

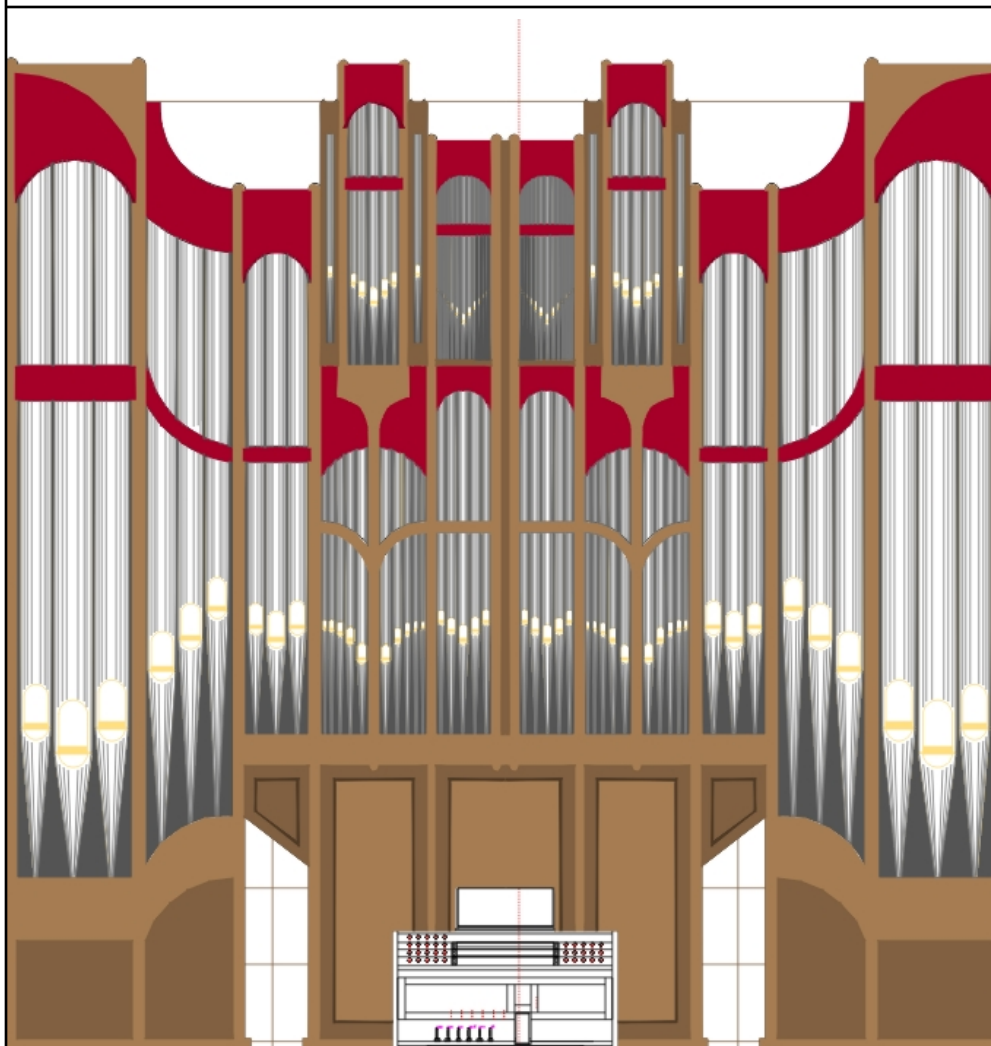
The Desert Wind

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**SPECIAL
EDITION**

IN MEMORY OF MAURINE JACKSON SMITH

53-RANK VON BECKERATH TO GRACE BEAM MUSIC CENTER RECITAL HALL AT UNLV



of that year.

Isabelle Emerson, Interim Chair of the Department of Music, said that the organ selection committee had gone through numerous proposals from American and European organ builders. The final awarding of the contract was made only after a visit by Emerson, Paul Kreider, Chair of Music at that time, and committee members Paul Hesselink and Ethelyn Peterson to hear several different instruments in California and after Emerson and Hesselink had visited the workshop of Beckerath in Hamburg. The organ will be built and partially assembled in the Hamburg workshop, then shipped to Las Vegas, where it will be given the final tunings and voicings to suit the acoustics of its setting. With three manuals and thirty-eight stops, the instrument will be the largest organ in the state of Nevada. It has been so designed that it will serve well as an accompanying instrument in small ensembles as well as function brilliantly in solo recitals and performance of organ concertos. Professor Emerson stated that the Department of Music is already considering how the presence of this organ will enrich not only the music program at UNLV but the musical life of Las Vegas by, for example, a series of organ recitals by prominent American and European organists.

