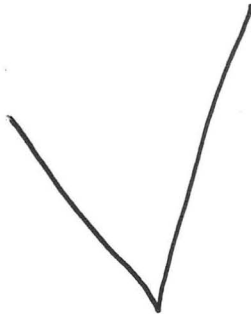


VAN CAMP, BOB (Died 1-26-90)

See Chapter 6, pp. ___ to ___.



VAN DUSEN, ERIC

Pseudonym for an organist who recorded on the Pathé label
(78 r.p.m.).

June 12, 1988

PROFILE ON PEACHTREE

By Gayle White

'There's a great feeling of power when sitting at the controls of such a large contraption and having at your fingertips such a great variety of sounds.' —*Bob Van Camp*

In a dingy, crowded storeroom somewhere in the bowels of the Fox Theatre, a small, thin gray-haired man pores over a tray of ancient glass slides. An hour later, the slides are projected onto the theater screen, and the man is sitting at the keyboard of the famed "Mighty Moller" organ, playing with apparent effortlessness as the audience follows the projected words with their rousing renditions of moldy oldies such as "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "Little Sir Echo."

Bob Van Camp is in his element — a faithful courtier of the "king of instruments." Organs appeal to him, he says, because they can produce full orchestral sounds. "There's a great feeling of power when sitting at the controls of such a large contraption and having at your fingertips such a great variety of sounds."

Van Camp has worked in usually blissful partnership with the Fox's Moller for 40 years, since he first came to Atlanta in 1947.

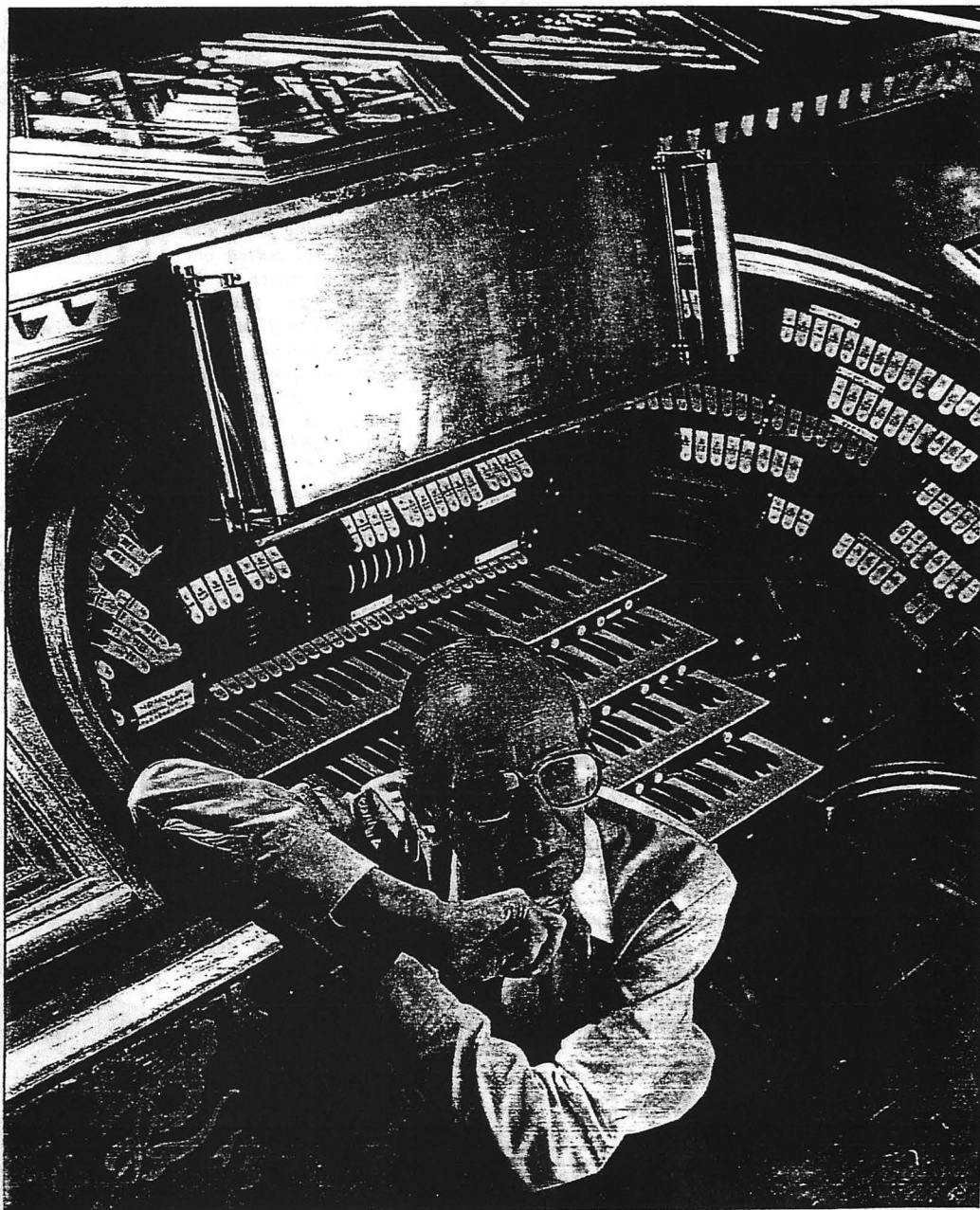
The only miscues have been minor. "On only one occasion the slides got completely mixed up," he says. "After five or six slides, there was nothing to do but close the curtain."

