Parkey OrganBuilders, Duluth, Georgia
Cathedral of St. John Berchmans, Shreveport, Louisiana

October 2011 marked the completion of the new pipe organ by Parkey OrganBuilders for the Cathedral of St. John Berchmans, Shreveport, Louisiana. St. John Berchmans had embarked on a major building restoration in 1992, just a few years after becoming the cathedral for the newly created Diocese of Shreveport. The 1992 restoration included plans to build a new organ for the church, but for various reasons, though the pipe organ was signed for and partially built, the instrument was never completed.

More than 15 years later, after the renovation was completed, the cathedral, under the direction of the rector, Father Peter Mangum, and the newly appointed director of sacred music and organist, Justin Ward, set itself a goal of expanding the cathedral music program, to include evaluating and completing the organ project. The cathedral secured the services of James Dorroh of Birmingham, Alabama, as an organ consultant to help achieve the goal of creating an organ that would visually complement the architecture of the building and tonally support both choral and congregational singing. The organ committee recognized the need for such an organ to provide sacred music in a way that would augment the worship experience for parishioners in addition to providing a cornerstone instrument for the community.

The organ committee quickly narrowed the list to three very capable firms, and in the summer of 2010, the committee chose our firm to complete the organ project. We worked directly with Mr. Ward and Dr. Dorroh to refine the initial specification drawn up by Dr. Dorroh to create a sound that would fit the needs of the cathedral. Because the choral program remains the center of music for the cathedral, we had to tailor our design for the most efficient utilization of space possible in the gallery. The new organ stands in two matching cases within the same footprint allocated for the organ in 1992.

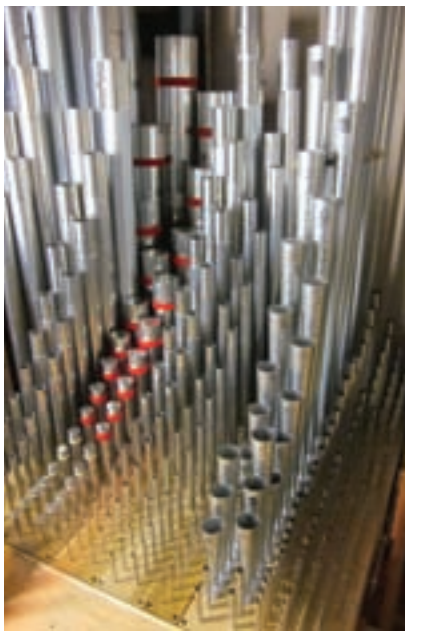
To accommodate any number of singers and additional musicians, the organ was designed with a movable console, which of course dictated the need for some sort of electric action. Our firm is comfortable in working with both electric and mechanical actions. When tracker action is not possible, we recommend the use of electro-pneumatic slider chests. Our windchests and winding systems are designed and built completely in-house. Using computer-aided design (CAD) software systems and computer numerically controlled (CNC) router machinery, we have developed an efficient and effective slider chest design for a clean and responsive action. The winding system is engineered based on single-rise reservoirs for a steady, fluid wind supply but with a gentle flex to provide life to the singing line of the organ.

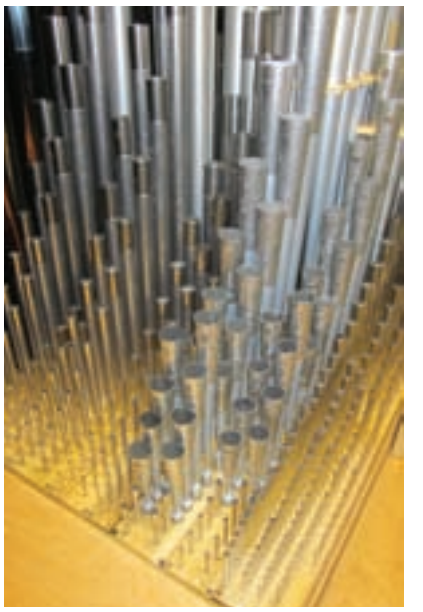
In addition to the mechanical design of the organ, our CAD systems have been instrumental in providing extensively scaled rendering work, so that the client can see and experience the visual design of an organ before anything is ever committed to materials.

