



American Guild of Organists

Chartered 1896

European Chapter

Chartered 1979

Newsletter April 2015

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The Dean's Corner

Dear European Chapter Members,

Spring has sprung in many parts of Europe and the USA during the last couple of weeks. How lovely to see smiles on faces and lightness in the steps of so many, young and old! For those European Chapter members who were able to attend our annual Spring Meeting in-and around Turin, Italy, from 6-11 April, well, I'm just sure that their smiles are some of the widest and their steps the jauntiest right now. **Giorgio Parolini**, you are to be commended, along with **Edgardo Pocerobba**, for organizing another fantastic Spring Meeting. To say thank you, doesn't seem to be quite adequate to express our appreciation for your months of planning, but THANK YOU anyway. The memories and friendships that were made will be with us for years to come. Please take time to read the amazing hour-by-hour Spring Meeting report by our Secretary and Newsletter Editor, Bernard Sanders. Thank you, Bernard! After you have read it you will wonder if we had time to sleep, but we did! And the Italian food was delicious as well! In our summer newsletter you can read where we'll be going next year. Start making plans now and try not to miss it!

Speaking of European Chapter Meetings: If you are one of our members who has never had the opportunity to attend a Spring Meeting, this year for the first time,

a shorter version of our Spring Meeting, a **FALL MEETING** is being offered on the week-end of 25-27 September, in Ingelheim, Germany. This meeting will be centered around a special American organ that has a new home in there. Please plan to come to Ingelheim to get acquainted with the organ and your fellow AGO European Chapter members. It promises to be a wonderful event! Read about it in this newsletter and watch for further details in upcoming e-mail and the July newsletter. I hope to see many of you there.

And that last statement brings to mind something I have just read in the April AGO magazine: James Thomashower, AGO's Executive Director, has written in his monthly message that according to the recent survey of AGO members: "Across all age groups, the most valuable aspect of AGO membership was to meet and network with professional colleagues." YES! I can't wait to meet you in Ingelheim!

With my best regards,

Judy

The Secretary's Voice

Dear Members,

The "Members News" items from Gabriel Dessauer and Hans Hielscher should gear you up for our Fall Meeting! Hope to see you soon !

Bernard

bernard.sanders@web.de

Please submit your items for the next
Newsletter before June 30th !

News from the Board

Mission Statement

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to enrich lives through organ and choral music. To achieve this, we:

- Encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music;
- Inspire, educate, and offer certification for organists and choral conductors;
- Provide networking, fellowship, and mutual support;
- Nurture future generations of organists;
- Promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles; and
- Engage wider audiences with organ and choral music.

Fall Meeting

In the January Newsletter you have already heard about the 1930 E. M. Skinner Organ relocated to Ingelheim, Germany, and installed 2013 with a new case and console in the Saalkirche by the Klais Organ Co.

<http://www.klais.de/m.php?tx=190>

Also in that Newsletter was the announcement of a “**Fall Meeting**” the European Chapter of the AGO is hosting there on the weekend of the 25th to the 27th of September 2015. The opening public concert on Friday evening will be performed by our members Christa Rakich (USA), Ann Elise Smoot (UK), Johan Hermans (Belgium) and Giorgio Parolini (Italy). On Saturday there will also be a smaller coffee-time concert. The complete itinerary is not definite yet. In the works are: hands-on playing time, workshops, organ excursion, and – if the participants are willing and available – a choir event with American music for choir and organ together with the church choir.

The weekend will have many similarities with our “Spring Meeting” but it especially will give our members who

are not free the week after Easter the opportunity to attend!

Carsten Lenz and Bernard Sanders are co-operating on the organisation in close contact with Dean Judy Riefel. **Reserve the date in your calendars NOW !** A separate invitation with more information will be sent out as soon as possible.

Hope to see a lot of new faces there!

Bernard Sanders

European Chapter AGO

Address changes

Please note that the e-mail addresses are formulated with (at) in place of @. This is to foil the efforts of electronic “phishing” for such information on-line. In order to use the addresses please insert the @ before adding them to your address book. Thank you !

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Membership Report, Jan. 2015

In the January Newsletter I listed where our members all come from and then asked, “who did I miss?” My apologies to our members from MINNESOTA !

Judy Riefel-Lindel,
Membership Coordinator

The European Chapter Web Site

can be visited at: www.agoeurope.eu

See Newsletters from 2000 until present and pictures from the Spring Meeting !

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Support your Board, be an active Member!

Spring Meeting 2015

The annual **Spring Meeting of the European Chapter of the American Guild of Organists** took place from April 6-10, the week after Easter, 2015. Member Giorgio Parolini together with Edgardo Pocerobba organized an itinerary in and around Turin, Italy, that met all of the high expectations. The 38 participants came from 8 countries including Germany (9), USA (8), Italy (6), England (5), France (4), Holland (3), Belgium (1), and Finland (2)! The convention hotel was conveniently located in the town of Chivasso. The evening meals were all taken together in a restaurant just across the street. The opening dinner on Monday night confirmed the quality of this choice.

After a good nights sleep (for most to recover from the strains of the Easter celebration and the journey) everyone boarded the bus Tuesday morning for an excursion to the city of Turin. The presentation at the Church of Santo Volto was a tribute to Massimo Nosetti, who died suddenly in November 2013 from pancreatic cancer. Nosetti was a consummate musician (active as a concert artist, teacher, and composer) who was also well known in the US from his many concert tours. Steve Gentile (Minnesota), a long-time friend, performed Nosetti's "Variations on a Japanese Folk Song" on

