



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 23 No. 8

August 2012

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

Coming September 15! TWO Big Events with...



JONAS NORDWALL

At Bill Keller's 5-manual Allen Theatre Organ

Morning workshop, 10:30 to noon

How to Improve Your "Rhythmic Registrations"

"Rhythmic registration? What is THAT?" you may ask.

Every selection has its rhythm, and registration changes are a tool to help define the overall rhythm of the piece.

- When should you change registrations?
- How do you execute those changes?
- Should you use pistons? Make the changes by hand?

Jonas will explore the many choices and explain how to plan your registration changes.

What you learn will apply to ANY organ, pipe or electronic.

This is an opportunity to participate and learn in a group at a fraction of the cost of a private lesson. Don't miss it!

Afternoon concert, 2:00 PM

Always a favorite, Jonas will show off the big Allen as no one else! Enjoy a great variety of music in an intimate setting as Bill welcomes everyone to his lovely home. Be there!

JONAS NORDWALL is an internationally renowned virtuoso organist equally skilled in both traditional classical and modern/popular schools of musical performance. For over 40 years he has performed with rave reviews in North America, Japan, Europe, and China plus nine concert tours in Australia.

Nordwall has over 40 highly acclaimed recordings on a variety of labels. His recordings are frequently heard on the syndicated radio show, "Pipedreams." Notable national television appearances include the "Today Show" and "Good Morning Australia."

A Portland native, Nordwall was one of few organists professionally playing theatre pipe organs beginning in the mid 1960s. During college he was the last organist at Portland's Paramount and Oriental Theatres. Later he became the Senior Staff Organist for the Organ Grinder Corporation, performing in both Portland and Denver on custom designed Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organs in lavish restaurant settings. Since 1966 he has been a featured artist for many American Theatre Organ Society national and regional conventions. The society's "Organist of the Year" Award was presented to Nordwall in 1987.

Saturday, September 15

Workshop 10:30 AM to noon

Concert 2:00 PM

Light lunch included for workshop attendees

Bill Keller Residence, 9914 Hampshire Ct. SE, Olympia

ADMISSION

| WORKSHOP ONLY | | CONCERT ONLY | | WORKSHOP/CONCERT PKG. | |
|---------------|------|-------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|
| Members | \$25 | Members | \$15 | Members | \$35 |
| Non-members | \$30 | Non-members | \$20 | Non-members | \$40 |
| 16 & under | \$15 | 16 & under free w/adult | | 16 & under | \$15 |

Workshop limited to 30 • Concert limited to 60

Use the enclosed reservation form to reserve your seats now.

Questions? Contact Ray Harris, 206-546-8959, rayh@prosserpiano.com

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
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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.

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Haller Lake Community Club—Bob Zat

Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell

Washington Center—Andy Crow

Calvary Christian Assembly—Jeff Snyder

AGO—David Locke

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, Treasurer
9594 1st Ave. NE #453,
Seattle WA 98115-2012

PSTOS Coming Events

Open Console at the Paramount Sunday, August 26

Time changed to 1:00PM

Practice up, bring your music, and take your turn at the Paramount Wurlitzer!

ENTRY WILL BE THROUGH THE STAGE DOOR

• **Be at the Stage Door (9th Ave) at 1:00 sharp**
• **Tom will be at the door until 1:10. If you are delayed, phone his cell, 206-778-2724, to be let in**

- **Put your name on the Play List**
- **You may play ten minutes**
- **You may sign up again**

Many thanks to Tom and the Paramount for arranging this. Don't miss it!

PARKING—Free street parking is available on Sundays. Additionally, parking at the adjacent Convention Center is quite reasonably priced.

▶ JONAS NORDWALL CONCERT and WORKSHOP at Bill Keller's home



Plan to attend a workshop from 10:30–noon, then enjoy a full concert at 2:00, all on Bill's fantastic 5-manual Allen! Watch for details.

**Saturday,
September 15**

▶ Annual PSTOS HOLIDAY PARTY with Portland's MIKE BRYANT at Haller Lake

Our annual holiday extravaganza!
Music! Food! Fun! A great time for all.

Sunday, December 2, 2012

The PSTOS Program Planning Team is working hard for you!

Upcoming programs aren't publicized until both artist and venue are fully locked in, but exciting events are on the drawing board for 2013! Think about one of the most talked about 2010 convention artists making a return visit! And a spectacularly gifted young organist from overseas! How about another great home event, plus a true full-blown Christmas concert, plus more.

Yes, your Program Planning Team is hard at work! Stay tuned to this column over the next months and be up to date!

