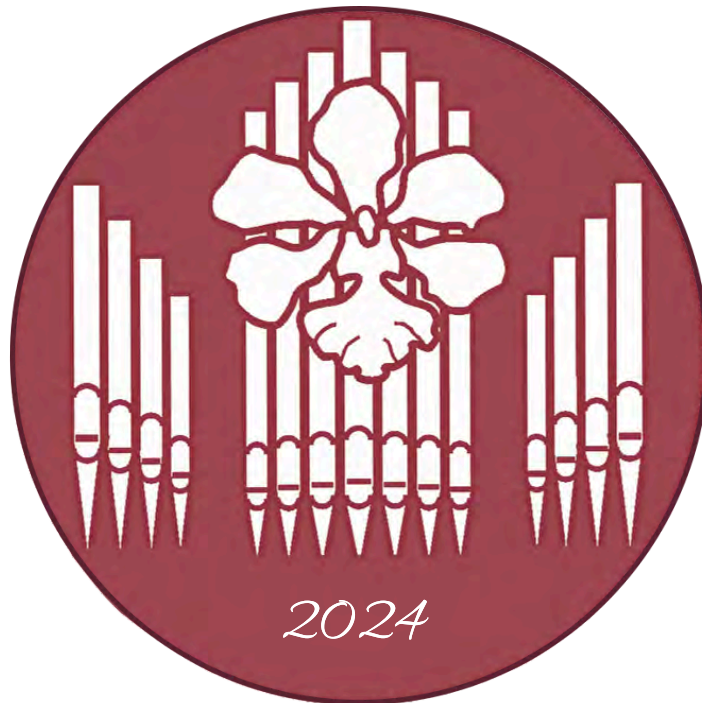


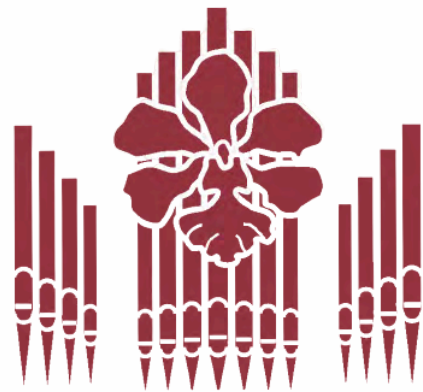
American Guild of Organists
Singapore Chapter



20th Anniversary

SPECIAL THANKS

To all our members for their support over the years. May we continue to grow as a community for many years to come.



Singapore AGO

About Us

The Singapore Chapter is the American Guild of Organists' (AGO) first chapter in Southeast Asia. It was approved by AGO headquarters on 20 October 2003 and registered with the Registry of Societies, Singapore (Unique Entity Number: T03SS0184E) on 23 December 2003. The inauguration was held in Singapore at the Kampong Kapor Methodist Church on 20 February 2004.

Since its inception, AGO Singapore Chapter has brought together all who are passionate about the organ and its music, providing many invaluable opportunities and spaces for the like-minded to share their enthusiasm for the pipe organ. As a music organisation, the Singapore AGO is unique because it pools people from diverse backgrounds - people who carry invaluable wealth of experience and talents.

The extraordinary synergy of the Chapter stems from the fact that its people come from all walks of life, and they are bonded through a common love for and appreciation of the “King of Instruments”. There is no better way to describe such a massive and magnificent instrument whose very sounds evoke the vast spectrum of feelings, from the quiet contemplations of beautiful and delicate whispers, to the incredibly rich and full sounds that makes its ground shake.

Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. (2009). American Guild of Organists Singapore Chapter: *Five*.

