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Contact the Editor: Regina

Kettering

editor@pitago.org

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DEAN'S NOTES

by Douglas Starr, Dean (dean@pitago.org)

Dear colleagues:

Your AGO Chapter Officers are very productive and you will soon elect, from a wonderful slate developed by Craig Dobbins' Nominating Committee, our next term of leadership. Tom Taylor has worked diligently to produce the final draft of updated Chapter Operating Procedures. Sub-Dean, Chaz Bowers, has started the Program Committee's work for next year. Jon Tyillian and a committee have been charged to assess Ian Connor's prospective Eagle Scout project to fund the building of a portative organ for Chapter use. These are just several among many completed and ongoing tasks by chapter membership. I deeply appreciate everyone's careful work and I know that you, too, are grateful.



Have an outstanding season of Lenten music in March. After a glorious Easter, make plans to attend the April 26 OAS/AGO Gala concert by John Walker and its surrounding events. Finally, don't forget to register for one of this summer's AGO regional conventions.

Gratefully, Doug Starr

JOHN WALKER AT SHADYSIDE

by Curt Scheib, DMA, Dean, School of Visual and Performing Arts, Seton Hill University

Reflections on Dr. John Walker's tenure as Director of Music and Organist at the Shadyside Presbyterian Church

In the summer of 1987, I arrived at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, beginning what would become a thirty-year period as a member of the music staff. During those years, I served in varying capacities, under five different directors of music. Having such a long and varied experience, I had the opportunity and the privilege of witnessing and participating in much of the growth and change that occurred during that time. Through all of those "circling years", John Walker was the central figure, literally and figuratively, in the development and growth of the music ministry at Shadyside. With John, it was indeed a ministry, seeking to serve all of God's people in a vibrant and inclusive worship through music-making that was joyful and intensely spiritual.

Music at Shadyside has a storied tradition. Under the long tenure of Russell G. Wichmann, music of the highest caliber, along with excellent preaching, had long been a central aspect of worship. The choir, whose members included many of the best singers in Pittsburgh, regularly sang anthems from the central canon of choral literature for the church. When I arrived in 1987, I was honored to join the storied group of soloists who had served the church and who were regularly featured in services and in concerts.

With the appointment of John Walker as Director of Music and Organist, there began a period of extensive growth, filled with new initiatives, a new organ, and a vision of how the music of Shadyside could be a vehicle to build community, both within the church and outside of its walls.

When I now reflect on how much was accomplished and the tremendous legacy that was created, I come to an even greater realization of the extent and significance of John Walker's contribution to Shadyside Church and to church music throughout the world. In John, there is a leadership that is both humble and compelling. Among his many gifts is an ability to bring people into his vision, to fully engage them, and together to move forward. In that way, one felt compelled to participate and to share in the joy of what was to come. To do otherwise was unthinkable.

Of all the many initiatives during John's tenure, securing the new Reuter pipe organ was among the most significant. It is all the more notable as it came on the heels of a 1989 rebuild and expansion of the 1950s vintage Möller organ. In a relatively short amount of time, John was able to build support by making a compelling argument of the essential need of obtaining an instrument of the highest caliber that would support the church and its significant music ministry well into the future. The Reuter organ, of 105 ranks, was completed in 1994, the bottom octave of the Choir Gemshorn and Great Violone

coming from the previous Möller organ and the bottom octave of the Swell Lieblich Gedeckt from the 1926 E.M. Skinner instrument which was installed at Shadyside in 1926.

There followed a period of tremendous activity in the music ministry of Shadyside. Initiatives begun and led by John Walker include the development of the *Shadyside Choral Society* and the establishment of the *Music in a Great Space* concert series. In the creation of these two significant programs, John led Shadyside to embrace the community by hosting concerts by musical artists of the highest caliber and by inviting the community at large to participate in the great sacred choral tradition of the church. The establishment of *Music in a Great Space*, along with the new organ, also coincided with another John Walker initiative, to seal the guastavino tile in the sanctuary, thereby significantly improving the acoustical environment of the church. The change was made greatly evident when a performance by *Chanticleer* was the first in the acoustically transformed sanctuary. For those of us who were present, we experienced a warmth and immediacy of sound that was extraordinary, the beauty of the sound now finally matching the visual beauty of the sanctuary. For the Shadyside Choral Society, I had the privilege of working with John on the establishment and ongoing work of the ensemble, which continued until just a few years ago.

