

PIPES &

Personalities

The Kirk Organ Concert Series 1981-82

The fourteenth annual organ concert series at The Kirk of Dunedin features Terry Charles, Rex Koury, and Lee Erwin for the remaining programs in the series. Terry Charles will present "The World of Rodgers and Hammerstein" on January 14, 15, 16, 1982. Rex Koury will play on February 11, 12, and 13. Terry Charles will again be the artist on March 11, 12, and 13 for "The Sound of A Great Amen." On April 15 and 16, Lee Erwin will be the guest artist. Returning on May 13 and 14, Terry Charles will offer "Requestfully Yours," a program of audience favorites. A special summer concert on July 8 entitled "America the Beautiful" will also feature Terry Charles.

Tickets for the Kirk concerts are in great demand, so it is necessary to reserve seats well in advance. Ticket information is available by calling (813) 733-9305 Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. EST.

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Man Bites Dog

If it is true that "man bites dog" is still news, then here is a news item that will delight any organ enthusiast's heart. In *The Press*, Atlantic City, New Jersey, under the date line September 11 appears a headline, "ORGANIST-LESS" BAR FILES SUIT OVER ITS LOSS.

The famed Leroy Lewis may not be exactly thrilled to be the subject of a lawsuit, but it must be flattering to find that the old excuse that the business cannot afford to hire live music is not true, at least on Long Beach Island where Leroy is a living legend. According to the paper, when Leroy moved from one locale to the other, the former venue claimed that he violated a verbal contract and "caused the bar to suffer financially when

Lewis' followers moved on." They are seeking \$7000 which they claim was advanced to Lewis last winter, monetary damages for the advertising and printing costs, and damages for financial losses suffered this summer.

For those who have never had the pleasure of hearing Leroy Lewis perform perhaps it should be noted that he and a friend, Ted Campbell, installed a 3-manual Wurlitzer at the Surf City Hotel on Long Beach Island, New Jersey, many years ago. Then he moved on to Panama, where he performed at the large Wurlitzer which he and Campbell removed from the Atlantic City Warner Theatre. In recent years he has had a fantastic electronic set-up which has graced the Lighthouse Inn, the Bayview Manor and the Surf Villa.

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Theatre Pipe Organ on Radio

Radio Station WSNJ AM-FM, of Bridgeton, New Jersey, has been featuring theatre pipe organ music on a regular schedule. Every Saturday at 6:05 p.m. a program called "Pedals and Pipes," hosted by Herb Stiles (a member of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society), features an artist playing a theatre pipe organ. In addition, theatre pipe organ music is featured as a part of the "Starlight Serenade," hosted on Sunday evenings from 9:35 till midnight by ATOS member Bob Smith.

Arrangements are being made to present occasional programs recorded at the Dickinson High School Kimball organ.

BOB SMITH

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Organ Donated to Performing Arts Center

According to an article in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* for October 27, the Wurlitzer theatre organ originally housed in the RKO-Keith Theatre in New York has been given to the Virginia Center for the Performing Arts (the former Loew's Theatre) by an anonymous donor.

The 3/24 instrument is to be restored by William B. Floyd, Sr., former organist at Radio City Music Hall, who is now working as an

organist and craftsman in Richmond. Restoration and installation is expected to be completed in about 14 months.

TOMMY LANDRUM

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Double Dedication in Wichita

In the great Exhibition Hall of Century II Center, Wichita, it was the final concert of the Ninth Annual Wurlitzer Pops. The evening of May 9 would be remembered as an intensely exciting one in programming and presentation. It was a double musical dedication, to the first "Big Band" era, then to the second one which began growing in the early seventies.

The artists chosen by the sponsor, Wichita Theatre Organ, were Billy Nalle at the Wichita Wurlitzer and J. C. Combs on percussion. Combs has worked in past years with Stan Kenton and other jazz masters, and is now chief percussionist of the Wichita Symphony. The ivory and gold organ console and the organ's grand piano were flanked by a stageful of every sort of percussion, tonal and non-tonal. Very likely, there had not been assembled such a variety since the days of the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra of the fifties. Despite heavy competition this same evening from the annual River Festival having changed its date, the audience numbered nearly 1600.

