



Detroit Theater Organ Society

May 2011 Newsletter

Volume 50, Issue 4

JELANI EDDINGTON REOPENS SENATE

Senate Theater

Sunday, May 15, 2011 3:00 p.m.

The Detroit Theater Organ Society is proud to announce the reopening of the Senate Theater with world-renown artist Jelani Eddington on Sunday, May 15 at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

Months of hard work cleaning, moving items, scraping paint, putting on new paint, cleaning floors, washing walls, and countless other tasks have brought the Senate Theater back better than it has looked in several decades. Come early to look around at all of the great work, and grab a good seat (which have also all been cleaned!) as you are in for a musical treat with Jelani at our prized Wurlitzer.

Jelani Eddington was born in Muncie, Indiana

to Louise Eddington and the late Robert Eddington and grew up in a very musical family. Between the interests of his mother, a professional music teacher of many years, and those of his grandmother, Florence Arnold, a well-respected piano instructor, it was no surprise when Jelani demonstrated an inclination toward music at a very early age.

Shortly after beginning piano instruction at the age of four, Jelani began studying classical piano under the direction of his grandmother. At the age of eight, a trip to hear the 4-manual 42-rank Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ installed in the Indianapolis, Indiana restaurant, the Paramount Music Palace, introduced Jelani to the sounds of the theatre pipe organ. Soon thereafter, he began to pursue classical organ lessons and ultimately began studying theatre organ under the direction of John Ferguson, whose skills as a theatre organ instructor have been highly acclaimed internationally.

At the age of 13, Jelani won the American Theatre Organ Society's Young Theatre Organist Competition, prevailing over competitors ages 13-21 from the United States, England, Australia, and New Zealand. Jelani remains the youngest competitor ever to win this title. Jelani went on to



JELANI EDDINGTON CONCERT ... continued from the first page

graduate Magna Cum Laude from Indiana University in 1996, and later received a Juris Doctor degree from the Yale Law School in 1999, after which time he was admitted to practice law in New York State.

During the course of his concert career, Jelani has been featured at numerous national and regional conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society, and has toured extensively throughout the world, including numerous concert appearances in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. He has also accompanied numerous silent films and appears regularly at film series. In 2007, Jelani accompanied the classic film, The Hunchback Of Notre Dame, for an international organ festival in Finland on the country's largest pipe organ.

In addition to his work as an organist, Jelani

has also distinguished himself as a concert pianist, appearing recently as a guest pianist for performances of Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A-Minor, George Gershwin's Rhapsody In Blue, and Leroy Anderson's Piano Concerto in C-Major. In February 2008, Jelani was invited to perform two special performances of Anderson's concerto with the Tulsa Signature Symphony as part of a celebration of Leroy Anderson's centennial.

Jelani has also produced and marketed over 30 theatre organ albums on some of the best-known and most dynamic instruments in the country. In August 2001, the American Theatre Organ Society honored Jelani's extensive career as a concert and recording organist by naming him the 2001 Theatre Organist Of The Year. Jelani retains the distinction of being the youngest-ever recipient of this prestigious honor.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE AT MCTOS!

Board of Directors
Detroit Theater Organ Society

As we prepare to reopen the Senate, we want to take a moment to offer a big "Thank You" to the Motor City Theatre Organ Society and Friends of the Redford for allowing us to use their beautiful facility and magnificent Barton to host our Sunday concert series during the past year. Their friendship, professionalism, gracious hospitality and enthusiastic cooperation enabled us to keep DTOS up and running while we focused on searching for a new location.

Together,
DTOS and MCTOS

have shared a long history and many common goals here in the Motor City. In fact, many of us are members of both organizations! We look forward to continuing a close association with MCTOS and the Redford to keep theater organ alive in the Motor City for many years to come.

Be sure to enjoy a classic film at the Redford. Each movie includes a 30-minute overture by various local artists before each feature, as well as during intermission.

Thanks
again MCTOS!



THEATER RENOVATION UPDATE

Connie Masserant
DTOS Board of Directors

You just have to step through the doors of the Senate and you can begin to feel her heart beat once again—stronger than ever.

