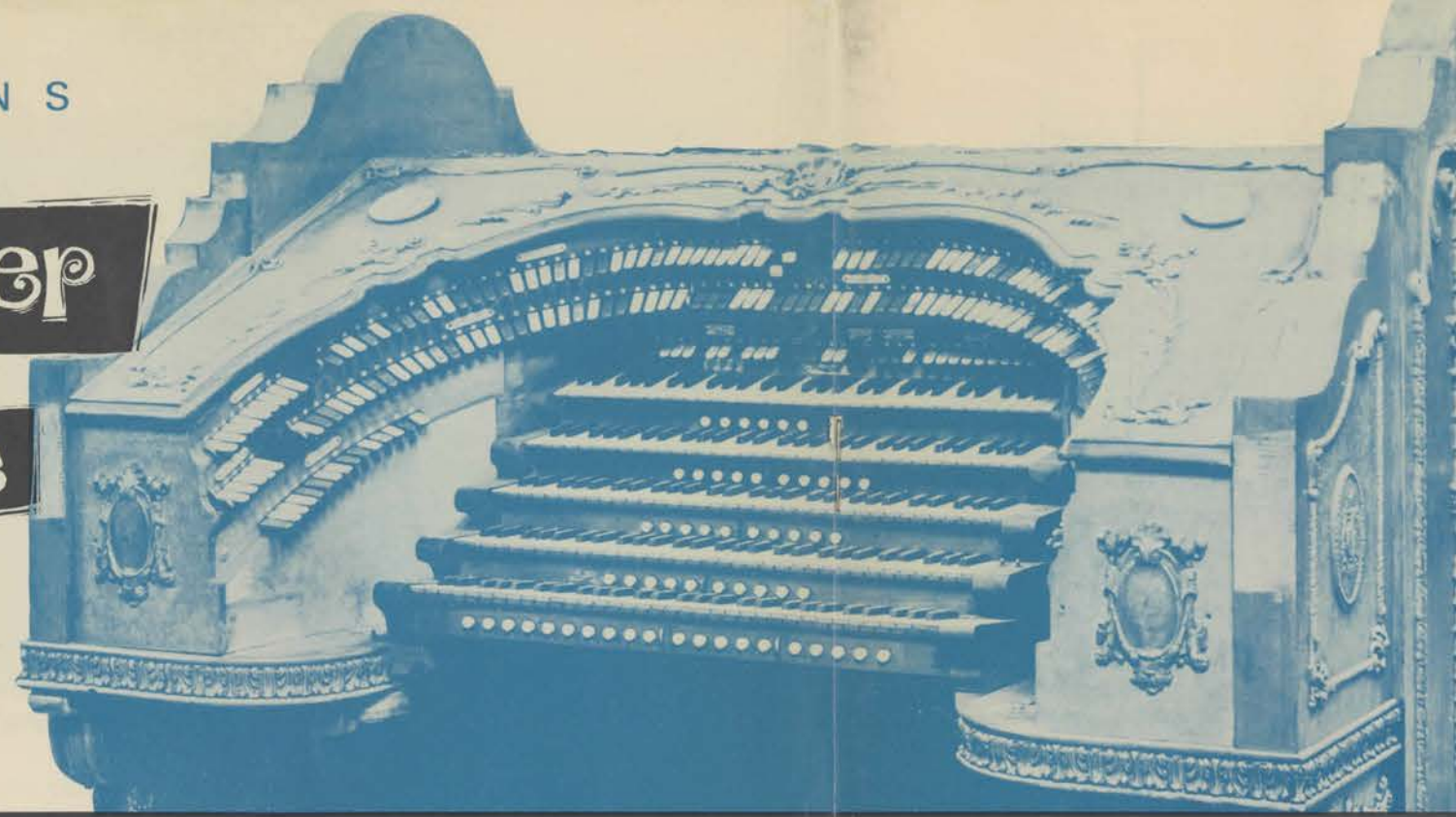


The Wurlitzer
THAT MADE
hi Fi!



Paradise Theatre, Chicago, Wurlitzer, 5-21, before rebuilding. (Side trim removed.)

... and as the same console appears today.