the Ruffatti, 37/III/P, from 2007. This opening was even more special since Nosetti's widow was also present. As with almost all organs visited, participants then had time to play the instrument themselves. Among others Agnes Goerke followed with a piece by Jongen and Bernard Sanders played his own Prelude (from Prelude, Recitative and Fugue). The 38/II/P organ in the Church of San Filippo Neri was built in 1831 by Serassi, rebuilt in 1889 by Carlo Vegezzi Bossi and restored in 2002 by Brondino Vegezzi Bossi. As one might suspect from this short description, Vegezzi Bossi is one of the numerous Italian organ companies which has been handed down from generation to generation for well over 100 years. This early romantic instrument was capably demonstrated by Corrado Cavalli from the Turin Conservatory with Mendelssohn's 2nd Sonata. Suitable period repertoire was then played by Barry Jordan (Magdeburg) with a Sonata by Antonio Diana followed by Böhm's "Vater unser" played by Dr. Yao Yue (also from Magdeburg). After a lunch break in the sublime sunshine which continued the entire week, a first taste of Italian Baroque awaited the group in the Church of Santa Cristina. This instrument (11/I/P) was built in 1748 by Grisanti for a church in Asti, was restored and moved to Turin in 1962 by Piccinelli. Typical aspects of the organ type represented here are one manual with only 45 notes and short octave, pedal "a leggio" (always coupled to the manual) of only 9 notes, and stops divided into Soprano (Treble) and Bass. Also, the ranks typically drawn in a Mixture stop, can each be drawn separately: 2', 1 1/3', 1', 2/3', and 1/2'. Due to the relatively early restoration, the mean-tone temperament one would expect was not realized. Professor Guido Donati, recently retired from the Conservatory of Turin, demonstrated the instrument with improvisation in early Baroque style. Period literature played by participants included Frescobaldi (Jean van Cleef, Barry Jordan, Faythe Freese, Agnes

Goerke), Kerckhoven (Johan Hermans) and Storace (Alissa Duryee). Within walking distance was the Temple Valdese with an interim organ (16/II/P) in North German Baroque style built by Pinchi in 1996 while the gallery organ by Carlo Vegezzi Bossi awaits restoration. Although the instrument is tuned Werckmeister III at 415 Hz. There are 3 stops on the Great at 440 for continuo/accompaniment purposes. Prof. Donati demonstrated this instrument as well, including an excerpt from Bach's *Fantasia and Fugue in g-minor*. Members followed with appropriate literature including "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland" BWV 659 (Roger Schumacher), Padre Narciso "Pastorale" (Meredith Baker), Bach Trio Sonate d-m, 2nd mvmt. (Yao Yue) J.G. Walther "Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist" (Ruth Ahrendt and Edeltraud Bode), Böhm "Vater unser" (Johan Hermans), Froberger Toccata (Alissa Duryee), Böhm Partita "Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele" (Faythe Freese). Prof. Donati then bade us farewell with an improvisation on folk songs from the Piedmont region, successfully eliciting unexpected theatre-organ sounds with jazz elements. The bus ride back to the hotel and a welcome pause preceded an excellent evening fare at the restaurant mentioned above.

Wednesday began with a venerable Cesare Catarinozzi (11/I/P) organ from 1695 in the Benedictine abbey church of Sts. Peter and Andrea in Novalesa. Originally built for the Benedictine Abbey St. Scolastica in Subiaco, it was restored and enlarged in 1794 by Celestino Catarinozzi and moved to Novalesa in 1983. Glauco Ghilardi restored it in 2006 in a modern organ case designed for the space. Once again only one manual, short octave, Pedal "a leggjo" and this time regular meantone tuning. After a demonstration by Giorgio Parlini many participants played Frescobaldi (Agnes Goerke, Alissa Duryee, Jean van Cleef, Barry Jordan, Christian Michel). Performances of the 5-part *Ricercare* from "Fiori musicali" with Faythe Freese on the

organ and Meredith Baker singing, "Aria detta balletto" with Wim Riefel and a *Fantasia* by Sweelinck with Johan Hermans deserve special mention. After a scenic drive through the mountains and lunch the group was greeted in Susa by Mariano Martina. The first organ visited here is an early specimen of the orchestral, operatic organ that was popular in Italy at the turn of the (last) century. It was built in 1894 by the Turin organ builder Giuseppe Mola for the Villa San Pietro in Susa, the residency of Earl German de Magny. In 1903 it was moved to the Convent-Church of San Francesco by Carlo Vegezzi Bossi. The single manual, mechanical action and division of stops into Soprano and Bass are traditional but the disposition includes a Tromba, Carillon (Glockenspiel), Rullante (Drum roll), plus Gamba, Violino, Violino Flebile, Viola Celeste and Fagotto/Oboe - all under expression. After a demonstration by Mariano Martina and Giorgio Parolini followed a series of more-or-less period pieces: Verdi (Meredith Baker), Mascagni (Charles Baer), C. Franck (Yao Yue), Verdi (Johan Hermans), Antonio Diana "Rondo Polonaise" (Barry Jordan), and the Bellini-Sonata (Alissa Duryee). A short walk took us to the final organ of the day at the Cathedral of San Giusto. Mariano Martina first explained some of the particularities of the early romantic Italian style as contained in this organ by Carlo Vegezzi Bossi; for example instead of the traditional Voce Umana as celeste, here we find an Unda Maris, 2 reed stops on the second manual are Oboe 8' and Corale 8' (with short resonators), the Bombarda 16' in wood, and - as a hint of things to come - Campana tubolari (chimes). Originally built in 1890 it was reworked as a pneumatic instrument with 26/II by Francesco Vegezzi Bossi in 1934. With a lovely reading of Bossi's "Chant du soir" he closed his presentation. This organ allowed a broad choice of repertoire which was forthcoming from the participants: Bossi "Entrée pontificale" (Mike Irvine), Dupré Magnificat I "My Soul doth Magnify the Lord", op. 18 Nr. 10 (Chelsea

Chen), Brahms “Schmücke Dich” (Roger Schumacher), Cesar Franck “Chorale E-Major” (Yao Yue), Sigfrid Karg-Elert (John Falkingham), Brahms “Es ist ein Ros” (Ian Pattinson), plus an improvisation in late romantic style by Barry Jordan.

