

# LOS ANGELES AGO CHAPTER INVITES ATOE'rs TO SILENT COMEDY FEATURE SCREENING

Dec. 2, Hollywood, Cal. - - -

The famous Hollywood High School, sometimes known as the "incubator of stars", was the scene of a novel musical event tonight as organist Gaylord Carter cued a silent comedy feature on a "straight" organ.

The film was Harold Lloyd's *Safety Last*, which LA chapter chairman Dick Simonton borrowed from Lloyd for the chapter's contribution to a program staged by the LA American Guild of Organists (AGO) chapter. The AGO chapter invited the ATOE'rs to the show, which was held in the school auditorium. The house is equipped with a 3-39 E.M. Skinner concert organ, installed in the mid-'20s and kept in good playing condition.

The event was arranged between the AGO chapter dean, Halstead McCormac, and ATOE chapter vice chairman, Ray Bonner, the latter standing in for recuperating chairman Dick Simonton.

For the movie, veteran organist Carter tackled the Skinner just as though it had been a theatre organ, with sometimes amusing results. Before the film started Gaylord played both classical and pop selections to give his audience the "feel" of the instrument. It must be stated that something is lost in translation when *Love is Blue* is heard played on big Diapasons, sharp reeds and complex Mixtures, with little or no tremulant.

The Skinner was more effective during the film because it is an action movie, with lots of suspense, comedy and violent movement. For those who missed it during the 1968 ATOE convention, *Safety Last* is the story of an impoverished young department store clerk who sees a chance to earn \$1000 (so he can get married!) if he can attract a crowd to the store where he works. He does so by unmittingly becoming a "human fly" and climbing the out-

side of the store building. Of course, Harold succeeds, but not before some hair-raising moments during his ascent which consumes almost half the footage. This sort of comedy-melodrama is right up Gaylord's alley, even though the Skinner was lacking the sound effects which silent movies need. To compensate, he hauled in a hand-operated siren to cue the careening chase scene through 1923 Los Angeles traffic (how those model T's dodged!). But in the midst of the sequence the siren broke down with a dissonant descrescendo wail which trailed off to embarrassed silence.

Carter found the skinner to his liking for playing this type of film but stated, "I don't know what I'd have done if there were love scenes -- no Tibia -- not even a gooey Stopped Flute on Tremolo. There's just no way of making it sound like a theatre organ. It's another breed of cat."



GAYLORD CARTER — Drawknobs?? Fat diapasons and a fire siren that wouldn't.

About 350 AGOers and ATOE'rs attended. Although such co-op concerts are rare in LA, there has been a friendly spirit of cooperation between the two chapters since they staged a joint pop concert at the Wiltern theatre when their national conventions overlapped in 1962.

— G. Bandini

## SOONER STATE ATOE CHAPTER IS OFF AND RUNNING . . .

The newly formed Sooner State Chapter held its first concert on November 8, at the Christian Crusade in Tulsa, where the late Jim Orcutt made his *Organ of the Month* recordings. For our first effort we were privileged to have the services of Lyn Larsen, who at the age of 23 is what we believe to be one of the finest theatre organists alive.

Playing to a crowd of about 300, (we were hampered by other events occurring the same night) Lyn got a warm response as he explored the registrations available on the 3/10 Robert Morton. His musical style and his personality made a hit with his audience, and sensing this, Lyn has promised us that he will be back next year.

Mr. Larsen played the first half



Larsen Discusses his music with the appreciative audience during recent program.

of his program leaning heavily on the standards which sound best on the theatre organ and are sure to meet with the approval of the older organ fans who remember how it was "in the good old days".

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