



THE  
LIFE  
AND  
TIMES  
OF  
Gaylord  
Carter

by  
Lloyd E. Klos

*Editor's Note: In October 1966, an interview, conducted by ATOE's Don Wallace, was aired on the "Pipes on Parade" program of Los Angeles radio station, KPFK, and featured prominent organist, Gaylord Carter. ATOE member, Jim Rayton taped the program as it came over the air, and sent a copy to Theatre Organ feature writer, Lloyd E. Klos, who considered the show so interestingly informative that he believed it should be shared by the ATOE membership, and transcribed the program from the tape, then transposed it into this feature.*

*Incidentally, Klos has known Gaylord Carter since 1945, when both served in the Aleutians. This will be discussed more fully later.*

"I was playing organ when I was going to high school in Wichita, Kan.," Carter began. "My dad had a conservatory of music, and was organist and choral director in the Episcopal Church there, so I grew in an atmosphere of considerable music around the house. I finally sneaked into the organ loft one day, started fiddling around a little bit, and pretty soon I was invited to play for Sunday School. Even in those days, when I was 14, I used to start playing what I considered pretty wild popular music, and one time the rector came in and said, 'Look—you've got to stop playing that high-falutin' music in here in this church. It's not right!'"

"In 1922, I came to Los Angeles, and while finishing high school, got a job in the little Sunshine Theater down on South Park at 54th Street. It had what they called a Y-O, or a Wurlitzer orchestra. This was a piano keyboard with two little sets of pipes, a string pipe and

a flute pipe; some drums and little bells, and there was a roll mechanism. I played the feature picture, then the rolls would come on and play the comedy and the serial.

"I remember the first solo I played on the thing. They said, 'Carter, you should play a solo.' So, I got out one of the overtures (I believe it was the *Light Cavalry Overture*), and played this in a little spotlight on this funny-looking little piano keyboard. The manager of the theater finally sprang for a 4-rank Robert Morton organ. For playing the piano, I had been getting \$16 a week for seven days, and when the organ was installed, he raised my salary to \$25 a week, which seemed to me to be a perfectly monstrous amount of money in 1923!

"This was when I played such things as chase music. The same people were chasing in the movie who are chasing in the late-late-late TV show today. Either the good guys were after the bad guys, or the other way around. But, the music is the same, and it's the kind of thing you still hear.

"When I started at UCLA (I was in the Class of 1928), I got a job in the Seville Theater in Inglewood, playing there nights and going to college in the daytime. This was a nice little theater where the management was interested in good music for the pictures. They had an Estey organ of about six ranks of pipes, and we'd play a different picture, I recall, every two days.

"In those days, we'd have cue sheets; we wouldn't see the picture first before

we'd put some music to it. We'd get a cue sheet which would give some idea of the type of music. Of course, you knew if you'd get a Spanish picture, you'd play Spanish music, or an Oriental picture, that kind of thing. There were always some little cue sheets which came along with the print which told the musician what to do.

"The cue sheet would give a few bars of suggested music so that you'd get the idea of what was involved. It would say, probably, 'screening', which meant when the picture hit the screen. Then it would call for a fanfare. Then it said, 'Opening titles,' and during this maybe one of the themes was used. Then it would say, 'Scene: Boy and girl in boat,' and it would indicate a *Barcarolle* type of music. Then, 'Boat tips over—agitation music,' and they'd indicate maybe *Agitato No. 3*, by a composer by the name of Cimino, who seems to have written hundreds of agitatatos. Then it would say, 'Children frolicking in the park,' and you'd have some happy music, and they'd give you from four to six bars. So, a page in a cue sheet is just a whole series of suggested types of music with a few bars indicated and the running time of the scene, say 50 seconds, 2½ minutes or 3½ minutes. I'd go over these things and make some little marks, and then about the second time I'd play the picture, I'd know pretty well where I was going.

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## LETTERS, contd.

Best of luck in the future.

Yours sincerely  
JOHN B. POTTER

3 Page Street  
Madison, N. J. 07940  
September 9, 1967

My Dear Miss Lake,

I'd like to say that it was a terrible shame that you, one of the greatest organists of our time, could not give one of your very distinguished (for one reason or another) performances at the recent Detroit ATOE convention. You were the hit (POW) of the banquet at Portland last year, and I know several people who were very disappointed to hear that you got left home in Squalor Hollow.

