

# **THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute**

## **Birmingham Chapter of The American Guild of Organists February 2014**



Charles Kennedy, Dean

### **A WORD FROM THE DEAN**

Greetings to all of you, and a very Happy New Year! I trust that you all are well rested and refreshed after much needed down time following the busy season of Advent and Christmas. I would like to begin by expressing my thanks to Gorman Jones for hosting the chapter at his home for a meet and greet in November with David Baskeyfield. It was a wonderful evening of food and fellowship, and David was most entertaining in sharing many stories of his varied career as a concert organist and church musician. Those of us who were privileged to hear him play on the Independent Presbyterian November series enjoyed his playing immensely, and indeed, the entire series was a brilliant success.

### **EPIPHANY PARTY**

Special thanks go to Fred and Leslie Teardo for hosting our Epiphany party in their home. We are very grateful for their generosity, and it was most enjoyable evening of wonderful food and conversation. We are also very thankful to Nathan Smock for his hard work in coordinating with the caterer to make this a success, and to Shereilyn and Greg for their assistance.

### **AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS AND CHAPTER OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Very soon we will be posting online for your consideration the proposed amendments to the Chapter Bylaws and Chapter Operating Procedures. We will be voting on these documents during late March and early April, along with the election of the new slate of officers and Members-at-Large to the Executive Committee.

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The following people have agreed to serve as members of the Nominating Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee: Sam Burke, Jim Cook, and Cathy Shelton. The Nominating Committee will choose candidates for Dean, Sub-Dean, Secretary, and Treasurer for 2014-2016, and three Members-at-Large on the Executive Committee for 2014-2017. The slate of candidates will be announced in mid-February, after which a window of time will be available for chapter members to submit additional candidates, in accordance with the Chapter Operating Procedures. The elections, as previously mentioned, will take place in late March and early April, using the new online voting system through the chapter website, with provisions for absentee voting by mail for those members who do not use the internet.

### **THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS FOR JONATHAN BIGGERS**

Some of you already know this, but Jonathan Biggers, who performed our program for October at First United Methodist Church, was the victim of a brutal attack when he was robbed upon leaving a friend's apartment on December 1. He had to have hand surgery, which

thankfully was successful. Please keep Jonathan in your thoughts and prayers as he recovers.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

I would like to invite all of you to a recital that I will be playing on the Concert Series at the Cathedral Church of the Advent on Sunday, February 2 at 3:00 p.m. This concert will be built around the theme of light, in keeping with Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (also known as Candlemas), which happens that very day. Works of Bach, Fleury, Howells, Karg-Elert, Tournemire and Widor will be performed. Also at the Cathedral Church of the Advent, on our Mid-Day Music Series on Friday, January 31, will be the debut concert of the Montevallo Early Music Ensemble, under the direction of Associate Professor Joseph Sargent of the University of Montevallo. Many other exciting and interesting events will be taking place during January and February, as listed below and on the chapter website.

#### 2014 AGO NATIONAL CONVENTION, BOSTON

The website to register for the AGO National Convention in Boston, June 23-27, is now up at <http://www.agoboston2014.org>. I encourage all of you to attend, and to take advantage of early registration, which ends January 31. The convention lineup looks very exciting, and this is one not to be missed. Let's have a good showing for the Birmingham Chapter!

Charles M. Kennedy  
Dean



**Dan Lawhon, Sub Dean**

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful Christmas and time to relax after the busy season. Many thanks to Leslie and Fred Teardo for hosting our Epiphany party this past week in their lovely home. It was a delightful evening with great food and fellowship and a great turn out. Thanks to Nathan, Greg and Sherelyn who always make sure everything is perfect.

Our next program will be February 10<sup>th</sup> at Baptist Church of the Covenant. Dr. Leon W. Couch, III, will lead a program entitled "Buxtehude's Music, the Affections, and Rhetorical Interpretation". Dr. Couch is new to the faculty of Birmingham Southern College. This promises to be an enjoyable and enlightening season. Dinner will be served at BCOC at 6:00 p.m.

On March 10<sup>th</sup> our meeting will be held at St. Paul's Cathedral on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue north. Bruce Ludwick will present our program, "Chant: Music and Prayer for All Christians." Bruce is the Director of Music at the Cathedral. He will demonstrate how chant can be a welcomed addition the worship service. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul's.

The next two events will feature the students of AGO chapter members. Students will present a recital at the Cathedral of the Advent on April 7<sup>th</sup>. We hope that you will encourage your students to be a part of this year's program. Also, on April 12<sup>th</sup>, the Minnie McNeil Carr and Myrtle Jones Steele Organ Scholarship Competitions will take place (site to be determined). Encourage your students to take part. You can find details of the competition

guidelines on our website. High school students from anywhere in Alabama are welcomed. They do not have to be studying with a Birmingham AGO member, while college students must be studying with a Birmingham AGO member. Our final program for this year, will be a Hymn Festival and installation of officers. This will be held May 12<sup>th</sup> at Ascension Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills. More details to follow.

