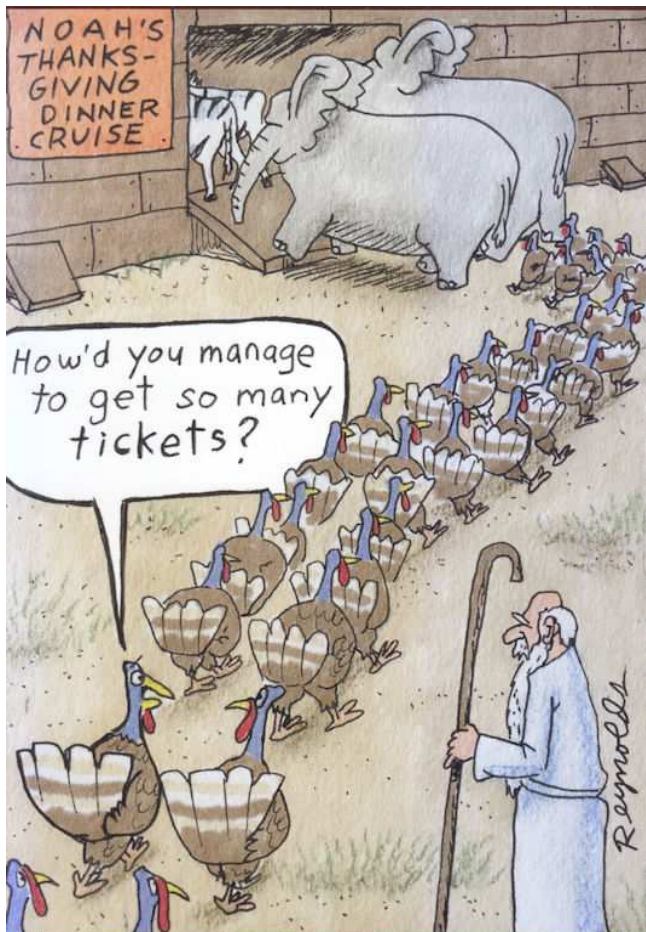


THE BROOKLYN BOMBARDE

The Newsletter of the Brooklyn Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

November 2019



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Dean's Letter

Dear Brooklyn AGO Members,

Greetings! I hope you've been enjoying a busy and productive Fall so far, and appreciating the lovely ambiance that the season

brings. Since the last time I wrote this Dean's Letter for the Bombarde, we at the Brooklyn AGO have gotten our program year well underway, with some great events recently concluded and much more around the corner.

We kicked things off in September with the triumphant return of "Bach to Brooklyn," our storied annual organ crawl. Led by the brilliant architectural historian Andrew Dolkart, we visited five churches and a synagogue, with fabulous musical performances at each. The event was the topic of a feature article in the Brooklyn Eagle newspaper, with write-ups and photos of each site by reporter Paul Frangipane. I encourage you to read the article via the link on our website, BrooklynAGO.org.

Later in September, we hosted a workshop focused on strategies for succeeding on the AGO's certification exams led by our board member Eric Birk, who has passed the most demanding tests the AGO offers. Mr. Birk made the important point that preparing for these exams makes us better organists, and this is a reason to undertake them even more important than the prestige they confer. Owing to strong attendance and positive reviews of the workshop, we're bound to offer more events like this one in the future, so please stay tuned!

Most recently, we produced a recital featuring the three winners of our 2019 George Mathison Memorial Scholarship Competition: Eddie Zheng, Samantha Scheff and Hannah Lingen Cen. Although these three are still students, they performed at the high level of full-fledged professionals, to the delight of our audience. Their performance was a gift to the future success of the Scholarship Competition, with all the funds they raised bound for the 2020 prize pool.

Our next event will be our New Years' kickoff, the January Banquet on Tuesday, January 7th, which will take place once again at Enoteca on Court. This event is always a wonderful opportunity to spend time with your fellow organists,

without having to pack your organ shoes! On January 25th we'll bring "Pedals, Pipes and Pizza" for children back to All Saints Episcopal Church in Park Slope, an effort to "pay it forward" and ensure that the music we love will be passed onto future generations. And on Sunday, February 9th, we'll host a recital by the incomparable David Hurd, who will also be donating his talents to benefit our Scholarship Competition Fund. Dr. Hurd will perform at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, the church he grew up attending, and he'll perform on the 1999 Guilbault-Thérien pipe organ that he helped design. This concert is not to be missed!

