

WINDLINES

*The newsletter of the AMERICAN ORGAN INSTITUTE at
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA SCHOOL OF MUSIC*

Fall 2017 (Volume 9, Number 1)

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A message from our director.



JOHN SCHWANDT, DM

Professor of Music; Director, AOI

Fall greetings to all of our faithful *Windlines* readers and AOI supporters! If anyone wondered about the reduced frequency of our publication, we felt a longer annual newsletter brimming with interesting information might be more pragmatic and beneficial, especially given the increase of our electronic media presence throughout the year. As always, please let us know what you think. Lest any reader perceive the absence of a newsletter during the year means there was little to write about, this lengthy issue will certainly correct any such perception.

Our ever-growing AOI family continually inspires me, from our talented students to our dedicated and highly skilled faculty and staff. Regarding the latter, I am pleased to report several outstanding additions to our roster of professionals. Each brings with them superb qualifications, skill, and expertise in their respective areas to the AOI. I would like to highlight the appointment of Clark Wilson as adjunct instructor of theatre organ. Clark's presence is the capstone of the development of the AOI, as we have added courses in popular and theatrical organ that allow for an emphasis on theatrical organ — we believe it to be a first since the Eastman School trained organists to accompany silent films in their own era. Alongside my other colleagues in the AOI, I could not be more pleased with or proud of the team we have assembled! Diversity is the strength of any progressive organization, and with our collective experience, we are providing the most comprehensive and unparalleled educational opportunities available to those who wish to study the pipe organ. You can read about the new additions to our family in this issue.



The newest members of the full-time AOI team. From left: Nathan Rau, service manager; Fred Bahr, shop manager; Bailey Hoffner, curator/archivist.

Alongside teaching, we also strive to be active performers. Please take note of upcoming performances locally as well as nationally and internationally by us, new recordings soon to be available, as well as our regular appearances on *Pipedreams*. In the last year, personal highlights have been the closing concert of the American Guild of Organists biennial national convention, a patriotic program on the great Austin organ of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium in Chattanooga, and two concerts at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, which was the home church of my mentor, Paul Manz. I was thrilled to recreate the original dedicatory recital that Paul played at the installation of the Schlicker organ 50 years ago. I presented a similar concert for the national convention of the Organ Historical Society, which was held in the Twin Cities this past summer.

I remain so grateful for the courage and vision of President David Boren, who brought me to Oklahoma to build something unique for the organ world in America's heartland. We have been blessed by his transformative leadership. We look proudly to the future. OU and Norman is a great place to live, work, study, practice, and grow. Come and see for yourself!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John D. Schwandt".



John Schwandt at the monumental Schlicker organ in Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis.

Photo courtesy Bill van Pelt

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Main Cover Photo:

John Schwandt and a capacity crowd at the unveiling of Kilgen Opus 5218, formerly of WKY Radio.

Very special thanks to Michael Barone for his continuing support of the AOI. Michael helped produce the 10th *Holiday Pipes* program, also featured as a *Pipedreams Live* show. This was an event that will be long remembered, and you can listen on-demand at <http://bit.ly/Pipedreams1649>. The thrill of having Michael here with us and his unique emcee abilities, the addition of magnificent performances by my colleagues, and our musical collaborations made for a wonderful experience commemorating 10 years. An event which began as a fluke of circumstance is now a beloved and anticipated OU-AOI annual holiday tradition. I often wonder when the public might grow weary of the format of total improvisation, or "making it up on the spot." I remain humbled and grateful that the capacity audiences each year suggest that it is apparently not yet time to retire the *Holiday*



Holiday Pipes! with Michael Barone

Pipes tradition. The next *Holiday Pipes!* program will be at 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8, in Sharp Concert Hall in Catlett Music Center. I will be joined by some special guests, so plan to be there!
—John Schwandt

A message from...

Photo: James DeCamp



CLARK WILSON

Adjunct Instructor, Theatrical Organ

I'm very pleased to be able to join the AOI family to contribute to the full education of organists – whether on a more traditional study track, or as part of our unique offerings to those who wish to emphasize organ technology or theatrical organ.

Our curriculum for the theatre organ emphasis, and for the better education

of all organ students, includes studies in the history of the American theatre organ, and silent film accompaniment.

The historical survey course is designed to acquaint students with the developments that led to the "Unit Orchestra," or orchestral pipe organ - what is known today as the theatre organ. The prominent builders and players are reviewed, as is the general time period of popular live music, vaudeville, and silent pictures in American theatres, emphasizing the theatrical organ's importance in the era. It is well worth any organist's time to understand the history behind the American theatre organ and to be aware of the impact and importance of perhaps the most misunderstood musical instrument.

Silent film scoring course takes the students from the initial basics of putting music to film action through the actual scoring of a picture in front of the class. Included are studies of accompaniment methods, music for all types of action and situations, as well as effects and imitations. Emphasis is placed on appropriate use of historic music for enhancement of both the comedic and dramatic picture. Silent film accompaniment is a living and vital art form that is often misrepresented today through improper musical settings. Having learned the craft from first-generation professionals who lived and performed in the silent theatre era, it is my hope to give young organists the tools, understanding, and ability to score pictures in an accurate, historic, and exciting manner, no matter what type of organ upon which they may be performing.



Clark Wilson provides live accompaniment for *The Cat and the Canary* in Sharp Concert Hall, OU School of Music.

JOHN SCHWANDT PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

- Oct. 29, 2017** Reformation Hymn Festival – First Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Dec. 8, 2017** *12th Annual Holiday Pipes!*
Sharp Hall, University of Oklahoma
- Dec. 16, 2017** Lessons and Carols
East Lake UMC, Birmingham, Alabama
- January 28, 2018** Concert
St. Lorenz Lutheran Church, Frankenmuth, Michigan
- March 15, 2018** *Durufle Requiem*
Gothic Hall, University of Oklahoma
- June 17-30, 2018** Artist-in-Residence
Montreat Worship and Music Conference
- Oct. 28, 2018** Silent Film
Plainfield UMC, Plainfield, Indiana

CLARK WILSON PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Performances remaining in 2017

- Oct. 7** Lerner Theatre, Elkhart, Indiana
- Oct. 13** Phipps Center for the Performing Arts, Hudson, Wisconsin
- Oct. 23 and 24** Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City, OK
- Oct. 31** Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, California
- Nov. 8** East Texas Pipe Organ Festival, Kilgore, Texas
- Nov. 11** Lerner Theatre, Elkhart, Indiana
- Nov. 18** Hanover Theatre, Worcester, Massachusetts
- Nov. 24-26** Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio

Performances through August, 2018

- Jan. 14** State Theatre, Sandusky, Ohio
- Jan. 28** San Gabriel Civic Center, San Gabriel, California
- Feb. 10 and 11** Juriet Residence, Stuart, Florida
- Feb. 18** Grace Church/Manasota TOS, Sarasota, Florida
- Feb. 23** South Methodist Church, Manchester, Connecticut
- Feb. 24** Hampton Congregational Church, Hampton, Connecticut
- Feb. 25** Foley Residence, Tolland, Connecticut
- March 9** Forrest Burdette UMC, Hurricane, West Virginia
- March 17** Capitol Theatre, Madison, Wisconsin
- March 21** First United Methodist Church, Wooster, Ohio
- March 25** Lerner Theatre, Elkhart, Indiana
- April 7** Capitol Theatre, Madison, Wisconsin
- April 28** Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware
- May 6** Hanover Theatre, Worcester, Massachusetts
- May 11** Brenan Loft/Columbus AGO, London, Ohio
- May 24** Peristyle, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio
- June 17** Embassy Theatre, Fort Wayne, Ohio
- June 1 to Aug. 31** Summer Film Series, Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio
- July 1** ATOS Convention, Los Angeles, California

The American Organ Institute

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY

When I left the American Organ Institute in 2013 for a full-time archivist position, it was not without a great deal of sadness. As the first graduate assistant to work with the collections of the American Theatre Organ Society at the AOI, I had grown a strong affinity for the collections – not to mention the faculty, staff, and students – and I felt justly committed to the preservation of these unique materials through time. But my graduate assistantship was ending and I was offered a position as archivist at the Carl Albert Center Congressional Archives that I simply could not turn down. While I gained invaluable experience at the CAC, it was with great pleasure and excitement that I rejoined the AOI family in October of 2016, as the institute's first-ever, full-time archivist.

Over the past year, graduate assistants Catherine Dean, Stephanie Barth, and Kaitlynn Eaton worked tirelessly with the collections at the American Organ Institute Archives and Library. Though each of them is moving on to new adventures this fall, we are indebted to them for their commitment to our



BAILEY HOFFNER, MLIS

('10, '13) Curator and Archivist

collections and proud of all that they accomplished.

Of particular note is Stephanie Barth's completion of her master's thesis on Mildred Andrews Boggess, a project which would never have been possible without the collections at the AOIAL.

This fall we welcome two new graduate assistants from the School of Library and Information Studies, Anna Taylor and Brynn Simons, both of whom have already jumped into their projects head-first. In addition to regular duties relating to outreach and reference services, they will each

head up their own major projects with Anna focusing on further developing the library side of our collections and Brynn managing a grant-funded re-processing project. Each of these projects will result in greater accessibility of our materials for researchers and enthusiasts.

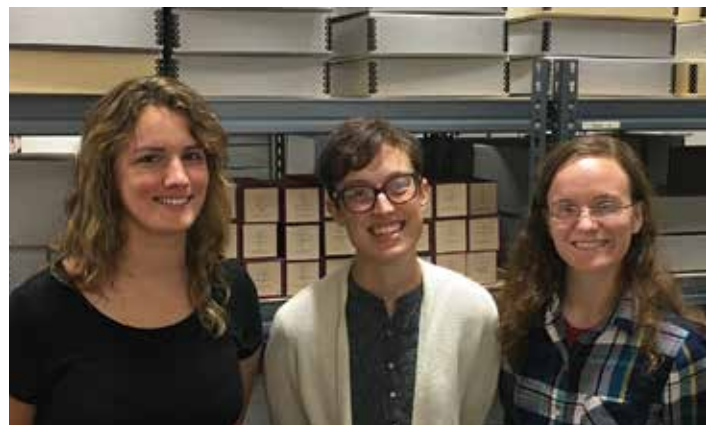
The excitement of these students has only bolstered my own excitement for this new chapter of the AOIAL's history – one of strategic development and consistent stewardship, the positive effects of which are already apparent. Not only are we working to update our online database, we are working on plans for our first major digitization project which will pave the way for all future digitization efforts.

The creation of my position was a strong affirmation of the AOI's commitment to our archives and library, and I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the author of the text.



Stephanie Barth's winning poster explaining her research and document on Mildred Andrews Boggess. Pictured from left: John Riester (AOI shop director), Jeremy Wance (AOI associate director), Stephanie Barth, Bailey Hoffner (curator and archivist)



New graduate assistants in the AOIAL are Brynn Simons (left) and Anna Taylor (right), here with Bailey Hoffner.

Everybody Sing!

