

's Conniff

The International Ray Conniff Fan Club Magazine No. 1/2003 (March 2003)

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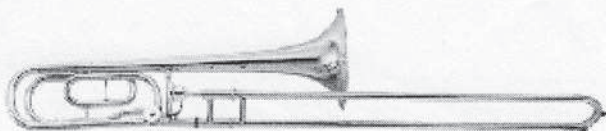
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Willkommen

zur März-2003-Ausgabe von 's *Conniff*. Es ist allerdings nicht die erste Ausgabe, die ich in diesem Jahre fertiggestellt habe. Im Augenblick wird eine Spezialausgabe gedruckt, die viele nach Rays Tod erschienene Artikel enthält. Das *Hamburger Abendblatt* ist ebenso dabei wie auch Zeitungen aus Lateinamerika. Des Weiteren enthält die Ausgabe mit dem Titel „'s *Always Conniff*“ Tamaras Grabrede und die von Sänger David Theriault. Neben vielen Kondolenzbriefen aus aller Welt beinhaltet die Gedenkausgabe auch das meines Wissens letzte Foto von Ray, welches zu seinen Lebzeiten in einer Zeitung abgedruckt wurde. Darauf ist er zu sehen, wie er Patienten im Zentrum für an Schlaganfall Erkrankte in Palm Springs bei einem „Sing-Along“ dirigiert. Am Flügel hinter ihm ist Johnny Mann zu sehen. Ich weiß noch nicht genau, wann ich die 68seitige Ausgabe werde versenden können, aber auf alle Fälle möchte ich John Gay und seinem Assistenten Tim Drake dafür herzlich danken, dass ich dieses Projekt realisieren konnte.

Kurz nachdem ich die Arbeit daran abgeschlossen hatte, erreichte mich noch mehr Material, welches gut in den Band gepasst hätte; ich werde es dosiert in zukünftigen Ausgaben des Clubmagazins bringen. Einige Kondolenzbekundigungen aus einem so genannten „Chat Forum“ im Internet befinden sich in dieser Ausgabe.

Gut einen Monat vor seinem Tode gab Ray ein Telefoninterview, welches für eine insgesamt dreistündige Radiosendung verwendet wurde. Der Interviewer und Radiomoderator Jim Stone versprach mir eine Aufzeichnung der drei Folgen, die mich jedoch bislang nicht erreichte. Ich bin sehr gespannt darauf.

Ich wurde in jüngster Vergangenheit oft gefragt, ob es den *Ray Conniff Fan Club* unter meiner Regie weiterhin geben würde, und die Antwort darauf ist einfach, denn sie lautet „ja, natürlich!“. Ich kann nur nicht versprechen, dass ich pro Jahr weiterhin vier Ausgaben des Magazins werde produzieren können. Das hat nichts mit einem Mangel an Material zu tun, sondern eher damit, dass ich beruflich anders eingebunden bin und weniger Freizeit habe als früher.

Bislang haben sich 49 Fans aus vielen Ländern für die *Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention* in Berlin angemeldet. Vom 16. bis 18. Mai werden wir Ray gedenken. Zufälligerweise war er genau vor 21 Jahren in Berlin und nahm dort sein Album „Musik für Millionen“ auf. Wir haben ein wunderbares Programm, auf das man sich freuen kann. Dazu gehört eine Führung durch den Reichstag in englischer und deutscher Sprache. Am Sonnabendabend werden wir beim Dinner in der „Brasserie am Gendarmenmarkt“ „unsere“ Musik spielen. Noch immer kann man sich anmelden, obwohl ich nicht dafür garantieren kann, dass auch für Nachzügler der Sondertarif für die Übernachtungen gilt, der bis Ende Januar für alle diejenigen garantiert werden konnte, die eine Anzahlung leisteten.

In dieser Ausgabe gibt's eine weitere Folge von Serge Elhaïks *Ray Conniff Story*. Dieses Mal beleuchtet er das letzte Drittel des Jahres 1963 und das Album „Speak to Me of Love“. Serge hat übrigens ein hervorragendes Buch über Paul Mauriat herausgebracht. Es ist sehr aufwendig produziert und lohnt sich durchaus auch für diejenigen, die kaum Französisch verstehen können. Es macht einfach Spaß, in diesem Buch mit seinen vielen Bildern und Zeitdokumenten herumzublättern.

In der Rubrik über neue CDs findet man eine neue Zusammenstellung mit dem Titel „Love Songs“. Diese CD ist auch bei uns zu haben. Sie enthält einen Titel („Love at First Sight“), der bislang auf CD nicht in Stereo zu haben war. Hoffen wir, dass es weitere ähnliche CDs in diesem Jahr geben wird.

Falls jemand wissen möchte, welche Aufnahme von Ray auf welchem Album zu finden ist und wer zudem noch den Namen des Komponisten und den Songtext haben möchte, dem sei eine neue Internetseite empfohlen, die Jorge L. D. Iório kreiert hat. (URL: <http://igspot.ig.com.br/connifflyrics/>) Einen „Link“ dorthin findet man sowohl von Dougs als auch meiner *Ray Conniff*-Seite.

Nachdem Ray verstarb, durchsuchte ich fast täglich das Internet nach Nachrichten und Artikeln über ihn und seine Musik. Interessanterweise fand ich auch anderes, nämlich Interviews - sowohl aus Großbritannien als auch aus Brasilien -, die ich nicht kannte. Vier davon sind in dieser Ausgabe im Original abgedruckt.

