

Phantasies of Divine Love

This year, the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will focus on a composer who has been of much contention - Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992). **Victor Li** pens his thoughts on the French maestro of composition.



La Trinité: Façade of the organ at Messiaen's church. Photo | Ong Te-Min

THE MUSIC of Olivier Messiaen sends tremors through me, his music strikes a particular raw chord: mystical yet melancholic, it is at once eremitic and emphatic, silent and slow yet shrill and swift; impenetrably full of intrigue avian and alien, evocative of light most ethereal, tinted nostalgia and primeval nature.

Olivier Messiaen wrote many works for the organ, a corpus of mystical organ literature.

An intensively secretive person, he was as secretive about works in progress as Steve Jobs, and equally reticent about his private life.

Although he wrote much about his musical language, these were written as descriptions, not explanations.

He describes, often in rich detail, what is in his music. However, he almost never explains why his music, why those elements are there, or what these complexities represent – for better or for worse, all that is left to the performer and to the listener.

A true mystic paints a veiled picture of God – he does not explain how then to see God in the picture – for the picture is for other true mystics alone to see and know and share.

His works were distinctive in many ways: his obsession with birdsong, his perception for colour, his invention: the modes of limited transposition, his irregular rhythms, and his Catholic theology.

BIRDSONG

Olivier Messiaen called birds “the greatest musicians on our planet”. Whenever he heard a bird, he would attempt to pin down its elusive timbre. The song of a wren to him was “silvery, very rapid, pearly”, the golden oriole “like a very large flute, almost a horn”, a trio of charming turtle-doves “very slow, tender, with the timbre of a flute flutter-tongue”. He would go for walks through the forests no matter where he was – in his native France, or in far away Japan and America, a notebook in his hand to record what he would hear, and a recorder in his pocket lest he miss the cry of any bird.

Message from the Dean

Dear Friends,

“...art partly completes what nature cannot bring to a finish, and partly imitates her.”

– Aristotle (Greek Philosopher)



ARISTOTLE theorised that the origin of art stemmed from man's affinity for imitation.

Thus, observation, imitation, and integration bring forth artistic creations. Perhaps such may be said of the eminent composer, Olivier Messiaen.

He remarked, “My faith is the grand drama of my life. I'm a believer, so I sing words of God to those who have no faith.”

With deep belief, conviction, insatiable curiosity and a keen ear, the maestro created a unique musical language that transcended the conventions of the day. Love it or hate it, his music leaves an indelible mark on music history and composition.

And what may we learn from this man, but to be fearless in our pursuit of excellent things... be it art, nature, knowledge or spiritual matters. Observe, imitate, integrate and re-create – for musicians, that would be the priority of the highest order.

May each of us, in our journey as musicians and lovers of music, explore new territories, transcend our limitations and encourage one another toward personal growth and enrichment.

With best wishes for the year ahead,

Evelyn Lim DMA
Dean

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In introducing his *Catalog d'oiseaux*, he writes: "Nature, birdsong! These are my passions. They are also my refuge." His beloved birdsong would appear in all his compositions. The *Catalog d'oiseaux* particularly, although a piano, not organ work, was his attempt to render precisely the typical birdsong of a region, surrounded by neighboring habitats, with singing at different hours of day and night and immersed in harmonic and rhythmic materials of the perfumes and colors of the countryside that is home to the bird. In other works, like the *Livre du Saint Sacrement* for organ, different birds are used to paint different sacred icons: that of the resurrection of Christ, or of Transubstantiation of the Blessed Sacrament, or of Divine Love.

COLOUR AND THE MODES OF LIMITED TRANSPOSITION

Olivier Messiaen did not write tonal music. Not even atonal music. He wrote music that transcended tonality. His music does not consist of a series of chord progressions, modulating through the usual keys to a predictable cadence. It consists of a series of light, a gradient of colours, as that through the rose window in the nave of a great Gothic cathedral. His music shines through in as many colours as light through a stained glass window, in as many colours as the love of God.