Edward D. Smith of Las Vegas has donated \$500,000 to build a pipe organ in memory of his wife, Maurine Jackson Smith, who died on October 1 of 1999. Mrs. Smith, who after raising three children earned a Bachelors degree magna cum laude in history at UNLV, was well known in Las Vegas for her love of music and especially

of the organ, which she played with deep joy. The instrument will be built by the renowned firm of Rudolph von Beckerath in Hamburg, Germany, and is custom designed for the recital hall of the new Beam Music Center on the UNLV campus. The installation is scheduled to take place during the summer of 2004, with the dedication planned for fall of

UNLV RECEIVES GIFT OF THE LARGEST PIPE ORGAN IN NEVADA

UNLV alumnae Maurine Jackson Smith possessed a tremendous talent and passion for the organ. It is because of that passion that her family will present UNLV's new Beam Music Center with a remarkable gift, a custom – designed pipe organ.

Mrs. Smith passed away in 1999, but her family wants to make sure that her memory lives on through this extraordinary gift in her honor.

"She loved the organ. She spent hours every week practicing," said Edward D. Smith of his late wife. "We just thought it would be a nice thing not only for the University, but for her. Any university that wants to promote its' musical venue and wants to have fine organists, needs a fine organ."

The builder, Rudolph von Beckerath Company in Hamburg, Germany, will take about three years to complete the organ. With thirty-eight stops, fifty-three ranks, and three keyboards, it will be the largest in Nevada.

The gift helps UNLV to continue to set a high standard for the arts in the American Southwest. The organ which will be used for concerts and for teaching, will be located in the 299-seat recital hall of the new Beam Music Center.

The gift is also significant because Mrs. Smith was a graduate of UNLV. After raising three children, Melanie Larkin, Branson Smith, and Greg Smith, she decided it was time to complete her college education. In 1995, at the age of 59, Mrs. Smith graduated magna cum laude with a bachelors degree in history. Her son Greg graduated from

UNLV with a degree in English in 1992 and was an active participant in the music program.

"This gift is not only for the University, but for the community," Greg said. "My mother loved the organ and would be very proud of this gift."

Mrs. Smith's daughter, Melanie Larkin, also attended UNLV. "We are very proud of our mother," Mrs. Larkin said. "This gift is something that is tender to our hearts."

As an organist and associate professor in the Music Department, Isabelle Emerson can appreciate just how important this gift is to future music students and to those in the community who simply appreciate the pure excellence of organ music. "This gift is a wonderfully appropriate memorial to a woman who was as beautiful in spirit as she was.

In appearance," Emerson said. "The instrument will bring joy to the many people who delight in the sound of this King of Instruments, and it will bring organ study and performance in this part of the country to a new level. Organists rarely own their own instruments, so they must be content with whatever is available. So to have an instrument like this creates exciting new opportunities for organ students and performers. The extraordinary generosity of Edward Smith will keep perpetually before us the inspiring memory of Maurine Jackson Smith and her love for music and for the pipe organ."

*Reprinted with kind permission from "It's Academic," UNLV Foundation, Summer edition, 2001.
The press release on page one was composed and issued by Dr. Isabelle Emerson, Interim Chair, Music Department, UNLV College of Fine Arts.*

SPECIFICATION OF THE MAURINE JACKSON SMITH MEMORIAL ORGAN

Rudolph von Beckerath, Hamburg, Germany
38 stops, 53 ranks—3 manuals and pedal
Mechanical Action, electric stop action

GREAT

Bordun 16'
Principal 8'
Rohrflöte 8'
Octave 4'
Spitzflöte 4'
Quinte 2 2/3'
Offenflöte 2'
Mixtur V (1 1/3')
Trompette 8'

SWELL

Flûte allemande 16'
Viol principal 8'
Bordun 8'
Salicional 8'
Voix Celeste 8'
Fugara 4'
Flûte Octaviane 4'
Octavin 2'
Nazard 2 2/3'
Terz 1 3/5'
Plein Jeu V (2')
Basson 16'
Trompette Harmonique 8'
Hautbois 8'
Tremulant

POSITIV

Holzgedackt 8'
Principal 4'
Rohrflöte 4'
Waldflöte 2'
Larigot 1 1/3'
Sesquialtera II (2 2/3')
Sharf IV (1')
Dulcian 8'
Tremulant

PEDAL

Principal 16'
Subbass 16'
Octavbass 8'
Spielflöte 8'
Choralbass 4'
Hintersatz IV (2 2/3')
Posaune 16'

COUPLERS

Swell to Great, Positiv to Great, Swell to Positiv, Great to Pedal,
Swell to Pedal, Positiv to Pedal, Swell 16', Swell 4',
Swell to Great 16', Swell to Great 4', Positiv to Great 16'
Swell to Pedal 4'

AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCH...**PLANNING A NEW ORGAN FOR UNLV**

By Paul S. Hesselink

When the gift for funding the building of an organ in the new recital hall in the Beam Music Center at UNLV was confirmed, Dr. Paul Kreider, then Chair of the Department of Music, in early March of 2000 convened a search committee comprised of Dr. Isabelle Emerson, Dr. Paul Hesselink and Ethelyn Peterson. The first decision of the Organ Search Committee was that ideally the organ should be a mechanical action instrument. Given the fact that the organ in the Beam Recital Hall would be both a concert and teaching instrument, the committee hoped that the instrument would have three manual divisions and pedal. The decision to opt for a tracker action instrument necessarily suggested companies that might be approached as possible builders.

