of prisoners was built using DC power. Writinghouse and AC power gained traction in the public eye. If DC could kill people, we don’t want it in our houses. It was political. Today, when we hear of a construction worker getting electrocuted, it’s proven that AC power can kill, too. Michael was lucky.

Pipe organ wind
When I talk about pipe organ wind, I keep mentioning reservoirs and regulators. Don’t I really mean bellows? Like the short circuit, and the circuit breaker. I suggest we use the name that best describes what the thing is actually doing. A bellows produces a flow of air. A Black-smith uses a bellows to blow on the fire in his forge just as we use a bellows at our living room fireplace.

A reservoir is a storage device. A rooftop water tower is a reservoir. In modern pipe organs, the bellows have been replaced with electric blowers, so what we might call a bellows under the winch-kid of the organ is actually a reservoir. But the reservoir also regulates the wind pressure. We use weights or spring tension to create the pressure. The more weight or the heavier the springs, the higher the pressure. But in order to create pressure, we also have to limit how far the thing can open—that’s another function of the curtain valve. The organ builder sets it so the valve is closed when the reservoir is open. Far enough. Otherwise it would inflate until it burst, which is the air pressure equivalent of a short circuit. So the balancing of weights, springs, and limit of travel determines the wind pressure. In the curtian valve I mentioned earlier opens to allow more air in as you consume air by playing. So I think the most accurate term to describe that unit is “regulator.” Regulator is correct, but incomplete. The rooftop water tank is also a regulator, though the regulator of pressure happens automatically as a function of physics—remember that hydrostatic pressure. Hydro means water, stific means “lacking in movement.” You get pressure regulation without doing anything!

Stop and think about it
When you think of these three names for organ stops, are descriptive, even definitive. “Prestant” comes from the Latin, presuming the name is, rather than to stand before. So a Prestant, by definition, is an organ stop that stands in the facade. Many organs have miniscule Prestants. A Chimney Flute is a capped pipe (usually metal) that sticks out of the facade sticking up from the cap. The purpose of the chimney is to emphasize the third overtone (22/3 pitch). That’s why a Chimney Flute is brighter than a Gedekt.

I don’t need to say much about Clarinets, Oboes, Trumpets, or Flutes. But a Harmonic Flute is special because the pipes are twice as long as Principal pipes, and the characteristic hole half-way up the resonator breaks the internal sound wave in half, so the double length produces normal pitch, but with a much richer harmonic structure.

Diapason is a mysterious word, until you look it up. I found two good applicable definitions: “a rich, full outpouring of sound,” and “a fixed standard of pitch.” Go to Grove-dictionary-staal-contacts and you find an Italian manufacturer of high-quality audio speakers—“a rich, full outpouring of sound.”

Quint = fifth. A 2 2/3 quint speaks the second overtone above fundamental pitch—one octave plus a fifth. A Quintaludia emphasizes that overtone—that’s why it’s brighter than a Bourdon.

Teece = third. A 1 2/3 Teece speaks the fourth overtone—two octaves plus a third.

A Resultic is a tricky one. Turns out that if you play 16′ and 10 2/3′ pitch together, your mind’s ear is tricked into thinking that you’re hearing 32′ pitch, because 16′ and 10 2/3′ are the first two overtones of 32′. The result is that you imagine you’re hearing a 32′ stop. Ha! Fooled you!

By the way, why does blowing on a fire make the fire bigger? Simple. Fire uses oxygen as fuel. Throwing a blanket over a fire and you increase the oxygen supply. Poof! More oxygen, anyone?

The Art of Improvisation
Featuring Concerts and Lectures by:
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For registration information please e-mail: chartz@umich.edu
The Froberger E-minor suite is a piece of real beauty, especially when played very fast; it is, essentially, an overture to the program. Of course, this is not just for variety on paper. It is because the demands made on listeners by a work in several movements are different—and less challenging, than the demands made by a long piece in indistinguishable sections. So in effect this piece is, while just as beautiful and as moving as the rest, rather relaxing in its experience in context.

The Froberger recital mentioned was present in the choice of the Handel piece to start the second half. More specifically, it serves to bring the audience out of the intermission in a friendly and not at all daunting way. Of course, this is not just for variety on paper. It is because the demands made on listeners by a work in several movements are different—and less challenging, than the demands made by a long piece in indistinguishable sections. So in effect this piece is, while just as beautiful and as moving as the rest, rather relaxing in its experience in context.

The two works that I have not mentioned yet—the short Buxtehude fugue and the Bach O Lamm Gottes—serve in part a function similar to that of the Handel in the harpsichord program. They are not bringing the audience back from intermission, but by being shorter and less imposing—not less interesting or beautiful—they provide a moment of relaxation before the challenge to the focus and attention span represented by the rest of the program (Bach, Kuhnau, Buxtehude) in the summer of 2004. I chose it because the relationship between the program and the instrument was different from the first example, and because there were also different considerations about the prospective audience. It went as follows:

Froheheit in F Major BWV 156, Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1707)

Inne della Domenica, Giordano Frescobaldi (1583–1643)

Cantica Quarta in F Major, Frescobaldi

Preludio in C Major, Buxtehude

O Lamm Gottes—

Psalmus: Warum betrubst du dich mein Herz? (chorale with twelve variations), Samuel Scheit (1587–1634)

Fugue in C Minor, Frescobaldi


Fugue in C Major,

Magnificat Primi Toni,

Partita: Was Gott tut das ist wohlgetan,

Psalmus: O Lamm Gottes unschuldig,

O Lamm Gottes—

Intemation

Partita: Wie Gott hat dich von Weib getrennt, Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706)

O Lamm Gottes unschuldig, J. S. Bach

Toccata, Frescobaldi

Fugue in E Minor, BWV 548, Bach

The organ was a late-twentieth-century instrument, elegantly designed in a style that was still a kind of romanticism: a large, two-sound organ with a fairly low wind pressure, stop names that could by and large have been found on an eighteenth-century German or French instrument, and mostly copied from them. When they invited me to play this concert, the church in question had known of me as a recitalist with a special interest in Baroque music. They wanted me to exploit the Baroque side of the instrument, and in doing so to show off a reasonable amount of variety. They expected that most of the people coming to the event would be enthusiastic organ-music listeners, but not necessarily themselves focused at all on the Baroque. The program, even if its composition dates all fall within the century, still would have to be presented in a way that could be understood by the audience, rather than a couple of other instances a Handel Allegro non troppo. I got feedback from several audience members that—keeping, in fact, with what I wrote above—I actually did not have to hear anything after the Buxtehude. The hand in this case serves to remain in the same key as long as this was decided to omit the encore after a certain point. There is one point that I have not mentioned yet—the short Buxtehude fugue. It is a through-composed one-movement piece: fairly short, quite exuberant, very charismatic piece, though not as tightly constructed as some (later) Bach pieces. Its multi-sectional toccata form was old-fashioned at the time when it was written, and therefore it actually fits especially well with the organ in which the instrument was different from the first example, and because there were also different considerations about the prospective audience. It went as follows:

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