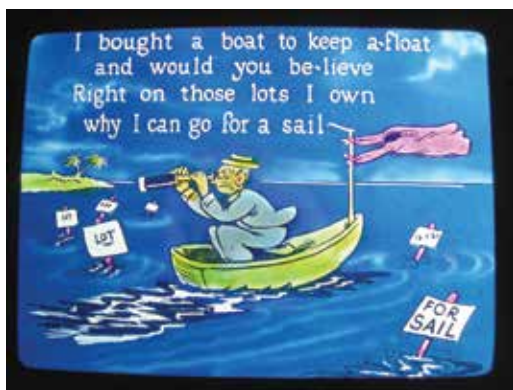


ESTHER MORGAN-ELLIS

Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Music, University of North Georgia

The American Theatre Organ Society Archive [which is part of the AOIAL] in Norman, Oklahoma, happens to contain one of the most extraordinary extant collections of song slides. The slides, which are made of glass and measure 3 by 4 inches, were used by theatre organists in the 1920s and early 1930s to project song lyrics while they played popular tunes. Some of the sets are exceptionally beautiful and feature unique illustrations on every slide. Among the most interesting are a hand-painted guide to the theatre

organ titled “Members of My Orchestra,” and a collection of hit songs from a 1929 MGM feature, complete with stills from the film. Sometimes patrons were expected to read the lyrics while enjoying the music in silence; this was true, for example, when Jesse Crawford used slides at the New York Paramount. Most of the time, however, the audience joined in and sang with the organist. At the height of the picture palace era, hundreds of organists at theatres across the country led 10-minute sing-alongs from the console during every show. These “sings” were so popular that they inspired a number of sing-along films series, including the famous Fleischer cartoons featuring the bouncing ball.



Glass slides like these were used to project song lyrics for the theatre audience.

I describe the practice of theatre sing-alongs for the first time in my book, *Everybody Sing!: Community Singing in the American Picture Palace*, which appears in the fall catalog of UGA Press. In addition to describing the general practices of community singing in picture theatres, I trace it back to the nickelodeon program and

to WWI-era sing-alongs. I also explore the songleading styles of some of the era’s most famous organists, including Eddie Meikel at the Chicago Harding, Henri Keates at the Chicago Oriental, and Bob West, Stuart Barrie, and Henry Murtagh at the Brooklyn Paramount. The book contains about 80 photographs of theaters, performers, and song slides, and includes an eight-page color insert with song slide reproductions.

—**Esther Morgan-Ellis**

THOUSANDS STRONG!

This past July, the AOIAL launched a crowd-sourced fundraising campaign for the first phase of the American Theatre Organ Journal Digitization Project. The final goal of the project is to provide free, online, text-searchable, access to the complete run of *The American Theatre Organ Journal*, including its earliest iterations, *The Tibia* and *The Bombarde*. The initial phase of the project funds the planning period during which decisions will be made as to where and how best to host and maintain the online journal, as well as the digitization of the first round of issues.

Our fundraising goal for the initial phase was \$5,000, which we not only surpassed, but nearly doubled by the end of our month-long campaign, with a final total of \$9,015. We worked hard to promote the campaign, but with as much significant history and information as this more than 60-year-old journal holds, it was hardly a difficult sell. The project will be giving back to the community for years to come, and donors from all over the country recognized that.

The cost of the entire project is much more than the initial costs, so keep an eye out for future opportunities to support this incredible project! —**Bailey Hoffner**



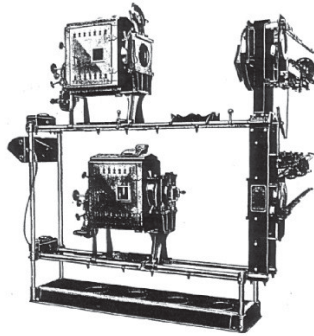
The Brenograph

AND THE BRENKERT LIGHT PROJECTION COMPANY

In the late 1920s, every deluxe movie palace had as part of its requisite equipment at least one "Master Brenograph F-7," a massive double magic lantern advertised by its manufacturer as projecting "Everything but the Motion Picture." From the projection booth, these complex machines could project airplanes flying through moving clouds, running water, fire, song lyrics dissolving from one verse to the next for sing-alongs, changing colors of patterned light, strobe effects, spot lights, and hundreds of special effects manufactured by the Maurice Workstel Company and a few others.

A new 60-page booklet on the history of the Brenograph and its manufacturer, the Brenkert Light Projection Company, is now available free of charge as a PDF for online reading or downloading from a link on the "Historic Brenograph" page of the Embassy Theatre's (Fort

The New Brenkert F7 Master Brenograph
FOR EVERY SIZE AND TYPE OF THEATRE



Wayne, Indiana) web site: <http://fwembassytheatre.org>. Print copies may be ordered from another link on the same page, with all proceeds going to the Embassy Theatre Foundation.

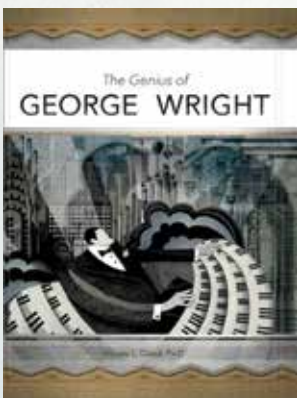
The booklet tells the story of the Brenograph's forerunners, the establishment of the Brenkert company and its gradual development of the F series of

combination projectors culminating in the F7, Maurice Workstel Studios' creation of special slides for the projector (including references to rare catalogues found in the AOIAL collections), effects created by Harry Rubin (head of projection for Publix), and the eventual collapse of the market for the Brenograph with the changes in theatrical exhibition that followed the 1929 stock market crash. The text is complemented by more than 85 illustrations, including the Brenograph's forerunners, early patents, numerous trade journal advertisements, catalog excerpts, slides, and detailed photographs and diagrams of the machine.



Thomas J. Mathiesen, DMA
Distinguished Professor of Music Emeritus, Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University

The Genius of George Wright



The recent release of "The Genius of George Wright," the 600-page definitive biography of the theatre organ legend, was made possible in part by the world's largest theatre organ research collection, housed at the American Organ Institute Archives and Library at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. Author William L. Coale, Ph.D. spent nine days scouring the archives, with the capable assistance of AOIAL

curator and archivist Bailey Hoffner and her staff. That research provided valuable and unique information that enriched the book's content considerably. This treasure trove of all things theatre organ will soon be enriched by the donation of all of Coale's research over the last four years, as well as an amazing collection of Wright's

personal memorabilia, photographs, and correspondence that had been acquired by the author.

According to Coale, "Significant progress has been made to preserve and catalog the theatre organ collection at AOIAL, but the task is monumental, and deserves financial and institutional support. In addition to written and photographic materials, an immense number of priceless audio recordings must be digitized in order to save them for posterity. To learn more about the biography, and George Wright's available recordings, please visit www.GeniusOfGeorgeWright.com



Bill Coale presents AOI curator and archivist Bailey Hoffner with the charm bracelet worn by George Wright's mother. Coale has made gifts to the AOIAL of many other unique items.

HARPSICHORD WEEK

Pluck off!

In May of 2017, the American Organ Institute hosted alumnus Lee Ridgway (BM '67) for a week-long seminar on harpsichord technique, which was playfully entitled "Pluck Off!" As well as being a student of Mildred Andrews Boggess, Ridgway studied with John Gibbons, Marie-Claire Alain, Anton Heiller, and Gustav Leonhardt. He is active nationally and in local chapters of the American Guild of Organists and is on the board of the Boston Early Music Festival — as Boston has been his home for some time now. For the seminar, he programmed a full schedule of masterclasses and lessons. Ridgway also presented a recital and lecture for the public.

The participants were a diverse group, including young piano students, bachelor-, and graduate-level music students, and area music teachers. For the master classes held every morning, each participant selected one or more of Bach's *Inventions* and *Sinfonias* to perform. Ridgway used these performances to discuss specific musical and technical aspects of the harpsichord. Though participants also performed other repertoire in the classes, the *Two-Part Inventions* were especially useful for those experiencing harpsichord touch and articulations for the first time. Ridgway also held

individual lessons each afternoon so participants could focus in-depth on their own questions, technical challenges, and repertoire. Several different instruments were utilized, including a recently-acquired clavichord, but primarily the 1975 Kingston double that was given in memory of Mildred Andrews Boggess by her student, Mary Jean Straw Cook, who, in addition to her musical career, is a noted historian of the American Southwest, publishing multiple volumes on the subject. The instrument was built by Richard Kingston as his personal instrument, which he later sold to Cook.

Ridgway's recital included spoken notes on and performances of music by Frescobaldi, Froberger, and Louis Couperin. In his lecture, he gave a history of harpsichord building from its medieval precursors to the present day.



Each day of the week included a group class, followed by private or semi-private coachings.



Local piano students also were invited to experience a harpsichord, to which they adapted very well!

Harpsichord makers and characteristics of instruments from different European regions were discussed in detail.

His excitement for the harpsichord and his expertise made the week a valuable experience for all participants. Students of all levels left with new musical ideas and techniques, as well as resources for exploring more early keyboard music. —Nathan Rau



LEE
RIDGWAY

('67)

“ Harpsichord Week with Mr. Ridgway was very useful as a practical introduction to the harpsichord. His extensive experience in both organ and harpsichord proved to be invaluable, as he could take the background of phrasing and articulation we had from the organ, and move it over to the harpsichord. Finishing the week at the organ, we then took what we had learned about articulation and phrasing from the two-part inventions, and applied it to organ repertoire, which will prove to be most useful in interpreting the music of Bach, and those before him.

Coming from fairly limited experience with this period of repertoire, I had only a vague understanding of the specifics of Baroque articulations. I also had some interest in exploring more historically appropriate interpretations of works for the keyboard than could be done on a modern piano. Working through the B-flat invention was a good chance to use a piece which would be short enough to learn quickly. The two voices are contrasting enough in nature that they both call for different articulations at different times, and experimenting with them at the harpsichord could change the character of the piece quite dramatically. Returning to the organ at the end of the week, we revisited an *Orgelbuchlein* chorale, where again the different voices need to be articulated differently, which the week of harpsichord group sessions helped with immensely. —Luke Staisiunas



An informal gathering of some of the participants from Harpsichord Week. Pictured are (l to r): Stephany Coursey, Cynthia Pullin, Lee Ridgway, Jeremy Wance, Damin Spritzer, Luke Staisiunas, Adam Pajan, John Schwandt, Alex Armstrong, and Stephen Wurst.

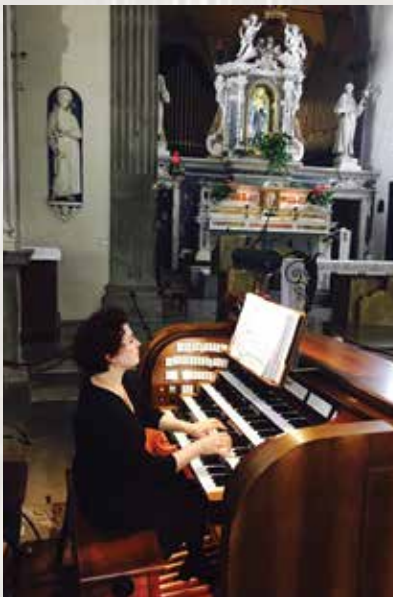
A message from...