Olivier Messiaen was particularly attracted to the organ because of the range of colours available. His colours were always carefully chosen, not just for his chords to be of the exact desired colours, but also of the pipes singing those colours. He was also very particular about not just playing any organ. Whenever he got to a new organ, he would take as much as ten days to acquaint himself with the timbres and colours. "Changing an organ", he said, "is a lot more complicated than driving an unfamiliar car!" At the world premier of *Meditations sur le mystere de la Sainte Trinite* at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC, he arrived ten days in advance to find his timbres and note them in the score! Any organist who would play the music of Olivier Messiaen would do well to pay similar attention to registration and timbre.

MODES OF LIMITED TRANSPOSITION

One of the aspects of Olivier Messiaen's musical colour was his remarkable invention – the modes of limited transposition. These are based on a chromatic scale of 12 notes, divided into several symmetrical groups, the last of each being the first of the next. After a certain number of chromatic transpositions, each mode can no longer be transposed, the next transposition resulting in the same as the first. Messiaen describes his modes as containing "the charm of impossibilities".

RHYTHM

Looking at any composition of Olivier Messiaen, one is struck by either the rapidly changing time signatures or their complete absence. Indeed, he took an iconoclastic approach to rhythm. If the average person were to be asked for what he thought was a rhythmic piece, he would probably reply with "a Bach Fugue" or "a Military march" or "Jazz syncopation". Messiaen however, took a contrary view. All the abovementioned are the negation of rhythm, he would say. They are merely an uninterrupted succession of equal durations. According to him, rhythmic music is music that scorns repetition, squareness, and equal divisions. Music that is inspired by the movements

of nature, movements of free and unequal durations.

Although at times the music of Olivier Messiaen lifts the soul and makes one feel like dancing, anyone who would try it is a fool. His music is rhythmic in the actual sense of the word. Like plainchant, or Classical iambic verse, or Hindu rhythms – all of which were a great influence on his work... What listener has not been entranced by a familiar strand of plainchant emerging from amidst a distant sound-world? Or found that the music cycles of Messiaen echo the accents of the epics of Homer and the orations of Cicero? Or been enraptured by his nonretrogradable Hindu *decitas*, themselves patterned after the symmetry of nature and beauty?

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

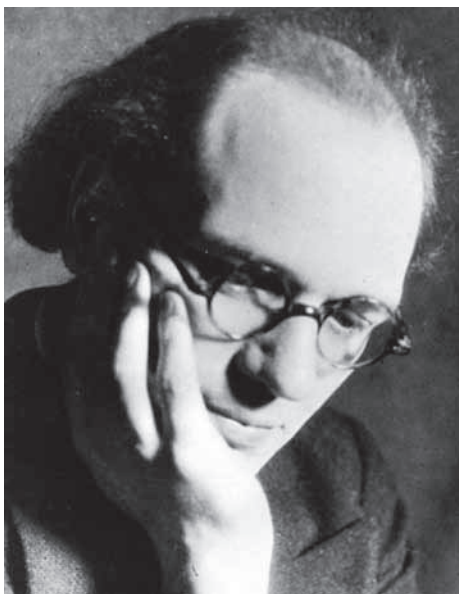
God is beauty, and everything that is beautiful points to God. The truths of the Faith are fairy tales, myths, and poetry that are true because they are beautiful. And in all these the theologian and the mystic and the poet agree. And the mystic is more often than not a poet, because it is impossible to be a mystic without being a poet. But a mystic is a poet believing that his poetry is true: and that the marvelous things he describes are not theatrical fiction but the truth, the marvelous multiplied a million times.

And so Olivier Messiaen, like other mystics: John of the Cross or Evelyn Underhill, wrote his music as poetry; but not only of poetry, but as truth about God and the Divine Love of God. Olivier Messiaen never wrote liturgical music; he wrote only long organ works, cycles of a religious character commenting on the mysteries of texts and the graces proceeding from them. If Handel sought, with his

music, to make men better, Messiaen sought, with his music, to draw them closer to the invisible God.

The music of Olivier Messiaen is something very special to me, something very intense, something I cherish. In Olivier Messiaen I find a musical equivalent of Julian of Norwich, whose writings I cherish and hold very close to my heart. Strip away from all the music of Messiaen his birdsong, and his rhythm, his colour and his modes of limited transposition – and you will be left with just one thing...

