



# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 32, Nos. 9 - 10 • Sept. - Oct., 2021

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*Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.*

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Phil Hargiss, phil@pstos.org • Barb Graham, barb@pstos.org

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*Program Planning Team*—Jo Ann Evans, Barb Graham, Jamie Snell, Ellen Sullivan, Bob Zat  
*Educational Outreach Committee*—Fred Rowe, fred@pstos.org  
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## NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

*Pipeline Co-Editors*—Jamie Snell, jamie@pstos.org  
Jo Ann Evans, joann@pstos.org  
*Pipeline distribution*—Terry Perdue  
*Pipeline Online Website*—Tom Blackwell, tom@pstos.org

## LIAISONS

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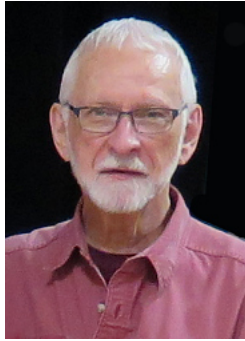
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# PRESIDENT'S *Message*

## *Greetings to all PSTOS members, families, and friends...*



On August 8<sup>th</sup>, for the first time in over two years, PSTOS hosted an event at Haller Lake Community Club featuring six artists playing the Chapter's 3/10 Wurlitzer and the HLCC-owned

piano. Three of the performers were young up and coming artists who had recently attended, via Zoom, the ATOS sponsored Summer Youth Adventure. They were Estelle McMaster, Mason Jones, and Sawyer Best, and they performed in that order. The other three performers were Tyler Pattison, Jo Ann Evans and Jamie Snell.

Tyler opened the program followed by Mason, Estelle, and Sawyer, then it was Jo Ann, Jamie, who also accompanied Estelle as she presented two vocal numbers, then Tyler who brought the program to a close.

I want to thank the volunteers who arrived early to help. Fred Rowe and Ed Poquette rolled in to set up all the chairs. Soon along came Ellen Sullivan with decorations to add some sparkle to the day. Then the financial wizards appeared – Jon Beveridge and Terry Perdue – who collected admission fees at both doors.

Since I am the PSTOS/HLCC liaison and the one who opens up the building and gets everything ready to go for the others, I arrived at 10:00 in the morning and had the console open, in place, and ready to go for any last minute rehearsals, and the sound system set up and tested with time to spare. The weekend before the event, Greg Smith and I tuned and checked the organ to make sure it was in prime condition. The instrument had not been played very much in over two years so it was important to assess the entire organ and mechanisms to make sure everything was in tune and functional. Greg and I found a few items that needed our

attention, but overall the organ was in good shape having sat for over two years with minimal playing.

Needless to say, the wind-down takes time and effort as well, and must not go unnoticed - Fred and Ed had the chairs back in the closet in no time, Bob had the console tucked back into its box with the help of Tyler, the place all spick and span, and the day ended on an up note. Several other members also pitched in to help. Thanks to all!

It was wonderful to once again get together for a live theatre organ event, and the entire PSTOS Program Planning Team thanks all of you, plus any we may have inadvertently overlooked, for their help.

The Program Planning Committee is working on a lineup of artists in preparation for the 2022 concert series held at Calvary Christian Assembly on the 2014 PSTOS- enhanced 3/25 Wurlitzer-Kimball Theatre Organ. All of the planning and arrangements are “fluid” at this time due to COVID-19 mandates and virus variants that pop up, but we move forward with optimism that once again we will be able to gather at a venue with top notch performing artists playing music we all enjoy on a concert quality theatre organ. Stay tuned for details.

The entire PSTOS Board thanks you for your continued support and encourages everyone to renew memberships and invite others you might know who enjoy theatre organ music to join the organization. Your financial support helps us fund all of our programs, offset maintenance costs, provide scholarships, and with additional financial support from members, help us secure additional resources for organ scholarship students as needed.

Please stay safe and be well and I hope to see you on December 5<sup>th</sup> at the Haller Lake Community Club for the annual PSTOS Holiday Party, provided we are allowed to gather once again.

