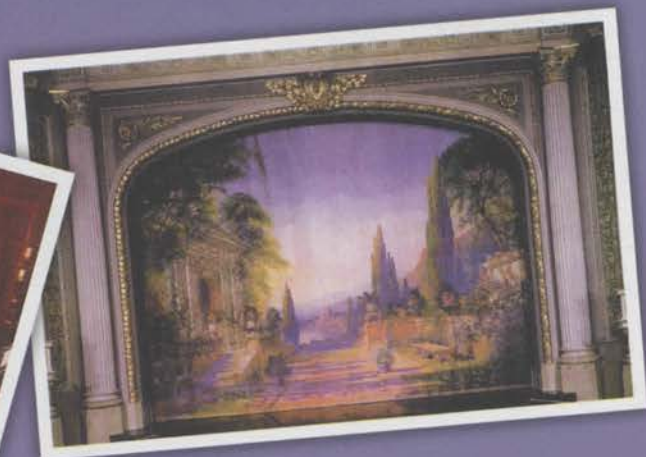
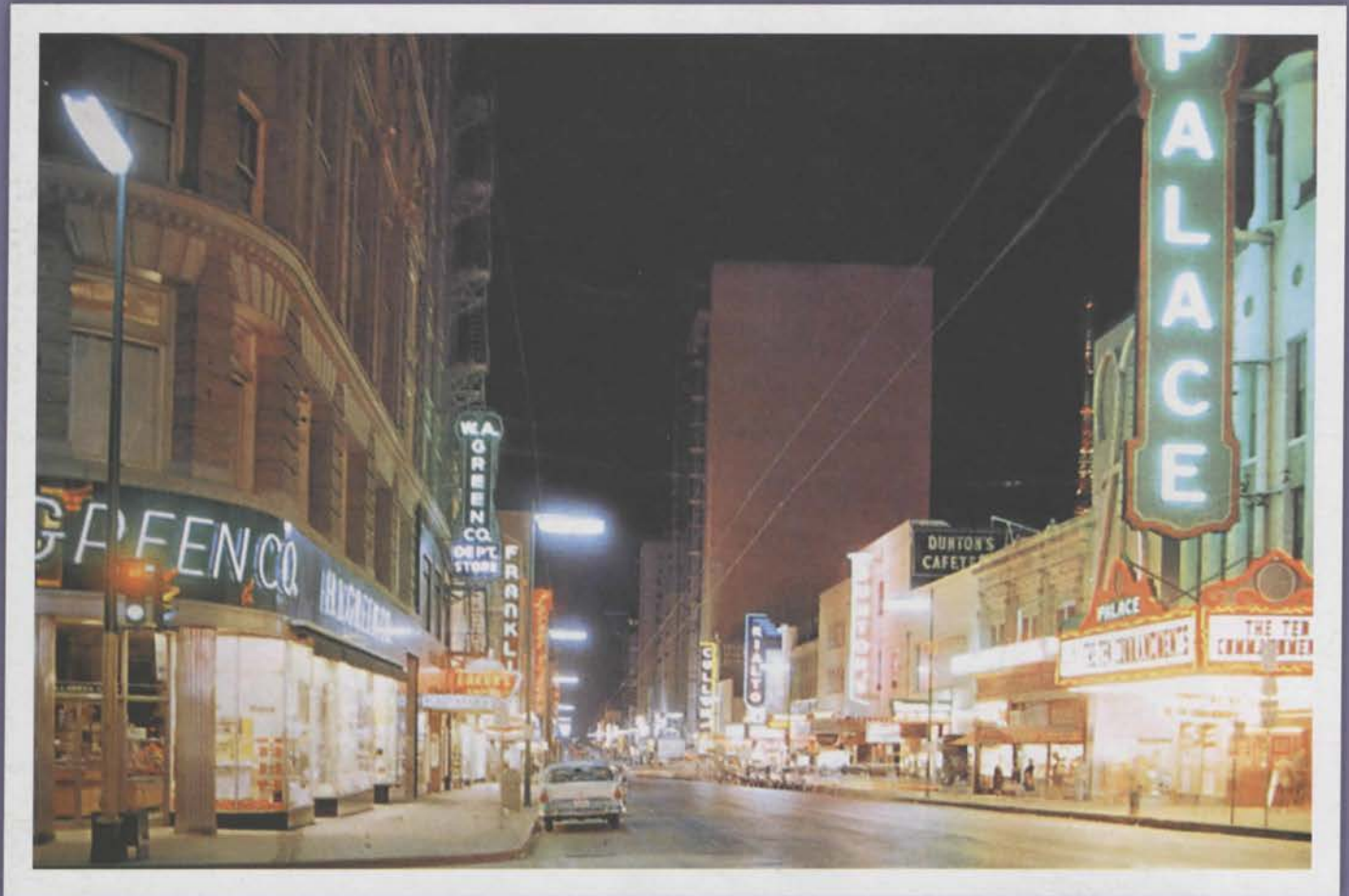


# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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July/August 2004

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# Theatre Organ

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July/August 2004 • Volume 46, Number 4

PRESIDENT: Gus Franklin

EDITOR: Dale Baker

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Michael Fellenzer

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## President's Message



This timing is simply all wrong! Thanks to the exigencies of publication scheduling and the dates of our Atlanta Event and our Annual Convention, my outlook at the time of writing this column and your perspective when reading it are vastly different. I have just returned from a 'once-in-a-lifetime' "Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend" in Atlanta and am now anticipating our Milwaukee Convention, which begins in just one month. You will be reading this article shortly after that Annual Convention has already occurred. The situation is truly awkward, but there's no way to remedy that.

Without hesitation, I must concur totally with every comment I have heard or read about the "Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend." It was irrefutably outstanding! The theatre is stunningly gorgeous; "Mighty Mo" is a unique, wonderful, beautiful, and assertive instrument, which everyone should hear; accommodations were superb; the lack of the necessity of busing was refreshing; the hospitality was certainly most gracious and unmistakably southern; and the pace of the schedule was comfortable. Best of all, the Preglow, concert, and movie presentation performances were all brilliantly stellar! In fact, one might well describe them as breathtaking. Additionally, the tours, lectures, workshops, and availability of a record shop and dealer demonstration rooms were clearly well planned and integrated into the overall event. Mike Kinerk, our ATOS Convention Coordinator, and the Atlanta Chapter, particularly Ron Carter, John McCall and their team, are certainly to be congratulated for a most special weekend very well done.

While not every Chapter is blessed with the circumstances which were basic to the success of the Atlanta Event, I believe what happened there can, nevertheless, suggest several ideas about how they may well host a special weekend or an ATOS Regional, or even Annual, Convention. Although the Atlanta weekend was not officially a Regional Convention, it grew from the originally envisioned special event into nearly that. It clearly demonstrated that there need not be several venues and instruments to have a successful event and that if busing can be kept at a minimum, or even eliminated entirely, it is much less costly, less hectic, and can contribute to a well-paced event. I trust several Chapters will consider these possibilities seriously.

Now I turn my attention and expectations toward the Milwaukee ATOS 49th Annual Convention hosted by our Dairyland Chapter (which will have already occurred by the time you get this message). Co-Chairs Bill Campbell and Gary Hanson and their team have been working diligently to provide yet another outstanding event. Four of the five artists who performed so brilliantly in Atlanta are scheduled to play for us again. Five other outstanding performers and a "surprise artist" will join them during the regular convention time, plus three others during the Preglows. Including the one to be played during those Preglows, three five-manual theatre organs will be used. Other special features include seminars, jam sessions, the Annual Membership Meeting, Member Forum, Young Theatre Organists' Competition, Awards Ceremony, and Record Shop, plus the optional Preglows and afterglow. And, of course, you will have the opportunity of meeting and mixing with other theatre organ enthusiasts, as well as with the members of your Board of Directors. For you and me, this event is truly our big, fun-filled family reunion! I look forward to seeing y'all (I learned that in Atlanta!) there.

Gus

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The Organist Entertains is a weekly radio program broadcast on BBC Radio 2 in the United Kingdom and worldwide via the net. British organist Nigel Ogden hosts the show. You can listen to the show every Tuesday at 2000 hours UK time at:

[http://  
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### A FAMILY ORIENTED MUSICAL SHOW

"Bob Ralston worked his tail off for us, was fun to work with, rolled with the organ's deficiencies and presented a delightful, family oriented musical show [at the Seattle Paramount on 3/16/03]. Bob kept us spellbound for over two hours. It was a wunnerful, wunnerful show... a real crowd pleaser."

—Clint Meadway, Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society

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—Priscilla Arthur, Rocky Mountain Chapter, ATOS



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—Theresa Bachman-Myers, Executive Director, Council for the Arts

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# THE SONG IS *not quite* ENDED

By Jeanette Howeth Crumpler



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OUT OF GEORGE PRATT COLLECTION

*The original fire curtain at the Majestic.*

**Looking back** at the times when the theatre organ was an essential part of the movie-going experience, it should also be recognized as an important contribution to our culture in the United States, and in many other countries as well.

When Robert Hope-Jones, the inventor of the Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra theatre organ, formed an alliance with the Wurlitzer Company in the early 1900s, the resulting instruments were incredible. Out of a rather halting and somewhat troubled relationship between the two, instruments were produced which set the standards for all of the other theatre organ building companies. Even today, Wurlitzer is still considered *the* 'benchmark' for all

other companies that produced theatre organs. Being able to place the console a distance from the other components, combined with the ability to produce music to match the moods and scenes in silent movies and sound effects, was an outstanding achievement for the entertainment industry. The economy of using a theatre organ appealed to theatre owners, and the ads from Wurlitzer echoed the practicality of owning a whole orchestra in one instrument, played by one person.

In contrast to the old time variety theatres, peep shows, and nickelodeons, entrepreneurs realized that a better setting was needed since the public had begun flocking to see this new phenomenon called moving pictures. Some of

JEANNETTE CRUMPLER PHOTO



Lakewood console, 1927 Robert-Morton theatre organ.

JEANNETTE CRUMPLER PHOTO



Lakewood Theatre exterior.

the smaller theatres had orchestras, and almost all of them had pianos, but the growing appreciation for theatre organs would change the coming newer theatres into real showplaces.

In Dallas, the early 1900s was a booming time for

building theatres, and with these new theatres, theatre organs were in demand. When the shift of building movie theatres on Elm Street replaced the Main and Commerce Street variety theatres, the demand for music

also increased. The majority of the theatres would be built on the north side of Elm Street and, in time, most would have theatre organs. In the larger theatres of the 1920s, there would be 'symphony' type orchestras, but the theatre organ became 'the star' of the orchestra pit. Music was always in demand for the enjoyment of theatre patrons, to accompany whatever talent was being represented, and also for the enhancement of the action on the screen.

By 1911 in Dallas, there were several stores located on Elm Street that sold pianos and organs, and in that same year at 1608 Elm Street, a truly gorgeous theatre, the Crystal, opened. This extravagantly decorated theatre presented vaudeville and silent films. The first Wurlitzer theatre organ in the Southwest (a 2/4) was installed in the Crystal in 1913. In 1917, a larger 2/6 Wurlitzer replaced this. Audiences really responded to the new instrument, and its emotional effect on them was not lost on the theatre owners.

A huge theatre was built at 1209-11 Elm Street, and named the Hippodrome. An ad for the opening in March of 1913 shows it was called, "a new moving picture house." Ads touted that only "high class" movies were shown in this theatre, "The Photoplay House Ahead." A splendid seven-piece orchestra, and a theatre pipe organ provided musical features. The organ was described as a 2/21 Pilcher, first played by a Professor Dee, an English organist. This organ ended up at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. The Hippodrome changed owners and names, becoming the Joy in 1932, the Wade in 1941, and later the Downtown in 1945. It finally closed as the Strand in 1959. It is not known when the organ was no longer used in the theatre, before its' removal.

The Old Mill Theatre opened June 24, 1913 at 1527-29 (some list it at 1525) Elm, and it seated 1400 patrons. The first organ installed there in 1915 was a small 2/7 Wurlitzer. The "Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra" proved to be an enormous hit, and it was commended again and again as, "the ideal musical instrument for a moving picture theatre." By 1920, a larger 2/18 Pilcher had replaced it, and in 1928 a 3/8 Robert-Morton organ replaced the Pilcher. This organ's story was somewhat representative of what happened to numerous theatre organs across the nation. Many more were to be junked, or pirated for parts that were placed into other organs.

The Robert-Morton story: After the 1927 Robert-Morton organ was manufactured in Van Nuys, California, it was installed in the Old Mill Theatre on March 30, 1928. Called, "The organ with an imagination," it was also said that grown men would cry when it was played. For a few years the organ was used to accompany the silent movies of the day, as well as vaudeville and specialty acts. The Old Mill Theatre had suffered a minor fire in 1917, but was closed only briefly. In 1934, the Old Mill had a larger fire, and the theatre was closed for remodeling.

Elm Street showing the Leo, which had been the Queen, The Dallas, which had been the Telenews, The Capitol, Rialto and The Palace. Circa 1950s



Capitol and Old Mill Theatres, June 13, 1931, showing WRR Kid Show crowds.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



North side of 1500 & 1600 blocks of Elm Street in 1937 (looking east).

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



Palace Theatre at 1623-25 Elm Street in 1950.

In December of 1935, the theatre was re-opened and renamed The Rialto, and the elaborate façade was completely transformed into an “Art Deco” concrete/stucco covered front. The console was placed under the stage, and never used again in that theatre. The components were boxed up and piled in the basement of the theatre. When the theatre was to be demolished in 1959, an organ enthusiast took the organ, and after some work, it was sold to Thurlow-Weed Funeral Home in Austin, Texas. Then a man

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

*Elm Street ran from the Trinity River (west of downtown) to the east, and finally ended at the border of what used to be the City of East Dallas, near what is now Central Expressway. It ran parallel to, and one block south of, the old Texas & Pacific Railroad track, and later was called Burseson, and then Pacific Street after the tracks were removed.*

*Elm Street was originally filled with stores of all kinds, and even a meat packing plant, seed stores, and grocery stores. When the variety theatres and saloons were first established on Main, Commerce, and Jefferson Streets, that's where entertainment began. However, when the silent movies came in, beautiful theatres were built on Elm Street, and the heart of the entertainment scene was established there on Elm.*



# Theatre Organ

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**EDITOR** Dale Baker  
PO Box 51450  
Indianapolis, IN 46251-0450  
317/838-9345  
baker@atos.org

**PRESIDENT** Fr. Gus Franklin  
6508 Willow Springs Road  
Springfield, IL 62707-9500  
217/585-1770 • Fax 217/585-0835  
franklin@atos.org

**VICE-PRESIDENT** Bob Davidson  
9448 117th Street  
Seminole FL 33772-2715  
Voice/Fax 727/392-7518  
davidson@atos.org

**SECRETARY** Jack Moelmann  
PO Box 25165  
Scott AFB, IL 62225-0165  
618/632-8455 • Fax 618/632-8456  
moelmann@atos.org

**TREASURER** Bob Maney  
229 Ellen Avenue  
State College, PA 16801-6306  
814/238-2022 • Fax 814/238-4034  
maney@atos.org

**ADVERTISING MANAGER** Michael Fellenzer  
PO Box 551081  
Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581  
317/251-6441 • Fax 317/251-6443  
fellenzer@atos.org

**ATOS MARKETPLACE** John Ledwon  
28933 Wagon Road  
Agoura, CA 91301-2735  
Voice/Fax: 818/889-8894  
ledwon@atos.org

## JOURNAL STAFF

**EDITOR** Dale Baker

**ASSISTANT EDITOR** Doris Erbe

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR** Tom DeLay

**ADVERTISING PUBLISHER** Michael Fellenzer

**PUBLISHER** Bob Maney

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Harry Heth  
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Nelson Page  
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## YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD

Michael Cierski • cierski@atos.org

## CORPORATE OFFICE

American Theatre Organ Society, Inc.  
5 Third Street, Suite 724  
San Francisco, CA 94103-3200

**DESIGN & TYPESETTING** ColorType

**PRINTING** Jostens Printing & Publishing

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## ATOS COMMITTEES & CHAIRPERSONS:

### AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Dan Bellomy  
PO Box 1326 / Burlington, MA 01803  
781/266-6874 • Fax 707/598-2689 • bellomy@atos.org

### ARCHIVES/LIBRARY

Jim Patak  
Rialto Square; 5 E. Van Buren Street, Suite 224  
Joliet, IL 60432  
708/562-8538 • patak@atos.org

### ATOS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Harry Heth / 1247 Peden / Houston, TX 77006-1130  
713/527-8096 • Fax 713/527-9182 • heth@atos.org

### BYLAWS

Bob Maney  
229 Ellen Avenue / State College, PA 16801-6306  
814/238-2022 • Fax 814/238-4034 • maney@atos.org

### CHAPTER RELATIONS

Ed Mullins  
813 Grand Avenue / Billings, MT 59102  
406/259-5555 • mullins@atos.org

### CONVENTION PLANNING

Mike Kinerk  
2655 Pine Tree Drive / Miami Beach, FL 33140  
305/532-9000 • Fax 305/376-3679 • kinerk@atos.org

### EDUCATION/TECHNICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Jeff Weiler  
1845 S. Michigan Avenue, #1905 / Chicago, IL 60616  
312/842-7475 • weiler@atos.org

### ELECTRONIC THEATRE ORGAN COMPETITION

Bob Acker  
216 Glenwick Place / Allen, TX 75013  
972/727-5024 • acker@atos.org

### ENDOWMENT FUND

Bob Davidson  
9448 117th Street / Seminole FL 33772-2715  
Voice/Fax 727/392-7518 • davidson@atos.org

### GEORGE WRIGHT MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP

Don Bickel  
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Voice/Fax: 626/794-9652 • dbickel@atos.org

### HISTORIAN

Tom DeLay  
21100 Valle San Juan Drive / Salinas, CA 93907-9200  
831/443-5917 • Fax 831/443-5826 • delay@atos.org

### INNER-CITY YOUTH PROGRAM

Ed Mullins  
813 Grand Avenue / Billings, MT 59102  
406/259-5555 • mullins@atos.org

### MENTOR PROGRAM

Dan Bellomy  
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781/266-6874 • Fax 707/598-2689 • bellomy@atos.org

### NOMINATIONS

Bob Miloche  
80 Maywood Avenue / Maywood, NJ 07607  
201/843-0083 • Fax 201/854-1477 • miloche@atos.org

### ORGANIST SCHOLARSHIPS

Carlton Smith  
2175 N. Irwin Street / Indianapolis, IN 46219-2220  
317/356-1240 • Fax 317/322-2379 • smith@atos.org

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

John Apple  
4146 Sheridan Drive / Charlotte, NC 28205-5654  
704/567-1066 • apple@atos.org

### PUBLICATIONS REVIEW

Nelson Page, The Galaxy Theatre  
7000 Blvd East / Guttenberg, NJ 07093  
201/854-7847 • Fax 201/854-1477

### RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION

Allen Miller  
167 Carriage Drive / Glastonbury, CT 06033-3231  
860/633-5710 • Fax 860/633-7230  
miller@atos.org

### SIMONTON LITERARY PRIZE

Jeff Weiler  
1845 S. Michigan Avenue, #1905 / Chicago, IL 60616  
312/842-7475 • weiler@atos.org

### SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION ORGAN PROJECT

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PO Box 179 / Cedars, PA 19423-0179 • 610/584-4035

### TECHNICAL

Jim Stemke  
408 Courtland Court / Schaumburg, IL 60193-1456  
847/534-9511 • Fax 847/534-1405 • stemke@atos.org

### THEATRE ORGANIST HOBBYIST COMPETITION

Dan Bellomy  
PO Box 1326 / Burlington, MA 01803  
781/266-6874 • Fax 707/598-2689 • bellomy@atos.org

## Theatre Organ

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Looking back... at Dallas theatres.  
THREE PHOTOS FROM CRUMPLER COLLECTION.

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## THEATRE ORGAN INTEREST GROUPS

### ELECTRONIC ORGANS (ETONES)

Jack Moelmann  
PO Box 25165 / Scott AFB, IL 62225-0165  
618/632-8455 • Fax 618/632-8456  
moelmann@atos.org

### PIPE ORGAN OWNERS GROUP (POOG)

John Ledwon  
28933 Wagon Road / Agoura, CA 91301  
Voice/Fax: 818/889-8894 • ledwon@atos.org

### WEB SITE: [www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org)

Ivan de la Garza, Site Designer  
707/785-2408 • ivan1@mcn.org  
Tom DeLay, Editor  
21100 Valle San Juan Dr  
Salinas CA 93907-9200  
831/443-5917 • Fax: 831/443-5826  
delay@atos.org

### YOUNG THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION

Harry Heth  
1247 Peden / Houston, TX 77006-1130  
713/527-8096 • Fax 713/527-9182 • heth@atos.org

### YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE

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# General Information

## 2004 ATOS Board of Directors' Election Results

The 2004 ATOS Board of Directors' election concluded with ballots having to be postmarked not later than April 15, 2004. We had five very qualified candidates. The three receiving the highest number of votes, to be seated on the Board for the term of 2004-2007, are in alphabetical order:

Jelani Eddington

Ed Mullins

Nelson Page


A total of 1,920 ballots were received (up from 1,703 in 2004),

which included 91 international ballots. The new Board members were seated at the Annual Board of Directors' Meeting held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 1st, just prior to the 2004 Annual Convention.

We want to thank Fern Siemens of St. Louis for again being our Election Teller. She always does a very thorough job.

Jack Moelmann, Secretary

## ATOS Decals & Pins

For THEATRE ORGAN readers . . . ATOS Marketplace has a "special" offer for ATOS Decals and ATOS Lapel Pins. To take advantage of this special priced "Combo Special," see page 58 for details. 

## The Tone Hour Radio Show Print

Created by Robert Hope-Jones,  
this stunning artwork brings to life an era when Wurlitzer and radio were king!

Appreciators of fine art will revel in detail so sharp, that every stop key can be clearly read in succession to reveal a real Wurlitzer specification. With over two years in the making, it is, without doubt, an unparalleled piece of work. Be one of the few to own this limited edition, 20x30 inch monochrome print, each one carrying the hand embossed signature of the artist.



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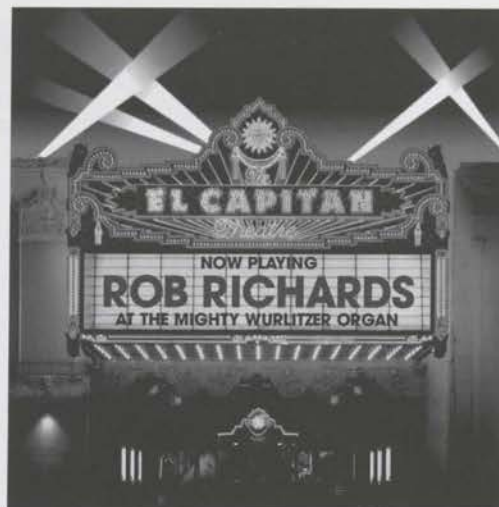
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Who'll Buy A Box Lunch  
That's Called Puppy Love  
The Wedding Party Of Mickey Mouse  
Mickey Mouse  
Mickey Mouse's Birthday Party  
Playful Pluto  
Mickey's Son & Daughter

The Dance of the Bogey Man  
What! No Mickey Mouse?  
The World Owes Me A Livin'  
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# Members' Forum\*

Dear Editor,

While reviewing Ken Double's "Great Ladies Of Song," Ralph Beaudry should have remembered (assuming he's old enough) that it was not Peggy Lee who sang "Hard Hearted Hannah" in the film *Pete Kelly's Blues*, but the wonderful Ella Fitzgerald who also sang the title song (although not over the title). In this picture, Miss Lee sang several memorable tunes from the 20s, including "Sugar," "He Needs Me" and "Somebody Loves Me."

This slight lapse should not detract from the great job Ralph does in reviewing theatre organ recordings, especially when it comes to recalling a fifty-year-old film. I have probably seen over a thousand movies in my years as a projectionist and later as a theatre manager. This one remains one of my favorites.

Jack Doyle,  
Merritt Island, Florida



Dear Editor,

To comment on Mr. Orlov's letter; First of all Ben Hall was a friend to me as well. Ray Bohr introduced us when I

joined the Music Hall staff in the late 50s. Knowing Ben, I doubt he would have made such a negative statement. It is well known that the great ceiling of the theatre does block the instrument's sound to a certain degree. Wurlitzer pointed out this possibility to the architects at the time of the building design, and tonal projection chambers were requested to all grille locations relative to the organ chambers. I have the original drawings showing this design concept. These same drawings show that these tonal chambers had been eliminated due to four-color lighting effects in the ceiling and cove areas. Two people that I knew heard the organ before the last sections of ceiling (in the organ chamber areas) were put in place. The man who engaged my services for the Organ Maintenance Dept., Mr. Louis Ferrara and Mr. Richard Leibert, the theatre's Senior Organist for many, many years. Both stated that the sound was just fantastic, and they both realized what would happen when that beautiful ceiling was completed.

Several improvements have been made in tonal projection since we completed the restoration project, and I hope Mr. Orlov has an opportunity to enjoy these changes.

With regard to the organ being thrown in. This is far from the truth. Mr. Ferrara was one of the crew members,

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and told me of the great care that was taken with this and all Wurlitzer installations. Having worked on this organ for many decades now I can tell you that this is one superb example of organ builders art, and remains in this condition to this day. In fact the Wurlitzer Company provided two men to stay on duty for a full year in the theatre, to make certain all was in order. They attended to all tonal regulation, action adjustments, and took care of tuning and maintenance during this time period. The in-house crew took over in February of 1934, under the supervision of Mr. Leibert.

The instrument is only used for productions as deemed appropriate by the Production Department and the Director of Pipe Organ Maintenance. This has been the situation since the theatre began operations, all usage being covered by the required security and insurance considerations.

Thank you for your consideration of this correspondence.

*Sincerely,*  
Ronald Cameron Bishop  
SR. Consultant  
Radio City Music Hall  
Organ Restoration/Maintenance Project



Dear Editor,

Having read several of Christian Orlov's cynical articles regarding the Theatre Organ, I suggest that he join ranks with the "cool" music people, and devote his efforts to supporting the current flood of un-musical, un-interesting, un-harmonious, cacophony of NOISE, that IS the "cool" music!

Apparently he has only one agenda, and that is to criticize anyone who has an interest in promoting, perpetuating, and furthering the beauty of majesty of not only the Theatre Organ, but organs in general, be they pipe or digital.

It is true that you cannot strap an organ to your back, and join a few other people with similar instruments, for a session of ear-shattering, nerve-jangling, noise that is capable of driving people to the depths of depression, and often ending up in individual suicide. This it would seem is his idea of "cool" music!

It is unfortunate that this man not only downgrades Theatre Organ, but also does nothing to support it, although he 'claims' to be an organ enthusiast! I fail to see his name anywhere in the list of those supporting Theatre Organ monetarily, so just how much of an 'enthusiast' is he?

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I believe in supporting Theatre Organ, the various clubs that I belong to, and in promoting theatre organ personally, both monetarily, and in my own home. To this end, I put an addition on my home, and created a mini theatre, in which I have currently installed an Allen George Wright Signature Series, (GW-4), four manual thirty-three rank digital theatre organ. At least four times a year, I invite internationally known theatre organists into my home to perform for friends, business associates, and theatre organ lovers. I do this to promote theatre organ, and to provide great entertainment for those who would otherwise be unable to enjoy the beauty and majesty of these great instruments. Those who attend love what they hear, and look forward to coming again. I have currently 110 people on my mailing list, but can only seat about forty-five, so I must use a rotation system for the invitations.

It is very encouraging to see how many young people

attend these programs, and are studying piano, with the thought of swinging into organ, as their talents improve.

If Mr. Orlov is such an enthusiast, as he proclaims to be, perhaps he could do a few things to promote theatre organ, instead of making his feeble attempts at destroying it.

*Sincerely yours,*  
Robert A. Lewis  
Villa Park, Illinois

*\*Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN. Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.*



## DAVID L. JUNCHEN TECHNICAL SCHOLARSHIP

The application process remains open for the tenth annual David L. Junchen Technical Scholarship. Winners attend the annual convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders. This year, the AIO will convene in New York City, September 28 to October 4. We invite all ATOS members between 18 and 60, who have an aptitude for pipe organ work and a commitment to excellence, to apply.

*For application materials, write to:*  
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ATOS Education Committee  
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*Or E-mail:*  
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# Closing Chord

## ROBERT DAVIS BALFOUR

1934-2004

On March 9, 2004 Garden State Chapter and ATOS lost a staunch, outstanding member, Robert Balfour. Bob lived in New Jersey all his life, and became a professional radio broadcast engineer. His talent was recording concerts professionally. He also founded Landmarks Recording Services, a division of Garden State Chapter. Bob was in the midst of producing a CD of the late Lee Erwin playing the various "Wonder Mortons." Bob had, over the years acquired a large music library in his home.



PAUL JACYK

*Bob Balfour at an ATOS Convention.*

The wonderful and great concerts, played on unforgettable theatre pipe organs, are now jewels.

Bob had first joined the Delaware Valley Chapter. An article in a local paper caught his attention, and soon he had joined Mike Hughes and Wendell Rotter who were restoring an original 2/7 Wurlitzer pipe organ placed in the Rahway Theatre, in Rahway, New Jersey. Bob fell in love with the acoustics and music in this theatre. Soon, the Wurlitzer was given the title of "Biggest Little Wurlitzer." When the New York Theatre Organ Society received a charter from ATOS, Bob joined it, as a charter member. While he was president of the chapter, the New York Theatre Society hosted the "Fabulous Fifteenth Convention" in July 1970. This was the only ATOS convention to be held in New York City.

New Jersey is the middle state in between Pennsylvania and New York. Our Jersey theatre pipe organ people wanted to obtain a chapter for our state. Bob Balfour, crew Chief of the Rahway Wurlitzer, arranged a meeting in the Rahway Theatre in 1971, and many interested people attended. An organizational meeting followed, held in Wanaque, New Jersey at a well-known suburban restaurant that contained a 3/18 Wurlitzer pipe organ. The meeting was very successful, and 77 people signed up and became charter members. Robert Balfour was elected as our first President. He then traveled to the 1973 ATOS Convention in Oregon, where we were awarded our ATOS charter. Through the years Bob has traveled each year to the Annual Conventions with camera in hand, meeting many friends around the country.

Our GSTOS Chapter has grown, and now we are restoring four theatre pipe organs. Bob's attention was now shifted towards the Loew's Theatre in Jersey City, New Jersey, which originally had a 4/23 Wonder Morton, It had been removed,

and now is in place in Santa Barbara, California. Bob was interested in the Wonder Morton from Bronx Loews Paradise, which was owned by Mr. James Walgreen. Bob successfully negotiated with Mr. Walgreen, having him donate half of the asking price of the Wonder Morton, while Bob completed sale by paying the remaining \$25,000, with a no-interest loan to Garden State. He later gave the organ as an outright gift to the chapter. Bob also donated stocks and money to the chapter.

He would visit the Loews Jersey Theatre weekly, and watch the miles of ductwork and pipes filling the chambers. As his health deteriorated, he would sit in the lobby, and keep up with the progress in the chambers. He continued this until pneumonia overtook him. His greatest wish was to see and hear the mighty Wonder Morton play. Our hearts go out for him. So near . . . so far.

Rest Bob.

## ALLEN R. MILLS

1935-2004

On March 20, 2004, the theatre organ world lost a gifted performer, composer and artist with the passing of Allen R. Mills. He succumbed to Type I diabetes at the age of 68, after a nearly 40-year battle with the disease. His family, fellow ATOS members, friends, and the many admirers of his talent, charm and sensitivity of performance, will keenly feel his absence.

Allen was born in Lake George, New York, and educated at the Crane School of Music and Westminster Choir College. His teachers included Dr. George Markey and Hugh Allen Wilson.



Allen played hundreds of dedicatory recitals of new church organs throughout the United States, and was a talented organ demonstrator in New York, Florida and California. Additionally, his versatility as a performer could be seen in a highly successful lounge act, early in his performing career. He juggled a Hammond spinet organ and piano as well as a unique device called a Chamberlain, during which he charmed audiences with self-accompanied vocals. He played theatre organ concerts throughout the United States including: The Redford Theatre in Detroit, The Round Lake Auditorium, The Rochester Civic Auditorium, the Capitol in Rome, New York, the Syracuse Fairgrounds, the Bardavon Opera House in Poughkeepsie, the Brooklyn Paramount, an appearance at the Hammond Castle Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and at Shea's Buffalo.

His prestigious resume includes such classical musical



*Allen Mills at Detroit's Redford Theatre.*

endeavors as concert accompanist for Albany, New York's Capitol Hill Choral Society for over 20 years; soloist on organ, piano and harpsichord with the Albany, Schenectady and Glens Falls Symphonies; a performance at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy; and participation in the Ethos Chamber Music Ensemble. All of these activities were based in the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter region of upstate New York State. His association with the Chapter remained close throughout his life, even after his relocation to California in the early 1990's. While in California, he was also associated with the LATOS Chapter.

He taught music at, and composed original scores for, the Albany Academy for Girls. He conducted the first regional orchestra and chorus performance of the Andrew Lloyd-Webber "Requiem" at Proctors Theatre. He conducted the Troy, New York, Musical Arts Society, and the Secret Touring Choir of the Albany Academy for girls, and directed his Westminster Presbyterian Church Choir in a choral concert tour of England and Scotland, appearing in Canterbury Cathedral, Ely Cathedral, Yorkminster Cathedral and St. Andrew's University.

Allen was the musical director at Zion Lutheran Church in Schenectady, NY, Trinity United Methodist Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Albany at various times during his time in New York. His commissions include a 1969 composition entitled "Rickshaw Ride" for the American Theatre Organ Society's "The Mighty Theatre Organ" collection; two recordings on Proctor's Theatre's 3/18 Wurlitzer and also for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society; a CD of gospel music with vocalist Theresa Treadway-Lloyd; and a number of demonstration recordings for the House of Harmony. He appeared at three ATOS national conventions: in 1964, 1967 and 1970. He concertized extensively throughout the United States. His performances in concert were always unforgettable, whether he was playing the piano, organ or using his amaz-

ing voice to captivate his audience. The Schenectady Gazette recognized Allen's connection with his music when it stated, "When Allen plays a ballad, he gets to your soul—he sings through the keyboard as well as his voice. . . ." He performed throughout the United States, and even visited the West Indies during his concert career.

Allen is probably best remembered, however, for his tenure as Organist/Artist-in-Residence of Proctors Theatre during the 1980s. The "Old Fashioned Christmas" shows starring Allen at *Goldie*, the Mighty Wurlitzer, and featuring local talent, were a mainstay of the theatre and remain a cherished holiday memory for many in the Capital District. Allen maintained this position

for 10 years before relocating to Arcadia, California in the early '90s. His time at Proctor's saw a recurrence of the "Golden Age of Theatre Organ" with a series of highly regarded concerts and silent movie presentations. An average of 16 organ-related presentations were produced annually starring Allen, as well as guest organists.

During the decade he lived in Arcadia, California in the '90s, Allen played for hundreds of weddings at Santa Anita Church in Arcadia, which he quipped was a "wedding factory". During his sojourn there, he took in the West Coast Organ experience and began composing and arranging using computer music writing software. He played theatre and classical organ recitals and gave Allen organ demonstrations. Recently, he had returned to the Upstate New York area to be near his family.

His family and friends organized a memorial service, featuring the music he loved, for Allen at Westminster Presbyterian Church under the musical direction of Al and Susan Fedak. He will be remembered on October 17 with a memorial concert to benefit juvenile diabetes, featuring Tom Hazelton on the newly renovated Goldie, at Proctors Theatre sponsored by the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter and the theatre.

