



THE ROYAL CANADIAN  
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

**Vancouver Centre  
Newsletter**



*Autumn Edition  
October, 2017*



**Our 12<sup>th</sup> annual RCCO Halloween Concert** is coming up fast! Our very own event, which attracted over 330 people last year, will take place on Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm at St. Andrew's-Wesley United Church, and this year there's a twist! To find out what it is, and for more info, scroll down to the upcoming events calendar in this newsletter.

### **RCCO Halloween Repertoire List**

Our Regional Director, Sam Balden, contacted RCCO Centres across Canada to compile a succinct and practical collection of suitable pieces for Halloween. With some editing help from the local executive, the preliminary draft was finished and sent out nationally as a resource for all to use. Many thanks to Sam for his work in planning and finalizing this project.

### **Donald Hunt in Vancouver**

The new incumbent of the prestigious Director of Music position at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria has settled into British Columbia and came to Vancouver to inaugurate a concert series taking place at St. James Anglican Church (Gore and Cordova). About 20% of the Vancouver Centre was present to hear and meet the newest elite addition to the West Coast organ scene. He met audience expectations with a program that displayed a wide range of musical and technical mastery, and reminded many of how lush and rich the St. James organ is when heard from the pews.

### **New "member"**

Michael Dirk (executive member-at-large) and wife Annabelle are pleased to have their "opus 1" added to their musical family. Her name is Julia. We all wish her a warm welcome and extend our congratulations to the happy parents.





## ★ Montreal convention reminiscences

Our Regional Director, Sam Balden, collected some reminiscences of this summer's joint RCCO and AGO (north east region) convention in Montreal, to share with our readers:

### From Gail Ovington:

The Montreal Organ Festival, July 1 to July 7/17 was a whirlwind of excitement, an on-going inspiration and had many moments of exhaustion. In seven days, I had attended 23 recitals/concerts in over a dozen venues from northern Montreal to near the Vermont border, 1 convocation, 2 evening rooftop parties, 1 winery, 2 organ factory tours, 2 workshops and a chance to play on 2 different consoles.

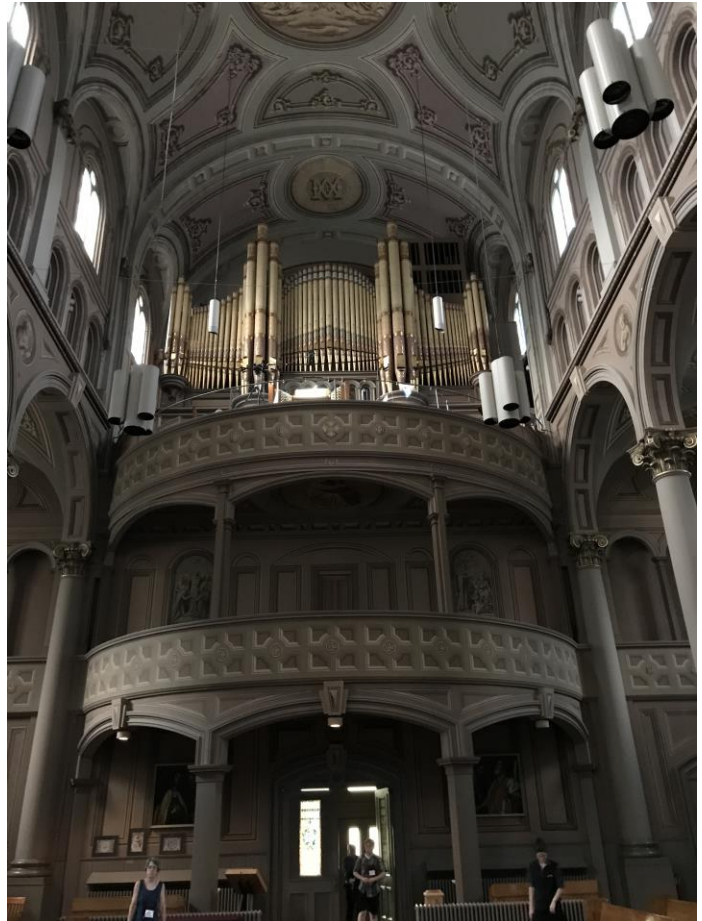
From the first chord at the RCCO competition at the Tres-Saint-Nom-de-Jesus church on July 1 to the last chord on July 7 by Renee Anne Louprette at the Abbey of Saint Benoit du Lac, the Festival was a learning experience with wonderful fellowship, some hilarious moments and just great fun with dedicated musicians!

