



ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA

Organ and orchestra

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I present my experience of preparing and playing with an orchestra, with an emphasis on technical and musical aspects. There are presented two organs in the European concert halls (Zagreb, Croatia and Gothenburg, Sweden) and examples from literature where the organ plays as a soloist instrument (A. Guilmant: Symphony Op.42. No. 1 and S. Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...”). The focus is on the practical aspects of the approach to creating interpretations, registration, dynamic, tempo, rubato, etc. Personal experiences described in words are supported by concrete examples from literature and recordings that present possibilities of realization. The purpose of this work is to consider technical and artistic aspects of playing with an orchestra, to improve the playing abilities of playing the organ with an ensemble, and to observe the technical situations and creative artistic ideas of interpretation.

Key words:

Music for organ and orchestra, music interpretation, playing with an orchestra, concert hall

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1. Introduction of the “Organ and Orchestra” project

During the formal education of the organist, I have been, like most of my colleagues, focusing on solo playing of different repertoire, liturgical playing and improvisation. I studied chamber music for three years, but I was never in the situation of playing the organ with a large symphony orchestra. Until three years ago. That was the first time a colleague asked me if I would like to play with an orchestra, and that sounded very interesting to me. However, I was aware of the complexity of the situation and the importance of good preparation. That's exactly why this project is useful for my personal development and approach to playing the organ with an orchestra because I have asked myself many questions related to the technical and artistic approach. I am writing about my experiences of preparation and performance, consider the process of preparing, and evaluate results for the purpose of progress. I believe that it is worthwhile to consider the process of preparation, personal experience and to be ready to consult with colleagues and to transfer this knowledge and skills.

The aim of the project is to present my own experience of preparing and working with an orchestra, two compositions for the organ and orchestra and two organs in two concert halls. The focus is on the practical aspects of the approach to creating interpretation, articulation, registration, dynamic, tempo, rubato, etc. Personal experiences described in words are supported by concrete examples from literature and ideas and possibilities of realization supported by examples in the form of recordings from my practicing sessions. There are discussions of the importance of these examples for several possible manners of realization.

1.1. Research questions, materials and methods

Some of the key questions are the ways in which I have been preparing for the performance with the orchestra and how to adapt technically and interpretatively. With the aim of getting to know some of the literature for organ and orchestra and the circumstances in which the compositions were created, I present and compare selected literature in which the organ is part of a symphony orchestra. I consider and discuss two pieces: Alexandre Guilmant: Symphony op. 42, no. 1 and Stjepan Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...”. My first contact with the organ version of the Sonata op. 42. no. 1 was several years ago, and this version is for the organ solo. After that, I had the opportunity to play a version of the Symphony op. 42. no. 1 that was written for symphony orchestra and solo organ. As I became interested in that area of music while playing with the orchestra, after the romantic Symphony by A. Guilmant, I decided to take another piece in a different style. This is how I got to know the neoclassical Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...” by S. Šulek, which in turn opened new aspects and interpretive ideas.

Although organs are most often found in churches, organs occupy a particularly important and almost indispensable place in many concert halls. These are usually large instruments that have a diverse and rich palette of sound colours. In settings like these the organ presents itself as the only instrument which can compete with a large symphony orchestra with its exceptional power and wealth of sound colours.

Therefore, it is not surprising that many composers included the organ in their symphonic works or entrusted it with a soloist role. In a separate chapter, I will refer specifically to the new organ in the Gothenburg Concert Hall and the organ in the “Vatroslav Lisinski” concert hall in Zagreb. These are two large instruments that are often used both as a soloist and as part of an orchestra. Since the symphonic repertoire that includes the organ is often performed in concert halls, the organist often also has experience playing in concert halls, although we usually play in churches. That's why I think it's necessary to consider the aspects of playing in different spaces that have different acoustic requirements. One of the goals is to develop the skill of adapting to play the organ in different spaces that have specific acoustical specificities. Technical aspects can be variable and fixed in nature. For example, what can I do as an organist in situations of a static nature, such as a fixed disposition and position of the organ and the acoustic parameters of the space. Also, what is very changeable is the way of playing and adaptation to a particular style, very organ and space. I analyse the scores and using concrete examples, offered ways of realization and discussed the important characteristics of a particular musical example.

In this thesis, I discuss and evaluate and discuss demonstration recordings and parameters such as articulation, phrasing and rubato. During the recording, I use two instruments that are placed in two different spaces. Two recordings are recorded on the large romantic organ in the Vasa church in Gothenburg, Sweden. Other recordings are recorded on Johannus electric organ on the Music Academy in Gothenburg, Sweden. One of the advantages of the electric organ is that the echo level can be adjusted. Therefore, in the same space, it is possible to have a simulation of a dry hall and a large acoustic church. The recordings proved to be valuable feedback and during the evaluation helped with progress in certain aspects on which they are focused.

1.2. Modern symphony orchestra – score order

In this chapter is presented a typical score order of a symphony orchestra with the purpose of understanding it and making it easier to understand with the upcoming musical examples. Although it is common practice to play from instrumental parts, professional musicians need to know how to read and understand an orchestral score. When we understand the orchestral score, we can better understand our own part and its role. Although playing and in-depth knowledge of scores is usually reserved for conductors, every member of the orchestra contributes to the music creation by knowing the musical structure and aspect of the piece. In addition to the positions of the instruments in the score, it is important to keep in mind the various transpositions (horns, clarinets...) that are specific for instruments. Let's simply conclude, by understanding the score, we understand written music.

When I was preparing a performance of Guilmant's Symphony op. 42. No. 1 and Šulek's Concerto for organ and orchestra "Memento...", I was listening many times to the performances with orchestral scores and observed what was happening "around" the organ part. I observed the structure and form of the piece, what was happening with the motives, themes, dynamics, and articulation of many instruments in the score. As a tool, I would even mark or colour individual part or melodic lines that allow me to find my way around more easily and provide clarity for following the music.

