



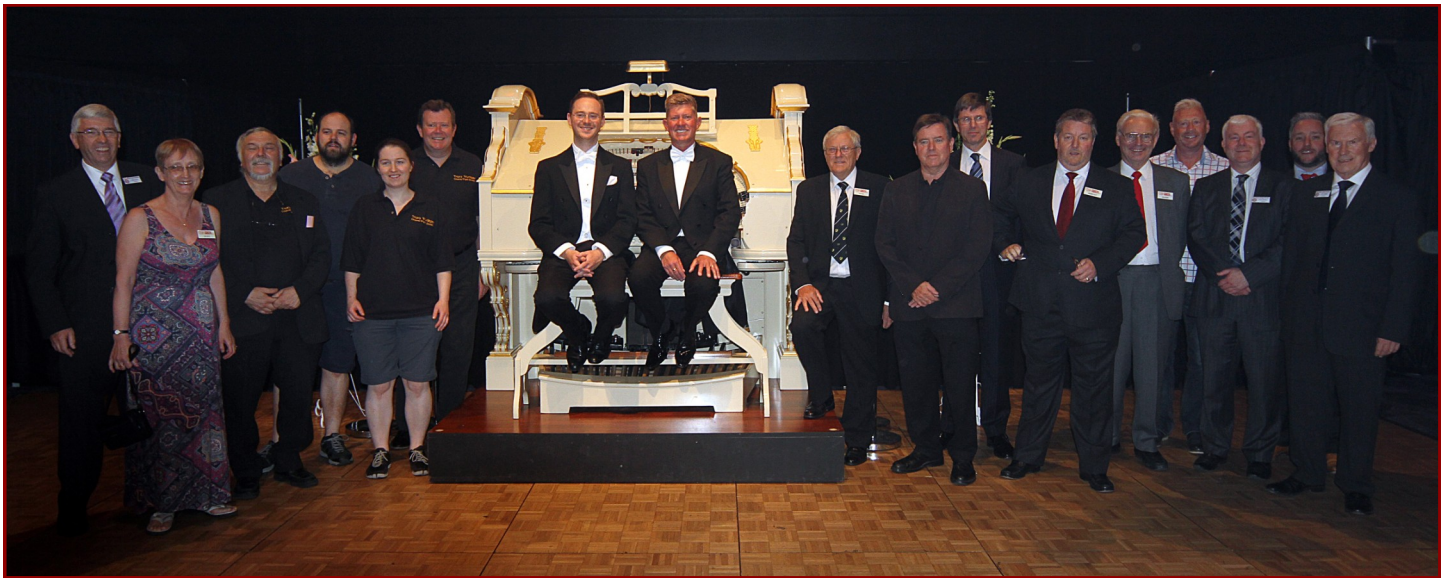
# THE CINEMA ORGAN SOCIETY

Promoting the cinema organ as entertainment for over 60 years

## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER – THE DEBUT OF THE TROXY WURLITZER

On the evening of Saturday 22nd August 2015 an audience of over 850 assembled at the Troxy, Stepney, London for the opening concert of the Troxy Wurlitzer. This was the first time that the largest Wurlitzer organ to come to Europe could be heard in a 3,500 seat auditorium since it was removed in 1960 from its original home, the Trocadero cinema Elephant & Castle.

The complex and time consuming project to restore and install the instrument has been completed at a cost of £275,000 pounds, raised through personal donations and grants to the Trocadero Wurlitzer Trust. Many of the donors were welcomed to hear the result of the work that was completed by a most dedicated volunteer project team and professional expertise.



*Some of the people who brought the Wurlitzer to the Troxy*

*David Traish photo*

### The Audience

To be part of this special occasion people had travelled to London from all over the UK, and also from Europe and the USA, on a day when the temperature reached 30°C. The audience included members of the Hyams family who built both the Troxy and the Trocadero. As the doors opened at 5.15pm invited guests and early patrons began to arrive.



*Balwant Thanki photo*



*Balwant Thanki photo*

Amongst the large audience were well known faces from the organ world.



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Then some of the large audience started to take their seats in the front stalls.