Directors, members, and volunteers have been busy plastering, sanding, and painting the walls, ceilings, and display cases getting ready for opening day. With a new color scheme, fresh paint, and new wall paper the theater has a new personality to behold for our Gala event.



Thanks to several generous donations, we were able to strip, polish, and shine our beautiful terrazzo floors. In addition, we were able to order the much needed mirror replacements. Thank you to the



individual who made that possible.

We are excited to announce that we have a new electric gate opener and a new card reader on the parking lot door. This adds to the security of playing members who wish to come and practice on the Mighty Wurlitzer. Once issued a remote, playing members can simply open and close the gate from within their car. Once in the parking lot, the side door can be opened with the key fob that was issued. For more information about the remote, gate system, or back door, contact Connie Masserant.



The organ is getting its fine tuning before the concert. Even a little work is being done on the console.

There is still much painting to do. We still need volunteers to come in and paint. Please contribute even two hours if you can. You can either show up and we will put you to work or if you would like to call ahead and confirm, you can call:

Connie Masserant
734-379-6645 hm
734-652-6004 cell
Email: cmasserant13@gmail.com

Remember, Saturdays are still work days before we open. The last week before we open we will need people to come in and clean. If you are not a painter, then now is your opportunity to come in and

THEATER RENOVATIONS ... *continued from previous page*

help by assisting with the last minute cleaning. to work.

Thank You to those of you who have made This is the last update before our Gala Open- monetary donations to help make our renovation possi- ing. See you at the Senate! ble, and Thank You to those of you who have come in

YOU ARE INVITED!

Board Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. Come and be an active member of your organization!

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE REDFORD THEATRE

May 13 & 14—The Sting

May 27 & 28—Alfred Hitchcock's "Rebecca"

June 10 & 11—Bedknobs and Broomsticks

June 24 & 25—The Bridge on the River Kwai

July 8 & 9—Funny Girl

July 22 & 23—Star Trek II—The Wrath of Kahn (in 70mm)

August 5 & 6—Somewhere in Time

August 19 & 20—Sabrina

All of these great films are shown Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m. as well as Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m.

Organ overtures start thirty minutes prior to each show time. Sit back and enjoy the movies under the Redford's star-lit sky!

M EMBERSHIP

Gary Grzebienik
DTOS Board of Directors

Membership in DTOS passed the "100" mark this month! As of this writing, we have 102 members and continue to grow. With our expanded concert and event schedule, reopening of the Senate, on-going restoration of our Wurlitzer and major improvements in security, the word is getting out about DTOS being back on the map "big time" these days! Of course we couldn't accomplish all of this without your continued support and membership. As always, "THANK YOU!"

Our newest Playing Member, John F. Fleming, hails from Oak Park, Michigan. Please make him welcome when you meet him at our next event. And, don't forget that if you have some friends that might enjoy one of our concerts, you can invite them as your guests (you can bring up to three for free -- the best entertainment deal in town!). Maybe they'll want to join DTOS, too. And, Playing Members, the Wurlitzer's

waiting for you! Take advantage of exclusive private practice time at the console. Use our on-line reservation system at www.dtos.org to set a date.

In addition, DTOS will be publishing a Membership Directory in May. You should have received a letter in the past few weeks listing the contact information we have on file for you. If you have any changes, or would like to limit what is published in the directory, please return the letter with your changes by May 15th.

These are exciting times to be a member of DTOS! Take advantage of everything we have to offer. Come to our concerts, bring your friends, attend a Board meeting, learn to play the organ, take advantage of private practice time on the Wurlitzer, volunteer your time and talents – get involved!

A NEW BEGINNING or PRESSING THE GENERAL CANCEL BUTTON

Scott Smith

Oftentimes, when I'm preparing my piston settings on an unfamiliar organ, I'll spend quite a lot of time getting what I consider to be "just the right sounds." It's just one of those things organists do to define themselves. Sometimes I'm lucky enough for it to fall right into place, sometimes it takes just a little fussing, and sometimes it seems to take forever. When that unfortunate circumstance comes about, I tend to lose my focus and pile on too many stops in my quest for sonic perfection, and actually make it worse than ever. Over the years, I've learned that is the time to press the General Cancel and start over. All of the stop tablets go back up and I begin again, trying to focus on what was most important in getting my initial musical point across, discarding that which was really unnecessary. I suppose that's reflective of all of us as we get older. We tend to be more clear, concise and to the point. Some call it crabby, irritable and outspoken, but I guess it's all in your point of view.

