

Casavant Frères



Montréal, Québec — Église Saint-Jean-Baptiste

Four manuals and pedals, 70 stops, 92 ranks

Electro-pneumatic action

Opus 615, 1915

Orgue de tribune: 55 stops, 77 ranks

Detached drawknob console, compass 61/32

Orgue du sanctuaire: 15 stops, 15 ranks

Detached drawknob console, compass 61/30

Photograph: Michael Perrault (color); Casavant Frères Archives

Like many areas of the present-day city of Montréal, Saint-Jean-Baptiste was a small village when it was established in 1861. Growth in the area was rapid and by 1884 it became a city only to be annexed by Montréal just two years later. In the early years, Catholics were obliged to travel to neighboring parishes in order to attend Mass. After several failed attempts, the citizens were finally successful in their petition to the Bishop of Montréal to build a church on rue Rachel on twenty lots that had been donated for that purpose by four residents in 1872. The first church was opened in June 1874. This building was destroyed by fire in 1898 and replaced by a new building designed by Emile Vanier and begun in 1903. This building housed a four manual Casavant, Opus 448 that was installed in 1908. Unfortunately the organ and building were destroyed by fire the day following its dedication.



Drawing of Opus 448

The third, and present neo-baroque church was built within the walls of the 1903 structure. Casimir Saint-Jean was the architect for the building. He also designed the organ case that was built by Casavant Frères but modified to fit the mechanism. Guido Ninchieri completed the interior painting, originally entrusted to Alphonse Paquette.

The church contains three instruments. The principal organ in the gallery of the main church is playable from a four manual console that also controls a two manual sanctuary organ, which has its own console. Both instruments were contracted in 1916 as Opus 615. Alexis Contant, titular organist, performed the dedication of Opus 615 held on September 26, 1915. A two manual tubular-pneumatic organ of nine stops (Opus 656) was installed in 1916 in the Saint-Louis Chapel (Chapelle des Mariages).

In 1996 the organ was reopened in a “*Festival d’inauguration*” following work to re-leather and restore the instrument. Since then, the church has been the site of numerous performances including the 1999 convention of the Organ Historical Society and the organ recorded by several artists.

ORGUE DE TRIBUNE

Grand Orgue		Récit	
Montre	16	Bourdon	16
Montre	8	Principal	8
Principal	8	Bourdon	8
Salicional	8	Flûte harmonique	8
Flûte harmonique ¹	8	Viole de gambe	8
Bourdon	8	Voix céleste (TC)	8
Prestant ¹	4	Principal	4
Flûte ouverte ¹	4	Flûte traverse	4
Quinte	2-2/3	Octavin	2
Doublette ¹	2	Cornet harmonique II ¹	2-2/3
Cornet V ¹	8	Fourniture harmonique ¹	III-V
Grand Fourniture II-IV ¹	2-2/3	Bombarde (Ext.)	16
Fourniture ¹	V	Trompette	8
Cymbale ¹	III	Hautbois	8
Bombarde	16	Voix humaine	8
Trompette	8	Clairon ¹	4
Clairon	4	Trémolo	
Positif		Bombarde	
Bourdon (Ext.)	16	Grand Cornet en 16’ V (GO)	16
Principal	8	Cornet en 8’ (Grand Orgue)	8
Flûte à cheminée ¹	8	Bombarde ¹	16
Principal	4	Trompette ¹	8
Flûte douce ¹	4	Clairon	4
Flûte ¹	2		
Sesquialtera II ¹	2-2/3		

Positif (continued)		Pédale	
Plein jeu harmonique ¹	II-V	Flûte (Ext., 6 polyphones) ²	32
Clarinette	8	Flûte ouverte	16
Trémolo		Principal (Grand Orgue)	16
		Violon	16
		Bourdon	16
Solo		Violoncelle (Ext.)	8
Stentorphone	8	Flûte (Ext.)	8
Flûte harmonique ¹	8	Bourdon (Ext.)	8
Violoncelle	8	Flûte (Ext.)	4
Flûte octavante	4	Bombarde (Ext.)	32
Piccolo (harmonique)	2	Bombarde	16
Clochettes II ¹	1-1/3	Trompette (Ext.)	8
Cor anglais	8	Clairon (Ext.)	4
Musette	8		
Trémolo			

ORGUE DU SANCTUAIRE

Choeur		
Montre	8	
Mélodie	8	
Dulciane	8	
Prestant	4	
Doublette	2	
Trompette	8	
Echo		
Principal	8	
Bourdon	8	
Aeoline	8	
Viole de gambe	8	
Voix céleste (TC)	8	
Flûte harmonique	4	
Hautbois	8	
Trémolo		
Pédale		
Bourdon	16	
Bourdon	8	



Photograph from the time of the completion of the organ.

¹ New stops or pipework-1996

² See the description for Opus 550 at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto for information about polyphone pipes.