

Metro Detroit Theatres and Their Pipe Organs The Census

Legend:

THEATRE NAME	Opening and closing dates
Street address	Architect
City	Number of seats
Comments (Organbuilder, year of installation, other pertinent or interesting data)	

ACADEMIE	(1921 - 1928)
9000 Oakland	
Detroit	342
2/4 Marr & Colton (1924)	
Went to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Detroit. Has since gone to parts. Roger Mumbrue acquired the console and relay. No combination action; not at all unusual for Marr & Colton organs of this size.	

ADAMS	(1917 - 1988)
44 West Adams	C. Howard Crane
(Grand Circus Park)	1,770
Detroit	
3/28 Hilgreen-Lane (1918)	
Organist and organbuilder Ed Gress purchased this organ and set up ten ranks of it in his home.	

ADDISON	(1914 - 1980)
(aka FINE ARTS)	
2954 Woodward (at Watson)	C. Howard Crane
Detroit	582
2/? Robert Morton (1919)	
2/5 Robert Morton (1927) Style 17	

ALHAMBRA	(1915 - 1975)
9428 Woodward (across from Boston Blvd)	C. Howard Crane
Detroit	1,475
2/11 Hilgreen-Lane (1914)	
Converted to a recording studio.	

AMBASSADOR	(1924 - 1970s?)
(aka TEMPLE, aka ART)	
17730 John R (North of McNichols)	
Highland Park	810
2/3 Wurlitzer (1924) Style 109	
Herb Head got the pipes from this instrument.	
By 1960, the building was largely destroyed, with the roof gone and no doors.	

ANNEX	(1927 - 1949)
8990 Grand River	John Eberson
Detroit	1,824
3/13 Robert Morton (1927)	
Moved to Powderhorn Park Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Extant, but now removed from the church.	

ARCADIA DANCE PALACE	(1915 - 1929)
(aka ARCADIA ROLLER RINK)	
3527 Woodward	
Detroit	
2/8 Moller (1914)	

Tubular pneumatic instrument.

The "Arc" opened as one of the country's largest ballrooms in 1912, and premiered as a concert hall and theatre in 1915 (presumably necessitating the organ) and was home to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for a brief period. The acoustics were reportedly bad enough to bring about the construction of Orchestra Hall just a few years later. The building reverted to a ballroom in 1929, and was converted to a roller skating rink in 1941, periodically hosting boxing matches. It was demolished in 1972 to make way for a high-rise apartment building for the elderly. The Capitol Theatre's 4/20 Wurlitzer was installed here for about a decade, beginning in the mid-1950s. See CAPITOL listing.

ARENA GARDENS ROLLER RINK (1916 - ???)

5787-5791 Woodward

Detroit

2/11 Wurlitzer (1935?) Rebuilt Style 13

Originally in Orpheum Theatre, Jersey City, NJ (1916) as a 2/8, then to Hamilton Theatre, Yonkers, NY (1916), then to Arena Gardens (1935), where Steve Bodman connected the organ to be playable from a button accordion. Rink owner Adam Weismuller was a concert accordionist. Bodman installed the organ in 1935 and increased the number of ranks from eight to eleven, reportedly all for \$148. Russell Bloc and Adam Weismuller were the organists. Later sold to Ben Van Houten, Grand Rapids, MI; later sold to Robert MacNeur (late 1970s). Parts.

AVALON (1928 - 1967)

13303 Linwood (at Davison)

Graven & Mayger

Detroit

1,972

3/10 Wangerin-Barton (1928)

Metal scrappers got to this instrument just before being removed by Henry Przybylski and Phil Robertson. Parts.

BIJOU (1905 - ??)

87 N. Gratiot

Mt. Clemens

800

2/6 Wurlitzer (1919) Style 160

BIRMINGHAM (1927 - present)

215 S. Woodward

C. W. Rapp & George Rapp

Birmingham

1,401

3/10 Barton

The balcony reportedly never had seats. The organ was heavily draped, had a very muffled sound and suffered some water damage while still in the theatre. Removed by George Orbits, sold to Don Jenks (installed and playing in his first Brighton home), later sold to Gary Montgomery. Served as core of the instrument in Theatre Organ Pizza & Pipes, Pontiac, opening in October, 1979, and built up to 21 ranks. Restaurant closed in 1986. Currently being installed in a private residence in Tennessee as a 3/14 "Barton concept organ," minus a few original components and all additions made in Pontiac. One of the additions to the bass is the metal Diaphone that was originally in the Olympia Stadium Barton.

BROADWAY - STRAND (1915 - 1929)

1337 Broadway

Arland W. Johnson

Detroit

1,600

3/15 Wurlitzer (1915) Style 35

Very few of this apparently experimental model were produced. The lower two keyboards (Accompaniment and Great) were standard 61-note, while the top (Solo) keyboard was only the center 37 notes. The limited-compass "color" stops, like Tibia, Trumpet, Kinura, Orchestral Oboe, Oboe Horn and Quintadena were only available on the Solo keyboard at 8' pitch and were available on the Great only via couplers from the Solo. Same story for the Chimes and Sleigh Bells. Sold to Ed Lansing, who cut the console down dramatically and removed the top keyboard for his home instrument. Later sold to James Van Eck (1973), later acquired by the Music House, Acme, MI. Parts.

CALVIN (1927 - 1980)

22168 Michigan Ave.

West Dearborn

1,200

2/5 Marr & Colton

Much of the organ was smashed by vandals in this one-chamber installation. The remains of organ were removed by Jeff Slabaugh and his father in early 1970s. Some chests and pipes later found a home in the Dearborn residence organ of David Brewer. Parts.