The most impressive factor was how very musically each musician played, each keeping perfect balances and a constant feeling of spon-

Season's Greetings

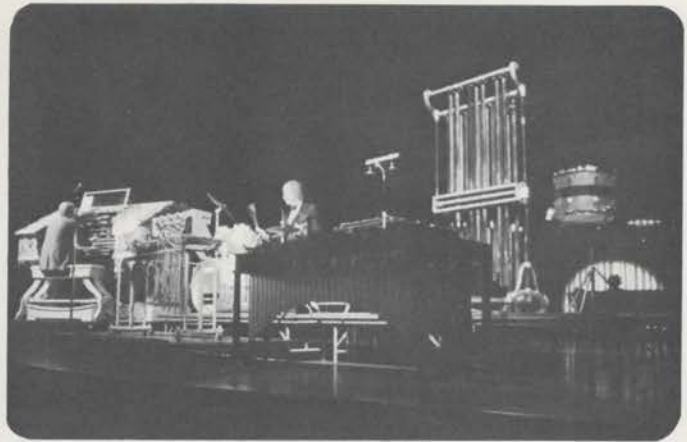
To All Our ATOS Friends

Jason and
The Old Prospector





Billy Nalle (left) and J. C. Combs during concert in Wichita. (John Lindstrom Photo)



Billy Nalle at the Wurlitzer and J. C. Combs on percussion. (Richard Harris Photo)

taneity. Music spanned a period from the late thirties to the late seventies, and its electricity was paralleled by audience enthusiasm. Then, when it was announced that Nalle and Combs would collaborate again in May of 1982 for the Tenth Anniversary season, there was an ovation. At that time, Combs will bring the All-Faculty Big Band of Wichita State University to join Nalle at the Wurlitzer. The program will be planned to feature the organ, using the format made famous at the organ's original home, the New York Paramount Theatre.

Having heard the last Billy Nalle solo concert here and the one Nalle played with the Peter Nero Trio, the writer did not believe they could be topped. Well, when you're dealing with an artist of endless imagination and creativity, "all bets are off!"

JOAN NICHOLS

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Hazleton Will Play Anniversary Concert

Pasadena Civic Auditorium Manager Doris G. Stovall has announced that Tom Hazleton will be the artist for a free concert on February 14, 1982, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Auditorium. Detailed information will be available later.

A beautiful commemorative poster for the anniversary was commissioned by The Pasadena Center Operating Company from artist Gary Wesser of Sierra Madre, California. The limited edition poster sells for \$5.00, and may be purchased at the Pasadena Civic Box Office, 300 East Green Street, Pasadena, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through

Friday. All proceeds from the posters go toward the Auditorium's Moller Theatre Organ Improvement Fund.

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"ORGAN"ized Pizza Comes to New York Capitol Area

The Market Street Music Hall, a converted theatre in Latham, New York, features a 3/17 Wurlitzer organ which started out in the North Park Theatre in Buffalo, New York. Andy Kasparian was selected as premier organist, following completion of the installation by D. Weber and J. Mitchell Associates.

The organ was moved from Buffalo to Schenectady and Plattsburg, New York, then to Atlanta, Georgia, and finally to its present site in Latham in 1981. The white and gold French-style console is installed on a lift which rises to stage level, and the percussions are mounted on the walls

in the usual pizza parlor manner. Elaborate lighting effects add to the display. This is said to be the only restaurant pipe organ in the New York and New England area.

LEO A. BOLBECKER

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Rob Calcaterra.

(Ron Buhlmann Photo)

Rob Calcaterra, who has recently been appointed organist at Radio City, is shown here serving guests at Bobby Schmidt's Resort in Stone Lake, Wisconsin. In addition to giving daily theatre organ seminars, accompanying silent movies and soloists, and performing nightly concerts, Rob also found time to tend bar and wait on tables! This was the third time Rob has been engaged to host the Bobby Schmidt Musical Weekend.

