

Organs of the Iberian Peninsular — part III



The Botafumeiro (“censer” in Galician) is one of the most famous and popular symbols of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. It is a large thurible that hangs by means of a system of pulleys from the main dome of the Cathedral and swings toward the

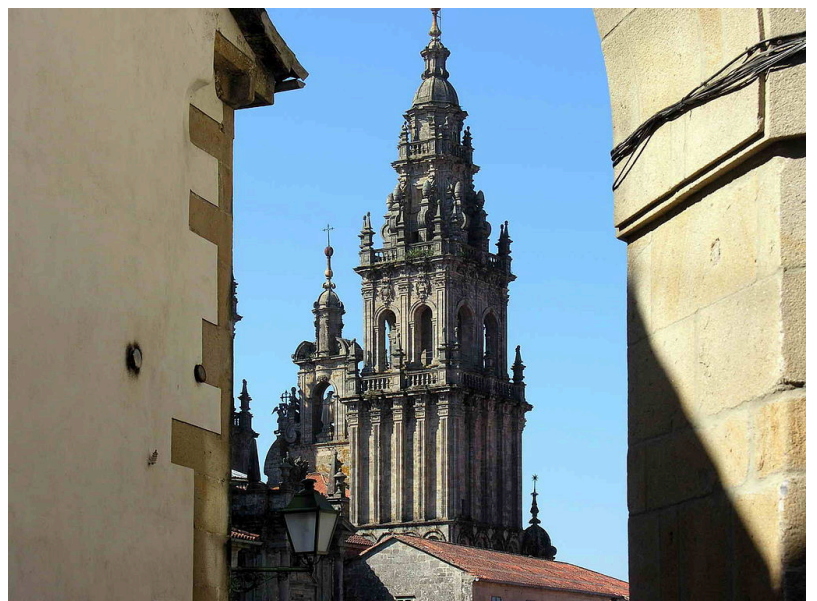
Santiago de Compostela Cathedral:

What a great experience. Elizabeth and I have walked our 250 km Camino and arrived in Santiago de Compostela, a UNESCO world heritage site. The end of the Camino is getting your certificate signed for having completed the pilgrimage. To get the certificate you must present your Camino Passport with two stamps collected each day of the Camino walk. Hotels, coffee shops, bars and restaurants vie for the privilege of stamping your passport!

Next highlight is attending the Pilgrim mass in the Cathedral at noon. Up to 2000 Pilgrims attend the mass each day. A nun acts as Cantor and prepares the Pilgrims for the sung responses – and when to sit and stand. The Mass concludes (usually) with the appearance of the botafumeiro being fuelled with 40kg of charcoal and incense.

side naves. It takes eight men “tiraboleiros” to move it. It weighs 53 kg and measures 1.50 metres; it hangs from a height of 20 metres and can pick up great speed. It rises in both transepts to 82 degrees from the vertical.

The Botafumeiro is used for liturgical reasons, as a priest would use a censer at the altar. It operates during the Cathedral’s main solemnities either during the entrance procession or at the



North Tower or da Carraca



The Botafumeiro above with no smoke emitting and below with clerical attendants and smoke pouring out



end of the Eucharist. The purpose of this great censer is to symbolic. In the same way that the smoke from the incense rises to the top of the temple's naves, so must the prayers of the pilgrims rise to reach the heart of God. As the aroma of the incense perfumes the entire basilica, so must Christians, with their virtues and the testimony of their lives, impregnate with the good scent of Christ, the society that they live in.

The first documented reference to the Botafumeiro is an annotation in a page from the Codex Calixtinus, where it is referred to

as "Turibulum Magnum". Throughout history there have been several thuribles; today there are two; one made from brass dating from 1851 by José Losada, which substituted the one stolen during the French occupation and used normally. The second Botafumeiro is a replica in silver of the previous one and was given to the Apostle by the Provisional Second-Lieutenants in 1971. It is usually kept in the Chapter Library.

The cathedral has a long musical tradition. In the 2nd century the Codex Calixtinus compiled pieces written for one, two and even three voices and devoted to the liturgy of the Apostle Saint James, whose relics are said to reside in the crypt of the church. The first references to the existence of a music chapel appear in the Renaissance. In the 16th century, in addition to the choir of canons, which sang canto llano, there were professional singers and children who performed polyphony. Soon the instrumentalists or minstrels were admitted to play wind and string



Saint James the Great statue in the baldachin (high altar)

instruments in a chapel that traditionally included two organ players.

This group of musicians was directed by a chapel master. In the 17th century several composers occupied that post until the arrival of José de Vaquedano, one of the most important musicians of the Spanish Baroque, part of whose works are kept in Santiago and who lived in the city until his death in 1711.

