

ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION HALL ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.  
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# The GRAND OPHICLEIDE

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Videographer Vic Ferrer and his brother, Ben, who jointly created video interviews, studies inside the Right and Left Stage chambers, and scored imagery to Antoni Scott's 1998 performances of the Toccata in D minor and Psalm 100. A DVD video presentation is now in the works.

## Vic Ferrer writes:

I attended the press conference because I am producing a documentary about preserving America's historic pipe organs. After traveling the country and visiting numerous pipe organs, to see an instrument of such monumental size and scale left me in awe. As a boy I read about the Midmer-Losh organ in Reginald Foort's book "The Theater Organ." To finally see it up close and personal all these years later was truly a highlight of my professional career as a producer. I hope to hear it playing someday soon.

The console with its 1,235 stop-keys, seven-manuals and seven swell shoes was mind-boggling. Sitting at the console, everything was easily reachable and ergonomically designed.

I saw three of the seven blowers, one of which was nearly the size of a VW bus. There are relays that go on forever and more pipes than I have ever seen in one location (and I only toured one of eight chambers!). The scale of some of the 32' pedal ranks was like walking in the land of the giants: pipes so big, you could easily fall down inside of them - short fat little pipes scaled the size of a quarter! - 100" and 50" of wind is found all over the place, and a quality of workmanship of which any organ builder would definitely approve.

Even though instruments of this magnitude are clearly examples of sheer exuberance and ego, they are representative of an era of grandeur, greatness and permanence. From an artistic and auditory perspective I cannot comment on its sound except for the recordings I have heard. While in Boardwalk Hall, a small stereo system played cuts from some of the various CDs of the Midmer-Losh. Hearing the recorded sound of the organ bouncing around in that beautiful acoustic provided me a hint at what will someday be a soul-moving experience.

I had the opportunity to interview L. Curt Mangel, III. Curt is the curator of the Wanamaker organ at the Lord and Taylor department store in Philadelphia. He also is chairman of the Technical Committee of the Historic Organ Restoration Committee, Inc. As such he will play an important role during the restoration of both the Kimball and Midmer-Losh organs. His track record in pulling together and managing the team, which successfully finished restoration of the Wanamaker organ, makes him a perfect match for this monumental project. After speaking with Curt at length, I experienced first-hand his confidence to take on a project of this enormity. He is the right person to bring this project to fruition. When Curt is finished with this project, some six years after restoration begins, he will have accomplished in his lifetime having a direct influence in putting back together two of the greatest pipe organs in the world - the Wanamaker and Atlantic City organs.

Boardwalk Hall is a national landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites and Places. The building and organs are owned and operated by the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.

This instrument is worthy of preservation because it represents an important part of American culture, American history and the art of organ building in America.

I encourage everyone to consider becoming a member of the Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society (ACCHOS) and to voice their support of this national treasure.

A QuickTime movie of the OHS citation presentation will be posted on the ACCHOS website soon, so please visit the site often to stay informed on the progress being made. ([www.acchos.org](http://www.acchos.org))

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