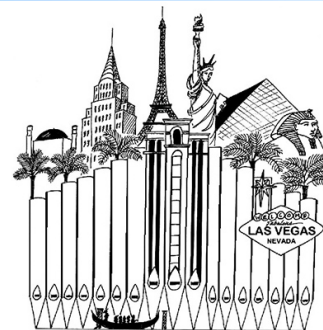


THE DESERT WIND

Editor: Bruce Behnke © 2015

Issue: May/June 2015

Dean's Notes



Southern Nevada Chapter
American Guild of Organists

Hello friends,

Our dean is currently unavailable because her husband is ill. We wish her and Scott our best. Meanwhile I am going to hijack this space to tell you a little about what I do as Newsletter editor and webmaster.

As editor, I collect all of the information from Paul Hesselink, who writes many of the articles, and any other things that come from members, national and regional sources. Dorothy Young Riess provides a lot of the local pictures but others are collected from the web. The Desertwind is created in a software called InDesign. This allows me to manipulate both the text and

images to get the exact look that I want. The best part of this software is that the compression used to create the PDF files allows me to take a very large document and reduce it to something that can be emailed.

As webmaster, I have negotiated with GoDaddy.com to register and host our domain name, sncago.org. There is an annual service fee the chapter pays to maintain and host the domain name. Web pages are written in code called HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language). If you go to a web page and click on the menu item that says "Source" you can see the actual code that goes into a page. Al-

though I understand the code, I do our pages in a program called Dreamweaver. This allows me, by using easy tools, to create the desired look. The software then creates the codes needed for that look. The created files on my computer need to be sent to the host site. The method of doing this is called "File Transfer Protocol" or ftp. I use a free program called Cyber Duck to send all of my files to the GoDaddy site.

As this is the last issue for this season, I would like to wish you a pleasant summer. Thank you to Paul, Dorothy, John and Kym for helping me produce another issue.

Bruce

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Angela Kraft Cross Recital

Angela Kraft Cross, San Francisco Bay area organist, was the guest artist presenting the fifth recital in the 2014-2015 Organ Recital Series at Doc Rando Hall in the Beam Music Center on the UNLV campus on Friday, April 10 at 7:30 P.M. She presented dazzling performances in a wonderfully eclectic program of works by Sweelinck, Böhm, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Bach, Langlais, Widor and works of her own composition. A responsive audience of about 170 people was present for the recital.

Here are the numbers from the audience evaluation:

69 evaluations completed: = 40.6 %

First time visiting Doc Rando: 10 = 14.5%

First hearing of von Beckerath organ: 15 = 21.7%

First attendance at an AGO recital: 15 = 21.7%

How they heard about the recital: e-mail = 36 flyer = 8
radio = 7 previous program = 18 from a friend = 25
Internet/website = 10

Feelings about the program:

Loved it: 58 = 84.1% Liked a lot: 8 = 11.6%

Found it interesting: 3 = 4.3%

Overall rating: 54 Superb = 78.3% 11 Excellent = 15.9%

3 Average = 4.3% 1 No response = 1.5%

Total of Superb and Excellent ratings = 94.2%

One respondent commented, "How is it possible that there are empty seats for a performance as fine as this and those in the series + free? Is a total mystery?" We'd also like to know the answer to this question. Getting the word out is difficult and a financial issue for a non-profit such as ours. We try to cover the media—news-paper, websites (UNLV Music Department and our own AGO website), KNPR/KCNV Public Radio, e-mail notification list, flyers, and a published season schedule. Do you have additional suggestions for audience building?



Bach's Birthday Bash



On Friday, April 20th we were treated to a recital in honor of Bach's 330th birthday. Our own Paul Hesselink played a program of familiar Bach pieces including the Toccata and Fugue, a Vivaldi Concerto transcription, and several Chorale Preludes. The final piece was the Little Fugue in G minor with added choreography supplied by Professor Margot Colbert and UNLV dance students. The music was well played and the mighty Beckerath sounded really good with those German registrations. A Bach Birthday Cake and reception concluded a very pleasant evening.

