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PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear

Volume 14 No. 9-10

Sept.-Oct. 2003



Enjoy music, food, movies and fun!

PIPES with PIZZA



ANDY CROW

at the PSTOS Theatre Pipe Organ

Sunday, Oct. 5, 2:00 PM

Haller Lake Community Club

12579 Densmore Ave. N., Seattle

Just \$10 per person

Includes Pizza, salad, beverage, dessert and entertainment!

RESERVATIONS are ESSENTIAL!

*Food will be ordered based on the number of reservations received. Those with reservations WILL BE SERVED FIRST. Those whose names are not on the reservation list will be called last. We don't want to run out of food. So **PLEASE** make your reservations no later than **Monday, September 29th** by phoning Clint at **1-877-843-0953** (Toll free-leave message) or by email at clint@pstos.org*

DRIVE DIRECTIONS

Northbound I-5: Use Exit 174 onto NE 130th St., turn left over freeway one long block to 1st Ave. N.E. Turn left (south) one block to 128th*. Right on N.E. 128th a few blocks to Densmore. Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear. **Southbound I-5:** Use Exit 175 onto N.E. 145th, turn right one block to 1st Ave. N.E. Turn left (south) and drive through N.E. 130th to N.E. 128th. Continue where underlined above.

HELP!



CREW NEEDED for the Pizza Party!

- We're **TERRIBLY** short handed! **NEEDED** are—
- 2 ticket-seller helpers
 - 3 food servers
 - 1 meal-ticket collector
 - 2 or 3 clean-up helpers

Please phone Clint to offer your help!
1-877-843-0953 toll free-leave message,
OR email at clint@pstos.org

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.

OFFICERS

President—Clint Meadway, 360-805-1619

Toll-free 1-877-843-0953

Past Pres.—Barbara Graham, 206-525-7859

Vice President—Bill Keller, 360-456-8269

Secretary—Bob Zat, 206-329-1826

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Board Members

Carl Dodrill, 206-236-0067

Jackie Cedarholm, 206-774-4336

Andy Crow, 360-357-8939

Diane Whipple, 253-856-1156

COMMITTEES

Pipeline Editors—Russ & JoAnn Evans

425-485-5465

Pipeline Online Website—Tom Blackwell

206-784-9203

Committee Liaison—Marilyn Schrum

Membership—Doug Owen, 253-566-6734

Publicity & Promotion, Tacoma

Doug Owen, 253-566-6734

Nat'l Magazine Reporter—Jo Ann Evans

HLIC Liaison—Bob Zat, 206-329-1826

PSTOS Organ Maintenance

Bob Zat, Bob White

Haller Lake Keys—Bob Zat

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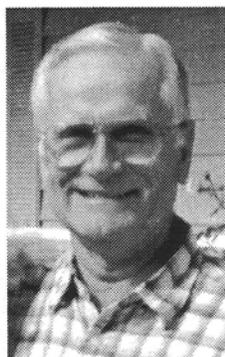
Listing of non-PSTOS events in the Pipeline

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

Advertising in the Pipeline

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

PRESIDENT'S Message



As instructed, we brought our music and took our turns at Ray and Muriel Whelpley's Mighty Wurlitzer and the piano. Some folks even played one or two of Muriel's Hammonds (can we use that word in a theatre organ newsletter?). Socialize and nibble? There was a groaning board of goodies. Some of us ate more than our share and there were still lots of leftovers. Many thanks to Ray and Muriel for their hospitality!

Some enjoyable recordings don't get reviewed in Theatre Organ Magazine. Doris Cooley has made a CD with her daughter, Toni. It has organ solos, piano solos and duets. Yes, this is an electronic, but the playing and sound are excellent and it is "easy listening" that should be in your collection. Contact Doris for your copy. They are only \$15. 425-745-9361

Sunrise, sunset. Two sides of the continuing cycle. Sometimes this creates a dilemma. How do we get young people interested in our passion, how do we accommodate the special needs of the older group? Perhaps hearing teenage organist, Felix Hell, would interest some young folks in the pipe organ. Remember the sensation that then 20 year old Simon Gledhill created with his recording on the Castro Wurlitzer? Jonas Nordwall included selections from "Harry Potter" in his May program at the Wilcox Wurlitzer. Perhaps those of us in the "senior" category would serve the cause well by inviting younger members of our families and friends to attend programs with us. At present, it appears transportation is the biggest issue for seniors. If you invite a younger person to come along, maybe they will drive (get in, sit down, buckle up, shut your eyes). Seriously, your board is

—Continued next column—

PSTOS Coming Events

Pipes With Pizza at Haller Lake Community Club

Another terrific pizza and music event!
Sunday, October 5, 2PM



Ragtime Pianist BOB MILNE & Organist JONAS NORDWALL at Gig Harbor.

