

# Loyola College Given Organ

by Bert Brouillon

A new organ installation, available for public and private concerts on a rental basis, was unveiled in mid-November at Loyola College in Los Angeles, with J. Edward Himes (formerly known as Jay Himes) playing the kickoff concert. The instrument is the 3/10 Wurlitzer which was for many years in the home of "Bud" Wittenberg, one of the pioneer organ hobbyists. The instrument had been in Bud's home for well over a dozen years, and was recorded long ago by a then budding organist named Bill Thomson. When Bud decided to move to smaller quarters he had to find a home for the organ which had served him so well for so long. He found a willing collaborator in Father Richard Trame at Loyola. In fact, an auditorium was in the planning stage and plans were changed to accommodate the two chambers and auditorium acoustics required to best accommodate a pipe organ.

First nighters entered the auditorium of St. Roberts Hall, a room about 80' x 80' with an 18' ceiling. Jagged wall projections on the upper portions of the side walls insure against the "standing waves" so injurious to organ sound.

The Solo Division has been installed in a backstage chamber which dis-

perses sound through swell shutters well above audience level on the right side of the hall (facing the stage) while the Main is in a similar "upper story" chamber on the left side of the hall. The ebony console is on a dolly on the stage. Camp chairs arranged in rows on the level floor provided seating.

J. Edward Himes gave a creditable performance of pops and standards, and a Tchaikovsky-studded accompaniment of film highlights from Chaney's Phantom of the Opera. Himes was laboring against the handicap of an unfinished installation which might be summed up as an instrument voiced too loud for the room and with tremors very much in need of fine adjustment, which will be done, the audience was assured.

Such critical niceties cast no gloom over the premiere audience; here was another organ in the Los Angeles area, a reason for rejoicing. Commentary was handled effectively by Dick Martin who supervised the installation. He revealed that plans include a 5-manual replacement console, a synthesizer to accommodate "mod" music and perhaps ten more ranks of pipes. Expansion depends entirely on the income from concerts and auditorium rentals, so Fr. Trame welcomes all inquiries. □

J. Edward Himes at the Loyola 3/10 Wurlitzer console.

(Stufoto)



## For The Records



*Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information, if applicable, and if possible a black and white photo which need not be returned.*

**JIMMIE BOYCE PLAYS THE WOODY WISE GRANDE BARTON.** Mark label No. MC 8494 (stereo). \$5.98 postpaid from JBP Recording Associates, 6516 Haystack Rd., Alexandria, Va. 22310.

All who attended the 1972 ATOS convention will remember the 3/11 Barton in the Virginia theatre, Alexandria, Va., with either joy or misgivings, depending on the ambient temperature. The Barton was kind to some organists, brutal to others. A very temperamental organ, especially in the heat of summer and with no air conditioning. But at that time we never did hear the 3/11 in the hands of Jimmy Boyce (the uncredited staffer). Of course, at that convention he did his stuff on the unenclosed 4/34 Wurlitzer in the Alexandria roller rink (it was originally in the Center theatre, the sister theatre to RCMH in New York).

This Barton has one advantage Jimmy's huge Wurlitzer lacks — expression. Even so, Jimmy is so in the habit of getting along with no swell shutters, he uses them very sparingly, but well. In fact, this is a better opportunity to get acquainted with the Boyce musical charisma than when

he plays the big beast. More intimate.

The Barton is almost the same as it was when removed from the Newport News Paramount in 1968 by Woody Wise. A Posthorn has been added, and the pedal has been fortified with added Grosse Flute and Tuba Mirabilis.

Jimmy tackles the program with the assurance of the old pro that he is. He opens with an appropriate console raiser of the *Dizzy Fingers* variety, an original named *On Broadway*. Kurt Weill's *My Ship* is enhanced by the color reeds plus mutations. Another Boyce original, which was composed to cue silent comedies, is the loping *Charlie's Walk*. The color reeds are again in the spotlight during Jimmy's *Waltz* and the Wood Block, Castanets, Glock and Kinura sprint a little during *Quanto le Gusto*. It's brass time for a dirty, lowdown *Hard Hearted Hannah* and the Side 1 closer is a lilting *Bluesette* with some melodic embellishment and beaucoup spirit.

