

# THE DESERT WIND

Editor: Bruce Behnke © 2016

Issue: March/April 2016

## Dean's Notes



Southern Nevada Chapter  
American Guild of Organists

In my last Dean's Notes I focused on our very successful nine years of hosting and presenting guest organists on our Organ Recital Series. It meets a number of the goals of the AGO, and our series has become the envy of a number of AGO Chapters. We are constantly receiving inquiries and requests for consideration of organists who wish to be considered as guests of the series.

The Organ Recital Series Committee has made excellent progress in the planning of the 2016-2017 season, and the particulars will be announced at a later time. This next season will be our 10th anniversary season.

There are three additional goals of the AGO, however, that we also need to consider:

- **To improve the proficiency of organists and choral conductors.** This is, of course, an important goal for any active church musician. We are reminded in the famous motto of one of our heroes, J.S. Bach: Soli Deo Gloria. (the

motto is inscribed across the logo of the AGO)--the chief reason for striving for excellence. One of the things we constantly hope to achieve is a greater degree of perfection. I have been fond of saying that over the years it has been my goal to play a perfect church service; it hasn't happened yet, so there is still room for improvement!

- **To evaluate, by examination, attainments in organ playing, choral techniques, conducting, and the theory and general knowledge of music, and to grant certificates to those who pass such examinations at specified levels of attainment.** The Guild Exams provide a splendid way for us to take advantage of resources and to add to our skill sets as organists. I think it has been a number of years since our chapter has mounted a concerted effort to help members prepare for and successfully take these exams. The most fundamental level of exams is the Service Playing Exam. Do we have any members who

would be willing to commit themselves to preparing to take and pass this exam? It really isn't as "scary" as it might sound. Some of you have already passed that level, and so may be willing to now consider moving up the next rung on the ladder: Colleague, Choir Master, Associateship, Fellowship.

- **To provide members with opportunities to meet for discussion of professional topics, and to pursue such other activities as contribute to the fulfillment of the purposes of the Guild.** Our chapter has consistently done well in this category. Perhaps we could have more workshops and meetings devoted to professional topics, but given the small number of chapter members who turn out for such events, I am not proposing we add to already busy schedules. Looking ahead, we have a promise from Tim Cooper to sometime soon visit his installation of his Hauptwerk instrument in his home, and member Dorothy Riess has also promised she would give a short photographic

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report on her recent trip to Antarctica. Stay tuned for more details.

I know that some AGO chapters have regularly scheduled monthly meetings---like every third Tuesday---when they meet for a catered meal and program. That has never seemed to be a practical or workable route to go for our Southern Nevada Chapter in the Las Vegas Valley where people have crazy work schedules and already heavy liens on their time.

Of course, we would entertain hearing from you regarding what you would like to see our chapter do.

Cordially,  
Paul

## Chelsea Chen Recital

Dorothy Young Riess

Organist-composer, Chelsea Chen, performed a recital at UNLV, Doc Rando Hall, Feb 26, 2016, the fourth of six concerts planned for the 2015-16 Recital Series. Her program included works by Bach, “*D Major Prelude and Fugue*”, Franck, “*Chorale in E Major*”, and Dupré, “*Prelude and Fugue in B Major*”. In addition, she made the north German Von Beckerath organ speak Chinese, Dutch and French by including original compositions on Chinese folk songs by herself and Japanese composer, Yui Kitamura, the clever samba, “*Miroir*”, by Dutch composer, Ad Wammes, “*Litanies*” by French composer, Jehan Alain, and *Prelude and Fugue on ALAIN* by Maurice Duruflé. Playing entirely from memory, her expertise and musical presentation of an exacting and technically difficult program brought a well deserved standing ovation from the appreciative audience.



Photo by Dorothy Young Riess

The numbers:

About **160** people attended the Chelsea Chen recital in Doc Rando Hall. We had **89** respondents (53.75 %) to our usual questionnaire with the following results:

Is this your first time visiting Doc Rando Hall ? 16 Yes 73 No  
 Is this your first hearing of the von Beckerath Organ? 16 Yes 81 No  
 Was this your first attendance at an AGO Recital Series program? 17 Yes 82 No  
 If you have attended organ recitals here before, how many?  
 14 1-3 4 4-5 57 more than 5

How did you hear about this recital?