A benefit program for both PSTOS and
Children's Home Society of Washington.
Sunday afternoon, November 9

Annual PSTOS Christmas Party **Sunday, December 7**

Leap Year Special Event

Enjoy a once-every-four-years Leap Day
special fun event. Details yet to come!
Sunday, February 29, 2004

Home Party

Another fun home event. Details still in
process. Stay tuned.
Sunday, March 28, 2004

Tony Fenelon Concert!

Another wonderful afternoon of theatre
organ pops at Gig Harbor! Aren't we
fortunate to have this outstanding
performer return!
Mid-May, exact date TBA

More fun events are being planned by your Program Planning Committee. Watch this column!

trying to work out bus transportation
for our events. Several members have
made some great suggestions and we
will report back to you when there are
results.

In the meantime, invite some
younger folks for *Pipes with Pizza* at
Haller Lake. And I hope to see many of
you at the Felix Hell concerts.

PIPE ORGAN Terminology

What is a TREM?

The most noticeable difference between a theatre and a classical organ is the variable pitch of pipes, often referred to as the TREMs. Or more accurately, TREMOLOS. Trems are responsible for the beautiful romantic sounds associated with love themes. Without trems turned on, the theatre organ pipes sound as if they were in a classical organ.

On a theatre pipe organ the tremolo or vibrato sound is produced by a tremulant working together with a pressure regulator. Before air from the blower reaches a pipe it must first pass through a pressure reducer (regulator). This is a box with wood top and bottom, but with flexible leather hinges allowing the box to increase or decrease its internal capacity as well as outgoing pressure.

The amount of change in outgoing pressure is controlled by heavy springs and weights and by the tremulant which is connected to the regulated air side of the regulator. The tremulant is a fairly simple beater mechanism that lets air escape the regulator in gasps rather than steadily. Thus when the pipe receives regulated and 'tremmed' air it speaks with a variable pitch, going slightly sharp and slightly flat approximately 5 to 7 times per second.

The result is the wonderful theatrical sound we all associate with the theatre pipe organ.

PSTOS Organ Work In The Works...

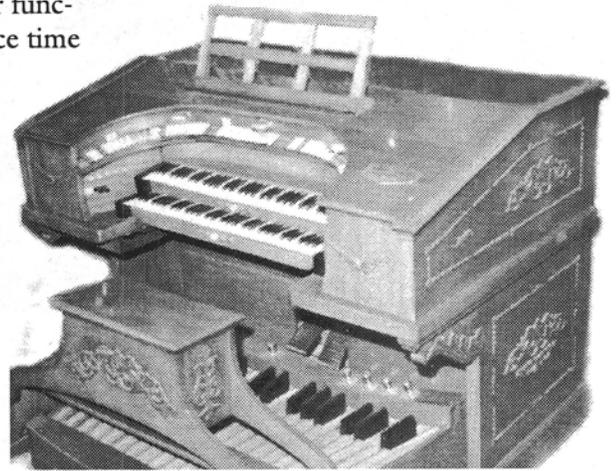
Our club takes care of three theatre organs in Seattle with the efforts of about a half-dozen volunteers. The number of organs probably won't increase soon. But the number of volunteers has increased recently and these new folks will have some fun times soon!

Our first commitment is to the club's Wurlitzer at the Haller Lake Community Center. We use this hidden jewel about three times a year for our functions and there is private practice time available for members. The building is rented to a full time business, so it is necessary to work and practice around their schedule. Our crew chief, Bob Zat, will have those arrangements made soon. Then we will make some needed changes to the Solo expression shutters and install a Clarinet rank in the Main chamber. There is some tedious work to do on the relay. The stop

tablets on the console will be rearranged to more closely meet the Wurlitzer standard layout. It might even be time to spruce up the finish on the console. Fire engine red, anybody?

