

THE DESERT WIND

Editor: Bruce Behnke © 2017

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Southern Nevada Chapter
American Guild of Organists

Dean's Notes

Happy New Year! I hope you have a week or two to breathe a sigh of relief after the Christmas Music program and before charging ahead into the Easter planning. This is a time of year when we get to reflect on the triumphs of the past as well as to look forward to the future.

It is a time of reflection, and a time of looking forward and of becoming excited about what is to come.

Last month's Members' Recital included one of the largest numbers of people on stage of any AGO event I've seen in any local chapter-only events. It was a major production; with four choirs performing in addition to the seven organists. I thought every organist did an awesome job showing the full breadth and color of the organ. A big thanks to Paul Hesselink for orchestrating such a masterful

event. It was particularly moving to honor Kathi Colman for a lifetime of service church music in the community and to the Guild. This was a most memorable event!

For the coming year, a concert celebrating J.S. Bach's birthday should start the year right. It will feature piano and organ music from the Well-Tempered Clavier. It is nice to have a co-sponsored events with the UNLV School of Music, because these relationships can often make wonderful and interesting programs. The week after Easter, Dr. Craig Cramer will conclude the Baroque Festival. His polished playing is admired world-wide.

The end of the program year features the amazing duo organists, the Chennault's. It is a concert not to be missed! I first met Ray and Beth Chennault at age 22 when I

auditioned to be the assistant organist at their church. Though I only spent a short-time playing at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Atlanta before moving on to another organist position; it was a formative experience.

Please consider attending the American Guild of Organist Regional Convention in Salt Lake City from June 11 to June 17th. Salt Lake City is a special place for many of our Mormon members. The Mormon community has done so much to help expose young people to the organ. Great concerts and reaching out to young people are two major missions of the American Guild of Organists.

Matt

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Standing Room Only for Advent-Christmas Recital

by Paul S. Hesselink

It has always been my dream that perhaps one day we would completely fill Doc Rando Recital Hall for one of our Southern Nevada Chapter's Organ Recitals. That dream was fulfilled on December 4, 2016 with our annual Advent-Christmas Members' Recital held at 4:00 P.M. Perhaps it was a bit of a foregone conclusion--this year's program featured four local choirs who occupied about 135 of the seats in the hall! I began to worry whether we would have enough room for audience members, so fortunately I made a last minute decision to seat one of the choirs on stage for the entire program, thereby freeing up nearly 40 seats in the hall. The attendance at the concert was 325 people.

Managing the logistics of the program required a lot of careful planning---it involved seven organists, four choral directors, and the four choirs. Rehearsal times for the organists had to be arranged during after-hours at night, and the choirs never really got a full rehearsal time in the room.

The four choirs participating in the program were Green Valley LDS Stake Choir, directed by Robert R. Orgill and accompanied by Kym S. Cushing; Grace Presbyterian Church Choir, directed by Lisa Elliott and accompanied by David Dorway; St. Joseph, Husband of Mary Roman Catholic Church Choir, directed by Shireen Beaudry and accompanied by Barbara Finn; and Choral Artists of Southern Nevada, directed by Marsha Borovicka and accompanied by Jane Dye. The four accompanists plus members Bruce Behnke and



Southern Nevada Chapter American Guild of Organists annual Advent-Christmas Recital performers: first row - Marsha Borovicka, Director, Choral Artists of Southern Nevada, Kym Cushing, Organist, Green Valley LDS Stake, David D Dorway, Organist, Grace Presbyterian Church, Lisa Elliott, Director, Grace Presbyterian Church Choir, Paul Hesselink, Organist. Second row - Shireen Beaudry, Director, St. Joseph, Husband of Mary Roman Catholic Church Choir, Barbara Finn, Organist, St. Joseph, Husband of Mary Roman Catholic Church, Kathi Colman, Director, Choirs and Audience singing "Hallelujah Chorus", Bruce Behnke, Organist, Robert Orgill, Director, Green Valley LDS Stake Choir. Not present for the photo: Jane Dye and Matt Estes. Photo by Dorothy Riess

Matthew Estes presented organ solos by Keith Chapman (arr.), Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Pachelbel, Bert Matter, Jacob W. Weber, and John Behnke. Choral works presented were by composers John Longhurst (arr.), Michael W. Smith, Jack Schrader (arr.), and John Rutter. (A special surprise recognition and World Premiere performance is detailed in a separate article in this issue.) The program concluded with a rousing performance of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* from *Messiah*, directed by Kathi Colman and accompanied by Paul S. Hesselink.