Hier noch eine Nachricht für deutsche Fans, die gerne CDs aus den USA (insbesondere vom *Collectables* Label) haben möchten. Ich bekam kürzlich Post von Herrn Wagner aus Berlin, der Folgendes schrieb:

Hallo Herr Thönicke,

ja es gibt uns noch, aber Kataloge sind leider zu teuer geworden für immer weniger Kunden. Unser Internetauftritt soll bald fertig sein, aber auch der kostet viel Geld. Collectables CDs führen wir fast alle am Lager, und wir bestellen weiterhin alle zwei Wochen in Amerika. Ich kann Ihnen und allen Fans gerne eine Ray Conniff Liste zufaxen. Bitte Fax Nr. mitteilen. Vielen Dank und alles Gute, Albert Wagner (L&P Musics, Hardenbergstr.4-5, 10623 Berlin, Tel: 030-31188-476 (Albert Wagner) -472(Laden), Fax: 030-31188-490, E-Mail: info@lpmusics.de

Es geht z.Zt. das Gerücht um, dass sich *Abril Music* aus dem Musikgeschäft zurückziehen wolle. Ob es stimmt, weiß ich nicht. Wer jedoch Rays brasilianische CDs noch nicht besitzt, sollte schleunigst versuchen, sie zu bekommen.

So viel für dieses Mal. Ich freue mich auf das Wiedersehen mit vielen Fans in Berlin Mitte Mai. Herzliche Grüße, Ihr / Euer / Dein



Welcome

to edition # 1/2003 of 's *Conniff*. Actually, it is not the first one I have produced this year. The other one is a 68 page memorial edition which is currently being printed and bound in John Gay's print shop in Wales, and I believe it will take a couple of weeks or maybe months until I will be able to mail copies to all members of the *Ray Conniff Fan Club*. It is aptly titled " 's *Always Conniff* " to pay homage to Ray. (Its front cover is shown on page 21.) It is not just a collection of articles and obituaries from around the world. In addition, it will feature the last picture taken by Ray in the Palm Springs Stroke Center during a sing-along, with Johnny Mann at the piano. Ray directed about 3 or 4 songs, one of them was "It's The Talk Of The Town". (The picture was published in a newspaper named "The Desert Sun", and I paid the photographer \$ 20.00 for the copyright to reproduce it. She kindly let me have a copy in colour.) Furthermore, you will find Tamara Conniff's eulogy and David Theriault's funeral speech, tributes from fans, and condolence letters, and more in the special edition. After all 68 pages were completed, I received much more material from various corners of the world, such as the messages from an Internet chat forum, which are featured in this edition, and photocopies of obituaries from many countries. More of these articles and condolence letters will be featured in future editions of 's *Conniff*.

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. I am still waiting for a tape that Jim promised me, but judging from what people who could pick up the show on the radio or Internet wrote to me, it must have been great. At the moment, I can only let you know the details as featured in this edition.

Recently, I have often been asked whether the club will continue to exist. The answer is plain and simple: Yes! I will do my very best to keep it alive, as well as the memory of Ray and his music. However, I do not know whether I will be able to produce 4 editions of the club magazine per year.

So far, 49 fans from many countries have registered for the *Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention* in Berlin. They are from Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, the UK, the USA, Denmark, Spain, Ireland and Germany. It is still possible to register even though the special low rate available for people who did so before the end of January and paid a deposit, cannot be guaranteed. During the weekend of 16th to 18th May

wrote a wonderful tribute, which you'll find in the special memorial edition mentioned above. Only lately, he sent me this picture of the headstone of Ray's grave: The inscription says "Ray Conniff November 6, 1916 October 13, 2002", above the notes there is a picture of a trombone, and the notes are from the score of "Somewhere My Love". Next to the flowers there is the statue of a small angel.

want to find out its composer or want to read its lyrics, then please visit a new website on the Internet, the "Ray Conniff Lyrics Homepage" at <http://igspot.ig.com.br/ConniffLyrics/>, webmaster is Jorge L. D. Iório. He did a great job, which must have cost him many, many hours. Please note that composers are listed according to their first names, not family names. This way of filing (e.g. records) is common in Latin countries. By the way, also please note the new URL of Doug Mitchell's official Conniff Page (see last page).

A new compilation CD is titled "Love Songs". The lower black and white photograph on the front cover is taken from its CD leaflet. Its sound is perfect, and for the first time, "Love at First Sight" (Ray's rendition of "Je t'aime ... moi non plus") is featured on CD in stereo. Let's hope for more releases of this kind that feature recordings by Ray previously only released on singles. I also hope that Sony will release some of Ray's quadraphonic albums on their new audio DVD's which can

reproduce 4 discrete channels. And what about a DVD of one of Ray's shows, such as the one from Japan, titled "Always Conniff"? I am of the opinion that the time is right for releases like these.

As said above, the next publication will be a heavyweight, similar to the *Ray Conniff Photo Collection*. Again, I cannot thank John Gay enough for his generosity. My gratitude also goes to his assistant Tim Drake without whose help this project would not be possible.

Some of you kindly sent me material which they probably expected to be featured in this edition. Let me assure all of them that their articles, letters, photos etc. were appreciated and will be featured in future editions.

My sincerest thanks to everybody who contributed to this issue. Best wishes to you all, and especially to Vera and Tamara,



we will remember Ray, and play his music e.g. during dinner on Saturday night at the "Brasserie". By the way, precisely 21 years ago, on 17th May 1982, Ray was in Berlin, too, to record his album "Musik für Millionen". Hopefully, I can come up with a few interesting items to listen to and to watch, such as the Peter Jennings segment from ABC News, which was broadcast a day after Ray had passed away.