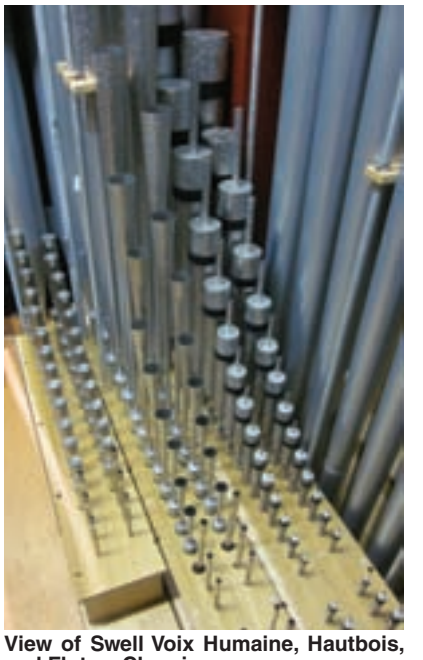
As the organ is a musical instrument capable of a strong visual and aural statement, we work to combine the art of sight and sound together. Michael Morris of our staff provided the visual design, which included retaining materials from the previous organ and expanding the case to house the new organ. In his design, one notes the core of the previous case combined with the essence of visual design seen in organbuilding of the early 1900s. Case details were shifted from the contemporary look to a much more traditional gothic format consistent with the architecture of the cathedral. A majority of material was retained from the previous case, though some parts are easily recognizable and some vastly changed.


Looking across the console to the Great/Pedal case


Side view of the Swell/Choir case


View of Great pipework


Swell flue and reed pipework


View of Swell Voix Humaine, Hautbois, and Flute a Cheminee


Console side details

Looking across the console to the Choir/Swell case

Case and console details

The side façades provide a magnitude of scale for the space: where the previous organ case was based on the use of 8′ pipes, the new cases are based on the 16′ Principal and Violone. The use of polychrome details combines with the colors of the nave for a more complete marriage of organ case and room architecture. Careful attention to detail was provided throughout the project. Details range from the turned wooden drawknobs to the 18k gold leaf accents in the case.

Since part of an earlier organ existed, the organ committee challenged us to retain parts of the existing instrument. In reviewing the uncompleted organ, we found that there were mechanical supply parts that could be retained without sacrificing the integrity of the instrument. Unfortunately, the pipework did not offer such an extensive array of options. While we did retain some pipework, it was limited to four ranks that were rescaled and revoiced to be compatible

View of Pontifical Trumpet looking up from the Great/Pedal service ladder

View of altar area on the south end of the nave

with the new tonal design of the organ. The remaining organ is completely new, with custom scaling for the space.

In addition to the challenge of working with an existing organ, the cathedral realized the needs of working within an existing space. Though the organ enjoys an excellent position for tonal egress in the room, the nave presented some obstacles in terms of sonic reflections. After consultation with Dennis Fleisher of MuSonics, the cathedral underwent an extensive renovation of the ceiling in the main portion of the nave, in order to install hard surfaces over the previous acoustically absorbent ceiling. The acoustical response in the room was greatly improved. The room now readily supports the organ's warmth and clarity equally throughout the nave.

Our conversations with Justin Ward and James Dorroh focused on the need for the organ to lead choirs and congregations in music for the worship service. In recent years the Catholic Church has

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Parkey OrganBuilders Opus 12
Cathedral of St. John Berchmans
Shreveport, Louisiana

GREAT (unenclosed)

16′	Violone (1–12 in façade)	61 pipes
8′	Principal (1–12 in façade)	61 pipes
8′	Bourdon	61 pipes
8′	Violone	12 pipes
4′	Octave	61 pipes
4′	Spitzflöte	61 pipes
2′	Super Octave	61 pipes
1⅓′	Mixture IV–V	281 pipes
8′	Trompete	61 pipes
8′	Pontifical Trumpet (horizontal inside Gt/Ped case)	61 pipes
	Chimes (37 notes)	digital
	Cymbelstern (existing)	