Special thanks to Steven Wright, Barbara Giles, and Carla and Bob Swift for helping to insure that choir members got on and off the stage with ease and efficiency. A festive seasonal reception, organized and served by member Doris Francis and her sister Marsha, brought the memorable afternoon to a close. We are indebted to all of the members of the chapter who participated in any way, the choral directors and the members of the choirs without whom the concert could not have happened.

Kathi Colman Honored for 30 Years of Service as Music Director

by Paul S. Hesselink

In mid-May chapter member Kathi Colman's thirty years of service as Music Director at Christ Church Episcopal was concluded. By late June I was contacted by Midgene Spatz, wife of a former Rector of the church, to explore the possibilities of coming up with a suitable way to honor Kathi and her service to the church. Here are Midgene's words:

In the spring, when I learned that Kathi Colman was leaving Christ Church, I began to wonder how we could duly recognize her thirty years as Music Director at Christ Church Episcopal. After worrying some about it, I called Paul Hesselink to propose an idea, and after some discussion we concluded that a commissioned anthem would be an appropriate "Thank you" to her. We decided that an anthem composed by one of Kathi's favorite contemporary church anthem composers, Craig Courtney, with an Advent text by our friend Susan Bentall Boersma would be perfect. We launched into the myriad details of making the anthem a reality.

Over the years, Kathi as the Director of the Music at Christ Church, developed an admiration for choral works written by Craig Courtney. During my tenure as the organist at Christ Church, the choir sang a number of his anthems. Mr. Courtney's music was not unknown to me; our Southern Nevada Chapter of the AGO hosted him twice for choral workshops over the past 25 years---one of them being a workshop entirely of his own compositions. Sometime in the spring of 2010, I was browsing the Beckenhorst Press website (Mr. Courtney is the Staff Composer and Editor of Beckenhorst Press) and I was looking at the thumbnail photos of all the composers they publish; when I got to the very last one of them I found a photo of a lovely lady. I looked at it and said to myself, "I know her!" It turned out to be the Beckenhorst Press lyricist-in-residence, Susan Bentall Boersma, who just happened to be a long-lost college classmate of mine! Through e-mail we managed to reconnect and started corresponding, with my asking her questions about how she created her texts for anthems (she now has more than 100 published anthem texts), and eventually, sometime in February or March of 2011, she sent me a packet of twenty or so of the anthems for which she had been the lyricist, along with a compilation CD recording of those anthems. As I listened to the anthems she had sent, an idea was born, and I proposed to Kathi that perhaps, if she could find eight or nine of them she could use in the church services throughout the year, we could gather them together for a concert the choir would give at the end of the choir season in May. The choir gave its performance of nine of those anthems on May 4, 2012 at Christ Church Episcopal, all with Susan Bentall Boersma texts, and five of them with music composed by Craig Courtney. We brought Susan and her husband Jim from Michigan for the event, and Susan participated in the concert by speaking about the creative process for the anthems we performed from the viewpoint of the lyricist. This was a very emotional event for Susan; the largest number of compositions with her texts performed on the same program had been two anthems! We determined that that the three of us were reuniting after 46 years!



That event had a profound impact on the Christ Church Choir---they became more conscious of the importance of anthem texts, and subsequently when Kathi would choose an anthem with a text written by Susan, someone

in the choir would invariably announce, “It’s a Susan anthem!”

