

May 2010

The American Guild of Organists San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

SFAGO June Chapter Event Thomas Murray in Recital

by David Howitt

On Saturday, June 5, at 8:00 p.m., Thomas Murray, internationally acclaimed concert organist and recording artist, will perform a solo recital on the new 4-manual, 94-stop Letourneau Organ at the equally new Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland.

Mr Murray is University Organist and Professor of Music at Yale University, where he has served on the faculty for 28 years and has taught many of the leading performers of a younger generation. Widely known for his interpretations of Romantic repertoire and orchestral transcriptions, his recordings are highly acclaimed. *High Fidelity* has credited him with "... consummate skill and artistry in treating the organ as a great orchestra" and *American Record Guide* said of his Elgar CD: "Murray's performance and his handling of the immense resources of the Woolsey Hall organ are beyond superlatives ... the shape of every phrase, the use of every color ... could not be more perfect." *The Diapason*, reviewing his recital at the 2006 National Convention in Chicago commented, "... a thrilling performance by Thomas Murray ... a perfect match of organ, program and artist. Murray justly received a tumultuous standing ovation."

Born in California in 1943, Murray studied with Clarence Mader at Occidental College. He has appeared in recitals and lectures at six national conventions of the A.G.O., which named him International Artist of the Year for 1986. As the recipient of this award he followed

SFAGO Annual Meeting

will take place from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Vo's Vietnamese Restaurant, 59 Grand Avenue, Oakland.

Join us for drinks at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m. and stay for the meeting, or just come at 7:00 p.m. for the meeting. After the meeting, we will walk to the Cathedral of Christ the Light to hear what should be a splendid program.

such luminaries as Marie-Claire Alain, Jean Guillou and Dame Gillian Weir. In 2003 he was named an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Organists in England, and in 2005 he was awarded the Gustave Stoeckel Award for excellence in teaching from the Yale University School of Music.

Recent appearances include the debut recital on the renovated E.M. Skinner organ in Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago, recitals for the Anglican Association of Musicians at Disney Hall in Los Angeles, and for the Organ Historical Society at Severance Hall in Cleveland. In the current season, Murray will collaborate with conductor Simon Carrington and the Yale Schola Cantorum in a performance of Richard Rodney Bennett's choral piece *The Glory and the Dream*.

The concert, sponsored by SFAGO and the Cathedral of Christ the Light is free for AGO members and will be preceded by the SFAGO Annual Dinner. 🎶

Please see the accompanying article on page 3.

Errata Redux

There will be eleven (11) issues per year, running September thru June, plus the summer issue for July/August. We apologize again for the confusion regarding this matter. 🎶

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Submission deadline for the June issue is **May 10, 2010**

From the Dean

I've just made my reservations for the DC-AGO Convention, July 4–8, to be held in Washington, DC. The convention committee has gone all out to transform the way conventions are put on, such as instituting fully online registration and printing the convention booklet on green paper. But we all know that content is the key, and there will be no shortage of that at this summer's convention.

I spent my high school years in the District of Columbia (Gonzaga High School — Go Eagles!) and it was during that time that I acquired a passion for the pipe organ. In my first year — I transferred in as a sophomore — a senior named Carl Schwartz took me up to show me the two manual Kilgen in St Aloysius Church, a barn of a building. He performed the opening toccata from Bach's BWV 565. Despite being merely two manuals, the organ had no problem filling the church with sound. I immediately said to myself, "I *have* to learn how to do this!" I spent most of my free periods in school teaching myself how to play the organ. Later on, of course, I went to an actual conservatory and learned how to play properly, but by the time I graduated from Gonzaga High, I could play BWV 565 in its entirety with minimal crashing and burning.

During that time, I also got to know a lot of the instruments in DC. My Latin teacher happened to be the organist at my parish church, and he also made the circuit as a novena organist in several Roman Catholic churches. Several of my classmates were also really into the pipe organ and we would often go around town and into churches to see if we could play the organs (sometimes sneaking in without checking with the authorities). I have not had much contact with Carl, but I do know he studied organ in college, continues to be an active player and is involved with the AGO in the DC area.

Whether or not you are considering going this summer, don't forget that *next* summer, we will have our own Region IX Convention (July 3–7, 2011). There will be monthly articles about this event, everything from information about the performing artists and venues, to the nuts and bolts of putting it on. Please keep your eyes peeled.