Divine Love.



THE THINKER: Messiaen in deep thought

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Victor Li is an organist at Barker Road Methodist Church.

Trekking the Concrete Jungle

As part of SAGO's outreach programme to the masses, an organ trail around Singapore was organised some time at the end of last year. Join **Isaac Lean** as he ploughs through the concrete jungle in search of beautiful metal pipes that make sound when wind is passed through them.

AS PART of the Chapter's outreach programme, students from NJC participated in an organ crawl on the 31st October 2007. The organ crawl provided a platform for the students to actually see and hear what a pipe organ actually sounds like.



ALL EARS: Students from NJC listening to Dr Lim as she introduced the King of Instruments. Photo | Ong Te-Min

Dr Evelyn Lim gave those who attended the organ crawl an insider's peek into the organ. Audible 'ooo's and 'aaaah's could be heard when Evelyn opened the side door of the organ facade to allow the eager students to take a look at the workings

of a pipe organ. As a brave volunteer attempted to play the organ, the rest of the students managed to see how the pipe organ actually worked. Some of them were intrigued with the pipes, while others posed questions to Chapter members.

Once the students were done with exploring the inside of the organ, Evelyn then proceeded to demonstrate the versatility of the organ. Whilst one would think the organ of nothing more than an instrument for hymns and solemn music, she explained to the students that the organ could be used to imitate various sounds such as that of a train churning away into the horizon.

We were also very fortunate to get Mr Jérôme Faucheur a French organist, to demonstrate music on the organ that was "fantastically French". Our Chapter members also presented a few pieces. One of them, Victor Li, played a piece by Messiaen. I must say that the piece was truly enjoyable though the volume and magnitude of the piece had me covering my ears.

All in all, the organ crawl was truly inspiring. I managed to obtain answers to my many questions. One of them being – why must the mixture on the great be coupled to the pedal when using the 'plenum'? The whole experience has greatly enriched my view on the organ and once again, I stand in awe of the Pipe Organ.

Isaac Lean is an organist at Calvary Pandan Bible-Presbyterian Church. The organ has taught him some much needed co-ordination skills. He used to be as cumbersome as Barney. No kidding.

Norwegian Organ is revived!

The quaint Norwegian Organ which was featured in the November 2005 issue of Pipe Echoes makes its comeback - thanks to **Robert Navaratnam**, Singapore's only organ builder. Pipe Echoes catches up with Robert, in an e-mail interview, to find out more on what has been done to the Norwegian organ. The interview is reproduced below.

FIRSTLY THE organ did not work at all because the bellows were completely torn. Secondly the tone channels were flooded by leakages from the air-conditioner so that when the bellows were repaired, several tones sounded by themselves.

In the higher range three or four notes played at the same time. The casing was discoloured and damaged by the leakage but the pipe-work had not been affected.

The most difficult task was to flood the windchest with liquid glue and drain it. After drying for a few days, it was put together with the mechanism and tested.

This process was carried out several times for two months before all the cracks were sealed and the inside properly dried. This was quite a tedious process but fortunately the windchest is quite small so it did not weigh that much.

The stoppers on the wooden pipes were re-felted and re-leathered. The entire casing was dismantled and repaired with steam and sanded down and varnished. The motor-box was also taken apart and the wind-curtain re-placed. Re-wiring of the lighting was also carried out. The stop discs were replaced.

Since this is a small organ I had no visions for improvements although certain parts of the storage bellow

was replaced by canvas as this is more durable in our climate.

If it is looked after properly and kept away from vermin the organ should have no problems.

It is quite a sweet-sounding instrument (and is) especially suited for chamber *musik*.

Robert Navaratnam



Homecoming for Harpsichordist

Harpsichord, piano, organ. All are keyboard instruments, but each is its own instrument, as Singapore AGO (SAGO) member **Chong Ten Yeen** finds out in an interview with Yang Tien.

YANG TIEN discovered the allure of the harpsichord during her undergraduate years as a piano major at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Following postgraduate training with harpsichordist Virginia Black, an M.Phil dissertation on contemporary harpsichord music, and prizes won at several international harpsichord competitions, she returned to Singapore to join the music faculty at the newly-established School of the Arts (SOTA).