So the link was forged, and when we were considering our commissioning project, we decided to ask for an Advent text written by Susan with music composed by Craig Courtney. Both Susan and Craig were wonderful in helping to make the commission happen in time for our December 4 Advent-Christmas program. When we decided we would try to raise the money to commission an anthem in Kathi’s honor, Midgene went into action to ask people to contribute, which resulted in our list of donors representing 54 friends in 38 gifts. The Southern Nevada Chapter of the AGO agreed to be the legal fiscal representative for the project, and a big “thank you” is due to Dr. David Dorway, Treasurer, for the considerable amount of work the management of the funds entailed. We have been told by the composer that he plans to publish the anthem in time to market it for use during the 2017 Advent Season. The dedication inscription heading the published anthem will read: “Commissioned by friends in honor of Kathleen A. Colman for her thirty years of dedicated leadership as Music Director of Christ Church Episcopal, Las Vegas, Nevada.”

Midgene and I had made the decision that we should try to keep the commissioning of the anthem a surprise, and that we would do the premiere performance at the Advent-Christmas recital December 4. Because we had to solicit funds for the project and many people would be involved, we worried about “keeping the secret.” I had arranged with Marsha Borovicka that Choral Artists of Southern Nevada would be the premiering choral group, and they began the preparation of the anthem when we received the manuscript around October 1. The December 4 program had been planned so that the premiering choir was last on the program and would stay in place as a “lead group” for the massed singing of the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel’s *Messiah*. I had asked Kathi Colman to conduct the Handel and told her I would accompany, so when Kathi gave the downbeat for the Handel, I didn’t play but instead slipped off the organ bench and made my way to the microphone, and we proceeded to “spring the surprise.” Everyone had been truly circumspect, and it was a total surprise to Kathi. Midgene and Kathi’s husband Jeff (who had been in on the secret) joined me at the podium. Midgene presented Kathi with a large bouquet of flowers and also a presentation copy of the score of the anthem, autographed by both the composer and the lyricist. Midgene also thoughtfully included a handkerchief in the folder for Kathi’s anticipated tears!

“Who But the Lord?” was given its world premiere performance by The Choral Artists of Southern Nevada under the direction of Marsha Borovicka. We are indebted to Marsha and the choir for helping us bring these plans to fruition and for a beautiful performance.

Who But the Lord?

Who But the Lord?

Commissioned by friends in honor of Kathleen A. Colman for her thirty years of dedicated leadership as Music Director of Christ Church Episcopal, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Music by Craig Courtney

Text: 11th century, Latin, translated by John Mason Neale, 1861 and Isaiah 58: 6-9 - Susan Bentall Boersma

O come, thou bright and morning star, and bring us comfort from afar.

Dispel the shadows of the night and turn our darkness into light.

Who but the Lord can give the shadows light, can break into the dark,
draw morning from the night?

Who but the Lord will hear our cry and answer, “Here am I?”

Who but the Lord makes blinded eyes to see, brings music to the deaf,
sets the captive free?

Who but the Lord will by his glory show the paths of peace?

O shine on us the brightness of Your face, to earth's remotest end,
every people, every race.

O shine on us until to each is shown Your saving grace.

O come, Thou bright and morning star and bring us comfort from afar.
Dispel the shadows of the night and turn our darkness into light.

