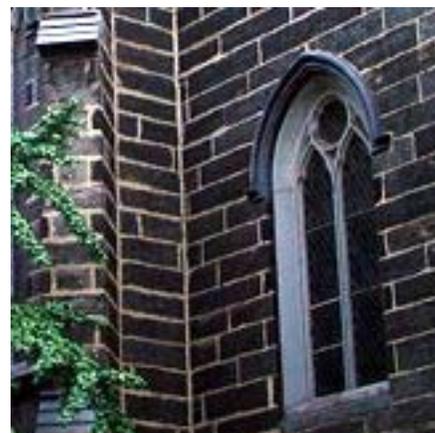


September 2003

Double Pen

A Publication of
the New York City Chapter of
the American Guild of Organists



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Who does it?
Why don't we?**

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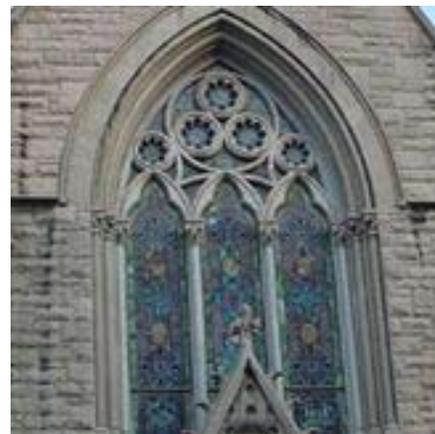
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The New York City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists was established 9 October 1950 when it was made independent of the former Headquarters Chapter, tracing its history to the founding of the AGO in 1896. With more than 550 members, it is one of the largest Chapters in the Guild.

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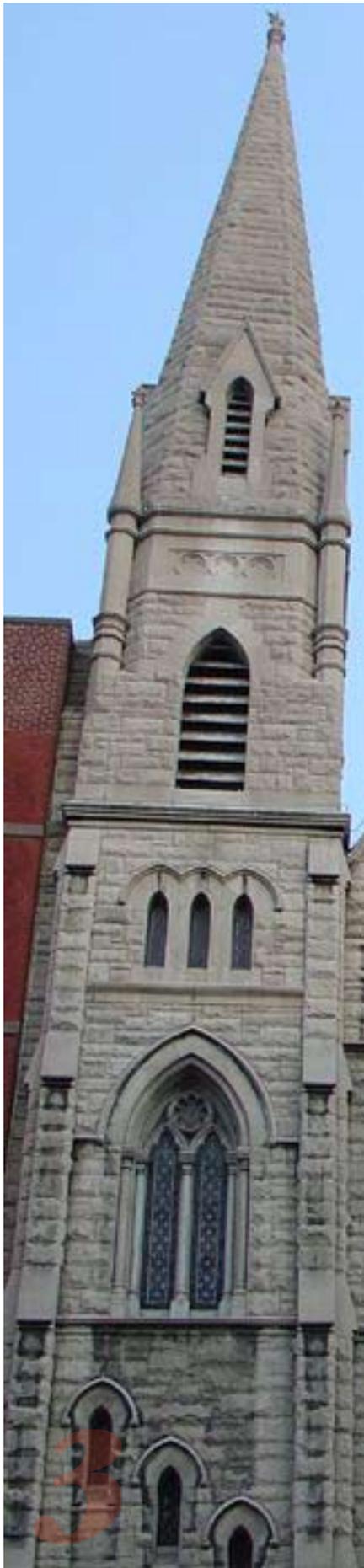
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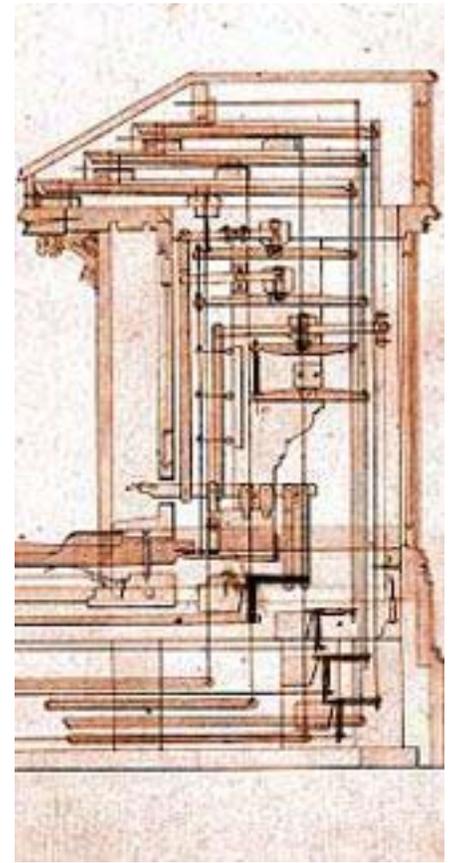
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11TH ANNUAL

AT SAINT PETER'S
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1:00 Felix Hell
2:15 Walter Hilse
3:30 Iain Quinn
4:15 Paul Jacobs
8:00 Festival Concert

Brandenburg Concerto No. 4,
Cantatas 93 and 65,

Works from Schein's Opella nova 1618
Saint Peter's Choir / Bach Festival Orchestra
Thomas Schmidt, conductor

Saturday, October 5, 2003

5:00 Jazz Mass with
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Epiphany on Wall Street

The tragic circumstances of the 11th of September, in 2001, still weighs heavy in the mind of New York City, the United States of America, indeed the whole world. Lives were brutally ended, heroes were born, martyrs (in more ways than one, and not all good) were created. Miraculously, the Chapel of Saint Paul and the magnificent building of its mother parish, Trinity Church Wall Street, were spared destruction.