These three events upcoming events aren't the only ones we have cooking. The 2020 Scholarship Competition is now accepting applications, we're scouting venues for our 2020 Members' Recital, and we're planning more workshops and educational events. Please keep an eye on our website and on your email inbox for updates, and I hope we'll see you at some of these events soon. Thank you very much for your time and support!

Very truly yours,
Dr. John A. Wolfe

Dean, American Guild of Organists Brooklyn Chapter

In Memoriam

Joseph was born on Staten Island to Joseph, Sr. and Hildegard Dennon and was the eldest of four brothers, the others being Anthony, John and Michael. He maintained an apartment in Brooklyn Heights for the majority of his adult life but always considered the house on the island as his primary residence.

I first met Joe through a mutual friend when we were in our thirties. He worked at Polygram and I at Warner Communications, both in the entertainment industry. I was drawn to him immediately by his kindness and affability. Our affinity was later enhanced by our many common interests.

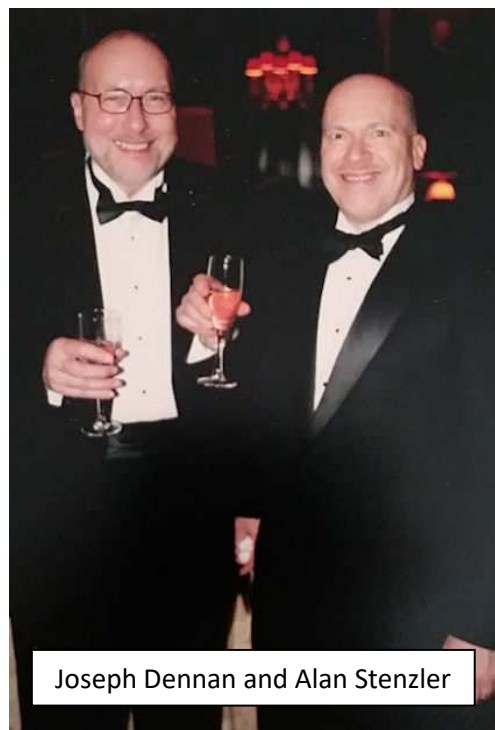
Joe was a veteran of the Vietnam War and, despite what may seem counter to common belief, said those years were among the best in his life. He developed many friendships, several which lasted long after his discharge. He was the recipient of many commendations.

Joe was a graduate of St. Francis College after having transferred from Manhattan College and earned a B.A. in psychology. I think his greatest love which was certainly fostered in school was the study of religion. He became so learned on the subject that his professor eventually acknowledged that Joe probably knew as much or more than he and would automatically receive an "A" with no need to attend class. Joe, being the person he was, went to class. Joe's retention of facts was phenomenal. I would guarantee that he could lecture on religion for an entire semester without once referring to notes or a textbook.

Most of Joe's employment was spent at the world headquarters of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was here where he met Carmen who became his other closest friend. She had recently emigrated from Colombia and was also attracted to him for the very same reasons I had been. He enjoyed to the utmost helping her with her English for which she will always be grateful.

Classical music was probably the major love which further cemented our trio. We all adored opera and symphonic music. In his later years, Joe broadened his interest to include piano music and the "rarified" world of chamber music. Over the years, we attended too many concerts to enumerate.

Without question, the organ was as equal in his love to the others. Throughout the city, Joe served as organist, later to find substituting more to his liking. He was a member of the AGO and OHS for many years and had also served as dean



Joseph Dennon and Alan Stenzler

of the former. Our annual summer event for decades was attendance at the conventions hosted by these organizations. Unfortunately, medical issues would finally force him to withdraw from performing.

Joe always studied the organ privately. I believe he credited his teacher, Craig Williams, presently Organist /Choirmaster at the West Point Cadet Chapel, as having the most profound influence on his playing.

