

# Westfield

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## THREE 2001 CONFERENCES: A REPORT

*Laurence Libin*

**H**ISTORICAL KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS recently held center stage at three widely separated musical gatherings. The fifth international symposium of the International Centre for

Clavichord Studies (5–8 September 2001) took place in the medieval village of Magnano, Italy, under aegis of the Associazione Festival Musica Antica a Magnano. Chaired by **Bernard Brauchli** and **Christopher Hogwood**,

this year's program presented 18 lectures, three full-length recitals plus several demonstrations, and continuous display of two dozen new instruments by outstanding makers, all European with the exception of Gary Blaise from San Francisco. Round-table discussions, informal (continued on page 7)



*New clavichords on display at Magnano, chez Brauchli*



whom had never heard a clavichord before. They will not soon hear one played better, but Henstra set the stage for a clavichord renaissance in a city where clavieres abounded in the eighteenth century and where libraries still hold volumes of old keyboard music awaiting exploration.

The emergence of several new Russian artists and groups was heartening. The youthful Catherine the Great Orchestra coached by Marie Leonhardt, with baroque violin soloist Andrei Reshetin, showed special promise. Another attraction, an exhibition of violins by St. Petersburg luthier Alexander Rabinovitch, intrigued curious conservatory students and others still unfamiliar with baroque-style instruments. Over the past decade, however, renewed contact with Western Europe has brought an influx of replicas that have sparked local production.

Many of the festival's offerings were sponsored by foreign consulates and cultural institutions; Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain were proudly represented. Regrettably, the United States government no longer supports cultural diplomacy, but a private foundation, CEC International Partners, generously sent three American participants including harpsichord recitalist Ed Parmentier, who also gave one of the festival's six master classes and a talk on Bach's ornamentation. Befuddled by lengthy travel delays, **Laurence Libin** presented the first festival lecture, at the Nabokov Museum, on the bizarre Kirckman harpsichord and recently identified Zumpe & Buntebart piano, both designed by Robert Adam in 1774 for Catherine the Great. The lion's share of lecturing went to Californian Margaret Murata, who discussed the rise of operatic singing, how "ancient" music became classical (1776-1890), and the

invention of early music and re-inventions of the Baroque.

All lectures were open to the public without charge, but even the ticketed concerts sold out. Happily, the audiences were mostly Russian, not tourists; early music seems as vital and appealing to St. Petersburgers as it was in New York thirty years ago. A handsomely illustrated 130-page program book contributed worthwhile articles on subjects including Yury Semenov's study of organ works by Prince Vladimir Odoevsky and V.V. Koshelev's examination of "organized pianos" in St. Petersburg in the late eighteenth century. The festival's patrons, its director Marc de Mauny, and his efficient staff deserve appreciation for putting together such a rich program under sometimes daunting circumstances.

## *Oaxaca Organ Conservation Conference*



*Left to right,  
Tattershall, C  
Winter, Lynn  
Edwards, and*

Of more immediate concern to Westfield Center members, restoration of historic organs in Latin America was the subject of a conference held 29 November to 3 December in Oaxaca, Mexico. The program was organized by the Instituto de Órganos Históricos de Oaxaca, or IOHIO (pronounced 'yo-yo') directed by Cecilia Winter and **Edward Pepe**, American residents of Oaxaca. With abundant support from local



and national institutions including those officially charged with preserving and restoring Mexico's cultural patrimony, IOHIO presented an intensive program of lectures, discussions, visits to churches, and recitals on several of the more than 50 baroque organs extant in the state of Oaxaca.

This was no small-time undertaking. Twenty-six foreign participants from six European and four South American countries as well as Canada and the United States joined an impressive number of Mexican scholars, performers, organ builders, restorers, and conservators, including a strong and vocal contingent of young persons. Assisted by excellent simultaneous translators, the discourse achieved a consistently high and sometimes emotionally charged level that demonstrated how seriously restoration issues are being taken. Polite controversy surrounded several matters of policy, and inadequate and unprofessional work was boldly criticized. At the end, the group ratified a lengthy protocol defining proper procedures and responsibilities for organ conservation and restoration in Latin America. This important document testifies to growing recognition of the cultural significance of historic organs worldwide (information is available from [IOHIO@spersaoaxaca.com.mx](mailto:IOHIO@spersaoaxaca.com.mx)).

