

## The Lloyd E. Klos Legacy

For the March, 1981 back page article, Lloyd Klos featured one of America's greatest movie palaces, now sadly lost to history.

### Great Movie Palaces

#### 2. The San Francisco Fox

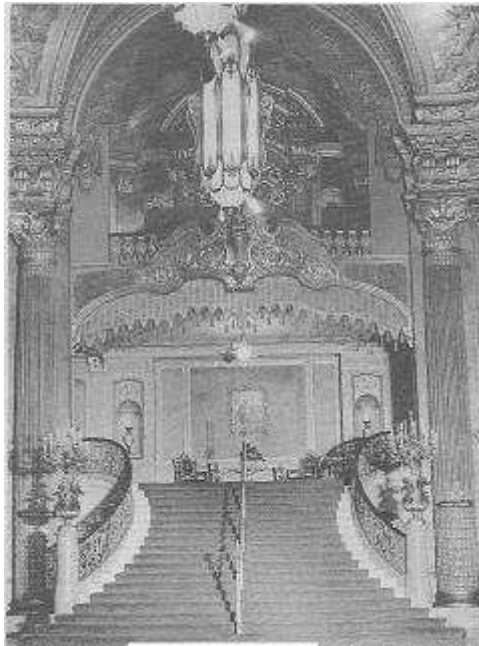
In 1926, film magnate William Fox had an inspiration. He would build in San Francisco a theatre which would be a "shrine to show the world America's growth and prosperity". After all, times were good and there was no place to go but up, as evinced by the mercurial rise of the Stock Market.

The Fox Theatre was over two years in designing and building, and architect Thomas Lamb initially estimated the cost would be around \$2 million. Final cost was \$5 million. While the 5651-seat house was being built, Mrs. Fox amassed some objects d'art on a European trip, including two \$3,000 vases which had belonged to the Russian czars. She did the ladies' lounge over five times before it pleased her, and had the auditorium's walls decorated in 18-carat gold. Everything about the place was spectacular, gaudy and grandiose when it was opened on June 28, 1929. Will Rogers, master of ceremonies, introduced Norma Shearer, Paul Muni, Laurel & Hardy, Bessie Love, Lupe Velez and other notables from the audience.

The Fox had five balconies, eight elevators and an orchestra lift capable of raising 50 musicians or two automobiles. The distance from projection booth to screen was 212 feet, necessitating special aperture closures to reduce the screen images. The organ was a 5-chamber, 4/36 Wurlitzer Fox Special, one of five built. Jamie Erickson, Doc Wilson, Mel Hertz, George Wright and Everett Nourse were among those who played it. In the lobby, a \$15,000 Moller organ with roll player entertained waiting patrons.

Beneath the basement of the Fox ran the Hayes Valley River, which provided pure water for drinking and fire-fighting. Pumps, continuously in operation, kept the water from flooding the cellar. The theatre was sometimes labeled "The Fabulous and Foolish Fox", simply because of its grandiose construction, close to the onset of the depression. Its history was spotted with closings because of costs and changes in entertainment habits.

A public referendum in 1963 to retain it as a performing arts center was defeated and it was razed. The organ, after several notable recordings by Tiny James and Everett Nourse, went into an enthusiast's home. A high-rise office building stands on the site, and San Franciscoans wish they had the Fox for just the purpose against which they voted in 1963. O tempora! o mores!



*Program design by Russ Shaner*

**The Rochester Theater  
Organ Society  
Proudly Presents**

**Dave Wickerham**



**in Concert**

**Auditorium Theatre  
November 5, 2017- 2:30pm**

## TODAY'S ARTIST - DAVE WICKERHAM

**Dave Wickerham** was born in Encino, California in 1962. He began playing the electronic organ at the age of four and had his first pipe organ experience at age ten. His musical education started at age seven.

In 1976 he became Associate Organist at the famous Arizona Organ Stop Pizza Restaurants in Phoenix, Mesa and Tucson. While in there, he continued his musical studies with Roseamond Crowley, one of the few remaining descendants of the Louis Vierne line of organists. He attended the Univ. of Arizona in Tucson on a full scholarship, pursuing classical organ studies for six years with Dr. Roy Johnson.

In 1984, Dave moved to the Chicago area to become Staff Organist at Pipes and Pizza in Lansing, Illinois. In addition to his performance there, he concertized frequently, as well as ministering musically and serving at various churches.

In 1990, the Wickerham family – Dave, his wife and two young children - moved to Wisconsin, where he was a featured Staff Organist at the Piper Music Palace in Greenfield, for the next 10 years.

In the spring of 2000, Dave began a limited special engagement, as a featured organist at "Roxy's Pipe Organ Pizzeria," part of a \$26,000,000 expansion phase at the FIESTA Casino and Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Wickerham's, Dave, Rhonda, and now three great kids, spent two years there before returning back home to Wisconsin in August of 2001... For the next three years, Dave resumed his position at the Piper Music Palace and was also the Principal Organist at Williams Bay Lutheran Church in Lake Geneva, WI.

He concertizes frequently to many audiences. In April of 1999, he took great pleasure being a feature artist in Melbourne, Australia for the convention of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia for which he received rave reviews. He returned "Down Under" three times for concert tours in Australia and New Zealand in 2003, 2012, and 2015.

Dave also enjoys recording and has recently "sold out" his fourth CD "Sounds of Music" recorded on the famous 5 Manual, 80 Rank Theatre Organ at the Sanfilippo Residence in Barrington, IL. There are several NEW recording projects currently in progress.

After seven years as Organist - Curator with the legendary Milhous Collection in South Florida, Dave and his family now reside in Upper Michigan where he had accepted the position of Co-Manager and Organist in Residence at Crystal Theatre in Crystal Falls. This 1927 theatre is now a regional Performing Arts Center and houses a 3 manual, 21 rank Moller theatre organ.

Dave and Rhonda have three grown kids, two married with children of their own. So, with three grandchildren and concertizing there are many opportunities for travel.



*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

*Best Wishes for the Holidays  
From the Officers and Directors  
of RTOS*

**Have you renewed your  
membership for 2018?**

**Start your Holiday shopping early.  
A 2018 membership or RTOS CD is  
the perfect stocking stuffer for a  
friend or relative.**

**Our fall fund drive is currently  
underway. Again this year, the goal is  
\$15,000. Please be generous and help  
RTOS keep the music playing.**



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**Sunday, December 10th  
at 2:30 PM**

**CHRISTMAS FOLLIES  
STARRING**

**TIM SCHRAMM**