
The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY
PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625 510/644-2707

www.norcaltos.org
April 2010

The Berkeley Community Theatre (BCT) is entered from the Courtyard accessible from Allston between Milvia and Martin Luther King



WALT STRONY at The Berkeley Community Theatre Sunday, May 2nd at 2:30 PM

Walt Strony is one of America's best known Theatre Organists, and NorCal members always consider his concerts at Berkeley a special treat.

One of the most popular artists, Strony has played at the BCT at least seven times and in the area about seventeen times that I[Ed] can count! His most recent appearance at the BCT was in October 2006. His distinctive style is well recognized not only throughout the US, but in Japan, Australia, England and Canada.

As with so many artists Strony, started young, at age seven, with his first public debut at age eighteen. His Theatre Organ teacher was the famous Chicago organist **Al Melgard**, who for many years presided over the fabled 6 manual Barton at the Chicago Stadium. In 1991 and again in 1993 he was voted ATOS's 'Organist of the Year' – the only living theatre organ artist so honored. But Strony is equally at home on Classical Organs, having studied under **Herbert L. White and Karel Paukert**.

Strony lived in Phoenix for 22 years before moving to Las Vegas and in both cities was well known in the Pizzeria world. He is now Artist-in-Residence at the First Christian Church in Las Vegas.

He has many CD's available; the latest one was in 2007 on the world's largest theatre organ at the Sanfilippo Music Room in Barrington, IL.

Strony is equally well known for his work as a pipe and digital organ consultant-finisher for both Classical and Theatre Organs. His book 'The Secrets of Theatre Organ Registration' is a standard reference book on this subject.

NorCal closes its current season with this outstanding artist of whom one reviewer said, "He has developed a style uniquely his own" and "It is a style that is inventive, harmonically interesting, and above all, right for today."

NEW MEMBER

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Rodriguez
(Alivia Lucci)
San Francisco, CA

DONATIONS

Mr. Robert Coffin
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Coon
Mr. Young S. Han
Mr. William Schlotter, Jr.

♪ A FINAL NOTE ♪
Robert Denny

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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.

CHRIS GORSUCH Review March 14, 2010

— Don Ravey

Chris Gorsuch, from San Diego, threatened to take our Wurlitzer home with him, but I checked later and it's still there, installed at Berkeley Community Theater.

As other artists have done at several of our concerts, Chris utilized **both** consoles. In the Playlist below, a superscript ¹ after a title means that he played it on the 'big' Center Theatre console, a superscript ² means that he played in on the 'little' Toledo Paramount console.

Chris presented a varied selection of musical genres, with virtuosity and humor. In my opinion, his registration and stylings represent the peak of musical talent. While remaining true to the composer's version, he graces each number with his own phrasing, which I found to be consistently in the best of taste.

For his initial, up-console number, Chris played an arrangement of the 1930 standard, *Get Happy*, with a bluesy/jazzy treatment, the theme being repeated several times with variations, much in the style of a fugue. Following that, his rendition of *Taking A Chance On Love* particularly impressed me with his phrasing. Just as a vocalist paces and punctuates his or her singing, the best instrumentalists can make a big difference in the emotional impact of a musical phrase by the timing and duration of each melody note. Later, in his presentation of the **Cole Porter** favorite, *It Was Just One Of Those Things*, he performed some dazzling triplets on the xylophone and played some fancy variations.

Before playing his final medley from **George Gershwin's** *Porgy And Bess*, Chris explained that, in deference to the musical genius represented in that work, he refuses to play a shortened version, and for that reason he doesn't often perform it, but expecting that our devoted audience would appreciate the full version (*and Boy, did we!*), he launched into a gorgeous orchestral medley that lasted 27 minutes (*I timed it!*) and included the original transitions (*segues*) composed by Mr. Gershwin. Chris' artistry was expressed in his sensitive and balanced registrations, and in the dynamics he produced from our 41 ranks. It was a memorable experience.

