PARSONS
PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS

Established 1921

Musical Integrity | Mechanical Excellence | Superior Tone

PHILOSOPHY

OUR MISSION

Our philosophy is simple. We design the very finest pipe organs to inspire worship. We voice them to render the literature of the organ elegantly and effectively, and we build them to last for generations.

Our new instruments combine the traditions of high quality organbuilding with the versatility of new technology. We are committed to helping each client determine goals and develop a plan for an instrument that is best suited to their needs. **Organbuilding is a labor of love** that, for us, provides a purpose and a means to express ourselves as artisans.

It is by God's grace alone that we are blessed with the knowledge and abilities to build such things of beauty; that musicians are gifted to make them sing; and that music can minister in so many ways. As these instruments lead us in song, may our worship be as an offering to Jesus Christ to whom we give all the glory for what we are able to accomplish through Him.

Richard B. Parsons
- President

SOLI DEO GLORIA
PARSONS
PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS
OF CANANDAIGUA, NEW YORK

Featured Instruments

PARSONS
PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS

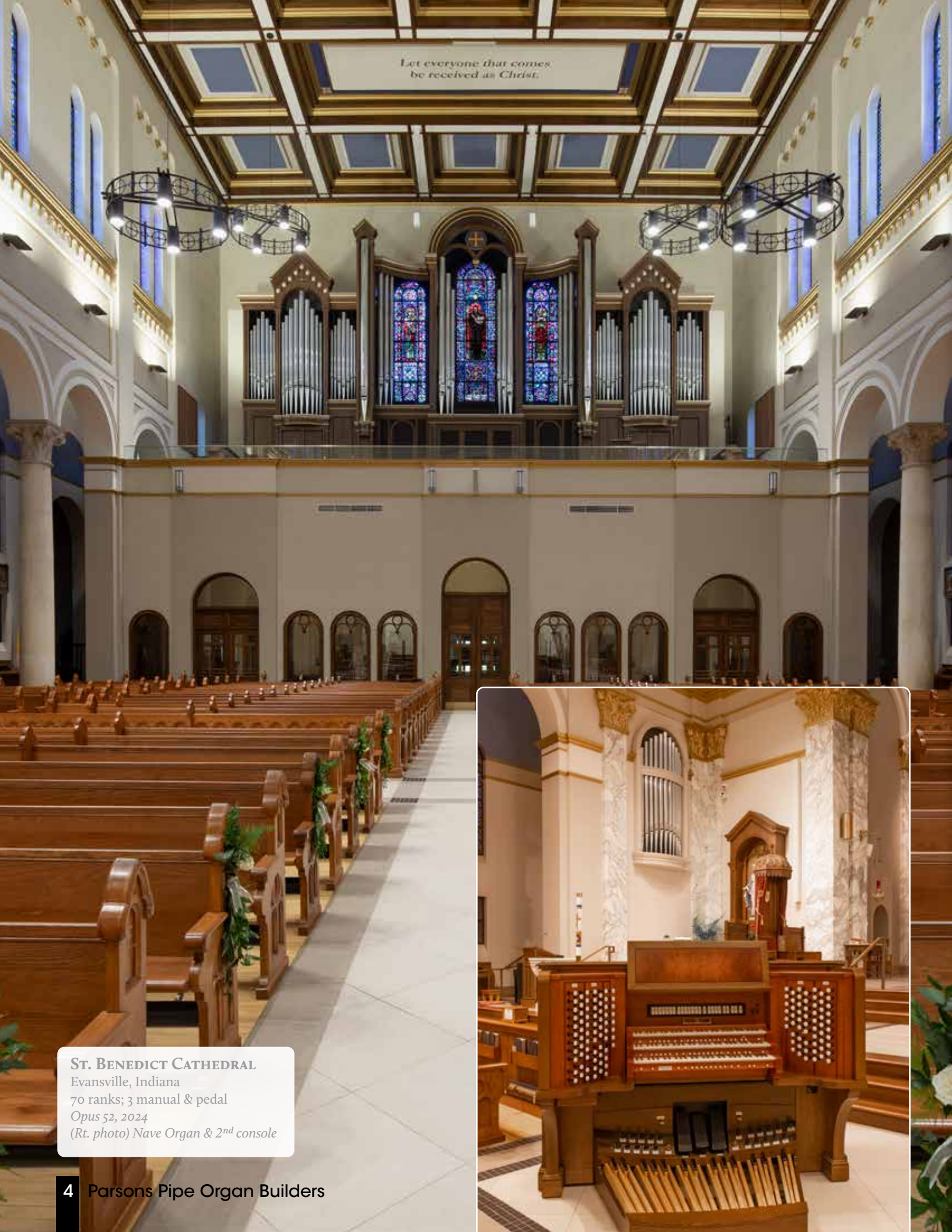
GREAT (II)
16' Prestant
8' Principal
8' Harmonic Flute
8' Gemshorn
4' Octave
4' Spire Flute
2⅔' Quinte
2' Super Octave
Mixture IV
8' Trumpet
Tremulant (GR/PD)
Chimes

SWELL (III) (Expressive)
16' Lieblich Gedeckt
8' Geigen Principal
8' Chimney Flute
8' Salicional
8' Voix Celeste T.C.
4' Principal
4' Harmonic Flute
2' Octavin
Mixture III
16' Bassoon (ext. Trumpet)
8' Trumpet
8' Oboe
4' Clarion (ext. Trumpet)
Tremulant (SW/CH)

CHOIR (I) (Expressive)
16' Quintaton
8' Viola
8' Gedeckt
8' Dolce
8' Dolce Celeste T.C.
4' Spitz Principal
4' Spindle Flute
2⅔' Nasard
2' Block Flute
1⅗' Tierce
1⅓' Quint Flute
8' Clarinet
16' Trombone (ext.)
8' Trumpet (Gr.)
Tremulant (SW/CH)

PEDAL
32' Resultant (derived)
16' Prestant (Gr.)
16' Bourdon
16' Lieblich Gedeckt (Sw.)
16' Quintaton (Ch.)
8' Octave
8' Bass Flute
8' Gedeckt (Sw.)
8' Quintaton (Ch.)
4' Choral Bass
4' Gedeckt (Sw.)
16' Trombone (Gr.)
16' Bassoon (Sw.)
8' Trumpet (Gr.)
4' Clarion (Sw.)

