Dear Member of the New York City Chapter,

Welcome to a new Chapter year.

Welcome to a new volume of Double Open. Your newsletter continues to evolve as we incorporate suggestions from members and continue to explore the way Internet technology and the World Wide Web can improve the way we keep in communication.

You will want to read this issue while logged in to your Internet Service Provider (ISP) as it includes a substantial number of what are called Hotlinks. Using your mouse to point to the link, a click of your finger will take you directly to a particular spot in the newsletter or, more important, to a Web page with details about a subject. This will allow you to refer to your newsletter throughout the month and to quickly be able to access updated information as it is posted to our Chapter Web site or another site, as the case may be.

For example, the American Institute of Organbuilders’ Convention is coming to the New York City metropolitan region in just a few weeks. By clicking right here—http://www.pipeorgan.org/convention/2004.html—you can view complete details about how you can attend some or all of the events. Likewise if you click on the “Chapter Programs” link on the first page of the Newsletter, you can see a summary of the AIO Convention events, including a schedule of organ demonstrations which New York City Chapter members may attend at no cost.

Some links will have the familiar look beginning with the letters “http” while some will be linked to text within an article. As an example of that, you will want to visit the Queens Chapter Web site (using your mouse, point to the preceding words and you should see the pointer change indicating a “live” link to the World Wide Web) to read about the Pipedreams event at Queens College. Click the linked words above and the computer will automatically switch you to a Web browser and you will be able to view the appropriate page.

If there is sufficient interest, the New York City Chapter will arrange for bus transportation from Manhattan to Queens College. There will be pick-up and drop-off points on both the East and West sides of town. Reservations should be placed with Yvonne Sonnenwald at 201 945 2824. The cutoff date for bus reservations is the 10th of September.

Your continued input is invaluable to the growth of our Chapter. Letters to the Editor are always welcome. Contact me at any time you have a suggestion or would care to contribute an article to the Newsletter. It is yours to use to communicate colleagues. I look forward to hearing from many of you, but even more, your entire chapter looks forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Sybesma, CAGO, editor
doubleopen@optonline.net
516 456 6321
OPENing Remarks from the Dean

Dear friends and colleagues,
I am honored to be the new Dean of our illustrious Chapter and will strive to do my best to represent you with integrity.

The board members and I have been quite busy this summer. Steve Lawson, our web master, continues to expand the scope of our Web site. Mark Peterson has been keeping the substitute list up to date, and salary guidelines have been revised by The Professional Concerns Committee. The new electronic newsletter continues to develop under the direction of Ken Sybesma, and Registrar Douglas Keilitz has done the huge job of processing membership renewals.

The Program Committee, headed by Frank Crosio, has been hard at work planning the NYC Chapter events for the coming year. I am pleased that our first guest this fall will be the eminent organist and teacher Marilyn Mason, who is going to spend the evening of October 18th telling us about her long and colorful life and career. This promises to be very entertaining and enjoyable as she is known to be quite an engaging speaker.

Other major events you might attend this fall include the AIO convention beginning September 29th, and the Pipedreams Benefit Concert which is taking place at Queens College. Please refer to our Web site to obtain complete details, and we hope you plan to join us.

As the choirs come back and the musical church season begins to energize, may I wish you a wonderful year of music making, and I hope to meet those of you I do not know at our chapter functions and concerts during the coming year.

—Christopher Creaghan, Dean

AIO in New York and New Jersey

The American Institute of Organbuilders is holding their annual convention, 29 September – 2 October 2004, across the river in New Jersey and will be easily reached from Manhattan. Guild members are invited to participate.

Two days at the convention hotel provide us a rare opportunity to hear lectures and view presentations on a variety of subjects from the point of view of the organ builder. Then, two days of organ demonstrations throughout the New York metropolitan region.