Who is Rich Vaughn? Surely this article would not be complete without some mention of the man who has been largely responsible for the popularity of theater organ recordings today. Vaughn is a Charter Member of A.T.O.E. having attended the organization meeting held by Dick Simonton at his home on February 8, 1955. It was at this meeting that some of the tapes were first played that were soon to be released as the first of the HI-FI Theater Organ records . . . a preview that few had any idea would be so important. Quiet and unassuming, he prefers to be known as just another theater organ enthusiast. Recently re-elected to a second term as a member of the Board of Directors of A.T.O.E., you can be sure that he is not about to retire from his theater organ activities . . . which is indeed fortunate for theater organ enthusiasts the world over!

THE RICH VAUGHN ORGAN

The Theater Organ Hobby as it is recognized today has not been established by accident, but is the result of many activities. As a matter of fact, there are as many facets involved as there are theater organ enthusiasts and to trace them all would be almost impossible—certainly time-consuming. There are, however, a few factors that stand out as being primarily responsible for not only bringing this most interesting and fascinating of hobbies to the public's attention, but even for the existence of A.T.O.E. itself, to say nothing of this very magazine.

If these factors were to be listed, among the several that would have to be counted as most important would be the Rich Vaughn Organ—the Wurlitzer that “made” HI-FI.

The Rich Vaughn Organ is not just another theater organ that was purchased from a theater, dis-mantled, transported to, and installed in a home. These events to be sure are a part of this story, but only a small part. Actually, this theater organ which is today more famous throughout the world than any other, was started on the road to fame by another organ, equally famous in it's day. For it was hearing Jesse Crawford recordings, made on the renowned Paramount Studio Or-

gan in New York that first attracted Vaughn to the theater organ (as was the case with many of us).

Finding that a newly acquired Hammond did not meet his requirements as a theater organ enthusiast made Vaughn want to own an instrument with pipes, preferably Wurlitzer. A lead from F. M. Brown, a Los Angeles Wurlitzer Violin collector, resulted in the purchase of the three manual Wurlitzer which was featured at the 1939 San Francisco Exposition located on the man-made Treasure Island. Removed and crated by the Wurlitzer Company, the organ was trucked from San Francisco in 1946 for installation in Vaughn's newly completed residence in Los Angeles. Even with several additions to the original eight ranks, this organ still did not fulfill the desires of this determined enthusiast, so he set out in earnest to locate a theater organ that would.

Starting in New York, Vaughn made a nation-wide tour visiting theaters and studios in which he suspected there was any possibility of finding the instrument he was searching for. Included in his itinerary was the New York Paramount Studio and several neighborhood theaters, four or five theaters in Chicago as well as

stops in Texas and the Pacific Northwest. It was in the old 4000-seat Paradise Theater in Chicago that Vaughn found the five manual, twenty-one rank Wurlitzer that eventually became his. All of this activity was on a bid basis, theater managements saying, in effect, “Go out and look at what we have and if you are interested in any of them give us a bid”. He did just that!

The Paradise Wurlitzer proved to be in practically new condition having been played for only about one year, it was claimed, following its installation by the Wurlitzer factory, after which it was covered up. Its appearance seemed to make this story reasonably true, and although it could not be played since the console had been disconnected, the more Vaughn looked at it the more enthusiastic he became over its possibilities. He made an offer (well into four figures) and continued his tour, not knowing whether or not his bid would be accepted. After several more weeks of travel he arrived back in Los Angeles only to be disappointed—no word from Chicago. Finally after another month had passed with no word, he called Chicago and learned that his offer had just been accepted—the Paradise Wurlitzer, Opus No. 1942 shipped August 27, 1928, was his—still in the theater to be sure,