During those days when coverage could be found about Ray in all sorts of media, there was an interesting item in a Brazilian newspaper, saying that his rendition of *Somewhere My Love*, which was filmed at the wedding of Liza Minnelli and David Gest, was to be shown on VH-1. (Until then I did not even know it was recorded or filmed.) Later on, in an American newspaper, it said that some disputes with the show's producer Rob Weiss stopped its broadcast. Keep your fingers crossed that it may become available for us fans some time.

One of our newest club members is Don Buchwald. He attended Ray's funeral and also

I hope you will find the items featured in this edition interesting. I am sure you will love to read the part of Serge Elhaik's *Ray Conniff Story* which originally was produced for edition No. 4/2002. By the way, please pay attention to the entry concerning his book about Paul Mauriat, which is fantastic. Ray's promoter of his Brazil tours, Manoel Poladian, also mentioned in a newspaper interview that he was considering a book about Ray. Well, if I had more time, I would love to do that job...

Recently, rumours have had it that *Abril Music* are closing down their business. So far, this has not been confirmed, but if this is true, the question is, what will happen to Ray's 6 albums whose rights they acquired? I had just drawn their attention to one unreleased track ("El Progreso"), and they did like the idea of adding it as a bonus track to a future release, and I was hoping this would become true. Let's wait and see and hope for the best.

If you are looking for a certain song by Ray and do not remember what album it was on, or if you



→ USA / World

Which of the covers would you have preferred? The one on the right was shown on the *Collectables* website on the Internet for a while, and I must confess I was very disappointed to see a sunset rather than the enlarged photo of Vera. However, it turned out to be a draft only. This "2-on-1" CD featuring Ray's albums "JEAN" and "BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER" was scheduled for release on September 24 on *Collectables* COL 7457. Officially, it was postponed until October 15. However, some fans received their copies in the first week of October, already.



→ Brazil

As mentioned in 's Conniff No. 3/2002 already, *Abril Music* (Brazil) are currently releasing a series of compilation CD's titled "UMA NOVA HISTÓRIA". It also includes one by Ray. Here are details of the new CD: "RAY CONNIFF - UMA NOVA HISTÓRIA" (Abril Music 1105054-2, release date was August 12, 2002) Tracks are as follows: *New York, New York / Emoções / Evidências / La Bamba / Unchained Melody / My Way / Besame Mucho / Somewhere My Love / Pense Em Mim / Detalhes / Oh, Pretty Woman / My Heart Will Go On / Chariots Of Fire / Jingle Bells* (All tracks from albums recorded for Abril Music and Universal / PolyGram.)

Note: This CD contains one executable file, which requires a Pentium 266 MHz PC, Windows 95/98 or up, 16MB RAM. This file features Ray's bio (by Vera Conniff and Manfred, updated in July 2002) in Portuguese, song details (composers, lyrics) and recording dates, studios, personnel etc., which makes the purchase of this CD well worth, even though you already have all the songs on various albums.



→ USA

Released in the on September 10, 2002, a CD titled PERSONALIDAD: 20 EXITOS (Sony Discos Inc. 87462), previously released as 20 DE COLECCION*

Tracks are as follows: *De Niña a Mujer / A Taste of Honey / A La Antigua / Nadia's Theme (The Young And The Restless) / Frenesi / I've Got You Under My Skin / Mi Cafetal / Stranger in Paradise / Cuando Calienta el Sol / The Continental / Tico Tico / Besame Mucho / Brazil / Green Eyes / Beyond the Sea / Aquarius & Let The Sunshine In / Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / Midnight Cowboy / Sweet Caroline / My Sweet Lord*

*This selection of tracks became first available in spring 1996 on Sony Latin CDL-81911 / 2-470616. The cover was also used for a CD titled "PERSONALIDAD" (Sony Latin CDB 82074, also released in 1996). This CD featured 12 of the tracks from "20 de Coleccion".

Note: In addition to the flaws of the first *Personalidad* (and *20 de Coleccion*), they boosted the sound level way up which adds a bit of distortion. In other words: This CD is not recommended!

→ Colombia

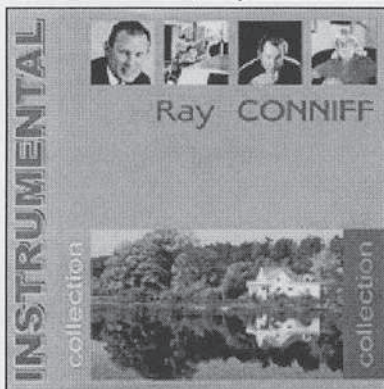
Released on June 17, 2002 on Sony Music: A compilation CD set titled "30 GRANDES EXITOS".

Tracks include: *Brazil / De Niña a Mujer / Green Eyes / Love Story / Cuando Sali de Cuba / Diosito Santo / Caballo Viejo / Mi Cafetal / Siboney / Cuando Calienta El Sol / Don't Cry For Me Argentina / Como Agua Para Chocolate / Volare / The Girl From Ipanema / El Condor Pasa / La Gota Fria / New York New York / Moonlight Serenade / Besame Mucho / Love Theme from "The Godfather"*.

Unfortunately, more details cannot be revealed here at the moment, because it seems the website of Sony Music Colombia is not available any longer. Chances are the set is titled "20" not "30 Grandes Exitos", because only 20 tracks were listen on the Internet. Order No.: Sony Music 503631.

