

GRACE CHURCH IN NEW YORK TAYLOR & BOODY ORGANBUILDERS STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

ON OCTOBER 31, 1863, when the great Walcker organ at the Boston Music Hall was inaugurated, it was George Washburne Morgan, the organist from Grace Church New York, who opened the program with the playing of the *William Tell* Overture, certainly, an indication of the leadership of Grace Church not only in the church music of New York, but in the entire country. *Dwight's Journal of Music* in 1861 described the quality of the singers in the double quartet of the choir and the style of the music at Grace as “especially famed for the quality of its music—less ecclesiastical and more ornate; selections from Beethoven, Mozart, Mosenthal, and Mr. Morgan are performed.”

The organs of Grace Church represent a timeline of American organbuilding from the workshops of Henry Erben, Hilborne Roosevelt, Ernest M. Skinner, and Herman Schlicker. The architect of Grace Church, James Renwick Jr., who ranks as one of America's greatest, designed the building as his second commission at the age of 25. Completed in 1846, the church is one of the prized landmarks of the city, a survivor that should be forever preserved.

With this in mind, we first met with the organ committee almost seven years ago. After studying the church, we proposed that a four-manual tracker-action organ be built in double cases in the chancel, close to the liturgical and musical center of worship. Because the pipework serving these four divisions—the Great, Swell, Choir, and Choir Pedal—would be concentrated in the chancel cases, there was a need for additional space to house the large pedal stops and the large expression box for the Solo division. These we proposed to place in the chamber originally constructed for the Roosevelt organ.

Parts of the organ that we usually place within the casework of the instrument or nearby—namely the bellows, wind system, and much of the tracker action—are, at Grace, built into a climate-controlled mechanical space in the basement below the chancel floor. Some of the trackers run for more than 50 feet. Their mechanism is of modern design and materials incorporating two miles of carbon fiber trackers, with a self-adjusting key action. The stop action is controlled by electric solenoids with a solid-state electric combination action.

The tonal design was developed through many hours of discussion with organist Patrick Allen, whose love of Grace Church and vision for the new instrument has been the single most important force behind the project. The specification is a direct response to the music and architecture of Grace Church and may be described as a blending of all the previous organs of Grace

Church, although the heart of the instrument is distinctively Taylor & Boody. Stops enhancing this core could have come from Erben, Roosevelt, or Skinner. In the case of the Solo, we utilized some wonderful vintage Romantic stops to create an authentic orchestral voice. The massive E.M. Skinner 32' Open Wood pipes, twelve notes of the bottom octave, still play in their original place in the gallery. The pipes still have their original Skinner shipping labels from 1907.

The organ is intended foremost to accompany hymns, liturgy, and choirs. The Great division has a robust chorus of Diapason pipes with two mixtures, three trumpet stops, and a powerful Cornet for leading the melody of hymns. The Swell is a versatile accompaniment organ of great dynamic range with four reed

stops. The Choir has gentle, sweet, and beautiful stops chosen especially for accompanying the children of Grace. The enclosed Solo contains many of the stops much beloved in American and English Romantic instruments: two strings with célestes, orchestral reeds, Vox Humana, and the powerful Harmonic Trumpet and Tuba on high pressure. The Pedal is

profound with its four 32' stops and a complete chorus comprising a wide variety of flue pipes and reeds. The organ is tuned in a well-tempered, close-to-Equal Temperament system developed by Taylor & Boody called “Grace Church.” There is a sweetening of the keys close to C-major, but the tuning does not exclude any keys.

Opus 65 has taken our 15-person workshop more than three years to build. It has been the labor of a lifetime. Even following our experience in building 64 instruments, many things about this project were new to us. We have frequently turned to our colleagues for their generous help, expertise, and advice. This has made Opus 65 an unusually cooperative adventure. At 77 stops and nearly 5,000 pipes, it will surely stand for a long while as our Magnum Opus. We give thanks for the saints of Grace Church who built, served, and loved this wonderful place of worship. We give thanks particularly to the Rev. J. Donald Waring, rector; to the vestry, especially Charlie Johnston; and to Patrick Allen, the organ committee, and the congregation for giving us the opportunity to build this instrument. Our appreciation likewise goes to the many contributors to the organ fund and for the restoration work done in the church.

The builders were George Taylor, John Boody, Emerson Willard, Larry Damico, Chris Peterson, Kelley Blanton, Christopher Bono, Robbie Lawson, Thomas Karaffa, Erik Boody, Aaron

