

ATOS Atlanta

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

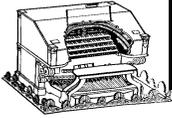


*Treasure
The Smiles, Good Times and Memories,
Leave Behind
The Disappointments, Hard Times and Enemies,
Hold Onto
Faith, Hope and Beliefs,
And May Your New Year Be Filled With
Love, Joy and Peace!*

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



THE NEW MO IS A HIT, AND OTHER GOODIES FOR 2021

With as much exuberance as I can manage in print, let me start this missive with wishes for the most healthy, happy New Year ever for all of you. I am sure for many of us, there has never been a calendar page turned with the level of eagerness and anticipation as the year 2020.

That stated, what a 2020 finish for the Atlanta Chapter of ATOS with the December return of Mighty Mo's gleaming, refurbished console to the lift at the Atlanta Fox. And the video production that has now been viewed by thousands via YouTube and the Fox Theatre's Facebook page.

Thanks and kudos to the Fox leadership for the decision to take on this project; the staff and crew at the A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Co; Rick Clear and his video production team; Tim Stephens and his audio expertise; and a VIP of the highest order who provided financial support for the video production, allowing us all to see and hear Mighty Mo at its newest!

We have already had discussions about figuring out a way to invite the chapter members into the Fox to see and experience the new console. It is breathtaking, and without too much hyperbole, I might suggest bringing sunglasses! My word, IT IS GOLD! And she explodes in the spotlight. No date in mind as yet, but discussions are underway for a visit to Peachtree and Ponce and a chance for all of us to see and hear Mo.

As of this writing, Rick McGee reports that membership renewals are still coming in, thus it is timely, and so very important, to remind you that if you have not done so, please renew your membership in the chapter for 2021. At some point, we will look forward to:

- a return to our monthly meetings, and music on our Page and Allen organs, and a visit to the Fox
- a return to concerts on the Grande Page pipe organ at Stephenson High School
- and ideas for things like road trips, and special events such as joint meeting with our friends in the AGO, and more.

This cannot happen without the support of our chapter members. Big thanks to those who have renewed, and were also generous enough to "add a little" to support the chapter. And for those who might be procrastinating just a tad, let this be the gentle reminder to drop your dues in the envelope we provided, or simply go online at www.atosatlanta.org and renew via the website.

And just as soon as we can, we will be announcing a series of new chapter meetings so we can enjoy our company, our instruments, the music we love, and let 2021 be a most memorable year for all of the right reasons!

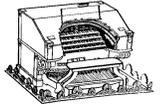
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ACATOS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501.c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Chapter President - Ken Double
 Vice President - Ron Carter
 Treasurer - Paul Beavin
 Secretary - Larry Davis
 Newsletter Editor - Debbie Chambless
 Chapter Correspondent - Larry Davis
 Board members:

John Alford
 John Tanner
 Eddie Hulsey, Jr.
 Larry Davis
 Randy Hendry
 Lee Lanier

Strand Project – Ron Carter
 Page Project – Jack Sandow



CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS

As we begin the new year, we have the opportunity to offer congratulations to those now serving as board members for the Atlanta Chapter for the coming year. And we say “Thank You” as best we can for those who have served us in 2020.

In particular, we say thanks to two gentlemen who have done yeoman’s service. Rick McGee has spent several years in the position of Treasurer of ACATOS, a job he has done with great diligence and detail. Rick will step aside which allows Paul Beavin the opportunity to serve the chapter as Treasurer, and we welcome Paul, and know he will do a great job.

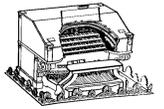
Meanwhile, Rick will continue to be a valued member of the chapter what with his work on the Page, ongoing and valuable advice and input, and one of these days, the opportunity to visit his home and again experience his fantastic Allen TO-5 theatre organ.

We also thank Bill Thompson, our outgoing Secretary, who has been an outstanding and supportive member of the chapter. A fine organist in his own right, it has been a joy to see Bill express his joy of the theatre organ, and to see him volunteer to assist in many different areas, including his years as Secretary. Thank you, Bill and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Larry Davis, a mainstay and vital member of the chapter, will serve as Secretary for the next year.

Finally, Debbie Chambless will continue as the Editor of this newsletter. She has done a fantastic job of producing our monthly missive, and we appreciate her efforts so very much, including her fine talents at the keyboard.

