Eric David Johnson, Master Organ Builder
Reed voicer par excellence, nationally recognized
A brief Glimpse of His 40+ year Career



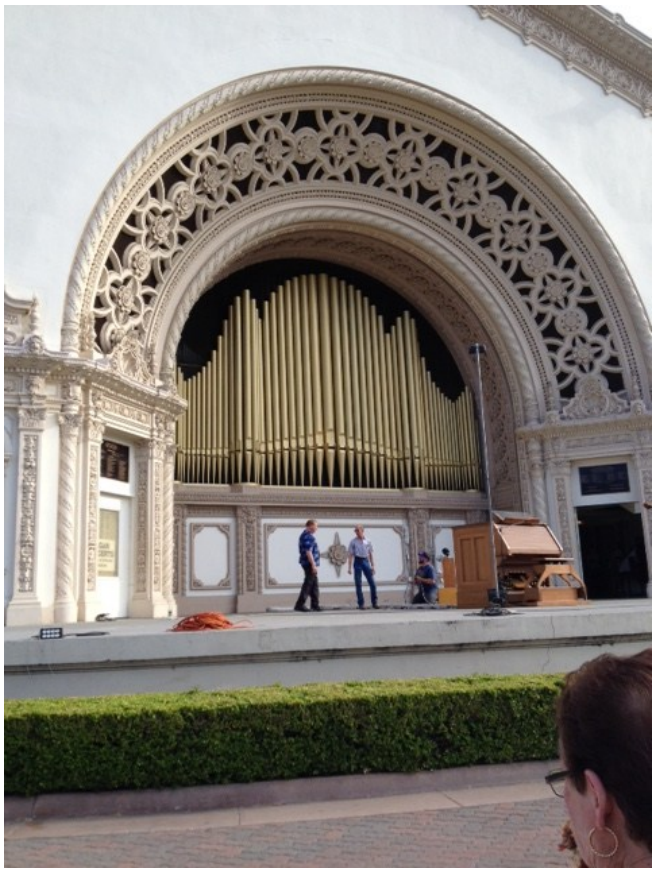
Eric Johnson, Head Voicer, Quimby Pipe Organs, has been involved with organ building for 52 years, beginning in his teens. His initial work was with the local Arizona organ builder, David McDowell, where he first learned to leather pouchboards, wiring, and tuning. This was followed by two years of electrical engineering study at the University of Arizona, while also working part-time for Brad Kerns who was the local Phoenix organ builder. After leaving the U of A, he apprenticed with L. W. Blackinton and Associates, Inc., of San Diego, CA where all facets of organ building were learned. Eric joined QPO in 1991 as the Head of the windchest department. Currently, he holds the position of Head Voicer and specializes in reed voicing. He has broad experience in all facets of organ building in new installations, restorations and rebuildings from coast to coast. This has included one-manual mechanical action instruments, all the way up to a five-manual electro-pneumatic instrument.
Eric is the author of a paper on chest construction for the American Institute of Organ Builders (AIO) Journal. He has also presented several seminars on reed voicing for the AIO and lectured on windchest building at the 2014 AIO Convention. He is currently a member of the American Institute of Organbuilders, the American Guild of Organists, the Organ Historical Society, the American Theatre Organ Society, and the Estey Organ Society.

First United Methodist Church, San Diego
Blackinton and Associates, 1989
4 manuals, 108 ranks

This 107-rank Blackinton and Associates Organ is the largest organ in San Diego County. The specification includes three 32' ranks, of which the Principal and the Bombarde are full length. The organ stands as San Diego County's largest. Eric, Lyle Blackinton and Dale Sorenson







Spreckels Organ at Balboa Park, prepping for 2015 AGO convention. Eric and Dale Sorenson..



