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# The Lee Erwin Collection: The Music of Silent Film Composer and Theater Organist Lee Erwin

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
THE LEE ERWIN COLLECTION: THE MUSIC OF SILENT FILM COMPOSER AND  
THEATER ORGANIST LEE ERWIN.

By  
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School of Music  
in partial fulfillment of the  
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The members of the Committee approve the thesis of Michael Hix defended on  
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## ABSTRACT

From the 1960s until his death in September of 2000, Lee Erwin championed silent films, silent film music, and the theater organ. Growing up in Huntsville, Alabama during the first quarter of the twentieth century, Lee Erwin (1908 – 2000) was an organist for several of the country's great movie palaces during the silent film era. From 1930 until 1931 Erwin studied in France with organist André Marchal and with Nadia Boulanger. Upon returning to the United States, Erwin began his lengthy career in radio and television working with Arthur Godfrey. In 1967, Erwin was commissioned by the American Theater Organ Society to compose organ music for the Gloria Swanson film *Queen Kelly*. It was this film that led his career back into the consoles of the great American theater organs. He toured extensively playing thousands of concerts of organ music during silent film showings. Erwin, believing that cue sheets originally compiled for these films during the silent film era were "full of the musical cliché's of the 1920s," composed new scores to over 100 silent films. In addition to preserving this unique art form through his performing and composing, Erwin also worked with several pupils. These pupils, including Jeff Weiller and Ben Model, work full time composing and performing, striving to keep this genre of art music alive.

This thesis discusses the life and music of Lee Erwin, with emphasis on the film music he composed after 1967 and his role in preserving the art of silent film accompanying. His educational background will be examined as well as his compositional style and aesthetic. The body of this thesis serves as an introduction and index to the Lee Erwin Collection, an archive of documents pertaining to the life and compositions of Lee Erwin. The Lee Erwin Collection will be housed at the Library of the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.

## PART 1 BIOGRAPHY

### LEE ORVILLE ERWIN JR. IN HUNTSVILLE

Lee Orville Erwin Jr. was the first child of Mary Estella Shaver Erwin and Lee Orville Erwin Sr. According to family records he was born 15 July 1908 at East Holmes Street in Huntsville, Alabama. During the next fifteen years, Lee would be joined by five siblings: Thelma May Erwin Castator (born 20 April 1911, died 11 March 1988), Sara (Sally) Elizabeth Erwin Hix (born 25 November 1914), Chas Alfred Erwin (born 13 June 1917, died 16 March 1918), Mary Leone Erwin Edwards (born 26 November 1920), and Joseph (Joe) Arthur Erwin (born 13 January 1923).<sup>1</sup>

Life in the Erwin household was a comfortable one. Lee Erwin Sr., the founder of the Erwin Manufacturing Company and the Textile Hardwood Manufacturing Company Incorporated, was a successful businessman in northern Alabama. The family lived in a large house in West Huntsville until 1918 when they moved to Calhoun Street inside present day downtown Huntsville.<sup>2</sup> According to Joe, the youngest Erwin sibling, his parents were “fun-loving” and very attentive: “Mother would read stories to us, or get Thelma or Sally to do it. Dad would make up stories, many of which were outlandish and we knew it, but we loved listening anyway. They would take us on hikes, for a ride in the car on Sundays - often including a stop at the Drug Store for an ice-cream cone.”<sup>3</sup> The Erwin parents exposed their children to the arts and discovered the individual talents of each child: Thelma enthusiastically studied ballet; Sara was interested in the visual arts; Mary loved to write. Although each child was encouraged to pursue their interests, the common discipline among the Erwin family was music. In a 1970 article by Lloyd E. Klos, Lee Erwin recounts:

One of my first remembrances was listening to music. My mother was the organist of a very small church; she was probably the only member of the congregation who could play.<sup>4</sup> When I was three or four, I was given a toy piano for Christmas. It must have been a better than average toy, because it was exactly in tune, and it had a keyboard of almost four octaves. Although I couldn't possibly have known at that time that I was gifted with absolute pitch, I realize now that I was demonstrating it regularly by reproducing accurately any group of notes which I heard. So, I found that I could automatically play anything I heard my mother play on her big piano.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Family Bible, 1907, Lee Erwin Collection. Lee Orville Erwin and Mary Estella Shaver were married 18 September 1907 in Huntsville at the residence of the bride's parents.

<sup>2</sup> Sara Erwin Hix, personal interview by author, Huntsville, AL, 13 November 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph (Joe) Erwin, Tryon, North Carolina, letter to author. 11 January 2003.

<sup>4</sup> According to Sara Erwin Hix this church was West Huntsville United Methodist Church.

<sup>5</sup> Lloyd E. Klos, “Portrait of Lee Erwin: Theatre Organist” *Theater Organ: The Journal of the American Theater Organ Society*, 12/3 (June 1970): 8.



When Lee started school he began his formal lessons with a lifelong friend of the Erwin family, Bessie Pettus (Spragins). Joe Erwin recalls:

All the children studied piano with Ms. Pettus, but only Lee and I developed a sensitivity to musical expressiveness. Miss Bessie, as everyone called her, loved young people and music. She was not a great performer, technically, but played very expressively. Her love of each of us, her students, translated that sense of expressiveness with great flourish and enthusiasm. She had a genuine pride in the accomplishments each of us would achieve.”<sup>6</sup>

Various letters and documents in the Lee Erwin Collection reflect the warm relationship between Lee Erwin and Bessie Pettus. While studying in France in 1930 he corresponded with her frequently.<sup>7</sup> The family’s genial relationship with Pettus remained intact through several decades. Sara Erwin Hix’s children, William P. Hix, Jr. and Elizabeth (Betty) Hix also studied piano with Pettus when younger.<sup>8</sup>



Fig. 1 Lee Orville Erwin, Jr. 1915 (age 7).

Moving from West Huntsville to the Calhoun Street residence, the family began attending the First United Methodist Church of Huntsville. It is quite possible that it was

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph (Joe) Erwin, Tryon, North Carolina, letter to author. 11 January 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Lee Erwin, Paris, France to Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 19 January 1931. “Ask Miss Bessie if she has stopped writing letters to her friends. I wrote her way before Christmas and have not heard from her in a very long time.” Another letter to his mother dated 30 August 1930 mentions receiving a letter from Miss Pettus.

<sup>8</sup> William P. Hix Jr., interview by author, 21 October 2002.

here Lee began to play the organ, substituting for the regular organist.<sup>9</sup> Although his religious upbringing and early musical experiences are important to note, Lee Erwin's fascination and life long love of the organ commenced in the movie theaters.

During the 1920s Huntsville had two movie theaters: the Grand Theatre located on Jefferson Street, and the Lyric Theatre, located on Washington Street. Young Lee Erwin was a fixture at both of these theaters. The Lyric Theatre was equipped with a Style L Wurlitzer Pipe Organ-Orchestra, which was played by organist George Hatch. According to Erwin, Hatch could not read music, but did a terrific job of improvising music for films. The Grand Theatre did not originally have an organ; instead, a pianist accompanied the films. In numerous interviews Erwin reminisced about his time spent in the Huntsville movie theaters:

After a time I was given permission to play the supper show in both theatres any time I wanted to, but without pay, of course. It did give me the opportunity to attend both theatres without admission- a real prize for a twelve-year-old boy who was already hooked on the theatre organ.<sup>10</sup>

In 1924 Lee Erwin made the transition from the adolescent who haunted the movie theaters substituting for regular organists to a serious young man intent on a career in music. At sixteen he graduated from high school<sup>11</sup> and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.<sup>12</sup>

### LEE ERWIN'S EDUCATION

Cincinnati provided a tremendous cultural contrast to the small, sleepy Huntsville of the 1920s. Erwin enrolled at the conservatory in 1926 and studied organ with Professor Parvin Titus. A native of New Jersey, Parvin Titus (1897-1973) had studied with organists Marcel Dupré and Gaston Dethier. When he was appointed to the position of Professor of Organ in 1924, Titus moved to Cincinnati, where he taught at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music until 1965.<sup>13</sup> Titus was exceedingly supportive of the young Erwin's talent and later arranged for him to study in France.

In order to earn extra money during his school years, Erwin played the organ seven nights a week in two local movie theaters; the Albee Theatre, located on the south side of Fifth Street, and the Palace Theatre.<sup>14</sup> Because they were an important part of the movie palace experience, theater organists of the silent film era were handsomely paid musicians. In his autobiography *The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter*, organist Gaylord Carter recalls that during the 1920s "as a theater organist you would make in a

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<sup>9</sup> Donna Fisher-Jackson, "Lee Erwin," *Friends of the Zeiterion Theatre Newsletter*, 8/1 Summer 1991. Erwin started by "banging around" on the organ, then progressed to playing in church services.

<sup>10</sup> Klos, "Portrait of Lee Erwin," 11.

<sup>11</sup> Erwin graduated from the Mills Taylor School, a private high school in Huntsville.

<sup>12</sup> Joe Erwin, Tryon, North Carolina, letter to author, 11 January 2003. Lee won a statewide piano competition held in Birmingham and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Cincinnati Conservatory,

<sup>13</sup> "Nunc Dimitis: Parvin Titus," *The Diapason*, May 1973, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Jerry Stein, "Albee Lives in Makeover for Ballroom," available at <http://www.cincypost.com/living/1998/albee021798.html>; internet. Accessed 20 January 2003

week what a church organist would make in a month.”<sup>15</sup> According to Erwin, he earned \$20 a week - a substantial sum, considering his rent was only \$5 a week.<sup>16</sup> A steady income allowed the young Erwin to amass substantial savings as well as to purchase his first car, a Model T Ford.

In 1929, after three years at the conservatory, Erwin left school to accept his first full time theater positions. He served as assistant organist at Loew’s Temple Theatre and organist for the Alabama Theatre, both located in Birmingham, Alabama. Loew’s Temple Theatre, with its four manual, sixty rank Möller organ, featured first-run films and popular vaudeville acts. (see fig. 2)



Fig 2 Lee Erwin, age 21, at the console of the Loew’s Temple Theatre Möller

Joseph Stovee, principal organist for Loew’s Temple Theatre, was a powerful influence on Erwin’s ideas regarding the theater organ.

The chief organist, Joseph Stovee, was a genuine artist, not a retreaded piano player. He really knew classical and popular music, and his improvisations were marvelous. Even his first ‘cold’ performance of a silent film (a new one each week) was nearly always a masterpiece. From

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<sup>15</sup> Carter, Gaylord, *The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter*, ed., Nancy Grimley Carlton (Oakland, CA: Paramount Theater of the Arts, 1995), 36.

<sup>16</sup> Klos, “Portrait of Lee Erwin,” 9.

his examples, I learned, in an unforgettable way, that an organist should never use current popular music, or even well known classical selections as accompaniment for a *serious* film. Any familiar piece of music already has preconceived connotations for any audience, and therefore, draws too much attention to the organ, at the expense of the film. For him, each film had to have a new, completely original score that he improvised on the spot. It was a lesson which very few organists learned, probably because many of them weren't capable. Of course, there were books of cue music to fit any given situation, except usually it didn't really fit."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to accepting a position at Loew's, 1929 marks the beginning of Erwin's long time involvement at the Alabama Theatre.<sup>18</sup> The following telegram details Erwin's job with the theatre.

Have opening Alabama Theatre for feature organist play spot solos and accompany orchestral overtures. Two hours a day approximate time actual playing. Salary sixty seven fifty. Wire me at once if interested.

Bert Hollowell Alabama Theatre.<sup>19</sup>



Fig. 3 Lee Erwin at age 22.

<sup>17</sup> Klos, "Portrait of Lee Erwin," 8-9. "Books of cue music" or cue sheets include a breakdown of the film's plot, with musical suggestions for each scene. "Books of cue music" include *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* published in 1924 by Erno Rapeé, and Lang and West's *Musical Accompaniment of Moving Pictures* published in 1920. Cue sheets were published and circulated with the films.

<sup>18</sup> When the theatre was resurrected and restored in the 1980s by Cecil Whitmire, Erwin graced the console of the Wurlitzer (nicknamed "Big Bertha") in concerts and film productions nearly every year. I first saw Lee Erwin perform at the Alabama Theatre in April of 1992, where he was featured in a Holy Week presentation of the Cecil B. DeMille classic *King of Kings*.

<sup>19</sup> Bert Hollowell, Telegram to Lee Erwin, 26 February 1929, Lee Erwin Collection.

An ambitious young man, it was also during this time that Erwin became involved in radio. He served as pianist and organist for two Birmingham radio stations, WAPI<sup>20</sup> and WRBC.<sup>21</sup>

In winter of 1930 Professor Parvin Titus invited Erwin to embark upon a year long period of study in France. Initially Erwin's parents were not supportive of this venture to Europe. They felt that the twenty-one year old Erwin was too young for an extended period of study overseas. After assurances from Titus that he would escort Erwin and help him get established in France, the parents acceded. Erwin and Titus departed on the *Vollendam* from New York 6 June 1930.<sup>22</sup>

Remaining in France until May 1931, Erwin studied music with several of the master musicians of Paris. He was the first American student of organist André Marchal (1894-1980). Blind from birth, Marchal studied at the National Institute for the Blind, where Vierne and Barié had studied. When he was fifteen, he began studying organ with Adolphe Marty, and harmony with Albert Mahaut, both of whom had won the Premier Prix d'Orgue at the Paris Conservatoire in the class of César Franck. Marchal was famous more for his abilities as a colourist and interpreter rather than for technical prowess.<sup>23</sup>

There is no doubt that Marchal pushed his new American student. The letters Erwin wrote his mother attest to this. Erwin revered Marchal, and worked very hard to succeed in his lessons. From his time in France, until the end of his performing career, Erwin cited Marchal as an important influence. Erwin, indebted to and very fond of Marchal, maintained contact with him and his family through the years.<sup>24</sup>



Fig. 4 Lee Erwin in France, 1930.

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<sup>20</sup> *Birmingham (Alabama) News*, 9 February 1930, Xerox clipping in the Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>21</sup> Klos, "Portrait of Lee Erwin," 9.

<sup>22</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 8 June 1930, Lee Erwin Collection. The Lee Erwin Collection contains forty-five letters Erwin wrote to his mother during his study in France.

<sup>23</sup> Felix Aprahamian. "Marchal, André," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 15 (London: MacMillan Publishers Ltd., 2001).

<sup>24</sup> Allan Evans, "The 1956 Zodiac Recordings: André Marchal, Organ," available at <http://www.arbiterrecords.com/notes/111notes.html>; internet, Accessed 11 April 2001. In 1956, under his new Zodiac record label, Erwin recorded Marchal playing Bach's *Orgelbuchlein*, BWV 603-12, 614-15.

The weekly organ lesson was not the sole medium through which Erwin learned his craft. The artistic atmosphere of Paris, with its host of musicians, inspired and nurtured Erwin's ideas about music. Erwin's connection to Marchal allowed him to spend time with numerous influential French musicians of the twentieth century. It was through Marchal that Erwin met one of the greatest French organists of the century, Olivier Messiaen.

