

JOHANN SPETH

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

Ars Magna
Consoni et
Dissoni
Music for
Organ

Chiara Minali *organ*
Letizia Butterin *Gregorian Chant*

Johann Speth 1664 - after 1719
Ars Magna Consoni et Dissoni
Music for Organ

1. Toccata Prima oder Erstes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	5'00	10. Toccata Decima et ultima oder Zehendes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	3'29
2. Toccata Secunda oder Zweytes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	5'07	11. Partite diverse sopra l'aria detta la Todesca	7'35
3. Toccata Tertia oder Drites Musicalisches Blumen Feld	3'45	12. Partite diverse sopra l'aria detta la Pasquina	6'01
4. Toccata Quarta oder Viertes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	3'49	13. Partite diverse sopra la Spagnioletta	6'59
5. Toccata Quinta oder Fünfftes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	2'43	14. Magnificat Primi Toni	7'27
6. Toccata Sexta oder Sechstes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	4'23	15. Magnificat Secundi Toni	6'01
7. Toccata Septima oder Sibendtes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	2'33	16. Magnificat Tertii Toni	7'10
8. Toccata Octava oder Achtes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	3'03	17. Magnificat Quarti Toni	6'51
9. Toccata Nona oder Neundtes Musicalisches Blumen Feld	2'57	18. Magnificat Quinti Toni	7'14
		19. Magnificat Sexti Toni	7'28
		20. Magnificat Septimi Toni	6'45
		21. Magnificat Octavi Toni	7'38

Chiara Minali *organ*
 Letizia Butterin *Gregorian chant (in alternatim) (tracks 14-21)*

When **Johann Speth** applied for the job as organist at Augsburg Cathedral, he added his "*Ars magna consoni et dissoni*" to the submission, and was assigned the post on 4 November 1692.

Born in 1664 in Speinshart, about 150 km from Nuremberg, he was the son of Heinrich Speth, a teacher, and his wife Margareta (née Vichtl). Very little is known about his life prior to his appointment at Augsburg Cathedral, and even the date of his death is uncertain. There is, however, evidence that in 1705 he was also employed in the office of the Cathedral Chapter, and that in 1719 he was still alive and resided with his wife and a maid in Augsburg.

The "*Ars magna consoni et dissoni*", which is Speth's only composition to have come down to us, was later published by Lorenz Kroniger and Gottlieb Göbels Erben in Augsburg. The title may be a reference to the famous treatise by Athanasius Kircher, "*Musurgia universalis, sive ars magna consoni et dissoni*", which had been published in 1650. As the title page reveals, Speth's "*Ars magna*" is divided into three parts: ten toccatas (*Musicalische Blumen = Felder*), eight Magnificats and three series of variations. The work clearly reveals the influence of certain Italian composers, such as the variation built around a theme by Bernardo Paquini, the passage by Bernardo Storace in the "*Spagnioletta*" aria and a verse in the Magnificat (*quinti toni No.3*) by Alessandro Poglietti. Moreover, there are also evident references to coeval composers from southern Germany, in particular Georg Muffat and Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer.

The first part of the composition comprises the ten toccatas, which follow the order of the eight ecclesiastical modes plus the two "modern" keys with two flat and three sharp notes. In this they also reveal the influence of Muffat. The toccatas are relatively short and tend to be three-part in structure (toccata-fugato-toccata), with a fascinating variety of themes and pace.

Next comes the section devoted to the eight Magnificats in keys that reflect the succession of the eight ecclesiastical modes. Here Speth has recourse to the model provided by Kerll: each Magnificat consists of a prelude, five verses and a finale. The first and last verses are longer and composed in the toccata style, while the intermediate ones are generally fugue-like and short. They can be played in the “Alternatim” manner, which consists of performance of certain verses on the organ and others in Gregorian chant sung by a choir or soloist, in keeping with religious practice of the time.

The work ends with three partitas composed on the arias “*La Pasquina*”, *La Todisca*” and “*La Spagnioletta*”. They comprise a series of variations that clearly reveal the distinctive style and influence of coeval Italian composers.

© Chiara Minali



The Organ of the Parish Church of Santa Maria Assunta - Cavalese

Built in 2011 for the Parish Church of S. Maria Assunta in Cavalese, the new organ was constructed using the surviving case and pipes from the earlier organ by Joseph Balthasar Humpel of Merano, built in 1731-32. Various repaired and renewed in the course of time, the instrument has been reconstructed in the original style, adding new pipes to the existing ranks.

