Chapter Meeting: September 21 - 7:30pm

So You Think Bach Can Dance?

Dr. Theodore Davis will present a program of organ music based on Bach’s use of French dance. The program is entitled “So You Think Bach Can Dance?” Dr. Davis has his DMA from Peabody Conservatory, and is Organist/Choirmaster of St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church in Baltimore.

Watch your email for a link to this program!

"The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ."
It’s not too late for you to turn in a digital video file of your organ playing for our virtual Members’ Recital for our October 19 program! The response has been wonderful, and we may end up having enough for 2 programs! Many of you have a library of videos, since many of our churches are having virtual services. Please share something you’ve done. Or create a new one! You need to turn the file in to a special place on our website, which has been created for this purpose. If you have questions, please ask Mark Johanson. He’s the webmaster, and our technical guru.

Make sure you put our September 21 program on your calendar. Dr. Theodore Davis will live stream from Baltimore, “So You Think Bach Can Dance?” He was to be here in person in November, but he graciously agreed to do a virtual presentation in September. The program will be recorded and made available to all AGO chapters in our country. We are a trend-setting chapter!

Especially during this pandemic, I get emails almost daily asking me to send information to all our members. We don’t want to flood your email folder with too much information! We want you to read and act on what’s in our newsletter! One I recently received from The Sacred Music Institute of America sounds wonderful for any of us. Classes for church musicians include: Gregorian and English Chant I, History of Sacred Music, and Music Theory I. If you want more information, I can send you the original email, or go to the website listed below.

All fall classes begin on August 24. More information is available at www.sacredmusicinstitute.org, or by contacting the Institute at 614-395-7783 or administrator@sacredmusicinstitute.org.

Your Charlotte Chapter AGO Board was finally installed at our last board meeting, on August 10 by Justin Smith, our District Convener by way of Zoom. You will be able to watch it on our website. Normally, of course, this would have happened in May in a church with a dinner. Maybe next May? We certainly hope so!

Nancy Watson, Dean
Charlotte Chapter AGO
E-mail: watsonndh@gmail.com
Tel: 704-618-280
September 2020 Chapter Meeting

We have a real treat coming up on September 21 at 7:30. We will be having a live streamed production from Baltimore, MD.

Dr. Theodore Davis will present a program of organ music based on Bach’s use of French dance. The program is entitled “So You Think Bach Can Dance?”

Dr. Davis has his DMA from Peabody Conservatory, and is Organist/Choirmaster of St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church in Baltimore.

His programs include both organ and harpsichord on a variety of subjects such as “Advent from the land of Luther,” “Homage to Sacre’ Coeur,” and this Bach program. Harpsichord programs have such titles as “The French Twist” and “Goldberg Variations.”

We look forward to hearing this interesting program and certainly hope that many of you will be tuned in to watch and listen. We will send a link in September to the program. Many thanks to Dr. Davis for making this a virtual presentation, though we certainly regret that he cannot be with us in person.
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The 53rd anniversary concert celebrating the 1967 installation of the 3-manual M.P. Möller Opus 10260 at First United Methodist Church, Charlotte, on Sunday, September 20, 2020 at 5:30pm will be presented by guest organist Patrick Pope (this will be a streaming-only event due to coronavirus restrictions in place). The repertoire of contemporary women composers and composers of a variety of ethnic backgrounds will be featured. This annual concert celebration within the resonant acoustic of First Methodist Charlotte has been sponsored by the Kathryn Stephenson Pipe Organ Foundation since 2017. The program may be accessed from either the Stephenson Moeller Organ Foundation Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/smoefdn/ or the concert link provided at www.facebook.com/fumccharlotte. For additional details, please visit the foundation website: https://uptownmo10260.org/. Additional inquiries may be directed to: Don Kaufhold, don@charlottefirst.org.

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The board of the Charlotte AGO Chapter met on Monday, August 10, 2020, via Zoom. Highlights of the meeting were discussions around:

- A new membership directory
- Upcoming programming for 2020-21
- Virtual recital by AGO members
- Membership survey
- Renewing membership updates

Our next meeting will be September 14 via Zoom. Please let any board member know if you have any issues that need to be discussed.
Thank You.

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I offer a huge “thank you” and congratulations to all involved in the many efforts and events over the years that led to this amazing story.

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The 75th anniversary of the founding of the Charlotte Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will be upon us starting October, 2022! Our chapter executive board has commissioned an anniversary committee to assist with planning preparations now. The committee will consist of: Evan Currie (board liaison), Don Kaufhold (chair), John Apple, Jacob Temple, Sandy Davis, and Beth Harrison. In light of current coronavirus concerns, the committee will meet remotely for the foreseeable future. And given the fluctuating status of the pandemic and public health concerns, anniversary events will most likely be extended into 2023 to secure everyone’s health and well-being. More details will be shared with the membership as the anniversary committee begins its planning in earnest this fall. We look forward to coming together as a chapter, and indeed as a community, to celebrate 75 years of the chapter’s work featuring the King of Instruments in the Queen City!
Young Organist

Events

Something for everyone!
AGYOY virtual program year 20-21

Fridays at Noon EST

Videos will be premiered at:
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August 14- Organ crawl: West Point Chapel
September 11- Workshop:
Church musicians and technology
September 25- Panel: Organists of colors
October 9- Panel: The Global Organist
November 13- Organ crawl: Longwood Gardens
December 11- Organ factory tour: Austin Organ Co.
January 8- Webinar:
Young conductors/organists guide to church music
February 12- Organ crawl: Wanamaker
March 12- Panel:
Board positions in the guild/serving in leadership roles
April 9- Organ factory tour: Taylor & Boody
May 7, 14, 21, 28- Young organist recitals

