

Monaco, Église Saint-Charles Monte-Carlo (Monaco)

8 Av. Saint-Charles, 98000 Monaco, Monaco



Builder	Tamburini
Year	ca. 1979
Period/Style	Classical
Keyaction	tracker/mechanical
Tuning	Unknown

Description

The Church

History

To meet the spiritual needs of a growing population, Prince Charles III ordered, in 1879, the construction of a place of worship in the new tourist section of Monte Carlo. According to his wishes, this new church was dedicated to St. Charles Borromeo. Mrs Marie Blanc donated the land to the Principality; a piece of land where stood an former private chapel dedicated to St. Laurent.

The Prince entrusted the construction to Parisian architect Charles Lenormand, who worked since 1875 on the construction site of the new Monaco cathedral. After major landscaping works, the first stone was laid down and blessed by Bishop Charles Theuret, on November 11th, 1879.

The church was inaugurated on March 26th, 1883, then elevated as parish church, on March 15th, 1887. It was consecrated on November 9th, 1912 by Bishop Jean-Charles Arnal du Curel.

In 1983, Prince Rainier III ordered major interior restoration works. The centenary festivities were presided by Bishop Charles Brandt. Degraded by marine air and pollution, the facades and the bell tower were completed renovated in 2003.

The organ

The history of this instrument is merged with the instrument which was in St. Nicholas church, destroyed in 1874 to make room for the actual cathedral. In 1874, entrusted with the construction of both the cathedral and St. Charles church, architect Charles Lenormand proposed to transfer the organcase in St. Charles church.

Most of St. Nicholas' organcase was preserved but Charles Lenormand enlarged it. To the seven groups of pipes were located in the space located between the columns, he added, on either side, four symmetrical sections giving more width to the original organcase. A new gallery was built.

In 1883, the Merklin firm, from Lyons, was entrusted to build a new 2-manual and pedal 24-stop organ with mixed mechanical and pneumatic action at the cost of 18,500 francs. It does not seem that the original pipework was reused. On either side of the columns, two flats were added and, standing aside, two auxiliary caissons to house the pedal windchests. In the cut pediment, a group of pipes replaced Honoré III's coat of arms. The organ was inaugurated on March 25th, 1884.

Affected by marine air and hygrometric variations, and in spite of numerous restorations, notably in 1939 by the Merklin firm and in 1953 by the Puget firm who added an enclosed Récit, the organ became silent in 1973.

In 1977, the Government orders, from the Tamburini Pontifical Organbuilding firm, of Crema (Italy), a new 17-th century classical Italian style organ, with 39 stops, an enclosed Récit, three 56-note manuals and a flat 30-note pedalboard. The manual action is mechanical and the stop action is electric. Windchests are made of mahogany and the aluminium manuals are covered with buxus and with ebony. At the same time, pedal caissons are removed. The newly restored organcase woodworks show a new display of pipeworks, more in line with the Italian style, and more in harmony with the architecture of the instrument. The Grimaldi's coat of arms were put back on the pediment. A back Positif division and case were added.

The new organ was blessed on January 26th, 1979 by Bishop Edmond Abelé and the inaugural concert was given by Canon Henri Carol and by Lucienne Antonini.