



Windlines

A newsletter of the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma

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<http://aoi.ou.edu/>

Principal Chorus



Another exciting and eventful year has begun here at the American Organ Institute. In May, we said goodbye to three students who received their master's degrees in organ performance – the first students to graduate since the founding of the American Organ Institute, and indeed the first students to receive a degree in organ performance from the University of Oklahoma since 1998. This was a major milestone for us, and I am very proud of the students and their accomplishments. I'm likewise happy to report that all three were immediately employed – another important statistic to note. Their departure left space in our organ studio family, but these spots have been filled by four new and very talented graduate students, and so the family continues to grow.

The past summer was one of great activity, particularly at the Institute's Shop facility. Three small instruments have either been rebuilt or are currently in the process, making them good-as-new for a generation of young organ students, and the work is being done by the very students who will utilize the instruments. You can see more information on these projects at our website. Approximately 150 people joined us on Aug. 16 for our third annual Open House (see right). It was a wonderful opportunity for interested members of the public to see what happens in a pipe organ shop, including the "guts" of the pipe organ. The Shop is functioning at full speed as we take on new projects.



I know some of our gentle readers were present at the fine concert presented by Christoph Grohmann (see left) on the Mildred Andrews Boggess Memorial Organ in Kerr Gothic Hall. We had a fine turnout and a very enthusiastic audience to experience a broad range of music in the finest North German style. I hope your calendars are marked for Nathan Laube's concert at 8 p.m. Friday Nov. 5. This young man has become a highly sought-after artist, and his concerts are known for their musicality and dazzling technical displays. We await his performance with great anticipation. I also ask you to plan to be in attendance at the Fifth Annual Holiday Pipes concert, which I will present at 8 p. m. on Friday Dec. 10. This concert is always the highlight of my year, as I take requests from the audience and attempt to turn them into original musical offerings. For the first time, patrons attending the Holiday Pipes and Nathan Laube concerts will have the opportunity to purchase seats in the organ loft itself for a true ringside experience. There are only 15 tickets, so call the box office today!

As we move into the fall, I ask you to keep your eye on the growth of our program. We are already looking forward to 2011, and have planned audition dates for the weekends of Jan. 28 and March 25. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a part of the American Organ Institute here at the University of Oklahoma, please take note of these dates. Additional concert announcements for the spring semester are forthcoming, so look for those announcements. Best wishes from all of us at the AOI to all of you.

Boomer Sooner!

—Professor John Schwandt
Director, American Organ Institute

Join us for more exciting events!

Organ Studio Recital

—noon Tuesday, Sept. 28 Gothic Hall

Nathan Laube, Guest Artist

—8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 5 Gothic Hall

5th Annual "Holiday Pipes"

—8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10 Gothic Hall

For tickets or accommodations on the basis of disability call the Fine Arts Box Office (405) 325-4101.

Beyond the AOI

Notes from recent AOI alumni:

Although I graduated only a summer ago, I'm finding that the American Organ Institute has helped me improve on many facets of my life both at and away from the organ console. My internship at University Lutheran Church under Cindy Pullin and organ lessons with Dr. John Schwandt have thoroughly prepared me for the life of a church musician. I found a job at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Roseville, Minn.

immediately after graduation, and made an easy transition into their music ministry and greater community. My experience at the organ shop allowed me to fix a couple of ciphers and dead notes on their organ. Even my small amount of woodworking experience at the shop has allowed me to help my parents work on a remodeling project on their home. Finally, designing the AOI website was a great addition to my resume, which helped get me hired for a technical support job upon moving to Minnesota. Thank you to the directors, students and supporters of the AOI for making this all possible!

—**Kenneth Vigne, MM Organ Performance '10**

After graduating from OU I moved south to Tyler, Texas. I am currently applying my AOI-nurtured skills at Christ Episcopal Church in Tyler. As the Organ Scholar, I play the organ for services, accompany the choir, assist with conducting, and frequently provide music notes for the Sunday bulletins (thank you, Craig, for those hours of Organ Literature). In addition to playing for Christ Church, I am teaching two sections of Music Appreciation and organ lessons at Tyler Junior College.

—**Andrea Printy, MM Organ Performance '10**

I worked for the American Organ Institute during my senior year of college. I was busy with my fourth year as a member of the Pride of Oklahoma as well as working on finishing up my electrical engineering degree, but I'm glad I was still able to find a few hours to work out at the shop throughout the week. Now I work out at Tinker Air Force Base, and while my job doesn't directly incorporate what I physically did while working at AOI, I am still very thankful I was given the opportunity. It was a great experience to be able to work on such a large project. That experience is what will correlate to what I do now. Every engineering project is dealt with in the same manner that was demonstrated so well by how the job was done at the American Organ Institute. Sure, I may never again actually have to solder or lace wires together, but having that background is irreplaceable. Knowing that all these little tasks is what makes up the overall project and seeing the process work was a great experience. I appreciate the time I was able to spend working with others out in the shop and on the concert organ in Sharp Hall. It was a great way to get into a professional environment and start off a career in the field of engineering. Most of all, I just enjoyed being part of the team.

—**Brian Spinner, BS Electrical Engineering '09**

I am a recent graduate of the American Organ Institute but I am still in the area, willing and wanting to stay involved. I received my Master of Music degree in Organ Performance last spring, and I am now pursuing my doctorate in Choral Conducting at OU. While I am not an organ major anymore, it is very refreshing to see so many organists involved in the choral program, along with the graduate choral conducting class. (They make up half the class!) I have expressed my desire to John Riester that I would like to stay a "liason" person between the organ and choral programs, allowing more collaborative opportunities to take place. I am not showing up to the Shop every day to work on the weekly projects, but I hope I can still have some part in helping the program grow.

—**Olivia Buthod, MM Organ Performance '10**

Diping In...

This summer, I applied for a position at the AOI shop. Growing up, I have always cultivated an interest in woodworking, but I have seldom had a creative outlet for it. When I was asked to begin work, specifically on the Möller Artiste Op. 10736 and the Hinners Op. 2686, I was elated. Not only did I finally get the opportunity to delve into organ building, but I got a chance to get to know historic instruments and the unique quirks about the "personalities" of each instrument. Moreover, I had a chance to combine my love of woodcrafting with my passion for music. I dove into the process of sanding, staining, and refinishing the casework with great fervor, as well as replacing or refurbishing various parts that needed attention. During this time, I faced the challenge and the intrigue of developing my own processes and procedures to produce a superior end result. I also learned the value of compromise when it comes to issues such as cost, availability, size, and strengths and weaknesses of particular building materials. The end result is a great personal satisfaction taken in a high-quality finished product that looks good and will ultimately serve future students. The restoration process has also satiated a long-standing interest in acoustics and organology, giving me chances to apply my own knowledge of types of woods and materials and their advantages and disadvantages to design elements of these organs. These chances are made possible by the fact that great emphasis and value is placed on the decisions and opinions of the students—we do not simply show up and do what we are told. Rather, we become part of the process. I think that is what I have most enjoyed about working at the shop.

—**Matthew McCarter**



Matthew McCarter, a native of Oklahoma City, is starting his senior year this fall. He is pursuing a bachelor of music degree in vocal performance.

Did you know??

As part of its goal of preservation and education, the American Organ Institute currently provides maintenance and service for some 18 clients across the state of Oklahoma and farther. For some, it is as simple as regular tuning. For others the jobs include the full range of repair, restoration and rebuilding of any and all pipe organ components. Our technicians recently travelled to California to assist a client in the removal of an historic instrument. If you would like more information about our services, please feel free to call the AOI Shop at (405) 325-7829.



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