

Padre DAVIDE da BERGAMO 1791–1863

Organ Music

CD1	67'25	4	Pastorale in G	4'31	
Sonatas and Symphonies*		5	Elevazione in G minor	3'28	
1	Sinfonia in D	7'17	6	Sonatina in D	4'42
2	Suonata in E	5'16	7	Sonatina in A	3'25
3	Sinfonia in E flat	7'12	8	Elevazione in D minor	3'49
4	Suonata in B flat	4'04		6 Versetti in F	
5	Sinfonia in D	6'32	9	Versetto 1	1'56
6	Suonata in F	4'48	10	Versetto 2	1'32
7	Sinfonia in C	5'56	11	Versetto 3	1'49
8	Suonata in E flat	4'04	12	Versetto 4	2'12
9	Sinfonia in D	6'03	13	Versetto 5	1'21
10	Suonata in A	5'03	14	Versetto 6	1'32
11	Sinfonia in E	5'59			
12	Suonata in G	5'02	15	Elevazione in B flat	3'25
			16	Sonatina in F	4'41
CD2	67'44		17	La vera piva montanara	8'50
Sonatinas, Versets and Pastorali			18	Elevazione in D minor	3'57
1	Sonatina in F	3'53	19	Sonatina in F	3'17
2	Elevazione 'con risposte in eco'	4'44			
3	Sonatina in C	4'28			

*First recordings

Marco Ruggeri *organ*

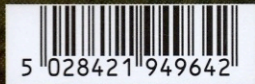
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Padre Davide da Bergamo

The Italian organist and composer Padre Davide da Bergamo (Felice Moretti) has only begun to feature in concert programmes in recent years. Notwithstanding his status as the greatest Italian organist of the period of Italian unification (Risorgimento) in the 19th century, his name is now omitted from the main international music dictionaries (*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*), and therefore the only source of reference is the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, published by Treccani and edited by Oscar Mischiati.

Born in Zanica near Bergamo in 1791, Moretti was a pupil of Davide Bianchi and Antonio Gonzales; he came into contact with the German composer Johann Simon Mayr, who lived in Bergamo and founded a famous music academy. The young Felice, who was eager to study at this institution, was rejected on the grounds that he had passed the maximum age limit for entry, which stood at 14 years. However, he remained in contact with Mayr and got to know most of the prominent musicians of Bergamo in the early 1800s, notably the composer Gaetano Donizetti and the tenor Giovanni Battista Rubini. After pursuing a career as an organist in various parts of the province of Bergamo (Torre Bondone, Zanica and Gandino) during a ten-year period from 1808 to 1818, he decided to take holy orders with the Franciscan monks of the Frati Minori Osservanti. Adopting the monastic name Davide (recalling both his first teacher and the writer of the Book of Psalms), in 1818 he entered the Monastery of Santa Maria di Campagna in Piacenza, and remained there for 45 years until his death in 1863. A letter to Simon Mayr written in 1826 by the rector of the monastery, Father Angelo Maria Sgorbati, reveals that it was the same Mayr who advised the young Padre Davide to take up the post of organist and choirmaster of the Piacenza monastery. As such, the appointment of the young priest-musician could be seen as a conscious effort to raise the standard of the music at Santa Maria di Campagna, where organists had not been of the first rank, and which had no proper *maestro di cappella*.

Throughout his time in Piacenza, Padre Davide diligently carried out his duties as organist and master of the choir of monks, both as a performer-director and, especially, as a composer.

In fact, his output was immense, amounting to more than 2000 organ works and around 500 sacred choral pieces. The latter were composed to serve the minor and major feasts of the liturgical calendar, and were written for the core group of singers in the monastery, usually performing in three parts (TTB) but sometimes in two parts and occasionally as solo voices – with simple organ accompaniments doubling or harmonising the line – or unaccompanied. The vocal style of the music was generally easy to read – lyrical, often moving in parallel thirds – allowing the monks to learn quickly and refresh their repertoire continuously. Padre Davide dedicated himself mainly to producing Latin hymns, psalm antiphons, responsories, litanies and Magnificats; a small but significant part of his output was in Italian, prompted by his collaboration with Simon Mayr and with Samuele Biava, a Bergamo poet who had translated many liturgical texts into the vernacular.