Organ demonstrations are free to guild members. Lectures require a daily registration, payable at the convention hotel, and includes meals. More detailed information has been posted to the chapter Web site, or you may visit http://www.pipeorgan.org

Trends: AGO Los Angeles 2004

The nearly 50 conventioneers from the New York City Chapter can tell 50 different tales of the experience that was the 2004 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists. Here, then, is just one possible story.

Well, not so much story as observation of what I’m calling trends. I say “calling” because I’ve not done any real statistical research to back up these claims. Okay, “opinions.”

If one word were to describe this convention it would be “early”: early to bed, early to rise, if one wished to attend the morning events throughout most of the week. The trend in this case seemed to be earlier and earlier as the days passed, although this may have been more the feelings of a writer who is not a morning person. Planners clearly were erring on the side of caution, with the result that many recitals and concerts were able to begin ahead of time. An early return to the hotel allowed time for the completion of those naps begun on the bus.

Afternoon workshops provided diverse opportunities for personal and professional growth, to pursue a new interest or re-familiarize with familiar but forgotten concepts. A very popular workshop offered an introduction to the lengthy and fascinating process that led to the creation of the Glatter-Götz pipe organ in Walt Disney Concert Hall. It is not a shy, retiring instrument, visually or aurally.

One request (requirement? demand?) of major donors and Los Angeles Philharmonic leaders, according to organ builder Manuel Rosales, was that any pipe organ for the Hall not make the space look like a church. The Gehry-designed façade has certainly succeeded in setting the bar rather high for creative and controversial pipe organ display in the third millennium. Was there any kind of similar reaction to the “fan” continued page 2
Trends continued: displays of the 19th century, or the bold, nude look of mid-20th century Walter Holtkamp, Sr., instruments and his imitators?

Perhaps it’s not a trend, but it was interesting that this listener made it through an entire week without hearing a single organ work by Johann Sebastian Bach at an AGO convention. This is not to say that Bach was not played. At “Rising Stars” recitals, technically pre-convention, there were substantial helpings of Bach. As part of the NYACOP, Bach was indeed performed. There was some Orgelbüchlein during an unoffi-
cial prelude to “ensemble amarcord,” a vocal concert which included a movement from the cantata for the 19th Sunday after Trinity. We missed the Bach organ work in this case when buses arrived in mid-prelude.

Oh, I take that back, we did hear some rather splendid Bach, performed by Hector Olivera on a Roland instrument. What can you say about a performer of Olivera’s rare abilities? “Flight of the Bumblebee” on the pedals at the speed of light was nothing compared to his getting a room full of organists to behave like they were at a rock concert. It certainly didn’t hurt having David Hyde Pierce as an “opening act”!

Early music was not completely anathema. Louis Marchand’s “Grand Dialogue in C Major” preceded Choral Evensong at First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, while my companion and I went to Shabbat Service at Wilshire Boulevard Temple, so we missed that. Transcriptions of works by Handel and Mozart were also heard at times. Ordinarily I would not call Mozart “early” music, but when, for example, the entire first full day of the convention is devoted to composers active and living into the first decades of the 20th century along with works by living composers, the 18th century seems so much more a long, long time ago.

Lest this sound like a criticism, let me say in no uncertain terms that it is not; there are enough solid compositions, some forgotten, from the 20th century alone that would easily fill a week of organists at convention. We did hear, also, a few truly fine works commissioned for the occasion. I wonder, though, about the need for so many newly-minted and untested works in a short span of time. Monday alone had five of varying quality: four organ premieres (two with other instruments) and one new choral work.

Another trend seems to be the increasing acceptance of digitally-produced tone as a substitute for wind-blown pipes. On occasion the sound was quite passable when used “sparingly,” in relation to the 7 digital voices next to 339 ranks in the First Congregational behemoth. Often the digital sounds elsewhere became rather bland, lacking in the substance that winded pipes provide. One unfortunate performance was forced onto an entirely digital instrument—unfortunately the nearby and very fine Beckerath is in a hall too small for the expected audience size—that seemed

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Salary Guidelines Updated

The members of the Professional Concerns committee, under the direction of David Shuler, have responded to many requests for an update to salary guidelines.

