



CENTENNIAL ORGAN PROJECT

Ronald Paul Sidhu

Centennial Organ Committee Moderator

Dear donors to the Centennial Organ and Friends of the Centennial Organ,

Welcome to our first newsletter about the Centennial Organ project and our vision for it to be sited in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in downtown Sacramento. [See the screen shots from the almost complete 3-D rendering model on next page]

As you know, the Centennial Organ is one of the most incredible Central German style organs outside of Germany. I wrote in the July 2020 AGO Newsletter after saving the organ at auction:

“ . . . it is the finest example of that style of building (Central German) during the life and times of Johann Sebastian Bach, a great composer to be sure, but who’s pulpit, his personal medium of expression, was the organ. The intricacies of his music are illuminated by this instrument – it is an incredible teaching tool and window into a bygone era.

When your fingers touch the keys of the organ, you are transported to another time and the sonorities that follow lift the music to extraordinary heights of understanding. It is the perfect medium to comprehend the organ music of J.S. Bach.”

July 2020 SVC AGO Newsletter





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We are now working diligently, in fact the Centennial Organ Committee meets every two weeks, to erect this instrument again, and in an even more glorious fashion (if that's possible) imaginable.

At the end of the newsletter you will find the proposed stop list which expands the organ into a third division (Brustwerk) and fleshes out the pedal division. When it is complete the Centennial organ will continue to be the best example of a Central German Organ outside of Central Germany.

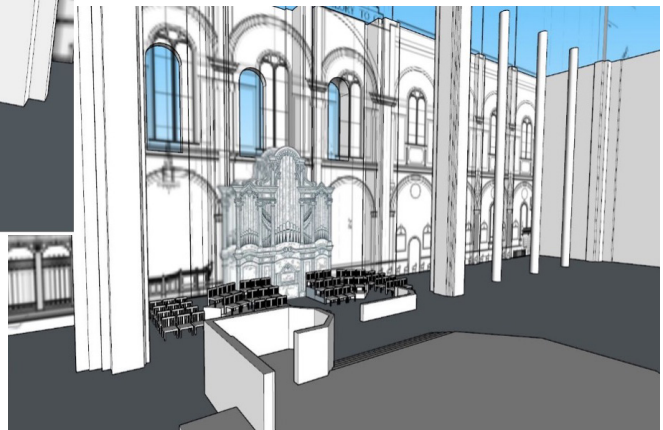
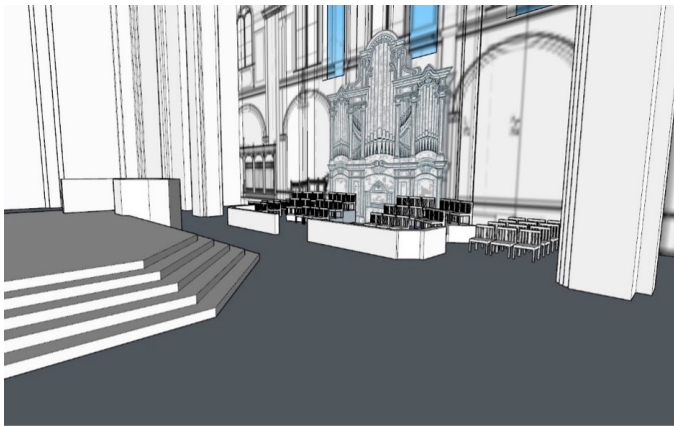
In the newsletter below you will read a message from Rex Rallanka the organist and music director of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, a book review of Lynn Edwards Butler's new book about Johann Scheibe a central German organ builder in Bach's time, and the link to Munetaka Yokota's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@yokota-organ> (please visit and subscribe) – followed by the proposed specification of the reinstalled and expanded Centennial Organ.

Mr. Yokota, as the original builder of the organ, will be completing all the pipe additions and overseeing the project.

Lastly, in our next newsletter (expect them every two months or so). You can view the organ in storage there, see and hear the fine acoustics with its current organ. As well as look over the area where it will be placed – Our 3-D model may be complete by then as well.

Till then we will keep you informed as to the progress through this newsletter.