Another time, the organ's elevator button was stuck — raising and lowering Van Camp into the organ pit like a yo-yo. "The guy with the spotlight was going nuts trying to keep up with me," he recalls with a laugh.

Van Camp's quick mind and bony fingers can conjure up "maybe as many as 1,000" tunes without printed music. "I have always been able to play by ear," he says, "but I'm not restricted to that. I read music."

(Continued on page 26)

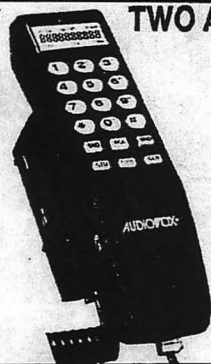
Gayle White is a staff writer for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.



Van Camp has worked in partnership with the Fox's Moller for 40 years, since he came to Atlanta in 1947.

Photography by William Berry

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VAN CAMP

(Continued from page 5)

At the Fox, he has played for Dick Van Dyke, Rosalind Russell, Burt Reynolds, John Wayne and Pat Boone. He played twice with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops and played "Rule Britannia" for the Prince of Wales.

"That was pretty exciting," he says.

Van Camp, a native of Scranton, Pa., came to Atlanta after World War II. "I was stationed in the Air Force with Elmo Ellis of WSB fame," he says. "He encouraged me to come here."

For 25 years, Van Camp was staff announcer and organist at WSB. At one time, he says, the radio station had a program of all organ music in the morning. Van Camp also bridged the silence in locally produced dramas with appropriate melodramatic swells.

In the early days of television, Van Camp was tapped to host several shows, including "Strictly for the Girls," an audience participation show that preceded Phil Donahue by several decades. "A box of Tide was considered a prize in those days," he says. "We played silly little games."

At "The Wayside Inn," Van Camp and longtime Atlanta television hostess Ruth Kent greeted guests who came to their "registration desk" to check in.

"Because I played the organ, we put organs in the shows," he says.

His interest in organs began at a movie theater in Scranton. "It developed in the old silent-movie days when Mom used to take me to the movies, Van Camp recalls. "I wouldn't look at the picture at all — I'd just look at the lady playing the organ down in the pit."

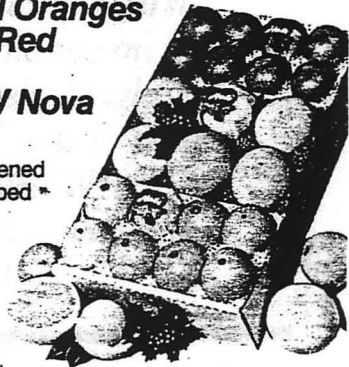
As a freshman at Duke University, Van Camp offered to play a theater organ recently purchased by

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FRANK VAN DUSEN

Who heads the American Conservatory's Organ Department. The current graduation festivities presented six post-graduates in public recital in Kimball Hall, all of whom received their Mus. Bac. degrees; there were also four graduates and eight teacher's certificates — a total of eighteen graduates for the organ department. The organ-playing contest resulted in the first prize Gold Medal to Mr. Edward Eigenschenk, second prize Silver Medal and teacher's certificate to Mr. George Ceiga, and special Honorable Mention to Mr. Louis Nespo

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The following item was found in the July 1923 issue of The Diapason
by Lloyd E Klos:

MIDGET THEATRE GIVES ORGANISTS OPPORTUNITY ~~BY~~

Frank Van Dusen, director of the School of Theatre Organ Playing of the American Conservatory, and his associate teacher, Edward Eigenschenk, have joined with the Fulco Sales Co., handling equipment for moving picture theatres, in equipping a little model theatre for the projection of motion pictures. The theatre is called "Fulco Little Model Theatre," and is something original and individual in that it gives the pupil and inexperienced theatre organists an opportunity to practice before the screen under the same conditions which they will meet in any large theatre. The pupil may play with auditors as in a theatre or may arrange for individual private practice before the screen, and it gives to the school an opportunity to conduct classes before the screen and thus offer the pupils the practical training needed for their work and heretofore impossible to obtain.

The Little Model Theatre is at 24 East Eighth Street, Chicago. It is complete in every detail, having a small stage, with an attractive painted drop curtain, beautiful plush drape curtains and an automatic screen curtain, back of which is a good-sized screen and in front of the stage is a small orchestra pit containing the console of the newly-installed organ. The little auditorium has leather-cushioned chairs which will seat approximately 100 people. The theater is tastefully decorated, nothing being spared to secure artistic and harmonious effect, even to the carrying out of changing colored lighting effects.