Just a short example from these guidelines: “Compensation for church musicians should be comparable with that of public school teachers and professional musicians employed in the secular world, as well as with that of persons in other professions requiring similar levels of training and experience. Salary determination should in no way be based on the compensation the musician earns from other jobs, on the musician’s spouse’s earnings, or on the number of dependents. Such practice is discriminatory and is not tolerated in other professions.” It’s about more than just money, it’s about justice.


Trends continued: to have been intended to emulate not a pipe organ but rather the kind of artificial tone we all hoped we’d left in the 1950s and 1960s.

Exhibits in a relatively contained area seemed significantly reduced in size in comparison to those at past conventions, with few playing pipe organs on display to compete with the large rooms devoted to digital instruments. Perhaps this is a reflection of the economy of the past few years, with many companies in all sorts of industries having to cut expenses. Given the very small market for pipe organs and pipe organ music publishing and accessories, it can be quite a financial undertaking to exhibit at a convention of musicians. I hope that the Los Angeles Convention Web site will remain up for some time to come so that we all may look to the list of exhibitors and continue to support them with our patronage. Without their financial support by way of purchasing exhibit space the cost of attending a convention of this scope would increase significantly. You can find that list here: http://www.agohq.org/2004/exhibit1.html

In terms of the two major competitions at each national convention, both the National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP) and the National Competition in Organ Improvisation (NCOI) fielded strong candidates. In particular the NYACOP candidates’ geographical backgrounds reflect an increasingly international flavor to the competition. Dong-ill Shin, a student of James David Christie at Boston Conservatory, received third prize; Christian Lane, studying with David Higgs and William Porter at Eastman, received both second prize and the audience prize; Yoon-mi Lim, in the doctoral program at Indian University and studying with Christopher Young, received first prize.

NCOI prize winners were Robert P. Ridgell, of Philadelphia, third prize; Jason Roberts, a student of Martin Jean at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, was awarded second prize; Luke Mayernik, of Pittsburgh, received first prize. Check out our superlative professional journal, The American Organist, for details on the next rounds in the NCOI (and NYACOP, if you’re of a more tender age than I), and get yourself involved.

Regional meetings at a national convention can be dull if you let them be, but if you’ve got someone like Pat Maimone, a good friend and District Convener from Upstate New York, running things such a meeting keeps up its momentum. It’s a great way to keep in touch on what neighboring and not-quite-so-near chapters are doing throughout the region. You also get great news early, like the names of regional members who have successfully passed certification exams (more on this subject is elsewhere in this issue).

Here again, just one story out of nearly 50 member stories about Los Angeles’ National Convention 2004. Kudos to the L.A. Chapter! Here’s an open invitation for others to write in with an account of their own.—KLS
News of Members and Friends

Our former dean, Stephen Hamilton, has had a full summer of concerts and workshops with performances in Hagerstown, Maryland; Lafayette, Louisiana; the Los Angeles National AGO Convention and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Hamilton performs at Syracuse University on Sunday, 12 September and presents his “Church Music Repertoire” workshop for the Syracuse AGO Chapter on Monday, 13 September.

In other news from Dr. Hamilton, the Church of the Holy Trinity (Episcopal) at 316 East 88th Street in Manhattan, will commemorate the third anniversary of the tragedy of September 11, 2001 with a special Evensong on Saturday, 11 September, at 6:00. The Rt. Rev. Andrew St. John, DD, Interim Rector, will officiate and preach. The Holy Trinity Choir, under the leadership of Dr. Hamilton, choirmaster and organist, will present anthems by Mozart and

as well as the Preces and Responses by Richard Ayleward. Hymns include: “My country, ’tis of thee,” “O blest Creator, course of light,” and “Eternal Father, strong to save.”

