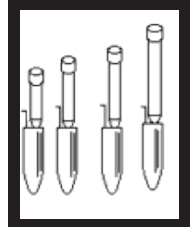


DTOS

Dickinson Theatre Organ Society

A chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society



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Vox Humana

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The Official DTOS Newsletter

June 2022



Like most talented theatre organists, **Dave Peckham** lives, eats, and breathes pipe organs. He's been on tour around the world. And when he's not performing, he's restoring and repairing pipe organs for the family business.

In his spare time, he's the organist for the Clemens Center in Elmira, New York, providing accompaniment and sound effects for silent films or tunes before the start of a show. Like so many child prodigies, Dave began taking piano lessons at age eight, then moved to the pipe organ when he was 11. He studied liberal arts and music at the Eastman School of Music, then returned to his home in Horsehead, New York, to work at his family's pipe organ repair shop, L.A. Peckham and Son Pipe Organ Service. He credits his parents with giving him a musical background. "I was going to concerts, apparently, before I was born," he said. It was his family that brought him back to Horsehead after his Eastman education. The family's pipe organ repair business was busy repairing the Clemens Center organ after it suffered severe water damage. Dave is married and has three teenage children. He often has the chance to tour internationally. He's played in England and Australia as well as nationally, in states from Maine to California. He's recorded four CDs, the most recent on the Wurlitzer installation at Rochester's Auditorium Center, home of the Rochester Theatre Organ Society.



Now celebrating its 34th season, **THE PARAGON RAGTIME ORCHESTRA** is the world's only year-round, professional ensemble specializing in the authentic recreation of "America's Original Music" – the sounds of early theater, "silent" cinema, and vintage dance. PRO came into being as the result of Juilliard student Rick Benjamin's 1985 discovery of thousands of historic orchestra scores of legendary Victor recording company. This extraordinary collection sparked Mr. Benjamin's formation of his "Paragon Ragtime Orchestra" at The Juilliard School the following year. In 1988 the Orchestra made its formal debut at **Alice Tully Hall** - the first concert ever presented at **Lincoln Center** by such an ensemble. Since then PRO has toured extensively across 48 States and several countries overseas. These travels have taken the Orchestra to more than 700 performing arts centers, including the **Ravinia Festival**, the **Smithsonian Institution**, **Chautauqua**, **Philadelphia's Kimmel Center**, the Austria's **Brucknerhaus**, the **American Dance Festival**, and in New York at the **92nd Street Y** and **City Center**. PRO's music inspired legendary choreographer Paul Taylor's dance suite, *Oh, You Kid!*, which was premiered at **The Kennedy Center** jointly by the **Paul Taylor Dance Company** and the Paragon and has since toured the world.

Continued on page 2

THE PARAGON RAGTIME ORCHESTRA

In 2003 the Orchestra premiered Rick Benjamin's reconstruction of Scott Joplin's opera *Treemonisha* at the Stern Grove Festival in a performance hailed by the San Francisco Chronicle as "vigorous and utterly charming." More recently, PRO has appeared twice as special guests of the **Minnesota Orchestra**, and in 2017 had the honor of presenting the official **Scott Joplin Centennial Memorial** concert at the composer's grave in Queens, New York.

In addition to its world-wide concert hall, university, and festival appearances, PRO has acquired a considerable following both here and abroad through its radio programs on National Public Radio, New York Times' WQXR, the BBC, the WWFM Classical, and the *Voice of America* networks. Since 1989 more than 600,000,000 people have enjoyed the Orchestra's recorded area music on **Main Street, U.S.A.** at Disneyland, Disney World, and Disneyland Paris, and in 1992 PRO proudly served as "Ambassador of Goodwill" for the United States at the **World's Fair** in Seville, Spain. Over the years the Orchestra has been heard on the soundtracks of several feature films and television programs, including productions for PBS, HBO, the FX Channel, and Turner Classic Movies. The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra's widely praised discography includes 18 albums and 2 DVD sets of historic Hollywood films with authentic scores. PRO's recordings have made the *Billboard* Charts ("Top Classical Albums") and have won three major critic's awards: **Gramophone's** "Editor's Choice," **BBC Music's** "Opera of the Month," and **Sterophile's** "Record of the Month." (website: www.paragonragtime.com)