Was Joe a polymath? I think I could argue that very persuasively. In addition to the aforementioned, he adored history, linguistics, ethnology, architecture, classic film, etc. Ask him the religious and ethnic composition of a nation, he would immediately tell you with the percentage of each group.

He was also a connoisseur of New York City and its history. He was fascinated with its subway system. He took delight in advising a person as to how to commute to some of the more obscure sections of the city.

Did his interests ever become esoteric? I recall the time he mentioned he had become curious about Chinese calligraphy and had started attending classes. The teacher had taken the students to the studio of a master calligrapher. I forget the details, but the students were asked to select a brush from his ample collection. Without much hesitation, Joe chose his. The master was dumbfounded. "You picked my finest brush! Are you sure you're not Chinese?"

I hope the foregoing has provided you a glimpse into the depth and character of this remarkable person. Carmen and I will always miss him terribly and relish the memories. I would wish Joe to rest in peace but can't erase the vision I have of him in heaven having a hearty discussion of religion with the angels.

Alan Stenzler & Carmen Maza



Brooklyn AGO member Roy Prescod has passed away. He was a beloved choral conductor at the Phillips Schuyler School and, for many years, director of music at St. Thomas Bushwick. He was a graduate of New York University and Fordham University, and a native of Colón, Panama. His funeral was held Saturday, August 31st at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Flatbush.

We Thank Our 2018-2019 Contributors to the Brooklyn AGO

- Keith Bigger
- W. Eric Birk
- Gary Di Franco
- Gregory C. Eaton
- Jared M. Lamenzo
- Nicholas Martellacci
- Joe Vitacco
- Craig R. Whitney

George S. Mathison Scholarship Winners Perform

In this third year of the Brooklyn AGO's Scholarship Competition, the three prizewinners gathered on Saturday, October 26th at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn Heights to perform a spectacular recital of beautiful and challenging music on the church's 1937 Aeolian Skinner organ. Proceeds from the event's freewill offering will be used to replenish the George S. Mathison Scholarship Fund for the 2020 Competition to be held on March 14th.

Hannah Lingen Cen, a Master's Degree candidate in Organ Performance at the Manhattan School of Music and the third place winner, played J.S. Bach's Toccata and "Dorian" Fugue and the Introduction and Passacaglia in D Minor by Max Reger. Second place winner, Samantha Scheff, a Master's Degree student at Rutgers University, played Bach's Fantasia super: Komm Heiliger Geist, BWV 651 and two movements from Louis Vierne's 3rd Symphonie. The first place winner was Eddie Zheng, an undergraduate student at the Juilliard School who played Mendelssohn's Fourth Sonata in Bb and César Franck's Chorale #3 in A Minor.

At the reception following the concert, everyone agreed that all three performances were very inspiring and expertly performed. Please keep your eye on the Chapter website <https://www.brooklynago.org> for the date of our 2020 Winners' Recital. We would really like to build the audience for the event. Year after year, it has been consistently too wonderful of a performance not to have a really large and enthusiastic attendance.

Applicants for the 2020 Competition should go to <https://www.brooklynago.org/scholarship-competition> for eligibility/repertoire requirements and the application form which is due by February 14th, 2020.

Ellen Wright

Cooperative Choral Reading Workshop

This past January's workshop was a success and members have asked us to repeat it. So mark your calendars for Monday, January 27, 2020. Former Dean Raymond Trapp will be hosting us at Vandevener Park United Methodist Church located at 3114 Glenwood Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11210. The workshop will run from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., followed by light refreshments provided by the church.

One of our members has requested that we highlight Easter anthems at our next workshop. Let's do our best to honor that request. However, if you want to participate but do **not** have an Easter anthem to share, please show up with your anthem in hand!

Early in December I will be emailing a Google Forms link to all members. The form will let you identify the anthem you'll be presenting.