Allen's last performances were at Proctor's Theatre, the New York Military Academy and the Capitol Theatre in Rome, New York. His children Jody Allen Mills and Amy Mills Scarlett, as well as three grandchildren, former wife Gail Scott, and cousin Richard Montena survive him. His legacy remains in the talent of his music pupils, the memories of his many friends, as well as those whose lives he touched through a musical life.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, 6 Greenwood Drive, East Greenbush, New York 12061.

*Prepared by Norene Gross, Hudson-Mohawk Chapter, and Char Hopwood, LATOS.*





# Pop Organ Workshop

By Bill Irwin



## BASS PEDAL MAGIC

In this session...

- Bass Pedal Techniques For All Levels
- Bass Pedal Patterns
- Bass Pedal Pick-ups
- Bass Pedals in Stop Rhythms
- Bass Pedal Embellishment
- Walking Bass Pedals
- Walking Pedals In Shuffle Rhythm
- Bass Pedal Blues Pattern
- Q & A—Key Signatures

## “Bass Pedal Blues Spectacular”

### Bass Pedal Techniques For All Levels of Performance

At first glance, the music in this article could be mistaken for just another arrangement of the Blues . . . but if you take a closer look at the bottom staff, (three staves were necessary for this particular arrangement) you'll notice that the Bass Pedal line changes almost constantly. That's because this music is more like a “working textbook,” giving you a practical setting in which to learn a number of Bass Pedal Techniques.

I'd like to walk you through almost every measure, explaining what I did to illustrate the various pedal patterns. Some of these techniques can be found in my Magic Study Series volume “Bass Pedal Magic.” Others are newer, and some *more advanced* than shown in the book.

Before you “dip your toe” (and heel) into this ‘pool of knowledge’, let's take a couple of minutes to discuss pedaling on the organ. Here are some “do's” and “don'ts” that can help make your pedaling more accurate, cause less fatigue, maintain proper balance to encourage the use of both feet, and to avoid “riding” the Swell or Expression Pedal.

### Do's & Don'ts

- Shoes: Just some random thoughts about bass pedals, such as the shoes you wear when you're playing the bass pedals.

*Ladies first . . .*

Yes, I know how Ethel Smith used to play the electronic organ in high-heels. (Years ago, I went to see her in connection with the one, and only one, arrangement that I ghosted for her. I wrote one, and others wrote some. Didn't take away from her ability. It's just something I thought I'd share with you. But back to high-heels.) Truthfully, maybe some of our present day female organists are doing the same, but it's not recommended, especially if you're going to play using the “heel and toe” technique.

*Men . . .*

Try to avoid ‘wing-tip’ shoes. You might get by on an electronic organ with a monophonic bass, (only one bass pedal

note sounds at a time) otherwise, count on hearing two bass notes as the ‘wing-tips’ generally cover more than one pedal as you step on them.

Organ shoes are available, and wearing them will also protect the finish of your home organ.

- The really big “Do” . . . is a “Don't!”—**Don't Look At The Pedals!**

When you take the time to find your best position in relation to the Pedalboard, you won't need to continue to sneak glances at the bass pedals. The more you look at them, the more your subconscious tells you that you must look at them in order to play them. Read on, and I'll give you my suggestion as to how to check the accuracy of your pedaling.

### Balancing Your Assets

Part of the entire presentation of my approach to Position At The Console instruction, has to do with balance . . . **your** balance. It's worth every bit of time it takes to find out how and where to sit at the console, unless you're playing one of the theatre pipe organs that (still) has a metal ‘Howard’ seat, (with the two separated halves that swivel with you, keeping you in one place, that some engineer figured out would be the best place for everyone who plays that organ).

Most of the time you'll be on a bench, where, if you sit in the very same place every time you sit down, *and you should . . .* and practice hard and long enough to cause men to perspire and women to “glow,” you'll create a white outline of your body where you sat. This speaks well for your sitting position, but it also indicates that you didn't use a bench pad or pillow to both take care of the bench finish and the comfort of your “assets.”

Keep in mind that anything you can do to minimize fatigue and lessen any aches, pains, or leg cramps, will simply allow you to continue to practice longer, with greater progress . . . and will result in your playing better. Make sense to you? It does to me.

# Bass Pedal Blues Spectacular

By Bill Irwin

♩ = ♩

Slowly *mf*

C<sup>6</sup> F<sup>9</sup> C<sup>6</sup>

4 C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>9</sup> C<sup>6</sup>

8 G<sup>9</sup> F<sup>9</sup> C<sup>6</sup>

12 (R) C<sup>6</sup> F<sup>9</sup> C<sup>6</sup>

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16 **C7** **F9** **C6**

(Pedal Solo)

20 **A<sup>b</sup>9** **G<sup>9</sup>** **G<sup>b</sup>9** **F<sup>9</sup>**

23 **C6** **(R)** **C7 8va (opt.)**

2 3 2 1 2 1 2 1

26 **F7** **C7** **F7**

(Pedal Solo)

Music engraving by Pat Stacy, Dorset, England

30 C7 G7

(Pedal Solo)

34 F7 C7 (R) C6

(Pedal Solo)

38 F9 C6 C7

(Pedal Solo)

41 F9 C6

(Pedal Solo)

45  $G^9$   $F^9$   $C^6$  (R)

49  $C^6(9)$   $F^9$   $C^6(9)$   $C^9$

(Pedal Solo)

53  $F^9$   $C^6$

57  $G^9$   $F^9$   $C^6$   $C^6$

## The Balancing Routine

I've never said, "my way is the best way," but I do know that I have had many students, who have applied my balancing routine on the bench, tell me that there was an immediate improvement in their level of playing the bass pedals. The routine has helped them achieve the goal: greater accuracy, less fatigue, and less "riding" the Swell Pedal.

Students come in all sizes and shapes and they try to play an organ, pipe or electronic, that "fits all" . . . but it doesn't. Each individual must adjust their own body to accommodate the configuration of the instrument they are playing. Let me explain how I suggest you do that . . .

(By the way, I appreciate the requests for instruction on **Position At The Console**, but due to space, I'm going to limit the discourse to the area of the Bass Pedals, and cover the entire routine in a later Session.)

1. Slide onto the bench, avoiding sounding any of the bass pedals. Move to the approximate center of the organ, and grasp the outer edge of both sides at the same time. That will confirm whether you are, or are not, in the middle of the instrument.
2. Before you place your right foot on the Swell/Expression Pedal, use your right hand to reach out for either the Upper Manual on a two-manual organ, or the Uppermost (Solo) manual on a three-manual organ. (You're on your own with four or more manuals!) Notice your right elbow. Can you reach out and touch the manual with a slight break at the elbow, or is your right arm stretched straight out to reach the manual? I suggest that when there is no break in the elbow, that you move your body closer to the console, which will probably result in moving the bench closer to support you. If you don't sit close enough, you will bend over to reach the keys or the registration tabs/drawbars and, oops, here comes the back pain and the fatigue . . . and there goes your practice time.
3. When you know how close you want to sit, for comfort, adjust the bench to allow the majority of your thighs to be off the bench, (for freedom of movement) but with enough of your body on the bench to allow you to raise both legs up in the air, without having to lean back to avoid falling forward. That's the "Balancing Act."

### "G'-Whiz, I Did It!"

Now that you have placed yourself from left to right and then from back to front on the bench, with your Right Foot on the Swell Pedal . . .

- Casually drop your Left Foot straight down in front of you, to play the pedal note "G". Don't try hard. Just let your Left Foot drop down to the Pedals.
- After you play the note . . . **Don't look down to check it!** Play a "G" on the Lower Manual, compare the sound and let your ear tell you if you actually played the pedal note

"G". If you hit the "G" the very first time, you'll be delighted. If you tried to find it on the way down and missed it, then continue to hold down the note you are playing, while you check the adjoining keys of "F" and "A" on the manual. When you determine which pedal key you're playing instead of the "G", don't raise your body off of the bench (or pad), just wiggle in the proper direction (Did you play "F"? Slightly wiggle to the right to correct. Did you play "A"? Slightly wiggle to the left.) After the very slight adjustment (most beginners over-adjust), put your Left Foot on the Bench Rest, then casually, without trying, lift your Left Foot and casually drop it on "G". You will get it right.

- Follow with some simple Bass Pedal Exercises, moving up and down the C scale, then using intervals, i.e., C-D, C-E, C-F, C-G (it's like coming home), C-A, C-B, C-C. Then reverse the order . . . High C-B, C-A, C-G, and so on.
- You can use the lower space between the black pedals, Eb and F# and the upper space between Bb and C# as check points.
- When you first start, make sure you are sitting in correct relationship to the pedals, and then slide your foot into the lower space (Eb/F#) and feel the relationship. In a short period of time, just doing that will tell you if you're back in the same good relationship to the Pedalboard.

## Bass Pedal Pattern Variations

It's about time we got started with the analysis of the **Bass Pedal Blues Spectacular** . . .

**Important:** Notice the small illustration above the staff at the very beginning . . . two even eighth notes = a dotted eighth and sixteenth note . . . a symbol that advises you to play all the even eighth notes, in this arrangement, as dotted eighths and sixteenths . . . in an easy "long-short" manner . . . as though they were quarter and eighth notes in an eighth note triplet. Now, we're ready to start the analysis . . .

Measures 1, 2, 3 . . . including the Bass Pedal note "G" in the beginning, incomplete measure, illustrate the use of **Bass Pedal Pick-up** notes, starting with 1 note on the preceding 4th beat. It's the 5th step (G) moving to the Root C. At the end of Meas. 1, there are 2 notes in the Bass pick-up. Notice the 3 notes in the "pick-up" at the end of Meas. 2, repeated on the 2nd half of the 2nd beat in Meas. 3.

Measure 4 . . . the bass notes are actually a **Bass Pedal Fill**, based on the **Walking Pedals Pattern Down** for C7th, which is explained in greater detail later in this Session.

Measures 4 through 12 . . . show variations of **Stop Rhythms**, with the L.H. chords and bass pedals, playing together on various beats of the measures . . . i.e., 1st beat only, 1st and 4th beats, first 2 beats, first 3 beats, all 4 beats in the measure. It's a dramatic and useful accompaniment for a variety of songs.

Measures 13 to 24 . . . illustrate the **Bass Pedal Variation** in the simple 4/4 or “Oom-pah” accompaniment. An easy approach is to play the half tone above or below the desired bass pedal, depending on the direction of your left foot. In Meas. 13, moving up to G, play the F#. Next, moving down from G to F, play the Gb. Then, moving down to C, use the Db on the way. In moving up or down to a black key note, I suggest using your heel on the half tone above or below, again, depending on the direction in which your foot is moving.

Measure 24 . . . in this measure there is another 3-note bass pedal pick-up, based on the C scale.

Measures 25 through 36 . . . illustrate the use of the “**Walking Pedals**” technique, that is easy to understand and easy to perform. If you sit at the organ while I explain my approach to Walking Pedals, you will be able to pick out the steps of the chords/scales as we go along. This approach is applicable to both console and spinet organs, and all levels of players will find some or all of the techniques useable in their creative performances.

Here are some basic ‘Rules’ used in mastering this relatively easy technique . . . (Note: Roman numerals are used to indicate steps of the scale. Arabic numerals are used to indicate the type of chord to be played on the step of the original scale.)

1. Walk the Bass Pedals “**Up and Down**” the **Triads**, whose Roots are located chromatically from C through E (C, C#/Db, D, D#/Eb, E).
2. Walk the Bass Pedals “**Down**” the **Scales** of the Roots from F through Bb (F, F#/Gb, G, G#/Ab, A, A#/Bb). You can also Walk “**Down**” the scale starting with the pedal C an octave above the low C and continue higher with a full Pedalboard.
3. *When Walking Up and Down the Triads, both Major and Seventh chords will be played the same, using the I, III, V steps of the scale. Flat the III step for a Minor chord. Sharp the V step for an Augmented chord. And flat both the III and V steps for the Diminished 7th chord. (Note: The initial approach uses the left foot only, within the range of one octave. An extension of the basic approach can be used with a full Pedalboard on console organs.)*
4. *When Walking Down the Scales, play the Root and move down through the VII, VI and V steps of the Major scale. The same steps are played for the Minor chord, as you do not play the III step of the scale as you move down from the VIII step to the V step. If you have any difficulty remembering the names of the steps, use the simple intervals of the scale construction . . . originally, moving up, to the right, on the keyboard/manual, “2 whole tones, a 1/2 tone, 3 whole tones and a 1/2 tone.” However, thinking backwards from the VIII step (Root) “Down” to the V step, you would say or think, “1/2 tone, whole tone, whole tone” . . . i.e. **Walking Down the F major or F Minor chord, you will play F, E,***

**D, C. Walking Down the Scales, sharp the V step for the Augmented chord, flat the VII step for the Seventh chord and walk any of the steps of the Diminished 7th chord, in any order.** On a full Pedalboard, you will be able to Walk Down the steps of a Diminished 7th chord built on any Root. If you’d like more information about Walking Pedals, contact me through the Editorial offices.

### Using Walking Pedals In Various Accompaniments

In Measures 25–36, the sustained left hand chords, with the Walking Pedals, constitutes what I call a **Ballad Accompaniment**—excellent for slow ballads, especially when there is a single note melody. It fills up the background and maintains a beat. Notice the **Walking Pedals “Fill”** in measures 28, 32, 36. Playing the even eighths as dotted-eighths, lends a ‘jazz feel’ to the Fill. (Note: The common term for dotted eighths and sixteenths is “**Jazz Eighths.**”)

In measures 37–48, the same Walking Pedals are used in the **Shuffle Rhythm**. Both the right hand and left hand chord values are written correctly to express the “long, short, long short” sound of the Shuffle Rhythm.

### Both Feet Are Used For a Blues Pedal Pattern

Remember our earlier discussion about **Balance On The Bench?** If you attempt the 12-Bar Blues Pedal Pattern in measures 49–60, you’ll quickly realize how necessary it is to be balanced on the bench.

In measures 13–24, it was suggested that you use the **Heel and Toe** technique when playing the Bass Pedal Variations. In the final 12-Bar Blues Pattern, measures 49–60, the left foot uses Heel and Toe for the Bass Pedal Solos . . . measures 52, 56, and 59. In measure 60, I offer you the option of playing the F# and G interval with either your left foot—**toe and heel**, or the right foot—**toe and heel**.

Please study the last **12-Bar Blues Pattern**, measures 49–60, and notice the conventional **inverted V** to indicate the **Toe** and the **U** to indicate the **Heel**. When these marks are placed **under the bass notes**, it indicates using the **left foot**. When placed **over the bass notes**, it indicates using the **right foot**. In the final measure 60, I’ve left the choice up to you in the ending, shown in the first two beats of the final measure.

### Registration Hints

With the great variety and disparity of pipe and electronic organs, I have not specified a general registration. You choose the registration for the right hand melody, and for the left hand accompaniment. I’ll add that, since the Bass Pedals are featured, you emphasize the 8’ settings in the Bass, perhaps adding just a bit of 16’ for depth. Don’t be shy. Have the volume of the Bass Pedals loud enough to be impressive . . . unless you’re one of those shy players who keeps the bass pedal volume very soft, so that mistakes in pedaling can’t be heard. If you’re reading this, I doubt that you are.



# Questions & Answers

**Q** Workshop Questions—the students ask:  
“What is the *real* importance of Key Signatures?”

**A** Bill:

Too often, Key Signatures are treated too casually . . . After a quick glance at the Signature, the average student plunges into the performance. You really should treat Key Signatures with more respect.

I believe it is fairly common for a teacher to ask the student to identify the Key of the piece about to be played. If the student names the Key correctly, the teacher smiles and the student is proud . . . until during the performance, the student forgets to flat the B, or perhaps forgets to sharp the F . . . so that just being able to name the Key by glancing at the space between the Clef and the Time Signature (the Key Signature) wasn't really productive. Imagine when the Key Signature has 4 or 5 flats or sharps to remember!

To help your sub-conscious remember the sharps or flats in a Key Signature, I suggest that, while you are in the process of learning, that you state, **out loud**, exactly what you see in the Key Signature area. For example, “One flat, B flat” . . . “One sharp, F sharp,” etc. This really makes an impression on the sub-conscious, which will help your conscious remember (during the performance) to flat or sharp the notes that were indicated.

By the way, if I ask you to tell me what the Key Signature is for the Key of C, I hope you'll say, “There are no sharps and no flats in the Key Signature for the Key of C.” The more specific you are in stating the data related to any facet of your music, especially when you state it **out loud**, the greater the possibility of it staying in your sub-conscious. Feed your personal computer the exact, correct information.

By the way, when I speak of the sharps and flats in the Key Signatures, notice that I don't use the word “accidentals,” as accidentals are the sharps and flats **not** seen in the Key Signature. Not every sharp and flat is considered to be an accidental.

**It's Good To Name The Key, But Be Careful.**

Yes, it's good to name the Key after you state the Key Signature. Example: “One flat, Bb, Key of F Major.” However,

\*\*\*\*\*

## And In Conclusion . . .

We've had a long Session, and I hope you've all found interesting and challenging material to motivate you, and to interest you in learning and using more creative bass pedal techniques in your own arrangements.

A friend in Germany, **Hans Rainer Eicker**, would like to locate an old book by **Porter Heaps**, titled “Swinging Bach,” published in the early 1960's. If you have the book, please contact me and help us maintain good foreign relations.

On the horizon . . . I'm marking my calendar—

since both the Major and the Relative Minor Keys (built on the 6th step of the Major Scale) both have the same Key Signature, check the first and last measures of the song for major or minor chords before you attempt to name the Key from the Key Signature.

**Why Do You Want To Know The Name Of The Key?**

When I've asked that question in Workshops, students have actually stated that the Key tells you what notes are to be sharpened or flatted! They forgot that in order to name the Key, the sharps or flats in that Key have to be identified. They already knew what notes were to be sharpened or flatted in order to name the Key . . . so that's not the reason for knowing what Key in which the piece was written.

Even if you read all the arrangements you play, knowledge of chords and chord progressions will help prepare you to read the notes better. Of course, if you study Chords and Chord Progressions, i.e. ‘Modern Keyboard Harmony’, the next logical step is to start to create your own arrangements. Following that, you will probably start to compose.

There are basic Chord Progressions associated with every Key. Roman numerals are used to indicate steps of the scale and Arabic numbers and abbreviations are used to indicate the types of chords to be played on the steps of the scale. For example, the simplest progression would be I, V7, I. That indicates the major chord played on the 1st step of the scale, followed by the Seventh chord played on the 5th step of the scale, followed by the original major chord on the 1st step. In the Key of C = C major, G7, C major. In the Key of G = G major, D7, G major. In the Key of F = F major, C7, F major. (“Mary Had A Little Lamb”). Of course, in advanced music, the progressions may be more complicated, but by knowing what Key you are playing in, with a knowledge of the chord progressions associated with that Key, you can almost know where the harmony is going . . . and the melody will be going along with it, using melody notes, arpeggios, R.H. melody in chords, etc., associated with the chords in the progressions. So, with some knowledge of ‘Modern Keyboard Harmony’, you will have a head start in mastering the new piece you have started to study.

**Date:** Nov. 26–28. **Place:** Phoenix, Arizona. **Weather Forecast:** Desert Winds will blow in “The Magnificent Seven,” sponsored by the Valley Of The Sun Chapter, ATOS. See page 34 in this issue for details. I'll be there. Will I see you?

**In our Next Session:**

Several requests for the **Jesse Crawford Style** have resulted in “Theatre Organ Styling” in the September/October issue. Two arrangements are scheduled. Please join me.

Bye now,  
Bill



## THE SONG IS *not quite* ENDED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

in Victoria, Texas purchased the organ, when the funeral home's lease on their building ran out. In time, he advertised the organ for sale, and Earl McDonald, one of the original members of the local Dallas theatre organ chap-

ter, purchased the organ. It was stored in three different garages for more 20 years. When Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Barr refurbished the historic 1938 Lakewood Theatre, they expressed an interest in putting a theatre organ in the theatre. A large Wonder Morton was originally offered, but that project turned out not to be feasible. When Earl McDonald donated the 1927 Robert-Morton organ to the



North side of 1500 & 1600 blocks of Elm Street in 1935 (looking east).

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



1600 block of Elm Street in the 1950s (looking east).

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

COURTESY DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY



*The second Majestic, housed in the Old Dallas Opera House, 1915.*

PAUL ADAIR PHOTO

*Washington Theatre, 1913.*



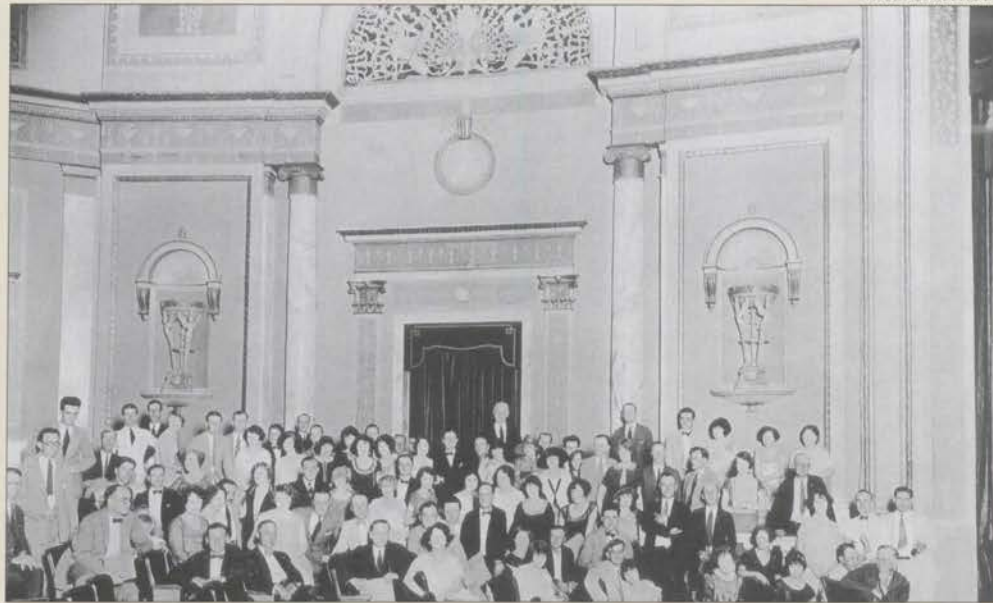
local chapter, it was decided to install it in the Lakewood.

From 1984–85 onward, the organ became an integral part of entertainment at the Lakewood Theatre. Movies, including silent movies where the organ was used, and feature spots as well as concerts and special music presentations brought back the appreciation and joy of hearing a theatre organ being played in a theatre setting. Once again though, obstacles arose. An ongoing effort to remedy water damage in the theatre was addressed; however, in 1994, due to financial reverses and other problems, the theatre again closed. The new property owners, Mark Miranda and partners, allowed the local chapter to keep the organ in the theatre, and to hold their meetings and a few concerts there. In 1996 Keith McKeague leased the theatre and, because of the organ being there, he was interested in scheduling silent movie nights, concerts, and other events where the organ could again be utilized.

For some years, the organ's versatility was showcased in a number of ways, from accompanying silent movies to spe-

cial concerts, and even as part of a rock concert. As patrons had been for previous decades, the grand sounds and the sight of that organ being played mesmerized the young people at the rock concert. Over the next seven years, the organ was seen and heard by hundreds of people who came to the silent movie nights and special concerts. Additional problems arose, and further water damage occurred, so the organ was finally removed from the theatre in January of

*Interior of the Palace Theatre showing the fan-shaped organ grill over the exit. Circa 1930s.*



*The Palace Theatre, Dallas, Texas, Special Palace Symphony Orchestra, 1934.*

GEORGE CEARLEY, JR. PHOTO



lating it into sounds that touch our senses. It literally causes us to 'experience' the unique sounds of the theatre pipe organ. It is like looking at a real sunset, instead of looking at a picture of a sunset. Once, when I first went to Gordon Wright's home, where the Melba theatre organ was being played, as I was walking up the steps I could not only hear the organ, I could actually feel it. At the concerts at the Lakewood, when I played the Robert-Morton, audiences always responded that way to the music. Many had never heard a theatre organ played in a theatre before, and they always loved experiencing the sound." It is an amazing fact

2004, thus concluding another chapter of the Robert-Morton theatre organ in Dallas.

Don Reasons, who served as 1st Vice President and Program Chairman of the local theatre organ chapter for a period of time, observed, "The reason the theatre pipe organ affects people so, is because of the physical and emotional response to this volume of sound that is produced. A thousand different pipes are moving masses of air, and trans-

that for generations, over 10,000 theatre organs were playing in theatres in the United States, and loyal fans here appreciated many in Dallas. In 1926 the Wurlitzer Company was turning out one complete theatre organ a day for the entire year!

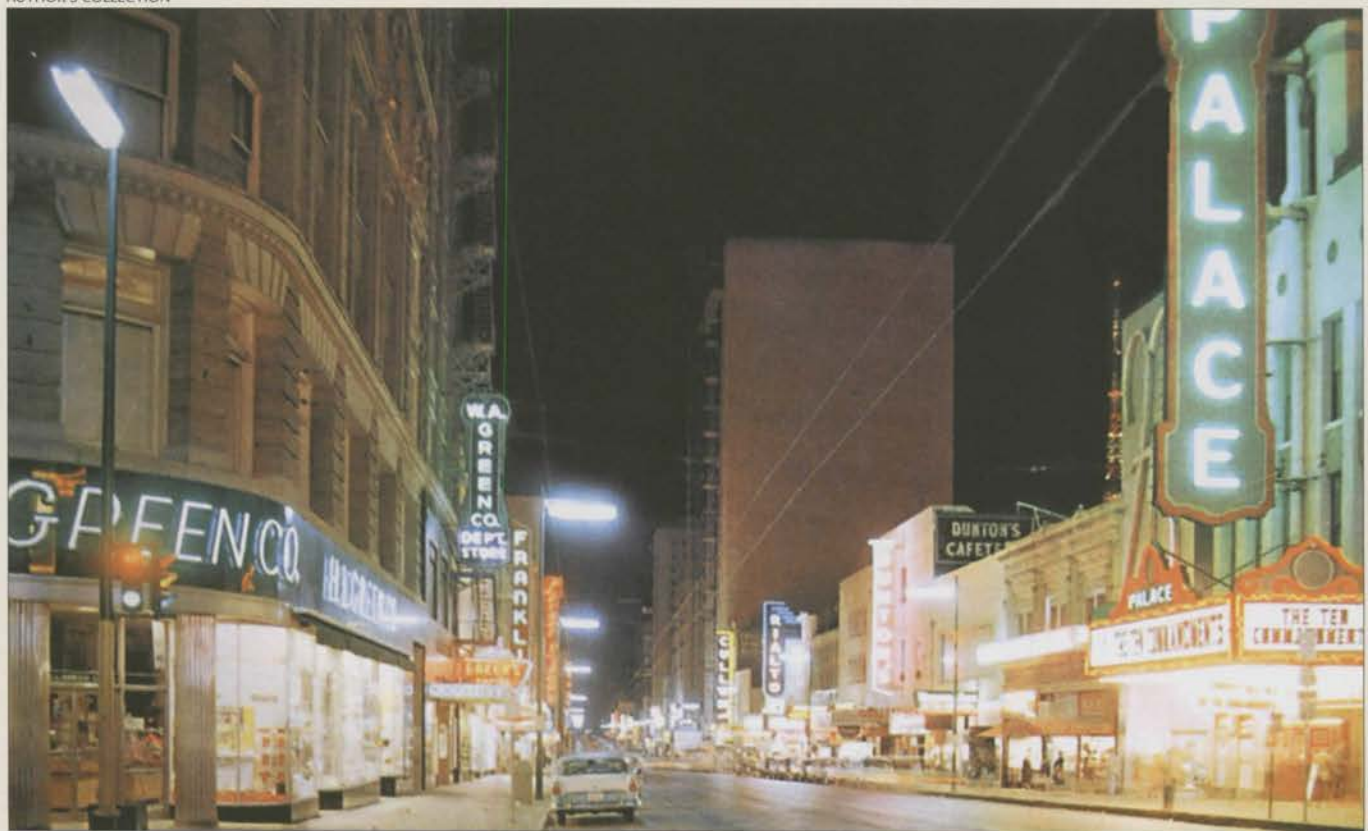
More and larger theatres were being built along Elm Street in the 1900s. The Washington, built in 1912 at 1613-15 Elm, had a 2/12 Hillgreen-Lane. The Queen, built

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



1500 block of Elm Street in the early 1940s (looking east).

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



1600 block of Elm—both sides of street in 1956 (looking west).

*Majestic Theatre was at 1925 Elm in 1952 (looking west).*

in 1913 at 1501-3 Elm, was an incredible theatre. Statues of naked ladies in every form, size, and shape decorated the interior of this movie theatre. A 2/23 Pilcher graced the orchestra pit. A smaller 2/16 Pilcher later replaced this.

The real movie 'palaces' now appeared on the Dallas scene. In June of 1921, the Palace Theatre opened at 1623-25 Elm. This 3,000-seat beauty became the jewel of Elm Street. The first organ installed was a 3/11 Wurlitzer "Unit Orchestra," played by Carl Wiesemann. The opening night program spotlighted the organ as one of the finest ever built, "a true supreme development in the organ world." By 1930, a huge Paramount Publix #1 Wurlitzer 4/20 was installed, and that instrument became "THE PALACE ORGAN." It is the one that is best remembered, and the legendary organists who played it became equally famous, especially Harold Ramsay and Dwight Brown, and later Weldon Flanagan.

The Majestic Theatre opened in 1921 at 1925 Elm, and this John Eberson-designed atmospheric theatre was graced with a small 2/8 Kilgen organ. It was not celebrated for its sound, and by 1938 it was removed.

Other theatres downtown were the Melba that had a lovely 3/11 Wurlitzer, the Capitol that had a Barton, the Rex with a 2/9 Kilgen, and the Orpheum on Main Street that had a 2/11 Hillgreen-Lane. Some of the neighborhood



theatres in Dallas also had theatre organs. The Arcadia Theatre had a 4/14 Reuter that had been installed in 1927. The Columbia Theatre had a Wicks, and then a Hillgreen-Lane organ. The Oaklawn Theatre had a Wicks, and the

WELDON FLANAGAN PHOTO



*Weldon Flanagan at The Publix #1 Wurlitzer, Palace Theatre, Dallas, Texas, 1950s.*

Midway a 2/6 Barton, which was later moved to the Texas Theatre in Oak Cliff. The Ideal Theatre had a Barton, and the Parkway had a 2/11 Hillgreen-Lane followed by a 2/16 Reuter. Even the Fair Park auditorium had a 4/24 Barton organ, which was the largest in the state.

But time was running out for theatre organs. Sound, coming to the movie world in 1927, would indeed be the beginning death knell for the theatre organ era. There would be some sparks of life when excellent organists like Jesse Crawford came along, and later when George Wright came in during the 1950s. With the development of Hi-Fi recordings, a revived interest in theatre organ music occurred, that continues to the present time. In Dallas there were dozens of organists who produced the true meaning of music with these theatre organs in theatres. But by the 1940s, many of these organs and their players were shadowy relics from a long-gone era. As George Perfect, another prominent theatre organist in Dallas, wrote on the wall of the Capitol Theatre . . . "Vitaphone finally got me. George Perfect." It was dated June 1, 1929.

Only a few theatres would even keep their organs after sound came in. The Melba and the Palace in Dallas did keep theirs for a while longer than most. The Palace organ, in particular, received prominence again under the skilled hands of Weldon Flanagan. Beginning in the late 1940s, this talented musical genius poured his money and talent into the famous "Palace Wurlitzer." For more than two decades, Weldon and the Palace Organ would thrill audiences and promote the theatre organ and its music more than any other source in Dallas. Playing before more than 12,000 people weekly, they were synonymous with what the theatre organ was, a unique American musical instrument. Weldon had actually been given ownership of the organ, long before the Palace theatre closed in 1969. The organ was removed and placed in his home on Haverford, and he continued keeping it in good repair for several years. The Melba Wurlitzer was rescued by Gordon Wright in 1974, and was placed in his home where it remains today. The fates and final destinations of the other organs are outlined in,

WELDON FLANAGAN PHOTO



*The Paramount Publix #1, 4/20 Wurlitzer Organ, Palace Theatre, 1930s.*


Night view of the Palace Theatre,  
Dallas, Texas, 1960s.

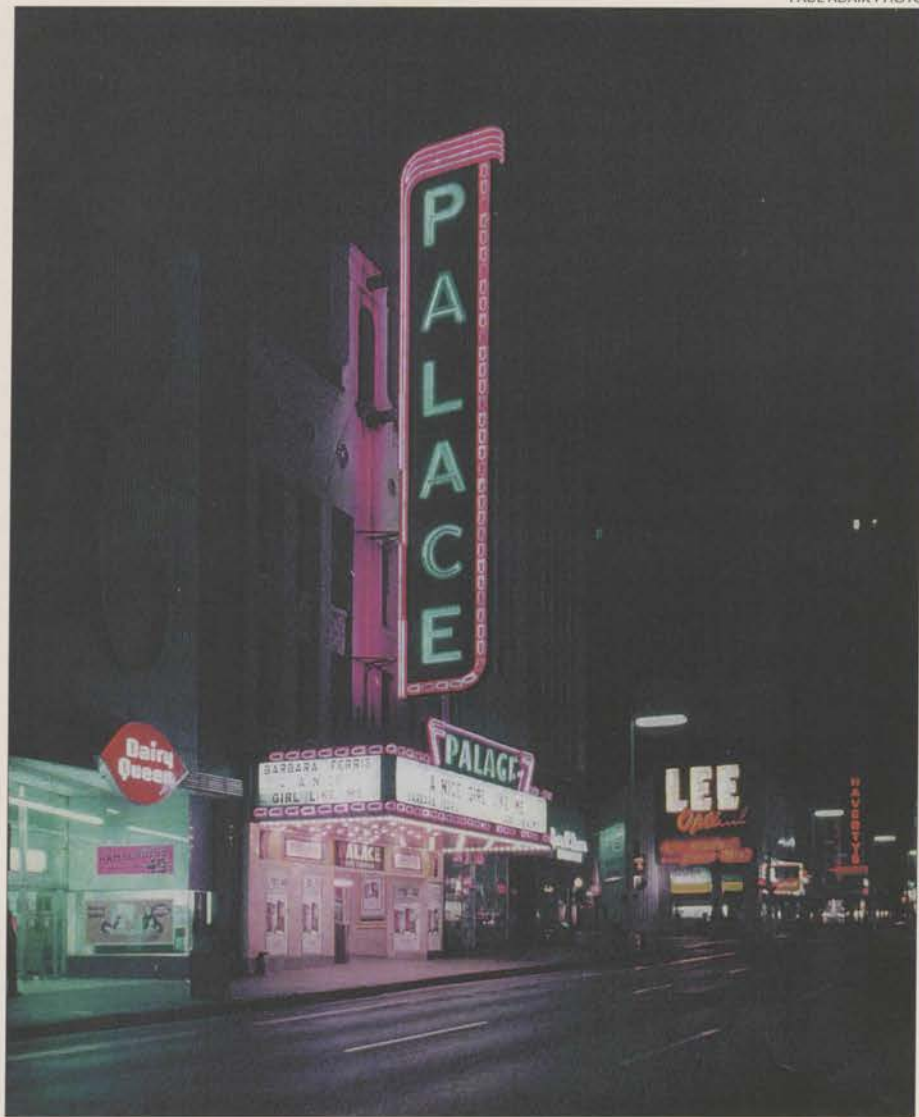
PAUL ADAIR PHOTO

*"Street of Dreams, A History of Dallas' Theatre Row."*

But... the memories linger on for all of us. What is there about the theatre organ and its music that touches us so? Gordon Wright expressed it well when he said, "Music is emotional, and communicates rhythms to the human soul. The 'sobbing Tibia,' the harmonics, overtones, and tonal colorations are so unique to the theatre organ."