From left to right kneeling: Kalie McGlaughlin, Dannii Moore, Malik Gray, Margot Mink Cobert (Choreographer), Paul Hesselink (Organist) Taylorann Evans, Laura Schaffer, Kaitlyn Marcus (kneeling).

James David Christie Recital

JAMES DAVID CHRISTIE has been internationally acclaimed as one of the finest organists of his generation. He has performed around the world with symphony orchestras and period instrument ensembles as well as in solo recitals. He was the 1979 First Prize winner of the Bruges (Belgium) International Organ Competition and was the first American ever to win First Prize in this prestigious competition; he was also the first person in the competition's eighteen-year history to win both the First Prize and the Prize of the Audience. James David Christie has served as Organist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since 1978 and has performed and recorded with the major orchestras of Vienna, London, Dublin, Stuttgart, Koblenz, Paris, Philadelphia, San Francisco, San Diego, Seattle, Baltimore, New York and Boston. He has given over sixty tours of Europe and has performed often in Russia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia and Iceland. He is Music Director of Ensemble Abendmusik, a Boston-based period instrument orchestra and chorus specializing in sacred music of the 17th and 18th centuries. He has performed with many period instrument orchestras including the Academy of Ancient Music, the Bach Ensemble, Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and the New York Collegium. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the New England School of Law for his outstanding contributions to the musical life of Boston and the New England Conservatory honored him with their Outstanding Alumni Award. He has served on international organ competition juries in Paris, St. Omer-Wasquehal, Chartres, Biarritz, St. Albans, Amsterdam, Lübeck, Bordeaux, Dublin, Worcester, Calgary, Montreal, Columbus, Dallas, Leipzig, Weimar-Merseburg, Speyer, Erfurt, Tokyo, Moscow, Kaliningrad, Astana, Lausanne, Pistoia, Boston, Bruges and several others. His students have been competition prize-winners in North America, Europe, Japan and South Africa. James David Christie has recorded for Decca, Philips, Nonesuch, JAV, Northeastern, Arabesque, Denon, RCA, Dorian, Naxos, Bridge and GM and has received several awards for his solo recordings, including the Preis der Deutschen Schallplatten Kritik and the Magazine d'Orgue: Coup de Coeur.



James David Christie holds positions as Chair and Professor of Organ at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH, Distinguished Artist in Residence at the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA, and serves as College Organist at Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA. He has previously held positions at Boston Conservatory, Harvard University, M.I.T. and Boston University. In the fall of 2010, James David Christie was on sabbatical in Paris, France, where he served as visiting Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatory. He exchanged positions with Notre Dame Cathedral organist, Olivier Latry, who was in residence at Oberlin for the fall semester. He was recently the featured artist and teacher for the Académie "Dom Bedos" in Bordeaux on the restored Dom Bedos organ at the Église de Sainte Croix and gave master classes at the Chateau de Versailles and at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Paris. He performed solo recitals in Toulouse, Reims and several in Paris, including the final Tuesday Evening Artists Concert at Notre Dame Cathedral. In 2014-15, James David Christie served on juries for the Sweelinck International Organ Competition in Amsterdam, the Pistoia Agati-Tronci International Organ Competition (Italy), the Grand Prix du Chartres (which was held at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France), the Canadian International Organ Competition in Montreal, and he served as President of the Jury of the Pierre de Manchicourt International Organ Competition in Béthune, France. He was the American patron of the National French Jehan Alain Centenary Festival in Saint-Germain-

en-Laye, France. This past season, he performed concerts in Canada, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Estonia. James David Christie recently recorded four CDs of the organ works of Johann Pachelbel on three historic organs in Thuringia (Germany) for CPO/Germany. In June 2014, he performed the opening gala concert of the National Convention of the American Guild of Organists at Symphony Hall, Boston, with a program of five major works for organ and orchestra. James David Christie gave a two-week concert tour of Japan at the end of February 2015. This June, he will perform an evening of organ concertos with orchestra as well as give a solo concert and several master classes as part of the 2015 Royal College of Canadian Organists National Convention in Winnipeg; in addition, he will perform a concert at Tanglewood (Massachusetts) with members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra for the 2015 National Convention of the Organ Historical Society. He will also perform with orchestra and give a solo concert in Fort Collins, CO, for their annual Summer Organ Festival and will lead a one-week organ academy for high school students at Oberlin. In July 2015, he will appear in concert and give a master class for the Region V AGO Convention in Indianapolis; he will perform and serve as a member of the 2015 McGill Summer Organ Academy faculty in Montreal. He will also teach and perform for several AGO Pipe Organ Encounters throughout the summer. In August and early September 2015, he will give concerts and master classes in Germany (Leipzig and Schneeberg) and France (Blois Festival), as well as serve on the 2015 Mikael Tariverdiev International Organ Competition jury in Moscow, Russia. The Oberlin Conservatory recently honored James David Christie with their 2015 Excellence in Teaching Award.



