



PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER AGO

Find us online at www.papenago.org and groups.yahoo.com/group/papenago

NEWSLETTER—MARCH/APRIL 2010

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Chapter,

Hope you are well and enjoying the lovely weather. Winter on the Peninsula seems officially over, unlike in many parts of the northern hemisphere, but that's what you get when you live in paradise, as we do.

Thanks to the many who participated in our winter events. Robert Huw Morgan's masterclass at Stanford was highly enriching, from what I heard. Our chapter is so grateful for the opportunity to come to Memorial Church and work with such a master teacher. Prior to that, we had an exceptional talk and recital by Lenore Alford on Rolande Falcinelli, composer, pedagogue at the Conservatoire, and the first woman in Parisian history to be named titulaire organist of a major console—in her case, at the Sacré-Coeur Basilica, in 1945. I hope you will share the repertoire of this prolific and intriguing female organist which many people have not heard before.

I plan to be at all the upcoming events, and hope to catch up with you there. The events are listed in the calendar, and you will see Angela's separate description

of the composers' forum in this newsletter. The April event, however, I will describe here. On Sunday, April 18 from 3 to 5 p.m. at St. Bede's Church, Menlo Park, we will hold a Certification Fair. This is a time to share resources, set goals, and encourage each other to work towards an AGO certificate, such as, the Service-Playing Certificate and the CAGO. I, myself, would like to reach the CAGO status, and we have a good example in Keith Wannamaker, who attained it last year. Stop by for even a few minutes to browse, listen, and dream about what could be your next step.

You may have noticed a new look on our website. Our board has been discussing ways to make it easier to read and more appealing. Thanks to Mary Frances, Jay, and especially to Keith and Sarah for their web expertise and hours of effort. Let us know what you think of the website's appearance and content.

As you may remember from the last issue, I was going to meet Angela and her husband Robert in Lyon, France in January. I actually did meet them, and we had a wonderful time, savoring the sounds, sights, and delicacies of that fabled city. I arrived on a snowy evening to hear Angela give a recital at the medieval church of St. Bonaventure, with a 19th-century organ, in rough shape due to lack of funds. Still, the voicing of the pipes was more mellifluous than many instruments, and she had attracted a good crowd.

The next day Angela had arranged for me to play the organ at l'Eglise St. François de Sales, the church where Widor debuted played his Fifth Symphony. It is a relatively untouched Cavaillé-Coll from 1880. Widor's father was the organist at the time, and the son Charles came to visit on a special feast day. The organ is a treasure. It combines sweetness, warmth, might, and grandeur all in one. Not only was I allowed to play my first Cavaillé-Coll, but Angela had scheduled me to take a lesson from her beloved teacher, Louis Robillard, the titular organist of St. François de Sales. I will never play Franck the same way from now on. Here is a short clip of a younger M. Robillard playing the famous toccata on the very organ on which we took lessons: www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFvsZEzqtY.

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The church of St. François is Neo-Classical in style and very dark indeed, but glorious on its own terms. There are many other examples of architecture in Lyon, from an intact Roman amphitheatre, to a Gothic cathedral with a mechanical clock, to a 19th-century basilica with gilded mosaics inside, somewhat like Stanford's church. I am very grateful for this experience, and I know that if you ever wanted to visit Lyon, Angela, Robert or I would love to talk more.

Finally, I think you will appreciate this story from one of our colleagues in the funeral business. Hope to see you very soon.