PLAYLIST

Up console:

[Come On,] *Get Happy*¹ – *Harold Arlen* (1930)

First half:

Taking A Chance On Love from *Cabin In the Sky*² – *Vernon Duke* (1940)

If I Love Again from *Hold Your Horses*² – *Ben Oakland* (1932)

Cole Porter medley¹:

Begin the Beguine, Anything Goes, In the Still of the Night, Night and Day, My Heart Belongs to Daddy, I've Got You Under My Skin, It Was Just One of Those Things

My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice from *Samson And Delilah*² – *Camille-Saint Saëns*

Overture to The Marriage of Figaro¹ – *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*

Intermission

Second half:

Up console:

It's De-lovely¹ – *Cole Porter* (1936)

Birth of Passion Waltz² – *Karl Hoschna* (1910)

Porgy & Bess¹ – *George Gershwin* (1935)
Summertime, I Got Plenty of Nothin', Bess, You Is My Woman, It Ain't Necessarily So

Encores:

Tico Tico¹ – *Zequinha Abreu* (1944)
I'll See You Again¹ – *Noel Coward* (1929)

STAGE DOOR

Please!

No one should come in the Stage Door, except the Stage Crew or others with business there.

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:

Sundays
May 23
June 13
July 11
August 15

Open Consoles are informal and our genial host, **Chris Nichols**, ensures that any NorCal member feels comfortable. Chris 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, in rotation.

Important: Call the NorCal voice mail at **(510) 644-2707** on *that* Sunday morning to confirm that the theatre is available. If there will be Open Console, enter via the backstage door at 1930 Allston Way.

ATOS NEWS

Don't forget the 2010 ATOS Convention in Seattle June 28 – July 4 (including Overture & Encore). The convention artist lineup can be found at:

www.atos.org/conventions/2010

This Convention sounds like a winner, and being in Seattle is easier to get to for our SF Bay members. It is still not too late to make reservations, and if you are at all interested, check out the URL above, or the write ups in *Theatre Organ Magazine*.

Also **Dave Moreno** is trying to put a group together to go by **Amtrak**, and if enough people are interested they could be put in the same car. The train will leave Saturday, June 26th. If LATOS and Orange County TOS members take the Coast Starlight they can arrange for a ATOS Car.

For more details contact Dave Moreno at: davem@lanaset.com

CHAIRMAN'S WINDLINE



NorCal is on Facebook

We now have 200 members on our group list on Facebook. Members can join our group: "NorCal Theatre Organ Society"

— Bill Coale

EDITOR'S

Jan La Fetra



Everyone should experience this once in their life; Moving a pipe organ. A generous donation was made to NorCal in the form of a 3 manual, 18 rank Wurlitzer/Wicks (WurliWicks) pipe organ by **Mr. Young Han**. The disassembled organ was in storage in Livermore, CA, and needed to be moved as quickly as possible. But where was NorCal going to store the organ? This is where some fortunate timely events were reaching their nexus.

Over the last year, **Kevin King** has been constructing a building to house a home pipe organ. He acquired the Bella Roma Wurlitzer console, the relay, the accordion, and three ranks of pipes from the restaurant, but still needed pipes, chests, percussions, traps, and blower to complete the organ. The WurliWicks would fulfill most of the requirements for Kevin's home installation, so why not store it in Kevins recently completed building. He can purchase parts from the organ as he needs them. Kismet!

It took four trips to Livermore, to move the organ using Mr. Han's truck and trailer and **Bill Schlotter's** vintage pickup. There were approximately 28 crates of pipework, several pipe chests, percussions, traps, console, and blower that had to be moved. The organ crew, **Mr. Han**, and **Mr. John Chan** (a new member) contributed a lot of sweat equity in this move. **Bill Schlotter's** organ moving experience involving ramps, levers, winches would make Archimedes proud. Now the fun begins.

It will probably take a couple of years for the organ to be installed and completely playable. Kevin has graciously offered his location for the NorCal picnic in 2012. It will be great to have another organ venue in the bay area.

