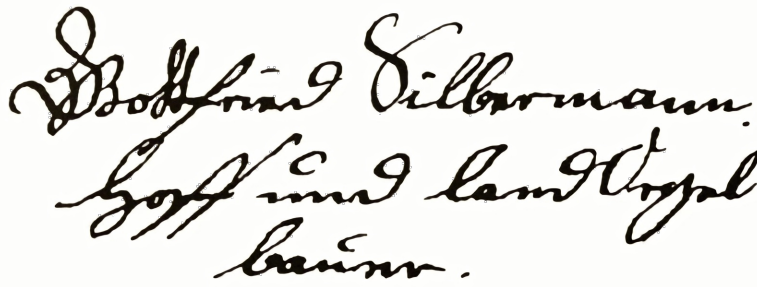


# Gottfried Silbermann

Schloßplatz 6, 09599 Freiberg, Germany



Gottfried Silbermann.  
Gottfried Silbermann  
bauer.

**Founded/Born**

1683 - 1753

**Closed/Death**

**Still active?**

no

**Webpage**

<https://silbermann.org/silbermann-haus/>

## Description

Gottfried Silbermann, born on January 14, 1683, in Kleinbobritzschesch and passing away on August 4, 1753, in Dresden, is renowned as the most significant organ builder of the Baroque era in central Germany. He integrated Alsatian influences into Saxon organ building, creating instruments that were renowned during his lifetime. Of the 50 organs Silbermann built, 31 survive, significantly shaping Saxony's organ landscape. The organs crafted by him, his brother Andreas Silbermann, and his nephew Johann Andreas Silbermann are globally known as "Silbermann organs." Additionally, Gottfried Silbermann constructed stringed keyboard instruments, including harpsichords, clavichords, and fortepianos, driving their evolution forward.

Silbermann's family lineage traces back to his great-grandfather Georg in Kleinbobritzschesch. His father, Michael Silbermann, was a farmer and later a carpenter. Gottfried, along with his brother Andreas, attended the town school in Frauenstein. Contrary to previous claims, Silbermann's letter suggests an early interest in organ building, not a bookbinding apprenticeship. He journeyed to Strasbourg in 1702 to learn organ building under Andreas. Returning to Saxony in 1710, Silbermann established his workshop in Freiberg, building his first German organ in Frauenstein in 1711. He gained recognition for his craftsmanship and garnered support from figures like Thomaskantor Johann Kuhnau.

Silbermann's pragmatic approach led to prosperity, despite occasionally underpricing his work. His ability to secure contracts and establish a near-monopoly position in the market allowed him to maintain financial stability. Silbermann's feud with Zacharias Hildebrandt over apprenticeship led to legal disputes resolved by the ruling of Elector Frederick Augustus I. Although Johann Sebastian Bach criticized some aspects of Silbermann's instruments, they eventually collaborated on assessing a newly built organ. Silbermann's illness in 1749 led him to delegate projects and eventually succumb to gout in 1753, leaving his nephew Johann Daniel Silbermann as his heir.

In his organ building, Silbermann adhered to a consistent design concept, integrating French influences initially and later developing his unique style. His organs were renowned for their durability, craftsmanship, and rich tonal quality. Silbermann's innovation extended to stringed keyboard instruments, including harpsichords, clavichords, and fortepianos, influencing the evolution of keyboard instrument construction. His hammer pianos, in particular, garnered acclaim

and were sought after by European courts, contributing significantly to the history of keyboard instruments. Silbermann's legacy lives on through his surviving instruments and the influence he exerted on subsequent generations of organ builders and keyboard instrument makers.

## **Sources**

[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried\\_Silbermann](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Silbermann)

# Reinhardtsgrimma, Dorfkirche

Pfarrweg 3, 01768 Reinhardtsgrimma, Germany



<b>Builder</b>	G. Silbermann
<b>Year</b>	ca. 1731
<b>Period/Style</b>	Baroque
<b>Stops</b>	20
<b>Keyboards</b>	2+P
<b>Keyaction</b>	tracker/mechanical
<b>Tuning</b>	1/6 Comma Meantone at 465 Hz
<b>Sampleset</b>	<u><a href="#">OrganArt Media</a></u>

## Description

The instrument is located in a historic village church in eastern Germany near Dresden. The current church is based on a 13th-century structure that has been repeatedly modified and expanded over the centuries, with the last major renovation occurring in 1742. The church's acoustics are very dry and clear due to numerous wooden fixtures.