38 e-mail notification 13 flyer 4 radio 23 previous program 26 from a friend  
 8 Internet/website 8 newspaper 4 other

Which selections on this program did you particularly enjoy?

Every composer on the program was somebody's favorite! Most mentioned were Bach, Wammes, Chen and Dupre.

Which ONE statement best describes your feelings about this program and performer?

73 loved it! 12 liked it a lot 3 found it interesting 0 not really interested. 0 wouldn't come again

Considering venue, instrument and performer, my overall rating for this program is:

68 Superb 19 Excellent 0 Average 0 Fair 0 Poor

Seventeen respondents requested they be added to the e-mail notification list.

One hundred percent (100%) of respondents rated Ms. Chens' performance as either "Superb" or "Excellent"! That is amazing!

I always hope that someday we will fill every seat in the house for our recitals. The numbers do indicate that we have developed a following of 'regular' attendees, and frequently, as at this recital, we do continue to attract some new people. We are so fortunate to have the Doc Rando Hall and the wonderful von Beckerath organ available for our Recital Series.

The Series wouldn't happen without the hard work of a number of people in our Southern Nevada AGO Chapter: the Recital Series Committee--Shireen Beaudry, Jan Bigler, Genie Burkett and David Dorway); our Reception Committee --Doris Frances and helpers and the many members who contribute food for the receptions; Susan Lasher for program design; Dorothy Riess, our official photographer; our video experts, Jeff and Kathi Colman, (when our recitals are held at Christ Church Episcopal); Christian Lentz for his expertise in maintaining the von Beckerath organ; and many others of you who help out in various ways when called upon. Last but not least, we are indebted to our more than 60 patrons who through their financial generosity make the bringing of quality artists for the series possible. Thank you to all for your attendance and support of the Organ Recital Series.

Paul S. Hesselink, Chair  
 2015-2016 Organ Recital Series Committee

## Organ Pipes Available

Member Kathi Colman, choir director at Christ Church Episcopal, has a collection of organ pipes that she would like to pass on to the next person. Although not enough to make an organ they would make a nice facade or art project. The metal pipes include several Diapasons as well as extensive 2 foot flutes and 2 foot principals. Wooden pipes include Borduns and various flutes. You may contact Kathi at 702 564-7229 for more information.

## Kordörfer Recital April 8, 2016

Our next Organ Recital, featuring Dr. Jens Korndörfer, will be Friday April 8, 2016 at 7:30 P.M. in Doc Rando Hall on the Campus of UNLV.

Dr. Jens Korndörfer is Director of Worship, the Arts, and Organist at First Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, GA, and instructor for organ and harpsichord at Agnes Scott College.

In the past decade, he has given more than 200 concerts at major venues around the world, including Westminster Abbey in London, Notre Dame Cathedral and St. Sulpice in Paris, Chapel Royal in Versailles, Moscow Cathedral, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche in Berlin, the Münster in Ulm, St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue in New York, Cathedral-Basilica in St. Louis, St. James Cathedral in Toronto, Suntory Hall and Metropolitan Art Space in Tokyo, Kyoto Concert Hall and Cultural Centre in Hong Kong.

Critics and organists have called him a “prodigious technician” (La Presse, Montreal), and have praised his “effortless, poetic,” “colourful and exciting playing” (Prof. Landale and ORGAN Canada), whose concerts have “thrilled the audience” (Mixtures).



Dr. Korndörfer has spent the last twelve years in France, Japan, the United States and Canada. His multinational experience has enabled him to become intimately familiar with a wide range of different cultures, instruments and musical styles, allowing him to be equally at home in the interpretation of music by composers as different as Bach and Messiaen, Couperin and Reger, Franck and Ives. Additionally, he enjoys including transcriptions of orchestral, instrumental, and even film music in his programs, in order to bring new listeners to the pipe organ.

