



THE NEW YORK CITY CHAPTER
of the
American Guild of Organists

www.nycago.org



Volume 67, Number 6

March 2017

Visit the [website](#) of the NYC AGO Chapter

Don't miss events presented by your friends and colleagues.

Visit the [Concert Calendar](#) of the NYC Chapter,
and attend some concerts!

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Dean's Message

Dear Colleagues,

This past month, we have had a very successful and enjoyable event with improvisation master Jeffrey Brillhart teaching and performing improvisation. Special thanks to **Valerie Shondel**, our host at St. Paul the Apostle, and to **Emily Werne** of the program committee, and registrar **Larry Long**, for being "chargés d'affaires" of this event. Our improvisation event, held annually for the past seven years, has attracted good crowds of members who want to better their skills in this important and sometimes under-instructed area.

We then held the chapter's signature event, the Presidents' Day conference. Every year for many decades, the chapter has gathered mid-winter to hear lectures and performances on interesting topics from luminaries in the field. This year, the organ in cinema was the main focus of the day, and our Sub-Dean and many volunteers assembled a wonderful day for us all. It was particularly smashing to have more than 800 in the audience for the screening of *Metropolis* with Peter Krasinski. I am most grateful to board member and host **Kenneth Dake** for his hospitality to us all at Marble.

Our chapter has grown in number every year lately; I think it is because of the good material, and the positive atmosphere, at events. So, regarding future events, what I ask of us is: who will not only show up, but also **invite someone new?**

Yours truly,
David Enlow
Dean

Marble Lunchtime Organ Recitals
Mondays 12:30-1pm - Free

March 13 Claudia Dumschat
March 20 Bryan Dunnewald
March 27 Matthew Smith

April 3 RCYO Competition Winner
April 10 Colin MacKnight

IV/101 Sebastian M. Glück, Op. 20 (2015)
Marble Collegiate Church - Kenneth Dake, Director of Music
Fifth Ave. @ 29th Street • MarbleChurch.org



Over 800 people applaud Peter Krasinski following his accompaniment of Metropolis.
Most of these people had never heard an organ before!

Program News

February was certainly the month for our Chapter programs! On Saturday, February 4, we held our annual **Improvisation Spectacular** with Jeffrey Brillhart at the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle. Many thanks to Valerie Shondel and Daniel Ficcari for hosting us, and to our improvisors, Colin MacKnight and Alessandro Pittorino. This past Monday saw the Chapter's **Presidents' Day conference**. Our theme, *Metropolis: the organ and the cinema*, paved the way



for a rich and varied exploration of the organ and its music. Our base for the day was Marble Collegiate Church (Kenneth Dake, host) with its 2015 Sebastian Glück Opus 20 instrument. Thrilling and informative talks by John Bishop and Jonathan Ambrosino explored the likes of Pythagoras, general pistons, and the organ in vintage films. Chelsea Chen and 'cellist Joseph Lee gave a concert on the Fisk organ at the Church of the Transfiguration (Claudia Dumschat, host), delighting us with virtuosity and charm in equal measure.

Our principal performer, **Peter Krasinski**, gave a masterclass on various aspects of improvisation, and then quite literally blew us away with his improvised accompaniment of the silent movie, *Metropolis*. The event was open to the public, and a capacity audience of more than 800 people filled the Marble sanctuary for an evening of music that many of us will cherish for years to come. To see so many non-organists (the average age was 30!) thrilled by hearing the instrument for the first time was immensely gratifying to say the least.

Our next event of the season is on Wednesday, March 28. Celebrated organist **Daniel Roth**, winner of the 2015 International Performer of the Year Award, will give a concert and be presented with the certificate. See below for more details.

The grand finale to the season will take the form of a **Manhattan boat cruise and dinner on Monday June 5**. See below for complete information.

As always, please see our website for complete information. All events are free to current NYC AGO members, and some are also open to the public.

With my very best wishes, on behalf of the Program Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Kennerley
Sub-Dean & Chair of the Program Committee

2015 IPYA WINNER DANIEL ROTH IN CONCERT



Daniel Roth, winner of the 2015 International Performer of the Year Award (credit: Joe Vitacco)

2015 International Performer of the Year Award winner [Daniel Roth](#) will give a concert and be presented with the award certificate in a magnificent event co-sponsored by the NYC AGO Chapter and the Peragallo Pipe Organ Company. Mr. Roth is *Organiste Titulaire* of Saint Sulpice, Paris, and was Professor of Organ at the Musikhochschule in Frankfurt am Main from 1995 to 2007. His playing is stunning, and his improvisation world renowned.

