



A Perspective

Ken Double

The New York Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer carried the reputation as the theatre organ world's greatest creation. When the New York Paramount Theatre was re-purposed for offices, Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc., bought the great Wurlitzer and installed in what was then, the "new" Century II Civic Center. For more than 40 years, concerts featuring the finest organists from around the world have entertained audiences who love the unequalled sound of the Wichita Wurlitzer. The white console with its gold trim, four keyboards, curved "horseshoe" rails with more than 360 stops is a visual stunner. Concert-goers love it.

Tastes have changed since the 20's when the Wurlitzer first entertained New York audiences and since the 70's when the Wurlitzer premiered in Wichita. Planning is in progress for new Wichita Wurlitzer events aimed to engage today's audiences and continue sharing music not possible by traditional or the latest electronic instruments. The question is: will a younger public become engaged?

What is NOT in question is this: Out of more than 10,000 theatre pipe organs built, Wichita is home to the finest example ever conceived and executed...The Wichita Wurlitzer.

How often does a city and its citizens get to boast, "We have the greatest one ever made?" Not often. What's more? With the Wichita Wurlitzer, it's not a museum piece behind glass. Rather it is a living, breathing, breathtaking music making machine with the tonal resources of an orchestra, band, or jazz trio. An instrument never equaled. And yes, it needs to stay in Wichita, to educate, to entertain and to be known by everyone as one of Wichita's jewels.

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