Conductor Biography



Conductor **RICK BENJAMIN** has built a career upon the discovery and performance of American music from the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. He is the founder and director of the Paragon Ragtime Orchestra, which uses his extraordinary 20,000-title collection of antique theater and dance orchestra music (c. 1830-1930) as the basis of its repertoire. In addition to his work with Paragon, Mr. Benjamin maintains active careers as a pianist, arranger, and tubist. As a conductor he leads many other innovative ensembles, including the National Orchestra of Ireland (Dublin), the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the Aalborg and Aarhus Symfioniorkester in Denmark, the Olympia Symphony (Washington State), the National Orchestra of Iceland, the Erie Philharmonic, the Anchorage (Alaska) Symphony, and Chamber Music Hawaii. Mr. Benjamin is also a leading researcher of music for silent films; he has unearthed the original orchestral accompaniments to many great motion pictures of the 1910s and '20s, and he has conducted nearly 700 silent film screenings – a current world record. His articles on popular music appear in several publications, and lecture tours have taken him to over a hundred colleges and universities throughout North America. Mr. Benjamin's multi-year reconstruction of the Scott Joplin opera *Treemonisha* was premiered to great acclaim in 2003 at San Francisco's Stern Grove Festival and has since been performed nationally and internationally; recently the opera was recorded under Mr. Benjamin's baton for New World Records. He is continuing work on his books *The American Theater Orchestra* and *Encyclopedia of Arrangers & Orchestrators: 1875-1925*. Rick Benjamin is a voting member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (www.GRAMMY.com) and Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI). He was educated at The Juilliard School in New York City. (website: www.rickbenjamin.com)

President's Message

Spring has arrived! And with the arrival of Spring at Dickinson comes the anticipation of the next concert season! We're not ready to release the season yet, but I did have some news to share with you as it relates to our 53rd (2022-2023) concert season.

First, thanks to so many of you who took the time to offer your feedback on our matinee concert times. Many of you liked the 3 PM start time. Many of you prefer the 7 PM start time. Based on the number of responses received, MOST of you liked keeping the 7 PM start times, but using the 3 PM matinee times for the colder months.

The Board of Directors has decided that for our 53rd (2022-2023) concert season, we will be offering an Open House in September, a possible holiday concert in December, and 4 regular concerts. Due to the amount of work and staff that it takes to host the concerts, we realized that 6 concerts in a year was too much for us. So for next year, we are going to try offering 4 concerts (1 each in October, November, March, and May). The concerts in October and May will begin at 7 PM; the concerts in November and March will begin at 3 PM. The actual dates and the artists have yet to be finalized and we will communicate that to you once all of the details have been worked out.

Some other changes to note – we will no longer be offering advanced tickets by mail or phone. Tickets may be purchased in advance online through our website or at the door on the day / night of the concert. During our concerts, we will be selling tickets for the additional concerts in the season, but we will not be offering "season tickets" as a packet. The Board unanimously voted NOT to raise our ticket prices, so our ticket prices will remain the same -- \$15.

We do plan to resume the DTOS tradition of our post-concert receptions. As you may know, our receptions were held on the stage following the concert, featuring some snacks, homemade baked goods, coffee, and refreshments. It was also a time to meet the featured artist as well as have conversations with one another and members of the DTOS team. Many of our attendees, however, have been unable to attend the receptions on the stage, due to accessibility issues. So, starting next season, we have decided to move our receptions to the lobby following the concert so that everyone in attendance has the opportunity to participate.

Please continue to be safe and stay well.

David A. Ruth, Ph.D.
President / Chairman
Dickinson Theatre Organ Society
DTOSPres@gmail.com

A Memorial Service for Bob Dilworth



Join us for the memorial service of **Robert E. Dilworth** on the **July 16th** in the Dickinson Theatre. Services begin at 4pm with **Carl Black** and **John Baratta** on the consoles, with a special pre-recorded tribute by **Peter Richard Conte** following. After, we will break for light refreshments then be joined for a musical celebration concert presented by **Nathan Avakian** and **Dave Wickerham**. This memorial and special presentation has no admission required. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made that evening to the society. Doors open at 3:30. Please join us on July 16th as we pay tribute to the founder of the amazing Dickinson Theatre Organ Society.

Missed the last Vox?

Mary Ann Dilworth did a little sleuthing and decided to track down what happened to the newsletter - after all, this process has worked successfully for thousands of mailed *Vox*s. She determined that our printer printed them, put the mailing labels on them, sorted them, and took them to the post office. 5 trays of sorted *Vox Humanas* were accepted by the Post Office at 5:17PM on April 18th. Unfortunately, they haven't been seen since.