What challenges do harpsichordists wrestle with, and what does she hope to impart to her students, AGO member Chong Ten Yeen asked the harpsichordist in an interview in January. Read on for some answers...

Ten Yeen: Tien, when did you start playing the harpsichord, and why the decision to switch to a new instrument?

Tien: I was supposed to take up a second instrument when I studied at the Royal Academy of Music. Being a pragmatic Chinese, I decided to take up the harpsichord, because I thought that would allow me to get away with minimum practice. I did not bother to practice properly on the harpsichord in my first two years, and the turning point was in the middle of my third year. I was asked to play the Handel G minor suite, and for the first time, I realized the beauty of the harpsichord sound, the subtlety in its expressive power and for me, it is the real voice for baroque repertoire. I have always been partial to Bach's music, and I discovered how well (albeit difficult) contrapuntal music works on the harpsichord.

I then decided to change to the harpsichord for my major instrument and I have never regretted it.



HARPSICHORD: Yang Tien and her intricately designed harpsichord. Photo | Chong Ten Yeen

Ten Yeen: Did the other harpsichordists you know tread a similar path?

Tien: Yes, I think it is the norm to start off as a pianist. The only exception I have known so far is a friend who started

on the harpsichord when she was ten. That was because her hand was far too small to play on many other instruments.

Ten Yeen: What was studying the harpsichord like in the beginning, and getting to know an instrument similar in some ways to the piano- your first instrument?

Tien: In the beginning, it was very difficult to 'switch' between the two instruments. The only similarity is the basic layout of the keys. The key width is different and I tended to play many wrong notes, because I practiced my harpsichord pieces on the piano. The mechanism is so different and I found it frustrating initially. I knew what I wanted to achieve musically, but could not attain the result I wanted because I did not know how to. It challenged me to think of ways of creating dynamic differences, to play expressively etc, on an instrument which is seemingly 'limited' in many ways.

Ten Yeen: Do pianists and harpsichordists have different issues to address? Both instruments have their own places in music history.

Tien: The harpsichord seems to have many limitations. The mechanism does not allow one to create differences in dynamics, so the performer has to achieve the same end by understanding the use of texture, sequences, harmonic directions etc, to shape the music. As a pianist, I do not give much thought to lengths of notes, for instance. But on the harpsichord, the relative lengths of notes help determine the importance of the notes in the bar, in the phrase.

It is very difficult to compare the two instruments. Good composers will draw out the strengths of the respective instruments in different periods of music history, and I personally do not object to pianists playing Bach or Scarlatti on the piano, so long the interpretation is convincing and well-thought out.

Ten Yeen: So that's learning to use the different resources available on a different instrument to express the same musical ideas? Or using different tools to reach the same goal?

Tien: Yeap!

Ten Yeen: Has playing the harpsichord changed your approach to the piano in any way?

Tien: I find that I am more careful with note-values, for one thing. This is especially important in contrapuntal works, because on the harpsichord, clarity in texture is necessary to understand the interaction between the voices. Also, I have learnt to use my fingers – a strange thing to say, but this is indeed true! The harpsichord can be a very unforgiving instrument, as uneven notes and tiny glitches are very obvious. That makes me practise each note with a lot more care.

On the other hand, my piano background has helped me in my harpsichord playing too. It helps to think in dynamic gradation, to know that legato line can be achieved.

Ten Yeen: Please tell me about the work you've been doing at SOTA.

Tien: As a faculty member of the music department, I am involved in the planning of the music curriculum. I teach music theory and music history, and am also to coach in chamber music sessions. We also encourage students to help the less-privileged children learn music, so in the second term, we have a group of students helping out in a student care centre.

Ten Yeen: What is it like to be involved in setting up a brand-new school? SOTA is structured so differently from the other Singapore schools, and it's unlike your own education in many ways.

Tien: It is very challenging, as we are charting a new path. There are of course frustrating moments, as there is uncertainty and ambiguity. However, it is also very stimulating. We see many possibilities in the school and most importantly, I have colleagues who are willing to take the risks and put in all it takes to make the school a success. We are currently in the second week of the school term, and the students are coping well with the new ways they are taught to see the world and make sense of their environment.

