

celestial harmonies

romantic organ music of the
19th century
franz lehrndorfer
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the artist

Franz Lehnrdorfer was born in 1928 in Salzburg, Austria, of German parents. He grew up in Kempten, Bavaria and received his early musical education from his father, a choir conductor and musicologist.

He began his professional life in 1951 as an educator with the German boys choir Regensburger Domspatzen, where he met his future producer/engineer Ulrich Kraus, who was one of the choir's singers. Their friendship and collaboration has thus endured half a century.

In 1957, he proved his mastery of the organ when he won first prize at the international ARD Competition sponsored by the German broadcasting network. In 1969 Lehnrdorfer was appointed organist of the Munich Cathedral, the same year he became head of the Department of Organ and Catholic Liturgical Music at the Munich Conservatory. His renown and the resulting demand for his services as a teacher led him to found a School of Organ in Munich, which has since produced two generations of graduates. More than a few names well-known to the music world may be counted among them.

Lehnrdorfer is a recognized master of the art of improvisation. His concerts both in Germany and abroad are invariably met with enthusiasm and admiration.

As Dome Organist for over 30 years, and as a visiting professor at the Catholic University in Porto, Portugal, Lehnrdorfer has carried on a tradition of organ recitals initiated by his predecessors and has expanded their scope. Well-known contemporary composers write works for him to premiere.

the project

Celestial Harmonies' efforts to present the definitive catalogue of Franz Lehnrdorfer's repertoire would not be complete without **ROMANTIC ORGAN MUSIC OF THE 19th CENTURY**, recorded on the organ of St. Boniface in Munich. Built in 1976, the organ does not embody the tonal character of a conventional South-German organ. Instead, it follows the tonal ideals of a 19th century French cathedral.

The works performed on this CD show off the many different tonal possibilities of this nuance-rich organ. The choice of compositions, which include those resulting from the musical patronage of the Benedictine Order and two pieces from the threshold of the Romantic era, take into account the fundamental romantic character of the instrument and its connection to the Benedictines.

Featured composers include Léon Boëllmann, Charles-Marie Widor, Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wély, Joseph Ignaz Bieling, Armin Knab, Franz Xaver Schnizer, Sigfrid Karg-Elert, Arthur Piechler and César Franck.

Lehnrdorfer's repertoire reaches from Early Music to the 20th century. His musicianship is equally suited to romantic organ music from 19th century France (and as practised in other countries) as it is to Bach or improvisations over themes from children's and folk songs.

In Celestial Harmonies' efforts to present Lehnrdorfer's definitive catalogue, we also include a survey of the instruments he has played over his illustrious career. The new organ in the Dome at Munich is featured on **CELESTIAL CHRISTMAS 5 (13090-2)**, **THE CONCERT (13109-2)** and **THEME & VARIATIONS, VOL. 2 (13209-2)**, the organ in the Pfarrkirche, St. Quirin, Tegernsee and the Dome at Eichstätt on **BACH REGER (14200-2)** and the concert organ of the Academy of Music in Munich on **THEME & VARIATIONS, VOL. 1: IMPROVISATIONS ON CHILDREN'S SONGS (13208-2)**.