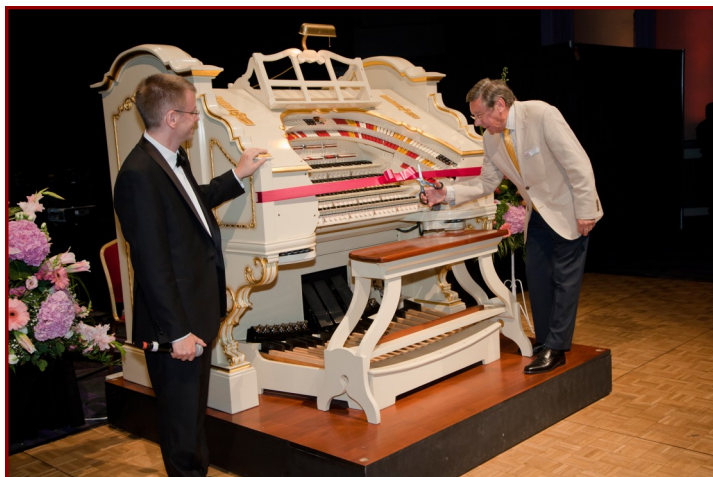


David Traish photo

Finally, with a great sense of anticipation the audience awaited the start of the show.

## The Concert

At 7.00pm precisely Cinema Organ Society chairman Simon Gledhill stepped into the spotlight to welcome the audience and make some opening remarks.



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The big moment had arrived, and Simon Gledhill introduced the artists for the evening Richard Hills and Robert Wolfe.



David Traish photo

He then introduced president of the Society John Mann who cut the ribbon draped across the front of the organ console.



Balwant Thanki photo

Richard Hills slipped on to the organ bench, and quietly the organ came to life to the strains of *Limehouse Blues* (a reference to the Troxy) interwoven with *Knock 'Em In The Old Kent Road* (a reference to the Trocadero) which seamlessly merged into a fine rendition of Jack Strachey's *Theatreland*. As this finished there were cheers and sustained applause from the audience. Richard's varied programme of music concluded with a 1933 medley celebrating the opening year of the Troxy.



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*Richard Hills addressing the audience and at the console*

Following a break for refreshments, served by the excellent facilities of the Troxy, Simon Gledhill then introduced Robert Wolfe to play the second half of the concert.

Robert had closed the organ in 2004 at its previous home and, with his usual showmanship, played a wide selection of music, starting with *Happy Days Are here Again* and including his signature rhythm numbers, all of which were received with great enthusiasm by the audience.



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*Robert Wolfe addressing the audience and at the console*



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To conclude the evening the both artists took to the console to perform *Tiger Rag*, bringing the audience to their feet.



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*Tiger Rag*

And so a night of fine music in a thrilling and emotional atmosphere came to an end, perhaps with a few tears for some along the way. Definitely a night to remember for a very long time.

## What the Audience Thought

Many present were impressed by not only the sound of the organ but also the splendid Art Deco theatre in which it now plays. Here are a few of the comments that have been received.

- ◇ *Congratulations on a sparkling opening concert by Richard Hills and Robert Wolfe. What a fantastic sound, the instrument has a real "wow" factor. The Troxy project has put the "theatre" back in Theatre Organ and what a difference it makes!*
- ◇ *WOW. What an incredible night. Excellence from start to finish. The COS is quite a formidable team. The venue is superb for the mighty and famous Wurlitzer. The guest stars Robert Wolfe and Richard Hills contrasting fabulously and showing the true tonal colours of this instrument.*
- ◇ *I was completely blown away - haven't heard that instrument sound with such polish before; just proves that "the most important stop is the room" that lovely auditorium.*
- ◇ *The Troxy bills itself as "home to astonishing events" and last night was certainly one of them! For 47 years I have been attending theatre organ concerts, but so far only two will live on in my memory, Reginald Foort's famed appearance at the Granada, Tooting in the 1970's, where the 'house full' notice went up and the atmosphere was electric, and yesterday evening.*
- ◇ *I think a huge round of congratulations is deserved by all those who have been involved in the Troxy project. Last Saturday's opening concert was fabulous. Well done everyone!*
- ◇ *WOW, WOW and thrice WOW....what a magical evening at The Troxy. Magnificent performances from two superb organists on the most beautiful instrument showcased in every way. The COS put on a show, spectacular in every way.*