And... there is that magical quality that starts upon hearing those first notes as a magnificent console rises up, and a brilliant artist brings out those melodies that carry imagination and soaring delight to our minds, and indeed, to our souls.

Long live the theatre organ wherever it is played, and long live those who appreciate it. Let the melody linger on! 



In 1997 a book was being written about the Lakewood Shopping Center, and some of its buildings, its origins, and historical accounts of the development of the Lakewood/East Dallas area. The history of the theatre was an important part of the book, as was presenting the history of the organ, and was well documented in the book **"The Lakewood StarWalk As Seen Through The Eyes of D. O. T."** This book was underwritten and published by the Disciples of Trinity, a 501c3, non-church-related charity, and co-authored by Jim Davis, Executive Director and President of DOT and Jeanette Howeth Crumpler. All proceeds from the book went to the terminally

ill clients served by DOT. This year, another book **"Lakewood—Memoirs and Spirit,"** co-authored by Jim Davis and Jeanette Howeth Crumpler, contains additional history of the theatre and the organ, and the intense memories connected to them. These books are available from DOT, 5810-12 Live Oak, Dallas, Texas 75214. Their telephone number is 214/826-4099, Monday through Saturday.

Jeanette Howeth Crumpler is the author of **"Street of Dreams, A History of Dallas' Theatre Row,"** available through [www.tomatolady.net](http://www.tomatolady.net) or P.O. Box 140613, Dallas, TX 75214.

# Welcome!

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Robert Bellerose, Slatersville, RI  
Aaron Crute, Columbus, IN  
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Thelma Gray, Mansfield, MA  
Martino Ippolito, Rochester, NY  
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Wayne S. Johnson Jr., Lynn, MA  
Kenneth Keyser, Portland, OR  
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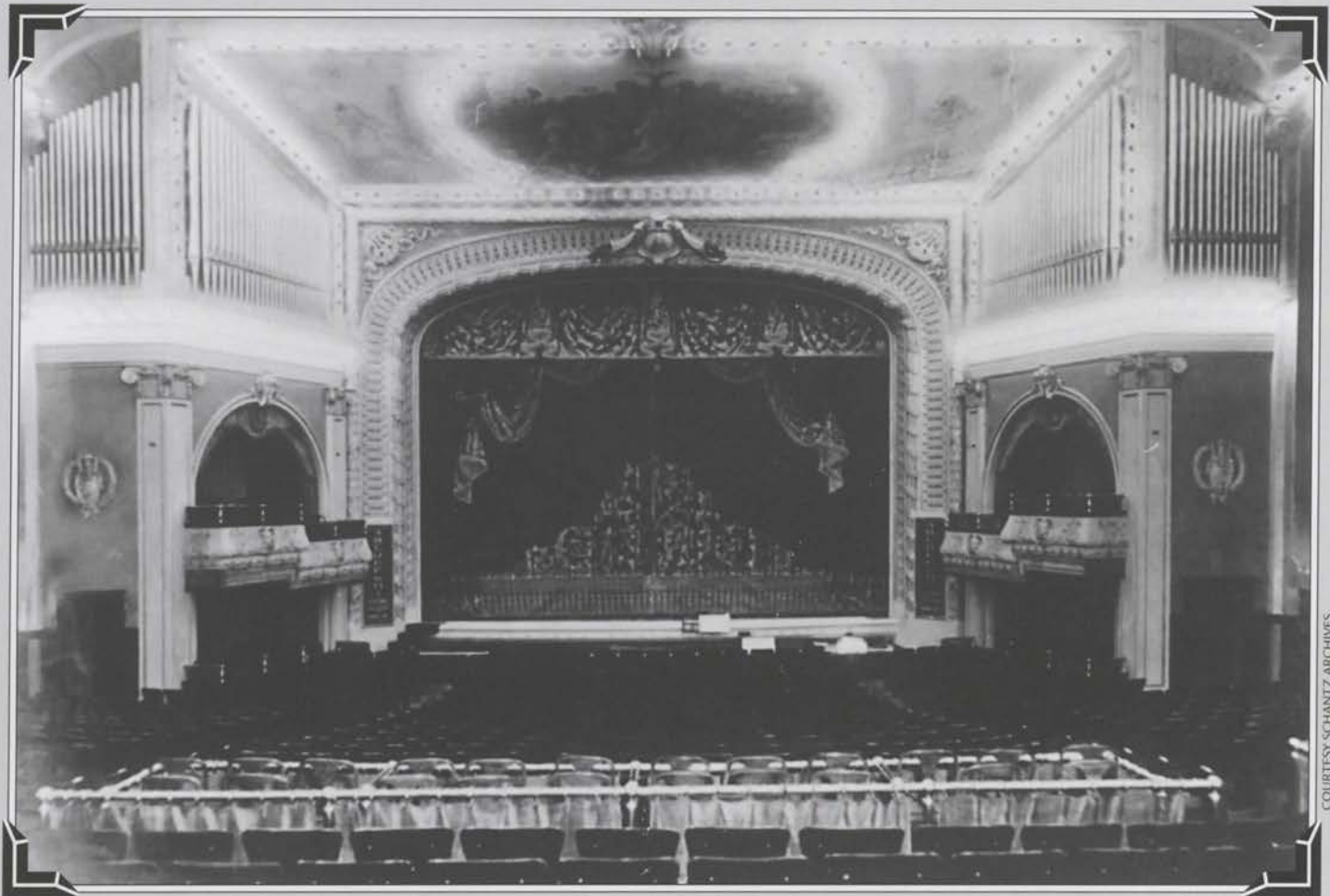
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# Schantz...

## *A Brief Encounter With Theatre Organs*

*By Jack L. Sievert*



COURTESY SCHANTZ ARCHIVES

*Alhambra Theatre—first pipe organ used in a Cleveland, Ohio theatre, 1908-09, pneumatic action.*

The Schantz Organ Co. of Orrville, Ohio, was never a major builder of pipe organs in theatres. Its business was, and continues to be, primarily directed to the religious, educational, and concert venues. However, research for another purpose did reveal that there was a minuscule venture into the theatre organ market by Schantz, apparently resulting in as many as three instruments.

The photograph of the Alhambra Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio was found in the dusty Schantz archives, with a note on the back that the instrument was built by Schantz in 1909, and was indicated as the, "first pipe organ used in a

theatre in Cleveland." Also in the note on the photo, it states that although there is a pipe display on each side of the stage area, the organ is totally located on the right side, with nothing on the left. No specification for this instrument has been uncovered in the Schantz files.

Cleveland, Ohio is also involved in one additional snippet of information regarding Schantz theatre organs. There is a contract for a 15-rank tubular pneumatic action instrument, with the purchaser being a person in Buffalo, New York, who apparently owned a number of theatres. The contract is dated October 15, 1910, with the installation to be

## SPECIFICATIONS OF THE SCHANTZ PIPE ORGAN

**Installed In The Astor (?) Theatre,  
Cleveland, Ohio, In 1910**

### GREAT ORGAN

8' Open Diapason	61 pipes
8" Doppel Flute	61 pipes
8' Dulciana	61 pipes
4' Flute d'Amour	61 pipes
8' Clarinett	61 pipes

### SWELL ORGAN

16" Bourdon	73 pipes
8' Open Diapason	73 pipes
8' Stopped Diapason	73 pipes
8' Vax Celeste	134 pipes
8' Unda Maris	134 pipes
4' Flute Harmonic	73 pipes
8" Orchestral Oboe	73 pipes
Tremolo	

### PEDAL ORGAN

16' Double Open Diapason	30 pipes
16' (Sw) Lieblich Gedeckt	

### COUPLERS

Great to Great Super
Swell to Great
Swell to Great Super
Swell to Swell Super
Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal

### MISCELLANEOUS

Great Forte combination pedal
Great Piano combination pedal
Great Piano combination pedal
Swell Piano combination pedal
Crescendo pedal
Wind indicator
Crescendo indicator

*Note: The spelling of "Clarinett" and  
"Vax Celeste" are as written in the original  
contract.*

completed by December 25, 1910. Unfortunately, the handwriting on the contract is so illegible that it is virtually impossible to decipher the name of the contracting person. The purchaser may have been a J.H. Michael, Manager for W.H. Ward, although this interpretation of handwriting cannot be guaranteed. It was noted, however, that the instrument was to be "passed" by H.J. Sisson, whoever he may have been.

Interestingly enough, the name of the actual theatre in Cleveland is never mentioned in the contract, although its location is stated as being at 105th and Euclid Avenues. The specification is essentially that of a church organ of the time, and has no distinctive voices or any percussions that are traditionally associated with later theatre organs. The contract did indicate that there was an "organ front" . . . "The front pipes of this organ to stand on a heavy moulding. The moulding to be placed on the wall of the organ chamber and furnished by the organ builder." Thus far, no photo has been found of this instrument.

In with this contract is a one-page supplemental "Contract" dated 1936, at which time this organ was repurchased by Schantz for \$400, and the name of the theatre at that time was the Astor. Therefore, we have reason to believe that there were at least two Schantz pipe organs in Cleveland theatres.

John Schantz, of the third-generation of Schantz family management of the firm, recalls that Schantz did build "one or two" theatre organs, and that one in a Cleveland theatre was repurchased by Schantz, modified somewhat, and resold to a church. This is presumed to be the instrument removed from the Astor Theatre in 1936. At this point in time, however, even the location of the specific church where the organ was reinstalled is not known.

Another Schantz pipe organ was installed in the "New Theatre, Ashland, Ohio" in 1920. According to the contract there apparently was no pipe display relative to this installation.

We believe that at least three Schantz instruments can be confirmed and documented, albeit sketchily, as installed in northeast Ohio theatres. It is unlikely that there were more, but who knows what may be found, perhaps merely by accident, as older files of this 131-year-old firm are uncovered and researched.

Over time Orrville, Ohio, has had two movie theatres, the Grand and the Orr. The Grand, built in 1909, is now an office building while its successor, the Orr, is still a movie theatre today. David Junchen, in his comprehensive publication "Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ," lists a Schantz pipe organ in the Orr Theatre, Orrville, Ohio. Unfortunately this is believed to be incorrect, in that the Orr Theatre is a relatively recent building that never housed a pipe organ. Bruce Schantz, older brother of John Schantz and also of the third generation of the Schantz family of organ builders, was a youngster when the Grand theatre was in operation and does not remember there ever being an organ in this earliest theatre.




COURTESY SCHANTZ ARCHIVES

*Example of Schantz horseshoe console, used on church organs circa 1930s.*

We can only assume that since Mr. Junchen was aware that there had been a brief encounter by Schantz in the theatre organ field, he perhaps presumed that an instrument might have been in the Orr Theatre, which is and was the only theatre in Orrville once the Grand ceased to serve as a theatre. It is a logical assumption, but apparently not verifiable.

These three instruments appear to be the sum total of Schantz ventures into the theatre organ market. The instruments appear to all have been mildly modified church organs in design, pipe scaling, and voicing, and never did the firm develop a true late-Wurlitzer-style unit orchestra. None of the organs mentioned are thought to be extant.

The theatre organ did impact on Schantz in another way, however. Many of its church organs in the 20s and 30s were equipped with horseshoe consoles. The console photo is believed to have been an example of the style used in the church organs of the time, and not one that was directly related to one of the three theatre organs.

Therefore the Schantz exposure to placement of its instruments in theatres appears to have been limited to the time frame from 1909–1920, with no theatre organs having been built in 1920. 

*Mr. Sievert is Executive Vice-President of Schantz Organ Company.*

## SPECIFICATIONS OF THE SCHANTZ PIPE ORGAN

At The "New Theatre," Ashland, Ohio  
(Clark & Edwards, Proprietors)

Two manual (keyboards—61 notes; pedalboard—32 notes), electro-pneumatic action

No case or front pipes; console to be located in the center of the orchestra pit

**GREAT ORGAN** (operated by white stopkeys placed at the right side above the Swell manual)

16' Bourdon	85 pipes
8' Open Diapason	85 pipes
8' Stopped Diapason	
8' Viole d'Orchestra	73 pipes
4' Principal	
4' Flute d'Amour	
4' Gambette	
2' Piccolo (believed to be from 8' Open Diapason)	
8' Vox Humana	61 pipes (to bring on Tremolo)
Three blank stopkeys for potential future enlargement	
Chimes	20 bells

**SWELL ORGAN** (operated by white stopkeys placed on the left side over the Swell manual)

16' Bourdon	4' Gambette
8' Open Diapason	2' Piccolo
8' Stopped Diapason	8' Vox Humana
8' Viol d'Orchestra	Three blank stopkeys for potential future enlargement
4' Principal	Tremolo
4' Flute d'Amour	

**PEDAL ORGAN** (Operated by white stopkeys placed at the extreme left over the Swell Organ)

16' Bourdon
8' Diapason
8' Bass Flute
8' Violin Cello
4' Principal
Two blank stopkeys for potential future enlargement

**COMBINATIONS** (Adjustable affecting all stops and tremolo)

Great Organ & Pedal 1, 2, 3
Swell Organ & Pedal 1, 2, 3

### PEDAL MOVEMENTS

Swell pedal
Crescendo pedal

Contract dated September 17, 1920  
Installation to be completed by March 1, 1921  
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Signatures by O.A. Schantz and Clark & Edwards

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PHOENIX, ARIZONA NOVEMBER 26TH - 28TH 2004

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Afternoon: **Walt Strony** - Orpheum Theatre  
Evening: **Lyn Larsen** - Orpheum Theatre

### Saturday

Morning: **Rob Richards** - Orpheum Theatre  
Afternoon: **Lew Williams** - Historic First Presbyterian Church  
Evening: **Ron Rhode** - Orpheum Theatre

### Sunday

Morning: **Charlie Balogh** - Organ Stop Pizza  
Lunch: Show at the RockN' R Ranch  
Afternoon: **Jelani Eddington** - Organ Stop Pizza

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Orpheum Theatre Wurlitzer

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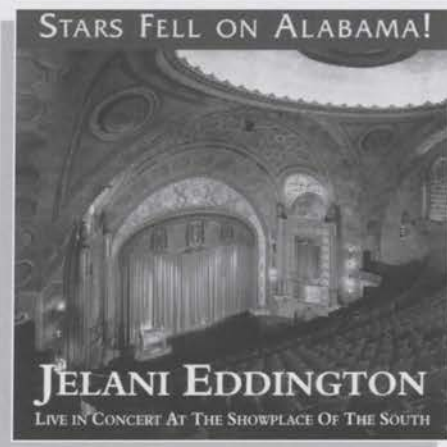
# For the Records

Ralph Beaudry, Associate Editor

Compact discs, cassettes, videos, and books to be reviewed should be sent to Ralph Beaudry, 5155 N. Fresno Street, Apt. 170, Fresno, CA 93710-6838. Please be aware items must be received three months prior to the issue date in which the review will appear. Information telephone 559/222-0239.

## STARS FELL ON ALABAMA!

Jelani Eddington



Jelani has certainly been a busy young organist recently, releasing back-to-back CDs—first on the magnificent new Wurlitzer in Florida, (see the review of *Sarasota Spectacular* in the last issue) and here he is playing the equally stunning, now 76-year-old, original installation Wurlitzer in Birmingham's Alabama Theatre. This unique Spanish-Moorish theatre is justly billed as the, "Showplace of the South" and the theatre and organ have been cover stories in the Journals of December 1973 and September 1987. "Big Bertha," as the organ is affectionately called, is Opus 1783, which was installed as a 4/20 "Crawford Special" when the theatre opened in 1927. Some years back the house was threatened with demolition, but ATOS members and concerned citizens were able to save the Alabama and its organ, which boasts having a one-of-a-kind red, gold, and black console. Since 1968, ATOS members have completely restored *Bertha*, given her lots of 'TLC', and quite recently, enlarged her to a 4/28.

Over the years surprisingly few recordings have been made on *Bertha*, but those few have always received the highest

accolades. In reviewing Don Baker's LP of the Alabama organ, (in the April, 1980 Journal) Stu Green referred to it as, "...a singing organ... (it's) scintillating." Bob Shafter's review of Tom Hazleton's LP (in the January 1987 issue) said "...this is truly a wonderful instrument," and in his review of Jim Riggs' CD (September, 1996) he added "...The sound was thrilling and yet when the organ is small, it is also beautiful and delicate." About Lew Williams' *At Last* CD (September, 1996) we commented, "...no reverb needs to be added to Bertha's recordings as the theatre has a completely satisfying natural roll-around sound." In truth, as the late Jim Roseveare so often said about the organ in Oakland's Paramount Theatre, the room itself is an essential part of the organ... and that is certainly true of Opus 1783 and the Alabama Theatre!

From the opening notes of Jelani's console-riser, "Of Thee I Sing" you'll know you're in for a musical treat—it's rich and full and has some unique Eddington touches. In addition many will note that this disc has a certain sparkle one usually hears only in a live concert performance. It should, for much of the program on this CD is from Jelani's September 28, 2003 concert performance, which was programmed into the organ's computer and played back under ideal conditions for this recording. "Of Thee I Sing (Baby)" is this number's complete title, but did you realize this somewhat Biblical sounding title is from an American patriotic song we seldom hear today? It's a line from "My Country Tis of Thee." Jelani's second tune is another cheerful earful, for it's Harry Revel's "Wake Up and Live" which was a hit in the UK before it became the title tune for a 1937 film which starred—I kid you not—Walter Winchell and Ben Bernie—along with Alice Faye, who played the "Wake Up and Live" girl on

the radio program that was featured in the film.

New York's famous theatre critic Brooks Atkinson wrote that Kurt Weill is, "... the best writer of theatre music this century." Nowhere is that more evident than in his alluring "My Ship" which Gertrude Lawrence introduced in 1941's unusual musical *Lady In The Dark*. Jelani's arrangement has a mystic, foggy opening that develops into a rich and gloriously romantic melody before fading away to a whisper soft ending. Morton Gould's elegant "Pavanne" receives a refreshingly different reading by Jelani, and then we have a 12½-minute *Celebration of the Grandeur of Gershwin* which includes "Love Is Sweeping The Country" (which also came from *Of Thee I Sing*), "Nice Work If You Can Get It" (which Fred Astaire first sang in the film *Damsel In Distress*), "Embraceable You," a generous portion of "Rhapsody In Blue," "I Got Rhythm," and "The Man I Love" (which Fred's sister, Adele, introduced in 1924's *Lady, Be Good!*) "Londonderry Air" opens with shimmering strings, and then features some of *Bertha's* most exquisite voices. If you know this melody as "Danny Boy," you might be interested in knowing that in 1909 composer/lyricist Frederick Weatherly wrote the words to "Danny Boy" and set them to a melody that he had written! It was not a success. Then a relative in America wrote to tell him that his poem was a perfect fit to the Irish peasant tune "Londonderry Air," which first appeared in print in 1855. One critic has written that it is "... the most beautiful tune in the world..." and you'll probably agree after hearing Jelani's superb interpretation.

After he left the organ bench in 1940, Sidney Torch became one of the leading conductors—and composers—of what is usually referred to as "British Light Music." Jelani's next selection is Torch's

finger-busting "Fandango." (A fandango is a Spanish dance developed in the early 18th Century in triple-time accompanied by a guitar and castanets) Although written by the Danish composer Jacob Gade, the next selection also has a strong Latin flavor for it's a fascinating recreation (with some delightful, added Eddington touches) of George Wright's memorable arrangement of "Jalousie." Although Wright recorded it on Richard Vaughn's 5-manual Wurlitzer, that organ had only 21 ranks and, since its specification was quite similar to *Bertha's*, Jelani's registrations quite accurately depict what the Vaughn organ would sound like in a theatre!

The "magnum opus" on this disc is Jelani's breathtaking 18½-minute medley of Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. When it opened in 1949, New York critics wrote "... (It's) one of the greatest musical scores of all—jazzy, sparkling, lyrical, aggressive, beautiful, memorable—unlike anything seen on Broadway before," and "... (It's) an incandescent piece of theatre" and "... (It has a) thunderbolt score." You'll say those things, too, as you listen to Jelani's wonderful orchestral arrangements of the "Overture" followed by the "Jet Song," "Something's Coming," "Maria," "America," "One Hand, One Heart,"

"Tonight," "I Feel Pretty," "Mambo," and "Somewhere." Although it starts with a whisper, its finale will leave you breathless. Bravo!

"We lived our little drama  
We kissed in a field of white  
And stars fell on Alabama last night"

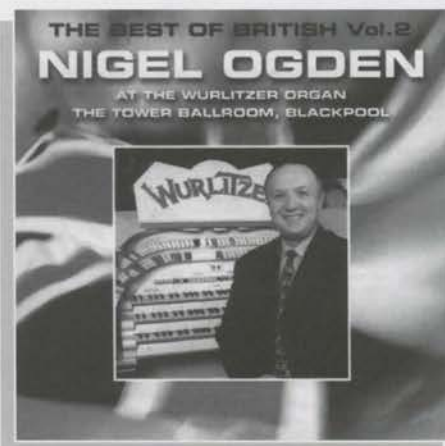
No visit to the Alabama Theatre would be complete without Frank Perkins' lilting "Stars Fell on Alabama," which jazz trombonist Jack Teagarden introduced in 1934. Jelani's first chorus is lushly legato, and the second chorus has a delightfully light beat. Finale time, and it's another spectacular orchestral transcription. Spectacular is the right word for, if you remember Walt Disney's 1940 masterpiece *Fantasia*, you'll surely be able to visualize those prancing hippopotami, undulating crocodiles, ostriches engaging in *entrechats*, and light-footed elephants in Jelani's 9-minute recreation of Amilcaré Ponchelli's "Dance of the Hours." It well deserves another Bravo!

On all counts—the tonal splendor of the organ and room, the consummate musicianship of the artist and his selections, arrangements, and registrations, plus the superb recording and excellent liner notes—this disc receives an enthusiastic Must Have rating. (The liner notes include the organ specifications,

which need one very minor correction—the Toy Counter is not "exposed," the word should be "expanded.") CD only for \$20.00 (plus \$2.00 postage in the U.S.) from Alabama Chapter ATOS, 1817 3rd Avenue North, Birmingham AL 35203.

## THE BEST OF BRITISH VOL. 2

Nigel Ogden



In the last Journal, we reviewed the first volume of Nigel Ogden's new series of recordings from Blackpool's famous Tower Ballroom 3/14 Wurlitzer. Here is another 70 minutes of delightful British Light Music, which again features

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**CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND**

Featuring the dynamic duo of Jelani Eddington and pianist David Harris performing some of the most beloved holiday music of all time at the Wheaton-Fox Studio at the Paul & Linda VanDerMolen residence. Highlights include: *Sleigh Ride, White Christmas, Suite From The Nutcracker, European Christmas Carol Fantasy, We Wish You A Merry Christmas.*

**LET'S FACE THE MUSIC!**

Recorded at the breathtaking 4/35 Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre in Berkeley, California. This album premieres the newly refurbished Art Deco console from the Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center. Highlights include: *Let's Face The Music And Dance, The Music of Johnny Mercer, Medley From Showboat, Overture From Candide, Kitten On The Keys, Bacchanale.*

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marches, waltzes, mood music and tone poems along with some selections from operettas, radio, and TV programs. Again, the disc has no liner notes, other than to list the selections and the composers, so we will have to admit up front that this time Nigel has chosen some melodies we aren't familiar with; and some composers about whom we have little or no information. Of course, as usual, Nigel and the Wurlitzer are in top form so we'll just sit back and relax and describe the program that is chock-full of music that is refreshingly different, but thoroughly enjoyable.

This time the console-riser is Kenneth Alford's surprisingly titled "Mad Major March." It's a jolly romp with a cute melody line, with frequent punctuations on the crash cymbal. (In case the Alford name isn't familiar, his better-known tune is "The Colonel Bogey March.") Charles Ancliffe's best-known composition is next; it's the flowing "Nights of Gladness Waltz" which features lots of light, lovely Wurlitzer voices. One of Great Britain's best-loved composers of operettas was Ivor Novello (1893-1951.) Indeed he was a multi-talented individual for, with his matinee-idol good looks, he was an acclaimed stage actor in the late 'teens and starred in silent films in the twenties! Although

he had composed some tunes for musical reviews, his first successful operetta, *Glamorous Nights*, wasn't produced until 1935! Nigel plays a medley from Novello's 1945 show *Perchance To Dream*, that ran for over a thousand performances in London. His ravishing ballad, "We'll Gather Lilacs" is surely the best-known song in the five-tune medley.

A brisk "Golden Tango" has a tricky-finger melody line, but then it's march time again with one of Eric Coates' best and brightest pieces—"Television March." That leads into an 8-minute medley of songs written by another famous British composer of operettas—Lionel Monckton—who also was a practicing lawyer for most of his career. His scores are described as "delightfully tuneful, happy and melodious" and, unlike Ivor Novello's musicals which never made it to America, between 1900 and 1920 a half dozen Monckton operettas enjoyed successful runs on Broadway! If "Doreen" is the name of a young lady, the music sounds as if there is a bit of mystery about her. But there is no question about Trevor Duncan's "March" from his *Little Suite* for it's a tone poem written for a BBC television program set in Scotland; it's charming and, as one critic has said "... (he's) penned a miniature masterpiece."

Ketelbey's "Bells Across the Meadow" is a tonal painting "... of rose-entwined thatched cottages amidst gardens full of hollyhocks with a gentle brook bubbling its rustic way and cows grazing peacefully in the pastures beyond." ... (An apt description of Nigel's performance of this charming melody.) A bubbling "Oasis" is next, and it's a cute, zippy, full of fun novelty. Docker's "Legend" is quite majestic, while King's "Lime Grove March" is a brassy up-tempo treasure that an organist could use as a great "second-half opener." Byfield's "Valse Romantique" conjures up visions of a haunted ballroom while, "Out of the Blue March" is a sparkling concert number more suited for dancing than marching! In abrupt contrast is Wesley's "Air and Govotte" which is light, untremmed, and Bach-like. We usually associate Edward Elgar with his popular marches, but Nigel instead has selected to play his exquisitely lush "Salut D'Amore." As you'd expect with the title "Swing o' The Kilt" it's got bagpipes; but these are the swingin'est bagpipes we've ever encountered. Great fun!

O'Brien's "Summer of the Seventeenth Doll"—what an unusual title!—is cheerful and loaded with pizzicato touches while the all too rarely heard Tower Tibias are featured on the



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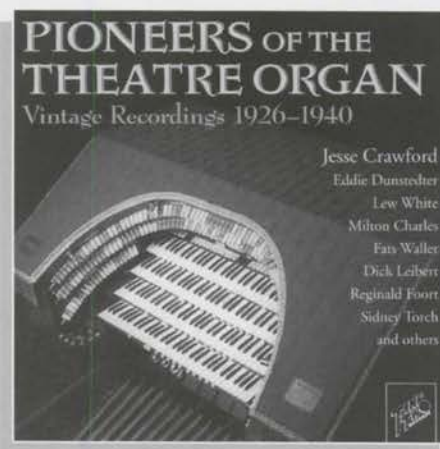
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enchanting waltz "Dreaming." Closing out this unusual disc of attractive, engaging light music from the British Isles is a piece titled "Savoy Medley of Medleys," a title which had us quite puzzled until we started picking out tunes like "Yankee Doodle Dandy," "Turkey In the Straw," and "Auld Lang Syne." Once again, we can strongly recommend this disc for everyone looking for "new" theatre organ music. The recording is superb and, as always, Nigel has put together a first-class program with great registrations and arrangements. This compact disc can be charged on either your VISA or MasterCard. (No \$U.S. checks or other credit cards are accepted.) Mail orders to Discurio, 46 High Street, Rochester, Kent ME19 5AG. Fax order to (00 44) 1634 845222 and e-mails to discurio1@aol.com

## PIONEERS OF THE THEATRE ORGAN

Jesse Crawford & Others



Twenty years ago, in the July 1984 issue of *The Console Magazine*, this writer reviewed a one-hour cassette tape titled *Theatre Organists of the Past—Vol. 1*. It featured 19 selections of 78-rpm recordings, made by several theatre organists between 1927 and 1940. The Creegan Company of Steubenville, Ohio produced the album. (The *Journal* carried reviews of Volume 1 in the July, 1984 issue and Volume 2 in the March, 1985 issue.) In our *Console* review we complimented the engineers for producing a valuable archival tape of enjoyable music, but had to add "Yes, the hiss and pops are there but the mastering of the tape was very well done, and the instruments are presented . . . in as full fidelity as is possible considering what there was

to work with and the "state of the art" in mastering today (1984.)"

Here, we have a 2-CD set—totaling 124 minutes—that has 37 numbers played by Jesse Crawford and 11 other organists who were theatre organ stars in the Golden Age. Now, with the great improvements in digital mastering over the past 20 years, there is no noticeable hiss nor any distracting pops and ticks! The voices of each organ are front-and-center, and with a pure clarity that sounds as if the listener were in the room with the artist and organ. And, only a very few of the selections on these new CDs are the same pieces that were heard on the Creegan tapes.

In addition to the music is an added bonus for there are 16 pages of full-color liner notes with a beautifully written, informative essay by the late Ron Musselman that explains what a theatre organ is, and then describes the artists and their music. As Ron's notes explain, "The earlier theatre organs were used mostly for silent film accompaniment. Instruments built past the early 1920s began to change in character, and were used increasingly for solo work . . . The artists featured here, among the pioneers of the theatre organ, helped develop the musical vocabulary of the genre . . . These recordings provide a good cross section of music from the twenties and thirties, including ballads and novelty songs of the day and even some film and show tunes."

The first disc is devoted entirely to "The Poet of The Organ," Jesse Crawford, (1895–1962) with 20 recordings he made on three different organs between 1926 and 1933. Crawford was named the first Honorary ATOS member in 1958, and he was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1970. First up is a group of selections recorded on the 3/15 Wurlitzer (Opus 1099) in Chicago's Wurlitzer store. "Amapola" is given a delightful Latin flavor and, as Ron Musselman comments in his liner notes, he "... employs a pause technique at the end of phrases that 'lets it breathe' at the same places as a singer would take a breath. In these pauses, one can hear the thump of the combination pistons." Not only that, but in all his selections there are light registrations that makes both the melody line and accompaniment voices crystal clear. Yes, Crawford certainly did know how to make an organ sing!



Robert Katscher's lovely "When Day Is Done" is followed by Haydn Wood's equally enchanting "Roses of Picardy." Crawford is joined by Jean Goldkette's Book Cadillac Hotel Orchestra, on an upbeat version of "I'd Love To Call You My Sweetheart," and we then have that all too familiar "What Are You Waiting For? Mary." Somehow Jesse's original version sounds so much fresher and cleaner than many of today's duplications ... probably due to his lighter registrations. George Gershwin wrote the bouncy "High Hat" for the 1927 musical *Funny Face*, and Crawford made this recording just six months after that show opened on Broadway!

The remainder of Crawford's program, with one exception, was recorded on the 4/21 New York Paramount Studio Wurlitzer, Opus 1960, which also had a 4-manual slave console, so Jesse and Helen could practice their organ duets. This organ was removed by Dick Loderhose and is now installed (with additional ranks) in his Bay Theatre in Seal Beach, California, while the slave console is in Oakland's Paramount Theatre. "Ten Little Miles From Town" is the first number, and is also one of the oddest theatre organ recordings ever made, for it features a male trio doing an early type of 'scat' singing. The dictionary defines scat as "... using improvised, meaningless syllables in singing." That it is and it's a hoot! From the 1928 musical *Hold Everything*, which starred Bert Lahr and Victor Moore, is "You're The Cream In

My Coffee." Gertrude Lawrence introduced Gershwin's "Maybe" in the 1926 musical *Oh, Kay!*, and Crawford is joined by the Nat Shilret Orchestra on this selection. Mabel Wayne, one of our very few female composers, wrote "It Happened In Monterey" for Paul Whiteman's Orchestra to play in the 1930 film *King of Jazz* and, again, Crawford had his recording out just about the time the film opened!

The disc continues with "Cuban Love Song," which was the title song for a 1932 film starring the famous operatic baritone Lawrence Tibbett. Then, we have the beautiful melody torch singer Ruth Etting introduced in 1928—"I'll Get By (As Long As I Have You.)" No, it wasn't Tiny Tim (remember him?) who made "Tip-Toe Through The Tulips With Me" a hit; it was crooner Nick Lucas in an early film musical *Gold Diggers of Broadway*. Crawford plays it straight, although some of us may prefer George Wright's Rialto Theatre version better! Reaching way back to Victor Herbert's 1898 operetta *The Fortune Teller*, Crawford plays the "Gypsy Love Song." The Leonard Joy Orchestra (with three cornets, two trombones, four saxophones, three violins, and banjo, string bass, tuba, and drums) joins Crawford on the confusingly titled Billy Rose composition "She's A New Kind Of Old-fashioned Girl," and then it's on to Rudolph Friml's romantic bon-bon "L'Amour, Toujours, L'Amore," and the too-often-reprised "I Love To Hear You Singing."

In 1933 Crawford visited England, and so we hear "My Love Song" played on the 4/20 Wurlitzer Opus 1931 in the New Empire Cinema in London with vocalist Jack Plant. Moving back to the New York Paramount Studio organ, there is another beautiful Victor Herbert song; this one is "A Kiss In The Dark" from his 1922 operetta *Orange Blossoms*. The last selection is a special treat, for Helen Crawford, (who was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971) is at the slave console as she joins Jesse for a rousing duet on what critic Ian Whitcomb calls that curious marching beer song from 1910—"Stein Song." This disc is a joy from first to last. And it's only half of the musical delights in this set.

Now we turn to the other Pioneers on the second disc. First up is Eddie Dunstetter, (1897-1974) who was made an ATOS Honorary Member in 1963, and inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1970. Eddie is heard playing three different organs. His first melody is the alluring "Girl of My Dreams," which one discography shows was recorded on the Chicago Temple of Labor Morton. We may be wrong, but we believe it was probably done on the 2/10 Barton organ installed at radio station WCFL (operated by the Chicago Federation of Labor.) However there's no question about his second number "If I Had You," as it was definitely recorded on the Minnesota (later Radio City) Theatre's 4/20 Purlix 1 Wurlitzer Opus 1848. That gently swinging declaration of true love first



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became a hit in the U.K., and didn't reach the U.S. until Rudy Vallee sang it on a 78 disc in 1928. Dunstedter's last item is the chipper "Ciribiribin," which he recorded on the 3/14 Wurlitzer Opus 2080 in the WCCO studios in Minneapolis. It's worth noting here that many of these pioneer organists will play a lush ballad beautifully in the first chorus, and then really "jazz it up" the second time around!

Lew White (1903–1955), who entered the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971, was chief organist at New York City's Roxy Theatre, where he presided at the monstrous 5/34 Kimball console. (Actually there were three consoles in the orchestra pit, and often there would be three organists playing at the same time. But, with the organ itself being an under-the-stage installation, one wonders what the instrument sounded like, for it was never recorded. Since the Roxy was in direct competition with the Paramount, where Jesse and Helen Crawford played at twin consoles, they just had to go them one better!) Also it's interesting to note that Dr. John Landon writes in his book *Behold The Mighty Wurlitzer that*, "... Lew White was Crawford's arch-rival who diligently tried to match Crawford's success in personal appearances and on records." White's three tracks on this disc were recorded on the dandy 3/8 Kimball he had installed in his own music studio. Charles Newman and singer Carmen Lombardo (of Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians) wrote

White's first tune, "Sweethearts on Parade." And, to add interest to this version, White is joined by a trumpet player and drummer! Next is an organ solo of the rather sultry "I Get The Blues When It Rains." White closes with Cole Porter's "What Is This Thing Called Love?" which has an added piano and xylophone!