→ Russia

"**INSTRUMENTAL COLLECTION**" is the title of a new compilation CD available in Russia. (This may or may not be a bootleg CD.) Details, such as label and order number are not available at present. The CD features a total of 25 tracks. Songs 1 to 16 are taken from "16 Most Requested Songs", the remaining 9 tracks are from "Ray Conniff's World of Hits":



's Wonderful /
Danke Schoen /
Sometimes I'm
Happy / You Do
Something To Me /
the Way You Look
Tonight / I'd Like
To Teach The
World To Sing /
Love Theme From
"Romeo and
Juliet" (A Time

For Us) / Lara's Theme From " Doctor Zhivago" /
Ravel's Bolero / Love Theme From "Love Story" /
The Way We Were / Love Theme From "The God-
father" / We've Only Just Begun / I Write The
Songs / Just The Way You Are / Emotion & How
Deep Is Your Love / You Light Up My Life / The
Shadow Of Your Smile / Hello, Dolly! / Granada /
Moscow Nights / Alley Cat / Moon River / I Will
Wait For You / Greenfields

It is interesting to note that the small photograph of Ray in the upper right hand corner was taken by yours truly in 2001! It was on the special edition for Ray's 85th birthday. Can anyone solve the mystery how it got into the hands of some CD maker?

→ Colombia

Speaking of "16 Most Requested Songs"...

did you know that one of Ray's first compact discs, a compilation titled "**16 MOST REQUESTED SONGS**" was released with 20 tracks in Colombia? (Sony Music CDC040214). The 4 extra tracks are: **Tico Tico, The White cliffs of Dover, Lisbon Antigua and Autumn**



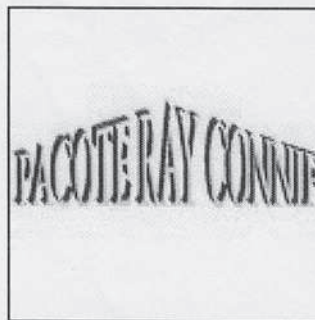
Leaves & Just Walking in the Rain. (Released September 15, 1989.)

A note for fans in Germany (and Europe) who want to obtain e.g. Ray's *Collectables* CD's: Please write to or phone

Mr Albert Wagner
L&P Musics
Hardenbergstr.4-5
10623 Berlin
Phone: 030-31188-476 (Albert Wagner) -472(Laden)
Fax: 030-31188-490
E-Mail: info@lpmusics.de

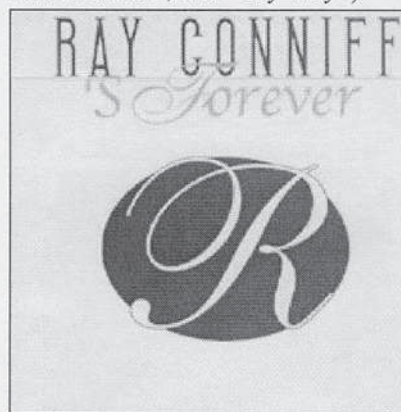
→ Brazil

"**PACOTE**" means "package". This is a 4 CD set released in Brazil by Abril Music featuring Ray's albums "s Christmas", "Live in Rio", "I Love Movies" and "My Way".



→ Brazil

"**S FOREVER** Tracks are as follows: Love Is A Many- Splendored Thing / Besame Mucho / Brazil / El Dia Que Me Quieras / La Mer (Beyond The Sea) / New York, New York / All The Way / I've Got You Under My Skin / My Way / Mack The Knife / Unchained Melody / My Heart Will Go On / Dream A Little Dream Of Me / Somewhere My Love (Tracks are from Ray's Universal albums "Live in Rio", "I Love Movies", and "My Way")



This was the first CD released after Ray passed away. It became available on the *Som Livre* label in November 2002, order No. 2339-2

Liner notes by Tamara Conniff:

These are some of my father's favorite recordings. His sound and spirit shine in every song — from "Mack The Knife" to "Besame Mucho."

While we listen to his music here on earth, he is conducting an orchestra of beautiful angels in heaven. He is now the brightest star in the sky, watching over us.

For my mother and I, for his friends and fans and for countless future generations, his music is forever. We miss you.

Tamara Conniff

→ Russia



Now available in Russia with this cover with Cyrillic letters: **RAY CONNIFF IN MOSCOW** (Same label and order No. as the 1999 CD release: *music boheme* CDBMR 907078 / *Melodiya* MEL CD 60 00453). Released in November 2002.

→ Russia

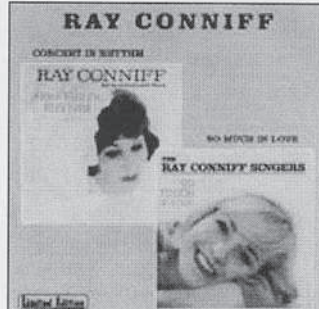
These "2 on 1" CD's became available in Russia in December 2002. They are probably bootlegs:



This one features Ray's first two Christmas albums, **CHRISTMAS WITH CONNIFF** and **WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS**.

This once features two more gold award winning albums, **CONCERT IN RHYTHM** and **SO MUCH IN LOVE**.

Thanks to Igor Karpov from Russia who provided all the information on the Russian CD's-



Other albums recently released in Russia include: **'S ALWAYS CONNIFF** and **RAY CONNIFF'S CONCERT IN STEREO LIVE AT THE SAHARA / TAHOE**.

→ USA, Europe and Australia



This compilation titled **LOVE SONGS** was released in the USA on January 14, 2003 (Columbia/Legacy 87149*). It was also released in Europe (CD made in Austria, Columbia / Legacy COL 510712 2). *Same order No. in Australia. The liner notes read as follows:

Love can be expressed in many ways, but none can match the exuberance and exhilaration that have found a musical echo in Ray Conniff's legendary happy beat. This Love Songs compilation finds maestro Conniff, his orchestra and his singers exploring the many joyful moods of love everlasting, interspersed with a few more romantic moments. With Ray and his singers around to spread the joy, the moods couldn't be livelier and lovelier.

