



Spinning Organs

... BY THE EDITOR

LET'S TAKE an inventory of Hi-Fi, lateral disc, L.P. recordings issued from the fall of 1955 to Jan. 1, 1957, a period of about 16 months:

Number of Discs	62
Number of Recorded Organists	30
Baker, Don	Kiley, John
Berry, Leon	Knaus, Bill
Bohr, Ray	Leibert, Dick
Carson, Paul	McAbee, Kay
Clifford, Eddie	Melgard, Al
Cole, Buddy	Mickelson, Paul
Duffy, Johnny	Miller, Ashley
Dunstedter, Eddie	Osborne, Eddie
Erwin, Lee	Pearl, Hal
Foort, Reginald	Siegel, Arsene
Gerhard, Ramona	Thompson, Bill
Heaps, Porter	Torrent, Shay
Holmes, Ernestine	Welch, Truman
Kates, Bob	Westbrook, Helen
Kibbee, Gordon	Wright, George
Number of Organs	26

In Theatres

Acca Mosque Temple, Richmond, Virginia	(R. Foort)
Byrd, Richmond, Virginia	(D. Leibert)
Fox, Detroit, Mich.	(R. Foort)
Fox, San Francisco	(G. Wright)
Metropolitan, Boston, Mass.	(J. Kiley)
Music Hall, Seattle, Washington	(E. Clifford)
Paramount, Aurora, Ill.	(K. McAbee)
Paramount, New York	(R. Bohr, G. Wright)
Oriental, Chicago, Ill.	(A. Siegel, H. Westbrook)
Radio City Music Hall, N. Y.	(A. Miller)

In Ballrooms, Studios

Aragon, Chicago, Ill.	(H. Pearl, Shay Torrent)
Trionon, Chicago, Ill.	(Bill Knaus)
Iceland Amphitheatre, Paramount, Cal.	(T. Welch)
Hub Rink, Chicago, Ill.	(L. Berry, E. Osborne)
Stadium, Chicago, Ill.	(A. Melgard)

In Recording Studios

W.G.N. Organ Studio, Chicago, Ill.	(P. Heaps)
Lorin Whitney Studios, Glendale, Cal.	(E. Dunstedter, Don Baker, Richard Ellsasser)
KNX—(Columbia Square), L. A., Cal.	(J. Duffy, R. Gerhard)
C.B.S., Hollywood, Cal.	(P. Mickelson)
N.B.C., Hollywood, Cal.	(P. Carson, L. Charles, P. Mickelson)
Radio City Music Hall, Studio, N. Y.	(E. Holmes)

In Residences

Berry, Leon, Chicago, Ill.	(L. Berry)
Cole, Buddy, Hollywood, Cal.	(B. Cole)

Kates, Bob (Berkeley, Cal.)	(B. Kates)
Quinby, Jay (Summit, N. J.)	(L. Erwin)
Vaughn, Rich, Hollywood, Cal.	(D. Baker, G. Kibbee, G. Wright)
Wittenburg, Bud, Beverly Hills, Cal.	(B. Thompson)
Kearns, Joe, Hollywood, Cal.	(J. Duffy)
Huck, Bill, Des Plaines, Ill.	(E. Osborne)
Types of Organs	6
Barton, Chicago Stadium	(A. Melgard)
Moller-U. S., Jay Quinby residence, Summit, N. J.	(L. Erwin)
Robert-Morton	
Music Hall, Seattle, Wash.	(E. Clifford)
Cole Residence, Hollywood, Cal.	(B. Cole)
Lorin Whitney Studio, Glendale, Cal.	(E. Dunstedter)
Wurlitzer	
Acca Mosque Temple, Richmond, Virginia	(R. Foort)
Aragon Ballroom, Chicago, Ill.	(H. Pearl, S. Torrent)
Berry Residence, Chicago, Ill.	(L. Berry)
Byrd Theatre, Richmond, Virginia	(D. Leibert)
Columbia Square (KNX), L. A., Cal.	(J. Duffy, R. Gerhard)
Fox Theatre, Detroit, Mich.	(R. Foort)
Hub Rink, Chicago, Ill.	(L. Berry, E. Osborne)
Huck Residence, Des Plaines, Ill.	(E. Osborne)
Iceland Amphitheatre, Paramount, Cal.	(T. Welch)
Kates' Residence (Berkeley, Cal.)	(B. Kates)
Kearns' Residence, Hollywood, Cal.	(J. Duffy)
Metropolitan Theatre, Boston, Mass.	(J. Kiley)
Oriental Theatre, Chicago, Ill.	(A. Siegel, H. Westbrook)
Paramount Theatre, N. Y.	(R. Bohr, G. Wright)
Paramount Theatre, Aurora, Ill.	(K. McAbee)
Radio City, Music Hall	(A. Miller)
Studio, Radio City Music Hall, N. Y.	(E. Holmes, P. Mickelson)
Trionon Ballroom, Chicago, Ill.	(B. Knaus)
Wittenburg Residence, Beverly Hills, Cal.	(B. Thompson)
Wurlitzer-Kimball	
WGN Studio, Chicago, Ill.	(P. Heaps)
Wurlitzer and other makes	
C.B.S., Hollywood, Cal.	(P. Mickelson)
N.B.C., Hollywood, Cal.	(P. Carson, L. Charles, P. Mickelson)

