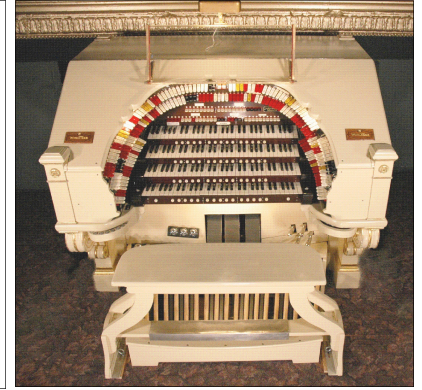


# RTOS Blower

Official Newsletter of The Rochester Theater Organ Society Inc.



## 2017 ATOS Competition Winner Alex Jones Returns to RTOS to Headline Eastman Bunch, 11th Edition!

Alex Jones made his theatre organ debut playing the RTOS Wurlitzer as a student participant in the 2017 Eastman Bunch program. He then entered the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition and easily won first place at its summer convention in Tampa last July. We are privileged to welcome him back to RTOS as the special guest performer for the 2018 Eastman Bunch concert.

Originally from London, Alex is currently studying for a Masters in Organ Performance Literature at the Eastman School of Music in the studio of Prof Edoardo Bellotti. His education is generously sponsored by grants from the Robert Carwithen Foundation, Mr Philipp Klais and others.

He began his career by gaining a scholarship place to study at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, UK and was awarded the Junior Organ Scholarship at Manchester Cathedral. Whilst in Manchester, he performed in the Cathedral's concert series and at the Bridgewater Hall and Royal Northern College of Music. He earned his Bachelors' Degree at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, UK. In 2013, he was awarded the Anne & Don Smith Memorial



### Alex Jones & Eastman Bunch XI

Auditorium Theatre - 885 E. Main St.

**Sunday, March 4, 2018**

**2:30 PM**

*(Doors open 45 min early)*

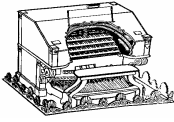
Organ Scholarship to Birmingham Symphony Hall and during this tenure, he collaborated alongside a wide variety of artists and has been responsible for curating the hall's organ. In 2014, he was awarded the Organ Department Recital Prize and was also awarded a grant from the Birmingham Organists Association Leonard Gibbons' Fund to aid with the completion of a new transcription for organ of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition".

In recent years, he has performed around the Netherlands making appearances at the Grote Kerk in Zwolle and the Eindhoven Muzeiksaal as well as performing in major UK venues including St. Paul's Cathedral, Royal Festival Hall, Westminster Central Hall and St. John Smith Square, London. He has also appeared as a guest speaker at Southbank Centre's "Pulling out the Stops" festival celebration.

During his time in the US he has performed at the 2016 EROI Festival and has been awarded both the Runner-Up Prize at the West Chester University International Organ Competition in PA as well as winning the recent ATOS Competition in Tampa. He is now in demand as a Theatre Organist. Most recently, he gave a performance of Francis Poulenc's Concerto for Organ, Strings and Timpani in Rochester with the distinguished Eastman Players and will perform at the 2018 and 2019 ATOS Conventions.

Alex currently holds the position of Organist at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Rochester, NY.

**EASTMAN BUNCH XI BIOS  
APPEAR ON PAGE 3.**



**Rochester Theater Organ Society**  
(Founded 1964)  
PO Box 17114  
Rochester, NY 14617  
Concerts & Info: (585) 234-2295  
<http://www.rtosonline.org>

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

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Membership (from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)  
Full: \$75.00

Associate: (50+ miles from Roch): \$55.00  
Student (age 18-24 with ID): \$45.00

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**JUST \$1**

Help RTOS keep the music playing.  
If everyone drops \$1 into a donation box  
at each concert it will pay the yearly cost  
for the *Blower* & Concert Programs.



**A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT**



It was a long stretch through January without a theater organ concert. As I write this, I am still savoring Pierre Fracalanza's February 4th concert which was a most unique and refreshing program. When I first heard Pierre at an ATOS convention about two years ago he played a virtual theater organ, not a live pipe instrument. Nevertheless, good music well played is delightful no matter what it is played on. Hearing him entertain us on our Wurlitzer was truly the "frosting on the cake".

This brings me to the subject of our national organization, American Theater Organ Society or ATOS. RTOS is not a chapter for reasons best known by previous Board Presidents but we are closely connected. Many of us are members and one of our charter members, Richard Neidich, is currently the ATOS Chair. I encourage all RTOS members and friends to go to the ATOS website ([www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org)) to see what is going on at the national level. There are links to other groups and specially to the "ATOS Radio" site which features theater organ music streaming 24/7.

