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Dean’s Message

Introductions

This September Newsletter, admittedly published later than our usual beginning-of-the-month timeframe, is simply a brief overview of the year. A fuller edition will follow in October.

Members of the Board

The Chapter Board has already met twice over the summer to articulate a strategic plan for this new term, some components of which are outlined below. Since the elections in July, two members of the Board – Diane Belcher and Rebecca Ehren – have moved away from the City and have thus resigned. The Board has appointed Eva Sze to fill Rebecca’s place in the Class of 2026 and also has appointed Sándor Szabó to fill Diane’s place in the previously-elected Class of 2024. (Click on their names for links to their biographies.) Sándor was the runner-up in the last election, and Eva was a member of the election’s Nominations Committee, so it seemed fitting for the Board to invite these two to fill the vacancies.

Committee Work

The Program Committee has developed an exciting season of events at which I hope to see many of you. David Shuler as Sub Dean serves as Committee Chair.
The Chapter’s educational activities (Organ Day for Pianists; Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza; etc.) historically have been organized by the Program Committee. The Board now has created an independent Education Committee and has appointed Janet Yieh as its Chair. This way, the Chapter will have an entity solely dedicated to educational initiatives, which will include developing a continuing ed program for those local organists interested in improving their professional skills (hymn-playing, accompanying, registration, etc.).

Michael Shake is the new Chair of the Awards Committee. This fall, the Chapter will present the 2022 Distinguished Career Award to Wilma Jensen and will proceed with nominations for the 2023 International Performer of the Year Award.

Christopher Babcock has been named principal trustee of the Centennial Millennium Fund. The CMF was created with proceeds from the 1996 National AGO Centennial Convention held in New York City. Since 2007, the trustees annually have awarded grants to submitted proposals that worthily promise to promote and enhance our profession.

An Archives Committee has been created, with Jared Lamenzo as Chair. It is charged with establishing a Chapter Archives, documenting our past programming, and, eventually, updating and maintaining the NYC Organ Project.

Raymond Nagem as Secretary has agreed to chair the Operating Procedures Committee which will review our governing document, bringing it in line with recent updates in the National Bylaws.

Other Appointments: Loraine Enlow will now oversee Directory Advertising, and Raymond Nagem will be the Exams/Competition Coordinator. Continuing on from the Board’s previous term are Sam Bartlett as Webmaster; Larry Long as Chair of the Equity in Diversity Committee as well as the manager of the NYCAGO Substitute List; and yours truly as the Newsletter Editor.

**Goals for This Term**

Thanks to the indefatigable efforts of our Webmaster, our new Chapter website should be up and running in the coming weeks. The new design for the companion NYC Organ Project webpage should go live in the new year. (The Organ Project has been not been revised since its creator Steve Lawson's death in 2018.)

For anyone who has visited the Past Programs page, you may have noticed that there are lacunae in the records. We are trying to fill them out. Do you have copies of past programs? Do you have a box of old print NYCAGO Newsletters? Well, believe it or not, the Chapter itself does not! In fact, we have no centralized physical archive at all. Will you contribute by donating your records
to us?

The Board has charged a group to consider how we might improve our presence on social media. Do you have some facility with this and would be willing to help?

The online Pipe Organs of NYC will resume this fall. If you would like your institution’s instrument to be featured in this series, let me know.

I am delighted to report that, thanks in no small part to our redoubtable Registrar Larry Long, our Chapter membership is over 400! This is comparable to our pre-pandemic numbers. However, there are still many organists active within our Chapter precincts who are not members. Do you know one? We need to encourage these people to "Join Our Ranks." The Chapter will introduce a formal membership initiative in the coming months.

If you are willing to offer assistance with any of these projects or if you have suggestions for other pursuits the NYCAGO Board should consider in the years ahead, please send me an email.