Come and be thrilled as Mr. Roth treats to a thrilling evening of music-making on **Tuesday, March 28th, 2017 at 7:00 PM** at the Church of Saint Francis Xavier (John Uehlein, host), home to the [2010 Peragallo instrument](#). Don't miss this opportunity to be blown away by such a legendary performer!

The event is free and open to all. [Click here for directions.](#)

Additionally, the vote for the 2017 International Performer of the Year Award is due to take place this year. Look out for information on that.

GRAND FINALE MANHATTAN BOAT CRUISE



Following a two-year hiatus we are delighted to be able to offer a **Manhattan boat cruise** as the grand finale to the 2016-17 season. This has been an immensely popular event in the past and this year will be no exception. Mark **Monday June 5** in your calendars and look out for more information shortly. Tickets cost \$75 and are heavily subsidized by the NYC AGO. A buffet dinner is included, and there will be an open bar. Invite your friends for an unforgettable evening of friendship and revelry!



The pre-concert line outside Marble Collegiate Church in anticipation of the final event of the Presidents' Day Conference. Have you ever seen so many people waiting to attend an organ concert?!

ARTHUR LAWRENCE
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L. Cameron Johnson Memorial Organ Competition

The Twentieth Annual L. Cameron Johnson Memorial Organ Competition for High School Students

Saturday, May 20, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.

Storrs Congregational Church

on the campus of the University of Connecticut

1st prize: \$1,500 offered by Storrs Congregational Church

2nd prize: \$750 offered by the Northeastern Connecticut and Greater Hartford Chapters, American Guild of Organists

3rd prize: \$300 offered by Johannus New England

Entries must be submitted by March 24, 2017

containing one composition from each of the following periods:

Baroque, Romantic, and 20th or 21st century

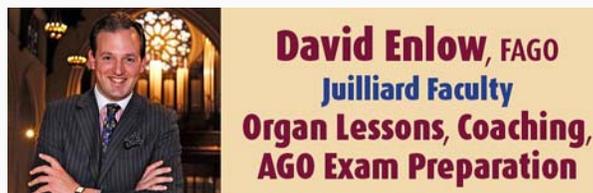
Rules and application forms available online: www.northeasternctago.org

**The L. Cameron Johnson Memorial Organ Competition
is sponsored jointly by the
Northeastern Connecticut Chapter of the American Guild of Organists
and Storrs Congregational Church**

Quote of the Month

"If I should ever die, God forbid, let this be my epitaph: THE ONLY PROOF HE NEEDED FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD WAS MUSIC."

-Kurt Vonnegut



Won't you be my neighbor?

New York is a great city for the performing arts. How many thousands of talented people are tramping the boards every night in theaters and concert halls, and how many tens of thousands of art lovers are in the seats, soaking up the wonders of live performances? And what a range of choices, from black-tie fare at [Carnegie Hall](#) to the edgy olio at [Le Poisson Rouge](#) in the West Village.

Presidents' Day brought an AGO wonder to the public, Fritz Lang's 1927 cinematic masterpiece, *Metropolis*, accompanied by agile, imaginative Peter Krasinski. Chapter members who had attended the day-long conference sat in a reserved section in the front of [Marble Church](#), and marveled at the throng who showed up. (Kudos to James Kennerley for such effective publicity.) I bet a lot of

them used to think that going into a church to hear the organ would be a stuffy experience - guess we showed them!

The next evening, Wendy and I went to the [Cathedral of St. John the Divine](#) to be bathed in the music of Duruflé at the hands of Kent Tritle, Ray Nagem, the Chamber Orchestra and Chorus of the Manhattan School of Music, soloists, and the Cathedral Choir. I'm always amazed at the feat of intimate music-making in a monumental space, and that program was no exception. It was a glorious evening, just about as far across the musical spectrum as possible from the pleasures of the previous night.

But wait, on the way to the concert, changing trains at Times Square, we were treated to a medley of Beatles tunes, played on the goofiest looking one-man-band ever. This guy may have had advice from an organbuilder, because there was an elaborate tracker action to operate the myriad percussions across the top of the big drum.

