



# CIPHERS

SEPTEMBER 2013

Newsletter of the  
Central Indiana  
Chapter American  
Theatre Organ Society

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# Pierre Fracalanza: Sight and Sound...

Show at Warren PAC on September 8th | 2:30pm!

### About the Show:

On Sunday, September 8, 2013, noted theatre organist and Steinway Artist™ PIERRE FRACALANZA will perform a solo show titled, "An Experience in Sight and Sound", in which he perform on the theatre pipe organ with unique projected visuals, similar to those seen in his YouTube videos, which have received great acclaim from around the world. The show will take place on Sunday, September 8, 2013 at 2:30pm at Warren Performing Arts Center, home of the Dessa and Virginia Byrd Memorial Barton Theatre Pipe Organ originally installed in the Indiana Theatre downtown.

Tickets are \$12 presale, \$15 at the door. Student tickets are FREE at the door. Visit [www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org) to order tickets, or call (317) 255-8056. The concert will take place at Warren Performing Arts Center, located at 9500 E. 16th St., Indianapolis, part of the Warren Central High School Complex. Free parking.

### About Pierre Fracalanza:

Pierre Fracalanza discovered the theatre organ while in his early twenties. Having studied at the Eastman School of Music, Pierre was happiest improvising piano and utilizing his vocal talents to entertain. On a fateful night, he visited Theatre Organ Pizza and Pipes in Pontiac, Michigan where jazz organist, Father Jim Miller was playing a Barton hybrid. He inquired if Father Jim Miller offered coaching on theatre organ. And less than a month later, Pierre was on the "rotation" of four organists which supplied lunch and dinner music seven days a week.

Despite a smattering of theatre organ concerts back then, Pierre mostly concentrated on his piano/vocal skills for the next twenty five years. But always intrigued by technology, Pierre did two



Pierre Fracalanza pictured at the console of the famous New York Paramount Wurlitzer, now installed at Century II in Wichita, KA.

and three piano concerts, the other pianos being Yamaha Disklavier Reproducing Pianos. Pierre did Disklavier commercials. He introduced the original Yamaha Disklavier to Detroit audiences and when Yamaha produced their Disklavier 2000, a player piano for the new Millennium, Pierre presented that piano in both Detroit and Chicago. On organ, Pierre did many concerts on Yamaha HX-1 and ELX-1 models and then, the Roland Atelier line. And during much of the time, Pierre was and still is a church music director for St. James Catholic Parish in Novi, a parish with 2700 families.

(Cont'd on page 2...)

## PEOPLE

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# About Pierre Fracalanza...

(Cont'd from page 1...)

In the last five years, Pierre has been producing performance videos to enhance his piano/vocal shows. And it was in making such videos that Pierre spotted a new breed of virtual organs (powered by the Hauptwerk software engine). Intrigued, Pierre made some contacts and outfitted himself with a baby software theatre organ. Soon after, he became an Artist for Paramount Organ Works and helped introduce the Paramount 320, 332 and 450. A string of YouTube videos later, Pierre found himself back on REAL theatre pipe organs. But armed with pianistic and video experience, he has actively sought to bring a new DIMENSION to the sights and sounds of a theatre pipe organ.

In August of 2012, Pierre was officially named to the Steinway & Sons Artist Roster, a world-wide list of musicians who have exemplified the ideals of Steinway & Sons both now and in the past.

Pierre returned to the Theatre Pipe Organ with his September 2012 Concert at the Senate in Detroit. This past Spring, he concertized in Wichita and at Casa Loma in Toronto. Next year, he will be featured

at the ATOS Convention and at RialtoFest, an annual "Pipe Organ Extravaganza" in the Chicago area.

Pierre's Indianapolis Concert will be an experience in sight and sound. With extensive preparation, the September 8th show will not only tickle your hearing with intricate arrangements, but feast your eyes with visuals. You won't just hear music that sounds like a roller coaster. You'll experience riding on one. You won't just hear big band music. You'll hear and watch a big band. An afternoon full of surprises awaits as you attend this special concert. And the true star of the show is the Grande Barton Theatre Organ.



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P. O. Box 44092

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PH: 262-639-8788

E-mail: [rj.eddington@atos.org](mailto:rj.eddington@atos.org)

# President's Message

We had a nice turnout of over 50 at our August social that featured the wonderful playing talent of JUSTIN LaVOIE, the winner of the recent ATOS Young Theatre Organists Competition in Atlanta, GA. All there enjoyed his great performance and his mature and interesting commentary before each selection. For a young man of 18, he has a bright future ahead of him. His theatre organ teacher, Jelani Eddington, is rightly proud of his student. Justin and his dad Vince stayed and socialized with our members and guests quite awhile before heading back to their home in the Detroit area. We thank both of them for making the effort to come down and spend time with us, and we look forward to hearing Justin give his YTOC winner's formal concert at our Indianapolis ATOS Annual Convention next July, this time at Manual High School.

