

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, authentic performance practice has become an integral part of the performance of music of the 17th and 18th centuries. This particular style includes the rendering of the specific works as precisely as possible in accordance with the style of the relevant era in terms of articulation, tempo and *Affekt*, and more importantly, in view of this thesis, registration in organ music.

Georg Friedrich Kauffmann may not enjoy the prominence of his contemporaries such as J.S. Bach, but his contribution to the field of organ music is of considerable importance. His compositional output, evident in the *Harmonische Seelenlust*, has secured his reputation as a composer of unmistakable quality and craftsmanship. The mere fact that many of his contemporaries and some composers of the subsequent generation copied and regularly performed not only his organ, but also his choral works, testifies to the high regard in which he was held during his era.

The *Harmonische Seelenlust* did not receive notable attention after its completion, but may now be regarded as one of the most important collection of chorale preludes since Samuel Scheidt's *Tabulatura Nova* of 1624. The *Harmonische Seelenlust* abounds with interesting characteristics, viz. precise suggestions in terms of tempo, ornaments, and articulation – some of these typical of the Baroque era and some implicating the dawn of the next period, namely the so-called *Galant*, that was gradually but seamlessly emerging to replace the Baroque. But the discerning aspect that makes the *Harmonische Seelenlust* such an important source of information from the Baroque, is Kauffmann's detailed and accurate suggestions for the registration of most of the works contained therein. All these recommendations indicated by Kauffmann himself, contributed in making the *Harmonische Seelenlust* an exemplary and individualistic approach to organ composition of the Baroque.

This collection also contains one of the first examples of compositions combining a wind instrument, in this case an oboe, playing an unadorned *cantus firmus* accompanied by an organ. Kauffmann is generally believed to be the pioneer of this peculiar genre.

The Merseburg organ, an instrument of great diversity, must have been one of the highlights during Kauffmann's tenure as organist and composer. This magnificent instrument unequivocally inspired him to produce what ultimately became the *Harmonische Seelenlust*. The versatility of this instrument in terms of timbre, was a motivation in itself for Kauffmann to record on his manuscripts his personally preferred registration for literally each individual work. Although Kauffmann might have had other organs in mind when he suggested certain registrations for works in the *Harmonische Seelenlust*, it must have been the Merseburg organ's remarkably comprehensive specification and its numerous possibilities for different combinations that motivated him. It is evident in the *Harmonische Seelenlust* that the contrasted choruses of this organ – Principals, Flutes, string stops and reeds– motivated Kauffmann to embark on an unprecedented feat by adding all his preferred timbres to most of the works in this collection.

The *Harmonische Seelenlust* is not only the most detailed source of registration trends during the Baroque, but is likewise a rich source of what the sound ideals were during this period. The use of 16' stops as foundation in the manuals, the use of multiple stops at 8' pitch, 4' stops to be played an octave lower on the manuals, unusual combinations of stops in both manuals and pedal, and the combining of a wind instrument (oboe) with organ, are but some of the aspects that make the *Harmonische Seelenlust* an indispensable source of information from the Baroque. The writer discovered that Kauffmann does not merely add a combination of stops to a specific piece, but that he employs a scientific system of registration to individual genres of works. Furthermore, since the registration combinations are always linked with specific types of genres, Kauffmann appropriately establishes a particular texture of registration for each of these works.

Kauffmann's initiative to record his sound ideals in some of the works themselves consequently makes it possible for performers to emulate these meticulous registrations on pieces in the *Harmonische Seelenlust* where indications were either supplied incompletely, or where none were supplied at all. The works that have been provided with registration, have the full potential to function as prototypes in the establishment of, and the serving as foundations for the specific combinations a performer may use, depending on the genre in question as outlined in the previous chapters. In consequence, these combinations, devised by a specific system of registration, can equally be applied effectively to the corresponding works of his contemporaries such as J.S. Bach, J.G. Walther and G.P. Telemann.

G.F. Kauffmann may not have received the acclaim he so rightfully deserves, mostly due to the fact that his talent was being eclipsed by J.S. Bach. With the advantages that hindsight and historical reflections offer, restitution in appreciation has become due for Georg Friedrich Kauffmann. The writer is of the firm opinion that the time has come for this composer to be taken out the framework of mediocrity and the relative disregard that exists around his work. He deserves assessment in terms of his own, individual achievements, and not in terms of other Baroque contemporaries. The impact that he has had on the organ music of his era needs to be recognised, realised and appraised for its own intrinsic worth.

This study makes a contribution to the acknowledgement of Kauffmann in his own right, and to stimulate performers, students and historical critics to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the works of this hitherto unsung composer.