He graduated with top-honors from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris (Diploma in Organ-Interpretation, class of Olivier Latry and Michel Bouvard; Harpsichord with Francoise Marmin), the Oberlin Conservatory (Artist Diploma, James David Christie), the Musikhochschule in Bayreuth (Church Music Diploma, Organ with H. Leuschner, Harpsichord with Oscar Milani, Piano with Michael Wessel) and McGill University in Montreal (Doctor of Music, Hans-Ola Ericsson, John Grew and Willaim Porter).

In September 2005, he became the first German appointed organist in residence at the Concert Hall Kitara in Sapporo, Japan. During one year, he gave approximately 50 recitals in Sapporo and major venues throughout Japan and was in frequent demand as a teacher (organ studio, master classes, etc.). During his tenure there, he also recorded a solo-CD with works by Bach, Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Reger, Liszt, Brahms and Wagner as well as a DVD presenting Kitara’s organ, and concertized with orchestras (Sapporo Symphony Orchestra and the Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini under Lorin Maazel).

Dr. Korndörfer is a triple prize winner of the Canadian International Organ Competition, held in Montréal in 2008 and 2011. His talent has also been recognised with numerous scholarship awards from organizations

such as the German Academic Exchange Service, the BACH-woche Ansbach, the Festival du Comminges, the Oberlin Conservatory (Dean's Scholarship), McGill-University (Max Stern Fellowship) and the Government of Quebec (Quebec Merit Scholarship).

Aside from his busy concert schedule on three continents, Dr. Korndörfer has taught in various settings (organ studio at the School of Fine Arts of First Presbyterian Church Atlanta; master classes in Japan, France and Germany; teaching assistant of Prof. Christie at the Oberlin Conservatory) and shared his knowledge and experience in presentations at conferences in Germany, the USA (AGO National Convention 2012), and Asia (Hong Kong Cultural Centre). Furthermore, he has published several articles in American, Belgian, British, French, German, Russian and Swiss music journals, and has served on the jury of the Quimby Competition held at the AGO Southeast Regional Convention in Charlotte, SC, in 2015.

In 2009, he recorded "Trumpet Ave Maria" together with Kazuhiro Maekawa (solo-trumpet of the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra) at the Harmony Hall in Fukui (Japan). Two years later, his second CD "Variations on America" was released by the ORGAN-label.

Dr. Korndörfer is represented by Karen McFarlane Artists, Inc., in North America.

**Bruce Behnke** What first started your interest in the pipe organ?

**Dr. Jens Korndörfer** I had played the organ for a year, but did not like it too much and hardly ever practiced - my teacher at that time even came up with excuses for me why I had not practiced. Fortunately, someone else got her job, and when I was 16. My new teacher took me to a concert with all four Toccatas by Bach. Not surprisingly, the one that fascinated me the most was 'the' Toccata in d, and I told my teacher that I wanted to play it: even though it was way above anything I had played until then, he agreed, and - lo and behold - I started practicing like crazy! The old church where I practiced was right next to the minister's house, and after awhile, he came to see me and said: "It's great that you are so excited about playing the organ, Jens, but could you please bring down the volume a little bit?" - I had practiced using the tutti of the organ for hours in a row, including a magnificent 16' Posaune that was placed right next to the wall of the minister's study... I also went to the public library and found a CD with 'my' piece performed by Edgar Krapp on the giant organ of the Cathedral in Passau, which to my knowledge is still the largest instrument in a church. There was a two-week limit to take out CDs, so I would return it after two weeks and come back the following day to take it out again!



**Behnke** How old were you when you first started studying the organ seriously?

**Korndörfer** During my last years in high school, I practiced organ and piano a lot, but I also played trombone, sang in the church choir and gospel choir, played in the 'Posaunenchor', etc., as I wanted to become a church musician (Kantor). However, during my mandatory military service, I served as accompanist in the German Music Corps. All of a sudden, I had lots of time to practice the piano, and hardly anything else to do - usually, I started my day with one hour of Hanon or Czerny on the piano, what else can one do after a 5am wake-up call?

