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## BOSTON PIPINGS

news and notes for members of Boston Chapter AGO

### ***January 2021 Pippings - The Newsletter of the Boston Chapter AGO***

[Click here to go to the Calendar on our website.](#)

#### **Meet the Executive Committee**

Greetings!

Welcome to a new feature of our newsletter. We are asking members of our Executive Committee and of our Chapter to introduce themselves in our newsletter. This month we feature Stephan Griffin, Member-at-Large.

I grew up in Monkton, Maryland, a rural town roughly 25 miles north of Baltimore. My family sang in the choir at church, but it didn't stop there...they'd burst into song around the house, mid-conversation in the car (no, the radio wasn't on), and there was even more singing than usual if relatives came to visit. My first solo in church was *This little light of mine* around age 6 and eventually, I started playing melodies by ear on the piano. By age 8, my parents knew it was time for piano lessons. One Sunday afternoon, we went to a concert given by Virginia Reinecke and the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra. I don't remember what they played, but I do remember meeting Virginia after the concert and she was ecstatic to hear about my fascination with Grieg...we had just been introduced to the first *Peer Gynt Suite* in music class. A couple days go by and I'm sitting in her living room being interviewed for her studio. Fast forward five years and I've started playing in church, discovered how the Hammond B-3 works (thanks to a cousin), and joined the Maryland State Boychoir at the recommendation of a friend from school. Four years of rugby and zero hand injuries later, I'm finishing high school armed with eleven years of piano lessons, five years of serious



choral training, two years of voice lessons, and a year of pipe organ lessons from Frank Cimino, director of the Boychoir.

I arrived at BU as an undergraduate voice major with a plan to finish two degrees in five years, get a job in the corporate world, and do music on the side. The next semester I added organ lessons, and the following year I officially added a business major with a finance concentration.

The summer after my sophomore year was spent fully immersed in the business school. I enjoyed all of my classes, but they didn't hold a candle to rehearsals with Ann Jones or lessons with Susan Ormont and Peter Sykes. Then came my junior year. *\*insert dramatic fully diminished seventh chord\** I decided to study abroad at the Royal College of Music and the experience completely ruined my amazing plan. In short, inspiration overload. By the time I left London, I knew that music was going to be more than just a side job. I returned to Boston energized and inspired, but I needed a new plan. Four grad school auditions and two senior recitals later, I still wasn't sure if I was going to be an organist or a singer. Thankfully, my teachers reminded me that I wouldn't suddenly lose one skill if I chose to pursue a degree in the other.

By August, I was starting a MMus in organ at the University of Texas at Austin with Gerre and Judy Hancock, and on the music faculty St. Stephen's Episcopal Boarding School. I was the chapel organist on Sundays, but during the week I taught voice and coached chamber music. I managed to keep my own voice in shape by singing in the UT choirs and as the bass soloist and chorus master for Ensemble Settecento (now Austin Baroque Orchestra).

Two years later, I found myself back in Boston doing a DMA in organ with Peter, studying conducting with Ann Jones, singing around town, and working as the Director of Music at Trinity Episcopal Church in Newport, RI.

Fast forward to the present day and I'm often asked if I consider myself more of a singer or an organist. In my response, I'll usually quote Jessye Norman who said, "pigeon holes are only comfortable for pigeons." I've finished my DMA, but still do a lot of choral singing, accompanying, occasional organ recitals, guest conducting, and oratorio solos. I'm in my third season at All Saints, Brookline, and in addition to AGO, I'm a member of the Liturgy and Music Commission for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and a Director-at-Large for the Association of Anglican Musicians. I couldn't be more grateful for the journey and the amazing teachers that I've had along the way.

Yours sincerely,

*Stephan Griffin*  
Member at Large

## Welcome New Chapter Members

We would to welcome these new Chapter Members:

Katherine Angier  
Mary-Katherine Fletcher  
Dr. Harold F. Fortuin

We are glad you have joined us. We look forward to meeting you soon either 'virtually' or 'in person'.



## Organ Library News



The Organ Library received a very large donation (10 large boxes) of organ scores in very fine condition from Dr. John Near, the editor for the A-R editions of all the Widor works. Dr. Near was a Boston University graduate who has retired to Florida.