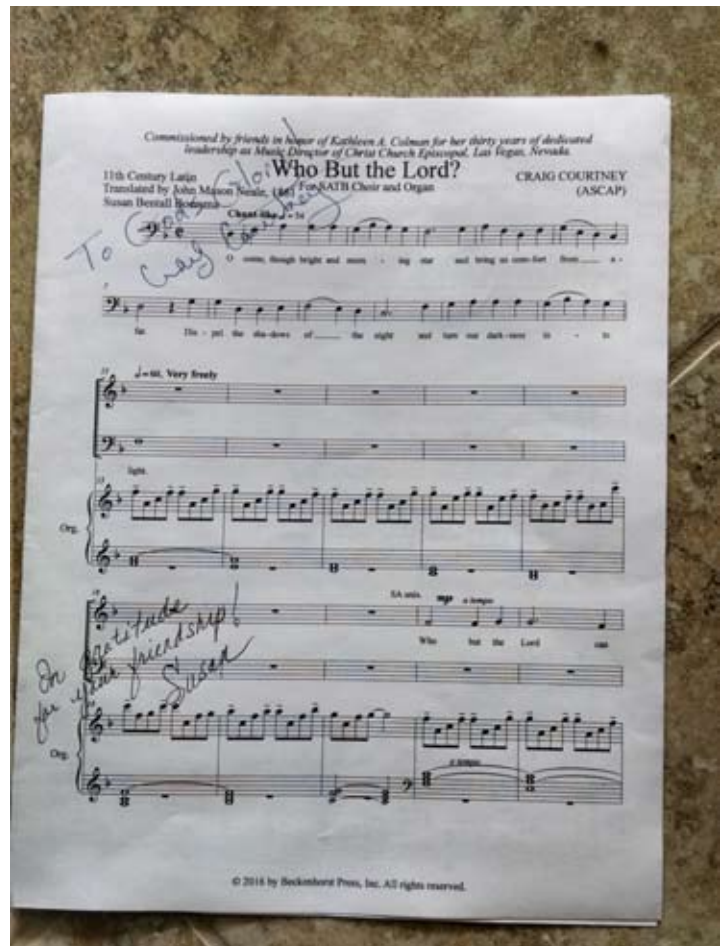
Who but the Lord can give the shadows light?
None but the Lord.

Oh, yes! We did conclude the afternoon's program with Kathi conducting the four choirs which had performed on the program and the members of the audience singing the *Hallelujah Chorus*.



Jeff Colman, Kathi Colman, Midgene Spatz and Paul Hesselink.

To the right is the first page of the score autographed by the composer, Craig Courtney, and the lyricist Susan Bentall Boersma.



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Musicology 101

Medieval Music History Review

General Background on the Medieval Era

The Medieval Era (also referred to as “the Middle Ages”) is the span between the ancient Greek/Roman eras and the Renaissance. It lasted nearly 1,000 years, from the fall of the Roman Empire (*ca.* 476) until *ca.* 1430, when a new triadic sound was appearing in England.

During the Medieval Era, feudalism separated society into a multi-leveled class-separated structure, ranging from kings and other wealthy royalty to poor serfs. Between c450 and 800, the Western Christian Catholic church evolved into Europe’s strongest and most influential institution.

Medieval times also included:

- The “Age of Chivalry” (knights, courtly love, and honor, etc.)
- The Crusades (a failed 200-year struggle for Christians to regain control of the Holy Land in and near Jerusalem)
- The “Black Death” (“Black Plague”—one of the worst pandemics in human history, caused by diseased rat fleas that killed 75-200 million Europeans between 1348 and 1350.
- The Establishment of the First Universities: such as Bologna (1088), Paris/Sorbonne (*ca.* 1150), Oxford (1167), and Cambridge (1209).

Some Musical Considerations in the Medieval Era

Music in the Middle Ages began as monophonic chant, but in *ca.* 900 new types of polyphony developed and gradually expanded in rhythm, harmony and texture, until reaching an extremely complex style in the late 1300s. A full assessment of Medieval music is difficult because the amount of musical source material that has survived from this era is limited by several factors:

- A process for printing music had not yet been invented.
- A standardized music notation system was slow to evolve.
- Copying music by hand into a manuscript was a tedious task—few people had the skill or the time to do so. Until the widespread use of paper in the Renaissance, music had to be copied on to large pieces of animal hide (expensive and difficult).
- The church was one of the few institutions to educate music copyists. Some monks even lived in solitary confinement and dedicated their lives to copying music in service to God. (Unfortunately, many of the precious one-of-a-kind musical manuscripts that survived into the 20th century were destroyed by bombs during World War II).