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs... Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a grave side service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Kentucky back-country. As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost; and being a typical man I didn't stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late. I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play. The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And as I played 'Amazing Grace,' the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. When I finished I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head hung low, my heart was full. As I was opening the door to my car, I heard one of the worker say, "My goodness, I never seen nothing like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Yours,

RANI FISCHER

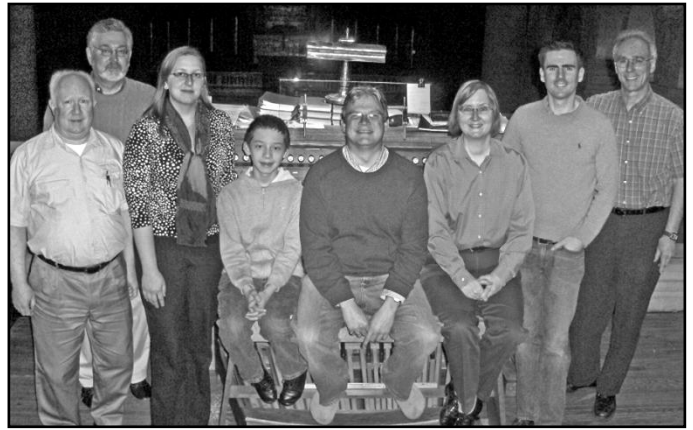
REGISTER FOR THE DC CONVENTION

It's not too late to register for the national AGO convention in July in Washington, DC. For information, please visit <www.ago2010.org>.

MISSING CONSOLE!

Michael Bernard, and organist in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, seeks the whereabouts of the original console for E.M. Skinner's Opus 819, which was originally built for Temple Methodist Church in San Francisco, and which his parish has subsequently purchased. Please write him at <bernardmichael@bellsouth.net> with any information.

STANFORD MASTERCLASS



The chapter was treated to yet another electrifying masterclass with Stanford University Organist, Robert Huw Morgan, on Monday February 8. We thoroughly enjoyed performances on the Fisk organ of Donald Mulliken playing Bach's "Von Himmel Hoch" from *Orgelbuchlein*, Ethan Haman playing the Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*, and Matthew Burt performing "Basse de Cromorne" from Clerambault's *Second Suite*. On the Murray Harris organ, we were treated to more Classical and Romantic literature including Doug Franks playing CPE Bach's *Fantasie and Fugue in C minor*, Phil Winters performing Duruflé's *Prélude* from his *Suite*, Sarah Wannamaker performing Mulet's *Tu es Petra* and Angela Kraft Cross concluding with the *Allegro, Chorale and Fugue* of Mendelssohn. Much of the literature for the evening highlighted the musically dramatic, what the classicists called *Sturm und Drang* "Storm and Stress" and it gave Robert ample chance to work with the group on the concepts of Drama and Rhetoric in organ performance. He encouraged all of us to ask the question for every piece we play "What is the picture? What is the adjective?" and to know what the piece is trying to say before you even start. He also taught us to be aware of the theatrics of performing all the way from giving yourself an upbeat to prepare mentally for the start of the piece, to staying in the character of the piece all the way through the fading of the echo of the final chord; for in the end, we are all actors. Robert also reiterated themes from previous years including the importance of "playing the room" and listening to the impact of each and every note on the acoustic of the room. And not surprisingly, rests are the most important part of playing the organ, especially in a luscious acoustic of Memorial Church. And "rubato is a luxury"; many times you should just stay in tempo! Be able to try different passages different ways (with rubato, with no rubato) to stay flexible and be capable of experimenting with different presentations of the same music.

ANGELA KRAFT CROSS

Member Support Needed for 2011 Region IX Convention in San Francisco!

By Douglas Franks, Chair of Gifts and Grants Committee

Four full days of superb concerts, recitals, workshops, worship services, and exhibits are coming our way, as the San Francisco Chapter of the AGO in collaboration with the Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter, plays host to the 2011 Region IX Convention. The Region IX Convention in 2011 will mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of San Francisco AGO Chapter. The chapter's organizing meeting took place June 20, 1911.

