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INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF THE FOURSQUARE GOSPEL

The following article was prompted by a communication from Douglas Gilliland, music director of the Foursquare Church of Mehlville, Mo. He brought to our attention the fact that 1973 marked the 50th anniversary of the construction of Angelus Temple, headquarters of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, in Los Angeles, Calif. The Foursquare Church was founded by Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), the sensational evangelist whose life and work were often front page news during the 1920s.

ANGELUS TEMPLE KIMBALL ORGAN AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL MICKELSON WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

BY JANICE L. PEDERSEN, EDITOR, FOURSQUARE
WORLD ADVANCE

He wasn't an antique dealer ready to make a quick profit, but, as he touched the marked wood of the old 1923 organ console, something clicked between the two. The organ was rather like an old friend. Others might have taken some time to give some thought before they took money out of their pockets, but this man made no hesitation, for it was at this very console that he, Paul Mickelson, had taken his first lessons as a lad of 15, and had gone on to be a renowned organist for evangelist Billy Graham.

"When I heard the console was for sale," said Mickelson, "I quickly let Angelus Temple know I would buy it to save it for posterity, lest it go to some non-church establishment that knew little of its historical interest. I bought it in its worn state with the thought that I would have it restored and keep it for my personal library."

The console had been part of Angelus Temple, headquarters church for the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel in Los Angeles, for 50 years when, in 1973, the congrega-

The Foursquare Church has some 1,000 churches in the U.S. and 9,000 worldwide. It is the third largest of the major pentecostal denominations (The Assemblies of God and The Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, being the largest).

Angelus Temple is located at 1100 Glendale Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90026. Dr. Harold Helms is the pastor as well as vice president of the organization. Donald W. Stabe is the minister of music at the Temple and Charles Duarte is chairman of the committee of Foursquare Heritage. —Ed.

tion found need to replace it in celebration of their 50th anniversary.

The console holds more sentiment for Mickelson now than when he first took lessons; an accomplished performer, he was honored to become Angelus Temple organist 1947–50. "I followed in the tradition of other organists by holding Kimball concerts," Mickelson said, "and broadcasting a half-hour organ concert on Foursquare's radio station KFSG. I called my program 'Console Melody Time.'"

Mickelson can tell the life story of the three-manual, 23-rank Kimball orchestral pipe organ as well as anyone. It was Aimee Semple McPherson, known worldwide in the early 1900s as evangelist, author, songwriter, musician and founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, who ordered the organ from Chicago in 1923. It was to be installed in her 5,300-seat evangelistic center, then boasting what was said to be the largest unsupported concrete dome on the continent and the largest seating capacity of any fireproof building in southern California.

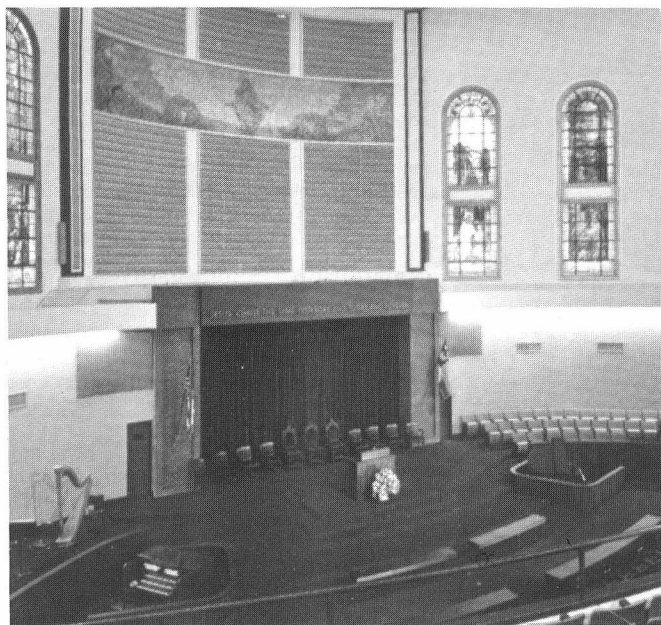
"Esther Fricke Stewart, the first organist at Angelus Temple," tells Mickelson, "worked very closely with W.W. Kimball on the specifications. Aimee Semple McPherson's diversified music, from classics to gospel music to opera scores, required a combination of classically-voiced ranks with some orchestral-theater ranks."

Mrs. McPherson understood music well and knew its power. She used it avidly in her revival meetings attended by thousands who jammed the doorways to her services. In an unusual commendation, she said, "The organ — of all inanimate things I love it most. It seems to contain somewhere within those mighty pipes the epitome of all life. When I am sad, it whispers to me in a tremolo undertone; when I am joyous, it shares my joy with all the world in deep, deafening tones. At a touch of the keyboard, delicate arias wisp around the tops of the pipes like butterflies in a scented garden; another touch, and the very foundations set down in their trenches, the very walls and the steel within them, the very floor of a solid mass builded upon unyielding soil, seems, when one listens with closed eyes, to shake as though a giant outside were swaying the Temple upon the end of his watchchain."

