
The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NOR-CAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY
 PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438 510/644-2707

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

May 2004



Walter Strony

The Berkeley Community Theatre
 1930 Allston Way
 Sunday, May 9th, 2:30 PM

Walt Strony has been a performer who has continued to entertain the theatre organ audience with new and satisfying approaches to arranging music for an increasingly sophisticated audience. Styles change, and so does Walt's selection of pieces to perform and the way he presents them on the organ in concert. What you will hear in concert now will not be the same as what you would have heard a few years previously. That's one sign that this artist, who has now been appearing in public theatre organ venues for thirty years, will be a vital performer now and in the future.

Walt is well known for his many recordings, such as his first CD, "Phoenix", that was rated 10/10 by CD Review—the highest rating given by this prestigious publication. Others of his recordings have received similar acclaim in Theatre Organ, Keyboard World, and Cinema Organ—He recently completed his 25th recording.

As an author, he is well known in theatre organ circles for his book "The Secrets Of Theatre Organ Registration", which has already become the standard reference book on the subject.

Going way back, Walter Strony was born in Chicago in 1955, and began music

lessons at the age of seven. He studied theatre organ under the famous Chicago organist Al Melgard, who for many years was the Staff Organist at the Chicago Stadium. His classical studies were with Herbert L. White and Karel Paukert.

After living in the Phoenix area for 22 years, Mr. Strony relocated to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1999. He was organist at Roxy's Pipe Organ Pizzeria in the Fiesta Casino, Las Vegas during its entire run, and is currently organist at First Christian Church, Las Vegas.

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CHAIRMAN Donald G. Siefert 1129 Augusta Pointe Ct Ripon, CA 95366 209/599-7480 dseifert@sbcglobal.net	VICE CHAIRMAN Kevin J. King 3106 Sheffield Ave. Oakland, CA 94602 510/532-9345 kevjking@juno.com	SECRETARY Arthur Woodworth 600 Coventry Road Kensington, CA 94707 510/524-7452 awoodworth@bigfoot.com	TREASURER John H. O'Neill P.O. Box 2741 Oakland, CA 94602 510/632-9177	EDITOR Robert K. Shipley 1734-9 W El Camino Real Mountain View, CA 94040 650/968-3290 bshipley1@atmc.net	PROGRAM Warren P. Lubich 2950 26th Avenue San Francisco, CA 94132 415/566-2623 lubie65@aol.com	TICKETS/ MEMBERSHIP John H. O'Neill P.O. Box 2741 Oakland, CA 94602 510/632-9177
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COMMENTS ON MORTON MADNESS X – SATURDAY APRIL 17, 2004

The Woodworths agreed that this had been a great event and what follows are their selective notes on this year's Morton Madness.

As we approached Bob and Linda Hartzell's blue barn and Harmony Wynelands, we were greeted by the sight of their lovely rose garden, which was then bursting into full bloom. With the fluffy clouds in the sky, we were put in a beautiful mood for a day's worth of music.

Bill Schlotter thanked Dave Moreno for all the TLC he gives to the Hartzell and Kautz Robert Morton pipe organs, as well as numerous other pipe organs throughout northern California. Bob Hartzell then gave an update on the exciting Stockton Fox project.

Jonas was introduced and proved to be in fine form: a hard-driving boogie-woogie version of "Big Bad Leroy Brown" opened, followed by a Hawaiian medley, which included "Tiny Bubbles", "Aloha Oe", "Little Grass Shack", "Hawaiian Wedding Song", and "Hawaiian War Chant."

"Veradero" was played true to George Wright's arrangement. Then a quiet and lovely "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." As is the blue barn custom, the final number was a patriotic medley-- "National Emblem March", "American Patrol", "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean", "Stars and Stripes Forever," with the audience joining in the song "God Bless America."

Driving through the beautiful green of the Sierra foothills to Murphys, we arrived at Kautz's Ironstone Vineyards, our second venue, where container after container of tulips were blooming in every imaginable color. After exploring the grounds and enjoying wine tasting, we feasted on a delicious dinner (cheese blintzes for desert). Craig Peterson of Sierra Chapter then re-introduced Jonas.

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Opening with "Beer Barrel Polka", Jonas then adopted a smoky, bluesy registration, for a gentle playing of "Sentimental Journey", followed by an up-tempo "Waltz In Swing Time." Next came themes by John Williams from the movie *Harry Potter*, including "Hedwig's Theme" and "Harry's Wonderful World."

"Love for Sale" was in the style of George's x-rated production, which we all love to hear. Jonas referred to his medley from *Fiddler on the Roof* as "wedding music," since "Sunrise, Sunset" is often requested when he plays for weddings. This followed by "Matchmaker, Matchmaker", "If I Were a Rich Man", "Sunrise, Sunset", and "Fiddler on the Roof."

Billy Joel's "Root Beer Rag," a real knuckle-buster, Jonas pulled off with style and precision. Descending blues motifs first in the solo, then in the main, and then on the grand piano led into "The Stripper". A slightly different and very delicious take on this number.

