

March 2015

The Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild  
of Organists presents...

# THE CIPHER

## Bach and the Twenty-First Century

Mark Your Calendars

for the

March Program on

Monday, March 16

(see pages 2 & 3)

GUEST EDITORIAL, BASED ON AN ESSAY  
BY O.P. KRETZMANN, FORMER PRESIDENT OF VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY

Johann Sebastian Bach died on July 28, 1750. The centuries that have become history since that day are without parallel in the history of humankind. The distance that separates the person of today from the half-blind musician who died quietly at Leipzig so many years ago is almost beyond measuring. The world of 1750 was a comparatively quiet world in which the music of a man, singing greatly to his God and Savior, could be heard and loved by men and women who lived and believed simply. True, not all of them understood him clearly, for the language of supreme, surrendered faith was raised to its highest power. The massive truths of Christianity were expressed, perhaps for the first time, in a music which, though bound by all the limitations of earth and time, approximated most closely the towering grandeur and glory of their meaning for the hearts of humankind.

Confronted by Bach, contemporary people must be bewildered. What shall the new pagan do with a man who so magnificently fused high art and high religion? Or how can many modern Christians, accustomed to shoddiness, emotionalism, and subjectivity in their religious life, understand a man who humbly accepts the great objective truths of Christianity and pours them into music which makes them live and breathe and march into the souls of men and women? That sort of thing is beyond us.

In a certain sense Bach is a paradox. When we speak of his art as a reflection of his faith, one might conceivably think of him as a highly subjective artist. Exactly the opposite is true. As in the works of Shakespeare, there is hardly a single echo of his personal, subjective life in his compositions. But there is a great difference between Shakespeare and Bach in their use of the value and power of the materials of faith. Bach had at his command two inexhaustible treasures of material for great music: the facts and words of the Gospel story, and the hymns of the Reformation, especially of Martin Luther. The former became, under his genius, the Passions, the cantatas, and the Mass. The latter provided the melodic structure of the endless beauty of the chorale preludes.

*(continued on page 2)*

AGO



GRAND  
RAPIDS

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If one were to say that this unique achievement is the result only of his musical genius, many would probably be content with this explanation and accept it. We could then understand Bach as much or as little as we understand any other genius. Unfortunately for the modern mind, however, that would not be the whole truth. Coupled with his astonishing musical genius there is something equally important and just as vitally necessary for a complete understanding of his achievement. As we have noted, a part of the wall between our age and the cantor of Leipzig is in the realm of faith. Bach believed that what he was singing and playing was true, eternally true, and because it was, its garment of music had to be good and true and beautiful. The technical equipment of his genius and the incredible richness of his invention were servants, willing and glad, of a God who, at a given moment in time, joined the human race.

## THE ORGAN CONCERTOS OF JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

March 16, 2015

Calvin College Chapel

8:00 p.m.

John Varineau, Conductor

### A CONCERTO IN D MAJOR

Presto – Sinfonia to Part II from Cantata 120a: *Herr Gott, Beherscher alle Dinge*  
 Siciliano – Aria (Stirb in mir, Welt) from Cantata 169: *Gott soll allein mein Herze haben*  
 Allegro – Sinfonia from Cantata 169: *Gott soll allein mein Herze haben*

**Rhonda Sider Edgington, organ**

### A CONCERTO IN D MINOR

Allegro - Sinfonia from Part I of Cantata 35: *Geist und Seele wird verwirret*  
 Adagio – Sinfonia from Cantata 156: *Ich steh mit einem Fuss im Grabe*  
 Presto – Sinfonia from Part II of Cantata 35: *Geist und Seele wird verwirret*

**Norma de Waal Malefyt, organ**

**Sarah Peterson, oboe**

### A CONCERTO IN E MAJOR

Adagio – Sinfonia from Cantata 150: *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich*  
 Allegro – Sinfonia from Cantata 49: *Ich gehe und suche mit Verlangen*

**Karl Schrock, organ**

### A CONCERTO IN D MINOR

Adagio – Chorus from Cantata 146: *Wir muessen durch viel Truebsal*  
 Allegro – Sinfonia from Cantata 146: *Wir muessen durch viel Truebsal*

