



L to R: Ian Dalglish, Richard Purvis and Dr. Edward J. Mullins outside Royal Festival Hall, London, England, October 8, 1986, after organ concert. (Martin A. Lilley photo)

Terry obviously adores its unique sound. He played his own composition, "Miss Liberty March," which suited this organ. I can only recall Carlo Curley playing a concert at the Odeon and wonder why, with its delightful presentation and great organ, more organists from the USA don't get a chance to play it.

Searle Wright is no stranger to London; he has played at Kilburn State and other theatres here in the past. On August 31 our ATOS chapter teamed him with our own George Blackmore at the State Kilburn 4/16 Torch special Wurlitzer. It is lovely to have this most interesting Wurlitzer back in use again. The console has been moved off of its revolving lift on the right side of the stage and is now on a podium near the left side of the stage under its chambers, and while the theatricality of its "entrance" at concerts and solos is lost now, no doubt the organists prefer it as they can now hear what they are playing.

Another most brilliant organist, always welcome here, is Dennis James who is no stranger to us and who played a September 6 double concert and silent film, Chaplin's *The Circus*. This was at the fabulous New Victoria Centre, Howden-Le-Wear, on the NETOA 3/11 Wurlitzer 220 Special, a superbly voiced and maintained organ. Because of the size of this specially created super-cinema organ studio, Dennis had to repeat the show on September 7. A quite brilliant artist is Dennis James.

Another transplanted Wurlitzer is the ex-Union Circuit Ritz Cinema Ipswich 3/8, a late style which, after languishing in storage and changing hands, has landed up in the bustling Yorkshire seaside resort of Scarborough. Installed by its owner, Arthur Turner, an ex-cinema organist, in the Hollywood-Plaza, an old-time cinema now brought to life again for special programmes, the Ritz Wurlitzer was played in its heyday by such big names as Sid Torch, Robinson Cleaver and Harold Ramsey. Ramsey actually designed it as head organist of Union, then the fourth largest chain in Britain. The giant ABC circuit took over Union when it got into financial dif-

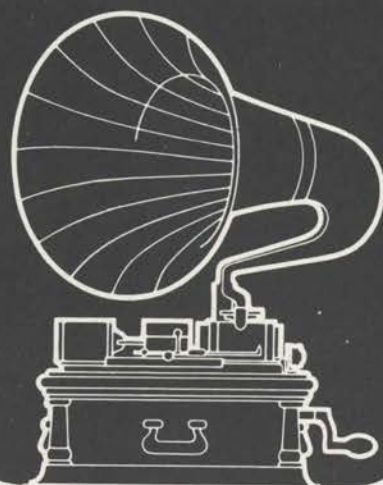
ficulties in 1937. No more Wurlitzers were ordered, and Cleaver, Torch and Ramsey eventually left. Lavish stage shows and solos were all too much for ABC who did things their way. Another fine Ramsey-designed Wurlitzer has been in hiding since it was removed from the Ritz Cinema Chatham, Kent, in 1972. It sported its own grand piano on its own lift alongside the elaborate glass, illuminated console. Dave Pawlyn, the organ-builder, owns this gem which a cinema organ group in Telford, Shropshire, plans to lease and install in a cinema complex there. I don't recall the county of Shropshire having one theatre organ installation in the Golden Heyday, so they do deserve a break after all these years.

Back in London, near the world-famous Regents Park Zoo, was the 2700-seat Gaumont Camden Town which boasted a superb four-manual Compton. The console used to slide out of a niche like the one in Radio City Music Hall, BUT it would then revolve around. There was a big pit orchestra conducted by the late Montovani, and organists such as Ena Baga and Sid Gustard played the Compton. The organ was, sadly, removed years ago, the cinema turned into a store and the balcony into mini-cinemas. Now the enterprising operator has spent a fortune putting the glamour back into cinemas again, even to having a Wurlitzer installed in one of the two cinemas — so the famous site will soon be filled with the sound of a real organ once again. History does sometimes repeat itself after all.

It's not only people who celebrate birthdays — theatre organs love this, too. Over in organ-minded Holland, in the radio/TV station of Hilversum, is the famous four-manual Compton/Standaard opened fifty years ago and happily all intact. Recently the AVRO station held an Open Day, and 30,000 people came to see and hear the famous organ played by Bernard Drukker who had played it hundreds of times on the air and for recording. Nostalgia does get a look-in once again.

Have a lovely Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all. □

For The Records



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the **Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 4633 SE Brookside Drive #58, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222**. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.

