

DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

Volume 54, Issue 10

November 2015

HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!

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Nathan Avakian Premieres at Senate Sunday, November 15, 2015—3:00 p.m.

The Detroit Theater Organ Society is pleased to present a new artist to the line-up at the Senate Theater this month. Nathan Avakian is a multi-talented artist with specialized interests and experience in organ performance, musical arrangement and composition, and lighting design. He makes his Senate debut Sunday, November 15, 2015.

Nathan's fascination with the theatre organ began at age four with a visit to the Portland Organ Grinder Restaurant. He began formal organ studies with Donna Parker at age eleven and has also been frequently coached by Jonas Nordwall. Since winning the American Theatre Organ Society Young Organist Competition in 2009, Nathan has provided theatre organ entertainment across the United States and internationally. In 2011 he completed a six-week concert tour of Australia and New Zealand. That same year he released his first album, *Outside The Box*, featuring both theatre and classical pipe organs as well as virtual orchestrations.

Renowned for his tasteful blending of twenty-first century virtual instrument technology with theatre or-

gan music, Nathan creates performances that satisfy contemporary musical tastes and pay tribute to the historical legacy of the theatre organ. He was commissioned to compose seven original theatre organ soundtracks for the International Youth Silent Film Festival, a program that challenges young filmmakers to create contemporary silent films to theatre organ music. He helped pioneer the festival's expansion which now includes regional festivals in Oregon, Missouri, Adelaide and Melbourne, Australia.

Nathan served as the Youth Representative on the American Theatre Organ Society Board of Directors from 2011-2013 managing programs that recognize and support the work of young organ students.

Currently based in New York City, Nathan works as

a freelance lighting designer and design associate with organizations including Historic Hudson Valley, Princeton University, New York Stage and Film, CAP21 Theatre Company, Purchase Opera, and the Lighting Design Group. Prior to his university studies, Nathan completed twelve years of dance training with Westside Dance Academy in various styles including tap, jazz, and ballet, frequently performing with Oregon Children's Theatre and Krayon Kids Musical Theatre Company. In 2014 Nathan received a B.F.A. degree in lighting design from Purchase College, State University of New York.

Join us for a concert that is not to be missed! Doors to the Senate Theater open at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 15, with the concert starting at 3:00 p.m.

See you at the Senate!



The New Normal

Formation of the Fundraising / Marketing Committee Scott Smith, Chairman

The passing of George Orbits marks the end of one era, and the beginning of another.

Not long before he died, George privately shared with me that he had poured a sizeable sum into the club over a fifty-year period. The figure in itself is daunting, even if you divide it fifty times. I have no doubt he was speaking the truth. His love for the instrument and the club cannot be overstated, and in that financial admission comes the proof.

In a way, we were kept in a comfort zone, like children cared for by a doting father. For the most part, club members were shielded from the problems associated with maintaining the theatre and its financial needs. Negative types might call it a benevolent dictatorship, but while George held some strong opinions (who doesn't?), he never became dictatorial. Above all, he was always mindful of a positive outcome that benefited the club, first and foremost. While he and I may not have agreed on everything, we maintained a mutual respect of each other.

Now we enter a new era; one of uncertainty. From where will our financial support come? Where is our safety net? Is this going to cost us more? Will we have to shut down during the cold weather months?

The answer to these questions is simple: We're going to do it ourselves. In order to meet our current and future financial needs, a new committee has been formed and soon, the venerable Detroit Theater Organ Society will begin to operate under a

new paradigm. You might ask: Who do we think we are? Do we know what we're doing?

The initial goal of staffing the top level of the committee was to have persons with either fundraising experience or business owners or both, and that goal has been met. With a variety of experience, the forming members are Lance Luce, Michael Fisher, Stephen Warner, and Scott Smith. While we don't claim to know everything about raising funds, we all have experience with maintaining the bottom line and seeking new ways to create revenue on a daily basis, be it for our own businesses, an arts group or a church or all. As time goes on, we'd like to see this become a multi-tiered committee that involves more than just the four of us.

One of the first questions people ask is "why not hire a professional fundraiser?" That's a valid question, but that hire does not come without hooks. Professional fundraisers generally want their money up front, which usually comes in the form of a percentage of the needed funding. That sum can be breathtaking, and there are no guarantees that they can perform any better than those hiring them. In the past, I was assigned the task of interviewing a professional fundraiser for possible hiring. After explaining our project to him, he politely but firmly told me that our project was simply too small for him. However, he did want to be helpful and gave many tips that I've used over the years in numerous other applications. So, to sum things up, the hiring of a professional

fundraiser to cure the club's woes, while enticing, seems highly unlikely.