Due to the good efforts of Carl Dodrill, PSTOS now has the OK to install a real theatre organ console at Franklin High School. It has been

almost humorous to watch organists try to deal with the church organ console that plays this outstanding Kimball theatre organ. So, the Robert-Morton console that spent so much time in the Neptune Theatre will now be upgraded and attached to the Kimball. Is it possible we will end up with a Kimball-Morton decked out in school colors? The majority of the work will be done at the Pipe Organ Foundation's shop



Robert Morton console

on Mercer Island. Clint Meadway is the crew chief and will get the project rolling soon.

The Paramount Wurlitzer has received some intense attention, mostly to prepare it for the Bob Ralston show. Since that entertaining event, much effort has gone into fixing the most pressing problems experienced by Tedde Gibson, Andy Crow and House Organist Dennis James. Crew chief Tom Blackwell is working with theatre management on a mutually beneficial relationship for the future. In the meantime, the Paramount has used the organ for the Silent Movie Monday series, the Tony Bennett show, ice skating, theatre tour groups and private parties. They are committed to making the Wurlitzer a regular part of "The Paramount Experience."

If you are not on the pipe organ maintenance volunteers list and would like to be, contact any of the crew chiefs or any board member. You will be contacted when there is something ready and waiting for your tender loving care.

Other Northwest Theatre Organ Events

Hokum Hall Happenings in September & October

Jeannette d'Armand, Mark Rabe, Edie Hoppin with elegant song stylings,
September 12 & 13, 8PM

Gems From The Musical Theatre, September 19 & 20, 8PM

Jaci Koreski, Peter Becker, Johnson & Peters, & The Bidlows,
September 26 & 27, 8PM

Hokum Jeebs returns with Pianomania, October 3 & 4, 8PM

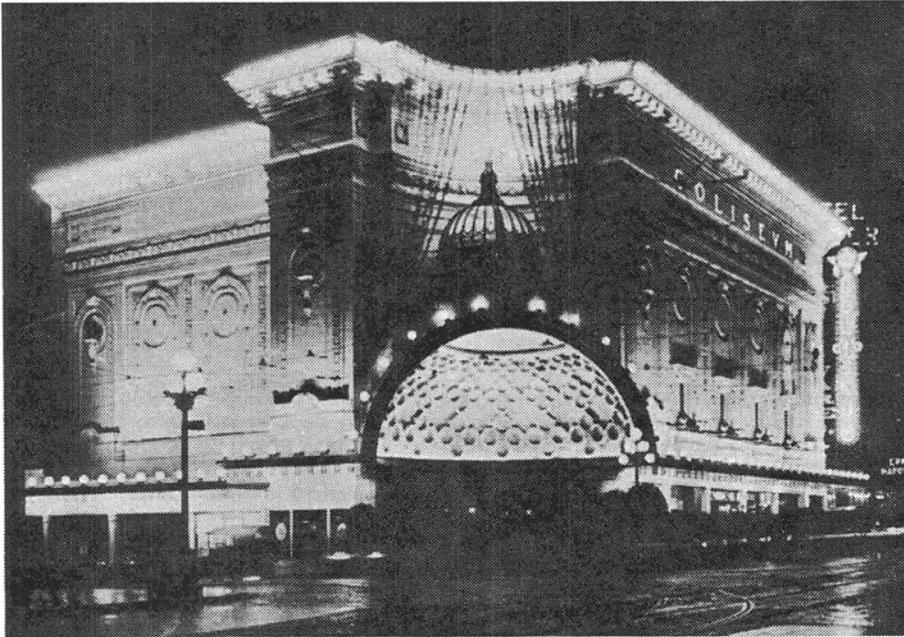
**Pianomania II with Hokum, Lou, Allyson Kramer and two more
Pianomaniacs!, October 17 & 18, 8PM**

Juggling Antics, Music and Comedy, October 3 & 4, 8PM

Mouseketeer Madness wityh Ginny Tyler, October 24 & 25, 8PM

Enjoy the wonderful Hokum Hall Wurlitzer!

7904 35th Ave. SW, Seattle • 206-937-3613 • hokumhall@earthlink.net



Few people realize that Seattle is recognized as the birthplace of the movie palace. Within a few years after the first one opened in Seattle, ornate movie houses were to be found in almost every city and town of any size and played a major role in shaping our national culture.

The movie palace, like the vaudeville theatres they eventually replaced, thrived as places where ordinary people could experience the surroundings of the fabled rich. They carried the workingman through periods in our history when little else in his life was grand or exotic.

