



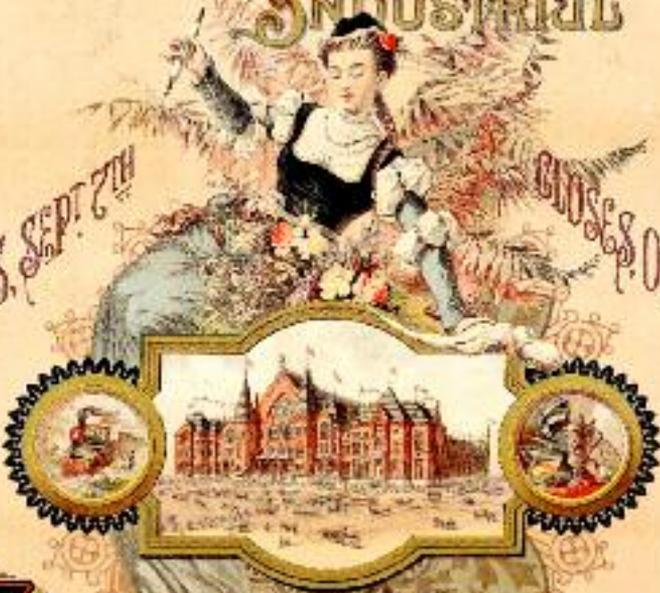
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# CINCINNATI INDUSTRIAL

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# EXPOSITION

THE NATIONAL EXHIBITION

## OF ART AND INDUSTRY.

SENE OF COMMISSIONERS.

2012  
Summer  
Issue

## *MUSIC HALL Marks*

A Publication Of The Society  
For The Preservation Of Music Hall

1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

## *SPMH - President's Message*

We have been blessed with a beautiful spring and the excitement around Music Hall has never been greater! The proposed revitalization of Music Hall, highlighted extensively in all forms of the media, is the topic of conversation in every part of Cincinnati. It's actually very interesting to see the intense feelings that the community has about Music Hall. These obviously heart-felt emotions are reserved for items about which we care most, and Cincinnati deeply cares about Music Hall!

Although some in the community have strongly expressed differing opinions concerning some of the proposed changes, Music Hall's principal resident companies, have now agreed on the most important design decisions. SPMH has been involved in the process ever since the "working group" stage and continues to be a force

'at the table'. As to current happenings, remember, Music Hall is not just 'bricks and mortar' awaiting a renovation; it is a vibrant welcoming place where something great and exciting is always going on!

Your SPMH just presented its 4th Mighty Wurlitzer Concert, 'Hooray for Hollywood', the Magnificent May Festival triumphed again with two week-ends of sensational performances and now we are in the midst of another phenomenal Opera Season. Music

Hall will also host two spectacular performances of the World Choir Games in July.....trust me; you definitely want to attend this "once in a lifetime" gathering of the greatest choral groups on the planet!

To close out the summer, all SPMH members are invited and encouraged to attend our annual meeting in Corbett Tower on Sep-



Don Siekmann

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tember 10th. We will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the founding of our 100% volunteer organization. If you are currently a member, please renew your membership today by using the enclosed envelope. If not a member, JOIN now and be recognized as

one of the growing number of Cincinnatians proudly showing support for Music Hall.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting, where we will honor the past, salute the present and look eagerly to the future!

- Don Siekmann

### ***SPMH MISSION STATEMENT***

*The mission of The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall is to preserve, promote, improve, and provide education about Music Hall, funding special projects in addition to Music Hall management's operational and maintenance obligations, and facilitating communications among Music Hall management, owner, and tenants, in order to perpetuate Music Hall as the premier cultural center of the Region, and as a National Historic Landmark of international significance.*

### ***SPMH BOARD of Directors 2012***

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## *SPMH and the Revitalization*

As mentioned in my president's notes, Music Hall's revitalization is on everyone's lips and every form of media. The Enquirer has highlighted many of the project's questions in recent articles, but, the revitalization process itself is still moving forward. On May 21st, SPMH, along with the Cincinnati Arts Association, Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Opera, Cincinnati Symphony and Pops Orchestra, and the May Festival issued a joint release stating that we continue to "...overwhelmingly support this endeavor..." Subsequently, we issued a release highlighting the change in the leadership of the Music Hall Revitalization Corp from Jack Rouse to Otto Budig. Otto has jumped quickly into the forefront of discussions with the City, is optimistic that an agreement can be reached, and has stated that this is an "idea, whose time has come." The anticipated deadline to reach agreement with the City has been pushed to June 30, and, with the City Council going on summer recess, time is truly "of the essence". Hopefully, as you are reading these comments, a satisfactory outcome has been or will be reached.