Most Sincerely,  
Dan Lawhon, Sub-Dean

### **Farewell to a long-time chapter member**

In early November Martha Willetts called to say she was moving to Arkansas to be near family. During our conversation, we reminisced about various chapter events that occurred during her long membership. Martha rarely missed a chapter meeting or event and could always be depended on to volunteer her services with publicity, hospitality, or to meet any other need. Martha remarked how much she will miss the chapter and asked that we keep her in our thoughts. We wish her well as she embarks on her new life in Arkansas and thank her for her devotion to the chapter for so many years.

Shereilyn Breland

### **AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS AWARDED \$15,000 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

NEA Funding Will Support Performances,  
Workshops, and New Music at  
the 52nd Biennial AGO National Convention in  
Boston, Mass., June 23–27, 2014

NEW YORK CITY — The American Guild of Organists (AGO) has been awarded a grant by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to support the 2014 AGO National Convention in Boston, Mass., June 23–27, 2014. The \$15,000 NEA “Art Works” grant is directed to support

performances, educational workshops, publication of the Boston Organ Book, and new music premieres. The grant carries a mandate that it be matched dollar for dollar from other funding sources. The 2014 AGO National Convention is the fifth consecutive AGO National Convention that has garnered funding from the arts endowment.

AGO President Eileen Guenther stated, “The recognition by the NEA reaffirms the importance of new music commissions to increase organ and choral repertoire, and to increase the American public’s knowledge of and appreciation for contemporary classical music. The AGO is especially interested in supporting new music for the concert stage, as there are increasing numbers of American concert halls, including the Symphony Hall in Boston, with new or renewed concert organs.” AGO Executive Director James Thomashower added, “It is an honor to be recognized by the NEA. We are highly grateful for this grant that will enable us to continue our tradition of presenting outstanding musical performances to enrich lives through organ and choral music when we meet for our National Convention in Boston.”

Art Works grants support the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence: public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancing the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,528 eligible Art Works applications, requesting more than \$75 million in funding. Of those applications, 895 are recommended for grants for a total of \$ 23.4 million. Acting NEA Chairman Shigekawa said, “The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support these exciting and diverse arts projects that will take place throughout the United States. Whether it is through a focus on education, engagement, or innovation, these projects all contribute to vibrant communities

and memorable experiences for the public to engage with the arts.”

The 2014 AGO National Convention will augment and enrich cultural life in New England and beyond through performances by outstanding solo artists and choral and instrumental ensembles in the city’s concert halls and houses of worship, educational workshops, and presentations of scholarly papers. In addition, the Guild has commissioned 14 composers renowned for artistic excellence, totaling more than 100 minutes of new music.

Convention performers and performing ensembles include: James David Christie (organ) and the Boston Landmarks Orchestra, Christopher Wilkins (conductor); Joan Lippincott (organ) and the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble; Handel and Haydn Society; Boston City Singers Youth Choir; Cantata Singers; Berklee Jazz Organ Group; Blue Heron Renaissance Choir; organists: Chelsea Chen, Heinrich Christensen, Craig Cramer, Scott Dettra, Thierry Escaich, Janette Fishell, Peter Krasinski, Christian Lane, Renée Anne Louprette, Kimberly Marshall, Rosalind Mohnsen, Bruce Neswick, Jonathan Ortloff, Kola Owolabi, Pamela Ruitter-Feenstra, Jonathan Ryan, John Scott, Stephen Tharp, and Catherine Todorovski; Peter Sykes, harpsichord; plus winners of the AGO National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance, the AGO National Competition in Organ Improvisation, and the AGO/Quimby Regional Competitions for Young Organists.

Premier performances will be presented of commissioned works from: Carol Barnett, Lisa Bielawa, Carson Cooman, Pamela Decker, Libby Larsen, David Lasky, Matthew Martin, Nico Muhly, Betty Olivero, Scott Perkins, Robert Sirota, Hilary Tann, Edward Thompson, and James Woodman. Serving to highlight Boston’s heritage of American musical composition, six

historic compositions by Boston composers will be grouped with six new music commissions to form the Boston Organ Book, a publication to be distributed to all convention registrants to encourage performances for the benefit of the public.

For further information about the 2014 AGO National Convention, please visit [Agoboston2014.org](http://Agoboston2014.org). For further information about the National Endowment for the Arts, please visit [Arts.gov](http://Arts.gov). ■

### **AGO PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS WITH THE KING OF INSTRUMENTS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP**

Nine Summer Educational Programs for Teenagers and Adults Announced by the AGO with Generous Funding provided by the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America and the American Institute of Organbuilders

NEW YORK CITY—The American Guild of Organists (AGO) is proud to announce five PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS (POEs) and one POE (Advanced) for students aged 13–18; one POE (Technical) for students aged 16–23; and two POE+ programs for adult students in 2014. Generous funding from the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America (APOBA) and the American Institute of Organbuilders (AIO) will support the summer programs, which will be held from coast to coast. Complete contact information for each Pipe Organ Encounter can be found in The American Organist Magazine and online at [Agohq.org](http://Agohq.org). The summer schedule follows:

#### **POE for ages 13–18**

June 8–13, Fort Collins, Colo.

