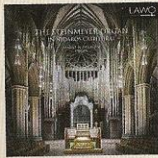


The Steinmeyer Organ in Nidaros Cathedral



Grieg
Morgenstemning
(tr. Harve B. Gaul);
Dupré *Placare*
Christe servulus;
Howells *Master*

Tallis's Testament; Widor *Marche nuptiale*; Reger *Benedictus*; Egil Hovland *Toccata over Kjærlighet er lysets kilde*; Dubois *In Paradisum*; Ludwig Nielsen *Organ fantasy "Nidarosdomens klokke"*; Karg-Elert *Hommage a Händel*; Arild Sandvold *Adagio*; Eben *Moto Ostinato*; Handel *Hornpipe* (tr. O.H. Peasgood); Magne H. Draagen *Improvisation on a Folk Tune from Hornindal*; Gigout *Grand Choeur Dialogué*

The Steinmeyer Organ in Nidaros Cathedral played by Magne H. Draagen

Nidaros is the medieval name for Trondheim in Norway and is still used in some contexts, such as the

Cathedral and the Lutheran diocese. The Cathedral organ was completed in 1930 but, as the sleeve notes put it, "suffered an unkind fate over the course of time as a result of moves within the Cathedral, a reduction of the number of stops, and exposure to dampness and draft". Happily, the instrument was restored between 2012 and 2014 and it now boasts 139 stops, 9,600 pipes and a new façade. This CD has been recorded to celebrate the rejuvenation of the organ; and the Cathedral's Director of Music, Magne H. Draagen, clearly enjoys putting his splendid instrument through its paces.

The arrangement of Grieg's famous *Morning Mood* shows off admirably the orchestral side of the Nidaros organ. Draagen plays with great control and sense of musical shape. These skills are also very much evident in his excellent performance of *Master Tallis's Testament*, in which one can also

appreciate the phenomenal dynamic range of the instrument. Although Karg-Elert's *Hommage a Händel* is another vehicle for exhibiting the timbral range of this magnificent organ, the 54 variations do rather outstay their welcome! The various Scandinavian pieces (in addition to the Grieg) are an interesting aspect of the programme. Ludwig Nielsen's Organ fantasy *The Bells of Nidaros Cathedral* is based on a theme from the notes of the bells that hang in the north tower; while Draagen's own *Improvisation on a Folk Tune from Hornindal* features the Chimes and Celesta stops. Gigout's *Grand Choeur Dialogué*, which closes the programme, showcases the high pressure reeds of the Solo division and made (twice) by the English firm of Willis. Read the sleeve notes for the whole saga!

Christopher Maxim