

Ratzmann

Founded/Born

1771 - 1911

Closed/Death

Still active?

no

Description

The Ratzmann family was a notable German organ-building family from the 19th and early 20th centuries, creating around 170 organs in Thuringia and Hesse. The family's legacy spans three generations, beginning with Georg Franz Ratzmann (1771–1846), who established the family business in Ohrdruf, Thuringia. Georg's sons, Johann Friedrich Heinrich, Johann Heinrich Ludwig, and Wilhelm August Ratzmann, continued the tradition, with Wilhelm August setting up his own workshop in Gelnhausen, Hesse, around 1841. This move marked a period of significant growth and prosperity for the Ratzmann organ-building enterprise.

Wilhelm August's sons, Jean, Wilhelm, and Anton August Ratzmann, inherited and expanded the business, operating under the name "Gebr. Ratzmann" after their father's death. The brothers adapted to new technologies, with Wilhelm embracing pneumatic organ techniques, while Anton preferred traditional methods. Despite internal conflicts following Wilhelm's death in 1911, the business continued under new ownership and management by Richard Schmidt and later his descendants. The Ratzmann family's work, particularly that of Georg Franz and Wilhelm August, left a lasting impact on the organ landscape in Hesse, with numerous instruments still serving as testament to their craftsmanship.

Sources

[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratzmann_\(Orgelbauer\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratzmann_(Orgelbauer))

Smiltene, Smiltenes Luterāņu baznīca

Baznīcas laukums 1, LV-4729 Smiltene, Latvia



Builder	Ratzmann
Year	1889
Period/Style	Romantic
Stops	20
Keyboards	2+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Equal at 445.5 Hz

Description

The earliest known organ at the previous Smiltene Church dates back to around 1760, gifted by Major von Taube of the Smiltene estate. This organ, known as a positiv, had 8 stops, though its builder remains unidentified. With the consecration of the new Smiltene Church on October 18, 1859, the congregation began using an organ purchased in 1847 from the Riga Reformed Church for 425 silver rubles. This valuable instrument, originally built in 1783 by organ builders Koncius and Stein in Valmiera, was expanded to 17 stops by Tirza schoolmaster Leonhard Krenberg in 1859, and installed in the Smiltene Church.

In 1889, a new organ was built by Jean Ratzmann from Liepaja, although a plaque on the organ's console credits C. Roller as the builder. This instrument, consecrated on February 4, 1890, has a late romantic disposition and is particularly significant for its historical and musical value. The organ's prospect, likely constructed by Leonhard Krenberg, possibly contains original pipes from H.A. Koncius' earlier organ, making it a unique and valuable historical artifact in Latvia. Subsequent maintenance and repairs were carried out by various organ builders, including Müllverstedt and Dzērbenes master Veiklis, ensuring the organ's preservation and continued use.

Stoplist/Disposition

I. Manual	II. Manual	Pedal
Bourdon 16'	Geigen-Principal 8'	Principalbass 16'
Principal 8'	Lieblichgedeckt 8'	Subbass 16'
Gambe 8'	Salicional 8'	Violon 8'
Hohlflöte 8'	Aeoline 8'	Bassflöte 8'
Octave 4'Octave 2'	Dolce 8'	Posaune 16'
Octave 2'	Fugara 4'	
Quinte 2 2/3'		
Mixtur 5fach		
Cornett 2-4fach		

Additional: Manual Coppel, Pedal Koppel, Schweller (Swell pedal), CollectivPedal MezzoForte, CollectivPedal Forte, CollectivPedal Tutti, CombinationsPedal

Sources

https://orgcat.lv/smiltene_main.htm