June 9–14, Indianapolis, Ind.

June 29–July 4, Wilmington, Del.

July 7–11, Manhattan, Kans.

July 13–18, Easton, Mass.

### **POE (Advanced) for ages 13–18**

June 29–July 4, Ann Arbor, Mich.

### **POE (Technical) for ages 16–23**

June 8–13, Stowe, Pa.

### **POE+ for Adults**

June 8–13, Rockford, Ill.  
July 13–17, Seattle, Wash.

“The AGO and APOBA have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship since 1975,” declared AGO Executive Director James Thomashower. “Likewise, the AIO has been active in supporting the Guild’s educational programs, beginning with their partnership in Pulling Out All the Stops, a video produced jointly by the AGO, AIO, APOBA, the Organ Historical Society, and the American Theater Organ Society in 1996. Collectively, APOBA and the AIO have contributed more than \$446,000 in support of the AGO’s educational programs during our long association. For their ongoing, committed generosity in supporting the Guild’s mission—to enrich lives through organ and choral music—we are extremely grateful.”

**The PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTER (POE)** is an introduction to the pipe organ through instruction in organ playing, repertoire, history, design, and construction. These regional summer organ music institutes for teenage students provide private and group instruction in service playing and solo repertoire,

opportunities to learn about the musical heritage of various religious denominations, and a chance for young musicians to meet others with similar interests. Basic keyboard proficiency is required, although previous organ study is not necessary. The POE (Advanced) provides intermediate to advanced classes in areas such as organ literature, history, pipe organ construction and design, music theory, improvisation, conducting, and service playing for students who have achieved a high level of success in organ study. The POE (Technical) is a program designed for students who are interested in learning the art and craft of organ building. Scholarship assistance is available. The POE+ is a summer program filled with practical information and instruction for adult keyboard musicians interested in improving their service-playing skills. Participants will be introduced to basic organ skills through private instruction and classes. The weeklong experience will lead to greater confidence and competence at the organ. ■

**POE site locations are selected by the AGO Committee on the New Organist and approved by the AGO National Council after application by AGO host chapters. The deadline for applications to host 2015 POE and POE+ programs is March 15, 2014. Applications are available from AGO National Headquarters. Partial program funding is provided to AGO host chapters.**

F. Anthony Thurman, DMA  
Director of Development and Communications  
American Guild of Organists  
National Headquarters and THE AMERICAN  
ORGANIST Magazine

## Chapter Events 2014

### February

**Dr. Leon Couch**

#### **Organ Works of Buxtehude**

Monday, February 10, 2014

Baptist Church of the Covenant

Dinner 6:00 p.m.;

Business meeting 6:30 p.m.;

Program 7:00 p.m.

### March

#### **Bruce Ludwick, Teaching Chant**

Monday, March 10, 2014

St. Paul's Cathedral

Dinner 6:00 p.m.;

Business meeting 6:30 p.m.;

Program 7:00 p.m.

### April

#### **Student Recital**

Monday, April 7, 2014

Cathedral Church of the Advent

Dinner 6:00 p.m.;

Business meeting 6:30 p.m.;

Program 7:00 p.m.

### May

#### **Hymn Festival/Officer Installation Service**

Episcopal Church of the Ascension

Monday, May 12, 2014

## Member Events

January 24, 2014 7:30 PM. Barry Jordan, Organist/Choirmaster, Magdeburg Cathedral. Organ Festival Concert. The University of Alabama School of Music

January 25, 2014 09:00 AM .Barry Snyder, Professor of Piano, Eastman School of Music. Organ and Piano Festival Workshops and Piano Concert. University of Alabama School of Music

January 26, 2014 4:00 PM. IPC Camerata. Choral Evensong (Service of Light). Independent Presbyterian Church

January 31, 2014 12:30 PM. The Montevallo Early Music Ensemble; Joseph Sargent, Director. Mid-Day Musical Menu. Cathedral Church of the Advent, 2017 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203

February 2, 2014 3:00 PM. Charles Kennedy, organ. Cathedral Concert Series. Cathedral Church of the Advent, 2017 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203

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February 3, 2014 7:00 PM. Lecture on Arthur Honneger by Jeff McLelland. Independent Presbyterian Church

February 7, 2014 7:00 PM. Liber UnUsualis. Early Music Concert. Independent Presbyterian Church

February 9, 2014 4:00 PM. IPC Choir. Choral Concert. Independent Presbyterian Church

February 10, 2014 6:00 PM. Dr. Leon W. Couch III. "Buxtehude's music, the Affections, and Rhetorical Interpretations". Baptist Church of the Covenant

February 16, 2014 3:00 PM. The Cathedral Choir; Frederick T. Teardo, Director of Music and Organist; Charles M. Kennedy, Associate Director of Music and Organist. Choral Evensong. Cathedral Church of the Advent, 2017 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203

February 23, 2014 4:00 PM. IPC Camerata. Choral Evensong (Service of Wholeness). Independent Presbyterian Church

February 28, 2014 12:30 PM. Leon W. Couch, III, organ. Mid-Day Musical Menu. Cathedral Church of the Advent, 2017 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203 .