Tracks:

1. Somewhere My Love (from "Somewhere My Love")
2. I'm In The Mood For Love (from "Young at Heart")
3. The Look Of Love (from "Honey")
4. The Way You Look Tonight (from "'s Marvelous")
5. A Time For Us (from "Jean")
6. Just The Way You Are (from "Ray Conniff Plays the Bee Gees and Other Great Hits")
7. Speak Softly Love (from "Love Theme from 'The Godfather'")
8. Memories Are Made Of This (from "Memories Are Made of This")
9. This Is My Song (from "This Is My Song")
10. Love Is A Many Splendored Thing (from "Love Affair")
11. You Light Up My Life (from "Ray Conniff Plays the Bee Gees and Other Great Hits")
12. I've Got You Under My Skin (from "Say It With Music")
13. Where Do I Begin (Love Story) (from "Love Story")
14. This Guy's In Love With You (from "Turn Around Look At Me")
15. It Had To Be You (from "'s Awful Nice")
16. Je T'Aime... Moi Non Plus (Love At First Sight) (For the first time, Je T'Aime... Moi Non Plus has been released in stereo on compact disc. It has appeared on several CDs, Lps, and on a 45rpm single in mono only. The stereo version had only previously been released to radio stations.)

Note: the album details mistakenly list *The Look Of Love* (and the album *Honey*) as being released in 1960. Actually, it was released in 1968. Also, *Ray Conniff Plays The Bee Gees* was recorded in 1978 although it might not have been released until 1979.

→ Spain



RAY CONNIFF: Volare, Bésame mucho, El amor es algo maravilloso, Chanson d'amour (Bootleg, Spain, 2002, 2 CD set, featuring the previously released CD's "Volare" and "Moscow Nights" with the same terrible flaws, Rise International Music Ltd. CDMC 132) Interestingly, this set features

"Yellow Rose" twice. Definitely NOT recommended!

CD 1 (LM 82155): Moon River / Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing (Singers) / Smoke Gets In Your Eyes / Blue Moon / Only You / Rhapsody In Blue / Greenfields / Moscow Nights / My Prayer / Memories Are Made Of This / Besame Mucho / Moonlight Serenade / 's Wonderful / Yellow Rose / On The Street Where You Live / Summertime

CD 2 (LM 82156): Blueberry Hill / The Song From Moulin Rouge / As Time Goes By / Mack The Knife / Where Or When / Yellow Rose / In The Still Of The Night / Wheel Of Fortune / Chanson D'amour / Be My Love / I'll Walk Alone / Gigi / Cry / My Prayer / Never On Sunday / Volare

→ Mexico



In 's Conniff #3/2002, I mentioned another 5 CD set released by *Readers Digest (Mexico)*, but could not provide details. Now, here is a list of tracks, provided by a Ray Conniff fan from Mexico. However, I was unable to identify some of them, as the song titles are listed with Spanish translations, only. So, if anybody can be of help with the ones listed with an asterisk, please let me know. Thanks in advance.

UNA CARICIA UN SENTIMIENTO

(Readers Digest, Mexico, 5 CD set, released in 2002)

CD 1: Green Eyes / Spanish Eyes / Granada / Vereda Tropical / Besame Mucho / Frenesi / El Condor Pasa / Pajaro Chogüi Boogie / Brazil / Tico Tico / Memories Are Made of This / Say It With Music / On the Street Where You Live / I Could Have Danced All Night & I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face / Cabaret / Something to Remember You By / All I Have to Do Is Dream / Nuestros Recuerdos* / Thanks for the Memory / Un Gran Final* / Oklahoma!

CD 2: Smoke Gets in Your Eyes / In the Still of the Night / As Time Goes By / I'll See You in My Dreams / Stomping at the Savoy / In the Mood / Moonlight Serenade / Stardust / Begin the Beguine / Sentimental Journey / Chanson d'amour / Volare / Only You / Love Me Tender / Blueberry Hill / My Foolish Heart / Time on My Hands / La Mer / The Song from Moulin Rouge / The Poor People of Paris

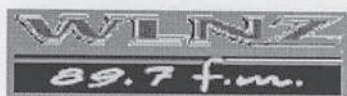
CD 3: Stranger in Paradise / Just the Way You Are / A Man and a Woman / Three Coins in the Fountain / Red Roses For A Blue Lady / Love Story / The Way You Look Tonight / Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing / For All We Know / Days of Wine and Roses / My Prayer / The Most Beautiful Girl in the World / The Morning After / Mandy / Love Will Keep Us Together & How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You / Sweet Caroline / I've Got You Under my Skin / Touch Me in the Morning / I Write the Songs

CD 4: Honey / Close to You / Kiss and Say Goodbye / A Horse With No Name / Unchained Melody / No puedo dejar de verte* / Feelings / A Taste of Honey / My Sweet Lord / Lisboa Antigua / Harbor Lights / Jamaica Farewell / Perfidia / Cuando calienta el sol /

Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise / It Had to Be You / The Windmills of Your Mind / Nadia's Theme (The Young and the Restless) / Lullaby of Birdland