Elaborate chandeliers, thick carpets, ornate wall and ceiling decorations and murals, gold and crystal and plush—if it wasn't the best money could buy, it was the best imitation that money could buy.

Although the lavish "palace" theatre has been run over by the changing needs of society, the man who gave it form still lives in Seattle [1971]. B. Marcus Priteca designed more than 200 major theatres and innumerable remodelings for the Pantages, Warner Brothers and Keith-Orpheum circuits across the country.

A gold-medal-winning craftsman in ornamentation before he came to Seattle in 1909 from Scotland, Priteca is one of few competent to differentiate among the myriad classic schools of ornamentation throughout the world.

Priteca's skill was not confined to movie theatres. The lessons in acoustics taught by so many buildings have made him a con-

sultant to many major music halls and a lead architect in several including the Seattle and Portland opera houses.

Seattle was particularly rich in examples of his theatre work. The Metropolitan, the Pantages (later the Palomar), the Orpheum, and the Coliseum were major downtown theatres which came from his drawing board.

New development has been stalking Priteca's work. The Metropolitan fell to an expansion of the Olympic Hotel, the Pantages to a parking garage and the Orpheum to the Washington Plaza Hotel.

The Coliseum at Fifth Avenue and Pike Street is the last of Priteca's downtown designs left. It was the theatre cited by the Journal of the Royal Institute of Architects in 1931 as the first of the world's movie palaces. Although not the best of his theatres for stage productions, it was the first to open primarily as a movie house.

And a palace it was, too. There was a 35-piece orchestra in the pit when the Coliseum opened which sometimes grew to as many as 50 musicians when the silent film demanded extra effects.

The Coliseum at its finest had fountains which played at either side of the orchestra pit. There were 30 canaries in the upstairs foyer which sang along with the orchestra and the Big Dipper and the North Star blinked in lights from the ceiling. "The Big Dipper was the only constellation I could remember," Priteca explained.

A. B. Heinsbergen, a Seattle interior

decorator, rode the crest of the movie-palace wave with Priteca to found an international firm headquartered in Los Angeles.

All of which brings us to an idea by Ibsen Nelsen, architect and member of the City Design Commission. "The city needs a theatre facility to fill the gap between the Playhouse and the Seattle Center Coliseum. About 1,300 seats would be ideal," Nelsen said.

"Why doesn't the city buy the Coliseum Theatre," he urges. "It seats 1,829 but would have to lose some seats if it were converted to a legitimate theatre. Not only would the city get as good or better a theatre than it could afford to build but it would preserve an important piece of architecture with national significance and provide some badly needed nighttime activity downtown."

"The building was designed as an opera house," Priteca said, "with the proscenium-arch pillars designed for the addition of a loft. A 60-foot lot at the rear of the building was to have been included for backstage facilities and would have to be added to the present building."

The original decor still may be there also, Priteca thinks. A \$250,000 remodeling which was ordered and shipped up from California by Fox Theatres in 1950 may have been just bolted right over the old decorations on the walls and ceiling.

The original plaster work was done by the late Joseph Jefferson, owner of a firm now run by his son here. Many of the original architectural drawings of the building have been preserved.

Seattle has reached the stage in its maturation that the value of its past is appreciated. The Coliseum is an unrecognized piece of architecture with historical significance of national stature. One hopes the city is not too close to it to recognize the significance and make proper display of it.

Editor's note: In the mid-1990s the theatre was converted to a Banana Republic store. Please visit the PSTOS website for more interesting information about the history of the theatre as well as its two large theatre pipe organs, a 4/30 Moller installed in 191 replaced in 1918 with a 4/32 Wurlitzer.

