



# American Guild of Organists

Chartered 1896

## European Chapter

Chartered 1979

*Newsletter January 2022*

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### *The Dean's Corner*

Dear European Chapter Members,

Fortunately, the tradition of wishing each other all the best at the beginning of a new year remains. May 2022 turn out to be a better year than 2021, with a thriving European Chapter of the AGO that keeps connecting us!

I truly hope that we can soon meet in person and inspire each other through our shared passion. Only six weeks ago, the Chapter Board decided to go for a real Spring Meeting in April 2022, hoping that it would feel like a pick up after a break. Alas, recent infection figures may necessitate a different scenario. Until we meet again in person, this Newsletter brings us a tad closer together.

You will read that our dear Bernard will leave us after over 20 years as Chapter Secretary and as Newsletter Editor. Many thanks for the wonderful work you did for so many years, Bernard! Good luck with the many projects that will keep you busy after your retirement as a full-time church musician, and thank you as well for remaining on the Board as a Member-at-large!

Many thanks also to Alissa and Barry for accepting to take over Bernard's duties in the Chapter Board.

Hope to see you all soon live and in person!

Cordially,

*Johan  
Chapter Dean*

### *The Secretary's Voice*

My very dear fellow members of the European Chapter of the AGO,

It is with one laughing eye and one teary eye that I write this column. As you can read later in "News from the Board", I am taking my leave both as Chapter Secretary and as Newsletter Editor. These will be my last lines to you in those capacities.

This step is by no means sudden nor hurried. In fact, we on the Board have been working on the turnover for almost three years already. The laughing eye says that after over 20 years of doing double duty, it's time to move on and let others take over. It is reassuring that everything is well prepared and I am most confident that it will go smoothly.

Barry Jordan has already served on the Board for a long time and for most of that time has taken care of our Web site. In addition to that he will take over as Newsletter editor.

Alissa Duryee has been a Member-at-large for several years and will take over the duties of Chapter Secretary.

For my part, I am happy to remain on the Board simply as a Member-at-large and resource person. With my many years of experience I hope to contribute to a sense of continuity and to be helpful in any other way that I can.

The teary eye, of course, is because I will no longer be directly in contact with all of you fellow members. I am also most grateful for your contributions over the years. Many of you have consistently thanked me for my work and given me positive feedback. Many of you, whom I met in or through the Chapter, have become good friends. For this blessing I am very thankful and am confident that we will remain in contact.

This step on my part was precipitated by the fact that I will be retiring in July 2022 from my full-time position as church musician in Tuttingen. Here, too, it's time to move on and I have many projects and ideas which will keep me busy in the time to come.

I wish my successors much satisfaction with their respective responsibilities and all of us continued connection through a thriving European Chapter of the AGO!

With best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year 2022 and God's choicest blessings. Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay in touch!

Most sincerely,

*Bernard*

**Please submit your items for the next  
Newsletter before March 31<sup>st</sup> !**

### *The Board*

*Dean and Membership Coordinator:*

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*Sub-Dean:*

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*Secretary:*

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*Membership Chair and Treasurer:*

Ludo Vandersmissen  
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Support your Board, be an active Member!  
*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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### **Mission, Vision and Value Proposition**

The **mission** of the American Guild of Organists 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.

#### **Value Proposition**

As a member of the American Guild of Organists you can:

- **connect** with other organists
- **enhance** your skills as an organist and choral conductor
- **celebrate** the organ in historic and evolving contexts
- **discover** news of the organ and choral world online and in *The American Organist*
- Engage wider audiences with organ and choral music.
- **nurture** new organists of all ages
- **share** knowledge and expertise
- **enjoy** camaraderie at chapter events and conventions
- **find** inspiration and challenge

- **receive** encouragement from colleagues
- **experience** great organs and organists
- **access** career opportunities and job listings
- **earn** professional credentials through AGO certification

*Approved by the National Council  
May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016; revised by the  
National Council June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.*

### *News from the Board*

On Sunday evening, the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, 9 PM Brussels time, the Board of the European Chapter held an **Online Board Meeting** with 7 Board members attending. Some items of interest and even of importance to our membership were discussed.

The **Membership and the Treasurer's Report** were both submitted by Ludo Vandersmissen. The following highlights were disclosed:

Based on the information in OnCard at AGO HQ from November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 there are a total of 158 members currently listed. Of those, 113 have their primary membership in the European Chapter and 45 are dual members with their primary membership elsewhere. Our members come from 12 different countries with (sub)members out of 31 US Chapters.

The Treasurer's Report confirmed that the European Chapter is financially in good shape. Approximately half of our assets are in our account in Belgium and the other half on our tab at HQ in New York. [Due to Tax status for non-profit organizations and locality to Treasurer and Dean the Chapter Account in Germany is being phased out.]

The Chapter's recent donation history was described briefly. A yearly donation to the AGO Annual Fund had been given regularly based upon the number of members. This practice will be continued.

