



Lorain County Chapter American Guild of Organists

www.lcago.org

Newsletter for October 2011

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Jehan Alain Festival October 1

Oberlin is holding a festival in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of French organist and composer Jehan Alain on the afternoon of Saturday, October 1.

Alain was born in 1911 into a musical family, his father being an organist and organbuilder who had studied with Guilmant and Vierne. His younger brother Olivier was also an organist, as is his sister, Marie-Claire Alain. Alain attended the Paris Conservatoire, where he studied with, among others, Dupré and Dukas. His short career was ended in 1940 when he was killed in the line of duty in World War II.

Alain was one of the most original composers of the twentieth century. One can only imagine the heights to which he would have soared had he lived a full life. His music is both emotionally involving and technically innovative. He wrote in many genres, but is most well known for his organ works. Some of his most famous organ pieces include: *Litanies*, *Trois Danses*, and *Le jardin suspendu*.

The Oberlin Alain Festival is in two parts. First, Dr. Aurélie Decourt, Alain's niece and Marie-Claire's daughter, will present two lectures: "Jehan Alain: Musician and Poet" and "Jehan Alain: His Musical and Creative Inspiration." This will be a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn about the composer from someone intimately acquainted with his life and work. The lectures will be held at 1:00 and 2:30 in the King Building, room 106.

The second part of the festival will be a concert in Finney Chapel at 4:00, featuring Alain's music in a number of genres, performed by Oberlin students and faculty. Music presented will include *Litanies* and *Le jardin suspendu*, many other organ pieces, and works for winds, voice, and piano. This is again a rare opportunity to hear a wide range of Alain's works, and will help to put the more familiar organ pieces in the context of his wider output.





From the Dean

It was great to see many of you at the William Porter concert on September 25. This was a great event for our chapter. A review of the concert is on [page 4](#).

This month I would like to share with you some of my goals as dean of LCAGO: membership retention and growth; better communication; and a closer relationship with Oberlin Conservatory.

- Membership retention and growth

In order to be a vital chapter able to carry out our mission (see [page 5!](#)) we need to continually gain new members as well as give all of you reason to remain members. This is not an easy task, and can be best accomplished by all of us working together.

- Better communication

The strength of any organization is dependent on its ability to communicate. Our new chapter website and electronic newsletters are a step towards more efficient and modern communication. How can we communicate even better?

- Closer relationship with Oberlin Conservatory

Our chapter is privileged to have one of the country's premier organ centers in our backyard. How can we take advantage of that resource as well as use our resources to keep that program strong? I have been having conversations with James David Christie and Jack Mitchener, organ professors at Oberlin, to try to figure out how we might do just that.

Brian

Chapter News

Hymn Playing Workshop

The date and location for our November hymn playing workshop are now set. Nicole Keller will lead this informative program on November 20 at 4:30 at [First Church in Oberlin](#). Come to this workshop to learn more about the art of hymn playing, and to have your own hymn playing refreshed. Ms. Keller would like to have some people play hymns for her comments; please [contact the dean](#) if you are interested in playing

[Nicole Keller](#) is in demand as a solo and chamber music recitalist and clinician in the United States. She performs regularly as a solo and collaborative artist on the organ, piano and harpsichord. She serves as Organist and Choirmaster at Christ Church Episcopal in Hudson, Ohio where she oversees a vibrant music ministry dedicated to highest standards of excellence in music for worship. Ms. Keller received the Performer's Certificate and the Master of Music

[Chapter News continued on page 4](#)

Oberlin Events

October 1, 1-5:30

Jehan Alain Festival

This festival will include two lectures by Alain's niece, Aurélie Decourt. After the two lectures, there will be a 4:00 concert in Finney Chapel of Alain's music, featuring works for organ as well as piano, voice, and chamber music. See [page 1](#) for more details.