Compiled by Lloyd Bishop
(father of member Jan Bigler)

Las Vegas Baroque Festival

April 20-23, 2017

Tentative Schedule

Thursday, April 20, 2017 - 4:00 P.M. - 7:00 P. M.

Graduate Seminar on the Baroque Period. A multidisciplinary presentation sponsored by the School of Music, Department of English, and the Department of History.



Thursday, April 20, 2017 - 7:30 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

The UNLV Chamber Chorale and Las Vegas Master Singers, under the direction of David Weiller, will present a program of Baroque choral masterworks, including selections by Telemann, Pachelbel, Schütz, and Handel.

Friday, April 21, 2017 - 7:30 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

Performance by the Archetti Baroque String Orchestra. Archetti Baroque String Ensemble was founded in 2010 by violinist Carla Moore and viola da gambist John Dornenburg to perform the rich chamber concerto repertory of the Baroque era. The collective experience and artistry of Archetti's members creates distinctive, dynamic and historically-informed interpretations without a conductor. The ensemble's eight-member size is perfectly matched to the eight printed part-books of string concertos by composers such as Vivaldi, Corelli, and Handel, and is also small enough for the intimacy of Bach's harpsichord concertos. The ensemble's name means "little bows" in Italian and alludes to the dominance of bowed stringed instruments in the Italian Baroque concerto repertory. Archetti is based in the San Francisco Bay Area, where they have been praised for their "dazzling clarity" (San Francisco Examiner Online) and "beautiful ensemble playing" (Early Music America). The Archetti Baroque String Orchestra will present a program of concerti grossi by Locatelli, Torelli, Handel, Corelli, and Vivaldi.



Saturday, April 22, 2017 - 3:00 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

UNLV Student Ensemble performance. Students from the UNLV School of Music will perform a concert of baroque instrumental and vocal chamber works.

Saturday, April 22, 2017 - 7:30 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

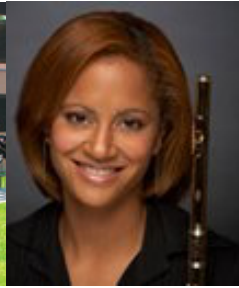
UNLV Faculty and Guests Chamber Concert. UNLV Faculty and Guests will perform chamber works by Couperin, Leclair, Telemann, and Bach. Featured artists include Loren Ludwig, viola da gamba, Gregory Maldonado, baroque violin, Jennifer Grim, baroque flute, Weiwei Le, violin, Janis McKay, bassoon, Jonathan Rhodes Lee, harpsichord, and Timothy Hoft, harpsichord.



Loren Ludwig



Gregory Maldonado



Jennifer Grim



Barbara Hull



DeAnn Letourneau



Wei-Wei Le



Janis McKay



Stephen Caplan



Jonathan Rhodes Lee



Timothy Hoft

Sunday April 23, 2017 - 1:00 P.M.

Baroque Play-Along Amateur musicians from the local community are invited to read through their favorite sonatas, chamber works, and concerti, accompanied by Dr. Jonathan Lee or Dr. Timothy Hoft.

Sunday, April 23, 2017 - 2:00 P.M.

Baroque Dance Party! Faculty from the UNLV Department of Dance will give a demonstration of traditional baroque dances, and will teach the members of the audience how to perform the dances.

Sunday, April 23, 2017 - 4:00 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

The Southern Nevada Chapter of the American Guild of Organists presents Craig Cramer, organ

Sunday, April 23, 2017 - 7:30 P.M. - Doc Rando Recital Hall

UNLV Chamber Orchestra performance, Taras Krysa violin and conductor. The UNLV Chamber Orchestra will perform with UNLV Faculty in the closing event of the Las Vegas Baroque Festival.

DeAnn Letourneau, concertmaster of the Las Vegas Philharmonic, will join the violin faculty in a performance of the Vivaldi Concerto for 4 violins in E minor. Harpsichordists Timothy Hoft and Jonathan Rhodes Lee will perform the Concerto for 2 harpsichords by J.S. Bach, and closing out the concert are faculty soloists Barbara Hull, trumpet, Stephen Caplan, oboe, Jennifer Grim, flute, performing Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2.



