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KEN WRIGHT AT THE 4-MANUAL KILGEN PIPE ORGAN. CDS-2371, recorded in WKY-TV studios, Oklahoma City in 1947; monaural, rechanneled for stereo effect. Available by mail for \$3.49 postpaid from Chuck Davis, 12886 Crowley Street, Arleta, Calif. 91331.

How this record came about is a story in itself (see Disc Squeals). Recorded in May 1947, a few days before the organ was removed from the Oklahoma TV station and "retired" to the civic auditorium, the tape laid "in the can" for 21 years, almost forgotten. Ken Wright is a well-known musician in the Oklahoma City area and his performance on a typical Kilgen organ is exemplary. In 1947, the era of the big bands was coming to a close and Ken is obviously a devotee of that style. His adaptations for organ of the Dorsey-Goodman-Shaw-James stylings leave little to be desired, and the Kilgen—its reed-heavy "brass" section very prominent—provides a proper facility for the big swingband beat with its characteristic brassy punctuation.

The Posthorn (more likely a French Trumpet on a Kilgen) riffs that brighten "Dont Be That Way," the sullen Clarinet featured briefly during "We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye," and the swaying tempo of "Begin the Beguine" provide an exciting rhythmic introduction to this compelling journey back through time. The first ballad (also with a beat) is "September in the Rain." The treatment is reminiscent of vintage Dunstedter, possibly because of the Kilgen sound heard on Eddie's '30s broadcasts.

Side 1 closes with two pop classics, "Lazy River" and "St. Louis Blues." "River" uses the Chrysoglott Harp and that grumbly Clarinet to good effect while "Blues" features a dirty Horn.

It must be stated that the "Kilgen sound" heard here isn't exactly "theatre organ" as generally understood. It lacks a real Tibia sound and the dominant voices are those of reeds (very good ones) plus lots of foundation. Yet, as played by Ken Wright it's "entertainment organ" and not the least bit "churchie."

An oldie, "The Moon Is Low," opens side 2 and then comes an inventive treatment of "Aint Misbehavin'," with piano effects played on the Chrysoglott. "Garden in the Rain" is given a non-rhythmic first chorus for one of the few spots in which tempo is abandoned. Anderson's "Jazz Pizzicato," "Basin Street Blues" and "At Last" round out a thoroughly enjoyable sampling of the styles of 1947 which still sound good today.

The jacket has 1947 photos of Ken at the console. The size isn't stated, but it appears to be (and sounds) somewhere between 12 and 15 ranks. The only adverse comment we can offer is that modulation on the disc is a bit too high, causing some distortion on better quality playback systems.

How does Ken sound today? As good as ever, as proven by a current performance recorded on a good plug-in. It includes "Music to Watch Girls By," "Call Me," "Winchester Cathedral," "Temptation," "Mine," "Brazil" and eight other tunes, mostly standards. It may be ordered from the same dealer and the price is the same as for the pipe disc. It's entitled "Ken Wright at the Deluxe Conn Theatre Organ."

ESPECIALLY FOR YOU — Denis Palmistra at the 2-14 residence Wurlitzer of John Clancy, Wentworthville, New South Wales, Australia, CR-0032 (stereo), available at \$4.50 (check or money order) postpaid from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262. It is also available on 7½ ips 4-track stereo tape at \$5.95 postpaid.

Organ enthusiasts owe quite a debt of gratitude to Concert Recording, not only for keeping a constant stream of organ recordings in the mail, but also for widening the horizons of many an enthusiast through the variety of instruments heard on the label. This is one of a handful of Wurlitzers cared for by the Theatre Organ Society of Australia, the "down under" ATOE. It is installed in the specially-built home of TOSA's Hon. Secretary, Mr. John Clancy.

The organist, Denis Palmistra, was a student of fondly remembered Fred Burr Scholl, the master organist who played opening performances for so many of Sid Grauman's Hollywood theatres. Fred played the Sydney Capitol 3-15 Wurlitzer during the late '20s and did some teaching on the side.

