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## NOVEMBER 2017

Newsletter of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society  
[www.norcaltos.org](http://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



### Zach Frame in Concert

**Berkeley Community Theatre**

**2:30 PM, Sunday November 5**

**Enter through Stage Door at 1930 Allston Way**

Zach owes his interest in the theatre pipe organ to his parents, and also to a visit to Organ Piper Pizza when he was 5 years old (in 1992). It was the first time Frame saw a live organist and he was instantly drawn to the instrument. "My parents said I needed to learn to play piano first, so I started taking lessons." In addition to performing, Zach is a pipe organ technician and maintains the Organ Piper's Mighty Wurlitzer, he also has his own theatre pipe organ which he is in the process of restoring. Zach has a degree in Recording Technology from McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul, Minnesota. He and his wife, Emily reside in East Troy, Wisconsin, where he is also an active volunteer at the East Troy Railroad Museum.

Organ Piper Pizza has been a Milwaukee area landmark for nearly 40 years, opening in December 1976. The organ has a 3-manual Wurlitzer console and 30 ranks of Wurlitzer and Kimball pipes. Since May 2002, Organ Piper Pizza features the Mighty Wurlitzer AND The New South Rampart Street Paraders on the first Wednesday of every month.

### 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.

### ZACK FRAME INTERVIEW

December 31, 2012, by Molly Snyder Senior Writer [On Milwaukee.com](http://OnMilwaukee.com)

When Zach Frame was 5 years old, his parents took him to the pizza restaurant, Organ Piper Music Palace, 4353 South 108<sup>th</sup> Street. It was the first time Frame saw a live organist and he was instantly drawn to the instrument. "My parents said I needed to learn piano first, so I started taking lessons," says Frame.

For the past two years, Frame has been the only full-time featured organist at Organ Piper, where he plays a giant Wurlitzer five nights a week. The restaurant has two part-time organists on staff, too. "I never imagined as a kid that someday I'd be up there," says Frame, 25.

Frame, who grew up in Lake Geneva, studied piano privately and then went on to study music at McNally Smith in Saint Paul, Minn. He learned to play the theater organ - which is the instrument at Organ Piper - through observing other players. "There are probably only two or three people in the country who

*Zack Frame Interview Continued on Page 2*

### Coming Attraction:

**ROB RICHARDS IN CONCERT**

**Sunday January 28, 2018**

**NorCal Annual Meeting and Concert**

**Berkeley Community Theatre**

**Concert 2:00 pm, Meeting to Follow**

**Enter through stage door at 1930 Allston Way**

**Zack Frame Interview, Continued**

could teach me to play a theater organ. It's different than a classical organ," he says.

Frame says the appeal of the organ for him has always been the complexity of the instrument, because it requires use of both hands and both feet. "One musician can make so much music. There are eight or nine things going on at once - chords, bass line, melody line, counter melody line, dynamics, percussion, lights. Lots of stuff," he says.

Pizza restaurants with live organ entertainment were popular all over the country in the '70s and '80s. Milwaukee had a second one, called Pipe Organ Pizza, which closed in the '80s. Today, according to Frame, there is only one other theater-organ pizza restaurant left in the country other than Organ Piper and it's in Phoenix. Gary Hanson opened the Organ Piper Pizza in December 1975. It serves pizza, pasta, sandwiches, a nightly fish fry, soda, beer and wine. It's a loud, fun experience, with lots of musical ducks, a whirling Raggedy Ann Doll, flags and lights galore.

Frame, who knows between 800 and 1,000 songs on the organ, says the most commonly requested songs are the theme to "Phantom Of The Opera," "Star Wars" and "Under The Sea." "If a night goes by and I don't play at least two of these three songs, it's rare," he says. He plays more contemporary songs, too, from Michael Jackson to a three-song Lady Gaga medley – as well as a lot of Beatles, one of his favorite bands. But Frame's all-time favorite song varies. "It's usually something I haven't played in a while," he says.

Occasionally, someone will request a song he does not know, and he will make it a personal challenge to learn it on the fly or on his own time. He has an electric organ at home and is also allowed to come in and practice on the theater organ. "I'm basically trying to play catch-up with the last 300 years of music," he says.

The Organ Piper's Wurlitzer was assembled from several vintage theater pipe organs across the country. The basic mechanical parts - including the windchests, regulators and tremulants/vibratos - were all built by the Wurlitzer Company in New York. The pipework, which is the "heart or sound" of an organ, was built by the Wurlitzer firm, and also the Kimball Co. of Chicago.

Frame, who describes himself as a "big jazz fan," also plays drums and saxophone. He has been in garage bands and jazz groups, but with only two nights off a week from playing music, he doesn't really have the time nor the desire to pursue music beyond his job. "Actually, it's nice to have silence on a night off," he says.

Frame says he plans to live his dream and stay at Organ Piper as long as he can. He recognizes how rare and niche his job is and says when people get up and dance, he feels like he's doing something right. "I never imagined that I would be doing this for a

living, but I'll take it, and do it for as long as I possibly can," says Frame.