CAPITOL (1922 - 1985)

(aka BROADWAY-CAPITOL, aka PARAMOUNT, aka GRAND CIRCUS)

DETROIT OPERA THEATRE

(1990s - present)

1526 Broadway (Grand Circus Park)

C. Howard Crane

Detroit

3,485

3/38 Hilgreen-Lane (1921)

4/20 Wurlitzer (1925) Publix #1

This was Detroit's first "super-palace." Only four years after the Hilgreen-Lane was installed, it was replaced by Wurlitzer's first Publix #1, ultimately a popular economy model with the smaller Style 285 four-manual shell (the same used for the Fox slave consoles). Purchase price was reportedly \$46,475. Under specific direction from organist Jesse Crawford, the specification was sans English Post Horn; "to protect the audience from the organist." Prior to his days at the Fisher Theatre, Don Miller was the chief organist here. Lew Betterly and many of the old-time organists felt this was Detroit's finest sounding organ, speaking out well with great acoustics, coupled with huge openings into the auditorium. Miller said he played the piano during the Summer while the Hilgreen-Lane was being removed and the Wurlitzer installed. The console arrived sans ornamentation, and sat in the lobby during that period. A publicity photo of Marguerite Werner at the undecorated console was taken during that time. Later, the organ was broadcast on radio in the afternoon, even while the theatre was open, showing movies. Opus 1123 was sold to organist William Holleman and installed on stage of the Arcadia Rink in the mid 50s. Holleman sold the brass Saxophone and had two Posthorns in the organ; a Moller and a Marr & Colton. Beginning in 1969, it was sold to a rapid succession of owners on roughly an annual basis before being acquired by the Oakland (California) Symphony Association in 1972, and now serves as the basis for the Wurlitzer organ in the Oakland Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California.

CASINO (1930 - 1949)

4858 East Davison

Detroit

650

2/3 Wurlitzer (1930) Style 109

First installed in Penniman-Allen Theatre, Plymouth (1923)

Repossessed and sold to the Wadlow Bros., Detroit (1926), (possibly Wadlaw or Wadlosa Theatre in Plymouth)

Repossessed and installed in Casino Theatre, Detroit (1929)

CHALMERS (1928 - 1950)

(aka CHANDLER)

1403 Harper

Detroit

450

2/3 Wurlitzer (1928) Style 109

Installed only weeks after the Fisher Theatre Wurlitzer, this was the last theatre organ installation in the city of Detroit. Repossessed and reinstalled in the New Theatre, New Baltimore, MI (1933).

CINDERELLA (1924 - 1975)

13305-9 East Jefferson (at Copeland)

Christian W. Brandt

Detroit

1,897

2/6 Wurlitzer (1923) Style D (Moved to Roosevelt Theatre, Detroit, 1924)

3/10 Wurlitzer (1924) Style H Special

The Roosevelt organ was purchased and removed by Herb Head and used as the core of his Roseville home instrument, which is now in storage awaiting reinstallation in a theatre in Waco, Texas. Dudley Harwood

was organist at the Cinderella before moving over to the Oriole. He would often have an usher climb up to the chamber and open the top of the upright piano to increase its volume. The three-manual Cinderella organ was purchased and removed by Glenn Rank (1969) and sold to the Music House Museum, Acme, Michigan (1985), where it now serves as the core of the instrument there. See ROOSEVELT listing.

COLONIAL (1917 - mid 1975)
2615 Woodward (at Adelaide) C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,566
2/22 Hilgreen-Lane (1917)

COLUMBIA (1911 - 1956)
50 Monroe C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,006
2/18 Hilgreen-Lane (1911)
2/3 Wurlitzer (1927) Style 100 Special
The Hilgreen-Lane was Detroit's first pipe organ installation into a movie theatre (located near Campus Martius), and that company's first theatre organ installation anywhere.

CONANT (1929 - 1954)
12027 Conant
Detroit 940
2/? Robert Morton (1929)

CRESCENT

—
Pontiac
2/3 Wurlitzer, Style 105
No information. Theatre possibly demolished early, changed names prior to installation, or never built.

CRYSTAL (1916 - 1938)
4845 Michigan Avenue
Detroit 589
2/3 Robert Morton (1923) Style 49
Unspecified revisions or replacement by Morton (1926)

DELTHE (1916 - 1963)
(aka DEL)
8935 Mack Ave. Christian W. Brandt
Detroit 1,076
2/7 Wurlitzer (1915)

DELUXE (1918 - 1958)
9355 Kercheval B. C. Wetzell
Detroit 1,486
?/? Seeburg-Smith
This Adam styled East English Village theatre housed the only Seeburg-Smith installation in the Detroit area. Demolished April, 1963.

DETROIT CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

530 Woodward Avenue
Detroit
2/3 Kimball
Full percussions and traps. Sold to the late Tom Wilson, who had it installed in his home in Birmingham.

DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS (1917 - present)
5200 Woodward Avenue Paul Phillipe Cret

Detroit 1,200
 4/79 Casavant (1927)
 Not a "true" theatre organ, but a fine old instrument voiced in the orchestral Romantic style, and used to accompany films even today. Extant, unaltered, awaiting a full restoration. Stacked chambers, making for great difficulty to restore.

DEXTER (1926 - 1964)
 11618 Dexter (at Burlingame)
 Detroit 1,228
 2/5 Marr & Colton (1926)
 Removed 1970s. Spent some time playing in a restaurant, then reinstalled in home of Taylor Trimby, Joliet, Illinois. Resold to an unknown party and now parts.

DRURY LANE (1916 - 1922)
 1534 Woodward Ave.
 Detroit
 2/8 Wurlitzer (1916) Style V Special

DUPLEX (1915 - 1922)
 (aka GRAND BOULEVARD)
 3075 E. Grand Boulevard Fuller Clafin
 Detroit 1,500 (twin adjoining 750 seat theatres)
 ?? Karn Morris (1915)

EAGLE (1927? - ????)
 13-15 S. Saginaw
 Pontiac 150
 Photoplayer of unknown make.
 Formerly the Arlington Hotel, this was Pontiac's first theatre. Building still extant.

