Marceau & Associates Pipe Organ Builders, Inc., Seattle, Washington
Trinity Parish Episcopal Church, Seattle, Washington

From the builder

My first contact with Trinity Parish took place in the summer of 1978, when, as an employee of Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs of Seattle, I was on the crew that removed the church's 1902 Kimball instrument. I recall the rather thick layer of furnace dust and grime that made the removal fairly dirty! Since none of the windchests or reservoirs were to be retained in the new organ project, these components were destined for the dump. That project incorporated some of the original Kimball pipework, but not with any degree of success. I subsequently relocated to Portland, Oregon and founded Marceau Pipe Organs in 1985.

I had begun maintenance of the Trinity pipe organ in 1983, when Martin Olson was appointed organist/choirmaster. As the existing console began to show signs of advancing age, Marceau Pipe Organs was awarded the contract of building our first three-manual, tiered drawknob console. With the able assistance of Frans Bosman (who built the console shell), we assembled new components from P&S Organ Supply (keyboards), Harris Precision Products (stop action controls), and Solid State Logic (combination action—now Solid State Organ Systems), and installed this in the fall of 1989.

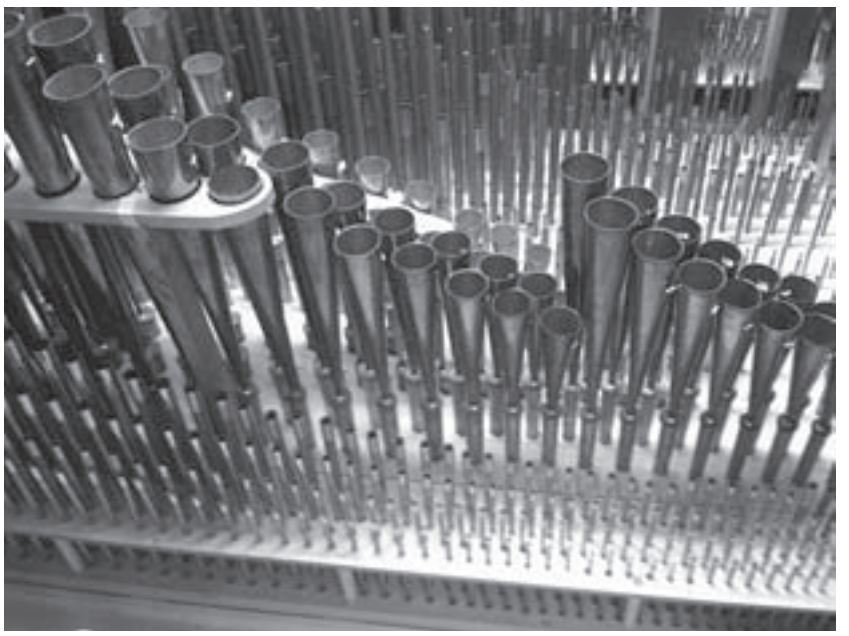
The second phase focused on a redesign of the organ chamber to accommodate new slider-pallet windchests (produced in the Marceau shop) and a façade that would pay homage to the original Kimball façade. The budget did not allow for the total number of stops to be installed at that time. It was through fate that this instrument was completed! The massive Nisqually earthquake of 2001 almost closed this historic building for good, if it were not for the unshakable vision of this congregation, led by their rector, the Rev. Paul Collins.

During the time in which the church was being rebuilt and upgraded, we were fortunate enough to acquire a large pipe organ of about 35 ranks. From this inventory, stops that were prepared for future addition could be added at about half the cost of new pipes. One of the unique trademarks of a Marceau pipe organ is the inclusion of vintage pipework that is rescaled, revoiced, and re-regulated to be successfully integrated with stops, both old and new. The Trinity Parish pipe organ is no exception. A quick glance at the stoplist suggests a number of musical possibilities that make it possible to interpret organ repertoire from Bach to Manz and everything in between!

