



YOUR HAWAII AGO CONTACTS

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UPCOMING EVENT

Sunday, July 20 • 7:00 pm
19th Annual Midsummer Night's Organ Concert
Central Union Church
1660 South Beretania Street

Organists

Katherine Crosier (Lutheran Church of Honolulu)
Joey Fala, Nyle Hallman and Margaret Lloyd (Central Union Church)
John McCreary and John Renke (St. Andrew's Cathedral)
Jordan McCreary (AGO Organ Scholar)
Young Pak (Logos Korean Church)

Through the generosity of Central Union Church, the Midsummer Night's Organ Concert is an annual benefit for the Hawaii Chapter American Guild of Organists scholarship programs. Eight of Honolulu's prominent organists will play works by J. S. Bach, David Cherwien, Emma Lou Diemer, Alexandre Guilmant, Robert Hebble, Johannes Matthias Michel and Louis Vierne.

Plan now to attend *the Organ Concert of the Summer* at which the 2008-2009 recipients of the Donald L. "Don" Conover and Aloha Music Club Organ Scholarships will be announced. The public is invited and donations are welcomed. A poster may be found at the back page of this publication—please put it up on your church bulletin boards and invite your friends to this night of support for organ students in Hawaii.



Last year's performers at the Midsummer Night's Organ Concert included (Back Row): John Renke, Margaret Lloyd, Frederick Swann, John McCreary, Joey Fala. (Front Row): Jordan McCreary, Katherine Crosier and Nyle Hallman. This year, Dr. Swann will not playing at the MNOC, but will return in January 2009 (see elsewhere in this newsletter). New this year will be Young Pak, organist of Logos Korean Church.



DEAN'S COLUMN

Summer Salutations!

Monday evening, June 2nd, thirty-four of us gathered in the Parish Hall of Central Union Church for our Annual AGO Dinner Meeting. The meeting included the expression of appreciation to the executive board members who had served for the 2007-2008 season; reports on membership, finance and our scholarship program; the election of a slate of officers for the

2008-2009 season; and an overview of the upcoming International Year of the Organ, 2008-2009. Members and guests then shared a catered lasagne dinner "and a good time was had by all".

On Friday, June 13th, an enthusiastic and musically sophisticated audience of 670 marveled at the phenomenal performance of Paul Jacobs on the recently restored Æolian-Skinner in the sanctuary of Central Union Church. [I wouldn't even try to compete with Karl Bachman's review of this concert, but would strongly encourage you to read it when you have the time to enjoy it appropriately!] The evening was both a concluding event for the 2007-2008 season as well as an incredible opening to the Hawaii Chapter's celebration of the International Year of the Organ! My thanks to all who supported this wonderful event for our AGO Chapter and the greater music community.

The National AGO Convention was held in Minneapolis/St. Paul in June and several of our Hawaii members were able to attend. Thank you, Kathy, for sharing photos and recollections of this convention with our members!

This coming Sunday, July 20th, you are invited to attend the 19th annual Midsummer Night's Organ Concert at Central Union Church, a benefit concert for the Donald L. "Don" Conover Scholarship Fund of the AGO-Hawaii Chapter. Participating organists are listed on the first page of this newsletter and this year's scholarship recipients will be introduced that evening.

A brochure advertising the International Year of the Organ and the events being held here in our Hawaii Chapter is being prepared and will be available soon for distribution. It promises to be an exciting year featuring the king of all instruments and you are invited to share in as many events as you are able to attend. Promoting AGO Chapter happenings is also strongly encouraged and I thank you in advance for your assistance!

Margaret Lloyd, Dean

REVOLUTIONARY PERFORMANCE

Paul Jacobs, Organist, June 13, 2008

Perhaps once in a generation a talent arises that is so new and different that it causes a major change in performance art. If one combines a photographic memory, flawless technical skill, insightful analysis, and a prodigious musicianship all of the ingredients are present for a major change in performance art and one can have a concert like that presented by Paul Jacobs at Central Union Church that is best called a "revolutionary performance." Mr. Jacobs returned to Honolulu by popular demand

following his 2006 concert and to celebrate the complete two-year restoration of the Aeolian-Skinner organ at Central Union Church.