SPMH has been substantially involved with the revitalization process, for almost 3 years, beginning with the original 'working group'. Recently, the SPMH Board summarized our position on many of the questions about the revital-

ization, and, we wish to share a few thoughts on some significant issues. Although we certainly realize that specific items may well change before any revitalization work actually begins, we believe it important that you know of SPMH's commitment.

First, you have our assurance that we remain dedicated to the SPMH Mission Statement, proud to be a 100% supporter of Music Hall. Our volunteer Board includes many members of Cincinnati's finest arts organizations; the Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board (including its chairman); the Cincinnati Preservation Association, a renowned architectural historian, and others with similar credentials. After appropriate discussions, the SPMH Board unanimously agreed that we support the revitalization of Music Hall as necessary to preserve and protect this historical icon. In addition (while any exact terms and timing must be finalized) SPMH stands ready to make a significant financial contribution to support a revitalization project from our Patricia and J. Ralph Corbett Music Hall Endowment.

Concerning the auditorium seating questions: we have been included in resident company discussions and we accept their final decisions as to the appropriate seating configuration. Each resident company is represented on the SPMH Board—all have ex-

pressed directly to us the need for these seating changes.

There are other elements of Music Hall that are important to patrons, the ambiance and overall character of this historic icon, which may or may not be, far removed in time from the original designs of Hannaford. These include the chandelier, Music Hall Timeline, various paintings, historic carved organ panels, busts etc. We are pleased to report that SPMH has been asked to assist in determining the proper retention and use of all such items. The decision to retain the Chandelier has already been made. Additionally, the historic Fry and Pitman organ screen carvings will be restored and installed in a renewed Corbett Tower.

Importantly, SPMH played a very significant role in obtaining the \$1.4 million funding for the restoration of the Mighty Wurlitzer organ in the ballroom. Consequently, we are extremely invested in any changes to that space. We are pleased that the only contemplated change to the ballroom will be the addition of a very deserving "Grand Entrance", with only a minor loss of capacity. Any final revitalization project will

involve literally hundreds of other changes; most are massive improvements to the Hall's infrastructure. In future *Hall Mark* issues, we will add further comments, as appropriate.

One important point: now that the anticipated "start date" for revitalization is 2014, SPMH will be working closely with CAA (Cincinnati Arts Association) on some interim projects, necessary to keep the appearance of Music Hall at its very best. We recently funded the refurbishing of the water fountains, and some restroom improvements. We are now funding substantial painting projects on all 3 floors, the refinishing of the ballroom floor, and the outside of the Elm Street fire exit doors. We anticipate more such projects before the actual start date of any revitalization.

Music Hall has seen numerous changes over the past 134 years, and, most likely will again in the future. Each and every time, the community and the groups that use the Hall have become the better for it. This will be another of those times and SPMH stands strong for our Music Hall.

--Don Siekmann

To Purchase  
*Music Hall: Cincinnati Finds its Voice*  
 on DVD or VHS call  
 (513) 744-3293



## *Corbett Trust Contributions*

Thanks to the very generous endowment gifted to SPMH by Patricia Corbett, SPMH has been able to fund several important projects that assist the organizations which call Music Hall home. The Bravo Shop software, used to track inventory and point of sale equipment for processing customer transactions, was out-of-date and unreliable.

Thanks to a donation from the SPMH Corbett Trust of \$12,500 the Bravo Shop was able to purchase new software and equipment. This upgrade has benefited all the tenants of Music Hall, including SPMH, in selling merchandise through the Bravo Shop

The SPMH Corbett Trust also provided the final piece of funding needed to purchase new ticketing

software that enables print-at-home ticketing. This capability will reduce long 'will call' lines. It will also enable Music Hall organizations to better track patron and general ticket purchases. Have you noticed the new electronic ticket scanning at the entrances to Music Hall? This is one visible part of the new software system in action. The Corbett Trust provided \$25,000 to help make this possible.

The Corbett Fund covered over \$15,000 of plumbing repairs to restrooms and the water fountains and SPMH will continue to use funds from this Trust to make various restorative repairs and improvements to Music Hall in the future.