SWELL (enclosed)

16′	Bourdon	12 pipes
8′	Flute a Cheminee	61 pipes
8′	Viola Pomposa	61 pipes
8′	Voix Celeste GG	54 pipes
4′	Principal	61 pipes
4′	Cor de Nuit	61 pipes
2′	Octavin	61 pipes
2′	Plein Jeu IV–V	281 pipes
16′	Basson	12 pipes
8′	Trompette	61 pipes
8′	Hautbois	61 pipes
4′	Clairon	61 pipes
8′	Voix Humaine (separate wind and tremulant)	61 pipes
	Tremulant	
	Voix Humaine Tremulant	
	Swell 16	
	Swell Unison Off	
	Swell 4	

CHOIR (enclosed)

8′	Prinzipal	61 pipes
8′	Holz Gedeckt	61 pipes
8′	Spitzflöte	61 pipes
8′	Spitzflöte Celeste	49 pipes
4′	Octav	61 pipes
4′	Koppelflöte	61 pipes
2⅔′	Nazat	61 pipes
2′	Superoctav	61 pipes
2′	Blockflöte	61 pipes
1⅗′	Terz	61 pipes
1⅓′	Quinte	61 pipes
⅔′	Zymbel IV	244 pipes
8′	Cromorne	61 pipes
8′	Pontifical Trumpet	Great
	Tremulant	
	Harp	digital
	Celesta	digital
	Choir 16	
	Choir Unison Off	
	Choir 4	

CHANCEL (unenclosed)

8′	Gedeckt	61 pipes
4′	Rohrflöte	61 pipes

PEDAL

32′	Subbass (12 notes) (ext of 16′ Subbass)	digital
16′	Principal (1–24 in façade)	32 pipes
16′	Subbass	32 pipes
16′	Violone	Great
16′	Bourdon	Swell
8′	Octave	12 pipes
8′	Flötenbass	12 pipes
8′	Violone	Great
8′	Flute a Cheminee	Swell
4′	Choral Bass	32 pipes
4′	Flute	32 pipes
2⅔′	Rauschquinte IV	128 pipes
32′	Contra Posaune (12 notes) (ext of 16′ Posaune)	digital
16′	Posaune	32 pipes
16′	Basson	Swell
8′	Trompete	12 pipes
8′	Hautbois	Swell
8′	Pontifical Trumpet	Great

COUPLERS
Swell to Great 16
Swell to Great 8
Swell to Great 4
Choir to Great 16
Choir to Great 8
Choir to Great 4
Chancel on Great

Swell to Choir 16
Swell to Choir 8
Swell to Choir 4

Great to Choir 8
Chancel on Choir

Great to Pedal 8
Great to Pedal 4
Swell to Pedal 8
Swell to Pedal 4
Choir to Pedal 8
Choir to Pedal 4
Chancel on Pedal

Great/Choir Transfer (moves divisional pistons as well)

Transposer

Total stops = 57
Total ranks = 55

COMBINATION ACTION
Solid State Organ Systems
100 memory levels
12 general pistons, thumb and toe
8 divisional pistons, manual, thumb only
6 divisional pistons, pedal, toe only
Great to Pedal reversible, thumb and toe
Swell to Pedal reversible, thumb and toe
Choir to Pedal reversible, thumb and toe
Cymbelstern reversible, thumb and toe
32′ Subbass reversible, toe only
32′ Contra Posaune reversible, toe only
Sforzando reversible, thumb and toe
General Cancel, thumb only
Reverse piston for sequencer, thumb and toe
Solid State Organ Systems "Any Piston Next" sequencer
Movable console

➤ page 29: Parkey cover feature

Blessing of the new organ at delivery

further recognized the contribution of the pipe organ as the main instrument for the Catholic Mass. Dr. Dorroh and I discussed the role and influence of the Baroque revival in America, and the influence of leading clarity common to the German Baroque organ. Those traits were combined with aspects of the weight and presence of the French Grand Orgue of the late 1800s. The result is an organ that can skillfully handle the full range of organ literature, from soft and subtle to large and fiery. However, the use of moderate pressures and large scales keeps a refined and unforced sound.

