

Restoration 'Payoff': Purvis! Wright!

RICHARD PURVIS PLAYS REDEDICATION CONCERT ON ELKS' MORTON RESTORED BY CHAPTER MEMBERS

LOS ANGELES.—There were two reasons for rejoicing on December 5, for ATOErs: completion of the restoration project started during the summer of 1967 on the either 58 or 61-rank Robert Morton concert organ in the Los Angeles Elks Temple, and choice of the right artist to play the rededication concert—Richard Purvis.

The evening concert was introduced by Chapter Chairman Bob Carson who provided some background on the organ and the time invested in restoring it—1,500 man-hours!

Mr. Purvis is a very "hip" classical organist who doesn't demean the theatre organ or its music. He brings a light touch to the classics and manages to inject good humor into his introductions. For example, one of his Bach selections was entitled, "I Stand on the Threshold of Immortality," which in German, he stated, comes out, "I'm at Death's Door." It turned out to be rather jolly Bach for such a somber occasion. Another selection was from Henry Purcell's "Westminster Abbey Royalty Suite"—"The Trumpet Tune," for which Mr. Purvis managed to produce a sharp "trumpet" voice from the great selection available—music fit for a king. Next, several centuries were spanned for a tune by the very modern-sounding Karg Elert, his rarely heard "Claire de Lune," an approach quite different from the familiar Debussy brand of moonlight but no less intriguing. There is a mystic quality in all of Karg Elert's music and his moody description of moonlight was done in delicate pastels.

"Caprice on the Notes of the Cuckoo" called for some skillful weaving of musical structure or "body" around the oft-repeated cuckoo call, which varied between a minor and major third, a bit of whimsy written by the organist. Then came "Greensleeves" in an Elmore setting of quiet grandeur which made use of many of the theatrical voices of the Morton.

As is usual of a Purvis concert, the post-intermission period consisted of the organist's compositions. First was his slightly irreverent tone-picture of a pompous but portly bishop, puffing while marching in a church procession, aptly named "March Grotesque." One of his tunes which gets through to the T.O. crowd is "Night in Monterey," an atmospheric and ethereal wisp of music, this time dedicated to Ruth Carson. Other

Purvis compositions heard were "Idyll," "Les Petites Cloches" ("Li'l Bells") and "Toccata Festiva." An appreciative audience wanted more.



RICHARD PURVIS put on an impressive concert for the Angelenos at Elks Temple Morton rededication concert.

Purvis' encore included a confession; he admitted that he had once played the theatre organ on the radio under the name "Don Irvine." He then proceeded to play Mr. Irvine's radio signature, an up-tempo "I'll Take An Option On You," which gave the until then suppressed Kinura a chance to cackle atop a theatrical combination. This one taste of theatrical fare left no doubt that Dick Purvis can cut the T.O. mustard with ease.

The maintenance crew stood by with "cipher eradicators" at ready during the entire evening but only one cipher started up (in the Echo chamber) and that took care of itself in a few seconds, without any assistance from the crew. In general, it can be said of the instrument that it leans more to the concert tonalities than theatrical sounds, despite the presence of percussions and a full "toy counter." And unification is sparse. Yet, it's a welcome addition to the realm of playable organs in the California southland.

If the ability to attract other organists to his concerts is indicative of an organist's appeal, Purvis sure rates with his colleagues; Ann Leaf, Gordon Kibbee, Gaylord Carter and Dick Schrum were in his audience. Mr. Schrum, ATOE National's hard-working prexy, flew in from Seattle to attend the rededication concert.

—Peg Nielsen

L. A. CHAPTER SPOTLIGHTS



. . . . AT ELECTION MEETING CONCERT

Los Angeles, Dec. 10.—Retiring L.A. Chapter Chairman Bob Carson today turned the reins of office over to former Vice Chairman Dick Simonton (succession is automatic) with an expression of satisfaction on the chapter's response to the projects undertaken in 1967.

It happened at the annual election meeting of the L.A. chapter held at the Elks Lodge, where a chapter work crew has refurbished the long-neglected 4-61 (counting mixture ranks separately) Robert Morton concert organ.

Prior to the business meeting, organist Helen Dell played a short but well-received concert on the big Morton. When a couple of the maintenance crew men started resetting combination pistons in full view of the audience during the business meeting, anticipation started to rise. Not many organists rate that special treatment.

Carson reviewed the year's accomplishments briefly then called on Dr. Phil Olson to greet and swear-in the new officers after they had been elected. The

oath included a promise to "neglect your business" in behalf of the organ hobby. All agreed readily. In addition to Chairman Simonton, Ray Bonner was switched from treasurer to vice chairman, Ruth Skovmand accepted a second term as secretary, while the treasurer and program director slots went to Keith Woodard and Neil Kissel, respectively. Dick Simonton took over the podium and told of plans for the future. There was a brief exposition of plans for the 1968 ATOE convention which will be held in L.A. He closed with a fine compliment to retiring Chairman Carson.

It was an electric moment when the name of the featured artist was revealed by Bob Carson—none other than George Wright! George came on like "Gang Busters" to a roar of applause which reflected the surprise and delight of the members. George went straight to the console and announced a tune that's making a comeback—"The Glory of Love." (". . . Comeback tunes are wel-

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