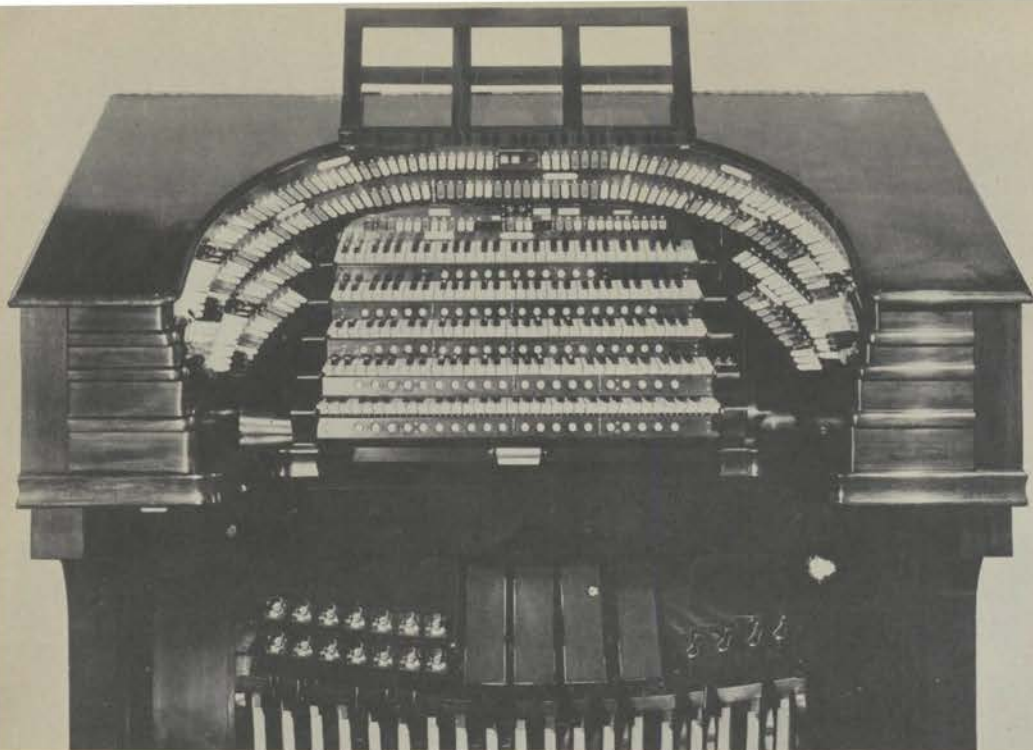
but his!!!! Having started his tour determined to locate a suitable four manual Wurlitzer, it is possible for any enthusiast to share the feeling Vaughn had in finding, not a four manual, but a late model FIVE manual (which he hadn't even realized existed), complete with twenty-one ranks of pipes and seven sets of percussions.

As installed in the theater, the organ contained the following ranks:—Open Diapason, Concert Flute, two Tibia Clausa, two Solo Strings, two Viol D'Orchestres, Quintadena, Dulciana, Tuba Horn, Tuba Mirabilis, two Vox Humana, Clarinet, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Oboe Horn, English Horn, Brass Sax and Brass Trumpet. Included in the percussions were two Xylophones, Glockenspiel, Chrysoglott with Vibraharp attachment, Marimba, Piano and toy shelf and traps.

Now began a period of concentrated activity. For, having purchased the organ, there was the exacting task of removing, shipping, cleaning, rebuilding and re-installing it in the Los Angeles residence. Locating a competent organ man, Vaughn returned to Chicago and supervised the removal. The organ was loaded into a thirty-five foot truck-van and into one half of a railroad freight car. By the

time it arrived in California, the original Exposition Wurlitzer had been removed and sold to another enthusiast and the chambers had been made ready for the new arrival.

A crew of five men went to work on the organ the minute it was unloaded, and the console was sent to the shop of the German cabinet maker, Mr. Finkert. One of his craftsmen, following a design prepared by Vaughn, re-veneered and refinished the console. A new top, new bench and new side jambs were crafted, carefully following the new plan, in matching split grain mahogany. The manual and stop keys were in perfect condition and required no replacement or re-finishing. It took about thirty days to complete the console, and in the meantime, Vaughn and the five man crew had not been idle. Into the prepared rooms went the floor frames, reservoirs, chests, duct-work, relays and blower (Spencer Orgblo 15 H.P.). The organ itself is installed in two chambers, each 14' by 14' with 14' ceilings, located side-by-side, with floors just below the basement floor level. The shutters open into a sound mixing chamber that extends up two floors, the organ actually speaking into a 25' by 35' room through two grilles 6' by 9' long. The relays are located in a separate room, adjacent to the Solo



Rich Vaughn meets George Wright

During the later part of the work, Vaughn happened to hear several organ transcriptions played on the air by a local radio station. A telephone call to KFAC revealed that the organist was George Wright, then playing at the New York Paramount Theater. Immediately placing a call to the theater, the operator connected him with Wright who had just completed his Organ Solo. The conversation soon turned to the five manual project underway in California, with Vaughn tendering an invitation to the new acquaintance to come and have a look-see. About six or eight months later, in 1951, Wright did fly to the west coast and with several of his friends stopped by to see the organ which by now had been tuned, regulated and was in excellent condition.