Not so the pipe organs, in particular the large Æolian-Skinner organ in the rear gallery of the nave and the smaller instrument in the sanctuary. Given the very nature, history and stature of the Parish of Trinity Church, organists everywhere wondered what would be done in the interim, and ultimately in the long term, with regard to this substantial instrument, one of the city's largest. To the latter the question remains unanswered while insurance carriers fight amongst themselves. To the former, there is, quite literally, an Epiphany.

Epiphany, Opus 1, to be exact: a creation of the firm [Douglas] Marshall and [David] Ogletree, LLC. When the entire instrument is completed, which is expected to be in time for Christmas 2003, it will possess some 170 'stops' and will arguably take the state of the art of digital instrument building to a new level. Choirmaster and

Organist Dr. Owen Burdick, well known for his expertise in electronic music, said, "I knew the first time I played the prototype that I wanted Trinity Church to be the first to have this technology." Trinity Church Wall Street is one parish in the unique position to do just that!

Throughout the design phase of the project, Burdick made the usual suggestions concerning the console layout and stoplist specification, as would any organist receiving such an instrument. However,



his background also allowed him to make important contributions to the design of special features and controls which 'marry' the new organ to Trinity's state-of-the-art electronic music facility. Hence, the organ will be able to control all of the synthesizers and sound processors in the church's studio for simultaneous or subsequent playback throughout the church. In addition, the organ will be completely MIDI-compatible and remotely 'playable' by the studio's computers and keyboard controllers.

"I really shouldn't admit this to anyone—much less my own Rector," muses Burdick, "but I'll be able to wake up at 8:59 on a Sunday morning, type in a couple of commands from my bedside computer, and have the first hymn begin to play at Trinity's 9:00 A.M. service! Of course I'm kidding. Nevertheless, this kind of automation opens both a Pandora's box of ethics questions and a new realm of sonic possibilities." Burdick's special control features will be essentially invisible to the visiting organist, and will not add distracting clutter to the otherwise traditional design of the console.

From the beginning, Marshall and Ogletree conceived of their instrument as a musical 'flight simulator,' one which attempts to recreate every conceivable detail of pipe organ sound. Although accurately reproducing the tone of pipe organ stops was a critical ingredient, other issues were considered to be of equal importance. It was a design goal, for example, to be able to reproduce subtle playing response characteristics of real pipe organs (discernable only by a knowledgeable organist), as well as the myriad effects of winding systems and internal mechanics on the instrument's sound. These issues and many more were analyzed in detail by the builders, resulting in sophisticated organ behavior modeling software being incorporated into the tone generation system.

Knowing that with limited resources it would be nearly impossible to develop new hardware for the instrument in addition to cutting edge software and sound samples, an early decision was made to design the instrument using quality hardware ingredients built by other established companies. As a result, the instrument can be readily serviced, and will be easy to obtain parts for in the future.

The hardware required consisted of two organ consoles with electrical control systems, tone generation system hardware, and two large audio systems. In all cases, hardware choices were carefully made so as to provide excellent performance and functionality while delivering proven reliability and long term serviceability.

The consoles are being supplied by two different companies, one from America and one from Europe. The primary console, built for Trinity's ornate chancel, will be constructed by Fratelli Ruffatti Pipe Organ Builders of Padua, Italy. It will be constructed of solid oak, with elaborate carvings and



moldings. English keyboards, featuring cow bone and African ebony wood coverings, will be fitted into this console.

The console for the gallery was built by Klann Organ Supply of Waynesboro, Virginia, a long time supplier of quality components to America's pipe organ industry. Although less extravagant than its Ruffatti sibling, the Klann console is sturdy and handsome, and very comfortable to play. The Klann console will be delivered by Labor Day, 2003; the Ruffatti console is expected in time for Christmas, 2003.

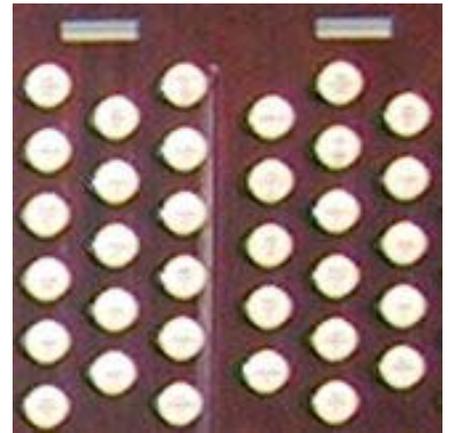
It was quickly determined that the design goals for the new tone generation system would be most easily accom-



plished on a standard PC platform. This is radically different than the approach taken by other digital instrument manufacturers, who build proprietary hardware systems intended to last for thirty to forty years. PCs are designed to last for seven to ten years on average, thus an Epiphany cus-

tomers will need to plan on upgrading their tone generation system hardware approximately once per decade.