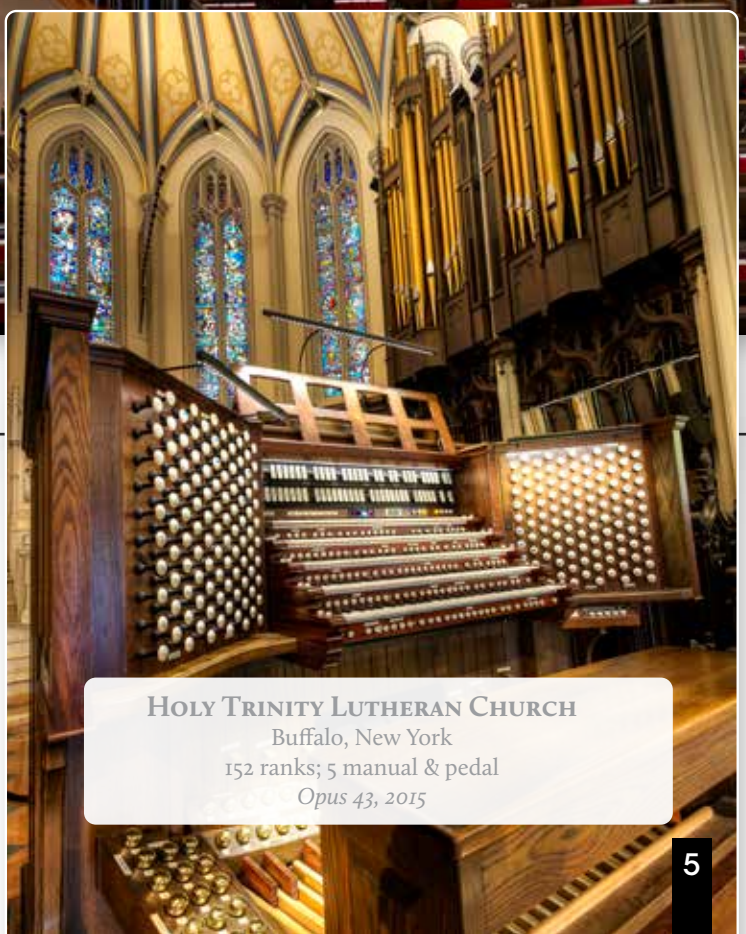
Canandaigua United Church
Canandaigua, New York
40 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Electric Slider Action
Opus 41, 2015



St. Benedict Cathedral
Evansville, Indiana
70 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Opus 52, 2024
(Rt. photo) Nave Organ & 2nd console

INVESTMENT

Pipe organs are intended to last centuries, yet thousands of 19th and 20th century pipe organs have failed to withstand the test of time. 21st century organbuilding offers a culmination of knowledge for those willing to examine why. You can ensure that an organ is not discarded due to changing musical tastes or the short-sighted choices made in the interest of expediency or lower cost. When researching the pipe organ builder that is right for your church, remember that you are buying the skill of experienced craftsmen rather than just merchandise. To attain a high level of tonal and mechanical quality with an eye toward long-term care, you must invest at a level that will allow the craftsmen freedom to do their very best for you.



