

's *Always* Conniff



Ray Conniff

6<sup>th</sup> November 1916 - 12<sup>th</sup> October 2002

*Somewhere My Love*



His music will live forever!

On August 29 I had a long conversation with Ray over the phone. It was to be the last time I spoke to him. He had just read the latest fan club magazine and told me he had really enjoyed each and every column - especially Serge's part of the Ray Conniff Story, which brought back many wonderful memories.

Ray sounded very much as usual. You could not notice that he had had a tough time trying to recover from the stroke he suffered in the Spring. Meanwhile, he had spent a month at a Stroke Center in Palm Springs, where he made great progress. Ray said he was feeling so much better and was full of hope. He had regained some feeling in his left hand and could already move toes on his left foot. Also, he was able to walk a few steps again. In September, Ray and Vera moved back to Palm Springs for another month of treatment. On 7th September Ray gave a long interview over the phone to radio presenter Jim Stone, which was used for a three hour radio show about his music and career. This must have been Ray's very last interview. It was broadcast in November.

Allegedly the last picture taken of Ray and published in "The Desert Sun" shows him during a sing-along at the Palm Springs Stroke Center. Johnny Mann was at the piano. Ray directed about 3 or 4 songs, one of them was "It's The Talk Of The Town". (Photo reproduced here by kind permission of the photographer.) Vera told me later that he was able to walk again with the help of a stick, and that he had made plans for a new record and even a tour.

Vera called me in the early evening of October 12. She was phoning from their cottage in San Diego, where Ray had had his fall and passed away. I was terribly shocked and devastated to learn the sad news, and so were all the fans who were informed immediately by email or phone. The club's representatives received calls from journalists worldwide and asked for confirmation of the news. Elias' interview became available as an audio file on the Internet, and many of Warren's statements were used for the articles published by the Associated Press. I put an Italian journalist onto Luciano in Rome, who spoke about Ray and his music on the air. Also Doug gave an interview or two, and Igor in Moscow had the pos-

sibility to host a couple of radio shows featuring Ray's music. I remember a call from Brazil during which I told the guy what I knew. Still under shock I also told him that while I was talking to him, Ray's daughter Tamara was on her way to Europe and that she did not know the sad news yet, because she still was on a plane. Well, see for yourselves in this special edition what became of this message. I was most puzzled to see that the newspaper wrote his wife Vera was on a flight to Switzerland.

Well, the message is clear: Do not believe everything you read. In this collection of articles from around the globe you can also read that Ray was the composer of the love theme from "Dr. Zhivago", that he was a trumpet player, that he was born in 1912, that he collaborated with The Fifth Dimension and Simon and Garfunkel and that he joined Columbia Records in 1951. Of course, none of this is true.

However, I decided to leave the articles I have collected, unchanged for reasons of authenticity. What counts is that he was remembered in all corners of the world, mostly in a fond way and that all writers and their articles reveal what a great musician he was and how much he influenced the history of music. For technical reasons it was impossible to reproduce articles from Japan, and some from Argentina, Germany and the States had to be omitted, too. Anyway, the ones included here are to give the fans an idea of what was published. I want to express my sincerest thanks to everybody who contributed to this collection. Special thanks go to Tamara Conniff and David Theriault who let me have the manuscripts of their speeches they gave at the funeral.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the ceremony on October 17, which was held at 2 p.m. at Pierce Bros. Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary in Los Angeles. (Ray is buried near Walter Matthau's grave.) However, a videotape kindly made for and sent to me at Vera's request, gave me an idea of the atmosphere. I was very touched by Tamara's eulogy, and when Dave spoke, the chapel was filled with laughter. (You'll find out why when you read his speech.) Then a neighbour spoke fondly of Ray. This was followed by a few words from John Crean, Ray's long-time friend. The club was represented by

Warren Pischke. Also attending were two fans who kindly sent reports of the ceremony, featured in this memorial magazine. After the burial, everyone was invited to a reception at the "Olympic Collection", the venue where Ray's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated.

On November 6, which would have been Ray's 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, a memorial service was held at Nossa Senhora do Brasil Church, located in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. This was to pay tribute to Ray and his music. Tamara Conniff was present. Please read the original press release by Poladian Productions Ltd. featured in this publication. There you can read the schedule handed out to people who attended the service. Please also find an article about this event which features a small picture of Tamara Conniff and Manoel Poladian.

I also included condolence messages from quite a few fans from all over the world. I even received some from people who are not members of the fan club. A selection of these is featured on the last pages of this publication. Doug, Michael, Warren, Elias, Chris and Claudine received many more. It would have been impossible to include them all here.

As for Manoel Poladian, Ray's Brazil tour promoter and friend, he put the following note on his website:

***As festas no Céu ficarão mais alegres ainda!  
Na terra, suas músicas serão eternas!  
Ray Conniff - Ele Cumpriu Sua Missão...***

meaning: "Now the parties in Heaven will be happier. On Earth, his music will last forever. Ray Conniff - He is sadly missed..."

As for me, I am grateful for the fact that Ray and his music has had a great influence on my life. For example, I would not have made so many great friends (including him), I probably would not have shown too much interest in the English language - and thus I might have chosen a different career. He brought so much happiness into my life and all our lives. Therefore I would like to close this editorial with

Thankfully, *Hayfed*

P.S.: I must not forget to express my sincerest thanks to John Gay who made this project possible.

*Below: The above mentioned photograph taken by Allison McBee, who gave her permission to reproduce it here.*



A few years ago, I was sitting in an empty concert hall in Sao Paulo watching my dad rehearse his big band and eight singers. He had assembled the best musicians from New York to Los Angeles, many of whom I see here today. I watched him run back and forth between the saxophones and the trombones.

“Come on, make it pop,” he said. “Yea, get it swinging.”

My dad heard the music all perfectly in his head. He heard it all – every note and every nuance, for every instrument. He knew exactly how it was supposed to sound. And he knew how to communicate it to musicians. He could actually make the best players, even better. And I think every musician who ever played with him loved him and hated him at the same time. They loved him because he was a perfectionist and because his music could make the earth bounce. And they hated him because he was a perfectionist, because he always pushed for more. He was a musician’s musician – and he had the utmost respect and love for all the musicians and singers who ever played with him.

It was an amazing tour. My dad was 81 years old at the time, but on stage he jumped up and down like a 20-year old. I’ve never seen anyone with so much energy. He was happiest when he was on stage. He was the music – it filled him. And he fed off the audience. After a grueling two-hour concert, all the musicians would pile into the bus and go back to the hotel. But not my dad.

He would sit on the stage and sign autographs for the fans for another two hours. “Dad, you’re exhausted. We have to catch a 6:00am flight. You don’t have to sign autographs. Let’s go.” He smiled and said, “I have to, I promised.”

I remember one night I stood in the wings of the concert hall with my father’s biggest ally and dear friend, promoter and businessman extraordinaire Manoel Poladian,

who is here from Brazil. “Your father, he is the Maestro,” said Manoel. “He is our Maestro.”

Manoel and Dad simply understood each other. They respected and loved each other so much so that they could fight and then hug and make up within the hour. Their friendship has held strong for more than 30 years. Thanks to Manoel, Brazil became a home for my father and his music.

I also spent a lot of time during that tour standing at the soundboard during the concerts with one of my dad’s closest friends, sound engineer Dick Bogert. No one knew my dad’s sound better than Dick, who has worked with my dad on tours and albums for over 30 years. One night we both got choked up watching Dad perform “My Way.” “You’re dad is one of a kind,” said Dick. “He’s a force of nature.”

He wasn’t a Hollywood dad who left his wife and child at home while he traveled. We always went with him. And I was always allowed on stage with him. I remember being four years old, and every night during the sing-a-long, my mom would set me loose and I’d run across the stage into his arms and help him conduct the band.

His fans loved him as much as he loved them – and the king of the fans is the president of the Ray Conniff International Fan Club Manfred Thoenicke. I think Manfred knows more details about my dad’s recording career than my dad did. “Really, did I play trombone on that session?” he would ask Manfred.

“Yes Ray, in New York City in 1939.” Manfred traveled from his home in Germany to Brazil on numerous occasions to see my dad play. He really wanted to be here today, but was unable to attend because his wife is in the hospital.

Back home in Los Angeles, in between albums, he was just a dad. He liked to wear jeans and work on his cars. Our family vacations consisted of motor home trips with John

(continued ➔)

and Donna Crean and the never boring Crean clan. We'd camp out in the middle of the desert – weathering floods and heat, ride motorcycles and dune buggies, sit around the camp fire and tell stories, and my dad, always ready for a gag had a tradition of getting up really early in the morning, taking out his trombone and waking up the entire campsite with a rousing rendition of “Revelee.”

My dad always found great joy with his family. He cherished the time he spent with my brother Jimmy. I think Jimmy is most like my dad – the two of them share many of the same quirks especially an amazing enjoyment of driving long distances – my dad in the motor home and Jimmy in his 18 wheel truck. Dad often talked about his life when Jimmy and his other daughter Patty, who passed away a few years ago, were growing up and about their times together in Reseda and their adventures with a spirited poodle named Melee.

My dad also loved the ocean – it was his favorite place. He believed salt water could heal anything – from a cut to a wounded heart. His grandchildren are infected with the same Conniff love – all three live close to the beach.

He and my mother often went to Hawaii to visit his grand kids Jay and Laurie.

Dad marveled at Jay's expertise as a surfer and he often talked about the good times he had when Laurie joined him on a South American tour. He was also very proud of his grandchild Sean's creative pursuits and his dedication to AA – the two of them often attended meetings together. Dad also found wonder in his great grandchildren – Sean's sons Dillon and Taylor Ray; and Jay daughter's Marely. He was very much looking forward to meeting his newest great grand child, Jay's son Jeremy Michael.

He also loved his friends and neighbors – our Mt. Olympus family, which whom we have spent almost every holiday. He especially got a kick out of Christmas Eve at Bruce and Sumona Rosner's house and Bruce's off-key, off tempo, but always joyous X-mas sing a long.

Over the past few years, he and my mother found a second home in a Pennsylvania camp

ground named Country Haven. They would pile in the motor home, dogs and cats in tow, and drive across the country twice a year to spend a month in Amish country, where they would meet up with fellow campers and friends from New Jersey and New York including Marshall and Michelle Wilcoxen and Greg McBowman. My dad especially liked to watch the sun set over the rolling Pennsylvania Hills – dusk was his favorite time of day.

During the last few months of his life, dad found great solace at the Stroke Activity Center in Palm Springs – where he, thanks to my mom's dedication, the support of his dear friends Skip and Florence Creaser, and the stroke center staff and patients, was rapidly learning how to walk again.

He was a simple man. He liked simple things. But he always heard the music – we could be having a perfectly normal dinner and suddenly he would drift away and start singing to himself and then he'd grab a napkin and jot down some notes.

If I had a problem, if I was in trouble, my dad would drop everything to be with me. He taught me how to give your all to whatever your craft is. He taught me about having integrity and striving to be the best you can be. There are no words for how much I miss him. But, he is always with me, and his music will always be with the world.

Manoel said the other day, “Special persons like Ray, don't die – they just become one more star in the sky, shining above us and lightening our way down here.”

I would like to ask every one here to go home tonight and listen to some Ray Conniff music, take your family in your arms, and dance a little, rejoice that you knew this great man. I also ask that you tell your kids and grand kids your stories of my dad, tell them who he was, what he was like, play his music for them, make his memory live.

The night after he died, I had a dream that he came and sat next to me while I was sleeping. He was young again and he was happy.

Thanks for the music dad. Thank you for all the joy.



My name is David Theriault and I'm here with my incredibly beautiful wife Erin, a fellow Ray Conniff singer, or as Ray would introduce us on stage ... Dave Therio and his wife Er-in.

Let me begin by saying how honored I am to be standing before you having been asked to share a few words as a part of this memorial. I promise to keep it fairly brief, no longer than 45 minutes or so.

When Tamara and I spoke about today, she let me know that as much as this service is about the marking of Ray's passing, it is also a celebration about the incredibly full, entertaining, and rich life that he led, so to that end, some of my focus will be on a few of the lighter moments in the seventeen years that I knew Ray and had the privilege of working for him. Because one thing for sure is we know that Ray knew how to make us laugh, but also to cry, to dream, to shout, to dance, and to sing, to name just a few of the things he and his music have inspired in us.

Sunday morning, after I heard of Ray's death, I lied in bed wondering what I would say at a time such as this, and many things came to mind, as you might expect.

I thought of all the Ray Conniffisms that the singers and players have enjoyed throughout the years, some that Ray probably thought were funny and some he probably had no idea were humorous.

Ray's mind was always racing, thoughts flying in and out at a feverish pitch. And so on more than one occasion, as he was charging us to be focused on him, ready to play and sing, we might have heard this Rayism "One, Two, Three ... while we're stopped ..."

And although some might consider this next Rayism to be irreverent at an event such as this, it is one we will never forget, maybe because he used it so frequently in assorted configurations, but mostly because it was so darn funny that we could barely function in the wake of its use.

I'm gonna stand up here and everybody should watch me beat off

Nobody's watching me beat off.

I'm standin' up here beatin' off and nothin's happenin'

I suppose one of us could have pulled him aside and let him know what that phrase had come to mean in the English language – but nobody did, as far as I know.

I bring up these things not to mock Ray, but rather to highlight the intensity by which he lived, the singular focus of his existence, a mode that took away all of the clutter of the world and left him thinking about the music, just the music. His style of putting the singers into the roles of players was trend setting, and from what I have seen has spawned many imitators, including someone we've come to know as Perry Conniff Jr., also known as Perry LaMarca. But I think for Perry it is true what they say, that plagiar-

ism is the sincerest form of flattery, because I know how much he admired what Ray did.

There's another Ray story I thought of that illustrates the challenges of the language barrier that comes with foreign travel, and the level of trust that Ray had for people like Manoel Poladian, our Brazilian promoter. At the start of every tour, Ray would make up cue cards that would be placed at the foot of the stage, to remind him not only of the show order but also to give him a few jokes to tell. Manoel, and other Brazilians fed these jokes to him in Portuguese, and they were often timely, having to do with popular television shows or soccer stars of the day. Well one Brazilian TV hostess would sign off her show with a phrase that went something like, "Beijão, Beijão, Pao, Pao". Literally translated I think it meant, "kisses, kisses, loaf of bread, loaf of bread". Loaf of bread as in 'a baguette'. Well this seemed harmless enough, if not odd for it to be funny to Brazilians, but the laughter was indeed uproarious whenever Ray said it. I discovered, and I can't remember how, that Pao, or Baguette was a local euphemism for the male anatomy. I felt it was important to let Ray know what he was actually saying in this joke. "Kisses, Kisses, ... hmhm, ... hmhm". He was quite surprised and an immediate hunt for an alternate line was underway, which left Manoel disappointed, I must say.

Ray's role in my life is significant on many levels, for instance he likes to take credit for my wife Erin and I meeting on one of his tours. That wasn't entirely true, however. We had already known each other for a year or two before that fateful '86 Brazil trip but it is true that we did hook up on the tour, so he does deserve partial credit. After I got off the phone with Darryl, when he had called to tell me of Ray's passing, I went over to Erin and gave her a hug. She became quite silent as she began to tear up. A few moments later we began to talk about the significance of Ray in our lives, and ironically enough, the music was the least significant. It was about falling in love in Brazil, with the Ray Conniff tour as a backdrop. Having Ray and Vera attend our wedding a year later. Fifteen years later, by the way, we still have the lovely Braun coffee maker they gave us complete with the gold filter. We aren't coffee drinkers, of course, but there was no way we were going to exchange that gift from the Conniffs, and many of our guests have enjoyed drinking from it over the years. Then we toured as a married couple, were introduced on stage as a married couple. Erin did a concert while she was pregnant with Sam and he had his first onstage introduction, albeit while he was still in the womb, but hey, the great Ray Conniff introduced him. So our lives and the Ray Conniff experience are deeply enmeshed with one another, and always will be.

I felt loved by Ray, I got yelled at by Ray, I was praised by him, learned from him, saw a lot of the world because of him, took care of my family because of him,

saw him act like a vivacious, lively, active, good looking, charming 40 year old, much like myself, ... though he was eighty at the time, and I saw him on days he appeared to be enduring all of the ailments that come with being an octogenarian. One time, when we were on tour in Central America, we had a late concert that started about 10 or 11:00, I think. I believe we were in Ecuador. Well that put us in bed by about 2:00am and we had to be on the only flight from there to Guatemala City that departed about 6:00 or 7:00am. I think the bus was slated to leave the hotel at 5:30am. So needless to say, even the youngest of us were dragging our bodies to the bus, and then the airport terminal. Ray seemed to be in a mode, kind of like when you get up in the middle of the night to go to the bathroom, and you try to wake up just enough to get to the toilet and back so your trip back to sleep will be that much faster. I'm not sure he ever looked up, first of all, not wanting to strain his neck muscles and wake them up unnecessarily. So he kind of cruised from seating location to seating location, only when it was demanded of him, then would immediately plop himself down and tuck into a semi sleep state. Finally it came time to get on the plane. Ray usually traveled first class but for one reason or another, maybe because the flight was only 30 or 40 minutes long, Ray had been booked into coach. Well, given that he was refusing to wake up fully, he assumed he would be heading for first class, which he did, and plopped himself down in the first leather seat he came to. The flight attendant was politely looking for verification of Ray's seating assignment and he kept waving her off with some nonsensical growl and roll of his head. Well, as luck would have it, that seat assignment was not contested and Ray drifted happily off to sleep with little more incident.

I'm not sure if Ray's semi sleep state was because he was nearly eighty or just because he was Ray and was protesting that we only had 3 hours of sleep. I think that was also the same flight where some Interpol, drug sniffing dogs had smelled something funny in one of Wally Snow's timpani cases. As a result, all seventy plus bags of ours, both professional and personal, were held there in Ecuador until the next flight, 24 hours later. We spent a day wondering if we could even do a show the next night, and all of us knew that the other 30 people on the tour had not changed their underwear for two days.

Ray certainly had a sense of humor, and there is an indelible memory burned into my psyche that will likely never leave, and it was of Ray telling a joke during an impromptu party in his room, about a one armed piccolo player. I don't even remember what the set-up of the joke was about, only that the presentation required Ray to pull one of his arms back through his shirtsleeve and bury it down the length of his body so that he would appear to have only one arm. He also needed a prop to represent the piccolo, for which he used a pencil, or something. Then he told the joke. At some point in the story, when the piccolo player needed to turn the page of his music, a finger on the hand of Ray's that was buried in his pants emerged from the zipper on his pants to hold the piccolo while the good arm turned the page of music, implying that his 'you-

know-what' was actually holding the piccolo. It was a scary moment for all of us.

As much as Ray was an instrumentalist first, I feel that he had a special kinship to the singers, maybe because they were the hallmark of his sound, or maybe because we weren't as grumpy as most of the players, I don't know. We enjoyed how he considered himself to be a singer also and how we might hear him warming up before a show. He was always so nervous before any concert, no matter how deep into the tour we were, or how big the crowd was. So he would always want to pray before the show with the singers. He said often that this was a calming influence on him and I could see it.

I know that Ray had a firmly held belief in God and he credits that belief, in part anyway, for what turned his life around from his drinking and carousing days several decades ago. Ray was as imperfect as any of us though at least as often as I saw him get angry or belligerent with people, I saw him penitent and remorseful for having said or acted in a way that he knew to be wrong, or that wouldn't honor his faith in God. I would never say that I knew everything about Ray's soul, but I'm sure that if he's in heaven, he is probably leading a bunch of New York fire and police personnel in a version of God Bless America that goes something like 'Da, dat da dat da da.'

We all know that Memorial services are a prime time for people to be introspective, and I think today should be no exception. This should be a time when we consider what our lives are about, what we mean to our families, our friends, and to the world around us, and consider how all of that is intertwined with our mortality. I grew up in a home where I was taught to believe in God and in his Son, Jesus Christ, probably not unlike the beliefs Ray came to know. But it was on my second tour with Ray where my relationship with God took a turn for the better. And I believe it was primarily because of the example of two other singers, my wife to be Erin, and Amick Byram, combined with God's efforts of working on my heart, that I took the leap to become the Jesus Freak that I am today.

On a thirteen hour Pan Am flight, somewhere between here and Sao Paulo, and after watching the in-flight movie, "It's A Wonderful Life", I became a Jesus Freak, one of those holy rollin', born again, evangelical, right wing types. Before that time I had always considered myself to be a Christian but Erin, Amick, and others on that tour helped me realize that what was missing in my relationship with God was the driving force of Christianity, and that is the ongoing internalization of Jesus' life and teachings into my life, and the acknowledgement of the significance to my life of Christ's death on the cross and subsequent resurrection. They helped me realize that giving your life over to Jesus doesn't make you perfect, indeed there are some self described Christians out there who I'm sure are embarrassing God on a regular basis. At times I know I'm probably one of them. But they showed me that I shouldn't let the imperfections of other people, of me, of Ray, of people who call themselves Christians and of people who don't, keep me from having a relationship with God.

I don't know how intimately or devoutly Ray knew God, and I would hesitate to ever make that evaluation. That's God's job. But what I can do is ask you to consider where you are in your life, on behalf of Ray, who I am sure that if he could come back for five minutes right now would ask you the same thing and also tell you what I am about to. I believe in Jesus Christ as the only Son of God, the God who became a man who died on the cross for all of our sins, so that we could have eternal life with him. I believe that belief is the only ticket to heaven. I also believe that is the ticket to a life on earth that maximizes our worth, to our families, to our friends, and to the world around us. It won't bring you material wealth, but it will change your life, for the better, I'm certain of it.

Some people consider this to be a belief that excludes people and I beg to differ. Christianity, as Jesus taught it, is the most inclusive practice/faith/belief system on the planet, because anyone can have this relationship no matter what your cultural background, your religious background, your moral history, or even your present situation. If you haven't come to that conclusion in your own life then let today be the day you consider it, again or for the first time. Take this moment, as we take time to honor the passing of a musical icon and the impact he had on the world, to be introspective about where your life is and what impact you're making on your world. Your faith is a very personal thing, I know it was to Ray, and you should never feel forced to believe something. No relationship is worth having if you're only in it because there's a gun to your head. You've got to want it for yourself. Think about it. That's all I'm asking. That's all Ray would be asking if he could step back into our midst right now.

If my words in this area have you a little confused, or if you're thinking about making this decision to become a Jesus Freak like me, then please come and talk to me when we're done here today. I don't have it all figured out but maybe we can do some discovery together.

Before I get out of your hair I want to share a moment that Ray would have on stage with the inimitable trumpet player Zeke Zarchy before Zeke stopped touring with Ray. Zeke would come down front, during the show, for a solo, and Ray would introduce him and ask him, "Zeke. Are you glad to be here?" And Zeke, who was just a few years older than Ray would say. "At my age, I'm glad to be anywhere!" So in closing I want to tell you how glad I am to be here, how glad I am to be anywhere, and I want to thank Vera and Tamara again for giving me these minutes to talk to you, and allowing me to be a part of remembering this legend of music, my colleague, my musical mentor, and my friend, Ray Conniff. No matter what you do today just take a moment to be introspective and thank God for all the goodness and blessings in your life. I'm confident you've got a ton of stuff that would fall under that category, and one thing for sure is, "You knew Ray Conniff", "You worked with Ray Conniff", "You were married to Ray Conniff", "Your dad was Ray Conniff", and for me "I got to see Ray Conniff wearing nothing but a speedo swimsuit".

Thank you

I received the following two reports from fans who attended the service from outside the chapel:

**Don Buchwald** wrote:

From what I could see and hear, the service was beautiful. It began with the chorus singing "Ave Maria" and it sounded so much like a Conniff arrangement. It truly brought tears to my eyes. Then his daughter, Tamara, said some eloquent words that made me feel like I had met him...and wished I had. She mentioned you were unable to make the service, which is too bad. Then one of his singers spoke humorously and with deep affection about his experiences with Ray. Lastly, two of his friends (possibly neighbors) spoke. I'm not sure because I was at a respectful distance from the chapel, so as not to intrude on the family's sorrow. The service ended with the chorus singing "The Lord's Prayer". It was very moving. Then followed the interment...another very sad moment.

**Donald Fritz** wrote:

I have just returned home from the service. It was magnificent! About 30 current & veteran Ray Conniff Singers attended AND PERFORMED! Among other veterans was Jay Meyer. They opened the service with "Ave Maria" and closed the service with "The Lord's Prayer". They all were singing it FOR RAY! It was Beautiful. Perry La Marca accompanied the singers on an electric keyboard. Before the service, as guests were being seated, there was Ray Conniff music playing in the background. Tamara, Dave Theriault & others spoke about Ray. Ray's burial site is just across the cemetery road from the chapel where the service was held (maybe 30 meters). The entire service was videotaped.

Because of my work schedule, I could not attend the reception to which all guests were invited. Buddy Ebsen & Jerry Vale were present. I'm sure there were other celebrities & important people to Ray present, but I did not recognize them. Tamara mentioned you, personally, in her remarks. I'm so sorry that you could not be here. I know it would have meant so much to you, just as it did to me. I'm so glad I could be there. It brought a certain amount of closure to me. I hope you can get copies of Tamara's & Dave's remarks. I think all the fans would like to share in what we were able to hear.

At the graveside, Ray received US Military honors and an American flag was presented to Ray's family because he was a military service veteran.



## Obituaries; Ray Conniff, 85; Popularized Choral Sound

The Los Angeles Times; Los Angeles, Calif.;  
Oct 15, 2002; Dennis McLellan;

### Abstract:

*Born in 1916, in Attleboro, Mass., [Ray Conniff] grew up in a musical family. His mother played piano and his trombone-playing father led a local band. In high school, Conniff started a dance orchestra. After graduating, he landed his first professional job, playing with a band in Boston called Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers.*

*In the late '60s, wanting to create the same sound listeners heard on recordings, Conniff toured the United States and Europe doing the world's first live concerts in three-channel stereo. In 1974, he became the first American popular musician to record in Russia, where he used a local chorus to make "Ray Conniff In Moscow."*

*RAY CONNIFF, He was known for his innovative choral arrangements and had 28 Top 10 albums, including 1966's "Somewhere My Love."; Photo (not available), caption: Ray Conniff before 1966 concert.*

### Full text\*:

Ray Conniff, the bandleader, composer and arranger whose orchestra and chorus produced a string of Top 40 popular music albums such as " 'S Wonderful" and the Grammy-winning "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

Conniff, who had a stroke in March, died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido.

In a career of nearly 70 years that began as a swing-era trombonist in the 1930s and included stints as a player and arranger with the Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw bands, Conniff recorded more than 100 albums that have sold more than 70 million copies.

He scored 28 Top 40 albums from 1957 to 1968, including "Say It With Music (A Touch of Latin)," "Memories Are Made of This" and the 1966 million-seller "Somewhere My Love."

The title tune of the "Somewhere My Love" album -- "Lara's Theme" by Maurice Jarre from the film "Dr. Zhivago," with lyrics by Paul Francis Webster -- also made the top 10 singles charts and earned Conniff a Grammy for best performance by a chorus.

In his last public appearance in March, Conniff conducted a choir singing "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of Liza Minnelli and David Gest.

Conniff had more than 10 gold albums and two platinum albums (for "Somewhere My Love" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"); he also won CBS Records' award for Best Selling Artist for 1962 and numerous international awards.

Joining Columbia Records in 1954 as an arranger, Conniff arranged a string of hits produced by legendary artists and repertoire director Mitch Miller, including Don Cherry's "Band of Gold," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Marty Robbins' "A White Sport Coat" and Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," "Wonderful, Wonderful" and "It's Not for Me To Say."

It was during this period that Conniff launched the "new sound" that became his signature, using male and female singers' voices as though they were instruments.

"Very few arrangers had trademarks, but if you heard a Conniff arrangement, you knew it was Ray," Miller said Monday.

Miller said Conniff had done an arrangement for Harry James' hit version of George and Ira Gershwin's " 'S Wonderful."

"I said, 'Take that same arrangement and add women's voices to the brass as other instruments to give another color and men's voices to the woodwinds,' " said Miller. "We tried it out on a single record, and it got lots of play."

The ensuing album " 'S Wonderful" spent nine months in the Top 20, ultimately sold about 15 million copies and was followed by "S Marvelous" and "S Awful Nice."

"The integration of the orchestral and the choral was something that hadn't been explored much in popular music, and for the time, I think he was considered by many a pop music master," said Timothy Edwards, head of operations at UCLA's musical special collections.

Indeed, Cash Box magazine named Conniff "the most promising up- and-coming band leader" in both 1957 and 1958. And in 1959, disc jockeys voted the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers "the most played orchestra on the air."

In 1960, on "It's the Talk of the Town," Conniff began altering his formula by having his chorus sing words.

Actor Buddy Ebsen, a close friend of Conniff, remembers him as a gentle man. "I have been a fan of Ray Conniff and his talent since long before I met him," Ebsen said Monday. "I worship the quality of all his music and his integrity as a person."

Born in 1916, in Attleboro, Mass., Conniff grew up in a musical family. His mother played piano and his trombone-playing father led a local band. In high school, Conniff started a dance orchestra. After graduating, he landed his first professional job, playing with a band in Boston called Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers.

He joined Berigan's band in 1937 as a trombonist and arranger, and was hired away by Crosby in 1939.

After playing with Bob Crosby's Bobcats for a year, Conniff spent four years with Artie Shaw and was featured on several Shaw hits.

After a stint with the Glen Gray band, Conniff spent two years in the Army, arranging for the Armed Forces Radio Services in Hollywood. After the war, he joined the Harry James band as an arranger and freelanced as an arranger before joining Columbia Records.

After his Grammy win for "Somewhere My Love," Conniff earned two other Grammy nominations -- in 1968 for "Honey" and in 1969 for Conniff's version of the Rod McKuen song "Jean."

In the late '60s, wanting to create the same sound listeners heard on recordings, Conniff toured the United States and Europe doing the world's first live concerts in three-channel stereo. In 1974, he became the first American popular musician to record in Russia, where he used a local chorus to make "Ray Conniff In Moscow."

His daughter, Tamara, went on to become music editor of the Hollywood Reporter.

Until his stroke, he continued recording about one album a year and toured annually in Brazil with his full orchestra and chorus.

He is survived by his wife, Vera; his daughter; a son, Jimmy; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

A private funeral service for family and friends will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday at Pierce Brothers Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary, 1218 Glendon Ave., Los Angeles.

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\*An abbreviated version of this article was featured on the Internet with the caption "Bandleader and arranger Ray Conniff dies at 85"





## Ray Conniff, famed bandleader and composer, dies at 85

Oct. 15, 2002

By Tony Gieske



Grammy-winning composer and bandleader Ray Conniff dies at 85. The Grammy was for his recording of "Somewhere My Love" from the motion picture "Dr. Zhivago."

Ray Conniff, the Grammy-winning composer and conductor who pioneered the use of vocal elements in pop arrangements, died Saturday at an Escondido, Calif., hospital after injuring his head in a fall. He was 85.

A top-selling big band leader and trombonist, Conniff made more than 100 albums, 25 of them reaching the top 40, in a career that spanned six decades.

His easy-listening albums sold more than 70 million copies. He earned a Grammy Award for his recording of "Somewhere, My Love," along with two Grammy nominations, more than 10 gold albums and two platinum albums, "Somewhere, My Love" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." The latter brought him a citation as CBS Records' best-selling artist for 1962.

Colleagues from the industry paid Conniff tribute Monday.

Said Buddy Ebsen: "I have been a fan of Ray Conniff and his talent since long before I met him, since the first time I heard his version of 'September Song' during the war and 'The Warsaw Concerto,' which used to cheer me up. I worshipped the quality of all of his music and his integrity as a person."

Said Mitch Miller, a veteran A&R man who hired Conniff as a staff arranger at Columbia Records in the 1950s: "He was a consummate craftsman, and he knew that the simpler, the better ... but it's also harder to do it that way. He arranged the first Johnny Mathis recordings, and they were all hits: 'Chances Are,' 'It's Not for Me to Say,' 'Wonderful! Wonderful!' 'Scarlet Ribbons.' He could take a good idea and run with it, and I think he probably sold more records for Columbia than any other artist we had at the time."

Still touring and recording until he suffered a stroke six months ago, Conniff performed "Somewhere, My Love," the theme from "Dr. Zhivago," on March 16 at the wedding reception of Liza Minnelli and David Gest, an event portrayed in an article by his daughter, Tamara Conniff, music editor of The Hollywood Reporter (HR 3/20).

A native of Attleboro, Mass., Conniff learned to play the trombone from his father, who was also a trombonist, and his mother, a pianist. He got his first professional job with Dan Murphy's Musical Skip-pers in Boston. He played trombone, arranged music and drove a panel truck for the band. Just in time for the birth of swing, he left for New York.

Conniff landed a gig in the trombone section of Bun-ny Berigan's band, playing on Berigan's famous re-cording of "I Can't Get Started." Bob Crosby hired him in 1939; he joined Artie Shaw a year later and had moved on to Glen Gray when World War II broke out. Conniff spent two years in the Army, arranging for the Armed Forces Radio Services in Hollywood. When he was discharged in 1946, he began arranging for Harry James, but his career hit a snag when bebop, an intellectual genre that he re-buffed, became the rage.

A fallow period ended when Miller hired Conniff in 1951. His work on Don Cherry's 1955 hit "Band of Gold" led to opportunities to arrange for some of the label's leading artists. He arranged the top 5 hits "Just Walking in the Rain" for Johnnie Ray, "Moonlight Gambler" for Frankie Laine, "Singing the Blues" for Guy Mitchell and "A White Sport Coat (And a Pink Carnation)" for Marty Robbins. He also did arrange-ments for Frank Sinatra and Rosemary Clooney.

Columbia jumped him to featured artist in 1956, and his debut album for the label -- "S'Wonderful" -- spent 20 weeks in the top 20.

Recording with the Ray Conniff Singers and the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus, Conniff specialized in covering popular tunes with his own blend of vocal and instrumental music.

He arrived at his sound by substituting women's voices for the trumpets and men's voices for the sax-ophones in big-band arrangements. At first, the voic-es backed melodies without words, but Conniff soon moved the voices to the front of the mix. A magazine writer described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

In addition to daughter Tamara, Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; his son, Jimmy; three grandchil-dren; and four great-grandchildren.

A private funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday at Pierce Bros. Westwood Village Me-morial Park and Mortuary in Los Angeles.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Industry News - October 15, 2002

## GRAMMY Winner Ray Conniff Dies

Trombonist, composer, conductor and arranger won award for *Dr. Zhivago* theme

*The Washington Post*

Adam Bernstein



Ray Conniff, 85, a GRAMMY Award-winning conductor and arranger who engineered a series of commercially popular records in the 1950s and 1960s that were among the first to match wordless vocal choruses with bright orchestrations, died Oct. 12 at a hospital in Escondido, Calif., after a fall. He had had a stroke in April.

Mr. Conniff was a trombonist, composer and arranger with the big bands of Bunny Berigan, Bob

Crosby, Artie Shaw and Harry James before taking a self-imposed hiatus in the late 1940s to study conducting and music theory. He studied recordings, television themes and jingles to find a danceable formula to please an audience.

He worked with producer Mitch Miller at Columbia Records to spin out a succession of light-pop hits for such singers as Don Cherry ("Band of Gold"), Johnnie Ray ("Just Walking in the Rain") and Johnny Mathis ("Chances Are," "Wonderful, Wonderful" and "It's Not for Me to Say").

By the late 1950s, Columbia gave Mr. Conniff the freedom to conduct his own orchestras. He often used a chorus with up to 25 people, making it an increasingly important part of his recordings.

His roughly 100 albums — including *'S Wonderful* (1956), *'S Marvelous* (1957) and *'S Awful Nice* (1958) — sold more than 50 million copies.

"When I used to play with the big bands, we rode in the bus for hours between jobs, and to pass the time, we would sing the arrangements of other big bands, like Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey," Conniff once said. "The whole bus would sing the arrangements, and that's where I got the idea of voices for instruments."

He added: "Trumpets and girls go together because they operate on almost identical frequency ranges. Male voices blend better with tenor and baritone saxophones."

He directed the Ray Conniff Singers on "Somewhere My Love," which won the 1966 GRAMMY for best performance by a chorus. The song was the theme from the film *Doctor Zhivago*.

Extensive touring followed, including a concert at the White House during the Richard M. Nixon presidency in which one of his singers lashed out at the president for his role in the Vietnam War.

He continued to record and sell 2 million albums annually, half outside the United States.

Mr. Conniff was born into a musical family in Attleboro, Mass. His father was a trombonist, his mother a pianist. He embarked on a band-leading and arranging career while in high school. He took a mail-order course on arranging, which he called one of the best investments of his life.

After school, he moved to Boston and had an early apprenticeship with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers as trombonist and bus driver. He then went to New York and studied with famed jazz trombonist Irving "Miff" Mole before Berigan hired him in 1937.

During World War II, he served in the Army as an arranger with the Armed Forces Radio Service in Hollywood. Afterward, he worked for the James band but disliked the leader's preoccupation with the furious tempo of the bebop sound. He left, only to find jobs hard to get. He said he dug ditches for two years to support his family before landing at Columbia Records as a house arranger.

## ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT ONLINE

## Big Band Leader Ray Conniff Dies in California

2002-10-14 21:29:36 GMT (Reuters)

By Gina Keating

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Big Band leader Ray Conniff, who pioneered an "easy listening" blend of vocal chorus and light orchestral music to cover popular tunes, has died after suffering a head injury in a fall, hospital officials said on Monday.

The 85-year-old Conniff died on Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido, California, not far from San Diego.