In this little theater Mr Van Dusen and Mr Eigenschenk have installed a two-manual Kimball organ of modern type with registration to meet the demands of theatre playing of the highest order. In addition to the regular 16, 8, 4 and 2-foot strings, flutes and diapasons, it contains a vox humana, oboe, horn, clarinet, kinura, orchestra bells, glockenspiel, nazard and tierce, and is equipped with all the couplers, pistons and accessories of the modern theatre organ.

Classes before the screen were opened by Mr Van Dusen and Mr Eigenschenk

early in May. Mr Van Dusen has added to his list of assistant teachers and now has four assistants, all organists of his own training. These are, besides Mr Eigenschenk, organist at the Michigan Theatre; Helen Searles, organist at Portage Park Theatre; Mrs Gertrude Baily, assistant organist, Michigan Theatre; and Emily Roberts, teacher of organ at the American Conservatory. Arrangements also have been made with Edward Benedict, organist at the Capitol Theatre, to give special courses of instruction on the modern unit organ along practical lines.

ork; Musical Agency, Detroit, Mich. (1924-36); Detroit, Heights, N. Y.; Brook-Hall and World's Fair, others (1940). *Radio*: live broadcasts to Europe; lecturer for New York City education on American United Indian Council Theatre, New York (8 United Indian Portraits and Douthitt Art Galleries, 1939). At present, appearing and lecturing. *Author of*: *Speaks, The Amerind*; Society of First Sons of America (Founder); Greenwidge Village History; New York City History; National Opera Club; Alpha Chi Omega Emerson Alumni Club; *Address*: 316 E. 58th St., New

WILLIAM TREAT—Organist, Writer. Born in Tallahassee, Fla., 1870. *Education*: Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin and Vienna; pupil of Franz Liszt and Lhevinne. *Degrees*: Mus. B. (1904), and M.A. in Music. Organist and Choirmaster, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Oberlin. *Author of*: Articles for *Music*; *Art-Song in Amer-*

CAROLYN—Soprano. Born in Boston, Mass. *Education*: School of Music; Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia. Winner of "Singer Star" Award. *Debut*: Boston, Mass. (1934). *Radio*: Tour throughout Poland; throughout the United States. *Address*: 35 St. George St., New York City.

BRUNO DAVID—Musician. Born in Fuerth, Bavaria. *Education*: Oxford University and Leipzig University. Music Editor, *Evening Post*, Los Angeles. *Regional director*, Federal Music Project, Los Angeles (1938). *Radio*: program notes for Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and Bowl Concerts (since 1923); School of Music, University of California (since 1931). Music Editor, Los Angeles *Evening Post*, Los Angeles *Evening Post*, Los Angeles *Evening Post*, Los Angeles *Evening Post*. Member of Editorial Board of *Is Who in Music* (1940-41). *Address*: 6122 Scenic Ave., Cal.

V

FRANCIS—Clarinetist, Composer. Born in Ardmore, Pa., 1898. *Education*: Conservatory of Music; Chicago College. *Appearances*: With and dance orchestras throughout the United States. Former faculty, Uptown Conservatory, Shore Conservatory, Dinton Municipal Band; Dinton Municipal Band. *Compositions*: *Moody Contrasts*, London (more Music House); marches for band. *Recordings*: Elmer (Brunswick). *Ad-*

VAIL, MARY LOUISE—Teacher of Piano. *Education*: Birmingham Conservatory; Cadek Conservatory, Chattanooga; American Conservatory of Music, Chicago; School of Music, Chautauqua, N. Y. At present member of faculty, Birmingham Conservatory, and Director of Vail Studio. *Address*: 2300 Highland Ave., Birmingham, Ala.

VAIL, OLCOTT—Violinist. Born in St. Louis, Mo., 1902. *Education*: New York University; Chicago Musical College; Juilliard Graduate School; pupil of Auer and Enesco. *Debut*: Aeolian Hall, New York (1924). *Appearances*: Soloist, American Symphony Orchestra, New York (1925). *Radio*: Concertmaster, Charlie McCarthy program; "Hollywood Hotel"; with orchestra, Woodbury program. Former Concertmaster, Denver and Russian Symphony orchestras. *Address*: 4323 Agnes Ave., Hollywood, Cal.

VALDANE, ARVIDA—Soprano. Born in Philadelphia, Pa. *Education*: In Philadelphia, New York and Paris. *Debut*: In Philadelphia (1929). Currently appearing in concerts and teaching in Philadelphia and New York. *Address*: 430 E. 86th St., New York City.

VALENTINE, RANCE—Vocalist. Born in Passaic, New Jersey, 1900. *Education*: Colgate University; private teachers in Hollywood, Cal. *Appearances*: Soloist with Lee Gordon's Orchestra. *Radio*: "Do You Remember?" NBC. Staff Announcer and Vocalist, WTAM-NBC, Cleveland. *Address*: 3131 Essex Rd., Cleveland, Ohio.