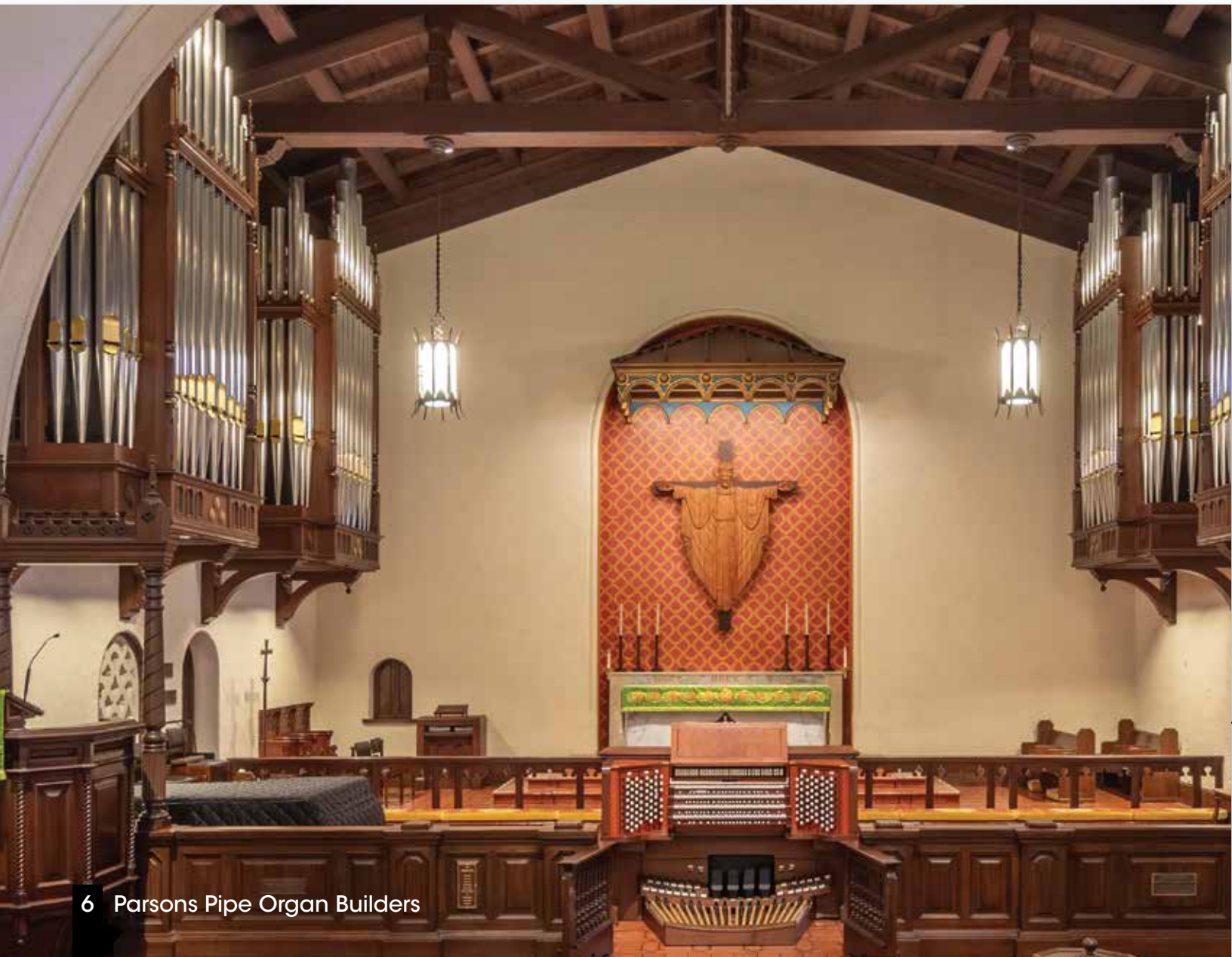
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Buffalo, New York
152 ranks; 5 manual & pedal
Opus 43, 2015

TONAL PHILOSOPHY

Parsons Tonal Philosophy is firmly grounded in the past, yet looking ever toward the future. Our voicing style is influenced not only by great pipe organs already making beautiful music, but more importantly by great choral ensembles and fine orchestras; for if our instruments can sing with the blended musicality of these great ensembles, then they will succeed as both accompaniment and solo instruments.

Our principal choruses are bold and blending, flutes are varied and colorful, strings are evocative and rich, and reeds are powerful and distinctive. Using decades of experience, we carefully scale, voice, and tonal finish each organ to suit the room in which it will sing for generations.

Voicing Room:
Tonal Director, **Duane Prill**, insures that every pipe receives individual attention to the onset of speech, volume, decay and tone color including all aspects of harmonic development.



St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church
La Jolla, California
Opus 51

St. James by the Sea Episcopal Church in La Jolla, CA engaged Parsons to build a new four-manual and pedal, 65 voice, 79 rank pipe organ. The instrument is a collaboration with Rosales Organbuilders of Los Angeles, CA. The new organ incorporates electric slider, electro-pneumatic and electric actions on wind pressures ranging from 3.5" to 17.5" water column. It is located in chambers created for the previous organ, two on each side of the Chancel. New casework of quartered white oak is designed to be cantilevered in front of the four, enlarged, tone openings. A matching case is installed in the rear of the Nave to house the Antiphonal division. 109 tin façade pipes are incorporated into the five new cases. The new English-style drawknob console is custom designed to control the 105 drawknobs spread over six divisions including two full length 32'Pedal stops and sixteen ranks of reeds.

St. James by-the-Sea Episcopal Church
La Jolla, California
79 ranks; 4 manual & pedal
Rosales Opus 42 – Parsons Opus 51
Collaboration – 2023

First Lutheran Church

Cedar Rapods, Iowa
51 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Opus 50, 2022

I. CHOIR (expressive)
16 Quintaton
8 Gedeckt
8 Gemshorn
8 Gemshorn Celeste (TC)
4 Principal
4 Koppel Flute
2 Octave
1⅓ Larigot
Sesquialtera II
Scharff III
16 Dulzian
8 Dulzian (ext.)
8 Clarinet

II. GREAT
16 Bourdon (Ped.)
16 Quintaton (Ch.)
8 Principal
8 Harmonic Flute
8 Spire Flute
4 Octave
4 Spitz Flute
2⅔ Twelfth
2 Fifteenth
1⅗ Tierce
Mixture IV
8 Trumpet
Chimes

III. SWELL (expressive)
16 Lieblich Gedeckt
8 Geigen Principal
8 Rohr Flute
8 Gamba
8 Voix céleste
4 Octave
4 Traverse Flute
2⅔ Nasard
2 Block Flute
1⅗ Tierce
Mixture III
16 Bassoon
8 Trompette
8 Oboe
4 Clarion

PEDAL
32 Resultant
16 Principal
16 Bourdon
16 Lieblich Gedeckt (Sw.)
16 Quintaton (Ch.)
8 Octave
8 Bass Flute (ext. 16')
8 Gedeckt (Sw.)
8 Quintaton (Ch.)
4 Choral Bass
4 Gedeckt (Sw.)
16 Posaune
16 Bassoon (Sw.)
16 Dulzian (Ch.)
8 Trumpet (ext. 16')
8 Bassoon (Sw.)
4 Rohr Schalmei

COUPLERS
Swell to Great
Choir to Great
Swell to Choir
Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal

ACCESSORIES
Flexible Wind
General Tremulant
Cymbelstern

VISUAL DESIGN

The visual effect that a custom-designed and handcrafted case has on the viewer will determine, before a single note is played, the quality of the music yet to be heard. Our organs are specifically designed to blend with their architectural surrounding. We use artists' renderings and enhanced three-dimensional computer graphics to allow our clients to view our custom designs in a simulated church environment. Computer-aided design allows us to create a variety of perspective renderings and to transfer the final design directly into shop construction drawings.

