

A History of the Organ in Estonia

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1. Historical Sketch

Until the 13th century, the indigenous people of the territories of modern Estonia suffered numerous invasions from the West, the South, and the East. Nevertheless, they were able to keep their independence, and the Estonian language emerged in the sixth century. During the 13th and 14th centuries the Estonians were Christianized, in the course of which the southern parts of Estonia were divided in 1224 between the German *Schwertbrüderorden* (a military-religious order) and the bishops of Dorpat and Ösel. The northern part of the country, together with the city of Reval (Tallinn) founded by German merchants in 1230, was under Danish rule from 1238 to 1346.

The country was ruled by the Teutonic Knights and local bishops, who were supported by the merchants of the towns and the landed gentry. This ruling class was almost entirely ethnic German, and the native Estonian farmers fell by degrees into bondage. The church, showing no interest in the Estonian language, had only limited influence on the local people until the Reformation, when, during the 1520s, the Estonian people began to take a more active part in church life.

As a result of the Livonian war (1558–83), the Order of the Teutonic Knights collapsed. The northern part of Estonia was occupied by Sweden, the southern part brought under Polish–Lithuanian rule, while the island of Saaremaa remained Danish. From 1645, all Estonian territory was under Swedish jurisdiction. After the Swedish defeat in the Great Northern War (1700–21), which was accompanied by a devastating plague, Estonia fell under Russian rule, remaining a part of the Russian Empire until 1917.

Under these circumstances, Estonian culture always developed under the influence of the ruling nations, that of the Germans being particularly strong. The Baltic German aristocracy, the clergy, and the merchants of the Hanseatic League maintained their privileged position in Estonian society, even when the Baltic territories were controlled by Poland, Sweden, or Russia. The church's administration in Lutheran Estonia from the 16th century until Estonia's declaration of independence in 1918 was, for instance, always headed by Germans.

2. Organs in Estonia from the 13th to the 16th century

Early Estonian music developed in monasteries and church schools, founded even during the subjugation of the Estonian tribes by foreign invaders. Twelfth-century unison church hymns written in neume notation can be found in liturgy books preserved in the Tallinn City Archives. In 13th-century sources, the main churches of Tallinn are mentioned for the first time: the Cathedral of St. Mary (1219); St. Nicholas' Church (1230); and St. Olai's Church (1267). It is evident that organs began to spread in parallel with the growing influence of the church in Estonia. However, the first documented reference to organs in Estonian territories dates only from 1329: in Paistu and Helme (northern Livonia) organs were destroyed by enemy action.¹ Some years later (1341), an organist working for a church in Tallinn is mentioned.²

After the great fire, which almost completely destroyed Tallinn on 11 May 1433, a new organ was built in St. Nicholas' Church (Niguliste) by the organ builder “*Orgelmaker*” **Albrecht**; it was later rebuilt in 1489 by **Hermann Stüwe** from Wismar and six assistants. Most of the organ builders working in Estonia during this period came from the Hanseatic cities of North Germany. Around 1500, the church of St. Nicholas, the largest and wealthiest church in



August Terkmann organ, 1914, Tallinn, St. Johannis Church

the influential Hanseatic city of Tallinn, boasted a total of three organs³: the first on the west wall; the second in St. Antonius' chapel; and the third in the chancel, built in 1502 by the local organ builder and Dominican monk **Peter Schmidt**.⁴ Tradition hands down the name of one more local “Maker of Organs”: **Yllies**. His name is mentioned in the report of the treasurer of St. Olai's Church (Oleviste) in 1540.⁵

A new organ in St. Nicholas' Church was built in 1547 by a certain “*Meister Hans*.” In 1584 this organ was enlarged by the organ builder **Bartolt** (Bartold) **Fiehoff** (Viehoff, Fehoff)⁶ and fitted with a Rückpositiv.⁷ Between 1588 and 1590 the same builder Fiehoff also built a positive organ in 1585–86 for the church of St. Johannis in Tartu (Dorpat).

During the 15th and 16th centuries, positive organs became fashionable among the wealthier nobility, citizens, and town officials. For instance, in 1499 the “*Domherr*” and “*Stadtschreiber*” (Town Clerk) Magister Christianus Czernekow bequeathed his positive organ to the organist Matthias: “. . . Item domino Mathie, organiste in summo, positivum stantem in camera mea . . .”⁸ The above-mentioned Bartolt Fiehoff also built a positive organ in 1585–86 for the church of St. Johannis in Tartu (Dorpat).

With the spread of Protestantism, church music in Estonia acquired new significance. Lutheran hymns, accompanied by the organ, became the musical basis of the liturgy. Following the guidelines of Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon about education, the Latin school at St. Olai's Church in Tallinn was reorganized in 1528 as a Lutheran town school (Stadtschule). Its curriculum included basic studies of Protestant music. Choral singing was practiced under the direction of the *Kantor*—a special teacher who also became responsible for the musical accompaniment of the church services. Gradually the Kantors became the main figures in the cities' music life. The first Protestant Kantor in Tallinn whose name has come down to us was **Petrus Mellin** (1531–2).

After the Reformation, the Tallinn churches of St. Nicholas and St. Olai became the focus of cultural life. In the second half of the 16th century, the choir of St. Nicholas' Church, consisting of about 50 members, performed vocal

music from handwritten *Kantionalien* (liturgical books) by Lukas Lossius, Jacob Meiland, Melchior Vulpius, Hieronymus Praetorius, and others.

3. Culture, religion and musical life in the 17th and 18th centuries

In 1630, the Swedish King Gustavus Adolfus II established a *Gymnasium* in Tartu for the purpose of strengthening Protestantism. Two years later this Gymnasium was transformed into a university (Academia Gustaviana) and became the most important center of cultural life in Estonia. In Tartu, for the first time in the history of the country, the music of an Estonian folk song was printed (Friedrich Menius, *Syntagma de origine livonorum*, Dorpat 1635). Another important publication appeared in Tartu in 1640, the *Oratio de musica* of **Jacob Lotichius**, who later became the Kantor of the Cathedral School in Riga (Latvia). Concerts and theatrical performances regularly took place in the University of Tartu.

