

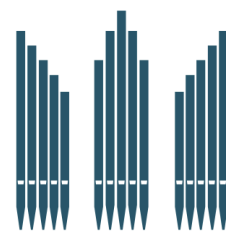


AGO Task Force for Gender Equity

March Newsletter

Woman Composer Sunday

Woman Composer Sunday is March 10th, 2024, and we hope you are ready to add to the day. Please share with us what you are playing and perhaps a little report of how it went. Remember to post your videos of your playing on social media with the hashtag #WomanComposerSunday!



WOMAN
COMPOSER
SUNDAY

Woman Composer Sunday 2024 – Honoring Trailblazers and Inspiring New Generations

What will you play on Woman Composer on Sunday, March 10? Join us for this interactive webinar as we share plans for the third annual event, presented by the AGO and the U.K. Society of Women Organists. In addition to repertoire and helpful resources, participants will be introduced to three trailblazing women composers: Lynn Loewi will introduce British organist and composer Elizabeth Stirling (1819-1895), who was introduced in the January issue of *The American Organist*. AGO President Eileen Hunt will interview Dr. Grace Wiersma, daughter of Dr. Roberta Bitgood, organist, composer, and first female president of the AGO (1975-1981). Michelle Kardos will have a conversation with contemporary composer Dr. Martha Sobaje. Works by all three composers will be reprinted in the January – March issues of *The American Organist*, for use on WCS!

[WEBINAR WOMAN COMPOSER SUNDAY 2024](#)

Need a Last-Minute Idea?

Organ Repertoire

- Adoration - Florence B. Price
- Moderately slow ("Offertory") - Emma Lou Diemer
 - From Little Suite of Organ
- Prelude in G - Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel
- Sous les Étoiles, Op. 65, No. 4 - Amy Beach
 - Transcribed from piano solo found on IMSLP by Benjamin Cornelius-Bates
- Toccata - Mel Bonis

Choral Anthems

- John 3:16 - B.E. Boykin
- Sanctus - Sherri Porterfield
- The Meditations of My Heart - Elaine Hagenberg
- We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace - Undine Smith Moore

Hymns

- "All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly" - Sylvia G. Dunstan
- "Blessed Assurance" - Phoebe Palmer Knapp
- "Christ, Be Our Light" - Bernadette Farrell
- "Hope of the World" - Georgia Elma Harkness
- "Houston" - Kathleen Thomerson
 - Often set to the text "I want to walk as a child of the light"
- "Lord of All Hopefulness" - Jan Struther
- "Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak" - Frances R. Havergral
- "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" - Claudia Frances Hernaman
- "O Lord, You Were Sent" - Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
- "Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior" - Bernadette Farrell
- "The First One Ever" - Linda Wilberger Egan

[AGO TASK FORCE FOR GENDER EQUITY RESOURCES](#)

[RSCM WOMAN COMPOSER PUBLICATIONS](#)

[SWO WOMAN COMPOSER SUNDAY REPERTOIRE](#)

The Music of Florence Price

This is an interesting read about Florence Price, a marginalized composer who has previously been highlighted as the Composer of the Month in the May 2023 newsletter. Her music is gaining recognition, but there are errors in published scores of her work. This makes it difficult for performers and can create a negative impression of her music. The article also discusses how the high cost of renting her music also makes it difficult to perform. Read more below!



[THE PRICE IS WRONG](#)

Music by Women Festival



The Mississippi University for Women is hosting the 8th annual Music by Women Festival, which will be held March 7-9, 2024. The festival will feature concerts of new and historic music written by women composers. The festival aims to celebrate the achievements of women composers and to promote their work to a wider audience.

[MUSIC BY WOMEN FESTIVAL](#)

Resources about Roberta Bitgood

Explore the life and legacy of Dr. Roberta Bitgood (1908-2007), an American organist, composer, and educator. There are two websites where you can find more information. They both share archival materials and welcome contributions from colleagues, friends, and family. Reflect on her life and achievements through biodata, professional documents, and community projects.



[ROBERTA BITGOOD COMMONS](#)

[ROBERTA BITGOOD PAPERS COLLECTION](#)

Composer of the Month

Martha Sobaje

Martha Sobaje (b.1948) is Minister of Music and Education at Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, and Adjunct Instructor of Music at the Community College of Rhode Island. She has previously held positions on the faculties of Gordon College, Barrington College, and the University of Northern Colorado. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Organ Performance from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, and a Master of Music degree in Organ Performance and Church Music from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where she studied organ with Russell Saunders and David Craighead, and the Doctor of Sacred Music degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation in South Bend, Indiana. She has also done summer study in choral conducting at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and attended the Summer Programme in Theology at the University of Oxford's Christ Church in Oxford, England.



Dr. Sobaje has conducted choirs at all levels, including the Colorado Youth Chorale, of which she was the founder and director. She has conducted the Rhode Island Junior High All-State Chorus and the Rhode Island High School All-State Chamber Singers, and has adjudicated the Rhode Island All-State auditions, the Rhode Island Music Educators High School Choral Festival, and the Rhode Island South County Choral Festival. Dr. Sobaje has conducted choir tours through America, Canada, and Europe.

She is a member of ASCAP, and is published through Kendor Music, Almitra Music, Elkan-Vogel, Music 70, Studio PR, Wayne Leupold Editions Inc., Darcey Press, Lifeway Christian Resources, and The Organist's Companion. In addition to many choral, organ, and handbell publications, she has authored articles for the Journal of Church Music, School Music News, Rhode Island Music Educators Review, Woodwind World-Brass & Percussion, The College Music Symposium, The Instrumentalist, and GlorySounds. She has also lectured and served as a clinician at several conventions across the country. In July 2001, Dr. Sobaje was invited to perform an organ recital of her compositions at the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford University, England. In addition to being an organ recitalist, she is active in the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, of which she completed a two-year term as Dean.

Mark Your Calendars!

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](#)



Woman Composer Sunday Wikipedia Challenge

Another way to honor Woman Composer Sunday is to look at the Women Organist list on Wikipedia. Take a look through as you may have someone to contribute to the list! Or you may look through some of your favorite organists and see if the information is correct and/or if you have additional information to add.

[WIKIPEDIA: WOMEN ORGANISTS](#)

Get Involved!

Have you completed any research recently that you want to share with the public? Have you reworked your doctoral dissertation on women organ composers, cut it in half, and eliminated all words of more than 4 syllables, and are ready to submit it somewhere? Consider publishing in TAO. Talk with Nancy or Lyn Loewi, or write Nick directly (nbergin@agohq.org). He is eager to hear from you!



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