

# THE FABULOUS PEARLS — PIPE ORGAN SPECTACULAR

The glorious sound of the theatre pipe organ came alive once again when CATOE, Chicago Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, presented a Pipe Organ Spectacular starring "The Fabulous Pearls"—Pearl White and Hal Pearl—on two exciting evenings (March 13 and 14) at the newly refurbished Patio Theatre on Chicago's Northwest side.

Three thousand organ fans attended the tandem event and marked another CATOE "first" in Chicago. New seats and new lobby redecoration greeted the many guests, some from as far away as Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan, when the doors opened early for the 8 p.m. shows.

The Patio 3M-17R Barton Pipe Organ, installed in 1927, was in excellent playing condition; the colorful lighting of the atmospheric theatre in full operation, the huge advance ticket sale, the publicity, and above all, the smoothly moving program were all planned and directed by CATOE members, who worked long hours to insure a successful opening of the 1968 CATOE Pipe Organ Shows.

## THE FABULOUS PEARL WHITE

At precisely 8 p.m., Stan Dale, M.C. (WLS Radio personality) introduced CATOE Chairman, Bob Mueller, who welcomed the capacity audience. Immediately following, Stan introduced Pearl White and the Grande Barton Pipe Organ of the Patio Theatre lifted from the pit to a rousing rendition of "Sing Hallelujah". A medley of popular standard ballads followed and allowed the organ to speak its golden throated Tiba's and soft strings, all beautifully styled by Pearl.

"Roaring Twenty Jazz" followed as Pearl "tickled" the keys in her own roaring twenties style. The Hammond piano, recently attached to the organ, was heard frequently as it blended with the organ.

As the organ lowered into the pit, Laurel and Hardy's "Second Hundred Years" flashed on the screen, and the audience roared with laughter as the comedy unreeled with the typical Laurel and Hardy situations. Pearl guided the organ thru the film skillfully and in expert fashion. All too soon the intermission arrived and the audience hurried to the lobby for quick refreshment and conversation.

After CATOE announcements by Bob Mueller, Stan Dale and Pearl White presented a short skit "The Shadow Strikes Again" patterned after the famous "Shadow" radio series.

The second portion of the program began on a happy note as the audience raised their 1500 voices in song. With Pearl at the console, Stan at the mike, and colorful song slides on the screen, the audience sang lustily to tunes of years gone by—*Louise, Always, Sometimes I'm Happy, My Blue Heaven* and other tunes of the '20s and '30s.

As the organ again settled into the pit, Pearl introduced the one reeler, "Love, Speed, and Thrills" with Chester Conklin. Once more the large gathering expressed their approval with laughter and applause. Pearl concluded the program with "Blues" selections and memory tunes of the past. After flower presentations, Pearl encoored with additional tunes. While Stan Dale expres-

## THE FABULOUS HAL PEARL

At 8 p.m. sharp, Stan Dale, M.C. (WLS Radio personality) stepped to the stage and introduced Bob Mueller, CATOE Chairman, who extended greetings to the overflow audience. Stan Dale announced the return appearance of Hal Pearl—in fact his fourth consecutive sell-out at the Patio since CATOE first presented him at the Gala Re-premiere Performance on April 6, 1967.

As the giant Barton console rose from the pit to the music of Mr. Pearl's theme "Warsaw Concerto", thunderous

sed his appreciation to CATOE for presenting the program, Pearl played "Good Night Ladies" as the console lowered. Hundreds gathered around the console to congratulate Pearl White and to offer their personal "thank you" for a splendid performance. Thus, another evening in the Authentic Theatre Pipe Organ Era, complete with top-notch projection and professional lighting, came to an end.



