

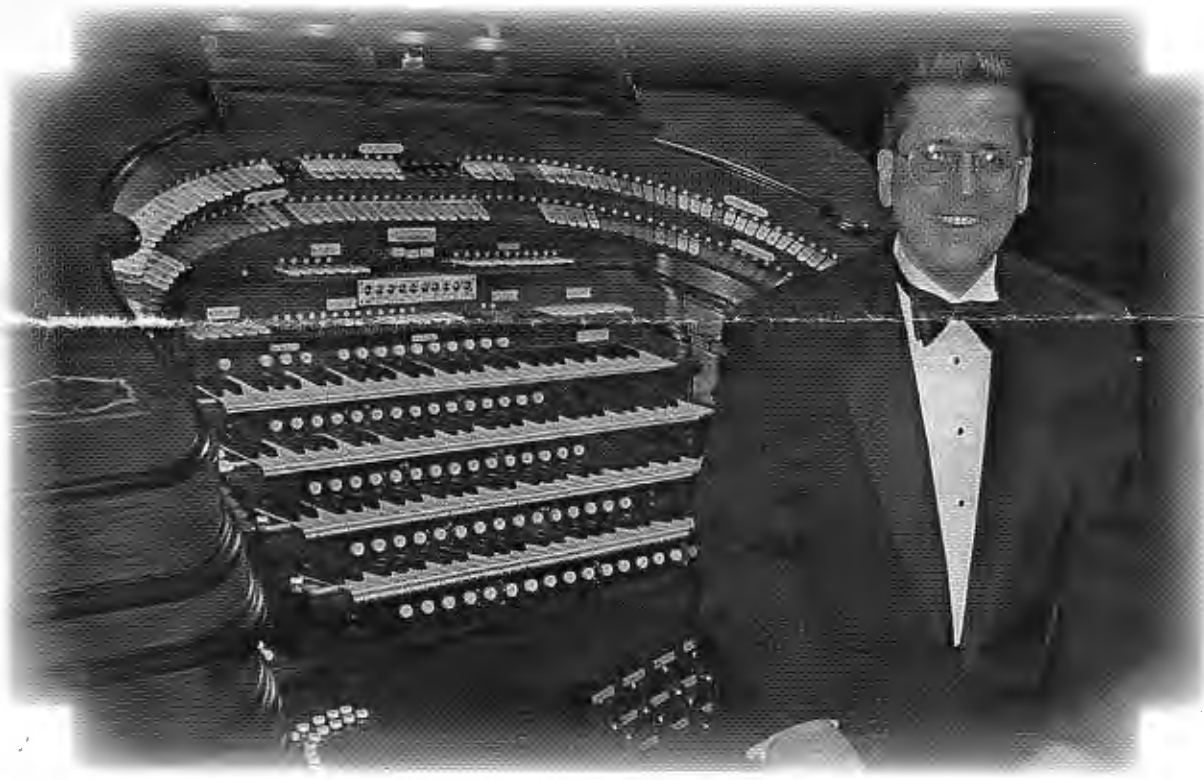
The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY
 PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438 510/644-2707

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

October 2006



WALT STRONY
 Berkeley Community Theater
 October 22, 2006 at 2:30 PM

NorCal is delighted to start off our 2006-2007 public concert season with **Walt Strony** on **Sunday, October 22, 2006 at 2:30 PM** at the **Berkeley Community Theatre**.

Walter Strony is one of America's premiere concert organists. He made his public debut in 1974 at the age of 18 and has since established himself in both theater and classical organ circles. Mr. Strony has performed hundreds of concerts from coast to coast in the United States and in Japan, Australia, England and Canada. In addition, he has performed at many conventions of the American Theater Organ Society (ATOS) and the American Guild of Organists (AGO). In 1991 and in 1993, he was given the honored title

Organist of the Year by the ATOS. He has made many recordings which have received rave reviews. As an author, he is well known in organ circles for his book, *The Secrets of Theatre Organ Registration*. In addition, Mr. Strony is a consultant in the design and the tonal finishing of both pipe and digital organs. He is also a composer of organ and choral music.

Walter Strony was born in Chicago in 1955 and began music lessons at the age of seven. His theater organ teacher was the famous Chicago organist, **Al Melgart**, who was the staff organist at the Chicago Stadium for many years. His classical studies were with **Herbert L. White** and **Karel Paukert**. This well-rounded

musician brings a wealth of experience to any organ console, which has brought to him the reputation of being one of America's most original and interesting sounding concert organists. One reviewer noted that, "While looking respectfully backwards to the masters of the theater organ tradition, he manages to look forward with a refreshing approach in all of his musical arrangements. It is a style that is inventive, harmonically interesting and, above all, right for today."