Below is the score order of a typical symphony orchestra. This table can help for the later examples.

Woodwind instruments: flute / piccolo oboe / English horn clarinet / bass clarinet bassoon / contrabassoon
Brass: horn (1 st and 3 rd , 2 nd and 4 th) trumpet trombone tuba
Percussion, tympani
Harp, celeste, organ
Strings: first violine second violine viola cello double bass

2. The organ in concert halls

As an organist, I spend a lot of time in churches, and therefore the way I play is adapted to playing in such a space. In this chapter, I am writing about the organs that we find in concert halls to consider the disposition, different sound and technical possibilities, such as a movable console. Some of the discussed questions will be what the role of the organ in concert halls is, why are these instruments mostly large, where are they located in the concert halls and what that means for the organist. I present two organs in the concert halls: Gothenburg Concert Hall, Sweden, and the “Vatroslav Lisinski” hall in Zagreb, Croatia. These are two large instruments that are used for solo playing and for playing with an orchestra. Large instruments refer to the fact that the instruments satisfy the size of the halls and can compete with a powerful symphony orchestra. Numerous and different registers enable the playing of the most diverse musical literature. Organs in concert halls are indispensable when performing numerous orchestral literature which is regularly found on the concert program.

The following quote from the book *Orchestral Performance* by Christopher Adev, talks about the uniqueness of each organ and the uniqueness of merging with space. The writer also emphasizes fixed intonation as one of the very important parameters that cannot be changed on the spot.

“The fixed nature of church, cathedral and concert hall organs, coupled with the specific knowledge of each instrument that is required to make best use of them, makes discussion of the few common characteristics unnecessary in this context as one is never likely to have a choice either of instrument or position. Suffice it to say that every instrument is unique in many aspects, not least in matters of tonal variation, immediacy of response, clarity and rang. It is unfortunate from the point of view of combining with an orchestra that, in all but rare cases, intonation can be added to the foregoing list.”¹

Why do we find mostly large instruments in concert halls? When we talk about the organ, we are almost always talking about the organ and the space in which it is located. The same instrument can fit and sound completely differently in a larger and more acoustic space or in a smaller and less acoustic space (I would also mention a detail like a full and empty hall or church). Given that concert halls are mostly large, a large and powerful instrument is really needed to fill that hall with sound and meet the requirements of playing with a large symphony orchestra. Accordingly, the organist adapts to the space, for example in terms of the length of the breaths, articulation; the amount of *legato* and *non-legato*...

Another extremely important component, also fixed and specific for each organ, are the registers – the disposition of an individual instrument. Nowadays, there is often an effort to make large instruments in concert halls that are suitable for playing different (historically-national) styles, which have different specificities. Although it's always a compromise in a way when we talk about playing different styles on one instrument, it's great possibility to have one instrument where an organist with a good knowledge of musical styles, performance practice and registration can choose suitable registers for playing different music styles.

And finally, let's mention the aesthetic-visual aspect of the organ in the concert hall. Even when the organ is not playing, it is physically present and is part of the permanent decor of the hall. In addition to good

¹ Adev, Christopher: *Orchestral Performance A Guide for Conductors and Players*, Faber & Faber, 2012., 154

functionality and sound quality, the visual aspect is an important feature of the organ in concert halls. Also, due to the various possibilities offered by the space, both acoustic and technical, such as a large podium for the ensemble, dancers, lighting, recording possibilities, etc., the organ in concert halls can be used and fit into different concerts, either as a solo instrument or as part of an ensemble.

I would briefly compare the appearance of the Lisinski concert hall's organ and the Gothenburg concert hall's organ. The Lisinski concert hall's organ is generally open (the pipes of the third manual are in the swell box), but it is possible to mechanically close it with planks when necessary. The organ in the Concert house in Gothenburg is entirely housed in swell box that can open and close during the performance. We can say that it is a practical aesthetic solution considering the multifunctionality of the hall, and during the performance it is possible to make a strong *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, with the indispensable visual effect of opening and closing the large blinds. I would also like to mention the two pedal registers, *Soubasse 32'* and *Flûte 16'*, located under the seats of the audience, which cause a slight vibration of the floor and seats. Both mentioned organs have a movable console, which enables additional flexibility and adaptation to the space.

2.1. The organ in the Gothenburg Concert House

The organ of the concert hall in Gothenburg was built by the Austrian company *Rieger Orgelbau*. The organ contains over 9000 pipes, 112 registers distributed over four manuals and two consoles, one mechanical and one movable. The process of installing the organ lasted from 2017 to 2021 and many experts participated in it, which resulted in an excellent instrument with many possibilities. The organ is regularly used for various solo and orchestral concerts.

