

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Theatre Organ

JULY | AUGUST 2010



ATOS

American Theatre Organ Society

AMERICAN THEATRE
ORGAN SOCIETY
Celebrating the
100th Anniversary
of the theatre pipe organ



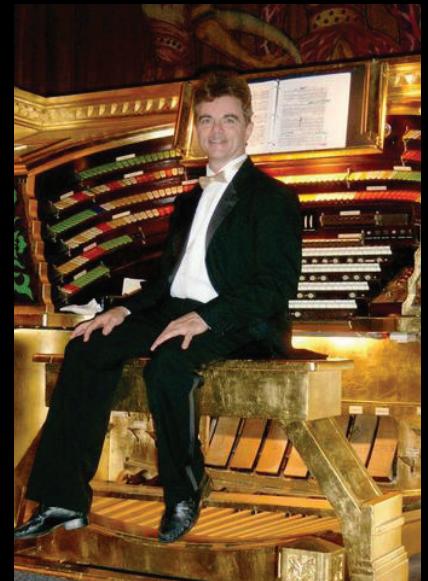
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*The Solo Chamber of the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom Wurlitzer
(Photo by Phillip Groshong)*

On the Cover: The Cincinnati Albee Theatre Wurlitzer in its new home at the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

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Join us again this summer for the fourth annual

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(4/75 Wurlitzer)*



*Adrian Phillips Music Studio
(5/106 Midmer-Losh)*



*Orpheum Theatre
(3/30 Wurlitzer)*

The ATOS Summer Camp is a unique opportunity for young enthusiasts to study and learn the art of the theatre organ through lectures, master classes, and private study. As we embark on our fourth annual summer camp, we will be returning once again to the great Valley of the Sun.

Our core faculty includes Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, and Jelani Eddington. We are also delighted to welcome Lyn Larsen and Charlie Balogh as special guest lecturers. The majority of the coaching sessions will take place at the fabulous Adrian Phillips Music Studio symphonic-theatre organ. We will also take trips to visit many wonderful instruments in the area, including Organ Stop Pizza, the Orpheum Theatre, and many others!

The ATOS Summer Camp is open to all participants up to 30 years of age. Registration per student is \$295.00 (including all tuition, meals, and transportation to and from the venues during the event). Special arrangements will be made for out-of-town students to stay at a nearby hotel. For more information, please contact Jelani Eddington at 262/639.8788 (rj.eddington@atos.org) or Donna Parker at 503/642-7009 (d.parker@atos.org).

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From the Publisher's Pen

As most of you are aware, Jeff Weiler recently resigned as the Editor of THEATRE ORGAN. He has contributed greatly to our organization over the years. When the Journal was in great need of an experienced, guiding hand, Jeff accepted the challenge. Through his dedication and efforts, he created a professional publication with integrity of which we can all be proud. On behalf of the membership, the Board of Directors, and myself, I extend

our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Jeff for his excellent work and service to ATOS. Without his passion and determination, the Wurlitzer book may never have been published. He also initiated the Junchen Technical scholarship and the Simonton Prize. We will be forever grateful to him for these important contributions, and wish him all the best in future endeavors.

As we say farewell to Jeff, we welcome our new Co-editors, Mike Bryant and Don

Feely. Both of these gentlemen have been longtime ATOS members, have terrific experience in the field of publication, and have a strong passion for the theatre organ. As many of you know, they both are excellent organists and technicians, and I think you will enjoy the new thoughts and ideas they bring to our journal. Please welcome them when you see them in Seattle in June.

—Donna Parker

From the Editors

With this issue, some new names appear on the masthead. As Co-Editors, we (Mike Bryant and Don Feely) would first like to thank all those that have preceded us. THEATRE ORGAN has been elevated to a level of excellence seldom seen in a special interest publication. Our measure of long-term success is that when the time comes for us to hand over the desk to the next editor, you will feel similarly about us.

With a new editorial team in place, it is reasonable to expect some shift in editorial philosophy. No doubt, with the concurrence of the publisher and ATOS leadership, we will explore some changes where we all feel it will improve the product. Don't look for sweeping changes, though. There's an old saying "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." We expect that any changes will be fairly subtle—evolutionary, rather than revolutionary.

We'll let you know in this column when we make a change, and ask you to comment. After all, THEATRE ORGAN is your Journal. It needs to reflect your interests, and they are diverse. It won't be possible to present articles on every major topic in every issue, but over the course of a year we hope to wind up with a good balance.

With this issue, we have two changes to report. First, we're introducing a new department, "Fanfare." This department will run from time to time, and will contain accounts of successes that the Editors feel will be of particular interest to our readers.

Our inaugural column features two examples of what to expect of Fanfare in future issues.

The other change concerns our review department, For the Records. This issue we say goodbye to reviewer Andy Antonczyk. We could always count on Andy's reviews to be well-researched and well written, and his contribution will be missed. Andy felt that this change of editors was a logical time for him to move on down other paths. We wish him well, and bid him goodbye with our sincere thanks for his work.

Joining us as a new reviewer is Dennis Hedberg. Dennis has been in and around the "theatre organ biz" for well over 40 years as a business owner, organ technician and recording engineer. He is the author of what many consider to be the definitive work on the physics of tremulants (the article is contained in the *ATOS Shop Notes*). Dennis has contributed to these pages in the past, and will now do so on a regular basis. If you'd like to see the heart of Dennis' home audio system, we've posted a picture of it on the ATOS website. We hear that his wife, Judy (who is normally very understanding and tolerant of Dennis' audio system), has already asked that he wear headphones when reviewing organ CDs....

In the last issue, a letter to the editor suggested a zero- to five-star rating system for reviews, with several different parameters being measured. This is an idea we've discussed for a while and thought

had definite merit. Mr. Burroughs' letter helped nudge us into deciding to go with it. We've streamlined it by consolidating all factors into a single rating. The reviewers will explain how they arrived at the rating.

While we're on the subject of contributors, we are asking you to contribute to your Journal. We need a wider variety of both feature articles and short pieces. You may not think you can write, but part of an editor's job is to take what you submit and help you turn it into a piece suitable for publication.

There's a lot more going on in the theatre organ world than what is reported, and we'll bet that folks outside your own neighborhood would like to hear about your events, your projects, your successes, and even the hurdles you've had to overcome. If you'd like to discuss an idea for an article, let's talk.

Stay in touch.



Mike Bryant



Don Feely

Read more at atos.org



Headquarters



Much Afoot As We Enjoy Seattle And Summer

I feel as if I am a novice on a cooking show. My challenge is to keep about 16 dishes cooking at once, but with only four burners on which to get this all accomplished! That is a comedic capsule glance at what is happening as you read this.

Where to begin? How about with national exposure. It has taken nearly one year, but a lot of communication, a lot of patience, and a lot of meetings have finally generated an event focused in Atlanta but with far-reaching ramifications. On Tuesday, August 10, the Atlanta Fox will screen *The General* starring Buster Keaton as part of its Coca-Cola Summer Film Festival. ATOS and our local Atlanta chapter are involved in a partnership that will also include Turner Classic Movies. Watch the website for more details. Fox Organist-in-Residence Larry-Douglas Embury will provide pre-show music and the traditional sing-along that is always part of these film showings at the Fabulous Fox. Then *Mighty Mo* will be under the control of Clark Wilson for the film. This will mark the first event in what we hope will be many, over many years in partnership with TCM.

Meanwhile, an update on the archives. A team of five, headed by committee co-chairs Allen Miller and Bob Evans, concluded two days of touring, sightseeing, evaluation and meetings with officials at the University of Oklahoma. As I am writing this immediately after these meetings (but six weeks before you will see it), there will be more information available on the website. Suffice it to say the

meetings were productive; the discussion focused on a true partnership; and the fears, concerns and questions raised by many were a major part of the discussions. The convention will feature a full discussion of the plans, including a presentation by Dr. John Schwandt and Robert Wilhelm from OU. This is a positive and exciting development.

Important and official news for ATOS. By the time you read this, and the convention is about over, the membership in attendance will have a full report on the ATOS audit. A full audit is being completed as I write this missive, an important step for our membership to see and understand our financial position. Moreover, this is important as we seek funding and grants for projects, as organizations often want to see an audited financial statement when contemplating providing funding or grants. Our thanks go to Treasurer Paul Van Der Molen, who put in numerous hours preparing for and working with the auditors.

It might seem a bit early, but those attending in Seattle got the full preview of what should be a spectacular convention event next year in Eastern Massachusetts. See the EMCATOS website for more information. And just before Seattle, Philadelphia was the site of the premiere performance of the Lowell Ayars/Macy's Wurlitzer at Greek Hall. Jim Riggs and Stephen Ball did the honors and now the former Wanamaker's is home to two historic instruments. Congratulations to Curt Mangel and his crew. ATOS has much to be proud of in providing major funding for this magnificent example of original craftsmanship.

I must offer an apology stemming from comments I wrote in the May/June issue. Anticipating and assuming can get one in

trouble. I wrote of the completion of the Cleveland convention CD...and was premature. Several wrote and e-mailed, and my apologies were offered while wiping egg off the face. A new procedure this year at the convention will hopefully eliminate the issues that surrounded our inaugural convention CD effort. My sincere apologies to the more than 220 who ordered the Cleveland convention discs. I hope by now that you have enjoyed recapturing some memories. For this year, a promise to do better, and deliver within 100 days of the convention.

The Summer Youth Camp is on tap for later this month, as is Allen Miller's inaugural Technical Experience. More on that later as we report on these important, member-oriented events.

Meanwhile, the Strategic Plan has been completed with input from several sources. It will soon generate a new Business Plan as ATOS looks to the future, which is the focus of this issue of the journal. I hope you enjoy articles on the marriage between theatre pipe organ and symphony orchestra at concert halls around the country; a piece in our new Fanfare department about a new theatre organ installation in a California high school, a feature on our youth programs, and a retrospective on the life of the amazing Rosa Rio, who passed away in May. Didn't we all just figure she would outlive everyone?

There is so much more. We welcome Tim Needler to the ATOS board, and congratulate young Tyler Morkin and veteran Allen Miller who now begin new three-year terms on the board. And we continue to work hard for ATOS and its membership in marrying our past with an exciting future. See you in September!

—Ken Double

Have you remembered the **ATOS Endowment Fund** in your will or trust?

News & Notes

RESULTS OF THE ATOS 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

Total ballots received: 1517
Total votes cast: 4404

Elected Directors:
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Tyler Morkin 621 votes
Timothy Needler 668 votes

Other totals:
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Robert Dilworth 408 votes
David Kalzenberg 460 votes
Don Near 479 votes
Craig Peterson 553 votes
Don Phipps 382 votes

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JULY 18-22, 2010
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MEET YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Tim Needler

I wish to thank those who voted for me, thus electing me to one of the three director's positions on the ATOS board, and I promise to serve to the best of my ability. Much good has been accomplished in the recent past, but much remains to be done to keep ATOS moving ahead and serving its membership

and its chapters. Working together in harmony to accomplish defined goals and seeking consensus on any divisive issues is the work of the board, and I hope to contribute wherever possible. No one person has all the answers, and more input from interested members on any topic would be helpful and appreciated. Please feel free to contact me directly, and I will try to be responsive in return.



Tyler Morkin

It is with great thanks and humility that I accept my position as an elected director of the American Theatre Organ Society. With my three years of board experience as the Youth Representative, I am confident that I will be able continue the organization's forward direction. I will strive to ensure that we captivate a new generation of enthusiasts, technicians, and organists to the organization and the art form that we hold so dear. I will also seek to ensure that board business is done with the utmost transparency and

accountability to the membership. After all, we are here to serve you, our members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you, as members of ATOS. I would also like to extend a special thanks to our local chapter leaders and members. The board of ATOS merely puts the icing on the cake. The cake building happens with our local chapters and their members. We could not do what we do without all of your hard work and dedication.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to serve. We have a lot of work to do in the years ahead to ensure our organization's future. Let's get to work.

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Professional Perspectives

Healthy Connections and Other Short Circuits

BY EDWARD MILLINGTON STOUT III



Our wonderful and most worthy hobby is one link in a chain of historical institutions, all of which should be connected and supported. It seems as though many Theatre Organ buffs are connected and impassioned with the remaining motion picture theatres. Many ATOS members actively support the Theatre Historical Society, another vital link in the chain. The remaining link in the chain of associated interests is the Organ Historical Society, which in its formative years was celebrating the remaining mechanical action organs in America. That noble organization places very heavy focus on true restoration and preservation, a term often held in disdain in shallow wading ponds.

Restoration is one of the most abused and misunderstood terms within the organ world. Restoration means "To Make Anew As Original" and most true "restorations" reside within the corral of the Organ Historical Society. In recent years that worthwhile organization has made a real

effort to remove their blinders and embrace all quality aspects of American organ building, including the Theatre Organ. In the recent issue of *The Tracker*, their house journal, an impassioned article by Jonathan Ortloff appeared concerning the very few original Unit Orchestras remaining. Jonathan is a graduate of the distinguished Eastman School of Music and his instructor, David Higgs, encouraged the lad's profound interest in the Theatre Organ. Jonathan presented a logical argument in favor of preserving the very few original examples of specific styles manufactured. We really do not know how our dedicated members of the ATOS may feel about preservation, but we might just check in with our old friend Clyde Ferndock and his wife, long time ATOS members.

"Zelda, did you see that thing about Theatre Organs in that stick-organ magazine?" So questioned our genial friend Clyde Ferndock, who had just read Jonathan Ortloff's insightful article in their

recent issue of the Organ Historical Society's *Tracker* magazine. Now, Clyde was born with high pressure magnets and somewhat crude expression, but now in his late sixties and after a lifetime of Theatre Organ, he was determined to expand his knowledge and appreciation concerning the instrument that had dominated his life.

Clyde and Zelda became sweethearts while working at the old Reel Joy theatre in remote Moosehead, Montana. The young beauty sold popcorn and candy and Clyde ran the old Simplex projectors. In fact, Zelda was voted Miss Good and Plenty during her senior year in high school. Mechanically minded Clyde tinkered with the charming original style F Wurlitzer in the tiny pit of the Reel Joy. With the closing of the town's only link to true culture and entertainment our dedicated souls bought the organ and installed it in their music room extension of their old farmhouse. The tar-papered music room had actually been a chicken coop years before, but the organ sounded fine and the room was warm and comfortable as long as enough scented candles were ablaze.

While Clyde was in the music room reading Jonathan Ortloff's article in the new issue of *The Tracker*, Zelda's clever little digits were busy at the kitchen table wrapping chest pneumatics for the three-rank Smith chest intended for installation in Main chamber. She always questioned why Clyde wanted to add anything to the organ because her Methodist hymns sounded just like George Wright's "Hymns That Live" recording on the once existing Vaughn organ. Dear old Clyde loved the singing quality and power of the organ and he was convinced his instrument was underwhelming and lacked variety. Over the years he showed his steadfast wife article after article in the THEATRE ORGAN journal celebrating the enlargement and enhancement of little organs,

running for their lives from the overcharged poachers. Now curious, Zelda asked Clyde who this opinionated young man Jonathan Ortloff is and what are his qualifications for blowing the air-raid siren?

“Well, it seems he has graduated from one of them fancy-dig music schools in the east near Kodak and he loves both the high-toned organ music as well as the fun stuff we like.” As the two discussed the young scholar’s article in *The Tracker* magazine, they were shocked to learn “of the 292 remaining public theatre organ installations, only 99 remain in their original homes; of these, a shocking 19 remain conclusively unaltered—out of 10,000 originally built.” Reading on, Zelda learned that their Wurlitzer was one of ten remaining as manufactured. The couple then toasted their little treasure and determined to preserve it for future generations. Clyde added, “You know, honey, this thing in its original state is far more impressive than all the gadgets and additions.”

Satisfied they had made the correct decision, Clyde and his sweetheart Zelda sat in their music room in the company of their two cats and the vibrant little original style F, while in the background they heard the crackling and snapping of the partially consumed Smith chest as it both warmed the room and their hearts. Thank you, Clyde and Zelda.

If there was ever a need for an endangered species act, it should apply to the organ world at large. The first and most active link in the preservation and appreciation chain is the Organ Historical Society and we as members of ATOS could learn much from their value system. Under the protective blanket of the OHS, every little charming four or five rank hand pumped instrument is viewed upon as a treasure in the history of American Organ building. Every organ does not need to have seventy ranks with three thirty-two foot stops to be interesting. As dear Clyde has discovered, size is not the most important element in warming one’s musical heart.

There are different tented camps spread throughout the desert of the Theatre Organ World and civil communication and education is the key to our holding onto what little is left of the builder’s art—yes, ART, dear-hearts, for the Theatre Organ, although a modular instrument, is a true work of art, with wonderfully dated ensembles that still thrill and warm the souls of the general public. We are too few to allow shallow and ego driven self-interest to cloud our judgment and our original mission. Is not any detracting activity to be considered a short circuit, draining energy from what should be our goal? The ATOS has, in its long history, done a great deal in the effort to educate and further the understanding of the Theatre Organ, but some within the organization feel we might just do a little better in respecting and appreciating the Theatre Organ in its original form. The late Larry Vannucci would dash across the room to render unbelievable jazz on an original cigarette burned style D.



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Fanfare

From time to time, an item will be submitted that the editors feel will be of special interest to our readers. We'll invite the writer to expand the item to include more detail, and present it in "Fanfare." In our inaugural Fanfare column, we recognize the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society for its role in the installation of not one, but two theatre organs in Santa Monica High School's Barnum hall, and Sierra chapter for three events that exposed the world of theatre organ to significant new audiences—in one case reversing a trend of declining attendance through a practical application of the "less is more" philosophy.

Sierra Chapter Success Stories

BY RANDY WARWICK

Sierra chapter (Sacramento, California area) opened 2010 with a concert in January by 2009 overall Young Theatre Organist Competition winner Nathan Avakian at the Chapter 3/13 Wurlitzer/Robert-Morton composite at the Fair Oaks Community Club House. Nathan's style draws less from the Crawford/Wright idioms leaning more to a style that is centered in an orchestral/instrumental combo inspiration and origin. Nathan was very well received and we hope that theatre organ remains at least a part of this multi-talented young man's future.

On January 30, Sierra chapter participated in the all-Sacramento-area museums' annual "Free Museum Day," with very short theatre organ demonstrations on the other chapter instrument, the 3/16 Wurlitzer at the California Auto Museum. We talked to and played for many hundreds of the nearly 5,000 people who came to the large multi-sectioned museum. While not a pristine sound environment due to the noise of the large crowd, the Mighty Wurlitzer made its presence known. We told many, "No, there are no speakers. That much sound does come from wind-blown pipes."

March 19 we were back at the California Auto Museum for a screening of Cecil B. DeMille's silent *The King of Kings*, accompanied by Walt Strony. Two weeks before Easter turned out to be perfect timing as a nearly full crowd of 250 was moved by this wonderful film so enhanced by Walt's very appropriate and spectacular "reverently dramatic" style of accompaniment.

April 17 was the return of a Sierra and Nor-Cal chapter tradition, but with changes. The former "Morton Madness," with the same artist playing two shows in a day—one each on two nearly identical Robert-Mortons—is now just one show on one Morton.

Attendance had been declining in the last few years. Ironstone Vineyards, one of the venues, is located in Murphys, California, in the foothills of the Sierra

Nevada mountain range. The vineyard is two to three hours away from Sacramento, and three to four hours away from the Bay Area. After the concert at Ironstone, attendees faced an additional drive of well over an hour to the second venue. The artist had to prepare two shows as well. All of this led to re-thinking the concept.

Chapter officers Carol Zerbo, Dave Sauer, and Craig Peterson, working with Ironstone Vineyards came up with *Pops Concert at Ironstone* which was co-promoted by Ironstone as one of their featured events.

Also this year a charter bus from Sacramento allowed a "no driving" option. The result of these changes was a sellout, with more than double the 95 attendees of last year's event.

Martin Ellis, winner of the first ATOS Young Artist competition in 1986, played a wonderful and varied concert both by era, styles and textures. This organ is definitely a "Snortin' Morton" with a huge sound in the medium size room that belies it "only" having 15 ranks. Martin took to the organ very well, seeming to be very comfortable on it despite having never played it until the day before the event. To see the beautiful site of this event that Martin told the crowd he did not want to leave so soon, go to www.ironstone.com. On the home page slide show is a photo of the music room with the Robert-Morton.



California Auto Museum Wurlitzer (Photo by Terry Clifton)



Appreciative audience at Ironstone (Photo by Terry Clifton)

California High School Receives Donation of Two Theatre Organs

Los Angeles, California—On January 17, 1994, a magnitude 6.7 earthquake struck California's San Fernando Valley near the community of Northridge. More than 60 people lost their lives, more than 9,000 were injured, and the earthquake caused an estimated \$20 billion in property damage.

Most of the property damage was in the west San Fernando Valley, and the cities of Simi Valley, Santa Clarita and Santa Monica. Santa Monica High's Barnum Hall, home of the Music Department, was among the buildings suffering major damage. Santa Monica High School boasts a celebrated music department, comprised of five wind bands, six orchestras, five choirs, two student-run choirs, piano classes and guitar classes. Barnum Hall has now been renovated, and seats 1200 with a full stage—and pipe chambers. The original pipe organ had been removed several years earlier, following the earthquake.

Today, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Gordon Belt, who donated the 3/20 Wurlitzer, and the members of the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society, Barnum Hall is now home to a fully restored Wurlitzer pipe

organ, and an Allen ADC-4500 three-manual theatre organ. The Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society donated the Allen to make practice time available when the auditorium is unavailable.

Henry Hunt, of the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society and Church Organs Inc. of Pasadena was responsible for coordinating the donation of the organ. Henry orchestrated all aspects of this huge undertaking, bringing together all of the people necessary to make sure the project was done properly.

Ken Crome, of the Crome Organ Company, and Lyn Larsen collaborated on the chamber layouts and winding design for the new installation. Ken, who is well known in the theatre organ world for his meticulous and impeccable work, rebuilt the organ and erected it in his Reno, Nevada shop. (Notice the lack of elbows on the PVC wind line in the accompanying picture of a portion of the Solo chamber. All joints were cut and hand-fitted, then glued.) The organ was then disassembled, packed and moved to Santa Monica for installation.

As Lyn Larsen noted at the time, "It was a real pleasure to be involved with the Crome Organ Company in the layout and re-design of the Wurlitzer organ that was recently completed in Barnum Hall at Santa Monica High. I first worked with my good friend Gordon Belt, when I did the design, layout, and specification of this three-manual Wurlitzer for a specially built music room

that Gordon added on to his home in Hollywood. The organ turned out to be a very rich and satisfying sound, and was enjoyed and played for a number of years. But after a move and some down-sizing of homes, Gordon donated the Wurlitzer to Santa Monica High to be installed in the existing chambers in Barnum Hall. Once again, I worked with Ken Crome on the chamber layouts and winding design for the new installation. And after the organ was installed I did a re-regulation of the pipework with Ken Crome, and with the assistance of Ken Kukuk and Ed Burnside."

On March 8, 2010, the 3/20 Wurlitzer was unveiled to the public during the rededication of Barnum Hall.

Lance Luce began the program with a "console raiser" even though that particular evening the orchestra pit lift was not fully cooperating. Lyn and Lance each played several numbers and Lance accompanied a short Laurel & Hardy silent film.

A student organist, Jared Hammer, played a Bach Prelude. Jared's father was the last person to play the old organ prior to the earthquake that damaged the building and the original organ. Lyn Larsen then played two songs dedicated to Gordon Belt.

The Santa Monica High School Wind Ensemble joined the organ in the playing of "Polka and Fugue" from the opera *Swanda the Bagpiper* with student organist Thomas Nagata at the console. Next, the band



Martin Ellis at the Ironstone Robert-Morton (Photo by Gary French)



Lyn Larsen, Henry Hunt, Gordon Belt and Lance Luce at SaMoHi (Lance Luce Collection)

Fanfare

played Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" with Lance Luce again at the console. The sound of the organ and the orchestra together is amazing.

Lance Luce commented "We were trying to show the students and the alumni that were in attendance some of the different things this organ is capable of doing."

The evening was most enjoyable for everyone involved. The audience, made up of organ enthusiasts, students and their families, and alumni, were very responsive to the organ. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm from the younger crowd.

Thanks to the generosity of Gordon Belt and the hard work of all of those involved with the rebuilding and installation of the organ, the school has a beautiful Wurlitzer that the students will be able to learn on, and the auditorium will be able to host events with a theatre pipe organ for generations to come.

—Maureen Fuller and Lance Luce contributed to this article.



Lance Luce at the Wurlitzer console (Lance Luce Collection)



Rear of the Solo chamber. Notice the workmanship on the PVC wind line on the Tibia offset (Lance Luce Collection)



Lance Luce and the SaMoHi Wind Ensemble, Terry Sakow conducting (Lance Luce Collection)

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Our sister organization, Theatre Organ Society of Australia, New South Wales Division recently celebrated a major milestone—fifty years of existence. To mark the occasion, we are reprinting their report of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Many of the participants are well known to ATOS members. We offer our congratulations for their longevity and raise a toast to the next fifty years of success.

Theatre Organ Society of Australia Turns



Theatre Organ Society of Australia, New South Wales Division 50th Anniversary Celebrations 13th & 14th March 2010

Theatre Organ Society of Australia, New South Wales Division (TOSA (NSW)) celebrated a significant milestone on the weekend of 13–14 March. As the compere for the occasion, long-time Patron John Gorrie remarked from the stage that five decades of keeping alive the sounds of the theatre organ in what often seems to be a less than sympathetic world is well worth celebrating. TOSA members from other states had also come to support the celebrations, so it was good to see John and Margaret Sutcliffe (Victoria Division), Peter Beames (South Australia Division), and John and Anne Fuhrmann (Western Australia). The President of the Organ Music Society of Sydney, Godelieve Ghavalas, was also on hand to extend public congratulations from the stage on the Sunday afternoon and wished TOSA well for its second fifty years.

John Atwell (Wurlitzer Theatre Organ) & Mathew Loeser (Grand Piano)

Orion Centre Theatre – Saturday March 13th 2010

REVIEW BY JOHN S. BATTS

The Saturday event, not a normal day for our organ occasions, may well have been a source of apprehension for organisers worried about attendance; as it turned out, numbers were not far short of two hundred. Melbourne's John Atwell brought to the bench an eclectic programme of lighter music, some items rarely heard from the unit organ. Further, Mathew Loeser, currently a Sydney resident, gave variety by singing to his own piano accompaniment. For the weekend the special Celebrations Program promised "A Touch of Viennese Music," plus a selection of "Musical Gems" by Noel Coward and songs by Cole Porter; the Sunday program seemed to offer a more popular selection of items by both the organist (the music of Johnny Mercer, selections from *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946) and from *Bye, Bye Birdie* (1960) and the pianist ("Rhapsody in Blue," "The Blue Danube," plus Scott Joplin hits).

John Atwell began with what was originally a vehicle for Fred Astaire, "New Sun in the Sky" [1931: Arthur Schwartz & Howard Dietz, from the Broadway musical, *Bandwagon*; later made into the MGM film of 1957]. He followed this with Fucik's "Florentiner March" [1907: Julius Fucik] bright and light music, tuneful and bracing—just what you might expect from "the Bohemian Sousa"! This was a good chance to show off some of the organ's traps (especially the snare drum and cymbal). If you thought you recognised this old tune, it could be that you had seen the 1996 British film *Brassed Off*.

A relaxing ballad was next, another piece that John had recorded on his CD *Here's Malvern!* in 2000. "I'll Remember April" [1942: Patricia Johnson, Don Raye & Gene de Paul] is by now a jazz standard, and at the Wurlitzer John demonstrated that he can be influenced in part by the style of American theatre organist, Buddy Cole. A big opening was followed by a wistfully rendered restatement of the slow-moving melody. Lyricism was readily apparent. Here too, via that wonderful addition to TOSA shows, the close-up screen, we could observe some thumbing on the Great manual whilst the right hand was still playing on the Solo manual above; nor was that the only time that technique was employed, and thanks to the screen this

useful technique was also displayed by Bill Schumacher next day; at other times both organists held a note (or two) on the manual above while playing on the keyboard beneath with the free fingers. Eventually, there was a livelier run-through of the chorus with jazzy riffs too, before the close brought some adventurous harmonisation in the style of Buddy Cole featuring Strings plus Vox registration and leading towards a delicate single note on the Chrysoglott at the close.

Mathew entered to begin his contribution, singing along to his own accompaniment at the grand piano and beginning with "It's De-Lovely" [1936: Cole Porter; from *Red, Hot and Blue*]. For this afternoon both artists were arrayed in tuxedos—a nice touch for a special day. On the close-up screen which somehow downplayed colour for the pianist, Mathew looked remarkably like a fashionable Hollywood actor from a 1940s film. His choices of music, too, were of that era because he went on to sing "Night and Day" [1932: from *Gay Divorcée*] and "You Do Something to Me" [1929: from *Fifty Million Frenchmen*], both from the pen of Cole Porter.

Because the piano was located well back from the lip of the stage, the close-up screen was especially useful; it allowed the audience to watch Mathew's face as he negotiated Porter's amusing verbal play and fulsome rhymes, and thereby projected the sophisticated, at times suggestive, lyrics to effect—the masterly timing, the raised eyebrow, the hint of a disingenuous leer—a mastery of which was behind much of Noel Coward's success. Of course, trying to emulate a Porter or a Coward, entertainers best encountered in the intimate surroundings of a night-club, cabaret, or small theatre, is a difficult ask at the Orion—it demands much from both the performer and the listener!

Nonetheless, Mathew continued with "You're the Top" [1934: Cole Porter; from *Anything Goes*]. He then turned to a brace of songs written by Noel Coward, starting with "Someday I'll Find You" [1930: from *Private Lives*] and moving straight into "Nina from Argentina" [1945: from the revue *Sigh No More*]. This comical song about a South American beauty who hates Latin American dancing and falls in love

with a sailor with a wooden leg, gently parodies "Begin the Beguine."

Here and about the lyrics especially reminded one of Coward's affection for the patter songs of Gilbert and Sullivan, yet Mathew carried off the verbal torrent with aplomb and was soon launched into the lyrical "I'll Follow My Secret Heart" [1933: Coward, from the comedy *Conversation Piece*]. What an enigma is Coward! Despite never being able to read music, he wrote more than three hundred songs. Then it was back to Porter for a wildly allusive "Can Can" [1953: Cole Porter, from *Can Can*] with its tongue-twister lyrics and extravagant rhymes ("Astrakan," "Saskatchewan," "Aga Khan," "Sudan," etc.), again showing a polished vocalist. Mathew's bracket closed with "Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love" [1928: Porter, from *Paris*].

John Atwell returned to the Wurlitzer bench for the remainder of the first half to present a selection of Franz Lehár's (1870–1948) Viennese music written for the 1909 operetta *Gypsy Love* [*Zigeunerliebe*]. This composer was actually Hungarian by birth though now associated with Vienna and the waltz. Reputedly he was encouraged as a composer by Dvorák and latterly, one gathers, his music had been enjoyed by Adolf Hitler. What we listened to began in stately waltz-time, worked up to employing the louder reeds, and eschewed any tuned percussions prior to a Chrysoglott/Glockenspiel riff on the Solo. This joyous music was lovingly played, and is heard perhaps too infrequently at theatre organ occasions for the songs are melodious and colourful, here lushly registered, and probably inspired by Lehár's Hungarian background.