DAMIN SPRITZER, DM

Assistant Professor of Music

At the beginning of my third full year with the AOI at OU, there are so many wonderful things to report! I continue to be grateful beyond description for my colleagues and our shared studio, and the organ family we have here in beautiful Oklahoma! We've had a number of recent graduates and a 100% placement/employment rate, and we love and miss them and look forward to hearing about the next steps in their musical lives and adventures!

Personally, last year was a deeply meaningful one to teach and support and connect, with a long list of additional opportunities and publications. I'm proud of our graduates, and thoroughly enjoyed teaching sections of both graduate and undergraduate organ literature. I completed the recording of my third CD of the music of R. L. Becker on the historic 1938 Kimball organ of St. John's Cathedral in Denver. One of the only extant organs of its kind in America, this is the first recording to feature the antiphonal division that was only completed in 2016 by the Spencer Organ Co., despite having been prepared for in 1938, when the organ was installed, right before the Kimball factory was forced to suspend all building because of the war. The disc has been released by Raven Recordings. Thank you to Stephen Tappe and Alberto Gutierrez for your welcome, Christoph Frommen, recording engineer, and Adam Pajan for assisting at the console! Also forthcoming will be my first collaborative disc. Recorded in Dallas at St. Monica's Catholic Church on the new Nichols & Simpson organ, the disc features works for organ and trombone, performed by Dr. Donald Pinson of Del Mar



Damin Spritzer presented a concert at the La Verna Festival in Arezzo, Italy.

College in Corpus Christi, Texas. The disc will be released by Raven Recordings later this fall.

Also for Becker, two upcoming publications later this year with the release of the second volume of this organ works. Volume II will focus on Becker's numerous toccatas for organ. Additionally, a monograph on Becker is also with Leupold Publishing, and should be released in 2018. A great labor of time and love these many years, that has yielded very precious opportunities for performance and publication, and that I hope will be a lasting scholarly and artistic contribution to the field.

Performances for me this year included the La Verna Festival near Arezzo, Italy, along with two additional performances in Trieste and Udine; four recitals in Germany on historic organs, including the Nicolaikirche in Leipzig that was home to both J. S. Bach and Franz Liszt, the Herderkirche in Weimar where Bach had cantatas premiered, the Predigerkirche in Erfurt that was the church of Johann Pachelbel, and a 1722 Silbermann organ in Rötha; and St. Matthews Episcopal Cathedral, Dallas; the Big 12 Trombone Conference, Lubbock; Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Saint Patrick's Cathedral, New York City; First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio (In conjunction with the William C. Hall Pipe Organ Competition); St. Andrews UMC in Dallas with Dr. Pajan; Lawton, Stillwater, and Norman, Oklahoma; Waco, Texas; the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption in San Francisco; and Trinity Episcopal Church in Tulsa.

I am excited about the organ literature class this year, and so looking forward to getting to know all the new members of our studio and AOI family!

Upcoming performances include:

Oct. 1 The Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta

The Terra Sancta Organ Festival in the Holy Land:

Oct. 10 St. Peter's Church, Tel Aviv - Jaffa

Oct. 11 Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth

Oct. 12 Church of St. Saviour, Jerusalem

Oct. 13 Church of St. Catherine at Nativity, Bethlehem

Oct. 29 The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Denver, CO

THE SOUND OF HISTORY:

A Voice Reborn

An intensive three-year process came to its completion as John Schwandt played the inaugural concert on the organ, Opus 5218 of the Geo. Kilgen & Son organ company originally installed in the studios of WKY Radio in 1935, as the station prepared to move into these new quarters at the top of the Skirvin Tower in downtown OKC.

Almost immediately upon installation, the 10-rank organ gained an additional 4 ranks and a beautiful Deagan vibraharp. On April 12, 1936, the organ was inaugurated by famed theatre organist Jesse Crawford, to a capacity in-studio crowd (the sound and the heat must've been oppressive!) and an audience of listeners across the state who had tuned in for this special event.

The Kilgen sang on as the house-organist, the well-known Ken Wright, gave it voice daily until the arrival and explosion of television. In 1951, E.K. Gaylord moved the radio station north, joining WKY Television in new buildings. There was no real need for the organ, so Gaylord sold it to the City of Oklahoma City, and it was installed in what was then the Municipal Auditorium.

The organ played on until 1967, when the Auditorium was completely renovated, and the organ was moved to new chambers on either side of the proscenium of what is now the Civic Center Music Hall. Paul Haggard, a local organ technician who had previously worked for Kilgen, and had even been on the original installation team back in 1935, rebuilt it in 1977. Hector Olivera played the first concert following the work, and Ken Wright was in the audience.

And then again in 1998, the Civic Center was to undergo a complete rebuild of the interior, and there was no place for the organ, which had already been homeless

once. Now it would either meet the wrecking ball or, it was rumored, be sold to a buyer out-of-state. This was too much for local businessman Greg Robertson, who gathered the support of a few others and appealed to the mayor and City Council to save the organ and keep this piece of Oklahoma history here.

Robertson enlisted the support of Wally Brown, a resident and well-known pianist and organist. Brown had spent many years traveling with Oral Roberts on his "crusades" around the world as Roberts's personal organist, and did the same with Benny Hinn and other preachers in that vein. He was there to punctuate the sermonizing, the praying, the healings, and the altar calls. He agreed to help save the instrument that he had played as a young man while it was in the WKY studio. With some cajoling, the mayor and City Council accepted an invitation to a private concert. They had to stand, as the seats had already been taken out of the hall, but Wally worked his own type of magic, and the bureaucrats agreed to remove and store the organ — but it still had no home.

Greg Robertson was not easily deterred, and he was fortunate that Bob Blackburn, then deputy director of the Oklahoma Historical Society, heard of the Kilgen's plight. Blackburn was busy with the building of a new home for the Oklahoma History Center, which was already under construction to the northeast of the Capitol. After talks with Robertson and others, Blackburn got a change order



The Kilgen organ installed in the new studios of WKY Radio, Oklahoma City.



Jesse Crawford played the inaugural concert to live and radio audiences.



Ken Wright with the organ he called "my baby."



Installation begins in the Great Hall of the Oklahoma History Center.



Dusty Miller rolls up his sleeves and joins in the work.



Garman Kimmell, inventor and philanthropist.

issued that provided a room in the basement for the organ's blower, and two chambers in a prime spot on either side of the Great Hall's rotunda, with its hard surfaces and elegant view of the Capitol.

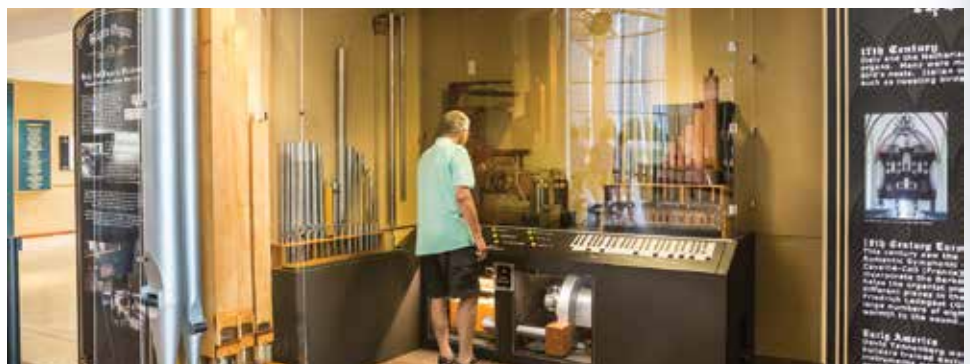
Meanwhile, Robertson knew that funding would have to be found, and so he approached his friend Garman Kimmell, who had founded Kimray, Inc. in OKC, and who had revolutionized the oil and gas industry with several inventions that were used around the world. A true genius, Kimmell was the medical physicist on the first open-heart surgery team in Oklahoma and built one of the first heart/lung machines. He also developed the vena cava filter, which was installed in hundreds of thousands of patients to catch blood clots as they entered the heart – before they could cause serious injury or death. He based the design on a device he had developed to deal with sludge that built up in oil pumps.

Kimmell had a broad interest in how things worked, and he was intrigued by the plan for the Kilgen. He agreed to fund the project. A local organ enthusiast was brought on to run the restoration and installation, but unfortunately the overall plan was flawed, and the project foundered with the organ partially installed and completely unplayable. Professionals were engaged by the Oklahoma Historical Society to evaluate and recommend action, but all agreed that the only acceptable solution was to start over – and so the organ sat, silent.

And, as was repeatedly the case in the Kilgen's history, someone else was in the right place at the right time – John Schwandt. Having been hired in 2006 as the new organ professor at the University of Oklahoma, Schwandt had also founded the American Organ Institute within the university, which he envisioned as a center for not only the standard repertoire of the pipe organ, but also music of other styles – jazz, theatre, and popular music. He also wanted the art and science of organbuilding, maintenance, and restoration to be studied – something not offered by other American universities.

This is where Dusty Miller stepped in to be yet another of the people who can be credited with Opus 5218's salvation. Miller was a son-in-law of Kimmell and happened to be a fan of theatre organ music as a genre. Having retired from an engineering career in Pennsylvania, he and his wife, Barbara, were planning a move back to Oklahoma in 2012. Being brought current on the story of the organ project, he offered to work behind-the-scenes to find a solution. Unfortunately, Garman Kimmell had passed away in the interim, but Miller convinced Kimray, Inc. and the charitable foundation left by Kimmell, along with the Gaylord family, original owners of WKY and the organ, to put together enough money to see the project to completion.

John Schwandt had been one of those called upon to evaluate the Kilgen. He recognized that this was an opportunity for collaboration



The interactive display showing the many aspects of the pipe organ in detail.

KILGEN OPUS 5218



The AOI family gathers around the console following the inaugural concert of the Kilgen organ.

between two state institutions, to the benefit of all. The OHC would gain a unique centerpiece, and the AOI would both re-introduce a theatre organ to the OKC metro, where none remained, and the project would serve as a learning experience for OU students. Dusty Miller recognized that there would be an extra level of enthusiasm on the part of the AOI, as well as an extra level of accountability. It was a win-win situation.

In April 2015, after a year of study and planning, the AOI signed a contract to remove, rebuild, and re-install the WKY organ. Organbuilders and other professionals were consulted at every step of the project, providing an even greater educational opportunity. Dan Sliger, then shop foreman, and John Riester, projects director, worked to take advantage of the height of the organ chambers by designing two three-level superstructures that provided adequate room for the winding system, the chests and their pipes, and the tuned and untuned percussions.

This was not to be a restoration of the organ. All parties agreed that the original fabric of the instrument had been damaged or compromised such that an attempt would be very costly, and the budget would not allow it. Likewise, theatre organists and professionals did not want to see the organ returned to its specification in any of its several incarnations. Some pipes had been damaged and all needed some TLC, but most were repairable. The Kilgen chests were rebuilt, retaining their original design. All of the tuned percussions were rebuilt, and a new toy counter was provided, with almost none of the original remaining. The wind system was re-designed. It was planned and installed when the organ was its original 10 ranks, and never quite kept up with the needs of the enlarged instrument. Finally, the console specification, which laid out the possibilities afforded by the 15 ranks (the organ had gained a Kinura



The two massive superstructures as seen on the AOI shop floor.



