

God Save The King

HESSE: God Save the King; **KOHLER:** Austrian Folksong Variations; **KUHSTEDT:** March of the Priests; **STEHLE:** O Sanctissima; **PFRETZSCHNER:** Diligent Night Variations; **DE LANGE:** Sonata 4: III

Halgeir Schiager, org
Lawo 1102—73 minutes

A program of works by unfamiliar German composers who wrote between 1833 and 1879. They were influenced by the late classical and early romantic styles, performed their own works, and were considered influential in their time. All the pieces are theme and variations on well known melodies.

The last movement of De Lange's sonata, dedicated to the American organist Clarence Eddy, uses the 'Star-Spangled Banner'. Adolph Hesse (1809-1863) is probably the most familiar to organists. Known as the "Silesian Bach", he was considered one of Europe's leading organ virtuosos, and his repertoire included Bach's organ works—which at the time were seldom performed. In 1844 he took part in the dedication of the new organ at St Eustace in Paris, "wowing" the audience with his pedal technique.

The most substantial piece is by J. Gustav Eduard Stehle (1839-1915). It was dedicated to Liszt and consists of a fantasy, theme and variations, and fugal finale. It is a demanding work and employs a four-voice pedal part in the fantasy. Samuel De Lange (1842-1911) was also interested in pedal technique, writing a wonderfully virtuosic pedal passage near the end of the finale.

Schiager gives engaging and colorful performances of this interesting music, which are effective on the 2014 Hermann Eule organ in the Sofienberg Church in Oslo, Norway. Tonally, it is modeled on ones by the 19th Century German organ builder, Friedrich Ladegast, and perfect for this repertoire. A welcome addition to the extensive notes is the registrations for each piece.

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