Next year, RTOS will sponsor the 2019 National Convention here in Rochester. We need volunteer help NOW to work on promotion of this event. Our earlier request for a person to write articles, etc. has gone unanswered. Will you consider helping?

In closing, I urge you to read the notice on page 4 of this *Blower*. We really do need some help.

Paul A. Law  
paullaw018@gmail.com  
585-755-4144

**VIDEO ENGINEERING TEAM**

*by Bob Bower*

Just a brief note from the Video Engineering Team. We are working to add to the concert experience with a hope to attract new people to our concerts. We are adding audio to some of the presentations and will soon be recording audio with video of our concerts.

Our goal is to fine tune our AV presentations as we prepare for the ATOS Convention in 2019. We have received some feedback as well a great suggestion from the Annual Meeting. Thank you for letting us know how we are doing. We would like to ask for more suggestions, like things we can add or remove that would make this a better total experience for both existing long-term members and those new people we all hope to see filling the seats. Please feel free to contact me at 585-301-6262.



## EASTMAN BUNCH XI BIOGRAPHIES

**Isaac Drewes** is a first year masters candidate at Eastman School of Music, where he studies organ with Prof. David Higgs. He is also the organist at Greece Baptist Church in Greece, NY. He earned his bachelor's degree from St. Olaf College, where he studied organ with Dr. Catherine Rodland. Additionally, Isaac was the Organ Scholar at St. Louis, King of France Catholic Church in St. Paul, MN for three years. He is the winner of the 2016 Twin Cities AGO Student Competition, and the recipient of several Scholarships.

Isaac is an active performer around the country. He is actively involved in the Organ Historical Society, currently serving on the 2018 Convention Committee. In 2016 and 2017, he performed for conventions held in Philadelphia, PA and the Twin Cities, MN respectively. When not at the organ bench, Isaac enjoys bicycling and hiking.

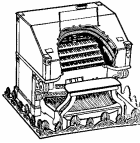
**Joshua Ehlebracht** is an undergraduate student in the studio of Professor Nathan Laube. Joshua began his musical studies when he was 6 years old on the piano, and then began taking organ lessons when he was 11. Joshua is from Kitchener, Ontario and has been performing in recitals around his home town at many large churches. He is also a recurring performer in the RCCO hosted annual Phantoms of the Organ recital in Toronto on Canada's largest pipe organ. In 2016, he was awarded second place in the Royal Canadian College of Organist's Fairclough Competition. Joshua, at the age of 16, was appointed music director of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Kitchener, after many previous years of supply work around the region. In 2016, he attended the Eastman Summer Academy for High School Organists and studied with Nathan Laube and Stephen Kennedy.

**Benjamin Henderson** is from Middletown, CT and is in pursuit of his Bachelors (BM) in Organ Performance in The studio of Nathan Laube. He previously studied with David Spicer for four years. In 2015, Ben was an organ soloist with the New Haven Symphony and was twice a recipient of the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ Scholarship, and studied with Alan Morrison, Peter Conte and Matthew Glandorf at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. There, Ben had the opportunity to play the famous Wanamaker Organ. In 2016, he received the Roberta Bitgood scholarship for young organists. Ben has sung tenor in many choirs. He made All-State Mixed Choir three times in his high school career and All-National Honors Ensemble in Tennessee where he performed at The Grand Ole Opry. Ben enjoys performing in theater productions as well.

**Daniel Minnick** is pursuing a master's degree in organ performance and literature in the studio of Professor Nathan Laube. Daniel began piano studies at the age of 7 in Australia, his homeland. He completed both a BMus and a MMus degree in Piano Performance at Bob Jones University in 2013 and 2016, respectively, where he studied with Professors David Lehman and Dr. Ed Dunbar. In 2013, Daniel participated in the Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition and was received an encouragement award and a cash prize. In 2015, he won the BJU Concerto and Aria Competition and performed with the BJU Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his piano and organ studies, Daniel also enjoys the study of composition and working as a piano technician. In 2016, he became certified to be a Registered Piano Technician (RPT) within the Piano Technicians Guild.

**Margaret-Mary Owens** is a Master's degree candidate and teaching assistant for Prof. Nathan Laube. She graduated *magna cum laude* with her Bachelors of Music in Organ Performance at The Florida State University, where she studied organ and harpsichord under Dr. Iain Quinn. From 2011- 2013, she maintained a private piano studio, and has held multiple church positions, most recently working as Organ Scholar at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tampa, FL. As an undergraduate, Owens was research assistant to Dr. Quinn and later assisted in the editing of his recently published book. Her own article was published in an undergraduate FSU research journal. She has participated in masterclasses by Dr. Pamela Ruiten-Feenstra and Dr. James Kibbie. Her awards include: several academic scholarships from both ESM and FSU, the OHS Biggs Fellowship, the Louise Weber Music Scholarship, and in 2012 she took first place at the Tampa AGO chapter competition. She hopes to continue building her career as a teacher, performer, and researcher on various topics related to the historic organ.

