

John Snetzler

Founded/Born

1710 - 1785

Closed/Death

Still active?

no

Description

John Snetzler, born on April 6, 1710, in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, was a renowned organ builder who moved to England with his younger brother, Leonhard. There, he became the most successful organ builder of his time. Though there are claims that he may have trained with Egedacher in Passau or Müller in Haarlem, these are unsubstantiated. It is more likely that he was trained by his cousin Johann Konrad Speisegger in Zurich around 1730. The earliest surviving instruments signed by Snetzler date to 1742 in London, where his business was already thriving by 1743. Snetzler probably specialized early in building bureau organs and chamber organs, and he collaborated on the construction of Claviorgana.

Sources

<https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg11642&v=1.0&rs=mgg11642>

New Haven, CT, Yale University, Belle Skinner Collection

Yale University, Trumbull Street, 06510 New Haven, CT, United States of America



Builder	J. Snetzler
Year	1742
Period/Style	Baroque
Stops	5
Keyboards	1
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical

Description

The organ at Yale University, crafted by Johannes Schnetzler in 1742 in London, showcases the historical craftsmanship and technical aspects of 18th-century organ building. This organ is notable for its retention of all-metal pipes with Mander slide tuners added in 1983, which are used to adjust the tuning of the pipes more precisely. The specification of the organ includes a DIAPAISON at 8', made from stopt wood including oak and some pine, spanning the full compass. The OP DIAPASON at 8' begins from middle C and is made from common metal, reflecting typical material use for treble extensions during the period.

Additional stops in the organ include a FLAUTA at 4' in the bass register, with the first 24 pipes made from stopt wood, and an unlabeled Flauta in the treble also at 4'. The FIFTEENTH at 2', made from common metal, runs through the entire compass, adding brilliance to the organ's sound. The CORNET and SESQUIALTRA, starting from middle C in the treble, and a bass SESQUIALTRA for the first 24 notes, both feature two ranks of common metal. Modern conveniences such as a machine-stop foot pedal, which controls upperwork, and a blowing strap for assistant operation during performance, alongside a wind indicator rod, integrate traditional organ craftsmanship with functional enhancements for contemporary use.

Stoplist/Disposition

Manual

Diapason 8' (bass/treble)

Flauta 4' (bass/treble)

Fifteenth 2'

Cornet (treble)

Sesquialtera (2 ranks, bass/treble)

Additional:

Sources

<https://beta.pipeorgandatabase.org/instruments/1063>

Washington, DC, National Museum of American History

National Museum of American History, Constitution Avenue Northwest, 20423 Washington, DC, United States of America



Builder	J. Snetzler
Year	1761
Period/Style	Baroque
Stops	6
Keyboards	1+P
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical

Description

The 1761 John Snetzler organ at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC represents a precious piece of musical heritage, being the sole survivor of the five chamber organs imported into North America before the American Revolution. The organ has been meticulously restored to its original appearance and playing condition, ensuring that it remains a functional piece of history. This restoration emphasizes its cultural and historical importance, providing insight into the craftsmanship and musical aesthetics of the period.

The organ's specification includes an 8' Stopped Diapason made of wood, and an 8' Open Diapason from middle C, made of metal, which highlights the typical construction materials and techniques of the era. Other stops include a 4' Flute (stopped wood), a 2' Fifteenth (open metal), and two ranks of II Sesquialter in the bass up to B and a II Cornet in the treble from middle C, both made of open metal. The presence of a pedal coupled to the manual keys further enhances the organ's versatility and depth, allowing for a fuller range of musical expression. This historically significant organ not only serves as a reminder of John Snetzler's craftsmanship but also offers a tangible link to the musical and cultural practices of the 18th century.

Stoplist/Disposition

Manual

Pedal (always attached)

Stopped Diapason 8'

Open Diapason 8'

Flute 4'

Fifteenth 2'

Sesquialter II (bass)

Cornet II (treble)

Additional:

Sources

<https://beta.pipeorgandatabase.org/instruments/1907>