

***John McCall at the Marietta Performing Arts Center
Sunday Afternoon, June 25th at 3 p.m.***

It's a program that has been three years in the making, but we're finally excited to present John McCall at the Chapter's Mighty Allen LL-324Q-SP organ at the Marietta Performing Arts Center. Our January 2014 program was set to unite this talented artist and wonderful instrument at the Allen Organ Studios here in Atlanta. Unfortunately, our ship literally did not come in – the organ was taking a grand tour of Valencia, Spain and New York on its journey from Panama to Atlanta. With our June date secured at the Marietta Performing Arts Center, the choice for artist was obvious. We hope you'll join us in this beautiful facility for an afternoon of fun and entertainment with an artist we're proud to call our own showcasing an instrument that you must hear to believe.

About the Artist... John McCall, a native of Vidalia, GA, got his first taste of the theatre organ through the Hi-Fi record "George Wright Encores at the Mighty Wurlitzer". By the time his family relocated to Moultrie, GA in 1960, he had a fairly extensive library of theatre organ recordings and was hopelessly hooked. Early sightings of silenced organs in Georgia's Albany and Fox theatres heightened his interest in movie palaces and their musical "soul". In 1969, he finally heard his first theatre organ live at the Atlanta Fox with Bob Van Camp at the helm. He



promptly joined ATOS and the Atlanta Chapter.

McCall's theatre organ training has been self-taught. His teaching tool was a two-manual pipe organ console graciously supplied by Atlanta Chapter members Edd and Norma Simmons. In 1986, he played for his first real audience prior to a screening at Chicago's Music Box Theatre. His second appearance in a theatre was not until June 2000, when he played for the screening of *Singin' in the Rain* at the Rylander in Americus. He soon followed with his first concert appearance at the Rylander with ATOS members Fred Boska and James Thrower.

John McCall earned a degree in journalism from Georgia State University. While there, he produced the first "Keyboard Colossus" which raised more than \$9,000 toward the "Save the Fox" effort. His monograph on the theatre, "Atlanta's Fox Theatre: Mecca on Peachtree Street", went

through several printings and raised more than \$70,000 toward the historical campaign.

McCall has written numerous articles and jacket notes on theatre organ and theatre history for such publications as *Maquee*, *Theatre Organ Journal*, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and the *Atlanta Historical Society Bulletin*. John was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Atlanta Chapter of ATOS following his solo concert at the Rylander Theatre in October of 2010. In addition to being an honorary member of the Manasota ATOS Chapter and an active member of the Atlanta Chapter, he is a lifetime member of England's Theatre Organ Club and the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Society.

Throughout his travels, John McCall has been honored to appear with Mickey Rooney, Robert Osborne, President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalyn, and Mary Badham (Scout from *To Kill a Mockingbird*). John was recently a featured artist during the 2017 "Party on the Pipes" event hosted by the St. Louis Theatre Organ Society in Missouri. He performed during the 2009 ATOS National Convention in Cleveland and will once again take the spotlight during this year's Convention in Tampa, FL in July. His latest CD release is entitled "Calling Mr. Miller" and is a tribute to the era of Big Bands recorded on the magnificent Forker Memorial Wurlitzer at Grace Church in Sarasota.

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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A Match Made in Stone Mountain

Laurel and Hardy, Bonnie and Clyde, Abbott and Costello – some things are just meant to be together. The same can be said for Ken Double and the Grande Page organ at Stephenson High School. The match of artist to instrument is one of the critical factors when considering an organ presentation. When it comes to Ken and the Grande Page, that match is seamless and the results are incredible. Chapter members who gathered in the shadow of Stone Mountain the afternoon of May 14 were treated to a unique program showcasing the varied resources of our magnificent instrument.

Larry Davis greeted the crowd at Stephenson High School and recognized several first-time attendees (the “Having Traveled the Farthest” award went to Johannes Späth of Trier, Germany). Larry then introduced John McCall as they presented long-time member Bob McKoon with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of dedicated service to the Atlanta Chapter.

When concert time approached, Ken brought the gold and white console up to the stage with Jerry Herman’s “It’s Today”. And the day just so happened to be Mother’s Day. In a most fitting (or would that be tight-fitting?) tribute, Ken played “You’ve Got to See Mama Ev’ry Night (or You Can’t See Mama at All)”. With the Tibias, the organist, and the crowd warmed up, we knew we were in for a treat with this program.

Ken slowed things down a bit with a beautiful performance of “Try a Little Tenderness”, showing off just how lush the instrument can sound – and it can sound “real lush”! Next up was a nod to the late George Wright with “Granada”, proving that the organ could certainly stand up when the tremors are turned off. Then Ken featured a stirring version of “Be My Love”, a song penned for Mario Lanza and one that Ken has performed with young vocalist Daniel Mata. That was followed

with a classical waltz from Strauss – “Voices of Spring” which had Ken’s fingers flying across all four manuals. “A Hundred Years from Today” is a classic from 1933, recorded by artists such as Ethel Waters, Frank Sinatra, and Dean Martin, and Ken played a wonderful arrangement that once again was a perfect match for the resources of the Grande Page. From the movie of the same name, “Love is a Many-Splendored Thing” followed, marking the end of our musical journey for the afternoon. By audience request, Ken featured an encore signature performance of “If You Knew Susie”.

