



**2019**  
**DALLAS, TEXAS**  
THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S  
64TH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
PHOTOGRAPHY LEN LEVASSEUR

# 2019

## ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY DALLAS • TEXAS • JULY 14–18



C.B. Fisk, Inc., Op. 100 (1992) • Lay Family Concert Organ, Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center ~ Dallas

## WELCOME TO DALLAS!

## *OHS 64th Annual Convention Guide*

**THE CITY OF DALLAS** has a relatively short history compared to the great cities of Europe or of the East Coast of the United States—a historical fact that has plagued the psyches of Dallasites from the beginning as they attempted to found and grow a cultivated, erudite society on the plains. Shortly after the city's founding by John Neely Bryan in 1844, the first European settlers, utopian socialists from France, Belgium, and Switzerland, indeed desired to establish a model society on the banks of the occasionally mighty (but generally dry) Trinity River. Their colony, however, failed to flourish, given that the settlers' skills at weaving, watchmaking, and pondering the philosophical benefits of direct democracy and private property ownership were ill-suited to the harsh, inconsistent weather and unique growing

patterns of the North Texas plains. Yet, the young city would survive and flourish, even without the benefit of those steeped in high art, music, and culture. By 1877, the city's faith community was flourishing to such an extent that the first pipe organ, built by Joseph Gratian of Alton, Illinois, was purchased for the Episcopal cathedral. This represented a significant overall cultural advancement that the city appreciated. The *Dallas Weekly Herald* on 25 May, 1882, reviewed the cathedral's Ascension Day service, noting that:

The music was all of the highest order, and rendered in a style that would have done credit to any church in Boston or New York. Indeed it was remarked by many after the services that they had attended Ascension

day services in the principal cities of the North, and that they had never heard any that surpassed in beauty and impressiveness the services that they had heard in this new little city in the West. A stranger from the eastern states dropping into St. Matthew's on yesterday [*sic*] would doubtless have experienced a change in his ideas of Texas.

Church music and organ building in this small city in the West, then, would assume its trajectory from these early days. Dallas suffered from an acute cultural inferiority complex relative to the more established cities of the Midwest or Northeast, resulting in sometimes cartoonish expressions of exaggerated self-esteem, such that the newspapers



### Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co., Op. 1438 (1962) • St. Luke's Episcopal Church ~ Dallas

often zealously proclaimed each new organ built as the "Largest in the World!" Later in the twentieth century, when Dallas' permanence and relative prosperity was assured, many of the organ installations would indeed be large and significant, rivaling any elsewhere in the nation.

#### SUNDAY, JULY 14

**THOSE ARRIVING EARLY** to Dallas can partake in the wealth of fine church music programs offered in the city. Several of the venues featured at the convention offer regular Sunday morning music of a high caliber, including St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, First Methodist downtown, and University Park United Methodist.

A pre-convention event that afternoon will showcase the 1927 Wurlitzer Opus 1632 at the McKinney Performing Arts Center in the northern suburb of McKinney. The organ, originally installed

in Oklahoma, was lovingly restored and brought to Texas by the local American Theatre Organ Society Chapter where it was installed in the Courtroom Theatre. The old courthouse, the centerpiece of the revitalized and fashionable old town square, had been requisitioned for use as a performing arts center, the 400-seat courtroom finding new life as an auditorium for community theatre and concerts, the Wurlitzer accompanying an annual series of summer melodramas, Dicken's *Christmas Carol* during December, and the occasional wedding.

The convention proper begins with evensong at Church of the Incarnation in Dallas, a historic church whose church music program is a source of pride for the city. The 1994/2015 Noack organ weekly accompanies the world-renowned choir under the leadership of Scott Dettra. This church is the only one in Dallas to offer weekly choral evensong during the academic year.