I have conferred with a pipe organ owning friend of mine concerning the possibility of an addition to your 3/9 T.O. which I designed for you last March. He agrees that the perfect addition to make it a 3/10 should be a VOX IN-HUMANA. This can be used in solo work with the Tibia Martha rank with accompaniment, of course, on the VDB's! I hope this meets with your satisfaction. I hope you give another concert soon.

Sincerely yours  
ERIC ZELIFF

P.S.: When do I get my record?

Dear Sirs:

Being a theatre pipe organ buff, as well as a fellow ATOE member, I am curious to know how many of our membership was fortunate enough to catch the color TV show, titled "Across the Seven Seas" (*Face and Place*), which featured in the opening segment an all too brief series of shots of Leon Berry's two-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ in his home at Norridge, Ill. I accidentally tuned the program in for want of watching something other than a rerun and the caption in the TV guide stated merely, "World's Greatest 'Do-It-Yourself' Organ Builder." I am glad it featured an artist from our Chicago area as I have all, or most, of Mr. Berry's albums as well as hundreds of other pipe organ albums, from Jesse Crawford down to the most obscure artists. My only wish is that more exposure should be accorded to the pipe organ to give the public a more concise picture of the "World's Greatest Instrument."

Hoping you will find this item of interest to our subscribers, I remain

Yours sincerely  
Harry C. Miller  
Box 336, R. R. #3  
Palatine, Illinois 60067

(Program data: Channel 9, July 23, 1967—9:00 p.m.)

## CLOSING CHORD

(Continued from Page 4)

John E. Mitchell, 65, known throughout the Pittsburgh area by the phrase "Johnny Mitchell at the organ!" died on August 22, shortly after a cancer operation, in a Pittsburgh hospital. Mitchell's career started in 1918 when he started playing for silent movies at 16 in the Loew's Lyceum Theatre in Pittsburgh.

In 1921 he moved on to the Victor Theatre in McKeesport, then joined the Clark chain which operated the Regent and Liberty Theatres in East Liberty, Penna. Leo Palucki of Erie recalls hearing Mitchell at the Warner House when it first opened. He opened at the Enright in Pittsburgh in 1929, but by then "talkies" had doomed silent movies so he changed to broadcasting with a daily "Footlights and Stardust" program from



the Enright. In recent years he did club work and teaching. A friend, Vincent Volpe, says, "Mitchell was a demanding teacher, but his students loved him. And he was always ready to go along with us (ATOEers) to play the Leona Theatre Kimball over in Homestead. We in the Pittsburgh district are going to miss him." He was planning a record release to be played on the Leona organ, according to Jay E. Smith.

Mitchell played at the Pittsburgh Civic Arena right up to the day of his admittance to the hospital for the operation. He is survived by his widow, Marie; a son, John, and a daughter, Mrs. Joanne Dunn. He was a member of AFM and ATOE. A story about his musical career appeared in the April 1967 issue of THEATRE ORGAN-BOMBARDE.

Harry Reed of Seattle, 73, organist-musician, long active in Pacific Northwest music circles, died in Miami Beach August 7 after an illness of five weeks. He became ill while attending the National Convention of the American Federation of Musicians in that Florida city.

He began his musical career at 14 as a church organist. Later, he was staff organist for Loew's St. James Theatre in Boston. He came to Seattle in 1921, and played the organ at cinemas there and in Everett. In 1931, Reed became assistant program and musical director for radio station KJR. Leaving radio in 1937, he

played for vaudeville shows at the Palomar Theatre until 1944 when he took over the orchestra at the Showbox Theatre.

Reed was president of Local 76, AFM, from 1944 to 1954, and served several terms on its board of directors. He was president of the Northwest Conference of Musicians from 1946 to 1952, and was its secretary-treasurer from 1953 until 1962.

He is survived by his wife and two sons, Eugene A. Reed of Seattle, and Capt. Charles C. Reed of New York.

