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CITIES OF
HISTORICAL
ORGANS

letter of application

Altenburg, Germany



City of Altenburg

Altenburg is a small city with a population of 35,000 right in the heart of Germany. It is based 25 miles south of Leipzig which can be reached comfortably by a direct train line.

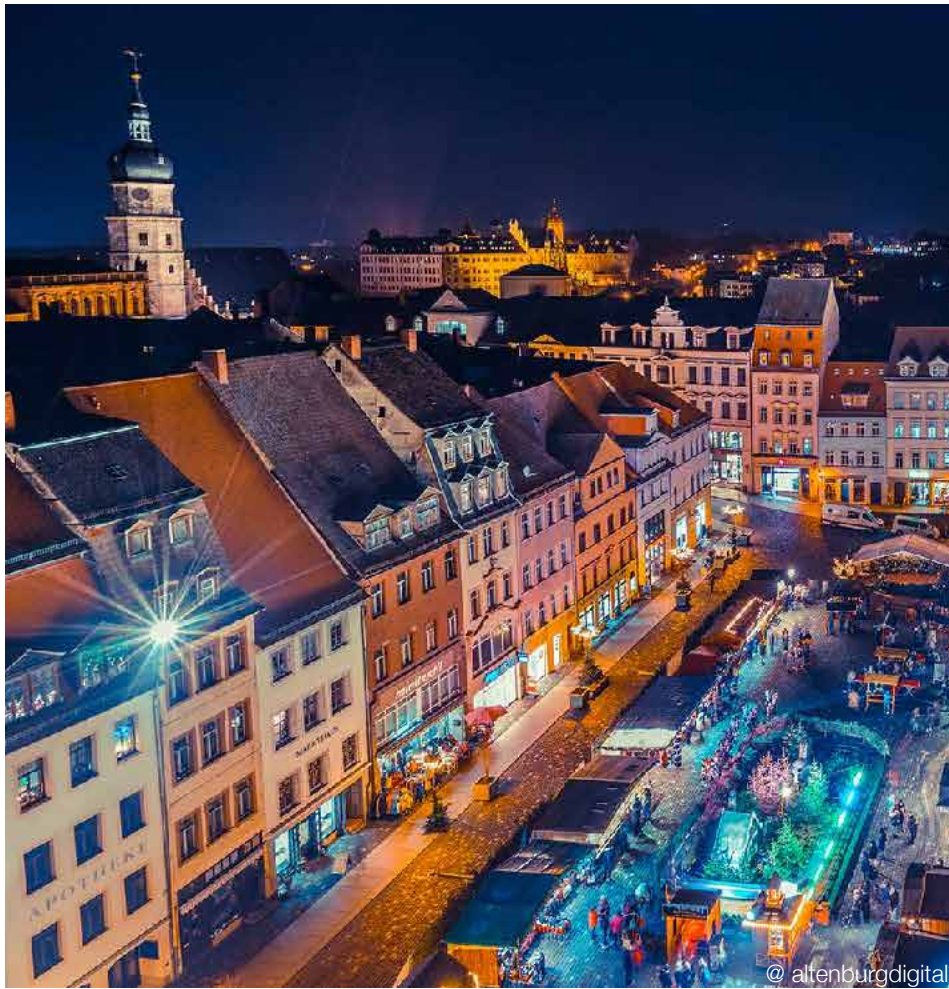
Altenburg was firstly mentioned in 976. The city center of Altenburg within the former wall has a planned grid of 12th/13th century origin. Since the 17th century, Altenburg has been the residence of different Ernestine duchies, of whom the Saxe-Altenburg persisted until the end of monarchy in Germany in 1918. Industrialisation reached Altenburg and the region quite early in the first half of the 19th century and flourished until the Great Depression around 1930.

During the 19th and early 20th century, Altenburg saw a construction boom and the town enlarged to all directions, particularly north and east towards the new railway station (opened in 1878). Its time as a state capital until 1918 led to many interesting public and private buildings in Gründerzeit style. Later, the town lost some of its importance and became a simple district capital in Thuringia.

World War II left Altenburg unscratched, so all historic buildings are preserved. Buildings' maintenance was neglected during the East German period but after the German reunification, most of the main sights and historic buildings were refurbished.