VOICING

While the mechanism of each organ is essential for reliable and technically accurate performance, it is ultimately subservient to the sound the organ creates. The ultimate test of an artistic pipe organ is that it both meets all musical requirements for accompanying worship while also being capable of serving in its role as a solo instrument. This process begins with putting voice to each individual pipe. Months later, it ends with tonal finishing; the essential union of each pipe to its acoustical environment by determining volume, speech characteristics and, most importantly, balance as each pipe relates to all the others. This ensures a seamless crescendo and decrescendo, enabling the player to control all of the subtle nuances that can be experienced in a well-voiced musical instrument.

Mechanical Specifications:

The First Lutheran case is of walnut with ebony, burled elm, quarter sawn white oak and figured maple accents; the organ's steel structure ensures stability for the key action connecting the detached console to the windchests; modern carbon fiber trackers and adjustable pneumatic assists are used to ensure a responsive key action; to ensure the widest possible dynamic control, our expression enclosures and louvers of 2 1/4" thick maple; a single wedge bellows provides wind to the organ and is stabilized with a series of tunable concussion bellows; and the organ's environment is stabilized with a micro-climate air circulation system designed to quietly and effectively keep temperature and humidity consistent with the church Nave.

Saint Mary's Church
Auburn, New York
30 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
Carl Barckhoff Organ; 1890
Historic Restoration
Project 45, 2016

QUALITY

For a pipe organ to have integrity, each facet of design and construction must be carefully executed. Woods must be properly cured and hand selected for each application, winding systems must be stable yet yielding to give life to the music, and the expressive enclosures must be of adequate mass to soften the pipes to a whisper while incorporating properly designed louvers that will allow a majestic swelling of the sound. Wind chests must be carefully designed and laid out to allow ample room for proper pipe speech and tonal development. Key actions must be designed using minimal mass and low friction-bearing points to ensure a sensitive and responsive touch that is truly an extension of the player. It is through this arduous attention to each detail of construction that the pipe organ will continue to stand the test of time as it earns its place as an integral part of divine worship.

Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church

St. Louis, Missouri
27 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
Opus 49, 2019

GREAT
MANUAL I // ENCLOSED
16′ Gemshorn (ext., 1-12 from SW)
8′ Principal
8′ Harmonic Flute
8′ Gemshorn
4′ Octave
4′ Spitzflute
4′ Gemshorn (ext.)
2′ Fifteenth
Mixture IV
8′ Trumpet (SW)
8′ Clarinet
Chimes

SWELL
MANUAL II // ENCLOSED
16′ Bourdon (ext.)
8′ Geigen Principal
8′ Chimney Flute
8′ Salicional
8′ Celeste
4′ Principal
4′ Traverse Flute
2 2/3′ Nazard
2′ Blockflute
1 3/5′ Tierce
Plein Jeu III
16′ Contra Trumpet (ext.)
8′ Trumpet
8′ Oboe
4′ Clarion (ext.)

PEDAL
UNENCLOSED
32′ Resultant
16′ Subbass
16′ Bourdon (SW)
8′ Octave
8′ Bass Flute (ext.)
8′ Bourdon (SW)
8′ Gemshorn (GR)
4′ Choral Bass (ext.)
4′ Bourdon (SW)
16′ Trumpet (SW)
8′ Trumpet (SW)
4′ Clarion (SW)

ADDITIONAL FEATURES
Tremulant
Flexible Wind
Cymbelstern
Pedal Stops on Manual Combinations
Full complement of couplers and reversibles

CASEWORK

The casework is integral to the structure of the organ and to almost every aspect of the design. It acts as a protective covering while serving to blend, focus, and project the sound of the pipe organ. Our casework is built of the finest hardwoods and veneers using traditional joinery.

KEY ACTIONS

Our key actions are carefully executed using both mechanical (tracker) action designs and electric actuators on slider and tone channel wind chests. Mechanical key actions are painstakingly designed and constructed using strong materials that have low mass. Action components of brass, aluminum and hornbeam on low-resistance bearings and trackers of carbon-fiber all contribute to provide the organist with an intimate connection to their instrument.

▷

St. George's Episcopal Church
Fredericksburg, Virginia
55 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Opus 29, 2010

GREAT (I)
- 16' Praestant
- 8' Principal
- 8' Harmonic Flute
- 8' Chimney Flute
- 8' Gamba
- 4' Octave
- 4' Spire Flute
- 2⅔' Twelfth
- 2' Super Octave
- 1⅗' Tierce
- 1⅓' Mixture IV
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Clarinet (prep.)
- 8' Festival Trumpet (Pos.)
- Chimes
- Swell to Great
- Positive to Great

SWELL (III) (Expressive)
- 16' Lieblich Gedeckt
- 8' Geigen Principal
- 8' Bourdon
- 8' Viole de Gambe (prep.)
- 8' Voix Celeste
- 4' Principal
- 4' Harmonic Flute
- 2' Doublette
- 2' Plein Jeu IV
- 16' Bassoon
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Bassoon (ext. 16' prep.)
- 8' Oboe
- 8' Vox Humana (prep.)
- Tremulant (affects Sw.)

ACCESSORIES
- Tremulant: Great and Positive
- Tremulant: Swell
- Flexible Wind
- Cymbelstern (prep.)
- Nightingale (prep.)

