



Visit our web site at www.pstos.org

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear. PSTOS is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Volume 21 No. 9

September 2010

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

FUN! FUN! FUN! DON'T MISS IT!

Oktoberfest

GREAT ENTERTAINMENT! GREAT FOOD!



DON FEELY

at the Kenyon Hall pipe organ,
with HANNAH FEELY, vocalist.

Complete Bavarian meal!

- German sausages and rolls
- Hot German potato salad
- Sauerkraut
- Dessert
- SUDS and other beverages

**Bring your own
beer stein or mug!**

Prizes for steins that are
1-Most authentic!
2-Most creative!
3-Best of show!

Saturday, Oct. 30, 1:00 PM

Kenyon Hall

7904 35th Ave. SW • West Seattle

*All food and drink plus a full afternoon of
wonderful entertainment included.*

Just \$20 per person—what a bargain!
Limited to the first 75 to reserve.

*Food will be ordered based on the number of reservations. It's IMPERATIVE that you reserve
with Ray Harris by October 22nd! Phone 206-546-8959 or email rayh@prosserpiano.com*

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Vol. 21, No. 9 – September 2010
Published monthly by
Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
6521 NE 191st ST
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.

OFFICERS

President—Jamie Snell, 206-525-4521
Past Pres.—Dave Luttinen, 206-963-3283
Vice President—Tom Blackwell
Secretary—Joani Roughton, 253-946-4400
Acting Treasurer—Clint Meadway, 425-327-9467

BOARD MEMBERS

Micah Bisson, 206-778-2724 • Phil Hargiss, 206-524-8799
Jon Beveridge, 425-337-6840 • Bill Keller, 253-318-2724

COMMITTEES

Development & Grant Writing—Barbara Graham
History & Archives—Tom Blackwell
Organ Restoration & Maintenance—Bob Zat
Program Coordinating—Ray Harris & Barbara Graham
Promotions & Media Relations—Dave Luttinen
Scholarship—Carl Dodrill & Norman Miller
Volunteer Coordination—Tom Blackwell
New member processing—Doug Owen, 253-566-6734
Haller Lake keys—Bob Zat
Sunshine—Joani Roughton, 253-946-4400
Hospitality HLCC—Ellen Sullivan, 206-365-7554

NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

Pipeline Editors—Russ & Jo Ann Evans, 425-485-5465
Pipeline Online Website—Tom Blackwell, 206-784-9203
Nat'l Magazine Reporter—Jo Ann Evans

LIAISONS

AMICA & POF—Carl Dodrill • Haller Lake Comm. Club—Bob Zat
Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell • Wash. Center—Andy Crow

Listing of non-PSTOS events in the Pipeline

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

Advertising in the Pipeline

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy! For a one year membership, send a \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:

PSTOS, Clint Meadway, Acting Treasurer
9594 1st Ave. NE #453,
Seattle WA 98115-2012

The President's Message has moved to page 6 this month.

Your PSTOS Scholarship dollars at work... Jonathan Gradin reports on his ATOS Youth Camp experience, thanks to a PSTOS grant

The ATOS Youth Camp, an event which has taken place the third week of July for the past four years, is an admirable opportunity for young people of any skill level interested in the theatre organ to learn about it, gaining valuable playing tips and insights from some of the country's best organists and teachers.

This year, the Youth Camp was hosted in Phoenix, with instructors Jelani Eddington, Donna Parker and Jonas Nordwall, as well as guest instructors Lyn Larsen and Organ Stop Pizza organist Charlie Balogh. Instruction centered around the Adrian Philips Residence's 5/110 Midmer-Losh/Hybrid, although Organ Stop Pizza and the Orpheum Theatre played a part.

Thirteen students of various ages and playing abilities attended from across the country, and thanks to a generous scholarship grant from PSTOS, I was able to attend. A journalism major at North Idaho College and Publicity Chairman for the Spokane First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society (SFNTOS), I hoped to gain some playing and registration tips for playing an actual theatre organ—rather than a Hammond or electronic spinet.

Sunday night featured an opening party/jam session at the Philips Residence, where an additional four-manual Wurlitzer console allowed for some energetic duets.