The Roy Johnson Memorial Organ
Northminster Presbyterian Church
Quimby Pipe Organs, Opus 51, 1999, 3 manuals, 46 ranks

The Roy A. Johnson Memorial Organ is a three-manual instrument of 46 ranks based on an eclectic design. The concept does not copy any historical style of organ building. The tonal design is a synthesis, resulting in a concept that is distinctly American. The tonal specification was designed in consultation with John Brobeck, organist, and Stardust Johnson, director of music. The instrument features Blackinton-Johnson style electro-pneumatic slider windchests and electro-pneumatic unit windchests for extended ranks.







COVER FEATURE, *The American Organist*, November 2009

THE RESTORATION OF THE GREAT ORGAN, 2008

CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, NEW YORK CITY

Michael Quimby, John L. Speller, Douglass Hunt, and Eric Johnson

The Great Organ, built by the Ernest M. Skinner Company, 1910, Op. 150, was rebuilt and enlarged by G. Donald Harrison of Aeolian-Skinner in 1954 as Op. 150-A. The Cathedral suffered fires in 2001 and 2019 which silenced the instrument. Both times, restoration was carried out by Quimby Pipe Organs of Warrensburg, Missouri. Widely considered to be the masterpiece of American pipe organ building, it is an acclaimed national treasure. Four manual and pedal, electro-pneumatic action instrument, 151 ranks and 8,514 pipes. It has several extraordinary features, including the world famous State Trumpet above the Cathedral's West End, one of the most powerful organ stops in the world.











Our Lady of Refuge, Brooklyn, New York
Quimby Pipe Organ, Opus 68, 2013
2 manuals, 25 ranks



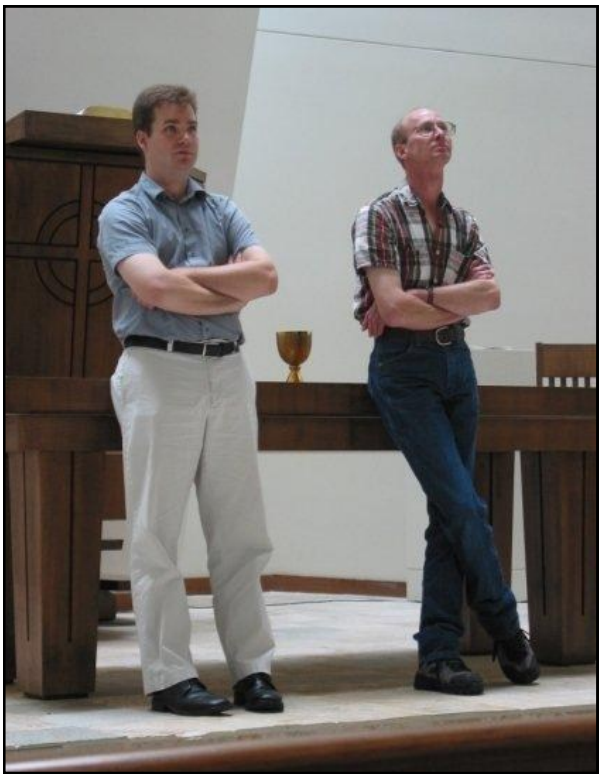






Finally, on the morning of June 17th of 2013, two large trucks pulled up to the doors of the church. After eight men worked hard for more than four hours, the parts of the organ were back inside of the church, sprawled all over the building like some giant Chinese puzzler waiting to be assembled. Six weeks later, a team of capable people led by Eric Johnson of Quimby Pipe Organs put the finishing touches on the organ. *From the dedication brochure.*

Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church, Richardson, Texas
Quimby Pipe Organ, Opus 61, 2013
3 manuals, 58 ranks



The tonal specification was drawn by Michael Quimby, in consultation with Dr. Sally Hill, Organist, and Colin Howland, Consultant. The organ possesses a high proportion of *color reed stops*, such as the English Horn, French Horn and Bass Clarinet, one of the marks of a particularly lavish instrument. The organ is also unusual for its size in possessing two contrasting large solo reeds of the trumpet family, the Tuba and Harmonic Trumpet stops, both voiced on 15" wind pressure, and were constructed and voiced in our workshop.