– Ed Rider

**Learn More About Music Hall, Past Present and Future**  
**[www.spmhcincinnati.org](http://www.spmhcincinnati.org)**

### *Thank You, Mr. Bauer*

..and thank you everyone for your donations, your membership in SPMH! Bob Bauer may live in New Hampshire but his heart is in Music Hall! He has been a member for some time. "Cincinnati is my Hometown. Until the 1980's I worked for the H & S Pogue Co. In 1983 I moved to Pittsburgh to start a new career. I attended many concerts by the CSO at Music Hall. So I have a Strong Attachment to the CSO and Historic Music Hall. Most recently I visited Cincinnati to see family and we attended the Sunday Christmas Pops together." Music Hall has personal meaning for all of us and we continue our support for various reasons. Near or far, we remember. Music Hall gives, and so we give. Thank you all, so very much!!

## Revitalizing Tours--It's Time!!

So, you have a reason to be in Music Hall: attending a performance (CSO, Opera, May Festival, Pops, Ballet, Wurlitzer Organ Concert), maybe a wedding, Prom, meeting, etc. You gaze at the chandelier, the architecture, whatever... and you think to yourself ... "hmmm, interesting structure, wish I knew more" ... ..well...it's time and — Tours, that's your Answer!!! And Tours will be 'revitalized' along with the structure—

new and improved!! We have a Plan—Yes!! We, on the Board of SPMH are literally 'on board' to give you an 'inspired experience'! What do we have in mind?

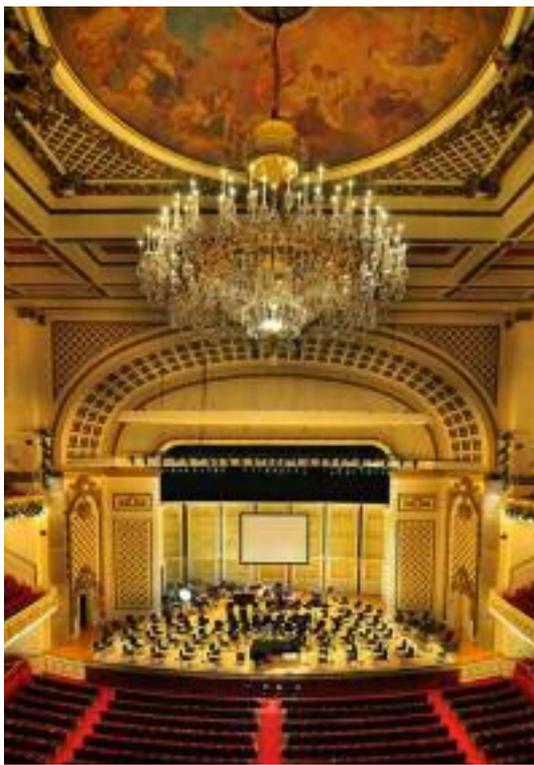
**1.** Techno-multi-media presentations, video screens, new, ad-

vanced with formalized hand-outs and user feedback

**2.** Increased number of knowledgeable documents ready to answer all your questions

**3.** Music Hall Kiosk, historical and up to date for your viewing pleasure

**4.** Information coordinated with Cincinnati Arts Association and Resident Groups to inform you about current and upcoming activities



Springer Auditorium

**5.** Touring times, structured with your convenience in mind

So, come on in, soak up the history, get a new perspective—Yes, Take a Tour!!!

**To get a unique look at Music Hall's Treasures and to learn about its rich history call 744-3344 to schedule a Tour!**

## *It's Our Silver!*

Although the official establishment of SPMH took place in 1992, several ladies went to great lengths in April 1987 to lay the groundwork for the organization. Prompted by an incident which compromised the safety of Music Hall patrons, they decided that lighting for the parking lot was an important use of funds as were other concerns for the structure. The document they wrote entitled 'The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall Cincinnati, Ohio' included:

### **Purpose**

1. To provide ongoing financial and volunteer support toward maintaining and improving the Music Hall facility internally and externally.
2. To provide this service to Music Hall through an organization of volunteers comprised of individuals from all walks of life and from all over the greater Cincinnati area who are dedicated to the continuing preservation of Music Hall as a National Historic monument.

They sought to accomplish this dual purpose by forming the following committees:

### **1. Charter/Governing Committee**

Purpose: to write a Charter, to act as liaison with Music Hall's Trustees, staff, tenants and the City of Cincinnati-- Co-Chaired by Jean Reis and Joyce Van Wye.