If I must pick out highlights, I would say that Nathan Laube and Vincent Boucher at the Oratoire Saint Joseph, Christian Lane at the Montreal Symphony Hall, Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger at the Gesu Church, Olivier Latry at the Basilique Notre-Dame, and Rachel Laurin at the Cathedrale Saint-Hyacinthe-Le-Confesseur in Saint-Hyacinthe simply took my breath away.

The Montreal Organ Festival was well worth the expense and I would go again at a moment's notice.

### From Madelene Klassen:

Many thanks to the organizers of the Festival - anyone who has worked on a major convention will appreciate the level of advance planning, coordination and complexity of



Gesu church

bringing 700 people of varying dispositions together in many events, times and places. The hotel staff at the Festival hotel were patient, knowledgeable and very helpful.

July 7, the extension day, was excellent, with the variety of events, churches, organs and performances all packed into one amazing day.

Best concerts for me - Vincent Boucher, Cherry Rhodes, Rachel Laurin, Olivier Latry. An excellent variety of pipe organs, and exceptional playing over all, at the Festival.

Best events for me, not necessarily in order of preference:

Roomful of Teeth concert as well as their workshop

Jazz portion of the Montreal Symphony Hall concert, outstanding clarinetist

Daily Evensong at Christ Church Cathedral

Vincent Boucher's playing at St. Joseph's Oratory

And pommes frites and wine at the hotel at 11:00pm July 7.



Casavant Organbuilding factory



## From Katherine Hume:

I attended the OrgelkidsUSA workshop and was delighted and inspired to see children and adults cooperating to build a working model of a pipe organ in less than an hour. We broke off into three groups to assemble the 2-octave keyboard, 2 ranks of pipes and windchest. When the organ was finally coming together, the kids couldn't keep their hands off of it! We marvelled at their enthusiasm for the instrument and their joy in creating something with their own hands. Designed in the Netherlands, Orgelkids supplies the kit, box and support for purchasers. They were on route to the Mini Maker Faire in Seattle following the Montreal festival and the organ kit has been suggested as a STEM teaching tool in the schools. Perhaps Vancouver Centre could acquire one of these incredible hands-on teaching tools. Here's a picture of children building the Orgelkids portable organ. Eventually, the adults backed off and just admired their enthusiasm.



The Montreal festival represented the largest gathering of organists in the history of Canada, according to RCCO president, Peter Bishop. Showcasing the beautiful, historic city of Montreal and its wealth of pipe organs, the festival was bold, expansive and eclectic.

Personal highlights were the concerts at L'Oratoire Saint-Joseph featuring Vincent Boucher, Basilique Notre-Dame final concert with Olivier Latry, Montreal Jazz Festival concert featuring Jean-Willy Kunz on the new Casavant in the Maison Symphonique, Grammy-winning vocal ensemble A Roomful of Teeth at Cathédrale Marie-Reine-du-Monde as well as the many social opportunities with friends old and new. Great cocktail party on the top of Place Ville Marie on July 4<sup>th</sup>!

I concluded my festival experience with the day trip to St. Hyacinthe where we toured the Casavant and Létourneau organ builders, enjoyed a wine tasting and final concert at Abbaye de Saint-Benoît-Du-Lac featuring Renée Anne Louprette on the Karl Wilhelm organ in the presence of the builder himself.

## From Haruyo Shikano Abramson:

On day one, my shoulders were puffed up with eagerness trying to listen and absorb every line of music and all the lessons. I made a point of attending all the workshops or master classes and all the concerts I could possibly manage. I am well aware that it is my very weakness. I just cannot relax and take things easy. Let me describe a day as an example. It started with an early morning church service, and when it was over I searched for the next venue



Saints-Ange church, Lachine

on the map, following my iPhone GPS instruction, walking and taking the subway, getting lost a few times in the unfamiliar city, attending the workshop, then, immediately running to the next venue for the masterclass. By the time I arrived there, most of the seats were occupied and I ended up standing for the entire duration of the class. When it was over, I ran to the next venue hoping to get a good seat for the concert.... After 10PM, collapsing in my hotel room, I noticed that I was hungry...having never had the chance to eat dinner. What a hard schedule it was! What a dense, intensive, and inspiring week it was!