Now is your opportunity, as a Palo Alto/Peninsula AGO member, friend, or supporter, to step up to the plate and provide necessary funds to help make our convention—YOUR convention—a success. Concert artists, workshop presenters, transportation, space rentals, printing, banquets, hospitality, the list goes on—these are all essential expenses for an event of this magnitude and require considerable financial commitment. With your help, we can meet that challenge! No contribution is too small. **Donations from the Palo Alto /Peninsula Chapter membership will add up to a significant percentage of our overall convention income.** All donors will be acknowledged in the Convention Program Book. Concert, recital, and workshop underwriters will be listed in the comprehensive donors' list and on the page of the event itself.

We invite you to select one of the following ways to donate:

- ◆ **An “unrestricted” donation will help the convention as a whole.** The levels of giving are: **Sponsor (\$1000+), Benefactor (\$500–\$999), Sustainer (\$250–\$499), Patron (\$100–\$249), and Donor (\$1–\$99).**
- ◆ **Sponsor a concert or a recital.** This can be a full or partial sponsorship of a performance you choose to support. The levels of giving are: **Concert Sponsor (\$1000+), Concert Co-Sponsor (\$500–\$999), and Concert Donor (\$250–\$499).**
- ◆ **Sponsor a workshop.** A wide array of workshops will form the educational component of our convention. The levels of giving are: **Workshop Sponsor (\$300+), Workshop Co-Sponsor (\$100–\$299), and Workshop Donor (\$50–\$99).**
- ◆ **Donate towards other important convention expenses**—worship-service honoraria, non-prize expenses for the AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists, printing costs for the Convention Program Book, bus transportation for conventioners, rehearsal or venue fees, music scores, tuning technicians, and so on. **There is one level of giving for this category: whatever you wish to give!**

Concert and workshop sponsorship donations are especially welcomed and can be pinpointed once contracts are signed and publicity about specific artists and venues begins. For now, we offer these two categories in somewhat generic fashion for your consideration. It is not too early to stake your claim as a major sponsor of one of the many performances or workshops that will delight, uplift, educate, and invigorate us come July 2011. If you prefer the “unrestricted” donation option, rest assured your dollars will be used to help deliver a first-rate convention of which we can all be justly proud.

No matter what donation category you decide upon, we encourage you to step forward and do your utmost to help make our regional convention an experience to remember. **We're relying on the generous support of Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter members and friends to make it happen.** All donations are tax-deductible. With grateful anticipation, we look forward to hearing from you. *Thank you!*

AGO 2011 Region IX Convention Donation Form

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone(s) _____
E-Mail(s) _____
Primary Chapter/Chapter Position(s) (if any) _____

Please indicate category, level, and amount of your donation below.

◆ **“Unrestricted” Donation:**

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor (\$1000+) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (\$500–\$999) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer (\$250–\$499) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron (\$100–\$249) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor (\$1–\$99) | amount _____ |

◆ **Concert or Recital Sponsorship Donation:**

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concert Sponsor (\$1000+) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concert Co-Sponsor (\$500–\$999) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concert Donor (\$250–\$499) | amount _____ |

◆ **Workshop Sponsorship Donation:**

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Sponsor (\$300+) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Co-Sponsor (\$100–\$299) | amount _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop Donor (\$50–\$99) | amount _____ |

◆ **Donation for “Designated” Convention Expense:**

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Designated Convention Expense | amount _____ |
|--|--------------|
- (Please refer to article for specific options.)*

Preferred type of concert or workshop topic to sponsor, or convention expense to underwrite:

All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please make check or money order payable to “AGO 2011 Region IX Convention” and mail together with this form to: William Montgomery, Treasurer, AGO 2011 Region IX Convention, PO Box 52, Mill Valley, CA 94942-0052.

We extend our deepest gratitude to you!

COMPOSERS' FORUM

We will be having our third annual Composers' Forum on Saturday, March 13 at 3 PM at the Los Altos United Methodist Church. All interested composers are welcome to share their organ works in a semiformal concert. We thank fellow composer/organist T. Paul Rosas, the senior organist of Los Altos Methodist, for being our host for the afternoon. The program is best suited for composers to play their own works, but can also accommodate performers who would like to play the works of contemporary friends. If you would like to be a part of this program, please contact me at <krftcrss@pacbell.net> right away. In the last two years, this program has been a wonderful hour of sharing with each other, and you will not want to miss this year's offerings!