John next turned our minds back to 1960, the year of the founding of TOSA (NSW), in order to remind us of a brace of popular songs of that year. First was Bobby Darin's "Beyond the Sea" [1960] which was in the charts that year, a song that made much use of the older "La Mer" by French singer and songwriter, Charles Trenet. This was followed by music that was given the Grammy Award Record for the Year, Percy Faith and His Orchestra playing the theme from the film *A Summer Place* [1959: Max Steiner]. In the playing of this we heard the Wurlitzer piano emphasizing the triplet-based accompaniment.



Patron Dr. John Atwell at the Orion



Pianist and Singer Mathew Loeser

The first half came to a close with an unusual choice of some German music new to this listener, Theo Mackeben's "Tales of Munich." It was a good moment to savour how readily and how well a vast array of music can be suitably transcribed for theatre organ performance. If it was not riveting it was nonetheless pleasant to hear, and it again brings up the issue of just how much traditional repertoire should be featured in a TOSA show. Sunday's selections aired the safer options where popular favourites at both organ and piano abounded.

A 25-minute interval allowed for refreshments and on the Sunday allowed your scribe to hear the Mortier street organ and to look at some of the veteran cars on display courtesy of the Austin Car Club. Both initiatives were praiseworthy and lent a special air to the celebratory weekend.

The second half continued the Viennese motif with nods to composer-musicians Hans May (1886–1958), Fritz Kreisler (1875–1962) and Johann Strauss II (1825–1899). John began with "Today is the Happiest Day in My Life" [1936: H. May], certainly a suitable sentiment for the weekend, though normally associated with the tenor Joseph Schmidt, "the Jewish Caruso." It proved to be a bouncy and tuneful little number. This was followed by a more lyrical and waltz-like "I'll Sing a Song of Love to You" [?1939: from the film *A Star Fell from Heaven*: H. May]. The Kreisler choice was also film music, the song "Stars in My Eyes" [1936: from *The King Steps Out*], in waltz-time once more. The third composer born in Vienna was

Johann Strauss and again an unusual choice of a polka that sounded like "One Vienna" [1965: Johann Strauss II, opus 291], boisterous music if not a show stopper, and reminiscent of the "Tik Tak Polka." A part of me probably longed for more familiar strains from this last composer, perhaps "The Tritsch Tratsch Polka" or "Thunder and Lightning."

Mathew Loeser returned to the grand piano to feature a number of songs by Noel Coward: "Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage Mrs Worthington" [from *On The Air*, 1947]; "A Room With A View" [from the revue *This Year of Grace*, 1928]; "Uncle Harry" [from the musical romance *Pacific* 1860, 1946]. There followed two songs by Cole Porter (1891–1964) from his 1935 musical *Jubilee*: "Just One of Those Things" and "Begin the Beguine." Finally he returned to another bracket of Coward songs, namely "A Bar on the Piccola Marina," the one which follows the hilarious saga of Mrs Wentworth Brewster on the Isle of Capri, and the more familiar "I'll See You Again" [from the operetta *Bitter Sweet* (1928, 1929)].

This contribution was, of course, in a different vein to Sunday afternoon's piano program by maestro Bernard Walz—yes, he will be conducting the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra in June. At the grand piano he demonstrated a commanding pianistic technique. Moments of cascading arpeggios (think Chopin's "Fantasie-Impromptu") interrupted others of delicate touch (Scott Joplin's "Solace"); he produced an array of graduated sounds from fast octaves pounding up and down the

keyboard, whereby sounds resonated and reverberated, to delicate caresses of the notes that seemed to sparkle in the air—and always in the service of musicality. Further, it was notable that both Bernard and Bill performed without scores before them. For the organist such freedom enhances the ability to execute flawless piston changes and to hand-register the stop-tabs with more ease. A further reflection was on Bernard's ability to render popular cross-over music, strains of "Happy Birthday" entangled with well-known passages of Beethoven (think "Moonlight Sonata") or his imaginative and playful mingling of "Clair de Lune" (Debussy) with "Stardust" (Hoagy Carmichael). Once upon a time this kind of approach was not unknown in theatre organ programs too (think, for example, of George Malcolm's "Bach Goes to Town" or Albert Ketèlbey's "Tangled Tunes"). Indeed, perhaps my only regret about the weekend's music was that we heard no duo of organ and piano, a thought amplified when Bernard played solo both "Rhapsody in Blue" (1924: George Gershwin) and what sounded like the "Warsaw Concerto" (1941: music from the film *Dangerous Moonlight* [*Suicide Squadron* in the US] by Richard Addinsell).

Back on the bench with the Wurlitzer in concert position once more, John Atwell completed his European-flavoured choices with a selection from the operetta *White Horse Inn* [1930: by a Czech-born Austrian Ralph Benatzky and Austrian-born Robert Stolz] and then music from an opera by Russian-born Tchaikovsky. The former is much more traditional theatre organ fare,

and I might mention that this music is included on the new CD that John has recorded at Marrickville Town Hall. I think that part of the attraction of this musical is its melodic variety, its dance forms and its different keys. The first song was Benatzky's effervescent "White Horse Inn" with plenty of opportunity for developing a counter-melody via second touch—also true of "Your Eyes" and "My Song of Love" (both by Stolz). A bright "Sigismund" (Robert Gilbert) was punctuated by reed riffs and led into the best-known of its songs, "Good-Bye" (Stolz), and a climax reprising "White

Horse Inn." That musicals are felicitous choices in the theatre organ world was confirmed next afternoon when Bill Schumacher sympathetically played selections from both *Annie Get Your Gun* [1946: Irving Berlin] and *Bye, Bye Birdie* [1960: Charles Strouse].

Saturday's final offering by John was "Waltz of the Villagers" [1879: Tchaikovsky, from *Eugene Onegin* Opus 24], a striking choice of repertoire because, like our 50th anniversary, it is unusual and deserves to be celebrated.

We had enjoyed a good afternoon of music-making, but John found energy for an attractive encore, choosing "Everything's in Rhythm with my Heart" [1935: Al Hoffman, Al Goodhart & Maurice Sigler] from the film *First a Girl* starring Jessie Mathews. The 50th anniversary celebration had got well under way; and next afternoon even more attended the Sunday show during our regular time-slot. Let's hope that TOSA (NSW) will be able to mark its centenary with as much pride and competency!

Bill Schumacher (Wurlitzer Theatre Organ) and Bernard Walz (Grand Piano) Orion Centre Theatre – Sunday March 14th 2010

REVIEW BY DOUGLAS GRANT

A heart-warming around 450 people attended the second of TOSA (NSW)'s 50th anniversary celebratory shows. Show-goers were greeted in the car-park behind/beside the Orion by a grand old street organ bellowing out its lungs (courtesy of Craig Robson), and close by, a display of some grand old cars courtesy of the Austin Car Club. I drooled over seeing a relative of my first car—a 1954 Austin A30, but there were a lot more, including a Rolls-Royce and a Vanden Plas Austin "Princess," all in immaculate condition. A nice touch and a reminder of just some of the vehicles around at TOSA (NSW)'s inauguration in 1960.

TOSA (NSW)'s co-patron John Gorrie welcomed all to the show and dismayed regular attendees by announcing that the organ would rise from the pit "playing beautiful music" but minus the organist. True enough, to the strains of Ray Noble's "Cherokee" the console rose from the pit, minus Bill Schumacher. Instead, John called on Bill to walk on from stage-right whilst the organ rose into position, enabling Bill to "climb aboard" and seamlessly pick up the melody. Something that has been the practice for nearly a century, and which has added to the sense of occasion at concerts and cinema performances throughout the world, is now considered in NSW, a health and safety issue. As a "Letters to the Editor" correspondent wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the 17th March 2010, "Come on. Has anyone been killed lately falling off a rising theatre organ?"

Undaunted by this change of presentation, Bill concluded his opener in fine style setting the tone, and establishing himself as

master of the instrument, reminding those of us who have known Bill for years, as a fine artist, a competent organist, and a great stalwart of TOSA (NSW) for about fifty years. Bill mentioned that the first time he had played for an audience was 48 years ago when he was only 21, making him in his late 30s now (ahem)!

First "cab off the rank" was an item from the 1955 movie *Daddy Long Legs* (which starred a 55-year-old Fred Astaire with a 25-year-old Leslie Caron), "Something's Gotta Give" with words and music by Johnny Mercer. His registrations for the number were full-bodied, varied and sounded totally appropriate.

Bill then launched forth with "Skylark," the music for which was composed by Hoagy Carmichael in 1942. Bill chose a slow measured pace for the bulk of this item utilising a lot of the string stops for accompaniment and more strident combinations for the melody. Even the piano got an airing in this arrangement. The measured pace gave way to a slow restrained conclusion topped off with a chime.

Maintaining the Johnny Mercer genre (who wrote the lyrics for "Something's Gotta Give"), Bill continued with "Tangerine" which was featured in the 1941 movie *The Fleet's In* with lyrics by Johnny Mercer and music written by Victor Schertzinger. His arrangement was paced faster than the original Tommy Dorsey and Nat King Cole versions, but in a jazzy style, complete with piano accompaniment and initially without the tremulants.

Running slightly behind schedule, Bill skipped a number on his agenda, and went

to "People," the song most associated with Barbra Streisand, written by Jule Styne for the Broadway musical *Funny Girl*. He chose to perform the number largely in the traditional manner and exploited many of the wonderful voices of the Wurlitzer, ending with a slow sensitive finale—and a single-note chime to cap it off.

Bill made way for his associate artist for the concert, pianist Bernard Walz whom Bill introduced as having known one another for many years, and often had performed together at various RSL Clubs around Sydney. He added that Bernard had at one time chosen the organ as a performing "tool" but



Pianist Bernard Walz

eventually resorted to the piano as his favoured instrument.

Bernard went straight into his segment with "The Maple Leaf Rag" by Scott Joplin. A marvellous re-creation of the infectious music and style of playing by Joplin was topped off with a temporary halt to the proceedings when he interrupted the audience applause to recommence the "Maple Leaf Rag" with a version which could only be described as "molto accelerando" from "adagio assai" to "prestissimo" (dead slow to insanely fast). He ended the piece by saying "Thank you and good night." He explained that the "Maple Leaf Rag" was dedicated to a black gentlemen's club in Missouri, the "Maple Leaf Club," at which he was engaged as a performer, and which featured on the first floor, as Bernard described it, "a venue of horizontal refreshment."

Bernard chose for his medley of Scott Joplin songs, items which all were featured in the movie *The Sting*. First was the plaintive "Solace" followed briskly by "Easy Winners," ending up with the ubiquitous "The Entertainer," each item played with superb musicianship.

Bernard next chose the music of George Gershwin. He disclosed that at the tender age of nine or ten, around which time he had been studying the music of Beethoven Mozart and Bach: "I first heard Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue' and it changed my musical life." He commenced his celebration of the work of Gershwin with the conventional piano transcript of "Rhapsody in Blue" displaying the high degree of virtuosity required for the performance of this work. As the piece was nearing a conclusion, he surprised us by suddenly morphing into "Someone to Watch Over Me" from the 1926 musical *Oh Kay*, weaving in just a smidgen of the main "Rhapsody" theme. Bernard's bravura style would certainly challenge all that we recall demonstrated by Liberace, and nowhere was it more evident than in "Someone to Watch Over Me." Following on was a slightly less brilliant version of "Embraceable You" from the 1930 musical *Girl Crazy*. This was quickly overtaken by a highly agitated version of Gershwin's "They All Laughed" from the 1937 film *Shall We Dance*. Bernard was in full flight as he briefly moved into "Liza," the 1929 song from the musical *Show Girl*, then he full steamed ahead into "Fascinating Rhythm" from the 1924 Broadway musical *Lady be Good*. With near manic enthusiasm he burst into "I've got Rhythm" also from *Girl Crazy*, before a



Bill Schumacher at the Orion Wurlitzer

crashing return into the closing bars of "Rhapsody in Blue." The audience loved it, as I'm sure would have Liberace.

Bill Schumacher returned to the stage to await the re-emergence of the Wurlitzer console from the bowels of the Orion, before he launched into Cole Porter's "Just One of Those Things." A big opening returned us to the well-crafted Schumacher style as he ranged over the organ's multiple colours and tones for a no-nonsense version of the Porter favourite coming from the musical *Jubilee*.

A change of pace and style, then, as Bill moved on to one of his stated favourites, "Cry Me a River." Arthur Hamilton composed this piece in 1953, described as a "torch song" which he defined as "a sentimental love song in which the singer laments an unrequited or lost love." Bill's performance provided all the appropriate ingredients to adhere to the definition of this bluesy sounding standard from the Great American Songbook.

Bill's last selection before interval was from the American 1960 Broadway musical *Bye Bye Birdie* with music by Charles Strouse. The musical was inspired by the drafting of Elvis Presley into the US Army in 1958. Bill opened with a lilting version of "Put on a Happy Face," one of the enduring pieces in *Bye Bye Birdie*. A segue took us into "One Boy," which is sung in the show by a love-sick pair for their respective beaux, but with the sentiments captured by Bill with the well-tempered Tibias. "Kids" was next on the agenda, the song which expresses the exasperation parents have for their off-spring. Bill gave us no opportunity

to be exasperated with a light-hearted rendition of this popular song, largely untremmed. Onwards into "A Lot of Livin' to Do," another memorable tune from the show, played in a pseudo samba style. Next was "One Last Kiss," a song sung by "Birdie" before an altercation, but such was not the case at the Orion as Bill quickly segued into a big finish with a reprise of "A Lot of Livin' to Do."

After interval, John Gorrie introduced the President of the Organ Music Society of Sydney, Ms. Godelieve Ghavalas. Godelieve spoke of the respective roles of the two societies (classical and popular) and concluded by wishing TOSA (NSW): "Happy Anniversary, Happy 50th, keep playing all your music. We love it, and I hope you'll keep going for another 50 years." The President of TOSA (NSW), Geoff Brimley, spoke encouraging new membership of TOSA, followed by the drawing of the raffle.

Bill Schumacher returned to the stage, followed after a protracted wait for the organ console. He launched forth for the second half of the program with "I've Got the World on a String" written in 1932 by Harold Arlen for the *Cotton Club Parade* and introduced by Cab Calloway and Bing Crosby. Bill's version utilised amongst other things, the piano and strident untremmed brass. Bill's performance of this very popular piece could be described as a full-blown swinging version.

By way of contrast, the next item was another Harold Arlen favourite, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," a song which MGM chief Louis B. Mayer complained "slowed

down the picture” and “our star sings it in a barnyard!” ‘Nuff said. Bill’s arrangement elevated this undoubted classic with a treatment totally sympathetic to Arlen’s intentions. He highlighted all the softer gentler qualities of the organ.

Bill noted a potential overrun of the schedule and decided to omit an item from his playlist, and went on to end his bracket with “Satin Doll” written by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn in 1953. Once again Bill often utilised the piano as an accompaniment for the brass melody line. This was Bill at his best with a measured pace for this jazz classic with a characteristic concluding dissonant chord.

Almost immediately, Bernard Walz was at the Yamaha keyboard with the readily recognisable introduction to Johann Strauss II’s 1861 composition, the “Blue Danube” waltz, or “On the Beautiful Blue Danube.” Commencing softly and gently, it wasn’t long before the bravura style of playing returned, and the Danube was in full flow. Bernard Walz in some respects reminded me of the classical Cuban-American pianist Jorge Bolet in that this similar-sized big man was capable of the most delicate style of playing, and moments later, could almost invert the hammers of the grand. Such was the case with this extravagant version of “An der schönen blauen donau” Opus 34.

Bernard advised the audience that he had that morning received an e-mail from Ludwig Van Beethoven wanting his greetings to be added for the 50th anniversary of TOSA (NSW), and asking Bernard to musically convey his birthday greetings. He obliged playing the opening bars of Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata,” quickly and skilfully weaving in the happy birthday theme, albeit in a minor key. Considering Beethoven wrote the base theme in 1801, that e-mail took an awfully long time to arrive, no matter how graciously it was offered.

Bernard introduced his next item explaining that he often is torn between popular and classical music, and he demonstrated this with an amalgam of Debussy’s “Clair de Lune” (“Light of the Moon”), and Hoagy Carmichael’s “Stardust.” The piece started off with all the lightness of touch and delicacy required of Debussy’s musical gem, then with a very clever transition, he moved into “Stardust,” again with lightness of touch and delicacy. Back into the “Moonlight” as per Debussy’s intentions, but transitioning into total bravura for “Stardust,” until returning with the closing bars and a final hearing from the “Moon-

light,” as soft and gentle as one could wish for the piece. For me, this was the highlight of Bernard’s performance on the day.

Before his last contribution for the afternoon, he explained that he always has trouble choosing items suitable for the day, so he said: “To avoid selecting a single piece, I will play all the pieces I had in mind.” He titled his offering as “The World’s Greatest Concerto.” Now, this was quite something! Straight away into Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No 2*, to be shortly followed by segues into Chopin’s “Minute Waltz,” then the “Fantasie Impromptu” with its more recognisable popular central theme “I’m Always Chasing Rainbows,” followed by Chopin’s delightful *Etude No. 1 Opus 25*, “Æolian Harp.” Across into Richard Addinsell’s “Warsaw Concerto,” then a giant leap into Liszt’s closing bars of his *Piano Concerto No. 1*, followed by a triple somersault with pike into the opening bars of the same concerto. Back into Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” for a well-earned rest, merging into the delightful theme from the MGM 1953 movie *The Story of Three Loves* (derived from the 18th variation of Rachmaninoff’s “Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini”). This quickly transitioned into the spectacular “Malaguena” by Ernesto Lecuona, and finally back into the closing bars of Liszt’s “Hungarian Rhapsody.” A monumental collection of pieces, requiring great accuracy and musicality to be successful. The warmth of the audience response seemed to indicate just that.

Bill returned for his final segment saying “How do you follow on that?” We all waited patiently for the console to again rise from the pit and for Bill to prove just how it is possible to follow an act like that, as he announced his choice for the last bracket of the day, selections from the Irving Berlin musical and 1946 Broadway hit, *Annie Get Your Gun*. In fairly quick succession Bill provided the highly memorable items “You Can’t get a Man with a Gun,” “My Defenses are Down,” “The Girl That I Marry,” “Doin’ What Comes Natur’lly,” “They Say it’s Wonderful,” and the concert topper “There’s No Business Like Show Business.”

Responding to demands for an encore, Bill announced the last item for the day, as one that he said he used to play on the piano accordion, “Chinatown,” with music written by Jean Schwartz as far back as 1910. Encapsulated in that one piece Bill once again demonstrated his well-honed skill as a theatre organist, his ability to bring out the best in his musical interpretations and to fully and effectively utilise the capabilities of the Orion’s marvellous 3/17 Wurlitzer organ. My only regrets for the otherwise great day, were that Bill now lives far away from Sydney and we don’t get to hear him often enough.

Congratulations to all the TOSA (NSW) team and to the artists Bill Schumacher and Bernard Walz for their contribution making it a really fine weekend of music and entertainment, and with everyone’s cooperation, it shall continue for at least another half century.

Things that go bump in the night!

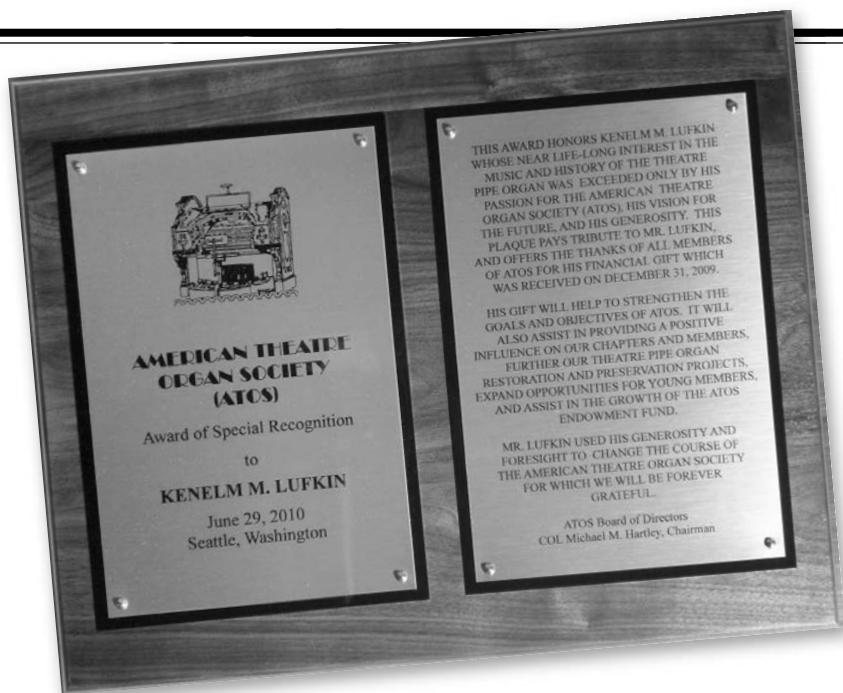
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Kenelm M. Lufkin's Lasting Legacy

BY KEN DOUBLE

To simply say that the late Kenelm M. Lufkin loved the theatre organ and the lure and the lore of the great movie palaces would be like saying Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* liked home.

December 31, 2009 was a monumental day in the 55-year history of our organization. Mr. Lufkin bequeathed the sum of \$900,000 to ATOS, and a matching amount to our sister organization, the Theatre Historical Society. That gift will indeed impact our organization for decades to come.

Who was Ken Lufkin? And how did he come to love the theatre organ and the movie palaces so much that he was moved to give these gifts to ATOS and the Theatre Historical Society?

A call to his friend David Brooks unveiled a few details of Mr. Lufkin's life that should be shared with ATOS members so they might know at least a little about this exceedingly generous man.

Ken Lufkin grew up in Newton, Iowa, and his love for the movie palace and the theatre organ was born in the Capitol Theatre in Newton. Mr. Lufkin worked at the theatre while in high school, and occasionally, the console in the pit would be uncovered and the organ played for

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special events. As it is for so many of us, so it was for Ken Lufkin. He fell in love with the sound of the theatre pipe organ.

Although he never learned to play, Ken Lufkin nonetheless became part of what I call “the most important part of the equation,” a listener—although a very special one whose love of the theatre organ would lead to his incredible gift to ATOS.

Mr. Lufkin attended Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and received a degree in Radio with hopes of a career as a broadcaster. He was encouraged and inspired by a young broadcaster at Des Moines radio station WHO, a fellow nicknamed “Dutch.” Dutch did play-by-play recreations of Chicago Cubs’ baseball games (the plays were received via ticker tape) complete with sound effects. Dutch made a name for himself in radio in Iowa, in movies in Hollywood, and in politics in the White House. Ken’s inspiration was Ronald Reagan.

Mr. Lufkin’s career moved from the microphone and the typewriter (he also wrote local soap opera stories for radio broadcast in Iowa), to broadcast sales. His sales skills landed him a job in New York City, where his career flourished. While

in New York, he had the opportunity to attend movies at the great theatres, and to hear George Wright (his favorite) at the Paramount, Dick Leibert and Ashley Miller at Radio City Music Hall, and other great artists who fueled his passion for this music.

His eventual retirement brought him back to Des Moines, and, when the winters were a bit rough, to Scottsdale, Arizona. He enjoyed attending concerts, the occasional ATOS convention, trips to Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona, and he especially enjoyed hearing and seeing the budding talents of the young players “coming up” in the profession.

Mr. Brooks, Ken’s friend and executor of the estate, expressed great pleasure in knowing that much of Mr. Lufkin’s gift has been earmarked for the Endowment Fund, helping to fund projects for ATOS chapters around the world. Mr. Brooks was especially pleased to know that part of the gift has created an endowment which now fully funds the George Wright Memorial Fellowship. This most appropriate use of a part of that gift now connects Ken Lufkin with his favorite organist, while providing the funding

which annually sends a young person to an ATOS convention.

We will forever be grateful to Mr. Kenelm M. Lufkin for his foresight and generosity. It is truly amazing that one single individual could have such an enormous impact on our organization, and the music and instruments that we love.

ATOS will honor the memory of Mr. Lufkin and his special gift during the convention in Seattle at which a plaque will be unveiled commemorating this wonderful man and his legacy.

So, the next time you sit in a darkened movie palace, enjoying the performance of a young performer who has been a scholarship recipient, or thrill to the sounds of a theatre organ that has benefited from an Endowment Fund grant, or see the wonder and joy on the face of a George Wright Memorial Fellowship recipient at the opening concert of their first ATOS convention, please say a silent word of thanks to Ken Lufkin.

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Teaching to the Future

BY DON FEELY



Top: 2009 Summer Youth Camp at Organ Stop Pizza with Charlie Balogh (Photo by Donna Parker)



A group of Motion Picture Organ students pose for the camera in the spring of 1927 (Lloyd Klos collection)

In 1922, the Eastman School of Music opened in Rochester, New York. Among the course offerings, taught by a “staff of extremely competent instructors,” was a “Motion Picture Organ Course.” Responding to a need for specifically trained organists, the school developed a program of study. For the next eight years, until 1930, students were schooled in a special studio on the sixth floor of the Eastman Theatre Building, utilizing the 2/8 Wurlitzer, Opus 553, installed there. So popular was the Wurlitzer, students had to sign up well in advance for practice time, in addition to paying 50¢ an hour for the privilege. Three years later the summer school bulletin offered this description:

The Department of Motion Pictures of the Eastman School of Music offers two courses of 5 weeks' duration for the summer session. The first is a Preparatory Course, designed for those who work to equip themselves for entrance to the regular Motion Picture Course or advancement therein. The second is a Master Course designed for those who have had thorough organ training and extensive theatrical experience.

Spring ahead 85 years to 2007, when ATOS sponsored the first Summer Youth Camp. Once again responding to a need for theatre organists, Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Martin Ellis and Jelani Eddington have developed a curriculum that respects tradition while embracing new uses of the instrument. The program has received overwhelming support from the ATOS membership. In the first two years of the event, chapters and individuals donated in excess of \$10,000 to ensure that every young person who wanted to attend was able to do so. Recently, three alumni of the program shared their thoughts on the importance of this ATOS event and their feelings about the theatre organ.

Donnie Rankin

Donnie Rankin was winner of the 2007 Young Organist Competition, and owes his interest in the theatre organ to attendance at a Lyn Larsen concert in 2000. He learned of the new summer camp while at the 2006 convention in Tampa, Florida and was one of 22 students that attended the first session in 2007. He is an advocate of the experience, “I hope to attend all the upcoming summer camps. Until I age out. Or until they say, “teach!” A lot of people ask why I go there, since I do play on a professional

basis, and my answer is simple, I’ve still got a lot to learn myself! One of the most memorable events at the last camp, made me feel rather old actually. One of the students performed one of my arrangements! It made me feel that I belong at these camps as sort of a big brother, there to encourage. I impart what wisdom I have when younglings come seeking, tell stories that have been passed on to me, encourage...all the things a mentor should do. And most importantly, show that theatre organ is tons of fun.”

Students have had the chance to play some note-worthy instruments, and all have stories to share. According to Donnie, “The summer camps have given me the privilege to play on some of the most incredible installations in the country. But if I had to pick just one, my answer would not be either Jasper Sanfilippo’s 5/80 Wurlitzer or Adrian Phillip’s 5/106 Midmer-Losh... which are both beyond impressive...but rather Paul Van Der Molen’s 4/26 Robert-Morton. I’ve never been able to put my finger on why I’m so fond of that instrument, but I absolutely love it! Maybe it’s because I have some wild fantasy about having a studio like that myself one day....”

Jessica Tomlinson

Jessica Tomlinson was introduced to the organ by her piano teacher. “He showed me how one could draw varying timbres from it by selecting different stops, and how these tonal varieties were usually created by pipes rather than sine wave generating circuits. I was most fascinated, however, by the fact that it had two keyboards, and a pedal keyboard! Since I have small hands, my feet could help me out!” After attending an event by the Central Florida Theatre Organ Society she caught the bug, “I learned from the short presentation that this organ sounded quite different, because of the tremulants and other stops. I was intrigued by the idea that a pipe organ had been designed to play popular music.”

A highlight for Jessica was the chance to play the Wurlitzer at Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix. “I live near Roaring 20s Pizza and Pipes in Ellenton, FL, and have spent many happy hours listening to it. That’s why it was such a thrill to have a chance to play, for myself, a formidable instrument in a similar setting.”

She also sees the camp as a way for the young organists to learn from each other, “I would definitely recommend it. This is because nobody can really learn in a vacuum. Even if they could, it wouldn’t be half as pleasant. The students at the camp learn from each other, and from the great



The first camp visits Jasper and Marian Sanfilippo’s Victorian Palace in 2007 (Photo by Donna Parker)

instructors who lead the camp each year. It's a chance to make new friends and share experiences that one wouldn't normally have the opportunity to enjoy."

Nathan Avakian

Nathan Avakian won the Young Organist competition in 2009 and will be a featured artist at the convention in Seattle. "I first heard a theatre organ during a trip to the Portland Organ Grinder Restaurant when I was four years old. I was immediately captivated by the complexity of the mechanical aspects of the instrument. I heard about the camp from Donna Parker, my organ teacher, who helped organize the first summer camp. I had previously attended organ camps and workshops but none of them provided much of a chance to meet other kids my age who were also interested in the theatre organ. This aspect of the camp was most intriguing to me." For him, performing on the Wurlitzer at Organ Stop Pizza was particularly memorable. "Aside

from having a magnificent instrument, Organ Stop Pizza is a practical example of the successful presentation of theatre organ in a contemporary context to the general public, which is exactly what I strive to achieve as a concert artist. Observing children and parents having so much fun at the restaurant was perhaps my most meaningful and memorable summer camp experience."

All three students have insights to performing contemporary music on the theatre organ, a topic often discussed by adult enthusiasts as well. For Donnie, who is also a drummer, performing contemporary music seems harder. "Theatre Organists can't really accomplish more than a glorified boom chuck boom chuck on a theatre organ trap set, and I'll be honest with you, that drives me nuts. I guess my straight forward answer to this is, it can be done, but if we're going to do it, we've got to do it well!"

Jessica feels that one must choose music carefully. "There are pieces that work better than others on the theatre organ and on

keyboard instruments in general. Many times, the characteristics of popular melodies make extensive use of the almost infinite degree of expression which the human voice is capable of. Since the organ can't bend pitch or use words, you have to be careful which songs you choose for it. For me, the test is to pick out the melody alone on my keyboard with no accompaniment. If it sounds awful and makes no sense, it definitely won't fly. If it sounds plausible and somewhat recognizable, it might work."

Nathan believes that playing music with which the general public can identify is one essential measure that must be taken to ensure the future life of the theatre organ. "While some electronically based music does not translate well to an acoustic instrument like the organ, there is a vast repertoire of contemporary pop and orchestral music that lends itself very well to the instrument. The summer camp teaches young organists to think outside the box rather than merely repeat standard organ repertoire. When playing music that is contemporary, as well as old standards, the organ becomes an interesting versatile instrument. When only popular music from previous generations is heard, the organ becomes outdated and irrelevant to today's general public. This is exactly the problem preservation groups face today. Without any music that directly appeals to today's general public the instrument does not stand a chance of survival in the coming generations. The effort to play contemporary music is not about irreversibly changing the theatre organ; it is about expanding its versatility to ensure it can provide musical entertainment for years to come."

As the theatre organ enters its second century, it is fitting that the competent instruction of young organists becomes a focus of the ATOS. As evidenced by the success of these young adults, the program is already having an impact on the future of this instrument.

Read more responses from these young organists online at atos.org.

Theatre Organ Online



Donnie Rankin helps Justin LaVoie during open console (Photo by Donna Parker)



Summer Youth Camp attendees and instructors at the Adrian Phillips studio (Photo by Deb Phillips)

“There is something for everyone.”