**The Library has added new web page for the recently digitized reel-to-reel tapes from E. Power Biggs' audio room.** The digitization was paid for by the National HQ, which gave a grant to the OHS for this collaboration between OHS and The Organ Library. The work was done in the amazing facilities at The New England Document Conservation Center in Andover. We are still in the process of listening to and labeling all the recordings, but they are now all up on their own

page of the Library website. Some are just radio chat from the 1950s, but most are programs that EPB recorded that went out on the CBS Radio Network. This work is now considered historic! To visit the new webpage, [click here](#).

### With Appreciation



The Boston Chapter would like to acknowledge and thank the following Chapter members who generously contributed additional monies to fund chapter programs and operations. These donations are above and beyond dues payment, and are directed toward General Operations (O), Educational Programs (E), the Organ Library (L), and the Young Organist Initiative (YOI). This year, these funds have helped us to fund a ZOOM account, a

YouTube account, production of virtual recitals, lessons for YOI students, and the continued operations of the Organ Library. We are deeply grateful to the following donors:

Jonathan Ambrosino (E)  
Margaret Angelini (O, E, L)  
Raffi R. Berberian (O)  
Daryl J. Bichel (O, E, L)  
Rachel J. Burckardt (O, E)  
Mitchell L. Crawford (O)  
Neil E Dugas (O)  
John Dunn (YOI)  
Fred W. Ehrhardt (E)  
John W. Ehrlich (O)

Ruth M. Gordon (O)  
Catherine Grein (O)  
Ivan J. Hansen (O, E, L)  
Thomas Hoisington (E)  
Amy E. Lepak (E)  
Linda J Lyster (E, L)  
Jeffrey A. Mills (O, E)  
Marilyn E. Moore (E)  
Samuel E.A. Nelson (L)

Robert P. Noble (O, E, L)  
Donald W. Paine (E)  
Christopher D. Porter (O)  
Lois W. Regestein (E)  
Mary Jane Rupert (O, E)  
Bryce Benjamin Sady (E)  
Paul Sawyer (O, E)  
Denise Ann Shea (O)  
Victoria L. Wagner (O, E)  
Mary Sue Willie (E, L)

### From the Program Committee



Even with a vaccine on the way, the recent uptick in COVID cases nationwide (and close to home) has meant programming will remain online as we move into the New Year. Upcoming events include:

**A Virtual BachBash:** This March, BAGO will sponsor a virtual BachBash, featuring members of the chapter in performances honoring the great Leipzig cantor.

**WIMFest 2021:** For our annual celebration of Women Composers, exploring "Multitude of Voyces, Vol. I" (edited by Louise Stewart and published by Stainer & Bell). When conditions permit, we look forward to facilitating a reading session to explore material from this wonderful collection.

**Spring Annual Meeting:** Save the date! Our annual meeting will be held via Zoom. This is an opportunity to interact with other BAGO members, to hear about the year in retrospect, and discuss the exciting things to come. More details to follow.

## Special Projects Advisory Committee (SPAC) News

**SPAC**

The next deadline for project submissions is **March 15, 2021**. To read more about SPAC, or to view submission guidelines, please [click here](#). Special Project Advisory Committee



### First Night Concert available on YouTube

Our first ever virtual First Night CTncert Premiere on Facebook was a success! We have over 450 views during the 40 minute concert. If you missed the premiere, you may view this concert any time on our [YouTube Channel](#).

The Program features performances by David von Behren, Matthew Dion, Katelyn Emerson, and John Roper.

#### **PROGRAM:**

Grand Dialogue from the 3e Livre d'Orgue — Louis Marchand (1669–1732)  
Hymne d'Actions de Grâces "Te Deum" from Trois Paraphrases Grégoriennes — Jean Langlais (1907–1991)  
Matthew Dion, organist

Christ lag in Todesbanden, BWV 625 — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)  
Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 639 — Bach  
John Roper, organist

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella — Keith Chapman (1945–1989)  
David von Behren, organist

from La Nativité du Seigneur — Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)  
II. Les bergers  
VI. Les anges  
Katelyn Emerson, organist

IX. Dieu parmi nous  
David von Behren, organist

**MATTHEW DION** is a native of Somerset, Massachusetts and a fourth-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Music Degree in Organ and a Minor in Music History at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He is currently an organ student of Dr. Jonathan Moyer. A 2015 recipient of the YOI Scholarship from BAGO, he was also a 2019 prizewinner in the chapter level AGO RCYO/Quimby Organ Competition.  
[www.mdionorganist.com](http://www.mdionorganist.com)

