

National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts

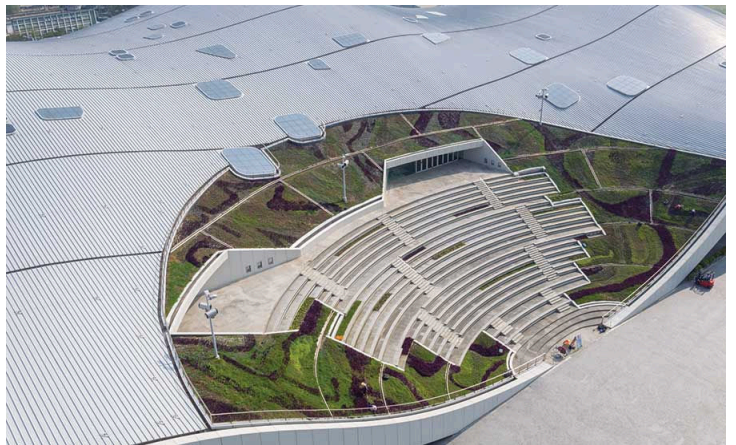


Mechanical Console of the Symphonic Organ

Kaohsiung is a special municipality located in southern-western Taiwan and facing the Taiwan Strait. Kaohsiung has a population of approximately 2.77 million people and has been officially ranked as Taiwan's third most populous city since July 2017. It is Taiwan's largest municipality by area at 2,951.85 km², stretching from Mount Yu to Taiping Island.

Since its start in the 17th century, Kaohsiung has grown from a small trading village into the political, economic, transportation, manufacturing, refining, shipbuilding, and industrial centre of southern Taiwan. The city is also home to the Republic of China Navy fleet headquarters and academy.

Beginning in 2006, the largest cultural centre in Asia has been developed and built in the heart of Kaohsiung. On the site of

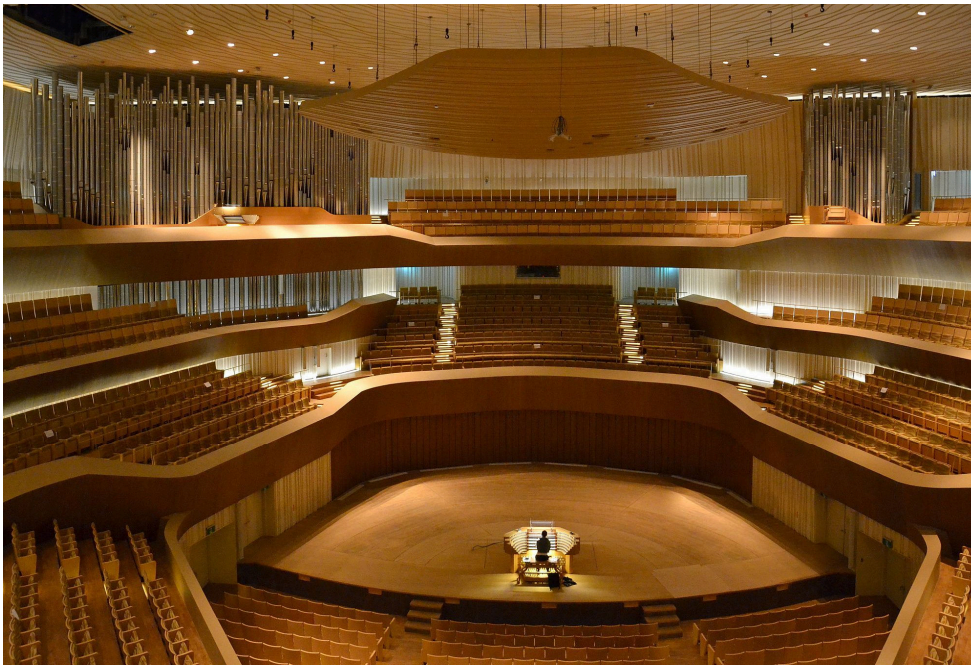


Aerial views of the massive Kaohsiung Cultural Centre showing the so-called sandwich effect of construction and the amphitheatre built into and under part of the roof.

a former barracks, Dutch architect Francine Houben, creative director of Mecanoo architects, designed a building complex comprising concert hall (2,000



The Symphonic Organ



Symphonic Organ on the left, Classic Organ on the right

attached mechanical console.