My technique improved, and when I finally started my church music studies in Bayreuth, I quickly realized that

the organ was my real strong suit. I practiced more and more (organ & piano, but never voice...), was selected to perform with orchestra, etc. The turning point came when I told my teacher that I wanted to go abroad and study with Olivier Latry at the National Conservatory in Paris: going from a small no-name church music school to one of the most famous and prestigious schools in the world to study with the titular organist of Notre Dame Cathedral sounded like a crazy idea. With one exception, my teachers told me that I had no chance, but I practiced ten hours and more per day, and was admitted in 2002 - unanimously. After three years of intense and exciting studies, I was also awarded the highest degree in the final examination as the best of my class.

**Behnke** Who are some of the most influential teachers with whom you studied?

**Korndörfer** I have been fortunate to study with some of the greatest organists and pedagogues of our times: Michel Bouvard and Olivier Latry at the Paris Conservatory CNSM, James-David Christie at the Oberlin Conservatory, and Hans-Ola Ericsson, John Grew and William Porter at McGill University.

The two teachers who were most influential in my career are Michael Wessel, my piano professor at the Musik-hochschule in Bayreuth, and Olivier Latry: Wessel was my first teacher after High school. It was under his guidance that my keyboard technique exploded, and he made me aware of the magic one can produce on a keyboard instrument by approaching it as a collection of (orchestral) instruments whose sounds the pianist attempts to imitate. Most importantly, he believed in my talent, provided me with the opportunity to perform as a soloist with a professional orchestra, and encouraged my dreams to enter the Paris Conservatory - even though it was as an organist, and not a pianist. In many ways, he laid the groundwork that Guilmant and Dupré required from their students before they would be admitted into their organ studios.

Being able to study for three years under the guidance of Latry was a dream come true, and the list of things he taught me would be very long. Suffice it to say that it changed my approach and view of the organ forever, and I continue to expand on his amazing ideas.

**Behnke** What are some of the more interesting venues in which you have played?

**Korndörfer** In my opinion, there are two different categories of venues where I have performed that are interesting: the first ones because of the quality of the instrument and/or the beauty of the venue, the second ones because of the place that the organ and classical music occupy in its society.

Among the first category, I would list the Parisian churches (Notre-Dame Cathedral, St. Sulpice, La Madeleine...), St. Croix in Bordeaux (the reeds of the Dom Bédos organ are simply breathtaking), Westminster Abbey in London, the Minster in Ulm, St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in New York and the Cathedral-Basilica in St. Louis.



Among the second category, Asia and Russia come to mind: concert halls (there are only few churches in these countries) are frequently sold out, thanks to amazing advertising efforts of the organizers, the imaginative programming, and the prominent place that classical music occupies in these societies.

I was honored to serve as organist in residence at the Concert Hall Kitara in Sapporo, Japan, in the 2005/06 season. During my time there, I gave many concerts for kids and teenagers (the 'First Concerts', a series of ten concerts together with the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra, were attended by 16,000 fifth-graders!), my Bach concerts were

sold out weeks in advance (thanks to a short TV ad with the opening measures of 'the' Toccata), and I got my biggest ovation ever after performing my own arrangement of Puccini's 'Nessun dorma', the piece that Japan's sole gold medal winner in the 2006 Torino Olympics had used for her free skating program... Together with classical concerts on Sunday nights and piano masterclasses on Wednesday nights on national TV, that was a pretty unique experience, which continues to inform my own work as a concert organist and as Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.

**Behnke** Do you do any improvisation and or have you ever composed music?

**Korndörfer** I enjoy improvising during church every Sunday, but I do not consider myself a concert improviser and prefer to leave this to others who excel in it. I have not yet composed, but I have arranged many compositions for the organ, including works for piano, orchestra, from musicals, films and operas.

**Behnke** Who are some of your favorite modern composers?

**Korndörfer** Olivier Messiaen is at the very top of my list, followed by Thierry Escaich, Pamela Decker and Jean-Baptiste Robin.