The evening concert will feature Kimberly Marshall at the 1978 Alfred Kern

organ at University Park United Methodist Church. The venerable Robert Anderson, longtime organ professor at Southern Methodist University, served as consultant for this Alsatian instrument. Anderson had a vision that the Dallas area would have at least one representative instrument from all the major historical styles of organ building, and this instrument provided tone colors that, while common in Europe, were new to the area at the time. Its casework and keydesk represent craftsmanship and artistry which was unique for its time. Anderson's vision for Dallas as a veritable organ panoply has largely been virtually fulfilled, with an international cadre of instruments from Germany, England, France, and Canada.

#### MONDAY, 15 JULY

**ALTHOUGH DALLAS ORGANS** began to take on international character in the 1970s, the city's landscape remains a bastion of American organ building tra-



**Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co., Inc., Op. 1528 (1973)  
Cox Chapel, Highland Park United Methodist Church ~ Dallas**

ditions, the first organ heard on Monday morning represents the august firm of Aeolian-Skinner, the chancel organ at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church. Dallas had been home to numerous Aeolian-Skinners in the 1950s and 1960s, but as the churches prospered (and in some cases, migrated to different locations), the organs were frequently “upgraded” with newer installations, to mixed results. This instrument is one of about half a dozen that remain, and, with its favorable acoustical environment, is one of the most successful.

The All Saints Chapel at The Episcopal School of Dallas, a modern space reminiscent of the great churches of

Europe, houses a 2002 Noack instrument of two manuals. Whereas the Incarnation Noack represents a grand instrument in the cathedral tradition, this mechanical action instrument shines in the performance of smaller works, which sound no less grand in the cavernous church.

Next featured will be the 2007 Schoenstein at Park Cities Presbyterian Church. This exquisite organ, with its double expressive capabilities and manifold orchestral stops, is a worthy successor to the E.M. Skinner style, and is distinctly American. Interestingly, Dallas only had one E.M. Skinner organ, installed in 1926 at First Presbyterian Church, and long since replaced. Skinner’s style, though

can be heard throughout the city. This church also houses a 1903 Gottlieb Voteler organ in the chapel.

One focus of this convention is on Texas organ builders, of whom the state has had its fair share. So, it is appropriate to end the day featuring the work of two Texas builders. First we visit Northaven United Methodist Church to hear the Redman organ, Opus 7, 1973. Roy Redman, a Texas native, has built many significant organs throughout the state, participating in the tracker revival in its uniquely Texan manifestations. The day concludes in the Romanesque magnificence of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church which houses the 1978/1987 Schudi organ, with its French-inspired sonorities.

**TUESDAY, JULY 16**

**THIS SECOND FULL DAY** sharpens the focus on the uniqueness of Texas organs and their important history in American organ building. We visit St. Stephen United Methodist Church with its 1962 Sipe-Yarbrough, Opus 1, an organ that quite possibly best represents the tracker revival in Texas. This neo-baroque, mechanical action organ opened the ears of Texas organists to sounds that only those who had the luxury of extensive travel had experienced. These two Texas builders collaborated on this instrument which was more of a culmination of several years philosophizing amongst Texas builders. The patriarch of native-Texas organ builders, Otto Hofmann, wrote in a 1959 *Diapason* of the new winds blowing in the Texas organ landscape:

It was a strange coincidence that an editorial in *The Diapason* of June 1958 questioning America’s willingness and capacity to build a mechanical action organ should appear when every square foot in our workrooms and erecting area at that time was full of new mechanical action organs built entirely in Texas... Almost all of our visitors expressed surprise and amazement that this was going on in America, and of all places, in Texas! Organ building in Texas is hardly more than 100 years old in contrast to a history of well over 300 years in the land to the south of us.