I'm very excited about our next artist to appear! PIERRE FRACALANZA is a "new" star on the theatre organ scene, and his YouTube presentations quickly show the tremendous talent this gentleman has in designing and playing his marvelous and imaginative arrangements of popular and familiar songs. If you have access to a computer, check out this YouTube sparkling arrangement by Pierre of "Top Hat, White Tie And Tails": <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdQbgdeVArY>

Although I'm sure he doesn't remember our first meeting, probably 25 years ago, we met at a lovely dinner restaurant in a prosperous suburb of Detroit where he was playing cocktail piano, and I was a guest of Henry Hunt, long-time manager of Lyn Larsen's. Henry had told me of this young man's prodigious pianistic ability, and it was no exaggeration. Pierre came over to our table during his break, and I found him to witty and charming and full of musical talent. Later, he played theatre organ in a pizza restaurant that Henry established in the Detroit area, but I never got to hear him there and completely lost touch with him until by chance I happened across some of his marvelous renditions on YouTube a couple of years ago. I got in touch with Pierre, complimenting him on his wonderful styling and magnificent and complicated arrangements that have since become noticed by more and more people, and we've developed a very fine friendship. His full-time job is Director of Music at a large Catholic parish in a Detroit suburb, and he has been doing a few public theatre organ concerts (notably in Wichita for Mike Coup and in Pierre's home area of Detroit at the large 4-manual Wurlitzer owned by the Detroit Theatre Organ Society), but his appearance at Warren PAC on Sunday, September 8, will be the first time he's concertized in our area. I urge all of you to take advantage of having him in our midst and DON'T MISS attending if you possibly can. If any of you recall Buddy Cole or have Buddy's recordings, or just know of and love Buddy Cole's theatre organ arrangements (they started me on my love of theatre organ many years ago

before I ever heard of George Wright), you won't believe how faithfully Pierre can recreate them. He also marries video to his performances to make the presentation more interesting and enjoyable, so this is really ONE concert you should definitely try to attend. Call me anytime (317-255-8056) to reserve your tickets, either paying then with a credit card and having them mailed to you, or asking that they be held at the door for your payment and pick-up. You'll save \$3/ticket over the box office price, so it's worth doing. Do it NOW while you think of it!

Update on the upcoming above-mentioned ATOS Annual convention: the Jan/Feb issue of THEATRE ORGAN Journal will have all the information and the registration form for convention and hotel. We gave you the link to the convention video in last month's CIPHERS. Do watch it if you've not done so already and mark your calendars now for next July 4 through 9 and be a part of this exciting and enjoyable event. We'll need a lot of help from you, our members, to ensure that our visitors have the best time imaginable while here, sort of a "Superbowl" Hoosier hospitality that ATOS members from all around the world have enjoyed here before. In our next issue, I'll list the areas where we need your help. And we ask that our helpers all register and attend the convention. Many members also take a room at the Hyatt to make it a full experience, but that's not a requirement but is something to consider to be fully involved with our convention and all the fun the attendees have.

-Tim Needler

## CHAPTER CONTACTS

### DUES & MEMBERSHIP

Tim Needler  
tneedler@needlersales.com  
317-255-8056

### CIPHERS EDITOR

Mark Herman  
mherman433@gmail.com  
260-515-3569

### CD DISTRIBUTION/SALES

Mike Rolfe  
mrolfe@iquest.net  
317-358-1564

### TICKET SALES

Tim Needler  
tneedler@needlersales.com  
317-255-8056

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## 2013 EVENT CALENDAR

September 8, 2013 | 2:30pm (Sunday)

### CIC CONCERT: Pierre Fracalanza

Warren Performing Arts Center, Indianapolis

*For the Pierre Fracalanza show, to purchase tickets in advance (\$12 instead of \$15 at the door), contact Tim Needler at 317-255-8056 anytime to order with a VISA or MasterCard; or mail him a check made payable to CIC-ATOS for the number of advance sale tickets you would like, and he will mail your tickets to you or hold them at the box office.*

October 5, 2013 | 11am (Saturday)

### CIC SOCIAL: Borchers' Chapel and Rust Residence, Cookout and Matt Gerhard Program

Seymour, IN. Directions and info in next issue.

October 5, 2013 | 7:00pm (Saturday)

### Warren York Remembered: Mark Herman & Anthony Snitker

Virginia Theatre, Champaign, IL

Details in next CIPHERS and [www.thevirginia.org](http://www.thevirginia.org)

November 10, 2013 | 2:30pm

### CIC SOCIAL: Various Artists

Hedback Community Theatre, Indianapolis



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