

THE COVER PHOTO

The huge console of the Robert Morton concert organ in the Los Angeles Elks Temple is a fitting subject for our February cover. In effect, it is the harbinger of the story in this issue about the L. A. Chapter members who put it back into first-class shape.

— Stufoto



THE FUTURE: LET'S TAKE A GOOD LOOK

Theatre Pipe Organs are fun. Any way you look at them. Their traditions, histories, music, artists, and the vaults in which they were housed make fascinating reading, as well as a wonderful hobby. Hence the prime thought behind the formation of the A.T.O.E., as quoted from Article 3 of the preamble of the National Bylaws: "The purposes for which this association is formed are: To preserve the tradition of the Theatre Organ; to further the understanding of the instrument and its music; and to have published a periodical to be called 'THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE'."

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Good works are being done in the many areas. There is a general desire on the part of many chapters to own a good instrument and house it in a public building for concert purposes and the general enjoyment of all. But in actuality, we are at crossroads. In just 24 hours, tomorrow becomes yesterday; the future is suddenly history. In that space of time a valued theatre organ can be lost from the theatre world and the community.

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Too many of us fail to realize that the instruments are leaving the scene faster than they are being saved and placed where they will have a future. There is also the sobering fact that NO organ builder is producing instruments for theatres. If there were ever a period in which we could afford the dubious luxuries of indifference, argument, and default, every last second, every drop of that period has been used up. Time is not on our side.

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National A.T.O.E. funds are earmarked for the journal, the annual meeting, and other vital expenses connected with running a small business with volunteer staff. Therefore, National cannot underwrite any specific organ salvation projects. It has to be done on the local level, and soon, if we wish to continue hearing these great instruments. There is no magical formula to hand out that will do the job; each individual situation is unique. But strong will and perseverance can accomplish wondrous things.

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For instance, this magazine can be a real convincer. Not only does it recount our accomplishments, it also indicates the existence of an organized nationwide movement. This, our official journal, or "organ," is not only a purveyor of national and international activities, it is a very useful chronicle of A.T.O.E.'s progress, reaching not only our membership, but many theatre managers, civic leaders, libraries, and is on file in the Library of Congress.

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The Theatre Pipe Organ is on the threshold of once again becoming a real and useful facet of the entertainment world, or returning to the obscure curiosity category. February 5 marked our 13th anniversary of organization; we have come so far, let's not let it slip back. We need a "unification" of our efforts at all pitches with couplers to give A.T.O.E. and THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE the support it requires to grow and work. The future of the theatre organ depends on the action we take today.



Dick Schrum, President

NOTE: Due to incomplete information, the A.T.O.E. CHAPTER DIRECTORY, announced for this month, will appear in the April issue.

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