



October 2015

The American Guild of Organists

San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

Dean's Column

by Simon Berry

Perhaps you wonder what I do in the times between Masses and rehearsal at church – that's a huge topic that I won't go near yet! However, you may be interested to learn about my secular music making with San Francisco Opera and this month's production of *Sweeney Todd*, which has a huge organ part – indeed the organist opens the show with a mammoth solo and continues to play through a great deal of this complex show.

I've had a very interesting month working with a group of professional musicians at San Francisco Opera. It has been a good experience working with musicians outside a religious house of prayer where values could be different, yet most of the expectations are similar, if not higher.

Rehearsals always started and finished on time. Breaks were given at appropriate junctures. My colleague musicians were punctual and positive minded and serious about the task in hand. They were welcoming, friendly and supportive of each other. I heard no backbiting or gossiping (if it went on, it was well hidden).

I received a written letter of agreement outlining my responsibilities and the pay. Payments were made as promised. At the last rehearsal the music director sent a note of encouragement and thanks to each musician with some clarifications about a difficult passage.

In return for this I was expected to learn a very hard organ part and play it in an appropriate manner at the first rehearsal. When there were problems of ensemble and balance, I – as well as the other musicians – was expected to hear the well placed criticism and find a good solution.

I was expected to put in my learning hours on my own and be appropriately skilled and knowledgeable about my instrument and its role in the performance. That was tricky as it was a Hauptwerk installation and hearing the sound from the audience perspective was not possible from the pit.

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Message from the Sub Dean Elect

by George Emblom

It is a pleasure for me to serve as Sub Dean Elect of the SFAGO Chapter for the 2016–2017 program year.

As many of you may know, our board recently made changes in our operating procedures by now electing SFAGO members to serve on the program committee. This helps foster responsibility and accountability among the committee being that the MEMBERSHIP elected people to serve on said committee. We live in a very dense part of the world and our respective schedules and commitments are many.

Models and expectations that have worked for so many of us in the past no longer necessarily provide desired outcomes. Planning SFAGO events that are interesting and attractive to people has always been a challenge due to the diversity of our membership and geographical challenges. These factors will never change.

The elected program committee includes:

- Andrew Chislett (ajichislett@gmail.com),
- Jonathan Dimmock (jonathandimmock@gmail.com),
- David Howitt (howitt123@att.net and dhowitt@sjbalameda.org),
- Stephen Lind (stephen.lind@gmail.com),
- Christopher Putnam (cputnam@prodigy.net), and
- Timothy Zerlang (zerlang.timothy@comcast.net).

As you can imagine, each one of them is extremely committed and busy. We thank them, in advance, for giving freely of their time to brain-storm and help to organize and facilitate programming for the 2016–2017 SFAGO season.

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Submission deadline for the **November** issue is **October 10**

Summary of Board Highlights, September 2015

from Arthur West, Secretary

Topics covered at our recent Executive Board meeting:

Clarification of the board roster: some changes are taking place as Program Committee members replace the board position of "Member-at-Large." Our Treasurer reported on our finances and the chapter auditors presented the results of their annual audit. Our chapter finances are in good shape and are in good hands with our current treasurer. To quote the auditors "Both of us agree that Bill's record keeping is not only meticulous but accurate." In order to make the job of the Treasurer a little easier, the auditors recommended using software that is less cumbersome than QuickBooks. The Treasurer will be exploring the possibilities of replacement software.

The Program year for 2015–16 starts on Sunday, September 20, and there is a wonderful group of programs in store for the members. We have stayed within budget as well.

Our Registrar reports that we have 235 members in our chapter making us one of the largest chapters in the AGO. We continue to work to improve the use of technology in maintaining contact with members and in running our chapter. A motion was passed to include the ability to vote electronically in the next election cycle. By the time you read this you should have been able to pick up a membership directory at the September 20 Vesper's service at St Luke's or you will have gotten a link to download the most current directory as a PDF file.

