

# TIBIA

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*Please join us in celebrating another fabulous year of First-Class entertainment with internationally acclaimed organist Alessandro Pittorino!*

The monthly journal of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia - Queensland Division Inc.

[www.tosaq.com.au](http://www.tosaq.com.au)

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**TOSA QUEENSLAND was established on  
26 Feb 1964**

**Unless otherwise noted, our daytime meetings are held from 2 pm at Kelvin Grove State College Theatre, corner of Tank Street & Victoria Park Road, Kelvin Grove 4059 — ALL WELCOME!**

[www.tosaq.com.au](http://www.tosaq.com.au)



*Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily that of the TOSAQ committee, its membership or the Society's policy.*

## COMING UP:

### Practice Nights

Held at Kelvin Grove State College Theatre from 7.30pm. Come along and have a play— all welcome! Enjoy a cuppa with fellow players. Listening / playing guests' welcome.

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March

The 2025 calendar is now available in this edition. Some artists are still to be confirmed. Tickets for TOSAQ events can be booked on line by visiting

<https://www.tosaq.com.au/whats-on/>

#### **For your consideration.**

TOSAQ accepts bequests and tax deductible donations to assist in the continuation of presenting Theatre Organ music to our members and the wider public audience. More details on how to do this are included at the end of this newsletter.

#### **Make Alessandro's show your opportunity to help set up for concerts?**

Your committee is always open to welcome more volunteers to set up the hall for our major events. Despite the professional appearance of our shows, there is always room for you to bring fresh ideas to our shows. It is always rewarding to be a part of the big show and you don't necessarily need special skills.

You may have a passing interest in stagecraft, table decorating or catering. There is room for you!

Please contact anyone on committee if you would like to find out how it all happens.

Tickets for TOSAQ events can be booked on line by visiting

<https://www.tosaq.com.au/whats-on/>

## Music on Sundays with Alessandro Pittorino

A Spectacular Start to 2025!

Sunday 2 March 2025 2pm



Join us for an unforgettable afternoon as TOSAQ launches its 2025 'Music on Sundays' series with internationally acclaimed organist Alessandro Pittorino! Performing on the magnificent Christie Cinema Pipe Organ at Kelvin Grove State College Hall, Alessandro brings his signature vibrant and theatrical style to Brisbane audiences.

Fresh from a highly successful 2025 tour at Brisbane City Hall, Sydney and Melbourne Town Halls, and with an upcoming performance at the Capri Theatre in South Australia,

Alessandro is a true crossover artist, seamlessly blending classical mastery with show-stopping Broadway energy.

### **Broadway & Stage Favorites**

Everything's Coming Up Roses (Gypsy)

Cabaret (Cabaret)

Selections from Wicked

### **Orchestral & Classical Spectaculars**

Die Fledermaus Overture – Johann Strauss II

Danse Macabre – Saint-Saëns

Experience the magic of cabaret-style seating, multi-camera projection for an up-close view of the performance, and enjoy a complimentary drink on arrival with afternoon tea at interval.

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our beloved Christie Cinema Pipe Organ at Kelvin Grove with an electrifying performance by one of Australia's most exciting organists!

Experience the magic of cabaret-style seating, multi-camera projection for an up-close view of the performance, and enjoy a complimentary drink on arrival with afternoon tea at interval.

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our beloved Christie Cinema Pipe Organ at Kelvin Grove with an electrifying performance by one of Australia's most exciting organists!

### **Tickets**

General Admission – \$40

Concession – \$35

TOSAQ Members – \$30

Primary & Secondary Students – \$10

Children – Free

Date: Sunday 2 March

Venue: Kelvin Grove State College Hall

Tickets: <https://www.tosaq.com.au/events/alessandro2025/>

Alessandro's full biography appears later in this edition



I'm thrilled to write my first President's Report for 2025!

Following the incredible success of our 60th Anniversary year in 2024, we now move into yet another milestone celebration—this time, marking the 50th Anniversary of our beloved Christie Cinema Pipe Organ housed within the Kelvin Grove State College. This historic occasion will be celebrated with electrifying events and performances from some of the most exciting organists in the world!