A glorious Thursday morning bus ride took us to Abbadia Alpina. Here in the village church of San Verano we were met by the regional organ expert Professor Silvio Sorrentino, who was to accompany us the entire day. The organ built here by Giacomo Filippo Landesio in the middle of the 18th Century is typical for the Piedmont area; 11 stops on one manual, short octave, 12 note pedalboard a leggio, mechanical action and meantone tuning. The Mixture is again divided into single stops at 2', 1 1/3', 1', 1/2', the Cornetto (Treble only) consists of 4', 2 2/3', 2', 1 3/5' and is playable only in the Treble, the Voce Umana from e. The demonstration was an elegant performance of anonymous Variations on the Follia. Period works were played by Alissa Duryee, Barry Jordan, Yao Yue, and Fabrice Muller. Faythe Freese deserves special mention for her performance of José Lidon's “Sonata para la Corneta real con Eco” as do Jean van Cleef and Wim Riefel (Tenor) for another performance of Frescobaldi's Ricercare à 5. The rest of the day was spent in Pinerolo, beginning at the Basilica of San Maurizio, a medieval collegiate church from the 14th Century with 5 naves and frescoes from the 15th Century. Originally constructed 1861 by Alessandro Collino (the Collino family build more than 200 organs in Piedmont), the organ was rebuilt by Giuseppe Lingua in 1891 with a spring chest typical for northern Italy and stops divided into Treble and Bass. It was first restored by Bortolo Pansera in 1968, then by Dell'Orto & Lanzini in 2009. After Silvio Sorrentino's demonstration with a Rossini transcription all sorts of fun music was packed out: a Sonata by Nicola Moretti (Johan Hermans), Padre Davide da Bergamo (Yao Yue), Marseillaise by Claude Balbastre (Fabrice Muller), Chelsea Chen played one

of her own Variations on a Chinese Folk Song, and a Humoreske by Gustav Merkel (Agnes Goerke). Many of the performers made ample and effective use of the Tympani and Glockenspiel. Practically at the back of the San Maurizio church was the Santuario della Beata Vergine delle Grazie (Sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of Grace). The organ here is somewhat older but with a similar history. Built in 1848 by Giuseppe and Alessandro (father & son) Collino, it was modified in 1897 by Giuseppe Lingua, first restored by Pansera in 1969, then in 2008 by Dell'Orto & Lanzini. For Sorrentino's performance of a Sonata by Pescetti he quite obviously had drawn a reed stop although there was none apparent in the disposition. The solution was quite simple, in the Italian nomenclature of this period a Violoncello stop can also be built as a reed! Although considerably smaller than the previous organ, a Drum roll stop was still available. Around 1771 the French organ builder Adrien Joseph Potier from Lille built a small organ (7/I/P) for the Convent Church of the Visitation (Conventuale della Visitazione di Maria). At the time Pinerolo belonged to France and both Cardinal Richelieu as well as the Musketeers had been to the fortress (or the prison) there. The disposition starts with a 4' Principal in the manual, the only 8' stop being the Contrabasso, which is always drawn in the pedal. Various participants tried out the instrument but Chelsea Chen's rendition of Pietro Yon's Humoresque brought down the house. Lunch for all was served in a cafeteria run by the parish of Our Lady of Fatima (Nostra Signora di Fatima), whose church and organ are both new. The organ (34/III/P) was built in 2011 by Dell'Orto & Lanzini in the North German Baroque style, modeled after Arp Schnitger. The organ builder Carlo Dell'Orto and the pastor of the parish welcomed us personally. The organ was capably demonstrated with Variations on “Nun komm der Heiden Heiland” by Samuel Scheidt and Kneller, which are also available on a CD recorded on the organ.

Participants responded with Bach (Orgelbüchlein, excerpts from Toccata Adagio and Fugue, Prelude and Fugue in a-minor, Prelude and Fugue in E-flat, Fantasie and Fugue in c-minor), Böhm (Vater unser) and Buxtehude (Praeludium F-Major, Praeludium g-minor). In the Pinerolo Cathedral of San Donato there is a processional organ (4/I) attributed to Giuseppe Calandra. Although built at the end of the 17th Century it is very much in Renaissance style with short octave, 7-note pull-down pedal and meantone temperament. A Gagliarde by Trabaci (Agnes Goerke) and a Corrente by Michelangelo Rossi (Christian Michel) as well as improvisations in Renaissance style (Wim Riefel and Barry Jordan) brought the instrument to life. The gallery organ (25/I/P) built by Carlo Vegezzi Bossi in 1922 is in the “reformed” Italian organ style. That is, 2 manuals with 61 notes, full pedal with 32 notes, second manual under expression, crescendo pedal, reed cancel piston, sub and super couplers from II to I and, as Prof. Sorrentino said, “lots of strings”: Dulciana 8’, Viola Gamba 8’, Unda Maris 8’ on I and Viola Gamba 8’, Voce Celeste 8’, Coro Viole 3 rks on II. There are also a 4 rank Mixture and Tromba on I and a 3 rank Mixture and Oboe on II. With music by Giovanni Battista Polleri (Meredith Baker) on the foundations, a Variation from Michael Burkhardt’s “All Glory Laud & Honor” (Steve Gentile) on the strings, and an excerpt from Bach’s Fantasy in g-minor on the principal chorus (Emil Iliev) the versatility of this instrument was proven. The test went on however with contemporary pieces: Petr Eben “Moto ostinato” from the Sunday Music (Yao Yue), Naji Hakim (Faythe Freese), and Bernard Sanders “Fugue” from Prelude, Recitative and Fugue (Bernard Sanders). Barry Jordan summed up the sonic experience with an improvisation in romantic style exploiting not only the rich palette of colors but also the broad dynamic range with use of the crescendo pedal. At the evening dinner Chelsea Chen,

AGO District Convener and AGO Regional Councillor Cheryl Duerr took their leave from the group as they were departing the next morning. Both had attended the Spring Meeting of the European Chapter for the first time, were thrilled with the experience, and hope to come again in future years. Thanks for his invaluable assistance on the planning was also given to Edgardo Pocerobba since he couldn’t be with the group on the final evening. In recognition for his service he was presented with an engraved plaque.

