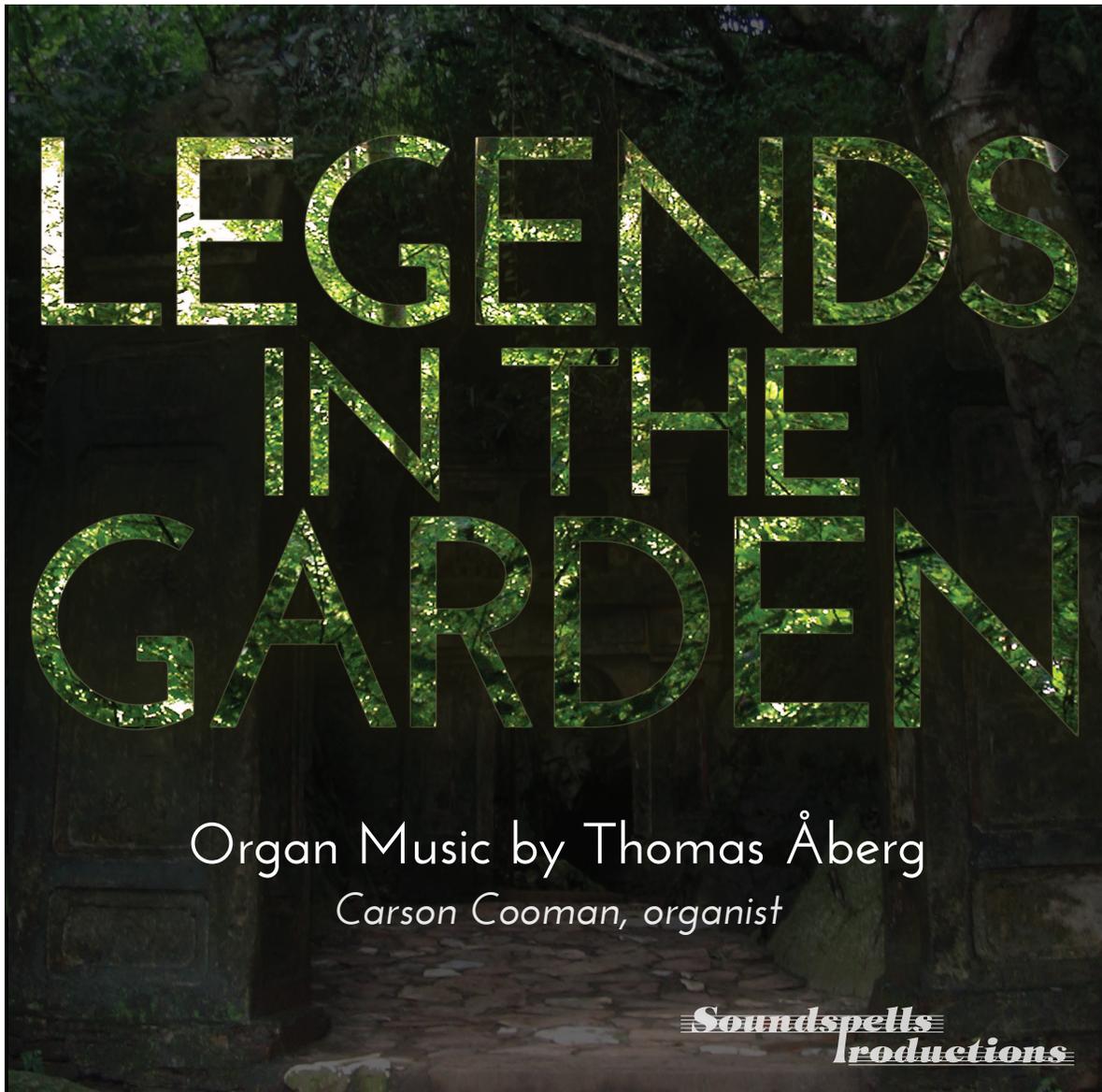


CD Booklet Front:



Inside Pages of CD Booklet follow.

