



# VOX OCEANA

FEB 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS | VOLUME LIV NO. 1

## RI CHAPTER OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS 2020-2021

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2020  
Adam Schneider  
adamsschneider39@gmail.com

2021  
Frederick Jodry  
Stephen P. Kirby, Outgoing Dean  
Lawrence E. Wilson III  
860.857.5493  
ewilson3rd@gmail.com

2022  
Philip Martorella  
Gina Vecchio 401.354.2366

[www.riago.org](http://www.riago.org)

## FROM THE DEAN

Hello dear friends and colleagues,

Happy New Year! 2021!

The New Year always brings with it hope for a new tomorrow and a good dose of optimism. Certainly, after the challenges of this past year, we are due some! This New Year is unique, not only because a new President has been inaugurated, but because we also have two new vaccines that we are holding out much hope for, and we are eagerly awaiting the chance to reunite with choirs, congregations, choruses, and students in our beloved churches, concert halls, schools and universities, and around our dinner tables with friends. Although the way ahead is still uncertain, we have much to be grateful for and much to hope for. I think one thing that has given me so much hope is seeing in action how we as musicians have so much hope and optimism left in us despite this having been perhaps the most challenging year of our lives. This is no more apparent than in the RIAGO webinar event we held last December, *Creativity in Crisis*. Our own Stephen Martorella has written a recap about it and shares his thoughts and takeaways. We also provide a link to the webinar which was recorded and live streamed. If you have not yet had a chance to see it, please do. It is very uplifting. Here's the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/gigi.mitchellvelasco/videos/10225041313999440/>

I have seen many of you online in your church services, accompanying online recitals and playing online organ recitals. One takeaway for me during the webinar was the fact that no matter what, we as musicians are creators. I also see your cooking, your quilts, your knitting, gardens and home projects on Facebook and Instagram, and I am in awe of your resilience and desire to make the world a better place! It is this creativity that keeps us alive and keeps us sane. Please remember if you are in need of assistance financially because of hardship and joblessness we have a program that can help you. Please look into the newsletter for further information.

Despite it all, I have enjoyed being part of your journey over the past year, and I look forward with eagerness to our next adventures, whatever life may bring. I am, as always, grateful to be here for you, as are all of us at RIAGO.

*Gigi*

Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, MMus, CAGO  
Dean

## PANDEMIC ROUNDTABLE - CREATIVITY IN CRISIS

Webinar Wrap-up  
*Stephen T. Martorella*

RIAGO held its first ever webinar on December 11, 2020, when **Dean Gigi Mitchell-Velasco** hosted an international panel of 10 people in the musical arts, one of whom is also a licensed clinical social worker. After a welcome and introduction by **Elizabeth George**, Director of Member Engagement and Chapter Development for the American Guild of Organists, participants each presented and discussed samples of their work and explained how they adapted, continued, and planned for a future despite the pandemic. Panelists included international concert organist **Katelyn Emerson**, who recently performed for our chapter before the pandemic hit. Persons in and around Rhode Island included choral clinician **Paulo Faustini**, violinist with the Rhode Island Philharmonic; Handel and Haydn Society, and Concertmaster Vermont Symphony **Katherine Winterstein**; and recorder player and licensed clinical social worker **Katy Roth**. Casting the net wider we heard from **David Hayes**, Music Director of the New York Choral Society and Director of Orchestral and Conducting Studies at the Mannes School of Music; **Matt Scinto**, Music Director of Cape Cod Chamber Orchestra and Civic Orchestra of New Haven; **Erin Hannigan**, Principal Oboe for the Dallas Symphony and co-Founder of Artists for Animals, **Thomas Vozzela**; Director of Music, organist and choirmaster at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, MO; New York based **Courtney Carey**, operatic baritone and presenter/promoter and founder of *Courtney's Stars of Tomorrow*; international opera star **Carl Tanner**, not to mention our own Dean Gigi, who added insight from personal stories of her own distinguished career as an international concert and opera star. We also heard from the leaders of the New England Musicians Relief Fund, **Gabriel Langfur Rice** and **Hazel Dean Davis** talk about their philanthropic mission of extending financial assistance to affected free-lance musicians.

Hearing their stories, one theme stood out: *Do not give up, keep up your resilience and keep on in creative ways, keeping your name and your game alive, your projects*

*in peoples' minds, your hopes and dreams alive for the future, and offer hope to others to persevere.*

This is not the first global crisis, nor will it be the last, but the response of our medical and first responders, and the resonance of the arts should all be inspiration to work toward a brighter tomorrow, and to be heroes today simply by observing the protocols.

