



SPRECKELS
ORGAN SOCIETY

Autumn 2019

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Holiday Time in the Park!

As Santa and his reindeer take their customary places along Balboa Park's Esplanade, holiday plans are dancing in our heads like the proverbial sugar plums. Take a look at the events calendar for specifics, and mark your schedule for some of the season's highlights:

- ◆ Community Christmas Center weekend dedication
- ◆ December Nights, now with an organ concert set for Saturday afternoon as well as Friday evening
- ◆ A special concert by Raúl Prieto Ramírez on Friday, December 14 at 6 p.m. to honor Society members with their favorite music choices of 2018.
- ◆ Christmas Carol Singalong on Sunday, December 16 at the 2 p.m. concert



About that Blower...

The Society is grateful to the organ curatorial team and the City of San Diego's Parks & Recreation Department for their fast and efficient work to repair the 70-plus year old Spencer Turbine after it shorted out late in September. As the motor was being rebuilt, Sunday audiences were treated to an extensive "show and tell" presentation on how the Spreckels organ makes its music. Meanwhile the 1500-pound blower was removed from the Pavilion and brought to Sloan Electric, where the motor was re-wound and the apparatus reconditioned. On November 8 the repaired equipment was re-installed and tested in time for a concert the following Sunday. This marks the longest period in living memory that the Spreckels Organ has gone without playing! And there's more work ahead: impeller blades on the blower, while serviceable, are soon to be replaced in an operation that will not interrupt the regular concert schedule.

Upcoming Events

The Spreckels Organ plays every Sunday, rain or shine, at 2 p.m for a free public concert in the heart of Balboa Park.

Saturday, Dec 1 - Community Christmas Center Opens - Organ Pavilion - activities from 1 to 8 p.m. including a Spreckels Organ concert by Robert Plimpton from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Details at www.ChristmasOnThePrado.org

Sunday, Dec 2 - Community Celebration Continues - Organ Pavilion - activities/booths up till **concert time at 2 p.m.**

Friday, Dec 7 - [December Nights](#), Park-wide - Organ concert **4:50 p.m. to 5:50 p.m.** by Raúl Prieto Ramírez.

Saturday, Dec 8 - [December Nights](#), Park-wide - **Organ concert 2:40 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.** by Raúl Prieto Ramírez.

Sunday, Dec 9 - Sunday Concert by Raúl Prieto Ramírez - 2 p.m.

Friday, Dec 14 - **Special Concert by Raúl Prieto Ramírez - 6 p.m.**—honoring members of the Spreckels Organ Society (*see story inside*)

Sunday, Dec 16 - Sunday Concert - Christmas Carol Sing-along - 2 p.m.

Sunday, Dec 23 - Sunday Concert - 2 p.m.

Sunday, Dec 30 - Sunday Concert - 2 p.m.

Tuesday, January 1, 2019—Celebrate the 104th Anniversary of the Spreckels Organ in a Concert that heralds a new year—2 p.m.



Attention Spreckels Members

You'll be receiving a membership renewal notice during December in order to maintain your membership into the new year. 2019 is an important year for the Society, introducing new audiences to our Civic Organist and helping people find their way to the Pavilion through the long-anticipated parking garage construction which is slated to begin in the spring. Your support during this critical time is important to the future of the organization, so be ready to rejoin for 2019 as soon as you get your envelope in the mail. Thank you!



The Premier group of the San Diego Children's Choir helped the organ re-start on November 11 with our first Sunday concert in more than a month! Now the organ is back and roaring! Come hear one of the concerts this Season.

Greetings from Carol Williams...

San Diego Civic Organist Emerita Carol Williams has been busy with concerts and new compositions. With her passion for raising money for the Humane Society she wrote her first opera, "The Grumpy Duck." This was performed by Andrew and Megan Rose Potter - two amazing operatic singers. Her new organ symphony is due to be published in the Spring and is dedicated to the American Guild of Organists.

Dr. Carol Williams
[Www.melcot.com](http://www.melcot.com)



Dear Members and Friends of the Spreckels Organ Society,

Despite the lack of music during October, the autumn has been a busy time for me, traveling to France and New Zealand for concerts and planning the lineup of talented artists for next year's International Summer Organ Festival.

At this time I want to bid Jack Lasher a very fond goodbye. He has made my path in San Diego a much smoother one, and I am grateful for his continued support, and for yours as well.

