

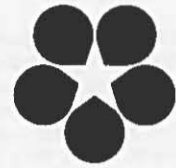
# THE DIAPASON

AN INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY DEVOTED TO THE ORGAN, THE HARPSICHORD AND CHURCH MUSIC

Sixty-Seventh Year, No. 9 — Whole No. 801

AUGUST, 1976

## AGO 76 BOSTON



Boston 200



## A Review of the Biennial Convention of the American Guild of Organists Boston, Massachusetts, June 21 — June 25, 1976

by Marilou Kratzenstein and Arthur Lawrence

For readers who did not attend this rich and stimulating convention, we'd like to establish at the outset that we are not attempting a comprehensive report of convention activities. Given the unusually broad selection of events, several reporters would be required to cover the entire convention. We attended the activities which interested us most, since there wasn't time for everything.

Boston, which was the earliest center of culture in the United States, was the perfect site for a bicentennial convention. In addition to the numerous historic monuments of a more general nature, Boston is rich in historic organs. For many convention participants, the opportunity to hear authentic American instruments of the 18th and 19th centuries, in addition to numerous examples of outstanding modern organs, was the highlight of the convention. Among historic organs featured were: the English-style organ by an unknown Boston builder of c. 1830 in St. Stephen's Church (a Fisk restoration); the E. & C.C. Hook (1863) in Immaculate Conception; the Hook and Hastings instruments in Holy Cross Cathedral (1875) and in the First Baptist Church (1872); the Hutchings organ at St. John the Evangelist (1890). Convention-goers who signed up for the optional Wednesday excursions also had the chance to hear the Walcker organ at Methuen, a John-

son organ, and several instruments by modern builders. Boston and Cambridge and the surrounding area are not only a treasure house for old instruments; they contain an exceptionally large number of outstanding modern tracker instruments by a wide variety of builders. Instruments by Fisk, Flentrop, Frobenius, Bozeman-Gibson, and Casavant were presented at the convention. A Skinner and some Aeolian-Skinners from earlier in the century were also heard. Some conventioners also found the time to visit organs by other fine builders who have instruments in this area.

While the instruments themselves were a particular source of joy, also impressive was the suitability of nearly every recitalist and the repertory selected for each instrument. We appreciate this kind of careful planning which shows a respect for the instrument's capabilities and limitations.

Another particularly fine aspect of the convention was the availability of a wide assortment of workshops and seminars. When we asked fellow participants what they especially liked about the Boston convention, they often replied that they particularly appreciated the seminars and workshops. Persons who can't afford to attend more than one convention, or workshop, per year, were most strongly appreciative of this educational element. We also noted with

satisfaction that, despite the wide cross section of people which the convention must serve, it was possible to deal with some very sophisticated topics, and to deal with them in detail, in some of the work sessions. We would hope very much that seminars and workshops could continue to be a feature of AGO conventions in the future.

Continuing with highlights of the convention, one must certainly mention the King's College Choir, Cambridge, which more than lived up to our expectations. Listening to both English and American choirs within the space of a few days also led to interesting observations concerning the impact of pronunciation and speech patterns on vocal production. We were reminded again that, regardless of how they may look in print, English and American are two very different languages, and the choral sound of one is of necessity quite distinct from the other.

On the negative side, we have to mention that housing provided for some of the convention participants who did not stay at the Sheraton was far below the minimum expected. Our hosts were most thoughtful in providing lists of restaurants, exhibits, and other items to make our visit enjoyable, but they overlooked the importance of a clean, comfortable room. We do congratulate them on otherwise successfully working

out the innumerable details of a convention of enormous scope.

—M.K.

### SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

**Harald Vogel Seminar: Keyboard Performance Practice in the 17th and 18th Centuries**

The session I attended (the second of two sessions) dealt primarily with 1) fingering and pedalling and 2) articulation. Using numerous examples, Mr. Vogel gave precise, documented information about fingering in Baroque and pre-Baroque times. He pointed out the relationship between old fingering and pedalling to the physical characteristics of the old instruments. One rarely used the heel in Baroque music, for example, as the short pedals made this a near physical impossibility. Illustrating his examples at the organ, he showed the desirability of using Baroque performance techniques to delineate the structure of Baroque compositions. Smiles and a visible wave of admiration swept over the audience as he illustrated how the pedal solo of the Bach *Prelude, Adagio*, and *Fugue* is easier to play with old pedallings than with new. I appreciated particularly the fact that old fingerings and old pedallings are not a fetish with him, but a means to a

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## New Books

Reviewed by Wesley Vos

The Organ Club Golden Jubilee, 1976. Available from Philip Weston, 84 Haynes Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 2 HU. (117 pp., £1.80)

Both professional and non professional organ enthusiasts are welcomed in The Organ Club, and the 50th anniversary of this delightful British group has inspired a book of articles and memoirs. Among the former are:

- "Five Decades of Organ Case Design" by Herbert Norman
- "Organ Recording during the past Fifty Years" by Harcourt Macklin
- "Half a Century of Organ Music" by Bryan Hesford
- "Tubular to Tracker" by John Maidment
- "For the Beginning Organ Photographer" by B. B. Edmonds

The Bicentennial Tracker. The Organ Historical Society, 1976. Available from The O.H.S., Inc., P.O. Box 209, Wilmington, Ohio 45177. (192 pp., \$10.00)

Publication of this special issue of *The Tracker* is justified both by its extraordinarily rich content as well as by the simultaneously celebrated 20th anniversary of the O.H.S. and the nation's bicentennial. The 27 essays and articles were all written especially for this issue, and an extensive index enhances their usefulness. All deal with American organs, organbuilding, and composers. Many are profusely illustrated. Those familiar with *The Tracker* will recognize the same diversity of content, but on a much larger scale.

Aksel Andersen, *Improvisation I*. Edition Egtved, Denmark. (57 pp., no price listed)

An exercise book for organists beginning improvisation study, this method follows strictly traditional "Baroque" practice. Commentary is kept to a minimum in favor of music examples illustrating organizational techniques. Volume 2 is promised later this year.

Reginald Whitworth, *The Electric Organ*. The Organ Literature Foundation, Braintree, Mass. 02184. (257 pp., \$21.00) Reprint of the third edition (1948). Originally published in 1930.

It must be emphasized that this technical study deals with the use of electricity in pipe organs, and with electronic instrument manufacture only in its infancy. There are numerous diagrams and illustrations.

Lois Rowell (compiled), *American Organ Music On Records*. The Organ Literature Foundation, 1976. (105 pp. \$6.50).

A discography exemplary in every respect, this landmark study is a must for anyone concerned with the performance of American organ music. There are 415 entries, each listing composer and title; performer, organ, location, and date of recording; record title/collection, label, etc.

Six separate indexes cover:

- performers
- organ builder/location
- album titles
- record label/number
- authors of program notes
- record series

Although single men and single women holding a degree in organ or sacred music would presumably have the same economic needs, the AGO national survey in 1973 indicated that single men earned on the average \$2,000 more in church positions than did single women (\$5,300 versus \$3,300). (It should be noted that these low figures reflect the fact that countless professional organists must make their living from sources of income outside the church. They should not be used by churches as justification for keeping salaries low simply because one's church may pay above the national average.)

Women are, with few exceptions, relegated to those positions which not only pay less, but have fewer resources and opportunities for professional growth and personal satisfaction, and thus, subsequently, fewer opportunities for professional advancement.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of "race, color, religion, national origin, or sex." The Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires employers to pay equal salaries and wages for equal work without regard to sex.

By and large, women have been excluded from the larger church positions, most of which are filled by word-of-mouth. Women have been assumed incapable of choral conducting on a professional level, and have been left to pursue organist-only and smaller organist-director positions, inferior both in salary and in status.

One might assume that married women deliberately seek less demanding positions. Yet the fact that they earn on the average only \$10 less per year than single women suggests that all women are in the position of having to accept lesser positions. Even married men with no music degree earn substantially more than women with years of costly training (\$3,800 versus \$3,300).

Women encounter far more difficulty in being assertive than do men. They are often considered expendable if they request a higher salary. "If you're not happy here, Jane, maybe you should go somewhere else", was told to an organist making considerably less than the male choir director for doing more work. Because it is hard for a woman to be assertive in financial matters without being labelled "pushy", we need the support of an organization behind us.

It is difficult for women to be taken seriously as professional musicians. If she is single, she is passing time until she marries. If she is married, she is getting away from the kids and earning pin money. These and similar rationalizations are used to justify paying women less. Yet there are women today who are trying to support a jobless husband on a church musician's salary. There are many women whose husbands are unable to support a family completely and whose church salaries are greatly needed to maintain a modest standard of living. There are widowed and divorced women who are the sole provider for their children. We mention this not to suggest that persons without financial worries should be paid less, but simply to point out that many single and married women must work, and are dependent upon their church incomes.

Sometimes women themselves are part of the problem. Every time we accept a job for less money than a male musician, every time we accept inferior status, we are making it more difficult for the whole profession to gain respect.

Three resolutions regarding the national AGO placement service and a program of education for churches were presented last November to the AGO National Council, and they were received favorably. The task of implementation remains ahead, particularly with regard to an education program.

We need able workers to raise the level of awareness among churches. Individual Guild chapters should have a task force for affirmative action to work with their placement services. Women deans in particular should exercise leadership. All professional women should consider this an important issue. Enlightened self-interest should warn us that little is secure in this life. A married woman with no financial worries today may later find herself a widow, a divorcee, or with a jobless husband.

We do not want special favors. We merely request that the laws be obeyed, that all church positions be open to the best qualified candidate, and that salaries be equal for men and women.

Beverly Scheibert  
Sub-Dean, Boston Chapter

## American Institute of Organbuilders

The Annual Convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders will be held in Houston, Texas, October 3-6, 1976. This year's convention promises to be one of the finest and most educational planned to date by the organization. The headquarters location for the convention will be the Marriott Hotel, 2100 South Braeswood Blvd., Houston, TX 77030. Single rooms will be available for \$30 and doubles for \$34 per night. The \$90 registration fee covers most meals and a final closing banquet.

Speakers for the convention will include Dr. M. A. Vente of Holland on "Iberian Organbuilding"; Roland Killinger of Germany on "Reeds with Short-Length Resonators and Other Practical Reed Problems"; Roy Redman on "Present Trends in U.S. Organbuilding" (with a slide show courtesy of Fritz Nacker); Robert Anderson on "Organist

to Organbuilder: The Stoptist"; Joseph Blanton on "Principles of Case Design"; Jack Sievert and a panel on "Administrative Problems: Legal and Accounting" (with a CPA and an attorney present); Jan Rowland on "Pressure Rise in the Pipe Foot and Some Implications"; Otto Hofmann on "Reflections after 30 Years"; Pete Sieker on "Organ Design and Placement: Problems and Solutions"; and Pieter Visser on "Some Thoughts on Tonal Matters and Tuning Practices."

In addition to the above, fine product exhibits will be displayed by American suppliers to the trade, as well as some of the European suppliers. There will be plenty of socializing, a chance to pick a colleague's brain, and visits to interesting organs in the Houston area. Plan to join the fun in Houston in October!

The Convention Committee of the AIO reports that it needs help with its mailing list. Some members' addresses need correction, even though the mail reaches the addressee eventually. In addition, there are others who are not now on the mailing list who might like to receive AIO mailings. Any organbuilders or organ maintenance men, whether independent or employees of firms, should be on the AIO mailing list. All are invited to send corrections and additions to: Jan Rowland, Chairman, Convention Committee, AIO-76, 2033 Johana A-2, Houston, TX 77055.

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musical end. On the subject of articulation, he stressed the need to develop absolute control over the release of each key, and he stated that the center of the basic articulation in old music was a tracker organ. It was a stimulating modern legato. Not staccato, but less than modern legato. He related all of this to the fine nuances available on a tracker organ. It was a stimulating presentation, one which provoked numerous questions during the class, as well as discussions and exchange of ideas by various members after class.

#### Vogel Workshop on Tuning and Temperament

This session was less valuable. Persons who already had some knowledge of the subject found it too elementary. Those for whom it was a new subject received some explanation of basic terms and concepts. One question the advisability of scheduling such a complex topic for a one-hour session in which musicians of widely varying background will be present.

#### Robert Schuneman Seminar: Understanding German Organ Romanticism

In the four one-hour sessions devoted to this topic, Mr. Schuneman discussed the German organ at mid-19th century, how it was used, the principles of registration, and aspects of interpretation such as rubato. The session which I attended concentrated on registration. Mr. Schuneman provided specific examples of registration for different types

of composition, drawn from an organ method book of 1861, Bönnicke's *Die Kunst des freien Orgelspiels*. He pointed out how drastically different the Romantic approach to registration is from our own today and he underscored the need to study Romantic music and techniques as belonging to a style period distinctly different from our own. All of the material was well-organized and presented in an enthusiastic manner which stimulated thoughtful questions from the participants. Mr. Schuneman's illustrations of this music were distinguished by a beautifully singing cantabile style, a lush legato touch, and an expressive rubato. Especially moving was his ponderous interpretation of Brahms' *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, for which he drew 16' and 8' Diapasons on one manual, several 8' flues on the other manual, and an 8' Trumpet for the *cantus firmus* solo in the pedal. We felt fortunate to have heard these works performed on the historic Hook organ in Immaculate Conception Church. We felt especially fortunate to have heard the organ after learning that steps have been taken to demolish the beautiful old church which houses it. Those of us who come from parts of the United States where there are fewer evidences of America's architectural history will never be able to understand how Bostonians could contemplate throwing away an historical monument to make way for a mere parking lot.

—M.K.

#### Robert Schuneman Workshop

Mr. Schuneman's workshop, an hour-long lecture on "The Organ as Religious Symbol in Nineteenth-Century German Musical Aesthetics," was carefully pre-

pared to give an overview of a large topic in a short time. Dealing with the period up to c.1885, Schuneman stressed the fact that little serious study has been devoted to this topic and that the relative closeness to our own time prevents proper perspective. His central point was that the commonly-made assumption concerning the decadence of the nineteenth-century organ — that it fell to a low point and became an orchestral imitation — is in fact a myth; rather, the organ remained essentially classic in design, and composers imitated it with the orchestra when they wished to evoke the symbol of *musica sacra*. Such writing was in a different style from other works and was illustrated in recorded examples from pieces by Mendelssohn, Wagner, and Schumann. When romantic composers sought to imitate the orchestra with a keyboard instrument, the piano was employed, and the use of the organ was reserved to impart a particular religious symbolism. The difference in the ways in which a composer wrote for organ and for orchestra was exemplified by different versions Liszt produced of the same pieces. The changes in organ design and in composition which are usually considered decadent came chiefly after 1885, with the advent of impressionism. Mr. Schuneman is to be congratulated for his research in this area which merits further attention.

#### André Isoir Workshop

M. Isoir's topic for the two-hour session at Old West Church was the same as for his limited-enrollment seminar: "Interpretation of French Organ Music of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." He discussed the works of Titelouze, stressing the embellishments of

cadences, and then dealt in a more cursory manner with selected pieces by François Couperin, Marchand, DuMège, and LeBègue. Some mention was made of registrations as mentioned in contemporary treatises, of rhythmic inequality, and of various problems common to meantone temperament. Unfortunately, M. Isoir's presentation was greatly flawed for an American audience by the fact that it was delivered in French and was not organized in a clear fashion; one was either already familiar with the material presented or else one could not follow it. The presence of an excellent translator, Thomas Kelley, did not entirely overcome the difficulties. The examples played on the fine Fisk organ, however, were very much to the point, and the session ended with a rousing performance of a *Ba'bastre Noel*.

—A.L.

#### Barbara Owen Workshop: The American Organ — An Instrument Without a Literature?

In a remarkably short period of time, a mere hour, Ms. Owen sketched a clear outline of American organ playing from its beginnings up to the 20th century, and filled in with numerous fascinating details. It was a scholarly presentation, yet interesting on various levels. She played examples from each period, indicating how the music was intimately connected with the organs that were available. She also showed the connection of organ music with the religious and cultural life of the people. Of the many interesting facts presented, one that particularly stays in my mind is her statement that American Romantic organ music developed differently from

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## King's College Choir at AGO 76 Boston

A Review by Robert Schuneman

The appearance of King's College Choir from Cambridge, England on these shores is special. After all, 525 years of continuous choral tradition has brought this choir to a sense of intuneness that is far beyond the ordinary. Daily singing is the best trainer of a choir, and 525 years of daily singing is the forming discipline of King's College Choir. The 16 boys and 14 men who form the choir at the present, in spite of their short tenure in the choir, are thus joined with those who preceded them in all those years, both by the strength of musical continuity, and also by force of the experienced discipline that such a strong tradition provides. Precocious the boys and young men might be; but precious they are not. Musically skilled and technically haughty they might be; but humbled by the strength of their predecessors they are. Thus, this extraordinarily fine choir goes about its quiet round of work year in and year out, providing some of the most harmonious and nerve-tingling sounds which fill the air at worship in their home chapel. It is no wonder that the whole Western world has come to know this choir and its music, and come to bow before the simple beauty of their work. Radio, TV and recordings have allowed the choir this notoriety in spite of the scarcity of their tours outside Cambridge, and modern travel has blessed countless musicians with opportunity to hear the choir in its own setting at home more frequently than would have been possible in past centuries. But nothing supplants hearing the choir in person, and if the Boston AGO could not go to England, the next best solution was to bring King's College Choir here. It was a singular feast for the convention-goers to be able to hear the choir in a full concert as well as in three services. In a word, it was special.

Philip Ledger has been the choir's director for two full years, and by now some of the significant differences from his predecessors, Boris Ord and David Willcocks, are becoming apparent. The sound of the choir has changed somewhat. The trebles have been opened up somewhat, even to the point of bordering on stridency at times. What might seem like a risky business with the young voice has paid off, however, in that the men are also singing more openly, with a more virile and mature quality, and without the danger of overbalancing the trebles. This has allowed the choir a bit more vocal flexibility in which such things as color, dynamic range, and vocal style are allowed a greater range of expression. Yes, there were some strident moments, but these were far outweighed by the amount of variety and subtle changes in the vocal expression. This was particularly noticeable in polyphonic works, where inner voices and vocal inflection of text continually spurted forth from within the inner fabric of the pieces. Then too, this kind of singing allowed the choir to take on subtle differences of vocal approach according to the historical style of the pieces sung, treating renaissance polyphony quite different from the baroque anthem and the modern works, and thus providing interesting and engaging musical approach to all the works.

Fighting the unusual heat, the choir sang one concert program twice for the convention (on Monday and Tuesday evenings) at St. Paul's Church in Cambridge, and once for the general public in a jam-packed Trinity Church on Copley Square on the preceding Saturday evening. The program consisted of Psalms 8 and 150 in Anglican Chant to bring the choir in and out; *Ave Maria* by Robert Parsons; *Crucifixus* by Antonio Lotti; *Hosanna to the Son of David* by Orlando Gibbons; *Missa "Euge Bone"* by Christopher Tye; *Remember not, Lord and Jehova quam multi sunt* by Henry Purcell; *Take Him, earth, for cherishing* by Herbert Howells; and *Let all the world in every corner sing* by Kenneth Leighton. The heat, accentuated by SRO audiences each time, would take its toll on any choir, and one must say that it did also on this choir. Saturday's program sounded the best; by Tuesday evening the strain was more apparent in the choir. But still nothing but excitement filled the audience for the musical results which Mr. Ledger got from the singers. The extraordinary tuning and intonation for which the choir is so well known was amply demonstrated in the first two pieces, and the bold richness of the 8-part writing in the Gibbons piece was given free

rein. Christopher Tye's unbelievably fine Mass was given a fantastically fine performance, one in which the surprising cadences, dramatic changes of mood according to the text, and virtuoso inner lines were handled so expressively by the choir. The homogeneity of the choir as a single instrument was stunning in Purcell's *Remember not*, and in Howells' richly harmonic anthem. Only in the Purcell verse anthem did slight weaknesses appear, mostly in the form of intruding organ accompaniment that was not registered well for the choir, and less tightly knit ensemble. Leighton's anthem provided a strong and lively, full-bodied and festive close to the program. All this was interspersed with organ pieces sturdily played by the very young organ scholar from King's, Francis Grier (two *Noels* by LeBègue; *Fantasia on "Komm, Heiliger Geist"* by Bach, and *Joie et clarté* by Messiaen).

Obviously the cheering and shouting audience had enjoyed what they heard on all three occasions, for they called again and again for more. Alas, there were no encores. Had there been, I am quite sure that the audience would have stayed as long as the choir could sing without giving in to heat prostration.

There is something noble about the bearing of this choir in concert. Since the choir sings daily services as its chief work, it has learned from long tradition the magnificence of quiet deportment and extremely understated physical bearing. This choir does not make a show such as other touring concert choirs, and it was a rare thing to see such self-effacing deportment from choir and conductor. In many ways, it accentuated the special beauty of their music.