More candidly: "Oftentimes, when the church is empty save for an isolated soul praying here and there, I slip into a seat under the shadow of one of the pillars, and there, listening to its multithroated melodies, the organ brings me peace."

"That organ — it was one of the last things to come. And then, when the Temple was completed, it was the organ which crashed out in triumphant chords the realization of our dream: 'Open the Gates of the Temple!'"

It is hard to say if there was another organ more used than the Kimball in Angelus Temple, for it accompanied Mrs. McPherson in 21 weekly services and could be heard with full orchestra for Sunday morning worship and the "Silver Band" in the evening service. Hymns written by Aimee Semple



Angelus Temple sanctuary



Aimee Semple McPherson

McPherson have been sounded many times over: "The Old Violin," "Preach the Word," "The Key to Paradise" and many others.

"An interesting note," mentioned Paul Mickelson, "is that it is my understanding that Charlie Chaplin suggested to Mrs. McPherson that she add a proscenium arch to the platform. This necessitated that the organ be moved to the center of the orchestra pit, and it was placed on a platform which served as an elevator. Thus, when the Kimball was featured in a solo number, the organ could be elevated eight feet above the pit."

Thousands of music lovers spent hours traveling to hear organ recitals. With auditorium lights turned down, senses of sight and sound were intensified, as the audience was aware only of the melodious sounds and lighted stained glass windows. Kimball concerts by radio were possible when Mrs. McPherson became the first woman in the nation to receive a radio license from the FCC, and KFSG (Kall the FourSquare Gospel) became the first fully religious radio station in the nation.

"You can see how much the Kimball has been used over the past 60 years," said Mickelson. "For some time now it has been in need of restoration. The congregation spent a year and \$40,000, donated by an anonymous foundation, restoring the Kimball to its original state. This celebrates 60 years of musical ministry and the Diamond Jubilee Anniversary of the Four-square denomination. Landon Organs of Temple City, California, gave themselves to the task, headed by Ed Cleveland."

Upon completion, it was Paul Mickelson who played the organ at the rededication ceremony on October 9, 1983. Opening with Beethoven's "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee," he continued the program with his own arrangements, those of Aimee Semple McPherson and others. Subsequent to this, he was asked to take the organ bench again to play live with a recording of the London National Philharmonic Orchestra for an anniversary production of the sacred opera "Bells of Bethlehem," written by Mrs. McPherson 50 years ago.

"Mrs. McPherson wrote numerous songs and five major operas," notes Mickelson, "so the Kimball always had a large part in those presentations. Although Aimee Semple McPherson was known mainly as a major evangelist of her day, she was an excellent composer."

The face of the console is different now, but whenever Paul Mickelson sits down to play the mighty Kimball at Angelus Temple, his mind wanders back to that first lesson years before. Mickelson's last piece at the organ rededication service

consisted of excerpts from "The Bells of Bethlehem." Then he and his wife ascended to the platform and told the story of the original console. In a surprise gesture, they presented the old, now refinished, console to Angelus Temple — back home where it belonged.

GREAT

16	Diapason
8	Principal Diapason
8	Diapason
8	Tibia Clausa
8	Gamba
8	Concert Flute
8	Gemshorn
4	Octave
4	Traverse Flute
II	Quint Tierce
2	String Fifteenth
16	Ophicleide
8	Harmonic Tuba
4	Harmonic Clarion
	Harp
	Chimes

SWELL

16	Bourdon
8	Diapason
8	Viola
8	Doppel Flute
8	Clarabella
8	Salicional
8	Voix Celeste
8	Aeoline
4	Quintadena
4	Wald Flute
2 2/3	Nazard
2	Flautina
1 3/5	Tierce
16	Contra Fagotto
8	Trumpet
8	Oboe Horn
8	Vox Humana
4	Oboe Clarion
	Tremolo

ORCHESTRAL (CHOIR)

16	Contra Viole
8	Diapason
8	Tibia Clausa
8	Violon Cello
II	Viol Celeste
8	Dulciana
8	Concert Flute
8	Flute Celeste
4	Violin
4	Traverse Flute
2 2/3	Twelfth
2	Piccolo
8	Harmonic Tuba
8	Clarinet
	Tremolo
	Harp
	Chimes
	Orchestra Bells