Neal

NorCal WEBSITE

We now have copies of the current and recent past *Windsheets* on our web site—and in color! They are in .pdf format, which requires that your computer has a copy of the *free* Adobe Acrobat Reader.

We also have an up-to-date Calendar Events online. Be sure to visit it!

norcaltos.org

ATOS YOUTH CAMP

The highly successful ATOS Summer youth camp is going to be held on July 19-23rd, in Phoenix, AZ. This camp is a unique opportunity for young organists to learn the art of theatre organ by attending lectures, master classes, and private study. Mentors include, **Donna Parker, Martin Ellis, Jelani Eddington, and Lyn Larsen**. The NorCal Chapter is proud to sponsor a matching fund to help support the youth camp. NorCal will match up to \$2500 in donations. The matching fund will close on June 30th. Please consider supporting this worthy cause. Donations can be sent to NorCal's Berkeley address listed on the front of the Windsheet.

NorCal BOARD MINUTES

Every NorCal member is entitled to request copies of the Minutes of meetings of the NorCal Board of Directors, which meets 6 times a year. Requests should be sent to the Secretary, whose email address and telephone number is published at the bottom of Page One of the Windsheet.

Sometimes I receive an interesting bit, but can't include it because there is too much material already. But this month I would like to pass on an interesting 'bit' from **Art Woodworth**.

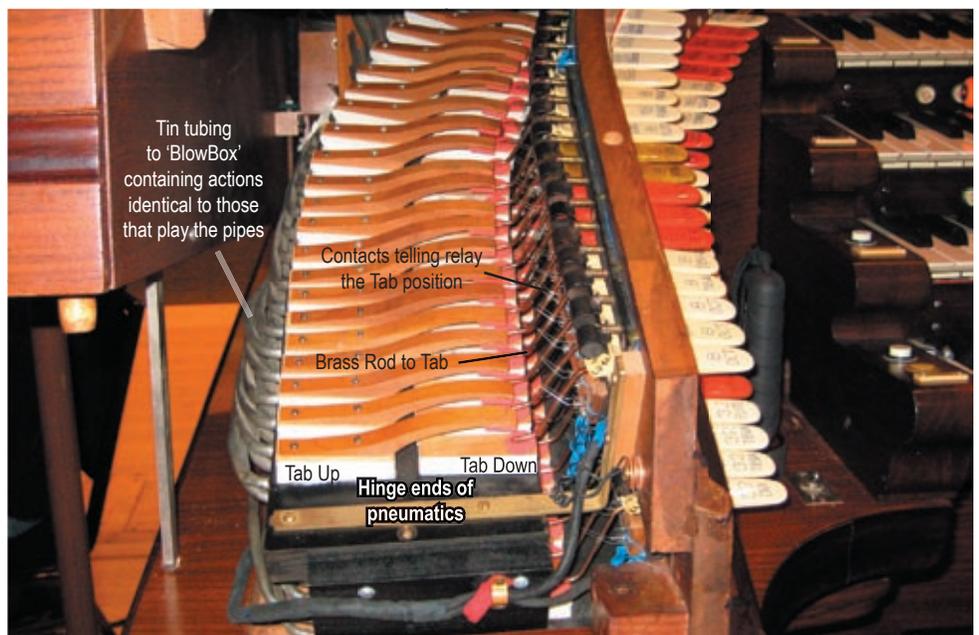
"In our rare visits to the east coast, Evelyn and I would visit botanical gardens and arboreta to see what a 'yellow poplar' tree looks like, that is, the source of our beloved 'Wurlitzer wood,' which is sold commercially as 'yellow poplar.' We never could find an example or even a docent who had any idea what we were talking about. I recently came across the answer.