It is indeed very different from the way we were taught in school, but that in itself is not a bad thing. We come to know what good or bad teaching is, and we know the kind of education we yearn to have.

Ten Yeen: What kind of an education do you wish for your students, then? What does it really mean to be an “educated

emotion in different cultural contexts. It is NOT an activity which one indulges in in a practice room, isolated from the events in the world or period in history. Hence in SOTA, we place a great deal of emphasis on academic rigour and guiding the students to draw creative stimulation from the times in which they live, so that their expression can be relevant to society and has a message behind it.

In the same way, a musician is not a person ‘equipped’ with examination certificates. It is one who knows not only the technique, but more importantly, one who has something to say. The depth of content does not come from 12 hours in a studio, slogging away. It comes from an understanding of the world around him/her...

Yes, I think the process of learning is very important. For instance, whilst in London, my harpsichord teacher would not tell me how to play each note, but to understand why I had to play this phrase in a certain way. It challenges me to think about the relevance of interpretation, to understand the performance practice of the time etc, and in this process of exploration and research, I am able to find my own voice in interpreting the music. So it is not a matter of producing the piece in the way which she would, but the focus is on shaping my own performance by going through a long process of study and experimentation. Lack of success at times is inevitable, but this is part of the learning process.

Ten Yeen: And eventually one learns to stand on one's own feet. Like they say, teach a man to fish, rather than give him a fish.

In 2008, what other programmes are planned for SOTA music students apart from the regular, daily classes?

Tien: We have masterclasses, workshops for students specializing in the four art forms at the school– music, visual arts, dance and theatre. We are organizing an Arts Festival in August and I am looking forward to the collaboration with AGO for the organ concert.

☐ To learn more about **SOTA**, go to: <http://www.sota.sg>

☐ Information on the **SOTA Arts Festival** will be available on the SOTA and Singapore AGO websites nearer the date. Please check back for details!

☐ Tien will be presenting baroque and contemporary harpsichord works, including the Handel *G minor Suite*, at the *Abendmusik* concert. 8 March, 7:30pm, Norwegian Seamen's Church. All are welcome.



VITAL ORGANS: A peep into the insides of the harpsichord.
Photo | Chong Ten Yeen

musician”?

You talk about “the way” people learn, rather than “what” they learn or are taught. How does this affect one's development as an artist, and as a person?

Tien: I would like the students to understand that the arts is a product of culture, and the expression of thought/ideas/



Sojourn in Manhattan

Yoo Ji Eun, a former student at the Singapore Bible College (SBC), corresponds with **Ng Chet Wei**, Membership Officer of the SAGO, from the Big Apple.

IT HAS been almost five months since I moved to the “International Home of Music”- New York. I was so excited to be in the city that many people have to come to admire, but the illusion of being a “New Yorker” broke when I took the very dirty and old subway train. (Maybe it is because I have become used to a “super-clean” nation, Singapore). Nevertheless, the street musicians’ professional performances at the subway and on the street are sufficient to make me excited about the city.

I am studying for a master degree at MSM (not Methodist School of Music, but Manhattan School of Music) majoring in organ performance. My first week at MSM was filled with tension, yet excitement. Placement exams (history, theory, keyboard skills, sight-singing and ear training) were very challenging, but after the exams, the other programs were interesting and fun. They included not only school matters but also about New York City, such as watching New York Yankees baseball game, visit Metropolitan Museum, cruise at the Hudson river, watch a Broadway show etc.

to learn the organ at eight years old, someone’s mother is an organist and someone’s father is a conductor. They are talented and play very well, so they are a source of motivation for me.

My teacher, Mr. Robinson McNeil, Chairman of the organ department, is a great teacher and organist. He knows my strong and weak points and teaches me from basic practice methods to advanced performance skills. Organ literature and choral literature class are also interesting and I enjoy the classes very much.