VALENTINO, FRANCESCO—Bari-tone. Born in New York City. *Education*: Studied in Denver, Colo., and Milan, Italy. *Debut*: In opera, Parma, Italy. *Appearances*: In opera, La Scala, Milan; San Carlo, Naples; Royal Opera, Rome; Arena, Verona; as soloist, May Festival, Florence, Italy; in France, Switzerland, England and Spain. At present, member, Metropolitan Opera Company. *Address*: Metropolitan Opera Association, Inc., Metropolitan Opera House, New York City.

VALLEE, RUDY—Conductor, Saxophonist, Vocalist (Popular). Born in Island Pond, Vt., 1901. *Education*: University of Maine; Yale University. *Degree*: B.A., Romance Languages, Yale. Organized own band, "The Connecticut Yankees," while at Yale (1924). *Appearances*: Savoy Hotel, London (1926); Heigh Ho Club, New York; tours of the United States (since 1929). *Radio*: "Fleischmann Hour," NBC (1929-39). Currently appearing on NBC for Sealtest, Inc. Has appeared in motion pictures. *Recordings*: Victor. *Address*: National Broadcasting Company, RCA Bldg., New York City.

VAN BROEKHOVEN, JOHN A.—Composer, Conductor, Teacher of Voice. Born in Beek, Holland, 1856. *Appearances*: As violist, Theodore Thomas Orchestra, Chicago and New York. Founder and Conductor, symphony orchestra in Cincinnati (1889); Voice Teacher, New York; Professor of composition, Cincinnati College of Music. *Compositions*: *A Colonial Wedding* (1905) and *Camaralzaman*, operas; *Creole Suite*, for orchestra; choral works with orchestra, and chamber music. *Author of*: *The Tone-Producing Functions of the Vocal Organs* (1905), *The True Method of Tone Production* (1908), and *A System of Harmony*.

111, 1910. *Appearances*: Weber and Walter Steindel, Grant Park Concerts, Chicago; tour with Chicago Little Philharmonic Orchestra. Member of Chicago City Opera Orchestra. *Address*: 4235 N. Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, Ill.

VAN CLEVE, JOHN SMITH—Teacher, Critic. Born in Maysville, Ky., 1851. *Education*: Ohio Wesleyan University and Boston University; pupil of Steinbrecher, Land and Apthorp. *Degree*: Hon. Ph.D., Twin Valley College. Member of faculty, Ohio Institute for the Blind (1872-75); taught at Janesville, Wis. (1875-79); former member of faculty, College of Music and Conservatory of Music, Cincinnati; Music Critic, *Commercial and News-Journal*. *Compositions*: *Gavotte Humoresque*, for piano; others.

VAN DELDEN, MARIA—Soprano. Born in Holland. *Education*: With various teachers of drama, dancing and voice in Germany and Austria. *Appearances*: In recitals and opera in Germany, Austria and France, especially in Wagnerian roles. In Havana with Philharmonic Orchestra. Now appearing in recitals in the United States. *Management*: Annie Friedberg, 250 West 57th Street, New York City.

VANDENBERG, BERTHE—Pianist, Celesta Player, Novachordist. Born in Amsterdam, Holland. *Education*: Brussels Conservatory, Belgium. *Appearances*: Member of Philharmonic Orchestra, New York (1922-28). Accompanist, Branscombe Choral, New York. *Address*: 370 Central Park, New York City.

VAN DOREN, MARY—Pianist. Born in Emporia, Kan., 1904. *Education*: College of Emporia; pupil of Ernest Hutcheson and Gordon Stanley (Fellowship, Juilliard Graduate School). *Degrees*: A.B., Mus. B., College of Emporia. *Debut*: Town Hall, New York (1930). *Appearances*: Soloist with Chicago, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Chautauqua, St. Louis, Kansas City Philharmonic and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestras; piano recitals and lecture-recitals in Toledo and elsewhere. *Radio*: As narrator and pianist, "Music for Young Listeners," NBC and CBC (1939-40). Head of Music Department, Toledo Museum of Art (since 1931). *Address*: Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio.

VAN DUSEN, FRANK—Organist, Teacher. Born in Monfort, Wis. *Education*: American Conservatory; pupil of Moritz Moszkowski (piano); Guilmant (organ). *Degree*: Mus. B., American Conservatory. *Compositions*: Teaching material for piano and organ. Member: A. G. O., Society of American Musicians (Vice-President); The Cliff Dwellers. *Address*: 306 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

VAN DYNE, WAYNE—Tenor, Voice Coach. Born in Northville, Mich., 1914. *Education*: University of Michigan, Detroit Institute of Musical Art; Detroit Conservatory of Music. *Degree*: B.S. in Music, University of Michigan. *Radio*: Soloist, Shrine of The Little Flower broadcasts, Detroit (1932-39); "Double Everything," CBS (1938); "The Smile Parade," "Home Town" (1939) and "Roy Shield Revue" (1940), NBC. Staff artist, NBC, Chicago. *Compositions*: *My Humble Serenade* (Chappell & Co., Inc., 1939). *Address*: 154 E. Erie Street, Chicago, Ill.