## DELAWARE VALLEY

(Continued from Page 4)

the organ installation technicians indicated that something was amiss. A call to the factory at Hagerstown, Maryland, confirmed that there had indeed been a mixup; this was the "Met" organ missent to the Sedgewick Theatre. The "Met" Moller was practically a twin of the 4-43 organ in the Fox, Atlanta, Georgia, the "Big Mo." Some fast reshipping resulted and finally the 19-ranker arrived at the Sedgewick.

In the spring of 1928 the theatre opened with the largest theatre organ in the Germantown area. This was opus 5230. Among the professional organists that were to play this Moller was Leonard MacClain—demonstrator, designer and soloist.

Once again, 39 years later, was organist MacClain to present a lifetime of tunes flowing from his fingers, and those Moller pipes responded.

Leonard MacClain—the master of the console—the teacher and the friend.

## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF Gaylord Carter

(Continued from Page 5)

DURING THIS TIME, we were playing Harold Lloyd pictures. He would make about two pictures a year, and one evening, one of his managers was in the audience at the Seville. Apparently, I was feeling pretty well that night, because I was just going to town on the movie. He phoned the manager of one of the big downtown theaters, and said, "There's a kid out here in the sticks who's really kicking heck out of this organ! You could probably use somebody down there."

"They sent for me, I did an audition, and in 1926, I went into the Million Dollar Theater at Third and Broadway, which was the leading presentation house in Los Angeles. The pictures ran from a month to two or three months, and we

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prepared the scores well in advance. There was an orchestra, and the musical director was Leo Forbstein, who later became musical director at Warner Brothers' Studio.

"When I went into the Million Dollar, here was the setup: There was a concert orchestra of 35 men in the pit, Paul Whiteman with about 30 men on the stage, and a great big score. I believe the first picture I played there starred Norma Talmadge, though I don't remember the name of it.

"But here was a tremendous presentation, and I, just a youngster from the outlands, came into this enormously complicated atmosphere. I'd been there about two weeks, was just petrified with the dynamic nature of it all, playing all day, then practicing all night, when Paul Whiteman stopped me in the hall backstage and said, 'Carter, you've been doing a great job. I've been noticing what you're doing.' You had no idea what that meant to a youngster just starting out!

"This theater was one of the Publix Theaters, which was a national chain under the supervision of Paramount Pictures. Sid Grauman, the former owner, had given up the Million Dollar and the Metropolitan (the Paramount later) and was running the Egyptian and the Chinese.

"Two girls were my assistants, and you can imagine their annoyance when I was brought in as supervising organist! One of them would come to work at 11 a.m. when the house opened. Then at 1 p.m., I would come on and play about 15 minutes. The orchestra would come in, play the overture, then the act, and would go into about 10 minutes of the feature. I'd play the middle of the picture, they'd come in for the last 10 minutes of the feature, then we'd do the overture, which I played along with the orchestra. Then would come the stage show, the orchestra coming in for 10 minutes again. I'd play till about 4:30, followed by one of my assistants who'd play till about 7, at which time, I'd come back. We'd go through the routine again until the last feature at night, the orchestra would play 10 minutes, and then I'd finish it out, closing about 12 o'clock. So, it was from 1 p.m. till about midnight, with two hours off for supper.

"It was quite a bit of playing, but it was a wonderful experience working with the orchestra in a big house. It was a case of sinking or swimming in a *burry*! I had to work pretty hard to keep up with it, but it was one of the most enjoyable experiences I ever had.

"We played 'Ben Hur' for about three months. This was the original 'Ben Hur', the silent version with Ramon Navarro. Then we played 'Beau Geste' with Ron-

ald Coleman. I can't remember others. There were all sorts of films.

"I didn't record any of the music in those days. The 'Ben Hur' score was prepared by a well-known musician in New York. There was no original music in that particular score. It was a compilation of, for example, Dvorak's 'New World Symphony' for the fighting scenes, and there were the 'Steppes of Central Asia' for the lonely sequences of the fort. There were three themes which were written for the picture by Dr. William Axt, who compiled the score.

"Many of the pictures had distinguished musicians composing and compiling scores. Erno Rapee, for example, who was scoring pictures at that time in New York, wrote 'Diane' for 'Seventh Heaven' which I played when I was working in Inglewood. It was a combination in those days of original and published music used in most of these scores. Now, of course, everything is written for the picture. There is practically no music which is adapted from something else unless a piece is called for in the picture.

