

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by
Lloyd
E.
Klos



With our holiday greetings comes this collection of items of interest to all. Sources were *Metronome* (M), *Local Press* (LP), *Jacobs Magazine* (J) and *Diapason* (D).

November 1925 (M) . . .

The new \$8 million Metropolitan Theatre in Boston was recently opened and presented a spectacle of magnificence seldom equalled in a theatre. This 5000-seat house, possessing a grand lounge large enough to accommodate 2000, was packed to its doors for its premier, and thousands were turned away. It is estimated that, on the first day, 30,000 visited the theatre.

Magnificent murals and 10,000 electric lamps decorate the auditorium domes, the central one representing the conception of music and drama, encrusted with 250 gems, costing \$10,000. The building's marble is valued at \$500,000.

The 4/26 Wurlitzer organ, built and installed at a cost of \$100,000, possesses 3100 pipes and is said to be the first ever constructed with French Horn and Tuba ranks.

The 35-piece orchestra, in accordance with the policy of Boston theatres, is much smaller than those used elsewhere. A 12-piece orchestra gives concerts in the Grand Lobby. The musicians have been provided with splendid quarters and showers, with private rooms for the concertmaster and manager. The orchestra is situated on an elevator which raises it to concert level for featured numbers, and lowers it for incidental playing. An innovation is the series of 600-candle-power spotlights which play upon the orchestra during its numbers.

The theatre also has a press room with messenger boys in attendance, and a projection booth on the mezzanine floor which permits the film machine to focus directly on the screen without optical distortion.

An electrical chart, showing the vacant seats, enables the ushers to determine exactly how many there are and their location.

April 7, 1926 (LP) . . .

The Lincoln Theatre in Rochester, New York, announces the opening of the new mighty (2/3) Wurlitzer pipe organ with the "world's finest photoplayer," TOM GRIERSON, at the console this evening.

August 1926 (M) . . .

When the Paramount Theatre in New York opens this fall, you can meet your friends in any of 25 rooms, foyers, or lobbies. Each will have a definite name and luxurious appointments. Entering the box office lobby, one passes into the foyer, thence into the Grand Hall which is lined with Breche Centella marble, imported from Italy at a cost of over \$500,000. The main lounge, known as the University Room, is in the basement where there are also a ladies' lounge, dressing room, and ladies' and mens' smoking rooms.

Leaving the Grand Hall and passing upward, one finds the intermediate mezzanine lobby, which leads to the loges. Here also is a men's smoking room and a ladies' rest room.

The most novel rooms ever incorporated into a theatre are the club and fraternity rooms. Here, you can lounge in luxury and await your friends. These rooms are named: Elizabethan, Marie Antoinette, Chinoiserie, College, Jade Club, The Galleries, Peacock Alley, Grand Hall, Hall of Nations, the Rotunda, Music Room and Fraternity. The College Club and Fraternity rooms will be decorated with insignia and colors of colleges, clubs and fraternities.

The Paramount, rapidly nearing completion, will be one of the great art buildings of the world, with almost 50% of the space devoted to promenades, lounges, rest rooms and comfortable conveniences for its patrons.

February 19, 1927 (LP) . . .

At Rochester, New York's Victoria Theatre, R. WILSON ROSS is playing the \$30,000 mammoth (sic) Marr & Colton three-manual orchestral organ, featuring "Where Do You Work A-John?"

May 1927 (J) . . .

EARL ROLAND LARSON, a talented young organist-composer in Duluth, is also taking part in the newly organized manuscript section of the Duluth Matinee Musicales, which will present some of his new songs at a recital soon.

Mr. Larson was born in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and began his early study of piano and organ with Paola Cote at Wesley College. After the World War, he directed an orchestra for five years at the Strand Cafe in Venice, California. Since then he has been at the Wurlitzer in the Lyceum, Duluth's leading theatre, and at the First Methodist Church's large Hutchins organ.

Versatile and skillful performances have characterized his work. He has an aptitude for producing good photoplay melodies, some of which have been published: "The Enchanted Grotto," "A Venetian Night," "Fancy Free," "Autumn Color," and "Romany." A brilliant future is forecast for the young man by all who have heard him.

May 1927 (J) . . .

GENE BYERS started playing the pictures when Mary Pickford was beginning to shine as a star for the old Biograph Studios in New York. Owen Moore was scarcely known, and Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin had not yet come into prominence.

Those were the old five-and-ten-cent days when a show consisted of a two-reel picture, a comedy, and an illustrated song. Three-reelers were regarded as long, and it was considered entertainment enough for several days to sit through five reels of the old Pathe hand-colored Passion Play.

At an early age, Gene became interested in, and later owner of, the Electric Theatre in Monticello, Iowa, where he acted in all capacities from janitor up. Picture music was limited to piano and drums and he became adept at both. He regards his playing of "Hiawatha" on a cornet, accompanying himself with piano, bass and snare drum, as his most distinctive achievement up to that time, and the one which revealed the talent which placed him at the theatre organ console.

A streak of ambition led him to abandon theatre work for engineering study at Iowa State College, receiving a Bachelor of Science. However, during the depression following the war, he returned to playing theatre organs in Cleveland, Chicago and Milwaukee.

