

Minutes -- Chapel Organ Committee

Meeting 3 - August 11, 1986, 2 p.m.

1. Present: J. Tiefel, P. Manthey, D. Valleskey, and John Chappell Stowe, assistant professor of organ at the University of Wisconsin - Madison
2. Purpose: To interview Prof. Stowe as a prospective organ consultant. He was recommended by the organ professor of the son of Philip Press as a man who takes a somewhat different approach to organ building than a Paul Bunjes
3. Meeting began with a survey of the chapel. Stowe, more strongly than previous consultants, recommended the removal of the ceiling to allow for more air space in the chapel and a higher placement of the pipes. Recommended that the organ be in the back of the chapel. Mentioned that the room as is, i.e., without removal of ceiling, is limited, but "far less than some"
4. Stowe's background: A Presbyterian, native of North Carolina. Degree in organ at Southern Methodist University, 1976; won national competition in organ, 1978; doctor's degree in organ at Eastman School of Music, 1980. Has served as organist at many kinds of churches, e.g., Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran. Plays for many recitals nation-wide.
5. Experience as organ consultant: Has had 6-8 consultant jobs, Emmanuel Lutheran in Madison at present, but has received no special training in organ building, except in connection with courses in organ performance. His strength, as he sees it, is in knowing what a good organ should sound like.
6. Kind of organ Stowe prefers: Of the style being built by John Brumbow (sp?) and several other small builders (He mentioned George Taylor of Virginia, Manuel Rosales of California, and David Moore of Vermont). After reviewing briefly the history of the restoration of the classical organ in our time, Stowe described what he considers to be the best kind of pipe organ.
  - a. An organ with a more mellow, rounder tone, with less nasal quality, less brilliance than a Bunjes, for example, would recommend. Another way of describing it: an organ with more of a vocal than an instrumental sound. Accomplished through strong foundational tones (8' principal) with overtones carefully blended to the foundation. The result, says Stowe, is a mellow, warm, but powerful sound.
  - b. An organ with an attractive visual appearance. Casework, etc., is important aesthetically also.
  - c. A tracker action organ, but one which is designed correctly, e.g., properly balanced
7. Cost of organ: c. \$10,000 - 11,000 per stop. Should be able to get by with 12-15 stops -- 16', 8', 4', 2' principals, a mixture, plus 7-10 more
8. Fee: his expenses plus whatever we would want to give him
9. Procedure: If we retain him as a consultant, he would contact several builders whom he feels would be able to do the job for us; we would check out on organs built by them; and then choose a builder.