ATOS Youth Summer Camp 2010

Mark your calendars for July 19–23. That’s the week for the fourth annual ATOS Summer Youth Camp. This year we will again be in Phoenix, Arizona, where we will have theatre pipe organs ranging from the small two-manual Wurlitzer in the First Christian Church, to Organ Stop Pizza’s 4/78 Wurlitzer and Adrian Phillips’ 5/107 super sized instrument!

Several issues back, we explained some changes made in the instructional format taking place this year. The Principal–Associate teacher format is upgraded to a team teaching system, plus special guest instructors. When we researched formats used by many successful summer music camps, we decided this is a step in the right direction to offer a better diversified program.

The ATOS Summer Youth Camp committee consists of Martin Ellis, Donna Parker, Jelani Eddington and me as the committee chairperson. Being redundant to

previous articles, I reiterate that I specifically chose the committee members based on professional performance skills plus teaching experience with this age group. Those ATOS members who are in the education business know that this age group has a tremendous capacity to absorb information, and we are looking forward to another productive camp.

This year’s core team is Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker and Jelani Eddington. Our special guest instructors are Lyn Larsen and Charlie Balogh. Topics range from historical theatre organ performance styles to modern applications. Beginners, as well as experienced organists, are welcome. There is something for everyone.

The event’s hotel is the Embassy Suites Hotel in Scottsdale, convenient to the primary teaching locations. Very reasonable rates have been negotiated by Mike Kinerk, making this very affordable for families. A beautiful pool area is quite attractive during

breaks and after teaching sessions, and an unbelievable breakfast is included.

If anyone knows of an interested youth who would like to attend, please encourage them to do so. Madeline Livolsi, of the Valley of the Sun Chapter, is the Summer Camp Registrar. Please check the ATOS website for registration forms to sign up for this year’s camp.

Also, if you are interested in providing scholarship funds, we are very grateful to receive them. As mentioned a few issues ago, with the generous scholarships that were received during the past few years, the cost of the ATOS Youth Summer Camp to ATOS has been minimal. Please contact me or Jelani for more information. It’s a great tax deduction that benefits future musicians who will perpetuate the theatre organ.

See you in Phoenix!

—Jonas Nordwall

“Chapters can, and should, encourage teachers in their operational area to apply to the ATOS Scholarship program for worthy students. After all, it is the students of today who will guarantee the future.”

Scholarships

In the May/June issue of THEATRE ORGAN, Ed Stout headed his column “The Past Refreshes the Present and Guarantees the Future.” Ed reminded us of the legacy of those who came before, and their influence on those who followed. He cited the example of then-young Tom Hazleton coaching Jim Roseveare, who himself later coached Jim Riggs. Another example that comes to mind is Gaylord Carter’s mentoring of the ATOS 2009 Organist of the Year, Chris Elliott, in silent film accompaniment. Other examples exist today because, as special-interest groups go, the theatre organ world is a relatively small group. But we are passionate.

The realities of life dictate that few, regardless of their passion for the art form, are able to give away their talents—

including their teaching skills—for free. A few are fortunate enough to make a comfortable living performing, but for many of those few the meat and potatoes is the “church job,” and theatre organ performances are just the sweet. For others, the meat and potatoes are outside the music business altogether. Perhaps the most fortunate are those who are able to combine performance with related businesses—organ building, tonal finishing, design consulting, computer relay installations, academic positions, and so on.

There are those who love to teach, and are good at it. But are there enough students interested in theatre organ to make teaching a viable “day job”? And how many of those students are able to afford the going rate for instruction from a qualified theatre organ teacher?

As described in the bylaws, part of ATOS’ reason for existence is “to encourage talented musicians to preserve the art of theatre organ playing, through competitions and awards.” To that end, the ATOS Scholarship program was established.

Good instruction is expensive. A student who takes a one-hour lesson 50 weeks per year can easily run up expenses of several thousands of dollars when transportation and music purchases are added to the instruction costs. While many ATOS chapters, as well as independent clubs, have scholarship programs funded locally, the amount of support a chapter is able to provide varies widely. Independent arts organizations sometimes have grant-in-aid programs, but few have much focus on theatre organ. Occasionally memorial scholarship programs are established, but



Nathan Avakian at the Rialto Theatre (Photo by Donna Parker)

these are often targeted toward a narrow pool of potential recipients (residents of a particular community, or members of some organization, perhaps).

The ATOS Scholarship program has no restrictions on geography, membership, or secondary funding sources. The only eligibility requirements are (1) the student's teacher must apply on behalf of the candidate, (2) the teacher must be a qualified professional theatre organ teacher, (3) the student must show progress to continue receiving funding, and (4) the student must be between 13 and 27 years of age. The student does not have to be a member of ATOS; if he or she is not, then an ATOS chapter must sponsor the student.

How does ATOS fund the scholarship program? Unlike Endowment Fund Grants and the George Wright Memorial Fellowship program, the Scholarship program is not dependent on earnings from a restricted fund. Instead, the Scholarship program is supported out of the General Fund. Additions to the budgeted amount may come from donations targeted to scholarships.

The applications must be accompanied by essays written by the candidates describing why they feel they should be awarded a scholarship, and their interpretations on the different functions and musical styles in which theatre and classical organs are used. The applications must be received by the Scholarship Committee not later than April 15 of each year.

Successful applicants are eligible to receive 50 percent of their cost of lessons, up to a maximum of \$1,500 per year.

Scholarships are also available to applicants who are theatre organ students and full-time students at an institution of higher learning, and who are specializing in organ performance. The criteria for eligibility are the same as for independent students, but the essay must also include a discussion of how they intend to use their musical training after graduation.

Recipients of ATOS scholarships are eligible to apply for funding year-over-year; for subsequent years, the essay requirement is replaced with a letter outlining the student's progress over the past year.

Some of the most active young performers of today were ATOS scholarship



recipients in the past: Nathan Avakian, Jelani Eddington, Mark Herman, Donnie Rankin (all Young Organist of the Year competition winners), Catherine Drummond in the UK, Chris McPhee in Australia, and Ron Reseigh, to name a few.

Some, like Steven Ball, are now teaching others. In addition to his concert and recording career, he is a member of the organ/carillon department faculty at the University of Michigan.

Others, such as Justin Nimmo, have combined their studies of the performance of theatre organ with training in the technical side of organ building, restoration and maintenance, and will help ensure that the theatre organs of today survive for decades to come.

As with any group, there are those who decide that theatre organ performance is not their life's calling. Scholarships given to this group are not money wasted. There are many fine organists who get great personal

satisfaction from learning and sharpening their skills, but simply prefer listening to others to performing or teaching. For the most part, they are no less enthusiastic about theatre organ, and are among the best ambassadors for the art form. Without this vital group of enthusiasts, theatre organ would surely decline quickly.

Some years, there are not enough applicants to use up the budgeted Scholarship funds for the year—money is left on the table. Money left over this year is not likely to be added to the funding pool next year, so it simply represents a lost opportunity for worthy students. Chapters can, and should, encourage teachers in their operational area to apply to the ATOS Scholarship program for worthy students. After all, it is the students of today who will guarantee the future.

A Fresh Air Of Legitimacy

Theatre Organ And Symphony—A Growing Combination

BY KEN DOUBLE

For many years there have been many in the world of the theatre pipe organ who wished the instrument might enjoy a higher level of legitimacy and sophistication in the music world.

A certain disdain for our beloved instrument had been common, led by longstanding misunderstandings, jealousies or outright snobbery generated by many in the classical/church organ field. This is not an attempt to “sling arrows” at our classical organ playing friends, rather this is a simple statement of fact.

More the rule than the exception, the theatre organ was relegated to the status of the “crazy uncle in the corner”; the “Rodney Dangerfield of the organ world, getting no respect”; or perhaps more aptly stated, it was considered a musical novelty.

During the past forty years, we have witnessed a transformation of sorts. The wheezy, dusty original instruments uncovered in the 1950s and 60s, and “beaten into submission” enough to play after years of silent neglect, were wonders to behold for us who thrilled to have the Tibias sobbing again, and the Xylophones clacking once more.

But the level of sophistication of the instrument had to rise if the “wheezy box of whistles” was to be taken more seriously. It seems odd that the advent of the organ-equipped pizza parlors played a role in this transformation, but it most certainly did. Though the 1970s and '80s, installations of larger instruments with greater flexibility and stronger instrumentation created a level of sophistication that the theatre organ had not generally known. It is obvious that in the old days, not every theatre organ had its very own Dan Papp (the New York Paramount technician who kept that instrument in top shape). And as we know, more often than not, the installers in the 1920s were scrambling to stay one step ahead of the plasterers and painters, voicing and regulation thus suffering.

This background sets the stage for not only a theatre organ world today with instruments of a much greater degree of integrity, but a growing marriage between

this type of instrument and legitimate symphony orchestra. Consider the following:

- The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra is now home to a 3/24 Wurlitzer Theatre Organ in the Hilbert Circle Theatre that has been heard with the orchestra in serious music repertoire, with the “Pops” orchestra in a long series of holiday programs, and in solo concert;

- In San Diego, the Copley Center is home of the San Diego Symphony and the former Fox Theatre is also home to a now-rebuilt 4/32 Robert-Morton organ playing to rave reviews from audiences, media, symphony management and its principal conductor;

- In Cincinnati, the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, home of that city’s symphony orchestra and opera company spent nearly \$1.5 million installing the former Cincinnati Albee Theatre’s Wurlitzer organ in the Grand Ballroom of Music Hall (see article this issue);

- In San Jose, the Fox-California Theatre boasts two organs installed by Ed Stout—a four-manual Wurlitzer in the auditorium, along with a new lobby organ, allowing patrons of the symphony and the opera to enjoy theatre organ music at almost every performance, including a Jonas Nordwall concert that received rave reviews.

This is, literally, “music to the ears” of those of us who long for a greater acceptance of the theatre pipe organ in legitimate music circles.

I had the privilege of witnessing some of this, and learning more, in Indianapolis. Last holiday season, Hilbert Circle Theatre staff organist Martin Ellis shared the stage with Donna Parker during a series of holiday pops concerts, and the ISO’s pops conductor Jack Everly could hardly contain his excitement and enthusiasm for the new Wurlitzer organ.

“I was thrilled with the sound and the incredible versatility of the Wurlitzer,” said Everly, who is no stranger to the world of theatre organ having been a classmate of Dennis James at Indiana University and

listening to Dennis’ silent film shows on campus. “The great challenge was how best to arrange for this ‘one-person orchestra’ to fit with the full Pops Orchestra. Martin Ellis turned out to be not just a brilliant performer, but the ideal partner in that our collaboration created wonderful arrangements in great balance.”

Everly, the principal conductor of the ISO Pops Orchestra since 2001, was impressed with the fine musicianship and professionalism of Ellis, staff organist at the Hilbert Circle Theatre, and Donna Parker, who shared the bench for the 20 concerts this past winter. The combination is set for this coming holiday season as well.

I personally had the privilege of introducing the Wurlitzer at Cincinnati’s Music Hall Grand Ballroom at the annual meeting of the Music Hall’s Board of Directors, and the reaction was thrilling. Later, as reported in these pages, Ron Rhode played to a sellout crowd.

This most welcomed transformation has come about due to the confluence of many factors, all the planets aligning as it were. The instruments are better and more flexible; the musicians are also better and more prepared to work with symphonic literature; and most importantly, the decision-makers in these symphony halls—be it management or the conductors—see and hear these instruments as legitimate musical entities that can work well with serious symphonic literature, audience-pleasing “pops” music, as accompaniment with or without orchestra for silent film, or as stand-alone concert instruments to be heard by symphony patrons and the general public alike.

This is an exciting new world for all of us in ATOS and in the theatre organ world as we look to change and raise the image of the organ, and generate new listeners. It’s a good time to let “Rodney Dangerfield and that Crazy Uncle” disappear forever.



Vance George conducts the Chorale and Chamber Orchestra with Jonas Nordwall at the console, California Theatre, San Jose (Photo by Robert Shomler)

Donna Parker and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Hilbert Circle Theatre, Indianapolis (Photo by Bethany MacNeur)

Chris Elliott rehearses with the San Diego Symphony at Copley Center (Photo by Jorge Padilla-Zamudio)



Over the years, the Albee Theatre Wurlitzer, Opus 1680, has been featured three times in these pages (June/July 1976, February/March 1978, and July/August 2009). In the most recent article, Joe Hollmann described the plan to install it in the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom. Ron Wehmeier had the task of rebuilding the organ and the 1925 Steinway. That project is now complete, and what follows is Ron Wehmeier's narrative of his involvement with Opus 1680, from his first encounter in the Albee theatre, through its move to another theatre and then into storage, and finally into its new home in the Ballroom of Cincinnati's Historic Music Hall.



Rebirth in Cincinnati From the Albee to the Music Hall

The console and Steinway Duo-Art grand piano in the ballroom. Chambers are behind the decorative grille (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

The Cincinnati Albee Wurlitzer, Opus 1680, was first installed in 1927 as a 3/19, 260 Special. I first worked on the instrument in the gorgeous 3,500 seat Albee in the mid 60s. Not a whole lot could be done, since the original zephyr skin was in bad shape. I cleaned switches and magnets, removing lots of coal dust in those days, and asked my organist friend, Jack Doll Jr., to play the heck out of it. After some months, it started to sound pretty good, even with more of the zephyr blowing out. The 15" ranks (both Tibias, Tuba Horn, Tuba Mirabilis, and Diaphonic Diapason) all came together making a wonderful full sound with a very big pedal that I remember to this day, even with the heavy drapes covering most of the tone openings.

When the Albee closed, I made a cash offer to buy the organ, as did several others throughout the country. RKO in New York, owners of the Albee, decided to donate the remainder of its organs for tax reasons. So the organ went to a local college, the Ohio Mechanics Institute. The Ohio Valley chapter of ATOS acquired the organ from the college and partially rebuilt the organ over the next few years. It was installed in the Emery Theatre, which was part of the campus. Beginning around 1977, the organ was used for silent film accompaniment and occasional concerts.

In 1999, the organ was removed from the Emery and placed in storage in a warehouse while the search began for a new venue.

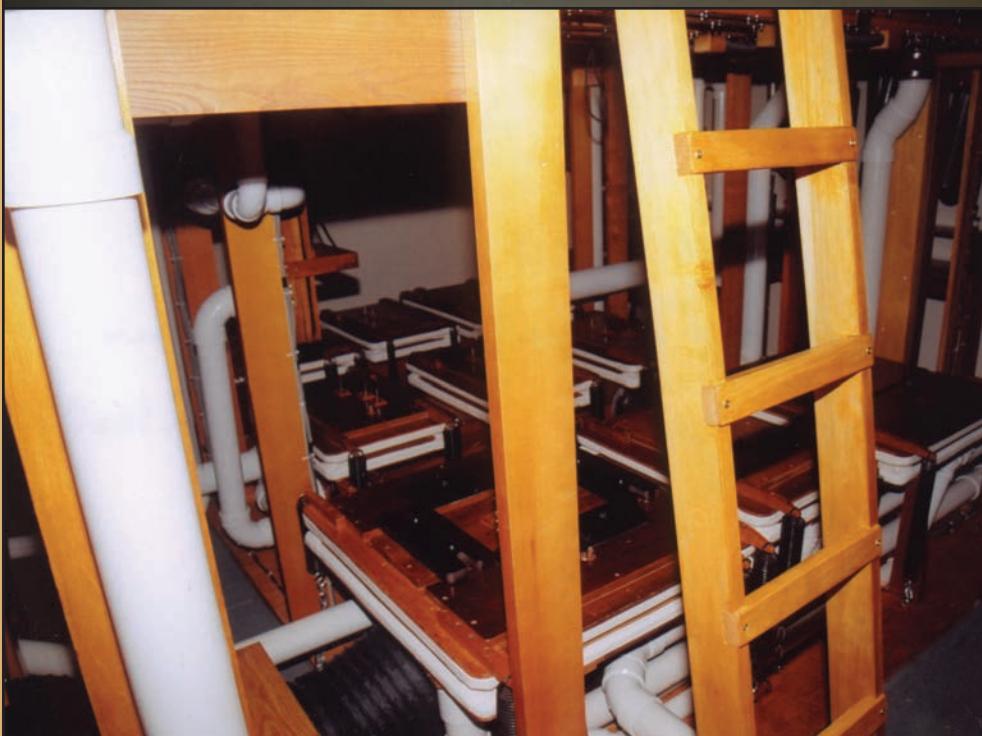
In 2003 Dr. David Billmire, a member of the Ohio Valley chapter board of directors, attended a musical event. He ran into David Klingshirn, and during their casual conversation mentioned that he was looking for a new home for the Albee Wurlitzer. David Klingshirn was the President of Memorial



From top: The Historic Cincinnati Music Hall (Wikipedia collection)

Gaylord Carter at the Albee console at the Emery Theatre (Photo by Michael Detroy)

The chambers will replace this small stage area (Photo by Scott Santangelo)



From top: Pipes begin to populate the Main chamber (Photo by Joanne Grueter)

Main chamber regulators (Photo by Ron Wehmeier)

Chamber walls under construction (Photo by Scott Santangelo)

Hall Society, and said he thought he had just the place—Memorial Hall in downtown Cincinnati.

Soon after, Ohio Valley chapter officials Joe Hollmann and Ken Aultz, asked me if I would be interested in rebuilding the Albee Wurlitzer for installation in Memorial Hall. An anonymous donor was ready to give \$50,000 for the project. I inspected the organ, which was in rough shape, and also checked out Memorial Hall. It was a grand old building, restored to perfection, but had no air conditioning. I accepted the job, with the condition I must meet with the donor and ask for additional funding.

I made drawings of the proposed installation, built a scale model, and compiled a list of needed modifications to the building. A nice chamber space was directly behind the proscenium, but the solid ornate plaster would need to be torn out and replaced with tasteful open grille. I made the presentation to the anonymous benefactor and his foundation board. I explained to them what needed to be done to Memorial hall for a good installation, and that just the rebuilding of the Wurlitzer would exceed \$500,000. The foundation's president was an organist, and he loved the Albee Wurlitzer, having heard it as a young person. He and the board were ready to proceed, and agreed to fund the full amount!

In late 2005, David Klingshirn called and asked if he could bring a friend from Music Hall over to see my Wurlitzer. When they arrived in early January of 2006, he introduced Norma Petersen, who was (and is) President of the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall. David said he had some good news...and some bad news.

The bad news was that the Memorial Hall installation was off, since the proscenium plaster cannot be removed. The good news was that officials at Music Hall thought the Ballroom would make a fine home for the Wurlitzer. I said I would check out the Ballroom, since I had never been in the place. I then played several selections on my Wurlitzer for Norma. She was blown away, and offered her full support.

I inspected the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom. It is a wonderful, big place 80' wide, 210' long, with a vaulted ceiling 18'6" in the center down to 12' on the sides. It has seating for 1,300 on a hardwood floor, a great computer-controlled lighting system with effects, and many artifacts taken from the Albee were incorporated in the Ballroom. There is a 40' long bar with a kitchen for food preparation, and a fine sound

system. Best of all, there are great acoustics for the Wurlitzer.

A new organ chamber could be built on the west side, 18' deep by 30' wide, replacing the present stage, since another stage on the south side is the most used. I was excited and ready to design the new chamber, but the Wurlitzer installation needed to be approved by the City of Cincinnati, owners of the building, Cincinnati Arts Association, manager of the complex, and Music Hall officials.

After many meetings, which went on for a year, all were in agreement. I proceeded with my drawings and specification, glaserworks Architects was hired and developed working drawings, Messer Construction was given the contract to construct the chambers, console and piano display room and the blower room. Contracts were signed in June 2007, and our benefactor funded the entire project in the amount of \$1,410,000.

Over the years in Emery, some additional ranks had been added, and others had been changed out. With the exception of the Schopp Post Horn, the added ranks were removed to take the organ back to the rank complement that existed at the Albee. One of the original Vox Humanas had been taken out and replaced with an Estey. Ken Aultz had acquired the original, gave it back to Ohio Valley chapter and it is now back in the organ! The chapter had purchased a Salicional and Voix Celeste from Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati (Opus 574, a three-manual style CH). Both ranks were stored in trays, in excellent condition, and I used them in the Main. I also made the Concert Flute from the same organ into a Flute Celeste. I bought a 1928 Solo String, and made this the Solo String Celeste.

Our donor had requested a classical division after hearing mine at home. We installed a seven rank division playing on 4-½" pressure: Principal ranks at 8', 4' and 2', and a four-rank Mixture (19-22-26-29), all playable from the Great. That addition provides a good solid foundation for performances of classical numbers, and since there are frequent weddings in the ballroom, it makes the organ just that much more flexible.

Originally the Albee had both the Diaphonic Diapason and the Open Diapason in the Main. The Open was placed in the Solo and extended down into a late Wurlitzer 16' metal Diaphone set.



From top: Main chamber (Photo by Phillip Goshong)
Solo chamber (Photo by Phillip Goshong)



There are 4 sets of expression shutters 8'3" tall by 7'9" wide, two for each chamber. It is nice that the Albee had these large shades, as they open up the entire front wall of the chambers. The Wurlitzer is Mighty in this big room.

The 15-hp motor on the Spencer blower was rewound for 208v, and delivers 27" to the chambers via a 16" diameter feed pipe 100' long. The bearings were replaced, the rusty case and fans sand blasted, and the case painted. The fans were balanced, and the 1200 rpm Spencer is a thing of beauty. I built a 2' x 2' x 6' muffler box with adjustable flap valve. This works great, with no loss in pressure.

The blower room, console/piano/computer display room, and chambers have a dedicated HVAC system, to maintain 70°F at 40 percent humidity at all times. Since the large ballroom is only heated and cooled for events, this work works out fine for the instrument.

Due to the tremendous vibration created by the Wurlitzer, I specified extra-heavy construction of the chambers. The outer walls are 2 x 6 studs with two layers of ¾" plywood glued and screwed on both sides. The dividing wall between the Solo and Main has 2 x 12 studs on 12" centers, with the two layers of ¾" plywood on each side glued and screwed. Ceiling construction is the same. The entire ballroom has a finished hardwood floor which is nailed to sleepers, with a concrete floor underneath. Thus the floor acts as a sound board, and transmits the bass of the organ.

All the rebuilding in my shop was done to factory new condition. All valves, gaskets, leather nuts, and pneumatics were done. Hot glue was used throughout, with CPL Hairsheep skins. For the shade pneumatics I used kangaroo skins. For the 14 tremis I used OSI heavy rubber cloth, and medium cloth for the percussions.

I had already rebuilt the 1925 Steinway Duo-Art 6'6" piano, which replaced a junk upright player. The Steinway is now playable from the Wurlitzer console.

Knowing I could not do all this rebuild-work myself and complete the project

From top: Lyn Larsen and Ron Wehmeier during tonal finishing (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

An audience of over 700 at the Dedication Concert (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

Joe Hollmann, Ohio Valley Chapter president, Ron Rhode, Ron Wehmeier (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

in two years, I sent the console and manual chests to Kenny Crome. He also provided the proper size regulators and wind trunks. There are 19 regulators, and three of the large size are used for offsets. Carlton Smith went to Reno and applied the console ornamentation. Rose Crome applied the gold leaf.

Installation of the Wurlitzer began in the ballroom September 10, 2008. The move was done in stages, requiring many trips by my piano movers (three strong guys and a big truck). I also loaded my van with smaller parts every day. After arriving on Elm Street at 6:00am, the parts were moved up to the ballroom on the freight elevator. As we unloaded each day, everything would go directly into the chamber. This way we did not need a staging area in the ballroom. Each part was then installed according to the drawings I had made many months earlier. This was a process I repeated many times over the following months.

When all the chests, regulators, percussions, expression shades, and 16' pipes were in place, I started winding with schedule 40 PVC pipe. This took several months. After the wind pressures were set, we installed the pipes, holding the primary valve wires to blow out the holes.

I ordered the Uniflex 3000 computer control from Tim Rickman, and was sure in a bad fix with his death. Tim was always nice to deal with and glad to help out with any questions on the phone. We all miss Tim! To the rescue came Dick Wilcox, the developer of the Uniflex system. Dick knew I was in the middle of this big job, ready for his driver boards, and had received nothing from Tim. Dick took over, sent me what I needed, and spent hours with me on the phone, instructing me on the new system.

When I had everything wired up, I turned the system on. All the indicator lights lit, and no smoke appeared, but neither did any sound. I called Dick. The next day I picked him up at the airport, and after about an hour on the job, the organ was playing. Dick spent the next several days with me getting out bugs, and converting tunes recorded on my home computer to play on the Music Hall 3000!

The last phase of this project was to invite Lyn Larsen to help me with the final tonal finishing. This important process took just seven days, since Dave Hazelton, my associate for the last 37 years, and I had spent weeks doing tonal work and tuning in preparation for Lyn's arrival. I must say that working with Lyn is a complete pleasure. Since I respect his approach to everything



*Clockwise from top left: Percussion stack in the Solo chamber (Photo by Joanne Grueter)
Main chamber (Photo by Ron Wehmeier)
Ron Rhode at the Dedication Concert (Photo by Phillip Grashong)
Ron Wehmeier touches up a string pipe (Photo by Phillip Grashong)*

Wurlitzer, doing what he requested of me (always in a nice way) made this tedious process fun. And when I took a break out of the chamber, he treated me to one of his great arrangements to test the instrument.

Lyn also drew up the console specifications, and I consulted with him on the chamber layout. I always said when my idol and friend George Wright passes, Lyn will be and is number one!

As you can tell, I am pleased with how well the Wurlitzer sounds in the ballroom, as are the many people who have heard my demonstrations. Ken Double played a preview concert for invited guests in September, sponsored by the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall. Ken said "the Wurlitzer is sensational, and the installation of this magnificent instrument is stellar!" Ron Rhode played the dedication concert November 28, 2009, to a sold out house of over 700. "It was an honor to be here," he said, adding that this concert was one of the highlights of his 36-year career.

It was indeed an honor and pleasure for me to rebuild and install the Albee Wurlitzer in the Music Hall Ballroom. Special thanks go to Norma Petersen, President, Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, as she made this project happen; to the management and staff of Music Hall, for their kindness, help and cooperation; to the owners of the organ, Ohio Valley Chapter-American Theatre Organ Society, Joe Hollmann, President; and to our Donor Foundation, whose generosity has ensured that the people of Cincinnati will be able to enjoy the unique art form that is Theatre Organ for decades to come.

Read more at atos.org



The newly rebuilt and refinished console (Photo by Phillip Groshong)

Music Hall Wurlitzer 3 manuals, 31 ranks Chamber Analysis

MAIN CHAMBER

	Pipes
8	Vox Humana 61
8	Tibia 85
16	Diaphonic Diapason 73
16	Tuba Horn 73
8	Clarinet 61
16	Concert Flute 97
8	Viol d'Orchestre 85
8	Viol Celeste 85
4	Flute Celeste 73
8	Salicional 73
8	Voix Celeste 73
8	Principal (42 scale) 61
4	Octave (56 scale) 61
2	Super Octave (70 scale) 61
	Mixture IV 244

	Notes
	Chrysoglott 49
	Zimbelstern
	Temple Bells

SOLO CHAMBER

	Pipes
8	Vox Humana 61
8	Brass Sax 61
8	Quintadena 61
8	Brass Trumpet 61
8	Oboe Horn 61
8	Kinura 61
8	Orchestral Oboe 61
8	Solo String 73
16	Tibia 97
8	Tuba Mirabilis 61
8	Solo String Celeste 61
16	Open Diapason 73
8	Post Horn 61

	Notes
	Xylophone 37
	Marimba 49
	Chimes 25
	Glockenspiel 37
	Sleigh Bells 25

Traps and effects, 21 units

GENERAL

Thumb Pistons: 15 General, 10 Solo, 10 Great, 10 Accompaniment, Set, General Cancel, Range
 Divisional Nameplates cancel division
 Toe Studs: 6 (1 - 5 Combination, 6 32' Rev.)
 Expression Pedals: 3 (Piano, Main, Solo/Master)
 Sostenuto/Piano Sustain switch on Solo/Master
 Crescendo Pedal
 Piano Levers, Upper (1st Touch / 2nd Touch)
 Roll Cymbal/Crash Cymbal
 Snare Roll/Bass Drum & Crash
 Piano Levers, Lower (single touch)
 Crash Cymbal
 Chinese Gong
 1925 Steinway Style OR - 6'6" Duo-Art
 15-hp Spencer Blower, 3000 CFM, 27" w.p.
 44 Expression Shades
 14 Tremulants
 215 Stop Tabs
 Uniflex 3000 Computer Relay
 19 Regulators/Reservoirs

Stoplist

SOLO

English Horn	8
Tuba Mirabilis	8
Trumpet	8
Tuba Horn	8
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa (S)	8
Tibia Clausa (M)	8
Clarinet	8
Saxophone	8
Orchestral Oboe	8
Kinura	8
Solo String (2 ranks)	8
Salicional (2 ranks)	8
Oboe Horn	8
Vox Humana (S)	8
Vox Humana (M)	8
Piccolo (S)	4
Piccolo (M)	4
Solo String (2 ranks)	4
Salicet (2 ranks)	4
Vox Humana	4
Twelfth (S)	2½
Twelfth (M)	2½
Piccolo (S)	2
Piccolo (M)	2
Tierce	1½
Piano	8
Sub Harp	
Harp	

Xylophone	
Glockenspiel	
Chrysoglott	
Sleigh Bells	
Cathedral Chimes	
Sub Octave	
Unison Off	
Octave	

GREAT

English Horn (Ten C)	16
Tuba Mirabilis (Ten C)	16
Trumpet (Ten C)	16
Ophicleide	16
Diaphone	16
Diaphonic Horn	16
Tibia Clausa	16
Tibia Clausa (Ten C)	16
Clarinet (Ten C)	16
Saxophone (Ten C)	16
Orchestral Oboe (Ten C)	16
Solo String (2 rks) (Ten C)	16
Viol d'Orchestre (2 rks) (Ten C)	16
Salicional (2 rks) (Ten C)	16
Bourdon	16
Vox Humana (S) (Ten C)	16
Vox Humana (M) (Ten C)	16
English Horn	8
Tuba Mirabilis	8
Trumpet	8
Tuba Horn	8
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Open Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa (S)	8
Tibia Clausa (M)	8
Clarinet	8
Saxophone	8
Orchestral Oboe	8
Kinura	8
Solo String (2 ranks)	8
Viol d'Orchestre (2 ranks)	8
Salicional (2 ranks)	8

Oboe Horn	8
Quintadena	8
Concert Flute (2 ranks)	8
Vox Humana (S)	8
Vox Humana (M)	8
Fifth (Solo Tibia)	5½
Octave	4
Octave (Open)	4
Piccolo (S)	4
Piccolo (M)	4
Solo String (2 ranks)	4
Viol (2 ranks)	4
Salicet (2 ranks)	4
Quintadena	4
Flute (2 ranks)	4
Vox Humana (S)	4
Vox Humana (M)	4
Tenth	3½
Twelfth (S)	2½
Twelfth (M)	2½
Twelfth (Flute)	2½
Piccolo (S)	2
Piccolo (M)	2
Fifteenth	2
Piccolo (Flute)	2
Tierce (S)	1½
Larigot (S)	1½
Fife (Flute)	1
Sub Octave	
Unison Off	
Octave	
Solo Sub to Great	
Solo to Great	

ACCOMPANIMENT

English Horn	8
Tuba Mirabilis	8
Trumpet	8
Tuba Horn	8
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Open Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa (S)	8
Tibia Clausa (M)	8
Clarinet	8
Solo String (2 ranks)	8
Viol d'Orchestre (2 ranks)	8
Salicional (2 ranks)	8
Oboe Horn	8
Quintadena	8
Concert Flute	8
Flute Celeste (Ten C)	8
Vox Humana (S)	8
Vox Humana (M)	8
Octave (Open)	4
Piccolo (M)	4
Solo String (2 ranks)	4
Viol (2 ranks)	4
Salicet (2 ranks)	4
Flute	4
Flute Celeste	4
Vox Humana (S)	4
Vox Humana (M)	4
Twelfth (Flute)	2½
Piccolo (Flute)	2
Piano	8
Sub Harp	
Harp	
Chrysoglott	
Octave	
Solo to Accomp	

Solo to Accomp

PEDAL

Bourdon (Resultant)	32
Ophicleide	16
Diaphone	16
Tibia Clausa	16
Diaphonic Horn	16
Bourdon	16
English Horn	8
Tuba Mirabilis	8
Tuba Horn	8
Octave	8
Open Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa (S)	8
Tibia Clausa (M)	8
Clarinet	8
Solo String (2 ranks)	8
Cello	8
Flute	8
Piano	16
Accomp to Pedal	
Great to Pedal	
Great Octave to Pedal	
Solo to Pedal	

KEY CHEEK CONTROLS

ACCOMP BASS END

Projector	
Police Whistle	

ACCOMP TREBLE END

Zimbelstern Rev.	
Wind Chimes	

GREAT TREBLE END

Percussion / Splash Cymbal	
----------------------------	--

BACKRAIL

Upper Row	
-----------	--

PEDAL

Bass Drum	
Tympani	
Crash Cymbal	
Tap Cymbal	
Triangle	

ACCOMPANIMENT

Snare Drum	
Tom Tom	
Tambourine	
Castanets	
Wood Block	
Sand Block	
Tap Cymbal	

GREAT

Piano	8
Harp	
Xylophone	
Glockenspiel	
Chrysoglott	
Principal	8
Octave	4
Super Octave	2
Mixture IV	

GENERAL

String Celestes Off	
Great Flute Celeste Off	
Percussion Re-It On	
Piano Sustain (Kick Switch)	

Lower Row

ACCOMPANIMENT 2ND TOUCH

English Horn	8
Tuba Mirabilis	8
Trumpet	8
Tuba Horn	8
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa (S)	8
Clarinet	8
Piccolo (S)	4
Piano	8
Sub Harp	
Octave Glockenspiel	
Cathedral Chimes	
Triangle	
Great Octave to Accomp	
Solo to Accomp	
Solo to Accomp Pizzicato	

GREAT 2ND TOUCH

English Horn	16
English Horn	8
Solo to Great	
Solo to Great Pizzicato	
English Horn Pizzicato	16

TREMULANTS

Main	
Clarinet	
Solo 1	
Solo 2	
Tibia Clausas	
Vox Humanas	
Tuba / Diapason	
Tuba Mirabilis	
English Horn	

Controls in Bass-end drawer

Fire Gong	
Fire Siren	
Train Whistle	
Train Bell	
Horses Hooves	
Surf	
Acme Siren	
Door Bell	
Triangle	
Splash Cymbal	
Wood Block	
Chinese Gong	
Bird	
Klaxon	

Controls in Treble-end drawer

Digital Display	
Transposer (Up - Unison - Down)	
Recorder: Start, Finish, Play	
File Up	
File Down	
Combination Load	
Combination Save	
Master Expression	
Accomp Traps to 2nd Touch	
Memory 1-8	

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—Rev. Jerry Rittenhouse, senior pastor
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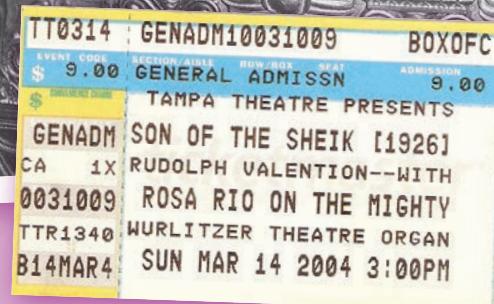
ROB RICHARDS TOURING ORGAN

Rosa Rio Remembered

“Rosa Rio was a star, but...she had the ability to make you feel like a star, just being in her presence.”