G o t h e n b u r g K o n s e r t h a u s	I. Manual (Grand orgue)	II. Manual (Positif expressif)	III. Manual (Recit expressif)	IV. Manual (Orchestre expressif)	Pedale
	Montre 16' Bourdon 16' Montre 8' Flûte harmonique 8' Bourdon 8' Viole de gambe 8' Grosse Quinte 51/3' Prestant 4' Flûte 4' Grosse Tierce 31/5' Quinte 22/3' Doublette 2' Cornet (från c1) V Fourniture (2') V Cymbale (1') IV Bombarde 16' Trompette 8' Clairon 4' Saxophone (*) 8'	Quintaton 16' Principal 8' Flûte 8' Cor de nuit 8' Salicional 8' Unda maris (od c0) 8' Prestant 4' Flûte douce 4' Nazard 22/3' Doublette 2' Tierce 13/5' Larigot 11/3' Septième 11/7' Piccolo 1' Neuvième 8/9' Onzième 8/11' Cornet (from f0) V Plein Jeu (11/3') IV Basson 16' Trompette 8' Cromome 8'	Bourdon 16' Diapason 8' Flûte traversière 8' Bourdon 8' Viole de gambe 8' Voix céleste (from c0) 8' Octave 4' Flûte octavante 4' Nazard harmonique 22/3' Octavin 2' Tierce harmonique 13/5' Fourniture (2') IV Cymbale (1/2') III Bombarde 16' Trompette harmonique 8' Basson & Hautbois 8' Voix humaine 8' Clairon harmonique 4'	Violonbasse 16' Corno dolce 16' Violon 8' Flûte d'orchestre 8' Bourdon doux 8' Quintaton 8' Éolienne 8' Voix angélique (from c0) 8' Viole 4' Flûte d'echo 4' Piccolo 2' Harmonia aethera (22/3') III Clarinette (*) 8' Physharmonica (**) 16' Physharmonica (**) 8'	Basse acoustique [211/3'] 64' Soubasse 32' Flûte 16' Montre (GRAND ORGUE) 16' Soubasse 16' Grosse Quinte 102/3' Flûte 8' Principal 8' Grande Tierce 62/5' Quinte 51/3' Grande Septième 44/7' Flûte 4' Bombarde 32' Bombarde 16' Basson 16' Trompette 8' Clairon 4'
	(*) free reed (**) free reed with separate swell device (***) on high pressure (****) from Corno dolce 16' (ORCHESTRE)				
	SOLO EXPRESSIF ('floating')		BOMBARDE ('floating')		PÉDALE EXPRESSIF
	Cor d'harmonie 8' Violoncelle 8' Violoncelle céleste (from c0) 8' Cor anglais 8' Tuba magna 16' Tuba mirabilis 8' Tuba clairon 4'		Cor d'harmonie (SOLO) 8' Tuba magna (SOLO) 16' Tuba mirabilis (SOLO) 8' Tuba clairon (SOLO) 4' Trompette Royale (****) 8'		Basse acoustique (****) 32' Violonbasse (ORCH.) 16' Corno dolce (ORCH.) 16' Violoncelle 8 (SOLO) 8' Violon (ORCH.) 8' Corno dolce (****) 8' Physharmonica (ORCH.) 16' Tuba magna (SOLO) 16' Tuba mirabilis (SOLO) 8' Tuba clairon (SOLO) 4'

Table 1: *Rieger Orgelbau*, 2021.; 112 registers, 4 manuals and pedal

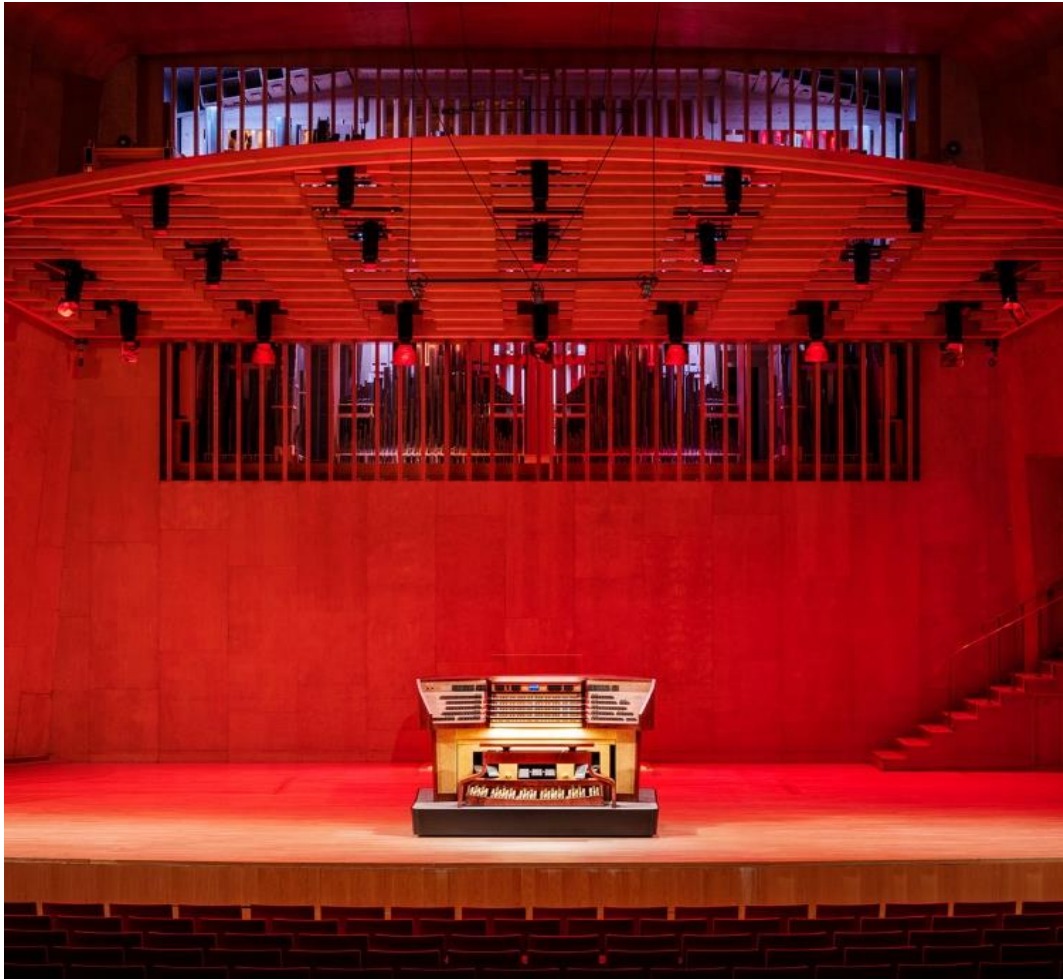


Photo 1: Organ in the Concert House in Gothenburg, Sweden

2.2. The organ in the “Vatroslav Lisinski” Concert House

The concert organ of the Vatroslav Lisinski Hall is the work of the German builder and company *Werner Walcker Mayer* and contains 66 registers distributed over four manuals and a pedal, two consols and 4,967 pipes. The organ was installed in the hall in 1974, after which it regularly participates in many concerts.