The churches continued to be centers of musical life, the concerts that regularly took place there being contributed by choir, organ, solo singers, and the musicians in the service of the town. It should be noted that organists in Estonia maintained a privileged position compared with town musicians. While the latter received a payment of 20 *Taler* per year (with three tons of rye and other food in addition), the organists of the Tallinn churches of St. Nicholas and St. Olai in the middle of the 17th century received 100 *Taler* a year (as well as accommodation and other benefits).⁹

Much attention was paid to church music; for instance, St. Johannis, the main church in Tartu, employed two organists in the 1680s—one of them, the *cantor figuralis*, being responsible for the choir, the other, the *cantor choralis*, for hymn singing.

Use of the Estonian language had also grown. The first attempts at translating Lutheran hymns into Estonian had already been made in the 16th century, while the earliest surviving historical source in the Estonian language is Pastor Henrico Stahl's anthology of religious hymns, *Hand- und Haußbuch Für die Pfarherren und Haußväter Esthnischen Fürstenthumbs* (Handbook and Domestic Book for the Clergy and Nobility in

Estonia, 1632–38). The first collection of music was published in Estonia (in 1637) by Tallinn's Gymnasium (founded in 1631 by Gustavus Adolfus II). From the end of the 17th century, lessons at schools were increasingly held in the mother tongue. The New Testament was translated into Estonian in 1686, followed by the entire Bible in 1739.

Country parish churches established the post of sacristan (*Küster* in German, *kõster* in Estonian), whose duties included instructing young people in reading and writing, prayers, and singing hymns. In 1684 **Bengt Gottfried Forselius** founded a seminary near Tartu to train young people for such posts, and from the 19th century the *kõster* was also the village schoolmaster and organist.

A tendency towards secular influences is noticeable in the art and religious life of that time. The decorative depiction of saints on organ cases was replaced by allegories from non-religious art. The organ gallery in the chancel of St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn, finished in 1639, was decorated with seven wooden sculptures. The “*Allegory of Music*” was placed in the middle between six other female figures. Together they portrayed the seven fine arts (*septem artes liberales*).

Important among organ builders working in Estonia at this time were **Johannes Pauli** (Pawels, Paulus) from Riga, who built and repaired several organs in Tallinn and Kuressaare (Arensburg) between 1611 and 1644, the Swede **Andres Bruse** (mid-17th century), and above all **Christopher Meinecke** (Christoff Mencke) from Lübeck, who, working first with Bruse, was active in Tartu until 1645, and from 1660 in Tallinn (St. Nicholas, III/P/30¹⁰, 1668).

Tallinn, St. Nicholas' Church
Christopher Meinecke (Christoff Mencke), 1668 (does not exist)

HAUPTWERK (upper manual)	
16'	Principal
16'	Quinta-Thön
8'	Octava
8'	Rohrflöte (4'?)
4'	Super-Octava
2'	Rausch-Pfeife
	Mixtur IV–V
16'	Trommet
8'	Trommet
RÜCKPOSITIV (lower manual)	
8'	Principal
8'	Gedackt
4'	Octava
4'	Gedackt
	Tertian II
	Scharf III
8'	Krumhorn
8'	Dulcian
BRUSTWERK (played from the upper manual)	
8'	Quinta-Thön
4'	Gedackt
2'	Octava
	Sesquialtera II
8'	Regal
PEDAL	
16'	Untersatz
8'	Octava
8'	Gedackt
4'	Gedackt
16'	Posaune
16'	Fagotto
8'	Trommet
4'	Cornet
	Tremolo
	Koppel

Sources:
Leonid Rojman, *Organnaja kul'tura Ėstonii* [The Organ Culture of Estonia], Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo [State Musical Publishing House] 1960, p. 84.
Hugo Lepnurm, *Istorija organa i organnoj muzyki*, Kazan' 1999, p. 74 (translation of the Estonian original “*Oreli ja orelimuusika ajaloo*,” Tallinn 1971 [“On the History of the Organ and Organ Music”]).

During the Great Northern War (1700–21), almost all organs in the Estonian territories were destroyed. There is a reference to only one organ preserved in a small church in Mänspä on the island of Hiiumaa (Dagö), built by an unknown organ builder at the beginning of the 18th century. After the war and until the end of the century, most of the existing organs were in poor condition because of the country's extraordinary poverty. Only a few installations or renovations of organs are known; **Gottfried Kloos** (Clossen, Klossen, Kloss, died 1740), an organ builder from Danzig, installed a Vox humana stop and a Zimbelstern in the main organ of St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn (1720–21).

In the 1780s, the organ builder **Johann Friedrich Gräbner** from Bremen, who later became a citizen of Tallinn, began working in Estonia. He also built harpsichords, clavichords, lutes, harps and fortepianos. In April 1789, he visited St. Petersburg and handed over plans for two organs with 45 and 60 stops to Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potjomkin (1739–91). Shortly before that, he had finished an organ for the Cathedral of St. Mary in Tallinn and brought a report about his work to St. Petersburg:

We, the undersigned members of the council of the church "de la Noblesse" and the Cathedral, certify by this document that Johann Friedrich Gräbner, an organ builder, designed and built a wonderful and majestic organ [. . .], which gained the endorsement of all experts.¹¹

The most famous organ builder in the Baltics in the 18th century was **Heinrich Andreas Contius** (1708–92). Between 1764 and 1771, he built a new organ in St. Olai, Tallinn (III/P/60)¹² (*Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* gives the starting date as 1767¹³). Abbé Georg Joseph Vogler played this organ on his way from Stockholm to Moscow in 1787; according to his report he "never encountered a better organ."¹⁴

Contius's son-in-law, **Johann Andreas Stein** (1752–1821), born in Karlsruhe, established his own workshop in Pärnu (Pernau) at the end of the century. In 1805, he installed an organ in the church of Kihelkonna on the island Saaremaa. This instrument, with a case in the late rococo style, is the oldest church organ in Estonia still preserved.