**Henry Webb** is a freshman studying Organ Performance with Nathan Laube. For the year following his high school graduation, Henry served as Organ Scholar at the Church of the Incarnation in Dallas, Texas under the guidance of Graham Schultz and Scott Dettra. Henry began music studies in 2010 and his teachers have included Christina Harmon and Scott Dettra. In 2012, Henry received first prize in the Oklahoma City University High School Organ Competition. He has given recitals in Texas and beyond, notably as part of the dedicatory series at the parish of Christ the King, Dallas, the Baylor University's Pipedreams Live, and the 2016 and 2017 East Texas Pipe Organ Festivals. Henry has participated in organ academies including the Oberlin Organ European Winter Term and Summer Academy, the Leipzig Europäische Orgelakademie and French and Spanish Organ Music Seminars. He enjoys Astronomy, hiking, photography, and playing tennis.



**Rochester Theater  
Organ Society**  
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Rochester, NY 14617-0114

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Christine Van Stean, *Secretary*  
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David Higgs, *Director*  
John Lukes, *Director*  
Tim Schramm, *Director, Programs*  
Greg Spring, *Director*  
Russ Shaner, *Past-President, Programs*  
Ken Wilson, *Director*

**RTOS EVENTS**

Auditorium Theatre, 885 E. Main St.  
*All artists and dates subject to change*

<b>Eastman Bunch XI</b>	<b>Mar 4</b>	<b>2:30 PM</b>
Justin LaVoie	Apr 8	2:30 PM
Brett Valliant	May 27	2:30 PM
Jerry Nagano	Jun 24	2:30 PM

Note: Artists and dates are subject to change  
**Check the RTOS website often for latest information on 2017-2018 dates and artists.**

Rochester Museum & Science Center  
Eisenhart Auditorium, East Ave. & Goodman St.

**Open Console**

*Sundays from 11:00 AM to 4 PM*

**2018 Dates**

<b>Mar 18</b>	<b>Jun 17</b>	<b>Sep 16</b>	<b>Dec 16</b>
Apr 15	Jul 15	Oct 21	
May 20	Aug 19	Nov 25	

*“Open Console” is when members are given a time slot to play one of the Society’s theater pipe organs. Come to play, or enjoy the music.*

**UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS**

**Riviera Theatre & Organ Preservation Society (RTOS)**

(3/15 Wurlitzer) 67 Webster St, N Tonawanda, NY  
Box Office: (716) 692-2413. Info: <http://www.rivieratheatre.org/>

**Empire State Theatre & Musical Instrument Museum (ESTMIM)**

(3/11 Wurlitzer) 581 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse (315) 687-3580  
Info: <http://www.empiretheatre.org/index.htm>

**Kingston Theatre Organ Society (KTOS)**

Kingston Korean Church 89 Kirkpatrick St., Kingston, ON, CA  
Info: (3/28 Kimball) Info/ticketing: <http://ktos.ca/>

**Toronto Theatre Organ Society (TTOS)**

Concerts currently held at: St. Andrew’s United Church,  
117 Bloor St. East, Toronto ON, CA. Check website for details.  
Tickets: (416) 492-6262 email: [box-office@ttos.ca](mailto:box-office@ttos.ca)  
Info/ticketing: <http://theatreorgans.com/toronto/>

**Binghamton Theatre Organ Society (BTOS)**

236 Washington St, Binghamton, NY. Box Office (716) 692-2413.  
Info/ticketing: <http://www.binghamtontos.org/>

Please visit the web sties for these venues for the latest information for their upcoming 2018 concert season

**RTOS NEEDS HELP!!!!**

**Somewhere among our membership there must be a person who can volunteer to take over the RTOS Treasurer position!**

Our treasurer, Ken Veneron, has announced his pending retirement from this job. Ken has served diligently as treasurer and membership chair for many years but now must step down for personal reasons. We are desperately seeking someone to take over these duties. Candidates must have a background in performing the financial duties associated with a medium size non-profit organization. She/He must possess computer skills for managing spreadsheets and financial software, maintaining RTOS bank accounts, maintaining records for IRS reporting, dues collection, processing invoices, distributing payments and maintaining membership rolls. Per the RTOS by-laws, the treasurer must be bondable. This (as all RTOS jobs) is a volunteer, unpaid position. Please contact me directly if you are interested. Thank you!

Paul Law, President Phone: 585-755-4144 Email: [paullaw018@gmail.com](mailto:paullaw018@gmail.com)