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 the organist at First Christian Church, Las Vegas.

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

CHAIRMAN Kevin J. King 2851 Creston Rd. Walnut Creek, 94597 925/256-7436 kevjking@juno.com	VICE CHAIRMAN Neal R. Wood 523 Corbett Avenue San Francisco, CA 94114 415/861-7082 nealwood@pacbell.net	SECRETARY Arthur Woodworth 600 Coventry Road Kensington, CA 94707 510/524-7452 awoodworth@bigfoot.com	TREASURER Ronald D. Bingaman 837 Redwood Dr. Danville, CA 94506 925/736-4512 ron.bingaman@safeway.com	EDITOR Don Ravey 127 Chukker Ct. San Mateo, CA 94403 650/573-8027 don@ravey.net	PROGRAM Gordon A. Pratt 15942 Via Cordoba San Lorenzo, CA 94580 510/276-8102 aznme2@webtv.net	MEMBERSHIP Neal R. Wood 523 Corbett Avenue San Francisco, CA 94114 415/861-7082 nealwood@pacbell.net
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

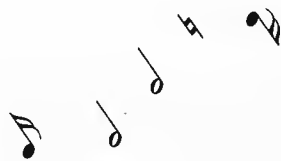
When emailing, include ATOS in the subject line. Otherwise, if you are unknown to the recipient's computer, its SPAM filter may divert your mail.

— FIRST TIME —
FRIENDS 4 FREE

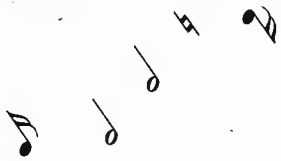
As we begin a new NorCal public concert season, here's a reminder of the policy: *any first time visitor to a NorCal public concert at Berkeley Community Theater will be admitted free of charge.* We do ask that such visitors complete a simple name and address form that we will use to send them occasional concert announcements and a few complimentary issues of the *Windsheet*.

There is no requirement that such a first time visitor be accompanied by a NorCal member, so even if you have a friend who can attend a concert that you won't be attending, they still qualify.

Folks, there are precious few free offers these days with such straightforward rules and benefits! Help us spread the appreciation of theatre organ music to new ears!



Until about 1500, organs could only make one sound, regardless of how many pipes they had per note. Mechanisms were developed so that separate sets of pipes could be "stopped off." This meant they could be played alone, providing some variation in dynamics (degrees of loud and soft) and color. Today, we routinely associate the organ with the ability to generate an array of sounds -- as well as the power to make a splash by "pulling out all the stops."



Grace Baptist Concert & Open Console

On Sunday, September 24th, Grace Baptist Church of San Jose, through its pastor, Michael-Ray Mathews, and NorCal member Bill Brooks, graciously hosted NorCal members and guests at a special event, arranged to revive an old tradition of Sunday afternoon pipe organ concerts. Their 3/13 Robert Morton organ was originally installed in the Liberty Theater in San Jose as a 3/20 instrument. Its theater organ features and voices are still alive and usable, although much of their capabilities are not regularly utilized in their modern usage as a liturgical organ.

Our featured concert artist was Paul-Wesley ('P-W') Bowen, a NorCal member and veteran performer in both theatre organ and church settings. P-W is a native Californian, but spent 30 years in Minnesota, where he was a representative for the Dutch organ manufacturer, Eminent Organ Co. He played a Rodgers electronic organ for an ATOS Convention lunch in Oakland in the 1960's.

NorCal Program Chairman, Gordon Pratt, introduced the concert and P-W with some explanation of the tradition of Sunday afternoon concerts in churches, as a congregation activity, and a bit of an introduction to the differences between a theatre pipe organ and the usual liturgical organs, for the benefit of those church members who may not have had prior exposure to theatre organs.

P-W opened the concert with a bright and peppy version of *Oh, What a Beautiful Morning* from *Oklahoma*, followed by a dreamy and shimmering rendition of *In the Still of the Night*. There was no doubt that the tremulants are still working! P-W employed complex, underlying left-hand rhythms to offset the otherwise *largo* nature of the piece.

To pick up the tempo, P-W then ripped off a *staccato* arrangement of *Muskrat Ramble*, using solo flutes to good effect.

Then, without announcing it, he rendered a beautiful version of the 20th century hymn *Great is Thy Faithfulness*.

