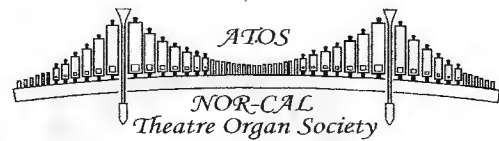

The WINDSHEET



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

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal
November/December 2004

Mark Herman

Concert leads off at the
Nor-Cal Annual Membership Meeting
Berkeley Community Theatre, 2:30 PM Sunday, December 5, 2004



Our concert that will lead off the Nor-Cal's Annual Corporate Membership meeting will be a special treat: Those of you who attended the 2003 and 2004 ATOS national conventions will already have had a chance to hear **Mark Herman**, and Nor-Cal is delighted to present him again in concert to all our members.

This year's meeting has some nice features to tempt you to make your way to Berkeley for this annual event: First, is a chance to hear a full concert on the club's mighty Wurlitzer without paying any fees. Second is the opportunity after the concert to meet your hard-working club officers and Board members at the annual meeting that is a requirement to maintain Nor-Cal TOS's Charitable Non-Profit tax status. It's a necessary legal requirement that we have a Quorum to make this required meeting legal, so do plan to come on December 5th at 2:30 PM. This is the one sure opportunity you will have to
(Continued on Page Three, Mark Herman)

New Board of Directors Members Proposed

After getting a late start on the process—A fact regretted by the current Board because thereby our membership was afforded little opportunity to propose candidates, the Nomination Committee, headed by **Gordon Pratt**, has identified candidates to fill the vacancies on the Nor-Cal Board.

The committee has proposed **Don Siefert** continue by serving a second term, and also proposed **Don Ravey** and **Ron Bingaman**, both relatively new and active club members. This would be their first time serving on the Nor-Cal board.

Nominations also will be open from the floor at the meeting following **Mark Herman's** concert.

January Club Concert John Lauter plays the Castro 4/22 Wurlitzer

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 23, 2005 for then **John Lauter**, a Detroit area artist, will entertain club members with a morning concert on the Castro Theatre's Wurlitzer. Doors open at 9:00 AM, with the concert at 9:30.

We've had great success with this organ and artist combination in the past—John reports that this will be the third time he's entertained for us on the Castro Theatre instrument. It's not easy to book time at the Castro for organ performances, and although the list of artists who would jump at the chance to play this instrument is long, **Warren Lubich**, our program chairman, has done us all a favor by selecting Lauter to be the one to ride up the console lift to brighten up our mid-Winter that Sunday.

Federal Employer Identification Number 23-741594-7 • State Charitable Trust No. CT 45966 • State Organization Number D-072 6636 NT20S M12

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When emailing, include ATOS in the subject line. Otherwise, if you are unknown to the recipient's computer, its SPAM filter may divert your mail.

Organs in Japan

Leon Fletcher
Guest Contributor



It's some 5,600 miles from San Francisco to Tokyo, about a 15-hour plane ride—a trip that only the most dedicated organ enthusiast would endure in order to visit organs in Japan. Still, it might be worth the trip: despite much popular publicity, Yamaha's are not the only organs in Japan.

In Tokyo, in a concert hall at the Metropolitan Art Space, is a 126-stop Garnier pipe organ. The organ is set up to play Renaissance music (with 26 stops, 3 keyboards), Baroque music (37 stops, 3 keyboards), and modern music (63 stops, 5 keyboards). It's located at the rear center of a stage that has room for a 120-piece orchestra and a 200-member chorus. During concert intermissions the wall underneath the organ opens to give guests a view of a roof garden that is illuminated. The hall seats 1,999 people. (Why didn't they squeeze in just one more seat?)

Beyond Tokyo

Some 100 miles north of Tokyo, in Ibaraki, a city of more than two million residents, is an organ with 46 stops and 3,283 pipes. Eight settings can be stored electronically.

Reverberation time is 5.8 seconds when the hall is empty; 2.6 seconds when there's a full audience. There's seating for 300 people.

The organ is in the "Entrance Hall" of the Mito Arts Foundation, a center for concerts, plays, and exhibitions. The instrument was built by two Japanese certified masters of organ construction who were trained in Germany. Free organ concerts are presented every weekend.

Shades of Wanamaker's

In Matasuzkaya, a giant department store in Nayoya, there's another impressive organ. That Japanese store started operating almost 400 years ago, and has

recently been enlarged substantially with the addition of a new building that features a large atrium and that organ.

In the Kyoto Concert Hall, there's a unique pipe organ with both metal and wooden pipes—"the largest of its kind in Japan," promoters say. The organ can produce the sounds of traditional Japanese instruments as well as classical instruments.

