



THE ROYAL CANADIAN  
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

**Vancouver Centre  
Newsletter**



*Spring Edition  
May, 2019*



## Table of Contents

- 3** RCCO Vancouver Centre Members and Students Recital
- 4** Time to renew your RCCO membership, or to consider becoming a member!
- 5** Recent events
- 5** Copycats and Doppelgangers
- 7** Upcoming Concerts
- 8** Pipe Organ Spotlight
- 11** Useful Information

## ★ RCCO Vancouver Centre Members and Students Recital

By Susan Ohannesian

### Inspiration and Influence

Saturday 8 June 7:00pm

St. Mary's Kerrisdale Anglican Church

2490 West 37th Ave at Larch Street Vancouver



When I started organizing the members recital this year the three composers that came up first were Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn. It occurred to me that they were in a line of inspiration and

influence. In 1705 Bach walked almost 400 km from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear and be inspired by Buxtehude. For about a hundred years after his death the music of Bach was largely forgotten until Mendelssohn brought it back to popularity with a performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion in 1829. The next composer to be chosen was Denis Bédard and I think I can safely say that Denis has been inspired and influenced by the music of Buxtehude, Bach and Mendelssohn as well as the whole French tradition.

When I encouraged Michael Molnar to think about what he wanted to play this is what he had to say about his pieces and my idea of a theme "For variety I'm thinking about doing a sparkly French Verset by A.P.F. Boëly and a spunky English Festal March by H. Ernest Nichol... If wanting to run with the "influences" theme, the verset is 19<sup>th</sup> century, but very much in a more flighty Baroque/Classical style, and the March is in a very French Romantic style (in particular, the Lefebvre-Wely vein!), so they're pieces influenced by other genres/times."

Another composer represented in this recital is Georg Muffat, a French Baroque composer, who was influenced by Jean Baptiste Lully and the Italian composers Bernardo Pasquini, Girolamo Frescobaldi and Arcangelo Corelli.

Paul Hindemith is harder to fit into the theme of inspiration and influence and his later spare, contrapuntally complex works could be thought to have been inspired by the counterpoint of J. S. Bach.

Standing all alone there will be a set of three pieces for Holy Week and beyond by the American composers Dennis Elliot, Marianne Kim and Emma Lou Diemer.

I think the Paul Hindemith will clean our palate and the three pieces by American composers will add some spice.

Come and hear all this music performed by Rachel Alflatt, Michael Blais, Tamar Genossar, Madelene Klassen, Cindy Leung, Cindy Huiyuan Ma, Michael Molnar, Gail Ovington, John Pals, Angelique Po and Haruyo Shikano.

Admission is by donation and there will be a reception in the Parish Hall after the recital.

## ★ It's that time of year, time to renew your RCCO membership, or to consider becoming a member!

A special message to our readers who are not members of the RCCO:

Membership with the RCCO not only entitles you to a wide range of benefits, it supports the important work we do to provide more opportunities and engage more people with the organ and its music.

RCCO members are eligible for many benefits, including:

- discounted registration fees at the national organ festival
- our quarterly journal, *Organ Canada*
- special health insurance rates for arts workers
- access to valuable resources available only to members
- discounted membership in the American Guild of Organists and the Fédération Québécoise des Amis de l'Orgue
- discounted subscriptions to several international organ publications
- voting privileges to determine RCCO organizational leadership
- and of course, full participation in your local centre events

RCCO membership helps to support existing flagship programs such as the National Organ Festival, the National Organ Playing Competition, Honorary Awards, the Travelling Clinician programme, the expanded Summer Organ Academy, and our exciting new OrgelkidsCAN project!

Here in Vancouver we have benefited several times from the Travelling Clinician programme, and will again this autumn. And a few months ago, more than 300 children benefited from the OrgelkidsCAN Orgelkit, under the supervision of our local vice-president Michael Dirk

RCCO membership also helps to support the programmes we offer here – including organ crawls, members' recitals, and our very successful annual Halloween Concert.

For more information: <https://www.rcco.ca/benefits-of-membership>

And to find out how to join: <https://www.rcco.ca/join-us>

There are various membership categories, including 35 and under or full-time student, senior, and joint (two or more at the same address).

Please do consider joining us!

\* Credits to National Office and Rachel Alflatt

## ★ Recent events

What the RCCO Vancouver Centre has been doing in the past few months!  
By Rachel Alflatt

We held two events in February 2019. One was a visit by RCCO Travelling Clinician Sarah Svendsen, who gave a fantastic introduction to the organ to over 400 elementary school students at Saint John Shaughnessy Anglican Church. The other was an organ “crawl” to the Orpheum Theatre’s mighty Wurlitzer, giving Vancouver organists a rare chance to try out that instrument.