# Legends in the Garden

Organ Music by Thomas Åberg (b. 1952)

Carson Cooman, organist

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 1  | <b>Marsch Babacou</b> (1983)                       | [05:10] |
| 2  | <b>I Folkton (Swedish Folktune)</b> (1990)         | [06:13] |
| 3  | <b>Swedenborg Piece No. 1, “The Clock”</b> (2004)  | [02:11] |
| 4  | <b>Swedenborg Piece No. 2, “Time goes…”</b> (2005) | [02:01] |
| 5  | <b>In the Garden: Dew-drops</b> (1999)             | [07:12] |
| 6  | <b>In the Garden: Frosty Morning</b> (1999)        | [07:54] |
| 7  | <b>In the Garden: Rainy Day</b> (2002)             | [06:49] |
|    | <b>Five Miniatures</b> (1984)                      | [08:12] |
| 8  | Allegro  | [01:38] |
| 9  | Presto   | [01:06] |
| 10 | Moderato   | [02:16] |
| 11 | Allegro, staccato                                  | [01:03] |
| 12 | Presto   | [02:09] |
| 13 | <b>Legend No. 1</b> (1985)                         | [06:21] |
| 14 | <b>Postlude</b> (1984)                             | [01:52] |
| 15 | <b>Legend No. 6</b> (2010)                         | [05:33] |
| 16 | <b>Låt fran Tånåm (Melody from Tanum)</b> (1997)   | [05:35] |
| 17 | <b>Legend No. 3</b> (1985)                         | [04:44] |
| 18 | <b>Toccata III</b> (1982)                          | [03:13] |

**Total duration [72:55]**

**Thomas Åberg** (b. 1952) was born in Stockholm, Sweden and works there as composer, concert organist, and music administrator. Most of his works are written for the organ and are characterized by their rhythmic joy, simplicity, and humor. He has stated that “music must bring enjoyment, without abandoning reverence,” and as such his style often uses the most basic of musical materials to create a discourse that is both spiritual and visceral. His music has been performed by organists at festivals throughout Europe, Asia, and the USA. He also tours regularly worldwide as concert organist with his own works. For more information about his work, visit his website at: [www.abergmusic.com](http://www.abergmusic.com)

Thomas Åberg’s organ works are some of the most enjoyable organ pieces that I know, delightful to hear and extremely enjoyable to play. In Åberg’s style, one hears an intersection of the classical organ tradition with more contemporary elements, especially influence from minimalist and ambient music. The pieces range from energetic and humorous (*Marsch Babacou*) to the atmospheric and meditative (the very moving *In the Garden* trilogy). This recording project has brought me a great deal of pleasure as a performer, and it is a joy to share these pieces, many of which have not been previously recorded.

— Carson Cooman



I was very blessed during my student years (1981–83) to work with the Swedish composer Stig Gustav Schönberg (b. 1933). He was very generous with his contacts and introduced me to all organists who at that time were important for new organ music. It was then also mandatory for organists to work in a church congregation. Through that experience, I also had the chance to write music for very young and inexperienced organ players which was a useful challenge. This generous atmosphere created my fundamental ambition to write music that can be used, even often, and to be appreciated by listeners who are not as experienced with contemporary music.

*Marsch Babacou* (1983) was written during a period when I played a lot of music by BACH, BARTÓK, and COUPERIN as some sounds and even the title indicates.

Scandinavian folk music has always been popular in Swedish church music. I worked for a long period both arranging traditional melodies and writing new melodies in traditional style. *I Folkton* (1990) is my own original melody.

*Postlude* (1984) is dedicated to the organist Karin Strid (1951–2010) who was one of my most important mentors throughout the years. She also commissioned the two small pieces for the philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg's (1688–1772) house organ (an instrument with just one 4' voice) which is located in his summer house at the museum Skansen on the island of Djurgården (in Central Stockholm).

The *In the Garden* trilogy—consisting of “Dew-drops” (1999), “Frosty Morning” (1999), and “Rainy Day” (2002)—was composed during a bleak period of my life. These meditations were certainly written as a form of unconscious self-therapy for life's more

difficult crossroads. The individual pieces are ideal as interludes, and the work “Rainy Day” I have even used as Passion music during Holy Week.

The former cathedral organist in Stockholm, Professor Gotthard Arnér (1913–2002), encouraged me in particular to write new music for chamber (or “choir”) organs. He often said that “most modern composers are only interested in the sound of the great organ, and thus miss the intimate sound of the smaller instruments.” *Five Miniatures* (1984) was one of the pieces I wrote under his inspiration.

The *Legends* are meditations written as dialogues between the composer/organist and composer/audience. One of Sweden's most famous concert organists was Torvald Torén (1945–2001). We had some good communication, and he allowed me write a concert piece for him. However, I became very nervous of the task of writing a piece for such a great performer, so instead of writing him a virtuosic toccata, I instead wrote the quiet and atmospheric *Legend No. 1* (1985) in a state of cowardice. However, he liked the piece very much and performed it. *Legend No. 3* (1985) was inspired by contact with young organ players, and *Legend No. 6* (2010) is dedicated to one of my most frequent listeners on her birthday.

