Mander Organs, London, England

The Mansion House Organ

Although initially for the Mansion House, this instrument is destined to replace the Snetzler organ in the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey. It will move there towards the end of 2013. The organ is a gift to Her Majesty the Queen in celebration of her Diamond Jubilee from the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of London.

The case design is based loosely on case designs of 18th-century English chamber organs, but that is where any similarity to such instruments ceases. The dimensions of the organ were dictated by where it will reside in the Mansion House and Westminster Abbey. With exception of the blower, keys, and small action parts, the organ was constructed entirely in the Mander Organs workshops in Bethnal Green. It is built on a steel chassis (also made in the works), which has been fitted with four casters provided with suspension to make the instrument moveable. The design and manufacture of the instrument has taken six months and almost 5,000 man hours to construct. The front pipes are gilded using French Red gold leaf.

—John Mander

New Organs

but with more warmth and foundational pitches than were present in the existing instrument. We also wanted an organ that would last for 100 years without a need for major repairs or modifications. The Buzard Company identified exactly what we were looking for and built us an instrument that exceeded our expectations in every aspect.

Most of the principal chorus and mixtures were reused from the previous instrument. Under the skilful hand of tonal director Brian Davis, the mixtures were voiced to maintain the brilliance we desired, but without being as harsh and strident as they were previously. Many of the existing reeds were also rescaled and revoiced. Prior to renovation, the instrument contained three 8’ flutes that were almost indistinguishable from one another. Today we now have four 8’ flutes with unique timbres and varying dynamic levels. All new strings were also added to the instrument. When the Swell Salizional and flutes are played together, they blend so perfectly that one would think it was a Stopped Diapason.

The most noticeable tonal improvements were made in the reeds. Aside from a reused Oboe, all of the reeds in this instrument are new. The Swell reeds have a fiery brilliance that contrasts nicely with the darker timbre of the reeds in the Great division. Where the previous instrument had all half-length reeds, we now have new full-length 16’ reeds that provide a solid foundation to the new organ sound. While the Festliche Trompete is absolutely thrilling to hear, the new Dulzian is equally as impressive. Its tone is a cross between a Krummhorn and a Clarinet and possesses the best characteristics of each stop.

All of these improvements result in an instrument that looks and sounds as it never has before. Parishioners have commented on how much easier it is to sing with the new organ than with the previous instrument. The sound is clearer and the pitches are in the proper proportions between high and low registers. Through the skillful engineering of Chuck Eames, all 52 ranks of the instrument fit in the same space as the previous instrument, and yet the pipes are more accessible for tuning and maintenance.

As Lutherans, our weekly time together in the Divine Service is filled with sung liturgy and hymns. We have identified the pipe organ as the best instrument to lead congregational singing, as it is able to “text-paint” the hymns in meaningful and varied ways. This project has preserved the best pipework given to us by our predecessors and blended it seamlessly into a new instrument that will serve many generations in the years to come. Soli Deo Gloria.

—Brian Heinlein

Director of Music

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MANUAL I
8’ Open Diapason
8’ Stopped Diapason
4’ Principal
2’ Fifteencloth
1’ Mixture II
8’ Trumpet
Manual II to Manual I

MANUAL II
8’ Gedackt
4’ Chimney Flute
2’ Recorder
22⁄3 Sesquialtera II
8’ Trumpet

PEDAL
16’ Bourdon
Manual I to Pedal
Manual II to Pedal

Drum or Thunder Pedal
Nightingale with revolving birds
Kellner temperament