VAN GORDEN, CYRENA—Soprano. Born in Camden, O., 1896. *Education*:

VAN DUSEN, FRANK

Theatre organist in the Chicago area. Operated a school for theatre organists located in Kimball Hall, Chicago in the early 1920's. In 1923 more than 50 of his students were playing in Chicago theatres. (Diapason, Feb. 1923). Joined forces with Edward Eigenschenk to operate the Fulco Little Model Theatre in Chicago to train theatre organists. The American Organist for December 1923 related, "Theatre organists may practice at 60¢ an hour with special private use of the screen in the American Conservatory's theatre organ school under Frank Van Busen."

An announcement in the 1933(June) Diapason reads, "The American Conservatory of Music in Chicago announces a class of Radio Organ Interpretation to be held from June 26 to August 5. Frank Van Busen and Irma Glen are instructors. Two lessons and one demonstration lecture weekly at the NBC organ studio are scheduled." ~~XXXXXXXX~~

VAN DUSEN, FRANK

Van Dusen recorded on the ~~XX~~ Pathe label(78rpm).

In 1940 his address was

306 S. Wabash

Chicago, Ill.

Source: Who's Who in Music

VAN IWEGEN, MILDRED

Hawaiian theatre organist who followed Edwin Sawtelle at the Princess Theatre (4 manual/16 rank Robert Morton) in Honolulu.

VANNUCCI, LARRY

Former organist of the San Francisco Theatre. Recorded some long playing discs of theatre pipe organ music including one on the Sequoia on the Wurlitzer organ at the Golden Gate Theatre in San Francisco, California.

Died, Nov. 28, 1993.

VARNEY, JOHN

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, March 11, 1906. He studied organ and piano at the Peabody Institute and also with various private instructors. At the age of 16 he started playing the organ in theatres for silent pictures, following which he played in some of the larger theatres in Baltimore including the Valencia Theatre, Loew's Century Theatre, the Rivoli Theatre, and later at the Stanley Theatre which was built after the advent of sound pictures. At the Stanley Theatre he was ^{the} featured organ soloist and he accompanied song slides, etc., as a special feature of their shows.

After the invention of the electronic organ, Varney became Musical Director of Radio Station WCAO, around 1940. He organized a quintet consisting of Hammond organ, Novachord, string bass, electric

VARNEY, JOHN

2.

guitar, and percussion, which was handled by his wife who doubled on marimba, vibraphone, and drums. The quintet featured a female vocalist. Later Varney and his wife teamed up as a duo and played a number of leading night spots around Baltimore. By the middle 1970's Varney was semi-retired and teaching organ and piano as well as playing the organ at the Maryland Presbyterian Church in Towson, Maryland.

VAUGHN, ROBERT F.

Born August 14, 1911 in Pomona, California. Studied theatre organ under Roy L. Medcalfe, Long Beach, California from 1926 to 1927. Played the Brayton, the Home, the Dale, the Ebell, the Carter, and the Mission Theatres in Long Beach from 1926 through 1929. He did theatre and dance orchestra work until 1938. From 1938 to 1968 he was not involved in music as a profession, but in 1968 he resumed playing for silent motion pictures at the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco where he now appears regularly. Now retired Vaughn is a collector of classic silent films, silent film music and scores, speaks on silent film music, and presents film and music programs for theatres, organ clubs, educational institutions, museums, and private groups. He is also a part-time church organist and organist for a dance combos.

VEACH, MERLE (MISS)

Organist of Loew's Inwood Theatre in New York City in 1927.

BACKGROUND SKETCH: Robert F. Vaughn - for theater organ purposes better known simply as Bob Vaughn

Bob Vaughn was born at Pomona, California in 1911. He took piano lessons when about 10 years of age - but hated to practice. But - in 1925, while in high school, he heard an excellent organ score for the original silent film "Phantom of the Opera" - and decided that his career had to be that of a theater organist. He took lessons, built his film music library and in 1929 was playing for the movies seven nights a week. But the talkies were in - and Bob and the organs went out. After some dance and stage orchestra work, Bob, in 1938, began working with the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Most of that service until retirement in 1970 was as an investigator - a most unmusical occupation. However, during World War II he played chapel organs for chaplains of many faiths. Thereafter, in San Francisco, he served as a part time church organist and choir director.*

In 1968 Bob went to practice on the theatre organ at the Avenue Theater in San Francisco. When it was discovered he had once played for the silent films, he was pressed into service performing for the weekly presentations of famous silent classics shown at the Avenue - where he has continued to the present time. Upon retirement in 1970 from non-musical work he expanded his film music library, acquired an ever-growing library of prints of famous film classics in the public domain - and now is on call to present his films and music for other theatres, organ clubs, schools, universities and varied fraternal organizations. He played for the silent films at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. He was organist for the Mary Pickford retrospective at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco and for the initial Harold Lloyd 10-week revival at the University of California at Berkeley. He presently plays silent films at the U.C. Theater and at the Pacific Film Archive of the University of California.

