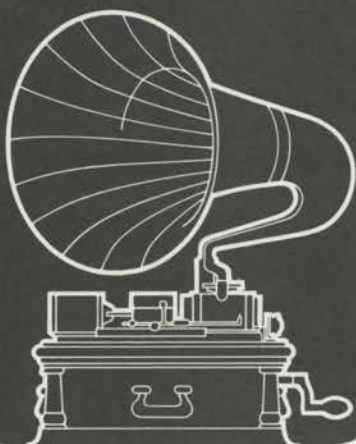


## For The Records



**THE SENTIMENTAL GENTLEMAN FROM TOOTING, Vic Hammett plays the Wurlitzer organ in the Granada Theatre, Tooting, London. Amberlee (stereo) AML 311. \$6.50 (plus \$1.00 handling per order) from Doric Records, Box 282, Monterey, California 93940.**

Since the death of Vic Hammett on December 29th, 1974, there have been a plethora of remembrances dedicated to an organist both skilled and likeable. Few who came in contact with Vic could resist his infectious sense of humor, nor his monumental and original musical stylings. He had friends and fans on four continents at the time of his death at 57.

ably not for the low-flying home organist.

Whether or not the individual player will cotton to the actual melodies is anybody's guess. However, "Waltzing" might be a good learning experience for the Kouryous minded, those who admire Rex and want to know how he does some of his things so wonderfully well.

**Rex Koury, THE ENTERTAINER: A RAGTIME NUMBER BY SCOTT JOPLIN, Dave Coleman Recital Series, 1974 (Same availability at same price as above).**

Although this reviewer enjoys some of the music of Scott Joplin he has always found this ragtime music curiously difficult to play. Sure, it sounds like it should be easy — but it

There have been memorial concerts and records eulogizing his fine ability as an organist (that he could successfully follow such a popular luminary as Sidney Torch in a British cinema is one of the legends which has persisted).

This album is the result of a visit to Britain by Vic's American friend and fan Doric Record's Prexy, Frank Killinger in the early days of the last decade. Frank was forever urging Vic to record. Vic agreed to knock out a few tunes informally for Frank, just as a remembrance, on a 2/5 Wurlitzer. The result was a posthumous Doric release of the tunes as *That will be 2 and 6 Extra*, a local jargon phrase often used by Vic in daily conversation. During the same visit, Frank recorded Vic playing the 4/14 Wurlitzer in the Granada Theatre, Tooting, a very famous organ, this for Britain's Amberlee Records. With its bright reed section (Posthorn, Saxophone, Kinura, Harmonic Tuba and Orch. Oboe), this instrument was a natural for Vic's upbeat style.

The selections: "Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia," "Charleston," "Stardust," "Down Yonder," "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams," "One Dozen Roses," "Bugle Call Rag," "Rockabye Your Baby," "Bye Bye Blues," "You're Getting to be a Habit with Me," "I Got Rhythm," "All the Way," "Happy Feet."

isn't. Perhaps the chief virtue of Rex Koury's organ arrangement of "The Entertainer" is that it is surprisingly comfortable under the fingers and, therefore, great fun. Rex keeps most of the title music for "The Sting" in C with one brief sortie into F. The left hand provides straight-forward counter melodies with rhythmic accents, and the pedal line never gets exotic. Right hand melodies are in thirds or sixths when necessary, but Koury doesn't let this become a chore. Registrations are imaginative and well worth trying. Although rated for the intermediate or advanced player, "The Entertainer" seemed to be on the *easy* side of intermediate. So if after all this time you are still in the market for a good, solid arrangement of this Joplin classic — one that doesn't throw any technical curves — here it is. □

Six of the selections are played as moderate tempo ballads while seven are presented in that frenzied quick step style common to many British organists. This is not criticism: Vic does it expertly, and often with a touch of the Sydney Torch style which he could duplicate to perfection.

For this album Vic chose mostly full registration with octave couplers often emphasizing the "upper-work," and his preference ran to brass combinations, although there are a number of solo reeds in evidence, mostly those carrying the jazz

*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 (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.*

"rides." And Vic was very effective in improvising those jazz variations. Not too many organists could do as well in that area of music. If he is less effective playing the ballads it might have been the pressure of the theatre recording session where so much has to be accomplished in a limited time. For example, Vic repeatedly missed (omitted) a very obvious and anticipated harmonic progression during "Wrap Your Troubles," and his "Stardust" suffers repeatedly from a distracting lead-in downward glissando. But the seven "ripsnorters"



Vic Hammett.

