



Schwyzerörgelerin

The Schwyzerörgeli (Schwyzer organ) is a variant form of the diatonic accordion. It is principally used in the Swiss folk music. The bass is monotone and represents the forerunner model of the Stradell-Bass. Modern instruments are mostly equipped with three banks of buttons. A compact coverage type with a cassotto plus a bantling with a protection cover for the leathered corner are today's characteristic features of the Örgeli.

The Schwyzerörgeli got its name from the canton Schwyz, and does not base on the concept of the country Switzerland. The eldest Schwyzerörgelis were the so-called Langnauerli, which have been produced in Lagnau in Emmental, canton Bern up from 1836.

The first producer of Schwyzerörgelis was Robert Iten (1859-1918) from Pfäffikon of the canton Schwyz. The most popular instruments, which are still great demanded to this day, are certainly the Nussbaumer and the old Eichhorn. Joseph Nussbaumer was born 1882 in Schwyz, and is often called as the Stradivari of the Schwyzerörgeli-manufacture. Together with Robert Iten, Alois Eichhorn and Ernst Salvisberg, he belongs to the producers of Schwyzerörgelis from the very beginning. His Örgelis are particularly tonally silhouetted against other instruments. The history of the company Nussbaumer is quite eventful, as its name, location and owner has been changed several times. The period from 1920 to 1929 is considered as the apex, in point of the quality of the manufactured instruments. It's a dream of the most Schwyzerörgeli-player, to possess a Nussbaumer. Not seldom, there are paid maximum prices by enthusiasts for such an instrument. Alois Eichhorn was born 1865 and belongs, like Joseph Nussbaumer and Ernst Salvisberg, to one of the first great pioneers of the Schwyzerörgeli. In 1886, he started the manufacture and was producing his Örgelis without a resonance box, in the beginning. In the year 1915, Eichhorn produced his first 3-row hand organ, consisting of 36 basses. The then famous „Stalder Franz“ was supposed to bring Eichhorn to produce that hand organ. Also a 5-row instrument with 80 basses was built by Eichhorn later. In common with his sons Alois, Josef and Ernst, Eichhorn became more and more important and reinforced the term „Eichhorn Schwyz“ as also the term Schwyzerörgeli. The instrument's quality became better and better. Particularly the 18-bassed Schwyzerörgeli with cube inlays are still very appreciated to this day.

Today, there is a clutch of Schwyzerörgeli-manufacturer, which are specialized in reproducing the Nussbaumer-original. The Zürcher-Schmidi Örgeli and the Stradivarius-Schwyzerörgeli by Beat Kolleger from Alvaneu belong to the most popular ones. Only a small number of instruments are annually leaving the factory of both manufacturers.

Among the thousands of ländler-chapels, many of them are called as Schwyzerörgeli-duet, -trio or -quartet. Also the Yeniches prefer the Schwyzerörgeli for their music, in which they mix up their own traditional rhythms and melodies with the Swiss folk music. In Switzerland, the costumes do not only differ from canton to canton, but (especially the women-costums) do also vary within each of them. There is, practical everywhere, the differenciation between Sundays- and working days-costums. **Our Schwyzerörgelerin wears a Bernese Sunday-costum.**