We thank everyone who serves as chapter officers and board members; and those who volunteer to help with meetings and concerts, and those who have played for us, even though those opportunities were few in 2020. Our chapter thrives on just that kind of support that helps us all enjoy the theatre organ.



REVIEW OF JOHN MCCALL'S "SARASOTA SAMPLER"

Chapter member John McCall sent me a copy of his latest CD, a compilation of recordings he has made on the marvelous Forker Memorial Wurlitzer in Grace Church, Sarasota Florida. The selections on this CD are from his concerts at this magnificent instrument in May of 2013 and 2017. Through today's fantastic technology, John has collaborated with Chicago vocalist Mark Demmin II, a marvelous baritone, by accompanying Mark on several selections while not in the same room!! Both made separate tracks at different times and places and put them together remotely!!

On the front of Donna and my CD John wrote a personal message to us which brought back wonderful memories from over 20 years ago when he was invited to play his first Chapter Program in our home. This was on our Wurlitzer pipe organ before the Allen GWIV and the Carter Performing Arts Center addition!! John wrote "Dear friends who got me into this mess". I might add that Donna and I were at John's first Alabama Theatre concert where we had placed a congratulatory bottle of wine in his dressing room before the program. Don't know whether it helped or hurt his playing!!!!

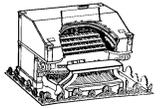
John McCall has his own playing style. Having heard hundreds of live performances by many theatre organists and owning hundreds of theatre organ CDs, so many artists sound the same! John's playing is not cut of the same cloth. Yes, John is self taught and does not read music. I believe this is one reason his playing is different and in many ways so refreshing. He does his own thing and does it well! I quite often listen to theatre organ radio and unless I look at the computer screen to see who is playing (unless I know the CD) I can't tell who is playing! But when John's CDs are featured they are immediately recognizable.

Ok enough of this personal background, now let's get into the CD review. The "Sarasota Sampler" features 16 very different genres of music. And one of John's great strengths is his vast knowledge of the American Songbook. He is literally an encyclopedia of American popular music. One time when he was listening to me play I did the theme from the movie "The Yellow Rolls Royce," thinking no one would recognize it. Well John immediately did!!

Beginning with "Carolina In the Morning" and ending with selections from "High Society", what lies in-between is a much varied selection of songs many never performed on the theatre organ. Carolina starts with a big robust registration and then goes to a beautiful combination of tibias and untremmed reeds to single stroke glockenspiel which both alternate back and forth. John could have easily accompanied Al Jolson on this piece. "Desperado" has a beautiful classic style intro, and is one my favorite songs by the Eagles, again with the glock and chimes used so tasteful during the interlude and for the melody lines and a great key change for a big dramatic prelude to a meditative ending.

"Cocktails" is an American Standard of the big band era made famous by Duke Ellington. John begins with Orch Oboe and continues with untremmed brass, a key change (never knew a transposer could be that good) ending with a Marimba finish. On the "Sinatra Set" John uses the clarinet/tibia untremmed, glock and piano to a unique rhythmic effect, and numerous key changes between numbers in this 11 minute compilation of Sinatra standards. Simon Gledhill has said several times that you CAN play the theatre organ without tremulants at the appropriate time! John ends this set with a grand Post Horn finale.