EAST END (1926 - 1955)
 11510 East Jefferson P. R. Periera
 Detroit 1,050
 3/9 Marr & Colton (1926)

EAST SIDE (1910 - 1955)
 (aka GREAT LAKES EAST SIDE)
 2717 Gratiot (at Grandy) George V. Pottle
 Detroit 650
 2/3 Wurlitzer (1925) Style 109, repossessed and reinstalled in Sylvia Theatre, Bellevue, KY (1928)
 2/6 Wurlitzer (1927) Style D. Sold to St. Stephen's A.M.E. Church, later to George Buck, see WASHINGTON, Royal Oak.

ECHO (1926 - 1954)
 8962 Oakland Ave. Richard H. Marr
 Detroit 689
 2/7 Marr & Colton (1926)
 Organ went to unknown location in Amherst, New York.
 Building erected 1919.

ECORSE (1920 - 1951?)
 4050 W. Jefferson
 Ecorse 400
 2/3 Wurlitzer (1926) Style 105 Special. Repossessed and sold to Reverend Welsh, Detroit (1935).

EMPIRE (1910 - 1923)

1251 Woodward Detroit 2/8 Hilgreen-Lane (1913)	C. Howard Crane
FAMILY (aka FOLLIES) 1 Cadillac Square at Monroe Detroit 2/6 Wurlitzer (1924) Style D Special	(1909 - 1973) Fuller Claflin 934
Organ sold to St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Church, later sold to Bill Ptolemy (1970). Unknown. When this theatre changed its entertainment policy to that of adult films, the nearby residents complained, and so the name was changed to the Follies. At 10:14 p.m., on the evening of July 26, 1973, the theatre caught fire and burned slowly enough that most of the fifty or so patrons in attendance waited patiently in line to accept a full refund on the \$5 admission charge. The remains of the theatre were demolished about a month later.	
FARNUM 9048 Joseph Campau Hamtramck 2/4 Wurlitzer (1923) Style B	(1916 - 1967) C. Howard Crane 900
FERNDALE 22920 Woodward (one block N. of 9 Mile) Ferndale Bartola Model 3-1/2 (1920)	(1921 - ??) 425
Theatre now called "The Magic Bag," running rock shows.	
FERRY FIELD (aka BEACON) 6541 Grand River (at Grand Blvd.) Detroit 2/6 Marr & Colton (1926)	(1916 - 1935) (1936 - 1937) C. Howard Crane 1,325
Sold to Tom Hadfield.	
FISHER West Grand Blvd. (at Second; Fisher Bldg) Detroit 4/34 Wurlitzer (1928) 4-manual Special	(1928 - 1960; legit playhouse 1961 through present) Graven & Mayger 2,975
One-of-a-kind, modified Publix #4 specification; one of the last two original theatre organ installations in the city of Detroit. Purchase price reportedly \$67,050. Installed by Wurlitzer's Chicago installer; a rare exception in the city that did not include Steve Bodman. Don Miller played on Friday nights from 1951-1955. Bill Holleman played during the late 50s. Roy Steinert maintained the organ and replaced many magnets while still in the theatre. Organ was available for practice at fifty cents an hour in the 50s. Purchased by George Orbits in 1960, and moved to Iris Theatre and installed in 1961 as the focal point of the Detroit Theatre Organ Society (then Club). Moved to Senate Theatre and installed 1963-1964. Extant, unaltered.	
FLAMINGO 14270 E. 7 Mile (near Gratiot) Detroit 2/5 Marr & Colton (1925)	(1925 - 1952) 997
Organ removed at the time of conversion to a church. Location unknown. Building currently in use as a church.	
FLEUR DE LYS 10775 W. Jefferson Ave.	(1922 - 1926)

Detroit (Waterworks Park) Bartola Model Deluxe (1919) 2/7 Barton (1927?)	1,000
FORD GRAND	
<hr/>	
Springwells (Dearborn) 2/3 Wurlitzer (1926) Style 105	
FORDSON	
10149 Dix Rd. Fordson (Dearborn) ?? Marr & Colton 2/3 Wurlitzer (1926) Style 105 Parts	
FOX 2211 Woodward Detroit 3/12 Moller; lobby (1928) Residence organ with roll player attachment. 4/36 Wurlitzer; auditorium (1928) Both extant, intact.	(1928 - present) C. Howard Crane 5,041
FRONTENAC (aka ACE) 7206 Harper (at Frontenac) Detroit Bartola Model 5 (1919)	(1912 - 1951) 834
GARDEN 3929 Woodward (at Alexander) Detroit 2/11 Hilgreen-Lane (1914)	(1912 - 1949) C. Howard Crane 903
GLADWIN PARK (aka GLADWIN, aka ALADDIN, aka BOOTH) 9636 East Jefferson (at Parkview) Detroit 2/7 Wurlitzer (1918) Style 2 Special Case organ installed on stage. 3/8 Marr & Colton (1925)	(1914 - 1962) E. H. Rogers 894
GLOBE 3520 Grand River (at Trumbell) Detroit 2/13 Hilgreen-Lane (1915)	(1912 - late 70s?) Harley & Atcheson 650
GRANADA 5549 West Warren (at Junction) Detroit 2/7 Wurlitzer (1927) Style E Now installed in Village Chapel in Fowlerville, MI. Extant, some alterations.	(1927 - 1970) 1,750
GRAND RIVIERA 9222 Grand River (at Joy Rd.)	(1925 - mid 70s) John Eberson

