


APRIL 2017

Newsletter of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society
www.norcaltos.org (510) 644-2707
P. O Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

Berkeley Community Theatre
1930 Allston Way, Between Milvia Street &
Martin Luther King, Jr. Way



Mark Herman in Concert

**Berkeley Community Theatre
2:30 PM, Sunday April 2**

Enter through Stage Door at 1930 Allston Way

Born in 1987, Mark Herman is one of America’s busiest young theatre organists, performing over 30 concerts and silent film presentations each year across the US and abroad. In 2012, he was named the American Theatre Organ Society’s Organist of the Year and is the youngest person ever to receive the prestigious honor. Previously, he was overall winner of the Society’s Young Theatre Organist Competition in 2004.

He studied theatre organ with the late John Ferguson of Indianapolis, who was recognized worldwide for his skills teaching the art of the theatre organ. His classical piano studies were with Christine Freeman of Fort Wayne, Indiana. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Arts/Management from DePaul University in Chicago.

Mark has been featured on several episodes of American Public Media’s *Pipedreams* program, and has performed for countless conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society, American Guild of Organists, and Organ Historical Society. On the international stage, he has toured in Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

He currently resides in Los Angeles, where he is President and Tonal Director of the Los Angeles Organ Company, the Allen

Organ dealer for the Greater Los Angeles Area. He is in demand as a voicing specialist and tonal consultant for Allen Organs and is proud to be an Allen Artist, showcasing new Allen Organs in the US and beyond.

THIS WILL BE A NORCAL “MEMBERS ONLY” CONCERT.
Members’ Admission: \$15.00 on the day of the concert. Members can order their tickets in advance of concert day from Membership Secretary Neal Wood for \$12.00. (See bottom of last page to contact Neal.)
Concert Special: Join NorCal for \$20.00 and you and your guest will attend the concert as our guest! You will be joining at the “Friend” Level and your year-long membership includes your “partner,” if any.
Special Note: *Due to the time of year, the theatre may be COLD!*

P W BOWEN CONCERT JANUARY 29

NorCal’s long-time friend, PW Bowen played a wonderful concert covering many genres and styles of organ playing. He thoroughly explored the capabilities of the NorCal Wurlitzer. His opening number, *Oh What a Beautiful Morning* from the musical “Oklahoma,” was a remarkable arrangement starting in the style of the overture for a Wagnerian opera. It then shifted into the styles of classical organ composers Louis Vierne and Charles Marie Widor!

PW then loosened up with numbers such as *I’m Beginning to See the Light, Shangri La, Melody of Love, Wunderbar, Fly Me to the Moon, Fascination, I Could Have Danced All Night.* and *In a Little Spanish Town.*

There was a medley from the pizza parlor days which included *Jeremiah Was a Bullfrog, A Summer Place, and Unchained Melody.* And we heard all about the moon with: *Paper Moon, Moon Over Miami, Moonglow, and Moonlight and Shadows.*

CHAIRMAN’S WIND LINE

“The Old and the New”

A member of NorCal since 1974, I can remember when we had no chapter organ, even though NorCal was a founding chapter

of ATOS in 1955. In 1974, there were 19 organ equipped restaurants in Northern California, and three theatres with organs. (originally there were many more theatres with organs.) The Cinema 21 (Marina) Theatre on Chestnut Street in San Francisco had a 2/5 Robert Morton organ, the Avenue Theatre had a 3/15 Wurlitzer, and the Orpheum Theatre on Market at 8th had a 4/22 Robert Morton. Can you remember all the restaurants that used to have theatre pipe organs?

The pipe organ equipped restaurants and original theatre installations faded away and theatre pipe organs were reinstalled in other theatres. The Paramount and Grand Lake in Oakland, the Castro in San Francisco, (once again removed), the Stanford in Palo Alto, the California in San Jose, (with 2 Wurlitzers), the Empress in Vallejo, (now also removed), the Bob Hope (Fox) in Stockton, the (Golden) State in Monterey, and now the California in Pittsburg.

Since 1991, we have had our own excellent 4/41 Wurlitzer expertly maintained by our diligent organ maintenance crew. When you come to our next concert April 2nd, why not bring a friend and take advantage of the \$20 Concert and Friend membership opportunity?



WELCOME NEW MEMBER

NorCal welcomes the following the following new member:

Michael L. Brown, Benecia

OPEN CONSOLE SCHEDULE

Chris Nichols will host open console sessions at Berkeley Community Theatre on the following upcoming Sundays:

March 12th, April 23rd, May 21st, and June 18th.

These sessions run from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Enter through the stage door at 1930 Allston Way, Berkeley. These events are a very social open house for NorCal members (both players and listeners) and their guests. Most of those playing are amateurs but some are definitely professionals. Chamber tours are available. Here is a chance for you to play (and/or see and hear up close) one of the best (and biggest) Wurlitzers in the world! Please be sure to call the NorCal answering machine the day of the event at 510-644-2707 to make certain that the event is still on.