During a career that spanned six decades, Conniff and his Ray Conniff Singers and Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus sold more than 50 million albums.

He toured internationally until last year and turned out more than 100 recordings, including 10 gold and two platinum albums among more than two dozen Top 40 albums.

Conniff captured the adult easy-listening market in the mid-1950s and his success was cemented by a Grammy Award, two Grammy nominations and recognition as CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

Because they were not reliant on lyrics, Conniff's compositions easily translated overseas. He was the first American pop artist to record in the Soviet Union in mid-1970s and his music was enjoying a resurgence in Latin America when he died. His rendition of "Somewhere My Love," the theme from the movie "Dr. Zhivago" was one of his most popular works.

Born in 1912 to a trombonist father and pianist mother, Conniff began as a trombone player during the heyday of Swing in the 1930s. He moved from his hometown near Boston to New York at age 21 and, within six months, landed a spot in Bunny Berigan's Orchestra.

With a growing reputation as an arranger and soloist, Conniff went on to work with Artie Shaw and Bob Crosby, the hottest Big Band leaders of the late 1930s.

When World War II broke out, Conniff joined the Army and worked as an arranger for the Armed Forces Radio Service in Hollywood, California. He stayed on after the war but left the music industry altogether in the late 1940s with the rise of Be-Bop, which he disliked.

While he worked as a ditch digger to support his family, Conniff taught himself to conduct and tried to unlock the secrets of making hit records.

He told music historian Joseph Lanza that he noticed that pop hits shared an ingredient with advertising -- repetition of short phrases. "I made an about-face and wrote my arrangements with a view to making the masses understand and buy records," he told Lanza. "From that point on, I became very successful."

### BAND OF GOLD

In 1951, Conniff took a job with Columbia Records as a house arranger until he was able to test his theory by arranging the single "Band of Gold" for crooner Don Cherry.

The song, which featured vocal harmonies instead of a string section, was an instant hit and led to other successes, including Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain" and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues."

Conniff collaborated with Rosemary Clooney, Frank Sinatra and Marty Robbins, and recorded his first LP as a featured performer with the phenomenally successful "S Wonderful," which spent nearly a year on the pop charts in 1956.

With the advent of rock 'n roll, Conniff's popularity waned and he turned to covering hit songs of the day with his voice-driven sound -- from "I Write the Songs" to "Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Kid."

Conniff is survived by his wife, two children and three grandchildren.





## Ray Conniff

**Hugely successful band-leader and arranger who defied rock 'n' roll with his easy listening sound**

**Michael Freedland**

*Tuesday October 15, 2002*

Ray Conniff, who has died aged 85, was a highly successful popular musician who defied rock 'n' roll and lived to talk about it. Equally well known as a bandleader and an arranger, he blended together sweet choruses and soothing strings, creating an easy listening sound that encouraged his audiences to sit back with eyes closed, and allow the orchestra to do the work. It made him, year after year, one of the most influential music men of his age.

And what an age it was. The man who began his career as a trombonist in the 1930s was still playing 70 years later. Well into his 80s, he was conducting orchestras, sitting in and substituting for his own artists - and collecting award after award. In the last decade of the century, he sold almost 20m records; for the previous 10 years, he had been selling an average of 2m discs a year all around the world.

Born in Attleboro, Massachusetts, Conniff came from a musical family; his father was a trombonist, and his mother played the piano. He formed a small dance band and subscribed to a mail-order course on arranging. Later, he did a course at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

As a trombonist, he worked for such great names as Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw between 1937 and 1941, the year he formed his own octet. This did not always enjoy the success he hoped for, which was why he went to work for Harry James, and then, once more, for Artie Shaw. By the 1950s, he was resident bandleader at ABC radio in New York. He then moved to CBS.

Conniff gave up the trombone to concentrate on arranging - and giving his particular sound to a veritable Who's Who of popular music; Don Cherry, Guy Mitchell, Johnnie Ray and Johnny Mathis all shared label credits with him, and, with the growing success of the long-playing album, he became an easy bestseller. These were velvet-sounding recordings that sold out as soon as they appeared, to people who could not stand rock 'n' roll, and wanted the kind of swing music that had all but died - music that literally was nice 'n' easy.

Conniff recycled many of those standards, and reaped the rewards. Between 1957 and 1973, he had 37 albums in the Billboard Top 100. Of those, 28 were in the top 40, a phenomenal achievement. Between 1960 and 1972, 11 albums were in the British charts.

Among his most famous recordings was the theme from the film *Dr Zhivago*, *Somewhere My Love*, which became an American hit single in 1966. Other great successes included *Unchained Melody*, *Music To Watch Girls By*, *Always In My Heart*, *Bridge Over Troubled Waters*, *Hawaiian Album*, various discs entitled *The Greatest Hits* and *The Nashville Connection*.

In 1997, at the age of 81, Conniff made his 92nd album, *I Love Movies*, which he launched himself in Hollywood, having just returned from a concert tour of South America, one of his most popular regions, where *En Español* had been a big hit.

But so was his record issued for German audiences, *Musik für Millionen*. Indeed, the Germans honoured him year after year, as did Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Australia

and Britain. There were Grammy and Golden Globe awards to line his home.

Conniff always said he loved film music. "Movie music has always been a great constant over the years. Whether the prevailing style was the Beatles or disco or rap, you could always guarantee that, somewhere along the line, a great piece of melodic music from a soundtrack would come along. And they become part of people's memories."

The movie album was notable for Conniff taking up his old instrument once more. When the trombonist failed to turn up for the session at which they were recording their first song, *La Bamba*, he sat in for him.

He always knew his great talent. But what was it? "Just lounge music," he once said.

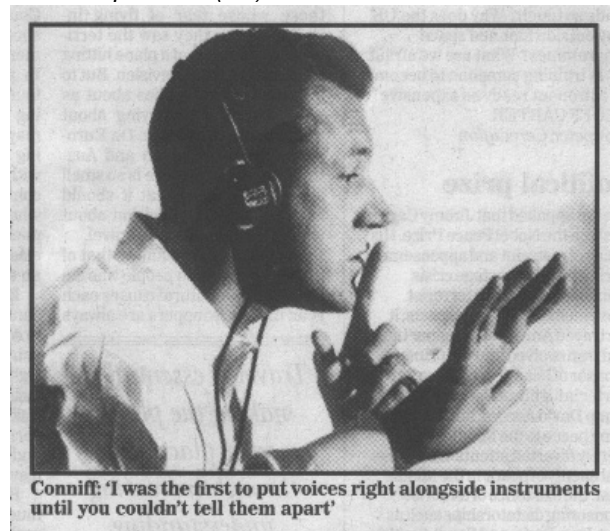
He was married, twice, with a son, a daughter, and a daughter who predeceased him.

Ray Conniff, arranger, bandleader and trombonist, born November 6 1916; died October 12 2002



A little nice music ... Conniff with singers, band and glitz on stage in 1989 (Photo: Dezo Hoffmann / Rex Features)

*The photograph below was featured in "The Independent" (UK):*



Conniff: 'I was the first to put voices right alongside instruments until you couldn't tell them apart'

Websites that featured articles about Ray which unfortunately could not be included in this publication:

(Goo News, Japan:) [channel.goo.ne.jp/news/reuters/geino/20021015/92884-1.html](http://channel.goo.ne.jp/news/reuters/geino/20021015/92884-1.html)

(Kyoto Shimbun, Japan:) [www.kyoto-np.co.jp/kp/topics/2002oct/15/K20021015MK11Z10000064.html](http://www.kyoto-np.co.jp/kp/topics/2002oct/15/K20021015MK11Z10000064.html)

(Lycos News, Japan:) [news.lycos.co.jp/entertainment/story.html?q=15reutersJAPAN92884&cat=1](http://news.lycos.co.jp/entertainment/story.html?q=15reutersJAPAN92884&cat=1)

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# Ray Conniff

*Talented arranger with a long succession of easy listening hits*

RAY CONNIFF used to tease his audiences, saying "You know, it's not hard to sing with the Ray Conniff Orchestra. You don't have to know the words, just da-das and do-dos. Anyone can do it." In fact, his easy listening versions of pop standards disguised a perfectionist's skills and an arranger's talent honed from working with leading musicians. To many people, Ray Conniff was Easy Listening and, with his orchestra and chorus, he sold over 50 million albums.

Conniff's big break came in 1954 when Mitch Miller, the leading producer at Columbia Records, asked Conniff to arrange the song "Band of Gold" for Don Cherry. It became an international hit, and Miller loved the way that, in Conniff's arrangement, the male chorus blended with the brass. Conniff explained, "When I used to play with the big bands, we rode in the bus for hours between jobs, and to pass the time, we would sing the arrangements of other big bands like Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey. The whole bus would sing the arrangements, and that's where I got the idea of voices for instruments."

Miller asked Conniff to arrange for some of his other artists and between 1954 and 1960, he was involved in a long succession of hit records, including "Just Walking in the Rain" (Johnnie Ray), "Singing the Blues" and "Knee Deep in the Blues" (Guy Mitchell, with Conniff doing the whistling), "Moonlight Gambler" (Frankie Laine), "The Story of My Life" (Marty Robbins), "Wonderful, Wonderful", "It's Not For Me to Say" and "Chances Are" (Johnny Mathis), "I Understand" (G-Clefs) and "One For My Baby" (Tony Bennett).

Conniff came from a musical family. He was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts in 1916, and his father, a trombonist, would lead a band for Sunday afternoon concerts in the park. His mother played the piano and they both encouraged him towards music. He followed his father by forming a small dance band with his school friends. Conniff subscribed to a mail-order course on arranging. "It only cost me a few dollars," said Conniff, "and it was the best investment I ever made." Much later, he supplemented his knowledge with a course at eth Juilliard School of Music in New York.

After working with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers in Boston, Conniff headed to New York in 1937 and looked for work. When he joined the jazz musician Bunny Berigan for a trombone solo in "'S Wonderful", he was offered a job with the band. He was poached by Bob Crosby's Bobcats in 1939 and then spent four years with Artie Shaw. Even army service in the Second World War did not curtail his activities, as he was put to work organizing programmes for the Armed Forces Radio Service.

After the war, Conniff worked with Harry James and his Orchestra. However, James was becoming preoccupied with the more experimental Bebop jazz. This was not to Conniff's liking and he left in 1949. Unable to find other comparable work, he dug ditches to support his wife and children. This prompted him to think that he must find a way to make both music and money.

Conniff studied popular records, television themes and jingles to discover the factors that linked their success. Still taking musical work where he could, he was reunited with Harry James and his Orchestra in 1951 for some arrangements for Frank Sinatra, notably "Castle Rock", for Sinatra's producer at Columbia Records, Mitch Miller. "It's the worst thing either of us ever recorded," James said. "You ask Sinatra and

he'll tell you the same thing." Nevertheless, Miller was impressed.

Conniff also made his own albums. In 1956 he cut "'S Wonderful" (1956), which sold half a million copies. It was followed by "'S Marvellous" (1957) and "'S Awful Nice" (1958). He said, "I wasn't the first to use voices as instruments. That was done in early classical symphonies, but I believe I was the first to put voices right alongside instruments until you couldn't tell them apart. Trumpets and girls go together because they operate on identical frequency ranges. Male voices blend better with tenor and baritone saxophones."

At first, the Conniff sound was created by 18 musicians, with a chorus of eight. He then expanded the chorus to 25 and reduced the musicians, thereby bringing the voices to the fore. This was heard on "It's The Talk of the Town" (1960), and he was soon releasing albums in quick succession including "Young at Heart" (1960), "Say It With Music" (1960), "Memories are Made of This" (1961) and a series of seasonal best-sellers. He also made a best-selling album, "Conniff Meets Butterfield" (1958), with the jazz trumpeter Billy Butterfield and another, "Concert in Rhythm" (1958), in which he gave the Conniff sound to classical works. A compilation of his work, "The Hi-Fi Companion Album" (1960), was on the UK album charts for a year and reached the No. 3 position.

In 1966, Ray Conniff's Orchestra and Chorus made the Top Ten on the US singles chart with "Somewhere My Love", also known as "Lara's Theme", from the film "Doctor Zhivago" (1965). The lush-sounding album of the same name sold several million copies and Conniff won a Grammy for the Best Performance by a Chorus.

Conniff's group made the headlines in 1972 when they performed at the White House in front of President Nixon. One of his vocalists grabbed the microphone and asked, "Mr Nixon, you go to church on Sunday, so how can you let all this killing go on in Vietnam?" Conniff apologized to Nixon, who said, "Don't worry about it. If it hadn't happened, no one would have known you were at the White House. Now all the world will know."

In 1969, Conniff had topped the UK albums chart with "His Orchestra, His Chorus, His Songs, His Sound", but disagreements over the use of his American orchestra with the Musicians' Union prevented him from touring in Britain until 1973. Eventually he was allowed to use his singers and three American musicians, making up the sound with local talent. The resulting album of a BBC Radio 2 concert, "Ray Conniff in Britain", shows no loss in quality. At the time Conniff's records were receiving more airplay on Radio 2 than any other American artist with the exception of Frank Sinatra.

Conniff continued to tour and make albums, but his sound became unfashionable. In the 1990s there was a new interest in his work following the success of "lounge music" and Conniff himself found himself treated as a musical giant in Brazil. In 2000 he paid tribute to the Brazilian composer Roberto Carlos, with "Do Ray Para O Rei" and the following year, toured Brazil to celebrate his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

SPENCER LEIGH

*Ray Conniff, arranger, bandleader and trombonist: born Attleboro, Massachusetts 6 November 1916; twice married (one son, one daughter, and one daughter deceased); dies San Diego, California 12 October 2002.*

*(The photo featured in this article is shown on the previous page; caption: "I was the first to put voices right alongside instruments and you couldn't tell them apart")*



www.**timesonline**.co.uk

October 15, 2002



Conniff started out as a big band trombonist before breaking out as solo artist in the 1950s

**Ray Conniff** Trombonist and arranger whose orchestra epitomised the middle-of-the-road easy-listening sound of the 1950s and 1960s

One of the most exciting trombonists of the Big Band era, Ray Conniff was best known for his recording of *Lara's Theme (Somewhere My Love)* from David Lean's film *Dr Zhivago* (1965), for which he won a Grammy Award. In a career that produced more than 100 recordings — 25 of them Top 40 albums — he recorded such well known classics as *S' Wonderful*, *New York, New York* and *Besame Mucho*. His 1962 recording *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist award.

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers epitomised the middle-of-the-road, lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s, with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment. Though he had started his career as a big-band trombonist playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired by Mitch Miller to be a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951. He was responsible for Johnny Mathis's *Chances Are*, Frankie Laine's *Moonlight Gambler*, Johnnie Ray's *Just Walking in the Rain*, and Guy Mitchell's *Singin' the Blues*.

He weathered criticism that his output was "wallpaper music" and that no one could ever put a face to his name, pointing out that his output progressed with the times.

"I'd rather be remembered for my music than for my face," he said. During a visit to London in 1973 he explained the secret of his success: "I figured a long time ago that few people sit down and listen, I mean actually listen, to a record. They kinda like to have it in the background to clean the car to, wash dishes by or just have on while reading a magazine. That's why the rhythm section is always prominent in my records, so people never forget it's there."

In 1956 Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big band mix that included the guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. That debut album, *S' Wonderful*, in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed in the Top 20 for nine months. One of the first artists to use voices as part of the instrumentation — for example female

voices doubling with trumpets or male voices with trombones — he was voted "the most promising up-and-coming band leader" in both 1957 and 1958. A 1962 article in *McCall's* magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing".

Ray Conniff was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts. His trombonist father was the leader of the local Jewelry City Band, and his mother was a pianist. One of his earliest memories was riding a tricycle at the age of five along the narrow pathways of a park in Martha's Vineyard, while his father played trombone and conducted a small band in the centre of the park on a white wooden bandstand. Soon young Ray was playing proficiently himself.

While at high school, Conniff and a group of friends started a dance orchestra, for which he wrote an arrangement of *Sweet Georgia Brown*. His first professional work came in Boston with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers, with whom he played trombone, arranged music and drove the truck. When a friend suggested that Boston was too small for a musician of his talents, Conniff headed for New York. Six months after arriving in the Big Apple in 1938, with only \$200 to his name, he was appearing with Bunny Berigan's band. When not playing gigs, Conniff spent every spare moment jamming with fellow musicians and having his arrangements played by rehearsal bands.

During the Second World War, Conniff joined the Army, where he worked with the composer and arranger Walter Schumann on the Armed Forces Radio Service. Afterwards he joined Harry James's band, but when James wanted Conniff to start writing bop instead of swing, Conniff walked out. "I said he should find someone else," he recalled. "It just wasn't my style. I was sure I would get another gig — but I didn't." Leaner times followed. After spending two years out of work Conniff finally took a job as a builder's labourer, digging foundations. "I had enough foreclosure notices on my house to paper the living room," he later said.

Eventually he headed to Hollywood, where the work and income were more reliable. In 1951 he was taken on by Columbia as a house arranger. Although towards the end of the 1950s his popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll, there were still stars such as the Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, the Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach who benefited from his arrangements in recordings of *Laughter in the Rain*, *I Write the Songs* and *I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing*.

He performed at the White House for President Nixon for a *Reader's Digest* dinner during the Vietnam War (during which one of the Ray Conniff Singers, Carole Feraci, unveiled a banner reading "Stop the Killing"), and in 1974 he was one of the first American pop artists to record an album in Moscow using a Russian recording crew.

In addition to his continuing popularity in the US and Europe, Conniff found himself a huge hit in Brazil, appearing in concert there last year for his 85th birthday. Earlier this year he performed *Somewhere my Love* at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli.

Conniff's music might have been safe, but beyond the recording studio he was something of a risk-taker. In his mid-50s he became interested in off-road racing, competing in several Baja-500 races.

He is survived by his third wife, Vera Schmidheiny, whom he married in 1968, and by their daughter. He also had three children by an earlier marriage.

Ray Conniff, composer, trombonist and bandleader, was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts, on November 6, 1916. He died, following a fall, in Escondido, California, on October 12, 2002, aged 85.



## Ray Conniff, big-band leader, Grammy winner started in Hub

*By Brian MacQuarrie, Globe Staff, 10/15/2002*

Ray Conniff, a prolific composer and big-band leader who achieved global commercial success with innovative arrangements that millions loved but which critics dismissed as "elevator music," has died at a hospital in Escondido, Calif. He was 85.

Mr. Conniff, who was born in Attleboro in 1916, died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center after striking his head in a fall. He had suffered a stroke in April.

The Grammy Award winner's career spanned more than six decades. Beginning with a small band in Boston, Mr. Conniff played trombone for some of the best big bands of the swing era then devised a wordless vocal sound used as instrumental backup by conductors such as Mitch Miller and a wide range of pop singers.

Mr. Conniff's most memorable albums included top-listed "Somewhere My Love," whose 1966 Grammy-winning title song was an adaptation of "Lara's Theme" from the film "Dr. Zhivago," and "S'Wonderful," which broke ground in 1956 with its use of wordless vocals. "S'Wonderful" was listed among the Top 40 album charts for a year.

In a style that embodied the laid-back ambience of lounge-style entertainment in the 1950s and 1960s, Mr. Conniff reinvigorated and expanded his career after World War II as a star arranger and leader of the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers.

Mr. Conniff had 10 gold and two platinum records among his 100 recordings for Columbia Records, 25 of which were listed in the Top 40.

He also won CBS Records' Best-Selling Artist for 1962 with the album, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

A sampling of other successful recordings included "Besame Mucho," and arrangements of Don Cherry's 1955 hit "Band of Gold," Johnny Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," and Johnny Mathis's "Chances Are," "Wonderful, Wonderful," and "It's Not for Me to Say."

"You never know who you are going to touch, or how what you do is going to affect other people," Conniff's daughter, Tamara, quoted him. "I think if you can affect at least one person in a positive way through your work, you have done well, you have done your job."

He played at the White House. And in 1974, Mr. Conniff became the first Western pop artist to be asked to record an album in Moscow. In the final years of his career, Mr. Conniff led an annual tour of Brazil with a full orchestra and chorus.

"He had a repertoire that included big band standards, adaptations of classical themes, songs from the movies, and hits all the way to country and Latin music," said Sean Casey, programming director at WPLM radio (99.1 FM) in Plymouth. "He just wasn't a rock 'n' roller. You can't deny

the genius of the man. The popularity of the music speaks for itself."

A master of reinvention, Mr. Conniff rose to the heights of commercial success - with more than 70 million albums, cassettes, and CDs sold - from humble beginnings in a musical family from Attleboro. As a high school junior, Mr. Conniff decided to follow in the footsteps of his father, the leader and trombonist of the local Jewelry City Band, by forming a dance group.

Attleboro Mayor Judith Robbins said yesterday that Mr. Conniff's connection with the city has nearly been forgotten over the years. "I don't even know if his house is still standing," the mayor said. However, Mr. Conniff did visit Attleboro during its tricentennial celebration in 1994, she said.

After high school, Mr. Conniff landed a professional job with a Boston band called Dan Murphy's Musical Skip-pers, for whom he played trombone, did arranging, and drove a panel truck, according to a biography. In 1937, when he was 21, Mr. Conniff left on a bus for New York with \$200. After six months in New York, he landed a job with Bunny Berigan's band, Mr. Conniff said in a reminiscence.

As the swing era blossomed, Mr. Conniff played successively for Berigan, Bob Crosby's Bobcats, and Artie Shaw. After moving to Hollywood in 1939, Mr. Conniff served two years in the Army during World War II as an arranger for Armed Forces Radio. After his discharge in 1946, he resisted the new bebop trend and found work difficult to obtain.

The transition in tastes was difficult for Mr. Conniff, who helped support himself for two years by digging ditches. In the interim, Mr. Conniff taught himself to conduct and studied the common traits of hit recordings in an effort to generate a stream of commercial successes.

The breakthrough came with Miller, of Columbia Records, who hired Mr. Conniff as an arranger and allowed him to put his theories into practice. After the success of "Band of Gold" and arrangements for other artists, Columbia allowed Mr. Conniff to record an album under his own name.

That album, "S'Wonderful," featured the introduction of his wordless vocal experiment, in which female voices doubled with trumpets, high saxophones, or clarinets, and lower male voices were used with trombones or low-register saxophones. Later in his career, the chorus moved in front of the band and was used to sing verses along with the music.

Mr. Conniff's popularity declined during the rock years, but the understated approach of acts such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension, and Bert Bacharach were helped by arrangements Mr. Conniff devised for "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Although Mr. Conniff's style has been derided by some critics as too soft, supporters stress that his success is evidence of appeal. The allure continued until shortly before his stroke. In March, Mr. Conniff performed "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli.

This story ran on page D16 of the Boston Globe on 10/15/2002.



Boston Herald, October 15:

## LOCAL NEWS

### Attleboro mourns native son, bandleader Conniff

by Eric Convey Tuesday, October 15, 2002

Ray Conniff, the Attleboro native who parlayed his trombone playing into jobs with some of the biggest names in swing and then went on to become one of the top arrangers of the 1950s and '60s, died Saturday outside Los Angeles.

He was 85 years old.

"We very much enjoyed him visiting our community when we celebrated our tricentennial back in 1994. We had a marvelous reunion," Attleboro Mayor Judy Robins said yesterday.

"We'll miss his presence," she said.

It was in Attleboro that Mr. Conniff's skill as a trombonist emerged early in life.

While a teenager, he led a local band playing early big band tunes. He also, according to a fan club biography, wowed fellow players with his own arrangements.

After his graduation from high school, the son of musicians moved to Boston and joined a swing band called Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers.

He moved to New York in the mid-1930s and to Hollywood in 1939.

During World War II, Mr. Conniff arranged music for Armed Forces Radio.

Mr. Conniff returned on occasion to the performance circuit.

In 1972, his group, the Ray Conniff Singers, made what would become a controversial trip to the White House.

A stand-in who had joined the group just for that show greeted an audience including President Richard M. Nixon with an anti-war message. Mr. Conniff, according to reports at the time, was horrified until Nixon telephoned afterward to say he realized the bandleader was not behind the incident.

In 1974, he performed in Moscow.

In an industry that rewards stage performers and businessmen, Mr. Conniff thrived writing pop arrangements. In 1967, according to his wife's divorce lawyer, Mr. Conniff was making \$180,000 per year.

Mr. Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York" in a career that spanned six decades.

His most memorable song may have been "Somewhere My Love". The song was adapted from French composer Maurice Jarre's "Lara's Theme" from the film "Dr. Zhivago". It rose to the top of the pop and easy-listening charts and won Mr. Conniff a Grammy in 1966.

Mr. Conniff produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix

of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain", "I Write the Songs", and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing".

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," said fan club official Warren Pischke.

According to a fan club Web site, Mr. Conniff was regularly leading his band on tours, including one to Brazil as recently as this year.

He suffered a stroke in April. His death Saturday was due to a fall, the L.A. County Medical Examiner's office said.

Mr. Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report*

## LOCAL NEWS (Boston Herald.com)

### Ray Conniff, the bandleader and composer from Attleboro, Mass., who preserved and updated the Big Band sound, dead at 85

Associated Press Monday, October 14, 2002

LOS ANGELES - Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. The Attleboro, Mass., native was 85.

Conniff died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press. He had suffered a stroke in April.

Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York," in a career that spanned six decades.

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The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues." He also did arrangements for Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney and Marty Robbins.



It was Conniff's arrangement of "Band of Gold" for singer Don Cherry that hit the first high note of both men's careers. The song made No. 5 on the Top 40 and was widely thought to be Cherry's hottest recording.

In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, "S'Wonderful," in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

A few of Conniff's singers were known studio vocalists including Loulie Jean Norman and B.J. Baker. Jay Meyer assisted as conductor.

Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

He performed at the White House during the Vietnam War and in 1974 was the first pop artist asked to record an album in Moscow. In 2001, he gave a series of concerts in Brazil. He performed "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli in March.

Born in November 1916, Conniff gained much of his musical experience from his father, a trombone player, who led a local band while his mother played the piano.

Conniff led a local band while in high school. He moved to Boston and began playing with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers. He moved to New York during the swing era in the mid-'30s and landed a job playing and arranging for Berigan in 1937.

By 1939, he moved to Hollywood to join Bob Crosby's Bobcats, one of the hottest bands of the time.

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," said fan club official Warren Pischke.

Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.

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His twelve Top Ten LPs and well over 50 million total albums sold made him one of the most popular artists ever.

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but his repertoire began to include songs made popular by soft-rockers such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, and The Fifth Dimension, and covers of songs such as "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."



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October 14, 2002 14:56:56

(CBS) Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning arranger and bandleader whose arrangements continued and modernized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

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## The New York Times

ON THE WEB

### Composer Ray Conniff Dies at 85

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, Monday, Oct. 14, 2002, Filed at 1:03 a.m. ET

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Ray Conniff, the composer, trombone player and bandleader who won a Grammy Award for his recording of the "Dr. Zhivago" theme "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

Conniff died at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido on Saturday after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press.

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Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera, and a daughter, Tamara Conniff.



telegraph.co.uk



Published on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2002:

## Ray Conniff

### Trombonist who arranged seductively for voice and orchestra

RAY CONNIFF, who died on Saturday aged 85, was a jazz trombonist whose big band arrangements evolved over 20 years into the lush music favoured as an inducement to buy in supermarkets.

Conniff's initial success came with a then novel innovation, the long playing record. His *'S Wonderful* (1956), which employed a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18, so impressed Columbia Records that the company encouraged him to continue with his experiments.

These led Conniff gradually to substitute women's voices for the trumpet section in a standard big band arrangement, and men's voices for the saxophone section. At the same time his impeccably drilled "Ray Conniff Singers", with whom he made a series of international tours over the years, began by employing 12 women and 13 men with minimal instrumental backing.

Conniff sold half a million copies of *'S Wonderful*, but he had his biggest success in 1966 with *Somewhere My Love*, a compilation of standards, which included an adaptation of Maurice Jarre's *Lara's Theme* from the film *Dr Zhivago*. This became one of the biggest successes in film music, and Conniff's version played a major part in the tune's popularity.

However, while the Conniff sound seemed to many all the more seductive for resembling subtly fluted woodwinds as much as singing, jazz fans were increasingly appalled by his saccharine treatments. They sniffed with disapproval as the abandonment of his roots paid dividends in the form of 10 gold and two platinum records.

But this was not entirely fair. Although well launched on the profitable trail of "easy listening" music by the late 1950s, Conniff made two admired "Dixieland" albums with his old Crosby colleague, the trumpeter Billy Butterfield, *Just Kidding Around* and *Mr Conniff Meets Mr Butterfield*.

Ray Conniff was born on November 6 1916 at Attleborough, Massachusetts. He received tuition from his father, a trombonist who led the Attleborough Jewelry City Band, and taught himself arranging via a mail-order course. His first job was with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers in Boston.

Although never in the front rank as a soloist, in 1937 Conniff found a chair with the orchestra of the brilliant but alcoholic trumpeter Bunny Berigan in New York. For two tipsy years, Conniff later recalled: "We were a gang of naughty little boys." He agreed to write arrangements for Berigan at \$30 a piece. The bandleader frequently commented on how little he was paying for such fine scores and, repeatedly raised the price; but in fact Conniff never received a cent for his contributions.

In 1939 he joined Bob Crosby's Orchestra, and then the mercurial Artie Shaw, with whom he contributed some graceful solos and recorded a notable tightly muted outburst in *Beyond The Blue Horizon* (1941). He went into the Army to arrange for the Armed Forces Radio Services and Harry James's Orchestra.

After being demobilised in 1944, Conniff recorded under the leadership of the black drummer Cozy Cole, and became embroiled in the traditional scene with veteran pianist Art Hodes and the lyrical trumpeter Bobby Hackett. But the emergence of bebop led him to take labouring jobs to support his family.

In the post-war decade Conniff made an intense study of the formulae for hit records until he received a chance to arrange for the singer Don Cherry. His first score, *Band Of Gold*, in 1955, sold a million.

This was followed by such hits as *Wonderful, Wonderful* for Johnny Mathis and *Singing The Blues* for Guy Mitchell in 1956. There were two further successes with Mathis, *Chances Are* and *It's Not For Me To Say*, and *The Story of My Life* and *White Sport Coat And A Pink Carnation* for Marty Robbins, in addition to scores for Johnnie Ray and Frankie Laine.

By 1970 Conniff had been awarded nine gold discs for million-selling albums, and he earned the distinction of being invited to play for Richard

Nixon at the White House. Later in life, Conniff's work became too familiar and too easy to emulate for him still to continue to sell in the millions. But he arranged periodically for such stars of a new generation as the Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel and the Fifth Dimension.

Not the least of Conniff's appeal was that he was willing to give anything his treatment, even such novelty hits as Rolf Harris's *Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport*. He was the first American pop performer to record in the Soviet Union, producing *Ray Conniff In Moscow*, employing a Russian chorus, and recently had a series of hits in Latin America. But he made no great claims for himself, declaring that anybody could sing his hits. "You don't have to know the words, just da-das and do-dos."

Conniff was married twice, and leaves a son and a daughter.



Conniff: 'You don't have to know the words, just da-das and do-dos'



10/17/2002

## NOTÍCIA: MORRE RAY CONNIFF

Morreu neste sábado em Los Angeles, nos Estados Unidos, o maestro e trombonista Ray Conniff. Ele tinha 85 anos e sofreu um derrame, o segundo em seis meses. Foi levado para um hospital da cidade, mas não resistiu. Conniff nasceu em 1916, em Massachusetts. Seu pai era trombonista, e a mãe, pianista. Seguiu os caminhos do pai e tornou-se um dos melhores instrumentistas da era das big bands. Tocou ao lado de alguns dos maiores nomes da música americana, como Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Art Hodes e Artie Shaw. Após servir na Segunda Guerra Mundial, Conniff passou a investir mais em sua faceta de arranjador. Após uma rápida passagem pelo conjunto de Harry James, foi a Hollywood e começou a trabalhar para os grandes estúdios. Acabou contratado da Columbia, em 1951, que decidiu bancar seu álbum de estréia em 56, S' Wonderful, o primeiro de uma longa discografia de 102 discos. Como arranjador, tornou-se um dos grandes mestres do "easy listening" e uma campeão absoluto dos salões de bailes. Foi também bastante criticado pelos arranjos suaves e adocicados que dispensava a clássicos como Besame Mucho, New York, New York, Pretty Woman, que o ajudaram a vender 85 milhões de discos. Seus críticos enxergavam em seus arranjos, pródigos em metais, uma mesma interpretação pobre e pasteurizada para os mais diversos gêneros, como jazz, bossa, rock, bolero, swing etc. Daí porque passou a ser ironizado, ao lado de Glenn Miller, Burt Bacharach, Chris de Burgh e outros, como rei dos elevadores, consultórios médicos e salas de espera em geral. Conniff dizia não ligar. "Não tenho controle sobre o que escrevem." O fato é que seus arranjos para músicas como Smoke Gets in Your Eyes e Strangers in The Night embalsamaram bailinhos de várias gerações, em muitas partes do mundo, incluindo o Brasil, país pelo qual tinha um carinho especial. Sua primeira visita ao País foi na década de 60, quando, ao lado de Henry Mancini, tocou Aquarela do Brasil, Besame Mucho e Somewhere my Love. Voltaria mais de dez vezes. "Não sei a razão, mas gosto muito de saber que no Brasil três gerações dançam com minhas músicas", disse ao Estado, em 1999. No mesmo ano, lançou um disco dedicado à

música sertaneja brasileira. Em Ray Conniff's Country (1999), gravado na Califórnia, o maestro rearranjou Pense em Mim, É o Amor, Festa de Rodeio, Luar do Sertão, Bem te Vi, No Rancho Fundo, Entre Tapas e Beijos, entre outras. O disco entrou para sua longa série de álbuns "regionais", que já incluía homenagens à Rússia, Venezuela, Grã-Bretanha, além do Brasil em Amor, Amor (1982), Fantástico (1983), Ray Conniff Live in Rio (1996). Sua última passagem foi em setembro de 2001, para duas apresentações no Credicard Hall, tendo no repertório músicas de Frank Sinatra, Bee Gees, The Carpenters e Beatles. Estão entre suas últimas aparições públicas.



### В США

#### скончался известный музыкант Рэй Конифф

В медицинском центре городка Эскондидо (штат



Калифорния) в возрасте 85 лет скончался известный американский музыкант и композитор, руководитель популярного в 50-60-е годы в США оркестра Рэй Конифф. Смерть наступила в субботу в результате травмы головы, которую он получил при падении, сообщила агентству AP в воскресенье вечером

медицинский эксперт из Сан-Диего Анджела Вагнер. Рэй Конифф родился в 1916 году в городе Аттлборо (штат Массачусетс) в семье музыканта: его отец играл на тромбоне и руководил местным оркестром. В 30-е годы Конифф участвовал в различных оркестрах, играл в Голливуде. Свою сольную музыкальную карьеру он начал в 1951 году аранжировщиком на студии Columbia records. Уже через пять лет Конифф играл с собственным оркестром, дебютный альбом которого входил в двадцатку лучших в течение девяти месяцев. За 60 лет творческой жизни музыкант записал более 100 альбомов, 25 из которых входили в списки сорока лучших записей фирмы Columbia records. Конифф получил премию Grammy за музыку к американскому фильму "Доктор Живаго", напоминает ИТАР-ТАСС. В течение ряда лет его имя не сходило с рекламных проспектов крупнейших фирм грамзаписи многих стран мира. В 1974 году Рэй Конифф по приглашению фирмы "Мелодия" посетил Советский Союз, где вместе с советскими артистами записал альбом "Рэй Конифф в Москве".

ntvru.com, 14 октября 2002



## Hamburger Abendblatt

Dienstag, 15. Oktober 2002

### Unsterblich durch "Somewhere My Love"

Von hpmat, dpa

**Los Angeles** - Ray Conniff, der mit Arrangements wie der "Schiwago-Melodie" eine musikalische Brücke vom Bigband-Sound zum Schlager schlug, ist im Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben. Der Bandleader erlag am Sonnabend in einem Krankenhaus in San Diego Verletzungen, die er sich nach einem Sturz am Kopf zugezogen hatte. Conniff hatte im April einen Schlaganfall erlitten.



**Ray Conniff starb jetzt  
im Alter von 85 Jahren**

Die Welt der Unterhaltungsmusik hat mit ihm einen ihren großen alten Stars verloren. Conniff gilt als Urvater des Easy Listening. Seine Bigband "The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers" prägte in den 50er- und 60er-Jahren den Lounge Sound mit melodiosen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die beim Easy Listening der 90er-Jahre

Pate standen. Für Columbia Records nahm Conniff 25 Erfolgsalben auf, die es in die Top 40 schafften. Sein größter Erfolg war seine Adaption von "Lara's Theme", das der französische Komponist Maurice Jarre für den Film "Doktor Schiwago" komponiert hatte. Bei Conniff hieß der Titel "Somewhere My Love" und wurde sein größter Hit. 1966 erhielt er dafür einen Grammy.

In seiner mehr als 60-jährigen Karriere nahm Conniff über 100 Schallplatten auf. Gut 60 Millionen verkaufte Alben brachten ihm großen kommerziellen Erfolg. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten "Besame Mucho", "New York, New York", "S'Wonderful" und - alle Jahre wieder um die Weihnachtszeit zu hören - "We Wish You A Merry Christmas". Conniffs Erfolg beruhte darauf, dass er einen Chor Melodien ohne Texte intonieren ließ und das mit dem Sound eines großen Orchesters mischte. Der Musikjournalist Frank Laufenberg schrieb über den am 6. November 1916 in Attleboro/Massachusetts geborenen Musiker: "Er schrieb keine Hits - er nahm bestehende Melodien und arrangierte sie neu. Genau das konnte in den 50er- und 60er-Jahren keiner so gut und erfolgreich wie Ray." Conniff habe Musik für diejenigen gemacht, die den Rock 'n' Roll nicht mochten. Sein Stil prägte zahllose andere Unterhaltungsorchester, in Deutschland vor allem James Last und Max Greger.