There is a lot more about these events on our website. To find photos and write-ups by Rachel Alflatt and Sam Balden, just click here:  
<http://www.rcco.bc.ca/wp/blog/category/rcco-vancouver-updates/>

## ★ Copycats and Doppelgangers

By Michael Molnar

In North America, when considering the world of buildings and organs built for worship, a peculiar and significant quirk is noticeable, and it relates to the fine art of replication.

How many churches in Canada and the States are architectural copies of bigger European buildings? Many. To look briefly at a few:

Montreal has a beautiful Notre-Dame that imitates the great Parisian beauty (the original now sadly having been marred by that devastating fire).

Not many living above the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel know about the replica known as the “Little Notre Dame” in Covington, Kentucky. It has its own set of custom-made gargoyles, and very similar gothic design (with some small differences in front tower scales, buttress use, etc.).

Back in Canada (also in Montreal), the majestic Marie-Reine-du-Monde is a smaller version of St. Peter’s in the Vatican, Rome (of course, to put it in context...this “smaller” version is still much bigger than anything in Vancouver!).

But what about the pipe organs?

It is very rare to hear about organs being close replicas of specific European masterpieces. Even in most buildings that are architectural replicas, it is common for pipe organs to be built as entirely unique elements (though often stylistically similar). As a significant exception to this general trend, Christ Church in Rochester, New York houses one mighty masterpiece that is an uncommonly faithful replica of a Prussian instrument from 1776 (the original now in Lithuania). It is a tracker-action beast that can be manually pumped (for those in North America wondering what it must have been like to power an instrument such as Bach would have played!). It was a very unique engineering challenge, with builders needing to travel and research how best to approach a more authentic build, without the use of our abundant modern short-cuts and technological tricks to facilitate instrument construction. The cost blossomed to over three million USD, but the end result (completed only about a decade ago) is quite unique and beautiful.

Why is this so rare in organs, when a lot more common with buildings?

Naturally, instruments need to be built to fill a space, and scale replicas simply cannot work with pipes. If a building is 75% as big as the original, your 32', 16', 8', and 4' pipes can't all be 75% smaller (imagine if your stop list featured 24', 12', 6', and 3' stops!). As seen in the Rochester example, faithful replication is also very expensive and difficult.

Also, slight variations in basilicas and cathedrals can often be more interesting than smaller 'perfect' copies. Like noticing the subtle differences in identical twins that make them similar, and yet still two unique individuals.

Here in Vancouver, we have a few instruments inspired by earlier styles, but one of our more striking replica-hybrids is the St. Andrew's-Wesley Chapel organ (which was put up for sale prior to the renovation project getting underway). That organ was designed and built specifically to copy three instruments made by English builder Richard Bridge in the mid 1700's.

Do you have some favourite ecclesiastical copycats or pipe organ doppelgangers you've discovered in sundry travels abroad?

## ★ Upcoming Concerts and Events

**Friday, May 24, 8:00pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral**

### **Cathedral organist Denis Bédard in concert**

A musical voyage from Europe with works by Italian and German composers, to this continent with works by American composers and Denis Bédard.

Tickets \$20 adult, \$15 student/senior

**Saturday, June 8, 11:00am-4:00 pm, Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church**

### **Surrey Doors Open event showcasing Maranatha's 106 year old pipe organ**

Free entry, demonstrations by various organists.

**Saturday, June 8, 7:00pm, St. Mary's Kerrisdale**

### **RCCO Members and Members' Students Recital**

Works by Bach, Buxtehude, Mendelssohn, Bedard and others.

Performers: Rachel Alflatt, Michael Blais, Tamar Genossar, Madelene Klassen, Cindy Leung, Cindy Huiyuan Ma, Michael Molnar, Gail Ovington, Angelique Po, John Pals, Haruyo Shikano.

Free admission, donations accepted.

**Saturday, June 22, 7:00pm, St. John Shaughnessy**

### **RCCO Vancouver Centre AGM and Orgelkit presentation**

**Monday, August 12 – Thursday, August 15**

### **Carillon Music's Church Music Summer Institute**

Instructor: Michael Dirk

**Wednesday, November 6, 7:30pm, St. John Shaughnessy**

### **Workshop with Montreal Symphony Orchestra Organist in Residence and RCCO Travelling Clinician Jean-Willy Kunz**

Expanding the Possibilities of Organ Repertoire: Transcription, improvisation, jazz and non-classical music.

By donation.

**Friday, November 8, 8:00pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral**

### **Montreal Symphony Orchestra Organist in Residence Jean-Willy Kunz in Concert**

A co-production by Holy Rosary Cathedral and the RCCO Travelling Clinician Programme. Programme TBA, will include Kunz's own transcription of Saint-Saëns' "Carnaval des animaux".