For the second half, Jonas led off with a rousing "76 Trombones." As a contrast, he next played J. S. Bach's "Fugue in G Minor," followed by a medley of three Andrew Lloyd Webber songs: "I Don't Know How to Love Him" from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, "Memory" from *Cats*, and "Music of the Night" from *Phantom of the Opera*. From his accordion-playing youth, Jonas offered a spectacular accordion solo, a fast paso-doble by Pietro Frossini called "Jolly Caballero."

Jonas then asked we avoid thoughts of Warner Brothers cartoons, radio programs, etc., for the overture from Rossini's opera, *William Tell* was his concluding selection. It proved to be an outstanding and thoroughly satisfying transcription. Jonas, as an encore, played "Colonel Bogey March."

Windsheet

We are definitely looking forward to next year's Morton Madness. This is the tenth such joint effort of Nor-Cal and Sierra Chapters. Lunch time at Hartzell's, and the time before and after dinner at Kautz's, gave us ample time to renew old friendships and make new ones, as a dozen or more of the attendees were from other chapters.

Contributions from Art and Evelyn Woodworth, and Frank and Jan La Fetra.

Open Console for members will be held on both Sunday, May 2 and Sunday, May 23 from 1-5PM. at the Berkeley Community Theatre. In addition,, June 13 is tentatively scheduled. **IMPORTANT:** Call the Nor-Cal voice mail at (510) 644-2707 on Sunday morning to confirm theatre availability. If there will be Open Console that day, enter via the back stage door at 1930 Allston Way.

Bob Shipley
Editor



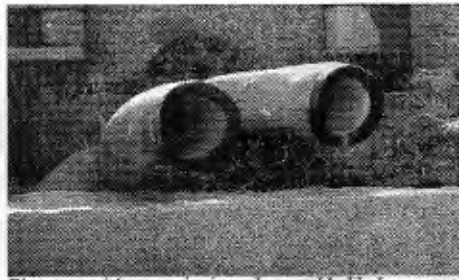
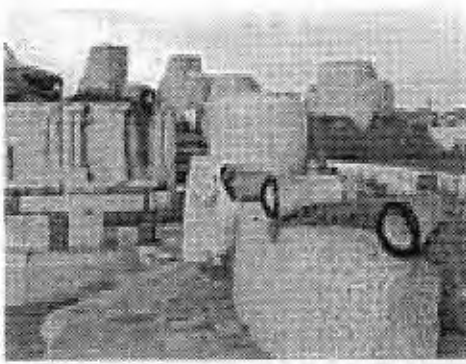
We are happy to receive contributions to this publication to share with Nor-Cal. **Next Windsheet Deadline: June 3.** Contact me: by email bshipley1@atmc.net, by phone (650) 968-3290, or by US mail 1734-9 W. El Camino, Mountain View 94040.

Bob

Future Board Meeting—June 8 at Don Siefert's, 1129 Augusta Pointe Court, Ripon, CA 95366
Phone 209-599-7100

All members are encouraged to attend. Please contact the meeting ~~host~~ that there can be sufficient chairs and refreshments.

May 2004



Photos, with permission, James H. H. Lampert



Watery Organ

While Nor-Cal certainly has some mighty big names playing its organ, there's another organ in the area that's played by a still bigger name—played by the San Francisco Bay itself.

It's the *Wave Organ*—a “unique artifact, part musical instrument, part environmental sculpture,” according to writer James H. H. Lampert of Fountain Valley, CA, a self-proclaimed “organ geek.”

Certainly the *Wave Organ* is no theater pipe organ; but then, no theater pipe organ is a *Wave Organ*.

How It Works

The *Wave Organ* has 25 pipes, positioned vertically. One end of each pipe is submerged into the bay, the other end sticks out above ground, about three feet.

The pipes are made of PVC—Polyvinyl Chloride—the piping used extensively for in-the-ground watering systems. The *Wave Organ* pipes are covered with rough-finished cement; they look much like periscopes. The entire site looks like a pile of stone and cement debris.

“Sound is created by the impact of waves against the pipe ends and the subsequent movement of the water in and out of the pipes,” says Peter Richards, an “Artist in Residence” at the San Francisco hands-on museum, “Exploratorium.” Richards was a leader in designing and installing the organ, and now maintains it.

There's of course more “music”—sound—coming from the organ when the bay is rough. Yet even on calm days, this organ keeps playing. It sounds best at high tide.
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“The *Wave Organ*'s music is a symphony of land and sea, complex, subtle, powerful, hypnotic,” wrote one unidentified listener. Others have described the sound as “gurgling” or like “breathing” or “a toilet flushing.” Then there's the visitor who said the sounds “range from subtly soothing to downright rude!”

In the midst of the pipes are seats on which you can relax to listen to the “concert.” Or, if you like your organ in stereo, there's a booth you can duck into, sit on the wooden bench, and hear the pipes giving out sounds from three sides.

