

The following study by Wolfgang J. Brylla is titled “*Gebrüder Späth* Organ in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship” (Organy firmy *Gebrüder Späth* w województwie dolnośląskim). Its author describes the activity of an organ builder who came from the distant Baden-Württemberg, which is unique in the tradition of organ building in Silesia. The same author also published a second article titled “Rudolph Iske – A Contribution to the History of Organ Building in Lubuskie” [Rudolph Iske – przyczynek do dziejów lubuskiego organmistrzostwa]. It is a presentation of important information about the hitherto little-known organ builder, who, however, created the landscape of organ building in the region.

The later part of the publication includes an article by Rev. Grzegorz Poźniak bearing the title “The Unpreserved Organ of Franz Joseph Weiss in Przechód” (Nie zachowane organy Franza Josepha Weissa w Przechodzie). It is an interesting piece of information about the instrument built in the village near Korfantów by an organ builder so important for the Silesian tradition.

The penultimate article by Stanisław Pielczyk is entitled “Three-Voice Positive with a Pedal as a Didactic and Artistic Instrument. Construction Issues” (Trzygłosowy pozytyw z pedalem jako instrument dydaktyczny i artystyczny. Problematyka konstrukcyjna) and contains a description of the instrument’s construction along with technical drawings.

The last text is an article by Janusz Musialik titled “Sale of Harmoniums in Upper Silesia in the Years 1860-1975 – Historical Outline” (Sprzedaż fisharmonii na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1860–1975 – rys historyczny). The text is primarily an interesting list of companies trading in harmoniums in Silesia.

As in every other volume of the publication “Organs in Silesia”, the ending includes an extremely useful index of names and places.

Franciszek Koenig

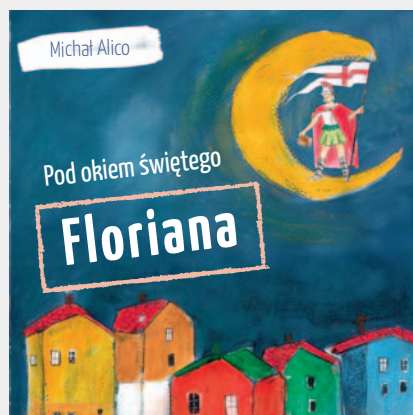
## REVIEW

Michał Alico, *Pod okiem świętego Floriana*. Opole: SINDRUK-DIMK 2021, pp. 24. ISBN 978-83-955914-3-3.

***From a story for children to serious science.***

***Contribution to the great history of Silesian organ building.***

In spring 2021 a new book for children appeared on the shelves of SINDRUK-DIMK publishing house. It takes readers into the world of music. Earlier, we could read a book entitled *About church organs with children and for children* written by Father Grzegorz Poźniak. It can be used as a simplified and easy to understand “textbook on church



organs". It was also appreciated by the Catholic Publishers Association *Feniks 2020* and successfully released for the second time. Now organs and their history have once again become an inspiration to create a valuable literary and graphical story for children.

This time it is a book by Michał Alico, an author who constantly cooperates with the Diocesan Institute of Church Music. In his work, he uses a literary pseudonym, although his real name is not difficult to find, especially if you follow the hints on his website. The book was enriched with original illustrations by Małgorzata Kowalcze. The title of the story – *Under the Watchful Eye of Saint Florian* – certainly does not reveal to the readers the main subject of the story, which is the presentation of the life of an organ builder Johann Matthias Vinzenz Haas, whose activities require further research.

Although the book in question does not belong to scientific publications, it certainly deserves attention, and its topic fits perfectly into the profile of this journal. This is mainly due to the fact that the book initiates the promotion of the described organ builder in literature in general. He still does not have his scientific monograph. It is also worth noting that although science does not know everything about him, he is already promoted in children's literature. What is more, the story presented in the book is based mainly on real and confirmed events. They were only slightly coloured with elements of literary fiction, which in this case, does not influence the accuracy of the presented information as far as history and cultural heritage are concerned.

The author begins his story when the organ builder's workshop is moved from Baborów to Głubczyce. Although the date of this event is unknown, we know that it happened more or less at the time of the fire of Głubczyce (1854), which is the starting point of the book. The location of the organ builder's workshop and flat was described in detail. There is also information that he had two daughters. The story also mentions the statue of Saint Florian, which was erected in Głubczyce after Haas's death, and its eyes are fixed exactly halfway between the workshop and the flat of the organ builder.

In the story, the author recalls the names of real places where pipe organs were built by J.M.V. Haas. These instruments can still be heard in local churches, and the sound of some of them was recorded in the *Organs of Opole Silesia* album series. It would be great if reading the book was accompanied by listening to organ music, especially the one recorded on the instruments of the described organ builder.

It should be noted that the book *Under the Watchful Eye of Saint Florian* is an excellent educational aid, since it shows the centuries-old cultural heritage of Opole Silesia, and promotes higher culture and art. The land of Głubczyce, as well as the whole Silesia, has been marked by the traces of the activity of composers, music publishers and organ builders who have made a valuable contribution to the development of regional music culture, equal to European standards. For this reason, it is important to undertake actions which can reveal facts unknown to a wider audience and present forgotten figures. This publication fulfills this task because it contributes to the promotion of local history by introducing the figure of Johann Matthias Vinzenz Haas – the organ builder who was highly professional and who lived and worked in Głubczyce and whose workshop was famous all over Silesia and beyond its borders. He built numerous wonderful instruments, which still can be heard in many churches.

Thus, we should be glad to welcome this book, since its purpose is to present the history covered in the darkness of the past. The author must be congratulated on his outstanding creativity and literary imagination. We also hope that this publication will become an inspiration to the creation of new works promoting organ building, and music culture.

Ewelina Szendzielorz

## REVIEW

### Organs of Opole Silesia, vol. 26 and vol. 27

The year 2020 is associated with the release of new albums from the series *Organs of Opole Silesia*. This time they were the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh volumes. Thanks to it the sound of the next instruments of Opole Silesia was recorded and many copies of CDs with organ music with appropriate commentary were released. It is worth noting that both discs received a distinction from the Association of Catholic Publishers Feniks 2021 in the category: Christian – Classical Music.

The enrichment of the already existing collection with two more albums (vol. 26 and vol. 27) is an expression of concern for the religious and cultural heritage of organ instruments and the centuries-old achievements of church music in Silesia. This is confirmed by the fact that the instruments that we can hear were created in the local organ building companies in Opole Silesia, run by well-known organ builders, such as Karl Berschdorf from Nysa and Karl Spiegel from Opole.

The two subsequent albums are a proof of cooperation that takes place between parishioners under the leadership of their parish priests, organ builders and church musicians and musicologists. The result of this collaboration is the restoration of the former splendour of the wonderful instruments. It should be emphasized that they are located not only in large urban centres, but also in smaller rural parish communities, where they were adjusted to the local beautiful churches. In a small booklet attached to the 26th CD, Ms Ewelina Szendzielorz reminds that “over the centuries Silesian land has been marked by the traces of activity of excellent organ-building companies, which were most often the result of the continuation of the family tradition of many generations. The region located in the heart of Europe, on the Polish, Czech and German border was a meeting place of three cultures, influencing one another and creating a colourful, multicultural regional specificity, resulting in an extraordinary transfer of thoughts and ideas, also at the level of organ-building art. As a result of dynamically developing organ building in Silesia numerous instruments were created. Each of them is unique and exceptional because it was built for a particular church to fill its space connected with worship of God with wonderful sound, and at the same time to encourage the faithful gathered in the temple to sing and pray together”.