I have to admit, while some workshops and master classes were interesting and informative, some classes needed better organization and preparation, and some English sounded too French to me and I had a hard time understanding.

All the concerts were amazing. The venues and the pipe organs were exceptionally beautiful, and the choir music was heavenly. I felt grateful that I get to study such a grand instrument, and learn such glorious music. Listening to the concerts, I felt I was in a truly miraculous space and time, sharing together with hundreds of organists from all over the US and Canada. I will never forget that feeling.

My introduction to pipe organ was late. I was already 50 when I first touched the instrument. Although I had an extensive training in piano, I had such difficulty learning the foot pedals and am still struggling with my coordination. Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could enjoy one day playing one of the most magnificent pipe organs somewhere, in a beautiful sacred space. Well, that means I need to keep practicing, keep my body in shape, keep my brain super active, and build up my stamina.....

Lord, please grant me more time.....!



## From Sandra Bower:

Attending the festival with about 800 other organ enthusiasts was an awesome and inspiring experience. It was my first time in the exciting and vibrant city of Montreal. To walk on the cobblestones of a city that started 375 years ago and visit churches with a long standing history captured in the building style and exquisite interiors, was absolutely amazing. To see and listen to organs that have stood the test of time and to know many famous organists have played on these magnificent instruments through hundreds of years, was inconceivable.

The organ performances in the Notre Dame Basilica and St Joseph`s Oratory were impressive. It was a privilege to be able to have the opportunity to listen to so many different organs in one city and to witness the rich history of each. The style and program of the many performances was varied and interesting. The different worship services I was able to attend, were very moving and emotional. Hundreds of people singing together in perfect harmony in a magnificent cathedral gave me shivers up my spine.



Basilique Notre-Dame

**From Sam Balden:**

The 2017 Montreal Organ Festival

A very, very, very long time A-G-O  
The Americans said to the R-C-C-O -  
“Why don’t we hold a joint organist’s convention?”  
For great music and fun, was their joint intention.

They settled on Montreal, a city quite fine,  
To hear organs, and choirs, and to drink much fine wine;  
And extend cross their borders, in most friendly way  
Their hands, to commemorate, each one’s natal day.\*

Midst recitals and workshops was business so much,  
Competitions, convocations, councils and such.  
There was weather with generous and sweltering heat.  
In church without ‘air’, you could stick to your seat.

There were names of some groups that were really quite prime,  
Like Roomful of Teeth, Buzz Brass, and Organized Crime.  
The week’s organ repertoire had much great pizzazz,  
For solo, with choir, with tape, and even with jazz!

To try and condense all the music making and fun  
Into one simple poem - well it just can’t be done.  
So to Leslie and Duerr\*\* - “You both did your bit;  
This joint Organ Festival has sure been a hit.”

4:30 p.m., July 6, 2017

\*July 1 and July 4

\*\*Thomas Leslie (RCCO) and Cheryl Duerr (AGO)



## ★ Upcoming Concerts

**Friday, October 20**, 8:00pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral

**The French Symphonic Organ**, with Jérôme Faucheur (Lille, France).

Music by Boëly, Franck, Vierne, Saint-Saëns, Guilmant, Dupré, Litaize, Demessieux, and Langlais, performed by a specialist in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century French organ music, who was a student of Rolande Falcinelli and Jean Langlais. Tickets \$20 adult, \$15 student/senior.

**Saturday, October 21**, 1:00pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church

**Saturdays at One: Thanksgiving Trumpets**

Katherine Evans, Christopher Robertson, trumpets; Sinéad White, soprano; Darryl Nixon, organ. Music by Adams, Bach, Fauré, Mendelssohn, Purcell, Scarlatti, Vivaldi  
Tickets: \$10 at the door.