### **Music on Sundays with Alessandro Pittorino - A Spectacular Start to 2025!**

Be sure to secure your tickets now for our first major event of the year, featuring the sensational talent of young Perth organist Alessandro Pittorino. Fresh from a highly successful 2024 tour, performing at Brisbane City Hall, Sydney and Melbourne Town Halls, and with an upcoming concert for TOSA SA on their Capri Theatre's Wurlitzer, Alessandro is a true crossover artist. His unique ability to blend classical mastery with show-stopping Broadway energy makes him one of the most dynamic performers on the international scene today.

For his TOASQ debut, Alessandro presents *Symphonic*, a dynamic program featuring orchestral transcriptions, Broadway favourites, and cinematic masterpieces. This is a concert not to be missed—get your tickets now and experience one of the most exciting artists of his generation live at the Christie!

### **December AGM & Club Day**

Thank you to everyone who attended the December AGM and Club Day. A special thanks to Vice President Rick Whatson for overseeing proceedings while Debbie Fitzsummons and I were performing at the TOSA SA Capri Theatre for their final concert event of the year.

This was our second performance trip to the Capri Theatre—thank you to all TOSA SA members and friends who came out to support the event and made us feel so welcome. Your hospitality was next level. It was a truly special occasion, made even more memorable when Debbie secretly arranged for my parents to surprise me in the audience. It was an unforgettable moment, and I look forward to sharing our music with you all again soon.

### **2025 Membership Renewals**

Our 2025 Membership Form is included at the end of this newsletter. I encourage all members to renew their membership as soon as possible to assist the committee in managing finances and ensuring our operating costs are covered for the year ahead. Your support is vital in maintaining the work we do and keeping the magic of theatre organ music alive.

### **A Great Year Ahead**

Our Tibia editor, Rob Weismantel, has once again put together a fantastic newsletter to kick off the year. Thank you, Rob, for your continued enthusiasm and dedication. We have an exciting year ahead, filled with music, celebration, and community—let's make it a great one!

“Another Year, Another Milestone – Celebrating Music, Community, and 50 Years of the TOSAQ Christie!”

See you at the Christie!

Brett Kavanagh  
TOSAQ President

TOSAQ President



# TOSAQ Gold Coast News

## TOSAQ Member House Parties 2024

February 16th John Buchanan – Southport

Gold Coast and Brisbane members are invited host home parties and this can be arranged by contacting Gary Ivory. We try to have one party each month to keep the tradition, music and fellowship alive. Gary can be contacted by email on pengary1@onthenet.com.au

Dear Fellow TOSAQ Members, 2025 is upon us with our first musical afternoons well in the pipe line.

There is no doubt our get togethers help us all stay disciplined with our playing, connected with like-minded people and relaxed in good company.

TOSAQ has always offered a great deal to participants with minds staying nimble along with our fingers. The enjoyment of music which often starts in childhood and hopefully with some good teaching along the way makes all the difference to the quality of our lives.

John Buchanan will host the first musical afternoon in February with Pam Webb set to host in March. April is yet to be announced while Graham and Shirley will host the May Musical Afternoon.

“Music creates social cohesion, it speaks to all when words can fail, and wherever you go in the world, it is understood. Music is a universal gift and its power to connect people is without question. It is an art form with human interaction at its centre.” (Five reason why everyone should have music in their lives)

Make the effort in 2025 and enjoy the rewards.

Musical Afternoons Coming Up-

February 16th John Buchanan – Southport  
March 16th Pam Webb -Carrara  
April – to be announced  
May – Graham Scarr and Shirley Strong - Carrara

If you are able to host any of these months please let me know asap

April  
June  
July  
August  
Sept

Gary Ivory



## The future of organ music is in the hands of the innovative players



At 25, Titus Grenyer, City Organist for the City of Sydney and head organist at the University of Sydney, is one of few young people playing the organ and he thinks people need to innovate.

"Culturally there is a decline in the organ, a lot of churches are closing, and a lot of organs are not being used anymore but that is actually a window of opportunity for players and audiences," he said.

"A lot of organs and churches now belong in private hands and there are organist jobs no longer associated with the church but rather used for private concerts.

Grenyer suggests it's about having an open mind.

"I think we assume that young people don't have the patience for such things; what's more likely is they are being distracted by other things," he said.

Grenyer, who composes his own music, plays contemporary sounds focusing on music that people know, such as film scores and video game music, and he's not alone.

