



THE MOVIE PALACES. Host, Gene Kelly. Available from: Office of Telecommunications, Smithsonian Institute, Dept. 0609, Washington, DC 20073-0609. 16mm Print \$425.00, Videocassette \$19.95. Make checks payable to Smithsonian Institute.

From the Wiltern in Los Angeles, Gene Kelly hosts this loving look into the beginnings, heyday, decline and rebirth of this country's theatre-going experience. This film also explores the visions of the theatre moguls, and the architects who made this experience such a unique and grand event for so many millions of Americans. Packed into this half hour are an unbelievable number of still photos and live shots, in glorious color, of many of this country's finest theatres. This film manages to impart a strong sense of the awe and majesty that accompanied the theatre-going experience. We are given a rare look into theatre interiors that many of us will probably never see.

Gaylord Carter is given a spot to explain the function and purpose of the theatre organ. His introduction says something about the Mighty Wurlitzer rising from the pit, except that he isn't playing a Wurlitzer. The writers are simply using the generic name for all theatre organs. Gaylord is as entertaining and engaging as always.

The production values are very high. The videocassette that was sent for review is without flaw, and was clearly produced on the finest equipment.

This film is a "must have" for anyone who loves theatres and theatre organs.

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



(L to R) David Strickland - piano, Laurie Meeker - vocalist, Steve Schlessing - organist.

SMILES. Laurie Meeker, vocalist. David Strickland, pianist. Steve Schlessing, organist. Available from: Church of Today, P.O. Box 280, Warren, MI 48090. Cassette tape \$10.00 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling.

Produced by the Church of Today, side one contains vocal, piano and organ, while side two is piano and organ.

Journal readers who enjoy pop spiritual will no doubt enjoy this album. This album was professionally produced, and for the most part lives up to the standards I apply to recordings, except that I wasn't convinced that the performers truly believed in what they were doing.

Tunes are as follows: Side one: "Smile/When You're Smiling," "Amazing Grace," "Over the Rainbow," "Try A Little Kindness," "The Greatest Love of All," "My Tribute." Side two: "Be Still My Soul," "On the First Day of Spring," Theme from *Somewhere In Time*, "If My People Will Pray," "Memory," "How Great Thou Art."

A couple of notes, on side one I believe the tune is called "Somewhere Over The Rainbow," and they include the all-too-often omitted verse.

The organ used is a decently finished, if somewhat narrowly focused, Wurlitzer. The recording engineer did a good job.



THEN AND NOW. Donna Parker and Bill Vlasak at the Paramount Music Palace 4/42 Wurlitzer. Available from Donna Parker Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 19371, Indianapolis, Indiana 46219. LPs and Cassettes, \$10.75, CDs \$17.75 postpaid.

Donna Parker and Bill Vlasak have collaborated again on a recording that should delight those readers who have not yet had enough pizza organ slam bang.

Donna Parker's selections are: "Rock Around the Clock," "Grandpa's Spells," "Cry Me a River," "Tocatta in D Minor (a la Phantom)," Theme from *Terms of Endearment*, "Entry of the Gladiators," CDs only have the following: "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Baby Elephant Walk," "Clap Yo' Hands."

Bill Vlasak selections are: "Seventy-Six Trombones," "Ghostriders in the Sky," "Memory," "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," Medley from *The Wizard of Oz*, CDs only include the following: "And All That Jazz," "The Last Dance," "Hooray For Hollywood."



Donna Parker managed to cleverly eliminate most of the syncopation from "Grandpa's Spells," however, "Entry Of The Gladiators," was brilliant. I only wonder why in the intro supplied to "Gladiators," by Larry MacPherson at the Indiana University Calliope, does the calliope have to be out of tune?

Bill Vlasak performed an extremely good ballad in "The Last Dance," only to be ruined by the ending.

The recording engineer used a technique which is billed as the first North American commercial recording of same. The Aachener Kopf Head, which is supposed to accurately record human spatial hearing. This system is, however, only effective when played back through headphones. The normal average room environment and better than average playback equipment seems to sound muffled, with a slight phase shift quality. This recording lacks the clarity and definition we have come to expect from digitally produced recordings.

Bob Shaffer