In the 18th century prestigious composers were at the head of the chapel. Antonio Yangüas later was appointed professor of music in Salamanca, and both Diego Muelas and



Pedro Rodrigo achieved their magisterium from the convent of La Encarnación in Madrid. The great composer Melchor López succeeded the Italian Buono Chiodi in 1783 and



remained in the post until his death in 1822. After the 19th century, the cathedral received the valuable musical contribution of Santiago Tafall, although he was only chapel master from 1895 to 1898. In the 20th century the work of Manuel Soler, Nemesio García Carril and Xavier Méndez deserve mention.

The Compostela cathedral chapter gives great importance to the cathedral's organ which is played on a daily basis during the pilgrim's mass, during the evening mass and, in general, during all the solemnities, festivities and special celebrations that are held in the cathedral. It is used to both accompany

SPECIFICATION OF THE MASCIONI ORGAN in SEVILLE CATHEDRAL (OP. 1010, 1977)

POSITIVO I

C1 - C6

1. Principal 8
2. Flauta chimenea 8
3. Octava 4
4. Flauta 4
5. Sexquiáltera (2 ranks)
2 2/3 & 1 3/5
6. Quincena 2
7. Decinovenas 1 1/3
8. Veintidosena 1
9. Címbala (2 ranks)
10. Trompeta Real
11. Cromorno
12. Trémolo

GRAN ORGANO II

C1 - C6

13. Principal 16
14. Bordón 16
15. Principal 8
16. Flautado 8
17. Flauta 8
18. Octava 4
19. Flauta chimenea 4
20. Docena 2 2/3
21. Quincena 2
22. Decinovenas y Veintidosena (2 ranks)
23. Veintiseisena y Veintinovenas (2 ranks)
24. Llano (4 ranks)
25. Corneta
(5 ranks, C3 - C6)
26. Trompeta Magna 16
27. Trompeta Real 8
28. Trompeta 8
29. Clarín 4

COUPLERS

30. I 8 Ped.
31. II 8 Ped.
32. III 8 Ped.
33. I 8 II
34. III 8 II
35. III 8 I
36. I 4 Ped.
37. II 4 Ped.
38. III 4 Ped.
39. I 16 I
40. I 4 I
41. III 4 I
42. I 16 II
43. II 4 II
44. III 4 II
45. III 4 III

PEDAL

C1 - G2

46. Contrabajas 16
47. Subbajo 16
48. Bordón 16
49. Quinta 10 2/3
50. Bajo 8
51. Principal 8
52. Bordón 8
53. Quinta 5 1/3
54. Octava 4
55. Flauta 4
56. Llano (6 ranks)
57. Bombarda 16
58. Fagot 16
59. Trompeta 8
60. Fagot 8
61. Clarín 4

RECITATIVE III

C1 - C6

62. Quintadena 16
63. Principal
64. Bordón
65. Viola de Gamba 8
66. Octava 4
67. Flauta 4
68. Llano (5 ranks)
69. Nazardo 2 2/3
70. Flautín 2
71. Flauta en
Dieciséisena 1 3/5
72. Voz Celeste 8
73. Fagot 16
74. Trompeta Real 8
75. Clarín 4
76. Trémolo



Reference: <http://catedraldesantiago.es/en/>

the singing of worshippers and choir as well as to play solo pieces.

The previous organ was built between 1708 (Gospel organ) and 1712 (Epistle Organ) by Manuel de la Viña. The two cases were designed by Antonio Alfonsín, with the intervention of Domingo de Andrade, one of the architects of the cathedral, and were built from 1705 to 1709 by Miguel de Romay. The organs have about 200 mute pipes on the façade. In 1947 the organ was electrified by Organería Española and the old consoles were unfortunately removed.

The present-day organ was manufactured by the firm Mascioni of Cuvio-Varese, Italy, in 1977 and utilised the old casework. It is the only instrument by this firm in Spain. The inauguration concert (17 March 1978) was performed by the German organist Erich Arndt, who at the time was organist at Saint Peter's, in Rome.



The organ consists of a double structure on each side of the central nave.

Although the instrument includes some pipes from previous organs (both on the facade and in the interior) it must be

considered a new work, for the majority of the pipes and all the other elements are by Mascioni. The windchests are sliding and the action is electro-mechanical. The distribution of the stops corresponding to the three keyboards and pedalboard in the case is the following: great organ (II) and recitative-expressive (III) are on the Gospel side and



positive (I) and pedalboard on the Epistolary side.

The console includes a number of accessories available for the organ player. These elements are for locking or cancelling adjustable combinations, activating and deactivating stops, coupling the ranks when they belong to different keyboards, starting up the crescendo general, the tutti, etc. In June 2005 Mascioni restored the organ's action with the addition of an electronic combination whose software can store three programmable crescendo and 2490 combinations that can be copied into memory cards. These combinations can be activated one after



The nave looking towards the high altar. The two organ cases can be seen.

the other with forward and reverse devices during the performance.

Currently, the musicians in charge of playing the cathedral's organ are Manuel Cela and Adrián Regueiro. Adrian proudly showed me his photos of the appearance of the organ in various stages

of repair and was enthusiastic in telling me that he had five ranks of en chamade trumpets at his disposal.

Donald Cook

