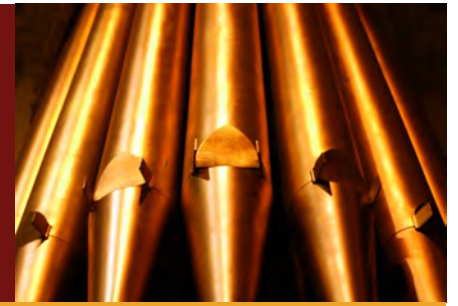


# Pipe Lines

The Official Newsletter of the Kotzschmar Organ



106th Season of Concerts

Winter 2018

FOKO's 37th Year

A festive background featuring a white wooden plank texture. On the left, there are green pine branches and red berries. In the bottom left, a brown paper gift box is tied with a white string and decorated with a pine branch.

# Christmas with Kennerley

TUESDAY  
**DECEMBER 18**  
MERRILL AUDITORIUM 7:30 PM  
**RESERVED SEATING**  
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.PORTTIX.COM](http://WWW.PORTTIX.COM)  
SPONSORED BY MURRAY, PLUMB & MURRAY ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**James Kennerley is known for his vibrant socks,** so it's only fitting that he and the Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ will be collecting new socks in adult sizes (*and all colors!*) for donation to Preble Street.



## From the President



This is the time of year that anticipation builds for the holiday season. Last year we were preparing to say goodbye to Ray Cornils and his last performance as the municipal organist. Now we are all looking forward to the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas with Kennerley. Anyone who has experienced James Kennerley's

performances will understand the unique level of energy and pure joy that he brings to the Merrill stage. Yes, there will be many more chances to experience our new municipal organist in future years, but this will be his first Christmas concert, and in that sense this will be unique evening.

Now is a good time to remind ourselves that there is more to FOKO and the Mighty Kotschmar than the Christmas concert. We present concerts throughout the year, and we attract world class organists to our very special organ. We also reach out to schools and cultural organizations, we have docents and friends who tirelessly connect the people of this region to our 106 year old instrument that was a gift to the city and the new municipal auditorium. It is truly a gift that keeps on giving. Please consider your own gift to FOKO as we make sure that this organ will always be available to the people of Portland, and Maine, and to cultural enthusiasts everywhere.

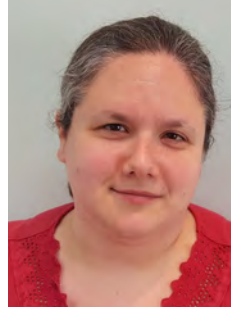
*Tom Cattell*

Save the Date:  
March 20, 2019



**B**ach  
irthday  
ash

## From the Executive Director



With the season of giving approaching, it seems almost impossible not to think about gifts. Whether they are in the form of end-of-year donations to the causes you believe in, or the carefully chosen items that mark special occasions with family and friends, they seem to be everywhere this time of year. The best gifts, though, are often

those which show up completely unexpectedly, as two such items did at the FOKO office over the summer.

The first such gift was a diary from 1912 belonging to a family in the Augusta area. It is a general recounting of daily events, with one of particular note: on December 17, 1912, upon visiting Portland for a grange meeting, the diarist paid a visit to "the Grand Organ", only a few short months after the organ was installed. Think about a trip from Augusta to Portland in 1912: it was probably made by horse and buggy (or perhaps in a one-horse open sleigh). It is some 50+ miles from Augusta to Portland, easily made by a modern car in an hour or so, but this trip would have taken much longer. Several hours, at least. It was December, so it would have been cold, and since the Maine Turnpike wasn't built until the 1940's, it was probably on some pretty rough back roads. But, once the diarist arrived in Portland, he or she would have seen the same beautiful organ façade that we see today. They would have heard some of the same powerful sounds, and since it was December when they visited, perhaps they heard or sang some of the same carols that will be featured in our upcoming *Christmas with Kennerley* concert.