Two In One

The city of Miyazaki, on the south island, Kyosho, has two organs of interest. In the Lutheran Church is a highly-regarded organ built by Edskes, a Swiss organ maker. The organ is a 7-stop instrument. The installation required the redesign of the church's sanctuary, formerly a wood-framed building in need of repair. To plan the restoration, the congregation selected the Japanese company Nagata Acoustics, rather than a conventional contractor.

Just a few blocks away, in the hall at the Shinjo Ophthalmology Institute, is another organ—an eleven stop instrument built by Klop, a Dutch company specializing in building house organs. All of the pipes are fabricated from wood—producing "marvelously gentle tone color," the doctor wrote.

Those are but a few examples of organs in Japan. But searching for information about theater pipe organs in that country is hindered because there organ (as a musical instrument) usually means a reed or electric organ—in contrast to the meaning of organ in the United States and Europe: a pipe organ.



Editor's Console

Bob Shipley

We're calling this our December issue—Best Wishes to you for a happy Holiday season. Your editor expects to have a January issue—not the normal publication cycle for the *Windsheet*, but one that better fits the lead time to announce club events. So the deadline for the next *Windsheet* is December 23. I'm happy to receive your material for inclusion. Contact me by email <bshipley1@atmc.net>, by phone (650) 968-3290, or mail me at 1734-9 W. El Camino, Mountain View, CA 94040.

Stockton Fox Update

Stockton area residents now have an elegant performing arts house, as the old Stockton Fox theatre emerged from a two-year restoration effort and opened to live performances in October as the **Bob Hope Theatre**.

Originally opened in 1930, and under Fox management for many years, the theatre took a typical course from being a major venue to a tired movie house, and was eventually gifted to the City of Stockton in 2000. In short order, what turned out to be the \$8.5 million effort to restore the theatre to its former splendor took off, when a combination of public and private sources of funding was assembled, and the work headed by the Stockton Redevelopment Agency, to bring new life to the venue while retaining its grandeur.

The scope of the restoration was thorough, with particular attention paid to the restoration of elements of the design that recall the era of movie palaces—such things as the theatre's marquee, decorative murals, paintings and acoustic plaster. Additions to the theatre such as the marble mosaic floor in the lobby and a section of carved granite sidewalk are also in keeping with the grand past history of movie palaces. And, lest we forget, there is a restored Robert Morton pipe organ being installed that had previously seen service in the Seattle Fox Theatre. We're hoping to hear soon that the work on the organ will have progressed to the point that we can both see the restoration befitting a building designated for the National Register of Historical Places, and hear the sounds of theatre pipes reverberating in the vast 2000+ seat venue.

New Member

We welcome Norman Reddy of Walnut Creek to the ranks.

Open Console

It's an opportunity for members to try their hand at playing the Chapter's Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre. When the theatre is available, these sessions run from 1 to 5PM. Current dates are:

November 21, December 12, January 9, 2005

Important: Call the Nor-Cal voice mail at (510) 644-2707 on that Sunday morning to confirm theatre availability. If there will be Open Console, enter via the back-stage door at 1930 Allston Way.

(Mark Herman, continued from Page One)

recognize their efforts, make suggestions, and get an introduction to the new Board members.

In a *change from prior years*, there will be no planned meal associated with the meeting, so the entire event requires no payments or advanced registration.

Mark Herman was born on August 25, 1987, and currently lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He has been studying the piano since he was seven-years old and started classical organ lessons in the sixth grade. His first introduction to the theatre organ was when he was in fourth grade and was at the Embassy Theatre. This was made possible by **Bob Goldstine** and the local AGO's "Room on the Organ Bench" program. He has been studying theatre organ with **John Ferguson** of Indianapolis for about three years and piano for a little longer period with **Christine Freeman** at Indiana University-Purdue University extension campus at Fort Wayne. In the summer of 2003, he was given the opportunity to play a cameo performance at the American Theatre Organ Society's annual convention in Oakland, California. The following year, he won the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition in Milwaukee at the Riverside Theatre. Mark is also still involved heavily with the Embassy Theatre. He is one of the volunteer pianists and organists and serves on the Embassy Organ Committee and the Embassy Organ Crew. He is also currently a sophomore at Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne. In addition to playing the organ, Mark is an avid pianist and loves trying his hand at composing pieces for practice and recreational purposes.

Mark feels special gratitude towards his parents, Ron and Andrea, who have

Sundries

(continuation from an earlier Windsheet)

from Guest Contributor, Leon Fletcher

Early organs were written about by Homer and Virgil.

The Roman **Hydraulus organ**, built in the pre-Christian years, was made with copper and bronze pipes, and stops worked by levers, plus large keys played by the musician's *fists*.