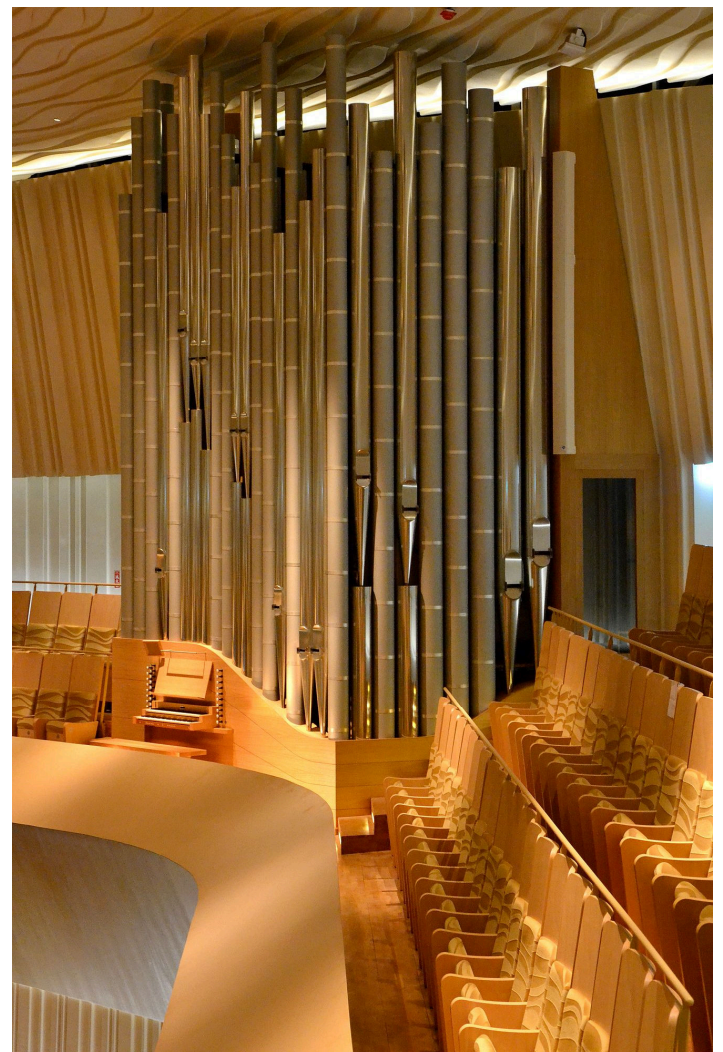
Both instruments have mechanical key and electric stop action. Only the key action of the Solo division of the symphonic organ is electric action, since the high wind pressures and the exposed placement within the organ did not allow for a more sensitive tracker action.

seats), opera house (2,260 seats), playhouse (1,250 seats), chamber music hall (470 seats), several congress halls, rehearsal rooms, public library and an open-air amphitheatre under (and on) one roof. The built up area is 141,000 m², the equal of about 13 soccer fields or almost eight times the size of the Perth Optus Stadium (with a ground area of 18,000 m²).

While the swaying roof construction is reminiscent of the treetops of the local Banyan trees, the organ facade is meant to refer to the typical bamboo trees found in nearby forests. In addition to the function rooms, an open plaza forms a shady meeting place in the subtropical climate of the port city.

The twin organ has three consoles. The attached console at the symphonic organ and the stage console are largely identical in terms of layout and equipment. From both consoles, both organs can be played. In addition, the baroque, or Classic, organ has its own

With a total of 127 stops and 9,085 pipes, the twin organ of the National Kaohsiung Centre for the Art is not only



The Classic Organ

the largest pipe organ in Asia, but also the Magnum Opus for the prestigious German builder Orgelbau Klais of Bonn.

Olivier Latry, titular organist at the Paris Cathedral of Notre-Dame, acted as consultant for the general architectural and construction contractor (Mecanoo). The larger symphonic organ of the twin instrument follows the sound aesthetics of French Romanticism; the small instrument rather like German-Baroque models. Both instruments are not style copies in the true sense, but interpret their archetypes from the contemporary position taken by Klais. Both instruments feature modern equal temperament so they can be played together.



The festive inauguration of concert hall and organ took place 10th to 14th October 2018. The inaugural organ recital was played by Latvian organist Iveta Apkalna, considered one of the leading instrumentalists in the world. Since 2017 Iveta has served as the titular organist of the Klais organ at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Germany (see article in the April 2017 edition of *In The Pipeline*).

Bruce Duncan



Information and photographs from Orgelbau Klais and from general internet sources.