

The Newsletter Voice of the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts

Steven Eaklor at Tivoli - May 14

Our next event will be a CATOE business meeting and social on **Saturday, May 14th at 10am** at the Classic Cinemas' flagship **Tivoli Theatre 5021 Highland Avenue** in Downers Grove. Following the business meeting, **Steven Eaklor** will perform at CATOE's Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. There will also be time for open console. Please bring sweets to share and the concession stand will be selling snacks and drinks.



During the business meeting, members of the CATOE Board of Directors will update the membership on a few topics including the restoration work on the Mundelein organ. Also, nominations will be accepted for the following offices for the CATOE 2011-2012 Board: President, Secretary, VOX CATOE Editor, and a 'member at large'.

According to the CATOE bylaws, all nominations must be seconded at the time of nomination and the nominee must agree to the nomination. This can be done either in person at time of nomination, or in advance by submitting a written indication of their willingness to serve on the board. Elections for the nominated candidates will be held at the next regularly scheduled CATOE business meeting.

Thanks to CATOE members Willis & Shirley Johnson and 'Classic Cinemas' for their non-stop support of CATOE; and providing the staffing and use of the Tivoli Theatre.

Business Meeting / Nominations

Steven Eaklor's musical training began at the age of 6, when he began to play the Hammond Chord organ. A few years later, Steven started to study the Hammond console and spinet organs, deciding to pursue music as a career. He completed his formal study at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado where he earned a B.A. in Music Performance.

His extensive performance experience includes everything from rock bands to symphony orchestras. In his capacity as Director of Product Planning and Development with the Hammond Organ Company, he is responsible for a great many of the sounds and features you will find on the newer Hammond organs.

Steven is a walking encyclopedia of the history of the electronic organ, especially the Hammond organ. Since he was a child he has loved the Hammond and ironically enough grew up to become one of the company's product engineers and demonstration artists. Within the industry, Steven has played a vital role as the leading Hammond expert for the Museum of Making Music and countless publications.

Steven Eaklor is one of the most talented and versatile organists in the world. He is equally at home with the classical organ repertoire, theatre, jazz, and gospel styles. His performances are always entertaining and interesting, and he brings to his performances, a thorough awareness and love of music.

After several years in the Philadelphia area, Steven recently moved back to Chicago and is working with Hammond-Suzuki. He can also be seen playing keyboards with the Chicago R&R/R&B band "AUGUST".

Bozo Show Organ Auctioned

A rarely used Conn organ and associated Leslie speaker was recently auctioned by Leslie Hindman Auctioneers. The lot consisted of 3 pieces described by the auctioneer as, "played to accompany "Mr. Bob" Trendler's Big Top Band and regular circus acts on WGN-TV's 'Bozo's Circus' from approximately 1961 to 1975, comprising (of) a Conn electric organ with bench, an Echo speaker and a Leslie speaker."

The organ was being listed for it's owner, Greg Cone, who's father, a WGN-TV sound engineer purchased the organ from WGN in 1975. The organ was rarely used after that date, and was sold in "partial working order" at this auction. An amendment to the auction listing added, "It powers on and many of the keys play, but a number of tubes are burnt out and the Leslie speaker produces a mild buzz."

The organ's auction received a tremendous amount of media attention a few weeks before the sale, when former Bozo staffers including longtime Bozo's Circus producer Al Hall, made comments to the Chicago Tribune expressing concerns about the organ's authenticity claiming that the Bozo Show band, never had an organ in it. "The 13-piece band was brass and piano," Hall said. "It never used an organ."

Upon further review and with documentation, including a cancelled check as proof of purchase from WGN, it was determined that the organ was used on a few rare occasions.

According to Time Out Chicago blogger Robert Feder, the winning bid of \$3,000 (plus \$660 for buyer's premium fees) was entered by David Plier, a board member of the Museum of Broadcast Communications. Plier said he plans to donate the organ to the museum for its exhibit on WGN children's shows.



This photo provided by the auctioneer shows the Conn organ and speakers believed to be used on WGN-TV's "Bozo's Circus" which sold for \$3,660.00 including auction fees.

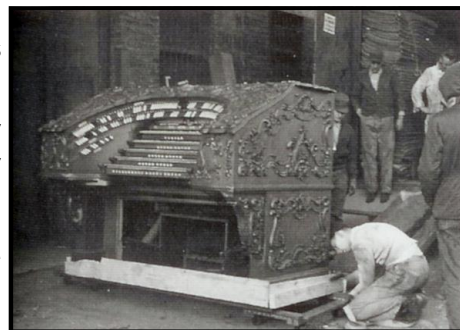
Marboro Theatre Wurlitzer History

The May/June issue of Theatre Organ included a wonderfully written and footnoted history of Wurlitzer Opus 1587. Originally installed in the Marboro Theatre on Chicago's west side, this unique Wurlitzer

organ has had a few homes since it's departure from the theatre in the spring of 1959.

Several CATOE members and friends helped play a role in the removal and subsequent installations of this instrument -- their preservation efforts of this instrument are wonderfully acknowledged in this article.

With many historical photographs and detailed research by author, Jonathan Ortloff, "Chicago Beginnings" fills several pages with the history of the famous 5 manual



theatre organ. Please take a few moments to read the article and check out the many photographs (including the above 1959 image courtesy of John Shanahan) of this instrument from it's 84 year history.

The organ will be featured at this year's ATOS National Convention, held in Providence, Rhode Island

Best Laid Plans - No April Social

Maybe you are one of the several CATOE members who have asked "What happened to our April social?" Well, CATOE had originally planned on holding the April business meeting and social with Steven Eaklor at the Arcada Theatre, but due to a late change in booking of a show in the theatre, we were notified that the stage extension over the orchestra pit and organ console could not be removed for our scheduled date. It was decided that having a social where the artist and the audience were separated just would not work, and the event was cancelled. Arcada management is eager for our use of their organ and will schedule another event later this year.

CATOE is very lucky to have wonderful relationships with several venues and appreciate all of them for sharing their facilities with us. We are very understanding when a venue needs to make a change and we are always happy to hear news of busy bookings rather than dark auditoriums. We hope you do to!