Convention goers had the opportunity to hear the choir, or rather to worship with the choir in three services during the week at Trinity Church. Matins on Tuesday morning included *Fecisti nos* by Radcliffe, responses by Byrd, Psalm 5 by Havergal, service in C by Britten, and *Almighty and everlasting God* by Gibbons. Evensong on Wednesday included *Almighty God* by Ford, responses and Psalms 114-115 by W. Smith, Howells' service (*Collegium Regale*), and *Haec dies* by Byrd. Evensong on Thursday included *Cantate Domino* by Pitoni, responses by Tomkins, Psalm 119 in settings by Atkins and Hayes, the McCabe *Norwich Canticles*, and *Beati quorum via integra est* by Stanford. In spite of the fact that the acoustical ambience of Trinity Church is less free and resonant than King's Chapel in Cambridge, England (nothing can compare with that acoustical ambience), the services showed the choir at their best, offering their music to the glory of God in daily worship. One might wonder (and I, for one, was disappointed) that no congregational hymns were included in the services. Certainly the large congregation of convention-goers, and parishioners from countless city churches would have sung lustily and well, and it would have given the congregation a chance to actively participate in the worship. Also, those of us who have sung hymns with the choir at King's Chapel in England know how stirring it is when the choir embellishes the hymns with descants and harmonized settings. It was a shame not to experience it here also.

That the choir enjoyed its foray to Boston was shown by the entertaining numbers sung by the men (and one by the boys) at the convention banquet. The Andrews Sisters could not have outdone the popular arrangements coming from the stage. Even Mrs. Ledger joined the men for one number, and the boys of the choir wildly cheered the men on from their balcony dinner-table location. And all the banquet audience at once came to know just how marvelously human are these singers who make such inhumanly beautiful music. Even Anna Russell was up-staged.

There are many good choirs in the world. But there is only one King's College Choir. There are not enough decent words to describe them accurately. That's why they are special. Their music must be heard. Once heard, one carries their sound, their moments of beauty in one's inner memory. How wonderful to have that kind of memory from this convention.

(Continued from page 3)

European Romantic music because American churches were smaller and the acoustics were different. Therefore American music focused on color effects rather than on monumental sounds. Since we were surrounded by American history during this week in Boston, Barbara Owen's excellent historical survey of American organ literature was particularly welcome at this time.

**Martha Folts Seminar:  
Contemporary Organ Repertoire**

On the first day of this 4-day seminar, Ms. Folts traced recent explorations in sound back to John Cage and placed the avant-garde organ movement in a broad perspective. She emphasized that ours is an age of exploration of timbre. It requires virtuosity of the ear and virtuosity of the mind, more than the finger virtuosity which was needed for 19th-century music. During the course of the seminar, she repeatedly emphasized that new ear training is required in order to perceive the new music. In much of this music, it is useless to look for causality or development in the Western sense. In subsequent class sessions, she talked about the process of preparing specific works for performance, and she involved the seminar members in the actual working out of Ligeti's *Volumina* and other compositions. She also discussed some of the composers and works which were included in her recital. Class members raised fundamental questions to which she gave thoughtful replies. Her extensive knowledge produced some very perceptive insights into this difficult subject. Given her characteristically abundant enthusiasm, the seminar was a pleasurable exploration trip into the realm of new sounds and ideas.

—M.K.

**Daniel Pinkham Workshop**

Mr. Pinkham devoted his hour to a fascinating demonstration of an electronic music synthesizer, using the ElectroComp Model 200. After defining the basic vocabulary needed to work with the instrument, he illustrated the various wave shapes produced by the oscillators, the modifications which can be achieved through the use of filters and related controls, analog and digital functions, and various random possibilities. His interesting and personable presentation was devoted mainly to the techniques of using the synthesizer, but he also provided some insight into the ways in which a composer employs such an instrument, particularly in combination with conventional instruments. Interestingly, Pinkham expressed the viewpoint that his work with electronic instruments now provides new ways of viewing work with acoustic instruments. The high caliber of the demonstration and the marked audience interest made this one of the most worthwhile sessions of the convention.

**Gerre Hancock Workshop**

Mr. Hancock treated a large audience to the basic ideas of improvisation and service playing which he had also taught in the smaller seminars. Working from a simple starting point, he gave an outline for daily practice of improvisation, advocating the harmonization of scales in all keys and voices, then moving on to a question-answer technique, simple A-B-A forms, and free hymn accompaniments. Hancock illustrated all his points with examples which were spontaneously and skillfully played. By the end of the hour, he had also covered the anthem-to-doxology transition and the improvisation of simple chorale preludes, taking the last of the Brahms set as a model. The need for discipline, counting, and the filling of a definite space was stressed throughout. This was a very practical session and gave almost every interested person, beginning or advanced, something with which they could work.

**Nicolson Harpsichord Seminar**

James Nicolson led a daily seminar in harpsichord maintenance, which was attended mostly by persons already owning instruments or by prospective buyers. The approach was a practical, how-to-do-it one, and Mr. Nicolson's enthusiasm and knowledge ensured participation, giving that invaluable background which

comes only through practical experience. Each day dealt with a different aspect of the subject: the parts of the harpsichord, replacing broken strings, quilling, regulation, and tuning.

The amount of interest shown in the harpsichord was a new and healthy one for such an eclectic group as the AGO; in addition to the seminar, there were displays of new instruments and demonstrations of historic instruments. The latter were held at the Museum of Fine Arts on two afternoons, where John Gibbons and Martin Pearlman each performed a brief recital on instruments from the museum collection. Mr. Gibbons played a sonata by J. C. Bach on a 1798 Kirkman double harpsichord and a Haydn sonata on a Broadwood forte-piano of 1804; the 1792 Avery cabinet organ was not presently operating. In another room, where the overflow crowd was accommodated, Mr. Pearlman played a set of Sweelinck variations on a Ruckers muselar (large Flemish-style virginal with keyboard at the right side) of c.1610, a Frescobaldi toccata on a late sixteenth century Italian virginal (or spinetto) attributed to Domenico, and a group of short pieces by Armand-Louis Couperin on a 1756 French double harpsichord by Hensch. As an encore, he performed the Bach *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* on the same instrument.

Displays of new harpsichords set up in the Conservatory and in the hotel showed how far we have come in quality during the past few years; every instrument was a hand-crafted one, based on general historic principles (some were copies of specific instruments), and not a "production" model was to be seen. Among the clavichords, virginals, and harpsichords, both single and double, were examples from the shops of Adams, Brockman, Dowd, Fudge, Herz, Hubbard, Koster, Nargesian, Sassmann, and Shortridge.

—A.L.

**ORGAN RECITALS**

**Thomas Murray Recital**

Church of the Immaculate Conception; 1863 E. & G. G. Hook organ. Program: Sonata I, Mendelssohn; Prelude, Fugue and Variation, Franck; Sonata, Opus 28, Elgar.

Thomas Murray treated us to an absolutely sumptuous recital on the E. and G.G. Hook organ at Church of the Immaculate Conception. Mendelssohn's *Sonata I* was characterized by a good, strong tempo and a forceful delineation of line. Simple yet eloquent, Murray's playing had none of the sentimentality or effeminate graciousness which all too often destroy performances of the Mendelssohn works. In the Franck *Prelude, Fugue and Variation*, on the other hand, Murray displayed infinite control over the most subtle nuances. I remember with particular delight his delicate operation of the Swell box to heighten the expressiveness of the composition and his gentle, forward propulsion of the 16th-note filigree figure in the third section. For the opening movement of the Elgar *Sonata*, he chose a brisk but majestic tempo. Highlighting the contrast between the forceful first theme and the lyric second one, he made the most of the melodious character of this work. While this sonata can seem unduly long when performed by an immature player, under Mr. Murray's fingers it was cohesive and literally bursting with joy. Registrations, which can be a problem in this work, were carefully thought out, displaying all three — instrument, composition, and performer — to best advantage. It was a recital which will remain in my memory for a long time.

**George Bozeman Recital**

St. Stephen's Church; c1830 by unknown Boston builder, rebuilt Fisk, 1967. Program: Voluntary I in C, Stanley; Voluntary for "Dulcian or Diapasons" and "Swell with Hautboy or Trumpet", Thomas Loud; Voluntary, Selby.

Another historic instrument was presented by George Bozeman at St. Stephen's Catholic Church. For this early 19th-century organ in the English tradition (c.1830), Mr. Bozeman selected works which were a standard part of the American repertory at that time. His lighthearted rendition of the Stanley Voluntary was quite charming and appropriate. Also interesting were the two voluntaries by early American composers. Mr. Bozeman thoughtfully provided in-

formative program notes explaining, among other things, the registration indications provided by the composers and the meaning of such registrations for an organ of this type.

—M.K.

**Harald Vogel Recital**

Old West Church; C. B. Fisk organ, 1971. Program: Magnificat VIII Toni, Scheidemann; Jesus Christus unser Heiland, Tunder; Fantasia on "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland", Bruhns; Nun komm der Heiden Heiland, Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Buxtehude.

This program showed Vogel to be an excellent organist and one who can bring his own scholarship to bear on performance — his was the most convincing demonstration this reviewer has heard in making "old" music come alive by using the techniques of the period. The robust, craggy nature of the north German music fitted the magnificent organ well, and I found myself in disagreement with the *Globe's* critic Michael Steinberg (review of June 26), who found the playing adequate but reserved. Rather, I thought Mr. Vogel employed just the right amount of freedom, within the bounds of the style, to make the music dramatic and eloquent.

**André Isoir Recital**

Memorial Church, Harvard University; C. B. Fisk organ, 1967. Program: Hymne "Pange Lingua", Titelouze; Fugue dixième, Roberday; Suite du deuxième ton, Guilain; Récit de cro-morne en taille, Calvière; Flûtes et Symphonie concertante, Laseux; Andante con moto, Boëly; Carillon Orfènaïs, Nibelle; Scherzo (Suite), Alain; Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain, Duruffé.

Isoir provided a recital of the pieces for which he is best-known: a kaleidoscopic trip through large segments of the French literature, including a number of works by composers little-known outside France. The large Fisk organ in Harvard's Memorial Church is not French and it certainly does not enjoy the resonant acoustics that most French churches have, but M. Isoir made it work well for him and used it in a colorful way. Some of the pieces — those by Roberday, Boëly, and Nibelle, for instance — are probably best forgotten when played by anyone less able, but the works of greater substance fared well. Strong, virile playing characterized the pieces of Titelouze, Guilain, and Calvière, while a considerable touch of humor was present in the Laseux and Boëly pieces; one senses in these trifles the entertaining style of the period. With Alain and Duruffé, Isoir came back to "real" organ music, turning in the kind of virtuosic performance for which the French are noted. Having heard this organist play most of these pieces at Saint-Germain-des-Près in Paris, however, I must say that he is best in his native setting.

—A.L.

**Margaret Mueller Recital**

Busch-Reisinger Museum, Cambridge; 1958 Flentrop organ. Program: Echo Fantasia, Ons is gheboren een kindekijn, Sweelinck; Orgel-sonate (Trio), Distler; Fantasia in F minor, K 608, Mozart.

In this recital, one was immediately struck by the appropriateness of the literature for the instrument on which it was performed — the Flentrop in the Busch-Reisinger museum. Beginning with works by the old Dutch composer, J. P. Sweelinck, Ms. Mueller proceeded to a modern trio sonata by Hugo Distler (1908-1942) who was one of the most avid exponents of the neo-Baroque movement and the *Orgelbewegung* in Germany. Together with the large *Fantasia in F Minor* (K.608) by Mozart, these works seemed most fitting for the Busch-Reisinger organ, which has probably done more than any other single instrument in America to bring the ideals of the neo-classic organ to a wide public. I was pleased to note in the Sweelinck performance that Ms. Mueller preserved a true Renaissance flavor. Her use of old fingerings enhanced the melodic line and the rhythmic structure, and they served, incidentally, as a lively illustration of the techniques discussed in the Vogel seminar. A sprightly, sparkling precision characterized Ms. Mueller's

performance of the Distler *Orgelsonata*. The fine, linear conception always came across, and the registrations were excellent. For the Mozart *Fantasia* she chose a good, fast tempo which she consistently maintained despite the technical difficulties this imposes in some parts of the work. She played with buoyancy and charm — a good Mozart style.

**Roberta Gary Recital**

First Church in Cambridge; 1972 Frobenius organ. Program: Chaconne in F minor, Pachelbel; Prelude and Fugue in B minor, Bach; Vater unser im Himmelreich, Böhm; Variants (1972), Paul Cooper; Entrée-Les langues de feu, Sortie-Le vent d'Esprit (Messe de Pentecôte), Messiaen.

This was a highly provocative recital. The Pachelbel *Chaconne*, cleanly articulated and artistically registered, was given added interest through a most subtle use of rhythmic alterations. The Bach *Prelude and Fugue in B Minor*, to which she applied the mannerisms of the French overture style, was characterized by majestic vitality and a broad sweep of line. Ms. Gary is a performer whose playing both brings out the contrapuntal line and underscores the formal structure of a work. This was particularly evident in her performance of the Pachelbel and Bach compositions. In the Böhm chorale prelude, she displayed very creative ornamentation, delicate articulation, and a thorough understanding of Böhm's style. The Paul Cooper work allowed the artist to effectively exploit the tonal resources of her instrument. In the Messiaen works her playing was brilliant, accurate, and full of rhythmic verve. It was a stimulating experience to hear this performer who combines a high degree of reflective intelligence with imagination and solid musicianship. Her registrations were always logical and artistic, and she displayed the Frobenius organ to good advantage. This instrument is an organ of unusual refinement. It was played by a musician of equal refinement.

**Martha Folts Recital**

King's Chapel; C. B. Fisk organ, 1963. Program: Fergus Are, Pozzi Escot; Internal Organ, Folts; No Attack of Organic Metals (1973), Robert Cogan; Or, David Cope.

All of the works performed in this program treat the organ as a sound source offering a seemingly limitless number of new sonic possibilities. The first work, *Fergus Are*, by Pozzi Escot, takes its structure from a number of geometric designs drawn by the composer. The basic thoughts which generated this work are abstract mathematical ones, but one can experience the work on a sonic level alone without knowledge of its mathematical basis. Its realization requires an enormous amount of creativity on the part of the performer. Ms. Folts' fearless approach to music-making resulted in all sorts of imaginative sonorities. In her own work, entitled *Internal Organ*, she and her assistants climbed inside the organ in what she described as an "exploratory operation." The result was a succession of bizarre sounds, totally unrelated to any sound traditionally associated with the organ. Our curiosity was piqued, wanting to know what in the world she was doing inside the instrument. Obviously, she knows things about the insides of an organ that most of us don't. *No Attack of Organic Metals* for organ, tape, and slide whistles, by Robert Cogan, combined machine sounds with organ sounds to produce sustained blocks of sonority. David Cope's work for prepared organ and tape, entitled *Or*, aims at involvement on several levels. Beginning with a primordial scream by the performer, it reaches us first at the visceral level. This is an interesting work, performed with gripping intensity by Martha Folts, for whom it was written. The entire program was a witness to Ms. Folts' ingenuity. She showed wit, lightheartedness, and a joy in the creative process.

**Yuko Hayashi Recital**

Expressly commissioned for the convention was a new work by Gunther Schuller, entitled *Triptych*. Written for the extraordinarily beautiful Fisk organ

in Old West Church, where it was performed, this work uses a wide palette of beautiful sonorities. Basically a dodecaphonic work, it is in three movements, played without pause. One feels that more than a single hearing is required to appreciate both the structure and the details of such an extensive work (32 minutes in length). However, we are proud to have this interesting and colorful new work by a significant composer added to the rapidly growing list of contemporary American organ compositions. Yuko Hayashi's performance was energetic and assertive, rhythmically alive and sensitive. She astounded us all by learning this difficult, lengthy work in just 8 days. Only a virtuoso with a keen mind and extraordinary self-discipline could accomplish such a feat.

#### Competition Winners

Paul Lee, a recent graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi representing the Southeastern region, was the competition runner-up and played the following recital as a prelude to the Sunday afternoon vesper service at the Church of St. John the Evangelist: Bach: *Prelude and Fugue in B Minor*, BWV 544; and *Organbook I* by William Albright. His playing was facile and musical, and he performed the Bach in a straightforward manner, without manual changes in the prelude. The approach to the Albright was more elastic, as befits the music, and I applaud any contestant for playing a work of this type. The 1890 Hutchings, recently rebuilt by Philip Beaudry, was used to good advantage. Mr. Lee's prize of \$500 was donated by eleven tracker organ builders.

Robert Duerr, a student at the University of Southern California and organist of the First Baptist Church of Los Angeles, represented the New York-New Jersey region and was the competition winner (see THE DIAPASON, June 1976, p.9, for an account of Mr. Duerr winning first place in the Long Beach Chapter AGO Memorial Scholarship Competition). He played his recital four times at the first and Second Church on a large Casavant tracker (3-43) built in 1972; the program consisted of Reger: *Introduction and Passacaglia in D Minor*; Bach: *Trio Sonata V in C Minor*; Persichetti: *Shimshon's Song*; and Vierne: *Final (Sixth Symphony)*. Mr. Duerr was well-qualified to win—he played with accuracy, musicality, and assurance. One might disagree with small points of registration, but the recital was of a high quality. It was marred, especially in the Vierne, only by the forced, harsh sound of the instrument, which looked as if it should sound considerably more beautiful than it did. The first prize of \$1000 was provided by the Baldwin Piano and Organ Company.

#### George Baker Recital

First Church of Christ, Scientist, The Mother Church; 1952 Aeolian-Skinner organ. Program: *Prelude and Fugue on BACH*, Liszt; *Petite Rhapsodie from Five Improvisations* reconstructed by Duraffle, Tournemire; *Hymne d'Actions de grâces ("Te Deum")*, Langlais; *Pastorale*, Roger-Ducasse; *Variations on "Lucia Creator"*, Aria, Alain; *Improvisation on a submitted theme in variations form*.

The final recital of the week was played by George Baker on the large Aeolian-Skinner at the Mother Church. In one of the few logistical "goofs" of the week, this recital was begun before several of the buses had discharged their passengers from the previous recital; thus, your reviewer was one of a number of persons whose acquaintance with the playing of the Liszt was restricted to the applause following it. In keeping with his recent French training, Mr. Baker's recital was devoted to twentieth-century music from France (excepting the Liszt) and he played it in the virtuosic style worthy of that tradition; both organ and artist were suited to the performance of the music. The performance of the Roger-Ducasse *Pastorale* was especially good—it was made to sound lyrical and easy (which it is not), and the conclusion faded away into beautiful nothingness. The improvised variations, on a hymn tune "altered from J. S. Bach" (Christian Science Hymnal No. 32: "Brood o'er us with Thy shelt'ring wing"), were in the facile, if predictable, style of Cochereau. —A.L.

#### Pre-Convention Services

Two "official" pre-convention services were held on Sunday, June 20: the Solemn Vespers of Corpus Christi and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, in the afternoon at the Church of St. John the Evangelist; and the Solemn Mass with Procession and Te Deum, in the evening at the Church of the Advent. Both were distinguished by fine preludes, excellent choirs and service playing, loving attention to the intricacies of liturgy, and the wonderful hymn singing of the hundreds (by the evening, thousands) of organists and choirmasters present. Neither was marred by the use of ugly microphones which disfigure and disrupt the many "modern" churches which could better do without them, and both exhibited the kind of tasteful, planned ceremony which modern "reforms" have often rendered asunder.

At the afternoon service, the choir of the Monastery of St. Mary and St. John (Brother Philip Michael, SSJE, director) sang the chants, while the Schola Cantorum of the church (Sally Slade Warner, director and organist) sang the fauxbourdons of the magnificent, the alternated verses of the procession, and the motets. I wished only that the memory of Everett Titcomb had been better served by one of his motets rather than by a relatively minor organ postlude.

Preceding the evening mass, Robert Glasgow played Franck's *Grande Pièce Symphonique*; as a postlude, he performed the *Finale* from the *Symphonie V* of Vierne. His affinity with the French romantic style and command of the large Aeolian-Skinner organ (4-57, 1935 and 1964) set an impressive tone for the whole convention. The Vierne was especially thrilling, since it demonstrated both organ and composer in all their splendor, and showed how marvelous this music can be when it is played on the right instrument by the right performer.

Phillip Steinhaus, organist and choir-master of the church, led the choir and orchestra in a performance of the "Lord Nelson" Mass by Haydn, which served as the music of the ordinary. The choir and soprano soloist Lorraine Friend distinguished themselves, but the lack of the complete wind parts (taken by the organ) made occasional imbalances. The lovely boychoir-quality achieved by this mixed group on the motets of Noehren, Thompson, and Lassus was quite extraordinary. At the conclusion of the mass, everyone stood for the singing of the Mozart *Te Deum* in C Major, K. 141; it was probably an excess of a good thing after a long service, but it received a solemn performance which permitted the generation of the most impressive cloud of incense most of those present had ever witnessed. —A.L.

#### Festival Service of Convocation

The Festival Service of Convocation, which officially opened the convention, set the tone for the week by using hymns, anthems, and organ music by American composers. America's cultural history was further underscored by the opulent architecture of Trinity Church, where the service was held. The service was sung by the Worcester Concert Choir (Henry Hokans, director) and the Choir of the Archdiocesan Choir School (Theodore Marier, director). With strong, improvised accompaniment by Gerre Hancock, organist, the hymn singing provided that kind of extraordinary experience which happens when roughly 2000 musicians get together. The climax of the service was Daniel Pinkham's new anthem, *Fanfarses*, for choir, congregation, organ, brass, and percussion. This is very singable music. The refrain ("O praise the Lord, alleluia"), sung by the congregation, haunts me still. The congregational part is easy enough so that it could be learned by an unskilled congregation with a modicum of good will. The work as a whole is a brilliant statement of praise. Participating in this work was a moving religious experience, as well as an artistic one. The service concluded with a magnificent improvisational postlude on the final hymn in which Mr. Hancock displayed both imagination and thorough craftsmanship.

