

Summer Organ Academy 2021: ARCCO Examination Preparation Daily Outline

Day 1: INTRODUCTION & PRACTICE STRATEGIES

- Introduction to the ARCCO exam
- Strategies for practice, including injury prevention
- Transposition practice strategies and materials
- Introduction to improvisation
- Improvisation model: creating variations on a chaconne theme

Day 2: ORGAN PIPE ANATOMY & THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

- Resources: a seventeenth-century guide for improvisation students
- Anatomy of an organ pipe: construction and voicing of flue and reed stops
- Improvisation model: Baroque style and techniques

Day 3: OPEN SCORE READING, APPLIED KEYBOARD SKILLS & BAROQUE REPERTOIRE

- Practice strategies and materials for reading open score
- The organist in ensemble: applied keyboard skills for the freelance musician
- Baroque repertoire for the ARCCO exam (“List A”): composers and performance practice
- Improvisation model: Classical style using “schemata”

Day 4: FRENCH SYMPHONIC STYLE

- The French organ symphony
- French symphonic style improvisation techniques
- Improvisation models from Vierne’s “Pieces in Free Style”

Day 5: ORGAN HISTORY, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

- Organ design and construction
- Organ key action and chest design
- Organ building and the history of the organ
- Twentieth-century “extended tonal” improvisation techniques
- Improvisation model: a miniature by Jehan Alain

Day 6: CAREERS & NINETEENTH – TWENTIETH-CENTURY REPERTOIRE

- Discussion of nineteenth- and twentieth-century repertoire suggested by students
- Forum on career issues: jobs in church music, alternative careers for organists, options for advanced education

There will be 90 minutes of class time plus 15 minutes of social time every day.

Participants are invited to submit 5 “homework assignments” as short videos; these will be viewed by the instructor only, although the instructor may ask permission to share particularly excellent videos with the class.

The course itself is primarily discussion-based; demonstrations of new skills and improvisation models will be made available as short videos which students can watch again at home in between classes.

The instructor will hold “virtual office hours” each week where students can receive individual and hands-on feedback on their work.

Participants will be supplied with ARCCO exam materials including a registration form, a hymn leaflet, practice materials for keyboard tests, and lists of bibliography on organ literature, history, and construction.