

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Dear Members and Friends,

As we approach mid-year, I would firstly like to thank the various committee members for all their hard work in the main "instruments" of the Singapore AGO: Pipeworks, a well received recital series that has drawn the support of the general public and organ music lovers; and Pipe Echoes, which keeps our members connected. As our chapter grows, we hope to take bigger steps toward fulfilling our aims of providing education and a platform for organ music in our country.

An exciting event in June 2005, the POE + (Pipe Organ Encounter-Plus), is certainly a major undertaking of any AGO chapter. This music education effort which focuses on teens and young adults, is an attempt to make the world of the organ more accessible and attractive. Some of our members are working hard to organise this 4-day event, which is also AGO's first POE+ in South East Asia. For members who are not directly involved, please help to support this event by inviting your friends and family to the wonderful recitals.

The successful collaboration of our Chapter with Methodist School of Music in the recent Hymn Playing Class by Mark Quarmby also indicates a need for more workshops on both secular and sacred organ music subjects. We rely very much on the support of generous individuals, organizations and churches to fulfill this need.

Again, I urge each member to participate actively in the development and growth of the chapter. No job is too small or insignificant as long as we are each working toward the common goal of promoting and nurturing the future of music and musicians!

Sincerely,

Evelyn S. E. Lim, DMA
Dean

Legend has it that once, when he was complimented on his playing, (J. S.) Bach replied:

"There is nothing remarkable about it. All you have to do is hit the right notes at the right time and the instrument plays itself."

Organ Discovery

- reported by Lin Yangchen

On 15 May 2005, Alphonsus Chern was invited by the Church of Sweden Abroad (*Svenska Kyrkan i Utlandet*) in Singapore to play at a service. He made a startling discovery; standing in a corner of the chapel was a chamber organ hitherto unknown to the organ community in Singapore. Its specification is as follows:

Trægedakt 8'
Principal 4'
Rørfløjte 4'
Quintaton 2'



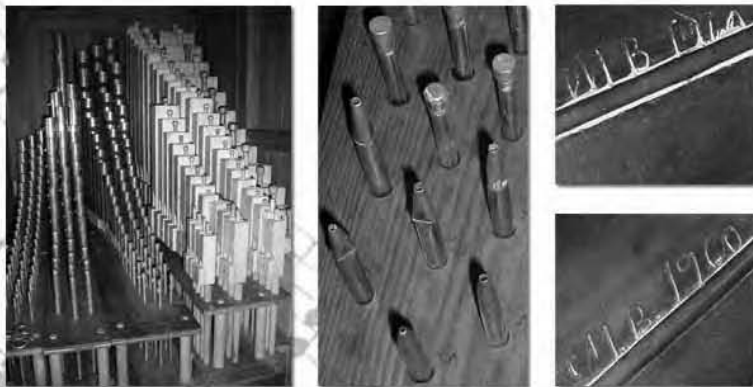
From left to right: close-up of the Principal 4' stop knob - note the power switch visible to the lower right; left stop jamb; right stop jamb - the bottom two stop knobs have been pulled out.

Each stop has two stop knobs controlling the upper and lower halves of the manual which is divided between B and middle C, allowing the bass and treble to be played on different registrations.



The undecorated rectangular case alludes to the modern trend of organ design towards functionality in sound projection. The placement of the smaller, brighter-sounding pipes in front is a neo-Baroque feature.

Due to the absence of a nameplate on the organ, some research had to be carried out in order to trace the builder. Vital clues included the Danish stop names and year engravings found on the metal pipes. Correspondence with organ builders finally revealed that the firm of Starup & Søn, established in Copenhagen, 1858 and closed down in 1986, had built the instrument in 1960. [continued]



From left to right: inside the organ; a close-up of the rare Quintaton 2' showing the last six conical pipes; markings which led to the organ's identification.

Being in several respects the only one of its kind in Singapore, the organ is both an important document and interesting variation in the nation's predominantly Anglo-German organ landscape. 🌿

Writer's note: I would like to acknowledge Inger Synnevaag, Adriel Yap and Alphonsus Chern for their kind assistance in making this article possible.



