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Centre President's Message

Michael Capon



Thank you to Mark Dumbrique and Laurence Rowbotham for organizing the recent concert by Matthieu Latreille and Francine Nguyen-Savaria (Duo Pergulae). The duo put on a beautiful performance for the approximately fifty-five people in attendance. We are fortunate to have such fine artists in our midst.

Next up is the "Community of Organists" concert on Saturday March 18 at 3:30pm at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, featuring...you! Students and local organists are encouraged to participate, so start thinking about what you'd like to play. Be ready to hear from Bev Koski and Joan Egnatoff, who are organizing the event. A reception will follow. Please encourage your friends to come along as proceeds will go toward our scholarship fund.

Coincidentally, that will be the same day as the closing performance of the Domino Theatre production of "Village of Idiots", a classic comedy by local playwright John Lazarus, in which I'm playing the role of the Rabbi! It runs from March 2 to 18, Thursday to Saturday at 7:30pm. I believe that's called a shameless plug!

Wishing you a good Lenten season, and a Happy Easter!

Michael Capon

From the Editors: A Hoary Controversy.

David Cameron



I have greatly enjoyed the ongoing discussions on the PIPORG-L list, where about a thousand musicians in Canada and the US, but also all over the world, discuss everything organic: voicing, actions, organ history, performers past and present – everything to do with organs. Occasionally some members of that List still produce references to electronic organs as “toasters”, along with more considered opinions like this one:

At the risk of sounding snooty, I will say that I generally do not go to musical events which use non-synthesizer electronic devices, nor do I play in public on electronic "organs".

Of course, there are also supporters of electronic organs. In the exciting concluding concert of our *We Feel the Winds* organ festival last July, Felix Hell played at The Isabel on his touring organ, a three-manual Rodgers. He and the Rodgers will be returning to The Isabel for another concert on Sunday afternoon, October 15 (do you have your tickets?). The May edition of *The American Organist* featured as its cover illustration, and accompanying article, a large all-digital custom Johannus. This was certainly a first for a major organ periodical, and it provoked much discussion, some of it quite angry.

For one of many interesting discussions of the issue online, check out <http://www.ccwatershed.org/blog/2015/oct/9/digital-vs-pipe-organ-who-wins/>

However you feel about electronic organs, it's apparent that they will continue as part of our organ-community environment for many years to come. Consider a few of the better-known organs in the area served by the Kingston Centre:

All pipes, tracker action: St. Thomas', Belleville; House of Providence chapel, Kingston;
Grant Hall, Queen's University **3 II-man organs**

All pipes, electro-pneumatic action:
Wall St. United, Brockville; St. Francis Xavier, Brockville; St. Lawrence, Brockville; Grace
United, Gananoque; Sydenham St. United, Kingston; St. Mary's Cathedral, Kingston;
St. Paul's, Kingston; St. James, Kingston; St. John's, Portsmouth (Kingston);
St. James', Perth; St. Mary Magdalene, Picton **5 II-man organs**
5 III-man organs

Almost all pipes (low octave of 32's, perhaps some Pedal 16's are digital):
St. George's Cathedral, Kingston; Bridge St. United, Belleville **2 III--man organs**

Mixed pipe/electronic
(including at least several digital stops in manual and pedal divisions): St. Paul's United,
Perth; St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Kingston; Chalmers United, Kingston **3 III-man organs**

All-electronic:
Crossroads United, Edith Rankin United, Cooke's-Portsmouth United, St. Mark's Lutheran,

St. Mark's, Barriefield, St. Andrew's by-the-Lake United (all in Kingston) **2 III-man organs**
4-II-man organs

These lists (which could certainly be expanded) show a significant preponderance of all-pipe or almost-all-pipe sound production in our area. Still, electronic sound plays a part in quite a lot of local organ music, for example in Centre President Michael Capon's and executive member Brad Mills' very active music programs at St. George's Cathedral and St. Paul's United, Perth. Elsewhere in this issue is a report of the exciting recital recently given by David Simon at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, in which digital pedal stops and a digital tuba played important and effective roles. And vital music programs exist in several of the "all-electronic" churches.

Most of our readers know that I was responsible for the 1996 rebuild at Chalmers Church, which added a digital division and various digital ranks to the 43 ranks of Lawrence Phelps' 1961 Casavant. This was in a very specific context: the church's worship reachrd far more people by broadcast, than those actually in attendance, so most people heard it through speaker systems anyway; and it was a very active teaching organ, both for Queen's and for community students, in many years serving up to twenty people for lessons and practice time. There was no space to add pipes, and the digital additions allowed us to add expressive accompanying sounds that were notably lacking in the original Phelps Casavant.



Your editor (while he still had hair) at the Chalmers console.

