



Riga Cathedral

On July 25, 1211, Bishop Albert laid the foundation stone for the Riga Cathedral with a solemn ceremony. Unfortunately, very little is known about the initial construction stage of the Cathedral. It is generally accepted that the construction of the present church gained momentum in spring 1215, after the first Cathedral church in the inner city had burned down. Around that time the building material was changed from natural stone to brick.

Stone blocks were used only in the outer corners of the building.

In 1266, Bishop William of Modena, the Pope's legate, held a council in the newly built Riga Cathedral. It is thought that by that time the choir and the cross-nave were completed and separated from the unfinished part of the church with a wall.

The first construction period was characterised by the simple and laconic Romanesque style. According to studies carried out by art historians, Riga

Cathedral was initially envisaged as a basilica, but later the design was changed and a hall church was built instead. At the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th centuries, Riga Cathedral was enlarged by building the western cross-nave and side chapels and elevating the side walls of the central nave thus making the church into a basilica. At that time the tower walls were also raised and an octagonal pyramidal spire was added. This tower can be seen in the oldest picture of the Cathedral – the Sebastian Munster's cosmography dating back to 1559. According to V. Neimanis, supervisor of the Riga Cathedral renovation works in the 19th century, the Riga Cathedral Tower was the highest spire in the whole city of Riga at that time.

Riga Cathedral kept its appearance up to 1547, when on a Sunday before Pentecost a great fire broke out in the inner city and the Gothic spire of the cathedral burned down. A new tower with a pyramidal spire and two galleries was built by 1595. The Riga Cathedral rooster dating back to that time can still be seen in the Cloister of the Cathedral.

From 1881 to 1914, the Riga Cathedral Building section of the Riga Society of Researchers of History and Ancient Times carried out major reconstruction and renovation works in the church and the Cloister. As a result of these works, the Cathedral and the Cloister acquired their present-day appearance.

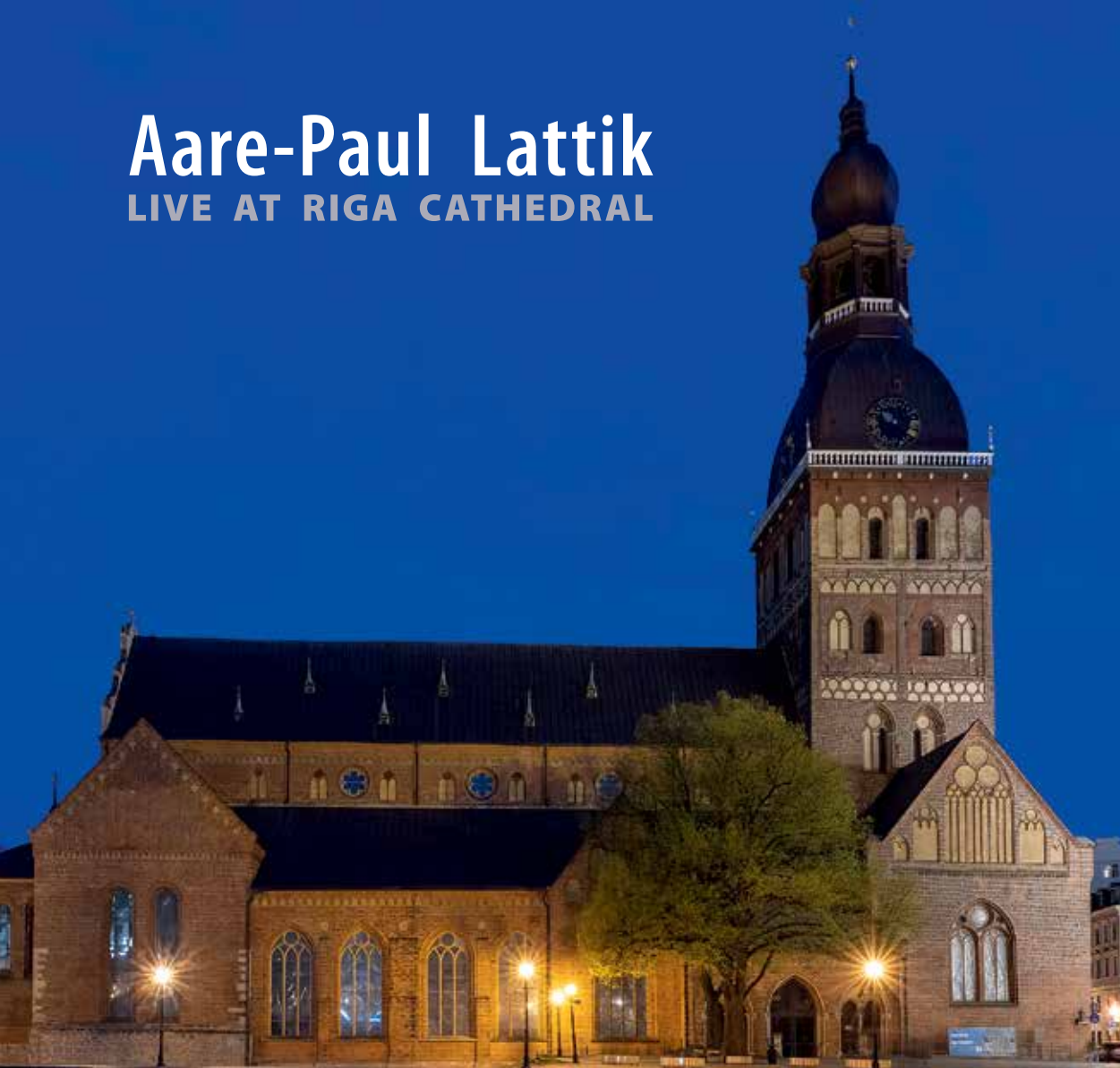
In the 20th century, during the Soviet times, two major reconstruction works took place.

