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Multi-faceted splendour in organ music

Matthias Havinga – Passacaglia

by Thimo Wind

Matthias Havinga has devoted a recording to the passacaglia, a musical form based on a repeated bass line over which variations are composed. This Dutch organist performs examples from various periods of musical history.

The baroque composer Buxtehude takes his place between the romantics Reger and Mendelssohn, while Bach has the final word. Jan Welmers demonstrated in 1965 how exciting an atonal passacaglia can be.

Havinga plays all these works with agile hands and feet, and the stop combinations are tasteful and varied. To make this recording he travelled to the Kotka Church in Finland, where Martti Porthan has built a new instrument inspired by the Silbermann organ at the Freiberg Cathedral.