Side 2 is equally interesting. *Sweet Georgia Brown* acquires an unladylike baritone voice with Posthorn topping and the Barton's "Oogah" horn, all to a peppy beat. Then the haunting *Laura - Laura?* Why it seems only yesterday that the late Ben Hall was contemplating a "Society for the Prevention of Organ Recordings of *Laura* and *Tenderly* - but a whole new generation has arrived since her too frequent recording and the lady (played to the hilt, perhaps by Jean Lautzenheiser) is as tasty as ever when exercising the Barton's delicious Tibia and later the 16' Tuba played against a web of harmony on ethereal Strings. It's downright unearthly! But we recovered from Fantasyland about halfway through *The Entertainer*, a cheery organ adaptation which uses the Glock, Bells and Xylophone as effective standins for the piano.

*Andalucia* includes three of the supporting themes to the melody which will be recognized by its popular name, *The Breeze and I*. Well done. And it's a delight to hear *Stormy Weather* without the manual hand-wipe storm sound effects. This time it's just the music with a wide range of dynamics and registration variety. The closer is a rocking *Boogie Woogie* which leaves the auditioner wanting more.

This may be the only chance to hear the Woody Wise Barton under theatrical conditions because its record

debut is probably also its swansong, so far as the Virginia theatre is concerned. The organ has been sold. Regardless of sentiment, this is a well-recorded and well-played album, one well worth owning.

**COAST TO COAST, Don Thompson playing ten pipe organs. Amberlee (stereo) No. AML 307. \$5.98 postpaid from Doric Records, Box 282, Monterey, Calif. 93940.**



Don Thompson

This British release is being distributed by Doric in the USA. This material is drawn mainly from Don Thompson's concert performances, judging from the applause following the selections, although some has been obviously dubbed in. The organs heard are the LA Wiltern 4/37 Kimball, the Redwood City, Calif. Cap'n's Galley 4/18 Wurlitzer, Joe Koons' motorcycle shop (then) 2/19 Wurlitzer-Welte-Page, The Old Town Music Hall 4/24 Wurlitzer in El Segundo, Calif., The Elks' Bldg. 4/61 Robert Morton in LA, the N.Y. United Palace 4/24 Morton, the No. Tonawanda Riviera theatre's 3/12 Wurlitzer, the 3/11 ESTMIM Wurlitzer in Syracuse, N.Y., the 3/26 (Buddy Cole) Wurlitzer-Morton in the Campbell (Calif.) Cap'n's Galley and the 4/22 RTOS Wurlitzer in the Auditorium theatre, Rochester, N.Y. All of which must add up to a monumental job of disbursing earned royalties to the various organ owners who agreed to the use of their instruments on the record.

One would assume that this record would provide material for comparison of the ten organs. Not so. The rough technical edges have been attenuated and artificial reverb has been added where natural liveness was missing to

the extent that a level of sameness has been achieved. Even so, a couple of the organs manage to retain a degree of individuality despite the doctoring, notably the United Palace Morton and the Buddy Cole Wurlitzer-Morton (the latter also in spite of the hackneyed vehicle - *Lara's Theme* - again!)

With that one exception, the tune-list reflects the wide range and variety in Don's repertoire, one of his strong points. Playing quality ranges from mostly good to a small touch of bad, the latter perhaps resulting from the nature of releasing a concert performance; there's no chance to correct small flubs without retakes. Overall, it's Don's best recorded work to date. Arrangements, all by Don, maintain a high degree of interest value; he makes good use of the best solo reeds on each instrument. Technical quality varies according to the skills of the various tapers and the quality of equipment used. Yet the miking catches all the music with good effect.

The selections are; Purvis' *Fanfare*, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, *The Phantom Brigade*, Lehar's *Villia* (sic), *While We're Young*, *Tell Me Little Gypsy*, *The Phantom Regiment*, *Shadow Waltz*, *Speakeasy*, *What Kind of Fool Am I?*, *Lara's Theme*, *Rosalie* and *I Double Dare You*. Four of these selections are tops in all respects - Purvis' brassy *Fanfare*, *Phantom Regiment*, *Shadow Waltz* and *Speakeasy*. *Rosalie* and *I Double Dare You*, a tribute to organist Reginald Dixon, are played in that British star's "rum-te-tum" quick-step ballroom style.

This recording is representative of Don Thompson's various playing styles, his broad repertoire, his inventive arrangements and varied registration on 10 organs. It is certain to please his many fans.

**HORACE FINCH ON THE WURLITZER ORGAN IN THE EMPRESS BALLROOM, BLACKPOOL. Deroy No. 949, Volume 16. \$6.50 postpaid (checks on US banks accepted) from Deroy Records, Box 3, Carnforth, Lancs., England.**

Deroy is a new source to this column, although long known for organ records in Britain and on the continent. The Deroy catalogue includes over 50 organ records, many of them being re-issues hypoed by "studio stereo," a process which is supposed to enhance originally mon-

aural recordings. This set of tunes was recorded during the mid-50s by Derrick Marsh, Deroy's moving force. There will be no later recordings by Mr. Finch because he retired in 1962 after losing a finger in an accident (perhaps he should have taken heart from now retired Chicago Stadium organist Al Melgard who played the greater part of his career with nine fingers).