To a large degree, this is what has happened to our beloved DTOS. In an analogous sense, we pressed the General Cancel button at the end of 2009 when we shut things down at the Senate Theater. Since then, we've been trying on other "stops," if you will, and have now moved to that which is most important. Within days of receiving this newsletter, the Senate will reopen, while we do that which we do best until we can decide what our next move will be. It's a bold step by the club that I applaud loudly. I'm hoping you do, too.

The elasticity of our club's well-being is a testament to the genius with which it was originally conceived. In every way, it boldly broke new ground. Over the period of its 50-year existence,

the club has been the unflagging leader of organizations of its kind. For most of that time, Detroit's plain and modest neighborhood theater, the Senate has been regarded internationally as the concert hall of the theater organ. It established standards for performance, artist care, and organ condition that have never been surpassed. Demonstrating its strength and determination to go on, it has withstood challenges of various types, bullying tactics, hair-brained schemes, and yet rises again to potentially face all of these odds anew.

As one walks through the theater today, the optimism is palpable. Volunteers are once again occupying what was a dark, lonely building for the past year-and-a-half. Floors seem cleaner. Lights seem brighter. There is laughter where there was silence. The building is alive again. In a way, it's a new beginning.

An opportunity awaits us all on Opening Day. That opportunity is the chance not only to renew old acquaintances, but to make new ones, as well. Best of all, we get a chance to reinvent ourselves. Maybe it's just pie-in-the-sky, but let's aim for a kinder, gentler co-existence. When we see something not being done to our liking, or not being done at all, let's not complain, or whine or point fingers. Instead, let's roll up our sleeves and simply get the work done. Let's not take each other for granted, but instead pat each other on the back for jobs well done. Instead of seeing the hole,

let's look for the doughnut. There's plenty to do. Let's get it done. In the meantime, let's all press our personal general cancel buttons, and on May 15, walk proudly into our club and start choosing some new stops of our own, shall we?

See you there!



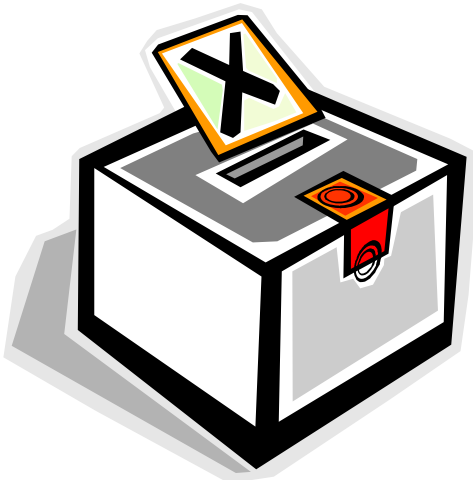
D TOS ELECTION RESULTS

Dave Calendine
DTOS Board of Directors

The annual meeting of the Detroit Theater Organ Society was held at the Senate Theater on Tuesday, April 26. Announced at the meeting were the results of the elections for the Board of Directors and Organ Trustee.

There were six positions to be filled on the Board of Directors.

Re-elected to the board:
Dave Calendine
Jeff Cushing



Connie Masserant
George Orbits
Fr. Andrew Rogers
Newly-elected to the Board:
Michael Fisher
Organ Trustee: Glen Rank
Thank you to Dave Voydanoff and Glen Rank for handling the elections and sending out the ballots.

Remember that this is your organization. The Board of Directors wants your input on what we are doing for the society.

Renovations Continue!



Installation of the new electric gate for our parking lot is now complete. Here are some pictures of the work done. More information on this gate can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.



The line is drawn on the ground. Now to use the trenching machine to dig along the line.

Now that the line is dug, the power line had to be put in. Then everything was covered back up. You can't even tell that all of this work was done in our parking lot!