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Lyn Larsen Concert at the Alabama Theatre

Mayor Richard Arrington proclaimed October 18, 1981, "Theatre Organ Day" in Birmingham, Ala-





Lyn Larsen.

bama. Alabama Chapter ATOS members had spent many hours in tuning and repairing "Big Bertha," the last theatre pipe organ in its original installation in the state. "Big Bertha" is a 4/20 Wurlitzer which was unveiled in 1927 when the Alabama Theatre opened its doors.

The big event was to be a Lyn Larsen concert, and Lyn had arrived early. He had spent most of October 17 in directing the fine tuning and some re-voicing of the organ. It had taken him only twenty minutes to rearrange the multitude of "safety pins" on the preset boards to his liking.

Concert hour arrived, and the "Mighty Wurlitzer" rose majestically from the orchestra pit. Lyn Larsen greeted an eager and responsive crowd with "That's Entertainment." His knowledge of registration and orchestration helped him to

fill the theatre with the most pleasant sounds heard there in some time. The highlight of the concert was Lyn's accompaniment of a Laurel and Hardy silent comedy *Leave 'em Laughing*. His accompaniment blended so well with the movie that many seemed to forget that the organ was playing.

A concert requires quite a bit of work, but it can be a form of recreation, too. Fellowship and a sense of accomplishment make the work enjoyable. The real pay-off comes when you are able to hear an organist like Lyn Larsen bring out sounds that you helped to make possible.

LARRY McCORMICK

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Ayars Wows 'Em in Richmond

Lowell Ayars, ATOS "Organist of the Year" in 1980, enthralled a nearly full house in the beautiful Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia, September 22. The theatre was especially decorated for the occasion with fresh cut flowers. Very professionally presented, as is the policy of the Richmond Organ Enthusiasts Club for their shows, with a full house staff made up of club members dressed in formal attire, the show was the first public event sponsored by the independent club in nearly 20 years.

Ayars played mostly ballads from his seemingly endless repertoire, including popular vocals "I Wish You Love" and "Something to Remember You By." The "sleeper" of the evening was a blockbuster version of "You're the Cream in My Coffee."



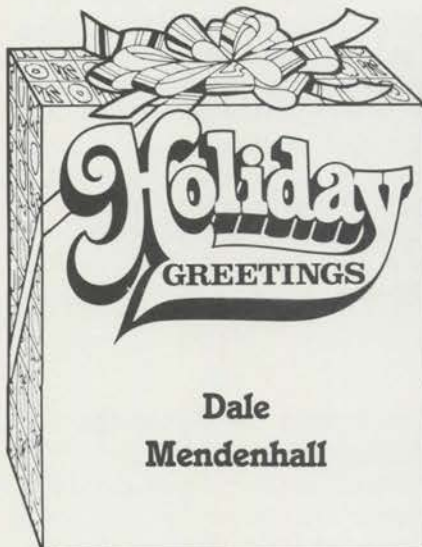
He also played medleys from *Showboat* and *Oklahoma*, and one by Neil Moret. After the "National Confederation March," Ayars received a standing ovation, to which he responded with an encore, requested by his local hosts, "The Girl I Love Belongs to Somebody Else."

In the picture Ayars is shown hugging Mrs. Velma Beck, assistant organist to Carl Rhond, the Byrd's first staff organist. Mrs. Beck was the first to play the 53-year-old 4/17 Wurlitzer organ.

The comment was heard repeatedly that the organ sounded wonderful, reminiscent of the Dick Leibert recordings made by Westminster during the '50s. The excellent performance and box office results were most encouraging to ROEC officers, who intend to promote a series of shows in Richmond. The club's policy is to present the theatre organ to the public as a dynamic and viable musical instrument for today, and not just a relic from a bygone era.

The dates and artists for future shows have not yet been announced, but the tremendous success of this first presentation assures a bright future for theatre organ music in Richmond.

DAVID M. BARNETT □



Lowell Ayars and Mrs. Velma Beck.

(David Barnett Photo)