Bob Zat, President

# Cameo Concert is First In-Person PSTOS Event in Two Years

By Jamie Snell, photos by Jeff Snyder



The organists L to R: Tyler Pattison, Jamie Snell, Estelle McMaster, Jo Ann Evans, Mason Jones, Sawyer Best

The joy was palpable on the afternoon of Sunday, August 8, as about fifty theatre organ fans plus friends and family gathered at the Haller Lake Community Club for our first in-person concert since before the pandemic, nearly two years. This was a cameo concert featuring the chapter's 3/10 Wurlitzer, with six local volunteers performing: three long-time PSTOS devotees – Tyler Pattison, Jo Ann Evans, and Jamie Snell – and three up-and-coming young organists – Mason Jones, Estelle McMaster, and Sawyer Best.

The concert had originally been planned to include refreshments and seating at the usual circular tables, but due to the covid delta variant, we notified reserves that refreshments would not be served, seating would be auditorium format with wide spacing, and masks were strongly urged, even for those fully vaccinated.

Following welcoming comments by President Bob Zat, Tyler Pattison opened the concert with “I Love to Hear You Singing,” the 1928 song by the English composer Haydn Wood, and a theatre organ standard. Tyler is an aviation electronics engineer, test pilot, and flight instructor. He studied both classical and theatre organ, and plays regularly at St. John’s in Greenwood, as well as at the Paramount Theatre, where he is also on the Wurlitzer maintenance crew.

The next part of the program featured our three young artists. First up, Mason Jones took the bench and performed the Harry Warren classic “Lullaby of Broadway,” first popularized in the musical film *Gold Diggers of 1935*, and later recorded by the Andrews

Sisters, Doris Day, and Bing Crosby, among others. Mason then moved from the organ to the piano to play “Pastoral” (No. 6 from *Eight Concert Etudes for Piano*, Op. 40, 1984) by the Ukrainian composer Nikolai Kapustin. This is a jazzy, up-tempo, and virtuosic piece, and Mason executed it solidly. He currently studies

classical organ with Kim Croft; he’s also studying classical piano with Maria Sier, and has recently begun pursuing an interest in



Mason Jones

jazz. Mason, like all three of the young performers, recently completed the ATOS Summer Youth Adventure, a week-long educational program for aspiring theatre organists.

Next on the bench was Estelle McMaster, performing three very different songs. First was the 1939 ballad, “A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square,” by the American composer Manning Sherwin, a hit standard recorded by Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole,



Estelle McMaster

and the Manhattan Transfer, and many others. Next, for a change of pace, was Don Kingston’s 1962 novelty tune, “The Chicken Polka,” complete with authentic chicken sounds! And finally, “The Trolley Song” by Hugh Martin, famously sung by Judy Garland in the 1944 movie *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Estelle is doing Running Start this fall at Everett Community College. She studies classical organ with Kim Croft, and has studied theatre organ with Jo Ann Evans for almost two years.

The final young organist was Sawyer Best, who opened with “Feed the Birds,” the poignant song sung by Julie Andrews in the 1964 film *Mary Poppins*, with score by Richard and Robert Sherman. Next up, Anthony Newley’s “Pure Imagination,” sung by Gene Wilder in the 1971 film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. Sawyer then moved to the piano to perform a pair of songs that were favorites of the late Lou Magor, proprietor of Kenyon Hall: “Remember,” by Harry Nilsson, and “Come in From the Rain” by Carole Bayer Sager. Sawyer has studied accordion with Murl Allen Sanders for eight years, and recently expanded his studies to include piano and music theory. He plans to enroll at Willamette University in 2022, and is taking a gap year to pursue various projects, notably a collaboration with some friends to rebuild a 3/14 Kimball-Wurlitzer. He is also on the



Sawyer Best

Paramount Wurlitzer maintenance crew.