Yesterday Marchal had us to his house in the morning to play a whole bunch of new music for us: some things that have just been written in the past year. Some of the things I liked, and some of them I didn't, but a piece composed by one of Marchal's pupils (Olivier Messiaen) was extremely good. It is very different from anything I have ever heard and it is also very difficult.<sup>25</sup>

Erwin fondly recalled his Sunday mornings in Paris. After hearing Marchal improvise his Sunday morning service, Erwin and his colleagues rushed to the Paris Métro to reach Trinité<sup>26</sup> in time to hear Messiaen's improvisation.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to organ, Erwin studied harmony while in France. He worked with a former colleague of Titus' named Jean Verd.<sup>28</sup> At one time Verd had been a faculty member of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, however health problems caused him to leave America and return to his home in France.<sup>29</sup> Erwin studied harmony, solfege, and piano with Verd, who encouraged and challenged the young musician.

Mr. Verd sees to it that I don't have a single idle moment. The other day he said, "Well now, Sunday is a holiday for you. Of course you will study all morning and most of the afternoon and have a French lesson at night, but the rest of the day is your own to do as you like it with it"! The "rest of the day" I will take a walk similar to the one last Sunday, but one not quite so long.

To save time, that Mr. Verd says I need to put towards harmony and solfege, he has suggested that I cut down on my letters to everybody but you all. He does not say to write less, but to make all the letters very short and to the point, and whenever possible, just write a postal card.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 27 July 1930, Lee Erwin Collection. The pieces Messiaen played were probably the *Huit préludes* for piano, which were composed in 1929.

<sup>26</sup> See *Olivier Messiaen: Music and Color. Conversations with Claude Samuel* (Portland, OR.: Amadeus Press, 1994 ). Messiaen (1908-1992) began playing the organ at Trinité in 1930 (at the age of 22). This first year at Trinité coincides with Erwin's stay in Paris. Messiaen played his own compositions at the noon mass.

<sup>27</sup> Allan Evans, "The 1956 Zodiac Recordings: André Marchal, Organ," available at <http://www.arbiterrecords.com/notes/111notes.html>; internet, Accessed 11 April 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Jean Verd is author of *Points d'orgue, souvenirs d'un musicien* (Nice: Nice, La Lambrusque, 1973).

<sup>29</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, 22 June 1930, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>30</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, date unknown August 1930, Lee Erwin Collection.

In a letter dated 30 August 1930 Erwin speaks of Verd's guidance and his plans to continue his musical education in France.

Mr. Verd is being simply too good to me for words and I am learning much under his guidance. He believes in a person having plenty of work to do and anyone that stays around him has to work or else- He has helped me plan my course of study and if I can ever finish it I can then begin to get some insight into what music really is. My musical education has been sadly neglected, but no more than any other American I suppose- Over there a person merely gets a "smattering" of what it's all about whereas over here they plunge into it head first and even though it takes twice the time to do it that it does in America when a person finishes he is really a musician with a sound understanding of things.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to studies with Marchal and Verd, Erwin studied composition with Nadia Boulanger. One of the most famous composition teachers of the twentieth century, Boulanger instructed hundreds of musicians including Aaron Copland, Walter Piston, Virgil Thompson, and Philip Glass. In his letters, Erwin mentions Boulanger in one brief sentence:

I have a class (a new one that I am starting this week with a Mlle. Boulanger) where we all sing the cantatas and church music of Bach in German.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout his life Erwin cited Boulanger as one of his teachers, yet his letters reflect a stronger influence of Marchal and Verd. Perhaps the relationship with Boulanger was embellished because of her fame in musical circles. While Marchal and Verd were obviously important in Erwin's musical development, the name Boulanger ("arguably the greatest teacher since Socrates, certainly the greatest *music* teacher"<sup>33</sup>) carried with it associations that lend credibility to a theatre organist, whose musicianship would have been questioned by classical organists.<sup>34</sup>

During this period, Erwin's friends and family in America were struggling with the economic hardship of the Great Depression. Many of his letters reflect his concern for his father's business and those of several of his relatives. Because his parents were unable to provide financial support during his year of study in France, Erwin utilized the savings he amassed playing as a theater organist in Cincinnati and maintained a very

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<sup>31</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr. , Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 31 August 1930. Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>32</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr. , Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 19 January 1931, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>33</sup> Ned Rorem, *Knowing When to Stop: A Memoir*, (New York: Simon and Schuster 1994), 396.

<sup>34</sup> See Thomas J. Mathiesen, "Silent Film Music and the Theatre Organ," *Indiana Theory Review*, Vol. 11 (1990), 81. "If film music in general was denigrated, the theatre organ was regarded in serious musical circles as a particular aberration, not only because of the type of music it intended to play but also because it represented the exact opposite of the characteristics espoused by the *Orgelbewegung* of the twentieth century."



strict budget. In a letter dated 12 October 1930 Erwin calculated his monthly living expenses at \$110, and stated that he had \$500 in the bank.<sup>35</sup> Briefly working as a substitute organist at the American Cathedral in Paris Erwin was also able to secure an additional thirty-five francs<sup>36</sup> each week, as well as an organ on which to practice.<sup>37</sup> In order to remain in France for a longer period of study Erwin contacted his Aunts Julia and Sarah. Both wired him additional funds to help pay for this unique educational experience.<sup>38</sup> As his trip came to a conclusion Erwin even arranged to sell his car, which was in Huntsville with his parents. When his parents sold the Model T Ford in April of 1931, he used the money to repay his generous relatives rather than remain in France.

With his savings depleted, Erwin returned to Alabama in May of 1931. Though he never returned to France as a student, this experience shaped his life. According to his student, Jeff Weiler, Erwin spoke fondly of this exciting educational venture. He reminisced not only of the music and musicians he heard, but of the life lessons learned.<sup>39</sup>



Fig. 5 Erwin (center) on his return trip from France, 1931.

### ERWIN'S WORK ON RADIO AND TELEVISION (1931-1967)

On returning to the United States, Erwin went back to work at the Alabama Theatre, though his responsibilities as a musician in the theater were quite different. Due

<sup>35</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 12 October 1930, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>36</sup> Erwin estimated this equaled around \$1.50 a week.

<sup>37</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 27 October 1930, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>38</sup> Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, 5 December 1930, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>39</sup> Jeff Weiler, Phone interview by author, tape recorded, 24 February 2000.



to the popularity of sound films (“talkies”) and the economic woes of the Great Depression, the roles of theater musicians during the early 1930s were greatly diminished. Although several large theaters kept orchestras to play overtures and vaudeville acts, between 1928 and 1930, 10,000 musicians lost their jobs.<sup>40</sup> As a result, Erwin found himself playing the organ occasionally for sing-a-longs<sup>41</sup> but primarily working as a sync-operator.<sup>42</sup> As a sync-operator he synchronized the sound recordings with the films and news-reels as they were presented. Unhappy with this situation, Erwin moved back to Ohio in 1932 and completed his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.<sup>43</sup>

In 1932 at the conservatory, Erwin met John Ranck, the man who would become his first long-term companion. A seventeen year old piano student, Ranck was just beginning his studies at Cincinnati Conservatory. They moved in together in 1933 to an apartment located on 2814 Highland Avenue<sup>44</sup> and remained partners for the next twenty years.<sup>45</sup>

According to Ranck, Erwin kept a busy schedule playing the organ in a few small theaters, leading a dance band, and holding various other musical jobs.<sup>46</sup> Erwin’s dance band, Lee Erwin’s Musical Troupe, was a popular group in Cincinnati that played for numerous concerts and radio appearances. This band provided Erwin with his first experience arranging music, a skill that he would eventually master.<sup>47</sup>

At the same time that sound film gained prominence in the American theater, the fledgling radio industry also gained popularity. By 1930 there were twenty fifteen-minute serials on daytime network radio, totaling seventy-five hours a week.<sup>48</sup> Sponsored by soap manufacturers, these serials were popularly known as “soap operas.” Ironically, the only musical score of these “operas” was “the organ music swelling and subsiding in the background.”<sup>49</sup> As a result of the popularity of the soap operas many theater organists successfully made the transition to work in radio. As Mary Cassata and Thomas Skill observe in *Life in Daytime Television*, the soap opera organist was a direct descendant of the pianist or organist who provided the music for silent films.<sup>50</sup> Both Lee Erwin and Gaylord Cater are examples of musicians who thrived in this new medium.

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<sup>40</sup> Gillian B. Anderson, “Presentation of Silent Films, or, Music as Anaesthesia,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* V/2 (1987): 293

<sup>41</sup> John W. Landon, *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer*, (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1983), 9. The sing-a-long was an audience favorite during the early days of film. Dick Huemer and Max Fleischer introduced the first “bouncing ball” sing-along cartoon film at the Circle Theatre, Columbus Circle, New York City, in 1924. The organist led the audience in singing a popular song, while a film projected the words onto the screen.

<sup>42</sup> Klos, “Portrait of Lee Erwin,” 15.

<sup>43</sup> Erwin graduated from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in 1936.

<sup>44</sup> They later relocated to 291 Southern Avenue in Cincinnati.

<sup>45</sup> John Ranck, phone interview with author, 2 February 2003.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Joseph (Joe) Erwin, letter to author, 12 January 2003.

<sup>48</sup> Mary Cassata and Thomas Skill, *Life in Daytime Television: Tuning in Daytime Serial Drama*, (Norwood New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1983), 108.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 102

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 106



Fig. 6 Lee Erwin, during his early twenties

Erwin began playing for serials on radio station WLW of Cincinnati in 1933.<sup>51</sup> Proudly called the “Nation’s Station,” WLW was one of the most powerful radio stations in the history of radio. From 1934 until 1939, the FCC granted special permission to station owner Powel Crosley Jr. to operate at 500,000 watts. This wattage, ten times the power other stations were allowed, was strong enough to broadcast a signal to England and South America, not to mention over the entire United States.<sup>52</sup>

Arguably one of the most popular shows on WLW was “Moon River.” In *Not Just a Sound: The Story of WLW*, Dick Perry describes “Moon River” as a “program of dreamy organ music, dreamy poetry, and dreamy moods which WLW used to transmit late each night to put old people to sleep and get lovers on with the business at hand.”<sup>53</sup> First airing in 1930, “Moon River” featured a three manual, seventeen rank Wurlitzer organ,<sup>54</sup> which was dedicated to the memory of Powel Crosley’s mother.<sup>55</sup> Each evening the program would begin and end in the same manner, with a reading of the poem, “Moon River.”

<sup>51</sup> Allan Hughes, “Pipe Organ Reresounds at Movies,” *New York Times*, 28 November 1980, C22.

<sup>52</sup> John Price, *History of WLW, Cincinnati*, available at <http://members.aol.com/jeff1070/wlw.html>; internet; accessed 4 April 2003.

<sup>53</sup> Dick Perry, *Not Just a Sound: The Story of WLW*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. : Prentice Hall, 1971), 3.

<sup>54</sup> Jerrell Kautz, *The Moon River Organ*, available at <http://theatreorgans.com/ohio/wlw/>; internet, accessed 6 May 2003. The 4 manual, 32 rank Wurlitzer believed to be the “Moon River” organ is currently purported to located at the Shady Nook Restaurant on US 27 in Millville, OH.

<sup>55</sup> John Price, *History of WLW, Cincinnati*, available from <http://members.aol.com/jeff1070/wlw.html>; internet; accessed 4 April 2003.

(opening)  
 Moon River. . .  
 A lazy stream of dreams,  
 Where vain desires forget themselves  
 In the loveliness of sleep  
 Moon River. . .  
 Exchanged white ribbon  
 Twined in the hair of night  
 Where nothing is but sleep.  
 Dream on. . . sleep on. . .  
 Care will not seek for thee.  
 Float on. . . drift on. . .  
 Moon River, to the sea.

(Closing)  
 Down the valley of a thousand yesterdays  
 Flow the bright waters of Moon River.  
 On and down forever flowing...forever waiting  
 To carry you down to the land of forgetfulness,  
 To the kingdom of sleep. . . to the realms of. . .  
 Moon River. . .  
 A lazy stream of dreams,  
 Where vain desires forget themselves  
 In the loveliness of sleep.  
 Moon River  
 Enchanted white ribbon  
 Twined in the hair of night,  
 Where nothing is but sleep.  
 Dream on. . . sleep on. . .  
 Care will not seek for thee.  
 Float on. . . drift on. . .  
 Moon River, to the sea.<sup>56</sup>

This poem reflects the syrupy mood of “Moon River,” a radio show that typified WLW in the 1930s. The announcers during the show’s twenty-five year run included Peter Grant, Harry Holcomb, Palmer Ward, Charles Woods, Don Dowd, Jay Jostyn, Jimmy Leonard, and Ken Linn.<sup>57</sup> It featured such singers as The DeVore Sisters, Rosemary and Betty Clooney, Doris Day, Janette Davis, Lucille Norman, Anita Ellis, Ruby Wright, and Phil Brito.<sup>58</sup> Among the organists were Pat Gillick, Fats Waller, and Lee Erwin. Erwin, who replaced Waller in 1933,<sup>59</sup> played on “Moon River” until 1944. According to John

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<sup>56</sup> Dick Perry, *Not Just A Sound*, 3.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>59</sup> Jerrell Kautz, *Moon River Organ at WLW*, available at <http://theatreorgans.com/ohio/wlw/>; internet, accessed 6 May 2003. For unknown reasons Waller was fired from WLW by Crosley. One legend cites his excessive drinking, while another states that Crosley felt the jazz music Waller played was disrespectful to the organ that was dedicated to the memory of his mother.

Ranck, Erwin “was ‘Moon River’” and was responsible for not only playing the organ, but also arranging any musical numbers needed for each broadcast.<sup>60</sup>



Fig. 7 Lee Erwin seated at the “Moon River” organ with the Devore Sisters.

Although Erwin was well paid and achieved a certain degree of local fame, his dream was to leave Cincinnati for New York. A 1938 letter from Erwin’s mother comments upon his desire to move to New York City:

I see you still have New York in the back of your mind, but I would be pretty sure of something more definite, before I turned WLW loose, even though it isn’t just what you would like. A weekly salary coming in means a lot, when you read and see so many musicians as well as people in other lines of business, walking the streets looking for a job.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> John Ranck, interview.

<sup>61</sup> Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama to Lee Orville Erwin, Cincinnati, Ohio. 31 May 1938. Lee Erwin Collection.

Before he acted on his dream to leave Cincinnati for New York City, however, Erwin pursued another dream. He began flying in 1940. This expensive hobby is evidence of the success Erwin was having financially as a musician in Cincinnati. According to a student log book in the Lee Erwin Collection, Erwin flew forty-two hours of solo flight time and passed the test for his pilot's license in October of 1940. During 1941 and 1942 Erwin flew dozens of flights, mostly in his personal Taylorcraft plane, between Cincinnati and Huntsville in order to visit his family.<sup>62</sup>

Eventually the allure of life in New York City overcame Erwin. With no job secured, Erwin and Ranck moved to an apartment on East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan. According to Ranck, Erwin believed that finding work in New York would not be problematic, and that the move would "broaden his horizons."<sup>63</sup> Based on his reputation from "Moon River" Erwin was hired by CBS as the staff organist. He played for numerous serials as well as for the programs hosted by Arthur Godfrey.

