

**MEETING — SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 3:00 PM
ORCHESTRA PIT PARTY
AT THE MARIETTA EARL SMITH STRAND THEATRE**

Our February chapter meeting will be held at the newly renovated Strand Theatre on the Marietta Square. Join us to hear the fantastic sounds of John McCall's Allen 3/17ex (with its double-audio speaker system installed IN THE PIPE CHAMBERS) in this acoustically live auditorium! The instrument was well received at The Strand grand opening and, since this function was sold out before our chapter members could obtain tickets, we now have the opportunity to have our own private program. However, don't let the word "private" prevent any chapter member from inviting a guest or guests. In fact, we hope that every chapter member will attend and bring many guests and family members with them. We need to introduce the highly-entertaining music of the theatre organ to as many folks as we can and this is the perfect opportunity to hear a theatre organ in a genuine theatre. Sufficient seating will be no problem since The Strand has room for over 500!

What is an orchestra pit party? Since the organ console is in the orchestra pit and the console lift has not been installed, for those brave hearts able to walk down a few steps and through the dressing room area, seating will be provided IN THE ORCHESTRA PIT itself. Of course, the organ console and artist can also be seen from any of the several front-row seats of the theatre and there is not a bad seat in the house as far as hearing the instrument.

The concession stand WILL BE OPEN with hot popcorn, candy and soft drinks available for purchase. You may take all refreshments into the auditorium.

Come early and hear the wonderfully restored 1920's player piano playing paper rolls in the lobby. This beautiful instrument and 100 rolls were donated to the Strand by chapter members Bob and Elsie McKoon. Mr. James Thrower will be operating the instrument and may be



playing a few tunes himself starting 2:15 pm.

As you enter the lobby, we invite everyone to fill out a name tag. You can then feel free to check out the lobby, the historic photographs and other art work while listening to the great "stride" music of the player piano. (Chapter members will also be asked to pose for a quick photo for our upcoming chapter directory.)

Around 2:45 p.m. the doors to the auditorium will open and, following a short chapter meeting at 3:00 pm, a stellar lineup of artists from our very own group of Atlanta ATOS organists will each present a 15 to 20 minute program. Rick McGee, John McCall, Phillip Allen (accompanying the entertaining silent comedy classic, *Teddy at the Throttle* on The Strand's large 22' by 22' screen) and Ron Carter will complete the afternoon's program. (Who knows maybe Abby Carter might also be enticed to sing us a song as well.) Larry Davis has agreed to be our Master of Ceremonies for the afternoon, adding his own touch and flair to the proceedings.

After the program, a behind the scenes self-guided tour of the theatre will be available and the entire theatre will then be opened to all who would like to have a look around. (Hint: Don't miss the view of Kennesaw Mountain and the Marietta Square from the 4th floor terrace.) Additionally, there will be an OPEN CONSOLE session for anyone who would like to take a turn playing the instrument.

Parking is free on the Marietta Square on Sundays as is the parking deck directly east of the theatre across Cherokee Street. Park on the 2nd level of the parking deck and you can walk right out and down a ramp to the street across from the front doors of the theatre. We look forward to having you be a part of the fun and enjoying the festivities!

PAY YOUR 2009 DUES NOW !!!

According to our By-Laws, Article VIII, dues are payable on January 1 and shall be paid within the first two months of the year.

Please pay your 2009 dues of \$35 (student \$17.50) now and don't miss out on any of the wonderful things our chapter has to offer. Members who joined during

the last quarter of 2008 are deemed members for 2009. **Those who have not renewed by the end of February will be dropped from the newsletter distribution list.**

See membership application form on page 4 for instructions.