But where will Altenburg be in future? Major André Neumann showed his vision "Altenburg 2030" shortly after taking office. The concept involves a holistic approach connecting the history of Altenburg with modern culture, new infrastructure and making the city a place worth to live in.

Altenburg will invest €60 million for the redevelopment of museums, the castle hill area and the theatre in the next 5 years. They will develop the tourism sector with a newly designed Spielwelt (playing world) in the heart of the city. By 2030, Altenburg expects 250,000 visitors every year and we will show our organ landscape to them.



The unique central German organ culture within a 15 minutes walk through Altenburg

The central German organ landscape is unique in its character and relevance and is known and appreciated worldwide. Especially in the 18th, 19th and 20th century, the organ music from this area of Germany was – alongside the organ building – ground-breaking not only in Germany but worldwide. Composers as Johann Sebastian Bach, Franz List or Max Reger created their masterpieces in this area - music which is the heart of organ repertoire of most organists until today. Perfectness and development of organ building and organ music inspired each other in central Germany for centuries and affected the cultural identity of the country and its church. Central German organs never sound rigid, they sound warm, alive, emotional and flexible, short: they touch the soul.

It needs historically authentic instruments from those single epochs, to understand and preserve this tradition. In this view, Altenburg's organs landscape is perfect, as there are three representative organs from im-

portant central German organ builders, representing an ideal epochal chronology: The Trost organ at the castle church (1739), the Ladegast organ in St. Bartholomew's Church (1881) and the Sauer organ in friars church (1905). The charisma of this organs is supplemented by very interesting organs in the direct neighbourhood.

This unique organ ensemble makes the fascination for central German organ culture come alive, hands it down to coming generation and illustrates its actuality and its enormous future potential.

Altenburg's organ landscape represents both, the capstone of baroque organ building in Thuringia and the progression of central German organ building in ensuing centuries. Altenburg supplements Freiberg's focus on activities around the great Saxonian and central German baroque organ builder Gottfried Silbermann.



ORIGIN

Trost Organ in the Castle Church

Tobias Gottfried Heinrich Trost's organ in the castle church of Altenburg forms – together with other remaining organs by Trost – the climax of baroque organ building in Thuringia. This organ represents a unique world of sound. The organ is thoroughly connected to Johann Sebastian Bach, who was rooted in this special tradition of building organs in Thuringia. This tradition of organ building in Thuringia is clearly different from the one in Northern Germany as from Gottfried Silbermann's style of organ building. Bach's ideal of Thuringian organ building is uniquely visible in Altenburg.

1735–1739: Trost, organ builder at the court of Altenburg, constructed the great organ at the castle church.

1737: Silbermann visits the building site and speaks in high terms of organ and organ builder.

