

Buddy Nolan Plays 50th Anniversary Concert

by Robert J. Ort

On Saturday, February 27, 1982, a near-capacity audience helped veteran theatre organist Buddy Nolan celebrate his fiftieth year in the entertainment business with a program in the historic, elegant Embassy Theatre in downtown Fort Wayne, Indiana, with Buddy at the console of that theatre's 4/15 Page theatre pipe organ. The program marked Nolan's fifteenth concert done there since he moved to Indiana from his native Pennsylvania following military service in World War II.

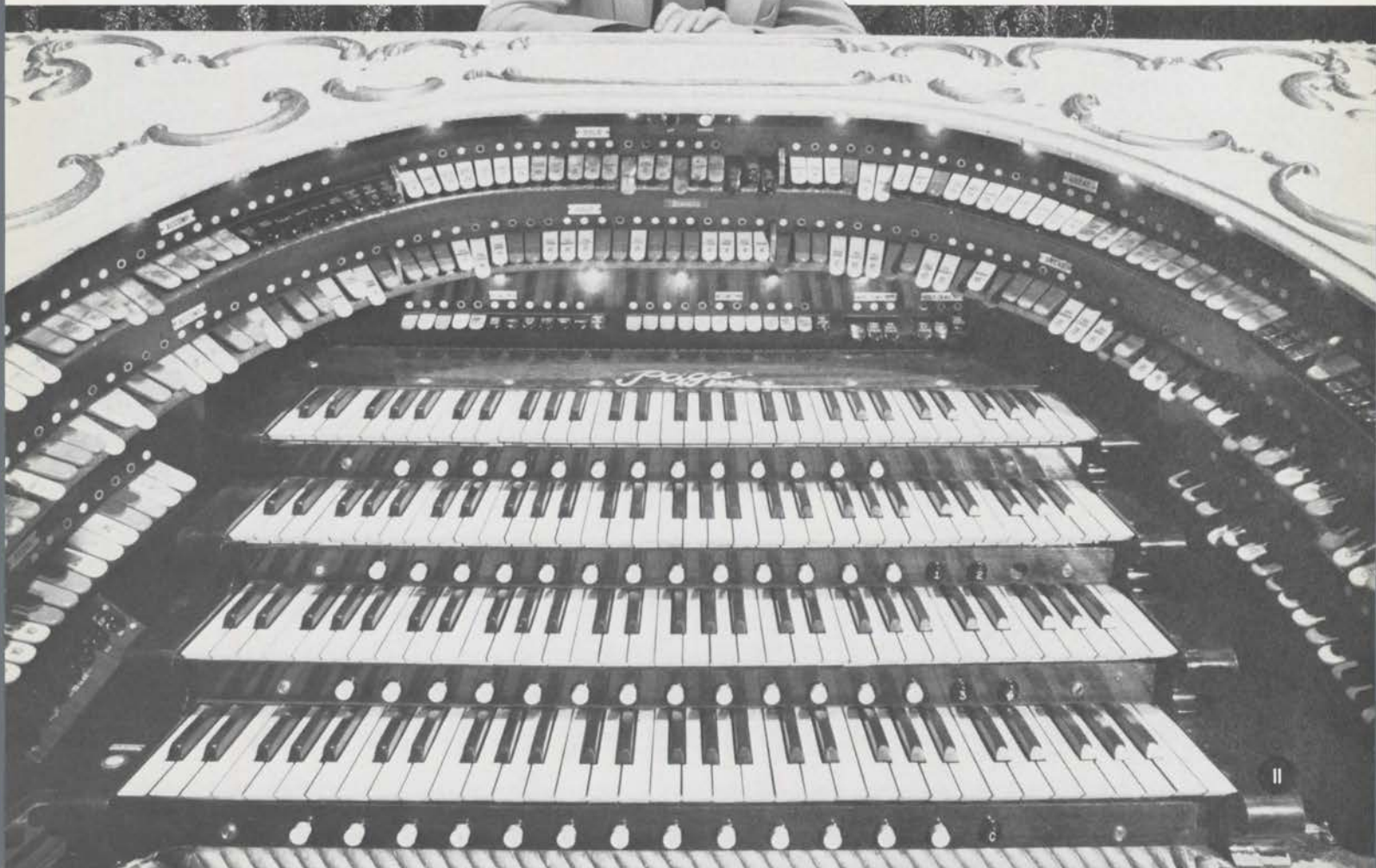
The Embassy Theatre Foundation's Board of Directors last year

honored Buddy Nolan and Bob Goldstine for their part in creating the nucleus of what eventually became the Embassy Theatre Founda-

tion in the early 1970s, saving the building and its precious Page when they were destined to be leveled. The 54-year-old Embassy with its ornate interior restored is truly *the* showplace of Indiana now, and a fitting tribute to these two dedicated gentlemen. It was the ideal setting for the Golden Anniversary Concert honoring Buddy's half century in the world of music.

Nolan's performances are always more show oriented than concert, using variety and surprises instead of the production of many musical selections. Repeating a feature of his

Photo: Mike Hanley / The News-Sentinel.