Saint Paul's Cathedral, San Diego
Quimby Pipe Organ, Opus 68, 2013
4 manuals, 81 ranks

IN 2007, ERIC JOHNSON and I were invited to St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, San Diego, by Robert Wilkins, chair of the organ committee, and Martin Green, canon musician of the cathedral, at the recommendation of William "Pat" Patridge, canon musician, Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral, St. Louis, MO.

After our initial examination of the existing pipe organ, we found an instrument that was merely a collection of ranks, where there were only disjointed ensembles and mechanical components that were becoming of questionable reliability. The existing instrument included ranks from their previous instruments and rebuilds, including an 1887 Hook & Hastings (Opus 1345), a 1915 Johnston, a 1950 M.P. Möller, a 1967 Aeolian-Skinner, and the 1986 Wicks Organ Company rebuilding and enlargement, resulting in an instrument of 81 ranks. The most significant number of ranks to be considered for retaining were from the four-manual, 61-rank Aeolian-Skinner (Opus 1495).

Following our initial examination of the existing ranks, and determining which were of excellent construction with possibilities for revoicing and rescaling, Green, Johnson, and I created a new specification, using as many of the existing ranks as possible, that would result in an integrated tonal ensemble. No effort was made to use pipes from the divisions found at the time of the last re building; instead, we would place them in the division where they would best fit into the new tonal concept. Green's goal was to achieve a wide variety of tonal and dynamic possibilities for creative and sensitive service playing of the Episcopal liturgy.

Michael Quimby, TAO, February 2014

Individuals from Quimby Pipe Organs who were involved in the







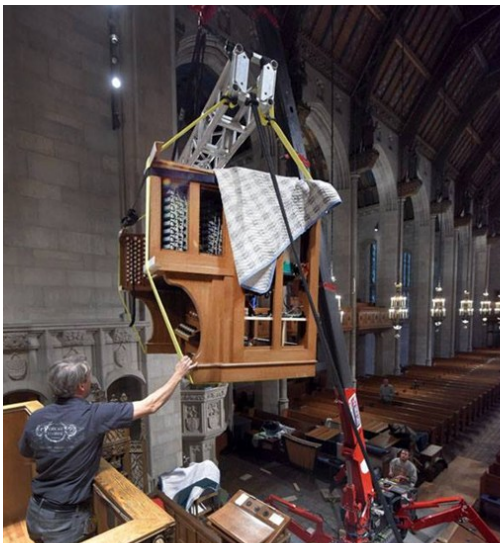
Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago
Quimby Pipe Organ, Opus 71, 2015
5 manuals, 143 ranks



The instrument is an American symphonic organ with influence from the British organ builders T. C. Lewis and Henry Willis. It includes delicate symphonic colors, including a harp, English horn, and many lush string tones, as well as zymbelsterns (bells) and chimes. Pairing that with its warm foundation tones and expansive color, the Andrew Pipe Organ is able to play any organ literature. It is particularly well suited to accompanying congregational singing and choir anthems, inspiring people and bringing them closer to God with expressions of majesty, sorrow, and joy.

Its console is the only organ in Chicago to have five manuals. These keyboards, along with the pedals, control the nine divisions of the organ. These are made up of 143 ranks and 8,343 pipes, making this the largest pipe organ not only in Chicago but throughout the Midwest. It has 10,000 memory levels. In August 2014 the previous Fourth Church organ, the 1971 Aeolian-Skinner Organ, Opus 1516, was removed and sent to the Quimby Organ Company in Warrensburg, where pipes were cleaned and repaired and new ones were hand made. (The design and preparation phase began in late 2012.) The finished pipes were delivered in early August 2015 and the installation process began, with a new console hoisted into the choir loft on November 11, 2015.