#### Cecilia Society

Old North Church. Program: *Four Elegies* (1974), Daniel Pinkham; *Five Songs of Experience* (1971), John Harbison.

The illustrious Cecilia Society, known for its premieres of new music, presented two relatively recent works by Daniel Pinkham and John Harbison. The *Four Elegies* by Pinkham are an eloquent work, distinguished by expressive, yet refined text setting. While the work has a contemporary ring, one notes that the composer is not afraid of the triad nor of tonal implications. The choral writing is basically homophonic and very idiomatic to the voice. The second elegy ("Upon the death of a Friend") has an emotional tenor solo, which with its disjunct character communicated most effectively by a sense of loss and anguish. Richard Conrad was the competent soloist in this movement. The elegies are connected by three interludes of progressively increasing intensity, performed by tape and various instrumental combinations. For the interludes, the composer utilized fragile, crystalline sonorities which set a dream-like mood, difficult to describe in words. The choir and instruments, under the direction of Donald Teeters, gave a spellbinding performance of this beautiful work. Diction and intonation were excellent. Above all, it was a warm, communicative interpretation. *The Five Songs of Experience* by John Harbison is a work in the dodecaphonic tradition, rich in timbre. The music captures the essential mood of each of the poems by William Blake. The first movement, sustained and contrapuntal, aims at a universal expression. The second is rhythmic and earthy. Third and fourth are lyrical, while the fifth is primitive, expressing cruelty, jealousy and other primitive aspects of human nature. Scored for soloists, chorus, string quartet and percussion, this work has an exotic flavor heightened by the use of the African marimba, steel drum and other percussion instruments outside the classical Western tradition. It was well performed by singers and instrumentalists alike. —M.K.

#### Handel and Haydn Society Concert

Holy Cross Cathedral. Program: *Salve festa dies*, Mabel Daniels; *Motet, "Help Us O Lord"*, Amy March Cheney (Mrs. H.H.A.) Beach; *Coronation Anthems*, Handel; *Concerto IV in B-flat*, Handel (with Barbara Bruns, soloist).

This well-known choral organization, the oldest in the country, provided an interesting concert, ably directed by Thomas Dunn. The program opened with two early twentieth-century unaccompanied works by American women: *Salve festa dies* by Mabel Daniels and Mrs. H.H.A. Beach's motet *Help Us, O Lord*. In a year when the performance of such pieces has often been lip-service to inferior works, it was refreshing to hear fine works in this case, well worth hearing. Both exhibited considerable craft of writing, and the Beach was especially lovely. The concluding choral works were Handel's four *Coronation Anthems*, which, because of their special coronation texts, are not often performed. It was a pleasure to hear them in a spirited performance, and the skill with which they were sung said a great deal for the direction this large chorus has taken in the nine years that Dunn has been the director. In a ceremony part way through the program, he was presented with the baton which had been given to the Irish-American bandmaster Patrick S. Gilmore, to open the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

Between the two choral sections of the program, Barbara Bruns was heard as organ soloist with the orchestra in the *Concerto in B Flat, Op. 4, No. 2*, by Handel. The organ was a new one-manual and pedal instrument of eight stops by Bozeman-Gibson, and it served well for this competent rendition, even though it was in a temporary installation.

Holy Cross Cathedral, in which the program was held, is a monumental building in Boston's South End, where its continued existence may well be threatened. With dimensions of 364' length, 170' width at the transept, and 120' height, it is a special building, of the tradition which has provided so many great buildings in Europe, but so few in the United States. Every effort should be made to preserve this building, and the 3-70 E. and G. G. Hook

and Hastings organ in the rear gallery, built in 1875. Presently in poor condition, this potentially-magnificent instrument was demonstrated before and after the concert by Philip Beaudry, who played the entire *Suite Gothic* by Böllmann. A competent restoration ought to be provided for this unique organ; toward that end, a spontaneously-announced collection at the door netted over \$1100. Now, perhaps some other funds (such as AGO convention profits?) can be contributed.

#### Ronald Ingraham Concert Choir

This twenty-one member gospel choir provided a program which was a refreshing change from the more conventional fare, and one which probably surprised a lot of Guild members. Although it was not the finest gospel singing I have heard, it was as enthusiastic as could be expected under the sweltering conditions; the performance of such pieces as the "Amen" (from *The Lilies of the Field*), with the singers moving through the audience, was very pleasant. This program was an indication of the diversity of events at the convention.

#### OTHER EVENTS

##### Julia Sutton Dance Program

New England Conservatory's Elizabethan Dance Ensemble, directed by Julia Sutton, presented a charming and colorful concert of Renaissance Dance and Music. Eight costumed performers variously sang, danced, and played a selection of pieces by English and Italian composers of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, providing an entertainment that would well have been witnessed at a court of the period. The choreographies of the *pavanes*, *galliards*, *balletti*, *volte*, *passamezzi*, *canaries*, and *branles* were taken from dance manuals of the time and were gracefully performed. From a musical standpoint, the occasional use of the five-stop Fisk chamber organ, patterned after Snetzler, provided a delightful continuo instrument, and served as a reminder that the organ need not always be thought of as an instrument exclusively for sacred music. —A.L.

##### Alexander's Feast

This consort of five musicians specializing in early music and dance provided a carefree change of pace. Their obvious joy in what they were doing was immediately contagious. Absent was any hint of musical stiffness. They performed with abandon and without artifice or affectation. Works associated with the court of Henry VIII were given a refined, yet sensual interpretation. Music from early America was sung with utmost simplicity and directness, preserving its folk character. It was a delightful program. —M.K.

##### Welte Organ Roll Program

Church of the Covenant; Welte-Tripp organ, 1929. Program: *Poet and Peasant Overture*, von Suppe (transcribed by Michael Welte); *Fugue in G ("Jig")*, Bach (played by Edwin H. Lemare); *Meditation and Intermezzo* from *First Symphony*, Widor (played by Lynnwood Farnam); *Allegro vivace* from *Symphony I*, Vierne (played by Lynnwood Farnam); *Fantasy and Fugue on BACH*, Liszt (played by Clarence Eddy); *Etude*, Opus 56, No. 5, Schumann (played by Eugene Gigout); *Grande Fantaisie in E minor ("The Storm")*, Lemmens (played by Harry Goss Custard); *Rondo Capriccio (A Study in Accents)*, Opus 64, Lemare (played by Lemare); *Dance Macabre*, Saint-Saëns/Lemare (played by Lemare).

It is strange to discuss a program for which there was no live performer, but this "walk-in" concert, played on a Welte Reproducing Organ Player at the Church of the Covenant, provided an agreeable surprise for those who came seeking only the curious. Carefully restored and applied to a large (4-60) Welte-Tripp organ of 1929 by Ken Clark, the automatic player reproduced the performances of such famous organists as Edwin H. Lemare, Lynnwood Farnam, and Clarence Eddy. The repertoire ranged from such transcriptions as the *Poet and Peasant Overture* and the *Dance Macabre* to the "Gigue" *Fugue* of Bach and the *B-A-C-H Fantasy and Fugue* by Liszt. These rolls gave an insight into performance practice of the past and showed that there was some (Continued, page 10)

# A Performance Style for Mendelssohn

by Thomas Murray

We are just now feeling the need to have a clearer stylistic comprehension of the organ works of Mendelssohn. Editors and performers in the earlier part of our own century, confident that Mendelssohn would have been delighted with the flexibility and color of the "orchestral" organ, approached his organ pieces with a free hand. More recently we have heard Mendelssohn performed with the same registrational formulae which are used for Buxtehude and Bach, and it seems to be an ever more obvious fact that each age reinterprets great music to suit its own taste.

With music of the Romantic Period the issue is even more confused, since the organs which are loosely termed "Romantic" by nearly everyone are in reality products of the 20th century. Is it not logical that we should expect the true Romantic Organ to be a product of that era acknowledged by the wider musical world as the Romantic Period?

This article is not a detailed study of any one of Mendelssohn's organ works, but rather an overall survey of his activity as a performing organist, of the instruments he knew and of written descriptions of his playing. For a variety of reasons I have concentrated on material dealing with his organ playing in England. Although he played the organ frequently in Germany (his benefit recital at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig made possible the erection of the famous Bach monument in the courtyard next to that church), his playing in England seems to have attracted much more attention. The facility of his playing was so remarkable that it inspired numerous and valuable written descriptions by Englishmen. It was his reputation as an organist in that country which led the London publishers, Coventry & Hollier, to commission the *Six Sonatas*, opus 65.<sup>1</sup> A collection of Bach's organ works edited by Mendelssohn was published by the same firm, and the *Three Preludes and Fugues*, opus 37 were first released by the English publisher Novello.<sup>2</sup> His consultations with progressive English organists and organ builders of the time resulted in a reform movement which Clutton and Niland, in their history, *The British Organ*, do not hesitate to call a "revolution."<sup>3</sup> In summary, Mendelssohn's contributions to the English organ world were extraordinary, and his activities in that country alone provide the material for a cohesive study. Let us begin by reviewing some of the organs which Mendelssohn knew first-hand from his visits to England.

The first performance by Mendelssohn on an English organ is believed to have taken place on June 23, 1833, when he and a group of friends visited St. Paul's Cathedral. He extemporized an introduction and fugue, played Attwood's *Coronation Anthem* in a four-hands arrangement with the composer, and performed three Bach selections. On this occasion the cathedral was empty, and those present took turns at the bellows.<sup>4</sup> Four years later, on September 10, 1837, he played the same instrument, not to an empty church, but to a throng of spellbound listeners who would not leave, despite the vergers' warning that the service was over. Determined to disperse the large gathering, the vergers ordered the organ blower to release his bellows handle, and it is recorded that the air ran out of the organ during Bach's *Fugue in A minor* at a point just before the subject re-enters in the pedals.<sup>5</sup>

Thomas Murray is organist-choirmaster at St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston, Massachusetts. He has recorded the six Organ Sonatas by Mendelssohn on historic Boston instruments.

The stoplist of this late 17th century instrument as Mendelssohn knew it follows below. It was placed on top of a screen which once separated the choir from the nave. The world-famous Wren organ cases which are now divided and placed on the walls of the choir, facing each other, were still free-standing at the time of Mendelssohn's visit, the pipe-work speaking toward both nave and choir.

This was quite possibly the oldest English organ which Mendelssohn encountered, and its specification is especially interesting as evidence of the limitations of older English organs. Prior to the addition of the single one-octave pedal stop, the organ had "pull down" pedals which operated the bass keys of the manuals, presumably through couplers. It is said that Handel especially enjoyed playing the organ in St. Paul's because it possessed pedal keys — a feature then virtually unknown in 18th century England.<sup>6</sup> Although the Great and Choir compass may have extended below 8-foot C, it should be noted that the Swell went no lower than tenor C. The following stoplist is found in *Hamilton's Catechism of the Organ*.<sup>7</sup>

Saint Paul's Cathedral, London: Father Smith 1694; repaired and altered by Bishop in 1825-26, with the addition of one octave of open wood pipes for the pedals.

## GREAT ORGAN

Open Diapason 8'  
Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Principal 4'  
Twelfth 2-2/3'  
Fifteenth 2'  
Nason Flute 2'  
Tierce 1-3/5'  
Sesquialtera II  
Mixture II  
Tromba 8'  
Tromba 8' (to C-sharp, new, in place of Mounted Cornet)  
Clarion 4'

## CHOIR ORGAN

Small Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Dulciana 8'  
Principal 4'  
Flute 4'  
Twelfth 2-2/3'  
Fifteenth 2'  
Trumpet 8' (in place of Vox Humana)

## SWELL ORGAN

Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Principal 4'  
Cornet (middle C)  
Tromba 8'  
Hautboy 8'  
Corno (Bishop)

## PEDAL ORGAN

Open Diapason 16' (Bishop)

## COUPLERS

Pedal Copula  
Swell Copula

On Thursday, September 12, just two days after his interrupted performance at St. Paul's, Mendelssohn was the guest of Henry Gauntlett, then organist of Christ Church, Newgate Street, in visiting the newly reconstructed organ in that church. Though a few materials from the original Renatus Harris organ (1690) were re-used, this was in reality a new instrument in 1835 — the product of William Hill. It seems to have been a forward-looking instrument, but there were curious limitations, such as the 10-stop Pedal Organ which looks so impressive on paper, but which had only one octave of pipes. Considering this pathetically short compass, the provision of 32 pedal keys is even more of a paradox. Either the pedal pipes repeated (at a pitch one octave too low) above the second C on the pedal keys, or the manual to pedal couplers repeated in the same fashion. These limitations would tend to indicate that English

builders were not yet prepared to build an organ capable of playing those few works of Bach which had found their way into the repertoire.

Among those present at Mendelssohn's informal visit to this instrument was the aged Samuel Wesley, who gave Mendelssohn a subject for improvisation and who was later prevailed upon to play.<sup>8</sup> The stoplist of this organ is recorded in *Pearce's Old London City Churches*.<sup>9</sup>

Christ Church, Newgate Street, London: rebuilt by William Hill, 1835, incorporating materials from the original organ by Renatus Harris (1690) and from an early 19th century rebuild by Elliott and Hill. Manual compass: CC to f in alt., 54 notes. Pedal compass: CCC to fiddle G, 32 notes (pedal stops: CCC to CC, 13 notes).

## GREAT ORGAN

Double Open Diapason 16'  
Open Diapason 8'  
Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Principal 4'  
Twelfth 2-2/3'  
Fifteenth 2'  
Sesquialtera 2', V ranks  
Mixture 1-3/5', V ranks  
Doublette 2', II ranks  
Double Trumpet 16'  
Posaune 8'  
Clarion 4'

## SWELL ORGAN

Double Open Diapason 16'  
Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Principal 4'  
Flageolet 4'  
Fifteenth 2'  
Sesquialtera 1-3/5', V ranks  
Horn 8'  
Trumpet 8'  
Oboe 8'  
Clarion 4'

## CHOIR ORGAN

Open Diapason 8'  
Stopped Diapason 8'  
Principal 4'  
Stopped Flute 4'  
Fifteenth 2'

## PEDAL ORGAN

Great Diapason 16' (wood)  
Open Diapason 16' (wood)  
Open Diapason 16' (metal)  
Principal 8'  
Twelfth 6'  
Fifteenth 4'  
Sesquialtera VI ranks  
Mixture V ranks  
Posaune 16'  
Clarion 8'

## COUPLERS

Swell to Great  
Swell to Choir  
Choir to Great  
Great to Pedal  
Swell to Pedal  
Choir to Pedal

One of Mendelssohn's most prestigious appearances in England followed his visit to Christ Church by just one week — the Birmingham Festival. For this event Mendelssohn conducted his own *St. Paul*, premiered his new piano concerto, and performed at the organ. Groves recalls that the subjects for his improvisations included "Your Harps and Cymbals Sound" from Handel's *Solomon*, and a theme from the first movement of a Mozart symphony.<sup>10</sup> On Friday morning, September 22, 1837, Mendelssohn played the Bach *Prelude and Fugue in E-flat*, a choice which he had made after much thought, as we learn from a letter to his mother, dated July 13, 1937.<sup>11</sup>

"Ask Fanny, dear Mother, what she says to my intention of playing Bach's organ prelude in E flat major in Birmingham, and the fugue at the end of the same book. I suspect it will puzzle me; and yet I think I am right. I have an idea that *this* very prelude will be peculiarly acceptable to the English, and you can play both prelude and fugue *piano* and *pianissimo*, and also bring out the full power of

the organ. Faith! I can tell you it is no stupid composition."

The organ which he played was one of the most opulent instruments to come from the manufactory of William Hill, and although we may well voice some reservations about the limited pedal compass at Christ Church in London, the specification of the Birmingham organ is quite beyond reproach. The information quoted below is from a *Short Description of the Grand Organ in the Town Hall, Birmingham*, written by James Stimpson in 1846. It is possible that not all of the registers were installed at the time Mendelssohn played the organ. The nature of the mechanism which operated the Combination Organ remains a mystery. Likewise, the listings for extra pipes in registers which were ostensibly "borrowed" are a puzzle. The Combination Organ was played from a fourth row of keys ". . . upon which, by a most ingenious contrivance can be played any stop or stops in the Choir or Swell Organs, without interfering with their previous arrangement. Some of the stops in *this* Organ have pipes of their own; these it will be found are enumerated in the proper place."<sup>12</sup> There is also some ambiguity as to the pitch of certain stops, but the specification is quoted here exactly as it is found in Stimpson's booklet. Stops marked with an asterisk were added following the opening of the instrument.

Organ in the Town Hall, Birmingham, built by William Hill, 1834.

## GRAND ORGAN

1. Open Diapason 54 pipes
  2. Open Diapason 54 pipes
  3. Double Open Diapason 54 pipes
  4. Open Diapason 54 pipes
  5. Stop Diapason 54 pipes
  6. \*Quint 54 pipes
  7. Principal 54 pipes
  8. Principal 54 pipes
  9. Twelfth 54 pipes
  10. \*Doublette, 2 ranks 108 pipes
  11. Fifteenth 54 pipes
  12. Sesquialtra, 5 ranks 270 pipes
  13. Mixture, 3 ranks 162 pipes
  14. \*Fourniture, 5 ranks 270 pipes
  15. Posaune 54 pipes
  16. \*Contra or Double Trumpet 54 pipes
  17. Clarion 54 pipes
  18. Octave Clarion 54 pipes
  19. \*Great Ophicleide 54 pipes
- Total 1620

## SWELL ORGAN

1. Open Diapason 54 pipes
  2. Double Diapason 54 pipes
  3. Stop Diapason 54 pipes
  4. Principal 54 pipes
  5. \*Sesquialtra 270 pipes
  6. Fifteenth 54 pipes
  7. Horn 54 pipes
  8. Trumpet 54 pipes
  9. Clarion 54 pipes
  10. Hautboy 54 pipes...
- Total 756

## CHOIR ORGAN

1. Open Diapason 54 pipes
  2. \*Cornopean 54 pipes
  3. Dulciana 54 pipes
  4. Stop Diapason 66 pipes
  5. Principal 54 pipes
  6. \*Oboe Flute 54 pipes
  7. Flute 54 pipes
  8. Flute 54 pipes
  9. \*Wald Flute 54 pipes
- Total 498

## COMBINATION OR SOLO ORGAN

- Choir
1. Open Diapason 23 pipes
  2. Cornopean 21 pipes
  3. Dulciana 23 pipes
  4. Stop Diapason 23 pipes
  5. Harmonica 54 pipes
  6. Flute 23 pipes
  7. Vox Humana 54 pipes
  8. \*Bells (30)
- Total 221 (Swell)
9. Hautboy 18 pipes
  10. Clarion 34 pipes
  11. Trumpet 18 pipes
  12. Horn 21 pipes
  13. Fifteenth 30 pipes
  14. Claribella 54 pipes

15. Principal 30 pipes
16. Stop Diapason 21 pipes
17. Open Diapason 21 pipes
- Total 247

#### PEDAL ORGAN

1. Contra-Open Diapason 32, metal 30 pipes
2. Contra-Open Diapason 32', wood 30 pipes
3. Contra Posaune 16' wood 30 pipes
4. \*Open Diapason 16' wood 30 pipes
5. \*Open Diapason 16' wood 30 pipes
6. \*Open Diapason 16' wood 30 pipes
7. \*Stop Diapason 8' wood 30 pipes
8. \*Principal 8' wood 60 pipes
9. \*Twelfth 6' wood 30 pipes
10. \*Fifteenth 4' wood 30 pipes
12. \*Sesquialtra, 5 ranks, wood 150 pipes
13. \*Mixture, 5 ranks, wood 150 pipes
14. \*Contra Trumpet 32' wood 30 pipes
15. \*Claron 8' wood 30 pipes
16. \*Octave Clarion 4' wood 30 pipes
- Total 720

#### COPULAS

1. Swell keys to the Grand Organ
2. Choir keys to the Grand Organ
3. Pedals to Grand Organ
4. Pedals to Choir Organ
5. Pedals to Swell Organ
6. Pedal Organ only
7. Combination Choir
8. Combination Swell

In 1840, Mendelssohn again visited London and was taken to see the organ at St. Peter's Cornhill, which had been completed just three months earlier. He played Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in E minor* (presumably the shorter one), his own *Prelude and Fugue in C minor* and his *Fugue in F minor*. In conclusion he played Bach's *Pasacaglia and Fugue* and wrote its stately theme on a sheet of paper as a memento. This "manuscript" and the stophandles and keyboards of the organ were later removed to the vestry room for display.<sup>13</sup> On June 12, 1842 Mendelssohn again played at St. Peter's, this time following a morning service. The concluding hymn — Haydn's tune, "Austria" — served as his theme for an improvised voluntary.