The instrument is a 3/13 Wurlitzer installed in the Blackpool Empress Ballroom in 1935 and used regularly thereafter for dancing, usually piloted by Horace Finch. This accounts for the two strict tempo "quickstep" medleys of mostly US hits of the '20s (e.g. *Yessir, That's My Baby, You'r Driving Me Crazy, My Blue Heaven* etc) and '30s (e.g. *Young and Foolish, Lullabye of Broadway, We're in the Money* etc). Other tunes familiar to US ears are *Smiling Through, Londonderry Air*, a medley from South Pacific and a very different *Roses of Picardy* (one unblessed by sentimental values). Less familiar are selections from *The Arcadians*, an operetta, *Toy Town Fusiliers* and *Tonight's the Night*.

The best playing is heard during the single selections; the medleys, while always interesting, tend to get less care than the individual titles, and some suffer from efforts to be flashy in the 1950's plug-in sense. Too often the noodling becomes louder than the melody line. Yet the playing is accurate and the arrangements well thought out. One of Mr. Finch's strong points is registration; his is always changing and he has a leaning toward untrem'd brass, in combination and in solo. He seems to get a large variety of brass voices from not more than three reeds.

The technical quality of the cuts is good and we could hear no difference in the sounds of the "studio stereo" left and right channels, which is okay with this "studio stereophobe."

Deroy records include jackets with photos and liner notes. The records are dispatched by air mail.

**A MILLION HAPPY SOUNDS.** Bill Million playing the John Ledwon 3/25 studio Wurlitzer Stereo record \$6.50 postpaid from Million Productions, Box 1362, Ventura, Calif. 93001.

Here's another first — the first released recording played on John



Bill Million, down among the footnotes. (Shown at Reseda, Cal., PIPE & PIZZA 2/10 Wurlitzer console) (Stufoto)

Ledwon's Wurlitzer located in his roomy studio in Agoura, Calif. It's an "assembled" instrument with the basic ten ranks from the "Treasure Island" Wurlitzer which entertained San Franciscans during a pre-World WarII Exposition, a three-deck console from a Plattsburg, New York, theatre plus carefully selected additions to attain the current 25-rank pipe complement. The additions have been carefully selected over a 10-year period to reach a well balanced ensemble. One of the last ranks completed was a 16' Pedal Posthorn, voiced to a ripping, staccato snarl by that veteran master of the beating reed, Lee Haggart. The floor of the two spacious chambers starts at the chest tops to mask out mechanical noise from tremors and regulators beneath. The listening area is a spacious room under an A-frame roof, an area generous enough to seat more than the 150 ATOSers who suffered through the "Stu Green Humiliation Concert" held there in 1971.

Bill Million may be a new name on the national scene but he is well known in Southern California. The past president of the Los Angeles Professional Organists' Club studied with Ann Leaf after emigrating from his native Lafayette, Indiana. He has

three previous record releases to his credit, all played on theatrical plug-ins. This is Bill's first on pipes.

The program is a mix of old and new "happy" music: *Cabaret, Maybe This Time, Tie a Yellow Ribbon, Happy Heart, My Happiness, For Once in My Life, Put on a Happy Face, I Want to be Happy, Happy Wanderer, Sometimes I'm Happy, Get Happy and Happiness is a Thing Called Joe* (a happy torch song?)

Playing is well done throughout and the arrangements add up to easy listening. The registration is less impressive; most of the playing is done on the flue pipes and tonal percussions to the neglect of the many exotic reed solo and color voices on the Ledwon organ. Bill was contacted and explained that the taping was done during a summer heat wave which threw the reeds badly out of tune, so he had no alternative but to use the ranks which remained reasonably in tune.

So we must view Bill Million's pipe debut with mixed feelings. He certainly makes his point with his "happy music" format, but the full tonal range of the Ledwon organ remains to be recorded. Next time, we hope Bill will choose a cool day to record.

## CALLIOPE CABINET

**HERB HEAD PLAYS CIRCUS CALLIOPE MUSIC** on the Tangley Model CA43 Calliope. Stereo tape cassette \$4.00 postpaid. Order from George H. Aston, Box 2359, Dearborn, Michigan, 48123.