A view of the pipes of the Solo chamber.



The nameplate and left stop jamb of Kilgen Opus 5218.

Oct. 23
SOLD
OUT

Upcoming performances:

7 p.m., Monday, Oct. 23 and 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 24 – Clark Wilson provides live accompaniment for one of the greatest films of all times – F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* Monday performance sold out!

7 p.m., Monday, Jan. 22, 2018 – Jelani Eddington presents a program of music from great American composers.

during its time at WKY) over four manuals and pedal, was completely revised by leading theatre organists of today, with attention to the evolution of the theatre genre over the decades. The resulting instrument has far-exceeded even our highest hopes. With an enormous amount of work, the original Kilgen sound has been preserved.

Perhaps of greater importance, this theatre organ, scarcely to be encountered in the entire region, has been given a secure home in an optimal environment. It served as a learning exercise for the students of the AOI, it supported many organbuilders and suppliers as they worked alongside us to produce the final result, and it will be, in many cases, the only pipe organ that many visitors to the museum will ever encounter. To aid in the

education of the general public, a wonderful interactive display allows visitors to see exactly how an organ works, complete with playable pipes of different sorts, and a small toy counter, with all the bells and whistles (perhaps to the chagrin of the museum personnel in close proximity).

The professionals and the students of the AOI are grateful to the Oklahoma Historical Society, to the Kimmell and Gaylord families, and to the many professionals that came together to save an important piece of our history. We look forward to the future, which includes regular performances throughout the year, and hopefully more!
—Jeremy Wance

For more information on the WKY Kilgen, or to purchase tickets, visit the website of the Oklahoma History Center: www.okhistory.org/historycenter/kilgen.php

My father-in-law, engineer and inventor Garman Kimmell, was a good friend of Ken Wright and had enjoyed the Kilgen while it resided in the Civic Center. When he heard that the instrument might be shipped out of town, he was among the first to underwrite, keeping it in Oklahoma City. Sadly, he died before the project was completed.



Proud Papa: Dusty Miller with the Kilgen console at the inaugural concert.

was in limbo because the first attempt to install it in the History Center had failed.

Even though I lived out of state at the time, I volunteered to help the History Center raise enough money to try again and to be their liaison with an organ shop, and they agreed. It took some four

years to raise the money. During that time I moved back to Oklahoma City, where I could be of more direct support. Thankfully, with the dedicated work of the AOI the result is more than anyone could have hoped for or imagined. —Dusty Miller

years to raise the money. During that time I moved back to Oklahoma City, where I could be of more direct support. Thankfully, with the dedicated work of the AOI the result is more than anyone could have hoped for or imagined. —Dusty Miller



Master's student Jesse Oddis ('17) racks the Diapason.



Stephen Wurst, doctoral student in organ, adjusts the note actions from the WKY organ.



The rebuilt console of Kilgen Opus 5218 shines like new.



A look inside.



Mayu Allen ('14), a graduate of the AOI's organ technology program, restoring a tuba pipe.

A message from...

JOHN RIESTER, BS, CAIO

AOI Shop Director

One of the aspects I most enjoy about organbuilding is that there is always something new with every project. Given the fact that there are few Kilgen theatre organs in existence and very few museums installing pipe organs, we knew that the WKY organ project for the Oklahoma History Center would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity before we even started. The April 2017 rededication of the 82-year-old instrument—now in its third home—was the culmination of thousands of hours of labor by AOI shop students, staff and contracted organbuilders.

I really enjoyed my time at the OHC for the installation. The staff was friendly,

kind and had great questions. Many visitors peeked in the chambers as the work progressed. While everyone was interested in the project, I don't think folks enjoyed the tuning and voicing on the loudest stops quite as much!



John Riester works with Nathan Rau to machine new brass weights for reed tongues.



John Riester during the installation of the Kilgen at the Oklahoma History Center.

One unique aspect was that the AOI was also contracted to build a pipe organ demonstrator model exhibit. The unit has a sampling of components behind glass for the visitors to play, in addition to historical information about the Kilgen organ company and the pipe organ. Guests can play/operate 12 different sound effects, 17 pipes (including a string pipe that is 16 feet in length!), and a tiny set of expression shades. The demonstrator exhibit, which is located just inside the entrance, combines with the installation to make an amazing educational opportunity.

On April 24, 2017, I was honored to give the newly refurbished Kilgen organ its debut performance at the Oklahoma History Center. This instrument is a living, functional, and tangible piece of Oklahoma history, and I am proud of the countless hours the staff and students spent rebuilding and resuscitating this amazing music machine. Special thanks goes to Dusty Miller, who was the driving force behind the entire project. Working with him and the superb OHC staff has been a very fulfilling experience for everyone involved.

Based on past recordings and the commentary of people who knew the organ in its previous versions, there is consensus in the belief that the Kilgen is sounding



better now than ever before and has perhaps finally found its best and most permanent "home" at the OHC! However, don't take my word for it—if you find yourselves in the Oklahoma City area, I highly recommend a visit to the OHC. —**John Schwandt**

The first time I saw the Kilgen Theatrical Organ, I knew we had a story that could connect the historical dots of music, radio, movies, and entrepreneurial innovation. All we needed to restore the sleeping giant were two key assets. The easier challenge of the two was raising several hundred thousand dollars. We did that with the help of generous Oklahomans. The more difficult challenge was finding a partner to restore, install, and maintain the Kilgen to Smithsonian standards. We found that partner right here in Oklahoma on the campus of the University of Oklahoma.

Without the staff, students, and leadership at the American Organ Institute, the Kilgen would still be a static relic with only the disconnected pipes and console to represent its storied history. Through their efforts, the State of Oklahoma now has a fully functioning Kilgen Theatrical Organ that can serve as both a museum artifact and a performance instrument that delivers stories through the magic of music. Supplemented with movies, broadcast history, and reproductions of live radio programs, the Kilgen is already drawing sold-out audiences who want to know more about the importance of theatrical organs in history.

Through high standards, hard work, and an enduring partnership, the Kilgen Theatrical Organ will serve as a window to history for all time here at the Oklahoma History Center.

—**Bob L. Blackburn, Ph.D., Director of the Oklahoma Historical Society**



In the last year, I have spent many hours in the voicing room working with the fifteen ranks of the WKY Kilgen organ. Because it was moved from the WKY studio, to the Civic Center, to storage, and then to the Oklahoma History Center, a number of ranks experienced some amount of damage. Principally in the careful hands of former student Mayu Allen, in collaboration with AOI students and staff, damaged pipes were repaired or, only when absolutely necessary, remade in part or whole to match the standards of quality and craftsmanship in the remaining pipework.



Adam Pajan in the AOI voicing room, at work on one of the reed ranks of the WKY Kilgen.

Relocating instruments requires some amount of restorative voicing, for the art of voicing seeks to match pipes to an aural aesthetic that harmonizes with the acoustical properties of the room. The WKY studio, relatively small and with low ceilings, contrasts starkly with the wonderful expanse of the Great Hall at the History Center. As such, each pipe was carefully regulated for speech and volume with the acoustic of its new home in mind. In particular, we spent a great deal of time on the reed ranks, ranging in wind pressure from 10" to 15" of water column. Many of the reeds suffered from inconsistent speech, often slow, so each tongue was removed, cleaned, and adjusted as necessary to allow the tone to develop immediately and for its intended purpose. The Tuba has regained its rich, mellow tone, while the Kinura and Post Horn are lightning quick and add the aggressive bite needed for quick accent chords.

One great benefit of the AOI is our ability to spend a comparatively large amount of time on each rank of

pipes since our principal goal is to provide students with the best educational opportunities available, not to be a production shop. We are able to teach students the evolution of tonal concepts, expose them to the literature for which the instruments exist, and discuss how the mechanical components and voicing practices need to serve the music. We can truly live out the mission statement of the AOI: **we honor the past** by preserving instruments and bringing them back to life; **we embrace the present** by giving instruments life and meaning, working with the best technologies of the current times to allow the organs to sing for generations to come; and **we foster the future** by leaving a legacy of instruments and highly skilled students who can keep these organs alive and make music on them, giving them meaning and value. What an amazingly gratifying honor, privilege, and challenge.

—Adam Pajan



Bob Blackburn joined by John Schwandt at the signing of the agreement for the rebuilding of the WKY Kilgen on April 2, 2015.



The class of 2017, from left to right, Kaitlynn Eaton, Stephanie Barth, Stephen Wurst, and Jesse Oddis, joined by secondary student Katie Kientz and three of our faculty.

Our 2017 graduating class was comprised of four Master's students with concentrations in Church music, performance, and organ technology. We're proud to send them into the world!

IN REMEMBRANCE: DAVID RUMSEY

With great sadness we learned of the death on February 12, 2017, of David Rumsey in Basel, Switzerland, where he had lived for 16 years in what could well be called Act III of his remarkable life. He was a talented organist and pedagogue, and a source of an almost infinite wealth of knowledge and experience. As discussed in this publication, David had collaborated actively with us on the crucial elements of the Möller Master Roll project. David and his associate, Daniel Debrunner of the Bern Institute of Applied Sciences, were responsible for the complete digitization of the master roll collection of the Welte company, containing perhaps the greatest treasure trove of performances by organists and composers of the 19th and early 20th centuries. He produced no less than 10 CD sets of performances from the digital files, played back by the Welte organ housed in the *Museum für Musikautomaten* at Seewen, outside Basel. The project is summed up in a collection of monographs titled *Wie von Geisterhand*.

In January of 2016, David, after much coaxing, agreed to come



Rumsey at the console of the Welte organ in Seewen at the Museum für Musikautomaten.

to Oklahoma, where he huddled with the AOI team (including Sean O'Donnell and Charles Kegg) working on the Master Roll project. We reciprocated just this past October to see for ourselves the system upon which ours is to be based. We enjoyed not only unfettered access to the collection at the museum, but David had also laid on a very full schedule of visits to important instruments throughout the northwest of Switzerland, from Biel to Zürich, and all parts in-between. It was a marvelous cross-section of European organbuilding from the late Gothic to the present. David's special interest in the medieval organ was extremely enlightening to these Americans abroad, and the kindness that he and his wife, Liz, radiated

made for one of the most memorable experiences of my life thus far. It was exhausting to try and keep up with his quick and lengthy stride, and that energy will be greatly missed. In my last message from him just on the 23rd of January, he displayed the most sentimentality I'd known from him as he ended his e-mail with "I often think back on things and one thing keeps repeating: that lovely visit from you guys in late 2016, and especially our 'steam day.'"

Thank you, David, for your good cheer, for your omnivorous musicianship, for sharing your knowledge, and, most of all, for your warm friendship. *Au revoir!*

—Jeremy Wance

David's varied and intense interests are cataloged on his website, www.davidrumsey.ch



David Rumsey with a replica of a 13th-century portable organ built by Walter Chinaglia and belonging to Cristina Alís Raurich of Basel.

A message from...

BRYAN SLOCOMB, M.DIV.