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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www.theatreorgans.com/georgia/atlanta/atos/

AC/ATOS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under
Section 501.c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Chapter President - Bucky Reddish
Vice President - Phillip Allen
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Chapter Correspondent - Rick McGee

Ads or announcements for this newsletter:
Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or
elfields@yahoo.com

**From Your New
Vice-President, Phillip E. Allen**

Please allow me to express my heartfelt appreciation for placing your vote and confidence in me as I begin to serve you as your new Vice President. It is quite an honor and also very humbling to be placed in this position since I deeply revere and respect the great history, legacy and ongoing activity of the esteemed Atlanta Chapter of the ATOS.

As the New Year begins I have many thoughts and ideas, along with those of my sweet wife Mandy, as to future program possibilities. However, I would very much like to hear from you ... your thoughts, your ideas, your suggestions, what you would like to see or hear, what you would rather refrain from seeing or hearing and also knowing anything helpful which might be on your mind that you would like to share.

This is YOUR chapter ... your officers and board truly desire to administer the organization in a way that will excite, inspire, encourage, uplift and entertain you, your family and friends. As we strive to offer a wide variety of programs, artists and instruments – all centered around our love and appreciation of the great art and history of the Theatre Organ – your input, participation, support and attendance is vital to our ongoing effort and purpose. Without you and your ongoing support we would not have a local chapter of the ATOS.

As I am in the very beginning stages of getting started, I am impressed with the wonderful breadth and depth of talent we have in our chapter. Recently, after looking at a list



of past newsletters of our chapter, I was amazed to see the many talents of our own musicians who have made a contribution and played programs. Please let me know if you would like to play a chapter program or would rather tag-team with another member or members to present a joint-program. Let's have lots of fun both contributing and then cheering for our chapter family members as we enjoy the various "voices" all of us have to offer at the mighty console.

Also, let me express my gratitude to the many kind folks who have hosted our meetings and events; we are indebted to each of you for your kindness and warm hospitality. I very much would like to meet you and thank each of you personally.

In closing, please feel free to email me (phillip@phillipeallen.com), give me a call (770-926-9214) or send a note in the mail (3487 Sabrina Court, Marietta, GA 30066-4770) and express those great ideas. Mandy and I are very much looking forward to meeting each and every one of you personally, getting to know you in the days, weeks and months ahead.

Take care and see all y'all at our next meeting!

Strand Organ Project Update

By Ron Carter

Our volunteers continue working three to four days a week. In addition to all of the tuned percussions (chimes, glock, xylophone, chrys) being finished the Robert Morton saxophone, trumpet, post horn, and tibia manual chests have been re-leathered, new gaskets installed, and tested. All of the Robert Morton traps and effects actions, except for one snare, have been gone through, cleaned and tested. We will have to replace/repair several missing percussions such as maracas, mallets, and drum heads. Phillip Allen is heading up this area of the restoration. Rick McGee is working on woodwork modifications to the Wurlitzer console, restoration of the keyboards, building a new backboard, and preparing the stop rails for the new syndyne magnets. We have received part shipment on the syndyne order and Rick has all of the many parts for the keyboard rebuilding. Jim Ingram from Allen Organ Studios is donating an AGO pedal board with magnetic contacts! The Spencer Blower Company is scheduling a technician to dismantle and then re-install the 15-hp blower. The move of the blower to the theatre will be done when the southeast factory tech is in the Georgia area. Slug Lindsey continues cleaning every pipe. So far he has finished the tibia, diapason, orchestral oboe, flute, and is currently working on the clarinet. Each pipe is being cleaned with a special pipe cleaning solution. Several

of the metal pipes will need soldering repairs and the leather lips have been stripped and will need to be replaced. We will soon begin working on the Robert Morton pedal chests and offsets.

After we are finished with our restoration, we plan on erecting the organ by chamber in the warehouse. This will require building the chests legs, floor plan and other wood working. We will tape off the chamber dimensions and actually set up the organ in the warehouse, cut the PVC wind line and use whatever wood wind lines we have available. That way, when we begin taking the parts to the theatre it will be a matter of putting it together with screws and glue! We need help and funds for this project to continue without interruption.