Mixtures are carefully terraced and balanced to define the chorus with a silvery clarity without becoming abrasive. Power and brilliance are also supported by the use of French reeds in the Swell division. The Cavaillé-Coll-scaled 8′ Voix Humaine was featured in the Franck *Choral* in proper context during the dedication recital. The Pontifical Trumpet is of ample scale to carry in the room over full organ, yet it manages chords easily with a majestic elegance. The 8′ flutes possess individual color and personality and are also enhanced with carefully balanced 4′ flutes in each division. Two independent manual Principal choruses are provided in addition to full mutations in the Choir. The 8′ Viola Pomposa and 8′ Flute a Cheminee provide the foundation support for the Swell division. The dynamic terracing allows for a smooth buildup of sound from the 8′ Spitzflöte in the Choir to full organ.

In the end, the organ makes a strong but elegant statement consistent with the quality of worship services at the cathedral. Justin Ward and James Dorroh were a tremendous pleasure to work with during the project, providing clear and concise direction while yet allowing us room for artful design and finishing. We appreciate the confidence placed in us by the parishioners, clergy, and staff of the cathedral. I also extend my personal thanks to our own staff and suppliers who have made this an overwhelming success.

Case details being machined on the CNC router

Please feel free to contact us at <www.parkeyorgans.com>, or contact the cathedral for further information. Visits can be arranged with Justin Ward at the cathedral.

—Phillip K. Parkey
President and Tonal Director
Parkey OrganBuilders

Staff

Phillip K. Parkey—President and tonal director, voicing and tonal finishing

Michael Morris—Visual and structural design and installation

Josh Okeson—Shop foreman, cabinet maker, wiring and installation

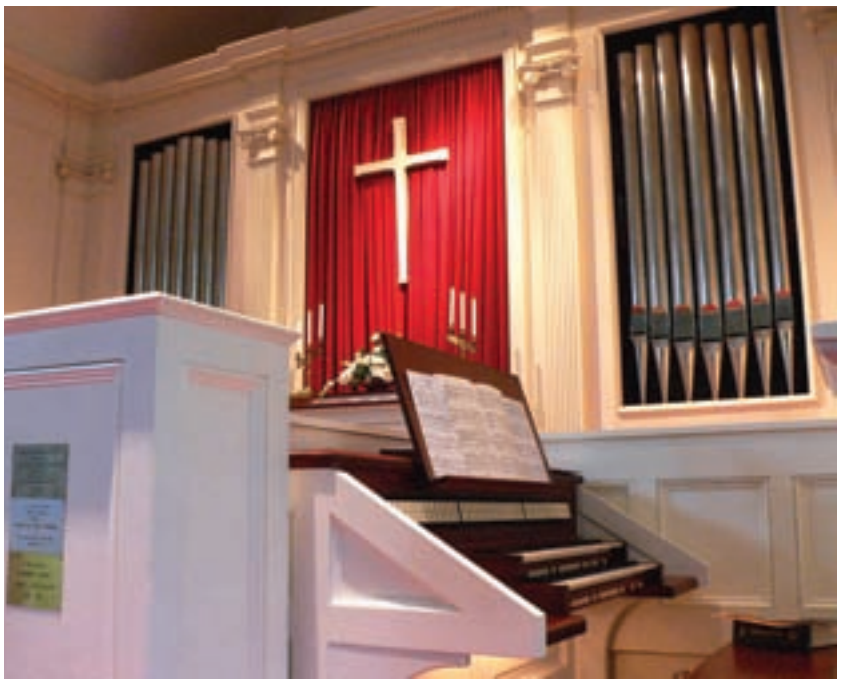
Otilia Gamboa—Chestwork, wiring and small parts

Philip Read—CNC operator, cabinet maker and installation

Jim Allen—Cabinet maker and installation

Kenny Lewis—Voicing, wiring, installation and tonal finishing.