"There were entire books of mysterious, agitated, sweet music and sad music written for accompanying the silents. I still have a musty library in a little warehouse behind the garage at home, just full of these things—agitated, mystery themes, spooky music, happy tunes, and all sorts of things. They went under what they called 'moods'."

Gaylord explained that this was actually original mood music, so silent pictures pre-dated the present craze for mood music. "It was certainly along the same line. It's a very interesting thing; the medium of presentation of entertainment keeps changing—from silent movies to sound movies, to radio, to television, to the stage, to sports areas, etc. The setting and the type of entertainment change, but the *music* stays the same. 'A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody' is still good for a sequence in any kind of medium.

"The *taste* in music changes; the appreciation may be of a certain class. The youngsters, say for instance, going for rock n' roll. You had a jazz period, a boogie-woogie period, a pop period, a bop period and a rock n' roll period. But, for anybody to define exactly what these things are, and where one kind of music leaves off and another one starts, would be pretty difficult to do. I remember listening one time to Richard Rodgers. He said 'I couldn't tell you what the difference is among boogie-woogie, rock n' roll, and bop. I wouldn't have the slightest idea.'

"I believe these are labels which are put on things for easy reference. But

what actually is being labeled very often is a similar thing, with maybe a slight change in rhythm."

AT THIS point, Gaylord discussed styles of music played on types of organs.

"Music is music, and organ-playing is organ-playing. It is perfectly possible to play classical style or popular style (or theater style as it's sometimes known) on practically any kind of instrument. You can take the most classical baroque organ and play the blues on it, or play certain jazz styles. But, you can't get up and really go on it in a jazz way. On a good sized theater organ, which has diapasons, tubas and trombones, you can turn off the tremulants and play the Vidor Toccata so that it will sound just as magnificent as on the finest classical organ.

"It's really a frame of mind; it's a point of view which you're using. If you're playing popular music, you're thinking along those lines; if you're playing classical music, you're thinking along *those* lines.

"Of course, the organs should be designed for the special kind of music, but it's perfectly possible to interplay types of music on different kinds of organs. In the early days when organs were first installed in theaters, there were no theater organs per se; the kind which has the drums, the traps, the xylophones and bells. Classical organs were installed in theaters. In the Capitol Theater in New York, there was a great concert organ, and Dr. Mauro-Cottone, one of the leading classical organists in New York, was featured in that theater for many years.

"I remember when I was just a youngster in Wichita, there was an Austin organ in the Palace Theater, and the organist was a concert musician by the name of P. Hans Flaff, who played in strict concert style. It was later (I'm talking about the period of the very early 1920's), that the need for an instrument in a theater which would approximate orchestral sounds, was discovered, and mostly through the influence of Hope-Jones, we got orchestra sounds from organs in theaters, and gradually the traps, drums, xylophones, bells, steamboat whistles and things were added to the consoles. It really started as classical organs in the theaters and gradually developed into something which was far closer to what was needed in order to give orchestra quality.

"I believe this was because theaters had orchestras, and when the organ came on, they wanted it to sound as much like the orchestra as possible, so they designed an instrument which would give that sound."



**I**N RESPONSE to the well-known fact that theater organists were looked down upon by classical organists, Gaylord Carter had this to say: There were many more jobs available to theater organists than there were qualified, trained organists. A lot of people who had been playing pianos in theaters, switched to the organ, and little by little, they developed pedal technique and got known as "left-foot organists." In other words, they were just playing thump-thump-thump-thump with the left foot, giving a kind of bass effect and were never playing a pedal line or a bass line which is what you have in classical organ literature. This is probably one of the reasons they were looked down upon.

"I also believe they were looked down on and envied at the same time, because the theater organists were making pretty big salaries, and the combination of ineptitude in the pedal department and large salaries annoyed some of these people."

Getting back to his experiences, Gaylord continued. "At the last presentation we had at the Million Dollar before it closed as a Publix house, they invited me to play a solo. The organ console in the Million Dollar was not on an elevator; it didn't rise out of the pit in majestic grandeur, and then you performed a number. I had never done a solo in a large theater before. I mentioned the "Light Cavalry Overture" down at the little Sunshine Theater, but here, this had to be a 6-minute portion of the show. The manager said to me, 'Gaylord, you'll never have any respect as an entertainer in a theater unless you take some time of your own on the program.'

