



The Executive Committee of
Grand Rapids AGO
2008-2009

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THE CIPHER

The Monthly Newsletter of the Grand Rapids Chapter
American Guild of Organists

September 2008

From the Dean

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

At the outset of the **International Year of the Organ**, National Headquarters of the AGO launched a massive Phonathon in an effort to contact all lapsed members of the Guild from the last ten years. Members of your Executive Committee have called, contacted personally, or tracked down the fifty former members of our chapter who fall into this category. Because we were able to report on all fifty persons, our chapter is again in the running for winning the AGO Chapter Challenge--for the third time.

As a result of these efforts, nine persons have agreed to rejoin the guild, and another eight have promised to seriously consider rejoining. Each of these persons has been sent the Dean's invitational letter, a registration form, and a copy of our August Cipher. If you know any former members of our chapter, will you talk to them about coming back to us? 2008/09 is a wonderful time to belong to the Guild, what with the special events connected with the **IYO** and the seven marvelous programs we have lined up for this season.

The **IYO** begins in West Michigan with an appropriately spectacular event. This is the Inaugural Guild Service in Dimnent Chapel in Holland on September 15. Huw Lewis will play the newly-restored E. M. Skinner organ, and Karl Schrock will conduct a choir of thirty dedicated choristers in four anthems. At the heart of the service will be the installation of the officers of the four West Michigan chapters involved in this event.

On next Monday or Tuesday, a member of the Executive Committee will call you to ask for your dinner reservation. If you are not called, please telephone your dinner reservation in to Errol Shewman before Wednesday evening, September 10 (456-9232). Dinner will be served at 6:30 in the Smeelink Dining Hall at Western Theological Seminary, in the building directly south of Dimnent Chapel. A vegetarian entrée is available. Please tell your caller or Errol if you would prefer this type of meal.

The general public is cordially invited to attend and participate in this Guild celebration. The hymn-singing led by Huw Lewis will be spectacular, so encourage your friends and congregational members to attend. Below you will find a capsule bulletin announcement. Tomorrow please make an effort (personally or electronically) to have your church place this announcement in the Sunday bulletin of September 7. And on Wednesday, please paste it into an emailed invitation to friends and family who love church music. On Thursday, please, if you are a text-messenger, let people know about this event. On Friday, call someone and invite them. And on Sunday, speak to persons in your church who love good church music.

And on Monday, September 15, be the kind of person you want the world to be.

Howard Slenk

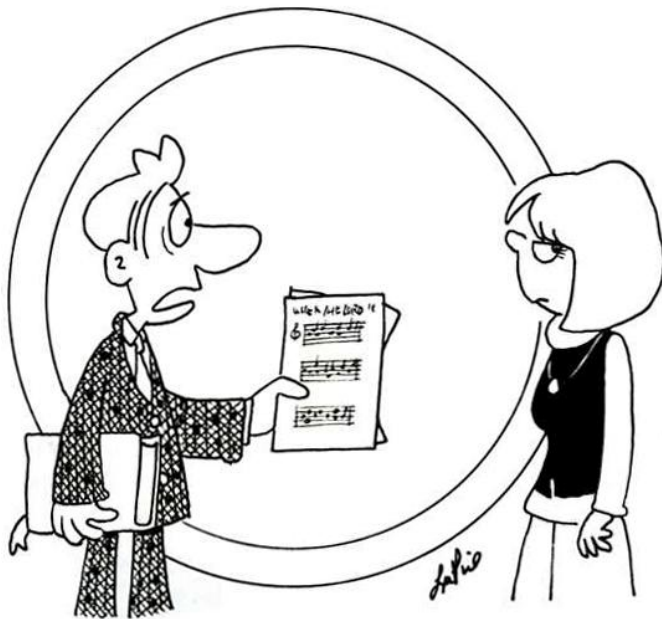


Bulletin Announcement

The American Guild of Organists has declared this year *The International Year of the Organ*. The IYO begins in West Michigan with an appropriately spectacular event. This is the Inaugural Guild Service in Dimnent Chapel in Holland on September 15 at 8:00 p.m.. Huw Lewis will play the newly-restored E. M. Skinner organ, and Karl Schrock will conduct a choir of thirty dedicated choristers in four anthems. At the heart of the service will be the installation of the officers of the four West Michigan chapters involved in this event. The four chapters are Holland, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Muskegon. Everyone is enthusiastically invited for a service which will include great hymn singing and choral anthems..