Zu Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff, wie schon sein Vater, Posaunist in verschiedenen Bigbands. So arbeitete er unter anderem mit Bob Crosby. 1951 bekam Conniff seine große Chance, als Columbia-Records-Manager Mitch Miller ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre spä-

ter konnte er seine eigene Bigband zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album "S'Wonderful" wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den Top 20. Das weltweit erste Stereo-Konzert ließ die Zeitungen vom "größten musikalischen Event der 60er-Jahre" schwärmen. Noch bis kurz vor seinem Tod stand Ray Conniff als Dirigent, Sänger, Entertainer und Posaunist auf der Bühne und sorgte während seiner Tourneen regelmäßig für ausverkaufte Häuser.



Montag, 21. Oktober 2002 Berlin, 20:23 Uhr

### Weicher Welle wohliger Klang

**Ray Conniff erfand die Musik, die wie eine Tapete ist**



Ray Conniff erfand die  
Background Musik  
Foto: AP

Der kluge Mann verhält sich still, wenn Trends und Moden ihn bedrohen. Auch im Pop. Da hieß der Altmeister des Aussitzens Ray Conniff. Er

beharrte auf der leichten Muse, er vertraute seiner Zauberformel: Man nehme ein 18köpfiges Orchester, zu den hohen Bläsern lasse man vier Frauen säuseln, zu den tieferen vier Männer summen. Das klingt gut in Fahrstühlen, zum Tee und überall, wo Stille stört.

Nur wenige verdienten mehr mit ihren Platten als Ray Conniff. Als die Welt vor kurzem wieder des verschwitzten Rock'n'Roll, des HipHop und des Techno überdrüssig war, galt Easy Listening wiederum als schick. Das war nicht völlig ernst gemeint, aber es half. Ray Conniff, weißer Anzug, weiße Edelfrisur und weißer Bart, stieß froh in die Posaune, dirigierte, tanzte, plauderte. Als Musikantenkind in Massachusetts gründete Ray Conniff an der Schule seine erste Tanzkapelle. Über Boston fand er nach New York, erlebte die Anfänge des Swing. Während des Krieges arrangierte er für den Armeefunk, um danach vom uncharmanten Bebop überrascht zu werden. Doch die Pause nutzte Conniff sinnvoll. Er entdeckte seine Formel, er vertiefte sich in die Feinheiten neuer Tontechnik. Für die Stars einer großen Plattenfirma arrangierte er die Instrumentalmusik. 1957 debütierte er, "S Wonderful", sein erstes eigenes Album. Als die Rock'n'Roller kamen, hielt er sich an Simon & Garfunkel. Er gliederte selbst die Ray Conniff Singers aus dem schmissigen Orchester aus. Conniff demonstrierte nicht gegen Vietnam, er spielte im Weißen Haus. Die Jugend lärmte, Ray Conniff ging mit einem besänftigenden Großereignis auf die Reise: Bis nach Deutschland führte ihn das erste audiophile Stereo-Live-Konzert. Seitdem zählt Deutschland zu den dankbarsten Conniff-Platten-Absatzmärkten. Aber alle Welt kennt den von Conniff munter arrangierten Weihnachtshit "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" und sein Arrangement des Film-Titelsongs von "Doktor Schiwago".

Ray Conniff, geboren am 6. November 1916 in Attleboro, Massachusetts, starb am 12. Oktober an den Folgen eines Sturzes in San Diego.

Michael Pilz



## Composer Ray Conniff Dies at 85

**Ray Conniff, Bandleader, Composer Who Wrote Theme to 'Dr. Zhivago' Dies at 85**

The Associated Press

**LOS ANGELES, Oct. 14** — Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

Conniff died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press. He had suffered a stroke in April.

Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York," in a career that spanned six decades.

His most memorable song may have been "Somewhere My Love." The song was adapted from French composer Maurice Jarre's "Lara's Theme" from the film "Dr. Zhivago." It rose to the top of the pop and easy-listening charts and won Conniff a Grammy in 1966.

Conniff produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues." He also did arrangements for Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney and Marty Robbins.

It was Conniff's arrangement of "Band of Gold" for singer Don Cherry that hit the first high note of both men's careers. The song made No. 5 on the Top 40 and was widely thought to be Cherry's hottest recording.

In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, "S'Wonderful," in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

A few of Conniff's singers were known studio vocalists including Loulie Jean Norman and B.J. Baker. Jay Meyer assisted as conductor.

Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

He performed at the White House during the Vietnam War and in 1974 was the first pop artist asked to record an album in Moscow. In 2001, he gave a series of concerts in Brazil. He performed "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli in March.

Born in November 1916 in Attleboro, Mass., Conniff gained much of his musical experience from his father, a trombone player, who led a local band while his mother played the piano.

Conniff led a local band while in high school. He moved to Boston and began playing with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers. He moved to New York during the swing era in the mid-'30s and landed a job playing and arranging for Berigan in 1937.

By 1939, he moved to Hollywood to join Bob Crosby's Bobcats, one of the hottest bands of the time.

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," said fan club official Warren Pischke.

Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamar Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.



### Ray Conniff dead at 85

*Last Updated 2002-10-17 The Arts Report*

Los Angeles - Ray Conniff, the bandleader best known for complementing big-band music with a vocal chorus, has died after a fall. He was 85.

Conniff started in the music business as a trombone player in the Big band era and became house arranger for Columbia Records in 1951, where his credits included the Johnny Mathis hit Chances Are and Frankie Laine's Moonlight Gambler.

In 1956, he released his first record. 'S Wonderful combined the talents of 18 instrumentalists and a four-man, four-woman chorus. A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

In a career spanning six decades, Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums. One of his most recognizable hits, Somewhere My Love from the film Dr. Zhivago, won a Grammy Award.

Conniff had continued to perform into his 80s. He gave a series of concerts in Brazil in 2001, and performed Somewhere My Love in March at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli.



Ray Conniff

In Memoriam, 1916-2002



Collectables Records

mourns the loss of Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose musical arrangements epitomized the Easy Listening genre.

During his career, Conniff produced two platinum and ten gold records, and was responsible for the award-winning "Somewhere My Love," Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking In The Rain" and Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler."

Popular albums by Ray Conniff:

- [Jean / Bridge Over Troubled Water](#)
- [It Must Be Him / Honey](#)
- [Way We Were / The Happy Sound Of](#)

**Ray Conniff** b. 6 November 1916, Attleboro, Massachusetts, USA. Taught to play the trombone by his father, Conniff studied arranging with the aid of a mail-order course while still at college. In 1934, after graduation, he worked with small bands in Boston before joining [Bunny Berigan](#) as trombonist/arranger in 1936. After a spell with [Bob Crosby](#)'s Bobcats, Conniff spent four years with [Artie Shaw](#) and featured on several successful records including "Concerto For Clarinet", "Dancing In The Dark" and "St James Infirmary". During this period he was also studying at the New York Juilliard School of Music in New York. After army service in World War II Conniff spent some time as an arranger with [Harry James](#), then freelanced while searching for a successful formula for producing hit records. He joined **Columbia Records** in 1954 and worked with several of their artists, including [Johnnie Ray](#), [Rosemary Clooney](#), [Guy Mitchell](#) and [Marty Robbins](#). In 1954 he provided the arrangement for [Don Cherry](#)'s million-seller, "Band Of Gold", and in 1956 was given the chance, by Columbia producer [Mitch](#)

[Miller](#), to make an album featuring his "new sound".

The successful result, "*S Wonderful!*", was a set of familiar songs with an orchestra, and a cleverly blended mixed chorus of wordless voices, sometimes used as extra instruments within the songs' arrangements. "*S Wonderful!*" was followed, naturally, by "*S Marvellous*" and "*S Awful Nice*", all in the same vein. *It's The Talk Of The Town*, in 1960, featured a larger chorus, and for the first time they sang words. From 1957-68 Conniff had 28 albums in the US Top 40, including *Say It With Music (A Touch Of Latin)*, *Memories Are Made Of This*, and in 1966, the million-seller, *Somewhere My Love*. The album's title track, "Lara's Theme" from the movie *Doctor Zhivago* (1965), also made the US Top 10 singles chart. In 1969 he topped the UK album charts with *His Orchestra, His Chorus, His Singers, His Sound*, and in 1974 became the first American popular musician to record in Russia, where he made *Ray Conniff In Moscow*, using a local chorus. The prolific Conniff's later albums, including *Exclusivamente Latino*, *Amor Amor*, *Fantastico*, *Interpreta 16 Exitos De Manuel Alejandro*, *Latinisimo* and *Do Ray Para O Rei*, have catered to his large Latin audience.



## Global Hit



**Artists:** Ray Conniff  
**Title:** Somewhere My Love  
**Label:** Universal  
**Country:** United States  
**Region:** The Americas

One of the pioneers of "easy listening" music, Ray Conniff died this past weekend at the age of 85. In a career that spanned six decades, Conniff worked with some of the great names in American big band jazz, playing trombone and writing arrangements for Bunny Berrigan, Artie Shaw and Harry James. But it was the music released under his own name that brought Conniff international fame.

The theme to Dr. Zhivago was just one of many hit records for the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers. Their lush sound epitomized the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s. Then along came rock n' roll and Conniff's kind of music fell from favor. But the band leader never stopped working and of late had been enjoying a huge resurgence of popularity in Latin America.





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## MUERE CÉLEBRE TROMPETISTA RAY CONNIFF

lunes, 14 de octubre del 2002 13:30 Hora de Perú

**El célebre trompetista Ray Conniff, una de las últimas leyendas de "las grandes bandas", murió a los 85 años de edad, cuando este fin de semana se cayó y golpeó la cabeza en su casa en la ciudad de San Diego.**

El músico de la barba y cabello completamente blanco, aún mantenía su actividad artística con esporádicas presentaciones en las que aparecía acompañado por su gigantesca orquesta y sus impactantes coros que rememoraban una época nostálgica de la música estadounidense.

El accidente del prolífico músico, quien inició su carrera en la década de los años 30 y en la que ganó varios premios, se registró el sábado pasado, pero no fue hasta un día después cuando su familia anunció el deceso a través de un escueto comunicado de prensa.

Conniff compuso y produjo arreglos orquestales en una prolífica carrera con más de 100 producciones musicales, de las que cerca de 25 se convirtieron en éxitos mundiales, tanto con melodías eran originales como con versiones orquestales a temas de películas.

Entre sus éxitos figuran "Somewhere My Love" (Dr. Shvago), "No Llores Por Mí Argentina", "Carros De Fuego", "Pretty Woman", "Star Wars Theme", "Calles De Filadelfia", "Bésame Mucho", "New York, New York", "La Bamba" y "La Bella Y La Bestia", entre muchas otras.

Tras la caída, el ganador del Grammy a la Mejor Interpretación de un Coro en 1996, por el tema "Somewhere My Love", fue llevado al centro médico Palomar de la ciudad de Escondido en donde dejó de existir. Le sobreviven su esposa Vera y su única hija Tamara.

Una de sus últimas actuaciones la tuvo durante la boda de Liza Minelli y David Gest ocurrida en marzo pasado, en una fastuosa celebración privada registrada en Los Ángeles.

Conniff nació en 1916 en la ciudad de Attleboro, Massachussets, y su carrera musical fue marcada gracias a que su padre también era un trompetista, mientras que su madre tocaba piano. (esmas)

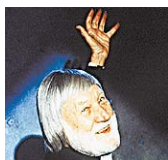


Tercera, Chile

Santiago de Chile, 15 de Octubre del año 2002

Tras sufrir una caída y golpearse en la cabeza falleció a los 85 años en California

**Muere Ray Conniff: padre de la música pop para grandes orquestas**



← Foto: Copesa

*El destacado compositor, arreglador y director de orquesta, ganador de un Grammy, ha vendido cerca de 60 millones de copias en su carrera.*

*Visitó cuatro veces Chile, destacando sus intervenciones en el Festival de Viña del Mar en los años 1978, 1979 y 1981.*

**C. C. M. / R. O**

La primera visita de Ray Conniff a Chile en 1978 marcó historia. El director de orquesta era una de las atracciones del Festival de Viña del Mar. Su show cerró la última jornada. Tras una hora y media sobre la Quinta Vergara, el "monstruo" no lo dejó irse, tampoco que se despidiera y menos que silenciara a sus músicos. Entonces, fuera de todo plan, accedió a tocar una pieza más: su clásica Somewhere my Love, adaptación del Tema de Lara, de la película ganadora del Oscar, Doctor Zhivago. La pieza (que no había ensayado) fue aplaudida a rabiar, mientras Conniff y compañía se abrazaban con lágrimas.

Esta anécdota local hasta hoy es un reflejo de la fuerza que alcanzó en el mundo musical este director, arreglador y compositor estadounidense, que el sábado falleció a la edad de 85 años. Su deceso se produjo en el Centro Médico Palomar, en California, después que se golpeó la cabeza en una caída en su casa. Según informó la forense Angela Wagner, el accidente tuvo complicaciones fatales debido a que en abril pasado había sufrido un derrame cerebral. La familia del intérprete de clásicos del easy listening (música que se caracteriza por los arreglos livianos) aún no se ha referido públicamente al hecho.

Ray Conniff nació el 6 de noviembre de 1916, en la ciudad de Attleboro, Massachusetts. Su padre tenía una joyería y tocaba el trombón, mientras su madre lo acompañaba en el piano. Trabajando de junior en la escuela integró la primera banda con la cual realizó su primer arreglo: Sweet Georgia Brown. Luego se fue a Nueva York a buscar nuevas oportunidades, hasta que en 1939 lo contrató Bing Crosby y posteriormente, Artie Shaw.

A comienzos de los '50 firmó con Columbia Record, compañía disquera que le dio la oportunidad de demostrar su destreza como arreglador. Nació así Band of Gold, placa que exhibía una seguidilla de reversionados éxitos: Walking in the Rain, Moonlight Gambler, entre otros. Con Is Wonderful (1957) se ubicó en la cima de los álbumes vendidos de Estados Unidos durante nueve meses. Le siguieron más de 95 placas, con Grammy incluido. Luego vinieron recordadas interpretaciones de temas como New York, New York, Brasil, Bésame Mucho, S'Wonderful y Just Walking in the Rain, muchos de los cuales le otorgaron tal popularidad que, hasta principios de los '90 era un músico que llegaba a vender dos millones de copias al año.

El director de orquesta Horacio Saavedra lo recuerda como "un ícono de la música popular orquestada. El mayor mérito de Ray Conniff fue lograr destacar por su originalidad y ser comercial sin caer en lo burdo o chabacano. Su sonido era inconfundible, sus arreglos eran simples, pero muy buenos".

"Lo recuerdo en sus visitas a Chile como una persona vital, que disfrutaba mucho lo que hacía. Además, las veces que venía no siempre lo hacía con su banda. Lo hacía con músicos chilenos y sonaba igual de bien. Un maestro", agrega Saavedra.



14.10.02, 15:56 Uhr

## Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

New York (dpa) - Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Hollywood-Film «Doktor Schiwago» einen Grammy erhielt, starb nach Angaben seiner Familie am Samstag im Alter von 85 Jahren in einem Hospital in der Nähe von San Diego im US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien.



Seine Big Band "The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers" prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodiosen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen.

In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25

die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten «Besame Mucho», «New York, New York» und «S'Wonderful». Jedes Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer wieder sein «We Wish You A Merry Christmas» zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten. Der Chor sang häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien.

Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch viele amerikanische Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension und The Carpenters. Am Anfang seiner Musikaufbahn war Conniff Posaunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bekam er seine große Chance, als Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre später konnte er seine Big Band zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album «S'Wonderful» wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den Top 20.

## Frankfurter Rundschau

Dokument erstellt am 14.10.2002 um 21:07:05 Uhr  
Erscheinungsdatum 15.10.2002

### Singen ohne Worte

#### Der amerikanische Bandleader und Vater des Easy Listening-Sounds Ray Conniff ist gestorben

Als Mitte der siebziger Jahre seine Platten aus den Charts verschwanden, wurde es still um ihn. Dennoch tourte er noch bis in die neunziger Jahre mit dem, was ihn einst groß rausgebracht hat, ja, eigentlich müsste man sagen, mit dem, was er erfunden hat.

Ob nun *Blowin' In The Wind*, *In the Mood* oder *Phantom Of The Opera* - Conniff transformierte die Hits seiner Zeit zu einer Art Musik, die in Fahrstühlen und Kaufhäusern vor sich hinklimpert. Auf diesem Wege gab es eigentlich nichts, vor dem er halt machte. Selbst kleine Kunststückchen von Chopin oder das Thema aus dem Film *Shaft* mussten dran glauben, und es war bestimmt nicht böse gemeint. Zwölf Top-Ten LPs und weit über 50 Millionen verkaufte Platten machten Conniff zu einem der erfolgreichsten Bestseller in der Geschichte der Schallplatte. Er gehörte nicht nur zu den Erfindern des instrumentalen Backgroundmusik, das Geheimnis seines Erfolges war, dass er die beliebten Melodien auch singen ließ, allerdings ohne Worte.

Ganz früher war er - wie sein deutscher Kollege James Last übrigens auch - ein Jazzler gewesen. Hatte wie sein Vater Posaune gespielt und wuchs in einem musikalischen Haushalt in Massachusetts auf, noch als Teenager ging er dann nach Boston. Dort traf er auf Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers und wurde Posaunist, Arrangeur und Chauffeur der Band. Mitte der dreißiger Jahre war dann die Zeit reif für New York. Und er wurde schnell zu einem vielbeschäftigten Swinger in der aufstrebenden Jazzmetropole, spielte mit Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby und Artie Shaw.

Während des 2. Weltkriegs arbeitete er als Arrangeur für das Armeeradio und später dann für Harry James. Doch den wilden Akkordwechsel der Bebop-Revolutionäre wollte Conniff nicht mehr folgen. Ende der vierziger Jahre zog er sich für einige Zeit aus dem Musikgeschäft zurück und studierte Orchesterleitung und Musiktheorie. Sein großer Durchbruch als Arrangeur kam dann 1957 mit seinem Instrumentalbum 'S Wonderful, das sich ein ganzes Jahr lang in den Charts halten konnte. Ähnlich wie das Vokal-Trio Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, das bekannte Soli von Jazzinstrumentalisten in völlig ungewohnter Form als Gesangsnummern interpretierte, hatte Conniff nun die leicht eingängigen Melodien für einen kleinen Chor arrangiert.

Die Hörer mussten fortan also nicht mehr auf die menschliche Stimme verzichten, wenn sie Musik für den Hintergrund auflegten. Und sie brauchten eben nicht mehr fürchten, von den Texten der Songs abgelenkt zu werden. *Lara's Theme* aus dem Film *Doktor Schiwago*, der 1965 die Kinos füllte, wurde zu einem großen Single-Erfolg für Conniff, und die Platte *We Wish You a Merry Christmas* wurde zu einem seiner größten Hits. Conniff war einer der Erfinder des Easy Listening- und Muzak-Sounds und blieb diesem bis zum Ende seines Lebens treu. Am Samstag ist Ray Conniff, wie erst jetzt bekannt wurde, im Alter von 85 Jahren in Kalifornien gestorben.

CRISTIAN BROECKING

*Berliner Zeitung*, 15. Oktober 2002

### Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

Ray Conniff ist tot. Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist war gewissermaßen der Urvater des Easy Listening: Mit seiner Big Band The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers hat er in den 50er- und 60er-Jahren jenen melodiosen und heiter angeswingten „Lounge Sound“ geprägt, der sich bei urbanen Barbenutzern heute wieder großer Beliebtheit erfreut. Aber auch Zeitgenossen wie Simon & Garfunkel und die Carpenters wurden von seinen Arrangements inspiriert. Zu Conniffs größten Erfolgen gehörten „Besame Mucho“ und „S'Wonderful“; auch „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“ haben wir ihm zu verdanken. Am Sonnabend ist er im Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben. (bal.)

## Умер Рэй Коннифф

В США умер Рэй Коннифф, один из самых популярных в середине прошлого века американских композиторов и первый человек из мира зарубежной популярной музыки, которому позволили записать пластинку в Советском Союзе.

Рэй Коннифф родился в 1916 году в семье тромбониста и пианистки, а поэтому с миром музыки был связан с самого раннего детства. Поиграв немного с разными коллективами, в середине 30-х он прибыл в Нью-Йорк, где стал работать то как музыкант, то как аранжировщик, то совмещая оба занятия. В числе прочего он играл у Бинга Кросби в его знаменитых Bing Crosby's Bobcats. Когда Америка вступила во вторую мировую войну, Рэй Коннифф пошел в армию - служить аранжировщиком в Armed Forces Radio. А к концу войны подустал от аранжировок и на несколько лет ушел в тень, занявшись теорией музыки, учась дирижировать и наблюдая, как вокруг расцветает чуждый ему бибоп.

В музыкальный бизнес Рэй Коннифф вернулся в 1954 году, подписав контракт с фирмой Columbia Records. Возложенные на него надежды он оправдал: хиты посыпались из Конниффа один за другим, пластинки становились золотыми и платиновыми, а альбом 1957 года "S Wonderful" провел в топ-40 целых 12 месяцев. Рэя Конниффа называли лучшим аранжировщиком в мире, а звук, который он выстраивал из игры биг-бендов и пения солиста, был легко узнаваем и абсолютно безупречен. Все шло очень хорошо, пока в 60-е не появился рок-н-ролл, который подсократил аудиторию Рэя Конниффа. Правда, с одним существенным исключением. В 1966 году Коннифф переаранжировал написанную композитором Морисом Жарром для фильма "Доктор Живаго" композицию "Lara's Theme", и в итоге получил большой хит и, собственно, самая популярная в репертуаре Конниффа вещь.

Все последующие годы Рэй Коннифф провел очень ровно. Выпускал примерно по одной пластинке в год, активно ездил по миру с концертами (последний раз выступал в прошлом году в Бразилии), получал бесчисленные музыкальные награды в самых разных странах. Особая история связывала Конниффа с Советским Союзом. В 1974 году его пригласила в Москву фирма "Мелодия". Суть предложения была такова: записать с русскими музыкантами альбом русских песен. Гостя принимали по высочайшему разряду,

дали на выбор самые популярные песни (Бабаджаняна, Пахмутовой, Шаинского, Таривердиева и прочих грандов) и возможность самому отобрать музыкантов. Рэй Коннифф выбрал Московский камерный хор Владимира Минина, вокальный квартет "Улыбка", ансамбль "Мелодия", которым тогда управлял Георгий Гаранян, и за неделю записал пластинку, для которой собственноручно сочинил пьесу-увертюру. Диск вышел под названием "Рэй Коннифф в Москве", получился, как положено, идеальным по звуку и качеству аранжировок, став небольшой приятной брешью в "железном занавесе".

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## "Московский Комсомолец"

от 17.10.2002



### МИР ОСТАЛСЯ БЕЗ РЕЯ КОНИФФА

**Известный американский композитор, музыкант и руководитель оркестра Рей Конифф скончался в субботу в Калифорнии в возрасте 85 лет. Он умер в медицинском центре города Эскондидо от последствий случайного падения.**

Рей Конифф за свою долгую творческую жизнь записал со своим оркестром около полусотни альбомов, многие из которых разошлись тиражом более 1 млн. экземпляров. Всемирную славу ему принесла аранжировка известных мелодий, в том числе к кинофильму "Доктор Живаго".

В середине 1970-х годов он приезжал в Россию, где записал пользовавшуюся большой популярностью пластинку "Рей Конифф в Москве".





Oct 14, 6:26 PM

## Composer Ray Conniff, 85, dies after fall

By Kate Berry, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES - Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

Conniff died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press. He had suffered a stroke in April.

Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York," in a career that spanned six decades.

His most memorable song may have been "Somewhere My Love." The song was adapted from French composer Maurice Jarre's "Lara's Theme" from the film "Dr. Zhivago." It rose to the top of the pop and easy-listening charts and won Conniff a Grammy in 1966.

Conniff produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and '60s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues." He also did arrangements for Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney and Marty Robbins.

It was Conniff's arrangement of "Band of Gold" for singer Don Cherry that hit the first high note of both men's careers. The song made No. 5 on the Top 40 and was widely thought to be Cherry's hottest recording.

In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, "S'Wonderful," in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big-band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.

**washingtonpost.com**

## Musician Ray Conniff, 85, Dies; Won Grammy for 'Dr. Zhivago'

By Adam Bernstein, Washington Post Staff Writer, Tuesday, October 15, 2002; Page B07



Ray Conniff was a composer, trombone player and bandleader. (1970 FILE PHOTO/AP)

Ray Conniff, 85, a Grammy Award-winning conductor and arranger who engineered a series of commercially popular records in the 1950s and 1960s that were among the first to match wordless vocal choruses with bright orchestrations, died Oct. 12 at a hospital in Escondido, Calif., after a fall. He had had a stroke in April.

Mr. Conniff was a trombonist, composer and arranger with the big bands of Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Artie Shaw and Harry James before taking a self-imposed hiatus in the late 1940s to study conducting and music theory. He studied recordings, television themes and jingles to find a danceable formula to please an audience.

He worked with producer Mitch Miller at Columbia Records to spin out a succession of light-pop hits for such singers as Don Cherry ("Band of Gold"), Johnnie Ray ("Just Walking in the Rain") and Johnny Mathis ("Chances Are," "Wonderful, Wonderful" and "It's Not for Me to Say").

By the late 1950s, Columbia gave Mr. Conniff the freedom to conduct his own orchestras. He often used a chorus with up to 25 people, making it an increasingly important part of his recordings.

His roughly 100 albums -- including " 's Wonderful" (1956), " 's Marvelous" (1957) and " 's Awwful Nice" (1958) -- sold more than 50 million copies.

"When I used to play with the big bands, we rode in the bus for hours between jobs, and to pass the time, we would sing the arrangements of other big bands, like Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey," Mr. Conniff once said. "The whole bus would sing the arrangements, and that's where I got the idea of voices for instruments."

He added: "Trumpets and girls go together because they operate on almost identical frequency ranges. Male voices blend better with tenor and baritone saxophones."

He directed the Ray Conniff Singers on "Somewhere My Love," which won the 1966 Grammy for best performance by a chorus. The song was the theme from the film "Doctor Zhivago."

Extensive touring followed, including a concert at the White House during the Richard M. Nixon presidency in which one of his singers lashed out at the president for his role in the Vietnam War.

He continued to record and sell 2 million albums annually, half outside the United States.

Mr. Conniff was born into a musical family in Attleboro, Mass. His father was a trombonist, his mother a pianist. He embarked on a band-leading and arranging career while in high school. He took a mail-order course on arranging, which he called one of the best investments of his life.

After school, he moved to Boston and had an early apprenticeship with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers as trombonist and bus driver. He then went to New York and studied with famed jazz trombonist Irving "Miff" Mole before Berigan hired him in 1937.

During World War II, he served in the Army as an arranger with the Armed Forces Radio Service in Hollywood. Afterward, he worked for the James band but disliked the leader's preoccupation with the furious tempo of the bebop sound. He left, only to find jobs hard to get. He said he dug ditches for two years to support his family before landing at Columbia Records as a house arranger.





**Trombonista e direttore scrisse il «Tema di Lara» per «Il dottor Zivago»**

## La musica in lutto per Ray Conniff

LOS ANGELES. Ray Conniff, trombonista e direttore di orchestra, è morto in un ospedale del sud della California nei pressi di Los Angeles. Un portavoce del suo fan club ha detto alla stampa americana che Conniff aveva di recente subito un ictus.

La carriera del direttore d'orchestra era cominciata all'epoca delle Big Band, le orchestre composte da uno stuolo di elementi: aveva registrato oltre 100 dischi, era stato più volte ai vertici delle classifiche, aveva vinto un Grammy (l'oscar della musica) per il «Tema di Lara», motivo conduttore del film «Il dottor Zivago».



Il trombonista e direttore d'orchestra Ray Conniff scomparso all'età di 85 anni

Per spiegare il successo che Ray Conniff ha avuto in oltre 65 anni di carriera basta pensare che ha venduto più di 70 milioni di album e che le vendite del suo catalogo sono di molto superiori a quelle di personaggi come Jimi Hendrix e Led Zeppelin. La formula adottata da questo musicista nato il 6 novembre del 1916 ad Attleboro, Massachusetts, è legata alla sua predisposizione a soddisfare i gusti del pubblico più

vasto: il suo repertorio infatti comprendeva dai classici del jazz alle riletture della musica classica, dalle canzoni popolari e di Natale alla musica latina con un uso dell'orchestra che in qualche maniera ne fa l'inventore di una formula che è stata poi riutilizzata da centinaia di artisti. Figlio di un musicista, aveva cominciato a suonare da bambino: ma è stato soltanto dopo il suo arrivo a New York, in piena era dello swing, negli anni '30, che, dopo un ingaggio con Bunny Berigan, ha iniziato un'attività professionale di session man che lo ha visto suonare in prestigiose formazioni come quelle di Bob Crosby e Artie Shaw. Trombonista dalla sonorità molto morbida e lirica, Conniff aveva trovato un suono peculiare e facilmente riconoscibile che addolciva la carica ritmica del jazz e sfruttava con furbizia le sonorità delle sordine. E' stato grazie ad alcuni successi melodici del primo rock and roll come «Just walking in the rain» di Johnnie Ray oppure «Moonlight gambler» di Frankie Laine che Conniff ha ripreso il suo rapporto con il successo che da allora non si è più interrotto. Da allora la sua discografia si è arricchita più o meno di un disco all'anno, fino a formare una serie lunghissima di titoli visto che l'artista ha suonato fino a poco tempo fa: nel settembre 2001, per esempio, sono stati organizzati una serie di concerti in Brasile culminati con l'85° compleanno festeggiato sul palco il 6 novembre.

*martedì 15 ottobre 2002*



martedì 15 ottobre 2002

## L'ultimo divulgatore

**E' morto Conniff, «O' Ray» della musica di facile ascolto. Tra riletture del jazz e del rock ha venduto settanta milioni di dischi: più dei Led Zeppelin e di Jimi Hendrix**

di Paolo Biamonte

ROMA. Per spiegare il successo che Ray Conniff ha avuto in oltre 65 anni di carriera basta pensare che ha venduto più di 70 milioni di album e che le vendite del suo catalogo sono di molto superiori a quelle di personaggi come Jimi Hendrix e Led Zeppelin.

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Non per niente Ray Conniff, nella sua carriera che lo ha portato in giro ai quattro angoli del mondo e che gli ha tra l'altro permesso di essere il primo artista occidentale a incidere, nel '74, un album nella Mosca dell'allora Unione Sovietica, vanta anche una partecipazione al Festival di Sanremo (quello del '71, quando vinse «Il cuore è uno zingaro») dove fu chiamato a reinterpretare i brani in gara.

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Dopo la seconda guerra mondiale e una fortunata collaborazione con Harry James, negli anni '40 Conniff ha conosciuto il periodo più difficile della sua carriera durante «la rivoluzione be bop», quel movimento fondato da personaggi come Charlie Parker o Dizzy Gillespie che ha cambiato completamente le regole del jazz e che rappresentava esattamente tutto ciò che non faceva parte dell'universo espressivo di Conniff. E' stato grazie ad alcuni successi melodici del primo rock and roll come «Just walking in the rain» di Johnnie Ray oppure «Moonlight gambler» di Frankie Laine che Conniff ha ripreso il suo rapporto con il successo che da allora non si è più interrotto.

L'invenzione che gli ha dato la popolarità planetaria, negli anni '60, è stata quella di aggiungere alla sua band una sezione di cantanti, «The Ray Conniff Singers» che hanno avuto tra l'altro una discreta popolarità lontani dall'orchestra. Da allora la sua discografia si è arricchita più o meno di un disco all'anno, fino a formare una serie lunghissima di titoli visto che l'artista ha suonato fino a poco tempo fa.

Naturalmente la musica brasiliana, così come quella latina, faceva stabilmente parte del repertorio di Conniff insieme ai titoli più celebri della canzone americana (da «Stardust» a «Moonlight serenade» da i classici di Cole Porter, Gershwin, Rodgers fino a quelli di Tchaikovsky, Schubert, Weill). Ray Conniff può essere considerato il più popolare, e per qualche aspetto anche più elegante, fondatore di una formula musicale che ha un enorme successo da quando esiste il mercato del disco e che è tutta fondata sull'abilità di rendere popolare per il pubblico più vasto ogni forma di musica mettendo in secondo piano gli elementi più «duri» e adattandola al gusto di chi non ama correre rischi ed è appassionato di quelle antologie che coprono varie epoche e vari generi e consentono così di avere una sorta di Bignami del disco.

## Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Monday, October 14, 2002 · Last updated 4:54 a.m. PT

### Composer Ray Conniff Dies at 85

By KATE BERRY, ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES -- Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.

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Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York," in a career that spanned six decades.

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In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, "S'Wonderful," in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

A few of Conniff's singers were known studio vocalists including Loulie Jean Norman and B.J. Baker. Jay Meyer assisted as conductor.

Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

He performed at the White House during the Vietnam War and in 1974 was the first pop artist asked to record an album in Moscow. In 2001, he gave a series of concerts in Brazil. He

performed "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli in March.

Born in November 1916 in Attleboro, Mass., Conniff gained much of his musical experience from his father, a trombone player, who led a local band while his mother played the piano.

Conniff led a local band while in high school. He moved to Boston and began playing with Dan Murphy's Musical Skip-pers. He moved to New York during the swing era in the mid-'30s and landed a job playing and arranging for Berigan in 1937.

By 1939, he moved to Hollywood to join Bob Crosby's Bobcats, one of the hottest bands of the time.

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," said fan club official Warren Pischke.

Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.

**Sun-Sentinel.com**

SOUTH FLORIDA'S LATEST NEWS

### Ray Conniff, updated Big Band sound

The Associated Press Posted October 15 2002

LOS ANGELES · Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as S'Wonderful and Somewhere My Love, has died. He was 85.

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Mr. Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

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## espectáculos

### Deja de sonar la música de Conniff

*La música del compositor y trombonista logró destacar gracias a su decisión de sobredimensionar a los coros por encima de la orquesta*

Por EDUARDO ALVARADO / Grupo Reforma

**Ciudad de México (15 octubre 2002).**- Toda una era en la música popular estadounidense concluyó ayer por la mañana con la muerte del que por todos los tiempos será reconocido como el rey de los arreglos corales de supermercado, Ray Conniff.



El trombonista y compositor murió este sábado.  
/ FOTO: NTX

Nacido el 6 de noviembre de 1916 en Attleboro, Massachussets, Conniff tuvo desde niño fuerte contacto con la música. Su padre fue el trombón líder en la local Jewelry City Band, en tanto que su madre tocaba el piano.

Durante su paso por la preparatoria, Conniff fundó junto con algunos cuates una orquesta para bailes asesorado por su padre. Ahí se inició en el dominio del trombón y con esta banda hizo su primer arreglo de una clásica rola de aquellos tiempos, "Sweet Georgia Brown".

Más tarde consiguió su primer trabajo como profesional en Boston con la banda Musical Skippers de Dan Murphy. Sin embargo, por sugerencia de un amigo, decidió tomar camino hacia Nueva York, donde encontraría un ambiente más adecuado para su desarrollo musical.

Al comienzo del reinado del swing, a mediados y fines de los años 30, Conniff participó tocando el trombón y elaborando arreglos para la Bunny Berigan's Band, la Bob Crosby's Band y más tarde tocó para el gran Artie Shaw.

Durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, Ray Conniff realizó arreglos para los servicios radiofónicos de la armada de los Estados Unidos, trabajo del que se despidió en 1946.

Después de varios años de impasse profesional y estudio exhaustivo de la conducción de orquesta, Conniff encontró la que sería su fórmula mágica para el éxito discográfico.

A mediados de los 50 Conniff recibió la oportunidad de probar sus teorías personales componiendo un arreglo para el tema de Don Cherry, "Band of Gold", que fue un hitazo en la radio.

Acicateado por este su primer éxito, Conniff se siguió de frente y con el apoyo de Columbia Records hizo los arreglos para temas como "Just Walking In The Rain" con Johnnie Ray; "Moonlight Gambler", con Frankie Laine;

"Singing the Blues" para Guy Mitchell y "A White Sport Coat" con Marty Robbins. Todos convertidos en hits.

Con estos antecedentes, Columbia le permite grabar un álbum con su propio nombre en el que Conniff usaba por primera vez grupos corales masculinos y femeninos como parte de sus arreglos instrumentales. "S Wonderful" estuvo en el top 20 de las listas de popularidad durante 9 meses continuos.

En 1957 y 1958, Conniff fue nombrado el más prometedor líder de banda, y en 1959 la Ray Conniff Orchestra & Singers fue catalogada como la orquesta de estudio más programada en la radio.

El éxito de ventas de sus discos llevó a Conniff a intentar un concierto en vivo donde la calidad de sonido fuera similar a la de sus grabaciones. Presentado como Concert in Stereo en la televisión estadounidense, el experimento fue calificado por los críticos como "el evento musical de los 60" y llevado por su autor a giras por los Estados Unidos, Alemania, Austria y Suiza.

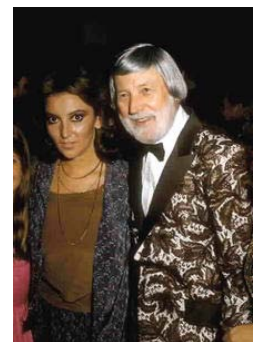
Poco después, Conniff decidió sobredimensionar a los coros por encima de la orquesta convirtiendo a su banda en la Ray Conniff Singers, cumbre de su ?desarrollo? musical. El resto es historia y trivía.