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OrganFest 2020 - A Great Success

C. Justin Smith, North Carolina District Convener

While all AGO members were saddened by the necessary cancellation of our National Convention in Atlanta in July, our national Committee on Conventions really "pulled out all the stops" for the inaugural AGO OrganFest, a weeklong celebration of organ and choral music in the United States and around the world. The OrganFest featured five evening "concerts," which were recorded at locations worldwide by a number of organists who were scheduled to play at the national convention. The backbone of these video programs were five of the major commissioned works that were to be premiered at the convention. Instead of having the premieres in person for only registered conference attendees, people everywhere were able to hear these pieces as many times as they wanted, all free of charge. These videos also included the introduction of the new AGO logo, recognition of award winners celebrating our scholarship and composition competitions, and the introduction of leadership award winner Dr. Joyce Johnson of Atlanta. All of these items would have occurred during the national convention, but this instead gave everyone interested a chance to see them and participate in learning more about the Guild, even though many people watching were not going to be able to attend the conference in the first place.

In addition to the evening virtual concerts, a number of PipeTalks were recorded and uploaded to YouTube. These short ten-minute presentations are overviews of academic research as well as workshops on how to teach new organists and lead choral groups. Usually these workshops are a benefit of conference registration, but this year they are free for all to enjoy.

We also enjoyed a lively and informational regional meeting, led by Regional Councillor Sue Mitchell-Wallace. At this Zoom meeting, which had around 135 attendees, we learned that the 2021 regional conventions have been postponed until 2023 given the uncertainty of travel and performance availability. We also remembered the members who have passed away in the last year with a prayer by National Chaplain Don Saliers, and we heard a performance by the 2019 Southeast Region AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists winner Nicholas Stigall, who was to have performed at the convention. I am pleased to report that at least seven of our nine AGO chapters in North Carolina were represented, including your chapter.

I was thrilled by the entogenic response to our first attempt at this kind of event. The "after-parties" on Zoom after each evening concert gave everyone a chance to meet other organists from around the world. I personally was able to connect with friends that I only get to see at AGO conventions due to distance and schedule restraints. It really did feel like you were together, even though it was all online. I hope that we can experience similar events in the future. If you were not able to watch the weeknight videos, each are less than an hour long and are well worth your time, as you will surely be inspired by the incredible music. Please check them out online at: https://agoorganfest2020.org.
You recently joined our chapter of the American Guild of Organists. What brought you to the Charlotte area?
My wife and I moved to Charlotte at the end of October after getting married in the beginning of that same month so I could begin my new position as Director of Sacred Music at St. Mark Catholic Church in Huntersville.

Tell us about your background. Where did you study? With whom did you study?
Sacred Music has been a part of my life from the time I was 7 or 8 years old. Growing up I was in the parish children’s choir and joined the parish adult choir in 6th grade as a boy soprano. Naturally I made my way to the bass section after a brief, two-week stint as a tenor, skipping the alto section completely. In high school I studied organ with Dr. Gianfranco DeLuca, currently Director of Sacred Music at St. Patrick Cathedral here in Charlotte. For college I went to Duquesne University where I received both my Bachelor of Music in Organ and Sacred Music and Master of Music in Organ Performance, studying under Dr. Ann Labounsky.

Why did you decide to study organ?
My mother asked me if I wanted to take lessons and I said “sure, why not?”.

What kind of future do you see for young organists like yourself?
I think the future is very bright for young organists, and all organists in general. Personally my focus is not on performing, but instead on liturgy and worship, and how organ music fits in to that. However, there is a strong showing of performing organists these days which really give hope to aspiring young artists. The world of the organ is vast, and I can see many opportunities arising for young and old organists alike.

Do you think the AGO at the National, Regional, or Chapter level will be important for the future of young organists?
How do you see yourself involved in the AGO in the future?
The most important will be local chapters in my opinion. We are the folks on the ground that are able to scout out and develop new talent. Regional and National are important, but if there weren’t any new members coming in to local chapters there wouldn’t be a need for Regional and National. In past chapters I’ve held various positions, and would love to get involved more in the Charlotte chapter whether it be as a member-at-large, performer, or participant in chapter masterclasses.
What are your plans for the future?
Obviously the future is a little murky for everyone right now. As for me, I plan to continue developing the music program at St. Mark as best I can, and catch up on some practicing. I've also considered going back to school for a Master of Arts in Liturgy.

What is your favorite repertoire? What attracts you to this repertoire?
I tend to gravitate towards French Romantic/ 20th century repertoire, especially compositions based on Gregorian chant. The harmonic language is so interesting and the color combinations called for in registration really captivate me.

What is your favorite organ? What attracts you to this instrument?
My favorite organ would probably have to be the Cavaillé-Coll in St. Sulpice. I've had the privilege of hearing it in person several times, and playing it once; it was one of the most emotional experiences I've ever had, and I'm not an emotional person. Obviously it plays my favorite repertoire extraordinarily well, but there's also something about the organ's history and those who have been charged with its care that make it that much more special.

If you could be any rank of pipes on an organ, what would you be and why?
I would say some kind of Flûte Harmonique or Doppelflöte. I've always loved these stops for the way their sound envelops the room and the organist. They often have a piercing quality, in a good way.
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