



VOL. 41, No. 5
JANUARY/JANVIER 2024

Pipelines

Bouches et anches



President's Message

ALISON KRANIAS

Winter Inspiration by Bird Song

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Well, Christmas is over. I hope you all had wonderful celebrations at your churches. And now that it's January, do you find, like me, that there are fewer singers in your choir? There are always some who travel to warmer climes at this time of year and some of them are gone for months. *Snowbirds* we call them, and perhaps you are one of them. And what does that make those of us who remain here? Chickadees, perhaps?

So, if you are here for the winter, and leading a choir with, shall we say, reduced forces, what music do you choose for them? I've found that *keeping it simple* is best. You can look for music in two parts, perhaps something written for a children's or women's choir. If you have low voices in the choir, try having them double the alto part, an octave down. Rounds can also work well, as these are generally written in a comfortable range for all voices. So if you have lots of altos, and a couple of tenors and a few sopranos, you can just put some people from each section on each part. It could be a short round you find in your hymn book, like Strathdee's *What Does the Lord Require of You?*, or something more elaborate like William Boyce's *Alleluia* round. If you are blessed with a good vocal or instrumental soloist, what about finding an anthem with a solo part

and having the choir sing the soprano line in unison? There are lots of possibilities once you start looking. Whatever you choose, I hope you and whatever little flock you might be leading, puff up your feathers and enjoy singing through the brilliant cold of our winter months!



Centre Events

IAN GUENETTE AND SONDRA GOLDSMITH PROCTOR

It's 2024! A time of new beginnings and looking over our shoulders at what is yet to be completed for 2023. As you ponder your activities for the new year, please remember to place several RCCO-Ottawa events on your new calendar.

Saturday, 27 January 2024, 10 a.m. Plan now to reserve a seat at the Cafe RCCO Zoom session on *Principles for Making Informed Decisions about our Musical Techniques* led by Donald Russell. Please register via email at events@rcco-ottawa.ca. You'll receive a registration notice. Close to the event, you will receive a Zoom invitation and link.

Saturday, February 10, 2024 at 2pm, the RCCO Ottawa Centre will have an afternoon session of Lent and Easter music at 2pm at Trinity United Church, 1099 Maitland Ave. The church has a 3-manual Casavant organ, a lovely baby grand piano, and a large parking lot. Please bring music you love, music you find useful to share with centre members.

Saturday, April 6 is International Organ Day. There will be several programs showcasing the organ. If you are interested in presenting, please contact Sondra Goldsmith Proctor.

On **Saturday, May 11** we will gather at St. Andrew's Church for the **Great Bach Marathon**. This year there will be three tracks. Many grown-ups have expressed

interest in the organ but have not had the opportunity to learn about how all the parts function. So we are providing an opportunity for adults who wish to explore and learn about the organ to do so. Of course, we will invite children to learn about the King of Instruments as well. We'll conclude with many offerings of Bach's organ repertoire.



Kiwanis Music Festival Preparation

ROBERT JONES

For many years, Ottawa's Kiwanis Music Festival has included classes for organ. The Festival wants a sufficient number of organ students to enter or they won't offer the organ classes. That would be a great pity: the students gain valuable performance and adjudication experience. Additionally, we would lose the big Arnt Loa Scholarship of \$600, which they usually divide between several Junior students. If we don't have sufficient numbers, and they cancel the organ classes, the chances of the Festival reviving the organ classes might be highly unlikely. This year's organ classes are currently scheduled for Saturday, April 13th.

If you have any students or know of someone who might consider applying, please contact one of our co-convenors of Student Concerns: Bob Jones at robertpjones12345@gmail.com or Sue Sparks at sue.sparks@rogers.com.

The deadline to submit applications is December 22nd.