Herb Head's calliope music was the frosting on the cake at the 1974 ATOS convention. That moonlight cruise to the whooping strains of *In the Good Old Summer Time* just about transformed the Detroit River into the Mississippi in the showboat days. Herb learned to play the air whistles from Tommy Comstock, once the calliopist with the Cole Bros. Circus. He takes us through two non-stop 15-minute medleys which include such favorites as *Hindustan*, *Hello Dolly*, *Small Hotel*, *Pony Boy*, *Diane*, *Chicago*, *Yes Sir*, *That's My Baby*, and plenty of familiar circus tunes which evoke some long ago memories of the Big Top. Playing is clean, lively and — perhaps the best word is "jingling." One advantage the calliopist has is the absence of worries about registration; his 43 pipes are "on" all of the time. Yet Herb's program never slows down enough to

hint at monotony. It moves.

This is not what would be regarded as a professional recording. It's miked out in the open. There's some occasional talk heard in the background and the nearer buzz isn't a sawmill, it's the Tangley's blower puffing up 1¼ pounds (!) of air pressure to make the whistles sing. Recording modulation is kept low to prevent "print through" on the tape, a malady which seems to frustrate those who attempt to record this powerful instrument. None of these conditions lessen enjoyment of Herb's playing, and Mr. Aston informs us he will donate \$1.00 to the Motor City ATOS Chapter for each cassette ordered.

### — THE PLUG-IN CORNER —

**JAY HIMES' THEATRE ORGAN EXTRAVAGANZA**, played on the Rodgers model 340 theatre organ. Century label (stereo), No. 42159. \$5.50 postpaid from Jay Himes, c/o Burbank Music House, 3524 West Magnolia Blvd. Burbank, Calif. 91505.

The name Jay Himes represented a talent unknown to this reviewer until his 1974 concert for the LA Chapter

at the Wiltern 4/37 Kimball. We knew that Jay had studied with Edward Eigenschenk in Chicago and later with Kay McAbee. The McAbee association was of special interest because in our humble opinion, Kay is one of the most underrated of contemporary organists. He's "way up there," even though not too many enthusiasts appear to be aware of it. But Jay Himes is. The McAbee training is apparent from the quality of playing on this recording. Jay is at home in both pop and classical fields. The selections on side 1 are *The Trolley Song*, *Here's That Rainy Day*, *Teddy Bear's Picnic*, *Cry Me a River* and von Suppe's *Zampa Overture*. Side 2 is devoted entirely to selections from Jesus Christ Superstar.

The instrument is a lineal descendent of the Bob Power "style 260" custom Rodgers, that firm's best effort in the TO field. The ensemble sound is good, and Jay offers both Brass Trumpet and (organ) Saxophone effects, a grunting pedal Tuba for *Teddy Bear* and lots of juicy full combinations. *Zampa* is played with authority and finesse. The "rock" characteristics of the *Superstar* selections have been de-emphasized to the extent that the tunes make very listenable theatre organ music, the kind "over 30's" find appealing. Recording is good.

Herb Head plays the Calliope at the Ford Research and Engineering Center in 1968.

(George Aston Photo)



**O'LYN, O'Lyn Callahan** playing the Yamaha ESAR model. No. YR-5002 (stereo). May be purchased from Yamaha dealers. Price \$5.00.

This is an exploitation record, designed to make the ESAR sound good and to make its organist look good, which she already does without benefit of organ. O'Lyn is a different breed of organist, one who won her spurs in the free-for-all of an elimination contest with its figurative scratching and clawing. To win such a contest one must depend on good looks and musical "flash." Profundity is not a factor.

On this record, O'Lyn is still playing "to win." The adrenalin count is still high and she strives continually for a "peak" in every phrase. Results are interesting. O'Lyn is especially adept in the field of jazz improvisation, and she knows when to cut off the tremos to make a point. There doesn't appear to be a lot of registration variety on the ESAR. It seems to be mainly a flute organ, although string sounds are heard, too (often on



O'Lyn Callahan. A new breed of organist.  
(Nakahara photo)

the same doppler trem as the flutes). Registration is usually early Hammond, but with the addition of percussive and synthesizer effects, some quite remarkable. For example, O'Lyn creates all the jungle sounds and bird-calls for *Quiet Village* at the console.