October 9, 8:00

Kulas Recital Hall

Charles Metz, harpsichord recital

October 10, 8:00

Kulas Recital Hall

Charles Metz, harpsichord masterclass

October, 11, 8:00

Fairchild Chapel

Jonathan Moyer, recital

Artist Diploma recital including music by Muffat, Aston, Bull, Correa and Pedro de Arauxo and Scheidt

October 12, 3:00-4:25

Bibbins Hall

Lecture by Bertrand Cattiaux

French organ builder Bertrand Cattiaux is one of the finest builders in Europe. He will discuss organ building today in France and his work specifically.

October 16, 8:00

Hallock Auditorium

Music in Indian Himalayan Spirit Possession Ceremonies

October 19, 1:00

Kulas Recital Hall

Mitzi Meyerson, harpsichord masterclass

Other Area Events

October 9, 3:00

Grace Episcopal, Sandusky

Sandusky AGO chapter organ recital

October 23, 4:30

Ridgewood UMC, Parma

Jeff Sawders, organ recital

October 28, 7:00

First Congregational, Akron

Annual Halloween Spooktacular - AGO members' recital

October 30, 3:00

First Lutheran, Lorain

Reformation Hymn Festival

This hymn festival on Reformation Sunday will focus on hymns by reformers from the 16th century and the present day. Join with choir and organ for this celebration, led by Brian Wentzel.

October 28-30

Cleveland Organ Weekend

Organized by Cleveland AGO

October 28, 7:30

Plymouth Church, Shaker Heights

ORGAN + with Todd Wilson

Music for Organ and instruments

\$5 for AGO members

October 29, 10:00, 1:00, 4:00

Free concerts and demonstrations around Cleveland

October 30, 3:00

First Baptist, Cleveland

Jonathan Ryan, organ recital

Recital by Jonathan Ryan, rising star and international competition winner

\$5 for AGO members

Chapter News (continued)

Degree in Organ Performance and Literature at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York under the tutelage of David Higgs. She is on the faculty of Cleveland State University, Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music, and is the continuist for the Baldwin-Wallace College Bach Festival Chamber Orchestra.

William Porter recital

LCAGO sponsored William Porter in recital at First Lutheran, Lorain, on Sunday, September 25. This program was a great success. A large crowd, including many of you, was in attendance to hear Mr. Porter play Hindemith and Bach and improvising on “Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices” (O DASS ICH TAUSEND ZUNGEN HÄTTE) with the audience singing the hymn. A few LCAGO members had a pleasant lunch with the Mr. Porter before the concert.

Daniel Hathaway gave a positive review of the concert at ClevelandClassical.com. He writes:

In many ways, [the improvisation] proved most successful. ... Porter talked the congregation through his intended scenario: everyone would (lustily) sing all five verses, but the recitalist would play “something” after the first, “something different” after the third, and a fugue with the tune in the pedal after the fifth. Quite a number of organists as well as incumbent Lutherans being in the pews, the singing was strong, and Porter supported it with a full organ registration that enveloped the congregation in sound that was both bright and warm. He concocted a lovely, typical chorale prelude for the first improvisation with the tune in the tenor and an attractive counter melody in the soprano. After the third, he surprised us with a bluesy *arioso* full of lounge piano chords, and at the end, he built a sturdy fugue out of various phrases of the chorale, with the tune itself in long notes in the pedal. While his techniques may have been somewhat formulaic and adaptable to any melodic material, the results were impressive. Just try to do this if you think it’s easy!

Before the improvisation, Porter ended his formal program with a thrilling and contrapuntally transparent performance of Bach’s *Toccatà and Fugue in F*, masterfully nailing the pedal solos and expertly navigating the tangly trios in the Toccata.

The [full review](#) can be found at ClevelandClassical.com.

Newsletter delivered electronically

This is the first issue of the LCAGO newsletter to be delivered via email only (a paper copy has been mailed to those who do not have an email address on file. If we don’t have your email address, please let us know! This will save the chapter postage and printing costs and make the newsletter more interactive.

AGO Mission Statement

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.



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Please email any newsletter information to the Dean by the 20th of the month.