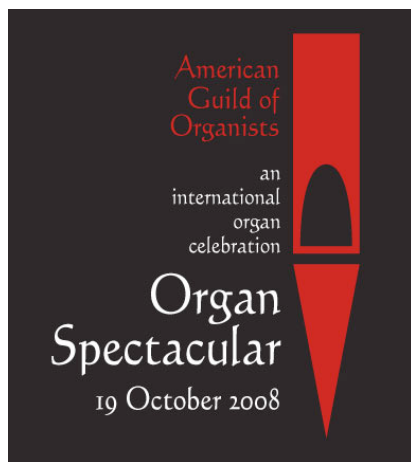


International Year of the Organ 2008-2009 and Organ Spectacular



CONCERT PROGRAMMING THEMES & FORMATS

Prepared by the
**Committee on Professional
Networking and Public Relations**

of the
American Guild of Organists

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AN OVERVIEW

The two primary objectives of Organ Spectacular: An International Organ Celebration 2008-2009 are to:

- Promote increased general public awareness of the organ
- Promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles among current/previous organ enthusiasts and entirely new audiences

STRATEGIES

Using the “Organ Spectacular” event on October 19, 2008 and subsequent individual chapter events throughout the year, promote awareness of the instrument, as well as increase attendance and participation in various concerts and classes.

Align the AGO with other organizations devoted to promoting the organ both nationally and internationally.

Leverage celebrity involvement and support for the instrument.

GOALS

- Have a minimum of 225 chapters participate in the October 19th Organ Spectacular event.
- Have a minimum of 250 chapters, and at least 25 international organizations, participate in the International Year of the Organ.
- Have a minimum of 100 chapters participate in providing a class for public schools, assuming CONO [AGO Committee on the New Organist] has developed a class outline for one 45-minute class about the organ for different age levels (with assistance of local organ builder/technician): in other words, take Pedals, Pipes and Pizza to the classroom.
- Have at least 150 chapters put on a Pedals, Pipes and Pizza program.

Our main business strategy is to attract new audiences to the organ through the year-long IYO--International Year of the Organ 2008-2009, and to lay the ground work for future events, fund-raising, and membership in the AGO. This guide will also focus on how to plan strategically, target your desired audience, and produce a successful Organ Spectacular (OS) event for October 19, 2008. Other resources supplied on the International Year of the Organ webpage and Organ Spectacular webpage on the AGO’s website will help you plan and execute the marketing aspects of your events.

This year-long celebration (IYO) will highlight many events, with a festive beginning at the national convention in Minneapolis June, 2008. Of particular note is the Sunday, October 19, 2008 world-wide organ concert. With an estimated 250 organ concerts expected to be held throughout the world on Sunday, October 19, 2008, we hope that a variety of concert programs will not only attract our core audience, but will diversify our audiences to ensure the future growth of our organization and the popularity of organ music.

We encourage you to think as creatively as possible to make your International Year of the Organ (IYO) events and Organ Spectacular (OS) concert day a great success. The

AGO Committee on Professional Networking and Public Relations and the AGO staff are committed to helping chapters make the most of their involvement in IYO and OS. Please contact AGO National Headquarters if you have any additional ideas you think will be helpful to AGO chapters for planning of the IYO and OS events, or if you have any questions. We will be happy to discuss these ideas and questions with you and disseminate information to other chapters.

A WORD ABOUT AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

For most AGO chapters, the success of their events will depend on their ability to build grassroots community support for their International Year of the Organ (IYO) programs. Your chapter can ensure larger audiences for your events now and in the future by using IYO to create new partnerships, networks, and linkages with other music and arts organizations, AGO members, houses of worship, media, local businesses, volunteers, and local government and community members. The national Committee on Professional Networking and Public Relations is networking with many music organizations around the world. The Committee has created an extensive list of the groups that have been contacted. This list is available on the International Year of the Organ website.