The Church of Kihelkonna
Johann Andreas Stein, I/P/14 (Pärnu), 1805
Friedrich Weissenborn, II. Manual
(Jekabpils [Jacobstadt], Latvia), 1890

I. MANUAL (C–f ³)	
16'	Bourdon
8'	Principal
8'	Gedackt
8'	Gamba
4'	Octave
4'	Flöte
2 $\frac{3}{4}$ '	Quint
2'	Octave
Mixture II–III	
8'	Trompete
II. MANUAL (C–f ³)	
8'	Geigenprincipal
8'	Hohlflöte
8'	Piano
4'	Geigenprincipal
PEDAL (C–c ¹)	
16'	Subbass
8'	Principalbass
4'	Octave
8'	Posaune
II/I, I/Ped.	
II. Manual in Swell Box	

Sources:
Leonid Rojman, *Organnaja kul'tura Ėstonii* [The Organ Culture of Estonia], Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo [State Musical Publishing House] 1960, p. 85.
Andreas Uibo and Jüri Kuuskemaa, *Historical Organs in Estonia*, Lilienthal/Bremen (Eres Edition 2408) 1994, p. 72.

Among the foremost musicians in 17th-century Estonia was **Johann Valentin Meder** (1649–1719). Born in Wassungen on the Werra, he worked as a Kantor in the Tallinn Gymnasium (1674–83), and was a prolific composer. The first performance of his Singspiel *Die beständige Argenia* took place in Tallinn in 1680.



Johann Andreas Stein organ, 1805, the Church of Kihelkonna

Notable contributions to the development of the art of the organ in Estonia were also made by **Erasmus Pogatz** (organist at St. Nicholas' Church in Tallinn 1583–1630), **Christopher Asmes** (organist at St. Olai's Church in the first half of the 17th century), and representatives of the Busbetzky musical dynasty. The most important of the latter was **Ludwig Busbetzky**, a pupil of Dietrich Buxtehude and from 1687 to 1699 organist at the German church in Narva.

Playing the organ became widespread in private homes from the middle of the 17th century. Organists were evidently invited to play at weddings there, for in 1665 a special decree was issued by the Tallinn Magistracy emphasizing that: "... at weddings of housemaids only two musicians and an organist should play, and each of them should receive two Taler for his work." In 1777, August Wilhelm Hupel, a member of the Independent Economics Society founded in St. Petersburg in 1765, wrote about organists coming from rural families: "... our farmers are not completely without a musical ear: nobles have sent them to study and now they can satisfactorily accompany dances."¹⁵

Musical life became more active in the second half of the 18th century, when it became fashionable to take music lessons and to give concerts in private homes. One instrument that was probably played on such occasions, a positive organ built by **Johann Karl Thal** from Antsla (I/2, 1795), is now exhibited in the Theatre and Music Museum in Tallinn.

Established by Carl Christian Aghte, the *Hündelberger Theater-Kompanie* (1776–82) performed the first Singspiels under his direction. In 1784, August von Kotzebue founded the *Tallinn Liebhaber-Theater*, known from 1809 as the *Staendiges* ("Permanent") *Theatre*, where such works as Mozart's operas *Die Zauberflöte* (1795?) and *Don Giovanni* (1797) were performed.

4. Estonia in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century

The 19th century brought momentous changes to Estonia. The abolition of serfdom between 1816 and 1819 by Tsar Alexander I (reigned 1801–25) was the decisive step towards liberating the Estonian peasants from the grip of their Baltic German landlords; however, it took several decades before the peasants came into the possession of their farms. In the course of agrarian reform and development of the education system,

national self-awareness began to awaken. It was during Alexander II's reign (1855–81) that the Estonian national movement came into being. Its leaders saw it as their main task to develop Estonia culturally, but step by step the movement became increasingly more political. During the Russian Revolution of 1905, the Estonians demanded cultural and political autonomy, but the Tsarist government refused any concession. It took the collapse of the Russian Empire to create the conditions for the emergence of an independent Estonia, proclaimed on February 24, 1918.

Against this background, concert-giving activity in Estonia steadily expanded. In Tallinn, compositions of the Viennese classical period were performed, among them Mozart's *Requiem* (1814) and Haydn's *Creation* (1817). In 1819 and 1821, compositions by **Peter Andreas Johann Steinsberg** using folk melodies and folk dances were performed in the Estonian language for the first time: *Häbbi sellel*, *kes petta tahhab* ("Shame on One Who Wants to Cheat") and *Krappi kaie willetsus, ehk: Kes paljo lobbiseb, peab paljo wastama* ("Krappi Kais' Need, or: Who Chatters Much Has Much to Answer").

Many famous musicians performed in Estonia, among them Clara Schumann, Franz Liszt, Sigismund Thalberg, and Anton Rubinstein, while the conductor Arthur Nikisch brought the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra to Tallinn in 1899.

Among composers particularly active in Estonia in the first half of the 19th century was **Johann Friedrich de La Trobe** (1769–1845), who came from Chelsea near London. From 1829 he worked as a music teacher in Tartu; in 1834 he conducted Handel's *Alexander's Feast* in St. Johannis Church there with more than a hundred singers, and in 1835 he founded the Tartu Choral Society, to promote the development of choral music in the town. De La Trobe's works included mainly sacred vocal compositions, as well as piano and chamber music. His son-in-law **Woldemar von Bock** (1816–1903) studied law in Tartu before living in Riga (1857–66) and afterwards in Quedlinburg. His collection, *Chorale Studies for the Organ*, was published in Erfurt in 1855.

The surviving organ works of de La Trobe (the *Chorale Preludes*, 1805, and the *Fughettas*, 1798, from the early period of his life)—as well as those of von Bock—are of little artistic value.