Conniff grabó más de 100 discos y vendió más de 70 millones de álbumes, casetes y discos compactos. Ganó solamente un Grammy por su interpretación de "Somewhere my Love". Obtuvo 10 álbumes de oro, 2 de platino y el premio Crystal Globe como el Mejor Vendedor de discos en 1962. También fue el primer músico de occidente en grabar en la Unión Soviética.

Su éxito más permanente lo consiguió tomando los temas de cuanto compositor pasaba por sus oídos para someterlos a su singular proceso de transformación coral. De esa manera, prácticamente ningún género musical escapó a su alquimia.

Quedan como registro de este proceder sus exitosas versiones de "El Tema de Lara" (de la película Doctor Zhivago), "A Time for Us" (tema de amor de la cinta Romeo y Julieta), "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing" (In Perfect Harmony), hitazo comercial de la refresquera Coca-Cola en los años 70; el mismísimo "Bolero de Ravel"; "My Sweet Lord", de George Harrison; y para deleite de los latinos, "Bésame Mucho", "Tico-Tico", "Brasil", "Mi Cafetal" y "Cuando Calienta el Sol". Junto con él, todos descansamos en paz.

## fotogalería



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## EL MERCURIO

Santiago de Chile, Martes 15 de Octubre de 2002

RAY CONNIFF:

# Muere el padre de la música orquestada

SEBASTIÁN MONTALVA

El swing terminó para Ray Conniff. El trombonista, arreglador y precursor del estilo llamado "easy listening" (conocido popularmente en Chile como música orquestada), falleció el sábado 12 a los 85 años de edad, víctima de un derrame cerebral. Desde hace seis meses, Conniff, famoso sobre todo en la década del 50 y 60 y en cuya discografía se cuentan más de 100 producciones, ya tenía su cuerpo paralizado.



Ray Conniff se caracterizó por sus arreglos orquestales y corales en los que las voces humanas se asemejaban a los instrumentos de viento.

En Chile, músicos y productores lo recuerdan. Uno de ellos es Camilo Fernández, productor discográfico de la llamada Nueva Ola. "En 1959 yo edité su disco 'S marvelous', el primero en Chile, mientras trabajaba como director ejecutivo del sello Columbia" cuenta. "Él tenía un estilo muy pulcro, que combinaba voces femeninas con las trompetas y voces masculinas con trombones, sonando al unísono".

Fernández es admirador de Conniff y así lo manifiesta: "Una de las cosas importantes en la historia de la música es crear sonidos y estilos, y él es uno de los creadores mundialmente aceptados, como Glenn Miller", afirma.

Nacido el 6 de noviembre de 1916 en Massachussets, Estados Unidos, Ray Conniff se destacó por ser un arreglista, más que un compositor. De hecho, una de sus grabaciones más importantes, "Somewhere my love" o el tema de Lara, canción principal de la película "Doctor Zhivago" - que le valió un Grammy en 1966- no fue compuesta por él, sino por el músico Maurice Jarre.

El maestro de orquesta Horacio Saavedra, quien lo conoció en el Festival de Viña del Mar de 1981, opina al respecto: "No creo que a él le haya gustado componer, pero eso no le resta méritos artísticos". En efecto, el trabajo de Ray Conniff consistía en crear nuevas versiones orquestales para canciones ya conocidas masivamente.

Según Jorge Pedreros, quien hizo una recordada imitación con el "Jappening con Ja" (ver recuadro), el estilo de Ray Conniff influyó en la música chilena. "Él marcó un estilo de acompañamiento. Para todos los autores de ese tiempo fue una influencia, especialmente para los arreglistas y directores de orquesta de la Nueva Ola".

Conniff se caracterizó por estar muy atento a los éxitos musicales de las distintas épocas de la historia de la música popular. Por eso no es raro encontrar en su discografía versiones orquestadas de grupos como los Platters, los Beatles, los Bee Gees y los Carpenters, entre otros. También arregló clásicos latinos como "La Bamba", "América" y "Procura olvidarte", e incluso su último disco, "De Ray para el rey", era un tributo al brasileño Roberto Carlos.

En Viña un día

A Chile vino muchas veces, pero las más recordadas son sus participaciones en los Festivales de Viña del Mar de 1978 y 1981. Leo García, hoy productor ejecutivo de Sony Music, estuvo con él en 1981. "Nunca pensamos que él iba a sonar igual en vivo que en sus grabaciones. Dirigió hasta al monstruo: lo hizo cantar 'Bésame mucho'", recuerda.

García cuenta que Conniff también aprovechaba de traspasar sus conocimientos. "En el Hotel O'Higgins daba clases gratuitas de inflexión de voz. Les decía 'levanten la voz', en una mezcla de español e inglés. Lo recuerdo por su generosidad y simpatía".

Meticuloso y simpático Ray Conniff fue una de las principales figuras del Festival de Viña de 1981. Leo García lo recuerda: "Él se fue a meter a la parte del audio y ecualizó cada una de las voces de la orquesta de Horacio Saavedra. Nadie de TVN tocó las perillas". Conniff había advertido antes: "Yo voy a Chile, pero a mí me dejan sonar como yo quiero".

Ese mismo año, el Jappening hizo una imitación de su estilo. Jorge Pedreros recuerda: "Nos estaba viendo y dijo: 'Les sale mejor que yo. Si hubiera sabido traigo a mi coro'. Incluso cuando estábamos ensayando, él estaba en la platea y de repente se paró y empezó a dirigir desde abajo. Que un maestro como él haya hecho eso fue algo que nos emocionó mucho".

  **Terra Novedades**  
(Honduras)

## Falleció Ray Conniff

**Ray Conniff, el compositor, trombonista y director de orquesta, falleció a los 85 años, producto de una caída que le produjo golpes en la cabeza.**



Ray Conniff, el compositor, trombonista y director de orquesta que ganó un Premio Grammy por crear la melodía para el filme "Doctor Zhivago", falleció. Tenía 85 años.

Conniff murió en el Centro Médico Palomar, en Escondido, el sábado, tras caerse y golpearse la cabeza, dijo a The Associated Press la médica forense Angela Wagner, de San Diego.

El compositor hizo más de 100 grabaciones y produjo 40 álbumes para Columbia Records.

Sus interpretaciones de clásicos como "Bésame Mucho", "New York, New York" y "S' Wonderful" fueron oídas en todo el mundo.

Durante una carrera que se prolongó seis décadas, Conniff produjo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino.



## THE GLOBE AND MAIL

POSTED AT 9:54 AM EDT Monday, October 14

### OBITUARY: Ray Conniff

Associated Press

Los Angeles — Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as *S'Wonderful* and *Somewhere My Love*, has died. He was 85.

Mr. Conniff died Saturday at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido, Calif., after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told Associated Press. He had suffered a stroke in April.

Mr. Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as *Besame Mucho* and *New York, New York*, in a career that spanned six decades.

His most memorable song may have been *Somewhere My Love*. The song was adapted from French composer Maurice Jarre's *Lara's Theme* from the film *Dr. Zhivago*. It rose to the top of the pop and easy-listening charts and won Mr. Conniff a Grammy in 1966.

He produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*.

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Mr. Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis's *Chances Are*, Frankie Laine's *Moonlight Gambler*, Johnnie Ray's *Just Walking in the Rain* and Guy Mitchell's *Singing the Blues*. He also did arrangements for Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney and Marty Robbins.

It was Mr. Conniff's arrangement of *Band of Gold* for singer Don Cherry that hit the first high note of both men's careers. The song made No. 5 on the Top 40 and was widely thought to be Mr. Cherry's hottest recording.

In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Mr. Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, *S'Wonderful*, in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

A few of Mr. Conniff's singers were known studio vocalists including Loulie Jean Norman and B.J. Baker. Jay Meyer assisted as conductor.

Mr. Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll, but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrange-

ments with recordings of *Laughter in the Rain*, *I Write the Songs* and *I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing*.

Mr. Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

He performed at the White House during the Vietnam War and in 1974 was the first pop artist asked to record an album in Moscow. In 2001, he gave a series of concerts in Brazil. He performed *Somewhere My Love* at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli in March.

Born in November, 1916, in Attleboro, Mass., Mr. Conniff gained much of his musical experience from his father, a trombone player, who led a local band while his mother played the piano.

Mr. Conniff also led a local band while in high school. He moved to Boston and began playing with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers. He moved to New York during the swing era in the mid-'30s and landed a job playing and arranging for Mr. Berigan in 1937.

By 1939, he moved to Hollywood to join Bob Crosby's Bobcats, one of the hottest bands of the time.

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," fan club official Warren Pischke said.

Mr. Conniff leaves his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.



14.10.2002 16:42

### Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

NEW YORK - Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Hollywood-Film "Doktor Schiwago" einen Grammy erhielt, starb 85-jährig in der Nähe von San Diego.

Seine Big Band The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen.

In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten "Besame Mucho", "New York, New York" und "S'Wonderful". Jedes Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer wieder sein "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" zu hören.

Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten. Der Chor sang häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien.

Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll. Doch viele amerikanische Bands liessen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon und Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension und The Carpenters.

Am Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff Posunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bekam er seine grosse Chance, als Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre später konnte er seine Big Band zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album "S'Wonderful" wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den Top 20.

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WORLD FOR LOVERS OF THE  
GOLDEN AGE OF POPULAR MUSIC

# RAY CONNIFF

1916-2002

## Brian Belton remembers the master of easy listening who died in October

Through his wonderful music Ray Conniff was effectively a friend of my family so I am truly saddened by his passing. For nearly 50 years he provided superb entertainment on record and in many personal appearances. My wife and I treasure the memory of his UK tour in the late 1970s when, with an orchestra of British and American musicians including several star players, he spread happiness at a number of concerts and in radio broadcasts. We longed for him to make a return visit with his talented organisation but it was not to be and other places, notably South America, had the benefit of the Conniff Sound in person.

That 'sound', originally a unique blend of instruments and a wordless chorus, proved irresistible from the launch on Columbia Records in 1956. In the years immediately following his debut album 'S WONDERFUL', Ray's sound became THE dance music at any party and the catchy rhythms he so deftly created, invariably woven around great standards, proved hugely popular.

Success, eventually worldwide, was just reward for a man who for many years, from the 1930s to the early 1950s had doggedly pursued a career as an arranger and trombonist. Earlier this year I had the pleasure of compiling and producing a compact disc for Jasmine Records containing many of Ray's very fine big band arrangements as recorded by several top orchestras. I am proud of the fact that this disc has proved popular particularly with members of the International Ray Conniff Society.

In several liner notes for CDs put out by UK Sony, I referred many times to Ray's professionalism and to his consistently high artistic standards. The Conniff Orchestra always contained top musicians including, in the early days, Billy Butterfield, 'Skeets' Herfurt and Panama Francis to name just a few. That talented Conniff Chorus evolved into the superb Ray Conniff Singers, one of the finest choral groups in the history of popular music. Fortunately, we have a wide and varied recorded repertoire to draw upon now that another music giant has left us. I somehow think that we shall not see a Ray Conniff 'Ghost Band'. Personally, I hope that we don't. I shall go on playing his recordings for the rest of my life, and as has been said about others, "Ray Conniff is dead, but I don't have to believe it if I don't want to". It will be just memories of course but what great ones of a true gentleman of music - just 'S WONDERFUL'!

The address of the International Ray Conniff Fan Club for the UK is: Michael Leach, 1 Court Cottages, Churcham, Gloucestershire GL2 8AF, tel 01452 750522, e-mail: mike.leach@btinternet.com

*There are distribution agents all over the world, so readers outside the UK are advised to contact the president and editor in chief of the magazine*

Manfred Thönicke, Haynstr. 8, 20249 Hamburg, Germany, tel +49-(0) 40-472727, fax+49-(0)40-4 72397

## STATESIDE with ROBERT W RICE

E-mail: Rwrkeyin@Aol.com

New York: One of the unavoidable tasks, of writing a news report is the ongoing coverage of obituaries. Since we are dealing with the golden era of popular music, it is inevitable that the passings of stellar performers accelerate with each year. Ray Conniff was one of those rare musicians who not only was identifiable with the big band era, but in the contemporary generation of pop music's transitional period.

Oddly enough it was for the latter part of his career that he is probably best known. It was here that he stepped out from the shadows of other artist's work, to make a dynamic impact in his own right. For nearly two decades, spanning 1937 to 1956, Ray's name was identified with the arrangements and ultimate success of many of the biggest names of the swing era that included, Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Harry James, Artie Shaw and many more. In the early 50s, Ray moved his attention to the singers at COLUMBIA, and again he was the force behind many of the hits during this bubblegum generation. Johnny Mathis, Rosemary Clooney, Frankie Laine, Don Cherry, Marty Robbins and particularly Guy Mitchell enjoyed mega hits through Ray's efforts on their behalf. In 1956, COLUMBIA was desperate to stem the growing tide toward R & R, and the siphoning off hits via fly by night labels, which seemed to come out of nowhere and then disappear. It was worth an experiment, to turn the Conniff magic loose, and on his own, in hopes of not only gaining back those who had strayed to the new rhythms, but also in satisfying the maturing generation that their music had not been abandoned.

The first venture was an album titled "S' Wonderful", and it featured four men and four women as instrumental voices, blending in with the orchestra. The result was spontaneous, and it went on to be a huge success, spawning an array of encores. In the end Conniff produced more than 100 albums, of which one quarter of them attained classic status. The best selling album from 1962 was "We Wish You A Merry Christmas", which not only presented those time tested holiday favorites, in newly orchestrated showcase arrangements, but introduced new titles like CHRISTMAS BRIDE. On his own, Ray Conniff was for the most part an album maker, and it was here that his charted success derived. Amidst it all however, he did record an ample number of singles releases. His best-received effort was SOMEWHERE MY LOVE, the theme from Dr. Zhivago, which resulted in a top ten best seller. The wordless vocal choruses became Ray's trademark, and their popularity continued well on into the 60s, when again pop music went through yet another massive overhaul, and the emerging of the Beatles.

In April of this year Ray suffered a stroke, but his death was caused by a head injury received from a fall. Ray Conniff was born on November 6, 1916, and died on October 12. His wife Vera, his daughter Tamara Conniff, a son Jimmy, and three grandchildren survive him. Ray Conniff was 85.

## EXPRESS OBITUARIES

Friday, October 25, 2002

### Ray Conniff, bandleader

RAY CONNIFF, one of the world's most successful bandleaders, became known as the king of shopping-centre muzak. As the tills jangled, shoppers would hum along to his lush arrangements of such songs as *Somewhere My Love* and *Music To Watch Girls Go By*. It was a magic formula, perfected by Conniff, that sold 50 million albums - an easy-listening blend of vocal chorus and light orchestral music to cover popular songs. "You don't have to know the words," he once said, "just the da-das and the do-dos."

## Music man was so easy on the ear

PLAY IT AGAIN: Conniff with his third wife, Vera, and on the trombone in his early band life, right



Long before he hit the big time with his own orchestra, he was a respected trombonist and arranger. Born in Massachusetts in 1916, he came from a musical home. His father played trombone and his mother piano. His father taught him the trombone and he taught himself arranging through a weekly correspondence course. He was still at school when he began leading a band.

In 1938 he went to New York to try his hand as a professional musician. Six months later he was appearing with Bunny Berigan's Band, soon gaining acclaim as a top arranger and soloist and appearing with such giants as Artie Shaw, Bob Crosby and Harry James.

During the Second World War he worked in the Army as an arranger on the Armed Forces Radio Service in Hollywood. After the war he refused to bow to the public taste for rebop and found himself out of work "Rebop wasn't really my style," he said. "I was sure I would get another gig — but I didn't."



After two years out of work, he was forced to take a job digging ditches to support his family. In his spare time he taught himself to conduct and worked out a formula for making hit records.

"I noticed that pop hits shared an ingredient with advertising - repetition of short phrases," he recalled. "I made an about-face and wrote my arrangements with a view to making the masses understand and buy records. From that point on, I became very successful."

His first score, *Band Of Gold* for Don Cherry, sold a million in 1955 and others quickly followed. Johnny Mathis's

*Chances Are*, Johnnie Ray's *Just Walkin' In The Rain*, Frankie Laine's *Moonlight Gambler* and Guy Mitchell's *Singin' The Blues* were all given the Conniff magic touch.

Even rock 'n' roll could not dent his sales. In the Sixties and Seventies, he had 37 albums in the US Top 100 and 11 in the British charts. Stars such as Rosemary Clooney and Frank Sinatra worked with him, and among his most famous recordings was the *Dr Zhivago* theme, *Somewhere My Love*. Other classics included *I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing* and *Bridge Over Troubled Waters*.

In 1970 he played for President Nixon at the White House and in 1974 was the first American popular musician to record an album in Moscow using a Russian crew.

He was undeterred by purists who said he churned out "wall-paper" music, "I figured out a long time ago that few people sit down and listen, I mean actually listen, to a record," he said.

"They kinda like to have it on in the background to clean the car, wash dishes or just while reading.

That's why the rhythm section is always prominent on my records, so people never forget it's there."

He was one of the most widely travelled musicians of his era and appeared worldwide with his band even in his 80s. He was an imposing figure on stage, immaculately dressed in coloured velvet suits and floppy bow ties, and talked warmly with his audiences.

He had a huge following in Latin America and was honoured with awards in Britain, Australia and Germany, where he performed annually. In 1997 he made his 92nd album, *I Love Movies*, and this year he performed his classic *Somewhere My Love* at Liza Minnelli's celebrity-studded wedding in New York.

Lounge music, muzak or simply tunes to do your shopping by — the Ray Conniff sound brought happiness to millions.

He is survived by his third wife, Vera, whom he married in 1962, and by their daughter. He also had three children by one of his two earlier marriages.

*Ray Conniff, born Massachusetts, US, November 6, 1916. Died California, October 12, 2002, aged 85.*

Patrick Newly

Photo captions:

↑ PLAY IT AGAIN: Conniff with his third wife, Vera, and on the trombone in his early band life, right

↖ STAGE PRESENCE: Ray Conniff's dress and style were distinctive

A third photograph shows a scene from "*Dr Zhivago*": *SOMEWHERE MY LOVE*: The *Dr Zhivago* theme was a big seller.



Die Weltwoche, Ausgabe 42.02 vom 17. Oktober 2002, Seite 23

## Unsterblich: Ray Conniff, Ikone des lässigen Optimismus

Ray Conniff (1916—2002) — Er wollte keine Musik machen, die das Herz aufwühlt, und er wollte auch keine Klangwelt erschaffen, die das Grosshirn anstrengt. Ihm schwebte ein Sound für den kleinen Zeh vor — wenn der lässig mitwippt, ist das schon das höchste der Gefühle. Ray Conniff war der Klassiker des Easy Listening,

Im Hollywood der fünfziger Jahre begann seine Glanzzeit. Ein entspanntes Lächeln lag über der Stadt, die Menschen hatten alles, einen schicken Bungalow, einen leuchtenden Swimmingpool, eine Terrasse mit Blick aufs Lichtermeer, nur etwas hatten sie nicht: Musik, zu der sich ein Mann lässig mit einer Frau im Arm bewegen kann, ohne auf die Zigarette in der rechten Hand und den Martini in der linken Hand verzichten zu müssen. Diese Musik lieferte plötzlich Ray Conniff.

Sein Sound war unverwechselbar: Conniff griff sich Melodien, die gerade populär waren, und arrangierte sie neu — das Orchester sorgt für den Swing, der Chor summt mit. Beide verschmelzen zu einer leicht verdaulichen Sauce. «Die Instrumente klingen, als ob sie singen, und die Sänger klingen, als ob sie ein Instrument spielen», staunte ein Kritiker. Ein neuer Sound war geboren: der Ray-Conniff-Sound.

Keine Komposition war vor Conniff sicher, nicht einmal Tschaikowsky oder Rachmaninow. Seine Swing-Version von Tschaikowskys „Schwanensee“-Motiv gehört zu den Meilensteinen in der Geschichte der guten Laune.

Ray Conniffs Debütalbum „'s Wonderful“ schaffte es im Jahre 1956 auf Anhieb in die Hitparade und hielt sich dort volle neun Monate lang. Amerika wurde süchtig nach dem beschwingten Sound. Das Land wollte auf einmal zu „Also sprach Zarathustra“ mit den Fingern schnippen. Und Ray Conniff er. füllte jeden Wunsch — Broadway-Hits, Country-Klassiker, Popsongs, Filmmelodien, alles gab's im grossen Sonderangebot des Conniff-Sounds. Kein Wunder, dass die Musik als Nächstes die Supermärkte eroberte — der Soundtrack zum Einkaufen. Leise, sanft und unaufdringlich schwebte die Klangwolke über den Regalen. Eine Musik, die man nicht merkt. Nichts Ist so leicht konsumierbar wie Ray Conniff. *Easy Listening, Easy Shopping.*

Zwei grosse musikalische Berieselungsanlagen beherrschten Amerika; Mantovani in den Fahrstühlen, Ray Conniff in den Supermärkten.

Dann kam die Kulturrevolution, Rock, Punk, Heavy Metal, Rap — damit konnte der coole Orchesterchef nun definitiv nichts mehr anfangen. Stars, die auf der Bühne die Verstärker zertrümmerten und Gitarrenhälse durchbissen, das entsprach nicht seinem Stil. Das waren keine Ohrwürmer mehr, aus denen er Swing-Versionen mit Summchor hätte herstellen können. Trotzig setzte Conniff der wild gewordenen Musik seinen ungebrochenen Happy-Hour-Sound entgegen. Das Publikum, das am Feierabend weiterhin gern den Hut in den Nacken schob, blieb ihm treu.

Ray Conniff, der Alleinunterhalter einer Generation, die nichts emphatischer feierte als die Erfindung des Automatikgetriebes. Heute ist sein lässiger Optimismus längst wieder Kult.

Über hundert Platten hat Conniff im Lauf seiner beispiellosen Karriere produziert. Siebzig Millionen Stück wurden weltweit verkauft. Kein schlechtes Ergebnis für einen Mann, der seine Ausbildung zum Arrangeur im Fernkurs absolviert hat. Ein

Zeitungsinserat war ihm aufgefallen: «Learn to arrange quickly» hiess die Broschüre, die nur einen Dollar kostete. «Das beste Investment, das ich je gemacht habe», sagte Ray Conniff einmal.

In den letzten Jahren war er mit seiner Frau Vera, einer gebürtigen Schweizerin übrigens, hauptsächlich im Wohnmobil unterwegs. Ein zehn Meter langes Ungetüm der Marke *Fleetwood Bounder*, sogar ein elektrisches Klavier stand drin. Der fanatische Musiker war einfach unverwundlich. Erst 1997 hatte er einen neuen Plattenvertrag ausgehandelt, seither sind schon wieder drei neue Alben erschienen. im September 2001, kurz vor seinem 85. Geburtstag, ging er auf Brasilien-Tournee. Und noch im März sang er auf der Hochzeit von Liza Minnelli.

Er ist am Samstag nur unglücklich gestürzt. Vielleicht der einzige falsche Schrift in seiner Karriere. Trotzdem tödlich. Die sterblichen Überreste von Ray Conniff werden beigesetzt, die unsterblichen Überreste leben weiter.

Christian Kämmerling



## EASY LISTENING Komponist Ray Conniff gestorben

Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, einer der Urväter des "Easy Listening"-Sounds, ist im Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben.



Komponist Conniff (1970):  
Pate des "Easy Listening"  
(Foto: AP)

New York - Conniff, der für den Titelsong für den Hollywood-Film "Doktor Schiwago" einen Grammy erhielt, starb nach Angaben seiner Familie bereits am Samstag in einem Hospital in der Nähe von San Diego im US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien. Seine Big Band The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers prägte in den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren den "Lounge Sound" mit seinen melodiosen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in späteren Jahren bei der Entstehung des "Easy Listening" Pate standen.

In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die amerikanischen Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten unter anderem "Besame Mucho", "New York, New York" und "S'Wonderful". Jedes Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist auch immer wieder sein "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten. Der Chor sang häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien.

Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch viele amerikanischen Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension und The Carpenters. Am Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff Posaunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bekam er seine große Chance, als Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre später konnte er seine Big Band zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album "S'Wonderful" wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den amerikanischen Top 20.



the annotated, illustrated, interactive  
**HISTORY OF BOSTON ROCK & ROLL**

## Ray Conniff

On Monday, October 12, 2002, Ray Conniff, the composer, trombone player and bandleader who won a Grammy Award for his recording of the "Dr. Zhivago" theme "Somewhere My Love," died at his California home after a fall. He was 85. The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs" and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

He produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He was CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The liner notes from his 1967 release *The Impossible Dream*:

Most of you reading this already know the instantly identifiable sound that is Ray Conniff. You are familiar with the Conniff mystique and are going to buy this record no matter what it says here on the back because you know if it's Conniff it's going to be great. But the Conniff greatness didn't just happen. The piece of vinyl resting between these two pieces of cardboard is like all Conniff records—the product of years of hard work, devotion, development and imagination. It is testimony to the musical genius who created it and gave his name to the sound pressed in its grooves.

The Conniff sound began in Attleboro, Massachusetts, back in 1933 when Ray and some high school buddies decided to start a dance band. Ray played trombone because his father had given him one, and since the band couldn't afford to buy arrangements, Ray was elected to that chore too. He had seen an ad for a transposer called the "Lightning Arranger" in *Billboard* so he invested a dollar and launched his arranging career. Ray says today, "That was the best investment I ever made." His first arrangement was for *Sweet Georgia Brown* and took him two weeks to complete. The band liked it, the kids loved it and, Ray Conniff, arranger, was born.

After high school, Ray went to Boston and joined "Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers" as trombonist/arranger/truck driver and started his professional career as a barnstorming musician for the grand sum of \$35.00 a week. Ray soon discovered that playing and arranging for the same orchestra were providing him with a million-dollar education in the rudiments of orchestral arranging. By hearing and performing the arrangement night after night, the arranger has an opportunity to analyze the good and bad points of each arrangement. In the three decades Ray has been performing this dual role, he has discovered and discarded all the devices that don't work and found or created just about every one that will.

While on tour with the "Skippers," Ray Conniff encountered a musical genius of that era... Count Basie. The musical world had yet to discover the "Count," but Ray spent every free night at the Reno Club in Kansas City listening and learning. Ray credits Basie not only with his considerable contribution to jazz and popular music, but also for initiating a young man named Conniff to the mysteries of the essence of pop music—the beat.

After Ray left the "Skippers" he moved to New York and auditioned for Bunny Berigan's orchestra as arranger/trombonist. He was hired on the spot and spent two years working with the other greats in the band like George Auld, Joe Bushkin and Buddy Rich. While with Berigan, Ray was heard by Bob Crosby and immediately offered a job with the famed "Bob-cats." By 1940, Ray was making quite a name for himself in music circles

as an arranger and composer. It was for this ability, as much as for his virtuosity on the trombone, that Ray was signed to the Artie Shaw Orchestra, then one of the three top bands in the country.

During his five years with Shaw, Ray did some of his best writing. Many of his compositions were recorded by Shaw and some of them like *Just Kiddin' Around*, *Jumpin' On The Merry-Go-Round* and *Prelude In C Major* are still popular. One of his best arrangements for Shaw was the Gershwin tune, *S' Wonderful*, which today is synonymous with the "Ray Conniff Sound." After Artie Shaw, Ray joined Glen Gray as a straight arranger. Unfortunately, while many of Ray's arrangements and compositions were performed live and on the air, none were ever recorded by Gray and are now lost forever.

Ray's next job was with Uncle Sam, who for two years utilized his talents for the Armed Services Radio Network. After his discharge, Ray went to work for Harry James.

It was while working with James that Ray Conniff was first introduced to Columbia Records. Ray arranged many of James' best records including the hit version of *September Song*. After nearly three years with Harry James, the musical monster known as be-bop reared its ugly head and Ray's impeccable taste prevented him from arranging this new music.

The next two years were the most difficult of Ray's musical career. Yet at the same time they were among the most productive, for it was during this time that Ray began to examine the makings of a hit record. While working at other jobs, Ray's musical appetites were sated by the dissection of hit singles. He asked himself why one record is a hit while others never make it. After three years of investigation and study, he hit on a formula for arranging that he knew could be instrumental in producing hit records. Unfortunately, he found it difficult to sell his ideas to a record company. It wasn't until the early 50's when Ray met Mitch Miller, Director of Artists and Repertoire for Columbia, that things began to happen.

Miller, convinced that Ray was on to something, gave him a chance. On the third Conniff-arranged single it happened: Don Cherry's *Band Of Gold* became a smash hit. This started a series of Conniff-arranged singles that reads like a Who's Who of all-time hit records: Johnny

Ray's *Walkin' In The Rain* sold over a million; Frankie Laine's *Moonlight Gambler* sold nearly that number; Guy Mitchell's *Singin' The Blues* went over three million, knocking Elvis Presley out of first place on the charts; Marty Robbins' *White Sport Coat* was one of his biggest hits and Johnny Mathis' *Wonderful, Wonderful, It's Not For Me To Say* and *Chances Are* are history.

Shortly after his success with *Band Of Gold*, Ray recorded his first Columbia album. He dusted off his old Artie Shaw arrangement of *S' Wonderful*, added orchestral voices, put in all his arranging ideas and the "Conniff Sound" was born. Since that first LP, Ray Conniff has recorded many great albums. Seven of them have received the coveted Gold Record Award.

Because his very first, and succeeding albums have been such great successes, Ray has been termed an "instant success" by some. Nothing could be further from the truth. Like all great artists, musical or otherwise, Ray has matured and improved like a fine wine. His years of service to the great bands in the country, coupled with his inherent musical genius, have resulted in his deserved recognition. The magical "Conniff Touch" transcends musical fads and fortunately for our, and future generations, it will be preserved for years to come in that piece of vinyl between these two pieces of cardboard.

- Tom Riley, Photo: Columbia Records Photo Studio





## Ray Conniff dies

**Composer, bandleader preserved Big Band sound**

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 14 — Ray Conniff, the Grammy Award-winning composer and bandleader whose arrangements epitomized the Big Band sound while spawning such albums as "S'Wonderful" and "Somewhere My Love," has died. He was 85.



AP file

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers epitomized the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

(Audio link: Song featured: Theme from Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto)

CONNIFF DIED SATURDAY at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press. He had suffered a stroke in April.

Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records. He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho" and "New York, New York," in a career that spanned six decades.

His most memorable song may have been "Somewhere My Love." The song was adapted from French composer Maurice Jarre's "Lara's Theme" from the film "Dr. Zhivago." It rose to the top of the pop and easy-listening charts and won Conniff a Grammy in 1966.

Conniff produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers typified the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

### BROKE OUT AS SOLOIST

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are," Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler," Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain," and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues." He also did arrangements for Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney and Marty Robbins.

It was Conniff's arrangement of "Band of Gold" for singer Don Cherry that hit the first high note of both men's careers. The song made No. 5 on the Top 40 and was widely thought to be Cherry's hottest recording.

In 1956, Columbia decided to try out Conniff as a featured performer with a big-band mix that included guitarists Al Caiola and Tony Mottola. His debut album, "S'Wonderful," in which he combined a chorus of four men and four women with a traditional big band mix of 18 instruments, stayed on the Top 20 charts for nine months.

### VOICES LIKE INSTRUMENTS

A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

A few of Conniff's singers were known studio vocalists including Loulie Jean Norman and B.J. Baker. Jay Meyer assisted as conductor.

Conniff's instrumental arrangements provided easy listening for a booming adult album market.

His popularity waned with the rise of rock 'n' roll but stars such as The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension and Bert Bacharach benefited from his arrangements with recordings of "Laughter in the Rain," "I Write the Songs," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

Conniff received countless international awards, continued touring and produced about an album a year.

He performed at the White House during the Vietnam War and in 1974 was the first pop artist asked to record an album in Moscow. In 2001, he gave a series of concerts in Brazil. He performed "Somewhere My Love" at the wedding of David Gest and Liza Minnelli in March.

### SON OF MUSICIANS

Born in November 1916 in Attleboro, Mass., Conniff gained much of his musical experience from his father, a trombone player, who led a local band while his mother played the piano.

Conniff led a local band while in high school. He moved to Boston and began playing with Dan Murphy's Musical Skippers. He moved to New York during the swing era in the mid-'30s and landed a job playing and arranging for Berigan in 1937.

By 1939, he moved to Hollywood to join Bob Crosby's Bobcats, one of the hottest bands of the time.

"He was always reinventing himself, that's how he was able to continue his popularity for so many years," said fan club official Warren Pischke.

Conniff is survived by his wife, Vera; a daughter, Tamara Conniff; son, Jimmy Conniff; and three grandchildren.



ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD (14.10.2002)

### Ray Conniff (85) overleden AFP, Los Angeles

Componist, arrangeur en big band-leider Ray Conniff is overleden. Hij werd 85 jaar. Het is nog niet duidelijk wanneer Conniff is gestorven en waaraan.

Het orkest van Conniff en de Ray Conniff Singers maakten in de jaren vijftig en zestig meer dan honderd platen en cd's waaronder ruim een twintigtal die in de lijst van veertig best verkopende terecht waren gekomen. Ook in Nederland waren de Ray Conniff Singers zeer populair. Conniff won in 1966 ook een prestigieuze Grammy Award voor het bekende liedje 'Somewhere my Love', uit de film Doctor Zhivago. Conniff schreef We Wish You a Merry Christmas, dat in 1962 de bestverkochte plaat van de maatschappij CBS was.

El músic nord-americà va assolir gran popularitat amb els arranjaments per a orquestra i cor

## La música lleugera perd el compositor Ray Conniff

Redacció LOS ANGELES (DIARI AVUI)

Una caiguda i un cop al cap van causar, dissabte passat, la mort del compositor i director d'orquestra Ray Conniff, popular gràcies als múltiples enregistraments amb la seva orquestra.

Entre els èxits destacats de Conniff hi ha 'Somewhere My Love', adaptació del tema central de 'Doctor Jivago'

Ray Conniff va crear un estil propi i inconfusible, amb el qual va assolir una gran popularitat amb la seva orquestra i el seu cor als anys 50 i 60, amb un so suau que combinava veus sense paraules i un acompanyament orquestral lleuger, superficialment sofisticat, innegablement enganxós, tant en els arranjaments de temes coneguts com en les peces pròpies.

Conniff va morir dissabte passat al Centre Mèdic Palomar, a la localitat californiana d'Escondido, després de rebre un fort cop al cap com a conseqüència d'una caiguda, segons va informar ahir Doug Mitchell, responsable de la pàgina d'Internet dedicada al músic nord-americà i que va ser, a l'hora de tancar aquesta edició, l'única confirmació oficial del traspàs del músic. Guanyador de nombrosos guardons i celebrat pels seus arranjaments per a grans conjunts, Ray Conniff tenia vuitanta-cinc anys.

L'artista va gravar més de cent discos al llarg de la seva dilatada carrera, amb èxits destacats com *Somewhere My Love*, una adaptació del Tema de Lara que el compositor francès Maurice Jarre va escriure per a la pel·lícula de David Lean *Doctor Jivago*, la versió cinematogràfica de la novel·la de Borís Pasternak.

### D'entrada, trombonista

Les sis dècades de carrera de Conniff també es poden resumir en 25 discos col·locats entre els 40 més venuts a les llistes d'èxit dels Estats Units i amb les versions de clàssics com *New York New York* i *Bésame mucho*. El currículum de Conniff també inclou 10 discos d'or i dos de platí, així com 70 milions de discos, cassetts i cedés venuts arreu del món, diversos premis Grammy (entre els quals el 1966 per la ja esmentada *Somewhere My Love*), l'equivalent als Oscars de la indústria discogràfica.

Ray Conniff va néixer el 6 de novembre de 1916 a l'Estat nord-americà de Massachussets. La seva carrera musical va començar per un interès pel trombó, amb el qual interpretava temes clàssics del jazz com *Sweet Georgia Brown*.

La seva popularitat als Estats Units va créixer notablement després de la Segona Guerra Mundial, al posar-se al capdavant del conjunt que ell mateix va crear, la Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers, així com pels seus múltiples i hàbils arranjaments. Però en la faceta de compositor Conniff també va destacar com a autor d'un conegut tema nadalenc: *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, amb el qual va obtenir el 1962 el rècord de vendes de discos de la CBS aquell mateix any. Actiu fins als darrers anys, Ray Conniff va protagonitzar una gira de concerts pel Brasil poc abans del seu vuitanta-cinc aniversari.



## Muere Ray Conniff

Los Ángeles, Estados Unidos.

Ray Conniff, el popularísimo compositor y director musical galardonado con un Grammy, y cuyos arreglos caracterizaron la era de las grandes bandas, falleció. Tenía 85 años de edad.

Conniff murió el sábado en el Centro Médico Palomar en Escondido después que se golpeó la cabeza en una caída, dijo la forense Angela Wagner a la AP. Había sufrido un derrame en abril.

Con más de un centenar de grabaciones y 25 álbumes de Columbia Records incluidos en las listas de las 40 canciones más populares, produjo clásicos como "Bésame Mucho" y "New York, New York" en una carrera de seis décadas.



Su canción más memorable puede haber sido "Somewhere My Love", adaptada de "Lara's Theme" de Maurice Jarre de la película Dr. Zhivago. Se encaramó en el primer puesto en las listas de canciones populares y ligeras y le valió un Grammy en 1966.

