

CONVENTION (Cont.)

Naturally, there will be concerts galore, but what other kinds of entertainment will be offered? What more appropriate place than the cradle of the film industry for some movie nostalgia? Already, several silent movie stars have been contacted, and one of the greatest has already agreed to appear. There will be a great silent movie presentation—a comedy, of course. And to cue this vintage gem (you'll get the title in a mailer, coming soon!) none other than Gaylord Carter! In addition, there will be a movie premiere—the first showing in the USA of a new movie dealing with theatre organs.

Visitors to Hollywood naturally gravitate toward the film studios. Convention planners will give conventioners the full treatment: a tour of a world-renowned film studio equipped with a theatre organ! Naturally, the organ will be heard during the tour, which will require several hours in order to survey the entire movie-making scene.

Then there are the home and studio installations, among them famed recording organs such as Dick Sominton's "Grande Wurlitzer," Harvey Heck's 4-27 Wurlitzer, Bob Carson's 3-27 studio Wurlitzer, Lorin Whitney's 4-34 studio Morton, and (if installation has been completed) Frank Lanterman's 4-36 San Francisco Fox "Crawford Special" Wurlitzer.

And that's just the start! Plans are still jelling. Watch the postman for a flyer coming your way with complete registration information about May first.

A BOMBARDE Technical Feature . . .

REITERATION MADE EASY EASY EASY EASY EASY

by Ernie Manly
Puget Sound Chapter

Have you been contemplating adding "reiteration" to your single-stroke Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Marimba and Piano but dreading the job of adding the necessary contact blocks, shorting bars, switches—plus rewiring each instrument? All of the required effort can be eliminated by using present-day technology. The method presented here is a transistorized keyer unit, inserted in the ground return line of an instrument. This unit will close or open the ground line, causing the instrument to reiterate. Reiteration speed may be regulated by the organist from the organ console.

With a little more effort, the ground return line of each magnet of an instrument can be divided between two ground lines and the keyer unit will alternately close or open these two ground lines for a "marimba effect," where the hammers are alternately striking while a chord is held. This is a very pleasing sound when using Piano 16', 8' and 4'; it brings back those "old piano roll" days.

Incidentally, this article was "born" when Bob Jones of Edmonds, Wash., stopped by while I was adding this keyer unit to a new type of tremolo. Bob commented that he could use the keyer unit on his pipe organ piano stop. Bob had already worked out the best note

grouping combination for the marimba effect and had his piano magnets re-wired. Bob and I thought others might be interested in the keyer unit.

For those who are interested in the technical details of the keyer unit, a short description is presented here. The block diagram shows the basic circuit configuration. The timer circuit uses a unijunction transistor to trigger a "flip-flop."

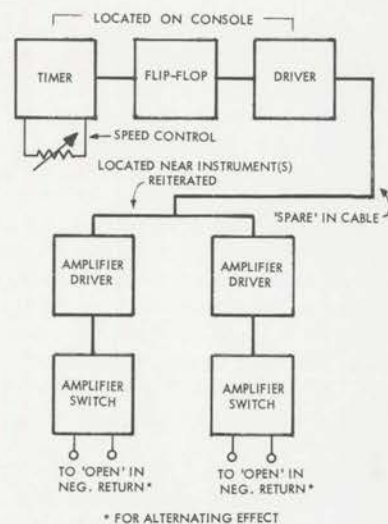


FIGURE 1. BLOCK DIAGRAM OF ELECTRONIC REITERATION CIRCUIT

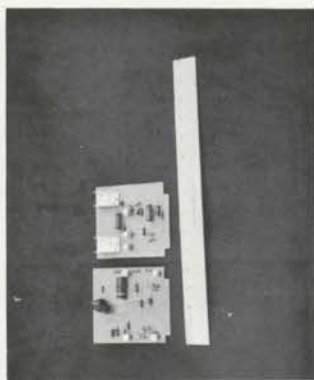
The output of the flip-flop is a symmetrical square wave which turns the driver and the amplifiers on or off. The DC amplifier switches act as a single-pole, double-throw relay, but there are no arcing contacts to worry about and each amplifier switch will handle approximately three amperes of current. The reiteration speed control is like an ordinary volume control which controls the speed of the timer circuit.

The keyer unit is built on two 4"x4" printed circuit cards. The timer, flip-flop and driver circuits are on one card, and the other card is used for the DC amplifiers. The timer card should be mounted somewhere in the console, and the reiteration speed control can be placed within reach of the organist, or mounted on the card. This card may be used to drive a 12-volt relay, magnet, etc. The DC amplifier card should be located near the instrument being reiterated.