Now that the power is installed, the gate operator can be put into its final place and put into working order. Thanks to Connie Masserant and her husband Dave, the gate, as well as much of the restoration of the theater, has been in good hands. Be sure to give them your thanks for all of their work!



EASY ACCESS TO THE SENATE THEATER

Dave Calendine
DTOS Board of Directors / Newsletter Editor

One of the major improvements that has taken shape at the Senate Theater is the installation of an electric gate operator for our parking lot, and the ability to enter the theater from the side door of the theater from the parking lot. With these new improvements, there are some things that you will need to know.

In order to receive a remote to activate the electric gate, you will need to see Connie Masserant. Her contact information is in the Restoration article that appears elsewhere in this Newsletter. The remotes have a \$15 deposit that will need to be paid to our treasurer. Once the deposit is received, you will be contacted and will be instructed on how to receive your remote.

Using the remote is very simple. There is only one button. Once you arrive to the parking lot entrance, simply press the button on the remote and the gate will open. Please let the gate fully open before you drive through. For your protection, there is a safety feature that will not let the gate close if anything is in the way of it closing. Once you are inside the lot, you can secure the lot by pressing the remote button once again and the gate will close.

To gain access to the theater, go to the side door (the door that you normally use to enter for concerts) and swipe your keyfob on the large black box on the outside of the door. The door will unlock and you can enter the theater.

It will be dark in the theater, but we have added a new light switch to the left after you enter so that you can turn on the lights in the building. The light switch functions exactly the same as the switch in the front of the building. Simp-

ly press the light switch up and the lights will come on. For your safety, and so that you don't set off the alarm, please do not go through the theater without the lights on. The alarm is loud, and we don't want any unnecessary calls to the alarm company to say "oops!"

After you are in and the lights are on, you can go about your business as usual. The parking lot gate will be closed, and the building doors will be locked as well.

Once you are done and go to leave the theater, simply press the light switch down and the lights will all go out. To leave the building and go to the parking lot, press the metal bar. This will disengage the magnetic lock and let you open the door. Note that pressing anywhere else on the door will not open it.

Once you are in your car and ready to leave, press the button on your remote and the gate will open. Once again, please let the gate open fully before exiting. Once you are completely out of the parking lot, press the button once again on the remote and the gate will close. Please wait and make sure that the gate closes fully before you leave.

This new improvement has been done so that you may feel more secure when going to the Senate Theater. The parking lot is lit at night, so you do not have to worry about being in the dark when going to the theater in the evenings.

A HUGE thank you goes out to Dave and Connie Masserant. They spent many MANY hours at the theater working with several contractors to make this electric gate possible.



FROM THE BENCH

Scott Smith
Mayan Mystery Errata

At the end of the brilliant comedic movie, "Some Like It Hot," actor/comedian Joe E. Brown, suddenly faced with the prospect that Jack Lemmon's character is actually a man, simply says, "Nobody's perfect!" Here is the time when I need to admit that I'm not, either, and make a few corrections to the epic tale of the Fisher Wurlitzer that appeared in the past three issues of this Newsletter. While I pride myself on checking facts as much as possible, there are times when I rely on my memory when I should be spending that same time verifying the facts.

Farny Wurlitzer's first name had no "e" in it. There is no absolute evidence that he was the primary designer of organs at Wurlitzer, only speculation. All we can say with some certainty is that there was somebody on staff who performed this work, and was influenced in some way by organists who helped to mold and shape theatre organs in a progressive manner during a relatively short period of time. They didn't just design themselves.

It was apparently customary to see consoles appear as "plain boxes" on the wiring schedules of Wurlitzer organs, as in the case of my Radio City Music Hall drawings. This, of course, makes sense, as all of the companies (Wurlitzer in particular) were too busy cranking out the organs to deal with details that could be covered elsewhere. Wouldn't it be great to unearth the original drawings for the Fisher console?

There are not two (as reported), but actually three stops in

the Fisher Wurlitzer that do not go all the way down to 8' CC. Those ranks are the Unda Maris, Voix Celeste and Harmonic Flute.

The Disney Hall organ in Los Angeles was actually a collaborative effort between Manuel Rosales and Glatter-Goetz Orgelbau of Owingen, Germany. Rosales provided consultation and some on-site work, while G-G actually built the bulk of the organ, according to my sources.