Bruce Behnke

What first started your interest in the pipe organ?

James David Christie

I wanted to be an organist since I was three years old! My sister sang in our local Catholic church choir back in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and took me to the choir loft; I watched the nun playing the organ and I fell in love with it on the spot. I never lost the desire to become an organist from that day!

Behnke

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

Christie

I started with the piano at the age of six and I taught myself the organ when I was nine. I studied with one of our nuns at the

school for a year, but she was not really an organist and I made little improvement. I had the great fortune to study with a real professional organist, Byron Blackmore, when I was in the eighth grade; Byron is now retired, but an active church musician at age 80; he lives in Sun City West, Arizona. He was a great teacher and I would not be where I am today if I had not studied with him. By the time I went to Oberlin for my undergraduate studies, I had an eclectic and diverse repertoire of about 40 major organ works ranging from Buxtehude to Messiaen.

Behnke

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

Christie

I attended many master classes and worked with great teachers such as Russell Saunders, Anton Heiller, Gustav Leonhardt. I had three wonderful teachers for my undergraduate and graduate study: David Boe, Fenner Douglass and Yuko Hayashi. I also had the good fortune to work extensively with Marie-Claire Alain (I lived in Paris for a year), Harald Vogel and Bernard Lagacé.

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

Christie I have played throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Russia, Australia, Iceland, Japan and Korea. My trips to East Germany (the former German Democratic Republic) were fascinating and I played on many historic organs there. In France, I have played on at least 40 different instruments over the years. - among my favorites there: the glorious Cavaillé-Coll at St. Sulpice in Paris, the Dom Bedos organ at Sainte-Croix in Bordeaux, the Classical French organs at Poitiers, Houdan, Cintegabelle, Bolbec (I could list at least 25 more!), the Cavaillé-Coll organs at St. Sernin in Toulouse and St. Etienne in Caen, the new Dominique Thomas organ at the Monaco Cathedral...

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

Christie I used to improvise in concert after I returned from my year in Paris when I was in my 20s and early 30s. I then felt I was repeating what I had always done and I completely stopped improvising in concert and reserved it only for church. I was greatly influenced by Jean Langlais for improvisation. I last composed a suite of three pieces ("Trois Hommages") on commission in 2006. I do not consider myself a composer and I have a lot of difficulty putting the notes on paper and deciding on final versions. I wrote an Élegie in memory of Jean Langlais to mark his 100th birthday and I have played it often in concert. It is a passacaglia in A-B-A form and the harmony is very indebted to both Jean Langlais and Francis Poulenc. I played this work for the prelude for the funeral of Senator Edward Kennedy at the Boston Basilica ("Mission Church"); the event was broadcast live and I received many requests for copies of the music. I also played my Pavane at the very end of the recessional, which I improvised and which lasted for about 45 minutes. I had written this work for my younger sister's wedding back in the mid-1980s; it is almost like a renaissance dance and it is inspired by both Claude Gervaise and Jehan Alain!

Behnke Who are some of your favorite modern composers?

Christie I especially enjoy performing solo organ works by Messiaen, Claire Delbos (Messiaen's first wife, who was a fine composer). Langlais, Jehan Alain, André Isoir, Thierry Escaich, William Albright, Ellen Taffe Zwilich, Michelle Foison, Daniel Pinkham. Most recently, I have played several organ concertos by modern composers including Langlais, Denis Bédard, Walter Piston, Daniel Pinkham and Samuel Barber.

Behnke What pieces will you be playing for us?

