

ATOS Atlanta

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



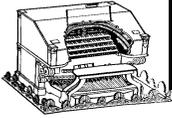
March Chapter Meeting



It's time to renew your ACATOS Membership! Please review the membership options and consider renewing at the Contributor or Patron level.



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



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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 - Rick McGee
 Secretary - Bill Thompson
 Newsletter Editor - Debbie Chambless
 Chapter Correspondent - Larry Davis
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 John Alford
 John Tanner
 Eddie Hulsey, Jr.
 Larry Davis
 Randy Hendry
 Lee Lanier
 Strand Project – Ron Carter
 Page Project – Jack Sandow

YOUNG ARTIST, NEW MUSIC, A GREAT DAY AT STEPHENSON

Perhaps it was a sneak peek into the future of the theatre organ. If so, it was wonderful! On Saturday, February 15th the day after Valentine’s Day ,generated a quickly-developing love affair between young concert artist Nathan Avakian and an audience that quickly fell in love with his music and his winning personality.

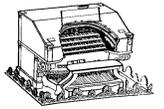
With nary the first hint of music from the Great American Songbook – something some of us were foolishly just a tad concerned about – Nathan enthralled nearly 120 in the audience with his pre-recorded rhythm tracks, a steady diet of new music, and that peek into the future whereby today’s younger people might enjoy the theatre organ! It was a stellar and stunning performance which again demonstrates the incredible flexibility of the Grande Page.

Thanks to all on the crew that made this happen, as Nathan was effusive in his praise of the Page. Special thanks to John Alford, without whom there would have been no tracks to hear, nor those special short silent films to enjoy. Nathan got a bonus during his visit – he played the walk-in music for *Hello Dolly* at the Fox Friday night on Mighty Mo’s temporary console.

Now, on to more for the Page. As I write this, the Vibraphone is coming back after a complete rebuild by Carlton Smith; the Krumet Horn rank is being installed as we will welcome back Carlton and Clark Wilson for a “touch-up” on voicing since their stop here four years ago; and the work crew continues to button up the final touches in wiring, updating, and all things that will soon help us declare the installation of the Page “finished!”

While Clark Wilson is in town to work on the Page, he will perform at the chapter-owned Allen GW IV at the Strand Theatre in Marietta. He will accompany *Metropolis* Saturday night, March 14. See details elsewhere in this newsletter. And if you have not, mark Saturday April 25th on your calendars! That day we present 18-year-old Brett Miller in concert on the Grande Page, an event you must see and hear to believe. He’s brilliant, and yet another example of our talented youth on the bench!

Finally, we have about 40 or so who have yet to renew membership. Reminders are out. We most certainly hope you will remain as members of ACATOS, as we continue to grow interest in the music of the theatre organ in Atlanta and beyond. See you at the Strand March 14th!



METROPOLIS RETURNS TO THE STRAND MARCH 14

In the world of the cinema, one can find many lists of the “Greatest” movies of all time. Every such list includes Fritz Lang’s *METROPOLIS*, indeed one of the greatest and most influential movies ever made. And it is coming back to the Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Theatre on the square in Marietta on Saturday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m.

The tale of a futuristic city and its inhabitants continues to influence film directors today. Be it stories of science fiction; set design; film technique; and special effects, its place in history as an important film is unquestioned.

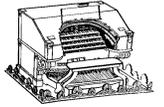
It is a silent film, and thus, there must be musical accompaniment, and the Strand Theatre is specially prepared for music for silent film. It’s four-manual Mighty Allen Theatre Organ will be at the command of the finest silent film accompanist in the world today.

Clark Wilson works tirelessly to create the proper musical mood for silent film, be it romance, horror, adventure or comedy. In this instance, he will labor through a near-three-hour exercise with *Metropolis*. More than 30 years ago, Wilson determined his career would not necessarily be musical concerts (although he is brilliant), but instead would focus on creating music for silent films.

He has been lauded by KINO International; the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences: hired exclusively at Disney Hall in Los Angeles for its annual sell-out Halloween spectacular; and is in demand worldwide for his genius at accompanying silent film on the theatre organ.

This marks Wilson’s third screening of this film in Atlanta, including a 2004 event at the Fox Theatre, and a previous event at the Strand. Ticket demand will be high for this special screening of this amazing film.





TICKET PRICING FOR METROPOLIS

Please follow this procedure for purchasing tickets to Metropolis.