Erwin's first major job at CBS was as an organist on the radio program "Arthur Godfrey Time." Godfrey hosted a popular morning radio program and later in his career several evening television shows. "Arthur Godfrey Time" featured an orchestra, male and female vocalists to sing the hit songs of the day, and a quartet, which performed traditional material including gospel and barbershop. In his book *Arthur Godfrey: Adventures of an American Broadcaster*, Arthur Singer explained:

"What he (Godfrey) wanted was not only a versatile group of musicians and performers, but also a flexible group who could fit into his unrehearsed, make-it-up-as-you-go-along style."<sup>64</sup>

With Lee Erwin he found just such a versatile musician. Erwin, a classically trained performer with experience in arranging and performing popular music, was an obvious choice. The other band members who were hired formed an impressive core of accomplished musicians and included clarinetist Johnny Mince, bassist Gene Traxler, trombonist Sy Schaffer Hank, pianist Ludwig Von Flato, and drummer Joe Marshall. Many of these musicians had played with some of the most popular swing bands including those of Ben Bernie, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, and Benny Goodman.<sup>65</sup>

As the television industry began to emerge, Arthur Godfrey made the transition flawlessly. His television programs included "Arthur Godfrey and His Friends" and "Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts." By the early 1950s Godfrey's programs were reaching over eighty million viewers and in 1954 accounted for twelve percent of CBS's revenues.<sup>66</sup>

As Godfrey's importance as a broadcaster grew, so did Erwin's responsibilities to the numerous Godfrey programs. At one point in his career Erwin was conducting, arranging, composing, and performing (organ and piano) for CBS. His talent, versatility,

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<sup>62</sup> Lee Erwin, pilot's log book, 1940-1941, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>63</sup> John Ranck, interview with author.

<sup>64</sup> Arthur J. Singer, *Arthur Godfrey-The Adventures of an American Broadcaster*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing, 2000), 69.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Slater, *This Is CBS: A Chronicle of 60 Years*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.; Prentice Hall, 1988), 148.



dedicated work ethic, and success earned him the nickname “Money-Bags Erwin” with Godfrey, who used the moniker humorously on the air in an ongoing comedy sketch.<sup>67</sup>



Fig. 8 One version of the “Arthur Godfrey Show” band. Lee Erwin is seated at the piano. Godfrey is the banjo player seated on the right.

When reminiscing about his days at CBS, Erwin recalled, “Mr. Godfrey would give his musicians the title for a song, and then expect them to have the music composed by the next day.”<sup>68</sup> These songs were sung by Godfrey, and “all the little Godfreys:” Janette Davis, Julius La Rosa, Bill Lawrence, Marion Marlowe, Frank Parker, Johnny Nash, LuAnn Simme, Carmel Quinn, Pat Boone, the Chordettes, The Mariners, and The

<sup>67</sup> Jeff Weiler, “Lee Erwin: A Tribute,” *Theatre Organ: Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society*, Jan/ Feb 2001, 13. In the same way that there exists a comradery between modern television host David Letterman and his music director Paul Schaffer, there seems to have existed a similar relationship between Erwin and Godfrey.

<sup>68</sup> Donna Fisher-Jackson, *Performance: Friends of the Zeiterion Theatre Newsletter*. Vol. 8 No. 1, Summer 1991.

McGuire Sisters. A number of these songs became popular hits, including “Dance Me Loose,” “There Ought to Be A Society,” “Go Now,” and “A Google Eye Ghee.”<sup>69</sup>

Just as many theater musicians made the transition from movie palaces to radio work, so did radio musicians quickly adjust to the growing television industry. In addition to the work with Arthur Godfrey, Lee Erwin provided music for every CBS soap opera filmed in New York which aired during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>70</sup>

An unexplained anomaly in the life of Lee Erwin was his marriage to Jane M. E. Kampf<sup>71</sup> on 26 June 1957. According to his brother Joe Erwin, Lee called the day before the wedding in order to invite Joe and to ask about borrowing a pair of black socks for the ceremony. There was no known courtship and no previous clues that Erwin and Kampf intended to marry. Although there is no evidence in the Lee Erwin Collection to suggest the reasons Erwin married, speculation can lead to two possible conclusions.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps Erwin felt a union with the wealthy Kampf would prove a good business venture, or perhaps the marriage could have been used to mask his identity as a homosexual. Not surprisingly, the union lasted only a few months. After the dissolution of his marriage to Jane Kampf, Erwin became involved with Ted Creech, the lyricist for dozens of Erwin’s songs. Erwin and Creech remained partners until the early 1970s.

### ERWIN’S RETURN TO FILM MUSIC

In 1967 Erwin made an unexpected career move. After more than twenty successful years with CBS radio and television, Erwin left his well paying job and resumed his role as a silent film accompanist. Silent films, which had fallen out of fashion after the invention of sound film, had not been produced since the 1930s. But with a sense of nostalgia, cinemaphiles increasingly began to take interest in silent films and their preservation. During the 1960s many individuals took action to preserve the rapidly deteriorating celluloid films from the early 1900s. These individuals included actors and actresses, as well as film collectors such as Jim Day and the film historian and preservationist Raymond Rohauer.

In addition to film preservation there was also a movement to restore theatres and theater organs. Organists and fans of the theater organ joined together nationally in 1955 and formed the American Theater Organ Society (ATOS).<sup>73</sup> Their mission statement sums up their goals:

The American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) is dedicated to the preservation of a unique American art form -- the theatre pipe organ and its music. The membership includes musicians, technicians, and

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<sup>69</sup> Klos, “Portrait of Lee Erwin,” 10. The Lee Erwin Collection contains copies of fifty of these songs.

<sup>70</sup> Sharon Seitz, “Organists Play the Sound of Silents,” *Asbury Park (New Jersey) Press Sunday*, 21 April 1996, E1.

<sup>71</sup> Jane Kampf was a wealthy jewelry store owner from Cincinnati.

<sup>72</sup> The Lee Erwin Collection includes the marriage certificate of Lee Erwin and Jane Kampf, and a single wedding photo.

<sup>73</sup> Jeff Weiller, *Lee Erwin: A Tribute*, 13. Lee Erwin served on the Board of Directors and as Vice President for the American Theater Organ Society. He was twice the winner of the “ATOS Organist of the Year Award” and was among the American Theater Organ Society’s “Theatre Organist Hall of Fame.”

enthusiastic listeners -- all devoted to the preservation and continued enjoyment of what we believe to be a national treasure.<sup>74</sup>

Erwin credited the American Theater Organ Society more than any other group with the success of theater preservation. "By saving the organs, they have often saved the theaters. But they have helped preserve more than buildings, as they helped preserve an art."<sup>75</sup>

Simultaneous with the formation of ATOS, many performers, including Lee Erwin, made their way back to the consoles of American theatre organs. The first effort to revive the theater organ accompaniment for silent film was initiated by Gaylord Carter in 1959. With film collector Jim Day, Carter originated "Flicker Finger Productions" in 1959.<sup>76</sup> Originally film screenings for small private audiences consisting of cue sheet accompaniments, Carter's presentations sparked a great deal of interest in the theatre organ's original accompanimental role in silent film. Although Erwin did not return to film music until the late 1960s, his role in the revival of silent film cannot be overstated. Erwin, having a deep respect for and a profound understanding of silent film as an art form, began composing original scores for each film, just as he had done in the 1920s.

In early 1967 the New York Chapter of the American Theater Organ Enthusiasts (now the American Theater Organ Society) commissioned Erwin to compose his first film score since the 1930s. This commission was for a new score for the 1929 Eric Von Stroheim film *Queen Kelly*. The film, starring Gloria Swanson, was Von Stroheim's last film. In her autobiography, Swanson discusses how Von Stroheim's megalomania led this film into disaster. His artistic indulgences, incredibly lengthy shoots, and disregard for the film's budget created "\$600,000 worth of unresolved footage" which was never completed nor released during his lifetime.<sup>77</sup> In 1967 Swanson decided to salvage what she could of the film, and present it for the public.

The following is an announcement from the New York Theatre Organ Society regarding the commission. It includes many details concerning the performance, including Gloria Swanson's role as emcee.

#### Special Notice

We are proud to announce to you, in advance of our public advertising, that on Monday evening, May 8th at the Beacon Theatre, we will present Gloria Swanson, IN PERSON, in an unusual silent film and theatre organ show, "From Silents to Sounds" with famous N.Y. Chapter Member Lee Erwin at the console of the mighty, better-than-new Beacon Wurlitzer. This great event stems directly from Miss Swanson's thrilling surprise appearance at our memorable Gaylord Carter "Flicker Fingers" Beacon show in February.

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<sup>74</sup> "Our Mission," available at <http://www.atos.org/Pages/about.html>; internet Accessed 2 January 2003.

<sup>75</sup> Morrison, Bill. "Silent-Film Organist Goes Full Circle," *Raleigh (North Carolina) News and Observer*, 7 October 1976, 2.

<sup>76</sup> Gaylord Carter, *The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter*, 185.

<sup>77</sup> Gloria Swanson, *Swanson on Swanson*, (New York; Random House, 1980), 368-375.



In addition to his program of traditional organ novelties and songtime favorites, Lee Erwin has composed a special score to accompany Gloria Swanson's last silent Von Stroheim feature length classic, *Queen Kelly* on the magnificent, 4 manual Beacon organ. Lee's original, imaginative "Queen Kelly" music will make this showing a truly unique experience for every theatre organ enthusiast and silent film fan.

Miss Swanson will explain the dramatic circumstances surrounding her producing and starring in *Queen Kelly*. And, as a special treat, at the end of the main section of this feature she will show the exciting ominous Africa sequence - unreleased footage, from her personal collection, never before seen in public.

After *Queen Kelly*, Miss Swanson will relive for you, for the first time anywhere, her trials and triumphs in maintaining her stardom while she closed the era of the silents and climbed to greater heights in the new worlds of talking pictures.<sup>78</sup>



Fig. 9 A flyer which advertised the 1967 Concert at the Beacon Theatre.

This film presentation, a turning point in Erwin's career, is also discussed in the following article from *The Villager*:

A movie event that may have the makings of fun - or gossip, anyway - has been announced for Monday night, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 when Gloria Swanson will introduce two of her legendary films at the Beacon Theatre. One is *The Trespasser*, her first talking movie, and the other is *Queen Kelly*, her last silent film, and which was never released- never shown even in part.---

To add to the fun, there will be an original organ score, written and played by Lee Erwin, an ASCAP composer who drew on his early silent films experiences to create this mood piece.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Allen W. Rossiter to the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, New York Theatre Organ Society, Inc., Loose paper (8 ½ by 14 inches), date unknown, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>79</sup> Raley Benet, "The Cinema," *The Villager, Greenwich Village*, 27 April 1967, 12.



Fig. 10 Marquee for the 1967 showing of *Queen Kelly*.

The performance was a triumph. The Beacon Theatre was filled to capacity (see fig. 9) In a letter to Erwin, E. J. Quinby provides a glimpse of the successful evening.

We are still marveling over the splendid performance you turned out last night at the Gloria Swanson FROM SILENT TO SOUND show at the Beacon Theatre in New York. The score you composed and arranged for *Queen Kelly* is superb, and I am so glad to know that it was taped for future use. . . .

Gloria Swanson's charming appearance and personality at the microphone certainly captured the audience. Their sincere and prolonged applause brought genuine tears to her eyes, - we were seated in the third row, and could plainly see her genuine emotion. . . .

It is gratifying to know that the house was sold out, and this experience should certainly be significant to exhibitors who are having a hard time selling enough seats to keep such magnificent show places out of the red.<sup>80</sup>



Fig. 11 The capacity crowd for the Beacon Theatre Showing of *Queen Kelly*.

<sup>80</sup> E.J. Quinby, Summit, N.J. to Lee Erwin, New York City, N.Y., 9 May 1967, Lee Erwin Collection.

Swanson, thrilled by the performance, wrote Erwin the following letter:

Dear Mr. Erwin,

I have heard nothing but the most fulsome praises for your performance Monday night. It was a tour de force on all grounds. I look forward to hearing the tape one quiet evening when things are not as hectic as they were the other night.

Meanwhile I want you to know how much I appreciate the labor and love that went into bringing *QUEEN KELLY* to life - the way it was meant to be seen.

Best wishes for your well-being and happiness.

Sincerely,  
Gloria Swanson<sup>81</sup>



Fig. 12 Gloria Swanson at the Beacon Theatre 8 May 1967

The success of the 8 May 1967 performance at the Beacon Theatre prompted the New York Theatre Organ Society to commission Erwin for another film score. Thus in 1968 he composed the music to one of his most frequently performed film presentations, Valetino's film *The Eagle*. It premiered 1 May 1968 in North Tonawanda, New York at

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<sup>81</sup>Gloria Swanson to Lee Erwin, New York City, N.Y., 11 May 1967, Lee Erwin Collection. In addition to this event at the Beacon Theatre in 1967, Erwin and Swanson toured various theaters throughout the country during 1975 with the same films and general format.

the Riviera Theatre.<sup>82</sup> It received additional performances at the Beacon Theatre<sup>83</sup> and the Academy of Music on 14<sup>th</sup> Street in New York City on 28 October 1968.<sup>84</sup> Allen Hughes, reporter for the *New York Times*, reviewed the performance.

Waves of magnificent sound rolled through the Academy of Music Theater on 14<sup>th</sup> Street last night. . . . Lee Erwin . . . was the performer, and he was great. Mr. Erwin composed the score he played for *The Eagle*, which is a 70-minute film. It employs leitmotifs and includes appropriate sound effects. The nationwide theatre organ revival is resulting in the establishment of a concert circuit which includes Rochester, Detroit, San Francisco, and Dunedin in Florida. . . . If all goes well, the sound of the theatre organs may again be heard regularly throughout the land.<sup>85</sup>

While playing a full week's run of *The Eagle* at the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria in October 1969, Erwin made an appearance on the "Ed Walker-Willard Scott Show," an NBC program in Washington D.C.. When Walker posed the question, "Out of all the things you have done what has been your real ambition?" Erwin replied:

Come to think of it, I'm finally doing the one thing which I always wanted to do more than anything else - playing a theatre organ in a theatre. Radio and television shows were wonderful; they kept organists going for a good many years, but how wonderful it is to be playing in front of a real live audience!"<sup>86</sup>

Though Erwin approached film composing as a serious artistic venture, nostalgia was a prominent facet of the silent film renaissance, as is evident in the 1969 film presentation and concert entitled "The Colleen Moore Show." This event, with music composed by Erwin, was similar in many ways to the 1967 *Queen Kelly* performance. Moore made a personal appearance (similar to the Gloria Swanson appearance) and her 1926 film *Irene* was shown. This production at the Redford Theatre in Detroit, Michigan was sponsored by the Motor City Chapter of the American Theater Organ Enthusiasts. In addition to the film and music, the general atmosphere of the era was created with roaring twenties fashions and a vintage car motorcade.<sup>87</sup>

From the 1970s until 2000, Erwin toured the world as an ambassador of the theater organ and silent films. The numbers of concerts and venues he played are staggering. According to a list Erwin compiled, by 1977 he had performed in 404 different venues, including concert halls, theaters and churches in the United States, Canada, Australia,

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<sup>82</sup> "Noted Organist to Perform at NT's Riviera Theatre," *North Tonawanda (New York) Record-Advertiser*, 25 April 1968, 4.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Allen Hughes, "Organist Evokes Silent-Film Days," *New York Times*, 29 October 1968, L52.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Klos, "Portrait of Lee Erwin, Theatre Organist," 11.

