

Pipe Lines

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE KOTZSCHMAR ORGAN



ORGELFEST 17

PORTLAND MAINE

THE KOTZSCHMAR ORGAN SUMMER SERIES

Tuesdays in August will offer the people of Portland a musical treat as the Friends of the Kitzschmar Organ welcome a variety of organists to the Merrill Auditorium stage as part of Orgelfest 2017. This concert series will be a true celebration of the Kitzschmar and the people who play it. From classic repertoire to contemporary theater organ pieces, from organ and brass arrangements to transcriptions of symphonic works for organ, these concerts will show our audiences just how versatile the Kitzschmar Organ, and the organists who play it, can be!



AUG 1

Monica Czausz



AUG 8

Richard Elliott



AUG 12

KOTZSCHMAR
Organ Day!



AUG 15

Nathan Avakian



AUG 22

Ray Cornils
& Festival Brass

TUESDAYS | 7:30 PM

Kitzschmar Konversations | 6:30 pm | Rehearsal Hall
KOTZSCHMAR Organ Day! | 10:00 - 4:00 pm | Saturday

MERRILL AUDITORIUM

20 Myrtle Street, Portland, ME

MORE INFO foko.org



TICKETS porttix.com 207-842-0800

Box Office, Monday - Friday 12:00 - 6:00 pm

2017-2018 SEASON

NATHAN LAUBE

Saturday, September 16, 2017 | 7:30 pm

HALLOWEEN SILENT FILM NIGHT

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Tuesday, October 24, 2017 | 7:30 pm

Tom Trenney

KOTZSCHMAR CHRISTMAS WITH CORNILS

Ray's 27th and final performance as Municipal Organist

Tuesday, December 19, 2017 | 7:00 pm

with Kitzschmar Festival Brass

Public reception to follow concert



From the Municipal Organist



What a pleasure and honor it has been to serve as Portland's Municipal Organist since 1990. We have come a long way together.

In the 1990's we focused on getting more of the instrument to function - replacing worn stop and key actions - so that increasingly more of the instrument would be playable. The board was actively involved in the major remodeling of the auditorium and worked diligently to keep the organ and its needs in that decision-making processes. We increased the number of silent films being offered, celebrated Bach's Birthday with a bash in March and began the Kotzschmar Christmas with Cornils concerts.

In the 2000's, we provided a new console to the instrument. This greatly increased the resources available to the performer so that the broad palate of sounds and colors of the instrument could be more fully used. FOKO created an Education Committee which worked diligently to introduce the organ and its music to young listeners with newly created in-school curricula. Our Meet the King of Instruments concert continues to bring busloads of students to hear and explore the Kotzschmar organ. Music from the Great Cathedrals introduced a "celebrity artist" concert to the yearly offerings.

In the 2010's FOKO celebrated the Kotzschmar's 100th anniversary, launched a successful capital campaign and executed a splendid total renovation of the instrument. It sounds and plays better than ever and stands as a shining example of a great American symphonic organ. The instrument now fully deserves its prominence on the national and international stage.

I first played in the Kotzschmar Summer Series in 1987, so this August will mark my 31st year playing this beloved instrument. Decades ago, one of the questions posed to me by the interview committee was, "Why would you want this post? It doesn't pay very much and the instrument is not in very good playing condition." I replied that "the Kotzschmar organ would be a great teacher. An instrument such as this is a prime player in a concert in which there is a complex interaction between composer, performer, instrument, and audience. All are integral to the concert experience. Having such a broad palate of sound with which to work indeed will challenge and excite my creativity and will foster more complex and engaging interpretations." And indeed, it has.

One of the most important relationships is the one between performer and audience. Over these past decades, I have had the invaluable experience of hearing your feedback and reactions, both to literature and interpretations. Thank you for your active participation in all of this. Together, we have all grown. I look forward to seeing you this year.

Sincerely,

— Ray Cornils

Ray Cornils Retirement Announcement

Ray Cornils announces his retirement as Minister of Music of First Parish Church, UCC Brunswick Maine as of August 31, 2017 and as Portland Municipal Organist effective December 31, 2017. As one of Maine's most prominent ambassador for the organ,

Ray has had a profound effect on the musical and spiritual life of southern Maine.