L i s i n s k i K o n s e r t h a u s	I. Manual (Hauptwerk)	II. Manual (Positiv)	III. Manual (Schwellwerk)	IV. Manual (Oberwerk)	Pedal
	Principal 16'	Pommer 16'	Hamprincipal 8	Gedackt 8	Untersatz 32'
	Gedackt 16'	Principal 8'	Salicional 8'	Quintaton 8'	Principalbass 16'
	Diapason 8'	Gamba 8'	Schwebung 8'	Viola 8'	Subbass 16'
	Gemshorn 8'	Gedackt 8'	Traversflote 8'	Principal 4'	Gedecktbas 16'
	Rohrflote 5 1/3'	Octav 4'	Ital. Principal 4'	Flote 4'	Octavbass 8'
	Octav 4'	Spitzflote 4'	Salicet 4'	Quintflote 2 2/3'	Flotenbass 8'
	Nachthorn 4'	Blockflote 2'	Offenflote 4'	Octav 2'	Nachthorn 4'
	Quinte 2 2/3'	Sesquialter II	Nasard 2 2/3'	Terz 1 3/5'	Choralbass 4'
	Superoctav 2'	Cornett V	Waldflote 2'	Larigot 1 1/3'	Choralbass 2'
Hohlflote 8'	Oberton IV	Mixtur V	Siffote 1'	Mixtur V	
Mixtur VI-VIII	Krummhorn 8'	Oboe 8'	Zymbel III	Bombarde 32'	
Scharf IV-VI	Schalmey 4'	Trompete 8'	Vox humana 8'	Posaune 16'	
Fagott 16'	Tremolo	Clarion 4'	Dulcian 8'	Trompete 8'	
Trompete 8'			Tremolo	Clarion 4'	

Table 2: *Werner Walcker Mayer*, 1974.; 66 registers, 4 manuals and pedal



Photo 2: Organ in the Concert House “Vatroslav Lisinski” in Zagreb, Croatia

3. Examples for solo organ:

In this chapter, two works will be presented, one by French composer A. Guilmant and one by Croatian composer, S. Šulek. To get to know the circumstances of the creation of the works, I looked for facts that could help me understand it. In addition to finding ways of interpretation and technical solutions, I think it is valuable to know the history of the work and the facts surrounding its creation. It helps to understand the style and the music language itself. Also, I included in the chapter basic formal analyses that makes it easier to understand the work, which is reflected in the final interpretive ideas and the work as a whole.

3.1.A. Guilmant: Symphony op. 42, no. 1

Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911) was a French organist, composer and pedagogue who occupies an important place in the anthology of organ music due to his rich opus. He received his first musical education from his father Jean-Baptiste, and later from Jacques Nicolas Lemmens. Succeeding Charles-Marie Widor, he was appointed organ professor at the Paris Conservatoire. He worked as a church organist and achieved a rich concert career around the world and is one of the founders of the *Schola Cantorum de Paris*.² The large instruments on which Guilmant very often played, such as those of Cavallé-Coll, with a multitude of colours and tongues, enable a diverse registrations and approach to organ music as symphonic, where the organ is approached as a symphony orchestra with many different colours and possibilities. Is clearly visible the mutual influences of the specificity of the French romantic organ and the composers who wrote music for such instruments. There is a version of the Sonata Op. 42 for organ solo and for organ and orchestra, entitled Symphony Op. 42. *Première symphonie pour orgue et orchestra*, op. 42. no. 1, that dates from 1878; Guilmant completed the orchestration in March of that year, and the premiere of the symphonic version took place on August 22, 1878, at the *Salle des Fêtes du Trocadéro*, where Guilmant played the organ.²

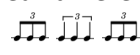
The piece is written in three movements: *Mestoso and quassi allegro*, *Pastorale* and *Finale, allegro assai*. The sharply punctuated rhythms of the *Maestoso* introduction seem like an homage to French baroque overtures, but what follows is not a fugue, then the first theme of the sonata form, in which the first theme is presented in pedal. In contrast to the character of the first theme, the second theme is calmer and more melodious. During the movement, the two themes and motifs are elaborated. The second movement is in a pastoral character, in three-part form, where the middle part is dominated by chorales with solo woodwind melodies. One oboe and two flutes evoke a nice pastoral atmosphere. The third movement is brilliant and energetic in the form of a sonata rondo. The minor and dark beginning of the sonata's dynamic third movement is resolved in the final part, the magnificent and solemn D major when the whole orchestra performs with the organ, *tutti*. The recording (*Video_tutti*), performed by the student symphony orchestra and me in the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Zagreb, Croatia, represents the solemn end of this Symphony. The aim of this recording is to present the balance of the organ played by the tutti organ together with the tutti orchestra. Also, it can be seen from the video that

² Grove Music Online, s.v. "Guilmant, (Félix) Alexandre," accessed 1/3/2024.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.ub.gu.se/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.11996>

the organ and the orchestra are very close and there is no sound delay. It is a medium-sized church with medium acoustics that nicely supports the performance but does not muddy or distort the sound.

3.2. S. Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...”

Stjepan Šulek (1914-1986) was a Croatian composer, conductor, violinist and pianist. Šulek is the composer of the *Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...”* from 1974, written for the ceremonial opening inauguration of the organ in the Vatroslav Lisinski Hall (the hall is opened in December 1973). The concert was premiered by the Zagreb Philharmonic at Vatroslav Lisinski Hall on June 24, 1974, with soloist organist Anđelko Klobučar and conductor Stjepan Šulek.³

The Concerto consists of three movements: *Fantasia* (with fugue), *Illusione* and *Finale*, which are connected in a kind of narrative. In addition to music, there is also a non-musical context. We come across admonitions addressed to the human species such as the call to humanity and peace, which were ideas that we find in Šulek's opus. There is a picture of peace, gentleness and tranquility presented as *Illusione*, while in the *Finale*, which is a freely conceived double fugue, we can hear different "war" references, especially in the 2nd fugue where it occurs and the specific rhythm figure  (S-O-S, according to Morse code) presented at the beginning, as well as at the end of the *Finale*, where it is heard amplified in the brass section. The first fugue of the finale has a theme based on the B-A-C-H motif, which, together with the material in the first and last movement, as well as the final bars of the Concert, present Šulek's references to Johann Sebastian Bach and his unique organ idiom.