**NORCAL TOS BYLAWS CHANGES**

The ballots for the two proposed changes have been counted and both measures passed. The first measure will allow the number of directors to reduce from nine to five by attrition. The second reduces the size of the Nominating Committee from three to one.

**JUSTIN LAVOIE CONCERT JULY 23**

If you weren't there, you missed a great concert up-and-coming artist, Justin LaVoie. He made full use of our Wurlitzer's resources thoroughly covered all manners of style, registration, and musical genre.



**Justin LaVoie and his many friends and admirers after his NorCal concert – Rob Thomas photo**

Justin's play list included:

*With a Song in My Heart*

*Nice Work if You Can Get It*

*Spring is Here – Frank Loesser*

*Remando*

Medley from "Meet Me in Saint Louis"

*Meet Me in Saint Louis*

*The Boy Next Door*

*The Trolley Song*

*Let's Do It – Cole Porter*

*Invitation*

*Golliwogs' Cakewalk*

*Voices of Spring*

Intermission

*The Piccolino*

*Deed I Do*

*Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*

*Holiday for Strings*

*Venetian Gondola Ride*

Three Preludes by George Gershwin

*Bess You is My Woman Now* - George Gershwin  
*The Girlfriend of the Whirling Dervish*  
 Overture to "The Barber of Seville"

Encore

*Minute Waltz* – Frederick Chopin

Several months ago the following links were posted of Justin playing the Markworth residence organ. All of these were included in his concert for NorCal.

"With a Song in My Heart"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PNijBuUIso>

"Remando"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1og5xQW6rc>

"Bess, You Is My Woman Now" <https://youtu.be/fvbfy-vCOSE>

**PICNIC & WALTER STRONY AT KEVIN KING'S STUDIO**



**Walter Strony & Kevin King**

Walt presented an excellent concert which showcased all the resources of Kevin's 3/20 Wurlitzer. Much could be said about each number listed below so your Editor will mention only two. The opening number was very appropriate for the day and started in the style of a carousel organ, shifted to traditional theatre organ, and finally up-to-date theatre organ styling. Introducing the final number, Walter told about Chicago area organist Kay McAbee with whom he studied. Walter's closing number was Kay's blockbuster arrangement of the main theme from the wide screen epic "Land of the Pharaohs."

Walter's play list included:

Medley:

*In the Good Old Summertime/Summertime*

*Almost Like Being In Love*

Medley – Songs by Glen Campbell and Barbara Cook

*Valse Mirage*

*Penny Serenade*

Medley from "South Pacific"

*Bali Hai*

*There is Nothing Like a Dame*

*Some Enchanted Evening*

*I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair*

*Younger than Springtime*

*This Nearly Was Mine*

*Honey Bun*

*I'm in Love with a Wonderful Guy*

Main Theme for "Land of the Pharaohs"

**REMEMBERING BILL LANGFORD**

**Bill Langford Memorial Service.** The service was held on Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup> at the San Leandro Funeral Home. A number of NorCal members were present. The prelude for the service was a series of recordings of Bill playing the organ. The remembrances by family and friends brought back many memories and let us know much more about his life.

**NorCal Remembrance at Berkeley Community Theatre.** With heavy heart the NorCal Board cancelled this event scheduled for the following day at Berkeley Community Theatre. We had been notified that the City and the Berkeley Unified School District had decided to close off Allston Way at the theatre entrance in the interest of public safety due to the potential of civic unrest during an event scheduled for that afternoon in Berkeley's Civic Park which directly across the street from the theatre entrance.

**JIM CRANK- A Remembrance by Geoff Hansen**

He must have had a near-genius IQ with involvement in engineering at Lockheed and work at other electronics firms. I think he specialized in optics late in his career.

He knew everybody. Jim was good friends with Dick Simonton, and this connection brought Gaylord Carter to the Avenue a few times. Jim Talmadge, Buster Keaton's son, was another one Jim knew.

He was the only person I knew who claimed to have gone swimming in the Hearst-San Simeon pool in the late fifties.

Jim was the only kid in his high school to drive a Rolls Royce. He had bought Homer Curran's (Curran Theater) old car, only one of many classic cars he was to purchase.

Lastly, he had an intense interest in three dimension photography. Jim urged me to revive 3D movies at the Avenue in 1975. It was the only money-maker Avenue ever had, producing thousands of dollars in a ten year period. These 3D shows kept us going and I'll always be grateful to Jim for initiating the idea.

The Kodacolor film of the SF Fox interior was done by Jim, and the quality color photos also. One or two Fox Ev Nourse albums had Jim Crank photos on their covers.

In his final years, Jim was passionately involved with a Doble steam car built in San Francisco. Only a handful of Doble survive. My last visit to Jim's house was interrupted by a phone

call. The caller was asking Jim for help in fixing a Stanley Steamer. Jim knew all about them and didn't think they had the quality of a Doble---and he'd tell you why.

