

"BIRTH OF A TRACKER ORGAN"

Leek Pipe Organ Co.

THE GROUNDWORK

At the beginning, a group of people, including the organist, a church representative, an organ expert, and the organbuilder meet to establish the size, appearance, and stoplist (sound colors) for the new organ. Then, the designer and constructor create blueprints using specialized software and may construct a scale model or computer simulation to visualize the organ's impact on its installation site.

CONTRACT, MODEL, AND MATERIALS

When the contract has been awarded and a certain model decided on, the materials have to be chosen and ordered. The most important raw material in a pipe organ is wood. It is needed for almost all parts of it: the casing, pipes, windchest, bellows compartment, console, action etc. Having well-seasoned wood at hand is essential to building a good organ.

CONSTRUCTING THE ORGAN

Upon the arrival of materials, manufacturing begins in different sections to construct organ components such as pipes, chests, bellows, wind channels, action, console and casing. Larger organs may require a combination system to be programmed.

Steps can be divided as such:

Making and building pipes—metal flue, wooden flue and reed pipes;

Creating the wind system— the windchest, bellows and wind conductor; and

Building the key action and the console.

ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP

Usually, a new organ is test-assembled at the workshop to ensure that everything fits and works correctly before it is shipped. After the testing, the organ is disassembled and packed for delivery. Preliminary voicing and tuning is usually done here as well, to save time when it is time for the organ's final voicing at its site.

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DESTINATION ASSEMBLY

The organ needs to be reassembled at the final location, which can take days or even weeks. During this process, the entire sanctuary may have to be used as a storage area for thousands of parts until they are gradually assembled.

FINAL VOICING AND TUNING

After assembling the organ, the voicer adjusts the sound of each pipe to match the acoustics of the location and other pipes. This step is crucial to the sound quality of the organ. The final tuning can take weeks to months depending on the size of the instrument.

FINAL APPRAISAL (BY ORGAN EXPERTS)

After the organ-building process is complete, the organ needs to be approved by the organist, buyer, and experts. *In the past, it was customary for the organbuilder to receive as much wine as the largest pipe in the organ could hold as a reward for their work.*