OUR MISSION

The Singapore Chapter is the Guild's first chapter in Southeast Asia. It was approved by the AGO headquarters on 20 October 2003 and inaugurated on 20 February 2004. The Singapore Chapter is registered with the Registry of Societies, Singapore (ROS 0296/2003). The Singapore Chapter strives to uphold the mission, vision and value proposition of the American Guild of Organists, which is: to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ. The vision of the American Guild of Organists is to engage, support, and uplift every organist. A non-profit organization, the Singapore Chapter is run by volunteers who are professional organists, church organists, music teachers and supporters of organ music. Regular concerts by visiting artists and clinicians, masterclasses, music festivals and collaborations with arts groups and churches make up the main activities of the Chapter. As such, the Singapore Chapter relies largely on the kindness and generosity of external sponsorship in order to organize events for its members and the public. All forms of contributions and donations (financial or otherwise) are deeply appreciated. All enquiries may be directed to enquire@singaporeago.org

Current Office Holders (2024 - 2026)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dean

Dr Evelyn Lim

Secretary

Ong Te-Min

Treasurer

Ng Chet Wei

Membership Officer

Grace Chiam

Programme Director

Yap Wai Hoong

Newsletter Editor

Rushil Thomas

Publicity and Social Media

Eugene Yeo

STANDING COMMITTEE

Programmes

Loraine Muthiah & Lisa Ong

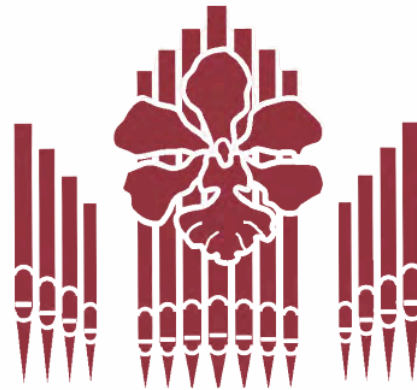
Newsletter

Patricia Darana

HONORARY ADVISORS

Dr Margaret Chen

Mrs Esther Seet
(In memoriam)



Well - Wishes

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

~ Helen Keller (American author & activist)

It all began 22 years ago as an informal membership to an online “Yahoo” group, called “Singapore Organists' Network” . At the time, there was no common platform where organists and organ music enthusiasts could meet, exchange ideas, and make music together. This group comprising local organists and music teachers soon decided to take a step forward and make things official. It took many months, but finally submissions to the local authorities and the AGO headquarters were approved by December 2003. Excitedly, we made plans for the inauguration of the Chapter, and were really grateful to be hosted by Kampong Kapur Methodist Church, which has the only pipe organ in a local Methodist church.

20th February 2004 saw a historic event— we were inaugurated as South East Asia’s very first AGO Chapter! A number of supportive clergy members, notable figures from the musical community and our own circle of friends joined in the musical celebration. The real work began soon after, as we launched a series of concerts, educational events and the big test — the Pipe Organ Encounters (POE), which was modelled loosely after the American versions.

It has been 20 years with many concerts, masterclasses, and musical evenings — what have we got to show for all this? A Community. With the hard work and musical passion of Chapter members and our wonderful friends, we as a community strive to further the cause of organ music and its varied experience in music education, religious worship and in the performing arts.

With grateful thanks for every friend and member (both past, and present),

Dr Evelyn Lim, DMA
Dean (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO



Photo courtesy of Memphis West Pictures

When I was asked to take up the Programme Director role, I did not really know what it entailed. One evening - while hosting a dinner with organist Chelsea Chen, she exclaimed “Oh you’re the one who makes the Dean’s ideas into reality (paraphrased)!”. The rest as they say, is history.

On top hosting recitals and workshops by visiting organists, we reinstated our regular members’ concert and incorporated more varied programs (i.e. with voices, strings and wind instruments), thereby providing more avenues for members to engage in.

The following years saw growth in membership and improvements in musicianship. With the reopening of Victoria Concert Hall after five years of refurbishment and more instruments available in Singapore, alongside more public interest in organs, we started having more internal projects and also engagements with various organisations. We also created the online Pipe Organ database project and executed the Organ Academy Singapore (OAS), just to name a few. COVID-19 did not deter us from reinventing ourselves. We took on the opportunities to learn and launch our OrganBytes video project (10 Episodes by far!) — bringing our local instruments and performers closer to the public.