From 1959 to 1962, Riga Cathedral was turned into a concert hall – the altar was dismantled and seats were installed to face the organ.

From 1981 to 1984, the Dutch organ building company *Flentrop Orgelbouw Zaandam* carried out a major organ reconstruction. At the same time, the Cathedral interior was renovated and refurbished. The copper plating of the tower and the railings of both galleries were restored, a new rooster was made, and the copper sphere was revamped.

Aare-Paul Lattik

LIVE AT RIGA CATHEDRAL



Alfred Karindi (1901–1969)

Of the four organ sonatas written by the Estonian composer Alfred Karindi, the best-known and the most frequently played is Organ Sonata No. 3 in F minor, completed in 1944. The second part of the Sonata, Berceuse (*Lullaby*), is undoubtedly the composer's best-known piece of music, which is played as an independent piece, and has also been published separately. Although the title of the Sonata's second part is in French, the dance-like part in the middle has, undoubtedly, its roots in Estonian folk dance. The middle dance section is flanked by slow movements, reminiscent of a slow and romantic French organ piece.

The third part of the Sonata, Fugue, is a good example of the so-called improvisational polyphony.

The Sonata is generally characterised by improvisationalism, abrupt modulations, and an alternation of distant timbres.



Aare-Paul Lattik

LIVE AT RIGA CATHEDRAL

A

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685–1750)

Passacaglia and Fugue in c, BWV 582 13.28

César Franck

(1822–1890)

Cantabile

(from «Trois pièces pour grand orgue» FWV 36) 5.59

Alfred Karindi

(1901–1969)

Organ Sonata No. 3 in F minor

1. Allegro moderato 10.20
2. Berceuse. Andante cantabile 6.54
3. Fugue. Allegro ma non troppo 6.32

AARE-PAUL LATTIK

studied organ at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre where he completed his Master's degree. He perfected his craft under Aude Heurtematte, the titular organist of the Saint-Gervais church in Lille, and at the Lyon Conservatoire under the guidance of Professor Louis Robilliard. A laureate of several Estonian and international competitions, Aare-Paul Lattik has worked as a lecturer at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, and as an organist in several churches. Active as an organist both in Estonia and abroad, he has recorded several solo albums. The most recent one, recorded on the organ of St. Mary's Cathedral in Tallinn, was released in 2024 and has gained wide international attention.

It was nominated as the best classical music solo album of 2024.

Aare-Paul Lattik was awarded the title Interpreter of the Year by the Cultural Endowment of Estonia in 2023.

Recorded live at Riga Cathedral 2.05.2025

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