



The Principal

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONG BEACH CHAPTER
OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Volume 77, Number 3

November, 2022

The Dean's Corner

Greetings!

Our Chapter was treated to two days of terrific events by Dr. Bruce Neswick. First, Dr. Neswick conducted a workshop on Creative Hymn Leadership and it was exceptionally educational, providing useful information for practicing organists. Second, Dr. Neswick gave a stunning recital with a variety of genres and composers and including improvisation (more details of which can be found on pages 2-3). I sincerely want to thank Covenant Presbyterian Church and Peter Bates for hosting us. I also want to thank Althea Waites for coming up with a beautiful improvisation theme for the recital.



Our next event is Silent Movie afternoon where we will play the movie "The General" with a live accompaniment by our very own Robert York! It will be on Sunday, November 13, 2022, at 5:00 pm, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 370 Junipero Avenue, Long Beach.

Google Map at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4jtw2j>

Remember to think of musicians and friends you know who would benefit from joining our Chapter. Please invite them to come to our November meeting. Just imagine how our ranks would swell if everyone could recruit just one new member!

As All Saints' Day approaches, I will keep each of you in my thoughts as you prepare your special, commemorative music to remember all the saints who have impacted our lives. Your music will surely help to inspire and heal, bringing us to that "thin" place between earth and eternity.

I wish you all a wonderful upcoming season, one in which we can be thankful for what we enjoy and be surrounded by those we love. Finally, I look forward to seeing you all at our November event.

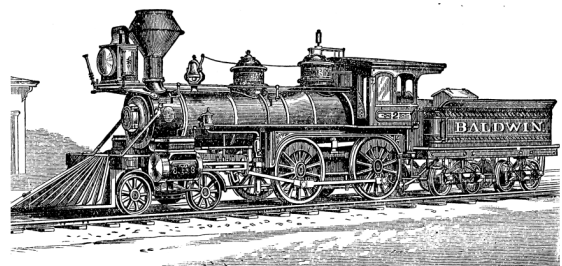
Dr. Hyunju Hwang
Dean, Long Beach AGO

Silent Film: *The General*

On Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 5:00 pm we will gather with the community of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, at 370 Junipero Ave. to see Buster Keaton's 1926 silent film masterpiece, *The General* with live organ accompaniment by Robert York. Robert is a master at bringing silent films to life, having been involved in many presentations here in Long Beach, as well as his more recent sold-out performances at the Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo.

The General was inspired by the Great Locomotive Chase, a true story of an event that occurred during the Civil War. Star Buster Keaton also co-directed the film, which is now often ranked among the greatest American films ever made. In 1989, it was selected by the Library of Congress to be included in the first class of films for preservation in the United States National Film Registry for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant". *The General* was filmed in an area in Oregon that had old-fashioned railroads. The company purchased three locomotives for use in the film and according to United Artists, the film had 3,000 people on its payroll and cost \$400 per hour to make. The train wreck of the "Texas" was shot near Cottage Grove, Oregon and cost \$42,000, the most expensive single shot in silent-film history. The wreckage of the locomotive was left in the riverbed for nearly 20 years before being salvaged for scrap metal during World War II. Also noteworthy is the fact that Buster Keaton performed his own stunts, many extremely dangerous on and around the moving train.

If you haven't seen this film, it's a must see! If you have, see it again with Robert at the organ. The film lasts 75 minutes and is time well spent!!!



Our Weekend With Bruce Neswick, a Reflection

Peter Bates

What a joy it was to have Bruce Neswick back with us in Long Beach again! Besides being a true gentleman and kind to all he meets, he is a consummate church musician and service player of the highest order. Those who have participated in services where he has been on the bench, either at his church, or during a convention, cannot help but be deeply moved by his creative sensitivity to moving his congregations in a most profound way. His workshop, "Filling the Dead Spaces: Creative Hymn Leadership" was truly engaging. Beginning with the basics; how do you improve/increase your improvisational vocabulary? He said, one must first follow the "Six Wheels of Keyboard Skills". To wit: approach practicing scales adding various contrivances to the basic scale, practice figured bass passages, transposing and modulating, hymns in all keys altering from major to minor, sight reading unknown anthems, practicing easy trios and improvising in the style of composers. He then walked us through a process of creating your own chorale-preludes and even gave suggestions for building a partita. Those who participated came away with some new ideas of how to either get started with improvisation, or improve their own improvisatory skills.