**Karl Wilhelm Inc. (1975)**  
**First United Lutheran Church ~ Dallas**

Hofmann's instruments work out neo-baroque tonal designs and sonorities uniquely and with varying successes; most of them were built in central Texas, and most are not mechanical action. The Sipe-Yarbrough instrument represents the amalgamation of all that the neo-baroque revival represented—mechanical action, careful attention to craftsmanship, and a concern for baroque sonorities with tone colors available through vertical “stacking” of pitches, reminiscent perhaps of the effervescent Schnitger organs of the Hanseatic League.

A visit to the Church of the Ascension to hear the 2005 Pasi organ allows participants to hear the fruit of forty years worth of study and experience in building neo-baroque organs; whereas the builders of Sipe-Yarbrough Opus 1 were breaking regional ground in their artistic and tonal conceptions, the Pasi represents the peak of those artistic ideas.

Downtown Dallas is a must-see for any visitor with its new Arts District encompassing the AT&T Performing Arts Center, the Winspear Opera House, and the Meyerson Symphony Center, to name but a few of the significant spaces. Set within a walkable locale, we visit First Presbyterian Church, recently renovated to its 1912 splendor and now housing a 1977 Robert Sipe organ that utilizes about 30% of the original E.M. Skinner pipework. A 1988 Jaeckel organ in the chapel is reminiscent of the Cavallé-Coll choir organs and is particularly suitable for French Romantic literature.

Possibly no organ in Dallas is more famous than the iconic Fisk Opus 100 in the near-perfect acoustics of the Meyerson Symphony Center. Inaugurated in 1992, this landmark C.B. Fisk instrument developed from a close and early collaboration among the architect, I.M. Pei, the City of Dallas, and the organ committee headed by Robert Anderson. This organ would be groundbreaking simply by the fact that it was deemed a necessary feature of the hall in an era when the pipe organ was seen as superfluous equipment. That the organ is of mechanical action is also a distinguishing feature, as the few organs of the era that had been installed in concert halls (Davies Symphony Center) were decidedly securely of electric action. The tonal design of the instrument was carefully crafted to blend with the orchestra, while conversely, the instrument could rival any other in performing the concert literature. Our visit to the Meyerson includes a visit with David C. Pike, Executive Vice President and Tonal Director of C.B. Fisk, who was intimately involved with the installation of the organ here. His lecture will situate the organ in its place in American organ building history, as will Dallas Symphony organist Bradley Hunter Welch, who will demonstrate the organ to its full capacity.

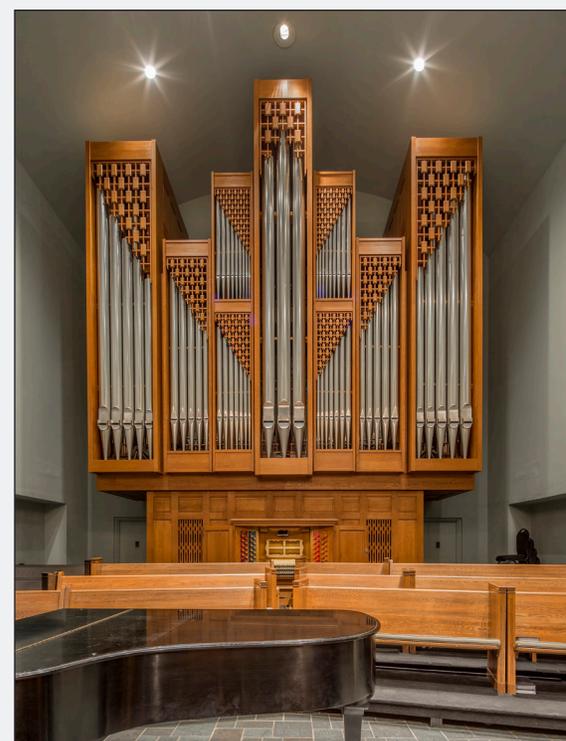
Across the street from the Meyerson is the Cathedral Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a Victorian, red-brick edifice housing an 1871 Reuben Midmer instrument that was transplanted to its current location in 1903 by Hook and Hastings. This lovely instrument with stenciled pipes is the oldest organ in its original location (such as it is) in Dallas. The spacious, soaring nave cannot prevent the beauty of this organ from being heard. While only a two-manual instrument and conceived

for a much smaller space, it is a rare gem from an era of organ building which has few other local examples. In this case, we can be thankful that the Catholic diocese never entertained any interest in replacing this historic organ.