There has been a continuation of the discussion of ways to help members get to chapter events who might have difficulty doing so on their own.

Our next board meeting will be on October 12 at 7:30pm and members are always welcome!



Tonal Demonstration on YouTube

from Jack Bethards

An educational video on symphonic organ design is available on YouTube. Open YouTube, search "Schoenstein Tonal".

Using the 15 stop, 17 rank Schoenstein organ at Christ and St Stephen's Church in New York City, Jack Bethards, president of Schoenstein &



Co., explains in detail the tonal characteristics of each stop. Nigel Potts, organist and choirmaster of the church, plays short examples from the organ and transcription repertoire. You will see and hear how the stops fit into tonal families and then combine to create a symphonic color palette. The Double Expression system is illustrated along with other organ design principles that can make a small instrument sound like a much larger one.

This video will be of value to anyone interested in organ registration, composition, or tonal design.



Sub Dean Elect, from front page

What do we request of you? We ask that you contact one of us no later than October 30 with program ideas, suggestions, or dreams for our chapter.

This is *your* chapter, your group of colleagues, and the above people are *your* elected representatives. We want to hear from you! We will consider every request and idea.

Our desire is to have as much clarity as possible regarding our program direction BEFORE the SFAGO board meeting the evening of November 16, 2015, location to be determined.

On behalf of my colleagues above, thank you for placing trust in us to serve you and our Chapter. We look forward to hearing from you and look forward to the 2016–2017 program year!

Dean's Column, from front page

What were the benefits for me? First, I was able to re-evaluate my part as an ensemble musician and re-hone those skills. Second, I was able to experience clear and logical requests from a director that enabled me to look at my own rehearsal style. Third, I've had a reality check about the appropriateness of my skills. Fourth, it was good for me to step outside my usual realm and be a visiting musician and have to fit into an established ensemble. Fifth, there was a financial benefit!

So now I have to question whether I treat my fellow professional musicians with the same level of trust and high expectations. Do I encourage and help my less experienced musicians to live up to these levels or do I demand something that they cannot return without relevant help? Do I offer help where needed? Do I use their time well? Do I represent my role of the professional well? Following this show, will the listening public think more highly of organs and organists or not? Did I do something to promote my instrument?

As I finish writing this column the reviews of *Sweeney Todd* are being published in the newspapers and online. It was a tense time waiting to see if the critics liked the show and if they thought anything of the organ part. I was fortunate in what they said about my part, but I have to wonder what would be the most appropriate reaction if they had not liked it and negative criticism had been flowing around the Bay Area. These are unknowns, but I am deeply aware that a thoughtful and slow response time is usually the most appropriate. ~



Classified Ads

Collected by David Howitt

This information is provided as a service to SFAGO members and the employing institutions. Inclusion of information in this column does not imply endorsement by the SFAGO. Send **Job Referrals** items, **Substitutes Available** notices, and **For Sale** items to: dhowitt@sjbalameda.org. Deadline for the **November** issue is **October 10**.

Position Available

Assistant Organist, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, San Francisco

The Assistant Organist is responsible for the Saturday 4:30 pm Mass and for assisting the Director of Music at the Sunday 9:30 am Novus Ordo and 11:00 am Missa Cantata masses as well as additional holy days. The average work week is estimated at 6 hours with no administrative or rehearsal responsibilities. The salary is equal to the AGO rates for 1/4 time position. If interested, please contact Sven Edward Olbash, <sven@starparish.com>, Director of Music, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, 4420 Geary Boulevard, San Francisco, CA 94118; <www.StarParish.com>

For Sale & Miscellaneous

For Donation

— a two manual, 26 stop, Rodgers 100 Jamestown organ, built for church and classic play and compact enough to fit into a living room. The organ was played on a more or less regular basis from 1980 until last year. The organ is currently in a temperature-controlled storage unit in the East Bay. The owner is willing to pay a portion of moving costs. If interested, please contact Quentin Hancock at 408-335-8223 or at qhancock@cruzio.com.