ATOS MEMBERS you can purchase tickets on the web or in person or by phone. By purchasing on the web there is an additional \$4.16 processing fee. Calling the box office at 770-293-0080 or going by in person that fee is removed. Either way use promo code METROATOS when speaking with the box office or on the web.

<https://earlsmithstrand.secure.force.com/ticket#/events/>

WEB: Go to the Earl and Rachel Smith Strand Website. Click on Calendar or tickets. Click on Metropolis. (note there is a book to film option above the movie ticket icon if you want to attend this). It is reserved seating so indicate on the seating map your desired seat(s) by clicking on the seat(s). Go over to the drop box icon and click on whether you want VIP or NON-VIP Seating. VIP gives you a preview concert by Clark Wilson, a meet and greet with the artist, and a free drink and popcorn. After choosing which ticket option you want, click on next and choose ticket delivery. Go to next page and enter the promo code **METROATOS** and hit apply. Then hit next to checkout. Non-vip tickets are \$18.16

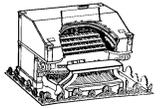
PHONE or INPERSON: Just give the box office your seat choice and the promo code METROATOS. Non-VIP tickets are \$14.00

I encourage all of our members to choose the VIP option. Yes it is an extra \$20 but this is a joint venture between Atlanta ATOS and the Strand with us splitting half the profits or losses with the Strand. Please promote this program and invite neighbors, family and friends. This is a fantastic film with a fantastic artist and original musical score!!

Everyone- we need your support in publicizing METROPOLIS. This is a joint project between the Strand and ATOS and we really need to sell a bunch of tickets because of the costly film rights and paying our great artist Clark Wilson.

By the way there are several new restaurants on the Square and one right next door which is very good and reasonable. Make this a great evening out by supporting your Chapter and the Strand with our own GWIV Chapter theatre organ!!!

Ron Carter



Ron Carter's what's going on at the Strand, the Plaza and Others

AT THE STRAND

Organ pre-shows start 30 minutes prior to below listed movie start times



Saturday - March 14 - 7:30 pm
No organ pre-show



Saturday - March 28 - 8:00 pm
Organ pre-show by Larry Davis
at 7:30 pm

Thanks to our Donors:

Wanda Fields
Bruce & Marie Brownlow
Hall Cristman
Don Eckles
Carroll & Kay Eddleman
Keith Huffstetter
Joe Mackrovitch
Keith Vansant



Like No One Else

In the world of theatre organ, among the great artists, there are many who have exceptional talent, even genius. And then there is Nathan Avakian. Nathan is simply one of a kind, and there is no one else like him and no one else who does what he does. All of us who were there on that special Saturday (and the students that had a preview on Thursday at a Stephenson high school assembly) had the opportunity to hear, see, and experience the uniqueness that is Nathan Avakian.

For those who aren't familiar with his concerts, Nathan plays music that is as up to date as what the kids at Stephenson are listening to in their earbuds. To make it work, he composes accompaniment tracks, but whether he accompanies them or they accompany him, who can tell? After a brief video in which he introduced himself and his work, Nathan brought the console up to *Uptown Funk*, and if the console never went back down, neither did the level of music. Nathan pulled no punches, as it were, on that February afternoon. We got not a note of what might be called "traditional" theatre organ, but nothing that wasn't exciting, creative, and fun. Following his opening, he played a work without an accompaniment track but no less rhythmic, Dave Brubeck's *Blue Rondo a la Turk*. With that one came the wonderful story of his conversation with Brubeck, who was amazed that it was being done on organ and suggested that, in playing the pedals, that he not do anything that would make him "fall over." He didn't, but survived to present us with three selections from *Slumdog Millionaire*. Following those, Nathan told the story of being asked to compose a piece of music for a newspaper company. His composition evoked memories of an operating printing press and was entitled *At the Square*, which is, of course, where the newspaper is printed.

Having seen the grand piano that once belonged to Bob Fountain lurking backstage, Nathan asked that it be brought out, and on that piano performed his next selection, a composition entitled *Schwinn Song* that he wrote for a wedding of friends whose name you can no doubt guess. I am certain Bob was smiling down on the that special moment.

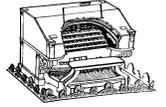
Nathan then brought out a work that he said, "I haven't played in a while," but that he felt was rather necessary for a concert at Stephenson and we got to hear the incredibly creative tour de force *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*.

