

Michael Welte & Söhne

Founded/Born

1832 - 1952

Closed/Death

Still active?

no

Description

M. Welte & Söhne was a renowned manufacturer of self-playing mechanical musical instruments, founded in 1832 by Michael Welte in Vöhrenbach, Germany. The company moved to Freiburg im Breisgau in 1872 and gained significant recognition for its innovative contributions to music technology. Despite the complete destruction of its facilities during a bombing raid in 1944 and the eventual closure in 1952, the company left a lasting legacy in the world of automated musical instruments.

Welte's contributions to theater and pipe organ building were substantial. The company was a pioneer in developing electro-pneumatic organ action, which revolutionized the control of organ registers and pipes through electromagnets. This innovation was marketed extensively by 1887, with notable clients across Europe, including J. Merklin & Cie in Paris and Lyon, J. W. Walker & Sons in London, and Gebrüder Rieger in Jägerndorf. The Welte-Philharmonie-Orgel, introduced in 1911, utilized this technology and showcased the company's expertise in combining traditional organ building with modern mechanical advancements.

The introduction of the Welte-Mignon reproducing piano in 1905 further cemented Welte's reputation for innovation. This instrument could replay a pianist's performance with remarkable accuracy, using perforated paper rolls to control the playback. The same technology was later adapted for the Welte-Philharmonie-Orgel, allowing for automated performances of complex organ pieces. Despite the challenges faced during the Great Depression and the advent of sound films, which diminished the demand for theater organs, Welte's contributions to automated musical instruments remained influential.

Welte's legacy includes surviving instruments and historical artifacts that continue to be celebrated and studied. Notable examples of Welte's craftsmanship can be found in museums and churches, including the Augustinermuseum in Freiburg and the Deutsches Musikautomaten-Museum in Bruchsal. The innovative spirit of M. Welte & Söhne in theater and pipe organ building remains an important chapter in the history of musical instrument development.

Sources

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/M._Welte_%26_S%C3%B6hne

Hamburg, NDR-Studio-1

Norddeutscher Rundfunk, Rothenbaumchaussee 132, 20149 Hamburg, Germany



Builder	M. Welte & Söhne
Year	ca. 1930
Period/Style	Romantic
Stops	129
Keyboards	3+P
Keyaction	electrical
Tuning	Equal

Description

The Organ, made by M. Welte & Söhne in 1930, is recognized as the largest "Cinema Organ" type instrument in Germany, although it was never actually housed in a cinema. It nevertheless fulfills all the technical characteristics of this term, including percussion stops, high wind pressure, and ultimately its sound. The organ is divided into two sections, each of which can be separately swelled. The "main organ" is located in a room above and behind the stage, while the "solo organ" is located in the basement of Studio 1, beneath the stage. Its sound is projected into the concert hall through sound openings on the front of the stage. Numerous broadcasts have been recorded on this organ, and it continues to be used and maintained today. In 1998, it was expanded to include eight free combinations that are housed in a separate case to the right independently of the console.

Stoplist/Disposition

I Manual	II Manual	III Manual	Pedal
Flöte 16'	Diapason 16'	Principal 16'	Principalbass 16'
Principal 8'	Principal 8'	Viola di Gamba 16'	Contrabass 16'
Traversflöte 8'	Flöte 8'	Principal 8'	Violon 16'
Bordun-Horn 8'	Geige 8'	Flöte 8'	Principalbass 8'
Quintatön 8'	Bordun-Horn 8'	Gemshorn 8'	Cello 8'
Geige 8'	Quintatön 8'	Vox angelica 8'	Geige 8'
Viol d'orchestre 8'	Aeoline 8'	Octav 4'	Flötenbass 8'

Vox coelestis 8'	Vox coelestis 8'	Gemshorn 4'	Cornetbass 51/3'
Cornett 51/3'	Cornet 51/3'	Vox angelica 4'	Flötenbass 4'
Octav 4'	Flöte 4'	Terz 31/5'	Violine 4'
Flöte 4'	Quintatön 4'	Aeolsharf 2'	Fagottbass 16'
Violine 4'	Quinte 22/3'	Terz 13/5'	Tuba 16'
Quintatön 4'	Piccolo 2'	Sesquialter 22/3'	Trompete 8'
Quinte 22/3'	Aeolsharfe 2'	Cymbel	Saxophon 8'
Superoctav 2'	Sesquialter 2f 22/3'	Tuba 16'	Soloorgel
Flageolet 2'	Mixtur 4-6f	Oboe 16'	Bassflöte 16'
Aeolsharfe 2'	Cymbel	Feldtrompete 8'	Salicetbass 16'
Sesquialter 2f 22/3'	Saxophon 16'	Saxophon 8'	Flöte 8'
Mixtur 4-6f	Clarinetten 16'	Clarinetten 8'	Cello 8'
Feltrompete 8'	Vox humana 16'	Vox humana 8'	Octave 4'
Saxophon 8'	Saxophon 8'	Vox humana 4'	Aeoline 2'
Oboe 8'	Oboe 8'		Trompete 8'
Vox humana 8'	Vox humana 8'		Cor anglais 8'
Vox humana 4'	Horn 4'		
Harfe	Harfe		
Flauto amabile 16'	Xylophon		
Tibia 8'	Stahlharmonika		
Wieder Flöte 8'	Große Glocken		
Viol d'amour 8'	Tibia 16'		
Unda maris 8'	Tibia 8'		
Tibia 4'	Wiener Flöte 8'		
Violine 4'	Viol d'amour 8'		
Quinte 22/3'	Unda maris 8'		
Flageolet 2'	Flöte 4'		
Aeolsharfe 2'	Tibia 4'		
Trompette à Piston 8'	Quinte 22/3'		
Cor anglais 8'	Tibia 2'		
Kinura 8'	Piccolo 2'		
Kinura 4'	Terz 13/5'		
Marimba	Cor anglais 16'		
	Kinura 16'		
	Trompette à Piston 8'		
	Cor anglais 8'		
	Kinura 8'		
	Marimba		

Additional: II/I, III/I, III/II, I/P, II/P, III/P, Super I/I, Super II/I, Super III/I, Super II/II, Super III/III, 10 free combinations, 8 fixed combinations, Tutti, Registercrescendotritt(Crescendopedal), Zungen Ab, Multiple Tremulants

Sources

https://organindex.de/index.php?title=Hamburg/Harvestehude,_NDR-Studio-1