TY WOODWARD PLAYS THE MIGHTY WURLITZER ORGAN, The Auditorium Theatre, Rochester, New York. 12" LP or cassette available from: Ty Woodward Productions, P.O. Box 3845, Manhattan Beach, California 90266. \$10.95 plus \$1.50 postage and handling.

Ty Woodward releases his sequel to the Kennedy Center disc.

These performances are so reserved as to border on lifeless. Although the playing is accurate, there is more to music than getting all the notes right. Actually, his ballads are quite successful, even though the phrasing is not perfect.

The way this album is put together makes it sound like a pizza album done on a concert organ. Selections include: "Another Op'nin', Another Show," "Memory," "What'll I Do," "Maple Leaf Rag," "New York, New York," "Evergreen," "Honeymoon Hotel," "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," and saving the best for last, Lemmen's "Fanfare," which is brilliant. If the rest of the album were of this quality, Mr. Woodward would cause quite a stir in the theatre organ world. Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" should have been omitted as he doesn't quite get the timing right.

The RTOS organ is one of the truly fine theatre concert instruments. Anyone by now not familiar with this wonderful organ should avail themselves of the opportunity to become familiar with it, but perhaps with a different recording. The recording engineer did an excellent, perhaps perfect job here.

This reviewer feels that the cost of this album is not concomitant with the rather modest accomplishment.

BOB SHAFTER

PIPES OF CHRISTMAS, Lyn Larsen at the Wichita Century II Convention Center. Pro-Arte Compact Disc CDD282. Available in record stores or from ProArte, 14025 23rd Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441. CDs are \$15.98 and cassettes cost \$10.98.

Selections: "Winter Wonderland," a bouncy opener; "Sleigh Ride," well-orchestrated; "Greensleeves," a delicate touch of soy sauce for an Oriental essence — inventive accompaniment; "Cradle Carol" (Away in a Manger), almost too delicately intricate for a live performance; variations on "Angels We Have Heard on High," straightforward intro — a very lush "Purvisian" massive string ensemble, a light French section and the mandatory climax at the end — I don't understand the inclusion of the "click track" which starts the last part of this selection; "A Scottish Carol," a fresh-sounding work (a march) by Lyn's teacher, Richard Purvis; "O Tannenbaum," a pleasant music-box effect in the obbligato; "O Holy Night," a counter melody of which Lyn should be proud; "The Christmas Song," interesting orchestration in this production ballad; "A Carol Fantasy," "Joy to the World," "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "Jingle Bells," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing," "We Three Kings" and "O Come All Ye Faithful," treatments as we have come to expect of Lyn.

Lyn's playing is clean, maybe overly so, to the extent that the phrasing and vitality are not on a par with what we have heard from this talent.

Compact discs of organ music have established themselves on the dealers' shelves, and we are now beginning to see compact discs of our beloved theatre organs. This collection of mainly familiar Christmas music was found snuggled among the more "commercial" recordings.

The booklet contains the stoplist of the famous Paramount Wurlitzer now installed in the Century II Civic Center in Wichita, Kansas, some "candid" photos and a warning in red letters about using caution when selecting the playback volume. The recording would appear at first to be made at a lower than normal level. This seems to be the product of some bothersome standing waves which unfortunately plague some installations and give the audio engineer fits by trying to bend the needles on the meters or light every l.e.d. on the panel. Apparently, the recording engineer did not find a spot for his microphones where they would not be subject to the few overbearing notes. There is a bit of reverberation, but the recording seems to give the impression that the organ was quite far away, farther than we normally hear in a theatre installation. The normal sounds, the inevitable air leaks, tremulant thumps, and console-combination gunshots are well-con-

trolled, and few organs are in as good condition. There is the dynamic range as promised by the compact disc and 32' lease-breakers.

If you would like to give your stereo a good workout and hear far better than average Christmas fare, buy it.

HARRY HETH

MUSIC IN THE DALES, John Barlow playing the 3/8 Hampsthwaite Wurlitzer at Dale Hall. Available from John Leeming, 23 Aveling Park Road, London E17 4NS. Dolby cassette, \$8.00 airmail postpaid.

Modern harmonies, youthful enthusiasm and raw energy make this recording come alive.

This cassette was issued to coincide with Mr. Barlow's appointment as the 1986-87 Ian Sutherland Award holder. Generally, up-beat tunes have a minimum of registration changes, choppy playing and some fluffs, while ballads are more successful in that there are interesting registration changes and smooth, accurate playing.