As Minister of Music at First Parish Church for over 30 years he has built an extensive multi-generational music ministry of five vocal choirs and two handbell choirs, with members from ages 4 through adults. In addition to leading the church's worship services, each year the Adult Choir presented a major choral work with full orchestra and professional soloists, including Brahms *Requiem*, Dvorak *Stabat Mater*, Mendelssohn *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, Ann Wilson's *Song of Hope*, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Stephen Paulus *The Shoemaker*, Bach's *Mass in b minor* and *St. Matthew Passion* (performed on Good Friday to a standing room only congregation). He lead the church's choir on regular concert tours including England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Portugal, Ecuador and the Canadian Maritimes. The handbell choir performed with the Portland Symphony Orchestra and was a featured ensemble in the AGO Region I convention in 2001 and the AGEHR Handbell Festival in 2001.

As Portland's 10th Municipal Organist Ray oversaw with the assistance of the Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ, the recovering health of the 1912 V/104 Austin Organ which culminated in a total renovation of America's oldest municipal organ on the occasion of it's 100th anniversary. In addition to extensive concertizing on this instrument, he also developed an extensive educational program which includes curricula that promotes the organ in in-classroom programs exploring in an inter-disciplinary fashion the life and works of J S Bach, the life of and works of Olivier Messiaen or Sound Wave Energy and the pipe organ. For the past 13 years he has partnered with many school districts in southern Maine and New Hampshire.

He performed extensively with the Portland Symphony Orchestra as both harpsichordist and organist, including Samuel Barber's *Toccata Festiva*, all six of Bach's *Brandenburg Concerti*, Poulenc's *Concerto Champetre*, Poulenc's *Concerto for Organ, String and Tympani*, Saint Saens' *Organ Symphony*, Joseph Jongen's *Symphonie Concertante* and Leoš Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*.

Known for his teaching skills with all age groups, he taught high school students through the Young Organist Collaborative, and is a member of the music faculties of Bowdoin College, the University of Southern Maine and the Portland Conservatory of Music. Among his students have been first place winners of the AGO National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance and the American Theatre Organ Society National Young Artist Competition.

As an active member of the American Guild of Organists, he has served as Dean and Sub-dean of several chapters, was a member of the National Committee for Professional Concerns and the Committee for Conventions. He has served on 3 steering committees for regional and national conventions and was the Convention Coordinator of the 2014 AGO National Convention in Boston.

Born in Sterling, Illinois, Mr. Cornils was trained at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. He has studied organ with Robert Reeves, Fenner Douglas, William Porter, Yuko Hayashi and did post-graduate studies with Dame Gillian Weir. He studied harpsichord with William Porter, Lenora McCroskey, Rhona Freeman and Lisa Goode Crawford.

From the President



As we head into another wonderful Maine summer, you are surely making many fun plans. I am suggesting that you keep in mind this simple thought: **Kotzschmar Tuesdays in August.**

Many world class organs of the world are readily available most of the time for performances. Many of them are located in dedicated venues or in churches. Not so with our Kotzschmar, which is housed in busy Merrill Auditorium. We have to pick and choose our concert dates within Merrill's availability. But in summer there is a lull, allowing us to spring into action for an eventful August. We start with guest performers the 1st 3 Tuesday evenings. Monica Czausz and Nathan Avakian are world class organists, each under 30 years of age. Come and see what the millennials are up to in the organ world. Richard Elliott is the Principal Tabernacle Organist from Salt Lake City. He wants to perform on our organ and we are pleased to accommodate him. Come on August 8th and find out why.

If any of you are like me, you were sad to hear that Ray Cornils plans retire at the end of 2017, after 27 years as our municipal organist. Some of you probably wished that you attended more of his concerts (this was my reaction). So, of course put December 19th on your calendar and purchase tickets early for the final Kotzschmar Christmas with Cornils. But why wait until then? What are you doing on Tuesday evening August 22nd? Come and hear Ray Cornils wrap the Orgelfest, along with the Kotzschmar Festival Brass. Come early to his talk at the rehearsal room and ask him a question.

There is still more. Do you wonder where all the pipes are? How about the wind chest? Take a docent led tour on Saturday August 12th. No reservations, no tickets – just show up. Check the website for details and time slots.

So now you know why you should commit to memory that one simple thought: **Kotzschmar Tuesdays in August (plus one Saturday!).** Go ahead and make those summer plans.