### **2. Docent Committee**

Purpose: to plan a written history of Music Hall for the training of volunteer Docents-- Chaired by Alberta

Marsh.

### **3. Volunteer Business Services Committee**

Purpose: to seek out services of businesses interested in providing services-in-kind (or at greatly reduced cost) to Music Hall—SPMH  
Chair: pending

### **4. Finance Committee**

Purpose: to oversee member contributions, funds raised from Special Events, Expenses and Accounting for such functions--  
Chaired by John Van Wye

### **5. Public Relations Committee**

a. Publicity --Chaired by Linda Siekmann

b. Community Relations --  
Chaired by Norma Petersen

### **6. Fund Raising Committee**

Purpose: to encourage current and deferred giving for specific items or general operations or endowment fund of Music Hall --Chaired by Alex Young

### **7. Membership Committee**

- Chaired by Jill Kamin

### **8. Ombudsman Committee**

- Chaired by Marlene Johnson

### **9. Special Events Committee**

– Chaired by Dianne Dunkelmann,  
Committee Members: Louise Nipper, Patricia Corbett and Eugene Frey

**A debt of gratitude** is owed to these prescient leaders and so, **yes, it is our 25th Anniversary!** SPMH Members, Celebrate our Past, our Present and our Future!

## SOMMER Time...

...is Music Hall Time! Sue and Bill Sommer have devoted countless hours to the care of and attention to patrons of events in the Hall since early 1985.

"I started ushering at Music Hall on Jan. 2, 1985 for a Broadway Show and it snowballed from there," said Sue. "The building has a charm that gets in your blood. You meet people from all

over the world who have heard about the Hall and it is always a thrill to give them a quick tour and some literature to take home with them. I think most of the people who work at the Hall feel it is a privilege to be associated with such a great building. The size of the building and the first impression you get when you see the lobby is something you never tire of. When you watch people come in and look around it is always thrilling. They see the crystal chandeliers in the foyer. Then if you can it is fun to watch their mouths drop when they see the big one inside the auditorium!"

"In 1990 Bob Neu asked me to be in charge of all the Symphonies. In 1991 Patty Beggs asked me to take over the ushering for Opera and then in 1992 Tom Bockenstette

asked me to be in charge of any event in the auditorium and I have been there ever since. Bill started ushering in the fall of 1985 and our



Bill and Sue Sommer

family (daughters Stacy, Sherry, Susan and son Bill) would fill in as needed from the beginning. They have all been involved in some way for over 20 /25 years. I have worked with 7 different Hall

managers and have seen a lot of changes, some good and some not so good. The one thing I really miss is the shine of the brass railings."

Overseeing a team of some 200 ushers with approximately 35 working each event, Sue commented on their work, "Every event is different. Just when you think you have seen and heard it all something else happens. It is never boring. I think we all enjoy the variety of people we come in contact with at the Hall. The Opera audience is very different from the Symphony or Ballet and then you have your one nighters which are another story. You have to have good help that can think on their feet and know what to do in any situation. You are only as good as the people you have to back you up. Music Hall has some of the most dedicated

and hard working people to be had. We assist all handicapped patrons which involves both helping them into the building and then into their seats. The Young Peoples and Lollipops concerts can prove to be a real challenge; but with the right people in the right places it works.”

In all of the years Sue has supervised this team, only one individual decided not to continue the work. Ushers are trained on the job and the new person on the team is most likely a friend or a family member of one of the ushers.

What is the background of this dedicated couple? “I have lived on the family farm all my life. Originally it was a dairy farm and now we have 9 acres in corn but we oversee 60 acres of farmland. I am a farmer’s daughter and Bill is a doctor’s son.

He served in Korea 1951- 52 in the 2nd Infantry Division. We met some 58 years ago while working for Chevron at Columbia Park, North Bend, OH (Bill retired from Chevron after 37 years of employment). We were married in November of 1955 and have 4 children, and 5 grandchildren (all either work regularly in Music Hall or fill in as needed). I have always been a stay at home mom, working on the farm originally with my dad.”