MOTHER AND BABY: Ji Eun with the *Holtkamp* practice organ at the MSM and her baby, Sharon. Photo | Yoo Ji Eun



BROADWAY: Ji Eun standing in front of Carnegie Hall. Photo | Yoo Ji Eun

MSM provides master and doctoral degrees and the school has seven organ students only. I am the only foreigner, female, married and the oldest student here. In the beginning, it was quite tough to keep up with the other students. Some of them started

One of the fun experiences at MSM was the chance to play the organ part in the orchestra. During the “Family and Friends Weeks”, I joined the MSM Philharmonia to perform Ottorino Respighi’s *Feste Romane*.

During the first rehearsal, I was so nervous, as it was my very first time playing with the orchestra, but it turned out to be my most enjoyable experience. I hope I will have more opportunities to play with the orchestra here.

Besides school activities, I also join the MILAL Missionary Choir and Crystal Handbell Choir. In October we had a concert with 250 singers and a full orchestra at Carnegie Hall. It was another fascinating experience here in New York.

My life isn’t easy here. Studying at the conservatory is very challenging and it will get harder. It’s not so much competing with other musicians, but with myself.

Especially in my case, I need to be a superwoman: as a student, mother of a seven-month-old daughter, wife and daughter-in-law at the same time.

I try to plan my day wisely to strike a balance between school life and family. I know that I’m so blessed to have this wonderful opportunity to study at Manhattan, and I will do my best to make use of it.

Institute of British Organ Building East Yorkshire Residential Weekend

OVER THE weekend of 12-14 October 2007, more than 60 organ builders and enthusiasts met in the market town of Beverley, South Yorkshire to explore three fascinating organs, renew friendships and learn from each other.

The first port of call was the organ of the Chapel of Saints Mary and Everilda, Everingham. The Charles Allen organ of 1839 is a significant example of a transitional instrument between the 18th century English organs and the modern organ.

The organ retains four of its original reed stops; two Trumpets, a *Hautbois* and a *Cremona*, though it has lost its original tuning which, according to Stephen Bicknell, may have been 1/5 comma meantone with a modified wolf.

Dr Alan Spedding, former organist of Beverly Minster, demonstrated the organ, which was hand blown for this event (it has an auxiliary electric blower when a human one is unavailable). The pedal pipes, large scaled and very bold, are very effective in reinforcing the sound.

We spent the next day exploring the organs of Beverley Minster and Birdlington Priory. Beverly Minster's organ began its life as the Swiss John Snetzer's largest organ in 1769. William Hill rebuilt and enlarged this organ in 1885 and saved a substantial amount of the Snetzer pipework.

Dr Spedding demonstrated the wide range of colours and the versatility of the organ playing music contemporary to the when Snetzer organ was built after which David Wood took out a few of the Snetzer pipes for us to inspect.

Charles Anneessens of Belgium built a 3 manual instrument for Birdlington Priory in 1889. Of interest was the fact that the Choir and Great shared an exceedingly long soundboard, possibly the longest in England.

John Compton was awarded the contract to restore the organ in 1949. Among other things, he electrified the organ and added an extra Diapason chorus to the Great and enlarged the Choir.

In 1968, an even more complex rebuild by Laycock & Bannister was begun. This included adding a new 5 rank mixture for the Swell, and a stopped 32' octave to the Pedal Grosse Flöte 16'. In the 2004-06 Nicholson & Company Ltd rebuild, it was decided that the organ would have a new building frame and layout. The original Anneessens pipework was returned to its original voicing and new slider soundboards were made.

The Great was divided into two sections, one for the Anneessen flues (speaking South across the Chancel) and the other for the louder ranks added by Compton and Laycock & Bannister, revoiced to balance the organ, and the Anneessen reeds, to be a 'primary' Great speaking West. Other changes to the Positive, Swell, Solo and Pedal divisions created a more versatile instrument.

Geoffrey Morgan, previously assistant organist of Westminster Abbey and presently organist of Christchurch Priory, gave us an improvised demonstration, going through virtually every stop of the organ to display the organ's versatility.



BRIDLINGTON PRIORY: Adriel at the console. Photo | Adriel Yap

After the IBO's formal dinner, Andrew Carter completed the evening with a series of entertaining anecdotes arising from his association with Francis Jackson (who had recently celebrated his ninetieth birthday) as a member of the choir in York Minster. Unfortunately the hymn chosen could be sung more than one tune, and each side of the Nave disregarded what the organ played and sang the hymn to the tune they were used to.