The Wurlitzer organ of the Avenue Theater in San Francisco has sixteen ranks of pipes, and the Avenue is the only theatre in the United States presenting silent films on an almost weekly basis with full organ accompaniment. It is notable that the now famous film, NAPOLEON, was screened complete and in polyvision in 1973 and 1975 at the Avenue, and Bob, so far, is the only theatre organist to have presented a full organ score for the film on a theatre pipe organ.

Bob Vaughn ventures out from San Francisco to perform for his treasured silents. He will also play additional organ music but leaves contemporary organ concertizing to the younger generation. His specialty is his first love - the silent film - and very few there are now who played for them "way back" in the silent era. And best of all, for Bob, he is one of the few people who, denied the opportunity to follow a chosen career, is able to return to it fifty years later - bringing pleasure and happy recollection to his generation - and something "new" to the young people of today.

Bob Vaughn, 1118 Rivera Street, San Francisco, CA 94116 - (415) 564-6652

* St Patrick's Church, Mission Street, San Francisco
from 1946 to 1965 Sundays and special days only -
I was still working for a living.

VAUGHN, ROBERT

1118 Rivera Street
San Francisco, CA 94116
January 18, 1985

Dr. John W. Landon
809 Celia Lane
Lexington, KY 40504

Dear Dr. Landon:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning information for use in the Biographical Dictionary of Theatre Organists.

I enclose a background sketch. Of necessity it is somewhat limited. I have never tried very hard to sell myself as an organist - certainly not as a "concert" organist. I seem to be well regarded in my home area for my work in scoring the silent film, and calls to do that are enough to keep me as busy as my somewhat advanced age dictates. So I have placed no advertising in organ publications etc. Those who want me know what I can do - and have come to rely on my sizeable silent film library and my knowledge of the history of the silent film. In addition to details in my biographical sketch, it is understood my major playing is for silent film shows at other theaters, schools, film history classes, churches (KING OF KINGS - but more often entertainment on the light side), fraternal organizations, organ clubs, social groups etc. Occasionally I am happy to have an electronic organ - more often for these it is a piano.

The Avenue Theater closed at the end of 1984 - the organ is removed - the victim of increased rental demands and the current trend toward videotaped home showings. Our weekly silent film night did not come off badly - we simply couldn't successfully fill in additional nights with commercial showings. However, I play at the Castro Theater with its fine 4-19] Wur-litzer - and at the UC Theater in Berkeley about every two months (a plug-in). I have played as far away as Reno, Vallejo, Stockton, Fresno and Coos Bay, Oregon on repeat visits. I have played at Honolulu, Boise, Idaho, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Red Wing, Minnesota and Portland, Oregon. Each year, over Labor Day I attend the convention of the Society for Cinephiles - wherever it may be and usually play seven or eight rare silent films in a two day period, occasionally on a real pipe organ. When programmed, I have been pianist for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art silent film series and am organist for the San Francisco International Film Festival. Oh, yes - I played the silent film for both of the ATOS conventions held in San Francisco. Last October I played the movie for the 3-day "Organ Bash" in Fresno, CA sponsored by 4 California ATOS Chapters.

All this is sadly rambling - I apologize - but indicates I have found a small niche in my specialized field since my 1970 retirement from non-musical work. Have been fortunate to increase my film music library, and I deliberately use as much as I can of the cinemusic output of the composers of the "teens" and 1920s. I have been asked how many different silent movies I had played for since retirement. I was curious and checked my notes. It came to over 350 different silent feature films!

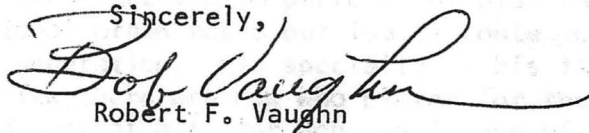
I cannot point to fabulous periods of study with eminent instructors - no conservatories. I had about a year and a half of undistinguished piano study. When I awoke to the theatre organ, my theater organ instructor was Roy L. Medcalfe who was well known for years in the 1920s in the West Coast area - particularly in Southern California - but always as a cinema organist. He played novelty solos - but his major impression was as a scorer and accompanist for silent films. He was head organist at the Imperial Theater (where I studied) in Long Beach, California from 1925 until sound took over in 1929. That house was devoted to the showing of the biggest and best films. I made my way while studying with him by playing at several smaller houses in Long Beach: The Brayton, Home, Dale, Ebell, Mission and Carter Theaters. At the last named I was on the job 7 days a week while still attending Junior College. It is a good thing sound came in, or I would have wound up a physical wreck. I never made it into the bigger houses as an organist, and when sound came in I figured my theatre organ days were over. Surely it is a great experience to come back in my antiquity to find I'm still wanted.