To relate the content of nearly thirty talks, some of them profusely illustrated, would exceed the space available here. Highlights included **Hans Davidsson's** report on research projects at the University of Göteborg; Gerhard Grenzing's introduction to the development of Iberian organs; **Susan Tattershall's** recounting of challenges she faced as a pioneer organ restorer in Mexico; Piotr Nawrot's revelation of musical discoveries in Bolivia; Montserrat Torrent's paper (read in her absence) on organ restoration from a performer's viewpoint; Christoph Metzler's

account of a recently identified Arp Schnitger organ in Portugal and Elisa Freixo's news of the most recent restoration of the Schnitger organ in Mariana, Brazil. Henk van Eeken stressed the importance of replicating baroque-era craft practices. **Laurance Libin**, again discombobulated by airline problems, nevertheless spoke on organ conservation from a museum perspective. Several speakers addressed historical aspects of Latin American organs, organists, and organ music, and previewed future restoration and documentation projects. Daniel Guzman and Mercedes Gomez from the Escuela Nacional de Restauración y Conservación of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, accompanied by six of their students, emphasized the need for adequate training and resources for restoration personnel in Mexico.

No program like this could have shorted public performance. A recital series in and around Oaxaca displayed the very idiosyncratic organs of the city cathedral, the Basílica de la Soledad, and San Jerónimo Tlacoahuaya. Enthusiastic applause from large audiences rewarded recitalists **Guy Bovet**, Elisa Freixo, Roberto Fresco, Cristina García Banegas, and José Suárez with recorder virtuoso Horacio Franco. Bovet, Freixo, and García Banegas also gave master classes. Iberian baroque music of every genre appropriately dominated the recital programs, but improvisation (including percussion accompaniments) also figured in several. **Michael Barone** recorded these ear-opening concerts for broadcast on his NPR program, *Pipedreams*, and some portions were videotaped for television.

Barone also recorded several equally pungent organs at remote churches reached after lengthy bus rides. Most imposing of these buildings was the massive Sto. Domingo at Yanhuitlán in the Mixteca Alta, a sixteenth-century Spanish Renaissance

structure erected by some 6000 workers. Considering that this region once flourished through the export of cochineal, it is no wonder that the spectacular church houses an equally astonishing organ dating back perhaps to the 1690s. While some aspects of its most recent restoration raised questions (e.g., "Rameau" temperament at 415?), no one left unimpressed with the setting. **James Wyly** demonstrated the exquisitely decorated organ at San Andrés Zautla for a large audience that included many members of the Zautla community. The comprehensive, bilingual conference handbook contained a stoplist and short description of each organ visited, but these instruments must be seen to be fully appreciated.

Dignified welcomes and gracious hospitality were extended at every village; brass bands greeted the group's arrival, and one community honored its visitors with fireworks, traditional festival dancers, and a spectacular meal lubricated with home-distilled spirits. Everywhere, Cecilia Winter received heartfelt tributes from the many friends she has made for IOHIO. Mexican leadership likewise received full acknowledgment, and Edward Pepe, Susan Tattershall, and James Wyly were also recognized for their contributions. The institute's work not only benefits Mexico's organs but has also brought to light several old clavichords and pianos that await study.

Unlike Magnano's biannual clavichord symposia, the Oaxaca conference was not one of a regular series; however, so much remains to be learned about historic keyboard instruments in Latin America, and the need for their protection is so urgent, that other gatherings of this sort should be encouraged. Such opportunities for colleagues to share ideas and experiences internationally are simply priceless and can only strengthen our commitments.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

*Continued from page 12*

Competition. *Contact:* TriumphEnt Foundation, 134 11<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Calgary, Alta., Canada T2G OX5, (or check website [www.triumphent.com](http://www.triumphent.com)).

### **August 8-22, 2002: Naumburg, Germany.**

A conference designed to explore the newly restored 1746 Hildebrandt organ in St. Wenceslaus Church, sponsored by University of Nebraska. A special study seminar on the Hildebrandt organ will precede the conference. Leaders include Christoph Wolff, **Robert Clark**, **Quentin Faulkner** and **George Ritchie**. *Contact:* Matterhorn Travel, 914 Bay Ridge Rd., Annapolis, MD 21403, or [Robert.Clark@asu.edu](mailto:Robert.Clark@asu.edu).

### **September 30-October 4, 2002: Tuscany, Italy.**

Courses on Italian and French organ music taught by **Luigi Tagliavini** and Jean Boyer. *Contact:* Accademia di musica italiana per organo, Villa Puccini a Scornio, piazza Belvedere 5, 51100 Pistoia, Italy.