**Behnke** What pieces will you be playing for us?

**Korndörfer** My program is going to reflect the eclectic influences in my career, ranging from 'classical' organ repertoire by Bach, Muffat and Reger (Introduktion and Passacaglia in d), to virtuosic arrangements of Beethoven (excerpts from the Fifth Symphony), Brahms, and Strauss (Blue Danube Waltz), and finally the French school with Tournemire (Victim paschali).

I am looking extremely forward to performing this exciting program on the beautiful van Beckerath organ.

## DOROTHY YOUNG RIESS M.D.

Concert Organist - Composer

First United Methodist Church

Santa Barbara, California

March 6, 2016

3:30 PM

### PROGRAM

Pierre DuMage Grand Jeu (1708)

(1674-1751)

J.S. Bach Prelude in F Minor BWV 534 (c. 1709)

(1685-1750)

Ludwig von Beethoven Sonata Pathetique #8 (1798)

(1770-1827) Adagio Cantabile

Arranged for organ by Dorothy Riess (2014)

Johannes Brahms Eleven Chorale Preludes, Opus 122 (1896)

(1833-1897) #10 Herzlich thut mich verlangen

(My Heart is Ever Yearning)



# 7 O Gott, du frommer Gott  
(O God, Thou Faithful God)  
Max Reger Seven Organ Pieces Opus 145, #4 (1915)  
(1873-1916) Passion, Herzliebster Jesu  
(Dearest Jesus)

Herbert Howells Three Psalm Preludes for Organ,  
(1892-1983) Set One, Opus 32, #3 (1915)  
Psalm 23, verse 4

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Dorothy Young Riess Chorale Preludes on Familiar Hymn Tunes (2014) (1931- )

1. Love Divine All Loves Excelling
2. Jesus Loves Me
3. What a Friend we have in Jesus -  
to a boogie beat

Fantasy and Passacaglia on “Ein Feste Burg” (2012)  
(A Mighty Fortress)

## THE SOUTHERNMOST CATHEDRAL IN THE WORLD

Dorothy Young Riess

Most of us know about the Falkland Islands only because in 1982 Argentina tried to take them from Britain and the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher, took them back, quite forcefully! With a cold and windy climate, rain half the year and snow almost all year, these small barren, treeless islands, two larger East and West and 776 smaller, lie at 51.69 degrees south and 57.85 degrees west. The capitol, Port Stanley, has a population of almost 3,000 supported by sheep farming, fishing and tourism. I was a tourist there in January 2016 when the cruise ship I was on, the Crystal Symphony, returning from Antarctica, anchored in the harbor and we tendered ashore to sight see. A short



walk from the pier is the southernmost cathedral in the world, Christ Church Anglican. Dating back to 1892, it is a graceful gothic building of local stone and brick with beautiful stained glass windows and a serene atmosphere. It serves as the Parish Church of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Sandwich Islands and British Antarctica. Tim, a kindly gentleman, resident there for 50 years, unlocked the organ case to show me the organ and took my picture. A small two manual Telford from Dublin with only a few stops and flat pedal board it is used each Sunday for services. He admitted it needed a “bit of work”. I did not play it as I was anxious to return to the pier in case a sight-seeing flight was a go. (It wasn’t – ceiling too low.) On the way out, I noticed the whalebone arches, from the jawbones of two blue whales, a monument in 1933 to one hundred years of British Rule. Crossing the street I was careful to look