*Låt från Tanum* (1997) or *Melody from Tanum* was written for my friend and composer colleague Kurt Wiklander who lives in the small village of Tanum on the west coast of Sweden. The character of Swedish folk music is present in the piece because Kurt is a great enthusiast of such.

In the early 1980's there was a moral debate in the Swedish Church on what was appropriate to play in church. “Church music should not be too easygoing and cheerful...” said some conservatives. However, I believe that God definitely has a sense of humor, and that he wants us to be happy even when we go to church! Many of my toccatas explore this state of mind.

— Thomas Åberg



**Carson Cooman** is an American organist and composer. He holds degrees in music from Harvard University and Carnegie Mellon University and since 2006 has held the position of Composer in Residence at The Memorial Church, Harvard University. As an organ recitalist, Cooman specializes in the performance of contemporary music. Over 130 new compositions by over 100 composers have been written for him by composers from around the world. He has given premiere performances of works by many of the present era's most distinguished living composers including Peter Maxwell Davies, Emma Lou Diemer, Michael Finnissy, Jennifer Higdon,

Jo Kondo, Robert Moran, Colin Mawby, and Daniel Pinkham. Cooman has recorded organ music for Albany Records, ASV/Blackbox, JADE Records, and Zimbel Records. His most recent release *A Marvelous Love: New Music for Organ* (Albany Records) contains works by Patricia Van Ness, Jim Dalton, Tim Rozema, Al Benner, Thomas Åberg, Harold Stover, Peter Machadjik.

As a composer, Cooman has created a catalog of works in many forms—ranging from solo instrumental pieces to operas, and from orchestral works to hymn tunes. His work has been performed on all six inhabited continents and appears on over thirty-five recordings, including sixteen complete CDs on the Naxos, Albany, Artek, Altarus, MSR Classics, Raven, and Zimbel labels. Two CDs devoted to his own organ compositions are currently available: *Wild Sunrises* (2011; Raven Records; played by Harry Lyn Huff) and *Canzona* (2012; www.coomanorgan.com; played by Erik Simmons). [www.carsoncooman.com](http://www.carsoncooman.com)

## Organ of Tolland Residence Hall

Mechanics and voicing by G. & S. Tolland, 1984–2001  
Pipework primarily from instruments by Walcker, Sauer, Steere, and Aeolian  
(In a German–American late-Romantic style)

<u>Great</u> (C–g <sup>3</sup> )	<u>Positive</u> (C–g <sup>3</sup> )	<u>Swell</u> (C–g <sup>3</sup> )	<u>Pedal</u> (C–g <sup>1</sup> )
Principal 16'	Bourdon 16'	(enclosed)	Double Principal 16'
Principale Suensis 8'	Principal 8'	Gedackt 16'	Double Bass 16'
Bourdon 8'	Gedackt 8'	Violin Diapason 8'	Double Flute 16'
Harmonic Flute 8'	Solo Flute 8'	Gedackt 8'	Double Quint 10 ½'
Viol 8'	Salicional 8'	Flauto Gregorio 8'	Principal 8'
Gemshorn 8'	Flauto Dolce 8'	Echo 8'	Flute 8'
Octave 4'	Octave 4'	Celeste 8'	Cello 8'
Chimney Flute 4'	Traverso 4'	Horn Viol 4'	Octave 4'
Recorder 2'	Mixture IV	Echo Flute 4'	Tromboon 16'
Quartane II	English Horn 8'	Flautino 2'	
Mixture III–IV			
Trumpet 8'			

Couplers: Pos–Gt, Sw–Gt, Sw–Pos, Gt–Ped, Pos–P, Gt–P, Gt–Gt 4', Pos–Gt 4'; Sw–Gt 4'

### Recording credits:

Producer: Gregory Tolland

Booklet Notes: Carson Cooman

Engineering, Editing, and Mastering: Overtone Audio

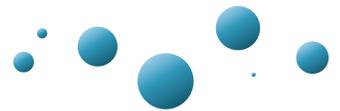
Publishers: Noteria/Norbergs Musikförlag (1–2, 8–14, 17);

Swedish Music Information Centre (3–7, 14–16, 18)

World premiere recordings: 1, 2, 5, 7–18

Photo credits: Cover (Michelle Dennis), Back (Greg Wallace); Åberg (BAL); Cooman (Colby Cooman)

Design: Karl Hinze



CD Disc Face:





CD Jewel Case:

# LEGENDS IN THE GARDEN

Organ Music by Thomas Åberg

Carson Cooman, organist

LEGENDS IN THE GARDEN: Organ Music by Thomas Åberg

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**Soundspells**  
**Productions**

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