Returning to the seasoned performers, the concert continued with Jo Ann Evans at the console, playing three numbers: “Keep Your Sunny Side Up,” from the same-named 1929 film with music by the DeSylva-Brown-Henderson composing trio; “I Cover the Waterfront,” the 1933 Johnny Green classic from the same-named film, recorded by Billie Holiday, Frank Sinatra, Sarah Vaughan, and many others; and an upbeat

rendition of “Put On a Happy Face,” the 1960 standard by Charles Strouse, introduced by Dick Van Dyke in the musical *Bye Bye Birdie*. At that point, Jo Ann said she was not feeling well, and stepped down from the console and off the stage. (Medics were called, and soon she was on her way to the hospital; after some tests, three days in hospital and a stent insertion, she was back home and feeling fine.)

Meanwhile, Bob Zat kept the concert on track with the next planned section, a brief vocal segment by Estelle. The plan had been for Jo Ann to accompany her; instead, Jamie substituted at the piano, as Estelle sang two



Estelle McMaster’s vocals added to the day beloved tunes: Jerome Kern’s “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes,” from the 1933 musical *Roberta*, followed by “Carolina in the Morning,” by Walter Donaldson, from *The*

*Passing Show of 1922*. Despite the unusual situation, Estelle’s performance was “in the pocket,” as if the two had rehearsed for weeks.

Next it was Jamie’s turn at the console. As he announced, he had picked three tunes to honor the legendary theatre organists George Wright and Jesse Crawford, to demonstrate the organ’s fine reed stops, and to show that century-old melodies still hold up. First was “Under the Double Eagle,” an 1893 march by the Austrian composer Josef Wagner, popularized by John Philip Sousa’s band. Then came “High Hat,” a 1928 novelty tune by the American composer Louis Alter, used in an animated film starring Betty Boop. The last was “Granada,” named after the city in southern Spain, and written in 1932 by the Mexican composer Agustin Lara.

Tyler returned to the console to close the concert with three numbers: First, “Blue Skies,” the 1926 Irving Berlin hit, written as a last-minute addition to the Rodgers and Hart musical *Betsy*; next, in a light classics vein, “The Swan” from the Saint-Saëns chamber suite *Carnival of the Animals*; and finally, a piece that, as Tyler explained, none in the audience could have heard before, as it was his original composition: “The Mallard March,” inspired by views of Duck

Island in Seattle’s Green Lake. The audience responded with enthusiastic applause as the concert ended.

Heart-felt thanks to the many people who helped make this event a success, including: Jo Ann Evans, for overall organizing, taking care of promotion and reservations, and many other details, as well as a fine performance; Bob Zat, for coordinating with HLCC, handling organ prep, the console, and the sound system, and serving as M.C. in his usual professional style; Fred Rowe and Ed Poquette for setting up and stowing the chairs; Ellen Sullivan for adding sparkle to the day with decorations; Jon Beveridge and Terry Perdue for collecting admission fees; Mason Jones, Estelle McMaster, and Sawyer Best, for performing beautifully; Tyler Pattison for opening and closing the concert so professionally; Jamie Snell for his performance, and for impromptu accompaniment; Jeff Snyder for acting as official photographer; Barb Graham and Ellen Sullivan for stepping up to help Jo Ann in her hour of need; and the PSTOS Program Planning Team and several other members who pitched in. We all hope that as the pandemic wanes, we will return to putting on theatre organ events in the traditional way.

## Dubuque Organist Invents New Chair

E. R. Howard, organist at the Strand theatre, Dubuque, Iowa, is not only a very capable musician, but an inventor as well. Playing is a tiresome occupation at times, so Mr. Howard has invented a chair that has won him the approbation of organists all over the state.

The first chair was made last May and its success was so great that Mr. Howard told a few of his friends about it. Now, he is receiving orders from all over the country, among them being from the Kimball Organ Company, and the Wurlitzer Organ Company, both of Chicago. His latest order is from Mr. Jesse J. Crawford, the organist at the New Chicago Theatre, which was recently opened. Mr. Crawford’s chair is being done in red and gold upholstery, to harmonize with the decorations of the theatre.