<sup>87</sup> Colleen Moore Show, Advertisement, Poster, Lee Erwin Collection.

England, France, Switzerland, Greenland, and the Virgin Islands.<sup>88</sup> His concert tours, which Erwin continued into his nineties, include literally thousands of performances.<sup>89</sup> Because of the number of concerts, only highlights of Erwin's career will be discussed in detail.



Fig. 13 Lee Erwin with an unknown ATOS member, actress Colleen Moore, and Ben Hall.

Noteworthy performances include Erwin's appearance at the 1970 American Guild of Organists convention in Buffalo, NY, "The Golden 20s Gala in Honor of George Eastman, and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Eastman Theatre and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra," in 1973,<sup>90</sup> and at the Art Deco Symposium at Radio City Music Hall in 1975.<sup>91</sup>

Two major tours for Erwin include the "Silent Clown's Tour" of 1979 and a tour under the auspices of the Library of Congress National Film Registry Board. The "Silent Clowns" tour visited ten cities, during which time Erwin played for 441 performances of films featuring Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd, and Buster Keaton. The National Film Registry Board of the Library of Congress sponsored Lee Erwin in concert throughout the United States in 1986. It featured such films as *The Beloved Rogue* starring John Barrymore, and Lon Cheney's *The Phantom of the Opera*.

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<sup>88</sup> Lee Erwin, "A List of Theatres, Concert Halls, Churches, Recording Studios, Radio Stations, and Television Studios Where Lee Erwin Has Performed," personal document, Lee Erwin Collection. See Appendix H.

<sup>89</sup> In 1979 alone Erwin performed for 441 film screenings in "The Silent Clowns" tour.

<sup>90</sup> "The Golden 20s Gala in Honor of George Eastman and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Eastman Theatre and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra," program notes, 13 January 1973, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>91</sup> Bill Morrison, "Silent-Film Organist Goes Full Circle," *The News and Observer (Raleigh, N.C.)*, 7 October 1976. Erwin is quoted as saying: "The last theater organ to be built was put into Radio City Music Hall in the 1930s after sound had come in. It wasn't used for its original purpose until last year when I played the first and only movie to be shown at Radio City."



Fig. 14 Lee Erwin in concert

Not only did Erwin's career keep him busy composing music for television and movies, but it soon brought him into the limelight. The Lee Erwin Collection contains two videocassette recordings of television programs that document Erwin's unique musical career. The CBS Morning Show interviewed and filmed his performance at the Alabama Theatre in 1985. Vermont Public Television also produced a 1987 documentary about Erwin. But it was not until the 1987 Woody Allen movie *Radio Days* that Erwin found himself on the silver screen. In this nostalgic film set in the 1940s, Erwin convincingly portrays a roller rink organist.<sup>92</sup>

Given Erwin's involvement with such a historical musical tradition, it is noteworthy that Erwin also composed avant garde electronic music during the 1960s and 1970s. He frequently performed one of these works, *Abstract Duration 22:22* in recital.<sup>93</sup> Labeled "A Happening for Electronic Tape and Organ" it combined taped electronic sounds, splices of Dupré, Franck, and Bach, with sections of improvised music. This piece demonstrates his awareness of current trends in musical composition.<sup>94</sup> In addition to writing experimental compositions, Erwin served on the faculty of Hunter College (later renamed Lehman College) in New York as a professor of electronic music.

In the 1980s, as the videocassette recorder became omnipresent in American homes, dozens of silent films were released on VHS format. Rather than having the films appear without music, many companies hired musicians such as Gaylord Carter and Lee Erwin to provide scores for the video recordings. Thus, several of Erwin's scores have

<sup>92</sup> *Full Cast and Credits for Radio Days*, available at

"<http://www.woodyallenmovies.com/movies/radiodayscredits.htm>"; internet, accessed 18 August 2003.

<sup>93</sup> Evelyn Spearman, "Lee Erwin Brings New Sounds Here." *The Huntsville Times*, xeroxed clipping, 1967(exact date unknown), page unknown, Lee Erwin Collection. "It is like nothing you have ever heard before, a first for Alabama listeners, and an interesting, exciting and different musical experience...The sounds on the tape were produced by various electronic means and included all sorts of weird sounds, bells, clackers, some sounded like the music for the 'Twilight Zone.' . . . Being no music critic, I can honestly say that it was a 'happening' and very stimulating."

<sup>94</sup> Lee Erwin, *Abstract Duration 22:22 (A Happening for Electronic Tape and Organ)*, Score, Lee Erwin Collection.



been preserved on VHS and DVD. A complete list of these video recordings can be found in Appendix 2.

Two interesting projects occupied much of Erwin's later years. In 1991 Erwin completed a film score for *A Man Without A World*, a film by performance artist/film director Eleanor Antin. In many of her works Antin takes on various personae, who in turn create or are the subject of the work. In *A Man Without A World*, Antin assumes the persona of Yevgeny Antinov, a fictional Russian Jewish silent film director from the 1920s.<sup>95</sup> To guarantee the authentic style of this silent work, Antin chose Lee Erwin to compose the score.<sup>96</sup> The other major project, which occupied Erwin from 1990 until 1997 was his musical *The Count of Monte Cristo*. With a book by Gayle Stahlhuth and lyrics by Rim Rich, this musical premiered at the Church of the Holy Trinity in New York City in 1997 by the Triangle Theatre Company. The Lee Erwin Collection contains a large quantity of material, including scores and sketches, pertaining to this work.<sup>97</sup>

Among Erwin's greatest contributions to the preservation of silent film accompanying was his work with younger musicians interested in the theater organ. Organist/silent film composer Jeff Weiler stated in an interview that he was not just a pupil of Erwin, but a "disciple."<sup>98</sup>

Everyone has certain experiences that strongly define their lives. One of the strongest life-defining experiences came for me at age 16, when I first heard Lee perform his score for the Valentino classic, *The Eagle*, at the Capitol Theatre in Davenport, Iowa. I was held spellbound by the suave and sophisticated music, and by how it subtly carried and advanced the screen drama. No one missed spoken dialogue at all. The performance made me completely fascinated in composing silent film music, and presenting the theatre organ to fulfill its original purpose. It was later a great privilege for me to study with Lee in New York. His attitudes towards the arts and his lessons and observations on life continue to have a profound influence on me.<sup>99</sup>



Fig. 15 Erwin and Weiler

<sup>95</sup> Eleanor Antin, "Man Without A World," available at [http://www.milestonefilms.com/pdf\\_press/Manwithout.pdf](http://www.milestonefilms.com/pdf_press/Manwithout.pdf); internet. Accessed 28 July 2003.

<sup>96</sup> This film is available on VHS and DVD on Milestone Films.

<sup>97</sup> *The Count of Monte Cristo*, concert program, 28 January 1997, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>98</sup> Jeff Weiler, phone interview with author, tape recorded, 24 February 2001.

<sup>99</sup> Jeff Weiler, Chicago, IL email to author, 10 January 2003. Lee Erwin Collection.

Other organists/composers who have cited Erwin as an influence include Ben Model, silent film accompanist at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, silent film composer/theater organist Dennis James, and organist David Messineo. According to Messineo, a New York-area organist and teacher, Erwin taught him a great deal about improvisation, and he considered Erwin to be the “Leo Sowerby<sup>100</sup> of the theatre organ”<sup>101</sup>

In the winter of 2000, Lee Erwin fell and broke his hip. During the next months he was lovingly cared for by his partner Donald Schwing.<sup>102</sup> Unable to leave their Greenwich Village apartment, Erwin’s health slowly deteriorated. He died September 21, 2000.



Fig. 16 Erwin at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

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<sup>100</sup> Sowerby (1895-1968 ) was a Pulitzer prize winning composer and church/concert organist.

<sup>101</sup> *Lee Erwin, Theater Organist and Composer, Dies at 92*, available at <http://www.newmusicbox.org/news/nov00/erwin.html>; internet, Accessed 18 August 2003.

<sup>102</sup> Donald Schwing, an organ builder, was Erwin’s partner from the mid 1970s until his death.



## PART 2

### ERWIN'S SILENT FILM MUSIC AESTHETIC

Erwin's zeal to perpetuate the art of silent film accompanying was matched only by the conviction with which he adhered to his silent film scoring aesthetic. Erwin firmly believed that silent film music should be original compositions, rather than cue sheet compilations of classical and popular tunes. While this idea seems an obvious aesthetic choice to contemporary composers and scholars, in order to understand this position one must consider Erwin's musical heritage as a silent film musician. Evaluating these compositional ideas not only provides information about Erwin's musical output, but a glimpse into the world of music making in the silent film era.

As the popularity of movies erupted in the early 1900s, the demand for personnel to meet the musical needs of the theatres greatly exceeded the supply<sup>1</sup>.

The difficulty in those early years was to find suitable performers to play these strange instruments [theater organs]. It was useless to employ a church organist, as he would not have the essential ability and experience in playing the variety of light music required; equally it was not good using the pianist out of the orchestra, as he couldn't play with his feet and had little idea what to do with the stops.<sup>2</sup>

In larger theaters and movie palaces finding adequate theater musicians was not problematic, but in smaller cities theaters frequently had to rely on amateur musicians. Quoted in a 1981 *New York Times* article Erwin paints a very unflattering picture of these amateur organists.

I'm sure that most of the silent film accompaniment was simply atrocious. Classical organists looked down their noses at the theater organists. Most of the movie house instruments were played by the local pianists who had never seen the film and could barely improvise.<sup>3</sup>

Erwin, who referred to these theater organists as "retreaded" pianists, also notes that these musicians "simply weren't capable" of composing or compiling film scores.<sup>4</sup> Two cartoons from the trade journal *Moving Picture World* provide examples of common complaints associated with these amateur theater musicians.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gillian Anderson, "Presentation of Silent Films, or Music and Anesthesia," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. V/2 (1987): 269.

<sup>2</sup> John W. Landon, *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer*, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Rothstein, "Silent Films Had a Musical Voice," *New York Times*, 8 February 1981, D30.

<sup>4</sup> Klos, "Portrait of Lee Erwin" 8-9.

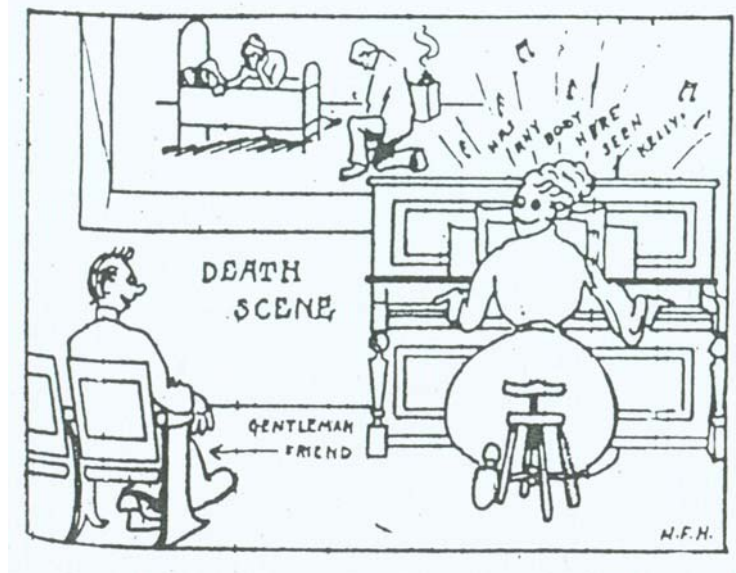


Fig. 1 A Cartoon satirizing early movie musicians.

The first cartoon (Fig. 1) illustrates the use of inappropriate music during silent film screenings. Amateur musicians, frequently hired to provide music in order to mask the sound of the film projector rather than provide a score for the film, played popular songs throughout the presentation, regardless of the film's dramatic structure.

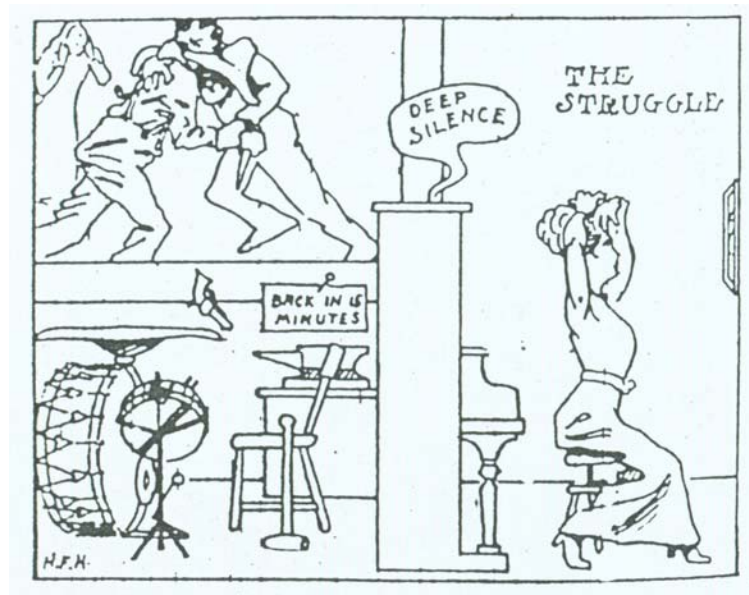


Fig. 2 A cartoon concerning early film music.