Beyond dues, the club's old method of raising additional revenue was basically two-fold. First, members could send additional amounts of money along with their dues, and designate where they'd like it to be spent. Or not, if they chose to allow the board to spend it as they saw fit. Secondly, one could drop some cash into a basket in the lobby; a permutation on the donation basket passed during a church service. In this case, there was just one basket with a plastic shield over the top. These methods are certainly a nice way to raise small amounts, but generally come without any sort of accountability. That all needs to change. We will be establishing finite goals for projects and make ourselves accountable for how the money is spent, plain and simple. It's only fair to everyone.

Major gifts from generous members like George Orbits, Dave Brewer, Marvin Spear and others should not be overlooked here, but those are few and far between. In the beginning, other members were generous with their time, their resources and their hard-earned money, but after those days passed, we became more complacent. It's human nature.

The use of the 501(c)(3) designation has been largely unused since 1989. That is a tremendously powerful tool in the hands of organizations that have them, but sadly, we have barely used ours since successfully receiving it just over 25 years ago. That's all going to change.

Many people think the answer is solely in grants. While it is true that grants are the answer for many things, they're not the answer for everything, and you'll find that granters are fairly specific about that for which they give. For organizations like ours, there are basically three different types of expenses. We have (1) operating expenses, (2) capital expenses and (3) performance expenses. In theory, our dues are supposed to cover all of them, but without a dramatic increase, they only really cover the concerts. For special performances utilizing extra performers or greater expenses, performance grants are available, and assuming we fit the requirements of a given granter, we might be able to cover all or part of our expenses with their grant. Capital expenses, as in the case of actual, physical needs (such as new bathrooms or marquee) can be all or partially covered under a capital grant, again depending on the granter's wishes. Sadly, there are few grants available for operating expenses. That includes the lights, the gas, the phone and other mundane but necessary expenditures. I've never seen an engraved plaque on any wall anywhere recognizing an individual or corporation or foundation for paying the bills. While we should take advantage of whatever is available to us, we should not be reliant upon grants for continued operation for basic needs. Our goal needs to be to handle that ourselves. Otherwise, we'll become complacent again and we're back where we started.

What do others do?

The New Normal

Continued from the previous page

Churches? Museums? Arts groups? We'll be looking at all of them and "cherry picking" the most effective methods used by everyone else and creating those of our own.

Any expression of "need" is something shunned by many, often feeling that it demonstrates weakness or mismanagement, and that can potentially lead to embarrassment for some. Our parents taught us that notion, and their parents before that. It seems logical, but is quite the opposite of the management of a successful nonprofit arts organization. The blunt truth is that we're all in the same boat on this. Live theatre, dance, music and any performance art is just taking

it on the head. Even the mighty NFL cannot fill their stadiums anymore. We're experiencing a paradigm shift right now, where people turn to their computers or their phones (yes, I said phones!) for entertainment.

Of course, criticism of our efforts is inevitable, and we're prepared to handle that. Cries of "oh, how the mighty have fallen" are really demonstrative of naive types who fail to understand what's going on out in the world, and keep their heads deeply planted in the sands of yesteryear. They also fail to recognize that we have responsibly supported ourselves for over fifty years, and while there have been bumps in the road, we always

landed safely on the other side of them and kept going. Certainly we're not going to live in denial of the fact that the-times-they-are-a'changin', but we need to find creative ways to perpetuate ourselves and share the joy we feel from the tones of the Mighty Wurlitzer with the world.

Fundraising is a function of marketing, and to a degree, vice-versa. We hear the term "branding" a lot these days, and we are creating a definition of what and who we are and how we wish to be perceived right now. This creates a unified direction from which we can not only self-identify, but to "sell our product."

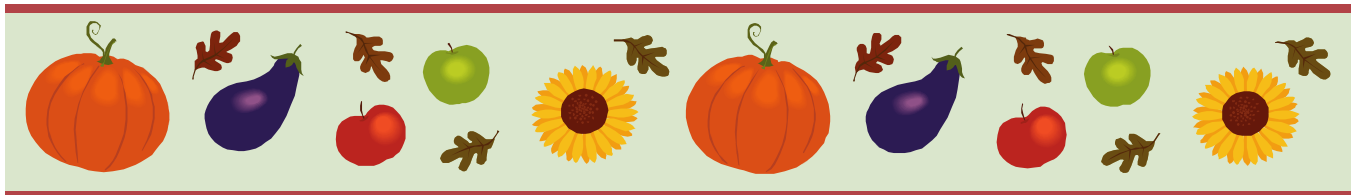
So, what are club members to expect in the coming

months and years? In a word: events. Lots of them. They will not all be the same, some will take place at the Senate, some will not, and some won't require you to leave home at all. We're going to mix it up, and the big thing is that it will be fun! As with local public radio and television stations, an overall financial goal will be determined and we'll all be asked to participate in attaining that goal.