Articles will be appearing regularly about the 2011 Region IX Convention in this newsletter. The 2011 Convention will feature artists who are well known nationally and internationally, and the amazing thing


Remembering Emmy Altman

by James Aylward


Emmy Altman (1911–2010), widow of the late well-known bay area organist Ludwig Altman (1910–1990) was born in Schweinfurt, Bavaria. After graduating from the University of Wurzburg, she left Nazi Germany in 1938 and settled in San Francisco, where in 1940 she married Ludwig and began a distinguished forty year career in the San Francisco middle school system.

Both of them were devoted to Judaism and proud of their association with Congregation Emanu-El, where Ludwig served as organist for fifty years and Emmy seventy years in the Temple Sisterhood.

A talented teacher and a specialist in historical costumes, this witty and elegant woman, though not a musician herself, loyally supported her husband's career and memory. On one occasion, after a recital by Ludwig at the Palace of the Legion of Honor (where he played on weekends), a young organist remarked to Emmy that she had never before heard a certain piece (Ives' Variations on America) that Ludwig had played and intended to check on the score when she returned home. Emmy's reply was, "Why? Didn't you think that my husband played it accurately?"

Emmy spent the last six years of her life in San Francisco's Jewish home before her death on January 11. Later this year, Congregation Emanu-El plans to hold a memorial concert in honor of Emmy and of the 29th anniversary of her husband's death. May they both rest in peace. 



is that they are *all* from Region IX. Hopefully, you read Douglas Franks' article in last month's newsletter about the need for funding from members and organizations. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation and help us meet our goals. 

SFAGO Annual Dinner and Meeting

Saturday, June 5, 2010

5:30 p.m. Gathering

6:00 p.m. Dinner

7:00 p.m. Meeting

8:00 p.m. Recital

by David Howitt, Sub Dean

The SFAGO will hold its final event of the 2009–2010 season, the annual dinner and meeting followed by a recital featuring Thomas Murray on the 4/94 Letourneau organ at the Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland. Great music and food on the same evening ... who could ask for more!

The annual dinner and meeting will take place at Vo's Vietnamese Restaurant, 59 Grand Avenue, at the corner of Grand Avenue and Webster Street, just two blocks from the Cathedral.

We'll gather at 5:30 p.m. in a private area of the restaurant for drinks and conversation. Vo's has an extensive list of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. At 6:00 p.m. we'll gather for dinner and will be served a starter of Spring rolls with shrimp or tofu, Crab puffs and additional appetizers and salads of Fuji Apple/tofu and a duck salad. These will be served family style. The entrees will be served individually and will include grilled salmon, free range chicken breast, prawns, shaken cube beef steak, vegetarian rice in clay pot, or garlic tofu with accompanying vegetables. Jasmine or brown rice is included with the entrée. The total price for the meal is \$25.00 excluding drinks (water and tea are included).

Following dinner, the meeting will recap the past year, preview the 2010–2011 program, and talk about the 2011

Regional Convention. After the meeting we'll walk two blocks to the Cathedral for Thomas Murray's recital.

Directions to Vo's restaurant and the Cathedral

Vo's – 59 Grand Ave (corner of Grand and Webster)
Cathedral – 2121 Harrison (between Grand and 21st St.)

From 880 North

Take I-980 (Berkeley/Walnut Creek) proceeding 1.6 miles (be in the right lane); exit onto I-580 East towards Hayward. (†) Go 0.7 miles and be in the right lane; exit at Harrison St. and turn right to get onto Harrison; turn right on Grand (The Cathedral is on the corner of Harrison and Grand. Vo's is 2 blocks away on the corner of Grand and Webster).

From 80 West

Take 80 West; Exit onto I-580 East towards Hayward (be in left lanes); follow the above directions at (†).

From San Francisco

Take the Bay Bridge (I-80 East); as you come off the bridge get into the middle lanes so that you exit onto I-580 East; follow the above directions at (†).

