

# THE DESERT WIND

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Southern Nevada Chapter  
American Guild of Organists

## Dean's Notes

Dear SNCAGO Friends,

As we begin our musical preparations for the Lent/Easter season, and as Spring approaches, it is a time for renewal and reflection. I recently saw Margaret Hannah at two organ recitals. As I visited with her, I reflected on her contribution to our AGO Chapter over the past 50 years. I appreciate people like Margaret and Ethelyn Peterson, our last surviving founding members, for their vision, commitment and dedication to promoting the organ in our community. Their work has laid a solid foundation for teaching and excellent performance. They are great teachers and mentors.

Last year I attended an organ training workshop here in Las Vegas sponsored by Brigham Young University, which was heavily attended by young musicians. There

were nearly 300 people there, and an abundance of enthusiasm for the organ. Our future lies in this rising generation.

Recently, the Executive Board approved the awarding of four scholarships to young local organ students to attend the upcoming Pipe Organ Encounters in Los Angeles and Phoenix. Two additional students have registered at their own expense. I am so pleased that we can honor our founding Dean, Raymond Barnes, by awarding these scholarships. Please join me in congratulating these young people on their interest, talent and dedication.

As Lent/Easter approaches, I challenge all of us to reach out to younger organists in training. I encourage our members to mentor and help these budding musicians

to find avenues to express their talents. We can help them financially, offer tips and pointers, invite them to participate in opportunities to perform and play for services. There are many opportunities if we look for them with these young people in mind. May you have a joyous Advent/Easter in celebration of the Resurrection of the Savior.

My best regards,

Steven R. Wright, Dean  
SNCAGO



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# 50th Anniversary

of the

Southern Nevada Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

## Save This Date

Our Southern Nevada Chapter of the AGO will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this year on June 15, 2018. After a catered banquet and program in the Foundation Room at UNLV, during which our AGO National President, Michael Bedford, will bring greetings, guest organist James Kasen, assisted by The Choral Artists of Southern Nevada under the direction of Marsha Borovicka, will present a celebratory concert in adjacent Doc Rando Hall.

Stay tuned to the Desertwind in the next few months for more details of this exciting celebration!

Thanks!  
Kathi



Michael Bedford, President AGO



James Kasen



The Choral Artists of Southern Nevada

## Chartres Competition Winner Delivers Exciting Performance

On Friday, January 26, the 2014 grand prize-winner of the Concours International d'Orgue de Chartres, Dexter Kennedy, presented the third recital of our Southern Nevada Chapter's 2017-2018 Recital Series season in Doc Rando-Grillot Hall on the UNLV campus. It was a special bargain for the 135 audience members who attended since Mr. Kennedy's program consisted mostly of pieces he planned to play in his recital at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, February 17. Notre Dame was the venue where Dexter won the competition in 2014. Round-trip airfare from Las Vegas is currently +/- \$1,700, and that wouldn't have included any lodging (!), so hearing Mr. Kennedy's "Paris recital" was a great deal—free for Las Vegans!

His program opened with J. S. Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor*, BWV 543 and was followed by the *Trio Sonata IV in E Minor*, BWV 528. This was very satisfying playing; tempos, articulation, pacing and registrations were carefully considered and stylishly delivered. *In Festo Corporis Christi* by the Austrian composer and organist, Anton Heiller, immersed us into a totally different tonal and dramatic world. More contrast followed with English composer Ethyl Smyth's *Prelude and Fugue on "O Traurigkeit, O Herzeleid."* The four concluding works were all composed by 20th century French organists: Gason Litaize, Charles Tournemire, Louis Vierne, and Maurice Duruflé. The barely four-minute *Scherzo* by Gaston Litaize was a delightful bauble presented with verve and dash. Maurice Duruflé's reconstruction of Charles Tournemire's *Improvisation sur le 'Te Deum'* was powerful and dramatic, and the lovely *Romance from Symphony No. 4*, Op. 32 by Vierne which followed exhibited a fine sense of line and phrasing. Closing the program, the Duruflé *Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'ALAIN*, Op. 7, was played with aplomb and surety, and was a perfect and exciting piece to end the group of French pieces and the recital.

Here are the numbers from the evaluations:

Evaluations completed: 77

First time visiting Doc Rando: 6

First time hearing the Maurine Jackson Smith Organ: 13

First attendance at an AGO Recital Series program: 13

How many organ recitals have you attended at Do Rando  
(1-3) 7, (4-5) 5, more than 5 - 53

How did you hear about the recital?

e-mail: 55 flyer: 7 radio: 1 previous program: 12  
from a friend: 19 other: 4

What selections did you particularly enjoy?

