

# Mighty Wurlitzer Days

OCTOBER 14 IS  
MIGHTY WURLITZER DAY  
WHEN ALL THE ORGANS  
PLAY AT TWILIGHT

Can you imagine the thrill you'll find as you listen to a special Mighty Wurlitzer concert program, knowing that every other Mighty Wurlitzer will be playing the same number simultaneously across the continent. That's exactly what's scheduled to happen on Mighty Wurlitzer Day. With the cooperation of theatre organ enthusiasts and the owners of these restored and working instruments, one of the most ambitious programs ever undertaken to build public awareness in the rich heritage of theatre organ music will be a mighty success.

Mighty Wurlitzer Day is scheduled for October 14, 1977. The number to be played is a special commemorative arrangement of one of Jesse Crawford's favorites, "When the Organ Played at Twilight." The arrangement, by John Muri, was commissioned by The Wurlitzer Company, and it's scheduled to be played at 10 p.m. in the East, 9 p.m. Central, 8 p.m. Mountain and 7 p.m. Pacific Coast time. It's hoped that theatres and restaurants that have regularly scheduled programs will interrupt their programs for this unique musical event.

The idea of having all these wonderful old pipe organs playing simultaneously came out of the Wurlitzer Advertising and Sales Promotion Department, DeKalb, Illinois. It was inspired by the hubbub of activity going on in DeKalb as restoration work is well underway on the organ billed as the Mightiest Wurlitzer of them all. When one of the advertising staff members asked what it might sound like if every Mighty Wurlitzer in the world played the same number at the same time,

the concept of Mighty Wurlitzer Day was born. The concept has now grown to be much larger. Mighty Wurlitzer Day has now become a full-blown public awareness project to build support for preserving the rich cultural heritage theatre organ music represents.

When the Wurlitzer people first recognized the gigantic scope of the project, they turned to ATOS members for help. President Ray Snitil was contacted immediately to solicit his support and suggestions for coordinating this project. At Mr. Snitil's suggestion, Judd Walton and THEATRE ORGAN editor, George Thompson, were then consulted for their assistance in finding effective ways to contact the people responsible for the Mighty Wurlitzers programs throughout the country. According to the Wurlitzer staff, the project would have become bogged down right then and there if it weren't for the immediate and enthusiastic help of these ATOS members.

Selecting an appropriate arrangement for this project meant going outside the Wurlitzer organization for help, too. John Muri, ATOS Organist of the Year, was the natural choice, and the Wurlitzer people were delighted when he accepted their commission.

It was Muri who suggested "When the Organ Played at Twilight" for the Mighty Wurlitzer Day number. His reasons were basic. The title told exactly what was going to happen. And that particular tune was a favorite of Jesse Crawford's, an artist possibly more closely associated with The Mighty Wurlitzer than anyone else.

A limited, commemorative edition of John Muri's arrangement is being

distributed by The Wurlitzer Company to participating organists. Additional copies will be published by the Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and distributed through Wurlitzer music dealers.

An important aspect of Mighty Wurlitzer Day will be the publicity generated by this event. In coordinating the event, the Wurlitzer staff will try to contact the news media at both the national and local levels to generate as much coverage as possible. Wurlitzer hopes to collect tape recordings and news film footage of each participating Mighty Wurlitzer. The tape and film will then be edited together, if possible, into a presentation which can be used to generate new enthusiasm for theatre organ music.

The Wurlitzer Company would like to ask readers of THEATRE ORGAN for additional help and support in this project. If you or your local organization know of a Wurlitzer pipe organ that has not been contacted by Wurlitzer, they would like to know about it. Simply send the name and address of the person responsible for that instrument's program to The Wurlitzer Company, Advertising and Sales Promotion Department, DeKalb, Illinois 60115. If you can commit that instrument's participation, they would also appreciate your sending along background information on the instrument, the artist who will play the Mighty Wurlitzer Day concert and a list of newspapers, radio and TV stations in your community.

Mighty Wurlitzer Day, 1977, will become known as the day when all the organs played at twilight. It's bound to become one more memorable event that theatre organ enthusiasts helped make happen. □