Friday started once again with the beautiful warm Spring weather accompanying the group all week. The final day began with a trip to the church of St. Mary of the Assumption in Caluso which houses an organ (40/IIP) built in 1821 by Fratelli Serassi from Bergamo. Giacomo Vegezzi Bossi did some modifications in 1859 and 1882, the last restoration was done in 2006 by Italo Marzi. Many of the stops are divided between Treble and Bass, there are 17 pedals but the pedal stops have only 12 notes which repeat for the upper octave (as is frequently the case), otherwise “a leggiero”, the “toy counter” includes Gran cassa (Bass Drum), Campanini (Glockenspiel), Timballi, Triangolo, Timpanone, Rullante (Drum Roll) and Tuono. An interesting stop was the “Tromba sforzate”, only in the Treble, whose Cornamusa reed pipes were located centrally in the balustrade as a sort of tiny Rückpositiv. Although not uncommon, we had only encountered it only once before in the Temple Valdese. Lateral pedals activate an additive mechanical combination system which can also be changed during a piece. This relatively exotic organ evoked equally unusual repertoire from the participants. Giorgio Parolini performed a piece by Padre Davide da Bergamo with “all the bells and whistles”. Emil Iliev started off on the Bach F-Dur Toccata but soon ran out of pedals, Yao Yue did some of Liszt’s “Weinen, Klagen”, Faythe Freese excerpts from Naji Hakim’s “To Call My True

Love” and Johan Hermans a good portion of a tango-like “Florinda” by Andrés Laprida (born 1959). In the rustic rural town of Chiaverno we were joined by Emilio Giachino and Angela Maria Fontana. Although both are active organists in the churches we visited, they preferred, with one notable exception, not to play themselves. The church of St. Silvester houses a rather large baroque organ (40/II/P) in meantone temperament. Built in 1793-95 by Giovanni Bruna it was restored by Dell’Orto & Lanzini in 2007. Despite the large number of stops there is no independent pedal, but rather only (and always) coupled (“a leggio”). The Carilioni (Glockenspiel), Timpani and Tamburo are all historic and not, as one might expect, added in the operatic period. A cute touch were the Putti (Cherubs) to the right and left on the front of the case, each with a trumpet on their lips. These were actual sounding Trumpet pipes (D + A) and could be played with a lateral pedal. There were also lateral pedals for free mechanical combinations. After a brief demonstration by Giorgio Parolini, pieces by Zipoli (Alissa Duryee), Balbastre “O filii” (Johan Hermans) and Arbeau (Fabrice Muller) were played. Fabrice Muller closed with an improvisation utilizing the Putti. The organ builder Bruna apprenticed with Carlo Silvestro Velatta. In the second half of the 18th Century Velatta built a smaller organ (15/I/P) in the parish church of St. Peter in Chains (San Pietro in Vincoli) in the nearby town of Andrate. During the course of the next 250 years the organ was changed at least 5 times by different builders with loss of a great part of the original material. For the most recent restoration by Dell’Orto & Lanzini 5 of the stops including the Fagotto and Cornetti were completely reconstructed to bring it back to the original specification. It is now tuned with the Valotti temperament. In addition to the principal chorus (Mixture stops drawn separately) there are only the aforementioned Fagotto and Cornetti, Sesquialtera, Flutes at 4’ and 2’ and the Voce Umana (Principal celeste).

Everything one needs for the repertoire of the period as was demonstrated by Giorgio Parolini. Other pieces played were Sweelinck’s “Chromatic Fantasie” (Faythe Freese), Pasquini (Fabrice Muller), Padre Narciso di Milano “Elevation” (Meredith Baker) and a Ricercar by Floriano Aresti (Agnes Goerke). Wim Riefel and Barry Jordan also improvised in late Renaissance style. Just as an interesting footnote, on the very scenic journey to our next and final instrument Giorgio Parolini pointed out that we came past the birthplace of the composer and past organist of St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York Pietro Alessandro Yon. In 1747 Giovanni Michele Ramasco built an instrument in the parish church of San Maurizio in Borgofranco d’Ivrea. It was enlarged in 1897 by Giovanni Foglia from Bergamo keeping a great part of the original material. Two stops added in 1937 were removed in the last restoration by Italo Marzi in 2011. The 12 stops (4 divided) on one manual with a 27-note pedal (16’ and 8’) is very versatile. Pieces played were Liebster Jesu BWV 731 (Emil Iliev), an Elevation Toccata by Frescobaldi (Johan Hermans), Bach’s Adagio from Toccata, Adagio and Fugue (Yao Yue), “Monica” by Bernard Storace (Alissa Duryee), a Rondo by Gherardeschi (Agnes Goerke) and the “Ballo della Battaglia” also by Storace (Wim Riefel).

The closing dinner was fabulous, which was to be expected after the experience of the whole week, and was crowned with a round of well-deserved thank yous. The restaurant and kitchen staff were called in to take their applause, but the main recipient was Giorgio Parolini, not only as a demonstrator for many of the instruments and for sharing his profound knowledge of the Italian organ, but mainly for the meticulous preparation work he had done well in advance. The Board members present each gave him a token of their collective thanks and esteem. Gratitude was also duly expressed to Dean Judy Riefel-Lindel, who gave much support and assistance in advance, as well as to Giorgio’s wife

Isabella and to the other non-organists that participated in the entire tour. The fabulous Spring Meeting booklet with daily itinerary, list of participants, and not only the stop lists but detailed information about all of the organs was prepared by Giorgio. Practically a constant at the Spring Meetings of the European Chapter is the noteworthy and admirable camaraderie of all participants. Both Chelsea Chen and Cheryl Duerr mentioned this at their farewell. Mutual respect and acceptance of the other participants regardless of their playing abilities or academic status is the basis for a harmonious common experience.

One last event topped off the Spring Meeting experience. Not only did Edgardo Poccobba help to organize our itinerary, he is also instrumental in organizing events for the “Chivasso in Musica” festival. The European Chapter was invited to be guests of honor at the final concert which took place at 9 PM in the Chivasso Cathedral. The young international concert pianist Saskia Giorgini gave a stunning performance of works by Chopin and the 13 Preludes, op. 32, by Sergei Rachmaninov.

Bernard Sanders,
Secretary of the European Chapter

Introducing Our Members

In each issue we'd like to introduce another member. Send us your resumé for inclusion!

Members' News

Alexia Tye is a board member of the Association de Grandes Orgues de Saint Eustache. In this capacity she reports that Jean Guillou is stepping down from Saint Eustache after more than 40 years. In his Farewell Concert on April 18th he played works by Liszt, Berlioz and Guillou together with the Prague Symphony Orchestra conducted by Johannes Skudlik. The concert began at 8:30 PM, with tickets available at the door.