Ogletree sees this as a hidden advantage. "This brings the digital organ more into line with other high tech products that people buy. Today, no one expects to own a computer for more than a few years, and in



fact, people look forward to buying new ones to obtain new features, capabilities, and higher speed. The first tone generation system you buy from us will be the most expensive one. As PCs get faster, cheaper, and more capable every year, upgrading your M&O tone generation hardware will become less expensive each time you do it. The console connects to the tone generation system with a simple network cable, making the upgrading of hardware quick and easy when the time comes."

According to Marshall, "With an Epiphany organ, you'll invest in a pipe organ grade console, with elegant keyboards, superior controls, and

beautiful hand made wood-work. A premium quality console like this will last for decades, while the tone generation system it controls will change and improve over time.”

Burdick, however, wishes to make it perfectly clear that this is an interim instrument. Given the scope of the final pipe organ project, the means



of the parish, and the waiting list typically several years long for an instrument out of a premium builder’s shop, he did not relish the prospect of dealing with an off-the-assembly line electronic substitute for what could be five to seven years or more. Some may question the wisdom of this decision, but Trinity has long been known for its ground-breaking ministry in such fields as video production and broadcasting and other means and media financially out of reach of perhaps any other parish on Earth, certainly in New York City.

It has often been the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that has advanced knowledge and technical ability. Such a project

as the digital instrument going in at Trinity Church Wall Street has that potential, leading to even greater realism in the instruments of potentially every manufacturer so that the church with very limited funds and frighteningly deadly acoustics can have a substitute that provides as close to authentic pipe organ tone as possible. Nothing produces innovation like healthy competition. It remains to be seen, or heard, if others can compete with the likes of the unique features of the Marshall & Ogletree LLC “Epiphany.”



Being built on a standard PC platform, the M&O tone generation system is essentially hardware independent. Industrial quality server cases, racks, power supplies, disks, motherboards, and RAM memory were selected for long and reliable service.

The Windows operating system which most people are familiar with was not designed for use in stand alone applications such as this. The reliability issues which afflict most PC users would never be tolerated

in equipment which is expected to turn on and work every time, as a church organ is. The decision was made to develop the organ’s control and tone generation systems in a Linux environment. Linux, a highly stable operating system, is considered by many to be the finest environment in which to run this type of stand alone application on either standard or embedded controller PCs.

A custom console control system had to be developed to accommodate planned features and console operations. This was accomplished by combining proven console control hardware supplied by Classic Organ Works of Markham, Ontario with a more powerful embedded controller CPU, also run



ning Linux. The console control software was designed by M&O.

A feature which Marshall and Ogletree call ‘Alternate Stops’ required that special vacuum fluorescent displays be installed above the drawknobs for each division. These displays serve as nametags for the divisions, and also indicate the

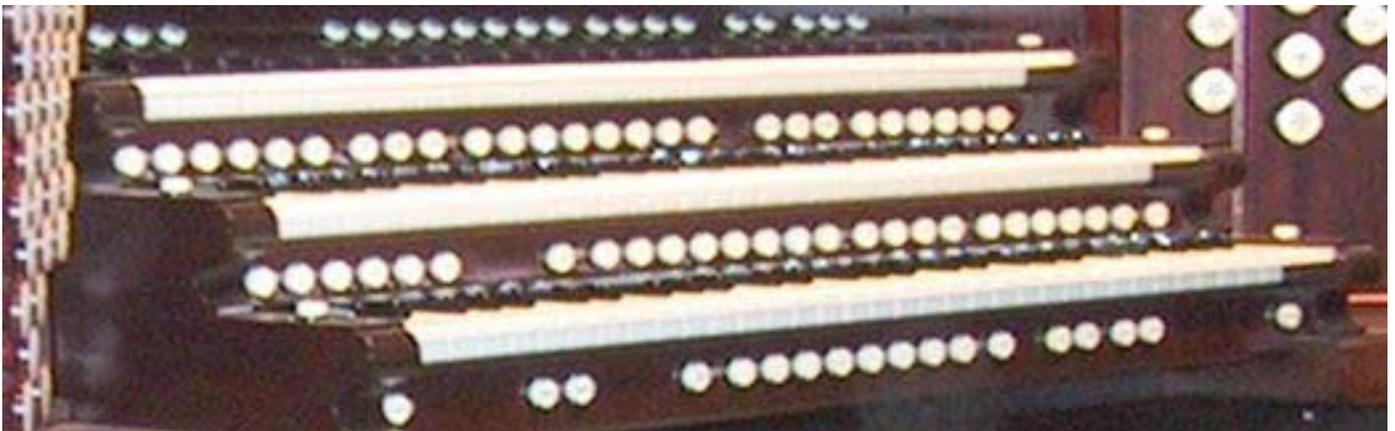
current setting for each Alternate Stop. The displays ensure that the organist will know what sound to expect every time that an Alternate Stop knob is drawn. Each Alternate Stop can be set to play any one of several possible stops in a list. The choice can then be saved and later recalled by pressing a piston.

Ogletree explains, "Other organ companies have offered variable stops for years, but our approach is different. We don't think of variable stops as providing multiple versions of

bidirectional data communication throughout the organ. The LAN is connected to the internet through a security firewall and a high speed DSL line. Any errors encountered will be reported to the builders immediately for analysis. New features, software updates, and sound samples will be easily uploaded into the organ from M&O headquarters in Needham, MA.

