

Rowan West

Am Weiher 2, 53505 Altenahr, Germany

Founded/Born

1953 - 2023

Closed/Death

Still active?

no

Email

Rowan@West-Orgelbau.de

Webpage

<https://www.west-orgelbau.de>

Description

Rowan West (1953–2023) was an accomplished organ builder based in Altenahr, Germany. Originally from Australia, West learned to play the organ at Sydney Cathedral. After completing high school and an apprenticeship in organ building in Australia, he received a Churchill Fellowship that enabled him to move to Central Europe in 1975. He honed his skills at Orgelbau Klais in Bonn and attended the North German Organ Academy in Bunde, focusing on Baroque organs. He completed his master craftsman school in Ludwigsburg in 1986 and established his own workshop in 1987, which employed five workers by 2016. Tragically, his workshop was completely destroyed by the 2021 flood, and he passed away after a long illness at the age of 70 in 2023.

West's work primarily centered on North German Baroque organs, creating new instruments in the style of Arp Schnitger and restoring historical organs. Significant projects include the reconstruction of Berendt Hus's lost organ in Celler Stadtkirche St. Marien in 1999 and the restoration of several Schnitger organs from 2012 onward. His craftsmanship extended to creating new organs in the Central German style of Gottfried Silbermann, as well as South German traditions of the 18th century and French styles. Notable restorations include the oldest playable organ in Germany at St. Andreas in Ostönnen and the Schwalbennest organ in Lemgo, St. Marien. Dedicated to traditional techniques, West used historical methods in pipe and woodwork, ensuring the authenticity and quality of his restorations and new builds. His work gained recognition in the organ-building community, contributing to research on preserving 17th and 18th-century organ pipes from lead corrosion.

Sources

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowan_West

https://www.west-orgelbau.de/Ubersicht/Die_Firma/die_firma.html

Celle, Stadtkirche Sankt Marien

An der Stadtkirche, 29221 Celle, Germany



Builder	R. West
Year	1999
Period/Style	Baroque
Stops	49
Keyboards	3+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical

Description

The Stadtkirche St. Marien in Celle boasts a rich organ history, with the original organ likely installed in the 15th century. The current organ façade, built in 1653 by Hermann Kröger and Berend Hus, includes intricate carvings by Ahrend Schultze and Andreas Gröber. This organ was expanded in 1687 to include a Brustwerk, and further adorned with extensive gilding and painted pipes by 1697. Despite surviving mostly unchanged until 1912, it was replaced by a Furtwängler & Hammer organ in 1913, preserving only the historical façade.

In 1969, Detlef Kleuker constructed a new organ behind the historical façade. However, during a church renovation from 1993 to 1999, it was decided to reconstruct the 1687 organ. Rowan West meticulously restored the organ casing and rebuilt the instrument in the style of Arp Schnitger, using traditional methods. The restored organ, completed in 1999, features 49 registers across three manuals and pedal, incorporating a new Hinterwerk to accommodate a wider repertoire. This restored instrument not only preserves historical elements but also enhances the church's musical capabilities.

Stoplist/Disposition

Rückpositiv I	Oberwerk II	Hinterwerk/Brustwerk III	Pedal
Quintadena 8'	Quintadena 16'	Principal 8'	Principal 16'
Gedackt 8'	Principal 8'	Traversflöte 8'	Subbaß 16'
Principal 4'	Gemshorn 8'	Viola da Gamba 8'	Octava 8'
Rohrflöte 4'	Rohrflöte 8'	Octava 4'	Gedecktbaß 8'
Octava 2'	Octava 4'	Gedeckflöte 4'	Octava 4'
Waldflöte 2'	Coppelflöte 4'	Nasat 3'	Mixtur VI
Sesquialtera II	Quinta 3'	Querflöte 2'	Posaune 16'
Scharff IV	Superoctava 2'	Tertia 1 3/5'	Trumeten 8'
Dulcian 16'	Mixtur V-VI	Trumeten 16'	Trumeten 4'
Krummhorn 8'	Trumeten 8'	Hobo 8'	Cornet 2'
	Vox humana 8'	Mixtur IV 1'	
		Gedact 8'	
		Blockflöte 4'	
		Oktava 2'	
		Tertia 1 3/5'	
		Quintflöte 1 1/2'	
		Trechterregal 8'	
		Schalmey 4'	