The national epic poem *Kalevipoeg* ("Kalev's Son") by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, written between 1857 and 1861, became a landmark in Estonian literature. Poetry became the most important genre, represented by Lydia Koidula-Jannsen, Ado Reinwald, Mihkel Veske, Marie Under, and Betti Alver.

In 1841, the pianist Theodor Stein (1819–93) and Ferdinand Johann Wiedermann founded the Musical Society, followed by such associations as the Men's Choral Society of Reval (1849), the Reval Choral Union (1854), the Harmony (1858), and the Jäkelsche Choral Union (1859). The art of choral performance developed rapidly, reaching its zenith in 1869, when the First Song Festival (*Üldlaulupidu*) took place in Tartu, involving 1,000 singers and an audience of 15,000. It was initiated by the journalist Johann Voldemar Jannsen (1819–90). Here for the first time choral works by **Aleksander Saebelmann-Kunileid** (1845–75) were performed, settings of patriotic poems by Lydia Koidula-Jannsen (1843–86): *Mu isamaa on minu arm* ("My Native Land, My Dearest Love") and *Sind surmani* ("I'll Cherish You till Death").

In 1827, **Eduard Philipp Körber** published his *Little Estonian Hymnal in the Tartu Dialect* (*Das kleine ehstnische Choralbuch in Dörptscher ehstnischen Sprache*). Soon afterwards, **Johann Leberecht Ehregott Punschel** (1778–1849) presented the *Ecangelical Chorale Book Appropriate to German, Latvian and Estonian Hymnbooks in the Russian Baltic Provinces* (*Evangelische Choralbuch zunächst in Bezug auf die deutschen, lettischen und estnischen Gesangbücher der russischen Ostsee-Provinzen*) (Leipzig, 1839). This book included 363 chorales. Its second, extended edition was issued in 1844.

These collections of hymns were complemented by tutorial books in the Estonian language for those who wanted to learn to play the *klavier*. One of the first books of this kind was the unfinished work by **Johann Heinrich Rosenplänter** (1782–1846), *How One Can Learn to Play the Piano [and the Organ]* (*Õppetus kuidas klawwerit [ja oreli] mängida*) (manuscript, 1830).¹⁶ A little later, the Saxon **Johann August Hagen** (1786–1877), who from 1815 was the organist at St. Olai's Church in Tallinn,¹⁷ published his instructive book *Instruction on How Singing People, and Whoever Else Wishes, Can Learn to Bring Forth Songs from the Written Notes, in Order to Play Them on the House Organ and to Sing Themselves, As Well As Together with Their Pupils* (*Õppetus, kuidas laulomehhed, ja kes muud tahtwad, joudwad notidest laulo wisid üleswõtta, lauloerrelatte peäl mängides ja nende järrel lauldes, ni hästi nemad isse, kui ka nende õppetus lapsed*) (Tallinn, 1841). In 1861, a new work by Hagen was published: *A Guide to Organ Playing for Those Who Wish to Attain the Position of Country Organist and to Prepare Themselves for It* (*Juhhataja errela mängimiseks neile, kes maal errela mängimisse ammetid noudwad ja ennast selle wasto tahtwad walmistada*); and finally, the textbook of **Andreas Erlemann**, *Instruction in Music* (*Musika õppetus*), was published in 1864, placing special emphasis on the organ.

In addition to these theoretical works by Hagen and Erlemann, the large number of chamber organs built by self-taught enthusiasts had a significant influence on the musical education of the people. As a rule, most of these instruments had only wooden pipes. At the end of the 19th century, hardly any sizable family in Estonia did not possess a chamber organ. Schools contributed much to the spreading of music, as they also possessed organs. Thus the organ in Estonia really became the folk instrument.

Organs of a larger scale were built by **Carl Tanton**, as well as by the Germans **Ernst Kessler** and **Wilhelm Müllerstedt**, who had settled in Tartu. Some of their church organs are still preserved in Kullamaa (C. Tanton, I/P/12, 1854), Otepää (E. Kessler, I/P/12, 1853), Vigala (W. Müllerstedt, II/P/14, 1886), and other Estonian towns.

The Church of Vigala
Wilhelm Müllverstedt, II/P/14. Originally the organ was built for the church of St. Peter in Tartu (1886); was moved to Vigala in 1888.

I. MANUAL (C–f³)

- 16’ Bordun
- 8’ Principal
- 8’ Gedackt
- 8’ Gambe
- 4’ Principal
- 4’ Flöte
- 4’ Spitzflöte
- 2½’ Quinte
- 2’ Octav
- Mixtur IV

II. MANUAL (C–f³)

Phisharmonika

PEDAL (C–d¹)

- 16’ Subbass
- 8’ Principal
- 8’ Bassflöte
- Calcant
- Sperrventil Pedal
- Pedal Coupler

Source:
Andreas Uiho and Jüri Kuuskemaa, *Historical Organs in Estonia*, Lilienthal/Bremen (Eres Edition 2408) 1994, p. 78.

Müllverstedt had often been in St. Petersburg and Moscow, where he repaired and tuned, in particular, the house organ “Sebastianon”¹⁸ of the Prince Vladimir Odoyevsky, and the old organ (1889) in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire. As Professor Alexander Fyodorovich Goedicke (1877–1957) remembered, in the 1890s the Tartu master regularly visited towns in central Russia to tune and repair organs. There were about 60 organs in Russia in the care of Müllverstedt.¹⁹

Gustav Normann (1825–93), a very productive organ builder, was the founder of the “organ building school” in Northern Estonia. He built one of his more significant works for St. Johannis’ Church in Tallinn (III/P/40, 1869).²⁰ Others of his surviving instruments include those in Harju-Madise (I/P/7, 1859) and Simuna (II/P/20, 1886).

Normann’s successors were the father and son **Gustav** and **August Terkmann**. Gustav (1855–1911) founded his own organ workshop in Tallinn in 1882 and produced mainly small organs with tracker action for village churches. One of his instruments (II/P/13, 1902) can be seen in Järva-Madise.