Each of the two consoles for the new Trinity Church organ will be able to play eighty five stops, simultaneously. The gallery organ console will play its

The tone generation system will be capable of generating up to twelve thousand simultaneous independent notes of polyphony, many times the polyphony typically produced by digital organs of this size. Why so much polyphony? Ogletree explains, "We've got one hundred seventy stops to generate in total here, and every note of every stop played uses four note generators... two for the stereo attack/steady-state samples, and two for the stereo release samples. Frankly, a specification this large demands this kind of polyphonic



basic organ sounds. Rather, our Alternate Stops are designed to be complementary to the permanent stops of their division. By combining our Alternate Stops with other basic divisional stops, an organist can create unusual and colorful registrations which are typically possible only in much larger instruments."

All of the various computers of the instrument are interconnected by means of a high speed local area network (LAN) providing instantaneous

own set of eighty five stop samples, each properly voiced and scaled to speak from that location into the building, and designed to produce greater power to support the full congregation in song. The chancel organ console will play a different set of eighty five stop samples, each scaled and voiced to accompany the church's professional mixed choir. At a touch of a button, the organist (seated at either console) can summon the resources of either organ or both at the same time.

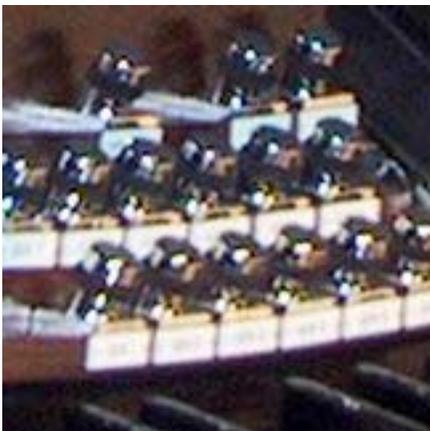
horsepower. It's just never been practical in a digital organ before our system was developed."

Every note of every stop on the organ is comprised of unique sample data. Altogether, nearly twenty gigabytes of sample waveforms are required to generate this organ's enormous specification. "If you were to listen to every sample in the instrument from beginning to end, it would take about thirty-four hours, without a space between notes,"

exclaims Marshall.

Marshall continues, “We wanted to capture every detail of a pipe organ’s sound, and that takes time...a lot of time, as it turns out.” The original digital sample recordings of pipe organs are made on location, and require high resolution, multi-channel recording equipment and very neutral sounding microphones. In the laboratory, the raw samples are painstakingly reviewed, and then processed for subsequent use in the organ.

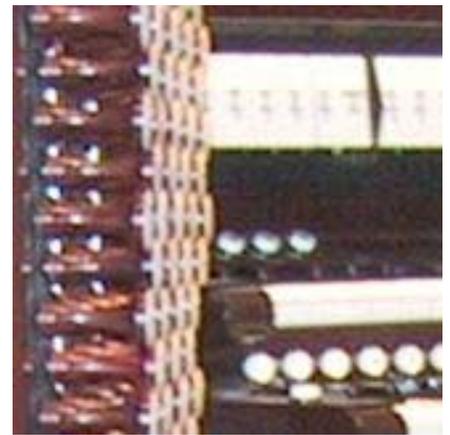
“This is where some of the magic in the M&O sound is first created,” says George Sargeant, the company’s full time sample processor. “By starting with a variety of audio tracks of the same pipe recorded from different vantage points, we can arrive at a final solution for every note of every stop that sounds as good as it can.” Proprietary sample processing techniques and tools have been developed to preserve frequency content and spatial details, as well as eliminate resident noise impurities. It can take up to fifteen hours of processing time to complete a single 61 note stop.



Marshall and Sargeant have dedicated years to recording, analyzing, and processing the nearly ten thousand note samples loaded into the Trinity Church organ tone generation system. Many of the new organ’s stops were originally recorded at some of America’s most prestigious organ venues. “We’ve promised not to tell where they came from,” says Ogletree, “but suffice it to say, we’ve been privileged to obtain truly famous sounds that every builder would want, and nobody else has.”

An especially innovative feature will be the inclusion of what Marshall & Ogletree refer to as ‘extraneous’ organ sounds. A pipe organ makes sounds which are not made by its pipes at all. These include the sounds of an electric blower fan, of hundreds of tiny pneumatic leather pouches being pressurized and exhausted, of expression shades rotating and then closing with a soft thud, of the chuffing of pneumatic tremulants, et cetera. These and other sounds are an integral part of pipe organs, yet have never been addressed in modern digital organs, until now.

Even the property of inertia has been taken into account, since all mechanical events take some time to start and stop. The M&O system recreates these subtle, yet critical, timing issues in precise detail throughout the instrument’s functions, which contributes



greatly to its realistic sound and response.

The Epiphany organ is equally replete with audio horsepower. Typically, an eighty stop digital organ might have between ten and twenty separate audio channels. “As a rule, when it comes to audio, the more the merrier,” says Marshall. True to this concept, the organ for Trinity will have seventy four independent channels of audio. Approximately fifteen thousand watts of amplifier power will drive the organ’s seventy four speaker cabinets. The only difference between the chancel and gallery audio systems will be the dedicated speakers and amplifiers for the Trompette des Tours stop, which speaks only from the gallery. The stentorian nature of this stop (whose name is translated as *Trumpet of the Towers*) is intended to sonically commemorate the majestic World Trade Center towers, destroyed by terrorists on September 11, 2001.