Who was Robert Hope-Jones?

Hope-Jones, 1859–1914, was a brilliant innovator, whose inspirations in the field of organ design and building contributed to possibly the finest musical product to ever come out of America—the mighty Wurlitzer!

Excerpts from a May, 1990 Pipeline article.

No person in the long history of the organ-building craft can have been the subject of more criticism, or more praise, than Robert Hope-Jones.

Born February 9th, 1859, the third of seven sons and two daughters, he was a highly strung, nervous and sickly boy, often subject to deep fits of depression. Ill health prevented him from attending school until his teen years, thus a tutor was employed to teach him at home and in the South of France, where he was sent on occasion to escape the cold damp conditions of the area. Owing to this disruption to his early years, he spent little time with other children his age, and found consolation playing and studying music.

At the age of nine he proved to be a capable church organist playing at one church, all three services on a Sunday. At the age of 15, his health having improved tenfold, Robert was enrolled at Birkenhead School where shortly he was appointed organist and choirmaster in the large chapel. Leaving school at 17, he was apprenticed to Lairds of Birkenhead, who were ship-builders and engineers. During his employment with Lairds, he was to spend time in engineering and drafting shops, learning the skills that were to benefit his career in later years.

Although at this time he felt it necessary to relinquish his job playing organ, Robert's inventive mind had been busy at work devising means to improve existing organ actions of the time. With assistance from his choir members at St. John's Church, Birkenhead, he spent a great deal of money rebuilding the church pipe organ with these new ideas. Members of his choir who assisted him in this task were later to hold positions in the Hope-Jones Organ Company formed later in Britain.

On leaving Lairds, Robert took a position with the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone company where he rose to become the company's chief electrician. It was while there that he conceived the 'diaphone'—a large scaled fog horn for marine use. The diaphone was later redesigned and scaled for use in the pipe organ.

By 1899, Robert's interest in the organ had become so great the he relinquished his job with the telephone company to devote

Continued next page...

Other NW Theatre Organ News

Jeff and Jody Fox to perform at Mt. Vernon's Lincoln Theatre

Jeff will play Lincoln's original Style D Wurlitzer to which he contributed many hours of restoration effort. He will be joined by his vocalist wife Jody in a program of nostalgic favorites of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s.

Saturday, August 25, 3:00PM

Tickets \$10 at the door, or online at
www.lincoltheatre.org

Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

www.kenyonhall.org or email
kenyonhall@earthlink.net

Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

lincoltheatre.org

Columbia River Theatre Organ Society

www.croonline.org

Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

www.sfnatos.org

Oregon Chapter ATOS, Portland

<http://www.theatreorgans.com/oregon/ocatos/ocatos2.htm>



Welcome to
our recent
new PSTOS
members!

Andrew Hall
Aberdeen, WA

Steven Landau
Seattle

Carl & Pat Kishline
Kent

Harvey Rossiter
Eastsound, WA

FOR SALE Organ Stuff

Mostly FREE! Miscellaneous pipe organ parts. Contact rails, misc. screws, contact blocks, wood and metal hardware, telephone wire. Contact Jack Becvar.

253 852-2011 tibia61@comcast.net

Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society has disbanded

Sadly, MBTOS has decided to disband due to shrinking attendance and support. Their last several concerts were attended by only about 35, according to Bill Charles, long time "spark plug" behind the group.

Bill states that the theatre will take over managing the use of the Wurlitzer. With its great publicity network, it reaches a much larger group of people than the club was able to reach.

The theatre will continue to use the organ, presenting concerts and silent movies. Bill and other enthusiasts are very hopeful that everything will work for the best for everyone. The organ will be maintained the same as in the past, with many of the theatre organ society members volunteering to keep it up. Upgrades that have been on the drawing board for several years are moving forward, including a new relay and other improvements.

The Mt. Baker Wurlitzer is one of just four remaining original theatre organ installations in Washington. The others are in Seattle's Paramount, Tacoma's Temple Theatre, and Mt. Vernon's Lincoln Theatre.

Robert Hope-Jones continued...

full time to his new vocation. During this time many organs were built for him by other notable English organ-builders on a sub-contract basis for distribution the world over.

Robert's ideas were too avant-garde

Traditionalists attacked Robert's ideas on organ design, the likes of which had never before been seen. They resented his ideas of electrifying the internal mechanics of the organ. His first instrument employing electric action was St. John's Church, Birkenhead, done in 1886 when he was only 27 years old. Many Hope-Jones organs were maliciously interfered with in England and later America. Ridiculous rumors of fires caused by his electrifications were spread. Sadly, this gave the invention a bad reputation, and it was blamed for any fault in an organ his critics could come up with. The trifling electric current—derived from dry batteries—could not possibly have caused the fires so much talked about. The voltage was only 10-12 volts DC.