Seminars during the week included "Playing and Hand Registering Small Instruments" and "The Four C's—Color, Contrast, Continuity and Cleanliness," taught by Larsen; "Importance of Phrasing" by Eddington; Silent Film Accompaniment by Nordwall; "Business of Theatre Organ—Marketing, Promotion, etc." by Parker and Eddington; and Balogh's "Playing Modern Music on a Theatre Organ, Using MIDI and Rhythm Units."

I benefited most from Larsen's lectures, particularly the one pertaining to small instruments, as I appreciate and enjoy traditional theatre organ performance, rather than trying to adapt modern music (to which I do not really listen) to the organ. The organ at Spokane First Nazarene—while large in specification at 3 manuals, 25 ranks—plays much like a small organ due to its limited, yet soon to be replaced, console. Hence, Lyn's tips for small instruments were very applicable to the open console sessions in which I participate: Use a base, albeit slightly incomplete, registration to which stops can be added or subtracted to form multiple ensemble sounds; play on the Accompaniment as a contrast while setting up a combination on the Solo (Great if three-manual); and change stops and the end of phrases or stanzas so as not

to interrupt the music's continuity. His lecture on the four C's also hit home as they provided an insight into why Crawford and George are easy to listen to over long periods, whereas others tire one's ears with a barrage of "ear aerobics": technically dazzling playing without phrasing, breaths or periods of relaxation. Crawford was a master at economizing the notes used, playing the least amount of harmony notes for the greatest effect. Cleanliness in playing is a must: crisp, detached style in up-tempo numbers; smooth, almost lyrical phrasing—with breaths and pauses—in ballads. The opposite is the mushy style heard in some recordings that drives many listeners and professional musicians away. One way to avoid this is to not use Tibias, Voxes and Flutes in an up-tempo piece, as these speak slowly; rather, use strings and reeds with an 8' Pedal Tibia (this does speak quickly) played staccato.

On Friday, we participated in an ensemble jam session, with both consoles of the Midmer-Losh, an Allen Theatre and an Allen Classical organ. Each student was given a part, from percussion to after-beat brass stabs, melody lines and other filler parts, using an 8-bar blues pattern in the key of C. That was very fun and the first time I had ever done anything remotely similar. At the wrap-up party Friday night, we demonstrated the performance to various volunteers and Valley of the Sun Theatre Organ Society members, who all deserve gratitude for putting up with all of us young people.

Special Thanks to Adrian Philips Jr. and III and their families for making the music room and organ available. It is truly a world-class, unique instrument, which could quite possibly start a new trend in organbuilding, particularly as the symphonic style is coming back into vogue.

Youth Camp was a blast; I hope to attend next year, especially after working with Ron Mitchell on the lessons learned. The leadership is looking at a location on the East Coast—they like to vary the location every couple years to allow students to experience various types of instruments—so it may be a trifle far to attend. In any case, I heartily recommend the experience to aspiring young organists of any skill level, not just for the playing lessons and experience, but also for the friendships gained. I got to know Glenn Tallar, organist at Beggar's Pizza, Donnie Rankin, a very good player and friendly person, and Schilliday, who has built a "Dorm Room Organ" running Miditzer. Also, where else can you spend a week-long masterclass session with not one, but three to five professional organists for only \$300, plus travel and hotel? ➤

PSTOS Coming Events

◆ It's OKTOBERFEST with DON FEELY at the Kenyon Hall Wurlitzer and a Bavarian feast!

It's been five years since PSTOS members enjoyed an Oktoberfest celebration. This will be a fun afternoon with tasty food and the kind of music you love—don't miss it! Limited to 75—reservations required.



Saturday, October 30, 1:00PM
Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

◆ Annual PSTOS CHRISTMAS PARTY will feature RAY HARRIS & JO ANN EVANS

Ray and Jo Ann return to entertain you with an afternoon of fun music, chuckles and a few surprises. Plan now to be at Haller Lake Community Club for another *Holidays at Haller* celebration.



Sunday, December 5, 2:00PM
Haller Lake Community Club

➤ Photos from ATOS Youth Camp...



