



PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

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NEWSLETTER—MARCH/APRIL 2013

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Chapter Colleagues:

What a busy spring we are having! We have already enjoyed two wonderful programs: a members' recital on the beautifully restored Beckerath organ at St. Bede's and a master class with four accomplished young organists led by another—Christopher Houlihan. My thanks to David Sheetz, Rani Fischer, Sarah Wannamaker, Christopher, and all those who made those events such successes (and with wonderful audiences)!



As if the master class were not showcase enough of the talents of our younger members, the upcoming Quimby/AGO Regional Competition for Young Organists on Saturday, March 23 promises to provide an marvelous afternoon of diverse repertoire performed by four local organists aged under 25. The venue for the competition, Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church, is one that we have not used for a chapter event in recent years, so it will be a new venue and instrument for many of us. The competition begins at 2:30 p.m. and will run until approximately 6:15; all are welcome to attend part of the afternoon or the whole thing. Do remember that—unlike some competitions—in this one the performers all play different repertoire. While this arguably makes the judges' job harder, it definitely makes for a more enjoyable afternoon for the audience! First and second prizes of \$300 and \$200 will be awarded at the end of the day. We are grateful that the Joanna Smullin Education Fund, administered by the San Francisco Chapter, has offered \$350 toward this event.

To continue the theme of young players, I am delighted that the Pipe Organ Encounter this July 21-27 has a nearly full registration (indeed it may be full by the time this goes to press)! Additionally, we are well on our way to achieving a balanced budget for the POE, thanks to many generous individuals and other Region IX chapters, including the San Francisco Chapter, which has recently given \$1,000 from the Joanna

Smullin Education Fund. Nevertheless, we still need donations of both money and time—please contact Rani Fischer if you're able to help out with either, and thank you!

I wrote in my last letter that I did not wish to stand for nomination for another year as dean. I am incredibly grateful to Sarah Wannamaker, Rodney Gehrke, and Margaret Kvamme, members of the Nominating Committee, who have put forward not only an excellent slate of officers for 2013-2014, but also for the vacant member-at-large positions. The candidates are announced in this newsletter, and I hope you will join me in welcoming our incoming board members, and thanking them for their service.

As always, my gratitude goes to all our current board members for envisioning, implementing, and supporting so many wonderful opportunities for us this year. I hope that—for those celebrating and playing for them—your Holy Week and Easter services are solemn and majestic.

Best wishes to you all,

Matthew

NEXT CHAPTER EVENTS

**AGO/QUIMBY REGIONAL COMPETITION
FOR YOUNG ORGANISTS
Saturday, March 23, 2:30 p.m.**

Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church
728 West Fremont Avenue, Sunnyvale

**MUSIC FOR THE SYNAGOGUE
WITH RODNEY GEHRKE
Sunday, April 28, 4:00 p.m.**

First Lutheran Church
600 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto

For all the latest PAPenAGO news, remember to "[Like](#)" us on Facebook!

Nominating Committee Report

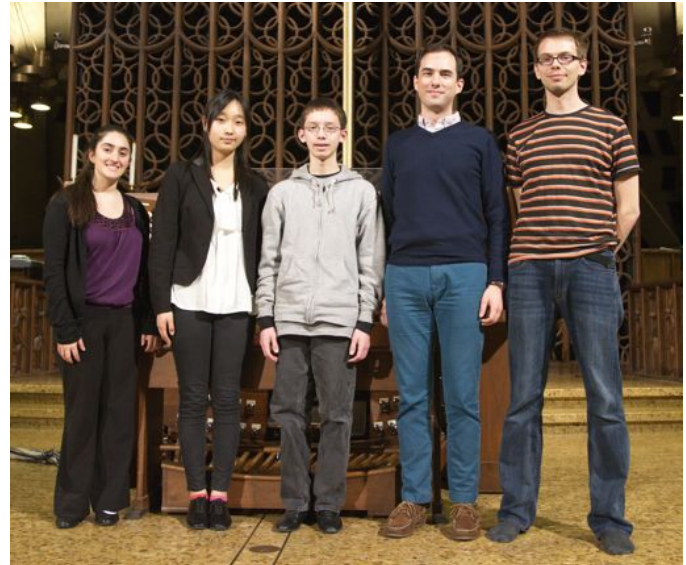
The chapter nominating committee, Sarah Wannamaker, Rodney Gehrke, and Margaret Kvamme, have presented their slate of candidates for the 2013-2014 executive board. The nominees are:

David Sheetz, dean
Sarah Wannamaker, subdean
Tim Getz, secretary
Jill Mueller, treasurer
Jin Kyung Lim and Dan Gonzalez,
members-at-large (class of 2016)

Under chapter bylaws, nominees running unopposed are elected as presented. Any further nominations should be submitted to current chapter secretary Douglas Franks, dohfra@earthlink.net, by May 1, 2013.