In the following paragraphs, I will write a short analysis of the work and some key elements that are important for music interpretation.

The first movement of the *Concerto, Moderato assai*, begins with an ascending passage in D minor natural in the first violins, which is immediately followed in the second bar by the organ with a D minor chord in *ff* dynamics on the main manual and continues with characteristic trio rhythms, the ascending (later and descending) movement of parallel sixths, chordal solutions (diminished seventh chord dominates) and several dissonant chords. A four-part fugue (atonal four-beat theme) follows in the organ section, after which the fugue materials are performed in different orchestral sections. Furthermore, Šulek entrusts the organ with an interesting effect – the bell effect, *Come campanelli*, where in *staccato* articulation and light sparkling registration (8' 4' 2' 1'), the split chords evoke small bells. These bells are a kind of counterpoint to strings, which mostly have material derived from the fugue. Occasionally, chordal progressions and solo parts appear in the organ section. Before the reappearance of the first theme, which begins the piece, the fugue theme appears in the organ pedal, and immediately after its performance, the organ and orchestra enter with a D minor chord. The movement ends with a gentle calm and decrescendo in C minor, and the last thing that comes are the tympani strikes in *pp* dynamic.

In the 2nd movement, *Ilusione*, with the tempo marking *Adagio non troppo*, is presented an atmosphere of peace and well-being, lightness, and tranquillity. At the very beginning, the choral appears in the brass ensemble, *espressivo*. In the organ section comes parallel sextachords (on the long pedal tone) and a

³ Croatian Music Information Center, accessed 2/3/2024., <https://mic.hr/quercus/#/works/10626>

melody theme appears with chordal accompaniment. The last appearance of the melody theme is in the part of the organ pedal, and it is doubled with the parts of the cello and double bass, which increases the warmth, volume, and colour of the sound. The movement abounds in fine nuances of *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, and the dynamics of *pp*, *p*, *mp* prevail. The movement ends with the arpeggio of C major in the harp part, in *pp* dynamic. The following *attaca* is a completely contrasting; rhythmic, loud, and powerful *Finale*.

In the *Finale*, marked *Allegro moderato*, there is a freely conceived double fugue and we can hear various war references, strong rhythmic motifs, especially in the 2nd fugue with marching elements where a specific rhythmic figure appears , "S-O-S". The presented motif also appears at the end, strongly in the brass section. The very beginning of the movement is characterized by three main elements: a strong tremolo on the drum, trumpet signals in a specific "SOS" rhythm and gradual *crescendo*, and the B-A-C-H motif in the trombone section. In addition to the dynamic *crescendo*, there is also a rhythmic *crescendo*, namely after six expressions of the rhyming "SOS" motif, two large triplets follow, and there is an octave in the trumpet section. This is followed by a dramatic organ solo, *quazzi cadenza*, that begins with the entry of the pedal, in the form of split chords, major and minor triplets and general accumulation of sound and dissonance. The first fugue is four-part (like the second too), based on a triplet rhythm, with frequent gradual movement and the motif B-A-C-H. The motif B-A-C-H appears in different rhythms and note values and with different instruments during the movement. The theme of the second fugue contrasts with the first – it is based on longer note values and at the beginning characteristic intervals of a major seventh and a very dissonant interval – tritone. After the performance of both fugues, in the third part, the themes of the first and second fugues are opposed in the organ section. Towards the end, large and small triplets contrast in an interesting way, which was anticipated already at the very beginning of the movement. The movement is somehow rounded off with a *quasi candza* and three very strong and dissonant chords. Before the end of the movement, there is a short sound decline and calm, but the dramatic and unpredictable atmosphere remains. At the very end, in the organ section, there is a descending progression of dissonant chords on the pedal tone (the same progression that ends the introductory part of the first movement), after which it resolves into a long and stable D major chord; the orchestra plays *tutti* in *ff* dynamic, the organ is in octave position in *ff* dynamic.

4. Performing practice and interpretation

In this chapter, I will write about the approach to compositions and music realisation, the way of articulating, registering, using agogics, and acoustic requirements of the space and organ. Based on examples from the music literature, I will explain some personal experiences closely related to interpretation and technical performance. Ideas and possibilities of realization are supported by concrete examples in the form of recordings from my practicing sessions with special references to the problems of articulation, rubato using and acoustics of different spaces.

The organ, as an instrument of constant tone volume, often requires articulation dynamics and deftly phrasing, where the two very important elements are weight manipulation - closely related to articulation, and time manipulation - closely related to rubato. When it comes to manipulating time, it is good to be aware of our personal perception of time, which is not always completely the same and it is conditioned by some physiological reactions in the body. For example, from personal experience and conversations with colleagues, it turned out that the heart rate changes during a public performance. At a performance, the pulse often speeds up a bit, what can result in a feeling of nervousness or a faster performance. Recordings of performances were important feedback to me in making me aware of this feeling.

Each space where the organ is located has specific acoustic requirements and specific position of instrument. There is often a distance between the console and the pipes, or between the pipes and the orchestra. Sometimes, because of the distance between the organist and orchestra, it is necessary to play a little forward to be together with the orchestra. If it is necessary to play a little forward, this does not mean rush, but constantly being slightly ahead. In concert halls, these situations related to the positions of musicians, are usually quite good, but if there is a longer distance, it is important to estimate how far forward to play so that the whole ensemble is together. The sound delay is even bigger if the organ action is pneumatic. From my experience, I can say that in such situation with the distance, everything could sound wrong from the organist's position. However, the conductor or other relevant person, assistant conductor for example, can confirm that the sound and the balance in the space are good.

