

DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Senate Theater • 6424 Michigan Avenue • Detroit, MI 48210
Phone (313) 894-0850 • WWW.DTOS.org *Volume 59 issue 4, Apr 2020*

What's New?

In light of global precautions for the COVID-19 Coronavirus and building upon recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), State and local authorities the board of directors has decided to suspend programming to limit the spread of the Coronavirus. The well-being of our members, guests, patrons and volunteers is our top priority here at the Senate Theater. This suspension will go into effect from Monday, March 16 through May 9th with the hopes of resuming programming on May 17th with Lance Luce at the mighty Wurlitzer. It is also the hope that some of the programming can be rescheduled. Dates are subject to change as things unfold daily.



Then and Now.

Here's a little tid bit about our theater from back in February of 1959. Member John Lauter provided me with this interesting article about the operator of the theater during that time.

Owner's Right to Run Own Booth Is Issue

DETROIT—Picket lines have been set up in front of the Senate Theatre over the issue of whether a union projectionist should be employed, or whether the new owner can continue to serve as projectionist. The issue has strong economic overtones locally in view of the prevalent depression in this area.

Trouble started when George Wise, a former theatre manager, opened the 1,150-seat Senate on January 21, and decided to be his own projectionist. He formerly managed a theatre for a local circuit. Wise says he cannot afford to hire a union operator at present, but will when he can:

"I'm trying to open up this theatre, which was closed for about six or seven months, and to run it for the neighborhood and make a little money for myself. I'm going to keep the theatre open. The pickets aren't hurting me; the weather is doing worse.

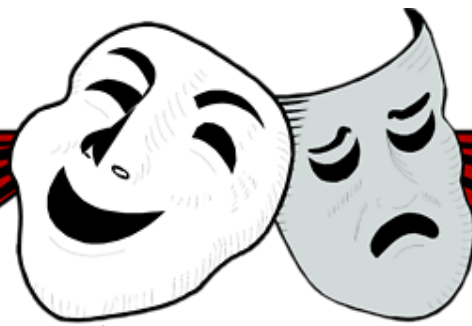
"If I can once get going, I'll put in a union man. I don't want to be upstairs here all the time. I'm a promotion man, and I'd rather be downstairs where I can meet the people."

Wise plans to go to court and ask for an injunction as soon as he gets enough money in. He stresses that he is the sole lessee of the theatre, and has no financial backers in his operation.

The union position was expressed by Gilbert E. Light, Local 199 business agent: "We cannot cut down the conditions which we have worked for years to build up, just to help him out. We will have a picket out there as long as he is open unless he puts a union man in."

Light granted that some relief has been given on occasion, when the show business background of the individual concerned justified some special consideration: "We have granted concessions like this in the past to people who were in show business for years. But recently we have refused such concessions even to some of the old-timers, and we are not going to do it now for someone who has just come into show business as an owner.

"It is not fair to Saul Korman (of the Kramer Theatre), Art Robinson (of the Granada), or any other competition he may have."



Back Stage Happenings.

The marquee has been built and installation is underway. The new marquee will consist of LED technology which will enable us to change the message with only a few keystrokes on the computer or even a smart phone.
Stay tuned!



Upward Curve:

The DTOS' Silent Movie Program helps regain an audience for Theater Organ

(John Shetler, Movie Selection Committee)

When the Detroit Theater Organ Club (now Society) was founded, it had only been forty years since the end of the silent film era. Theater organs were disappearing, but several generations of people who loved the instrument still packed Senate Theater for regular concerts. Today, nearly sixty years after it was founded, DTOS continues to hold concerts at the Senate. Though there are still devotees, it's no secret that their numbers have declined significantly. Young people have not taken to the theater organ like they had generations ago.

This leaves DTOS with a challenge - continuing to support and promote the instrument we love to a shrinking audience. Without Senate Theater patrons (and enough DTOS members and volunteers), our crown jewel Wurlitzer could face an uncertain future. Luckily, our DTOS forefathers had the foresight to purchase the Senate, which has set us up for financial success. In addition to organ concerts and private theater rentals, movies bring in new patrons and much needed revenue. As far as the organ, all is not doom and gloom. Silent movies at the Senate have been packing them in. Our February 2020 screening of *The Man Who Laughs* was attended by nearly 200 people. Last October, *Nosferatu* brought in almost 300! After every silent film, most of the audience stays riveted by the organist's question and answer session, and the line for the chamber tour often stretches to the back of the auditorium. People are discovering the joy that our mighty Wurlitzer can bring, and silent films are the gateway for most new fans of the instrument.