Conniff produjo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino. Ganó el premio al Artista Más Vendedor de CBS Records en 1962 por la grabación "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

La Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers caracterizó la

música popular de los años 50 y 60 con una mezcla de coros sin palabras y acompañamiento orquestral ligero.

Aunque se inició como trombonista en la era de las grandes bandas tocando junto a Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby y Artie Shaw, Conniff se presentó como solista después de ser contratado como arreglista residente de Columbia Records en 1951.

Fue el autor de "Chances Are" de Johnny Mathis, "Moonlight Gambler" de Frankie Laine, "Just Walking in the Rain" de Johnnie Ray y "Singing the Blues" de Guy Mitchell. También hizo arreglos para Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney y Marty Robbins.

Fue su arreglo de "Band of Gold" para el cantante Don Cherry que significó un triunfo inicial en la carrera de ambos.

En 1956, Columbia decidió probar a Conniff como ejecutante con una banda que incluía a los guitarristas Al Caiola y Tony Mottola. El álbum de su debut, *S'Wonderful*, en que combinaba un coro de cuatro varones y cuatro mujeres con una banda de 18 instrumentistas, estuvo en la lista de los 20 mayores éxitos durante nueve meses.

Un artículo de 1962 en la revista *McCall's* describió su banda como "cantantes que 'emiten' sus voces como si fueran instrumentos, más como sutiles instrumentos de viento que voces".

Su popularidad disminuyó con el surgimiento del rock, pero astros como The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension y Bert Bacharach se beneficiaron con sus arreglos con grabaciones como "Cantando bajo la lluvia", "I Write the Songs" y "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing".

Conniff recibió incontables premios internacionales y siguió haciendo giras y produciendo un álbum por año.

Actuó en la Casa Blanca durante la Guerra de Vietnam y en 1974 fue el primer artista pop al que se le invitó a grabar un álbum en Moscú. En el 2001 dio una serie de conciertos en Brasil. Y en marzo actuó en la boda de David Gest y Liza Minnelli.

Le sobreviven su esposa Vera, sus hijos Tamara y Jimmy y tres nietos.





## Ray Conniff legendario músico y compositor, falleció a los 85 años de edad

Lauro. Recibió un Grammy por Tema de Lara, de "Doctor Zhivago"

Ray Conniff, el compositor, trombonista y director de orquesta que ganó un Premio Grammy por crear la melodía para el filme "Doctor Zhivago", falleció a los 85 años. Conniff murió el sábado en el Centro Médico Palomar, en la localidad de Escondido, tras caerse y golpearse la cabeza, dijo a The Associated Press la médica forense Angela Wagner, de San Diego. El compositor hizo más de 100 grabaciones y produjo 40 álbumes para Columbia Records. Sus interpretaciones de clásicos como "Bésame mucho", "New York, New York" y "S Wonderful" fueron oídas en todo el mundo. Durante una carrera que se prolongó seis décadas,



Conniff produjo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino. Nació el 6 de noviembre de 1916, en la ciudad de Attleboro, Massachusetts, Estados Unidos. Su padre era trombonista y su madre tocaba piano, de ella heredó la pasión por la música. La primera experiencia como músico de orquesta fue en la secundaria de Attleboro. Comenzó como

trombonista y con el tiempo pasó a hacer arreglos hasta convertirse en director de la banda local. Su primer empleo como músico profesional fue con "Musical Skippers", de Dan Murphy, en Boston. Comenzó tocando trombón, orquestrando y conduciendo el camión del grupo. Después se mudó a Nueva York. Allí trabajó como trombonista-arreglista de Bunny Berrigan. En 1939 comenzó a trabajar con Bob Crosby y los Bobcats. Un año después, fue contratado por contratado por Artie Shaw y luego, por Glen Gray. Después de esas dos experiencias, Conniff comenzó a hacer arreglos para el servicio de radio de las fuerzas armadas de Estados Unidos, donde se quedó hasta 1946. Salió del Ejército y fue a orquestrar para Harry James, con quien trabajó hasta el final de la década del 40. Los últimos años de la década del 40 fueron los más oscuros de su historia. Dejó de hacer arreglos y se ganaba la vida en la época en que ya estaba casado y tenía tres hijos como director musical free-lance y haciendo trabajos fuera de la música. Su gran oportunidad surgió en la década del 50 cuando conoció a Mitch Miller, de Columbia Records. En el estudio comenzó a hacer arreglos y orquestaciones para otros músicos y para los discos de Columbia. Los mayores sucesos fueron Walkin' In The Rain, Moonlight Gambler, entre otros. El éxito obtenido con otros discos incentivó a Columbia a lanzar un álbum de la autoría del maestro. Fue entonces cuando surgió 'S Wonderful, que quedó en la lista de los discos más vendidos durante nueve meses. En la primavera de 1960, Conniff hizo un tour de 11 días y llenó los principales locales nocturnos de Los

Angeles y San Francisco. En esos conciertos, el maestro comenzó a desarrollar su estilo musical, que lo distinguió como un talentoso director-arreglista. Ray comenzó a hacer uso de un coro vocal como comodín de la orquesta y en lugar de tocar instrumentos, los vocalistas sílabas como: ba-ba e du-du, que juntas al sonido de un ritmo musical contribuyeron a hacer el estilo de Conniff mundialmente conocido. En toda su carrera grabó más de 100 discos, entre ellos "Live In Rio", en homenaje a Brasil, país donde estuvo 12 veces y donde hizo su última presentación, en diciembre del año pasado.

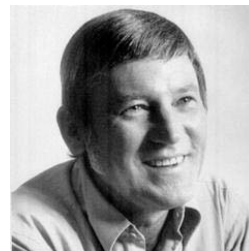


Buenos Aires, 14 de octubre de 2002 - 13:24 hs.

**TENÍA 85 AÑOS**

## Murió el compositor Ray Conniff

El destacado compositor, ganador de varios premios Grammy y productor de diez discos de oro y dos de platino, falleció el sábado último en California como consecuencia de un golpe accidental en la cabeza.



El compositor y director de orquesta Ray Conniff falleció el sábado en el Centro Médico Palomar, de Escondido, California, tras caerse y golpearse la cabeza, informó uno de los allegados del artista.

"Siento mucho informar que Ray Conniff falleció en la mañana del sábado", dice Doug Mitchell, que dirige la página que este artista tiene en Internet, en la que hasta ahora es la única confirmación oficial del fallecimiento del afamado músico.

Conniff, ganador de numerosos galardones y famoso en todo el mundo por sus arreglos para grandes bandas, tenía 85 años de edad.

Entre las canciones más famosas de su centenar de discos se cuenta "Somewhere My Love" adaptada de la obra "La canción de Lara", del francés Maurice Jarre y que fuera tema de la película "Doctor Zhivago".

Durante su carrera de más de seis décadas, Conniff **produjo 25 álbumes** que se colocaron entre los 40 más vendidos de Estados Unidos, e hizo sus interpretaciones de clásicos como "New York, New York", y "Bésame mucho".

Conniff produjo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino, ganó premios Grammy, y en 1962 recibió el título de **Artista Más Vendido** de la CBS por su disco "Feliz Navidad".



# estadao.com.br

Domingo, 13 de outubro de 2002 - 14h41

## Morre Ray Conniff, que muitos criticam e muitíssimos dançam

Os críticos malhaviam os arranjos suaves e adocicados que o maestro dispensava a clássicos como *Besame Mucho*, *New York, New York*, *Pretty Woman*, que o ajudaram a vender 85 milhões de discos e fizeram gerações dançar.



Ray Conniff: 102 discos, muitas críticas, 85 milhões de cópias vendidas

**São Paulo** - Morreu neste sábado em Los Angeles, nos Estados Unidos, o maestro e trombonista Ray Conniff. Ele tinha 85 anos e sofreu um derrame, o segundo em seis meses. Foi levado para um hospital da cidade, mas não resistiu.

Conniff nasceu em 1916, em Massachusetts. Seu pai era trombonista, e a mãe, pianista. Seguiu os caminhos do pai e tornou-se um dos melhores instrumentistas da era das big bands. Tocou ao lado de alguns dos maiores nomes da música americana, como Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Art Hodes e Artie Shaw.

Após servir na Segunda Guerra Mundial, Conniff passou a investir mais em sua faceta de arranjador. Após uma rápida passagem pelo conjunto de Harry James, foi a Hollywood e começou a trabalhar para os grandes estúdios. Acabou contratado da Columbia, em 1951, que decidiu bancar seu álbum de estréia em 56, *S'Wonderful*, o primeiro de uma longa discografia de 102 discos.

Como arranjador, tornou-se um dos grandes mestres do "easy listening" e uma campeão absoluto dos salões de bailes. Foi também bastante criticado pelos arranjos suaves e adocicados que dispensava a clássicos como *Besame Mucho*, *New York, New York*, *Pretty Woman*, que o ajudaram a vender 85 milhões de discos.

Seus críticos enxergavam em seus arranjos, pródigos em metais, uma mesma interpretação pobre e pasteurizada para os mais diversos gêneros, como jazz, bossa, rock, bolero, swing etc. Daí porque passou a ser ironizado, ao lado de Glenn Miller, Burt Bacharach, Chris de Burgh e outros, como rei dos elevadores, consultórios médicos e salas de espera em geral. Conniff dizia não ligar. "Não tenho controle sobre o que escrevem."

O fato é que seus arranjos para músicas como *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* e < i>embalaram bailinhos de várias gerações, em muitas partes do mundo, incluindo o Brasil, país pelo qual tinha um carinho especial. Sua

primeira visita ao País foi na década de 60, quando, ao lado de Henry Mancini, tocou *Aquarela do Brasil*, *Besame Mucho* e *Somewhere my Love*. Voltaria mais de dez vezes. "Não sei a razão, mas gosto muito de saber que no Brasil três gerações dançam com minhas músicas", disse ao **Estado**, em 1999.

No mesmo ano, lançou um disco dedicado à música sertaneja brasileira. Em *Ray Conniff's Country* (1999), gravado na Califórnia, o maestro rearranjou *Pense em Mim*, *É o Amor*, *Festa de Rodeio*, *Luar do Sertão*, *Bem te Vi*, *No Rancho Fundo*, *Entre Tapas e Beijos* e outras. O disco entrou para sua longa série de álbuns "regionais", que já incluía homenagens à Rússia, Venezuela, Grã-Bretanha, além do Brasil em *Amor, Amor* (1982), *Fantástico* (1983), *Ray Conniff Live in Rio* (1996).

Sua última passagem foi em setembro de 2001, para duas apresentações no Credicard Hall, tendo no repertório músicas de Frank Sinatra, Bee Gees, The Carpenters e Beatles. Estão entre suas últimas aparições públicas.

### Em surdina

A morte do músico não havia sido registrada pelas agências nem pelos sites internacionais de notícias até as 14h30 deste domingo – motivo pelo qual não havia também sido noticiada neste portal. Nesse horário, **O Estado de S. Paulo** confirmou a informação – adiantada ontem pela *Globonews* – com o presidente do fã-clubes internacional de Ray Conniff, o alemão Manfred Thoenicke, que havia recebido a notícia da mulher do maestro, Vera. Ele fez um registro da morte no site do fã-clubes (<http://members.aol.com/dmitchell9/>).

Elias Ramos Gaia, responsável pelo fã-clubes no Brasil, não considera estranho o silêncio das agências internacionais, mesmo as dos Estados Unidos. Ray Conniff, segundo Gaia, era ignorado pelo público norte-americano, embora seus primeiros discos, nos anos 60, tenham feito muito sucesso. "O maestro era uma pessoa de trato difícil e tinha rompido com a imprensa."

## Elmshorner Nachrichten

Dienstag, 15. Oktober 2002

### Leichte Melodien mit Chor und Bigband Ray Conniff starb in Kalifornien

**New York** (dpa) Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist, Ray Conniff ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Hollywood-Film Doktor Schiwago einen Grammy erhielt, starb bereits am Sonnabend im Alter von 85 Jahren in einem Hospital in San Diego im US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien. Seine Big Band „The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers“ prägte den 50er- und 60er-den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen.

In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“. Um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer sein „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“ zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten.

Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch viele amerikanische Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel, „The Fifth Dimension“ und „The Carpenters“. Am Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff Posaunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bekam er seine große Chance, als Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre später stellte er seine Big Band zusammen.



Venezia, martedì 15 ottobre 2002, S. Teresa d'Avila

## E' morto Ray Conniff, musicò «Il dottor Zivago»

**Trombonista e direttore d'orchestra, in 65 anni  
di carriera ha venduto 70 milioni di album**



ROMA. Ray Conniff, trombonista e direttore di orchestra, è morto in California; nato nel 1916 ad Attelboro in Massachusetts, il prossimo 6 novembre avrebbe compiuto 86 anni. Conniff (nella foto) ebbe un grandissimo successo nel 1966 incidendo «Somewhere my love», tema dal film «Il dottor Zivago». Nel 1974 fu il primo artista statunitense a registrare nell'Urss dove incise «Ray Conniff in Moscow» usando un coro sovietico.

Ray Conniff è morto in un ospedale del sud della California nei pressi di Los Angeles. Un portavoce del suo «fan club» ha detto alla stampa americana che Conniff aveva di recente subito un ictus. La carriera del direttore d'orchestra era cominciata all'epoca delle Big Bands, le orchestre composte da uno stuolo di elementi: aveva registrato oltre 100 dischi, era stato più volte ai vertici delle classifiche, aveva vinto un Grammy (l'oscar della musica) per il «Tema di Lara», motivo conduttore del film «Il Dottor Zivago». L'orchestra di Ray Conniff, conosciuta e popolare anche in Italia, segnò, soprattutto, gli Anni Cinquanta e Sessanta, accompagnando al successo «Chances Are» di Johnny Mathis, «Moonlight Gambler» di Frankie Laine, «Just Walking in the Rain» di Johnnie Ray e «Singing the Blues» di Huy Mitchell.

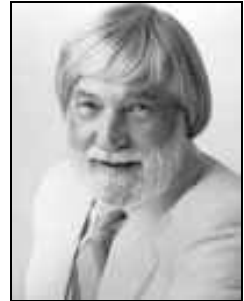
Per spiegare il successo che Ray Conniff ha avuto in oltre 65 anni di carriera basta pensare che ha venduto più di 70 milioni di album e che le vendite del suo catalogo sono di molto superiori a quelle di personaggi come Jimi Hendrix e Led Zeppelin.

La formula adottata da questo musicista è legato alla sua predisposizione a soddisfare i gusti del pubblico più vasto: il suo repertorio infatti comprendeva dai classici del jazz alle riletture della musica classica, dalle canzoni popolari e di Natale alla musica latina con un uso dell'orchestra che in qualche maniera ne fa l'inventore di una formula che è stata poi riutilizzata da centinaia di artisti, tanto per intendersi quella che qualche decennio fa ha reso famoso in Italia Fausto Papetti.

Non per niente Ray Conniff, vanta anche una partecipazione al Festival di Sanremo (quello del '71, quando vinse «Il cuore è uno zingaro») dove fu chiamato a reinterpretare i brani in gara.



## Martedì 15 Ottobre 2002, 10:20 **Morto Ray Conniff, re da 50 milioni di dischi di musica facile**



LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - La sua musica è stata sottofondo leggero per milioni di persone che magari non conoscevano il suo nome. Ray Conniff, pioniere di uno stile "easy listening", che fondeva voci e orchestra nel riproporre celebri successi, è morto all'età di 85 anni, in seguito alle ferite alla testa riportate in una caduta. E' quanto hanno riferito ieri fonti ospedaliere.

Conniff è morto al Palomar Medical Center di Escondido, California, non lontano da San Diego.

Nel corso di una carriera durata sei decenni, Conniff, con i Ray Conniff Singers e la Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus aveva venduto oltre 50 milioni di album.

Il musicista aveva continuato ad esibirsi in tournée sino allo scorso anno. Aveva registrato più di 100 dischi, tra i quali 10 d'oro e due di platino, oltre a due dozzine arrivati tra i Top 40.

A metà anni Cinquanta, Conniff aveva conquistato il mercato adulto della musica di facile ascolto, con campioni d'incassi come "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" (1962). E toccò i vertici di popolarità con la sua versione di "Somewhere My Love", il motivo dal film Dottor Zivago. Brani che proponendo musica d'orchestra e vocalizzi senza parole, non avevano bisogno d'esser tradotti e conquistano più facilmente il pubblico internazionale.

Conniff fu il primo americano a registrare in Unione Sovietica a metà degli anni Settanta e oggi la sua musica sta tornando di moda in America Latina.

Padre trombonista e madre pianista, Conniff divenne un apprezzato trombonista nell'era dello swing, lavorando anche con Bing Crosby, prima di imparare la direzione d'orchestra e studiare a fondo il modo per fare una musica di grande successo commerciale.

Una volta, allo storico della musica Joseph Lanza, Conniff disse che aveva trovato un nesso tra brani pop di successo e un ingrediente degli spot commerciali: la ripetizione di frasi brevi. "Ho fatto un dietrofront cominciando a scrivere i miei arrangiamenti in modo che il grande pubblico capisse e comprasse i miei dischi", disse a Lanza. "Da quel punto in poi, ho avuto un grande successo".



Terça-Feira, 15 de Outubro, 10:36 AM

## Ray Conniff morre na Califórnia

Por Gina Keating

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Ray Conniff, pioneiro de um estilo que mistura coros vocais e música orquestral ligeira para interpretar melodias populares, morreu de um ferimento na cabeça provocado por uma queda, disseram autoridades hospitalares na segunda-feira.

Conniff, de 85 anos, morreu no sábado no centro médico Palomar, em Escondido, Califórnia, próximo de San Diego.

Durante uma carreira que se prolongou por seis décadas, Ray Conniff e sua orquestra e coro venderam mais de 50 milhões de álbuns.

Ray Conniff fez turnês internacionais até o ano passado e gravou mais de 100 discos, entre eles 10 álbuns de ouro e dois de platina. Mais de 24 de seus álbuns estiveram entre os 40 primeiros nas paradas de álbuns.

Ele cativou o mercado adulto de melodias "fáceis de ouvir" em meados dos anos 1950, e seu sucesso foi reforçado por ter recebido um prêmio Grammy e duas indicações ao Grammy, além de ter sido considerado o "Artista que Mais Vendeu" da CBS Records em 1962, por "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

O fato de suas músicas não dependerem das letras fez com que suas composições fossem facilmente traduzidas no exterior.

Ray Conniff foi o primeiro artista pop americano a gravar na União Soviética, em meados dos anos 1970, e sua música vinha tendo um ressurgimento na América Latina quando ele morreu.

Sua interpretação de "Somewhere My Love", a canção tema do filme "Dr. Jivago", foi um de seus trabalhos mais populares.

Ray Conniff nasceu em 1912 de pai trombonista e mãe pianista. Deixa sua mulher, dois filhos e três netos.



**Jornal Nacional**

Sábado, 12 de outubro de 2002

A Semana

**Morre o maestro americano Ray Conniff, de derrame, nos EUA**

Morreu hoje de derrame, nos Estados Unidos, o maestro americano Ray Conniff. Ele faria 86 anos em novembro, era filho de músicos e começou a tocar ainda no colégio. Gravou mais de 80 discos. Sua orquestra embalou casais em todo o mundo, por mais de quatro décadas.

Conniff visitou o Brasil 12 vezes e incluiu sucessos da MPB em suas gravações. Seu último show foi no Brasil, no fim do ano passado.



Domingo, 13 de outubro de 2002.

## OBITUÁRIO

## Ray Conniff, 85 anos, maestro



O maestro Ray Conniff (foto) morreu ontem em Los Angeles, nos Estados Unidos, em consequência de um derrame. Há seis meses, ele teve o lado direito do corpo paralisado devido a um acidente vascular cerebral. Prestes a completar 86 anos, Conniff sentiu-se mal quando saía de um restaurante e foi levado ao hospital, mas não resistiu.

O maestro visitou o Brasil 12 vezes e seu último show foi realizado no país. Ele ficou famoso pelas versões instrumentais de "Besame Mucho", "Paloma Blanca" e outros sucessos. Há alguns anos, chegou a lançar CD com o cancionista sertanejo nacional e fez até uma homenagem a Roberto Carlos.

Um dos últimos remanescentes da era das big bands, Conniff fazia 30 apresentações por ano. Sucesso de vendas no mundo inteiro – seus álbuns, somados, já ultrapassaram os 60 milhões de cópias –, Conniff não gostava de ser chamado de músico comercial. "Nunca sacrifiquei a qualidade. Meus arranjos são a personalidade de meu trabalho e os que conhecem música sabem reconhecer o estilo Conniff que criei naturalmente", costumava dizer o maestro.

**telegraaf.nl**  
Nieuwsportaal van Nederland

## Big Band-leider Conniff overleden

Van onze kunstredactie

LOS ANGELES, dinsdag

Componist en big band-leider Ray Conniff is overleden hij werd 85 jaar. Hel is nog niet duidelijk wanneer Conniff is gestorven en waaraan.

Wel werd hij behandeld in een kliniek in California voor mensen die door een beroerte zijn getroffen.

Ray Conniff maakte meer dan honderd platen en cd's waaronder ruim twintig die in de lijst van veertig best verkopende terecht waren gekomen. Hij won ook een prestigieuze Grammy award voor het bekende lied 'Somewhere my Love' uit de film Doctor Zhivago.





Martes 15 de octubre de 2002

MUSICA: A LOS 85 AÑOS, MURIO EL LEGENDARIO RAY CONNIFF

## Cuestión de estilo

Con sello propio, el trombonista y arreglador vendió más de 70 millones de discos reformulando clásicos de todos los géneros.

El sábado, en un hospital del sur de California, murió el trombonista, compositor y director Ray Conniff. Tenía 85 años, más de 65 de trayectoria musical y una fama mundial tan extendida como las controversias surgidas en relación a su estilo.

Conniff nació Attleboro, Massachussetts, en 1916, de una madre pianista y un padre trombonista de quien heredó la vocación inicial. Antes de terminar el colegio secundario ya había armado una banda propia. Profesionalmente debutó en Boston con los Musical Skippers de Dan Murphy, para quienes trabajó al mismo tiempo como instrumentista, arreglador y chofer.

En Nueva York ganó una larga experiencia como trombonista y arreglador de las bandas de Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Artie Shaw y Harry James, entre otras, incluida la banda de la radio de las Fuerzas Armadas, a mediados de los años 40. "Aprendí todo lo que sé de música de las grandes bandas de *swing* con las que estuve trabajando décadas", evocaba en una entrevista.

No se considera casual que el esplendor de músicos como Charlie Parker, liderando una revolución en el jazz, coincidiera con una pausa en la carrera de Conniff como arreglador. La reaparición se produjo a mediados de los 50, después de algunos años alejado de la escena y con el apoyo decisivo de Mitch Miller en Columbia Records. Entonces, Conniff se lanzó a probar la fórmula que le daría inmediatos e inagotables réditos: arreglos propios, en general bailables, sobre clásicos ajenos. Su primer álbum, **It's Wonderful** (Es maravilloso), pasó nueve meses en la lista de los veinte más vendidos en los Estados Unidos. En los 60, la aparición de los *Ray Conniff Singers*—cuatro voces femeninas y cuatro masculinas incorporadas a la orquesta— terminaría de definir su estilo.

"Me gusta escribir arreglos y hacer música que todo el mundo pueda entender, con la que cualquiera pueda enamorarse, bailar, casarse y tener familia también", afirmaba. Conniff no hizo distinciones a la hora de aplicar su fórmula, adaptando a sus premisas clásicos del jazz, el tradicional repertorio navideño, obras clásicas, tangos, música brasileña o boleros.

Abordó títulos como **Bésame mucho**, **New York, New York** o **Serenata a la luz de la luna**, pero también acometió, al estilo Conniff, obras de Chopin, Tchaicovsky y Rachmaninov, en versiones tan comercialmente exitosas como lapidariamente criticadas más allá de la amplia comunidad internacional de sus fans. El insistía en que, a partir de esas grabaciones, los bailables del disco **Conciertos en ritmo**, "muchacha gente que no se interesaba en la música clásica empezó a escuchar Tchaicovsky y Chopin".

"Yo no uso el termino comercial. Si bien no hago jazz, tampoco somos una banda de hotel. Lo mío esta en el

medio", era la definición de Conniff sobre su estilo. En su ensalada musical podían mezclarse con total naturalidad **La cumparsita**, el **Ave María** de Schubert, fragmentos de **A chorus line**, **Hay humo en tus ojos** y **La vie en rose**.

Los años 60 marcan el apogeo de popularidad de The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers. Su **Tema de Lara**, que fue la canción principal de la banda de sonido de la película de David Lean **Doctor Zhivago**, obtuvo un premio Grammy en 1967. En 1970 tocó en la Casa Blanca de Washington, y en los años siguientes cumplió recordadas giras por Europa, Japón y Latinoamérica promocionado como "El embajador de la Música". En Rusia se convirtió en un fenómeno inédito y fue elegido en 1973 como el Mejor Artista Pop, distinción que lo llevó a viajar invitado por el gobierno para grabar en Moscú.



Conniff estuvo en la Argentina en 1979 y por última vez en 1994, en un nostálgico recorrido de sus éxitos en el teatro Opera, con la compañía de sus ocho cantantes de rigor y únicamente nueve de sus músicos (la formación se reforzó con músicos locales). En ocasión de esa última visita, a los 77 años, aseguró en entrevistas que había decidido adoptar una estilo de vida más tranquilo: "A lo sumo un mes de gira por año. El resto del tiempo me quedó en mi casa de Hollywood, o paseo con mi casa rodante". No obstante, en setiembre de 2001, en Brasil se organizó una serie de conciertos para celebrar los 85 años del músico, ciclo que culminó el 6 de noviembre, día de su cumpleaños, con Conniff sobre el escenario (entre sus hits latinos, figuran exitosas versiones de **Brasil** y **Tico-tico no fuba**).

La noticia de la muerte de Conniff fue difundida por el portavoz de su fan's club oficial, que informó que recientemente había sufrido un accidente cerebral. Como medida de su éxito, dejó en la historia de la industria discográfica un par de datos: editó más de cien álbumes, facturó más de 70 millones de discos en el mundo, y superó en ventas a mitos de la dimensión de Jimi Hendrix o Led Zeppelin.

### RAY CONNIFF (1916-2002)

#### *Gepolijst orkestleider*

(Source: either Algemeed Dagblad or Telegraaf)

LOS ANGELES, 14 OKT. Orkestleider, arrangeur en platenproducer Ray Conniff is zaterdag op 85-jarige leeftijd overleden. Met zijn orkest maakte hij ruim honderd glanzend gepolijste langspeelplaten, waarvan meer dan 70 miljoen exemplaren werden verkocht.

Conniff begon in de jaren dertig als trombonist bij het swingorkest van Bob Crosby en bleef dat instrument trouw: in zijn latere arrangementen speelde de trombone vaak een hoofdrol. Begin jaren vijftig trad hij als arrangeur in dienst bij Columbia Records, waar hij de kloeki klank bepaalde van hits als *Just walking in the rain* van Johnny Ray en *Singing the blues* van Frankie Laine. Onder zijn eigen naam maakte Conniff in 1957 de productie *S'Wonderful*, waarin hij zijn karakteristieke instrumentale geluid combineerde met zoetgevooisde koorzang. De plaat bleef negen maanden lang in de Amerikaanse top-20 staan. Tot zijn dood maakte hij met The Ray Conniff Orchestra nog één easy listening plaat per jaar, waarvoor een groot publiek bleef bestaan.

Door Henk van Gelder



## Vendió Ray Conniff más discos que Hendrix y Zeppelin

Murió el sábado a los 85 años de edad; sufrió una caída en su casa de California; le sobreviven su esposa Vera y su única hija Tamara

Compositor, trombonista y director de orquesta que realizó más de 100 grabaciones, obtuvo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino, y produjo 40 álbumes, Ray Conniff murió el sábado en California, a los 85 años de edad.

Conniff vendió más de 70 millones de álbumes y sus discos en general se vendieron más que los de míticos como Jimi Hendrix o Led Zeppelin.

La Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers caracterizó la música popular de los años 50 y 60 con una mezcla de coros sin palabras y acompañamiento orquestal ligero.

Aunque se inició como trombonista en la era de las grandes bandas tocando junto a Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby y Artie Shaw, Conniff se presentó como solista después de ser contratado como arreglista residente de Columbia Records en 1951. En 1956, Columbia decidió probar a Conniff como ejecutante con una banda que incluía a los guitarristas Al Caiola y Tony Mottola. El álbum de su debut, "S'Wonderful", en que combinaba un coro de cuatro varones y cuatro mujeres con una banda de 18 instrumentistas, estuvo en la lista de los 20 mayores éxitos durante nueve meses.

Un artículo de 1962 en la revista McCall's describió su banda como "cantantes que 'emiten' sus voces como si fueran instrumentos, más como sutiles instrumentos de viento que voces".

Su popularidad disminuyó con el surgimiento del rock, pero astros como The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension y Bert Bacharach se beneficiaron con sus arreglos con grabaciones como "Cantando bajo la lluvia", "I Write the Songs" y "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing".

El músico de la barba y cabello lacio completamente blanco, aún mantenía su actividad artística con esporádicas presentaciones en las que aparecía acompañado por su gigantesca orquesta y sus impactantes coros que rememoraban una época nostálica de la música estadounidense.

El accidente del prolífico músico que tuvo una carrera iniciada en la década de los 30 se registró el sábado pasado, pero no fue hasta un día después cuando su familia anunció el deceso a través de un escueto comunicado de prensa.

Entre sus éxitos figuran Somewhere my love (Dr. Shvago); No llores por mi Argentina (Evita); Carros de Fuego; Pretty woman; Star wars; Calles de Filadelfia; Bésame mucho; New York, New York; La bamba; La bella y la bestia; Dream a little dream of me; Pocahontas y Ghost.

Su repertorio incluía clásicos del jazz, adaptaciones de temas célebres de música clásica, canciones populares y canciones de Navidad.

Sus interpretaciones de "bésame mucho", "New York, New York" y "S'Wonderful" recorrieron el mundo de continente a continente.

Conniff también hizo incursiones en la música latina utilizando por primera vez la orquesta en un modo que haría escuela entre los compositores de música

melódica no sólo en Estados Unidos sino también en Europa.

Tras la caída, el ganador del Grammy, fue llevado al Centro médico Palomar, de la ciudad de Escondido en donde dejó de existir. Le sobreviven su esposa Vera y su única hija Tamara.

Una de sus últimas actuaciones la tuvo durante la boda de Liza Minelli y David Gest ocurrida en marzo pasado, en una fastuosa celebración privada registrada en Los Angeles.

Conniff nació en 1916 en la ciudad de Attleboro, Massachussets, y su carrera musical fue marcada gracias a que su padre también era un trompetista, mientras que su madre tocaba piano.

La fórmula adoptada por este músico nacido el 6 de noviembre de 1916 en Attleboro, Massachusetts, estaba vinculada a la predisposición para satisfacer los gustos de un público muy variado.

**último segundo**  
O jornal líder de audiência na internet

## Morre o maestro Ray Conniff

21:03 12/10 Redação\* ([editorultimosegundo@ig.com](mailto:editorultimosegundo@ig.com))

SÃO PAULO - Morreu, neste sábado, nos Estados Unidos o maestro Ray Conniff, aos 85 anos, em consequência de um derrame. As informações são do canal de notícias "Globo News". O maestro, que havia sofrido um derrame, sentiu-se mal hoje quando saía de um restaurante em Los Angeles. Conniff ainda foi levado para o hospital, mas acabou falecendo.

Nascido em Attleboro, Massachusetts, Ray Conniff teve contato com a música desde criança, seu pai era trombonista de uma banda da cidade e sua mãe tocava piano. Quando jovem ainda no colégio em Attleboro, Ray e alguns de seus colegas decidiram formar uma "dance orchestra". Aprendendo alguns "truques" com seu pai, Ray começou a praticar trombone tocando como primeiro trombonista da banda.

Chegando a Nova York na mesma época em que estava nascendo o "swing" e, antes de achar trabalho fixo, Ray Conniff tocou com as bandas locais e praticava o instrumento se sua devoção. No início dos anos 50, houve uma grande virada na carreira de Ray Conniff e isto ocorreu quando ele conheceu Mitch Miller da Columbia Records, que o contratou como arranjador. Em 1955, Ray consegue sua primeira chance para provar sua teoria musical. A gravação foi com Don Cherry, "Band Of Gold". Tornou-se sucesso instantaneamente. Desta forma tem início uma série de gravações "Conniff-arranged" para a Columbia, que resultaram em muitos discos de sucesso.

No início dos anos 60, as vendas dos discos de Ray Conniff explodiram. A orquestra e coro de Ray Conniff eram bastante solicitados. Ray, que se orgulhava de ter conseguido reproduzir o som em seus shows ao vivo da mesma forma que em estúdio, trouxe ao público o primeiro show ao vivo em estéreo, "Concert in Stereo", no mundo. As platéias experimentaram a sensação de três canais de som sendo transmitidos pelo teatro com o auxílio de um sofisticado sistema de som estéreo. A crítica aclamou estes concertos como o "evento musical dos anos 60".

Ray gravou mais de 90 discos e vendeu mais de 65 milhões de discos. Ele foi agraciado com o Grammy Award por sua gravação de "Somewhere My Love", duas indicações para o Grammy, mais de 10 discos de ouro, CBS Records - Prêmio de melhor artista em vendas em 1962 e um sem número de prêmios internacionais.

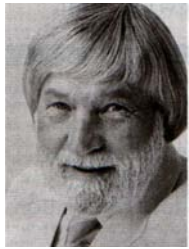
Conniff visitou o Brasil 12 vezes e seu último show foi realizado no país, no final do ano passado.

\*Com informações do site ["The Ray Conniff page"](http://TheRayConniffpage.com)

## Der Spiegel

Nr. 43/2002, Seite 248:

„Register: Gestorben“



**Ray Conniff**, 85. „Musik für Millionen“ war der Titel einer seiner Platten für das deutsche Publikum, und das war es, was der amerikanische Posaunist, Arrangeur und Bandleader sein Leben lang produzierte. Mit über 50 Millionen verkauften Alben, 25 Platten in den Top 40 und zahlreichen Auszeichnungen gelang ihm ein phänomenaler Erfolg. Seine Karriere begann der Musikersohn Ende der dreißiger Jahre in New York, wo er in diversen Big Bands mitspielte, sein Durchbruch kam 1954. Im Auftrag von Columbia Records arrangierte Conniff das Lied „Band of Gold“ für Don Cherry. Seine Version, in der die Stimmen eines Männerchors mit dem Sound der Bläser verschmelzen, wurde ein internationaler Hit, die Methode, Stimmen als Instrumente einzusetzen, sein Markenzeichen. Der wohl bekannteste Song des Musikers, der als Vater des Easy Listening gilt, ist „Somewhere My Love“, seine Version der Titelmelodie zum Film „Doktor Schiwago“. Ray Conniff starb am 12. Oktober in San Diego an den Folgen eines Sturzes.



8.12.2002

### Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

**New York (dpa) - Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Hollywood-Film «Doktor Schiwago» einen Grammy erhielt, starb nach Angaben seiner Familie am Samstag im Alter von 85 Jahren in einem Hospital in der Nähe von San Diego im US- Bundesstaat Kalifornien.**

Seine Big Band "The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers" prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen.

Ein Evergreen  
des Band-  
leaders, der im  
Alter von 85  
Jahren verstor-  
ben ist.



In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten «Besame Mucho», «New York, New York» und «S'Wonderful». Jedes Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer wieder sein «We Wish You A Merry Christmas» zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner

Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten. Der Chor sang häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien.

Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch viele amerikanische Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension und The Carpenters. Am Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff Posaunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bekam er seine große Chance, als Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur anbot. Fünf Jahre später konnte er seine Big Band zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album «S'Wonderful» wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den Top 20.



**Der amerikani-  
sche Bandleader  
und Komponist  
Ray Conniff, ein  
Urvater des Easy  
Listening, ist tot.  
Der Musiker starb  
im Alter von 85  
Jahren in einem  
Hospital in der  
Nähe von San  
Diego.**

## Lübecker Nachrichten

15. Oktober 2002

### Die „Schiwago“-Melodie“ war sein größter Hit

**New York - Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für seine Adaption des von Maurice Jarre komponierten, „Doktor-Schiwago“-Titelsongs, „Lara's Theme“ (bei Conniff „Somewhere my Love“, einen Grammy erhielt, starb nach Angaben seiner Familie am Sonnabend im Alter von 85 Jahren in einem Hospital in der Nähe von San Diego (Kalifornien). Seine Big Band The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen.**

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Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch amerikanische Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren. dpa/AP

[Bild wie oben: „Der Bandleader und Arrangeur Ray Conniff ist tot.“ Foto: DPA]



# La Cuarta

15 de Octubre de 2002

Director musical tenía 85 años

## Víctima de un golpe en la cabeza murió Ray Conniff



Ray Conniff falleció el pasado sábado. El director se cayó en su domicilio y se golpeó la cabeza. El '79 estuvo en el Festival de Viña, como parte del jurado internacional.

(Foto: Copesa)

LOS ANGELES (AP).- Ray Conniff, el popularísimo compositor y director musical galardonado con un Grammy, y cuyos arreglos caracterizaron la era de las grandes bandas, falleció. Tenía 85 años de edad.

Conniff murió el sábado en el Centro Médico Palomar en Escondido después que se golpeó la cabeza en una caída, dijo la forense Angela Wagner. Había sufrido un derrame en abril.

Con más de un centenar de grabaciones y 25 álbumes de Columbia Records incluidos en las listas de las 40 canciones más populares, produjo clásicos como "Bésame Mucho" y "New York, New York" en una carrera de seis décadas.