Robert left England for America

Upset with the reception of his ideas in England, Robert departed the coun-

try to America, taking up with the Austin brothers, two Englishmen building small church organs. He later spent time with two other American organ builders and in 1904 when with the Skinner Co., produced some remarkable changes in organ building. At Skinner he directed the building of his first organ of magnitude for the Park Church, Elmira, New York. This organ marked the practical beginning of Hope-Jones's electrical extension and unification system, whereby one rank of pipes is made to play at various different pitches. Also this marked the introduction of the Hope-Jones idea of inclined or slanted keyboards for the convenience of the player. Additionally this was the first organ to be built with the famous 'horseshoe' or cinema-type console.

Hope-Jones Organ Co. re-established

His relations with Skinner Co. were not good. Having been able to secure contracts for two organs on the 'quiet,' Robert severed connections with that firm and re-established the Hope-Jones Organ Company. A principal sponsor in assisting the beginning of the firm was author Mark Twain. This period marked the culminating point in Hope-Jones' career in the United

States. He was now free to do as he pleased with no restrictions and could do more or less what he pleased with the design of his instruments. The company was located in Elmira, New York, and during its existence (1907-1910) many organs were built.

It was during 1907, despite the building of many instruments, Robert once again found himself in financial trouble. A notable organ built during this time by the company was a remarkable instrument for the Ocean Grove Auditorium in New Jersey. It was entirely different from any organ existing at that time and created a great deal of interest in musical circles.

[See page 4, "Pages From the Past"]

At the invitation of Robert Hope-Jones, officials of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company were invited to view the Ocean Grove organ. They were so taken with the instrument that negotiations were quickly underway organizing the absorption of the Hope-Jones Co. by the Wurlitzer Co. In May, 1910, Robert and key members of his staff moved to North Tonawanda, New York, to take up residence at the huge Wurlitzer factory.

Continued next month...

Pages From The Past..1910

Exactly 102 years ago, Robert Hope-Jones, one of the most remarkable innovators ever to come along in the field of pipe organs, addressed the National Association of Organists at their national convention. He puts forth a strong argument for abandoning the old and accepting the new, while at the same time admitting that change is difficult. Part 1 of his lecture is reproduced here.

Recent Developments of Organ Building

By ROBERT HOPE-JONES

of North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Being a lecture delivered before the National Association of Organists at the Auditorium, Ocean Grove, N.J., U.S.A.
August 6th, 1910 (abbreviated)



Robert Hope-Jones seated at a Wurlitzer console

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I deem it a privilege to be allowed to address this, the largest association of organists in the world. Some of you have traveled over 3000 miles to attend these meetings, some have come from countries flying another flag, and it is with diffidence that I presume to occupy your time. Should I speak too much of my own work, pray forgive me. It is difficult to avoid what lies so near to my heart.

Experienced organists are usually conservative. For this there is

a reason. Twenty or thirty years ago they approached the comparatively crude instruments of that day and by patient study and incessant practice mastered their manifold difficulties, achieving success and perhaps fame. These gentlemen are not likely now to approve some modification in the organ that will necessitate their unlearning their life acquired methods and beginning the study of the instrument afresh. How, for instance, could such an artist as Edwin H. Lemare ever advocate the double touch?—a device that your Secretary (Mr. Beebe), a man trained in technique by modern scientific methods, declares presents no difficulty whatever—a device that you younger organ students know will be adopted universally. Mr. Lemare is perhaps the greatest living performer on the old fashioned organ. In his student days almost all organs had very heavy touch and as he was preparing to play these in all parts of the world, he cultivated a touch calculated to break down the resistance of the most stubborn tracker action he might ever meet with in his travel. When one sees him in attempting to play a modern instrument unconsciously hammering the keys to their lowest possible limit—double touch and all!—one can well understand his dictum that double touch is impracticable.

Similar reasons tend to set the experienced organist against well nigh every change introduced—make him in fact ultra-conservative.

Has it ever struck you how almost every improvement has met with determined opposition at the hands of organists?

Within the lifetime of some of us, organs were so tuned that music could be rendered in only a few of the keys. These keys were more perfectly in tune than anything we are now accustomed to but woe betide the musician who by straying into any of the forbidden keys encountered the “wolf.”

