

# Flight to Tokyo

by  
M/Sgt. Louis E. Miller



Hiroshi Matsugawa, at the console of the Mitsukoshi Dept. Store Wurlitzer, Tokyo, Japan.

Theatre organs have been installed in many countries throughout the world. They are to be found in profusion in England, Australia, and Africa, although it might be fairly stated that Africa has fewer than it has elephants or other species of game, the reverse being true in most of the other countries mentioned.

As a matter of fact, theatre organs are to be found in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France, Holland, and even in India, where at one time, if not now, there was installed one lone Wurlitzer. One might wonder how a single solitary Wurlitzer shows up in India, but a turbaned gentleman seated on an organ bench is today almost commonplace, what with Korlu Pandit turning to theatre organ recordings!!!!

None of these facts seem to explain the existence of the Wurlitzer in the Mitsukoshi Department Store in downtown Tokyo, however. At the request of our editor, I accepted the task of seeking out the only theatre organ in Japan, as my first assignment as a new A.T.O.E. member.

It did not take me long to locate the store, a beautiful and modern building. It is, I learned, only one of several stores, there being others in Japan, and other parts of the Far East . . . at one time there were branches in territory now Communist controlled.

After parking the jalopy, I hastened inside, and sure enough, the unmistakable strains of Wurlitzer Theatre Organ sound greeted my ears! A quick glance at the interior of the store revealed a large open well running up through the center of the structure, surrounded on each floor by balconies. I was soon standing beside the console watching a young Japanese organist perform.

He introduced himself to me as Hiroshi Matsugawa. I learned that he had studied piano for eight years at the Tokyo Art School, and that he has played the organ for several years, having taught himself how to handle the console.

The organ is a Model R20, Opus Number 2099 and was shipped from the factory in New York on February 26th, 1930. It has twelve ranks installed in two chambers, which are located side by side. The shutters face out to the balcony railing, with the console situated in front of the chambers. The console has two straight stop jambs or bolsters, and has a roll top as the pictures reveal. One oddity which caught my eye were the six flat-head brass screws installed on each white key to hold the ivories in place! The organ is equipped with a roll player which I was told is now out of order, as is the combination action. As a result, all combinations have to be set by hand. The organ has 791 pipes, and four tremolos,

with 74 percussion notes. This series of model did not come equipped with a toy shelf or traps, and only a Chrysoglott and Chimes in the percussion department.

Tonally, the organ is typical Wurlitzer sound, with the tremolos a bit fast and shallow. It appears to be in need of a thorough servicing, as many of the notes do not play. Matsugawa indicated that he tuned the treble pipes about every ten days, and the basses about every 90 days.

His programs are made up of numbers such as "To A Wild Rose," Handel's "Largo" and other light or semi-classical pieces. The organ has been recorded by Columbia with Matsugawa at the console, and I was soon the recipient of two 7" 45 rpm records, No. AA-32 which has four pieces entitled "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," and "Winter," and No. SA-9 which is a Christmas record including the pieces "Silent Night," "Jingle Bells," and "Auld Lang Syne."

The reproduction is a fair example of the sound of the organ in the store with a close-up mike placement. The brass trumpet is unmistakable as is the Solo scale Tibia Clausa. The records are difficult to review by our standards; suffice it to say that the style of playing is different than that to which we are accustomed and not unpleasing to listen to.

Getting back to the organ itself, the stop tablets are all white and black, with



black lettering for the flue and percussion stops, and red lettering for the reed stops. The couplers are black, as is usual, with white lettering. This was, I understand, normal in the R series.

Matsugawa was recently my house guest where I had the privilege of playing several George Wright Hi-Fi records for him. He was visibly impressed both with the artist and the organ. For any who would like to write to him, address him as follows: — HIROSHI MATSUGAWA, WASED MINAMI-CHO 10, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO, JAPAN.