While concert hall organs have experienced something of a renaissance in the past 25 years, and it's a fantastic thing, I'm still of the opinion that they just don't make 'em like they used to. At least not the ones I've heard. While it is possible to recreate the sonorous tones of the organs of the pre-WWII era, I don't see this as a growing trend.

Many thanks to helpful friends and colleagues who carefully corrected my errors. Rest assured, they are only the beginning of many errors to come, and, as I have come to believe: it's what you learn after you know it all that really counts!



THEATER ORGAN LINKS ON THE WEB

Dave Calendine

DTOS Board of Directors / Newsletter Editor

The internet is a fascinating place, if you know how to tame it down. It can be “information overload” if you don’t know how to search for what you are looking for. One of the greatest things that you can find on the internet is information on organizations similar to ours. Here is a listing of some links to organizations that might be of interest to you.

First I want to make sure you know of our website, www.dtos.org. This website is maintained by our own Lance Luce. He has been updating the website for many months now. Great pictures and information on our Wurlitzer is located within the easy-to-navigate pages. Be sure to check it out.

Our good friends at the Motor City Theatre Organ Society and the Redford Theatre have their website at www.redfordtheatre.com. They have a great movie series, and of course, are the home to the Barton theatre pipe organ, one of the three remaining original theatre pipe organs in Detroit. Check out their calendar of events to see what great movies you can go see. The newsletter editor highly recommends climbing the stairs and sitting in the center of the balcony for the best seats to see and hear everything there!

A short journey out I-96 takes you to our state capitol in Lansing and to the Grand Ledge Opera House which houses another great Barton theatre pipe organ. Their website is www.lto-pops.org. Their concert season has just ended, but keep checking their website for the next season to be announced soon.

Going West on I-94 will take you to Ann Arbor and there you can go to the beautiful Michigan Theatre. They have great films shown throughout the week. Their website is michtheater.org. Not only do they have a great selection of films, they also have great concerts throughout the year as well.

Over in Grand Rapids they have a large organ installed at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids. The Great Lakes Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society presents several concerts each year on the 3-manual, 30-rank Wurlitzer organ installed there. More

information on this organization and other organs in their area can be found by going to their website at www.greatlakestheatreorgan.org.

Acme, Michigan, is the home to a wonderful museum that is well worth visiting. The Music House Museum not only houses a Wurlitzer organ (formerly in the Cinderella Theatre in Detroit) but also has a large collection of other mechanical musical machines. Guided tours are given throughout the day that not only describes the music machines, they also play them! More information can be found by going to the Music House Museum webpage at www.musichouse.org.

The Toledo Area Theatre Organ Society (or TATOS) has many members that are also members of DTOS. They have meetings throughout the year in various venues throughout the Toledo area. Their website is www.theatreorgans.com/tatos.

Websites for larger groups often have links to various chapters that are throughout the country. The American Theatre Organ Society has a newly revamped webpage at www.atos.org that has information on theatre organ events happening all around the country and the world.

While many of our members are big fans of the theatre pipe organ, many are also interested in mechanical musical machines. There are two large organizations that are dedicated to these machines. The Musical Box Society, International has chapters throughout the world. Their website is www.mbsi.org. The Automatic Music Instrument Collectors Association, better known as AMICA, also has several chapters throughout the world. More information on them can be found at their website, www.amica.org

Don’t forget that the Detroit Theater Organ Society is now on Facebook. “Friend” the organization there and you will receive updates on happenings with our organization, as well as find pictures of various activities that have taken place.

Jump on the web and explore, and have fun!



The Detroit Theater Organ Society

Senate Theater

6424 Michigan Avenue

Detroit, MI 48210-2957

Telephone: (313) 894-0850

Concert Hotline: (313) 894-4100

Website: www.dtos.org

Look for us on Facebook!

2011 Concert Series

SENATE THEATER

May 15—Jelani Eddington

June 12—John Lauter

July (TBA) - Open Console

September 11—Members Concert

October 9—David Wickerham

November 20—Tony O’Brien

December 11—Dave Calendine