

PIPINGS - An occasional Newsletter

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Dean's Message

How marvelous to see so many BAGO members at King's Chapel on September 23rd. Former Dean and Music Director at KC Heinrich Christensen was our host along with Rev. Joy Fallon of King's Chapel. Joy is our Chaplain this year. Welcome! "A Boston Evensong" featured Boston musicians past and present in a service of organ and choral music.

Since the opening service I have seen a number of different communities and in the course of those travels I managed to come down with laryngitis. I mean, nothing above a whisper. Fortunately Jay Lane is giving a vocal workshop at Church of the Advent on Saturday, October 13th beginning at 10 am. I need Jay to help me return to vocal health so I can get my choirs to do the same. Come join me!

On October 28th at 3 pm Mark Dwyer will play the annual fundraiser for the Hook Opus 801 at St. John's Seminary at 127 Lake Street in Brighton. See the attached poster for more information. Any chance to hear the refurbished Hook & Hastings Op. 1833, with work by Andover in 2015, is one not to be missed.

Earlier in the September we co-sponsored a masterclass as part of the Boston Bach International Organ Competition. I was able to attend part of the competition finals and heard a lot of fabulous playing. Congratulations to the local organizers Jonathan Wessler and Cheryl Ryder of First Lutheran. The competitors were professional level. Rosalind Mohnsen wrote an article about the event that is reprinted in this edition of the newsletter.

At the student level YOI chair Christine Hogan hosted the fall auditions for young people to get the chance to take organ lessons for a year. Six students passed the auditions and are our newest members of BAGO. Welcome, YOI students!

We have new members joining each month. The new directory is up and running thanks to the untiring efforts of Claire DeCustati. It is great to have an up-to-date list of our community. Thank you, Claire. Make sure your information is correct, especially if you have a change in status.

Have a wonderful October. Be sure to keep November 9th on your calendar for the Jonathan Ryan concert at St. Joseph's in Needham. New Executive Committee member Father David Michael and Treasurer Daryl Bichel are putting together the event, so be sure to set aside that day on your calendar and join your fellow BAGO members.

We live in a rich cultural area, don't we?

- Louise

October Events



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13TH AT 10 AM
WITH JAY LANE
"A BLENDED SOUND
FROM YOUR VOLUNTEER CHOIR:
HERE ARE THE TOOLS YOU NEED!"
CHURCH OF THE ADVENT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28TH at 3 pm
HOLY CROSS BENEFIT CONCERT AT ST. JOHN'S
SEMINARY, BRIGHTON
MARK DWYER, RECITALIST



October BAGO
events

Special Invitation

Just the Right-Sized Organ for Us

From the Music Director, Margaret Angelini



Like many of us, I work for a small congregation. St. John's Episcopal Church in Sharon, MA, is surrounded by many Christian denominations, 5 Jewish houses of worship, and an Islamic Study Center, so there aren't all that many Episcopalians in the neighborhood. We do, however, have an engaged group of worshippers who care about a sung liturgy, and we strive to offer the most beautiful and real experience we can. We have had a 1925 Estey reed organ of one manual and no pedal since 2001, which is when I first walked through the door. Like most small congregations, we struggle to make ends meet sometimes, but we manage to support each other and offer the best we have.

One fine day in March of 2016 I got a note from Scot Huntington, who was looking for a congregation to adopt an organ that needed a new home. More than 30 years ago, he was involved in building a 2m + pedal mechanical action organ as a prototype for Zuckerman. After it was purchased for Harvard Divinity School by John Ferris, the organ ended up in Andover Hall, where several members of our chapter played it and taught their students. During the tenure of Harry Huff over the last decade, the movement towards blended worship meant that the organ was barely played, if at all. In 2016, the school was planning a large renovation to Andover Hall, and the organ was not a part of the future there. Since Scot knows I'm one of those "tracker-backers," he guessed that I would enjoy playing it so he gave me a call.

This is where the leap of faith comes in - in a small place like ours, how could we afford an organ? I asked the rector, Rev. Jerry Morrow, if he thought we could do this, and after the parish had spoken with Scot about the cost of renovation and spent some time singing with the organ, they decided to go for it. There was about a year of delay while Harvard worked through a decision to either sell or donate the organ; the former option would have made the project impossible, but eventually the organ was donated to St. John's. Funding was acquired through donations from friends and supporters, and on the first hot week in June in 2017 we moved the organ out of Andover Hall and down to the shop. During that wait the parish saw Jerry retire, and our priest in charge, Rev. Jennifer Beal, has assumed the responsibilities of steering a parish through a major acquisition - another very important leap of faith!

The organ needed a great deal of work, and had to wait for other projects to be finished. By the end of August 2018 it was ready to be shipped to St. John's, and at the writing of this article it is erected and preparing to be assembled. Voicing will have happened in mid-September, and we should be singing with our new-to-us organ in October.