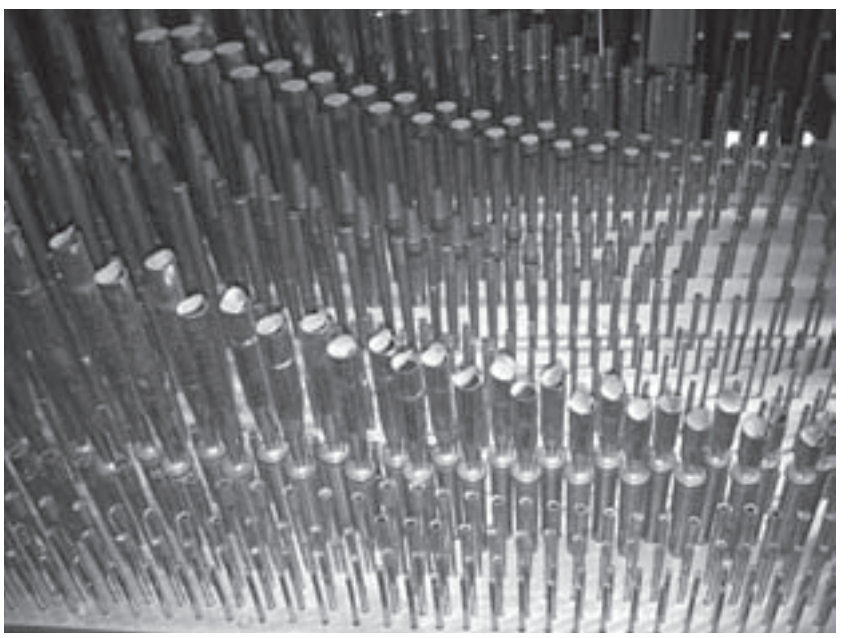
In 2005, I moved back to Seattle to open a Seattle office for our activities in the Puget Sound region. In 2008, we moved into a small but very useful shop in the Ballard district and have seen our work increase dramatically since then. While I enjoy each project that comes through the shop, I will always think fondly of our Opus IV at Trinity Parish and how that instrument continues to be one of great satisfaction and pride.

—René A. Marceau

Marceau Opus IV, Trinity Parish Episcopal Church, Seattle



Swell pipes



Positiv pipes

Original 1902 Kimball façade

From the organist

I started as organist/music director at Trinity Parish Church in 1983, over 27 years ago. At that time, there was a recently remodeled pipe organ, with no façade pipes, grille cloth, and a used console that was gradually failing. I had worked with Marceau & Associates on other organ projects in the past and engaged him to build us a new console. This proved to be the start of a professional and personal friendship that has lasted many years! This was Marceau's first console and was planned with tonal revisions and (hopefully) new pipework in the future. I didn't know where the money was to come from, but I had a lot of faith. Shortly after the new console was built, notes started going dead, and we found out that the organ had used Perflex instead of leather; we faced a future with an increasing number of dead notes.

At this time the vestry encouraged us to look at the existing tonal plan, and the organ was totally rebuilt using slider chests. Each of the three arches of the organ had façade pipes installed, helping to keep the visual appearance of the organ consistent with the nineteenth-century English Country Gothic architecture. At this point, we were out of money and only about a third of the planned pipework was installed.

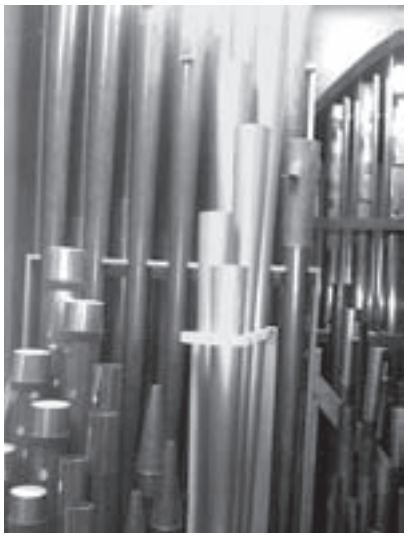
Our planning for fund raising came to an abrupt halt on Ash Wednesday 2001. The Nisqually earthquake hit about an hour before the 12:10 Ash Wednesday service. The organ was not too badly damaged, but the building was unusable. Part of the tower collapsed into the nave, and the north and south transept walls moved outward, so that daylight could be seen coming through the walls! We were red-tagged by the city, meaning that no one could go into the building. For almost five years we worshipped in the parish hall, using the piano and a lovely one-manual positive (built by Marceau), lent to us by the Seattle AGO chapter. At times we didn't know if the money would be found to rebuild the church, but Trinity persevered and the millions of dollars needed were raised.

