

Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Twelfth Anniversary

David Spicer



John Weaver, David Spicer, Wilma Jensen, and Frederick Hohman (photo credit: David Gilbert)

It hardly seems possible that twelve years have gone by since we began the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival! We have experienced outstanding applicants, who reflected wonderful, superb teaching, outstanding adjudicators, and a remarkable and consistently high level of music making.

Beautiful New England weather gave an idyllic setting for the festival. On Friday evening, September 10, our traditional opening concert was held. The service/choral portions were played by the writer:

Prelude: *Benedictus*, op. 59, no. 9, Max Reger (played also at the first annual festival)

Psalm 150, César Franck

Hymn: *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* (tune: CHRIST CHURCH), Richard W. Dirksen

Kyrie (from *Messe Solennelle*, op. 16), Louis Vierne

He Comes to Us (text by Albert Schweitzer), Jane Marshall

Go Ye into All the World, Robert Wetzler

Hymn: *Let Heaven Rejoice* (tune: ROCK HARBOR) (text by Hal M. Helms), Alan MacMillan

The three judges were each invited to play a selection of their own choosing. The artists' playing from the balcony was projected onto a screen downstairs in the historic Meetinghouse. Frederick Hohman played his arrangement of *Arioso* (*Suite No. 3 in D*) by J. S. Bach. Wilma Jensen played *Méditation à Ste. Clothilde* by Philip James. John Weaver then played *Chorale Prelude on Ellers* followed by *Fantasy on Sine Nomine*, both his own compositions.

Saturday morning, from 9 to noon, the three high school division finalists played the required repertoire. At 2 pm the young professional division finalists were heard. The combined repertoire of these six finalists included hymn tunes: ST. THOMAS (WILLIAMS), CORONATION, EIN' FESTE BURG, DIADEMATA, SLANE, and VENI CREATOR; Bach: *Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor*, BWV 542, *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor*, BWV 543, *Prelude and Fugue in D Minor*, BWV 539, *Trio Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major*, BWV 525, and *Trio Sonata No. 5 in C Major*, BWV 529; Widor: *Cantabile* (from *Symphony No. 6 in G Minor*), *Andante Cantabile* (from *Symphony No. 4 in F*), and *Andante Sostenuto* (from *Symphonie Gothique*); Franck: *Choral No. 2 in B Minor* and *Choral No. 3 in A Minor*; Eben: *Moto Ostinato* (from *Sunday Music*); Jongen: *Sonata Eroica*, op. 94; Jehan Alain: *Aria*; Duruflé: *Scherzo*, op. 2; Messiaen: *Dieu parmi nous* (*Nativité du Seigneur*, IX).

Immediately afterwards, all finalists and judges had a chance for interaction and discussion over a delicious meal provided by Dana Spicer at Mainly Tea, directly across the street from the Meetinghouse.

On Sunday, September 12, all finalists played portions of the 8, 9:15, and 11

am worship services. At 1:30 pm, a masterclass with the three judges was held. Many important topics were covered, and awards were presented.

The judges' decisions

High School Division: first place, **Bryan Anderson** from Stockbridge, Georgia, a student of Sarah L. Martin; second place, **Deniz Uz** from Longwood, Florida, a student of Terry Yount and currently with Thomas Bara at the Interlochen Arts Academy; third place, **Clarence Chaisson** from South Lancaster, Massachusetts, a student of Christa Rakich.

Young Professional Division: first place, **Adam Pajan** from New Haven, Connecticut, formerly a student of Charles Boyd Tompkins at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina and currently with Martin Jean at Yale University; second place, **Clayton Roberts** from Houston, Texas, a student of Robert Bates at the University of Houston; third place: **Jonathan Hehn** from South Bend, Indiana, a student of Craig Cramer at the University of Notre Dame.

We are very grateful to Charles Callahan for serving as the screening judge for initial recorded examples of these organists and other applicants.

