Visit the [website](#) of the NYC AGO Chapter

Don't miss events presented by your friends and colleagues.
Visit the [Concert Calendar](#) of the NYC Chapter, and attend some concerts!

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Dean's Message

"The old order changeth yielding place to new..."
Tennyson, *Morte d'Arthur*.

Whether we teach, have children or friends who are starting or returning to school, or just enjoy the flurry of yellow buses that swarm the streets, September will always be "back to school" month. As a youngster we would always begin the school term by reading Tennyson's Romantic ode to King Arthur: our English teacher clearly thought it would help us to process the many changes that would inevitably have taken place over the course of the summer. September is a natural time to consider the year past and build excitement for the season ahead. For those who observe Judaism, September sees the celebration of Rosh Hashanah—the New Year—celebrated with liturgies that several of us will have been involved with as organists, singers, and congregants.

Now is the perfect time to grow our Chapter. We have seen a steady increase in membership over the past few years, which is most encouraging, considering the downward trend. That’s due in part to some exciting programming, creative and engaging communication, clear and effective leadership, and a much easier process of joining the Guild via the ONCARD online registration system. There are many reasons to join the Guild. Here are my top five reasons:

1. **Strength in numbers!** It’s true, more people means more money to be spent on programs, which enables us to present bigger and better performances, conferences, masterclasses, and outreach events. It’s also energizing and restorative to spend time with friends and colleagues who have similar interests.

2. **The NYC Chapter is awesome!** Once the mothership of the AGO, the NYC Chapter draws on the multitude of excellent organs, musicians, conservatories, and our second-to-none location. Our events allow you to enjoy experiences not available to tourists.
3. **A lifetime of learning!** Whether you’re a music lover, amateur organist, or professional music director, there’s so much to inspire us on to greater heights, whether that’s through hearing an amazing performance, taking place in a masterclass, or discussing repertoire ideas with a colleague. And the world-class certification programs of the AGO are a sure-fire way to progress your skills and, ultimately, your career.

4. **Stay in touch!** The NYC Chapter maintains an extensive sub list. With hundreds of houses of worship in the NYC area, some of our members make thousands of dollars a year due to their contact information being made available.

5. **It makes financial sense!** The market value of our program events alone is far higher than the cost of membership. That’s not to mention the other benefits of being a member, such as a subscription to The American Organist, discounts offered through the AGO website, and access to the AGO’s job placement services. And, if you are a professional, consider asking whether your employer might sponsor your AGO membership or contribute towards attending a convention. It will be money well spent.

Do you know someone who would like to be a part of the AGO? Why not bring them to a concert, masterclass, or social gathering and show them what we’re about. Or just forward them this message with a personal note. And, as always, please let us know your thoughts, your reasons for joining (or leaving!) the Guild, and what we can do for you. We really do want to hear from you!

With my very best wishes, as ever,

James Kennerley, Dean
Link to register for all choir dates: https://balanceartscenter.as.me/bac-choir
Link to register for drop-in dates: https://balanceartscenter.as.me/bac-choir-drop-in

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**Program News**

I am delighted to announce the events that the Program Committee has organized for this season. The members of the Committee are Andrew Henderson, Michael Hey, James Kennerley, Larry Long, Donald Meineke, Raymond Nagem, Benjamin Sheen, and Janet Yieh.

**Saturday, October 5, 2019**

**AGO Certification Preparation Workshop**

**Madison Avenue Presbyterian**  (Dr. Andrew Henderson, *host*)

12:00-2:00 PM

*David Enlow and Dr. Henderson will offer their insights to those preparing for an AGO Certification Exam. For more information on the Certification process, click here.*

**Saturday, October 12, 2019**

**Architectural Tour of Upper East Side Churches**

11:00 AM-12:00 Noon – **Saint Bartholomew’s Church**  (Dr. Paolo Bordignon, *host*)

12:15-1:15 PM – **Christ Church Methodist**  (Dr. Steven Pilkington, *host*)

1:30-2:30 PM – **Church of Saint Vincent Ferrer**  (James D. Wetzel, *host*)
We will explore these magnificent solo efforts by architects Ralph Adams Cram and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue following their final collaboration at Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue in 1913.

At each site we will hear a brief organ demonstration/recital, enjoy a tour of the sanctuary, and be offered console time.

**Friday, November 22, 2019**

**German Organ Music of the 20th Century**

**Saint Michael’s Church** (John Cantrell, host)

6:30 PM Lecture by **Dr. Russell Weismann** on the history of Rudolf von Beckerath's firm

7:30 PM Recital by **Mark Steinbach** of Brown University

*Celebrating the anniversary of Anton Heiller (1923-1979), this evening begins with an examination of German organ building in the United States as exemplified by Beckerath's stunning work. Mr. Steinbach, who issued a CD of Heiller's music on the Beckerath at Saint Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh, will offer a recital that contextualizes Heiller's contribution within the broader German tradition.*

**Monday, February 17, 2020**

**Presidents’ Day Conference**

**Temple Emanu-El** (Jack Coen, Daniel Beckwith, and Dr. Andrew Henderson, hosts)

9:00 AM-5:00 PM

One of the most beautiful sacred spaces in the city is also one of the least well-known to the organ community: Temple Emanu-El has not been featured in an NYCAGO program since the 2007 Regional Convention. The day will include an eclectic organ recital by the hosts, lectures on the history of the Temple and its music program, a tour of the building, and an accompanied silent movie in the afternoon. A full schedule of events is to follow.

**Wednesday, March 18, 2020**

**Improvised Stations of the Cross**

**Church of Saint Mary the Virgin** (Dr. David Hurd, host)
7:00 PM
Renowned for their improvisational skill, chapter members David Enlow, our immediate past Dean, and Dr. Kalle Toivio, the 2018 winner of the National Competition in Organ Improvisation, share the bench in a sequence of improvisations on the Via Crucis.

