



VOX ONONDAGA

Tuning & Maintenance Seminar for Pianos, Pipe Organs and Harpsichords



Saturday, May 21st, 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M

Learn about the care and feeding of your acoustic keyboard instruments. See the instruments up close, and ask questions. Each presenter will have handouts and give demonstrations. Free lunch to follow!

May / June 2016

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Syracuse AGO Organ Scholar Program

The Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is offering a scholarship for Central New York students between the ages of 14 and 20 to study the pipe organ. Eligible candidates should already have piano skills and have a strong interest in learning about the *King of Instruments*. Students will be evaluated based on their current skill level, and

will be assigned a local instructor based on their location, availability, skill level etc. We are pleased to announce that the Scholarship has been awarded to Tyme Baez of Syracuse University for the spring semester of 2016. Applications for the Fall 2016 semester will be accepted up until August 1st. Visit www.syracuseago.org for more details.

Dean's Message – Abel Searor

Our esteemed Dean, Abel Searor, is on tour with the University Singers of Syracuse University in Varna, Bulgaria. They are competing in the European Grand Prix, an international choral competition in which only six choirs in the world are invited to compete. Your editor hopes that Abel will tell us about this great adventure in the next edition of The Vox.

Seen at the right are Abel Searor and Julia Tucker, admiring the sights on their travels.



Sub dean's Message – Vince Guarneiri

Now that most of the major holidays are over for the season, we can look forward to our end of year banquet and annual meeting. This year, the banquet will be held on June 10th at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Downtown Syracuse. Please see the St. Paul's website for directions: <http://www.stpaulsyr.org/map--directions.html>. We will have cocktail hour with wine and hors d'oeuvres 5:30, our annual meeting at 6:00 immediately followed by dinner. At 8:00 guild members will present a recital on the church's 74 rank Quimby/Möller pipe organ.

Jim Potts, Alan Lynch, Julia Tucker, Chang Lee, Myself, and possibly Annie Laver and others will perform some of our favorites for the guild. If you have a piece in mind, and you'd like to join us, please let Annie Laver know! alaver@syr.edu

Finally, please drop me a note A.S.A.P. if you'd like to attend the banquet. vincent@cnyorganist.com. We're still coordinating the menu for the evening, but Chef Brian Mesterhazy from Assumption Church will be preparing dinner for us. Chef Brian impressed us at the 2014 banquet, and is sure to please!

We Hope to see you there!

Vince Guarneiri

Sub-Dean



Spring 2016 organ studio, from left to right: Robin Padilla, Chang Lee, Jolanis Alexandre, Anne Laver, Julia Tucker, Joel Morehouse, Alan Lynch, Tyme Baez.

News from the Hill

Annie Laver

We just wrapped up another great semester up on the hill. All the students made great progress and there were many milestones and fine performances. I am especially proud of the four students who took on the Organ Improvisation course this spring. They learned how restrictions on the parameters for creating an improvisation challenge as well as spur creativity. We explored chromatic third relationships, octatonicism, ritornello chorale preludes, and canon, among other things. The students had the opportunity to work with master improviser Tom Trenney when he was on campus to present his own improvised accompaniment to *The Mark of Zorro*. They presented their final performances in a noontime concert in Hendricks Chapel on the last day of classes.

Now that classes are over, the students are looking forward to a summer with plenty of time to relax, travel...and of course, practice! Three of our graduate students, Alan Lynch, Joel Morehouse, and Julia Tucker have been awarded the E. Power Biggs Fellowship to attend the Organ Historical Society convention in Philadelphia in June. Chang Lee and Jared Shepard will be visiting Europe for organ concerts and tours. Many of the students are planning to play at the members' recital on June 10 before they disperse to distant places. I hope you will join us for that event and find out first hand about the experiences of these wonderful young organists.

2016 Syracuse AGO Tuning & Maintenance Seminar Pipe Organs, Pianos, and Harpsichords

Saturday, May 21st, 2016
10:00 A.M. 12:00 P.M. with a Free Lunch!