Next was the Eddie Dunstetter composition and theme song *Open Your Eyes*, which P-W challenged the audience to identify.

That was followed by the popular George Gershwin song *Mine*, featuring effective left-hand *obligatos*.



Photo by
Gordon Pratt

Returning to the church repertoire, P-W played *The Unveiled Christ* with a rich texture of liturgical registrations.

Completely changing the mood, his next presentation was *Baby Elephant Walk*, making good use of the Orchestra Bells, although these are apparently located deep within the chambers and are not as prominent as we in the theatre organ tradition are accustomed to hearing.

To conclude his first half, P-W played the majestic *You'll Never Walk Alone* from the 1945 musical *Carousel*.

To bring us back to the fun of theatre pipe organ, P-W used the Xylophone to play a brassy *Chicken Reel*. Then he offered a spirited *Those Were the Days*, *My Friend*, followed by the old familiar melody *Honeysuckle Rose*, with jazzy melodic variations to keep it up-tempo.

P-W announced that he wanted to feature the Oboe horn on the next number, and indeed, it had a fine, throaty quality as an un-tremmed melody lead for the first chorus of the Disney song, *When You Wish Upon a Star*, which ended with a very full and fully-tremmed finish.

As his closing presentation, P-W played his arrangement of Richard Wagner's *To the Evening Star* from *Tannhäuser*, which he enriched with a rhythmic accompaniment.

During the entire performance, I was impressed by P-W's active *hand registration* of this erstwhile theatre instrument, and his artistic sense in using its available voicings. That and his frequent use of left-hand melodies with rich *obligatto* counter melodies made this concert especially enjoyable for me.

Following the concert, Gordon Pratt led off an *open console* for NorCal members.

-- Don Ravey



EDITOR'S
RAVINGS

A couple of weeks ago I had the pleasure of attending a crew reunion of the U.S. Navy ship I served on during 1954 and 1955. I didn't really know any of the others (although one remembered me), but it was a happy time for all and we enjoyed a sort of 'crew spirit' that spanned WWII and the Korean era.

My purpose in mentioning this is that I was reminded of the way in which we socialize when we have a shared experience. It's not all that different from when we converse with someone about a concert or an artist which we both have enjoyed.

NorCal's upcoming concert season will afford many of us with the pleasure of hearing once again some of the great artists who have played for us here before, beginning on **October 22nd** with **Walter Strony**. If you were here for his concert at BCT in May of 2004 – or at the 2003 ATOS convention in Oakland – or at BCT in January of 2001 – or at even earlier performances, you have a shared experience of being at a live concert by one of the finest theatre organists around. If you have not been so fortunate as to have heard Walt perform his magic at the Mighty Wurlitzer, don't miss this occasion! And bring along some family and friends so that you will be able to re-live the wonderful experience over and over again with people who will now have this experience in common with you.

This season NorCal has planned *five* [count 'em – FIVE!] public concerts at the Berkeley Community Theater. All will be performed by the top theatre organists of this country – and the U.K.!

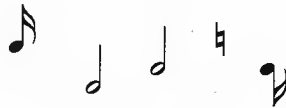
February 11 NorCal will present **Chris Gorsuch**, March 18 it will be **Clark Wilson**, May 20 we will hear **Jonas Nordwall** and June 10 we will welcome **Richard Hills** from England!

Order your season tickets now and reserve the dates on your calendar. Oh, and don't forget to bring your friends! Remember, *First Time Guests are Free!*

PRACTICE TIME ON AN ELECTRONIC WURLITZER

Hillside Community Church in El Cerrito has just received a donation of a 2-manual electronic theatre organ (Wurlitzer 4520). They also have a grand piano and a pianist who plays for services, but do not currently have an organist. The church is willing to allow organists to practice during the week, asking only that perhaps the organists would be willing to play for an occasional service such as Christmas or Easter.

If you might be interested in such an arrangement, please contact Eileen Andrade at the church (510) 235-3646 or mobile (510) 847-2689 or email to: hillside.church@comcast.net



OPEN
CONSOLE
Hosted by
Chris Nichols



This is an opportunity for NorCal 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 1:00 to 5:00 PM. The next scheduled dates are:

Sunday, October 15th

Sunday, November 19th

Sunday, December 10th.

Open Consoles are informal and our genial host, Chris Nichols, ensures that any NorCal member feels comfortable. He lends help and support to anyone who needs it. Depending on how many members are present, each has one or more 15-minute sessions at the console.

Important: Call the NorCal 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.

