

The International Celebration of the Organ, 2008-09

Project Overview

The American Guild of Organists has proclaimed the program year, 2008-09, to be the International Celebration of the Organ. This year of celebration of the King of Instruments will focus upon the unique value of the organ and its literature as well as the contribution of its art to the culture at large. This celebration of the organ is designed to increase appreciation for the enduring majesty of the instrument and its music in people of all ages and backgrounds.

The 2008-09 year will include a variety of events. On Sunday, October 19, 2008, the American Guild of Organists (AGO) in cooperation with various other organ organizations, including the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO) and the American Theater Organ Society (ATOS) will present more than 2,000 performers in more than 225 concert venues throughout North America and abroad--the Organ Spectacular celebration. A family audience of more than 100,000 is expected to attend these concerts. In addition, special TV and radio organ music programming promoting the event will reach an estimated 300,000 people or more. This one-day celebration of the pipe organ is designed to increase public awareness of the organ. Included in the program at many venues that day will be the winning composition of a competition as well as a work commissioned for this concert.

Other events of the International Celebration of the Organ year will include educational outreach programs to schools and concert-goers, as well as visits to organ shops. These events will feature the organ in its historic and evolving roles as a solo, accompanying and ensemble instrument — showcasing the talents of the nation's leading professional organists in collaboration with some of the country's most distinguished musical artists. Concert programs will feature the organ with dance companies, brass and other instrumental ensembles, acclaimed choral groups and vocal soloists, marching bands, symphony orchestras, and many other musical and arts organizations.

Events will be presented in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout North American and abroad in a diverse array of settings — from performing arts centers and concert halls to churches, universities and outdoor pavilions. In addition to the great variety of instruments and performers presented with the organ, programs will feature “informances,” organ “crawls,” multimedia presentations, and audiovisual enhancements.

Partner Organizations

Distinguished organizations collaborating with the AGO in sponsoring the International Year of the Organ, 2008-09, include:

American Theater Organ Society
Royal Canadian College of Organists

Admission

Each local presenter will determine admission fees, if any, to events.

The **AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS** (AGO) is the national professional association serving the organ and choral music fields. Founded in 1896 as both an educational and service organization, the AGO seeks to set and maintain high musical standards and to promote understanding and appreciation of all aspects of organ and choral music. The mission of the AGO 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. The Guild currently serves more than 20,000 members in 343 local chapters throughout the United States and abroad.