Other NW Theatre Organ Events

◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at www.kenyonhall.org or by email at kenyonhall@earthlink.net

◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

The Wurlitzer is usually played Mon/Tue/Fri/Sat at 7PM and Sun at 5PM. If there is a live performance, the organ may not be heard. Check the web at lincolntheatre.org

◆ Columbia River Theatre Organ Society

For info and latest news go to www.croconline.org

◆ Bellingham's Mt Baker Theatre

The Mount Baker Theatre Organ Society is now a full-fledged Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society with lots of great plans. For news of what's going on with MBTOS, please check out their website: www.mountbakertoshome.com/

◆ Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

Quarterly meetings are held in March, June, September and December featuring the newly refurbished 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre Wurlitzer. For up-to-the-minute news and events calendar, go to www.sfnatos.org

Member Patrick Lajko enjoyed a recent visit to Germany's Berlin Musical Instrument Museum



Recently, while vacationing in Germany, member Patrick Lajko, of West Seattle, had a great experience when he was allowed to play the organ at the Berlin Musical Instrument Museum.

The organ was originally owned by the Siemens family. The console was destroyed in WWII and rebuilt by American servicemen. Thanks for sharing your fun news, Patrick!



Paramount Theatre Silent Movie Mondays

October Series: Silent Crime Spree

Crooked cops, double-dealing mistresses, high-tension jewel thefts, perfect crimes that go perfectly wrong, Silent Crime Spree features four films, all produced before censorship and the restrictive Hays Code, showing us when criminals were more important figures than the enforcers of the law. The street toughs of yesteryear have largely vanished in the modern-day millionaire's playground of our big cities, but they still capture the imagination in a way that the new breed of criminal—from Wall Street execs to smalltime fund managers—never could. This collection of films displays a fascination for the mechanics and motivations of crime, but also of course plenty of dark and devilishly handsome men and swooning ladies.

All movies accompanied by JIM RIGGS at the Paramount's original 4/21 Wurlitzer

◆ **October 4, 7PM**
Cottage on Dartmoor (1929)

◆ **October 11, 7PM**
Beggars of Life (1928)

◆ **October 18, 7PM**
Underworld (1927)

◆ **October 25, 7PM**
Regeneration (1915)

It's that time again—even PSTOS must have elections!

It seems like just yesterday that new officers were installed. Goodness, everyone has been so busy with convention tasks, programs, organ repairs, and other activities that the time has flown quickly.

However, rules prevail and it's time for our president to appoint an official Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of potential 2011 officers. Routinely the immediate past president serves as chair of that committee, and President Jamie Snell has asked three others to serve with Chair, Dave Luttinen. Those are Bill Keller, Barbara Graham, and Jo Ann Evans.

A message to our membership: If a name stands out in your mind as someone who could serve PSTOS well, please contact Dave by email at dave@pstos.org and let him know.

And if you're asked to serve, remember, it's much more fun than jury duty!

Pages From The Past..

Part 2 of an article about the early years of ATOS, reprinted from a 1962 publication in the William Bunch archives.

New Thunder from Old Organs, Part 2

ONE REASON for the mushrooming interest in theatre organs lies in the popularity of the portable home organ, which has become a \$300-million-a-year business. Organ enthusiasts admit that the popularity of electronic units for the home, church, and school has touched off the craze for the huge, expensive pipe organs which haven't been manufactured for more than three decades.