Audience development and retention are the primary considerations for the concert themes and formats suggested in this guide. Audience cultivation is the key to the successful development of future events, contributors, organ students, and AGO members.

This document was created to be thought-provoking, and to serve as an aid to chapter deans and concert coordinators. Specific program repertoire will be the decision of the local chapter and the AGO members organizing the concert. Within this concept, all chapters are encouraged to program a member to play the work commissioned from Stephen Paulus and the AGO Organ and Instrument Competition piece on the October 19, 2008 Organ Spectacular concert. The main idea we want to impart to you is to target your concert programming strategically to attract certain audiences, and then, give those audiences a great experience.

An estimated 300,000 people tune in to radio and television programs featuring organ music each week. These are some of the people we want to attract as IYO audience members and future Guild members. Obviously, there is great potential “out there” for us to build our audience for live chapter events. Conceptually, we hope that chapter leaders, Organ Spectacular Concert Coordinators, and other members who organize these events will give particular consideration to the following factors when planning the Organ Spectacular concert for October 19, 2008 and other events throughout the celebration year.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Generally speaking, we want chapters to consider three important factors when planning IYO events. 1) What segment (children, families, young professionals, ethnic groups, seniors, etc.) of the local population has the greatest potential to deliver a large audience to your event? 2) What programming do you want to use to attract this group? and 3) Which partners do you want to work with to help you attract this audience?

1. COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS:

What are the demographics of your local community? Perhaps the makeup of your community has changed in recent years — as it has in many areas of the country — or there might be a segment of the community that you would like to reach out to. Your community may have experienced an increase in the number of young families, young professionals, or a particular ethnic group. Your events can be designed to appeal to these potential audience members, and you can invite their leaders to participate in planning it.

In larger chapters, a number of different concert ideas and formats can be used in different venues to appeal to various segments of the community. Concert formats can also be combined to attract a cross section of the community and the membership of your church or synagogue.

For many, the membership of your church or synagogue will be a natural core audience for your IYO events. If so, then the programming for your event should appeal to the greatest number of people in your congregation. If your church or synagogue will be the venue for this event, your marketing of this event to new audience members will probably be of interest to the religious leadership of your church or synagogue. They can help you market the event.

2. PROGRAMMING (For the Celebration Year and the Organ Spectacular concert on October 19, 2008):

Themes:

After you have identified the best audience for you to market your Organ IYO events to, you can consider the programming for the concert that will be most appealing and satisfying for your audience. Feel free to use these themes and any others as part or all of your concert programming to attract your targeted audience:

- American Music — patriotic themes
- Classical Music
- Comedy — (e.g., PDQ Bach)
- Composer Recognition
- Ethnic/Cultural — African-American, Caribbean, Christian, Country of Origin for particular communities (e.g., Polish or Italian music), Latino, Jewish, etc.
- Fine Arts (e.g., *Pictures at an Exhibition*)
- Halloween (e.g., Pipes Spooktacular!)
- Hymns
- Jewish New Year

- New Age Music
- Popular Music (Contemporary Pop, Rock, Jazz, etc.)
- Sacred Music
- Space (e.g., Gustav Holst: *The Planets*, György Ligeti choral works)
- Spirituals (and Early Blues)
- Sports — Baseball, Hockey and Skating
- Themes and music from favorite TV shows, movies and children’s songs
- Wedding Music

Formats and Enhancements:

The following programming formats can be used wholly or in part of your event programs:

- “Hands-On” experiences — open console opportunities to play the organ
- “In-formances” for old and young
- “Meet the King” of Instruments
- MIDI Music
- Multimedia Events
- Music and Dance
- Music and Theatre Arts
- Music and Visual Arts
- Open Rehearsal
- Pipe Organ Crawl (before or after concert)
- Professional Sports Organists — Recruit team announcers, coaches and players to participate
- Sing-a-long
- Theatre Organ for a Day — accompany classic movies
- Young People’s Concerts