So how do we fix this? What do we do? The best thing you, the reader, can do is sign up for an email version. Remember, the digital version is often received a week before the mailed version and even comes in color, unlike the mailed version you may receive.

On our end, we are trying to get all the editing done earlier so we can make sure everyone, wherever they live, can get it with enough time before the concert. This may involve sending them first class mail, and we really want to reserve this added expense for patrons who don't have email. We will have extra paper copies available in the lobby on concert night for those who choose email and still want to have a paper copy to keep.

On another note, we are always looking for ideas or ways to improve the *Vox* to appeal to a larger audience so more people can come to enjoy our wonderful Kimball. If you have any suggestions or entries you would like to see in our publication, feel free to send them to **avabrooksdtos@gmail.com** and we will take your suggestions into consideration as we make our *Vox* even better.

Review of Jelani Eddington Live Concert 4.30.22 by Ron Stonehouse

As usual, before the actual concert begins, the house lights are dimmed and a professional sounding voice is heard announcing "The President of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society" then following a short pause our Vice President, Eric Robbins, steps up to the mike and said, "is not here." Eric gave us the latest updates, the introduction of Jelani, and the passing of another member, Mr. Bill Church, all done without any notes. Impressive! The biggest surprise to me was in the performance itself. I've seen and heard Jelani Eddington many times but never heard him play more beautifully than this evening and those who missed it, really missed a great one! This evening we congratulate Jelani, about 4 days late, on his 25th anniversary at Dickinson. His first appearance was April 26, 1997.

Jelani's opening number was "Some People" composed by Jule Styne with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim in 1959 and introduced in *Gypsy* by the character Rose played by Ethel Merman.

This was followed by "Belle of the Ball" by Leroy Anderson in 1951. Jelani pointed out that Leroy was noted for his descriptive composing and you can almost see a couple dancing to this tune.

The next piece was dedicated to the people of the Ukraine as we enjoyed the very beautiful arrangement with many wonderful voices from our Kimball on "Let There Be Peace on Earth" by Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller in 1955.

One of Jelani's favorites was "National Emblem March" by Edwin Eugene Bagley in 1902, published in 1906 and first recorded by New York Military Band around 1910.

A medley, the first of the night, was from *Annie* the Broadway show in 1976. The music was by Charles Strause and the lyrics Martin Charnin. The order in which were played is as follows: "Maybe", "It's the Hard-Knock Life", "Tomorrow", "I Think I'm Gonna Like it Here", "NYC, You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile", "Easy Street", and "Tomorrow" as a reprise. I actually caught the closing night performance when all the previous Annies and Daddy Warbucks joined the cast for a final bow.

Jelani continued his performance with "Something's Gotta Give" words and music by Johnny Mercer in 1954, published in 1955 for Fred Astaire in the musical *Daddy Long Legs*.

The next piece was played for our late president Robert "Bob" Dilworth with so much of his life being dedicated to this school and mainly almost everything that has been accomplished with the DTOS organization and particularly our organs themselves! It was very touching and befitting that the selection be "Over the Rainbow" by Harold Arlen in

1939 for *The Wizard of Oz* and do I need to mention Judy Garland.

Taking us into intermission, we are entertained with "Voices of Spring Waltz" by the "Waltz King" Johann Strauss II in 1882.

The second half begins with Vincent Youmans biggest hit "Hallelujah!" composed in 1927 and first appears in *Hit the Deck*, a Broadway production.

"Brazileira" was next and is the 3rd movement in Darius Milhaud's *Scaramouche* in 1937.

For those of us who are Gershwin fans, you will enjoy the next medley. Jelani noted this on his playlist as "Gershwin Medley Gorsuch". What this turns out to be is a medley of about seven or more Gershwin tunes that Chris Gorsuch arranged and played mostly bits and pieces of these songs in what seems no particular order. The songs include the following: "S Wonderful", "Our Love is Here to Stay", "They Can't Take That Away from Me", "I Got Rhythm", "3rd Movement of Concert in F", "An American in Paris", "Rhapsody in Blue", plus others. Jelani warned us not to try and follow any particular order and when he played Gorsuch's arrangement you just have to sit back and enjoy it. As he turned around to play, he called it "Gershwin Fantasy". I looked back at some of the performances at Dickinson and found that Chris was here on September 23, 2006 and played what he called "Gershwin Fantasy" but that was a little before my time at DTOS. On March 12, 2011, the two of them were here in concert together and caught them together at the 2011 ATOS convention. I did enjoy Chris's playing at other conventions but alas he too is no longer with us.