Detroit	2,766
3/10 Robert Morton (1925)	
Installed in two chambers on auditorium right side of theatre; Brass and Woodwind. Impact of the organ was reportedly rather weak in the room, but always playable. Purchased and removed by Lee Hohner in 1969. Reinstalled three times since purchase, and remains intact and playing in Lee's residence in Three Rivers, Michigan.	
GRAND VICTORY	(1921 - 1958)
(aka CHARGOT, aka VICTORY)	
8225 Grand River Ave.	Maurice H. Finkel
Detroit	919
2/4 Wurlitzer (1920) Style 135A	
Vandalized, later to parts.	
GRANDE	(1909 - 1956)
8024 West Jefferson	Kohner & Seeler
Detroit	1,837
2/6 Wurlitzer (1921) Style 160	
Sold to Charles Bartells, later sold again to unknown party.	
2/5 Marr & Colton (1929)	
Sold to former DTOS board director Ed Kantarian.	
GRATIOT	(1910 - 1930)
2306-12 Gratiot	Mildner & Eisen
Detroit	
2/4 Wurlitzer (1925) Style B Special	
Parts	
GREAT LAKES	(1927 - 1972)
(aka VEST POCKET)	
14832 Grand River	George D. Mason
Detroit	1,795
3/9 Marr & Colton (1927)	
Operated as a church after closing as a theatre. Extant but unclear if building dormant or in use.	
Some evidence exists that organist Don Miller did some teaching here. Organ removed mid-50s by Russ Vogt, and connected to Reg Webb 3-manual Marr & Colton console, which was highly unified with lots of couplers. Later sold to the late Harold Dingel. Sold after his passing in recent years. Location unknown.	
GROSSE POINTE PARK	(1923 - 1955)
(aka ALOMA)	
15003 Charlevoix	
Grosse Pointe Park	
?? Marr & Colton (1924)	
HARMONY	(1921 - late 70s)
(aka ADMIRAL)	
11205 Mack (at St. Jean)	
Detroit	1,322
?? Marr & Colton (1921)	
HARPER	(1922 - 1930)
7723 Harper	
Detroit	
?? Marr & Colton (1922)	
2/3 Wurlitzer (1925) Style 109. Repossessed and moved in 1933 to Advent Lutheran Church, Dearborn.	

HARRIS

Detroit

2/6 Wurlitzer (1915) Style L

Detroit's first theatre Wurlitzer.

HAZEL PARK

22840 John R

Detroit (Hazel Park)

2/3 Wurlitzer (1925) Style 105

Possibly relocated to a church.

HOLLYWOOD

(1927 - 1958)

4809 West Fort (at Ferdinand)

Charles N. Agree; Graven & Mayger, associates

Detroit

3,436

4/21 Barton (1927)

This was a deluxe theatre in a sketchy neighborhood. Bob Clark was the organist here. Maintained by Ed Lansing through the 50s. Organ spoke out well, good acoustics. Some think this was Detroit's second-best sounding organ in it's time. Building demolished in 1963. Organ purchased and removed by Henry Przybylski in 1962. Sold to Steven Ball in 2002. In storage. Intact.

IRIS

(1916 - 1954)

2314 East Grand Blvd.

Mildner & Eisen

Detroit

881

2/8 Wurlitzer (1917) Style 3 Special

Organ sold to Frank Ski. Building was first home for Detroit Theatre Organ Club (1961 - 1963).

IRVING

(1927 - 1997)

21220 Fenkell

Kohner & Payne

Detroit

1,025

2/6 Robert Morton

Purchased and removed by William Kaltrider (Owosso) during the riots in 1967. Parts.

KNICKERBOCKER

(1916 - 1957)

(aka WHITTIER)

7237 East Jefferson

973

Detroit

2/6 Wurlitzer (1915) Style L

The Style L was the legendary instrument that Clare Dunham transported to his home in St. Clair Shores a piece at a time in the sidecar of his motorcycle. Dunham purchased a brand new Tibia from Wurlitzer for \$99. Organ later sold to John Steele and installed in his Pontiac home; later sold to Walter Bressler and installed in his Midland home; later sold to Joel Gary of Grand Rapids. Parts.

2/8 Wurlitzer (1928) Style 175 Special. Repossessed and reinstalled in Coolidge Corner Theatre, Brookline, MA (1933). Unknown.

KRAMER

(1920 - 1970)

5741 Michigan Avenue (near Livernois)

C. Howard Crane

Detroit

1,732

2/18 Hilgreen-Lane (1920)

LA VEEDA

(1922 - 1949)

(aka DE SOTO, aka OAKLAND)

11759 Oakland

Highland Park

520

2/4 Marr & Colton (1926)

Spent some time in unknown church. Last known Detroit area owner was the late Charles Baas of Clawson,

who installed it in his home and later augmented it with other parts. Organ sold and removed 2016 following Mr. Baas death. Current owner and location unknown.

LAKWOOD (1915 - 1958)
14243-49 East Jefferson
Detroit 1,270
2/12 Moller

LA SALLE GARDEN (1920 - 1954)
(aka CENTURY)
6515 14th St. at West Grand Blvd. Christian W. Brandt
Detroit 1,990
2/26 Hilgreen-Lane (1920)
2/?? Robert Morton (1928)
Gutted and converted to carwash in 1970s.

LANCASTER (1912 - 1970)
(aka AMUSE U)
10533 West Jefferson
Detroit (River Rouge) 1,200
3/6 Wurlitzer (1925) Style D, 3 manual
Some believe this is the most reinstalled theatre organ that remained intact, maybe ever, having been (partially to completely) reinstalled a total of seven verifiable times after leaving the theatre. Purchased and removed by George Orbits, later sold to Henry Przybylski, later sold to Dave Voydanoff (three locations), later sold to Jim Walgreen (Chicago) and installed in the residence of Fred Cruise (Chicago) and still later reacquired by Dave Voydanoff. Intact, some additions.

LASKY (1926 - 1949)
13320 Joseph Campau
Detroit 998
3/9 Marr & Colton (1926)
Ed Kantarian had at least the console from this theatre to control his home instrument, later sold to Dave Voydanoff, and later to Bob Warsham. Now in Covenant Lutheran Church.

LEE PALACE
(aka PALACE)
—
Detroit
?? Marr & Colton (1923)

LIBERTY (1913 -1926)
1020 Farmer St. (at Woodward) C. Howard Crane
Detroit
2/10 Hilgreen-Lane (1913)
?? Hilgreen-Lane (1916) New blower? Revisions?
This was the former Central United Methodist Church, modified into a theatre by C. Howard Crane.

