

December 2014

The American Guild of Organists

San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

Dean's Column

by Simon Berry


Dear Colleagues:

Recently I took part in a special event with other choirs and choir directors where we each sang a couple of pieces from our repertoire. The other choirs/music groups taking part were from an amazing variety of faith backgrounds. We sang motets in Latin, while other groups used piano, guitar, tambourine and, yes, organ. Those who used the organ loved that instrument and spoke of this, in the same way that guitarists — who were good — had a personal connection to their instrument (after all, they envelope the instrument with their body). Two points spring to mind:

- Not all of the music was to my taste. It didn't have to be since it wasn't about me. Because these music groups and choirs are leading the music of thriving congregations, who am I to criticize? I don't have to like it, but I do need to respect it. And that I try to do with all my heart and mind and soul.
- I wonder if we show a real love for our instrument and are willing to be vulnerable when supporting organ over, say, praise band, but still love those who like the praise band. That's hard. Very hard.

We are blessed indeed to have the choice of a huge variety of organ and choral music to put before our listeners. We have a huge responsibility to ensure that in faith-based situations this music acts as a means of prayer. In entertainment venues, this music must continue to draw people in to have their spirits raised in different ways.

As you start the process of presenting music for Advent, Christmas, holiday services and parties, I invite you to recall a love for the music you are presenting. Even if it's the twentieth performance of Silent Night this season, it should still charm the hearts and souls of the people.

Without you at the organ consoles of our churches, temples and theatres, the holiday season would be a far less festive time. Then, when it is all over, sit back and give thanks for the gift of music making and your particular gift of leading people in prayer and entertainment. 

On Giving Notes


from Simon Berry

Most of us either give notes to choirs or receive them from organists when we direct choirs. Have you ever thought that there are really good ways of doing this and conversely, some much less helpful ways? When my organ students start to help at the console, I give them this lesson in being thoughtful note-givers and I think it helps them reflect on many other aspects of their organ playing.

1. Choose the most appropriate stop, one with plenty of upper partials, as this helps the singers to hear the pitch accurately. I prefer a milder string stop, such as a Salicional or a quiet Diapason/Principal, preferably enclosed so that the note can be given subtly, with a small crescendo and diminuendo to give it a live aspect. I find flutes hard to hear accurately as they have fewer upper partials and that affects their apparent fundamental pitch. The same argument goes for tapered stops, such as Gemshorns. Reeds are less subtle and more often off pitch; celestes never! (although a student did try that once.)
2. Choose the most appropriate pitch(es). For most music I like the key note only – even if the first notes are different, as this means that the tonality of the piece should be in

► **Giving Notes**, page 2

Choir Directors

Charles Blue proposes to set up opportunities for choir directors to visit each other's rehearsals for mutual benefit. If you are interested, please contact Charles Blue for more information. 

Inside this issue

Rosemary Wren, R.I.P.	2
Chapter Program 2014–2015	2
Classified Ads & Information Box	3
Events Calendar & Looking Ahead	4

Submission deadline for the **January** issue is **December 10**

Rosemary Wren, R.I.P.

Rosemary Gouveia Wren, a one-time resident of Santa Cruz, passed away peacefully on June 26 in Sacramento, California, at age 85. She was a member of the American Guild of Organists and was a church organist in San Jose and Sacramento. ~



Giving Notes, from front page

the forefront of the singers' minds. For a piece in B flat, where the sopranos start on the B flat above middle C, I ask for a pair of octave B flats – the real pitch and the octave below. This helps the tenors and basses feel the tonality. For pieces that start on a chord – such as Tallis's 'If Ye Love Me' – I still prefer the key notes (middle F) to a chord, as this means the singers have to work out their pitches in their minds before starting to sing.

3. For less experienced choirs I may ask for a broken-chord – always from the bass up, holding the pitches and adding each one to form the full chord. This is also helpful in rehearsal as the singers get into the routine of what to listen for.

4. I always cue the accompanist when I want the notes. That way I know everyone is paying attention and will hear the note best.

5. I always give the accompanist a copy of the music with the pitch(es) to be given clearly marked.

6. I always tell the singers what the given pitch will be. ~

SFAGO Program for 2014–2015

Saturday, September 20, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

“Our Souls Inspire...”