While researching "Who's Sorry Now?" I discovered Connie Francis' signature recording in 1958 was composed by Ted Snyder with lyrics by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby in 1923. It was recorded by Isham Jones and had a major hit with it.

Jelani's final piece of the evening was "Bacchanale" from the opera *Samson and Delilah* composed by Camille Saint-Saens and making its premier on December 2, 1877 in the Ducal Theatre, Weimar, Germany. It is a spectacular dance scene I've been told.

The encore was a little different than usual being "Dizzy Fingers" followed closely by "God Bless America". The first by Zez Confrey in 1927 and the second by Irving Berlin in 1918. Needless to say, Mr. Eddington received two standing ovations for his work tonight. Thank you sir for a wonderful and memorable concert!

A few of our friends

Grand Theater, East Greenville, PA
www.thegrandtheater.org 3/14 Marr
& Colton played before many shows.

Organ Piper Pizza, Greenfield, WI
Zach Frame plays regularly.

Organ Stop Pizza, Mesa, AZ
Daily 3pm to 9pm featuring
Brett Valliant or Glenn Tallar

Wanamaker Organ, Macy's Phila. PA
www.wanamakerorgan.com Current
daily concert times on website Peter
Richard Conte & others

Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, PA
See tosdv.org for current schedule

Broadway Theater, Pitman, NJ 3/8
Kimball played at all stage shows and
special events

Susquehanna Valley TO Society
www.svtos.org

Capital Theater, York, PA

Allen Organ Co, Macungie, PA
www.allenorgans.com

Garden State TO Society
www.gstos.org

Boardwalk Hall - Atlantic City
boardwalkorgans.org

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DTOS Publications

CD Recordings

All professional CDs are \$20
postpaid, recorded on the Dickinson
Kimball, available only in the US.

An Affair To Remember - Tony Fenelon.

Tribute - Ken Double (organ) and Skip
Stine (trumpet).

Graduation - Richard Hills.

dave @ dickinson - Dave Wickerham.

Discovering The Unit Orchestra - Jelani
Eddington.

Kavalkade - Simon Gledhill.

Double Touch - Ken Double.

DVD The Magic Is the Sound - About the
DTOS Kimball and its music, with Steven
Ball and Tony Fenelon (DVD)

The Dickinson Kimball Story, - an
illustrated 52 page booklet. \$10.00 postpaid

Concert Memories CDs

Following is a listing of CDs readily
available. A longer list will be available
soon covering previous concerts.

Convention Concerts 2015

CC1 - David Peckham
CC2 - Dave Wickerham
CC3 - Hector Olivera
CC4 - Simon Gledhill/Richard Hills

2010/2011

246B Fenelon 247 Ortloff
248 Smith
249 Eddington/Gorsuch
250 Hills 251 Wickerham

2011/2012

252 Nordwall 253 Herman
254 Luce 255 Valliant
256 Wilson 257 Avakian

2012/2013

258 Strony 259 Peckham
260 Rankin 261 Gledhill
262 Smith 263 Fenelon

2013.2014

264 Wickerham 265 Eddington
266 Ball 267 Parker
268 Nagano 269 Gray (\$16)

2014/2015

270 Hills 271 Gray
272 Double 273 Schwandt
274 Olivera 275 Lavoie
& CC1 Peckham

Minervini

CC2 Wickerham **CC3 Olivera**
CC4 Gledhill/Hills (duet)

2015/2016

276 Avakian 277 Eddington
279 Gibson & Kinnier

2016/ 2017

280 Wickerham (\$16)
282 Dick Smith 283 Ron Rhode
284 Mark Herman
285 David Gray (\$16)

2017/18

286 Scott Foppiano 287 Brett Valliant
288 Rosemary Bailey 289 Simon Gledhill
290 Clark Wilson

2018/19

292 Alex Jones 293 Carol Williams
294 Nathan Avakian 295 Richard Hills
296 Phil Kelsall 297 Ken Double

2019/20

298 Zach Frame 299 Hector Olivera
300 David Gray
301 Jelani Eddington / Donnie Rankin

2020/21

302 Tedde Gibson 303 Nathan Avakian
304 Mark Herman 305 Ken Double
w/ Skip Stine

2021/22

306 Zach Frame

To Purchase Concert Memories CDs

Concert Memory CDs are \$15.00 for single disc selections and
\$20.00 for two-disc selections. The DTOS music store is available before
and during intermission of each concert.

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Dickinson Theatre Organ Society

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