From the Fourth Presbyterian Church website.

Fourth Presbyterian Dedication





QPO shop on site somewhere

Eric at work













At work in the Voicing Room



An Install somewhere

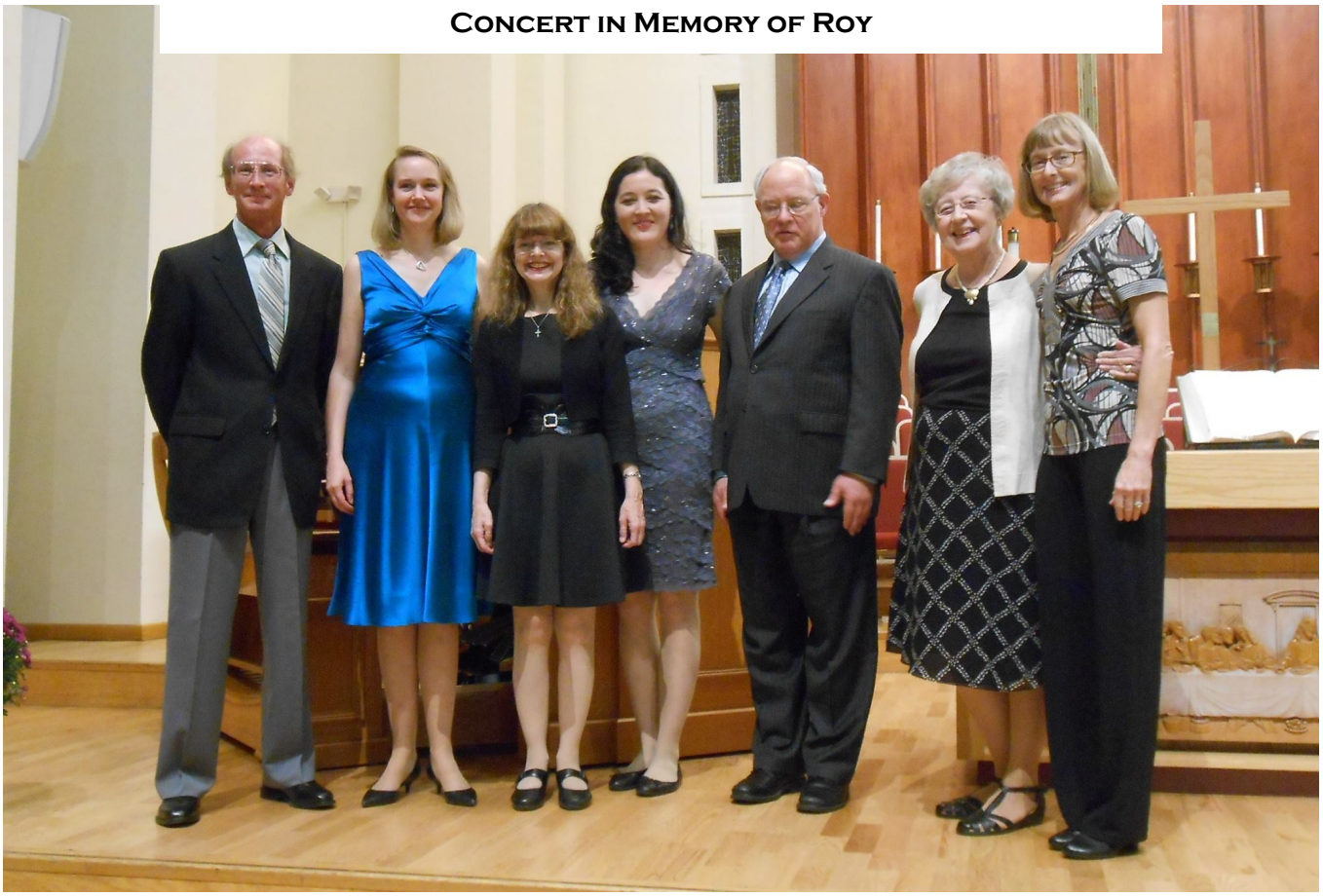
Catalina United Methodist Church, Opus 70, 2014
4 manuals, 57 ranks