LINCOLN PARK
1583 Fort Charles N. Agree
(two blocks North of Southfield Rd) 2,000
Lincoln Park
2/7 Hilgreen-Lane (1925)

LINCOLN SQUARE (1918 - 1971)
6034-36 West Fort (at Livernois) Fred F. Swirsky
Detroit 1,850

2/10 Wurlitzer (1918) Style 4 Special. Parts.

LINWOOD-LASALLE (1920 - 1964)
(aka LINWOOD)
8229 Linwood (at Virginia Park) George V. Pottle
Detroit 1,400
2/6 Wurlitzer (1920) Style 160
2/8 Barton (1928)
Barton owned by Chuck Lalone at one time.

LOOP (1928 - 1956)
418 Michigan Ave. H. D. Ilgenfritz
Detroit 550
2/5 Kimball

LYRIC (1913 - 1929)
17 N. Gratiot
Mt. Clemens
Bartola Model 3-1/2 (1920)

MACOMB (1921 - ??)
31 N. Walnut St. C. Howard Crane
Mt. Clemens
2/26 Hilgreen-Lane (1921)
In the 1970s, Bill Nelem and friends installed a 3/9 Kilgen in these chambers. Now removed and in storage.

MADISON (1917 - 1984)
22 Witherell (at Grand Circus Park) C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,806
3/48 Hilgreen-Lane (1916)
Largest H-L theatre organ ever built. Building owned by Detroit Opera Theatre, now gutted. Parts.

MAJESTIC (1915 - 1951)
4136 Woodward (at Willis) C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,651
2/16 Hilgreen-Lane (1915)
2/6 Wurlitzer (1920) Style 160
The Wurlitzer was first installed in the Wurlitzer Cincinnati store before coming to the Majestic.

MAJESTIC (1916 - 195?)
3161-63 Biddle Christian Brandt
Wyandotte 976
Bartola Model 3-1/2 (1915)
Bartola Model 5 (1919)
2/? Barton (??)
2/7 Marr & Colton (1928)
The M&C moved to Berkely Community Church by Steve Bodman.

MARTHA WASHINGTON (1924 - 1970s)
(aka CAMPAU)
10315-31 Joseph Campau Peter R. Rossello
Hamtramck 1,000
2/8 Marr & Colton (1923)
3/14 Marr & Colton (1924), enlargement
Reg Webb, organist. Six ranks straight, sold to St. Ladislaus (gymnasium), Hamtramck, then to Dennis Unks around 1970.

MAXINE 7641 Mack Ave. Detroit 2/9 Hilgreen-Lane (1915)	(1915 - 1952) McFarlane, Maul & Lenz 960
MICHIGAN 238 Bagley Detroit 5/28 Wurlitzer (1926) The first and largest five-manual Wurlitzer. Famed organist Arthur Gutow presided here. Purchased in 1952 and reinstalled by Fred Hermes in his Racine, Wisconsin home with some additions. Intact.	(1926 - 1976) C. W. Rapp & George Rapp 4,038
MILES 1220-22 Griswold Detroit 2/29 Hilgreen Lane (1921)	(1910 - 1927) Keys & Colburn 2,000
MILES-MAJESTIC (never built) Corner of Grand River & Roosevelt Detroit 2/11 Hilgreen-Lane (1919) Announced with great fanfare, this mammoth structure was never built, nor apparently was the organ, which seems to be very undersized for a space this large. The theatre builder was to have been Charles Miles, who also owned the Majestic, Regent and Orpheum theatres.	4,800
(NEW) ASTOR 8652 12th St. Detroit ?? Marr & Colton (1923)	(1923 - 1960s) 723
NEW HAROLD — Pontiac 2/4 Wurlitzer (1919) Style 135 Special Included a set of Unifon Bells.	
(NEW) PLAZA 11641 E. Jefferson Detroit ?? Kimball (1922)	(1913 - 1954) 750
NEW ROWLAND — Pontiac 2/5 Wurlitzer (1919) Style 135 Special	
OAKDALE 8 Mile Rd. & Stephenson Hwy. Hazel Park 2/5 Marr & Colton Moved to Immanuel N. Baptist; now First Latin American Baptist Church, Detroit.	750
OAKLAND 41 S. Saginaw Pontiac	

3/12 Barton (1925)

A Butterfield Special (3/11) plus Bartolina (metal Tibia) and a second Vox Humana (37 notes), which were installed on the floor in the left chamber. It was still playing right up the end in 1960, when the organ was donated to a Mormon church in the area and completely burned in a fire (along with the theatre) just weeks before it was scheduled to leave the building. Cliff Weegan was the longtime organist here.

OAKMAN (1919 - 1950s)
12728-40 Woodrow Wilson (at Glendale) C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,213
2/3 Barton (1921)
3/? Marr & Colton (1927)

OLYMPIA STADIUM (1927 - 1979)
5920 Grand River C. Howard Crane
Detroit 11,563 (later increased to 15,000)
3/14 Barton (1934)

This late instrument was a composite factory-built organ controlled by a repossessed Butterfield Special console from a theatre in Wisconsin. Much of the remainder was originally installed in the studios of WBBM (Chicago). The instrument was outfitted with English Post Horn, Trumpet and Saxophone, purpose-built for the instrument by Dennison and Gottfried when installed at the stadium, along with a metal Diaphone from National Organ Supply. The specification was clearly designed for brute force to battle against the live acoustic of the stadium, and differed somewhat from the standard theatre organ. In addition to the previously mentioned custom reeds, it's tonal makeup consisted of (standard) Tuba, Tuba Mirabilis, (second) English Post Horn, Diapason, Concert Flute, two Tibia Clausa and four string ranks. That meant no Vox Humana, Clarinet, Oboe Horn, Orchestral Oboe or Kinura. This was a single chamber installation that opened up fully with large openings on three sides. Removed by Roger Mumbroe, sold to Robert Goldstine and later to Byron Fogt, both of Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Fogt modified and added to the basic organ while installed in his home. Later given to Mark Herman (then of Ft. Wayne) following Fogt's passing. Parts.

Olympia Stadium demolished 1987.