The sound of the Clancy instrument has a fullness which indicates much more spaciousness than one expects to hear in a residence organ. It's a fine-sounding installation. The performance is pleasing but not marked by a display of imagination for arranging or registration. However, it adds up to easy listening, partly because the tunes selected are not the usual list of repeatedly recorded "chestnuts." Heard are "Arrividerci, Roma," "I Wish You Love," "Serenata" by Anderson, "La Golondrina," "This Is My Song," "My Heart Reminds Me," "Blue Hawaii," "C'est Magnifique," "Pagan Love Song" and "I'm in Love With a Wonderful Guy." These provide an enjoyable introduction to an instrument previously unheard in the U.S.A. Recording is good jacket notes and photos informative.

BILL DALTON AT THE CONSOLE, Loew's Ohio theatre (Columbus), 4-22 Robert Morton organ, Amherst SLP-1202 (stereo), available by mail from Central Ohio Chapter ATOE, 5567 Crawford, Columbus 24, Ohio. \$5.00 postpaid.

Sometimes all the elements that can assure a great organ recording manage to come to a balance and the result is pure ecstasy. Such is the case with this recording. Instrument, artist and recording all come off with brilliance. That doesn't mean it's perfect, but the sheer excellence engulfs minor flaws.

The technical setup is just right to capture the sound intimately and yet never allow the listener to forget he is in a theatre.

And Bill Dalton is the answer to theatre organ enthusiasts' dreams. A veteran of the late silent era, Bill was persuaded to return to the console of the Morton he had played perhaps 30 years ago. The wonder here is that he plays on this recording as though he had never left pipes, with hardly a trace of the electronic organ tricks he must have acquired in the interim (we caught one well-integrated "smear" in "Oklahoma").

The record opens with the Dalton theme, "Bill," and modulates (in true T.O. style) to "The Song Is Ended." The separation between solo (Tibias) and accompaniment ((strings) is very distinct, even when the record is played monaurally.

Next a Richard Rodgers set, with

"June Is Bustin' Out" in up tempo and with good shading. "Climb Every Mountain" gives an exceptionally lush set of Tibias an opportunity to shine, and "Oklahoma" is handled with enthusiasm and the taste which prevails throughout the record. "Love Is Blue" gets a purely T.O. treatment and it turns out to be an attractive ballad when shorn of amplified guitars and "rumpty-tum."

"In the Mood" is something of an enigma. The treatment is "big band" style and Bill's skill with the Posthorn riffs and solo rides is exceptional. It seems inconceivable that Bill Dalton would not have the melody down pat so we must conclude he's pulling our musical "gambi" when he plays only a variation, never the tune the way Glenn Miller established it. "Scratch My Back" is one of those lilting novelty tunes just right for showing off the "woodpile" and Bill uses the percussors throughout. Side 1 closes with the most beautiful "When Day Is Done" since the late "poet of the organ" set the style. It's often reminiscent of the Crawford original but there's plenty of Dalton there, too.

Side 2 presents four fine old warhorses from the "standards" category. The side starts with Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody" done to a turn in sparkling "spotlight solo" style. "Clair de Lune" provides a musical impression of Tibia'd moonlight (missing only the liquid voice of David Ross reading poems), and "Battle Hymn of the Republic" has all the drive (and much of the arrangement) of the Mormon Tabernacle choir's rendition. For a topper Bill superimposes a Sousa-style Piccolo counter-melody over a goodly number of "Glory Hallelujahs."

The closer is an excerpt from Offenbach's "Orpheus Overture" which has those imaginary Can-Can dancers stepping really high.

It's a fine performance on an instrument restored by a group headed by ATOE's Carlos Parker and Tom Hamilton. All who participated in the production of this recording are to be congratulated.

GRANADA, Robinson Cleaver at the 4-14 Wurlitzer in the Granada Theatre, Tooting, London. Concert Recording CR-0036. Same purchasing information as for the previous record.