Organbird is a Tasmanian bird whose singing sounds like an organ.

Future Board Meetings

Tuesday, November 16, 7:30 PM

Harry's Hofbrau, 14900 East 14th Street, San Leandro—Hesperian at 14th
(Gather to eat at 6:30 optional)

All members are encouraged to attend.

For Sale

Rodgers 3/M custom 33-E theatre organ with AGO pedalboard, MIDI. Received by a church in the Los Angeles area as a gift. Console, keyboard & pedals in excellent condition w/2 speaker towers, one w/Leslie. Needs minor work. \$1500 OBO. Call (818) 359-3109 with purchase offers. More information on condition: call Dr. Frank McGinnis at (818) 363-4923



Other Events

Sunday Nov 21st 7:30pm

Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos

16575 Shannon Rd., Los Gatos

408-356-6156 <www.pclg.org>

T. Paul Rosas, organ; Jay Rizzetto, trumpet
Music of the Romantic Period—Free will offering to benefit the Organ Renovation Fund.

Sunday, December 19 4 PM

Angelino's Restaurant—3/13 Wurlitzer

3121 Williams Road, San Jose. **Dean**

Cook provides accompaniment to the Laurel and Hardy classics *Two Tars*, and *Big Business*.

Call (408) 243-6095 for reservations.

The Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer

was installed in just four weeks, in 1932.

The largest mechanical tracker organ

ever built is in the city of Liepaja, Latvia.

One of the few organs in China is in the Forbidden City Concert Hall, in Beijing; the instrument was built by Austin Organs, of Hartford, CT, and inaugurated April 2000.

Stalin's Organ was a WWII Soviet Union weapon--sets of parallel rails, usually mounted on trucks, sometimes on tractors, from which rockets were fired. German troops gave them that name because they thought the weapon looked like a pipe organ.

The Spreckels Organ Pavilion in San Diego, one of the world's largest outdoor pipe organs, has more than 4,500 pipes, was built in 1914 for that city's Panama-California Exposition. Free concerts are still presented every Sunday, year-round, 2 - 3pm.

The Large Hot Pipe Organ is a propane-powered instrument that its promoters say is a "pyro-acoustic explodo-rhythmations [that] will throbate your earholes and dance-ify your body." I think that means it blasts out exceptionally loud sounds plus a variety of flames, sparks, and fireworks. [www.lhpo.com says that it performs throughout Austria, Germany, Denmark, Helsinki, and Holland—it's obviously 'portable'. Listening to it by streaming audio is interesting and doesn't seem terribly loud—fel]

The Bamboo Organ of Las Pinas, in Manila, Philippines, has all 747 pipes made of bamboo.

Organ Pipe Cactus grows primarily in Sonoran Desert, Arizona; gets up to some 25 feet high, usually has several branches at its base, which some say make them look like organ pipes.

Organ Jokes are posted in a 2-page online listing. In my view, few are funny, and most are at least slightly off-color. Typical of those suitable for quoting in a family newsletter: "What's the difference between an organist and a terrorist? You can negotiate with a terrorist." Still, if slightly-blue organ unfunny humor is to your interest, go to <<http://www.iol.ie/~rod/organ/jokes.html>>.

Other Venues

Arlington Theatre, 4/27 Robert-Morton, 1317 State St., Santa Barbara, CA. (805) 692-0939

Bay Theatre, 4/54 Wurlitzer, Pacific Coast Hwy. and Main St., Seal Beach, CA. (562) 431-9988. <www.baytheatre.com>

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

El Capitan Theatre, 4/37 Wurlitzer 6338 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA. Rob Richards, John Ledwon & Ed Vodicka play

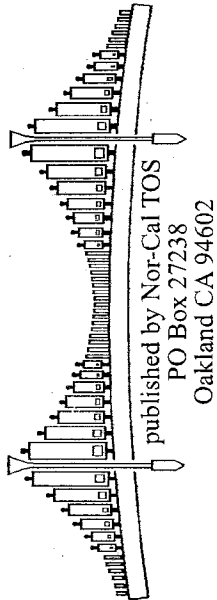
preview music 30 minutes prior to film. (800) 347-6396 <www.elcapitantickets.com>

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>

Nethercutt Collection, 4/74 Wurlitzer, 15200 Bledsoe St., Sylmar, CA. Phone (818) 367-2251 <www.nethercuttcollection.org>

Old Town Music Hall, 4/26 Wurlitzer, Check website for details and events. (310) 322-2592 <www.otmh.org>

Paramount Theatre, 4/26 Wurlitzer, 2025 Broadway, Oakland. Public tours on first and third Saturdays of month at 10AM. (510) 465-6400 <www.paramounttheatre.com>



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.