Padre Davide's organ works, few of which were published in the 19th century, are nearly all preserved as manuscripts in the monastery's archives. Their survival owes much to the efforts of Leone da Codogno, fellow monk and pupil of Padre Davide, because Franciscan humility and the desire to 'leave no trace' led Davide deliberately to destroy a lot of his own compositions, letters and sketches. Davide's surviving work can be considered almost complete thanks to the work of Brother Leone, who – in order to learn the secrets of organ composition or because he was aware of Padre Davide's destructive tendencies – embarked on a mammoth project to make faithful copies of the maestro's music.

After Davide's death, an inventory was made of the manuscripts in his cell, to prevent them disappearing. These comprised choral and organ pieces written in conventional two-stave notation or, in the case of some of the sketches, in single staves. Padre Davide's output of compositions is essentially linked to developments in organ design in Lombardy at the beginning of the 19th century, thanks primarily to the workshops of Serassi and Bossi, who were among the most active and innovative organ builders of the time in Bergamo. By the turn of the century a class of organ had emerged which was the product of experiments going back to the last decades of the 18th century; in it, the traditional liturgical registers (Principal, Ripieno and Vox humana) joined an astonishing new palette of stops which imitated orchestral sounds (Flauto traverso, Ottavino, Corni da caccia, Fagotto, Tromba,

Corno inglese, Tromboni etc.). Padre Davide had been familiar with these organs since boyhood; he therefore, in his own compositions, embraced the tonal resources of these 'modern organs' and deployed them with great imagination in his own work.

Between 1823 and 1838, Serassi built a large two-manual organ which not only incorporated the new registers noted above but also included some rarer stops such as the Cornamuse, Ottavino grosso, five-note Tympani and even the Campani (bells), which were unique in Italian organ design. To mark the inauguration of this organ in 1838, Padre Davide composed a collection of works which were published by Ricordi of Milan as *15 Pezzi per il gradioso organo della Chiesa Ducale di S. Maria di Campagna*. With this one exception, few of his works were published in his own lifetime: apart from some collections of liturgical versets, Canti of Milan published '12 Sonatas' in 1845–6, but in fact these comprised six sonatas and six sinfonias – all of which are recorded for the first time on this CD. These are substantial and difficult works, which brilliantly exemplify the organ's adoption of one of the most complex of orchestral forms – the sinfonia (with its simpler variant, the sonata); the organ's tone-colours are able to reproduce the sounds of orchestral discourse with surprising fidelity.

Padre Davide's music stands at that moment in history when organ composition began to detach itself from the liturgy. He himself was one of the most lauded and sought-after performers, famous for his Christmas Pastorals, which attracted huge crowds; he was the father of the Italian organ recital, leading the organ away from its atmosphere of sanctity. Liturgical works such as the Elevation, Benedictus, Postcommunion and Offertory of the Mass are transformed by being suffused with the new orchestral timbres; recital pieces appear, including sinfonias, sonatas, sonatinas, divertimentos, polonaises, the Concertino, the Prayer, and the two pictorial works: *Fire* and *The Days of Blood or The Revolution in Milan* (recalling the 'Five Days of Milan' uprising in 1848).

Immediately after his death in 1863, the monks decided to offer some of Padre Davide's major works for publication. Between 1865 and 1867, Vismara of Milan published three volumes of organ music (Volumes I and III) and choral pieces with organ accompaniment

(Volume II). In 1982 many of the organ works appeared in facsimile, edited by Giuseppe Scarpato for Paideia Press, Brescia; these have long been out of print but provided the main vehicle for the rediscovery of Padre Davide's music in the 20th century after 100 years of neglect.