Additional:

Sources

<https://nomine.net/orgel/celle-stadtkirche-st-marien/>

Belum, St. Vitus

Kirchplatz, 21785 Belum, Germany



Builder	R. West
Year	ca. 2004
Period/Style	Baroque
Stops	13
Keyboards	2+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Bach-Barnes at 440 Hz

Description

The St. Vitus Church in Belum has a long history of organ construction and renovation. Originally, the church possessed an organ before 1600, which was rebuilt by the organ builder Georg Wilhelm Wilhelmy in 1794-95, incorporating old prospect pipes from the 16th century. In 1905, the firm Furtwängler & Hammer constructed a new romantic organ using cone chests, but it soon became problematic.

In the early 2000s, Rowan West from Altenahr built a new organ within the old Wilhelmy case, once again utilizing the 16th-century prospect pipes. The new organ was inaugurated on September 1, 2001, and the project was fully completed in 2004. The organ features a mix of historical and modern elements, with 11 stops distributed across Hauptwerk, Hinterwerk, and Pedal divisions. The detailed restoration maintained the original character and incorporated key historical components, ensuring the instrument's rich legacy continued.

Stoplist/Disposition

Hauptwerk	Hinterwerk	Pedal
Bordun 16'	Gedact 8'	Subbaß 16'
Principal 8'	Rohrflöte 4'	Octavbaß 8'
Rohrflöte 8'	Principal 2'	
Octave 4'	Sesquialtera 2f	
Spitzflöte 4'		
Nassat 3'		
Mixtur 4f		

Additional: II/I, I/P, II/P, Tremulant (whole instrument)

Sources

<https://nomine.net/orgel/belum-st-vitus/>

Fallersleben, Michaeliskirche

Schlossplatz, 38442 Fallersleben, Germany



Builder	R. West
Year	ca. 2005
Period/Style	Classical
Stops	27
Keyboards	2+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	after Bach/Barnes at 440 Hz

Description

The Michaeliskirche in Fallersleben houses an organ built by Rowan West between 2003 and 2005, using the historical facade from 1814. This new organ is a tribute to its predecessor, maintaining the aesthetic of the original instrument while incorporating modern craftsmanship and materials. The organ features a significant number of reed stops, totaling seven out of the 27 registers, which contribute to its distinctive sound. The metal pipes are crafted using the traditional sand-casting method, enhancing the organ's robust and majestic tonal quality.

The church's organ history dates back to 1806 when the first organ was acquired by the mayor Heinrich Wilhelm Hoffmann. In 1814, a new organ was installed, and its case has been preserved to the present day. Subsequent rebuilds occurred in 1907 and 1969 before the current Rowan West organ was constructed. This new instrument, housed within the original 1814 case, is designed to echo the sound of its historical counterpart while benefiting from modern organ-building techniques. The organ's detailed disposition includes a variety of stops across two manuals and pedal, offering a rich palette of sounds for liturgical and concert use.

Stoplist/Disposition

I. Manual	II. Manual	Pedal
Quintadon 16'	Gedeckt 8'	Subbaß 16'
Principal 8'	Quintadon 8'	Quinta 12'
Spillflöte 8'	Principal 4'	Octave 8'
Octave 4'	Flauto trav. 4'	Octave 4'
Blockflöte 4'	Nasat 2 2/3'	Posaune 16'
Quinte 2 2/3'	Waldflöte 2'	Trompete 8'
Superoctave 2'	Sesquialtera II	Trompete 4'
Mixtur IV	Mixtur III	
Fagott 16'	Hoboe 8'	
Trompete 8'	Vox humana 8'	