There should be parking available on the street, but if you wish to park in the Cathedral Parking Garage, proceed across Grand Avenue and make the first right turn onto 21st Street. The parking garage is on the right underneath the cathedral grounds. ☺



RESERVATION FORM

SFAGO Annual Dinner at Vo's Vietnamese Restaurant
59 Grand Avenue, Oakland (510) 465-4600

Please copy this form and fill out a separate form for each person attending
Deadline – June 1, 2010

Name _____

Phone and/or email address _____

Entrée (please choose **one** of the following)

Grilled Salmon with garlic green beans

Grilled FREE RANGE Chicken breast with fresh asparagus

Tamarind Prawns with watercress

Shaken Beef steak with watercress

Vegetarian Rice in Clay pot

Garlic Tofu with eggplant

Dinner reservation — \$25.00.

Please mail this reservation form and your check, payable to SFAGO to
David Howitt, 2840 Adams St., Alameda CA 94501

Things to Come: SFAGO 2011 Convention Performers

by John Karl Hirten

AGO Regional Conventions are different than the biennial national conventions in that they are intended to feature regional performers. Region IX, of which the San Francisco Chapter is a part, is special because it incorporates chapters not only from California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Hawaii but also Singapore, Korea and Australia. The committee charged with planning the programs for the 2011 convention made a decision early on to feature performers exclusively from the region. Here, then, is the second in a series of articles about the convention, which will take place July 3–7, 2011 in the San Francisco Bay Area, and we will focus on the performers chosen for this event. In later articles, we will focus on the venues.

The first notes heard at the convention will be played by Rodney Gehrke, who will be the featured organist in the opening service on Sunday, July 3. Rodney Gehrke is director of music at All Saints' Episcopal Church, Palo Alto; organist and choir director at San Francisco's Temple Emanu-El; undergraduate organ instructor at the University of California, Berkeley; and adjunct lecturer in church music and liturgy at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley. Mr Gehrke has performed and recorded with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and has also made two recordings of Mexican Baroque music with Chanticleer, with whom he toured the Southwest and Mexico in 1998. More recently he has performed with the American Bach Soloists as continuo organist and harpsichordist. More information about this service and the other worship services of the week will appear in later articles.

The first daytime recital on Monday, July 4, features Angela Kraft Cross. She has performed extensively on both organ and piano, having given over three hundred concerts across the United States, in Canada, England, Holland, France, Hungary, Lesotho and Guam, including such venues as Notre Dame Cathedral and St Sulpice in Paris, Washington National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., St Thomas Church in New York City, and Southwark Cathedral in London. She has released five CDs—three with Arkay Records: two on organ (French Romantic and North German Baroque) and one on piano (Classical Piano Sonatas). Both organ albums have received critical acclaim in *The American Organist* magazine. For more info, visit www.angelakraftcross.com.

Later that day, we will hear Robert Huw Morgan, University Organist at Stanford University. A native of Wales, he received his BA and MA from the University of Cambridge, where he was organ scholar at St John's College. His performances have been featured on the BBC

radio and television, as well as stations in other countries. His repertoire includes works from the earliest sources of keyboard music to contemporary works (including the west coast premiere of *Hyperion* by Jean Guillou), along with such Romantic masterpieces as Franz Liszt's *Fantasia and Fugue on "Ad nos"* and Max Reger's *Variations and Fugue on an Original Theme*. For more info, visit www.roberthuwmorgan.com.

The first ensemble to perform will be Millennia Consort, with Alison Luedecke, organist. This wonderful brass and organ group has appeared at the AGO National Convention in Los Angeles a few years ago. For more information, visit millenniaconsort.com.

We are very fortunate to have Roger Nyquist, who will play on Tuesday, July 5. Nyquist has been on the faculty of Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas; the University of California at Santa Barbara; and from 1968–1992, was Professor of Music and University Organist at Santa Clara University. He also was Chairman of the Music Department at Santa Clara from 1969–1978. Now residing in Sacramento, California, Nyquist devotes full time to his concert career, private organ teaching and recording. *Fanfare* Magazine states "Nyquist is a stimulating artist, full of alertness, flexibility, and imagination." For more information, go to www.rogernyquist.com.

Later that afternoon, convention goers will hear *I, Norton, an Opera in Real Time*, by the Bay Area Avant-garde Composer/Performer Gino Robair. The literary elements behind the work are the writings attributed to Norton I, as well as "fraudulent decrees" published in contemporary newspapers to cash in on the Emperor's notoriety. The words, letters, rhythms, and structure of the texts are prepared in a variety of ways and used as source material by each performer. In performance, *I, Norton* takes the shape of an improvised collage structure that combines conduction (using hand cues), graphic scores, memory-based improvisational structures, and fully notated works. The opera can be performed by a handful of people or a large ensemble. In this performance, organist David Hatt will be featured.