In order to appreciate the revolutionary character of the performance one needs to recall what was happening in America in the 1950s. Organs were still being constructed along the lines of late nineteenth century symphonic instruments and particularly performance practice of Baroque music followed more along the example of Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra than that inspired by the sound of North German tracker-action instruments. Then came such instruments as the Flentrop at Harvard and the Beckerath at Trinity Lutheran, Cleveland. American builders began to rethink organ design and pipes were taken out of chancel chambers and placed right in the middle of the room



Paul Jacobs is shown with Jordan McCreary (left) and Joey Fala (right) at Central Union Church.

along the main sound axis: shocking revolution! It didn't take long before there was a revolution in the performance of Baroque organ music—a revolution that was waged both from the organ consoles and on the pages of *The Diapason*, the then official journal of the American Guild of Organists. Along with the revolution in organ performance came a rediscovery and renewed interest in early music theory and practice with many performances taking place on reproductions of historic instruments which were brand new sounds to the ears of audiences in the 1970s and 80s. These simultaneous events reinforced each other in the area of performance practice.

Performances from the beginning of the twentieth century could often seem contrived because of their incessant manipulation of organ sound to achieve orchestral effects that overwhelmed rather than enhanced the music itself. From the end of the century music could often weary the ears through over-articulation, the use of only one sound combination per piece, or a slavish adherence to tempo at the expense of any rubato or, dare I say it, musicality.

Enter Paul Jacobs. From his academic education and performance training he is able to see the



Virtuoso Paul Jacobs is flanked by Hawaii's young organ students at his concert at Central Union Church. He also played a concert at Makawao Union Church, on Maui. (L-R) Joshua Yuen-Schat, Seong Eun Kim, Adam Simon, Naomi Yuen-Schat, Joey Fala and Jordan McCreary.

entire previous century with the good ideas from both parts, eschewing that which would present itself as contrived, and incorporating a convincing musicality into that which would otherwise weary the ears with monotony. With all of his musical talent he is able to take the best from what has gone before and wage a new performance revolution.

The first sign this would be a revolutionary performance was when the Bach "Prelude and Fugue in A Minor" began with a single stop on the choir with the shades closed and proceed to crescendo to the end of the movement. The sensitivities of late twentieth-century performance practice may have been assaulted, but if one examines the score it moves from four to six to eight notes per beat and the texture increases from one to four voices. In other words, the piece is written as a crescendo and accelerando. With registration and manual changes the form of the piece was emphasized and with Paul's crystalline keyboard technique the excitement of the performance grew with every passing phrase. This same approach to the fugue made the experience a *tour de force* of aural joy. The birds singing just outside of the chancel simply made it a unique musical experience.

The second sign this would be a revolutionary performance was when the Franck "Prelude, Fugue, et Variation" began without a sixteen foot stop in the pedal. Franck does indicate registration in his works, but in many instances it is predictable: eight foot flues with oboe on the Swell, and the like. Not only did Paul omit the lower pitch in the pedal, but he played the lyrical solo line by dividing it among three manuals for three different sounds which served to bring out the subtle change of character in the line itself. Purists may cringe, but to those listening musically it was analytical and musical genius at work.

The third sign this would be a revolutionary performance was when Leo Sowerby's "Pageant" was presented with a revolutionary control of both the console and the notes to provide a breathtaking experience in sight and sound. Most of the notes were in the feet with two and three-part writing as the norm. The physical demands to get through the work were on a par with running a marathon, but in Paul's hands and feet it appeared effortless. Even more amazing than playing all the notes so musically was Paul's handling of all the registration changes "while in mid air" as it were.

Following a brief intermission wherein our community showed its appreciation in a very generous way, Mr. Jacobs performed the "Fantasy and Fugue on 'Ad nos, ad salutarem undam'" by Franz Liszt. One of our treasures here in Hawaii is the magnificent pipe organ at Central Union

Church. This recital celebrated its complete restoration and Paul chose this work specifically with this instrument and the occasion in mind. Liszt indicated no registration choices whatsoever, so Paul had to plan everything. He seized this opportunity to use every stop on the instrument in almost every conceivable combination. The work is phenomenally difficult, pages of parallel octaves at break-neck speed being just one of the technical challenges for the performer. The large scope [thirty-five minutes in length] makes it a challenge to present a musically coherent performance. Mr. Jacobs handled all of the technical challenges, the analytical challenges, the musical challenges and did it all from memory with grace, poise, accuracy, and just enough showmanship to bring the audience to its feet with a thunderous ovation.