"So, I was in a state of considerable panic as to what I would do. I went out, bought Jesse Crawford's record of "Roses of Picardy," played it over and over, and copied the style as closely as I could.

"Which brings me to the fact that the great Jesse Crawford was the one who set us all up in the theater business, blazing all the trails, and setting all the standards for that day and age. As organist at the Million Dollar Theater, shortly before we came to Los Angeles, he was making records, and was the only organist, to my knowledge, who was making them for national distribution at that time.

"Roses of Picardy" was a particular appealing solo. It went very well, but the theater closed in about two weeks. (Chuckle) Leo Forbstein came to me and said, 'I knew if we ever asked Gaylord to play a solo, it would end the run of the Million Dollar Theater!', which it did. But, I went from there to the Paramount Theater at Sixth and Broad-

way, which is now a parking lot. By this time, sound pictures had come in, but we still played silent cartoons, newsreels and organ solos for awhile. Then, I went to the United Artists Theater down near Ninth and Broadway, where I played solos."

In answer to a question about Sid Grauman, Gaylord replied: "When I went to the Egyptian (I believe I went there in 1934), Sid Grauman had given up that one, too, as that was taken over by Fox West Coast, and he was just operating the Chinese. Later on, he gave that up. He sold these theaters, I understand, at perfectly enormous prices to theater chains. He developed them, set up a certain fabulous atmosphere in the theaters and then sold them to good advantage.

"At the Egyptian, I was just the organ feature. This was in 1933-34 when there was considerable depression. The best seats in the house were 50c and the side seats were 25c. It was, however, a first-run house. You could get in there for 25c, see a beautiful picture, and (chuckle) hear an organ solo by me, and remember, I was getting \$55 a week. It seemed like an enormous amount of money then.

"At about that time, I was invited to join the staff of KHJ, which was Don Lee Broadcasting. The Cadillac showroom was downstairs, and the whole second floor was the broadcasting studio. There was a funny little 2-manual Estey organ there which is now in one of the chapels at Forest Lawn Cemetery. I think it found a proper home! Anyway, I did a midnight broadcast, and we called this "The Phantom of the Organ". I played spooky music and quiet stuff from midnight until 1 a.m. every morning. That was my first experience in radio which was a sort of bridging period, although I did stay in the theater quite a long time after that. But, that was the time when I was starting to move from theaters into radio.

"I was the mystery organist, and was known as the "Phantom of the Organ." We kept the program going for quite a long time until somebody wrote a letter addressed to me. It said, "Dear Fanny of the Organ". At this point, we changed the program."

**A**NOTHER theater in which Gaylord Carter exhibited his talents was the Warner Theater in Hollywood. The organ came out of the pit, Gaylord would ask that "everybody sing", and everybody did. Then he said "Men sing"; then "women sing" etc.

"In those days, when we were presenting what we called "slide novelities", the organ presentations were geared to

the popular songs of the day. All the publishers of popular songs would get out slides of their songs for promotional purposes, and furnish them to the theater organists, because they thought the theater was a good plug for their music.

"Then, some of the more energetic publishers would develop little presentations around their tunes with certain ideas in which you'd use their things. Those of us who were doing theater presentations, would also come up with little ideas.

"When we got the repeal of prohibition in 1933, I had the organ console decked up like the counter in a beer hall, complete with a big bowl of pretzels. I came up, wearing an apron, turned around, wiped off the console, and said, "What'll you have?" I played the "Beer Barrel Polka" and things of that kind. When it was over, and the console going down, I threw pretzels to the audience.

"Another time, I had a rigged-up thermometer on the stage, and the louder people would sing, the higher would go the thermometer until when they really were screaming at the end of the presentation, the thermometer went clear to the top, a flash pot went off, and the thing collapsed. It was quite a presentation!"

**G**AYLORD next cleared up the bouncing-ball controversy. "This was actually a movie technique, and came with pre-recorded organs. The bouncing ball didn't come in until sound, and in many cases, was done with the orchestra. This was strictly a short-subject presentation with a musical score and words, and everybody was invited to sing. There was no personality involved. It just came on the screen and there it was. I was doing community sings when other theaters were presenting the bouncing ball, so the idea with an organist was actually a misconception.