ORCHESTRA HALL (1919 - 1939)
Renamed PARADISE (1941 - 1951)
Renamed ORCHESTRA HALL (1987 - present)
3711 Woodward C. Howard Crane
Detroit 2,286

4/96 Casavant, removed and installed in Calvary Presbyterian Church, ca. 1942, sans Tuba Organ and 32' Open Diapason (wood). Donated to the Music House Museum in 1992, removed and stored for several years while in Acme, Michigan. Now once again in the hands of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, with hopes of reinstalling all or part of it in Orchestra Hall. Like the DIA Casavant, not a true theatre organ, but a fine old instrument voiced in the orchestral Romantic style with numerous orchestral voices. Films have been shown here from time to time. Information sketchy whether or not organ accompanied those films.

ORIENT (1927 - 1960s)
(aka ORIOLE)
8450 Linwood (at Philadelphia) George D. Mason
Detroit 2,078
3/17 Marr & Colton (1927)

Purchased and removed by Nat Brown and Roger Mumbroe. Console, Quintadena and Gamba installed in Roger's Bloomfield Hills home. Remainder sold. Altered and enlarged to 38 ranks. Removed and currently owned by Melissa Ambrose-Eidson. Dudley Harwood was organist here. Mrs. Marr recalled the Orient M&C as one of their premier instruments, right alongside the 4/18 Buffalo (N.Y.) Roosevelt Theatre and 5/24 Rochester (N.Y.) Rochester Theatre.

ORIENTAL (1927 - 1950)
(aka RKO DOWNTOWN)

120 West Adams Detroit 3/15 Kimball (1927) Dudley Boomhower was organist here. Purchased and removed by organbuilder Julian Bully of Toledo and set up in his shop, but never playing. Purchased by onetime DTOS president, the late Charles Edwards. Intact, in storage in Oakland, MI.	Percival R. Periera 2,950
ORPHEUM (aka LAFAYETTE, aka SHUBERT) 153 W. Lafayette Ave. Detroit 2/23 Hilgreen-Lane (1917)	(1914 - 1964) Smith, Hinchman & Grylls 1,489
ORPHEUM 65-67 S. Saginaw Pontiac 2/6 Barton (1925) Purchased by one-time DTOS member Ray Eby around 1960, and was playing in his home. One chamber, on auditorium left.	(1927 - ??)
PALACE 130-32 Monroe Detroit 2/19 Hilgreen-Lane (1920)	(1914 - 1928) C. Howard Crane
PARK 2626 East Davison Detroit 2/3 Wurlitzer (1923) Style 109 Parts.	(1921 - 1949) Harry T. Smith 676
PASADENA 9232 Mack Ave. Detroit ?? Page (1925)	(1914 - 1949) Greenwich Co., designers-builders 386
PENNIMAN-ALLEN (aka P&A) 133-5 East Main Northville 2/6 Wurlitzer (1925) Style D Special Had a 16' Diaphone. Sold to Nat Brown, console and relay sold to Roger Mumbrue. Modified console later controlled Dave Brewer's residence organ. Parts.	(1925 - ??) 600
PENNIMAN-ALLEN (aka P&A) 855 Penniman Plymouth 2/3 Wurlitzer (1923) Model 109 Repossessed (See CASINO listing) 2/6 Wurlitzer (1925) Style D Special No 16' Diaphone. Sold to Nat Brown, later sold to Jack Dommer, later sold to Stan Albertson, later sold to Larry Gleason. Now installed in Larry's home in Florida.	(1918 - 1968) 600
PICCADILLY 4014 Livernois (at Fenkell)	(1925 - 1951)

Detroit 825
2/4 Wurlitzer (1925) Style B

PUNCH & JUDY (1930 - 1977)

21 Kercheval Robert O. Derrick
Grosse Pointe Farms 714

2/5 Wurlitzer (1928) Style 150 Special

This instrument was installed and playing in the Wurlitzer store in downtown Detroit (1928), moved once within the store, and reinstalled in the P&J at the time of the theatre's opening (1930). Steve Bodman installed the organ all three times. With all of the plush interior and 96 luxury armchairs in the balcony, it was once described as "Detroit's largest living room." Later moved to the Sterling Heights home of Jerry Elliott, playing there until 2015, when the organ was purchased and removed by organist Justin Lavoie, awaiting restoration and reinstallation.

RAMONA (1927 - 1977)

13705 Gratiot (at McNichols) Kohner & Payne
Detroit 2,020

2/4 Wurlitzer (1927) Style B Special.

Roy Steinert installed a Gottfried French Horn on a Page chest at some point. Later became mostly junk. Some parts salvaged. See WASHINGTON, Royal Oak.

REDFORD (1928 - present)

17354 Lahser (just North of Grand River) Verner, Wilhelm, Molby, Shrieve & Associates
Detroit (Redford Township) 2,051

3/10 Barton (1928)

The longtime home of the Motor City Theatre Organ Society. Organ intact, some alterations.

REGENT (1916 - 1974)

(aka CENTER)
7314 Woodward Stratton & Von Schneider
Detroit 3,600

4/27 Kimball (1916)

Cramped under-stage chambers with small openings made this instrument rather underwhelming. Largely a straight instrument.

REGINALD WEBB STUDIO

3001 E. Grand Blvd. (near Woodward)

Detroit

3/10 Marr & Colton (1928)

2/4 Marr & Colton (1928?)

The three-manual Marr & Colton was regularly broadcast over radio station WJR. Reg Webb was the Marr & Colton representative for the Detroit and surrounding area, and sold a remarkable total of sixty of their instruments; a fact verified by Mrs. Marr. His legendary sales numbers were probably due in no small part to the fact that he performed extensively on the radio during the Golden Era, plus the M&C instruments tended to be cheaper than the competition. At some point, the instrument was broken up, with the Post Horn going to a church in Bay City, and the console eventually going to Harold Dingel in Goodrich, Michigan. Following Mr. Dingel's passing, the console and organ were sold in recent years. Current location unknown.