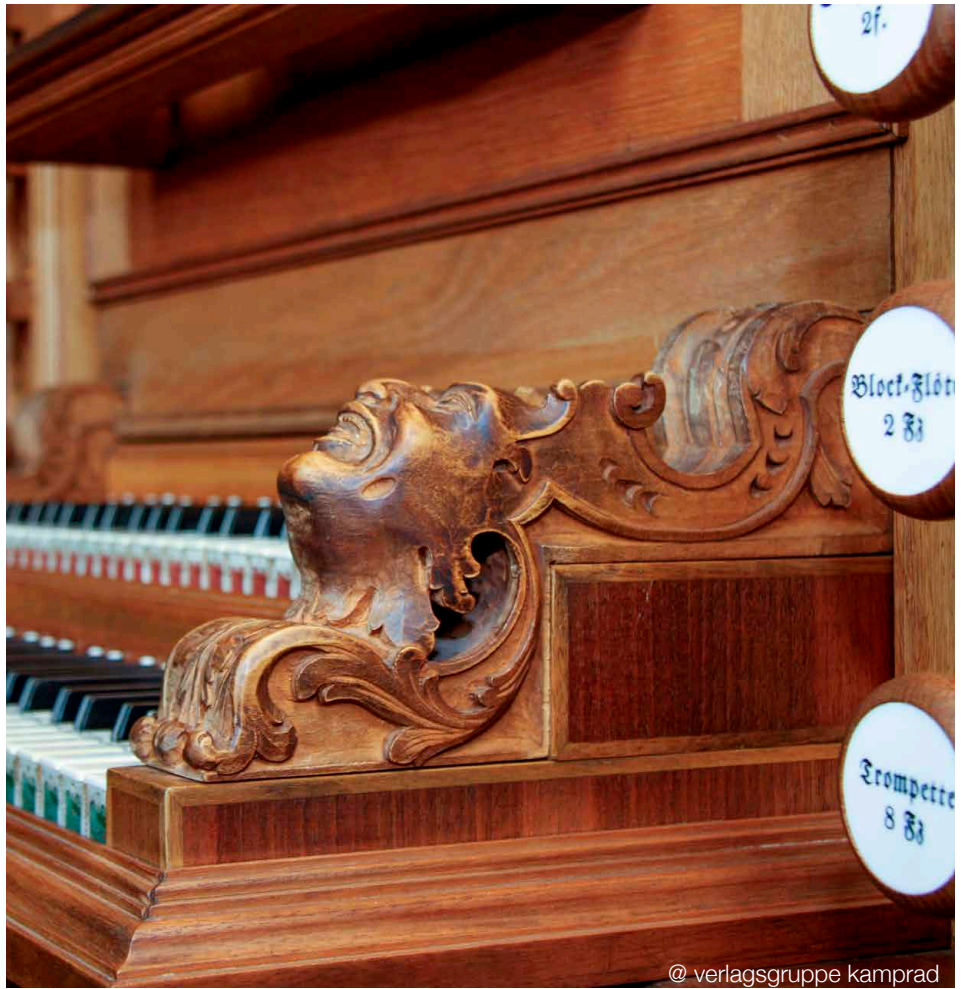
1739: Johann Sebastian Bach visits the completed organ. His appreciation provides importance to the instrument until today.

Late 19th century: Extensions and alterations depart the sound and technical construction from its original though about 70 % of its original parts remained.

1974–1976: Reconstruction initiated by Dr. Felix Friedrich (former organist at Trost organ) and implemented by organ building company Eule from Bautzen, Germany. It is since then that this cultural heritage of international charisma is available again in its original form.



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Trost Organ – specification

Hauptwerk (I) C–c'''

Groß Quintadena 16', Flaute traverse 16', Principal 8', Bordun 8', Spitzflöte 8', Viol di Gamba 8', Rohrflöte 8', Octave 4', Kleingedackt 4', Quinte 3', Superoctava 2', Blockflöte 2', Sesquialtera 2f., Mixtur 6-9f. 2', Trompete 8', Glockenspiel c'-c''', Tremulant

Oberwerk (II) C–c'''

Geigenprincipal 8', Lieblich Gedackt 8', Vugara 8', Quintadena 8', Hohlflöte 8', Gemshorn 4', Flaute douce 2f. 4', Nasat 3', Octave 2', Waldflöte 2', Superoctava 1', Cornet 5f., Mixtur 4-5f. 2', Vox humana 8', Tremulat

Pedal C–c'

Principalbaß 16', Violonbaß 16', Subbaß 16', Octavenbaß 8', Posaune 32', Posaune 16', Trompete 8' 5 Transmissions from HW (*)