Readers of this column will be pleased to note that, beginning with this issue, the new releases will be "reviewed" by competent persons who have the very finest hi-fi playback equipment. At the onset, it was decided to refrain from criticising the artistry of the organist. This policy shall continue in spite of the fact that many readers would presumably welcome critical comments. On the other hand, there are areas where criticism is in order—i.e., sloppy tape editing and misrepresentations on labels and record jackets. Several examples of this sort of thing can be noted: the label on the Eddie Clifford disc states "Wurlitzer" whereas the organ is actually a Robert Morton; Dick Leibert's Christmas Album was not the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer but a church organ; the Christmas album of Ramona Gerhard was claimed to have been recorded on the "World's Largest Theatre Organ"; that Joe Kearns' Wurlitzer includes "a Wurlitzer upright piano" whereas the specifications reveal no piano (evidently the piano was dubbed-in), and tinkering with photos of organ consoles by pasting in tabs, pistons, and studs. Additionally, it may be stated that multiple recordings should so state on the record jacket. Failure to disclose such information has often resulted in arguments. An organ fan is told by an organist that so-

and-so could not possibly have played that number with two hands and two feet at one time. These things are of little consequence to the average person who buys an organ record but the true organ enthusiast pleads for accuracy. In our opinion, misrepresentations are inexcusable and it is to be hoped this practice will not continue. Situations such as this and those previously mentioned do not, of course, reflect on the organist.

Reviews of Recent Recordings

AUDIO FIDELITY

Leon Berry (Wurlitzer, Hub Rink, Chicago, Ill.)

1829-12-33. Leon Berry at the giant Wurlitzer. Vol. II. Record not received in time for review.

CAPITOL RECORDS

Don Baker (Robert-Morton, Lorin Whitney Studio, Glendale, Cal.)

T 797-12-33. "FAR AWAY MUSIC." Sel.

April in Paris, Japanese sandman, Russian lullaby, Valencia, Moonlight on the Ganges, Flying down to Rio; Come back to Sorrento, Vienna Dreams, Canadian capers, Song of the islands, In a Persian market.

Don Baker "conducts a tour of faraway places" and the die-hard Wurlitzer fan is in for a bit of "come-uppance" when he hears this recording of Don Baker playing some pleasing arrangements of old standards on a beautifully regulated Robert-Morton. Although Mr. Whitney's organ does contain a couple of ranks by Wurlitzer, the over-all tonal color is definitely Robert-Morton. To date, this recording represents the *ne plus ultra* recording of a R-M. Technically, there is no evidence of a multiple recording and if any artificial reverberation was employed, it was done so in excellent taste. This is studio-organ sound at its best with well-developed 16' pedal tone. Mr. Baker seems inspired to new "highs" in playing, and with such an excellent organ to work with the reason is evident. (R.G.)

COLUMBIA

Ashley Miller (Wurlitzer, Radio City Music Hall, N. Y.)

CL 945-12-33. "THE RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL ORGAN." Sel.:

Fantasia Impromptu, C \sharp minor, Op., 66 (Chopin-Miller), Poem (Fibich), Flight of the bumble bee (Rimsky-Korsakov), Slavonic dance No. 10 in E minor (Dvorak), Satyr dance (German); The continental, Medley—Once in love with Amy, My darling, my darling, Serenade, The piccolo, Yesterdays, Stranger in paradise.

Here, **at last**, is a recording of the Music Hall Theatre Organ, not the Studio Wurlitzer. And very nicely recorded indeed. Columbia has given us a bit of the "auditorium" sound and it all comes off very well. Ashley Miller does a fine job on the two groups of selections, both the light classics and the popular tunes. Most organ fans should find the arrangements to their liking as well as the execution of them. My favorite was the arrangement of the pop tune "Once In Love With Amy." Miller has a nice counter-melody in this number, and it is in this piece that we find the only use of tonal percussions—except for the occasional use of chimes—with the use of Orchestral Bells to highlight the bounce of the number. The playing throughout the record is made up of full registrations that give a full and glorious sound to this Mighty Wurlitzer. There is excellent full bass, in fact so full, that on one of the machines on which I played this record there was a tendency for the needle to jump on some of the fuller passages. The record notes are adequate, although I think most organ fans would have appreciated a close-up view of the organ console to go along with the view of the Music Hall stage, in which the console is merely a "blob" of white light. (A.C.)