"It seems that the Latin name for the tree is *liriodendron tulipifera* but the common name is 'Tulip Poplar' or 'Tulip Tree.' It grows extensively in the eastern US. Common plant names are often misleading. Since it is not from the genus *Populus*, it is not a real poplar tree. I don't think anything in that genus is much good for lumber or woodworking anyway.

"One source explains that there already was an imported 'Tulip Wood' so the trade term 'Yellow Poplar' developed.

"Enter *liriodendron tulipifera* into your search engine (or whatever). Wikipedia has a long article with photos. It even mentions use in organ construction. It grows fairly fast and can get big (up to 180 feet)."

Console interior—showing ONE layer of left side Tab actions



UPCOMING EVENTS

NorCal Presents —



Open Console at BCT —

May 23rd

June 13th

July 11th

August 15th

See more details on Page Two

Sierra Chapter Presents —

May 21st (Friday) at 7:30 PM, **Chris Elliott** playing **Buster Keaton**'s 'Our Hospitality' (1923) at the *California Auto Museum*, 220 Front St, Sacramento.

LATOS (Los Angeles) —

May 9th, 2:30 PM — **Clark Wilson** playing **Buster Keaton**'s 'The Cameraman' at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse. For more information contact:

www.latos.org

2010-2011 S.F. Symphony Organ

Concerts at Davies Symphony Hall

Sundays at 6 PM —

October 31st, 2010 – **Dennis James** plays for the silent film, *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*

November 21st, 2010 – **Oliver Latry**

January 30st, 2011 – **Paul Jacobs**

April 3rd, 2011 – **Jane Parker-Smith**

OTHER VENUES

Castro Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 429 Castro St. SF, CA. Intermission music played daily by **David Hegarty**, **Warren Lubich**, **Mark Putterbaugh** or **Harry Garland**. (425) 621-6120.

CastroTheatre.com

Grand Lake Theatre, 3/18 Wurlitzer, 3200 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA. Intermission music: **Warren Lubich** or **Gordon Pratt** (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 the first full weekend of each month, other artists play classical concerts other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

LegionOfHonor.org

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

Stanford Theatre, 3/21 Wurlitzer, 221 University Ave., Palo Alto, CA. The organ is played before and between films. (650) 324-3700.

StanfordTheatre.org

California Auto Museum, 3/21 Wurlitzer, 2200 Front St., Sacramento, CA (\$10 General, \$20 Family, \$5 Students, \$8 Members.)

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

MARTIN ELLIS

POPS Concert at Ironstone

[Ed. note – this concert was sold out, but for NorCal members here is the artist's bio.]

Martin Ellis started his studies on the Theatre Organ at age 15 under **John Ferguson**. He was the first winner of the *ATOS Young Organists Competition* in 1986, which was just the beginning of an illustrious career in both Theatre and Classical Organ. During his college years at DePauw University he was runner-up in the AGO Region V competition.

Later Martin became the Senior Staff Pianist/Organist for the Indianapolis Children's Choir – a touring organization with over 2,000 children! Their tours have taken them through most major cities in Europe and Canada—including playing an organ concert on the Tambourini organ at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. He has also served as Artistic Assistant/Pianist for the Pacific Rim Children's Choir.

He has published many choral and orchestra arrangements with **Hal Leonard** and **Colla Voce** publishing companies.

Martin was invited to join **Donna Parker**, **Jonas Nordwall**, and **Tom Hazleton** as a fourth member of the *Trio con Brio*, substituting for any member unable to play a performance. Since **Tom Hazleton**'s death, Ellis has become a permanent member of this famous group.

In 2004, Martin was appointed the Associate Director of Music and Organist at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis.

FOR SALE

From the Estate of Philip Green (a long time NorCal Member).

2 electronic theatre Wurlitzers, a 3m classical Baldwin, accordions, 5 Leslie speakers, 2 player pianos, 1 grand piano, 1 square grand.

For more details, contact his son, Philip Green, Jr. 707-426-6016

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 call or write:

Mr. Neal R. Wood at (415)861-7082 <nealwood@pacbell.net> , PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625.

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.