We are also grateful to Leigh and Betty Standish for the \$2000 award for first prize in the high school division. The young professional division first prize of \$3500 was given by Robert Bausmith and Jill Peters-Gee, M.D. Thanks go to John Gorton and Richard Pilch for providing \$750 for the David Spicer Hymn Playing Award, which was awarded to high school division finalist **Bryan Anderson**. Other prizes and gifts toward the festival—including the high school division second prize of \$1000 and the young professional division second prize of \$1500—came from Austin Organs, Inc., Marilyn Austin & the Austin family, and several individuals in the First Church family. We also thank Dr. Paul Bender for his gift to this festival.

Special thanks go to Bon Smith of Austin Organ Service Company of Avon, Connecticut, who was on hand throughout the Saturday competition to offer assistance, should the organ need it, as well as his gracious gift of tuning and maintenance for this festival. Austin Organ Service Company is the regular curator of this instrument, serviced by Alex Belair and Michael Tanguay.

Our thanks to William Dean, music committee chair; Andrea Volpe, ASOF chair; and Linda Henderson, assistant, for so ably performing the organizational work that made the festival run smoothly and efficiently.

Churches that allowed their instruments to be used for additional practice include Trinity Episcopal Church, Wethersfield, Bruce Henley, organist-choirmaster; St. John's Episcopal Church, West Hartford, Ralph Valen-



Left to right: David Spicer, Andrea Volpe, Adam Pajan, Clayton Roberts, Jonathan Hehn, Clarence Chaisson, Bryan Anderson, Deniz Uz, Wilma Jensen, John Weaver, and Frederick Hohman (photo credit: David Gilbert)

tine, organist-choirmaster; St. James' Episcopal Church, also in West Hartford, Jason Roberts, organist-choirmaster; First Church of Christ, Glastonbury, Angela Salcedo, director of music ministries; Cathedral of St. Joseph, Hartford, Ezequiel Menéndez, music director; and Bethany Covenant Church, Berlin, Olga Ljungholm, minister of music.

The 2009 first-place winners, Bryan Anderson and Adam Pajan, will perform in recital on Sunday, June 13, 2010, at 7 pm at the First Church of Christ, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

The 2010 Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival will have the following judges for the competition: Joyce Jones, Charles Callahan, and Frederick Hohman. Plans are underway to feature these organists in the opening concert of the festival on Friday

evening, September 10, at 7:30 pm. The ASOF committee is hoping to invite six qualified young organists to compete in the two divisions on Saturday, September 11. Information about the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival and current requirements for the competition are available by telephone at 860/529-1575 ext. 209, by e-mail at <music@firstchurch.org>, or by viewing the ASOF website: <www.firstchurch.org/ASOF>.

David Spicer began as Minister of Music and the Arts at First Church of Christ in Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1986. In 1996 he and Harold Robles founded the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival. Spicer is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Alexander McCurdy, and is a graduate of the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Thirteenth Annual

Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival

A Weekend in Celebration of Excellence in Organ Music:
A Gala Concert, ORGAN COMPETITION, Services, and Masterclass

High School Division

First Prize: \$2,000 Other prizes also awarded

College/Young Professional Through age 26

First Prize: \$3,500 Other prizes also awarded

This includes an appearance on our 2010-2011 Concert Series.

2010 Panel of Judges



Joyce Jones



Frederick Hohman



Charles Callahan

PAST JUDGES:

Colin Andrews, Diane Meredith Belcher, Benjamin Dobey, Paul Fejko, Janette Fishell, Gerri Hancock, Fredrick Hohman, Paul Jacobs, Wilma Jensen, Marilyn Mason, Katharine Pardoe, Cherry Rhodes, Catherine Rodland, John Rose, John Walker and John Weaver

AUDITION TAPES/CDS:

Due on June 4, 2010

THE COMPETITION:

September 8-10, 2010

For Information & Application:

First Church of Christ

250 Main St., Wethersfield, CT 06109

www.firstchurch.org/asof

860.529.1575 Ext. 209

music@firstchurch.org

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