



*"Watch out,
Arthur Fiedler!"*

SOUNDS OF THE STATE. Iain Flitcroft at the Kilburn 4/16 Wurlitzer. Available from Goeff Day, COS Sales, 105 Highview, Vigo Village, Meopham, Kent, England, DA13 0TQ. \$13.00 postpaid. Checks payable to Cinema Organ Society.

It wasn't called the Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra for nothing. Watch out, Arthur Fiedler. One person is doing the work of the entire Boston Pops and he's doing it right well. Iain Flitcroft is telling the Kilburn Wurlitzer what it was meant to be, an instrument with orchestral capabilities played by one person.

Selections include: "State Occasion," "La Cinquantine," "Mink and Pearls," Franz Lehar selection, "Regency Romp," "Amparito Roca," "Russian Rag," "Dancing with Tears in My Eyes," "Liebesfreud," Hans Christian Anderson selection, and "Czardas."

The precise finger technique, impeccable phrasing, intelligent tempi, and good registrations all contribute to the excellence of this tape. Mr. Flitcroft gives you a chance to savor a particular stop combination without feeling a need to change every four beats in case you might be bored with what's happening musically. The two medleys also hang together beautifully without meaningless meanderings between selections — a welcome change.

The organ sounds very good in the room. The recording captures a feeling of a large space, though I personally felt a slightly slower tremulant would have eliminated an underlying feeling of nervousness in the slower ballads — note "Dancing with Tears in My Eyes," a real gem.

If you like listening to orchestral music, you'll love hearing Iain playing it on our favorite instrument. Go for it.

Gerry Gregorius

WINTER SUNSET. Nigel Ogden at the St. John Vianney Church (Clayhill) 3/6 (plus Melotone) Compton. Available from Goeff Day, COS Sales, 105 Highview, Vigo Village, Meopham, Kent, England, DA13 0TQ. \$13.00 postpaid. Checks payable to Cinema Organ Society.

I can't believe it's only six ranks! That just goes to show what can happen when an organ that is tonally finished in a superb manner is played by an organist who thoroughly understands the acoustical setting, in this case a very reverberant church. As soon as you hear the opening chords, you know you are going to hear something special. This organ has a Tromba rank that thousands of church organists in this country would kill for.

Mr. Ogden is a master at bringing out every possibility the limited resources offer. The recording engineer captured every bit of the clean playing, yet you are aware of the generous acoustics of the room.

The selections on the first side are: "Bonaventure," "Tangerine," "Winter Sunset," "Melody on the Move," and "Opus One." The second side has "Nightriders," "Serenade to Marianne," "Coffee in the Morning and Kisses in the Night," "Through the Courtesy of Love," "Let's Fall in Love," "Give Me the Simple Life," "Secret Love," and "I'll Walk with God." Most of the program is played without tremulant which is not missed. When the tremulant is used, it tends to fight a bit with the room's reverberation.

Mr. Ogden's playing makes the instrument sing, cry, laugh, and even get in some good solid punches. His own composition, "Winter Sunset," has such a haunting quality that it almost conjures up an image of ectoplasms rising through the darkened building. A superior example of melody, harmony, and orchestration.

Does a theatre organ have to be large to be worth hearing or playing? I think not. Nigel Ogden is a prime example of an organist who can bring out the most of a small instrument.

Gerry Gregorius

LONDON'S PRIDE. Robert Wolfe at the Southbank 4/21 Wurlitzer. Available from Goeff Day, COS Sales, 105 Highview, Vigo Village, Meopham, Kent, England, DA13 0TQ. \$15.00 postpaid. Checks payable to Cinema Organ Society.

Do you like the organ loud? Do you like it played fast? Do you like the Post Horn used for everything but punctuation? Then this is a recording for you. Selections are: "Knightsbridge March," "Mood Indigo," a medley of "Mountain Greenery, We'll All Go Riding on a Rainbow, Over My Shoulder, and Dreamboat," a coupling of "A Foggy Day," and "London by Night," "Masquerade Waltz," and a set including "Westminster Waltz" and "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square." The second side brings us selections from *La Cage aux Folles*, "Leicester Square Rag," "I Don't Know How to Love Him,"

"Amparito Roca," "When Day is Done," and a set called London Pride consisting of "Down the Mall, Lambeth Walk, Underneath the Arches, and Limehouse Blues."

The recording of the organ is spacious but not overly cavernous. When Mr. Wolfe slows down a bit, the ambience is perfect. When he gets in gear to play as many notes as possible in a measure, it is a little difficult for the ear to sort it all out. There is a school of thought that it's really all right to play a melodic interval without playing every note between them, up, down, and continuously. Robert has yet to learn this, but perhaps his youthful exuberance will eventually give way to a maturity yet to come.

Despite the slap-dash, the razzle-dazzle, and the occasional ability to defeat the Wurlitzer's fast action, Robert Wolfe is certainly worth watching as an up-and-coming artist. A little introspection and examination of his own recordings is all he needs.

Gerry Gregorius

MEMORIES FROM THE HEART: Theatre Organ Stylings by Ron J. Aselton. Order from 07 Forest Place, Sauble Beach, Ontario NOH-1PO Canada. \$10.00, plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

Occasionally, a recording is submitted to THEATRE ORGAN that tests the framework in which its reviewers must function. Memories From The Heart is just such a recording in that it falls just outside the description of recordings normally reviewed in this department.

