



# Theatre Organ Society

## ORGAN LOG

February 2013

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Toll free Info Line & Message Center: 1-888-LATOS22

Website: [www.LATOS.org](http://www.LATOS.org)

Coming this April 14, 2013 at 2:30pm...

# Bob Salisbury in Concert!

**Theatre Pipe Organ Music and Two Short Silent Film Comedies!**

*at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse*



One of the amazing things about a silent film was its ability to communicate to everyone. Not bound by the restraints of speech, its powerful ability to express truly made it an international language. The music, the theatre, and the film presentation made the silent film come alive. In the silent film era, theatres often utilized a theatre pipe organ (*played by a single musician*) to produce sound effects and create the "voice" of an entire orchestra. As many of us know, the theatre pipe organ became synonymous with, and was an essential part of the silent movie. From the early 1920s to the end of that decade, taking in a movie was a unique

and wondrous experience that became a regular ritual for many who went to the theatre. It was a "magic carpet ride" that transported them from their tedious lives to a world of unparalleled opulence, *the movie palace*. A typical theatre's architecture, furnishings, tapestries, hand-painted frescos, chandeliers, woodwork and marble, and other over-the-top decorative touches were as sumptuous as those in the court of a king. This was the film experience at its best.

**On April 14 at 2:30pm the incomparable artist, Mr. Bob Salisbury, will be featured on the fabulous Wurlitzer pipe organ at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse with a program that will make a grand comeback for the silent film era.** The audience will relive the silent film experience with a theatre organ concert that will include two short comedy silent films accompanied by Bob.

This will be a fantastic program that you will never forget (*you will be glad that you came*).

The March issue of the Organ Log will have a feature article about Bob Salisbury that will include details of the concert and silent films, a photo of Bob at the Mission Playhouse Wurlitzer, a bio about Bob, and more. **Stay tuned!**

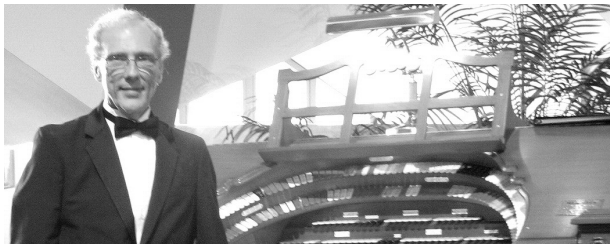
## OUR MINI WURLI-WEEKEND

### *and the Celebration of Life for Chris Gorsuch*

by **Madeline Levolsi**, a friend and supporter of LATOS

Although the LATOS chapter did not have a Wurlitzer Weekend this year, Bill Carr, Hassell Moores and I enjoyed a mini version of our own January 18-21.

We drove to San Diego on Friday for the Saturday **Celebration of Life for Chris Gorsuch**. This was held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Spring Valley, where the Theater Organ Society of San Diego owns and maintains a 4/24 Wurlitzer. January 18 would have been Chris' 59th birthday. The afternoon began with a reception in the church hall where birthday cake and punch were served. We also had the opportunity for short visits with the organists.



Chris Gorsuch 1954-2012

Later, in the church, Jelani Eddington welcomed the audience to a celebration of Chris Gorsuch's life. The organists appearing and the music played that afternoon all had some connection to Chris. With Russ Peck on the drums, Jelani, at the organ, played "Get Happy" and "Take Five."

Next up was Chris Elliott, who had played Rialtofest in Joliet in April, 2012 with Gorsuch. He played the beautiful "All the Things You Are", which was followed with what Gorsuch called "tassel music," "Love For Sale."

Walt Strony had been scheduled to appear at the concert, but something came up at home in Las Vegas and he was unable to attend. He did send greetings.

Donnie Rankin, who had played drums for Chris, gave us "All's Fair In Love and War." Then Glenn Tallar took the bench for "Serenade" from "Student Prince." With Russ Peck on drums, Donnie returned to the organ for "Cute."

Russ said he had known Chris Gorsuch since about 1980, when Chris played at Organ Power Pizza in San Diego. We heard Russ at the organ play "Solitude." He then introduced the next artist with "superlative, superlative, superlative.....Lyn Larsen." Lyn had

known Chris for about forty years. Chris took lessons from him in Phoenix. Lyn played two very different numbers, "Wake Up and Live" and "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice."

Chris Gorsuch had been a fan of orchestral pieces and transcribing them for the organ. The finale featured Jelani at the piano, Donnie at the organ, and Russ on drums for a great rendition of the "Warsaw Concerto."

With Jelani back at the organ and Donnie on drums, the encore was "Gonna Build A Mountain."

Sunday afternoon was fun program at **Plummer Auditorium** in Fullerton. **Rosemary Bailey** played their 4/37 Wurlitzer. She played a wide variety of music and had quite a sense of humor. Personal favorites included her Cole Porter selections, "Poet and Peasant Overture" and "The Trolley Song." Coming back from intermission, she played four numbers on the Roland Atelier. While nothing like a theatre organ, it had some great sounds, especially the strings. I really enjoyed "Pure Imagination", "An Affair to Remember", "Le Jazz Hot", and "Pirates of the Caribbean." After more selections on the Wurlitzer, Rosemary brought the program to a close with requests from the audience.