Here is the repertoire:

Bach Junior

Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,
BWV 639 (3 minutes)

Bach Intermediate

Prelude and Fugue in Bb major,
BWV 560 (4 minutes)

Bach Senior

*Allein Gott in der
Höh sei Ehr,*
BWV 664 (6 minutes)

General Junior

Brahms: *Es ist ein
Ros' entsprungen*
Op. 122 No. 8 (4 minutes)

General Intermediate

Mendelssohn: *Sonata No 5: Andante
and Andante con moto* (4 minutes)

General Senior

Alain: *Le jardin suspendu* (6 minutes)

The Open classes, General and Bach, are Own Choice.



Maria Gajraj Concert Review

DEIRDRE PIPER

The second in this season's four scheduled Pro Organo recitals featured Maria Gajraj on the Rogers op.926 in Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday, November 12th, 2023. Maria is currently a Doctoral Candidate at McGill University having previously completed a Master's in Organ Performance and Church Music at McGill, and a Bachelor of Music at Carleton University. She is passionate about bringing to the public music written by sidelined composers such as people of colour and women. She has performed in Norway, the United States and Canada.

Maria's program was unusual - but endlessly engaging - in that, with one exception, all the music performed was composed by women. That, in itself, would have made the program unusual and interesting, but Maria's spirited, clean, and colourful performance lent real meaningful significance to their music. This was a gift, but also an invitation to expand our own individual musical resources.

The one exception on the program was an arrangement for organ by **Léon Roques** of **Claude Debussy's** piano piece *La Cathédrale Engloutie*. This is a good and colourful transcription of Debussy's original which, to this listener with its variety of colours between manuals, enhanced the idea of all the various forces at work as the cathedral rises and falls. The fortissimo climax was breathtaking, and the final descent into the ocean most poignantly portrayed by careful stop reductions.

Maria's program commenced, however, with **Cecilia McDowall's** *Church Bells Beyond the Stars*. McDowall is one of the UK's leading composers of choral music. *Church Bells* (2013) is the third in a trilogy of organ pieces inspired by the metaphysical 17th century poet George Herbert, and his sonnet *Prayer* whose penultimate line includes the phrase *Church-bells beyond the stars heard*. The piece commences with a lengthy peal of bells, some immediate, some distant. The middle section is quieter but similar

in movement, while the third and final section returns to material reminiscent of that in the first section, but louder and with a striking fortissimo pedal reed. This was a wonderful start to the program.

The second piece on the program was by the eminent British author, suffragette, conductor and composer **Dame Ethel Smyth** (1858-1944). In her early years she fought against all the restrictions that barred women from the professions, and is honoured now as a champion of women's



rights and as a pioneer of the place of women in music. Her *Prelude and Fugue on the Good Friday hymn O Traurigkeit, O Herzelied* is one of a collection of five short hymn preludes composed soon after she started playing the organ in about 1882-84. The *Prelude* was treated very delicately by Maria, mostly soft flutes and the chorale melody on a soft diapason. This contrasted most effectively with the following Bach-like Fugal exposition leading to a gradual addition of stops to a stunning short fortissimo section. The piece was then most effectively gradually reduced to pianissimo and a slower, soft coda.

Following the piece by Debussy, we heard *Paix* by the internationally renowned concert organist and composer

Jeanne Demessieux, of whom her teacher, Marcel Dupré, declared in 1944: "*Jeanne Demessieux is the greatest organist of all generations,*" and predicted that she would be "*one of the greatest glories of France.*" *Paix* is the sixth of a set of seven *Méditations sur le Saint-Esprit* composed during the immediate post-war years and published in 1947. In listening to Maria's performance I was at first puzzled by the relationship of what I was hearing and the title: *Peace*. I found it hard to interpret the quite heavy registration and constantly repeated events as peacefulness; and then I awoke to the fact that it was precisely the stability, the predictability of the musical events that spoke of true peace; for, in itself, quietness has nothing to do with peace per se.