In the ensuing months, an *international* search for the "right" builder was launched. I assumed the responsibility of contacting firms the committee wished to consider for the project. Most of the communicating could be done by e-mail and over the months until the contract was signed in late January, 2001, nearly 600 e-mail messages were logged. E-mail communications also had the advantage of making it possible to "copy" messages and responses to other members of the committee. So, this process actually made it possible for the committee to be informed without having to spend huge numbers of hours in face-to-face meetings.

The search eventually involved contact and discussions with 18 world-class organ builders in the United States (9 companies), Canada (3), Germany (3) and one builder each from Italy, England and Denmark. Members of the committee heard presentations from four organ builders who wanted to come to Las Vegas to meet with us.

The members of the committee brought to the search task a broad range of expertise. Ethelyn had recent experience with the instruments of Michael Bigelow and also for two years had played a wonderful Marcussen in Jerusalem. Isabelle was in contact with colleagues in the eastern U.S. who had recently been involved in a similar search process, and she had visited a fine new instrument in Philadelphia by the Mander firm of England. Because organ building has been one of my interests for many years, I had recently visited the organ building shops of Paul Fritts, Martin Pasi and Steven Cook, playing representative instruments of those builders. Guild member Mark Towne and I made an organ safari to southern California and in two days visited and played instruments by Dobson, Pasi, Glatter-Götz, Bigelow and Blackinton. During March and April last year, I played recitals in Wisconsin and Virginia and visited recent tracker instruments by C.B. Fisk, Jaeckel, Dobson, Rosales, and Letourneau. Our committee of four also made a trip to southern California to see and play instruments by Bigelow and von Beckerath in early September, 2000.

The committee made a unanimous decision to pursue talking with the firm of Rudolph von Beckerath of Hamburg, Germany about our project as our first choice. Their proposal was for a three manual and pedal instrument of 35 stops. Not only did the design seem to meet our needs, but it was priced within our budget. The company has a 50-year record of building superb instruments world-wide, acclaimed for their warmth, blend of ensembles, beautiful voicing and meticulous craftsmanship. We addressed the company with a list of our concerns regarding both their company and our project, all of which were answered to our complete satisfaction. Three stops were added to the original specification with the result that the new Beam Recital Hall organ will consist of 38 stops and 53 ranks of pipes.

At the invitation of Holger Redlick, Business Manager and Rolf Miehle, Tonal Director, Isabelle and I visited the firm in Hamburg November 5 through 7, 2000. We heard and played both historic and recent work of the company. Since I arrived in Hamburg a few hours earlier than Isabelle, a special bonus for me was to hear a recital performed on the Beckerath firm's Opus 1 at the Music Hall in Hamburg. We found the quality of workmanship, tonal finishing and beauty of their recent instruments to be of the highest order. Both of our hosts seemed also to be knowledgeable and skilled as well as efficient in doing business. In early March, 2001, both Holger and Rolf came to UNLV for a site visit; they were pleased with the hall's fine acoustics and Rolf said, "I can already 'hear' the organ."

After a period of relative inactivity in the U.S., the Beckerath firm is now in what could be called their "Second American Period." A 21-stop instrument has recently been installed in Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan in New York City; a 16-stop house organ has been installed in the home of Dr. Whitney Reader in Wichita, Kansas; a large 49-stop instrument will be completed for Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Wichita, Kansas the fall of 2002; and UNLV's instrument of 38 stops is to be installed in the summer of 2004.

The Beckerath company has a website which includes information and photos of some of their instruments around the world, photos of the construction process in their shop and much more information about the company. The "News" section under "Our Company" on the "English Pages" includes photos and drawings of the four American projects. The website address is www.Beckerath.com.

Thanks to the long term vision and wonderful generosity of the Smith family, this exciting new instrument will focus new attention on the organ in our community for years to come. It will fittingly honor the memory of one of our Southern Nevada AGO Chapter members. The planning of a project of this magnitude comes with a very large responsibility to invest the resources of the gift responsibly and wisely for the artistic future; the committee took this task seriously. The completion of the new Maurine Jackson Smith organ will, indeed, be an exciting event for all of us.

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Events and Information of the Southern
Nevada Chapter of the American Guild of
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