CIPHERS

AUGUST 2013

Newsletter of the Central Indiana Chapter American Theatre Organ Society

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Justin LaVoie at Warren!

18-year-old 2013 ATOS Young Organist Competition Winner to Perform August 11th Social | 2:30pm!

August Social:

Join us at Warren Performing Arts Center at 2:30pm on Sunday, August 11th to hear the sensational talents of Justin LaVoie, who only weeks ago won first place in the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition. This is a free event, and please feel free to bring friends to hear this fine young artist. Refreshments and open console will follow Justin's performance. Warren Performing Arts Center is located at 9500 E. 16th St. in Indianapolis. For more information or questions, please contact Mark Herman at (317) 721-8005.

Justin LaVoie pictured sitting at the Barton organ in Detroit's Redford Theatre.

About Justin LaVoie:

Justin LaVoie is a passionate, 18-year old organist who possesses a steadfast dedication to the theatre organ art form. His fascination with the instrument began at the age of 7, after hearing his first theatre organ recording. This newfound interest compelled Justin to take electronic organ lessons at a local music store for the next six years. In 2008, he attended the ATOS Summer Youth Camp in Chicago, subsequently participating in the 2009, 2010, and 2012 camps. These thoroughly enjoyable and educational opportunities motivated Justin to mature in his musicianship, and he began studying with renowned theatre organist Jelani Eddington in 2010. Shortly thereafter, he began performing movie overtures and intermissions for the public on the Barton organ at the Redford Theatre in Detroit, Michigan, a historic venue owned and operated by the Motor City Chapter of ATOS. In recognition of his diligent musical studies, Justin was named ATOS Student of the Year in 2010, and more recently he won the 2013 ATOS Young Organist Competition, achieving the prestigious title of Overall Winner. In addition to his theatre organ pursuits, Justin studies classical organ with Rick Cucchi, and occasionally plays for services at his home parish. Away from the console, he enjoys listening to a wide variety of music, cooking, spending time outdoors, and maintaining his extensive collection of early 20th century box cameras.

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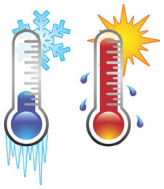

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President's Message

The 2013 ATOS Annual Convention was a "hot" affair, but the weather was mostly cooler with some rain thrown in. No matter, the music was definitely "hot" or great or whatever adjective comes to mind. Here are some highlights, for those who were unable to make it: Four concerts were at the Fabulous Fox Theatre with its huge 4/42 Möller original organ in the 5,000-seat house, and each artist made it sound almost like a totally different instrument. Richard Hills opened the convention at the Fox in the afternoon of the first day with complete mastery of the console and fantastic musicianship, followed in the evening by a great Buster Keaton full-length comedy "Spite Marriage" that Clark Wilson accompanied in his outstanding and creative way.

Jelani Eddington and Tony Fenelon played the next day at the Fox, and each did an outstanding job in his line-up of great selections and expert execution, yet totally different from each other. On the third day the group traveled to Birmingham, AL, to the gorgeous Alabama Theatre to hear the 4/32 Wurlitzer, first in the afternoon under the lively and talented fingers of Scotland's gift to the theatre organ world, David Gray, who dazzled the audience with great showmanship, both on the organ and a 10-minute classical selection on the stage piano. Mark Herman provided a beautifully-registered and played evening performance in his own well-prepared and smoothly-executed style, and the concert ended with a clever encore (being the 4th of July) of "Stars and Stripes Forever" by Sousa in which the well-known piccolo obbligato was played by David Gray who appeared at the piano at the exact right minute, much to the delight of the audience! Furthering the fun, Mark played another chorus during which David came over to the organ bench and sat down on the edge, pushing Mark somewhat out of the way and finally right off the bench, but there was nary a missed note as Mark relinquished control of the console and David smoothly took it over, now firmly seated on the organ bench as Mark scampered over to the piano and played the piccolo obbligato portion. As one would expect, the audience was on its feet by the time this encore was over, and the two smiling performers stood side-by-side and bowed together several times before exiting the stage amidst thunderous applause.

The final day of the convention itself was in the Atlanta area with the morning presentation being the Young Theatre Organists Competition at the Art Deco Strand Theatre in the Atlanta suburb of Marietta, where a fine-sounding 4-manual GW Allen organ has its speakers in the former pipe chambers. The three contestants were all very fine performers, so the judges definitely had their work cut out.

The overall winner of the 2013 YTOC was 18-year-old Justin LaVoie from the Detroit, MI, area. He studies with Jelani, traveling to Jelani's home in Racine, WI, from time to time and keeping the lessons going via Skype (computer interactive TV), and we are very fortunate to have already secured Justin's services for our August social on August 11 at Warren PAC. DON'T MISS THIS VERY TALENTED YOUNG MAN and read his bio elsewhere in this CIPHERS. Bring all your friends to hear him, too, and they will amazed at his natural ability, now being honed and improved by his fine teacher who admits being highly impressed by the talent of this hard-working young man.

After lunch, Lance Luce of Detroit renown played a most pleasant concert on the Allen, and then for us Hoosiers we had a treat at another venue for the final evening concert by our own former Paramount Music Palace organist, Dwight Thomas. It was so good to see him again after these many years, and he has a fine career as a church organist, now the Director of Music and Organist at St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral in St. Petersburg, FL, where he resides. He also teaches organ at the State College of Florida in Bradenton, FL. His concert was on the recently-completed chapter organ, a large (4/16) Page organ in a local high school, but he experienced some problems with the slow relay system and other issues that were unfortunate. Nonetheless, the chapter had done a stupendous job in getting the instrument to play, so we were all glad to hear it and know they will upgrade their relay system and do tonal finishing with profits from the convention, just as our chapter has put convention profits from the past to good use with our local instruments.

It was a very successful convention with approximately 450 in attendance, and I hope we can attract this many, or more, to our ATOS Convention next summer here in Indianapolis, headquartered at the Hyatt-Regency Hotel downtown with the guaranteed great daily rate of $99/single or double room and free internet access from each guestroom. We presented our convention preview video on the final day of the Atlanta Convention to great review!

Before closing, I would like to thank Jerry and Joan Wright who have contributed their collection of 88-note player piano rolls (mostly QRS, plus some older ones) in nice condition for resale to our members or anyone else with an interest in acquiring them. There are 68 QRS rolls (8 of which are the large Jumbo rolls) and 36 of the older ones, and the titles are mostly popular music from the past. If you have any interest in these or would like more information, give me a call anytime at 255-8056, and I'll try to answer any questions. We will entertain an offer for all of them initially as opposed to selling individual rolls at this time.

Hope to see a great turn-out at our next social on August 11th. As mentioned above and elsewhere, our artist, Justin LaVoie, just won the theatre organ playing competition, and that's how most of our current top artists got their start (Mark Herman, Dwight Thomas, Jelani Eddington, etc.). Come and hear him! Bring your friends! And bring something for the refreshment table if you can. Thanks!

-Tim Needler

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2013 Event Calendar

August 11, 2013 | 2:30pm
CIC SOCIAL: Justin LaVoie
Warren Performing Arts Center, Indianapolis

September 8, 2013 | 2:30pm
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.

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