



**MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA • JOHN DEMAIN, MUSIC DIRECTOR**  
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## **Overture Concert Organ The Gift of Pleasant T. Rowland**

**“...the instrument proved mightily attractive to the eye as well as the ear...  
the artful, undulant array of organ pipes captivated the attention,  
in shifting harmony or counterpoint with the music.” THE NEW YORK TIMES (11-23-04)**

- ◆ Commissioned and owned by the Madison Symphony Orchestra (MSO), the Overture Concert Organ is one of the most significant new installations in America. This one-of-a-kind instrument is the striking backdrop for all MSO performances in Overture Hall.
- ◆ All organ parts were handcrafted in the Orgelbau Klais workshop, a fourth-generation family-owned enterprise in Bonn, Germany.
- ◆ The instrument is installed in a moveable chamber, which gently rolls into position on 16 steel wheels and four steel rails, powered by a push chain drive. When not in use, the organ recedes into an oversize cabinet at the back of the stage. No other organ in the world moves in this fashion.
- ◆ Weight of organ: approx. 30 tons. Weight of moveable organ chamber: approx. 120 tons. Together with its chamber, the organ is believed to be the heaviest moveable object in any theater in the world.
- ◆ Organ travels at approx. 1 foot per minute; it takes approx. 30 minutes for the organ to move into place.
- ◆ 63 stops; 72 ranks; 4,040 pipes (3,779 metal and 261 wooden).
- ◆ Length of tallest pipe: 437 inches (36 feet, 5 inches).
- ◆ Weight of biggest pipe: Approx. 1,212 lbs.
- ◆ Three manuals (keyboards), each one with 61 keys. Pedal board has 32 notes.
- ◆ Materials used include mixture of woods (fir, oak, beech, and cedar), metals (tin and lead alloy, brass and steel), in addition to bone and ebony.
- ◆ Organ was designed and built in two years and nine months.
- ◆ The project is funded through an unprecedented \$2.95 million in private gifts to the MSO: \$1.1 million from the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation; \$1 million from Diane Endres Ballweg for programming and education; \$500,000 from an anonymous donor to endow the Wayne Curtis & Maybelle Slavens Hall and Francis Vincent & Lettie von Kalweit Dunnebacke Organ Curator position (held by Samuel Hutchison); and gifts from the Malmquist family and an additional anonymous donor.