**PEARL WHITE**—Chicago Area Organist Pearl White of Chicago is considered the youngest of the organists to be featured at the consoles of the mighty theatre organs a few years back. Miss White played the Balaban & Katz Theatre circuit as a featured performer. She also made player piano rolls from 1925 to 1932. In 1944-45, she was background organist for the Franklyn MacCormack (WGN Radio) show. Pearl was a featured performer at the ATOE conventions in Buffalo and Chicago in 1964 and 1965. She is currently entertaining patrons at Nielsen's Restaurant in Elmwood Park, a suburb of Chicago.

applause greeted Hal's return to the Patio. From that point, Mr. Pearl held his audience spell-bound for the next 45 minutes as he played musical selections entitled "A String of Pearls" (gems of the past and present)—"A Salute to St. Patrick's Day" and a number of encores. During this portion of the program, Hal's masterful touch of the Barton was evident as he used all the resources of the organ to distinct advantage.

The organ safely in the pit, "45 Minutes from Hollywood" with Oliver Hardy flashed on the screen and Hal accompanied the silent in expert fashion.

Following the film came the long awaited moment for many of the capacity audience—the opportunity to sing under Mr. Pearl's direction. As the "Hal Pearl Novelty" introduction slide came on the screen, the audience sang and clapped their hearts out as Hal glided with ease thru a fast 20 minute song fest.

As the CATOE mirrored ball began to spin under the bright spotlight, a short intermission was held. After quick refreshment, many patrons were seen at CATOE's information booth, staffed by Fern and Larry Coleman. Others were console peeking, picture taking, or engaged in happy conversation.

Since the program was running late—Hal dispensed with his "Award-Win-

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**HAL PEARL**—Chicago Area Organist Chicago-born Hal Pearl is known to many Chicagoland dancers as the official organist of the old Aragon Ballroom, where he co-starred with the foremost dance bands in America. At the Aragon his music contributed to many large gatherings—conventions, fashion shows, and political affairs. It has been said that his memory holds some 20,000 different pieces of music. Having played the organ for over 30 years, Hal has spent over 30,000 hours at the keyboard. Mr. Pearl was the organist for CATOE'S April 6, 1967 "Re-Premiere" program at the Patio Theatre, and has appeared at two other sold-out programs at the Patio in 1967.



# CONCERT CIRCUIT

## Jim Roseveare — SF Banker Rates High Interest at LA Wiltern Concert

Los Angeles, March 24—Jim Roseveare visited the Los Angeles Chapter today and captivated a 600-plus Sunday morning audience with his sound musicianship and boyish charm.

The young man who put the huge Vollum (ex-San Francisco Paramount) Wurlitzer through its paces at the Portland ATOE Convention two years ago with such finesse (while insisting that he was a non-professional), played a program of offbeat memory-joggers for the Angelenos. His registration was notable for its crystal-clear transparency; not one muddy phrase was in evidence. Registration variety was aided greatly by the comparatively low volume level of Roseveare's output, a trick which permitted exploration of the many beautiful soft combinations and also seemed to make the Kimball's one, small Tibia seem louder.

The concert was introduced by Program Chairman Neal Kissel, who asked a distinguished visitor to take a bow — Eddie Dunstedter. Jim brought the organ up with a *Fabulous Places* riser in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, an approach quite different from the usual high-kicking and fast show-tune introduction. His MC technique is on the pixie-ish side; he sounds and appears much younger in the spotlight than his 25 years. He credited the organ maintenance crew, then swung into a sweeping waltz, entitled *I Dream Too Much*, by Kern. Jim took pains in compiling his program to steer clear of the hackneyed, the very temporary and the overplayed chestnuts. His *Swinging in a Hammock* was pure 1928 Guy Lombardo. The Roseveare enthusiasm for the moody tunes of Robert Farnon is well known; for this show Jim played two by the Canadian composer, *Journey Into Melody* and later, *A Star Is Born*, which

### PEARLS (Cont.)

ning Melodies From the Movies" and went directly into the "Poet and Peasant overture as an opening for the third film — Charlie Chaplin's "The Rink". At conclusion of the film, a few short "Sweet Dreams" melodies brought the program to a close at 11:15 p.m. Stan Dale again thanked Hal Pearl and especially CATOE for presenting another glorious evening for organ music. Hundreds gathered at the orchestra rail for autographs and for a last look at the lowered golden console.

