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Chapel of St. Joseph, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, MO

A.E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company, Lithonia, GA

By Arthur E. Schlueter III

Every organ commission that has been awarded to our firm has left us humbled and thankful for the opportunity to build instruments for worship and praise. This was amplified by the opportunity to build an instrument in support of the daily life, prayer, and worship for the clergy, staff, and students at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary.

When I arrived for our first visit to the seminary, I was informed of plans to renovate the chapel that would include a new pipe organ. I had numerous discussions about how the organ would be used in worship and sought to design an eclectic specification that would fully support these needs. Working with the seminary, we decided on a small, three-manual organ and began the discussions about the comparative value of various ranks in developing the stoplist.

Anybody who has ever been part of an organ project is well aware of the pressure that financial constraints can place on the choice of one stop over another. While this is a necessary consideration, it does sometimes force “either/or” compromises. As an organbuilding family, we have long felt that there are instances where it is reasonable to consider philanthropy as an extension of our organbuilding work. As we prayerfully assessed the role of this instrument in daily worship, the members of the Schlueter family decided that we would donate several stops to the organ, along with considering our margins. By freeing ourselves from the strictures of a hard budget, we were able to make several artistic choices of stops that we deemed important for the benefit of the seminary and the students it will continue to serve. From a theological perspective, this was our tithe or gift, and we feel privileged to have been able to make these donations. Ultimately, during our discussions, the instrument would grow in size to 39 ranks with 2,156 pipes. In preservation of stewardship of the prior instrument, four stops were retained and rescaled and/or revoiced for inclusion in the new instrument.

Without organ chambers, it would be necessary to place the organ in two freestanding cases in the rear gallery. The organ soars more than 44 feet above the chapel floor and weighs over 13 tons. To support an instrument of this size and stature, we built a steel and timber building frame for the organ. With the strength of these structures, we were able to cantilever the organ forward to the gallery rail, which allowed us to design paneled hallways under the organ chassis, allowing access to the gallery.



We knew that, commensurate to the stoplist we were developing, this was a worship space that called for a case to match the organ's aural beauty. The organ cases are built of oak to match the interior wood of the chapel. We paid careful attention to the architecture and incorporated details from the chapel where

possible. The cases are designed so that the pipe towers over-rotate the lower case footprint, and the side returns step back from the front towers. This opens the visual field for the rear gallery window while allowing additional floor space for choristers. To pay homage to the previous instrument, we incorporated hand-painted gold linked rings on a red polychrome background to mimic the woodwork from the former organ case. This same shape was repeated in side grille fretwork. We included carved and gilded lettering from the church's constitution in the lower cases bracketed by heavy oak moldings.

The facade pipes are made of polished aluminum with gilded, gold mouths. In addition



Carved and gilded into the organ case: Ad gloriam Dei et sanctificationem fidelium · All photos by Sid Hastings

to the beauty provided by the polished metal, we find that this material has favorable speech characteristics that, we find, rival some other traditional pipe building materials for certain voicing styles. The added rigidity of the material and its resistance to surface oxidation made it an ideal choice for this installation. The polished surfaces reflect and refract light in such a way that the facade takes on the natural lighting in soft, even hues.

Tonally, we sought to design an instrument that could best be classed under the banner of American Eclecticism. In consideration of the importance of choral accompaniment, a significant number of resources are enclosed. The expression shades open to the front and sides of the organ case. The side shades are bi-directional to direct sound out of the gallery while also directing some sound rearward in support of the choristers. This is an instrument that, with careful registration and expressive control, will allow all of the resources to be used in every service. When larger dynamics are desired, the organ has sufficient resources to “ring the room” through stop and chorus massing.

The instrument is grounded by the Great with a clean, robust principal chorus that is anchored with a 16' Violone. The Great 8' Hohl Flute and 4' Chimney Flute, in addition to being lovely solo voices, have textures that are valuable as thickening agents to the Great principal chorus. The reeds in this division are duplexed from the Swell to provide dynamic control.