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2015-2016

Last updated 08/13/2015

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

October ²⁰¹⁵

Events, dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. Compiled from flyers, press releases, and listings submitted by members and organizations. SFAGO is not responsible for errors, although every effort is made to be accurate. Submission deadline for the **November** issue is **October 10**. Send event listings to sfagocal@gmail.com. For the most up-to-date calendar, visit www.sfago.org, click on **SFAGO Bay Area Concert Calendar**.

Recurring Venues

Churches and institutions offering programs on a regular basis have been assigned abbreviations so as to save space in our listings. Abbreviations are listed below with the full name of the venue. When no city is stated, San Francisco is assumed.

CCL-O: Cath. of Christ the Light, Oakland

CPLH: Calif. Palace of the Legion of Honor

CSMA: Cath. of St Mary of the Assumption

FPC-O: First Presbyterian Ch, Oakland

RP-SR: Resurrection Parish, Santa Rosa

SME-B: St Mark's Episcopal Ch, Berkeley

SME-PA: St Mark's Episcopal Ch, Palo Alto

September

26 Saturday

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

27 Sunday

4pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

October

3 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4 Sunday

4pm. Rex Rallanka, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. Music of Franck, Vierne, and Langlais. \$10 suggested donation. Grace Cathedral

10 Saturday

4pm. Brendan Conner, Organ. CPLH

11 Sunday

3pm. Antony Baldwin, Organ. Music of Handel, Elgar, Howells, Buxtehude, Stanford, Williams, Baldwin, and Guilmant. Freewill offering. St Martin's Episcopal Church, Davis

4pm. Brendan Conner, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Philip Manwell, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Jerome Lenk, Organ. Mission Dolores Basilica

6:05pm. Ugo Sforza, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

15 Thursday

3pm. Antony Baldwin, Organ. With the Orpheus West Chorale. Music of Handel, Elgar, Howells, Buxtehude, Stanford, Williams, Baldwin, and Guilmant. \$15. Mt La Salle Monastery, Napa

17 Saturday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

18 Sunday

3:30pm. Christine Westhoff, Soprano; Timothy Allen, Organ. \$15 donation. RP-SR

4pm. John Cannon, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

5pm. Hans Uwe Hielscher, Organ. Freewill offering. CCL-O

7pm. Paul Jacobs, Organ, with Christine Brewer, Soprano. Tickets: sfsymphony.org. Davies Symphony Hall

24 Saturday

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

25 Sunday

4pm. Diana Stork & Portia Diwa, Harp. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

31 Saturday

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. CPLH

8pm. James Welch, Organ. Halloween Concert. \$10. SME-PA

Looking Ahead

November

1 Sunday

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. CPLH

7 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

8 Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Mission Dolores Basilica

5pm. Interfaith Choral Concert. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

6:05pm. **SFAGO Event.** Christian Lane, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

11 Wednesday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

14 Saturday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

15 Sunday

3pm. Nicholas Welch, Organ & Piano. St Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto

4pm. Philip Brisson, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

20 Friday

8pm. San Francisco City Chorus; Larry Marietta, Conductor; John Walko, Organ; Igor Viera, Baritone. Grieg, *Four Psalms*; Vaughan Williams, *Five Mystical Songs*. \$20/\$15 seniors. Mission Dolores

21 Saturday

4pm. Simon Berry, Organ. CPLH

22 Sunday

3pm. San Francisco City Chorus; Larry Marietta, Conductor; John Walko, Organ; Igor Viera, Baritone. Grieg, *Four Psalms*; Vaughan Williams, *Five Mystical Songs*. \$20/\$15 seniors. FPC-O

4pm. Simon Berry, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

25 Wednesday

5:30pm. Choral Evensong. St Francis Choir; Robert Kermn, Director; Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Music of Drummond Wolff, Vivaldi, Bouman. St Francis Episcopal Church

29 Sunday

4pm. David Hatt, Organ. Free parking. Freewill offering. CSMA

December

5 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

6 Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