Master Carpenter and Cabinetmaker

Working as an organ builder is pretty amazing. Think of the privilege it is to work on a broken organ that in the past has warmed the hearts of those who experienced her majesty. Then we who are challenged with the complexity of problems in repairing the old organ are able to again make her sing. That's cool! I'm a woodworker and musician, so working with the team at the American Organ Institute is actually fun.



Doctoral student **Alvez Barkoskie IV** was the winner of the Hymn Competition for College Students in celebration of Bruton Parish's (Williamsburg, Virginia) 300th Anniversary. His *God, We Gather* was part of a festal Mass that included the Bishop of London, marking the occasion.

Bryan Slocumb

A message from...

ADAM PAJAN, DMA ('14)

Instructor of Organ and Shop Technician

Warm greetings! It is a pleasure to write at the entry of another action-packed year here at the American Organ Institute. In the last year, we have heard a number of fine recitals by graduating students, spent hours poring over scores and resources, carefully voiced ranks of vintage pipework, gone on dozens of service and maintenance calls, and hosted a highly successful festival of transcriptions for the organ – and that is only scratching the surface. What an exciting time to be a part of the AOI!

On Sept. 11, I presented my biennial faculty recital. In recent months, I have been exploring repertoire from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, specifically that of English and American composers. One of the particular draws for me is their ability to be played on a wide variety of instruments, from classically inspired trackers like the Fisk in Gothic Hall to symphonically conceived organs like the Möller in Sharp Hall. The program utilized both instruments, and I sought to draw out as many different colors as possible. It was my special honor to be joined by Dr. Brian Wolfe, assistant director of athletic bands, who conducted an ensemble of 16 pieces of brass, timpani, and gong in a performance of the "Fuga Solemnis" by 20th century Austrian composer Franz Schmidt. Due to the size of the ensemble required for its performance, it is not well known but certainly fulfills one's expectations for solemnity and made

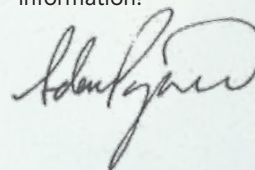
quite a joyful noise in Gothic Hall. If you were unable to attend, please watch it on demand, the link for which may be found on the AOI YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/AOIatOU

In July of 2018, I will return to Germany for my fourth concert tour. The previous three have provided some of the most notable memories in my professional career, and I am thrilled to return to two venues and explore three new ones. The first program will be at the Wallonisch-Niederländische Kirche in Hanau, which just celebrated its 400th anniversary. A quick trip north will take me to the Riddagshausen Internationaler Orgelsommer at the remarkable Klosterkirche. The nine-second reverberation is hailed as one of the finest in Europe, and the case is, in part, from a 1619 instrument by Compenius. Praetorius himself wrote down the disposition, which was reconstructed by Führer in 1979. I will then continue to the Pauluskirche in Ulm, which houses a Link organ featuring pedal divide and some unit ranks – very unusual indeed for a European instrument. From there, I will move west to the Altenberger Dom, which is home to a four manual Klais organ from 1980 of over 120 ranks. The program of 75 minutes will be part of the Internationaler Orgelsommer, a series in which I presented a recital in 2013. Finally, I have the honor of presenting a program at the Konstantin Basilika in Trier on its magnificent new Eule organ

of 87 stops. The symphonic instrument adds a beautifully noble voice to the fourth-century building constructed by the Romans. It is always a joy and honor to represent the AOI abroad, and I greatly anticipate the trip.

Beginning this fall, I will start my appointment as Artist in Residence at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tulsa, whose program is under the fine direction of friend and colleague Joseph Arndt. In his short time there, Joseph has been able to build upon the program built by Dr. Michael Bedford, AGO President, and add to its offerings by including monthly evensongs, recitals, and special concerts. It has been a pleasure to accompany Joseph along the path of a new organ project: a three-manual Schoenstein due for completion next year. I look forward to becoming a (part-time) part of the St. John's community and adding to their worship and education.

Finally, I am excited to announce that I will present the Sunday organ concert at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on September 9, 2018. The coming 12 months promise to be exciting on all fronts – stay tuned for more information!



Adam Pajan inspecting the tongue and shallot of a pipe from the WKY tuba rank.



Pajan conducting the choir of St. Mark's Church (RC), Norman.



Pajan at the largest organ in Texas - the Casavant of Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth.

Upcoming performances:

10/29: Wittenberg 500, a festival of Reformation-era music, St. John's Episcopal Church, Tulsa

11/1: Music at Midday organ recital, St. John's Episcopal Church, Tulsa

11/3: Augustana Arts Organ Concert, Augustana Lutheran Church, Denver

11/4: Not Enough Fingers!: transcribing the Brahms Requiem choral movements for organ, presentation to Denver AGO

11/5: Evensong Recital, Trinity Episcopal Church, Tulsa

11/19: Concordiae: Music for Choir and Organ, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Greenville, South Carolina

12/1: Messiah Sing-in (Guest Conductor), Basilica of St. John the Baptist, Canton, Ohio

12/4: Classical Designs: Music of Haydn and Mozart (Conductor), Oklahoma Master Chorale, St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, Norman

12/10: Messiah (continuo), St. John's Episcopal Church, Tulsa

3/11/18: Evensong Organ Concert, St. James Episcopal Church, Los Angeles



BUILDING OUR RANKS

A CAMPAIGN FOR THE FUTURE

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA.
American Organ Institute



John Schwandt

Friends, we've reached a happy turning-point in the development of the American Organ Institute. Starting from scratch, and never shelving the goals of the traditional model of an academic organ program, we have joined together to build a new paradigm for teaching the next generation of organists and organbuilders that emphasizes cooperation and diversity. It's deeply fulfilling to say that we now have completed our curriculum and added the personnel needed to provide our students, and our community, with a well-rounded understanding of the instrument and art form we love.

There is much work left to be done! There are many dreams that are still being pursued! But we also need to pause for a moment and ensure that the work we have done is cemented, so that it can continue into the future without relying on any particular one of us. For this reason, you see as part of this publication the identifying of areas that need funding

put in place for the long term. We will continue to work toward these goals, and we ask you to join us in this campaign to foster the future! The AOI is here only because of the foresight of Mildred Andrews, who gave her estate to fund the spectacular organ named in her memory, and to fund scholarships. It's your turn to provide for the future, as she did. Help us to endow a program whose excellence will go untouched for generations to come!
—**John Schwandt**



Hundreds of children and families line up to sit at the console and peek in the chambers.



The next generation of organists are already on the way!



Jeremy Wance

In this issue of *Windlines*, you see just the highlights of a single year – all sorts of unique and marvelous experiences. But you can't easily see the daily work that is done by faculty and students as they strive toward advancement of their own abilities, as well as the preservation of many aspects of American pipe organ culture. It takes a lot of determination to get up each morning and throw oneself into the fray. The Arts are personal in a way that some disciplines aren't. So, it's easy to say that here at the AOI we don't just build organs or organists – we build people. We cultivate audiences. We curate treasure troves of information.

The reality of today is that the Fine Arts face real threats as our world changes. We need the Arts now, more than ever! Fortunately, the AOI has some donor funds set aside which allow us to invest in our students and faculty. But funds are finite. For this reason, we are formalizing our ongoing work to endow as much of the program as is possible. There are several types of funds on which we will focus. Please consider helping to secure the future. There are many ways to give and we can provide all the information you need.

In the next few pages, allow me to introduce our areas of focus and highlight some of the progress we have made.



Elaine Ehlers gives the toast at a dinner celebrating the centenary of the birth of Mildred Andrews Boggress.

Support Scholarships!

We are extremely fortunate that a portion of Miss Andrews's estate was combined with gifts from alumni and friends to leave an endowed scholarship in her name. There is no better testament to her impact than the influence she *continues* to have through her gifts, and those made to honor her. You may wish to add to this fund and we welcome your gift.

We have likewise been blessed by a number of alumni and friends who have shown their belief in the importance of the AOI by establishing generous endowed scholarships.

Chief among these must be **Elaine (George) Ehlers ('58)**, who both spearheaded the effort that resulted in the beautiful Fisk that is named for her teacher, and then endowed a scholarship of her own. These funds are important, both to bring promising students to OU and to assist in preventing student debt, which can otherwise make it impossible for these students to continue their studies, or from remaining within the field after graduation. **Elaine – thank you for your long friendship and your generosity.**



We have more recently been fortunate to receive an endowment in memory of **Donald Dumler**, who passed away on Palm Sunday of 2016. Don was a direct product of the abilities of Miss Andrews as a teacher and mentor. His long career, his brilliance at the organ, and his quiet and gentle spirit combined in a person who bettered the world and the people around him. To have a scholarship endowed by his family is both fitting and a regular remembrance of his very significant career. **To the Geis family, who are now part of the AOI family – thank you for helping all of us remember Don.**



This past March, **Clarece Dyer Candamio ('60, '61)** died following a brief illness. She had been an extremely active musician in Dallas for 50 years, with much of that time at Lovers Lane UMC and Temple Shalom, and Emanu-El. Having met her briefly and heard her play, I think she must have been a twin of Miss Andrews. She possessed the same quiet, no-nonsense, diligent, and exacting

temperament, along with perfect posture. A fund has been established in Clarece's name at the OU Foundation. Gifts in her memory may be made on the enclosed card. **To Ann Candamio Peak, Clarece's daughter, we say thank you and welcome you into our family.**

Support Programming!

There are other patrons who have been regular and special supporters through gifts that underwrite each year's programs. We are able to bring the greatest artists to Norman, where they enrich not only our program, but the entire community — and often the wider world through live and on-demand video — and this is only possible because of individual supporters.



Albert Folop

One of the most consistent benefactors is **Albert Folop ('45)**, of Mitchellsville, Maryland. His annual gifts have always arrived, but I never had met or had significant contact with him. On a recent trip to Philadelphia, I made a short stop in the D.C. area in order to finally meet him. He told me his story of coming to

Oklahoma during WWII as a reserve officer. He loved the pipe organ and took lessons from Miss Andrews as a non-major. In a few years he graduated with a degree in Mathematics, and his fascinating life in the Navy and as a computer programmer continued to be linked with the organ and other keyboard instruments (as he eventually received a degree in music). Even more, he has devoted a significant part of his life amount to compiling, transcribing, and editing music of the Medieval and Renaissance periods for stringed instruments. A friend in Basel (Ground Zero for early music ensembles and schools) told me that they regularly utilize his edited music in various consorts. IMSLP, the central website for music in the public domain, lists 1,160 titles to his name, and that's not an exhaustive list! We are fortunate to be remembered by him each year, and I'm pleased that Oklahoma and Miss Andrews were so important and enriching as he set off on a remarkable life. **Al, it is a joy to call you a friend and fellow alumnus!**



Donald Dumler



Clarece Dyer Candamio at the console even in retirement.



Clarece with daughter Ann Candamio Peak.



The Dodds as found in their natural environs.



Photo: David Dodd

See? Egret!