We've come a long way – dotted with challenges and little victories. But witnessing the fruits of labour together with equally dedicated members makes it all worthwhile.

Let us raise our glasses to many more purposeful and fruitful years ahead!



Yap Wai Hoong
Programme Director (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO

We started the Singapore Organists' Network - a mailing list on Yahoo Groups (now defunct) as a means to share news of organ recitals, workshops, etc. It had around 40 members at its height and helped to increase awareness of the organ landscape in Singapore and attempted to bring organ aficionados together.

The idea of forming a Singapore Chapter of the AGO originated from Dr Evelyn Lim, together with Dr Margaret Chen's support, and through the late Mrs Esther Seet's indefatigable efforts, successfully pushed through the creation of this Chapter. Esther, with her extensive experience, helped us tremendously with the processes of kickstarting this endeavour.

Over several sessions of afternoon tea at the Tanglin Club, the nascent core of Singapore AGO discussed and collaborated. Eventually leading to the signing of a petition for the organization of a chapter to AGO National Headquarters on 20 July 2003. Followed by the formal adoption of our constitution, operating procedures and by-laws on 18 January 2004 and the inauguration at Kampong Kapur Methodist Church on 20 February 2004.

Since then Singapore AGO has organized many events with the highlights being the Pipe Organ Encounters (2005) and Organ Academy of Singapore (2019). Many well-known organists, to name a few - Felix Hell, Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin, Paul Jacobs, Dong-ill Shin and others have visited and given recitals. It is my fervent hope that the Chapter can continue to bring attention to the organ and cultivate new audiences to appreciate the intricacies and grandeur of this instrument.

Ong Te-Min
Secretary (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO





It has been wonderful to see so many members continue to support the Chapter over the years, and new ones coming on board. I'm especially grateful for members who have been involved in the activities of the Chapter in one way or another. The friendships forged during these occasions are precious, as we continue to support and encourage one another, or simply enjoy music together.

Ng Chet Wei
Treasurer (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO

Congratulations S-AGO on her 20th Anniversary!

Time flew by but organ music will continue to excite and bring to life the precious compositions from of old.

Thank you to our Dean, Dr Evelyn Lim for her dedication and leadership in introducing the organ for many to enjoy.

To many more exciting years, bravo S-AGO!

Grace Chiam
Membership Officer (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO



The Chapter has come a long way since its early days, and has seen a growing interest in the pipe organ in recent years within Singapore. Here's to many more years of happy music making, and to the next generation of organists who will pass on our passion for the organ!

Eugene Yeo
Publicity and Social Media (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO



When the newly renovated Victoria Concert Hall re-opened in 2014, the SSO asked me to start a regular organ series. Almost 10 years later, thanks to funding from the Lee Foundation, the avid cooperation and support of the S-AGO, we have a vibrant series, often filling the entire hall with enthusiastic listeners, young and old.

Dr Margaret Chen
Honorary Advisor (2024-2026)
Singapore AGO





Adriel Yap
1st Programme Director (2004-2008)
Singapore AGO

It was a lot of fun being the first Programme Director for the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. This role sat outside the main committee and that meant freedom to explore different ideas and think outside the box.

We started a series of organ recitals at Orchard Road Presbyterian Church and invited international organists to perform. We organised the first Pipe Organ Encounters outside the United States, and I am very delighted that some of the participants have gone on to study the organ at conservatory level.

The work of the Programme Director depends on the support of many people, local and overseas, including those who are not members of the Chapter. I met lots of interesting people and built up a wide network of friends. In particular, I want to recognise the late Esther Seet who offered a lot of wisdom, encouragement and support to me.