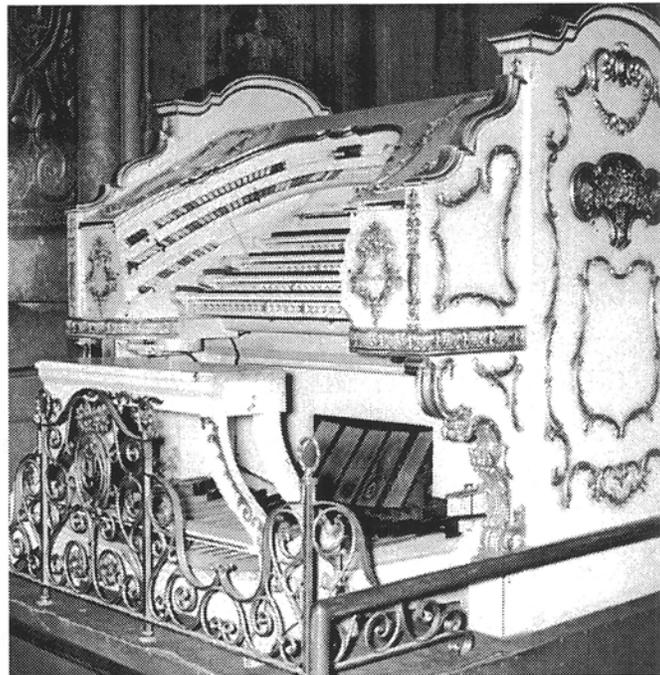
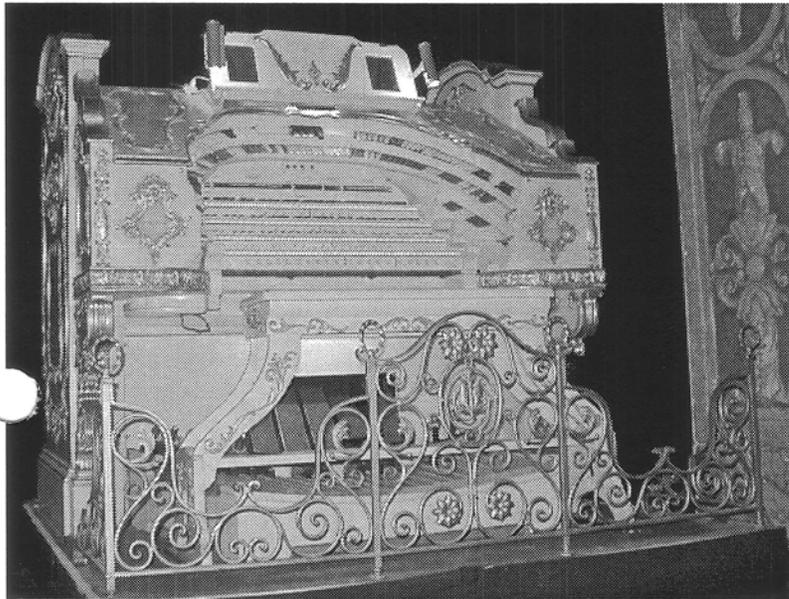
www.pstos.org/instruments/wal-seattle/coliseum.htm

Pages From The Past.. continued

Original Console Screen Donated Back to the Paramount

Former PSTOS member Mike Wallace recently donated the ornate console screen that originally graced the Paramount Theatre's organ loft platform. The screen, which had been discarded by the theatre prior to the renovations, was retrieved by Mike and stored for the last 8-10 years. He recently donated it back to the Paramount just in time for the theatre's 75th Anniversary celebration during the month of March.

Mike, together with Barbara Graham and Tom Blackwell, moved the screen to the theatre in late February where it was attached to the console's rolling platform. It fit perfectly! The first public showing of the newly re-installed screen was March 1,



2003 when House Organist Dennis James played for one hour prior to the sold-out Tony Bennett show.

Thanks Mike! Now everyone can once again enjoy this wonderful piece of Paramount Theatre history.

- ▲ ABOVE—The console screen in its early days.
- ◀ LEFT—The screen sets off the stunning Wurlitzer console on the Paramount stage. Photo by Tom Blackwell.

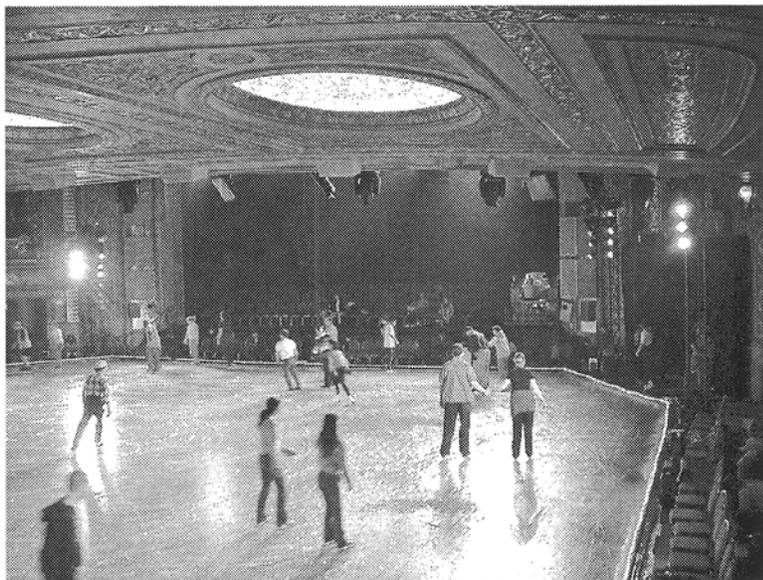
Paramount's public ice skating session a smashing success!