Just some of the things we'll be talking about and acting upon in the future will be:

- Auctions
- Estate planning
- Special concerts
- And more!

So, come on...be a part of the music where the music is a part of you!



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE REDFORD THEATRE

November 14—Classic Cartoon Festival

November 20 & 21—Miracle on 34th Street

December 4 & 5—White Christmas

December 12—Christmas Concert

Featuring Steve Schlessing and the Celebration Church Choir
and vocalist, Rachel Kowalski

December 18 & 19—It's a Wonderful Life

with guest appearance of Karolyn "Zuzu" Grimes at each showing

Doors open one hour prior to all event times. Organ overtures start thirty minutes prior to show times, except for concerts. Schedule subject to change. For the most up-to-date schedule information, visit www.redfordtheatre.com.

Our First Fundraising Event

The Brewer Bash

Sunday, December 27, 2015 3:00 p.m.

MUSIC!
OPEN CONSOLE!
FOOD!
SILENT AUCTION!
PRIZES!

In days gone by, the late David Brewer would host a party at his home on December 30 of every year. It was called The Brewer Bash. There would be music, food, laughter, fun, and you'd get

to see people you hadn't seen since the last one! It was a great combination of people, and music would be played on Dave's pipe organ well into the wee hours of the morning.

The Fundraising/Marketing Committee is kicking off its schedule of events for the coming year with a reworked version of Dave's great party. Instead

of those late hours, we're holding it during the afternoon during the festive holiday season.

Being a fundraising event, you'll be invited to contribute above the ticket price toward a variety of projects. It's the end of the tax year, and this will be a fine way to offset your tax burden with a little fun, a little food and a whole lot of great music!

Senate Theatre
6424 Michigan Ave.,
Detroit

Suggested Admission Price:
\$15.00 per person

Tickets available at the November and December concerts (and at the door).

Come on! Be A Part Of The Music Where The Music Is A Part Of You!

EVENT SCHEDULE FOR THE SENATE THEATER

Sunday, November 15—Nathan Avakian in concert

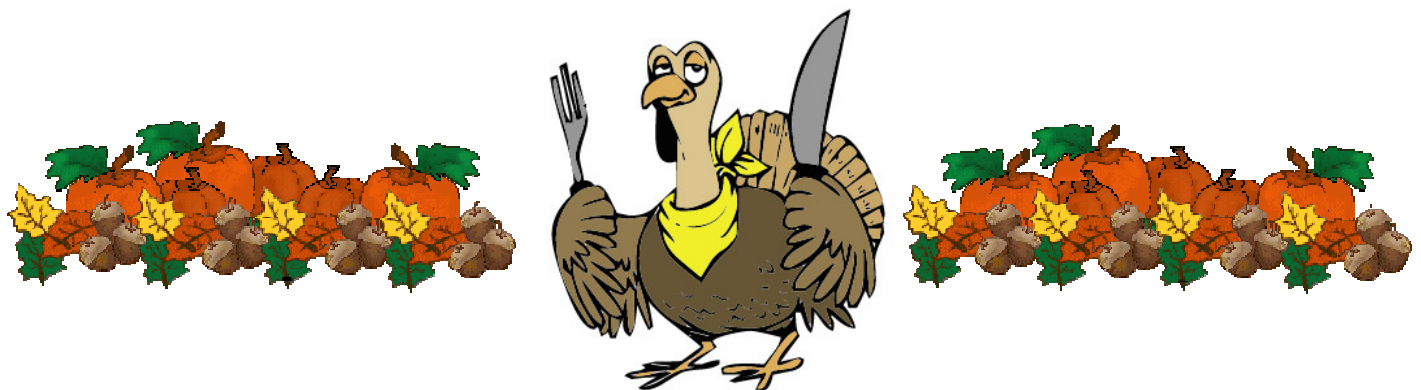
Saturday, November 28—Planes, Trains & Automobiles (1987)

Sunday, December 6—John Lauter in concert

Saturday, December 12—Holiday Inn (1942)

Doors open one hour prior to all event times. Schedule subject to change.

For the most up-to-date schedule information, visit our web site at www.dtos.org.