Christie I will be performing a mixed program of early music (some J. S. Bach for sure!) and a few 20th century French works which I will choose especially for the Beckerath organ...I have been very busy this past month and I am planning my Las Vegas program on this coming weekend. Sorry I can't yet give you specific composer names or works - it will be a surprise, but I promise you there will be nothing dull or uninteresting on the program!



The Pipe Organs of Norway

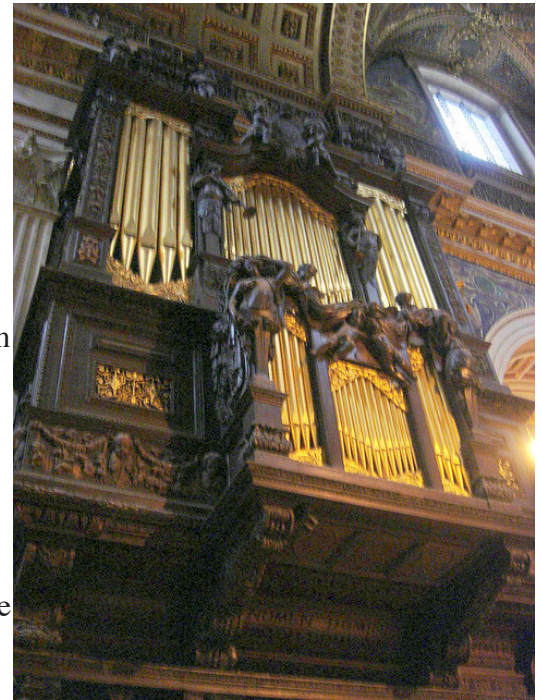
(with London and Paris thrown in)

by Kym Cushing

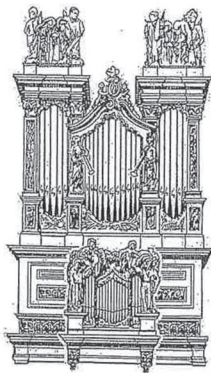
Fulfilling a promise made long ago to our oldest child, Christopher, my wife and I, embarked on an adventurous trip to the North Pole last month via Northern Norway. However, before agreeing to such an extreme trip, I had a few conditions of my own: we had to stop in London and Paris for at least one day to visit and hear the marvelous organs in those cities.

We arrived in London just in time to hear the weekly Sunday 4:45 pm recital at St. Paul's Cathedral. The program is attached. Over 700 people attended this recital. St. Paul's new movable console was placed directly in the middle of the cathedral -- just feet from where the audience sits -- so everyone could watch the organist's every move.

What more can be said about this famous Willis organ and the Cathedral's famous acoustics? Not much, except that Christopher, who is not a fan of organ music, not only enjoyed the "loud endings" of some of the pieces, he was amazed at how fast the organist's feet moved. I guess he's never watched me play at home or in church during the last 25+ years! He especially liked the first piece "Trompeta Celtica" which showcased the organs many trumpet stops, including the state



Grand Organ Recitals



Ryan Leonard

London

Sunday 15th February 2015

4.45 pm

Programme

<i>Trompeta Celtica</i>	Stephen Hamill
<i>Cortège et Litanie</i> (Op. 19 No 2)	Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)
<i>Prière après la communion</i> from <i>Livre du Saint-Sacrement</i>	Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
<i>Pièce Héroïque</i> from <i>Trois Pièces</i>	César Franck (1822-1890)
<i>Carillon de Westminster</i> (Op. 54) from <i>24 Pièces de fantaisie</i>	Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