His son, organ builder August Terkmann (1885–1940), who had been a trainee of Laukhuff, used pneumatic and electropneumatic action in his instruments. Active in the Estonian countryside, as well as in St. Petersburg, Astrakhan and Simbirsk, he also built some larger organs in Tallinn, in particular for the Estonia concert hall (III/P/56 + 3 borrowed stops, 1913)²¹ and in St. Johannis’ Church, (III/P/36 + 23 borrowed stops, 1914).²²

Tallinn, The Estonia Concert Hall
August Terkmann, III/P/56 + 3 borrowed stops, 1913 (does not exist)

I. MANUAL

- 16’ Principal
- 8’ Principal
- 8’ Seraphon-gambe
- 8’ Hohlflöte
- 8’ Rohrflöte
- 8’ Gemshorn
- 4’ Octave
- 4’ Rohrflöte
- 2’ Octave
- 2½’ Quinte
- Mixtur III
- 8’ Trompete

II. MANUAL

- 16’ Bourdun-doux
- 16’ Quintatön
- 8’ Principal
- 8’ Bourdun
- 8’ Quintatön
- 8’ Traversflöte
- 8’ Gamba°
- 8’ Salicional
- 8’ Unda maris
- 4’ Principal
- 4’ Traversflöte
- 4’ Salicional
- 2’ Waldflöte
- Cornett III–IV
- 8’ Clarinette
- 8’ Basson

III. MANUAL

- 16’ Lieblichgedackt°
- 8’ Geigenprincipal
- 8’ Gedackt
- 8’ Flauto amabile
- 8’ Gamba
- 8’ Viola d’amour
- 8’ Aeoline
- 8’ Vox celestis
- 4’ Fugare
- 4’ Flauto dolce
- 2’ Flautino
- Harmonia aetheria III
- Cornett IV
- 16’ Fagott°
- 8’ Trompete
- 8’ Oboe
- 8’ Vox humana
- 4’ Clairon

PEDAL

- 32’ Untersatz
- 16’ Principalbaß
- 16’ Violonbaß
- 16’ Subbaß
- 16’ Gedecktbaß (° Manual III)
- 8’ Octavbaß
- 8’ Cello (° II)
- 8’ Flöte
- 8’ Dolce
- 4’ Flöte
- (10½’ Quinte)°°
- 16’ Posaune
- 16’ Fagott (° Manual III)

- ° Borrowed stops
- °° Thus in the source

Source:
Leonid Rojzman, *Organnaja kul’tura Èstonii* [The Organ Culture of Estonia], Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal’noe izdatel’stvo [State Musical Publishing House] 1960, pp. 85–86.

The large German companies were very productive in Estonia, above all **E. F. Walcker & Co.** and **Wilhelm Sauer**. Walcker built two large organs in Tallinn: St. Olai (III/P/65, 1842) and St. Nicholas (III/P/43, 1895). Of the most important Sauer instruments to have been preserved, that in St. Mary’s Cathedral, Tallinn, is noteworthy (III/P/71 + 2 borrowed stops, 1914).

Tallinn, Cathedral of St. Mary
Wilhelm Sauer, III/P/71 + 2 borrowed stops (Frankfurt/Oder, Germany), Opus 1171, 1914

I. MANUAL (C–a³)

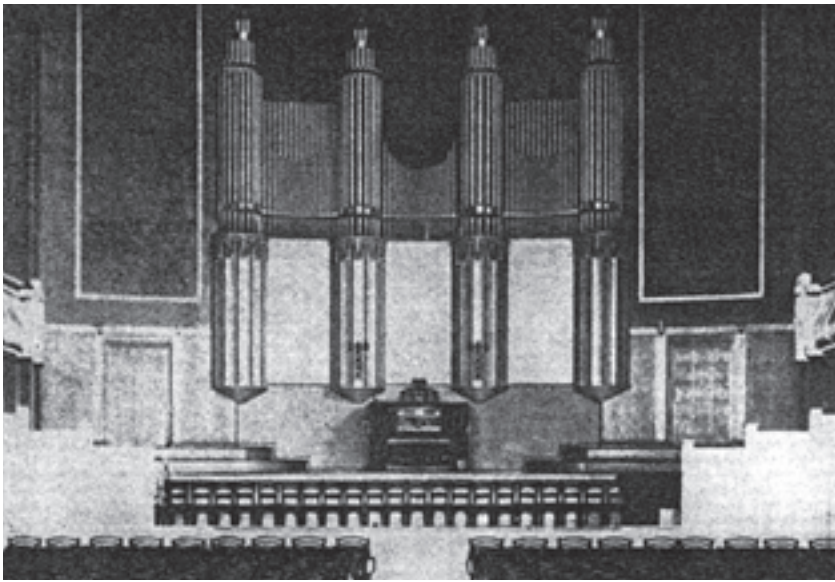
- 16’ Principal
- 16’ Bordun
- 8’ Principal
- 8’ Gamba
- 8’ Doppelflöte
- 8’ Flauto amabile
- 8’ Quintatön
- 8’ Gemshorn
- 8’ Gedackt
- 8’ Dolce
- 5½’ Nasard
- 4’ Rohrflöte
- 4’ Gemshorn
- 4’ Octave
- 2’ Waldflöte
- Mixtur III
- Cornett III
- 8’ Trompete

II. MANUAL (C–a³)

- 16’ Gedackt
- 16’ Salicional
- 8’ Dulciana
- 8’ Rohrflöte
- 8’ Salicional
- 8’ Konzertflöte
- 8’ Viola
- 8’ Flauto traverso
- 8’ Principal
- 4’ Dolce
- 4’ Flauto amabile
- 4’ Principal
- 2½’ Nasard
- 2’ Piccolo
- Progress II–III
- Cymbel III–IV
- 8’ Klarinette