RIALTO (1917 - 1968)

6345-47 Gratiot C. Howard Crane
(between Mt. Elliot and Meldrum)

Detroit 1,334

2/22 Hilgreen-Lane (1916)

RIVOLA (1922 - 1957)

4703 Cadillac (at East Forest)
Detroit
2/6 Wurlitzer (1921) Style 160

Christian W. Brandt and H.D. Ilgenfritz
1,010

RKO UPTOWN
(aka SIX MILE UPTOWN, aka SIX MILE)
16501 Woodward (at McNichols)
Highland Park
3/11 Wurlitzer (1926) Style 235

(1927 - late 80s)
Percival R. Periera; Graven & Mayger, associates
3,200 / later reduced to 1,500 to sidestep union demands

This instrument had not played since 1942, when it was reawakened by Mert and Chuck Harris and recorded by John Muri in 1970 just prior to its removal in 1971. With the seats out of the balcony, the organ had a remarkable acoustic in which to play. "John Muri, Volume 1" is a "must have" for anyone who enjoys Muri's music, or a modern recording of an unaltered Wurlitzer organ in its original home. Intact, in storage.

ROOSEVELT
(aka IMPERIAL)
9515 Gratiot - Harper
Detroit

(1925 - 1954)
Christian W. Brandt and H. D. Ilgenfritz
1,771

2/6 Wurlitzer (1922), Style D

Initially installed in downtown Detroit Wurlitzer store (1922). Later installed in Cinderella Theatre (1923), and removed in 1924 to make way for larger Style H Wurlitzer. Reinstalled in Roosevelt Theatre (1924). Sold to Herb Head, Roseville, MI (1954?), acquired by Jim Pitts, Waco, TX (2010). In storage awaiting reinstallation. See CINDERELLA listing.

ROSEDALE
11520 Woodward
Detroit
2/12 Kimball (1915)
Parts

(1915 - 1954)
William B. Stratton
965

ROYAL OAK
318 West 4th St.
Royal Oak
3/10 Barton (1928)

(1928 - present)
C. W. Rapp & George Rapp
2,000

Used for many years by the Motor City Theatre Organ Society in the theatre, and removed to storage by members. Later sold to Scott Herpick of Brighton, and later sold to Robert Maes, organ broker from Kansas City, Missouri. Parts.

RUSSELL
5335 Russell (between Kirby & Frederick)
Detroit
Bartola Model 5 (1917)

(1917 - 1949)
C. Howard Crane
1,406

SENATE
6424 Michigan Avenue
Detroit

(1926 - 1958)
Christian W. Brandt
1,200

2/7 Robert Morton (1926)

Played by Marguerite Werner, who later went on to play the bigger downtown houses, particularly the United Artists Theatre. Instrument moved to WXYZ Studios on W. Jefferson Avenue in 1931. See WXYZ STUDIOS listing.

Home of the Detroit Theatre Organ Society since 1963.

STATE
(aka PALMS-STATE, aka PALMS)
2121 Woodward

(1925 - present)
C. Howard Crane

Detroit 2,967
4/20 Wurlitzer (1925) Publix #1
This was the second of this popular four-manual series to be built, and was installed only one month after the first Publix #1 in Detroit's Capitol Theatre, just blocks away. Total cost of organ and installation was \$46,475. Not considered a very successful installation, with very high chambers. The organ was water soaked, with six ranks missing by the time it was removed in 1972 by organ broker Roy Davis. Later went to Oral Roberts University. At some point, the console and relay were sold to control the Wurlitzer organ in the Castro Theatre in San Francisco, California for many years until recently, when it was removed in lieu of a large custom digital organ. The remainder of the State organ ultimately went the Aztec Theatre in San Antonio, Texas amidst much ballyhoo, but unfortunately has been mothballed already after a very short public life there, as the theatre's new business plan does not include the organ.

STATE (1927 - 1956)
38-40 S. Saginaw St.
Pontiac
2/8 Barton (1926)
Moved to Romeo First Church of Christ, Scientist with some alterations, including a Dulciana and Trumpet from Adrian. Later purchased and removed by Jerry Muethel. Current status unknown.

STRAND (1915 - 1958)
4730 Grand River (at 14th) C. Howard Crane
Detroit 1,384
3/13 Hilgreen-Lane (1915)

STRAND
12-14 N. Saginaw St.
Pontiac
2/8 Barton (1920)
Removed by Steve Bodman, gone to parts. Theatre building still extant, often being restored.

STRATFORD (1916 - 1985)
4651 West Vernor Joseph P. Jogerst
Detroit 1,137
2/7 Wurlitzer (1916) Style 3
Moved in the 1930s to Our Lady of Help Christian Church, and later sold to John Rinn of St. Clair Shores, who installed it in his home there. Lacking a Tibia in the original plan, Rinn acquired one from Roger Mumbrue and added it to the organ. Removed and donated to Soo Theatre project in Sault St. Marie. In storage.

TEMPLE
17 Monroe
Detroit
2/7 Wurlitzer (1927) Style E

TIVOLI (1926 - 1927)
16330 Woodward
Detroit (Highland Park)
2/4 Wurlitzer (1924?) Style B
In the only such incident to ever occur in the Detroit metro area, this theatre was destroyed by a bomb blast in the late Fall of 1927.

TUXEDO (1921 - 1958, razed 1967)
11738 Hamilton (at Tuxedo) Maurice H. Finkel
Detroit 1,800
2/? Robert Morton (1921)
3/13 Robert Morton (1926)

The later organ had the rare V'Olean, a stringed stop played from the keys of the organ. Reportedly weak and always out of tune. A good deal of the organ was on 15" (considered higher pressure), but much of it closed down dramatically. Purchased and removed by Nat Brown and Roger Mumbrue in late 50s. Parts.

UNITED ARTISTS (1928 - 1971)
140 Bagley C. Howard Crane
Detroit 2,012

3/17 Wurlitzer (1927) Style 260 Special

Purchased and removed from theatre. Reinstalled briefly in Pied Piper Pizza Peddler at Universal Mall in Warren, majority of organ now installed in Long Center, Lafayette, IN. Remainder to parts.