### **October 17-19, 2002: Bethlehem, PA.**

Bethlehem Conference on Moravian Music. Lectures, demonstrations, and performances. Deadline for paper proposals: May 15, 2002. *Contact:* Dr. Hilde Binford, Conference Coordinator, Moravian College, 1200 Main St., Bethlehem, PA 18018-6650.

### **November 21-25, 2002: Oaxaca, Mexico.**

Oaxaca Organ Festival, with recitals and master classes. *Contact:* **Ed Pepe**, [iohio@spersaoaxaca.com.mx](mailto:iohio@spersaoaxaca.com.mx).

### **March 28-30, 2003: Ithaca, NY.**

"Mozart and the Keyboard," Mozart Society of America biennial conference to be held at Cornell University. Performances, papers, and exhibitions focusing on 18<sup>th</sup> century keyboard instruments and issues of repertoire, idiom, style and performance practice. Deadline for paper proposals: July 15, 2002. *Contact:* **Kathryn L. Libin**, Dept. of Music, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604-0018, or [kalibin@vassar.edu](mailto:kalibin@vassar.edu).

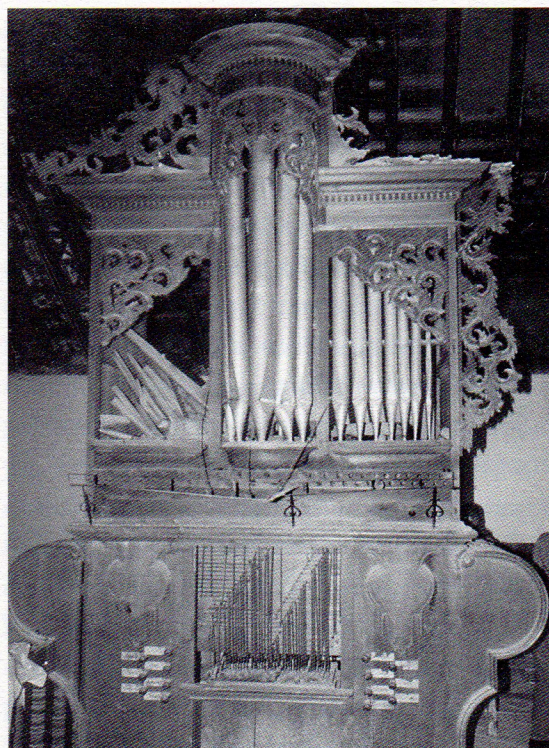


Edward Pepe

**M**ORE THAN 50 participants at a recent conference in Oaxaca, Oaxaca signed a nine-page document which proposes the regulation of restoration practices in that Mexican state, as well as in the rest of Mexico and Latin America. The Protocol includes both ethical and practical guidelines for parties (funders, organbuilders, consultants, and custodians) involved with the several hundred organs (in Mexico alone) which survive from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

"The Restoration of Organs in Latin America" consisted of a four-and-a-half day conference (including an all-day field trip to restored and unrestored organs), a five-concert organ festival, and an additional four days of masterclasses. It was sponsored by the Instituto de Órganos Históricos de Oaxaca (IOHIO) under the direction of Cicely Winter and **Edward Pepe**. The conference was planned in cooperation with the leading organists and organbuilders of Mexico and included a major participation on the part of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) and its Restoration Workshop, the government organization in Mexico responsible for the welfare of the historic patrimony including pipe organs. The IOHIO is now continuing to work together with the INAH to insure that it adopts the Protocol, a move which will offer significant protection (more than currently exists in some European countries) to this important legacy of a once-thriving organ culture.

The first International Festival of Organ Music in Oaxaca consisted of concerts by **Guy Bovet** (Switzerland), Roberto Fresco (Spain), Cristina García Banegas (Uruguay),



Elisa Freixo (Brazil), and Horacio Franco, flautist and José Suarez of Mexico City and was a tremendous opportunity to hear some Spanish repertoire and a sampling of the little-known repertoire of Mexico and South America. A second Organ Festival in Oaxaca is planned for next year. A follow-up conference in conjunction with the Festival Misiones de Chiquitos in Bolivia is being discussed for April of 2003.

A sampling of the conference presentations is being prepared for the IOHIO's web page (coming soon!) which will also contain IOHIO's newsletter and information about some of the more than fifty organs in the state of Oaxaca. For more information contact the IOHIO at [iohio@spersaoaxaca.com.mx](mailto:iohio@spersaoaxaca.com.mx).

*Ed. note: Edward Pepe was one of the founders of the Westfield Center. We wish him well in this new and worthwhile enterprise!*

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