An Act of Worship for AGO members and friends
with music for Organ, Brass and Choir
Inspirational Address from Dean Alan Jones & Installation of Officers
Followed by a reception
Christ the Light Cathedral, Oakland

Saturday, October 18, 2014, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Masterclass Workshop on movements from a Couperin Mass
Jean-Baptiste Robin
St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

Sunday, October 19, 2014, 4:30 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Jean-Baptiste Robin
Followed by a reception
St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

Saturday, November 22, 2014, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

St. Cecilia's Day Hone Your Skills Workshops
New Music for Organ • New Music for Voices • Wedding and Funeral Music
Transposition for AGO exams • Improvisation Masterclass
With refreshments and lunch
St John's Episcopal Church, Ross

Monday, January 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

Dean's Roundtable Discussion of Professional Issues
Followed by a reception
St Dominic's Church, San Francisco

Saturday, February 7, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong and Presentation on RSCM Voices for Life scheme
Susan Jane Matthew, The St Paul's Choir,
including Choir School boys and girls
St Paul's Episcopal Church, Burlingame

Saturday, March 15, 2015, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Workshop with San Francisco Girls' Chorus & Short Concert
Chorissima Hall, Hayes Street, San Francisco

Sunday, April 26, 2015, 4:00 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Nigel Potts, organ & Sarah Taylor, mezzo soprano
Elgar's Sea Pictures
Followed by a reception
Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

Tuesday, May 26, 2015, 6:15 p.m.

Dinner, Annual Meeting and Members' Recital
First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Classified Ads

Collected by Robert J Kerman

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: Robert J Kerman; sfago.classifieds@gmail.com. Deadline for the **January** issue is **December 10**. Visit our blog at <http://sfagojobs.blogspot.com/> often to see the latest listings.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

East Bay

MUSIC DIRECTOR/ORGANIST, OAKLAND

St Paul Lutheran Church (1658 Excelsior Ave., Oakland, CA 94602, 510-530-6333, www.stpaul-lutheran.com) seeks Director of Music skilled in choral conducting, organ, piano, and accompanying, for a liturgical church setting blending traditional and contemporary choral and liturgical music, to begin January 1, 2015. Responsibilities include planning the music program, directing the adult and bell choirs, playing services (including extra services on holy days), and accompanying soloists. 23-rank 3-manual Wicks organ, Kawai grand piano. Part-time position. \$24,000–\$29,000 annually. Send résumé to info@stpaul-lutheran.com.

ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER, ALAMEDA

St Philip Neri Roman Catholic Church, 9 am Sunday Mass and Thursday evening choir rehearsal. Contact Michael Page (michael.erwin.page@gmail.com) for details and further contact information.

PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR, MORAGA

Saint Giles Episcopal Church (www.stgiles-moraga.org) seeks Minister of Music (organist/pianist/director for small adult choir) Responsibilities include but are not limited to: planning parish music program, making weekly music recommendations, leading a weekly choir rehearsal, and directing at 9am Sunday service. The church meets at Saint Mary's College Chapel. 65-rank Austin pipe organ, grand piano. Quarter-time position, compensation based on experience and education. Email résumé, along with a letter summarizing your experience and approach to church/sacred music, to justin@stgiles-moraga.org. Include "Minster of Music" in the subject line.

South Bay

LONG TERM SUBSTITUTE ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR, FREMONT

Saint Anne's Episcopal Church, Fremont, January 2015 through August 2015. Play organ/piano and conduct a small choir for 10am Sunday service, plus choir rehearsal on Wednesday evening. Other services as per the liturgical year. Pay negotiable. Contact Giancarlo Aquilanti, gcarlo@ccrma.stanford.edu.

Peninsula

PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR, MENLO PARK

St Raymond's Catholic Parish, Menlo Park (A Dominican Parish) seeks a person qualified and skilled in both traditional and contemporary music to direct the music for Parish Masses (Saturday 5:15pm, Sunday 10:00am), including proficiency on organ, piano, and in directing a schola and cantors; some singing ability as well. Additional duties on Solemnities, Weddings and Funerals. Weekly duties currently amount to 20 hours; salary according to AGO scale. Possibility for eventual growth into a 3/4 or full-time position. 2-manual Allen Digital Organ; Yamaha grand piano. Apply by email or phone to Fr Christopher Fadok, cpfadok@yahoo.com or 650-323-1755.

DONATION OR LOAN

ORGAN FOR DONATION OR LOAN

Rodgers 100 series electronic organ, 2-M & Ped. In storage in East Bay, very good condition. If taken as donation, owner may contribute to moving costs. Owner is also willing to loan to interested party with written agreement, with borrower responsible for at least half of maintenance costs. For more information, contact owner at 831-421-9052.



SFAGO Newsletter is published monthly, August thru May, with a Summer issue for June/July, by the San Francisco Chapter, American Guild of Organists. Opinions stated herein are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect official policies of this Chapter. The deadline for receipt of all newsletter items is the 10th of the month preceding publication.