All of the amplifiers and speakers for the new organ were made by well known, cre-

ative manufacturers. Of particular interest are the speakers chosen for the manual stops built by Definitive Technology of Maryland. Bipolar in design, they radiate identical sound from the front and rear of each enclosure. This is imitative of the way in which pipes resonate in multiple directions, and allows the chamber to play an active role in contributing desired acoustic resonance to the organ's sound. All of the organ's sound samples were optimized during processing to make use of the particular spatial characteristics of these speakers.

To mark the events of 9/11, and to inaugurate this interim instrument, Trinity Choir will offer a special presentation of the oratorio, *A Song to David*, by William Albright. The special event is to begin at half past six on the evening of the 11th of September.

The New York classical music radio station, WQXR, will underwrite and broadcast the performance, to which admission will be free. *A Song to David* is an oratorio for double chorus, vocal soloists and narrators. It will be directed by Dr. Burdick with organist Dr. Dean Billmeyer, FAGO, University Organist and Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota. The concert will be the first in a year-long series of recitals featuring the state-of-the-art organ.

A stoplist for Epiphany, Opus 1, appears on page 12.



The editor is grateful to Dr. Owen Burdick, for the provision of the photographs of the digital tone generation rack (left) and the new gallery console (below), as well as a copy of the instrument stoplist and the press release from the firm, Marshall and Ogletree, LLC, from which the many unique and technical details of the installation were gleaned.

The Epiphany on Wall Street promises to be a major new presence downtown for a number of years to come. This is the end of an article, but certainly not the end of the story, as we all look with anticipation to the future when a pipe organ—new or restored—takes up its rightful place in such a majestic, historic space.



Get the Word Out! **New "cyber" NYC Chapter newsletter formally makes its debut this month**

Advertise your concert, recital, institution, studio or other services to more than 550 of your colleagues, plus the unknown numbers who will download the cyberletter from the Chapter website. Now, your advertisement can have the added attraction of color, including photographs in full, glorious color.

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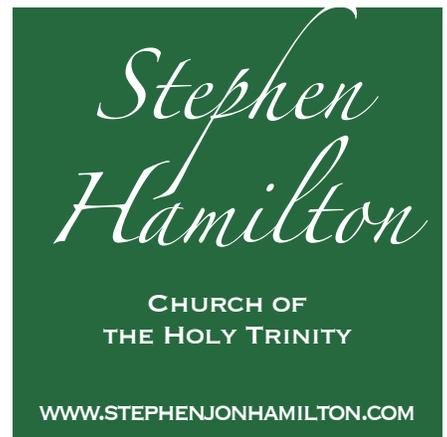
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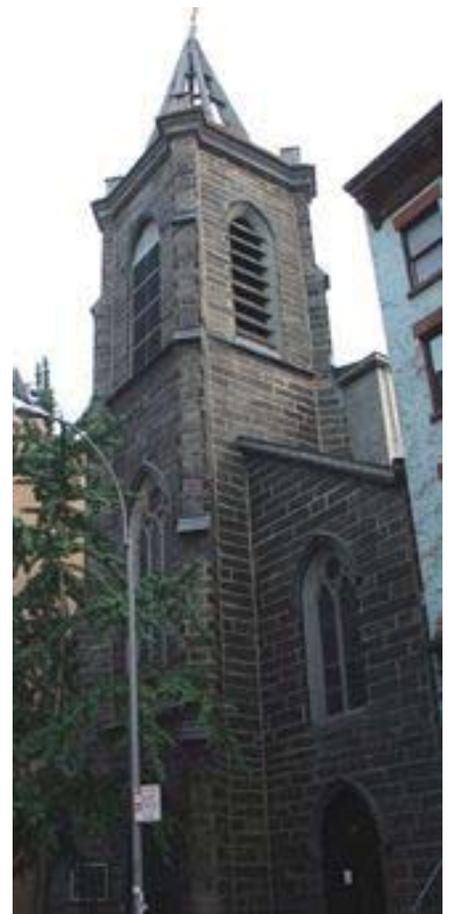
New York City AGO Annual Church Architecture and Organ Walking Tour

4th of October 2003
begins 9:30 A.M. at
Old St. Patrick Cathedral



Our tour of the East Village begins on Saturday, October 4 at 9:30 A.M. when we gather in front of Old St. Patrick's Cathedral in Little Italy, located at 263 Mulberry Street between Houston and Prince Streets. There we will hear the 1868 Erben organ in its original installation.

Andrew Dolkart, who has delighted us in the past with his knowledge and wit, will lead us from there on an excursion to see several remarkable church structures in the Tompkins Square area. On our way to the 1892 Middle Collegiate Church, located on 2nd Avenue at 50 East 7th Street, we will pass the site of the Fillmore East, where Virgil Fox played his ground-breaking all-Bach sound and light recitals.



After lunch on Second Avenue, where we can visit one of many famed Eastern European restaurants in "Little Ukraine," we will pass the site of the famed Wanamaker Auditorium, and Cooper Union on our way to St. Anne's Armenian Catholic Cathedral, located at 110 East 12th Street, home of an 1864 Erben organ. This church has been threatened with closure, and this may be the last opportunity for the public to visit it.



Our last stop will be historic Grace Church, located at 802 Broadway at 10th Street, home of a significant 1961 Schlicker organ of 101 ranks which incorporates parts of an earlier E.M. Skinner and where we will end our day around 4 PM. Free to NYC AGO Members; all others: \$25. No advance registration required.