Music brings pleasure and joy; it enriches the lives of many people. In promoting the organ, the most colourful, the loudest, largest and most mechanically complicated of all musical instruments, we have the opportunity of making life richer and fuller for many people. Ultimately every member of the Chapter can help make the world a better place by sharing the joy of playing the organ and listening to organ music with those around us. And in sharing the joy of music and music making with others, we in turn become enriched ourselves.

Congratulations to the Singapore Chapter of AGO for reaching your 20th Anniversary milestone! As the then Principal of Methodist School of Music (MSM), I was privileged to be among the founding members that worked towards the formation of the Singapore Chapter. As organ was an important part of MSM ministry, MSM gave her full support to the establishment of the chapter by providing the personnel, resources and premises needed. The founding members were either MSM faculty or organ students. Since then, AGO has expanded its scope of services to include the wider organ community in Singapore. The historic and functional links with MSM remain over the years. I wish AGO the very best as you continue to promote organ music in Singapore!

Ms Mary Y.T. Gan
Founding Principal, Methodist School of Music
(1997-2009)





It was in 2003 that S-AGO was formed and incorporated as a Society. I count it a privilege to be in the first EXCO to lend support to Dr Evelyn Lim, our Dean, who inspired my passion for organ music. I am still a member of S-AGO for the same reason I first joined — the belief in the vision to raise up generations of organists with good musicianship and provide a platform in support of them locally.

Mrs Dorothy Lee-Teh
Singapore AGO



It's been 18 years since we first met at an AGO event and we value the friends, memories and music we made along the way.

Melissa Goh (L), Victor Li (R), and their children, Anna, Teddy, and baby Esther

Singapore AGO



Huge congratulations to the Singapore AGO on your milestone birthday! It is wonderful to see the passion, dedication, and warmth with which you all promote the organ. You are a model of how a musical organisation can be a real force for good! It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with you on various memorable and rewarding occasions over the years. Here's to the next twenty — and beyond!

Daniel Moulton

I congratulate the Singapore Chapter of the AGO on its 20th anniversary of its founding. My first visit to Singapore was several years after the creation of your Chapter. Since then, I have visited several times, and I am visiting again this April. I am looking forward to my upcoming trip and eager to see how the Chapter has developed so far. I extend my sincere congratulations to all the members, especially Dr Evelyn Lim, who has been working tirelessly for the chapter!

Dong-ill Shin





I remember the unforgettable welcome I received in 2020 by my friends of Singapore. I send all my best wishes and a long life to the Singapore Chapter of The AGO.

François Espinasse



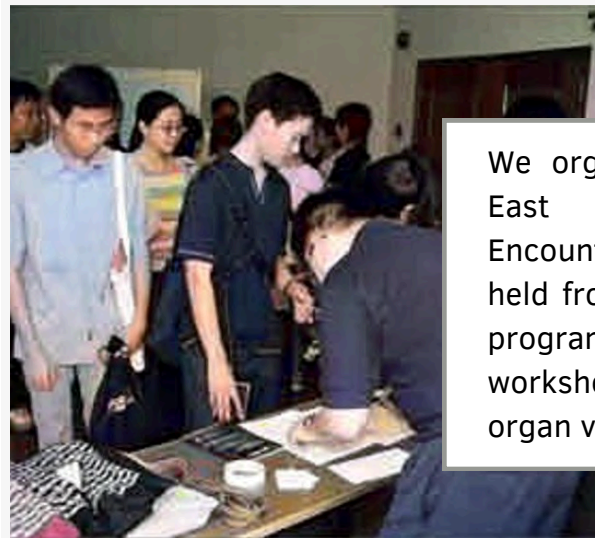
With great pleasure I remember my visit to Singapore, when I had the honour to be invited by the Singapore Chapter of the AGO to play. I felt so welcomed by so many wonderful people. On its 20th Anniversary, the Singapore AGO can look back on countless moments filled with wonderful music, and it can look forward to a wonderful future with great moments to come. I send all my best wishes! May you have many curious and supporting souls and twice as many listening ears.

