



# ATOS ATLANTA

Official Newsletter of The Atlanta Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE FEBRUARY CHAPTER MEETING AT THE PLAZA THEATRE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19th - 1:00 PM

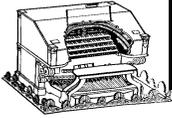
Join us on Saturday afternoon, February 19, to hear Dolton McAlpin. Dolton is well known in the Atlanta Chapter and he will be our guest artist for February playing the Chapter's wonderful Lyn Larsen Allen Three Manual Theatre Organ. The Plaza Theatre is the longest continuously running theatre in Atlanta. Free parking in front and behind the theatre!!



Please renew your ATOS Chapter membership if you haven't done so.



Level	Base	Cap
Student	\$17.50	
Basic	\$35.00	
Donor	\$36.00	\$99.00
Contributor	\$100.00	\$199.00
Sponsor	\$200.00	\$299.00
Patron	\$300.00	And up



## A Letter from your President



### A WISE DECISION; THE STRAND STEPS UP; DOLTON UP NEXT

Before I type another word, another reminder: your membership dues for 2022 are due, and at this point, we have around 30 or so of our 84 members who have renewed the year. Thus, this friendly reminder, and the simplest way to renew is right on line via credit card. Quick, SAFE, easy – no stamps, no muss, no fuss!

And much to look forward to as you can tell when you see Ron Carter’s upcoming calendar! Which includes Dolton McAlpin, one of our favorites making the trip from Mississippi to play at the Plaza and be reunited with the Allen LLQ 324 (which he played for us when it was at Marietta High School).



The weatherman certainly proved to us that we made a prudent decision to push the Jack Sandow birthday party at the Page back into June. It would not have been pleasant to have Ron Rhode stuck at a hotel here, and no program to play! And now something to really look forward to when the weather we know will be more pleasant. Meanwhile, we had a wonderful event at the Strand Theatre with Ron Carter’s music for *Sunrise*. More about that a bit later within these pages.

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American Theatre Organ Society  
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ACATOS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501.c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Chapter President - Ken Double  
Vice President - Ron Carter  
Treasurer - Paul Beavin  
Secretary - Larry Davis  
Newsletter Editor - Debbie Chambless  
Chapter Correspondent - Larry Davis  
Membership Director - Janis Beavin  
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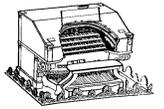
John Tanner  
Eddie Hulsey, Jr.  
Larry Davis  
Randy Hendry  
Lee Lanier  
Rick McGee  
David Yackman

Strand Project – Ron Carter  
Page Project – Jack Sandow

Speaking of Ron, our Vice President has been busy lining up dates, locations and artists for our upcoming meetings, and we will have some real treats in store, including an effort to fly in some of our great YOUNG players. The late Bucky Reddish would host his “bashes” and he was an ardent supporter of young talent and provided so many young players the chance to perform, to grow, and to take those initial steps toward a concert career. We are doing more of that, with exciting young players coming to Atlanta. Again, see Ron’s schedule.

Finally, the Board of Directors made a strong decision with an eye firmly focused on the future. Allow me to introduce (via this missive) Randy Gorod, who is now officially providing fundraising services for ACATOS. Randy has been in this field for more than 25 years, providing guidance and advice for nonprofit organizations, and generating grants and donations. His great success with the Strand Theatre brought him to our attention, and we firmly believe that an investment in this expertise could create a huge impact for our chapter down the road.

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We are just getting started in our formal relationship, and our hope is that once we get Randy the specific information he needs, he can then approach funding organizations to help us stage concerts; bring in the best artists from all over the world; raise our image and recognition in the arts community; and help us fund the concert activities, our needs to keep our instruments in top shape; and to better achieve our stated goals in promoting and presenting the theatre organ. Welcome Randy Gorod, and we look forward to a successful partnership!