POSITIVE (II)
- 8' Viola
- 8' Gedeckt
- 8' Spitz Flute
- 8' Dolce
- 4' Principal
- 4' Koppel Flute
- 2⅔' Nasard
- 2' Block Flute
- 1⅗' Tierce
- 1⅓' Quint
- 1' Scharff III
- 8' Cromorne
- 8' Festival Trumpet
- 4' Festival Trumpet (ext.)
- Swell to Positive
- (Tremulant affects Pos. & Gr.)

PEDAL
- 32' Contra Bourdon (derived)
- 16' Open Wood
- 16' Praestant (Gr.)
- 16' Bourdon
- 16' Lieblich Gedeckt (Sw.)
- 8' Octave
- 8' Open Flute (ext.)
- 8' Bourdon (ext.)
- 8' Gedeckt (Sw.)
- 4' Choral Bass (ext.)
- 4' Spitz Flute
- 4' Gedeckt (Sw.)
- 32' Contra Bombarde (electronic)
- 16' Posaune
- 16' Bassoon (Sw.)
- 8' Trumpet (ext.)
- 8' Bassoon (Sw.)
- Great to Pedal
- Swell to Pedal
- Positive to Pedal

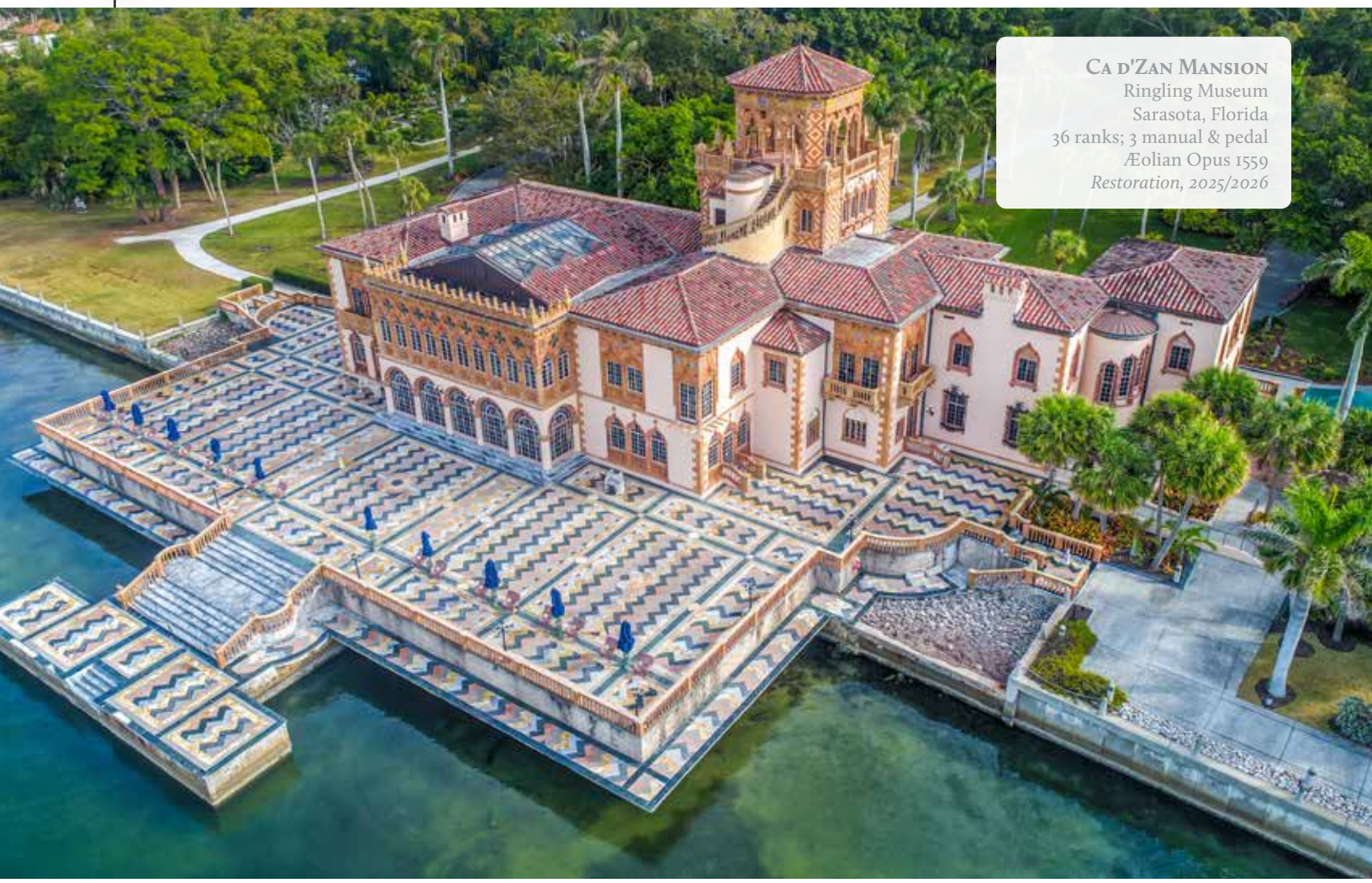
Craftsmanship:
Three manual walnut console with South American bloodwood interior. Key coverings of polished bone and ebony.

