



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.

LUSH ROMANTIC KNIGHTS. Don Knights playing the 4-manual Compton theatre organ in Abbey Hall, Abington, England. Released as a cassette only by Tremulant Recordings. Available by International Money Order for six British Pounds from 'J' Enterprises, Millaway, Reading Road, Woodcote, Nr. Reading, Berks RG8 0QY, England. (Note: at this writing a British Pound equalled \$1.45, which adds up to \$8.70 plus the cost of an International Money Order.)

This cassette heralds the emergence of a brand new organ music releaser — Tremulant Recordings, the brainchild of Roger and Jean Maytum whose enthusiasm is to be admired and nurtured in view of the closing down of small record companies in the USA. This is their first release and is presented in cassette form only. The organist selected by the Maytums to "preem" their new company was veteran theatre organist Don Knights, who is no stranger to the instrument; he recorded a well-played program of Austrian favorites for the Concert

label on it a few years ago entitled *Viennese Knights*. It illustrated the same determination to avoid the overdone and obvious as his *Holidays and Knights* recorded on a Wurlitzer for the Carwell label. So far as we know, these gems are no longer available, but the same striving for an interesting tunelist is evident in *Lush Romantic Knights*.

Admittedly aimed toward U.S. listeners (Don has strong family ties with the USA), the titles, with a few exceptions, are selections by American tunesmiths. And the list is generous:

Side 1: Medley — "Manhattan Serenade" (excerpts), "Manhattan" (Rodgers), "Rose of Washington Square," "Penthouse Serenade;" "Savoy Tango Medley" — four tangos (titles not listed but we recognized "Goodnight Vienna"); Medley — "I'm a One-Man Girl," "Song of the Trees," "In Cherry Blossom Lane," "Can't We Talk it Over?," "Love Letters in the Sand;" "Mountain Greenery" (Rodgers).

Side 2: "Her Name is Mary" (by Harold Ramsey, a colleague); "Vienna Bon-Bons" (Strauss); Intermission Medley — "Tell Me Little Gypsy" (Berlin), "Moonglow," "Melody of Love," "You'll Never Know," "Lazy River," "Dolores," "Strange Music," "One Dozen Roses," "My Ideal," "Everything's Been Done Before," "I'll Get By," "Auf Wiedersehen;" "The Song That I Sing;" "We'll Meet Again." Thirty titles, and not one "quickstep" among them.

The organ is a 3/9 Compton plus a three-octave Fanfare Trumpet which Don solos occasionally. The installation in Abington's Abbey Hall (1966) is still another story of the determination of a small group of enthusiasts (the Abington chapter of the Theatre Organ Preservation Society) to rescue an instrument, in this case the 1931 Compton installation in the Birmingham Gaumont Cinema. The Abbey Hall acoustic environment is very favorable. The Fanfare Trumpet sounds like it is coming from the far end of the auditorium, truly an echo rank. Apparently the console has been rebuilt or replaced; it now boasts four manuals. We mention these points because there is precious little information contained in the cassette mailer; no room.

Don Knights has been playing in

theatres ever since he quit his church job as a teenager. Over the years he has played for such British theatre chains as Granada, ABC and Odeon. His style is smooth and ingratiating, with no musical cul-de-sacs to make us wonder how he will resolve them. His harmony is mostly conventional with an occasional off-beat progression thrown in to keep listeners on their toes. If there is an adverse criticism it may be overuse of the slur; Don likes to slur up to a new phrase, a tendency not apparent in his previous recordings. Perhaps he sees the musical slur as an adjunct to the USA characteristics of the tunes recorded here. Certainly there are precedents; the big radio orchestras such as those of Kostelanetz and David Rose often used the device.

Recording is good, with a minimum of distortion. As mentioned previously, there isn't room for much information on the folded card which serves also as a label. This cassette points toward an encouraging future for the new record label.

AN EVENING WITH GARELD. Gareld Payne playing a 2/8 Robert-Morton home installation. No. AAS-1423-LP (stereo). \$8.50 postpaid from Gareld Payne, 1306 West First Street, Coffeyville, Kansas 67337. Check or money order okay.

Chances are the name "Jerry Payne" will be unfamiliar. But if you have frequented restaurants, pizzerias and lounges in midwest and southwest towns and cities, including Vegas, it is likely that you have heard him; over the past 25 years he has played in more than 50 such locations. On electronic organs, of course. But all this time Gareld Payne was in love with the pipe organ. So when the opportunity came to record, he selected a home installation, an eight-rank Morton organ. In fact, it's

TAPE RECORDING WORKSHOP

A discussion workshop on tape recording will be held during the '83 Convention in San Francisco. Location, day and time will be announced and posted at the Registration Desk. The workshop will be open to anyone interested. □



Gareld Payne.

a mystery organ; the owner consented to the recording session only with the provision that his name and the location of the instrument be not revealed. So the only clues we can offer are that the Morton was originally shipped to the Empress Theatre (later the New American Theatre) in Fort Collins, Colorado. It's now installed in a Springfield, Missouri, home. Of course, there aren't too many eight-rank theatre pipe organs in that neck of the woods. So, interested organ detectives can take it from there.