III. MANUAL (C–a³)

- 16’ Gedackt°
- 16’ Gamba
- 8’ Voix celeste
- 8’ Aeoline
- 8’ Gemshorn
- 8’ Gedackt
- 8’ Viola d’amour
- 8’ Quintatön
- 8’ Flauto amabile°
- 8’ Portunalflöte
- 8’ Schalmey
- 8’ Geigenprincipal
- 4’ Flauto dolce
- 4’ Salicet
- 4’ Fugara



August Terkmann organ, 1913, Tallinn, Estonia Concert Hall



Wilhelm Sauer organ, 1914, Tallinn, Cathedral of St. Mary

- 2’ Flautino
- Harmonia aetheria III
- 8’ Aeolodian
- 8’ Oboe
- 8’ Trompete

PEDAL (C–f¹)

- 32’ Untersatz
- 16’ Lieblich Gedackt (° Manual III)
- 16’ Gemshorn
- 16’ Subbass
- 16’ Quintatön
- 16’ Violon
- 16’ Principal
- 10½’ Quinte
- 8’ Dulciana (° Manual III)
- 8’ Gemshorn
- 8’ Bassflöte
- 8’ Cello
- 8’ Principal
- 4’ Flauto
- 4’ Principal
- 16’ Posaune
- 8’ Trompete
- 4’ Clairon

- ° Borrowed stops

III/II, III/I, II/I
III/Ped., II/Ped., I/Ped.

Sub-octave Coupler II/I
Super-octave Coupler II/I
General Coupler

Prepared Combinations: Piano, Mezzoforte, Forte
3 Free Combinations
Crescendo Roller
Swell Pedal for Manual III and Lieblich Gedackt 16’, Dulciana 8’ (Ped.)

Piano Pedal
Mezzoforte Pedal
Forte Pedal

Stops Off
Reeds Off
Pedal Couplers Off
Crescendo Off

Pneumatic Action

Restoration: Orgelwerkstatt Christian Schefler (Frankfurt/Oder, Germany), 1998

This organ incorporates many elements of an earlier instrument by **Friedrich Ladegast** (III/P/51, 1878). Ladegast built also a number of organs in provincial towns, of which the instru-

great momentum. There were seven song festivals from 1869 to 1910, with more than 10,000 singers taking part in the last of these, while the composer **Juhan Simm** (1885–1959), who played a significant role in the organization of subsequent song festivals, founded in 1911 the Tartu university choir.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the literary movement *Young Estonia* (*Noor Eesti*) was inaugurated and presided over by the poet Gustav Suits. The motto of the movement “Let us remain Estonians, but let us also become Europeans!” became the inspiration of cultural Estonia.

5. Estonia in the period of its first independence (1918–1940)

The period between the First and Second World Wars witnessed many brilliant events in Estonian artistic life. The greatest literary achievement was the five-part epic novel *Truth and Justice* (*Tõde ja õigus*) by Anton H. Tammsaare (written 1926–33), depicting Estonian life between the 1870s and 1920s.

The Tallinn Song Festivals attracted constantly rising numbers of participants (with 17,500 singers in the 11th Song Festival of 1938). From the 1920s, operas were regularly performed in the Theatre Estonia. The concert repertoire in the 1921–22 season included such works as Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique* and *Till Eulenspiegel* by Richard Strauss. In 1936, Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms* was performed under the direction of **Eduard Tubin** (1905–82) in Tallinn, and in the following year the composer himself came to conduct his *Firebird Suite* and the *Capriccio* for piano there.

As mentioned above, in 1919 the Higher Music School (from 1923–93 the Conservatoire, and from 1993 the Estonian Academy of Music) was established in Tallinn. In 1919, the Tartu Higher Music School (*Tartu Kõrgem Muusikakool*) was opened. The Tallinn Conservatoire was directed from 1923–33 by Rector **Jaani Tamm**, and **August Topman** was the head of the organ department. **Hugo Lepnurm** (1914–99), who studied organ there from 1928 to 1933, recalls that Topman laid particular emphasis on preparing his students for their work in Lutheran churches. Since playing services occupied little time and yielded little income, Topman tried to prepare his students for a greater variety of activities, stimulating their interest in choral skills and teaching. Sometimes he joked, “any organist, especially in the provinces, should be able to conduct choirs and the fire brigade band, accompany guest soloists, perform operettas in the House of Culture, be the chairman or at least secretary of the agricultural society, and, if still able, play the organ well.”

In the period between the wars, Peeter Laja (1897–1970), Alfred Karindi (1901–69), Edgar Arro (1911–78), and Hugo Lepnurm were among Topman’s best pupils.

Peeter Laja first became known in 1923, when, at that time a student of the Tallinn Conservatoire, he made his debut in the Estonia Concert Hall, performing as a soloist in G. F. Handel’s *Organ Concerto in B-flat* (from Op. 4), accompanied by an orchestra under Raimund Kull. Laja’s programs contained compositions of both international and Estonian composers (A. Kapp, R. Tobias, P. Süda, and others).

A distinctive performer, **Alfred Karindi** was born in Kõnnu. He studied organ (with Johannes Kärt) and composition (with Heino Eller) at the Tartu Higher Music School, where in 1925–28 he taught music theory. From 1927, he was organist of the Tartu university church (here he played the organ that was later moved to the Estonia concert hall) and performed in concerts as organist and conductor. In 1928–32, he was a teacher and a conductor of the mixed students’ choir at the Tartu university. In 1931, he finished his studies as organist and composer at the Tallinn Conservatoire. At the beginning of the 1930s, he moved to Tallinn, where he pursued an active career giving concerts, conducting choral works, including Mozart’s *Requiem* (1940), and performing as a solo organ-

ist. Between 1940–50 and 1955–69, he taught at the conservatoire (from 1946 as a professor). Karindi wrote a symphony, cantatas, piano, chamber, and vocal works. His output includes a number of interesting pieces for organ, of which the central place is held by his four sonatas: No. 1 in E minor (1928), No. 2 in G minor (1932), No. 3 in F minor (1944), and No. 4 in E minor (1963).