RESTORATIVE CONSERVATION

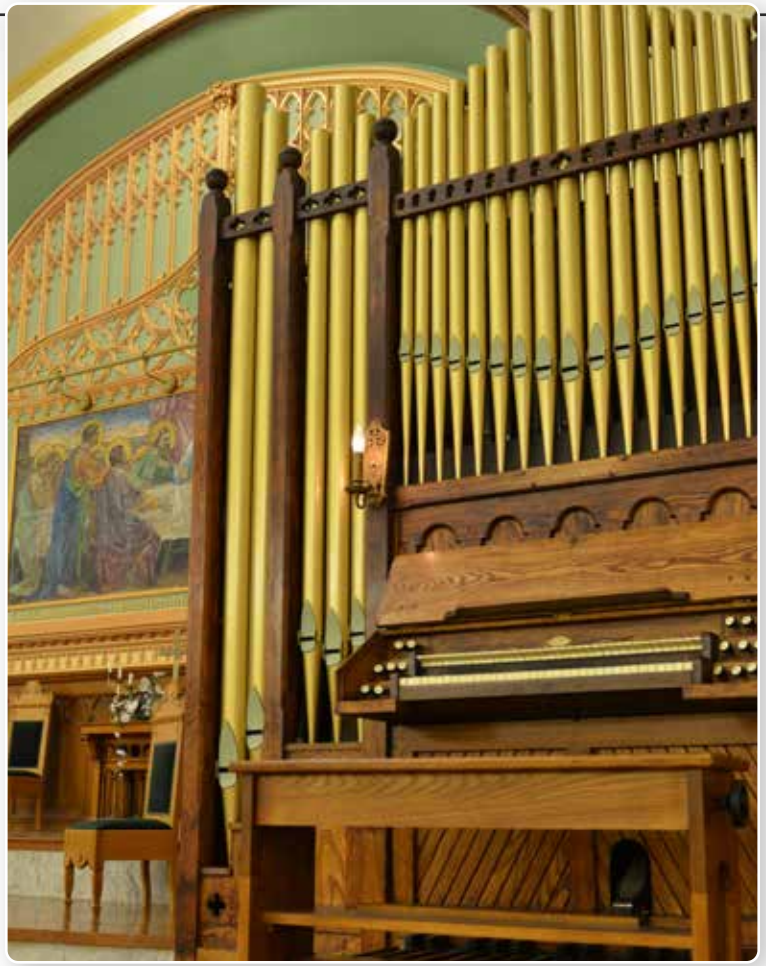
As faithful stewards, we are each called to prayerfully consider the wisdom and investments of previous generations. Even with careful maintenance, a beloved organ will wear and age over time. Unfortunately, many 19th and 20th century American organbuilders have closed and ended production of highly specialized and in many cases patented designs. For instruments that have contributed in a significant and unique manner to the development of the pipe organ in America, our team is focused on documentation, research and preservation. Materials and techniques employed by the original craftsmen are very often key to both the tonal and mechanical distinctiveness of an instrument and are essential to preserving an instrument's historical value.

The Æolian company was the premier organbuilder to the rich and famous in the early 20th century due, almost entirely, to their unique sound and roll-player. Fortunately, museums like The Ringling have the prudence to restore one of only a handful of original Æolian's instruments remaining today.

Come one. Come all:
John and Mable Ringlizng's beautiful 36,000 sq. ft. mansion built in 1924. Music is integral to both the Ringling Mansion, Museum and Archives and the organ will have a pivotal role going forward in The Ringling's vision to educate, inspire and entertain the public.



Ca d'Zan Mansion
Ringling Museum
Sarasota, Florida
36 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Æolian Opus 1559
Restoration, 2025/2026

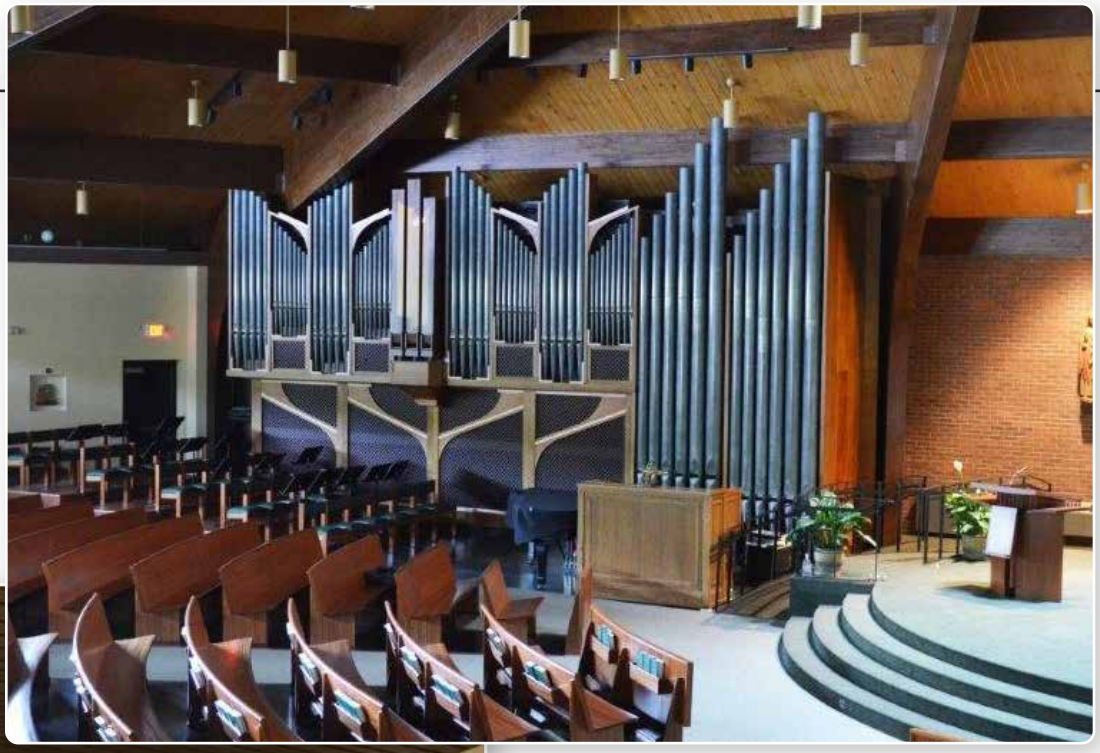


Clifton Springs Sanitarium Chapel
Clifton Springs, New York
9 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
William & Charles Pilcher; Circa 1903