We also appreciate regular support for programming from **David and Betty Dodd**. An OU petroleum engineering alum, David ('59) retired from a long international career for Shell, and now he and Betty, his

always-smiling, nimble partner in life, follow happenings at OU from their Houston home — at least, when they are home. Both avid photographers, they are usually on scenic roadtrips, found hanging from a cliff atop the Grand Canyon, trekking across the Gobi desert by camel, or strafing the countryside from the cockpit of a P-51 Mustang — always looking for the perfect shot, or the perfect margarita (which recipe David claims to have found). Somehow, they always manage to find an egret to stalk, no matter where they are. We don't see each other nearly enough, but always enjoy the times we do share together. **David and Betty, your friendship and support have bettered our lives!**



A number of other alumni and friends who frequently make gifts that support programming. A special thanks to **Rod and Carolyn Murrow** of Alva, Oklahoma (which seems to be the hometown of half of all good native Oklahomans!) for consistent, automatic monthly gifts. This type of giving adds up! Any giving adds up, and we are thankful for each gift.



We must continue to better our students, our artform, and our community by presenting opportunities to experience music made by the greatest artists of our time. Please help us!

Support The American Organ Institute Archives and Library!

The unique and priceless collection of the AOIAL is on track to greater public accessibility with the return of Bailey Hoffner as our full-time curator and archivist, but the task is herculean! We have been blessed by the American

Theatre Organ Society (whose archive forms the largest part of our collections) with the provision of funds for two graduate assistants to work alongside Bailey each year, and the continued funding of these eager and capable student assistants is crucial — as is the funding of Bailey's position! Few people understand the complexities of digitizing content and making it easily available to anyone in the world. Projects can only be started when money has been provided specifically. We have already used crowdsourcing as a means of gathering support, and we are constantly in pursuit of grants and gifts.

Another challenge is in finding an appropriate space to contain the collections in an optimal environment that allows easy access. **This is the biggest problem we face currently, and there is urgent need for a solution!**



From left: Brynn Simmons and Anna Taylor processing organ history.

As part of the plans for the Archives and Library, we have an account that is solely dedicated to it. Its first infusion of funds came with the very successful *Thousands Strong* crowdfunding campaign for the digitization of the *Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society*. We have been fortunate to receive a number of other monetary gifts that will help ensure that the Archive and Library can operate correctly and make content available to the general public. If this is an issue that resonates particularly with you, please indicate this on the enclosed card, and consider coming to see for yourself! We're always happy to welcome visitors and answer questions.

Support endowed professorships!

Without wishing to sound alarmist because of the solid program that has been built here at OU's American Organ Institute, anyone who has any contact with academia is aware that there are few programs that are truly safe from cuts that would threaten the ability to advance their mission. Academia changes, and none of us can foresee the future. **The great legacy started by Miss Andrews in 1939 must continue, and the best way to ensure that is to endow professorships.** We hope to accomplish that as part of as part of the "Building Our Ranks" campaign.



Stephen Thomas Roberts with Professor Mildred Morford Andrews in 1972. Roberts was Miss Andrews's 12th, and final, Fulbright winner.



Support endowed shop and staff funds!

The AOI at the University of Oklahoma is the only program in the nation that possesses a fully equipped organbuilding shop, and actively teaches students about the art and the science of organbuilding — even offering a degree emphasis in organ technology, which is also unique in America. The proof of the success of the model we have created is a 100% employment rate for our graduates. There actually exists in our office a list of organbuilding firms that have requested the opportunity to meet our students, with the hope of hiring young and enthusiastic individuals who have already been taught the basic skills and concepts of organbuilding.

Our shop operates by accepting projects from within the borders of the state of Oklahoma. When a church or other institution asks us to consult on a project — from the most basic maintenance of existing instruments to the provision of new instruments — we consider how the project will serve as an educational opportunity for our students. The reality is that, while we generate revenue, we cannot operate for profit in the way a pipe organ firm would. When the primary goal is to teach excellence,

time and money become constant variables. Thus, the shop must always operate at a loss, but a reasonable and manageable loss that is a result of the education that is provided. Our professional staff is largely employed by funds designated for this by generous donors. **We hope that permanent provision will be made so that we can continue in our mission to keep organbuilding alive and well into the coming generations.**



The Great division of Möller Opus 5819 on the AOI Shop floor.

Support endowed travel and enrichment funds!



DOROTHY YOUNG RIESS

('53, '69)

We have long wished for funding that would allow our students the opportunity to study abroad through the university's many partner institutions around the world, to travel to competitions or educational opportunities, and to take part in tours of parts of the world that contain the history of our artform.

With great pleasure, we announce a generous gift from Dorothy Young Riess that will allow this dream to begin to

become a reality. In considering ways in which she wanted to impact the lives of our students, it was clear that the experience of seeing the world was transformative in her own life, and that it would no doubt be the same for the "grandchildren" of Miss Andrews, whose ethic and support helped form Dorothy's mind and habits, and set her on a course toward excellence.

The first result of Dorothy's gift will be significant underwriting of a trip to Paris at the end of May, 2018, so that the AOI family can go together to tour some of the most remarkable instruments in the world. You can read more about that trip in this issue, and we hasten to add

that there are still a very few spots available for interested friends and alumni!

We are also at work planning a semester experience at OU's campus in Arezzo, Italy. A medieval monastery has been turned into a spectacular base of operations for students and faculty. It is foreseen that our students will partake in courses that emphasize the language, art, and history of the area, and, together with our faculty, who will rotate through during the semester, will experience the unique Italian incarnation of the pipe organ, while the faculty present concerts as outreach to the surrounding towns and cities of Tuscany.

If you feel that these sorts of experiences are important, please consider assisting us in making them possible!



Damir Spritzer in Arezzo with Kirk Duclaux, OU's director of Italian programs (right), and Ursula Armstrong, OU's special program coordinator (left).



KOBY HARRINGTON, MHR ('09, '11)

Director of Development, Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts

Greetings, Alumni and Friends of the American Organ Institute,

What an exciting time it is to be a part of the American Organ Institute! I hope you are extremely proud of the achievements and advancements of this storied OU program—you have every reason to be. Special thanks go to those alumni and friends who are actively supporting the AOI. On behalf of the entire College of Fine Arts, I offer our sincerest gratitude for your generosity. Your involvement is the key to the AOI's success.

Today more than ever before, it is essential that alumni and friends are engaged with our college and its goals. In these uncertain economic times, private gifts are helping to ensure that crucial educational opportunities and programs remain a part of the OU experience. The American Organ Institute has recently embarked on a fundraising campaign to maintain its forward momentum and solidify its future at OU.

I am excited and ready to help as we work together to ensure the success of the American Organ Institute at OU, and I hope you are too. In this newsletter, you can read more about the specifics of our fundraising campaign and the ways you can participate.

Your support will make a lasting impact, and I look forward to discussing your involvement. Please contact me at koby@ou.edu or (405) 325-7376 at any time with questions, ideas, or feedback.

Thank you again for your ongoing dedication and enthusiasm for the American Organ Institute!

Why did I endow organ scholarships?



**ELAINE
GEORGE
EHLERS**

('58)
Fulbright Scholar

Having studied with Mildred Andrews (Bogges), who was the most outstanding organ professor in the United States during the 1950's and 1960's, I know the value of studying with "the best."

The American Organ Institute at the OU School of Music, has the most comprehensive organ department in the United States providing degrees in organ performance, church music, theatre organ, and organ construction and maintenance. No other school provides instruction in all four areas.

The AOI's reputation is outstanding and outstanding schools need outstanding students. Organ scholarships are needed to compete with other schools in drawing these outstanding students.

Therefore, I felt the need for and am happy to provide some scholarship help to obtain these students and to help keep the program growing.



Don Dumler on horseback in 1976, with niece Laura Geis Ackerman and nephew Mark Geis.

After my uncle's passing, I had the opportunity to contribute to the Donald Dumler Memorial Endowment. My desire to support the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma was twofold. First of all, I wanted to honor Uncle Don by making a donation that would recognize the impact his music education at OU had on his life, as his career led him to being the organist at St. Patrick's Cathedral in NYC for more than 40 years. Secondly, I felt a strong desire to ensure that his legacy would continue, and, mostly, that it would benefit future aspiring organists. His amazing teacher, Mildred Andrews, inspired him to follow his dreams and catapulted his career to one that few people have the honor to achieve... a lifetime of doing what he loved best and impacting lives by the beautiful organ music that he played. Donating to his endowment was a privilege and will make it possible to secure the future of the Organ Institute at OU. — **Laura Geis Ackerman**



The key to the future is you! There are many ways to give – both now and in the future – and we have a guide that explains those options. If you'd like to receive it, please indicate that on the reply card. We look forward to partnering with you! Together, we can do almost anything!

A new old organ!



The Hinners organ (Opus 1027) as it was prior to removal.

A major focus of the shop's work currently is a Hinners organ of two manuals and nine stops. Built in Pekin, Illinois in 1909, and installed in what was then the new German Methodist Church in the center of Oklahoma City, it is the earliest original pipe organ installation in Oklahoma. The church building, which had served as a soup kitchen, was sold to a nearby hospital, to be leveled and become a parking lot. Thankfully, the AOI was aware of its existence and worked with the United Methodist Church to be certain that the instrument was saved. Severely water-damaged in its original home, it was also damaged in the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, a few blocks away. It is being rebuilt for installation in Trinity Lutheran Church in Norman. All repair and replacement of damaged parts is being done in a sympathetic manner, giving this historic instrument the opportunity to live again.

All parts of the tracker action are being cleaned and restored. Broken squares are being repaired if possible, or having new reproductions made to match the existing ones. It is an important part of the AOI mindset that we approach our work with respect for the historic legacy of an instrument while ensuring its continuing functionality into the future.



Evan Bellas rebuilds the tired and dirty mechanical action.



As the organ was originally installed in a corner, a third case side had to be built, in harmony with the Hinners style.

The slider windchests required re-tabling, expertly carried out by Bradley Rule of Tennessee. The pallets are being releathered and will be carefully adjusted for reliable service. The large, double-rise reservoir was releathered and restored to like-new condition under the supervision of Richard Nickerson of Massachusetts. Even the feeder bellows were restored, allowing the organ to be hand-pumped if desired.

The casework that houses the keyboards and façade in the front of the organ is being retained as it was originally built. Side walls of the casework were missing, since the organ had been installed in a corner. We have designed and are building new matching side walls to accommodate a freestanding installation in its new home. The design of the panels and the beautiful grain of the quarter-sawn oak help blend the old and new into a cohesive entity.

The pipework is getting cleaned and repaired as needed. Treble pipes that were mangled by improper cone-tuning have been straightened and fitted with tuning sleeves to avoid further damage. Wood pipes have had their water damage fixed and their stoppers releathered. Voicing and tonal finishing will seek to restore the original sounds while also adapting to the acoustical environment of the new location.

One change is being made to the stoplist. The Great Dulciana 8' is being replaced with a Super Octave 2' to help lead the congregation in singing. Pipes of the Dulciana will be carefully wrapped and stored inside the organ to allow for any future reversal of this decision.

As students and staff work together on this project, we learn from the work of craftsmen who came before us. We also share in the joy of helping to restore an instrument to a life of making music once again.

—Fredrick Bahr



The reservoir and bellows of the Hinners, before and after restoration.

