

# The Buckeye Backcheck

*Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild*

Volume 40 Issue 7 September 2015



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



The weather is starting to feel cooler in the morning and even though it's expected to get back in the mid 80s, we are definitely coming into the fall season. We are also coming into the busiest season for technicians, September to December. Schools and churches starting their program years, piano lessons starting back up, new lessons beginning, folks getting back in the swing of the school year schedule and out of the summer laid back mode (oh yeah, I've been meaning to call you about the piano...). And the Columbus Chapter PTG is no exception. My summer was actually busier than late spring, but it is now getting even busier. I actually hit the ground running right after the PTG Convention, so all those things I learned while I was there came in very handy as did some of the new "toys" I purchased. I will be sharing those things at our September meeting as well as the report from the 2015 Council session. Jay at Solich has graciously agreed to let us have the meeting at their Proprietors Road store, so I will be able to easily demonstrate some of the techniques and tools that I acquired in Denver. There will also be a raffle drawing with some, as our good friend Tom Harr used to say, "swell prizes"; a few extra items I picked up in Denver. Nothing like a seminar or convention to get you pumped up and excited about this work that we do. We will also have an "open" board meeting prior to the regular meeting. That simply means if anyone outside the board (Pres., VP, Treas, Sec, and Immediate Past Pres) would like to come and help plan the coming year, you are most welcome. We will meet at 6, there will be pizza for all at 7 and then we will have our meeting at 7:30. Please (please and please) let me know if you are coming so I know how much pizza to order. Please. See you all in a couple of weeks

Kim Hoessly, RPT

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## Barenboim-Maene Concert Grand



Pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim has collaborated with Belgian instrument maker Chris Maene to design and build a straight-strung concert grand that is a mix of old and new. They also received support from Steinway in some of the material design elements like the rim, among other things.

Inspiration for the project arose after Barenboim played a restored grand that had belonged to Liszt. Daniel was mesmerized by the tonal qualities the instrument presented. He, being a Steinway artist, went to that company with the idea of designing a straight-strung concert grand. They, in turn, introduced him to Chris Maene, a renowned maker and restorer of historical and period instruments. The two both share a strong affinity for straight strung instruments and they both agree that it creates a different tonal color spectrum across the scale, as a whole, than what is produced with overstrung pianos. It is almost like the baby was thrown out with the bath water, so to speak, when so many companies tried to emulate the success of Steinway's cross-strung patterns. Yes, speaking length was increased and Steinway introduced other innovations as well, but maybe something of value was left behind. The irony is thick considering Steinway's involvement here. Maene feels that overstrung instruments have a more homogenized sound, which may be desirable in some ways, but straight-strung pianos have their own unique tonality. So, the idea for this piano is to combine the best elements of modern piano design such as evenness of touch, tuning stability, and power with the tonal qualities from a bygone era.



From afar, it looks like a typical concert grand. Then, upon closer inspection, it is clear that it is not overstrung. However, there is still a separate bass bridge that has its own contour that occupies its own space on the soundboard, parallel to the treble, instead of behind it. The sound transmitted from the bass bridge may actually be diminished by having to pass under the treble bridge, so to speak, contending, and mixing, with the vibrations from it. That may explain why these gentlemen used homogenized to describe one, and tonally distinct to describe the other. The bass strings are also not wound in copper, but in yellow brass, which is another nod to the past. Also, the grain of the soundboard runs lengthwise and parallel to the strings, instead of diagonally.



Here are several links with more details and video clips:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-32885683>

[http://www.chrismaene.be/en/news/chris-maene-workshop/barenboim\\_maene\\_concert\\_grand.aspx](http://www.chrismaene.be/en/news/chris-maene-workshop/barenboim_maene_concert_grand.aspx)

<http://www.musicaltoronto.org/2015/05/29/the-scoop-after-130-years-daniel-barenboim-reinvents-the-modern-piano/>



## Fortepiano Event with Robert Murphy

Sponsored by the Columbus Chapter PTG

Church of the Master United Methodist

24 N. Grove St., Westerville, OH 43081

Across from Otterbein University

Google Map Link: <https://goo.gl/maps/qKyAs>

**Saturday, October 3, 2015 9:30am-3pm**

Join the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technician's Guild as we welcome Robert Murphy, Assistant Director of Piano Technology & Curator of Fortepianos at Oberlin College. Learn the fundamentals of harpsichord & fortepiano construction as well as action set-up so you can use that information to prep period instruments for performance use. Be prepared to shape/voice a plectrum and flagpole a tuning pin! Even if you never intend to service these instruments, learning about the precursor of the modern piano will be a good "tool" to have in your bag. Robert will have with him a 5-octave fortepiano cir. 1990's by Tom & Barbara Wolf after Dulcken (1792).

Robert Murphy has 25 years experience as a College and University Technician (CAUT). In this capacity, he has prepared pianos, fortepianos, and harpsichords for performances and recordings during tenures at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Michigan State University, and Cornell University. He has been in demand as a concert technician for world-renowned artists at concert venues on many other college and university campuses, as well as prominent cultural arts centers including Chicago's Orchestra Hall, the Meyerson Center in Dallas, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Avery Fisher Hall, and Alice Tully Hall. Murphy has served as an instructor for the annual C.F. Theodore Steinway Technical Academy - Steinway at Oberlin Summer Workshop.

Schedule for the day:

9am Check-in  
9:30am Fortepiano Part I  
11:30am Lunch break (Jersey Mike's subs provided)  
1pm-3pm Fortepiano Part II

----- cut here and mail bottom portion -----

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

"Box" lunch will be provided. Sub preference (check one)

Turkey on wheat  Italian on white  Vegetarian on wheat

	Before Sept 3	After Sept 3
PTG, Piano Teachers or College/Univ. Faculty	\$30 _____	\$40 _____
Non PTG members	\$50 _____	\$60 _____
Students	\$10 _____	\$15 _____

All registrations must be received by Sept. 18,

Please make checks payable to: Columbus Chapter PTG & Mail to:

Kim Hoessly, RPT 4284 Kenny Rd., Columbus, OH 43220



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[www.ptgcolumbus.org](http://www.ptgcolumbus.org)



## Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

<b>President</b>	Kim Hoessly, RPT
<b>Vice-President</b>	Vacant
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ron Kenreich
<b>Secretary</b>	Christopher Burget
<b>Imm. Past Pres.</b>	Bryan Hartzler, RPT

*Contributions and pictures for the Buckeye Backcheck and the web page are always welcome, (even if they are only peripherally related to pianos)!*  
- Chris Burget

**Chapter Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 15**  
**7:30 pm**

**Solich Piano Columbus**  
6370 Proprietors Rd. Suite A  
Worthington, OH 43085  
(614) 888-3441  
[solichpianocolumbus.com](http://solichpianocolumbus.com)

**Map Link:**

<https://goo.gl/maps/7ccJY>

Open Board Meeting: **6:00 pm**

Pizza and Beverages: **7:00 pm**

Raffle with **Swell Prizes !!!**

**Topic:** Tips from Denver Convention

This newsletter was created using the open-source program Scribus running on the Linux Mint operating system.

Disclaimer:

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Comments, articles, and advertising requests may be sent to the editor:

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