John Walker also brought significant forms of music-centered worship to Shadyside, including the Candlelight Carol Service and a service of Tenebrae. During his tenure the Shadyside Choir, sometimes joining forces with the Shadyside Choral Society, regularly performed major works either with orchestra or with organ. The Shadyside Choir also completed two international tours, one to Great Britain and one to Taiwan. The choir additionally completed several recording projects under John's direction, including *To Behold the Fair Beauty*, *A Choral Harvest*, *Angels We Have Heard*, and *How Can I Keep From Singing*. John also completed two organ recordings at Shadyside, *Romance: John Walker Plays the Shadyside Organ*, and a recording of overlooked Christmas music for organ, *Christmas Rediscovered*.

In worship, John brought a true sense of the beauty of worship, his playing and his choice of music all designed to weave a space where all of God's people would be invited to participate. The inclusion of music from many cultures, the hosting of a gospel music festival, and leading the congregation into an updated and more inclusive hymnal, all spoke to John's desire to create a place of welcome through music.

The story of John Walker at Shadyside Presbyterian Church is one of transformation. He was not merely the steward of the great tradition he inherited, but rather saw that tradition as a springboard to move forward. Through his many contributions and initiatives, the story and the trajectory of music at Shadyside and of the church itself, opened to embrace its role as a place where community is enhanced and celebrated. It then serves as a beautiful example of the power of music to bring us together, to serve God, and to bring us into dialogue with one another. Particularly in these times where divisiveness is all too prevalent, John Walker's work at Shadyside is a reminder of what we can be and how we are indeed all God's children, each and every one.

MARCH MEETING – THE FRENCH PHRASE

by Chaz Bowers, Sub-Dean (sub-dean@pitago.org)

The French Phrase: A Masterclass with Dr. Ann Labounsky

Monday, March 25, 2019

St. John's Lutheran Church, 601 Washington Ave, Carnegie, PA 15106

6:00 P.M. Appetizers, 6:30 P.M. Dinner

7:30 P.M. Business Meeting, 7:50 P.M. Presentation

William Arthur Ward, a twentieth century author renowned for his inspirational maxims, writes of teaching, "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." For its March meeting, the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is proud to feature another one of its own, Dr. Ann Labounsky, in an evening that is designed to inspire.

Ann certainly needs no introduction to many of our members. A former chapter dean, Labounsky has served as the Professor of Organ and Sacred Music at the Mary Pappert School of Music since 1976. She recently accepted a position as organist and choirmaster at the Church of the Redeemer (Episcopal) in Squirrel Hill.

Labounsky studied in France on a Fulbright scholarship. She is the leading interpreter of the music of Jean Langlais. In 2002, Amadeus Press published her book, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*; in 2007, she starred in *Life and Music of Jean Langlais*, a DVD produced by the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Guild of Organists; and, in 2013, she released a CD set of the complete recordings of his works.

As we continue to highlight new instruments in our area, the masterclass will be held at the St. John's Lutheran Church in Carnegie which houses a new 3-manual, 17-rank pipe organ by Patrick J. Murphy and Associates. The instrument was featured on the cover of the December issue of the *The American Organist* magazine.

The dinner, catered again by Bistro to Go thanks to the rave reviews by so many of our members, will feature Chicken Parmesan, Roasted Vegetable Lasagna, Green Bean Almondine, Simple Salad, and a Lemon Cream Cake! Our sincerest thanks to Jeff Gray and the music ministry of St. John Lutheran Church for providing the appetizers prior to this evening's dinner.

If you are interested in playing for the masterclass, please email me at chazbowers@gmail.com to see if spots are still available.

Program Committee

If you have thoughts or ideas regarding our monthly programs, please consider serving on the program committee! No previous experience needed to join. Please email me at chazbowers@gmail.com by April 1st to participate or find out more information.

