



National Park Service
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Death Valley National
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Death Valley News Release

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SCOTTY'S CASTLE ORGAN CONCERT In Death Valley National Park

Pipe organs like the Welte-Mignon Pipe Organ in Scotty's Castle were used to accompany silent films. By the time the organ was installed in the Scotty's Castle Music Room, talking movies had replaced silent films. This June, theatre organist Don Thompson will take participants back to the silent film era with an exciting repertoire that will entertain listeners of all ages. This unique concert venue is available one weekend each year, thanks in part to a crew of interns from historic preservation programs across the United States. In June, curatorial interns remove the historic furniture in the Music Room in Scotty's Castle. During their four week stay in Death Valley, interns clean Scotty's Castle and learn from National Park Service professionals how to care for museum collections.

The Welte-Mignon theater pipe organ features 1121 pipes, a grand piano, glockenspiel, xylophone, chimes, orchestra bells, sleigh bells, bird calls and a drum and cymbal assortment, and cost more than \$50,000 to purchase, deliver and install in 1928.

The dates for this year's concerts are June 11 & 12. There are only 40 seats for each concert and every performance in the past three years has sold out. The Friday night performance will be at 7:00 p.m. There will be two concerts on Saturday - seats are available for the 7:00 p.m. concert on Saturday, but the 5:30 p.m. performance has sold out. The ticket price will be \$35 per person and the proceeds support the annual maintenance and tuning of the pipe organ and the maintenance of the Deagan chimes in the Chimes Tower. To make reservations, call the Death Valley Natural History Association at (800)478-8564 ext 10. For more information call Scotty's Castle at (760) 786-2392 or check the website at www.nps.gov/deva.

Don Thompson started playing the organ in his teen years. His international career includes concerts all over Europe, the Middle East, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. In addition to his concert performances, Don played in many organ pizza parlors in the United States and Canada. He currently resides in Palm Springs, CA. For more information about Don Thompson, visit www.donthompson.org.

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