Saturday, April 18, 2020
Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza
Details to follow.

Other events later in the spring
The NYCAGO is planning a collaborative event in the spring with a neighboring Chapter. The season finale event will also be announced soon. Details to follow.

Any suggestions are, as always, most welcome via email. And as I mentioned over the summer, our Webmaster Sam Bartlett has streamlined our website's Concert Calendar. Please take advantage of this valuable resource by attending some of the numerous recitals listed there and by making sure that events presented by your own institution are listed by emailing Sam.

Sincerely,

James D. Wetzel, Sub Dean and Chair of the Program Committee
Quote of the Month

"May all that has been reduced to noise in you become music again."
- David Teems

Advertise in the Newsletter

Do you have something special you'd like to share with your colleagues? Would you like to honor someone by making a gift? Place an ad in your AGO Chapter Newsletter, read by more than a thousand of your closest friends. The modest fee helps support the work of the chapter, and the rest of us will be the better for knowing what you're up to. Contact Ken Dake, advertising coordinator at kdake@marblechurch.org.
Won't you be my neighbor?

Better ask Linc.

Lincoln Davis first went to Mercury School in 1965. You might think that's where he got his first pair of shoes with wings, but his story is a little more down to earth. Linc is the owner of Stetson & Pinkham, a small Mercury dealer in Waldoboro, Maine, and he's the local guru for outboard motors. I first met Linc around 1997 when Wendy and I bought a twenty-two foot boat with a 115-horsepower Mercury motor. We never had any trouble with that motor, so I didn't see him again until last week.

We traded that boat for a sailboat in 2013, and just after I had back surgery, sailed her from Padanaram, Massachusetts (near New Bedford), through the Cape Cod Canal to our home port in Maine. This was our seventh summer on Kingfisher, and as we planned a two-week cruise "down east," we decided to make the switch from a rowing dinghy to a more stable inflatable boat with an outboard motor.

Not wanting to leave the motor unattended on a dinghy for nights when we're not using it, I've removed the motor each time and taken it home. The motor weighs about forty pounds, and is designed to be easy to handle and carry, but there's a "This Side Up" sticker on one side. The first time I did that maneuver,
kneeling in the super-bouyant dinghy, I clumsily rolled the motor onto the dock wrong way up. I wasn't surprised when it wouldn't start the next time I tried.

I took it to Linc. The problem was simple. Rolling the motor wrong side up allowed oil to flow from its discreet reservoir into the carburetor, and from there into the cylinder. He had the motor open and problem identified and solved in a couple minutes. He mounted the motor on the edge of a big tank of water, and it started right up.

Looking around his shop at some of the behemoth motors (Mercury makes a 400hp model with six cylinders and half the displacement of the engine in my Chevy Suburban), I realized that my issue was below Linc's pay grade. No surprise, as he's over eighty years old, and has been working on Mercury outboards all his life. He proudly showed me his collection of Mercury outboards, some dating from the early 1940s, and told me the history of the company as we walked from one to the other.

I got my 2.5hp motor home and down to our dock just in time for a visit with our two grandsons. It's nice to have an expert in the neighborhood. I know a lot of people who have devoted their lives to that one thing that really interests them. Some of them work on organs.

Joke of the Month
From the Editor

In 2005, I began a lengthy correspondence with John Schwandt, newly-appointed professor of organ at the University of Oklahoma, and director of the newly-formed American Organ Institute. He was laying the groundwork for that
brilliant initiative, and was shopping specifically for a concert organ, specifically a vintage American concert organ. Ours was a fascinating conversation about his focus on the American organ, its players, builders, and innovators. We briefly considered the politically encumbered Kimball at Memorial Auditorium in Worcester, Massachusetts, but that was not to be. Instead, I suggested the massive Möller that the Organ Clearing House had recently removed from the Civic Auditorium in Philadelphia. I'd call it a singular organ, but in fact it's a double organ with two four-manual consoles, one a horseshoe theatre console, the other a traditional drawknob console with drawknobs. The photo shows both consoles on the floor of the Convention Center with the four tuning keyboards, a twelve-manual organ.

John's immediate reaction was, "Why would we want a Möller?" But as he learned more about the organ, he came to feel that it would be ideal, especially because he intended to include teaching of theatre organ techniques in the new institute. I had one recording of the organ made at a convention of the American Theatre Organ Society, when the late Tom Hazleton improvised a medley of tunes from Oklahoma. That recording was played at a meeting of deans and administrators at OU, and the decision was made. Happily, we were able to negotiate that the University of Pennsylvania (which owned the organ) would give it to UO.

I'm thinking about that great experience as I read with sadness about the apparent end of that great experiment, the closure of the American Organ Institute through narrow-minded decisions of the University's leadership. It seems that OU's new president equates budget cuts with fundraising.
I watched with pleasure and more than a little pride as the AOI grew into a powerful force in the American pipe organ scene. The teaching studios were stocked with brilliant educators and students, the organ technology workshop was thrumming with activity, renovating organs, and maintaining most of the pipe organs in Oklahoma. It was a model of creativity and artistic development, and POOF! It went away. Staff members have been fired, the technology shop has been closed, and the program has been reduced to tatters. All that work. All that innovation.

Most of what I know about this sad story I read on Facebook, and the passionate responses of members of the AOI community may bear some inaccuracies, but it seems as though the enlightened part of the University, especially music students, are mounting unified protests about the demise of this program.

I offer my best wishes to my many friends at OU. I offer my congratulations for all that they accomplished. I hope those who have been cut loose will find meaningful new work. And I hope that other institutions might learn from this sad mistake.

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