Trinity Church Epiphany, Opus 1

Great

Contra Principal 16'
Principal 8'
Gamba 8'
Bourdon 8'
Flûte Harmonique 8'
Octave 4'
Chimney Flute 4'
Nazard 2 2/3'
Fifteenth 2'
Mixture IV-V 1 1/3'
Posaune 16'
Trompette 8'
Klarine 4'
Great Alternate Stop:
Bourdon 16'
Diapason 8'
Gemshorn 4'
Waldflöte 2'
Tierce 1 3/5'
Gross Cornet II 5 1/3'
Terz Zimbel III 1'
Scharff III-IV 1/2'
Tremulant
Great Unison Off
Trompette des Tours 8'

Swell

Bourdon 16'
Montre 8'
Bourdon 8'
Salicional 8'
Voix Celeste 8'
Flûtes Douces II 8'
Prestant 4'
Flûte Traversière 4'
Nazard 2 2/3'
Doublette 2'
Tierce 1 3/5'
Plein Jeu IV-V 2'
Cymbale IV 1'
Double Trumpet 16'
Cornoepen 8'
Oboe 8'
Vox Humana 8'
Clarion 4'

Swell continues
Swell Alternate Stop:
Soubasse 32'
Gambe 16'
Flûte Harmonique 8'
Dulcet II 8'
Æoline 8'
Octavin 2'
Fagot 16'
Echo Vox 8'
Tremulant
Swell 16'
Swell Unison Off
Swell 4'
Trompette des Tours 8'

Choir

Dulciana 16'
Viola Pomposa 8'
Viola Celeste 8'
Klein Erzähler 8'
Erzähler Celeste 8'
Nachthorn 8'
Spitzprinzipal 4'
Koppelflöte 4'
Oktav 2'
Quinteflöte 1 1/3'
Mixtur IV 1'
Jeu de Clochette II 2/5'
Basson 16'
Trompette 8'
Clarinet 8'
Clairon 4'
Choir Alternate Stop:
Quintäden 16'
Singend Gedeckt 8'
Unda Maris II 8'
Zauberflöte 2'
Septième 1 1/7'
Sifflöte 1'
Cornet III 2 2/3'
Cromorne 8'
Tremulant
Choir 16'
Choir Unison Off
Choir 4'
Trompette des Tours 8'

Expression Shoes

Solo, Choir, Swell

Bombarde

Major Diapason II 8'
Éclat VII-IX 2'
Contre Bombarde 16'
Bombarde 8'
Bombarde Clairon 4'
Solo
Cello 8'
Cello Celeste 8'
Flauto Mirabilis 8'
Tuba Major 8'
French Horn 8'
English Horn 8'
Solo Alternate Stop:
Contre Gambes II 16'
Voix des Anges II 8'
Flûte Triangulaire 4'
Cornet V 8'
Rankett 16'
Anches Antiques 16' 8' 4'
Chimes
Harp
Tremulant

Pedal

Contre Basse 32'
Soubasse 32'
Principal 16'
Soubasse 16'
Violone 16'
Bourdon 16' (Swell)
Dulciana 16' (Choir)
Octave 8'
Gedeckt 8'
Super Octave 4'
Furniture V 2'
Bombardon 32'
Ophicleide 16'
Posaune 16' (Great)
Double Trumpet 16' (Swell)
Basson 16' (Choir)
Tromba 8'
Clarion 4'
Pedal Alternate Stop:
Violoncelli III 16'
Gamba 8' (Great)
Quinte 5 1/3'
Koppelgedackt 4'
Harmonics IV 10 2/3

Pedal continues
Fagot 16' (Swell)
Rankett 4' (Solo)
Chimes (Solo)
Trompette des Tours

Couplers

Great to Pedal 8'
Swell to Pedal 8' 4'
Choir to Pedal 8' 4'
Solo on Pedal 8' 4'
Bombarde on Pedal
Swell to Great 16' 8' 4'
Choir to Great 16' 8' 4'
Solo on Great 16' 8' 4'
Bombarde on Great
Swell to Choir 16' 8' 4'
Great to Choir 8'
Solo on Choir 16' 8' 4'
Bombarde on Choir
Choir to Swell 16' 8' 4'
Solo on Swell 16' 8' 4'
Bombarde on Swell

Thumb Pistons

12 General (duplicated)
8 Divisional:
Great, Swell, Choir
6 Divisional:
Bombarde, Solo
Set, General Cancel
2 Next and 2 Previous
Sequencer (duplicated)
Tutti Reversible (dup.)
Reversibles to each
intermanual and
manual to pedal coupler
Divisional Cancels
on key cheeks

Toe Pistons

8 Pedal Divisional
Reversibles for manual
to pedal couplers
2 MIDI Sostenuto
3 32' stop reversibles

Register Crescendo

MIDI and other controls
via lighted pistons above
the Swell manual

THE ST. THOMAS CHOIR SCHOOL, NEW YORK,
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO AN OPEN HOUSE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2003
8:00 AM UNTIL 1:00 PM

Observe the boys of the St. Thomas Choir in rehearsal under the direction of
Judith & Gerre Hancock.

Attend academic classes at the Choir School.

Join the Hancocks for an informal coffee and Q & A session.

Conclude the morning at lunch in the Dining Room with students and faculty.

