

St. Luke Lutheran Church
FRENCH ROMANTIC ORGAN



JUGET-SINCLAIR
MONTREAL
OPUS 45 2016

From the Director of Music

It still barely seems real that I'm writing about and playing the magnificent new instrument at St. Luke Lutheran Church, Juget-Sinclair's opus 45. The journey began in mid-2012 when a choir member and longtime aficionado of quality church music asked what might be done to enhance the organ. At first I investigated enhancements, until another organist in the congregation suggested we think bigger: why not a new instrument of the highest quality and in a specific style? With the Cornell Baroque organ a two-minute walk away, and several other notable organs in town—including a landmark Aeolian-Skinner, an Italian Baroque, a large Russell, a Wolff, and a Brombaugh, among others—a French Romantic instrument suggested itself rather naturally. It was not long before we had determined that Juget-Sinclair of Montreal was ideally suited to design and build the instrument.

Juget-Sinclair partnered with St. Luke Lutheran Church to research, design, and build this magnificent musical instrument such that it will play on for centuries. Research included a visit to France in January 2015 by Robin Côté, Denis Juget, Jeffrey Snedeker, and myself. I had previously visited the Guilbault-Therien organ in the chapel at the Brick Church in New York City, as well as made a day trip from London to Paris in 2014, trying four instruments. All convinced me that the magnificent singing quality of the Cavallé-Coll style would be an inspiring leader of congregational song so important to Lutherans and practiced enthusiastically in Ithaca.

The specification, sound, console design, and feel all aim at an instrument that Cavallé-Coll would have built late in his career if our building and liturgical style had commissioned an instrument from him. Thus we have fully mechanical action, with electricity just for the blower. At first hesitant to forego a modern combination action, I have realized that the limitations imposed have much to teach us, and are not as severe as it seemed at first. With the Lutheran penchant for congregational song, we did decide on an independent pedal. This size instrument is approximately the boundary for Cavallé-Coll, between borrowing his pedal stops and having independent pipes. The dimensions and thus the feel of the console is modeled quite closely on the one at Charenton-le-Pont, and the sound is modeled on the organ in the church of Jean-Baptiste in the village of Long on the Somme River.

The organ has two keyboards, the top one having its pipes encased in a box with shutters that change the volume perceived in the room. The pipes for these nine stops are located behind the center section of the visible pipes, which are all speaking. The lower keyboard plays pipes of a further nine stops behind the two side sections of the façade, each stop with half its pipes on each side. The pedal plays three more stops of pipes which are located behind the lightly colored painted panels to the sides of the main case. In all there are 1180 pipes.

Words cannot express my gratitude to the generous donors of this instrument. The enthusiastic support of the pastors, council, staff, and congregation of St. Luke is appreciated beyond measure.

– Erik Kibelsbeck

St. Luke Lutheran Church Staff

Pastor Rick Bair

Pastor Laurie Carson

Michelle Gray, *administrative assistant*

Tammy Devlen, *sexton*

Erik Kibelsbeck, *director of music*

Juget-Sinclair Organbuilders Opus 45

Specification of the organ in St. Luke Lutheran Church, Ithaca, NY (2016)

All mechanical key and stop action
 Compass: 56 manual keys / 30 pedal
 Pitch: A440 at 71 degrees Fahrenheit
 Temperament: Equal
 Wind Pressure: GO & Péd 85 mm, Récit 90 mm

| Grand Orgue | | Récit expressif | |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|---|
| Bourdon 16' | 56 1-24 stopped pine, metal from C25, chimneys from C37 | Cor de nuit 8' | 56 stopped, 1-12 pine on ceiling (pneumatic action) |
| Montre 8' | 56 1-23 in façade | Viola de gambe 8' | 56 |
| Salicional 8' | 56 | Voix céleste 8' | 44 from C13 |
| Bourdon 8' | 56 1-12 stopped pine, rest metal, chimneys from C25 | Flûte octaviante 4' | 56 harmonic from C25 |
| Flûte harmonique 8' | 38 1-18 from bourdon, harmonic from F#19 | Octavin 2' | 56 harmonic from C13 |
| Prestant 4' | 56 | Trompette 8' | 56 |
| Quinte 2 2/3' | 56 | Basson-Hautbois 8' | 56 |
| Doublette 2' | 56 | Voix humaine 8' | 56 |
| Fourniture III | 168 | Clairon 4' | 56 8' break from G#45 to G56 |

Pédale

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Soubasse 16' | 30 stopped white pine |
| Flûte 8' | 30 open white pine |
| Basson 16' | 30 full length metal |

Pedales de combinaison (left to right)

Orange
 Tirasse Grand Orgue
 Tirasse Récit
 Copula R-GO Octaves Graves
 Copula R-GO
 Balanced swell pedal
 Appel Anche Pédale
 Appel Plein-jeu Grand Orgue
 Appel Anches Récit
 Trémolo Récit

Fourniture composition

C1 1' – 2/3' – 1/2'
F18 2' – 1 1/3' – 1'
F30 4' – 2 2/3' – 2'
F42 8' – 5 1/3' – 4'

Detached console based on the 1890 Cavaillé-Coll organ (a historical monument since 1986) at Saint Pierre de Charenton, France. Bone naturals and ebony sharps. Casework of white oak.

