

Coming . . .

ATLANTA '78

23RD ATOS NATIONAL CONVENTION

**SUNDAY, JULY 9 THROUGH WEDNESDAY, JULY 12
AFTERGLOW – THURSDAY, JULY 13**

Welcome to The South!

And after a winter like the last two, we expect to bask in summer glory with you at the 23rd National Convention.

You'll be in the heart of "uptown" Atlanta, headquartered in the beautiful Sheraton-Biltmore Hotel just minutes away from the headquarters theatre . . . the Fabulous Fox at 660 Peachtree Street, N.E. In the immediate vicinity are many churches of all denominations and many establishments catering to the needs and pleasures of the human species in the realm of food and drink.

While our activities will be centered around the grand installation at the Fox, there will be other delights. For example, the 3/11 Moller at the East Point Theatre, the 3/22 Wurlitzer at the Music Grinder, and the twin installation at Peachtree Christian Church (a 3/57 Ruffatti and 3/35 Pilcher).

By chartered bus we will go to Birmingham, Alabama on Monday for concerts by Eddie Weaver and Don Baker at the Alabama Theatre, a box lunch in the theatre, and then hear Dr. Edward Tibbs perform at the Birmingham Civic Center on the 2/15 Schlicker after which there will be a catered dinner in the Civic Center prior to departure by bus for Atlanta.

The line-up in Atlanta includes a special day, Wednesday, when two concerts will be presented at the East Point and two at the Music Grinder, with groups alternating at noontime. Lunch will be provided at the Music Grinder for both groups and two artists are scheduled at each location for each group. Trevor Bolshaw from Wellington, Somerset and Tom Helms from Pensacola will do the honors at East Point on the 3/11 Moller, and Jay Mitchell and Lew Williams will exercise Wini-fred, the Weber Wurlitzer at the Music Grinder (see article, this issue and front cover).

Lee Erwin, Ron Rhode, Helen Dell, Walt Strony, Tom Cotner, Hector Olivera and Lyn Larsen are lined up to treat you to a taste of the "many moods of the Mighty Mo" at the Fox. These great talents and the scope of the Fox Concert Moller will provide all the diversity any organ buff could wish for.

Of course, Jam Sessions during all "off hours" will be a feature of the demonstration rooms on the 10th floor of the Biltmore where exhibitors will be displaying both equipment and talent. Elsewhere in this issue you may read of another "jam session" after hours (12 midnight til ?) at the Music Grinder.

Y'all Come . . . and let us entertain you!

ARTISTS

1978 ATOS CONVENTION (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

LEE ERWIN — who really needs no introduction to organ buffs. Lee has played the Fox Moller on many occasions accompanying silents with his original scores, and has entertained Atlanta Chapter with his inimitable renditions of Scott Joplin and a whole catalog of theatre organ favorites.

RON RHODE — Chief staff organist at Organ Stop Pizza, played the Chicago Convention, and is rapidly making a big and good name for himself as a stylist who appeals to theatre organ enthusiasts.

EDDIE WEAVER — has played a theatre organ in a theatre longer than any living theatre organist! Like a Methodist preacher, he's done enough programs. It won't take study and practice to get a top-notch performance from Eddie.

DON BAKER — Don's another "old timer" who started formal music lessons on piano and was reformed. Recently cut a disc on the Alabama Wurlitzer. Former staff organist at the Paramount in New York. Reckon he could give us "La Campanella" on the organ?

EDWARD TIBBS — Professor of Music at Samford University in Birmingham, holds Bachelor of Music with Distinction from Eastman School of Music. Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan. Instrumental in the design of the Schlicker he is going to play.

HELEN DELL — Organist for the Los Angeles Dodgers!!! Highlight of the Detroit Convention in '74. Seven (count 'em) records; fresh and novel arrangements. '74 Best Female Organist by Organist Magazine.

WALT STRONY — Staff organist at the Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix, formerly of Milwaukee in a similar capacity. Well known among the rising young organists.

TOM HELMS — Staff organist, Saenger Theatre, Pensacola, Florida. Played the Fox Moller "cold" in late '77 to the amazement of Atlanta Chapter. His arrangements and musicianship are outstanding — the young man to watch!

TREVOR BOLSHAW — England's gift to our Convention comes from Wellington, Somerset. His style is a cross between British and American, but based on solid musical training and interesting arrangements.

JAY MITCHELL — Staff organist at the Music Grinder, formerly at Alabama Theatre. Winning personality, solid musicianship, wide repertoire. We have him tied to Atlanta, so don't get any ideas!

LEW WILLIAMS — Lew made the mistake at the San Francisco Convention of being overheard by the present convention chairman and treasurer when he played "In the Mood" in one of the demonstration rooms and they decided he *must* be heard by a full convention.

