

The Bennett and Giuttari Continuo Organ 2010



The instrument was hand-crafted in 2010 by John Bennett in collaboration with Glenn Giutarri. The decorative painting on the small doors, designed to coordinate with the stenciling above the St. Paul's altar, is by Bonnie Bennett. Based on a 17th-century *kisten* (box or chest) organ by Mandersheidt of Nüremburg, Germany, the organ features mild pipe voicing for use as a *continuo* organ. In the baroque era (1600-1750), a *continuo* organ was used to play the harmonic support for choral and instrumental compositions with a bass string or woodwind instrument doubling the bass line. The organ serves beautifully to accompany the St. Paul's Choristers as well as choral concerts, Celtic Evensongs, and other services.

The chest is made of cherry and features fretwork panels that allow the pipes to sound at their fullest when the doors are open. The keyboard naturals are made of ebonized walnut, and the sharps, of flamed maple. The mechanical action lies just beneath the keyboard and allows precise control of pipe speech. There is one single-fold wedge reservoir on 55 mm or 65 mm to give gentle and flexible winding to the pipes. The three ranks of wood pipes are an 8' Gedackt (stopped flute), a 4' Flute (stopped and rohrflute pipes in the lower octaves, and open pipes from middle c upwards) and a 2' Principal. Placed on a rolling platform, the organ is easily moved within the nave and could be used in the narthex for chapel services.

A number of churches, professional music organizations, and educational institutions throughout the United States own Bennett and Giutarri continuo organs, including the New England Conservatory of Music, Wellesley College, Mt. Holyoke College, New York Baroque, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (Minneapolis), Texas Christian University, and Florida State University.