The most remarkable thing about the chair is the adjustable back rest which can be raised or lowered to the extent of six inches, thus adapting itself to any player. A pair of feet extend under the pedals of the organ. A curved standard, modified perpendicularly on the feet, extends upward and overhangs the pedals, near the center of the pedal board. A divided seat mounted upon the standard rotates every way.

From an undisclosed newspaper ca. 1920s

## In the 1920s, the New Howard Seat Was a Popular Option for Theatre Organists



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—JESSE J. CRAWFORD.

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adds to one’s pedal technic, is perfectly adjusted and will be a revelation to those who use it.—LOUIS LOHMANN.

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# PAGES FROM THE PAST . . . July 3, 1921

Clipping from an unnamed Portland newspaper, July 3, 1921 (Just think! A hundred years ago!)

## LARGEST ORCHESTRAL ORGAN IN ANY MOTION-PICTURE THEATER IS HERE IN PORTLAND

Only One Other Instrument Like That of the Liberty Theater Exists in the Country, Says Henri Keates, Who Plays Giant Instrument



**HENRI KEATES, PROBABLY PORTLAND'S HIGHEST PAID MUSICIAN, AT THE LIBERTY INSTRUMENT**

**BY HENRI KEATES**

PORTLAND may boast of the largest orchestral organ installed in any motion picture house in the United States. It is known as the giant four manual orchestral organ designed by Hope Jones and with the exception of the one in Denver City Auditorium, which is exactly the same although built on a larger scale, there is no larger instrument of its kind in this country. The Denver organ has mechanism similar in every way to that of the Liberty instrument, but because the auditorium is larger and capable of assimilating notes on a greater volume it has been built on a larger plan.

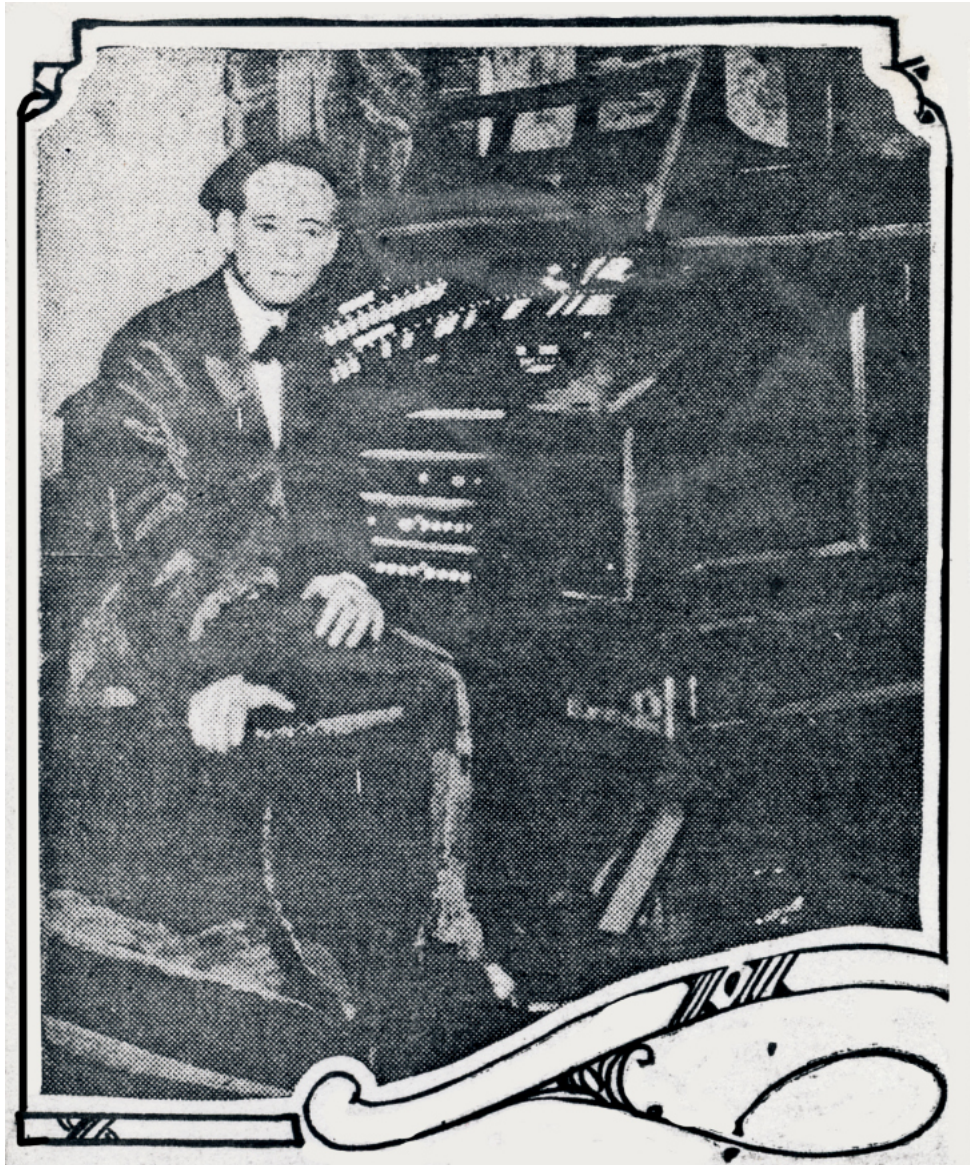
In possessing the largest orchestral organ, Portland may truthfully be said to lead the world in organ accompaniment for motion picture houses. The installation of expensive organs is characteristic of the West alone. Eastern theaters, even the the largest New York and Chicago motion picture houses, have what are known as church organs with few orchestral devices and with little variation for possible types of music. This is true today, but the east is awakening to the popularity of the orchestral instruments in the Pacific Coast cities and there is a growing tendency to enlarge the theater organs and have them take a more prominent part in each day's programme.