Sincerely,
Ronald Paul Sidhu, Moderator



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Rexphil Rallanka

Music Director of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Sacramento

I have been at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament since 2005 and have never been more excited as I am now, for the future of our local organ community. The Centennial Organ currently sits in the Cathedral Choir rehearsal room awaiting assembly, restoration, and additions. I have been meeting regularly with members of the Centennial Organ Committee and the Buildings Committee of the Diocese of Sacramento to discuss placement, organ design, fundraising, and donor relations. We await the go-ahead from the Diocese to begin formal fundraising and are optimistic this effort will commence this summer. In the meantime, we have received unsolicited donations totaling some \$50,000. I am hopeful that once we start actively fundraising, there will not be much difficulty in raising the \$1.2 million needed to resurrect the Centennial Organ here at the Cathedral.

I would love to hear from you if you have any questions or comments about our organ project. If you are in the area, I would be happy to show you the Centennial Organ in its current state. Do not hesitate to reach out!

Rex Rallanka, Music Director - rrallanka@cathedralsacramento.org

Johann Scheibe, Organ Builder in Leipzig in the Time of Bach by Lynn Edwards Butler

Available from: <https://www.press.uillinois.edu/>

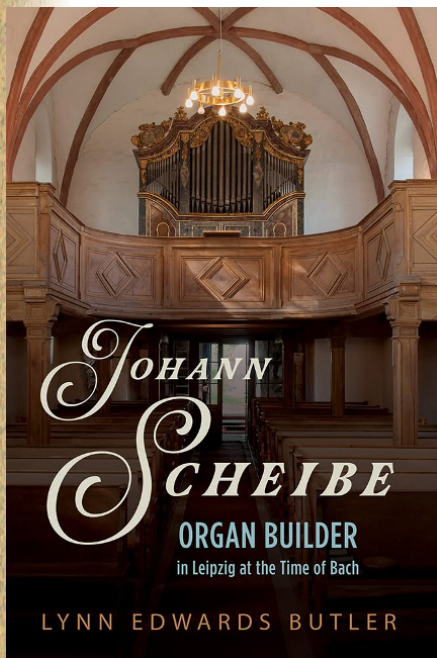
If you have been curious about the organs in Leipzig during Bach's tenure as the Music Director of St. Thomas, then this is the book for you. We know a lot about his association with Gottfried Silbermann and his apprentice Zacharias Hildebrandt (who moved his shop to Leipzig late in Bach's life). This new book by Lynn Edwards Butler fills in the gaps about Leipzig municipal organ builder, Johann Scheibe. Ms. Butler treats us to a complete detailed listing of the organs in Leipzig that he maintained and to which the famous composer and organist Johann Sebastian Bach had access to.

Johann Scheibe, organ builder, is replete with pictures, drawings, and stop lists for each of the Leipzig organs discussed.

Most notably, and regretfully, the no longer extant St. Paul's University organ which is detailed extensively (including the material and style the stops were constructed). [See drawing below]

This instrument and the organs in Leipzig, including the ones just outside of town, are all covered in the book. And each in the context of Johann Schiebe as builder and maintenance firm, who was a close colleague of Bach. (As well as Leipzig's previous music director, Johann Kuhnau).

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Many of the Leipzig organs had been built by various other organ firms however Johann Scheibe rebuilt and maintained virtually all of them. Some were essentially completely changed in the rebuild – while others, including changes made to the large St. Thomas organ (sadly, no longer with us) Bach would have performed on. Scheibe renovated the St. Thomas instrument twice (1720 & 1747), as well as cleaned the pipes and reset the temperament in 1730. (Curious in reference to Bach’s performances of the Cantatas etc. considering his own preference for temperament)

Without giving away too much detail, you will discover innovations in organ building that he invented – for the pedal wind line and manual stops among other things.

Unfortunately, there is only one of his instruments extant, and that outside of Leipzig. The single manual and pedal organ at St. Nicholas in Zschortau.

There are few recordings of this instrument and even less YouTube videos. However, there is one here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYCDT8VG0tA>

(admittedly not the best but you get an impression of the instrument)

I highly recommend the book. If you are looking for another review of it, you can find it in the December 2022 issue of the Diapason Magazine. Don’t get the Diapason? You can subscribe here: <https://www.thediapason.com/>

[The drawing at left is of the Johann Scheibe organ at St. Paul’s University Chapel in Leipzig during the time of Bach – the book has a recreation of this drawing set inside of the last known picture of St. Paul’s chapel before it was destroyed.]