The organ is an instrument that has a very large palette of different sound colours that are often inspired by orchestral instruments. Therefore, when playing the organ, we can often audibly imagine how it would be played or articulated by another instrument. The organ sound of the romantic organ is inspired by the orchestral sound; therefore, knowledge of orchestral instruments implies a better knowledge of organ sound and the art of registration. Orchestral approach to playing the organ can be such that we present the orchestral sections and specifics of the instruments (different sections). It can be useful to hear and understand the orchestral colours, possibilities, and ways of articulation with the different instruments that we find in the symphony orchestra. The organist as a conductor leads different parts and sections (registration, articulation, dynamic and character). For example, we can be inspired and play *string legato* (close to *violin legato*, fat tone of cello and double bass), imagine colour and softness of woodwinds, signals that often occur with brass, articulation and character of trombones or horns etc. Brass instruments often have short notes in music literature, a kind of signals, that are very natural for those instruments. Applying all that knowledge and actively listening to orchestral performances have helped me in better interpretation of organ music, especially the romantic music that is close to symphonic music.

4.1. Examples from Symphony op. 42. no. 1. for organ and orchestra by A. Guilmant

As the first musical example, I will present and discuss a theme which comes in the organ pedal after the introductory part in the first movement, and then is carried out and developed in the orchestral sections. It is a recognizable, harmonically defined theme with clear and regular phrases. Phrasing is one of the very important characteristics of music interpretation and one of the definitions of phrases is quoted in the next sentences. “The art of performing music in a way that allows each phrase to be conceived as a single unit. This involves breathing in the correct places, crescendoing and decrescendoing in the correct places, and using rhythm, dynamics, and musicianship to give the music shape.”⁴ The flow of the phrase and its direction can be influenced by the dynamic, harmonic, and metric sequence.

Speaking of phrasing, below are two examples from the Guilmant's Symphony op 42., first movement, pedal solo, from two different editions. In *example 1*, in the score of the Symphony version, phrasing marks are not included, while in the edition of the organ Sonata, *example 2*, they are. In this pedal solo, the basic type of articulation would be *legato*. Given that it is a large octave and a lot of organ sound, there is no need for very short notes. Moreover, to short articulation could be dangerous for the speech of the organ pipe. The following two recordings refer to that.

The first recording (*Video_1*) presents that too short articulation in the pedal is not a good option because the organ does not pronounce well. I tried a shorter articulation with the aim of testing the melodic line to be clearly articulated and pronounced in the big acoustic. But in this case the speech was not satisfactory. Due to the large volume of the pipes, it takes a little more time to fill the pipes with air and reproduce the tone. The speed of pronouncing a tone depends on the nature of the pipes and the wind pressure of the organ (higher pressure means faster pronunciation and vice versa).

The second recording (*Video_2*) presents the articulation in the pedal in which I tried to achieve a quality pronunciation of the instrument, and while playing I tried to be aware of the directions of the phrases, for example moving upwards towards the highest note or moving downwards towards the bass. Dynamically, I play slightly longer notes when I want to get a *crescendo*, and to get a slight *decrescendo*, I play shallower and without accents. That way of playing from the second recording proved to be good for articulation and pronunciation of all tones.

⁴ *OnMusic Dictionary*, s.v. “phrase,” accessed 6/5/2024., <https://dictionary.onmusic.org/>

Allegro. (♩ = 96)

Example 1: A. Guilmant: Organ symphony Op. 42. No. 1;
pedal solo, the first theme that comes after the introduction

Allegro (♩ = 96)

Example 2: A. Guilmant: Organ sonata Op. 42. No. 1;
pedal solo, the first theme that comes after the introduction

After presenting the first theme in the organ pedal, the same theme with the same phrasing is taken over by the orchestra:

The image displays two pages of a musical score, numbered 8 and 9. The score is written for a large ensemble, including organ and orchestra. The organ part is shown in the upper staves, and the orchestral parts are in the lower staves. The music is in a major key and 4/4 time. The organ part begins with a series of chords and a melodic line in the pedal. The orchestral part enters with the same melodic line in the strings. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *divisi*. The organ part is marked with a large 'A' at the beginning of the first system. The orchestral part is marked with a large 'A' at the beginning of the second system. The organ part ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The orchestral part continues with the same melodic line.

Example 3: A. Guilmant: Organ symphony Op. 42. No. 1;
“A part”, the first theme comes in the orchestra

When preparing a registration and a dynamic plan, these are some of the guidelines that I find useful to follow:

- balance of organ with orchestra volume and amount of sound against the size of the hall
- balance between hands and pedals
- balance between the accompanying part and the soloist part
- saturation and brightness of the sound
- working with swell boxes

The swell boxes on the organ enable a very fine and gradual dynamic shading, which is particularly audible at low dynamics. But it is possible to make significant differences. For example, if we play on the first manual on *mf* registration, to which the second and third are connected, with a lot of registers, it is possible by suddenly opening the second and third manual, to get a strong *crescendo* and a significant dynamic difference.

The next parameter that I will discuss in the chapter is rubato, and some thoughts that define rubato are: “A practice common in romantic compositions of taking part of the duration from one note and giving it to another. It involves the performer tastefully stretching, slowing, or hurrying the tempo as she/he sees fit, thus imparting flexibility and emotion to the performance.”⁵ I would also add that nuances in dosage work wonders.

