

February  
2025

# Mixtures



Binghamton Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

## DEAN'S MESSAGE...

I was able to take a Sunday off after Christmas. Many thanks to the talented church member who earned a graduate degree in piano, and has taken up organ in more recent years! It was the first time in a long time that my beloved Sarah and I were able to take a few days vacation together. We got a dog-sitter and reserved a hotel near Washington, DC and arranged to get together with family members we haven't seen in months, or in some cases years. It was a wonderful, but too short, holiday.

One highlight of those days was a visit to the National Cathedral on New Year's Day. My older daughter has a friend who does change ringing, and his group was attempting a full peal of the 10 bells in the cathedral's main bell tower. It's a remarkable activity explained in this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lyDCUKsWZs> and article [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Change\\_ringing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Change_ringing). The sequence of ringing provided a joyful noise for about three hours (which to me is a more meaningful way to commemorate the start of a new year than watching an illuminated ball slowly descend a flagpole). My daughters and I didn't stay the entire time, but we walked around outside (in an intense, cold wind), and went inside the cathedral as well. I have been in that "house of prayer for all people" many times, but it never fails to inspire humility and reverence in me.

You probably know that the Great Organ of the National Cathedral is being renovated (see page 3 of this newsletter). I have played that instrument at least twice. An aspect which one doesn't realize until sitting at the console is how spread out the pipework is. There is a very noticeable delay from playing a note to hearing the sound come back to you. So one has to develop the ability to "not listen" to the delayed music while also listening to oneself.

My other notable experience with that wonderful instrument was when I played Franck's B minor Chorale as part of the prelude for a worship service there. There are four manuals, putting the music desk rather high, and requiring a bit of stretch for my page turner. The fellow wasn't exactly short, but at one point, while reaching to turn a page he brushed up against the stop knobs and canceled half of the registration. Oh well, something to laugh about now, 40+ years later!

May all your page turns and registrations go well in the coming months!

Hilton

## UPCOMING EVENTS...

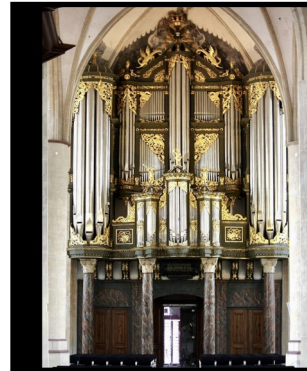
- ♦ Sunday, February 2 - 4:00 pm - German Music Organ Recital featuring Rob Oldroyd and Randy Frye, First Presbyterian Church , Troy, PA
- ♦ Saturday, February 15 - 10:00 am - Fugue State Film's DVD **THE GREAT TOCCATA**. Gathering at 9:30 am with coffee/refreshments followed by the presentation at 10:00 am at Central Methodist Church, 17 Nanticoke Avenue, Endicott. Jean Henssler, host. (See below)
- ♦ Thursday, March 6 - 10:00 am - Organ music sorting/cataloging, Trinity Episcopal Church, 44 Main Street, Binghamton. Further details to come.
- ♦ Sunday, April 6 - 4:00 pm - Trinity Episcopal Church, Binghamton. A light-hearted *multi-media presentation/recital* documenting Jean Henssler's recent 3 month return to college life at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, Ohio

## SATURDAY, 2/15 - FUGUE STATE FILMS

### THE GREAT TOCCATA...

It is NOT Howdy Doody time, but it IS Fugue State Films time.

We've all played it and everyone loves it...Bach's (in-)famous *Tocatta and Fugue in d minor BWV 565*. The mysteries behind its creation will be demystified by organist extraordinaire, Daniel Moulton, in the Martinikirche, Groningen, The Netherlands. Included is a demonstration of the 18th C. historic Arp Schnitger organ which contains pipes dating from 1450! Saturday, February 15, Central United Methodist Church, 17 Nanticoke Avenue, Endicott. 9:30 am light refreshments, 10 am presentation.



Jean Henssler - host

## FROM YOUR REGISTRAR...

The long awaited 2024-2025 Binghamton Yearbook was distributed to members at the Post Holiday dinner and mailed to those who could not attend. I trust all have received it by now. If you haven't already done it, please take a moment to affirm that your listing is correct and, if not as you want it, send me an email with your amends. I was told of one address change at the dinner and a renewing member sent me a phone message of another address change. Thank you!

Richard [sheasleyr@aol.com](mailto:sheasleyr@aol.com)

# INTERIM ORGAN AT NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

The Washington National Cathedral has been in the news these past few weeks, first with the Memorial Service of President Jimmy Carter and then again with the Inaugural Prayer Service which was broadcast live the day after the inauguration. As Hilton mentioned in his *Dean's Message*, the pipe organ is being restored.

What many do not know is that while the 1938 Skinner organ is being restored a 2023 Walker digital organ from the Walker Technical Company, PA is being used as a substitute (2024-2028). Before you turn away, check out the article <https://cathedral.org/music/organ/digital-organ/>. And if you have time to hear this magnificent instrument and its player, go to The National Cathedral's YouTube channel to listen to the organ with organist Thomas Sheehan playing for the above mentioned services. It is difficult to believe that this is not a pipe organ!



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