CD 5: I'll Never Fall in Love Again / Where Is the Love / Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree / MacArthur Park / Winchester Cathedral / Wheel of Fortune / Aquarius & Let The Sunshine In / Georgy Girl / Blowin' in the Wind / By the Time I Get to Phoenix / Do You Know the Way to San José? / Bah Bah Conniff Sprach (Zarathustra) / Theme from Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet / Melody from Mozart / Swan Lake Ballet - Theme / Favorite Theme from Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto / Schubert's Serenade / Warsaw Concerto / A Bit of Beethoven / Conniff's Dance of the Hours / Rhapsody in Blue

*English title unknown



Big Band Swing

A radio show about and with Ray

On 7th September Ray gave a long interview over the phone, which was used for a three hour radio show about his music and career. On Saturday, November 16th at 7PM, Eastern Standard Time, the first part of the 3 hour show was aired on WLNZ (89,7 FM). It was continued one week later on November 23 at the same time. Radio presenter **Jim Stone** probably did the last interview with Ray. He is joined by Ray's pianist of 12 years, **Perry La Marca**, premier session singer and contractor, **Ron Hicklin**, who worked with Ray on many albums, **Jay Meyer**, who must have been among the very first group of singers Ray employed, and **Doug Mitchell**, who does the official Ray Conniff website. The show was called "Big Band Swing" and was broadcast from Lansing, Michigan. His show has been on the air since 1986 when it was called *Big Band Saturday Night* and since 1993 on WLNZ under the name *Big Band Swing*. Since they stream the audio, the show could be picked up worldwide at wlnz.org on the Internet. Here are details of the shows:

FIRST HOUR: Tribute opening / Jay Meyer / Oklahoma / break / Smoke Get in your Eyes / When the Saints Go Marching In / Somewhere My Love / Love is A Many Splendored Thing / Unchained Melody / break / Warsaw Concerto / Dream a Little Dream of Me / Detalhes (from "Do Ray Para O Rei") / That Old Feeling / Brazil

SECOND HOUR: Little Gate's Special / Prelude In C Major / Just Kidding Around (Conniff & Butterfield) / These Foolish Things / 's Wonderful (Shaw & Conniff versions) / September Song / Arsenic & Old Face (Jerry Jerome) / break / The Ray Conniff Hit Record Medley / On the Street Where you Live / Stompin' at the Savoy / The Way You Look Tonight / Shangri-La / break / You Make Me Feel So Young / Mack the Knife (live) / Closing

THIRD HOUR: This segment featured an interview with Ron Hicklin and with Doug Mitchell

The year is still 1963, and the month is December. Nine months after recording his last album, *"You Make Me Feel So Young"*, Ray was in the recording studio again. Two things were different, however: 1) The new album was recorded with the Ray Conniff Singers, and 2) the location was Hollywood. (Remember, the last album was an instrumental one and was recorded in New York.) So, Ray, his musicians and the 25 singers went to the West Coast to record the album

Speak to Me of Love

from Tuesday, 3rd December to Thursday, 5th December, to be precise. It was the first album by the Singers in 18 months! (The last one, *"We Wish You a Merry Christmas"* was recorded in May 1962.) At that time Ray said in an interview, "I will record more Singers albums in the future, since Mitch Miller and Norman Luboff, who both led a chorus, had left the Columbia label."



The 12 songs for the album were recorded on the three consecutive days, but on Friday, 6th December, three more songs were taped, which were included in other albums. Two of them (*"Blue Moon"* and *"Honeycomb"*) were rushed for release on a single on January 28, 1964 - almost at the same time when the album *"You Make Me Feel So Young"* became available on the US market. The third song was *"You Stepped Out of a Dream"*, which remained unreleased for a while. All three tracks eventually found their home on albums later on: *"Blue Moon"* and *"You Stepped Out of a Dream"* were released on the *"Happiness Is"*-album two years later, and *"Honeycomb"* fit perfectly on *"Invisible Tears"*, with *"Singing the Blues"* as its counterpart. (Due to its success as a single, *"Blue Moon"* was also released on the French release of the *"'s Continental"* album, where it substituted *"Strange Music"*.)

In a way, *"Blue Moon"* followed the formula that was successfully applied with *"Scarlet"* earlier that year: Ray played a trombone solo and was backed by 25 singers. Contrary to *"Scarlet"*, this time they sang



some of the lyrics. *"Honeycomb"* may be considered an experimental recording, which was similar to Ray's arrangements for solo singers that he had once backed: The men sang the lyrics, while the girls only accompanied them, singing "doo-wah" etc. By the way, the single of *"Blue Moon" / "Honeycomb"* was released on a blue vinyl single record in Germany. Apart from the USA, in many other countries both tracks were only released on EP's with 4 or 5 tracks. The French EP featured *"Night and Day"* and *"Stranger in Paradise"* as well, whereas the British EP (↑) featured three other tracks previously only released on singles in the States: *"Popsy"*, *"Scarlet"*, and *"Sweet Sue, Just You"*. Soon after its release, the US single entered the Billboard Top 150 Singles at position No. 119. (This was also the highest position.) OK, let's return to the focus of this part, Ray's only 1964 album with the Singers:

After his big success with the album *"So Much in Love"*, *"Love"* again was the central theme of another album by the Conniff Singers. (This was to be continued with *"Love Affair"*, as you all may be aware.) Ray is a very romantic person. In 1991, we could find the following statements in a Brazilian magazine:

"Every man is romantic. I remember that when I was 12 or 13 years old, I fell in love with a girl who lived near my home. I was astonished when she passed me by humming 'Would You Like to Take a Walk, Do You Think It's Going to Rain'. Still today, when I listen to that song, I feel a pain in my heart. About my records, I want the hearts in love keep their vibrations with my music. Everybody, who falls in love, wants music in order to share emotions. Because of that I record hit songs every year so that the persons can enjoy the moment, and later remember."