After a few minutes to catch our collective breath, have a drink, acquire CD's, and meet Nathan, we all returned to the auditorium and he to the console, and then came the second and completely different part of his unique concert experience. I will not try to describe the entirety of the International Youth Silent Film Festival movement, you can find that at www.makesilentfilm.com. Nathan has composed 3-minute film scores on various themes and young filmmakers (20 is the maximum age) create films to fit the scores. We got to see five of these with Nathan accompanying them. The talent exhibited by Nathan on the organ was well-matched by these young people (one as young as 13) in the work they did to fit their films to the music. Which is, of course, the opposite of the way that it's normally done.

With the completion of the films, we heard the public premiere of a new Avakian arrangement, Billie Elish's *Bad Guy*. Then Nathan closed the concert with his second tour de force, his arrangements from the score of *Bohemian Rhapsody*. The standing ovation that followed brought him back to the console for what Lee Lanier reminded us was the "oldest piece he played," the 1943 *Bumble Boogie*.

The Atlanta Chapter has, thanks to many in our chapter over the years, been in the forefront of presenting young artists in concert. As far back as the days of Bob Van Camp and his *Here With the Wind* recording, modern music has been a welcome part of our chapter's listening experience. That tradition continued in a most special way with Nathan on that wonderful Saturday.

Larry Davis



Remembering Norma Simmons 1927-2020

Last Saturday at Stephenson High School I overheard Larry Davis talking to one of our visitors about this couple that he had met years ago. That couple was Edd and Norma Simmons. The following Monday morning as I was getting ready to go out of town to a job site, I received a text message from Larry asking if I had heard anything lately from Norma, that one of his EMS co-workers had been visiting with one of Norma's daughters and son in law. He mentioned that one of their parents had recently passed away. Checking this out, I found out that indeed, Norma had passed away on Feb. 5, 2020.

Norma and her husband Edd were two of our long time chapter members, They were part of our chapter's first generation of members that got together back in the 60's, to form the Southeastern Chapter, and later the Atlanta Chapter ATOS. Although not charter members, they joined soon afterwards and had been members ever since.

In June of 2009 I wrote a remembrance about Edd on his passing. Everything I said in that article equally applies to Norma because for 63 years they were a team, supporting each other in all their endeavors, be it family, church, work, or anything they set out to do.

When I joined the chapter back in 1977, Norma and Edd were some of the first people I met and was immediately accepted into their friendship. Norma was also interested in what I was doing and was always supportive. Her smile was one of the most welcoming smiles I have ever seen, because she was truly glad to see you.

On the occasion that I was able to stop by and visit, I could usually find Norma out in the garden, which was one of her great passions. If invited for a meal, then I was sure to have some of the best baked breads in Fayette County.

Norma always supported our chapter, serving on the board, hosting chapter meetings, volunteering at various functions, and even helping out in moving some of the organs our members had aquired.

After Edd' s passing in 2009, Norma was able to attend some of the chapter meetings but it has been quite a while since she had been to one. The last one that I remember her coming to, she was brought by two of her grandchildren. You talk about a proud grandmother!

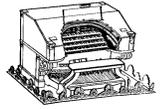
For all of those who knew Norma, we can consider ourselves truly blessed and she will be greatly missed.

John Tanner

Edd and Norma Simmons were members back in the early 1960's soon after our founding. This is my memory. Doc and Norma acquired, owned and donated the Lucas Wurlitzer that is in the process of being set up to be reinstalled in the Lucas.

Larry Davis

ATOS Atlanta



Date	Time	Location	Event Description
March 14 Saturday	7:30	Strand Theatre	Atlanta Chapter ATOS Monthly Meeting METROPOLIS! Clark Wilson—Film Accompaniment
March 26 Friday	NOON	Email debbiechambless57@gmail.com	Deadline for submissions for April newsletter of ACATOS
March 28 Saturday	8:00	Strand Theatre	The Princess Bride Larry Davis—Preshow
April 25	3:00	Stephenson High School Stone Mountain, GA	Atlanta Chapter ATOS Monthly Meeting: Brett Miller
April 27 Monday	NOON	Email debbiechambless57@gmail.com	Deadline for submissions for April newsletter of ACATOS
Chapter Events	Plaza Theatre Events	Strand Theatre Events	Theatre Organ events in special venues in and out of Atlanta

**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP**



Ken Double reminds you to "Look in your mailbox for the reminders about 2020 dues, which should arrive any day. And if you haven't as yet, please renew your membership in the chapter. We'd hate to lose you!"