UPTOWN

Mack & Chalmers
Detroit

2/4 Wurlitzer (Style B)

Purchased by Paul Ritzman. Lived in Detroit and later Chicago.

VENDOME (1911 - 1958)

(aka SUN, aka SEVILLE)

4481 Grand River Ave.

Detroit 891

Bartola Model 5 (1917)

VIRGINIA (1914 - 1949)

(aka VIRGINIA PARK)

8237 Hamilton Ave.

Detroit Harry S. Angell

485

2/3 Wurlitzer (1923) Style 108.

Sold to Evangelical Church, Detroit (1970?).

WADLOW BROS

—

Plymouth(?)

2/3 Wurlitzer (1923) Style 108

Repossessed. See entry for CASINO theatre.

WASHINGTON (1913 - 1928)

(aka FOX WASHINGTON)

1505-13 Washington Blvd.

Detroit

2/11 Hilgreen-Lane (1914)

3/7 Moller (1919)

WASHINGTON (1922 - present)

(aka BALDWIN, aka STAGECRAFTERS)

422 S. Washington

Royal Oak

Frederick D. Madison

1,128

2/7 Barton (1922)

Donated to original First Presbyterian Church (Royal Oak) in 1941 by Mabel Baldwin. Gone by 1955 when the church moved to their new building. Status unknown.

2/9 Wurlitzer-hybrid (1980s). Core of organ from EAST SIDE, Detroit. Additions from RAMONA, Detroit and WSMK Radio, Dayton, OH.

WEST END (1926 - 1954)

6864 West Warren Ave.

Detroit 800

3/10 Barton (1926)

Possibly repossessed. Some question the size of the organ as recorded in the Barton list. The blower size in the Spencer list would suggest an instrument of about six ranks.

Theatre demolished in recent years.

WOODWARD GRAND (1924 - 1958)

(aka HUMBER, aka UPTOWN GRAND, aka GRAND)

15 West Grand

Highland Park 940

2/4 Marr & Colton (1924)

WWJ RADIO

Lafayette & 2nd Avenues (Detroit Evening News Building)

Detroit

2/3 Estey (1930)

This was one of those curious little models known as the "Minuette;" with two manuals and a pedalboard mated to a cabinet that was shaped like a grand piano. All of the organ's pipes and mechanics were precisely engineered to fit neatly into this very cramped cabinet. A vintage photo known well by area organ buffs has been seen from time to time with organist Ole Foersch playing this instrument.

WWJ RADIO

600 W. Lafayette Avenue

Detroit

3/15 Aeolian-Skinner (1936)

3/26 Aeolian-Skinner (later additions - unknown date)

The nation's second oldest radio station moved its operations into new studios on West Lafayette at the same time as the organ's installation in 1936. This striking Moderne building was designed by famed Detroit architect Albert Kahn, who also designed the transmitter building in similar style at the same time, which still stands on 8 Mile and Meyer Rds. Kahn had also designed the Detroit Evening News Building, from which WWJ broadcasted for its first several years; established as an extension of the newspaper. The later Lafayette studio building is now occupied by the AFL-CIO. The 1936 Aeolian-Skinner was delivered with two, three-manual drawknob consoles controlling fifteen ranks. One console was upstairs in a studio where the organ was heard directly, while the other was in a large studio downstairs. It had a unified Tibia Clausa with second-touch on the Choir manual of both consoles. Given the specifications, it would appear to be a near-identical twin of one installed in NBC Studio 3B in New York City just two years earlier. (During his stint at the New York Paramount in the 1940s, famed organist George Wright jokingly claimed to have kept the NYC cab companies in business, constantly running him between the theatre and the studio, where he also played for broadcasts.) The original contract with the Evening News Association stated a total cost of \$18,700. In 1955, the WWJ organ was donated and moved to First Presbyterian Church in Royal Oak, where it was reinstalled with additions by Casavant Freres, and later enlarged and console replaced by a succession of commercial builders including Schantz and Moller on a regular basis of about every ten years. The instrument was most recently rebuilt in 2013 by Reuter, retaining an unknown amount of the previous organ, now three manuals controlling fifty-four ranks. WWJ has since moved to another studio on American Drive in Southfield, and has mothballed the transmitter.

WXYZ RADIO

8415 E. Jefferson Ave.

Detroit

2/7 Robert-Morton

Moved from Senate Theatre and installed into the studio by Steve Bodman in 1931 in what had previously been the carriage house for the Mendelssohn mansion. Armin "Jack" Franz and Lew Betterly could be heard regularly on this instrument. Moved to Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church in Oak Park in 1955, later burned. See SENATE listing.

UNKNOWN

Detroit

?/? Wurlitzer (1915) Rebuilt Model J (Opus 077)

~~~~~

Resources:

Opera House, Nickel Show and Palace; Andrew Craig Morrison, 1974

Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ, volume 1; David Junchen, 1985

Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ, volume 2; David Junchen, 1989

Motor City Marquees; Stuart Galbraith IV, 1994

The Wurlitzer Pipe Organ; David Junchen & Jeff Weiler, 2005

Theatre Organ Bombarde, several issues in 1968 (Barton info)

E. M. Skinner / Aeolian-Skinner Opus List; Allen Kinsey & Sand Lawn, OHS, 1997

Internet sources:

[Cinema Treasures.org](http://CinemaTreasures.org)

[Cinematour.com](http://Cinematour.com)

[HistoricTheatres.org](http://HistoricTheatres.org)

[Movie-Theatre.org](http://Movie-Theatre.org)>mi>MI Detroit City.pdf

OHS Pipe Organ Database

[Theatreorgans.com](http://Theatreorgans.com)

Peter Beames Wurlitzer List

[WaterWinterWonderland.com](http://WaterWinterWonderland.com)

Individuals:

William Kaltrider

John Lauter

Roger Mumbrue

Glenn Rank

Carlton Smith

Dave Voydanoff