New Organs



J.H. & C.S. Odell, East Haddam, Connecticut
Opus 649, Orange Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Orange, Connecticut

The Woodruff Memorial Organ, our Opus 649, is the first Odell organ in over 100 years to return to slider windchest construction. Equally important is that this organ expresses a new unity of artistic vision. All aspects of the tonal design—specification, stoplist, pipe scales, and especially voicing—were conceived and realized entirely by Edward Odell. We think the result is fresh and exciting.

The tonal design of the organ does not easily yield to a classification. For the modern church organ, our intent is to look first to classical design principles. This calls for a complete principal chorus in the Great, scaled and voiced in correct proportion to the space and use, and whose rightful priority is the leading of congregational song. This is complemented by a true 8′ Gamba, which was created from the original Möller Dulciana by increasing its scale several half tones, by careful raising of the cutups, and by slotting. The division also includes 8′ and 4′ flutes, stopped and open respectively, which complement each other extremely well. The 8′ is also available at 16′, with a wooden bottom octave built and voiced in our shop. An appropriately scaled English-style Trumpet completes the division.

The Swell is also generously outfitted with flutes. The metal 8′ Rohr Flute is also available at 16′, with a subordinate scale to the Great 8′ Bourdon and a lightly arched cut-up. The Salicional and Voix Celeste follow, and the compass of the Celeste was increased, as is our custom. As with the flute, the Swell 8′ Principal is scaled slightly subordinate to the Great and voiced with more articulation. Also available at 4′, it forms a lighter secondary chorus that allows the organist great flexibility in choral accompaniment.

Our distinctively scaled Harmonic Flute further enriches the division; this is adapted from models from our own 19th-century instruments. The flute chorus is completed with a Nazard, Block Flute and Tierce, allowing for (among other effects) the classical *Cornet decomposée*. The division's reed complement includes the organ's original Trompette with French shallots, and an entirely new Oboe, which like the Great reed has English antecedents, as the stop has English shallots and dual-taper resonators, and is half-capped.

The foundation of the Pedal is the original Möller Subbass, placed on new chests to allow for better placement and adjustment of power. The 8′ Octave (the tallest seven pipes of which are in the left façade) is entirely new, and is available at 4′ to support cantus firmus. A 16′ extension of the Great Trumpet rounds out the additions to the division. The Pedal is further filled out through selective borrowing of manual stops.

We would like to thank the members of Orange Congregational Church who made this project possible, including all the donors, the organ committee, and the pastoral staff. We would like to thank most especially the church members who worked closely with us and waited so patiently in order to make the project a success: Bradford Elker, Bradford Gesler, Ronald Barber, minister Stoddon G.N. King, and church organist Bryan Campbell.

—Edward Odell

J.H. & C.S. Odell
Opus 649, Orange Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

GREAT

16′ Bourdon (ext)
8′ Open Diapason
8′ Bourdon
8′ Gamba
4′ Octave
4′ Flute
2′ Super Octave
III Mixture (draws 2′)
8′ Trumpet
Chimes
Zimbelstern

SWELL (Expressive)

16′ Rohr Flute (ext)
8′ Principal (from 4′ Principal and 16′ Rohr Flute)
8′ Rohr Flute
8′ Salicional
8′ Voix Celeste
4′ Principal
4′ Harmonic Flute
2⅔′ Nazard
2′ Block Flute
1⅗′ Tierce
8′ Trompette
8′ Oboe
Tremulant

PEDAL

16′ Subbass
16′ Rohr Gedeckt (Sw)
8′ Octave
8′ Bourdon (extension, 16′ Subbass)
8′ Gedeckt (Sw)
4′ Choralbass (extension, 8′ Octave)
4′ Flute (Sw)
16′ Trumpet (ext, Gt)
8′ Trumpet (Gt)
4′ Clarion (Gt)

Total: 31 stops, 21 ranks