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Grand Rapids AGO
2013-2014

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THE CIPHER

The Monthly Newsletter of the Grand Rapids Chapter
American Guild of Organists

April 2014

From the Dean

The Bubble

If you are a West Michigan native, you are certainly familiar with the phrase ‘the bubble.’ This of course refers to the cultural nuances that define our community and that set us apart (for better or for worse) from other parts of the United States. Sometimes mentioned in a positive light, and sometimes negative, the ‘bubble’ has a very large number of organizations that support the arts. In fact, when assembling the annual concert series at Trinity UMC, I often lament the very large number of musical organizations. It’s almost impossible to find an evening where no other musical events occur (who compete for largely the same audience)! Despite my whininess about this, what a blessing it is to have so many active and high quality organizations in our relatively small city. Off the top of my head, I can think of several: Embellish, The Bach Chorale, The Chamber Choir, The Grand Rapids Symphony and Chorus, The Choral Scholars, Opera Grand Rapids, The Grand Rapids Ballet, and The Grand Rapids Women’s Chorus. I’ve only mentioned a fraction of all that exist, but this list alone already represents a greater number than the total of many other cities of comparable size!

I was furthermore reminded of the blessings of our bubble during a recent conversation with an organist friend from another city. He had spent a large portion of his career in a city slightly larger than Grand Rapids, but much to my surprise, there were no full-time church music positions in that city! Also, we discussed how our neighboring city of Lansing currently has no full-time music positions. This is certainly not to say that full-time church positions are somehow more important than part-time ones, but one could argue that the number of full-time church music positions is a gauge of the city’s love of and appreciation for sacred music. Praise be to God that Grand Rapids still has many full-time and quality part-time positions!

Our city’s commitment to the arts makes our role in the AGO even more important. It’s our job to equip each other for service in the local sacred music scene. It’s also our job to further strengthen the organ’s presence in the community. I’m thankful to serve a robust and active community that has a strong history and promising future.

Yours,

Chris



APRIL PROGRAM

Grand Rapids AGO Chapter member Dr. Richard Rotman has generously given a substantial gift to fund the Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition. Given in honor of his mother, Annamae, this competition is open to any resident of Kent County, MI or any county adjacent to Kent County and/or resident student attending a high school, college, or university in Kent County, MI or any county adjacent to Kent County (Ottawa, Muskegon, Newaygo, Montcalm, Ionia, Barry, and Allegan Counties). The entrant must be under the age of 22 years as of August 1 of the competition year. You may find all the requirements on our website at

<http://www.grago.org/index.php/competitions/>

Held annually, Dr. Rotman desires this competition to be an encouragement for young musicians to continue and to further their organ study. This year we have two entrants and there will be a reception for them following the competition.

The Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition

Monday, April 28, 2014

6:30 pm: punch

7:00 pm: dinner (\$15, free for 30 and under)

8:00 pm: Competition

Calvin Christian Reformed Church
700 Ethel Ave SE
Grand Rapids

Music At Mid-Day from Park Church

Concerts begin at 12:15 pm. They last roughly 30 minutes. There is no cost for the concerts.

Lunch is available both before and after the concert.

11:15 am – 1:15 pm for \$5.00. Each week homemade soup, salad bar, bread, beverage, and fresh cookies are served. We hope you will join us!

April 1 Jonathan Tuuk, organ

April 8 Diane Penning, soprano,
Robert Byrens, piano

April 15 TBA

April 22 No Concert – Easter Break

April 29 Bruce Robey and Friends

EVENTS

Saturday, April 5, 7:00 pm. Cathedral of Saint Andrew, 301 Sheldon Blvd. S.E. The Evangelical Choral Society. Works by: J.S. Bach, Felix Mendelssohn, Charles Hubert H. Parry, Henry Purcell, Josef Rheinberger and Randall Thompson. Free admission.



Sunday, April 6, 3:00 pm Trinity Lutheran Church, 2700 East Fulton. Aquinas College Chamber Choir. Sensational Schubert. Larry Biser, Director, Carol McNally, Accompanist; Student Soloists; String Quartet: Christopher Martin, Violin I; Haijin Choi, Violin II; Barbara Corbato, Viola; Steve Redmon, Cello.

Music of Franz Schubert:

Stabat Mater D175;

Miriam's Song of Triumph (excerpt);

An die Musik;

Mass in Bb Major D324.

Sunday, April 6, 4:00 pm. Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain Street N.E. Oratorio Memorial Concert. The Fountain Street Oratorio Choir, the GRCC Concert Choir, along with musicians from the Grand River Winds, will perform:

Celebrations by Vincent Persichetti

Song of Democracy by Howard Hanson

Sleep by Eric Whitacre

Salvation Is Created by Pavel Chesnokov

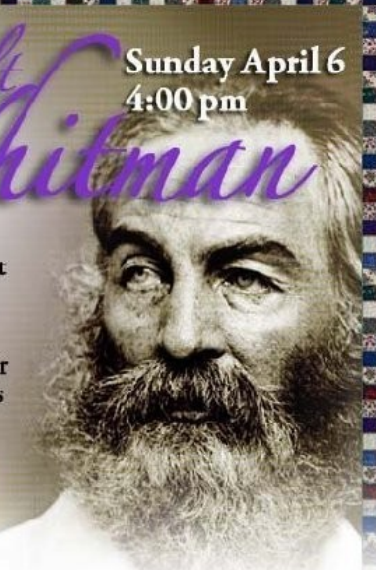

The performance will be conducted by Dr. Stephen Barton and Professor Michael Gillan. Marilyn Ossentjuk, Music Director at Fountain Street Church, will accompany the performance.