His recital on Sunday was, in a word, stunning. Opening with Bach's monumental *Tocatta in E Major*, he shifted gears with his own transcription of Clara Schumann's *Three Preludes and Fugues* originally scored for piano, but well suited to the organ. He then moved to music of the 20th and 21st centuries; first with *Ma\$HeD*, composed by his husband, Texu Kim. Dr. Kim was commissioned to compose the piece by organist Mark Pacoe at St. Malachy's Church, which is known as "The Actors' Chapel" based on its location in the "theatre district" on Broadway in Manhattan. It was premiered by Dr. Neswick in 2016 at the Paul Creston Award celebration concert honoring Pulitzer and Grammy award winning composer Jennifer Higdon, the recipient of the award that year (Bruce Neswick was himself the 2010 recipient of that award). The piece skillfully "mashes" the themes from Jennifer Higdon's piece *Smash*, Paul Creston's *Psalm XXIII* and the hymn-tune *Nun Danket*.

The second half of the recital opened with David Hurd's *Te Deum Laudamus* a 30 minute four movement work incorporating Latin hymnody and chant. The third movement is so hauntingly beautiful as to draw

one to tears. He followed this with the very romantic *Air* from Florence Price's *Suite No. 1* for Organ, and continued with the very familiar *Tocatta* by Leo Sowerby.

The recital concluded with an *Improvisation on a Submitted Theme*. In the last issue of *The Principal*, chapter members were invited to create and submit an original theme subject for this purpose. There were four submissions and the one selected was submitted by **Professor Althea Waites**. Although this was announced during the introductory comments by LBAGO Dean Dr. Hyunju Hwang, Dr. Neswick did not see the theme until he opened the sealed envelope that was handed to him immediately prior to the improvisation. During the ensuing seven minutes, he truly showed his extraordinary skills at improvising. Ms. Waites said, following the recital, "I didn't know there was that much music in those five measures!"



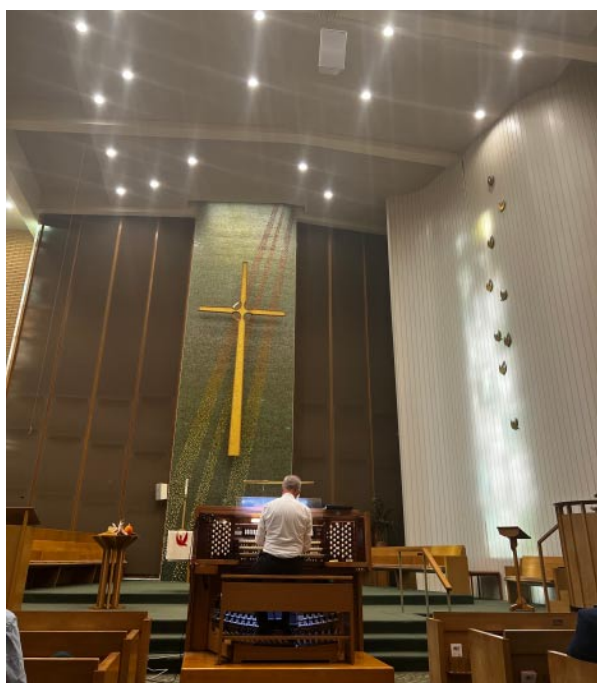
Writing for The Principal Couldn't Be Easier

Got a story to tell? A concert to publicize? We've got column-inches of space to fill! Just send it to me as a plain text email body, a plain text file, or an RTF file. What's a column-inch?

This is a column inch.
A block of material one column wide, and one inch high.

On the front page, we have 15 of them, 7 1/2 for the Dean's Corner, and another 7 1/2 for upcoming events. On each subsequent page, we have 19 of them, 9 1/2 in each column. I'm not asking you to write a doctoral dissertation, and if you don't feel like writing, just give me the facts and I'll write it.