Movies at the Strand

A film series will be featured on the first three Fridays in February at the Earl Smith Strand Theatre on the Square in Marietta. The organ will be played before each screening. Ticket price is \$7.00. Films will begin at 8:00 pm and the organ pre-shows at 7:30 pm.

February 6 - *Citizen Kane*
February 13 - *Casablanca*
February 20 - *The Color Purple*



Rankin Plays the Ranks!

By John Clark McCall, Jr.

Christmastide centered around the Reddish Walker Theatre Organ is special in any case, but when we are privileged to hear a talented future herald of the art of the theatre organ, as witnessed by Donnie Rankin, then the concert is even more memorable.

I have had the good fortune of hearing and watching Donnie come into his own, and after his stint at Manual High School at the Indianapolis Convention this past summer, I nearly squeezed the life out of him after his brilliant full concert as the 2007 ATOS Young Artist Competition winner. I could not believe the growth and the maturity of this young lad, remembering that as a young artist, he probably has a precious few contemporaries his age who embrace the theatre organ or the literature it does best. These are just cold, hard facts, so it makes future professionals like Mr. Rankin all the more special to us and to future audiences. I fervently hope that those audiences will be filled with young people!

Donnie's program was certainly an ambitious one and except for a bit of a train wreck in his first offering, Leroy Anderson's obligatory *Sleigh Ride*, the rest of his afternoon at the magnificent Walker was like a sleigh on a new bed of snow. I, as a reviewer, point out the critical association that arranging has with the success of theatre organ. And in Donnie's program, we heard snippets of some of the "legends" but those ideas were refreshingly repackaged and customized in a very personal way at the console. This, among his many strong musical traits, will carry Mr. Rankin far!

Donnie's second offering, the delightful *There Ought to be a Moonlight*

Savings Time, was played in the best theatre organ novelty style with some impressive and big block chords in the right hand. This offering calmed the artist and there was no need for the "rotten fruit or vegetables" he mentioned, rendered in his typical, desert-dry wit. When his adept use of the Walker's tonal percussions ended the piece, the audience knew they could settle down to something other than "a long winter's nap!"

Donnie continued in the holiday vein with *I'll be Home for Christmas*, exhibiting an adept ability in using the organ's sostenuto, emulating patron saint Jesse Crawford, and, in contrast, winging the central portion of his melodic journey. Varied and carefully constructed registrations (I bet Bucky selected or deleted a tab or two when setting up the (combinations) made for an unending palette of new and fresh sounds on this, the most pipe-like of the digital instruments. A sing-a-long of the traditional Christmas carols, a rousing *El Recairo*, a very sensitive and newly-arranged *Silent Night*, and the toe-tapping *Repasz Band* march by Sweeley finished out the first half of the program.

An even more relaxed Donnie returned with offerings of Cole Porter's *From This Moment On* with some impressive ornamentation in the right hand against Porter's eternal melody line, a jazz improvisation take on *Let It Snow*, and for me the highlight of the program: Walter Gross' *Tenderly*. At this juncture, even some of "the big boys" might take notice of Donnie's masterful registration ideas. Against the cool and un-tremmed orchestral voices of the Walker, he introduced a Skinner flute with an almost human vibrato in the solo line. And then he progressed to tremulated strings and on to the lushest, most theatrical restatement of this enduring ballad. *Tenderly* was sensitively, even *tenderly* played, and ingeniously registered; now, what more could you want, I ask? Rankin's medley from *The Music Man* was equally well-conceived with even a brief suggestion of *The Melody in G* at its finale. "Now, thinkkkkk, boys..." you could hear Professor Hill plead. Other selections included Jerome Kern's *All the Things You Are* — dedicated to our

beloved James Thrower who plays an equally fine version, and on to Richard Rodgers' daunting *Slaughter On Tenth Avenue* to finish the formal part of the program. It is thrilling to hear a young artist take this well-known, and actually well-worn piece and do some very inventive things with it. This was never better evidenced than in Donnie's very personalized and "Cinematic" ending.