Su canción más memorable puede haber sido "Somewhere My Love", adaptada de "Lara's Theme" de Maurice Jarre de la película "Dr. Zhivago". Con ella se encaramó en el primer puesto en las listas de canciones populares y ligeras y le valió un Grammy en 1966.

Conniff produjo 10 discos de oro y dos de platino. Ganó el premio al Artista Más Vendedor de CBS Records en 1962 por la grabación "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

La Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers caracterizó la música popular de los años 50 y 60 con una mezcla de coros sin palabras y acompañamiento orquestal ligero.

### Trombonista

Aunque se inició como trombonista en la era de las grandes bandas tocando junto a Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby y Artie Shaw, Conniff se presentó como solista después de ser contratado como arreglista residente de Columbia Records en 1951.

Fue el autor de "Chances Are" de Johnny Mathis, "Moonlight Gambler" de Frankie Laine, "Just Walking in the Rain" de Johnnie Ray y "Singing the Blues" de Guy Mitchell. También hizo arreglos para Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney y Marty Robbins.

Fue su arreglo de "Band of Gold" para el cantante Don Cherry que significó un triunfo inicial en la carrera de ambos.

En 1956, Columbia decidió probar a Conniff como ejecutante con una banda que incluía a los guitarristas Al Caiola y Tony Mottola. El álbum de su debut, "S'Wonderful", en que combinaba un coro de cuatro varones y cuatro mujeres con una banda de 18 instrumentistas, estuvo en la lista de los 20 mayores éxitos durante nueve meses.

Un artículo de 1962 en la revista McCall's describió su banda como "cantantes que 'emiten' sus voces como si fueran instrumentos, más como sutiles instrumentos de viento que voces".

Su popularidad disminuyó con el surgimiento del rock, pero astros como The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension y Bert Bacharach se beneficiaron con sus arreglos con grabaciones como "Cantando bajo la lluvia", "I Write the Songs" y "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing".

Conniff recibió incontables premios internacionales y siguió haciendo giras y produciendo un álbum por año.

Actuó en la Casa Blanca durante la Guerra de Vietnam y en 1974 fue el primer artista pop al que se le invitó a grabar un álbum en Moscú. En el 2001 dio una serie de conciertos en Brasil. Y en marzo actuó en la boda de David Gest y Liza Minnelli.

Le sobreviven su esposa Vera, sus hijos Tamara y Jimmy y tres nietos.

### Festival de Viña

Ray Conniff estuvo en el verano de 1979 en Chile. El director fue parte del jurado del Festival de Viña, incluso, en una de las jornadas, subió al escenario para dirigir a la orquesta, siendo ovacionado por el respetable.

## Le Monde.fr

MIS A JOUR LE 14.10.02 | 15h30  
ARTICLE PARU DANS L'ÉDITION DU 15.10.02

## Mort de Ray Conniff, tromboniste américain

Ray Conniff, tromboniste américain, compositeur et arrangeur de pop orchestrale, est mort samedi 12 octobre à Escondido (Californie) à l'âge de 85 ans. Sa carrière est jalonnée d'une centaine d'enregistrements qui connurent le succès dans les années 1950 (il a vendu environ 50 millions d'albums) grâce à ses versions de classiques comme *Besame Mucho*, *New York, New York* ou *S'Wonderful*. Né le 6 novembre 1916 à Attleboro (Massachusetts), Ray Conniff avait reçu son éducation musicale de ses parents, son père étant lui-même tromboniste et sa mère pianiste. Il débute comme tromboniste de big band, accompagnant Bunny Berigan, Bing Crosby et Artie Shaw avant de devenir arrangeur pour la firme Columbia à partir de 1954. Avec son orchestre, The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers, il popularise une pop légère à base de chœurs sans paroles. L'explosion du rock allait marginaliser cette génération de musiciens d'*easy listening*. Ray Conniff devait pourtant encore faire un tube en 1966 avec sa version du thème de *Docteur Jivago*.



17/10/2002 - 20h55

## Ray Conniff era a música ambiente por excelência

da Redação

Morreu no sábado passado (12), aos 85 anos, de derrame, o maestro Ray Conniff, em Los Angeles, EUA.



Conniff foi responsável pela popularização do uso de orquestras com corais em arranjos de música popular, e seu nome se tornou sinônimo de música ambiente.

O maestro, que começou como um dos melhores trombonistas da era das bigbands, criou uma fórmula e se

ateve a ela durante toda a sua carreira: Instrumentações suaves, sempre acompanhadas de corais, em que as vozes são utilizadas como uma seção de sopro. Conniff trocava a seção de trompetes por um coro feminino e a seção de sax por um coro masculino.

O músico Estreou com o disco "'S Wonderful", em 56, e, a partir daí, gravou mais de 100 álbuns, emplacou mais de 12 nas paradas dos anos 60 e vendeu mais de 50 milhões de álbuns pelo mundo todo.

Mesmo preso a uma fórmula extremamente comercial, Conniff consegue criar com sua música momentos inusitados de grande qualidade musical e de humor.

Conniff gravou diversas músicas brasileiras e esteve 12 vezes no país, e um de seus últimos discos foi inteiramente dedicado a composições de Roberto Carlos ("Do Ray para o Rei").

Em uma de suas últimas apresentações, o músico tocou no casamento de Liza Minnelli e David Guest, em Nova York, em março deste ano.

## ZERO HORA DIGITAL



O show de Ray Conniff em Santo Ângelo, no ano passado, foi um de seus últimos no Brasil (foto Paulo Vilani, especial, Banco de Dados/ZH – 22/9/01)

## Ray Conniff (1916 – 2002)

*Maestro, arranjador e trombonista americano morreu no sábado*

Um dos maiores maestros e arranjadores americanos do século 20 morreu sábado nos Estados Unidos. O músico Ray Conniff, 85 anos, sentiu-se mal quando saía de um restaurante em Los Angeles e foi levado a um hospital, onde morreu em consequência de um derrame. Havia seis meses, o maestro estava com o lado direito do corpo paralisado devido a outro derrame.

Nascido em Attleboro, Massachussets, o maestro faria 86 anos no dia 6 de novembro. A paixão pela música veio dos pais: a mãe tocava piano e o pai era trombonista. Já no colégio, Ray formou uma "orquestra-dançante", na qual fez o seu primeiro arranjo. Após a escola, entrou para o conjunto Musical Skippers, em Boston. Tocou trombone, fez arranjos e até dirigiu o caminhão da banda.

Mudou-se para Nova York para trabalhar como trombonista e arranjador. Fez arranjos para o serviço de rádio das Forças Armadas dos EUA na década de 40. Sua grande oportunidade surgiu no começo dos anos 50, quando conheceu Mitch Miller, da Columbia Records. Na gravadora, começou a fazer arranjos e orquestração para outros músicos. Os maiores sucessos foram Walkin' in The Rain e Moonlight Gambler.

O talento do maestro incentivou a Columbia a lançar um álbum de sua autoria – o primeiro foi 'S Wonderful. Desde 1960, desenvolveu o estilo que o consagrou: usava o coro vocal como naípe da orquestra, com vozes no lugar dos instrumentos.

O maestro se apresentava no Brasil desde o final dos anos 60. Esteve 12 vezes no país, e seu último show foi realizado em dezembro de 2001. Entre seus mais de 80 discos, pelo menos duas homenagens ao Brasil: Do Ray para o Rei (com arranjos orquestrais para sucessos de Roberto Carlos) e o ao vivo Live In Rio.

Conniff acreditava que seu sucesso mundial se justificava pelo tipo de canções que oferecia: populares e românticas. O maestro da Orquestra Sinfônica de Porto Alegre, Tulio Belardi, concorda. Para ele, Conniff difundiu um estilo musical ímpar, e seus shows no Brasil foram emocionantes por aliar a simpatia do maestro com a performance no palco.

– Pessoas como ele não deveriam morrer nunca. Por sorte, sua obra permanecerá, como convém a todos os grandes artistas – disse Belardi.

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### Especial mostra último concerto de Ray Conniff

Quarta-feira, 16 de outubro de 2002 - 13h44

**Nova York** - A última apresentação ao vivo de Ray Conniff, no casamento de Liza Minelli e David Gest, em março, vai integrar o especial no canal por assinatura VH1 sobre a atriz. O compositor e maestro morreu no sábado, aos 85 anos, em um hospital da Califórnia. Durante sua carreira, gravou mais de cem discos, que venderam 85 milhões de cópias, ganhou um Grammy, por *Somewhere, My Love*, e dez discos de ouro. No casamento de Liza, Conniff conduziu o famoso tema do filme *Doutor Jivago*, que ele próprio arranjou.



12/10/2002 - 22h59

## Ray Coniff era filho de músicos; veja biografia do maestro

da Folha Online

Ray Coniff nasceu no dia 6 de novembro de 1916, na cidade de Attleboro, Massachusetts, EUA. O pai era trombonista e a mãe tocava piano, de quem herdou a paixão pela música.

A primeira experiência como músico de orquestra foi no ginásio Attleboro. Começou como trombonista e com o tempo passou a fazer arranjos até tornar-se orquestrador da banda local.

Seu primeiro emprego como músico profissional foi com o "Musical Skippers", de Dan Murphy, em Boston. Começou tocando trombone, orquestrando e dirigindo o caminho do grupo. Depois, mudou-se para Nova York.

Em Nova York trabalhou como trombonista-arranjador de Bunny Berrigan. Em 1939 começou a trabalhar com Bob Crosby e os "Bobcats". Um ano depois foi contratado por Artie Shaw e depois, por Glen Gray.

Após essas duas experiências, Coniff começou a fazer arranjos para o serviço de rádio das Forças Armadas dos EUA, onde ficou até 1946. Saiu do Exército e foi orquestrar para Harry James, com quem trabalhou até o final da década de 40.

Os últimos anos da década de 40 foram os mais apagados da história de Coniff. Ele parou de fazer arranjos e ganhava a vida - na época era casado e já tinha três filhos- como orquestrador free-lance e fazendo trabalhos fora da área musical.

A sua grande oportunidade surgiu no começo da década de 50 quando conheceu Mitch Miller, da Columbia Records. Na gravadora, começou a fazer arranjos e orquestração para outros músicos e para os discos da Columbia. Os maiores sucessos foram "Walkin' In The Rain", "Moonlight Gambler", entre outros.

O sucesso obtido por Coniff em outros discos incentivou a Columbia a lançar um álbum de autoria do maestro. Foi então que surgiu "S Wonderful", que ficou na lista dos discos de maior sucesso por nove meses.

Na primavera de 1960, Coniff fez uma turnê de 11 dias e lotou as principais casas noturnas de Los Angeles e São Francisco. Nesses concertos, o maestro começou a desenvolver o seu estilo musical, que o distinguiu como um talentoso arranjador-regente.

Ray começou a fazer uso de um coro vocal como naipes da orquestra e em vez de tocar instrumentos, os vocalistas soltavam sílabas tais como: ba-ba e du-du, que juntas ao som de um ritmo musical contribuíram para tornar o estilo de Coniff mundialmente conhecido.

12/10/2002 - 20h29

## Vítima de derrame, Ray Conniff morre aos 85 anos nos Estados Unidos

da Folha Online

O músico e maestro Ray Conniff, 85, morreu neste sábado nos Estados Unidos em consequência de um derrame, segundo informações divulgadas pela Globonews.

Há seis meses, o maestro estava com o lado direito do corpo paralisado devido a outro derrame. Coniff sentiu-se mal

quando saía de um restaurante em Los Angeles e foi levado ao hospital, onde morreu.



O maestro, que completaria 86 anos no dia 6 de novembro, herdou dos pais a paixão pela música. Seu pai era mestre e trombonista e sua mãe tocava piano.

No Brasil, esteve 12 vezes e seu último show foi realizado no país no final do ano passado. Na época, o músico estava promovendo um disco que fez só com arranjos orquestrais para sucessos do cantor Roberto Carlos.

12/10/2002 - 23h14

## Conniff gravou mais de 80 discos; veja discografia do maestro

da Folha Online

O maestro Ray Conniff morreu hoje nos EUA aos 85 anos. Em toda sua carreira gravou mais de 80 discos, entre eles "Live In Rio", em homenagem ao Brasil, país onde esteve 12 vezes e onde fez sua última apresentação, em dezembro do ano passado.

Veja a lista de álbuns gravados por Conniff:

- S'Wonderful
- Dance the Bop
- S'Marvelous
- S'Awful Nice
- Concert in Rhythm
- Broadway in Rhythm
- Hollywood in Rhythm
- It's the Talk of the Town
- Conniff Meets Butterfield
- Christmas With Conniff
- Young at Heart
- Say It With Music
- Memories Are Made of This
- Somebody Loves Me
- So Much in Love
- S'Continental
- Rhapsody in Rhythm
- We Wish You A Merry Christmas
- The Happy Beat
- You Make Me Feel So Young
- Speak To Me of Love
- Friendly Persuasion
- Invisible Tears
- Love Affair
- Here We Come A Caroling
- Happiness Is
- World of Hits
- Somewhere My Love
- This Is My Song
- Hawaiian Album
- It Must Be Him
- Honey
- Turn Around Look At Me
- I Love How You Love Me
- Concert in Stereo/Live at the Sahara
- We've Only Just Begun
- Love Story
- I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing
- The Happy Sound of Ray Conniff
- Charlotte's Web
- Ray Conniff In Britain
- You Are the Sunshine of My Life
- Harmony
- The Way We Were •
- Laughter in the Rain
- Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong
- Love Will Keep Us Together
- Send in the Clowns
- I Write the Songs
- Theme from S.W.A.T. and Other TV Themes
- After The Lovin'
- Éxitos Latinos •
- Plays the Bee Gees and Other Great Hits
- I Will Survive
- The Perfect 10 Classics
- Exclusivamente Latino
- Siempre Latino
- Entre Amigos
- The Nashville Connection
- Musik Für Millionen
- Amor Amor
- Fantastico
- Supersonico
- Campeones
- Say You Say Me
- 30th Anniversary Edition
- Always In My Heart
- Interpreta Manuel Alejandro
- Ray Conniff Plays Broadway
- s Always Conniff
- Latinísimo
- 40th Anniversary
- Live In Rio
- I Love Movies
- My Way
- s Country
- Do Ray para o Rei
- Ray Conniff in Moscow
- Tico Tico, Saludos
- Cancion de Amor, Saludos



## MITCHELL MUSIC

The magazine of the Guy Mitchell Appreciation Society, issue No. 79 (December 2002)

### GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

One of the great names of American music, trombonist, arranger and leader of the most successful orchestra and chorus, RAY CONNIFF, has died at the age of 85.

Ray Conniff was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts on 16th November, 1916 and it soon became apparent that he was a brilliant player of the trombone. In the mid 1930s he joined the Bunny Berigan Orchestra as trombonist and arranger and soon the band were playing and recording some of Ray's own compositions. He was that good that even the great



Glenn Miller Orchestra were playing one of Ray's compositions, 'The Hop'. In the 1940s he played and arranged for the Bob Crosby Band, the Artie Shaw Orchestra, The Glen Gray Casa Loma Orchestra and, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Harry James Orchestra. With the decline of the big bands in the 1950s, Ray moved

to New York and joined Mitch Miller at Columbia Records where he wrote the arrangements for the orchestra backing the great singing stars. Among the artists benefiting from the Ray Conniff arranging skills were Mindy Carson, Don Cherry, Marty Robbins, Rosemary Clooney, Tony Bennett, Johnny Mathis, Johnnie Ray, Frankie Laine, Jo Stafford and, of course, Guy Mitchell. It was Ray Conniff's arrangement, and his Orchestra, backing Guy on Columbia Records biggest ever single record, 'Singing The Blues'. And yes, even the whistling was provided by Ray. It was in 1956 that Mitch Miller gave Ray the chance to record an album in his own name and Ray took the opportunity to record with a large orchestra and a vocal chorus, The success of 's Wonderful' was instant and Ray was to record over one hundred albums right through to the year 2000. He has toured in concert in Britain and Europe, Russia, Japan and particularly in South America where he still has a vast following. Ray was still working right to the end - he conducted the orchestra and chorus at the Liza Minnelli wedding earlier this year. A few months ago Ray attended the Palm Springs Jazz Festival where he was being honoured for his contribution to the big band era

when he suffered a stroke. When Ray died on 12th October, 2002, he left an enormous legacy of some of the most melodic and most listenable recordings ever made. They will continue to be enjoyed around the world by Ray's legion of fans. Our sincere condolences go to Ray's wife, Vera and to his daughter, Tamara.

Les Peckham

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Quarta-feira, 16 de outubro de 2002 - 13h44

## Especial mostra último concerto de Ray Conniff

**Nova York** - A última apresentação ao vivo de Ray Conniff, no casamento de Liza Minelli e David Gest, em março, vai integrar o especial no canal por assinatura VH1 sobre a atriz. O compositor e maestro morreu no sábado, aos 85 anos, em um hospital da Califórnia. Durante sua carreira, gravou mais de cem discos, que venderam 85 milhões de cópias, ganhou um Grammy, por *Somewhere, My Love*, e dez discos de ouro. No casamento de Liza, Conniff conduziu o famoso tema do filme *Doutor Jivago*, que ele próprio arranjou.

## turkish daily news

Turkey's First and ONLY English Daily

Tuesday, October 15, 2002

Ray Conniff, bandleader, composer who wrote theme to 'Dr. Zhivago' dead at 85

Ray Conniff, the composer, trombone player and bandleader who won a Grammy Award for his recording of the "Dr. Zhivago" theme "Somewhere My Love", has died. He was 85.

Conniff died at Palomar Medical Center in Escondido on Saturday after falling down and hitting his head, San Diego medical examiner's investigator Angela Wagner told The Associated Press.

Conniff had more than 100 recordings and produced 25 Top 40 albums for Columbia Records.

He rendered such classics as "Besame Mucho", "New York, New York", and "S' Wonderful" in a career that spanned six decades.

He produced 10 gold and two platinum records. He won CBS Records' Best Selling Artist for 1962 for the recording, "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers epitomized the lounge-singing style of the 1950s and 1960s with a mix of wordless vocal choruses and light orchestral accompaniment.

Though he got his start as a trombone player in the Big Band era playing with Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby and Artie Shaw, Conniff broke out as a solo artist after being hired as a house arranger with Columbia Records in 1951.

He was responsible for Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are", Frankie Laine's "Moonlight Gambler", Johnnie Ray's "Just Walking in the Rain", and Guy Mitchell's "Singing the Blues." A 1962 article in McCall's magazine described his band as "singers who 'play' their voices as though they were instruments, more like subtly fluted woodwinds than singing."

## UAI Estados de Minas (October 14)

### Morre nos EUA o maestro Ray Coniff

*Internacional*

O maestro Ray Conniff, 85, morreu neste sábado nos Estados Unidos em consequência um derrame. Há seis meses, o maestro estava com o lado direito do corpo paralisado devido a outro derrame. Conniff sentiu-se mal quando saía de um restaurante em Los Angeles e foi levado ao hospital, onde faleceu. Conniff visitou o Brasil 12 vezes e seu último show foi realizado no país, no final do ano passado. (AF)

# LA PRENSA DIGITAL

Diario La Prensa

Martes 15 de Octubre de 2002

## LEYENDA

A los 85 años murió Ray Conniff, que llegó a vender 60 millones de discos.

Era un personaje legendario, pertenecía a la época en que las grandes orquestas -sucesoras de las "big band" del jazz-, se pusieron de moda y hicieron bailar a todo el mundo. Era Ray Conniff, el compositor que produjo más de un centenar de registros y cuarenta álbumes para el sello Columbia y durante seis décadas de carrera obtuvo diez Disco de Oro y dos de Platino.

Sus interpretaciones adaptadas de clásicos como "Bésame mucho", "New York, New York" y "S Wonderful" fueron oídas en todo el mundo.

Ray Conniff murió el sábado a los ochenta y cinco años en el Centro Médico Palomar en Escondido (en el sur de California), donde estaba internado debido a un derrame cerebral que subió en abril, después de golpearse la cabeza en una caída, según informó la médica Angela Wagner a la agencia AP.

El tema más memorable de Ray Conniff fue "Somewhere My Love", adaptada de "El tema de Lara" de Maurice Jarre de la película "Dr. Zhivago" (la dirigió David Lean), que trepó al primer puesto en las listas de temas populares y le valió un Grammy en 1966; cuatro años antes obtuvo el premio al Artista Más Vendedor de CBS Records en 1962 por "We Wish You A Merry Christmas".

### PEGADIZO Y LIGERO

La Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers caracterizó la música popular de los años 50 y 60 con una mezcla de coros sin palabras y un acompañamiento orquestal pegadizo, ligero.

Aunque se inició como trombonista en la era de las grandes bandas tocando junto a Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby y Artie Shaw, Conniff se presentó como solista después de ser contratado como arreglista residente de Columbia Records en 1951.

Fue el autor de "Chances Are" de Johnny Mathis, "Moonlight Gambler" de Frankie Laine, "Just Walking in the Rain" de Johnnie Ray y "Singing the Blues" de Guy Mitchell.

También hizo arreglos para Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney y Marty Robbins y su adaptación de "Band of Gold" para el cantante Don Cherry significó un triunfo inicial en la carrera de ambos.

En 1956, Columbia decidió probar a Conniff como ejecutante con una banda que incluía a los guitarristas Al Caiola y Tony Mottola. El álbum de su debut, "S Wonderful", en que combinó un coro de cuatro varones y cuatro mujeres con una banda de dieciocho instrumentistas, estuvo en la lista de los veinte mayores éxitos durante nueve meses.

Un artículo de 1962 en la revista McCall's describió su banda como "cantantes que emiten" sus voces como si fueran instrumentos, más como sutiles instrumentos de viento que voces".

Su popularidad disminuyó con el advenimiento del rock, pero astros como The Carpenters, Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension y Burt Bacharach se beneficiaron con sus arreglos con grabaciones como "Cantando bajo la lluvia", "I Write the Songs" y "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing".

Conniff recibió incontables premios internacionales y siguió haciendo giras y produciendo un álbum por año.



En 1994 en el porteño teatro Opera, aún con ímpetu juvenil.

### EN WASHINGTON Y MOSCÚ

Actuó en la Casa Blanca durante la Guerra de Vietnam y en 1974 fue el primer artista "pop" al que se invitó a grabar un álbum en Moscú. En el 2001 dio una serie de conciertos en Brasil, y en marzo del año actual tocó en el casamiento de David Gest y Liza Minnelli.

Pasó por Buenos Aires en 1979 y en abril de 1994, oportunidad en que La Prensa dijo de su recital en el Opera: "Podemos discutir si estamos de acuerdo o no con los arreglos y transgresiones a la melodía original de las canciones; podemos o no gustar hoy de un estilo musical que se apoyó en éxitos populares con coros incluidos; podemos sentir a Chopin revolverse en su tumba al oír como queda su más famoso "Nocturno" tras el tamiz de Conniff. Pero todo esto cae en saco roto cuando las pruebas del fenómeno Ray Conniff se hacen presentes: sesenta millones de discos vendidos en todos el mundo."

## Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung

### Der Mann, der Schiwago zu seinem Hit verhalf

*Der Bandleader Ray Conniff starb 85-jährig*

Wer glaubt, er kenne Ray Conniff nicht, der irrt. Auch, wer den Namen nie bewusst gehört hat, kennt seine Musik - mindestens „Somewhere My Love“, den nach Maurice Jarre's Original arrangierten Titelsong aus „Doktor Schiwago“ und „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“. Conniff starb am Wochenende 85-jährig.



Am Anfang spielte Ray Conniff als Posaunist in Big Bands. 1951 boten Columbia Records ihm einen Vertrag als Arrangeur an, fünf Jahre später stellte er seine eigene Big Band zusammen. Schon das Debüt-Album „S Wonderful“ - auch so ein Ohrwurm - wurde zum

Riesenerfolg. „The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers“ prägten in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen, leicht swingigen Klängen. Markenzeichen der Band war der orchestrale Einsatz der Singstimmen, die mit dem Sound eines großen Orchesters gemischt wurden.

Daneben war Ray Conniff ein Meister im Einsatz ungewöhnlicher Klangfarben. Er strich mit Fingerhüten über ein Waschbrett, ließ Musiker Sandpapierblöcke vor dem Mikrofon reiben, oder die Sänger stülpten Schuhe über ihre Hände und strichen damit über Steinplatten. Beim Neuarrangieren von Klassikern trat Conniff in manchen Fettnäpfen. Kritiker stellten die heute belächelte Frage, ob er den Meistern gerecht werde.

Ray Conniff gehörte zu den meistgespielten Tanzmusikern. Er nahm 100 Schallplatten auf, zu seinen Hits gehörten „Besame Mucho“ und „New York, New York“. Sein Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'Roll, doch viele ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel. Ray Conniff erlag am Samstag nach einem Sturz seiner Kopfverletzung. 15.10.2002 GuN

Bildunterschrift:

Ray Conniff, einer der berühmtesten Tanzmusiker der Welt.

# Frankfurter Allgemeine

ZEITUNG FÜR DEUTSCHLAND

## Ein Dauerlächeln

*Zum Tod des Musikers Ray Conniff*

Nichts, was gut war im amerikanischen Jazz und Pop, nichts auch vom Besten lateinamerikanischer Musik, das er nicht in die Mangel genommen hätte. So urteilten Ende der siebziger Jahre musikkritische Dogmatiker über Ray Conniff. Eineinhalb Jahrzehnte später, als unter dem Begriff „Easy Listening“ das Wort U-Musik vom Bannfluch zum Gütezeichen mutierte und Künstler wie Al Martino, Burt Bacharach — oder bei uns James Last — ihre Sockel zurückeroberten, da war Ray Conniff wieder anerkannt als ihrer aller Meister.

Leicht hatte er es sich nicht gemacht mit seiner Musik. Das verbot sich bei seiner soliden Ausbildung als Posaunist und Arrangeur fast von selbst. Mit kleinen Bands erprobte er ab 1934 sein Können; gefordert wurde es 1936, als er mit Artie Shaw arbeitete. Weitere Ausbildung an der Juilliard School of Music in New York. In den fünfziger Jahren arrangierte er für Stars wie Rosmarie Clooney. Das, was dann weltweit als Conniff-Sound gefeiert wurde, bot er erstmals 1956 auf seinem Album „S' Wonderful“: Jazz- und Popklassiker in flüssigen, wattierten Arrangements, denen ein Chor mit kompliziertem Scatgesang Glanzlichter aufsetzte. Bei dieser perfekten Mischung, belohnt mit Dutzenden goldener Schallplatten. Welttourneen und Spitzenpositionen aller Hitparaden, blieb es fast dreißig Jahre lang. Hierzulande verband sich Conniffs musikalisches Dauerlächeln nahtlos mit den Klischees amerikanischer Lässigkeit — man hörte ihn beim Trinken von „Lufthansa-Cocktails“ oder wenn Zigaretten bei Tzanzstundenbällen den „Duft der großen weiten Welt“ verbreiteten.

Krönung der Karriere war die Komposition des Welthits „Lara's Song“, der Titelnusik von „Doktor Schiwago“. Zur Zeit der Beatles und der Rolling Stones stärkte Conniff dem Folkduo Simon & Garfunkel den Rücken, auch den Carpenters, die heute gleichfalls Ikonen des Easy Listening sind. Am vergangenen Samstag starb Ray Conniff im Alter von 85 Jahren. (bat), 15. Oktober 2002

## Mitteldeutsche Zeitung

### Ray Conniff gestorben

New York/dpa. Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff ist am Wochenende 85-jährig in einem Hospital nahe San Diego gestorben. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong zum Film „Doktor Schiwago“ einen Grammy erhielt, nahm in seiner über 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere mehr als 100 Platten auf. Zu seinen Hits gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“. (15. Oktober 2002)

## Kieler Nachrichten

Ray Conniff, Komponist und ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Film „Doktor Schiwago“ einen Grammy erhielt, starb am Sonnabend im Alter von 85 Jahren bei San Diego in Kalifornien. Seine Big Band „The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers“ prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen Klängen. Zu den Hits gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“, „S Wonderful“ und „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“. 15. Oktober 2002

## Flensburger Tageblatt

### Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

New York — Der US-Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong des Hollywood-Films „Doktor Schiwago“ einen Grammy erhielt, starb am Samstag im Alter von 85 Jahren in San Diego im US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien. Seine Big Band „The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers“ prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound mit melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den 90er Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen. In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“.

Flensburger Tageblatt / Norddeutsche Rundschau, 15. Oktober 2002

## Berliner Morgenpost

### Nachruf: Urvater des Easy Listening

Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, der für den Titelsong des Historienfilms „Doktor Schiwago“, einen Grammy erhielt, ist im Alter von 85 Jahren nahe San Diego im US-Bundesstaat Kalifornien gestorben. The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers prägten in den 50er- und 60er-Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinem melodischen und leicht swingenden Klängen, die in den 90er-Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen. In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff mehr als 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu seinen Hits gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“. Jedes Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer wieder sein „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“ zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die enge Verbindung seiner 18 Instrumentalisten zu einem Chor mit vier Frauen und vier Männern, die häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien sangen. dpa 15. Oktober 2002

## TV Teletexte:

**n-tv:** Vater des „Schiwago“-Titelsongs Komponist Ray Conniff gestorben (S. 138)

Ray Conniff, Komponist des Titelsongs von „Dr. Schiwago“, ist im Alter von 85 Jahren in Kalifornien gestorben. Polizeisprecherin Angela Wagner sagte, Conniff sei gestürzt und am Samstag in einer Klinik in San Diego seinen Kopfverletzungen erlegen.

Für den Film „Dr. Schiwago“ mit Omar Sharif in der Hauptrolle komponierte Conniff „Somewhere My Love“. Außerdem interpretierte er in seiner sechs Jahrzehnte umspannenden Karriere Klassiker wie „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“.

**mdr** (S. 136): *Komponist Ray Conniff gestorben*

(Text wie n-tv, zusätzlich:) Conniff produzierte insgesamt 25 Erfolgsalben, die es in die Top 40 schafften. Später arbeitete Conniff auch mit Bands wie „The Carpenters“ und Simon und Garfunkel zusammen.

**Bayerntext** (S. 161): *Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben*

„Trauer um Ray Conniff“: Der Komponist und Bandleader Ray Conniff ist tot. Er starb nach Angaben seiner Familie im Alter von 85 Jahren in der Nähe von San Diego. Conniff gilt als einer der Mitbegründer des „Easy Listening“. Mit seinem Orchester war er vor allem in den 50er und 60er Jahren sehr erfolgreich. Zu ihren bekanntesten Titeln zählen „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“. Auch als Interpret von Filmmusik machte sich Conniff einen Namen. Für seine Version der Titelmelodie von „Dr. Schiwago“ erhielt er einen Grammy.



O ESTADO DE S. PAULO

## CADERNO2

ANO XVII NÚMERO 5.617, SEGUNDA-FEIRA, 14 DE OUTUBRO DE 2002



*O maestro e trombonista americano Ray Conniff fazia shows regulares no Brasil, onde concentrava a maior parte de seu fã clube: suas últimas apresentações no País aconteceram no ano passado, no Credicard Hall*

### A despedida de Ray Conniff, o músico que embalou a emoção de três gerações

Condagrado como um dos mestres do 'easy listening', o maestro e trombonista morreu na madrugada de sábado, aos 85 anos, depois de se sentir mal em seu pequeno chalé em San Diego

#### UBIRATAN BRASIL

As críticas negativas já não o incomodavam fazia anos, pois o que realmente interessava ao maestro e trombonista americano Ray Conniff era ver um salão lotado dançando ao som de sua orquestra, que transformava em sons adocicados clássicos como Besame Mucho e New York, New York. Ele morreu sábado, às 2 horas da manhã, em consequência de um derrame, depois de sentir-se mal em seu pequeno chalé em San Diego. Conniff completaria 86 anos no dia 16 de novembro e notícia de sua morte foi ignorada pelas principais agências de notícias do mundo — o **Estado** noticiou em sua edição de ontem a partir de informações divulgadas pela rede Globo e o portal *Estadão* só divulgou o fato depois que o jornal confirmou.

A confirmação, aliás, veio com o presidente do fã-clube internacional de Conniff, o alemão Manfred Thoenicke, que recebeu a informação da mulher do maestro, Vera. Segundo afirmou Thoenicke em entrevista ontem ao **Estado**, Vera estava viajando aos Alpes suíços no momento do ocorrido. Conniff sofreu um derrame há seis meses e estava com o lado esquerdo do corpo paralisado.

Thoenicke afirmou ainda que receberá durante esta semana, da própria Vera, informações sobre data e local de enterro. Segundo ele, o funeral deverá acontecer em Los Angeles.

### ELE VENDEU MAIS DE 85 MILHÕES DE CÓPIAS EM UMA CARREIRA COM 102 DISCOS

Com o silêncio das agências de notícias, o próprio Thoenicke se encarregou de divulgá-la, falando com jornalistas do mundo todo. Ele também fez um registro da morte no site do fã-clube (<http://members.aol.com/dmitchell9/>).

**Trato difícil** — Elias Ramos Gaia, responsável pelo fã-clube no Brasil, não considera estranho o silêncio das agências internacionais, mesmo as dos Estados Unidos. Conniff, segundo Gaia, era ignorado pelo público norte-americano, embora seus primeiros discos, nos anos 60, tenham feito muito sucesso. “O maestro era uma pessoa de trato difícil e tinha rompido com a imprensa.”

Seu prazer era compartilhado mesmo com os fãs, responsáveis pela venda de 85 milhões de cópias de uma longa carreira, com 102 discos. Fãs que se concentravam quase que exclusivamente no Brasil, onde suas apresentações eram aguardadas por um público cativo. Seus shows (os últimos dois em São Paulo aconteceram em setembro do ano passado, no Credicard Hall) seguiam rigorosamente a mesma pauta, com o maestro gesticulando como um garoto ao reger a orquestra, incentivando o público a acompanhá-lo na dança, nas palmas e na batida dos pés. Se para alguns soava como algo cafona (o excesso de metais da banda pasteurizava os mais diversos gêneros musicais), para outros era o próprio ressurgimento das grandes bandas dos anos 40 e 50. Graças a seu espírito cativante, Conniff conseguia transformar um rígido esquema comercial em um animado baile.

Conniff nasceu em 1916, em Massachusetts, nos Estados Unidos, filho de um trombonista e uma pianista. Decidiu seguir o mesmo caminho do pai, tornando-se um instrumentista de relativo respeito. Tocou ao lado de alguns dos maiores nomes da música americana, como Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Art Hodes e Artie Shaw.

Depois de participar da 2.ª Guerra Mundial, Conniff abriu um novo caminho, tomando-se arranjador. Após uma rápida passagem pelo conjunto de Harry James, foi a Hollywood e começou a trabalhar para os grandes estúdios. Acabou contratado da Columbia, em 1951, que decidiu bancar seu álbum de estréia em 56, *S'Wonderful*.

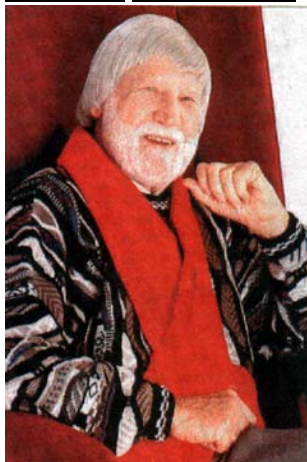
Sua primeira visita ao Brasil foi na década de 60, quando, ao lado de Henry Mancini, tocou *Aquarela do Brasil*, *Besame Mucho* e *Somewhere my Love*. Desde então, não ficaria mais que dois anos sem voltar. “Não sei a razão, mas gosto muito de saber que no Brasil três gerações dançam com minhas músicas”, disse ao **Estado**, em 1999.

Quando estimulado a pensar mais no assunto, abria um sorriso e, como fez à filha Tamara, autora de um artigo sobre o assunto, respondia com frases tão adocicadas como suas apresentações: “Se você ama o que faz e o faz porque realmente ama, simplesmente acontecerá”.

(Colaborou Marco Justo Losso)

## Maestro tocava o que o povo pedia

*Não buscava ser original, apenas agradar sua legião de fãs, especialmente brasileiros*  
**JOTABÊ MEDEIROS**



*Conniff foi maestro de auditório em programas de televisão nos Estados Unidos antes de adotar a fórmula de band leader que acabou consagrando-o*

Músico querido de maneira extremada no Brasil, o band leader Ray Conniff foi sinônimo de baile, cheek to cheek, muzak, música de elevador, música de consultório de dentista, música de sofá, lounge. Nunca foi original, nem nunca foi esse o seu objetivo. Ele tocava o que o povo pedia, e aí está sua contribuição. Jamais recusou um pedido. Onipresente na música ambiente dos cinemas do interior, aqueles de cadeiras com braços de madeira de lei, Conniff aprendeu muito da sua arte na condução de uma orquestra ao lado de Artie Shaw, com o qual gravou álbuns como *Hollywood Palladium 1941*, ao lado de músicos como Les Robinson e Al Hendrickson. Mas não era um solista de futuro.

TOCOU COM  
BANDAS  
SELETI VÁS DE  
JAZZ

No início da carreira, por exemplo, Conniff tocou em discos do trompetista de jazz (e também band leader) Hot Lips Page (1908-1954), que era por sua vez um imitador de Louis Armstrong. Quando posto à prova em big bands mais expressivas, como a de Bunny Berigan, por exemplo (está presente na gravação de *Swingin' High*, de 1939), não chamava a atenção nem pela excepcionalidade nem pela mediocridade.