This is where DTOS is poised for growth. Through silent movies, we have a chance to make new fans for our magnificent theater organ. To paraphrase Kevin Werner, we have the best organ, the best organists, and the best silent film program in the area. I would like to add that our popcorn ain't too shabby either.



Pictures, Pictures, who's got some pictures?

 TOM HULLETON "Hull on Top Concert" January 11, 1979	 MIRA BLO "Capitol Concert" November 23, 1971	 TONY FENNEL "Hull on Top" November 23, 1971	 LOWELL A. KING "Hull on Top" August 16, 1973
 TOMNO JAMES "The First Band Ball" June 9, 1971	 KAY BARKER "Hull Through The Night" February 17, 1973	 BILL THOMPSON "I Put a Ring on Her" May 23, 1972	 BEN SWAMY "Starboard Theater" April 14, 1973
 ASHLEY MILLER "Capitol" June 9, 1962	 ANN LEAF "Capitol" May 26, 1968	 TOM GRAYFRI "Hull on Top" November 23, 1972	

THE RECORD: This recording is a collection of musical highlights selected from the performances given by concert organists appearing at The Detroit Theater Organ Club. The concert hall presence has been maintained throughout the recording process so that you may enjoy the atmosphere of the concert.

The D.T.O.C. wishes to thank those club members who have given their time to making this last raising effort possible.

SIDE 1	SIDE 2
1. BUTON UP YOUR OVERCOAT - Ballyva, Brown, Henderson	1. I FEEL A BINGO COMING ON - Mulugh, Fields, Oppenheim
2. GARDNER VANDERBILT - Kessler	2. GARDNER VANDERBILT - Kessler
3. BIGLER CALL BIRD - Peltz, Moore, Schofield	3. CAROLINE ANN - Miller
4. BARRY BIRDSONG PARTY - Brown	4. TAKE EYES - Brennan - BNC
5. AT THE GOLF AND BALL - Lullaby, Riddle	5. ROBERT MY PRINCE WILL COME - Charrier
6. ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT - Johnson, Moore	ALL instruments played unless otherwise indicated.

in an effort to discover our past here at the Detroit Theater Organ Society I'm trying to put together a collage of old photos of the theater along with the people of the past that were instrumental in the club or those who just liked to come to the concerts. So, if any of you have any old photo's you'd be willing to either scan and send to me or mail them to me for me to scan and return, it would be a great help. You can send them to me at kevwer@comcast.net or mail them to Kevin Werner, 19611 Jeanette, Southfield, MI 48075.

Thanks, and see you all at the Senate!



Consider a bequest

A bequest is a **gift from your estate**—a transfer of cash, securities, or other property made through your estate plans. You can make a bequest to the Detroit Theater Organ Society by including language in your will or living trust leaving a portion of your estate to the DTOS, or by designating DTOS as a beneficiary of your retirement account or life insurance policy.

Remembering DTOS with a bequest from your estate will help sustain and strengthen the organization in years to come. Some of the advantages of creating a bequest include:

- A bequest costs nothing now yet gives you the satisfaction of knowing you have provided for DTOS in the future.
- You retain control of and use of your assets during your lifetime.
- You may modify your bequest if your circumstances change.

Gifts to DTOS from your estate are exempt from federal estate taxes

A **bequest to DTOS** can be made for a specific amount, for a percentage of your estate, or for all or a portion of what is left after you have made bequests to your family. To make a gift to DTOS from your estate, you must sign a new will or living trust instrument, add a codicil to your present will, or make an amendment to your present trust instrument.

Alternatively, you can designate DTOS as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy. To do so, contact the retirement plan administrator or life insurance company and complete the appropriate beneficiary designation form. Our employer identification number is 38-2827795

There are several types of bequests:

General: Usually cash or property like other items that are distributed.

Specific: A designated amount of cash or a specific property.

Percentage: A certain percentage of your estate.

Residual: A portion of what remains of your estate after other bequests are made.

Charitable: A gift serving a religious, scientific, political, educational, or general social purpose. These can reduce estate taxes that might be owed on your estate.

Demonstrative: A gift made from a specific source.

Executory: A gift that takes effect only when an event takes place, such as a child's 21st birthday or graduation from college.



Upcoming events!

Updated calendar. (tentative)			
May 17	3pm.	Lance Luce in concert	\$15.00
May 30	8pm.	It Should Happen to You	\$5.00
Nov 15	3pm.	Mark Herman in concert	\$15.00
Dec 6	3pm.	Justin LaVoie Holiday concert	\$15.00

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