By donation.

## ★ Pipe Organ Spotlight

### **The Flentrop at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle**

The first in the series "Some Organs I Have Tried" by Susan Ohannesian

My husband Paul and I have lived in our house for 41 years, and for the past 33 years, with our son, Ben. Paul and Ben are both collectors and pack rats and our house is full of stuff. I am not so much a collector of things even though I have to admit I have a lot of inherited items of sentimental value of which I have trouble letting go. I prefer to collect experiences and memories and the most memorable are some of the organs I have tried. I say 'tried' because, although I have played many recitals, workshops, services, weddings, and funerals, some of the most exciting opportunities I have had are because I'm not afraid to say yes, put my hand up or go to the front of the line.



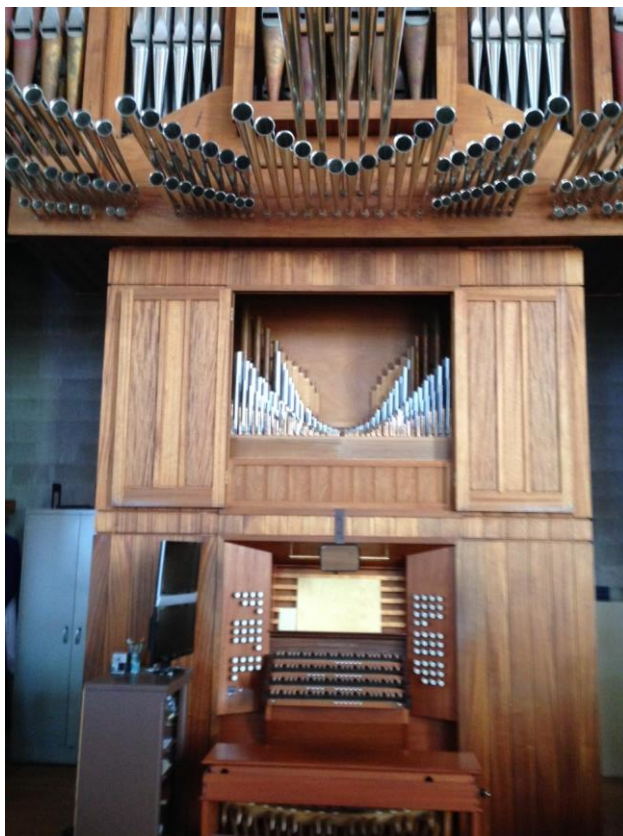
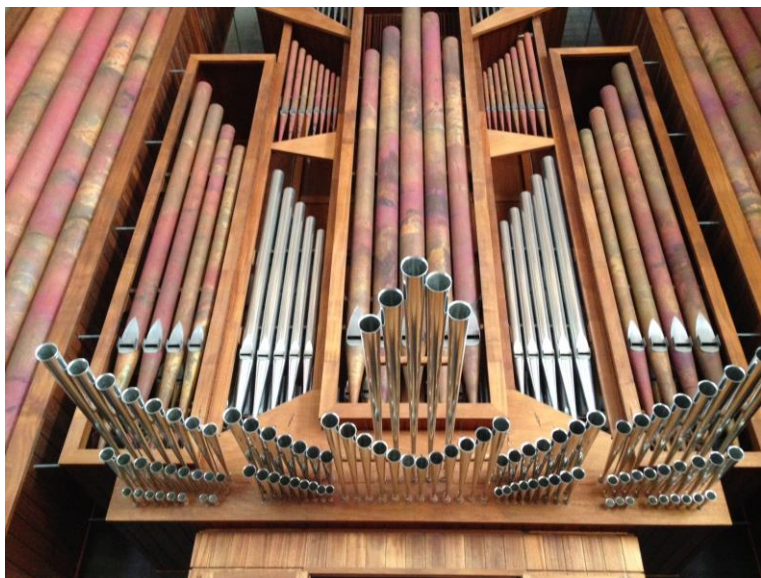
In this series of articles I'm going to work backwards in time starting, from the latest exciting experience and going back as far as I can remember, and share with you some organ spotlights from Canada, USA and England.

In 2017 at the reception after a concert at Holy Rosary Cathedral, I was talking to Rene Marceau from Seattle. We got to talking about the post Compline recitals he organizes at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle and when I said "I often go to Seattle to visit my mother in law" he invited me to play a post Compline half hour recital. I played music of Denis Bédard, Michael Blais and Paul Ohannesian. I love the sound of the 1965 organ designed and built by the Dutch firm of D. A. Flentrop and I find the four manual console



a little difficult to negotiate. A major restoration of the organ was completed by Paul Fritts Organ Builders of Tacoma, WA in 1993-1994 and in 2001 further work was done following damage sustained by the Nisqually earthquake including substantial seismic reinforcements. I had played the organ a few times for organ crawls and workshops in the 1970s and it was great to experience the restored and reinforced instrument. Some of the individual stops are the most beautiful (the 8' Rohrfluit on the Hoofdwerk) and interesting (the 16' and 32' Bazuin on the Pedaal) sounds I have heard in an organ in my 52 years of playing the organ.