Four Organ Concerts and a Choir Rehearsal in the US

A travel journal

by **Gabriel Dessauer**

Gradually I am getting to the age where one begins to think about what one would like to do before one is too old to be able to do it. And so last year I wrote to 3 churches in America in which I wanted to present an organ concert and included a couple of CDs. Some years ago I had heard a concert in the National Shrine in Washington and was thrilled by the monumental and imposing space. Soon I received a response from them. Another acceptance came from San Francisco. 25 years ago I visited the modern Cathedral of St. Mary's and knew that they regularly host midday concerts. A response from Salt Lake City took longer. I later learned that there was an application process with several steps. After listening to my CDs the committee also watched various public You-Tube Videos before finally accepting my offer.

One has to be a fan of American organs because such concerts are not lucrative. Foreigners coming in with the electronic ESTA permission or tourist Visa are not allowed to earn money in the US. It's very tedious and difficult to get a work permit and there are numerous stories about organists who weren't allowed to enter the country because they wrote on the immigration forms that they wanted to give concerts.

One should be familiar with the peculiarities of American organs:

- concave-radiating pedalboards, which I find very comfortable. Returning to German parallel pedals always feel like a step back into the Middle Ages.
- Many separate combinations, comparably few General pistons and not nearly always a sequencer (Here the Americans are far behind the English)
- American organs sound wonderful. Generally wide scales, light mixtures and especially a broad palette of celestes. Not simply one thin string celeste but rather two or three and then

luscious flute celestes or even an „Erzähler céleste“.

As a rule American organists do their own registrations. The music is laid out so that no page turner is needed. This was also expected of me. With my programs that worked fine except for a piece by Naji Hakim. Otherwise I had prepared works by J.S.Bach (Fantasie und Fuge g-moll), C.Ph.E. Bach (Fantasie und Fuge c-moll), Liszt (B-A-C-H), Reubke (94.Psalm), and Hakim („Aalaiki'ssalaam“ und „Colourful world“) as well as Arndts „Nola“ vorbereitet. Unfortunately organ concerts in the US are not any better attended than here (in Germany). I had the most listeners in Salt Lake City, about 200.

Washington DC

„The National Shrine of Immaculate Conception“ ist the largest Catholic church in the US. It was completed in 1962, the architectural style defies pinpointing. Through use of marble and gold it makes a refined impression. The whole church is built above a story with the crypt, shops, meeting rooms, chapels, even a restaurant. The church music office seemed more like a plush lawyers bureau. The assistant organist escorted me to the organ – naturally with an elevator – and left me to do my business. The church houses 2 organs, of which even the choir organ of 46 stops (even a 32') is quite respectable. It was recommended to “mirror” the registrations, that would sound better than using only one of the organs. As a matter of fact, when sitting at the console of the organ on the West wall, it seems quite loud. An effect which does not occur down in the nave. And the Pontifical Trumpet, the only horizontal reed, is so powerful that I couldn't draw it for practice. Even playing only one note elicited the reaction of holding the ears shut – which doesn't work when one needs to play at the same time. In concert I had one accident: since the pistons on American organs are quite close together I once hit not only the sequencer but also the adjacent Cymbelstern. Fortunately many in the audience thought it was intentional.

What I also experienced: there was a service at 4:30 PM on Sunday afternoon. I didn't think this was a very good time for a Sunday Mass. It was incredibly well-attended! I estimated 500 people festively accompanied by full organ and liturgically celebrated as a High Mass. The remark of a young associate priest came to mind: „Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his Apostles, not Breakfast!“

What remains in my mind: The toilet on the organ loft. Very practical!

Between the concert in Washington and San Francisco I had a whole weeks time. I fulfilled a dream of my childhood and took the train from coast to coast, which took 4 days and 3 nights. In this manner you can experience the vastness of the country. One also meets interesting people on the train. For example, a woman who was going back to Laramie, Wyoming, after a conference of the „Veterans for Peace“. She was quite excited to hear that I had planned spending a night in Laramie and offered to find an organ there where I could practice. Later she asked if I would mind, if people would listen while I was practicing. Thus an unplanned concert in the „Episcopal Cathedral“ in Laramie came about. More on this later.

San Francisco

The Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary's is a must for tourists due to its modern architecture from the late 60's of the 20th Century. The walls unfold elegantly heavenward in a square cross form. The Ruffatti organ imported from Italy stands free on a platform on one side, an unusual but acoustically advantageous position. Typical for the era, the sound of the organ is somewhat pointed, the scales too narrow. Never-the-less even here in the comparatively dry space one can produce beautiful warm sounds. The console however stands several meters away from the case, view toward the altar, in the middle of congregational pews at ground floor level. The intention is clear and comprehensible: the organist should be integrated into the event and the

congregation and not throne over it from the other end. The practical result is very bothersome: tourists are constantly walking by (mostly Asian, I'm not able to tell the difference between Chinese, Japanese and Koreans). One is reminded that San Francisco is not far from Asia. It feels like being a gorilla in the zoo. The classes of school children talk and giggle, mostly the tourists simply hold out their cell phones or tablets and take snapshots or videos.

What remains in my mind: In the Grace Cathedral I experienced a wedding. Fascinating, how stiff Americans can be. The organist played 20 minutes beforehand as the guests arrived and were escorted to their seats. At the beginning of the service the Maids and Grooms of Honor proceed down the main aisle in meticulously planned and practiced manner to the front before the crowning moment when the father of the bride escorts the bride with just as much stage presence. The whole scene takes place to the accompaniment of the Pachelbel Canon. Why do people like that piece?

Laramie, Wyoming

Actually I just wanted to spend the night and experience a "normal" American small town. But my acquaintance from the train had outdone herself and organized a small concert. At my arrival in the Hotel I could already read in the newspaper: 6 p.m. „open practice Gabriel Dessauer“. I got to the church at about 4:30 p.m. but couldn't practice because of a wedding rehearsal. The organ turned out to be a real gem: a genuine E.M. Skinner from 1928, untouched. 4 manuals with a mellow tone of incomparable beauty. An original „French Horn“, in addition several fabulous String stops, all in soft and warm colors, even the Tuba, I could hardly overcome my astonishment. When the wedding rehearsal was finished it was already 6 p.m. and about 30 people had come to the church with expectation. But I had hardly gotten to know the instrument and so I did what I usually do when I try

out an organ: first improvise, then I could play a couple of pieces. After all, the organ had 6 General pistons.