Stefan Kießling



Down Memory Lane

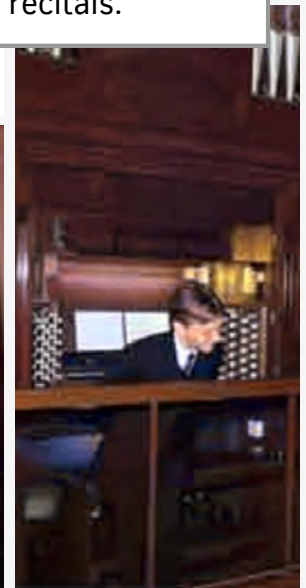
PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS



We organized the first South East Asian Pipe Organ Encounters (POE) that was held from 1-4 June 2005. The programme included organ workshops, individual lessons, organ visits and recitals.



Participants at the Klais Organ @ Victoria Concert Hall



PIPES @ Victoria

This was the first partnership forged between the Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and the Victoria Concert Hall in 2006. The Pipes@Victoria Series of organ recitals intended to showcase not just the musical prowess of internationally acclaimed organists, but also the instrument itself.



*Sophie-Véronique
25.04.2006*



*Paul Jacobs
20.06.2006*

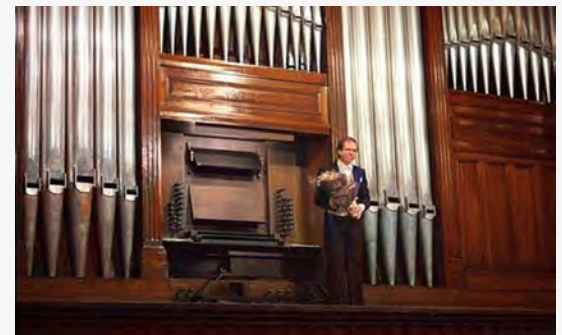
The inaugural artistes, who first performed in 25th April and 20th June 2006.



S-AGO members with Sophie-Véronique after the recital



S-AGO members with Paul Jacobs after the recital



Flemming Dreisig - 13.02.2007



Faythe Freese - 05.06.2007



Dong-ill Shin interviewed by Charles Cousins



Dong-ill Shin - 02.10.2008



Dr. Florian Pagitsch - 26.05.2009

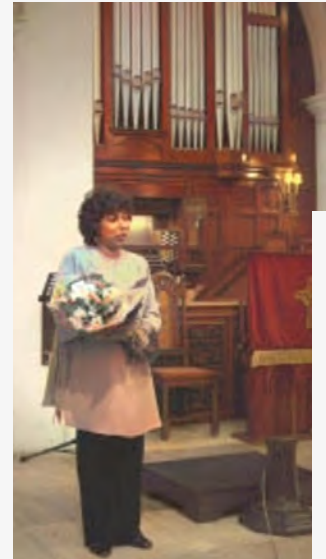


Heinrich Walther - 23.02.2010

2010 marked the end of our PIPES@Victoria Series, as Victoria Concert Hall underwent refurbishment.

PIPE WORKS

The Pipe Works Series started in 2004, consisting of a number of recitals at the Orchard Road Presbyterian Church which houses the largest organ by an English builder in Singapore.



Joanna Paul
31.08.2006



Hans Hieschler
25.01.2007

A poster for the Pipe Works Series 2006/07. The background is a close-up of organ pipes. The text on the poster is as follows:

PIPE WORKS
2006/07

31 Aug 06 **Joanna Paul**
(U.K./Singapore)

30 Nov 06 **Alphonsus Chern,**
Melissa Goh,
Yoo Ji Eun
(Singapore AGO)

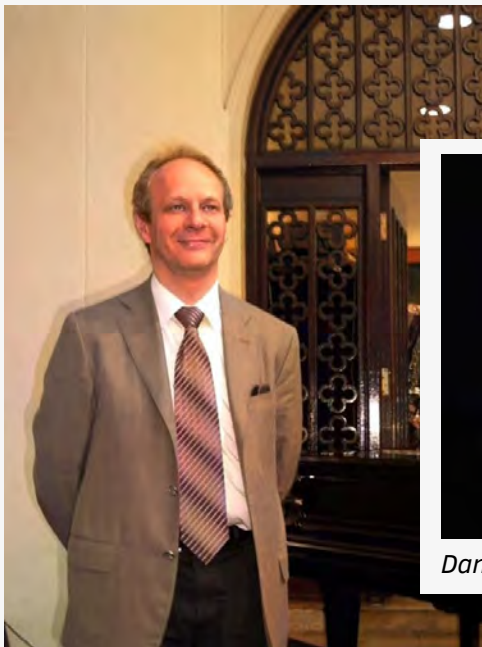
25 Jan 07 **Hans Hieschler**
(Germany)

Free admission
All recitals on Thursday, 8.00pm
Orchard Road Presbyterian Church, 3 Orchard Road
Email enquiries@singaporeago.org or call +65 9128 9806 for inquiries.

Image courtesy of Bedford University



Pavel Kohout - 11.10.2007



Johan Hermans - 26.02.2009



Daniel Tappe - 24.08.2010



Dr Michael Burkhardt - 14.03.2017

28 April 2015 saw the last concert in the Pipe Works Series, as the Orchard Road Presbyterian Church which houses the J.W. Walker (1962) organ, underwent refurbishment for the next couple of years.

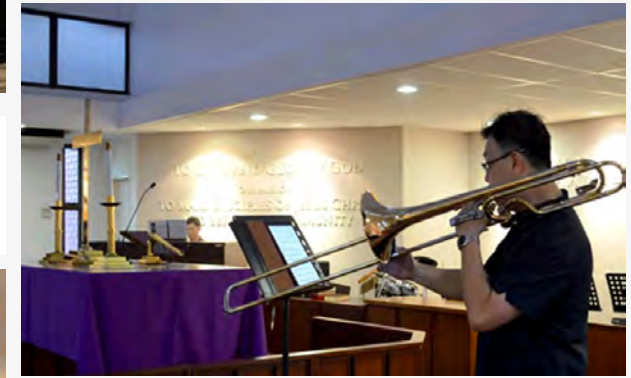
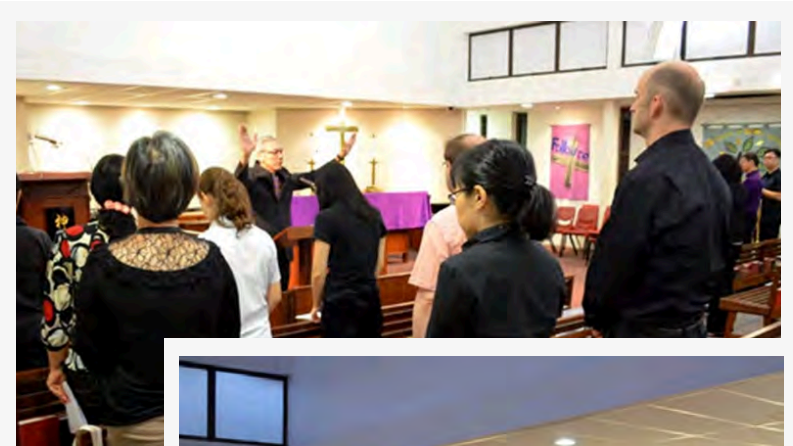


Dr Graham Barber - 28.04.2015

On 14th March 2017, Pipe Works Series returned, with Dr Michael Burkhardt on the J.W. Walker organ.

SEASON'S PIPINGS

On 11 March 2015, members of the Singapore AGO presented a Lenten edition of Seasons' Pippings held at Kampong Kapur Methodist church. It was a great evening of instrumental, organ and choral music for Lent, as well as reflective readings.



