

# DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

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## Tony Thomas Returns

Sunday, April 21, 2013 3:00 p.m.

It has been many years since our artist for April has been at the Senate Theater. That, happily, is about to change as we bring back Tony Thomas to the Senate Wurlitzer.

Tony Thomas is a nationally known pianist/organist/ keyboardist, currently based in Memphis. Although he earned a Bachelor of Music Degree in Organ Performance under the late Gerhard Krapf at the University of Iowa in 1968, Thomas is known best as a jazz artist. Improvisation is his forte. He performs as a solo pianist, with a trio (under his name), in numerous other types of jazz ensembles, and as a jazz-influenced theater organist.

As a youngster, Tony was fortunate to see and hear the Count Basie Orchestra perform in person, and even "sat in" with the band's rhythm section at rehearsal. From that moment on, he was "hooked" on swing. As a pianist, his experience in jazz group playing started in his late teens, and he was blessed to play and apprentice with wonderful, older players who acted as mentors and instilled a love for the jazz craft. His influences are numerous, but probably the work of Erroll Garner, Milt Buckner,

George Shearing and Bill Evans has helped the most to shape his musical conception on both the piano and organ. Tony has also spent a lot of time over the years in small jazz ensembles on Hammond B-3, doing the "nitty-gritty" thing as well, with such influencers as the late Jimmy Smith and Larry Young leading the way.

A love of the thea-

ter organ also came early in Thomas' musical life when, at age 8, he heard his first recordings of George Wright. This was followed over the next few years by numerous visits with his parents and others to various theaters and residences where "Mighty Wurlitzers" and other wonderful instruments could be found. By age fourteen he was performing regularly on a 3/15 Barton in a



# Tony Thomas ... continued from front page

local roller rink, and at age 15 became the youngest soloist ever to give a concert on the newly-installed Fisher Theater 4/34 Wurlitzer, re-installed at the Iris Theatre in Detroit (now re-installed in the Senate Theater). Almost from the onset of Tony's acquaintance with these fascinating and colorful organs, as he played he heard a Big Band in his musical ear!

He is a five-time winner of the N.A.R.A.S. (the "Grammy People") Premier Player Award for Keyboards and/or Piano, and was inducted into that organization's Premier Player

Hall of Fame. He has recorded literally thousands of commercial music tracks as well as cuts with Joe Walsh, U2, Jimi Jamison (lead singer of the band "Survivor"), and an album of Standard "torch" songs with internationally known opera star, Kallen Esperian. Tony has performed with Al Jarreau, David Sanborn, Thelma Houston, Marilyn McCoo/Billy Davis, The Temptations, Hank Crawford, and the late Richard "Groove" Holmes.

As a pianist, Tony has available a solo CD, "Understatement", purchas-

able at Amazon.com. The Tony Thomas Trio has recently recorded a CD of original compositions, entitled "Progreso", which is available as well at Amazon.com, CDBaby.com, Locobop.com, or through iTunes. He can also be seen and heard at the website, GrandGrands.com; as you look over the various instruments available (particularly in the Steinway section), just click any button that says "See Movie Of This Piano"!

As a theater organist, Tony has recorded a CD of jazz-influenced arrangements entitled "Something

Different...Something Wonderful...", which can be obtained at Polo Café Records ([www.polocafe.com](http://www.polocafe.com)), and jazzmart.com (Website for Jazz Record Mart of Chicago). Tony performs concerts on theater organ and enjoys improvising silent movie accompaniments.

The Board of Directors is excited to have Tony perform for us once again after several years. The doors will open at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 21. Concert starts at 3:00 p.m.. Join us as we welcome back Tony to our prized Wurlitzer!

# Rope

Saturday, April 13 2:00pm & 7:00pm

Showing on the Senate Screen in April is Alfred Hitchcock's "Rope."

"Rope", starring James Stewart, John Dall and Farley Granger, was made in 1948.