All this commitment to Music Hall! Are they ‘musical’ and how were they first introduced to the Hall? “We come from musical parents. My father played clarinet and sax in dance bands all over the area in the twenties and thirties. My mother played piano for silent

movies, and then played for school functions. Bill’s mother had a degree in music, majoring in voice, from Dennison. She played piano & organ for various organizations. Bill and I were both in our Church Choir and our first experience in Music Hall was probably some 10 years before I began ushering, when the Choir

has given concert tickets.”

So what do they do in their ‘spare time’? “We have been to all 50 states, their capitols and to most of the major National Parks and we also drove to Newfoundland and Nova Scotio. We were gone two months when we drove the Alaskan Highway--we drive everywhere we can!”

You will not find a more energetic, dedicated couple than Sue and Bill Sommer. They make and have made the Music Hall experience special, comfortable and more enjoyable for thousands of patrons!

- Kathy Janson



Getting ready for May Festival

## Historic Carvings to Get New Life

Janelle Gelfand's excellent article, "Pieces of History" (Enquirer January 15, 2012), detailing the mission to preserve the carved wood panels from the 1878 Hook and Hastings Organ, generated thoughtful discussion and momentum toward action concerning Music Hall's historic artifacts. Both Roger Fry and son, William, descendants and name sake of the famous carvers, Henry and William Fry, viewed the 18 panels in the orchestra pit as well as the panels in the North Hall stairway. A collector and restorer of Fry carvings, Roger had originally restored the 'Trumpet Vine' and 'Passion Flower' at the request of Gale Petersen when the panels were in storage at the Museum Center.

Having such a personal connection to the pieces, Roger's assessment of the condition and prospects for full restoration added expertise to the project. In addition, Will offered to remove the panels from the pit as he and his family have the proper tools and have done removals in the past. Amy Dehan, Cincinnati Art Museum Associate

Curator of Decorative Arts & Design has also offered assistance with the endeavor.

Members of the Society for Preservation of Music Hall, which had accepted a proposal put forth by Kathy Janson in November, to retain the panels in Music Hall, procure cost estimates for restoration and reinstallation, and allocate funds toward the project, had the opportunity to view the 18 panels in the orchestra pit on March 13th. Vice President Marcella Hsiung declared them to be "beautiful!"

Cincinnatians voiced their support for the project. Michael Williams, well-known Cincinnati antique dealer and owner of 'The Wooden Nickel', offered his help as did woodcarver O'Neal Johnston of Wood Creations, LLC.

O'Neal indicated that artisans who have a great interest in the City's woodcarving history might provide a labor source for the work. These carvers hold memberships in the Cincinnati Carving Guild, the National Wood Carvers Association, and other similar organizations

Individuals have donated panels and some have provided informa-



Organ Panel in the Orchestra Pit

tion about those they own. Lee Rassmussen gave a panel once in the possession of Frances Jones Poetker and Durrell Goetz donated a section of the uppermost portion of the organ. Edna and Don Ellis sent photos of a wainscot section depicting a lily. Michael Newman, whose wife, Judith Pellens was the daughter of Music Hall Manager Roger Pellens, sent photos of 4 panels which Judith acquired from her Dad. Interest in the project is not limited to the Cincinnati area. Elizabeth Geer of Greenville, S.C. contacted Janelle Gelfand regarding the 'Mendelsohn', carved by William Fry's daughter Laura. This panel won a first prize in the Reuben Springer competition. Elizabeth and her sister had inherited the piece from their great aunt, Thelma Lichtenberg, long-time as-

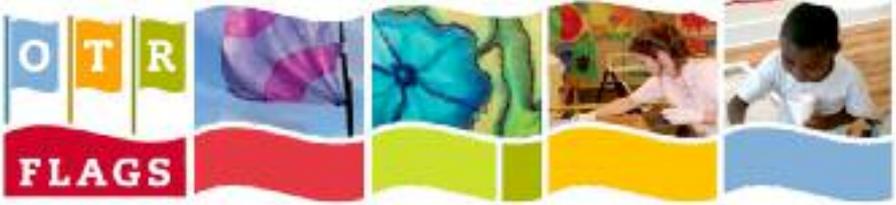
sistant to Ralph Corbett and a contributor to Music Hall. In addition, some have sent their checks earmarked for the project, to SPMH.

"With the support of The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, I hope she (Kathy Janson) is successful in her mission (to rescue the panels)" wrote Laura Hobson of East Walnut Hills in her letter to the Enquirer. "We need more preservation of Cincinnati's treasures."