ANGELA KRAFT CROSS

A PAIR OF NEW ARRIVALS

February 2010 witnessed a pair of new arrivals [organs] to the Bay Area, or more precisely, the East Bay. On February 11, Oliver Latry, Organist at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris played the dedication of the Conroy Memorial Organ in Oakland's Roman Catholic Cathedral of Christ the Light. The instrument was built by Orgues Letourneau, Ltee. as their Op. 118, 4 manuals and 92 ranks. Works by Boellmann, Bach, Barie, Vierne, Durufle, Cochereau, Messiaen, an original improvisation on a submitted theme and a Widor encore were performed masterfully by this splendid artist and teacher. The building is a dramatic architectural statement inside and out. It's spacious interior dimensions make a grand place for music albeit with some odd acoustical effects created by the interior shape. The organ is placed on opposite sides near the front on cantilevered wood-covered platforms. The architect told the organ builder he wanted to see a lot of wood pipes and the builder provided what may be the most numerous display of speaking wood pipes anywhere. Behind the display is, of course, everything else with the SW, CH, Echo CH and SOLO chambers along with the unenclosed GT, PED and BOMB divisions. I had to pinch myself as I listened to the incredible sonic power this instrument is capable of to believe I was in Oakland, on a Thursday evening, among a sellout crowd of 2,000, obviously enjoying very much what they were hearing and seeing, at an organ recital, no less. Where is the credibility of all those critics we've heard so much from in recent years telling us the pipe organ is an artistic dinosaur utterly incapable of reaching today's audiences?

On Friday the February 19, Christophe Mantoux, Organist of the Parish of Saint-Severin in Paris and

Professor of Organ at the National Conservatoire in Strasbourg performed on the new 4 manual organ in Berkeley's First Congregational Church. This is the instrument in the handsome cover photo on the February 2010 issue of *The American Organist*. Details of how it came about are in the cover story on pp.44-46. This church is extensively used as a performing venue for a number of musical organizations. The acoustic is clear and sight lines are excellent with a maximum seating capacity of 300. This new Petty-Madden organ is the 4th organ at Berkeley First Congregational since the extensive church facility was built in 1924. Mantoux played an all French program with works by Boely, Franck, Widor, Alain and Durufle to a responsive and appreciative audience.

Members of this chapter should watch for recitals on these two instruments. Both reflect quality organ building and the resources to present a wide variety of organ solo literature with admirable results. Both instruments "speak with a fine French accent" and are well suited to playing French music. Both show the great care and attention that the builder applied in the scaling and finishing of the instruments as their blend is exceptional. Additionally, both are accessible via BART.

PAUL SAHLIN

BACH ONLINE!

The complete organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach, recorded by James Kibbie on original baroque organs in Germany, are now available as free internet downloads. The University of Michigan's Block M Records label is offering free downloads of all 270 Bach works at <www.blockmrecords.org/bach>. James Kibbie recorded the series on seven historic organs by Silbermann, Schnitger, Trost, Bielfeldt, and Hildebrandt. To date, there have been approximately half a million downloads from the site.

ORGAN FOR SALE

A friend of mine is selling a 3-manual Wicks organ (13 ranks, unified; 863 pipes; also includes harp, chimes, and an electronic 32' pedal extension) is for sale. It was first installed in 1965 in a teaching studio at BYU in Provo, Utah. It was sold to a private party around 1983 and was installed in a home until a few years ago. It is currently dismantled and in storage in the Sacramento area. The owner is asking \$14,500 OBO. Buyer responsible for transporting the organ and any re-installation. Please contact Jim Welch at <james@welch.net> for more information.

