



# PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER AGO

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## NEWSLETTER—MARCH/APRIL 2011

### FROM THE DEAN

Dear Chapter,

One evening Martin Luther King, Jr., leaned over the balcony and called out to a saxophone player, "Ben, make sure you play 'Precious Lord, Take My Hand' in the meeting tonight ... Play it real pretty." Those were his last words spoken. (*Smithsonian*, May 2010, p. 71)

February is Black History Month. Even though we don't have many African Americans in our chapter, it is nice to think of what we have in common. How uncanny that Dr. King's last words referred to music, not to the strike for garbage collectors, which was the struggle at hand. Music must have been essential in the fight for a good life for all people. It is for us, too. We are all fighting for life in a world of raging inequity and personal challenges. It is music, to which we devote our lives, which helps us and those around us keep keeping on.

I hope you will join us in that joyous struggle to make music better and better, since it is such a life-force. One opportunity for that is our annual masterclass with Robert Huw Morgan coming right up on **Monday February 28**, from 7 to 9 p.m., at Memorial Church. This is our

most popular event all year. I am mesmerized every time I go. I hope you will not miss this chance to hear such a gifted artist, teacher, and scholar.

Less than one week later is our annual local composers' forum. That will be on **Saturday March 5** at 5 p.m. at Paul Rosas' church, Los Altos United Methodist Church. It's more formal than we have done in the past, a real concert. Bring your compositions, or those of local friends. It can be organ or choral. Please let Angela know if you want a particular piece on the program. If choral, there's a chance that certain lovely singers can prepare it, no promises, but that's always nice to have music rehearsed first, if possible. Afterwards we can go across the street for dinner at one of Paul's favorite restaurants. Hope you can join us for an evening of exciting new work by people you know. Bring as many friends as you can. (Incidentally, on that weekend is a free conference sponsored by the Stanford Music Department on music, memory, and the brain: see [www.stanford.edu/group/brainwaves/](http://www.stanford.edu/group/brainwaves/).)

**Finally, we need your help!** This coming June we will elect new officers and members of our executive board. The nominating committee has nominated Matthew Burt as Dean, David Sheetz as Sub-Dean, Jill Mueller as Treasurer, and Glen Frank as a Member-at-Large. But that leaves us with two vacancies: for Secretary (a one-year term) and for another Member-at-Large (a three-year term). If you would be interested in serving the Chapter in one of these roles, or would like to nominate somebody, please get in touch with me as soon as possible!

Warm regards,

**RANI FISCHER**

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### UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

#### STANFORD MASTERCLASS

**Monday February 28, at 7:00 p.m.** with Robert Huw Morgan at Stanford Memorial Church.

#### COMPOSERS' RECITAL

**Saturday March 5, at 5:00 p.m.** hosted by Paul Rosas at Los Altos United Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena Avenue, Los Altos.

## DO YOU HAVE A CONTRACT?

Do you have a contract with your church or synagogue? Look over the model contract online on the AGO Headquarters page under “Professional Development”. If you are interviewing for a position, or just need to define the job you have had for years, this sample contract is a good prelude for discussions about what the church and you expect from the job.

The preamble does a good job of explaining what the Federal Government expects concerning contract workers versus a position with deductions. Other topics covered are the employee’s and employer’s responsibilities, and dispute resolutions. While you are on the site, look over the Salary Guidelines. They’re very helpful.

Having a contract will start your new job on a professional note. If you are bringing it to your employer after many years, it shows that you want to do a good job, but be paid accordingly for that job. Both parties may build in some flexibility, of course, but in today’s world, a contract is a must!

**LEA SCHMIDT-ROGERS,**

*Region IX Coordinator for Professional Development*

## ART OF ACCOMPANYING WORKSHOP

This workshop has been rescheduled for **Saturday April 9** at 10:00 a.m. at Los Altos United Methodist Church. Paul Rosas will lead discussion of preparation, choir rehearsal techniques, and performance techniques. Please let him know if you plan to attend, by email at <[tpaulrosas@comcast.net](mailto:tpaulrosas@comcast.net)> or by phone at (408) 482-0517.

## DAVID PARSONS TO PLAY IN PALO ALTO

On **Sunday April 10** at 4:00 p.m. David Parsons will play works by Works by Schmidt, Scheidt, Bach, Reger, Vierne, and Lemare at First Congregational Church in Palo Alto.

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

## REGION IX CONVENTION JULY 3-7

It’s not too late to register for our Bay Area Region IX Convention: simply visit <[www.sfago2011.org](http://www.sfago2011.org)> and follow the sign-up instructions. An entire day of the convention—Monday July 4—will be devoted to Peninsula venues: Christ Church Portola Valley, St. Mark’s Palo Alto, First Congregational Palo Alto, First United Methodist Palo Alto, All Saints’ Palo Alto, and Stanford Memorial Church. We hope that many Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter Members will both register and volunteer—to help out, please speak with Rani.

## PAUL JACOBS WINS A GRAMMY

The American Guild of Organists (AGO) celebrates with Paul Jacobs, winner of the 2011 GRAMMY Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (without orchestra). The award was announced at the 53rd Annual GRAMMY Awards in Los Angeles on



Sunday February 13, and given in recognition of his CD recording of Olivier Messiaen’s *Livre du Saint-Sacrement* (Naxos, 2010) made at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in New York City. Jacobs’s recording of contemporary classical organ music shared the spotlight with such notable sensations as Lady Gaga, who won three GRAMMYS, herself, in the popular music genre. (Paul Jacobs was unable to walk the red carpet to receive the award in person because he was performing with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra that week.

“Jacobs is the first organist ever to receive a prestigious GRAMMY Award for a solo recording,” declared AGO Executive Director James Thomashower. “For organists everywhere, the day has been made brighter by the light of Paul’s stunning accomplishment.”

“This is indeed an important occurrence for all of us associated with the art of organ playing,” added Jacobs. “It has been an ongoing passion of mine to build even a modest bridge from the organ profession to the broader world of music. Young organists must understand that enthusiasm alone—no matter how sincere—is not enough to garner the respect needed to be taken seriously as artists. We must be willing to work tirelessly. We must become wedded to the beauty of great organ music so that it drives us to intense devotion to our art; then we will reap golden rewards.”

“We are extremely proud of Paul Jacobs, a dedicated and faithful member of the American Guild of Organists,” stated AGO President Eileen Guenther. “The AGO is the largest organization in the world devoted to a single musical instrument. Our mission mandates that we ‘promote the organ’ and ‘encourage excellence in the performance of organ music.’ Paul has embraced this mission as one of our youngest advocates, bringing excitement and enthusiasm to all his performances and engaging new audiences with the organ, the King of Instruments.”