Reservations are necessary for lunch only.

Please contact Margo Cantiello to inquire about discounted hotel rates
or further information.



The St. Thomas Choir School offers young boys the
Opportunity of a Lifetime

- Internationally acclaimed choir
- Average class size of 7 students
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Contact Margo Cantiello: cantiello@choirschool.org

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A Skinner Glows in Brooklyn

Many are the opportunities to hear fine organ playing in and around New York City. The borough of Manhattan alone could vie for pride of place with such internationally famed organ cities as Paris, London, Vienna, even Boston. Most of that organ music making, though, is on Sunday mornings when few of our membership have the luxury to take in a colleague's artistry.

So it is good when I learn of a recital performance mid-week and I've the time I try to get to one of these programs. When a series is in a landmark building and on a landmark instrument, there is both curiosity and great anticipation. When the performer is one of Manhattan's finest, and a good friend, how could I stay away?

So it was that I trained my way to the Church of Saint Ann and the Holy Trinity on a typically muggy, warm August Wednesday. The featured performer was to be Dr. Jonathan Hall, FAGO, FTCL, choirmaster and organist at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany on Manhattan's upper east side. Having previously altered my flight plans cross-country at the last minute some years back to hear Jon perform on the large Flentrop in the Cathedral of the Holy Name, Chicago, humidity and heat would not be enough to keep me away from Brooklyn Heights.

This listener was not disappointed in his decision. After a warm welcome (no pun intended), Dr. Hall got busy with BWV 541, Johann Sebastian Bach's "Prelude and Fugue in G." Anyone expecting a 1925 vintage E.M. Skinner organ to provide nothing but a thick, opaque tone would have been quite surprised, one hopes pleasantly so, as the performer carefully selected just the right voices to create a bright, lively plenum. An advantage to achieving this sound here is that one can be sure there is weight and substance to balance, something that a good many instruments from later in the 20th century never quite achieved. Helpful too is a responsive if not reverberant acoustic. The choice of using the smaller of the two 16' Pedal reeds, the Posaune, proved perfect to give solid foundation to the ensemble with its rich, buttery tone.

Next on the program was 'Elms,' a pleasant and brief *moment musicale* from Ned Rorem's "Views from the Oldest House." Hall carefully registered for a luscious, rich and smooth sound while keeping the feel

light and fresh, a characteristic of his registrations over all.

As the first notes of the 'Cantabile' from Louis Vierne's Second Symphony, Op. 20, in the key of e, one could feel and hear the change in accent. The brighter sound of Bach gave way, and French flowed forth. Dr. Hall played the piece like a singer—a good singer—might have done. This was fine preparation for the 'Final' played with great excitement and bravura pedaling. I did not ask, but imagine the temperature in the high rear gallery was well above that at the nave floor, where two small fans worked their best to keep air moving.

Dr. Hall's program blew through the room like a fresh breeze, a moment of respite, like spring in Paris or, well, summering on Martha's Vineyard. Bravo, Jon.

Check out <http://www.jonathanhall.com/> for a calendar of Dr. Hall's appearances. Bring your passport, he'll be soon on his next international tour, this time to delight the people of Germany.



Thomas Murray & E.M. Skinner, Op. 524 (1925 - V/80)

A Concert to Celebrate Stage I Restoration of an
American Masterpiece - The Solo Stops Speak Again!

Sunday, September 28, 2003, 8 pm
Suggested Donation \$15.00, Students/Seniors \$10.00

St. Ann & the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Corner of Clinton and Montague Streets
Brooklyn Heights, New York
(718) 875-6960

News & Notes of Chapter Members & Friends

Pipe Organ Encounter 2003 is a fond memory for those more than 40 students who descended upon Manhattan in July. Memorable too, no doubt, to those adults, the teachers, chaperones, chauffeurs and guides, who were instrumental in helping make this a first-in-a-lifetime of mountain top experiences for these young musicians.

If you missed the extensive coverage in the local press you just didn't look hard enough. The New York Times included not only a thoroughly well-reported article, but also some photographs. The efforts to increase the visibility of our art, and the craft of building fine pipe organs, is paying off.

Next month's issue of *Double Open* will include a more extensive wrap-up with thank yous and the like. We would be remiss, though, were we not to offer our collective, collegial, chapter thanks to Dr. Gregory D'Agostino. The significant time and energy both physical

and mental he expended to bring the POE to fruition, and to bring it off so successfully and memorably, is testament to his devotion to organ music and to the Guild.

Dr. Timothy Smith, organist and director of music at Riverside Church, has a new CD out, recorded on two smaller, historic E. M. Skinner pipe organs, in Huntington, NY and in New Haven, CT. You can go to www.pipeorgancds.com and check it out.

Basically Bach observes its 11th anniversary this year at Saint Peter Lutheran Church, under the direction of Thomas Schmidt, Cantor. See the advertisement elsewhere in this issue for details on the concerts, recitals and liturgies in this increasingly important yearly event in the life of Manhattan.