"I was at the Warner's Hollywood about 3½ years, and left shortly before I went with "Amos n' Andy" in 1935 for seven years.

"In those days, the networks didn't use recorded themes in any way, so we played "The Perfect Song" every day, twice a day; once for the eastern part of the country, and then again in the evening for the western part. It played everywhere at 8 o'clock; I believe in the middle west, it was 7. But 8 o'clock in the evening, it was the time for "Amos n' Andy", so we would do it here at 4 o'clock for the eastern broadcast, and then would do it at 8 o'clock for the west.

"The Boys" as they were always known; Freeman Gosden, who played



the Kingfish and Amos; and Charlie Correll, who was Andy, were in another studio. I would very rarely see them, but Bill Hay, the announcer, and I were in studio G at CBS. I played the theme on 3 different organs. It originally started at Warner Brothers, and I never saw any of them. We just used the organ. Then later we moved to the organ at NBC over on Vine Street, and they were in another studio. That's another parking lot, too. I have so many parking lots to look at where I once earned a living!

"But, the boys were very, very interesting and wonderful people. I remember Charlie Correll, who used to fly an airplane, often would go out for a flight between the afternoon and evening shows, and I'd join him. We'd go out to Lockheed Airport, take off in that beautiful plane of his, and fly over Los Angeles. They were the first flights which I had ever taken.

ONCE A YEAR, the show would move to New York, and I'd go with it. We'd fly there, and I remember the first time. When you consider you get to New York now in 4 hours in a jet, we left here at 11 o'clock at night, and flew all night, with stops at Phoenix and Dallas; then we flew all day with stops at Memphis, Nashville and Washington, and got to New York approximately 11 o'clock the next night, which would be a 24-hour flight! It was really 3 or 4 hours less, according to the time differential, but it was in a DC-3, and it was a long, long flight.

"I was greatly excited about all the Broadway shows, the Great White Way, and all that sort of thing.

"There were no musical bridges on this show. Occasionally, we would play musical effects during the commercials, and on very rare occasions, when it was impossible for either Gosden or Correll to be there, I would fill with a little organ concert, and I got some very nice mail on this. People seemed to be getting a kick out of hearing the organ for a change. But, it was on very rare occasions. I always played pipe organ for the Amos n' Andy show, never an electronic.

"Of course, the boys went on to bigger and better things. They had a half-hour show once a week, and later on, were tremendous in TV. The show had a marvelous life. They're wonderfully fine gentlemen, and it was a rewarding experience to be associated with them."

Gaylord stayed with the show until 1942, at which time he joined the Navy. The writer fondly treasures his several meetings with the jolly Lieutenant (JG) in 1945 when both were stationed on the rock of Adak in the Aleutians. Cart-

er was chief of the Navy Welfare Department on the island, and had a 15-minute nighttime program "Organ Melodies" on a Hammond in the Village Theater, over radio station WXLB, "On the Northern Highway to Victory." This would have been aptly called "Music to Go to Sleep By", and it is not meant in a derogatory sense. The music was soothing to the ear, and one could easily have gone to sleep with it. Not this listener, however; he sensed real technique behind it, and rarely missed hearing a program. Carter also did many special programs, such as the one on December 24, 1944 in which he played Christmas music.

IN THE SPRING of 1945, Lt. Carter presented a series of Sunday afternoon musicales in the Army Post Chapel. Classics and semi-classics, which included the complete score of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Mikado" were featured. A faded program from Adak's Castle Theater, dated June 11, 1945, lists Carter as one of the judges in the Post Talent Contest in which the writer participated. Yes, the short, stocky Lieutenant is well-remembered for his morale-building work in a desolate garrison in World War II.

Following his Navy discharge, he went back to organ programs in radio. "I had been doing radio and theater at the same time in the thirties, but finally, I went into strictly radio, because there weren't any more jobs in theaters; it just ended. It was always, I thought, awfully nice that when one medium of presentation was denied us, another one always opened up. There was always something.

"The Hammond organ had come into the picture about 1936-37. The advantage, of course, was that while the pipe organ was installed in one studio, if that studio were busy, the organ couldn't be used, but you could put the Hammond on a dolly and move it anywhere. At one time, CBS had 8 or 9 Hammonds, so that made it possible not only for the organ to be used in a great many places, but to employ many organists. There were 4 or 5 of us on the staff of CBS at one time.