As we approached the completion of the church restoration, we realized that if we didn't finish acquiring the missing pipework now, it might never happen. The vestry gave approval, and thanks to a lot of searching by René Marceau, we added the missing 20 ranks of pipes—all recycled pipework. Today, the 19th-century sanctuary has solid wood floors, hard reflective walls, and very little carpet. Thanks to Marceau's voicing skills, the pipework from 1902 works with the ranks added in the 1970s and 2000s.

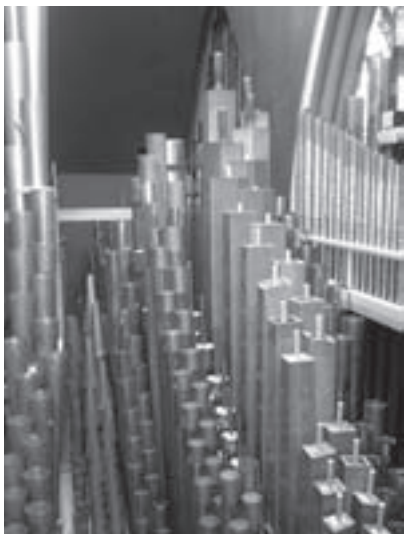
During the first several weeks in the rebuilt sanctuary and "new" organ, I was surprised that almost everyone stayed and listened quietly to the postlude, but I didn't think it would last. I was proven wrong again! Four years later, almost everyone still stays for the postlude! Years ago, under the leadership of Ed Hanson, there was a weekly lunchtime organ recital every Wednesday. When the church and the organ were rebuilt, I decided to revive that tradition, and for some years now we have had a weekly organ recital, often featuring student organists from the area. These recitals, combined with other concerts here at Trinity, make this organ one of the most heard organs in the Seattle area.

—Martin Olson
Organist/music director

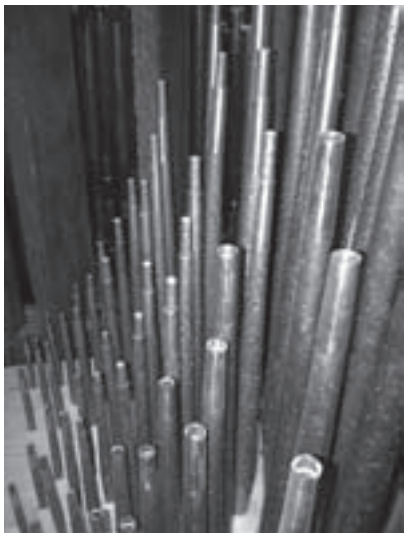
Martin Olson



Pedal reed



Great pipes



Gemshorn and Celeste

Swell pipes

History

Trinity Episcopal Church has a long history as one of Seattle's oldest congregations—and music has been a part of that history from the very beginning. While the parish's first organ was a reed organ of unknown manufacture, the parish has the credit of being the first to bring a pipe organ to Seattle. Preserved vestry notes from February 2, 1882, page 82, indicate a signed order to buy an organ "of Mr. Bergstrom's make" for $1,500. This is further corroborated in Thomas E. Jessett's *Pioneering God's Country—The History of the Diocese of Olympia, 1853–1953,* in which he states on page 33, "The first pipe organ in Washington was installed in Trinity Church, Seattle, in 1882."

By 1900, the parish was ready to acquire a larger instrument, and a contract was drawn up towards the purchase of a larger pipe organ. The vestry even announced they were willing to spend $6,000 if necessary. Such was the importance of music to the parish!

A contract was signed with the Hutchings Organ Co. of Boston for an organ to cost $2,500 plus $138 for a water engine to provide wind. The organ was shipped in December 1900. Such a listing does not appear on the Hutchings opus list, so it was likely built under the name of Hutchings-Votey, whose opus list is not complete. Coincidentally, the parish requested Dr. Franklin S. Palmer of San Francisco to come test the completed organ and to play the dedicatory concert. Dr. Palmer would later become the organist of St. James R.C. Cathedral in Seattle, and was principal in the design and acquisition of that congregation's well-known 4-manual, 1907 Hutchings-Votey. Sadly, the Hutchings-Votey only lasted about a year, and was destroyed by a fire within the church on January 19, 1902.