About fifty percent of this tape is material composed in the 1960s and '70s. Tunes include: "Ticket to Ride," "The Way We Were," "Belle of the Ball," "Girl Talk," "How Deep Is Your Love," a Beatles medley, a Stevie Wonder medley, "Tarantella" and "Polish Dance." Of special interest are "Somewhere," "Polish Dance" and "Tarantella," which are not only brilliant, but also probably worth the cost of the entire tape. "Belle of the Ball" suffers a little in the introduction. Mr. Barlow understands the use of the tremors just about as well as anyone, and he also demonstrates an understanding of the orchestral approach to organ playing.

The 3/8 Wurlitzer was originally installed in the Gaumont Theatre, Oldham, and was installed in Dale Hall, Hampsthwaite, in the 1960s. This organ is another excellent example of what the British do with their theatre instruments. The room is not huge, but the organ has presence, a big sound and sparkle — another well-finished, beautifully balanced organ.

The recording engineer did an excellent job, but the review copy was recorded a little hot. This reviewer does take exception to the fact that this recording is on tape and not vinyl. Tape has been shown to be an impermanent storage medium, lasting only about 10-12 years, whereas vinyl, properly stored, has no known limits to its life expectancy.

ATOS

Archives/Library

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Overall, this recording was exciting and interesting, but this reviewer would have to give a qualified endorsement based on the lack of technical finesse and a presumed understanding of most organ enthusiasts' tastes.

BOB SHAFTER

THE ALABAMA WURLITZER AT ITS BEST, Tom Hazleton at the organ. Available from: Alabama Chapter ATOS, P.O. Box 6695, Birmingham, Alabama 35210. \$11.00 postpaid U.S. and territories: \$16.00 all others.

Tom Hazleton strikes again! After so many albums by this artist, one might wonder how he does it. Here, once again, is a quality product, and Mr. Hazleton sounds like he's still having a good time.

The entire album is a treat of technical excellence, sensitivity, polish and finesse. The only exceptions one might take to this album might be that of interpretation and the excessive use of the Post Horn, but those are matters of personal taste.

Here is a list of the tunes: rest assured that each is played with the same attention to detail as every other; "Love Is Where You Find It," "Me Too," "When You're Away," "Rustic March," "The Church's One Foundation," "Stars Fell on Alabama," "Strike Up The Band," "I've Got A Crush on You," "I've Got Rhythm," "Concerto in F," "Lady, Be Good," and "Our Love Is Here to Stay." This instrument's ability to work as a concert organ is admirably demonstrated in "The Church's One Foundation," and Hazleton's "Stars Fell on Alabama" is incredibly slushy and romantic.

The organ is an original installation, 4/20 Publix #1 Crawford Special. The only thing not original is a Trivo Post Horn which will part your skull. The only problem with this organ is that there really isn't enough organ to support that much Post Horn, or maybe the Post Horn just needs to be brought under better control. However, this is truly a wonderful instrument. The recording and pressing are excellent.

This album should provide much listening pleasure.

BOB SHAFTER

IN THE MOOD, Walt Strony on the Wurlitzer pipe organ at the Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona. Dolby HX Pro stereo cassette. Available from Organ Stop Pizza, 2250 West Southern Avenue, Mesa, Arizona 85202. \$11.00 postpaid.

This cassette recording will, I fear, meet with mixed emotions from Walt's many fans, both in and out of ATOS. Members of the public who hear Walt at the Mesa Organ Stop and then buy this cassette will love it. His followers in ATOS will enjoy the performance by a favorite organist, but may ask why he chose several selections which are played on an average night in most pizza parlors. Walt's enormous ability raises this music to new heights, and the hard facts are that Walt makes at least a portion of his income playing

in pizza parlors and does it beautifully. Some ATOS members have at times been brutal in their criticism of pizza parlors, the organists who play in them and the music played there; however, most parlors encourage requests, and the public has its favorite tunes. The secret of success is having an organist of enough ability to do these certain tunes tastefully. This cassette is an entertaining selection of many of the public's favorite tunes, played well, and it just might help find new members for ATOS by introducing the instrument to the yet unrecruited. I commend Walt for his decision to do a cassette which will encourage enjoyment by even those who have not yet been introduced to the pleasure of theatre organ.

"In The Mood" really swings. Walt's treatment is exciting and shows why this is a favorite of the public. The piano solo is tremendous, and Walt's improvisation is outstanding.

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow" is treated with beautiful harmony, exquisite key changes and lush ensembles, and Walt resists the tendency to either overdo a syrupy treatment or to use too many bells. This is superb playing.

"Music Box Dancer" is one of the most requested numbers in the pizza parlor, and Walt's treatment is certainly fun and should be enjoyed. In the hands of this proficient technician, this music box was smokin' and burnin'!