PEDAL

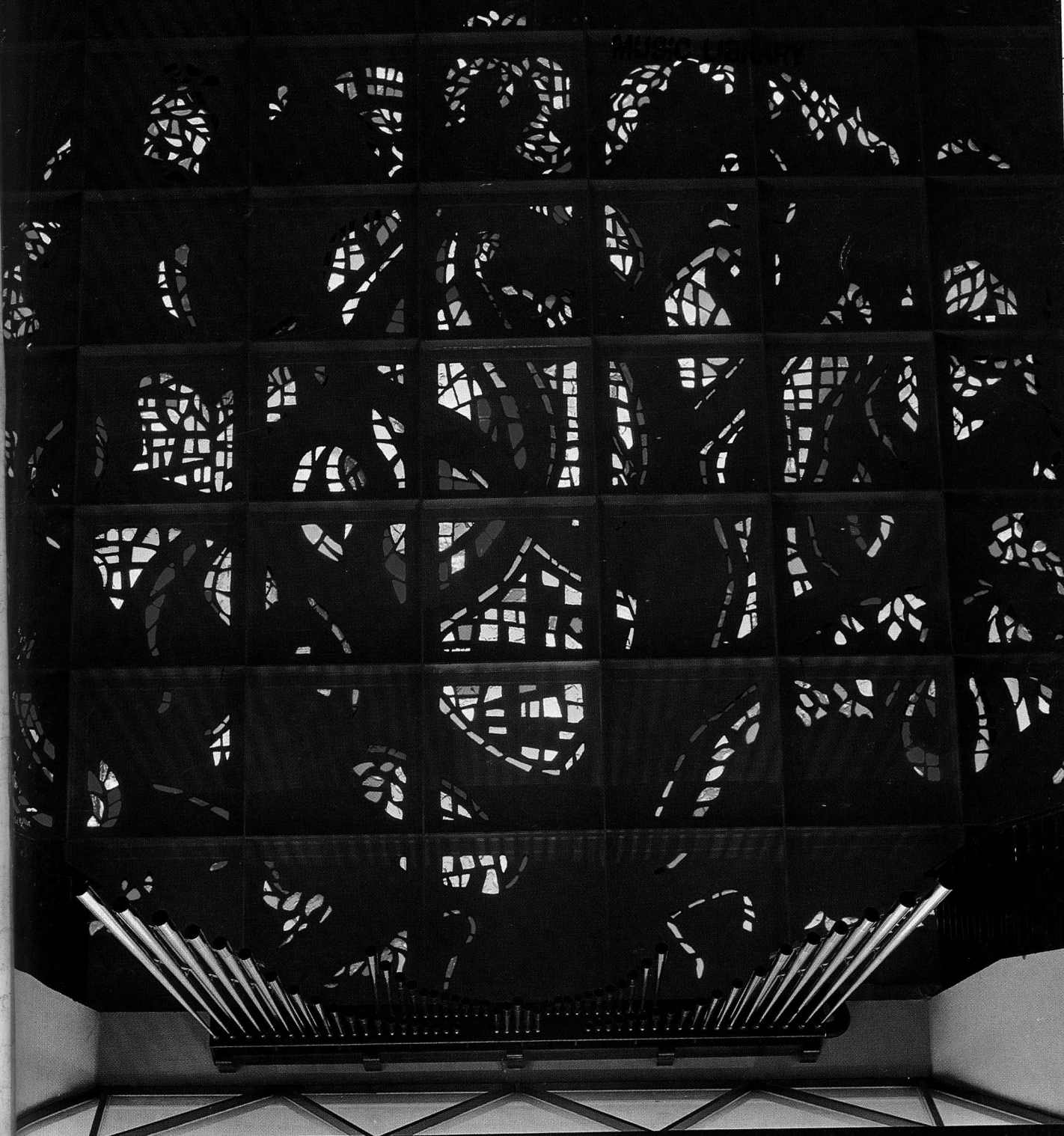
32	Acoustic Bass
16	Principal Diapason
16	Diapason
16	Contra Tibia
16	Contra Viole
16	Bourdon
8	Diapason
8	Cello
8	Flute
4	Flute
16	Ophicleide
16	Contra Fagotto
8	Harmonic Tuba
4	Harmonic Clarion



Paul Mickelson at new console

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Eighteenth Year

December 1984

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First Presbyterian Church Saint Petersburg, Florida

Reuter organ
(see page 40)

(photo: James E. Shauburger)



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EDITOR'S NOTES

THE ORGAN IN MASS MEDIA

This year, the organ has made three significant appearances in the mass media. *Time* magazine used the organ as a graphic symbol for the complex control of Western Europe's economy by U.S. foreign policy. (See TAO, Oct., p. 34.) A new filming of Henry James's *The Bostonians*, began and ended with impressive pipe organ sequences. (More will be written about this in a future issue.)

The third occurrence, which will undoubtedly be seen by the greatest number of people, is a TV commercial for Wang Laboratories, a leading manufacturer of business computers. The "spot," entitled "The Power and the Glory," was created for Wang by Hill, Holliday, Cosmopolus Inc. Advertising of Boston, as part of a campaign that de-emphasizes technological claims and stresses service, reliability and what computers can do to enhance a person's work.

The scenario opens as a woman plays the last chord on a small church organ, gathers up her music and proceeds to drive from the country to the city. A huge cathedral comes into view with a sign reading "Auditions." The woman enters, sits before an imposing organ and plays Bach's *Tocatta in D Minor*. The camera pulls back to reveal the grandeur of the cathedral. The text of the commercial is as follows:

It can be intimidating to step up to a new technology. At Wang, we make computers not to intimidate, but to enhance one's performance. So when we put technology at your fingertips it's not just the power. It's the glory. Wang. We put people in front of computers.

The portrayal of the organ as an unusually intricate machine is one that has not been common in popular presentations. In the past, organs and organ music have usually been associated with horror movies, marriage and death. It is refreshing to have mass audiences view our chosen instrument as a symbol of the most sophisticated advances in modern technology.

ANTHONY BAGLIVI

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