



AGO Task Force for Gender Equity

# January Newsletter



Woman Composer Sunday  
Sunday, March 10, 2024



Happy New Year from the AGO Task Force for Gender Equity!

It is time to get ready for Woman Composer Sunday as it is coming up on March 10th, 2024. In preparation for this, look for articles in the January, February, and March editions of the TAO. There will be articles about women organists and composers, as well as free music! The AGO Task Force for Gender Equity will also have a webinar in preparation and support for this day on February 12th at 7 pm EST. That webinar will be recorded and posted by the AGO, so make sure to either tune in or check it out later. See below for updated resources in preparation!



# Updated Resources for Women Composer Sunday

[A GREAT HOST OF COMPOSERS](#)

[AMPLIFY FEMALE COMPOSERS](#)

[BOULANGER INITIATIVE](#)

[CHORAL MUSIC BY WOMEN COMPOSERS DATABASE](#)

[COMPOSER DIVERSITY DATABASE](#)

[DIVERSIFY YOUR REPERTOIRE](#)

[MARGARET ZACH INTERNATIONAL WOMEN COMPOSERS' LIBRARY](#)

[MUSIC BY WOMEN](#)

[MUSIC, SHE WROTE](#)

[SACRED SONG SISTERS](#)

[SWO DIRECTORY OF WOMEN COMPOSERS OF ORGAN AND LITURGICAL MUSIC CATALOGUE](#)

[WOMEN'S SACRED MUSIC PROJECT](#)

# Composer of the Month

## Elizabeth Stirling

Elizabeth Stirling (1819–1895) was born in London and educated at home. She privately studied organ, piano, and harmony at the Royal Academy of Music. Her organ teacher, Edward Holmes, was a renowned German composer and a strong professional ally. At 16, Stirling became a respected recitalist, church organist, and composer, showcasing her dazzling pedal technique. She is believed to have been the first person to have performed J.S. Bach's 'St. Anne' Prelude and Fugue at a public recital in Britain. In 1856, she applied for a music degree at Oxford University by submitting a piece. Though this composition was accepted, it was not performed, since at the time women were not eligible for degrees. Despite this, she went on to serve in church positions for decades.



Her set of voluntaries, *Six Pedal Fugues and Eight Other Movements*, was published



by Novello in 1857. In 1863, she married singer Frederick Albert Bridge, collaborating with him in concerts. Elizabeth composed two grand voluntaries, six pedal fugues, eight slow movements, and other organ works, over fifty songs and duets, and numerous arrangements of works of Bach, Mozart, and Handel. For more information about Elizabeth Stirling, see Lyn Loewi's article in the September 2022 issue of TAO, entitled "Elizabeth Stirling (1819–1895): Lessons from the Earliest Professional Women Organists." Judith Barger's book, "Elizabeth Stirling and the musical life of female organists in nineteenth-century England," is also highly recommended for those who are interested in her remarkable life. Also, check out the January 2024 TAO for a copy of her piece, "Andante in A-flat".