A message from...

FREDRICK BAHR, BM

AOI Shop Manager

The American Organ Institute first blipped across my personal radar screen in October of 2007, when John Schwandt presented his vision to the annual convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders. I was immediately intrigued with the concept on a number of levels, three of which are embodied in the name.



Fredrick Bahr, BM, AOI Shop Manager and adjunct instructor of organ technology. Fred, as found in his natural environment.

AMERICAN: in the fact that the program would deliberately seek to promote distinctly American contributions to the history of the instrument; American, also in its "melting pot" approach, celebrating the broadest possible range of influences.

ORGAN: working toward a comprehensive understanding of the instrument, its history, its technology, its repertoire and performance, and its future.

INSTITUTE: bringing to academia for the first time in this country hands-on opportunities to learn basic skills in preparation for a career in organbuilding, or, for those who focused more on the performance aspect of the instrument, a solid fundament of knowledge that would inform their professional life.

It has been my privilege over the years to watch from the sidelines as the AOI continues to develop and grow. In July of 2010 the AOI staff gave me open access to evaluate the program as a representative of the American Institute of Organbuilders with an eye toward mutual cooperation in the educational endeavor. In 2014, the AOI hosted the annual convention of the AIO. In 2015 I was invited back to serve as a faculty member for a week-long Pipe Organ Encounter-Technical, a program co-hosted by the AOI and Southern Plains chapter of the American Guild of Organists. That experience, coupled with mentoring a young voicer for the past year, made me realize how much I enjoy teaching.

So, when I received the phone call asking me to join the AOI team on a full-time basis, the answer came easily in the affirmative. Everything I have learned over the course of my career has been willingly given to me by someone else and I am grateful. It is now my joy and responsibility to pay it forward and pass that treasure on to a new generation. I am pleased to be a part of the AOI as it continues to grow and shape the future.

A handwritten signature of Fredrick Bahr in black ink.



The AOI family was saddened by the loss of **Donald Schwandt**, father of John, this past March. The performance of Mahler's *Resurrection* symphony was dedicated to his memory.

In February of 2017, three of our students were invited to present a concert for the Tulsa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Students **Stephen Wurst**, **Justin LaVoie**, and **Samuel Backman** presented a joint recital at First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, featuring music of Messaien, Howells, Mozart, Franck, Vierne, Brahms, Reger, and Widor. Thank you to Lyndon Meyer, Casey Cantwell, Joseph Arndt, Karen Rich, and Michael Bedford for making this possible!

The 2017 academic year included two concerts by esteemed alumni. **Lee Ridgway** ('67) and **Dorothy Young Riess** ('53, '69) each spent time with our students and faculty during their visits, which culminated in solo concerts that featured music that combined their history as students with their lifelong artistic development.

A message from...

PAUL WATKINS, MM ('13, '15)

AOI Shop Technician

As an organist, composer, and singer, I've always enjoyed the process of striving to create beauty through music. Now, as a technician, I also revel in the production and restoration of instruments which make possible the ineffable feelings and emotions derived from sublime organ music.



Paul Watkins builds racking to support one of the reed ranks in the WKY Kilgen.

A handwritten signature of Paul Watkins in black ink.

We're not in Kansas anymore!

In early May, the AOI's organ construction and design class had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Reuter Organ factory in Lawrence, Kansas, and see the Wolff, Opus 20 at the University of Kansas. Our two-day trip contained a wealth of information and experience that will not soon be forgotten.

Upon arrival at Reuter's factory, we were greeted by Reuter's president, Albert Neutel, had a quick lunch, and were taken on a brief but informative tour of their expansive shop. At the AOI, we have the capability to craft virtually all organ components from scratch, with the exception of metal pipe work, so seeing Reuter's smelter, casting table, and sheet metal planer was particularly noteworthy. The tour also included an opportunity for our students to play a few numbers on the theatre organ which resides in the assembly room. After the tour, we were guided through the process of creating metal pipes from cast sheets by one of Reuter's pipe makers. After extensive use of jigs, mandrels, and soldering irons, our pipes were assembled and prepared for voicing by the end of the day.

Day two began with voicing our newly made pipework, choosing whether to voice them as principals, flutes, or somewhere between. After the voicing, we had tuning collars fitted, and tuned up our newly completed projects. At this point, the trip turned a little bit less hands-on, but still just as informative. We were presented with a great deal of information on various types of chest actions, technological advancements in organ building, and a very scientific approach to troubleshooting, testing, and problem solving with regard to organ technology. This presentation also included a wealth of truly fascinating historical context to drive the technical information. After the conclusion of the presentation, we all had lunch with Reuter's employees, and headed out to KU's campus to visit with Professor James Higdon, and see, hear, and play the Wolff, Opus 20. Higdon was a gracious host, who demonstrated the instrument before turning us loose on it for the remainder of the afternoon. The marriage of building and instrument between Bales Recital Hall and the Wolff is truly remarkable. With over six seconds of reverberation in the hall, the capability to emulate the sounds of European cathedrals is astounding, while also familiar because of Gothic Hall and the Mildred Andrews Boggess Memorial Organ (Fisk, Opus 111, 1999) that we are blessed with at OU.

After being surrounded by such wonderful, kind, and generous people, both at Reuter and KU, our truly delightful trip had reached its conclusion in what seemed like a few hours rather than days. And although the trip itself was a relatively short one, the experience and knowledge gained from it will last many years to come.
—Paul Watkins



The AOI group gathers around the Wolff organ in Bales Recital Hall on the campus of the University of Kansas.



AOI students learn about the voicing of pipes at the Reuter shop.

ORGANBUILDING

the French way



Bertrand Cattiaux, French master organbuilder, in his shop in Liourdres, France.

French organbuilder Bertrand Cattiaux has been closely involved with the organ in Notre-Dame de Paris, along with many of the greatest instruments in France. Last January we were fortunate to have him spend a few days with us in Norman for the second time. His lecture on the history of the Notre-Dame organ was fascinating, tracing the many rebuilds and alterations that have shaped its life. We were particularly intrigued by discussions of what methods Cavallé-Coll used to adapt existing Clicquot pipework to serve his own tonal ideas.

Throughout most of the 20th century, particularly in America, a great many totally new organs were built. In the last few decades, however, the organbuilding industry as a whole has returned to a surprisingly historic emphasis on incorporating existing pipework into rebuilt or refashioned instruments. Much discussion is taking place within the organ community about balancing our respect for the past with our ability

to reuse quality material in making our own musical statements. The willingness of Bertrand Cattiaux to share his specific observations about the Notre-Dame organ will provide invaluable insight as we make our own decisions.

Cattiaux has agreed to visit us again, this time with a hands-on approach for learning — **an opportunity never previously presented in the United States.** In addition to

lectures and photos, M. Cattiaux will bring especially made pipes for a limited number of voicers to work on. These pipes will come prepared as if they had been made for a Clicquot organ of the 17th Century. Then he will demonstrate the process Cavallé-Coll would have used in the 19th Century to revoice those same pipes, adapting them for his own use. The voicers will follow Cattiaux's instructions to get a first-hand understanding of the process. The seminar is scheduled for January, 2018.

—Fredrick Bahr



Bertrand Cattiaux returned in January to present a lecture on the rebuilding of the organ of Notre-Dame-de-Paris.

HIGHLIGHTS

A definite highlight of the 2017 academic year was the two-day festival of music originally written for orchestra and transcribed for organ. On March 10, David Briggs provided a lecture and video on Mahler and Briggs's project to transcribe all of the symphonies. That evening featured Richard Hills providing his score for the classic silent film *Metropolis*, back by popular demand.

Saturday morning found a concert especially for families. Isabelle Demers presented music from *Harry Potter* accompanied by images from the film. Jelani Eddington opened with music of *Star Wars*, and accompanied a silent short, which proved the timelessness of humor. The centerpiece of the program was his transcription of *Peter and the Wolf*, which was accompanied by images and the narration provided by Johnnie-Margaret McConnell. We were then thrilled to invite all to the stage to sit for a moment at the organ to just "make noise" and to go upstairs to view the organ chambers. After a concert that clocked in at just under an hour, we spent an additional 1.5 hours introducing kids of all ages to the pipe organ!

The afternoon belonged to Isabelle Demers, playing selections from Holst's *The Planets* and her own transcription of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. The closing concert on Saturday evening was held in Gothic Hall, where a capacity crowd witnessed Briggs present the *Second Symphony* of Gustav Mahler, "Resurrection," joined by the Oklahoma Master Chorale and soloists Donna Mitchell-Cox and Rebekah Ambrosini, under the direction of Adam Pajan. This stunning performance has been said by some to be one of the most moving musical experiences in memory.



Jelani Eddington, joined by Johnnie-Margaret McConnell, presents his transcription of *Peter and the Wolf*.



Richard Hills provides the score for *Metropolis*.



Isabelle Demers plays music from *Harry Potter* as part of a program for families.



David Briggs rehearses Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony (#2) with the Oklahoma Master Chorale and soloists under Adam Pajan.

For the first week of August, I had the opportunity to travel to St. Paul, Minnesota, to attend the annual convention of the Organ Historical Society as an E. Power Biggs Fellow, a program that allows individuals with an interest in any aspect of the pipe organ to attend their first OHS convention at no cost. While the AGO is the largest professional organization for organists, the OHS exists to further the study of the pipe organ through preservation of instruments and materials relating to the organ. As a result, while organists make up the bulk of AGO convention attendees, an OHS convention is attended by organists, engineers, builders, historians, teachers, and enthusiasts. The result was a coming together of many backgrounds and types of expertise, which made for a rich experience I had not expected. I learned so much from talking with many of these individuals.

The OHS board went out of its way to make the Biggs Fellows feel welcomed. Reflecting the diverse educational background of the convention attendees, fellows ranged from high school students taking organ lessons on the side to teachers and church music directors with decades of experience. In addition to the many recitals each day, the OHS set up two masterclasses for the fellows with John

Ferguson and Nathan Laube, both of whom were beyond gracious with their time and patience.

The convention included four to five recitals daily, mixing instruments historically important in the central and southern Minnesota regions with prominent newer instruments in the Twin Cities area. Our own **John Schwandt** played a morning recital on the Schlicker at Mount Olive Lutheran in Minneapolis, and his brother Dan also played a wonderful concert on a Hinners instrument at Prospect Park Methodist, also in Minneapolis. This first-hand exposure to these instruments, many of which are not played regularly or are too far away from urban areas to host concerts, was certainly a rare opportunity. I'm grateful to the OHS for their role in making the convention more affordable, and the AOI for bringing this opportunity to my attention.

—David Anderson



The AOI at OU was strongly represented at the American Guild of Organists National Convention, held in Houston in June, 2016. **Damin Spritzer** was featured in a workshop to present Volume I of the *Organ Works of René Louis Becker*, a critical edition featuring an extensive preface. **John Schwandt** was one of the two organists selected for the final stunning gala concert with organ and orchestra, held at St. Martin's Episcopal Church. Along with Aaron David Miller and the Houston Symphony, he played the Poulenc *Concerto for Organ, Tympani, and Strings*, as well as music from the movie *Interstellar*, which was accompanied by projected images from the Hubble telescope.