"Some of the shows on radio with which I was connected included "Hollywood Hotel" with Ramond Paige (later Musical Director of the Radio City Music Hall). Then I was on a program with David Brook, called "California Melodies."

"On several occasions, I substituted for a very distinguished organist, Paul Carson, playing "One Man's Family" and some of the other things which he did.

I was also with "Suspense", "The Second Mrs. Burton" and "Bride and Groom." I had little combinations on some of them. In one, I had two fiddles, a bassoon and a French horn with the organ."

Another organ with which Gaylord Carter has been associated, is the big 4-manual Kimball in the Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles. "That's one of my favorite organs. As you know, the Wiltern is a Warner Brothers house, so when I was playing in Warner's Hollywood, we organists would occasionally switch. This was a great experience, because the Wiltern organ is a magnificent instrument. This is a combination concert and theater organ, and has all the brilliance and the grandeur which you'd ever want."

THE WILTERN organ was restored by the local chapter of the ATOE. Gaylord was the first person to play it after its renovation.

"It was wonderful to come back to this organ, and I can't give you anything but my most heartfelt appreciation for sparking the rehabilitation of this instrument. Going back to playing it again, was like renewing an old friendship. In 1961, we had the convention of the ATOE when we had a presentation of Harold Lloyd's "Kid Brother" in the Wiltern. Harold Lloyd is still a very good friend, and I have enjoyed his friendship for a long, long time.

Next came a discussion of the organization called "Flicker Fingers", devoted to resurrection of the old silents and the organ accompaniment of them.

"My partner, Jim Day, and I have organized a little thing in which we are reviving presentations of silent movies as they were in the days when I was working at it. More as an experience in nostalgia than as a (chuckle) business, we've presented these things in the Wiltern and we've done them in a lot of other places. In fact, we've taken our little presentations on tour. We've been in many cities in the United States with Harold Lloyd pictures and with a lot of other pictures; Douglas Fairbanks, for instance, in "The Thief of Bagdad" and in "Mark of Zorro."

"These are great silent movies which are packed with action and a lot of excitement. It's not like bringing out old relics, looking at them, and saying, 'My goodness, we're glad that year has passed!' It's not that way at all. To a lot of youngsters, this is a new experience in film presentation, and with the interest of the musical score played on a big organ, it's a pretty exciting thing.



"You may remember that last year, we had a series of silent movies at Occidental College. This was not Flicker Fingers; it was a silent movie festival. We played the scores on a concert organ, doing theater effects on the most rigid of concert instruments, a great Skinner."

ANOTHER place where Gaylord Carter is featured is the Los Angeles Sports Arena. "The Sports Arena is one of the places where an electronic organ has been installed to use before and during sporting events. The organ at the Dodger Stadium is a big feature of the action down there, and also at the new Anaheim Stadium where the Angels are. At the Sports Arena, I was privileged to play for the Blades, the Lakers, boxing events, track events and all sorts of sporting activities.

"There, you play, more or less, the kind of music which will heighten the action. People will come up to you and give you requests, and of course, all the kids want to hear the Batman theme and Beatle songs. During one of the intervals of a hockey game, we play selections from "My Fair Lady" and during the other one, numbers from "Sound of Music". All of this just to keep something going while the action is not taking place on the floor.

"Though they demolished the theaters, got rid of the theater organs, and maybe knocked the organ to the ropes a bit, it certainly has rebounded. There's always a spot for good music, and I'm very grateful that there's a revived interest in organ-playing. I believe this is due to several things.

"One, of course, is the invention and dissemination of the electronic instruments. So many people have organs in their homes now, so many youngsters are having the opportunity to learn to play the organ through free lessons which are given with the purchase of an organ, and later on, through study with a good teacher. When a person has an organ in his home, he's interested in organs being played in other places.

"Then, of course, the organ records which have been on the market, by distinguished musicians such as George Wright and many others, have given a great impetus to the interest in organ.

"Then, the organization, the ATOE, the Association of Theater Organ Enthusiasts. This is a group of people who have revived interest in organs, just as the ancient automobile societies have interested people in old, old automobiles.