Couplers

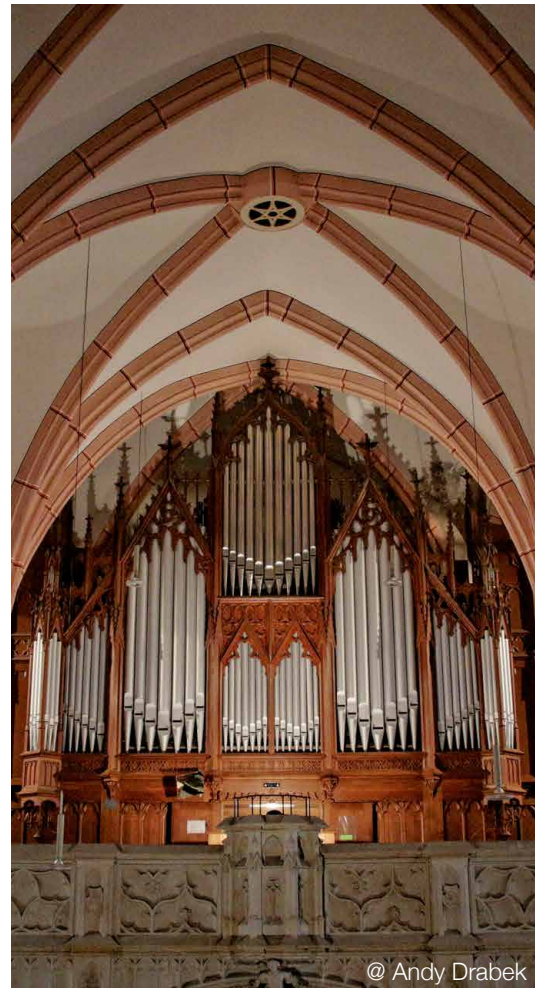
wind coupler HW/P, keyboard sliding coupler II/I

Temperament

"Neidhardt I", a" = 468 Hz



@ Kirchgemeinde Altenburg



@ Andy Drabek

WAYS INTO THE ROMANTIC

Ladegast Organ in St. Bartholomew's

After having had its impressive climax in the late baroque era (Trost, Silbermann, and others), Friedrich Ladegast from Weißenfels became the next pioneer in organ building in Germany. His organs not only mark the way into a new era of organ building but are also closely linked to the most important organ compositions of the 19th century.

Whereas Friedrich Ladegast's instruments represent the epoch of early Romantic, the "Fernwerk" that was added later appears as a testimony of the very last innovations of Romantic organ building processes.

After several alterations, Ladegast's precious instrument in St Bartholomew's church is in a very poor condition at the moment. But as the remaining original parts are in good state, an extensive reconstruction is aspired and looks promising.

1881: Friedrich Ladegast completes the organ with 40 stops on three manuals and pedal

WW I: disassembling of most front pipes for military purposes, the front pipes of the "Oberwerk" remained and therefore are of outstanding importance

1919: zinc pipes were installed to replace the original tin front pipes

1922: the "Fernwerk" was added by the company Jehmlich

1949: tonal transformation matching neo-baroque's ideals. Replacement of the mechanical action by an electro-pneumatic action



@ Andy Drabek



@ Andy Drabek

Ladegast Organ – specification

Hauptwerk (I) C–f'''

Prinzipal 16', Prinzipal 8', Gedackt 8', Oktave 4', Gemshorn 4', *Pommer* 4', Quinte 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', Oktave 2', Blockflöte 2', Terz 1 $\frac{3}{5}$ ', Mixtur 4f. 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ', Zimbel 3f. $\frac{1}{2}$ ', Trompete 8'

Oberwerk (II) C–f'''

Quintade 16', Prinzipal 8', Gemshorn 8', Rohrflöte 8', Oktave 4', Gedackt 4', Nasard 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', Waldflöte 2', Sesquialtera 2f. 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ', Scharff 4f. 1', Regal 8'

Brustwerk (III) C–f'''

Quintade 8', Rohrflöte 4', Spitzflöte 2', Quinte 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ', Sifflet 1'