As a result of efforts to promote the historic organ panels, point number 63 of, *Inspiring Experiences, The Revitalization of Music Hall a Selection of Key Elements*, (a document produced by the Music Hall Revitalization Company), states that Corbett Tower will be returned to its original grandeur...displaying the original organ panels within the space....



1878 Organ, red dots indicate the 18 panels currently in the Orchestra Pit



## *OTR Flags Celebrate Washington Park*

SPMH is participating in the celebration of Washington Park's re-opening in a truly unique and innovative, community based event. Inspired by the silk flag installation "Gates" in New York City's Central Park, OTR (Over-the-Rhine) FLAGS is an art installation of 100+ colorful, hand painted silk flags that will line the sidewalks and surround the gazebo. OTR FLAGS will be the first public event in the newly renovated and expanded Washington Park. As Music Hall is an anchor in Over-the-Rhine's history and community, SPMH was eager to sign on as a sponsor, joining its performing arts partners, Cincinnati Ballet, the CSO, Cincinnati Opera and May Festival.

The design of the flags was a collaborative experience. First, every sponsor was paired with a local Cincinnati artist. SPMH partnered with Chris Luessen, a recent graduate of University of Cincinnati's DAAP School. In this unique process, OTR FLAGS began with conversation. Selected members from SPMH met with Chris for a moderated "charette" – a conversation about the relationship between Music Hall, Washington Park and

the Over-the-Rhine community. We shared SPMH's mission with Chris -- to preserve, promote, improve, and provide education about Music Hall -- and our feelings about what it is like to approach and then to depart from the grand landmark, after an uplifting, moving performance. We discussed Music Hall's rich musical heritage and ties to OTR. After all, she was built for the OTR community, with the expectation and commitment that the community would fund 50% of her costs. Even schoolchildren across Cincinnati had a hand in the original fundraising process. And for over 130 years, Music Hall has stood as a beacon of light with her rose window aglow. We shared the feelings we had coming to Music Hall as children and our dreams for her after the Revitalization project. It was an inspiring experience.

Chris took our input back to his after-school enrichment class and asked his students to complete renderings of flag concepts which best reflected the feelings we wished to evoke. Chris returned with a design which blended the best elements of the sketches created by his students. Not surprisingly, Music Hall is the hero of our

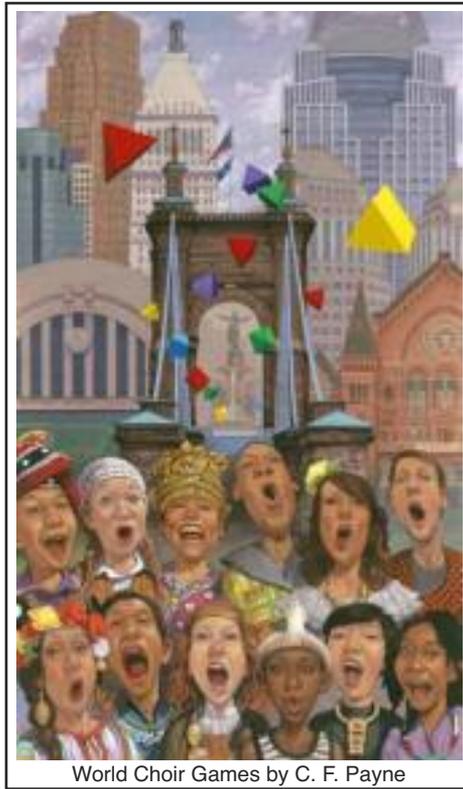
flag. Our design reflects the majesty of Music Hall's iconic architectural features at night – the gothic turrets and magnificent Rose Window – shining upon a restored Washington Park. Our flag represents Music Hall not as a Victorian relic, but as the living, breathing, vibrant cultural mecca for the OTR community and Cincinnati, that she is today and will continue to be.

Beginning with the Grand Re-Opening Celebration of Washington Park in July and lasting for a period of 60 days, the SPMH flag, along with colorful flags representing other organizations, will adorn the park's gazebo and light poles. Come join the excitement and see how this community-wide project can inspire ownership of the park through art!