Successful Winter Events around the Chapter

January 19, chapter members performed a recital of German Baroque and neo-Classical works on the newly restored 1969 von Beckerath organ (II/37) at St. Bede's Episcopal Church in Menlo Park. The instrument's tracker action, effective case placement, and Neidhardt temperament make it one of the outstanding examples of neo-Baroque organ-building in our area. Performers were Rani Fischer, Tim Getz (member-at-large), Ethan Haman, David Sheetz (subdean), Nahri Ahn, Angela Kraft Cross, Amanda Wucher, and Duane Soubirous.



A Master class with Christopher Houlihan took place at First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto, on February 11. Pictured are Chinar Merjanian, Nahri Ahn, Ethan Haman, Christopher Houlihan, and Stephen Lind.

April Chapter Program: Music for the Synagogue

Our April program will be held Sunday, April 28, 4:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church in Palo Alto. Rodney Gehrke, organist and choirmaster at San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El (and Palo Alto's All Saints' Episcopal Church), will be joined by Cantor Roslyn Barak and a professional quartet of singers in a presentation of music for a typical Sabbath morning liturgy. Running commentary by Rodney and Cantor Barak will give attendees the liturgical and historical context for the music. The repertoire will show the vast range of styles heard in synagogues today with a bent toward the classic Reform style from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries for cantor, choir, and organ. This program is made possible, in part, by a grant from the San Francisco AGO Special Projects Fund.

Also in April: Organist Dana Robinson in Palo Alto

Dana Robinson, professor of organ at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, will perform on the Casavant organ at First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto in April 2013, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the organ's installation. There will be



an organ recital, a master class, and private lessons April 13-15. The schedule is as follows:

Saturday, April 13, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

All Saints Episcopal Church, Palo Alto

Master class “Developing Pedal technique”

Three participants may play movements from Bach’s six trio sonatas or Mendelssohn’s six sonatas. If you are interested in playing for the master class, please email Jin Kyung Lim, jjin.jsbach@gmail.com

Sunday, April 14, 4:00 p.m.

First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Organ Recital with Dana Robinson

The program includes works by J.S. Bach, Felix Mendelssohn, and Robert Schumann.

Admission: \$12 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under. Tickets available at the door.

Monday, April 15

First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Private lessons will be given by appointment.

Please bring your questions and any organ repertory that you’d like to play. Jin Kyung Lim, organist at First Lutheran Church, says of Professor Robinson’s teaching: “I recommend this for church organists and young students who want to develop their organ techniques in daily practice. Personally I was helped in refining my touch, improving my pedal technique, and listening critically to my playing when I studied with him.” **Anyone interested may apply. Slots are limited, so contact Jin as soon as possible.**

Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace

A Biography of California’s Most Prominent Organist by James Welch

Richard Purvis—organist, choirmaster, and composer at historic Grace

Cathedral—became a San Francisco legend and (along with Alexander Schreiner, E. Power Biggs, and Virgil Fox) a national celebrity who made mid-20th century American organ music popular with the masses through records, recitals, and the press. The only book of its kind, James Welch’s *Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace* is a major contribution to our understanding of the music, culture, and church politics of an era marked as much by social change as by a revolution in musical taste, technology, and compositional technique.



Uniquely among his colleagues, Purvis was first and foremost a writer and performer of original music for the organ, thrilling church and concert audiences everywhere with daring harmony, colorful registration, and evocative emotion of compositions that won him instant acclaim. Hollywood noticed, but Purvis turned down offers to leave Grace to write for the movies. Ed Stout, curator of instruments at the cathedral, famously remarked that Purvis wrote “film music for the Episcopal church.” Child prodigy, conservatory virtuoso, prisoner of war: Purvis’s life before Grace reads like a movie. Following his epic rise and fall at Grace, he continued to concertize, compose, and teach a new generation of organists in his own image: equally adept at playing church and theater organs, unafraid to experiment—even with electronic organs—and trained to trust their ears, not just the page.

Through scrupulous research and extensive interviews with those who knew Purvis best, James Welch captures the character, career, and legacy of “The Master of Grace” in a biography that future scholars and readers will return to, again and again, as the Place Where it All Began in Purvis studies.

Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace, 508 pages, is lavishly illustrated with never before-seen photos and a wealth of documents and interviews. It chronicles Purvis’s early life in the Bay Area, his years at the Curtis Institute, his military service in World War II, and his tempestuous tenure at Grace Cathedral, where he made the stones sing and crowds cheer. The book includes detailed chapters about Purvis as composer, recitalist, and teacher; complete lists of his published (and unpublished) organ and choral works; the story of his secret love for the theater organ; and colorful anecdotes and reminiscences from those who knew him as a friend, teacher, and colleague. His legend continues—clarified, corrected, and completed—in this essential resource for organists, historians, and lovers of music that speaks to the heart.

Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace is available now for the introductory price of \$19.95 (including all sales taxes) at <http://www.welchorganist.com>, shipping \$3.59 for any size order sent to the same U.S. address. Credit card payments are accepted on the PayPal site. To pay by check, please send an e-mail to james@welch.net for an order form.

James Welch’s concert schedule for the Purvis 100th anniversary year includes three programs of music that Purvis wrote and performed when he

concertized. The first, on May 20, 2013, at 7:30 p.m., will be a lecture/recital for the San Francisco AGO. It will be held at St. Cecilia Catholic Church, 2555 17th Avenue, San Francisco. The second, on June 21, 2013, at 6:00 p.m., will be played on the small Aeolian-Skinner designed by G. Donald Harrison for St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Salinas, where Purvis joined Virgil Fox and Alexander Schreiner in presenting the instrument's 1954-55 inaugural series. The third, on October 6, 2013, at 4:00 p.m., will be performed on the much larger Skinner organ—affectionately called "Gussie" by Purvis and others—at Grace Cathedral.

A Local Purvis Performance **The Lost Concerto: *Pièce Symphonique*** **by Paul Rosas**

Pièce Symphonique was written by the famous Grace Cathedral organist Richard Purvis and first performed on April 25, 1969, with the Oakland Symphony. There was much excitement in the organist community about this new organ concerto and discussion about publishing the new work. Unfortunately, the concerto was not published and the scores were put away and forgotten until recently.

When James Welch (www.welchorganist.com) began research for a biography of Richard Purvis, he discovered the existence of an unpublished organ concerto. He also found a recording and copies of the original manuscript, which he shared with T. Paul Rosas, who thought that the romantic and engaging work deserved to be seen and heard again. Mr. Rosas offered to engrave the entire piece. Three years later the project has reached completion.

On March 23 and 24, 2013, the first performances in over 40 years of Richard Purvis's organ concerto will take place with *Master Sinfonia*, conducted by David Ramadanoff. On March 23, at 8:00 p.m. the performance will be at First Congregational Church in Palo Alto; the second will be at Los Altos United Methodist Church on March 24, 2:30 p.m., both with organist T. Paul Rosas. Tickets are \$20 at the door, \$16 Senior, \$5 Youth under 18. www.mastersinfonia.org/tickets.aspx

Fabulous France **by Angela Kraft Cross**

Angela Kraft Cross and Robert Cross led a group of three young organ students to France in the first two weeks of the new year. Ethan Haman, 15, and Nahri Ahn, 16, currently study with Angela, and Duane Soubirous, 21, studied six years with Angela before going to Oberlin where he is a senior. Ethan Haman is the organist at Christ Episcopal Church Los Altos.

The study trip started with two days in the beautiful city of Lyon, at the church of St François de Sales, where there is a historic Cavaillé-Coll organ, installed when Charles-Marie Widor's father was organist. Widor's famous toccata was premiered there by the composer himself at the inaugural recital in 1880! The young organists took two days of lessons from master teacher, Louis Robilliard.



We then took the TGV (high speed train) to Paris where Ethan, Nahri, and Duane performed a joint recital after the morning mass at Notre Dame d'Auteuil, home to a beautiful Cavaillé-Coll organ that has been electrified but has original pipework. They were honored with a standing ovation. They took lessons in improvisation with Sophie-Veronique Cauchefer-Choplin who also led a class on the historic 1862 Cavaillé-Coll organ at St. Sulpice, where Widor was organist for 64 years. After playing their Jean Langlais organ pieces for Langlais' widow, Marie-Louise Langlais, the trip was rounded out with visits to the Louvre and Orsay museums and to the musical instrument museum. The students will never forget the power and sonority of the majestic French organs resonating through the large stone churches!

Concert/Event Listings

Friday, March 1, 7:00 p.m.

Andrew Chislett, organ
music of Bach, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and Franck
First Presbyterian Church, Berkeley

Sunday, March 3, 3:30 p.m.