St. Marks is a large concrete cathedral with a huge acoustic. I remember an organ crawl in the 1975 when I played Bach's Toccata in d minor and understood what the rests are all about - they are to let the building speak. A memorable workshop in the 1970s was with Luigi Tagliavini on early Italian music during which I played a toccata by Frescobaldi. This was at the height of the Early Music revival and tracker organs were all the rage. The Flentrop at St. Marks was the largest and most magnificent at the time in Seattle, with its four manuals, beautiful copper pipes and impressive 32' Prestant in the case.



## Organ specifications

D. A. Flentrop - 1965

Paul Fritts & Co., Organ Builders- 1992/95

4 Manuals & Pedals

58 Stops/79 Ranks

3,944 Pipes

Suspended key action and electric stop action.

Solid state combination action (255 memory levels)

Couplers and general pistons duplicated on toe studs

Note: 32 Prestant is a 12 pipe extension of the 16 Pedaal Prestant.

Note: **Boldface Type** indicates new work completed in 1992, 1995 and 2011

<b>Hoofdwerk II (Great) 56 Pipes/Rank</b>	<b>Rugwerk I (Positiv) 56 Pipes/Rank</b>	<b>Bovenwerk III (Swell*) 56 Pipes/Rank</b>	<b>Borstwerk IV (Brustwerk) 56 Pipes/Rank</b>
Prestant 16'	Prestant 8'	Prestant 8'	Gedekt (wood) 8'
Prestant 8'	Gedekt 8'	Fluit 8'	Prestant 4'
Roerfluit 8'	Quintadeen 8'	Gemshoorn 8'	Fluit 4'
Octaaf 4'	Octaaf 4'	Zweving 8'	Gemshoorn 2'
Speelfluit 4'	Roerfluit 4'	(44 Pipes)	Larigot 1 1/3'
Quint 2 2/3'	Octaaf 2'	Octaaf 4'	Cymbel II
Octaaf 2'	Sesquialter (112 Pipes)	Koppelfluit 4'	(112 Pipes)
Terts 1 3/5	Mixtuur III	Nasard 2 2/3	Regaal 8'
Mixtuur IV (224 Pipes)	Mixtuur III (168 Pipes)	Flageolet 2'	Tremulant
Scherp III (186 Pipes)	Scherp III (168 Pipes)	Octaaf 1'	<b>Zymbelstern</b>
<b>Trompet</b> 16	Dulciaan 16'	Mixtuur V (280 Pipes)	
<b>Trompet</b> 8'	Schalmei 8'	Trompet 8'	
<b>Trompeta</b> 4/16	Tremulant	Kromhoorn 8'	
<b>(*horizontal)</b>		Tremulant	
<b>Trompeta</b> 8		*Mechanically Operated Swell Shutters	
<b>(*horizontal)</b>			

[\*2011 Paul Fritts]

<b>Pedaal (Pedal) 32 Pipes/Rank</b>
Prestant (12 + 20/16') 32'
Prestant 16'
Subbas (wood) 16'
Octaaf 8'
Gedekt 8'
Octaaf 4'
Spitsgedekt 4'
Nachhoorn 2+1 (64 Pipes)
Mixtuur VII (224 Pipes)
<b>Bazuin</b> 32'
<b>(8w/24m)</b>
Bazuin 16'
Trompet 8'
Trompet 4'
Cornet 2'

<b>Couplers</b>
II + I
II + III
<b>I + III</b>
Ped + I (Rugwerk)
Ped + II (Hoofdwerk)
Ped + III (Bovenwerk)

Painting by Paul Ohannesian of the Flentrop at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle.

**Combinations**  
6 Combinations per Division  
**8 General Pistons**  
**1 General Cancel**  
**1 Setter Position**



## ★ Useful Information

### Vancouver Centre Teachers List:

**Rachel ALFLATT** (Queens Avenue United Church, New Westminster)

Phone number: 604 322 5995

Email: [cheldar@cheldar.com](mailto:cheldar@cheldar.com)

**Frank EZINGA** (Canadian Reformed Church, Langley)

Phone number: 604 807 5246

Email: [frank.ezinga@langleycanrc.org](mailto:frank.ezinga@langleycanrc.org)

### Vancouver Centre Executive 2018-2019

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