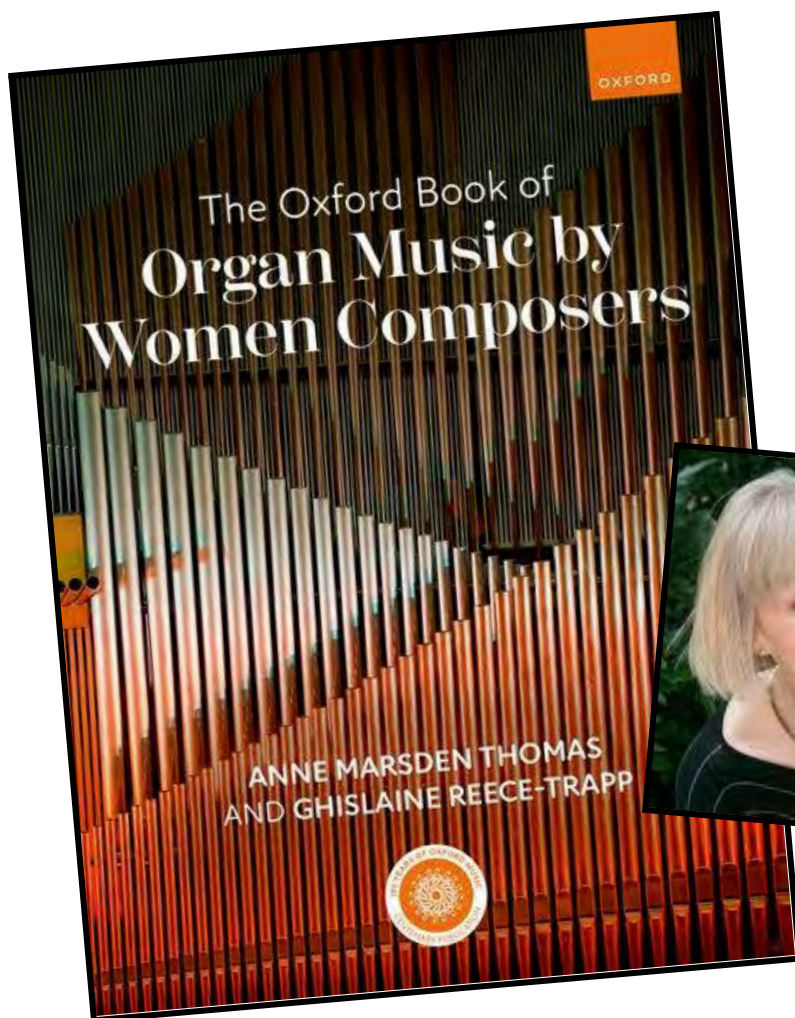
[6 PEDAL FUGUES AND 8 OTHER MOVEMENTS](#)

[ELIZABETH STIRLING AND THE MUSICAL LIFE OF FEMALE ORGANISTS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND](#)

# The Oxford Book of Organ Music by Women Composers

This new volume of 42 pieces was published in November and written by two of our colleagues from SWO, Anne Marsden Thomas and Ghislaine Reece-Trapp. The collection features original music for the instrument, spanning the sixteenth century to the present day, including compositions by Amy Beach, Clementine de Bourges, Nadia Boulanger, Jeanne Demessieux, Cecilia McDowall, Clara Schumann, and Ethyl Smyth, plus commissions from Kristina Arakelyan, Miriam Carpinetti, Ghislaine Reece-Trapp, Isabelle Ryder, Amy Summers, and Rebecca Groom te Velde. Standalone miniatures, movements from organ sonatas and symphonies, transcriptions of piano, harpsichord, and flute pieces, and an orchestral opera overture. It includes a variety of difficulty levels, from ABRSM Grades 2-3 through to Diploma standard, with a graded index provided.

[THE OXFORD BOOK OF ORGAN MUSIC BY WOMEN COMPOSERS](#)



# AGO 2024 National Convention



## **REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**

The National Convention of the American Guild of Organists is held biennially in even-numbered years and reflects the diverse aspects of the Guild and its official work across the country. Held as a function of the national organization in partnership with a selected chapter, it represents a coalition between the national leadership and the host chapter's leadership. This joint venture combines the talents and creative strengths of each and represents the larger vision of the whole membership and its needs. This year's upcoming convention will be in San Francisco from June 30-July 4, 2024. When you register, be sure to check for the workshop being given by the Task Force for Gender Equity and the Society for Women Organists. We hope to see you there!

[AGO 2024 SAN FRANCISCO](#)



### **AGO Task Force for Gender Equity**

Nancy Cooper, Director | Michelle Kardos, Newsletter Editor | Mary Newton | Lyn Loewi

Eileen Hunt, AGO President and ex officio member | Leslie Wolf Robb | Vicky Schaeffer