Trinity College choir, from The University of Melbourne, Australia, Michael Leighton Jones, conductor, will offer Choral Evensong at The Church of the Holy Trinity (Episcopal) in New York City, Wednesday evening, September 22, at 6:30 PM. Music includes “O Lux beata Trinitas” with settings by Leighton Jones and Palestina, as well as Kenneth Leighton’s setting of the Anglican service, “Collegium Magdalenæ Oxoniensis.” Organ Scholar Jonathan Bradley will present Finzi’s “Fortana” for the prelude and Dupre’s “Christie placare Servulis” for the postlude.

Internationally acclaimed concert organist Marilyn Mason from the University of Michigan will present the world premiere of “Breath of the Spirit” with poetry by Kenneth Gaertner and music by Gregory Hamilton, assisted by Donal Dischel, flute, and narrators Fred Burrell and India Cooper on Tuesday, October 19 at 8:00 PM. Dr. Mason was the New York City Performer of the Year in 1988. General admission is $15.00 at the door.

For more detailed information contact Dr. Hamilton, 212-289-4100, x210 or e-mail him at shamilton@holytrinity-nyc.org

Carol Williams, San Diego Civic Organist, returned to England to perform concerts in June 2004. The first was in Brighton at the magnificent Church of St Bartholomew which was opened in 1874, and is the tallest parish church in the United Kingdom. The historic organ built by J. W. Walker in 1901 enjoys splendid acoustics. The second concert was at Holy Trinity Blythburgh, known as the Cathedral of the Marshes. This historic church (dating from 1412) is a key centre in the Aldeburgh Festival established by Lord Benjamin Britten. This peaceful large church which still possesses continued page 5
In honor of the members of the Metropolitan New Jersey and New York City Chapters of the American Guild of Organists.

You serve our profession well.

Best wishes to all.

Yvonne L. Sonnenwald
Past Dean, Metro New Jersey Chapter
12th Annual Basically Bach at Saint Peter Lutheran Church  
Saturday, October 2, 2004

An afternoon of some of the world’s most exciting keyboard artists performing works of Bach and other masters.

1:00 - ARNO HARTMANN, organ
Milhaud, Petite Suite pour orgue
Bach, Prelude and Fugue in e, BWV 548
Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend, BWV 709
Arvo Pärt, Trivium (1976)
Bach, Prelude and Fugue in b, BWV 544
Jesus bleibet meine Freude, BWV 147
(Transcription: Maurice Duruflé)
Denis Bédard, Festive Toccata (1998)

2:00 - WALTER HILSE, organ
Bach-Vivaldi, Concerto in A Minor, BMV 593
Max Reger, Four Pieces from Opus 59
Bach, Passacaglia and Fugue in c, BWV 582

3:00 - MARTIN JEAN, organ
Bach, Prelude and Fugue in f, BWV 534
Sonata V, BWV 529
An Wasserflüssen Babylon, BWV 653
Wir Christenleut habn jezund Freud, BWV 710
Valet will ich dir geben, BWV 736
Prelude and Fugue in D Major, BWV 532

4:00 - DANIEL MARTYN LEWIS, piano
Bach, Well-tempered Clavier, Book I

8:00 - FESTIVAL CONCERT - Saint Peter Choir
Bach Festival Orchestra
Thomas Schmidt, conductor
Elsa Larsson, alto
Mary Elizabeth Poore and Rosalind Rees, sopranos
Roosevelt André Credit, baritone
Bach, Cantata 169 for alto solo
“Gott soll allein mein Herze haben”
Christmas Oratorio, Parts 4, 5, 6

Festival ticket for all events $50
($40 for seniors, students and AGO members)
Individual recitals $15 ($10)
Evening concert $20 ($15).

For reservations call the church 212-935-2200 or e-mail tschmidt@saintpeters.org

Saint Peter Lutheran Church, Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, New York City
http://www.saintpeters.org/

Convenient transportation: Take the 6 train to 51st Street or take the E train to Lexington Avenue