The applause was rewarded with an encore performance of the Bach "Sinfonia from Cantata 'Wir danken Dir, Gott'" transcribed for organ. If one sees and hears the organists coming from the Juilliard School of Music today, where Mr. Jacobs is chair of the organ department, it is obvious that there is a revolution in progress. One can experience similar exuberance, skill, excitement, creativity, and vitality from many of these young artists and our life is enriched by their contribution. It was a real treat for us to experience the source of this performance revolution, Mr. Paul Jacobs.

Karl D. Bachman, reviewer

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR REPORT

Applications and auditions for the AGO-Hawaii Chapter Organ Scholarship for the 2008 to 2009 scholarship year were publicized in April. The application deadline was moved up to May 15, 2008 from its usual May 31st date. Auditions were scheduled for late May instead of June as in the past. Adjudicators were Don Conover, John McCreary, and Nam Young Pak.

Seven new applicants auditioned. Six organ scholarships were awarded to 2 children, 3 teenagers, and 1 adult: Laura Bleakley, Seong Eun Kim (Aloha Music Club Scholar), Karen Leatherman, Michelle Manuel, Miki Yamamoto and Naomi Yuen-Schat.

Six renewals were awarded to 3 children, 1 adult, and 2 teenagers: Devin Chu, Nathalie Jones, Christopher Lindsay, Holly Lindsay, Jordan McCreary and Adam Simon.

Elizabeth Wong, Scholarship Chair

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE ORGAN

2008-2009 has been designated by the American Guild of Organists as the International Year of the Organ (IYO). Organizations throughout the world have been invited to participate with us in this celebration. This year was kicked off with events at the national AGO convention in Minneapolis in June 2008, and will conclude with the regional conventions in summer 2009. Every chapter of the AGO has been encouraged to participate in as many ways as they can.

Here are the dates of the IYO events in Hawaii:

July 20, 2008, 7 pm.

Midsummer Night's Organ Concert

Central Union Church

(see front page of the newsletter)

September 6, 2008, 6 pm

Organ Music of Latvia, Russia, Spain and Germany

Calvary-by-the-Sea Lutheran Church

Ina Young, Organist

September 26-28, 2008

Oahu Sacred Music Festival

St. Andrew's Cathedral

October 19, 2008, 7 pm

Organ Spectacular

Central Union Church

We will celebrate Nyle Hallman's birthday in a concert of music for organ and harp. AGO Chapters all over the world will present organ recitals on this day.

October 31, 2008, 7:30 pm

The Hunchback of Notre Dame

Hawaii Theatre

John McCreary will accompany this silent film classic on the Robert Morton theatre organ.

January 16, 2009, 7:00 pm

Frederick Swann, organist

Central Union Church

Part of the Sacred Choral Festival weekend

March 21, 2009, 3:00 pm

BACHanalia

Lutheran Church of Honolulu

A marathon organ recital on Bach's birthday from 3:00 to 6:00, with an optional catered dinner in the courtyard, culminating in Bach Vespers at 7:30 with the Lutheran Church of Honolulu Choir and the Bach Chamber Orchestra.

April 25, 2009, 7:00 pm

Young Organists Recital

Lutheran Church of Honolulu

June 12, 2009, 7:30 pm

Aaron David Miller, organist

St. Andrew's Cathedral

The fourth Annual Organ Concert will feature this brilliant young improvisateur who has just been appointed organist of House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, MN.

AGO NATIONAL CONVENTION, MINNEAPOLIS

"I've never had so much FUN at an organ concert!" was my reaction to "Pipedreams Live!" with deep-voiced host Michael Barone at the AGO National Convention held June 22-27 in Minneapolis, MN. For me, this event was the highlight of the week that included as many as two organ concerts, two workshops, a worship service and a choral concert EACH DAY! I should have known that something out of the ordinary was planned when we were each handed either a kazoo or a noisemaker when we boarded the buses for the concert. Nine organists performed at the Wooddale Church, home to a beautiful four-manual Visser-Rowland organ. The program ranged from dazzling performances by young organ virtuosos (including Aaron David Miller who will be coming to Hawaii in June 2009), to jazz improvisation by Barbara Dennerlein from Germany, to a rousing rendition of "The AGO Fight Song" sung by more than 1800 organists, armed with kazoos and noisemakers. (The music can be found in the June issue of *The American Organist* magazine.) Also unforgettable was the long, standing ovation given to 89-year-old Paul Manz, surely the Dean of American organ chorale composition. By the way, the broadcast will happen sometime this fall, and although Hawaii Public Radio doesn't carry *Pipedreams*, you will be able to hear the program over the Internet.