RECENT EVENTS



HYMN PLAYING CLASS BY MARK QUARMBY ON 22ND APRIL AT THE TELOK AYER METHODIST CHURCH, SINGAPORE
- by Adrian Chong

Hymn accompaniment need not be a stress-inducing activity played out in church week after week - that was the bottom line Mark Quarmby brought across to all 25 participants in the hymn-playing workshop held in Telok Ayer Methodist Church. The participants ranged from those with many years of playing experience to others who were just starting to play for their church.

Mark began by pointing out that there were several traditions of hymn playing which differed from country to country. However, there were also broad similarities and common techniques which one could apply under any circumstance.

Throughout the evening, Mark provided everyone with useful tips as eight volunteers came up to the organ to demonstrate his ideas. He also talked about suitable ways of giving an introduction, using registration, phrasing and articulation, and other unconventional ways of accompaniment:



- Introductions should be used to familiarise the congregation with the hymn tune.
- Let the congregation know when the introduction is finished by having a succinct pause.
- Keep the pulse of the hymn going throughout; use articulation or little breaks to propel the congregation forward.
- Differentiate the strong and weak beats of the hymn.
- If you are only using the manuals, you must include the bass part.
- Register the first verse quite brightly to boost the confidence of the congregation. You can then reduce the registration from the second verse onwards, since they would be familiar with the tune by then.
- The final verse is usually played bolder, sometimes with a fanciful arrangement.
- Maintain the melody line, as changing the melody could confuse the congregation.
- Set the general pistons and also the divisional pistons, if any, as a crescendo. This would help you adjust the brightness easily as you play, especially on an unfamiliar instrument.
- Make use of manual and pedal couplers to blend and balance the sound.
- Use your ears and listen to the sound of the instrument. Textbook solutions do not necessarily always work.
- Always be mindful of the congregation.

The most important point he made though, was that the accompanist must keep going no matter how many mistakes he made. Otherwise the congregation would stop singing and start staring!

Mark ended the evening by playing all five verses of "When In Our Music God Is Glorified" on the organ which got everybody in the church singing. 🌿

ORGAN MASTERCLASS AT THE ESPLANADE BY DAME GILLIAN WEIR ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2005
- by Dr. Evelyn Lim

Celebrated organist Dame Gillian Weir conducted an organ masterclass as part of the Esplanade's "Exploration" series. Singapore AGO organists Adrian Chong and Yoo Ji Eun performed Mulet's *Carillon-Sortie* and Mendelssohn's *Sonata No.3 in A major* respectively. 🌿



Left to right: Mr. Adrian Chong, Dame Gillian Weir, Miss Yoo Ji Eun.

A - Z OF COMPOSERS

- by Dr. Tang Boon Sen

JEHAN ALAIN



Born into a family of musicians at St-Germain-en-Laye, Jehan Alain (1911–1940) was a talented French organist and composer who tragically lost his life in action during World War II at the age of 29. At the Paris Conservatoire, he was the pupil of André Bloch, Georges Caussade, Paul Dukas, Jean Roger-Ducasse and Marcel Dupré, winning first prizes for harmony, counterpoint and fugue, organ and improvisation. In his short life he composed over 140 works, including 52 piano pieces, 36 organ pieces, two mélodies, ten motets for soloists or mixed choirs, three masses and 18 pieces for chamber ensemble. Jehan Alain's writing is the product of an original, creative mind as evidenced in his exploration of tonal colours and complex, intricate rhythms.