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Recording: 25 November 2013, Parish Church of Villa di Serio (CD1), 1–2 December 2013,

Parish Church of Almenno San Salvatore (CD2), Bergamo, Italy

Recording, editing & mastering: Federico Savio

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Translations: Graeme Kay

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The Organs

CD1: Villa di Serio (Bergamo), Parish Church

Organ built by Giovanni Giudici in 1853–5 and restored by Pietro Corna in 2013. Located in the Presbytery, epistle side. Two 61-note keyboards. Echo Organ from C2; keyboard divided between C3 and C#3 (bass: C1–C3; soprano: C#3–C6).

19-note chromatic pedal board C1–E2, permanently coupled, with Terzamano and Timballone.

Accessories: Full Organ, Lombardy-style free combinations, toe pistons for solo stops, couplers, crescendo. Wind pressure: 49mm; unequal temperament; 2311 pipes.

Specification

Grand'Organo (upper manual):

Campanelli s.
Cornetto s.
Fagotto 8' b.
Trombe 8' s.
Trombe 16' s.
Clarone 4' b.
Corno inglese 16' s.
Viola 4' b.
Flutta 8' s.
Violone 8' b.
Ottavino 2' s.
Corni dolci 16' s.
Flagioletto 1/2 b.
Ottavino profondo 4' s.
Flauto in VIII b.
Flauto in VIII s.
Flauto in XII
Voce puerile s.

Principale 16' b.
Principale 16' s.
Principale 8' b.
Principale 8' s.
Ottava 4' b.
Ottava 4' s.
Duodecima
Quintadecima
Due di ripieno
Due di ripieno
Due di ripieno
Due di ripieno
Sette di ripieno al ped
Contrabassi e rinforzi al ped.
Timballi al ped.
Bombarde 12 al ped.
Voce Umana 8' s.



Case and console of the Giudici organ (1853–5) in Villa di Serio (Bergamo)

Organo Eco (lower manual):

Principale 8' b.
Principale 8' s.
Ottava 4' b.
Ottava 4' s.
Duodecima
Due di ripieno
Due di ripieno



Cornetto s.
Viola 4' b.
Flutta 8' s.
Ottavino 2' s.
Voce Umana 8' s.
Violoncello 8' b.
Violoncello 8' s.

CD2: Almenno San Salvatore (Bergamo), Parish Church

Organ built by Andrea Giuseppe Serassi in 1790, enlarged by Egidio Sgritta in 1861, restored by Emilio Piccinelli in 1983 and Pietro Corna in 2005. Located in the Presbytery, gospel side. Two 61-note keyboards; 22-note pedal board. Keyboard divided between B2 and C3 (bass: C1–B2; soprano: C3–C6).

Accessories: Full Organ, Free Combinations, toe pistons to solo stops, couplers, including Man II-Pedal coupler, Reeds, Bells, Terzamani, Timballone, Banda turca. Wind pressure: 52mm; equal temperament; 2263 pipes.

Specification

Grand'Organo (upper manual):

Campanelli s.
Fagotto 8' b.
Trombe 8' s.
Clarone 4' b.
Oboè 8' s.
Viola 4' b.
Violone 8' b.
Corno inglese 16' s.
Corno da caccia 16' s.
Flauto traversiere 8' s.
Ottavino 2' s.
Cornetta I s.
Cornetta II s.
Flauto in VIII b.
Flauto in VIII s.
Flauto in XII s.
Voce Umana s.
Terzamani
Unione tastiere

Principale 16' b.
Principale 16' s.
Principale 8' b.
Principale 8' s.
Principale II b.
Principale II s.
Ottava 4' b.
Ottava 4' s.
Duodecima
Quintadecima
XIX
XXII
XXVI–IX
XXXIII–VI
XL–XLIII
Contrabasso I al ped.
Contrabasso II al ped.
Timballi in tutti i toni
Tromboni 12 al ped.



Case and console of the Serassi-Sgritta organ (1790–1861) in Almenno San Salvatore (Bergamo)

Organo Eco (lower manual):

Principale 8' b.
Principale 8' s.
Ottava b.
Ottava s.
XV
XIX
XXII
XXXVI–IX



XXXIII–VI
Viola 4' b.
Flutta 8' s.
Violoncello 8' b.
Violoncello 8' s.
Ottavino 2' s.
Voce Umana 8' s.