The balance of the organ flue stops in the instrument vary in construction and materials. This varied use of wood, metal, open, semi-open, stoppered, cylindrical, and conical, with careful voicing, allows each stop its own unique voice and color.

The mutations include the Swell cornet décomposé that is countered with a secondary cornet in the Choir. The Choir 22/3' was placed on a unit action and extended to draw at 11/3' pitch.

For this instrument, we chose to employ strings of differing texture in the Great, Swell, and Choir. The Great 8' Violone is independent of the Pedal 16' Violone, only shar-ing the two lowest octaves with the manual. In its home division, it functions as a secondary foundational register.

Early discussions about the Swell strings considered the foundational role they would need to play and while still desiring there would be the edge tone characteristic of a pure string when companioned with its celeste. To achieve a chameleon role, we increased the scale of the parent rank and built the stop without the traditional slotting. This deemphasizes the fifth overtones to provide much better, even harmonics for a cantus firmus to ground the division. The celeste rank is slotted and of smaller scale with roller beards to reinforce a more defined string texture that octave couples

and colors when the Celeste and unison ranks are drawn together.

Our formative discussions about the tonal design of the Choir had considered two classes of strings. There was an equal case to be made for the foundational hybrid Gemshorn and for the weightless Dulciana. In the end, through the donations of our family, we decided that these were not luxuries but necessities, and both were included.

In any organ, the most powerful stops are the reeds. With the defined use of this instrument, we considered it important that all of the reeds be under expression. The Swell reeds include a double tapered capped Oboe at 16' and 8' pitch that balances a large scaled 8' Trumpet. These stops are located at the rear, and lower than the flue registers to allow additional room for tonal development. The 16' Pedal Posaune is likewise enclosed with the Swell for control. The Choir also includes an 8' Clarinet.

We have long recognized the importance of independent stops in the Pedal division. The 16' Violone, 16/8' Subbass, 8' Octave, 4' Choral Bass, 4' Nason Flute, and 16' Posaune are independent ranks. To give the performer additional color and weighted texture in the Pedal, it has long been our practice to provide a number of duplexed manual ranks, and this was done here.

For control of the organ, we designed and built a low-profile, custom terrace drawknob console, which provides excellent sightlines between the choirmaster and the choristers. The console is built of oak with a contrasting mahogany interior. The drawknob heads were turned from gaboon ebony in an oblique shape and custom finished to match the sharps on the manuals and pedals and the ebonized mahogany key cheeks and piston slips. The drawknobs are on straight terraces turned inward toward the performer. The stops are arranged by pitch and family, with the primary choruses aligned parallel to the manual on which they draw. The linear stop arrangement does not exceed seven stops on each terrace and is designed to be within arm's distance. This coupling of care to sightlines and ergonomics promotes ease of registration.



The combination system and relays were provided by the Syndyne firm and allows a single centralized control for the combinations system, playback/record, and MIDI by way of a touch screen. All of the features that one expects on a modern console are present: 5,000 memory levels, programmable crescendos and sforzandos, blind checks, transposer, etc. One can save or import combination memories to or from an external USB drive. This provides infinite options to the performer. This same screen and USB interface allows testing, system configuration, and upgrades for the builder without the need for an external computer.

The organ chests are a combination of Blackinton-style electropneumatic slider chests and electropneumatic action for unit and duplex stops. The facade pipes are remotely fed with transmission tubes from electropneumatic blow box actions.

The winding system makes use of traditional spring-and-weight, ribbed regulators along with floating lid reservoirs. The tremolos are electromechanical, providing quiet and even undulation when engaged. Wind pressures on the organ are modest with Great and Choir 3 1/2", Swell 4", and Pedal and facade 3–4".