As we look ahead to 2019, I am planning more collaborations (including a spring concert with San Diego Opera!) and more opportunities for educating audiences of all ages. I hope you will join me for the special 104th Anniversary concert that will feature most of the audience's favorite music from this year's concerts. It's a way for all of us to offer our thanks for your generous and consistent support!

I look forward, with you, to an exciting year ahead that is made possible by the enthusiasm and participation of both Society members and volunteers.

Sincerely,

Raúl Prieto Ramírez
Civic Organist / Artistic Director

Friday December 14—Special Concert

To honor members of the Spreckels Organ Society and salute the 104th anniversary of the great Spreckels Organ, Raúl Prieto Ramírez will play a special concert at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 14. The concert will be free to the public, and members will be especially welcomed with free coffee or hot chocolate upon presentation of their valid membership card.

Musical selections will include the "audience choice" favorites of the past year: selections that Raúl has presented that were chosen for repeat performance by pavilion audiences. Bring your family to this special holiday salute to you, our members, and to the Spreckels Organ!

NEW CD COMING SOON!

Here's the gift your music lover has been waiting for! "Festival Magic," the latest release from Spreckels Organ Society, with selections from recent Summer Organ Festivals played on the Centennial Console (dedicated in 2011). Superb playing throughout, featuring the work of guest artists on the Spreckels Organ.

Dear Spreckels Friends:

This will be my last *StopTab* letter to you. I have thoroughly enjoyed being President for the last three years. Many important things have happened during that time. The Drive to 5000 Pipes concluded, and I was able to present their Deed of Gift to city Councilman Chris Ward.



I was able to chair the Search Committee that brought our fabulous Civic Organist/Artistic Director Raúl Prieto Ramírez to San Diego. It was also a great privilege to work with Dr. Carol Williams, who preceded Raúl.

During the summers I was able to interact – and become friends with – a host of fine international organists. To use the old cliché: All good things must come to an end, and I will leave San Diego in December.

Many of you have met or heard me mention my close friend Brandon Tate. (I know that many thought he didn't really exist, since he wasn't able to be here on Monday nights when we underwrote concerts here and there.) Well, I am moving to the San Fernando Valley section of Los Angeles, where Brandon and I are buying a brand-new home together. I have lived in San Diego for about 45 years, so it is indeed an exciting and scary time!

The Society is in excellent shape, financially and artistically. I couldn't feel better about its future than I do. A lot of it is because of your participation as members and the spirit that you bring. I have felt a new air of excitement this year as Raúl has taken the helm.

The 2019 year is going to be exciting as well. I want to thank the Board of Trustees for their hard work and the trust they have put in me, and especially the very hard-working Ross Porter, who has definitely made my life easier. I will try to get down here as often as I can, so this is not a "goodbye;" instead, it is a "see you later!"
Warmly,

Jack Lasher
President



Rising Stars Night, July 2018. (Left to right): Bruce Xu, Sponsors George Hardy and Michael Tassiello, Reilly Xu and Society President Jack Lasher.



On October 19, the Friends of Balboa Park honored both the San Diego Youth Symphony and the Spreckels Organ Society with Millennium Awards for Music in the Park. Left to right: Civic Organist Raúl Prieto Ramírez, Society Executive Director Ross Porter, and presenter Todd Gloria, Member of the California State Assembly for District 78.



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I don't know how many cities employ their own pipe organist, but I know the new organist in San Diego has flair. Raúl Prieto Ramírez is wearing bright red pants, a magenta shirt, and high-heeled white shoes. In other words, you can't miss him.

— Robert Reid, writing for the *National Geographic Traveler* in a recent story, "Explore the Cultural Heart of San Diego." www.nationalgeographic.com



Among the many highlights of the Summer Organ Festival was the appearance of organist Chelsea Chen together with Joseph Lee on cello, July 30.

Volunteer of the Year, 2018: Len Filomeo Honored

Hard-working Len Filomeo was named Volunteer of the Year at the annual membership meeting of the Spreckels Organ Society in August. Serving as Chairman of the Society's wide-ranging Operations Committee, Len is on hand for almost every concert. He has overseen the deployment of special shade for the greeters' tables on Sunday afternoons, set up lights for evening concerts and worked the light board to "oohs" and "ahs" of an appreciative audience, and countless backstage duties. He often rides his bike to the Pavilion on concert dates, from his home near San Diego's waterfront. Many thanks, Len!