... and as the console is planned when rebuilt to accommodate the addition of 25 ranks!

RICH VAUGHN ORGAN (Cont.)

Chamber. Behind this is the blower room which also houses the action-current generating mechanism. Current is supplied by a specially built motor-generator set with a variable output of 10 to 15 volts at 100 amps.

As has been the case with so many home installations, getting the three phase power run into the residence proved to be a real trial. After much negotiating with the local power company, the necessary connections were made to the blower motor. Being unable to use lifting equipment, it required 14 men to move the console into place, which was now completed and ready to connect up to the junction boards in the relay room. This was carefully accomplished and the organ was complete! Seventy-three days had elapsed since the installation was started. It is doubtful if a more meticulous installation had ever been accomplished, so carefully executed was the entire operation.

To the original organ has been added sixteen foot octaves of the Oboe Horn (Bassoon) and Solo String (Double Solo String). Several additional Tibia mutations have been wired in also.

All of the available space is now taken. Which brings us up to the present. But what of the future? There is no more room available, soooooo—

OUT IT COMES!!!!!! A new organ room 50' by 100' with a 25' ceiling is soon to be built . . . not a Celotex lined "stu-

dio" which implies deadness, but a live theater-like enclosure. Vaughn has just purchased and taken delivery of, most of the Denver Auditorium Wurlitzer, a four manual organ with thirty-five ranks. The Paradise Organ has one major short-coming—there are not enough accompaniment stops—soft pipes and gentle sounds. To be added to the organ to overcome this deficit will be 25 ranks as follows:—a four rank Vox Humana Chorus (16' Vox, 8' Vox, 8' Vox Celeste, 4' Vox), Krumet, Musette, French Horn, Horn Diapason, Open Diapason, Dulciana, Dulciana Celeste, 4' Metal Harmonic Flute, Quintadena Celeste, Solo String (II ranks), Viol D'Orchestre (II ranks), Viol Celeste (II ranks), Flute Celeste, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, English Post Horn, Style D Trumpet, and Doppel Flute. Additions to the pedal organ will include 16' Quintaton (an extension of the Quintadena), 16' English Post Horn, 16' Clarinet, 16' Metal Diaphone, 16' Gamba and 16' Trombone (an extension of the Style D Trumpet). All of these additions will be from the Denver organ with the exception of the Krumet, Musette and Quintaton. The stop lay-out of the five manual console will be expanded to the maximum possible to include all of the necessary new stop-keys to a depth of four bolsters!

For a while the organ will again be silent—but not for long. When re-installed with these additions, a wonderful new theater organ should emerge, which will place it among the great theater organs of all time!

The rest is history. Having made himself thoroughly familiar with the tremendous five manual console and its thousands of possible combinations, Wright was soon making tapes of the organ. In 1955 the first George Wright—Rich Vaughn Organ HI-FIRECORDS were issued. Since that date, memorable to all theater organ enthusiasts, the records of this series sold has numbered over two million copies! They have done more to popularize the theater organ today than any other single activity. But even more important, they have served as an introduction to the gorgeous sounds of a fine theater organ superbly played, thus opening the entire field of the theater organ to thousands of newly created enthusiasts!

Many hours have been spent by Ken Simpson, an extraordinary organ technician, in voicing and refining the organ to meet the demands of a perfectionist. The organ, as heard on the records, is as accurate a reproduction of the actual sound heard in the room as modern recording equipment can make it.

Announcement of the formation of a new A.T.O.E. Chapter to be called the DALLAS CHAPTER has been received from Dennis Guill, Secretary-treasurer. Organized with 12 regular members and 2 Charter Members, the Chapter's first project will be the renovation of the Dallas Melba Theatre 235 Wurlitzer. At least two members have home installations, a 2/7 Wurl. and a 4.30 Morton. The A.T.O.E. Board welcomes the new Chapter with their best wishes for success.