**Stephanie Pestana, organ**

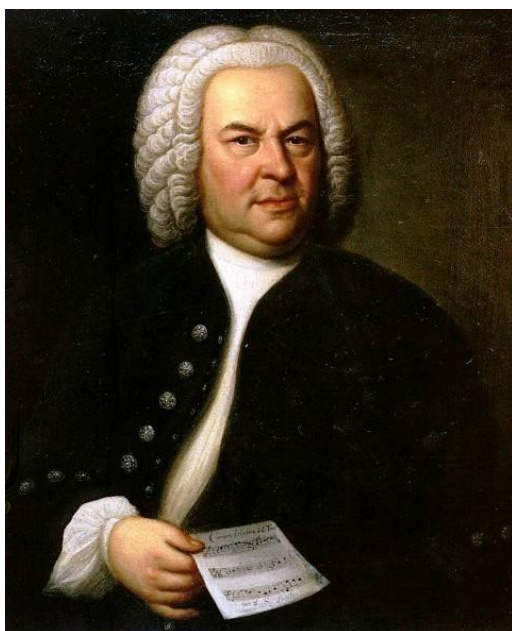
### THE PRE-BACH DINNER

will be served in the Undercroft of the Calvin College Chapel at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 16. There will be no punch bowl. The earlier dinner-time will give our performers time to catch their breath before the concert, and GRAGO members will want to claim their reserved seats in the chapel. A large crowd is expected. Seats will be reserved only for GRAGO members attending the dinner.

# Bach Cantatas

Monday - March 16 - 8:00 pm - Calvin College Chapel

Presented by the Grand Rapids Chapter of The American Guild of Organists



**Conductor:**

John Varineau

**Soloists:**

Rhonda Edgington

Karl Schrock

Norma de Waal Malefyt

Stephanie Pestana

This concert provides a unique opportunity to discover the music that Bach wrote for solo organ and orchestra. Tucked away in his seldom-heard church cantatas, these introductory sinfonias are some of Bach's most glorious music. Four highly skilled West Michigan organists will perform four "concertos" made up of ten sinfonias. The orchestra is drawn from the Grand Rapids Symphony.

**Celebrate the week of Bach's birthday**  
**Attend this "planets-aligned" one hour event**  
**Open to the public**  
**Free of charge**

**Cosponsored by the Calvin College Music Department and the**  
**Calvin Academy of Lifelong Learning**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS—UPCOMING SENIOR RECITAL

On Friday, April 10 at 8pm in Dimnent Chapel at Hope College, Zachary DeBruine will perform in a senior recital featuring a colorful variety of virtuoso and concert works for organ. Zachary is a senior organ performance major studying under Dr. Lewis.

## ORGAN FOR SALE

Positive organ by Gabriel Kney, ca. 1980.

Four stops (8', 4', 2', 1 1/3'). Height 76", width 48", depth 20.5 inches.

\$13,000 negotiable. Buyer to remove (GR location). Send serious inquiries to [crowellg@gvsu.edu](mailto:crowellg@gvsu.edu).

## UPCOMING CONCERT AT PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



Spring Concert

March 18, 2015

7:00 pm

Park Congregational Church

*Joost Van Belzen*

*&*

*Peter Wildeman*

*Tickets will be available at the door.*

Proceeds will benefit  
Christian Education  
Adults \$5 Family \$20



## Michigan AGOings on – March 2015

Monday, March 2, 7:30pm. Holland Area Chapter

Jim Folkert: What to do before the organ repair person arrives.

Second Reformed Church, Zeeland

Contact: Rhonda Sider Edgington, Dean. [rhondabse@gmail.com](mailto:rhondabse@gmail.com)

Sunday, March 8, 3:00pm. Greater Lansing Chapter

Members' Recital

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lansing

Contact: Dr. Barbara R. Hiranpradist, Dean. [barbara.hiranpradist@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.hiranpradist@gmail.com)

Sunday, March 8, 3:00pm. Muskegon Lakeshore Chapter

Young Artists Series / Abby Rockwood, organist

Central United Methodist Church, Muskegon

Contact: Ms. Caron M. Farmer, AAGO. [caronfarmer@comcast.net](mailto:caronfarmer@comcast.net)