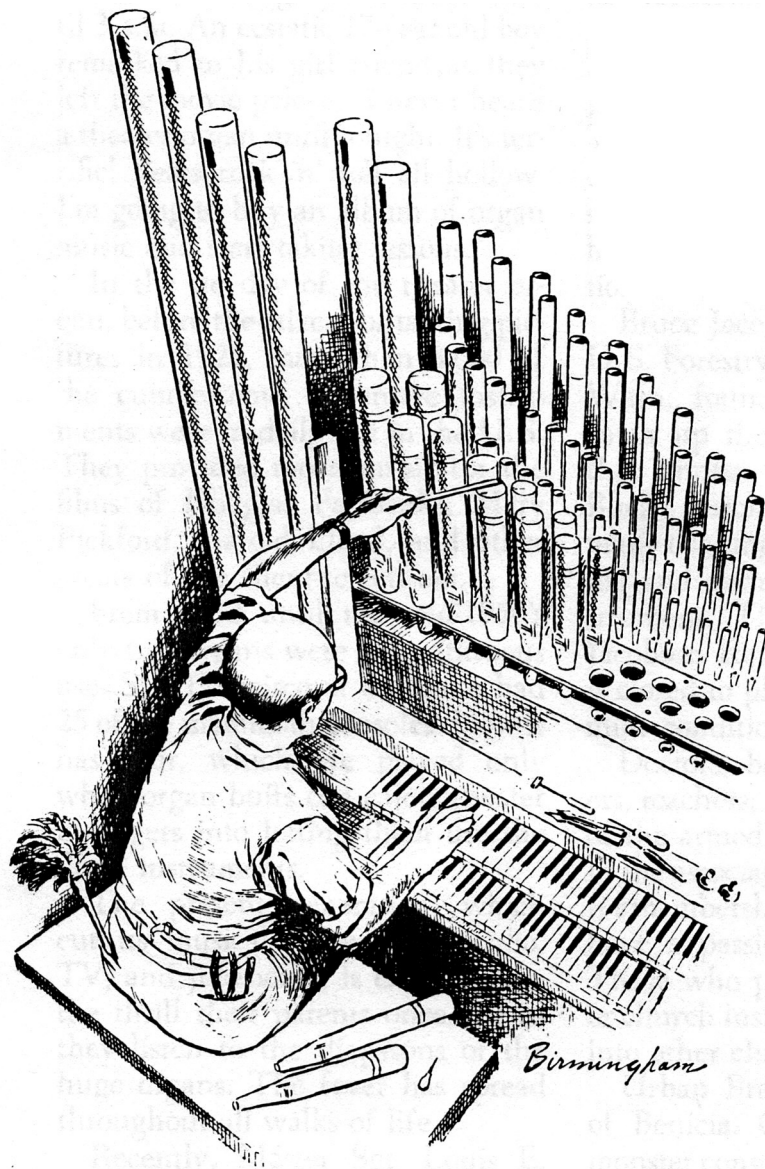
The association got started in 1955 when Alden Miller of Minneapolis, Minn., a railroad brakeman who doted on theatre organ music, initiated his *Miller's Round Robin Organ Letter*, which he sent to a handful of fellow enthusiasts. Miller, pecking out his chatty newsletter on a typewriter, wrote a total of 2,000 single-spaced pages about theatre organs. Among his readers were Dick Simonton of Los Angeles, a TV station owner; Buddy Cole, an orchestra leader; Winfred (Tiny) James, an Alameda, Calif. auditor; and Judd Walton of Vallejo, Calif., an executive of the California Farm Bureau federation. Out of the newsletter circulation, and the exchange of visits among these men, grew the idea for a national organization of theatre organ fans.

WALTON, A FORMER president of the association, is one of the organization's most persuasive spokesmen. He is a mild, bespectacled man of 48, who will rush to the aid of an ailing theatre console at any hour of day or night.

When I visited Walton's home in Vallejo, I found that his own Wurlitzer, resurrected from a theatre which had let it gather dust and worm holes, occupies much of his living room and overflows into two bedrooms and a basement.

Mrs. Walton, a patient woman who does not resent her husband's dedication to the organ, concedes that he is away from home most evenings tinkering with long-unused consoles he has located in theatres throughout the West.

"I caught the organ fever when I was a ten-year-old boy back in Minneapolis," Walton recalls. "The music in the neighborhood movie house entranced me. I hung around asking questions of the organist and begging for a chance to touch the magic keys.



"After school, I would practice on the theatre organ until the manager kicked me out. Often I'd cut classes just to polish and play that beautiful console."

Later, as a student at the University of Minnesota, Walton prowled the second-hand stores and salvage shops for organ records and albums. His present collection of recordings, though impressive, is not the largest in the country. That honor goes to Dr. Melvin P. Doner, an entomologist in Winona, Minn.

Other founding fathers of the associa-

tion were Bob Jacobus, a Vallejo engineer; Gordon Blanchard, an Oakland elevator-maintenance man; and Harvey Heck of Tarzana, Calif., who is in the blueprinting business.

The association has chapters in California, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, New York, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, Connecticut, Texas, Washington, and Massachusetts. Dues are \$4 a year, plus \$3 assessed by the local chapters. At least four times a year a chapter must present a concert on a theatre organ.