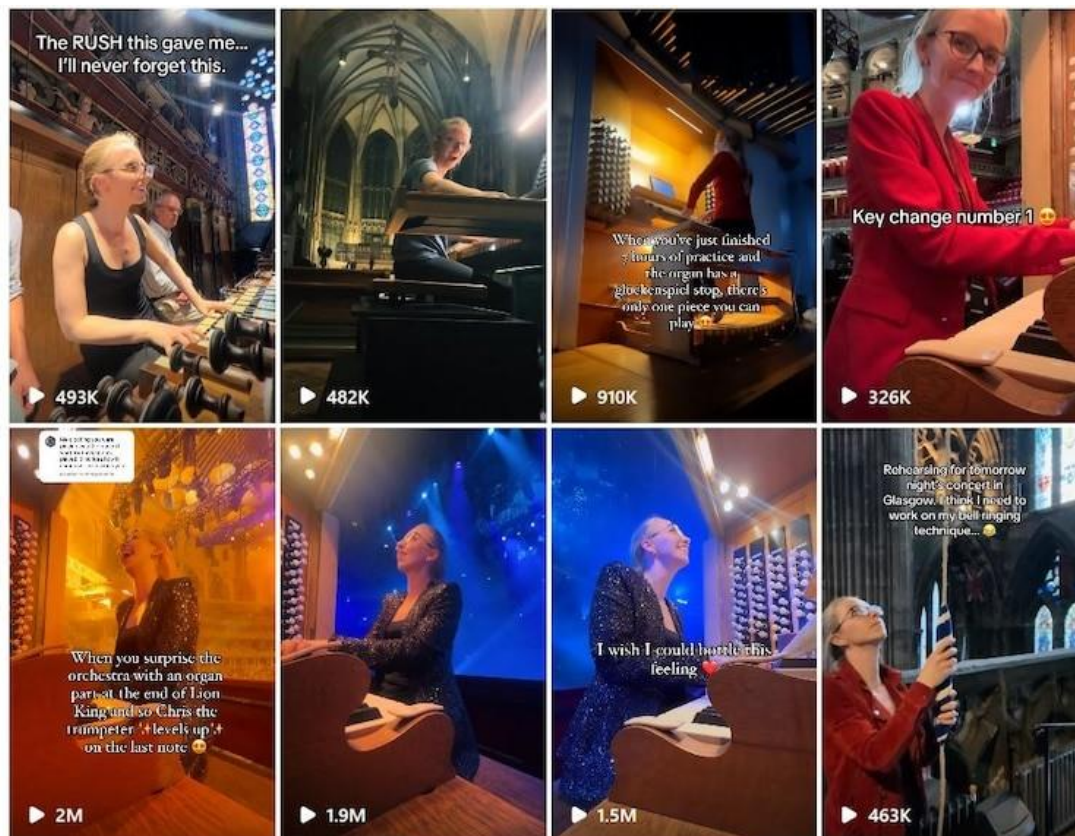
British TikTok musician Anna Lapwood, who works with popular bands while playing pipe organs across the world, is in high demand.

Anna Lapwood is drawing attention to the versatility of the pipe organ. (*Instagram: annalapwoodorgan*)

"She is demonstrating you do not need to be a virtuoso but rather you just need to play music people know and amaze them," Grenyer said.

"For me, it's about bringing people in. The finer appreciation for the instrument and the music written for it can come later; once they are there, my audiences are amazed with the sounds, particularly at Sydney Town Hall.

"It has five manuals and a 64-foot-long pipe which is the longest in the world. There is only one other in the world of that size, and we are very lucky in Sydney to have that."



The article was adapted by Robert Weismantel from an article published by Sara Moss from the ABC Illawarra.

### Music education helps improve children's ability to learn

From an article by Anita Collins

What if a large number of scientific studies found there was one activity that could improve our cognitive function, help our memory systems work effectively, help us learn language, help us moderate our emotional states, help us solve complex problems and help our brains be healthier into later life? What if that activity was also enjoyable for everyone involved?