I think one of the most moving moments of the convention was the opening celebration, held at Central Lutheran Church. It began with a fabulous performance of Felix Mendelssohn's "Sonata in F minor," and then as everyone stood for the procession, 12-foot red and gold streamers were waved back and forth like giant kites throughout the cavernous church. The procession entered to a magnificent and grand setting of "When in our music God is glorified" by Stephen Paulus. Seven downtown Minneapolis church choirs joined together with a brass quintet and sounded as one ethereal, blended voice. We marvelled at how beautiful and luscious the blend was between the seven choirs, seated in the front and in both transepts. Anthems and readings preceded the address by esteemed theologian, Dr. Martin Marty, who punctuated his speech with much humor. Surely one of the most incredible sounds





Samuel Lam (left) found Arlan Sunnarborg (now in Atlanta).

was that of the singing assembly, with over 2000 musicians singing praises in unison and in harmony. The service closed with a splendid improvisation by Tom Trenney. We all experienced a musical “high” that night.

Throughout the week, we heard many stunning organists, playing on equally-stunning

instruments in beautiful churches. We heard three of Paul Jacobs’ students perform: Keenan Boswell, Noah Wynne-Morton, and Isabelle Demers, the last of whom reminded us of the late Catharine Crozier for her complete command of the instrument. Unforgettable was the virtuosity of Cameron Carpenter, especially his transcription of Chopin’s “Revolutionary Étude” (with the bass line played furiously in the pedals) and John Philip Sousa’s “Stars and Stripes Forever,” with the piccolo part played in the pedals. (You can view Cameron’s performances on YouTube.)

I went to four workshops: 1) a panel discussion on new trends in organ building; 2) Growing Young Organists: Great Ideas from San Diego; 3) Sunday Comes Every Seven Days (new repertoire for services); and 4) Hymn Improvisation by Aaron David Miller. I was especially glad I went to the Young Organist workshop because they gave a wonderful handout which I can share with our scholarship committee. I also got lots of good ideas for easy, accessible music in the Sunday repertoire workshop, led ably by former Hawaii AGO member, Peggy Johnson (she said it had been over 20 years since she left Hawaii, for you old-timers!)

What struck me during this whole convention was “the passing of the guard.” Nearly all of the organ performers were what I would classify as “young, hotshot players.” (I know, I’m showing my age here!) Only John Weaver, retired from the Juilliard School, was the one performer from the “old guard.” This is indeed encouraging, for it means that the tide is surely turning back; that perhaps the organist “shortage” may be coming to an end.

Of course, the other fun aspect of convention-going is meeting new friends and getting reacquainted with old ones. And—looking at all the rows and rows of fabulous displays of new music at the exhibits, I was like a kid in a candy store. If you’ve never experienced an AGO convention, especially a national, I highly recommend it to you. The next one will be in Washington, DC in 2010. Hope to see *you* there!

Katherine Crozier, reviewer



The Visser-Rowland organ at the Wooddale Church was the featured instrument at PipeDreams Live.



The stunning organ case at the St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church. John Weaver and Cameron Carpenter were featured soloists on this instrument.



Every church (and public building) is required to post a sign like this one!

CENTRAL UNION CHURCH

Beretania and Punahou Streets

Sunday, July 20, 2008 7:00 p.m.

Nineteenth
Annual

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S *Organ Concert*

ORGANISTS:

Katherine Crosier
Lutheran Church of Honolulu

John McCreary
&
John Renke
St. Andrew's Cathedral

Jordan McCreary
AGO Organ Scholar

Joey Fala,
Nyle Hallman
&
Margaret Lloyd
Central Union Church

Young Pak
Logos Korean Church

The Midsummer Night's Organ Concert is an annual benefit for the Hawaii Chapter American Guild of Organists' scholarship programs. Your generous donations will ensure the education of future organists in Hawaii.

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