Sunday evening found us at the **Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo** with a 4/26 Wurlitzer and **Ron Rhode**. It was nice to see Phoenix friend Karl Warner there as well. Ron has been playing these programs for several years, usually as an add-on to the LATOS Wurlitzer Weekend. The majority of Ron's selections that evening were pre-1940. We also heard some Sousa and Romberg. Ron had recently seen the Cathy Rigby production of "Peter Pan" (me, too!), so he played four songs from that show. Two personal favorites were "Paddlin' Madeline Home" (thank you, Ron), and "What'll I Do?". He brought his program to a close with "Slaughter On 10th Avenue."

We had a great time! I encourage the rest of you to venture out and attend organ concerts in California. Check out the chapter websites at [atos.org](http://atos.org) and see what's going on over there. Most organ installations in California are two hours away or less by plane, and not too bad a drive if you prefer to stay on the ground.

## “GUESS WHERE THIS IS”

Jay Rosenthal was the first to guess that the “puzzler photo” in the January 2013 issue of the Organ Log was of Ethel Smith (in a comedic photo with Henry Hunt).

This time the puzzler photo is of a *place* that existed in Los Angeles and was ultimately demolished. Can you guess where this is, and what the organ is?



*Photo courtesy of Mr. Jim Lewis*

The first person to send an email with a correct answer to this month’s puzzler will receive two tickets to the Apr. 14 Bob Salisbury Concert. Email answers to [LATOS1@verizon.net](mailto:LATOS1@verizon.net)

## GENE ROBERSON CONCERT Review

*by Dorsey Caldwell, LATOS Board Member / Edited by T. Paul*

On Sunday, January 27, 2013 LATOS presented another fine theater organ program which was held at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse. The featured artist of the day was Gene Roberson who is no stranger to LATOS members, having played for us on several prior occasions. On this visit he brought with him five gentlemen who played brass instruments (3 trumpets and 2 trombones). In addition, he was joined for vocals by his daughter, Roz and David Wells, a fine young man from his church.

Promptly, at 3:00 PM the house lights dimmed and Gene was introduced as the console rose up out of the pit while he played a very upbeat piece done in true theater organ style. That set the mood for what was to become a most pleasant 2 hours of the kind of music we all came to hear. Soon, the brass players were brought on to play Leroy Anderson's "Bugler's Holiday" accompanied superbly by Gene at the Wurlitzer. Afterward for a change of pace the brass and organ were heard playing a selection by Bach; then it was on to several selections from the American Song Book, all of them familiar and very enjoyable.

The brass players retired for a much deserved respite and the organ was featured in the performance of a wide variety of tunes all written during the first half of the 20th century which in this writer's opinion was the heyday of American popular music.

The brass came back on to play a few more selections with the organ together as a group followed by an additional piece with just the organ and one trumpet.

Gene then introduced his daughter, Roz who has a beautiful soprano voice. She, together with her father presented the next couple of selections including a very sweet rendition of "Will I Ever Tell You?" from Meredith Wilson's "The Music Man". It was then time to introduce David Wells who demonstrated a very polished baritone voice while being accompanied on the organ. One of his songs was "Lida Rose", again from "The Music Man." This piece was originally done by a barbershop quartet in the show but in this instance David's voice along with the organ allowed you to imagine that there actually was a quartet singing up there. These two songs were then blended by the artists into counterpoint as was originally done in the show. The organ was used in accompaniment which produced a beautiful result and the audience just loved it.

Following a few more tunes on the Wurlitzer including "Lover" the afternoon came to an end all too soon with Gene, Roz and David performing a wonderful old hymn. This was truly an occasion where the audience was left wanting more while being able to "whistle" the majority of the music as they headed home. The console then disappeared down into the pit from whence it came with Gene playing his theme song.

We extend our thanks to you Gene and your cast for a truly wonderful and memorable experience. Please come back soon.

NOTE: This program was produced at considerable expense that was significantly borne by the finite resources of LATOS since box office receipts did not cover all of the costs. We urge you to make every effort to attend these wonderful performances and bring along your friends and family members. Sustained membership and attendance at performances is what LATOS depends on remain viable and continue its mission to preserve the increasingly rare theatre pipe organ – and share it with members so they can enjoy these amazing instruments.



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## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMING EVENTS** *(LATOS Events are in larger/bold text)*

February 9, 2013 – Saturday at 1:30pm – Bob Salisbury accompanies the silent film, “Thief of Baghdad”. The Mission Inn on 3640 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside. Admission \$10

February 21, 2013 – Thursday at 7:00pm – Bob Salisbury accompanies the silent film, “The Mark of Zorro”. Shafter Congregational Church on 430 E. Tulare Avenue, Shafter, CA 93263. Admission \$10

February 23, 2013 – Saturday at 1:00pm – Bob Salisbury accompanies the silent film, “Peter Pan”. Shafter Congregational Church on 430 E. Tulare Avenue, Shafter, CA 93263. Admission \$10

**April 14, 2013 - Sunday at 2:30pm – Bob Salisbury Concert with two short comedy silent films at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse.** *More details on the front page of this issue of the Organ Log. A full story will be posted in the March Organ Log.*

**Ongoing: Concerts, Movies, and Shows at the Old Town Music Hall**, 140 Richmond Street in El Segundo. For info on concerts or movies **featuring the 4-manual/27-rank theatre pipe organ**, call (310) 322-2592 (recorded info) or visit <http://oldtownmusicall.wordpress.com>

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