(Stufoto)



Glenn Hough at the Marietta Theatre console.



Bill Taber at the Akron Civic Theatre 3/13 Wurlitzer.

more than make up for such minor lapses.

Recording is good. The team which produced this album includes John and Noreen Foskett (coordination and jacket notes), photos by John D. Sharp and Michael Candy, jacket design by Orlean Lamas and organ technical work by Ted Beckerleg. They are among the British organ scene's most talented and devoted servants, and it shows in these grooves and on the jacket.

This album will probably be the final recorded memorial to Vic Hammett, a musician well worth knowing.

**GREAT PIPES.** Glenn Hough playing the Marietta, Pa., Theatre 3/37 Page-Wurlitzer. Montagne (stereo) No. ASM 419. \$7.50 postpaid in the USA from Bob Wilkinson, Box 3605, Laureldale, Penn. 19605.

For several years we have been hearing rumors about a remarkable organ-equipped theatre in Marietta, Pennsylvania, and with this biscuit it comes to life. This is a first.

The instrument is a hybrid; 17 ranks of Page and 20 ranks of Wurlitzer, a mix that provides an excellent blend of voices, although the Vox heard during "Around the World" is a bit bleaty. And some tunes find the ranks a bit out of tune with one another. But just a bit. For this recording a nine-foot grand piano is heard on two selections. It's all the work of organ magicians David Kalmbach and Sherman Hall, proprietors of the 360-seat Marietta Theatre, which presents a classic film series liberally punctuated with the

sound of pipes.

The selections: "Wake Up and Live," "Alley Cat," "Diane," "For Once in My Life," "Around the World" (Young), "Singing in the Rain," "Happy Days are Here Again," "If You Knew Susie," "California Here I Come," "I Don't Know Why I Love You Like I Do," "Birth of the Blues," "When You're Smiling," "Climb Every Mountain."

Many of the tunes are indicative of a first time record maker, although the jacket notes state that the organist has recorded previously. Yet, much-recorded "Diane" and "Alley Cat" fall into the "most requested" class. Luckily, the remainder of the tunelist offers more variety.

Glenn Hough plays his selections mostly in rhythmic full combination intermission style, sometimes with Xylophone topping. For two of the selections, "For Once in My Life" and "I Don't Know Why," he duets organ and piano and it works out well, although Glenn's full chord piano attack is sometimes on the brittle side. His piano inserts are most effective when done in single note phrases.

Subtle he's not. This is good shirt-sleeve organ playing in the intermission style. No offbeat harmonizing here, just basic entertainment, well presented. Glenn takes some melodic liberties with "Singing in the Rain" but they would probably annoy only Gene Kelly.

The registration is adequate for the jingling-style presented here but a 3/37 organ has got to have a wealth of solo voices which do not get exposure, although the Pedal Cymbal

and Xylophone are given lots of audibility. It's not all rhythm; "Diane" and "Climb Every Mountain" are afforded very fine waltz and ballad treatments, the latter with great majesty. Likewise "For Once in My Life." Recording is good.

Bob Wilkinson's jacket notes are aimed principally at the uninitiated but are written from an intelligent perspective; he knows his audiences.

This makes a good starter for Glenn Hough and for the Marietta Page-Wurlitzer. We hope to hear from both again.

**THE CIVIC SOUND: BILL TABER PLAYS THE AKRON CIVIC THEATRE WURLITZER, Advent No. BT-5-801. \$7.75 postpaid from Akron Civic Theatre Organ Guild, Box 3773, Akron, Ohio 44314.**

Although it seems to have been keeping a low profile, Akron is another city which has seen the value of a vintage but beautiful theatre. One of the supporting groups which has led to the adoption of the former Loew's house as a civic auditorium is the Akron Theatre Organ Guild which has restored the 3/13 (style 240) Wurlitzer organ. The Akron is a 3000-seat theatre which opened in April, 1929. It has the usual Ebersson Moorish garden decor, complete with projected clouds and twinkling stars. It was too good to steelball when attendance fell off in the '60s so the Community Hall Foundation was formed to buy the theatre for civic use. Another one saved!