Cindy and I from Aruba wish you all a happy, healthy, and COVID-safe New Year, one and all.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Don't forget that February is Black History Month. This gives us an opportunity to discover new and exciting repertoire. Check out this schedule from Classical 91.5 –

<https://www.classical915.org/post/pipedreams-celebrates-performers-composers-and-music-african-americans-february-2021>. Here's the link to the first program on February 1<sup>st</sup> – <https://www.pipedreams.org/episode/2021/02/01/shining-a-light>. One can listen to the trailer of this program on the home page – <https://www.pipedreams.org/>

## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

The RI AGO Board is planning on producing an updated Members Directory for 2021-2022. Due to our National Organization's restructuring of Membership Dues, please make sure you have updated your Membership as soon as possible. Christopher Souza plans to organize this directory in the early spring of 2021. Thanks for everyone's cooperation.

*Stephen Kirby*

## THE 2021 LOIS CONBOY MEMORIAL AWARDS

This year's Louis Conboy Memorial Awards are now accepting applications for the Young Artist, Encouragement and Discovery Awards. Please see each attached application information on these Awards.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR COVID SETBACKS

RIAGO has set up an Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) in response to the current and ongoing crisis and its economic impact on our members. The relief will be a \$100 gift card to a supermarket where the recipient buys groceries. To be eligible, applicants must be current members of our chapter and have lost income from their church postings as a result of being laid off due to the COVID-19 lockdown any time after 15 March 2020. This gift card may be issued only once in a 12-month period. Individuals with liability and/or insurance claims pending are not eligible. To apply, send a statement with your name, home address, telephone, email, a brief paragraph detailing the circumstances of your dismissal, the date of dismissal, date of reinstatement (if applicable), and the name of the institution from which you were dismissed. Please send this statement to Steve Martorella at [steve.fbc@verizon.net](mailto:steve.fbc@verizon.net).

The matter will be subject to review by the ERF Committee (Lawrence Wilson and Stephen Martorella) and subject to final approval by the Dean (Gigi Mitchell-Velasco).

## PLACEMENT LISTINGS

Contact Julie Tagen (401.225.9594) to list

North Kingstown United Methodist 4/16/20  
35 Congdon Hill Road, Saunderstown, RI 02874  
Mark Zaccaria 401.225.5051 [zaccaria@att.net](mailto:zaccaria@att.net)  
Pipe organ \$6,000-8,400

Emanuel Lutheran Church 10/10/20  
9 New London Ave, West Warwick, RI 02893  
Pastor Todd Stange 401-450-2836  
Ahlborn-Galanti \$13-18,000 Minister of Music

**AGO National** offers a link to various articles indicating helpful sources of information for musicians, religious institutions and students regarding many of the COVID-related challenges facing members.

[www.agohq.org/responding-to-Covid-19/](http://www.agohq.org/responding-to-Covid-19/)

## SUBSTITUTE LISTINGS

Contact Julie Tagen (401.225.9594) with changes.

### AVAILABLE SUNDAYS & WEEKENDS

Babbit, Jonathan 401.864.9009  
Casteel, Eden 401.932.5589  
Clarke, Margaret 401.726.4128 (all)  
Higgins, Stephen 401.441.2270  
(comfortable with any keyboard situation)  
Jones, William 401.848.4327 (all)  
Kohl, Karen 401.787.2695 (please inquire)  
MacCubbin, Jay 401.521.0698  
Nicholson, Nancy 401.521.9097 (all)  
Norton-Jackson, Diana 401.714.2700  
interim, sub, no weddings  
Tagen, Julia 401.225.9594 (all)  
weddings, funerals, interim  
Taylor, Terry 401.253.9030  
[tutti@fullchannel.net](mailto:tutti@fullchannel.net)  
Vecchio, Gina 401.954.2163  
Vinson, Duncan 781.888.3848  
Westhaver, Verna 401.683.2636  
substitute, interim  
Wilson, Lawrence 860.857.5493  
Organ, sacred jazz composer/arranger

### AVAILABLE WEEKDAYS ONLY

Black, John 401.737.1230 (all)  
available Saturday & weekdays  
Castellani, Roger 917.621.6530  
Cranmer, David 401.447.9848  
Martorella, Philip 401.615.0769  
no Sunday a.m.  
Sobaje, Martha 401.626.0099  
weddings, funerals

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## Submissions

Deadline: 20th of each month. Submissions: Send Word or Text files to [altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com) or to Althea Allard, 166 Suffolk Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02861.

Advertising: Word doc, PDF (print ready), JPG (high resolution), or TIFF. All files should be grayscale at 300 dpi resolution. Email to [altheaallard@gmail.com](mailto:altheaallard@gmail.com)

## Advertising Rates

1/4-page ad (3.5"W x 5"H): \$18 -or- 1/8-page ad (3.5"W x 2.5"H): \$10

Flyers provided electronically for inclusion with newsletter (for RIAGO members): \$10. Make checks out to RIAGO and mail to Althea Allard by the 20th. \$25 non-members.