PARAMOUNT THEATRE PROJECT

The NorCal organ crew is continuing restoration of the water damaged 5-rank chest from the main chamber of Oakland's Paramount Theatre of the Arts (PTA). This process includes complete disassembly, replacement of the leather gaskets, replacement of the leather on many of the pneumatics, and replacement of valve parts. The final steps will be refinishing, reassembly, and delivery back to the PTA. If you would like to see the "innards" of a Wurlitzer chest and/or would like to get involved in chest restoration (no experience necessary – we will teach you how), please join our work parties which take place most Saturdays from 10 to 5. Be sure to call the NorCal answering

machine at 510-644-2707 to make certain that the work party is still on for that day.

STILL MORE ABOUT THE CENTER THEATRE IN MILWAUKEE

Bill Campbell of Anaheim sent the following

Hi, Art: I really enjoyed the article about the Center Theatre in Milwaukee in the recent Windsheet newsletter. When I first joined ATOS in October of 1972, the article on the Center (which was originally the Warner) in downtown Milwaukee was my first experience with the theatre organ. I was in high school at that time, and had the nerve to call the theatre to ask to play the organ. As your article stated, the organ had been deteriorating for a long time. I played it several times before the theatre was twinned and the organ was removed.

My memory says that the organ was donated to Boy's Technical High School and not the Boy Scouts. At the time there was a Wangerin in the school's auditorium and plans were to have the Kimball installed there. There was one fund raising concert held at the high school with Tom Gnaster and Kay McAbee performing. I don't have the date for that anymore, but it was a great program. The story I heard is that the needed modifications to the school weren't possible for the Kimball because of the expense involved. If memory serves me correctly the cafeteria was located underneath the auditorium and that would have needed modification besides building large chambers for the organ in the auditorium.

As it stands today, the theatre twinning was reversed and the Milwaukee Symphony has been thinking about moving out of the Marcus Center for Performing arts and using the Warner/Center as their home theatre. It seems that the twinning process didn't do a lot of harm to the theatre. There is an online article about it if you search Milwaukee Journal Sentinel – Milwaukee and Wisconsin breaking news and investigations. So as of today, there is a possibility that another organ could go back into the theatre in the future.

Of course, if you attended the 2000 or 2004 ATOS convention in Milwaukee, you heard a great instrument at the Oriental. I believe that Malcolm Creighton was a shop teacher at Boy's Tech and led the way to get the organ donated to the Kimball Theatre Organ Society where he and a lot of other people put years into restoring the organ. Simon Gledhill put out a CD on the organ a couple of years ago.

Thanks for reading and let me know if I could somehow get a copy of Paul's recording?

HOW OFTEN DO WE PUBLISH THE WINDSHEET?

We publish whenever we have an event scheduled rather than on a set schedule.

OTHER VENUES

Grand Lake Theatre - 3/18 Wurlitzer. 3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland. Intermission music played by Warren Lubich or Gordon Pratt (Fridays) & Bob Reichert (Saturdays). (510) 452-3556.

Paramount Theatre - 4/26 Wurlitzer. 2025 Broadway, Oakland. Public tours on first and third Saturdays of the month at 10:00 am. (510) 465-6400. www.paramounttheatre.com

Stanford Theatre - 3/21 Wurlitzer. 221 University Avenue, Palo Alto. See their **Silent Film Schedule**. The organ is played before and between films by **Bill Taylor, David Hegarty, or Jerry Nagano**. (650) 324-3700. stanfordtheatre.org

Palace of the Legion of Honor - 4/63 E. M. Skinner. Lincoln Park, San Francisco Presidio. Saturdays and Sundays, 4:00 to 5:00 pm. Free after museum admission. **David Hegarty** plays an **Organ Pops Concert** on the first full weekend of each month. Other artists play classical concerts other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

Visalia Fox Theatre - 4/22 Wurlitzer. 300 West Main Street, Visalia. (599) 625-1369.

MEMBERS LOBBY ONLINE

For NorCal members only, there is a link near the bottom of our website home page to take you to our "Members' Lobby." A password is required in order to view any of the Members' Lobby. Members who need the password should contact Neal Wood. His email and phone number are at the bottom of the last page.

GET YOUR WINDSHEET BY E-MAIL!

Would you like to receive your copy of the Windsheet by email? It will be in full color; it will be wrinkle and tear-free; it will arrive sooner; and you will save NorCal the cost of postage and envelopes. If so, please contact our Membership Chair, Neal Wood nealwood@pacbell.net.

NORCAL RECORDINGS FOR SALE



See the NorCal web site for recordings of our Wurlitzer. They will all be on sale at our next concert or may be ordered from Neal Wood at nealwood@pacbell.net.

NorCal Theatre Organ Society is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS). 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 call or write:

Mr. Neal R. Wood at
(415) 861-7082 or nealwood@pacbell.net
P.O. Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

Dues are \$20 for NorCal TOS only. For an additional \$50 you may also join National ATOS (\$70 total) per year for full voting memberships in both NorCal and ATOS as well as your subscription to *Theatre Organ* magazine, the six times a year glossy journal of ATOS. Spouse and children living at home may be included in both NorCal and ATOS memberships. We hope you will join us to help preserve and enjoy these great instruments.

NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY CONTACTS:

NorCal Web Site: Current & recent past Windsheets in .pdf format, up-to-date Calendar of Events on line, and list of the CD's available: norcaltos.org.

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