Additional: II/I (shove-coupler), I/P, 2 Tremulants, Cymbelstern

Sources

<https://nomine.net/orgel/fallersleben-michaeliskirche/>

Wesselburen, St. Bartholomäus

Sankt Bartholomäus, Am Markt , 25764 Wesselburen, Germany



Builder	R. West
Year	ca. 2011
Period/Style	Modern
Stops	32
Keyboards	2+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Well-Tempered at 465.0 Hz

Description

The organ was constructed by Rowan West during two phases in 2006 and 2011. After interim new builds in 1882 by Marcussen and in 1968 by Tolle, only the valuable casing and 14 metal pipes remained from the original Baroque organ. Rowan West then reconstructed the instrument, completing the first phase by Easter 2006 with 24 registers, and finishing the entire instrument by Easter 2011. The original organ was built by Johann Hinrich Klapmeyer in 1741.

Stoplist/Disposition

Brustwerck (II)	Hauptwerck (I)	Pedal
Quinthadena 8'	Quinthadena 16'	Principal 16'
Gedackt 8'	Principal 8'	Untersatz 16'
Principal 4'	Gedackt 8'	Octav 8'
Gedackt 4'	Octav 4'	Octav 4'
Octav 2'	Rohrflöt 4'	Rauschpfeiff II
Waldflöt 2'	Quint 3'	Mixtur IV-VI
Zipfflöt 11/2'	Superoctav 2'	Posaun 16'
Sexquialter II	Rauschpfeiff III	Trommet 8'
Scharff III-IV	Mixtur IV-VI	Trommet 4'
Dulcian 8'	Cimbel IV	Cornett 2'
	Trommet 8'	
	Vox Humana 8'	

Additional: I/II, I/P, 2 Tremulants for the entire organ

Sources

https://organindex.de/index.php?title=Wesselburen,_St._Bartholom%C3%A4us

Oederquart, St. Johanniskirche

Süderende, 21734 Oederquart, Germany



Builder	R. West
Year	2017
Period/Style	Baroque
Stops	28
Keyboards	3+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Well-Tempered at 483 Hz

Description

The St. Johannis Church in Oederquart, originally built in the 14th century, is home to an organ with a rich history. The organ, originally constructed by the renowned organ builder Arp Schnitger between 1678 and 1682, incorporates elements from an earlier instrument made by Hans Christoph Frietzsch in 1652. Over the centuries, the organ underwent several modifications, including significant work by Johann Daniel Busch in 1781 and a comprehensive rebuild by Johann Hinrich Röver in 1864/65, which led to the loss of most of the original Schnitger pipes, except for the visible prospect pipes.

In the 20th century, the organ was further altered, but by the 1990s, the decision was made to restore and reconstruct the original Schnitger organ. This restoration was carried out in three phases from 2014 to 2017 by the organ builder Rowan West. The restoration work included the reactivation of the original disposition, resulting in an organ with 28 registers spread across the Hauptwerk, Brustwerk, Rückpositiv, and Pedal. The project culminated in the organ's re-inauguration at Easter 2017, returning the instrument to its former glory as one of the finest examples of Schnitger's work.

Stoplist/Disposition

Rückpositiv	Hauptwerk	Brustwerk	Pedal
GEDACT 8'	QUINTADEHN 16'	GEDACT 4'	SUBBAß 16'
PRINCIPAL 4'	PRINCIPAL 8'	OCTAVE 2'	PRINCIPAL 8'
OCTAVE 2'	GEDACT 8'	QUINTE 1 1/2'	OCTAVE 4'
SESQUIALT 2f	OCTAVE 4'	REGAL 8'	POSAUN 16'
MIXTUR 4f	GEDACT 4'		TROMET 8'
DULCIAN 8'	NASAT 3'		TROMET 4'
SCHALMEY 4'	OCTAVE 2'		
	GEMSHORN 2'		
	RAUSCHPFEIF 2f		
	MIXTUR 4-5f		
	TROMET 8'		

Additional: III/II (shove coupler), PEDAL COPPEL (II/P), CALCANT, TREMULANT, CIMBELSTERN, NACHTIGALL

Sources

<https://nomine.net/orgel/oederquart-st-johannis/>