The week's first evening concert will be the Artists' Vocal Ensemble (AVE) directed by Jonathan Dimmock. Founded on St Cecilia's Day 2004, AVE brings to life many of the lost masterworks from the Renaissance and Tudor periods, using informed performance style and highly trained singers. While presenting programs of scholarly interest, AVE strives to create experiences that are emotional, spiritual, and contemplative. The concerts have a strong impact on audiences, where many describe feelings of being transformed and uplifted. AVE's intention is not to limit its audience to early and liturgical music devotees, but to offer this seldom-heard material for an audience of all ages, tastes, and sensibilities. Visit www.ave-music.org.

Las Vegas-based Dorothy Young Riess, who will play

a midday program on Wednesday, July 6, started her professional training at the University of Oklahoma School of Music and became a protégé of the renowned Mildred Andrews, whose exceptional teaching skills and discipline resulted in top honors in several State and Regional competitions, including First Place in the American Guild of Organists National Competition in San Francisco 1952. She received a scholarship to study at l'École de Musique de Fontainebleau, France, composition with Nadia Boulanger and organ with Marcel Dupré, who recommended her as "...an excellent and perfect musician with a brilliant technique." She left a promising music career to study medicine, became a medical doctor and practiced until she retired in 2006 at the age of 76. She resumed her organ playing and, basically, plays as if she never left music.

Later that afternoon, Samuel Soria, organist at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, will provide improvised interludes in a vesper service. In addition to academic study with Philip Gehring and Wolfgang Rubsam, he has studied privately with Jean Guillou, Naji Hakim, and Paul Manz. He was a prize-winner in the 1996 AGO National Competition in Organ Improvisation and was a semi-finalist in the same competition in 1992. He won second place in the J.S. Bach International competition in 1993 at the Kennedy Center, Washington DC. In 1995, he participated in the European Competition in Organ improvisation, Knokke-Heist, Belgium, the first American to be invited to this competition.

That evening features Amy Johansen from Sydney, Australia. She is the Sydney University Organist and an Honorary Carillonneur at the University. Although her repertoire encompasses all periods of music, it was her first CD, *The Embrace of Fire*, devoted to the organ music of Naji Hakim, which initially brought her international acclaim. She has performed often as soloist and accompanist with Australian and foreign ensembles including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Sydney Philharmonia Choir, Sydney Chamber Choir and the Scottish National Orchestra Choir, with her performances broadcast on American Public Radio's Pipedreams, the ABC, and the BBC.

Thursday morning features the latest addition to the stable of organists at the Mormon Tabernacle, Andrew Unsworth. He was appointed to this position in 2007. He holds a degree in organ performance and pedagogy from Brigham Young University. He also earned master and doctorate degrees from Duke University. From 2001-2006 he was the organist for the Cathedral of the Madeline in Salt Lake City. Prior to becoming a Tabernacle Organist, Unsworth was an assistant professor of music history and organ at Stephen F. Austin State University.

The afternoon features recitalist Namhee Han. Playing from the heart defines Namhee Han's approach to music making. She was a featured artist at the National

Used Music Sale Project

from Steve Wallace

The time has come for me to relinquish the reins of the used music sale and hand them over to someone else. I have truly enjoyed some 20 years in this position, ever since Steve Repasky and I began the project some time in the last century!


If you are interested in taking over the used music sale for the Chapter, will you please call or e-mail me? I would like to turn things over sometime in late summer.

Steve Wallace
(510) 834-7708
skwwallace@peoplepc.com



Convention of the American Guild of Organists in 2004. A native of South Korea, Ms Han studied the piano from age eight. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in English education from Seoul National University, she came to the US to pursue graduate studies in linguistics. It was then that she encountered the organ and became immediately fascinated with the limitless tonal and expressive possibilities of the instrument. She began organ study with Thomas Harmon in 1999 and completed Master's and Doctoral degrees in organ performance at UCLA working with Christoph Bull. In addition, she holds Master's and Ph.D. degrees in applied linguistics from UCLA. She is resident organist at Westwood Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles.