In the recent Chapter history there have been several changes in the make-up of the Board. These include:

**Chapter Dean:**

Judy Riefel-Lindel retired and

was succeeded by **Johan Hermans**

**Sub-Dean:**

Johan Hermans became Dean,  
**Giorgio Parolini** became Sub-Dean

**Treasurer:**

Betsy Mixon-Stemmler resigned and was succeeded by **Ludo Vandersmissen**

**Membership Chair:**

Judy Riefel-Lindel had been in a double-function as Dean and Membership Chair

**Ludo Vandersmissen** is now in a double-function as Treasurer and Membership Chair

**Chapter Secretary:**

Bernard Sanders resigned after 21 years in this capacity and has been succeeded by **Alissa Duryee**

**Newsletter Editor:**

Bernard Sanders had been in a double-function as Secretary/Newsletter Editor. These duties will now be split up and **Barry Jordan** is now in a double-function as Newsletter Editor and Webmaster

**Member-at-Large:**

**Giorgio Parolini** became Sub-Dean  
**Bernard Sanders** will remain on the Board as Member-at-Large

**Katelyn Emerson** and **Axel Wilberg** remain on the Board in this capacity

**Upcoming Spring Meeting in Cologne**

In spite of once again rising corona statistics, **Axel Wilberg** will initiate definite plans for a Spring Meeting in Cologne for 2022. The itinerary will be similar to the plan for 2020 which did not take place. Once again the event will be subsidized by the chapter (demonstration fees, transportation, etc.) in order to keep the costs down for participants.

*From the editor: as soon as more information on the Spring Meeting is available, it will be sent to all members!*

From this brief glimpse at the proceedings you can imagine the efforts and commitment that all Board Members invest in our Chapter. Support the Board! Become more active and participate!

### Update from our Webmaster

Don't forget our Chapter **Facebook page!** Not only that, but photos from all of our Spring Meetings have been put up there as an album. Follow this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1291359287568257.1073741830.912597592111097&type=1&l=5c5fd786b0>

It is public, so people who are not on FB can see it too.

The **European Chapter Web Site**

can be visited at:

[www.agoeurope.eu](http://www.agoeurope.eu)

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

*Barry Jordan*

### Members' News

Since the beginning of November 2021, **Giorgio Parolini** is officially Organ Professor at the Conservatorio di Musica "Jacopo Tomadini" in Udine, in the Northeastern part of Italy. The most important news is that now, after 9 years, he has received the position permanently. The Udine Conservatory has three Organ classes and is very active in promoting the instrument among the younger generation. His class has 11 students (it is allowed to have a maximum of 12) and most of them are at the beginning of their musical studies, so he will have the pleasure and the responsibility of guiding them into the world of the organ.

*Editor's note: Congratulations, Giorgio! Wishing you all the best on your new path!*

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**Alissa Duryee** was awarded the 2021 Judith Lang Zaimont Prize in composition. Her collection of piano pieces, "Night Sketches" was chosen from 87 submissions from 19 countries to the **2021 Search for New Music Competition** of the International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM).

The competition recognizes the accomplishments of IAWM member composers and fosters IAWM's goal of increasing awareness of the musical

contributions of women. IAWM hopes that performers around the world will see this as a resource for their own concert programming.

About the work Alissa writes, "**Night Sketches** is a series of pieces to be experienced in the dark, or with one's eyes closed. When writing this, I was interested in exploring the relationship of visual stimulation to piano performance. If the player is not seen, what can be understood about the space they are in and the sounds they make? Several of the pieces also pay homage to nocturnal situations: the languor of nocturnal marsupials, the busy frenzy of a frog pond on a summer's night, with a wink to the Nocturne as a genre. The performer uses erasers, pencils, and paper to evoke the sounds of writer's block, as well as a number of extended techniques throughout the series. The fifth piece, 'Pond Jam', may be played by any number of players, none of whom need to be trained pianists."

Excerpts can be found here:

<https://www.alissaduryee.com/alissaduryee-3>

**Alissa Duryee** began her musical studies at the piano, first at the Manhattan School of Music and later at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Musique de Paris. Her interest soon expanded to other members of the keyboard family, and she earned degrees in harpsichord (CNR de Paris), and organ (CRD de Chartres). She performs actively on these instruments as well as various fortepianos and clavichords. Her interest in instrument building has led her to complete two instruments: a fretted clavichord, and a French double manual harpsichord. Her work as a composer is essentially focused on engaging with these keyboard instruments in idiomatic, questioning, and playful ways; in continuity of the long-standing tradition in composition, instrument building, and performing challenging one another in new directions. Her piece 'Forager's Journal' was awarded Second Prize in the Nordic Historical Keyboard Festival Clavichord Composition Competition 2018. Alissa maintains a

teaching career focusing on a common core of keyboard technique, and enjoys composing music for children.