The evening ends back at the Meyerson Symphony Center with a hymn festival played by Jan Kraybill in conjunction with national convention of The Hymn Society of the United States and Canada.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 17**

**THIS DAY** highlights the collaboration between OHS and The Hymn Society, whose convention is being held simultaneously, and based out of the Southern Methodist University campus. The day begins with a plenary session at Highland Park Methodist Church on campus, with hymn writer Thomas Troeger, organ builder Bruce Fowkes, Dallas composer Joel Martinson and Dallas musician Scott Dettra as they discuss the intersection of hymnody, organ building, composition, and performance practice during a moderated discussion entitled “Each Breath is Borrowed Air.” This will conclude with a concert on the church’s 2009 Dobson, Op. 87.



**Alfred Kern et Fils (1978)**  
**University Park**  
**United Methodist Church ~ Dallas**



C.B. Fisk, Inc., Op. 101 (1993) • Caruth Auditorium, Southern Methodist University ~ Dallas

Dallas organ historian and scholar Benjamin Kolodziej will give a lecture, assisted with audio and visual aids, on the history of organs in Dallas, particularly focusing on the fascinating history of the Southern Methodist University organ department.

A number of restaurants surround the campus, and the afternoon has been conceived as a time to relax to a slower pace. After lunch, participants can return to the campus at their leisure to partake of simultaneous events. Small positive organs by Hendrik Hess (1788) and Louis Debierre (1884) will be demonstrated by SMU students at the world-famous Bridwell Library. Also on display in the library will be an exhibition from the Robert Anderson archives. Organ professor at SMU for almost 40 years, Anderson's teaching shaped generations of students; the organ landscape of North Texas appearing as it does is largely a result of his students' labors, whose visions were informed by their studies with the great pedagogue. Dallas area organ expert James Wallmann will also have on display books from his personal collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century books on organ building.

Also occurring repeatedly and simultaneously, SMU organ students will demonstrate the 1973 Aeolian-Skinner tracker organ in Cox Chapel at Highland Park United Methodist, as well as the 1906

Hook and Hastings Op. 2109 at St Alban's Collegiate Chapel on the campus.

Dr. Larry Palmer, long-time Professor of Organ and Harpsichord at SMU, will play a concert on what is the oldest organ in Texas. The ca. 1762 Pascoali Caetano Oldovini chamber organ is housed in the nationally-acclaimed Meadows Museum, nicknamed "Prado on the Prairie," which houses the largest and most comprehensive collection of Iberian art outside of Spain. This little Portuguese organ of one manual and seven stops, formerly in Evora Cathedral, was bought from a collector in the Netherlands in the early 1980s and brought to SMU, where it was restored and is regularly played, Dr. Palmer having presented the organ to many audiences throughout the years.

A panel consisting of *Dallas Morning News* music critic Scott Cantrell and Texas organ builders George Bozeman, Jr., and Roy Redman will focus on the theme of "Organbuilding in the Lone Star State," followed by a concert by Stefan Engels, Professor of Organ and Leah Fullinwider Centennial Chair in Music Performance at Southern Methodist University, in Caruth Auditorium on Fisk's Opus 101 (1993.) Following a banquet at the Magnolia Hotel, conveniently located near the SMU campus, we travel to St Luke's Episcopal Church for a concert by Mormon Tabernacle organist Andrew Unsworth on the 1962 Aeoli-

an-Skinner, Op. 1438, originally installed in Caruth Auditorium and on which generations of organ students practiced and performed. Having been replaced in Caruth by the Fisk in 1993, the organ has since made music in the unique mid-century architecture of this local parish.