Gareld prefers to play on full combinations but occasionally solos a wonderfully mellow Trombone in the baritone register (listed as Trumpet on the stoplist printed on the jacket). And he shuns percussions although the stoplist claims Chimes, Glockenspiel, Chrysoglott, even a snare drum. Here he leans toward rhythm-ballads, but there are a couple of tunes played in jazz style.

He opens with a lilting "Carolina in the Morning," then it's a slow-fox, "Here's That Rainy Day." Nice Tibia ending. He goes country for "Your Cheatin' Heart" sans "gitters," then to his own jazz styling of a southern folk tune, with touches of blues, "Li'l Liza Jane." "Send in the Clowns" is pleasingly dominated by the baritone register of the Trumpet plus some excursions from the written melody. "Have I Told You Lately That I Love You?" opens Side 2 as a rhythm-ballad. "Since I Fell For You" is slow and languorous, but the beat is there. So is the solo Trumpet. "Five Foot Two" is provided the expected jazz treatment and the Morton comes through.

Jobim tunes seem always to make attractive organ fare. Gareld has se-

lected "Meditation." In his hands it gets a TLC treatment with lush registration. The last item is an original by the organist, one with a puzzling title — "Two Pennies on a Candle." It's a rhythm-ballad with much appeal as registered on the well-integrated ranks of the Morton.

The quality of performance is generally high, although there are a few flubs to be heard. It's pleasing playing rather than great playing. It has the close-up "studio" sound with just a touch of reverb added to avoid "deadness." The review pressing was smooth and free of "pops" and other surface noises.

It's a pleasant first recording by an organist with much to offer, but who could use more time profitably getting the feel of his instrument.

The jacket lists the selections, the stoplist and some bio of Gareld Payne.

ORGAN MAGIC. Six record set of electronic organ music played by seven popular organists plus the re-created Three Suns trio. Set No. 207. Available from Reader's Digest, Pleasantville, N.Y. 10570. Price: \$29.97 postpaid. Available also on 8-track tapes and cassettes.

A few issues back we gave good marks to the Digest's *The Mighty Pipe Organ Plays Golden Favorites* set with its galaxy of star organists and fine recording organs (it's still available). Just as much care and effort has gone into the preparation of *Organ Magic*. The pressings are RCA Dynagroove, smooth and fault-free. Extensive jacket notes provide much information about artists and music. And the price of about \$5.00 a record is very attractive. Recording is very good, even when some cuts appear to gild the lily. More about that later.

There are too many selections to list here; we counted seventy-three on the six sides (tunelist available from the Digest). Showtunes, nostalgia and film hits dominate. And there are whole sides of swingband recreations and syncopated classics, also tunes long associated with the individual organists.

The artists and instruments represent a cross section of the electronic organ field of recent years, although economic conditions have wrought changes since the recordings were made; some organists have switched allegiance and are no longer plugging

the brands they championed in the past. At least one builder has gone out of business and another has been completely reorganized. The players and instruments heard here are: Jane Jarvis (Thomas Celebrity model 871), Eddie Layton (Hammond Concord model 2300), Glenn Derringer (Wurlitzer model 625 T), Don Baker (Conn model 651), Bill Thomson (Yamaha E-70), Frank Renaut (Lowrey Symphonic), Dick Hyman (Baldwin Studio 2). The Three Suns use the Hammond 2300.

Buyers of electronic organ records are aware of the "demo" records, many recorded by the same artists, available at lower prices from manufacturers and dealers. Then why buy the Digest set? One good reason is that all of the music has been newly recorded, and none dubbed from existing demo records. An even better reason is that the organists are free of the obligation of demonstrating their employers' sales pitch gadgetry (e.g., automatics, arpeggiators, transposers, etc). It's interesting to note how the organists respond to this freedom; some simply soar while others seem conditioned to the demo routine. We are happy to report that there are a minimum of overcooked musical clichés in these grooves, but there are a few slip-ups by those who should know better.

Among the artists there are some crossovers, that is, organists who are also well-known on pipes. Those who play theatrically are Don Baker, Bill Thomson and, on some numbers, Frank Renaut. The others play in the entertainment styles which earned them their reputations.

There is one intriguing mystery and that's in the recording technique department; what magic was used to make the recordings of the Yamaha E-70, which makes no pretense of being a theatre instrument, sound more theatrical than the Conn 651, which is purely theatrical in concept and tonality?

Organists Jarvis, Derringer, Thomson, Renaut, Baker and Hyman each fill a record side, while Layton shares a side with the reconstructed Three Suns, a popular cocktail trio of the '50s. The remaining sides include tunes by more than one of the organists, each with their contrasting styles. It's a variety mix of electronic organs and playing modes, and the price is right. □