Who opposed the beneficent change to equal temperament? Some of the leading experienced organists of the day. The great S.S. Wesley insisted on the fine new Willis organ in St. George’s Hall, Liverpool (Eng.) being tuned to the old (unequal) temperament.

Willis did succeed in winning over that great musician to his radiating and concave pedalboard—but the majority of the leading organists strenuously, and for many years successfully, opposed its introduction. The Royal College of Organists met in solemn conclave and the votes of the “experienced organists” led them to condemn the Willis board. Fortunately Willis had the courage to defy. The younger men—the rising generation—supported him, and today his pedalboard is accepted as the standard in England and America and will be throughout the world.

Sir Walter Parat of St. George’s Chapel Windsor, the Royal

Pages From The Past...continued

Academy of Music, etc., was but one of the majority of the accepted authorities who strenuously opposed the introduction of high wind pressure. Fortunately some of us were daring enough to ignore the conservatism, with the result that almost all builders are now adopting this great improvement.

The abolition of the absurd “mixture work” so vigorously defended by the older school forms another illustration of the opposition to reform often offered by those who acquired their skill on the old style of organ—whose ears had become vitiated. Speaking broadly, it was the young men who held up our hands and enabled us to show the world the absurdity of the cherished idea that excessive mixtures were a necessity and a help to musical and effective organ tone.

Twenty odd years ago when I took up the study of the organ one frequently found a great organ provided with one double, one 8 foot open diapason, one 8 foot stopt diapason, one 8 foot trumpet, then principal, 12th 15th, fourteenth sesquialtera, cornet and perhaps cymbal, four foundation stops and near twenty ranks of mixture!

In introducing the first really small scale keen string tone in my organ in Worcester Cathedral, England, some fifteen years ago, I encountered strenuous opposition. The Precentor of the Cathedral, that gifted musician, the late Canon Woodward, required me to disconnect these stops from the combination pistons so as to remove any temptation to use them when accompanying the choir! The majority of older organists protested against the introduction of such tones as “unchurchly,” “foreign to the spirit of the organ,” etc. Even today a few have hardly given up the erroneous assertion that these keen and strongly marked tone colors “do not blend.” This organ (the Hope-Jones “unit organ” in the Auditorium, Ocean Grove, N.J.) contains the thinnest and most pungent orchestral oboe ever made and perhaps the keenest strings, and you have all heard how perfectly its various tone colors unite (applause)—I recall with a smile how one listener to the keen strings in my organ at St. Lukes, Montclair, (which is played by your gifted President, Mr. Mark Andrews) first condemned the strings as utterly unmusical and impossible of blend—some months later spoke of them as agreeable when the swell box was closed but unpleasant when open—and some months later still, had the nearest imitation procurable inserted in an organ in which he was interested.

It is fortunate indeed for the art that some of us have been bold enough to brave the opposition of the great ones and insist upon introducing these new tone colors, till at last conservative prejudice is disappearing in their favor and the organ is becoming a more interesting and musical instrument.

Similar remarks apply to the new keen orchestral reeds and other extreme tone colors.

We have just read in *The New Music Review* from an authority of the older school, (Mr. E. H. Lemare) that the arrangement you see here of inclining the various keyboards so that they meet the fingers naturally, is wrong.

An hour ago Mr. McClellan, the gifted concert organist, (who has traveled from the Mormon Tabernacle at Salt Lake City on purpose to attend this convention) declared it to be right; and as I notice you younger organists are unanimous in its favor I predict it will be universally adopted before long. Already that progressive

firm, the Austin Organ Company, supplies inclined keyboards—so does Willis, of England.

Another reform spoken against by the older and more conservative organists is the enclosure of all the pipes of every organ in swell boxes.

Another is the introduction of a percussion department into the organ.

The “Suitable Bass,” “pizzicato touch,” “Unit organ,” each meet vigorous opposition from many members of the older school.

The introduction of the balanced swell pedal was so strenuously fought by many of those whose practice was done on instruments having the old self-closing, pump handle device, that (despite Lemare’s efforts to the contrary) it is but little used in England to this day.

I beg you gentlemen to bear these matters in mind and beware of the danger that besets us all of becoming fossilized—ultra conservative—much power lies in your hands. I plead with you to condemn nothing in ignorance. Test long, deliberately and thoroughly. Take the opinions of the younger men into consideration—then, decide and your opinion will not be likely to prove a hindrance to the advancement of the art of organ building.

I do not forget that there is danger in departing too freely from accepted traditions and to this I especially should pay heed, for I have been publicly accused of being the author of nine-tenths of the innovations introduced during the last twenty years. The accusation is, I fear, true—but do not let us be alarmed. Of all the new things we various organ builders bring out, only the fittest will survive.