Member News

In our last issue we announced that Brooklyn member Adriano Spampinato had advanced to the semi-final round of the Tariverdiev Organ Competition. I'm happy to announce that Mr. Spampinato has won the special prize of the Art-Assembly and Tavrisheskaya chapel for the best rendition of baroque music at that competition. As part of that award Adriano will be performing a solo recital next season in St. Petersburg. Born in 1990, this French-Italian musician pursued musical studies to the "Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris" in piano, organ, harpsichord and accompaniment (vocal, dance and choral), earning four bachelor and one master degree.

Adriano Spampinato is currently organist at Christ Church on Park Ave. in Manhattan. Last summer, he worked as an assistant-conductor at Opera North (Lebanon, NH) and will join next season Opera Saratoga as a vocal coach.



Calendar

- 11/28/2019
Thanksgiving
- 12/3/2019 - 12:30:00 PM
Organ Recital - Craig Whitney
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 12/8/2019 - 11:00:00 AM
Advent Lessons and Carols
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 12/8/2019 - 4:00:00 PM
Community Carol Sing
Grace Lutheran Church, Forest Hills
- 12/10/2019 - 12:30:00 PM
Organ Recital - Dr. Gregory D'Agostino
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 12/17/2019 - 12:30:00 PM
Organ Recital - Paul Richard Olson
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 12/22/2019
First Night of Hanukkah
- 12/22/2019 - 5:00:00 PM
Christmas Lessons and Carols
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 12/25/2019
Christmas
- 1/1/2020
New Year's Day
- 1/7/2020 - 6:00:00 PM
January Banquet
Enoteca on Court
- 1/14/2020 - 7:30:00 PM
Board Meeting
Baptist Temple
- 1/20/2020
MLKing Day
- 1/25/2020 - 12:00:00 AM
Pedals, Pipes, & Pizza
All Saints, Park Slope
- 1/27/2020 - 7:00:00 PM
Choral Reading Workshop
Vandevener Park UMC, Brooklyn
- 2/11/2020 - 7:30:00 PM
Board Meeting
Baptist Temple
- 2/17/2020
President's Day
- 2/26/2020
Ash Wednesday
- 3/3/2020 - 12:30:00 PM
Dr. Judith Hancock, Organist
Grace Church Brooklyn Heights
- 3/10/2020 - 12:30:00 PM
Dr. Stephen Rapp, Organist
Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights
- 3/10/2020 - 7:30:00 PM
Board Meeting
Baptist Temple
- 3/14/2020 - 11:00:00 AM
Scholarship Competition
Grace Episcopal Church, Brooklyn
- 3/17/2020 - 12:30:00 PM
Dr. Paul Martin Maki, Organist
Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights
- 3/24/2020 - 12:30:00 PM
Dr. William F. Entriken, Organist
Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights
- 3/31/2020 - 12:30:00 PM
James D. Wetzel, Organist
Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights

Board and Officers

Dean Dr. John A. Wolfe
Sub-Dean Thomas Hobson Williams
Treasurer Eric Birk, FAGO
Secretary Maria Rayzwasser
Registrar Gary Di Franco

Executive Board

Class of 2020:
Anthony Labella
Kurleigh Lowe, CAGO
Rasaan Bourke

Class of 2021

Robert Frisby
Phillip Lamb
Ellen Wright

Class of 2022

Lana Krakovskiy
Nick Martellacci
Alex Violette

Substitute List

Don Barnum - (917) 689-2953
Samantha Bassler - (570) 594-1066
John Collis (no Sunday AM) - (718) 797-5473
John Conner - (201) 945-8579
Gary Di Franco - (917) 626-7760
Nick Martellacci (no Sunday AM) - (718) 624-5665
Maria Rayzwasser (no Sunday AM) - (347) 598-4571
Alex Violette - (718) 873-5912
Robert Vogel - (917) 242-6745
Thomas Hobson Williams (no Sunday AM) - (404) 403-7492
John A. Wolfe (no Sunday AM) - (717) 253-2886
Ellen Wright - (917) 693-7158

Te Deum
by
Harvey
Schwartz

Te Deum
by
Harvey
Schwartz

Te Deum
by
Harvey
Schwartz

Chorale Workshop

Vandever Park United Methodist Church
3114 Glenwood Rd
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Monday, January 27, 2020
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

The poster features a blue background with white snowflakes, stars, and musical notes. Several Christmas ornaments in red, blue, green, and gold are scattered throughout. The title 'Community Carol Sing' is written in a large, white, cursive font. Below the title, the date and time are listed in yellow. The church name and address are in white and yellow. A note about a reception and a cash prize is at the bottom.