Milton Charles (1897–1991) was known as "The Singing Organist" and, unlike so many other of these theatre organ pioneers, was named ATOS Organist of the Year and inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame during his lifetime in 1978! Milton's first number, "Dream Kisses," was recorded in Chicago in 1928 on the Gunn School's 3-manual Wurlitzer 'Special', Opus 1563. (In the late 1930s when he returned to Chicago to broadcast over WBBM, he was delighted to find that in 1936 the Gunn School organ had been moved to that radio station, and he was reunited with an old friend.) Charles is joined by the Guy Lombardo Orchestra on "The Spell Of The Blues." On that song he's playing the WENR 3/13 Wurlitzer, (Opus 1659) in the 42nd floor studios of the Chicago Civic Opera Building. Utility mogul Samuel Insull had his penthouse on the floor above, and was himself a dedicated organ buff!

Although he was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1973, Emil Velazco is probably one of the least known of the pioneer organists, although he was on the staff of organists playing at the

Roxy Theatre and also had his own organ studio in New York. It's on his studio 3/8 Kimball that he recorded "Angelina Mia." His not having had more publicity is doubly surprising, when you find out (according to the April and June, 1970 issues of *The Console Magazine*) that in the late 1930s he had a \$20,000 2/7 Möller Traveling Organ, and toured the country with his own band! He's followed by another little known organist, Harold L. Reider, who plays Walter Donaldson's "It Made You Happy When You Made Me Cry" on the 3/11 Style-235 Wurlitzer (Opus 0511) in Newark, New Jersey's 2,000-seat Tivoli Theatre.

The third relatively obscure organ pioneer is Sigmund Krumgold, (born in 1896 and inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971) who plays another of Walter Donaldson's most popular songs "My Blue Heaven," on an unidentified organ! Krumgold was a major organist in the late 1920s. He was Crawford's relief organist at the New York Paramount, and also played most of the of silent film accompaniments so that Crawford could concentrate on the solo spots! His peers considered him the all-time finest silent film organist! It's time for a breath of jazz, and "Fats" Waller fills the bill with two tunes played on the 3/21 Estey that RCA Victor bought in 1920 and installed in Camden, New Jersey's former Trinity Baptist Church. Thomas Wright Waller (1904–1943) was inducted into the

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# International ATOS NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AMERICAN THEATRE  
ORGAN SOCIETY

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Desert Winds** Thanksgiving weekend, 2004, Valley of the Sun Chapter will present-Seven organists and three organs. Complete information is available on the Theatre Organ Journal or at <<http://www.desertwinds.info>>

**2005 TOSA Semi Annual Convention**, Melbourne, VIC, Australia Friday March 25 - Monday, March 28 plus afterglow. Coburg, Dendy, Malvern, Moorabbin. John Atwell, David Bailey, Gail Dibben, Leith Ewart, Tony Fenelon, John Ferguson, John Giacchi, Margaret Hall / Nelson, Elizabeth Hanton, Scott Harrison, Thomas Heywood, Chris McPhee, Rob Richards, Robert Weatherall, Carole Wyatt. Stay tuned for more information.

**2005 Morton Madness**, Northern California, April 9, 2005, Tom Hazleton.

**2005 Annual ATOS Convention**, 50th Anniversary of ATOE / ATOS, Los Angeles, CA, Friday, July 1 - Tuesday, July 5 plus PreGlow and Afterglow. Monday evening, July 4 at Hollywood Bowl for music and fireworks.

**2005 Regional ATOS Convention**. Anyone care to host this one???

**2006 Annual ATOS Convention**. Anyone care to host this one???

**2006 Regional Convention**, Eastern Massachusetts, Friday, November 3 - Monday, November 5  
Schedules subject to change. Please see the Theatre Organ Journal for details.

## HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

ATOS Annual and Regional Conventions require planning and advance consideration. It is not too early to consider bidding for the conventions in 2007, 2008, and beyond. The income from your efforts can certainly help fund your Chapter's projects.

## JONAS NORDWALL TO DEDICATE LARGE CALIFORNIA WURLITZER

Saturday night, July 24, at 7:30 pm, Jonas Nordwall will dedicate, in a pops concert, the 4/22 Wurlitzer recently installed in the newly refurbished Fox Theatre in Visalia, California.

The organ was donated to Friends of the Fox, a local non-profit organization, by Ruth Villemin Dresser who has recently moved to Visalia from Malibu, California, where the instrument was used for many years to present well known theatre organists for the community and her friends. With her move to Visalia she wanted to continue with her tradition of providing theatre organ music for as many people as possible. Her Los Angeles organ technicians, Ken Kukuk and Ed Burnside, have traveled to Visalia for the past year making possible the organ transplant. The Fox is an atmospheric theatre of Moorish and Spanish design and seats 1200.

Tickets for the event may be purchased from the Visalia Fox Theatre box office at 308 W. Main Street, Visalia, CA 93291. All seats are \$15 and all children under 16 are FREE. ATOS members

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will receive a \$2 discount per ticket. Members must enclose their ATOS member number with the ticket order to receive the discount. With your order, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Theatre phone number: 559-625-1369. See details at <[www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org)> under What's New.

Further information may be obtained at <[petesweeney@thegrid.net](mailto:petesweeney@thegrid.net)>.

## RE-OPENING THE ST. LOUIS FOX

August 1, 2004 is the re-creation of the 75th Anniversary of the 1929 Grand Opening of the St. Louis Fox Theatre. In addition to some stage shows, Stan Kann will accompany the silent movie classic and the 1st movie to be shown at the Fox, "Street Angel", time 2:00pm. Prices are as of the

first night, admission 75 cents, popcorn 5 cents (such a bargain). <<http://www.fabulousfox.com/>>

## CONVENTIONS

The ATOS Conventions are Regional for concerts and socializing, and Annual for concerts, socializing, and conducting the business of ATOS. The term national is felt to be exclusionary by many of our members from outside the United States.

## CALENDAR

It is very important that you maintain your web site and send your event listings to the ATOS International News Editor. The best way is to drop an E-mail to the Editor on the day that you complete the performance contract so that it doesn't get lost in the shuffle.

## ATOS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Codes used in listing: A=Austin, B=Barton, C=Compton, CHR=Christie, E=Estey, GB=Griffith Beach, H=Hybrid, K=Kimball, M=Möller, MC=Marr & Colton P=Page,

RM=Robert-Morton W=Wurlitzer.

Example: (4/19W) = 4 manual, 19 rank Wurlitzer.

*Schedules subject to change.*

### ALASKA

**State Office Building**, 333 Willoughby Ave, Juneau, AK, (907)465-2910, (2/8K); Organ concerts Fri at 12:00noon; E-mail: <[mackinnon@gci.net](mailto:mackinnon@gci.net)>

### ALABAMA

**Alabama Theatre**, 1817 3rd Ave.North, Birmingham, AL. (205)252-2262, (4/28W); <<http://www.AlabamaTheatre.com>>

### ARIZONA

**Organ Stop Pizza**, 1149 E Southern Ave, Mesa, AZ (480)813-5700, (4/74+W); Winter organ hours, Sun-Thu, 4:30pm - 9:00pm, Fri-Sat, 4:30pm - 10:00pm; Summer organ hours, Sun-Thu, 5:30pm - 9:00pm, Fri-Sat, 5:30pm - 10:00pm; Charlie Balogh, Lew Williams; <<http://www.organstoppizza.com>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 203 W Adams, Phoenix, AZ, (602)252-9678, (3/30W); <<http://www.silentsundays.com>>

### CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

**Angelino's Restaurant**, 3132 Williams Rd, San Jose, CA, (408)243-6095, (3/13W); Live music Thu thru Sat 6:30pm 9:30pm, Dean Cook; Silent movies Sun, 4:00pm, Dean Cook; Jul 11, Wings; Aug 22, Mark of Zorro; Oct 10, Jekyll & Hyde; Dec 19, Two Tars & Big Business

**Bella Roma Pizza**, 4040 Alhambra Ave, Martinez, CA, (925)228-4935, (3/16W); Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun,

6:00pm - 9:00pm; Fri - Sat, 6:00pm - 10:00pm; Tue, Wed, Sat, Dave Moreno; Thu, Bob Reichert; Fri, Sun, Kevin King

**Berkeley Community Theatre**, 1930 Alston Way, Berkeley, CA, (510)632-9177, (4/33W); All concerts Sun, 2:30pm; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/norcal>>

**Castro Theatre**, 429 Castro, San Francisco, CA, (415)621-6120, (4/21W); Intermissions played nightly by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich, or Keith Thompson

**Grand Lake Theatre**, 3200 Grand Ave, Oakland, CA, (510)452-3556, (3/18W); Intermissions: Fri, Warren Lubich; Sat, Kevin King

**Grant Union High School**, 1500 Grand Ave, Sacramento, CA, (4/21W), (510)644-2707; Sun, Nov 14, 2:00pm, Ron Rhode

**Harmony Wynelands**, 9291 East Harney Ln, Lodi, California, (209)369-4184, (3/15 RM); Tasting Room open Fri, Sat, Sun 11:00am - 5:00pm or by appointment.; Bob Hartzell live and recorded performances; <[www.harmonywynelands.com](http://www.harmonywynelands.com)>

**Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery**, 8333 Hwy 128, Healdsburg, CA, (707)433-2319, (3/10RM); Daily in tasting room from 10:00am to 5:00pm

**Kautz Vineyards and Winery**, 1894 Six Mile Rd, Murphys, CA, (209)728-1251, (3/15RM); Winery tours, theatre pipe organ; <<http://www.ironstonevineyards.com/main.html>>

**Paramount Theatre**, 2025 Broadway, Oakland, CA, (510)465-6400, (4/27W); Public tours on 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10:00am; Movie Overtures, Thursdays at 6:30pm; <<http://www.paramounttheatre.com>>

**Stanford Theatre**, 221 University Ave, Palo Alto, CA, (650)324-3700, (3/21W); Organ played before and after the 7:30 movie; David Hegarty, Jerry Nagano, or Bill Taylor; Call to verify the theatre is open for the evening.

**Towe Auto Museum**, 2200 Front St, Sacramento, CA, (916)442-6802, (3/16W); Sun concerts, 2:00pm free with museum admission; <[ds3@att.net](mailto:ds3@att.net)>

**YE Olde Pizza Joynt**, 19510 Hesperian Blvd, San Leandro, CA, (510)785-1866, (3/14W); Venue temporarily closed due to a fire.

## ■ CALIFORNIA (SOUTH)

**Arlington Theatre**, 1317 State St, Santa Barbara, Ca, (805)963-4408, (4/27RM); All concerts on Saturdays, 11:00AM; Sep 11, Jelani Eddington; <http://members.cox.net/sbtos/>

**Avalon Casino Theatre**, One Casino Way, Catalina Island, CA, (310)510-2414, (4/16P); Fri & Sat, 6:15pm, Pre-Show concert, John Tusak; <<http://www.visitcatalina.org/>>

**Balboa Park**, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, San Diego, CA, (619)702-8138, (4/72A); All Concerts, Sunday afternoons at 2:00pm unless otherwise noted; Carol Williams and guests; Mon, Jul 19, 7:30pm, Dennis James, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*; <<http://www.serve.com/sosorgan/>>

**El Capitan Theatre**, 6838 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, (800)DISNEY6, (4/37W); Organ played for weekend intermissions & special showings; House Organist, Rob Richards, Staff Organists, John Ledwon & Ed Vodicka; <<http://www.elcapitantickets.com/>>

**Nethercutt Collection**, 15200 Bledsoe St, Sylmar, CA 91342, (818)367-2251, (4/74W); Guided tours twice a day, Tue-Sat at 10:00am and 1:30pm. Free admission by reservation; Organ is played at the end of each tour; Organ Concerts: Reservations required in advance.; Fri, Aug 20, 8:00pm, Lew Williams; Sat, Aug 21, 2:00 & 8:00pm, Lew Williams; Fri, Sep 10, 8:00pm, Piano Concert - Doug Montgomery; Sat, Sep 11, 8:00pm (NO 2:00 PM), Piano Concert - Doug Montgomery; Fri, Oct 22, 8:00pm, Chris Gorsuch; Sat, Oct 23, 2:00 & 8:00pm, Chris Gorsuch; Fri, Dec 3, 8:00 pm, Ron Rhode; Sat, Dec 4, 2:00 & 8:00 pm, Ron Rhode; Fri, Dec 10, 8:00 pm, Lyn Larsen; Fri, Dec 17, 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Sat, Dec 18, 2:00 & 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Fri, Feb 4, 2005, 8:00pm, Tony Fenelon; Sat, Feb 5, 2005, 2:00 & 8:00 pm, Tony Fenelon

**Old Town Music Hall**, 140 Richmond St, El Segundo, CA, (310)322-2592, (4/26W); Bill Field at the Wurlitzer; Fri & Sat 8:15pm, Sat & Sun 2:30 pm; Sun, Jul 25, 7:00pm, Tommy Stark; Sun, Nov 7, 7:00pm, Jerry Nagano; <<http://www.otmh.org>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 842 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA, (310)329-1455, (3/14W); Sat, 11:30am, organ is featured as part of the guided tour of theatre; <<http://www.laorpheum.com>>

**Plummer Auditorium**, 201 E Chapman, Fullerton, CA, (714)671-1300, (4/36W); Sat, Aug 21, 11:00am - Don Thompson, Pot Luck and Open Console; Sun, Sept 12, 2:30pm, Stan Kann & Charlie Lester; Sun, Nov 14, 2:30pm, Scott Foppiano; <<http://www.octos.org>>

**San Gabriel Auditorium**, 320 S Mission Dr, San

Gabriel, CA, (888)LATOS22, (3/17W); <<http://www.latos.org>>

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 3092 Kenwood, Spring Valley (San Diego), CA. (619)286-9979, (4/24W); Sat, Oct 9, 7:00pm, Russ Peck, Laurel & Hardy movie nite; Sun, Nov 14, 3:00pm, Rob Richards; Sun, Dec 5, 3:00pm, Bob Salisbury; <<http://theatreorgans.com/ca/tossd/>>

**Walt Disney Concert Hall**, 111 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA, (323)850-2000, (Not a theatre organ); Sun, Oct 31, 7:00pm, Clark Wilson, *Phantom of the Opera*

## ■ COLORADO

**Paramount Theatre**, 1621 Glenarm Pl, Denver, CO, (303)466-3330, (4/20W); Sun, Aug 8, 2:00pm, Patti Simon & Dick Kroeckel

**Colorado Springs City Auditorium**, 221 E. Kiowa St., Colorado Springs, CO. (719) 385-5969, (3/8 W); Thursdays, 12:00N - 1:00P, May 6 thru Sept. 2, Sack-lunch Serenade with organ and silent short presented by local and guest artists. Food available on premises.; <<http://RMCATOS.home.comcast.net>>

## ■ CONNECTICUT

**Thomaston Opera House**, 158 Main St, Thomaston, CT, (203)426-2443, (3/15MC); Sun, Dec 5, 2:00pm, Dave Wickerham; <ThomastonOperaHouse.org>

## ■ DELAWARE

**Dickinson High School**, 1801 Milltown Rd, Wilmington, DE, (302)995-2603, (3/66K); All concerts Sat, 8:00pm; Sat, Jul 10, Tom Hazleton; Sat, Sep 25, Dave Wickerham; Sat, Nov 6, Ron Rhode; Sat, Jan 29, 2005, Dan Bellomy; Sat, Mar 12, 2005, Cameron Carpenter; Sat, Apr 30, 2005, Richard Hills; Sat, Jun 11, 2005, Clark Wilson; <<http://www.geocities.com/dtoskimball>>

## ■ FLORIDA

**Grace Baptist Church**, 8000 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL, (941) 922-2044, (4/32W); Concerts Sunday afternoons at 3:00pm;; <[www.mtos.us](http://www.mtos.us)>

**The Kirk Of Dunedin**, 2686 Bayshore Blvd, Dunedin, FL 34698, (813)733-5475, (4/100H); <<http://www.kirkorgan.com/>>

**Polk Theatre**, 127 S Florida Ave, Lakeland, FL, (863)682-7553, (3/11RM); Movie overtures 7:45pm, Fri & Sat, 1:45pm, Sun, Johnnie June Carter, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs, & Heidi Lenker

**Roaring 20's Pizza and Pipes**, 6750 US Highway 301, Ellenton, FL, (941)723-1733, (4/41W); Sun-Thu eve, Open: 4:30pm-9:00pm, Organ performance: 5:00pm-9:00pm; Fri-Sat eve, Open: 4:30pm-10:00pm, Organ performance: 5:00pm-10:00pm; Sat & Sun aft, Open 12:00 - 2:30pm, Organ Performance: 12:30-2:30pm; Wed, Fri, Sat aft, Sun eve, Alternating Mon, Dwight Thomas; Tue, Thu, Sat eve, Sun aft, Alternating Mon, Bill Vlasak

**Tampa Theatre**, 711 Franklin St, Tampa FL, (813)274-8286, (3/14W); Movie Overtures, Bob Baker, Stephen Brittain, Bill Brusick, June Carter, Bob Courtney, and Sandy Hobbs; Sun, Sep 26, 3:00pm, Rosa Rio, *Steamboat Bill, Jr*; <<http://www.tampatheatre.org>>

## ■ ILLINOIS

**Arcada Theatre**, 105 E Main St, St. Charles, IL, (630)845-8900, (3/16GMC); Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights.

**Beggar's Pizza**, 3524 Ridge Rd, Lansing, IL, (708)418-3500, (3/17B); Tue 5:30pm - 8:30pm, Tim Tallar; Wed, 6:00pm - 9:00pm, Glenn Tallar

**Gateway Theatre**, 5216 W. Lawrence Ave, Chicago, IL, (773)205-SFSC(7372), (3/17WH); Silent film showings on Fridays at 8:00pm; Jul 23, Dennis Scott, *Steamboat Bill Jr*; Jul 30, Mark Noller, *Nosferatu*; Aug 6, Dennis James with orchestra, *The Iron Horse*; Aug 13, Jay Warren, II; Aug 20, Mark Noller, *Lilac Time*; Aug 27, Dennis Scott, *Blood & Sand*; <[www.silentfilmchicago.com](http://www.silentfilmchicago.com)>

**Lincoln Theatre**, 103 E Main St, Belleville IL, (618)233-0018, (3/15H); Organ plays movie overtures Fri, David Stephens, Sat, Volunteers; Sun, Oct 24, 2:00pm, Vaudeville Revival; Sun, Dec 5, 2:00pm, An Old Fashioned Christmas Show; Thu, Dec 9, 1:30pm, Dennis Ammann; Fri, Dec 31, 7:00pm, Pipe In the New Year; <<http://www.lincoltheatre-belleville.com>>

**Tivoli Theatre**, 5201 Highland Ave, Downers Grove, IL, (630)968-0219, (3/10W); Theatre organ interludes on Friday, Dennis Scott; Saturday, Freddy Arnish; <<http://www.classiccinemas.com>>

**York Theatre**, 150 N. York Rd, Elmhurst, IL, (630)834-0675, (2/7B); Theatre organ overtures on Friday nights, Freddy Arnish; Saturday nights, Roland Frase; <<http://www.classiccinemas.com>>

## ■ INDIANA

**Embassy Theatre**, 125 W Jefferson, Fort Wayne, IN, (260)424-6287, (4/16P); <<http://www.EmbassyCentre.org>>

**Hedback Theatre**, 1847 N Alabama St, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (2/11PW); Sun, Oct 24, 2:30pm, Brett Valiant

**Long Center For The Performing Arts**, 111 N 6th, Lafayette, IN, (765)742-5664, (3/21W); <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/cicatos>>

**Manual High School**, 2405 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (3/26W); Sun, Oct 10, 2:30pm, Brett Valliant; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/cicatos>>

**Paramount Theatre**, 1124 Meridian, Anderson, IN, (800)523-4658, (3/12P); Mon, July 26, 8:00pm, Mark Gifford; <<http://www.parathea.org/>>

**Warren Center**, 9500 E Sixteenth St, Indianapolis, IN, (317)295-8121, (3/18B); Sun, Sep 12, 2:30pm, Ken Double; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/cicatos>>

## ■ KANSAS

**Century II Civic Center**, 225 W. Douglas, Wichita KS. (316)838 3127), (4/38W); Sat, Oct 23, 7:00pm, Jelani Eddington; <<http://www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org>>

**Little River Studio**, 6141 Fairfield Rd, Wichita, KS, (316)838 3127), (4/19 W); Sun, Oct 24, 1:00pm, Steve Schlessing; <<http://www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org>>

## ■ MAINE

**Merrill Auditorium**, 389 Congress St, Portland, ME, (207)883-9525, (5/107A); All concerts Tue, 7:30pm unless otherwise noted; Jul 13: Cameron Carpenter; Jul 20: Carol Williams; Aug 3: John Weaver; Aug 10: Timothy Smith; Aug 17: Gordon Turk; Aug 24: Otto Krämer; Aug 31: Nigel Potts; Thursday pops series, 7:30pm;; Jul 8: Simon Gledhill; Aug 5: Scott Foppiano; Aug 19: Walt Strony; <<http://www.foko.org/>>

## ■ MASSACHUSETTS

**Knight Auditorium Babson College**, Wellesley Ave, Wellesley, MA, (978)670 1269, (4/18W); <www.emcatos.com>

**Shanklin Conference Center**, 130 Sandy Pond Rd, Groton, MA, (978)670 1269, (4/34W); <www.emcatos.com>

## ■ MICHIGAN

**Crystal Theatre**, 304 Superior Ave, Crystal Falls, MI, (906)875-6052, (3/21M); E-mail: <klamp@up.net>

**Fox Theatre**, 2211 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI, (313)471-3200, (4/36W) & (3/12M); Lobby organ played for 45 minutes prior to selected shows.; Call Theatre for dates and times

**Grand Ledge Opera House**, 121 S. Bridge St, Grand Ledge, MI, (888)333-POPS, (3/20B); <www.lto-pops.org>

**Michigan Theatre**, 603 E Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI (616)668-8397, (3/13B); Wed thru Sun intermissions (times vary); Henry Aldridge, Director; Steven Ball, Staff Organist, & Newton Bates, Wade Bray, John Lauter, Stephen Warner

**The Mole Hole**, 150 W. Michigan Ave, Marshall, MI, (616)781-5923, (2/6 B/K); Organ daily, Scott Smith, recorded artist

**Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theater**, 272 Pearl St NW Grand Rapids, MI, (616)459-4253, (3/30W); Tours by appt, and ATOS guests welcome to hear organ on Thurs noon weekly; story time slides program during school year; Organ played Sundays 1:00pm - 3:00pm

**Redford Theatre**, 17360 Lahser Rd, Detroit, MI, (313)531-4407, (3/10B); Movie Overtures, Fridays at 7:30pm and Saturdays at 1:30pm & 7:30pm; Guest Organists: Steven Ball, Gus Borman, David Calendine, Jennifer Canda, Gil Francis, John Lauter, Tony O'Brien, Sharron Patterson; <http://redfordtheatre.com>

**Senate Theatre**, 6424 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MI, (313)894-4100, (4/36W); All Concerts start at 3pm; Sun, Sep 19, Brent Valliant; Sun, Oct. 17, Jelani Eddington; Sun, Nov. 21, Dave Calendine; Sun, Dec. 5, Ron Rhode

## ■ MISSOURI

**Fox Theatre**, 527 Grand Blvd N, St Louis, MO, (314)534-1678, (4/36W); 10:30am theatre tours with Stan Kann playing the organ; Sun, Aug 1, 2:00pm, re-creation of opening night; Call (314)534-1678 for information and reservations; <http://www.fabulousfox.com/>

## ■ MINNESOTA

**A CENTER FOR THE ARTS**, (Fergus Theatre), 124 W Lincoln Ave E, Fergus Falls, (218) 736-5453, (3/12W); Friday Summer noon series, Lance Johnson; Jul 16, Aug 13, Fri, Oct 24, 7:00pm, Donna Parker

**Heights Theatre**, 3951 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, (763)789-4992, (4/10W); Movie overtures every Fri, Sat, and Sun

**Minnesota State U Moorhead**, 1104 7th Ave, South Moorhead, (701)237-0477, (3/7H); Summer Cinema organ prologues, Mondays at 7:15pm; Jul 12, Jul 19, Jul 26, Lloyd Collins, Steve Eneboe, Lance Johnson, Dave Knutson, Gene Struble; <organ@johnsonorgan.com>

## ■ NEW JERSEY

**Broadway Theatre**, 43 South Broadway St, Pitman, NJ, (856)589-7519, (3/8K); Movie Music Overtures;

Tue, 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Fri & Sat. 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Sun, 2:30pm - 3:00pm; House Organists: John Bresline, Michael Xavier Lundy, Bob Nichols, Janet Norcross, & Harold Ware; <www.pitmansbroadway.com>

**Galaxy Theatre**, 7000 Boulevard E, Guttenberg, NJ (201)854-6540, (3/12K); Fri, Sat evenings before and after evening shows, Jeff Barker; (Lobby, 2/6M) Sun afternoon before matinee, Jeff Barker; <http://www.galaxy-movie-theatre.com/>

**The Music Hall at Northlandz**, Rt 202 South, Flemington, NJ, (908)982-4022, (5/39W); Organ played several times daily, Call for exact times.; Bruce Conway, Harry Ley, Bruce Williams

**Newton Theatre**, 234 Spring St, Newton, NJ, (973)579-9993, (2/3E); Saturday evening intermissions, John Baratta

**Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Auditorium**, 27 Pilgrim Pathway, Ocean Grove, NJ, (732)775-0035, (4/154 Hope-Jones + Hybrid); Concerts by Dr. Gordon Turk; <http://www.oceangrove.org>

**Symphony Hall**, 1040 Broad St, Newark, NJ, (973)256-5480, (3/15GB); Used for special events; <http://www.gstos.org>

**Trenton War Memorial**, W. Lafayette St @ Wilson, Trenton, NJ (732)741-4045, (3/16M); <http://www.gstos.org>

**Union County Arts Center**, 1601 Irving St, Rahway, NJ, (732)499-8229, (2/7W); <www.ucac.org>

## ■ NEW YORK

**Auditorium Center**, 875 E Main, Rochester, NY, (585)377-5552, (4/23W); Sat Sep. 11, 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Sat Oct. 16, 8:00pm, Don Kinnier; Sun Nov. 14, 2:30pm, Paul Roberts; Sat Dec. 11, 8:00pm, Tim Schramm; <http://theatreorgans.com/rochester/>

**Bardavon 1869 Opera House**, 35 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY, (914)473-2072, (2/8W); Organ played before selected movies. Call or check the website for details.; <http://www.bardavon.org/>

**Capitol Theatre**, 220 W Dominick St, Rome, NY, (315)337-2576, (3/7M); Silent movie programs in 35mm (all shows start at 7:00pm); Sat, Aug 14 & Sun, Aug 15, Dr. Philip C. Carli, Dennis James, Avery Tunngley, *Capitolfest*; <http://www.theatreorgans.com/ny/rome/>

**Empire Theatre**, 581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY, (315)451-4943, (3/11W); All concerts start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise; August 26, - September 6, 2004 NY State Fair, Wurlitzer is played several times daily by area artists. Times to be posted on our website when available.; Sep 12, Byron Jones; Oct 24, John Ledwon; Dec 19, Lance Luce; <www.jrjunction.com/estmim>

**Lafayette Theatre**, Lafayette Ave, Suffern, (845) 369-8234, (2/10W); Sat, 7:30, Movie overtures, Dave Kopp, Keith Gramlich, Earle Seeley, Bernie Anderson

**Proctor's Theatre**, 432 State St., Schenectady, NY (518)346-8204, (3/18W); Noon Concert series, Tues unless stated otherwise; <www.proctors.org>

**Shea's Buffalo Theatre**, 646 Main St, Buffalo, NY, (716)684-8414, (4/28W); Sun, Aug 29 2:00pm, Byron Jones; <http://www.theatreorgans.com/ny/buffaloarea/sheas/concert.htm>

## ■ NORTH CAROLINA

**Carolina Theatre**, 310 South Green St, Greensboro, NC, (336)333-2600, (3/6M); Organ played before & after the Carolina Classic Film Series; <http://www.carolinatheatre.com/index.htm>

## ■ NORTH DAKOTA

**Fargo Theatre**, 314 N. Broadway, Fargo, ND, (701)239-8385, (4/21W); Organ plays Fri, Sat, Sun evenings before and between performances; Short organ concerts, Lance Johnson, David Knudson, & Steve Eneboe; <http://www.fargotheatre.org/>

## ■ OHIO

**Akron Civic Theatre**, 182 S Main St, Akron OH, (330)253-2488, (3/19W); <www.akroncivic.com>

**Church of God**, 3649 E Garfield Rd, New Springfield, OH, (330)549-3728, (4/44H); Sat, Oct 30, 7:00pm, Rob Richards

**Gray's Armory**, 1234 Bolivar Rd, Cleveland, OH, (216)532-4214, (3/13W); Sat, Oct 9, 7:30pm, Lew Williams

**The Historic Ohio Theatre**, 3114 Lagrange St, Toledo, OH, (419)241-6785, (4/11MC); Organ pre-show for movies (6:30-7:00pm)

**Music Palace**, 11473 Chester Rd, Sharonville, OH, (513)771-1675, (4/33W); Tue, Thru, Sat, 11:00am - 2:00pm; Call for evening performance times; Closed Sundays, Mondays, & Holidays; Trent Sims

**Ohio Theatre**, 55 E State St, Columbus, OH, (614)469-1045, (4/34RM); Organ overtures and intermissions; <http://www.capa.com/>

## ■ OREGON

**Bijou Theatre**, 1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, OR, (541)994-8255, (Elect); Silent Film Series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm; <http://www.cinematelovers.com/>

**Elsinore Theatre**, 170 High St SE, Salem, OR, (503)233-7274, (3/24W); Silent Movie Programs start Wednesdays during May at 7:00pm, Rick Parks, organist; <http://www.elsinoretheatre.com/>

## ■ PENNSYLVANIA

**Grand Court of Lord & Taylor**, 13th & Market, Philadelphia, PA (6/469 H); Forty five minute organ concerts daily except Sunday, 12:00noon, Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri & Sat, 5:00pm, Wed, 7:00pm; <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/>

**Keswick Theatre**, Easton Road & Keswick Ave, Glenside, PA, (610)346 - 8494, (3/19M); Musical Overtures Before Live Shows; House Organists: Barbara Fesmire, Michael Xavier Lundy, Wayne Zimmerman; <www.keswicktheatre.com>

**Keystone Oaks High School**, 1000 Kelton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA.; (412)921-8558, (3/19W); All concerts on Saturday at 7:30pm; <http://www.aol.com/wurliz/index.html>

**Longwood Gardens**, Kennett Square, PA (610)388-1000, (4/146 Aeolian); Sun, 2:30pm, Pipe Organ Concert Series

**Roxy Theatre**, 2004 Main St, Northampton, PA, (610)262-7699, (2/6W); Organ is played 6:30pm - 7:00pm and intermissions, Henry Thomas; <www.Roxytheaternorthampton.com>

**Strand-Capitol PAC**, 50 N George St, York, PA, (717)846-1111, (3/17W); Theatre undergoing renovation. Organ is in storage.; <http://www.strandcapitol.org/>

**Sunnybrook Ballroom**, East High Street, Pottstown, PA, (610)326-6400, (3/14US); Organ plays for Sunday Brunch

## ■ TENNESSEE

**The Paramount Center for the Arts**, 518 State St, Bristol, TN, (423)968-7456, (3/11+W); <www.theparamountcenter.com>

## ATOS NEWS

Newsletter of the American Theatre Organ Society, published bi-monthly by the American Theatre Organ Society

HARRY HETH, EDITOR

Please address all news correspondence to:  
1247 Peden, Houston, TX 77006-1130  
Phone: 713/527-8096; FAX 713/527-9182;  
E-mail: tibvox@aol.com.

All matters pertaining to membership or change of address must be sent to:  
Michael Fellenzer  
ATOS Membership Office,  
P.O. Box 551081  
Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581  
E-mail: fellenzer@ATOS.org

**Tennessee Theatre**, 604 S Gay St, Knoxville, TN, (770)428-4809, (3/16W); Concerts 12:00 noon on the first Monday of each month; <<http://www.tennesseetheatre.com>>

### ■ TEXAS

**Sunland Park Mall**, I-10 & Sunland Park Dr, El Paso, TX, (3/15W); Mon, Wed, Fri, 1:00pm - 1:30pm; Tue, Thu, Sat, 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Sun, 5:00pm - 6:00pm

### ■ UTAH

**The Organ Loft**, 3331 S. Edison St, Salt Lake City, Utah, (801)485-9265, (5/36W); <<http://www.organloftslc.com>>

### ■ VIRGINIA

**Byrd Theatre**, 2908 W Carey, Richmond, VA, (804)353-9911, (4/17W); Overtures Sat, 7:15pm & 9:30pm, Bob Gullledge

### ■ WASHINGTON

**Everett Theatre**, 2911 Colby, Everett, WA, (425) 258-6766, (3/16K); <<http://www.everetttheatre.org>>

**Hokum Hall**, 7904 35th Ave SW, Seattle, WA, (206)937-3613, (2/10W); Saturday and Sunday, 2:00pm, silent movie. Call to verify schedule.

