

## Choir & Organ review

Anthoni van Noordt: Tabulatuurboeck van Psalmen en Fantasyen (1659)

Léon Berben,

Van

Hagerbeer organ (1643), Pieterskerk, Leiden

Ramée RAM2201 (2CDS) [76:50; 78:55]

★★★★

Léon Berben continues his trans-European survey of 17th-century organ literature with Anthoni van Noordt's *Tabulatuurboeck*, complemented in this case with some of the decorative psalm settings from the Campuysen and Lübbenauer manuscripts. As usual there is a strongly personal aspect to Berben's interpretations. Once again, he argues for the addition of significant ornamentation, on the basis that this practice was ubiquitous at the time. Given the absence of contemporary Dutch sources for ornamentation, others from across Europe, although disseminated in the Netherlands, are cited. Berben proposes that Van Noordt's book served a higher purpose than simply to teach congregations the newly imposed Genevan Psalm melodies, and that Amsterdam would not have formed an exception to the ornamentation culture, even if this music did arise in a Calvinist environment. Opinions will be divided both about this, and about the question of registration. Interestingly, Berben cites similar sources (including those by Rodenstein, Roos and Van Lare, all dating from 50-100 years earlier than the publication of Van Noordt's book) to those used to justify gap registrations in his Titelouze recording. The choice of the Leiden Pieterskerk organ, the last surviving great city organ of the Dutch Golden Age and one of the largest meantone organs in the world, is entirely appropriate, even if it is recorded rather claustrophobically.

CHRIS BRAGG

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