Pages From The Past...continued

Last year, the organ buffs held their annual convention in Richmond, Va. Three hundred members and their families assembled for several days of lectures on organ rebuilding, organ buying, care and cleaning of the instruments, and improvising parts (since none are manufactured commercially today). After the speeches, they trooped to local theatres for organ concerts.

Members of the association speak in awed tones of Jesse Crawford, dean of theatre organists, who is a member of the group. Andrew Corsini (Brother Andy to the fans), of the University of Portland, is a regular contributor to *Theatre Organ*, quarterly publication for organ addicts. Father James Southard, of Toledo, Ohio, is another member who always is looking for dusty, neglected organs which can be restored to their original glory. He is joined in his hobby by Father Joseph C. O'Brien of Sacred Heart Church, Divernon, Ill.

THE OLDEST MEMBER of the association is 83-year-old Perry Cozat, who lives in a log cabin near Danville, Ill., where he manufactures air-driven calliopes. Mr. Cozat's huge theatre organ takes up most of the space in his cabin.

The youngest member of the association is Joyce Morrison of Everett, Wash., who was only 14 when she joined. Allen Miller of East Hartford, Conn., was only 13 when he became entranced by a movie-house organ. For the next six years, he tinkered with its innards, learned to play it, and now is forming a chapter of the association in his home town.

Stamp and coin collectors have it easy compared with the organ fancier. A theatre organ is an intricate collection of pipes, whistles, drums, marimbas, motors, bellows, shutters, electrical panels, and the massive console itself. An organ which once cost \$20,000 may, if you're lucky, be obtained today for around \$4,000.

Since a theatre organ and its parts may weigh two tons, the very act of moving one of the behemoths is hard on the pocket-book as well as on the truckers.

Dick Loderhose bought a theatre organ from the studio in the Paramount building on Times Square in New York. It cost him \$5,000 just to dismantle the instrument and get it out of the building. Doors were removed, a wall was broken open, and the organ and its arts came down piecemeal on a special platform atop a passenger elevator.

It was lovingly reconstructed by Loderhose and fellow club members, and today stands in a specially built concrete block-house behind his Long Island home. Dick proudly calls it "the biggest privately owned Wurlitzer in captivity!"

Organ fanciers are a kindly group of do-it-yourselfers. They respond with alacrity to each other's pleas for help. Recently, I journeyed with Judd Walton and Bob Jacobus to a distant fruit ranch where 70-year-old Joe Chadbourne, who was ill with the flu, wanted his theatre organ repaired.

The instrument, which once had graced the Hill Opera House in Petaluma, Calif., is installed in a barn. Here Joe gives annual concerts for neighbors, school children, and townspeople of Napa, Santa Rosa, and other communities. In the drafty barn Judd and Bob labored for five hours carrying heavy timbers, metal organ parts, and marimbas into a hayloft.

Members of the association make no charge for their time, gasoline, or out-of-pocket expenses when on an errand of mercy for an ailing organ. Hundreds of churches, schools, and individuals depend on the able amateurs for repair of balky instruments. Pipe-organ enthusiasts have been known to travel 150 miles in a blizzard to tune an instrument.

Organ music has a soothing effect on men and women who have noisy, difficult, or dangerous jobs. Capt. Erwin Young, a 40-year-old United Airlines pilot of Alexandria, Va., flies jets and has to be alert every moment. For relaxation, he plays a huge theatre organ which he saved from idle old age.

A Texas sheriff presents home concerts while wearing his Stetson, boots, and side-arms. But Wittenburg of Los Angeles, who demonstrates zippy foreign cars at his auto agency, gets his kicks not behind the wheel but seated at the console of his own theatre organ.

FINDING AN ORGAN that is for sale is a tough job. Members of the association are provided with copies of the 35-year-old shipping manifests of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. and other organ makers, which tell them where and when organs were installed throughout the world in the 1920s.

At one time, you could pick up one of the old instruments for as little as \$300. Today eager fans offer as much as \$10,000 for one in top condition.

Judd Walton scoured the West until he located a Wurlitzer for sale at the old Senator theatre in Chico, Calif. "It took me five years to clean it, rebuild missing parts, and install the machinery and the console," he says proudly, "but it was worth every dollar and hour I spent on it."