Music set to the Poetry of Walt Whitman

Sunday April 6
4:00 pm

2014 Oratorio Memorial Concert

Fountain Street Oratorio Choir, GRCC Concert Choir & Grand River Winds

Funding for this Concert will be largely from donations, contributed in memory of or in honor of someone important to you. If you wish to remember or honor someone, please return your contribution to Fountain Street Church by 12:00 p.m. on April 2nd. We appreciate your generous financial support of the Adult Choir and this musical tradition at Fountain Street Church.

Sunday, April 13, 3:00 pm. Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 1935 Plymouth Ave. S.E.



Aquinas College Chorus and Women's Chorus presents the Rachmaninoff "Vespers" with Concerto Winner. Mark Webb, Director.

Sunday, April 13, 6:00 pm. LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church, 107 LaGrave Ave. S.E. The Grand Rapids Symphony and LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church presents a "Sacred Dimensions" worship service featuring members of the GR Symphony, Dr. Larry Visser playing Handel's *Concerto in F Major* (The Cuckoo and the Nightingale), the LaGrave Chancel Choir singing Fauré's *Requiem* and a mass singing of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. There is no admission fee, however, a free-will offering will be taken at the service.

Saturday, April 26, 7:00 pm. Trinity United Methodist Church, 1100 Lake Drive S.E. **The Choral Scholars.** The Choral Scholars, one of West Michigan's premier vocal ensembles, will offer a concert of varied literature. Founded in 2005, the group has presented concerts throughout the area and has developed a reputation for their breathtaking intonation and stunning musicality. Admission is free, and a free-will offering will be received. A reception will follow.



Sunday, May 4, 7:30 pm. Central Reformed Church, 10 College Ave N.E. **The Bach Chorale of Grand Rapids.** will present its spring 2014 concert on Sunday, May 4th, at 7:30 pm, at Central Reformed Church, 10 College Ave NE, in downtown Grand Rapids. The featured works will be:

Josef Rheinberger: *Missa Misericordias Domini*

Josef Rheinberger: *Abendlied*

J. S. Bach: Cantata BWV 6, *Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden*

Benjamin Britten: *Festival Te Deum*

Luigi Boccherini: *Cello concerto in B-flat major*



Tickets for the May concert will go on sale in early March, and may be ordered at that time by using the ticket form on our website; they will also be available at the door. Ticket prices are \$15 for adults, \$12 for students and seniors (62+), and \$5 at the door for students with valid student ID.

UPCOMING PROGRAM

Sunday, May 18, 2014

3:00 p.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

47 Jefferson Avenue S.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49503



Hymn Festival featuring area children's choirs led by Michael

Burkhardt. Internationally known for his innovative and inspiring hymn festivals and for his creative work with children, Michael

Burkhardt is in frequent demand as a choral clinician, organ recitalist, and hymn festival leader.

He is currently Director of Worship and the Arts at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Livonia, Michigan, Director of Worship and the Arts for the Southeast Michigan Synod of the ELCA, and Artistic Director of the Detroit Handbell Ensemble. From 2001-2007 he served on the faculty of Carthage College (ELCA) in Kenosha, WI, as Director of Choral Activities, College Organist, and Artist in Residence. Prior to his appointment at Carthage, he was a Faculty Associate in organ at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. In addition, he served Christ College Irvine (LCMS), Irvine, CA, as College Organist and head of studies in church music and music education, as well as Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and Trinity Seminary, Columbus, OH, as Guest Lecturer in their Master of Sacred Music programs.

He has performed and led seminars at both national and regional events for the American Guild of Organists, the Hymn Society, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts, and the American Choral Directors Association. He made his symphonic hall debut in 1999 at the Meyerson Symphony Hall in Dallas, TX, and since 2003 has made four performance-teaching tours to South Korea and Singapore.

Dr. Burkhardt is author of *Part-Singing Global Style*, a resource focusing on sequential part-singing techniques in treble arrangements of global pieces, and author of *Singing with Understanding*, a curriculum utilizing the great hymns, folksongs and spirituals of the Church to share faith stories and to teach the elements of music and worship. He is composer of two settings of the Eucharistic liturgy, *A New Song* and *Missa St. Andrew*, as well as numerous organ improvisations, choral octavos and handbell compositions, available through [MorningStar Music Publishers](#) (St. Louis, MO), Choristers Guild (Dallas, TX), and Concordia Publishing House (St. Louis, MO).