St. John's Lutheran Church
Lyons, New York
13 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
C.E. Morey; 1907

The George Eastman House
Rochester, New York
106 ranks; 5929 pipes combined
3 manual & pedal (North Organ)
4 manual & pedal (South Organ)
Æolian Opus 1345
Relocated 2012

Kodak Moment:
Relocating and replacing a large missing section of one of the world's largest residence organs in the home of Kodak founder, George Eastman. Parsons has maintained the organ through four generations.



St. John's of Rochester Church ▷
Fairport, New York
26 ranks; 3 manual & pedal
Remanufacture
Project 37, 2013

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church ▽
Monona, Wisconsin
30 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
Parsons/Rosales Collaboration
Opus 22, 2005

CLIENT PROCESS

Successful pipe organ projects are most often defined by the communication that precedes the development of the organ specification. Most individuals or committees enter into the process of procuring a pipe organ with limited knowledge and are often overwhelmed by the extent of technical, musical, and liturgical considerations that form a necessary part of the discussion. Parsons is well aware of this critical issue and is specifically committed to a collaborative process that creates awareness while facilitating a clear understanding of every aspect of the project. Working in this fashion ensures that the resulting organ meets or exceeds the client's highest expectations.

△

Grace Episcopal Church
Kilmarnock, Virginia
25 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
Mechanical Action
Opus 11, 1996

◁

Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado
Casavant Frères Ltée.
Opus 2958, 1968
43 ranks, 3 manual & pedal
Historic Relocation &
Tonal Finishing
Project 31, 2008

UNIQUE ORGAN PROJECTS

△
Paul Knoke; Rochester, NY
Muir Wood Organ
(1798-1818)
Historic Preservation Project, 2019

△ **The Auerglass Organ**, New York City, NY
Mechanical Action, foot pumped organ, with a split keyboard requiring two people to create music. Conceived by Tauba Auerbach and Cameron Mesirow. Project 33, 2009

EDUCATION

Parsons regularly sponsors educational events, because we believe that the future of the industry hinges on education. We regularly host open-house receptions for the general public and the American Guild of Organists' sponsored Pipe Organ Encounters program, and we offer hands-on demonstrations for schools and events using our full-scale sectional model organ.

We maintain memberships in the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America (APOBA), the International Society of Organbuilders (ISO), and the Organ Historical Society (OHS). Many of our staff members belong to the American Guild of Organists (AGO) and the American Institute of Organbuilders (AIO).

Our commitment to ongoing education allows us to learn about new products, materials, and techniques in organbuilding and keeps us abreast of current trends in music and church liturgy. Maintaining a collaborative relationship with organists and other organbuilders is paramount to the future of the pipe organ and our craft.

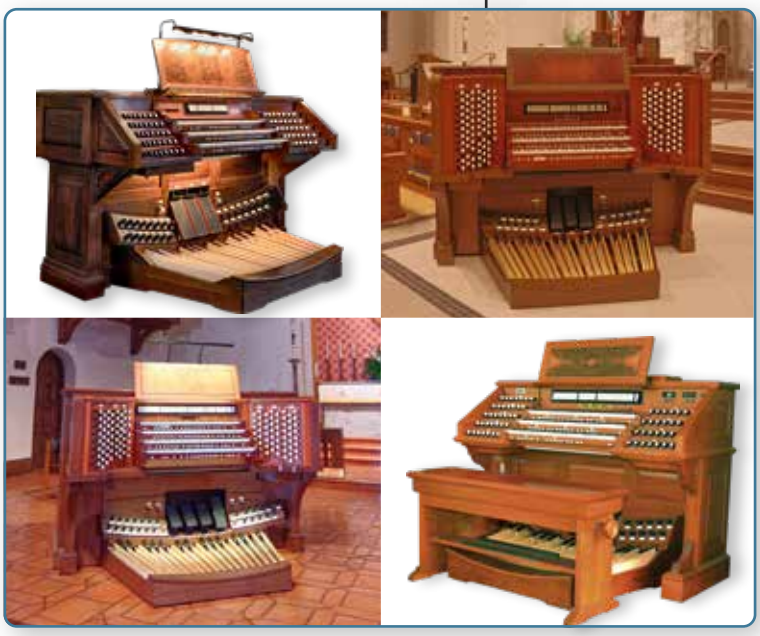
Parsons' Model Organ:
Educational tool for schools, one octave cross section of a two manual tracker pipe organ

◁
Cornell University
Anabel Taylor Chapel
Ithaca, New York
GoArt/Parsons/Lowe
41 ranks; 2 manual & pedal
Mechanical Action
Project 30, 2010

Each new project brings its own set of challenges, especially when a project involves three primary collaborators working for a University that demands perfection. Working carefully through each new challenge, the final result speaks for itself as to the dedication to quality brought by each party.

CONSOLES

The console is the organist's interface with the instrument. Our designs are elegant and ergonomically efficient, with all functional components, stops and couplers located in logical placements. As in case design, consoles are built to be lasting pieces of furniture that complement their surroundings. Normal features include bone and ebony keyboards, combination actions with multiple levels of memory, balanced expression and crescendo shoes, contactless keying for precise adjustment and reduced maintenance and adjustable benches. Every detail from the indicator lights and displays to the music, key desk, and pedal lighting is carefully executed.



