, Betätigung der beiden Schweller mechanisch.

Martin Welzel, who also performs on Volumes 6 (8.557338) and 8 (8.570455) gaining *American Record Guide*'s praise as 'authoritative', performs on the splendid Johannes Klais Organ in Trier Cathedral. Although a Catholic, Reger nevertheless drew on the Lutheran tradition's rich store of chorales, the inspiration for his many preludes, fantasias and other works. Whether pulling out all the stops or exploring the instrument's more delicate colourings, Welzel demonstrates here why Max Reger is regarded as the greatest German composer of organ music since Bach.

Max
REGER
(1873–1916)

Organ Works Volume 10

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|--------------|---|--------------|
| 1–2 | Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 85, No. 4 | 9:22 |
| 3–8 | Fifty-Two Easy Chorale Preludes on the most common Protestant chorales, Op. 67, Nos. 39–44 | 18:02 |
| 9–10 | Prelude and Fugue in G sharp minor (1906) | 9:31 |
| 11–18 | Fifty-Two Easy Chorale Preludes on the most common Protestant chorales, Op. 67, Nos. 45–52 | 17:50 |
| 19 | Chorale Fantasia on 'Freu dich sehr, o meine Seeie', Op. 30 | 24:42 |

Full track details will be found on page 2 of the booklet

Martin Welzel, Organ
Johannes Klais Organ, Trier Cathedral



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