What remains in my mind:

The testimony of the local organ builder, who had tuned the organ that morning: due to the altitude of Laramie (2100m above sea level), E.M. Skinner had to install a blower with 25% more power to compensate for the thin air.

In the remaining time until the final concert in Salt Lake City I visited many of the famous national parks, and still had opportunity to practice in between, for example in a Mormon church in Kanab (with an electronic organ), or in the Episcopal Church in Las Vegas with a new Schantz Organ (4 Manuals, 54 ranks) from 2010, a wonderful organ in the glittering surroundings.

Salt Lake City

Richard Elliott, one of the organists of the LDS (Latter Day Saints) Center, had made the offer that I could sing along at the dress rehearsal of the famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir on the day before my concert. An offer that I couldn't resist. I had to be at a particular place one half-hour before rehearsal and was shown to my position in the tenor section. In front of the choir (360 voices) was a full symphony orchestra, all amateurs but excellent! The rehearsal was concentrated and flink, considering the sheer size of the ensemble it was helpful that the choir directors (conductor and assistant took turns) each wore a headset. Orchestra and Choir were well-prepared, details in timbre were primarily rehearsed. Even when the choir sang 8-voice passages *a cappella* I could not detect tuning problems. I had to relinquish my impression that American choirs typically sing with a thick vibrato: the choir sound was clear and precise, a tone production at the height of modern expectations. At the intermission I was introduced and stood up. It was mentioned that I had sung in the Munich Bach Choir with Karl Richter which was acknowledged by a murmur of recognition.

Richter is in general more famous there than here. After the rehearsal I spoke with a young woman from the choir. Sonja comes from Germany and had studied Music Education at the Hochschule in Frankfurt before she went to Utah to study choral conducting in Salt Lake City. She described the opportunities at the University as excellent and considers it a special honor to be able to sing with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. In order to join the choir one has to take a series of tests, beginning with submitting a CD. The choir members come from towns as far as 100 Miles (160km) away. Sonja is a Mormon, which one recognizes immediately because she is wearing, as do all Mormon women, a long skirt. I don't think I've ever seen so many long skirts. Somehow one feels like being back in the 50's.

Salt Lake City lies in a valley surrounded by mountains of 3000 meters. The Tabernacle is a convention center that also non Mormons can visit (contrary to the Temple, which only Mormons can enter). The entire Temple Square is a paradise for organists: in the nearby Assembly Hall is a mechanical Sipes Organ with 49 stops, in the 1993 newly built Conference Center is a 5-manual Schönstein Organ from 2003 with 103 stops.

The façade of the Tabernacle Organ, originally built by Aeolian-Skinner, is renowned for the golden façade pipes. Behind these is the 12th largest organ in the world with 147 stops and over 12,000 pipes. It has five 32' stops, 4 in the Pedal and one 32' reed in the Swell. Four manual divisions are under expression including the Antiphonal division on the other side of the auditorium. The console is perched on a small revolving stage, the disposition definitely leaves nothing to be desired: even Reeds with short resonators can be found, a complete baroque Positiv, but also various high pressure reeds permit a volume that one must first learn to resist. Tonally the organ is truly a Rolls-Royce, it can be almost inaudibly quiet (the Swell divisions work perfectly), but also develop

the power of Formula-1 racers. And still another specialty: I'm not aware of any other console with a built in air-conditioning unit similar to that in cars. Very comfortable! Organ concerts are given at noon daily by the three full-time organists.

An elderly couple took perfect care of me before the concert, the "Green Room" under the stage was declared my dressing room. Punctuality was very important: my program was to be 54-55 minutes long (and should be more "entertaining" than "educating"). The concert began punctually at the given time with a Greeting and Prayer. Playing Reubke turned out to be an unforgettable experience. Calls of Bravo and standing ovations at the end (the latter have become more the rule than the exception). After the concert I was expected at a particular spot where many listeners came to express gratitude, ask what the Encore was (Pasini, Cantabile 18), or ask for a signature.

What remains in my mind:

Before the concert a young man came and introduced himself as the light technician. What colors did I wish for the various pieces. He would coordinate the background lighting of the organ accordingly.

*Gabriel Dessauer, September 2014
(Bernard Sanders, Translation)*

Our member **Hans Hielscher** has performed dozens of organ recitals in the U.S. annually since more than three decades and will be in the U.S. again in 2015 for 32 recitals on four different tours. Last year, on one of his U.S. tours which again included performances in California, Denver and the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City as well as a workshop at the National Convention in Boston, he recorded a new CD with the title "Say It With Music" on the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Denver Paramount Theatre. The CD turned out to be a best-seller and sold more than 1,000 copies in four months.

This instrument is one of the last great so-called "theatre organs", which were

originally developed during the first three decades of the 20th century to provide music and sound effects to accompany silent films. The CD includes selections – inspiring as well as entertaining – from a wide variety of musicians, ranging from Irving Berlin and Scott Joplin to Les Brown and Albert Ketèlbey. The grand finale is a most enjoyable rendition of the legendary “Chattanooga Choo Choo“.

Introductory Price: €10, - !

Contents:

Irving Berlin Medley “Say it with Music”:

*Say it with Music / Dance with me /
Always / Alexander’s Ragtime Band*

Percy Elliot: Love Song

Dan Miller: How great Thou art

Scott Joplin: Concert Waltz “Bethena”

Anton Karas: The Harry Lime Theme
(*Zither-Ballade*)

Les Brown: Sentimental Journey

Ron Goodwin: Miss Marple Theme

Robert Maxwell: Ebb Tide

Hans Uwe Hielscher:

Improvisation on three Gospel Songs:

*Day by day / What a friend we have in
Jesus / God will take care of you*

Hans U. Hielscher: Tango

(from “Six Franconian Wine Dances”)

Albert W. Ketèlbey:

By the blue Hawaiian Waters

Harry Warren: Chattanooga Choo Choo

It is available at the Marktkirche
Wiesbaden and from

Hans Uwe Hielscher

HielscherH@aol.com

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www.marktkirche-wiesbaden.de

www.churchmusic.de

Hans Uwe Hielscher

Concert Tour USA- Australia 2015

February

6th 12:15 pm Nat’l. City Christian Church
Washington DC

8th 2 pm St. Andrew’s Church
Rocky Mount, North Carolina

11th 12:10 pm Presbyterian Church
Pasadena, California

12th 07:00 pm Grace Presbyterian Church
Walnut Creek, California

13th 8 pm Mission Dolores Basilica
San Francisco, California

14th 4 pm Pacific Union College
Angwin, California

15th 4 pm St. Mary’s RC Cathedral
San Francisco, California

18th 12 pm St. Andrew’s Cathedral
Honolulu, Hawaii

22nd 4 pm Holy Trinity Cathedral
Auckland, New Zealand

27th 12:30 pm St. Stephen’s Church
Sydney, Australia

March

1st 3 pm Christ Church Cathedral
Newcastle, Australia

6th 7:30 pm St. David’s Cathedral
Hobart, Tasmania (Australia)

8th 2 pm St. Jude’s Anglican Church
Bowral, Australia

12th 1:10 pm St. Andrew’s Cathedral
Sydney, Australia

12th 7 pm St. Patrick’s Cathedral
Parramatta, Australia

13th 7:30 pm St. Saviour’s Cathedral
Goulburn, Australia

14th 12:30 pm National Carillon
Canberra, Australia

14th 7:30 pm St. Peter’s Church Reid
Canberra, Australia

15th 2:30 pm St. Matthew’s Anglican Ch.
Albury, Australia

15th 7:00 pm Zion Lutheran Church
Walla Walla, Australia

16th 7:00 pm Christ Anglican Church
Echuca, Australia

18th 1 pm St. Paul’s Cathedral
Melbourne, Australia

19th 1 pm St. Michael’s Church
Melbourne, Australia

21st 7 pm St. Mary’s Anglican Church
Perth, Australia

22nd 2 pm St. Andrew’s Church Subiaco
Perth, Australia

24th Singapore

25th Frankfurt

News from HQ

February 10, 2015

Dear AGO Members

The AGO National Council has established new dues rates for all dues categories. The new rates will appear on the April 1 renewal notices that AGO Headquarters will send to current chapter members renewing for the 2015-2016 membership year. These rates are \$100 for Regular members; \$75 for Special members; \$40 for Student members; and \$75 for Partners. The new rates reflect a \$3 increase in each membership category, with \$2 being retained by each chapter and \$1 allocated to National Headquarters.

The new dues rates will take effect on April 1 for those who join the Guild for the first time either as Chapter members or as Independent members, or who reinstate as either Chapter members or Independent members after their memberships have lapsed. Please note that new members and those who wish to reinstate their lapsed memberships can join now through March 30 at the current dues rates before they increase on April 1.

Separately, the National Council has authorized the National Headquarters to initiate a “rolling membership year” for those who are joining a chapter for the first time or reinstating after their membership has lapsed. This means that a member’s expiration date will be one year from the date on which the member joined; i.e., on the anniversary of the join date. Under this plan, all current chapter members will retain their July 1-June 30 membership year as long as they renew by September 1.

For new and reinstating members, however, the membership year will commence on the first of the month in which the member joins the Guild. Independent members, like TAO subscribers, have always followed a rolling membership year and will continue to do so.

Effective retroactively to November 1, 2014, AGO National Headquarters implemented the anniversary date

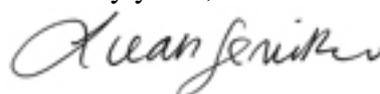
membership for all new members and those who reinstated their memberships since that date. These individuals will not have to wait until July 1, 2015 to begin to receive a full year of membership benefits. Instead, since November 1, their membership year began in the month in which they joined or reinstated.

Analyzing the responses to the recent membership survey, the AGO’s Marketing Committee has noted that, “Across all age groups, the most valuable aspect of AGO membership was to meet and network with professional colleagues.” Other key benefits include “staying informed about news in the organ world,” which is readily available through national and chapter publications including TAO, newsletters, websites, chapter meetings, plus regional as well as national conferences.

Our newest membership benefits include full online access to each issue of TAO, the ability to join online throughout the year and update one’s membership profile at any time, and, exclusively for first-time members, access to a no-cost life insurance policy for two years with a \$40,000 benefit. All Guild members have the ability to review job listings on the AGO’s job board, the world’s most complete listing of positions available; eligibility for high-quality insurance plans for health, car, home, and professional liability at competitive rates; discounts on AGO convention fees and educational resources; discounts on certification examination fees; access to Chapter events such as recitals, workshops, meetings, and seminars (in some cases for chapter members only); and voting privileges in officer elections. One important benefit cannot be overstated, and a prominent, long-time Guild member said it well: “I am an organist; the AGO is my professional organization.”

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



Leah Semiken

Manager of Membership and Chapter Relations

[Leah.Semiken\(at\)agohq.org](mailto:Leah.Semiken(at)agohq.org)



James E. Thomashower

Executive Director

[jet\(at\)agohq.org](mailto:jet(at)agohq.org)

Cherry Rhodes and Ladd Thomas to be Honored at AGO Recital and Gala Benefit Reception in Glendale, California

New York City. The AGO will sponsor a Recital and Gala Benefit Reception honoring international award-winning organist Cherry Rhodes and distinguished organist Ladd Thomas, professor of organ at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. The dynamic couple has been selected by the AGO National Council for its 2015 AGO Endowment Fund Distinguished Artist Award. The biographies of the honorees can be found online at Agohq.org.

The celebration will begin on Friday, April 17, 2015, at 7:30 p.m., at the First United Methodist Church of Glendale, Calif., where Ladd Thomas has served as organist for 55 years. The honorees will perform as organ soloists in Mendelssohn's *Sonata No. 1 in F Minor* (Thomas) and Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, transcribed by Jean Guillou (Rhodes). They will combine their talents in a rare organ duet performance of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Dukas, as arranged by Rayner Brown for their exclusive use. The gala benefit reception will follow at the Hilton Los Angeles North/Glendale Hotel (advance tickets required).

Sponsorship opportunities are available at the \$25,000, \$10,000, \$5,000, \$2,500, and \$1,000 levels. Full descriptions of sponsorship packages and benefits are available online at Agohq.org.