You cannot begin to understand how grateful I was to Jim for all his help at Avenue.

- Geoff

### **JIM CRANK- A Remembrance by Ed Stout**

I would say with some level of safety, I knew James D. Crank longer than most of his friends, having met him in 1961, when he called me for information on a Theatre Organ he had just purchased in Wichita, without seeing it. I told Jim I had a friend who played the organ in the Miller theatre by the name of Ray Shelly. I called Ray, on Jim's behalf and then I informed Jim Crank he had just purchased Church organ in the Orpheum Theatre. I suggested he find out something about theatre organs before purchasing any more. I invited Crank to meet me at the SF Paramount Theatre at midnight that night and that was the night he met me and Tom Hazleton.

Jim was very bright and he had an exceptional memory and a good understanding about engineering matters, but he was not a good mechanic because of his temper. He was very entertaining to be with and he was as strong as an Ox, until he put on weight, smoked and drank to the point it ruined his health.

I know dozens of tales of wonderful misadventures we had during the fifty-six years I knew him. George Wright named him "Bessie Shutters" while at the SF Paramount.

Jim was also a friend of and associated with the very kind and exceptionally gifted steam car restoration expert, Allan Brasel of San Mateo.

- Ed

### **CHAIRMAN'S WIND LINE**

#### *The Cream of the Crop*

This year's Annual Convention of the American Theatre Organ Society at Tampa, had the smallest attendance in years, 247. Tampa received some bad publicity regarding heat and humidity, which discouraged some people from attending. It was hot and humid, but the publicity was unwarranted. All the venues were air conditioned and the air conditioned buses took attendees from door to door.

NorCal members accounted for 6% of the attendees! Our members attending included: Dr. Bill Coale, Dean Coombs, Gail Frey, Rudy Frey, Robert Gonzales, Esther Joseph, Wayne Joseph, Dave Moreno, Jerry Nagano, Chris Nichols, Dave Sauer, Dick Taylor, Rob Thomas, Dalton Ward Jr., and Carol Zerbo. (My apologies for omissions. Several people belong to multiple chapters.) My thanks to Esther Joseph for her in help identifying the group. Congratulations to NorCal member Jerry Nagano, who was awarded as ATOS Theatre Organist of the Year!

Walter Strony and Justin LaVoie were engaged by the Tampa Convention to play at the first of two Encores on the Chapter's 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Pinellas Park Auditorium. Two ranks of reed pipes were ordered a year in advance for the organ, but were not delivered as of convention time. A problematic electronic organ was substituted, unbeknown to the organists. When Justin played for us at Berkeley in July and Walter at Kevin King's studio in August, both artists expressed elation with our instruments here, a testament to the quality of the organs maintained by Kevin and our whole NorCal organ crew.

Traveling to Barrington Hills, Illinois, Los Angeles and Tampa this year, we have been solicited by organists who want to play our chapter instrument at Berkeley. Being solicited is a satisfying position to occupy. There is no finer Wurlitzer than our organ at the Berkeley Community Theatre. Come and bring your friends to introduce them to theatre organ music!



### **OPEN CONSOLE SCHEDULE**

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

**October 15<sup>th</sup>, November 19<sup>th</sup>, & December 10<sup>th</sup> 2017**

**Plus: January 14<sup>th</sup> 2018**

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:

Julie Cole, Berkeley

Mark Herman, Monrovia

Grant & Alden Hughes, Castro Valley

Mr. & Mrs. James Seiferling Rio Vista

Alan Thomas, San Anselmo

### **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. Reassembly is under way. By the time you read this the crew will probably be doing the final check out and air-testing. 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

**George Wright Tribute Concert.** Sunday November 12, 2:00 pm, Grant Union High School, 1400 Grand Avenue, Sacramento. Jerry Nagano will play the concert on the organ where legendary organist George Wright got his start. Advance \$10, General \$12, Students FREE. Box Office opens at 1:00 p.m.

**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: [www.paramounttheatre.com](http://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](http://stanfordtheatre.org)

**California Theatre, San Jose (Fox Theatre) - 3/10 Wurlitzer.** 345 South First Street. Style 216 Wurlitzer lobby organ played before all scheduled performance-

**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. Concerts discontinued until at least February 2018.

### 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..

### 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](mailto:nealwood@pacbell.net).



Adjusting stop tab contacts on the Center theatre console: (left to right): =Bill Schlotter, Chris Nichols, Neal Wood



The ghost lamp at the Oakland Paramount Theatre of the Arts  
Jim Roseveare's jacket still hang there

**ABOUT NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY**

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 to:

Mr. Neal R. Wood  
NorCal TOS Membership Chair  
(415) 861-7082 or [nealwood@pacbell.net](mailto: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.

**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 at the address shown below.**

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**NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY CONTACTS:**

Please see the NorCal website at [norcaltos.org](http://norcaltos.org) for current & recent past Windsheets in [.pdf](#) format, an up-to-date Calendar of Events, and list of the CD's available.

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