TOM COTNER — A somewhat new name in the theatre organ world. Those who heard him at the Chicago '77 Convention know this artist has made a special study of the styles of the '20s.

HECTOR OLIVERA — The fireball from Argentina! If you haven't seen or heard him do "Flight of the Bumblebee" (no hands!) you've missed the sight and sensation of a lifetime. Knows the Fox Moller from two previous concerts and has a new record on that instrument.

LYN LARSEN — Another veteran of two concerts on the Fox Moller, known for his ballad styling and clean registrations. A gifted arranger, personable entertainer and a veteran of conventions and the concert circuit.



4/42 Moller

The Fox

The majority of the concerts at this year's convention will be held in the fabulous Fox Theatre which was saved from the wrecking ball in 1974. Earlier this year, Atlanta Landmarks paid off the mortgage of \$1.8 million.

The 4/42 Moller has also been saved. See story on page 8.

A Classical Treat . . .

Peachtree Christian Church

Built in 1928 to the design of Charles H. Hopson, who at that time was considered to be the foremost authority on Gothic Architecture in America, it houses the largest collection of English stained glass east of the Mississippi. In addition, it possesses the only complete set of tubular "Tower Chimes" in the southeast. The chimes are played by automatic roll player as well as from both organ consoles. The church is only a short distance from Convention headquarters and originally was next door to the Rhodes Mansion, present home of the Georgia Historical Society.

The Pilcher Organ, originally a 3/40, presently a 3/35 (the 5 rank Echo division was removed when the

Ruffatti was installed) was installed in the church chancel in 1928. At that time it was acclaimed to be the finest church organ in the South. It possesses today these same fine qualities and truly is one of the best voiced instruments in the area. An Austin console was added in 1957.

The Ruffatti organ, a 3/57, is installed in the balcony at the rear of the sanctuary. It was installed in 1973. Truly a concert instrument, it is the only Ruffatti in the area that is not augmented with electronic pedal stops.

The combined effect of the two complete instruments is unique in this area and is the prime reason for choosing it for our classical concert.



3/57 Ruffatti - 1973



3/35 Plicher - 1928

ALABAMA'S

BERTHA

A CONVENTION FEATURE

by Jay Mitchell

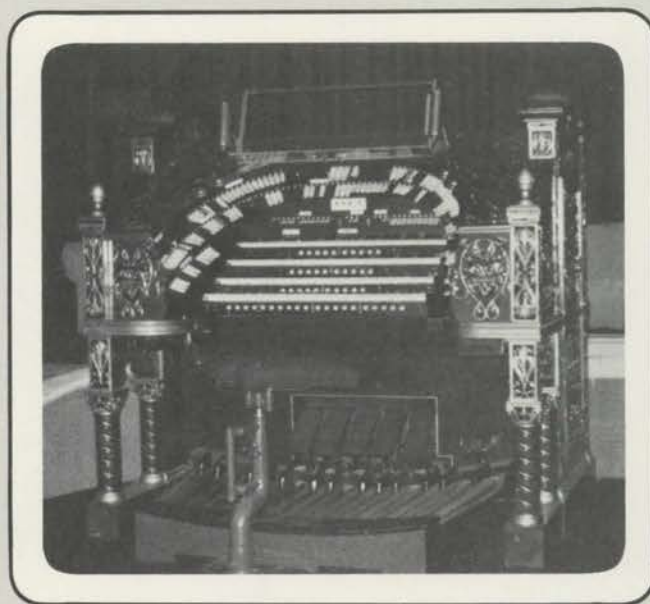
To be asked to write chapter two of a continuing history of the Publix 1 Wurlitzer at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham sounds awfully clinical and smells too much of fresh paint and printer's ink. How does a guy write about an enormous mass of wood, metal and leather that he fell in love with as a child, and has loved more deeply with the passing of almost 25 years?

Enter the "Magic Spell," or should I say the word "time." Because with enough hours at the cockpit to qualify me for my commercial pilot's license, I could tell you still where the 2-2/3 Tibia is on the Bombarde stop rail in the dark! Or even in my sleep! But what I can't tell you is how much I love her. I'm a musician, not a writer. To know her is to love her, and to love her you *must* know her, intimately.

It has been my good fortune to have worked with her on that intimate basis. Though dampness or dryness affected her speech, she always filled the house with a good, solid, almost assertive power that was lacking in so many other organs I played. When I wanted that last ounce of Fortissimo, there was always that one last contact on the back of the main swell pedal that would open four more shutters in the main chamber. It had been a wiring mistake by Wurlitzer installers, I was told by Chief Larry Donaldson, and I enthusiastically came back with, "Leave it alone; it's great!"