Chapel of St. Joseph, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary St. Louis, Missouri

A.E. SCHLUETER PIPE ORGAN COMPANY

Three manuals, 39 ranks

GREAT

16 Violone (1–24 from Ped.)
8 Principal
8 Hohl Flute (1–12 from Subbass)
8 Violone (1–12 from 16')
8 Gemshorn (Ch.)
8 Dulciana (Ch.)
8 Unda Maris (Ch.)
4 Octave
4 Chimney Flute
2 Super Octave
1¹/₃ Mixture II–IV
16 Contra Oboe (Sw.)
8 Trumpet (Sw.)
8 Oboe (Sw.)

SWELL (expressive)

16 Lieblich Gedeckt
8 Stopped Diapason
8 Viole de gambe
8 Viole Celeste
4 Principal
4 Harmonic Flute
2²/₃ Nazard
2 Flageolet (ext. 16')
1³/₅ Tierce
2 Mixture III–IV

CHOIR

16 Dulciana (TC)
8 Gemshorn
8 Dulciana
8 Unda maris
8 Holzgedeckt
4 Weit Principal
4 Spitzflöte
2²/₃ Nasat (TC)
2 Schweigel
1³/₅ Terz (TC)
1¹/₃ Quint (ext. 2²/₃')
1 Klein Octave (ext. Gemshorn)
8 Clarinet
Tremolo

PEDAL

32 Acoustic Bass
16 Violone (1–32 in facade)
16 Subbass
16 Lieblich Gedeckt (Sw.)
8 Octave (1–32 in facade)
8 Violone (Gt.)
8 Subbass
8 Stopped Diapason (Sw.)
4 Choral Bass (1–20 in facade)
4 Nachthorn

16 Oboe (TC)	16 Posaune
8 Trumpet	8 Trumpet (Sw.)
8 Oboe	8 Oboe (Sw.)
Tremolo	4 Clarion (Sw.)
—————	
FULL COMPLEMENT OF COUPLERS	MIDI on all divisions
SYNDYNE COMBINATION/CONTROL SYSTEM	INDICATOR LIGHTS
Full complement of generals, pistons, divisionals, and reversibles	Zimbelstern, Celestes Off, Mixtures Off, Gt./Ch. Transfer, Crescendo, Sforzando
Sequencer	

I would be remiss if I did not thank the staff and students of the seminary and the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Throughout this process, they could not have been more supportive and helpful. I am thankful for their encouragement, their friendship, and their prayers. We are thankful for the efforts of a dedicated team: Arthur E. Schlueter Jr., Mary Schlueter, Sarah Schlueter, John Tanner, Marc Conley, Patrick Hodges, Rob Black, Jeremiah Hodges, Peter Duys, James (Bud) Taylor Jr., Bob Weaver, Al Schroer, Shan Dalton-Bowen, Barbara Sedlacek, Michael DeSimone, Dallas Wood, Clifton Frierson, Ruth Lopez, Kelvin Cheatham, James Sowell, Derek Slote, Carl Morawetz, Dusty Dalton, and Dave Kocsis.

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From the Director of Sacred Music

When I came to Kenrick-Glennon in fall 2013, the entire campus, with the exception of the chapel, had just undergone a major renovation. Plans for renovating the chapel and replacing

From the Director of Worship

In January 2013, having lived off campus for three semesters, the seminary community moved back to the newly renovated campus at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. During the previous

the small Kilgen, which was no longer playable, were already in place. Money from a generous donor and the 2009 Faith for the Future Capital Campaign had already been earmarked for the new organ, and bids from several builders had already been submitted several years prior to my tenure. What a blessing it was to walk into such an ideal situation and simply help select a builder in conjunction with Fr. Jason Schumer (director of worship) and Horst Buchholz (director of music for the Archdiocese, who served as the consultant) and offer a few thoughts on what I'd like to see in the organ. Namely, I wanted an organ whose primary function was liturgical and able to accompany singers ranging from soloists, small scholas, a choir, and the full congregation consisting of mostly male voices (we always have a few visitors). We sing a lot of Gregorian chant, but sometimes it is necessary or even preferred to have a weightless support from the organ. We also sing many hymns, and the organ is used as a solo instrument to provide a liturgical atmosphere ranging from an ethereal peace to exuberant, grandiose glory.