Sunday's 5PM ice skate session was great fun. Andy Crow performed admirably and it was clear that the group of 100-150 skaters of all ages was having a good time. Many people had never skated to live theatre organ music before and afterward, a group gathered around the console to ask Andy questions about the organ.

During the skating, I sat on the far right aisle which was the entrance for the skaters. It was fun to watch people's expressions as they entered the auditorium... it ranged from shock/amazement to sheer delight as they first saw the theatre's main floor transformed into an ice skating rink all lit up with pink, blue and white lights. The perimeter of the skate floor was ringed in tiny white lights and sounds of the Wurlitzer created a truly magical feeling.

During the skating, I overheard some of the *Cold Fusion* people talking. Sounds like they are hoping for a December series, but we'll have to wait and see! An added bonus was running into Oksana Baiul backstage.

Hooray for the Paramount's willingness to use the Wurlitzer frequently, take risks and try new and different things. Good for the Paramount and good for the Mighty Wurlitzer! ...Tom Blackwell





**Sun., November 9,
2:00PM**

At Gig Harbor's fabulous
Wurlitzer Soundview Manor
215 - 27th St. NW, Gig Harbor

**Seating is limited to 300.
This event will sell out quickly,
ORDER TICKETS NOW!**

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors
6521 N.E. 191st
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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**A foot-tapping, hand-clapping afternoon of music featuring
BOB MILNE, America's virtuoso of Ragtime and Boogie Woogie piano
AND JONAS NORDWALL, internationally acclaimed theatre organist!**



Dazzling! Intoxicating! Virtuoso! Words critics have applied to **BOB MILNE**, known as one of America's top ragtime/boogie-woogie pianists. He is a master pianist, playing many varied styles portraying a wide spectrum of emotion and feeling to the great delight of his listeners.

Initially trained at Eastman School of Music, Bob's expertise and artistry have made him one of the busiest concert performers in the country. Since 1998 he has played

more than 200 performances a year across the country as well as for cruise lines and in Japan. A gifted child prodigy, he has recorded 10 solo piano recordings and is a prolific composer and author .



JONAS NORDWALL is no stranger to PSTOS and certainly not to the beautiful Wurlitzer in Gig Harbor! With his unique talents he is internationally recognized as a master organist adept at all styles of music. Audiences around the world applaud his broad range of offerings from Bach to Boogie, to Broadway, to Ragtime. He is a major contributor to the Renaissance popularity of the theatre

organ as an entertainment instrument and has produced numerous recordings. He looks forward to sharing this program with Bob, and to the duo numbers they will perform together!

RAGMATAZZ featuring Bob Milne & Jonas Nordwall • TICKET ORDER FORM

Wurlitzer Soundview Manor • Gig Harbor, WA • Sunday, November 9, 2:00 pm
Benefiting Children's Home Society of Washington, and Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society Scholarship Program

- Please mail ticket(s), a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed
 Will pick up ticket(s) at the door

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP+4 _____

Phone _____

IMPORTANT—We're unable to process phone or credit card orders. Orders received without a self-addressed stamped envelope will be held for pickup at the door. DRIVING DIRECTIONS will be included with all ticket orders.

ALL SEATS \$20

Here's my order for:
____ Tickets @ \$20 = \$____
Please make checks payable to:

RAGMATAZZ

Mail to:

RAGMATAZZ Tickets
c/o Barbara Graham
2823 NE 105th St.
Seattle, WA 98125-7722

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HALLER LAKE COMMUNITY CLUB!
You are invited to...**



Enjoy music, food, movies and fun!

PIPES with PIZZA



Hear

ANDY CROW

at the

Theatre Pipe Organ
Playing your favorite tunes
AND a 1920s silent movie!

Sunday, Oct. 5, 2:00 PM

Haller Lake Community Club
12579 Densmore Ave. North

Just \$10 per person
Includes pizza, salad, beverage, dessert and entertainment!

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Many thanks!

Sponsored by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society