"Twelfth Street Rag" is just good fun put to music. The arrangement is technically demanding, but Walt delivers. It is entertaining and uses the percussions and traps in a clever and completely tasteful manner, making the listener want to say, "That was fun!"

"Le Jazz Hot," from the movie *Victor-Victoria*, is a more contemporary tune which appears to have been written for a good theatre pipe organ. Many contemporary tunes work well on the instrument, particularly in the hands of an organist of Walt's ability, and this selection is played beautifully, registered perfectly and is a delight.

"Serenade," from *The Student Prince*, represents fine playing and beautiful ensemble registrations. All the facets of good theatre organ presentation, whether in a pizza parlor or on stage, are represented in this selection.

"Somewhere, My Love" is the second most requested number in a pizza parlor. Though the tune is generic, Walt takes this simple melody and plays it as a lovely ballad, pleasing to even the most jaded listener.

"Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Under the Double Eagle," and "How Great Thou Art" complete the selections.

The organ, originally from the Denver Theatre, is controlled by a black, gold-leaf, silver and bronze console which is beautifully pictured on the insert. Though an occasional squeaky shutter distracted slightly, the recording is judged certainly acceptable.

The playing would be considered outstanding and near perfection, whether in a pizza parlor or on a concert stage, and should encourage the high standard of playing for most, whether for selling pizzas or encourag-

ing concert attendance.

This cassette is highly recommended for anyone who enjoys collecting good music.

PATTI SIMON □

Closing Chord

Paul Schreves, 73, long-time member of Chicago Area Chapter, passed away in December 1986 after a long bout with cancer. Paul was known to call his many friends "Murph," and was well-liked by all. His welcome mat was always out for "open house" for members and guests who were organ buffs. He held the record for attending the most public concerts and shows hosted by Chicago Area Chapter. He was the proud owner of a Conn 650 with a self-contained glass chamber of live traps and percussions from various Wurlitzer pipe organs.

Paul was a skilled photographer. He also had an extensive library of record albums, tapes and periodicals relating to the theatre organ world.

Paul had been a widower for about 15 years and had no children. Yes, "Murph," you'll

be truly missed. We're reminded of the Irish proverb: "May God hold you in the palm of His hand."

JIM KOLLER

Ernestine McColl, organist, died November 2, 1986 in Noyes Memorial Hospital in Dansville, New York. She was 90.

A graduate of Rochester's Eastman School of Music, she was a well known piano and organ teacher, and for a time demonstrated organs for the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. She played for a string of silent movie theatres in Rochester, Nunda and Dansville, and was a church organist in Rochester and Nunda.

She is survived by a daughter, three sons, two grandsons and two great-grandsons.

Richard J. Streb, organist, pianist and amateur artist, died November 10, 1986, in his Webster, New York home. He was 75.

A frustrated baseball player, because of a shoulder injury, Mr. Streb turned to the organ for a livelihood. He performed in more than 100 restaurants, nightclubs and bowling alleys in the Rochester area in over 40 years, and had a tremendous following.

He is survived by his wife, two daughters, three sisters, a brother, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. □

ORGAN-IZING POPULAR MUSIC

by
AL HERMANN



In the last issue we listed the six musical elements which make the total sound that the listener hears. Let us first consider the melody. If you will listen carefully to the live or recorded performances of the best theatre organists, you will discover that there are three distinctly different ways to play the melody of a popular song on the organ:

1. Solo melody — one note at a time
2. Two, three or four-part legato chord melody
3. Detached chords — bouncy style

Further attention to detail will reveal that each of these styles requires a different registration and produces a different musical effect. Also, that these three styles should not be mixed on the same registration or within the same musical phrase or theme. The first sign of the self-taught convert from accordion or piano is the constant mixing of solo and chord melody.

Why is this mixing so unmusical? First, consider the registration. If you set the organ

so that the one-note melody is louder than the accompaniment and then play the melody in chords, you drown out the accompaniment. If you set the organ for chord melody and then play one note at a time, the accompaniment will come out twice as loud as the melody.

Also consider: one singer cannot suddenly sing a three or four note chord. It is impossible for any kind of horn player to play an occasional chord. Likewise, any kind of vocal or instrumental ensemble plays continuous harmony.

Normally, a solo melody will sound best on a Tibia ensemble: 16', 8', 4', 2-2/3', 2' or on individual orchestral stops. Tibia 8' or 8' and 4' or 8' and 2-2/3' may be used to reinforce the orchestral voices. If you use two or more instrumental stops, all you get is more volume and you lose the imitative character of each stop.

Next time we will discuss chord melody and appropriate registration. □