Learning music provides children with the cognitive foundations for effective learning, which ultimately helps them become confident learners, ready to make the most of their education. What we now know is that learning a musical instrument and foundation music education skills — such as clapping in time, singing in tune and moving to music — are some of the most complex cognitive activities the brain can undertake. They involve the auditory, motor and visual cortices communicating at an astonishingly fast rate, while the cognitive, reward and sensory networks are sharing information, and the perception, emotion and cognition networks are making personal meaning from all the logical information the brain is processing.

After doing something so complex, our brains look at other tasks like reading, problem solving and conceptualisation

The list of skills and abilities that music learning develops is still very long, but it has started to be sorted under three main areas: language development, executive skills and social skills development.

### How learning music improves brain development

The parts of the brain that are responsible for learning music and language are overlapping.

This means we hear music as language when we are babies, and we use that understanding to learn how to decode language and speak it.

This is why musically trained children tend to acquire language quicker, learn how to read earlier and develop comprehension skills earlier. This is the very foundation of all learning at school: the ability to use language.



The act of learning music requires children to use many different parts of their brains at once. One of the areas that gets a great workout is the prefrontal cortex, where our executive functions live — the area where we very slowly, through our entire school career, learn how to manage ourselves. Music learning requires the use of that system just a little bit every single time we pick up an instrument and do a musical activity. It is the slow, permanent and effective development of the most complex part of our brains.

Playing music in a group, whether keeping a beat or playing a symphony, requires subtle, non-verbal social skills. These are the manners and explicit behaviours we work so hard to teach our children, whether as parents or teachers. These are the subtle, deeply human social skills that employers seek when they interview someone.

These serve musically trained children well into adulthood as they develop solid relationships, manage their wellbeing, and are empathic and compassionate towards others.

### **The Big Myth about Music Education**

Very often I hear parents say, “My children aren’t going to be concert pianists so why should they keep learning music?”

It’s a fair question but one that’s informed by old thinking and a lack of understanding of the new research. Music is a wonderful art form and one that will enrich your children regardless of how proficient they become.

Learning music to pursue it as a profession is not the point of music education for every child in school. Learning music provides children with the cognitive foundations for effective learning, which ultimately helps them become confident learners, ready to make the most of their education.

**Dr Anita Collins** is an award-winning educator and researcher in music education and brain development. She has interviewed over 100 neuromusical researchers in Canada, USA, Scandinavia and Europe and is a TEDx speaker and TED-Ed writer.

### **TOSAQ involvement**

TOSAQ owns, maintains and presents the Christie at Kelvin Grove college to its members and the wider public audience.

The Christie is the only privately owned pipe organ in Queensland that is accessible to the public for practice and members participation. Brisbane and Gold Coast members host home organ parties which connect people through music and offer social integration. Gary Ivory is our Home Party co-ordinator.

Members are invited to participate in hall set up and concert presentation activities for the 2025 season. This is an opportunity to be part of the TOSAQ production team. Your ideas are welcome!

TOSAQ produced nine radio programs in 2019 for 4MBSFM Silver memories which is broadcast via subscription to aged care nursing homes throughout Australia. The primary focus of the programs was to connect with Dementia patients and bring back happy memories of youthful years. Research by 4MBS and medical specialists identified a calming and safe environment for listeners. Some patients only respond and show contentment while playing or listening to music.

TOSAQ also works closely with the music teachers and students of Kelvin Grove College to introduce the students to the thrill of playing the Christie Theatre Organ.



# ALESSANDRO PITTORINO



Lauded as a “virtuoso organist and a top-flight musician” in a 5 star review by Stewart Smith in Australia’s *Limelight Magazine*, ALESSANDRO PITTORINO is an Australian musician who is increasingly becoming one of the most exciting, invigorating, and innovative organists in the world today. Commencing the organ at the age of 5, he has gone on to be the only Australian organist, and one of few Australian Masters graduates of The Juilliard School. There he studied with GRAMMY Award-winning organist, Paul Jacobs.