2017 AGO West Regional Convention

Bruce Behnke

I had been asked to include information about the 2017 AGO West Regional Convention to be held from June 11 to June 15 in Salt Lake City, UT. I was able to contact Alex Oldroyd via email about a month ago and he said if things were ready he would send me something to include in our newsletter. Apparently things are still in negotiations because I have not heard anything and their web page is not providing anything but a contact for info in the future.

My recommendation is that you bookmark the following site:

<https://www.agohq.org/regional-conventions/>

which will give you access to information on all of the Regional Conferences for 2017. You can scroll down to the West Regional Site and visit their web page. Sign up to be contacted when they finally update their site. It is possible that an early registration deadline might occur before our next publication. While you are on the /regional-conventions/ page, check out some of the other offerings. There will be lots of interesting things happening next summer.

Young Organists Encouraged to Apply for Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival

The Lutheran Summer Music Academy Program has selected Kenneth Miller to serve as the Regina Holmen Fryxell and Patricia Schad Legee Chapel Organist at the 2017 Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival (LSM) from June 25th to July 23rd on the campus of Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana. Miller currently serves as Assistant Professor of Church Music and Organist and Choirmaster of the Chapel of the Apostles at the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, TN.

As a member of the artistic faculty, Miller will maintain a private organ studio, teach the Introduction to Pipe Organ elective class, and serve as a member of the LSM worship team. In addition to serving as primary organist for all LSM worship services, Miller will also perform as a soloist and with the LSM Bach Cantata.

Lutheran Summer Music is a four-week residential training and performance program. Each summer, LSM brings together 150+ 8-12 grade band, orchestra, choir, keyboard and organ students from the U.S. and abroad in a supportive, intentional community.

AGO members from the Southern Nevada Chapter are invited to refer students for the 2017 convening of Lutheran Summer Music Academy. All students using the application code AGO200 will receive an automatic \$200 tuition discount. Other merit and need-based assistance is available.

For more information, go to lutheransummermusic.org or contact Dietrich Jessen and Kristina Rodel, Admissions Directors at 888.635.6583 or email at admissions@lutheransummermusic.org.



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Dear friends,

I'd like to invite all of you in the Southern Nevada Chapter to attend the 2017 West Region Convention in Salt Lake City. June is wonderful in Salt Lake City, and will provide you a few days to get away from the heat!

We have a great lineup of internationally renowned performers to be featured at our convention. You'll have the opportunity to hear all the major organs in Salt Lake City, including those at the Tabernacle, the LDS Conference Center, the Cathedral of the Madeleine, Libby Gardner Concert Hall, and more.

The recently-renovated Salt Lake Sheraton hotel will serve as convention headquarters. In addition to top-quality, comfortable guest rooms, the hotel has spacious meeting facilities, an on-site bar and restaurant, and offers free parking. In addition, the hotel is conveniently located downtown within walking distance of several major attractions and outside restaurants, and is only a block from the free downtown light rail TRAX. At a nightly rate of \$129/night, which is available for a few days both pre and post convention, we feel it's an excellent bargain for convention lodging.

Thanks to increased speed limits in the rural areas of southern Utah, you can make the drive from Las Vegas in about 5-1/2 hours. Or, if you're flying, take advantage of our special convention airfare discount codes from Delta (NMP6G) or Alaska (ECMX309) airlines for flights to Salt Lake City. These rates are also available for a few days preceding and after the convention, in case you want to experience more of Salt Lake City.

Registration will be coming online soon at agowest2017.org. In the meantime, be sure to sign up for email updates on our web site, and like our pages on Facebook ([fb.com/agowest2017](https://www.facebook.com/agowest2017)) and Instagram ([instagr.am/agowest2017](https://www.instagram.com/agowest2017)) to keep up with all the information about our convention.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Alex Oldroyd
Coordinator, 2017 West Region Convention
alex@agowest2017.org