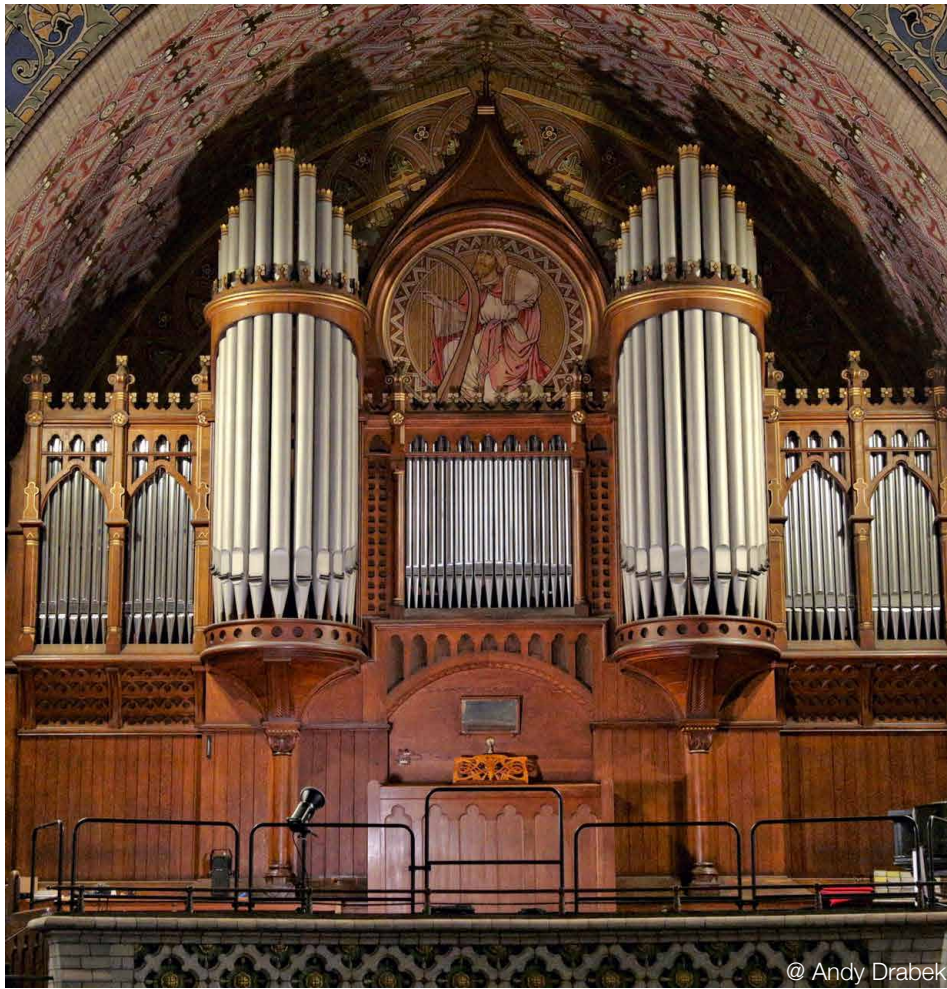
Fernwerk (III) C–f'''

Gedackt 8', Fl. Traverso 8', Geigenprinz. 4', Oktave 2'

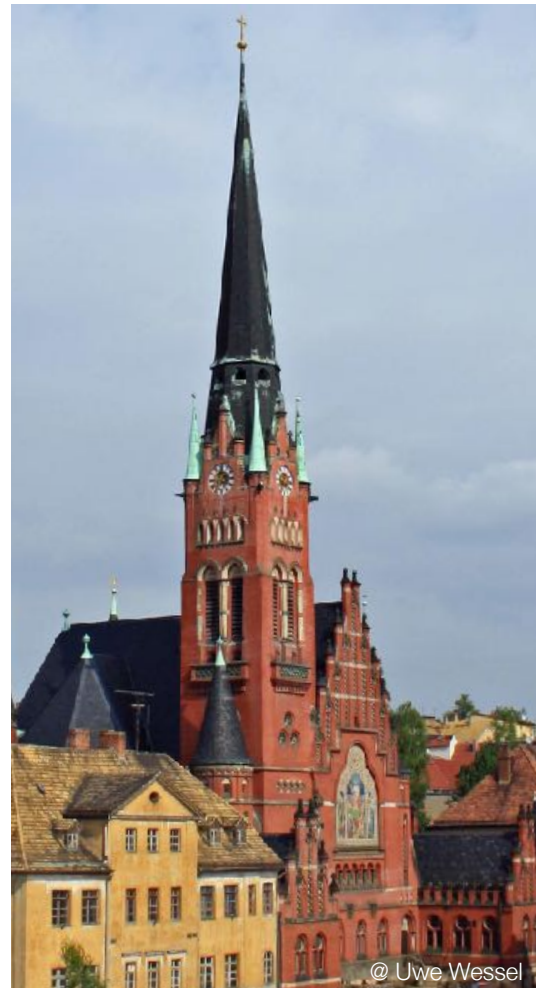
Pedal C–d'

Untersatz 32', Prinzipal 16', Subbass 16', Oktavbass 8', Bassflöte 8', Quintbass 5 $\frac{1}{3}$ ', Oktavbass 4', Nachthorn 2', Mixtur 4f. 2', Posaune 16', Trompete 8'

(Italic = not original)



@ Andy Drabek



@ Uwe Wessel

CLIMAX OF THE ROMANTIC ORGAN

Sauer organ in Friars Church

Beginning with Ladegast, the organ was immensely developed both technically and tonally in the late 19th and early 20th century. This way culminated in central Germany in organs built by Wilhelm Sauer. His instruments of that time are highly valued and internationally well known (equivalent to those by Trost and Ladegast).