It has been a long time since Mr. Cleaver's music was available on those 10-inch Deccas near the dawn of the long-playing record era. They were records of impeccable musicianship and taste. Listening to them, one can understand how this veteran organist became the inspiration which started one of Britain's prominent theatre organ clubs.

Generally, the same kind of attractiveness can be claimed for this welcome new release. Yet, in the interim, the electronic organ has apparently left its mark on "Robbie"; on this recording he has applied the "palm schmear"—that giveaway trademark of the bread and butter "Hammond honker"—much too liberally to the manuals of this fine pipe organ. All of which is rather disappointing because we know he is quite capable of performing a proper fingered roll.



ROBBIE

Disregarding this seeming flaw, Mr. Cleaver's performance is bright, spectacular and captivating throughout a program of 15 well-chosen selections. Outside of "Exodus," Mr. Cleaver avoids the too-often recorded tune syndrome (his "Exodus" still remains one of the best we've heard on pipes). One of the most exciting tunes is the glowering "March" from that long-ago H. G. Wells science-fiction fantasy, "Things to Come," an epic film which described the post-1984 world. It's a thriller. Other unusual selections are "Manhattan Spiritual," "Alligator Crawl" (good use of piano), the dramatic "Legend of the Glass Mountain," a wild Gypsy "Black Canary Hora," and the march, "Blaze Away." Also heard are "Granada," "Moonlight Serenade" (the Glenn Miller theme), a Spanish "Gypsy Dance," "A Walk in the Black Forest," "Canadian Capers" and the Cleaver broadcast theme, "An Earful of Music."

The well-maintained Wurlitzer sounds marvelous. It's great to hear this fine organist once more on records (the "Things to Come" march alone is worth the price of the platter). William Walker's recording is tops, as are Ralph Bartlett's jacket notes and D. J. Sharp's color photos of the auditorium, artist and console.

ACADEMY AWARD SONGS, Tony Felon on the Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ in Hoyts Regent Theatre, Melbourne, Australia. Crest CRT-12-SLP-017. Available at \$5.95 postpaid from Australia Theatre Organ Productions, GPO Box 2639X, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. An international money order is suggested for payment.

Physicist and electronics engineer Tony Felon plays a mean Wurlitzer, to state it briefly. Known better in Melbourne as an exceptionally fine classical and pop pianist, youthful Tony's venture into the theatre organ world started in 1964. This, his first recording to reach these shores, puts fresh pizzazz into a collection of over-familiar tunes from hit movies long ago relegated to TV late shows. All have been recorded many times over, but they benefit from the straightforward Felon approach. Tony uses no offbeat harmony, abrupt key changes, overdubbing, weird registration or similar surefire shock effects to hold his listeners. His preference in registration is toward full combinations with only occasional use of a solo voice. Yet, the 4-19 Wurlitzer seems to thrive on this treatment and the over-all presentation comes off well.

The sound is "big theatre" as Tony projects his brand of music which is full, lush, peppy and rhythmic, in the tradition of the theatre organ as heard during intermissions in the '30s and '40s in the USA. The instrument sounds exceptionally good, with lush Tibias, tremors set for a languorous slow, deep beat—in contrast to the fast "chop" sometimes encountered in overseas recordings.

Tony's phrasing is good, and he knows how to get the most from percussions. Yet it would seem that there must be lots of subtle registration possibilities among those 19 unified ranks, color which the almost continual use of heavy registration covers up. That's something to consider for next time. Meanwhile, this is a good staffer for a young artist with much promise. In passing we might add that music is something of a second career for Tony. His calling is in the field of science.

Miking of the organ is good. Our review pressing had some pops and clicks but not in numbers great enough to become irksome. The cover photo is a good color shot of the Regent Theatre interior and there are photos of the pipework and Tony. Jacket notes are aimed at the uninitiated. Among the selections are: "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing," "Gigi," "Mona Lisa," "Moon River," "Secret Love," "Over the Rainbow," "Never on Sunday," "When You Wish Upon a Star," "Days of Wine and Roses" plus four more movie themes.