Knob Layout

| | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| VH BH VdG VC | CdN FO O Tr Cl |
| 16 M FH B S | 4 Q 2 F |
| 16 8 | Bsn |

From the Builders

Project Background

From the outset, this project had a clear objective: to place musicians at the console of an organ where they would have an opportunity to travel back in time to the musical world of nineteenth-century France and enjoy an enriching musical experience—without ever leaving Ithaca. To add more definition to this vision we began to research small French church organs from the second half of the nineteenth century, starting by drawing up a comparative table showing the stop-lists of a dozen instruments built between 1858 and 1890 by the Cavallé-Coll firm. The main features of the project gradually emerged: the organ would have two 56-note keyboards and a 30-note pedalboard, around twenty stops including independent pedal stops, and a console based on historical models. In January 2015, after the contract was signed, we organized visits to seven instruments in Paris, Long-sur-Somme, and Caen, in the company of organists Erik Kibelsbeck and Jeffrey Snedeker. We were warmly received by our French colleagues and had multiple opportunities to analyze the instruments and discuss our impressions, both musical and technical, in relation to console ergonomics and casework styles. This study trip proved enormously rewarding and supported our belief that this type of organ from the French Romantic era could act effectively as a liturgical service instrument at St. Luke Lutheran Church. From a technical point of view, we chose two instruments by Cavallé-Coll as models: the organ in the church of Saint Pierre in Charenton-le-Pont (inaugurated by Widor in 1890) for its console; and the organ in the church at Long-sur-Somme (inaugurated by Guilmant in 1877) for its voicing and pipe scales. By the time we got back from our trip, the initial specification had gained two extra stops, the Quinte 2 2/3' on the Grand Orgue and the Clairon 4' on the Récit, taking the total to twenty-one independent speaking stops.

Technical Challenges

The placement of the organ in St. Luke and the space restrictions had a profound influence on the concept for the new instrument—the footprint of the case had to be reduced as far as possible, while all the available height was used to house the pipework. All the parties agreed that, in order to share the space more effectively with the choir, it was better not to slavishly follow the historical models for the placement of the console. In general, the consoles for instruments of this type were either attached, facing the case, or reversed at a short distance from the case. Here, to make things easier for the organist, who also conducts the choir, the console was placed facing the organ, but as far away as possible at the edge of the balcony. Despite the challenge of locating the key and stop actions in the seven-inch space beneath the floor, this arrangement provided an added bonus for the organist, who can hear the organ from a distance and balance accompaniments and registrations more easily. Both key action and stop action are mechanical, and for the first time we provided the “combination pedals” called for in numerous French compositions. These allow the organist to set up registrations in advance and achieve a smooth crescendo and decrescendo. Cavallé-Coll’s suppliers closed long ago, and so we had to study and understand the operation of all the components used in the consoles that are such an important part of the historical examples. The drawstops, music stand, keyboards, coupler pedals, swell pedal, etc. were all manufactured in our workshop with a constant focus on authenticity. In addition to the measurements we took during our trip, the original console drawings preserved in France’s Bibliothèque Nationale provided essential input for the design. Work was carried out in the church to improve the acoustics, and the nave aisle walls were strengthened. In addition, the balcony floor was completely rebuilt to accommodate the passage of the key and stop action.

Final Result

The organ's visual appearance draws on the neo-gothic vocabulary widely used in organ cases in the second half of the nineteenth century. As in all our projects, the architecture of the church and the shape of its ceiling are echoed in the case, built in stained white oak, which stands in an elegant and inspiring central position. The motifs seen in the large panels of the lower case echo the sculpted stone designs in the narthex. However, case design is not simply a decorative exercise, since the case also mirrors the internal layout of the organ. Here, the Récit expressif division is placed behind the central pipe display, while the Grand Orgue is split on either side. The Pédale is on both sides of the main case, at floor level, placed behind two-tone cream woodwork to blend in with the rear wall. The detached console, with its sophisticated design and execution, makes a visual contribution to the musical experience.