## THURSDAY, JULY 18

**THE FINAL OFFICIAL DAY** of the convention sees participants driven to Denton, now practically another northern suburb of the Dallas "metroplex," as the locals say. The University of North Texas, with its illustrious organ program boasting such teachers as Helen Hewitt, Dale Peters, and Jesse Eschbach, has produced generations of organ students. The campus offers an embarrassment of riches, starting with the 2008 Wolff & Associés Ltée Ardoin-Voertman Concert Organ on which Dr. Damin Spritzer, Assistant Professor of Organ at the University of Oklahoma, will perform. A panel of builders including Jack Bethards, Bruce Fowkes, Martin Pasi, Michael Quimby and Lynn Dobson, moderated by Jesse Eschbach, Professor of Organ at UNT, will then discuss the topic of "Designing and Building Concert Hall Organs." Susan Ferré will then speak of the "Raisin Organ," a little nineteenth-century Swiss organ that

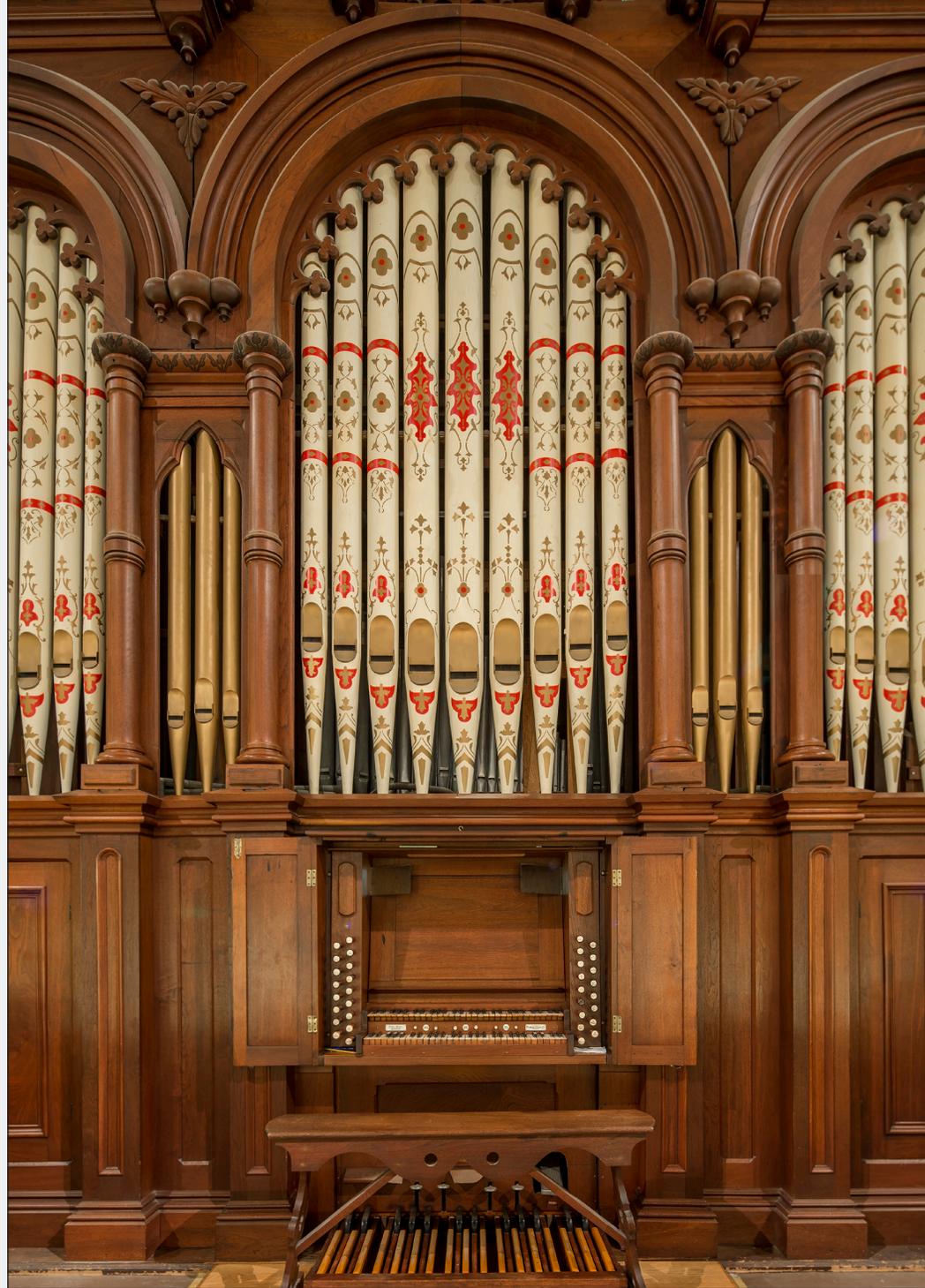
made its way to Texas with missionaries during the early twentieth century. Ferré will discuss how she found and acquired this organ, and what it reveals not only about performance practice in the nineteenth century, but about the Texas musicians who used the organ. This organ, along with a 1971 Rieger, will be demonstrated by UNT students.