I will mention one matter of import to me. When I started playing at the Avenue Theater in 1968 it had to be without compensation - we all gave our time on silent film nights to keep a roof over the Wurlitzer. And I have voluntarily continued in that uncompensated status at the Avenue for 15 years. I make no major issue of it, but I feel I've made a favorable contribution to the preservation of the theater organ as it was in the "old days" and it has made me very happy to see the following of film buffs who thrilled to the sound of the Wurlitzer all these years. When the Avenue started with its Wurlitzer, it was the only regular place in our Bay Area - except one pizza parlor across the bay. Very few ATOS members ever really regularly supported us - they showed only when we presented a guest organist from a distance - and not always too well then. We have been grateful for the movie buffs who appreciated the organ - and a sizeable and growing group of young people who rediscovered vintage cinema with organ - almost as a new toy. So - o - o - the Avenue is closed. Now - Viva el Castro!!!

Sorry this rambled so much - you can pick out the wheat from the chaff - the paragraph immediately preceding, of course, has nothing for your purpose, but it has reflected a part of our picture locally. And it is a part of me in these busy years.

For now - best wishes in your Dictionary of Organists. What a job you have undertaken!

Sincerely,


Robert F. Vaughn

Bob Vaughn,

7/67 1

The following item appeared in Jacobs Magazine, March 1928, and was submitted by Lloyd E Klos:

BROADWAY GLOOM

By

Emil Velazco

During the past year, a wave of despondency has swept the ranks of eastern organists. This mood of falling spirits has developed to the extent that it has become reflected in the columns of some of our organ periodicals. It appears that this condition has been created by the demands of eastern theater patrons for a more modern style of organ-playing than has, in the main, been vouchsafed^s them. For the last ten years, they have sat back contentedly and listened to conservative playing; now they are twisting uneasily in their seats and vociferously requesting something more in keeping with the trend of the times.

Strange to say, both the radio and talking-machine have had much to do with this somewhat disconcerting restlessness of a heretofore tame public. These two agencies have been spreading the playing of our western organists into eastern households, and the members thereof have acquired a taste for the occidental article. Many players, conscious of impending change and ~~for~~ fearing disaster, have sat them down to weep instead of examining the cause of their somewhat premature grief. Were they to do this latter, they would be agreeably surprised and heartened, for this threatening and ill-omened cloud has a real silver lining. The western or Californian style of organ playing, (it was in the climate belt that it originated) by raising theatre organists to stardom, has brought higher salaries and better living conditions in its train.

That it has successfully invaded New York is an acknowledged fact, and above the keening of the local mourners, rings the distracting note that wherever introduced, it has been accepted with whoops by the public and has settled down to stay. The writer was a resident of Chicago when the fateful

invasion swept in from the coast. At that time, the cry of "To Arms!" was raised, as at present, and the faithful amongst organists rushed to defend their citadel, which they fondly, and mistakenly, believed to be the only bulwark capable of sheltering "good music". He saw many others, however, join the invaders, and is happy to say that he was amongst those who did. The effect on good music did not bear out the forebodings of the Old Guard. It was not murdered by the barbarian hordes, but was tastefully bedecked and presented anew in a more entertaining, if not quite so dignified, a manner. The irreconcilables of the Windy City, nevertheless, are still casting sheep's-eyes at the past, and bemoaning the sad state in which they find themselves.

We are prone to forget that people go to a show to be entertained--not educated. An organist with an itch for uplift should not join the ranks of the motion picture brethren. As a matter of fact, most of the latter are at the job because it pays right well. Why not, then, be consistent? Play the things the public likes to hear in the manner in which they like to hear them. Get aboard the cloud and get your share of the silver lining. You'll not be sorry!.

30

(Editor's Note: Mr Velazco was one of the best-known ~~XXXXXXXX~~ organists in the eastern United States, and was one of three who opened the Roxy Theater in March 1927).

SCENICS

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Nov. 1st witnessed the completion and opening of the "Velazco Organ Studios". Situated in the Heart of the Great White Way, these studios open to the musicians of New York the most modernly equipped Theatre Organ School in the East.

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Only the most modern theatre Unit Organs are installed in the Studios.

Application for practise and teaching time rapidly filling up.

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NEW YORK CITY

VELAZCO, EMIL

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Organist of the Palace Theatre, Dallas, Texas in the early 1920's
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

See Chapter _____, pp. _____ to _____.

VINCENT, ELMER

Theatre organist who with Elbert LaChelle opened the Peninsula Theatre (Robert Morton pipe organ) in Burlingame, California in 1926.

VINING, IRIS (ETHEL)

Organist of the Granada Theatre in San Francisco, California in the middle to late 1920's. Vining began her theatre organ career as an organist in the Old Mill Theatre in Dallas, Texas in 1917. She came to ^{The} Granada Theatre in San Francisco as chief organist in 1922.

VOGEL, CHARLES

Organist of the Capitol Theatre in Whiting, Indiana in 1926.
Organist of Saxe's Theatre in Wausau, Wisconsin in 1927.

VIRO, JOSEPH

Organist of Loew's Park Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio.