Sometimes the “music” is hard to hear, but if you get close to a pipe, you can hear. Some observers think the reduced sound may result from sand, seaweed, and other debris restricting or obstructing the pipe.

Getting There

Drive out San Francisco's Marina Boulevard toward the Golden Gate Bridge. At the corner where signs show that you can drive straight ahead on to Crissy Field, or you can bend left to get on an approach to the Golden Gate Bridge, turn right. Drive through the parking lot, past the St. Francis Yacht Club on your left, the boat harbor on your right. Further on is another parking lot. Park.

Walk a block or so out the jetty. You'll pass, on your right, a gray building prominently marked as the Golden Gate Yacht Club. The *Wave Organ* is some 300 feet beyond.

Reportedly the waters around the organ are good for crabbing and fishing. And the site is a truly great spot for sight-seeing—you can see a broad sweep of most of the entire San Francisco bay area.

Publisher's Note

I will be away to go to Atlanta's *Fabulous Fox Weekend*. On my return, Jan and I leave for Oregon to pickup our new Golden Retriever puppy. The next Windsheet will thus come out in late June. *Frank La Fetra*
Windsheet

NEW Nor-Cal TOS Member Badges

We now have a supplier of all-engraved name badges with the Nor-Cal Golden Gate Bridge pipe-work logo and club name engraved above the engraved name of the club member. Size and style are similar to the old badges, but they should hold up longer with all parts engraved. The badges cost \$9, and can be ordered through **Jack O'Neill, PO Box 27238, Oakland, CA 94602-0438**. Please specify the way you want your name to appear on the badge. Allow up to a month after you order for delivery.

Nor-Cal TOS Coming Events

Club Concert—Kevin King, Saturday, June 12, buy your lunch at noon, concert at 1 PM. See Page 4, also note to left.

2005 Morton Madness—Tom Hazleton, April 9, 2005.

Other Chapters Coming Events

Fabulous Fox Weekend—an ATOS Regional convention in Atlanta May 28-30. <www.theafreorgans.com/atlanta>

ATOS Convention in Milwaukee, July 1-7 (dates include pre-glow and after-glow) <www.atos.org>

Desert Winds featuring the Magnificent Seven Phoenix's Valley of the Sun Chapter event. November 26-28. Info: <<http://www.bargainsail.com/desertwinds/dwframeset.htm>> or call **Don and Leota Reasor** 623-877-0635



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Maybe the ONLY Notice for Saturday June 12 Meeting!! (see Page 3)

Nor-Cal's **Kevin King** will present a concert for us at the Bella Roma, 4040 Alhambra Rd., just off Hwy 4 in Martinez with **Kevin's** concert starting at 1 PM..

Doors open at noon, and, as always, the owners appreciate our coming for lunch to show our appreciation for their hospitality.

Kevin advises that afterwards, time permitting, he will have Open Console.

Other Venues Coming Events

Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, May 16 at 3:00 pm **Hector Olivera** in concert on the magnificent 1934 Aeolian-Skinner. A variety of music, appropriate to the Cathedral setting. Program shown at: <<http://www.gracecathedral.org/calendar/detail.php?eid=241>>..

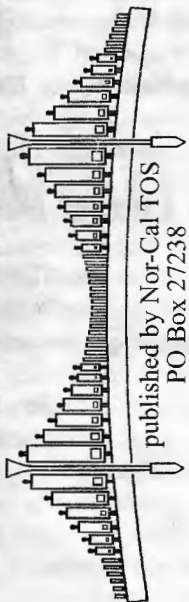
Grant Union High School, 1400 Grand Avenue, Sacramento. Sunday, May 2 - 1:00 PM **Tom Thompson** plays the Grant Union George Wright Memorial Theatre Pipe Organ. Tickets \$8 at the door.

Other Local Venues

Castro Theatre—4/22 Wurlitzer, 429 Castro St., San Francisco. Intermission music played daily by David Hegarty or Warren Lubich. (415) 621-6120 <www.castrotheatre.com>

Grand Lake Theatre—3/18 Wurlitzer, 3200 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA. Intermission music: **Warren Lubich** (Fridays) & **Kevin King** (Saturdays) (510) 452-3556 <www.renaissancerialto.com>

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PO Box 27238
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NOR-CAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, Inc.

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

ATOS is dedicated to promoting the tradition of the theatre pipe organ and public understanding and appreciation of the instrument and its music, and shall aid in any way possible the preservation of theatre organs through rehabilitation of instruments and fostering the arts of playing, building, voicing and maintenance. If you would like to join us, please write or call: **Mr. John O'Neill at (510) 632-9177, PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438.**

Your Name: _____ Your Spouse's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Occupation: _____

Dues are \$40 National ATOS and \$20 Nor-Cal (\$60 total) per year. Spouse and children living at home may be included in your membership. We hope you will join us to help preserve and enjoy these great instruments.