*Rosa Rio, Brooklyn Paramount 1934
(Tampa Theatre Collection)*



(Rosa Rio's life story has been told in these and other pages many times; Lloyd Klos wrote "The Story of Rosa Rio," for the February 1970 issue of THEATRE ORGAN (reprinted in the May/June 2009 issue, accompanied by a side piece by Lew Williams, Terry Snyder and Donna Parker). Tara Schroeder's profile of Rosa, "Still Coming Up Rosa," appeared in the September/October 2001 issue, and is available as well on the Tampa Theatre's website, www.tampatheatre.org.

Rosa passed away on Friday, May 13. We invited friends to share memories of Rosa with us through words and images. We've tried to avoid editing for anything other than spelling and grammatical errors in order to keep everything "straight from the heart." As additional remembrances come in, we'll post them on the ATOS website. —Ed.)

Terry Snyder

The rain was pouring after a typical Colorado midday thunderstorm when I saw a small, rather drenched lady racing to the door of the Ft. Collins auditorium. The Wurlitzer was playing the workshop attendees out to lunch as she was arriving to listen. We got to the door about the same time, so I held the door open for her. As she removed the folded newspaper (which acted as a hat) from her head, she looked up at me and flashed a big smile, illuminated with two of the most beautiful brown eyes I'd ever seen. She said, "Thank you."

At that moment I had no idea who she was, nor that it was to be the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

I knew the name Rosa Rio because I had purchased a music book, *The Mighty Theatre Organ*, which included one of Ms. Rio's compositions. I took the book to the workshop hoping for an autograph. I was surprised the following day when I learned the lady I had opened the door for was Ms. Rio herself. At lunch I asked her to sign it. As she wrote a note and signed the book, she smiled and flashed those big brown eyes at me again. This time Rosa was dressed to the nines, but those brown eyes shone brighter than any of the diamonds she was wearing.

Then came the evening performance where Ms. Rio was billed to play a silent film. As she was being announced in the darkened auditorium, the spotlight showing

only a hole on the stage, the low rumble of a 16' Diapason began to speak...softly at first, then louder and louder. Finally, as the words "Rosa Rio" were spoken, the full organ began playing her famous theme song and that small, drenched lady was transformed into an absolute giant wearing a gorgeous gold lamé outfit. The crowd was on its feet. Rosa welcomed the audience first by explaining a bit about the film and then warmed them further by playing some Gershwin on the concert grand piano before the film.

Returning back home to Oregon after the workshop, I wrote Ms. Rio a brief thank you note for all she had taught me at the event. Ten days later I received a long and interesting letter ending with "keep in touch." Over the next eleven years, through many letters and several visits, we certainly did keep in touch.

My final thought about my dear friend is this: Ms. Rosa Rio was a star, but when you met her or were around her, she had the ability to make you feel like a star, just being in her presence.

— *Respectfully submitted with lots of love,*
Terry Snyder

encouragement and positive thoughts about my music. Addressing some of the difficulties she had experienced as a female in the predominantly male world of theatre organ, she welcomed me into the fold. That was the first of many letters that would randomly appear through the years. After forty years as a professional theatre organist, those welcome letters never failed to give me the same thrill as the first one.

She always told a great joke when we spoke on the phone, wanted to know what was happening with my music, and was genuinely interested in everything else I was doing in my life.

She always managed the perfect balance of being able to handle herself around the toughest business men—complete with the appropriate language when needed—and still remain a lady. This proved to be one of her greatest strengths, and a skill which she insisted that girls in the music industry learn.

There was no better teacher.

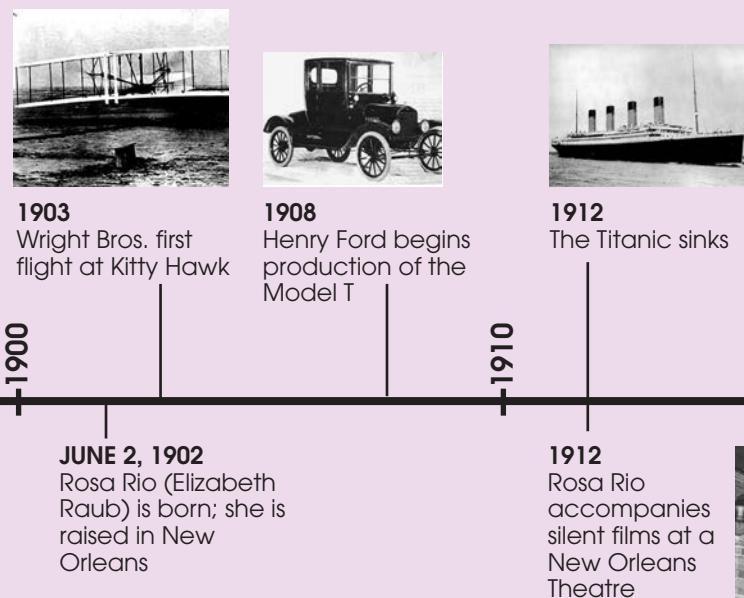
The question on everyone's mind was how she reached her enviable age, yet remained so vital, active, interesting, and full of life. Her answer always was the same: Maintain a proper balance between emotional, spiritual, and physical health.

I stood at the back of the Tampa Theatre a few years ago during the ATOS convention, watching in awe as the 105-year-old Rosa played a full-length silent film. She looked like a million dollars, never missed

Donna Parker

As a very young girl, I was thrilled to receive a beautifully handwritten letter from the famous Rosa Rio. I had played at an open console at an ATOS convention, and she responded with a letter filled with energy,

A Rosa Rio Timeline



“...listen to your inner voice... everyone has something inside that they are blessed with.”

a cue, her music was spot-on, and I knew I was living in an exceptional moment. I wanted time to stand still so that I could savor every second. Looking to my left and right, I saw my colleagues watching with the same admiration. Here was an artist who had blazed trails and enabled us to do that which we loved. Our eyes connected, heads shook, and there were few dry eyes. Mere words would be too feeble to describe the experience.

I will miss everything about my mentor and friend. How fortunate I was, that day when she extended her hand in friendship to a kid who just wanted to play the theatre organ.

—Donna Parker

John Clark McCall Jr.

I have always maintained a special fondness for ladies for whom flowers were easy to select! My remembrance of this special lady conjures up a musician of the first order—a seemingly limitless supply of bold determination, lust for life, and a grade-A sense of humor.

I got to know Rosa at about the time she had completed a century of living on this planet and, at that juncture, she had earned the right to “tell it like it was”—which she

did without ever looking back or paraphrasing her brutally honest delivery. Actually, I first saw that wonderful sense of humor in a letter she wrote to THEATRE ORGAN telling of the halcyon days of her New York radio work and her friendship with George Wright. After George left radio and his engagement at the Paramount Wurlitzer in Gotham he returned to the West Coast and Rosa commented, “I wonder whatever became of him?”

Blessed with luscious good looks—until her goodbye—Rosa brought a sense of style and star quality to the world of female theatre organists that has only been equaled by perhaps Helen Crawford. I often likened her to Gloria Swanson and she was certainly in that mode on March 14, 2004 when she presided at the Tampa Theatre’s Wurlitzer for the 1926 silent film, *Son of the Sheik* with Rudolph Valentino. I had driven down from Georgia armed with a dozen yellow roses for Rosa’s dressing room. After searching for a parking place (no easy task when Rosa played the Tampa; she really packed the house), I literally bumped in to Rosa and her husband, Bill Yeoman, as they rounded the corner for the dressing room entrance in the basement of the theatre. After a big hug she quickly dispatched Bill on some mission (he always lovingly

obliged) and took me down to the bowels of the theatre while I carried her make-up case. I told her I had some flowers for her in the car and before even seeing them she exclaimed, “Oh, this is a perfect publicity opportunity. I want you to present them to me on stage!”

I begged, “Oh no, Rosa, I want you to have them for your dressing room and I don’t want to share the spotlight with you in any way.” We kept the arbitration going until I finally acquiesced. I suggested that I just bring them to the foot of the stage at intermission like the “boys” did at Judy Garland’s Carnegie Hall concerts.

“No sir,” Rosa insisted. “I want you to come onstage at intermission—I’ll get them to put a spot on you, and then give them to me.” She didn’t even wait for a response and continued, “Now, when you come up, mind those steps; you can bust your ass on ‘em in a heartbeat.”

I made my way to a seat, roses in hand, sat back and breathed in that wonderful, somewhat stale smell of popcorn and cola syrup, and witnessed Rosa do what she did the very best—making those celluloid actors come alive on the screen. Her rapport with the audience was something in itself. The cheers, boos, and hisses she elicited as



1920
The 19th Amendment passes and women gain the right to vote
NBC begins NYC radio broadcasts

1924
George Gershwin composes “Rhapsody in Blue”



1931
The Empire State Building is completed



1940
The first regular TV broadcasts begin in New York

1920S
Rosa studies at the Eastman School of Music under John Hammond, whom she later marries

1927
Rosa is named organist at the Saenger Theatre in New Orleans



1930S
Rosa begins engagements at the Brooklyn Fox & Paramount Theatres

1939
Rosa serves as staff organist for NBC radio in New York (as will George Wright). On September 1 she provides relief music during the news broadcasts of Germany invading Poland. WWII begins



1940S
Rosa has her own radio program, *Rosa Rio Rhythms*, broadcast coast-to-coast and to troops overseas

she drove the Wurlitzer home were something to behold.

At intermission, I duly mounted the stage on those treacherous steps—and in the glow of a warm spotlight I did just what Rosa had forewarned. There for all to see, I was spread all over those damned steps. Well, of course, the audience had to laugh heartily and by the time I made my way to Rosa, the Tampa’s populace had risen to its feet to give the *grande dame* and her uncoordinated fan a standing ovation.

It was a special day, all-told, and we finished it by dining at the Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City where our star told countless stories—all of them laced with her own brand of humor, and the salt of a sailor mixed in for good measure.

Speaking of salty epithets, the crowning one for that genre was when I booked Rosa to appear at the Rylander Theatre in Americus. When I arrived, Rosa had just finished her rehearsal at the Möller and was pleased with the instrument and ready to repair to the Windsor Hotel to rest prior to the concert and film presentation. We wanted the Möller to be in tip-top shape for our countess, so the organ’s curator, John Tanner, and my good friend and musical colleague Fred Boska began a long afternoon of touch-up tuning. Fred, being a little more substantial than Rosa, moved the organ bench out a bit and also changed the memory level on the organ for the tuning process.

When Rosa began to rise from the pit at concert time, her signature “Everything’s Coming Up Roses” was more like “Everything’s Coming Up Dandelions!” At this moment I said under my breath, “Never hire the infirm.” Eventually Rosa made some sense out of the tune and then graciously apologized to the audience and quietly said that some “adjustments” had been made to the instrument since her rehearsal, and with a few further adjustments, everything would be back on track. Well, of course, I ate every one of those words about retaining her. She was marvelous and turned in a first-class silent film score.

At intermission, I rushed down and excitedly gushed, “Oh, Rosa, you are simply marvell—” I was cut off abruptly while her finger and wig began to shake in tandem. She lit in to me with an expletive-laden invective that, in words fit for our publication, went something like this: “What @#\$\$% S.O.B #&\$\$!/? around with this \$\$(@)!# organ?” Fred was somewhere near one of the velvet exit curtains and, like a wraith, quickly disappeared. I tried to explain but what was done was done. After her bench was repositioned (angled at her left) and her combinations were recalled, the rest of the presentation went beautifully.

I later became more fully aware of how this storehouse of unruly verbiage could come from such a lady. In Rosa’s early theatre work, she was literally surrounded by male musicians. She was the victim of

catcalls, jokes, and unwelcome sexual advances. She learned quickly to give it right back—and in a language that these “gentlemen” well understood. You’d never ever see her do this publicly. She protected that professional persona religiously. She always knew when to be a lady.

Rosa worked with many great names in the entertainment world including Mary Martin, for whom she often served as piano accompanist and Orson Welles, playing the Hammond organ for many of his radio presentations. Her story of Orson’s foray into becoming friendly with any new ingénue on the show was particularly rich.

It seems that Orson masterminded an evening after the show with a comely starlet and they were to drive to dinner in her car. Being chauffeured, Orson had some idle hands and, as Rosa put it in mixed company, he began to do “the breast work.” This little gal, obviously a graduate of the Rosa Rio School of Self-Defense, quickly turned the ignition off and faked the car’s inability to start. Orson got out of the car and opened the hood (one of those side jobs), whereupon his date drove the car away with great dispatch, leaving Orson stranded in the middle of the night on New York’s 44th Street.

Rosa attended four of the six concerts I have done at the Forker Wurlitzer at Grace Baptist Church in Sarasota. This meant so much to me personally and I’ll never forget the time she made her way to the console



1956
George Wright releases his first HiFi recording



1963
The San Francisco Fox Theatre is closed and demolished

1969
Neil Armstrong in Apollo XI becomes the first man to walk on the moon

1950

1960

1970

1950S
Rosa enters the medium of television; serves as organist for *The Today Show*, *The Brighter Day*, and others



1970
Rosa “retires” to Connecticut to teach piano and organ and publish music

“She was a high priestess of the art of the letter. I treasure every one of them—each emblazoned with roses and the loveliest penmanship you’ve ever witnessed.”

for some pictures with me and exclaimed, “You played the piss out of that organ!”

At another one of my concerts there, Rosa sent me a note by my good friend Bob Briner telling me that she would be in attendance. Well, I was thrilled and decided to play something in her honor. At this point in my program, I explained to the audience that we had a great lady present and that sometimes she even let me know in advance that she was going to be with us. I held the note up to the audience, whereupon Rosa, not missing a beat, tapped husband Bill Yeoman and said to me in a loud voice that the audience could readily hear, “*He* doesn’t know that I’ve been writing you!”

Actually, Rosa wrote me often. She was a high priestess of the art of the letter. I treasure every one of them—each emblazoned with roses and the loveliest penmanship you’ve ever witnessed. Sometimes, I really believe that a special force looked over us.

When we convened for the last ATOS Convention in Florida, I was asked to come by for an afternoon with Rosa, Bill, and friends at their home in Sun City Center. Earlier that day I had found a book on Eleanor Roosevelt which I thought would make interesting reading. After an afternoon of music by the great Lew Williams

and Rosa playing her Baldwin concert grand that once belonged to Jose Iturbi, we got around to story time.

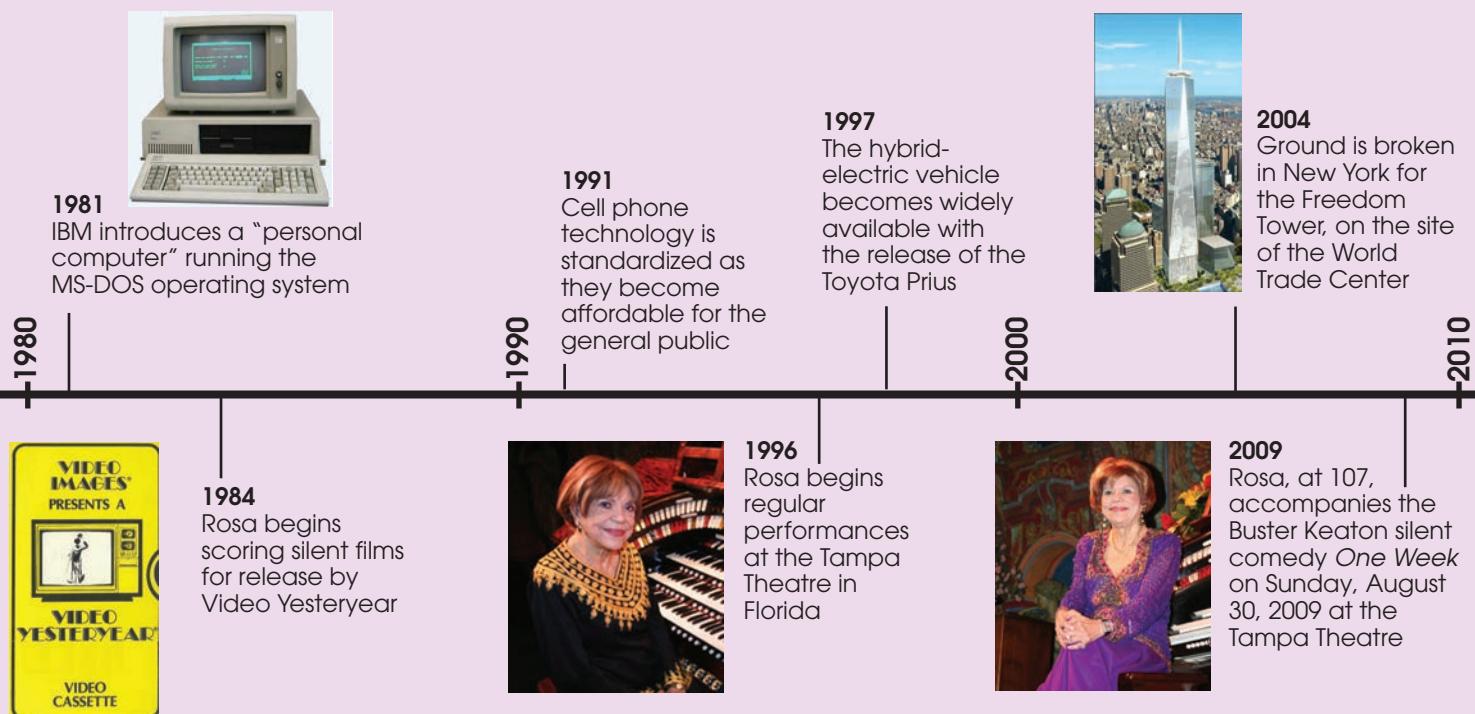
Rosa told of a time when she was doing radio work at Rockefeller Center and opened the door to a studio where she was going to practice, and there sat Eleanor Roosevelt who had been safely stowed there out of the public’s eye prior to a radio address. Rosa said that in her lifetime she never met a more gracious lady and that they spent almost an hour in conversation. I immediately went to the car and quickly inscribed the book to her. The opportunity and coincidence was just too good to pass up.

Like Rosa, I could go on and on about our stories together and the stories she would tell. When she learned that the Rylander Möller had originally been installed in the Riviera Theatre in Scranton, Pennsylvania, she informed me that she had a playing engagement there at another feature house and remembered hanging clothes on a line outside her small flat—returning to find them covered in coal dust. Her recount of introducing Jesse Crawford to his second wife, Lucy (a roommate of Rosa’s) was a fascinating one. But, I must leave space for other friends and admirers.

Rosa gave me so much—and far beyond her celebrity status as the First Lady of Silent Film Accompaniment. She taught me much about life and how to look at it. She also helped me realize that above almost any quality, the person you love should be bestowed with a grand sense of humor. When we did a film documentary underwritten in part by the Smithsonian (yet to be released) at the Tampa, during a break in the filming Rosa was below the stage’s edge (where I had so wanted to hand her those damned roses). Touching it gently, as if she was doing a portamento on the Tibias, she reflected: “Well, *He* doesn’t want me up there—and *This One* doesn’t want me down there, so I guess I’m stuck here forever!”

We are all so fortunate that Rosa “stuck” so long, and enriched us along her way. Her life in many ways personified the whole premise of the theatre organ—an instrument of unbelievable versatility, power, and magic; a device that can be poignant, raucous, and even funny; an instrument with real staying power that mirrors our lust for living and the people who make living worthwhile.

—John Clark McCall, Jr.





Rosa Rio and Lew Williams, 2006 ATOS Convention (Rick McGee)



Rosa Rio at the Tampa Theatre, 2006 ATOS Convention (Rick McGee)

Lew Williams

I first became acquainted with Rosa Rio when I wrote her a letter at age 14, asking for her recollections of her years in New Orleans at the Saenger Theatre in the late 1920s. She replied promptly and was ever afterwards “in touch.” Meeting her in person the following year during the national ATOS convention in Los Angeles, when she gave a concert on the 4/61 Robert-Morton organ in the Elks Lodge, was a great thrill. Then, as always, she was a great personality and communicator, willing to listen to others and give advice freely to students and fans.

As the years went by and I got to know her better, I discovered more than a bubbly presence and a keen love of music. Rosa had a kind of light from within, exuding a life force that few others possessed. She believed strongly in reincarnation and “the progression of souls.” Having no fear of death, she insisted that she could remember previous lifetimes with great clarity. When someone died, she said that they had “made the transition.”

In the entertainment industry, then as now, excesses and indulgences have always been a snare. Rosa ever avoided these traps. Maintaining that “my body is my temple,” she savored all things in moderation and kept a svelte figure well into her latest years. At her home, she worked out regularly with free weights, a step panel, and a stationary bicycle. Regular swims at the Sun City recreational center kept her limber. She stayed alert and interested, sometimes reading two books a week.

During her career she had met and worked with so many luminaries: George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Orson Welles, Eleanor Roosevelt. A pupil of Jesse Crawford and the theoretician Joseph Schillinger, she numbered among her own students Walter Murphy, who wrote *A Fifth of Beethoven* in the 1970s, and Ralph Blaine, who wrote the score, along with Hugh Martin, for *Meet Me in St. Louis* in 1943. Her friendship with Mary Martin and their shared experience auditioning for Cole Porter in his Waldorf penthouse was always a favorite memory for her. A regular pal during her NBC days was George Wright.

Working in New York, in a man’s world, she had to develop a certain resilience. “In those days, you had to have ‘New York skin,’ you couldn’t let anything that anyone said about you bother you, whether they were trying to get your job or do you dirt.” She overcame slights with a quick and bawdy sense of humor that disarmed her critics, usually men who objected to working alongside a woman. A very accomplished woman.

The road to such accomplishment was long and not always easy. Her first marriage to John Hammond ended in divorce, and she returned to New York with her son. It was the height of the Depression. At one point, she had exactly five dollars to her name, and, casting about for work, took a job playing accordion in a lounge in New Jersey. “I ate a lot of red beans and rice in those days,” she would later recall. Not long after, NBC came calling and would be her musical home for some 22 years.

She had wonderful memories indeed, but she didn’t live in the past, but stayed aware of current events throughout the world. As a constant crusader for women’s rights in all fields, she was a passionate supporter for Hillary Clinton’s bid for the Presidency. Though this was not to be, she rejoiced at the appointment of Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

She lived long and well, enjoying every minute, even when her hearing began to fail. Though she enjoyed telephone chats with friends, she adored receiving and writing letters even more, enthusing “It’s almost as good as a real visit.” She most enjoyed long sessions at her Baldwin grand piano, previously owned by José Iturbi. “I hear very well through my fingers.”

Unfortunately, a fall at home and a broken hip were the beginning of the end. Surgery repaired the hip and she was able to return home, but infections began to set in, sapping her strength. Realizing that the time was near, she was ready to make her “transition.”

Her legacy concerns not only her musical career and accomplishments, but her joy in living life through her music. Every time she put finger to key, it seemed to make her bloom. She spent her entire life doing the thing she loved most: sharing music with people.

We should all have such a charmed passage through this world as did Rosa Rio.

—Lew Williams



2006 ATOS Convention (Tampa Theatre Collection)

Dr. John W. Landon

It was my privilege to know Rosa Rio for approximately forty years. When I was writing my book on the life of Jesse Crawford and later on the history of the theatre pipe organ someone put me in touch with her. A friend of hers in Ohio, Stan Todd who owned the Stan Todd Steak House, picked up the phone one day when I was interviewing him, and called her directly. After a few words of introduction he handed the phone to me and I had my first conversation with her. I felt rather timid in the face of such celebrity but she soon put me at ease. I began asking her questions—fact checking from my as yet unpublished manuscript on Jesse Crawford. I was immediately impressed with the clarity and detail of her memory. She remembered people and places and experiences she had had many decades before as if it were yesterday. In succeeding years I continued to use her knowledge as an unimpeachable source of facts in writing articles or books which had to do with the theatre organ.

In 2003 I moved to the Tampa, Florida area and I was privileged to see Rosa and Bill Yeoman frequently. I was often in their home. I tried not to miss any of Rosa's silent film presentations at the Tampa Theatre which were usually very well attended with enthusiastic audiences. Rosa was in her element as she exposed younger generations to the art of silent film accompaniment. She always seemed tireless; a ball of energy and a person with a most positive attitude toward life. She had an endless fund of stories drawn from the "human comedy,"

and I sometimes told her that, alas, I could not use some of the funniest of them as sermon illustrations.

Rosa had the privilege of working until close to the end of her life and that is exactly what she wanted. She was happiest when she had a project to undertake, but now the curtain has come down on a most remarkable life and with it an era has come to a close forever.

—Dr. John W. Landon

Stephen Brittain

Rosa Rio's death certainly marks the end of an amazing era of organists—now all gone.

I met Rosa Rio sometime around 1983—while she was still living up north and "wintering" in Florida. She and husband Bill would always plan a trip to Fort Myers to see her friend Walter Draughon and play the 3/15 Wurlitzer organ in his home. I was a wide-eyed kid of 25 or so and had been learning to play theatre organ for about three years when I was told that I would meet Rosa next time she came to town.

She came with an entourage of friends and we enjoyed several hours of stories, laughter and, of course, music. I remember hearing, "On Green Dolphin Street" and "Stella by Starlight" at her hands that evening.

During a pause in her playing she looked down to see my high school class ring that I had taken off my hand during an earlier practice session and left on the key cheek of the accompaniment manual. She held it up and asked, "Who does this belong to?" I

responded that it was mine and she said, "Well, I like this...I just knew that we'd get along just fine."

Years and years later I ended up playing for a film festival at the Tampa Theatre and as luck would have it, Rosa was there in the early morning hours to grant an interview to a local newspaper and have some photos taken at the console. I sat there and listened to her being interviewed and we shared some more laughs and took a photograph or two.

Always supportive of new and upcoming musicians, I last saw her when she attended a program that I played in Sarasota. A grand lady that will be missed!

—Stephen Brittain

Jonathan Gradin

Jonathan Gradin wrote a brief biography of Rosa Rio as a college history class assignment in 2008. That article did not appear in these pages, but Jonathan has given THEATRE ORGAN permission to quote from it. The editors feel this is a fitting close to a tribute to a truly remarkable lady.

"...I asked Rosa for a closing word of advice. She said to listen to your inner voice, and do your best at what motivates you. 'I believe that everyone has something inside that they are blessed with,' she said. She also said that when new opportunities arise, jump on and make the most of them, which was what she has had to do all her life."

Read more
at atos.org





OUTSIDE THE BOX

BY NATHAN AVAKIAN

An Inside Perspective

(A review of this performance appeared in the March/April 2010 issue of THEATRE ORGAN. At the time the review was written, the intent was that this article would run side-by-side with it. This article would show what went into the preparation and production, and the review would cover the result. The planets didn't align, so it didn't happen that way. The Editors regret the delay in publication.—Ed.)

Despite popular opinions suggesting its heyday has come and gone, the theatre organ can flourish in contemporary society. I say this with confidence having recently presented an organ concert for a local organ society to a crowd of approximately 400. Hundreds of listeners were introduced to the theatre organ for the first time at this concert and many were inspired to attend future organ events. The success of this concert was a direct result of theatrical presentation and smart advertising; I assumed the role of director and designer of both and implemented standards consistent with other performing arts in place of common “habits” often seen in the organ community.