RSVP by Mar 15th for The French Phrase
6:00 PM Dinner, Meeting at 8:00 PM Mar 25th, 2019
St. John's Lutheran Church, 601 Washington Ave., Carnegie, PA 15106

Name: _____

Guests: _____

Amount enclosed (\$20.--/person) _____

I have included \$_____ to underwrite a student dinner. (\$20 underwrites one dinner)

Reservations to: Regina Kettering, 1115 Beaver Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143-2003
 Text or call: (412)-477-5547 email: reservations@pitago.org

Date	Event
<p style="text-align: center;">1 Mar 12:00 PM</p>	<p>First Fridays at Redeemer - March First Fridays features composer Nancy Galbraith with Ann Labounsky playing her organ works and interviewing her. Free to the public. The series of concerts and lectures is under the auspices of OSHER, Lifelong learning Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. <i>Church of the Redeemer, 7100 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 412.670.2056</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Mar 3:00 PM</p>	<p>University of Pittsburgh String Orchestra concert - Roger Zahab will direct a concert of works for string orchestra including what may be the second performance ever of African-American composer Julia Amanda Perry's "Symphony in one movement," John Cage's late work "Twenty-three" and Dvorak's "Serenade for Strings. <i>Heinz Memorial Chapel 326 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213</i> Roger Zahab at rzahab@pitt.edu</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Mar 3:00 PM</p>	<p>Heavenly Pipedreams - Donald K. Fellows will perform a 50-minute concert as part of the St. James Music Plus Series, using the full range of the Rogers Trillium organ. The program will include works by Lemmens, Near, Bales, Shearing, Bach and Vierne. A 2:30 Pre-concert will feature the Sign Language Choir of Sewickley's St. Stephens Church. ALL free-will proceeds will benefit The Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Dessert and punch reception immediately following. <i>St. James Church, 200 Walnut Street, Sewickley, PA 15143 412.741.6650</i> Sharron Schaefer, s.schaefer@comcast.net</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Mar 4:00 PM</p>	<p>Choral Vespers – Choral Vespers for the Transfiguration of our Lord sung by Pittsburgh Compline Choir. <i>First Lutheran Church, 615 Grant St, Pittsburgh, PA 15219</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">9 Mar 9:30 AM</p>	<p>Choral Reading Workshop - This workshop will be led by Craig Cannon, retired Music Director at Fox Chapel High School, Adjunct Faculty of Mary Pappert School of Music (choral), at Duquesne University, Founder and Director of Women's Choir, Belle Voci; and Interim Music Director at Faith Methodist Church, Fox Chapel. The music will be 2-part, SAB and SATB. Registration at 9:00 am, Workshop 9:30-Noon. Fee: \$10, walk-ins welcome. This is sponsored by the Pittsburgh Chapter of PAM (Presbyterian Association of Musicians).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">9 Mar 7:30 PM</p>	<p>Choral Concert: "Brothers from Another Mother - Those Musical Masons" - Music of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Gilbert and Sullivan, Berlin, Kern and Duke Ellington: all Freemasons! The Pittsburgh Concert Chorale, Susan Medley, director; David Billings, organist; Orchestra; and Jazz Trio. Tickets at the door; at 412-635-7654; or www.pccsinging.org <i>Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, 384 Fox Chapel road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238 412.963.8243, x29</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">10 Mar 3:00 PM</p>	<p>Organ recital - Daniel Ficarrì plays the Taylor and Booday organ in Galbreath Chapel, Westminster Presbyterian Church. <i>Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2040 Washington Rd. Upper St. Clair</i></p>

Date	Event
	https://www.westminster-church.org/events/event-list/music-arts-organist-daniel-ficarri
10 Mar 3:00 PM	James Dengler Organ Recital - James Dengler, organist at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Altoona, will present a concert that includes works by Bach, Handel, Brahms and Rheinberger. <i>Heinz Memorial Chapel (address above) 412.624.4157</i>
17 Mar 3:00 PM	Clarissa Boden on Glass Harp - Clarissa Boden, first introduced to the glass harp in her teens, will present a program of sacred and secular music, during which she will speak about the history and workings of the glass harp. <i>Heinz Memorial Chapel (address and info above)</i>
22 Mar 8:00 PM	Bach's St. John Passion presented by Resonance Works - Resonance Works, under conductor Maria Sensi Sellner, will present J. S. Bach's St. John Passion featuring tenor Joseph Gaines as the Evangelist and bass-baritone Michael Scarcelle as Jesus. <i>Heinz Memorial Chapel (address and info above)</i> Tickets: www.resonanceworks.org/st-john-passion Information: ResWorksPgh@gmail.com