The following week he played informally at Christ Church once more and, on June 17, in a concert at Exeter Hall, where he improvised a set of variations on Handel's "Harmonious Blacksmith" and played Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in E-flat*.<sup>14</sup> These appearances drew large numbers of listeners, as we learn from a letter written by Mendelssohn to his mother, dated June 21, 1842.<sup>15</sup>

"They have really asked a little too much of me. Recently when I played the organ in Christ Church, Newgate Street, I thought for a few moments that I would suffocate, so great was the crowd and pressure around my bench at the organ. Then, too, several days later I had to play in Exeter Hall before three thousand people, who shouted hurrahs and waved their handkerchiefs, and stamped their feet till the hall quaked. At that moment I felt no bad effects, but next morning my head was dizzy and as if I had had a sleepless night. Add to this the pretty and most charming Queen Victoria, who looks so youthful and is so shyly friendly and courteous, and who speaks such good German and who knows all my music so well . . ."

The organ at Exeter Hall was built in 1839 by Joseph Walker, founder of a respected company which is still active. Its stoplist was not unlike that of Christ Church, except that the manual compass extended down to FFF in the Great and Choir, and down to 8-foot F in the Swell. Unlike many church organs, it was very shallow, a circumstance which no doubt enhanced the organ's effectiveness. Hamilton's *Catechism* gives the dimensions: width 30 feet, height 40 feet, depth in the lower part 4 feet, six inches. The Directors of the Hall " . . . limited the builder to these dimensions, to prevent a loss of space on the platform . . . above it, at the height of twelve feet from the floor, comes the main body of the organ, carried out on projecting cantilions or consoles."<sup>16</sup> This organ had a reversed console.

The organ at St. Peter's Cornhill is an interesting example of a very "healthy" two manual design, but it suffered the handicap of short compass pedal registers which were so prevalent. We are certain, in the case of this organ, that the pedal stops "repeated" on the upper pedal keys at a pitch one octave lower than normal.<sup>17</sup>

St. Peter's, Cornhill, London: William Hill, 1840. Manual compass: CC to F, 54 notes. Pedal compass: CCC to D, 27 notes [pedal pipes: CCC to BBB, 12 notes].

#### GRAND ORGAN

1. Tenoroon Diapason 16' (to Tenor C) Bourdon 16' (to meet No. 1)
2. Principal Diapason 8'
3. Stopped Diapason treble 8' Stopped Diapason bass 8'
4. Dulciana 8' (Tenor C)
5. Claribel Flute 8' (Tenor C)
6. Principal Octave 4'
7. Wald Flute 4'
8. Oboe Flute 4'
9. Stopped Flute 4'
10. Twelfth 2-2/3'
11. Fifteenth 2'
12. Tierce 1-3/5'
13. Sesquialtra III ranks
14. Mixture II ranks
15. Doublette II ranks
16. Corono Trombone 8'
17. Corono Clarion 4'
18. Cromorne 8' (Tenor C)

#### SWELL ORGAN

19. Tenoroon Dulciana 16' (to Tenor C) Bourdon 16' (to meet No. 19)
20. Principal Diapason 8'
21. Stopped Diapason treble 8' Stopped Diapason bass 8'
22. Principal Octave 4'
23. Suebe Flute 4' (Tenor C)
24. Flageolet 4' (Tenor C)
25. Twelfth 2-2/3'
26. Fifteenth 2'
27. Piccolo 2'
28. Sesquialtra III ranks
29. Mixture II ranks
30. Echo Dulciana Cornet V ranks
31. Cornopean 8'
32. Tromba 8'
33. Oboe 8'
34. Clarion 4'

#### PEDAL ORGAN

35. Grand Diapason 16'
36. Grand Trombone 16'

#### COUPLERS

- Swell to Grand
- Grand to Pedal
- Swell to Pedal
- Octave Pedal

Finally, we shall take a look at one of the smallest organs Mendelssohn played while in England, one which was highly unusual in design and of which Mendelssohn speaks in a fascinating letter to his mother, dated July 19, 1842.<sup>18</sup>

" . . . the details of my last visit to Buckingham Palace I must write you at once because they will amuse you so much, and me, too . . . Prince Albert had asked me to go to him on Saturday at two o'clock, so that I might try his organ before I left England. I found him all alone, and as we were talking away, the Queen came in, also quite alone, in a house dress. She said she was obliged to leave for Claremont in an hour; "But, goodness! how it looks here," she added, when she saw that the wind had littered the whole room, and even the pedals of the organ (which, by the way, made a very pretty feature in the room), with leaves of music from a large portfolio that lay open. As she spoke, she knelt down and began picking up music; Prince Albert helped, and I too was not idle. Then Prince Albert proceeded to explain the stops to me, and while he was doing it, she said that she would put things straight alone.

"But I begged that the Prince would first play me something, so that, as I said, I might boast about it in Germany; and thereupon he played me a chorale by heart, with pedals, so charmingly and clearly and correctly that many an organist could have learned something; and the Queen, having finished her work, sat beside him and listened, very pleased. Then I had to play, and I began my chorus from 'St. Paul': 'How Lovely Are the Messengers!' Before I got to the end of the first verse, they both began to sing the chorus very well, and all the time Prince Albert managed the stops for me so expertly — first a flute, then full at the forte, the whole register at the D major part, then he made such an excellent *diminuendo* with the stops, and so on to the end of the piece, and all by heart — that I was heartily pleased."

The organ referred to in this letter was built by Gray and Davison in 1841, and the description of it quoted below is taken from Hamilton's *Catechism*.<sup>19</sup>

"It stands in a handsome room in the Prince's private apartments, in the left wing of the Palace; it is divided and in appearance resembles two beautiful cabinets, standing on each side of the fireplace, at one end of the room. There is no apparent communication between these two parts, the connection being ingeniously contrived behind the pier glass, over the fireplace. The bellows is not in the room, but is placed in an adjoining passage, where it appears like a table. It is a fine instrument, on the German plan, the keys being to CC, 8 feet, and the pedals to CCC, 16 feet. It contains: Open Diapason, Dulciana, Stopped Diapason, Principal, Fifteenth, Haut-boy, — enclosed in a swell box. The pedal pipes are Bourdon, or stopped; and there are four composition pedals."

Although the organs which Mendelssohn played were diverse both in size and age, several noteworthy characteristics appear. There was virtually no string tone, even in the largest instruments. Only in the Dulciana do we find anything approaching string color, and most writers of the time describe the Dulciana as a miniature Diapason. There is a curious absence of 16-foot stopped registers in the Pedal Organ, the preference being for 16 foot open pipes wherever possible. No organ is without a manual division in a swell box, and the later instruments are distinguished by a full-compass Swell Organ. The mechanism of the organs was, of course, mechanical both for the keys and for the stops.

So much for the resources. Now we shall look at their use, and at some of the descriptions which tell us of Mendelssohn's performances. Sir George Grove's article on Mendelssohn (which may be found in the earlier editions of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*) offers some of the finest recollections of the composer's playing.

"At times, especially at the organ, he leant very much over the keys, as if watching for the strains which came out of his finger tips. He sometimes swayed from side to side, but usually his whole performance was quiet and absorbed."<sup>20</sup>

"Of his organ-playing we have already spoken. It should be added that he settled upon his combinations of stops before starting, and steadily adhered to the plan on which he set out; if he started in three parts he continued in three, and the same with four or five. He took extraordinary delight in the organ; some describe him as even more at home there than on the piano-forte, though this must be taken with caution. But it is certain that he loved the organ, and was always greatly excited when playing it."<sup>21</sup>

Concerning Mendelssohn's playing of the Bach A minor Fugue, Grove quotes Edward Hopkins, who recorded that Mendelssohn

" . . . took the episode on the Swell, retiring to the Great Organ where the pedal re-enters, but transferring the E in the treble to the Great Organ a bar before the entry of the other parts, with very fine effect."<sup>22</sup>

In the eyes of Grove, this solitary manual change qualified for the description "an individual reading."<sup>23</sup> Of the three paragraphs quoted above not much need be said. One speaks merely of mannerisms, another of consistency in improvisation, another of a particular interpretation which the observer thought worthy of special comment.

Concerning Mendelssohn's views on tempo and rubato, Groves writes a highly interesting record.<sup>24</sup>

"His adherence to his author's meaning, and to the indications given in the music was absolute. Strict time was one of his hobbies. He alludes to it, with an eye to the sins of Hiller and Chopin, in a letter of May 23, 1834, and somewhere else speaks of 'nice strict tempo' as something peculiarly pleasant. After introducing some *ritardandos* in conducting the introduction to Beethoven's Second Symphony, he excused himself by say-

ing that 'one could not always be good,' and that he had felt the inclination too strongly to resist it. In playing, however, he never himself interpolated a *ritardando*, or suffered it in anyone else. It especially enraged him when done at the end of a song or other piece. 'Es steht nicht da!' he would say; 'if it were intended it would be written in — they think it expression, but it is sheer affectation.' But though in playing he never varied the tempo when once taken, he did not always take a movement at the same pace, but changed it as his mood was at the time.

This quotation is of special interest because of the contradiction it implies — the rule and its exception. To assume that Mendelssohn played the organ without a trace of flexibility in tempo, that he eschewed all invitations to slow down at a final cadence is to say that his playing lacked one of the most characteristic attributes of Romantic music. As far as "strict" tempo is concerned, it is absurd to think that he was a robot. In the organ works one finds markings for *tenuto*, *animato*, *ad libitum*, and *ritard*, and, as stated in the excerpt quoted above, Mendelssohn himself "could not always be good!" We shall not be far wrong in believing that the distaste he expressed so strongly was for the habitual *ritard*, the *rallentando* made as a matter of course and without a musical reason.

Some have noted the absence of crescendo and diminuendo indications in the organ works and have concluded that Mendelssohn did not use a swell device. Perhaps too much can be made of this. As we have seen, the English organs on which he performed invariably had one manual division behind swell shades, and we should not be too quick to say with the Puritan, "What God does not command, He condemns." As it happens, we simply do not know whether Mendelssohn used the swell box; that it was there to be used is certain. It was admittedly an awkward thing to operate, being controlled by an unbalanced hitch-down pedal which, unless left in the wide open position, would return to the closed position once the player's foot was removed. Considering this, it is possible that a composer of commissioned pieces for the organ would intentionally avoid crescendo indications for the sake of simplicity. Certainly there is much evidence that (in the *Sonatas*) Mendelssohn was being thoroughly practical in writing pieces which were, as we know, intended for use by English organists. Since he knew that pedal keyboards were relatively new in England, Mendelssohn wrote the *Sonatas* in such a way that the manual parts thin out and become playable by the right hand alone whenever the pedal line becomes problematic. This concession, which would scarcely have been required had Mendelssohn been writing for organists of his native country, allowed the pedal part to be played temporarily by the left hand.<sup>25</sup>

In the *Sonatas* the composer's desired manual changes and tempi (except for a book of short voluntaries by Samuel Wesley, the *Sonatas* are the first organ pieces to bear Maelzel metronome markings) are given; the "Prefatory Remarks" are concerned solely with registration and serve well to introduce a discussion of that subject here.<sup>26</sup>

Much depends, in these *Sonatas*, on the right choice of the Stops; however, as every Organ with which I am acquainted has its own peculiar mode of treatment in this respect, and as the same nominal combination does not produce exactly the same effect in different Instruments, I have given only a general indication of the kind of effects intended to be produced, without giving a precise List of the particular Stops to be used.

By "Fortissimo," I intend to designate the Full Organ: by "Pianissimo," I generally mean a soft 8 feet Stop alone: by "Forte," the Great Organ, but without some of the most powerful Stops: by "Piano," some of the soft 8 feet Stops combined: and so forth.

In the Pedal part, I should prefer throughout, even in the *Pianissimo* passages, the 8 feet & the 16 feet Stops

(Continued, page 18)

# A Harpsichord Primer: One Maker's View

by E. O. Witt

## INTRODUCTION

The reader is referred at the outset to three books which concern themselves historically, iconographically, and descriptively with matters germane to the harpsichord. There will also be found a smattering of elementary technical matters.

- (1) *Three Centuries of Harpsichord Making*, Frank Hubbard, Cambridge, 1965.
- (2) *The Harpsichord and Clavichord: an Introductory Study*, Raymond Russell, London, 1959.
- (3) *The Modern Harpsichord*, W. J. Zuckermann, New York, 1969.

The first two ascertain that there is a nearly-forgotten something there—a prior art, so to speak—buried in the sands of cultural evolution (or in the swamp of the Romantic Movement, if one prefers), and they attempt its excavation, to describe it, to discover its origins, and try to pin down a certain spirit inherent in it. The third book is a record of the manifestation of the spirit of the harpsichord in the 20th Century—a reincarnation which began as early as the last decade of the 19th Century.

These works are directed largely to a scholarly, if non-technical, public, and there remain numbers of interesting matters of which there is little, inadequate, or no mention. Many of these I have felt to be basic to a new understanding of the harpsichord and to its rational development. Further development depends upon a rather architectural comprehension of the spirit, and of the mechanical and structural premises of the instrument—integrated, of course, with what is expected of it by Music, both ancient and modern.

It is hoped that, following a brief history, new light may be shed together with old on a smattering of such topics as the mechanics of plectra, scale of strings, and other matters relating in part to the technical architecture of the harpsichord.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The harpsichord was the ubiquitous keyboard instrument of 16th, 17th, and 18th Century Europe. To discover the origins of the harpsichord and those other lesser instruments closely related to it one must discover, in a broad sense, the origins of the Italian Renaissance civilization, one of whose issues was the Italian harpsichord—the most pervasive, and the most pristine, form of many that the instrument was eventually to assume. These origins lie in the ferment and cultural interactions which abounded in the late Middle Ages. The fruits of Islamic culture, together with the literature and learning of the ancient world and other knowledge from the Orient, filtered into the perimeters of Europe. The seeds of the modern world sprouted vigorously during the 13th Century. We find where none had been before an accumulation of wealth and an educated aristocracy; the medieval town with its concentration of craftsmen; the chromatic keyboard, developed in conjunction with the organ; measured

music and the foundations of modern Western music; the use of water power and the wind for industrial purposes—and amongst these, the drawing of wire suitable for musical uses.

Nürnberg was the source of wire-coupons wire—from about 1385. Soon thereafter one begins to find references to musical instruments with wire strings and keyboard. The idea seems to have sprung up spontaneously all over Europe; and there are hints of its exploitation by instrument makers both in northern Italy and in the Lowlands at the mouth of the Rhine. For the time being, the innovative spirit lay to the South, so that it was in northern Italy, possibly Venice, that the harpsichord first found its form, structure, technology, and producibility crystallized.

So stable was that original conception, probably achieved by 1450, that the Italians continued to build it in essentially the same mode as late as 1780, long after it has been superannuated elsewhere, first by the Flemish instruments of the 17th Century, then by the French and English instruments of the 18th.

The earliest known Flemish instrument, from 1548, is Italian in style, with the short coupon scaling typical of Italian instruments. After this began a trickle, then by 1600 a torrent, of harpsichords and virginals issuing from Flanders whose scalings were too long for brass wire at the then normal pitch (about a semi-tone below today's). Architecturally, structurally, and musically these instruments were distinct from the Italian. Note that steel wire had become available within a century after brass; first from Berlin, then from England.

There is a distinct difference in the aura of sound emitted by brass and by steel scales of strings; there must have been ardent partisans on both sides of the matter of musical preference. That many Italianate instruments were later converted to steel is evidenced by the downward juggling of their keyboards. Steel strings must be tuned a fourth interval higher than brass of the same length to sound well. In view of the general fragility of most Italian instruments, this meant placing steel C-strings, for example, where brass G-strings had formerly resided; thus the shift of the keyboard to restore the customary keyboard pitch level, and leave string tension distribution essentially undisturbed.

A certain confusion of pitches, probably emanating from ill-understood pitch/length differences proper to brass and steel, was endemic then in the 16th and 17th Centuries as it is today amongst antiquarians and curators of old keyboard instruments. But then there appeared a young Fleming, Hans Ruckers, a scion of the famous family already in the business, who introduced a harpsichord with two keyboards—they were not in alignment as are today's but displaced from each other by a fourth. By this ploy he was able to offset an instrument not only playable at either of the then-extant pitches, but one which could be strung with either brass or steel, as the owner preferred.

Probably thousands of these "doubles" (the first one known is dated 1599) were made during the four or so decades it took to settle the pitch controversy. In the interim, a taste for two-manual harpsichords was created amongst musicians; steel, or what I have called Flemish, scaling was in the ascendancy; gradually, the unaligned keyboards were altered. The first known double with aligned keyboards as the original intent dates from 1618. Only one, perhaps two, harpsichords with the original transposing keyboards remain to us.

The Flemish harpsichords of the 17th Century were renowned worldwide, especially those of the Ruckers dynasty. Precious few remain even approximately as

they were originally. Enlarged in width and keyboard compass by later workmen (a process known as ravalement), they became the evolutionary progenitors of the highly-refined harpsichords made both in England and France during most of the 18th Century.

During the last years of the 18th Century, few harpsichords were made, the old shop facilities having rapidly been changed over to the production of the pianoforte—an instrument whose development and production paralleled, and partook of the spirit of, the Industrial Revolution.

The rejuvenation of the harpsichord in the modern world has followed the classical growth curve, with initial stirrings late in the 19th Century. Heavily influenced by piano technology of the 19th Century, a massiveness or "aroma" of the Romantic Era, utterly foreign to the original spirit of the harpsichord, clung to the instrument even well into the 1970's, especially at the hands of some European builders; and the mechanical complexities perpetrated belied an almost perverse faith in machinery.

Piano technology, at least to a considerable extent, influenced expectations amongst musicians as to tone, touch, and mechanical stability of the harpsichord.

During the 1950's, viable contact was established for modern consciousness with the spirit, the music, and the instruments of the 17th and 18th Centuries as a half-century of research by numerous interested individuals finally culminated in the works of Boalch, Russell and Hubbard, whose books helped to make it clear that the "harpsichord" we had known till then was clothed in too-complex modern, and often highly individualistic, accoutrements. Until Mr. Hubbard's book pierced our hubris we could not clearly discern the admirable simplicity, workability, and direct expression of function implicit in the old harpsichords, too often ignominiously tucked away in museum storerooms.

Suddenly it was accepted—even expected—that harpsichords go out of tune and regulation more frequently than pianos, and the musician himself was expected gladly to serve as technician and tuner, as of old.

It is curious that it was in the New World that the true value of the antique European harpsichord was rediscovered while Europe (with some exceptions) was still making "pianos with harpsichord actions" as late as this writing.

A plethora of new builders has appeared since 1960, both here and abroad. It has become fashionable to build close copies of extant examples of old instruments. Indeed, even the best-established and widely-renowned builders of the 18th Century type harpsichords base

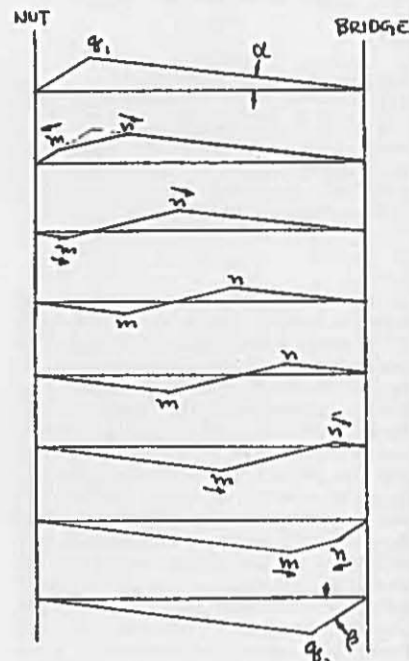
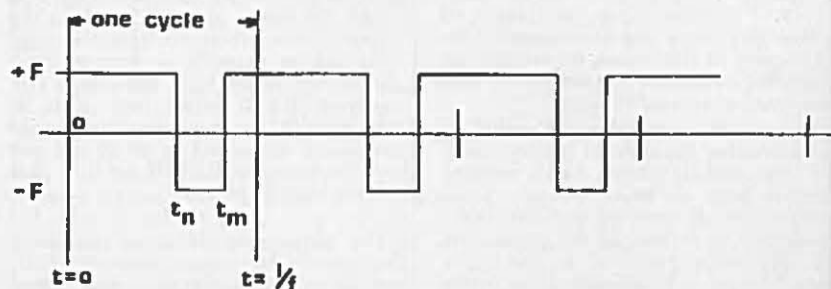


Fig. 2. Showing cinematographically for one-half cycle the progress of the two deformation impulses  $m$  and  $n$  created when the string, stretched over the nut and the bridge, is plucked at  $q$ . The angles at which the string meets the bridge are either  $a$  or  $B$ , the shift being almost instantaneous. A temporal pattern of resultant upward and downward forces is thus imposed on the bridge as the string vibrates.

Fig. 1. Force or pulse pattern at the bridge. Two equal but opposite forces  $+F$  and  $-F$ , displaced from each other in time, are normal (vertical) components of the string tension. The closer the pluck point  $q$  to the nut, the more piquant the tone, and the briefer the pulse length  $t_m - t_n$ . These latter are the arrival times of impulses  $m$  and  $n$  at the soundboard bridge.  $t=0$  is the instant of plectrum release. The period of one cycle  $t$  is the reciprocal of the frequency  $f$ .



E. O. Witt builds harpsichords in his shop at Three Rivers, Michigan.

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Flemish scaling at modern A (440) pitch to new designs, otherwise based on historical precedents, rather than resort to mechanical chicanery.