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE RICH VAUGHN WURLITZER

CHAMBER	MANUALS & PITCH OF STOPS DRAWN									
MAIN	COMPASS	No. of PIPES	PRES.	PEDAL—33-2p 10 Pistons	ACCOMP—42-13s-2p 10 Pistons	GREAT—55-3s-1p 10 Pistons	BOMBARDE—29-3s 10 Pistons	ORCHESTRAL—33 10 Pistons	SOLO—25 6 Pistons	
Tuba Horn	16-4'	85	15"	16-8	8	16-8	-16s	16-8-4	8	
Open Diapason	16-4'	85	10"	16-8	8	16-8		16	8	
Tibia Clausa	8-4'	73	12"	8 -8p	8-4	16-8-5 1/3-4	-2 2/3-2-	16-8-4	8-4	
Solo String	8-4'	73	10"	8	16-8	16-8		@16-8	8	
Viol D'Orchestre	8-4'	73	10"	8	8-4	8	-4	8-4	8	
Viol Celeste	8-4'	73	10"	8	8-4	8	-4	8-4	8	
Clarinet	8'	61	10"	8	8	16-8		8	8	
Bourdon-Flute	16-2'	97	10"	*32-16-8-4	8-4 2/3-2	8	-4	8	8-4	
Quintadena	8'	61	10"	8	8	8				
Dulciana	8'	61	10"		8					
Vox Humana	8'	61	6"		8-4	16-8		8		
Chrysoglott		823			x	x		x	x	
		49								
SOLO										
English Horn	8'	61	15"	8	8	8		8	8	
Tuba Mirabilis	8-4'	73	15"	8		8	16-8-4 -16s		8	
Brass Trumpet	8'	61	10"	8	8	8		8	8	
Tibia Clausa	16-2'	97	15"	16-8 -8p	8-4	16-8	-4-3 1/5-2 2/3-2-1 3/5	16-8-4	8-4	
Oboe Horn	16-8'	73	10"	16-8	8	8			8	
Solo String	16-4'	73	10"	16-8	16-8	16-8	8	@16-8	8	
Orchestral Oboe	8'	61	10"			8		8	8	
Kinura	8'	61	10"			8		8	8	
Brass Saxophone	8'	61	10"	8	8	8		16-8	8	
Vox Humana	8'	61	6"		8-4	16-8		8	8	
		694								
Xylophone		37					x	x		
Glockenspiel		37			-xs	x	x	x	x	
Bells-riet Glock									x	
Chimes		25			-xs				x	
Marimba		49			x	x		x	x	
HARP OUTSIDE										
					x	x		x		
Master Xylophone		37				x			x	
Piano		85		16	8	16-8	-4		8	
Sleigh Bells		25					x			
COUPLERS										
				A8-G8-S8	A4-S8	-G4s-S8s-S8p	G16-G4-S16	-S8s-S8p	G16-G8-S8	016
Bass Drum				x						
Kettle Drum				x						
Cymbal				x						
Brush Cymbal				x	x					
Field Drums				x						
Mandolin						x				
Snare Drum						x				
Tambourine						x				
Castenets						x				
Chinese Block						x				
Tom Tom						x				
Sand Block						x				
TREMOLO—9										
Main				Key Cheek Switches		Right levers for:—Thunder		Train Whistle		
Solo				Vibraharp		Grand Perc. Crash		Boat Whistle		
Tibia Clausa (S)				Chrysoglott Damper		Grand Reed Sforzando		Fire Gong		
Vox Humana				3 swell pedals		Grand Cymbal Crash		Triangle		
Vox Humana (S)				1 Crescendo Pedal				Chinese Gong		
Tuba						Left Toe Pistons for:		Surf		
Diaphone & String				3 Swell Coupler Switches		General Cancel		Auto Horn		
Tuba Mirabilis						Tremulants Off		Klaxon		
Tibia Clausa				3 Swell Indicators		Tremulants On		Gong		
						Bird Whistle		Ship's Bell		
										p - Pizzicato Touch s - Second Touch

*Resultant from Bourdon 16' and 10 2/3' Total Pipes—1517, Notes 344

* - Ensemble