OUR WORKSHOP

Canandaigua, NY

Since 1986, the company has expanded its operation to 31,000 sq.ft. of workshop, offices and conditioned storage. Our fully equipped workshop allows us to build intricate parts, from complex windchests to custom consoles to intricate casework. Although great organbuilding is firmly rooted in tradition, our state-of-the-art CNC router, CNC lathe, 3D Printer and CO_2 Laser Cutter & Engraver provide versatility for continuous innovation in technique and efficiency. The 32' high erecting room allows us to assemble and fully test both new organs and completed restorations. The sound isolated voicing room is equipped with two voicing machines, each built in a different style action. Our design room is equipped with four CAD workstations for 3D design and the creation of workshop drawings. Ample storage areas allow us to stock a large inventory of lumber, retain high-quality vintage pipework and other components for re-purposing and store entire instruments. Of course, there is no substitute for quality workmanship performed by skilled craftspersons. At Parsons, we encourage a team atmosphere, knowing that lofty goals are best achieved by experienced staff while also training up the next generation. Lastly, having a close relationship with each client ensures our high level of accountability and pride in everything we do. Personalized service, quality workmanship and customer satisfaction are key elements in our business. Each instrument is a labor of love, created by incorporating this merging of science and art known as organbuilding.

Did you know?

- Organ "stops" were originally invented to prevent all pipes of a given pitch from sounding in at the same time when played. The term "stop action" refers to the mechanism which stops specific groupings of pipes from playing, thereby granting the player control over which pipes sound alone or in combination. The expression "pulling out all the stops" has become a popular English idiom to describe making every possible effort or use all available resources to achieve a goal.
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart called the organ the "King of Instruments" because it is, by far, the world's largest and most complex instrument. It is an orchestra in the hands of a single player.
- Organ pipes are made from a variety of woods and metals; from spruce, pine and oak, to zinc, tin and lead. The species of wood and the composition of the metal are carefully chosen to provide the desired tone.

TUNING & MAINTENANCE

Like all fine instruments, pipe organs are sensitive to changes in temperature and humidity, and require seasonal tuning and maintenance. Parsons uses a scientific approach to tuning to bring out the very best from your instrument. Our service staff keeps detailed records about each organ, so that all mechanical or electrical concerns are resolved effectively and quickly. Parsons has become the premier tuning and service company in New York State, maintaining more than 200 organs annually.

While the organ's sound may come largely from its pipes, a mechanical or electrical failure in the organ can be disastrous. Through a one-time evaluation or an ongoing relationship, Parsons can determine the overall health of your instrument and set out timetables for maintenance and repair needs. While advance planning is always best, our shop is fully equipped to respond to your needs quickly in the case of an emergency.

OUR HISTORY

Established 1921

Five generations ago, in the late 1800's, Gideon Levi Parsons, a musician, settled in Massachusetts to apprentice with noted organbuilder, John Wesley Steere. He married J. W. Steere's niece and had two sons, Bryant and Richard. His career as a flue pipe voicer lasted with John Steere, his son, Frank, and later with another well-known organ builder, Ernest Skinner, who eventually purchased J. W. Steere & Son Organ Co.

Both of Gideon's sons apprenticed with the Steere firm. Bryant Gideon Parsons continued in organbuilding and, with his general knowledge of the trade, particularly with the "new" technology of electricity in organ actions, installed many of Skinner's instruments, including the large organ at Kilbourn Hall at The Eastman School of Music. Prior to WWI, Bryant was curator of instruments at Yale University. Following the war, Bryant and his wife settled in Rochester, New York, where he had installed many organs previously and recognized the musical and cultural opportunities that community had to offer. After brief employment with Charles M. Topliff, Organbuilder, he formed his own company in 1921 and continued to focus on service work and restorations. Bryant had two children, Bryant, Jr. and Bina.

Bryant G. Parsons, Jr. apprenticed with his father at an early age and with the M.P. Möller Organ Company. He returned to the firm following WWII and, in 1954, they incorporated as Bryant G. Parsons & Son, Inc. Bryant, Sr., retired circa 1960. The company relocated to Penfield, New York, and continued with service and restoration work, as well as building small pipe organs.

Bryant Jr.'s two sons, Richard and Calvin, apprenticed with the firm for many years prior to receiving their degrees in electronics. They purchased the firm in 1979 upon their father's retirement. Two of Richard's sons, Matthew and Timothy have also assumed roles in the company.

The operation has been reorganized and expanded and now includes the design and building of custom pipe organs. Two instruments were built in the Penfield workshop prior to relocating to larger facilities in scenic Bristol Valley, Canandaigua, New York, in 1986.

Three-dimensional computer modeling provides Parsons with unique capability for providing customized solutions for visual designs and space planning; giving proper attention to the ability of the instrument to serve in its role for generations.

Voicing Room:
Gideon L. Parsons, upper left, ca. 1906, J.W. Steere & Son Organ Co.

Bryant Sr. & Bryant Jr. Parsons

Richard & Calvin Parsons

Praise ye the Lord.
Praise God in his sanctuary:
praise him in the firmament of his power.
Praise him for his mighty acts:
praise him according to his excellent greatness.
Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:
praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him with the timbrel and dance:
praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
Praise him upon the loud cymbals:
praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.
Praise ye the LORD.

— Psalm 150

SOLI DEO GLORIA

PARSONS

PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS

OF CANANDAIGUA, NEW YORK

Est. 1921

4820 Bristol Valley Road
Canandaigua, NY 14424
585.229.5888
ParsonsOrgans.com