Sincerely,

James D. Wetzel, Dean

Program News

Chapter Events – Season Overview

Opening Event: Members Recital

Monday, October 17 – 7 PM
Church of the Holy Cross
329 West 42nd Street

Members of your NYCAGO Board will present a recital of hidden gems: wonderful, accessible organ music by unknown composers or unknown works by familiar names. The instrument of Holy Cross, Aeolian-Skinner’s Op. 908 (1933), was recently restored by Foley Baker, Inc., of Tolland, Connecticut.
Wilma Jensen Workshop and Award Presentation

Monday, November 7 – 7 PM
Saint Malachy’s Church – The Actor’s Chapel
239 West 49th Street

The Chapter will present Wilma Jensen with the 2022 Distinguished Career Award. She will also lead a workshop in console technique, in conjunction with her soon-to-be released book Organ Footnotes: Touches, Rubato, Finesse, an in-depth study of natural physical gestures and musical freedom at the keyboard.

Presidents’ Day Conference

Monday, February 20 – during the day
Save the date for our annual keystone event.

Olivier Latry in Recital

Tuesday, March 7 – 7:30 PM
Saint Thomas Church
Fifth Avenue at 53rd Street

As part of Saint Thomas Church’s Grand Organ Series, concert organist Olivier Latry will offer a program of Wagner transcriptions and Widor’s Symphony No. 5 in F minor, Op. 42, No. 1. This recital is co-sponsored by the NYCAGO; all Chapter Members may reserve a free ticket here, using the code AGOLATRY.

Reger Anniversary Lecture

Saturday, March 18 – 1:30 PM
Saint Joseph’s Church – Yorkville
408 East 87th Street

In celebration of the sesquicentennial of Max Reger’s birth, renowned scholar and organist Isabelle Demers will give a lecture-demonstration on his shorter organ works – those playable by the average parish organist. The Church’s Müller and Abel, Op. 9 (1895) is the ideal instrument for such German Romantic repertoire.

Festival of Psalms

Friday, April 21 – time t.b.d.
Church of the Heavenly Rest
1085 Fifth Avenue at 90th Street

The Church of the Heavenly Rest has commissioned a work by David and Kerenesa Briggs that will be premiered by the Church’s choir conducted by Janet
Yieh, with brass ensemble and David Briggs at the organ.

**General Note**

All NYCGO events are free to Chapter members. As explained in the Dean’s Message above, the Chapter’s educational programming for the year will be announced separately. More information on all these events and more will be included in the October Newsletter.

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**Events around Town**

**TONIGHT: Ben Sheen in Recital**

**Thursday, September 22 – 7:30 PM**

**Saint Thomas Church**
Fifth Avenue at 53rd Street

Concert organist and former Saint Thomas Associate Organist Benjamin Sheen will offer a program of English music to mark the launch of his debut solo album: *In London Town*. Played on the Miller-Scott Organ, the evening will feature transcriptions and works of Elgar, Walton, Bingham, Whitlock, and others.

For those who have not already purchased tickets, NYCGO members may use the code AGO20 [here](#) to receive a 20% discount on tonight’s recital, as well as for all other concerts in the Saint Thomas Church series (apart from the Latry recital, which, as noted above, is free to all Chapter members).

*Consider adding your events to the Concert Calendar for the season. Email submissions to Sam Bartlett [here](#).*

*Email suggestions and comments for the Program Committee [here](#).*

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**Quote of the Month**

*I couldn’t wait for success, so I went ahead without it.*

~Jonathan Winter (1925–2013)

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**NYCGO Chapter Information**

**General Inquiries**
Newsletter

James D. Wetzel, editor
The newsletter is published at the beginning of every month, September–June. Please submit all material to the editor by the 24th of the preceding month.

Executive Board

Dean: James D. Wetzel
Sub Dean: David Shuler
Secretary: Raymond Nagem
Treasurer: Patrick Kreeger
Registrar: Larry Long
Auditors: Paolo Bordignon and Andrew Henderson

At-large (Class of 2024): Loraine Enlow, Nathaniel Gumbs, Bernadette Hoke, Jared Lamenzo, Sándor Szabó, and Lena Tharp

At-large (Class of 2026): Daniel Beckwith, Caitlin Dowling, James Hopkins, Maria Rayzvasser, Michael Shake, and Eva Sze

The biographies of the board members are provided here.

Visit the NYCAGO Chapter website by clicking here.

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