- Lisa Allison

## *World Choir Games in Music Hall*

They're Coming!—and will soon be here! The World Choir Games, opening July 4th with a July 14th finale, will be one of the most spectacular happenings in Cincinnati history! Two stellar events will take place in Music Hall and you certainly will want tickets for these! On Thursday, July 12th at 7:30 pm Music Hall hosts a Celebration Concert: Gospel & Spiritual. Top Choirs from around the world will perform from the categories of gospel and traditional spiritual music. Internationally acclaimed gospel choir director and



World Choir Games by C. F. Payne

singer, Kirk Franklin has written the official 2012 World Choir Games song, first to be performed at the opening performance on July 4th. His participation alone indicates the very high level of the gospel sound one will hear in acoustically perfect Music Hall!

On Saturday July 14th at 2 pm A Champions Concert will fill our Hall with the music of recently crowned Champi-

ons of the 2012 Games. Need I say more? These events in Music Hall will be Dynamite!!!

Tickets and information:

[www.2012worldchoirgames.com](http://www.2012worldchoirgames.com)

## Hooray for Hollywood!



Jelani Eddington

Under the deft fingers of Jelani Eddington, the Wurlitzer gave Mighty performances on Thursday, May 10th! Carmyn Maria Howe and Seth Wallen, brought exuberance to the popular songs! From the opening with “Good News”, “All That Jazz” and “My Heart Will Go On” to James Bond themes of Lionel Bart such as “Gold Finger”, “For Your Eyes Only”, and then on

to West Side Story hits, followed by “Over the Rainbow”, “You Oughta’ Be in Pictures” and others, the audience was delighted to the hilt! Did you say that you missed it?! You Shoulda’ Been There! Next Show Time: December 13, 10:30 am & 7:00 pm “Happy Holidays with the Mighty Wurlitzer!” For tickets [www.CincinnatiArts.ORG](http://www.CincinnatiArts.ORG) or (513)621-ARTS (2787)



Seth Wallen and Carmyn Maria Howe



Norma Petersen, Ron Wehmeier, and Kathy Janson



Center, Cookie and Steve Carlson and friends



Valerie Newell and husband Tim Smith



Brian Siekmann with daughters, Allison and Claire and Mom Linda



Linda and Don Siekmann



Jelani Eddington on the Mighty Wurlitzer



Renew your membership today by using the enclosed envelope.

If not a member, JOIN now and become a part of

**The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall**

## Cincinnati OPERA!



*Pagliacci*



*Porgy and Bess*



*La Traviata*

Cincinnati opera's 92nd season will feature four operas, including the company premiere of the Gershwin's beloved American opera *Porgy and Bess* which will be an enormous event! Every opera features the illustrious Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in beautiful Music Hall. Tickets and information (513) 241-2742 [www.cincinnatiopera.org](http://www.cincinnatiopera.org).

The Summer Festival includes:

- **Pagliacci** by Ruggero Leoncavallo and **Gianni Schicchi** by Giacomo Puccini, 7:30 p.m. June 14 & 16, a double bill of Italian operas, pairing the tragic passion of *Pagliacci* with Puccini's charming and hilarious *Gianni Schicchi*. It's a brilliant new production from Opéra de Montréal. Musical highlights include the famous tenor aria "Vesti la giubba" as Canio the clown applies his make-up, and the sparkling soprano showstopper "O

mio babbino caro" in *Gianni Schicchi*. With Frank Poretta as Canio, Kelly Kaduce as Nedda, Maria Luigia Borsi as Lauretta, and Edgaras Montvidas as Rinuccio.

- **Porgy and Bess** by George Gershwin, 7:30 p.m. June 28, June 30 & July 6, and 3 p.m. July 8, the full operatic version led by the sensational Measha Brueggergosman as Bess and internationally-renowned bass-baritone Jonathan Lemalu as Porgy, Gordon Hawkins as Crown, and Steven Cole as Sporting Life. Filled with familiar tunes the opera is an inspiring story of perseverance through adversity and triumph of love over all obstacles.

- **La Traviata** by Giuseppe Verdi, 7:30 p.m. July 26 & 28, one of the best-loved operas of all time. We're pleased to present this 1853 masterpiece in a lavish production from Lyric Opera of Chicago. Star-

ring the world-renowned husband-and-wife team of Ailyn Pérez and Stephen Costello as Violetta and Alfredo, with Marco Caria as Germont.

• **Special event:** Along with the acclaimed ensemble concert:nova and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Opera will co-present Astor Piazzolla’s **Maria de Buenos Aires**, 7:30 p.m. July 25 & 27 in the Music Hall Ballroom. This

sultry Spanish-language “tango operita” follows the surreal journey of a woman seduced by the passion of tango into a dangerous life in the underworld of Buenos Aires. Soprano Catalina Cuervo leads an international cast including Jairo Cuesta and Luis Alejandro Orozco with Tony Award-winning tango dancers Fernanda Ghi and Guillermo Merlo.