Dolton at the Plaza in February; Clark Wilson and *Metropolis* at the Strand in March; and so much more coming your way. I look forward to seeing you all very soon.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ken'. The signature is written in a dark ink and is centered on the page.

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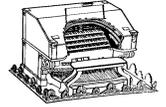
**It is Membership Renewal Time!!**

Please bring your check for renewing your membership to the next chapter meeting, or mail your check or credit card payment by filling in the membership form printed in this newsletter; or you can go to the chapter website, [www.atosatlanta.org](http://www.atosatlanta.org) and renew online.

**Welcome to our newest Members!**

Lance Netland  
Bill Callaway

Thanks for your donation Jim Grier David Yackman, and Randy Cobb



**DOLTON MCALPIN IN CONCERT  
AT THE PLAZA SATURDAY  
FEB 19th - 1:00 PM**

Chapter favorite Dolton McAlpin will be our guest artist for February playing the chapter's wonderful Lyn Larsen Allen Three Manual Theatre Organ in the longest continuously running theatre in Atlanta - THE PLAZA! Free parking in front and behind the theatre!!

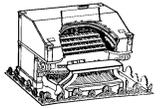
Dolton, who is from Starkville Mississippi, has been involved in saving, maintaining and playing theatre organs for over 50 years. He was one of the artists on the Mighty Mo Fox Album from the 70s and has entertained audiences throughout the southeast. His interest in the pipe organ dates from early childhood when he would climb into the choir loft every Sunday at First Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, to watch the organist play the postlude on the large E. M. Skinner pipe organ.

When a student in Baton Rouge in the 1960's, he discovered a recently restored Robert Morton theatre pipe organ in the Paramount Theatre and he played the organ regularly for intermission performances. During those years he recorded two record albums "Thoroughly Modern Morton" and "Hey Look".

Even though his day job is practicing law, he has traveled widely performing in Atlanta at the Fox, the Excelsior Mil, the Walt Winn Warehouse, the Carter residence, the Polglase residence in Augusta, the Alabama Theatre, the Orpheum in Memphis, the Jefferson in Beaumont, Texas, the Jeff Seal Studio, the Garner Residence in Laurel Mississippi, Marietta High School, the Page at Stephenson and at the Saenger Theatres in New Orleans, Mobile, Pensacola and Hattiesburg.

Dolton and his wife Martha, who is an RN are the parents of two children, Emily and Greg, and several grandchildren. They are heavily involved with church activities at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection in Starkville, Mississippi where Dolton sings in the choir and subs as organist.

Don't Miss this program presented by a great artist!!! See you at the Plaza on Saturday February 19 at 1pm!!



## Where Spectacular is Normal

Without doubt, the most anticipated event of any year is the now-legendary “Ron Carter and Friends,” most often held at the beautiful home of Donna and Ron in West Cobb. This year, the December meeting was the opportunity for a Christmas extravaganza featuring several vocalists and instrumentalists, including two first-timers to the show! Appropriately, Ron opened the show with four works: *Under the Christmas Mistletoe*, *Winter Wonderland*, Mack Wilberg’s arrangement of *The First Noel*, and the ever-popular *Sleigh Ride*.

Then Barry Lancaster, Cobb’s Vocalist of the Year, brought us *The Christmas Song*, and Suzy Thrasher followed with *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*. For these and all other vocal endeavors, the Allen GW4 served as the orchestra in the hands of Mr. Carter. Barry and Suzy joined to lead the audience in a hugely enjoyable *Twelve Days of Christmas*, featuring various members of the audience who were conscripted to represent each of the twelve days. That production just might have been the tour de force of the day. Following that energetic interlude, Larry Davis drew some of the beautiful orchestral voices from the Allen with a medley of quiet Christmas worship songs, *What Child is This?*, *Sweet Little Jesus Boy*, interwoven with *O, Little Town of Bethlehem*.