Sunday was devoted to presentations on the development and manufacture of keyboards. Martin Goetze gave an illustrated talk on the development of the English organ keyboards from the 16th to the 18th century. This was followed by a presentation from David Martin of Pianoforte Marwood, Castle Donington, Derby on the manufacture of piano and organ keys, and gave us an insight into how ivory was graded, cut and processed into key coverings.

The weekend was a valuable opportunity for organ builders to meet and learn from each other. The keen interest and lively discussions that were evident suggests that organ building in the UK is an industry that is forward looking and this can only bode well for the future.

Adriel Yap is currently training with Harrison & Harrison, Organ Builders, in Durham. He is a charter member of the Singapore Chapter and was its first Programme Director. Parts of this article were first published in the December 2007 Newsletter of the Institute of British Organ Building.

Journey of Faith

Join **Jerry Ng**, the SAGO's youngest member, as he makes contact with an organ builder in Switzerland.

THIS IS my first time going to Switzerland. The trip was exciting, fun but tiring. I visited many beautiful mountains, towns and also pipe organs, while I was staying in Luzern on the second night, I dropped by St Leodegar and there was the largest organ I've ever seen!



LEODEGAR: The organ at the cathedral. Photo | Jerry Ng

I was told by an organ builder that I met 'Mr. Hebeisen' that this was the largest organ around Switzerland and the best part is that I got to try the organ that he built! It was this small chamber organ with 8', 4' and 2' stops. The 8 and 4' pipes were all made of wood while the 2' pipes were made of metal.

I spent the rest of my 7 days in the other parts of Switzerland like, Zermatt, Montreux, Bern etc... And the last night celebrating Christmas eve back in Luzern.

From what I feel, Switzerland is a friendly, warm and clean place. You can wake up and meet strangers that say 'Hello' to you!

Definitely, I would be going back to Luzern to visit the Goll-Organ workshop that Mr. Hebeisen worked at. If you had not been there... I would say "GO FOR IT!!!"

Know of any interesting scoops?
Write to us!



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What's Hot?



American Guild of Organists National Convention June 22 - 26, 2008 Minneapolis - St. Paul



National Convention @ Twin Cities (Minneapolis & St Paul)

June 22 - 26, 2008

Highlights include 'St. Paul Cathedral Choir, London', 'Pipedreams Live!' and 'Olivier Messiaen Centenary'. You can look forward to over 20 organ concerts and more than 65 exciting workshops. For more information, please refer to: <http://www.ago2008.org/>

2007 - 2008 Member Challenge

This challenge promises fun, larger membership numbers, national recognition, and the opportunity to win a valuable prize - national headquarters will pay your major expenses while you enjoy the 2008 National convention in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Expenses include convention registration, the bus transportation package, and five nights in the convention hotel. For more details, please refer to: <http://www.agohq.org/eachone-reachone/forms/MemberChallengeFlyer.pdf>

Abendmusiken

Join us for an 'earful' of musik spanning the 16th to 20th century by Gabrieli, Scarlatti, Bach, Diemer and others. It will be held on the 8th of March at the Norwegian Seamen's Mission, 300 Pasir Panjang Road. Since it is a Saturday, why not bring the whole family to enjoy an evening of wonderful music. You may purchase your tickets at the door. Suggested donation of \$10 per ticket.

Pipes@Victoria

Korean organist Mr Dong-ill Shin will perform at the Victoria Concert Hall on 2nd October 2008, 7.30pm. Mr Dong-ill Shin is a prize winner of international competitions such as Musashino-Tokyo International Organ Competition in 1996, the 21st St. Albans, Great Britain in 2001 and the National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance of the AGO in 2004. He has been a featured artist on KBS in Korea, France Musique & MEZZO Television in France. Television and Radio & WCRB in USA.



Join us!

New members who sign up between 1 Feb and 31 Mar 2008 will pay the following reduced dues rates. The subscription includes chapter and national membership up to 30 Jun 2008 and "The American Organist" magazine from Mar to Nov 08.

Regular	\$90
>65, <21yrs	\$63
Student	\$35
Partner	\$63