As a performer, Alessandro combines a technical mastery with an expanded and diverse repertoire on the organ, resulting in a wide berth of musical experiences. Acclaimed as “Australia’s Wunderkind Organist” by ABC TV (Australia), he has performed for the likes of Lady Gaga and Nicole Kidman, has toured extensively throughout the USA and Australia, and has been heralded by Germany’s *BR-Klassik* as an “Extraordinary young organist”. Alessandro has been a featured organist in major performances which include Lincoln Center’s annual Fashion Gala at Alice Tully Hall (NYC, USA), Spreckels Organ Pavilion (San Diego, USA), Longwood Gardens (Kennett Square, USA), and the critically acclaimed annual Halloween Silent Film Show in Perth, WA. In 2021, he was the featured organ soloist with the Perth Chamber Orchestra, where his performance of the Poulenc Organ Concerto heralded as a “mastery of the piece and the instrument” by conductor Dr. Margaret Pride. As the regular season organist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, he has been praised for his “sensitive and transformative playing”, as well as “injecting energy and power”, and has been featured in such performance highlights as the Saint-Saëns *Organ Symphony*, *Stauss’ Also Sprach Zarathustra*, as well the requiem settings of Britten and Brahms.

As a church musician, Alessandro has held major positions in Australia and in the USA. In 2017 he was awarded first prize in the American Guild of Organists New York City Chapter Hymn and Repertoire playing competition. In New York, he played at a number of churches and Cathedrals, and held positions at Christ United Methodist Church (Assistant Organist) and Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church (Director of Music). At the Catholic Church, he established an extensive performance series utilizing the various spaces on the church campus. In the first year alone, the newly established “Arts at Blessed Sacrament” mounted 55 performances, featuring up and coming performers from the Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, Mannes School of Music, as well as other colleges from around the country. From orchestral performances, to dance choreographies, to collaborations across the field, this series hit the Upper West

Side by storm and was a major hit, even resulting in the purchase of a Steinway model D concert grand piano, and installation of a new organ in the Church.

Alessandro currently resides in Perth, Western Australia, where his extensive organ studio is indicative of his passion about organ education. He is the School Organist for John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School (JSRACS), where he is responsible for accompanying the acclaimed Chapel Choir of the School, as the other ensembles. As well, he is directly involved in the training of the choristers, and is responsible for the musicianship training of the choristers. Notable performances have included a collaborative performance of Maurice Durufle's Requiem with Aquinas College Schola, and a special fundraising performance for a Ukraine Relief effort.

As one of the few professional organists in Australia, Alessandro is regularly called upon to perform on some of the great pipe organs around the country, as well as bring the organ to audiences in more unconventional methods. Taking full advantage of advanced digital music technology, he is the only organist to have performed in Kings Park, the largest inner-city park in the world, for the Uniting Church in the City, Perth. As well, he is the only organist to have performed in Sydney's prestigious Resonant Bodies Festival at Carriageworks with acclaimed American Soprano, Ariadne Greif. In more conventional settings, Alessandro has performed at the Sydney Town Hall, Brisbane City Hall, and Melbourne Town Hall. He has also performed for online audiences, notably in the annual Cambridge Bach-a-thon festival (UK), and the Peace Studio (USA).

In July 2023, Alessandro was invited to take up the position of Artist in Residence at the Uniting Church in the City, Perth. There he has been responsible for the establishment of the Perth Organ Series, as well as a new orchestral concert series based at Wesley Church and Trinity Church. The first major concert will be Mozart's Requiem, which will include a choir of professional and school students, as well as a professional orchestra.

Most recently, Alessandro was appointed to the role of Master of Music at St Mary's Cathedral, Perth.



Soprano Daniella Sicari, mezzo soprano Caitlin Cassidy and organist Alessandro Pittorino had been building their international careers on concert platforms and opera houses in Europe, the UK, the US and Australia.

Photo Credit: Leigh Downsborough and published in the West Australian

## TOSA CONTACTS

### **TOSA ACT (Canberra)**

3/8 Compton  
Albert Hall, Canberra  
Contact: [tosasec@emailme.com.au](mailto:tosasec@emailme.com.au)

### **TOSA New South Wales**

Orion Theatre Wurlitzer 3/17;  
Marrickville Town Hall (TH) Wurlitzer 2/11;  
West Ryde Anglican Church 2/10 Christie  
Events Contact: Geoff Brimley (02) 6351 3122.

### **TOSA Victoria - MTO**

Kingston TH Wurlitzer 4/21;  
Malvern TH Compton 3/17;  
Capitol Theatre Wurlitzer 3/16;  
Coburg TH Christie/B & H 2/9;  
Regent Wurlitzer 4/36.