When I listen to the Chalmers electronics now – though they were state-of-the art in 1996 – I soon become aware that I'm hearing electronic sounds, especially if digital stops are played by themselves (when I played it, I made it a rule almost never to use digital stops without the support of at least one pipe rank). Nevertheless the instrument has served the church well, and it made a good home for Mark McDonald's very successful Student Academy in July. †This continued one of its designed purposes, to be an effective teaching instrument.

But 1996 electronics are generations old now. Even off-the-rack digitals include individual stops that the finest ear can't distinguish from "the real thing". My Hauptwerk organ at home (pretty much the only one I play now) has some sounds that are truly beautiful.

Where electronics still fall down is in ensemble. Last summer, many of us felt that Felix Hell's touring Rodgers, with its limited stacks of speakers, was redeemed only by the exquisite polish of his playing. As noted above, I never used electronics without supporting pipes at Chalmers. There may be a few digital organs with such expensive and wide-ranging amplification that this problem is overcome, perhaps large custom installations like those by Marshall and Ogletree; but the only one of those we've heard in Kingston, Cameron Carpenter's Touring Organ, was played so shockingly loudly that it produced more discomfort than music. For better M & O sound, hear the videos at

<https://www.marshallandogletree.com/proof-of-concept>

But do bear in mind that this is recorded sound, and may or may not be what you would hear in the room.

You know where I stand – somewhere in the middle, I think. The controversy keeps on renewing itself, decade after decade. Where do you stand?

TWO EARLY JUNE RECITALS ON QUEEN STREET

Fran Harkness and David Cameron

Kris Michaelson at St. Paul's, Queen and Montreal



Kris Michaelson at the St. Paul's console (Aurora Dokken photo)

On Thursday, 1 June, at St. Paul's Anglican Church at Queen and Montreal Streets in Kingston, Kingston Centre Chaplain Kris Michaelson (who is also Rector of St. Paul's) gave an organ recital to raise money for new community outreach programs at St. Paul's. His extensive and helpful notes ended with a paragraph describing the global ecumenical prayer movement *Thy Kingdom Come*, and explaining that the proceeds from the recital would support new outreach ventures at St. Paul's, especially among the poor, the addicted and those struggling with mental health issues. Attendance was, for a Thursday night organ recital, an impressive seventy-five.

Kris' program was as follows:

Buxtehude	<i>Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C, BuxWV 137</i>
Pachelbel	<i>Chaconne in f minor</i>
Bach, arr. Biggs	Chorale from BWV 147, perhaps better known as <i>Jesu, joy of man's desiring</i>
Bach	<i>Fugue in D, BWV 532</i>
Mendelssohn	<i>Sonata II in c minor, Op. 65</i>
Purcell	Three short pieces from <i>Abdelezar</i> and <i>Musick's Handmaid</i>
Bach	<i>Prelude and Fugue in E flat, BWV 552</i>

A reception in St. Paul's Parish Hall followed the concert.

The St. Cecilia window in the (liturgically) south corner of St. Paul's nave. (Kris Michaelson photo)



Bach's handwriting: the Fantasia, BWV 552

David Simon at St. Andrew's, Queen and Clergy

Fran Harkness and David Cameron

Two days after Kris Michaelson's recital, on Saturday, 3 June, David Simon played at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, in a recital arranged by Centre scholarship holder, and St. Andrew's Assistant Organist, Damien Macedo. The proceeds from this concert were for the St. Andrew's Organ Fund.

David Simon was born in Toronto, where he studied the organ with Patricia Wright at the University of Toronto, graduating in 2015. He has since gone on to complete a Master's degree at Yale, under Thomas Murray, and he will continue at Yale to complete his doctorate. His *Fugue on the National Anthem*, which concluded his recital, won Honourable Mention in the RCCO's 2016 John White competition for composers.



David Simon, on the left, and Damien Macedo on the right with the St. Andrew's console between them. The shoulder in the lower left corner belongs to Music Director John Hall.



David's program was as follows:

Bach	<i>Fantasia and Fugue in g minor, BWV 542</i>
Franck	<i>Prière, Op. 20</i>
Mendelssohn	<i>Sonata III in A</i>
Bales	<i>Petite Suite</i>
Sirrett	<i>Sicilienne</i>
Simon	<i>Fugue on the National Anthem</i>

A reception followed in St. Andrew's Hall. David Simon's is a name to note as the future of Canadian organ music unfolds.