You, gentlemen, will be the judges. All we ask is that you will make allowance for your natural tendency to condemn that which is different from that you have so laboriously learned to use.

Some there are who cry out for standardization. “It matters little what pattern is selected, provided all consoles are similar.” “All pianos are alike, why not all organs.”

Before it was standardized, the piano went through a long period of evolution. It was of varied compass—had sometimes one, sometimes two or even three keyboards. The keys were of various lengths, of various widths and compass. Sometimes the naturals were black and the sharps white; sometimes mother of pearl was used and they were neither one nor the other. When evolution had run its course the piano standardized itself; the same will certainly happen in the case of the organ. The evolution is still in progress and must not be frustrated or cramped by premature efforts at standardization. Already many points are settled and accepted by all. C to C and 61 note compass for the manuals; radiating and concave pedalboard; balanced swell pedals, etc., etc.

We poor organists must put up with the terrible handicap of want of uniformity for some time longer—for the sake of posterity. One thing we may, however, reasonably ask for at once, and that is that all consoles be made adjustable, as this one is. You see that by a pull or push I can instantly move the keys to any relative position; also that I can raise or lower the seat. Organists are of different size and build, and there is no reason why consoles cannot be made adjustable so as to suit all. The cost is trivial. (Applause)

Let us now consider a few of the “Recent developments of organ building.”

To be continued next month...

The Nathan Avakian event focused on youth in a big way...

Quoting PSTOS scholarship committee chair Carl Dodrill, “While all of us would have wanted a better attendance, the fact of the matter was that a young person, new PSTOS scholarship recipient Collin Boothby, for the first time heard a theatre organ and was dazzled by it. Another young person, two-year PSTOS scholarship recipient Jesse Zylstra, for the first time played a theatre organ in front of an audience. And, another young person, Nathan, really showed how the theatre organ could be adapted to today’s technology. So, it seems to me that this spells success, doesn’t it?”

Indeed, between his outstanding musicianship and his tasteful use of technology including his iPhone, Nathan did certainly dazzle everyone as he presented a fascinating lineup of music from all eras.

Additionally he generously shared his knowledge and experience as he coached Jesse Zylstra on how to tackle the big instrument, helping Jesse to more comfortably play a cameo of two numbers on the unfamiliar organ. If Jesse found the prospect a bit nerve racking, it certainly didn’t show.

Nathan’s sister Claire, a talented vocalist, was in the audience, and joined Nathan as she sang two delightful Broadway numbers.

In addition to his experience as an organist, Nathan is a skilled theatre technician and musical theatre performer. He is currently pursuing a B.F.A. degree in theatrical lighting design from Purchase College, State University of New York.

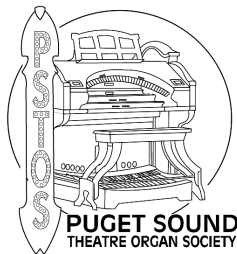
As a musician, Nathan’s mission is to showcase the versatility of the theatre organ by playing music from a wide variety of eras and styles. Nathan hopes to promote interest in the theatre organ among people of all ages to ensure that the instrument is kept alive for future generations.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors

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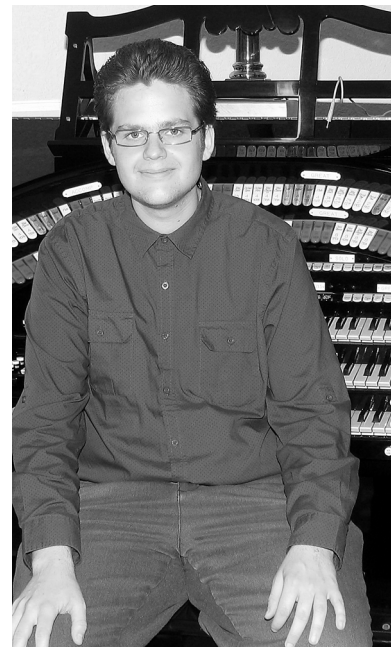


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Hostess Merlyn Johnson and Nathan



Jesse Zylstra at the console



Jesse Zylstra compares notes with PSTOS Treasurer Clint Meadway after the program. Jesse will transfer to the University of Idaho in the fall to study music.



ABOVE: Claire Avakian and her parents chat with Kate Gunsel.



ABOVE RIGHT: Dr. Alan Gunsel visits with Claire and Nathan about their plans.

RIGHT: PSTOS members Bill Keller, Patti Simon-Zollman, Phil Hargiss and Russ Evans catch up following the program.