Depois, tocou - sem deixar grandes marcas - em grupos seletivos de jazz, como o grupo do cantor Bob Crosby (1913-1993), mas sua vocação era pela música comercial, massiva, maciça. Maestro de auditório de TV nos Estados Unidos, líder de orquestra de estúdio; arranjador de bases programadas, Ray Conniff amou o Brasil que o acolheu como nenhum outro País - tanto que seu maior fã-clube é baseado justamente aqui. Maestro de casaca lantejoulada de cassino, ele tinha um grande coração, muito maior que sua música.

**Translation of both articles that appeared in "Caderno 2" kindly provided by Elias Ramos Gaia:**

(Photo subtitle): The trombonist and maestro Ray Conniff regularly went on tour in Brazil, where he had many fans, his last performances in the country happened last year, at Credicard Hall.

**Ray Conniff's Farewell: the musician that made three generations dance**  
**He was a master of "easy listening". The trombonist and maestro died last Saturday at the age of 85 after not feeling well at his chalet in San Diego. By Ubiratan Brasil**

The negative criticism about his work did not bother him anymore, what really mattered for the American trombonist and maestro

Ray Conniff was to see people dancing in a crowded audience to the sound of his orchestra that transformed classics as *Besame Mucho*, and *New York, New York* to "sweet sounds". He died on Saturday at 2 a.m. as a consequence of a stroke. After not feeling well, he was at his small chalet in San Diego. Conniff was to be 86 on November 6<sup>th</sup>. The information about his death has not yet been broadcast by the main international press agencies throughout the world - **O Estado** only broadcast the news yesterday, on Sunday, *Rede Globo* information and *Estadão* only broadcast the news after the news was confirmed.

This information reached us through The Ray Conniff International Fan Club President, the German Manfred Thoenicke, who was informed about the incident by the maestro's wife, Vera, who was on her way to the Swiss Alps when it happened. Conniff had had a stroke six months ago and had his left side paralyzed.

Thoenicke told us that during this week he would receive from Vera herself further information concerning the funeral services that will take place in Los Angeles.

Once the Press agencies did not broadcast the news, Thoenicke decided to do the job himself, talking to journalists all over the world. He also featured the news on the Fan club site.

Elias Ramos Gaia, a club member in Brazil, does not consider it strange that the international press agencies remain silent, even in the USA. Conniff, according to Gaia, was not well known to the contemporary American audience although his first albums in the 60s were all big hits.

His pleasure were the fans; they were responsible for the sales of 85 million albums during his career in which he recorded 102 albums. His fans were almost all concentrated in Brazil, where his performances were attended by a captive public. His shows (the last two in São Paulo took place last year in September at Credicard Hall) were composed by the same formula as the maestro, dancing like a boy on stage and conducting the orchestra and making the audience follow him in his dance clapping hands and beating their feet at the same tempo. If for some people this sounded "kitsch", (too many brass in a band produced a "flat" sound, a sound which made the different music styles sound alike), for others it was the rebirth of the big bands of the 40s and 50s. Due to his personal style, Conniff succeeded in transforming the rigid commercial scheme into a happy dancing party.

Conniff was born in 1916 in Massachusetts, USA, his father was a trombonist and his mother a pianist. He decided to follow his father's steps as and became a respectable musician. He played with the biggest names in American show biz, such as Bunny Berigan, Bob Crosby, Art Hodes and Artie Shaw.

After the Second World War, Conniff found another career by becoming an arranger. After a quick stay in Harry James' band, he came to Hollywood and began to work for the studios. He was hired in 1951 for Columbia Records and released his own album in 56, 'S Wonderful.

His first tour in Brazil was in the 60s beside Henry Mancini, they played *Aquarela do Brasil* (Brazil), *Besame Mucho* and *Somewhere my Love*. Since then Brazil became a mandatory not staying away for more than two years. "I don't know why, but I am very glad to know that three generations enjoy my arrangements" he declared to **Estado**, in 1999.

When we insisted on this subject he showed a smile as he did to his daughter Tamara, who wrote an article about this subject, he replied "If you enjoy your job it is because you really love it, and it simply happens".

**HE SOLD 85 MILLION COPIES IN A CAREER DURING WHICH HE RECORDED 102 ALBUMS THE MAESTRO PLAYED WHAT THE PEOPLE ASKED FOR. He didn't intend to be original, just to please his audience, especially the Brazilians. By Jotabê Medeiros**

Awfully beloved in Brazil, the musician Ray Conniff, was a synonym for dancing parties kind of "cheek to cheek" and elevator music and so on. He never was original, but it wasn't his intention. He used to play what people asked him for and that is his contribution. He never refused an enquiry.

Onnipresent music in cinema rooms, Conniff has learnt many of his art beside Artie Shaw, in whose band he was when they recorded albums like *Hollywood Palladium 1941*, beside musicians like Les Robinson and Al Hendrickson. But he wasn't a kind of solist.

At the beginning of his career, Conniff worked as jazz trumpeter (and band leader as well) Hot Lips Page (1908-1954), which was sort of a Louis Armstrong clone. When he played in the Big Bands, like Bunny Berigan for example, he neither called the attention for his exceptionality nor for his mediocrity.

Afterwards, he played for other jazz groups, such as Bob Crosby (1913-1993), but his talent for music was for the great audience. Auditorium conductor for TV in the USA, band studio leader and arranger, Ray Conniff played in Brazil that received him as any other country did, where he had his biggest number of fans. The maestro had a great heart much bigger than his music.

As you will have noticed, some information in this article is false. Ray never was a trumpet player, and neither did Manfred tell the journalist on the phone that Vera was on her way to Switzerland when Ray had his fall. In fact, it was Tamara who was traveling to Europe, then. - Manfred

## Secciones (in Catalan)

### Mor a causa d'una caiguda el compositor i director Ray Conniff

EFE/DDeG.ESCONDIDO



El compositor i director d'orquestra Ray Conniff va morir dissabte al Centre Mèdic Palomar, d'Escondido (Califòrnia), després de caure i colpejar-se al cap, va informar ahir els fonts properes a l'artista.

«Sento molt informar que Ray Conniff va morir el matí de dissabte», diu Doug Mitchell, que dirigeix la pàgina que aquest artista té a Internet, i que

fins ara és l'única confirmació oficial de la mort del famós músic.

Conniff, guanyador de nombrosos guardons i famós a tot arreu pels seus arranjaments per a grans bandes, tenia 85 anys d'edat. Entre les cançons més famoses del seu centenar de discos es troba *Somewhere My Love* adaptada de l'obra *La cançó de Lara*, del francès Maurice Jarre i que va ser tema de la pel·lícula *Doctor Zhivago*.

Durant la seva carrera de més de sis dècades, Conniff va produir 25 àlbums que es van col·locar entre els 40 més venuts dels Estats Units, i va fer les seves interpretacions de clàssics com *New York, New York*, i *Bésame mucho*.

Conniff va guanyar 10 discos d'or i dos de platí, va guanyar premis Grammy, i l'any 1962 va rebre el títol d'Artista Més Venut de la CBS pel seu disc *Feliz Navidad*.

L'Orquestra i Cor Ray Conniff es van convertir en la mostra més acabada de l'estil suau dels anys 50 i 60, amb la seva barreja de veus humanes sense paraules i un acompanyament orquestral lleuger.

Nascut a Attleboro (Massachusetts) el 6 de novembre de 1916, d'un pare músic, va estudiar música i dansa en la seva ciutat natal, on va començar a tocar en bandes i orquestres, amb el trombó com a instrument favorit. El seu debut va ser a Boston amb la *Dan Murphy Band*, i el 1938 va tocar a Nova York amb l'orquestra de *Bunny Berigan* i posteriorment amb *Bob Crosby*, *Artie Shaw* i *Glen Gray*.

Durant la II Guerra Mundial va treballar en la Ràdio de les Forces Armades. A principis dels cinquanta va firmar un contracte amb *Columbia Records* i el 1955 grava *Band of Gold*, que va ser un èxit mundial. Després vindrien temes com *Just walking in the rain*, *Moonlight gambler* o *Singing the Blues*. El seu darrer gran concert va ser l'any passat al Brasil, per celebrar el seu 84 aniversari.

## SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

### Ohrwürmer

15. Oktober 2002

#### Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff gestorben

Der amerikanische Bandleader und Komponist Ray Conniff, ein Urvater des Easy Listening, ist gestorben. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für den Film „Doktor Schiwago“ einen Grammy erhielt, starb im Alter von 85 Jahren. Seine Big Band *The Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers* prägte in den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren den Lounge Sound mit seinen melodischen und leicht swingigen Klängen, die in den neunziger Jahren beim Easy Listening Pate standen. In seiner mehr als 60 Jahre dauernden Karriere nahm Conniff über 100 Schallplatten auf, von denen 25 die American Top 40 erreichten. Zu den Hits des Conniff-Orchesters gehörten „Besame Mucho“, „New York, New York“ und „S Wonderful“. Jedes

Jahr um die Weihnachtszeit ist immer wieder sein „We Wish You A Merry Christmas“ zu hören. Zum Markenzeichen seiner Band machte Conniff die Verbindung eines Chores von vier Frauen und vier Männern mit 18 Instrumentalisten. Der Chor sang häufig keinen Text, sondern intonierte Melodien. Conniffs Stern sank mit dem Siegeszug des Rock'n'roll, doch viele amerikanische Bands ließen sich von seinen Arrangements inspirieren, darunter Simon and Garfunkel, The Fifth Dimension und The Carpenters. Am Anfang seiner Musikerlaufbahn war Conniff Posaunist in verschiedenen Big Bands. 1951 bot ihm *Columbia Records* einen Vertrag als Arrangeur an. Fünf Jahre später konnte er seine Big Band zusammenstellen. Schon das Debüt-Album „S Wonderful“ wurde zu einem Riesenerfolg und hielt sich neun Monate in den Top 20.



15. Oktober 2002 MUSIK

#### Bandleader und Posaunist Ray Conniff gestorben

Zuletzt wurde Ray Conniff noch einmal ein jugendliches Publikum beschert. Das „Easy Listening, die Fahrstuhl- oder Cocktail-Musik, galt wieder als schick. Ray Conniff setzte die Posaune in den weißen Bart und zog mit Band und Sängern eifrig um die Welt. Bereits in Massachusetts an der Schule hatte er sein erstes Tanzorchester formiert. Vom Swing geprägt warfen Ray Conniff zwar der Bebop und der Rock vorübergehend aus der Bahn. Doch ungerührt verfolgte Conniff das vollkommene Arrangement. Zum Instrument gesellte er die Stimme, kein Ray Conniff Orchestra ohne Ray Conniff Singers. Selten blieben eigenkomponierte Hits, „Somewhere My Love“ oder „S Wonderful“. Dafür gab er das erste Stereo-Live-Konzert, er spielte in Las Vegas wie im Moskau und im Weißen Haus, nahm mehr als 100 Alben auf und reiste samt Orchester unermüdlich durch die Mehrzweckhallen aller Länder. Am Samstag starb Ray Conniff 85-jährig an den Folgen eines Sturzes in San Diego.

## Hamburger Morgenpost

#### Bandleader Ray Conniff gestorben

New York - Bandleader Ray Conniff ist im Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben. Aus seiner Feder stammen Hits wie „Besame Mucho“ und „New York, New York“. Außerdem erhielt Conniff einen Grammy für den Titelsong von „Doktor Schiwago“. (15. Oktober 2002)

## Der Tagesspiegel

#### Der Bandleader Ray Conniff

ist tot. Der Musiker, der für den Titelsong für „Doktor Schiwago“ einen Grammy erhielt, starb 85-jährig in Kalifornien. Seine Big band prägte in den 50er und 60er Jahren den Lounge Sound. (dpa) 15. Oktober 2002

## Neue Zürcher Zeitung

#### Bandleader und Arrangeur Ray Conniff gestorben.

Ray Conniff, der mit Arrangements wie der „Schiwago-Melodie“ eine musikalische Brücke vom Big-Band-Sound zum Schlager schlug, ist im Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben. Der Bandleader erlag am Samstag in einem Krankenhaus in San Diego Verletzungen, die er sich nach einem Sturz am Kopf zugezogen hatte. (ap) 15. Oktober 2002



# Conniff não morreu

DEIXOU UM LEGADO ETERNO QUE AS RÁDIOS NUNCA DEIXARÃO DE TOCAR

De um estilo só dele, que embalou três gerações, Ray Conniff começou como arranjador da orquestra de Harry James e acabou tocando Roberto Carlos.

O maestro, que morreu sábado aos 86 anos de derrame, manteve seu som no ar até o fim. Há pouco mais de um ano, enfrentou uma aventura de 21 horas para poder cumprir sua agenda. Era um dia fatídico, 11 de setembro, quando aconteceram os atentados terroristas nos EUA. e todos os vôos estavam suspensos. Viajou até o México, por conta do bloqueio do tráfego aéreo, para chegar ao Brasil e fazer a despedida de sua orquestra, nos dias 15 e 16 de setembro de 2001. Em sua derradeira turnê mundial, tocou Beatles, Bee Gees, Carpenters, Frank Sinatra, além de Roberto Carlos.

O contato com o rádio foi quando o maestro fazia arranjos para a Rádio das Forças Armadas em Hollywood, após a eclosão da Segunda Guerra. Hermano Henning, apresentador do programa sobre big bands na Scalia, trabalhava em rádio nos anos 60, época em que o maestro explodiu em vendagens, e conta: "Eu era discotecário e tudo que chegava dele pela CBS (do selo laranja) era sucesso".

As rádios tocavam direto a orquestra popular de Ray Conniff. "Não houve ninguém que não tenha dançado com Ray Conniff", diz Henning. Mas o especialista ressalta que o Conniff da década de 60, quando estourou como músico de baile, tinha originalidade, após isso se comercializou e não se adaptava ao estilo big bands, sua orquestra era popular e não de jazz.

"No entanto, era um personagem que merece destaque. Como músico foi extraordinário. Falo dele como figura importante desta época", completa Henning, que sempre inclui Ray Conniff em seus programas de rádio, tocando em outras orquestras como a de Tommy Dorsey.

Do maestro, ele lembra da canção "La Mer" (de Charles Trenet), que com ele era "maravilhosa". O sucesso de Ray Conniff era tanto que até um disco atípico, sem orquestra e sem coral, como o "'S' Different", com ele no trombone e Billy Butterfield no pistom, emplacou.

Na TV brasileira, Ray Conniff ficou bem conhecido pois era tema de "Almoço com as Estrelas", com "It's Wonderful".

(com colaboração de Roberto Hirao)



Ray Conniff vendeu mais de 65 milhões de cerca de cem discos

**RAY CONNIFF EM SEIS NOTAS**

<b>1916</b> - Nasce em 6 de novembro, em Attleboro, Massachusetts (EUA)	<b>1966</b> - Ganha Grammy pelo disco "Somewhere My Love" e tem arranjo para "Tema de Lara", incluído na trilha do filme "Doutor Jivago"
<b>1939</b> - Entra para a prestigiada orquestra de Artie Shaw, onde trabalha como trombonista e arranjador	<b>1973</b> - Em plena Guerra Fria, se apresenta em Moscou, na então União Soviética
<b>1956</b> - Grava seu primeiro álbum, "S' Wonderful", e é eleito o maestro mais promissor do ano pela revista "Cash Box"	<b>1997</b> - Atinge a marca de cem discos pela gravadora Columbia (incluindo outros selos) e é contratado pela Polygram

**AS MAIS, MAIS**

<b>1958</b> - Broadway in Rhythm	<b>1960</b> - Say it With Music
<b>1958</b> - Concert in Rhythm	<b>1961</b> - S. Continental
<b>1959</b> - Christmas with Conniff	<b>1964</b> - Invisible Tears

Fonte: seleção dos melhores discos de Ray Conniff feita para a "Folia de S. Paulo" por Manfred Thurner, presidente do S.D. - The Ray Conniff International Fan Club

In the following newsflash it is announced that Ray's Brazil tour promoter, Manoel Poladian, is to write a book about Ray:

## Vida e obra

Há 35 anos empresário no Brasil de Ray Conniff, Manoel Poladian escreverá um livro sobre seu convívio com o maestro, que morreu no fim de semana nos EUA.

Em maio, ele completaria 12 turnês por aqui.

Além da obra, Poladian mandará rezar missa em memória de Ray, dia 6 de novembro, na Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Brasil, em São Paulo. As canções da cerimônia serão interpretadas por quatro cantoras da orquestra do saudoso maestro.

## elisa.net 15.10.2002

### Ray Conniff poissa

Maailmankuulu amerikkalainen ork.joht./ sovittaja Ray Conniff on kuollut 85 vuoden ikäisenä USA:ssa.

Conniff teki muusikkona yli 60 vuotta kestäneen elämäntyön. Aloitti big bandien pasunistina ja sovittajana 1940-luvulla. Siirtyi sitten Columbia Recordsin palvelukseen sovittaja/ kapellimestariksi. Conniffin uudenlaiset sovituskikat vauhdittivat esim. Johnny Mathisin, Guy Mitchellin ja Marty Robbinsin miljoonahittejä.

Ray Conniff Orchestra ja Chorus ilmestyi kuvioihin noin 1957. Siitä tuli Conniffin uran tärkein viihdefoorumi.

Kokoonpano kirjasi nimiinsä 25 Top 40 -albumia, muutaman hittisinglenkin. Somewhere my love -tulkinta sai Grammy-palkinnon.

# estadao.com.br

Quinta-feira, 7 de novembro de 2002

## Filha de Ray Conniff deve seguir regendo sua orquestra

Morto no dia 12, o maestro foi homenageado ontem em São Paulo com uma missa musical

JOTABÊ MEDEIROS

Os alto-falantes tocaram Blowin' in the Wind, de Bob Dylan, com o coro e a orquestra de Ray Conniff. O padre era fã, tinha ido ao último concerto do maestro, no Credicard Hall. Os fiéis sabiam cantar de cor e salteado as grandes versões do arranjador, como My Way e Smoke Gets in Your Eyes.



O empresário Manoel Poladian e Tamara, filha de Ray Conniff: missa teve duas canções de Roberto Carlos, 'Amigo' e 'Nossa Senhora' Sebastião Moreira/AE

No dia em que faria 86 anos, ontem, o maestro americano Ray Conniff recebeu uma tocante homenagem em São Paulo. Cerca de 70 pessoas, entre elas sua filha, Tamara Conniff, participaram de uma missa em homenagem ao músico, morto no dia 12 de outubro.

Ao chegar à Igreja Nossa Senhora do Brasil, no Jardim América, o empresário brasileiro de Conniff, Manoel Poladian, veterano promotor de espetáculos, anunciou que a orquestra que o trombonista e maestro criou deverá seguir apresentando-se no mundo inteiro, regida por sua filha Tamara.

"Meu pai amou esse país, foi como sua outra pátria", disse Tamara. "Esse país lhe transmitiu a paixão, a alegria e o romance, e era sobre isso que a música dele falava, sobre felicidade", afirmou ela, que aprendeu música viajando com Conniff e tornou-se sua mais próxima colaboradora.

Em discurso, Poladian lembrou da última apresentação do maestro no Brasil, para mais de 4 mil pessoas, em São Paulo. "Estreamos alguns dias depois da catástrofe com as torres de Nova York. Conniff pediu um minuto de silêncio e abriu a noite com New York, New York, o que deixou ele e a platéia muito emocionados, à beira do choro", contou. "Depois do concerto, ele me chamou e disse: Não, não podemos chorar no meu show. A minha música é para despertar alegria."

A missa toda foi pontuada com gravações da orquestra de Ray Conniff. Tocaram duas canções de Roberto Carlos (Amigo e Nossa Senhora), uma de Ary Barroso (Aquarela do Brasil), outra de Gounod (Ave Maria). Segundo Poladian, Conniff descobriu como associar dois instrumentos às vozes dos coros - o trompete com a voz feminina e o trombone com as masculinas - e construiu sua obra em torno dessas associações.

"Eu me considero um privilegiado por ter participado da vida desse gênio", afirmou. "Um artista de um preciosismo impressionante, que muitas vezes enlouquecia a todos nós."

Segundo Tamara Conniff, o maestro, em 86 anos e 70 de carreira, só amou uma coisa com mais intensidade que sua família: o Brasil. Ela lembrou que ele costumava sair por São Paulo, nos intervalos das apresentações, para conversar com as pessoas nas ruas. "Era um homem simples, que gostava de coisas simples", ela disse. "Vocês perderam um maestro e um amigo, eu perdi um pai", afirmou, muito emocionada.

O padre-cantor José Eduardo, escalado para rezar a missa, era "escolado" na música de Ray Conniff. Ele grava discos, como o padre Marcelo, e seu empresário no ramo também é Manoel Poladian.

No seu sermão, o padre José Eduardo sugeriu que Conniff deveria estar no céu "regendo o coro dos anjos bem melhor do que foi esse coro até hoje" e também falou sobre sua última experiência numa platéia do maestro. "De costas para a orquestra, ele regia cada um de nós e, ao final, disse: Agora todos vocês podem dizer que já foram do coral de Ray Conniff."

Ray Conniff nasceu em 6 de novembro de 1916 em Attleboro, Massachusetts.

Seus arranjos, que se tornaram sinônimo de música ambiente, lounge - ou easy listening, como foi batizada mais recentemente -, foram reproduzidos em mais de 90 discos. Foi muito criticado, mas teve uma aceitação popular muito grande, especialmente no Brasil.

Ray Conniff costumava se apresentar com uma orquestra de 18 músicos, ao lado de um coral de 8 cantores. Essa combinação, que usou para verter canções de Frank Sinatra a Roberto Carlos, foi seu ovo de Colombo musical.

"Ray Conniff amou essa terra, imortalizou essa terra nos seus arranjos. E agora nós estamos nessa Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Brasil prestando uma homenagem a ele", discursou o padre Zé Eduardo.

*The article says that Tamara Conniff may conduct the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Singers if a memorial tour materializes. Whether this will become true or not, we will have to wait and see.*

**SANTA MISSA  
EM MEMÓRIA DO  
MAESTRO RAY CONNIFF  
Igreja N. Sra. do Brasil  
São Paulo - SP  
06/XI/2002**

**1. ENTRADA:**

**2. SAUDAÇÃO INICIAL:**

Em nome do Pai e do Filho e do Espírito Santo.

**T. Amém.**

O Deus da esperança, que nos cumula de toda alegria e paz em nossa fé, pela ação do Espírito Santo, esteja convosco.

**T. Bendito seja Deus que nos reuniu no amor de Cristo.**

**3. RITO PENITENCIAL:**

Senhor, tende piedade de nós.

**Cristo, tende piedade de nós.**

Senhor, tende piedade de nós.

Deus todo-poderoso tenha compaixão de nós, perdoe os nossos pecados e nos conduza à vida eterna.

**T. Amém.**

**4. OREMOS:** Ó Deus, Pai de todos os donsefonte de toda vida, nós vos damos graças pela vida do Maestro Ray Conniff ao mesmo tempo que pedimos pelo seu descanso eterno. PNSJ.

**T. Amém.**

**5. SALMO 23**

*(O preferido de Ray Conniff)*

*O Senhor é meu pastor, nada me faltará. Em verdes prados ele me faz repousar. r Conduz-me junto às águas refrescantes, reslaura as forças de minha alma. Pelos caminhos retos ele me leva por amor do seu nome. Ainda que eu atravessasse o vale escuro, nada temerei, pois estais comigo. Vosso bordão e vosso báculo são o meu amparo. Preparais para mim a mesa à vista de meus inimigos. Derramai.- perfume sobre minha cabeça, e transborda minha taça. A vossa bondade e misericórdia hão de seguir-me por todos os dias da minha vida. E habitarei na casa do Senhor por longos dias. O Senhor é meu pastor, nada me faltará.*

**6. MEDITAÇÃO:**

**7. EVANGELHO:**

O Senhor esteja convosco.

**T. Ele está no meio de nós.**

Proclamação do Evangelho de N. S. Jesus Cristo segundo João.

**T. Glória a vós, Senhor.**

*Naquele tempo, disse Jesus a seus discípulos: Não fique perturbado o coração de vocês. Acreditem em Deus e acreditem também em mim. Na casa de meu Pai existem muitas moradas. Se não fosse assim, eu lhes teria dito; pois vou preparar um lugar para você~r Depois de ire preparar-lhes um lugar volia, ~i para tomar vocês comigo, para que, onde eu estiver, vocês também estejam. Eu sou o caminho, a verdade e a vida.*

Palavra da Salvação.

**T. Glória a vós, Senhor.**

**8. HOMILIA:**

**9. OFERTÓRIO:**

**10. ORAÇÃO:** Orai, irmãos e irmãs, para que o nosso saciificio seja aceito por Deus Pai todo-poderoso.

T. Receba o Senhor por tuas mãos este sacrificio, para a glória do seu nome, para nosso bem e de toda a santa Igreja.

Recebei, Senhor, no pão e no vinho, nossas oferendas de gratidão pela vida do Maestro Ray Conniff. Por Cristo, Senhor nosso.

**T. Amém.**

**11. PREFÁCIO:**

O Senhor esteja convosco.

T. Ele está no meio de nós.

Corações ao alto.

T. O nosso coração está em Deus.

Demos graças ao Senhor, nosso Deus.

T. É nosso dever e nossa salvação.

Na verdade, Deus eterno e todo-poderoso, é nosso dever e salvação dar-vos graças em todos os momentos e por todas as coisas, proclamando as vossas maravilhas por Cristo, Senhor nosso. Nele brilhou para nós a esperança da feliz ressurreição. E aos que a certeza da morte entristece, a promessa da imortalidade consola. Ó Pai, para os que crêem em vós, a vida não é tirada, mas transformada, e, desfeita a nossa habitação terrena, nos é dada, nos céus, uma mansão eterna. Por isso com todos os Anjos e Santos proclamamos a vossa glória, dizendo a uma só voz:

T. Santo, Santo, Santo, Senhor, Deus do universo! O céu e a terra proclamam a vossa glória. Hosana nas alturas! Bendito o que vem em nome do Senhor! Hosana nas alturas.

Senhor, vós que sempre quisestes ficar muito perto de nós, vivendo conosco no Cristo, falando conosco por ele, mandai vosso Espírito Santo, a fim de que as nossas ofertas se mudem no Corpo e no Sangue de nosso Senhor Jesus Cristo.

**T. Mandai vosso Espírito Santo!**

Na noite em que ia ser entregue, ceando com os seus apóstolos, Jesus, tendo opão em suas mãos, olhou para o céu e deu graças, partiu o pão e o entregou a seus discípulos, dizendo: TOMAI, TODOS, E COMEI: ISTO É O MEU CORPO, QUE SERÁ ENTREGUE POR VÓS.

Do mesmo modo, no fim da ceia, tomou o cálice em suas mãos, deu graças novamente e o entregou a seus discípulos, dizendo: TOMAIS, TODOS, E BEBEI: ESTE É O CÁLICE DO MEU SANGUE, O SANGUE DA NOVA E ETERNA ALIANÇA, QUE SERÁ DERRAMADO POR VÓS E POR TODOS, PARA A REMISSÃO DOS PECADOS. FAZEI ISTO EM MEMÓRIA DE MIM.

Eis o mistério da fé!

T. Anunciamos, Senhor, a vossa morte e proclamamos a vossa ressurreição. Vinde, Senhor Jesus!

Recordamos, ó Pai, neste momento, a paixão de Jesus, nosso Senhor, sua ressurreição e ascensão. Nós queremos a vós oferecer este Pão que alimenta e que dá vida, este Vinho que salva e dá coragem.

T. Recebei, ó Senhor, a nossa oferta.

E quando recebermos pio e vinho — o Corpo e Sangue dele oferecidos —, o Espírito nos una num só corpo, para sermos um só povo em seu amor.

T. O Espírito nos una num só corpo.

Protegei vossa Igreja que caminha nas estradas do mundo rumo ao céu, cada dia renovando a esperança de chegar junto a vós, na vossa paz.

T. Caminhamos na estrada de Jesus.

Dai ao santo Padre, o papa João Paulo, ser bem firme na fé e na caridade, e a Cláudio que é bispo desta Igreja muita luz para guiar o seu rebanho.

**T. Caminhamos na estrada de Jesus.**

Esperamos entrar na vida eterna com a Virgem, Mãe de Deus e da Igreja, os apóstolos e todos os santos, que na vida souberam amar Cristo e seus irmAos.

**T. Esperamos entrar na vida eterna.**

A todos que chamastes para a outra vida na vossa amizade, de modo especial hoje lembramos o Maestro Ray Conniff e aos marcados com o sinal da fé, abrindo vossos braços acolhei-os. Que vivam para sempre bem felizes no reino que para todos preparastes.

**T. A todos dai a luz que isso se apaga.**

E a nós, que agora estamos reunidos e somos povo santo e pecador, dai forças para construirmos juntos o vosso reino que também é nosso.

Por Cristo, com Cristo, em Cristo, a vós Deus Pai todo-poderoso, na unidade do Espírito Santo, toda honra e toda a glória, agora e para sempre.

**T. Amém.**

**12. PAI NOSSO:**

**13. ABRAÇO DA PAZ:**

A paz do Senhor esteja sempre convosco.

T. O amor de Cristo nos uniu.

**14. CORDEIRO:**

Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais o pecado do mundo, tende piedade de nós.

Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais o pecado do mundo, tende piedade de nós.

Cordeiro de Deus, que tirais o pecado do mundo, dai-nos a paz.

**15. COMUNHÃO:**

Eu sou a luz do mundo. Quem me segue não anda nas trevas, mas terá luz da vida Eis o Cordeiro de Deus, que tira o pecado do mundo.

**T. Senhor, eu não sou digno(a) de que entreis em minha morada, mas dizei uma palavra e serei salvo(a).**

**16. PALAVRA DE TAMARA CONNIFF:**

**17. PALAVRA DE MANOEL POLADIAN:**

**18. BÊNÇÃO FINAL:**

O Senhor esteja convosco.

**T. Ele está no meio de nós.**

Desça e permaneça sobre todos a bênção de Deus todo-poderoso Pai, Filho e Espírito Santo.

**T. Amém.**

A alegria do Senhor seja a vossa força. Ide em paz e que o Senhor vos acompanhe.

T. Graças a Deus.



## FIND A GRAVE



# Ray Conniff

Birth: Nov. 6, 1916, USA

Death: Oct. 12, 2002

Los Angeles County, USA

Ray Conniff, one of the few commercially successful musical geniuses of our time, was born on November 6, 1916, in Attleboro, Massachusetts. Ray was exposed to music at an early age, his father was the leader/trombonist of the local Jewelry City Band and his mother played the piano. Ray has survived in the music business for over 65 years, he has recorded over 100 albums to date and has sold over 70 million albums, cassettes and CD's. He was the proud recipient of a Grammy Award for his recording of "Somewhere My Love," two Grammy nominations, over 10 gold albums, 2 platinum albums ("Somewhere My Love" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"), CBS Records-Best Selling Artist for 1962 Award and countless international awards. He was also one of the few artists to receive the prestigious CBS Records International Crystal Globe Award for outstanding sales outside of the United States.



[Search Amazon.com for Ray Conniff](#)

Burial: [Westwood Memorial Park](#) Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California, USA



My mom would play your records for hours, especially at Christmas time. You have become a Christmas tradition at my house. I just wish I could have shook your hand! - Robert Burrows

Added: 11/4/2002



rest in peace Ray

- roger collins

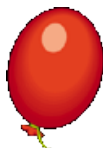
Added: 11/2/2002



So glad I had the chance to shake your hand in your last show in Brazil...The world will miss you always.....

-a fan from Brazil

Added: 11/14/2002



'S WONDERFUL, 'S MARVELOUS, 'S AWFUL NICE: All the things YOU are, Ray. Your music will be played FOREVER and EVER!-Anonymous

Added: 11/13/2002



The musical notes of your wonderful arrangements, like MIDNIGHT LACE, SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES, THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS, BRAZIL, LOVER, COME BACK TO ME, BEYOND THE SEA, and millions of others, will keep you alive forever! Your fans, like ME will never forget you. Thank you, RAY! P.S. Someday we'll listen to 'S HEAVEN, the album you must be producing now.

-jorge carpes

Added: 11/12/2002



As one of the biggest fans I will keep playing your music as being an admirer forever. You will be dearly missed.

-Tilly Van Der Zwaard

Added: 11/11/2002



Thanks for your music, you'll be dearly missed.

-Rico

Added: 11/8/2002



Has hecho,haces y harás bailar lindamente al planeta...Tu partida nunca debió haber sido hecha.¡Qué falta haces!

-Lolo Mardones

Added: 11/5/2002



Simplemente Saudades!!

-Arnaldo Dalia

Added: 11/5/2002



Dear Ray,

Since I was 14 years old (1968) you became the soundtrack of my life. Now you must be making the Angel Singers, sing much better with the perfection that exists in everything you (and you alone) did... Heaven is happier now, I'm sure!!!!

-jorge carpes

Added: 11/5/2002



His music will live forever!

-Daniel

Added: 11/2/2002



*"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints"* (Psalm 116:15 - New Int'l Version)

It's comforting to have the assurance that Ray is not wandering somewhere in infinity; we can infer that from the above text, and also from Ray's many testimonies of his faith in God through his music. I have no doubts that Ray is with the Person of Jesus Christ now. And with the Gift that God gave him, "perhaps" he's conducting a big company of angels now. I thought of writing you after listening over and over again Ray's own tune "I can do all things [through Christ Who's living in me]". There are two things that I feel when I listen Ray's music : Integrity and Joy, much Joy. When I'm sad, all I need is listen one of his happy tunes, then I'm OK again.

Of course, I was very moved to the point of weeping when I saw him on the TV news this evening; but I'm comforted I shall meet him again some day, and have unlimited time to chat with him.

Well, just wanted to share this with you "With every beat of my heart".

Very sincerely, Claudio Vital de Souza, Brazil (Oct. 13, 2002)

Hi Manfred, this is very sad news. Please forward our sympathies and best wishes to Vera, Tamara and all the Conniff family. Ray was not just a great musician but a truly wonderful, friendly man. We will treasure our memories of him forever, and of course play his music endlessly. I hope to have a dedication played on BBC Radio 2 today -Ed Stewart 5pm, Radio 2 has always been a great supporter of Rays music. Also best wishes to yourself and family on this sad day.

John Reid and Family (Lexa, Alan, Alison and Jacy), London (13th Oct. 2002)

P.S It was a huge surprise to see Tamara interviewed on a BBC Diana Ross TV tribute during the week!

*Dear Manfred,*

*I was so sorry to learn the sad news about Ray this morning. He gave the world so much wonderful music, and he will be greatly missed. On behalf of all members of the Robert Farnon Society, I send sincere condolences to you and all Ray's admirers around the world. My thoughts are with you at this tragic time. Kindest regards,*

*David Ades Robert Farnon Society*

*Hi Manfred,*

*Thanks for letting us all know. Possibly the most devastating news of my long lifetime. BOB WHITBY (Texas, Oct. 13, 2002)*

*Hello Manfred,*

*Thank you for your sad news. What a wonderful lifetime of music though, and few people will leave such a vast selection of superb recorded music.*

*Our sincere condolences to Vera and Tamara at this sad time.*

*We have been in touch with some of the radio presenters who we have regular contact with and we are sure that they will do nice tributes in their programmes.*

*1. Desmond Carrington, BBC Radio 2 - national coverage including worldwide on the web. The programme can also be heard at any time on the web for the following week on the BBC Radio Player. We are not sure if he will have time to adjust his play list for today's programme.*

*2. Ed Stewart, BBC Radio 2 - also national, but again his programme goes out today.*

*3. Frank Wappat, - all the BBC North Regional stations*

*4. Bill Rennells, - most of the BBC South Regional stations*

*5. Phil Farlow, - producer of the Big Band and Swing programme on all the BBC South Regional stations*

*6. Keith Skues, - All the BBC East Regional stations.*

*Well, we guess we knew that it would have to happen at some time, but it is still rather a shock to know that there will be no more new albums and no more live concerts.*

*Many thanks for letting us know the sad news.*

*Best regards, Les & Barbara Peckham (13th Oct. 2002)*

Dear Manfred, just read your e-mail when I got up this morning. I leave for Devon and Cornwall in about 2 hours time and I don't feel like going. I feel so sad after hearing the news about Ray. He was an amazing person, as too was his music. I sometimes hear his music when I listen to radio stations on the net. His music will be played forever.

From Len (Morris, Birmingham, UK, 13th Oct. 2002)



*Ray's grave and the chapel where the funeral service took place photographed by Don Buchwald.*

## **Dancing With Tears In My Eyes**

### **A Tribute to Ray Conniff by Don Buchwald, October 30, 2002**

It had been cold and cloudy in Los Angeles the last several days. Tuesday, October 15 was no different. I figured it was an early touch of winter. Settling in for lunch, I opened the Los Angeles Times to catch up on the latest news. Then I saw the headline: "Obituaries; Ray Conniff, 85; Popularized Choral Sound". Suddenly, it seemed that the world had become more barren; my favorite musician was no longer with us! According to the newspaper, he had passed away on Saturday, October 12. It seemed as though the gloomy weather was reflecting the fact that a giant of the music industry had left the scene. I wondered if the sun would ever come out again.

For several days I tried to express what Ray Conniff has meant to me for the last 46 years, but the words came with great difficulty. How sadly ironic, I thought – the inventor of wordless choral arrangements has died and I'm temporarily rendered speechless. Yes, there were previous attempts at wordless singing (Rachmaninoff's "Vocalise" comes immediately to mind), but no one made the creative leap that Ray Conniff did in 1956 when he recorded and released "'s Wonderful!". The sheer inventiveness of the arrangements and the exuberance of their execution remain incomparable. Listen, for example, to the very first song on the album. The musicians burst forth in a joyous riff, no longer constrained to playing Ray's arrangements for someone else's orchestra. This was Ray's own orchestra! Then the chorus starts its wordless singing in a nearly miraculous melding of voices and instruments. But it wasn't just the individual elements of the music that was astonishing to my young ears. The total package of arrangements, voices, top-notch instrumentalists (including a solid rhythm section), conducted by Ray with supreme confidence and a touch of audacity, is a touchstone in music history. As a 14 year old growing up in Buffalo, NY, I had heard nothing like it. From the first moment I heard "'s Wonderful!", I became a lifelong Ray Conniff fan.