Florence Beatrice Price (1887-1953) is the first African-American woman to have a composition performed by a major orchestra, and in 1940 she was inducted into the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers because of her work as a composer. Over 300 works are known, including a collection discovered only in 2009, hidden in an abandoned summer house. *Retrospection*, formerly entitled *Elf on a Moonbeam*, displays clear elements of Afro-American style in its harmony. Maria's registration of the middle section beautifully reflected the quirkiness of the composition.

Hania Rani, born in Gdansk, and trained as a pianist, incorporates elements of jazz and electronics into her compositions. She is very much an experimenter, pushing the boundaries of classical music. Maria performed *Now, Run*, a piece originally composed for the piano. The title is well reflected in the musical form and style - very fast runs, sudden manual changes, non-periodic rhythms, sudden starts and finishes of phrases. All this was wonderfully and compellingly played by Maria using the full colour resources of the instrument. The piece itself, and the performance, tells a story, and it's not a race: it's an escape run: *Catch me if you can!*

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Sofia Gubaidulina is considered to be one of the foremost Russian composers of the late 20th century. Her works embrace numerous different styles and tonal systems - sometimes simultaneously. *Hell und Dunkel* (Light and Dark) is notated throughout in unmeasured rhythms and appears to be freely chromatic, dissonant in style. The pedals play, for the most part, long held diads, representing the dark forces; the manual figures are mostly fast moving, wide ranging arpeggiated figures and trills representing the light. This is a technically demanding work to interpret and perform, and Maria gave us a colourful, technically spectacular

reading. I did, however, wonder whether a freer, less rhythmically consistent approach would have been appropriate. Nevertheless, for me this was one of the highlights of Maria's recital: beautifully expressive playing of a highly individualistic and often tonally acerbic piece.

The recital ended with a performance of Ottawa-born **Jeanne Landry's** *Orah*, the title being the Hebrew word for "light." The piece is classical in form and sometimes also in harmony (shades of Bach were detected!) Maria's registration was very colourful, leading to a most powerful fortissimo conclusion - as the program note says: *The piece ends in a*

blaze of light, with striking chords and free pedal runs. A truly rousing conclusion to a delightful, informative and utterly musical recital.

Members' News

Welcome to our newest member:

Mauder, Emilie

6141 Voyageur Drive, Orleans,
K1C 2X5 ON 613.514.0204
emiliebruno@gmail.com

Sharing Advent Music at Saint Paul's

DONALD MARJERRISON

On Saturday, December 2nd, members of the Ottawa Centre were invited to a sharing session at Saint Paul University's De Mazenod Chapel is located in the more southern, brown brick building called Laframboise Pavilion.

The organ at Saint Paul is a two-manual Casavant with several unified ranks. Though it is not the world's best instrument, it is located in a beautiful chapel space of classical design. The acoustics are marvellous especially for the listener out in the chapel space.

Josh Zentner-Barrett, our host, is part

of a team that coordinates liturgy, offers workshops and events, and builds the Anglican community at the university. Josh gave an overview of the history of the chapel and then played *Hózhó*, a piece by the indigenous American Navaho composer, Hozho-Connor Chee, that demonstrated many of the organ stops.

Members in attendance had the opportunity to play the organ which included some Advent and Christmas music. Many of us had never been in this chapel and we were very impressed with the sound of the organ. It has several

lovely string stops which add greatly to the versatility of the instrument. As well, the chapel is also home to a recently acquired Kawai baby grand piano, a gift from the former St. Martin's Anglican Church to the Anglican Studies program through the diocese which sounds superb in this space.

We thank Josh for giving us the opportunity to hear this organ and to learn about the Chapel and the Saint Paul programme in the Anglican Diocese alongside Roman Catholic, Eastern Christian, and other denominations.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Rev. Christine Piper

Following The Perfect Light

On January 6th, we shall celebrate the Christian Festival of Epiphany, meaning *manifestation* or *revelation*, which describes the biblical story of how the Magi or Three Kings saw in the East the brightest star. They were moved - indeed, we might put this more strongly - they felt compelled to follow this star westwards to wherever it might lead:

O star of wonder, star of night

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading, still proceeding

Guide us to thy perfect light.

