

SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL (RC)

287 FLOWER CITY PARK

John Brombaugh & Associates – Germantown, Ohio
Built for Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, Toledo, Ohio
Opus 9, 1972

PEDAL ORGAN

16'	Subbass
8'	Octave
16'	Fagot
8'	Trumpet (GT)

Manual compass: 56 notes

Pedal compass: 30 notes

Mechanical action

20 Stops

29 Ranks

1248 Pipes

Tremulant

Temperament: Kellner

GREAT ORGAN - II

16'	Bourdon
8'	Præstant III
8'	Holpijp
4'	Octave
4'	Spielflöte
2'	Octave
III: X	Mixture
8'	Trumpet

RÜCKPOSITIVE ORGAN - I

8'	Gedackt
4'	Præstant
4'	Rohrflöte
2'	Octave
1 1/3'	Quinte
II	Sesquialtera
8'	Musette

John Brombaugh's Opus 9, completed for Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Toledo, Ohio, in 1972, successfully brought to the American organ scene a number of "firsts," which were to have a lasting impact not only upon American organ building, but also upon the music making of countless organists who have been shaped by its distinctive qualities over the past thirty-three years. Some of those "firsts" are:

- the sound of hammered lead (82 percent) pipes, voiced in the manner similar to that of the Dutch Renaissance, giving the sound a very strong "vocal" quality, rich in fundamental tone, and intense;

- the warm brilliance of the plenum, or principal ensemble, of the organ, effected through the Great Mixture stop, designed according to the tonal concept of the Renaissance Blockwerk, sounding both forceful and sweet, and not overladen with high pitches;

- the successful realization of the smooth, quick-sounding, and somewhat dark quality of north-European reed stops, allowing increased understanding of older registration practices using reeds in combination with other stops;

- the use of suspended action in a full-sized instrument, for both the Great and the Rückpositive, allowing the organist to "play the wind" with increased sophistication;

- the particular approach to the design of the case, stressing classical proportions, the use of high-quality solid woods, and the use of a decorative scheme – especially the moldings, pipe shades, and embossed pipes – all of which aspects draw heavily upon Renaissance traditions, but which seek to further them, rather than simply to reproduce them.

Situated strategically in Toledo, Ohio, within easy reach of two major music schools (Michigan and Oberlin), this organ had a strong formative influence on the many students who played and studied upon it. Its distinctive character allowed those who studied and played upon it to experience new insights for the performance of much of the north-European repertoire, and it marked a decisive moment in American organ building: the movement away from a "neo-Baroque" aesthetic toward a re-connection with historic practice in its broadest sense.