John Schwandt (center) is greeted by Will Headlee (left) and Joyce Jones (right) following his performance.



David Anderson standing head and shoulders above the other Biggs Fellows.

A message from...

NATHAN RAU, MM, RPT ('16)

AOI Service Manager

I began my work as service manager at the American Organ Institute in December of 2016. Being one of the newest staff members, I'd like to make a brief introduction. My interest in tuning and keyboard technology began while studying piano performance and piano pedagogy at Wichita State University. During that time I worked for a piano rebuilder and became a Registered Piano Technician in the Piano Technicians Guild. I later became a student at the American Organ Institute in order to study organ technology and earned a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma. When the opportunity to join the AOI staff was offered, I was pleased to move back to the wonderful community of Norman and honored to work alongside the faculty and staff who had taught me so much during my time as a student.



Nathan Rau making turning collars for the WKY Kilgen.

My primary responsibilities are to provide regular tuning and maintenance of the AOI's keyboard instruments, as well as to provide organ service to institutions throughout Oklahoma. In addition, I assist in the AOI's organ shop with training and supervising students as they work on shop projects.

My service work, both on and off-campus, is assisted by our students and is a wonderful learning opportunity for them. It gives our organ technology students a chance to apply the tuning skills that they learn as part of their course work. They also gain hands-on experience analyzing and troubleshooting mechanical and electrical issues as they arise. Our organ performance students benefit from this work as well because they gain a wider perspective of their instrument and will be better prepared to coordinate the maintenance of pipe organs that they will play and care for throughout their careers.

I am currently restoring the mechanical action of a 1909 Hinners organ with the help of two AOI students. This project, like many at the AOI, involves the collaboration of experienced guest organ builders, the AOI shop staff, and students of various levels of shop experience. This collection of individuals makes for a rewarding environment to work in and I am glad to be a part of it.

A message from...

JEREMY WANCE, MA ('03, '10)

Associate Director

So much has happened since June of 2016, when last we published a newsletter. If I go to my Google photo account, I can see where I was or what I was doing on most any day of the past several years, and I was apparently very busy, but very happy, in all.

Just this past June, I found myself published in a peer-reviewed journal as co-author of a study done here at OU with Brian Grady, director of the chemical engineering school. Thanks to funds gathered by Matthew Bellocchio, now past-president of the American Institute of Organbuilders, we were able to recreate an experiment done over 30 years ago that sought to establish what method of leather tanning yielded leathers that, used still in organbuilding for making parts of the instrument airtight or to be part of any pneumatic motor used in an organ, would have a consistent and extended duty cycle.

The original experiment led to a sea change among American organbuilders, as it suggested that the best bet was to be found in leathers tanned with chromium salts. Based on anecdotal evidence, we believed the question needed to be revisited, and designed a protocol that we believed was more accurate at predicting longevity. Our tests indicated that leathers tanned in the old-fashioned manner, using natural products, would age better. The resulting article was published in the *Journal of the American Leather Chemists Association*. See? There are niches that are every bit as unexpected as that of the pipe organ.

Last October, I was fortunate to find myself on the way to Switzerland (via England) for research related to the Möller Master Roll project. Seewen, outside of Basel, is home to the *Museum für Musikautomaten*, which is a priceless collection of machines that were used to create live music before the advent of hi-fi systems. One of the major pieces in the collection is the Welte organ that was originally built for the *Brittanic*, the sister ship of the *Titanic*.

Welte was a German organbuilding firm that in the first decades of the 20th century produced what was probably the most extensive and spectacularly engineered system for "recording" a piece of music as it was performed in real-time by a live (hopefully) organist on an instrument at the Welte headquarters. It was the first true digital recording, but it was used to actually re-create a performance, not parrot a recorded sound wave. This was accomplished via a paper roll (much like player pianos), which could be copied endlessly and sent to paying customers who popped the roll into the player mechanism of their Welte organ, and enjoyed a virtual performance by the greatest organists of the time. Welte developed an American branch, with its own



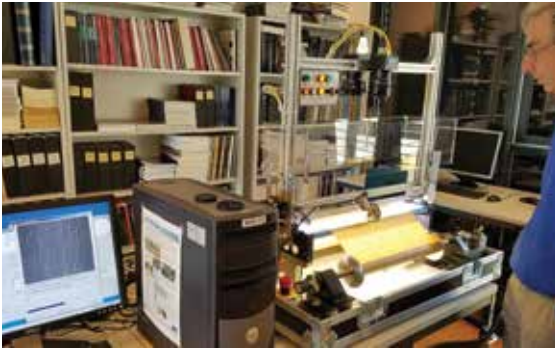
factory, but this connection was severed by the Great War, though both companies survived independently.

We possess the analogous system designed in America by the Möller company of Hagerstown, Maryland, who developed their own take on the system that focused less on standard organ repertoire and more on transcriptions of orchestral literature. Remember that in those first three decades of the 20th century, in order to hear an orchestral composition, one had to *go find an orchestra*. This system allowed the customer

to hear the *1812 Overture* on their own instrument, whether in a house, a church, a convention hall, a ballroom, etc. Möller relied less on artists "recording" rolls than on the skill of the people who designed the system and eventually came to arrange music directly on the thick, paper "master" rolls, which were used to create the "daughter" rolls.

If you've been following progress at the AOI over the last few years, you will know that we acquired the entire collection of the Möller rolls, *as well as the machine that "read" them and produced new daughter rolls*. This priceless collection of American music "recordings" received a grant from the GRAMMY Foundation for their preservation. The job is both enormous and intricately precise, and we formed a team that included two American organbuilders with specific knowledge and interest in the system, the organbuilders and renaissance men that are Sean O'Donnell and Charles Kegg. In time, we managed to convince David Rumsey, one of the leaders of the project at Seewen, to first come visit us in Oklahoma to see our system, which was followed with a reciprocal visit by us.

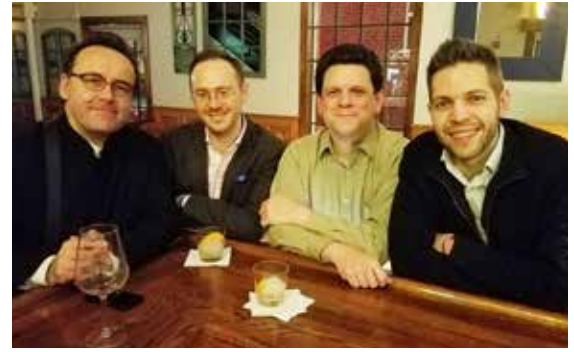
Rumsey had collaborated with Daniel Debrunner, an engineering professor at the Bern Institute of Applied Sciences, to create an automated system that would scan the aged and fragile Welte rolls. The scans gathered the data by shining a light up into a camera, which read the tiny holes in the rolls that contained the music, but also took a continuous color image of the roll which allows for examining the roll on a computer screen if there is a discrepancy. The data was then transferred into a modern MIDI file, which could be used to automatically play a pipe organ with the help of a computer. This means that the paper rolls are no longer needed to either reproduce or play any of the titles, but also that the music is freed from the necessity of having a Welte player mechanism hooked up to an instrument. Given a little money and engineering, almost any organ with electric or electro-pneumatic action can play any of the hundreds of titles available.



Daniel Debrunner with the Welte master roll scanner at the Museum für Musikautomaten in Seewen, Switzerland.



Jeremy Wance with Stephen Cleobury at King's College, Cambridge.



(l to r) David Briggs, Richard Hills, Jeremy Wance and Adam Pajan.

We here at OU needed a system that would be very similar to that of Seewen, including the software that translated holes in paper into music. There would be a level of customization needed, as Möller master rolls were much larger than those of Welte, but the principles were the same. The trip led to understanding exactly what was needed, and what questions or problems might arise. We are currently working with John Dyer, an OU research professor in electrical and computer engineering, to build the necessary system and customize software for it. When we are done, we will have some 500 titles that can be plugged into a pipe organ and played via computer. Stay tuned for more developments — and consider giving to this exciting project!

At the end of this academic year, we will pause to thank President and Mrs. Boren for their transformational presence at OU. Having been born in Norman, I grew up on this campus. It is marvelous to look back at what OU has become since David Boren and I

were both “freshmen” — I in the more usual sense of the word — in 1995. More personally, I owe the Borens, along with John Schwandt, a debt of gratitude for creating this place where I am (almost always) thrilled to greet the new workday. As you see in this publication, there’s more happening at the AOI than we could have dreamed — and we’re just now hitting our stride. I ask you to join us in this campaign to carry this rich legacy forward for generations. As the story goes, David Ross Boyd, the first president of the University of Oklahoma stepped off the train in 1892, surveyed the vast, rolling plain, and exclaimed “Oh! What possibilities!”

What possibilities, indeed!



I LOVE PARIS
IN THE
Springtime!

Have you ever wanted to view the great churches of Paris from their organ lofts?

Join the American Organ Institute family as we spend 10 days in this magical city, beginning on the morning of May 28, 2018.

A few open seats are available to alumni and friends. The package includes all ground transportation, comfortable hotel near the Gare de Lyon, two meals per day (breakfast and dinner), day trips to Versailles and to Rouen, tickets to attractions, and much more!

For more information, indicate on the enclosed card.

Individual price without airfare, \$2,600 (double occupancy)

Schedule subject to change.



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THE AMERICAN ORGAN INSTITUTE

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA SCHOOL of MUSIC

is proud to present a gala weekend in honor of The First Lady of the Organ, OU alumna

Diane Bish

We invite you to join us in celebrating her unsurpassed career and her unfailing advocacy for the pipe organ.

Saturday, April 7, 2018 | 6:30 p.m.

Gala Dinner in Miss Bish's honor
Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art

Sunday, April 8, 2018 | 3 p.m.

Gala Concert in Gothic Hall
featuring Miss Bish, plus choir and brass.
Gala Reception to follow in the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art

A scholarship in Bish's name has been created. If you wish to honor her, checks should be written to the OU Foundation c/o American Organ Institute, 2101 W. Tecumseh Road, Ste. C, Norman, OK 73069, or visit our website for more ways to give.

Dinner, concert, and reception: \$215
Ticket packages for concert and reception: \$115
Individual concert ticket: \$40
Seating is limited.

Sponsorship Levels

Bronze \$250

Individual sponsorship with priority seating at dinner.
1 reserved seat for the concert.
1 ticket for the reception following the concert.
Acknowledgement in publicity.

Silver \$2,000

Gala Dinner Table sponsorship (for 8).
8 reserved seats for the concert.
8 tickets for the reception.
Acknowledgment in publicity.

Gold \$3,000

Gala Dinner Table sponsorship (for 8)
with priority placement.
8 reserved seats for the concert.
8 guests for the reception following the concert.
Acknowledgment in publicity.

Platinum \$5,000

Gala Dinner Table sponsorship (for 7), with Miss Bish seated at your table for dinner.
8 reserved seats at the concert.
8 guests for the reception following the concert.
Acknowledgment in publicity.

For more information, please indicate on the enclosed card, visit the AOI website: aoi.ou.edu, email aoi@ou.edu, or call (405) 325-7829.