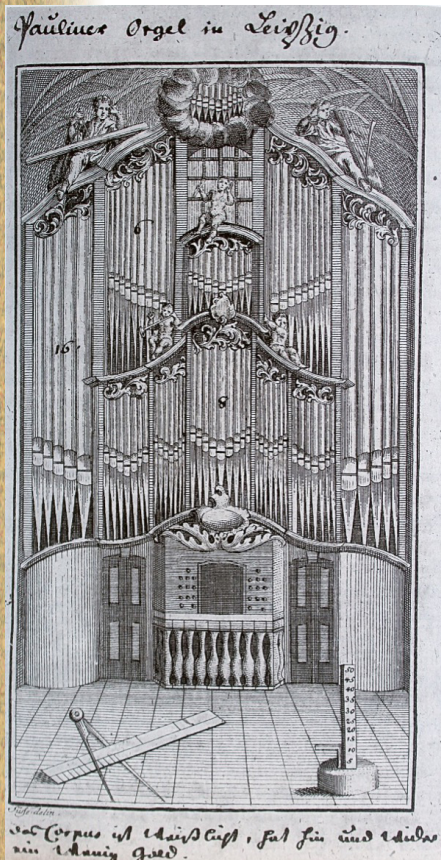
I bring this book up because I found it very informative in reference to Central German organ building.

As you know, the Centennial Organ Committee is working to resurrect the Centennial Organ formally of Chico State University inside the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in downtown Sacramento.

This unique organ was built in the Central German style, which includes Silbermann, Hildebrant, Trost and yes even, Johann Scheibe. The Central German organ is unique in sound, layout and stop list from the North German and South German/Northern France instruments. The famous organist Dr. John Butt once described it to me as “orchestral style”. I know this carries many other connotations for the modern organist who are unfamiliar with the central German style of organ building.

The Central German organ was built specially to blend well with other instruments, which is what Professor Butt was referring too. Its natural sonorities combine nicely with the “orchestra”. To say nothing of the many

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unique stops for playing in the “concerted” style – 16’ Fagott, 8’ Viol de Gambe, 8’ Vox Humana as well as a large assortment of manual 8’ and 16’ stops. (Besides the 8’ Gedackt for continuo playing).

I fondly remember hearing the organ perform with the North State Orchestra the Poulenc organ concerto under the deft hands and superb playing of Dr. David Rothe, the university organist at the time.

Our hope is that this organ will be used for even more organ and orchestra concerts at the Cathedral. To that end, I’d like to share with you the proposed specification for the resurrected organ. All additions will be completed by the original builder Munetaka Yokota and his firm (Munetaka Yokota Organ Building and Research LLC. – YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@yokota-organ>). Please visit and subscribe.

Proposed Centennial Organ Specification

Hauptwerk	Oberwerk	Brustwerk	Pedal
Principal (in facade) 16’	Quintadena 16’	Gedackt Lieblich 8’	Gross Untersatz 32’
Octav Principal (facade) 8’	Principal 8’	Rohrflöte 4’	Principal Bass 16’
Viol di Gamba 8’	Unda Maris (a-) 8’	Nasat 3’	Subbass 16’
Hohlfloete 8’	Quintadena 8’	Principal 2’	Octav Bass 8’
Octava 4’	Gedackt 8’	Tertia 1-3/5’	Violone 8’
Spitzfloete 4’	Octava 4’	Cimbel III	Octav Bass 4’
Quinta 3’	Rohrfloete 4’	Oboe 8’	Mixture VI
Octava 2’	Nasat 3’		Posaunen Bass 16’
Tertia 1-3/5’	Octava 2’		Trompeten Bass 8’
Mixtur IV (16’ chorus)	Tertia 1-3/5’		Cornet Bass 4’
Cymbel III (8’ chorus)	Quinta 1-1/3’		
Cornet IV (c or c#)	Sifflet 1’		
Glockenspiel (c-)	Mixtur (Scharf) IV		
Fagott 16’	Trompette (French) 8’		
Trompete (German) 8’	Vox Humana 8’		

Accessories:

Tremulant

2 Cymbelsterns

Couplers: II/I, II/P, I/P

Vogelgesang (Bird song)

Wind System: electric blower or five hand-operated single-fold bellows

Compass: Man.: C-g,a3, Ped.: C-f1

Temperament: Kellner/Bach

Pitch: a-440