### TECHNICAL PERSPECTIVE

When a slack harpsichord string, for instance, middle C, is slowly drawn up so that the pitch rises, while being gently plucked at the same point with a flexible plectrum, one becomes aware of a continuously-variant tonal structure. Then beyond a certain pitch these spurious effects vanish and the tonal quality becomes practically independent of frequency. If the string is of steel, then if one multiplies the frequency by the length, their product at the "transitional" pitch will be about 6720 inches per second. If it had been the corresponding note in a scale of brass strings, e.g., an Italian harpsichord, the same product would be about 4780. The product of frequency and length,  $fL$ , is the speed with which an impulse travels along a stretched string, regardless of its length. Such an impulse reflected back and forth between bridges of a stringed instrument results in a vibration of a certain fundamental pitch.

A vibrating plucked string imposes upon the soundboard, through the bridge, a well-defined periodic force pattern at the soundboard bridge which can be represented graphically as a rectangular waveform. See Fig. 1. This follows directly from the motions of the string subsequent to the pluck, as illustrated in Fig. 2.

If one studies the scalings of old instruments of Flemish lineage one becomes aware that, when considered at the old pitch (about a half-tone below modern pitch), these scalings cluster around an  $fL$  product at about 6720 which is an impulse velocity about half the speed of sound in air at ordinary temperatures. This is to say that the strings of instruments in what I have called Flemish scaling are, except in the foreshortened bass and tenor, equal in length to one-half the wavelength in air of the frequency at which they speak. When old instruments are copied *in toto* as is currently fashionable, then tuned to modern pitch, the resulting tone may

be unnecessarily plain; when tuned down to the originally-intended pitch an ineffable aura seems to surround the tone of the harpsichord — a veritable change in the tonal "format". Therefore, I prefer to design for an  $fL$  product of 6720 at modern pitch so that the instrument can be used with modern instruments whose antique prototypes mostly lie fallow in museums.

I have attributed this ancient intuitive choice of scaling parameters to the fact that the strings of the harpsichord vibrate in a viscous, compressible medium; and my conjecture is that below  $fL=6720$  minute eddy-system formations surrounding the strings are governed by the viscous and inertial qualities of the air, and that beyond  $fL=6720$  the elastic qualities of the air dominate the flow about them during vibration. The tone at the transition between the two regions has a special quality, both in harmonic structure and in the growth and decay pattern.

A similar transitional  $fL$  number in the Italian, or couprous, scaling is not so well defined, but it works out that brass strings the same length as steel strings sound their best when tuned the interval of a fourth below the pitch of steel strings at  $fL=6720$ . This might indicate that coincidences and reinforcements of the pluck-induced impulses traveling back and forth along the string by corresponding sound waves and their reflections are somehow involved in stabilization of the harmonic structure of the vibrating string — both for the brass and for steel wire.

A plain wire string can be easily stridulated into furious activity along its longitudinal axis by gently stroking it with an alcohol-damp cloth. The resulting intense, high-frequency sound is well defined and can be predicted knowing only the length of the string and its mechanical properties. It is independent of the wire diameter. If called the longitudinal body oscillation, we can invent the acronym LOBO. If the fundamental mode of the LOBO is excited by one of the higher harmonics of the transverse mode — particularly by one of the so-called dissonant overtones such as the 7th, 9th, etc. — there can result a most irritating high-pitched squeak or whistle which may dominate, or seem to dominate, the normal tone.

Since the LOBO is so easily designed out of a set or scale of strings, one wonders why it should so often be present in even well-reputed harpsichords and pianos. To be audible the LOBO must be coupled to the air through suitable structures. Usually the bridge or the nut is compliant enough to serve as a small soundboard.

Rarely, one finds an overspun string with a LOBO. The more complex parametric situation surrounding the phenomenon in these cases has not been fully worked out.

It is useful in harpsichord string scale design to plot the lengths on semi-logarithmic paper. With the several semi-tones as abscissae along the linear scale, the plot becomes, in fact, logarithmic in both directions because the frequencies attached to the semi-tones vary exponentially, which is to say, logarithmically.

In the so-called "just" scaling the  $fL$  product is constant throughout, so that the locus of points representing lengths will appear as a straight line on a log-log plane. If we try to carry the just scaling too far down into the bass, there will result impossibly long strings. Therefore, the bass strings must in some manner be foreshortened. (It is interesting that Italian scalings in brass were often "just" almost to the bottom. But then, they were necessarily short to begin with because of the lower strength of brass relative to steel.) As it turns out, in a harpsichord following traditional lines, the foreshortening is compensated by a kind of bass reflex effect which boosts the tenor and bass so that, given at least adequate length, overspun strings are unnecessary in the bass as they are in the piano. Instead, brass or other couprous wire, whose flexibility is twice that of steel, usually occupies the lowest few notes of the 8' registers.

The distribution of string diameters throughout a scale of harpsichord strings is an empirical matter which also turns out to have a rational basis. In Fig. 3 is shown the shape of the plot of the number  $Ld^2$  vs. pitch for some 18th Century harpsichords (approximate gages given by Hubbard). The  $Ld^2$  parameter is proportional to the total vibrating mass for each string. (Conveniently, the steel and brass are of nearly the same density.) Being a straight line, or nearly so, attests far more strongly to the "linearity" of the human ear than to a possible rationale on the part of the harpsichord maker. The orderly nature of the  $Ld^2$  function also cuts through a mountain of conjecture about old wire gages.

It has often been noted that when the harpsichord is built in the classical mode it lacks, by present-day standards, the stability of temperament which we have grown to expect from ubiquitous contact with the piano. Temperature change is the main malefactor because, rather than employing ferrous materials for both the strings and the tension-bearing structure as in the modern piano (Peyel of Paris has dallied with this principle for decades, but the spirit of the French harpsichord was lost along the way), most of the woods employed in harpsichord making show temperature coefficients of expansion as small as 10% of that of the steel which comprises the strings; the brass wire employed in the bass exhibits an even greater coefficient than steel. So, in the ordinary harpsichord, when there is a rise or fall in temperature, there is a corresponding fall or rise in the overall pitch level.

Steel strings have been used with some success with aluminum string plates, but the combination is of limited usefulness from a temperature-stability point of view unless very highly-stressed scales are employed. String stress is proportional to the  $fL$  number, and temperature stability of pitch is inversely proportional to the  $fL$  number and to the frame-and-string temperature coefficient differential.

If the harpsichord is provided a relatively stable thermal and humidity environment it will stay in tune for long periods of time. But, in any case, tuning a harpsichord — even a large one — is a chore hardly comparable with that of tuning a piano; and most harpsichordists are accustomed to the tuning and regulation of their own instruments.

The plectrum itself, be it of bird quill or of acetal resin (e.g. DuPont DELRIN, Celanese CELCON, etc.), comprises a tiny beam, fixed at one end and subjected to a variable load at the other.

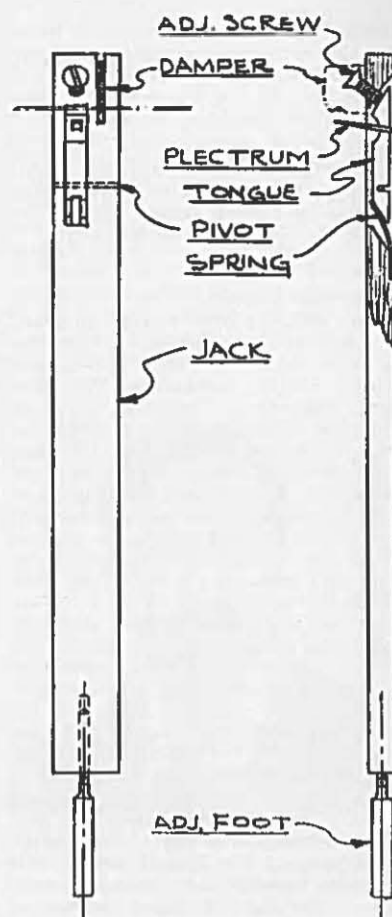
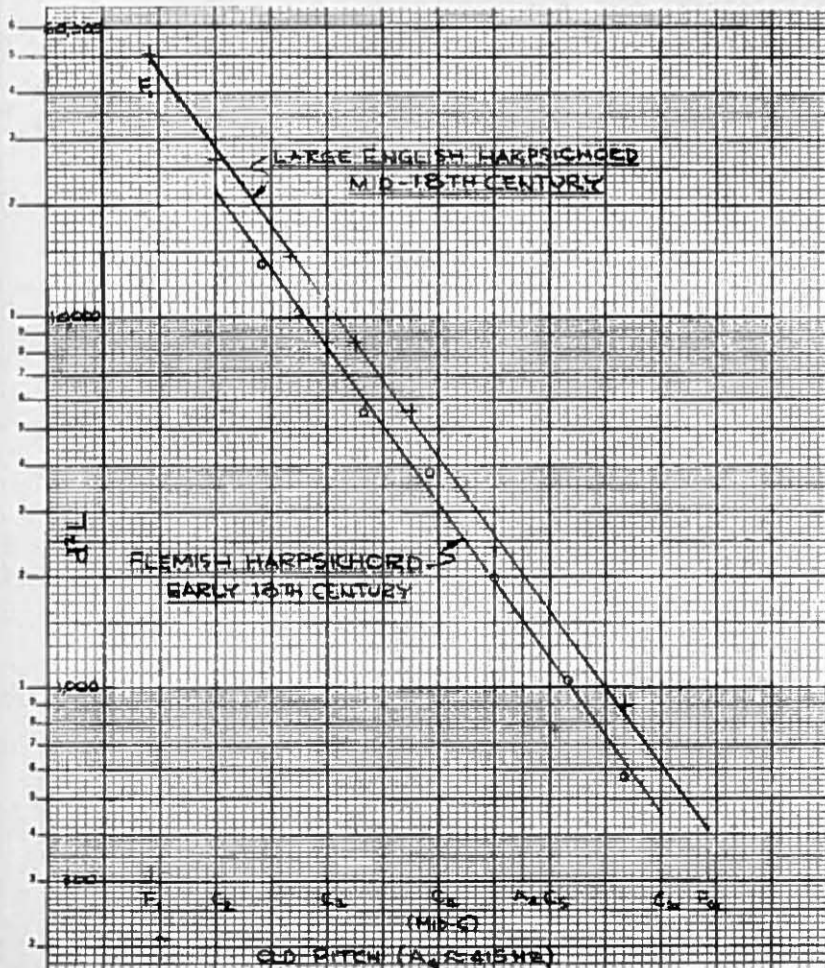


Fig. 4. A fully adjustable modern harpsichord jack designed to be made of wood.

Fig. 3. Total vibrating-mass distribution in typical 18th Century harpsichord 8' scalings.



The "load" in this case is the force exerted by the string during the pluck. Within the substance of the plectrum itself it is important for long plectrum life that concentrations of stress be minimized during its deflection as it interacts with the string. This leads to the concept of the classical constant-stress beam and the attendant mechanics.

Any beam, as it works out, which when flexed assumes a truly circular arc in the surface of its neutral axis (the "surface" lying between compressive and tensile stresses), is automatically in the "constant-stress" condition. In the present instance, represented by a cantilever beam fixed at one end, this implies a beam of cross section variable from base to tip. In practice, a number, if not an infinitude, of shapes may be employed. At one extreme one may choose to keep the vertical thickness constant from base to tip. Then the plan view must be triangular — and impractical insofar as the sharp tip at the apex would be too fragile. If, however, the width in the plan view is chosen to remain constant, then the side profile of the plectrum must ideally assume the shape of a cubical parabola — in practice nearly identical to a slightly truncated wedge. All other shapes lie in between these two.

Touch is one of the means by which the harpsichordist receives feedback from his instrument. For the same sound level, a longer plectrum gives a springier "touch", while a shorter plectrum produces a more "brittle" touch — like egg shells, as someone has remarked. But plectrum length is barely a factor in harpsichord tone quality; yet with longer plectra, voicing (the shaping of the plectra) is easier and less exacting, and on this account the overall tone and touch may seem smoother.

Note that the energy of deformation of the plectrum is lost. Therefore plectrum deflection, while it cannot be said that it is good to overly-minimize it, can at least be an efficient deflection. This is again insured by voicing to a constant-stress plectrum shape, because such a body can absorb maximum elastic energy with minimum deflection.

Having, by one set of criteria or another, chosen the plectrum length for a given rank, the jack slide is accordingly positioned. The tips of the plectra are then cut so that they merely brush against the jack-side of the strings, this being termed the "ghost" position; it

(Continued, page 19)

(Continued from page 5)

very fine playing being done early in this century. From an organist's standpoint, perhaps the finest performance was that of Eugene Gigout playing the *Etude, Op. 56, No. 5* by Schumann.

—A.L.

**Boston Pops Concert**

The week's activities were climaxed by a concert of the Boston Pops Orchestra with E. Power Biggs, soloist, and Arthur Fiedler, conductor. The program, designed as "American Guild of Organists' Night," featured works of special interest to organists. William Schuman's orchestral versions of Ives' *Variations on "America"* was dispatched with humor and playfulness. Organists who know this work only in its original version for organs were pleased to discover that Schuman's orchestration does justice to Ives' concept. With E. Power Biggs as organ soloist, the orchestra also performed Mozart's *Sonata No. 12 (K.278)*, probably the most popular of his church sonatas, and Rheinberger's *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra*. Especially welcome was the Rheinberger concerto which one rarely has an opportunity to hear in live performance. Organ and orchestra were appropriately balanced, and the performance was precise and well-coordinated. I would like to have heard the Mozart sonata with a smaller number of string instruments, but, in any case, it was a pleasure to hear Mr. Biggs in this setting. Having spent nearly a week thinking about America's musical history and, more specifically, about its organ culture, I couldn't help thinking that many of the events we enjoyed this week wouldn't have been possible had it not been for Mr. Biggs' pioneering efforts in past decades. A heart-felt thank you to Mr. Biggs for this immeasurable contribution, and a sincere thank you, also, to all the persons who had a part in preparing the 1976 convention.

—M.K.



Ralph B. Valentine has been appointed organist and choirmaster of St John's Episcopal Church, West Hartford, Connecticut. He will continue as instructor in theory and director of choral music at Choate Rosemary Hall School in Wallingford, Connecticut. Mr. Valentine holds the BA degree from Harvard University and a SMM degree from Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music. His organ teachers have included Duncan Phylfe, John Cook, and Vernon de Tar. While a student at Harvard, Mr. Valentine was assistant organist and choirmaster at the Church of the Advent in Boston and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. After graduation, he served as organist and choirmaster at St. Andrew's Parish in Stamford, Connecticut, and at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Meriden, Connecticut. He is currently dean of the New Haven Chapter of the AGO and is active in organ rebuilding projects and consultant work for churches considering the purchase of a new instrument.

Peter J. Hodgson has been named chairman of the department of academic studies in music in the School of Music, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana. The new department is the result of a reorganization of the school of music into two departments, academic studies in music, and applied studies in music. The reorganization of the school reduces the departments from four

**Appointments**

to two. Dr. Hodgson, a native of England, has been a member of the Ball State music faculty since 1968. A noted organist and musicologist, he studied at the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Organists, Trinity College of Music, London University, and the Royal College of Music, all in London. He earned his doctor's degree in musicology at the University of Colorado. Dr. Hodgson has taught at the University School in Victoria, British Columbia, and the Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta. He has also served with the British Army's Royal Engineers. His new appointment is effective September 1.



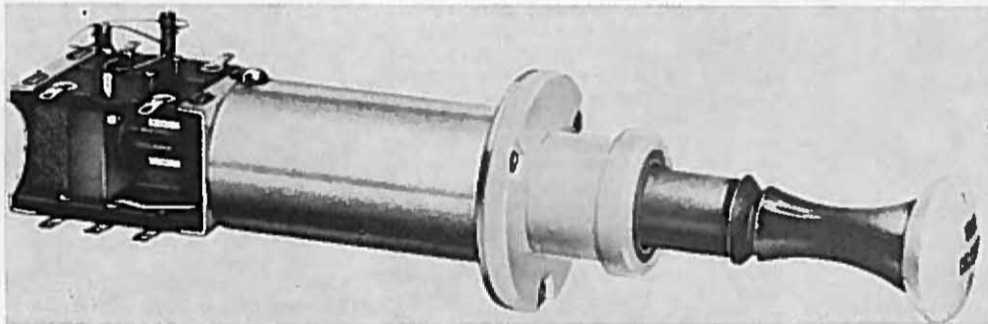
Theodore W. Ripper, since 1965 Minister of Music at First United Methodist Church, Decatur, Illinois and since 1967 adjunct assistant professor of organ at Millikin University in Decatur, has been appointed Minister of Music of Grace United Methodist Church in Venice, Florida, effective in mid-August. In addition to duties as church organist, Mr. Ripper will direct five choirs and two bell choirs. Mr. Ripper is a frequent contributor to the journal *Music Ministry*, and he has composed much music for organ and voices.



Philip Keil has accepted a position at the Church of St. Matthew (Episcopal) in San Mateo, California, where he will be responsible for the music program of both the parish church and its parochial day-school. He has resigned his position as organist and choirmaster of St. Clement's Episcopal Church, Berkeley, California, where he has served for nine years. Mr. Keil's teachers have been G. Logan McElvany, Alec Wyton, Ludwig Altman, and the Belgian pianist, Jeanne Stark.

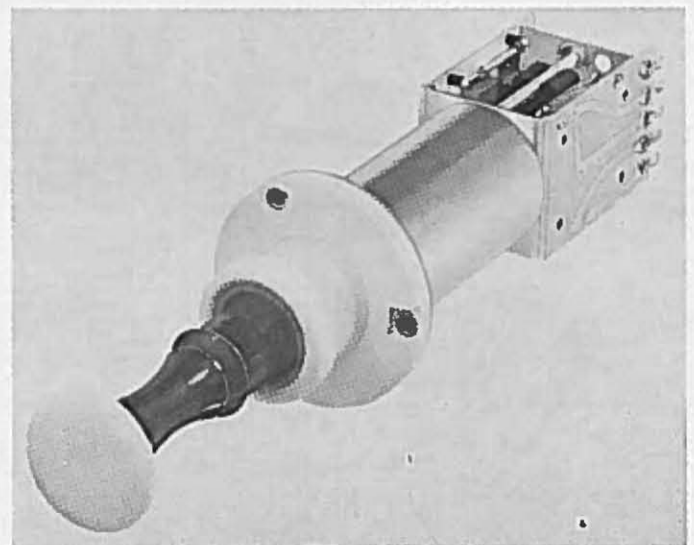
Larry Palmer has been promoted to full professor for the second time in his professional career, this time at the Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University Dallas, Texas, where he is beginning his seventh season of teaching. He will continue teaching harpsichord and organ. During the 1975-76 school year, six master's degrees in harpsichord or harpsichord/organ were completed; the total harpsichord class numbered 16 students.

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## Appointments



David Lennox Smith has been appointed college organist at Occidental College and instructor of organ at California State University, Los Angeles, California. He has also accepted the position of organist and choir-master at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Monrovia, California. Mr. Smith, dean of the Pasadena Chapter of the AGO, has been organist and choir-master of the First United Methodist Church of Santa Barbara for the past three years. A native of California, Mr. Smith holds degrees from Whittier College and Occidental College. He is currently completing the dissertation for the DMA degree at the Eastman School of Music where he has received the Performer's Certificate in Organ. His teachers have included David Craighead, Ladd Thomas, and Robert Prichard. Mr. Smith is represented by Artist Recitals concert management, and he has concertized widely throughout the United States.

Richard Wayne Dirksen has been appointed musician in residence at Washington Cathedral, Washington, D.C., effective September 1, 1976. Mr. Dirksen will share the direction of the cathedral's music with Paul Callaway, who since 1939 has been organist and choir-master of the cathedral. In his new role at the cathedral, Mr. Dirksen

will continue an association with Dr. Callaway which has been ongoing since he was named associate organist and choir-master in 1942. Since that time he has served variously and in some cases simultaneously as music director of the National Cathedral School and St. Alban's School, as the only lay precentor in the cathedral's history, and as composer in residence for the cathedral. He has written numerous sacred works especially for cathedral worship, has provided special music for the cathedral's productions of Brecht's "Galileo" and Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus," and he recently composed the score for "The American Adventure," a multi-media production mounted by the American Heritage Theatre in Washington.



Marianne Webb, associate professor of organ and university organist, has been appointed to the post of assistant director of the School of Music at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Miss Webb has been on the faculty for eleven years, teaching organ and music theory. In addition to her administrative duties, she will continue to teach advanced organ students and to concertize. She assumed her new position June 16, 1976.



David J. Hurd, Jr. has been appointed to the faculty of the General Theological Seminary, New York City, as organist and director of church music effective July 1. He is responsible for the music at daily offices and Eucharists and for the musical instruction of seminarians. Previously organist and music director at the Church of the Intercession (formerly Chapel of the Intercession, Trinity Parish), also in New York City, Mr. Hurd has been assistant organist at Trinity Church, and he has taught at Duke University where he was assistant chapel organist and assistant director of choral activities. His organ studies have been with Bronson Ragan at the Juilliard School, with Garth Peacock and Arthur Poister at Oberlin College, and with Rudolph Kremer at the University of North Carolina. He will continue to direct music at the Church of the Intercession on a part-time basis.