Dean: Simon Berry, 415.674.0430, simoncberry@gmail.com
Sub Dean: Jim Armstrong, 510.350.7801, jfaworking@gmail.com
Sub Dean Elect: Elizabeth Forsyth, e_forsyth@yahoo.com
Secretary: Arthur West, arthurwest@gmail.com
Treasurer: William Visscher, bvissch@fastmail.fm
Registrar: Christoph Tietze, 415.924.1377, orgelchris@yahoo.com
Webmaster: Robert J Kerman, rjkerman@gmail.com
Chapter Website: www.sfago.org

Newsletter Departments: *Send your entries to the appropriate editor; all submissions due by 10th of the month preceding publication*

Events Calendar Listings: Brian Swager, 415.551.7866, sfagocal@gmail.com
Job Placement & For Sale Listings: Robert J Kerman, sfago.classifieds@gmail.com
Obituary Listings: position open
Newsletter Articles: George Morten, 209.565.6660, sfago-editor@att.net

2014-2015
Last updated 07/14/2014

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

December ²⁰¹⁴

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 **January** issue is **December 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.

CPLH: Calif. Palace of the Legion of Honor

CSMA: Cath. of St Mary of the Assumption

FPC-O: First Presbyterian Ch, Oakland

RLC-O: Resurrection Lutheran Ch, Oakland

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

SPE-BU: St Paul's Episcopal Ch, Burlingame

December

6 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4:30pm. James Welch, Organ. Crèche exhibit. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Palo Alto

5pm. Advent Lessons and Carols. Reception follows. SPE-BU

7 Sunday

4pm. Eric Huenneke, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4:30 & 7pm. The Valparaiso Singers; James Welch, Accompanist. Crèche exhibit. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Palo Alto

9 Tuesday

7:30pm. SF Bay Brass; Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. Brass & Organ Christmas. \$15-\$50. Grace Cathedral

7:30pm. Daniel Pociernicki, Narrator; Christine Springer, Soprano; Brian Swager, Harp & Organ. "The Beloved Bull and the Sausage Horse." Freewill donation. Immanuel Lutheran Church, San Jose

13 Saturday

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

14 Sunday

3pm. German Advent Service. Lessons & Carols in German. RLC-O

4pm. Vytenis Vasyliunas, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

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

15 Monday

7:30pm. Christmas carol concert, including Vivaldi *Gloria* and works by James MacMillan. St Dominic's Schola Cantorum, SF Choral Artists, The Festival Orchestra; Simon Berry, Conductor. St Dominic's Catholic Church

16 Tuesday

7:30pm. Daniel Pociernicki, Narrator; Christine Springer, Soprano; Brian Swager, Harp & Organ. "The Beloved Bull and the Sausage Horse." Donation. First Unitarian Universalist Church

20 Saturday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

21 Sunday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Anna Maria Voinov, Flute; with Christoph Tietze, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4:30pm. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. SME-B

27 Saturday

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

28 Sunday

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

4pm. John Walko, Organ. CPLH

Looking Ahead

January 2015

4 Sunday

4pm. Epiphany Lessons and Carols. Archdiocesan Children's Choir, Golden Gate Boyschoir and Bellingers, St Brigid School Honor Choir. Freewill offering. CSMA

10 Saturday

5pm. Susan Jane Matthews, Organ. A celebration of the new ranks of the tuba, sesquialtera, and cymbelstern. Freewill donation. Reception follows. SPE-BU

11 Sunday

4pm. James Welch, Organ. \$10 donation. St Bede's Episcopal Church, Menlo Park

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

12 Monday

7:30 p.m. **SFAGO Event.** Dean's Roundtable Discussion of Professional Issues, followed by a reception. St Dominic's Church, San Francisco

18 Sunday

4pm. Gail Archer, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

25 Sunday

3pm. Paul Jacobs, Organ. Tickets: sfsymphony.org. Davies Symphony Hall

3:30pm. JungHae Kim, Harpsichord. Music of d'Anglebert, Le Roux, Frescobaldi, Froberger, Louis Couperin, and Bach. \$15 suggested donation. Resurrection Parish, Santa Rosa

4pm. Ennio Cominetti, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

February

7 Saturday

7:00 p.m. **SFAGO Event.** Choral Evensong and Presentation on RSCM Voices for Life chorister training program. Susan Jane Matthew, The St Paul's Choir, including Choir School boys and girls. St Paul's Episcopal Church, Burlingame

8 Sunday

4pm. Michael Cala, Organ. Free admission/\$10 suggested donation. Mission Dolores Basilica

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

15 Sunday

5:30pm. Choral Evensong. St Francis Choir; Robert Kerman, Director; Candace Guirao, Violin; Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Music of White, Gardiner, Mundy, Vaughan Williams. Freewill offering. Reception follows. St Francis Episcopal Church

22 Sunday

3:30pm. Daniela Mineva, Piano. \$15 suggested donation. Resurrection Parish, Santa Rosa

March

7 Saturday

5pm. Choir School Concert. Freewill donation. Reception follows. SPE-BU

8 Sunday

3pm. Isabelle Demers, Organ. Tickets: sfsymphony.org. Davies Symphony Hall

