

Hermann Raphaëlis

Founded/Born

1515 - 1583

Closed/Death

Still active?

no

Description

Hermann Raphaëlis (ca. 1515–1583) was a Dutch-born organ builder who made significant contributions to the field of organ construction in Denmark during the 16th century. He was likely born around 1510-20, the son of organ builder Gabriel Raphael Rottensteen. Around 1550, Raphaëlis was summoned to Denmark to construct the organ in Roskilde Cathedral, a prominent project that established his reputation in the region. He also built a two-manual organ for the chapel of Copenhagen Castle and at least one positive organ, showcasing his craftsmanship and expertise in organ building.

Later, Raphaëlis moved to Saxony, where he continued his work and built chapel organs for Elector Augustus of Saxony, who was the son-in-law of the Danish-Norwegian Queen Dorothea. It is believed that the organ in Queen Dorothea's chapel at Sønderborg Castle might be one of Raphaëlis' works. His contributions to organ building in both Denmark and Saxony highlight his significant impact on the development of organ music and construction during the Renaissance period.

Sources

https://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Rapha%C3%ABlis

Sønderborg, Sønderborg Slot

Sønderbro, 6400 Sønderborg, Denmark



Builder	H. Raphaëlis
Year	ca. 1570
Period/Style	Renaissance
Stops	14
Keyboards	2
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	1/4 Comma Meantone at 625 Hz

Description

The Sønderborg Castle Chapel in Denmark houses a unique Renaissance organ, originally built around 1570 by Dutch organ builder Hermann Raphaëlis. The castle, dating back to 1170 and expanded over the centuries, became a Renaissance castle in 1550 under King Christian III and Queen Dorothea, who established a Protestant chapel there. The organ, initially installed on the chapel's ground floor, was moved to its current position in 1626. Bartholomeus (?) later enlarged the instrument in the 17th century, adding a positive division in the basement.

The organ, considered old-fashioned and neglected for over 300 years, suffered vandalism during the castle's use as a hospital and prison in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the 1990s, expert organ builder Mads Kjersgaard undertook a restoration project, completing it in 1996. This organ is now the world's only surviving example of a transposing organ, tuned a fourth above ($a_1=625\text{Hz}$, meantone temperament). It has no pedalboard, two manuals with different compasses, and features stops such as Principal 6, Grob Gedact 6, and Trompet 8. The organ's unique sound and historical significance make it a valuable artifact of Renaissance musical heritage.

Stoplist/Disposition

Positiv	Oberwerck
Octav Flöite 3'	Principal 6'
Super Octav Flöite 1 ½'	Grob Gedact 6'
Qvint Flöite 1'	Qverpfeife 6' (treble)
Zimbel I	Octava 3'
Regal 6'	Nachthorn 3'
	Super Octava 1 ½'
	Sedecima ¾'
	Mixtur II
	Trompet 6'

Additional: I/II, Tremulant (whole organ)

Sources

<https://riccardo-gnudi.blogspot.com/2023/12/sonderborg.html>