Another cartoon (Fig. 2) ridicules the intermittent nature of early film music.<sup>6</sup>

To compensate for their inability, most theater musicians relied heavily on cue sheet accompaniments and books of suggestions from the classical repertoire. Cue

<sup>5</sup> H. F. Hoffman, *Moving Picture World*, 21 January 1911, utilized in Rick Altman's, "The Silence of the Silents," *Musical Quarterly*, vol. 80, no. 4 (1996): 680.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

sheets, published and circulated with each film, included a breakdown of the dramatic structure of the film, with musical suggestions for each scene. (See Fig. 3)

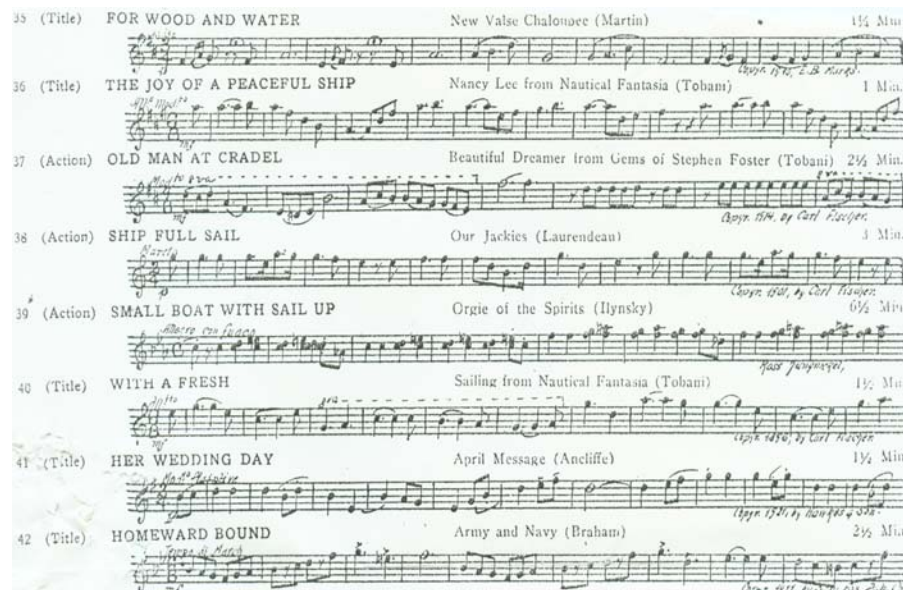


Fig. 3 A cue sheet from the silent film era

Collections which contained musical suggestions drawn from the classical repertoire include: *Musical Accompaniment of Moving Pictures* by Edith Lang and George West, *Musical Presentation of Motion Pictures*, by George W. Beynon, and *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* compiled by Erno Rapeé. These books offered musical suggestions based on mood or setting. For example, Lang and West include twenty-eight pieces that can be used for “nature” scenes. These include Saint-Saëns’s *The Swan*, Helm’s *Sylvan Sketches*, or Friml’s *Woodland Echoes*. Lang and West also include Elgar’s “Salut d’amour,” Greig’s “Ich liebe dich,” and Friml’s “Mélodie” as possible “Love Themes.” Rapeé suggests Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman Overture*, and the second movement from Greig’s *Peer Gynt Suite* as “sea music,” and the “Storm Scene” from Weber’s *Oberon*, and Schubert’s “Der Erlkönig” for “storm music.” Mindful of their roles as entertainers, organists also turned to musical sound effects and musical jokes to amuse their audiences. In the preface to his compilation of organ music for film, organist C. Roy Carter writes:

An audience will often be more favorably impressed by the organist who takes advantage of appropriate situations for putting in some clever trick or effect than by one who might possibly be a better musician but lets these scenes pass unnoticed. Remarks like, “Wasn’t that a clever banjo effect the organist played for that Negro scene?” or “Wasn’t that Rooster-crow imitation he put in a scream?” are much more frequent than “Didn’t the organist play that Chopin Nocturne beautifully?”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>C. Roy Carter. *Theatre Organ Secrets: A Collection of Successful Imitations, Tricks, and Effect for Motion Picture Accompaniment on the Pipe Organ* Compiled and Published by C. Roy Carter, Los Angeles, CA. Unknown publication date, quoted in John Landon, *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer*, 8. Carter’s

Others compiled musical scores that mocked the film by intentionally providing inappropriate music. These musicians, who were referred to as “film-punners” or “film-funners” exploited all films for their comedic potential, regardless of the film’s dramatic intent. Charles Merrill Berg describes an example of such an exploit: “The film-funner would . . . accompany a dramatic scene where burglars are entering the heroine’s home with the strains of the romantic love song “Meet Me in the Shadows.”<sup>8</sup> Many of these performers received notoriety and would draw audiences that came “to see what he would do with the picture.”<sup>9</sup>

Rather than use the film medium to draw attention to himself, Erwin respected silent films and believed silent films were a unique art form.<sup>10</sup> “The actors and actresses had to invent a new style of acting” to communicate the story visually.<sup>11</sup> Erwin simply yet eloquently describes silent films in a 1990 *New York Times* article: “It wasn’t theater. It wasn’t people talking. It was telling stories with moving pictures.”<sup>12</sup> Though modern audiences would argue that contemporary movies do the same, Erwin felt the directness of the silent medium to be superior. He believed that many sound films “hardly utilize the visual dimension of film,” and that “modern actors . . . have come to rely on words to convey feelings instead of their bodies.”<sup>13</sup> He praised Buster Keaton and Douglas Fairbanks for their physicality. “They were adept at using their bodies to get a story across.”<sup>14</sup> Erwin, especially fond of Buster Keaton, composed scores for every Keaton film. “Every time I see one of his films, I see something new. He was unbelievably clever.”<sup>15</sup> It is this respect for silent films as an art form that is the foundation of Erwin’s compositional ideas.

Erwin’s reverence for silent film led him to dismiss the use of published cue sheets from the silent film era. He felt that the musical suggestions contained within these cue sheets were “full of the musical clichés of 1920’s” and to modern audiences this music “sounded like it was poking fun at the film.”<sup>16</sup> Erwin’s rejection of cue sheets and the use of recognizable melodies can be traced back to the influence of Joseph Stovee from his days playing at Loew’s Temple Theatre in Birmingham. “From his examples, I learned, in an unforgettable way that an organist should never use current popular music,

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book contains instructions on how to musically produce sound effects such as a snore, laughter, a yell, a kiss, thunder, a rooster crow, a pig grunt, a cat meow, a lion roar, and many others.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Merrell Berg, *An Investigation of the Motives for and Realization of Music to Accompany The American Silent Film, 1896-1927* (New York: Arno Press, 1976) 244.

Erwin, who detested the practice of film-punners, ridiculed an organist for playing “Time on My Hands” in the film *Safety Last* during a scene in which Harry Langdon holds onto the arms of a clock while scaling the side of a building.

<sup>9</sup> Frederich H. Martens, “Funning the Films,” *Musical Observer*, 14/1, 1916, 58-59.

<sup>10</sup> Larry Copeland, “The Importance of Being Silent,” *SohoNews*, 5 November 1980, 38.

<sup>11</sup> Scott Cain, “Composer-organist Revitalizes Silent Gems like ‘Bagdad’,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 13 July 1984, page unknown.

<sup>12</sup> Allan Kozinn, “Composing and Playing the Sounds for Silents,” *New York Times*, 11 July 1990, C13.

<sup>13</sup> *King of Kings*, Alabama Theatre concert program, 1988. Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>14</sup> Scott Cain, “Composer-organist Revitalizes Silent Gems like ‘Bagdad’,” *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 13 July 1984.

<sup>15</sup> George R. Lausch, “Lee Erwin: Silent Film Musician,” *Taunton Daily Gazette*, 1992, 3A.

<sup>16</sup> Bill Morrison, “Silent Film Organist Goes Full Circle,” *The News and Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), 7 October 1976. page unknown.

or even well known classical selections as accompaniment.”<sup>17</sup> This idea became the root of Erwin’s approach to film composition. In two *New York Times* interviews, Erwin espouses this conviction:

One thing I never do is use recognizable classical themes. In the old days, organists would use themes from Tchaikovsky, Brahms, and Grieg, and of course nobody wrote better storm music than Beethoven. But in those days recordings were not so prevalent, and the audiences did not know this music as well. Today when you play music that’s known, the audience begins to think, “Oh, he’s playing the ‘Moonlight Sonata,’ and it detracts from the film.”<sup>18</sup>

When you play anything well known, every person in the audience has a preconceived idea of the music. You can just imagine what would happen today if you played the ‘William Tell Overture.’ The whole audience would yell ‘Hi Ho Silver!’

Mr. Erwin believes the sound should be transparent, never calling attention to itself: “It’s always a compliment after a film when people come up and say, ‘You know, I completely forgot that you were playing.’ You must be doing something right if the music is so integrated with what’s going on in the film that it, in a sense disappears.”<sup>19</sup>

This compositional practice, a reaction against the musical amateurism of the silent film era, is also a reaction against one of his rival organists, Gaylord Carter. Carter, who initiated the silent film accompanying renaissance eight years before Erwin, embodied much about silent film era musicians that Erwin rejected. Carter, a self-trained organist, used recognizable tunes for his film scores and occasionally adopted the practices of “film-funners.” Carter’s autobiography, *The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter*, presents his ideas on film scoring as such: “If you’ve got imagination and you can express this musically, you’re in. I’ve discovered to my astonishment that the cornier, the better!”<sup>20</sup> Residing on the East Coast, Carter’s commercial success as a silent film composer surpassed Erwin’s, which is evident by the numerous VHS and DVD recordings that contain his scores.

One of the most extensive discussions of silent film scoring in the Lee Erwin Collection is correspondence between Erwin and another theater organist.<sup>21</sup>

. . . It’s unfortunate that we can’t sit down and talk about silent film music. That would be easier than trying to write about it. *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* does present some difficult problems, the cyclone sequence being one of them.

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<sup>17</sup> Klos, “Portrait of Lee Erwin,” 8.

<sup>18</sup> Allan Konzin, “Composing and Playing the Sounds for Silents,” C13.

<sup>19</sup> Edward Rothstein, “Silent Films Had A Musical Voice,” *New York Times*, 8 February 1981. D30

<sup>20</sup> Carter, “The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter,” 187.

<sup>21</sup> This organist, a protégé of one of Erwin’s rivals, wishes to remain anonymous.

As you will note from the copy of enclosed music cue sheet (which, for all films, I have to give to ASCAP for foreign and domestic TV credits) that 15 minute segment indicated "Improvisation." Obviously, improvisation does not signify senseless, loud, and fast doodling. There has to be some definite thematic material, and various, specific rhythmic patterns; otherwise improvisation turns into a loud noise with no particular musical character.

That extensive cyclone sequence does not have to be covered entirely by "storm music." What Keaton is doing is the important activity. For example: When the side of a house is about to fall on Keaton, a few well chosen, single notes in the low register can create a terrific sense of tension. (And certainly, no big bang with drums and cymbals when the side of the house hits the ground. It's not a sound film).

The same idea when Keaton is flying through the air hanging to the trunk of a tree: A rhythmic figure, single notes in a high register, will create an effect. (But certainly not, as has been done, playing "The Man on the Flying Trapeze"---which may get a laugh for the organist, but spoils the scene).

The same general idea with all the other acrobatics: When Keaton is on the stage of the small theater involved with various props and scenery. Anything to keep the storm music from being monotonous.

Personally, I don't approve of using anything in the Rapee book. Most of that music is so full of the musical clichés of the twenties that it sounds like one is poking fun at the film. Also, I don't approve of using any known music unless the film specifically calls for a particular tune. "Steamboat Bill" has one such sequence; where Keaton is whistling "The Prisoners Song." Playing that tune is obviously a must, but not on a 4' flute to imitate whistling. As I said before, it's not a sound film. Any attempt to "Mickey-Mouse" or create actual sound effect in a silent film is a total disaster. I have seen people storm out of a showing of a Lloyd film (Time Life version) saying, "Turn off that awful noise."

I will enclose copy of a newspaper article written some years ago, which is fairly accurate of some of the views on the subject of silent film music. One other thing; I think it is extremely important to keep in that silent film music should be directed to present day movie audiences; young people, instead of the ATOS "nostalgia" audiences. ATOS members are interested in the organ, not the film. For the usual audience today, it's just the opposite. They are interested in the film, not the organ or the organ music, except that it adds to or enhances what's being shown on the screen. . . .<sup>22</sup>

In addition to Erwin's thoughts on film music, his process of composing for film is noteworthy. In 1967 when Erwin renewed his career as film composer, he utilized a

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<sup>22</sup> Lee Erwin, New York, NY to Anonymous Organist, 26 December 1985. Lee Erwin Collection. The underlined words are underlined by Erwin.



film projector, stop-watch, and pencil and paper. By the end of his career Erwin had devised a synthesizer system that included five manuals, an organ pedalboard, a television, and a videocassette player.



Fig. 4 Erwin's workspace in his New York City apartment

He would view the film between twenty to thirty times as he composed the score.<sup>23</sup> In the initial viewings, Erwin would notate the dramatic structure of the piece and create a cue sheet.<sup>24</sup> Erwin's cue sheets include the breakdown of events in the film, and indicate where major themes are to be played, and where improvisations occur. After he was familiar with the characters and the narrative of each film, he sketched themes, or *leitmotifs*, which represented characters, locations, or general mood. The majority of Erwin's film scores are mostly sketches,<sup>25</sup> which he realized and improvised at each performance. Some include only a melody, while others include melody and bass-line.<sup>26</sup> Upon examination of Erwin's cue sheets and the film score sketches in the Lee Erwin Collection, his reliance on improvisation becomes evident.

<sup>23</sup> Ann Carter, "He'll Play the Organ, Hopefully Unnoticed," *Atlanta Journal*, 26 March 1969.

<sup>24</sup> The majority of these cue sheets can be found in the Lee Erwin Collection. Each cue sheet is filed with its corresponding film score.

<sup>25</sup> Indicated as "film score sketch" in the Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>26</sup> Complete film scores of Lee Erwin do not exist. The two publications *The Sound of Silents* published by Belwin Mills Inc. in 1974 and *Salute to Silents* published by Belwin Mills Inc. in 1976 present themes of Erwin's film music compiled into medleys. Hopefully further research will produce live recordings of his film scores for examination.

MUSIC CUE SHEET FOR THE SILENT FILM  
 "STEAMBOAT BILL JR." BUSTER KEATON..

PROGRAM TITLE: "Steamboat Bill Jr., Keaton (Rohauer Collection)  
 MUSIC PUBLISHER: Piedmont Music Co., 1619 Broadway, N.Y., N.Y. 10019  
 COMPOSER: Lee Erwin, ASCAP  
 USE: Complete Score for Silent Film  
 Duration: 72 Minutes, 25 seconds

0: Main Theme- "Steamboat Bill, Jr."	
45 Seconds: Improvisation	
3:30: "Muddy Water"	
4:20: Impro.	
6:00: Hurry Music	
7:45: Theme (Variations)	
8:15: Impro.	
10:10: Scherzo	
11:30: Theme	
12:50: Impro.	
15:00: Theme	
15:40: Impro.	
16:10: "Where did you get that hat" (Parody)	
19:00: Theme	40:10: Impro.
19:50: Impro. & Theme	40:45: Theme
20:45: Fanfare & Impro	41:10: Impro.
25:00: Interlude	42:10: Dramatic Theme
26:10: Impro.	42:50: Theme (Var.)
26:50: Scherzo	44:20: Impro.
27:30: Theme <del>XXXX</del>	48:00: "Prisoner's Song" (Parody)
28:20: Impro.	48:50: Impro
30:00: "Sleepy-time Music"	52:10: "Prisoner's Song" (Parody)
34:00: Impro.	52:45: Impro.
38:15: Interlude	55:45: Dramatic Theme
38:45: "The Banjo"	56:45: Impro. (Hurricane)
39:15: Impro.	69:20: Theme & Impro.
39:50: Main Theme	72:25: End of Film

RUNNING TIME FOR ENTIRE FILM: 72 minutes, 25 seconds

Fig. 5 A cue sheet, created by Lee Erwin, from the Lee Erwin Collection

The Buster Keaton comedy *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* (Fig 4)., which Erwin discussed in the previous letter, contains fifty-one minutes and thirty-five seconds of improvisation (out of a total running time of seventy-two minutes).<sup>27</sup> *Queen Kelly*, the Gloria Swanson film which brought Erwin back into his silent film accompanying career, contains fourteen minutes and five seconds of improvisation in a twenty three minute score.<sup>28</sup> *Robin Hood*, which lasts one hundred twenty minutes and thirty-two seconds, contains eighty-four minutes and thirty-eight seconds of improvisational material.<sup>29</sup> According to Jeff Weiler, Erwin's improvisational talent was a result of his musical experiences in France. "Lee's sophisticated film scores were strongly influenced by the harmonic vocabulary of the French Romantic tradition."<sup>30</sup> This sophisticated harmonic vocabulary and talent for improvisation, which a *New York Times* critic praised for, "maintaining a seamless,

<sup>27</sup> Lee Erwin, *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, Erwin's cue sheet, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>28</sup> Lee Erwin, *Queen Kelly Out-takes*, Erwin's cue sheet. Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>29</sup> Lee Erwin, *Robin Hood*, Erwin's cue sheet, Lee Erwin Collection.

