

Rod Blackmore's
AUSTRALASIAN THEATRE ORGANS

New South Wales section



Best known location:

Mecca Theatre, Kogarah

*formerly of the ABC Ritz Theatre, Richmond,
England. Currently in private storage*

Wurlitzer theatre organ

Opus No. 2223

Style UNN3

3 manuals, 8 ranks

Wurlitzer opus 2223 opened at the *Ritz* theatre, Richmond, England on 28th January 1938. It is recorded as being a “rebuild”. According to Judd Walton’s *Wurlitzer Revised Installations List* the style designation UNN3 (or Union #3) was specified by the committee of the Cinema Organ Society of England at the suggestion of Mr. Farny Wurlitzer to indicate that it was one of six models built only for export to England. It is recorded that the organ was sold to theatre organist Len Rawle in January 1972, where the console for a time was connected as a “slave” to Len’s residence 3/19 *Wurlitzer* organ.

In 1975 this organ was bought and imported by Phil Doyle, proprietor of the *Mecca Theatre, Kogarah* (a southern suburb of Sydney). The “Mecca” had formerly been known as the *Victory* theatre and had housed a 2/7 *Christie* theatre organ from 1928 to 1971. The Wurlitzer opened at the Mecca theatre on 15th July 1978 with theatre organist Margaret Hall at the console. Margaret (pictured above) remained in residence for 4 years.

The organ was installed in two chambers. The console, which was painted gold, was installed to the left of the stage.

In the early 1990s the organ was bought by enthusiast Alan Tranter, joining in storage with the other organs owned by him: the 4/19 Wurlitzer opus 1902 from Melbourne’s *Regent* theatre, and the 2/7 *Christie* from the *Victory* theatre, Kogarah.

The eight pipe ranks originally at the *Ritz* theatre were:

French Trumpet, Diaphonic Diapason, Tibia Clausa,
Clarinet, Saxophone, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, Flute.

Post-1945 the Clarinet was replaced by an English Horn rank from the 3/10 *Wurlitzer* of the *Dominion* theatre, Walthamstow.

The installation at the *Mecca* was as follows:

Main chamber: Open Diapason, Gamba, Gamba Celeste,
Flute, Kinura

Solo chamber: Tibia Clausa, French Trumpet, Brass Saxophone