As is true of almost every delicate piece of mechanism, every organ, although built on exactly the same plan, has its own personality and individual characteristics. The Liberty giant organ excels all others in America in volume, variety and delicacy of tone color, I believe, and I have played on every large instrument in Denver, Seattle, and other western cities where orchestral organs have been installed. The Liberty console embodies many percussion effects such as harp, chimes, xylophone, glockenspiel, vibrating bells, sleigh bells and drums, that the effect of an entire orchestra is produced.

# PAGES FROM THE PAST . . . August 27, 1926

## MASTER OF WURLITZER COMES TO PORTLAND

OLIVER G. WALLACE TO PLAY AT NEW THEATER



### Program of Original and Popular Melodies to Feature Opening of Broadway Theater

In introducing the immense Wurlitzer pipe organ at the new Broadway Theater, which opens tonight for its initial performance, Oliver G. Wallace, noted organist, will depart from the usual routine of organ recitals and present a program of original and popular melodies.

Mr. Wallace as a musician has had an interesting career. At the time when pipe organs were being introduced on the Pacific coast he was playing a piano in the Dream theatre, Seattle, then managed by James Q. Clemmer, now manager of the Broadway in Portland. Mr.

Clemmer first introduced the organ at his theater in Seattle with Mr. Wallace at the console of the organ, which was an innovation, though in no sense compared to one of the modern Wurlitzers.

Since the installation of the organ at the Dream Theater in Seattle, Mr. Wallace has devoted his time to study of the organ. In addition to his masterful renditions, he is a composer of note, his outstanding hit being "Hindustan," which ranked among the best-selling songs of its day during the world war. Mr.

Wallace was at the Dream Theater for eight years and later played at the Liberty (Seattle) when that show house was opened by Mr. Clemmer. Patrons of the Granada in San Francisco and the Rivoli in Los Angeles also have heard his work on the organ.

Mr. Wallace is also an author of an allegorical musical drama, "The Eternal Mirror." Recently he completed a group of instrumental numbers for organ interpretation, which has been published.