Catalina United Methodist Church, Opus 70

Concert in Memory of Roy





When Quimby Pipe Organs was awarded the contract to build a new instrument for Catalina United Methodist Church in Tucson, Arizona, the memory gates were opened for me. Little did I know as a grade school student that one day as a member of the QPO team I would be building a future replacement instrument for Catalina. What follows is a trip down memory lane, which many readers may already know.

If you see my name at the end of this brief article, you may know who I am. I am the son of organ professor Roy Andrew Johnson, Jr., who moved to Tucson, Arizona, in 1966 to teach at the University of Arizona. Therefore, I consider Tucson my home, since that is where I grew up. As a teenager, my first job was with local organ builder David McDowell. One of the first tunings I ever accomplished took place in 1974 with David McDowell at Catalina UMC on the 1959 three-manual Reuter pipe organ. In 1966, the Reuter organ was the premier organ in the city of Tucson. And in 1966 the University of Arizona, where my father was the organ professor and counterpoint teacher, had no recital instrument of its own for practice and performance. Students had to use instruments in neighboring churches for some of their lessons and all of their recitals. The major recitals, including faculty recitals, were held at Catalina UMC, because it truly had the best instrument in the city and was only one and a half miles from the School of Music. It didn't hurt that my father was also the organist at Catalina UMC.. Excerpt by *Eric D. Johnson, Head Reed Voicer Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc., The Diapason, November 2015.*

Grand Avenue Temple United Methodist Church, Kansas City
E. M. Skinner, Opus 190, 1912
4 manuals, 56 ranks
AGO convention 2015

Additions to the instrument were made by E. M. Skinner in 1949. Michael Quimby and Eric Johnson maintained the organ for years as a labor of love, no charge to the church. Prepped it for the 2018 AGO convention (see below) where Eric remained in the very hot chambers in the very hot church (no AC) to be ready for anything untoward. All worked beautifully for an exciting concert. Photo on right of mom and Eric, both registered convention attendees. Eric proudly shared his instrument with his dad. See plaque on last page. Church now closed; organ salvaged by QPO for a new life.












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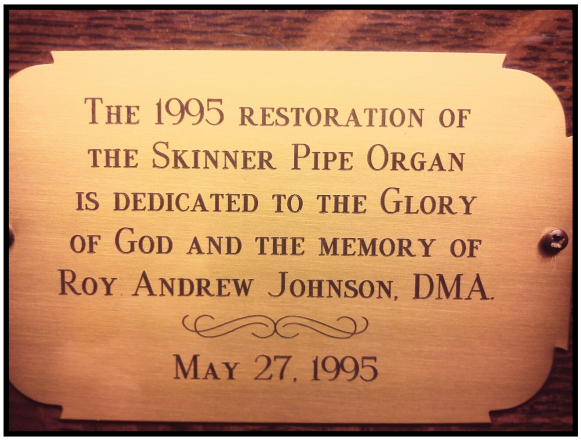








Eric's gift of a historic rank of Vox Humana pipes for the Schoenstein Organ, Holsclaw Hall, University of Arizona, 1994. He asked his dad if he would like to have them; the answer was 'yes.' They are a treasure from Eric's heart, a wonderful addition to the instrument—and a delight to hear.



Plaque honoring Roy's memory in recognition of the enormous gratis, labor of love, work he and Michael Quimby did on the Grand Avenue Methodist Temple, Kansas City, historic Skinner Pipe Organ. The instrument was featured in the AGO Kansas City Convention. Sadly, the historic church is now closed. QPO salvaged the instrument; it will now have a new home.