Guild spokesman Harold Wright informs us that the profits from this recording will be applied to re-

leathering the Wurlitzer's regulators, a most worthy cause.

The organ has been recorded previously by Hector Olivera and proved to be a suitable recording instrument. It still is, although a few of the brass (reed) pipes need the attention of a skilled voicer, but not many.

The organist, Bill Taber, hails from Philly and got the T.O. bug while playing the now gone Tower Theatre style 260 Wurlitzer, the one the late Leonard MacClain recorded with distinction. Bill is now teaching music in Cleveland. If a style can be attributed to him it would probably be "1950's intermission." His usual approach is a verse then a chorus with varied registration, followed by a second chorus on full combinations. There are enough breaks in this pattern to keep things interesting, for example "Dream of Olwen," a duet. The dreamy movie-style theme is orchestrated for piano and orchestra. In this case Bill is the orchestra, supporting Chuck Blair's piano expertly. It is one of the best selections on the record. Another highlight is Bill's soloing of selections from *Annie*. The button-eyed waif and her dog ("Arf!") Sandy, fare very well indeed in a medley covering about one-third of side two. Bill has a "feel" for show music.

Bill also has a thing for oldies such as "Makin Whoopee!", "You Made Me Love You," "As Time Goes By," "Sunny Disposhish," "The Words are in My Heart" (again with Chuck Blair's piano) and one we haven't heard since it was a hit in the '20s — "June Night." These are generally played in the '50s intermission style which adds up to solid, if unspectacular, entertainment. It's usually a verse and two choruses with changes in registration but not in key signature. Bill doesn't arrange tunes, he plays them. More contemporary are "I Write the Songs" and "The Rainbow Connection" which adapt well to theatre organ presentation. Also heard are a bluesy "I Couldn't Take it, Baby" and the big patriotic finale, "America, I Love You." Bill Taber sustains interest throughout for those who relish the playing style of the intermission organist. His playing is clean and trouble-free, his intros agreeable, and the Akron Guild has a winner which should help get those reservoirs recovered.

Miking is in big hall perspective, as from the best seat in the house. Sur-

face of the review pressing was smooth and free of pops. Jacket notes cover history of the theatre and present activities, which include organ interludes with Brenograph-projected charisma. Photos cover the console, theatre interior and Bill Taber.

**FORGET ME NOT: FRANK OLSEN PLAYS THE DISS WURLITZER. Kirkham KRS 1003. \$8.25 postpaid from Frank Olsen, R.R. No. 1 Vimy Rd., Fort Colborne, Ontario L3K 5V3, Canada, or from Laura Thomas, 3534 Bowen Rd., Lancaster, N.Y. 14086 USA.**

The instrument, a 3/19 Wurlitzer originally from the Paramount Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne, was installed in 1972 in the auto showroom of the Kitchen Bros. garage in Diss, England. The large room can seat 800 (after the wheels have been parked outside) and the acoustic qualities when empty are just what a large organ needs to get the big hall sound for recording. Emphasis is on "auditorium perspective" rather than intimate, or studio sound.

Frank Olsen has been reviewed in these pages many times and he always manages to come up with something different and entertaining. His most recent previous album was played on a 7-rank home installation in Niagara Falls and it presented Frank in an intimate light — *By a Waterfall*. This one is Frank doing the big organ bit, with results every bit as entertaining.

For those who haven't met Frank Olsen previously, he's English by birth. We first heard of him via a recording (*Paisely*) miked in Scotland. He emigrated to Canada in 1967 and has been brightening both the church and the theatre organ scenes on both sides of the border ever since.

For this stanza Frank plays 27 titles (medley tunes included), some given the once-over-lightly, others studiously orchestrated. For example Frank offers two selections remembered only because Jesse Crawford recorded distinctive arrangements of them on Victor 78s — "What Are You Waiting For, Mary?" and "I Love to Hear You Singing." Frank captures the spirit of both arrangements but substitutes his own registration. The results are interesting variants, rarely imitation.

Frank opens with a Scotch tune made famous by the late Sir Harry Lauder, the Olsen signature, a lively "Just a Wee Doch-an-Doris," then it's Gershwin's "Strike Up the Band" march with interesting question and answer instrumentation.