**Mt Baker Theatre**, 106 N Commercial, Bellingham, WA (2/12W); Second Sun monthly, 2:00pm, Open console

**Paramount Theatre**, 911 Pine St, Seattle, WA, (206) 467-5510, (4/20W); <<http://www.theparamount.com/>>

**Washington Center for the Performing Arts**, 512 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA, (360)753-8586, (3/25W); <<http://www.washingtoncenter.org/>>

### ■ WISCONSIN

**Organ Piper Music Palace**, 4353 S. 108th St., Greenfield (Milwaukee), WI, (414)529-1177, (3/27 W/K); Organ hours, 5:30pm - 9:00pm, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun., 5:00pm - 10:15pm, Fri, & Sat; Tue & Wed, Dave Wickerham; Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun, Ron Reseigh

**Oriental Theatre**, 2230 N Farwell Ave, Milwaukee, WI, (414) 276-8711, (3/39K); <http://theatreorgans.com/wi/milwaukee/orientaltheatre/>

**Phipps Center for the Arts**, 109 Locust St, Hudson, WI, (715)386-8409, (3/15W); <[www.ThePhipps.org](http://www.ThePhipps.org)>

### ■ AUSTRALIA

**Capri Theatre**, 141 Goodwood Rd, Goodwood, SA, (08) 8272 1177, (4/29W+H); Sun, Jul 25,

1:45pm, Jim Riggs; Sun, Sep 12, 1:45pm, Tony Fenelon & Chris McPhee; Sun, Nov 14, 1:45pm, Dennis James; Sun, Dec 5, 1:45pm, Tony Fenelon & Limited Edition; Organ used Tuesday, Friday, & Saturday evenings

**Coburg City Centre**, 90 Bell St, Coburg, VIC, (03) 9781 5349 (2/9 Blackett & Howden); Sun, Oct 17, 2:00pm, Leith Ewart & Carole Wyatt

**Dendy Cinema**, 26 Church St, Brighton, VIC, (03) 9781 5349, (3/15W); Organ before films, Saturday evening; Sun, Jul 18, 1:30pm, Jim Riggs; Sun, Sep 19, 1:30pm, Paul Fitzgerald & Heath Wooster

**John Lecke Music Center**, Melvista Ave, Nedlands, WA, (08)9276 6668, (3/10C); Sun, Sep 19, 2:00pm, Gail Dibben

**Malvern Town Hall**, Glenferrie Rd & High St, Malvern VIC, (03) 9781 5349, (3/16C); Sun, Aug 15, 2:00pm, Tony Fenelon; Sun, Nov 28, 2:00pm, John Atwell

**Marrickville Town Hall**, Marrickville & Petersham Roads, Marrickville, NSW, (02) 9629 2257, (2/11W); <<http://www.tosa.net.au>>

**Orion Centre**, 155 Beamish St, Campsie, NSW, (02)9629 2257, (3/17W); <<http://www.tosa.net.au>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 380 Military Rd, Cremorne, NSW, 9908-4344, (3/15W); Sat nite, Sun afternoon, Intermissions, Neil Jensen

### ■ CANADA

**CASA LOMA**, 1 Austin Terrace, Toronto, ON, (416)421-0918, (4/19W); All concerts, Monday @ 8:00pm; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/toronto/>>

**Church of the Redeemer**, 89 Kirkpatrick St, Kingston, Ont, (613)386-7295, (3/28K); Fri, May 28, 8:00pm, Peter Hansen

### ■ HOLLAND

**CBS Building**, Princes Beatrixlaan 428, Voorburg, Holland, 0344-624623, (2/11Standaard); Fri, Sep 17, 8:00pm, Don Thompson; <<http://www.xs4all.nl/~janhuls/Pagina-EN/NOF-intro-E.htm>>

**Fortis Theatre an der Schie**, Stadserf 1, Schiedam, Holland, 010 246 25, (3/11Standaard); Sun, Sep 19, 12:00noon; <<http://www.xs4all.nl/~janhuls/Pagina-EN/NOF-intro-E.htm>>

**Theatre de Meenthe**, Stationsplein 1, Steenwijk, Holland 0521-514004 (4/29 Strumk); Sun, Sep 19, 8:00pm, Don Thompson; <[http://home.wanadoo.nl/tomk/website\\_peter/web/index.html](http://home.wanadoo.nl/tomk/website_peter/web/index.html)>

### ■ UNITED KINGDOM

**The Assembly Hall**, Stoke Abbot Road, Worthing, Sussex, (0)1903-206 206, (3/23W); All concerts Sunday at 3:00pm unless noted otherwise; Sun, Jul 18, 3:00pm, Richard Hills; Sun, Sep 26, 3:00pm, Walt Strony; Sun, Oct 17, 3:00pm, Phil Kelsall; Sun, Nov 21, 3:00pm, Jim Riggs; Sun, Dec 19, 3:00pm, Simon Gledhill; Dances Saturday, 7:15pm

**The Barry Memorial Hall**, 7, Gladstone Rd, Barry, South Glamorgan, (4/15CHR); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**Civic Hall, North Street**, Wolverhampton, W Midlands, (0)1902 552121, (4/44C); Friday noontime concerts 12:00-12:30pm before the Tea Dance, Steve Tovey or Cameron Lloyd; All concerts Sat, 2:00pm; Jul 31, Dr Arnold Loxam; Aug 21, Nicholas Martin; <[http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic\\_hall.html](http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic_hall.html)>

**Fentham Hall**, Marsh Lane, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, +44 1564 794778, (3/11C); All Concerts Sunday at 3:00pm; Aug 1, Catherine Drummond; Aug 22, Ken Double; Sep 5, Nicholas Martin; Oct 3,

John Barnett; <<http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk/cosdistr/midlands.html>>

**Kilburn State Theatre**, 197 - 199 Kilburn, High Rd, Kilburn, London, (4/16W); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**New Victoria Centre**, High Street, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, Co. Durham. (0)1388 762 467. (3/12W); Concerts are on Sat at 7.00pm and Sun at 2.30pm.; Those events which only have one date are Saturday evening concerts; Aug 7, Youth at the Console; Sep 4/5, Kevin Morgan; Oct 9/10, Keith Beckingham; Nov 13/14, Nigel Ogden; Dec 18/19, Richard Openshaw & Annfield Plain Gleemen; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/uk/netoa>>

**Ossett Town Hall, Market Place**, Ossett, Wakefield, W Yorkshire, 44 (0) 113 2705885; (3/13C); All concerts Sunday at 2:30pm; Oct 3, Kevin Morgan; Nov 7, Willie Stephenson; Dec 5, David Shepherd

**Peterborough Regional College**, Eastfield Rd, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, UK, (44(0)1733 262800, (2/11W); <[www.ptops.ptops-wurlitzer.co.uk](http://www.ptops.ptops-wurlitzer.co.uk)>

**The Ritz Ballroom**, 73 Bradford Road, Brighouse, W Yorkshire, 44 (0)1274 589939, (3/10W); All concerts, Sun, 2:30pm, Dances, Saturday 7:30pm; Jul 11, Russell Holmes, Concert; Aug 8, Ken Double, Concert; Oct 10, Donald Mackenzie, Concert; Nov 14, Simon Gledhill, Concert; Dec 12, Robert Wolfe, Concert; <[www.cosnorth.co.uk](http://www.cosnorth.co.uk)>

**St. Albans Organ Museum**, 320 Camp Rd, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, 01144(0)1727 851 557 (3/12W); Sat, Jul 17, 7:45pm, Kevin Morgan; Sat, Aug 7, 7:45pm, Len Rawle; Sat, Sep 11, 7:45pm, Don Thompson; Sat, Oct 2, 7:45pm, Jean Martyn; Sat, Oct 23, 7:45pm, Nicholas Martin; Sat, Nov 6, 7:45pm, Phil Kelsall; Sat, Dec 4, 2:30pm & 7:45pm, Robert Wolfe; Fri, Dec 31, 8:30pm - 12:30am, Donald MacKenzie & Guests; <<http://www.stalbansorganmuseum.org.uk/>>

**St John Vianney RC Church**, Clayhall, 1 Stoneleigh Rd, Ilford Essex, 44 (0)1525 872356, (3/7C); <[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)>

**Singing Hills Golf Course**, Albourne near Brighton, (0)1903 261972, (3/19W); All concerts at 3:00pm

**South Bank University**, 103 Borough Road, London, 44 (0)1525 872356, (4/24W); Sun, Jul 18, 3:00pm, Keith Beckingham; Sun, Sep 19, 3:00pm, Robert Sudall; Sun, Oct 17, 3:00pm, Russell Holmes; Sat, Dec 11, 3:00pm, Mark Laffin, Stephen Hogger, David Warner & Robert Gurney (piano) <[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)>

**Stockport Town Hall**, On A6, Main Road Thru Stockport, UK, 44 (0) 161 764 3979, (4/20W); Mon, Sep 6, 12:00noon, Len Rawle; Mon, Oct 4, 12:00noon, Paul Roberts; Mon, Nov 1, 12:00, Kevin Grunill; Sun, Nov 28, 2:30pm, Nigel Ogden; Mon, Dec 6, 12:00noon, Joyce Alldred

**Thomas Peacocke Community College**, The Grove, Rye, East Sussex, 01424 444058, (2/6W)

**Woking Leisure Centre**, Woking Park, Kingfield Rd, Woking, Surrey, (3/17W); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**Wolverhampton Civic Hall**, North Street, Wolverhampton, W Mids, (0)1543 425 214, (4/44C); Sat, Oct 23, 2:00pm, Peter Jebson, Tribute concert to Reginald Dixon

**Town Hall, Victoria Rd**, Portslade, Sussex, 011-44-1293-844788, (3/20C); Sun, Sep 12, 3:00pm, Don Thompson; <<http://www.organfax.co.uk/clubs/southcoast-tos.html>>



## FOR THE RECORDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

ATOS Hall of Fame in 1983. During his all-too-brief life "Fats" often recorded with small groups using various names. On this disc his two selections, Rodgers and Hart's "Thou Swell," and a rather wild number titled "Persian Rug", feature Waller playing the Estey along with a group called The Louisiana Sugar Babes. What is particularly notable about the Sugar Babes is that playing the piano on these tracks is James P. Johnson, the greatest stride piano player who ever lived, and Waller's close friend and mentor!

Returning to more "traditional" organ pioneers, Dick Liebert is next. Leibert (1904-1976) was named ATOS Organist of the Year and inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1974. Leibert opened the largest organ the Wurlitzer Company ever built (the 4/58 organ with twin consoles in New York's Radio City Music Hall—Opus 2179) in 1933, and remained Chief Organist for the next 40 years! Have you ever wondered why this 6,000-seat theatre is named Radio City? It's because at the time Rockefeller Center, opened the National Broadcasting Company—with its Red and Blue Networks—were their most prestigious tenants! Although there are recordings of Liebert playing the theatre's massive organ, his two selections on this disc (both recorded in 1940) were made on the upstairs studio organ, a 3/14-Opus 2180. His melodies are the lush ballads "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" and "Stardust." (Years ago many other artists recorded LPs on this organ, which was often identified as being in the Plaza Studio. And, some of their album covers even sported photographs of the New York Paramount console!)

It's appropriate that the last three artists are British, for they too were true theatre organ pioneers. The first artist is Reginald Foort, (1894-1980) who was named ATOS Organist of the Year in 1964, and entered the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1970. We believe his two numbers were recorded on the 4/34 Christie in the Regal Marble Arch (London). Over the years we've heard a lot of songs featuring steam locomotives, but never before have we heard anything like Foort's version of what could be the most

musically descriptive railroad song ever written... it's simply titled "Choo Choo." Foort recorded it just a year after Ethel Waters sang Eubie Blake's poetic "Memories of You" in *Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1930*, and it's a delight in every way. Now we go to Blackpool's Tower Ballroom for a number by Reginald Dixon, (1904-1985) who was named to the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1974. Of course Dixon is playing the often-recorded Wurlitzer, which at the time of this recording in 1937 was a 3/13. Dixon plays one of Emil Waldteufel's best-known waltzes "Estudiantina."

Although his career as a theatre organist lasted a mere 10 years, there's no question but what Sidney Torch (1908-1990) belongs on everyone's list of theatre organ greatest, and he was elected to the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971. In 1934, at the console of the 4/15 Christie in the Regal Cinema, Edmonton, he recorded one of the typical up-tempo jazzy delights, "I Hate Myself For Being So Mean To You" and then an emotional version of the enduring Ralph Ranger ballad "Love In Bloom." That Academy

Award nominated song was written for Bing Crosby to sing in the film *She Loves Me Not*. But when Jack Benny gave it his "unique interpretation" in the 1936 film *College Holiday*, it became his theme song for the rest of his career.

Congratulations to album producer Jim Bedoian and his dedicated helpers, who have given us a thoroughly enjoyable two hours of absolutely fascinating music played by Jesse Crawford and 11 more Theatre Organ Pioneers. This 2-CD set is a Must Have collection for every serious theatre organ buff. This album is dedicated to the late Bill Coffman, and the full-color photographs in the liner notes show the 4-manual Mighty Wurlitzer playing today in El Segundo, California's Old Town Music Hall. Today Bill Field, Coffman's long-time partner at OTMH, continues to entertain the public with the best wholesome family entertainment available in Southern California. This CD set is Item #679522 selling for \$26.95 and the 2-cassette (!) version is Item #679514 selling for \$21.95 each plus \$3.00 postage from Yestermusic, P.O. Box 637, Holmes, PA 19043-0637.

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Tickets are \$12 at the door. For information on our group sales rates or to order a free event calendar, call the concert hotline at (313) 894-4100.

The Senate houses the 1928 4/34 Wurlitzer originally installed in Detroit's Fisher Theater.

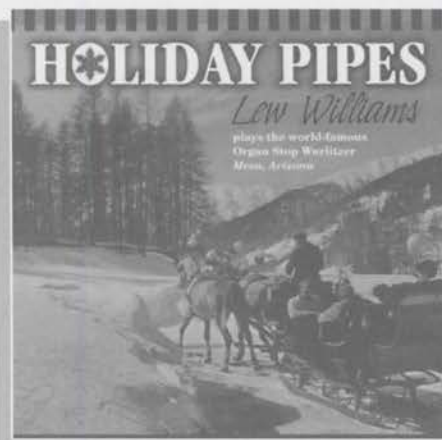
They accept the major credit cards, and you can order by phone at 1-800/538-4200 or check out their website at [www.yestermusic.com](http://www.yestermusic.com).

PS: Since this set's liner notes contain only the sketchy information found on the original 78 labels, we have added information about artists and organs from Judd Walton's Wurlitzer List, Dr. John Landon's two books, *Jesse Crawford* and *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer*, Reginald Foort's *The Cinema Organ*, Mel Doner's discography published in the early issues of the *ATOE Tibia*, various articles in *THEATRE ORGAN*, and *The Console Magazine*, and with the assistance of Jack O'Neill and Kevin King. Any corrections or additional information concerning these recordings are welcome, and

may be sent to the Record Review Editor, 5155 N. Fresno St., #170, Fresno CA 93710-6838.

## HOLIDAY PIPES

Lew Williams



Okay. So we may be pushing the holiday season a bit early but, since you'll be reading this during July's heat, maybe it will help cool you down a mite—and don't forget that it would be a great Christmas gift item for yourself and/or

your theatre organ loving friends! Lew is once again at the console of the superlative 4/74 Wurlitzer in Mesa, Arizona's Organ Stop Pizza which is now celebrating its 29th year, and it's still packing them in! Which only proves that a world class Wurlitzer, an exciting environment, two of the finest organists around, (Charlie Balogh and Lew Williams) and an appetizing menu truly can add up to long-term success.

Lew opens his 31-tune, 66½-minute salute to the holidays with LeRoy Anderson's charming, clip-clopping "Sleigh Ride." Next is an upbeat medley of two longtime favorites from the 1940s—"Winter Wonderland" and "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" Bob Hope (as a sidewalk Santa) and Marilyn Maxwell introduced the tinkling "Silver Bells" in the 1951 film *Lemon Drop Kid*. Next up is that other popular holiday bell song—"Jingle Bells," as Lew's liner notes tell us, was written in 1857 to provide a cheerful note during a Sunday School meeting. Though it is one of the tunes most closely associated with Christmas, it was actually written for a Thanksgiving program.

In an engaging medley, Lew combines "White Christmas," "Blue Christmas," and "I'll Be Home for Christmas." Of course, everyone remembers that Bing Crosby sang Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" in the 1942 film *Holiday Inn*. But you might not be aware that Irving Berlin thought up the entire story and wrote the entire score, or that this song won the Academy Award, or that Berlin was so unsure that this was a good song that he was hiding in the studio as Bing made the recording—which sold over 25 million copies, and was the all-time best selling single until Elton John's "Candle in the Wind" in 1997. Another cheerful medley follows as Lew combines "Rudolph, The Red Nosed Reindeer" with "Frosty The Snowman." Of course, the man who started his career as The Yodeling Cowboy on KVOO in Oklahoma City, and later WLS in Chicago, had two of his biggest hit recordings in the late 1940s with these wintertime favorites. He was, of course, Gene Autry. The original recordings were 78s, and an interesting sidelight on "Rudolph" is that the "B" side had a song no one has ever heard of—"If It Doesn't Snow On Christmas." However, since the disc sold 8-million copies, Gerald Marks

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made fortune on that obscure song which far outsold his better-known tune "All Of Me."

For a change of pace Lew next plays the graceful Richard Purvis arrangement of "What Child Is This?" which you might recognize by the title "Green-sleeves." From the 1966 TV Special *Charlie Brown's Christmas* is the jazzy, sparkling "Christmas Time Is Here" which is followed by the percussion delight "The Little Drummer Boy" that features this organ's rare Wurlitzer tympani (kettle drums.) Next up is another enduring song which Judy Garland made famous—and, surprisingly—in more ways than one! It's "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," which she sang in the 1944 film *Meet Me In St. Louis*. Since the family was planning to move to New York City the original lyrics were "Faithful friends who were dear to us/Will be near to us no more." Judy told composers Hugh Martin and Ralph Blaine that the song was too depressing to sing, so they changed the lyrics to the much more positive "Faithful friends who are dear to us/Gather near to us once more."

Hardly any Christmas album is complete without a tune or two from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, and Lew's 15-minute medley gives us the "Overture," "March," "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy," and the "Waltz of the Flowers." Lew is a master of orchestral transcriptions. His liner notes tell us, "In transcribing this music to the Mighty Wurlitzer, I have tried, as closely as possible, to duplicate the original orchestral colors and sonorities." Indeed, he has! Langlais' Christmas tone poem "The Nativity" is followed by Robert Hebble's arrangement of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" which is truly "... the most joyous proclamation of faith ever set to music," as one critic has said. Adolphe Adam's enduring "O Holy Night" is suitably reverent. Lew closes his captivating holiday program with a ten-minute medley of some additional seasonal favorites, beginning with "Joy To The World" and concluding with "O Come All Ye Faithful."

If you don't already have *Holiday Pipes* in your Christmas collection, (it was released last fall) it's a musical treasure chest of wintertime favorites and is Highly Recommended. CDs only for \$20.00

(postpaid) from Organ Stop Recordings, 1149 East Southern Avenue, Mesa, Arizona, 85204-5011. You can order by phone by calling 480/813-5700, Ext. 200 or on line at [www.OrganStopPizza.com](http://www.OrganStopPizza.com).

## MAKE WAY FOR CHRISTMAS

*Larry Kass And Others*

Now that we're in the holiday mood, here's the Mighty Wurlitzer Radio pro-



gram for December 14, 2003, which was, as usual, performed in front of a live studio audience and broadcast on Cleveland, Ohio's radio stations WRMR-AM and WCLV-FM. This one hour variety program again features professional soloists, announcers, dramatic artists, the Theatre of the Air Chorus, and an abundance of familiar favorites along with a sprinkling of new melodies—all 26 of them in the holiday spirit. Organist, composer and lyricist Larry Kass is at the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer, and the program opens with the entire cast singing one of Larry's cheery new numbers "Make Way for Christmas." The program's host, Robert Conrad sets the stage, so to speak, for this holiday season's program as the Chorus segues into their usual theme song, "I Feel A Song Coming On."

Cynthia O'Connell is the first soloist with "I'll Be Home For Christmas." She is followed by a generous six-tune medley that salutes "The Nations' Showplace"—Radio City Music Hall—and their annual Christmas spectacular. To open this set, the chorus sings a zesty Larry Kass

# SILENTS PLEASE!

Silent Films with a Vaudeville Flair!

Saturday, September 11 - 1 PM

**Sunrise (1928)**

One would hesitate to call any film the "finest of its era," but as a climax to the silent film era, one could certainly defend the statement if it applied to *Sunrise*. Carl Mayer's evocative, almost stream-of-conscious script, and the sensitive and powerful direction by F.W. Murnau, make this a pictorially beautiful masterpiece. *Sunrise*, represents the peak of Hollywood films, just before sound took over.

Special Guest Organist will be:  
**"The Truly.....Outstanding"  
Steven Ball**

Live Act will be Impressionist Frank Pisani  
"The Ultimate One-Man Show."

Saturday, October 9 - 1 PM

**Robin Hood (1922)**

An extraordinarily handsome production, with pageantry, huge sets, crowd scenes, the race to the rescue, the assault on the castle and of course the love scenes. All of which go to make a Douglas Fairbanks extravaganza. Come see Fairbanks at his swashbuckling, larger-than-life best.

Special Guest Organist will be:  
**"Masterful Theatre Organist" Steven Ball**

Live Act will be the Fabulous Illusionist—Mark Holstein

Monthly Shows September through May—Live film accompaniment on the 3/34 Skinner Organ  
Show time is 1 PM

Cooley Auditorium  
Milwaukee Area Technical College  
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For more information, contact: [silentplease@sbcglobal.net](mailto:silentplease@sbcglobal.net)  
or Silents Please! Box Office: 262-634-8394 (Racine, WI)

original number, "We're Off To Radio City Music Hall" which segues into "We Need A Little Christmas," (which Angela Lansbury introduced in Jerry Herman's 1966 hit musical *Mame*). In keeping with the Radio City tradition of having both popular and sacred music in the Christmas spectacular, a warm, lush, "Silent Night" is followed by the upbeat "Walking In A Winter Wonderland," a reverent "O, Little Town of Bethlehem," that wonderful song Judy Garland made famous, "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," and concludes with a fun version of "Santa Clause Is Coming To Town." Each number features a different soloist, and receives a full arrangement . . . it's a holiday musical delight!

Since there is a former Radio City Rockette in the studio audience Larry moves to the piano to accompany Weldon Gann in a sparkling original tune—"Tap My Troubles Away"—and, yes, the second chorus features a tap dance performed by Mimi Schwensen. Something a bit unusual for the Mighty Wurlitzer Radio Hour is an organ solo. But it's a slightly tongue-in-cheek response to the question of what will Larry give his wife for Christmas; he answers it with a jolly version of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love." Violinist Nicholas DiEugenio (with Michael Schneider on piano) plays

the Jascha Heifetz transcription of George Gershwin's fascinating "Piano Prelude #1," which is followed by Adina Bloom and the Chorus singing a rarely-heard Christmas treat made famous by folk-singer Burl Ives—"Have A Holly, Jolly Christmas." June Anthony tells us that she doesn't mind winter's cold breezes because, "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm."

Remember pretty, perky Brenda Lee who started her singing and recording career when she was just 11 years old? Her big Christmas hit is next . . . "Rocking 'Round The Christmas Tree." On a more serious note is Larry's original composition "A Hope and A Prayer," which has some luscious Kurt Weill-like harmonies. A few bars of "Rudolph" introduces a brief Christmas drama in which an out of work young lady has her Christmas wish come true, by finding employment in a pastry shop. Back to the music with a salute to Jerome Kern, featuring three of the songs he wrote for the 1936 film *Swing Time* that was the sixth of the wonderful Fred Astaire/Ginger Rogers musical classics. First is "A Fine Romance"—which Ginger sings to Fred during a snowstorm. Then the sprightly "Pick Yourself Up," and finally the number Fred sings while Ginger shampoos her hair—"The Way You Look Tonight."

Another Kass original song is next, as Kari Kandel and Patrick Janson duet on "Merry Christmas To You."

You elderly bobby-soxers will get a kick out of that 1950s hit "Jingle Bells Rock." Christmas comes at the same time people of the Jewish faith celebrate Hanukkah so the second mini-drama is a simple explanation about lighting the menorah's eight candles. Pianist Michael Schneider returns to play Rachmaninoff's challenging, spirited "Etude #33." The cast is then joined by a 12-voice choir from St. Joseph's Academy, who sing an a cappella arrangement of Larry's reverent "What Is The Meaning Of Christmas?" and then they are joined by the organ and the Theatre of the Air Chorus. This is truly the program's holiday musical highlight! Then, it's "Time To Go" and the broadcast closes with a final "Happy Holidays" from the entire cast. It's easily one of the finest of the Might Wurlitzer Radio Hour's programs, which is distinguished by some fine seasonal music we rarely hear on Christmas discs. It's High Recommended! CD only for \$17.50 (postpaid) from Razzmatazz Productions, Inc. P. O. Box 401, Hinckley, Ohio 44233. It can be also ordered by credit card from 1/877/590-4849 or by e-mail at [skass@prodigy.net](mailto:skass@prodigy.net)

## CORRECTIONS & APOLOGIES

In our review of "Sonic Bloom" in the November, 2003 Journal we indicated the Möller Organ Company had installed only 12 theatre organs. As Tom DeLay's Letter to the Editor in the March, 2004 Journal points out, that figure is incorrect. Since we were unable to consult the Möller opus list we should have said that, "according to the "Sonic Bloom's" liner notes the Möller Company installed only 12 theatre organs."

Although we have personally attended many concerts on the truly magnificent Spreckels organ in San Diego's Balboa Park, and have reviewed several recordings made on that world-famous instrument, throughout our review of Carol Williams' "Sunday at 2" in the March 2004 issue, we consistently misspelled the Spreckels name. Our apologies to all for this unfortunate error, and thanks to Chard Walker for tactfully calling our attention to this mistake. 🎵



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# Chapter News

**ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS:** The deadline for receiving Chapter News items for the September/October issue is July 5, 2004. Send All Chapter News Items and Photographs to: DALE BAKER, EDITOR, P.O. BOX 51450, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46251-0450...or...If possible, send all text via E-mail attachment, to: baker@atos.org

Photos may also be sent electronically, if they are no less than 300 dpi resolution. If you do not have access to equipment that can send high-resolution photos, please send all photos to the editor via the postal service. Please include the captions and credits for your photographs.

Be sure to include the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of your chapter president, the name of the principal city of operation for your chapter, and the name of your chapter correspondent.

You are reminded that the ATOS Board of Directors' Policy states that your article is not to include the titles of the music played at programs, or the menu items served at chapter functions. Thank you for your cooperation.

## ALABAMA

Sabrina Summers, President  
205/688-2357  
Sabrina\_atos@earthlink.net

**Birmingham, Alabama.** It's been some time since we've reported on the "goings-on" of the Alabama Chapter. We'll start by reporting that Danny and Lori Brooke, President of the Atlanta Chapter, provided a very entertaining afternoon concert on August 31, 2003. The trio of Danny, Lori and Bertha are always at hit.

September 28, 2003 saw Jelani Eddington at the console for our big concert of the year. The small but appreciative audience found out why words such as dazzling, awesome, and spectacular are inadequate when describing Jelani's playing prowess. Whew! He was great. Those who missed the concert can buy Jelani's new CD, "Stars Fell on Alabama," which contains most of the songs from the concert. It's available from Alabama Chapter-ATOS, 1817 3rd Ave. N., Birmingham, AL 35203 for \$20, plus \$2 postage.

It's great to report that the good folks of Alabama Chapter are always willing to step in and help out in a pinch. Such was the case on October 25, with the annual showing of the silent *Phantom of the Opera* featuring Tom Helms at the Wurlitzer. As President, it was my job to organize the event and direct it, but since I was suddenly hospitalized a few days before, this was not to be. Larry Donaldson and his crew, (Glenn Felton, John Troulias, Thurman Robertson, and



THURMAN ROBERTSON

*Alabama Theatre Sign and Marquee.*



*Danny Brooke at the console.*

THURMAN ROBERTSON



*Jelani Eddington in concert at Alabama Theatre.*

JOHN TROULIAS

The Christmas season of 2003 got off to a festive start with an Alabama Theatre favorite, John McCall, playing a great selection of Christmas ballads, Carols, and good "Ol' St. Nick" tunes.

Rick Norton was scheduled to play on November 16, but a last minute theatre booking prevented the show. We rescheduled for February 15, but the sale of Rick's house made it necessary to again cancel. Fortunately Gary Jones, an Alabama Theatre staff organist, volunteered to play for the February date. Gary and Bertha have been best friends for

Kenny Lewis) prepared the organ, Pat Seitz handled the box office, Tom Cronier directed sound, Ken Smith and Dan Liles helped in the lobby, and Ernestine Chapple did her usual fine job of publicity...and all pulled together for the procession.



Tom Helms accompanied *Phantom of the Opera*.



John McCall played for Christmas music meeting.



Ron Carter accompanies *Ben Hur*.



Alabama Theatre marquee announces *Ben Hur*.



Gary Jones played for February meeting.

over 20 years, and it was a treat to hear a full hour of his mastery of our mighty Wurlitzer.

Atlanta Chapter's Ron Carter has prepared a score for the 1925 epic silent classic *Ben Hur*, which was well received at the Tennessee Theater and other venues. When he offered to do it for us, we immediately booked March 28. Ron brought along film historian Doug McKinney, who shared many interesting facts about the production of this 2½-hour drama. Ron's excellent job of playing was so effective, that I soon forgot that he was playing, or that it was a "silent" movie, and became thoroughly immersed in the film's unfolding story. The standing ovation Ron received at the film's end was further evidence of his excellent job.

*Bertha*, the Alabama Theatre's beloved Wurlitzer, has been expanded over the last several years through the efforts of Larry Donaldson and crew. She is now entertaining audiences with 28 ranks.

Sabrina Summers

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

Cliff Shaffer, President, 407/207-1792

**Tampa, Florida.** On March 23 we met at the home of Dr. John Landon, who entertained us with a delightful program on his Allen R-311. He demonstrated many beautiful sounds of the organ, and also played a nice piano number on the organ using his Yamaha grand piano. John introduced Rosa Rio,

who played many beautiful George Gershwin tunes on the grand piano. There was also some Scott Joplin music, which we enjoyed. Bill Yeoman and Rosa Rio presented "Themes of Old Time Radio." Bill told us that the music theme was the clue to the show you wanted to hear. Rosa played the music themes, while Bill gave us the background about the show. Many times we were able to guess the name of the music theme and the show. We were also treated to a rare 1936 short-subject film of Jesse and Helen Crawford at the twin consoles of the New York Paramount Studio Wurlitzer. Our thanks go to Dr. John Landon, Rosa Rio, and Bill Yeoman for the great program.

RAY HOLT



From left, Dr. John Landon, Rosa Rio, and Bill Yeoman at Dr. Landon's home



Rosa Rio at the Tampa Theatre Console.

On March 14, Rosa Rio accompanied the silent film *Son of the Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino, at the Tampa Theatre 3/14 Wurlitzer. It was another excellent performance by Rosa.

In March, Heidi Lenker played the Robert-Morton during the pre-show at the Polk Theatre in Lakeland. It was for the "Performing Arts Series," starring the Coasters and the Drifters. Heidi is a new member, and one of our volunteer pre-show organists.

In March and April, our monthly concerts at the Pinellas Park Auditorium featured George Losinger and Bill Van Twistern in March, and George Losinger and Sandy Hobbis in April. A seasonal visitor from Illinois played the Wurlitzer during 'open-console' at the March concert, and did very well.

Our April meeting was held at the home of Dick and Dixie Leis. Our artist at the Allen 319EX was George Losinger, who gave an excellent program. After the program members Bob Courtney and Tom Hoehn took their turn at 'Open-Console'. It was another enjoyable afternoon of organ music.

Sandy Hobbis

## DAIRYLAND

Gary Hanson, President, 414/429-1177  
organpiper@aol.com

Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dairyland's March Social was a little different, in that we had a joint social with CATOE on March 21 at the Cardinal Mundelein Auditorium at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, in Mundelein, Illinois. The organ is a 4/10 Wurlitzer-

Howell, which has been in the building since it was constructed in 1934. The organist was Jim Kozak, a native of Chicago, who lives in Houston, Texas. Jim played in the Chicago area during the era of Pipe Organ Pizzerias, and at roller rinks with pipe organs, including Oak Lawn Roller Rink and the Elm Roller Rink. We thank the presidents of the two clubs for arranging this special event, John Peters of CATOE and Gary Hanson of DTOS.

Our April 7 social was also totally different from what we usually do. It was at the Oscar Mayer Theatre in Madison, Wisconsin. The event was their last "Duck Soup Cinema" until it returns, after extensive renovation to the theatre. The film was *Speedy*, starring Harold Lloyd, and the organist was our own DTOS member, Jelani Eddington, now living in Madison. The evening included the organ prelude, vaudeville acts and the silent movie.

Sandy Knuth

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Harry Linn, President 610/566-1764

Chester Springs, Pennsylvania. On Sunday April 25, our Society had a gathering at the Penn State Ogontz campus in Abington, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia. We have a three-manual Rodgers Century organ, Model 340, maintained in the auditorium there. It



Candi Carley-Roth at the Rodgers 340.

was installed and is maintained with the help of Robert Walker.

Candi Carley-Roth played a mini-concert for us, before the organ was turned over to the members for 'Open-Console'. She played a varied program for us, including a rousing country-western medley and a toe-tapping march. At 'Open-Console' were Dick Auchincloss, Lou Rabouin, and Michael Lundy. Many thanks go to Candi for her wonderful performance, and to Penn State for allowing us to use their auditorium. Refreshments were served, and everyone had a wonderful time.

Dick Auchincloss

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## **EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS**

Bob Evans, President, 508/674-0276  
organloft@mediaone.net

Wellesley, Massachusetts. The seventh of March was our social date at Richard Knight Auditorium, with new talent Tim Evans. He played a nice Strauss waltz, an opera piece, selections in medley format, and with St. Patrick's Day coming, Irish numbers were heard. Also, as a part of his program, lady soloist, Laura Grande, joined Tim. It is always nice to see and hear folks whom we haven't had before.

Our April 4 Palm Sunday social, at our Babson "home," featured member Leonard Beyersdorfer at the console. He did much double pedaling and finger runs, with songs familiar and some seldom heard. J.S. Bach was not forgotten for variety. Being in the Easter season, appropriate music was also a part of Len's offerings. It is amazing what a great number of combinations can be produced with 18-ranks. No other musical instrument has the capability, and our organist utilized many. The Chapter has talent within its own ranks, and we heard one.

On April 17 at Babson, EMCATOS presented the full-length silent movie *The Big Parade*, directed by King Vidor. This 1925 classic film's principal characters were John Gilbert and Renee' Adoree', with the setting in the battles

at Belleau Wood, France, during World War I. The battle scenes were most realistic, and the poignant scenes with John and Renee' very believable.

The large screen came alive with sound, very capably accompanied by Connecticut Valley's organist, Juan Cardona, Jr., who followed the action as closely as any professional, past or present. As demanding as the task was, both organist and our Wurlitzer were equal to the need. Juan always gives good measure, and we were treated to several selections, both before and after the film, including some patriotic. His audience responded with a long applause in a standing position for his first encore, and he played a second with much double pedaling. The quality of the film and the accompanist were first class, making for a fine evening's entertainment. This helps win friends for our favorite instrument, and possibly a few new Chapter members.

Stanley C. Garniss

## **GARDEN STATE**

Don Hansen, President 718/356-3175  
nesnah@aol.com

Trenton, New Jersey. On Saturday March 18, members of our chapter traveled to the home of Bob and Cathy Martin for an important meeting. For a change, the weather was bright and the temperature was a warm 40 degrees. As a

result, 70 members attended the meeting. Before the meeting began, President Don Hansen asked the members to please observe a moment of silence in memory of Robert Balfour, who passed away Tuesday March 9, 2004.

The meeting had several vital decisions, which were debated. Later on, these decisions were deferred to the next meeting. The remainder of the afternoon was held for organists who loved 'Open-Console'. The mighty 3/24 Griffith Beach theatre pipe organ had little time to rest. Talented organists kept the music flowing. There was time out for all to enjoy pizza. The music continued until 10 p.m. It was an interesting afternoon and evening. Once again, with all the people leaving, many heartfelt "thanks" were given to Bob and Cathy, who were standing at the door. We look forward to more friendly happy times there. They are very generous friends.

Robert (Bob) Balfour was the first chairman of our Garden State Theatre Organ Society, started in 1972. Bob, with friends Wendel Rotter and Mike Hughes, rebuilt the 2/7 Wurlitzer pipe organ in the Rahway Theatre. It is known as the "Biggest Little Wurlitzer," and is presently the last original Wurlitzer remaining in a theatre in New Jersey. Bob lived a full life of theatre organ, especially GSTOS and ATOS. He attended many ATOS conventions, loaded with his camera. He knew many theatre organists, and had friends all over. I have known Bob since 1962. I will remember him as a Big Daddy taking care of our chapter, and sometimes scolding us with letters rebuking those that differed with his ideas. His latest love has been the installation of a "Wonder Morton" in Loews Jersey City Theatre. His dream was to see and hear the mighty one play. With loss and sadness we will miss Bob Balfour.