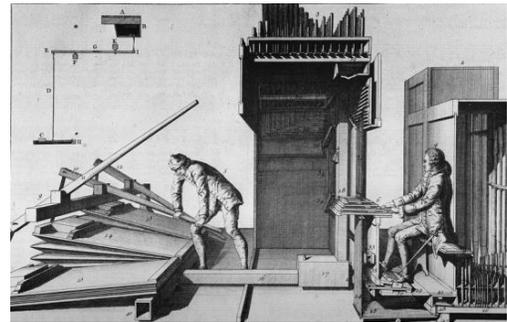
Hosted by:
Park Central Presbyterian Church
504 E Fayette Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Talks and demonstrations by:
Ryan J Boyle – Pipe Organs
Alan Lynch – Pianos
Ben Merchant - Harpsichords

In the world of acoustic keyboard instruments, there is a lot of lingo, and many variables factor in to proper maintenance. Learn from our local experts. See the instruments up close, and ask questions. See the tools of the trade, and how they're used. Many topics will be covered and a great deal of information presented. Each presenter will have a handout and a Q&A session.

Pipe Organs – Ryan J Boyle

- Basics of pipe construction, tuning, seasonal temperature & humidity swings
- Basic types of wind chests, their pros and cons
 - Temperaments and re-pitching
- The scope of a typical tuning & maintenance visit
 - How to effectively communicate with your technician
 - Modern technology in Pipe Organs



Pianos – Alan Lynch

- How to keep your piano in top playing shape
 - Soundboard Cracks – Is this the end?
 - The environmental ‘killer’ of pianos
 - How to select a used piano
- When to accept (or not accept) a donated piano
- Voicing – How is it different from tuning?
 - How piano value is determined
- New developments in piano technology
- See the action of a piano and learn the fundamentals of upright vs. grand actions

Harpsichords – Ben Merchant

- Tuning & maintaining harpsichords
- Adjusting the “action” of the harpsichord
- Historic Temperaments – Who uses them and why
 - Demonstration of tuning and setting temperaments



Dear Colleagues,

On Sunday, May 22 we will be treated to a double feature that I am quite excited about. Jonas Nordwall will offer a free Organist Workshop and Public Organ Concert at the Baldwinsville United Methodist Church, 17 West Genesee St. in Baldwinsville, NY. Jonas is an International Concert Organist who regularly performs in classical, theater, and popular music venues. He is a regular performer at Regional AGO, American Theater Organist, and American Choral Association Conventions, as well as General Conferences of the United Methodist Church. He has performed with a number of Major Symphony Orchestras from around the world and has produced over 30 well acclaimed recordings. In 1987 the ATOS named him Organist of the Year!

Jonas will offer a workshop titled “New Ideas to Orchestrate Accompaniments” which will focus on playing the church organ more orchestrally through the use of MIDI Sound Modules. Sound Modules allow us to enlarge the traditional stoplist of the organ and expand it to include orchestral instruments. With it we can restore the orchestra to orchestral reductions or add orchestral trumpets and tympani to a trumpet voluntary or festive hymn. Perhaps a harp would make a nice accompaniment to “On Eagles Wings” or utilize the guitar in “Kum Ba Ya”. You can even become a one person Praise Band! The possibilities are limitless. This is a great tool that I use myself every Sunday Morning with much success. Jonas will present this orchestral concept to us with an artistic perspective that will inspire all of us.