The manuals consist of 50 notes, ranging from C1 to D5 without the first C#; the pedalboard has 26 notes, ranging from C1 to D2, without the first C#.

The actions are entirely mechanical, and the keys of the manuals are suspended.

Arrangement	Rückpositiv	Pedal	Accessories
Grand Organ	Gedackt 8 ^{'*}	Subbass 16'	
Principal 8'	Rohrflöte 4'	Octavbass 8'	Manualkoppel
Rohrflöte 8 ^{'*}	Quintflöte 2' 2/3	Octavbass 4'	Koppel II/Pedal
Fivaro 8'	Principal 2 ^{'*}	Mixtur IV*	
Octav 4'	Zimbel II	Posaunenbass 16 ^{'*}	
Flaut 4'	Dulzian 8 ^{'*}		
Superoctav 2'		• entirely reconstructed ranks	
Quint 1' 1/3			
Mixtur II			
Cimpal II			
Horndl IV [soprani]			



Chiara Minali studied at the Dall'Abaco Conservatoire in Verona. In 2002 she graduated brilliantly in Organ and Organ composition under Alessio Corti. That same year she won first prize in the competition organized by the Accademia Filarmonica in Verona for newly graduated musicians. She then attended courses in Harpsichord, obtaining a first-class diploma in 2005 under Sergio Vartolo. This was followed in 2010 by a Masters Degree in harpsichord at the Bonporti Conservatoire under A. Bugatti. She has also attended master classes in organ under Michael Radulescu and in harpsichord under Murray, Bellotti, Baumont, Astronio, Bonizzoni and Baroni.

She played continuo in the early music course held at Brunico in 2005, at Villa Lagarina (Trento), and at the course in Baroque singing held by Lia Serafini in the province of Verona in 2013-2014. In September 2009 she won an award at the Terzo harpsichord competition, and the following year played with the Compagnia Virtuosa vocal ensemble for a production of Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas" in Pescara. She has also worked as harpsichord accompanist at the Monteverdi Conservatoire in Bolzano and the Dall'Abaco in Verona. From 1998 to 2007 she was titular organist at the church of San Giorgio in Braida (Verona), from 2007 to 2013 at the Church of the Redentore (Verona) and in 2019-2020 she was titular organist of the historic Bonatti organ at the parish church of San Tomaso Becket (Verona). From 2005 to 2017 she taught organ at the Istituto Diocesano di Musica Sacra in the same city.

Her career involves her in many concerts as a soloist and continuo player, collaborating with various instrumental and choral ensembles.

Chiara has recorded the Organ works of Benedetto Marcello (95277, Brilliant Classics), a 3 album box of Keyboard Works by Ignazio Spergher (95834, Brilliant Classics). The British magazine *Choir & Organ* gave it a 5 star rating and included it in the top 20 best albums of 2019. She has also recorded a 2 album set of Giovanni Battista Grazioli's 12 Harpsichord Sonatas Opp. 1 & 2 (95935, Brilliant Classics). *Fanfare Magazine* reviewed it defining Chiara's playing "...gently flexible and galant without being theatrical and phrases sound comfortable and natural..."



Letizia Butterin graduated in piano, harpsichord, pre-polyphony, organ and organ composition at the Conservatoires of Perugia, Rome, Venice, and the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music.

She regularly takes part in seminars and conferences in specialist subjects including Gregorian chant, the interpretation of ancient keyboard music, particular composers of organ music, the aesthetics and sociology of music, the physiology of performance technique and music for dance from the Middle Ages to the early nineteenth century.

She is titular organist at the Cathedral of S. Maria Assunta in Verona, and has held concerts in Italy, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, Hungary, Russia, Poland, Spain, Croatia and Vatican City.

In 2009 she was invited to the International Gregorian Festival in Watou, where she performed as a soloist

She has recorded 45 albums for the Fonè, Amadeus, Edizioni Paoline, Musica Dedicata, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Tactus, Melosantiqua, Dynamic and Brilliant Classics labels.

Her essay *Gregorian Chant* was included in the volume *Cipriano Cipriani - Olivetan Veronese Abbot of the Renaissance*, published by Il Prato Editore.

She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Italian Santa Cecilia Association.

A former teacher at the Conservatoires of Cosenza and Piacenza, she currently teaches at Bologna Conservatoire and at the Diocesan Institute of Sacred Music in Verona.



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