Guest player Mr Joost Flach on the oboe is seen on the bottom left, who was accompanied by Yap Wai Hoong [organ], assisted by Joanna Paul



15 March 2016 - Singapore AGO presented yet another edition of Seasons' Pippings; this time at Queenstown Lutheran Church.

The 2019 edition of Season's Pipings with the theme 'Epiphany' on 19 January saw full attendance at the Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church.



Another year, another edition of Season's Pipings - held at Orchard Road Presbyterian Church (ORPC) on 9 January 2020.

POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Singapore Chapter, in collaboration with the Orchard Road Presbyterian Church, successfully organized two consecutive “Season’s Pipings” in 2023 and 2024. Supported by the church’s 1962 J.W. Walker and Taylor & Sons organ, these presentations included both traditional and contemporary hymns, complemented by various readings. These events marked a significant return to community gatherings and musical celebrations following the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



30.09.2023

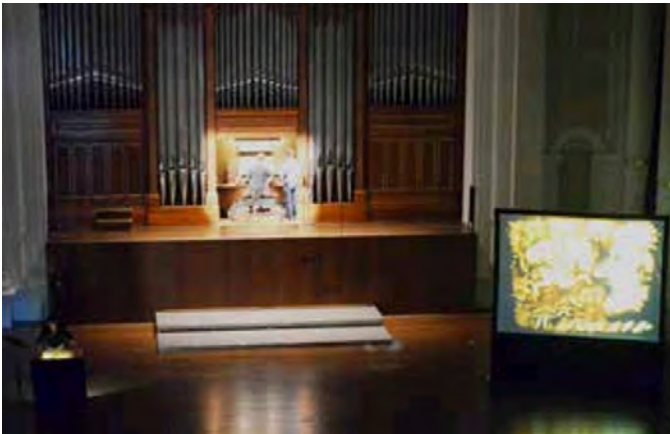


21.09.2024

VCH ORGAN SERIES

With support from Singapore AGO, the Victoria Concert Hall (VCH) Organ Series featured performances by various artists performing on the Klais Organ.

Art came alive as the audience was treated to this rare performance which paired aural and visual aspects. British organist Benjamin Sheen played Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, while home-grown sand artist Lawrence Koh drew the individual scenes on an illuminated canvas which was projected on a side screen.



Benjamin Sheen at VCH - 24.07.2015



Dong-ill Shin masterclass at Methodist School of Music - 01.02.2016

Since its reopening after refurbishment in 2016, the Victoria Concert Hall has hosted the VCH Organ Series, featuring renowned artists from around the world showcasing their works on the Klais Organ. In addition to performances, the series also includes workshops and masterclasses.



*Dr. Isabelle Demers at Singapore Bible College
Lecture Theatre - 20.11.2017*



*François Espinasse at Singapore Bible
College Worship Hall - 24.02.2020*



MASTERCLASSES



Daniel Moulton Masterclass via Zoom - 13.02.2022



Daniel Moulton Masterclass in-person - 04.03.2023

Masterclasses came alive again post COVID-19, beginning with Daniel Moulton in 2022 via Zoom, and 2023 in-person. This was followed through by Richard Brasier in 2024. These classes provided valuable advice and insights to the participants, covering a range of topics such as interpretation, registration, and keyboard technique. Both classes were well-received, with observers actively engaging by asking intriguing questions about the pieces and composers.



Richard Brasier Masterclass - 24.03.2024

ORGANBYTES



Since April 2021, several members of S-AGO have participated in a series of filming sessions across the island. Titled “OrganBytes,” the project features short video episodes showcasing Singapore’s pipe organs and their surrounding neighborhoods.

Featuring members of our Chapter, it promises interesting bits of Singapore’s history, music and importantly, the organs. A total of 10 episodes have been released.