Karl E. Moyer has been named chairman of the department of music at Millersville State College, Millersville, Pennsylvania. He succeeds James E. Zwally who retired July 1. Mr. Moyer, currently a candidate for the Doctor of Music degree at the Eastman School of Music, joined the Millersville faculty in 1964 after two years of teaching at Susquehanna University and Messiah Lutheran College. He received his bachelor's degree from Lebanon Valley College and earned a MSM degree at Union Theological Seminary and a MM degree at Temple University. Among his organ teachers have been Vernon

de Tar and David Craighead. Mr. Moyer is currently organist-choirmaster at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Lancaster, Pa., where he was recently elected as a delegate to the Lutheran Church in America Biennial Convention in Boston. He is also a former member of the Lancaster District Cabinet of the Lutheran Church in America, Central Pennsylvania Synod. From 1964-71 he was organist-choirmaster at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Lancaster. He is a Fellow and Chairmaster of the AGO, a member of the Organ Historical Society, the Lutheran Society of Worship, Music and the Arts, the Hymn Society of America, and the Music Educator's National Conference.



Herman D. Taylor has been appointed Associate Professor of Music and University Organist at Prairie View A and M University, Prairie View, Texas. Dr. Taylor received his MusB degree from Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University where he studied organ with Robert Reuter. His MM and DMA degrees are from the University of Michigan where he studied with Marilyn Mason. While a student at the University of Michigan, he was a teaching fellow and accompanied the University Choir, the University Chamber Choir, and the University Male Glee Club. At Prairie View, Dr. Taylor will teach organ, theory, and form and analysis. He has taught previously at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and at Dillard University in New Orleans.

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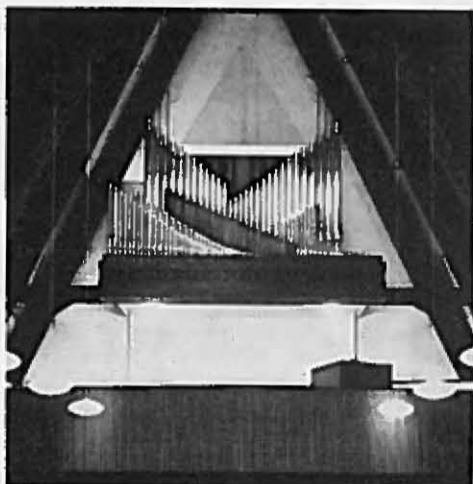
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## Contemporary Organ Music at Hartt College

by George Black

A remarkable phenomenon of the last decade has been the interest taken in the organ by composers who are not themselves organists. The barrier between organists and the rest of the musical world seems to be dropping, if only ever so slightly. Credit for this change must be given to those players who have attracted the attention of contemporary composers by the quality of their playing and by their willingness to co-operate in the preparation and performance of new works. Composers tend to be shy about entering what seems to be the mysterious, closed world of organ music, and players seem reluctant to take the trouble to explain the instrument in a simple manner to composers and to risk the performance of unusual compositions. There has been a certain amount of misunderstanding and intolerance on both sides. Yet what has caused the beginnings of a change has been the openness and enthusiasm of organists who were willing to commission and perform new works, however difficult or unorthodox they might turn out to be.

One thinks in this connection of William Albright, who both as performer and composer has added a truly significant number of new works to the repertory: his own two *Organ Books*, William Bolcom's *Black Host*, and Sydney Hodkinson's *Megaliths*, to name the most conspicuous examples. One must also inevitably think of the Annual Contemporary Organ Music Festival held at Hartt College at the University of Hartford. In the six years of its existence, 32 new compositions have been either composed for, or premiered, at this event. These pieces have been performed before rather small but significant audiences made up of composers and of organists interested in contemporary music. The Hartt College Festival has assiduously avoided espousing any particular school of thought or point of view, with the result that there is sometimes a rather zany unevenness in the compositions heard, but this very characteristic helps to make it evident to the hearer what the options are. It has provided a forum for composers, a school for performers, a place where those who are interested can find out what is happening right now, and an opportunity for those who think they might be interested but are not sure to gain a lot of experience in a short time in pleasant surroundings.

The 1976 festival, held June 14-18, was an especially important event because William Albright was a featured performer, and because an exceptional number of composers were present in one capacity or another — Albright himself, William Bolcom, George Cacioppo, Edward Diente, Norman Dincerstein, Derek Healey, Sydney Hodkinson, Robert Morris, Joseph Mulready, Elliott Schwartz, and Rudy Shackelford. The usual lectures, concerts, panel discussion, parties, and enough time to rest one's ears and gather one's wits, all contributed to making the week a good experience for those taking part.

The main thing in the festival is the music, and it certainly was not disappointing. The climax of the week was William Albright's concert on Friday night. He gave first performance of pieces by George Cacioppo and Robert Morris which he had commissioned himself, and of four pieces of moderate difficulty by William Bolcom which were commissioned by Walter Holtkamp, Jr., and also of an arrangement for organ of his own concert rag called *Sweet Sixteenths*. In addition he played a piece written for him in 1975 by Russell Peck, and the first complete performance of Sydney Hodkinson's *Megalith Trilogy*.

Who but Albright would have attempted it? Who else could have brought it off, even if the heat had not been so utterly stifling? It was a *tour de force* for Albright the performer.

The program was brilliantly conceived. It began with Albright performing all the parts in an enchanting piece by Cacioppo for organ, voice, and small percussion orchestra, called *Dream Concert*. It moved on to the terrifically intense *Curtains* by Morris, a piece with a spectacular tape part and suggestions of both masking and violent death. Before intermission came Bolcom's *Mysteris*. I have a feeling that its appealing second movement, *Eternal Flight*, will appear on concert programs all over the country as soon as it is published. Although I liked the fourth almost as well, it remains to be seen what will happen when it is played by someone who does not possess Albright's masterful sense of timing.

After the intermission was a piece with a title reminiscent of Ketelby. It was preceded by a solemn introduction. What a relief that it turned out to be an example of rock! The whole character of Russell Peck's *In the Garden of Gethsemane*, where Albright was assisted by drummer Rosemary Small, made it stand by itself and provided just the right foil for the severity of Hodkinson's *Megalith Trilogy* which followed. Of these pieces only *Dolmen* has been published. Powerful as it is, it is surpassed by *Menhir* and *Talayot*, and I for one hope that Merion Music will soon make them available as well. After so much severity, Albright's gentle rag, complete with ironic excursion into what Bolcom calls "Protestant devotional sound", brought us back from primitive monuments to a more comfortable and relaxed world. I thought it worth attending the festival for this program alone.

The week had opened with the performance of two long works in Trinity College Chapel. The inclusion of Messiaen's *Le Corps Glorieux* freed the week of any possible threat of parochialism; obviously we were being invited to compare the new American music with a major composition by an acknowledged genius. Splendidly played, it was a triumph for Edward Clark of the Hartt organ family. The other work was Rudy Shackelford's *The Wound-Dresser*, a piece which he calls a melodrama (in the sense that it includes both speech and song). A setting of poems and prose passages by Walt Whitman, it is scored for singer-narrator (well performed by Howard Sprout), four percussionists, organist, harpsichordist, flautist, trumpeter, French Horn, many of them doubling on other instruments. Filled with allusions to music by Dufay, Sweelinck, Bach, Brahms, and Mahler (to mention only the most recognizable), it gives the impression at first that all of its great moments belong to other composers. Yet as long as you are not completely put off by the very idea of such extensive pastiche, it must be acknowledged that the work has great evocative power. Unable to hear the narrator, I was not moved, as some were. Yet I confess that it has given me a lot of intellectual pleasure in retrospect, and that its unexpected juxtapositions are still providing me with food for thought a week later.

The annual concert by Hartt College organ students, including this year a piece by a student composer, reveals the high calibre of the work which is done year round at the school. These same hard-working students also perform many non-musical, but essential duties at the festival, and contribute greatly to its success.

Wednesday's outing to Farmington included a concert by Leonard Raver and Elizabeth Sollengerber, two players whose enthusiasm has encouraged many composers to write for them. Raver opened and closed the program with gloriously energetic performances of Walter Piston's *Partita for Violin, Viola*

George Black is Acting Dean of Arts and Social Science at Huron College, London, Ontario.

and Organ of 1944 (with Renato Bonacini and Jean Tai) and Samuel Adler's *Xenia* (with master percussionist Douglas Jackson). The rest of the program was mostly tranquil, with Elizabeth Sollenberger playing Harold Stover's *Song of Shadows* and Derek Healey's *Summer 78-Ontario*, the latter a perfect piece for the setting, with its gentle reflections of nature mixing with the breezes and sounds coming in through the open windows of the 18th century meeting house. All of these pieces, along with Elliott Schwartz' *Cycles and Gongs*, played by Raver and trumpeter Roger Murtha, added up to a suitably festive afternoon.

Thursday's concert has traditionally been music with little or no organ, and this year's version was by far the most successful of the three I have attended. In addition to three amusing pieces for tape alone by Charles Amirkhanyan and Israel Kopmar, it consisted of works by three Hartt College composers. Mary Stanton was the admirably versatile performer in Joseph Mulready's *Dialogues for Piano, Prerecorded Piano, Singer, Whistler and Percussion*. We are all familiar with musical representations of echos, reflections, and the like; Edward Diemente has taken shadows, an idea so obvious that only a very gifted man could have thought of it, and used them as the basis for a piece of woodwind quintet and percussion, beautifully executed by both composer and performers, and called, need I say it, *Shadows*. Best of all was Norman Dinerstein's *Zalmen or the Madness of God* for solo violin. A rather traditional piece, combining technical display with great warmth of feeling, it was expressively and lovingly played by Cyrus Stevens.

Although the music is the main thing, lectures and personal contact, especially between organists and composers, is an important element of the festival. This year's program was set up on the whole

so that organists listened while composers talked, a situation which only Robert Morris and William Albright used to good advantage. The others, none too sure what was expected of them, gave their best only in asides and in the musical examples they played. Especially memorable was the tape of a performance of Hodkinson's *November Voices* for chamber orchestra, tenor and narrator. Although for four days composers spoke mostly to composers in their free time, and organists spoke mostly to organists, towards the end they began to speak more freely to one another, and the panel discussion on the last day was lively and fruitful. As usual Elizabeth Sollenberger had prepared her valuable selected list of *Organ Compositions of the Twentieth Century*. This can be obtained by sending her a check or money order for \$5.00 at the Music Department, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine 04011.

The director of the Hartt College Contemporary Organ Music Festival is John Holtz, an utterly remarkable man, who somehow manages to organize concerts, lectures, trips, and parties, and still come up smiling and able to perform the difficult organ part of Rudy Shackelford's new piece. He presents to the rest of the world a very good image indeed of the college as a whole. Members of several departments cooperate in offering compositions and performances for the concerts. The commitment of the whole college provides a model of what schools can do if they take a project in hand and carry it through. Organists owe a lot to Hartt College and to John Holtz.

The festival is not, as some might secretly fear, an outing for a lunatic fringe. It is a major event — a meeting of interested and interesting people. It is shaping the repertory of our instrument. If you care at all about such things, you cannot really afford to miss it.

## Conferences

The Fourth Lahti Organ Festival was held in Lahti, Finland on August 9-15, and the programs included concerts played by Charles Benbow (U.S.A.), Ian Clarke (England), Hannes Kästner (Germany), Simon Preston (England), and Lionel Rogg (Switzerland), as well as Finnish organists Matti Hannula, Kari Jussila, Morkku Ketola, Jukka Kuninkaaniemi, Almo Känkänen, Jussi Laukola, Matti Rindell, Tapio Tiitu, Erkki Tuppurainen, and Tauno Aikää. Other events in the festival included concerts by the Cambridge University Chamber Choir directed by Richard Marlow, the Children's Choir of the Lotila School directed by Paavo Kiiski, the Sonores Antiqui ensemble, the Chamber Choir Eternitas directed by Matti Vihtonen, the Heikki Sarmanto group, and the Lahti Symphony Orchestra directed by Urpo Pesonen. Masterclasses and workshops were also given by the featured artists of the festival.

The Organ in America will be the theme of a three-day conference on the organ, its literature, and performance practices sponsored by the Restore the Old Church Organ Committee in Portland, Oregon, and the Portland Chapter of the AGO, September 23-25, 1976. The conference will be held at the Old Church in Portland. Wayne Leopold of Syracuse, New York, will be the featured lecturer on performance practices. He will hold four sessions beginning with a general discussion of Romantic performance practices regarding rubato, expression and rhythm, and following with specific sessions on the Widor-Vierne-Dupré School, the Franck-Tournemire School, and the German Schools. He will also coordinate another session on the American School with Barbara Owen, scholar and organ builder from Gloucester, Massachusetts. Orpha Ochse, author of a well-known book on American organ history, will lecture on "An Overview of the Organ in America." Charles Fisk, organbuilder, will coordinate a session with Barbara Owen on "Problems in Organ Registration." A panel discussion on "The Future of the Organ in America" will precede an organ crawl in Eugene, Oregon on Sept. 25th. Moderated by Lee Garrett, the panel

will include Orpha Ochse, Barbara Owen, Margaret Irwin-Brandon, John Brombaugh, Douglas L. Butler, Charles Fisk, John Hamilton and Wayne Leopold. Organs to be seen in the "crawl" will include the 1973 organ by Jürgen Ahrend at the University of Oregon, the 1976 instrument by John Brombaugh at Central Lutheran Church, and the 1976 organ by Ken Coulter at the United Lutheran Church. Those interested in further information and registration materials for the conference should write: Restore the Old Church Organ Committee, 1422 SW 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201; or phone (503) 222-2031.

Duquesne University School of Music will sponsor a sacred music convocation from October 17 through October 23. The featured artist will be Jean Langlais of Paris, France. M. Langlais will play a recital, give workshops on improvisation, and he will conduct master classes. For further information, please write: Ann Labounsky, School of Music, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

North Texas State University presented three organ recitals as part of the Bicentennial Organ Workshop held at the school during the second week of June. Dale Peters presented the first recital including works by James Bremner, William Selby, Francis Linley, Benjamin Carr, Kohn Knowles Paine, Dudley Buck, Haratio Parker, Harry B. Jepson, and Charles Ives in a recital entitled "The Native Sound: Music of the 18th and 19th centuries." "Music of the 20s, 30, and 40s" was the subject of Donald Willing's recital which included works by Leo Sowerby, Howard Thatcher, Carl McKinley, Gustav Strube, and Dezzo d'Antalfy. Charles S. Brown's program of "Sound Waves of the Present and the Future" had the assistance of George Morey, flutist, and Charles Veazey, oboist, in works by Daniel Pinkham, Alan Stout, Richard Hillert, Stuart S. Smith, Ernst Bacon, Rudy Shackelford, Edward Diemente, and Ross Lee Finney.



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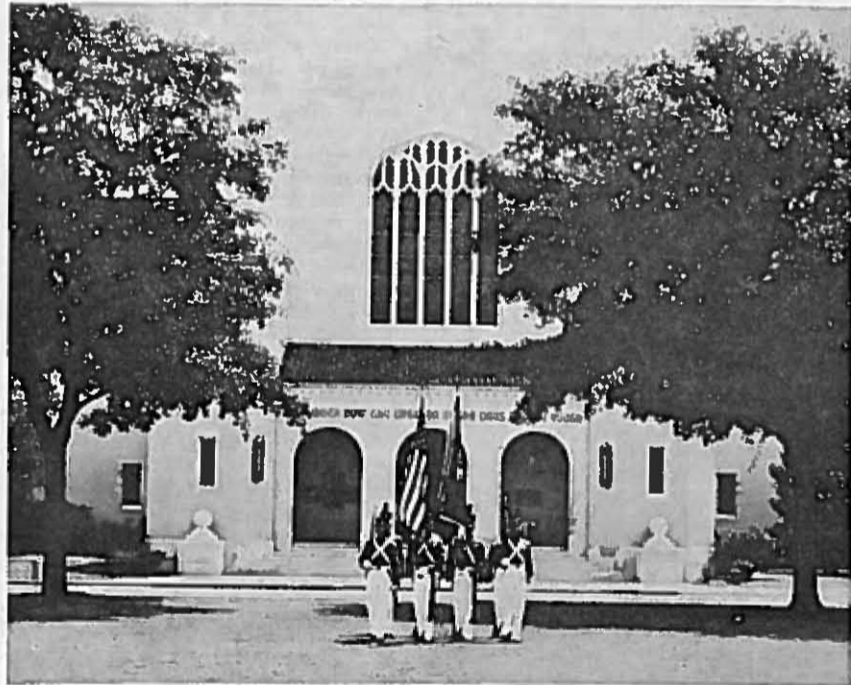
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# New Harpsichord Music

Reviewed by Larry Palmer

**Maurice Greene: Voluntaries and Suites for Organ and Harpsichord**, edited by Gwilym Beechey. Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era, Volume 19. A-R Editions, Inc., 152 West Johnson Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703. \$12.95

Contains eight voluntaries published in the 18th century (posthumously) by J. Bland (1780), three voluntaries from manuscript sources, six short pieces under the title *Suites de Pieces* — all for organ, six harpsichord suites and a seventh titled *Sonata per il Cembalo*. Also: two ornament tables: one from Peter Prellieur's *The Modern Musick Master*, 1731, and one from James Hook's *Guida di Musica*, 1785, and two facsimile plates: the title page of Bland's edition, and the first 18 measures of *Alemand, Suite in A Major*, from John Barker's manuscript copy, ca. 1730.

Four of the harpsichord suites are of four movements, two have three. The very attractive *Suite in F* has a *Preludio*, as does the *Suite in D*. The others begin, like the Purcell Suites, with an *Aiman*. The so-called *Sonata* is another *Suite in F Major*; the concluding three movements are *Courant, Minuet, and Giga*.

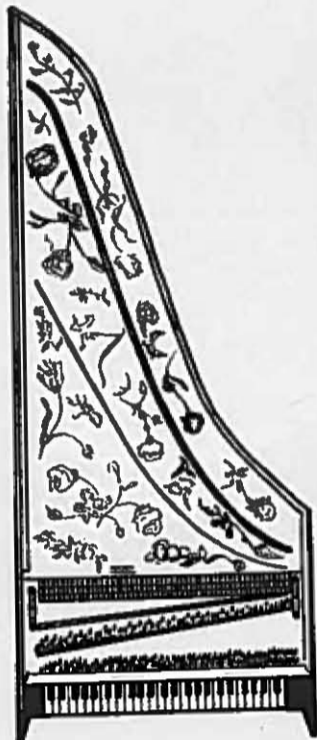
The text is well printed. In playing through the entire harpsichord section of the volume I found only two errors: page 49, measure 10, the left-hand E-flat should obviously be an F; page 66, measure 12, the left-hand notes are missing ledger lines. But oh, once again, the lack of thought about page-turns! Eighteenth-century composers and engravers were so conscious of the fact that a keyboardist must keep his hands on the keyboard; why can't 20th-century editors learn this same fact? This edition is replete with dance movements which begin (for one line) on one page, require a page-turn, and then, of course, a turn-back for the repeat. I counted at least one such awkward spot in five of the suites — certainly unnecessarily high in number. Again I would beg A-R Editions to turn its page proofs over to a performing musician for comment before issuing a volume. This music is pleasant, worthwhile, and nearly sight-readable: exactly the type for which a page-turner may not be available.

**Johann Kuhnau: Biblical Sonata No. 1 — "The Battle Between David and Goliath,"** edited by Margery Halford. Alfred Masterpiece Edition, Alfred Publishing Co., 75 Channel Drive, Port Washington, New York 11050. \$3.50.

As usual with Alfred Editions this one is exemplary: well laid-out, thought-out (with, incidentally, page turns whenever possible in feasible places — evidenced by placing the final page of editorial comment on the last page of the volume so that the music may begin on a left-hand page). All editorial suggestions are printed in lighter ink, so this becomes a first-rate scholarly edition as well, for one is able to see at a glance exactly what Kuhnau's original included. Ms. Halford's suggestions for ornamentation are tasteful and stylistic; following them will help a student to a fine idea of baroque style and performance practice. Especially helpful will be the suggested variation of the melodic voices for the repeat of the final section.

There are only two small details I might question in this edition: the mordent in measure 2 and similar spots sounds better to me with a semi-tone (f-sharp). The suggested note groupings in measures 4-5 (and similar spots) would be more in style, I think, if the slur were not extended over the barline. Ms. Halford rightly suggests the proper effect, having indicated an accent on the first beat of ms. 5; at least on the harpsichord this effect would be achieved more successfully by a new attack.

But, all in all, hats off again to Alfred and to Margery Halford for giving us the best available edition of this work at an affordable price!



**George Frideric Handel: An Introduction to his Solo Keyboard Works**, edited by George Lucktenberg. Alfred Masterwork Editions. \$2.95.

Twenty-four items, including rarely-encountered easier pieces from the *Aylesford Collection*; a rare (for Handel) programmatic piece, "Impertinence," (one page in G minor); a suite for the *Musical Clock*; the later *Suite in D minor*, and two movements from the *Great Suites* of 1720. Apparently aimed at younger players, the general introduction gives a music-appreciation overview of Handel's life and significance. Performance suggestions from a noted harpsichordist are sensible and stylistic. Recommended as varied repertoire and un-hackneyed material for beginning (and progressing) students — and a bargain: 63 pages!