For those in attendance for the first time, they were treated to a world-class concert by both artist and instrument. For those in attendance who have listened as the Page was refined over the years to its current state, it was a reminder of why we do what we do. This program fully reiterated that it has been worth every hour and every dollar that has gone into the project. Our very special thanks to Ken Double for sharing his talents with us and making the afternoon an unforgettable one. Here’s looking forward to the next time!

The Foxy Vox

Reminder about the survey:

"Thank you members who returned the chapter survey and a gentle reminder to those whose survey is sitting on your desk to put pen to paper."

Ted



President's Message...

So Many Things

There is so much to talk about this month. Let's start with the fun! Recently, Ted Barnett hosted an informal gathering at his home. He provided some basic snacks and anything else was contributed by those who came. A sizeable group of people gathered for our legendary food, fun, and music. There was no scheduled artist. The event was open console on the Walker and not only did we hear from the usual suspects (Rick, Bob, Misha and yours truly) but people who don't normally play publicly did so that evening. It was a truly delightful time, with good music and good conversation and a great opportunity to hear people we don't normally hear. It was hard to leave as the meeting wound down. First of all, thanks to Ted for hosting us! Mr. Fountain suggested that this is something that we should do periodically, maybe four times a year, in different venues, such as Rick's, the Page – see my message from last month – and other locations that might be opened to us. And Ted is willing to have more events as well. These would be informal, non-concert, non-chapter meeting events. Just a bunch of friends getting together, no expectations, no pressure, no responsibility of the host to feed us. So if you're willing to host us in such a get-together, let it be

known. Propose a date, and let's have some informal fun.

And now to business! Ken Double has worked hard and consulted with the board to produce a survey that will help the board as we move forward with the future of our chapter and our activities. You will receive yours in the mail soon and a stamped envelope will be included so you can mail it back. Please, please take a few minutes to answer the questions – and besides your “check marks” you can include written comments if you're so moved. We'll compile the answers, publish them, and it will become a guide for our chapter and our endeavors.

Second order of business: I've often said that the board handles the business end of the chapter so that we don't have to bother you with the boring stuff during the meetings – but I've also said that you're welcome to join us for any of our board meetings if you're interested or to see the minutes on request. But here's a little taste of it to explain to you why we do what we do.

Our dues are \$35 per year. If we have about 100 members (right now we're somewhat below that) that brings in \$3500. With that in mind, we plan our twelve meetings per year. We budget a minimum of \$250 for each meeting for artist honorariums and refreshments (x12 = \$3000). If we have an out-of-town artist, the expenses go up and there are other expenses (corporate fees, liability insurance, the newsletters, etc) that are not included in meeting

expenses. How do we increase available funds? The more members, the more money and the more flexibility, so be sure to keep your dues current and recruit! It's more fun to play for more people anyway – or to hear more people play! Some performers decline their fees; some hosts decline payment for refreshments. We're not asking that you do these things, just explaining where the extra funds may come from. That is one way to donate, but we also receive donations from members and those donations play an important role in what we can do. But when we have a major event, like *Metropolis* at the Strand, we have much larger than normal expenses – the cost of a major artist, hotel expenses, airline flights. So usually once a year, if we have an event like this, it will be a ticketed event, though we'll usually arrange a discount for our members. We are hoping to come out even on *Metropolis* (that is, make enough that it doesn't impact our existing funds) and if attendance is good enough, maybe we'll make a little money! That will help us. So come and encourage your friends to come – we are fulfilling our mission when we sponsor events like this. Questions? I'm always available, so stay in touch!

Larry D

EARL SMITH STRAND:

Silent Comedy Shorts !

- Sunday afternoon July 30th 3 pm featuring Ron Carter, Larry Davis, Ken Double, Misha Stefanuk, and Phillip Allen accompanying the great silent short comedies of the silent era. Come early for an old fashioned sing-a-long and organ preshow.

August 19th, Princess Bride.

- August 19th Princess Bride- organ preshow at 7:30. Organist TBA

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Editor's Note

• *Due to conditions beyond our control, both local area network and internet connections have been lost resulting in a lack of communication, an interruption to printing capability and inadequate backup, all of these delaying publication and affecting quality. We apologize and sincerely hope the problems will be corrected by the next edition.*

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Atlanta Chapter, ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____ Email _____

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

Membership Category (check one): Patron (\$300 and up) Sponsor (\$200 - \$299)

Contributor (\$100 - \$199) Donor (\$36 - \$99) Basic (\$35) Student (\$17.50)

Send Newsletter via email: Yes No Please make check payable to **Atlanta Chapter, ATOS**

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