As an 18-year-old beginning a professional career in organ performance, I

run the risk of sounding premature in my analysis of successful organ presentation. It is not my intention to directly criticize any artist or enthusiast with more experience than myself; I merely wish to express suggestions and observations concerning presentation of the theatre organ, drawing on my experience as a theatre practitioner. I offer the unique perspective of a high-school student immersed in the fast-paced life of today's younger generation with strong respect for the history and legacy of this remarkable instrument.

Theatrical Programming

Just as a writer structures plot, organists must give their concerts dynamic structure and flow. If you take the “hook” out of the

introduction of a book, those not already familiar with the story or author have no incentive to turn to the second page. The number of theatre organ enthusiasts is dwindling and in order to gain new support for the instrument, there has to be a “hook” to engage younger generations. Incorporating other artists and crafts into organ events is perhaps the most natural, honest way to provide this introduction.

I was asked to play the annual fall concert for the Columbia River Theatre Organ Society at the Historic Elsinore Theatre in Salem, Oregon. I decided this would be a great venue to incorporate other performing artists so I recruited NW Fusion, a local pre-professional dance company, to choreograph original dances to selections I would play on the organ. Advertising the event as *Nathan Avakian: OUTSIDE THE BOX—a Celebration of Music and Movement* rather than *Fall Organ Concert* drew a large crowd partially composed of NW Fusion supporters and people who support dance, introducing most of them to the theatre organ for the first time. While “organ concerts” appeal only to a select group of people, “theatrical events” appeal to the general public. Theatrical presentation must be apparent in advertising as well as programming.

As diverse as organ selections can be, most audiences are not accustomed to sitting through a two-hour performance with only one instrument in a fixed location. It is imperative that organists “mix up” the program as often as possible. In addition to NW Fusion, my sister, Claire, agreed to perform as a vocalist and Signe Larsen, a high school friend of mine, performed a musical dramatic scene with me. When developing the concert lineup, I made sure to space out guest performances and piano solos so there were never more than five organ selections before attention was redirected away from the console.

The Importance of Technical Theatre

As a theatre technician and light designer, I know how important theatre design is to any performance. In a dramatic production lights, sound, set, costume, staging, writing, and choreography each affect the audience in the same capacity as an actor’s performance. Every element has the ability to augment or diminish work of the others. A flawless performance of *Rhapsody In Blue* from a performer in a T-shirt on a dim stage with uneven fluorescent

lighting will have less of an emotional impact than the same musical performance in a tux in front of a grand drape augmented with subtle lighting changes that saturate the stage with colors fitting mood variations in the piece.

When executed properly, technical elements work on a sub-conscious level and enhance the performance instead of drawing focus away from it. In a society where attention to this level of detail and artistic expression is standard, organ groups often compromise the presentation of the instrument they promote by not giving artistic consideration to all theatrical design elements.

Effective Advertising

In raising the theatrical standard for organ performance, both artists and those who host concerts have important jobs; artists must find innovative ways to use the theatre organ and hosts must support these efforts with proper advertising. Effective advertising does not merely “get the word out” but does so through professional, creative advertisements. A catchy title or theme like *Outside The Box* will help draw initial attention, but intriguing graphic design is also imperative.

I assumed the responsibility of designing posters and advertisements for my concert. The event needed a “defining image” to appear on every ad—something whimsical and eye-catching. With some help from Photoshop, I created an image of myself in casual clothing leaning up against an oversized cardboard box. On the front of the box, slightly askew as if stenciled, was the title of the concert: *Nathan Avakian: OUTSIDE THE BOX*. This image appeared on all posters, postcards, websites, and e-mails giving the event a solid, consistent image that people could remember. Posters were distributed in as many places as possible including schools, offices, downtown storefronts, and retirement homes. Postcards were mailed as well as distributed by hand. In today’s technologically oriented world, we dare not underestimate the importance of electronic advertising. Publishing my event graphic through e-mails, Facebook, and website advertisements was perhaps the most effective marketing method I used.

Immediate advertising inspired further publicity. In the months leading up to the concert I was interviewed for two newspapers and featured on a live radio broadcast. Simply promoting this concert in

the same context as other professional public events gave it status, integrity, and intrigue far exceeding previous expectations of local organ concerts. These advertisements generated an enormous buzz of excitement among students and staff in schools, dance studios, offices, and other places. This public buzz—among people of all ages—is a true testament to the importance of artistic and thoughtful advertising.

Cost and Benefit of Production

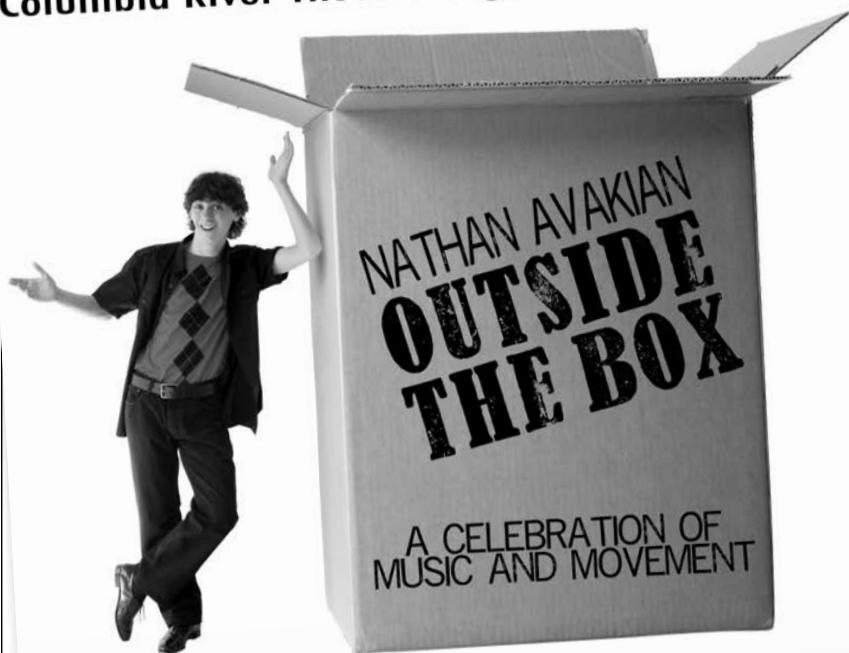
The type of theatrical production I have described involves commitment and coordination beyond what many organ groups are accustomed to providing. When planning a theatrical event be prepared for additional expenses including theatre rental for rehearsal, light/sound designers, stagehands, graphic designers, professional printing, ticket management, and more. My advice: don’t compromise quality to cut expenses. Make sure every element of production is professionally supported whether the organ group can directly provide the service or if outside help must be hired. A successful production on this scale will benefit all parties involved in reputation and finances.

Contemporary Music

It is important to remember what we have going for us—an instrument that is naturally appealing to people of all ages simply because of its unique design and the mechanical complexity that results in its music. I was first introduced to the instrument with a trip to the Portland Organ Grinder restaurant when I was four years old. My interest was primarily in analyzing the mechanical aspects of the instrument but I enjoyed the contemporary upbeat tunes that were played. As wonderful as ballads and novelty tunes from the 20s and 30s are, that genre of music is not particularly engaging to today’s general population. This cannot be attributed to ignorance, poor taste, or “corruptive” aspects of modern pop music but rather the natural evolution of artistic taste. If listeners are first “hooked” with a piece of music they recognize or identify with, respect for theatre organ standards will follow.

There is much controversy over whether modern pop music can really be pulled off on an organ. I agree that some of today’s music, because it is electronically based, simply does not translate well to an acoustic

Columbia River Theatre Organ Society Presents



Nathan Avakian provides an afternoon of theatre organ entertainment featuring NW Fusion Dance Company and vocalist Claire Avakian

NATHAN AVAKIAN

Nathan is the recent winner of the national 2009 American Theatre Organ Society Young Theatre Organist Competition.



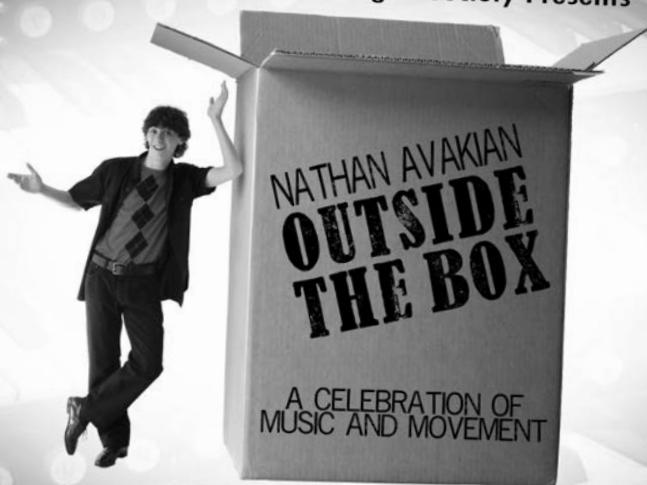
Sunday, Nov. 15
2:00 pm
at the Historic Elsinore Theatre



NW Fusion is a pre-professional dance company composed of advanced dancers between the ages of fourteen and eighteen.
www.nwfusion.org



Columbia River Theatre Organ Society Presents



Nathan Avakian provides an afternoon of theatre organ entertainment featuring NW Fusion Dance Company and vocalist Claire Avakian

instrument like an organ. But popular music spans a wide variety of genres and styles which include pieces that are not only playable on the organ but breathe new life into the instrument. I recently visited Disneyland and saw *Fantasmic*, the nightly Disneyland fireworks/musical spectacle. I returned home inspired and created an organ arrangement of the theme from the show. The theme is orchestral with a driving pop rhythm that lends itself very well to the theatre organ. This is one example of a contemporary piece of music (1998) that appeals to the general public and, for many, inspires fond memories from Disneyland visits. Film scores, Broadway blockbusters, television themes, and acoustic recording artists all provide contemporary music that can make fantastic theatre organ arrangements. Organists must always keep their ears and minds open for new material to maintain fresh and relevant repertoires.

A Few Thoughts For Young Organists About Concert Performance

When performing, it is important to keep in mind that audiences want to be entertained. A casual, spontaneous stage presence is the final touch to an outstanding concert. If you are relaxed (or appear so) the audience will relax and find the concert much more enjoyable. The pieces you choose to play must have some sort of significance or you wouldn't have learned them. Share that story with the audience when introducing your selections. Most listeners are far more interested in hearing your personal connection with the music than where the composer was born or when they wrote the song. Make sure you know this information and understand the importance of historical context, but recognize that these facts can be learned anytime; it is most important that the audience walks away from the theatre with a deeper personal connection to music and familiarity with your personality.

Performance and nerve-calming techniques are varied, unique, and must be self-discovered. For those just starting out: adrenaline is your best friend. It will help you achieve great things, but do not let it dominate your performance. Granted, it is

Top: Promotional poster. Several sizes were produced to maximize the number of places it could be posted (Nathan Avakian)

Front of postcard mailer/handout (Nathan Avakian)

stressful to stand under hot lights staring into darkness knowing that numerous eyes are analyzing your every move. Remember that you are standing in the spotlight because at this given moment you have something unique to share and audience members are here to provide support and benefit from what you have to offer. They have come to be entertained, so have fun! Don't be afraid to be bold, take risks, and make mistakes. When you are relaxed, confident, and having a good time, virtually any mistake is forgivable.

Make An Impact

I encourage organists and preservation groups seeking increased concert attendance and public interest to look to *OUTSIDE THE BOX* as one example of how to produce a successful contemporary organ event. Connect with local artists and companies to create theatrical work that is fresh and engaging for both the organ crowd and the general public. Do not doubt for a minute that this work is worthwhile and appreciated. There is no greater reward for these efforts than realizing how deeply your creation has affected the lives of audience members. I could not have hoped for a more satisfying audience reaction to my concert. Not a single person was seen leaving the theatre without a smile. Children were dancing, laughing, and beaming with curiosity and wonder. After the concert I witnessed tears in the eyes of adults and gratitude in the faces of elders. Comments from first-time listeners shared the theme of, "I had no idea anything like this existed." This needs to change.

It is clear that the core-resonating emotional impact of theatre organ music is as alive as ever. Our difficulty in acquiring theatre organ supporters can only be attributed to the methods we are using to present its music. Using contemporary context and material to introduce the theatre organ to a new generation of listeners is no less authentic than anything enthusiasts have done in the past. Keeping the theatre organ relevant, appealing, and competent in today's music industry is the least we can do to honor those who established its original musical merit and integrity in society. Producing theatrical events that generate public excitement and intrigue about the theatre organ should be our highest priority.

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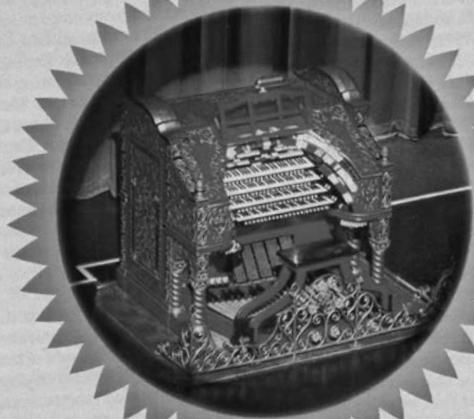
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I Got Rhythm



Don Baker

at the Alabama Theatre, Birmingham
and the Senate Theatre, Detroit

DON BAKER

I Got Rhythm

At the Alabama Theatre,
Birmingham and the Senate
Theater, Detroit

How do you follow Jesse Crawford into the New York Paramount Theatre? If you are Don Baker you develop a style totally different and make it your own. To this day no one has ever matched Don's skill combining widely diverse songs into inspired medleys. You never knew where he was going or what was coming next.

For a time Don made Portland, Oregon his home where he toured for the Rodgers Organ Company and played a Hammond in the lobby lounge of Portland's premier hotel, the Benson. I spent many a night listening and visiting with him. As one who had been there, done that, he didn't freely talk about his performing days in theatres but eventually I persuaded him to have a look at the Publix #1 Wurlitzer in Portland's Paramount Theatre.

I hadn't done too much restorative work on the organ yet other than clean or replace a lot of magnets so it wasn't long before he

ran into a strangely speaking diaphone. I told him I thought some ceiling plaster had fallen in the pipe but the pipe was too big for one person to safely un-rack it in a crowded chamber. Without hesitation Don said, "I'll help you. Let's fix it." After clearing the diaphone's throat Don resumed playing. It wasn't long before all the theatre's staff and even a normally calloused stagehand and projectionist were totally enthralled. None had ever heard the organ sound or played like that before. A few years later, ATOS National Convention attendees were treated to the same masterful playing on this same organ. Don Baker was the consummate gentleman.

The first 13 of 25 tracks of *I Got Rhythm* were originally recorded on a sister Publix #1 in the Alabama Theatre, Birmingham, Alabama. There is some disagreement between what my ears tell me and what the jacket notes say in regard to the additions made to Big Bertha, the Alabama Theatre's Wurlitzer. I wonder if the described additions were in place at the time of this recording? The give away is the lack of any evidence that an English Post Horn exists. I am positive Don would have used it had it been available. Overall these tracks capture the essence of a big organ played in a big style, in a big theatre, English Post Horn or not.

Don begins with "Down Yonder" and soon we hear another Don Baker trait. That would be including the 4' Piccolo in the accompaniment with a 4/4 pedal-chord pattern. This trait isn't that unusual. Many people do, it but I never thought it was a good choice other than when Don did it.

"Stars Fell on Alabama" certainly did fall in series of cascading, descending Glockenspiel chords. Soon the reiterating Xylophone joins the fun and we are convinced Don has no fear of using percussions in massed chords rather than occasional accents.

Don is an artist who paints with broad strokes. Nowhere is this more evident than the "Theme From The Apartment." He builds from simple single note registrations to large, grand ensembles topped off with obbligati riding over the melody.

Other selections in the Alabama Theatre section include "You've Got A Friend"; "Baby Face"; "Send In The Clowns"; "Hell's Bells"; "I Got Rhythm"; "That Old Black Magic"; "Blues In The Night"; "Young At Heart"; "Brian's Theme" and "They Call The Wind Maria."

In stark contrast, tracks from Detroit's Senate Theater are bright and up front. Mr. Baker opens with "Who" but something doesn't ring true. The producer of *I Got Rhythm* cheats us with an archaic monaural track, and it's not the only one. "Swanee" and "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" also suffer this insult. The difference this time is that one channel is 180° out of phase with the other. This creates a diffuse sound quality totally devoid of any focus.

Left/right channel assignment isn't consistent either. "Stomping At The Savoy" puts the English Post Horn in the right channel rather than where it belongs in the left. This won't really damage the song's enjoyment unless you know how the Senate Theatre's Wurlitzer is laid out.

"Beyond The Blue Horizon" starts out with the time honored chugging steam engine effect. On a big organ it is something to behold. With the engine now sailing towards the blue horizon Don takes us on a bouncy journey in his typical fashion of large chords and big ensemble registrations.

With no bombast "Three O' Clock in the Morning" is an exercise in tasteful playing. Lots of string accompaniment with tibias carrying the melody. Later, tibias and voxes join with the strings, and finally the tibias alone playing in open harmony, sometimes with voxes. Very nice, indeed.

If you are a fan of tuned wood piles—otherwise known as xylophones—you will enjoy Don's spritely arrangement of "Toot Toot Tootsie." With his Rachmaninoff-size hands Don can reach wide intervals with ease. This comes in handy when flying over the keyboards with large chords at fast tempi.

Another Don Baker style point is the use of toccata like flourishes in the vein of Henri

Mulet's "Tu Es Petrus." An example of this can be heard in "Limehouse Blues."

Completing the play list for the Senate Theatre section are "Ruby"; "Me and My Shadow"; "Stomping At The Savoy"; "Paradise"; and "Daybreak."

Notwithstanding the monaural tracks, I Got Rhythm is a fine demonstration of one of theatre organ's true masters. My only regret is that no medleys were included. This is where Don Baker was the most gifted. I Got Rhythm rates three stars in my book.

Total playing time is 73:28. I Got Rhythm can be ordered for \$19.95 from Pipe Organ Presentations, 68022 Grandview Avenue, Cathedral City, California 92234, by phone at 760-324-0470, or online at www.pipeorganpresentations.com.

DON THOMPSON

Don Thompson Plays Music From The Movies

On The San Sylmar Wurlitzer

Unlike fine single malt scotch, this re-issue of the original 1989 release did not improve with age. Oh, the recording is OK and the San Sylmar Wurlitzer is obviously well voiced, regulated and tuned but I am astonished at some liberties Mr. Thompson takes with the music. It is almost comedic, or even flippant.

As the jacket notes say, "Gone With The Wind is arguably the most famous movie of all time..." If true, then, with its multiple theatrical and video releases, millions have heard this milestone movie's music and know the signature "Tara's Theme." I wonder if Mr. Thompson has? His phrasing of this timeless melody mocks our musical sensibilities.

"Tarantella" from *The Godfather* is afflicted with unclear registration and a reiterating tambourine that just as easily could have been substituted with an angry rattlesnake. It's not the organ's fault. The 6/8 rhythm is totally obscured or worse, maybe it was never there at all. You would never know from this rendition.

The orchestral love theme from *Dr. Zhivago* is in 4/4 time but the popularized version,

"Somewhere My Love," is in 3/4 time. Reading the play list I expected a wonderful orchestral arrangement but instead got the old, tired, over played, wishy-washy "Somewhere My Love."

The theme from *Exodus* reveals something about Mr. Thompson's lack of understanding pipe organ construction. I would not have expected this from someone of Don Thompson's experience. If you are going to use an octave coupler you can't play above key C49. In most pipe organs there is nothing left to couple beyond that. With the octave coupler at 3:14 into this track the climactic top melody note lead by 2' piccolos is missing! What a letdown.

Lest you think I couldn't find anything pleasing about this recording I will offer "As Time Goes By" as rather elegant. I think it is the album's best track. The Grand Piano introduction is just right. If only all Wurlitzers could have such a piano. The melody leads off with a smooth tuba and possibly tibia and/or diapason. These ranks are regulated to perfection. Tibias with voxes or tibias with strings add to the lush sound. And then there is a whole chorus played on the Vibraharp. All in all very satisfying.

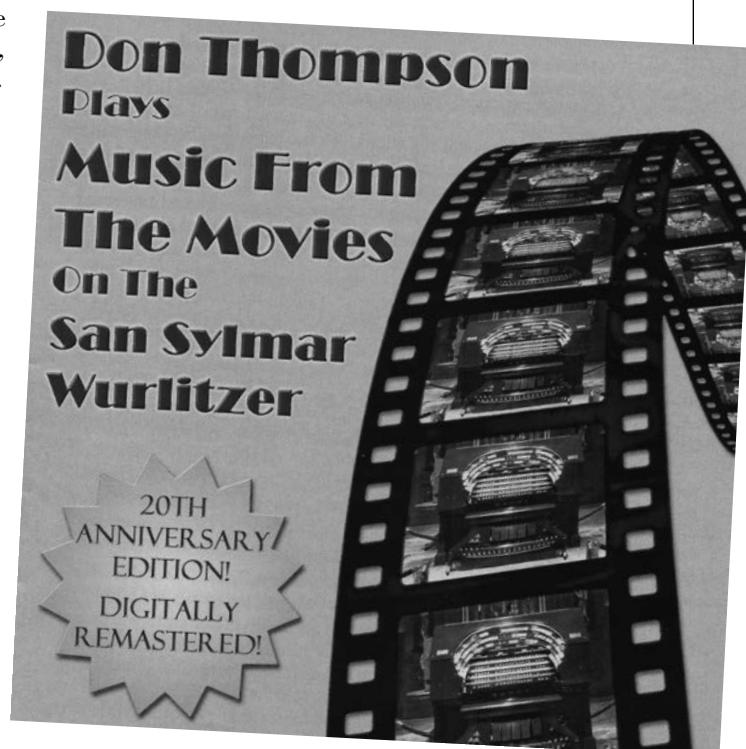
That pesky tambourine appears again in the theme from *Lawrence of Arabia*, but this time it is welcome. Mr. Thompson has a somewhat different arrangement of this theme than I am accustomed to but not bad. Kind of like waiting for the snake to be charmed out of its basket.

"The Pink Panther" is quite enjoyable and recalls a now defunct but popular pizza/pipe organ restaurant in Vancouver, Washington that featured "The Pink Panther" as its house theme. Mr. Thompson successfully captures the essence of the sleuthing panther. The San Sylmar English Post Horn played low in open fifths is a real growler. It's my kind of horn.

There are 18 selections in total including "Ebb Tide"; "Love Theme from *Romeo and Juliet*"; "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue"; "San Francisco"; "Alfie"; "Love Theme from *Love Story*"; "Charade"; "Moon River"; "Warsaw Concerto"; "Days of Wine and Roses" and "Picnic."

Don Thompson has been on the organ scene a long time with much experience playing in pipe organ equipped pizza restaurants and other public venues. After spending 23 years in this business myself and knowing the clientele these places attract, this album would make a great souvenir. However, taken out of this environment the album is not what I would choose for my own listening pleasure. If this were an original release I would give this recording three stars but since it is a re-release of material recorded years ago I can only rate it with two stars.

Playing time is 63:12. *Don Thompson Plays Music from the Movies* can be ordered for \$19.95 from Pipe Organ Presentations, 68022 Grandview Avenue, Cathedral City, California 92234, by phone at 760-324-0470, or online at www.pipeorganpresentations.com.



Chapter News

ATLANTA

Atlanta, Georgia—On March 21, a bunch of folks converged on the homestead of Bucky Reddish and his now-famous Walker RTO-335 for a concert by John Lauter, resident organist for the Detroit FOX and its 4/36 Wurlitzer pipe organ.

His opening selection indicated this would not be a program of well-worn offerings, but some lesser-known and even some unexpected sources for selections.

John then let us in a little to his courtship (and even marriage) to his special someone with a song just for her—much to her dislike!

A deserved encore and a rousing knuckle-buster sent us to the table where a vast array of goodies awaited, provided by our host and friends.

A great afternoon of music, a new chapter-friend, and food!

A beautiful spring day was the setting for the April chapter meeting at the lovely home of Elsie and Bob McKoon in Newnan. As beautiful as it was, no one wanted to be outside; all crowded into the downstairs studio to hear our own Rick McGee at the Allen 317EX.

Rick presented a program with a series of medleys he said was programmed to keep the music to a maximum and the commentary to a minimum. Quite a variety of styles from different composers, made famous by different artists, then some very familiar tunes, most of which the audience could have sung—I'm sure Rick was glad we didn't!

Rick had proven once again that the Atlanta chapter is blessed with a wealth of local talented musicians who are second to none in their ability to entertain.

The marvelous afternoon continued with great food and conversation. One repeated remark was how good the organ sounded in the room. Our thanks to Bob and Elsie and especially to Rick for a wonderful afternoon. It truly was a "great day."

—Rick McGee

Bucky Reddish, President
770-948-8424, buckyrph1@bellsouth.net



John Lauter at the Bucky Reddish Walker RTO-335 (Photo by Elbert Fields)



Rick McGee at the McKoon Allen 317EX Custom (Photo by Elbert Fields)

BLUEGRASS

Lexington, Kentucky—One of the problems faced by some of us whose chapters are located far from major urban centers is that we do not have access to any genuine theatre pipe organs. Our chapter is located in Lexington, Kentucky and to our knowledge there is no working theatre pipe organ in this state except for the former WHAS Kilgen organ which is relatively inaccessible in a downtown auditorium in Louisville, 85 miles away. There are theatre pipe organs in Cincinnati (also 85 miles away) and a nice two-manual Wurlitzer in the Keith-Albee Theatre in Huntington, West Virginia, over 100 miles away. Thus our chapter meetings sometimes involve our seeking out other pipe organs which we can hear and play.

On April 17 chapter members traveled to southern Indiana to see two pipe organs. The first is a 2/4 Kilgen Harmonic Ensemble located in the Garr Funeral Home in Sellersburg. This instrument is gently voiced and a pleasure to play. Various members played the instrument and some impromptu organ/piano duets were heard.

We then traveled approximately one mile to the Speed Memorial Church which houses a romantically voiced 2/12 Pilcher pipe organ. Members enjoyed playing and hearing this instrument as well. Both instruments are very well maintained. All of this makes us the more anxious for the completion of the three manual Wurlitzer which is now being refurbished so it can be reinstalled in its original home, Lexington's downtown Kentucky Theatre. We can hardly wait!

—Dr. John W. Landon
Dean McCleese, President
Lexington, Kentucky

859-276-3424, jwlandon@windstream.net

BUFFALO AREA

Buffalo, New York—After a long but dwindling relationship with Shea's Buffalo, the Buffalo Area chapter of ATOS has made a new association with the Riviera Theatre of

North Tonawanda, New York. With so many members of BAC-ATOS already being members of the Riviera Theatre & Organ Preservation Society, owners of the Riviera Theatre & Performing Arts Center, it made sense for the ATOS chapter to make our base where we had access to a magnificent Wurlitzer organ. Indeed, several BAC members have been assisting with the restoration and ongoing maintenance of the Riviera Wurlitzer for many years.

The Riviera Wurlitzer still enjoys regular exposure through the Monthly Organ Concert Program and the theatre management still views the organ as an integral part of the theatre's future plans. A major overhaul of the Mighty Wurlitzer (by Clark Wilson in early 2008) brought the organ back to the level of excellence intended by installers from the local Wurlitzer factory way back in 1926. The ongoing efforts and diligence of the Organ Working Party, headed by Don Lang, have helped to maintain this marvel of Wurlitzer ingenuity for generations to come.

As a direct result of the organ's renaissance the Riviera has managed to encourage greater involvement from leading international players, leading to a more varied annual program with appeal to a wider audience. BAC and RTOPS members are combining forces, making greater efforts to secure individual and corporate funding of the program and ensuring a real future for the Mighty Wurlitzer.

Buffalo Area chapter encourages regular monthly meetings for members at the Riviera, with open console, and maintains links with other organ installations throughout Western New York.

—Norma Pawley, President
716-688-4597, normabac@roadrunner.com

CHICAGO AREA

Chicago, Illinois—CATOE has undergone an unexpected change in leadership, following the death of longtime chapter President, John Peters in December, 2009. John's commitment to the presentation and preservation of theatre organs in the Chicago area earned him numerous terms as the chapter's president. John focused most of his time and work on the maintenance and improvement of the Howell/Wurlitzer organ in the seminary auditorium of the University of St. Mary of the Lake, in Mundelein Illinois. (See the Obituary in this issue.)

Succeeding John as President is longtime CATOE director Robert (Bob) Boin. Bob's passion and interest in preserving theatre organs and their movie palace homes has kept him working on CATOE's commitment to reinstall a Wurlitzer theatre organ in the Oriental Theatre, Chicago Illinois.

David Rhodes has taken over as crew chief for the Mundelein organ, and has accomplished many of the planned repairs to the organ's relay and swell shade motors. The Mundelein crew has just completed the installation of an eighteen note Kimball diaphone, gifted to the organ by ATOS Treasurer, Paul Van Der Molen and his wife, Linda.

CATOE has continued to present activities for our members through the harsh winter months with performances by Jonas Nordwall, Ron Reseigh, and Glenn Tallar. The April social was held at the York Theatre in Elmhurst, Illinois. This venue and its Barton organ have not been presented by CATOE in over a decade, but several member requests led to an entertaining event highlighted by a historical narrative and tours by theatre owners Willis and Shirley Johnson.

—Michael Garay
Bob Boin, President
773-935-3770, rgboin@msn.com



Glenn Tallar performs at the Barton Organ during the CATOE April 10, 2010 social at the York Theatre, Elmhurst, Illinois (Photo by Michael Garay)



Classic Cinemas owner, Willis Johnson recalls the history of the York Theatre, Elmhurst, Illinois during the CATOE Social, April 10, 2010 (Photo by Michael Garay)

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Thomaston, Connecticut—Jonathan Ortloff presented an outstanding concert at the Thomaston Opera House at the console of the

3/15 Marr & Colton organ on April 11th. Jon is employed as a full-time organ builder of classical organs and was the Young Organist Competition winner at the 2008 ATOS convention in Indianapolis. The audience enjoyed fine musicianship, a well-presented program and an excellent knowledge of jazz harmony. Jon represents the fine young talent that will continue the theatre organ and its music into the future.

We expect to see Jon having an excellent future presenting the theatre organ concerts as well as carrying forth the technical knowledge to build and maintain pipe organs.

The Marr and Colton is maintained in first class concert condition by crew chief, John Angevine with assistance from Juan Cardona, Sr. and George Bell. The instrument is regarded by many as one of the finest medium size theatre organs in the country with excellent acoustics in the auditorium that seats an audience of approximately 550.

—Jon Sibley
Meredith Sibley, President
860-345-2518



Jonathan Ortloff at the Thomaston Opera House (Photo by Jon Sibley)

DAIRYLAND

Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin—The Dairyland Theatre Organ Society had a Valentine social on Sunday, February 21 at the Racine Theatre Guild. The Wurlitzer organ was donated by Lowell McNeil, previously the owner of the Racine Capitol Theatre. The organist was our vice-president, Dean Rosko, who is also the organist for the Milwaukee Brewers and on staff at the Organ Piper Restaurant. Dean played music appropriate for the season and was also dressed perfectly for the day, in a red shirt and tie. Valentine boxes of chocolates were given out as door prizes. Taking advantage of open console were Zach Frame, John Cornue, Sandy Knuth, and Lavon (Scotty) Scott.