Especially welcome is a medley from Victor Herbert operettas, all well registered and played with great sensitivity and understanding — "Every Day is Ladies' Day," "Because You're You," "Moonbeams," (on gorgeous strings) "March of the Toys" (mislabelled "Toy Trumpet"), "Falling in Love," "Kiss Me Again," and "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life." Another bright spot is a medley of four famous hymns played in a spirited and militant style which would get a grin from Jerry Falwell, not to mention Oral Roberts.

Medley once-overs in "quick step" tempo include "Who's Sorry Now?," "Baby Face," and "You Were Meant for Me." Novelties include "Intermezzo" by Macbeth (not the soupy Bergman movie theme), "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile," "The Perfect Song," "Just Like the Ivy," a novelty 6/8 "Boston Two Step," a bit of Bach, "Come Sweet Repose" and the closer, "Let's Put Out the Lights and Go to Sleep." There's a variety program with something for everyone, and Frank makes the most of each selection.

If there is negative comment we suppose purists will catch occasional liberties taken with melody lines, for example, during "Perfect Song," and "In Old New York." But they are few and minor. In all, it's an attractive package by an organist who has so far gotten too little recognition.

Tom Travers' miking is good. The review pressing was smooth and fault free. Jacket notes give data on artist and organ.

**THE PIPES OF PAN: KORLA PANDIT playing an unidentified pipe organ. India Records No. 1002. Available as a record album, 8-track cartridge or cassette at \$7.50 postpaid from Bonnie J. Carette, Box 1493, Palm Springs, Calif. 92263.**

The mysterious easterner is with us once more after a rather long absence, spreading his spiritual contemplation via an unidentified Wurlitzer organ which we suspect may be

the Lorin Whitney 4/34 Wurli-Morton, on which a number of past Pandit albums have originated.

As is customary, the trappings of the inscrutable East are apparent even in selections such as "Til There Was You" and "If You Knew Susie." Of course, such conditioning is expected in selections such as "Song of India," which has become practically a Pandit talisman. The cymbal "whams" are there, too.

But right in the midst of all the gong thumping and temple bells, Korla includes a tasteful and well-played "Largo" (Handel) with no oriental embroidery. We've rarely heard it played better, even by a classical specialist. This Korla never fails to include surprises!

"I Wish You Love" gets some lowdown Chicago treatment (the jacket notes state that the organist studied at the University of Chicago) but closes with a characteristic gong bong, we assume to implant oriental color. "April in Paris" is innovative in its counter themes, and continues the bravura style (a bit like burlesque bump style; this Indian sure caught onto U.S. moves quickly and thoroughly). "Never on Sunday" con-



Korla Pandit.

tinues the upbeat contagion with large doses of Glockenspiel and good humored fun — plus the usual gong at the close.

In contrast is the theme, "A Time for Us," from the recent *Romeo and*

*Juliet* movie, played conservatively and tastefully on well-selected registration. It may be Korla's best work on this platter, even though followed by that blasted gong!

On the wild side are tunes we recognize from *Black Orpheus* labelled "Pelon Telephone," a wild samba with all the Latin percussers going.

Also heard is a lovely "Rose of Descanso." We just don't know what to say about this package, so far as the music is concerned; it employs so many contrasting auras. But we can comment with clear conscience on the jacket notes; ignore the hokum! Enjoy the music.

Recording is okay but the review pressing has very light modulation for much of Side One and much heavier sound on Side Two. Part of Side One requires a marked increase in gain on playback, so much that surface noise surfaces, although not enough to mar the music.

This is a mixed package, but those who were transfixed by the Korla Pandit eyes and Hammond organ stylings of the oriental maestro on TV in the '50s will appreciate this biscuit. Korla Pandit has a way of being irresistible. □

## The DORIC ORGAN SEAT

**IT'S NEW!**

**A handsome adjunct to your home or professional pedalboard organ.**

**Designed for comfort, convenience and instant adjustability, the DORIC ORGAN SEAT is available now and priced at just \$199.00 FOB Minneapolis, Minn.**

For further information write:

**Doric Industries**  
15218 73rd Place N.  
Maple Grove, Minn. 55369

(Not affiliated with Doric Records)