The next *Example 4*, the organ solo part marked *G* in the score, can be used as an example of how to use the rubato. The example is described in words in this paragraph and supported by two recordings (*Video_3*, *Video_4*). Rubato could be used for the purpose of slightly emphasizing the intrusion of the theme in the fugato, developing the crescendo and emphasizing the melody climax. Nevertheless, towards the end of the solo part, by stabilizing the tempo, it can be significantly facilitated and ensure the coming intrusion of the orchestra. This soloistic fugato is followed by *piu animato*, which is more rhythmic, and the chords in the organ part seem to represent the solemn exclamations of the bombards. The first recording of this part (*Video_3*) shows a performance that is more stable in tempo. During the second realisation (*Video_4*) I used more rubato and tried to emphasize the melodic lines more, especially the melody in the soprano and its climax on the highest note. After several listening performances I can conclude that both versions are successful and applicable regardless of personal preferences or the feeling in the moment of the performance.

⁵ *OnMusic Dictionary*, s.v. “rubato,” accessed 6/5/2024., <https://dictionary.onmusic.org/>

Example 4: A. Guilmant: Organ symphony Op. 42. No. 1;
 “G part”, a tempo

In the next two paragraphs, I would like to point out several music stations that I believe are important for the interpretation of the second and third movements.

Already the name of the second movement *Pastorale* refers to the character and atmosphere. The organ starts as a soloist and later strings and woodwinds join in. In this section, special attention could be paid to fine dynamic shading – registration and using swell boxes. Most of the time during the performance of this movement, the right foot was on the pedals to control the dynamics of the second and third manual. Regarding registration, the flutes will perfectly present the pastoral atmosphere, while the organ strings registers will harmonize nicely with the strings in the orchestra. When articulating, *expressive legato* seems like a good option because it is close to the strings and the character of movements. During the solo parts by other orchestral instruments, the organ is the chordal accompaniment. In such situations, I tried to listen and follow a solo instrument that will express its melodic lines expressively.

Most of the third movement, *Allegro assai*, is motoric and fast (first and third part), while the middle part is contrasting, somewhat calmer. The registration is mostly *f* and *ff*, and tempo is relatively fast. In this case, proved useful to feel the pulse, breathe properly and pay attention to the first beat in the bar. It was practicing with a metronome that helped stabilize music pulse. In that process, I made sure to be active and precise even when there was no metronome.

4.2. Examples from the Concert “Memento!...” for organ and orchestra by S. Šulek:

In this paragraph I will write some reviews of articulation and musical realization from Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...” by Stjepan Šulek. Examples are presented with extracts from the score, and some are discussed and supported by recordings with several possible realizations. Special emphasis will be placed on two examples played in two different acoustics with more and less reverberation.

In the *Example 6* (below) is presented four-parts fugato from the first movement, with a mark *a tempo*. In the score, the articulations that can be played are already indicated. The registration template can be respected and adapted according to the instrument and space requirements.

In the following two recordings (*Video_5*, *Video_6*), I perform the fugato in two different versions. The aim of this recordings is to consider performances with two different acoustic characteristics. The first version (*Video_5*) is in the conditions of a “dry” room, and the second in the conditions of bigger acoustics, for example a large church. In the first recording, when I played in a room acoustic, I tried actively articulate, but in general the articulation is close to the keys, without gaps between tones. In the second version (*Video_6*), in the conditions of the acoustic space, I tried actively articulate and play more openly in order to better understand the voices in the fugue. I used a slight rubato for a more musical and interesting performance, but I never stray too far from the set tempo.

2 a tempo

First system of musical notation. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. A yellow box labeled "SOLO" is placed above the first measure. A registration box above the treble clef contains the text "I. 16' 8' 4' 2'". The music consists of a complex rhythmic pattern in the bass line and a melodic line in the treble.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece with similar rhythmic and melodic textures.

Third system of musical notation, featuring more intricate melodic lines and rhythmic patterns.

Fourth system of musical notation. A registration box below the bass clef contains the text "16' 8' 4'". The music continues with complex textures.

Fifth system of musical notation. A registration box above the treble clef contains the text "III. Fl. 8' 4'". A dynamic marking "mp" is present. A registration box below the bass clef contains the text "16' 8' III / Ped.". The music continues with complex textures.

Sixth system of musical notation. A registration box above the treble clef contains the text "II. Fl. 8' 4'". The music continues with complex textures.

The image displays a musical score for the first movement of S. Šulek's Concerto for organ and orchestra, "Memento!...". The score is in 3/4 time and features several instruments: Clarinet 1 & 2 (Cl. 1.2.), Flute I (Fl. I.), Organ (ORG.), Violin I (V-ni I), Violin II (V-ni II), Viola (V-le), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The Organ part is highlighted with a yellow box. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *pizz.* (pizzicato). The tempo is marked *a tempo*. The score is divided into measures, with a large number '3' indicating the start of a section.

Example 6: S. Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra "Memento!...",
I. Fantasia, fugato, *a tempo*

Third movement, *Finale*, with the tempo marking *Allegro moderato*, the attacca appears after the second movement, with a strong drum beat and a signal in the trumpet part, and then other brass instruments. This is followed by a dramatic organ solo, *quasi-cadenza*, followed by *a tempo* marking.

In the *Example 7* (below) is presented *quasi cadenza*, which appears after a short and dramatic orchestral part at the very beginning of the third movement. The following two recordings (*Video_7*, *Video_8*) show two different ways of performing the *Solo cadenza* with a focus on the amount of rubato and dramatic character. In the first recording (*Video_7*), I tried to play a bit more restrained and regular in tempo, while in the second (*Video_8*) I gave more freedom, more rubato and more time while listening to the chords. After the evaluation of both recordings, I am more satisfied with the version with more rubato, because as a result, there is the dramatic character and the accumulation of sounds and dissonances, what is very compatible with a powerful and sonorous organ sound. Also, later in the movement, appear very precise rhythmic figures, so this *cadenza* is an interesting and striking contrast.

FINALE

Allegro moderato

1. 2.
Cor.

3. 4.

1. 2.
Tr. be

3.

1. 2.
Tr. bni

3.

Tamb.
Piatto

Allegro moderato

ORG.

1 quasi Cadenza (in tempo)

SOLO

ORG.

ORG.