*You can help us build up our force
for the fight to preserve the theatre
pipe organ . . . by getting a new
member, see page 29.*

last Embassy program, Buddy utilized Jim Burcaw, a very talented pianist/technician from Muncie, Indiana, to play the Embassy lobby grand piano from the mezzanine for a 45-minute pre-show program, as well as an intermission interlude. Many lingered in the lobby to enjoy Jim's talents.

Buddy's openings are always a total surprise, with this show providing a look at Bud's early life by way of a series of humorous slides with back-stage piano accompaniment. Nolan lets his audience know that he doesn't take himself seriously, and he transmits that feeling to them before he even begins his portion of the show.

Bud's own "Embassy Theme" opened the first segment, in which the selections ranged from old standards to "New York, New York," with some Academy Award songs along the way. Once again, Dyne Pfeffenberger's elegant piano stylings were an important feature of this Nolan concert. Buddy blended Dyne into this program by playing Gershwin's "Strike Up the Band" and "Rhapsody in Blue" as Dyne at

the Embassy's Steinway concert grand lifted into view. Together they produced an impressive medley of popular Gershwin tunes. Piano and pipe organ never blended better, and the audience applauded its approval.

During the first segment, Buddy also involved the audience by announcing that there was a talented, young organist named Jeff Hinkle in their midst. Nolan then invited the ten-year-old to the console to play a number. Young Hinkle chose "It's a Small World" for his theatre organ debut, and the audience loved it enough to prompt Nolan to ask him to repeat it. Needless to say, the audience loved the young artist.

As Buddy finished his first half, a local bearer of glad tidings who bills himself professionally as "Jeff, The Singing Messenger" rushed down the aisle to the console and sang Nolan a happy-fiftieth-in-show-business telegram containing some very clever lyrics.

Nolan began the second half by recalling the music and composers of that era when he first started in the entertainment field. Especially well received was a medley of Victor Herbert's tunes, as well as one containing songs that Buddy considered those requested most often through the years.

Dyne Pfeffenberger returned in the second segment to do a tribute to Hoagy Carmichael with an elegant interpretation of "Star Dust." Buddy and Dyne were then joined by Jim Burcaw at the piano, and the three played several ragtime tunes and

some novelty numbers that delighted the audience.

The final part of segment two featured the song slide/community singing section which is always an audience favorite. Buddy closed with "I'll Be Seeing You" and "There's No Business Like Show Business." The audience gave Buddy a standing ovation. That pleased him enough to begin work on the next fifty. □

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

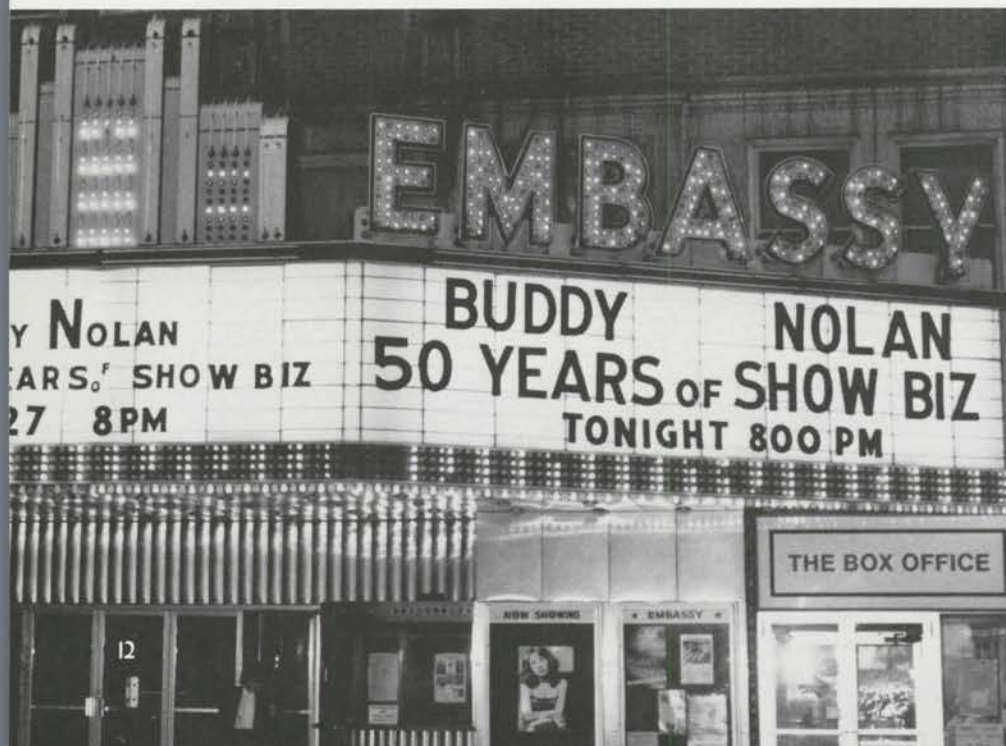
by Lance Johnson

Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

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Q. I'm having trouble voicing the low CCC of my 16' Wurlitzer Tibia with the rest of the pipes. It is either too soft or too windy, depending on the position of the regulator valve in the foot. If the valve is closed down the pipe becomes soft. If it is opened up, the pipe becomes loud and windy. I've checked the pipe for cracks and the usual leaks around the stopper and glue joints and all are tight. I would appreciate any suggestions for getting the volume up and the windiness out.

A. You have stated a common problem concerning wood bass pipes with which even organ builders strug-