Then the always-anticipated appearance of Ron’s grandchildren was fulfilled with Abby Carter singing a very compelling *Where Are You, Christmas*, and Jake played the Peanuts theme from *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and that led into *White Christmas*, a duet which Ron joined with the organ.



Ron and the Allen took center stage once again with a Children’s Christmas Fantasy that included *Here Comes Santa Claus*, *Jingle Bells*, *Rudolf*, *Frosty* and other friends. Following that, a more serious mood with Mack Wilberg’s Mormon Tabernacle Choir arrangement of *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, for which, in Ron’s own transcription, had the organ serving as both orchestra and choir. In a first time appearance, Ron’s son John joined Barry in a rendition of the Crosby/Bowie duet of *The Little Drummer Boy*. Following them, the audience became the choir for a sing-a-long with the organ.

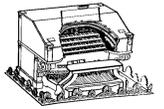
In the final and concluding segment, Suzy presented a breathtaking performance of *O, Holy Night*. Barry followed with one of his favorites, *Mary Did You Know?* and then the two joined once again to *sing Some-*

*where in My Memory*. They then led the audience in singing *Auld Lang Syne*, as all the singers returned to center stage to conclude the afternoon with *Silent Night*.

That is, conclude the musical part of the afternoon but that wasn’t the conclusion. Julie and Donna Carter then gave out the door prizes, which is always a lot of fun, before everyone decamped to the kitchen and dining room to experience the wonderful gastronomic hospitality that we always know is coming when we are in Donna’s home. To include special festive holiday beverages.

We look forward – as we always do – to next year, when we will once again have the privilege of sharing music at the Carter’s.

Larry Davis



***Sunrise: Another Carter-Scored Silent that Captivates Humans***

A Review by John Clark McCall, Jr.

Our Atlanta-connected friend, William Fox, produced this iconic film in 1927; but it is certain *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* has never been presented against a more convincing score than by our own Ron Carter at the *Chapter's* GW-4 Allen at the Marietta Strand Theatre on Sunday, January 23, 2022. The italics bestowed upon the possessive of the word *Chapter* refers to *you* as a member. It is bewildering that despite a healthy audience of over one-hundred, few Atlanta ATOS members were present to experience a tableaux combining a superb instrument, a memorable film and an organist whose original score will haunt anyone lucky enough to have witnessed this presentation. Sunday's entire production reinforces terms such as "versatile," "orchestral" and the perennial "mighty" when one references the theatre organ. Someone as prominent as Mr. Showmanship himself, Roxy, would have agreed--proclaiming it would have taken an orchestra of over one-hundred musicians to equal what Ron Carter effected on a truly *Awe-Inspiring Allen*. And film and theatre magnate impresario William Fox himself might have promoted *Sunrise* by giving away a personal pack of *Kleenex* to every theatre patron. It's a tear-jerker of the highest order.

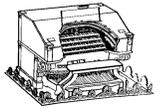
"Oh...it's just a silent," I said as I crunched my free popcorn and *Coca-Cola*. It will be dated and saccharine. I can crunch away with no fear of having emotions welling up inside. A relaxing day at the silents, I assured myself; an undemanding, simple entertainment. I was able to maintain that stance possibly through the introductory credits and the first (of few) subtitles. One look at actress Janet Gaynor's face let me know that my stirrings would not only grapple me, but by the film's end I would be drained and a bit embarrassed over the tears on my shirt.

Now, just how did I reach this personal reaction? A theatre organ, played by one of the masters of the silent film art form for which I received a free ticket to hear? In a word, yes. Allow me to share another chapter member's valued opinion. Wyatt McDaniel's comments relate to a screenplay that is decidedly familiar, but perhaps never acted so convincingly, and in a format with a minimum of dialogue with no sound or voice track.

