

BOARDWALK PIPES represents the initial venture in the field of organ recording for Mercury LIVING PRESENCE . The session took place on November 24, 1956. The special recording truck was driven to Atlantic City and set up in the east end of the Convention Hall . Elaborate tests were conducted in order to determine the best positions for the three microphones . Two main qualities were being sought: the greatest degree of " presence" as well as the maximum amount of resonance. Too close a pickup would risk a loss of the "live" character of the hall being used while a distant placement resulted in inadequate definition and excessive reverberation. Once these points had been located and the levels checked, control of dynamics rested entirely in the hands of the organist . The three-channel master recording was made on half -inch multiple-track tape and later combined into a two-channel quarter-inch master by means of a special electronic process developed by C. Robert Fine, engineer and technical supervisor of Mercury's Living Presence recordings. The incorporation of the third channel marks a significant advance in the science of recording since it adds the vital dimension of "breadth" missing in ordinary two-channel recordings. While the two-channel setup can perform certain directional tasks, it is incapable of eliminating the "hole-in-the-center" effect, thus impairing musical balance.



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

ROBERT ELMORE PLAYING THE BALLROOM ORGAN
AT THE ATLANTIC CITY AUDITORIUM AND CONVENTION HALL
WORLD'S LARGEST BALLROOM ORGAN - WORLD'S LARGEST AUDITORIUM

BOARDWALK PIPES



ATLANTIC CITY is famous for its beaches, salt water taffy, fine restaurants and spacious boardwalk. It is also the home of the largest convention hall, the largest concert organ, and the largest theatre-type organ in the world. Designed in 1929, the Convention Hall Ballroom organ is not, strictly speaking, a theatre organ. Partly "straight" and partly "unit," it is a compromise between the radical theatre organ and the normal concert instrument. Besides the percussions and special effects, it has 19 straight and 23 unit voices and 55 ranks of pipes, controlled by 357 stop keys from a four-manual (Accompaniment, Orchestral, Solo and Bombard) console, and a total of 4,139 pipes ••• all of which makes for an extraordinarily versatile organ, as well as a thrilling demonstration of the Mercury LIVING PRESENCE recording technique. The organ is housed in two chambers, one on each side of the stage, speaking directly into the room through open grills. The console is in a small gallery over the main entrance. Each chamber contains a complete diapason chorus; the right played from the Bombard (top) manual, the left from the Accompanimental (lower) manual. Minor choruses are obtained by a judicious combination of the straight and unit ranks. Also featured are multiple ranks of strings and flutes, a brass chorus of commanding power, numerous imitative orchestral reeds and an unusually large percussion family including chimes, harp, marimba harp, vibra harp, celesta, xylophone, glocken· spiel, drums, snare drums, cymbals and

others. The shape and dimensions of the Ballroom (181 feet long, 128 feet wide, a ceiling height of 75 feet, and a capacity of 5,000), combined with its hard maple dance floor provide maximum exploitation of the organ's multicolored personality. . Robert Elmore, distinguished organist, choirmaster and composer, making his recording debut on Mercury Living Presence series, is thoroughly at home in the horseshoe console of the Ballroom organ. This is not surprising in view of the fact that he has concertized extensively throughout the United States and Europe since the Thirties and has performed on countless varieties of organs ranging from the Baroque to the latest electro-pneumatically controlled instruments. Elmore is presently organist and choirmaster of the Central Moravian Church of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, having formerly been organist and director of music at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia for seventeen years. He also heads the organ department at the Philadelphia Conservatory of Music . A varied program has been chosen by Robert Elmore to expose the versatility and power of the remarkable Ballroom Organ, from the stirring "orchestration" of Stars and Stripes, to Kreisler's familiar melodies, Marche Champetre—a delightful evocation of French march rhythms of the 18th century featuring pipe and drum effects, the majestic Trumpet Voluntary, and rising to a climax of virtuosity in Elmore's own Fantasy on Nursery Themes.

Written 1956

Boardwalk Pipes

Robert Elmore, Organ

- 1 The Stars And Stripes Forever
- 2 Stars In My Eyes
- 3 Liebesfreud
- 4 Old Refrain
- 5 Marche Champêtre
- 6 Trumpet Voluntary
- 7 Fantasy On Nursery Themes

Recorded by Mercury Records
Performed on the ballroom organ at the Atlantic City Convention Hall.
Recorded November 23-24, 1956.



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