A true organ *aficionado* goes around with a feather duster, a thermometer, and as many as 75 different tools in his car. Dust is the great enemy of the instruments; extreme temperatures play hob with valves, keys, and bellows; the 10,000 parts require tools unobtainable in any hardware store.

In New York, only Radio City Music Hall still uses its great Wurlitzer, which is rated as the finest theatre organ in the world. Club members have organized special excursions to Manhattan just to see and photograph this instrument.

Al Winslow, president of the Massachusetts chapter of the association, almost lost his left arm below the elbow in a home-workshop accident involving a power saw. Doctors said, "Forget theatre organs. You'll never play one again with that arm." But Winslow, though he had no feeling in his left hand, persisted in fumbling with the dozens of keys on his organ console. The exercise gradually restored his sense of touch. Today he is repairing organs, playing daily, and recruiting new enthusiasts for his hobby.

In Detroit, Ardell Lenze, manager of the Regent Theatre, found many parts missing from his theatre's \$50,000, 2,000-pipe Wurlitzer. Prompt police work dredged up four men (none was a member of the organ fans' association!) who confessed to stealing the parts for their own 550-pipe organ.

Detective Dennis O'Neill, who made the arrest, reported, "It definitely wasn't a theft for profit. These men said it was their love of organ music that drove them to stealing. Funny thing is, I believe 'em! Who besides an organ nut would swipe pedals, pipes, and valves from a dusty Wurlitzer which hadn't seen action for years?"

Editor's note: Little has changed as the years have passed. Most of the names appearing in this 1962 article are no longer with us. But new aficionados have come along and filled the trenches. Folks still search for organs. And parts. They still barter, fix, make do. And yes, a few will steal parts. Folks still thrill to the sounds of a big theatre pipe organ. After all, there's really nothing, anywhere, that sounds quite the same!

PRESIDENT'S Message

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors
6521 NE 191st ST
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bothell, WA
Permit #287

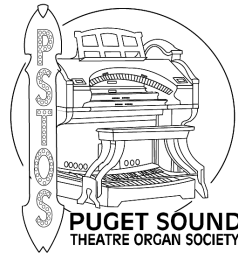
A Little Survey

Don't you love surveys? They give you a chance to influence things, and they can be fun and even thought-provoking. Here's a little one I cooked up, which I would like you to respond to.

This survey is about your preferences as an audience member at theatre organ concerts. Recently I've been involved in discussions about what kind of programming would have the most appeal to the most theatre organ fans. Everyone seems to have an opinion, and the opinions I've heard are quite divergent. So rather than argue philosophical abstractions, I thought it would make sense to collect some data.

Just email your answers by September 20 to jamie@pstos.org or mail them to **PSTOS, 9594 1st Ave NE #453, Seattle, WA 98115.**

I offer no prizes, just the satisfaction of knowing you participated.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Numbers for your answers:

1=not at all 2=not much 3=somewhat 4=fairly much 5=a lot

1. How much do you like the following kinds of music played on the theatre organ?

- ___ a. Broadway tunes and standards from the 1920s–1960s
- ___ b. Broadway tunes and standards from the 1970s–present
- ___ c. Rock and roll, any era
- ___ d. Baroque organ (think J.S. Bach)
- ___ e. Other classical organ (think Franck, Vierne, Widor, Dupré)
- ___ f. Transcriptions of light orchestral music (think Nutcracker, William Tell Overture)
- ___ g. Opera transcriptions
- ___ h. Other classical transcriptions
- ___ i. Religious music
- ___ j. Any other kinds of music you like or dislike?

2. To what extent do you prefer theatre organ music to be played in these venues:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| ___ a. A theatre | ___ b. A church |
| ___ c. A school | ___ d. A home |

___ 3. How much does it affect your enjoyment of theatre organ music to hear it played on a large instrument with more manuals and ranks?

___ 4. How much does it affect your enjoyment of theatre organ music to hear it played on a pipe organ, as distinct from an electronic organ?

___ 5. How much does it affect your enjoyment of organ music to hear it played on a theatre organ, as distinct from a church, classical, or concert organ?

___ 6. How much does the reputation of the performing artist affect your likelihood of attending a theatre organ concert?

7. Any other suggestions for theatre organ concert programming? _____

Thanks for participating in this survey. I'll report the results in a future President's Message.

Jamie Snell