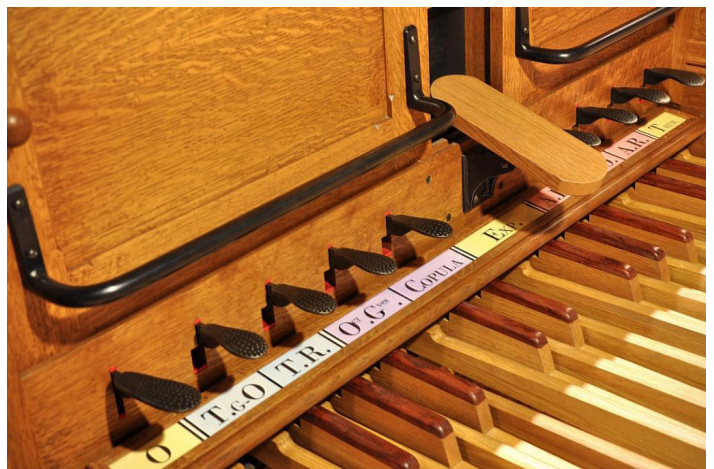
From a musical point of view, the stop list of the organ at St. Luke clearly belongs to the French Romantic tradition, but what is the result in terms of its actual sound? Since this depends to a large degree, as it does for any organ, on the acoustics of the building where it is housed, the answer must be considered carefully. St. Luke has a warm, intimate atmosphere that in no way resembles that of a reverberant French church and so, as we voiced the organ, we had to depart from the traditional parameters governing technical details such as cut-ups and toe-holes in order to achieve the familiar blending power, color and balance of a French organ. The result is both convincing and musically rewarding. The foundations stops on the Grand Orgue combine together without heaviness, and when coupled to the Récit and its reed stops, create the familiar symphonic sound. The melodic line soars above, thanks to the ascendant voicing and extra-length slotted pipes. The sub-octave Récit/Grand Orgue coupler, rarely present in an organ without a Barker machine, extends the spectrum and adds body to the full organ. The upperwork on the Grand Orgue contributes brilliance, while the full-length Basson 16 stop on the Pédale underpins the whole and also provides a little Lutheran gravity!

Taking into consideration the fact that this instrument was never intended to be a straight copy, we feel we have achieved the goal of creating a French Romantic organ. The experience at the console is inspiring, the registration indications of the great composers take on a new meaning, and the stop combinations build up naturally with the assistance of the combination and coupler pedals. Creating a new organ always requires a critical balance of skill and creativity, along with the support of a dedicated team, and we would like to thank all the people involved in the success of this project.

– Denis Juget, Robin Côté, Stephen Sinclair

Organbuilders

Alexis Basque
Jocelyn Béclair
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Inspirations



Tonal

The organ in the church of Saint Jean-Baptiste in Long, France served as the model for the voicing of the Juget-Sinclair. The 1877 organ is thought to have been influenced by the organist-composer Guilmant. The specifications are quite similar; rather than list it, here are the differences:

In the Grand Orgue, we omitted a Violoncelle 16' and eliminated a Flûte douce 4' in favor of a Salicional 8'. This preserved the familiar “quatre huit” or four 8' stops so typical of Cavallé-Coll's work, each stop splendid alone and multiplying its usefulness in different combinations with the others. The chorus, including a mixture, may well have been a nod to the revived interest in the music of Bach. The unusual-to-us composition of the mixture was typical of the time.

In the Récit we simply added an Octavin 2' and a Voix humaine 8'.

The Pédale at Long is all borrowed from the manuals; we made the decision early on to have an independent pedal. Thus the Flûte 16' stop doesn't have to be a compromise between power levels required for the Grand Orgue versus the Pédale. Our 8' is an open wood stop, and instead of the borrowed Trompette 8' at Long, we have an independent full-length Basson 16' of metal.

Console

During the research trip to organs of a similar size to what we planned to build, we experienced varying degrees of discomfort and awkwardness with the layout of the consoles. Especially troublesome in some cases was the positioning of the expression pedal in a way that made it difficult to operate; it seemed that the average leg length at that time was shorter. The console at Saint Pierre in Charenton-le-Pont was the best fit and is mostly replicated in Ithaca. The pedalboard is flat and non-radiating, which puts the outside notes a little further away than twenty-first-century Americans are used to, but the adaptation is quickly made. The sharp keys do become longer at the edges of the pedalboard. The expression pedal is reasonably convenient. The characteristic toe spoons, with metal bar over them, are replicated, as are the labels, hand watercolored and inked. Stop layout is logical with the Récit on the top row, Grand Orgue in the middle and Pédale lowest. Cavallé-Coll sometimes used different colored inks for the different divisions; we have gone with hand-lettered black for the foundation stops and red for the stops affected by the Appel pedals.

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The organ is maintained by **Kerner & Merchant Pipe Organ Builders** of Syracuse, New York.

As videos are created, they will be added to Ithaca French Organ channel on YouTube.

Upcoming events will be featured on the Friends of Music at St. Luke Series link, under the Music tab at <http://www.stlukeithaca.org>.