Jonas has planned a concert that is diverse to say the least. With selections ranging from Stanley’s “Trumpet Tune in D” and Daquins “The Cuckoo” to John Williams “Superman, Harry Potter and Star Wars”, there is truly something for everyone. The following is his program:

Trumpet Tune in D	John Stanley
The Cuckoo	Louis Claude Daquin
Concerto for Two Organs	Antonio Soler/Trans. J. Nordwall
Allegro	
Minue	
Chorale Prelude “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring”	J.S. Bach
Fugue in C Major	J.S. Bach
The Bells of St. Anne du Beaupre	Alexander Russell
Scherzo on Mendelssohnian Themes	Richard Ellsasser
The Music of John Williams	
Superman	
Harry Potter	
Star Wars	
Solemn Melody	H. Waldford Davies/R. Purvis
Allegro -Theme and Variations (Fifth Organ Symphony)	Charles Marie Widor

Jonas’s workshop will take place at 2:30 and his concert at 4:30. Both programs are free but we need reservations for the workshop. Please call me at 315-454-3823 for reservations or further information.

Sincerely,
Wayne Skinner

Event Reviews

Tom Trenney

Friday, April 15th, Hendricks Chapel, Syracuse University.

Reviews by Julia Tucker – Masterclass

A. Hawley Arnold – Silent Film



Tom Trenney gave a masterclass for the SU organ studio on April 15th. He spent the first half working through some improvisation exercises designed to help encourage creativity. He shared some of his own creative process with us, particularly how he approached hymn tunes. We did several exercises which involved identifying the unique characteristics of a hymn tune, and using those to shape our improvisations. The second half of the masterclass was spent working with students on their prepared improvisations. These included a few hymn tune based ones, a free form abstract improvisation, and some silent film accompaniment. Tom Trenney worked well with each student, and was able to help each person make progress, showing his mastery of a wide variety of genres.

– Julia Tucker

The recent Malmgren program offered at Hendricks Chapel was unique. Celebrated concert organist and improvisation specialist Tom Trenney accompanied the 1920 swashbuckler *The Mark of Zorro* using the Chapel's Holtkamp pipe organ. This was a rare treat, and something that (presumably) neither Arthur Poister nor Walter Holtkamp ever anticipated.

The film itself is a landmark production, being iconic 1920s superstar Douglas Fairbank's first foray into the "swashbuckling" costume-adventure genre. (His previous work having consisted mainly of very popular contemporary comedies.) Its success paved the way for

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Event Reviews

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Fairbanks's appearances as Robin Hood, a Thief of Bagdad, a Black Pirate, and other larger-than-life heroes. There even was a Zorro sequel – 1925's *Don Q, Son of Zorro*.

Mr. Trenney's reputation as an organist and especially as an improviser is well established. (He appeared at the Organ Historical Society's convention at Buffalo several years back. Part of his program was to improvise on three given melodies, one of which was "Shuffle Off to Buffalo"!)

His performance at Hendricks on Friday evening, April 15, certainly reinforced this reputation. He utilized the Chapel organ to its fullest extent, creating numerous colorful registrations. These were changed continually, providing a wide variety of sounds.

His improvised music score included a wide variety of elements – bits of Franck, Boëllmann and others, ad-libbed tunes and familiar melodies, all performed at break-neck speed with impressive accuracy and virtuosity. One of the best moments was actually a period of silence, contrasting with all of the activity that preceded and followed: when Zorro's foppish alter ego Don Diego "courts" the heroine, the two sit at a table and can find nothing to talk about. The silence that accompanies these moments adds greatly to the movie, increasing the humor, and complementing the experience.