The popularity of his organ music has largely been due to the efforts of his sister, the celebrated organist, Marie-Claire Alain, who continues to give persuasive performances of his works. Among these works are the *Suite pour orgue* (which was awarded a first prize in composition at the competition of Les Amis de l'Orgue in 1936), two *Fantaisies*, *Deux danses à Agni Yavishta*, *Trois danses: Joies, Deuils & Luttés*, *Trois pièces: Variations sur un thème de Clément Janequin*, *Le jardin suspendu* & *Litanies*. Written in 1937 – the same year as the death of his other sister Marie-Odile – *Litanies* is perhaps his best known piece for the organ. Alain prefaced it with the following:

'When the Christian soul in distress can no longer find new words to implore the mercy of God, it repeats the same invocation over and over again in a blind faith. The limits of reason are reached. Faith alone continues its ascent.'



image taken from www.jehanalain.com

Website of interest (in both French and English):
<http://www.jehanalain.com>

Selected Discography:

Organ Music of Jehan Alain (Vols. 1 & 2) performed by Marie-Claire Alain (Erato 8573802142 & 8573857732) – latest definitive recordings of the complete organ works.

Further Reading:

Alain, Marie-Claire (1923–), *Critical notes on the organ works of Jehan Alain*, trans. Norma Stevlingson (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 2003).

LÉON BOËLLMANN



The Frenchman Léon Boëllmann (1862–1897) was born in Ensisheim, Upper Alsace, a little over a month after Claude Debussy was born. Unlike his contemporary, Boëllmann's career was much shorter (he was only 35 when he died) and his musical idiom was certainly more traditional. Boëllmann was a pupil of Eugène Gigout at the École Niedermeyer where he studied from 1875 to 1881. He left the École to be appointed Organiste du Chœur at Saint-Vincent-de-Paul in Paris, and became titular of the Grand Orgue in 1887. Despite the brevity of his musical life, Boëllmann left 68 published works, among which are collections of pieces for the organ and harmonium.

He was also rather fond of the cello, for which he wrote a number of fine chamber works and an exquisite set of *Symphonic Variations* for cello and orchestra. Boëllmann is perhaps best known today for the *Suite Gothique* for organ (composed in 1895) which has four movements harkening back to the gothic era: *Introduction (Chorale)* – *Menuet Gothique* – *Prière à Notre Dame* – *Toccata*. In the very popular concluding toccata, the formula of brilliant manual figuration above a broad theme in the pedals is reminiscent of Widor's famous example from his fifth organ symphony. Boëllmann's other cycles for the organ include the *Douze Pièces* (Twelve Pieces), Op. 16, the *Deuxième Suite*, Op. 27 and *Les Heures Mystiques*, Op. 29 & Op. 30. The latter are also often performed on the harmonium.

Website of interest (in French only):
<http://www.boellmann-gigout.fr.fm/>

Selected Discography:

Léon Boëllmann: *Organ Works*, performed by Willibald Guggenmos on the Cavaillé-Coll Organ at Azkoita in Spain (Motette CD 11751). Featured on this CD are: *Suite Gothique*, Op. 25, 23 *Versets aus Heures Mystiques*, Op. 30, *Suite for Organ No. 2*, Op. 27.



Église Saint-Vincent-de-Paul à Paris

image taken from en.wikipedia.org



A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT-DAY ORGANS OF SINGAPORE

- by Lin Yangchen

Although there are only eleven functioning organs in Singapore, they represent a wide variety of engineering and musical styles. Other instruments existed in the past, making a total of 21, but are beyond the scope of this brief survey.

The Klais (2002) instrument in the Esplanade Concert Hall is the newest and largest in Singapore and tonally the most versatile. It has 61 stops, 3 manuals and is the only instrument with 32-foot pipes. In the Victoria Concert Hall is a fine 28-stop, 2-manual Klais (1987) organ chiefly in the German baroque style. It is the largest organ with purely mechanical and non-electrical connections between the keys and pipes.

Of the church instruments, the gallery organ of the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd (2 manuals, 27 stops) is especially interesting. It contains the oldest playing pipes in Singapore, built by Bevington & Sons in 1912. It also includes pipes from the pre-war organ of Victoria Concert Hall and recent pipework from Germany. The distinctive asymmetric façade is the work of Robert Navaratnam, the sole organ builder in Singapore. The choir organ (2 manuals, 10 stops) in the North Transept of the cathedral was constructed by Navaratnam (1994).