The organ in Friars' church can be considered equivalently to the great organs by Sauer in Leipzig, Bremen, Chemnitz or Mühlhausen. To enable the experience of a fully-featured high romantic organ the restoration of the third manual is urgent in order to complete the whole restoration process.

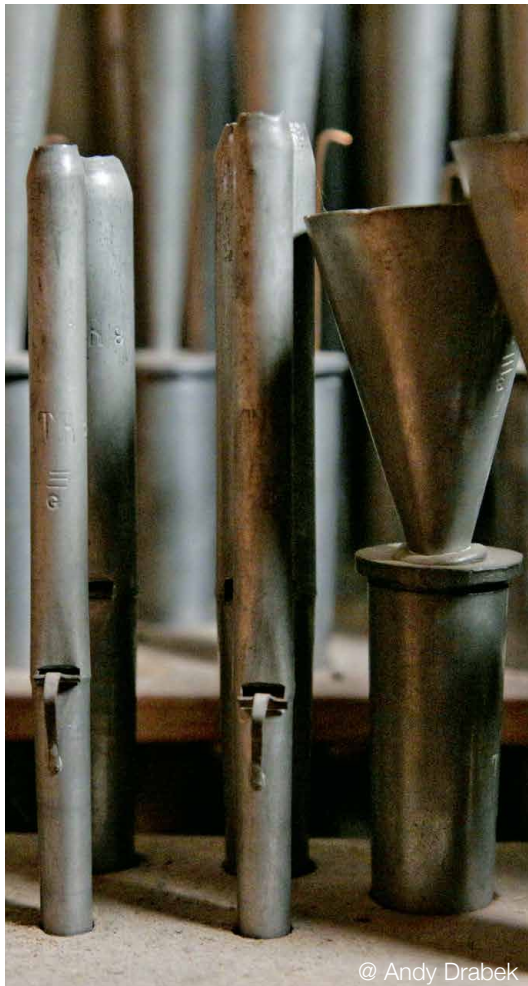
1905: at the same time as the church was completed, the company Wilhelm Sauer (Frankfurt/Oder) completes the new instrument having 50 stops on three manuals and pedal

