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**NOTES FROM DETROIT, Ann Leaf, America's First Lady of the Organ. Played on the Detroit Theater Organ Club's 4/34 Wurlitzer in the Senate Theatre. No. CR-0097 (stereo) available from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, California 90262 at \$4.85 postpaid.**

The combination of Ann Leaf's musicality and the DTOC's finely balanced Wurlitzer should be enough bait for the seasoned buff. He won't be disappointed. Rarely have the talents of orchestrally-minded Ann been turned loose on an instrument so well-equipped to meet her stringent demands. The result is her most orchestral recorded playing in recent years. One gets the impression that Ann is in control at all times and is making the huge beast jump through the fiery hoop on cue, and that just about tells the story — a very satisfying story.

Ann Leaf devotes all the time to a selection which she feels is required to tell the musical story. Thus seven of the eleven selections run well over three minutes, with "Love is Blue" one second short of five minutes.

A few highlights: Exciting "Belita" is marked by an arresting rhythm and many color changes. "Green Dolphin

Street" enjoys generous applications of both color and solo reeds. Ann's digital skill with "South of the Border" rhythms is ably demonstrated during "Minute Samba" and the same applies to "Quiet Nights," but with a greater emotional impact. "Nights" is presented in a quite different garb, leisurely in pace but penetrating. It's a field day for the bright reeds during Morton Gould's "Pavanne." "Gypsy Dance" is from the opera "Carmen" (remember "Beat out that Rhythm on a Drum"?), and it serves as a palette of many hues throughout the ever-growing frenzy of Bizet's compelling music. Ann makes the scene come alive. "Jamaican Rhumba" is also music which conjures visions of frenetic dancers through Ann's magic, but "Love Story" is purely romantic music with the Tibia holding forth until replaced by a huge string section which is later absorbed by color reeds. "Ode to a Man About Town" for some



ANN LEAF

reason seems to describe Ted Knight, the scatterbrained newscaster on the Mary Tyler Moore TV show; it's "big city" music. "Cadiz" is a leisurely intermezzo with interplay between Tibia and reeds; silent movie music depicting a Spanish atmosphere. There's an electrifying chorus of strings during "Love is Blue" and effective use of solo brass.

We've hit only highlights in Ann's fast changing array of tonalities and rhythms, else we'd run out of adjectives. It must be heard, over and over.

This recording, except for the pressing, is a product of DTOC. Ann Leaf would be first to credit organ technicians Dave Brewer and Ben Levy for the high polish on the instrument during recording. And recording technicians Ted Amano, Frank LaPerriere, Richard Little and Walter Plumhoff deserve much credit for placing microphones in the most advantageous positions and maintaining the balance and levels for such a satisfying result. The sum and total is sheer delight.

**SPECTACULAR, LYN LARSEN AT THE WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN. Played on the Bob Carson 3/26 Hollywood residence organ. No. ERS-1010 (stereo). Available postpaid at \$5.50 from Essential Records, Box 3544, Glendale, Calif. 91201.**

Lyn Larsen wrote his own jacket notes for this production and described it as a "Heinz 57" concoction. It's that, all right — something to please everyone. With each recording, Lyn's playing becomes ever more orchestral and his selection of material more discriminating in behalf of those who seek the more unusual in organ music, whether by tune title or treatment. For example, "Flight of the Bumblebee" has been recorded many times — but never before, to our knowledge, in "ping pong" stereo. One almost instinctively dodges that divebombing varmint!

We can overlook that flippancy for the fine work Lyn does during "Love Story" which features the grand piano played from the console, an instrument



LYN LARSEN

enhanced by several degrees of "touch" control. A specialty of Lyn's is conjuring up impressions of the "roaring '20s," an effort given much impetus by the tune, "Thoroughly Modern Millie," a delight for the nostalgia buffs. Recollections of Tom Jones' overblown "Delilah" are pictured effectively (get that Clarion frippery!), followed by a delightful tone picture, "Sylvan Idylle," by Richard Purvis. It sets a bucolic scene, perhaps a summer afternoon enjoying the woodlands of say, the early 1900's, with clouds viewed through pines swaying gently in warm breezes (that's what it said to this reviewer). Lyn takes a different approach to "As Time Goes By"; it's replete with bumps and grinds executed by an undulating "Gypsy Rose" clutching clusters of fans - or balloons, if preferred.

A very sentimental "Coco" is followed by that serenade of an egoist to himself, "My Way," with large doses of self admiration administered via cloying Tibias punctuated with icy Glockenspiel pecks and occasional spine-tingling Harp glissandos.