Our Garden State Chapter sponsored, during the months of January and April, two well-known silent films that were presented in the Union County Arts Center, the former Rahway Theatre in Rahway, New Jersey. The organist for the two films was Bernie Anderson, Jr., who studied with the late well-known Lee Erwin, and is actively working on music compositions and performing his own scores. On January 25 the delightful film *My Best Girl* was presented, with the

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famous Mary Pickford. It was a very successful afternoon with Bernie at the console of the Biggest Little Wurlitzer."

April was a busy month with 'Open-Consoles', silent films, business meetings and a fundraiser. On April 10, our chapter sponsored an 'Open-Console' session for our members, at the Union County Arts Center. That evening, the famous silent film *Wings* was shown, with Bernie Anderson as the accompanist. His creative music, combined with the great sounds of the 2/7 "Biggest Little Wurlitzer," made *Wings* an evening for all to remember.

April 18 found our members arriving at the home of Catherine Oliver, which contains a beautiful 3/11 Wurlitzer. A business meeting was followed by 'Open-Console', which is always enjoyed by the eager organists. GSTOS presented Cathy with a plaque of appreciation, in honor of the Everett Oliver Memorial held on June 1, 2003. Our grateful thanks go to Cathy Oliver, a wonderful, generous hostess who invited organists to come and keep her and the organ happy.

April 25 was our Annual Fundraiser. Once again it was the home of Bob and Cathy Martin. The fun title was "Dancing with Hansen." The artist was our president Don Hansen, and the organ was the 3/24 Griffith Beach theatre pipe organ. Before beginning the concert, Don dedicated his music as a memorial to Edna Hamilton, a friend and a professional pianist who accompanied him at special joyful occasions. He played a large variety of music for dancing, luring the dancers to the dance floor. The large music room, rearranged for dancing, had cozy tables along the walls where the guests sat and listened to the great music, danced and had refreshments. It was a super day, and making money for the chapter is always attractive.

*Jinny Vanore*

## GREAT PLANES

Brett Valliant, President, 316/687-4499  
Tibia88984@AOL.com

**Wichita, Kansas.** The March "Double Concert Weekend" in Wichita brought numerous organ buffs from Texas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and even New York State! Young fans Justin Nimmo and Andy Wos journeyed to the Midwest, and were hosted by Bob Acker, who then brought them up from Dallas

BOB ACKER



*From left, Justin Nimmo, Jonas Nordwall, and Andy Wos at Little River Studio.*

to hear Jonas Nordwall play a spectacular concert titled "Symphonic Organ Goes Pops" on the Paramount Wichita Wurlitzer at Century II Center. The next day, they and 70 others, (a full house) delighted to the fun, camaraderie, and musical skills of duo-team Patti Simon and Dick Kroeckel at Coups' Little River Studio. Both Wurlitzers were in fine form, thanks to Ed Zollman and his team, Luke Headley and (Chapter Vice President) Garry Neel.

May 22-23 was the final "Double Concert Weekend" of the 32nd WTO season. On Saturday night, the Century II audience found "Artist-in-Residence" Brett Valliant hosting well-known Wichita musicians. Broadway star Karla Burns added her great voice to those of the Wichita Wurlitzer, and pianist David Harris, joined them for a grand finale. The next day, Harris joined his "Dynamic-Duo" partner Jelani Eddington at Little River Studio, for a terrific afternoon of their inimitable offerings.

*Karen W. Coup*

## HUDSON-MOHAWK

Frank Hackert, Chairman  
518/355-4523

**Schenectady, New York.** The early spring general meetings for the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter, based in upstate New York, saw venues both familiar and new. The March 15 meeting was held at our organization's usual haunt, Proctors Theatre, State Street, Schenectady. The theatre is the home of Goldie, the fabulous 3/18 Wurlitzer, the maintenance and promotion of which is the club's primary mission. The March program featured a silent movie accompanied by organist Avery Tunningley, who has become

quite adept at this art. In addition, a slide show presentation was offered of an organ installation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Albany, New York. The April 26 meeting expanded on this theme.

On April 26, Robert Lent of Virginia, the man who installed the organ, treated club members to a guided tour of the new organ installation at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Bob spent the extremely snowy winter of 2003 installing the fully restored E.M. Skinner organ. His vast knowledge of organ installation and restoration was in great evidence during the tour, as was his helpful, friendly personality, all adding to enjoyment by those on the tour. Members were allowed to explore every chamber and pipe, and even concertize

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Group that toured Westminster Presbyterian Church, (Bob Lent R-F).

NORENE GROSE



Robert Lent at Goldie.

on the instrument at program's end. Many thanks go to Bob, and the church's artistic directors Al and Susan Fedak, for providing such an enjoyable evening.

In addition to holding monthly general meetings for members, the chapter sponsors (with Proctors Theatre) monthly free noon concerts, featuring

both local organists and guests from all over the country. Local organist David Lester presented the March 16 concert, providing his usual crowd-pleasing program of genre favorites. On April 26, Bob Lent ended a 12-year hiatus from the professional theatre organ concert world by starring in the April edition of the noon concert series. His traditional, crowd-pleasing program delighted his audience. Bob has spent the last decade concentrating on his organ building/restoring business based in Virginia. His craft in this area extends back in time for 42 years. Prior to his concentrating on business, Bob performed widely on the theatre organ, and was house organist at the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania and the Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia, as well as staff organist at the Brooklyn Fox. The Hudson-Mohawk Chapter is delighted that Bob has resumed his performance career with our Goldie, and will welcome him back next season.

Norene Grose

## JATOE

Jim Patak, Chairman, 708/562-5838

**Joliet, Illinois.** On Sunday afternoon, February 15, JATOE members got together at their "clubhouse," the Rialto Theatre, for their monthly social. Artist for the afternoon was CTOS President Dennis Scott. Dennis is no stranger to the theatre organ scene as he is staff organist at the Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove. He plays the 3/10 Wurlitzer, affectionately known as the John Muri Memorial Wurlitzer, in memory of his friend and mentor. Dennis has recently completed a season at the Oriental Theatre in Milwaukee accompanying silent film classics.

Dennis has a truly unique style and not a carbon copy of other organists. He provides a refreshing change of pace. He also provided a tribute to his friend, the late Pearl White, which demonstrated a medley of lightning fast and rhythmic selections and a dash of "double-touch." There was an intimate display of harmony, registration, and taste throughout his program. JATOE members expressed their appreciation with a grand ovation.

The usual array of refreshments was served on stage and 'Open-Console' immediately followed.

On Sunday afternoon, March 28, JATOE joined forces with Chicagoland Theatre Organ Society. We met and were guests of The Beautiful Sound in Countryside. Thanks to Joy Collins and Lee Maloney for dusting off the welcome mat and making us feel special. After the usual announcements made by Chapter Presidents Jim Patak and Dennis Scott, our artist, Don Springer, was officially introduced to the Allen GW IV.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

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# The Unit Orchestra In the “Land of the Long White Cloud”

## A Look at the Theatre Pipe Organ in New Zealand

By R. Jelani Eddington

Located in the far reaches of the South Pacific Ocean some 6,500 miles southwest of Los Angeles, and 1,350 miles east of Australia, New Zealand is a country as rich in history as it is beautiful. New Zealand, or “Aotearoa,” “The Land Of The Long White Cloud,” as the indigenous Māori inhabitants named it, was settled beginning in 1769 by British colonists, and the territory remained a colony until it became an independent dominion in 1907.

More recently, this “Middle Earth” has become the focus of much international attention due not only to the enormous popularity of the *Lord Of The Rings* film series, but also to prestigious international events such as the *America's Cup*



yacht race that twice took place in Auckland's beautiful harbor. Accordingly, it seemed an appropriate time to take a look into the history of the theatre organ in this South Pacific island paradise.

Despite its relatively small population of under 4 million inhabitants, New Zealand has been no stranger to the world of the theatre pipe organ, for as many as seven instruments made their way from overseas organ firms to New Zealand. Although none of the instruments presently play in their original venue, dedicated groups of theatre organ enthusiasts have steadfastly worked over the years to preserve the history, tradition, and music of these titans of the musical instrument world.

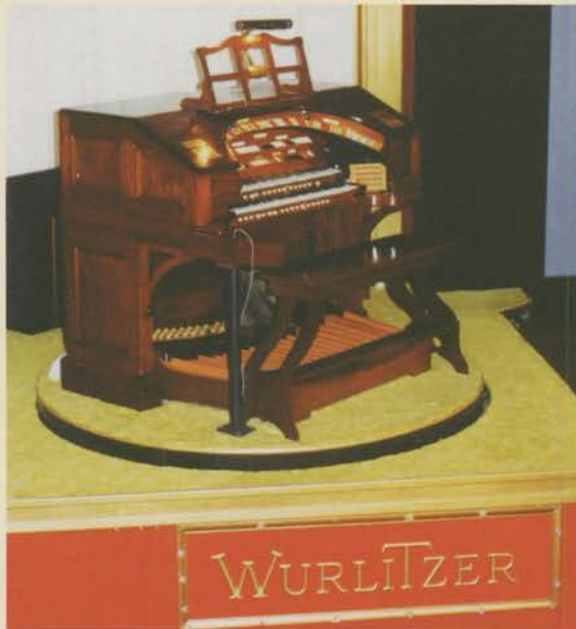
### 3/14 Wurlitzer, Opus 1475— Hollywood Theatre, Avondale, Auckland

Not surprisingly, the center of gravity of theatre organ activity in New Zealand is located in Auckland, the country's largest city of over 1 million inhabitants. The 3/14 Wurlitzer that now resides in the Hollywood Theatre in Avondale (a suburb of Auckland) began its life as a 2/8 Wurlitzer Model-F Opus 1475. Shipped from Wurlitzer's North Tonawanda factory in October 1926, Opus 1475 arrived in New Zealand in December of that year and was installed in the 1,700-seat Regent Theatre on Auckland's Queen Street, the city's most elegant thoroughfare.

The installation of the instrument was not completed in time for the official opening of the theatre in December 1926, and the organ was not heard publicly until February 1927 in a dedicatory concert played by American organist Eddie Horton. The theatre engaged Mr. Horton as house organist for the next year, followed by Australian organist Knight Barnett. As was often the case, the advent of the “talking” pictures in the 1930s temporarily silenced the instrument, and it was very rarely heard in public. Additionally, with the arrival of the much larger Wurlitzer Style-260 Special at the Civic Theatre only a few doors up the street from the Regent (see below), the novelty of the Regent Wurlitzer all but vanished.

Jelani Eddington has completed four theatre organ concert tours in New Zealand in 1996, 1997, 2003, and 2004, and worked for an Auckland not-for-profit law firm in June–August 1997.





The "original" two-manual console at the Hollywood.

After sitting virtually unplayed and unheard for several years, the instrument was offered for sale in 1944, and the parents and pupils of Hutt Valley High School, located in a dormitory suburb of New Zealand's capital city, Wellington, purchased the instrument. The organ was installed in the school's assembly hall where it became a feature of the music department and played for various school functions for many years. Sadly, in 1968 a deadly tropical cyclone struck the area and, at its apex, blew apart a portion of the roof of the school hall, exposing the instrument to torrential rains and wind. (In fact, this same storm was responsible for the sinking of an inter-island ferry, the *Wahine*, at the entrance to Wellington Harbor, with the tragic loss of 51 lives.)

Due to the significant damage to the Wurlitzer, the school considered the instrument to be unplayable and sold it to Wellington businessman and organ enthusiast Lindsay Anderson who in turn sold the instrument to Auckland enthusiast Les Stenersen in 1978. Mr. Stenersen, with the assistance of the late Mr. Jan Grefstad (owner of the Hollywood Theatre), Mr. John Parker (an organ builder from Sydney, Australia, then resident in New Zealand), the Kiwi Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, and a host of volunteers, brought the organ back to Auckland in August of that year and began the process of installing the instrument in the Hollywood Theatre.<sup>1</sup>

The instrument was repaired and painstakingly rebuilt under the direction of John Parker. Because the Hollywood Theatre was used exclusively for motion pictures, it was possible for the instrument to be installed in three chambers (Main, Solo, and Percussion) behind the movie screen. The console was situated to the left of the proscenium on a turntable lift. The opposite side of the proscenium houses a Wurlitzer upright

<sup>1</sup>For an account of the return of the Regent Wurlitzer from Wellington to Auckland, see Dawe, Norman "A Kiwi Wurlitzer In Flight." *THEATRE ORGAN* Dec. 1978-Jan. 1979: 23-25.

piano console which was once the piano-console organ at the Cozy Theatre in Masterton (see below).

In addition to the original eight Model F ranks (Tuba Horn, Open Diapason, Tibia Clausa, Violin & Celeste, Clarinet, Vox Humana, and Concert Flute), four more ranks were added, including a Solo String, Tromba, and a "pseudo" Kinura and Post Horn. Mr. Anderson retained the organ's original toy counter and percussions before the instrument was returned to Auckland, and, accordingly, the traps from Cozy Theatre Wurlitzer were incorporated into the Hollywood organ. Additionally, Wellington organ enthusiast Michael Woolf loaned a Glockenspiel and Xylophone from his residence installation (see discussion of the Nelson Paramount below).

The installation and restoration of the instrument was completed in late 1982, and November of that year saw the re-inaugural concert with Australian organists Tony Fenelon and Margaret Hall at the console. Following this gala re-opening of the instrument, the Hollywood Wurlitzer was used very regularly and could be heard in as many as eight public concerts each year.

The Hollywood's "new" three-manual console.



In 1993, Mr. Stenersen announced his intention to sell the Wurlitzer, and with the spectre of the instrument being sold for parts overseas, a group of eight enthusiasts formed the Wurlitzer Organ Trust Of Auckland (WOTA), a charitable trust that purchased the instrument from Mr. Stenersen and assumed responsibility for its preservation and maintenance. Once the Trust was established, the first priority was to focus on the condition of the instrument. Since 1984, the instrument had been a very active organ with six to eight concerts each year, and was in need of refurbishment and upgrading.

The first phase of the renovation included locating a full set of percussions to replace those loaned by Mr. Woolf. With the assistance of Russ Evans from Seattle, four Wurlitzer percussions (the Glockenspiel, Chrysoglott, Xylophone, and Chimes) were obtained, restored, and installed, and the units on loan were returned to Mr. Woolf. In addition, WOTA was able to re-acquire the original toy counter that had been retained by Mr. Anderson, and those traps were reunited with Opus 1475. Moreover, the Kinura and Post Horn were replaced with more suitable ranks, the Solo String was replaced by a pair of Salicionals, and a Trumpet was incorporated into the instrument. Plans are underway to install an Orchestral Oboe, which will complete the instrument at 15 ranks.

The second phase of the restoration came with the rebuilding of the console, as the organ had literally outgrown its origi-

inal two-manual console. To this end, and again with the assistance of Russ Evans, a three-manual Style-235 Wurlitzer console was located, originally from Opus 1256 that had been shipped to Loew's Theatre in Norfolk, Virginia. John Parker rebuilt the console and modernized the specification. John Andrews, also of Sydney, installed an electrified combination action with seven levels of memory, plus a complete solid-state organ relay to replace the original pneumatic relay. The organ's original two-manual console and relay were acquired by Michael Woolf in Wellington to control his residence organ.



*A close view of the Hollywood's rebuilt Wurlitzer console.*

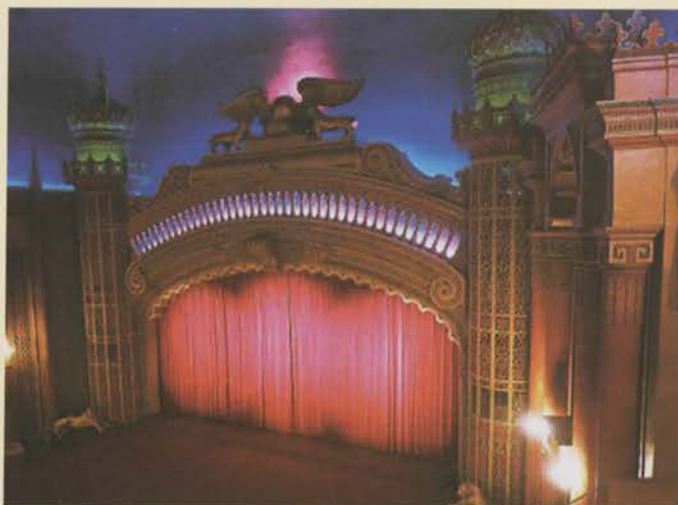
In May 1998, the newly refurbished console and relay arrived in Auckland. The premier concert series took place over the course of a three-month period between June and August of that year with organists from around the world, including Ken Double from the United States, Chris Powell, from the United Kingdom, and Margaret Hall, from Australia.

Since that time, the Hollywood Wurlitzer has become a focal point of theatre organ activity in New Zealand, regularly welcoming numerous artists from around the world. In fact, the Hollywood Wurlitzer is often the starting point for organists embarking on tours throughout New Zealand and Australia.

### *3/16 Wurlitzer Style-260 Special, Opus 2075, Southward Museum Trust, Paraparaumu (near Wellington)*

The largest, but last theatre organ to arrive in New Zealand was the instrument intended for the beautiful 3,500-seat Eberson-style atmospheric Civic Theatre in the heart of downtown Auckland. Built in 1929, the Civic Theatre was heralded as the "Showcase of the Pacific," with its lavish decoration boasting a foyer in an "Ancient Indian" style and auditorium in an "Ancient Persian" style.

The main musical feature of the theatre was, of course, Wurlitzer's Opus 2075, a 3/16-Style-260 Special which, as it was once remarked, rose from the depths "with a roar that made the marrow dance in one's bones." The organ was installed in chambers under the stage floor, and the Piano, Chimes, Xylophone and Marimba Harp were installed in small



*Downtown Auckland's beautiful Civic Theatre.*



*Civic  
Wurlitzer  
at the  
dizzying  
height of  
37 feet.*

opera-style boxes on either side of the auditorium, clearly visible to theatre patrons.

The console was mounted on a so-called "worm-drive" turntable lift that is believed to be one of the highest organ lifts in the entire world. Resting at the foot of a large well, the console lift had to rise an entire 20 feet before coming into view of the patrons. The spiral then ascended another 17 feet before the audience in the seats of the Grand Mezzanine could see the organist, who then entertained theatre patrons from a dizzying height of 37 feet!

Unfortunately, only one professional recording was ever made on this organ during its tenure at the Civic Theatre, a

78-rpm album recorded in 1951 by then house organist Denis Palmistra. In the late 1960s, the company that owned the Civic Theatre decided that the Wintergarden Ballroom that formed the Civic's lower floor area was to be turned into a small cinema, and the Wurlitzer was viewed as being in the way of this "progress." Sadly, in March 1968, house organist at the time Ron Boyce played the console into the pit during a farewell concert with the Māori love song, *Pakarekareana*. Shortly thereafter, the instrument was offered for sale, and a deal was struck with Australian interests. Complications arose, however, relating to the deadline for the instrument's removal, so the organ was once again on the market. Ultimately, the instrument was purchased by Sir Len Southward, a Wellington-based entrepreneur and collector of antique cars. Due to the theatre's schedule, it was of the utmost importance that the Wurlitzer be removed by the end of February 1969.

In late February 1969, and right on schedule, the instrument was removed and shipped to Sir Len's factory in Lower Hutt just outside of Wellington. Following extensive restoration over the next ten years, the instrument was installed in a small theatre adjacent to the main showroom of the Southward Museum Trust, a museum that boasts a magnificent display of vintage automobiles, traction engines, and mechanical instruments. The Wurlitzer opened in 1983, with chambers installed on either side of the auditorium, and with the console on yet another turntable lift (although not reaching quite the altitude that it did in the Civic Theatre).



*Wurlitzer Style-260 Special at the Southward Museum Trust near Wellington.*

Since that time, like its counterpart at the Hollywood Theatre in Auckland, the Southward Wurlitzer has been played by many touring artists from around the world. In fact, the Southward Museum Trust now works closely with the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland, as well as the Tauranga Theatre Organ Society, to arrange concert tours by visiting artists. The New Zealand theatre organ world was saddened to learn in early 2004 that Sir Len had passed away at the age of 98. Nevertheless, all look forward to the continuing legacy and vision of the theatre pipe organ that Sir Len engendered.



*The interior of Wellington's De Luxe (later Embassy) Theatre as it appeared in the 1920s.*

### *2/10 Wurlitzer Model-H Opus 1482, Baycourt Theatre, Tauranga*

Just one week after the Regent Theatre Wurlitzer had been shipped from the factory in North Tonowanda, Wurlitzer's slightly larger 2/10 Model H Opus 1482 left the United States bound for New Zealand, albeit this time for the capital city of Wellington and the De Luxe Theatre situated at the end of Courtney Place (a beautiful large shopping and café district in the city center). The organ made its debut in 1927 with Sydney organist Emanuel ("Manny") Aarons and quickly became a beloved feature of the theatre. The De Luxe Theatre (renamed the Embassy Theatre in the early 1950s) sponsored several radio variety shows using the organ, various soloists, and quartets, and a number of 78-rpm discs of this instrument were recorded.

Organists, both local and international, appeared at this instrument, often performing as part of a circuit with other instruments located throughout New Zealand and Australia. In 1959, however, the Wurlitzer at the Embassy Theatre played its last notes and was sold to Mr. Eddie Aikin, a theatre organ enthusiast who installed the instrument first in a former honey-packing shed south of Tokoroa, and later in the school hall of Tokoroa High School. Ultimately, ill health forced Mr. Aikin to sell the organ to the Tauranga 20,000 Club. This organization, formed specifically to purchase the organ, donated the instrument to the City of Tauranga, located on the beautiful Bay of Plenty on New Zealand's northeast shore. With the support of the Tauranga City Council, the society installed the instrument in the Tauranga Town Hall in 1972. The Wurlitzer was once again featured as a concert instrument for many local and overseas artists until it was announced in 1986 that the Town Hall would be demolished.

The Tauranga City Council suggested that the organ could be relocated in the newly-constructed Baycourt Entertainment Centre, a beautiful performing arts facility located behind the Town Hall. The Tauranga Theatre Organ Society (formerly the Tauranga 20,000 Club) accepted the Council's offer. By the middle of 1987, the arduous task of dismantling and re-installing the instrument began, and by late 1988, Opus 1482 was playing once again. Dennis James traveled from the



*Wurlitzer Opus 1482 in its home at the Baycourt Entertainment Centre, Tauranga.*

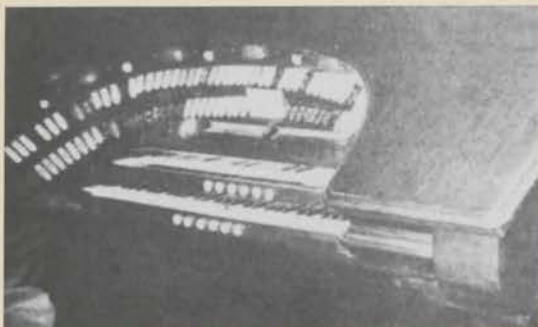
United States to present the premier concert of the instrument in December 1988. Since that time, with the co-ordination of James Duncan and the Wurlitzer Organ Trust Of Auckland, the Tauranga Theatre Organ Society has often participated as part of a three-venue circuit for visiting concert organists.

As might be expected, and like its counterpart at the Hollywood Theatre, due to the heavy use that this instrument received over the years, the organ was in need of refurbishment and repair. As such, in 2001 the Tauranga Theatre Organ Society embarked on an ambitious program under the direction of John Parker and Melbourne organist Scott Harrison to improve the playing condition of the instrument. Wind pressures were reset, and rewinding done to improve tremulant performance. Over a period of three years, the five reed ranks were shipped to John Parker's Sydney shop for cleaning, repairs and voicing. Work is ongoing, and will see the extension of the Tibia at 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' and 2' pitches. Provision has also been made for the addition of a Trumpet.

With the organ now sounding possibly its best ever, the instrument has been drawing record audiences to concerts and is proving a worthy asset, both to the Baycourt Entertainment Centre and to the city of Tauranga.

### *2/10 Christie Model 2714— Empire Theatre, Dunedin*

The 2/10 Christie Model 2714 was the only instrument built by the English firm Christie (a division of Hill, Norman & Beard) that made its way to New Zealand. It is also one of



*Wurlitzer Opus 1482 in its home at the Baycourt Entertainment Centre, Tauranga.*

the few instruments to find its way to the South Island. The instrument was shipped from London to Dunedin and was installed in the Empire Theatre in 1929, and the instrument was opened by organist Leslie V. Harvey. Unfortunately, very little has been documented about the instrument in its original home.

In 1952, Australian organist Penn Hughes purchased the instrument and installed the console and some of the pipework in his residence in Bexley, Sydney. When Mr. Hughes decided to enlarge the instrument to four manuals, this two-manual console became redundant, and was acquired by the Queensland Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (TOSA). TOSA enlarged the console to accommodate a third manual, and installed the modified console to control the Christie organ at Kelvin Grove State College in Brisbane, Australia. Mr. Hughes ultimately sold the pipework to the South Australian division of TOSA, and today three ranks from this instrument (the Salicional, Violone, and Vox Humana), can be heard in the 4/29 mostly Wurlitzer at the Capri Theatre in Adelaide, South Australia.

### *2/4 Style-135B Wurlitzer Piano-Console Organ—Cozy Theatre, Masterton*

In addition to the larger instruments discussed above, there were two Wurlitzer piano-console organs and one photoplayer shipped to New Zealand, although little has been documented about these instruments. The 2/4 Style-135B piano-console organ was installed at the Cozy Theatre in the small town of Masterton (north-east of Wellington) in 1927, and was the fourth Wurlitzer to be imported into New Zealand. Some reports suggest that this instrument was the last unit to be supplied from the Wurlitzer factory with a piano console.

The instrument, originally equipped with a roll playing mechanism which operated the pipes and the piano, was used in



*Piano console from Cozy Theatre, Masterton.*



*Piano console from Cozy Theatre, right, sharing the stage at the Hollywood Theatre with the ex-Regent Theatre Wurlitzer, left.*

Masterton until the late 1930s, when it was removed and purchased by Mr. John Holden who installed it in his residence in Hastings in approximately 1940. Following Mr. Holden's death, the organ moved to Wellington where it was later acquired by local theatre organ enthusiast Lindsay Anderson, who ultimately sold the instrument to Les Stenerson in 1977.

In 1978, this instrument was moved from Wellington to Auckland, and the piano console was installed at the Hollywood Theatre in Avondale opposite the Wurlitzer. Because the instrument would be used only as a remote piano, it was decided not to use the second partial manual. Presently, only the piano action remains and can be played either manually or from the Hollywood Wurlitzer console.

2/6 Wurlitzer Style-160 Special,  
Piano-Console Organ, Opus 1748 —  
New Paramount Theatre, Nelson



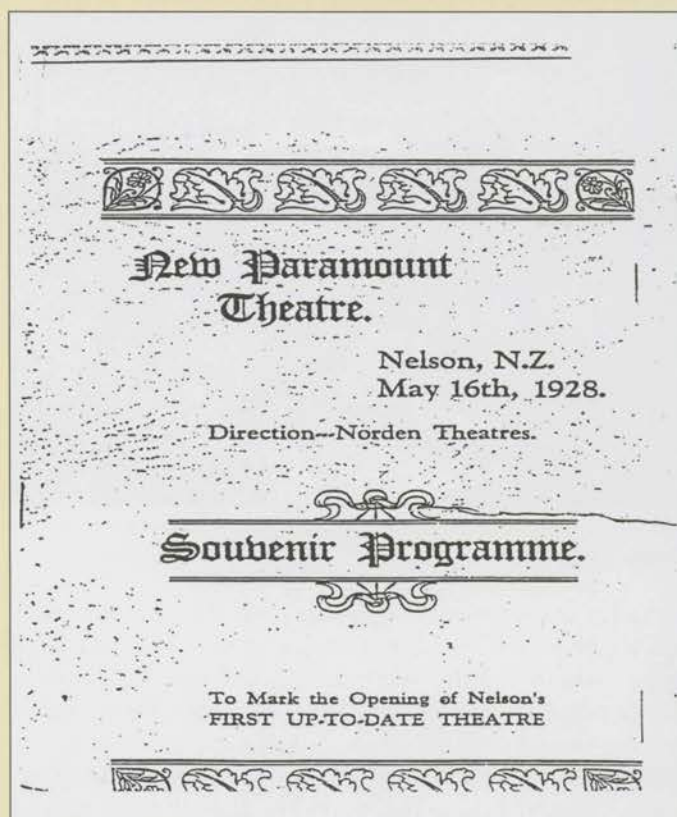
Wurlitzer  
piano-console  
organ in its  
home at All  
Saints' Church.

Another piano-console instrument that made its way onto New Zealand's shores was Wurlitzer's Opus 1748, this one a 2/6 instrument installed in the South Island city of Nelson.<sup>2</sup> This instrument was premiered on May 16, 1928 by organist G. Paulsen. An excerpt of the souvenir program from that performance proclaims:

*This wonderful instrument is the first to be installed in the South Island.*

*The instrument has two manuals or key boards and also a pedal board. There are a large number of orchestral stops representing the following instruments: Flute, violin, cellos, horns, vox humana, mirimba [sic], xylophone, orchestral bells, cathedral chimes, piano mandolin, snaer [sic] drum, tom-tom, castanets, tambourine, timpani [sic], bass drum, cymbals, crash cymbals, triangle. There is also an assortment of picture effects contained in the organ.*

<sup>2</sup>The Wurlitzer tag on the main cable indicates that this instrument was intended for the Cozy Theatre in Palmerston North. Wurlitzer records also show "Palmeaton" [sic] in many files. However, the New Paramount in Nelson appears to be the instrument's first port of call.



*It would be impossible to demonstrate its capabilities and ever changing combinations without having heard some of the many tunes.*

Unfortunately, little is known about this instrument in its original home. By all reports, however, somewhere around 1933, the instrument was moved to the Paramount Theatre, Wellington, which was certainly for the best, as the Nelson Paramount burned to the ground in a tragic fire in 1939.

The instrument survived at the Paramount Theatre in Wellington for only a few years, and in March of 1938 the instrument was sold to the All Saints Church in Kilbirnie (a Wellington suburb), where it remained until the mid 1980s, when it was purchased by Mr. Michael Woolf for use as his residence organ.

2/3 Wurlitzer Photoplayer,  
The Strand Theatre, Auckland

In around 1916, the first Wurlitzer to find its way to New Zealand — a Wurlitzer photoplayer — was installed in the Strand Theatre in Auckland's Queen Street. By all accounts, this instrument was a self-contained "pit organ" with a roll player mechanism built within the piano-style console. It is believed that the instrument was removed during renovations to the theatre in around 1944 and then stored at the Rialto Theatre in Newmarket (a suburb of Auckland).

Some years later, an Auckland organ enthusiast, the late Ralph Sewell, acquired the instrument and relocated it to Milford — a suburb on Auckland's north shore — where the instrument played for family and friends for many years. Mr. Sewell relocated several times and faithfully brought the

Wurlitzer with him. The instrument's last home was on Waiheke Island, a beautiful resort island in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf. Whittaker's Musical Museum, an extensive collection of musical instruments, now has possession of the former Strand Wurlitzer where it is in storage awaiting restoration.

### Where Are We Today?

While much international attention has been focused on activity in the United Kingdom and Australia, New Zealand's

theatre organ tradition has been no less rich, even if on a smaller scale. Today in 2004, although none of the instruments discussed in this article are currently playing in their original home, the presence and history of theatre organs in New Zealand is still very much alive and thriving. Three venues in particular, The Hollywood Theatre (Auckland), The Baycourt Theatre (Tauranga), and Southwards Museum Trust (Wellington), continue to serve as springboards for the music and art of the theatre organ to reach audiences throughout New Zealand and beyond.



## NEW ZEALAND THEATRE ORGANS "AT A GLANCE"

ORIGINAL INSTRUMENT	ORIGINAL VENUE	CURRENT VENUE	REMARKS
2/8 Model F Wurlitzer Op. 1475	Regent Theatre, Auckland	Hollywood Theatre, Auckland	Now 3/14 Wurlitzer, with plans to add an Orchestral Oboe. Original console and relay in Woolf Residence, Wellington.
3/16 Style-260SP Wurlitzer Op. 2075	Civic Theatre, Auckland	Southward Museum Trust, Wellington	
2/10 Model H Wurlitzer Op. 1482	De Luxe (Embassy) Theatre, Wellington	Baycourt Theatre, Tauranga	Plans underway to add a Trumpet
2/10 Christie Model 2714	Empire Theatre, Dunedin	Three ranks playing at Capri Theatre, Adelaide, Australia; Parts of console at Kelvin Grove State College, Brisbane, Australia	
2/4 Style-135B Wurlitzer Piano- Console Organ	Cozy Theatre, Masterton	Hollywood Theatre, Auckland	Only piano action remains and plays manually or from Hollywood Wurlitzer console.
2/6 Style-160SP Wurlitzer Piano- Console Organ, Op. 1748	New Paramount Theatre, Nelson  Nelson	Woolf Residence, Wellington	Restoration ongoing
2/3 Wurlitzer Photoplayer	Strand Theatre, Auckland	Whittaker's Musical Museum, Waiheke Island, Auckland	In storage awaiting restoration

\*\* Special thanks to the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland, James Duncan, John Parker, Mat Matthew, Scott Harrison, and Norm Freeman for their invaluable assistance in the preparation of this article.

## CHAPTER NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50

Don has been playing a long time in the Chicago area, most notably the now defunct Sally's Stage. His unique style and mastery at the console is truly noteworthy. Several Jesse Crawford arrangements as well as George Wright renditions were a delight to the ear. A larger than normal turnout attended this gala event. Standing room only! Plenty of refreshments were served following Don's mini-concert. 'Open-Console' was also available to those wishing to try their favorite songs on their favorite instruments.

Jim Koller

### LATOS

Don Near, President, 714/539-8934  
donnear@cox.net

Los Angeles, California. LATOS welcomes one new Board member from our recent election- Bob Kambeitz, and both Dorsey Caldwell and George Lakes return for a second term as Board members. Bob Kambeitz will be taking over as Membership Director, and Jim Dawson has agreed to serve as interim Treasurer, following the resignation of former Treasurer Bob Sandwick. We thank Bob for his service as "Bean Counter."

Plans are moving along for LATOS to host the ATOS Annual Convention in 2005, according to Convention Chair-

man Don Near and Vice Chairman Henry Hunt. We are looking forward to showing off our new Wurlitzer installation venue at South Pasadena High School Auditorium. Peter Crotty donated the instrument to LATOS, and is the Project Director. It will be up and running later this year.

Coming up on June 26 is a LATOS excursion to Catalina Island for the 17th Annual Silent Film Festival, sponsored by the Catalina Island Museum Society. Longtime Catalina organist Bob Salisbury will perform his farewell appearance there at the Page theatre organ, accompanying the silent film *The Iron Mask* (1929), starring Douglas Fairbanks and Marguerite De La Monte.

Sales are going well for the new LATOS CD "Welcome to LA." All proceeds go to the LATOS organ maintenance fund. Six local recording artists donated previously recorded tunes for the CD.

Char Hopwood

### LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Ian Ridley, President  
ridley@atos-london.freeserve.co.uk

London, England.  
Woking Leisure Centre  
Saturday, March 13, 2004  
Organist—Jean Martyn

Jean started playing pipe organs at a very early age, and was appointed as a

IAN RIDLEY



Jean Martyn at Woking.

church organist at the tender age of eleven. It is not surprising that she went on to study music, and gained many prestigious qualifications and awards. Since, she has composed, arranged and taught music. She is also a brilliant pianist, and has backed many of our television personalities in her time. She is a very popular performer on the theatre organ circuit, and is in great demand to play concerts both at home and abroad.