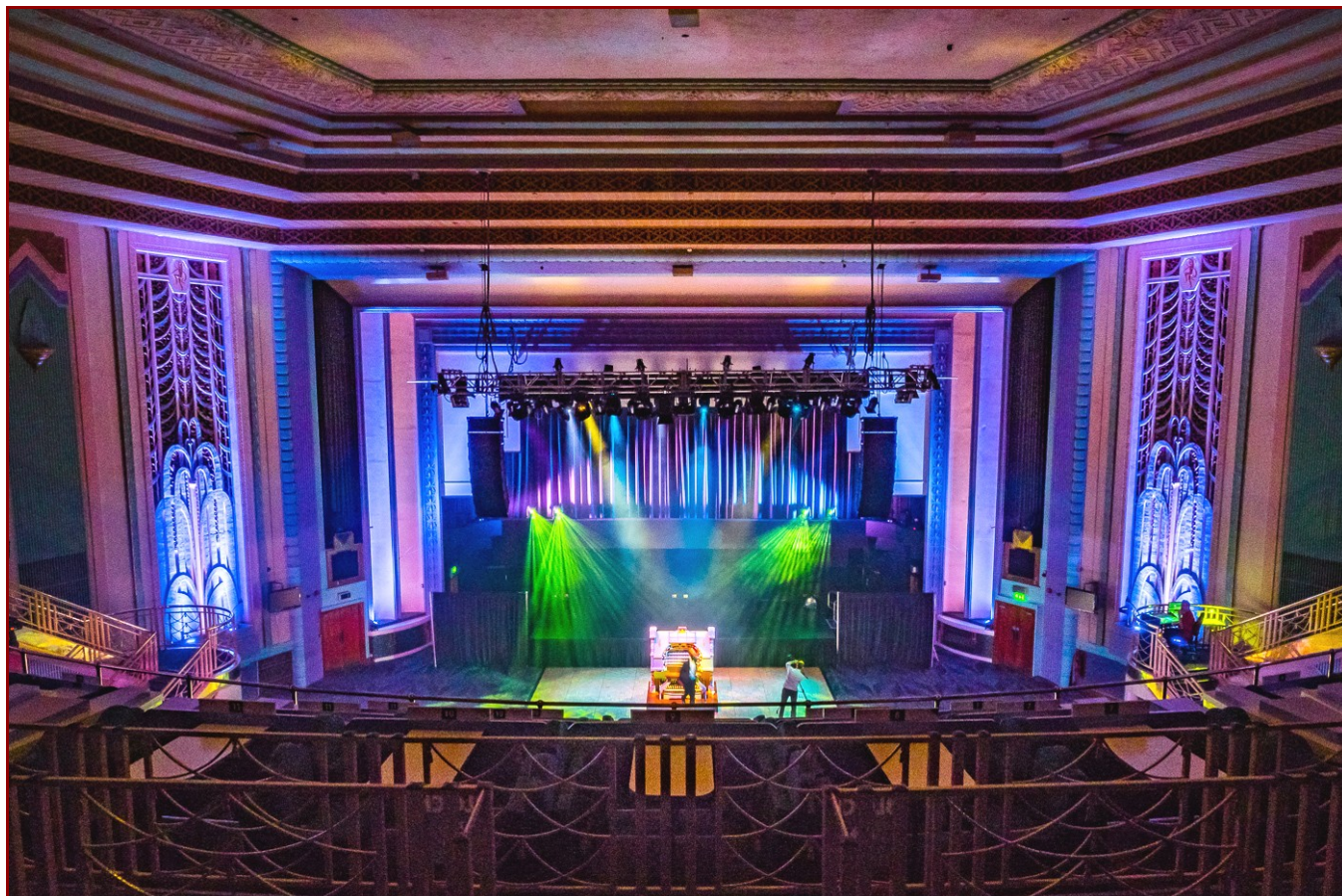
## When you can next hear the Wurlitzer

Details of forthcoming events featuring the Troxy Wurlitzer are available at:

**[www.troxy-wurlitzer.org](http://www.troxy-wurlitzer.org)**

To find out more about The Cinema Organ Society go to:

**[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)**



*The other star of the show – the Troxy on press day in late July*

*Nigel Laflin photo*