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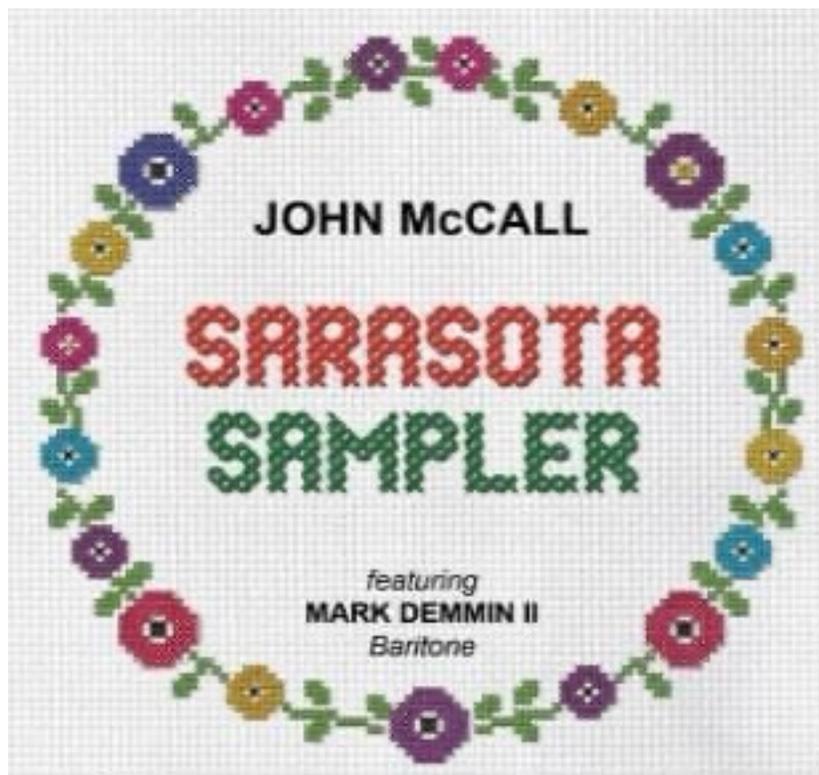


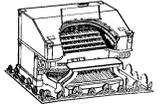
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The title, "C'est Magnifique", was not familiar to me but as soon as John got to the melody line it became immediately recognizable. I particularly liked his use of the Vox Chorus and full organ in this piece written by none other than Cole Porter for his 1957 musical Can Can. The next selection on the CD was one of my favorite ballads, "The Very Thought of You". John begins with a beautiful Sax/Tibia combination and continues with a lustful, poignant rendition of this wonderful 1924 piece written by Ray Noble and made famous by Nat King Cole.

"Little Coquette" follows which is a quick step foxtrot using the Forker's wonderful grand piano. Composed by Johnny Green and Carmen Lombardo in 1928, my favorite musical year! I have heard John play the next piece several times, "Every Time I See You I'm In Love Again", but this was his best rendition beginning with untremmed full organ, delicate use of the chimes, and smooth key changes. John really brings out the spirit of Buddy Cole in this arrangement. "Deed I Do" begins again with untremmed reeds and full organ coupled with Post Horn riffs to great effect. John follows this piece with "Careless" from 1940, with a beautiful string chorus. This piece really sings with an outstanding piano melody line. Next was an old Standard, "Canadian Sunset". This is traditional theatre organ fare with nice harp accompaniment in the left hand, orch oboe solo and tibia/vox combination. "The Loveliness of You" from 1937 follows and has been performed by notable singers like Perry Como, and Russ Morgan and his orchestra. John did his homework on interpreting this piece vocally.

John is the organist at Palmetto UMC and so very appropriate to his music selections is included a wonderful sacred piece "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross". Beginning with a very solemn beginning with a nice flute and string registration and then transitioning to tremulants with chord improvisations making this traditional hymn even more inviting. "Linda" is next and is an upbeat piece beginning with untremmed solo voices and harp accompaniment.





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"Good Night My Love" is a more current piece in the theatre organ world written in 1956 and not to be confused with a song of the same title from 1937. This piece is a prime example of the doo wop music of the 1950s and is played with the use of very rich registrations.

Finally, is the coup de grace! John's rendition of the songs from the great 1950s musical "High Society". This was a Broadway musical not familiar to this reviewer. At 17 minutes long, this writer is amazed that John played this entire set without looking at a shred of written music! The very talented baritone soloist from Chicago is featured in several selections. Mr. Mark Demmin II has such a wide vocal range and sings with a clear enunciation of the words. "Little One" was my favorite piece from this set. It was amazing how Mark was available to change his voice making the listener think there is a chorus of voices singing. The wonder of modern recording technology! Having accompanied many vocalists over the years I know quality when I hear it and Mark's voice is always on key and clear, where in this day and time that is not always the case. The balance between the vocal and the organ accompaniment is excellent. It is amazing how Mark is able to keep up with John's dozen key changes!! What gave this reviewer goose bumps was near the end of the set when John transitioned as a reprise to the piece "True Love". Gorgeous!

I have heard all of the CDs that John McCall has produced over the years and I believe this is the best and where John was really at the top of his game. I give this CD a BIG 5 STARS!! To purchase your copy contact John at jcmdc@windstream.net.

Ron Carter