The use of these programming themes and formats will depend on 1) the audience you hope to reach; 2) the arts, business, and community organizations that you choose to work with; and 3) the interests of the AGO membership and concert organizers. Using two or more formats or themes, you can make your concerts “multi-level,” appealing to different audiences. For example: Host an “Organ Crawl” before or after the concert, produce a choir and organ concert, and end the event with a sing-a-long. Or use modern, popular, or ethnic music combined with classical music. AGO chapters with many participating members can target each individual event towards a different audience and demographic segment of the community. One concert does not have to appeal to the entire community. The possibilities are endless. We suggest that considerable thought be given to attracting the largest number of people since this will help to make our concerts profitable.

A note to traditionalists: Some of the concert themes and formats above may seem unimportant or insignificant to some AGO members. While we recognize that many Guild members might decide to perform only classical music in a traditional format, we are seeking to build new audiences for pipe organ music by trying new ways of reaching people in our communities. We hope that a number of AGO members will embrace this approach, take some risks, and design their IYO events

with other partners (see below) and with dynamic programs to attract new audiences. We hope and expect that all performers will bring their professionalism, high standards, and a sense of pride to each event they perform, with all due respect for the audience and for the musical content of the program.

3. COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Music and the Arts:

We encourage chapters and members to use IYO as a means to develop new partnerships and to engage existing cultural partners in collaborative efforts. By teaming up with the local symphony orchestra, a visual arts group, or a popular local choir or glee club, you can arrange to market your IYO events to their audiences and members as well as to yours. How about a collaborative effort with local dance and theatrical groups? Does a local high school or college have a band or music program that might be interested in an ensemble performance with the organ? The friends and families of these performing groups can help build your audience. Bottom line: Use IYO to forge new relationships in your community and choose concert partners that can help you reach new audiences!

Think about your community and which demographic groups hold the greatest potential for attending your events. Families can be attracted to attend family concerts. Similarly, “hip” young professionals may be attracted to your event if you link up with a modern dance company and program avant garde dance, or spiritual new age music.

Consider introducing the organ to young adults through musical idioms they know and adore, whether it’s hip-hop, gospel, reggae, country-western, folk, blues, or rock ‘n roll. Don’t be afraid to experiment with innovative ideas.

Please note: Once you have chosen your event partner(s), marketing your International Year of the Organ events will be an integral part of making your events successful.

Schools:

If your chapter or individual members have strong relationships with schools in the area, perhaps your event programming should be designed to appeal to school children and their parents. Consider the value of holding open rehearsals for school children, pre- and post-event “Organ Crawls,” “In-formances,” or opportunities for children to sit on the bench and play before or after the concert. Similarly, as mentioned above, a collaboration with a school’s music, choral, or marching band program is a great way to build audiences. Invite the music faculty and the principal to become actively involved.

IYO events can also be used to showcase the talents of organ students in local colleges and universities. In addition, students studying arts administration may welcome the hands-on opportunity to help organize an IYO event, raise funds for it, and promote it within the community. College and university faculty and administrators can also be approached for their support. Popular professors can be invited to introduce each piece of music on the program by explaining its musicological, historical, or socio-cultural contexts.

Retail Businesses:

Retail stores in your community can be approached to sponsor an event by providing cash and in-kind contributions toward its success. For example, a video equipment retailer might be willing to set up a camera and video screen or multiple monitors so that the audience can watch the organists at work, or project graphics on the screen during the concert.

Local Industry:

Is your community a “company town”? If so, consider partnering with the company. Whether it is involved in heavy industry or high technology, try to enlist the firm’s active support or endorsement of your IYO events. Perhaps they can be approached to sponsor your event or subsidize it by purchasing a large block of tickets and offering them for sale to their employees at discounted prices.