Remembering Tom Hazleton

[The following email is reproduced with the permission of Sue Hansen, who was the prime mover in arranging the Tom Hazleton memorial concert at the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos, played by Jackson Borges, on September 17th.]

Hello

I just wanted to say thank you to all of you for helping out and supporting the Tom Hazleton Memorial Concert a week ago in Los Gatos. We had some stiff competition -- gorgeous weather, for one. There's so much that goes on in the bay area, you're always competing with something.

Mimi, Chris and Nick were there. I think they were pleased with how everything turned out. We took Tom's ashes to Monterey the next day.

Tom was Jackson's mentor, and they were great friends. I think Jackson did a wonderful job keeping his emotions in check -- I could not have done the same. The majority of Tom's life was spent in the bay area. I'm glad we all had the chance to come together and say goodbye.

In the last 10 yrs or so, whenever I would hear Tom play...afterwards he would ask, "how did it sound?" I loved to see the look of disgust on his face when I'd say, "I have this odd craving for pizza." He has left such a void. I will miss his wicked sense of humor and that devilish gleam in his eye. He was great, he was swell -- he was one of a kind, and we will always miss him.

Thank you
Sue Hansen



The violinist Fritz Kreisler was out strolling with a friend when they came upon a fish market. Kreisler looked down at the fish, seeing row upon row of staring eyes and gaping mouths. Suddenly, he smacked his hand to his forehead. "I'm late for a concert!"



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Oct. 15, 2006 – 1 - 5 PM:

Open Console at BCT for members.

Sunday, Oct. 22 – 2:30 PM:

Walt Strony opens the 2006/2007

NorCal concert season at the BCT.



Sunday, Nov. 19, 2006 – 1 - 5 PM:

Open Console at BCT for members.

Sunday, Dec. 10, 2006 – 1 - 5 PM:

Open Console at BCT for members

— 2007 —

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2007 – 2:30 PM:

NorCal presents



Sunday, March 18, 2007 – 2:30 PM:

NorCal presents



Sunday, May 20, 2007 – 2:30 PM:

NorCal presents



Sunday, June 10, 2007 – 2:30 PM:

From the U.K., NorCal presents



OTHER VENUES

Angelino's, 3/13 Wurlitzer, 3132 Williams Rd, San Jose, CA. Fridays & Saturdays, 6 to 9 PM. **Dean Cook.** (408) 243-6095.

Bella Roma Pizza, 3/16 Wurlitzer, 4040 Alhambra Ave., Martinex, CA. **Dave Moreno, Bob Reichert or Kevin King** at the console. (925) 228-4935.

Castro Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 429 Castro St., SF, CA. Intermission music played daily by **David Hegarty, Warren Lubich, Mark Putterbaugh or Harry Garland.** (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.

Palace of the Legion of Honor, 4/63 E. M. Skinner, Lincoln Park, San Francisco Presidio. Saturdays and Sundays from 4:00 to 4:45 PM. Free after museum admission. **David Hegarty** plays an *Organ Pops Concert* on some weekends, other artists play classical concerts on other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

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

Stanford Theatre, 3/21 Wurlitzer, 221 University Ave, Palo Alto, CA. (650) 324-3700. <www.stanfordtheatre.org>

Towe Auto Museum, 3/16 Wurlitzer, 2200 Front St., Sacramento, CA. Free Sunday concerts with Museum Admission. Sierra Chapter presents silent movies on Friday night, four times each year. <www.sierrachapterATOS.org>

Visalia Fox Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 300 W. Main St., Visalia, CA. (559) 625-1FOX (1369).

OTHER CHAPTERS

—Sierra Chapter, Sacramento, CA— <www.sierrachapterATOS.org>
October 27 at 8:00 PM.

Sierra Chapter Silent Film
Paul Quarino at the Towe Auto Museum.

November 12 at 2:00 PM.
Ninth Annual George Wright Memorial Concert
Jelani Eddington at Grant Union High School

—Mount Shasta Chapter TOS—
Contact Al Schoenstein
<DSchoen940@aol.com>

ON THE WEB

The following Internet web site has lots of theatre organ music that you can listen to on your computer, originating in Australia: <www.organfax.co.uk/eithrodda.html>



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NORCAL 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. Neal R. Wood at (415)861-7082 <nealwood@pacbell.net> , PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438.

Your Name: _____ Your Spouse's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Occupation: _____

Dues are \$20 for NorCal TOS only and an additional \$40 for National ATOS (\$60 total) per year for full voting membership and subscription to *Theatre Organ* the six times a year glossy journal of ATOS. 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.