

Recapturing Baroque organ sound

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The warmth and beauty of old organ music can once again be heard in Europe's historic churches, thanks to high-tech efforts that can accurately reproduce this unique sound.

In Baroque and [Medieval times](#), stunningly beautiful organ music filled the halls and churches of Europe. However, the organs lost their pure qualities after centuries, muting the captivating depth that once emanated from them.

The EU project Truesound tackled a major challenge in [materials sciences](#) to recapture the purity of organ music. The project aimed at

developing copper-based [alloys](#) for organ pipes and refining technology to recreate true organ [sound](#). It also wanted to empower small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that build organs to become more competitive in restoring the 10 000 organs scattered across the continent.

Truesound's work centred on identifying historically accurate alloy compositions and articulating processes to manufacture the most ideal alloys. The next step was to create organ tongues to replace historic reed pipes or to represent new reed pipe components that are capable of producing the desired sound.

A research team hailing from various countries successfully produced the most accurate alloys for reed pipe tongues. In particular, it created two new alloys, with and without lead, that were tested by organ builders tied to the project. Moreover, the project designed special software to digitise the sound spectrum related to organ pipes.

The combined software and hardware advances, which include sophisticated equipment for sound acquisition, have produced a rich sound that is the closest yet to the organ music of yesteryear. This will support organ-building SMEs in unprecedented ways and help revive an important and beautiful tradition across Europe.

Provided by CORDIS

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