And so, they came to Bethlehem where they discovered this 'perfect light,' the Christ Child; he who was perfect even as he lay in an animal's feeding trough. And they presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

And I wonder what *aha* moments,

what Epiphanies you may have experienced through this season, calling you perhaps to a journeying that you had not expected, just as there was surely a time when the wise men from the East had not anticipated their call to travel westwards... And such reflection is surely not easy as, in these days, *the East* presents to our mind's eye diverse complexities coming, for example, from Russia's invasion of the Ukraine, disturbing developments in Africa and the peoples of Gaza dealing with the

devastation of their homeland by the Israeli invasion which, in turn, was prompted by Hamas' extremists attacking Israel from Gaza.

And yes, even as the latter unfolding of events reminds us that humankind may ever know smudged realities, my prayer is that the season of Epiphany may offer us that sense of insight from which we may continue to answer and respond to God's call to serve each other...



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NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETING:
MONDAY, 15 JANUARY / 7:30 P.M.
WEB MEETING

Supply List

Sunday Supply Organists:

Amy Andonian	613 224-8117	Sundays, weddings, funerals. Organ and piano. All denominations.
Thomas Annand	613-261-0376	Available for Sundays, weddings, funerals, accompaniment
Elizabeth Brown	613-608-1220	lizbrown2007@hotmail.com Sundays, weddings, funerals, any denomination
Glenn Keefe	289-830-6607	gkeefe78@gmail.com United and Anglican services.
Matthew Larkin	613-862-4106	matthewlarkin1963@gmail.com Weddings, funerals, Sunday services, all denominations
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Gilles Leclerc	613-798-0264	gilles.leclerc7@sympatico.ca
Simon Pinsonneault	613-299-1886	simon.pinsonneault@tc.gc.ca
Donald Russell	613-738-9223	russell.kimberwick@me.com
Wesley R. Warren	613 726-6341	Weddings and Funerals

Organ Teachers List

Thomas Annand, MMus, BMus (Hons), FRCCO. Organ all levels, also instruction in theory, history, conducting, continuo and accompaniment. 613-261-0376

D. Mervyn Games, B.Mus., FRCO, ARCM. Students in piano, organ, and theory at all levels. Info: mervyn.games@gmail.com or 613-729-2515.

Heather Rice, ARCT, BMus, ARCCO (ChM). Welcomes students in piano, organ, voice and theory, Beginner - Intermediate, Children - Adult. Call 613-563-1409

Wesley R. Warren, M.Mus, FRCO, (ChM), ARCT. Beginning to advanced organ students, piano and theory. St. Barnabas Anglican Church, Ottawa. Info: 613-726-6341

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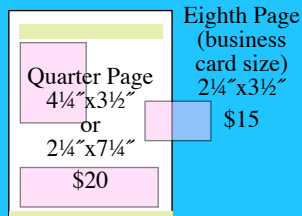
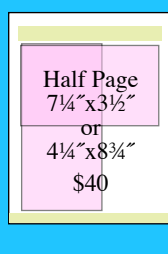
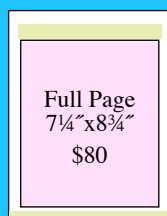
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St John the Evangelist Ottawa is seeking a new Director of Music

This position is for 20 hours per week and includes benefits. Compensation will be based on RCCO guidelines and as agreed upon between the successful applicant and St. John's Church. This position reports to the Incumbent and Churchwardens. A Bachelor's Degree in Music is required.

The applicant should have experience directing choirs and instrumentalists. A proficiency in various styles of music for piano and organ is required.

For full details on the job description, please use the link <https://www.stjohnsottawa.com/news/director-of-music-posting>.

Deadline for applications is: **February 15, 2024** to the attention of Brian Cameron, Chair of Music Director Selection Committee at: office@stjohnsottawa.ca

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