I can't emphasize enough what an acoustical transformation took place when the former

year and a half, the building had undergone an extensive and much-needed renovation. The only part of the building that had yet to be renovated was the St. Joseph Chapel, the heart of the seminary community. As I began as director of worship in fall 2013, at the behest of the archbishop, we began to make plans for an extensive renovation of the chapel. The first major part of this planning was the building of a new pipe organ. We collected bids and proposal from many well-respected organbuilders, and, with the helpful consultation of organists and musicians from the St. Louis area, we narrowed the proposals down to two builders. Having presented and explained these two proposals to the archbishop, we decided that A.E. Schlueter would provide the best instrument for the seminary.

As Arthur Schlueter worked to build our highly anticipated pipe organ, we embarked on an extensive chapel renovation, which I was fortunate to spearhead. With James McCrery of Washington, D.C., as our design architect and with BSI Constructors, a local contracting firm, as the general contractor, we were able to accomplish more than I could have imagined. For the purposes of the new organ, we paid

acoustic-tile ceiling was covered over. While I strongly advocated for something to be done about the poor acoustics, I never dreamed the change would be so consequential—several seconds of reverb that were not there before, without any change to the walls or the ceramic tile floor. Being a seminary chapel that houses both a school of theology and a school of philosophy, our requirements for the organ are quite varied. We pray Morning and Evening Prayer most days very simply, with the organ used mostly to give starting pitches or to lightly support a chant or hymn that could otherwise be sung a cappella. We also celebrate the office more festively on certain occasions throughout the year, where some flourishes from the organ would be most appropriate. We sing hymns as part of Eucharistic Adoration, which is done solemnly at least once a week and more simply on the other days. Of course, the Mass is the pinnacle of our liturgical worship, and this daily celebration ranges from very simple with little to no organ use to very festive with lots of splendor. Moreover, we are forming men who, one day, by the grace of God, will be diocesan priests. The emphasis we place on good liturgy and worthy sacred music now will have a lasting impact.

special attention to prepare the chapel loft for its arrival and installation; but above all, we sought to create a more satisfying acoustical space for the new instrument.

Since its construction in the late 1920s, the seminary chapel's vaulted ceiling had been covered with acoustic tiles. Over time, these tiles were painted and even repainted, which created a very dead space acoustically. After much discussion and budgetary consideration, we decided to resurface and then decoratively paint the ceiling. Glid-Wall was applied to the acoustic tiles using an adhesive and drywall compound mix. After this dried, the surface was heavily primed and then one final coat of drywall compound was applied to the Glid-Wall to create a smooth surface. All of this was then decoratively painted in a night-sky design meant to evoke the image of seeing up into heaven. Not only is this new design beautiful, but at the chapel's dedication on May 3, 2015, we were astounded to hear the seminary choir sing in a space where their voices easily resonated throughout the entire space without the assistance of any artificial sound enhancement. It was truly remarkable!

The Catholic Church has some wonderful teachings on sacred music. Specifically, in regard to the pipe organ, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy says, “In the Latin Church, the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument [that] adds a wonderful splendor to the Church’s ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man’s mind to God and to higher things.” Also, it teaches that the purpose of sacred music is “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” The new organ will be an ever-present reminder of this axiom, with these words in Latin—*Ad gloriam Dei et sanctificationem fidelium*—carved and gilded into the organ case.

—Jeffrey Wisniewski

While at the time of this writing I am in Rome, Italy, I look forward to hearing the completed instrument when I return home and the beautiful music that will lift the heart and the mind to God!

—Rev. Jason J. Schumer

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