MGM RECORDS

Richard Ellsasser (Robert-Morton, Lorin Whitney Studio, Glendale, Cal.)

E3490-12-33. "HI-FI HOLIDAY FOR ORGAN." Music by David Rose. See Disc. No. 279 in "Discography."

Record not received in time for review, but, suffice to say, organ enthusiasts will enjoy the artistry of Mr. Ellsasser who is perhaps best known for his many recordings of the music of Bach, Widor, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Franck,

and many contemporary composers of organ music. When a virtuoso of the stature of Mr. Ellsasser performs from the console of Mr. Lorin Whitney's Robert-Morton the results are magnificent listening.

PACIFICA

Bill Thompson (Wurlitzer, Bud Wittenburg's residence, Berkeley, Cal.)

P-2003-12-33. "Bill THOMPSON PLAYS RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN." Sel.:

From "The King and I"—Shall we dance, Whistle a happy tune, Hello young lovers, March of the Siamese children, Getting to know you, Finale; from "Oklahoma"—People will say we're in love, The surrey with the fringe on top; from "State Fair"—It might as well be spring, It's a grand night for singing, from "Carousel"—If I loved you, June is bursting out all over, from "South Pacific"—Bali Hai, Some enchanted evening, There is nothing like a dame.

A finer group of selections could not be brought together on one record, and certainly a fine talent is displayed by Mr. Thompson. His arrangements are new, well done, and full of variety. The organ is used to its fullest possibilities in an assortment of tonal combinations, many of which come through in an excellent manner on this recording. In particular, his use of tonal percussions is stimulating and many of the softer reed solos are beautiful. There is an "ultimate" tone to this organ . . . a feeling that is found even in the "full" registrations. It all makes for a "studio-like" presentation, with everything very precise and clear. Many organ fans will welcome this display of fine new talent and the ultimate and close nature of the sound through which it is presented, others will wish for a "fuller" type of recording, but in either case, the talent is still there to be heard. (A.C.)

NEW SOUND

Bob Kates (Wurlitzer, Kates' residence, Berkeley, Cal.)

NS 4002-12-33. "PIPE DREAMS." Sel.:

Snowfall, You go to my head, Lighthouse by the sea, September song, Candle in the wind; Stardust, None shall sleep, All the things you are, I could write a book, Remember.

To many organ fans this record will mark a step forward in the series of recordings that Bob Kates has been doing on his two manual residence Wurlitzer. It is, to this reviewer at least, much easier listening than the first release with the many novelty selections on it. Here we have just plain old "Wurlitzer magic," and it makes for fine listening. The arrangements are all pleasing, registrations varied, and the whole album is well recorded. In fact, as far as home installations go, this Wurlitzer has a nicely balanced sound . . . outstanding is the well balanced bass that gives a feeling of "body" to all the work. So often in home installations there is that lack of fullness that most of us like, but here it has been overcome to a great degree. All in all, a very pleasant group of sentimental ballads that make for good background music, or just fine listening when you become tired of having your ears bent back by Tubas and Brass Trumpets, en masse. (A.C.)

RCA VICTOR

Ray Bohr (Wurlitzer, Paramount Theatre, N. Y.). With the Three Suns.

LPM-1333-12-33. "MIDNIGHT FOR TWO." Sel.:

The world is waiting for the sunrise, When Yuba plays the rumba on the tuba, Memory lane, Blue tango, I don't stand a ghost of a chance, Intermission time; Stella by starlight, Cumana, Midnight for two, Ain't misbehavin', Let's call the whole thing off, The very thought of you.

The editors were a little hesitant to include this album in our Record Review feature, since it is not, strictly speaking, an organ record. Yet it should be of interest to the many admirers of the New York Paramount Wurlitzer. On this record we have the talents of Ray Bohr at the Paramount Organ combined with those of the Three Suns, and to this reviewer it was a happy combination. The arrangements are all first rate, as would be expected with this group, but more important is the way the organ comes through on this record. The recorded sound is superb . . . and the Tibias, Trumpets and what-have-you, of this famous instrument come shining through with beautiful tonal quality, far superior in many ways to the record released by Victor of Ray Bohr doing a solo stint at this same organ. It would be difficult to pick out any particular number and point to it as superior to the others. We'll settle for more of the same. (A.C.)