September Meeting

On next Monday or Tuesday, a member of the Executive Committee will call you to ask for your dinner reservation. If you are not called, please telephone your dinner reservation in to Errol Shewman before Wednesday evening, September 10 (456-9232). Dinner will be served at 6:30 in the Smeelink Dining Hall at Western Theological Seminary, in the building directly south of Dimnent Chapel. A vegetarian entrée is available. Please tell your caller or Errol if you would prefer this type of meal. You may find an interactive map of the Hope campus here:



"Pastor is preaching this Sunday on suffering.
He wants you to sing this hymn off-key."

Still time to register

WORSHIPPING BECAUSE IT MATTERS: THE DESIGN OF EFFECTIVE CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Herbert Brokering, Carl Schalk and Robert Rimbo will collaborate to lead a workshop at Camp Arcadia (located in Northwest Michigan on the shores of Lake Michigan) on the dates of September 21 - 24, 2008.

Corporate worship through Word, Sacrament, and song is called "the source and summit of the Christian life." This retreat examines sacred song. Led interactively by three major thinkers about worship -- pastor and liturgical scholar Robert Rimbo, composer and musicologist Carl Schalk, and poet and hymn writer Herbert Brokering -- sessions will move from the setting, mission, ritual and community incorporated into worship, to the specifics of effective congregational song.

Schalk and Brokering will illustrate with poetry, melody, rhythm, and harmony what makes existing compositions work. They will also demonstrate with an entirely new text and tune of their own collaboration how this happens.

Rimbo will explore how liturgical sequences, texts, and chants unite a people in seasonal stances toward their Creator and Redeemer.

Aspiring hymn writers or liturgists are encouraged to bring samples of their work for comment. The retreat is aimed at those attentive to congregational song: parish musicians, pastors, supportive laity, teachers and students. Though led by Lutherans, the content will be for all liturgical churches.

You can find out more by going to www.camp-arcadia.com and clicking on the **vacation** page, then clicking on "**Church Music Symposium**." — *Chip May, Director, Camp Arcadia*

Who: Those who care about making Congregational Worship meaningful

When: Sunday, September 21 - Wednesday September 24, 2008

Where: Camp Arcadia (North of Manistee)

What: A symposium of Composers, Writers, and Pastors who study worship and the things that make it meaningful.

Why: To Celebrate and Uplift Congregational Worship

How Much: \$250 per person

American Public Media's *Pipedreams* Brings *Pipedreams Live!* to Hope College on September 22

(St. Paul, Minn.) DATE, 2008—*Pipedreams*®, the only nationally distributed weekly radio program exploring the art of the pipe organ, is coming to the Dimnent Memorial Chapel at Hope College for a *Pipedreams Live!* performance with *Pipedreams* host Michael Barone. *Pipedreams* is produced and distributed by American Public Media™ and can be heard every Sunday at 7 a.m. on Blue Lake Public Radio, WBLV-FM 90.3 (Muskegon and the Lakeshore) and WBLU-FM 88.9 (Grand Rapids).

This *Pipedreams Live!* concert will feature Hope College resident organist Huw Lewis and Hope College students and alumni showcasing Dimnent Memorial Chapel's magnificently restored 1928 E.M. Skinner pipe organ.

During *Pipedreams Live!*, Barone provides program notes, converses with players and the audience, and demonstrates the mechanism and sound palette of the featured instrument. On rare occasions, he might even play a piece.

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Monday, September 22, 2008

WHERE: Dimnent Memorial Chapel auditorium, Hope College, Holland

About *Pipedreams*

On January 3, 1982, the first installment of a 14-program series titled *Pipedreams* was broadcast on Minnesota Public Radio and distributed free to the public radio system. MPR music director Michael Barone was both producer and host, and those programs featured numerous concert performances recorded during a national convention of the American Guild of Organists held in the Twin Cities during the summer of 1980. *Pipedreams* evolved from *The Organ Program*, which Barone had produced since 1970 for MPR's regional network. The AGO convention materials proved to be "good enough for prime time" and subsequently recorded performances from the 1982 AGO convention in Washington, D.C., brought about a re-launch of *Pipedreams* in October 1983 and the program has continued in national syndication since then.