Gala Benefit Reception Tickets are \$150 (75% tax deductible, includes admission to the recital) and can be purchased online

at Agohq.org or by calling 212-870-2311, ext. 4308. Gala ticket holders will be offered preferred recital seating and will have their names printed in the commemorative program book. The deadline to be included is April 1. General admission to the Recital, only is \$20.

Those unable to attend the Recital and Gala Benefit Reception are invited to Participate from a Distance by making a contribution to the AGO Endowment Fund in honor of Cherry Rhodes and Ladd Thomas. Contribute online at Agohq.org or by sending a check to the AGO Endowment Fund, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1260, New York, NY 10115. Contributions received by April 1 will be reported in the commemorative program book.

All proceeds from the Gala will honor Cherry Rhodes and Ladd Thomas in perpetuity through the AGO Endowment Fund. For further information, please call 212-870-2311, ext. 4308, or e-mail gala@agohq.org.

F. Anthony Thurman, DMA
Director of Development and
Communications AGO-HQ

AGO PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS WITH THE KING OF INSTRUMENTS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP

New York City - The AGO is proud to announce four PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS (POEs), one Advanced POE for students aged 13-18, and one POE (Technical) for students aged 16-23 in 2015. Generous funding from the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America (APOBA) and the American Institute of Organbuilders (AIO) will support the summer programs, which will be held from coast to coast. Complete contact information for each Pipe Organ Encounter can be found in The American Organist Magazine and online at www.agohq.org. The summer schedule follows:

POE for ages 13–18
 June 14–19 Wichita, Kans.
 July 5–10 Valparaiso, Ind.
 July 12–17 Columbus, Ga.
 July 26–31 Brooklyn, N.Y.

POE (Advanced) for ages 13–18
 June 14–19 Norman, Okla.

POE (Technical) for ages 16–23
 June 14–19 Norman, Okla.

“The AGO and APOBA have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship since 1975,” declared AGO Executive Director James Thomashower. “Likewise, the AIO has been active in supporting the Guild’s educational programs, beginning with their partnership in Pulling Out All the Stops, a video produced jointly by the AGO, AIO, APOBA, the Organ Historical Society, and the American Theater Organ Society in 1996. Collectively, APOBA and the AIO have contributed more than \$475,000 in support of the AGO’s educational programs during our long association. For their ongoing, committed generosity in supporting the Guild’s mission - to enrich lives through organ and choral music - we are extremely grateful.”

The PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTER (POE) is an introduction to the pipe organ through instruction in organ playing, repertoire, history, design, and

construction. These regional summer organ music institutes for teenage students provide private and group instruction in service playing and solo repertoire, opportunities to learn about the musical heritage of various religious denominations, and a chance for young musicians to meet others with similar interests. Basic keyboard proficiency is required, although previous organ study is not necessary. The POE (Advanced) provides intermediate to advanced classes in areas such as organ literature, history, pipe organ construction and design, music theory, improvisation, conducting, and service playing for students who have achieved a high level of success in organ study. The POE (Technical) is a program designed for students who are interested in learning the art and craft of organ building. Scholarship assistance is available; the application deadline is April 15.

POE site locations are selected by the AGO Committee on the New Organist and approved by the AGO National Council after application by AGO host chapters. Applications are available from AGO National Headquarters.

F. Anthony Thurman, DMA
 Director of Development and
 Communications AGO-HQ

Recitals Past and Present

***You can advertise here for your concert engagements to come as well as report those past.
 Please submit items for the next Newsletter !***

April 18 th	8:30 PM	Jean Guillou, Organ Prague Symphony Orchestra, Johannes Skudlik, Conductor	St. Eustache, Paris (F)
April 26 th	5 PM	Bernard Sanders, Organ; Dr. Martin Weidner, Trumpet	St. Michael, Wermelskirchen (D)
		Works by Ch. Avison, M.-R. Delalande, G. B. Pescetti, E. Hemmer, C. Cooman, B. Sanders,	
May 2 nd	12:05 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Peter, Recklinghausen (D)
May 3 rd	7 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Michael, Großbüllesheim (D)
May 31 st	5 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Florin, Koblenz (D)

June 3 rd	7 PM	Martin Welzel, Organ	Old Church, Helsinki (Finland)
June 7 th	4:30 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	Basilica S. Vittore, Varese (I)
June 8 th	8:15 PM	Martin Welzel, Organ Vierne: Symphony V op. 47 and works by Hancock and Baker	Central Pori Church, Pori (Finland)
July 4 th	11:30 AM	Martin Welzel, Organ	St. Margaret, Munich (D)
July 4 th	6 PM	Bernard Sanders, Conducting Benefit Concert for the Renovation of the Organ with works for Choir, Soli and Orchestra by Charpentier (Te Deum), Sanders (Cantata on "Ach, wie nichtig"), and Mozart (Jubilate Deo)	St. Gallus, Tuttlingen (D)
July 12 th		Jennifer Chou, Organ	Ilen Church, Trondheim (Denmark)
July 18 th		Jennifer Chou, Organ Market Music with Recorder and Organ; Works by Bach, Handel, Sanders, etc.	St. Walburga, Zutphen (N)
July 19 th	5 PM	Martin Welzel, Organ Reger: Variations and Fugue op. 73 and works by Rheinberger and Bunk	Moritzkirche, Halle (D)
July 21 st		Jennifer Chou, Organ	Cathedral, Ribe (Denmark)
July 28 th		Jennifer Chou, Organ	St. Mortens, Randers (Denmark)
July 19 th		Giorgio Parolini, Organ	Eglise Abbatiale, Marmoutier (F)
July 22 nd		Jennifer Chou, Organ	Ribe (Denmark)
July 25 th	8 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Bartholomäus, Dornheim (D)
July 25 th	8 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Bartholomäus, Dornheim (D)
July 26 th	5 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	Dreifaltigkeitskirche, Gräfenhein (D)
July 28 th	7:30 PM	Giorgio Parolini, Organ	St. Blasius, Friedrichroda (D)
July 28 th		Jennifer Chou, Organ	Randers (Denmark)

Every Saturday (11:30) Organ Music at Market Time Hans Uwe Hielscher and guest organists from around the world	Marktkirche, Wiesbaden (D)
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