Oh, Bertha has had her days when I cussed her, granted. She could out-do any temperamental Wagnerian you ever dreamed of — and she drove a lot of fellows to drink. Even with a new power supply that made her speak more promptly, I always had to show her who wore the pants. Sound strange? Not too much if you were to ask the other fellows who have given Bertha their best.

Bertha has been widowed several times, but the guys who still are around would probably tell you how much they are in love with her. Still around are Randy Sauls, Lee Erwin, Charlie Cox and Bertha's latest, Bernard Franklin. And certainly, Bernard Franklin



puts Bertha through her paces as few of us in the past have been able to do. He's well trained and possesses an incredible imagination for making old songs come to life as freshly as if they had been written yesterday and were new to our ears.

So what's the un-emotional side of this great old red-and-gold lady, folks? What *is*, in fact, the "clinical" side that makes this one so spectacular?

Simply this. Acoustics! The Alabama Theatre possesses some of the best acoustics in all movie theatredom. The organ is well-maintained, and when both are combined, a concert is indeed a rare treat to the ears. I'd trade my mother for the Brass Sax and my Grandmother for the Vox and Solo Vox. Certainly Jesse Crawford should have heard this installation. It was a product of his creativity and he would have been another one of us fellows who would have had a love affair with Bertha, that wonderful, wacky Wurlitzer.

Bronze Convention Metal

No. 1 (obverse) and No. 2 (reverse) shown here are models (actual size) of the bronze convention medal to be included in each registrant's packet. The medal will serve the function of admission to ticketed events as well as commemorating the 23rd National Convention. Orders for additional medals will be accepted in the Record Store for later delivery in pewter, silver or 24 carat gold.

No. 3 is the alternate reverse for No. 1 which will be struck in all three metals after the convention to commemorate the saving of the Fabulous Fox Theatre. A further announcement about the availability of this limited edition will be published later.

The metal was designed and the models executed by Atlanta sculptor William McCulloch. Mr. McCulloch studied at the University of Georgia, Ohio



1.



2.



3.

State and the Art Students League of New York. His training includes experience as studio assistant to Julian Harris and Paul Manship as well as informal study and travel in Italy and Mexico. His exhibitions include the Association of Georgia Artists, the National Academy of Design and he is represented in the Holbrook Collection of the Georgia Museum of Art. He has an MA in art history from the University of North Carolina and taught at Piedmont College, Columbia College, Lander College and the University of South Carolina. Bill is also a member of Atlanta Chapter, and finds time to pursue his interests in recording and hi-fidelity sound reproduction.

JAM AND BEER DO MIX!

by Jay Mitchell — Staff Organist, Music Grinder

If you organ fans lived in Atlanta, you'd naturally find your way out to the Music Grinder to hear our great Wurlitzer, Winifred, one of the spectacular instruments featured in *Readers Digest* "Golden Organ Favorites" when she resided at the Strand Theatre in Plattsburgh, New York.

But a visit to the Music Grinder will *open your eyes* as well as your ears. There are pipes behind glass, and percussions in the open where you can see them working. Coupled with all this is the most spectacular showmanship your eyes' mental palate can possibly absorb. The drama of electric colored hammers under black light! Vivid lipstick reds, hot pink, Egyptian blue, jungle green — oriental orange (!!!)

Special effects abound in variety, such as our dancing fire in the pipe chambers, even our ordinary curtain is made from thousands of strands of silver and gold Mylar® — they glitter and flash and move spectacularly as if they were almost on fire!

Coupled with the usual bubbles is Marvin, the unusual, moronic, mechanical monkey, doing his own act. And our staffers who cook the pizza also double on pizza pans and try to imitate Marvin's act. Sound crazy? Well, I've only just begun. The silent movies are fun fare, and coupled with our sing-alongs is one of the

finest and most complete slide libraries you'll find anywhere. So you've mastered the tongue-twisters, have you? Well, I've got a couple in the projector that I'd dare you to get through without biting your tonsils!

Now enter the jam and beer. What am I talking about? A jam session! And beer and wine — and of course, for tee-totlers (this is tee-totlin' country down here in Georgia, folks), Coke, Sprite, orange pop, water, and if you dare, Root Beer!

Jam sessions will be nightly at the Music Grinder from closing time into the wee hours and will feature the performing artists of the convention, as well as all the visiting pros. And don't be surprised when you run into some of your favorite "greats" sippin' & jamming away at the Music Grinder!

If you've never experienced the excitement of a jam session in the past where the pro's shed their inhibitions, let down their hair and take off into new musical horizons, then you ain't heard nothin' yet!

All in all, the beautiful Music Grinder backdrop, in its colorful splendor, the great Wurlitzer, the liquid refreshment, and most of all, the great artists who will be here letting their hair down promise you another fascinating feature of the Atlanta '78 Convention. Of one thing, you can be sure; Jam and Beer **do** mix!