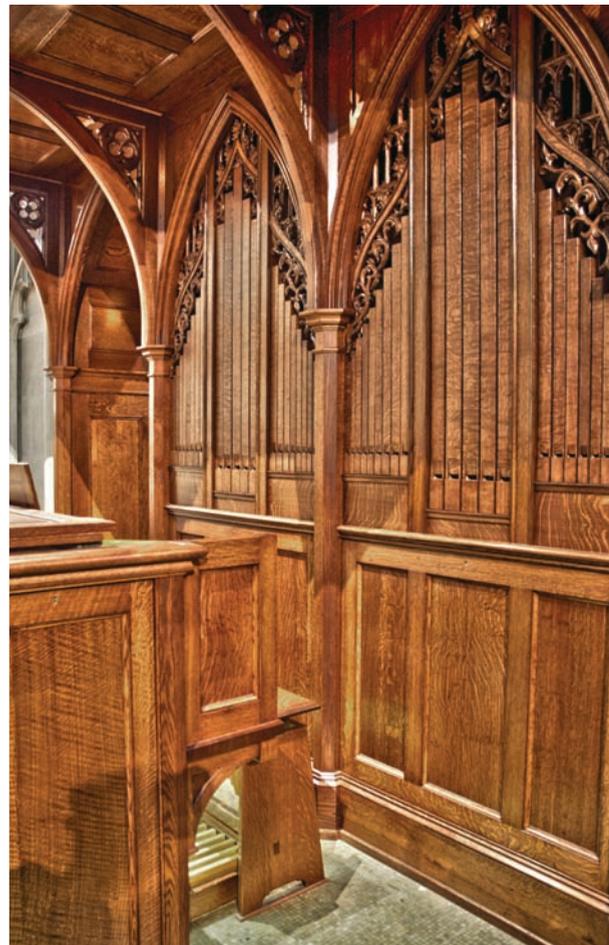
“I saw—we all saw—that the organ could indeed be a musical icon, resonating with the sacred life of this community and the prayers and songs of its people.”

—Patrick Allen, organist and master of choristers



Clockwise from top left: the south chancel case (Great above, Choir below); ornamental iron rail; Solo drawknobs; Choir Principal Dolce 8'; the north chancel case (Swell above, chancel Pedal below)

Photography by Robbie Lawson



Reichert, Cindi Johnson, Thomas Rohlfs, Steven Jett, Bobbi Jean Regi, Kate Harrington, Robert Harris, Olivia Kiers, and Katina Lawson, with assistance from Mika Oba, Jenna Dennison, and Autumn Coe.

It was Dana Kirkegaard, the acoustician, who gave us insight into the acoustical performance of Grace Church. He inspired us to place the organ in the chancel and gave us invaluable technical assistance in the design of the organ. Also thanks to Christopher Broome, Patrick Quigley, A.R. Schopp's Sons, Oak Hill Iron, Paul Fritts, Rick Isaacs, John Panning, Steven Dieck, Bruce Fowkes, Nicholas Thompson-Allen, Richard Swanson, Joe Sloane, John Bishop, Richard Houghton, and Vladimir Vaculik.

GEORGE TAYLOR AND JOHN BOODY

Years ago, the choirs of the Cathedral in Wilmington, Delaware, commissioned an icon of St. John the Evangelist as a retirement gift for their beloved dean of many years and his family. Before the artist began her work, she met with the choirs to explain that an icon is not just a piece of art, but a doorway to God, a meeting place of the human and divine, and that every member of the choir had a role to play in its birth. We were given a prayer to offer each day while it was being created. Many weeks later, the icon was unveiled in the presence of the bishop, who was to bless it. Everyone was speechless. The icon had resonance. We could feel the spiritual energy of the community. The icon radiated the love of the dean's relationship with the cathedral family.

Could a musical instrument also be an icon, a portal to the divine? String instruments are often thought of as living beings with a mystical energy. Why not the Grace Church pipe organ?

Grace Church in New York City began its path to a new organ long before I came on the scene. Reports and histories were commissioned and assembled by countless esteemed colleagues and parish members. At my first meeting in 2000 with the organ committee, chaired at that time by the historian and Columbia University professor Eric McKittrick, I was moved by the passion and spiritual energy of this parish around this quest for a new instrument. I saw—we all saw—that the organ could indeed be a musical icon, resonating with the sacred life of this community and the prayers and songs of its people.

When we finally came to invite presentations by prospective organbuilders in 2008, Taylor & Boody was the last builder I would have expected to hire. They didn't make the sort of instrument we needed—the building and type of music offered were not right for a historical northern European instrument. We had just received their Opus 61, a beautiful continuo organ. It was almost an afterthought to invite them to make a presentation for the large instrument. When John Boody and George Taylor arrived, they asked me, "Why are we here?" It seemed there was no possible way for them to build their style of organ in our space.

Twenty-four hours later, the Holy Spirit had inspired in them



Console (detached and reversed; bone keys with Gabon ebony sharps) (photo: Robbie Lawson)

a vision, a concept that excited the organ committee and began the creation of this new voice. Our Grace Church community has invested countless hours in dialogue, visioning, and prayer in support of these master artisans as they crafted this new organ, a new servant to accompany the voices of prayer and thanksgiving in this holy place, and to offer comfort and inspiration to all who come through the doors of this house of prayer on the corner of Broadway and 10th.

This beautiful organ is indeed an icon, reaching beyond time, and by her special nature reflecting the past, supporting the present, and dreaming of the future of this parish.

Johann Sebastian Bach, among the greatest of all composers for the organ, understood something about music as a pathway to the divine. In his Bible, in the margins next to the passage in Second Chronicles that speaks of the work of musicians in the temple, Bach wrote: "At a reverent performance of music, God is always at hand with his gracious presence." May it ever be so at Grace Church.