**Thomas Chilcot: Concerto in A Major, opus 2 number 2**, edited by Robin Langley. *Musica da Camera* number 32, Oxford University Press. \$13.65.

Chilcot (c. 1700-1766) was organist of Bath Abbey and apparently well-known in London. He composed 12 harpsichord concertos, of which this is the second from Set II (1765). Unfortunately only the keyboard part of this work has survived in a single copy, although the title page indicates that the Concertos have "Accompaniments." In this edition the editor has reconstructed the orchestral parts, taking as his instrumentation the evidence of an announcement in the *Bath Journal* for 1761: "Violino primo, secondo, viola e cello obbligato e due altri violini e basso rinforza." One could use more orchestra, of course, but the editor has chosen to add only two violin parts and a cello line (*senza obbligati*). Charming music, but not overwhelming, from a provincial friend of Handel's; I doubt that many performances will ensue with a score of 16 pages selling for \$13.65 with parts sold "extra."

Virginia Kellogg, violin, and Jerry Brainard, harpsichord, presented three programs for Texas Tech's Department of Music at the First Methodist Church Chapel in Lubbock. The repertoire included the six sonatas for violin and cembalo by J. S. Bach and the first part of the Well-Tempered Clavier. On November 14 the program consisted of Preludes and Fugues 1-4 and Sonata I in B minor; Preludes and Fugues 5-8, followed by Sonata III in E. December 13: Preludes and Fugues 9-16, Sonatas V (in F minor) and II (A Major). April 2: Preludes and Fugues 17-24 and Sonatas IV (C minor) and VI (G Major). Two French double harpsichords were used, both by Richard Kingston: one belonging to Texas Tech and one belonging to Jerry Brainard.

News from the Faculty of Music, McGill University, Montreal: Leslie Samuels played this graduation recital on November 24: Toccata Terza, Book I, Frescobaldi; Fantasia, MB 24, no. 5, Farnaby; Suite I in G Major, D'Anglebert; Toccata in D (BWV 912), Prelude and Fugue in F minor (WTC, I), Bach; Ordre 5, François Couperin; Sonatas in B minor, K. 408-409, Domenico Scarlatti. On February 6 John Grew, assistant professor in the Faculty of Music, and Peggie Sampson, viola da gamba, played the Bach Gamba Sonatas (and the harpsichord Toccata in E minor, BWV 914). On March 12 Betsy Goldberg directed students from the Baroque Ensemble Class in a performance of Bach's Musical Offering; the program was dedicated to the memory of Frank Hubbard.

Jerrie and George Lucktenberg, violin and harpsichord/fortepiano, gave this duo recital at the Center for the Visual Arts, Illinois State University, on March 25: Sonata in C minor, opus 5, no. 6 "Le Tombeau", Leclair; La Mandoline, Forqueray; Preludium and Allegro, Handel; Sonata in E Major, Bach; Sixes (written for the Bicentennial celebration), George Lucktenberg; Fantasia in D, K. 397, Mozart; Sonata in F, opus 24 "Spring", Beethoven.

Richard Birney Smith played this program for the Barrie Branch, Ontario Registered Music Teachers Association on April 25; Das Gassenhauer, Hans Neustädler; Nobodies Gigge, Farnaby; Les agatelles, Les Baricades Mysterieuses, Couperin; Ciaconna in D, Pachelbel; Suite in E Major, Handel. The harpsichord was by William Past Ross, 1969.

Abraham Abreau, harpsichordist from Venezuela, appeared at Wigmore Hall, London, on April 26. His program, played on a harpsichord by Dowd, was: Pavane: Flow my Tears, Galliard: Can she excuse my wrongs, Dowland, set by Randall; Toccata 5 and 8, Book I, Frescobaldi; Pass'e Mezzo-Saltarello, Ballo alla Polacha-Saltarello, from Balli d'arpicordo, 1620, Picchi; Sonatas in E, K. 263-264, D. Scarlatti; Partita in E minor, Bach.

John Corrie, DMA candidate in harpsichord at the Yale School of Music, played this program at Second Parish Church, Hingham, MA, on May 23: Poolsche Dans, Sweelinck; Suite in D, Froberger; Pièces de Clavecin in A minor, L. Couperin; Overture from Partita in D, Bach; Pièces de Clavecin in D, Rameau.

Trevor Pinnock and The English Concert gave the first English performance of the newly discovered Fourteen Canons, BWV 1087, of Johann Sebastian Bach as well as Bach's Musical Offering at their concert of May 6 at St. John's, Smith Square, London. For an illuminating review-article about these addenda to Bach's Goldberg Variations, read Andrew Porter's "See How They Run", *The New Yorker*, June 7, 1976 (pages 126-130). Mr. Porter reports the American premiere given by harpsichordists Alan Curtis and Bruce Brown in Berkeley's Hertz Hall.

On May 10 Trevor Pinnock joined forces with the Contrapuncti in London (Queen Elizabeth Hall) to mark the Falla centenary (the exact date of Falla's 100th birthday will be November 23). On this program were heard Falla's *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* (staged with puppets) and the Harpsichord Concerto.

Francis Monkman played this recital in the Purcell Room, London, on May 24; Lord

Lumley's Pavane and Galliard, Bull; Partita in A minor, Bach; Suite 5, Forqueray; Sonatina "Ad Usum Infantum", Busoni; seven sonatas, Scarlatti.

Edward Parmentier, Princeton University, played this program at Princeton on May 21: Overture in the French Style, Bach; 4 pieces from *Nouvelles Suites*, Rameau; Ordre 8, Couperin; Rondo in D, 1780, C.P.E. Bach; La Felix, La Forqueray, La de Belombre, Duphy. The Valley Forge Congress of the Guild of Carillonners in North America presented Mr. Parmentier on June 16 at St. Thomas', Whitemarsh, in this program: More Pa'atino, Gisbert Steenwick; Ballett, Scheidemann; The Bells, Byrd; Les Baricades Mysterieuses, Couperin; Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E-flat, Bach; La Montigny, Forqueray; La Felix, La de Belombre, Duphy. The instrument for both concerts was a 1975 Dowd after the Nicols and Francois-Etienne Blanchet of 1730.

Gustav Leonhardt played to a more-than-capacity audience in Nuremberg's Germanisches Museum as part of the 25th International Organ Week on June 17. Using a two-manual north-Italian harpsichord of the mid 17th-century he played Toccatas 2 and 7, Book II, and Capriccio sopra La Sol Fa Mi Re Ut (1624) of Frescobaldi, without utilizing the rare second manual. The remainder of the program was played on the two-manual harpsichord built by Carl August Gräbner, Dresden, 1782: Suite in C minor, Tombeau de Monsieur Blancrocher, Froberger; Jacob's Death and Burial, Kuhnau (with the composer's titles spoken by the artist); Sonata in D minor (harpsichord version of the violin sonata in G minor, reconstructed by Leonhardt), J. S. Bach; and Wuerttemberg Sonata in E minor, C. P. E. Bach. Leonhardt's program, and even more, his playing, illustrated elegantly the theme of this anniversary Organ Festival: "The Dramatic in Sacred Music."

Larry Palmer played this program in the Wassersaal of the Orangerie, Institute for Church Music, University of Erlangen (Germany) on June 18: Suite in F and Tombeau de Blancrocher, Louis Couperin; Sonata, opus 52, Persichetti; Suite in G, BWV 816, Bach; La Forqueray, Duphy; L'Affligée, Armand-Louis Couperin; Sonatas in E, K. 380-381, D. Scarlatti; Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, BWV 903, Bach. The harpsichord was by Sassmann.

Lionel Party, Chilean-American harpsichordist, received his doctorate from the Juilliard School on May 18. He gave a recital at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art on June 15, playing works of Frescobaldi using the 1666 Italian harpsichord and the 1540 virginal from the Museum's collection. He appeared this summer at the Aston Magna Festival in Great Barrington where he played J. S. Bach's Concerto in C minor for Two Harpsichords and W. F. Bach's Sonata with his teacher Albert Fuller. On July 11 he was soloist in Bach's Concerto in D minor at Aston Magna.

David Munrow, the 33-year-old leader of the Early Music Consort of London, a splendid player of Renaissance and Baroque wind instruments, and well-known through his recordings and writings, hanged himself in May. His wife stated to the coroner investigating the suicide that "her husband had been suffering from deep depression, perhaps brought on by the recent deaths of his father and father-in-law."

The English Harpsichord Magazine, volume 1 number 6 for April 1976 contains articles on Girolamo Diruta's *Il Transilvano* and the Early Italian Keyboard Tradition by Maria Baxall; *The Wearing Properties of Harpsichord Plectra*; *The Tunings and Pitch of Early Clavichords* by Michael Thomas; an interview with American harpsichordist Igor Kipnis; and some fascinating examples from *A Practical Guide to Thorough Bass*, written by A. F. C. Kollmann, organist of His Majesty's German Chapel at St. James, London, 1808.

Features and news items are always welcome for these pages. Send them to Dr. Larry Palmer, Division of Music, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas 75275.

## Harpsichord News

## New Organs



Mobile home residence of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Walters, Garden City, Kansas. Built by the Wicks Organ Company, Highland, Illinois. 2-manual and pedal, 6 ranks, organ takes up about a third of the living room, designed so that when the mobile home is moved, it is only necessary to remove and pack the smaller pipes. The organ cost more than the mobile home, is insured with Lloyds of London. Mrs. Walters was quoted as saying that their neighbors didn't think they were too crazy, because they know how much they loved music. "But we were careful to set the volume low enough that it wouldn't blast out the residents of the other 19 homes in the park." Both Mr. and Mrs. Walters have degrees in music from universities in Kansas. The organ is voiced on low wind pressure with small pipe scales and very gentle voicing.

### MANUAL I

Gedeckt 8' 61 pipes  
Gemshorn 8'  
Principal 4' 61 pipes  
Blockflöte 2' 12 pipes  
Dulcian 8' 61 pipes

### MANUAL II

Gemshorn 8' 49 pipes  
Nachthorn 4' 61 pipes  
Spitzoklav 2' 24 pipes  
Quint 1-1/3' 61 pipes  
Dulcian 8'

### PEDAL

Subbass 16' 12 pipes  
Gedeckt 8'  
Choralbass 4'  
Dulcian 8'

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Kinston, North Carolina. Built by Austin Organs, Inc., Hartford, Connecticut. Dedicated in recital by David Lowry on May 30, 1976. Organist of church is William F. Brame; Mary Hunter Brame is assistant organist.

### GREAT

Principal 8' 61 pipes  
Rohrbourdon 8' 61 pipes  
Octave 4' 61 pipes  
Spitzprincipal 2' 61 pipes  
Fourniture IV 1-1/3' 244 pipes  
Krummhorn 8' 49 pipes  
Chimes

### SWELL

Gedeckt 8' 61 pipes  
Viola Pomposa 8' 61 pipes  
Viola Celeste 8' 49 pipes  
Principal 4' 61 pipes  
Flute Harmonique 4' 61 pipes  
Octavin 2' 61 pipes  
Scharff III 1' 183 pipes  
Trompette 8' 61 pipes  
Rohr Schalmel 4' 61 pipes  
Tremolo

### CHOIR

Holzgedeckt 8' 61 pipes  
Spitzflöte 8' 61 pipes  
Flute Celeste 8' 49 pipes  
Koppelflöte 4' 61 pipes  
Nasat 2-2/3' 61 pipes  
Blockflöte 2' 61 pipes  
Terz 1-3/5' 49 pipes  
Zimbelstern  
Tremolo

### ANTIPHONAL

Bourdon 8' 61 pipes  
Octave 4' 61 pipes  
Mixture IV 2' 244 pipes  
Trompette 8' 61 pipes

### PEDAL

Resultant 32'  
Principal 16' 12 pipes  
Subbass 16' 32 pipes  
Spitzflöte 16' 12 pipes  
Octave 8' 32 pipes  
Bourdon 8' 12 pipes  
Super Octave 4' 12 pipes  
Flöte 4' 12 pipes  
Rauschquint II 2-2/3' 64 pipes  
Trompette 16' 12 pipes  
Krummhorn 4' (Great)  
ANTIPHONAL PEDAL  
Bourdon 16' 12 pipes



Preston Hollow United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas. Built by the Schudi Organ Company, Dallas. 2-manual and pedal, 15 stops, 22 ranks. Diatonic wind-chests of Pedal and Great flank a large tapestry designed by the pastor, Dr. Carl Keightley, and his wife, and executed by members of congregation. Behind Pedal pipes at left is an enclosure for the Swell. All flue pipes by Thomas H. Anderson of North Easton, Mass., and reeds are by Carl Giesecke of Germany. Winding by single floating-top reservoir at 60 mm wind pressure for the entire organ; general tremulant affects all stops. Detached oak console, solid-state capture-type combination action from ISS. Dedication recital played by Phillip E. Baker of Dallas.

### GREAT

Principal 8'  
Rohrflöte 8'  
Octave 4'  
Blockflöte 2'  
Mixture IV-V 1-1/3'  
Trompette 8'

### SWELL

Gedeckt 8'  
Gemshorn 8' (1-12 from Gedeckt 8')  
Celeste 8' (TC)  
Spillflöte 4'  
Sesquialtera II 2-2/3'  
Principal 2'  
Scharf 1' IV

### PEDAL

Subbass 16'  
Principal 8' (1-12 from Great)  
Gedeckt Pommer 8' (ext. Subbass)  
Choral Bass 4' (ext. Principal)  
Posaune 16' (ext. Trompette 8')  
Thompette 8' (Great)

## Letter to the Editor

July 8, 1976

To the Editor:

Thank you for the gratifying review of my record, "The Art of Hymnprovisation", in the current issue. Since this was a private project (Advent does not sell them) by Houghton College, and since they are still far from covering their costs, would it be possible to add a coda that the record is available only from Houghton College, Houghton, N.Y. at \$6.95 postpaid, via the Public Relations Office? This would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Finney  
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## Here & There

Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester announced plans in June for the construction of a new organ recital hall which will house a two-manual recital instrument. The new hall which will seat 100 people is being designed by Michael Doran of the Rochester firm of Todd and Giroux and will utilize space on the first floor of the Eastman School's main building. Jan van Daalen, organbuilder of Minneapolis, Minnesota, has been selected to build the new organ for the hall. It will be an encased 46-rank, 33-stop organ with completely mechanical key and stop actions.

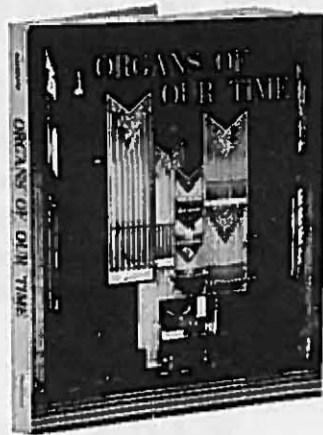
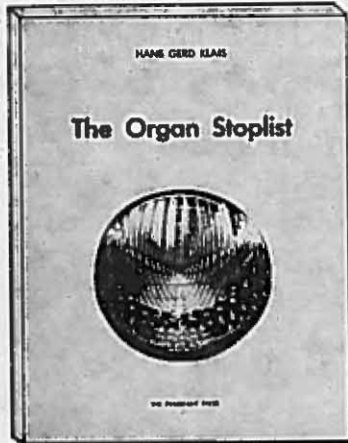
Ronald Freed of Southern Music Publishing Company Incorporated was elected to a two-year term as president of the Music Publishers' Association at its 81st annual meeting at the Warwick Hotel in New York City on Wednesday, June 9th. New directors, elected to four-year terms, are Bonnie Bourne of Bourne Company, Bernard Kalban of Edward B. Marks Music Corporation, David Sengstack of Summy-Birchard Company, and Dan Gendason of Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation.

Le Choeur d'Enfants de Paris made several U.S. appearances as a Bicentennial gift of the Government of France to the United States. The official boys' choir of the city of Paris, consisting of 24 boys and 8 men, sang concerts at St. Joseph's Church of Wilmette, Illinois and at St. Anthony Church, Chicago, Illinois on July 20-21.

Russell G. Wichmann was honored on the occasion of his 40th anniversary as organist and choirmaster at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the worship service of the church on Sunday, June 20, and at a reception and coffee-hour following the service. The music used in the service was composed by Mr. Wichmann. A graduate of Lawrence University and Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music, Mr. Wichmann also studied at Eastman School of Music and in Paris. He began his duties as organist choirmaster of Shadyside Church on Sunday, June 21, 1936. His formal installation to the position was on October 6, 1936, and Clarence Dickinson, dean of the Union School of Sacred Music was both recitalist and speaker at the service. Mr. Wichmann is well known as the composer of many sacred choral pieces which have been long established in the repertory of numerous choirs.

Sydney Hodkinson, a member of the composition and conducting faculties at the Eastman School of Music, has been commissioned to write a new work for organ, brass and percussion. The work is being jointly commissioned by the University of Connecticut's Hartt School of Music and composer-organist William Albright, who will premiere the work in the fall. Mr. Albright has recently recorded Sydney Hodkinson's "Megalith-Trilogy" at Trinity Episcopal Church in New York City for release by CRI records.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Cathedral Choir School at an Evensong on June 6th in the cathedral, at which 30 choirs including 700 singers, brass, timpani and organ were conducted by David Pizarro, master of music at the cathedral. Preceded by an organ recital played by Charles Dodsley Walker, the service included works by Parry, Wytton, Farrow, Bristol, Pizzaro, Coker-Jephcott, and Balfour-Gardiner. Participating choirs and choirmasters included St. Paul's, Chester, Pa. (Sheldon F. Eldridge, Jr.); United Methodist, Fairfax, Va. (Charles W. Whittaker); Grace, Utica, N.Y. (William Self); St. Michael and All Angels, Dallas, Tex. (Paul Lindsley Thomas); St. Thomas More, Baltimore, Md. (Frank Cimino); St. Paul's, Augusta, Ga. (Everett Summerall); Holy Spirit, Wayland, Mass. (Sr. Joyce Juanita, OSA); All Saints', Chelmsford, Mass. (Mrs. E. Sheldon); St. Mark's, Fall River, Mass. (Martha Howard); St. Luke's, Kalamazoo, Mich. (George N. Tucker); Hamilton Boy's Choir, Hamilton, Ont. (John Leek); All Saints', Indianapolis, Ind. (Robert Goodlett); Christ, New Brunswick, N.J. (John W. Van Sant); St. Andrew's, Murray Hill, N.J. (Kenneth Schaffner); St. George's Maplewood, N.J. (Gustav Bittrich); St. Joseph's, New London, Conn. (Kenneth C. Nott); Canterbury Choral Society, New York City (Charles Dodsley Walker); St. John's, Shenandoah, Ia. (Ann F. Eckholm); St. Mark's New Canaan, Conn. (Hedley E. Yost); Christ, Riverton, N.J. (George Tobias); Grace, Newark, N.J. (James McGregor); Corpus Christi, New York City (Louise Basbas); Southminster Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. (Thomas Flynn); and St. Uriel the Archangel, Sea Girt, N.J., (Robert Hazan).



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Pictured are concert theatre organist Billy Nalle (left) and Michael Coup, president of Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc., at the new console of the world famous, former N. Y. Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer organ during the concert/dance June 5 in Century II Center, Wichita, Kansas. The occasion was a national music first for organ, the first time all music for a public dance (with periodic concert numbers) has been supplied entirely by a pipe organ. The event was noted by the national media, including an interview with the artist presented at intervals during the final week of June on the 70 stations of the NBC all-news radio network. Among ticketholders were those representing 10 other states, plus 2 from Mexico City and 2 from Canada. The concert/dance ended the fourth season of the WTO sponsored concert series on this 4m/42r instrument. Billy Nalle last year moved to Wichita from New York to be artist-in-residence for this organization and continues his work in concerts and recording.



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Santa Maria de Iquique, a Chilean folk cantata by Luis Advis telling the story of the revolt and massacre of the peasants and depicting the strength of the human spirit, was given a full performance in the Sunday morning worship service of All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, D.C. on May 16. The choir, soloists and instrumentalists of All Souls Church were under the direction of Karl Halvorson and the performance also included the Washington Dance Theater directed by Erika Thimey. The worship services at All Souls Church nourish a close association between music and spoken word. There is no prescribed order of worship, so each Sunday is a creative experience put together by the Rev. David Eaton, minister, and Mr. Halvorson, director of music. Many of the services consist of an interweaving of music and meditations. Minister, musicians and congregation all contribute to the "counterpoint" on the basic theme of the day. Compositions such as Vivaldi's "Beatus Vir", Martin's "In Terra Pax", Swann's "Requiem for the Living", Tippett's "A Child of Our Time", Teleman's "Die Tageszeiten", and Diamond's "Taproot Manuscript" have been used in these services with choir, organ, instruments and dance.

All six Organ Symphonies of Vierne will be performed in the festive opening event for the Cathedral Concert Series in Newark, New Jersey on September 19. Robert Glasgow, Rollin Smith, and John Rose will be featured in the concert to begin at 5 p.m., and a light supper will be available to the audience during intermission. The balance of the season, the eighth of the Newark series, will present European and American concert organists each Tuesday evening at 8:30. Cathedral organist John Rose will give a special Sunday afternoon recital on October 24, and he will also close the season May 3, at 8:30 p.m.

