



About this Recording

This concert was recorded live on 5 August 2007. From the outset its purpose was twofold. First was to bring a pleasurable listening experience to a general audience on a hot summer afternoon in Laredo. Second was to showcase the tremendous flexibility of the Kegg organ's tonal resources. This is a live concert recording, allowing the listener to enjoy the ambience, audience appreciation and spontaneous music of an actual performance.

Many organ lovers want to know what Full Organ sounds like more than anything else! Alan Viner's *Make a Joyful Noise* begins with a flourish on the coupled flue choruses, and works its way, with occasional interruptions from the Solo Trombas and Tuba, to Full Organ.

Having gotten that out of the way, Herbert Howells' *Psalm Prelude* demonstrates a more subtle approach to the dynamic range. The seamless buildup from the Flute Celeste, through a warm mid-range with comments from the dark and woody Clarinet, eventually gives way to a Full Swell that is rich with texture. After a glimpse of a darker Full Organ sound than heard in the Viner, the piece gradually subsides and returns to the whisper where it began.

In sharp contrast to the lush sounds just heard, the Walther *Concerto* focuses on the balance and transparency of various manual combinations. The precision and responsiveness of both the action and winding are evident here, especially in passages with quickly repeated notes or chords. The opening *Allegro* contrasts the Plenum of the Great with that of the Positiv. The middle *Adagio* makes use of the Positiv Sesquialtera, spicier than most with the addition of a Septieme. The final *Allegro*, with a surprisingly light registration, highlights the Positiv Gedeckt and Quinte 1¹/₃'.

The *Tiento* by Cabanillas is included for the way it compares the 8' Principal stop in each division. First the Positiv, then the Swell and finally the Great. The Pedal remains constant throughout. Each is distinct in color, yet all are rich and warm while maintaining a remarkable clarity of inner voice leading.

Franck's *Choral in A Minor* displays the interaction of the flue choruses with the reeds. Whether as a solo combination as in the central section of the piece, or blazing in choruses of 16', 8' and 4', to the exhilarating crescendo of the Tuba in the last three measures, it is the reeds that give this organ the power needed to contend with a full symphony orchestra.

Though the published registration for Ramón Noble's *Toccatina* calls for a much bolder approach, the "scherzo" type of registration used here seems equally effective in delivering this piece of pure Mexican sunshine.

Bairstow's *Evening Song* lets us hear many of the stops in short, individual vignettes. The Vox Humana, English Horn, Holz Regal, Harmonic Flute and Solo Gambas all play important roles. At times it becomes difficult to believe that this is the same organ that was so crisp and sparkly moments earlier in the Walther!

Two songs from *South Pacific* show how comfortable this organ is with accompanying particularly the human voice. Though always supportive, it does not have to struggle to remain accompanimental with its wide variety of mezzo-forte colors.

The recital ends as it began with a flourish, this time with the delightful *March in E-flat*, a piece that would sound equally at home on a carousel as it does on the organ!

—Fredrick Bahr