Events of Interest

Music at Mid-Day;

Park Congregational Church, UCC

10 East Park Place, Grand Rapids. Free Concerts on Tuesdays 12:15—12:45 p.m.

Sept. 16 – Jim Metzler , organ

Sept. 23 – Jay Round, dulcimer

Sept. 30 – William Maddox, organ (from Toronto , Canada)

Oct. 7 – Cheryl Wells, flute; Carol McNally , piano/organ

Oct. 14 – David Phillips, organ (from Toronto , Canada)

Oct. 21 – Jeff Dwarshuis, classical guitar

Oct. 28 – Mark Loring, organ (music for Halloween)

Nov. 4 – Jeanne Hanley and Wendy Chu, pianists

Nov. 11 – Chris Dekker, organ

Nov. 18 – Pamela Smither Baker, trumpet; Fred Norris, piano

Nov. 25 – Carol McNally , organ (music for Thanksgiving)

Dec. 2 – Nancy Van Baak, soprano; Frans Van Liere, flute; Stephen Redmon, cello; Verlyn Schultz, harpsichord

Dec. 9 – Helen Hawley, organ (music for Advent and Christmas)

Dec. 16 – Caledonia High School Chorales

AGO Programs this Season

September 15—Opening Service; Dimnent Chapel

October 6— Dame Gillian Weir; Mayflower Church

October 19—Organ Spectacular: Park Church

November 17— Composer of the Year Richard Stewart; Trinity Lutheran Church

December—No meeting

January—No meeting

February 16 –Young Organist Competition; Immanuel Lutheran Church

March 18—Dupré, Stations of the Cross; Basilica of St. Adalbert

April 20—Maasaki Suzuki; Calvin College Chapel

May 18—Martin Neary; Park Church

For more information, see our website:

<http://www.grago.org/chapter/programs.shtml>

The PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA in Concert with the WANAMAKER ORGAN

Celebrating Macy's 150th Anniversary

Saturday, September 27 at 7:30 pm
The Grand Court at Macy's
John Wanamaker Building
13th & Market Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Rossen Milanov, Conductor
Peter Richard Conte, Soloist



On Sale Now! To buy tickets, click [here](#)

The soaring Grand Court of the famous Philadelphia department store—home to the thunderous Wanamaker Organ—will be transformed into a magnificent concert hall on Saturday September 27.

The **Philadelphia Orchestra** combines its resources with those of the **Wanamaker Organ**, the world's largest playing pipe organ. The organ has 28,482 pipes ranging from the size of a pencil to giants towering 37 feet tall. Performed for the first time here is Joseph Jongen's *Symphonie Concertante*. One of the most famous organ-orchestra pieces, closing in a thrilling pull-out-all-the stops toccata, it was written for the Wanamaker Organ and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1926, but to date has never been played on the instrument for which it was intended.

This event is co-sponsored by Macy's and by the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, and is a benefit for the Friends. The event is part of Macy's official 150th Anniversary Celebration, and includes a new composition by Howard Shore, who wrote the music for 'The Lord of the Rings' films.

Patrons purchasing tickets at \$500 and above are entitled to a lavish pre-concert open-bar and *hors d'oeuvres* party amid the Gilded Age splendor of the Mayor's Reception Room at City Hall. They are also entitled to a Curators Tour of the Wanamaker Organ at Noon the following day, with light refreshments and wine in the Wanamaker Organ Shop at Macy's. Holders of tickets of \$1000 or higher will receive a tax deduction for amounts above the \$500 'base price' of the ticket.

Tickets priced \$200 and above are in prime seating areas in the Grand Court. Tickets priced \$250 and above will have a direct Main Floor view of the orchestra. Lesser-priced seating is along the Grand Court upper balconies on floors two and three. Seating is extremely limited and demand for this rare event is expected to be exceptionally heavy—please purchase your tickets promptly.

Macy's is installing large TV monitors to provide views to those on the balconies.

*A similar concert in 1919 attracted 15,000 concertgoers. It was said that when the resources of the Philadelphia Orchestra and Wanamaker Organ were combined, the result was a "perfect Niagara of sound," transforming the Grand Court into a "temple of thrilling harmonies and soaring epics of tone." Nothing like this has been done in almost a century, nor is the event likely to be repeated in the near future. For the first time in decades, the entire resources of the Wanamaker Organ will be available, including the recently restored **Orchestral Division**.*

In addition to the Jonge "Symphonie Concertante" and the Howard Shore "Fanfare", the program includes organ-orchestra arrangements of the Bach/Stokowski "Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor," and the sublime "Cortege and Litany" by Marcel Dupré. All these works will be heard as never before in sheer sonic splendor as the world's largest pipe organ teams its resources with the formidable players of the full Philadelphia Orchestra.

Much additional information, including exciting details on the Wanamaker Organ and a seating chart, may be found at www.wanamakerorgan.com Additional information is at www.ticketphiladelphia.org To buy tickets, click [here](#)

Tickets can also be obtained by telephone **TicketPhiladelphia** directly at **215-893-1999**, where a specially trained staff can answer questions and meet special needs.