It is probably not an overstatement to suggest that UNT has an organ to fit everyone's taste, and nowhere is that more evident than in the Main Auditorium, with its 1949 M.P. Möller, Op. 7676, juxtaposed with the 1984/2003 Bedient, a first-of-its-kind organ in the USA, designed as a faithful replica of eighteenth-century French organs. This organ, originally installed in Michigan and made famous in the 1987 PBS documentary, "Wind at One's Fingertips," will be the instrument of choice for Davitt Moroney's concert that afternoon.

After returning to Dallas for a Happy Hour and Dinner at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, we will hear the 1970 Aeolian-Skinner (tracker) organ, followed by a gala concert on the 2010 Richards, Fowkes & Co., Op 17, in the gallery.

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

**FOR THOSE** who wish to stay a little longer, an add-on day in Fort Worth will showcase some of the important organs of that city, which, unlike Dallas, has always gladly embraced its Western heritage. The city boasts the stockyards and a traditional steam train, a ride not to be missed! Yes, you will see cowboys, boots, spurs, horses, and friendly people willing to talk to you about their city. Or, spend free time in Dallas. The downtown area is home to the Dallas World Aquarium and the Sixth Floor Museum, a moving tribute to that fateful day in 1963 that forever seared Dallas into the American consciousness, for better or for worse. The convention hotel, The Magnolia, is conveniently situated near the SMU campus at Mockingbird Station, a complex offering shopping, restaurants and entertainment venues on a Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) line, that offers easy public transportation to downtown, to the airport, and elsewhere. There is no doubt about it—Dallas in the summer is hot! But we Dallasites take this seriously



1871 Reuben Midmer/1902 Hook & Hastings/1982 Roy A. Redman Organ Co., Op. 34  
Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe ~ Dallas

and think of air conditioning first when building a structure, so all the venues are completely climate controlled.

This convention will truly feature organs significant "of their time." Many historic Dallas organs, of which there were plenty from the 1890s to the 1920s, were victims of the city's economic success. This is a region in which the established churches still prosper, and sometimes that means pipe organs are subject to the changing whims of musical tastes. The northern suburbs of Plano and Rich-

ardson showcase recent organs by Klais, Létourneau, Schantz, Reuter, and Schudi, among others, which we will not have time to visit. Our center of activity in Dallas will feature so many significant organs, some of them even old, that you will certainly come away with a sense of the area as the cosmopolitan city it certainly is. On behalf of convention co-chairs Dr. Christopher Anderson and James Wallmann, I hope you will join us as we together explore the organs of this dynamic and distinctive area.