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**Bernard Wayne Sanders** has completed a new work for Alto-Recorder and Piano entitled “Prairie Shanties”. The Suite was commissioned by Dr. Sharon L. Hettinger of Lawrence, Kansas. Although ‘Shanties’ is usually a reference to the sea, the association with the prairie is not new. One need only to think about the covered wagons which were referred to as ‘prairie schooners’. The individual movements also bear unusual titles: following the “Revival” are two pieces with French nomenclature: “Sens azure” and “Sans azure”; a play on words meaning approximately “blue mood” (a sense of blue) and “without blue(s)”. After two creature features (“Cinnamon Armadillo” and “Crimson Buffalo”) the grand finale is a “Ho-up, Ho-over Hoedown”. The premiere performance is not yet scheduled.

On a New Year’s Eve program (Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021) at the church of St. Mary’s in Tuttlingen, Germany, **Sanders** premiered his new Chorale-Prelude on “Morgenstern der finstern Nacht” for Organ solo.

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**Gabriel Dessauer** (see Members’ News) recommends a video with Fraser Gartshore on the organ at St. Bonifatius in Wiesbaden.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywxFfTHLFs>

It has already had 835,000 clicks in English and meanwhile over half a million in German. Quite astounding for an organ video!

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**Carolyn Shuster’s** virtual concert, recorded on the two organs at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris, was broadcast on Friday evening, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, at 7 p.m. on the Internet Site of the American Cathedral in Paris. This concert remains on their YouTube Channel (and on their Facebook Page). See:

[www.amcathparis.com](http://www.amcathparis.com)

## European News

### Obituary



**Hans Haselböck**, Austrian organist and composer, died at the age of 93 on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. He was a highly respected organist and pedagogue as well as a pioneer in church music in German-speaking countries.

Born July 26, 1928, in Nesselstauden, Austria, he attended school in Krems an der Donau. Beginning in 1947, he studied at the University of Music and the Performing Arts in Vienna as well as at the University of Vienna (classics and German), where he earned his doctorate in 1953.

In 1949, Haselböck became organist of the Dominican Church in Vienna, serving for more than 65 years. He taught Latin and German at the city’s Sigmund Freud Gymnasium. He won three consecutive first prizes at the Haarlem International Organ Improvisation Competition, 1958–1960, and in 1960 was appointed to the faculty of the Vienna University of Music and the Performing Arts. There he taught organ and improvisation, serving as chair of the church music department between 1963 and 1987. He was appointed professor of organ and improvisation in 1972. Between 1985 and 1990 he served as deputy director of the school.

Haselböck performed extensively throughout Europe, the United States, Japan, and Korea. He was a published composer as well as editor of numerous editions. His research into the history of the organ and performance practice led to several book-length publications. He served as juror at various international organ competitions. In 1997, Haselböck was awarded the Decoration of Honor for merits of distinction for the Republic of Austria.

### *Introducing Our Members*

**Virginus Barkauskas** is a Lithuanian concert organist, church musician and pedagogue, a member of the American Guild of Organists, living in Long Island, New York. Currently he serves as the Director of Music at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Roman Catholic Church in Melville, NY.

Mr. Barkauskas completed Master of Arts in Music and Liturgy with emphasis on organ at St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Indiana, where he had received a full scholarship by the United States Bishop's Conference and studied under the renowned organist and composer Dr. Phillip Gehring. He also studied at the Lithuanian National Academy of Music in Vilnius, majoring in organ with Prof. Leopoldas Digrys and piano performance with Liana Baronaite. Additional studies with acclaimed organist and pianist Eduard Oganessian.

As an organ soloist, Mr. Barkauskas has performed at Alice Tully Hall – Lincoln Center, New York, the National Philharmonic Hall in Vilnius, Lithuania, the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore, MD, St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco, CA, the Cathedral of Saint Joseph, in Hartford, CT, St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, IN, Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, IN, the Riga Dom in Riga, Latvia and others. In 2010,

2015, 2016 and 2019, Mr. Barkauskas participated at the international festivals in Lithuania, performing at the Arch-Cathedral Basilica in Vilnius and the St. Michael the Archangel Church in Kaunas and throughout the country, where he performed as a soloist and in ensemble with the leading artists.

In 2018 and 2019, Mr. Barkauskas participated in Organ Concert series throughout the Cathedrals of the USA and Canada. The venues included St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, NY, St. Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh, PA, the Incarnation Cathedral in Garden City, NY, St. Joseph's Cathedral in Hartford, CT, on the Midmer-Losh organ, the largest instrument in the world, at The Boardwalk Hall Auditorium Atlantic City, NJ, St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, Canada, and his return performances at the Washington National Cathedral and the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC.

In 2020 some of the engagements included a concert at the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Hall in Vilnius, where Mr. Barkauskas performed as the soloist of Poulenc's Organ Concerto with the "Musica Humana", Chamber Ensemble of the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society. In July he completed a three-recital concert tour in Germany, where he performed at the Frauenkirche Dresden, Cathedral of St. Petri in Bautzen and St. Petri church in Rochlitz.

In 2021 recital venues included the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC and St. Elizabeth of Hungary church in Melville, NY.

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

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