Side II opens with a high kicker played in authentic '20s style, "I Want to Be Happy", then a very individual arrangement of "76 Trombones" made fresh with a touch of Sousa and an overdubbed obligato played on the organ piccolo. "Stanley" is a Larsen original, and one which, to our way of thinking, deserves special enshrinement. Lyn dashed it off to accompany a silent film tribute to Laurel & Hardy presented by the noted film historian Robert Wade Chatterton at the Avenue theatre awhile back. It caught on and audiences often call it out as a concert encore. It's an ode to innocence, the inept but well-meaning resignation indicated by Stan's upturned palms when a bristling, frustrated Ollie blurts, "Why Don't You Do Something to Help Me?"

Lyn usually manages to include something of lasting value in his selection of tunes to be recorded. We have witnessed his discovery of the music of Grieg and Borodin; now he had found the wonderful descriptive music with which composer Eric Coates described his beloved England. We have all heard "Knightsbridge March" over and over, but Lyn has selected "Covent Garden" from that same "London Suite," a much more symphonic work (Coates scored for a large orchestra) which bristles with melodic activity

before settling down for a slow movement based on an old English folk song ("Cherry Ripe," if memory serves me well), and then more energetic passages depicting a lively part of the city. It's Lyn Larsen at his best; and that's saying a lot.

**BRINGIN' DOWN THE HOUSE, Tom Sheen at the 2/9 Wurlitzer in the Joe Spurr Studio, Chicago. No. CR-0098 (stereo). Available postpaid at \$4.85 from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262.**



TOM SHEEN

It's a long time between theatre organ records for Tom Sheen. Just 10 years ago Dick Loderhose hit the organ record market with his Renwick label, and the initial release was played by a young man named Tom Sheen on the Loderhose behemoth. It was a fine recording from all aspects, but there was no followup. Until now. Instead of the Loderhose then 4/38 Wurlitzer, Tom works here with a much smaller instrument; his musicianship has obviously grown but we are not certain the 2/9 installation and attendant problems permit him to express it adequately. The close miking results in a pelucidity close to stridency on many selections. Echo has been added to further confound a fault. Much of this objection can be overcome by juggling playback tone controls to decrease high frequency range. This removes some of the music but makes what's left more listenable.

Despite technical drawbacks, Sheen presents some irresistible stylings. On

both Sheen discs there is one tune, which we feel stands out above all others; on the Renwick label it's "Mr. Goldstone" (from "Mame") played as a march. This time around it's a beguine by Percy Faith, "Souvenir", alternately on untrem'd Strings, Tibia mutations and Solo Clarion. Both sum up the sensitivity and musicality of Tom Sheen better than words.

Tom starts his program in console-riser style with an upbeat "Another Op'nin' Another Show", then into a low-key "It Might as Well be Spring" which includes an attractive massed Strings bridge. "When My Sugar Walks Down the Street" is often carried by a brassy Posthorn, then again by Glock pecks. "Overture" to the Musical "Milk & Honey" is melodically attractive with lively showtunes.

Side II opens with more show tunes of a different genre, "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend" and "Bye Bye Baby", which conjure 1950's memories of Jane Russell and Marylin Monroe who sang the songs in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes."

"Weep No More" is a Dave Brubeck tune of great appeal in the mood of Kern's "Yesterdays", beautifully performed. Tom turns off the tremors for "Bugler's Holiday", allowing the Posthorn to stand in for the bugle. But it's the understated string passages which pack the appeal here. "Donkey Serenade" is pretty much pedestrian but "I've Got a Crush on You" is a masterwork in understatement throughout, a love song in slow drag tempo. It brings out the finest qualities of the instrument. The closer is a bit of slambang inspired by the Peggy Lee or Lena Horne versions of "Love." It's a gasser for its entire 1 minute and 46 seconds.

This recording may have technical faults but the unquestioned artistry of Tom Sheen makes it worthwhile.

**RICK SHINDELL playing the 3/11 Marr & Colton organ in the State Theatre, Toledo, Ohio. No. CR-0114 (stereo). Available from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262 at \$4.85 postpaid.**

From the evidence supplied by this recording we can state that Rick Shindell is definitely a "comer." The first exhibit is the organ; before the record could be taped, the organ had to be roused out of 25 years of

slumber. Rick and his buddies managed to make it sound like new, perhaps better, because one of builder David Marr's faults was a lack of understanding of tremulants (a 12-rank M&C organ might have only two). Marr often placed the strings, Tuba or Diapason on the same chest (and trem) as the Tibia! Thus if the trem was adjusted to put the proper chirp in the Tibia, the Strings, Tuba and Diapason were "overchopped." Problems which Rick seems to have overcome, or at least minimized, sometimes by playing minus trem.