April 11 we had another social in Racine. This time Donny Rankin was the artist for the afternoon, and it was arranged by his mentor, Jelani Eddington. Donny won the American

Theatre Organ Society Young Organist Competition in 2007, and that fall began studying with Jelani. Even though Donny lives in Ohio, he takes the train every few weeks to come to Racine, to have a lesson with Jelani. He played a wonderful hour-long program on the 5/35 Wurlitzer in Fred Hermes' Basement Bijou. Open console followed with Dean Rosko, Jelani Eddington, and DTOS president John Cornue, all taking a turn on the big Wurlitzer. Refreshments followed. It was a fun way to spend a Sunday Afternoon.

—Sandy Knuth
John Cornue, President
262-248-3458



Dean Rosko at the Racine Theatre Guild (Photo by John Knuth)



Donny Rankin at the Hermes Basement Bijou (Photo by John Knuth)

DELAWARE VALLEY

Cheltenham, Pennsylvania—On January 24 and again on March 21, 2010 our chapter presented a set of silent films at the Colonial Theatre in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. The programs started with two silent comedy shorts followed by the main feature. Wayne Zimmerman Sr., chapter president, and well known silent movie accompanist, was the featured artist.

The Colonial Theatre, a 600 seat venue, is the current home of the chapter's Rodgers Trio Deluxe, while we are installing our Wurlitzer 3/24 Opus 585. Those in attendance for the March movie got to see the Wurlitzer console rise from the pit for the first time, to the theme from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. We are hoping

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that for our May meeting we will be able to fire up the blower for its first playing for our members.

Meanwhile work continues on the chapter's Möller 3/19 Opus 5230 at the Keswick Theatre in Glenside, Pennsylvania. We are currently having the major parts of the console refurbished thanks to a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development.

—Wm. R. Gellhaus
Wayne Zimmerman Sr., President
215-780-0831, tosdvinfo@verizon.net

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Wellesley, Massachusetts—March and April were busy months for EMCATOS. In March the chapter held its annual Member's Day, where over a dozen members shared their considerable talent for our social. Many were surprised at the talent displayed during the performance. This event has blossomed into a much-anticipated event in only two years. Many thanks to Linda Duncan for organizing and promoting Member's Day.

Our April social featured Richard Giglio at the console of the Wurlitzer. Richard, a former Fenway Park organist, presented a program featuring popular tunes, hymns, semi classics, and some real "barn burners." Richard quickly developed a rapport with his audience. Many of his family were in attendance adding to the enthusiasm of the audience. Mr. Giglio received a standing ovation for his efforts.

Our April 17 and 18 concert presentations featured Ron Rhode at Babson and the Shanklin Music Hall. Ron always pleases and this was no exception. His offerings represented music from the past and present, Broadway to light classics, and much in between.

Jan Peters, Boston's premiere cabaret artist, joined Ron for part of the concert. Though they had just met these two performed like they had been working together for years. Ron's skill as an accompanist shone brightly enhancing Jan's vocal interpretations.

Plans are well underway for the 2011 ATOS Annual Convention hosted by the Eastern Massachusetts chapter. We are introducing two new theatre venues at this convention including the world premier of the 4/35 (mostly) Wurlitzer at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester, Massachusetts. A team of volunteers from EMCATOS has been helping Don Phipps install this instrument, and it promises to be a world-class installation in a fabulous theatre.

—Bob Evans
Bob Evans, President
508-674-0276 bob@organloft.org



Richard Giglio at the EMCATOS Wurlitzer
(Photo by Bob Evans)



Ron Rhode at Babson (Photo by Bob Evans)

FIRST STATE

Wilmington, Delaware—First State is a relatively new chapter which is nearing the end of its first full concert season. Our season started with a chapter meeting including special guests ATOS President Ken Double and Board Chairman Col. Mike Hartley (Ret.). We appreciate their time, encouragement, and guidance.

Immediately following our meeting, held at John Dickinson High School, we attended a concert hosted by the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society (DTOS). Ken not only met with us as ATOS President but did double duty as the featured artist on the Dickinson Theatre Pipe Organ. Ken was joined by trumpeter Skip Stine during the second half. Both performances were very enjoyable.

Our chapter has attended other DTOS concerts, including performances by Simon Gledhill and Steven Ball. Prior to these two concerts we had meet and greet sessions with the artists. We appreciate their time and the opportunity to learn more about them and their profession.

Mid-season Paul Vines, Chapter President, hosted a lunch at his home. Following lunch members enjoyed a varied CD selection of theatre pipe organ performances. We compared and contrasted playing styles,

techniques, venues, and organ manufacturers. We thank Paul for his hospitality.

The chapter looks forward to the next concert season and to expanding our activities and events. Please visit us at www.atos.org (find a local chapter) or at a DTOS concert. Visit www.dtoskimball.org for more information about DTOS.

—Brian Blackwell
Paul Vines, President
302-378-1912



Left to right: Ken Double; Stephen Ross (Chapter Treasurer); Bob Smith (Chapter VP); Brian Blackwell (Chapter Scfy.); Col. Mike Hartley; Paul Vines (kneeling-Chapter Pres.)
(Photo by Charles Gibb)



Left to right: Paul Vines, Stephen Ross, Brian Blackwell (board members); Bob Dilworth (DTOS President); Simon Gledhill (seated); Ken Double (seated) (Photo by Charles Gibb)

GARDEN STATE

Little Falls, New Jersey—GSTOS Treasurer, Cathie Oliver, opened her home to members in March for our regular business meeting, which was bookended with two mini-concerts. Bernie Anderson started out the afternoon with a wide variety of music highlighting little known or forgotten pieces which both entertain and intrigue the listeners.

After the business meeting, we were delighted to welcome a young artist, Andrew Van Varick, to the 3/11 Wurlitzer. The Garden

State Theatre Organ Society joined the New York Theatre Organ Society in sponsoring Andrew at the ATOS Summer Camp last summer. Now we had the pleasure of hearing first hand the results of his commitment to developing his wonderful musical talent on the theatre pipe organ. After all of this excitement members enjoyed refreshments, and open console provided an opportunity for many to take a turn at the keyboards in the beautiful music room.

The Patriots Theatre at the Trenton War Memorial was the venue for April in the Garden State. Silent film specialist Bernie Anderson accompanied the classic movie, *King of Kings*. As the audience entered into the world of first century Jerusalem, Bernie provided the emotional content substituting for the lack of dialogue. The 3/16 Möller performed magnificently and filled the restored theatre with resonant and moving music.

After the event, Bernie invited a thoroughly thrilled young music student to come on stage and try out the mighty Möller. With a little encouragement the youngster wowed his family and everyone present with his budding skills. He was then invited to come back with his parents to Trenton or one of the other GSTOS organ venues so that he can learn more about the instrument and join us in becoming a lifelong enthusiast. Two months, two young people getting a deeper introduction into theatre pipe organ music—the future is looking very hopeful.

—Catherine Martin
 Michael Cipolletti, President
 732-899-1588, mic22@verizon.net



Andrew Van Varick at the Oliver Wurlitzer
 (Photo by Tony Rustako)



Bernie Anderson at the Trenton Möller
 (Photo by Tony Rustako)



Bob Salisbury at the California Theatre Style 216 (Photo by Jim Henry)

INLAND EMPIRE

San Bernardino, California—On May 6 the California Theatre presented *The Thief of Bagdad* with Bob Salisbury at the console of the theatre's original installation Style 216 Wurlitzer. This was the second silent film event using the 216 since volunteers from IETOS put the organ into playable condition after twenty years of silence. Two weeks later the 216 was featured as part of a performance by the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra. Orchestra Maestro Carlo Ponti, Jr. auditioned the organ about a year ago and even spent some time at the console, after which he decided to include the Wurlitzer in the Symphony season.

IETOS is now in discussions with San Bernardino's Economic Development Agency, owner of the theatre, regarding plans for restoration of the Style 216. To date work on the organ has focused on making the minor repairs that restored functionality. However, the organ still has some original leather. To fully restore function and reliability will require more extensive work than has been done so far. Fortunately the city is fully committed to preserving the Wurlitzer and IETOS is looking forward to a long and productive partnership with the theatre.

The group has also progressed with the installation of the Lewis A. Hegybeli Style 150 Wurlitzer in the IETOS studio. Bob Salisbury will soon be using this instrument to instruct young performers in the art of silent film accompaniment. Matt Gerhard, Bob's first student, accompanied Charley Chase in *The Rat's Knuckles* as part of the May 6 show at the California Theatre. A video of his performance can be found on YouTube.

—Jim Henry
 Bob Salisbury, President
 ietos.org



Matt Gerhard at the California Theatre Style 216 (Photo by Jim Henry)

JOLIET AREA

Joliet, Illinois—Donnie Rankin was our guest artist in March at the Chicago Piano Superstore in Downers Grove. Donnie was overall winner of the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition in 2007 and was a joy to hear. During the second half of his program Donnie played duets with Glenn Tallar, the organist at the Pizza Restaurant in Lansing. They each did a splendid job.

We were entertained in April by Bill Tandy from Kokomo, Indiana. His sense of humor and wit really show up in his music. Bill learns his music by listening to old records, radio shows, etc., and doesn't even buy music. He had many stories to tell us about old time stars and musicians.

Extravaganza 14 is over and it was one of the best ever. Friday night featured Clark Wilson and Chris Elliott in alternating concerts at the Van Der Molen residence in Wheaton. Clark Wilson also accompanied a Laurel and Hardy silent film.

Saturday evening we were entertained at the Rialto Theatre in Joliet by Jelani Eddington, Clark Wilson, Chris Elliott and Chris Gorsuch. All four artists played both individually and together, and finally all played with the Joliet American Legion Band.

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A huge surprise was Larry Crawford, a truant officer from Joliet who sang an American patriotic song at the beginning of the evening and then blew our minds at the end of the evening. He received a standing ovation as did all the performers.

On Sunday the Sanfilippo estate in Barrington Hills was the venue to hear Jelani Eddington and Chris Gorsuch play individually and together in several duets. People from all over the country attended, and went home with big smiles on their faces. How can we top this next year?

—Barbara Petry
Jim Patak, President
708-562-8538



Martin Ellis after his concert on the Phipps Center Wurlitzer (Photo by Kim Crisler)

LAND O' LAKES

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota—Barton Player Piano Co. presented its 10th annual Piano Roll Flea Market and Movie Day at the Heights Theatre on March 27, with proceeds to benefit the continued restoration of the piano action on the WCCO Wurlitzer organ. The event featured resident organist Ed Copeland accompanying a short silent film, followed by a documentary of a piano roll factory tour. This year's film presentation was the Busby Berkley musical, *Gold Diggers of 1933* based on the 1919 play *The Gold Diggers*.

Work continues to progress at a steady rate on the organ, thanks to Ed Copeland, James Blomberg, and several other volunteers who donated their time, talent, and experience. With the addition of a Saxophone rank, the organ is now up to 15 ranks playing.

The Phipps Center for the Arts presented Martin Ellis in his local debut on March 20. His concert of popular and classical selections was well received by the audience. We look forward to a return engagement soon. Chris Gorsuch will close out the season in June, and we'll report on his program in the next issue. Next season's schedule will be available by either contacting the Phipps box office or online at www.thehipps.org.

—Kim Crisler
Terry Kleven, President
651-489-2074, nlttak@comcast.net

MANASOTA

Sarasota, Florida—We had a super March gathering, with a very full house enjoying a great afternoon of music. Concert and recording artist Rob Richards and Alex Zsolt were our musical delight. Rob is currently the House Organist at Disney's historic El Capitan theatre in Hollywood, where since 1999 he has played over four thousand performances on the legendary Wurlitzer pipe organ originally installed in San Francisco's Fox Theatre.

America's New Gospel Pianist, Alex Zsolt, presents music that ministers to people of all ages. In the past twelve years, Alex has visited over 800 churches. Rob and Alex are a superb duo.

Let's look back for a moment. In September, Dave Cogswell started our season. October brought us Sandy Hobis and Bob Courtney, both fine organists, sharing the afternoon. November marked the 18th anniversary of MTOS and a great mini concert with Tom Hoehn. We didn't have an official meeting in December as we all enjoyed the magnificent "Festival of 400,000 Lights" and music played on our Forker Memorial Wurlitzer organ.

We started 2010 with our dear friend and MTOS member John McCall coming all the way down from Georgia to again give us a wonderful afternoon of Theatre Organ. In February, Clark Wilson accompanied the silent movie *It* with Clara Bow. It was a great performance.

Steven Ball joined us April 18th and accompanied a silent movie with his own score. Steven occupies a rather unique place in the world of the Theatre Organ. In addition to being a Fulbright Scholar, he is part of a small number of artists in the profession to have ever achieved a terminal degree in music, and the first to have ever done so with a degree in Organ Performance. I am sure you all had a delightful afternoon.

—Chaz Bender, President
727-919-0042

MOUNT BAKER

Bellingham, Washington—The 1927 Wurlitzer Theatre Organ continues to entertain the people of Bellingham and brings in visitors from adjoining counties as well as from British Columbia. We offer monthly programs and have welcomed return appearances by Nathan Avakian and Mark Andersen. The latter included a successful sing-a-long and yes, the words were on the screen.

Presentations are in concert format and we continue to feature silent movies. *The General* with Buster Keaton, *The Sleuth* with Stan Laurel and *45 Minutes to Hollywood* with Oliver Hardy and Stan Laurel were all accompanied by Jeff Fox. Concert organists have included Andy Crow, and Dorothy Watson with Hal Logan.

Members are looking forward to the American Theatre Organ Society's Annual Convention, which will include a visit to Bellingham on June 30. The featured organist will be Lew Williams.

The Mount Baker Theatre continues to provide an excellent venue for our activities and we hope you will be able to join us in the near future.

—David Baines
Vernon Greenstreet, President
360-714-8235, grst@comcast.net



Nathan Avakian (Nathan Avakian photo)

NEW YORK

New York, New York—In spite of a heavy rain storm, New York chapter members along with guests from the local community gathered at the Middletown Paramount Theatre in Middletown, New York on March 13 to enjoy our 3/12 Mighty Wurlitzer. Several attendees ranging in age from 13 to 94 took turns playing open console, while others came just to enjoy the music. The afternoon concluded with an outstanding mini-concert by Juan Cardona, Jr., who certainly deserved the standing ovation that he received from the appreciative audience.

On April 23 we joined with the Social Studies Club at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York, to present the classic Buster Keaton film, *The General*, accompanied by organist Bernie Anderson, Jr. on the school's 3/15 Mighty Austin-Morton theatre pipe organ. Before the film, Brother Lawrence Syriac, chairman of Chaminade's social studies department, presented an interesting lecture on the historical event on which the film is based—the daring attempt by Union forces to steal the locomotive (the General) from behind Confederate lines. Bernie Anderson discussed the history of the film, and then brought the movie to life with his excellent accompaniment on the organ.

The next day, April 24, we, along with the Hudson-Mohawk chapter, headed to Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park, New York, for open console and a mini-concert. This was the first chapter event using the new Allen Custom 324Q digital theatre organ recently installed in the school's auditorium. Thanks largely to the creative and persevering efforts of NYTOS board member John Vanderlee, the chapter was able to raise the funds needed to purchase this fine instrument and donate it to the school for use in its active music program. Before the open console session, organist John Baratta entertained everyone with an excellent mini-concert, demonstrating both the theatre and the classical voicing of the organ.

—Tom Stehle

Anders R. Sterner, Chairman
917-327-5251, arsesq@arsesq.com



Juan Cardona, Jr. at the Middletown Paramount 3/12 Wurlitzer (Photo by Tom Stehle)



Members of the New York and Hudson-Mohawk chapters gather around the new Allen Organ at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park, New York (Photo by Tom Stehle)

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Berkeley, California—The chapter's public concert series continued when the Australian team of organist Scott Harrison and pianist Mark Page played for us on November 1. They played duets and some solos on their respective instruments.

Don Feely came from Oregon and played for us on January 24. We could tell that he knows how to get around on a large organ. He played at the Organ Grinder Pizza restaurant in Portland, Oregon for more than ten years.

Donna Parker played for us on February 14 and Chris Gorsuch came from San Diego, California and played for us on March 14. He did something to delight us that not many organists do. He played using BOTH organ consoles at different times.

We welcomed Bill Coale who recently moved to the Bay Area and was appointed to our board of directors to fill a mid-term vacancy. He has recorded a number of theatre organ videos that are posted on YouTube. Check them out by searching on Bill Coale.

Lorraine Smith, a long-time member of the chapter, passed away on November 11, 2009 in Carlsbad, Calif.

We also welcomed new members, Larry Kukan of San Francisco, Nicolie A. Bolster-Ott of Berkeley, John D. Whitmore of Santa Clara, John and Ashley Ahn of Livermore, Jacob Rodriguez of San Francisco, and Alivia Lucci of San Francisco.

Lastly, we have an all-new web site in color! Check it out at www.norcaltos.org

—Elbert Dawson

Neal R. Wood, Chairman
415-861-7082, nealwood@pacbell.net

NORTH TEXAS

Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas—March and April turned out to be quite busy months for our chapter. We were preparing for our immediate

activities and also planning for our future events. On March 27 we presented the silent film *The Three Musketeers* at the McKinney Performing Arts Center in McKinney, Texas with Bill Rowland at the console of the 3/17 Wurlitzer. The organ performed beautifully and Bill stated that he couldn't believe what we had accomplished with the console. He was familiar with its decrepit condition before the chapter got its hands on it. He didn't recognize it at first. The audience enjoyed the sing-along and the slides that Bill presented prior to the start of the movie.

On April 18 the chapter held its regular meeting. What was so special about this meeting was our guest artist, Master Theatre Organist Glenn Swope. Glenn has played on many organs around the mainland and Hawaii. This was his first solo program on MPAC's Wurlitzer and he did not disappoint us. His program was quite varied and his registrations thrilled everyone. One chapter member stated he had to come because Glenn was playing. All in all it was a thoroughly enjoyable program. As a side note, before the actual program, Glenn on the console and Al Cavitt on the piano gave a short impromptu jam session. This set the stage for the formal program.

—Kenneth E. Brown

Don Peterson, President
972-422-7757, dpete.tx@verizon.net



Bill Rowland at the MPAC console (Photo by Ken Brown)



Glenn Swope (Photo by Don Peterson)

Chapter News

ORANGE COUNTY

Fullerton, California—On Sunday afternoon, April 14, Donnie Rankin, 2007 American Theatre Organ Society's Young Theatre Organist of the Year, entertained over 200 enthusiastic concert goers with an afternoon of outstanding music played on the restored and enhanced 4/37 Wurlitzer organ in Plummer Auditorium. Included in the program was the 1928 Laurel and Hardy silent film *Their Purple Moment*. Mr. Rankin's accompaniment of the film was both skillful and entertaining, providing just the right mood for the hilarious antics of Stan and Ollie.

Donnie surprised the audience by playing several numbers on the drums accompanied by music he had earlier recorded on the organ's player. It was indeed encouraging to hear the music we oldsters enjoyed so much in the 30s and 40s played so well by a 21-year old. This speaks well of the future of theatre organ music! The program ended with Donnie's version of Tico Tico. Following the concert, the board took Donnie out for a top notch Mexican dinner at the El Cholo restaurant.

Future events include Robert Israel playing the accompaniment to Buster Keaton's masterpiece *The General* in June, and our annual Summer Open Console in August featuring a mini concert by Randy Woltz.

—Jack Townsend
Don Near, Chairman
714-539-8944 donnear@cox.net



Donnie Rankin accompanies Donnie Rankin at Plummer (Photo by Randyfoto)

ORLANDO AREA

Orlando, Florida—April's chapter meeting again coincided with a theatre organ concert at the beautifully restored Athens Theatre in nearby Deland. Presiding over the console of the Allen GW4 Theatre Organ was none other than ATOS president and Florida resident Ken Double, doing double duty (no pun intended) as a most accomplished concert artist and ambassador for ATOS.

Anyone who has ever seen one of Ken's concerts will remember that it consists of much more than "for my next number...." Ken

regaled us with anecdotes about his days as a sports announcer for the Houston Aeros hockey team, showed off his two championship rings the team won during his tenure, and mentioned that the owner had fired him via e-mail. That's cold! He also told one of his patented jokes. I've never heard the same one twice in a Double concert.

Ken shared the program and the stage with a men's novelty chorus, ten students from Deland's Stetson University aptly named "Hat Trick." (Stetson? Hat?) Their sports teams are named "The Hatters." These young men worked a-cappella except for their final number, "Let There Be Peace on Earth" ably accompanied by our own Ken Double.

I mentioned double duty. Ken was a fountain of information as to who we are and what we do. At most theatre organ concerts you would be preaching to the choir about ATOS, but this audience, except for the smattering of OATOS and other chapter members, was made up of people from in and around Deland who must be educated as to the "what and why" of a theatre organ.

—Jack Doyle
John Nard, President
407-862-1390



Ken Double at the Athens Theatre
(Photo by Jack Doyle)

PACKERLAND

Northeast Wisconsin—This has been a busy year for Packerland. We are now producing shows at The Meyer Theatre in Green Bay, Wisconsin with its original Wurlitzer pipe organ. Member Frank Rippl has been doing live music for our silent film series.

In November of 2009 we presented *An Evening with Laurel and Hardy*, for which both Tom McNeely and Frank Rippl played the music using the Wurlitzer.

March 1, 2010 we presented *Safety Last* with Frank Rippl playing the Austin organ at The History Museum in Appleton, Wisconsin.

May 18, 2010 we were back at The Meyer Theatre for a Buster Keaton Film Festival with Ed Franks singing Frank Sinatra songs, young

organist Zack Franme of Lake Geneva, and Frank Rippl on the Mighty Wurlitzer. We also had the STUN photography group come out as Hollywood movie stars with photographers to add to the excitement. Three more silent movies are planned for the rest of 2010.

—Tom McNeely, president
pcc28@netnet.net

RIVER CITY

Omaha, Nebraska—RCTOS March 21 chapter meeting was held at the Shirley Schainholz residence in Omaha, Nebraska. Shirley is an accomplished organist and the proud owner of a Lowrey Palladium organ. After the usual short business meeting, Shirley entertained the group with many standard musical selections. Shirley has mastered the accompaniment features of the instrument. Open console followed the musical program. It was a fun afternoon, and we are looking forward to our next visit.

The April 18 meeting was held at RCTOS Secretary/Treasurer Jerry Pawlak's residence in Lincoln, Nebraska. Jerry has maintained a Hammond B-3 with Leslie, purchased new in 1962. A Chicago native, Jerry performed in many restaurants and lounges in Chicago in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. A job-related move to Lincoln in 1988 got him acquainted with RCTOS in Omaha and the theatre pipe organ. Thanks to the Markworths in Omaha, he has had access to the Markworth Kimball 3/24 theatre pipe organ and has become quite proficient on that instrument. Many members are very familiar with the Hammond, and open console proved that. This meeting has become the annual Spring pizza and "pipes" event.

RCTOS annual concert at The Rose Theater in Omaha will be held on Sunday, July 18, 2010 at 3pm. Rob Richards, house organist at Disney's El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood, California, will be the guest artist presenting *HOORAY!! from HOLLYWOOD* on the Rose 3/21 Mighty Wurlitzer. The afternoon's program will also include a silent movie, *Two Tars*, along with the big band sounds of the SWINGTONES, 18 members of Nebraska's Wind Symphony. For ticket information visit our website: rctos.com, or contact gpawlak@neb.rr.com (402-421-1356).

RCTOS chapter has two surplus blower fans. For specifications, etc., contact Bob Markworth at 402-573-9071 (kimballorgan1@msn.com).

Keep up-to-date with us. Visit our website: rctos.com.

—Jerry Pawlak
Bob Markworth, President
402-573-9071, kimballorgan1@msn.com



Shirley Schainholz at her Lowrey Palladium
(Photo by Jerry Pawlak)



Jerry Pawlak at his Hammond B3
(Photo by Janet Domeier)



Martin Ellis accompanies the Colorado Children's Choral under the direction of Debbie DeSantis (photo by Jerry Nix)



Bob Castle at the grand piano and Jim Calm and DeLoy Goeglein at the twin consoles of the Denver Paramount Wurlitzer (photo by Bill Kwinn)

located downtown, but in 1976 a new school was built in west Tulsa and the organ, a four-manual, 45-rank Kilgen, was moved to the new location. The auditorium was built around the instrument and has five chambers for surround sound. Garvin Berry, who was a leader in restoring the organ, was present, and at his request, we played a midi version of Widor's "Toccata" for the program finale.

Bill Rowland gave us some facts about Buster Keaton and led us in a sing-along before accompanying a Buster Keaton feature movie. Keaton made 10 feature films, did his own stunts—some of which are truly spectacular—and loved big props. Bill did his usual great job of accompanying the film.

—Barbara Purtell

Phil Judkins, President

918-493-6577, pjudkins@sbcglobal.net



Wally Brown at the Robert-Morton
(Photo by Joyce Hatchett)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver, Colorado—*Wurlitzer and Wiz Kids*, our March club event at the Denver Paramount Theatre, paired Martin Ellis with the Colorado Children's Chorale Touring Choir, directed by Debbie DeSantis, for an outstanding concert.

Almost 400 visitors entered the Paramount's open doors in April for theatre tours and seven hours of continuous organ music at the *2010 Doors Open Denver*. Organists Bob Castle, Doug Thompson, Jim Calm and DeLoy Goeglein provided the music, Don Wick prepared the organ and led theatre tours, and former Paramount projectionist Jim Wagoner shared stories of carbon arc projectors and real time splicing.

—Jim Calm, President
jimcalm32@yahoo.com

SOONER STATE

Tulsa, Oklahoma—Wally Brown of Oklahoma City presented his annual program for us on March 26, playing on both our Robert-Morton organ and the piano. Wally is a delightful entertainer and his improvisations keep his audience listening closely for whatever tunes he may interweave. He began the program with a rag, morphed into bits of the Charleston and back to the rag. He took some familiar wedding songs and mixed them with a polka and songs from *Oklahoma*. He closed his program with several hymn arrangements.

Wally, a native of Duncan, Oklahoma, spent many years playing for one of Oklahoma City's best restaurants and a radio station. He gives theatre organ concerts, plays piano or organ for church conventions and has produced over 20 CDs of pop and gospel music. Wally was featured recently on *Oklahoma City Metro* on OETA, the Oklahoma public television station.

April 16 we had a chance to revisit the Central High School organ which our members were instrumental in restoring in 2002. Central High was Tulsa's original high school,



Bill Rowland at Central High School Kilgen
(Photo by Linda Rowland)

SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

York, Pennsylvania—On March 8, the theatre resounded to the sounds of old-time radio commercials like "...get Wildroot Cream Oil, Charlie," "Super Suds" and episodes of classic radio programs like *Little Orphan Annie*. These were presented by "The Spirit of the Airwaves Players" (S.O.A.P.), a traveling troupe of entertainers based in Reading, Pennsylvania. They perform for retirement communities, civic groups, and anywhere there is an interest and fascination with old-

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time radio. Dressed in vintage clothing and accessories, with ladies in seamed stockings and gentlemen in fedoras, the performers of S.O.A.P. recreate the 1930s and '40s in every detail. and use vintage microphones, too. S.O.A.P.'s sound effects department also uses authentic techniques of the era—two ordinary coconut shells transform into the thunderous hoof beats of the great horse Silver! Chapter members and the mighty Wurlitzer served up classic radio themes between radio shows.

After working for more than a year, the chapter has been granted non-profit status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. This enables the chapter to solicit tax deductible donations towards chapter programs and enhances our status with the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center where the organ is housed and presented.

—Roy Wainwright
Dusty Miller, President
717-795-2775, pres@svtos.org



S.O.A.P. Players Recreate '30s Radio
(Photo by Roy Wainwright)

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Phoenix, Arizona—On March 5, chapter membership chairman Ed Benoit played background dinner music on the Wurlitzer at the Orpheum Theatre for the American Council on Education. Their board of directors, about 60 people from all over the state, had their meeting and a dinner at the Orpheum.

The pizza buffet at Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa is always a great draw for our chapter, and March 14 was no exception. Our artist for the afternoon was Lew Williams. Lew played several of the numbers that are popular with the evening crowds, and also requests from our ATOS audience. He included a demonstration of the organ's

capabilities and various sounds. Did you know that there are frogs, mosquitoes and bees living in the theatre organ?

March 20 was our final silent film of the season at the Orpheum Theatre. At the Wurlitzer, Ron Rhode accompanied the Coleen Moore film, *Ella Cinders*, along with a comedy short about another Cinder Ella.

Chapter member Ken Winland was the organist at the Orpheum for our April 11 meeting. Ken is a quiet man who talks very little during his programs. At the beginning he announced, "I'm just going to get up there and have a good time." After playing nearly three dozen melodies beautifully, he said, "I had fun, and that's all she wrote." We had as much fun listening as he did playing! Chapter members Johnny Sharp, Mark Crenshaw, Tim Versluys, and visiting organist Juan Cardona provided us with another hour of entertainment during open console. We hope that Juan will return to Phoenix and play a full program for us sometime.

—Madeline LiVolsi
Bill Carr, President
623-694-1746, Bllcarr3.atos@cox.net

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.....
Dave Wickerham – Sunday, February 21
.....
Rob Richards and Alex Zsolt
Saturday, March 13
.....
Ken Double – Sunday, April 25
.....
Ron Carter: Concert/silent movie
Sunday, May 16
.....
Ron Carter: *The Phantom of the Opera*
Saturday, October 30
.....
John McCall – Sunday, December 12
.....
Athens Theatre, 124 N Florida Ave, DeLand, FL
Box Office 386-736-1500; www.athentheatre.org

Susan Cole Keyboard Productions
352-383-6975; 407-252-1997 cell
legatolady@aol.com

www.atos.org

Articles and Features
Added Regularly

Calendar of Events
and Submissions

Theatre Organ Locator

Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs
and Performances

We strive for accuracy; however, the information contained in Around the Circuit is presented as submitted. ATOS is not responsible for errors resulting from unreported changes to schedules, venue, and contact information.

ALASKA

State Office Building—333 Willoughby Avenue, Juneau, 907-465-5689 (2/8K). Organ concerts Friday at 12:00 noon. www.pstos.org/instruments/ak/juneau/state-bldg.htm

ARIZONA

Organ Stop Pizza—1149 East Southern Avenue, Mesa, 480-813-5700 (4/78W). Winter organ hours: Sunday through Thursday, 4:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday and Saturday, 4:30pm to 10:00pm. Summer organ hours: Sunday through Thursday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday and Saturday, 5:30pm to 10:00pm. Charlie Balogh, Lew Williams. www.organstoppizza.com

Orpheum Theatre—203 West Adams, Phoenix, 480-460-7699 (3/30W). *Silent Sundays* film series. Pre-show concerts 2:30-3:30pm. Concerts and film accompaniments are provided by Ron Rhode. www.silentsundays.info

CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

Berkeley Community Theatre—1930 Alston Way, Berkeley, 510-644-2707 (4/42W). All shows 2:30pm. www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

Bob Hope Theatre (Former Fox California)—242 Main Street, Stockton, 209-337-4673 (4/21RM). Organ played monthly for classic and silent movies, special occasions, and public tours.

California Automobile Museum—2200 Front Street, Sacramento, 916-442-6802 (3/16W). Formerly Towe Auto Museum. Sunday concerts, Friday night silent films. www.SierraChapterATOS.org

Castro Theatre—429 Castro, San Francisco, 415-621-6120 (4/21W). Intermissions played nightly by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich.

Fox Theatre—308 West Main Street, Visalia, 559-625-1369 (4/24W). Thirty-minute organ prelude, with guest organist, to frequent classic movies. www.foxvisalia.org

Grand Lake Theatre—3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland, 510-452-3556 (3/18W). Intermissions: Friday, Warren Lubich; Saturday, Kevin King.