The opening piece in today's recital was written for the organ of St Paul's Cathedral by the Northern Irish composer and organist Stephen Hamill and first performed here in 1992. *Trompeta Celtica* aims to showcase the many impressive trumpet and tuba stops situated in the main organ cases as well as around the dome and at the west entrance to the cathedral. The four works that follow are written by some of the leading exponents of the 19th and 20th Century French Organist/Composer tradition. Marcel Dupré's *Cortège et Litanie* started life as incidental music for a play and was scored for chamber orchestra. Subsequently arranged for the organ, the work presents two contrasting themes that are introduced individually before combining as the music gradually gains momentum, finally concluding in a blaze of triumph and hope. *Prière après la communion*, from Olivier Messiaen's monumental late work *Livre du Saint-Sacrement*, evokes an ethereal atmosphere as a delicate melody weaves itself around a sustained chordal accompaniment. César Franck's *Pièce Héroïque*, written for the opening of the Trocadero in Paris in 1878 is one of the composer's best-known works. The dark-hued, finely wrought main theme, heard beneath a restless chordal accompaniment, eventually gives way to a radiant second theme that is punctuated by a timpani-like pedal accompaniment. This period of tranquility is short lived however, as a reprise of the opening theme brings the music to a rousing and dramatic conclusion. The final work is the ever popular *Carillon de Westminster* by Louis Vierne – a fantasia based on the Westminster Chimes – that gradually builds towards a thrilling and exhilarating conclusion.

trumpets situated at the Cathedral's west end/main entrance.

During the next four days, we also heard the organs at St. George's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the restored Harrison & Harrison organ at Royal Festival Hall (Waterloo) and the rebuilt Willis organ at Royal Albert Hall (Mander). My favorite, however, is still the Willis organ at St. Paul's.

A quick "chunnel" trip from London to Paris and back (in one day!) only left time for a quick visit to Notre Dame and St. Eustache since we were on a hop-on/hop-off city bus tour. Unfortunately, with Notre Dame's organ still undergoing some restoration, we were able to hear only a few minutes of the St. Eustache organ while the organist was practicing. It was still thrilling to hear the fiery French reeds of that organ.

Then it was off to Bergen, Norway, where we started our "cruise" up to the North Pole. This was not your typical cruise, it was much more adventurous. This cruise line supplies Norway's major western cities with goods, food, mail, etc, and the 200+ guests go along for the ride in the hope of seeing the Northern Lights.

At almost every stop along the way, we would disembark and head to the coastal village church. On a couple of occasions, I got lucky and was able to play some of the organs, mostly German Baroque instruments -- all of them tracker. The highlight of the cruise was a stop in Trondheim, Norway where we visited Nidaros Cathedral, the largest Gothic Cathedral in Scandinavia, and the place where all Norwegian kings/queens are crowned.

In 1991, while serving my LDS mission in Trondheim, Norway, I was fortunate to play the Cathedral's 9,600+ pipe Steinmeyer organ on many occasions. The organ was recently totally rebuilt by Kuhn Organ Builders in Switzerland, and it was given a brand-new façade. It still sounds magnificent. The organ now has a much cleaner, richer sound, and the new façade placement helps with stop articulation. All of the reeds were replaced (even the three sets of 32' pedal reeds) with English reeds giving the organ a much brighter tone. Playing that instrument again brought back so many memories.



Then we were off to the Arctic/North Pole where the weather was actually milder than it was in the Eastern United States!

On a side note, every single organ we visited in Norway not only worked, but they were all well cared for and maintained -- even those located in the most remote of coastal villages. Each church had at least one full-time organist (a paid position), and others also had additional full-time music-related positions, all of which were full-time and paid positions. These churches are supported 100% by Norway's government as Norway has a single state-sponsored religion. Whether you agree or not with state-sponsored religion, one has to appreciate Norway's support of organ music, church choirs, and its firm support of the arts.

Dear friends,

My name is Arwen Myers, and I am the Music Associate and Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) Coordinator at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, OR. This summer, I along with Michael Kleinschmidt (our former Canon Musician, now at St. Mark's Seattle) are co-managing the very first West Coast RSCM summer training course, to be held at Menucha Conference Center in the Gorge June 29-July 5. As this is the first and only West Coast RSCM course, I was wondering whether it might be possible to send an announcement to the Southern Nevada AGO chapter members so that they might pass the information along to their youth & adult choir members. Here is the information at a glance, although you can find out more about our course at <http://rscmpnw.wix.com/rscmpnw> (or about RSCM courses in general on the RSCM America website: <http://www.rscmamerica.org/training-courses.php>).