Friday, March 13, 7:00pm. Detroit Chapter

Organ recital / Wilma Jensen

First United Methodist Church, Birmingham

Contact John Sittard, Dean. [john.sittard@sthugo.org](mailto:john.sittard@sthugo.org)

Saturday, March 14, 10:00am. Detroit Chapter

Organ Masterclass with Wilma Jensen

Location TBA

Contact John Sittard, Dean. [john.sittard@sthugo.org](mailto:john.sittard@sthugo.org)

Monday, March 16, 7:30pm. Southwest Michigan Chapter

Compositions by Chapter members

First United Methodist Church, Kalamazoo

Contact: Dr. Mark Wells, Dean. [mwells@stphilipchurch-bc.org](mailto:mwells@stphilipchurch-bc.org)

Monday, March 16, 8:00pm. Grand Rapids Chapter

Recital: The Organ Concerti of J.S. Bach

Calvin College Chapel

Contact: Helen Hoffmeister, Dean. [helenh@wpcgr.org](mailto:helenh@wpcgr.org)

## MARILYN MASON YOUNG MUSICIAN'S SCHOLARSHIP

### THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS ANN ARBOR CHAPTER

The Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Guild of Organists established a scholarship in 2008 in honor of Emerita Professor Marilyn Mason on the occasion of her 60th year on the faculty of the University of Michigan.

Each year a scholarship of \$400 is made available to a young person between the ages of 13 and 18 toward the cost of attending a Pipe Organ Encounter (POE) sponsored by the American Guild of Organists in our region. Held in the summer months, a POE is an introduction for young persons who have had little or no previous experience with the pipe organ. The event includes lessons with renowned teachers, recitals by faculty and participants, workshops and visits to area pipe organs and organ builders.

This year the scholarship will be awarded to an attendee of the Pipe Organ Encounter to be held in Valparaiso, Indiana July 5 - 10, 2015.

An application for the Marilyn Mason Young Musician's Scholarship is not an application to attend the POEA and does not guarantee acceptance into it. For information about this summer's POEA, consult the website of the American Guild of Organists: <http://www.agohq.org/education/poe/poe/> or the Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Guild of Organists: <http://www.annarborago.org>.

Applicants for the Marilyn Mason Young Musician's Scholarship may download the Award Guidelines and Application for 2015 at the website of the Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Guild of Organists: [www.AnnArborAGO.org](http://www.AnnArborAGO.org).

For more information about the Marilyn Mason Young Musician's Scholarship contact Gale Kramer by telephone 734.769.1466 or by email [gkramer@provide.net](mailto:gkramer@provide.net).

#### Marilyn Mason Young Person's Scholarship Winners

2008 - Reuben Seward

2009 – Emily Seward

2010 - Sarah Simko

2011 - Quinn Reichard

2012, 2013 – no award

2014 – Maks Jurasek, Emily Wheeler

The Executive Committee of the  
Grand Rapids AGO  
2014–2015

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*The purpose of the American Guild of Organists is to promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide a forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members. Members of the American Guild of Organists are bound by the Code of Ethics and guided by the Code of Standards.*

## ADVERTISING IN THE CIPHER

If you would like to advertise an event in the Cipher, please send it to Michael Adams (pastoralmusician007@gmail.com). The Cipher is published monthly around the beginning of the month. If you have photos you would like to include please send them as well as they would be most appreciated.

*Thank you!*

## UPCOMING GRAGO PROGRAMS

Monday, March 16, 2015—Organ Concerti of Johann Sebastian Bach  
*The Organ Concerti of Johann Sebastian Bach. Organists – Stephanie Pestana, Karl Schrock, Norma De Waal Malefyt, and Rhonda Sider Edgington.*

Monday, April 20, 2015—Rotman and Quimby Organ Competitions  
*The Rotman and Quimby Organ Competitions at Calvin Christian Reformed Church. Bruce Klanderman and Joan Ringerwole are the competitions coordinators.*

Monday, May 18, 2015—A House Organ Crawl and Party  
*We will visit two home organ installations: At the Chalet of Fred and Lynn Keller, and the home of Jim and Jeanne Ransford we will have the opportunity to play their instruments and will also have an end of the year party for the chapter.*