— Tom Cattell

From the Executive Director



It has been a whirlwind few months since I joined the Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ as the new Executive Director. It is hard for me to articulate just how exciting it is to be a part of this wonderful organization and to be working with so many people who are just as excited by the pipe organ and the music it produces as I am.

Music has always played a central role in my life. I started taking piano lessons at the ripe age of six and have been singing with various choirs for years. But, I have always been truly fascinated by the organ. I remember sitting in Merrill Auditorium with my parents as a child in utter amazement. I remember feeling the deep bass notes vibrate through me, staring at the shining row of façade pipes above the stage, and hearing so very many different sounds – trumpets and flutes, reeds and strings and something that I couldn't identify that sounded like church (which I now know are those wonderful organ diapason stops). There were loud notes and soft notes, low notes and high notes, and the most amazing thing of all? The organist was using his feet to play this instrument! I didn't know then that the Kotzschmar had thousands of pipes behind that beautiful façade. My parents said that the pipes made the music, so there was really only one reasonable explanation for all of these glorious sounds coming from so few visible pipes: it must be magic.

Since joining FOKO, I have learned that my childhood self wasn't all that far off in my belief in the magical qualities of the Kotzschmar. The magic isn't in the inner workings of the organ – thanks to the dedication of the FOKO docents, I have been inside the instrument and have seen the ranks of pipes that make all of those glorious notes. No, the magic is in the dedication of the people who love and believe in this instrument. It is in the commitment of the board members and docents who work tirelessly as ambassadors for the organ and the legacy left to the City of Portland by Cyrus Curtis and Hermann Kotzschmar. It is in the talent of organists who travel from up the street and around the world to bring their unique styles to the Kotzschmar bench. It is also in the support of our audiences and donors, whose generosity allows FOKO to carry out our mission to preserve, maintain and promote the Kotzschmar Organ through concerts, tours, educational programs and other activities.

We hope that you will join us for some of the amazing concerts that we have planned in the months to come. I look forward to meeting you, and to hearing about your experiences and encounters with this wonderful, magical instrument.

With warm regards,

— Brooke Hubner

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www.foko.org (207) 553-4363

Kotzschmar Happenings!



Kathy Grammer at her retirement celebration.



We would like to welcome John Bishop back to the board.

Where is K. Jr.?

FOKO is very proud to include a portable, playable pipe organ as part of our education and outreach programs. Affectionately known as “Kotzschmar Jr.” (or K. Jr., for short) this remarkable instrument was built by David E. Wallace & Co. of Gorham, Maine. K. Jr. travels to classrooms throughout Maine and beyond as part of FOKO’s education curriculum, giving students and adults alike the opportunity to see how an organ functions as it is played.

Recently, K. Jr. took its longest road trip to date, traveling all the way from Portland, Maine to Round Lake, New York. Round Lake is home to an historic pipe organ that was recently designated as a national historic landmark – the first pipe organ, and indeed the first object, to receive such distinction. Ray Cornils, Education Coordinator Elsa Gekus, David Wallace and his son Nick traveled with K. Jr. to Round Lake to be a part of the celebration. In addition to a concert by Ray Cornils, the children of Round Lake got to enjoy taking part in some of the educational activities that are a part of FOKO’s “Kotzschmar 4 Kids” program and also got a chance to play K. Jr. Who knows, in a few years, they might be on the organ bench at Round Lake, or even here in Portland!

K. Jr. will be visiting other locations this summer – including the Maine Mall in August and Victoria Mansion in September – so keep an eye on our Facebook page and website to find out: “Where is K. Jr.?”

Meet the King

On May 23rd, FOKO welcomed over 700 3rd through 6th grade students for the annual Meet the King of Instruments concert. Thank you, Ray Cornils, for helping so many students to “Meet the King” over the years!



FOKO Announces Ambassadors Fund to Honor Ray Cornils

The FOKO Board has designated \$100,000 of its reserves as seed money for the Cornils Ambassadors Fund. Recently, two generous gifts, each in the amount of \$25,000, have been received earmarked for the fund. One gift is from the Wyncote Foundation (Fred Haas) and the second is from the estate of Edwin Pert. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please contact the FOKO office at (207) 553-4363 or info@foko.org.