<sup>30</sup> Jeff Weiler, interview with author, 24 February 2001.



dignified flow . . . that was at once solemn and suspenseful,”<sup>31</sup> Erwin simply described as “putting together a jigsaw puzzle.”<sup>32</sup>

Because of the work of musicians like Gaylord Carter and Lee Erwin the art of silent film accompanying has been preserved. Younger generations of theater organists, such as Jeff Weiler, Denis James, and Christian Elliot, find themselves busily composing and performing for silent film. In addition to organists, composers including Jeff Beal, Ben Model, Carmine Coppola, and Philip Glass are utilizing this live, multi-media performance medium and reclaiming the artistic possibilities for the combination of film and music.

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen Holden, “Music: Lee Erwin Score for Silent ‘Hunchback’,” *New York Times*, 10 July 1986, C14.

<sup>32</sup> Allan Kozinn, “Composing and Playing the Sounds for Silents,” *New York Times*, 11 July 1990, C13.

## PART 3

### THE LEE ERWIN COLLECTION INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE LEE ERWIN COLLECTION

The Lee Erwin Collection, graciously donated by Donald Schwing, will be available for study at the College Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati. This will aid future musicologists, organists, and film historians in the study of silent film, the theater organ, film music, as well as scholars of American culture of the twentieth century.

The collection is arranged in the following manner.

- I. Film Scores and Sketches. The film scores are in alphabetical order by film title. Included in these folders are handwritten cue sheets, typed cue sheets, film score sketches, and film scores. The cue sheets, both handwritten and typed, are Erwin's own division of the film into segments, which include timings and accompanying music (ie. Theme 1, Improvise, Chase Theme, etc.). The film score sketches contain melodies, or melodies and accompanying bass line/chord progressions. The film scores, more fully arranged, can be considered concert suites. They contain themes from the film, fully realized, linked together without improvisation. Many files include historical information about the corresponding film. Erwin often researched the history of each movie in preparing his musical score.
- II. Erwin's popular song compositions, most of which were composed during his time with the Arthur Godfrey Show on CBS, are arranged alphabetically by title. The songs that have been recorded are indicated.
- III. Erwin's arrangements and transcriptions for organ, which include classical and popular music are organized alphabetically by song title. The arrangements that have been recorded are indicated.
- IV. Erwin's miscellaneous unidentified sketches are included in another folder.
- V. Correspondence between Erwin and his mother, Mary Shaver Erwin, during his period of study in France are arranged chronologically. They have been grouped together because they form a fascinating narrative about Erwin's educational experiences abroad.
- VI. Other correspondence is arranged chronologically, regardless of the author. This allows for an easy reading into Erwin's busy career through his letters.
- VII. Information such as programs, program notes and promotional materials from specific venues (Alabama Theatre, Fox Theatre, etc.) is arranged alphabetically by the name of the theater or concert hall.

APPENDIX A  
SILENT FILM SCORES

**1. *America***

Cue Sheet (Two pages)  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Film Score

**2. *American Aristocracy***

Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

**3. *Backstage***

Cue Sheet

**4. *Back to the Woods***

Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

**5. *Balloonatic***

Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

**6. *Battling Butler***

Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

**7. *Beau Geste***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)

**8. *Bell Boy, The***

Cue Sheet

**9. *Ben Hur***

Film Score (Sketch)  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film History/Background

**10. *Beloved Rogue***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

- 11. *Birth of a Nation***  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Film Score
- 12. *Black Pirate, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 13. *Blacksmith, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 14. *Boat, The***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 15. *Body and Soul***  
Cue Sheet  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 16. *Bond, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 17. *Borderline***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 18. *Broken Blossoms***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 19. *Cat and the Canary, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Cue Sheet
- 20. *Chaser, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 21. *College***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 22. *Coney Island***  
Cue Sheet
- 23. *Convict 13***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 24. *Cook, The***  
Cue Sheet

- 25. *Cops***  
Cue Sheet
- 26. *Daydreams***  
Cue Sheet
- 27. *Diary of a Lost Girl***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 28. *Don Q, Son of Zorro***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 29. *Down to the Sea in Ships***  
Film History/Background  
Historical Cue Sheet (Compiled by Edward Kilenyi)
- 30. *Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 31. *Eagle, The***  
Film Score
- 32. *Electric House***  
Cue Sheet
- 33. *Ella Goes to Hollywood***  
Cue Sheet
- 34. *Freshman, The***  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 35. *Flesh and the Devil***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 36. *Frozen North***  
Cue Sheet
- 37. *Garage, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 38. *Gaucha, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film History/Background  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

- 39. *General, The***  
Film History/Background  
Picture postcards of The General Locomotive (Three)  
Film Score  
Cue Sheet
- 40. *Go West***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 41. *Goat, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 42. *Gold Rush***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 43. *Good Night Nurse***  
Cue Sheet
- 44. *Hard Luck***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 45. *Haunted House***  
Cue Sheet
- 46. *Haunted Spooks***  
Cue Sheet
- 47. *Hayseed, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 48. *He Who Gets Slapped***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 49. *Hearts of the World***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 50. *High Sign***  
Cue Sheet
- 51. *His First Flame***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 52. *His Majesty the American***  
Cue Sheet

- 53. *Hollywood Dressmaker***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 54. *Hollywood Extra***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 55. *Hunchback of Notre Dame, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 56. *Intolerance***  
Cue Sheet (Two pages)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 57. *Irene***  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 58. *It***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 59. *Joyless Street***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 60. *Kid, The***  
Film History/Background  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 61. *King of Kings***  
Film History/Background  
Film Score  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 62. *La Boheme***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 63. *Laurel and Hardy Shorts***  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 64. *Lilac Time***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 65. *Little Match Girl***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 66. *Lodger, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)



- 67. *Lonedale Operator***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 68. *Long Pants***  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Cue Sheet
- 69. *Love***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 70. *Love Nest***  
Cue Sheet
- 71. *Lucky Star***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 72. *Luke's Movie Muddle***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 73. *Man Without a World, The***  
Film History/Background
- 74. *Mark of Zorro***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 75. *Merry-Go-Round***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 76. *Merry Widow***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 77. *Metropolis***  
Film History/Background  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score
- 78. *Mickey***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 79. *Mollycoddle, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 80. *Mother***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)

- 81. *My Best Girl***  
Film Score
- 82. *My Wife's Relations***  
Cue Sheet
- 83. *Nanook of the North***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 84. *Navigator, The***  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Cue Sheet
- 85. *Neighbors***  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Cue Sheet
- 86. *Nut, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 87. *Nosferatu***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 88. *Old New York***  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 89. *On the Fire***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 90. *One Week***  
Cue Sheet
- 91. *Orphans of the Storm***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 92. *Our Hospitality***  
Cue Sheet
- 93. *Out West***  
Cue Sheet
- 94. *Paleface, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 95. *Parody***  
Film Score (Sketch)

**96. *Peter Pan***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

**97. *Phantom of the Opera***

Film History/Background

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

Film Score

Film Score (Sketch)

Publicity Photo

**98. *Playhouse, The***

Cue Sheet

**99. *Pleasure Garden***

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**100. *Private Life of a Cat, The***

Cue Sheet

**101. *Queen Kelly***

Film History/Background

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

Film Score

**102. *Riders of the Purple Sage***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

**103. *Robin Hood***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**104. *Run Girl Run***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

**105. *Sadie***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

**106. *Safety Last***

Film Score (Sketch)

**107. *Sally of the Sawdust***

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**108. *Salome***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

- 109. *Salvation Hunters***  
Cue Sheet
- 110. *Saturday Afternoon***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 111. *Saphead, The***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 112. *Scarecrow, The***  
Cue Sheet
- 113. *Secret Reign, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 114. *Seven Chances***  
Cue Sheet
- 115. *Sherlock, Jr.***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 116. *Somewhere in Turkey***  
Cue Sheet
- 117. *Son of the Sheik***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 118. *Steamboat Bill, Jr.***  
Film Score (Sketch)  
Cue Sheet
- 119. *Storm Over Africa***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)
- 120. *Strong Man, The***  
Cue Sheet  
Film Score (Sketch)
- 121. *Swing Your Partner***  
Cue Sheet
- 122. *Ten Commandments, The***  
Cue Sheet (Handwritten)  
Film Score (Sketch)

**123. *Thief of Bagdad***

Cue Sheet (Two Pages)

Film Score (Sketch)

Film Score

**124. *Three Ages***

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**125. *Three's a Crowd***

Cue Sheet

**126. *Three Musketeers, The***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**127. *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp***

Cue Sheet

Film Score (Sketch)

**128. *Vermont Romance***

Cue Sheet

**129. *Way Down East***

Film Score (Sketch)

**130. *West of Zanzibar***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

**131. *When the Clouds Roll By***

Cue Sheet

**132. *Wind, The***

Cue Sheet

**133. *Wings***

Cue Sheet (Handwritten)

Film Score (Sketch)

APPENDIX B  
LEE ERWIN SONGS

1. "A Dream or Two"
2. "All Gone"
3. "And So Are You"
4. "Back to God's Country"
5. "Beautiful Beacon, The"
6. "Bridal March for Shelley and Cyril"
7. "Brown Eyes"
8. "Bright Red Roses"
9. "Cake and Candles"
10. "Can't Get the Cork out of Grandpappy's Jug"
11. "Chances Are"
12. "Christmas 1987"
13. "Dance Me Loose" \*
14. "Every Spring I Fall in Love"
15. "For Christmas"
16. "Goggle Eye Ghee" \*
17. "Goodbye Summer"
18. "Hello Sunshine"
19. "Huegenot Love Song"
20. "I Will Write You a Letter"
21. "June"
22. "Light on the Lookout, The"
23. "Linen Clothes"
24. "Little White House, The"
25. "March"
26. "Mary Jane"
27. "Masturbation Dance, The"
28. "May"
29. "Midnight Moonlight"
30. "Minnequa"
31. "Most of All"
32. "Moon River Music"
33. "My Life is a Parade"
34. "My Valentine"
35. "Old Fashioned Cowboy"
36. "One Alone"
37. "Sleepy Time Gal"

38. "Song of the Loon"
39. "Spring Song"
40. "Stay, My Love"
41. "Tabitha"
42. "Tailor Made Jeans"
43. "There Ought to be a Society" \*
44. "Two Lovely Blue Eyes"
45. "Where is My Love"
46. "Windchimes"
47. "Wine Jar, The"
48. "Winter Weather"
49. "Wish They were You and I"
50. "Yellow Moon"

\* Indicates that the song was recorded



APPENDIX C  
ORGAN ARRANGEMENTS

1. "3 O'Clock in the A.M."
2. "All the Things You Are" \*
3. "Amazing Grace"
4. "America, the Beautiful"
5. "Aqua" \*
6. Australian Folk Songs
  - a. "Colonial Song"
  - b. "Click, Go the Shears"
  - c. "Children's March"
  - d. "Waltzing Matilda"
  - e. "Wild Colonial Boy"
  - f. "Shepherd's Hay"
7. "Autumn Leaves" \*
8. "Blue Skies"
9. "Blue Tango"
10. "Cabaret"
11. "Camptown Races"
12. "Canon in D"
13. "Caprice Viennois" \*
14. "City by the Bay, The"
15. "Danse Macabre"
16. "Dinosaur Song"
17. "Down in the Valley"
18. "Fiddler on the Roof"
19. "Forgotten Dreams"
20. "Gershwin Medley"
21. "Greensleeves"
22. "Hallelujah Chorus"
23. "Hawaiian Medley"
24. "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"
25. "I Can't Get Started"
26. "I Could Write a Book"
27. "I Love New York"
28. "I Used to be Colorblind"
29. "If"
30. "If Ever I Would Leave You"
31. "Impossible Dream, The"

32. "In My Solitude"
33. "I've Been Working on the Railroad"
34. "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair"
35. "Jesus Christ Superstar"
36. "Jitterbug Waltz"
37. "Lazy Afternoon"
38. "Let's Face the Music and Dance"
39. "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
40. "Look of Love, The"
41. "Memories of You"
42. "Memory Lane"
43. "Mood Indigo"
44. "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"
45. "Porter, Cole Medley"
46. "Primero" \*
47. "Puss in Boots"
48. Ragtime Album Collection \*
  - a. "Maple Leaf Rag"
  - b. "Eugenia"
  - c. "Georgia Camp Meeting"
  - d. "Pineapple Rag"
  - e. "Stoptime Rag"
  - f. "The Entertainer"
  - g. "Whistling Rufus"
  - h. "The Cherry Chase"
  - i. "Pleasant Moments"
  - j. "Scott Joplin's New Rag"
  - k. "Gladiolus Rag"
  - l. "A Breeze from Alabama"
  - m. "Sunflower Slow Drag"
  - n. "Rosebud"
  - o. "Original Rag"
49. "Remember"
50. "Satin Doll"
51. "Swanee"
52. "Secret Love"
53. "Shenandoah"
54. "Sleepy Time Gal"
55. "Some Enchanted Evening"
56. "Someone to Watch Over Me"
57. "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child"
58. "Sound of Music, The"
59. "South Pacific"
60. "Stand by Me"
61. "Think of Me"
62. "Three French Waltzes"

- 63. "Where or When"
- 64. "Windmills"
- 65. "Woodland Sketches"
  - a. "To a Water Lily"
  - b. "To a Wild Rose"
- 66. "Träumerei"

\* Indicates that the organ arrangement/transcription was recorded

APPENDIX D  
CORRESPONDENCE

Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France To  
Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama,  
June 1930 – May 1931

1. 8 June 1930
2. 14 June 1930
3. ? June 1930
4. 22 June 1930
5. 6 July 1930
6. 13 July 1930
7. 27 July 1930
8. 31 July 1930
9. 5 August 1930
10. 10 August 1930
11. 31 August 1930
12. ? August 1930
13. 7 September 1930
14. 14 September 1930
15. 21 September 1930
16. 28 September 1930
17. 7 October 1930
18. 12 October 1930
19. 20 October 1930
20. 27 October 1930
21. 3 November 1930
22. 10 November 1930
23. 17 November 1930
24. 23 November 1930
25. 5 December 1930
26. 9 December 1930
27. 15 December 1930
28. 25 December 1930
29. 29 December 1930
30. 13 January 1931
31. 19 January 1931
32. 26 January 1931

- 33. 2 February 1931
- 34. 10 February 1931
- 35. 16 February 1931
- 36. 23 February 1931
- 37. 10 March 1931
- 38. 17 March 1931
- 39. 24 March 1931
- 40. 31 March 1931
- 41. 4 April 1931
- 42. 8 April 1931
- 43. 17 April 1931
- 44. 23 April 1931
- 45. 1 May 1931

APPENDIX E  
CORRESPONDENCE

1. Jesse (Last Name Unknown) to Lee Erwin, Birmingham, Alabama, 25 February 1929.
2. Mrs. Ashford Todd, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, Birmingham, Alabama, 2 March 1929.
3. Charles G. Branham, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, Birmingham, Alabama, 22 July 1929.
4. Charles G. Branham, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, Birmingham, Alabama, 17 August 1929.
5. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, Cincinnati, Ohio, 31 May 1938.
6. David Z. Rosensweig, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 2 February 1961.
7. E. J. Quinby, Summit, New Jersey, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 9 May 1967.
8. Gloria Swanson, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 11 May 1967
9. John J. Strader, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 2 September 1967.
10. William L. Hatzenbuehler, North Tonawanda, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 7 October 1967.
11. Joseph A. Erwin, Englewood, New Jersey, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 22 January 1968.
12. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Robert C. Colby, Tonawanda, New York, 26 March 1968.
13. Robert C. Colby, Tonawanda, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 28 March 1968.
14. John J. Strader, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 5 April 1968.
15. John J. Strader, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 18 April 1969.
16. Robert C. Colby, Tonawanda, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 June 1969.
17. John J. Strader, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 25 January 1971.
18. John J. Strader, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 1 February 1971.
19. Denny Richards, Akron, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 July 1971.