**Friday, October 27**, 7:30pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church

**RCCO Halloween Concert**

An evening of spooky music by various ghosts and ghouls! New this year: the first ever movie version of "Frankenstein", dating from 1910 and accompanied live by Edward Norman. Free admission, donations accepted.

**Saturday, October 28**, 3:00pm, St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church

**Organ Revitalization Campaign Launch Concert**

Organists Michael Dirk and John Mitchell, joined by choir, brass and percussion ensemble, will perform music by Bach, Widor, Howells, Vierne, and Lang, plus the 1917 Charlie Chaplin silent film "The Cure" with theater style organ accompaniment. By donation.

**Sunday, November 26** 3:00pm, Ryerson United Church

**Sundays at 3**, with organist Edward Norman and trumpeter Katherine Evans.

Works by Martini, Bach, Haydn, Telemann, Franck, Philiba, Vierne, Defaye.

Tickets \$15 general, \$10 students, available at the door.

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

**Choral Music for Christ the King**

Performed by the Cathedral's own musicians: organist Denis Bédard and the Cathedral Choir, assistant organist Catherine Walsh and the Holy Rosary Women's Choir, the Contemporary Choir with director Chito Lacsina, and the Spanish Mass Choir.

Free admission, donations accepted.

**Friday, January 26**, 8:00pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral

**Cathedral Organist Denis Bédard in Concert**

Music spanning eight centuries, from medieval France to Denis Bédard's own compositions, and including works by Bach, Gigout, and Dubois. Tickets \$20 adult, \$15 student/senior.

## ★ In Memoriam

Hugh McLean, Organist, OC, FRCCO, FRCM, FRSC



The musical world has lost a great organist, choirmaster and musicologist. Hugh John McLean passed away peacefully Sunday, July 30, 2017 in Naples, FL. He was born in Winnipeg, January 5, 1930. Hugh attended the Royal College of Music, England on an organ scholarship in 1949, the first Canadian to be Mann Organ Scholar at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, 1951-56. His London debut was a Command Performance for Queen Elizabeth II in 1955 at the Royal Festival Hall and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Returning to Vancouver, Hugh served as organist and choirmaster at Ryerson United Church, 1957-73. He founded and conducted the Vancouver Cantata Singers, the Hugh McLean Consort and the CBC Vancouver Singers. He taught at the universities of Victoria (1967-69), British Columbia (1969-73) before joining the Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario, London, 1973. While at Western (1973-1995) he served as Dean (1973-1980), taught organ, harpsichord and music history. With organ builder Gabriel Kney he consulted on the installation of the Roy Thompson Hall organ, Toronto, performing at the RTH inaugural Gala Concert, 1985.

After a long and illustrious career in Canada, Hugh retired from Western to assume the post of Choirmaster/Organist at All Saints Episcopal Church, Winter Park, Florida, 1995-2010. Hugh was regularly heard on the CBC, the BBC, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Swiss Radio, and NHK Japan, and performed globally.

A generous and loving person, Hugh is survived by his wife Florence Anne and their children, Ross Alan and Olivia Anne; his sons Robert Andreas, John Stuart, and Hugh Dundas (by his late wife Gunlaug Julie Gaberg); his grandchildren Alexander, Ian and Julie (Robert); Simon, Rhys, Finlay, Iain and Henry (Hugh Dundas); Shion Ross (Ross); his sisters Janet May (Bernard Smith), Kathleen Mary (Gerald Hill), and nieces and nephews Nancy, Donald, Douglas, and Marnie. Funeral services were held at Highlands United Church, North Vancouver, on August 13.

Hugh's kindness and keen perceptions enriched the lives of many musicians and educators. One colleague at Western aptly summarized Hugh's personal gifts: "Hugh changed the entire direction of our lives. His encouragement and support has influenced our very existence at a most fundamental level. The quick precision of Hugh's mind and his brilliance as both performer and scholar lifted those of us with whom he made contact to levels beyond our own expectations with his clearly communicated assumption that we could do it. Hugh will remain with us as a vital and positive spirit that inspired our forward direction, and in our vivid recollections of the experiences we shared."

## 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)

**Michael DIRK** (St. John's Shaughnessy)

Phone number: 604 562 5052

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### Vancouver Centre Executive 2016-2017

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