

Konsole Kapets

by Shirley Hannum Keiter

CHANGE IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

The average theatre-organ arrangement takes two to three minutes to play. If you only have ten minutes during an open console session, you'll spend most of it in setting registration and very little in actual playing. By following the guidelines set forth in this column in the June/July issue, your registration worries are over. Now, you can play three songs (one attention-getter, one ballad, and one applause-getter for good programming) without stopping in between. In this article, we will be dealing with modulation — the how-to of smoothly progressing from one key and mood into another.

There are a few guidelines to remember when changing keys. Although the Circle of Fourths is invaluable in understanding keys and chords, it takes many changes to go most of the way around the circle, and with a minimum of interest. But, *as long as there is one common note between two chords, a progression is*

theoretically possible. Generally, the modulation will be done with the left hand and pedal only, since the right hand will probably be occupied with flipping pages and in changing registration.

Let's take one example. Suppose you want to modulate from the key of C into Eb. First count up 5 scale tones from Eb (the new key) and make the chord a 7th. This chord (Bb7) must precede the statement of the new key (Eb). Therefore, you need to figure your way from C to Bb7. The length of the modulation depends on how much time you need between songs to make changes and to prepare the listener for the mood of what's coming. We will use six changes in this sample. From C, then, we can move to any variation of C, E, or G chords. For the sake of interest, let's go to E Major. Now we have C, E, _____, _____, _____, Bb7, Eb. Since E consists of G#, B, and E, we can now move into any variation of E, Ab (G#), or B chords. Let's go to Ab (Ab C Eb) and then to Db (or C#), which consists of Ab Db F, and then to F (A C F), on to Bb7 (Ab Bb D F) and finally to Eb. Our modulation now looks like this: C, E, Ab, Db, F, Bb7, Eb. We've used all major chords (except for Bb7) in this sample, but augmented, minor, diminished or sixth chords can also be used. Until you are accustomed to modulation, it is best to plan and practice carefully and to write it out in your music.

A modulation is also the time to change the mood of the music for the listener. Remember, *you* always know what you're going to do next, but your listeners need to be prepared. If you are proceeding from a march to a 3/4 ballad, your reduction of registration will be their first hint at what is coming. But how you swing from one form to another will keep them with you. End the march as you normally would, then proceed *immediately* to the modulation, with sustained chords and pedals. (This way, you can hold each chord for as long as necessary before proceeding to the next.) When you reach the new key, play two or four measures of pedal-chord-pedal-chord on the tonic (I) chord in the tempo of the song, and then proceed. The same technique applies when changing from a ballad to a full-organ theatre arrangement.

Keep your audience (no matter how large or small) interested by playing in a variety of keys and by varying your registration appropriately. □



the letters to the editors

Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Address:

Robert M. Gilbert
Editor
3448 Cowper Court
Palo Alto, Calif. 94306

Dear Sir:

In defense of recording concerts: Ron Musselman's article in the Aug./Sept./Oct. issue failed to cover recording concerts from the viewpoint of the patron.

1. For starters, it is impossible to get a good recording with a hand-held recorder anyway. (Obviously, professional equipment, especially that requiring AC power, has to be banned.)

2. You can't see the controls, so you can't be sure you are getting the recording.

Season's Greetings

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