

consists of an excellent "Tibia" sound, a brassy "reed," pitched percussions, and a somewhat lacklustre "main." Therefore, the big flute sound is bound to dominate. Dumser handles his instrument's limitations expertly, relying on the "piano" effect, the wah-wah brass for riffs and a rather strident bell effect for variety. It adds up to generally pleasant listening.

Recording is good, with acoustic liveness achieved through reverb/echo. Our review copy was enough "off center" on both sides to put a noticeable "wow" in untrem'd percussions. We are informed that Volumes I and II of this series are available.

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We have been asked what is meant by the term "off center" with regard to recordings. To state it simply this condition occurs when the spindle hole is not precisely in the center of the pressing with relation to the grooves, normally the result of careless presser operation — and, ultimately, poor quality control inspection. The off center flaw is usually heard as a pitch variation, or "wow," on sustained tones, especially during sustained percussion sounds. It is more evident on tones nearer the center of the pressings but on especially bad pressings it may be noted on the outside cuts as well. "Wow" is usually visible, too. If there is an audible pitch variation with each rotation of the table, look for a side-to-side swing of the pickup cartridge. We have measured a swing of up to 3/32" per revolution, resulting in a very marked "wow". However, as a rule of thumb, any visible side-to-side excursion of the stylus indicates the pressing is faulty and should be returned to the vendor for replacement. Sometimes the wow is not visible, only audible. Same procedure.

Vertical movement of the pickup head indicates a warped pressing. While this doesn't normally result in audible wow, it often causes distortion and early record wear. Send it back.

Returning the pressing may result in a replacement with precisely the same flaw, because the presser may have stamped out a large number of off-center pressings before discovering the defect. Sometimes it is necessary to return a pressing several times before receiving one free of audible wow.

Happily, off center pressings are

not the rule. Most vendors' quality control departments catch the faulty discs before they are sealed and delivered. Records sent to us for review are often received with the plastic seals broken, which indicates the pressings have been individually auditioned before shipment, a procedure we heartily approve.

Off center pressings occur most frequently among smaller sound processors but RCA, Columbia and Capitol have produced their share of "wobblers." However, no presser, vendor or artist wants a flawed record to mar his escutcheon; all of them we have consulted with are only too willing to replace imperfect pressings. So, if they wow, or are warped, send 'em back for replacements. □



*Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.*

*Address: P.O. Box 1314  
Salinas, Calif. 93901*

Dear Editor:

I am writing in regard to the story about John DeMello (October, 1972 issue, THEATRE ORGAN) by Alice Blue and Stu Green. To be sure, the story and the pictures were interesting and gave John credit that he has long deserved; as Alice Blue mentioned, it has been John that has kept the theatre organ alive in Honolulu.

However, I wish to point out several errors, both implicit and explicit, that were evident in the biography. Please bear with me if they seem to be trivial.

The organ in the Kaimuki Theatre was a 3/14, NOT a 3/10. The organs in the Princess and Hawaii Theatres were

4/16's, NOT 4/17's. The Japanese word for tidal wave is "tsunami", NOT "tatsumi". The Princess Theatre was destroyed in 1969, NOT in the mid-sixties. Help on the organ's re-installation was NOT "soon forthcoming" from ATOS, as the Hawaii Theatre Organ Club did not affiliate with ATOS until 1971. The help came from a few members of HTOC. They had not entirely neglected the organ either, as they had been trying to arrange for the organ to be rebuilt before re-installation, and its possible installation in a pizza parlor. Without arguing the pros and cons of pizza parlors, suffice it to say that Alice despised the idea, and hurriedly got the instrument into the theatre as-is. The price is now being paid for that haste — endless attention to things that should have been re-done once and for all.

As for implicit errors, the tidal wave of 1946 was not mentioned, with the resulting implication that John DeMello played in Hilo from 1940 to 1960. He was actually there only half that time. Also, the caption on Alice Blue's picture implies that there would have been no biography of John otherwise, though that is far from true. While the story was good in terms of what it did say, much was omitted, though perhaps of necessity.

After all, THEATRE ORGAN is a chronicle, albeit belated, of theatres, theatre organs, and theatre organists, and will be used as a reference in years to come. Shouldn't we take care — as well as pride — in its contents?

My congratulations to you and your staff for your fine work. That I cannot discredit.

Sincerely yours,  
Roger G. Angell