Now let's have a closer look at

The repertoire and the musicians:

On this album, we can listen to Ray playing three solos on his Clavietta and one on his trombone. Besides, there is a Ray Conniff original, *"Love Has No Rules"*. All the wonderful guitar solos were played by Al Hendrickson, who also belonged to the staff of *"You Make Me Feel So Young"*, and who would add his talents to the recording of another album by the Singers, *"Love Affair"*, as well.

Three songs were composed by Richard Rodgers: *"This Nearly Was Mine"* (from the musical *"South Pacific"*, from which Ray had already recorded 4 songs for his *"Broadway in Rhythm"* album), *"You'll Never Walk Alone"* (from *"Carousel"*), and *"The Sweetest Sounds"* (from *"No Strings"*, one of the most recent shows from the pen of Rodgers at that time: It was produced in 1962). One should mention *"Blue Moon"* here as well, which was also composed by Rodgers.

If you are interested in a list of songs by Richard Rodgers that Ray Conniff recorded, see part XX of my Ray Conniff Story, which was published in 's Conniff #1/1996.

You can imagine that I, as a Frenchman, was glad to find three songs on this album from my country. They are "*Speak to Me of Love*" (Parlez-Moi d'Amour), "*Under Paris Skies*" (Sous le Ciel de Paris), and "*Beyond the Sea*" (La Mer). Let me tell you something about these songs:

"*Beyond the Sea*" was originally titled "La Mer" and is one of the most played French songs all over the world. It was written by Charles Trenet, who was born in Narbonne in the South of France in 1913. He com-



posed that song during a ride on a train in the '40s. However, the public did not seem to like it and preferred Swing instead. Trenet retired as a singer, and only due to the insistence of famous publisher Raoul Breton he worked on that song again in

1946, and surprisingly it became a world-wide hit, which was titled "Beyond the Sea" in the USA.

This recording with the Ray Conniff Singers featured Ray's third arrangement of this song: Two years prior he had recorded an instrumental version of it for his album "'s Continental". The first arrangement, however, was written for Harry James and his orchestra in 1947. It was released on a 78 rpm record in 1948.

Trenet also had a big success with "I Wish You Love" (Que Reste T'il de Nos Amours), which many artists recorded.

"*Parlez-Moi d'Amour*" was a huge success for French singer Lucienne Boyer. In 1930 she won the "Grand Prix du Disque" award with it. She also gained fame in the USA with this song. It was composed by a certain Jean Lenoir.

"*Sous le Ciel de Paris*" was a big success for composer Hubert Giraud, who in 1971 had another international success with "Mamy Blue". Ray's Clavietta adds a kind of French touch to the recording, and Al Hendrickson played great guitar solos on all three songs.

Another favourite of mine is Ray's rendition of "*Don't Blame Me*", written by Jimmy McHugh, with words by Dorothy Fields. Let me

focus on Jimmy McHugh

for a minute or two: This American composer, pianist and publisher was born in Boston in July 1894. He gained first fame when he wrote music for the "Cotton Club" revues in the '20s. His collaboration with lyricist Dorothy Fields turned out to be extremely successful. Some of their memorable songs include "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" (featured in a 1928 revue titled "Blackbirds") and "On the Sunny Side of

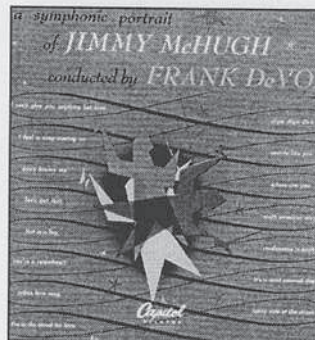
the Street" and "Exactly Like You" (both from "The International Revue", in 1930). The team later went to Hollywood and had many successes with songs featured in movies. Here are a few: "Cuban Love Song" in 1931, "Dinner at Eight" (which featured "*Don't Blame Me*") in 1933, "Have a Heart" in 1934



Jimmy McHugh

(which featured "Thank You For a Lovely Evening" and "Lost in a Fog"), and "Every Night at Eight" in 1935. The score of the latter included "I'm in the Mood for Love", which sold millions of copies. Ray also recorded this song for his album "Young at Heart". A list of his works would be incomplete without mentioning the music for "Roberta", which included a collaboration with Jerome Kern, titled "Lovely to Look at". The movie also featured another great song, titled "*Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*", which was solely written by Kern. As you know, both songs were recorded by Ray Conniff for his album "'s Awful Nice". It is interesting to note that Ray re-recorded this song with lyrics for "Speak to Me of Love", and also later in 1982 with singer Lacy J. Dalton for his "Nashville Connection" album.

For many years, Jimmy McHugh wrote scores for many Hollywood movies and Broadway shows as well as hit songs for America's great stars. He led a dance band in the '50s and founded a publishing company in 1959. He passed away in Beverly Hills in May 1969.



Some of the best orchestra leaders devoted complete albums to his music, such as Norrie Paramor from Britain (who was the producer of The Shadows), and American orchestra leader Frank DeVol, who recorded a symphonic portrait of Jimmy

McHugh for the Capitol label. (R)

Let's now regard the other songs:

Ray's rendition of "*Who's Sorry Now?*" is really swinging and features great Clavietta work by him. It was composed by Ted Snyder, who also wrote the famous "*Sheik of Araby*" (featured on Ray's "*Happiness Is*" album). "Who's Sorry Now" was a huge success both for Johnnie Ray and Connie Francis.