—Bill Benedict  
Publicity Director—CATOE



IN THE SPOTLIGHT—Jim Roseveare's easy-going approach to the MC chore and his "pastel plus" music warmed his audience quickly.

to Jim is a musical synesthesia of a panorama of Hollywood. Later, his admiration for Movietown was expressed in more direct terms, *Hooray for Hollywood*, which middle-aged radio listeners may recall as the "Hollywood Hotel" radio-cast (1937) closing theme.

The Broadway of the Gershwin era was reflected in *Liza*, which found the left-chamber Xylophone talking back to the right-chamber Kinura in a stereo argument. A more recent broadcast theme was *A Romantic Guy I*, from the Bob Cummings show. One of the schmalziest interludes was a tune lifted from an ancient Nat Shilkret RCA-Victor salon orchestra record, *Just Like a Butterfly Caught in the Rain. Tears!*

Jim's beguine offering was *The Night Has a Thousand Eyes*, then he went *Ridin' High* on the Cole Porter chorus line show stopper. Typical of the man was his selection from the memorable score of *Gay Divorcee*, a show which brought us *The Continental* and *Night and Day*. But as we all know, these tunes have become standard organ fare and Jim strives for the unusual. So, from the same show, he played *Needle in a Haystack*. Tres jolie!

We have saved the best for last: Jim Roseveare's specialty is recreating the old 78-rpm recordings of Jesse Crawford, and he does it with amazing accuracy. Sprinkled throughout the programs were such Crawford favorites as: *A Broken Rosary*, *Masquerade*, *I Love To Hear You Singing*, *Miss You*, and a thrilling *My Sin* which cued the downward ride of the big white console. Later, while mingling with his admirers in the lobby, Jim was heard to say, "I'm a banker — not an organist!" He must be a wonderful banker!

—Peg Nielsen

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many sources Gregory decided to re-install the organ. General and foreign films were shown during the reinstallation period. The organ was again playing in February of this year and the Northern California Chapter of ATOE spent an afternoon there. Plans are underway for major organ concerts as well as regular use of the organ for silent movie showings.

As originally installed in the Avenue, the Wurlitzer was one of the better sounding installations we have heard. The re-installation is even better, as blower rumble has been eliminated (by removal of a second blower stage), pressures more carefully adjusted and regulation improved. Chambers installed across the stage have proved (as in Detroit) to be ideal. This could not be done in the days of vaudeville. No longer is it necessary to sit in the middle of the house to get a balanced sound from the chambers. All seats are equally good. The organ sounds excellent on recordings (FM station KBAY broadcast tapes made at the Avenue last summer, to rave response from the listeners).

The work done thus far at the Avenue is a tribute to the unselfish devotion of a mighty crew whose members have worked with no compensation except the satisfaction of contributing to a worthwhile endeavor. Some of the persons involved in a variety of ways are Mack Wurtsbaugh, Rick Marshall, Bob Gregory, Claire Elgin, Kay Chenoweth, Rod Burton, Pati Murray, Carl and Jo Bareis, Blanche Ehat, Lorraine Cagle, Phil Messner, Paul Messner, Alex Santos, John Johnson, Ken Eaton, Jim Crank, Les Perea, Gene Hanford and Steve Levin. Many, many others have been involved in sundry ways, of course.

Our story ends on a note of hope. Just before we went to press, a flyer arrived from the Avenue Photoplay Society, the successor to the original Lyric Photoplay Society. The flyer announces that memberships in the previous society will be honored, also that the theatre has reopened and is showing "regular" movies, catering to neighborhood audiences, a move designed to keep the wolf from the door until the project can be fully reorganized. Vern Gregory makes a bid for community-wide support for the new society, asking for help in all areas of theatre operation as well as in the running of the Society. Vern will move slowly, feeling his way until he "gets the feel" of the situation as it jells. Soon, organ concerts will be resumed. The rest is up to the community of organ enthusiasts. With their help, the project can succeed.