The final program will feature Kimberly Marshall, who will be joined by members of American Bach Soloists. She is the director of the Arizona State University School of Music, Patricia and Leonard Goldman Endowed Professorship in Organ, Katherine K. Herberger College of the Arts. Previously, she served as Dean of Postgraduate Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, London, and Assistant Professor of Music at Stanford University. Despite all these academic accomplishments, she's an exceptional player! She won the prestigious St Albans Competition in 1985 and can be heard on several recordings.

As Chair of the Program Committee for the SFAGO 2011 Region IX Convention, I want to thank committee members Lenore Alford, Matthew Walsh, and Rani Fischer for their help and feedback. Please keep your eyes on this newsletter for more information about the convention. 

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

2010 May

Events, dates, times, and locations subject to change without notice. Compiled from flyers, press releases, and listings submitted by members and organizations. SFAGO is not responsible for errors, although every effort is made to be accurate. Submission deadline for the next issue is **May 10** for the **June** issue. Send event listings to AGOCalendar@yahoo.com

Recurring Venues

Churches and institutions offering programs on a regular basis have been assigned abbreviations so as to save space in our listings. Abbreviations are listed below with the full name of the venue. When no city is stated, San Francisco is assumed.

- CCL-O:** Cath of Christ the Light, Oakland
- CPLH:** Calif. Palace of the Legion of Honor
- CSMA:** Cath. of St Mary of the Assumption
- SFE:** St Francis' Episcopal
- SME-B:** St Mark's Episcopal Ch, Berkeley
- SPE-BU:** St Paul's Episcopal Ch, Burlingame

May 2010

1 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

2 Sunday

3:30pm. David Scofield, Organ. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

6pm. Cameron Carpenter (New York), Organ. \$20-\$30. Davies Symphony Hall

8 Saturday

4pm. Mark Bruce, Organ. CPLH

9 Sunday

3pm. Music by Women Composers. Resurrection Lutheran Church, Oakland.

3:30pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. CSMA

4pm. Mark Bruce, Organ. CPLH

6:10pm. Michael Messina (Trinity Episcopal Church, Indianapolis), Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. SME-B

15 Saturday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

5pm. Choral Evensong & Music Ministry Fundraiser. Music of JS Bach. SPE-BU

16 Sunday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

5pm. Susan Jane Matthews, Organ. Recital Series for the Dedication of the Létourneau organ. Free-will donation. Cathedral of Christ the Light, 2121 Harrison Street, Oakland [CCL-O]

22 Saturday

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

5pm. Soli Deo Gloria, Allen Simon, conductor. Duruflé Requiem and works by Rutter, Daley, Chatman, plus premieres by Susa, Lyon, and Simon. \$25/20. 888-SDG-SONG or www.sdgloria.org First Lutheran Church, 600 Homer Ave, Palo Alto

23 Sunday

3:30pm. Cole Tutino, Cello, with Chun Mei Wilson, Piano. CSMA

3:30pm. Soli Deo Gloria. (see May 22) Christ Episcopal Church, 1700 Santa Clara Ave, Alameda

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

29 Saturday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

30 Sunday

3:30pm. Bay Area Youth Harp Ensemble. CSMA

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

7pm. James Welch, Organ, with Rebecca Maggi, Soprano. Music of Widor, Pierné, Langlais, Berveiller, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, and Puccini. \$10. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto

Looking Ahead

June 2010

5 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

8pm. SFAGO EVENT: Thomas Murray, Organ. Recital Series for the Dedication of the Létourneau organ. Free-will donation. Cathedral of Christ the Light, 2121 Harrison Street, Oakland [CCL-O]

6 Sunday

3:30pm. Corrado Cavalli, Organ. CSMA

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

12 Saturday

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

13 Sunday

3:30pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. CSMA

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

5:30pm. Choral Evensong, St Francis' Choir & Chamber Ensemble, Robert J. Kerman, Director; Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Music by James Hurd, Grayston Ives, GF Handel, Charles Callahan, John Ireland. Reception to follow. Free-will offering. SFE

6:10pm. Lenore Alford (St John's Episcopal Church, Ross, CA), Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. SME-B

19 Saturday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

20 Sunday

3:30pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. CSMA

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

26 Saturday

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

27 Sunday

3:30pm. Scot Foppiano, Organ. CSMA

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

July 2010

3 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4 Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

10 Saturday

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

11 Sunday

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

17 Saturday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

18 Sunday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

24 Saturday

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

25 Sunday

4pm. Keith Thompson, Organ. CPLH