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CONVENTIONERS WILL BANQUET HERE—The world-famous Cocoanut Grove—with its red and gold decor, top cuisine, excitement and glamour—will be the setting for ATOE's annual banquet. Top entertainers and orchestras are standard fare in this exquisite dining room, frequented by Hollywood celebrities and personalities of international renown.



The keyer unit was designed to be used with the existing organ 12-volt DC power source where the positive side is the "hot line" and the negative is grounded. The DC power source should be well-regulated. The keyer unit will perform satisfactorily on between 10 to 15 volts. The timing card requires approximately 70 milliamperes and the amplifier card requires approximately 260 milliamperes.

Let us examine some of the various combinations as to how the keyer unit could be hooked up. One timing card can drive all DC amplifier cards, or there could be a timing card for each DC amplifier card. To reiterate one instrument, only one of the DC amplifier switches is used on a card. Both amplifier switches are used for the marimba effect or two instruments could be alternately reiterated from one card. To stop reiterating, a stop key, or switch, is needed to furnish 12 volts at 25 milliamperes to the amplifier card and then the instrument will play "single stroke." The DC amplifier card could be wired so that the two DC switches are not alternating but switching "in phase" with independent stop key control for each DC switch. This whole thing may seem complicated but really it isn't, and think what it will add to the organ!

Complete circuit diagram of the keyer unit, parts list, organ hook-up and notes grouping for the marimba effect are available free to the first fifty persons who send large self-addressed 12-cent envelopes. If there is sufficient demand for etched circuit boards, the boards and instruction could be made available.

Write to Flip-Flop, 429 10th Ave. West, Kirkland, Wash. 98033.

Closing Chord

JOHN R. THOMAS

1911 - 1968

EL PASO, Texas, Jan. 2 — Veteran theater organist John R. Thomas died in a local hospital tonight, after suffering a heart attack plus complications caused by pneumonia. He was 56. He played his regular stint — intermissions at the Plaza 3-15 Wurlitzer — up until a few days before his hospitalization.

"John R." as he was affectionately known by his Plaza audiences, was born in Ladd, Illinois in 1911. As might be expected, he showed musical inclinations very early in life. His early experience included a stint at Redman's Majestic Theatre in St. Louis, where he was nicknamed "the boy organist" because of his youth. It was some time later that he studied with Jesse



"JOHN R."

Crawford. His actual "big-time" theater career started in Chicago, where he played at the Oriental, Marbro and Chicago Theatres, plus many others on the Balaban and Katz circuit. Other engagements included the Fox Midwest and West Coast theater chains; WDAF radio and Loew's Midland Theatre in Kansas City; WJR radio, Detroit, and WLW radio in Cincinnati. Over the years, he played theater organ in 30 cities. In later years he turned to radio and TV, playing daily radio shows in Albuquerque and El Paso, plus appearances on three Dallas TV stations.

It was the big Wurlitzer in the Plaza Theatre which drew him back to El Paso. Restored by members of the Theatre Organ Club of El Paso several years ago, the instrument provided the perfect medium for John R.'s vast repertoire of music — over 9,000 selections, all played from memory. For several years, El Pasoans got up early on Labor Day to throng into the Plaza to hear Thomas play his annual concert. He always left them wanting more, but no one was more enthusiastic than the organist, who stated, after one concert:

"It was really a blast; the organ sang at its best and the crowd was right with me all the way. I tell you, when the console started down as I played 'When Day is Done', and that tremendous burst

of applause rang out and continued for several minutes — I had a lump as big as a Wurlitzer console in my throat!"

Seeing the drawing power of Thomas at the pipes, the Plaza Theatre management hired him to play prologues and intermissions on a regular basis, a happy arrangement which continued to the end of his life.

Since its beginning, John R. Thomas was an informal correspondent for the BOMBARDE, contributing background material and history. When the Plaza Theatre beckoned, Thomas moved his family to El Paso and bought an electronic "theaterette" on which to play club dates between shows at the Plaza. He had to be busy all the time.

Services were held on January 5 at an El Paso funeral home. Surviving are his wife, Lela; daughters Becky, "Kelly," son-in-law Walt Hanlon and another married daughter. A silent console at the Plaza misses him, too.

TRUMAN WELCH

1912 - 1968

Truman Welch, prominent in Southern California musical circles since boyhood, succumbed to a heart attack in his Downey, California home on March 9. He was 56 years old. Born in Ronan, Montana in 1912, Mr. Welch came to Los Angeles with his family in 1922 and grew up under the spell of the lustrous "golden era" of the theatre organ, an instrument which dominated much of his life. The organ teacher who shaped his style was Irene Robertson with whom he studied while attending USC, playing his lessons on the big concert



TRUMAN WELCH