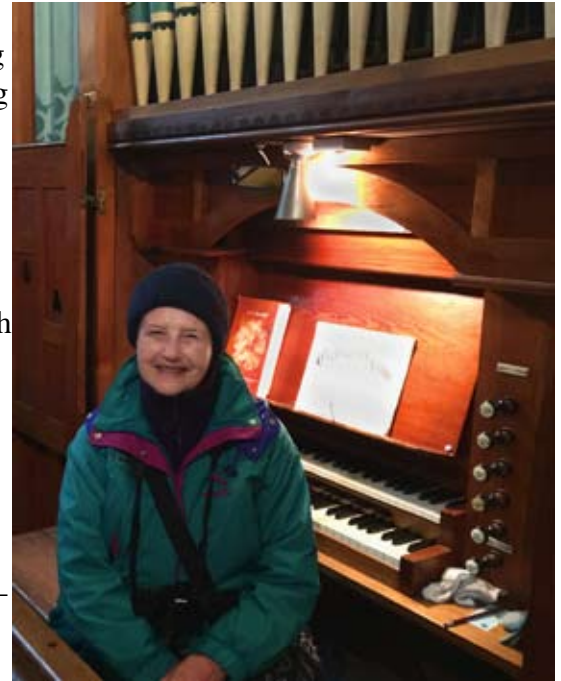




to the right  
for oncoming  
traffic driving  
on the left!

The organ  
was first  
played in  
Christ Church  
Cathedral on  
the twenty  
first of Janu-  
ary 1893.  
Built by Tel-  
ford & Tel-

ford of Dublin it was brought out to the Islands by the newly-appointed assistant minister and his wife, the Reverend and Mrs Aspinall.



It is a two manual organ with a total of 466 wooden and metal pipes varying in size from 8ft to ones smaller than a penny whistle; 30 of these pipes belong to the pedal organ, 212 to the great organ and 221 to the swell organ. Only the front 20 pipes can be seen and remain painted in their original colours



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Desert Spring United Methodist Church  
120 N. Pavilion Center Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89144  
3:00 P.M.  
March 6, 2016  
No Admission Charge - Free Will Offering

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2015-2016 CONCERT SERIES

**Dr. David Dorway**

*Organist at Grace Presbyterian Church in Las Vegas*



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**April 29, 2016  
7:30pm**

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**Suggested Donation \$15**

# Harpsichord Recital

The Mechanics of Musical Performance: A View from the French Enlightenment  
Thursday, March 3, 2016 – 7:30 p.m. – Barrick Museum Auditorium  
Davitt Moroney, Professor of Music, University of California, Berkeley  
Jean-Philippe Rameau's 1724 explanation of how to play the keyboard will be compared with the new scientific laws of motion developed by Descartes and Newton

Davitt Moroney was born in England in 1950. After studies at King's College (University of London), he completed the Master's program in musicology with a thesis on Italian music for the Roman Counter-Reformation: "Giovanni Animuccia, Missarum Liber Primus" (1972). He studied performance with the Austrian organist Susi Jeans, the Canadian harpsichordist Kenneth Gilbert and Dutch organist and harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt, and holds concert performance and teaching diplomas from London's Royal Academy of Music (1974) and Royal College of Music (1975). He entered the doctoral program in musicology at Berkeley in 1975. His doctoral dissertation, "Under Fower Sovereignes: Thomas Tallis and the Transformation of English Polyphony" (1980) was a study of the music composed by Thomas Tallis and William Byrd for the English Reformation. After leaving Berkeley, for twenty-one years he was based in Paris, working mostly as a freelance recitalist in many countries. For his services to music he was named Chevalier in "Order of Cultural Merit" by Prince Rainier III of Monaco (1988), and the French government named him Officier in the "Order of Arts and Letters" (2000). He returned to Berkeley as a Professor in August 2001. He is also University Organist.



Free harpsichord recital, tickets available at the door. Featuring works by William Byrd, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, Louis Couperin, François Couperin, Johann Sebastian Bach.

Professor Moroney is University Organist and Professor of Music Scholarship at the University of California, Berkeley. A world-renowned harpsichordist, he has released over 50 recordings of keyboard music of the 16th through the 18th centuries, for which he has won multiple Grammy Awards and France's Grand Prix du disque de l'Académie Charles Cros. As a musicologist, Professor Moroney has served as the director of Éditions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, prepared critical editions of Baroque composers' works, authored the monograph titled *Bach: An Extraordinary Life* (2000), and re-discovered Alessandro Striggio's 60-part mass, *Missa sopra Ecco sì beato giorno*, lost since the 17th century.