Pictures from the October Programs



IMPROVISATION THEME FOR BRUCE NESWICK

ALTHEA WAITES

ORGAN

10/15/22

Long Beach Chapter Programs

Sunday, November 13, 2022 - 5:00 PM

Robert York, Silent Film

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
370 Junipero Ave, Long Beach, CA 90814

Tuesday, January 24, 2023 - 7:00pm

"New Music for a New Year", Members' Recital

Venue - St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church
5306 East Arbor Road, Long Beach, CA 90808

Saturday, February 18, 2023 - 3:00 pm

Pedals, Pipes, & Pizza

Venue - TBA

Sunday, March 19, 2023 - 4:00 pm

Members' Recital

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
525 E 7th St, Long Beach, CA 90813

Sunday, May 21, 2023 - 4:00 pm

Guild Service & Installation of Officers

Host: Peter Bates

Covenant Presbyterian Church
607 E 3rd St, Long Beach, CA 90802

**Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
and the
Long Beach Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists
Present
A Silent Film with Live Accompaniment**



Robert York, organist
At the Reuter Pipe Organ
Showing in the Sanctuary
Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 5:00 pm

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
562-434-7400
Free of Admission Charge

370 Junipero Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90814

A New Chapter Member (But Not New to the AGO)

Dean Gray

Anna Ferraro, a multi-talented musician, and singer-songwriter joined the LA chapter around 2008 and recently co-joined the Long Beach chapter. Over the years she attended local, regional and national conventions. For over three decades she has steadily played organs (and pianos) for worship services in Los Angeles and Orange Counties for a variety of churches and even the Jewish Temple.

This year has been especially eventful. In March she took the AGO service playing certification test, passing with high marks. Much credit is due to her teacher, organist Peter Bates. In July she attended the national convention in Seattle. And, a few weeks ago, on October 14, Anna released her sixth album of original compositions on all streaming platforms.

AGO members might be surprised to hear *Anna's Musique* is a jazz album. The music features her own songs and instrumentals accompanied by drums, bass,



guitar, saxophone, and flute recorded at the 4th Street Recording Studio in Santa Monica with producer David Ross. Listen to her new album on Spotify, iTunes, Amazon Music, YouTube Music, and more. You might also be interested to view her

new website ANNA-FERRARO.COM (be sure to add a dash in between)

From the Press Room

James Lampert, Production and Distribution

(Any opinions expressed here are solely those of the author.)

I think I might have been the only one from the Chapter who attended the Junior Bach Festival Awards Concert as a regular audience member. That same day, we had Scouts at the Museum; in order to attend, I requested that the Letterpress station be scheduled so that they could cut me loose by 1:30. That ended up giving me and two other docents (one of whom had never done a Merit Badge Day before) all six groups of Scouts in the morning, without any breaks. That left me (and probably the other two) exhausted by lunch time.

The Awards Concert was roughly 110 minutes without an intermission, and for about the last 45 minutes of it, I really, really wanted a glass of water, but didn't want to miss any of it, or show the slightest

disrespect for any of the performers. All of the kids were good; most were really good; a few sounded like they could soon be spending some quality time on the radio with Peter Dugan. They saved Mr. Molina, our POE alum, for last, and it wasn't until I heard him get up that I realized that I'd chosen a seat almost directly in front of him.

On October 11th, I was off to Disney Hall for my first subscription program of the season: Sir András Schiff, playing a semi-extemporaneous program, the first half of which was almost as long as the entire Junior Bach Festival Awards Concert. Then, on the 16th, Peter's recital at St. Thomas of Canterbury went well, with a good mix of LBAGO members and parishioners in attendance.

As I type this, the Los Angeles Printers Fair is only a few hours away at the Museum, and Dr. Neswick's workshop/masterclass is only a few hours away at Covenant (and I suspect that the setup for that will have begun by the time my usual Saturday morning lesson in the chapel is over). I've arranged to leave the Fair half an hour before it closes on Sunday, so that I can make it to his recital. I also plan to make it to *The General* on the 13th; I've seen excerpts at the California State Railroad Museum, but I don't believe I've seen it in its entirety.

Remember: This is your newsletter. If you have something to share, don't be shy. While final production is relatively quick, it's not instantaneous, and since we always endeavor to get the print edition into the hands of those who elect to receive it by the first day of the nominal month, I really ought to have all of the material at least five days before the end of the previous month, and seven days would be better. For example, if I'd gotten everything for the October issue by September 24th, I could have produced a much more pleasing layout. And thanks, Peter, for getting the silent film material to me so soon; this makes it so much easier.

James H. H. Lampert
Your Humble Typesetter