Harmony Wynelands—9291 East Harney Lane, Lodi, 209-369-4184 (3/15RM). Tasting room open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11:00am to 5:00pm, or by appointment. Bob Hartzell, live and recorded performances. www.harmonywynelands.com

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

Paramount Theatre—2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-465-6400 (4/27W). Public tours on first and third Saturdays at 10:00am. Movie overtures, Thursdays at 6:30pm. www.paramounttheatre.com

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

CALIFORNIA (SOUTH)

Avalon Casino Theatre—One Casino Way, Catalina Island, 310-510-2414 (4/16P). Friday and Saturday, 6:15pm, pre-show concert, John Tusak. www.visitcatalina.org

El Capitan Theatre—6838 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, 800-DISNEY6 (4/37W). Organ played daily before shows. House Organist: Rob Richards. Staff Organists: John Ledwon, Ed Vodicka, and Ty Woodward. www.elcapitantickets.com

Granada Theatre—616 Kentucky Street, Bakersfield, 661-330-6733 (4/24RM). www.theatreorgans.com/spohngranada

Plummer Auditorium—201 East Chapman Avenue, Fullerton, 714-870-2813 (4/28W). www.octos.org

Nethercutt Collection—15200 Bledsoe Street, Sylmar, 818-364-6464 (4/74W). All events free, limit 4 tickets per household. Call for reservations. Voicemail, e-mail, and fax reservations not accepted. October 15, 8:00pm and October 16, 2:00pm and 8:00pm, *Silent Movie Night* with Joe Rinaudo, projectionist and Dean Mora, organist. December 3, 8:00pm and December 4, 2:00pm and 8:00pm, *Christmas Concert Series*, featuring Rob Richards with pianist Alex Zsolt. December 10, 8:00pm and December 11, 2:00pm and 8:00pm, Ron Rhode. www.nethercuttcollection.org

Orpheum Theatre—842 South Broadway, Los Angeles, 310-329-1455 (3/14W). Saturday, 11:30am; organ is featured as part of the guided tour of theatre. www.laorpheum.com

COLORADO

Holiday Hills Ballroom—2000 W 92nd Ave, Federal Heights, 303-466-3330 (GW4Q). All events: RMCATOS Members, no charge. All others, \$5. July 11, 2:00pm, *July Jamboree*; September 19, 2:00pm, *Tab Stops & Truck Stops*. www.rmcatos.org

DELAWARE

Dickinson High School—1801 Milltown Road, Wilmington, 302-995-2603 (3/66K). All concerts at 7:00pm unless otherwise noted. July 17, Rich Lewis. www.dftoskimball.org

FLORIDA

Polk Theatre—127 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, 863-682-7553 (3/12RM). Movie overtures: Friday and Saturday, 7:15pm; Sunday, 1:45pm. Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs, and Heidi Lenker.

Tampa Theatre—711 Franklin Street, Tampa, 813-274-8981 (3/14W). Movie overtures: Bob Baker, Bill Brusick, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs, Richard Frank, and Bob Logan. www.tampatheatre.org

GEORGIA

Earl Smith Strand Theatre—117 North Park Square, Marietta, 770-293-0080 (Allen 317EX). Pre-shows for movies and other events by Strand organists Ron Carter, Rick McGee, Larry Davis, Phillip Allen, and James Thrower.

Fox Theatre—600 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, 404-881-2119 (4/42M). Larry Douglas Embury plays before each show. www.foxtheatre.org

Rylander Theatre—310 West Lamar Street, Americus, 229-931-0001 (3/11M). Organ featured for pre-show productions of the Sumter Players and other events. www.rylander.org

HAWAII

Palace Theatre—38 Haili, Hilo, 808-934-7010 (4/13RM). *Hawaiiana* show every Wednesday, occasional silent movies, concerts and special events featuring the organ. Bob Alder, Tommy Stark and Dwight Beacham. www.palacehilo.org

ILLINOIS

Arcada Theatre—105 East Main Street, St. Charles, 630-845-8900 (3/16GMC). Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights. www.onestentertainment.com/arcada/arcada.htm

Beggar's Pizza—3524 Ridge Road, Lansing, 708-418-3500 (3/17 B/C). Tuesday and Friday, 6:00pm to 9:00pm: Glenn Tallar. www.beggarspizza.com/location-il-lansing.php

Lincoln Theatre—103 East Main Street, Belleville, 618-233-0018 (3/15C). Movie overtures: Friday, David Stephens; Saturday, volunteers. www.lincolntheatre-belleville.com

Rialto Square Theatre—102 North Chicago Street, Joliet, 815-726-6600 (4/27B). Organ pre-shows and intermissions: Jim Patak or Sam Yacono. Theatre tours with Jim Patak at the console.

IOWA

Orpheum Theatre—520 Pierce Street, Sioux City, 712-258-9164 (3/21W). Occasional pre-shows, special events, and concerts. www.orpheumlive.com

Codes used in listing: A=Austin, B=Barton, C=Composite, CHR=Christie, CPTN=Compton, E=Estey, GB=Griffith Beach, K=Kimball, M=Möller, MC=Marr and Colton, P=Page RM=Robert-Morton, W=Wurlitzer. Example: (4/19W) = 4-manual, 19-rank Wurlitzer

Schedules subject to change.

Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs
and Performances

MAINE

Merrill Auditorium—20 Myrtle Street, Portland, 207-553-4363 (5/103A). August 17, 7:30pm: Christoph Bull accompanies a silent movie (TBA). Pre-concert talk at 6:30pm. Tickets available through Port Tix, 207-842-0800, boxoffice@porttix.com, or <http://tickets.porttix.com>. www.foko.org

MICHIGAN

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

Michigan Theatre—603 East Liberty, Ann Arbor, 734-668-8397 (3/13B). Daily overtures before evening films, plus silent films for special occasions. Dr. Henry Aldridge, Director; Dr. Steve Ball, Staff Organist; Stephen Warner, Newton Bates, Fr. Andrew Rogers, Emily Seward. www.michtheater.org.

The Mole Hole—150 West Michigan Avenue, Marshall, 616-781-5923 (2/6 B/K). Organ daily, Scott Smith, recorded artist.

Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theatre—272 Pearl Street NW, Grand Rapids, 616-459-4253 (3/30W). Tours by appointment, and ATOS guests welcome to hear organ weekly at noon on Thursdays. Story time slide program during school year. Organ played on Sundays, 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Redford Theatre—17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, 313-537-2560 (3/10B). Movie overtures, Fridays at 7:30pm, Saturdays at 1:30pm and 7:30pm. Guest organists include Steve Ball, Newton Bates, Dave Calendine, Jennifer Candea, Brian Carmody, Gil Francis, John Lauter, Lance Luce, Tony O'Brien, Fr. Andrew Rogers, Emily Seward. www.redfordtheatre.com

MINNESOTA

Heights Theatre—3951 Central Avenue NE, Columbia Heights, 763-789-4992 (4/11W). Movie overtures every Friday and Saturday.

MISSOURI

City Museum—701 North 15th Street, St. Louis, 314-231-2489 (3/17W). Organ heard every day the museum is open, via computerized relay or by organists from St. Louis Theatre Organ Society. www.citymuseum.org

Fox Theatre—527 Grand Boulevard North, St. Louis, 314-534-1678 (4/36W). Tours of the Fox Theatre conducted every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday (except holidays) at 10:30am. Tuesday tour: \$5 for adults and \$3 for children (12 and under). Thursday and Saturday tours: \$8 for adults and \$3 for children. For parties of less than 20, no reservations are needed. www.fabulousfox.com

NEBRASKA

Rose Theatre—2001 Farnam Street, Omaha, 402-345-9718 (3/21W). July 18, 3:00pm, *Hooray! from Hollywood*, Rob Richards at the Wurlitzer with an 18-piece Big Band, the Swingtones, and the 1927 Laurel and Hardy silent short, *Two Tars*.

NEW JERSEY

Broadway Theatre—43 South Broadway, Pitman, 856-589-7519 (3/8K). Organ played before most movies and all stage shows. Harold Ware, John Breslin, Nathan Figlio, Janet Norcross, Bob Nichols.

Loew's Jersey—54 Journal Square, Jersey City, 732-741-4045 (4/23RM). October 2, 7:30pm: Chris Elliott accompanies *The Mark of Zorro*, Tickets \$10 at the door. Doors open at 7:00pm. www.loewsjersey.org

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

Newton Theatre—234 Spring Street, Newton, 973-579-9993 (2/4E). Friday evening intermissions, John Baratta.

NEW YORK

Auditorium Theatre—885 East Main Street, Rochester, 585-234-2295 (4/23W). www.theatreorgans.com/rochestr

Lafayette Theatre—Lafayette Avenue, Suffern, 845-369-8234 (2/11W). Saturday, 11:00am, Earle Seeley. Saturday evenings and Sunday before matinee: John Baratta, Earle Seeley and Jeff Barker.

Middletown Paramount Theatre—19 South Street, Middletown, 845-346-4195 (3/12W). Pre-show music, concerts and silent films presented by the New York chapter of ATOS and the Middletown Paramount Theatre. www.nytos.org

Proctor's Theatre—432 State Street, Schenectady, 518-346-8204 (3/18W). Noon concert series, Tuesdays, unless stated otherwise. www.proctors.org

Riviera Theatre & Performing Arts Center—67 Webster St, North Tonawanda, 716-692-2413 (3/11W). July 14, 7:30pm, Silent Movie *The General*, Ron Carter accompanying; August 22, 2:00pm, Byron Jones; September 18, 7:30pm, Trio Con Brio with Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall and Martin Ellis; October 6, 7:30pm, Ron Reseigh; November 14, 2:00pm, Clark Wilson Concert and Silent Movie *The Cameraman*; December 8, 7:30pm, Donnie Rankin

NORTH CAROLINA

Carolina Theatre—310 South Green Street, Greensboro, 336-333-2600 (3/6C-Electronic). Organ played before and after the *Carolina Classic Film Series*. www.carolinatheatre.com

NORTH DAKOTA

Fargo Theatre—314 North Broadway, Fargo, 701-239-8385 (4/21W). Organ plays Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings, before and between performances. Short organ concerts: Lance Johnson, Steve Eneboe and Tyler Engberg. www.fargotheatre.org

OHIO

Cincinnati Music Hall—1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, 513-621-1919 (3/31W). Concerts, special events presented by the Ohio Valley chapter of ATOS. www.ohiovalleychapteratos.org

Collingwood Arts Center—2413 Collingwood Avenue, Toledo, 419-389-9334 (3/8H). Organ often featured for pre-show music. House organists: Bill Yaney, George Krejci, Brian Bogdanowitz, Emily Seward, Paul Jacyk. www.collingwoodartscenter.org

Ohio Theatre—55 East State Street, Columbus, 614-469-1045 (4/34RM). Organ overtures and intermissions. www.capa.com

Palace Theatre—605 Market Avenue North, Canton, 330-454-9181 (3/12 Kilgen). Frequent pre-show and intermission use; occasional concerts. www.cantonpalacetheatre.org

Palace Theatre—Cleveland's Playhouse Square, 1615 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, 216-771-1771 (3/15K). Organ pre-shows for summer film series and special events. www.playhousesquare.org

Palace Theatre—617 Broadway, Lorain, 440-245-2323 (3/10W). Occasional pre-show and intermission use, and special events. www.lorainpalace.org

Palace Theatre—276 West Center Street, Marion, 740-383-2101 (3/10W). Occasional pre-show and special events. www.marionpalace.org

Renaissance Theatre—138 Park Avenue, Mansfield, 419-522-2726 (3/20W). Frequent use, including free summer concert series. www.culture.ohio.gov/project.asp?proj=renaissance

OKLAHOMA

Tulsa Technology Center, Broken Arrow Campus—129th East Avenue (Olive Street) and 111th Street (Florence Street), Broken Arrow, 918-355-1562 (3/13RM). Sooner State chapter ATOS, 3rd Friday of each month, programs and open console. www.theatreorgans.com/SoonerStateATOS

OREGON

Bijou Theatre—1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, 541-994-8255 (Electronic). Silent film series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm. www.cinematolovers.com

Elsinore Theatre—170 High Street SE, Salem, 503-375-3574 (3/25W). Silent film programs Wednesdays at 7:00pm. Rick Parks, organist. www.elsinoretheatre.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Blackwood Estate—Blackwood Lane, Harrisville, 724-735-2813 (3/20 W/C). Private residence near Pittsburgh hosts several concerts; proceeds benefit charities and scholarship recipients. www.blackwoodmusic.org

Keystone Oaks High School—1000 Kelton Avenue, Dormont, 724-446-9744 (3/19W). September 4, 2:00pm: Hector Olivera. Tickets \$15 in advance by e-mail, patos.mail@verizon.net or \$20 at door. mysite.verizon.net/patos.wurlitzer

Roxy Theatre—2004 Main Street, Northampton, 610-262-7699 (2/6W). Organ is played 6:30pm to 7:00pm and intermissions. Henry Thomas. www.Roxytheatrenorthampton.com

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Theatre—604 South Gay Street, Knoxville, 865-684-1200 (3/16W). Organ played before movies throughout the year and at free *First Monday* concerts, the first Monday of every month at 12:00 noon. Subject to cancellation due to other scheduled events. www.tennesseetheatre.com

UTAH

Peery's Egyptian Theatre—2415 Washington Boulevard, Ogden, 801-395-3200 (3/24W). Silent films; entrance and exit music at some other programs. www.peeryegyptiantheater.com

VIRGINIA

Byrd Theatre—2908 West Carey, Richmond, 804-353-9911 (4/17W). Overtures Saturdays at 7:15pm and 9:30pm, Bob Gullede. www.byrdtheatre.com

WASHINGTON

Lincoln Theatre—712 South 1st Street, Mt. Vernon, 360-419-7129 (2/7W). Original installation organ played one-half hour prior to movies most Fridays through Tuesdays. www.lincoltheater.org

Mt. Baker Theatre—106 North Commercial, Bellingham (2/14W). Second Sunday monthly, 2:00pm, open console.

Paramount Theatre—911 Pine Street, Seattle, 206-467-5510 (4/20W). Free tours of the historic theatre, first Saturday of every month, 10:00am. Includes organ demonstration. www.stgpresents.org

WISCONSIN

Hermes Basement Bijou—Racine, 262-639-1322 (5/35W). For tour information, contact Eileen at Racine County Convention Bureau, 262-884-6407, or Fred Hermes for appointment. Open console on weekends.

Organ Piper Music Palace—4353 South 108th Street, Greenfield (Milwaukee), 414-529-1177 (3/27C). Organ hours: Tuesday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Wednesday, 5:30pm to 10:00pm with live band; Thursday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday, 5:00pm to 9:45pm; Saturday, 12:30pm to 9:45pm; Sunday, 12:30pm to 8:45pm. Ron Reseigh, Ralph Conn, and Dean Rosko.

The Phipps Center for the Arts—109 Locust Street, Hudson, 715-386-8409 (3/16W). October 16, 7:30pm, Ken Double with Skip Stine, trumpet. Tickets \$23 Adults, \$16 Students w/current ID; December 18, 2:00pm, Jelani Eddington, Tickets \$22/adults, \$15/students w/current ID; January 22, 2011, 2:00pm, Dave Wickerham, Tickets \$22/adults, \$15/students w/current ID; March 5, 2011, 7:30pm, Clark Wilson accompanies Buster Keaton's *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, Tickets \$22/adults, \$15/students w/current ID; June 11, 2011, 7:30pm, Ron Rhode, Tickets \$22/adults, \$15/students w/current ID. www.thephipps.org

Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theatre—272 Pearl Street NW, Grand Rapids, 616-459-4253 (3/30W). Story time slide program on Monday mornings year round. Organ also played on Friday mornings. Tours by appointment.

AUSTRALIA

Capri Theatre—141 Goodwood Road, Goodwood SA +61 8 8272 1177 (4/29W). Organ played before evening sessions on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday nights. www.capri.org.au

Dendy Cinema—26 Church Street, Brighton, VIC, (03) +61 3 9789 1455 (3/15W). Organ before films, Saturday evenings.

Karrinyup Center—Perth, WA (61) +61 8 9447 9837 (3/21W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:00pm.

Marrickville Town Hall—Marrickville Road, Marrickville, NSW. Next to Fire Station (2/11W). All Shows Sundays at 2:00pm. 8 August, David Gray, Scotland; 12 December, Tony Fenelon & John Atwell. www.tosa.net.au

Orion Theatre—155 Beamish Street, Campsie, NSW +61 2 6351 3122 (3/17W). All Shows Sundays at 2:00pm. 8 August, David Gray, Scotland; 12 December, Tony Fenelon & John Atwell.

Orpheum Theatre—380 Military Road, Cremorne, NSW, (02) +61 2 9908 4344 (3/15W). Saturday night, Sunday afternoon, intermissions, Neil Jensen.

CANADA

Casa Loma—1 Austin Terrace, Toronto, 416-499-6262 (4/19W). All shows 8:00pm. www.theatreorgans.com/toronto

NEW ZEALAND

Hollywood Cinema—20 St Georges Road, Avondale, Auckland, +64 9 525-7067 (3/16W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:00pm. Sep 12, Ken Double (USA); Oct 17, Martin Ellis (USA). www.theatreorgans.com/wota

UNITED KINGDOM

Assembly Hall—Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing, West Sussex, +44 1903 206206 (3/23W). 26 September: Richard Hills; 26 October: Phil Kelsall; 21 November: Simon Gledhill. www.worthing-wurlitzer.org

Civic Hall—North Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands +44 1902 552121 (4/44CPTN). Friday concerts 12:00 noon to 12:30pm before the tea dance. Steve Tovey or Cameron Lloyd. Concerts Saturdays at 2:00pm. http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic_hall.html

Fentham Hall—Marsh Lane, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, +44 1564 794778 (3/11CPTN). All concerts on Sundays at 3:00pm. www.cos-centralandwales.co.uk

Musical Museum—399 High Street, Brenford, London, +44 2085 608108 (3/12W). Fri 16 July, 2.30pm, Richard Cole, tickets £8.00; Sun 25 July, 3.00pm, Silent Short Comedies accompanied by Donald MacKenzie, tickets £10.00; Fri 20 August, 2.30pm, Richard Cole at the Player Piano, tickets £8.00; Fri 17 September, 2.30pm, Richard Cole at the Player Piano, tickets £8.00, Sun 19 September, 3.00pm, American film music with Chris Barber, tickets £10.00: Visit website for most current schedule. www.musicalmuseum.co.uk

New Victoria Centre—High Street, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, County Durham, +44 1388 762467 (3/18W). Concerts on Saturdays at 7:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm; doors open 30 minutes before concert. Tickets obtainable from David Kirkbride, 3 Edendale Crescent, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, County Durham, DL15 8HR, phone as above. 10 July: Teach-In with Len Rawley; 7 August: Young Organists' Showcase; 11/12 September: Chris Powell; 16/17 October: Richard Hills; 20/21 November: Kevin Grunill; 18/19 December: Gala Christmas Concert. www.netoa.org.uk

Ossett Town Hall—Market Place, Ossett, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, +44 1132 705885 (3/13 CPTN/CHR). All concerts Sundays 2:30pm; doors open 2:00pm. 4 July: Peter Jebson. www.cinema-organs.org.uk

Pollockshaws Burgh Halls—2025 Pollockshaws Road, Glasgow, Scotland +44 1355 224761 (3/19W). All concerts Sundays 2:45pm. 29 August: Kevin Morgan. www.scottishcinemaorgantrust.org.uk

Rye College—Love Lane, Rye, East Sussex, +44 1424 444058 (2/6W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:30pm. 26 September: Paul Roberts; 24 October: John Mann; 28 November: Robert Wolfe. www.ryewurlitzer.co.cc

Stockport Town Hall—Edward Street, Stockport, Cheshire, +44 1614 272180 (4/20W). 26 July, 12:00pm: Kevin Morgan; 19 September, 2:30pm: Nicholas Martin; 27 September, 12:00pm: Peter Jebson; 19 December, 2:30pm: Kevin Morgan; 20 December, 12:00pm: Andrew Nix. www.ltot.org.uk

Theatre Organ Heritage Centre and Hope-Jones Museum—Alexandra Road, Peel Green, Eccles, Manchester (2/6W). Lunchtime concerts Wednesday every week, 1:00pm. www.voxlancastris.org.uk/heritage

Victoria Hall—Victoria Road, Saltaire, West Yorkshire, +44 8454 002208 (3/11W). Concerts at 2:30pm, unless otherwise noted. 24 July, 1:30pm: Phil Kelsall plays for dancing; 27-30 August: Cinema Organ Society Northern Convention; 19 September: Howard Beaumont Trio; 10 October: Michael Wooldridge; 12 December: Richard Hills. www.cosnorth.co.uk and www.cinemaorgans.org.uk

Minutes

MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Monday, February 1, 2010
8:00pm E.S.T.

1. Chairman Hartley called the meeting to order at 8:10pm

2. Secretary Bob Evans called the roll.

Officers Present: Mike Hartley- Chairman of the Board, Craig Peterson-Vice Chairman of the Board, Bob Evans-Secretary, Paul Van Der Molen-Treasurer. **Board Members Present:** John Apple, David Barnett, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Jack Moelmann, Donna Parker, Tyler Morkin-Youth Representative to the Board. **Board Members Absent:** Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish. **Guests Present:** Bill Carr-Nominations Committee Chair

3. Chairman Hartley declared a quorum.

4. Chairman of the Board Hartley asked Bill Carr to review the nominating process for the board.

Chairman Hartley asked Craig Peterson to work with Mr. Carr to review and present a proposal for possible revision of the nominating process.

5. The Board discussed the eligibility of nominees Robert Ridgeway and John Ledwon for the ATOS Board of Directors.

Robert Ridgeway was deemed ineligible because he did not meet membership requirements.

John Ledwon was deemed ineligible because a strict interpretation of the ATOS Bylaws determined he was still an officer of a competing international organization at the time of his nomination.

6. Chairman Hartley sought individual input from board members on this issue. The majority of the board supported the policy as spelled out in the ATOS Bylaws. These two nominees were determined to be ineligible.

7. With no further business Chairman Hartley declared the meeting adjourned.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Please Note: This meeting was conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order*. Tyler Morkin, Parliamentarian

MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Monday, February 15, 2010
8:00pm E.S.T.

1. Chairman of the Board Hartley called the meeting to order at 8:00pm E.S.T.

2. Secretary Bob Evans called the roll.

Officers Present: Mike Hartley-Chairman of the Board, Craig Peterson-Vice Chairman of the Board, Bob Evans-Secretary, Paul Van Der Molen-Treasurer. **Board Members Present:** John Apple, David Barnett, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Jack Moelmann, Donna Parker, Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish. Youth Representative to the

Board-Tyler Morkin. **Staff Present:** Ken Double-President/CEO, Jim Merry-Executive Secretary.

3. Chairman Hartley declared a quorum.

Motion: (Miller, Van Der Molen) to accept the minutes of the January 30, 2010 ATOS Mid-Year Telephone Conference (Carried: Unanimous)

4. Discussion of Archives: (Double, Board)

a. Ken Double remarked that some concern has arisen that due consideration was not given to the Eastman School of Music. Ken Double responded to Jonathan Ortloff's letter by informing him that numerous requests by E-mail and telephone messages were left for Dr. David Higgs with no response.

b. Tyler Morkin replied he was concerned with the use of selected quotes in Jonathan's letter taken from Dr. Higgs initial and only response which ended with "more to come later." Tyler received no further response from Dr. Higgs.

c. Allen Miller pointed out that the visit to The University of Oklahoma (OU) supplied additional questions, which were submitted to all the institutions under consideration.

5. Request for release of certain archival material: (Double)

a. Ken Double stated that a former executor of an estate is concerned about sealed documents that were placed in the archive and library after the death of David Junchen.

Ken suggested that we take this request under serious consideration as the material may contain sensitive materials.

b. Paul Van Der Molen stated that those in charge of a professional archive would be sensitive to this situation.

c. Jack Moelmann suggested that this material be returned to the executor of the estate so that the wishes of the original donor are carried out.

d. Allen Miller suggested that these materials should never be released. The materials should be returned.

e. Jack Moelmann again highly recommended the return of these materials to the executor of the estate.

f. Paul Van Der Molen asked if the executor actually wants the material back. Paul seems to get the impression that he does not (personally) want them back.

g. Jack offered to contact the executor to find out his wishes.

h. Jelani asked why these sensitive documents were placed in the archive in the first place.

i. Doug Powers stated that he was puzzled about this situation. The materials are sealed. Who was to disseminate this information? Was this information to be shared at some point?

(Motion: Moelmann, Miller) to return the sealed materials to the executor of the donor's estate.

j. Jelani Eddington expressed concern that we were being asked to vote on materials about which we know little or nothing.

k. Doug Powers expressed the opinion that if these materials are damaging they should not have been placed in the archives. He

feels uncomfortable with the unilateral disposition of these materials.

l. Jack Moelmann offered to contact the executor and get as much information as possible.

m. Allen Miller pointed out that Vern Bickel was curator of the archive at the time the donation was made and knew the people involved. Allen is not concerned about OU protecting the sealed documents. Allen feels that there has to be a set time when this information can be revealed.

n. Mike Hartley said that with Allen Miller's permission Jack Moelmann would contact the executor of the donor's estate to find out his wishes. After this contact Jack will submit a report to the board.

Jack Moelmann withdrew his motion.

6. Present State of the Archives: (Van Der Molen, Hartley, Miller)

a. Paul Van Der Molen stated that Jim Patak feels more comfortable after talking with Paul about the future of the archives. Jim also is under the impression that ATOS should be out of the Joliet building by April 30, 2010, as the current renters need more space. Paul recommends that we get the archive and library out of Joliet. He feels that we should store the materials in PODS near Chicago for the time being. We need to store the materials in "long distance PODS" which will save unpacking and repacking once the final destination is chosen for the archive and library. The PODS will be stored in climate-controlled warehouses for a monthly fee per POD. Paul suggested a target date of March 31, 2010 to remove the materials.

b. Jack Moelmann asked where these PODS would be placed. Paul replied that the storage company has several warehouses in the Chicago area.

c. Mike Hartley asked if this was part of the Archive Relocation Committee Plan. Allen Miller responded that it was. Allen asked if the Pataks would be available to supervise the packing of the boxes for the PODS.

d. Paul stated that the storage company could provide (at a cost) labor to carry the materials and pack them into the PODS.

e. Allen is concerned that like materials be packed together. (recordings with recordings, books with books, etc.)

f. Mike Hartley pointed out that ATOS would incur some expense with this procedure. We would not be paying rent in Joliet but would be paying for storage of the PODS.

g. John DeMajo asked how much the storage of these materials would cost.

h. Paul responded that the cost is \$199 per month per POD (plus some small incidental expenses). He guesses that it would cost about \$5,000 to pack and transport the materials.

i. Craig Peterson wanted to know the difference between storage in long distance PODS than (sic) local PODS.

j. Paul responded that the long distance PODS can be transported long distances and the local PODS are meant for limited movement.

k. Jack Moelmann asked if anyone has ever given an estimate of the cubic footage of the collection.

l. Paul estimates that the collection would fill three or four PODS.

m. Mike Hartley expressed the opinion that we should have an initial estimate of cost.

Motion: (Van Der Molen, Miller): that \$10,000 be allotted to load the PODS and place them in temporary storage. (Carried: Unanimous)

n. Mike Hartley asked Allen Miller when he planned to arrange for someone to go to Chicago and help the Pataks. We need to get people together to help the Pataks. Mike noted that we need a plan to send a designee to Joliet to help the Pataks.

o. Jack Moelmann asked about the disposition of old ATOS records. He wanted to know where these records would reside.

p. Paul Van Der Molen pointed out that he has the records for the last two years and that the rest reside in the archive and library. He does not have room to store any more than that.

q. Jim Merry described the materials as occupying ten banker's boxes. The secretary also pointed out that he does not have room to store these materials.

r. Craig Peterson asked what parts of the old financial records do we need to keep. Could we sort these materials and determine what to keep. Craig feels that we do not need to put all of these materials in storage.

s. Paul Van Der Molen pointed out that it might be cheaper to sort the material when it gets to its ultimate destination. Perhaps the materials could initially be sorted and separated then. We are operating under a time constraint.

t. Mike Hartley asked Paul and Allen to work with the Pataks.

u. Mike Hartley reminded the board that some other issues had arisen regarding the Archive and Library.

v. Jim Merry had distributed a suggested revision of the language used in the motion passed during the mid year meeting that permitted negotiations to begin with the University of Oklahoma regarding the possible donation of the ATOS Archive and Library to the university. Jim felt that even though the language explained the process perhaps the motion could be re-voted incorporating language that would be more palatable so some of the membership. Jim noted that the perception is out there that the decision has already been made to transfer the archive and library to the University of Oklahoma.

Jim felt that the language connotes that the final decision has already been made.

Jim suggested that the original motion be rescinded and replaced with the following:

w. Rescind the motion passed in part 6 of the January 30, 2010 ATOS Mid-Year Telephone Conference:

Archive and Library:
that ATOS donate its archive and library to the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma on such terms and conditions to be negotiated between the parties. I do this in order to protect the history of the

theatre organ and insure that our archival material is available to the general public and young organ enthusiasts for generations to come, and recognizing that the American Organ Institute has the resources, facilities, and interest in promoting the art of the theatre organ.

Amend the motion passed in part 36 of the January 30, 2010 ATOS Mid-Year Telephone Conference regarding the Archive and Relocation Committee to:

A committee be established to conduct negotiations with the University of Oklahoma, in order to explore and develop terms and conditions under which ATOS may decide whether transfer of its archive to the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma will best provide for protection, conservation and future additions to the history of the theatre organ while insuring that our archival material is available to ATOS members, the general public and young organ enthusiasts for generations to come.

Motion: (Van Der Molen, Miller) to accept Jim Merry's suggestion.

x. Jelani Eddington questioned the wisdom of adding another perception at this time. He added that adopting this suggestion makes it look like the board is incapable of making a decision. This amounts to trading one perception for another.

y. Allen Miller responded that although negotiations have not even begun, the incorrect perception that the final decision has been made is already out there among the membership. He feels that the more the situation is explained the more people will agree with initiating negotiations with OU. Many Board members have spent time explaining the situation to some ATOS members. Changing the wording now makes it look like we are waffling.

z. Bob Evans agreed with both Jelani and Allen. He feels that we will confuse the issue even more by adding another perception.

aa. Jack Moelmann wondered if it is possible that the collection might not go to OU.

bb. Jack Moelmann added that the perception is out there that we're going to donate and then negotiate; that in order to negotiate we have to donate first.

cc. Allen Miller noted that in order to enter into serious negotiations we must show intent to donate the collection. There is room for attachment of details to the official Deed of Gift. Any negotiations would include reasons why these materials might need to be returned to ATOS. We will have involvement in oversight of the materials donated. All of these details, and possibly many more, will have to be worked out.

dd. Jelani Eddington pointed out that before any agreement was signed the terms and conditions would have to be acceptable to both parties (ATOS and OU). He is concerned with rewriting the motion and causing confusion.

ee. Jim Merry commented that he is not sure what the general membership's feeling is about this. It is a problem, which may not

develop. This may be a problem that resolves itself but it may not.