As wonderful as Mr. Trenney's performance was, I do have a criticism. Music can add considerably to a film. Silent films (which in their time were almost always presented with musical accompaniment of some sort) can be greatly enhanced by music. The lack of spoken dialogue and the continuous music creates a distinct and individual relationship between the viewer and the action on screen, allowing the viewer's *imagination* to provide the dialogue, feel more fully the emotions, and become part of the story in ways that were greatly diminished when talking pictures came into being. The music must *serve* the picture, and never *subordinate* it. If the music becomes obtrusive or noticeable in and of itself, the overall experience is diminished. I believe that Mr. Trenney occasionally allowed his accompaniment to become obtrusive, with little musical jokes that amused the audience but detracted from the movie. His most egregious lapse, I believe, was a scene in which a character knocks on a door and the accompaniment consisted of the chimes doing a "ding-dong" doorbell imitation. This was totally out of character, and very detrimental to the overall effect. While it was an acknowledged practice in the silent days to utilize familiar melodies to help provide the proper mood (think "William Tell Overture," "Light Cavalry Overture," "In the Morning" from *Peer Gynt*, etc., as examples), the organist must be careful that he does not cross the line into musical cliché. In my opinion, Mr. Trenney crossed that line from time to time. His introduction of the "Bridal Chorus" from *Lohengrin* as a regular musical motif is a good example of this. I accept that others may question my criticism as nit-picking over a wonderful organ performance. However, I have a great amount of appreciation and respect for the silent cinema, *and* for the organist's art, and I consider the issues I have mentioned to be a genuine concern.

Aside from this, I have nothing but praise for the presentation, and applaud the Malmgren series for bringing another unusual and stimulating musical program to Hendricks Chapel.

– A. Hawley Arnold

Calendar of Events

Tuning & Maintenance Seminar Pipe Organs, Pianos, and Harpsichords

(oh my!)

Hosted by:
Park Central Presbyterian Church

Saturday, May 21st – 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Free lunch to follow!

Ever wondered how a pipe organ is tuned? A piano? Harpsichord? Why they go out of tune? How to prevent them from going out of tune so much? How does that thing work, anyway?

Learn all of this and much more on Saturday, the 21st. Interactive lectures, along with handouts, and a Q&A session will introduce you to the care and feeding of your acoustic keyboard instruments. This seminar only happens once every several years so DO NOT MISS IT!

Presentations by:
Ryan J Boyle – Pipe Organs
Alan Lynch – Pianos
Ben Merchant – Harpsichords

Syracuse AGO Year End Banquet, Annual Meeting, and Members Recital

St Paul's Church
310 Montgomery Street

5:30 P.M. – Hors D'oeuvres
6:00 P.M. – Annual Meeting followed by Dinner
8:00 P.M. – Members Recital

Chef Brian Mesterhazy from Assumption Church will cater this year's event. Wine will be provided compliments of Kerner & Merchant Pipe Organ Builders. Tickets are \$16, available at the door. Please make your reservations with our Sub dean, Vincent

Guarneiri: Vincent@Cnyorganist.com

Performers for the evening include Jim Potts, Alan Lynch, Julia Tucker, Change Lee, and Vincent Guarneiri, and hopefully Annie Laver.

K&M Corner

Kerner & Merchant has an exciting summer ahead! Our projects for this season include the following: further renovations to the Schlicker organ at Ithaca college – new slider motors for the Swell division, re-leathering all of the wind regulators on the Casavant organ at University Methodist along with a thorough cleaning, reregulation & retuning, complete rebuilding of the console for St John's Episcopal in Clifton Springs, the addition of a new Vox Humana for the Estey/Kerner & Merchant organ at Hamilton Baptist Church, and most importantly, an ALL NEW three manual console for the Kimball organ at St. Louis Church, Buffalo. Also on the docket for this summer is the renovation of two large sanctuaries in the Syracuse area. Construction is already under way at Plymouth Congregational where they will be installing a new tile floor in place of the carpet. The new acoustic will be superb! K&M has boxed up the console to protect it during reconstruction. Next, Immaculate Conception Parish in Fayetteville will be renovating their sanctuary later this summer. K&M will be removing the console, covering up all the pipes and wind chests, and installing the console in a new location after renovations are complete.

Special Event!!!
Rededication Recital for the 1944 Austin Organ

Christopher Houlihan

First Presbyterian Church
108 Court Street

Friday, June 3rd
7:00 P.M.

Submissions for this newsletter are due by the following dates: August 20, October 20, December 20, February 20, and April 20. The Vox Onondaga will be published on the first of the following month.

Syracuse AGO

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East Syracuse, New York 13057