Born in Tallinn, **Edgar Arro** studied the organ at Tallinn Conservatoire with August Topman (1929–35) and composition with Artur Kapp (1934–39). From 1935 to 1940 he worked for the radio. It was one of his tasks to improvise on the organ in the morning hours. Occasionally, he gave solo concerts. From 1944, he was a teacher at the Tallinn Conservatoire (Professor from 1972). Arro wrote symphonic works and oratorios, compositions for choir and different chamber ensembles and—together with Leo Normet—the popular musical comedy *Rummu Jüri*. Throughout his life as a composer, he had a strong liking for the organ. His first work, *Sonata for Organ* (1938), was written while studying at the conservatoire. In the early 1940s, it was followed by *Maestoso* (1943). Of his other organ music, the collection of about 56 concert pieces *Eesti rahvaviise orelili* (*Estonian Folk Tunes for Organ*) is of great interest.

A little different was the artistic life of Hugo Lepnurm during the period between the two World Wars. After graduating from the conservatoire, he served as assistant to Professor Topman (1936), but soon he moved to Paris, where he continued his studies with Marcel Dupré (in the winter of 1938–39). In Paris, the young Estonian musician got to know the work of celebrated French organists and he had the chance to listen to Rachmaninov, Cortot, and Menuhin.

During the 1920s two other large organs were built in Tallinn. One of them was the largest organ ever built in Estonia by the company E. F. Walcker & Co. and installed in the Charles’ Church (III/P/81 + 3 borrowed stops, 1923). The other was built by August Terkmann for the Holy Ghost Church (IV/P/71, 1929).²³ **The Brothers Kriisa** were also very active, and among their notable instruments in the 1930s were Paide (II/P/20, 1933), Urvaste (II/P/25 + 1 borrowed stop, 1938), and Suure-Jaani (II/P/25 + 1 borrowed stop, 1937). This last was installed by the Kriisas behind a Johann Andreas Stein case from 1804.

The Church of Suure-Jaani The Brothers Kriisa, II/P/25 + 1 borrowed stop, 1937

I. MANUAL (C–a ³)	
8’	Principal
8’	Viola di Gamba
8’	Doppelflöte
8’	Gemshorn
8’	Salicional
4’	Octave
4’	Flauto dolce
	Cornett III–V
	Mixtur III–IV
II. MANUAL (C–a ³)	
16’	Bordun
8’	Principal
8’	Gedackt
8’	Viola d’amour
8’	Voix celestes
4’	Flauto
2½’	Quintflöte
2’	Flautino
1½’	Terzflöte
	Cymbel IV
8’	Trompete
	Tremolo
PEDAL (C–f ¹)	
16’	Kontrabass
16’	Subbass
16’	Gedacktbass (Tr. Manual II)
8’	Octavbass
8’	Violon
16’	Posaune

II/I, Super II/I, Super I, Sub II/I
Super II, Sub II
I/Ped., II/Ped., Super II/Ped.

II. Manual in Swell Box

Source
Andreas Uibo and Jüri Kuuskemaa, *Historical Organs in Estonia*, Lilienthal/Bremen (Eres Edition 2408) 1994, p. 77.

A milestone in Estonian culture was the foundation of the Music Museum in 1934 in Tallinn (from 1941 the Theatre and Music Museum); it became the custodian of archival material and manuscripts of Estonian composers, recordings of folk songs, musical instruments, and other holdings.

6. Estonia from 1940 to the end of the 20th century

With the establishment of the Union of Estonian Composers in 1941, the creative work of native musicians received official support from the government. In the 1940s, some professional choirs were founded on the initiative of the famous choirmaster and composer **Gustav Ernesaks** (1908–93); their performances on radio and in the concert halls of the Soviet Union were well received. In 1947, the tradition of the Song Festivals was revived after a break of nine years (the 21st Song Festival in 1990 assembled some 30,000 singers and half a million listeners).

In 1947, the theatre and the concert hall Estonia, both of which had been destroyed in the Second World War, were rebuilt. In the years 1948–49, the Tallinn organ builder **Gutdorf Brothers** transferred the organ of the university church in Tartu, built by **Herbert Kolbe** (1928), to the concert hall and installed it on the stage. In doing so, the specification was enlarged (III/P/75). This instrument was superseded as early as 1961 with an organ by **Rieger-Kloss** (IV/P/66). Two others by this company were installed in the Vanemuine theatre in Tartu (III/P/47, 1978) and in St. Nicholas’ Church in Tallinn (IV/P/63, 1981), which had been turned into a museum and concert hall.

In the 1940s, the work of the most important representative of the Tartu school of composers, **Heino Eller** (1887–1970), reached its climax. Eller wrote three symphonies (1936, 1948, 1961), five string quartets, music for piano, chamber music, and vocal compositions. An estimable pupil of his, **Eduard Tubin**, wrote ten symphonies, two operas, two ballets, chamber and choral music, and a *Pastorale* for alto and organ (1956).

The decades following gave rise to a new generation of Estonian composers who were influenced by 20th-century Western European music: **Veljo Tormis** (*1930), **Eino Tamberg** (*1930), **Jaani Rääts** (*1932), **Arvo Pärt** (*1935) and **Kuldar Sink** (1942–95). Tamberg’s and Rääts’s compositions show neoclassical tendencies. Pärt and Sink tend towards serial techniques. Tormis, following the tradition of Mart Saar and Cyrillus Kreek (1889–1962), is interested in folklore and prefers choral music.

Eller taught Alo Põldmäe (*1945) and Lepo Sumera (*1950), while Ester Mägi (*1922), Jüri Tamverk (*1954), Erkki-Sven Tüür (*1959) and Urmas Sisask (*1960), a composer of a number of organ works, are among the distinguished pupils of Saar.