20. Denny Richards, Akron, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 26 July 1971.
21. Pamela G. White, Cleveland, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 1 November 1971.
22. Joseph Marsh, Northumberland, England, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 26 January 1972.
23. Norman Earl Thompson, San Francisco, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 June 1972.
24. Norman Earl Thompson, San Francisco, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 July 1972.
25. Norman Earl Thompson, San Francisco, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 18 October 1972.
26. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Norman Earl Thompson, San Francisco, California, 1 December 1972.
27. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Wilson Bruggart, Akron, Ohio, 8 December 1972.
28. William Tipper, Derby, England, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 15 December 1972.
29. Frances Wade, Akron, Ohio, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 12 June 1973.
30. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gloria Swanson, New York, New York, 18 September 1974.
31. Gloria Swanson, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 16 December 1974.
32. Sara (Sally) Erwin Hix, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 17 February 1975.
33. K. I. Wherrett, MacGregor, Australia, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 September 1976.
34. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to K. I. Wherrett, MacGregor, Australia, 6 October 1976.
35. Hilary Kelly, Mt. Gravatt, Australia, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 March 1977.
36. Clay Holbrook, Atlanta, Georgia, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 23 February 1978.
37. Marion Martin, Whiteville, North Carolina, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 March 1978.
38. Bernard Kalban, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 21 April 1978.
39. Bernard Kalban, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 25 April 1978.
40. Larry Copeland, Geneva, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 7 November 1979.
41. Vincent Martino, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 27 March 1980.
42. Thomas Jackson, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 29 August 1980.



43. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Ron Beigel, New York, New York, 6 November 1980.
44. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Wilson (Last Name Unknown), 15 June 1981.
45. Paul Knox, Bridgeport, Connecticut, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 4 August 1982.
46. Sara (Sally) Erwin Hix, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 22 May 1983.
47. Sara (Sally) Erwin Hix, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 1 June 1983.
48. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Sara (Sally) Erwin Hix, Huntsville, Alabama, 24 June 1983.
49. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, 14 January 1984.
50. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 22 January 1984.
51. Paul Knox, Bridgeport, Connecticut, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 27 January 1984.
52. Joel Duncan, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 March 1984.
53. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Cecil Whitmire, Pelham, Alabama, 16 May 1985.
54. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Henry Hill, Huntsville, Alabama, 24 June 1985.
55. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Cecil Whitmire, Pelham, Alabama, 28 July, 1985.
56. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Edward Walsh, Westbury, New York, 28 August 1985.
57. Edward Walsh, Westbury, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 17 October 1985.
58. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 16 December 1985.
59. John J. Cook, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 24 December 1985
60. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, 26 December 1985.
61. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 8 January 1986.
62. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, 28 January 1986.
63. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 28 February 1986.
64. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, 4 May 1986.
65. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 9 May 1986.

66. Edward Walsh, Westbury, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 May 1986.
67. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 June 1986.
68. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Santa Ana, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 13 June 1986.
69. Edward Walsh, Westbury, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 August 1986.
70. Edward Walsh, Westbury, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 26 December 1986.
71. Naj Wikoff, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 5 January 1987.
72. Chad, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 5 February 1987.
73. Jeff Weiler, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 17 April 1987.
74. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, 9 May 1987.
75. Leon C. Berry, Park Ridge, Illinois, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 11 May 1987.
76. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, 13 May 1987.
77. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 14 May 1987.
78. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 18 May 1987.
79. Sara (Sally) Erwin Hix, Huntsville, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 19 May 1987.
80. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 1 June 1987.
81. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, 22 August, 1987.
82. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 11 January 1988.
83. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 21 February 1988.
84. Rev. James Parks Morton, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 19 April 1988.
85. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 27 April 1988.
86. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 3 May 1988.
87. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, 11 May 1988.
88. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 16 May 1988.
89. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, 4 June 1988.

90. Jeff Weiler, Chicago, Illinois, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 5 June 1988.
91. Jeff Weiler, Chicago, Illinois, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 8 June 1988.
92. Gary Jones, Birmingham, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 June 1988.
93. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 8 July 1988.
94. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 8 July 1988.
95. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 July 1988.
96. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, 6 August 1988.
97. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 August 1988.
98. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 29 August 1988.
99. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 19 September 1988.
100. Thomas Helms, Pensacola, Florida to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 11 November 1988.
101. Robby Tindell, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 8 February 1989.
102. Thomas Helms, Pensacola, Florida, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 5 May 1989.
103. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Thomas Helms, Pensacola, Florida, 9 May 1989.
104. Naj Wikoff, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 22 May 1989.
105. Films Inc., Attention Mary Lou Larson, Chicago, Illinois, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 1 June 1989.
106. John J. Cook, Braintree, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 10 March 1990.
107. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, June 1990.
108. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 3 July 1990.
109. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 19 July 1990.
110. Larry W. Donaldson, Macon, Georgia, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 31 July 1990.
111. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 2 August 1990.
112. Dorothy J. Papadacos, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 18 September 1990.
113. Thomas Helms, postcard from Paris, France, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 28 September 1990.

114. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 28 September 1990.
115. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 20 November 1990.
116. Donna M. Fisher-Jackson, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 28 May, 1991.
117. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 3 July 1991.
118. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Maggie Duff, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 24 December 1991.
119. Alan Liddell, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 30 March 1992.
120. Donna M. Fisher-Jackson, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 3 June 1992.
121. Donna M. Fisher-Jackson, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 19 March 1993.
122. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, 5 April 1993.
123. Ilsa M. Glazer, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 27 April 1993.
124. Donna M. Fisher-Jackson, New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 25 May 1993.
125. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, 7 June 1993.
126. Carolyn Wilcox, Burlington, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 22 August 1993.
127. Carolyn Wilcox, Burlington, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 12 September 1993.
128. Chris (Christian) Elliot, Menlo Park, California, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 29 September 1993.
129. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, 18 November 1993.
130. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, 9 December 1993.
131. Carolyn Wilcox, Burlington, Massachusetts, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 6 January 1994.
132. Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, January 1994.
133. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Ozark, Alabama, 24 January 1994.
134. Michael Hix, Greenville, South Carolina, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, October 1994.
135. Lee Erwin, New York, New York, to Michael Hix, Greenville, South Carolina, 12 November 1994.
136. Joy M. Testa, Buffalo, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 4 December 1995.

137. Rev. James Parks Morton, New York, New York, to Lee Erwin, New York, New York, 6 August 1996.

## APPENDIX F NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

1. Author Unknown, "Young Organist Wins Encomium of Music Lovers," Newspaper Unknown, 10 November 1929 .
2. Author Unknown, "Huntsville Notes Music Week Fete," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
3. Author Unknown, "Artists of WAPI Desert Cozy Studio to Frolic when Snow Becomes Irresistible," *The Birmingham News*, 9 February 1930.
4. Author Unknown, "Mrs. Pettus Presents Pupils in Music Recital," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
5. Author Unknown, "Lee Erwin, Organist," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
6. Author Unknown, "Noted Organist to Perform at NT's Riviera Theatre," *Record-Advertiser*, 25 April 1968.
7. Author Unknown, "N. Tonawanda to Get 'World Premiere'," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
8. Author Unknown, "Pink and Mink," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
9. Author Unknown, "3 Musical 'Firsts' Booked," *Buffalo Courier – Express*, 25 April 1968.
10. Author Unknown, "Riviera," *Buffalo Courier - Express*, 27 April 1968.
11. Author Unknown, "Noted Organist to Perform at NT's Riviera Theatre," *Record-Advertiser*, 25 April 1968.
12. Author Unknown, "Silent-Film Night," *Riverside Review*, 25 April 1968.
13. Allen Hughes, "Organist Evokes Silent-Film Days," *The New York Times*, 29 October 1968.
14. Allen Hughes, "Gaudy Giant of the Past," *The New York Times*, 1969.
15. Ann Carter, "He'll Play the Organ, Hopefully Unnoticed," *The Atlanta Journal*, 26 March 1969.
16. Ted Creech, "Valentino Entrances Local Movie Fans in Silent Film," *The Alexandria Gazette*, 31 October 1969.
17. Author Unknown, "Presenting: Lee Erwin," *The Horseshoe*, March 1970.
18. Lloyd E. Klos, "A Collection of Original Compositions for Organ," *Theatre Organ*, April 1970.
19. Ellen Taussig, "Sing Away Your Worries – Just Like 40 Years Ago," *Buffalo Evening News*, 4 April 1970.
20. Walter Walker, "Lee Erwin to play Valentino Flick," *Relay*, July 1971.
21. Tom Putnam, "Guild of Organists to Hold Parley," *Buffalo Courier-Express*, 7 June 1970.

22. Author Unknown, "Parvin Titus dies; famed organist," *The Cincinnati Post*, 26 March 1973.
23. Ted Creech, "Lee Erwin Discovers Little-known Robert Morton," *Theatre Organ*, December 1973.
24. Jim Arpy, "A Night of Music and Memories," *Times-Democrat*, 18 May 1973.
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62. Allan Kozinn, "Lee Erwin, 92, Organist and Composer, Dies," *The New York Times*, 26 September 2000.

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69. Winston Kaehler, "A Magical Tour," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
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72. Kenneth V. Turvey, "Lee Erwin Shows Musical Mastery in Organ Recital," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
73. Andrew L. Yarrow, "An Organist Who Makes Music for Silent Films," *The New York Times*, Date Unknown.
74. Andrew Sarris, "Buster Keaton: The Beautiful and the Comic," Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.
75. Garland Reeves, "Organist made Phantom movie superb," *The Birmingham News*, Date Unknown.

76. Kenneth V. Turvey, "Lee Erwin Shows Musical Mastery in Organ Recital,"  
Newspaper Unknown, Date Unknown.

APPENDIX G  
MISCELLANY

ARRANGED BY ASSOCIATED VENUE ALPHABETICALLY

Akron Civic Theatre

Concert Advertisement, Flyer (5 May 1973)  
Concert Program (13 November 1976)  
Program Notes (Date Unknown)  
Concert Program (Date Unknown)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (23 October – Year Unknown)  
Artist Contract  
Organ Specifications  
Relay – Newsletter of the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society  
(October 1971 and December 1971)

Australian Tour

Organ Specifications (Sydney Town Hall organ)  
Organ Specifications (Christie Theatre pipe organ at Kelvin Grove)

Alabama Theatre

1988 ATOS Regional Convention name-tag  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (12 July 1987)  
Contract (12 July 1987)  
Concert Program (24 March 1991)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (Spring-Summer 1989)  
Contract (January 1988)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (27 July 1987)  
Organ History Information  
Xeroxed photos from atop Alabama Theatre (1929)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (12 July 1987)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (7 August 1987)  
Concert Program (March 1988)

Albright Theatre

Concert Advertisement, Flyer (25-27 April - Year Unknown)  
Film Festival Schedule (25-27 April – Year Unknown)

American Cathedral (Paris, France)  
Service Bulletin (15 June 1930)

Auditorium Theatre (Rochester, New York)  
Concert Program (24 April 1976)

Bailey Hall (Broward County)  
Concert Poster (28 September 1989)

Beacon Theatre  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (April 1967)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (Date Unknown)  
Concert Program (24-25 February 1969)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (21-26 September – Year Unknown)

Brook Theatre  
Concert Outline

Bundy Auditorium (New Castle, Indiana)  
Concert Program (11 November 1974)

Carnegie Hall Cinema (New York City, New York)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (4 November – Year Unknown)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (Date Unknown)

Cathedral of Saint John the Divine  
Concert Poster  
Concert Program  
Concert Poster

Century II Exhibition Hall (Wichita, Kansas)  
Concert Program (13 November 1993)  
Concert Program (22 February 1997)  
Program Notes (22 February 1987)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (1993-1994)

Cincinnati Conservatory of Music/College Conservatory of Music (Cincinnati, Ohio)  
Concert Program (14 December 1943)  
Concert Program (13-14 January 1972)

Chaminade High School (Mineola, New York)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (22 October – Year Unknown)

Community Church of Douglaston (Douglaston, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (5 April 1996)  
 Concert Program (5 April 1996)

Darby Auditorium (Mineola, New York)  
 Concert Program (9 November 1997)

Eastman Theatre (Rochester, New York)  
 Concert Program (13 January 1973)

Grenada Theatre (Kansas City, Kansas)  
 Concert Program (23-25 May – Year Unknown)

Gusman Cultural Center (Miami, Florida)  
 Program Notes/Organ History (Date Unknown)

Loew's Kings Theatre (Brooklyn, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (14 September – Year Unknown)

New York Historical Society (New York, New York)  
 Concert Program (28 May 1998)

New York Military Academy (Cornwall-On-Hudson, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (1 December 1979)

Public Theatre (New York, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (18 January – Year Unknown)

Radio City Music Hall (New York, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (12 November 1978)  
 Ticket (12 November 1978)

Redford Theatre (Detroit, Michigan)  
 Concert Poster – The Colleen Moore Show (4 March 1969)  
 Concert Program (14 April 1970)

Riviera Theatre (North Tonawanda, New York)  
 Concert Advertisement, Flyer (1 May 1968)  
 Ticket (1 May 1968)  
 Concert Program/American Guild of Organists National Convention (30 June 1970)

Sioux City Auditorium (Sioux City, Iowa)  
 Concert Program (1 April 1973)  
 Concert Program (1974-1975 Season)

Union County Arts Center (Rahway, New Jersey)  
Concert Program (16 October 1993)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (4 May 1997)

Virginia Theatre (Alexandria, Virginia)  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (16 June – Year Unknown)

Westchester Community College  
Concert Program (9 October 1998)

Zeiterion Theatre (New Bedford, Massachusetts)  
Organ Specifications  
Concert Advertisement, Flyer (25 September 1990)  
Organ Photo  
Theatre Photo

## APPENDIX H

A LIST OF THEATERS, CONCERT HALLS, CHURCHES, RECORDING STUDIOS,  
RADIO STATIONS, TELEVISION STATIONS WHERE LEE ERWIN HAS  
PERFORMED IN THE U.S.A., CANADA, AUSTRALIA, ENGLAND, FRANCE,  
SWITZERLAND, GREENLAND, VIRGIN ISLANDS. COMPILED BY LEE ERWIN

1979

### NEW YORK CITY

Carnegie Hall Cinema  
8th St. Playhouse  
RKO Richmond Hill (1945)  
Madison Theatre, Brooklyn  
Bleeker St. Cinema  
Museum of Modern Art  
Loew's Kings Theatre, Brooklyn  
Beacon Theatre, Broadway  
Radio City Music Hall  
Baldwin Piano Studio, 58 St.  
Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine  
Academy of Music, 14th St.  
Brooklyn Paramount (L.I.V.)  
Brooklyn Tech.  
All Saints Church, 129 St.  
Madison Square Garden  
Loews 175th St.  
St. Patrick's Cathedral  
57th St. Cinema  
Astoria Studios  
Carnegie Hall Organ  
Metro Cinema, 99 St.  
Immaculate Conception Church  
Town Hall, 43 St.  
Frick Museum, E. 70th St.  
D.W. Griffith Theatre, 59 St.  
C.B.S. Studios  
N.B.C. Studios  
A.B.C. Studios  
Calvary Church, Park Ave.  
St. George's Church, 16 St.  
Red Car Studios, Mercer St.