His coaching on theatre organ was from Claud B. Ball, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. For the past three years, Gene has been with the Rainbow Theatre Corp. of Milwaukee, which owns and operates the Rainbow and Climax theatres there.

In summer, his favorite hobby is golf in winter, he dances and skates. Often accused of being bashful or shy, he denies it: "I just look that way." In addition to being a good musician, Gene Byers is a regular fellow.

September 9, 1929 (LP) . . .

The management of Loew's Rochester Theatre announces the engagement of organist D. KENNETH WIDENOR with the first showing of *Lucky Star*, a Fox Movietone picture with Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell.

After playing in the leading theatres of his native Omaha, Mr. Widenor went to New York to further his musical studies at the Institute of Musical Art from which he was graduated in organ and compo-

(continued on page 38...)



ORGAN-IZING POPULAR MUSIC

by
AL HERMANN'S

ENDING — 2

Ending #1, described in the July/August edition of THEATRE ORGAN is the easiest and most useful Ending for slow and medium tempo songs. In Ending #2, the chromatic motion creates a more modern sound.

After playing the final I chord, change to the major chord that is a half tone above the I chord. The right hand plays an arpeggio upward on that chord ending on the 1st and 3rd or 3rd and 5th of that chord. Then return to the I chord by moving each part down a half tone.



Study these examples and figure them out in G, B \flat and E \flat .

Notice that the next to the last note in the arpeggio is held with the last note, and both move down together to the 1st and 3rd or 3rd and 5th of the I chord. This Ending will usually sound best on slow songs. After playing and listening to these examples, review Ending #1 and listen to the difference. Apply one of these Endings on everything you play until you can play them easily.

PIPE ORGAN PARTS FOR SALE

| | | | |
|--|--------|---|--------|
| Kilgen (Dennison) Tuba 16', 97 notes | \$1200 | 5 rank Morton chest | \$1000 |
| Kilgen (Dennison) Kinura | \$ 800 | Page 1 rank Tibia chest | \$ 100 |
| Wurlitzer-Vox | \$ 350 | 44 note Kilgen 16' Tuba chest | \$ 200 |
| Wurlitzer-Violins (pair) | \$ 900 | Kilgen 8' Tuba chest 12 notes | \$ 100 |
| Wurlitzer 16' Diaphone-85 notes | \$1200 | Kilgen 8' Tuba chest 12 notes | \$ 100 |
| Kilgen Vox with chest | \$ 200 | Offset Kilgen 11 note chest | \$ 100 |
| Wurlitzer Clarinet | \$ 650 | Wurlitzer Tibia offset | \$ 350 |
| Austin Clarinet | \$ 300 | Wurlitzer offset String | \$ 250 |
| Morton Flute 8' | \$ 100 | 2-61 note direct electric String chests | \$ 130 |
| Morton Vox | \$ 100 | Reservoir — all re-leathered | |
| Kilgen 8' String | \$ 200 | Wurlitzer 20 x 30 | \$ 400 |
| Morton 8' String | \$ 400 | Wurlitzer 20 x 30 | \$ 400 |
| Kilgen Tibia | \$ 500 | Wurlitzer 30 x 30 | \$ 400 |
| Wurlitzer Chrysoglott | \$ 800 | Kilgen 36 x 44 | \$ 175 |
| Kilgen (Deagen) Xylophone | \$ 300 | Kilgen 36 x 44 | \$ 175 |
| (Master size) | | Kilgen 20 x 15 | \$ 100 |
| Kilgen (Deagen) Block (Master size) | \$ 300 | Kilgen 25 x 35 | \$ 100 |
| Wurlitzer Chimes | \$ 300 | Blower 5 hp Spencer | \$1500 |
| Wurlitzer Toy Counter | \$1500 | 3 man Kilgen console | \$4000 |
| Wurlitzer tuned Sleigh Bells | \$1500 | 134 stop tabs / double bolster / re-leathered | |
| Wurlitzer shades - pair | \$ 500 | with 3/9 relay and combination-action | |
| 4 rank Kilgen chest | \$ 800 | and Morton switchstack | |

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After 6:00 p.m. 816/373-0257

NUGGETS (continued from page 30)

sition in 1920. While in New York, he played at the Rialto, Rivoli, Capitol and Criterion theatres.

He left New York to become solo organist at the new Capitol in Montreal, one of the finest theatres in Canada. After two years, he went to Chicago's Roosevelt until he accepted a two-year Philadelphia engagement.

Mr. Widenor holds the degree of associate in the AGO, is a charter member of the New York Society of Theatre Organists, and a member of the National Association of Organists. He will be featured in solos, classical and popular, at Loew's Rochester.

December 1934 (D) . . .

The Van Dusen Organ Club in Chicago, headed by theatre organist, EDWARD EIGENSCHENK, has announced its 1934-35 season of lectures, recitals, classes and social activities.

Season's Greetings to all our friends!
Jason & The Old Prospector

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It's a joy to share, so we meet other enthusiasts, learn of the history of the ATOS from guests Ben Hall, Richard Simonton, and then, the one and only Gaylord Carter, with his usual flair, brings down the house . . . (not Bernie's, but the Brooklyn Paramount).

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