For almost a half century, Ray Conniff has been part of the fabric of my life. I eagerly awaited each successive album, buying them on the day of their release. I credit my appreciation for music – standard, classical, big band, Latin – to Ray's influence. I remember writing him my one-and-only fan letter in the late '50's and was surprised to receive a handwritten reply. Sometime in the early '60's, I found out that the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus was going to be performing in Rochester, NY. Since I didn't yet have a car, I persuaded a friend who was also a fan to make the hour's journey to see my idol in action. There was no way I was going to pass up this opportunity. To actually see the arranger/conductor/composer/musician in a live performance with a state-of-the-art stereo sound system was awe-inspiring. The event remains a seminal point in my life.

As the years went by and I graduated from College, my love of the Conniff sound never diminished. When I moved to Los Angeles and started my career, Ray's music was always there, through good and bad times. I never met the man, but I firmly believe his character was revealed in the music. Listen to any Conniff arrangement. One hears optimism in every note. There's an inherent confidence and joy present. It was obvious Ray was proud of his family. He often featured his wife Vera and daughter Tamara on album covers, at times composing tunes in their honor. Thinking of all the photographs of Ray I've seen over the years, he was always smiling and with a devilish twinkle in his eyes. His happiness seemed boundless.

The obituary in the Times said that a private funeral service for family and friends would be held on Thursday at Pierce Brothers Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary. I struggled with my conscience as to whether I should attend. Could I be considered a "friend"? I certainly thought of myself as one. But the notice said "private". In the end, I decided to go but stay at a respectful distance. I could do no less for someone who meant so much to me. The day was glorious, sunny and warm. At least for the day, the cool, cloudy conditions had given way to more typical Southern California weather. The sun had returned. I took it as a sign of Ray's eternal optimism. The service began with the sounds of "Ave Maria" floating from the small chapel, sung by the Ray Conniff singers in a Conniff arrangement. It sent shivers down my spine. My invisible tears had now become quite visible. In Tamara's tender eulogy, she recommended that everyone go home, listen to some Ray Conniff music, and dance a little. That evening that's what I did, but I was dancing with tears in my eyes. About three months ago, I finally had gotten around to ordering the hard-to-obtain CD, "Ray Conniff in Moscow". It arrived about two weeks before Ray's passing and listening to it I was impressed with his mastery of Russian tunes – evidence, once again, that Ray's music was universal. Looking at the last song on the album entitled, "This Can Never Be Again", I can only sadly say, "How true, how true."

I have a vision of Ray in heaven, now eagerly writing arrangements for choirs of angels. So, every time you hear the warble of a songbird or feel the warmth of the wind, soft as the kiss of snow, listen carefully for that recognizable Conniff Sound. He's still performing his concerts, but this time for a celestial audience. And there's God in the front row, center, applauding at the finale, smiling while nodding His head in approval, and offering His review: "'s Wonderful!" "'s Marvelous!" "'s Awful Nice!"

You can imagine how sad and shocked I was, like all the RC fans all over the world, who must feel like orphans now. But Ray's music will live forever.

Thank you, Ray, for your music, and have a good time with Frankie, Duke, Benny, and Tommy in Paradise!

Serge Elhaik



## TRIBUTO A RAY CONNIFF

### Angel Infante

La tarde del 12 de octubre de este año, llegué a la turística isla tropical de Hainan, específicamente a su capital Haikou, para participar en un taller de entrenamiento en bambú y ratán en China. Me esperaban grandes sorpresas y la curiosidad de conocer el mundo oriental con su riqueza cultural tan particular. No obstante, jamás imaginaría lo que el destino me tenía reservado. Al día siguiente de mi llegada y una vez, que ya conocía las instalaciones del Hotel Internacional Yantai, recurrí a la sala de comunicaciones para leer mis mensajes de correo electrónico. Cuál sería mi sorpresa y sentimientos de confusión al leer: "Su música vivirá por siempre. RAY CONNIFF Noviembre 6, 1916 - Octubre 12, 2002 . El nos hará falta con tristeza. Manfred". Ahora está en el cielo, junto a Dios.

Recuerdo que el año pasado fue su último concierto "World Hits" en Sao Paulo, Brasil, donde interpretó música de Los Beatles, Los Bee Gees, Los Carpenters, Frank Sinatra, Roberto Carlos y música country brasileña. Disfruté mucho estos conciertos. Fue en el año 2000 cuando grabó su último CD interpretando a Roberto Carlos. Muchas memorias llegan a mi mente; las oportunidades que compartí con Ray, sus cantantes y su orquesta en los conciertos de 1997 y 1998 en Sao Paulo junto a mi amigo Elias Ramos, representante del club de fans por América Latina; momentos que han sido publicados en nuestra revista 'S Conniff del Club Internacional de Fans de Ray Conniff, cuyo presidente es Manfred Thoenicke de Alemania.

El pasado 6 de noviembre cumpliría 86 años, por eso su hija Tamara viajó desde Los Angeles (California) hasta Sao Paulo para reunirse en una iglesia local junto con gran cantidad de fans y admiradores para una celebración de vida porque las estrellas como el Maestro Ray Conniff no mueren nunca. "Es mejor imaginarlo en un coro celestial haciendo *da dats* y *doo bops* en algún trono divino", me diría David Theriault, uno de sus cantantes por más de 17 años, en un mensaje de correo electrónico, el 6 de junio de este año, en vista de que Ray estaba delicado de salud. Fue la respuesta a un mensaje de admiración que le envié al Maestro Conniff. En este mensaje, le expresé que: "la primera vez que escuché un álbum suyo fue en 1975, contaba con apenas 17 años de edad. Se trataba de *"Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song"*. Esa tarde que no he olvidado, mi hermano mayor, Agustín, quien también admira a Ray, trajo este álbum a casa. En ese entonces, vivía en su casa junto con nuestra cuñada Isabel Teresa, en Boconó, "Jardín de Venezuela", del estado Trujillo.

Quedé tan impresionado por las voces del coro que comencé a formar mi colección, la cual ya casi llega a los cien CD's. Cada día, mi apego a su música se volvía más fuerte y ahora cuando escucho su música, me lleno de alegría. Canciones venezolanas populares como *Caballo Viejo*, *Ansiedad*, *Voy a perder la cabeza por tu amor* y *Dueño de Nada* me recuerdan la fuerza del

amor en su música y me identifican más y más con su único estilo de mezclar voces masculinas y femeninas con instrumentos en una perfección absoluta".

Este mensaje fue conmovedor no sólo para Ray sino también para su esposa Vera y su hija Tamara, haciéndome feliz a mí también. Ray recordó estas canciones dentro de un repertorio de aproximadamente cien álbumes. Recuerdo a Ray como una persona enérgica y joven en el escenario, tal como un muchacho de 20 años. En un concierto en Costa Rica le dijo a la audiencia: "sus aplausos me hacen sentir pura vida". Sus conciertos eran muy alegres e informales, todo el mundo disfrutaba. Como dice su hija Tamara: "mi papá escuchaba la música perfectamente en su cabeza. Escuchaba todo, cada nota, cada instrumento. Conocía exactamente lo que se suponía era de escuchar. Sabía cómo comunicarse con sus músicos. Hacía de los mejores músicos, aún mejores. Era perfeccionista, sencillo y le gustaba disfrutar en familia. Para él, su familia era lo primero".

Particularmente, recuerdo que después de sus conciertos se quedaba hasta las dos de la madrugada o más tarde firmando autógrafos a la audiencia y con nosotros, los fans sentía gran respeto, cariño y admiración. Sentimientos afectuosos que le devolvíamos de igual manera.

Continúa diciendo su hija: "mi papá también le gustaba mucho el océano, era su lugar favorito. Creía que el agua salada podía curar todo, desde una cortadura hasta un corazón herido, quería mucho a sus amigos y a sus vecinos. Fue un hombre sencillo, le gustaban las cosas sencillas. Siempre escuchaba la música, aun comiendo tomaba una servilleta, tarareaba y luego hacía anotaciones."

Manuel Poladian, su amigo y promotor afirma: "Personas especiales como Ray, no mueren - sólo se vuelven una estrella más en el cielo, brillando sobre nosotros e iluminando nuestro sendero aquí abajo." Su esposa Vera y Tamara han creado la fundación The Ray Conniff Music Foundation. P.O. Box 461750. Los Angeles CA, 90046, USA como un tributo y en memoria de Ray Conniff. Si usted desea conocer más acerca de Ray Conniff y su música puede visitar la página: [thoenicke.bei.t-online.de/RayConniff/index.htm](http://thoenicke.bei.t-online.de/RayConniff/index.htm)

Yo me uno al deseo de su hija, al escuchar esta noche alguna canción de Ray Conniff, tomaré mi familia en brazos, bailaré un poco, me regocijaré de saber que conocí a este gran músico, con la gran diferencia de que estaré *dancing with tears in my eyes*, en otras palabras, bailando con lágrimas en mis ojos. También contaré que Ray fue una gran persona, un músico inigualable, por lo tanto mantendré su memoria viva. Gracias, Ray. Gracias por toda la alegría que nos has dado. Un hasta luego es suficiente. 12-11-2002.

*On 19th November he sent me the above tribute and wrote in an email: Dear Manfred: I wrote an article about Ray titled: Tributo a Ray Conniff (A tribute to Ray Conniff) which was published in a local newspaper here in my city Mérida on November 16, 2002. Many people read the article. This is a city of about 300 thousand people.*

### Homenagem

Alô amigos, Estava pensando que talvez pudéssemos fazer uma homenagem ao grande Ray Conniff, estou sem imaginação, algum de vocês teria alguma sugestão? Como nos faríamos representar em seus funerais? Como o Brasil faria presença?

Acho que ele é mais do que merecedor, afinal, pelo menos no meu caso, sua música me acompanha desde os meus 12 anos de idade. Também, o Brasil é o seu maior mercado, não é possível que fiquemos alheios a esse pesaroso acontecimento.

Mas não devemos ficar tristes, se ele não poderá nos apresentar novas músicas, certamente os anjos farão agora o seu coral para que, junto com seu trombone, Deus também possa apreciar o que nos embalou por quase 50 anos.

Um forte abraço,

Péricles D Maldonado (15/10/2002)

### Saudade

*Elias, Deus levou nosso maestro para tocar no céu, fica um vazio enorme de ter assistido apenas um show em Santo Angelo no ano passado, tinha esperança de vê-lo novamente, mas Deus se antecipou e o levou, minha filhinha de quatro anos que pouco entende o que ocorreu, mas gosta de suas musicas.*

*deuis*

*José Leopoldo Alves de MOURA(Zeca) 14/10/2002*

### Fallecimiento de Mr. Ray Conniff

Estimado Sr. Elias Ramos Gaia:

Siento mucho el fallecimiento del Sr. Ray Conniff, hoy ha sido difundida la noticia a nivel mi país, México. Hago una plegaria para que su alma descansa en paz y nuestro Señor lo reciba en su gloria. A usted le doy mi más sentido pesame y hagalo extensivo a la familia del Sr. Conniff. Atentamente un fanático de la música del Sr. Conniff desde 1959 en mi ciudad natal Paraiso, Tabasco, México.

Manuel Alejandro Pérez.

14/10/2002

### SAUDADES

*Olá,*

*Sou fã de Ray Conniff há muitos anos ....pois tenho 55 anos de idade e realmente ele era espetacular... Gostaria de fazer parte desse Fã club. Me informe o q preciso fazer..... Vai minha indignação pelo fato da pouca divulgação sobre a morte desse maestro especial.... Quero lhe dizer tb q da ultima turner aqui no Brasil sua ultima apresentação foi aqui na minha cidade de Santos-SP*

*E como sempre fui assistir.....foi um espetáculo...aplaudido de pé ...o q já era esperado.....*

*Abraços ..... Auri 14/10/2002*

### Apreciado Elias:

He visto tres publicaciones efectuadas en Brasil, incluso unas declaraciones tuyas. Creo que es muy injusto el mundo del espectáculo, aún cuando Ray pudiera tener, como dice, un carácter especial. Creo que sería bueno que los fans rindamos un homenaje a este extraordinario músico que marcó una época. Sería bueno que un día a designar, a una misma hora todos los fans pongamos en nuestras casas un tema interpretado por RAY, por ejemplo Besame Mucho u otro. Creo que sería un recordatorio que Ray merece. Sería bueno que ello esté organizado por Manfred para todo el mundo. Bueno Elias si le parece transmita esto a Manfred, ya sabe mis problemas con el inglés. Como siempre le mando un cordial saludo y un estrecho abrazo. Miguel Fortunato 14/10/2002

*Hola Elías,*

*Muy triste por la noticia sobre Ray. Ahora, el vivirá por siempre. Rezaré por su alma.*

*Mis condolencias.*

*Fuerte abrazo, Daniel Gularte 14/10/2002*

Sehr geehrter Herr Thönicke,

aus der Presse erfuhr ich, dass Ray Conniff verstorben ist. Das bewegt mich sehr, war seine besondere Musik mir in meinen "jungen" Jahren - bzw. in den 60ern vor allem - treuer Begleiter, Aufmunterer, Tröster. Ja, Erinnerungen kommen hoch...! Mir ist es ein Bedürfnis, Ihnen aus dem traurigen Anlass heute einfach zu schreiben. Wem gegenüber sollte ich sonst meine Gefühle mitteilen? Ihnen wird es nicht anders gehen, auch Sie werden sicherlich trauern, kannten Sie Ray doch persönlich. Heute Abend will ich einige Platten auflegen - in Gedenken und mit Dankbarkeit, dass es "ihn" gab! Ganz herzliche Grüße, Uwe Strauch, Berlin (16.10.2002)

*Lieber Manfred,*

*ich hoffe, dass Du in diesen düsteren Tagen einigermaßen über die Runden kommst. Ich kann es immer noch nicht glauben, dass Ray nicht mehr unter uns weilt. Seine Musik wird uns alle wohl um Längen überleben, aber der Mensch, der hinter diesen einzigartigen Klängen steckte, hinterlässt eben doch eine schmerzliche Lücke. Es ist eigenartig, im Moment kann ich seine Musik nicht hören, es geht mir zu tief. Dabei habe ich ihn nicht einmal persönlich gekannt, aber er war eben doch ein dominanter Punkt in unserem Leben. Und aus den vielen Videos hat man doch immer wieder gespürt, dass Ray ein äußerst sympathischer, bescheidener und angenehmer Mensch war. Irgendwie war er für mich fast so etwas wie ein zweiter Vater. Und Du hast so viel persönlich mit ihm zu tun gehabt, dass diese Zeit für Dich besonders schlimm ist.*

*Mit herzlichen Grüßen, Christian Haab*

*Ebnat-Kappel, Schweiz (17. 10.02)*

Manfred,

I know during this time you have probably received a lot of mail about Ray's death. I felt compelled to write. It is one of the ways I can deal with the sadness I feel about it. I knew down through the years that at sometime I would have to deal with this. His music was part of my life since 1968 when my sister first bought one of his albums and brought it home and played it. It was, *It Must Be Him*, and I was instantly hooked on the music and the Conniff sound. It angers me that my local paper, a large American city newspaper, did not print his obituary. I wrote to the editor about it but I have yet to get back a reply. That same week they published a half page article about Brittany Spears' younger sister trying to break into show business but no article about Ray Conniff, an American music icon and legend. I guess it is a sad reflection of the times we now live in. I do hope Sony music will release a tribute album but that is probably wishful thinking considering how shoddy they have treated their Easy Listening artists down through the years. A CD of unreleased rare material and singles would also be nice. I wrote to Sony last week but I have not heard anything back. The last couple of letters I sent to them went unanswered. You would think with all the money he made for Columbia/Sony they would have put in a memorial page in *Billboard* for him but I did not see one. I saw just a quarter page article about him.

There are so many things I wish Ray would have done in his career. Three things come to mind. First, I wish he would have done some type of television appearances and more concerts across the United States but he never did. I guess he and his promoters thought his biggest audiences were outside the States. After the early 1970s, he rarely performed in the United States. Second, I wish he would have recorded an album of Dixieland favorites. Whenever he got his old buddies together at concerts and did this style of music, it brought the house down. I guess Sony felt there was no audience for it. Third, I wish he would have recorded an album of inspirational or Christian music. He sure had the talent and chorus for it to have been a great album. Just listen to his recording of *You'll Never Walk Alone*.

I guess at this point, all the fans can do is keep writing to Sony and others and encourage them to keep Ray's recordings available to the public and hope new generations of people will discover what a musical genius he was. I also hope the Conniff family will continue to work to keep his vision and memory alive, much like the family of Percy Faith did with him.

Thanks for keeping us informed during this sad time.  
Take care,

Marty Wagers, Indianapolis, USA

*Dear Manfred*

*RAY CONNIFF Nov.6th 1916--Oct.12th 2002. Thank you for the music. It brought all us friends together.Need we say more.*

*Bob&Ros Gregory Bristol England (20th October 2002)*

Dear Manfred,

Just a brief letter on Ray's 86th birthday, today 6/11/02. I wrote to Vera and Tamara a long letter how I lost Ray's music and found it again and the fan club. For you personally it must be a very great loss plus not being able to attend the funeral service. I rang our national radio station to a music programme from 3:30 om to 5 pm and they mentioned Ray's passing and played three tracks of his music. I think Ray was quoted one time that he hoped that there would be a place in the trombone section in the Big Orchestra in the Big Sky.

Best regards and God bless,

Patrick Moore, Ireland

Dear Manfred,

The memorial service for Ray was a very beautiful tribute. It was a typical catholic mass which started at 10:45 and finished 11:25, including the speeches, Tamara said some grateful words to the Brazilian fans in English. The ceremony was taped by National Geographic channel. I decided not to take photos as in my personal opinion it was not appropriate to do so.

Manoel Poladian told me that he intends to bring the Ray Conniff orchestra again to Brazil next year conducted by Tamara Conniff, (he is trying to convince her to do that). Another news from Poladian is that probably next year we will have finally released on CD last year's live concert! Let's keep our fingers crossed.

Take care, Elias (11-11-2002)

*I am not a member of "The Ray Conniff Fan Club," but perhaps I should be.*

*I just wanted to write an e mail as I am living a serene evening listening to one of my many Ray Conniff albums. I was very upset to hear of his passing. I am 35 and have grown up with Ray's music. After buying a couple of his albums years ago and listening, I realized what an influence Ray was on American society. His music surrounded almost every setting imaginable. You went shopping, you heard him. You listened to "easy listening" stations, you heard him. You went to mature parties, you heard him. Not many people in my age group think about this and, instead, take for granted a very distinctive sound and style. I equate Ray with many fine designers. He could take a basic concept, like "the standard" and style it to where it was all his, as if he invented it.*

*I now have most of his records and have become quite a fan. Nothing can calm me or make me as happy as a Ray Conniff fox trot. I'm very into the "older stuff" and the "singers-with-the-band." It was such a distinctive and, now, almost cliche sound. But Ray was the original and deserves the credit.*

*I was very sad to hear of his passing, but very glad to have experienced his talent. He'll be greatly missed!*

*Eric Oliver (country unknown)*



Dear Manfred, You will be pleased to hear that here in North of England we have had 2 tribute programmes to Ray on local radio stations. The first being on Monday 14th October on Frank Woppatt music programme which is broadcast across 10 local stations in the North and reaching into Southern Scotland. This was followed by another tribute programme made by Elizabeth Catlow on Radio Lancashire's Sunday evening programme that was transmitted October 20th. Both shows were of approximately 20 -30 minutes in length and each was preceded by a short resume of Ray's musical career and his contribution to the world of music in the 2nd half of the 20th century.

Earlier in the year Frank Woppatt had broadcast a special 1/2 hour programme of Ray's music after being gingered along by me to play at least some recording of Rays during his programme, which is 3 hours in length every Monday evening.

I know many fans of Ray's listen to both of these programmes and were very pleased that he got a good air time in tribute to his services to music.

Please pass to Vera and Tamara, from all Ray's fans in the North of England (The Boys in the North) and Scotland, on this day when they say their farewells to Ray, the message that our thoughts and prayers of support are with them and we shall never forget Ray and his wonderful music and the great pleasure and joy he has given to so many thousands of his fans. We shall continue to hold you in our thoughts and offer our sincere condolences at this time of great sorrow. We all share your loss and hope by spreading that burden we can all in some way benefit from the mutual support.

Once again, yours sincerely, on behalf of the boys in the north, Big Bill Entwistle (Burnley, Lancashire, UK)

*condolencias por la perdida de el rey de la musica.. los corazones enamorados lloraran lagrimas de sangre por la perdida del rey... Descance en paz.. con dios.. el rey*

*Enrique Garcia Fernandez (Country unknown, email received on 14th October 2002)*

Lieber Manfred Thönicke!

Erst heute habe ich durch einem guten Freund vom Ableben meines musikalischen Idols Ray Conniff erfahren.

Ich empfinde, - so wie viele Fans, die sich von seiner Person und seines Schaffens begeistern ließen, tiefe Betroffenheit.

Man will es einfach nicht wahr haben, daß so eine große Persönlichkeit einfach nicht mehr da ist und durch nichts nur annähernd zu ersetzen ist.

Ich kann mir gut vorstellen, daß Sie nun sehr viel zu tun haben in Bezug auf die zahlreichen Reaktionen der trauernden Fans. Ich beteilige mich an der Anteilnahme am Schmerz um den Verlust den die Familie Conniff zu tragen hat.

Wolf-Dieter Magerl (Vienna, Austria, 25.10.2002)

Lieber Herr Thoenicke,

mit großer Bestürzung habe ich während meines Urlaubes vom Tode Ray Conniffs erfahren. In tiefer Trauer bekunde ich seiner Familie mein Mitgefühl! Mit seiner unnachahmlichen Musik wird Ray Conniff für uns immer lebendig bleiben.

Danke!!!! Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Gerhard Fobbe (29.10.2002, Hamburg, Germany)

*Hi Manfred*

*Thank you for keeping us all up to date with the information regarding Ray's*

*obituaries and funeral. It was a shame that you could not attend. I hope that your wife's health has improved.*

*Your e-mail with news of Ray's demise was a great shock for me and an even*

*greater shock to learn that it had been the result of a fall. My condolences go to Vera, Tamara and Jimmy and all Ray's family and friends and indeed to all his fans who must have been as upset as I.*

*It seems hard to come to terms with the fact that Ray won't be around anymore. Of course, he will always be around as long as we go on playing his music but I can't believe there will be no new music for us but we have been spoiled by the fact that Ray's output has been so prolific for such a long time.*

*I have been listening to his music for about 40 years ever since I heard 'Smoke Gets In Your Eyes' (Orch & Chorus) when I was a child. This sound has never ceased to captivate me. I was a member of the first fan club for some years then spent some time in the wilderness not knowing of the existence of the current one. Your hard work as President has been so appreciated by us all as well as the other contributors.*

*After a great concert at Bristol in the seventies, which started and ended with 'Apple Blossom Time' - simply because he had run out of encores - I had the opportunity to shake hands and have a brief chat with Ray. Although he had worked hard during the performance he still had the time, energy and thought to do this. It was a moment I shall always appreciate and cherish.*

*I didn't feel like playing any Conniff for a few days after hearing the sad news but when I did, it was in my car, from a tape I had compiled. I just switched on the cassette player and the strains of "Heaven, I'm in heaven" from 'Cheek to Cheek' started to play. I smiled imagining that was the place where now Ray is probably penning manuscripts.*

*Indeed Conniff's music, for me, has always come from there!*

*Best wishes, Alan Murphy*

*(October 22, 2002, Wales, UK)*

Dear Manfred,

*Many thanks for your detailed e-mail. Regrettably could not get onto a flight from South Africa which would have arrived in L.A. timeously for the funeral service. I did send a wreath and will send Vera and family a letter of condolences.*

*I still cannot comprehend Rays passing. I have been an ardent fan since the age of 5 years. I am now 55 years old. In my obituary to Ray in our major Daly Newspaper The Star I wrote as follows: "Ray you were a legend in the Music Industry. You brought music alive with your inimitable style, which never dated." He left a truly remarkable legacy, which legacy I'm sure will posthumously grow from strength to strength. Keep up the excellent work Manfred.*

Regards,

*Yours, Ken Gampel (22-10-2002, South Africa)*

Dear Manfred,

It was really amazing and so emotional reading Conniff's eulogy by Tamara. I just only can imagine to Ray reading her daughter's letter, each word reveal how deep her love to him is and how proud will be Ray for it.

No doubts, he was a special man not only for his legacy of music. I always saw him as a simple person, and you don't need to meet him in person to know that, you can feel it, like a real genius.

Ray was my first inspiration to begin with music, he always is when I am playing my sax.

Thanks & kind regards,

Daniel Gularte (Brazil, 21/10/2002)

Dear Manfred,

I was deeply saddened to learn of Ray's passing away.

Like millions of his fans, I took to his music from the moment I first heard it. I have played his records, audio-cassettes and CDs over and over for more than 40 years and enjoy his music as much today as I did then.

Tonight, there's a new star in Heaven. I'm sure Louis kept a place in his trombone section for that star.

Brian Warburton (20th October 2002, UK)

Dear Manfred,

*Just a quick note to let you know (in case you don't know by now) that our friend Wendell did a tribute to Ray in his site - It's a 3 min. video with pictures of Ray and music, suggested by myself: "Here Today And Gone Tomorrow", Ray's own composition. It's still hard to believe Ray is gone - I spent yesterday night watching those videos you sent to me many years ago and I felt a bit better, because watching him alive and happy helped me not thinking about the sad ceremony that was happening at the same time.*

*Best regards, Jorge L.D. Iorio (Brazil, 18th Oct. 2002)*

Notes by Manfred:

Wendell's tribute page has this URL:

**[www.swonderful.hpg.ig.com.br/index.htm](http://www.swonderful.hpg.ig.com.br/index.htm)**, it is completely in Portuguese and this way serves especially Ray's Brazilian audience.

Jorge has created a wonderful Internet site that features all the lyrics sung by the Ray Conniff Singers at

**<http://igspot.ig.com.br/connifflyrics/>**

Both are well worth a visit!

Dear Manfred,

Thanks for the info about the funeral services we will go in on line and have a look.

We have just had a phone call from Grant James of BBC South, who will be doing a tribute to Ray on the 'Big Band' programme tonight. He told us that he will be playing an Artie Shaw track followed by Cafe da Manha. Also on Monday night, as a further tribute to Ray, he will be playing tracks from

s' Wonderful on his 'Showtime' programme. Regards,

Les & Barbara Peckham, UK (18th October 2002)

Lieber Herr Thoenicke!

Ich möchte - durch den Umweg über Sie- allen Angehörigen, Freunden und Verehrern von Ray Conniff mein aufrichtiges Beileid zum Tod dieses großartigen Künstlers aussprechen.

Ein weiterer großartiger Orchesterleiter wurde von uns genommen. Ray Conniff hat eine RIESIGE Lücke im Firmament der großen Orchester hinterlassen. Diese wird NIE zu schließen sein!

SEINE UNVERGESSLICHE MUSIK ABER BLEIBT FÜR IMMER! SIE WIRD ALLE SEINE FANS UND BEWUNDERER TRÖSTEN.

Ich denke, das ist auch SEIN Wunsch gewesen.

Alles Gute für Sie und Ihre vielen Ray Conniff-Freunde aus aller Welt. Bitte machen Sie weiter mit Ihrer Liebe zu Ray Conniff und seiner unvergesslichen Musik und einzigartigem Sound.

Günter Krüger, Berlin

James Last-Fan und -Sammler

I know it'll be very difficult that Conniff's Family could read this mail. Many years ago I wrote a letter to the Ray Conniff's Fan Club. In that letter I wrote and I explained that my inspiration to become a musician was Ray CONNIF. Now many years have passed. Now I'm professional musician (organist at the Anglican Church of Mexico). And I cannot forget that because of Conniff's music I'm here. We'll never forget you... Thanks for all your talent!!! God bless you Ray!!!

Christ Church Parish Mexico City

Anglican/Episcopal

*Hello Manfred!*

*Yesterday I was in the studio of the Radio "Echo Of Moscow". From 1.00 A.M. until 3.00 A.M. we played Ray Conniff music, speaking about his bio and I answer for question receiving by Internet. From 3.00 A.M. until 4.00 A.M. Ray Conniff music was on air non stop.*

*On November we'll made another radio program dedicated to Ray as jazz musician, arranger and composer of Swing Era.*

*Also yesterday I bought the Britain's newspaper for Europe THE GUARDIAN, October 15 2002 with article about Ray with large photo of him.*

*All my best,*

*Igor Karpov (Moscow, 16th October 2002)*

*Hello,*

*I would like to say how sorry I am to read of Ray's passing. I live in Edinburgh, Scotland and I saw the Ray Conniff singers perform here many years ago and it was a fantastic show. I well remember the chemistry between Ray & Skeets Herfurt, it was like a mutual admiration society and the personalities of the two men was amazing. Please pass my thoughts to his family at this time.*

*Karl Johansen (16th October 2002)*

*Dear Manfred:*

*My sincere condolences for Ray Conniff's death. I have been so sad these days I don't have words to explain it.*

*He leaves a Legacy of music, of course, but knowing he is not longer with us, affect me too much.*

*I know God will have a place to him, for doing to the millions fans around the world with his music so happy.*

*The only for me is to speak about his music, as always I have done. Again, my sincere condolences.*

*Euro José Hernández (Venezuela, Oct. 16, 2002)*

*Dear Mr Thoenicke:*

*We are very sad here in El Salvador, Central America. I listened to his music when I was child, I grow up with Ray Conniff's Music. I never forget this wonderful music. Please tell to Vera & Tamara Conniff my condolences, but Ray's Music will live in our lives. From San Salvador, El Salvador. Sincerely....*

*RAFAEL OLIVARES (16/10/2002)*

*Liebe Freunde aus Hamburg,*

*Es ist kaum zu erfassen, dass so eine Persönlichkeit wie Ray Conniff leider endlich entschlafen ist! Auf jeden Fall vergrößert das nur seinen Wert als Mythos der Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts.*

*Möge seine Musik für immer so unsterblich bleiben wie seine Seele, sein Geist.*

*Mit herzlichen Grüßen, Jose Moreno (Bracelona, Spain)*

*Dear Manfred,*

*I just wanted to be among the many to express grief and condolence at Ray Conniff's passing.*

*Yesterday was our Columbus Day; so I paid my homage to an "easy-listening" explorer by playing two of his best albums: RHAPSODY IN RHYTHM and WORLD OF HITS. I was glad to see that ABC TV's Evening News commentator -- who referred to Conniff as a mere "jazz musician" two days before -- corrected the gaffe on last night's obit.*

*Thank you for your past and continued dedication to the man, his music and the musical culture Conniff had helped to inspire.*

*Best wishes, Joseph Lanza (USA, 15th October 2002)*

*Hello Manfred,*

*I'm Evgeni Patent, one of the Ray Conniff fan club's member. This morning I was terribly shocked when received an e-mail from my uncle (also a big fan) with this sad news. This is a very big loss for all of us!*

*Would you please pass my sincere condolences to the Family of Ray Conniff and of course to all members of the club!*

*Through his Wonderful music he will Always live in our memories, because*

*Memories are made of this...*

*Sincerely yours,*

*Evgeni (Holland, 15th October 2002)*

*Dear Manfred,*

*Ray wrote himself the words that best describe what WE all are feeling right now. They are from his song "Here Today And Gone Tomorrow":*

*"...Each night I say a little prayer that when HE takes me, you'll be there. Together once again we'll be, I'll live again my memory... That's life, that's life, you take the joy, you take the sorrow... That's life, that's life, you're here today and gone tomorrow... My life has crumbled since you've gone, but somehow I must carry on, the pain I feel I can't describe, I can't forget though I've tried...."*

*Ray Conniff will never be forgotten, he'll live forever, in our minds and specially in our hearts. Yours, Jorge Carpes (Copa Cabana, Brazil, 15th October 2002)*

*Now I know why Heaven cries, how is it possible that a man who made so many happy dies? I don't understand that. But God must love him too and wants a good music entertainer at his side. So goodbye farewell auf wiedersehn adieu Mr Conniff I hope to meet you again, wherever you are. Thank you very very much.*

*There are something written in Swedish newspapers today about you and a picture.*

*Regards, Leif from Sweden (15/10/2002)*



Dear Manfred, You must be run off your feet with all the info etc that you are receiving, we know exactly what you are going through, because we had the same response when Guy Mitchell left us.

Just to let you know that today there is an obituary in 'The Guardian' newspaper which has a 10" x 6" colour picture of Ray performing from 1989. Also another obituary is in 'The Daily Telegraph' with a black and white picture.

On National BBC Radio 2, Ed Stewart received 3 e-mails, including ours, and he gave a tribute and played 'As Time Goes By'. We have received an e-mail from BBC 2 Desmond Carrington's producer, to advise that he will be doing a tribute next Sunday, sometime between 1pm and 3pm (UK time).

Bill Rennells on BBC South read out our e-mail and will also be doing a tribute next Sunday evening. Keith Skues on BBC East did a really nice tribute last night. He played a half hour interview that he did with Ray in 1966 for the BBC World Service. He also dedicated a further half hour of his programme to Ray's music.

We have recorded the Ed Stewart piece and hope to get tapes of all the others. In due course we will pass them on to you.

We understand how busy you must be so there is no need to answer this e-mail.

Love, Barbara & Les Peckham (15/10/2002)

I am so sorry to hear of Ray Conniff's death. My Mother always played his albums. As a teenager, I groaned at THAT kind of music ! However, it wasn't long before I was the one buying his albums, tapes and CD's !! I was especially jealous of his wife shown on some of the album covers. She was so pretty! It's hard to imagine that we're all getting older but I'll always have fond memories when I hear / play a Ray Conniff arrangement ! Take care, Chantel

(Country and family name unknown, sent on October 15, 2002)

*Dear Manfred*

*I was so sad having read your e mail announcing Ray's death. Like millions of people in their 50's I grew up with his music after I was introduced to it by my father and still love every minute of it. I am so lucky to have a fair number of his records in my collection and they will be all the more precious right now.*

*You will have had many people contacting you I am sure so I have kept this brief. Regards, Jim Wilkinson*

*Chippenham, England (Oct. 14, 2002)*

Amen to that, Manfred. We will be striving to make as much of his music available as we can.

Mark Desman, Senior Art Director, Collectables Records Corp (14/10/2002)

*Note by Manfred: Check out their website (www.oldies.com) regularly and keep your fingers crossed!*

On the passing of Ray Conniff, I find myself recalling all the joy his music brought into my life and the lives of countless others.

His life and legacy can be measured any number of ways -- by popularity, by uniqueness, by sheer staying power. But I would sum up his contribution this way: Ray Conniff put two new words in the dictionary - not in just the English dictionary, but in every dictionary of every tongue on earth. Those words are "Bah" and "Dah." And to Ray's great credit, they both mean happiness.

Fondly, Bill Martin (USA, October 14, 2002)

*Dear Mr. Thoenicke:*

*I am very sad for Mr. Conniff death, today in my country Mexico the bad news was spread and many people that love Mr. Conniff music are crying.*

*God bless him and keep his soul in heaven.*

*And for you, my deepest sympathy extensively for Mr. Conniff's family.*

*Best regards, Manuel Alejandro Perez, Mr. Conniff's fan since 1959 at Paraiso, Tabasco, Mexico. (14/10/2002)*

*Hi Manfred,*

*I have just opened and read your email. It has hit me with a shock. I don't know what to say, other than, if you are speaking with or emailing Vera or Tamara, please pass on my very sincere condolences to them. My thoughts and love are with them at this time. Thanks you for passing on the news.*

*Very best regards Manfred,*

*Chris Couldrey (Australia, 14/20/2002)*

Note: Chris runs the Australian tribute page on the Internet. The URL is

**[www2.nextcentury.com.au/chrisc/index.htm](http://www2.nextcentury.com.au/chrisc/index.htm)**

Lieber Herr Thönicke,

Ihre Nachricht dass RC gestorben ist hat mich sehr erschüttert. Ich habe mich über Jahrzehnte mit seiner Musik und seiner Person identifiziert und er war sicher einer der letzten großen Musiklegenden unserer Zeit. In WDR 4 kam heute morgen ein Nachruf auf ihn mit der Todesursache und seinem Lied "'S Wonderful". Ich bin sehr, sehr traurig. Mit vielen herzlichen Grüßen

Elmar Nobis aus Gummersbach

(Germany, 14.10.2002)

*Dear Manfred, I was very sad to hear of Ray's passing and my condolences go to his family and all of those close to him. His sound has lifted me from my earliest childhood memories, and will always do so. If I had to choose one word to describe the music, that word would be "Happiness". With fond memories of a great talent.*

*Steve Clark, Gloucester, UK (14th Oct. 2002)*

# *Ray Conniff*

1916 - 2002

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want*

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths  
of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:  
for thou art with me: thy rod  
and thy staff they comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me  
in the presence of mine enemies:  
thou annointest my head with oil;  
my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life; and I will dwell  
in the house of the Lord for ever.*

*Psalm 23*

Donations in Ray's memory may be made to:  
THE RAY CONNIFF MUSIC FOUNDATION  
P.O.BOX 461750  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90046