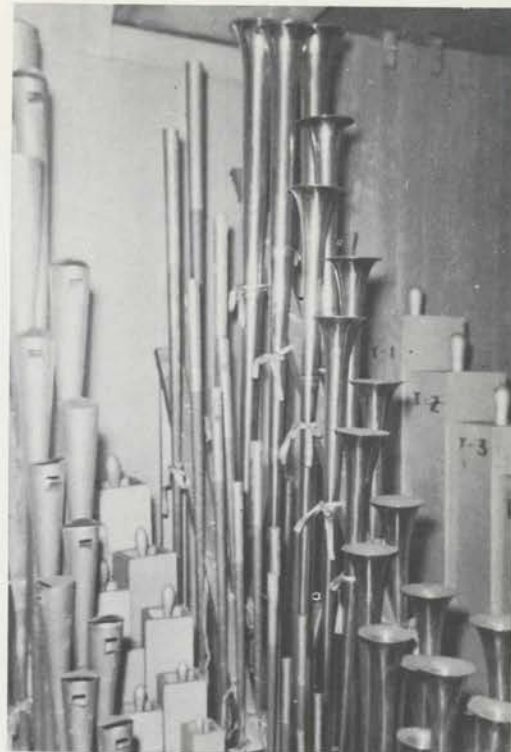
The complete specification of the organ is as follows:—

<b>PEDAL</b>	
Tuba	16'
Bass	16'
Bourdon	16'
Tuba	8'
Diapason	8'
Tibia Clausa	8'
Clarinet	8'
Cello	8'
Flute	8'
Dulciana	8'
Acc to Ped	8'
Great to Ped	8'
Solo to Ped	8'
<b>ACCOMPANIMENT</b>	
Contra Viol (tc)	16'
Tuba	8'
Open Diapason	8'
Tibia Clausa	8'
Clarinet	8'
Oboe Horn	8'
Salicional	8'
Voix Celeste	8'
Flute	8'
Vox Humana	8'
Dulciana	8'
Octave	4'
Piccolo (tibia)	4'
Salicet	4'
Octave Celeste	4'
Flute	4'
Vox Humana	4'
Dulcet	4'
Chrysoglott	
Solo Sub Acc	16'
Solo Unison Acc	8'
Solo Oct Acc	4'

<b>GREAT</b>	
Tuba	16'
Bass	16'
Tibia Clausa (tc)	16'
Clarinet (tc)	16'
Oboe (tc)	16'
Contra Viol (tc)	16'
Bourdon	16'
Trumpet (Brass)	8'
Tuba	8'
Open Diapason	8'
Tibia Clausa	8'
Orchestral Oboe	8'
Clarinet	8'
Oboe Horn	8'
Salicional	8'
Voix Celeste	8'
Flute	8'
Vox Humana	8'
Dulciana	8'
Octave	4'
Piccolo (tibia)	4'
Salicet	4'
Octave Celeste	4'
Flute	4'
Dulcet	4'
Twelfth (flute)	2 2/3'
Piccolo (flute)	2'
Cathedral Chimes	
Solo Sub Great	16'
Solo Unison Great	8'
Solo Oct Great	4'

<b>SOLO</b>	
Tuba	16'
Trumpet	8'
Tuba	8'
Open Diapason	8'
Tibia Clausa	8'
Orchestral Oboe	8'
Oboe Horn	8'
Clarinet	8'
Salicional	8'
Flute	8'
Vox Humana	8'
Octave	4'
Piccolo (tibia)	4'
Salicet	4'
Flute	4'
Twelfth (flute)	2 2/3'
Piccolo (flute)	2'
Cathedral Chimes	

<b>TREMOLO</b>	
Main	
Solo	
Vox Humana	
Tibia Clausa	
Two Swell Pedals	
One Crescendo Pedal	
NO second touch	
5 combination pistons per manual	



Solo chamber view of the Tokyo Wurlitzer. Note identifying numbers on the Tibia Pipes.

**MAIN CHAMBER**

Tuba	16'—73 pipes
Open Diapason	16'—85 pipes
Clarinet	8'—61 pipes
Salicional	8'—73 pipes
Voix Celeste	8'—73 pipes
Flute-Bourdon	16'—97 pipes
Dulciana	8'—73 pipes
Chrysoglott	49 bars

**SOLO CHAMBER**

Brass Trumpet	16'—61 pipes
Tibia Clausa	8'—73 pipes
Oboe Horn	8'—61 pipes
Vox Humana	8'—61 pipes
Cathedral Chimes	25 tubes
Player roll, mechanism attached but in-operative.	



Close-up of oboe horn, solo scale tibia clausa & brass trumpet, solo chamber, Tokyo Wurlitzer.



Close-up of the R-20 model Wurlitzer console, Tokyo.