

Record Reviews

THE MIGHTY WURLITZER AND THE ROARING HI-FI TWENTIES. Leonard Leigh at the KSTP-TV Wurlitzer Organ. RCA-Victor LSP 1665 Monaural and Stereo.

This first release by RCA of Leonard Leigh, formerly organist at this same organ when it was used in the Paramount Theatre, St. Paul, Minnesota, marks Leigh's debut in the Hi-Fi L-P field, both on monaural and stereo versions. The sound will seem a bit unique on first listening, and the organ may even be mistaken at times for an electronic. However, it is Wurlitzer Pipe Organ, with the volume controlled through the electronic pick-up circuit, rather than the swell shutters, which are fixed permanently in the open position. This, the first of two records, gets off to a rather slow start, but picks up interest and momentum as one turns to side 2. It is, one might suspect, a "company" record, with all factors involved under its direct supervision. It is good listening and an introduction to Leonard Leigh. One does not get to know him until one listens to his second L-P.

THE MIGHTY WURLITZER REMEMBERS THE GOOD OLD SONGS. Leonard Leigh at the KSTP-TV Wurlitzer Organ. RCA-Victor LSP 1795 Monaural and Stereo.

Our copy was the stereo version and was an exciting experience to audition. This record is not something to follow in the sales tradition of its predecessor, but it is an entirely new and original arrangement which demonstrates Leigh's musicianship. There is a very "live" crispness in this recording, and the presence is delightful. And the execution and arrangements are truly excellent. The theatre organ tradition in organ playing is recreated nostalgically. Side one ends much too soon, but the tremendous opening on side two, REDWING, is happily received by the listener. There is enough really original material here to defy easy description. It has been placed in the "must" category by our reviewing board.

STILL AVAILABLE—THEATRE ORGAN DISCS OF THE WORLD by M. H. Doner and Reginald Mander. This comprehensive work of five volumes is still available. It lists organists, organs used, and the brand labels of the discs. Arranged alphabetically, Volume One includes Argentina through Switzerland; Volumes Two and Three cover England, while Volumes Four and Five list U.S.A. releases. These may be obtained by writing to Dr. M. H. Doner, 466 Glenview Court, Winona, Minnesota. Two dollars purchases the first three volumes, and the remaining two are 1.50, postage included. This may be your last chance, for when these are gone, there may be no reprint for some time.

SWINGIN' PIPE ORGAN. RCA Victor, LPM-1521. Billy Nalle. Note on jacket: Hi! Here's hoping this will tickle the decibels of your hi fi and afford you even half as much fun as we had in the very wee hours. The very best to you! (signed) BILLY.

Dear Billy:

If we attempted to explain the delay in getting this record reviewed, we'd run out of space so . . .

Your thoughtfulness in sending us the nice letter along with the disc does us more good than you can easily know. Following your suggestion, we boosted bass and treble but found that with moderate volume our equipment seemed not to need it—but with the range somewhat reduced, good effects followed boosts. Because of its very nature, this is a difficult record to review. We heard lots of playing that must have taken hours to arrange, recording is excellent, and the numbers well selected. We know of no other platter slanted at swing in just the way this one is, and there seems no doubt that it achieves its purpose. The drums are about as well controlled as those on any record we recall. And there is never a question as to who is at the control of this beast. We're glad we got it, we find the music a real course in appreciation of its type. Frankly, we'd like to see the stop tab on the percussions "OFF" at least once! But this record should go for what it is, not what it is not.

"FINAL CURTAIN" with Dick LaSalle at the Old Minnesota Theatre Mighty Wurlitzer, 4/20. Audio Artistry, Box 832, Rochester, Minn. #T-J-165-66LP. MONAURAL or STEREO.

This time its for real—both the information, the pictures and the music are exactly as stated on the record jacket! Here, in a superbly executed package produced by a real theatre organ enthusiast, is nostalgia, grandeur, pathos and glory! Admitting to the records minor shortcomings, there has none-the-less been released a real theatre organ collectors item. It was only a matter of a few short weeks after they learned of the sale of the theatre that they discovered the building was to be demolished—and haste was uppermost. Now but a sad pile of rubble, this once great theatre—but no—the record itself will tell you this story. The sound of the organ is well reproduced, and Side two is especially poignant listening. Included within the package is a reproduction of the original program for the opening performance on March 23, 1928, with Eddie Dunstetter at the console. Price is \$4.75 Monaural, \$5.95 Stereo—a real nice item either way!

"ORGAN AT TWILIGHT," Pierre Graveur, Organist. Paris Sound Laboratories, 4645 Delafield Ave., Riverdale, New York. Record #P-120

This is a cut-rate item, picked up in a local dime store, with an intriguing close-up of a pair of hands playing a C sixth chord on the Bombarde manual of the Paramount Studio

Organ, now owned by member Dick Loderhose. This little deal starts out with two very nice theatre organ numbers, Humoresque and Liebestraum. From there on, its all Hammond organ. When first played, and the Hammond bit shows up, you might hopefully flip the record to see what the first two numbers are on the other side—but don't bother—the titles aren't important, as its ALL Hammond on Side 2. Two pipe organ numbers on a big Wurlitzer for \$1.79—not too bad a bargain what with the cover photo. Those three lone white stop tabs on the front-rail are swell couplers, by the way.

RCA CUSTOM L-P #RAL 1010 "Very Hi-Fi Organ," Vol. 10 for Hi-Fi Living. Jocelyn McNeil at the Pipe Organ.

Jocelyn, as pictured on the record jacket seated in front of the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer Console, is enough to make any red-blooded American boy want to have this release as his very own! Here you will find a really nice selection of the older pop tunes played with all the nuances and niceties possible to hear from Joe Kearns gold-plated Wurlitzer, just about the nicest sounding home installation yet recorded. After listening to the familiar sounding combinations which include a lot of 2' Tibia Piccolo with 4' coupler, 4' Tibia Piccolo with 8' Krument and Kinura; and the spicy Solo Brass Trumpet work, dashed with cayenne English Horn, you will come to realize that Jocelyn has learned an awful lot about theatre organ in the few short years she has inhabited this old planet earth—don't let the Pseudo-nym fool you — this is guess who???? Guy Melendy! Just about the best record buy on today's market, at \$1.49.

CLP 5091—"ORGAN RHAPSODY" William Daly At The Great Big Organ.

This record is on Crown label and the jacket lists the address as 9317 West Washington Blvd., Culver City, California.

Here is a record with a very misleading cover—four manuals with drawbars in the background. The record itself sounds very much like an 8 rank Wurlitzer. It could almost be an English installation judging by the very fast tremulant setting. The playing and the recording are good. Combinations used are pretty much the same throughout, with a good strong 8' Tuba added to the Pedal on full combinations. A little more individual, or thin, combinations would have given a better clue as to the size of the organ. A nice variety of selections includes All The Things You Are, In The Still Of The Night, Button Up Your Overcoat, I Love A Lassie, and others. This record was found on a bargain rack in a chain drug store priced at \$1.88! WJ