"I've often wondered when I'm playing for a group of people from the ATOE,

and there's all the enthusiasm; where were they when I was playing in the theater? There didn't seem to be anybody paying attention to the organ in those days. It was all taken for granted. The organ rose out of the pit, and we played a little organ solo. If the folks liked it, they gave you a big hand; if they didn't they sure *didn't* give you a big hand! There was never anybody you could really depend upon to be enthusiastic, *regardless* of what happened.

"But, it is enormously stimulating to me, having played the theater organs in the old days, and now seeing this revival of interest in the organ, in the silent movies and in the little presentations which we have.

"We recently went to Cincinnati with a Douglas Fairbanks picture, and 3,000 people turned out to see this presentation and hear the organ. They were enormously enthusiastic. It was a great night in the theater, and I'm sure I was having more fun than anybody there.

"One of the greatest experiences in the theater was to go to a place like the Paramount downtown, where there was the concert orchestra in the pit, the big stage show with the stage band, the organ playing a solo, and maybe a cartoon. There was a feeling that you were really *getting* something for your money.

"Now, you have that feeling today, too. But it's not quite the same. It may be that people spread it out a little bit. You go to the theater and see a great picture. You go to the Hollywood Bowl and hear a great orchestra. You go to a "Flicker Fingers" and hear a great theater organ."

IN CLOSING the interview, Don Wallace had this to say: "I'm quite sure, Gaylord, that probably we've whetted the interests of a lot of people to see and hear you play for the next "Flicker Fingers". You know, I think it's wonderful to be able to make a living, doing something you enjoy doing and having as much fun as obviously you have, from it."

"You're absolutely right, Don. I remember when I was graduated from Lincoln High School in Los Angeles out on North Broadway, the principal, Ethel Percy Andress said at the time, 'I hope that whatever it is which you do, which takes most of your time, will be the thing you enjoy most'. It certainly has been that in my case, and I'm very grateful."

## HARMONICS/BARTON

(Continued from Page 17)

the chest is the foot in flue pipes. It is a boot in metal reed pipes. The extreme bottom which fits into the air hole in the wind chest is the toe on all stops.

In reed pipes the *shallot* (echalotte) is also called a reed. The vibrating part is the tongue.

*Block* refers to part of the mouth in a wood stop; its counterpart in a metal pipe is the languid. A block is also a metal part of a reed stop. It is at the top of the boot and holds up the resonator. The shallot is on its underside.\*

*Tongue* is the vibrating brass strip in a reed pipe, also the hardwood piece that joins the upper lip to the front board in a 16' octave of a wood open diapason.

\*The parts listed are illustrated in the article, "How to Ruin a Theatre Organ," in the August, 1967, issue of this publication.

b b b

A little understood element of a pipe organ is the harmonic structure of the pipe. Harmonics are present in some degree in every musical sound. In many sounds they are easily distinguishable, while in others they are not so plain and in some musical sounds they are so faint they are not audible to the human ear. The human singing voice, especially soprano, is the richest in harmonics or overtones. In highly resonant, metallic musical instruments such as cymbals, bells and triangles, they are very audible. Oriental gongs have a great number. Instruments with stretched strings played with a bow, violins, violas, cellos and bass viols are rich in harmonics. Brass instruments are high in harmonics.

Harmonics are the result of the natural law of sound which is a part of acoustics. They are musical acoustics. Harmonics reinforce the fundamental sound, influence the intensity and quality of a musical tone. They blend with the unison tone and with each other to make a single tone creating brilliance and richness.

This is the definition of harmonics published in the *International Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians*: "Law of Harmonics—a sonorous body vibrates as a whole and at the same time vibrates in each of its several fractions as  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{6}$ ,  $\frac{1}{7}$ , etc." The harmonic intervals of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{6}$ ,  $\frac{1}{7}$ , etc., always appear in the same regular and orderly succession. The first harmonic of  $\frac{1}{2}$  has nearly the same volume as the prime tone but from that point the volume diminishes as the harmonics ascend. Harmonics decrease in strength as they rise in pitch. The loudest instruments have the highest harmonics.

If there were no harmonics a pipe organ would be a pretty dismal sounding affair. There would only be the heavy,