Jean has a wonderful 'bubbly' personality and this is reflected in her music. In the first half of the concert we were treated to a Glen Miller selection, and that wonderful march from the typically British film *Brassed Off*. Selections of other film music were also on the menu,

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Jean with  
Crystal  
Piano

with songs from the very popular *Oliver* and music not often heard from *Out of Africa*. To get our toes tapping again, we had music from 'ABBA' and a very lively 'Rock and Roll' selection, for which Jean is well known.

Before the start of the second half, Eric Atkin, the regional secretary for the Theatre Organ Club, was introduced to the audience. The TOC is, in fact, the longest running theatre organ group in Britain. In a recent ballot, members had elected Jean to be patron of the club. In fact, this was the second time in two years that Jean had gained this honour, and she was thrilled. It was Eric and his wife Daphne's pleasant duty to present Jean with the gift of a Swarovski "Crystal Piano," to celebrate the occasion.

In the second half, we had more of the same wide and varied music, which included a selection from *Zorba the Greek*, a very fast number, and a selection of famous theatre organ ballads. We also had a haunting classical piece and, for contrast, a lively rag. The final applause was such that it took our MC some time to quiet the audience in order to say his thanks, which was then followed by the demanded encore.

**Kilburn State Theatre  
And  
Harrow Gold's Gym  
Sunday, April 4, 2004  
Organist—Len Rawle**

This was a very special occasion for us, and also the start of a very busy day . . . which I have to say, was viewed by many of us, as a bit of an experiment. From negotiations with Gold's Gym, (formerly the Granada Cinema Harrow) it emerged that we could run two con-



"Double Touch" Concert—Len Rawle at Kilburn.



Len at Harrow.

certs there in 2004. The venue still houses a wonderful 3/8 Type-Two Granada Wurlitzer, which was refurbished by Len and members of our technical team a few years ago. It is very rare to gain access to this instrument, so we jumped at the chance and decided to undertake a pair of concerts on the same day. The first was held at the State Theatre Kilburn in the afternoon, and the second at Harrow in the evening. We called this venture "Double Touch." We had an excellent response, with people travelling from far and wide in the British Isles to attend. This was quite a challenge for our organist, however, as he had to have two completely different programmes prepared totalling nearly four hours of playing, as well as accepting zero practice time on the Harrow Wurlitzer. Len, who is part of our chapter committee and heads the technical team, knows both instruments very well, and rose to the challenge magnificently. The larger than usual audience at Kilburn were treated—as

described graphically to me by one of the audience—to a "cracker of a concert." Len likes to get into his stride and sit there and play, rather than spend lots of time talking, and judging by the audience reaction they loved this too. We always get a wonderful selection of contrasting music from Len, with wonderful changes of registration, which is always appreciated by the theatre organ devotees we seem to get at Kilburn.

The move for all of us from Kilburn to Harrow, which involved a drive across London, took place without mishap. The management closed the Gym just after 7:00 p.m. to enable us to prepare some lighting and PA sound. In order to have these concerts at this venue, equipment has to be moved from the space around the organ, and chairs brought in and set up. Our thanks must go to the staff of Gold's Gym for their co-operation and hard work in getting everything ready in time for the audience to enter at about 7:40 p.m. The limited space means that only about 100 people can be accommodated, so this second concert was ticket-only, in advance.

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The Harrow Wurlitzer is quite a different instrument from Kilburn, having only eight ranks. However it was one of the Granada Wurlitzers produced using some of the loudest ranks, and it certainly gives a very good account of itself in this venue. Len started by talking to the audience for a short while, explaining some of the differences between the two organs, and said that he would be playing long selections rather than talking. As he said, the cosy atmosphere at Harrow is rather like sitting around the piano in the drawing room at a family gathering on a Sunday evening. Again Len played a great concert with a wonderful programme of contrasting music, largely without stopping, and certainly gave us all an unforgettable evening with his usual mastery of the Wurlitzer and his innate musicianship. He did, in fact, deliberately play one number at both venues so that the audience could appreciate the differences between the two instruments. This "Double Touch" project was such a runaway success, that we intend to repeat it in August with a different organist.

**Woking Leisure Centre  
Wurlitzer Workshop  
Sunday, April 18, 2004**

This event, the third we have undertaken, was again a great success. Out of an attendance of almost thirty, ten people registered to play in the 'Open-Console' session after Len Rawles' talk and demonstration. The rest just came to learn about the theatre organ as an instrument, and they were not disappointed.

Len started by recapping some of the essentials of his last workshop in October last year. Then, as before, he asked each person attending what they would, "specifically like to know about the the-

IAN RIDLEY



*Wurlitzer Workshop.*

IAN RIDLEY



*Young Tom under instruction from Len.*

atre organ—either from a technical standpoint or from the point of view of playing." He made notes at this time, assembled similar questions together, and then, using demonstrations where required, proceeded to go through them. As you can imagine, the topics he covered were wide and various. We then started 'Open-Console', and at the same time started having our refreshment which was provide by the ladies of our committee. In the middle of the 'Open-

Console' session, we had a one-hour break where everyone retired to a quiet room away from the big hall containing the Wurlitzer, for a further informal discussion with Len on various topics not previously covered. Then, much refreshed, 'Open-Console' resumed and continued until nearly 7:00 p.m. This gave every-

one plenty of time to play, and to have access to Len for help with his or her playing techniques. This was obviously a great success and people are already asking, "When are we going to do another one?" This, we hope, will be in late summer or early autumn.

**Woking Leisure Centre  
Chapter A.G.M. & 'Open-Console'  
Tuesday, April 27, 2004**

This was held in the restaurant annex at the Leisure Centre as usual. The weather, consisting of heavy rain and violent thunderstorms that evening, kept quite a few members away. Bearing this in mind, and with the traffic problems we knew existed, we delayed the start until 7:45 p.m. We were in excess of a quorum of national members, so the meeting could officially take place. Notice of the meeting, the previous minutes, accounts details and chairman's report had been sent to all members in good time with the previous newsletter. This meant that the business side of the meeting was conducted fairly swiftly, but with plenty of time allowed for members to ask questions and engage members of the committee in discussion. There being no nominations for the committee, the present committee were re-elected enbloc. The meeting closed at

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8:30 p.m., and we all adjourned to Wurlitzer Hall where our playing members enjoyed an 'Open-Console' session on our 3/17 Wurlitzer until 10:00 p.m.

Ian Ridley

## MANASOTA

Charles Pierson, President  
941/924-0674

**Sarasota, Florida.** Our featured organist for March was the ever handsome, ever talented, ever witty, Walt Strony. Truly, he came, he saw, and he conquered. Walt played an exciting program, and really showed off the big Forker Wurlitzer in grand style. Walter is a master of registration and arranging, and he certainly gave his audience a kaleidoscope of colorful registrations. Walt let us hear some of the softest stops on the Wurlitzer, and thrilled us with quick forays into cathedral-like classical registration, thanks to the real classical ranks on this organ. It was enough to give AGO members goose bumps, to say nothing of envy. He played the gamut from baroque, to French romantic, to light jazz, to big theatre organ sound with many innovative percussion combinations. Our audience of more than 500 people was thrilled. Smiling faces abounded. His CD sold like hotcakes, and we now have more "true believers" in good theatre organ music. Thanks to talented performers like Jelani Eddington and Walt Strony, our attendance is rapidly growing, and many people have already inquired about next year's lineup of performers. We are happy to say that theatre organ appears to be alive and well in Sarasota.

Our next artists will be John Landon (April 18), Dwight Thomas (May 30), and Mark Herman (June 20). Please



Walt Strony at the Forker Wurlitzer.

consult our website for additional information (<http://theatreorgans.com/mtos/calendar.htm>).

Jim Weisenbome

## NEW YORK

Bernard Anderson, Chairman  
732/634-2320  
[roxymusic@comast.net](mailto:roxymusic@comast.net)

**New York, New York.** On Sunday April 4, the New York Chapter presented organist Juan Cardona, Jr. in concert at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York. Juan put the school's 3/15 mostly Austin-Morton theatre organ through its paces, playing an excellent concert that showcased his fine musicianship as well as the resources of this mighty instrument. Old favorites by Gershwin, Porter, and Berlin from the '20s and '30s including a medley of tunes from various Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers films, some of the California rock sounds of the '60s, and highlights from

TOM STEHLE



Juan Cardona, Jr. at the Chaminade High School.

Broadway hits past and present, made for a most interesting and enjoyable program. Juan also demonstrated his classical background and the orchestral capabilities of the organ with some light classics, including a dramatic arrangement of an operatic aria. The enthusiastic audience called for an encore, and Juan graciously obliged. Following the concert, chapter members and guests were invited to take turns at 'Open-Console'. Thanks to the hard work and the hospitality of the Chaminade crew, Brother Bob Lahey, Ken Ladner, and Bob Atkins, the organ was concert-ready, and all who attended enjoyed a delightful afternoon of theatre organ music. Thanks also to Mike O'Brien, John Valentino, Tom Stehle, and Phil Yankoschuk for their production assistance.

In other chapter business, NYTOS signed a contract in April with the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing

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Arts, which is owned by the Village Patchogue in Suffolk County on South Shore of Long Island, to install a theatre organ into the restored 1923 vintage former movie house. At the same time, we were fortunate in acquiring a suitable instrument for the theatre from the estate of the late George Pasquaye, who had installed it in his home in northern New Jersey. Originally a 2/6 Style-D Wurlitzer from the Bates Opera House in Attleboro, Massachusetts, George had expanded it to a 2/11 specification. We are grateful for the donation of this instrument to the Chapter, and George's son and daughter are delighted that their

father's beloved Wurlitzer will find a new home in a restored and active theatre. Board member Mike O'Brien is serving as crew chief for this project.

Our officers and board were also pleased to learn in April that Long Island University has agreed to fund the restoration of the 4/26 Brooklyn Paramount Wurlitzer by a professional organ builder, with organ curator Warren Laliberte and members of our technical advisory committee serving as liaison between the University and the contractor. The solo and orchestral chambers sustained water damage last December from a leaking roof drain. Appreciating the age and the unique historical significance of the instrument, the University agreed to support a professional restoration of this Mightiest of Wurlitzers.

Tom Stehle

IRVING LIGHT



Bob Goodwin at the Allen 319.

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### NORTH TEXAS

Earl McDonald, President  
214/348-4436  
[Olemac7456@aol.com](mailto:Olemac7456@aol.com)

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. North Texas chapter returned to the home of Bill and Jean Hanson for our August meeting, and were delighted to be able to again enjoy the beautiful theatre organ sounds of the Allen 319 George Wright Signature Organ. The artist chosen to play the program, Tawny Kingsley, is a newcomer to North Texas Chapter. Though she is a native of Texas and a noted Dallas enter-

tainer, we had not made the connection with this multi-talented musician to our theatre organ world. That is, until last June at our meeting in the Criswell auditorium when she was introduced to us and took a turn during 'Open-Console' at the five-manual Kimball organ. Wow! What an introduction. Why it took so long for us to "discover" her is hard to understand, except that these days, Tawny does most of her entertaining in upscale dining venues, playing the piano, and we hadn't heard of her in earlier years when she was a national performing artist for Yamaha, or when at age 16 she won the rank of Regional Artist... the youngest to be so honored. Tawny's rich musical heritage includes a grandfather, a contemporary of Jesse Crawford, who played theatre organ and accompanied silent movies. Though she ended up as a keyboard artist, Tawny began with cello, moved to the harp, but settled on the organ for her studies. These days, Tawny does her organ playing at her church, where she is organist and accompanist. We trust that we can entice her to continue to give of her talents to the wonderful world of theatre organ as well.

Her program for North Texas couldn't have been more appealing! She included so many of the songs that we love to hear played on the theatre organ, but gave them all her own touches of color, using unique tonalities, counter melodies, rhythms from jazz, and with rich use of

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strings piano and other percussion instruments. After receiving a well-deserved standing ovation from this devoted audience, Tawny played an encore medley of George Gershwin songs.

*Irving Light*

## ORANGE COUNTY

Ed Bridgeford, Chairman  
714/529-5594

**Fullerton, California.** On Sunday Afternoon April 4, Chris Gorsuch and Russ Peck from San Diego performed individually and together. Russ Peck skillfully accompanied not one, but two,

RANDY-PHOTO



*Chris Gorsuch at the console, as Russ Peck narrates a George Wright radio program.*

RANDY-PHOTO



*Chris Gorsuch at Plummer Auditorium.*

Laurel and Hardy Short comedies. *Habeas Corpus* proceeded with the boys hired by a mad scientist to acquire a body from a graveyard, but pursued by the police inspector wearing a sheet. There is some hilarious business trying to get over the graveyard wall, and meeting the inspector in an open grave. In the second film, *That's My Wife*, Ollie hopes for a large inheritance, but Stan's attempts to help in that regard (in drag) guarantee disastrous results.

After the intermission, we were treated to a nostalgic reproduction of the weekly George Wright radio program . . . with Chris at the Organ, and Russ as the melodious voiced announcer

purring into an oversized radio microphone, blue lights, an "ON AIR" sign, poetry and organ interludes. A busload of visitors from the Theatre Organ Society of San Diego, organized by Jackie Porter, joined the audience to enjoy their hometown performers.

We were all pleased to see Gladys Trousdale able to attend the show for her first concert outing since last November, when she suffered a serious injury. Gladys has served faithfully selling tickets at the Plummer box office since Orange County's first concert program.

The April concert was unique, because Plummer Auditorium, (including the organ's blower and switching equipment) was without utility power! Construction crews working to fill in a tunnel under Lemon Street had severed a cable. The whole auditorium and the organ were powered without a glitch by a "Whisper Watt" 70-amp generator, rented for the duration of the multi-day outage and parked beside the building. We had as much power as a Rock concert.

Board member Stuart Goodwin is working to coordinate a concert opportunity at the historic Riverside Mission Inn. Stuart assisted in a recent refurbishment of the Inn's pipe organ, which was originally installed in 1911 as a 32 rank Kimble and rebuilt by the Kilgen Organ Company in 1931. We hope to schedule a Saturday afternoon concert in the fall and offer options of dining and even overnight stays for those who wish to explore the unending variety of architectural delights and details of the Mission Inn.

*Jim Merry*

## ORLANDO

Warren Thomas, President  
386/761-0592  
ewthomas@hotmail.com

**Orlando, Florida.** Our annual Christmas meeting marked the resumption of an old tradition, that of having a party at the home of Chris Walsh. Chris opened the program with some excerpts from "Nutcracker" and other seasonal delights. Chris and co-host Steve Herman, assisted by other members, served wonderful Christmas "goodies" to all present. John Steele also entertained us on Chris' vintage Allen Theatre organ.

In January, due to continuing prob-



*Susan Shaw, John McCall, Clayton Shaw at the console.*

lems with our Artisan relay system, we were unable to use our chapter 3/19 Wurlitzer. We were invited to the lovely home of chapter members Al and Julia Konger, where John Steele gave us a most enjoyable program on their Allen George Wright Special 4/33 Theatre Organ. A charter bus was used to convey members from the Orlando Area to Port Orange, Florida.

Attempts to repair the relay proved futile, so we had to cancel the February meeting. Due to the uncertainty, we relocated the March meeting to Dunn Music Company, the Allen dealer in Orlando. Thanks to General Manager,

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Thomas Drake for hosting a great afternoon of theatre organ music, featuring the artistry of Tom Hoehn on the Allen 3/17-EX. Tom has played for us many times now, and just keeps getting better!

For our April meeting, we returned to the home of Susan and Clayton Shaw. By delaying our normal meeting date by one week, we were able to have England's Paul Roberts as our guest artist. What a marvelous program! It was followed by a "goodie" buffet, out by the pool.

We're planning to return to our Lake Brantley High School home for the May 16 meeting.

Warren Thomas

in the auditorium, and is maintained by the chapter. It is used each Thursday during the summer for the "Sacklunch Serenades." This year is the 10th year for "Sacklunch Serenade," an admission-free noontime concert that is attended by approximately 350 each week. This year, we are going to have the programs through September 2, the first year we have gone into the month of September. Another first for "Sacklunch Serenade" is the "Special Christmas Sacklunch Season", presented on the first four Thursdays in December. Once again, we invite you to plan to attend the serenades when you come to Colorado Springs for your summer vacation.

Owanah Wick

JO ANN EVANS



Father-Daughter duo, Carol Stanley & Clyde Hunnicutt.

## PIKES PEAK

Dave Weesner, President, 719/632-9539  
dnwdwa@aol.com

Colorado Springs, Colorado. On April 4, the Pikes Peak chapter held a social at the home of Don and Owanah Wick, with Mike Bryant of Denver presenting the program on the 2/8 Wurlitzer installed in the Wick's home. After Mike's program, several members played during 'Open-Console'.

On April 21, the PPATOS was presented with an award from the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Council, for preserving the historic Chief (nee Burns) Theatre Wurlitzer organ. The club removed the organ from the Chief in 1975, and by 1978 they had reinstalled the instrument in the Historic City Auditorium. The award was appropriately entitled the, "Better Late Than Never" Award. Several members attended the noon luncheon, and accepted the award for the chapter. The organ continues to reside

## PUGET SOUND

Clint Meadway, President  
360/805-9794  
cbmeadway@wwdb.org

Seattle, Washington. The "Home Party" has become a popular social event with PSTOS members during the past several years. In 2003, four such parties were held, and all were well attended. The usual format includes an hour-long program by a local organist, followed by 'Open-Console', finger foods, and much socializing. Saturday or Sunday afternoons are the most popular times. PSTOS Board member Diane Whipple hosted the latest event at her lovely home in Kent, Washington. Diane said she could handle about 35 guests, but nearly twice that many appeared, and all were tucked in at various spots! Diane is the proud owner of a new Allen 319-EX 3-manual organ, which was played by Clyde Hunnicutt. Clyde and his wife

now reside with their daughter in the Puget Sound area, after a life-long professional musical career in the Phoenix area. His program included many standards and favorites. Much to the delight of the crowd, Clyde's vocalist daughter, Carol Stanley, joined him with several Broadway style vocals. It was an outstanding day, and members look forward to the next such event.

Upcoming concerts during 2004 include Tony Fenelon in May and Dave Wickerham in September, both on the 4/48 Wurlitzer at the former Dick Wilcox home, now "Wurlitzer Manor," in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Jo Ann Evans

## THE RIVER CITY

President, Bob Markworth  
402/573-9071

Omaha, Nebraska. On March 14, we held our River City Chapter meeting at Omaha's beautiful Rose Theatre, a "John

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Eberson atmospheric delight." It's always a treat to play the Wurlitzer at the Rose! Our President, Bob Markworth, chaired a short business meeting, with Secretary-Treasurer Paul Kanka presenting his financial report. Then the meeting was turned over to Jeanne Mehuron, our Vice President and Program Chairman. Jeanne announced that our guest artists for the afternoon were eight, count them, chapter members: Doug Kroger, "D.J." Jennings, Jim Boston, Andrew Cullen, Larry Poffenberger, Sandy Anderson, Jerry Pawlak, and

Jeanne Mehuron. We had to delay playing the Wurlitzer, until a program finished elsewhere in the Rose's studio theatre, but Jeanne "watched the clock," and all of our artists had plenty of time to have their turn at the console.

For our April 18 meeting we arranged carpooling, and 36 members and guests traveled to the Lincoln, Nebraska area. Our first stop was at the Bedient Pipe Organ Company in Roca, Nebraska. Gene Bedient, President, generously furnished an employee to open their facility, and provide a very instructive tour for our group. Gene Bedient founded the company in 1969. His company was featured in a Nebraska ETV video, "The Wind At One's Fingertips," documenting the research, design, construction

NORMAN EMMACK



Chapter members tour Bedient Organ Company.

and installation of a large 18th Century French instrument for a Grand Rapids, Michigan church. Known for their fine tracker organs, Bedient also renovates and augments existing organs. One example is the organ work they are currently doing at St. Marks Episcopal Pro Cathedral, in Hastings, Nebraska. Many thanks go to the Bedient Company for their kind hospitality.

From the Bedient building, we traveled to the Lincoln, Nebraska home of member Jerry Pawlak. Jerry entertained us on his Hammond A-101 organ, with a Leslie Model 147 Tone Cabinet. This organ, with the Leslie, emulates the Hammond B-3 sound exactly. Above the Hammond, Jerry has a Yamaha PSR-350 Keyboard, which allows him to pre-

NORMAN EMMACK



Jerry Pawlak entertains.

record 8-tracks, so that he can accompany himself. The Keyboard is amplified through a 400-watt home stereo system.

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Jerry's program consisted of imitating the Hammond Organists who influenced him to pursue the instrument. His offerings were in the style of Ken Griffin, Ethel Smith, Three Suns, Lenny Dee, Earl Grant, Jackie Davis, and Jimmy Smith. Jerry, we thank you for your excellent program and hospitality.

The 47th Annual Omaha Press Club Show was held at the Rose Theatre, on Friday and Saturday evenings (April 2nd and 3rd). These original productions are mixtures of "musical comedy and satire," and are staged as fundraisers for journalism scholarships at area universities. Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns, Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey, U.S. Congressman Lee Terry, and other notables were in this year's cast. And, River City Theatre Organ Society was part of the action! Our own Jerry Pawlak entertained at the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ on both nights, playing while the audience was being seated, during intermission, and after the show ended. His keyboard offerings of movie themes and show tunes were well received by an appreciative audience of 1,400 of Omaha's "movers and shakers."

Bob Markworth, Jerry Pawlak, Norman Emmack, and Paul Kanka contributed to this report.

Tom Jeffery

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Owanah Wick, President, 719/488-9469  
dowick@prodigy.net

Denver, Colorado. THE MIGHTY WURLITZER & "Footloose" . . . "This fete was a great feat because of all the feet."

Dave Wickerham, who plays regularly at the Organ Piper Music Palace in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was our guest

WILLIAM CRANE



Dave Wickerham and 23 Skidoo! swing dance team.

theatre organ artist on Sunday April 18, at the Paramount Theatre. The theme this afternoon: "FOOTLOOSE." The concert "feetures" keyboard feet, trotting feet, waltzing feet, marching feet, swing feet, tango feet, jitterbug feet and even some Bach Jig feet. In addition to a well-rounded program of traditional and not-so-traditional theatre organ music, Dave was joined by three elegant ballroom dancing couples, and Denver's "23 Skidoo" swing dance group, (five couples who used their feet to great advantage), to provide a lively, unique and thoroughly enjoyable afternoon of high-energy music and fun.

## Coming Attractions

"Musical Story"  
Sunday, May 16, Club Social  
at Holiday Hills Ballroom

Don Story, a new club member who lives in Tucson, Arizona, (his Mother lives in Denver) has volunteered to entertain us at our May social. Don is currently Vice President of the Phoenix ATOS Chapter. At one time Don was organist at the Phoenix Paramount/Orpheum, and he now plays with the Santi Trio, a Tucson ballroom dance band.

WILLIAM CRANE



Dave Wickerham, about to be 'launched' from the pit at Denver Paramount Theatre.

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Stan Kann at Wicks Organ Company.



Dinner at Bellcourt.

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Paramount Theatre

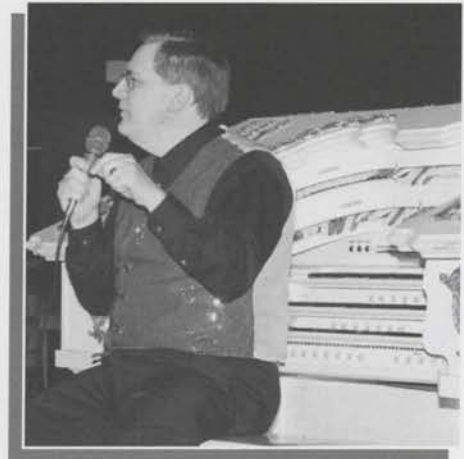
Club members Patti Simon from Wichita, Kansas (at the Wurlitzer console), and Dick Kroeckel from Denver, (at the 'ragtime' Steinway Grand) are teaming up again for "An Afternoon of American Music". This concert will be a part of the National AMICA (Automatic Musical Instruments Collectors' Association) Convention that is meeting in Denver. This concert is open to the public.

Priscilla Arthur

## SAINT LOUIS

Jim Ryan, President, 314/892-0754

Saint Louis, Missouri. "Meet Me In Saint Louis" . . . how many times have you heard that over the years? It brings fond memories of the 1904 Worlds Fair and Judy Garland. From March 19-22, people who love Theatre Organ gathered in Saint Louis for the chapter's second Extravaganza. Guests from the four corners of the U.S. and from England came to see, hear and enjoy Theatre Organ in the "Gateway to the West, Saint Louis." Tom Hazleton was our



Mark Gifford at Springfield High School.

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*Tom Hazleton and Stan Kann at Lincoln Theatre.*



*Stan Kann and Tom Hazleton at the St. Louis Fox.*

visiting artist, sharing the bench with Saint Louis's own Stan Kann. They shared the programs at the Lincoln Theatre in Bellville, Illinois and the St.

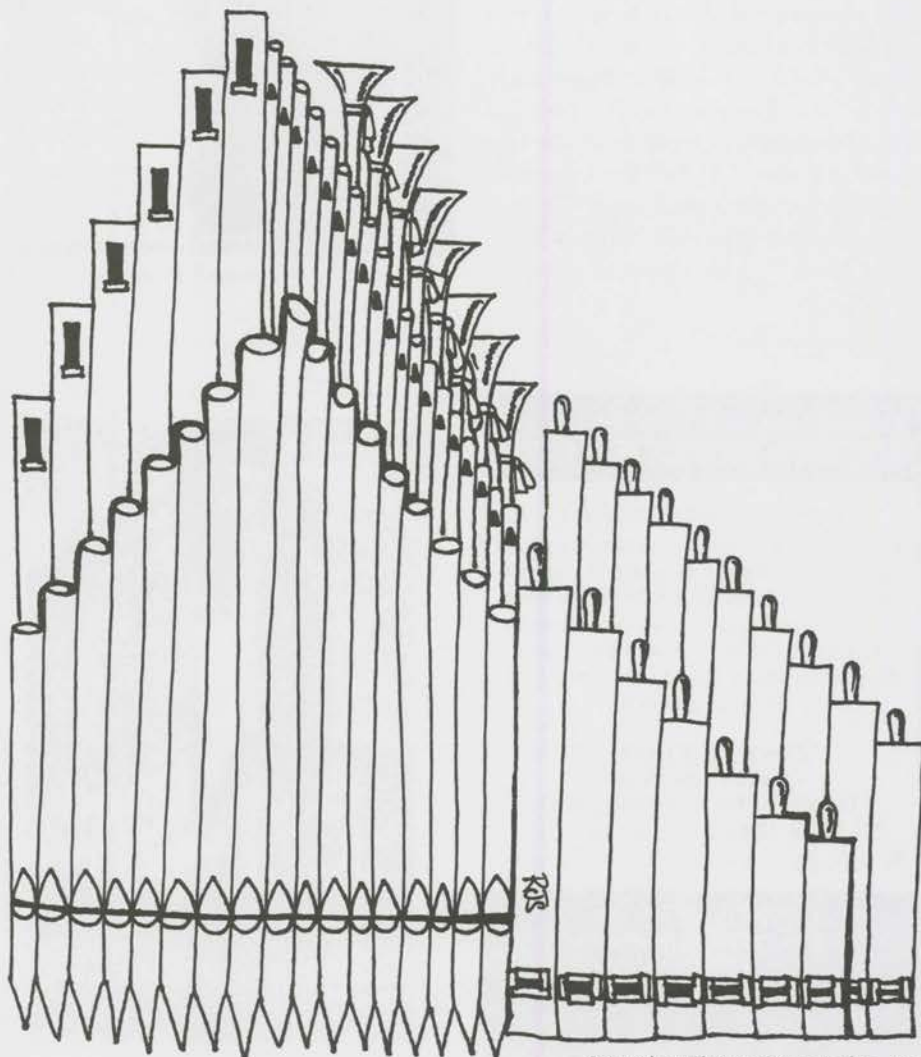
Louis Fox Theatre. The Lady of the Snows was headquarters for the weekend. The events started off with a special Pre-Glow on Friday with a tour of the

Wicks Organ Company, and Stan Kann playing an organ being finished by Wicks in their set-up and staging room.

Then it was off to Springfield, Illinois to the Springfield High School with Mark Gifford presiding over the Grande Barton, a 3/11 when it was moved from the Orpheum Theatre in Springfield. One rank was added when it was installed in the high school, making it a 3/12.

Saturday's events began with the house tours and programs. Chapter President Jim Ryan and his 4/21 Hybrid, Chapter Vice President Dennis Ammann and his 2/12 Barton, Past ATOS President Jack Moelmann and his highly modified Rodger 340, were the featured home events. Each was unique, presenting the theatre organ from different points of view. Saturday concluded with dinner at the Bellcourt banquet facility. Midwest Music provided the Allen GW-319 for use during the weekend. Jerry Roberts and his team of movers moved the Allen up to the second story of the Bellcourt, in a feat that they videotaped. Doing it last year, and then telling the story, nobody would believe what they had to do to get the organ up there. They had to lift the organ over the banister rail to navigate a corner mid way up the stairs. Believe It Or Not! Many members of SLTOS and guests played the Allen 319 during the evening.

Sunday afternoon it was back to the Lincoln Theatre in Bellville, where Tom Hazleton and Stan Kann played bench tag. Both players performed elegantly, pleasing the crowd with every selection. Monday, it was off to the Fabulous Fox



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*Dr. John Romeri at Cathedral Basilica Saint Louis.*

for lunch and to hear Tom Hazleton and Stan Kann playing the Mighty Wurlitzer. There is nothing like hearing a theatre organ in its natural environment, under the control of capable and talented hands. The Fox Wurlitzer sang to the enjoyment of all. The old girl played well.

Tours of the Fox theatre followed the program, guided by the Fox Volunteer Ushers. From the Fox it was off to the Scottish Rite Cathedral, where an Allen 319 had been installed to replace the Kimball that is in need of much work. The cost to repair and rebuild the Kimball Concert Organ is greater than the organization could afford. Buying the Allen and installing it was a cost-effective alternative. The final disposition of the Kimball has not been made. The final stop of the Saint Louis Extravaganza was the Cathedral Basilica Saint

Louis. In 1998, the organ was rebuilt and added to by Wicks, enlarging it to 118-ranks with solid-state control. The resident organist, Dr John Romeri, provided a program that showed the best of a classic organ. In a Cathedral, the echo and playing delay is a challenge. The hard surfaces lets the organ ring out for a bewildering seven seconds after you let go of the note. Playing in this environment and making it look easy, plus making it sound good is a credit to Dr Romeri. I must also say he did pull out the big guns, and put the pedal to the metal to show everyone what the effect of full-organ is in this setting.

From all the members and the SLTOS Officers, we wish to thank: all the attendees... all the talent that was lent, at the banquet and at the hotel, by players of all levels... and all those working behind the scenes, making the event seamless. Thank you for "Meeting Us In Saint Louis." Thanks For The Memories.

*Les Hickory*

## SIERRA

Craig Peterson, President  
916/682-9699  
craigapeterson@cs.com

**Sacramento, California.** Bob Salisbury returned to accompany his third film for Sierra Chapter... and he hit his third home run! This time Bob exercised our Dale Mendenhall Memorial 3/16 Wurlitzer at the Towe Auto Museum, scoring Douglas Fairbanks' 1929 film *The Iron Mask*. This was Fairbanks' last silent film, and it has an interesting result. Bob and the film provided all of us with a wonderful evening of entertainment. I'm sure this was not Bob's last silent film with Sierra Chapter.

April featured the 11th Annual Mor-

ton Madness, with Jonas Nordwall at the two R-M consoles. This event combined two concerts on two different 3/15 Robert-Morton's. The Nor-Cal and Sierra Chapters jointly sponsored it. The afternoon concert was at Hartzell's "Blue Barn" in Lodi, where Bob has installed an earlier, gentler R-M in a more intimate setting. The evening concert was immediately after dinner at the Kautz Winery in Murphys, on a late-edition R-M that can really breathe fire into the large music room. Jonas' performances offered a wide range of music selections. They included several orchestral transcriptions, for which he is justly well known, and some Sousa marches, with the traditional patriotic selections at the end of a performance at Hartzell's. Jonas received a standing ovation at both venues.

Chapter members Jim Brown, Bert Kuntz, and Dave Sauer are performing the "Spring Series" of Sunday Theatre Organ Concerts on the Dale Mendenhall Memorial Wurlitzer at the Towe Auto Museum. These afternoon concerts are open to all of those at the Museum, and expose several hundred of the public to the beauty and wonders of the theatre organ. Thanks to Dave Moreno, for keeping the Towe Wurlitzer and both Robert-Mortons in such good playing condition.

*Pete McCluer*

## SOONER STATE

Vernon Jackson, President  
918/493-2365

**Tulsa, Oklahoma.** Sooner State Chapter is still having fantastic programs! Our meeting for March was a magnificent concert by Brett Valliant, of

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*Bill  
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Morton.*

Wichita, Kansas. He was our guest artist on our 3/13 Robert-Morton at Tulsa Technology Center's Broken Arrow Campus. The music began with our now-customary singing of the National Anthem, with new member Rosanna Corrales playing the accompaniment on the organ. Then Brett began. He played fantastically varied selections of music, including popular songs, a Judy Garland medley, Ragtime, a classical selection (a tribute to his classical organ training), standards, ballads, opera numbers, music from movie sound tracks, and a Latin number. We saw lots of toe tapping, to

his up-beat selections, and we gave him a standing ovation at the end! We estimated there were some 175–200 people in the audience. It was a truly fantastic performance, and we heard many comments of "I've never heard that organ sound so wonderful" and "He was magnificent!"

It was a special treat to have Brett come by to play the Dorothy-and-Lee Smith home Wurlitzer, the afternoon before his concert. He played all kinds of music, and we especially enjoyed one hymn that he played—it was perfectly beautiful!

We returned to Tulsa Technology Center for our April meeting, this time to hear our Robert-Morton played by our member, Bill Rowland. After the National Anthem was played by Joyce Hatchett, Bill opened his program by telling us he would start with music composed in 1914 or so, and that he would be playing on an instrument designed to put musicians out of business! Well—the Theatre Organ was created as a "unit orchestra," to enable one person to accompany silent movies, instead of a whole orchestra. After a beautiful selection that Bill played as an introduction, he started with the 1914 music, all familiar standards, and played delightfully! He continued "down the years," playing wonderfully, selections of popular music from the early 1920s through 1951 and beyond.

There were several special treats included! One was a "duet" that he played with a "player piano"; he didn't actually have the piano on stage, but an electronic keyboard was set up to play the accompaniment while Bill played the melody; and there were lots of feet tapping in rhythm! He also played a selection of a "religious nature" that he had composed himself, for his sister to play on her violin, which had a beautiful "violin solo" melody. Then he did his now famous "Make a Tune", improvised

SAMPLER

## Theatre Organ Sampler on the ATOS Web Site

Have you visited the Theatre Organ Sampler on the ATOS Web site? There you will find audio recordings of theatre organ performances by our leading artists. Also included on this web page is a colorful audio demonstration by the late Buddy Cole of theatre organ stops and percussions. To access the sound sampler page, go to

<http://www.atos.org/>

enter the site and click the organ console on the main menu page.

from telephone (or other) numbers called out from the audience! We heard a March, a "Country Tune", a Cha-Cha, and a Tango—all very cleverly composed on the spot, with each number being assigned a note in the scale, in the order given! His closer was a Sousa March, with his granddaughter Jessica Duncan assisting by clanging a bell (from a recording) in the appropriate places. He also played an encore for us, one of our favorites, very up beat and rhythmic! He certainly demonstrated his mastery of the Theatre Organ!