Exhibit two is Rick's handling of the M&C. His style is youthful, loaded with enthusiasm and his own innovations. The result may be a little unseasoned but it may be a harbinger of great things in the offing.

Rick opens with a full blown "I Want to be Happy" then settles into a swinging "Caravan" which stars the M&C Kinura, the raspiest color reed ever developed for theatre organ use and so distinctive it makes a useful solo instrument. The repeated harmonic pattern used during the second chorus adds interest, even when the chording isn't entirely satisfying.

One criticism of the Marr and Colton organ is that it's ranks are chiefly solo-oriented, with little attention given to ensemble sound. However true that may be (and we suspect it is), Rick has found a particularly beautiful String/Vox combination on which to float "Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise." "Those Were the Days" is played in a bombastic style then back to sweet balladry and "Serenade in Blue" with the fine String/Vox ensemble, a bridge played solo on the Tuba Sonora and a brief interlude on flute mutations. Rick knows how to use a "sting" emphasis, too. "This Can't be Love" gets the "big organ" treatment, complete with percussers clapping. This mode carries over into a rather frenetic "How the West Was Won", then to Strings and mutations for a particularly beautiful "As Long as He Needs Me" with Harp punctuation, until the full organ segment. Next a haunting 3:49 minutes of "Charade" played with great subtlety throughout. The same applies to the first chorus of "On a Clear Day" and all of "Spanish Eyes." Local pride is expressed in a peppy march, "We're Strong for Toledo", for which Rick conjures a brass band with slide whistle and Klaxon punctuation. Throughout this review session

we had the strong feeling that Rick Shindell is actually a picture-playin' movie organist born out of his era.

**ENCORE, LARRY FERRARI AT THE MIGHTY WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN. No. 708 (stereo). Available from Sure Music Co., Box 94, Broomall, Penna. 19008. Price not stated.**



LARRY FERRARI

This Larry's second record session with the Detroit Theater Organ Club's 4/34 Wurlitzer, an event bound to spark a celebration among members of his fan club in the Philadelphia area where his frequent concerts, broadcasts and eight record albums have made him something of a musical institution. This one is bound to please them; it has something for all tastes.

The opener is the romantic ballad "More" which enjoys an offbeat harmonic treatment among reed-rich combinations before the Tamborine and Posthorn chorus. Then to the big majestic Radio City Music Hall full organ finale. "Love Story" provides an opportunity for fan clubbers to shed a sympathetic tear, at least until the Tamborine solo, which precedes the big RCMH chorus.

The Strauss medley ("Blue Danube", "Voices of Spring", and "Tales from Vienna Woods") is out-of-the-ordinary for a waltz medley because it is played in tempo rubato, often lacking the firm 3/4 rhythm characteristic of Viennese waltzes. Larry instead lingers over the melodic values involved in nicely orchestrated phrasings and some deviations from melodic line.

The Posthorn provides jazz riffs during "St. Louis Blues," sassing an

impudent and persistent piano. Surf laps the console throughout "Ebb Tide," and even the piano sounds a little waterlogged. Then the wind howls in for a sou'wester which nearly drowns out the RCMH chorus. It all finally simmers down to a tranquil scene with the organ's bird adding its glycerin-tremulated chirp. "Onward Christian Soldiers" is given full military band treatment as the drums go bang and the fanfares blast forth, leading up to the full organ chorus. "Bill Bailey" is beckoned home with a fast rhythm treatment rich in reedy punctuation.

This one should not only please the fans but should go far toward making Larry a raft of new friends. The DTOC crew has maintained a high quality level in taping the music, which is available in tape and cassette form as well as on disc.

#### — THE PLUG-IN CORNER —

**WHO? THE KEY MASTERS** — Franke Denke (piano) and Everett Nourse (Rodgers 36E organ). Doric stereo No. 1402. \$5.50 postpaid from Doric Records Sales Co., Box 605, Alamo, Calif. 94507.

Remember those piano/organ radio programs which graced the airwaves in the '30s? Nourse and Denke have recreated another slice of nostalgia for us with their sprightly stylings of such favorite standards as "Limehouse Blues," "Lulu's Back in Town," "La Rosita," "Valencia," "Caravan" (a la Frank Stitt!), "Sweet Georgia Brown" and others to total 12. Arrangements are well thought out and a light mood is maintained throughout. Dewey Cagle's jacket notes provide biographies of both artists. □

**Welcome**

TO OUR NEWEST CHAPTER

**WEST  
PENN**

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

(see pages 13 - 16)