

THE MONTHLY MIXTURE



The Newsletter of the Austin Chapter American Guild of Organists

APRIL 2015



FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends,

The holy days have ended! Pomp and Circumstance will soon be wafting through the air as we gather together for upcoming graduation ceremonies as people in High School begin their next step. I mention this because when I think of Pomp and Circumstance No.1, I don't think of the postlude and Prince William and Kate's wedding, or even Edward Elgar. I think of an 8-track tape that my parents had which included the William Stickles arrangement being played on a Theater organ. Recently I visited Beaumont, Texas to discover that the old theater building (now owned by the city) still has a 3 manual Robert Morton instrument.



The theater organ in England/America is usually attributed to the organ builder Robert Hope-Jones whose "unit orchestra organ" concept was largely popularized by Rudolph Wurlitzer of New York. The first theater organs were just a few ranks of pipes in a small cabinet found at the back of the orchestra pit. They may include a whistle and some sort of cymbal, but the idea was something that would enable films to be shown without employing an orchestra. These little cabinet organs operated much like a player piano with a roll player. With Robert Hope-Jones' idea of unifying everything to create a multitude of colors, the idea of the "unit orchestra organ" took off and soon other companies (such as Morton, Moller, Austin, Wicks, and Kimball) began copying the idea.

The theater organ had some other unique qualities. Where the classic organ had articulate flutes and principals, the theater organ had large scale flutes and huge principals that were nicked at the mouth and usually leathered at the upper lip to reduce any form of chuff, creating a dark sound with no upper harmonics which naturally led to blend with everything. Robert Hope-Jones is credited as having created the Tibia stop, which was a large scaled wooden stopped flute. Unification made it possible for a rank of pipes to be heard on more than one manual at more than one pitch simultaneously. A Tibia or Diapason rank of pipes could be heard at 16, 8, 4, 2 2/3, 2, 1 3/5, 1 1/3, and 1' pitch on any or all 2, 3 or 4 of the manuals.

Percussion was also very important to the theater organ. Complete Vibraphones, Glockenspiels, Harps, Chimes, Handbells, trap sets, castanets, cymbals, bass drums, train whistles, and even full grand pianos would be wired to have a mechanical connection playable from the organ console. Perhaps the most important element of the organ was the Tremolo. Even small theater organs operated on huge wind pressures and these tremulants were created to move these huge amounts of wind giving the effect of a Hammond Leslie.

FROM THE DEAN (CONT'D)

Another unique organ stop created by Hope-Jones was the Diaphone. In 1894 he received the first of several patents for this stop's construction. The first organ containing a Hope-Jones Diaphone was built in 1896 for Worcester Cathedral, which contained two of these stops, one at 32' pitch and one at 16'. These stops operated a bit like a free reed (such as those found in an old pump organ or an accordion) with long wooden resonators. The Beaumont organ has a very large scaled Diaphone in the stage-right chamber, along with the iconic horseshoe console that one would expect. Hopefully the city of Beaumont will continue to raise money to refurbish the instrument as the last storm did significant damage to it.

Sincerely,
Aaron M. Garcia, Dean

2014-2015 PROGRAM YEAR

AUSTIN CHAPTER, AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

APRIL

Saturday, April 18 at 1 PM

Shelton Chapel, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Composer's Forum!

Join us for one of our most popular events, where we feature the compositions of our talented area composers. In order to park on campus, please go to the McCord Building and get a parking pass from the front desk (the lot is monitored 24/7).

MAY

Sunday, May 17 at 6 PM

End-of-the-year event and members' dinner at Sao Paolo (on San Jacinto near 27th Street). The chapter will pay for food; drinks will be at the individuals' personal expense.

AUSTIN CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP!

Remember, you may now join the Austin Chapter of AGO at anytime during the year.

If you joined July 1st (as in previous years), your membership renewal date will be every year on July 1st.

If you forgot to join, or that paperwork was lost, join now! go to <https://www.agohq.org/oncard-login/> to get started.

All newsletter submissions should be sent to monthlymixture@gmail.com

Events, Concerts, Job Opportunities, Professional Development Milestones

Church concert series (individual event listings or pdf flyers), Trivia,

Notes from the Bench (serious or humorous)

LOCAL CONCERTS AND PROGRAMS

APRIL-MAY

Wednesdays during Eastertime, 12:15-12:50 PM

"EASTER PEOPLE" ORGAN SERIES

First United Methodist Church

410 E. University Avenue, Georgetown, TX 78626

(See flyer on page 4 for scheduled artists)

MAY

Friday, May 1, 2015 at 7:30 PM

Redeemer Presbyterian Church – Holbrook Organ series

Paul Keith, organist



Sunday, May 31, 2015 at 3:00 PM

The First United Methodist Church

Ken Cowan, organist



Ken Cowan, internationally acclaimed virtuoso, will perform a concert in the sanctuary on the church's new R. A. Colby pipe organ of 100 ranks! This is a thrilling program you and your friends will not want to miss, not only for the organ's sonic and color possibilities, but also the console will be moved into the chancel for a full view of Mr. Cowan's dazzling musicianship and technique. Mark your calendars now.

The Diapason magazine states: "It is difficult to find enough adjectives to describe Ken Cowan's playing. He is simply one of the best anywhere!" and The American Organist states: "Mr. Cowan's technical mastery, expressivity, musicality, and sheer brilliance thrilled the convention audience." This is a free program offered by First Church to the greater Austin community in celebration of the new instrument.

Free parking will be available in the church's lot on the north side of the Education/Chapel building (enter from Colorado Street), in the Trial Lawyer's Garage (enter from 13th Street between Guadalupe and Lavaca Streets), on the roof top of the Texas State Teachers Association garage on 12th Street, in the Stokes Garage on the southeast corner of 12th and Guadalupe Street, and on streets north of 12th Street surrounding the church.

LOCAL CONCERTS AND PROGRAMS

EASTER ORGAN SERIES

WEDNESDAYS 12:15-12:50 pm

APRIL 8 - MAY 20

- APRIL 8 **David Polley**, Organist, *University United Methodist Church, Austin*
with **Bruce Cain**, Vocalist; *Associate Professor of Music, Southwestern University*
- APRIL 15 **Don McManus**, Organist & Director of Music, *Grace Episcopal Church*
- APRIL 22 **Sheryl Stack**, Director of Music & Worship Ministries, *First United Methodist Church*
with **Caleb Bennetch**, Violinist; *Director of Music Ministries, St. Johns UMC*
and **Galen Wixson**, Cellist; *Executive Director, Dream Come True Foundation*
- APRIL 29 **Marti Mortensen Ahern**, Organist, *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*;
Artistic Director & Pianist, Austin Chamber Ensemble
- MAY 6 **Pam Rossman**, Organist, *First United Methodist Church; Chapel Organist & Instructor*
of Music, Southwestern University with *First UMC Adult Handbell Ensemble*
- MAY 13 **Ellsworth Peterson**, Director, *Georgetown Festival of the Arts; Former Music Director*
& Organist, First United Methodist Church; and Professor Emeritus, Southwestern
University with **Suzanne Peterson**, Organist and **Bob Horick**, Bassoonist
- MAY 20 **Jean Farris Fuller**, Director of Music & Organist, *St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Austin*



First United Methodist Church
410 E. University Avenue
Georgetown, Texas 78626

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**FORT WORTH
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2015**

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JUNE 28- JULY 1

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