The RLDS Auditorium in Independence, Missouri, has been the scene of half-hour organ recitals held daily during the months of June, July and August. A staff of seven organists including Thomas Brown, Delores Bruch, Rodney Giles, Pamela Robison, William T. Steward, Jr., Joseph Wilkinson, and John Wright are the performers. Auditorium Organists, John Obetz, is featured in a weekly program of organ music played on the large Aeolian-Skinner organ over 200 FM stations throughout the country.

The Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta, Georgia, will hold two major festivals of French music during its 1976-77 musical season. The first festival on October 1-3 will include the complete organ works of Jehan Alain played in two recitals by John Obetz and Marie-Claire Alain. Mr. Obetz and Mme. Alain will each give masterclasses on the music of their respective recitals. The Sunday morning Festival Eucharist on October 3 will include the U.S. premiere of Alain's "Messe Modale en septour" in honor of the late composer's 65th birthday. The second festival of French music will be held on February 5-6, 1977, and will comprise the complete organ and choral works of Maurice Durufle, honoring the 75th year of his birth. Details of the festivals and other information about the cathedral's music program may be obtained from the organist-choirmaster of the cathedral: J. Marcus Ritchie, Cathedral of St. Philip, 2744 Peachtree Road N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30305.

## Competitions

Sue Vaughn Westendorf, a student of Sue Henderson Seid at Notre Dame University, won first place in the 1976 Gruenstein Organ Playing Competition sponsored annually by the Chicago Club of Women Organists. The competition was held at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, University of Chicago on May 15. Four finalists were selected to play from a preliminary field of fourteen.

Mrs. Westendorf studied organ with Sue Seid and Russell Saunders at the Eastman School on music scholarships from Eastman and the New York State Regents. In 1975 she earned her MusB degree with high distinction and was elected to Pi Kappa Lambda. She will be presented in recital this coming season in Chicago by the CCWO.

Runner-up in the competition was Jane Flummerfelt of Wheaton, a student of Arthur Halbardier. The other finalists were Jane Dougherty of Decatur, Illinois, a former student of Robert Anderson at Southern Methodist University, and Andrea Handley of Chicago, who studies with Robert Lodine.

Judges for the competition were Lillian Robinson, Dexter Bailey, and Herbert Gotsch.

## Nunc Dimittis

Richard Watson Dirksen of Ocala, Florida, died June 15, 1976 at Marion Community Hospital after a short illness. He was 79.

Mr. Dirksen was employed lifelong in the pipe organ sales and service business, starting in 1920 as an apprentice with the Bennet Organ Company in Rock Island, Illinois. In 1929 he formed his own service and rebuilding company, the Freeport Organ Company of Freeport, Illinois. He operated the Freeport company until 1966. In 1933 he also became the sales representative for the Reuter Organ Company, and during his 43 years with Reuter he represented the company in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia. In 1966 he moved to Ocala, Florida and continued to represent Reuter until his retirement in 1975. At that time he opened the Dirksen Health Food Center in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, operating it until his death.

Mr. Dirksen was a member of Grace Episcopal Church, Ocala, Florida. He is survived by his wife, Maude E. Dirksen of Ocala; two sons, R. Wayne Dirksen of Washington, D.C., and Gerriet L. Dirksen of Brentwood, California; a daughter, Phyllis Reeser of Ocala; eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Ferd T. E. Rassmann died May 17, 1976 at 85 years of age.

Mr. Rassmann was born in Baltimore on July 7, 1890. He learned the organ building trade as a boy when he was employed by the Möller Organ Company. With the exception of service in the U.S. Army during World War I, Mr. Rassmann remained in the pipe organ trade his entire life, representing primarily the Austin and Reuter firms. After leaving the Möller firm, he and his brother Carl established their own pipe organ service firm in Philadelphia, remaining in the business until 1971. Mr. Rassmann was involved in the installation and rebuilding of a number of significant instruments. Among them were the 1922 Austin organ at St. George's Church in New York City, the 1923 Austin organ in Cincinnati's Music Hall, the 1930 Austin organ in St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Hanover, Pa., and a host of other organs. Many organs in Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey have felt the handiwork of Ferd Rassmann, and among them was the Hope Jones Organ in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, where he was the maintenance man for several years.

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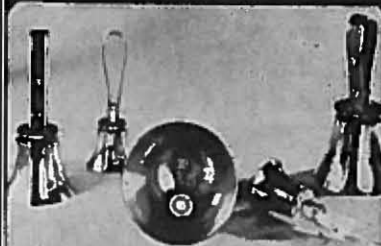
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## Mendelssohn

(Continued from page 7)

united; except when the contrary is expressly specified: (see the 6th Sonata.) It is therefore left to the judgment of the Performer, to mix the different Stops appropriately to the style of the various Pieces: advising him, however, to be careful that in combining the Stops belonging to two different sets of keys, the kind of tone in the one, should be distinguished from that in the other: but without forming too violent a contrast between the two distinct qualities of tone.

F. M. B.

For many, accepting Mendelssohn's registrational instructions at face value may seem to produce rather indifferent musical results. We see, for instance, that some of the *allegro* movements in the *Sonatas* are marked "fortissimo" at the beginning — an indication synonymous with "full organ" according to the "Prefatory Remarks" — with no subsequent dynamic markings whatever. Even when we take into account the vast difference between the many varieties of 20th century "full organ" sound and the sound Mendelssohn had in mind, we wonder whether there can be no latitude for the addition of stops during the course of such a movement. Knowing as we do that no composer, were he writing for the orchestra, would score an entire movement *tutti*, with the brass and tympani from beginning to end, we have made it a standard practice to underscore the dramatic sweep of such pieces with *crescendi* and *diminuendi*. This has seemed to be the eminently musical thing to do; on some organs it still may be. In the last analysis, however, the evidence seems to indicate that in Mendelssohn's time the changing of registration during the course of a piece was the exception, not the rule. That there were occasions when stops were added and withdrawn during a piece has already been indicated by the story of Mendelssohn's visit to Buckingham Palace. Yet another indication may be found in bar 58 of Mendelssohn's *Third Sonata*, where the player is requested to increase the tempo and the dynamic level gradually while approaching the return of the original theme in the major key.

Before leaving the subject of registration it is well worth mentioning that combinations of stops which leave a "gap" in the overtone series (such as an 8-foot and a 2-foot stop combined, without a 4-foot stop) were discouraged by writers of the period. Chorus work was to be added in the logical order of ascending pitch levels. The combining of several stops at the fundamental pitch was very much a part of the Romantic aesthetic, both for warm, rich unison tone for quiet pieces and as a foundation for the chorus.

Many think that the "scholarly approach" to performance is characteristically limiting and confining — demanding that the performer renounce many features of the modern organ in order to achieve an authentic interpretation. Such an approach may seem to dwell on

prohibition rather than possibilities, but the fact is that the best 19th century English (and American) organs offered many possibilities — they combined energy and restraint, grandeur and intimacy perhaps more successfully than organs of any other time. To those who are fortunate to know fine organs of the 1830-1860 period, I need say little about the elegant, singing quality of the Diapasons, the delicacy and refinement of the flute stops, the buoyancy and "life" in the principal chorus, and the distinguished reed tone which characterizes these instruments. The full organ registrations which Mendelssohn had in mind for his *fortissimo* movements are fully satisfying, and yet they do not tire when heard for prolonged periods. The *plenum* is always a beautifully balanced sound. It is a rare player who does not come away from his experience at such an organ with the stirring perception that he has heard Mendelssohn with the "right sound."

### FOOTNOTES

1. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. H. C. Colles New York: the MacMillan Co., 1935, vol. III, p. 306. The English publishers originally asked for a book of "voluntaries" for the organ; the choice of the term "Sonatas" was Mendelssohn's.
2. A facsimile reproduction of the contract assigning the Three Preludes and Fugues to Novello may be found in *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn to Ignaz and Charlotte Moscheles*, ed. Felix Moscheles, first printed in 1888, reprinted in 1970 by Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, New York, p. 66.
3. Clutton, Cecil and Austin Niland. *The British Organ*. London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1963, p. 89.
4. Groves, p. 392.
5. Groves, p. 396.
6. Scott, David. *The Music of St. Paul's Cathedral*. London: Stainer & Bell, 1972, p. 22.
7. *Hamilton's Catechism of the Organ*, 2nd edition, London: R. Cocks & Co., 1842, p. 53.
8. Groves, p. 396. See also "Wesley and Mendelssohn in England," Max Hinrichsen, in *Samuel Wesley and Dr. Mendelssohn*, New York: Edition Peters, 1962, p. 2.
9. Pearce, Charles. *Old London City Churches*. London: Vincent Music Co., Ltd., 1905, p. 28.
10. Groves, p. 397.
11. *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul and Dr. Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, first published 1864, reprinted 1970, Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, New York, p. 116.
12. Stimpson, James. *A Short Description of the Grand Organ in the Town Hall, Birmingham*. Birmingham: B. Hall, 1846, p. 14.
13. Groves, p. 400. See also *Musical Times*, vol. 46, no. 733, pp. 718-720.
14. Groves, p. 403.
15. *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn*, ed. G. Selden-Goth. New York: Pantheon, 1969, p. 303.
16. *Hamilton's Catechism*, p. 102.
17. Pearce, p. 70.
18. *Letters*, ed. Selden-Goth, p. 306-307.
19. *Hamilton's Catechism*, p. 61-62.
20. Groves, p. 418.
21. Groves, p. 425.
22. Groves, p. 396.
23. Groves, p. 423.
24. Groves, p. 423.
25. Pearce, Charles. *Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas, Technically and Critically Discussed*. London: Vincent Music Co., Ltd., 1900, pp. 14-16.
26. The "Prefatory Remarks" are quoted here exactly as they were printed in the Coventry & Hollier (original) edition.

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 Bourdon 16' 32 pipes  
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 Quintbass 5-1/3' (Bourdon)  
 Principal 8' 32 pipes  
 Choralbass 4' 32 pipes  
 Posauene 16' 32 pipes

## Harpichord Primer

(Continued from page 9)

provides a reference datum for all jack slide adjustments and movements. Then the slide is advanced toward the string by a standard distance. The resulting overlap of the string by the plectra is called the "bite."

An ample bite is desirable, say, 10% of the plectrum length, to care for possible spurious relative movements between the jacks and the strings — as might occur in extremes of temperature or humidity.

The voicing process follows ghosting. Voicing is the most tedious operation facing the harpichord maker. The musical results are absolutely dependent upon it, and this includes the playability of the instrument — its touch, its response to the fingers. Each plectrum has to be shaped, and the rest position and movement of the jacks closely regulated. It is the disciplines of voicing and regulating which to date have defied the methods of mass production of the harpichord, an instrument otherwise certainly no more sophisticated in its structure than the piano.

All the C's and/or F's are given initial voicing as the first step. This involves individual scraping or cutting of the plectra. The plectrum is watched as it plucks its string to see that it is indeed achieving the circular-arc shape mentioned above. The center of curvature of the deflecting plectrum must, incidentally, always lie forward of the tongue pivot; otherwise the plectrum-tongue assembly may cam off the string, releasing it prematurely and producing a false-sounding note. For a given harpichord the pluck force may be set at, say, 40 grams at middle-C. Notes bassward of middle-C will require greater depth of touch during the pluck and somewhat stiffer plectra, since the bass notes require more energy input. The reverse is true in the treble. Nevertheless, the sound should be subjectively at the same level throughout the scale; the touch should vary but gradually from top to bottom. When all the "benchmark" notes have been voiced as objectively as possible, the others in between are voiced accordingly.

At the same time voicing is in progress the jacks must be mechanically regulated for correct damper position and plectrum reset. When all the mechanical components, including the keylevels, are in correct relation to one another, one should be able to achieve a repetition rate of about 10 plucks per second.

External aids in voicing have, to date, played but a small role. For example, acoustic pressures inside the instrument may be transduced for visual display on the screen of a cathode ray oscilloscope. This is useful principally during training of the neophyte voicer; it makes easy the spotting of irregular notes which he may not otherwise have yet learned to perceive as such.

Variations in jack design are myriad but the basic functions remain invariant: to hold the root of the plectrum rigidly in a rectilinear path while it plucks the string, to simultaneously lift the damper from the string, and to let the plectrum lightly cam back over the top of the string to resume its rest position while at the same time bringing the damper back in contact with the string to stop its vibration when the key is released. The pivoted tongue (which carries the plectrum) is spring-loaded forward against a stop and, in the interest of extraneous noise reduction, should be of the lowest possible moment of inertia, and its center of percussion should lie at or near the pivot center. Angular momentum imparted to the tongue in the reset phase should also be minimal. Adjustability of the various movements through certain mechanical accoutrements is of great value during voicing and regulating, but experience has taught that this adjustability is often misused by the naive technician or owner.

We may speak of a static, and of a dynamic, weight of the action. The static weight comprises forces utilizing gravity to achieve return of the keylevers and jacks to their rest positions. Dynamic weight has to do with the forces required to accelerate the keylevers in rotation about their balance pins and the linear motion of the jacks in their upward travel. The kinetic energy remaining with action parts after the pluck is dissipated in friction and, if the action

parts are too massive, in thumping noises.

The extra force required to effect multiple plucking in a large harpichord with several ranks of strings all in action can be reduced to very comfortable levels by "sequencing", i.e., the lengths of the various ranks of jacks relative to the strings are adjusted such that when a key is slowly depressed one can hear and feel the strings of the various ranks being plucked sequentially in some set order. Playing the keys normally, one can feel a kind of "ripple" effect — a not unpleasant sensation. A large harpichord with all the stops on, which is not so adjusted, can be nearly unplayable. The usual plucking order is the 4', then the 8', both on the lower manual; and finally, through the coupler, the upper manual 8'. Successful plucking depends in part upon correct choice of plectrum length for the various ranks.

It is believed by many people that the way in which the builder planes the soundboard somehow comprises the "central mystery" of the harpichord. This simplistic view however begs the whole question of tonal format and what design factors distinguish an excellent from a mediocre instrument. Experience, on the contrary, strongly indicates that the general plan layout — the configuration of the parts abutting either side of the plane of the soundboard — constitute the really crucial variables governing the overall aura of sound created by the harpichord. Consider, for instance, the string scaling geometry, the pluck lines, the shape of the case and its relationship to the structures beneath the soundboard and to the bridges, as well as the general vertical compliance of the soundboard and its mass throughout the compass. There may be ribs on the underside of the soundboard placed there not for acoustical but for structural reasons: to counter splitting or buckling tendencies due to extremes of humidity, or to counter distortions deriving from collective or local tensions of the strings. If poorly employed, ribs can degrade the sonority of the sound.

Some builders have skirted the problems of soundboard stability by employing plywood for that member. In truth, the soundboard material is not of overriding importance as long as it is suitably compliant as a diaphragm, is of low internal acoustic loss, is both lightweight and strong, etc. In some minds esthetic considerations are also of importance.

If, indeed, a mystery inheres in the soundboard, then it lies far less in the substance or thickness of the material itself than in the configuration of the members with which it is associated, and particularly, the psyche of the designer himself.

A relatively small area of the soundboard is influenced by a given string towards the treble, but the area increases the farther the descent into the bass. In a harpichord reflecting traditional size and shape the whole soundboard seems to be involved with tones in the lowest half-octave. Indeed, one feels that the whole body of air within the case of the instrument is coupled to the soundboard inertially and elastically as a resonant system. We are further led to the conjecture that the peculiarly-shaped cavity within the harpichord beneath the soundboard and closed bottom, especially one of Flemish antecedents, might be akin to something like an exponential horn with one compliant side. The cavity of such an instrument (but not one of Italian lineage) is traditionally vented at the wide end of the "horn", just behind the keyboard and jacks.

The harpichord has evolved in a kind of cultural selection, analogous to the natural selection of bioevolution, which has equipped it with certain esthetic and technological validities. Hopefully, suspended between art and technology (which in the 17th and 18th Centuries were not yet split apart from one another) we can discover the truly adaptive evolutionary vector. We find many mutations along the way. Hybridizations have occurred. Some are "adaptive" and do violence neither to the present nor the past; others, perhaps through ignorance of the historical spirit of the harpichord, or in entrepreneurial zeal, have already been produced in such numbers that the clarity of the tradition has already been dimmed.

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**CALENDAR**

Deadline for this calendar was July 10

**5 AUGUST**

David Whiteside, flute; William Owen, organ; Memorial Church, Harvard U, Cambridge, MA 12:10 pm  
Marie-Claire Alain, Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ 8 pm  
Kenneth Bruggers, U of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN 8 pm

**6 AUGUST**

Virgil Fox, Temple U Music Festival, Ambler, PA 8:30 pm  
Richard R. Bunbury, Christ Church Episcopal, Savannah, GA 8 pm

**8 AUGUST**

Mark Hanak, Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC 7 pm  
Roger Roszell, U S Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO 8 pm  
Samuel Porter, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA 5 pm  
Lynne Davis, Cathedral, Chartres, France

**9 AUGUST**

John Obetz, for Augsburg Church Music Clinic, Ascension Lutheran, Columbus, OH

**10 AUGUST**

Diane Bish, Riverside Church, New York, NY 7 pm  
Washington Modern Dance Society, Washington Cathedral, DC 8 pm  
Sue Watby, Christ United Methodist, Rochester, MN 12 noon

**11 AUGUST**

Charles Tompkins, Music Hall, Methuen, MA 8:30 pm  
Dana Hull, St Paul's Lutheran, Ann Arbor, MI 12:15 pm  
John Obetz, for Schmidt Music Clinic, Minneapolis, MN

**12 AUGUST**

Yuko Hayashi, Memorial Church, Harvard U, Cambridge, MA 12:10 pm  
James David Christie, St. Michael's English Church, Paris, France 8 pm

**15 AUGUST**

Dale Krider, Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC 7 pm  
Stephen Hamilton, U S Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO 8 pm  
Lutheran Institute for Worship and Music, Pacific Lutheran U, Tacoma, WA (thru Aug 20)  
Douglas L. Butler, First Presbyterian, Hollywood, CA 7 pm

**16 AUGUST**

GIA Workshop, Cathedral College of the Immaculate Conception, Douglaston (Brooklyn), NY (thru Aug 20)  
Chilton Powell Institute, Episcopal Conference Center, Amarillo, TX (thru Aug 20)

**17 AUGUST**

Ron Ostlund, Christ United Methodist, Rochester, MN 12 noon

**18 AUGUST**

Johannes Somary, Music Hall, Methuen, MA 8:30 pm

**20 AUGUST**

Le Jeu de Robin et Marion (Anonymous); Musica Antiqua loculatares Upsallensis, Sven Berger, dir; International Festival of Music, Lucerne, Switzerland

**22 AUGUST**

Todd Gresick, Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC 7 pm  
Kathe Thompson, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, CA 5 pm

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24 AUGUST

Mary Larson, Christ United Methodist, Rochester, MN 12 noon

25 AUGUST

James Christie, Music Hall, Methuen, MA 8:30 pm

27 AUGUST

Mario Videla, International Festival of Music, Lucerne, Switzerland

28 AUGUST

Alan Barthel, Gordon Jeffery, St Catherine of Siena Church, Riverside, CT 5:45 pm (also Aug 29 at 5:45 pm)

29 AUGUST

Victor Hill, harpsichord, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA 4 pm

Pete Seeger, folk singer; Trinity Church, Newport, RI

Rosalind Mohsen, Auditorium, Round Lake, NY

James Dale, Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC 7 pm

John Ellis, Cathedral of St John the Evangelist, Spokane, WA 8 pm

Summer Choir Concert, Garden Grove Community Church, Garden Grove, CA 6 pm and 8 pm

War Requiem by Britten; Felicity Palmer Peter Pears, John Shirley-Quirk; Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Choir, Lucerne Festival Choir, Taelz Boys Choir, Rafael Kubelik dir; International Festival of Music, Lucerne, Switzerland

31 AUGUST

Merrill N. Davis III, Christ United Methodist, Rochester, MN 12 noon

1 SEPTEMBER

Wilbur Held, Music Hall, Methuen, MA 8:30 pm

3 SEPTEMBER

Marie-Claire Alain, Church of St Martin, Vevey, Switzerland 8:15 pm

8 SEPTEMBER

Pierre Whalon, Music Hall, Methuen, MA 8:30 pm

Charles H. Finney, Houghton College, Houghton, NY 8:15 pm

10 SEPTEMBER

Wilma Jensen, for Springfield, MO AGO (with masterclass Sept 11)

Marilyn Mason, First Presbyterian, Phoenix, AZ 8 pm

12 SEPTEMBER

Karl E. Moyer, Mansfield State College, Mansfield, PA 3 pm

John Rose, St Mary's Episcopal, Kinston, NC

Robert Anderson, First Presbyterian, Dallas, TX

Marilyn Mason, Northern Arizona U, Flagstaff, AZ

The Creation by Haydn, South German Madrigal Choir, Wolfgang Gönnerwein, dir; Festival of Music, Montreux-Vevey, Switzerland 8:15 pm

13 SEPTEMBER

Academy of Italian Organ Music, Pistoia, Italy (thru Sept 24)

14 SEPTEMBER

Donald Sutherland, organ; Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano, for Atlanta, GA AGO

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