Intermission Desserts for December Concert

Dave Calendine

DTOS Board of Directors

As is tradition at the Senate Theater for the upcoming Christmas concert next month on December 6, we ask that all members that are attending the concert bring goodies for the party

that is held during intermission. We would like to have cookies, brownies and other fancy baked goods (finger foods only, please!). You are also encouraged to bring foods such as cheese and veggies

for our friends and guests that can't have the sweet items. The coffee, Christmas punch (non-alcoholic) and water are free that day.

The intermission will be

extended so that there will be plenty of time to eat and renew friendships.

We hope to see you there.

Talk Us Up

Bring your friends, relatives and neighbors! Bring their friends, relatives and neighbors! Let them know what they are missing.

After well over fifty years we have become one of the hidden treasures of the Detroit area. Let's introduce ourselves to all those people that love theater organ music but just don't know it yet. We are in a

unique position in that we are the only venue in the country that allows the general public to tour the pipe chambers. We also have one of the largest Wurlitzer pipe organs ever built. The DTOS has much to boast about. All we need to do is spread the word and "talk us up."

It is gearing up to be a fantastic concert season in

2016 with some very good artists. Some are returning from years past and some are making their first visit to the Senate Theater. Artists, such as Pierre Fracalanza, Jonas Nordwall and Scott Foppiano will be returning once again to the Mighty Wurlitzer. American Theater Organ Society's theater organist of the year for 2015, David Gray, will be mak-

ing his first visit to the Senate Theater in April of 2016.

Please spread the word and invite your friends, relatives and neighbors to the Senate Theater. We also offer group sales for large groups. Contact any board member for details. See you at the Senate!

Kevin Werner

DTOS Board of Directors

Marquee Update and More

The front of our building is still missing its marquee. The process wasn't as simple as we had hoped, and it sure is more expensive that we ever wished it would be. Although it looks the same up front for the past several months, there are lots of activity concerning the marquee happening behind the scenes. It's time for a quick update so that you know what is happening with your Senate Theater.

We have engaged a structural engineer to do design work for us. This is the first step in getting several different plans to replace the reader boards (where the letters hang inside the theater). Once we receive this important work from the engineer, we hope to be able to eliminate the temporary supports that are currently down on the sidewalk.

Once the finished design work is received and approved, we will put out a call for bids for the steel work that will be needed to build the skeleton of a new marquee structure. We will also be looking at replac-

ing the plastic-letter reader boards with an LED sign, which will make changing the marquee easier for us to do.

To say that this project is expensive is an understatement. We will be starting some major fund-raising projects, as mentioned previously in this Newsletter.

Many know that I work at the Fox Theatre in downtown Detroit. If you have driven by in the past month, you will notice that we have a new marquee. The old marquee was completely removed and the old supporting structure was rebuilt. The new marquee, which is over nine stories tall and has new LED reader boards, as well as LED lights underneath the canopy of the sign, cost well over 1.5 million dollars. While this is nowhere near what ours will cost, it is still a daunting task for our organization to undertake.

We need your help to make this project happen. Please support the various fund-raising opportunities that we will be introducing over the next few months. Also, don't

forget that our organization is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

We look forward to moving forward with our new marquee, and we hope that you will share our excitement of having a new marquee on the front of our theater!

While the marquee is the biggest task we are undertaking right now, there are other projects that will be worked on over the next several months.

Before we lost Fred Brudlot earlier this year, he was working on upgrading our sound and lighting system at the theater. New microphone and DMX (lighting) cables were started, but the project was never completed. Now that we are using our stage for more things than just organ concerts, it is important that we update our sound and lighting equipment to meet the needs of organizations that wish to utilize our theater. Perhaps you would like to help work on this project? Not only are donations needed for equipment, but work to run

the new cables is needed as well.

We are in need of more volunteers to help with various tasks around the theater. We could use help with selling tickets, taking tickets, selling raffle tickets, keeping the theatre cleaned (and those restroom stalls stocked with needed supplies!). With more volunteers comes less work, and the ability to take turns doing work so that our volunteers aren't always on call for every show. Our volunteers are the backbones of our organization. Please help us help you by volunteering your time at the Senate Theater.

Scott Smith coined a phrase a while ago that is now one of the taglines on the back of this Newsletter, as well as in his article, that is perfect for the DTOS. *Come be a part of the music, where the music is part of you.* Come enjoy this month's concert. It will make you realize just how true that statement is.

I hope to see you at the Senate soon!

Dave Calendine

DTOS Board of Directors

DETROIT THEATER
ORGAN SOCIETY

Over 50 Years of Entertainment

Detroit Theater Organ Society

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*Come Be a Part of the Music
Where the Music is a Part of You!*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.DTOS.ORG

Join us for our
Christmas concert
with John Lauter
December 6



photo: Lance Luce