


JULY 2017

Newsletter of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society
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P. O Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

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



Justin LaVoie in Concert

Berkeley Community Theatre

2:30 PM, Sunday July 23

Enter through Stage Door at 1930 Allston Way

Justin LaVoie is a young rising star in the theatre organ world. He won the American Theatre Organ Society's Young Organist Competition in 2013, and since then has played at numerous venues across the United States. Justin is dedicated to presenting creative and authentic renditions of tunes from the American songbook and light classics, in addition to more contemporary popular music. Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, David Rose, Frank Sinatra, and Bing Crosby are just a few of Justin's favorite musicians and arrangers. Jesse Crawford and George Wright are his theatre organ idols.

After hearing a theatre organ recording at the age of six, this Detroit-area native was instantly captivated by the instrument's distinctive sound. Beginning in 2008, Justin attended several Summer Youth Adventures, conducted by the American Theatre Organ Society, deepening his knowledge of both the musical and mechanical aspects of the pipe organ. In recognition of his diligence as an organ student, he was named ATOS Student of the Year in 2010, after which he began a period of study with acclaimed theatre organist Jelani Eddington. At the 2013 ATOS National Convention in Atlanta, Justin won the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition, achieving the prestigious title of Overall Winner.

Aside from his musical pursuits, Justin is also interested in the restoration and maintenance of pipe organs. His personal project

is Opus 1880, the Wurlitzer organ from the Punch and Judy Theatre in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. He currently studies at the University of Oklahoma, pursuing a Bachelor of Music Arts Degree. Away from the console, he enjoys cooking, poetry, spending time outdoors, listening to a wide variety of music, and maintaining his extensive collection of early 20th century box cameras.

Whether at the console or in the chamber, Justin is passionately dedicated to carrying on the art of fine theatre organ music and sharing it with new audiences.

THIS WILL BE A NORCAL "MEMBERS ONLY" CONCERT.

Members' Admission: \$15.00 on the day of the concert. Members can order tickets in advance of concert day for themselves and their guests 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.

COMING ATTRACTIONS!

Sunday August 13

Picnic & Walter Strony in Concert
Kevin King Organ Studio

Picnic 12:30 pm – Concert 2:00 pm
2851 Creston Road
Walnut Creek

Due to space available in the studio, this will be a "Members Only" concert.

Please see Page 2 for details.

Sunday August 27

Bill Langford Remembrance
Berkeley Community Theatre

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm,

The late and great Bill Langford created "Pizza Parlor Style Theatre Organ" music at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward.

Please see Page 2 for details.

SUNDAY AUGUST 13 - PICNIC & WALTER STRONY IN CONCERT AT THE KEVIN KING ORGAN STUDIO

Picnic 12:30 pm – Concert 2:00 pm
2851 Creston Road
Walnut Creek

NorCal is looking forward to this event as over the years, Walter has played many wonderful concerts for us at Berkeley Community Theatre.

In July 2007 Walter performed the first solo organ recital to be presented in many years at New York's Radio City Music Hall for the American Theatre Organ Society's Annual Convention. In June 2016, he was featured for the second time in an evening concert on the famous Wanamaker organ in Philadelphia - the world's largest fully functioning pipe organ. He has also appeared at Sanfilippo Music Room in Barrington, Illinois.

In addition to his fine reputation as a concert organist, Mr. Strony is well known for his many recordings. His first CD "Phoenix" was rated 10/10 by CD Review - the highest rating given by this prestigious publication. He has recorded over 31 albums with his most recent CD (2013) being recorded on the Aveni Wurlitzer in Gates Mills, Ohio - an instrument that he designed. As an author, he is well known for his book "The Secrets Of Theatre Organ Registration," which has become the standard reference book on this subject. He is currently working on its expanded 2nd Edition, which will be released in 2017.

Walter is the only living organist to have been twice voted "Organist of the Year" by ATOS - in 1991 and 1993. In 2011, he was inducted into the ATOS "Hall of Fame." He has performed with the Calgary Symphony, Allentown Symphony, El Paso Symphony, and Symphony Silicon Valley.



Walter Strony

In addition to musical performance, he works as an organ consultant, most notably for instruments built by the Allen Organ Company. In collaboration with Allen Organs and the ATOS, he and four other artists recorded a five-DVD instructional video entitled "The Art of Playing Theatre Organ."

Some NorCal members probably remember Walter's debut to ATOS during the 1977 National Convention in Chicago at the ornate and (very) exotic Oriental Theater. We found out later he had to hand register the entire concert as the combination action

was not working. A highlight of the concert for this writer was his *Theme and Variations on the Oscar Meyer Hot Dog Commercial*.

And: If you would like to know more about Walter, just check out his extensive entry in none other than Wikipedia!

SUNDAY AUGUST 27 - BILL LANGFORD REMEMBRANCE

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm,
Berkeley Community Theatre

NorCal will be holding a remembrance gathering for Bill at Berkeley Community Theatre. There will be light refreshments and we will be playing back Bill's concert from 1998 (including that unforgettable Clarinet Lesson!). Enter through the stage door on Allston Way. By the way, this date would have been Bill's 89th birthday - So come and celebrate his life!



Eddie Glockenspiel (AKA Bill Langford) at his prime at YOPJ

We thank Gary Parks who posted the following remembrance:

A one-time Bay Area institution has left our sight. BILL LANGFORD, the very first person [actually Dave Quinlan preceded Bill at YOPJ – Ed.] to play a Wurlitzer organ in a pizza parlor, thereby initiating a trend, passed away in late April. I met him in 1990 when we began sharing a church music gig together, and we became fast friends. Many years ago, he collaborated with Steve Allen, and had a radio show of his own. While he didn't date back to the silent era as an organist, obviously, he was a leader in the next generation of theatre organists. He held forth at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt on Hesperian in San Lorenzo, where he played the organ salvaged from the Fox State Theatre in Fresno, controlled by the console originally from the [San Francisco] Warfield.