PATRICK ALLEN
Organist and Master of Choristers

Grace Church in New York
Taylor & Boody Organbuilders
 Opus 65 • Four manuals, 77 stops, 96 ranks

GREAT (Manual II)	SOLO (Manual IV, enclosed)	CONTROLS	TOE STUDS
16 Double Open Diapason (facade)	8 Harmonic Flute	Great+Pedal on Great divisionals	General 1–16
16 Bourdon	8 Gamba	Swell+Pedal on Swell divisionals	Pedal 1–8
8 First Open Diapason	8 Gamba Celeste	Choir+Pedal on Choir divisionals	Great to Pedal (rev.)
8 Second Open Diapason	8 Viol d'Orchestre	Pedal+Swell on Pedal toe studs	Swell to Pedal (rev.)
8 Spire Flute	8 Viol Celeste	All Swells	Solo to Pedal (rev.)
4 Principal	4 Flauto Traverso	All next	Swell to Great (rev.)
4 Spitz Flute	16 Corno di Bassetto	Memory level up	Solo to Great (rev.)
2 ² / ₃ Twelfth	8 Orchestral Oboe	Memory level down	32' Diapason (rev.)
1 ³ / ₅ Seventeenth	8 Vox Humana	Signal lights on buttons (4)	32' Bourdon (rev.)
Cornet V (g–d ³)	Tremulant	Memory level display	32' Ophicleide (rev.)
Mixture V	8 Tuba (15" wp)	General piston display	32' Fagott (rev.)
Scharf IV	8 Harmonic Trumpet (15")		16' Trombone (rev.)
16 Double Trumpet	Solo 16		Tutti I (rev.)
8 Trumpet	Solo 4		Tutti II (rev.)
4 Clarion			Tutti III (rev.)
	CHOIR PEDAL	THUMB PISTONS	Tutti IV (rev.)
SWELL (Manual III, enclosed)	16 Bourdon	Great 1–8	Sequencer forward
16 Contra Gamba	8 Cello (facade)	Swell 1–8	Sequencer back
8 Facade Principal	8 Spitz Gedackt	Choir 1–8	Memory level up
8 Violin Diapason	4 Clarabella (prep.)	Solo 1–8	Memory level down
8 Rohr Flute	16 Bassoon	Pedal 1–8	Compass:
8 Salicional	8 Schalmey	General 1–16	manuals 61 notes (c ⁰ –c ⁴)
8 Voix céleste (G)		Sequencer forward (4)	pedal 32 notes (CC–g ¹)
4 Principal	MAIN PEDAL	Sequencer back (2)	
4 Open Flute	32 Double Open Diapason	Swell to Great (rev.)	Wind pressures:
2 ² / ₃ Nazard	32 Contra Bourdon (1–6 resultant)	Choir to Great (rev.)	Great 3 ¹ / ₄ "
2 Fifteenth	16 Open Diapason (ext. 32')	Solo to Great (rev.)	Swell 3 ¹ / ₄ "
2 Wald Flute	16 Subbass (ext. 32')	Solo to Swell (rev.)	Choir 2 ³ / ₄ "
1 ³ / ₅ Tierce	16 Violone	Swell to Choir (rev.)	Solo 5"
Mixture V	8 Principal	Solo to Choir (rev.)	Choir Pedal 3"
16 Contra Bassoon	8 Spire Flute	Tutti I (rev. with indicator)	Main Pedal 5"
8 Cornopean	8 Fifteenth	Tutti II (rev. with indicator)	
8 Oboe	Mixture V	Tutti III (rev. with indicator)	Two balanced expression pedals, for Swell and Solo
4 Clarion	32 Contra Ophicleide	Tutti IV (rev. with indicator)	All stop action electric solenoid (slider) or solid state switching
Tremulant	32 Contra Fagott	Set	Mechanical key action with floating square rails
	16 Trombone (ext. 32')	Scope	Offset individual valve E.P. chests for large bass pipes
CHOIR (Manual I)	16 Fagott (ext. 32')	General Cancel	Six mechanical couplers; eleven electric couplers
8 Principal Dolce (facade)	8 Trumpet		
8 Stopped Diapason	4 Clarion		
8 Flauto Dolce	8 Tuba (Solo)		
8 Unda Maris (TC)	8 Harmonic Trumpet (Solo)		
4 Octave (prep.)			
4 Rohr Flute	COUPLERS		
2 Gemshorn	Swell to Great 8		
1 ¹ / ₃ Larigot (prep.)	Choir to Great 8		
Sesquialtera II (prep.)	Solo to Great 16, 8, 4		
Scharf (prep.) III–IV	Solo to Swell 16, 8, 4		
16 Cor Anglais	Swell to Choir 8		
8 Cremona	Solo to Choir 16, 8, 4		
Tremulant	Great to Pedal 8		
8 Tuba (Solo)	Swell to Pedal 8		
8 Harmonic Trumpet (Solo)	Choir to Pedal 8		
	Solo to Pedal 8, 4		