Angela Kraft Cross, organ
St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco

Sunday, March 3, 4:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong for Lent
music of Herbert Howells, featuring
the Gloucester Service
All Saints' Choir, Rodney Gehrke,
Director/Organist
All Saints Episcopal Church
555 Waverley St., Palo Alto

Wednesday, March 6, 8:00 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER EVENT
James O'Donnell, organ
Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

Saturday, March 9, 3:00 p.m.

SAN JOSE CHAPTER EVENT
Student Recital
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Los Gatos

Sunday, March 10, 4:00 p.m.

Susan Jane Matthews, organ
music by Buxtehude, Byrd, Bach, Vivaldi,
and Sweelinck
St. Bede's Episcopal Church, Menlo Park

Sunday, March 17, 4:00 p.m.

Jin-Kyung Lim, organ
"Lenten Meditations"
First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Saturday, March 23, 2:30 p.m.

PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER EVENT
AGO/Quimby Regional Competition
for Young Organists
Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church

Saturday, March 23, 8:00 p.m.

Master Sinfonia, David Ramadanoff, conductor
T. Paul Rosas, organ
Richard Purvis: *Pièce Symphonique*
First Congregational Church, Palo Alto

Sunday, March 24, 2:30 p.m.

Master Sinfonia, David Ramadanoff, conductor
T. Paul Rosas, organ
Richard Purvis: *Pièce Symphonique*
Los Altos United Methodist Church

Wednesday, April 10, 8:00 p.m.

Nigel Allcoat, organ
Stanford Memorial Church

Saturday, April 13, 10:00 a.m.

Master Class with Dana Robinson
All Saints' Episcopal Church, Palo Alto

Sunday, April 14, 4:00 p.m.

Dana Robinson, organ
music of Bach, Mendelssohn, and Schumann
First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Sunday, April 21, 4:00 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER EVENT
Hymn Festival with John Karl Hirten
Co-sponsored by the Hymn Society
First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Sunday, April 28, 4:00 p.m.

PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER EVENT
Music for the Synagogue
First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Future PAPenAGO events:

Monday, May 13, 7:00 p.m.
Master Class with Robert Huw Morgan
Stanford Memorial Church

Saturday, June 8, 3:00 p.m.

Members' Recital
Messiah Lutheran Church, Redwood City

Our concert calendar features performances by our chapter members, events occurring in our immediate area, and chapter-sponsored events of the Palo Alto/Peninsula, San Jose, and San Francisco chapters. For additional calendar listings please see the San Francisco Chapter's Bay Area concert calendar at <http://tinyurl.com/yzcqfdf>, as well as the Stanford University concert calendar at <http://music.stanford.edu/Events/calendar.html>.

OFFICERS

**Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter AGO
July 2012-June 2013**

Matthew Burt, Dean
David Sheetz, Subdean
Douglas Franks, Secretary
Jill Mueller, Treasurer and Registrar

Members-at-Large:

Jay Martin, Webmaster & Keith Wannamaker
(Class of 2013)
Jeffrey Abbott & Tim Getz, Newsletter Editor
(Class of 2014)
Donald Mulliken & Sarah Wannamaker
(Class of 2015)

Region IX Convention

Early bird registration has been extended to March 1, 2013 for the Region IX AGO Convention in Bakersfield, CA, June 24-26, 2013. Visit www.bakersfieldago2013.org to register online, or to print and mail a paper registration form.

A special discount rate at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel (subject to availability) extends to three days before and three days after the convention. The conference rate cannot be booked through the hotel website. Call Rhea Odchigu at [661-632-2219](tel:661-632-2219), or Katie Camp at [661-632-2213](tel:661-632-2213). Their office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30-5:00. It is strongly suggested to reserve rooms now because of the limited number available.

Positions Available

Trinity Church in Menlo Park (An Episcopal Community). Director of Music, 15 hours per week. Position description and application instructions at www.trinitymenlopark.org/musicdirector.

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Palo Alto. Organists, pianists, and vocalists sought for regular and guest positions. See <http://tinyurl.com/Auditions-CS-Palo-Alto>

The PAPenAGO newsletter is published bimonthly in September, November, January, March, May, and July. Submissions (concert listings, job announcements, articles, etc.) are welcome and are due the 10th of the month preceding publication. They may be sent to editor Tim Getz at tim@gracepa.org.

Donation to POE at Stanford 2013

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

In memory/honor of _____

Amount _____

Please make checks out to "PAPenAGO POE 2013" and mail to Rani Fischer, 665 Endicott Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94087. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.