A woman (convincingly played by Margaret Livingston) sets the plot into motion. She is from the urbane and iniquitous *City* (representing a decided contrast to the *farm* where actor George O'Brien and unappreciated wife, Janet Gaynor lead a hard-working and simple life with their small child). This "flapper" has her way with Gaynor's husband and convinces him to exterminate his wife, sell the farm and return with her to feast on the depravity and delicious vileness only a metropolis can provide. In a planned outing on a lake, O'Brien makes his move but, alas, it fails. Even though Gaynor is aware of the deed, she forgives her husband and remains by his side.

At this juncture it is important to underscore an introductory comment made by our artist: "Observe the scarcity of subtitles; here is a powerful example of what Gloria Swanson once said about silent-film acting: "We didn't need dialogue; we had faces." And Mr. Carter's claim was borne out by the incredible work of the cast ignited by a convincing organ score.

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ATOS member Wyatt McDaniel recalled:

*...NICE to SEE that these characters are able to FEEL and move to the music, as WE did. The moods were palpable.*

And, specifically about Ron Carter's scoring, McDaniel said:

*Then, throughout the movie the subtleties of every emotion are expressed—musically, rhythmically...discordant treasures...“jingles” in the thrill of ANTICIPATION; chromatic pedaling and chords follow footsteps...I couldn't breathe.*

Well, your reviewer could not either. Janet Gaynor was absolutely convincing. Her luminary quality based on *Sunrise* together with *Angel Street* and *7<sup>th</sup> Heaven* would garner the first ever *Academy Award for Best Actress* (1929), and the only such honor to ever be given for a collective of film roles. She made a successful transition to sound films and was nominated for her work in the first edition of *A Star Is Born* with co-star Fredric March. The underlying musical theme for the film was written by the noted conductor and composer, Hugo Riesenfeld (who once faced a trio of Kimball organ consoles when conducting his eighty-piece orchestra at the vast Roxy Theatre in New York). To introduce this important musical thread, our organist premiered it with Camilla Sanders of the Strand Theatre's professional staff. Her work was poignant and unforgettably crafted. Often, the organ score seemed to echo *her* rendition-- accompanied by Riesenfeld and Carter's musical essay as the film progressed.

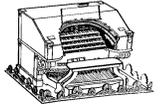


Members not only received a free admission, refreshments, a memorable live vocal performance, an *Academy-Award* film, and Ron Carter's masterwork; there was the traditional pre-show including a sing-along played by our own Eddie Hulsey. Organist Hulsey provided a spotlight on hits of 1927 and then allowed the audience to take charge in a rollicking collective. There is little doubt that in addition to Hulsey's delightful playing, his professional calling as a noted judge and barrister provided an unlike, delightful presence at the console. Hulsey's careful planning allowed a further return to the golden era of our art form. It was the perfect presentation backdrop for the delights yet to come.

McDaniel said it best when describing his reaction to the film:

*I track every beat, am regaled by the imagery painted by sound, but living IN COLOR in my head. The mastery is MAGIC to me. I know of nothing in my life that fills my soul like this.*

...and I suspect there are many more who subscribe to these good words—including seven young people to my left who had never seen a silent film with organ accompaniment!



**Ron Carter  
Chapter Programs for 2022**

Sunday, February 6th - 3:00 PM - Carrollton Jazz Orchestra with special ticket prices for Chapter members as guests of the Strand and the Atlanta Fox Board. Ron Carter pre-show organist at 2:30 PM. This has been rescheduled from January.

Friday, February 11 - 8:00 PM - An Affair to Remember with organ pops pre-show by John McCall at 7:30 PM.

Friday, February 11 - Midnight - Rocky Horror with organ pops pre-show by Misha Stefanuk at 11:30 PM.

Sunday, February 13 - 2:00 PM (Central Time) - Larry Davis will be playing for the Alabama Chapter on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

Saturday March 12 - 7:30 PM - METROPOLIS with organist Clark Wilson. VIP tickets to meet and greet the artist at 5:45 includes a beverage and popcorn. If you purchased tickets for the previously scheduled screening of this film back in March of 2020, they are still valid. Just contact the Box Office at 770- 293-0080 to verify.