WW I: disassembling of all front pipes for military purposes

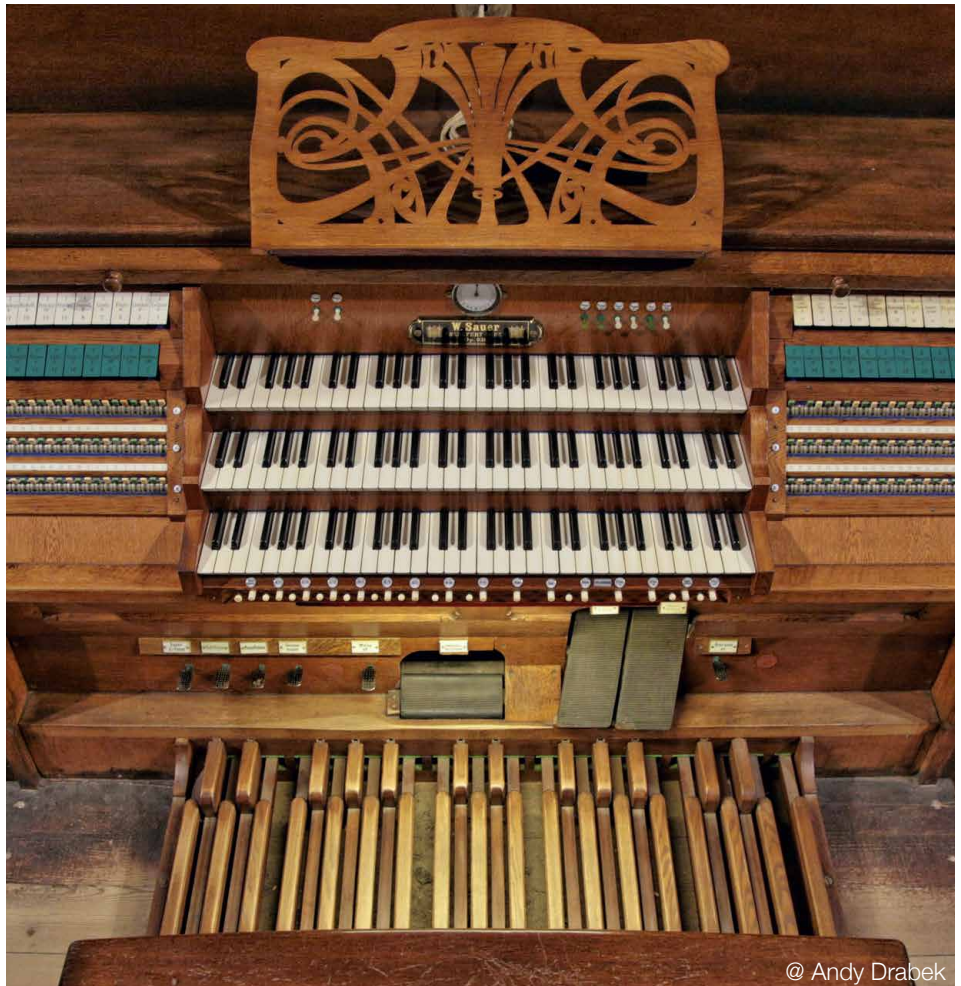
1925: zinc pipes were installed to replace the original tin front pipes

1927–1943: tonal transformation matching neo-baroque's ideals.

1990–2005: Restauration of manuals I and II and pedal to the original state



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@ Andy Drabek

Sauer Organ – specification

I. Manual C–a'''

Principal 16', Principal 8', Gedeckt 8', Gemshorn 8', Flute 8', Gamba 8', Doppelflöte 8', Oktave 4', Gemshorn 4', Rohrflöte 4', Rauschquinte II, Cornett III-IV, Mixtur IV, Fagott 16', Trompete 8'

II. Manual C–a''' (enclosed)

Bordun 16', Principal 8', Quintatön 8', Salicional 8', Konzertflöte 8', Rohrflöte 8', Oktave 4', Traversflöte 4', Piccolo 2', Sesquialter II, Mixtur IV, Schalmey 8', Oboe 8', Tremulant

III. Manual C–a''' (enclosed)

Quintatön 16', Lieblich Gedeckt 8', *Spitzflöte 8', Singprincipal 4', Fernflöte 4', Quinte 2 2/3', Oktave 2', Flautino 2', Superoctave 1', Terz 1 3/5', Scharff V, Krummhorn 8', Temulant*

Pedal C–f'

Untersatz 32', Principal 16', Violon 16', Subbaß 16', Oktave 8', Bassflöte 8', Cello 8', Oktave 4', Posaune 16', Trompete 8'