Apart from the works presented in the collection *Organ Music from the Baltic States, Volume 2: Estonia* (Bärenreiter, BA 8422), the following compositions for the organ written by Estonian composers in the 20th century should be mentioned: **Kaljo Raid** (*1921), *Sonata in Classical Style* (1948); **Peeter Laja**, *Five Pieces* (1950); **Leo Virkhaus** (1910–84), *Organ Prelude on Psalm 108 (Be Thou Exalted)* (1973); **Igor Garschnek** (*1958), *Three States* (1980); and **Arvo Pärt**, *Trivium* (1976), *Annum per annum* (1980) and *My Path Has Peaks and Troughs* (1989).

In the post-war period, the tradition of centuries of organ-playing in Estonia manifested itself above all in the work of **Hugo Lepnurm**. After his evacuation, he returned to Tallinn in 1944 and continued teaching organ, solfeggio, and music theory at the conservatoire (from 1945 as a professor). He also gave many concerts in the USSR, was organist at Tallinn’s Cathedral of St. Mary, and made recordings. In 1971, he published his book *On the History of the Organ and Organ Music (Orel ja orelimuusika ajaloo)*. Lepnurm’s compositions are not numerous, but include a number of interesting pieces, especially for the organ: a toccata (1943/50), two cycles of varia-

tions for violin and organ (1942, 1954), and a concerto for organ and orchestra (1956). Among his pupils, the Tallinn organist **Rolf Uusväli** (*1930), **Andreas Uibo** (*1956), and **Urmas Taniloo** (*1953) from Tartu are well known.

An important part in the revival of public interest in early music and its authentic performance was played by *Hortus Musicus*, a specialist ensemble (artistic director Andres Mustonen), founded in 1972. Since 1987, the International Tallinn Organ Festival has taken place every year in the Estonian capital. The tradition of organ building is continued by **Hardo Kriisa** (*1940), a representative of the third generation of the famous organ dynasty. His workshop is in Rakvere. ■

Notes

1. *Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten*, Volume 2, 1301–1367: Reval 1855, p. 180, Document No. 1227.
2. Andreas Uibo and Jüri Kuuskemaa, *Historical Organs in Estonia*, Lilienthal/Bremen: Eres Edition (2408) 1994, p. 5.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
4. Hugo Lepnurm and Alfred Reichling, article “Orgel” in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (MGG), Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag 1997, p. 940.
5. Tallinn City Archives, Collection 230, List 1, Number Bl 4, p. 109 v.
6. Lepnurm & Reichling, p. 940.
7. Leonid Rojzman, *Organnaja kul’tura Ėstonii [The Organ Culture of Estonia]*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal’noe izdatel’stvo [State Musical Publishing House] 1960, p. 8.
8. *Liv-, est- und kurländisches Urkundenbuch*, Zweite Abteilung, Volume 1, 1494 End of May–1500: Riga and Moscow 1900, p. 643, Document No. 845.
9. Rojzman, p. 9.
10. Hugo Lepnurm, *Istorija organa i organnoj muzyki*, Kazan’ 1999, p. 74 (translation of the Estonian original “Orel ja orelimuusika ajaloo”, Tallinn 1971 [“On the History of the Organ and Organ Music”]).
11. “On Various Artists Who Were in the Service of Prince Potyomkin-Tavritchesky, about Music, his Singers, Dancers, etc.,” State Central Archive of Old Documents, Series XVII, State Archive, No 285, p. 7. Original in French; English translation from the Russian translation. Dated 24 March, 1789.
12. Gotthard von Hansen, *Die Kirchen und ehemaligen Klöster Revels*, Reval 1885, p. 19 (Hannover-Döhren: v. Hirschheydt [1974]).
13. Lepnurm & Reichling, p. 941.
14. *Svedenija o cerkvi sv. Olaja v Revele, zažžennoj molniju v noči s 15 na 16 čislo ijulja 1820 goda. Sobrano Genr. Vil’g. Ioach. Rickersoni* [Reports on the Olai Church in Reval, which was burnt down in a fire on the night of 15–16 July, 1820. Collected by Heinrich Wilhelm [Joachim Rickers], St. Petersburg 1820, p. 21. Rojzman, p. 15.
15. Rojzman, pp. 10–11.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
18. The diary of V. F. Odoyevsky, entries for 29 September, 6 October, and 6 December, 1863 (A. Lyapunova, *The Musical Diary of V. Odoyevsky*; A. S. Lyapunova Archive, Manuscript, pp. 34, 36).
19. Rojzman, p. 18.
20. Gotthard von Hansen, *Die Kirchen und ehemaligen Klöster Revels*, Reval 1885, p. 81 (Hannover-Döhren: v. Hirschheydt [1974]).
21. Rojzman, pp. 19, 85–86.
22. Uibo & Kuuskemaa, p. 67.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

Alexander Fiseisky, born in Moscow, is one of the most famous and influential organists in Russia. He graduated with distinction from the Moscow Conservatoire as pianist and organist. He is an organ soloist of the Moscow State Philharmonic Society, head of the organ class at the Russian Gnssnins’ Academy of Music in Moscow, and president of the Vladimir Odoyevsky Organ Center. He organized and served as artistic director for organ festivals in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Tallinn, among others. In 1997 he was honored by President Yeltsin with the title ‘Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation’.

Fiseisky has given concerts in more than 30 countries. In the Bach Anniversary Year of 2000 he played J. S. Bach’s entire organ works, twice in the context of EXPO 2000 in Hannover, and once in a single day in Düsseldorf as a Bach Marathon.

Sought after as a juror in international competitions, he has directed seminars and masterclasses in Europe and the USA. He is the dedicatee of numerous compositions, including works by Mikhail Kollontai, Vladimir Ryabov, Milena Aroutjunova, and Walther Erbacher. A musicologist, he has edited anthologies of organ music of Russia and of the Baltics (Bärenreiter-Verlag). He has many recordings to his credit, including the complete organ works of J. S. Bach.