Government:

Popular local government and community leaders could lend their names to the event as Honorary Hosts, Masters of Ceremonies, or Chairpersons of IYO events and thereby attract larger audiences. Remember that the presidential election will be just a few weeks after the October 19, 2008 Organ Spectacular concert.

Denomination Leadership:

Organize a concert featuring the organists from the major churches and synagogues in your area to perform at one location and attract the participation and attendance of all the religious leaders and their congregations. Use this as an opportunity to show the Guild’s ecumenical, non-sectarian role in fostering excellence in organ music.

The Media:

Do members of the local AGO know anyone connected with the media in your community? Will a classical radio station or program help promote the event? If so, your program format could appeal to listeners of that station since radio has the power to reach a large number of people. TV promotion and coverage would be even more advantageous. Who do you know?

Please note: As part of the Chapter Marketing Resource, the Organ Spectacular website contains pre-designed media packages to help you introduce Organ Spectacular and International Year of the Organ events to your local media.

OTHER HELPFUL CONSIDERATIONS

1. SELECTING A VENUE:

This is a very important aspect of your event. Select a venue that enables you to present the concert programming you choose and attract the audience that you want. Generally speaking, if you can arrange for the donation of a venue at no cost, it will help the program achieve financial success. If, however, the program you want to do requires a big stage, greater audience seating, etc., consider whether your chapter and your artistic

partners have the wherewithal to rent a space. To maximize the financial stability of your event, we suggest working with free space whenever possible.

We recognize fully that the very large majority of pipe organs are installed in houses of worship where they have been dedicated to serve God and support the community in solemn, religious observance. If a religious institution and its council or clergy are not comfortable using its organ for a secular concert, another venue should be found. Make every effort to use a venue that will embrace your chapter's programming plans, especially if you are using the organ in a non-traditional, non-liturgical context. Organs in academic settings, theaters, and private halls may be more appropriate for some IYO events. Another approach is to bring the concert to your audience. If you are reaching out to young teenagers for example, consider bringing an IYO event to your area Shopping Mall, (and don't forget to program your concert to appeal to these "independently-minded" teens). In essence, go where your audience is.

2. CREATING A BUDGET:

Once you have selected your performing partners and the venue, plan your event on paper by creating a line-item budget. The budget should include projected ticket sales and revenue from fund raising and sponsorships as well as projected costs. Be conservative in your estimating. It is wise to project high on your costs and low on your projected fundraising revenue to ensure that you will meet your budgetary goals. Think about all sources of revenue and expenses. The most important resources that most of us overlook during the planning stages of an event are human. Who will do the things that are necessary to produce a successful event? If you are directing the program, managing and directing rehearsals, and coordinating activities at the venue, who will help you market the event? Can you handle both the production and the marketing for this event yourself?

Part of the budgeting process is identifying what needs to happen to produce this event, and how many people are required to do those things. Next, who do you know — which chapter members, students, family, and friends can help you produce your event? Often times, you will inherit capable volunteers by teaming up with other arts groups. Ticket sales can be estimated at 60% to 80% of total seating available to be conservative. Depending on your community norms and if you choose to have admission prices, they should average between \$10 to \$15 per adult ticket, and \$5 to \$8 for children under 12. Estimate costs of music, special lighting, sound, audio/visual equipment, printed AGO banners, flyers, phone calls, faxes, etc. Then, as part of your marketing efforts, seek to reduce these costs by finding in-kind donations of these expenses. Remember to set up an AGO table in each venue at which you can sign up new members, answer questions, sell or distribute AGO resources, and promote participation in your chapter and its programs.

SUMMARY

We hope all AGO chapters will use the International Year of the Organ 2008-2009 as an opportunity to learn how to plan and execute profitable, artistically successful events, while fostering new partnerships within their communities. Long term, the International Year of the Organ and Organ Spectacular have the potential to deliver substantial funds, new audiences, and new members to the AGO.

American Guild of Organists

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the American Guild of Organists is to promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide a forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members.