The organ was built between 1729 and 1731 by Gottfried Silbermann from Frauenstein/Saxony. Silbermann organs can be classified into different architectural types, and this particular instrument represents the medium-sized village organ type. It was a favorite instrument of Helmut Walcha and the Dresden Kreuzorganist Herbert Collum. Typical features of Silbermann organs include strong and sharp aliquots like 1 1/2' and 3', full and warm 8' principals, and bright super octave stops like 4', 2', and 1'. Notable expressive stops include the 8' Rohrflöte and 8' Quintadena. The plenum sound is clear and very powerful, requiring few stops to achieve this effect.

The organ is tuned to the so-called historical Chorton ( $a_1=465$  Hz). Almost all pipes are original, especially the façade pipes (Principal 8). Many historical organs lost their façade pipes due to requisitioning during World War I. However, this instrument has undergone several significant interventions, such as in 1852 when pipes were cut and re-set for equal temperament. A free pedal coupling was added, and the intonation was partially altered to suit contemporary tastes. In 1909, even a Salicional 8' stop on a pneumatic auxiliary chest was added.

In 1953, the wind pressure was drastically reduced from 94 mm to 70 mm, necessitating major intonation changes. The result was a noticeably weaker and wind-unstable organ, as evidenced by a

historical recording from that time featuring Herbert Collum. In 1997, the organ-building workshop Wegscheider from Dresden was commissioned to restore and reconstruct the organ, reinstating the original wind pressure and system, and reversing the altered intonation, made possible by a generous donation from a patron.

Since the original tuning was lost, a tuning by Wegscheider, inspired by Silbermann, was adopted. This tuning is intended to support the accompaniment of baroque chamber music and is characterized by pure fundamental tones. The instrument, with its two manuals and pedal, mechanical action and registration, and a manual coupler, is fully playable and in excellent condition.

## Stoplist/Disposition

Hauptwerk	Hinterwerk	Pedal
Principal 8. Fuß	Gedacktes 8. Fuß	Sub Baß 16. Fuß
Rohr=Fleute 8. Fuß	Rohr=Fleute 4. Fuß	Octaven Baß 8. Fuß
Qvinta dena 8. Fuß	Nassat 3. Fuß	Posaunen Baß 16. Fuß
Octava 4. Fuß	Tertia 2. Fuß	
Spiz=Fleute 4. Fuß	Octava 2. Fuß	
Qvinta 3. Fuß	Qvinta 1 1/2 Fuß	
Octava 2. Fuß	Suffleute 1. Fuß	
Mixtur 4. Fach	Zymbeln 2. Fach	
Cornett 3. Fach		

**Additional:** HIW-HW, HW-P, Tremulant (entire organ), Calcantenruf

## Sources

<https://www.organartmedia.com/de/gottfried-silbermann>

# Freiberg, Petrikirche

Petrikirche, Petriplatz , 09599 Freiberg, Germany



<b>Builder</b>	G. Silbermann
<b>Year</b>	ca. 1735
<b>Period/Style</b>	Baroque
<b>Stops</b>	32
<b>Keyboards</b>	2+P
<b>Keyaction</b>	tracker/mechanical
<b>Tuning</b>	Neidhardt II at 462.5 Hz
<b>Sampleset</b>	<u><a href="#">Sonus Paradisi</a></u>

## Description

The pipe organ in St. Peter's Church, Freiberg, is a significant historical instrument with a rich background. Renowned organ builder Gottfried Silbermann, after gaining fame with the Freiberg Cathedral organ, was approached by the city council to build a new organ for the reconstructed St. Peter's Church following a devastating fire in 1728. According to his nephew Johann Andreas' diary, Silbermann had vowed to build this organ for free if his nearby house, storing three finished organs, was spared from the fire.