On April 18, a goodly number of our chapter members attended the Lyn Larsen concert held at the Coleman Theatre Beautiful, in Miami, Oklahoma, which is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. There really aren't words in existence to describe Lyn's magnificent playing on their 3/10 Wurlitzer! After his first perky number, we all stood to sing a patriotic song, which he followed with a "wild" march! He then played three songs that had been on the Hit Parade in 1929—the first one played with a pretty Tibia, and the others in up-beat double time. He continued with other popular selections, mostly honoring 1929, the year the Coleman was built. We were especially fascinated by his pedaling—which was easy to watch because he was wearing bright red socks! He always plays fab-

ulously, with lots of variety in his registrations, lots of double time rhythm. He played a beautiful encore, and finished up with our Oklahoma State Song! It was truly absolutely wonderful!

*Dorothy Smith*

### SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

President: Sam Groh, 717-534-2470, TallPipes@msn.com

**York, Pennsylvania.** On Sunday November 9, 2003, members of our chapter were invited to Rice Auditorium, in Catonsville, Maryland (outside Baltimore) for a concert by our own Bobby Raye Lilarose, on the Free State Theatre Organ Society's 2/8 Robert-Morton/Wicks/Wurlitzer. It was a full house, and what a concert! Fine music, including obscure music from the '20s and '30s, to a Jazz Hammond B3 sound using everything the organ had to offer, and closing with moving patriotic variations. The crowd loved it and Bobby had fun with them, being an Emcee and Comedian. The organ was in tip-top shape, and sounded fabulous thanks to Roy Wagner, Pete D'Anna, and all the crew at Free State. Our own 3/17 Wurlitzer will be back home soon, to a totally renovated Capital Theatre in York, Pennsylvania.

*Dusty Miller*

PETE D'ANNA



*Bobby Raye Lilarose at Free State's 2/8 Robert-Morton.*

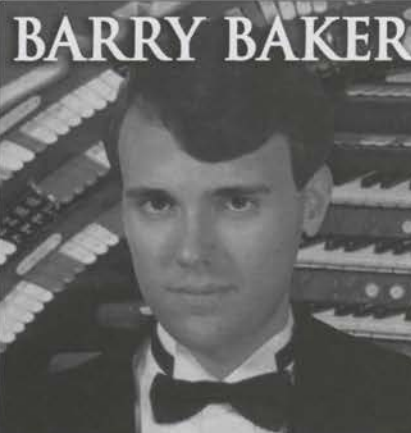
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CONTINUED ON PAGE 74

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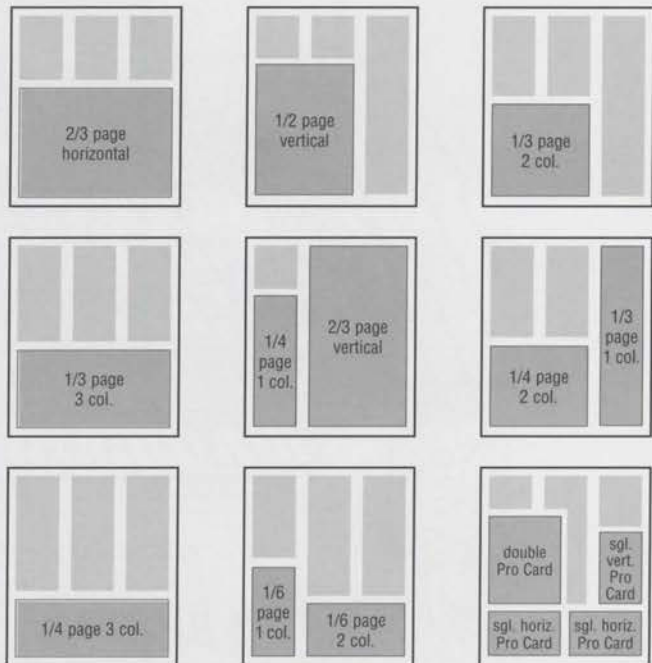
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## CHAPTER NEWS


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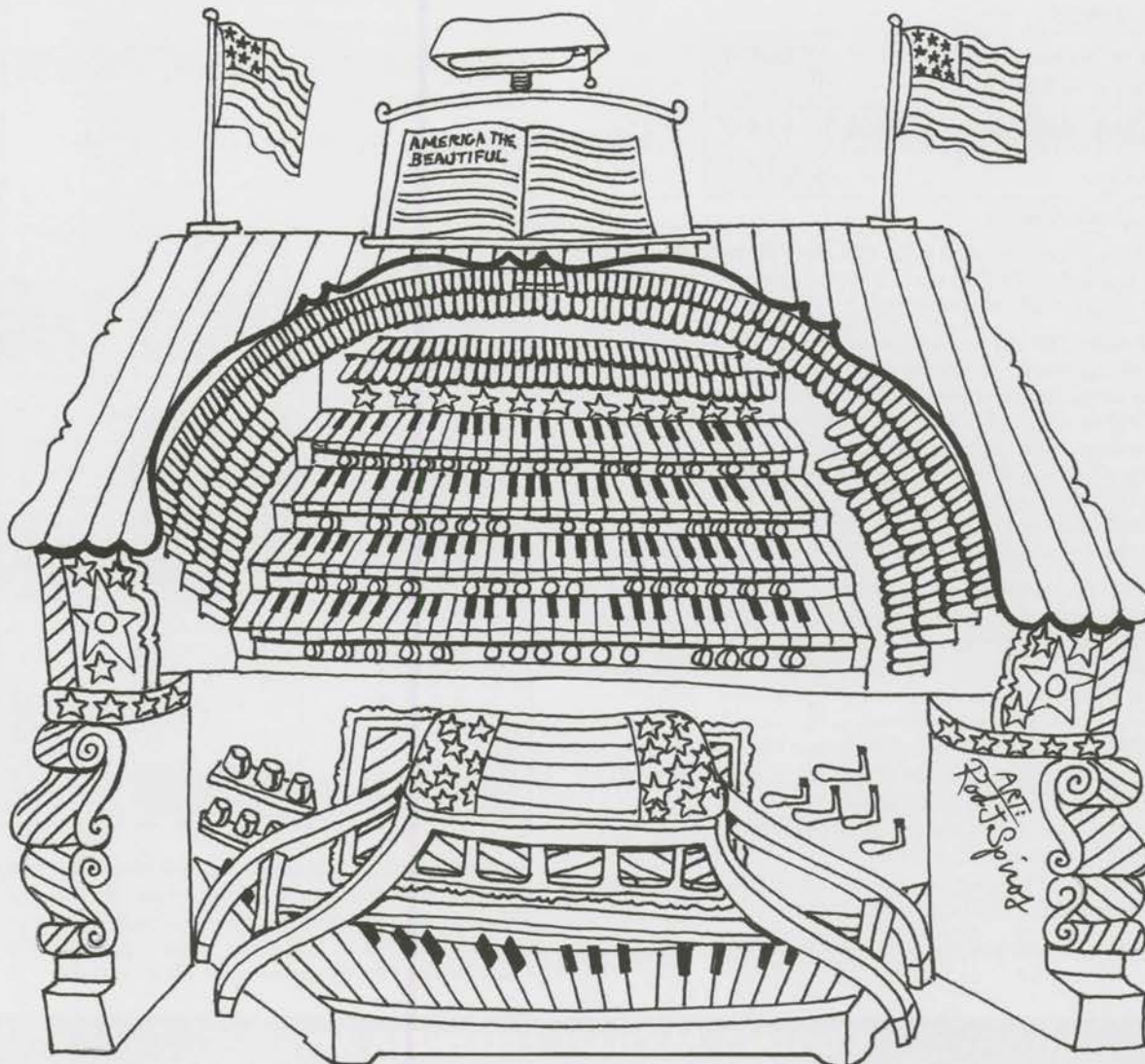
Fizzell's home in Phoenix, it was announced that Bill Brown had donated the 11 ranks of pipes, previously loaned to the chapter to complete the Orpheum instrument! Bill was there, after his recovery from a broken hip. It was a wonderful day. The installation is now completed, and totally paid off! Thank you, Bill! The instrument will be presented, once again, the weekend after Thanksgiving this year. See more details about "Desert Winds" elsewhere in *THE-ATRE ORGAN*, and on the Internet.

Johnny Harris did a splendid job with Christmas music that afternoon. The Fizzell's have a wonderful home, which has an upright piano, Hammond Organ, and the original console from the Orpheum Theatre. Thanks to Pete Knoblock and Tom, everything worked very well!

After a terrific Christmas, Ron Rhode and Ron Tanner invited 100 people to their home for two special Orpheum Organ Benefits. 95 tickets were donated, and everyone had a wonderful time.

Thanks to Don and Leota Reasor and Bill and Cheri Carr, refreshments on the patio were super! A few rain sprinkles did not stop the day. Robert Ridgeway from Illinois came in and supervised the sound. One of their dogs did run across the pedal a couple of times during the performance, but it didn't stop a great performance! It even created some laughs! The chapter realized an additional income of nearly \$4,600 from the Benefit. Thanks, Ron Rhode and Ron Tanner!

Dale E. Caplin 



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The Wurlitzer Factory Video is a rare black and white silent film documentary from the early 1920s showing the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company in Tonawanda, New York. A musical score is provided by Ray Brubacher on the 2/10 Wurlitzer, formerly in the Loew's Colonial Theatre in Reading, Pennsylvania. This video contains a special added attraction guaranteed to please every theatre organ enthusiast. This video is available in VHS format for the U.S. market and in PAL format for the overseas market.

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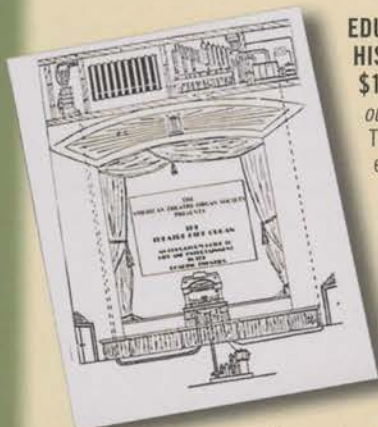
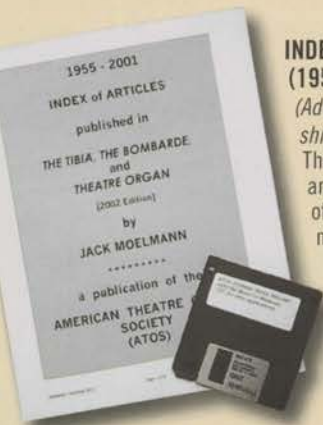
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This valuable technical manual, compiled and edited by Allen Miller, contains all of the technical articles that have been published by ATOS over the years. It is a must-have publication for anyone who is restoring or maintaining a theatre pipe organ. It is published in loose-leaf binder form, with re-enforced pages, in order to make it convenient to use in the chamber or in the shop while working with pipe organ components.



If you have any questions, please contact John Ledwon, ATOS Marketplace Manager at ledwon@atos.org, or 818/889-8894.

# Kinetic Blowers... A Restoration

By Philip Underwood



Kinetic logo-scanned from nameplate.

## History

Reginald Arthur and Louis Bertram Cousans, of Lincoln England, originally designed the Kinetic blower. These two brothers were the sons of James R. Cousans an organ builder in Lincoln, England.

As electricity became more available, there were several attempts at providing wind to organs using electricity. The old feeder bellows were activated using complicated mechanical systems with electric motors to drive them. The electric fans of the time either had to be extremely large, or driven at high revolutions, to get enough pressure for the organs. The Cousans brothers examined several versions of single-fan blowers, but were unhappy with the noise and size. They eventually tried using fans in series. They finally found a design that worked. On April 19, 1902 they applied for a patent in England for: *An Improved Air Compressor for Blowing Pipe Organs and the like Musical Instruments*. This was the first time a patent for a multi-stage fan compressor had been submitted and granted. The blowers were installed in local churches with great success.

These early blowers ran at a very slow speed, (less than 1000 rpm) and were virtually silent. The basic design used a central inlet that allowed the thrust of the fans to be used against each other to almost eliminate end thrust on the drive shaft. The blowers could be driven with any motor that provided the proper rpm for the blower. Internal combustion, electric, water, belt or direct drive motors could be utilized. These new

blowers were called "The Kinetic," which stands for the energy of a moving body.

Louis Cousans visited the United States in 1904, and the Kinetic Company of America was formed. The Cousans brothers applied for United States Patents for their invention. On May 7, 1907 they were granted United States Patent number 852541, for an 'Air-Compressor'. This was the first patent granted in the United States for using multiple-stage fans for the compression of air. On May 28, 1907 Louis Cousans was granted United States Patent number 855046. This patent was for a starter for the

direct-current motors that were used on organ blowers. It limited the current to the motor on starting, and gradually increased it as the blower came up to speed. On June 4, 1907 Louis Cousans was granted United States Patent number 855697, for improvements in air compressors that provide wind for blowing pipe organs. He added the baffle box, that is on top of most Kinetics, to help reduce the sound of the blower at low wind usage, and the metal plates to help cool the compressed air.

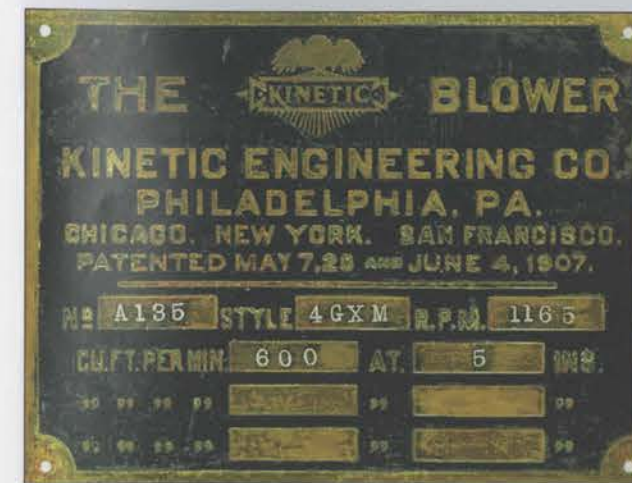
This patent mentions that it is preferable to make the blower square because, "A circular section is believed to be not desirable, on the account of the loss of energy due to rotation of the air therein." This comment explains why the original Kinetic blowers were square. This is also why, as the pressure output goes up on a Kinetic blower, it has problems with heating the air. The turbulence generated by the air getting "tossed about" in the corners heats up the air, as well as the heat generated due to it being compressed. It also reduces the total airflow through the blower. The original blowers were used on instruments that only usually needed 2-3" of wind pressure. As the pressure on the organs went up, the heat problem became more noticeable.

The last Kinetic patent listed on my 1921 Kinetic was from March 16, 1915. Harold A. Bierck of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, (of the United States Kinetic Company) applied for this patent. It is for a combination blower, used

on moving picture orchestras. It provides both vacuum and pressure to operate the instruments from one source. It also shows the design of the Kinetic blower that is most common today. All of the fans are in series, and face the same direction... unlike the original. This blower requires the use of a thrust bearing to counteract the force of the fans on the shaft.

## Restoration

This blower was attached to my Kimball pipe organ. It has been in storage for 25 years. The blower was made in 1911, and according to the serial number was supposed to be shipped to Alcazar Theatre in Great Falls, Montana. It



Nameplate from the blower being restored.

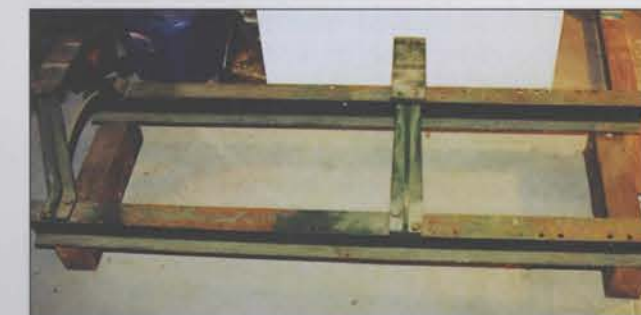
instead ended up attached to the Kimball that was installed in the Kedzie theatre in Chicago, Illinois. Since both organs were Style-23 Kimball theatre organs, either the organ or the blower went to a different location. It is a Style 4GXM. This is a four-stage blower, with an electric motor shipped with it.

As a result of storage in an unheated barn, the blower was in sad condition. The bearings were ruined in spite of being oiled before storage. The shaft and frame parts were rusty. The blower itself was okay, since the inlet and outlet had been sealed. Mice and made a nest between the blower and the baffle box. The felt seals and gaskets had failed from age and exposure to temperature extremes. As a result, the blower had to be completely disassembled and rebuilt.

Unlike most other blowers, Kinetic had inboard and

outboard bearings on the actual blower. The motor was separate from the blower. This allowed different motors to be used, without disturbing the blower. The bearings are mounted on cast iron frames that are bolted to the frame rails. These frames are attached to the rails with square-headed bolts. The motor on this blower had been replaced in the past, and the original motor mount frames were missing. The newer motor was a 1750-rpm motor, where the original had been an 1165-rpm. The weight of the motor had been used to provide belt tension. This made the belt drive noisy, as the motor bounced up and down on the belts.

The first thing I had to do was remove the blower box itself from the frame rails. It is attached with four large bolts through the frame. The bolts were tight enough in the blower that they didn't turn when I removed the nuts.



The frame rail after the blower has been removed.

After the nuts were removed, the entire blower was lifted off of the frame rails. The bearing frames were removed, cleaned, and painted. This left the frame rails bare. There were several holes from the mounting of the non-original motor. These were welded up, and the frame rails were painted. In the process, I discovered that the rails were from the Pencoyd iron works in Pennsylvania. This mill was eventually owned by Andrew Carnegie, and became a part of United States Steel... the only original steel company left in the United States at this time. At the time this blower was manufactured Andrew Carnegie was giving money to churches for their organs. I wonder if he knew that some of the blowers for these organs used steel from his own company!

After the frame rails and bearing frames were done, they were re-assembled. The bearing frames have the name Kinetic cast into them. The frames were attached to the frame rails with the name facing out. I did not tighten the bolts at this time, since

the bearing frames require alignment. I located a set of motor mounts, and cleaned and painted these. They were then attached to the frame rails, using the original bolts (again left loose). This assembly was then set aside.

The blower itself proved to be more of a challenge. The construction of the blower is such that the casing is in three parts. The very top section is a baffle box. This was removed to allow access to the actual blower box. The blower box is in two sections. Splice plates keep the top and bottom joined. These are made from wood, like the rest of the blower. According to the original patent, this was to keep the joint from leaking. The wood splice plates would shrink and expand, due to moisture, in a way that would keep the seam from leaking. The plates are attached with standard wood screws. After removing these plates, the two halves of the blower are supposed to separate. On this blower, the halves were stuck together. I had to fabricate a spreader, and used it to force the halves apart. After the top was removed, the fans were visible. They were in good condition in spite of storage. The shaft was cleaned of rust using a wire brush, and the fan bolts were checked to make sure that they had not loosened. Unlike the "can" blowers, the fans are not easily removed from the shaft. I really do not recommend removing these fans unless absolutely necessary. If they do need to be removed, due to damage, you will have to make a special puller to get them off. They are made mostly of thin sheet metal, so they are easily damaged.

The bearing housings were slid onto the shafts, and the

*The frame after restoration with the impellers mounted.*



fan assembly was placed upon the bearing frames. These housings have pins to align them to the bearing frames. The bolts that hold the bearing housing to the bearing frames were then tightened. Making sure that the shaft was not bound in the bearings, I then was able to tighten the bolts that hold the bearing and motor frames to the frame rails. With this completed, the shaft holding the fans should move easily in the bearings.

The actual blower box needed all of the felt gaskets replaced. The glue had managed to migrate through the



*The blower with the top half removed. The tongue that keeps the top and bottom baffles is visible. Notice the "tabs" holding the impeller together.*

felt and stick the halves together. The gasket for the top and bottom metal plates was also replaced at this time. There are screws under the outlet felt "door." This has to be removed to get the metal plate off the wood box. The metal plates were an attempt to dissipate the heat caused by compression. The original patentees were aware of this, and made this attempt to help reduce the affects. The rest of the box is made of wood, "to prevent the resonance which would be present in a casing made entirely of metal." The top and bottom halves have tongue-and-groove construction on the wood partitions between the stages. This is to keep the wood from warping into the fans. If they are damaged, they have to be repaired. It also helps to graphite the grooves, to keep them from binding on the tongues. The inlet and outlet "doors" were repaired at this time. They are made of thin wood with felt glued to them. The felt forms the hinge. The felt was replaced at this time, and the doors were reattached to the blower.

After all the felt is replaced and any repairs are made to the wood box, the blower can be re-assembled. The fans should be very carefully inspected for damage before the blower is re-assembled. The fans are a combination of castings and sheet metal parts. The back of the fan is riveted to a casting. This casting is the part that holds the fan to the shaft. The front of the fan and the impellers are attached to the back of the fan with tabs that are bent

over. These tabs should be flat to the front and back, and none should be missing. The blades should be flat. If they have been bent or damaged, they need to be repaired. Any work done to these fans will affect the balance.

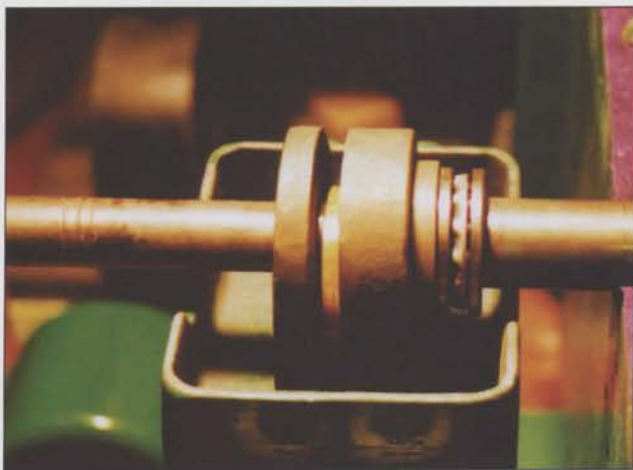
The packing assembly should be slid onto to the shaft at this time. The packing is made from a dense felt that is



*Outboard bearing with cap off. Notice spacer that keeps shaft from damaging bearing when blower slows down.*

about 1" thick. Two pieces are used to fill up the well. I had tried to use a new "better" material, but it did not seal as well as the felt and cost a lot more. There is a casting that holds the felt in place, and allows for some adjustment to reduce the air leakage. This assembly is installed on the pressure end with the outboard bearing.

The fan assembly was removed from the bearing frames and set aside. The bottom of the blower was reattached to



*View of inboard bearing with cap off. This bearing has the new thrust bearing and spacer.*

the frame rails using the original bolts. The fan assembly was then reattached to the bearing frames. The thrust bearing had to be replaced, and a different bearing had to be used. The new bearing was a little thinner than the old one. At this time, I was able to check the fan clearance,

and had a new thrust bearing spacer made. It was the same thickness as the spacer on the outboard bearing. The fans are centered between the wood partitions. The fans are rotated to make sure that they do not rub anywhere, and that they are straight and true. The top half of the blower was attached with the splice plates, but the top metal plate was left off. This allowed me to



*View of inboard bearing with cap off. This bearing has the new thrust bearing and spacer.*

check the fans, and make sure they did not rub anywhere on the top piece. The top metal plate was attached, and the blower was now ready for the top baffle box.

These blowers had an integral baffle box built onto them. This baffle box was to reduce the noise of the fans

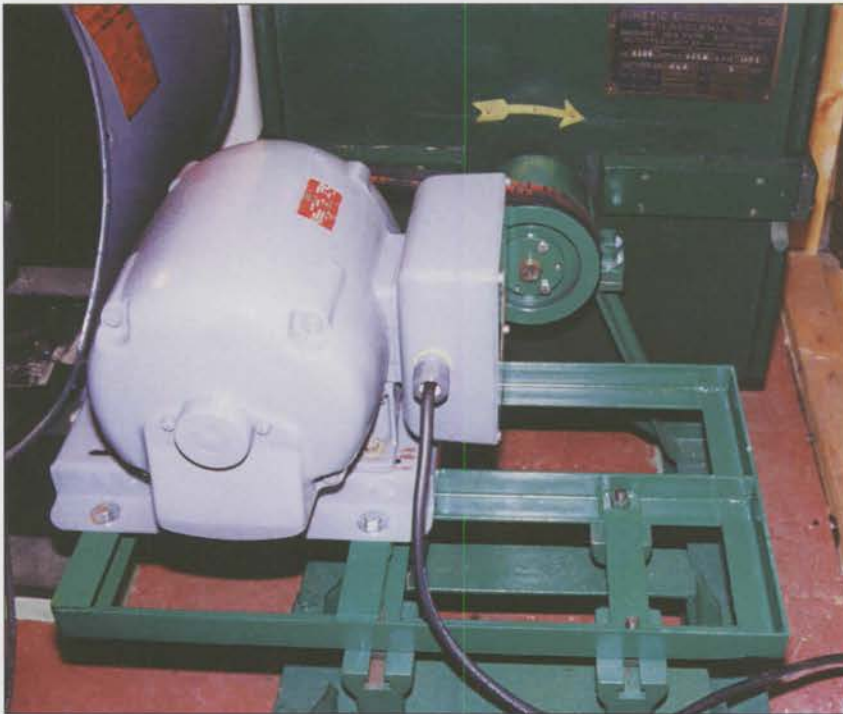


*Top: Kinetic baffle box without internal baffle installed, and bottom, with the internal baffle installed.*

in the wind line. The sides are made of wood, and the top and bottom are metal, (another attempt to cool the wind before it gets to the organ). There is a baffle inside, that makes the wind go around it before the wind exits the blower. The inside is lined with felt on the wood parts, and the baffle is also covered with felt. On some blowers, there might also be felt "doors"

installed on the motor and the blower. I used Browning "clamp" style hubs. The original couplings did not have keys in them, so the blower shaft does not have a keyway on it. The blower shaft is actually metric. All of them that I have worked on have a 25mm shaft size. I was unable to get a 25mm, so a 15/16" hub was machined to 25mm (or .980"). I used three-belt pulleys, mainly to keep the belt tension down. The motor pulley was aligned to the blower pulley using the original motor adjustments. The belts were installed, and a cap was installed on the outlet. Oil was added to the bearings. I usually use non-detergent 20 or 30 weight oil.

The blower was now ready to start. The blower motor was wired, and the blower was turned on. The blower should only be run for a short time with the outlet capped off. It will get hot with no air movement through it. The blower was checked for leaks. At this time, the blower was also checked for balance. It should not shake at all. There should be very little vibration, if any. If there is, it will need to be balanced. Balancing can be easily accomplished on these blowers, since the top



*New motor adapter for belt drive motor.*

attached to the baffle that help to dampen the noise. All of this was to help make the Kinetic as quiet as possible.

With the baffle box attached, the blower is basically done. The motor now had to be attached to the motor frames. The motor that came with this blower was originally a large-frame motor like a Century. The original motor would have been direct coupled. The coupling was made of two cast iron plates that used leather to couple them together. This coupling is the only part that should be changed on the blowers, even if the original motor is used. The modern couplings are much safer and quieter. The motor that is on it now is a smaller-frame motor. Since it also had a higher-rpm motor, a belt drive had to be designed. An adapter was made from steel angle stock, and attached to the original motor frames. A motor slide-adjuster was attached to the adapter, to allow for belt tightening. The motor was attached to the adapter. Pulleys were



*Both the Spencer and Kinetic blower next to each other. These blowers have a similar air flow rating when driven at the same speed.*

half of the blower is removable. During the balancing of the blower, it was run for short periods of time with the top half removed. This made it easy to mark each stage, and add the weight. The motor will overheat if the blower is run for more than a few minutes, but this is usually enough

time to check where the weight needs to be added. I used lead that was soldered to the points where the balancing service had marked. The blower was actually well balanced originally, and needed very little weight.

The blower was reassembled after the balancing, and a 2" hole was drilled into the cap. I was now able to run the blower for an extended period of time. The bearings were checked, to make sure the oil was getting where it belonged. This blower is a little noisier than most because of the belt drive. A direct-coupled blower, (even if it runs at a higher speed) is quieter. This blower is still quieter than the Spencer that sits next to it.

### Heat Problems

The wood box does reduce the sound of the blower. It also makes the blower run hotter. Since these blowers were originally slow speed and low pressure, the heat problem probably was not as noticeable. As the pressures went up, the heat problem became more evident. The all-metal shell on a "can" blower will help to dissipate the heat better than the wood box of the Kinetic. It is a trade-off between noise and heat. Kinetics were made to be real quiet, at a time when the pressures were low and noise was an issue. At this time, the blowers could be installed next to the organ. As the pressures went up they became louder, and the blowers were installed further away. The advantage of being quiet was replaced with the need for cooler high-pressure wind. This blower outputs 9" of wind when operated at 1165-rpm. At 1750-rpm, it can produce almost 20" of wind. It also heats the air a lot more at the higher speed.

Using a proper size blower can help the temperature issue. If the blower is too large, not enough air will pass through the blower to keep the wind cool. This can be corrected somewhat by having a permanent "leak" installed in the organ. A small bleed-hole (approximately 2-3") can be installed, with a suitable muffler, to help move some wind. If the blower is too small, the blower will have to work harder to keep up. The Kinetic blower can have the motor replaced with a larger one rather easily. This can make the blower move more wind than it was originally intended to. The square wood box naturally produces turbulence. However, if enough wind is moved through the blower, this turbulence becomes high enough to worsen the heat problem.

The original long metal wind lines from the blower to the organ also help to keep the wind cooler. If the wind line allows, fins can be attached to help cool the wind. If the heat problem is still not improved, an air cooler can be installed to either blow across the fins, or can actually be installed inside the wind line. A thermostat attached to the wind line will allow a blower room air cooler to react to the temperature of the wind itself, instead of the room temperature.

### Parts and Tools Used

- Assorted screwdrivers
- Assorted sockets and wrenches
- Kinetic shell spreader
- 1/2" -13 tap and die
- 3/8" -16 tap and die
- Consolidated bearing no. 3905 (for thrust bearing)
- NSK bearing no. 6205VVC3 (used 2 for shaft bearings)
- 1/4" gray felt for baffle box (2 yards)
- Hot glue and hot glue pot
- 1/16" felt for gaskets (2 yards)
- Square D Motor starter 8536SCG1V02
- Square D Control Station 9001BG201
- Square D thermal unit (sized to actual motor used)
- Gates belt no. A35 (used 3)
- Motor mounting base 3M281 (this will vary on motor style)
- Browning hub no. PIX 1 1/8"
- Browning hub no. PIX 1 5/16" (bored out to 25mm)
- Browning pulley no. 3TA40 (motor pulley)
- Browning pulley no. 3TA58 (blower pulley)



Above: Front of the tool used to spread the top and bottom half of the blower. The sharp edge is driven into the seam and used to spread it apart. Below: Back of the section spreader shows "shiny" bolts used to spread the sections. The other bolts keep the spreader together.



### Resources

Cousans Organs of Western Park, England supplied the information on the Cousans Organ Company. Their web site is at: [www.cousansorgans.co.uk](http://www.cousansorgans.co.uk)

The people at Motion Industries will help with new bearings and belts. Their web site is at: [www.motionmro.com/motion3/jsp/mi/index.jsp](http://www.motionmro.com/motion3/jsp/mi/index.jsp)

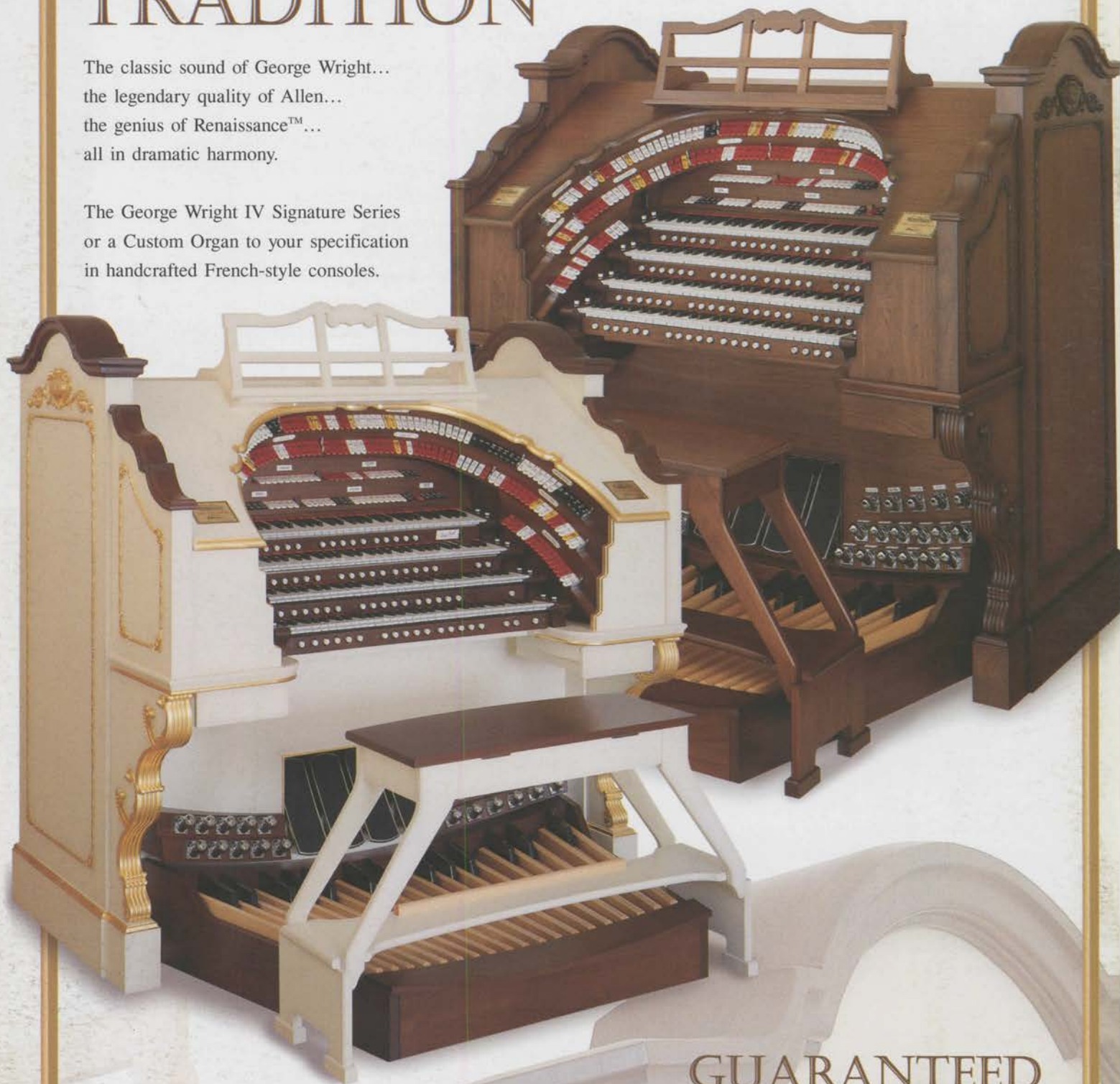
The people at Grainger will help with motor starters and adjusters. Their web site is at: [www.grainger.com/Grainger/wwg/start.shtml](http://www.grainger.com/Grainger/wwg/start.shtml)

The United State Patent Office. Their web site is at: [www.uspto.gov/](http://www.uspto.gov/)

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