Later, Bill played at a pizza parlor in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where there was an organ that used the mammoth console from the Brooklyn Fox. When he came back to the Bay Area, he played at Pizza and Pipes in Santa Clara, which is where he was employed when we met. ... Bill played a twenty-minute prologue of show music when we married on stage at the Golden State Theatre in Monterey (former organ of the Parkside, San Francisco) December 8, 2001. Thank you, Bill, for a wonderful friendship: For miles of laughs, moral support when I was a discouraged, divorced guy in the 1990s, and for helping me get a better sense of what it was like in an earlier, more level-headed era.

Your Editor, his late wife Evelyn, and our son and daughter (Robert and Margaret) spent many a Sunday evening enjoying Bill's delightful music, his great sense of humor, and the Henningsen family's warm hospitality and never to be forgotten pizza!

Bill Langford Memorial Service

Saturday, August 26th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm
San Leandro Funeral Home
407 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro

The service will be on the day before the Remembrance at Berkeley Community Theatre. If you need more info call Susan Langford (510) 483 5300.



Bill Langford (seated) with his buddy, Paul Quarino at Bert Atwood's
September 27, 2014

CHAIRMAN'S WIND LINE

Memories

In the March *Windsheet*, I was reminiscing about the many venues with theatre organs in the Bay Area. I named the 3 theatres which remained with organs, in 1974, but not the 19 organ equipped restaurants in the Bay Area. Foremost in my recollection was Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, with its 3-mauel theatre pipe organ, on Hesperian Boulevard. in San Lorenzo.

Living on the Peninsula, there were organ equipped pizza restaurants closer to home, some with larger organs, but not with organists like Bill Langford. Bill was playing an electronic organ at the New Southern Restaurant in South San Francisco, when he was hired to play at the Pizza Joynt by its owner, Carsten Henningsen. Bill was an entertainer as well as a musician. His rapport with his audience was unique. If there were children in the restaurant, which was a frequent occurrence, he would soon play Chattanooga Choo Choo, starting with a blast on a whistle and

choo choo sounds created with the palm of his left hand on the accompaniment manual. Bill had a trunk next to the console. Late on Saturday night, he'd open the trunk, which contained a variety of hats and other props, and do a stand-up comedy routine for the adult audience, which always filled the restaurant, anticipating his act.

Pizza Joynt publicity listed Bill variously by several different comical names which he concocted, such as Eddie Glockenspiel. Bill presented concerts for NorCal and other organizations around the country. He last played for us with Paul Quarino at a NorCal picnic at Bert Atwood's residence at Clear Lake. We will long remember Bill for his warm friendliness and good humor and musical talent.

Langford



JONAS NORDWALL CONCERT JUNE 25

Review by Kevin King

Sunday, June 25th saw the return of one of NorCal's favorite artists, Mr. Jonas Nordwall. One can always count on Jonas to offer a program filled with the widest variety of musical selections. We heard everything from complex classical offerings, to traditional standards, to "runway music." The concert started with "I could Have Danced All Night" as the console-riser. This led to the Barbra Streisand standard "The Way We Were." Jonas provided interesting musical history as he introduced each selection. Next, Jonas shared with us the difficulty of explaining to his younger students the concept of burlesque music. He made the concept clear to us with his smoky dance hall rendition of "Love Me or Leave Me."

Two of the following pieces were: "The Wig" and "The Marriage of Figaro." Next up was a Don Baker tribute medley

including “Exodus”, “Intermezzo”, and “I Love a Parade.” Trying to sit still was not an option during a fiery “España Cani.” The first half of the concert ended with the beautiful “Fountain Reverie” and “Allegro” from Widor’s 5th symphony.

Later we heard what Jonas described as the “Sabre Dance of the organ world” this being the Mushel “Toccata” which is a non-stop, rhythmic, runaway keyboard workout; a highlight of the program for me. Another highlight was his beautiful arrangement of the timeless classic “Moon River.” Every subtle nuance of the softer ranks in our instrument shone masterfully in this selection. All too soon we were at the finale, which was Slaughter on 10th Avenue.

As always, Jonas shared his flawless technique, historical knowledge, humor, and artistry at the highest level. He makes the near-impossible look effortless. Thanks again Jonas!

OPEN CONSOLE SCHEDULE

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

July 16th, August 20th, and September 17th.

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.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

NorCal welcomes the following the following new members:

Max and Carol Brown, Citrus Heights

Pete Hartstra, Benecia

Will Lewis, Oakland

Tom Madsen, Orinda (Returning Member)

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. We are now starting on reassembly. 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.

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 - 3/17 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. Classic movie nights with Wurlitzer concert starting at 7:30 PM:

Friday June 30 at 8:00 pm: “*The Big Lebowski*”

Friday July 14 at 8:00 pm: “*All the President’s Men*”

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

California Theatre, San Jose (Fox Theatre)– 2/10 Wurlitzer. 345 South First Street. Style 216 Wurlitzer lobby organ played before all scheduled performances, usually by Jerry Nagano.

California Theatre, Pittsburg – 3/10 Robert Morton. 351 Railroad Avenue, Pittsburg. Temporary 2-manual console. Played before selected shows, usually by Dave Moreno.

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.

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 e-mail 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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