He wasn't quite up to the standards of Krasinski, Tritle, and Nagem, but he played pretty well, and he drew a big crowd. Something for everyone.



Joke of the Month

["United Breaks Guitars"](#)

Follow this link to hear an eloquent protest about the care of musical instruments. Maybe it's not so funny.

David Lloyd ben Yaacov Yehuda Klepper
Cantor/Hazan-in-training, synagogue care-
taker, author, architectural acoustician.

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From the Editor



Eric Owens is an American bass-baritone, born in Philadelphia in 1970. His musical education began with piano lessons at the Settlement Music School when he was 6, and in junior high school, he began oboe lessons with Louis Rosenblatt, English horn player with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He majored in vocal performance at Temple University and received a Masters Degree in voice at the Curtis Institute.

[Mr. Owens](#) has had a marvelous career, singing with the Royal Opera, the San Francisco Opera, the Los Angeles Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Metropolitan Opera. He was the Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence for the New York Philharmonic for 2015-2016, and is appearing in three productions at the Metropolitan Opera this season. Wendy heard him there in the role of the Water Spirit in Dvorak's *Rusalka*, and when she noticed that he would be giving a recital at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, she bought tickets before

asking if I could go. "I could always invite someone else," she said.

We attended the recital on Sunday, February 26 with a friend, and were treated to as generous and personal an afternoon of music-making as I can recall. It was billed as a "day off" Chamber Recital with Pedro Diaz, english hornist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra - Owens and Diaz were joined by a stylish and sprightly Baroque band that included Chloe Fedor and Jeff Girton (violins), William Frampton (viola), Lindsay McIntosh (oboe), Sarah Stone (cello), Nathan Chase (bass), and Bradley Brookshire (harpsichord). It was noted that there would be a special performance by Mr. Owens on the oboe.

The program included two Bach cantatas; *Ich will den Kreuztab gerne tragen* (#56), and *Ich habe genug*, (#82). Cantata #56 is scored for strings and two oboes (Diaz and McIntosh), while #82 features strings and one oboe.

Mr. Owens is big strapping fellow with a powerful stage presence. (I suppose the Met does that for you.) His mouth is as big as a barn door, and he's a walking Orgoblo - one of those huge breaths would be enough air to play a scale on a Skinner 32-foot Open Wood. That is unusual equipment for *bel canto* singing, and while Mr. Owens is no fairy, his huge voice projected all those long Bachian melismas faultlessly. It's funny to think of him singing the role of a Water Nymph - hardly a sylph flitting above the ripples.

The obvious rapport between Owens and Diaz made it easy to imagine that they had become pals while working together at the Met - I suppose Owens happened to mention to Diaz that he play the oboe. It was also easy to imagine the hatching of the idea of a casual extra-curricular concert including those two bass-and-oboe Cantatas. The most charming moment was the closer, *Sinfonia for the Queen of Sheba* from Händel's *Solomon*. Ms. McIntosh, who had sat out Cantata #82, came on stage to hand Mr. Owen his oboe, along with a soaked reed. He inserted the reed, played a couple warmup licks, and gave a sly look to the audience: "Y'all didn't believe I could play the oboe," he winked.

And off they went at a snappy Händelian tempo, Mr. Owens on Oboe II. It wasn't

perfect. The oboe is a distant second in his musical world. But he blended and balanced with his double-reed buddy, his articulation was true, and he was in the heart of the style with the other instruments. His humility was engaging, as was the obvious simple fun he was having playing along with an admired colleague. No hoity-toity diva, he.

[National Sawdust](#) is a cool new performance venue on North 6th Street in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. And guess what? It used to be a sawdust factory. It seats fewer than 200 in a rectangular space, with stage on the "long" side, and five or six long rows of chairs. There's a bar and a neat little café, and a rollicking procession of artists and small ensembles on the calendar. And for you who live in Manhattan and are nervous about going to Brooklyn, it took us 20 minutes to get there from Union Square on the L train.

Take a look, and take a chance. It's as cool as it gets. And, don't miss [Cafe Mogador](#), a terrific Moroccan restaurant a couple blocks up Wythe Avenue. Tell 'em I sent you.

[Visit our amazing website!](#)