ORG.

Example 7: S. Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra “Memento!...”, III. Finale

In the following *Example 8*, excerpt from the third movement, rhythm is in the foreground and the drum has a constant rhythmic figure, *rhythmic ostinato*. Accordingly, I adjust my way of playing, paying attention to the stability of the pulse and metrics. During the practice of this section, I used a metronome in such a way as to practice first a little slower, and then at the final tempo. I wanted to be sure of the precision of the performance and the stability of the rhythm.

In these examples we can also find the several "B-A-C-H" motifs. The first one is in the beginning of the third movement (*example 7* above), in the trombone part. This same motif appears later in the movement in the orchestra's part and in the organ, both in its basic form (marked in the example, two bars before 23) and transposed (e.g. g-fis-a-as, mark 23) and is even the main element of the first fugue which is based on triplet rhythm.

The image displays two pages of a musical score, labeled 22 and 23. The top page (measure 22) shows percussion parts (Timp., Tamb., Mar., Tarn-tarn, Piatto, Cassa) and an organ part (ORG.). The organ part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets. The bottom page (measure 23) continues the percussion and organ parts. In measure 23, a specific rhythmic motif in the organ part is highlighted with a yellow box, representing the "B-A-C-H" motif. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (normale, f, mf), articulation (accents), and phrasing slurs.

Example 8: S. Šulek: Concerto for organ and orchestra "Memento!...",
III. Finale, from part 22

5. Cooperation with an accompanist and a conductor

In addition to the collaboration with the orchestra and the conductor, during the process of preparing a solo performance with the orchestra, we often have an opportunity to collaborate with the accompanist. An accompanist is usually an assistant conductor or pianist who rehearses parts or roles with the soloists and choir at the piano.

My experience working with an accompanist during the preparation of Guilmant's Symphony op. 42. No. 1 last year was extremely useful and productive and enables quality preparation before final rehearsals with the orchestra or the whole ensemble. While working with the accompanist, as a soloist, I have had the opportunity to set up and secure my part and to practice intrusions after breaks. Also, with the sound of the piano, I would often actively imagine the sound of an orchestral instrument or the whole orchestra, which was inspiring and somehow fun. Working with an accompanist allowed me to play the composition as a whole even before working with the orchestra and stimulated some new ideas. It helped me to go to rehearsals with the orchestra more confidently and I already had an idea of the whole piece that I was performing.

Although it may seem obvious, watching the conductor and understanding his signs and movements is very important, almost indispensable when it comes to a large performing ensemble. As already mentioned, it is often the case that the organ (the whole instrument or just the organist) is physically distant or separated. Sometimes a mirror or a screen connected with the camera is used to help. We can try to estimate the distance of the players or instruments in which the sound is created and find the best way to sound as one or try to estimate how much the delay of the orchestra is due to the hand of the conductor.

Before rehearsals with the orchestra, the soloist and the conductor usually meet and agree on the details of the performance. This part of the work has always been and remains particularly interesting and inspiring for me! In this phase of the preparing, I try to present my interpretive ideas, agree them with the conductor's, and find the best way to realize them together. Here, it is important to listen to and consider the views and experiences of the conductor, who has an in-depth knowledge of the way the orchestra functions and reacts. Some of the important things to coordinate with the conductor are tempo; initial, final and changes, ways of giving tempo, unit of measures and various interpretive ideas.

Mutual communication, cooperation and trust are very important in this work process. Conductors often have an individual way of approaching and working with ensembles, but one of the common aims is mostly quality and productive use of time. Therefore, high-quality preparation before orchestral rehearsals affects the quality and productivity of the rehearsals, and with a wise organization of time, it is possible to prepare the performance very well and successfully.

6. Conclusion

Numerous situations are presented and explained in the thesis to achieve a better understanding of the complex and inspiring approach to playing the organ with an orchestra. The organ can be played as part of an orchestra or as a soloist with the orchestra, which requires a good knowledge and practice of the performed piece, but also the characteristics of the organ itself and the space. A significant part of the sound quality of the organ, as well as the entire ensemble, is largely defined by the acoustic parameters of the space, as well as by the placement or spatiality of the instruments themselves in the ensemble. Precisely because of these acoustic requirements, the specificity of each individual organ and the space in which it is located, it is necessary to adjust the way of playing. This manifests itself in the adjustment of articulation, breaths, registration, dynamics, tempo, etc.

Organ, the queen of instruments, is the only instrument that can compete with a large symphony orchestra with its exceptional power and wealth of sound colours. It is not surprising that many composers included the organ in their magnificent symphonic works, entrusting it with the role of an orchestral instrument or a virtuoso soloist role. Therefore, by considering the entire score and our section, stylistic characteristics, and the instrument together with the space in which it is located we have at our disposal, it allows us a quality performance.

As an aid in the preparation of the interpretation, the recordings provided can be very useful, as they provide direct feedback to the objective unit of time. Then we can focus and analyse different parameters that are part of the artistic interpretation and technical challenges. Through this project, I realized the importance of special focus on the articulation in spaces of different acoustics, the realization of phrasing and rubato, the understanding of the score and other practical situations that an organist playing with an orchestra may encounter. Evaluating the experimental recordings, I concluded that it is important to play more *legato* in spaces with drier acoustics, and more open articulation in rooms with great acoustics. At the same time, care should be taken that the organ has a good speech and sound quality appropriate for the space.

I would like to end with the thought that we as quality musicians, we simultaneously have the quality of a solo player and a team player, since a professional musician is mostly expected to do both. With a responsible and creative approach and quality technical and musical preparation before coming to the rehearsals with the orchestra, we significantly contribute to productivity, quality, and a pleasant working atmosphere. And finally, through self-evaluation of work, we grow...

7. Literature, image sources and recordings:

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Image sources:

Photo 1: the official site Gothenburg Symphony,
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Photo 2: the official site Concert hall Vatroslav Lisinski,
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