Lehman College  
Walker Theatre, Brooklyn  
Mannes College of Music  
Grace and St. Paul's Church, 71st  
Jewish Museum, 5th Ave.  
Riverside Church (chapel)  
Bob Blake Studio, Carnegie Hall  
St. James Chapel (St. John's Cathedral)  
South Hall (St. John's Cathedral)  
Ben Hall Organ  
St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave.  
Baldwin Piano Studio, Queens  
Inter Church Center, Riverside Dr.  
Abyssinian Bapt. Church, 138 St.  
Peter Schalel Studio, Queens  
Our Lady of Good Council, 90th St.  
St. Gregory's Church, W. 90 St.  
RCA Recording Studios, 44 St.  
Players Club, Gramercy Park So  
Cabaret 22 Below, 22nd St.  
Brielle Studios, Vestry St.  
Actors Guild, 29th St.  
Hunter College  
15th St. Apt. Studio  
Bowery Savings Bank, 7th Ave.  
Armenian Cathedral, 2nd Ave.  
St. Francis of Assisi, 31st St.  
St. Barnabus Church, Brooklyn  
Baldwin Piano Studios, Queens[1]  
Bedford Central, Brooklyn  
Baldwin Piano Studios, Queens  
Kosciuzko Foundation, 65 St.  
Killiam Film Studio, 39 St.  
P.S. 122, 1st Ave., 9th St.

Roller Rink, 52 St.  
Roller Rink, Brooklyn  
Plaza Sound Studio, (R.C.M.H.)  
Citi Corp, Atrium, Lex. Ave.  
Fox Theatre, Brooklyn  
United Nations Chapel, 1st Ave.  
Loderhose Organ, Queens  
Recording Studio, 11th St.  
Biograph Theatre  
St. Mary the Virgin Church, 46 St.  
National Arts Club, Gramercy Pk.  
Baptist Cathedral, Brooklyn  
Joe Franklin Studio  
Ed Sullivan Theatre  
Recording Studio, Gway-7th Ave.  
St. Patrick's Church Carillon  
Chas. Morrow Studio, 5th Ave.  
Old St. Patrick's, Mulberry St.

Riverdale School  
Alice Tully Hall  
5th Ave. Presbyterian Ch.  
Public Theatre, Lafayette St.  
Methodist Church, Bayside  
St. Francis of Rome, Bronx  
Our Lady of Pity, Staten Island  
St. Francis of Hungary, 82 St.  
Jefferson Theatre, 14th St.  
Trinity Church, B'way  
Community Church of Douglaston  
Mt. Olivet, Lennox Ave.  
Juilliard School of Music  
St. Raymond's Ch., Bronx  
St. James of Fordham  
St. John's Lutheran, Bronx  
St. Thomas Church, 5th Ave.  
St. Bartholomew's, Park Ave.

### **STATE OF NEW YORK**

Shea's Theatre, Buffalo  
Riviera Theatre, N. Tonawanda  
Auditorium Theatre, Rochester  
Westchester Community College  
Chaminade H.S., Mineola  
Grace Church, White Plains  
Baldwin Piano Studios, White Plains  
St. James' Church, Lynbrook  
Sachem H.S., Ronkonkoma  
U.S. Military Academy, West Point  
N.Y. Military Academy, Cornwall  
Catholic Church, Patchogue  
Congregational Church, Patchogue  
Vanderbilt Estate, Centerport  
Lafayette Theatre, Suffern  
Most Holy Trinity, Yonkers  
St. Mary's Church, Yonkers  
Roberson Auditorium, Binghamton  
Hudson River Museum, Yonkers

Paramount Theatre, Middletown  
Chappaqua Film Society  
Bardavon Theatre, Poughkeepsie  
State Fairgrounds, Syracuse  
Proctors Theatre, Schenectady  
Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester  
Eastman House, Rochester  
Masonic Temple, Floral Park  
Roslyn Church  
Hilsenbeck Organ, Long Island  
Chelsea Mansion, Nassau  
Proctor H.S., Utica  
Clemens Center, Elmira  
Sachem H.S., Freeport  
Rockefeller House, L.I.  
Long Beach Church



## **PENNSYLVANIA, DELAWARE**

Philadelphia Civic Center  
Irvine Auditorium, Philadelphia  
Wanamaker Organ, Philadelphia  
Dickinson H.S., Wilmington, DE  
Capitol Theatre, Chambersburg, PA

Philadelphia University Chapel  
Longwood Gardens, Kennet Square  
Allen Organ Co., Macungie, PA  
Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, PA  
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA

## **RHODE ISLAND, CONNECTICUT, MASSACHUSETTS**

Babson College, Wellesley, MA  
Alan Goodnow Organ, N. Smithfield, RI  
University, Berlin, CT  
Zeiterion Theatre, New Bedford, MA  
Thomaston Opera House, Thomaston, CT  
Shelton H.S., Shelton, CT  
Hammond Museum, Gloucester, MA  
“Warehouse” Installation, New Bedford  
All Saints Church, Worcester, MA  
Metro Theatre, Provincetown, MA  
Stadium Theatre, Woonsocket, RI  
Ocean State Theatre, Boston  
Boston University, Boston  
Brattle Theatre, Boston  
Phil Stock Residence, W. Hartford, CT  
Town Hall, Stoneham, MA  
Performing Arts Center, Providence, RI  
Rhode Island University, Kingston  
Provincetown Film Festival, Cape Cod  
Pawtucket Theatre, RI  
United Church, Bridgeport, CT  
Shanklin Residence, Groton, CT  
Pizza Parlor, Groton, CT

## **CINCINNATI**

Albee Theatre  
Palace Theatre  
Paramount Theatre  
Radio Station WLW. Wurlitzer (a)  
Radio Station WLW. Wurlitzer (b)  
Radio Station WKRC

## **MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, VERMONT**

State Theatre, Portland, ME  
Flynn, Theatre, Burlington, VT  
Contois Music, Burlington, VT

## **MARYLAND, WASH.D.C., VIRGINIA**

Tirol Theatre, Frederick, MD  
Key Theatre, Wash, D.C.  
Dick Kline Organ, Thurmont, MD  
Byrd Theatre, Richmond, VA  
Mosque Theatre, Richmond  
Presbyterian Church, Wash. D.C.  
Virginia Theatre, Alexandria VA  
Smithsonian Institution, Wash. D.C.

## **WASHINGTON, OREGON**

Paramount Theatre, Seattle, WA  
Guild Theatre, Seattle, WA  
Franklin H.S., Seattle, WA  
Cleveland H.S., Portland, OR

Radio Station LUCKY  
New Thought Temple  
Gaiety Theatre  
Grand Theatre  
Pine Street Theatre  
Christ Church – 4th St.

Conservatory Concert Hall organ  
Conservatory Studio organ  
Emery Theatre  
Capitol Theatre  
University Concert Hall  
Lyric Theatre  
Lockland Theatre  
“Delta Queen” Riverboat Calliope  
WLW Vine St. Studios  
Louis Saverne Studio  
Highland Ave. Studio  
Ohio Theatre, Toledo

### **FLORIDA**

Tampa Theatre  
Saenger Theatre, Pensacola  
The Kirk of Dunedin  
Fort Lauderdale Film Festival  
Bailey Concert Hall  
Gussman Hall, Miami  
Mike Kinerk Organ, Miami Beach  
Ashley Hall, Fort Lauderdale

### **COLORADO, IOWA**

Paramount Theatre, Denver  
Ogden Theatre, Denver  
College Auditorium, Boulder  
Telluride Film Festival (1974)  
City Auditorium, Colorado Springs  
Alladin Theatre, Denver  
N. Iowa Community College, Mason  
City  
Capitol Theatre, Davenport  
City Auditorium, Sioux City

Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Ch.  
Netherland Plaza Hotel  
Church of the Advent  
Cinti Music Hall organ  
WLW Studios – 9th St.  
Strader House organ  
Gibson Hotel  
Cleveland H.S., Cleveland  
Normandie H.S., Parma Heights  
Palace Theatre, Marion  
Shady Nook Restaurant, Millville  
State Cinema, Springfield

### **ALABAMA**

Alabama Theatre  
Lowes Temple Theatre  
Presbyterian Church, Selma, AL  
Church of the Advent, Birmingham, AL  
Methodist Church (B. Hall), Atlanta, GA  
South Side Baptist Ch., Birmingham,  
AL

### **NORTH-SOUTH CAROLINA**

Carolina Theatre, Greensboro  
Dr. Abernethy Organ, Burlington  
N.C. Art Museum, Raleigh  
Duke University Chapel, Durham  
Hayes Barton Church, Raleigh  
Williams H.S., Burlington  
Elon College, Greensboro  
Front St. Methodist Church, Burlington  
Winthrop College, Rock Hill, SC  
Presbyterian Church, Tryon, NC  
Carolina Civic Center, Lumberton, NC  
Masonic Temple, Chapel Hill  
White Memorial Church, Raleigh

## **ILLINOIS**

Chicago Theatre – Chicago  
Music Box Theatre – Chicago  
Oriental Theatre – Chicago  
Civic Opera House – Chicago  
Sanaburg Theatre – Chicago  
Tivoli Theatre, Downers Grove  
Coronada Theatre, Rockford  
Chicago Radio Station  
Adams House Studio, Aledo  
Genesse Theatre, Waukegan  
Mundelein Organ  
Vandermollen Organ, Wheaton

## **INDIANA**

Manual H.S., Indianapolis  
Hedback Theatre, Indianapolis  
Paramount Music Palace, Indianapolis  
Rivoli Theatre, Indianapolis  
Tim Needler House, Indianapolis  
Embassy Theatre, Ft. Wayne  
Long Center, Lafayette  
Mars Theare, Indianapolis  
Winamae Theatre, Winamae

## **MICHIGAN**

Redford Theatre, Detroit  
Senate Theatre, Detroit  
Baldwin Theatre, Royal Oak  
Fox Theatre, Detroit  
Michigan Theatre, Muskegon  
Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor  
Punch and Judy, Grosse Point  
Betty Mason Organ, Livonia  
Hamilton/Kynaston Organ  
McComb Theatre, Mt. Clemens

## **TENNESSEE, KENTUCKY**

Tennessee Theatre, Knoxville  
Paramount Theatre, Bristol  
Tivoli Theatre, Chattanooga  
Home Installation, Knoxville  
Grand Theatre, Newport  
Covington Theatre, Covington  
“Robert E. Lee” Riverboat Calliope,  
Knoxville

## **MISSOURI, KANSAS**

Fox Theatre, St. Louis  
Webster College, St. Louis  
Art Museum, St. Louis  
Granada Theatre, Kansas City  
Century II, Wichita, KS  
Radio Station KAKE, Wichita  
Michael Coup Residence, Wichita

## **MINNESOTA, IDAHO**

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN  
Sheldon Auditorium, Red Wing, MN  
World Theatre, St. Paul, MN  
City Auditorium, Minneapolis, MN  
University Auditorium, Boise, ID  
Ada Theatre, Boise, ID  
Church Recital, Boise ID

## **AUSTRALIA**

Schonelle Theatre – Brisbane  
Queensland Conservatory – Brisbane  
Town Hall, Sydney  
St. Andrew's Church, Sydney  
Dendi Theatre, Melbourne  
St. John's College, Adelaide  
St. Thomas' H.S., Adelaide  
Univ. of Western Australia, Perth  
Neil Jensen Studio, Brisbane

## **FRANCE – SWITZERLAND**

American Film Festival, Deauville  
American Cathedral, Paris  
André Marchal Studio, Paris  
U.S. Students and Artist's Club  
G. Englebert Studio Organ, Paris  
Boellman Studio, Paris  
Marchal Studio, Hendaye  
Jean Verd Studio, Magagnose  
Jean Verd Studio, Kneuzligen, Sw.

## **CANADA**

Church of the Redeemer, Kingston  
Casa Loma Organ, Toronto

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

U.S. Air Base, Thula, Greenland. Dec.  
31, 1953  
  
Virgin Island Film Festival, St. Thomas.  
Nov. 1975  
  
Tucson, Arizona Film Festival. June  
1977

## **CONCERT TOUR – 1977**

From April 12 to May 8 – Performances  
on the Rogers Touring Organ in the  
following cities:

- 1) Miles City, MT
- 2) Rapid City, SD
- 3) Pierre, SD
- 4) Mobridge, SD
- 5) Bottineau, ND
- 6) Rugby, ND
- 7) Thief River Falls, MN
- 8) Duluth, MN
- 9) Owatonna, MN
- 10) Litchfield, MN
- 11) Hopkins, MN
- 12) Sparta, WI
- 13) Nebraska City, NE
- 14) Boone, Iowa
- 15) Washington, Iowa
- 16) Knoxville, IA
- 17) Carrollton, MO
- 18) Brookfield, MO
- 19) Bronxville, MO

## APPENDIX I VIDEOGRAPHY

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Los Angeles: Landmark Laservision, 1971), Laserdisk.  
*Eagle, The* (Chatsworth, CA: Image Entertainment, 2002), DVD.  
*Hunchback of Notre Dame, The* (1980), Spectrum VHS.  
*Phantom of the Opera* (Hollywood, CA: Hollywood Home Theater, 1980), VHS.  
*Pleasure Garden, The* (Saskatoon, Canada: Robertsvideos, 1985), VHS.  
*Thief of Bagdad, The* (Itasca, IL: Critics Choice Video, 1988), VHS.  
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## Articles

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michael Hix is a singer and musicologist originally from Ozark, Alabama. He graduated from Furman University with a Bachelor of Music degree in music theory in 1998. At Florida State University he completed dual masters degrees in Voice and Historical Musicology. He is married to soprano/musicologist Margaret (Meg) Jackson.