Paul Van Der Molen withdrew the motion.

ff. Jack Moelmann asked Allen Miller who was on the Archive Relocation Committee.

gg. Allen responded that Mike Hartley (ex-officio), Bob Evans, Paul Van Der Molen, Jelani Eddington, Carlton Smith, and Ken Double (ex-officio), and himself (chair) are officially committee members. Allen intends to invite a few others to participate. Vern Bickel, while not an official member, will serve as an unofficial advisor and therefore be kept abreast of any developments.

hh. Chairman Hartley reminded the board that there was a recommendation that we have one member from the initial investigative committee. John Apple has requested that at least one member of the initial committee be appointed a member of the Archive Relocation Committee. John feels that many of these committee members, because of their experience in archival matters, would be able to contribute much to the committee. Allen will take this under consideration.

7. Good of the Order:

a. Jim Merry pointed out that ballots for the 2010 Board election would be mailed out by March 5. The date for official return is April 15.

b. Tyler Morkin stated that he would now be responsible for posting items in the "Front Desk" portion of the ATOS web site.

c. Jack Moelmann asked that any memo that is considered confidential in nature be clearly labeled as such. This has been a practice in the past.

d. Craig Peterson replied that all Board business is confidential until voted upon. Once voted upon the business is stated in the official minutes and distributed to the membership.

If a piece of correspondence comes from outside the board it is not considered confidential.

e. Chairman Hartley then asked each person present if she or he had anything else to add.

f. Donna Parker stated that the Public Relations Committee is doing its best to report activities to the membership in a clear and transparent manner.

Chairman Hartley declared the meeting adjourned at 9:23 E.S.T.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Please note that this meeting was conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order*. Tyler Morkin, Parliamentarian

MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

Monday, March 15, 2010
8:00pm E.D.T.

1. Chairman of the Board Mike Hartley called the meeting to order at 8:04pm
2. Secretary Bob Evans called the roll:

Minutes

Officers Present: Mike Hartley, Chairman of the Board; Craig Peterson, Vice Chairman of the Board; Bob Evans, Secretary; Paul Van Der Molen, Treasurer. **Board Members Present:** David Barnett, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Jack Moelmann, Donna Parker, Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish. Youth Representative to the Board, Tyler Morkin. **Board Members Absent:** John Apple, Allen Miller. **Staff Members Present:** Ken Double, President/CEO; Jim Merry, Executive Secretary.

3. Chairman Hartley declared a quorum. Motion: (Van Der Molen, Reddish) to approve the board minutes of February 1, 2010. (Carried: Unanimous)

Motion: (Van Der Molen, Eddington) to approve the board minutes of February 15, 2010. (Carried: Unanimous)

Old Business:
4. Archive Relocation Committee Progress Report: (Miller/Evans)

a. In the absence of Allen Miller, Bob Evans gave a brief report to the board. Allen Miller will be in Joliet from March 22-25, 2010 to examine and evaluate the archive situation. He has asked for help in physically packing the materials for storage. The company who is supplying the PODS is able to supply labor to handle the packing of materials and transfer of materials to the PODS at an additional cost.

b. John DeMajo asked where the archival materials would be stored. Bob responded that the PODS would be stored in a climate-controlled warehouse in the Chicago area.

c. Jelani Eddington asked about the disposition of the Junchen files. He had understood that Jack Moelmann would investigate and report to the board.

d. Jack Moelmann replied that he contacted the executor of the estate and found out that the sealed files were not supposed to be opened for fifty years (2042). Jack also said that the executor wanted them returned. The executor would appoint a representative to pick up the four bankers boxes of materials for return to the executor.

e. Mike Hartley reported that he made the decision to return the files. The deceased wished the files to leave them sealed. Chairman Hartley takes sole responsibility for the action and stands corrected.

f. Jelani Eddington replied that this was a procedural mistake. The Board should have made the decision about the disposition of the files. Doug Powers and John DeMajo agreed with Jelani's point.

g. Ken Double suggested that the board should support its Chairman. In the Chairman's mind he was doing the right thing.

Motion: (Van Der Molen, Evans) to affirm the decision of Mike Hartley to return, at the request of the executor of the estate, the sealed documents. (Motion Failed: Nay; Peterson, Evans, Van Der Molen, Barnett, DeMajo, Eddington, Parker, Powers, Reddish. Abstain: Moelmann)

h. Jelani Eddington asked that the following statement be included in the minutes:

The Board fully supports the Chairman of the Board and believes that he took an

action in good faith that represented the best interests of ATOS at the time to honor the request of the estate of Dave Junchen. Nonetheless, the Directors felt that the board should make any decision regarding the disposition of ATOS property.

The Board engaged in a discussion of the transfer of the Junchen materials, which would result in future changes in procedure.

New Business:
5. Proposal for *Theatre Organ* Editor's Position: (Parker)

a. Donna has received positive feedback from two applicants (Don Feely and Mike Bryant). These two applicants wish to co-edit the journal and feel that they can work well together. They have already met several times to discuss the possibility of assuming co-editor positions.

Several Board members noted that they had not received the documents pertaining to the applicants. Donna immediately re-sent them so that all Board members would have copies.

b. Jack Moelmann asked what immediate action was expected of the board.

c. Mike Hartley replied that Donna was presenting a proposal for Board approval.

d. Jack was curious about how having two editors would work. He did not feel that editors should be convention reviewers. He also asked about the position of advertising manager. Donna said that these two are prepared to solicit advertising and are comfortable in assuming the position of advertising managers.

e. Donna stated that, as publisher, she wants someone who will act responsibly as a reviewer. The convention review(s) and photos should appear in *Theatre Organ* in the issue directly following the convention. Don Feely said that he has been a reviewer before.

Donna is not concerned about the editors reviewing the convention because they are not performing at the convention. Donna wants someone who is under contract with ATOS to be responsible for the timely submission of reviews and photographs.

f. Jelani Eddington pointed out that these editors would be subject to the contract. They would be contractually responsible for the journal. This would also give the organization more control over the publication.

g. Paul Van Der Molen asked if we are to pay for the convention and board meeting expenses for these two editors. Should we consider that they alternate each year?

h. Mike Hartley noted that we pay a reviewer and photographer's expenses for the convention. He feels that some of this expense could be offset.

i. Jack Moelmann commented that in the past we have relied on members for photographs.

j. Ken Double remarked that in some past conventions when we relied on attendees taking photographs the result was less than expected in quality and quantity.

k. Mike Hartley pointed out that Donna is asking for a \$6000 increase in compensation for the combined editors.

l. Jack Moelmann asked if either one of the two could handle the job alone.

m. Donna assured the board that either could handle the job alone but we have complained in the past about balance in the publication. Many members have asked for a better balance between the historical and modern day aspects of the theatre organ. These two gentlemen are offering to bring the web site into the equation. They will put more information on the web site. She is expanding the job description and asking them to do more than the previous editor(s). She feels that these two can work better with their duties split up.

n. Bob Evans remarked that he served as co-president of a teacher's organization with great success.

o. Ken Double stated that we have been concerned about increasing advertising revenue. Pursuing potential advertisers is very time consuming. We would be well served with two persons pursuing advertising revenue.

p. Donna replied that this is one of the discussions that they initiated. (Advertising) She has met with these gentlemen individually and together. They are very interested in generating more advertising revenue. We would be getting "more bang for our buck". They have already created a plan of attack.

q. Paul Van Der Molen asked if Donna believed that our membership would see an additional improvement in our journal that is sufficient to justify the additional expenditure. Donna replied that she firmly believed that the improvement would justify the expense.

r. Doug Powers asked about the length of the contract.

s. Donna replied that she preferred to give them a two-year contract.

t. Jack Moelmann suggested a one-year contract be executed to see how the new editors perform.

u. John DeMajo asked if Donna believed that these persons have the ability to edit a national publication.

She has worked with them and asked them to proof two previous journals.

v. John asked if they could work with a printer. Donna replied that Danielle Stark, our graphics person, does most of the work with the printer. Doug Powers added that he is runs a small publishing company and works the same way.

w. Craig Peterson asked about the provision in Donna's proposal that refers to these two gentlemen performing clerical tasks. Donna pointed out that we have a provision that allows the editor to seek outside clerical help if necessary. This provision has not been utilized up to this time. Donna stated that this provision would not be necessary with co-editors.

x. Jack Moelmann asked about the possibility of the new editors seeking a new printing company. Donna stated that the current printer, Johnson Press, has worked out

very well. The former editor regularly sought bids from various printing companies. She would expect these two editors to do the same. Jack added that normally, in the past, the editor has looked for a printing company that was close to the editor's headquarters. Donna replied that since most of this work is submitted electronically, proximity is not the issue it once was.

y. Paul Van Der Molen asked who makes the recommendation for a graphic designer. Donna replied that usually the editor and publisher make the recommendation.

z. Donna pointed out that she has talked at length with Jeff Weiler about the transition.

aa. Paul Van Der Molen inquired about when Mr. Weiler's contract ends. Jelani stated that his contractual obligation would be finished ninety days after his resignation. Basically, Mr. Weiler's assignment is completed as of April 15, 2010 when the May/June issue of the journal is "put to bed." Paul is concerned about paying for two separate editorships.

He suggested that we not hire the two new editors until May 1, 2010. He understands that this is open to discussion.

bb. Donna Parker would like to have the new editors begin their duties on April 1, 2010.

She pointed out that if we don't begin work on the next issue of the journal it would be late.

cc. Doug Powers agreed and stated that the board needs to move ahead and allow Donna to get these two men started on their new position(s).

dd. Paul Van Der Molen again expressed his concern about the increase in pay for the position(s). He pointed out that this Board has been criticized for its expenditures and just wanted to remind the group of that point.

ee. Craig Peterson asked where the figure for the two positions came from. Donna replied that one of the applicants felt that the figure of \$1,000 a month each was fair under current day standards.

Motion: (Reddish, Evans) to accept Donna Parker's recommendation to hire Don Feely and Mike Bryant as editors of *Theatre Organ* as of April 1, 2010 for a period of fifteen months ending June 30, 2011. (Motion Carried: Aye: Peterson, Evans, Van Der Molen, Barnett, DeMajo, Eddington, Moelmann, Powers, Reddish. Abstain: Parker)

Donna Parker will review and revise the editor's job description with the two co-editors.

Good of the Order:

a. Jelani Eddington noted that the board discussed the issue of confidential information at the last meeting.

He reminded the board that we have a confidentiality policy (5b). Generally speaking what happens during course of a board meeting in general session is not confidential. Any business or correspondence that is confidential should be plainly labeled so.

b. Mike Hartley polled the board members by name for any other comments.

c. Ken Double stated that much progress has been made on the convention CD front for both this year and next.

Chairman Hartley declared the meeting adjourned at 9:45pm E.D.T.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Please Note: The meeting was conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order*. Tyler Morkin, Parliamentarian.

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Obituaries

Orrill Dunn

Orrill Dunn passed away April 22, 2010, at the age of 93.

Orrill joined ATOS in 1965. In 1970, with the help and cooperation of George Smafield, a group from CATOE, and his son, Roland Dunn, he helped restore the Coronado Theatre Pipe Organ in Rockford, Illinois. The organ is a 4/17 Barton which is still in use today.

In 1973 Orrill organized a local Rockford Organ Club as a chapter of ATOS, the Land of Lincoln Theater Organ Society, and served as its first president. Orrill later became publicity and program chairman, a position he held for many years. In 1977, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the theatre, Orrill was instrumental in producing the reenactment of the opening of the Coronado Theatre. This program included five acts of vaudeville, a Master of Ceremonies, a twenty piece orchestra in the pit and Dennis James accompanying Harold Lloyd's silent film *Safety Last* on the Barton Organ. The Coronado Theatre seats 2400 and the two performances sold out.

Orrill was Staff Organist at the Coronado from 1980 to 1984 when he played the organ every weekend during intermissions of the feature films. After his retirement, he

taught many local residents to play the piano and organ.

He is survived by his daughter, Sylvia (Tedd) Ellis of Denver, Colorado; son, Raymond (Janis) Dunn of Oakwood; brothers, Howard (Charlotte) Dunn of Rockford, John (Donna) Dunn of Sycamore; and a niece and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife and son, Roland.

Memorials may be made to The American Theatre Organ Society (scholarship fund) or to Court Street United Methodist Church in Rockford.

Arnold Loxam

ARNOLD Loxam, who was one of the last of the great cinema and theatre organists, has died aged 93. He was an internationally renowned concert organist, with a wide musical talent, who began piano lessons at the age of five, immediately taking to music. He played the church organ in his teens and gave his first radio broadcast as a child pianist in Bradford in 1925. But it was to the theatre organ that he devoted his entire career, and he was still playing professionally when he was 90.

He was a man of great charm who appeared in concerts all over England, as well as abroad, with an infectious enthusiasm for everything he did which particularly endeared him to his loyal listeners. In the United States he was also remembered for the Union flag socks that he proudly wore at his concerts.

Arnold Loxam was born in Wibsey, then a village on the outskirts of Bradford, the youngest of three children of a textile overlooker. He was just three when his father, and brother Percy, taught him to play hymn tunes on the piano with one finger. As a child, Arnold attended Chapel with his parents and it was there that he first became fascinated by the organ. When only four, he is reputed to have said that one day he would play. At nine, he became Sunday

School pianist, regularly taking part in Chapel concerts. He trained under the legendary Charles Stott, one of the leading organists in the North of England at the time and organist at All Saints, Little Horton Green, Bradford, who had studied in Leipzig and played before Brahms two years before the composer's death in 1897.

While still the Sunday School pianist, Arnold Loxam made his first broadcast on the Leeds/Bradford BBC Radio Station in *Children's Hour*, and his first appearance on a Wurlitzer organ was at the then New Victoria Cinema, in Bradford, which with 3,318 seats was one of the largest cinemas in England. In 1946, he began playing regularly and broadcasting from there for BBC Radio, and was appointed deputy to the resident organist, Norman Briggs, until he left in 1948. Mr. Loxam succeeded him and became famous for his bouncy style of playing. He stayed for 16 years, often broadcasting nationally and regionally from the theatre. While there, in 1948, he met his future wife, Audrey, who was working as an usherette. They had a son Keith, also an organist, who followed his father into broadcasting at BBC Radio Leeds, and is now a BBC producer in Glasgow. After their marriage, Mrs. Loxam spent 25 years as her husband's driver, chauffeuring him to his many engagements in this country and overseas.

He gave his first solo broadcast on the BBC Theatre organ on November 29, 1947, and his association with Bradford continued until 1962 when the BBC moved its broadcasts to the Leeds Odeon until the organ was removed in 1968. While there he also began a regular series of broadcasts for Leeds General Infirmary, and with the opening of BBC Radio Leeds became one of its regular contributors. As the electronic organ developed Mr. Loxam also turned to that instrument, being musical director at the Huddersfield Continental from 1959 to 1962. He also spent nine years at theatre clubs accompanying such stars as David Whitfield, Helen Shapiro, Danny Williams and Joe Henderson, and also enjoyed successful seasons at Blackpool.

He was also an accomplished percussionist, playing everything but the timpani with the Northern Philharmonic Orchestra during the Second World War. He had been



Arnold Loxam (Photo by P.G. Young)

taken on at a week's notice by Sam Wood, well known in the brass band world, because there was a shortage of percussionists. He played with them for some years, under the conductorship of Sir Malcolm Sargent, among others.

Mr. Loxam added TV broadcasts to his repertoire when commercial TV started in Lancashire, in 1956, with Granada. For a number of years he was also resident organist at Beck Hill Working Men's Club, Bradford, where his dance evenings were particularly popular. In 1996, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Bradford University for his musical achievements.

Mr. Loxam is survived by his wife and son.

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John Peters

On December 9, 2009, the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts lost one of their leaders and long time organ enthusiast, CATOE president, John Peters.

John J. Peters, of Morton Grove, Illinois, died peacefully at St. Francis Hospital, in Evanston. He was 64. Born at St. Francis Hospital on October 29, 1945 to the late Harry and Leona Peters, he is survived by his sisters Barbara (Roy) Rooker of Phoenix, Arizona, Katherine (Doug) Ward of Elyria, Ohio and brother James (Rebecca) Peters of Maitland, Florida. He was uncle to 10 nieces & nephews.

While attending St. George High School in Evanston, John obtained his first pipe organ and rebuilt it in his parents basement with pipes stored all over the house. His passion for pipe organs and great organ music would carry him through life. Although he was a printer by trade, John prevailed as an organ builder and tuner and has worked on most of the pipe organs in the greater Chicago area.

While John's interest was originally the classical organ, he followed his passion of restoring and maintaining theatre organs. John joined the ranks of CATOE in the early 1970s and eventually became the President of the organization. He helped

with maintaining and preserving several Chicago theatre pipe organs including Wurlitzer organs installed in the Chicago and Oriental Theatres.

In 1981, John was instrumental in having the booking for the historic silent film *Napoleon* moved from the Arie Crown Theater, where an electronic organ would have been used, to the Chicago Theatre with its real theatre organ. The four scheduled performances were, with critical acclaim, quickly stretched to sixteen. Use of a down town movie palace for live entertainment stirred such interest in city government that *Loop Alive*, using all downtown theaters, was scheduled for the coming winter.

The Chicago Theater's owners saw the property as worth much more than the theatre and its organ. Knowing full well that CATOE's use of the theatre for organ shows was a convincing argument to keeping the theatre standing, the owners considered donating the organ to CATOE provided they remove it from the theatre. John's answer was unique. CATOE testified before the city council's landmark committee on the importance of this one organ to theatre organ history and the Chicago Wurlitzer became the city's first musical landmark, along with its home, the Chicago Theatre.

When the owners petitioned for a demolition permit anyway, John sprang into action with daily phone calls to the planning commissioner and Mayor Harold Washington's administrative aides resulting in that happy phone call from city hall to attend a hastily arranged press conference to announce the theatre's rebirth as a Performing Art Center.

John was active in organ preservation and maintenance most of his life. Most recently and until his death, he worked as an organ tuner, installer, and builder with the Bradford Organ Company.

A memorial Mass was held on Saturday, January 16, by his friend Rev. Thomas Franzman. CATOE and Mundelein hosted a musical memorial service on May 1 with performances on the Mundelein organ by several of John's favorite artists, including Jim Kozak, Devon Hollingsworth, Steven Eacklor, and John Bryant with additional musical performances by university staff members, Linda Cerabona and Mark Teresi.

Memorials may be made to CATOE, 173 South Rosedale Avenue, Aurora, Illinois 60506.

Bob Boin, Michael Garay, David Rhodes, Jon Habermaas, and Andy Pierce contributed to this article.



*Late CATOE President, John Peters awaiting the arrival of the Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer organ console in the theatre's lobby, March 8, 2007
(Photo by David Rhodes)*

Theatre Organ

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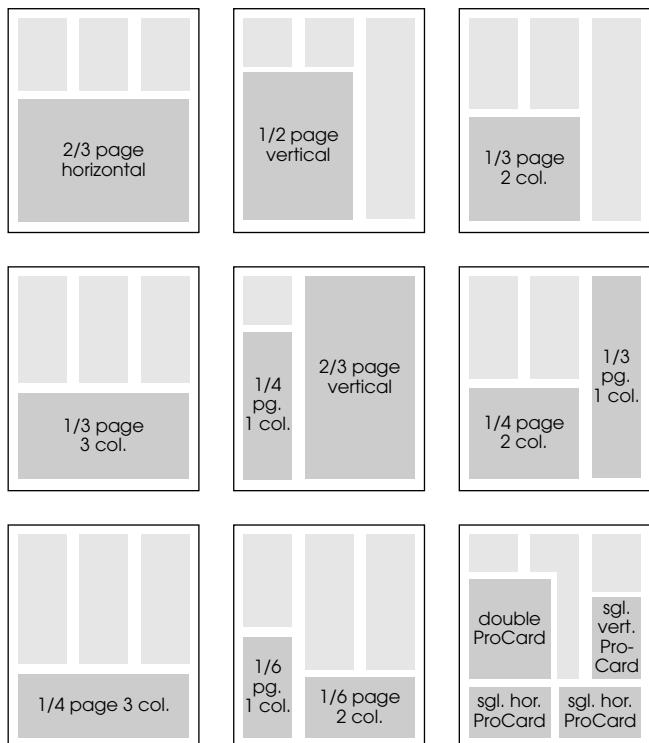
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A printed proof or a PDF proof MUST accompany ad. Media accepted includes CD or DVD mailed to the Editor. Files less than 5 megabytes can be submitted by e-mail to adsales@atos.org; larger files may be uploaded to an ATOS FTP site. E-mail the Ad Sales team at adsales@atos.org for FTP upload directions.

SIZES

SIZE	WIDTH	HEIGHT
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Full Page with 1/8" bleed	9"	11 5/8"
2/3 Page vertical	4 3/4"	9 7/8"
2/3 Page horizontal	7 1/4"	6 5/8"
1/2 Page vertical	4 3/4"	7 1/2"
1/2 Page horizontal	7 1/4"	5"
1/3 Page (1 column)	2 1/4"	9 7/8"
1/3 Page (2 columns)	4 3/4"	4 7/8"
1/3 Page (3 columns)	7 1/4"	3 1/4"
1/4 Page (1 column)	2 1/4"	7 1/4"
1/4 Page (2 columns)	4 3/4"	3 3/4"
1/4 Page (3 columns)	7 1/4"	2 1/2"
1/6 Page (1 column)	2 1/4"	4 7/8"
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Classifieds

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CLASSIFIED ADS—ATOS members: 75¢ per word; Nonmembers: \$1.00 per word. \$10.00 minimum. Not counted as words: a, and, & the. Phone numbers and hyphenated words are counted as one word. All classified ads must be submitted PRE-PAID to avoid a \$10.00 handling/billing charge. Charge of \$15.00 (PREPAID) to have a THEATRE ORGAN showing your ad sent to your mailing address. Deadline for placing ads is the 1st of each even month (February, April, June, August, October and December). Make check payable to ATOS and send to: Mike Bryant, THEATRE ORGAN Editor, 3111 NE 165th Place, Vancouver, Washington 98682-8686. Word counts may be verified in advance by e-mailing the Ad Sales team at adsales@atos.org.

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SHOPPING FOR RECORDINGS

Allen Organ Company—
P.O. Box 36, Macungie, Pennsylvania
18062-0338, 610-966-2202,
www.allenorgan.com/www/store/maincds.html

Steven Ball—
734-846-3627, www.stevenball.com

Banda (George Wright recordings)—
720-733-2905, fax 720-733-2137,
banda9@msn.com,
<http://theatreorgans.com/cds/banda.html>

Ed. Benoit—30110 West Latham Street, Buckeye,
Arizona 85326, 623-327-1437, WurliTzer@q.com

Canterbury Records—626-792-7184
Central Indiana Chapter of ATOS—
1431 North Audubon Road, Indianapolis, Indiana
46219, www.cicatos.org

Cinema Organ Society—
www.cinema-organs.org.uk

Dickinson Theatre Organ Society—
302-995-2603, www.dtoskimball.org

Ken Double—281-798-6205
www.KenDoubleEntertainment.com

Duet MIDI Concepts—www.MIDIConcepts.com,
630-893-5383

R. Jelani Eddington Organ Recordings—
P.O. Box 44092, Racine, Wisconsin
53404-7002, www.rjeproductions.com

Mark Herman Productions, LLC—
P.O. Box 5059, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46895,
www.markhermanproductions.com and
www.TheatreOrganCDs.com

The Historical Recording Company—
www.thehistoricalrecordingcompany.com

Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (JATOE)—P.O. Box 212, Joliet, Illinois 60434,
708-562-8538, jpatak31@att.net

JAV Recordings—
888-572-2242, www.greatorganacds.com

JBL Productions—
www.organhouse.com/jbl_productions.htm

Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust—
<http://theatreorgans.com/lancast/lanc1.htm>

Michael's Music Service—4146 Sheridan Drive,
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205, 704-567-1066,
www.michaelsmusicservice.com

Midnight Productions, Inc.—
800-788-1100, sales@theatreorgan.com,
www.theatreorgan.com

MSS Studios—www.organ.co.uk

Musical Contrasts—musicalcontrasts@cox.net

Nor-Cal Theatre Organ Society—
P.O. Box 625, Berkeley, California 94701-0625,
510-644-2707, www.theatreorgans.com/norcal/

Organ Historical Society—
Box 26811, Richmond, Virginia 23261,
804-353-9226, fax 804-353-9266,
catalog@organsociety.org, www.organsociety.org

Organ Stop Pizza—480-813-5700 x200,
www.organstoppizza.com

Jonathan Ortloff—www.jonathanortloff.com

Donna Parker Productions, Inc.—P.O. Box
6103, Aloha, Oregon 97007, 503-642-7009,
www.tcbrio.com

Pipe Organ Presentations—68022 Grandview
Avenue, Cathedral City, California 92234,
760-324-0470, info@pipeorganpresentations.com,
www.pipeorganpresentations.com

Bob Ralston—SPOTOMA, 17027 Tennyson
Place, Granada Hills, California 91344-1225,
818-366-3637, www.bobralston.com

Rob Richards—www.robrichards.com

Jim Riggs Recordings—6141 Fairfield Road,
Wichita, Kansas 67204

Paul Roberts, Cardinal Productions—
P.O. Box 22035, Beachwood, Ohio 44122,
<http://theatreorgans.com/cds/roberts/>

Roxy Productions—
480-695-8568, azroxy@cox.net

Trio con Brio—www.tcbrio.com, or from Donna
Parker Productions

Texas Talkies Media Production Company—
P.O. Box 23413, Waco, Texas 76702,
www.texastalkies.com

T-V Recording—408-248-6927, tvrdc@aol.com

Walter Strony—www.waltstrony.com

Wichita Theatre Organ—
316-655-8177, tickets2wto@hotmail.com,
www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org

Tony Whittaker—www.tonywhittaker.co.uk

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1970, Vol. 12	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1971, Vol. 13					<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1972, Vol. 14	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1973, Vol. 15	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
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1975, Vol. 17			<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1976, Vol. 18	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3			
1977, Vol. 19	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1978, Vol. 20		<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1979, Vol. 21	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1980, Vol. 22	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1981, Vol. 23	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	
1982, Vol. 24		<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2		<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1983, Vol. 25	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2		<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
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1993, Vol. 35	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
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1995, Vol. 37	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1996, Vol. 38	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1997, Vol. 39	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1998, Vol. 40	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
1999, Vol. 41	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2000, Vol. 42	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2001, Vol. 43	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2002, Vol. 44	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2003, Vol. 45	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2004, Vol. 46	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2005, Vol. 47	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2006, Vol. 48	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2007, Vol. 49	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1		<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2008, Vol. 50	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2009, Vol. 51	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 6
2010, Vol. 52	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 1	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> No. 4		

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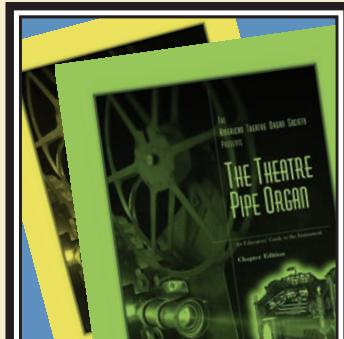
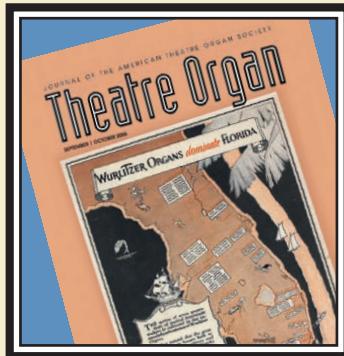
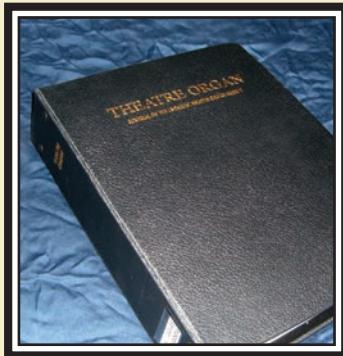
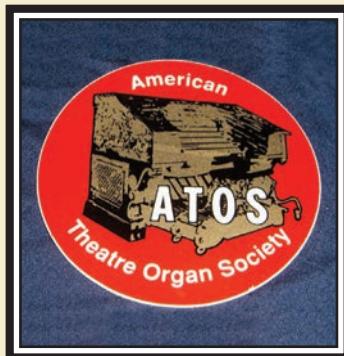
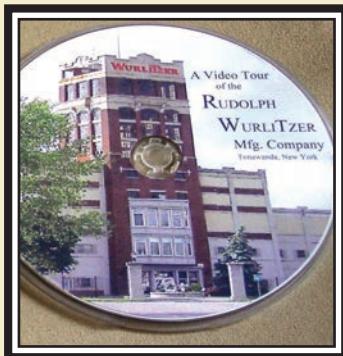
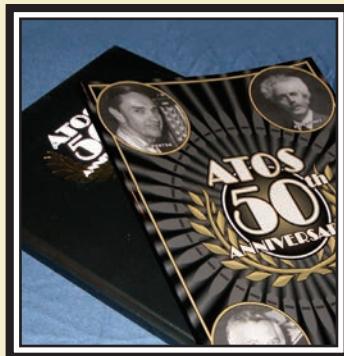
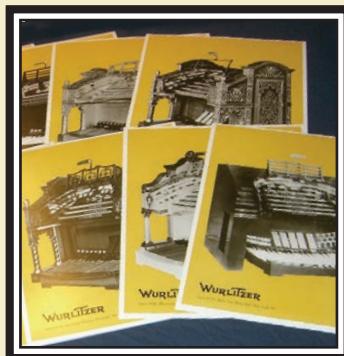
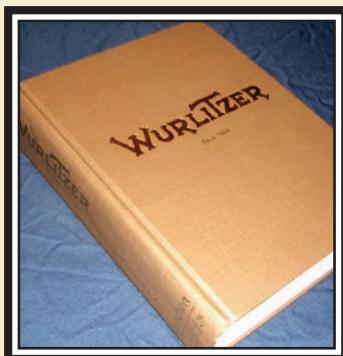
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An ATOS Marketplace order form is included in most issues of THEATRE ORGAN. Orders may also be placed online at www.atos.org/marketplace.

The prices listed above are postpaid for all orders shipped within the U.S.A. VISA and MasterCard are accepted.

If you have any questions, please contact Dennis Unks, ATOS Marketplace Manager, at marketplace@atos.org.

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5 Clarinet	5 Cromorne
6 Orchestral Oboe	6 Hautbois
7 Violin	7 Viola Pomposa
8 Violin Celeste	8 Viola Celeste
9 Dolce	(same)
10 Dolce Celeste	(same)
11 Concert Flute	9 Harmonic Flute
12 Vox Humana	10 English Vox Humana
Xylophone	11 > 14 Mixture IV
Glockenspiel	15 > 17 Mixture III
Chimes	Carillon

Q211SP Theatre Rank Q211SP Classical Rank

1 English Post Horn	1 French Trompette
2 Tuba Horn	2 Tromba
3 Open Diapason	3 Principal
4 Tibia Clausa	4 Gedackt
5 Clarinet	5 Cromorne
6 Orchestral Oboe	6 Hautbois
7 Violin	7 Viola Pomposa
8 Violin Celeste	8 Viola Celeste
9 Concert Flute	9 Harmonic Flute
10 Vox Humana	10 English Vox Humana
Xylophone	11 > 14 Mixture IV
Glockenspiel	15 > 17 Mixture III
Chimes	Carillon

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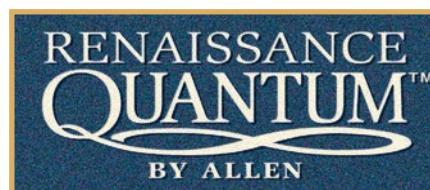
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