RSCM Pacific Northwest
Participants: boys & girls, rising
4th grade & up; adult participants
Dates: June 29-July 5, 2015
Residential Venue: Menucha Re-
treat and Conference Center, Cor-
bett, OR (in the Columbia Gorge)
Concerts/Services Venue: Trinity
Episcopal Cathedral, Portland, OR
Registration Page: <http://rscmpnw.wix.com/rscmpnw#!register/c1vud>



Rosales Organ at Trinity Episcopal Portland

The music director will be Bruce Neswick, who is also our new Interim Canon for Cathedral Music at Trinity. I'm sure you already know his work, if you don't already know him personally, but he is a truly phenomenal choral conductor—and also a veteran RSCM course director, former Director of Music at St. Albans School for Boys, the National Cathedral School for Girls, and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, and a really wonderful person. We couldn't be more thrilled to have him for our first year!

I so hope that you'll consider spreading the word about this course to your singers (young and adult). I hope you won't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or concerns, whether by email or by calling my office, 503-478-1236.

Warmly,
Arwen

Arwen Myers
Music Associate
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
Co-Course Director - RSCM Pacific Northwest
(503) 478-1236

Wilbur Held in Memoriam

Please go to this site <http://www.morningstarmusic.com/composers/h/held/remembering-wilbur-held> to read a wonderful article by Nancy Raabe titled *Remembering Wilbur Held*.

John Ledwon's Theatre Organ #4



John recently sent me an 18 page article documenting the installation of his latest Theatre Organ creation in his Henderson house. The story starts with finding an instrument, goes through digging a four foot hole in his living room floor and building the



instrument, rebuilding the console and installing it on a moveable platform as well as adding colored lights and many other things. It is a fascinating article with many pictures and descriptions. The article was written spe-



cifically for a Theatre Organ Magazine, but with John's permission it is available to see on our web page. You can find the link on our local organs page or you can go directly to:

<http://sncago.org/ledwon.pdf>



Plan your trip to San Diego today!

Enjoy concerts by Christopher Houlihan, Chelsea Chen, Douglas Cleveland, Carole Terry, and workshops with C. Michael Hawn and Emma Lou Diemer. The convention will also concentrate on outreach to youth with a special youth day and concerts by young organists.

The workshops will:

- * Boost Your Musical Skills
- * Broaden Your Repertoire
- * Bring Others into an appreciation of organ music.

Worship services and fellowship will lift your spirits too!

Details at www.agosandiego2014.org



Concerts - Workshops - Fellowship

The American Guild of Organists, Southern Nevada Chapter
Organ Recital Series - 2015-2016

FRIDAY – October 9, 2015 – 7:30 P.M.

Christopher Houlihan

One of today's young international "star" performers, this will be Mr. Houlihan's first performance in Nevada.

SUNDAY – November 1, 2015 - 4:00 P.M.

Thomas Strauss

German organist Thomas Strauss has won many competitions and performed organ recitals around the world.

SUNDAY – December 6, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Annual Advent - Christmas Members' Recital

Always a popular recital, this program features local talent from the Southern Nevada Chapter AGO membership. Get your holiday season off to a great start!

FRIDAY - February 26, 2016 – 7:30 P.M.

Chelsea Chen

Ms. Chen is having a successful international concert career and captivates her audiences with her playing. She was a featured performer on the Doc Rando organ during the Region IX AGO Convention in 2006.

FRIDAY - April 8, 2016 – 7:30 P.M.

Jens Korndörfer

In the past decade, German-born concert organist Dr. Jens Korndörfer has given more than 200 concerts at major venues around the world. Critics have called him a "prodigious technician" and have praised his "effortless, poetic," "colorful and exciting playing."

FRIDAY – May 20, 2016

Dorothy Young Riess

Our own Dr. Dorothy will present this recital in celebration of her 85th birthday. You won't want to miss it!

*All recitals in Doc Rando Recital Hall in the Beam Music Center on the UNLV Campus
except for the December 6 Advent-Christmas Members' Recital which will be at Christ Church Episcopal,
2000 S. Maryland Parkway (at St. Louis)*

Open to the public at no charge

*The Organ Recital Series is supported through the generosity of Patrons in the community.
Contributions are tax-deductible. To become a Patron, send your check made to
"Southern Nevada Chapter, AGO" to Dr. David Dorway, Treasurer,
10613 Shoalhaven Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134*

This Organ Recital Series is funded, in part, by a grant from the Nevada Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