VLASAK, BILL

Vlasak was born in Columbus, Ohio, January 17, 1945. He began his musical education at the age of six studying violin with his father. The violin lessons continued until Vlasak was 16. During his junior high and high school years he studied piano with teachers at Capitol University in Columbus. One year before graduating from high school, organ instruction was begun with Marjorie Jackson at Capitol University.

Vlasak served as associate organist of Columbus First Community Church from 1960-1964. Although he majored in English at Ohio State, he minored in organ studying with Wilbur Held for two years. His interest in theatre organ was whetted when permission was granted for him to practice on the 3/16 Wurlitzer

BILL VLASAK

-2-

in the RKO Palace Theatre in Columbus. He played organ intermissions there and occasionally for special events such as a state Republican rally in 1963.

In 1965 Vlasak turned his attention to the 4/20 Robert Morton in Loew's Ohio Theatre playing organ intermissions before the theatre closed as a regular film house. He was active in several fund raising campaigns at the theatre including playing with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

During the years 1962-1975 Vlasak played the piano professionally at various restaurants in the Columbus area before moving to Phoenix, Arizona to become assistant organist to Lyn Larsen at the Organ Stop Pizza. He took time out to appear at the organ

for Bruer restaurants in the San Francisco Bay area (Cap'n's Galley, Pizza 'N' Pies) before returning to Columbus, Ohio, for more professional appearances in restaurants playing the piano.

Vlasak moved to Indianapolis to become associate organist with Donna Parker at the Paramount Music Palace which opened in January of 1979.

BILL VLASAK

Bill is a native of Columbus, Ohio. His father, John Vlasak, was a noted violinist and a student of the renowned violinist, Leopold Auer. Bill began music study on the violin with his father. Later he switched his attention to the piano. Ultimately his interest in the organ developed, and he began studies on that instrument which took him to Ohio State University where he majored in organ. While working for several years in the Columbus area, Bill gained a fine reputation as a pianist, playing in many of the finer hotels and dinner clubs and was very much in demand as a solo instrumentalist.

Later positions included Organ Stop in Phoenix and the Cann's Galley restaurants in the San Francisco area. Presently, he is one of the featured organists at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis.

Bill has recorded three albums, the last of which has just been completed and was performed on the Paramount Music Palace organ. His outside interests include collecting classic cars and vintage recordings.

Reference: 1984 ATOS convention brochure

VOGES, HERBERT

Organist of the Knickerbocker Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio.

Glimpses of the Past No. 29

How many of you remember the Sunday WHEC programs in the forties and fifties entitled "Silver & Gold"? Do you remember the "Spotlight on Youth" program which originated from the Gannett Youth Club's Barn on Saturday nights over the same station? The organist who supplied the music was Jerry Vogt.



Mr. Vogt, an expert pianist and organist, was born in Wayland, NY in 1914. He became a lover of the theater organ in his youth and often practiced on a little 2-manual instrument in Wayland's theater. Following graduation from the Eastman School of Music, he served in the army as a chaplain's assistant, playing organ for services.

He became staff organist and pianist for WHEC. His associates recalled how he meticulously prepared for every broadcast, Perfectly timing the numbers. The WHEC organ was a 3/11 Wurlitzer and at the Barn, he used a Hammond electronic. On Sundays he played for services at St. Mary's Church.

In the 50s, Mr. Vogt became associated with the Joseph Shale Music store, teaching organ (yours truly was a student), and selling pianos and organs. He eventually became president of the firm.

He had a life-long dream when he purchased a home on Barrington Street and installed the organ he had Practiced on when a boy. At the height of success, he died suddenly in 1961 at age 47.

The author treasures his memories with Jerry Vogt, both as a teacher and a superb friend. Were he alive today, he'd be a supporter of R. T. O. S. without a doubt.

Compiled by Lloyd E. Klos

VON D'ANTALFFY, DEZSO

XX
Organist on the staff of the Holy Theatre in New York. One of
the three artists to play the triple consoles on opening night,
March 11, 1927.

See Chapter XX
Four, "The Artists."

VON der LEZZ, CARMENZA

Organist of the America Theatre in Denver, Colorado.

VOSS, FRED C.

Organist of the Branford Theatre in Newark, New Jersey in 1925.

VOSS, HERMAN

A native of Muskegon, Michigan and a member of the Jubilant Trio which appeared (sacred music) many places throughout the midwest. A graduate of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, he became staff pianist and organist for Radio Station WMBI, the voice of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He has travelled extensively in concert and evangelistic work and has made a number of recordings of pipe organ music on the WGN Kimball-Wurlitzer pipe organ. All of his recordings have been of sacred music.

VERGNE, ERMINIE De La

Organist of the Rialto Theatre in Dever, Colorado in the 1920's.

1938

ART
Vosteen

Solo Organist

AT

BAILEY THEATRE

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

1938

ART VOSTEEN - 1938

The Bailey Theatre in Buffalo has launched an enterprise in the person of Art Vosteen, one of the youngest feature organists on the Shea circuit. He features novelties and his solos are a delight to his patrons.