The Bach works and the Duruflé were most cited

Which statement **best** describes your feelings about the program?

Loved it: 50 (64.93%) Liked it a lot: 20 (35.97%) Found it interesting: 7 (9.1%)

Might come back for another program: 0 Wasn't really interested: 0 Wouldn't come again: 0

Overall rating of the program, instrument and performer

Superb: 43 (56.6%) Excellent: 32 (42.1%) Average: 1 (1.3%) Fair: 0 Poor: 0

Combined average of "Superb" and "Excellent": 96.6%

New e-mail addresses: 15

We are very much indebted to our group of loyal patrons who make the Recital Series possible. Thanks also to members of the chapter who assisted with ushering, putting together the reception, page turning, and entering the guest recitalist. And we are grateful for your attendance!

Paul S. Hesselink, Chair, 2017-2018 Recital Series Committee



# PIPE ORGANS OF SCANDINAVIA

Part Two – Finland and Sweden

by

Dorothy Young Riess M.D.

In July 2017, I embarked on the Crystal Symphony in Copenhagen, Denmark, for a cruise of the Baltic Sea, including St Petersburg, Russia, and Norwegian Fjords, above the Arctic Circle to North Cape, then southward to Scotland and disembarking in Antwerp, Belgium. Along the way I saw and played many fine organs. Thanks to texting, the internet and especially Facebook I was able to contact the organists in advance and arrange to meet at a convenient time when the ship would be in port. All of the organists were gracious and generous with their time and instrument access. As part of the Baltic Sea cruise, I visited one organ in Helsinki, Finland, and two in Stockholm, Sweden.

Kallio Kirke, Helsinki, Finland, Tommi Niskala and Vivika Oksanen, organists, Åkerman & Lund Organ (48/III/P - 1995). My initial contact was David Pickering, one of our Concert Artists at UNLV, who referred me to his friend in Helsinki, who then arranged for me to meet Vivika Oksanen after Sunday service. The cruise ship had a shuttle service from ship to center of town and from there I took a taxi to the church, about a 25 minute ride. Vivika graciously allowed me an hour on the “Cavaille-Coll” copy in the rear loft. A mechanical organ with Barker machine, it has 60 ranks and 48 stops, the straight forward sounds and gritty french reeds one expects from CC in a splendid reverberant space. The straight pedal board always takes some getting used to as well as the lack of pistons!



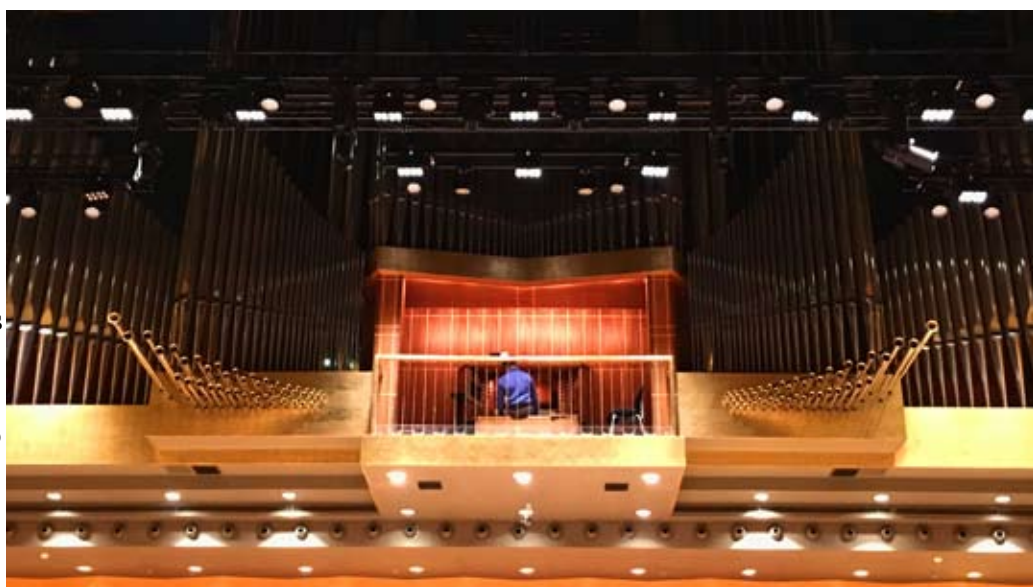
The author seated at Åkerman & Lund Organ  
in Kallio Kirke, Helsinki, Finland

Katerina Kirke, Stockholm, Sweden, Gregory Lloyd, organist, Van de Heuvel organ (62/III/P - 2000). A cab delivered me from the dock to the church in about 25 minutes. The symphonic organ of 85 ranks and 62 stops is in a spectacular setting with excellent reverberation. It has mechanical key action with Barker-levers and electronic stop action. The church site dates back to 1303. The church building from 1695 burned down twice, 1724 and 1990. The rebuild used measurements from the 1930s as the original plans were destroyed. Gregory is from Britain and the contact was through a friend on Facebook. He is a gifted player and we had a grand time chatting and playing the organ. A short cab ride brought me to my next venue. (I was warned by the cruise company to take only a certain company as many take advantage of tourists.)