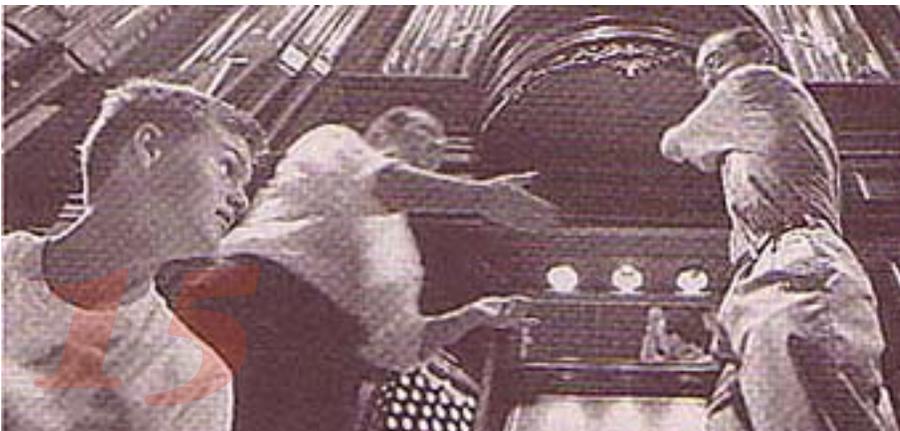
Congratulations to Michael Barone, host of Pipedreams, on his 35th anniversary with Minnesota Public Radio. May you enjoy many more years, Michael, and we will all enjoy them, with you.

St Thomas Choir School have planned a splendid open house on Friday, the 17th of October. See their advertisement in this issue, and perhaps print it out to post it in a conspicuous place at your church, school or other public place.

If you missed Craig Whitney and Dr. Mark Bani, organist and director of music at Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer, on National Public Radio, go to www.npr.org and click "Audio Archives" where you can search for "All the Stops" in the first field, and select "Morning Edition" in the third field. Well worth the effort!

Speaking of worth the effort, be sure to hear Professor Thomas Murray in Brooklyn, on the evening of Sunday, the 28th of September. Our friends in the Brooklyn Chapter won't mind a miniature invasion of Manhattan organists, and if any organist is qualified to bring out the best in a vintage Skinner pipe organ it is Tom Murray. See their advertisement elsewhere in this issue.

On Sunday, September 14th, at 7:00pm, The Catholic Church of Saint John & St. Mary, 15 St. John's Place, Chappaqua, NY, will present a concert by *Sing We Enchanted*, one of Westchester's finest vocal ensembles, in the English Gothic splendor of our "little church" at St. John's Place, off Route 120. \$10 suggested offering. Contact Joseph Nigro at 914-318-3268.



The Last Word

Dear friends and colleagues,

It's raining and rather cold on this Labor Day as I write this note welcoming you to another fine AGO year. Please put our program dates on your calendar now and check our web site at www.nycago.org frequently for upcoming concerts and general news.

My summer was quite uneventful except for our early July Pipe Organ Encounter which was enthusiastically received by all forty-four students who attended. We have thanked all the volunteers and teachers who participated, but expressing thanks is always appropriate. So "thank-you" again to all those who made the week so successful.

From the Editor

Greetings! What a great honor it is for me to assume this position at the invitation of Dr. Stephen Hamilton and the Chapter Board. I am also honored to follow in the footsteps of Dr. Jonathan Hall. I hope I am able, during my time editing the newsletter, to uphold the standards that he and our predecessors have established, and when the time comes, to pass the reins to my successor with as much grace.

Thank you to those who took the time to write in with words of encouragement after the preview issue came out.

What else happened this summer? Well, for one thing, except for church preparation, I did not practice a single note! For once in my thirty-one years of professional life, I literally took the summer off from serious practicing. It was glorious; a true "rest" now and then is highly recommended.

The editor of this newsletter has expressed an interest in printing your personal news and goings on. So, why not take this invitation seriously and write us about what you did this past summer. We would be pleased to hear from you and delighted to share your anecdotes with our membership.

And now it's September again--Ora Labora!

Stephen Hamilton, Dean

I appreciate the comments and constructive criticisms, they will help this endeavor to move our newsletter into the 21st century. I am always looking for ways to refine the look of the finished product, and welcome your contributions, be they in writing up a review or opinion piece or with photographs you've taken on your travels to see new or noteworthy pipe organs, and the like.

For next issue, I'd like to hear what you did (or if you're like Stephen, didn't!) organic or musical over the summer: a class, other study, a tour, concerts you presented or heard, new music learned, et cetera.

As for myself, I'll be writing a little about my visit to Brisbane, Australia, where I saw the shop of organbuilder Simon Pierce, and played beautiful instruments by Willis and Klais. Please write to me at [doubleopen@optonline.net!](mailto:doubleopen@optonline.net)

It seems appropriate to launch a new, 'high-tech' newsletter with an article about a new high-tech digital instrument. There is usually plenty of disagreement surrounding even the most ordinary pipe organ project. When Trinity Church announced plans for a substantial, experimental, expensive new interim digital for the historic space at the head of Wall Street it was like a virtual shot heard 'round the organ world.

Dr. Owen Burdick, choir-master and organist at Trinity since 1990, probably won't find the need, as did Bishop-elect V. Gene Robinson at General Convention of The Episcopal Church, to go around wearing a bullet-proof vest. Still, the controversy was quick and strong, encouraged no doubt by the relative speed of the internet and email lists like PIPORG-L to spread every opinion imaginable. To me, it appears that this instrument will take pipe organ imitation to a new place on a par with the finest of art copyists who seek to reproduce not just color and shape, but brush strokes and chisel marks. Forgery? Not if done with full honesty. After all, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, right? What do you think?