David Simon joining in coffee and conversation at the reception following his recital. (photos by Fran Harkness)





Montréal Organ Festival

A joint presentation by RCCO, AGO Northeast Region, and CIOC
**2 – 6 JULY, with PRECONVENTION EVENTS on 1 JULY and
 POST-CONVENTION EVENTS in St-Hyacinthe on 7 JULY**

One way to appreciate the range and quality of the musical experiences which await us in Montréal at the beginning of July is by hearing some of the instruments which will be featured in this first joint RCCO/AGO Festival. Here are some of them on YouTube:

The secrets of the Grand Orgue Pierre-Béique / Orchestre symphonique de Montréal <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkfODyEIAHE>



Christian Lane interview for the Montréal Organ Festival

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkdBLE2EHTE>

ORGAN 191 1901 Casavant – Église du Gesù, Montréal, Canada

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDF-oFlz_U

Sortie Improvisée (by Pierre Grandmaison) - Organ Postlude at Notre-Dame de Montreal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qphv5ZxIt2M>

Pierre Grandmaison will be heard in a pre-convention recital at Notre-Dame de Montréal, 1 July at

Bach (Tocatta C-Dur) à l'Oratoire Saint-Joseph (Montréal)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCMVs8liAno>

Mars, the Bringer of War (Holst, arr. Sykes) - Mark McDonald at the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLPyxHF6f7k>

And these are only a few of the organs to be heard July 1 to 7!

For more information about the Festival, visit

<http://www.montrealorganfestival.org/programmation.html>

Your editors have a son David Harkness, who works for Heritage Canada. David is not an organist but his wide-ranging musical interests sometimes take him to organ concerts in Ottawa, as well as to many other artistic events. He and his Russian-born wife Anastasia, who grew up in a land almost completely without organs, are taking two of their precious vacation days to hear The Elora Singers, a silent film accompanied, and Pierre Grandmaison on 1 July, and then the Festival concerts on 2 July.

Even if you're not able to spend five days in Montréal, or even if you're not an organist, it's worth taking a day or two to experience this unparalleled, once-in-a-lifetime Festival!



Coming Events



St. George's Cathedral Summer Concerts

Thursdays, 12:15 – 12:50 pm

- June 15 Flutissimo (Flute ensemble)**
- June 22 Cranberry Dixie Band**
- June 29 Michael Capon (Organ)**
- July 6 Saxobelles (Saxophone quartet)**
- July 13 Kingston Classics Trio (Flute, Clarinet, Bassoon)**
- July 20 Nicholas Walters (Organ)**
- July 27 [Special Evening concert replaces noon-hour event]**



Thursday July 27, 7:30pm Special evening concert The Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge

St. George's Cathedral presents the acclaimed Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, directed by Stephen Layton, in concert on Thursday July 27 at 7:30pm.

Tickets cost \$25 and are available at the Cathedral Office or at the door.

Voted the fifth best choir in the world in Gramophone magazine's "20 Greatest Choirs", The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge comprises around thirty Choral Scholars and two Organ Scholars, all of whom are ordinarily undergraduates of the College. Stephen Layton has been Director of Music since 2006.



"Sublime singing." Los Angeles Times

"One of Great Britain's finest choirs." American Record Guide

"Virtuoso is the right word ... Singing of such staggering accomplishment." BBC Music Magazine

Facebook event: [facebook.com/events/1824447844464756](https://www.facebook.com/events/1824447844464756)

August 3 Greater Kingston Chorus (Choir)

August 10 Leonid Nediak (Piano)

August 17 Sundance Trio (Oboe, Bassoon, Piano)

August 24 Tomoko Inui & Pedro Molina (Piano, Clarinet)

August 31 Federico Andreoni (Organ)



SUPPLY ORGANISTS

Joan Egnatoff is available for occasional services or other occasions.

joane@kingston.net or telephone 613-634-3341

Catherine Helferty is available to play for services. Please contact her by email:

catherinehelferty@hotmail.com

Murray Baer, newly arrived in Prince Edward County, and formerly of St. Mary's Anglican Church, Richmond Hill, is available for supply or occasional work in Prince Edward County, Belleville or Quinte West. He can be reached by email at murray_baer@hotmail.com or by telephone at 416-520-5702.

The Newsletter

The *Kingston Centre Newsletter* is edited by Fran Harkness and David Cameron, 34-100 Medley Court, Kingston, Ontario, K7K 6X2. They may be reached by telephone: 613-549-7125, or by e-mail at either address: charles.david.cameron@gmail.com or harknessfran@gmail.com. The Newsletter is published four times a year, in September, December, March and June, and the digital version is sent free of charge to all members of the Kingston Centre of the RCCO and to current scholarship holders. Black-and-white hard copy will be sent on request to others on payment of an annual subscription of \$10.00, sent to the Centre Treasurer, Fran Harkness, 34-100 Medley Court, Kingston, ON K7K 6X2. Cheques should be made payable to *RCCO Kingston Centre*.

Deadline for all submissions to the June, 2017 *Newsletter*, May 31, 2017.

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Advertisements

Commercial advertisements will be accepted as follows: the normal size will be business card (one eighth of a page) at \$15 for a single issue and \$50 for a year (four issues). If space allows, we will accept an occasional half-page advertisement at \$30 for one issue. Please send your requests to the Editor, enclosing a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to *RCCO Kingston Centre*. *Positions Vacant, Jobs Wanted* and *Supply Organists* notices will continue to be published free of charge.

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