By May 2 of that same year, the vestry awarded a contract to the W. W. Kimball Co. of Chicago for a three-manual organ to cost $7,500. It had 30 speaking stops and 29 ranks, and despite the growing influence of orchestral organs, the Kimball was built more along mid-to-late 19th-century tonal designs, with a mostly complete 16′, 8′, 4′, 2⅔′, and 2′ principal chorus on the Great, capped by an 8′ Orchestral Trumpet. The Swell reflected more of the orchestral influence, with one 16′ flue register, six 8′ flue registers, and only one 4′ flue register, plus an 8-8-8 reed complement. Even the Choir sported a 16′ flue, but included the standard 2′ Harmonic Piccolo and 8′ Clarinet among its stops. And the Pedal of 16-16-16-8 included a very fine wooden Violone. Monthly recitals were given by the organist, and often included a soloist, a quartet, or even the full choir.

In 1945 the organ was electrified by Charles W. Allen, successor to Kimball representative Arthur D. Longmore. An only slightly used Kimball console was acquired from the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Tacoma, one of two installed there. The chest primaries were electrified, some stops were moved from the Great to the Choir, and a few new ranks were added/substituted. The organ lasted pretty much unaltered in this form until 1977.

Beginning in 1975, Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc. of Seattle had been discussing options for rebuilding the Kimball at Trinity. Various stoplists and drawings were considered. In 1979 the parish finally decided upon a plan, and the organ was rebuilt. But the Balcom & Vaughan was essentially a new organ, on new chests, with predominantly new pipework, and retaining 12 selected voices from the venerable old Kimball. The impressive 1902 Kimball façades were eliminated, and little 'buffets' of exposed pipework took their place. The B & V was designed along "American Classic" lines akin to Aeolian-Skinner, which is where then B & V president, William J. Bunch, had been working for many years. While the new organ was more transparent-sounding than the Kimball, and offered more color in the way of mutations and mixtures, the blend between new and old was not entirely satisfying, nor did the brighter ensembles seem to adequately fill the church space.

In 1989 the Portland firm of Marceau & Associates provided a handsome new terraced drawknob console to replace the existing used Kimball stopkey console. Several preliminary stop changes were made with existing pipework to improve the sound of the organ. In 1995 Trinity Church awarded a contract to Marceau & Associates for the rebuilding of the existing organ. This effort sought to take the existing pipework and through rescaling, recombining, and revoicing, create a more cohesive whole, including appropriate new pipework. Each of the manual divisions now has a principal chorus in proper terraced dynamics. Part of this project was to recreate the three Kimball façades in spirit, but with a new twist. The church now has an eclectic 3-manual organ, with bold principals, colorful flutes, two strings with mated celestes, mutation voices, mixtures, and reeds of both chorus and solo colors. And all is housed behind a handsome façade of polished zinc principals in the original three bays, providing a sense of visual continuity with the past.

—Jim Stettner
Organ historian

Stoplist description

As with any instrument, the most critical areas of interest are the principal choruses. Our Opus IV is blessed with two divisions with 8′ Principals (Great and Positiv). The Great principal chorus is based on a normal scale 8′ Principal, with the low 19 notes in the façade. The 4′ Octave, 2′ Super Octave, and III–V Mixture are all stops retained from the 1978 project, rescaled and revoiced for a more energetic, colorful presence in the room. The Positiv principal chorus is 1–2 notes smaller, with a higher-pitched Mixture. Added to this chorus is the Sesquialtera II, of principal character, which imparts a "reedy" quality to the overall sound. Of particular note is the 8′ Principal. It is scaled 2 notes smaller than the Great 8′ Principal; when heard in the chancel it has a very Geigen-like quality, but takes on more character in the nave, and is a perfect complement to its "big brother."

The Swell principal chorus, based on the 4′ level, includes a III–IV Mixture, which works well with the reeds in this division. The Pedal principal chorus is based on the 16′ Principal (of wood) and progresses up to the III Mixture, which includes a Tierce rank. I find this addition completes the Pedal chorus without the need to include the reeds.