Memories From The Heart is recorded on a remarkably well-voiced Rodgers Trio electronic organ located in Mr. Aselton's home. Spacious acoustics, and a creative speaker complement combine to provide the listener with a warm, almost voluptuous sound from an instrument that is fully 20 years old. The casual listener might even be unaware that this is an electronic upon first listening. Mr. Aselton is to be complimented on his ability to realize such an authentic sound from an analogue, electronic organ of this age.

The selection of music merges perfectly with Ron's laid-back keyboard style. Ranging from "The World Is Wait'n For The Sunrise" (sic), to "Those Amazing Men And Their Flying Machines," the music is largely presented in medley form and these compositions are abbreviated in order to fit into medleys. The style, the music, and the format suggests a casual evening at Mr. Aselton's home, during which he recalls melodies and medleys which are sentimental to him and his guests. Medley #2 on the second side of the tape is particularly so, as it is presented in memory of his father.

Memories From The Heart is a recording that will appeal particularly to electronic organ owners. Mr. Aselton's command of the Rodgers Trio is excellent, potentially offering ideas on registration, and phrasing to the electronic organ

student. However, the theatre pipe organ enthusiast should be advised that this recording represents a sentimental excursion into melodies played nostalgically on an electronic organ. And, as a result, the content of this tape may not satisfy the appetite of the theatre pipe organ buff.

Steve Adams

BELLE OF THE BALL. Barbara Sellers at the Music Box. Order from: Music Box Theatre, 3733 North Southport Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60613. Cost is \$10.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling (inc. tax).

Here we have an interesting item from the Windy City — the debut recording of Barbara Sellers, playing a three-manual custom Allen in the Music Box Theatre in Chicago. As many ATOS members know, Barbara is the talented daughter of organists Preston and Edna Sellers, who played many of the Loop theatres in years past. She has made many appearances in Chicago clubs, usually working with a Hammond organ. This is her first excursion into theatre organ recording and she comes through splendidly, bringing to the instrument a secure technique, an innovative sense of harmony and a steady rhythmic approach. The result is a theatre organ style entirely her own.

The program opens with an upbeat "Swamp Fire," a jazzy number featuring full ensembles and block chords. "In the Still of the Night" follows, using the excellent strings of the organ. Barbara presents the tune in a straightforward manner that is, at times, rhythmically not exactly as notated. "Belle of the Ball" receives a graceful performance, with some dramatic modulations to enhance this well-known Leroy Anderson favorite. It's back to the music of Cole Porter with "So in Love," which is played in an extended arrangement as a beguine. "A Foggy Day" presents a wonderful vehicle for the organist's tasteful and innovative use of harmony. Beginning with the seldom-heard verse, Barbara builds an understated yet powerful arrangement of the familiar Gershwin tune, and there are some lovely registrations throughout. Side one concludes with a medley of tunes associated with Fred Astaire. "They Can't Take That Away From Me" is reminiscent of the Buddy Cole version, while "I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise" struts along using the excellent piano stop. In contrast, "Change Partners" receives a warm and introspective treatment.

Side two opens with a sweeping waltz, "The Wedding of the Winds," in which xylophone and piano are heard to good advantage. "Lara's Theme" is one of those tunes that can either charm or exasperate the listener, depending on its treatment by the performer. It can easily be overplayed, but one only needs to recall that it was presented in the film version of *Doctor Zhivago* as a simple, nostalgic folk tune. Barbara treats it as



Barbara Sellers

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such, using a balalaika effect over a gently rocking accompaniment.

The remainder of the recording is a selection of Lerner & Loewe show tunes titled "In Remembrance." Songs from *My Fair Lady*, *Brigadoon*, *Gigi*, *Paint Your Wagon*, and *Camelot* are featured, and each one gets a distinctive treatment. For example, "I Could Have Danced All Night" begins like a two-part invention, and "Get Me to the Church on Time" starts with a carillon fanfare. (The "train wreck" effect halfway through the tune might indicate that, on this occasion, the church wasn't reached.)

The cassette insert features an attractive photo of Barbara at the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer. Recorded sound is excellent, and one gets the full "in theatre" sound. The Allen organ presents a fine variety of solo voices and very convincing percussion stops. The rather wide tremulants may bother some listeners, and from time to time the higher pitches may be a bit strident. However, the musical playing of Barbara Sellers overcomes any slight reservations concerning the instrument. She brings a fresh approach to the theatre organ which avoids cliché and always holds interest.

Lew Williams



The doors have closed, the lights are dimmed,
A hush falls through the crowd.
This reverential silence
would make a minister proud!

The organ pipes resounding chords,
The velvet curtains part,
The flickering light of an unseen machine
Bids the action to start.

Within the darkness of these walls
And the projector's glowing beams,
People are transported to
A palace of celluloid dreams.

The lobbies are ornamental
With colors bright and bold;
The walls have lovely tapestries
And colonnades of gold.

Rich and poor, old and young
Come here every day,
Knowing that for an hour or two
Their troubles will melt away.

Right before their very eyes
On giant silver screens
Many wondrous stories unfold
In the palace of celluloid dreams

Douglas Fairbanks is a hero,
Charlie Chaplin is the tramp,
Lillian Gish has vestal innocence,
But Theda Bara is a vamp.

Valentino ignites the desert sands
With fire in his eyes,
While women swoon within their seats
All fluttered hearts and sighs.

Laughter, love, and sometimes tears,
Adventure and wild schemes,
All become reality
In the palace of celluloid dreams.

Time has passed, things have changed,
A frenzied world moves on,
The glory of the movie house
Has sadly long been gone.

The golden years have drifted,
The past becomes today;
The great stars of the silent screen
Have all faded away.

But somewhere in the stardust
Of a memory, it seems,
Their silver ghosts will always haunt
The palace of celluloid dreams.

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