**JOHN ROPER** is a student at Assumption University with interests in web design and computer simulation, with specialities in the development of tools for 3D Visual effects and simulation. At Assumption, he studies Organ as well as Composition,

and holds memberships in the Boston and Worcester chapters of the AGO.  
[www.jmroper.com/](http://www.jmroper.com/)

**KATELYN EMERSON** has won prizes in organ competitions on three continents, and garnered acclaim from listeners new to classical music and aficionados alike. Recently based in Stuttgart, she was awarded a German Academic Exchange Scholarship and, in 2020, received her Master's Degree in Organ from the Musikhochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst. Katelyn was Associate Organist & Choirmaster at the Church of the Advent from 2016-2018.  
[www.katelynemerson.com](http://www.katelynemerson.com)

Nebraska native **DAVID VON BEHREN** is Assistant University Organist and Choirmaster of the Memorial Church at Harvard University. He received the Master of Music from Yale University, studying organ with Martin Jean, improvisation with Jeff Brillhart, and choral conducting with Marguerite Brooks. Prior to his appointment at Harvard, David was senior organ scholar at Trinity Church on the Green in New Haven, Connecticut. [www.davidvonbehren.com](http://www.davidvonbehren.com)

**Featured instruments:** Saint Anne's Shrine, Fall River, MA (Casavant Frères, 1964); First-Plymouth Congregational, Lincoln, NE (Schoenstein & Co., 1997); Assumption University, Worcester, MA (Russell and Co., 1995); Chapel of St John the Divine, Champaign, IL (Buzard Pipe Organ Builders, 1991).

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## Addendum to the Operating Procedures

The Executive Committee has requested that an Addendum be added to the Chapter's Operating Procedures. This Addendum would be a repository for policies and practices of how committees operate. For example, one entry would be the policy that placement listings be published for 6 months or until the position is filled. Another example would be our child protection policy (e.g., the need for CORI certification, etc.). The benefit of adding an Addendum in that all information would be in one document.

The Addendum would be different than the Operating Procedures in that any changes to this portion of the document would only require Executive Committee approval. The changes would not need to be published to the Chapter Membership for 30 days before a change could be made. As an example, if the EC would want to expand placement listings from 6 months to 8 months, only an EC vote would be required.

The updated Operating Procedures are available on our website [here](#).

To comment, [click here](#) and address your comments to the Dean of the Chapter from the drop down box.

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## Organs of the Boston Area

Would you like your church organ to be listed on our website? We have a page dedicated to "Organs of Boston". If you would like to include a pipe organ in this list, please send a photo (.jpg or .png), the organ specifications, and the history to [Claire DeCusati](#).



To view the current listings, please [click here](#)



## Update on AGO HQ Policy on Child Safety

In our December newsletter, we published the proposed change in our Operating Procedures to add a Child Safety Committee. The 30 day comment period has closed with no changes or edits to the proposal. The Executive Committee will vote on this addition at the next EC meeting February 8th. More information will be provided in upcoming Pippings.

## Know your Chapter's History Quiz:

In 1950, The Boston Chapter hosted the National Convention for the American Guild of Organists. Which of the following is not true of the convention?

- The convention was headed by Dean Ruth Barrett Phelps, first woman Dean of the Chapter
- The convention featured music of "the moderns" - Hindemith, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Sowerby among other composers
- It had the largest attendance to date of any AGO National Convention with 1,141 attendees
- It hosted the Contest for Young Organists for the first time
- It was cool in July



[Click here for the answer!](#)

## AGO Membership - keep your information updated

Have you moved lately? Has your address, phone, or email changed? If so you are probably busy with many tasks, and keeping your information current with AGO Headquarters may be lower on your to-do list.

Let us help! You can update ONCARD directly using your login id and password (the account number found on your TAO label). Or you can contact me using contact section of our website. [Click here](#) and address your comments to the Membership Secretary from the drop down box.



If you have suffered financial hardships and loss of income as a result of the pandemic, AGO has received donations to assist those who cannot afford to renew their

memberships. If you do need assistance, contact me so that I may send your name to AGO HQ. Your request will be held in confidence.

Please visit the AGO COVID-19 resource page by [clicking here](#) .

Most importantly, during this particularly challenging time, continuing to be part of our chapter offers you the opportunity to stay connected with a community who is here to engage, uplift and support you.

*Lynn Vermeer  
Registrar*



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Click the image to link to AGO HQ website

Boston Chapter, American Guild of Organists | [bostonago@verizon.net](mailto:bostonago@verizon.net)

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