DIANE BISH: THE JOY OF MUSIC

One of my favorite TV programs each week is “The Joy of Music”. Diane Bish plays organs around the world. Currently she is doing Memorable Moments—25 years of The Joy of Music; over 500 programs. To see Miss Bish when she was younger is amazing. Now, at 68 years, she is well preserved and plays just as well, maybe even better than earlier. And the clothes—what a show. [See www.thejoyofmusic.org/ and en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diane_Bish>.]

The half-hour weekly program airs on The Church Channel each Monday morning (late Sunday night) at 1:30 (Pacific Time) and at 2:00 (Pacific Time) each Tuesday morning (late Monday night) on TBN. [See www.churchchannel.org/watch/schedule_view.php?date=20100215>, and www.tbn.org/watch-us/our-programs/the-joy-of-music-hosted-by-diane-bish>.]

Word has it that Diane Bish was fired from Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale when the homophobic self-righteous pastor D. James Kennedy found out she had a female partner. Kennedy is dead now, and Bish is back doing programs at Coral Ridge.

Susann McDonald appears in Memorable Moments III (February 1) playing the harp accompanied by Bish at the organ [see en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susann_McDonald>.]

The first in the Memorable Moments, program #2901 (January 18), featured, among other places, Dom Cathedral in Merseburg, Germany. [see en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merseburg_Cathedral>]. Franz Liszt composed for its grand German romantic organ. [See www.in.fh-merseburg.de/~buchanan/orgel/liszte.htm> and www.concertartist.info/organhistory/history/hist060.htm>.]

Each program is a virtual tour of the churches and their organs as well as a bit of the town. In Merseburg Cathedral the camera crew wasted no time in capturing the risen glorious Christ statue while Bish was busy with the Liszt Ad nos. Oh my. It is one of the most striking dramatic statues I have ever seen—Jesus at the top in full hunky 33 year old muscular triumphant stance, covered only with a small loincloth—stepping on a skeleton with one foot and at the other foot, a sinner begging for mercy.

This cathedral is on my wish list of places to visit.

JAY MARTIN

DISNEY HALL

I was disappointed to miss the chapter’s January 24 program, but am delighted to report on a wonderful organ recital I attended that evening in Disney Hall, Los Angeles. This was my first time in the concert hall since attending the premiere of the organ as part of the 2004 national AGO convention, and the architecture of the room and the organ still amaze me! It was truly one of those occasions that made me proud to be an organist: Ken Cowan played to a crowded and appreciative room (there must have been 1,500 people there), and the organ itself, under the care of Los Angeles chapter dean Manuel Rosales, sounded magnificent. Cowan, who played his program entirely from memory, also spoke eloquently about both his program and the instrument, and did us organists proud! Highlights of the repertoire were Dupré’s dark yet thrilling second symphony, and a beautiful transcription of an orchestral work by Liszt, the *Memphisto Waltz* No. 1. Cowan is truly one of the great organists of our generation, and a fantastic ambassador for the instrument to boot! It was an added bonus to bump into Frances Nobert, our Region’s Counselor and a SoCal resident, following the recital! I recommend any chapter members who travel to LA with any regularity to plan their next trip south to coincide with one of the future recitals this year: March 14 (Hector Olivera) and April 18 (Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin). Tickets are only \$26-51 (seniors can standby for \$10!).

MATTHEW BURT

EVENTS CALENDAR

SATURDAY MARCH 13: CHAPTER EVENT!

3:00 p.m. Composers’ Forum. Los Altos United Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena Ave., Los Altos Hills.

SUNDAY MARCH 21

4:00 p.m. Schola Cantorum with Robert Huw Morgan. First Congregational, 1985 Louis Rd., Palo Alto.

SUNDAY APRIL 18: CHAPTER EVENT!

3:00 p.m. Certification Fair. St. Bede’s Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park.

FOR ADDITIONAL CALENDAR LISTINGS please see the San Francisco Chapter’s Bay Area Concert Calendar at the following site: <http://tinyurl.com/yzcqdfj>>.