1912 Bevington (L) and 1994 Navaratnam (R) - Cathedral of the Good Shepherd

In the chancel of Orchard Road Presbyterian Church (ORPC) stands the largest English romantic organ in Singapore (3 manuals, 43 stops, J. W. Walker & Sons 1962). The gallery of St. Andrew's Cathedral houses a similar but currently unplayable instrument by the same builder (1959). A small instrument (2 manuals, 12 stops, built 1925) serves the needs of the ORPC chapel.



The chancel (L) and chapel organs (R) of Orchard Road Presbyterian Church

The organ of Kampong Kapur Methodist Church (2 manuals, 23 stops, built 1936), like the gallery organ of the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, is a practical and interesting hybrid instrument resulting from several improvements and pipe additions



Kampong Kapur Methodist Church made over the years. Curiously, this instrument and the small organ in the chapel of ORPC were originally built for a locality as far away as Singapore by the fledgling British firm of Walker & Taylor, which was obscure even in Britain. The smallest church organ in Singapore (1 manual, 4 stops), built by Starup & Son in 1960, resides in the chapel of the Norwegian Seamen's Mission. It is the only Danish organ in the country; more information is found in another article in this issue.



Organs in St. Andrew's Cathedral (L); Singapore Bible College (top) and Freemasons' Hall (bottom)

A few organs exist in secular venues besides the concert hall. The lecture theatre of the Singapore Bible College houses a fine example of a chamber organ (2 manuals, 9 stops, August Laukhuff 1986) which could serve both in liturgy and for home practice. In Freemasons' Hall, a small organ (2 manuals, 3 extended stops) has been built by J. W. Walker & Sons (1970) in memory of those who died in the two world wars.

The most rarely encountered organ is the continuo organ (4 stops, Laukhuff) in the possession of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. A lever below the single manual shifts the connections between the keys and pipes by one semitone and does away with the need for transposition to suit music from different periods. The diversity and rarity of the organs in Singapore are valuable aspects of the short but kaleidoscopic national heritage.

Conservation efforts of the organ builder, organist community and the churches should therefore be more widely appreciated and encouraged by the general public. 🎵

THE LITURGICAL YEAR AND THE ORGANIST - PENTECOST

- by Ng Chet Wei

The season of Pentecost begins on 15 May this year. It commences fifty days after Easter and marks the birth of the church.

The Origins

Pentecost, or Whitsuntide, has its roots in the Greek "*pentekoste*" meaning the fiftieth day after Easter. It commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of flames to the Apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. This marked the birth of the church and to this day, Pentecost is recognised and celebrated as the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples effecting profound change, keenness and boldness.

In the Old Testament, it is known by its Hebrew term "Shavuot", which means "weeks". It is one of the three annual pilgrimage festivals that the Jews were instructed to attend every year. This joyful festival occurred seven weeks after the Passover and marked the end of the barley harvest. During this feast, the first fruits of the barley harvest were brought to the Lord as a thanksgiving offering for the blessing of the harvest. The followers of "Christ", being devout followers of the Hebrew faith, had come to Jerusalem for the Festival of Shavuot.

The Symbols

The symbols of Pentecost and the Holy Spirit that are most familiar to people are the tongues of fire and the dove, but there are other lesser known symbols, such as the pomegranate and the seven lamps.

Tongues of fire - The power of the Holy Spirit (resting on the disciples) - Acts 2:3

Pomegranate - Because of the unity of the many seeds in the one fruit, it is said to resemble the church

Dove - The Holy Spirit (descending upon Jesus) - Luke 3:22

Seven Lamps - Seven-fold gifts of the Spirit: wisdom; understanding; counsel; inward strength; knowledge; true godliness; holy fear

Wind - Breath of God (Holy Spirit) - Acts 2:2

The Hymns and Chants of Pentecost

The Mass of Whitsunday (Pentecost) comprises an introit "*Spiritus Domini*", a sequence "*Veni Sancte Spiritus*", a hymn of vespers "*Veni Creator Spiritus*" and a communion "*Factus est Repente*". Of these four plainchants, the translated versions of "*Veni Sancte Spiritus*" and "*Veni Creator Spiritus*" can still be found in some modern hymnals. The German and English translations for "*Veni Sancte Spiritus*" are "*Komm, heiliger Geist, Herr Gott*" and "*Come, thou Holy Spirit, come*" respectively. The translations for "*Veni Creator Spiritus*" are "*Komm, Gott Schöpfer, heiliger Geist*" and "*Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire*".

