



(Nicholas Cole Photo)

Hector Encores in Atlanta

by Fran Verri

Atlanta — after four days, and many organ concerts, the '78 National Convention officially ended. On the fifth day the final event was the Afterglow, including Hector Olivera as one of the artists. Hector had already performed two benefit concerts along with his release of an album recorded on the Fox's Mighty Mo' with proceeds going to

help save the Atlanta Fox Theatre and the Moller theatre pipe organ, and he is most familiar with the organ (it was his fourth performance).

On the same evening the Atlanta Symphony under the direction of Louis Lane, was presenting clarinetist Benny Goodman as guest artist. Mr. Lane also attended the Afterglow concerts. The symphony sum-

mer series included such luminaries as Van Cliburn, Ferrante & Teicher, Mel Torme, the aforementioned Benny Goodman, and an announced concert with Virgil Fox to be presented on the 20th of July.

At the time of Hector's Afterglow concert, it was learned that due to illness, Mr. Fox would be unable to appear. Immediately after the Afterglow performance, Louis Lane met with Hector and his manager to see if he could and would play the scheduled concert on the 20th with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Lane then requested of Hector that for his solo portion of the program he repeat the same format that he demonstrated at the Afterglow. Hector stated that he would be honored to play.

Within a week Hector found himself once again in Atlanta. The orchestra and guest artist were ready to perform the *Symphony No. 3 in C Minor*, Opus 78 ("organ"), by Camille Saint-Saens.

In his review in *The Atlanta Journal* next day, critic David Ogg wrote . . . "Olivera swept his audience away with absolutely Olympic organ virtuosity."

For the first part of the program, conductor Louis Lane led his orchestra in a vibrant, often exciting performance of the St. Saens work, while Hector played the rather sparse organ part, much of it being pedal notes.

It was after intermission that the ex-Argentinian had his opportunity to shine in a solo performance which included "Evergreen" and homage to the '40s with dazzling reworkings of "Sweet Georgia Brown," "Moonlight Serenade" and "In the Mood." "These," wrote critic Ogg, "were enough to put Olivera in a class by himself." He also offered a transcription of one of Bach's chorale preludes, a medley of "Danny Boy," "Dixie" (always an audience rouser here) and "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

As during the Afterglow, Hector made his own announcements and succeeded in putting his personality over as well as his music.

Critic Ogg wrote, "Olivera exudes an unexpected charm and wit something on the order of a bantamweight Jose Jiminez. His delightful commentary between numbers produced almost nonstop giggles through-

out the program's second portion, which spotlighted him in solos on the organ."

The conductor, plus many members of the orchestra, remained to meet Hector after the concert. It was honor enough to have performed with this great orchestra, however it was an even greater thrill to have so many of his peers remain after his second half solo performance to acknowledge their delight at both his classic and theatre stylings as well.

This experience was particularly rewarding, stated Hector later. It was an opportunity for him to witness how enthusiastically an audience unfamiliar with theatre organ stylings can respond.

By playing a classic/theatre organ concert at a totally "open-to-the-public" event with a classical slant, the artist was able to present the wonderful world of theatre organ to an audience which normally would not be aware of its existence, thus expanding the vistas of the theatre organ as an art form. Well done, Hector! □

A Barton Is Saved

FLINT THEATRE ORGAN CLUB

The Capital Theatre, in the heart of Flint, Michigan, announced the closing of its doors forever with the showing of the 'last picture show' on October 2, 1976. It could no longer fight the exodus of moviegoers to the suburban theatres.

The announcement came as glum news to members of the Flint Theatre Organ Club who had spent ten years restoring the 3/11 Barton to mint condition.

The group had presented regular weekend intermission programs and monthly 'ladies day' volunteer concerts. One evening a month, members had gathered at a local restaurant then moved to the theatre following the last movie for an open console session. Suddenly this was all coming to an end.

Fortunately, Earl Berry, manager of the Capital, and Lyle Smith of Butterfield Theatres, Michigan's largest movie house chain, had always been interested boosters of the

Capital Barton. If certain conditions could be met, the organ would remain in Flint.

The scramble was on to find a new home for an 11-rank organ with toy counter. The acoustics would have to be good and it would have to be close by where it would be used and enjoyed as well as be a benefit to the community.

More good news. The Flint Institute of Music and Fred Peryer, director, wanted the organ and the MacArthur Recital Hall met all the requirements.

Hardly more than a month after the Capital had closed its doors, the great move started. Within two weeks, both pipe chambers had been emptied and all equipment piled on stage. The console, the main switchstack and two large wind-chests required professional movers, who donated their equipment for the occasion. Everything else had to be loaded manually into trucks and



It's Dues Time

See page 17
for details on how to
pay your dues for 1979.

Don't Miss an Issue!



Ron Dring, Bob Burnham and Harold Renico construct the retaining wall at F.I.M.



Harold Renico and Ted Decker hoist drywall during chamber construction.