Van de Heuvel organ at Katerina Kirke, Stockholm, Sweden

Concert Hall, Stockholm, Sweden, Ulf Norberg, organist, Grönlund pipe organ (68/IV/P - 1982). This is the famous hall where the Nobel Prizes are awarded and is a formidable experience. The view from the audience is very grand and the organ of 68 stops, 103 ranks and 6,100 pipes is spectacular! Entry for organists is through a side door, up many steps with twists and turns to the console high up on the wall. The sound at the console is somewhat less than in the hall and although it is a large instrument, it barely fills the 1,782 seat auditorium. After a delightful time with Ulf, who is also a fine singer, a cab delivered me to the ship shuttle in the center of town and return to the cruise ship.



Concert Hall, Stockholm, Sweden

Next: Part Three - Norway

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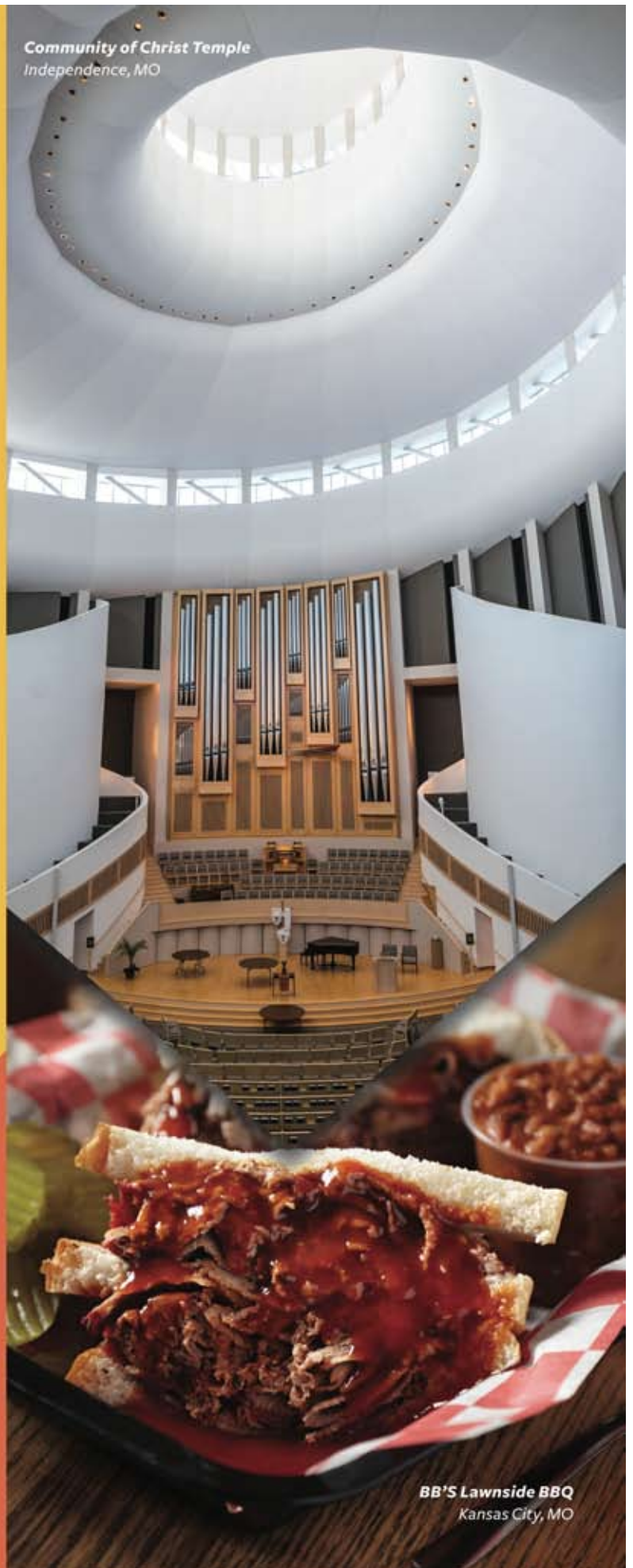
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