Pentecost Hymn and Chant-Based Organ Music

The well-known organ settings of the "*Komm, Gott Schöpfer*" chorale are Johann Sebastian Bach's BWV 631 from the Orgelbüchlein and BWV 667 from the Leipzig Chorales. Johann Pachelbel has a simpler setting of this chorale for manuals only. Bach also wrote two organ chorales on "*Komm, heiliger Geist*", BWV 651 and 652, of which the first is a fantasia. Other German composers include Dieterich Buxtehude (BuxWV 199 & 200) and Pachelbel.

French organ settings of "*Veni Creator*" can be found in Jeanne Demessieux's *Twelve Chorale Preludes on Gregorian Themes*, op. 8 (Toccata) and Maurice Duruflé's *Prélude, Adagio et Choral varié sur le thème du "Veni Creator"*, op. 4.

Other Pentecost organ literature can be found on the CanticaNOVA Publications website. Some examples are given below:

- "*Come Down, O Love Divine*" (Ronald Arnatt) Parish Organist XI [Concordia]
- "*Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest*" (Paul Manz) Improvisations for Pentecost & Trinity Sunday [Morning Star Music Publishers 10-500]
- "*Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest*" (Jean Titelouze) Parish Organist, Book 8 [Concordia 97-1404]
- "*Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove*" (Wilbur Held) Hymn Preludes for the Pentecost Season [Concordia 97-5517]
- "*Hymn Prelude on Down Ampney*" (Peter Pindar Stearns) Eight Hymn Preludes for Ascension & Pentecost [Flammer]
- "*Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*" (J.S. Bach) Orgelbüchlein [Orgelwerke VII - Peters 246]
- "*Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*" (Johann Pachelbel) Seasonal Chorale Preludes for Manuals, Book 2
- "*Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*" (J.G. Walther) Church Organist's Golden Treasury II [Oliver Ditson Co]
- "*Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist*" (Dieterich Buxtehude) Church Organist's Golden Treasury III [Oliver Ditson]
- "*Prelude on Komm, Gott Schöpfer*" (Paul Manz) from Improvisations for Pentecost and Trinity Sunday [Morning Star Music Publishers #10-500]

References:

<http://www.echoedvoices.org/May2002/Pentecost.html>
<http://www.angelfire.com/in/stleonard/pentecost.html>
http://interletras.com/canticum/Eng/Translation_Pentecote.html
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/v.htm>
http://www.canticaNOVA.com/planning/year-c/plnpve_m.htm



BOOK REVIEWS



- by Nicholas Leow

Title: The Last Verse for Christmas

Author: Janet Rupp Linker

Publisher: Beckenhurst Press, Inc.

Price: US\$10.95

Contents: *Angels from the Realms of Glory* (REGENT SQUARE); *Angels We Have Heard on High* (GLORIA); *Away in a Manger* (MUELLER); *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* (GO TELL IT); *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (MENDELSSOHN); *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* (W ZLOBE LEZY); *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* (CAROL); *Joy to the World* (ANTIOCH); *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (ADESTE FIDELES); *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (ST. LOUIS); *Once in Royal David's City* (IRBY); *Silent Night* (STILLE NACHT); *The First Noel* (THE FIRST NOEL); *We Three Kings of Orient Are* (KINGS OF ORIENT); *What Child Is This* (GREENSLEEVES).

Comments: This volume is a must-have for the Advent season. Containing hymn introduction, interlude and last stanza arrangements for 15 famous carols, it is sure to brighten up your festive worship and uplift your congregational hymn-singing atmosphere. The arrangements are of moderate difficulty and would be recommended for organists who already have some experience in leading congregational hymn-singing. A good value for money. ✨

Get organised!

This issue features a contest open to all current members of the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Answer all three questions correctly and win a **fifty dollar** (S\$50.00) cash prize. Are you ready?