I look back and wonder at how this has come to pass, and can think of several things that St. John's is fortunate to have. Friends and supporters made finding and affording the organ possible in the first place. Then comes the need for a good dose of patience when dealing with schedules, setbacks, and the many people that are involved in a lengthy and expensive project. To that I would add trust - trust that we will find what we need, that it will all work out, and that we can succeed together. I've also learned that when something good falls into your lap, always say yes. It will make you work harder than you want to, but will give you many more riches in return.

A Note from the Builder

This was the sixth organ built by D. Jacques Way & Zuckermann Harpsichords and the first and only instrument completed under the title Huntington & Way. Zuckermann began their organ project in 1977-- two of the six instruments built were continuo box organs, four including this one, were prototypes for an organ they wanted to add to their pre-assembled line of historic keyboard instruments. This was the final instrument in the series and the only one designed with two manuals. The construction of the organ strictly followed the construction practices described by Dom Bedos in his famous 18th-century treatise, and was stylistically based on the work of the Nurnberg/Munich Manderscheidt family-- a multi-generational dynasty of organbuilders active in central-south Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Zuckermann personnel were given carte-blanche access to the unrestored ca.

1660 table organ (Nicolas Manderscheidt) in the Yale University Belle Skinner collection, which became the reference instrument for the organ's basic design. After being exhibited at numerous AGO and regional historic keyboard society conventions during the early 1980s, the instrument was set up in the reverberant acoustics of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Central Square, Cambridge for the 1983 Boston Early Music Festival, where tuned in 1/5-comma meantone, it made quite a sensation as demonstrated by Zuckermann's Boston agent and noted Boston organist Peter Sykes, and Harold Vogel (who consulted on several minor changes to the design). When John Ferris, (Harvard University Organist), heard the organ in Central Square, he bought it on the spot for the Harvard Divinity School's Andover Chapel to replace its failed 1911 Skinner. The instrument was installed under the deanship of the noted theologian Krister Stendahl who was quite interested in the organ's role in the liturgy, and dedicated in April 1985 by John Ferris. The organ was used regularly for chapel services and chamber music concerts as well as student practice and lessons. Carol Lawton and Victoria Sirota were two of the many organists who played and cared for the instrument while it was under the care of the Student Ministry Office.

Organbuilder S.L. Huntington came to the project near its conclusion, building the pedal division, voicing the pipework in the Manderscheidt style, and installing the instrument in Central Square and Harvard.

S.L. Huntington & Co., Stonington, Conn, was responsible for removal from Harvard, the extensive refurbishment of the instrument, and its installation at St. John's Episcopal Church, Sharon, Mass. Work performed at this time includes: new wind system, remedial rebuilding of the action and windchests to address the effects of three incidents of catastrophic overheating while at Harvard, lowering of the wind pressure from 3 1/2" to 2 5/8" and re-intonation of the pipework on the reduced pressure with tonal finishing to the intimate acoustics of St. John's.

Please join us to celebrate the arrival of the organ
Sunday, October 28, 2018
3:30 Evensong and Dedication
4:30 Concert
Light Refreshments afterwards

St. John's Episcopal Church
23 High Street
Sharon MA
stjohnschurch.sharon@gmail.com
www.stjohnssharon.church
Handicap Accessible



Adelaide Manzum



Alexander Marin



Graham Minnich



Johanna Murphy



John Dunn



Michael Thekaekara

Young Organists Initiative Winners

SPECIAL PROJECT GRANTS

The Special Project Advisory Committee (SPAC) is charged with making recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the use of income from invested Chapter funds derived from previous convention profits. Special projects are considered to augment the normal Boston Chapter activities and are also available to all AGO members or chapters in the country. An application form to request funding is available from Martin Steinmetz, Coordinator, at cmsteinmetz@verizon.net

Projects supported are usually in the following areas and are connected with the organ in some way.

Education - Proposals should include the project's purpose, initial audience, co-sponsorship, and the usefulness of the project to other groups. Applicants are encouraged to contact publishers and journal editors to determine feasibility of publication. Funds will not be awarded for purposes of tuition or for research as part of an academic degree.

Concerts - Funds will not be provided for a concert series but a single event within the series is acceptable. Applicants should explain why the event is noteworthy and include information about the anticipated audience, concert location, instrument, performers, publicity plans and co-sponsorship.

New music - Include information about the premiere performance and/or performers, and how the composition will be made available to other musicians for future performance. A copy of the proposed contract with the composer should be included if possible.

Organ building or restoration- Money will not be made available for instruments in or for religious institutions. Grants may be given for assistance in purchasing or restoring instruments in buildings used primarily for secular purposes.

SPAC funds are distributed twice a year.

