



Ott Opus 110

**Martin Ott Pipe Organ Company,
St. Louis, Missouri
First Presbyterian Church,
Ypsilanti, Michigan**

From the builder

In the spring of 2007, I made my first visit to First Presbyterian Church in Ypsilanti. I was impressed by the beautiful, historic church and the massive organ case dominating the front of the sanctuary. The tall, rectangular room with its flat ceiling provides an acoustic that complements musical performances. The sanctuary and nave of the church had recently been renovated. The chancel platform was redesigned to be flexible and provide ample space for the liturgical furniture, choir seating, a small orchestra, and the new organ console.

The first organ for First Presbyterian Church was built in 1899 by George Jardine & Son Organ Company of New York. It had 17 stops and 19 ranks divided over two manuals and pedal. This original instrument was rebuilt in 1948; the playing action was electrified and the pipes were rearranged.

While the original Jardine organ case remains intact, we added oak casework on both sides of the case. The end result is a three-sided organ case that retains the original historical appearance. The actual footprint of the organ is somewhat larger than the original Jardine. During the voicing process, it was apparent that the solid oak panels in the lower front of the organ case were blocking the organ sound. After routing a fleur-de-lis design in many of the panels, the sound now projects into the nave.

The Choir division is located to the left, the Swell division to the right in the lower case, and the Great division centered directly above. The Pedal division is divided among the back and sides of the organ. The Swell and Choir are under expression.

The movable console has been de-

signed to match the organ casework. The drawknobs are within easy reach of the organist. The profile is low so that the organist can communicate with the music director or, if necessary, the organist can conduct from the console.

Several ranks of pipes of the original Jardine organ survived and were available for our use. These pipes served as a starting point for the tonal design of the new instrument. This tonal design was a new direction for our firm. While challenging, this proved to be very rewarding. The Choir consists exclusively of pipes from the original Jardine organ. The new Swell division serves as the link between the Romantic Jardine Choir division and the more robust Great division. Although the organ can be lush and rich, the sound is always clear. This enables the organ to be used for congregational singing, choral accompaniments, instrumental ensembles, and solo organ works. With 40 ranks and four extensions, many different styles of organ literature can be performed with stylistically appropriate registration. We have enjoyed collaborating with consultants Dr. John Weaver and Dr. Gordon McQuere on the tonal design and voicing.

Following are the craftsmen who built this instrument, Opus 110: James Cullen, William Dunaway, Marya Fancey, Larry Leed, Aleksandr Leshchenko, Eileen McGuinn, Richard Murphy, Earl Naylor, Martin Ott, Sean Rice, Inna Sholka.

—Martin Ott

From one of the consultants

In 1899, the eminent firm of George Jardine & Son of New York City installed a new pipe organ in the Presbyterian Church at Ypsilanti, Michigan. Jardine had been a premier American organ builder, with important instruments throughout the northeast. But by the end of the century the firm was nearing its end. In fact, the organ for Ypsilanti was perhaps its last. Some surviving



Choir of First Presbyterian Church, Ypsilanti, Michigan

pipes are stamped opus 1260, and others opus 1261. No original stoplist has been found, but the instrument was of modest size, about 17 ranks, with mechanical or tubular pneumatic action. This instrument served the church faithfully for a half century.

By the late 1940s, it was determined that a renovation was needed, and this was done in 1948 by the Lima Pipe Organ Company of Lima, Ohio. Consistent with the style of the times, a new electro-pneumatic action was installed. Only the pipes and blower were retained from the Jardine original. It is not known how much tonal alteration was made, but there appears to have been an unsuccessful attempt at revoicing. It is probable that the extension of the Swell Bourdon to provide some upperwork occurred at this time.

In its new form the organ survived more than another half century. To make it more useful, the original Cornopean was replaced in 1977 with a small-scale trumpet, and a three-rank mixture was added.

By the end of the 20th century, the organ was showing increasing mechanical problems, and its fundamental inadequacies increasingly limited the development of an otherwise strong music program and worship life at First Presbyterian Church. Even so, the quality of much of the surviving Jardine pipework was evident.

An organ committee was appointed to study the situation, and it was deemed desirable to acquire a new instrument, while honoring the legacy of the Jardine organ by incorporating as much as possible of the surviving pipework and retaining the magnificent oak case. A contract was signed with the Martin Ott Pipe Organ Company of St. Louis. The happy result of this project is an outstanding new instrument that, by incorporating the best of the Jardine organ, reminds us of the spirit and generosity of visionary members of the church a century ago.

—Gordon McQuere

Martin Ott Opus 110
Electric slider windchest action with some unit action
35 registers, 40 ranks, 4 extensions

GREAT Manual II (unenclosed)		
16'	Bourdon (EP)	(ext 8')
8'	Principal	
8'	Rohrflute	
8'	Bourdon (EP)	
4'	Octave	
4'	Flute	
2'	Fifteenth	
1 1/2'	Mixture IV	
16'	Bombarde	(Sw)
8'	Trompete	

SWELL Manual III (enclosed)		
8'	Viola di Gamba	
8'	Viola Celeste T.C.	
8'	Pommer	
4'	Principal	
4'	Gedackt Flute	Jardine
2 3/4'	Nazat	
2'	Fifteenth	
2'	Nachthorn	



Marianne and John Weaver

1 3/4'	Terz	
1 1/4'	Quinte	
1 1/2'	Septime	
2'	Plein Jeu IV	
16'	Bombarde (EP)	
8'	Trompette	
8'	Oboe	Jardine
	Tremulant	

CHOIR Manual I (enclosed)

8'	Geigen Principal	Jardine
8'	Stopped Diapason	Jardine
8'	Salicional	Jardine
8'	Salicional Celeste	Jardine
4'	Octave	Jardine
4'	Harmonic Flute	Jardine
2'	Flute	Jardine
8'	Clarinet	Jardine

PEDAL (EP)

32'	Resultant	
16'	Open Diapason (ext 8')	Jardine
16'	Bourdon	(Gt)
16'	Subbass	Jardine
8'	Octavbass	Jardine
8'	Bourdon	(Gt)
8'	Subbass	(ext 16')
4'	Choral Bass	
16'	Posaune	
16'	Bombarde	(Sw)
8'	Posaune	(ext 16')
8'	Bombarde	(Sw)
4'	Clarion	(Sw)

(EP) Indicates electro-pneumatic action

COUPLERS

Great to Pedal 8, 4
Swell to Pedal 8, 4
Choir to Pedal 8, 4
Swell to Swell 16, 4
Swell Unison Off
Swell to Great 16, 8, 4
Choir to Great 16, 8, 4
Great to Great 4

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