

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAPA CELEBRATES THE OHIO THEATRE'S 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
WITH A FREE CONCERT FEATURING  
**CLARK WILSON**  
AND THE OHIO'S MIGHTY MORTON THEATRE ORGAN**

***Food Donations Collected in Lieu of Admission***

In celebration of the Ohio Theatre's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, CAPA presents a nostalgic Sunday afternoon of "Mighty Morton" theatre organ music with Clark Wilson. Wilson, well-known to Columbus audiences as the official organist of CAPA's Summer Movie Series, will play a selection of popular tunes from the 1920s, when the Ohio Theatre first opened, through the 1980s. Audience members will get a live, bird's eye view of Wilson's talented fingers on a large projection screen via an above-keyboard camera. A second camera will be mounted inside the organ to showcase the inner workings of the massive instrument.

CAPA is proud to present Clark Wilson at the **Ohio Theatre** (39 E. State St.) on **Sunday, April 13, at 3 pm. Admission is FREE. CAPA will be accepting food donations for the Mid-Ohio FoodBank at the door.** Suggested food items include canned meats (tuna, beef or poultry), canned vegetables, canned fruit, grains (oatmeal, boxed pasta, or rice), peanut butter, complete meals (beef or chicken stew, ravioli), cereal, and macaroni and cheese.

**About the Ohio Theatre**

When Scottish-born architect, Thomas W. Lamb, designed the Ohio Theatre, he envisioned "a palace for the average man." Opened in 1928 as a Loew's movie house, the Ohio Theatre was a 2,779-seat Spanish-Baroque masterpiece complete with its own orchestra and theatre organ. In addition to movies, live stage shows touring on the Loews circuit found a home on the Ohio stage. During the heyday of vaudeville, many top performers crossed the Ohio's stage, including Milton Berle, Ray Bolger, Cab Calloway, Buddy Ebsen, Martha Raye, Jean Harlow, Ginger Rogers, Kate Smith, and a young emcee with a violin named Jack Benny.

To decorate and furnish the Ohio, Loew's chose Anne Dornan, one of the first women to graduate from the Columbia School of Architecture. Dornan traveled around the world to select art and furnishings, even going on a safari to find appropriate decorations for the "Africa Corner" in the lower lounge of the Ohio. Approximately \$1 million was spent on art and furnishings, which was more than the cost of the building itself!

The magnificent Morton theater organ was also installed in 1928 at a cost of \$21,000. It is equipped with a number of sound effects made by bells, cymbals, drums, whistles and marbles (to make the sound of waves). The pipes and sound effects for the organ are located behind the large gold drapes on either side of the stage.

The Ohio Theatre thrived as a movie house until the suburban sprawl of the 1960s drew traffic out of downtown. Like many grand theatres of the past, the Ohio was headed for demolition. In 1969, the citizens of central Ohio mounted a "Save the Ohio" campaign, raising an unprecedented \$2 million in less than a year. The newly formed Columbus Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA) subsequently purchased and renovated the theatre, creating a home for Columbus' performing arts institutions that to this day remains one of the busiest performing arts facilities in Ohio.

Today, the Ohio Theatre is home to The Columbus Symphony Orchestra, BalletMet, Broadway Across America, and more than 100 CAPA events each year including music from all genres and corners of the world, dance, theater, comedy, children's entertainment, and the time-honored Summer Movie Series. The Ohio Theatre's lush interior, excellent acoustics, and state-of-the-art stage facilities have made it a favorite of performers and patrons alike, and further renovations to the backstage and dressing rooms have guaranteed that the Ohio Theatre will continue its grand tradition as the "Official Theatre for the State of Ohio."

### **About Clark Wilson**

Ohio native Clark Wilson began his musical training at age 9. While growing up, he accompanied numerous stage musicals and was organist at several churches. He was listed in "Who's Who in the Midwest," "Who's Who in Executives and Professionals," and "Men of Achievement." He was also awarded Life Member status in the International Tri-M Music Honor Society.

After several years with the Schantz Organ Company as a reed voicer and tonal finisher, Clark's professional playing career began with his appointment to the featured organist post at Pipe Organ Pizza in Milwaukee (WI). He has since been on the playing staffs at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis (IN) and Pipes and Pizza in Lansing (IL). He is also currently on staff with Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa (AZ), and assisted with the planning and installation of their showpiece organ, the largest Wurlitzer organ in the world.

Clark's recording credits include seven albums. He has given all-transcription recitals for the American Guild of Organists, played for an Organ Historical Society convention, performed at numerous national and regional conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society, and

gave a series of highly-lauded workshops for Pipe Organ Encounters. He has also been a visiting lecturer on theatre organ and silent picture accompaniment for the Indiana University organ department.

Clark has performed in the US, Canada, Australia, and England, and done extensive silent film accompaniment, including New York's Chautaugua Institution, the Packard Foundation's Stanford Theatre, UCLA, and Atlanta's Fox Theatre premier of the restored *Metropolis*.

Annually, Clark accompanies a silent picture on the organ series of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. He is also scoring for commercial release on Kino International, and has performed at both the Cinequest and San Francisco Silent Film Festival, as well as for the Los Angeles Conservancy.

Clark is the resident organist and organ conservator for the Ohio Theatre, and also re-launched the renowned Chicago Theatre's landmark Wurlitzer, heading the professional crew that began restoration on the historic instrument.

Along with a busy concert schedule, Wilson runs his own pipe organ business and is in demand as a tonal consultant and finisher of both theatre and classical pipe organs. He has received both the Technician of the Year and Organist of the Year awards from the American Theatre Organ Society, the only person to have been awarded both titles, and his time is now equally divided between concert and technical work. He has been professionally involved with more than 100 organ installations throughout North America and England, and has provided consulting and voicing expertise for several different organ companies.

[www.clarkwilson.net](http://www.clarkwilson.net)

### **About the Mid-Ohio FoodBank**

Since 1980, the Mid-Ohio FoodBank has provided more than 388 million pounds of food and other grocery products for hungry people in our community, keeping the food shelves stocked for a network of more than 550 emergency food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, senior dining centers, day care and after-school enrichment programs.

The Mid-Ohio FoodBank is a member of America's Second Harvest, the nation's largest non-governmental, domestic hunger relief organization. As a member, they follow the network guidelines and are monitored periodically to ensure the highest standards of charitable food distribution are upheld.

From their 65,000 sq. ft. facility, the Mid-Ohio FoodBank distributes more than two million pounds of groceries every month, enough food to provide 40,000 meals each day. Food industry partners, including retailers, growers, manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and food service businesses, make that possible.

In addition, food is made available through federal and state programs, and the FoodBank also depends heavily on local food drives.

[www.midohiofoodbank.org](http://www.midohiofoodbank.org)

The **Ohio Arts Council** helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. CAPA also appreciates the support of **The Columbus Foundation**, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the **Greater Columbus Arts Council**, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973.

Owner/operator of downtown Columbus' magnificent historic theatres (Ohio Theatre, Palace Theatre, Southern Theatre) and manager of the Riffe Center Theatre Complex (Columbus) and the Shubert Theater (New Haven, CT), **CAPA** is an award-winning presenter of national and international performing arts and entertainment. For more information, visit [www.capa.com](http://www.capa.com).

### **CALENDAR LISTING**

**CAPA presents a FREE THEATRE ORGAN CONCERT with CLARK WILSON**

**Sunday, April 13, 3 pm**

**Ohio Theatre (39 E. State St.)**

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