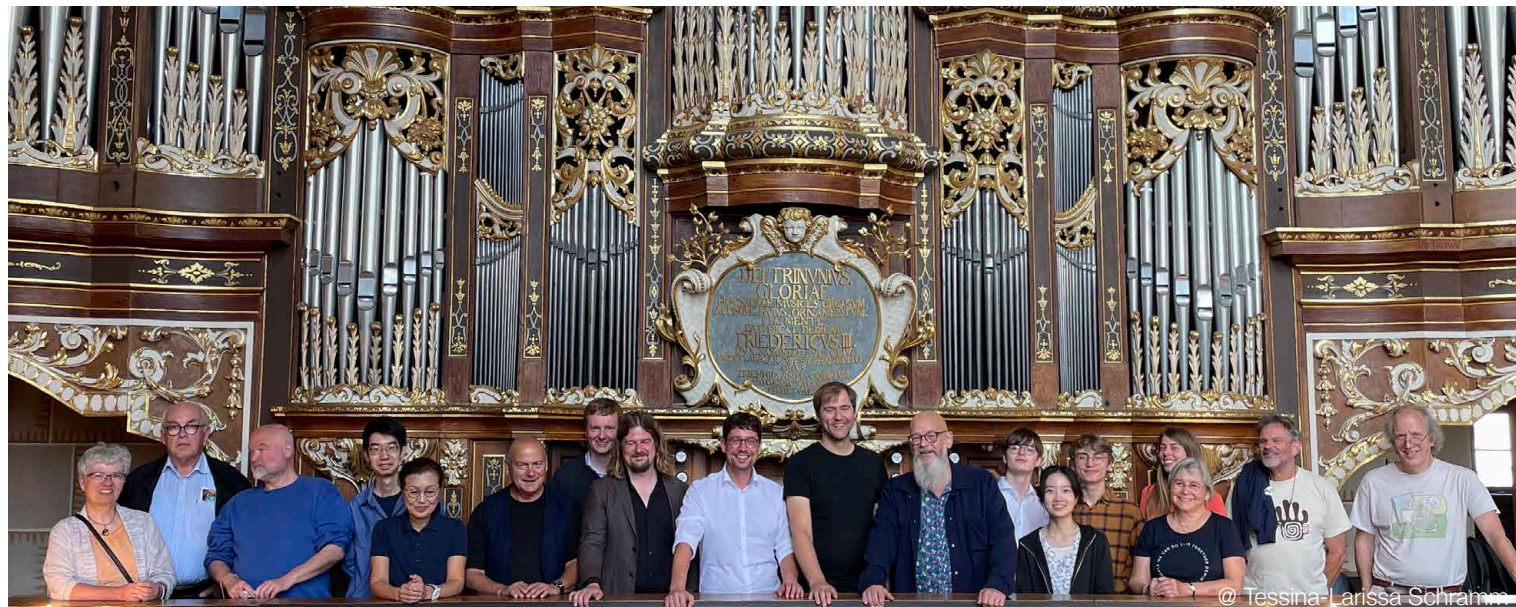
Couplers

II/I, III/I, III/II, I/P, II/P, III/P, Super II/P, Super I/I

Combination action

two fixed combinations, three free combinations, Walze

(italic = not original)



ORGAN CULTURE ALIVE

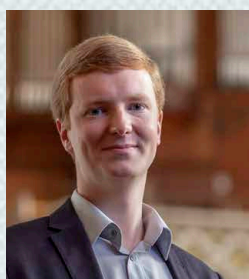
Protagonists in Altenburg



Daniel Beilschmidt
Organist Trost Organ
& University Teacher
for organ in Leipzig

There is a long history of organ related activities in Altenburg. The credit belongs to Dr. Felix Friedrich, the former organist at the castle church, who has organised excellent programs around the Trost organ for decades.

In 2021 two new organists started their positions in Altenburg: Daniel Beilschmidt as organist of the Trost organ and Johann Friedrich Röpke as church musician and organist for the Lutheran churches in Altenburg. Together they set up the Mitteldeutsche Orgelgesellschaft Altenburg (which translates as Central German Organ Society) in 2022. The main goal of the society is to retain this unique organ ensemble for the city of Altenburg.



Johann Friedrich Röpke
Organist Ladegast
& Sauer Organ

Both organists started to showcase the extraordinary proximity of the organs and their historical organ building value to the city and cultural institutions of Altenburg. All parties recognised this undetected treasure for the city and found it worthwhile to start cooperating and transferring the excitement to many more generations. Together, we are going to foster cultural and academic networking, innovative event concepts, contemporary imparting, promotion of young talents and the awareness of the central German organs both nationally and internationally. An extract of our activities can be found below.

ongoing projects

Thuringian Organ Academy
International Summer Organ Concerts
Altenburg Organ Night
Cooperation University for Music Leipzig
Kid's Organ Concerts
Organ Tours
Organ Classes

additional projects in the future

Junior Organ Academy 2023
Altenburg Organ Festival tbc
Cooperation Bachfest Leipzig 2023
Fundraising for restoration/maintenance
Cooperation University for Music Weimar
Annual Residency (composer/soloist)
ECHO membership application



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