To watch the OrganBytes series, please visit:
<https://singaporeago.org/organbytes/>



Episode 3 - 20-12-2021 at the Norwegian Seamen's Mission



**Prelude in G, BWV 541
Johann Sebastian Bach**

Episode 6 - 13-05-2022 at Dulwich College Singapore



**"Cantabile" from Sonata No.2 'O Filii'
By Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens**

Episode 10 - 16-02-2024 at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd



Episode 9 - 31-10-2022 at Victoria Concert Hall

OTHER EVENTS AND MILESTONES



AGO 5TH ANNIVERSARY AT KAMPONG KAPOR METHODIST CHURCH - 2009

ABENDMUSIK AT NORWEGIAN SEAMEN'S MISSION - 2014



ORGAN ACADEMY SINGAPORE AT VCH - 11-16.06.2019



CHAPTER CONCERT AT FREEMASONS' HALL - 17.09.2016

OTHER EVENTS AND MILESTONES



Whose Hill is This? - 18.06.2022



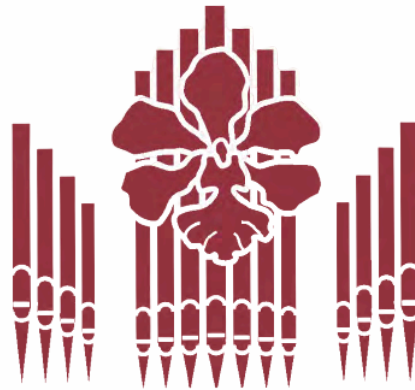
Calamity and Calm - The Music of Hope - 27.10.2020



Hymn-Playing Workshop with Dr Michael Burkhardt - 10.12.2018

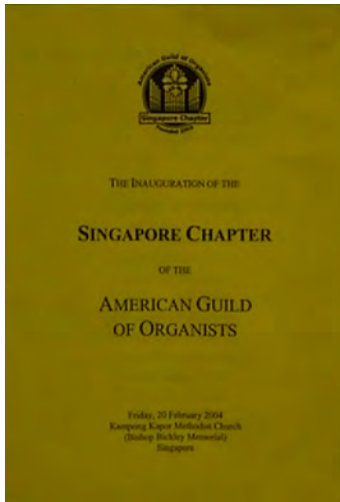


VCH Open House - 26.05.2024



Members to Remember

Inauguration Day at Kampong Kapor Methodist Church



(L-R): Dr Tang Boon Sen, Ms Ng Chet Wei, Mr Ong Te-Min, Dr Evelyn Lim, Dr Margaret Chen, Mrs Dorothy Lee-Teh, Mr Adriel Yap, Mrs Esther Seet

Singapore AGO "Founders' Day!"



*(Top L-R): Ms Susan Chong, Ms Ellena Yeo, Mrs Dorothy Lee-Teh, Dr Shirley Suresh, Dr Tang Boon Sen, Mrs Esther Seet, Mr Lin Yangchen, Ms Melissa Goh, Ms Vivien Goh, Ms Ester Wong, Mr Nicholas Leow
(Bottom L-R): Ms Mary Gan, Mr Adriel Yap, Dr Evelyn Lim, Dr Margaret Chen, Ms Ng Chet Wei, Mr Ong Te-Min*

COMING SOON...

Organ Music in a Different Light!

- Concert at the Victoria Concert Hall (VCH), Sunday, 26 January 2025, 4:00pm

Adam Brakel @ VCH

- Masterclass, Friday, 28 March 2025, 7:30pm
- *Night on a Bald Mountain* Concert, Saturday, 29 March 2025, 7:30pm

Anne Maria Lim and the Magic Organ

- Concert at the Victoria Concert Hall (VCH), Sunday, 8 June 2025, 2:00pm & 5:00pm



All forms of contributions (financial or otherwise) are always appreciated, as these help the Chapter to continue to bring quality music and educational events to its members and the public. Cheques may be mailed and addressed to "Singapore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists." All enquiries may be directed to enquire@singaporeago.org

Stay Connected With Us!

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Singapore AGO