The contract for the new organ was signed on August 3, 1734, with a completion date set for July 1736. Silbermann, working in parallel on the Frauenkirche organ in Dresden, completed the St. Peter's Church organ earlier than expected in October 1735. The organ was consecrated on October 31, 1735, featuring 32 voices, including many 16' stops, a Vox Humana, and a "Bass Ventil" pedal coupler.

Over the centuries, the organ underwent several reconstructions and modifications. Significant changes included the introduction of equal temperament in 1855 and numerous updates by the Jehmlich company in 1895, 1935, and 1940, which altered its original Baroque characteristics. A thorough historical restoration was planned from 2004 and completed by Jehmlich and Wegscheider between October 2006 and July 2007, restoring the organ to its 1735 condition.

St. Peter's Church itself dates back to the 12th century and has seen numerous architectural changes due to fires and reconstructions. It was rebuilt in the Baroque style after the 1728 fire, with the addition of the Silbermann organ marking a significant milestone in its history. The church

has a long-standing musical tradition, having been a Lutheran establishment since 1537 and fostering a rich musical life that included liturgical accompaniment and solo performances. The church's interior underwent substantial changes in the late 19th and 20th centuries, but it retains historical features such as its high tower and ancient bells.

The restored Silbermann organ now continues to enrich the liturgy, concerts, and recordings, echoing the musical excellence envisioned by its creator nearly 300 years ago.

## Stoplist/Disposition

I Hauptwerk	II Oberwerk	Pedal
Principal 16'	Quintaden 16'	Großuntersatz 32'
Oktave 8'	Principal 8'	Principalbaß 16'
Viola di Gamba 8'	Quintaden 8'	Oktavbaß 8'
Rohrflöte 8'	Gedackt 8'	Posaunenbaß 16'
Oktave 4'	Oktave 4'	Trompetenbaß 8'
Spitzflöte 4'	Rohrflöte 4'	
Quinta 3'	Nasard 3'	
Superoctava 2'	Oktave 2'	
Tertia 1 3/5'	Quinta 1 1/3'	
Mixtur 4f 1 1/3'	Sufflöte 1' (sic)	
Cymbel 3f 1/2'	Sesquialtera 4/5'(ab c1: 1 3/5')	
Cornett 4f 4'	Mixtur 3f 1'	
Fagott 16'	Vox humana 8'	
Trompete 8'		

**Additional:** II/I, I/P, Calcantenzug, Schwebung (Trem.) II

## Sources

[https://organindex.de/index.php?title=Freiberg\\_\(Sachsen\),\\_Petrikirche](https://organindex.de/index.php?title=Freiberg_(Sachsen),_Petrikirche)

<https://www.sonusparadisi.cz/en/organs/germany/freiberg-petrikirche.html>



## Zöblitz, Stadtkirche Zöblitz

Schützenstraße 6, 09496 Zöblitz, Germany



<b>Builder</b>	G. Silbermann
<b>Year</b>	1742
<b>Period/Style</b>	Baroque
<b>Stops</b>	20
<b>Keyboards</b>	2+P
<b>Keyaction</b>	tracker/mechanical
<b>Sampleset</b>	<u>Prospectum</u>

### Description

The two manual organ of the Evangelische Stadtkirche Zöblitz in the Ore Mountains was built by Silbermann in 1742. Hence it belongs to his later works. With 20 stops it is a representative of an instrument type that he realized several times, for example in Freiberg, Fraureuth, Reinhardsgrimma and Forchheim. Thanks to a donation the organ could be carefully restored in 1997 so that nowadays it presents itself in an impressive manner. During the restoration it was also possible to uncover the original coloration of the facade.

## Stoplist/Disposition

Hauptwerk	Oberwerk	Pedal
Principal 8'	Gedackt 8'	Subbass 16'
Quintadena 8'	Rohrflöte 4'	Octavbass 8'
Rohrflöte 8'	Nassat 3'	Posaunenbass 16'
Octava 4'	Octava 2'	
Spitzflöthe 4'	Tertia 1 3/5'	
Quinta 3'	Quinta 1 1/2'	
Octava 2'	Sufflet 1'	
Mixtur IV	Cimbel II	
Cornett (c'-c4) III		

**Additional:** Tremulant, Koppel HW-PD, Koppel OW-HW

## Sources

<https://www.prospectum.com/index.php?lang=en&id1=2&id2=8>