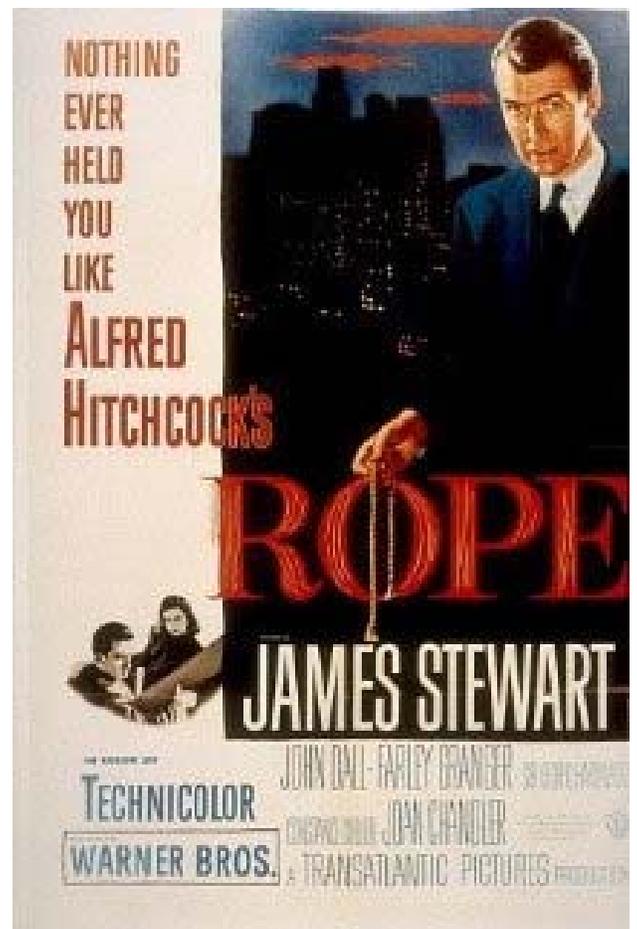
Brandon and Philip are two young men who share a New York apartment. They consider themselves intellectually superior to their friend David Kentley and as a consequence decide to murder him. Together they strangle David with a rope and placing the body in an old chest, they proceed to hold a small party. The guests include David's father, his fiancée Janet and their old school-teacher Rupert from whom

they mistakenly took their ideas. As Brandon becomes increasingly more daring, Rupert begins to suspect.

Tickets are \$5.00. Doors open one hour before each show. A 30-minute mini-concert on the Wurlitzer organ will precede each showing.

"Rope" is unrated due to its age, but it would probably receive a PG rating today.

Please note that this is a movie presentation, and is not included in your normal membership concert series. Tickets can be purchased at the door before each showing of the movie.



# Special Events Coming to the Senate Theater

Dave Calendine, DTOS Board of Directors

While many of our members are looking forward to our fantastic organ concerts, there are other events that will be happening at the Senate Theater.

More organizations are looking at using our theater, and with our new movie screen coming soon, there will be more great opportunities for our theater to be filled with happy patrons!

The first movie coming up is Alfred Hitchcock's "Rope" on April 13. See the article on the preceding page for more information on this movie.

Dragon Films returns to the Senate on April 20 for the premiere of their movie, "Act of Vengeance" at 8:00 p.m. Dragon Films is excited to be back at the Senate for this movie, and are planning on more showings in the future.

Buster Keaton's silent film masterpiece "The General" will be shown on Sunday, May 19 at 3:00 p.m. More information on this special showing will be in next month's newsletter.

A special Boogie Woogie and Ragtime Piano Festival will take place at the

Senate Theater on September 29 at 3:00 p.m.

Bob Milne, Bob Seeley and others will be a part of this special event. More information on these internationally-acclaimed musicians will be in an upcoming Newsletter. Tickets will be \$15.00 at the door.

As more events are added, they will be announced in upcoming Newsletters. You can also find information about upcoming shows by visiting the Detroit Theater Organ Society's web page at [www.dtos.org](http://www.dtos.org).

We are seeking volun-

teers to help with staffing these events. If you would be interested in helping with ticket sales, concessions, or any other areas with the operation of the theater, please contact Mike Fisher. His contact information is on the front of the Newsletter.

On a side note, our new movie screen is scheduled to arrive at the end of April. Pictures of its arrival and installation will be in a future Newsletter.

Here's looking forward to more events at the Senate!

**The Detroit Theatre Organ Society Board of Directors  
meets on the last Tuesday of each month.**

**All members are invited and encouraged to attend.**

**Information on all events happening at the Senate Theater can be  
found by going online to [www.dtos.org](http://www.dtos.org).**

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE REDFORD THEATRE

April 5 & 6—Three Stooges Festival

April 19 & 20—Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid

April 27—Buster Keaton Festival with Fr. Andrew Rogers at the Barton organ—8pm only

The Redford Theatre will be closed in May and June for a restoration project. The Redford Theatre reopens on July 12 & 13 with Walt Disney's "Mary Poppins"

All of these great films are shown Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m.  
as well as Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted)

Organ overtures start thirty minutes prior to each show time.

Sit back and enjoy the movies under the Redford's star-lit sky!

Visit the Redford Theatre on the web at [www.redfordtheatre.com](http://www.redfordtheatre.com)

DETROIT THEATER  
ORGAN SOCIETY

*Over 50 Years of Entertainment!*

## **Detroit Theater Organ Society**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.DTOS.ORG

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**Alfred Hitchcock's "Rope"**  
**Saturday, April 13 at 2:00pm & 7:00pm**

**Dragon Films' "Act of Vengeance"**  
**Saturday, April 20 at 8:00pm**

### **2013 Concert Series**

April 21—Tony Thomas

May 12—Martin Ellis

June 23—Mark Herman

September 22—Justin Stahl

October 20—Scott Smith

November 17—Clark Wilson

December 8—Joel Gary

All concerts are held at the Senate Theatre.

Doors open at 2:00 p.m., concerts start at 3:00 p.m.



photo: Lance Luce