### **Warragul Theatre Organ Society (VIC)**

Wurlitzer 3/10.

### **TOSA South Australia**

Tuesdays and weekends TOSA (SA) members play the 4/29 Wurlitzer in their Capri Theatre, Goodwood Road, Goodwood (08) 8272 1177.

### **TOSA Western Australia**

3/12 Compton.  
John Leckie Music Centre  
25 Melvista Ave, Nedlands.

### **Stirling Productions (WA)**

Wurlitzer 3/21  
Perth, Western Australia.  
John Fuhrmann on (08) 9447 9837.

### **TOSA Tasmania**

Like TOSA Tasmania's new Facebook Group for the latest happenings on the apple isle.  
[www.facebook.com/groups/tosatas](http://www.facebook.com/groups/tosatas)

**Donations and Bequests—** Our Vision is unlimited, but our funding is not. Your support is vital to ensure we can continue to support emerging organists and ensure our magnificent Christie Cinema Pipe Organ allows audiences a glimpse back through time, into the jazzy, carefree nights of the golden age of cinema. Donate via the PayPal link on the TOSAQ website or contact the Secretary to discuss payment options.

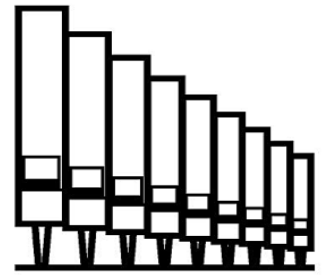
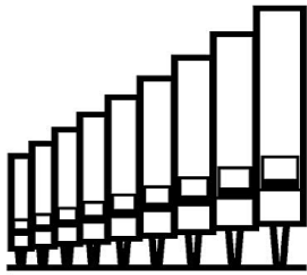


Donations and Bequests of \$2 or more are tax-deductible. The Theatre Organ Society of Australia Queensland Division Public Fund is a tax-deductible fund listed on the Australian Government's Register of Cultural Organisations maintained under Subdivision 30-B of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. An official tax-deductible receipt will be issued for all donations.

Donations can be included with your membership or at any time throughout the year.



# Theatre Organ Society of Australia - Queensland



## Membership Application / Renewal 2025

APPLICANT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Print)

PARTNER'S NAME \* \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

**(Required for full colour version of the monthly Tibia Newsletter)**

TELEPHONE (Home) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE \_\_\_\_\_

❖ I/we hereby apply to become/remain a member/members of the **Theatre Organ Society of Australia Queensland Division** (TOSA Qld Inc.) and state that I/we will abide by the rules of the association if accepted as a member.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 2025

**Parents Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 2025 **(Required for under15 years)**

Membership will be granted by the management committee upon receipt of this written application. The only qualification for membership is a genuine interest in the theatre pipe organ as a means of entertainment.

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

DOUBLE \* \$60     SINGLE \$35     LONG DISTANCE \$30     JUNIOR (**FREE**- 15Yrs & Under)

I enclose payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional) donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Cash / Cheque / Transfer / Online** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Donations of \$2 or more  
are Tax Deductable.)

- Direct Bank Transfer Information - **remember to include your name as the reference**

**Account Name** Theatre Organ Society of Aust Qld Divn Inc.

**BSB Number** 638 070

**Account Number** 5537819

**Reference** <insert your name>

- Cheques should be made payable to: Theatre Organ Society of Australia – Qld. Divn. Inc.

- This signed form and payment can be posted to:

The Secretary  
TOSA Qld Divn Inc.  
4167/37c  
Harbour Road  
Hamilton Qld 4007

Receipt Book Number (Cash / Cheque): \_\_\_\_\_ Electronic Transfer / Online Reference Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Other groups of interest

### Brisbane City Hall Organ Concerts

Check the Brisbane City Hall events website for further details  
[click here to read more](#)



Don't forget that the Organ Society of Queensland (OSQ) has interesting classical organ links and information.

Visit their web page:

<https://www.organsociety.com.au/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/organsocietyqld/>



**Gallery of Modern Art** web page has a wonderful description of the Wurlitzer and upcoming screenings. [Click here to read more](#)



### Majestic Theatre Pomona

Current screenings and information on the theatre and organ can be found here  
<https://www.themajestictheatre.com.au/>

[The Majestic Theatre Pomona](#)