All this hard work at the console yielded encores: a very cleanly rendered *Roller Coaster* (the original theme from TV's *What's My Line*) and a version of *Rock Around the Clock* that gives even Richard Hills a run for his money. It was an afternoon of true entertainment with the added bonus of getting to witness, firsthand, where the theatre organ is headed these days. And in the hands of this talented and personable young star, we're going places!

Author's note: My thanks goes to Mr. Rick McGee for making a recording of this concert for my use.

Peachtree Road United Methodist Church Presents



Sunday, March 1, 7:30 pm, Sanctuary
Cecil B. DeMille's
1927 Silent Movie Classic
The King of Kings
Accompanied by
Steven Ball,
Staff Organist, Michigan Theatre
Faculty, University of Michigan
Admission \$10



Intermission at Atlanta's Fabulous Fox

Dale Parrott reports that he has wanted a copy of Hector Olivera's "Intermission at Atlanta's Fabulous Fox", recorded in 1994 but was under the impression that it was out of print. He discovered that it is available from *The Organ Historical Society*. It's recorded in Dolby Surround and it put his very good sound system through its paces. He said "I had to fasten my seatbelt as the whole house shook! and Olivera's rendition of Malaguena is the most awesome piece I now have in my CD collection." (www.ohscatalog.org/hectorolivera.html)

Upcoming Meetings & Events (Mark your Calendars)

- February 6, 7:30 pm, Organ pre-show and *Citizen Kane* movie at the Strand, Admission \$7.00
- February 8, 5:00 pm, Brass and Organ Spectacular, Peachtree Road UMC Sanctuary - Scott Atchison & Nicole Marane, organ, and The Atlanta Brassworks, Admission \$10 - For information call 404-240-8212
- February 13, 7:30 pm, Organ pre-show and *Cassablanca* movie at the Strand, Admission \$7:00
- February 20, 7:30 pm, Organ pre-show and *The Color Purple* movie at the Strand, Admission \$7:00
- **February 22, 3:00 pm, Meeting, Orchestra Pit Party at the Strand Theatre in Marietta**
- March 1, 7:30 pm, Peachtree Road UMC Sanctuary, 1927 Silent Movie Classic "The King of Kings" (Directed by Cecil B. DeMille) accompanied by Theatre Organist Steven Ball (Staff Organist for the Michigan Theatre, and on the music faculty for the university of Michigan), Admission \$10
- March 8, 5:00 pm, Nicole Marane, organ, Sanctuary of Peachtree Road UMC, Admission \$10
- **March 22, 3:00 pm, Meeting, Christian Elliot at the Bucky Reddish residence**
- March 29, 4:00 pm, Roswell United Methodist Church Sanctuary, Paul Jacobs (Chairman of the Organ Department for Juilliard School of Music) in Concert. Free and open to the public.

NOW IS THE TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2009.

Don't miss the great things that will be happening within your Atlanta Chapter during 2009. Simply use the membership application below.

You are also encouraged to join our national organization. In doing so, you will receive *Theatre Organ* magazine to learn more about what's going on in the theatre organ world and be eligible to attend our conventions.

There are several membership categories available including Regular - \$40 and Student (under age 24) - \$25. See www.atos.org/membership for more information regarding additional levels or call 714-773-4354. Make check payable to A.T.O.S. Send your name, address and check to: Jim Merry, Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 5327, Fullerton, CA 92838.

Thanks for the Strand Theatre Organ Project Donations

Patron (\$250 to \$499)

James, Myra, and Jamie McElvaney
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(Page Organ Project)

Atlanta Chapter, ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____ Email _____

Do you own an organ? _____ If so, description _____

Meetings are held monthly, usually on the 3rd Sunday afternoon. Annual membership dues \$35 (Student \$17.50). **Please make check payable to Atlanta Chapter, ATOS.** Mail this application and your check to: Wanda Carey Fields, 413 Concord Road SW, Smyrna, GA 30082-4509