

Bradford Restoration of the Ernest M. Skinner Pipe Organ Opus 621

This instrument is number 621 of the 800 plus organs Ernest M. Skinner built in his career. The contract was signed in 1926 for the Fifth Church of Christ Scientist of Cleveland, Ohio. It was a three manual, 31 rank instrument of 2,199 pipes.

When the Fifth Church of Christ Scientist closed, the organ was purchased by the Bunn-Minnick Company of Columbus, a well-known Ohio firm. Unable to find a client for it, the instrument was put into storage in the basement of the Cleveland Gray's Armory Museum where it stayed for over 10 years. When the price was lowered to a more affordable figure, it was purchased by the Mundelein Seminary in 2012. Fr. Thomas Franzman then led an expedition to Cleveland, accompanied by staff from the Bradford Organ Company, to retrieve the organ. The instrument was then moved to the Bradford shop where restoration began.

As the organ was larger than the previous Wangerin organ at Mundelein, new wings on either side of the tower were built by the Mundelein carpenters. The Pedal is entirely in the right wing save the 16' Pedal reed which is on the left. The 32' Pedal reed was the sole stop saved from the original Wangerin. The Swell and Choir are in the center tower. Both are under expression, with the Swell on top. The Great is in the left wing. A second Skinner console was obtained in order to play the organ from either end of the chapel. The main Mundelein chapel, being somewhat larger than the organ's original home, it was thought that a second Diapason stop for the Great should be added which would have been a commonplace Skinner addition. There was no 8' Open in the Choir so a smaller scale Diapason was added there.

The success of any organ is to achieve a well-balanced instrument in a live acoustic. This match has turned out to exceed expectations. It is also pure luck.

1926 E.M. Skinner Opus 621

GREAT

16' Bourdon (Pedal)
8' Diapason I
8' Diapason II
8' Claribel Flute
4' Octave
4' Flute
2' Fifteenth
8' Tromba
Chimes (Mayland Elite)

CHOIR

8' Concert Flute
8' Dulciana
8' Unda Maris
4' Flute
8' Clarinet
Tremelo
Harp
Celesta

SWELL

16' Bourdon
8' Diapason
8' Gedeckt
8' Salicional
8' Voix Celeste
8' Flute Celeste
8' Aeoline
4' Octave
4' Flute Triangular
IV Mixture
16' Waldhorn
8' Cornopean
8' Oboe d' Amour
8' Vox Humana
Tremelo

PEDAL

16' Diapason
16' Bourdon
16' Bourdon (Swell)
8' Octave
8' Gedeckt
8' Still Gedeckt (Swell)
16' Waldhorn (Swell)
Chimes