## About the Cover

19th century Cincinnati was a hub of manufacturing and a center of artistic expression. “From 1870 to 1888, the Ohio Mechanics Institute’s fourteen Grand Expositions of Manufacture, Products, and Arts were sponsored in partnership with the City’s Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade. These spectacular events celebrated art and industry side by side with unprecedented success. Half a million people attended the third exposition in 1872; they viewed entries submitted from thirty states and brought \$100,000 into the city. The success of the Grand Expositions eventually led to the creation of Music Hall, which was built to house the May Festival Chorus in its central auditorium and the expo-

sitions in its North and South Halls—art and industry on either side. President Rutherford B. Hayes opened the 1879 Exposition at the new Music Hall. For the last

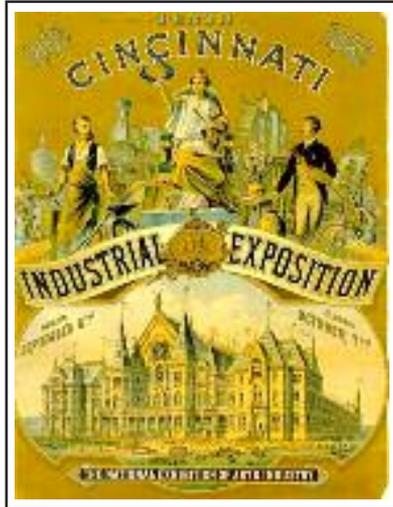
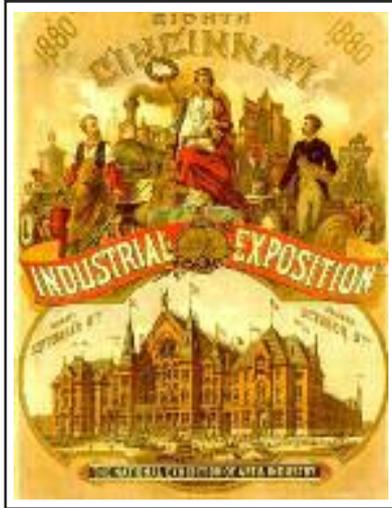
of the Grand Expositions, the Centennial Exposition of the Ohio Valley and Central States, trellises of outdoor electric lights arched over the Canal (now Central Parkway), as commissioners of the Exposition arrived by gondolas.”—OMI College of Applied Science historical notes.

Why was the 1881 Krebs lithograph poster chosen

for the cover of MUSIC HALL Marks? The obvious reason, first of all, is to draw your attention to the nature of this structure bridging now 3 centuries of history. One can imagine the pride of local citizens



in hosting an exposition of national stature in the new mammoth Hall on Elm Street. Look a bit more closely—the young woman, most likely of German descent with spindle in right hand and distaff in her left spins her yarn while gazing over and revealing Music Hall flanked by the steam engine at the left and examples of decorative arts on the right—industry and art. It is to be noted that The Cincinnati Art Museum was founded in 1881 as the first general art museum west of the Alleghenies. The fair lady among flowers and ferns, while she spins, appears both reflective and protective. Is it a stretch to suggest that she is spinning tales, ‘inspiring experiences’ of Music Hall? Who of us has not been ‘inspired’ within its walls? Gatherings of dear ones, celebrating occasions, hearing new music or ‘old’ music in a different context, attending exhibitions, lectures and meetings, remembering, yes, and being ‘inspired’—these are our experiences to savor



and retain!

Music Hall is mortar and bricks and so much more. It tells the tales of who we were and who we are as Cincinnatians and who we shall become. We are embarking on a ‘Revitalization’ that is embraced and yet tempered with trepidation. It must go forward so that generations will have the continuity of the essential nature of this Music Hall—all the ‘inspiring experiences’ of those who came before and, most importantly, of those we create ourselves.

Many believe that there are ghosts in Music Hall - and perhaps there are - look at the popularity of paranormal tours. But there is no doubting the existence of a ‘Spirit’ of Music Hall (could she be the maiden in the 1881 poster?) As we look forward to the coming changes, may she guide the decisions and actions, assuring that this iconic structure continues to inspire us all.

- Kathy Janson

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