The second surprise donation was a small booklet that had been created in honor of Maine's Centennial year in 1920. With Maine's Bicentennial looming on the near horizon, it was fascinating to get a glimpse into "A Trip Through the Portland Concert Organ" and what was going on nearly 100 years ago with the Kotschmar. In addition to a history of the instrument, a then-current stop list and an impressive resume and poem by Portland's second Municipal Organist Irvin John Morgan, there was a very interesting statistic. According to the booklet, "Portland now holds the record 'for all America' in Municipal Concert seat sales". It makes me wonder what concert attendance looked like in 1920, and whether we can still claim to hold that record nearly 100 years later?

With warm wishes,

*Brooke Joubert*

## From the Municipal Organist



I am intrigued by paradoxes. While the organ is often associated with lugubriously slow hymns in church and with desperately serious music harkening back to generations past, it has also stood for centuries as one of the most advanced mechanical devices known to man. Even in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, few machines surpassed the complexities of the pipe organ. The

Kotzschmar organ was dedicated in 1912 and was no exception to this rule. The Mighty Kotzschmar contained electrical and mechanical features that were up to the most recent advances in industry, allowing a single musician to command an entire symphony orchestra, a marching band, or a single tone, all at the touch of a button (well, more accurately, at the press of a key).

Embracing these paradoxes is key to our survival and growth as an organization. Many people will have their assumptions about pipe organ music questioned, and that is a good thing! Many of us will have seen the HSBC bank advertisements on the jet bridges at airports around the world (as a travelling musician I consider myself an expert on these sightings!) They have a successful ad campaign based on what things mean in different cultures, questioning our associations. One example featured an image with a strong red cast. One caption that read "Danger" and another said "Good luck". We can choose to identify the pipe organ with centuries past, with unexciting performances, and with dwindling audiences. Or we can see ourselves as trustees of an edgy, appealing, countercultural phenomenon, a "must-see" Portland experience with opportunities for tremendous growth and the power to transform lives.

There are two particular areas that we can achieve this reinvention. One is through collaborations. A number of weeks ago I had the great fortune to meet with the leaders of Portland's main artistic and cultural organizations. It solidified my conviction that we have a great deal to gain by cross-pollinating our respective assets in a city that is rich with art, music, dance, drama, and so much more.

The second is through technology. Just as the incorporation of the latest technological developments has been integral to the Kotzschmar's history, so too must we fully embrace the many possibilities of modern technology in our performances today. This success has already been proven through the use of the big screen projection of the organ console, giving the audience an up-close-and-personal view of the organist and the keyboard (and the pedalboard). Live streaming performances would allow us to widen our field of view well beyond the confines of Merrill Auditorium, increasing our presence on the global stage.

The last two concerts that I performed (in August and October) had very good attendance, proof that our increased marketing efforts are bearing fruit. These things take time, resources, and immense energy. We've a long way to go before Merrill is packed, but we are well on our way. Looking ahead to the remainder of the season, we have a fabulous roster of performers for the *Christmas With Kennerley* concert in December, a more traditional, yet equally engaging, concert of music for the *Bach Birthday Bash* in March, and an eclectic mix of styles for the summer concert series. I can't wait to see what the future holds, and look forward to seeing you at a future performance!

With my very best wishes,

*James*

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KOTZSCHMAR  
ORGAN, INC.**  
P. O. Box 7455  
Portland, ME 04112

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**Save the Date!**  
**December 18, 2018**  
 Christmas with Kennerley  
**March 20, 2019**  
 Bach Birthday Bash  
*Tickets are available at  
 www.porttix.com or by calling  
 207-842-0800.*



James Kennerley and a bone-chilling organist at the console during Halloween silent film night.

People of all ages can now build a working, two-rank pipe organ. Our puzzle organ, Kotzsch-in-a-Box visited Camden Mini Maker Faire (right, top) and Hadlock Field (right, middle and bottom).



We are pleased to welcome Harold Stover (left) and Larry Rubinstein (right) back to the FOKO Board.