1. What **type** of organ console is pictured above; and how many of these consoles are known to exist in Singapore today?
2. Which currently functioning organ in Singapore has the fewest number of ranks?
3. Which is the oldest functioning organ in Singapore? Please indicate the name of the original builder and the year it was installed.

Rules of the contest:

Please write or type your answers on a fresh sheet of paper and mail it to the address below, addressed to "The Publicity Officer".

The closing date for this contest is **31 July 2005**.

All decisions by the judging committee are final and appeals will not be entertained.

Committee members of the Singapore AGO are not eligible to participate in this contest.

In the event that no correct entries are received, the committee reserves the right not to award a prize.

The prize money is sponsored.

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COMING EVENTS

Singapore AGO's first ever POE+ (Pipe Organ Encounter for Adults) is a four-day organ introduction programme for older teenagers and young adults. Held at the Singapore Bible College, this programme will include organ workshops, individual lessons, organ visits and recitals and runs from June 1-4, 2005.

We are proud to have with us Dr. Margaret Chen, Dr. Evelyn Lim, Mr. Lim Chin Kai, Mr. Adrian Chong, Mr. Mark Quarmby, Dr. David Francis Urrows, and Mr. Felix Hell. With such esteemed talent on board, we can certainly look forward to an exciting and educational experience for all.

PIPE WORKS 2005 is an organ recital series organised by the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and the German Speaking Protestant Congregation associated with Orchard Road Presbyterian Church.

This year's recitals will feature Felix Hell (2 June), Clive Driskill-Smith (11 August), Jennifer Chou (29 September) and members of the Singapore AGO (10 November) playing the 1962 J. W. Walker Organ, the largest pipe organ of an English builder in South-east Asia, at Orchard Road Presbyterian Church.

All recitals will begin at 8pm, and admission is free, with a retiring collection.

City & Country: Future Directions for the Pipe Organ in Australia - the 28th Annual Conference of the Organ Historical Trust Australia (OHTA) will be held in Sydney, Newcastle and the Hunter Valley from 30 September to 6 October, 2005.

Discussions will focus upon the retention and use of pipe organs in Australian churches. The programme features several substantial recitals and two distinguished speakers, Hugh Mackay and Barbara Owen, as well as visits to 28 organs.

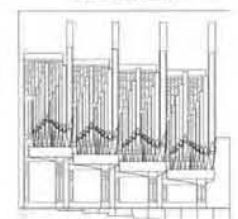
For more information, log on to www.vicnet.net.au/~ohta

Pipe Organ Encounter +

Singapore



CITY & COUNTRY: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE PIPE ORGAN IN AUSTRALIA



Determination

Angie was a girl who loved hymns very much. So she decided to learn to play the classical organ. After learning for two months, she felt frustrated because she could not coordinate her hands and feet. She told her Teacher that she wanted to give up. Her Teacher encouraged her by telling her that she could overcome the difficulty by practising regularly. He then told her about Apostle Paul's hardships. Paul determined to spread the gospel by overcoming a lot of obstacles. He never gave up his mission and many people got to know Christ because of that (II Corinthians 11). Angie was inspired by Paul's determination. She then continued to practise playing the organ and started to enjoy it.



written and illustrated by Esther Ching-Hay Ng

THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE: Dr. Evelyn Lim, Advisor; Mrs. Esther Seet, Publicity Officer; Dr. Tang Boon Sen, Chief Editor; Mr. Alphonsus Chern, Design, Layout & Photography, with additional photography in this issue by Mr. Adrian Chong and Mr. Lin Yangchen. **PIPE ECHOES** is published by the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. © 2005. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. The opinions expressed in the articles, reviews, comments, letters and interviews are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the views of the AGO, the Singapore Chapter, or the editors of this journal. All effort has been made to acknowledge the authors and sources of articles and images in this journal. In the case of any errors, omissions, or failure to credit a source, pardon is sought. Please inform the editors of all such errors and omissions at the address listed above. **EDITORIAL:** Your contributions are welcome. Please forward articles and contributions to the above address.