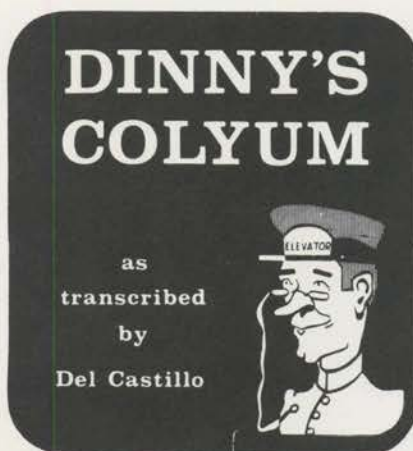
O'Lyn's technical prowess is amazing. Her manual work is clean, and often complex pedal passages are executed flawlessly. She employs the instruments' automatic rhythm device on some tunes but she's best when she's knocking out uninhibited jazz. She does equally well with a medley of Irish songs in both ballad and rhythm stylings. Not all of the special effects come off well; we noted a continuing "thump" during *The Summer Knows* which, at first hearing, sounded like a flaw in the grooves. On consulting the jacket notes we learned it was a low pitched "wah wah."

Other tunes heard are *Tie a Yellow Ribbon*, *This Could Be the Start of Something Big*, *St. Louis Blues*, and *MaCarthur Park*, all well done despite some '30s vintage Hammond "flash" here and there.

There's one point with which we must take issue with O'Lyn; it's a matter of taste.

Back in 1896, serious composer Richard Strauss wrote one of his most monumental tone poems, an epic symphonic work which extolls in bright musical colors the teachings of the prophet Zarathustra. Whatever

it was which caused O'Lyn to use the majestic opening fanfares of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* as the framework for a jazz improvisation escapes our understanding completely. To the informed music lover such misuse can be regarded only as musical mayhem and we must conclude that youthful O'Lyn just didn't know. The improvisation itself is outstanding, and had it been constructed around, say, *Sweet Georgia Brown*, it would not only have been more effective but would have offended no one. As things stand, an appropriate encore would be *Look What They've Done to Our Song*. How about it, O'Lyn? □



They was a colyumist like me, if that aint braggin, name of Dooley who used to rite for the papers back when I was a young feller, and who always started off by sayin — I see by the papers. Well, if anybody done that way now they'd wind up spreadin gloom around with a shovel, on acct they dont seem to be much of any good news anymore. If I tried it why this colyum would jest be filled up with stories of political crooks and hi jack-ins and kidnappins and prison riots and buggins and muggins and murders and tornados and drownins. Well, I guess that's jest about enough of that.

So maybe I'm lucky that I try to rite about music on acct. the only crime in music is the guys that go so fur out you cant hear any melody and then you get a lot of noises out of these here sinthesizers and if that is music I will eat it. They was a feller name of Harry Partch that jest died and he spent all of his time inventin new instruments made out of jelly glasses and wheel covers and wind

gongs and like that there, and they was kind of fun to listen to, but that's not jest what I am atalkin about. These other kinds of sounds I mean sound like tearin silk or scrapin chalk on a blackboard or sawin metal in a steel mill, and, like the feller says, they set your teeth on edge. How you set your teeth on edge is somethin I dont know how you do, but anyways thats how the sayin goes.

Then they is another kind of new music that I aint able to go along with. Seems like they is a new brand of composers who never learned nothin about cords except to run there fingers up and down on the white notes so they is jest aplaying CEG and then DFA and then EGB. Now I dont know much about harmony but I know they's a lot more to it than jest playin them three note cords on the white keys, and I bet fellers like Geo. Gerhswin and Cole Porter and Friml would jest turn over in there graves if they could hear songs like that.

So while I'm gripin about music I dont like they is still another kind of music that dont grab me, only this kind is rote by ritters not on acct. they dont know enough but on acct. they know too much, and they aint never satisfied by what has already been rote. Mostly these ritters was Germans who started about the beginnin of the 20th century. I dont recollect there names and whats more I dont care if I do or not, but they invented a lot of new names like Atonality and Dodeckafonic and Alleyatorick and Cereal ritin and if they ever rit a nice tune by mistake theyd be so ashamed of it theyd tear it up. I remember I went to a concert oncet of this kind of music and I had to walk out after about ten minutes of it. They would be a squeak, then theyd stop for three-four seconds, then they'd be a low kind of a grunt and then another wait and then a few scrambled notes that sounded like everybody was aplayin somethin different.

So I guess I got a confession to make. I dont like these ritters like this Shonberg and Stravinsky and Boulez and Stockhowsen and like that, but if I can settle down to lissen to peaces by ritters like Tchaikowsky and MacDowell and Irving Berlin and Debussy and Victor Herbert that can rite tunes you can hum or sing or whistle afterwards why then Im happy. So if that jest makes me an old square has-been, it's all right with me. □

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