Community Carol Sing

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018 - 4:00 P.M.

Grace Lutheran Church

103-15 Union Turnpike
Forest Hills, NY 11375
718-268-6189

Reception to follow.

*Cash prize for the craziest
Christmas sweater!*

**The American Guild of Organists
Brooklyn Chapter Invites You to Our
January 2020 Banquet**



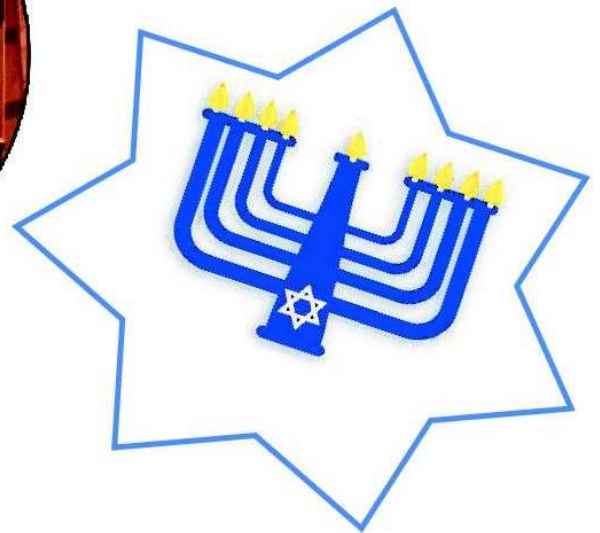
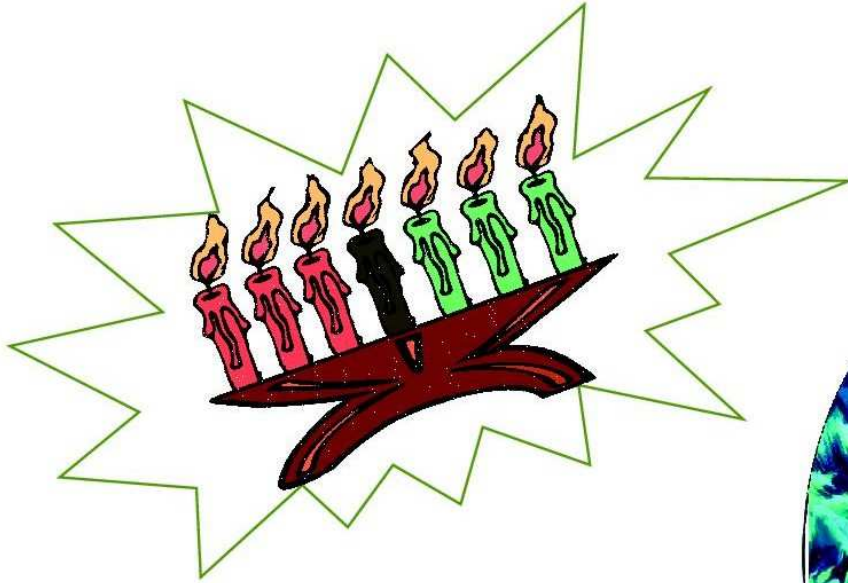
Tuesday, January 7th at 6:30PM
Enoteca on Court
347 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231
(Take the F or G Trains to Carroll Street Station)

\$55 per person

*Including salad, antipasto, pizza, choice of three entrées, cake and American coffee. Cash bar.
There will be a vegetarian option and members may bring guests.*

Please make checks payable to AGO Brooklyn Chapter and mail to:
The Brooklyn Chapter AGO
% John A. Wolfe
476 W. 141st St., Apt. 71
New York, NY 10031

For more info please contact
Dean John A. Wolfe at johnwolfe@johnwolfemusic.com



**Best wishes for a blessed holiday season
and a happy and healthy New Year!**