The Great flutes (8′ Rohrflute, 4′ Koppelflute) provide the foundation for the rest of the flute stops. Contrasting and complementary stops appear in the Positiv (8′ Gedackt, 4′ Spillflute, 2′ Lochgedackt), with smoother-sounding stops in the Swell (8′ Holzgedackt, 4′ Nachthorn, 2′ Waldflute). Of particular note is the Positiv 2′ Lochgedackt, whose character is gentle enough to soften the assertive sounds of the Sesquialtera.

There are two sets of strings, found on the Swell and Positiv manuals. The Swell 8′ Salicional and Positiv 8′ Gemshorn are from the 1902 Kimball; the Voix Celeste is of an unknown builder, while the Gemshorn Celeste is an original Dolce built by Stinkens in the late 1960s.

It is interesting to note that all of the manual reeds were built by Stinkens at some point in time. My colleague, Frans Bosman, was very successful in regulating each stop to work well in both solo and ensemble roles. The Great 8′ Trompete is dark and robust in character, contrasting with the brighter, more aggressive Swell 8′ Trompette. The Swell 8′ Oboe is also bright but at least one or two dynamic levels softer. The unit Fagott rank is from the 1978 project, appearing in the Pedal only. It was extended to play on the Swell at both 8′ and 4′ pitches. The Positiv 8′ Krummhorn is scaled more as a Dulzian, giving this stop the power to add color to the Positiv chorus. The most surprising set of reeds is found in the Pedal. Both the 16′ Posaune/8′ Trumpet and 4′ Clarion are vintage pipes. There was some concern about tonal and dynamic blend; these fears were laid to rest when, after regulating these stops, they were the perfect balance to the full ensemble!

There are Tierce ranks in every division. The Great mounted Cornet (located behind the façade pipes) can be used for classic French repertoire, the Positiv Sesquialtera II can be used in both solo and ensemble roles, the Swell Cornet decomposée allows for the individual mutations to be used separately or in combination, and the Pedal Mixture contains the tierce rank and is quite effective in chorus work.

—René A. Marceau

Marceau & Associates Pipe Organ Builders, Inc.
Trinity Parish Episcopal Church, Seattle, Washington
3 manuals, 41 stops, 56 ranks

GREAT (Manual II, unenclosed)

16′	Pommer	49 pipes
8′	Prinzipal	61
8′	Rohrflute	61
8′	Flute Harmonique	49
4′	Oktave	61
4′	Koppelflute	61
2′	Super Oktave	61
2⅔′	Cornet III (mounted)	147
1⅓′	Mixture III–V	269
8′	Trompete	61
	Great Unison Off	

SWELL (Manual III, enclosed)

16′	Lieblich Gedackt	12
8′	Holzgedackt	61
8′	Salicional	61
8′	Voix Celeste	49
4′	Principal	61
4′	Nachthorn	61
2⅔′	Nasard	61
2′	Waldflute	61
1⅗′	Tierce	61
2′	Mixture III–IV	228
16′	Fagott	12
8′	Trompette	61
8′	Oboe	61
8′	Fagott	61
4′	Fagott	12
	Swell to Swell 16′	
	Swell Unison Off	
	Swell to Swell 4′	

POSITIV (Manual I, unenclosed & enclosed*)

8′	Prinzipal	61
8′	Gedackt	61
8′	Gemshorn*	49
8′	Gemshorn Celeste*	61
4′	Spitzoktave	61
4′	Spillflute	61
2⅔′	Sesquialtera II	122
2′	Oktave	61
2′	Lochgedackt	61
1⅓′	Larigot	61
1′	Cymbel IV	244
8′	Krummhorn	61
	Positiv to Positiv 16′	
	Positiv Unison Off	

PEDAL (unenclosed)

32′	Untersatz (electronic)	
16′	Principalbass	32
16′	Subbass	32
16′	Lieblich Gedackt	Swell
8′	Octavebass	32
8′	Openbass	12
8′	Holzgedackt	Swell
4′	Choralbass	32
2⅔′	Mixture III	96
32′	Contra Posaune (electronic)	
16′	Posaune	32
16′	Fagott	Swell
8′	Trumpet	12
4′	Clarion	32

Intermanual couplers
Great to Pedal 8′
Swell to Pedal 8′
Positiv to Pedal 8′
Swell to Great 16′, 8′, 4′
Choir to Great 16′, 8′
Swell to Positiv 16′, 8′, 4′
Great to Positiv 8′
Positiv to Swell 8′