This year the dates will be as follows

Application Deadline	Review by SPAC	Final decision by Exec. Comm.
Nov 1	Nov 31	Jan 7
March 15	April 15	April 29

Boston Bach International Organ Competition

A feast of the music of J.S. Bach, his predecessors, and composers of a later date who honored him with pieces based on his name, was experienced by attendees at the inaugural quadrennial Boston Bach International Organ Competition held September 2-9 in Boston. Numerous features of this competition were based on the Leipzig Bach Competition. In addition to three rounds of competition, five concerts were presented by the distinguished members of the jury.

Featuring sixteen competitors, ages 26-37, from eight countries, the first round at Old West, on the iconic C.B. Fisk organ, Op. 55 from 1971, gave players the opportunity to interpret the stylus phantasticus of Buxtehude, an ornamented chorale of Bach, a Vesper hymn of de Grigny, and an early prelude and fugue of Bach in a 35-minute program. Most performers were secure in presenting this excellent diversity of repertoire with stylistic integrity and various colorful registrations, which worked beautifully on this eclectic instrument. One cannot tire of listening to the resonant sounds of this Fisk organ, which were only more beautiful for hearing it all day through twelve performers. Four had performed the day previous. The audience reached a high of around forty, very good considering the day's temperature and the non-air-conditioned space. Those advancing to the second round were announced quickly at day's end, with only a few surprises. Local organists in this round were John Robinson, Brandon Santini and Thomas Sheehan, all of whom gave excellent performances!

After a day allowing for practice by the competitors, challenged by three different instruments and limited time on each, the competition resumed on Wednesday, with the second round covering two days at Church of the Advent on the Aeolian-Skinner organ, Op. 940: versatile, elegant, and convincing in repertoire of all time periods. Ten competitors now interpreted one of two concerti of Vivaldi transcribed by Bach, either a Schumann or Liszt option on the name of Bach (Bb A C B natural in German), one of two chorale preludes by Bach, and for everyone, the chorale prelude of Bach on Vater Unser, from Clavierübung III. The handling of this difficult piece was apparently very important to the jury. Much superb playing was heard in this 45-minute segment by each performer, with some surprise when the results were announced after nearly an hour of jury deliberation. Of note is that the repertoire requirement was for the 1855 version of the Liszt "Fantasy and fugue on the theme B-A-C-H", rather than the revised and much more often heard version from 1870. It was good to see the wonderful Schumann Op. 60 Fugues on B-A-C-H chosen as frequently as the Liszt. Local organists in this round were Brandon Santini and Thomas Sheehan.

Anticipation was in the air as the third round began on Saturday on "Boston's Bach Organ" at First Lutheran Church. Built by Richards, Fowkes & Co. of Ooltewah, Tennessee in the year 2000, the organ is considered to render the music of Bach as convincingly as the organs Bach himself played. Its vocal quality is a delight to the ear! A sizeable crowd was present all day as five competitors, from five different countries, performed 60-minute programs of both required works and their own choices. Included in the day's repertoire were a grandiose and masterful Bach "Prelude and fugue in e", the "Wedge", from its angular, expanding fugue subject, (Simental) the Brahms Prelude & fugue in g, with expressive rhetorical flair, (Bloor) and four masterful interpretations of Bach's partita on Sei gegrübet, Jesu gütig. A delicious German lunch was available for purchase at noon, a familiar treat to those who attend the annual Bach Birthday Marathon. Winners were announced by Jury chair, Arvid Gast of Lübeck, with the predictable top three becoming Boston Bach Prize-Winners.

A very large crowd was present for the Winners' Concert on Sunday evening at First Lutheran Church, with all three winners participating in repertoire chosen by the jury from their three rounds. Third prize winner, Nicole Simental, Assistant Director of Music and Principal Organist at St. Joseph Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio, performed Buxtehude and Bach with style and sparkle. Second prize winner, Ben Bloor, Organist of the Oratory Church in London, U.K., performed William Byrd and Vivaldi's "Concerto in d", arranged by Bach, with clarity and finesse. The Yuko Hayashi First prize winner, Adriaan Hoek, of the Netherlands, gave us works by Franz Danksagmüller (born 1969) and Bach, flawlessly performed. The "Toccata, adagio, & fugue" of Bach was delivered as well as we are likely to hear it. Congratulations to all three winners! The standard of performing was very high! A reception was enjoyed by all following the program.

We all owe hearty thanks and much gratitude to First Lutheran Church of Boston, sponsors of this competition, and to Cheryl Ryder, Executive Director, for planning and managing this huge event! Boston has been a center of organ building and organ culture for several centuries; what better place to have an International Bach Competition! Watch for it in 2022!

For more details see bbioc.com, classical-scene.com or [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/bbioc) (search bbioc)

- *Rosalind Mohnsen*