"*Lover Come Back to Me*" was composed by Sigmund Romberg, with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II for the Broadway show "The New Moon" in 1928. Ray's version is quite unusual and features pleasant guitar work by Al Hendrickson.

Last but not least, there is Ray's original, "Love Has No Rules". Ray wrote the music, and the lyrics were written by Ray's friend, poet Joe Poland. (On the CD re-issue his name appears as "Z. Poland", by the way.) The song features a superb Clavietta solo by Ray.

The World-Wide Release of "Speak to Me of Love"

The album was released in the USA on 8th May 1964 and was a small sensation for fans of the Singers, because on the back cover was a wonderful black and white photo of them which also revealed their names.



The picture (see below) was taken by Frank Bez, who worked regularly for Columbia at that time.

The front cover picture was the same all over the world, only the title was changed in my country, where

CBS obviously preferred the French title, "Parlez-Moi d'Amour". In Brazil, they re-titled the album "'s Lovely", and in Argentina it was released with the title "Habla de Amor". On the cover of the Dutch release, one could find "Blue Moon" listed, but the record itself did not feature it.

The album entered the Billboard charts on 30th May 1964, staying in for 19 weeks, reaching the highest position of 50. It entered the Cashbox charts on 23rd May, staying in for 20 weeks, reaching the highest position of 33 (the stereo album, that is). "Speak to Me of Love" was released both in mono and stereo "360 Sound" just like the last albums by Ray.

Focus on the 25 Singers

I am sure you want to learn a little more about some singers of Ray's chorus that he used for this album. The Ray Conniff Singers at that time was a group of 25, twelve female and thirteen male singers.

The group's contractor in the '60s was Jay Meyer most of the time. Jay had been working with Ray for the past years. (Some of the following notes are from "Conniff & Rhythm", edited by Lois Hollands:) A native of Webb City in Missouri, Jay started his musical career in high school as a trumpet player. In addition to Mr Conniff, Jay has worked with other stars such as Danny Kaye, Kay Starr, Jack Benny, Spike Jones and Allan Sherman. He has sung in vocal groups with such stars as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Doris Day, Nat 'King' Cole, Joni James, Connie Francis, Roger Williams and many others.

Another singer in the group, Verne Rowe (tenor) also started as a trumpet player. He has played with Les Brown, Kay Kyser, Dick Stabile and Frank DeVol. While with the DeVol band, Verne started doing vocal



solos. He has appeared on television on the Dinah Shore Show and The King Sisters with Alvino Rey. Verne toured the country with the Marry Macs for two years and with Peggy DeCastro for two years. He has sung with, plus the Conniff Singers, the Norman Luboff Chorus and the Earl Brown Singers. With Ray Conniff ("and the Rockin' Rhythm Boys") he was also the soloist on two tracks recorded in 1953 - one of Ray's earlier attempt to gain ground as a recording artist. The songs were "Beanie Boy Boogie" and "Short Stuff".

Jimmy Joyce sang bass on the Conniff recordings. Jimmy was born in Toledo, Ohio, and attended the Toledo Conservatory of Music. He also is a pianist, arranger and vocal director for a children's chorus ("High Hopes" with Frank Sinatra). Jimmy was the singing voice for Stephen Boyd in the movie "Jumbo".

Jack Halloran (tenor) recorded with his vocal backing group (The Jack Halloran Singers) for many top artists, and for many TV productions.

Dick Cathcart (tenor) was known for his trumpet virtuosity, and also because he was also an excellent singer. You can listen to his fine trumpet solo on Ray Conniff's "Ebb Tide", for example. He was also one of the arrangers and musical directors of "the Lawrence Welk Show".

Dick Castle (tenor), in fact Dick Klinger, was a winner on Horace Heidt's Search For Talent. Soon after his arrival in Los Angeles he became soloist on Lawrence Welk's television show. Besides being in the studio with Ray Conniff many times, he also joined him on his tours.

To put it in a nutshell, these singers were not "only" singers, but artistes in their own right, with an own reputation, and oddly enough, three out of the six presented here, were also trumpet players.

Let's regard the ladies in the group now. I once wrote a short biography on **Rica Moore**. (Please see 's Conniff #2/2000, page 17). She passed away two years ago. Her obituary was featured in 's Conniff #3/1999, page 21.

As for **Jackie Allen**, a short biography was featured in 's Conniff #2/200, on page 17. I also wrote about her in my "News of the Past" column in 's Conniff #1/1995 on page 21.

Here are more quotations from Lois Hollands' "Conniff & Rhythm"-magazine about some of the other ladies:

Loulie Jean Norman was in great demand as a singer in Hollywood. When a really high voice was needed, Loulie Jean was called. In addition to the Ray Conniff Singers, she worked with the Earl Brown Singers on the Danny Kaye TV show. She was a member of the Rhythmairs with Bing Crosby for seven years and did the Dinah Shore TV shows. Loulie Jean did the vocal solos for Diahann Carroll who played the part of Serena in the movie "Porgy and Bess". She also sang

in numerous Walt Disney movies, such as "Mary Poppins", "Alice in Wonderland", "Peter Pan", and "Babes in Toyland".

Betty Perkins sang alto in the Ray Conniff Singers. Betty sang with other groups such as the Randy Van Horne Singers, the Normal Luboff Choir, Roger Wagner Chorale, the Johnny Mann Singers, Ray Charles and the Blue Reyes with Alvino Rey. While on tour she married the male vocalist in the Alvino Rey band and as Mr and Mrs Jimmy Joyce their voices have increased. (As stated above, Jimmy sings bass with Mr Conniff.)

Pat Collier sang mezzo soprano with the Ray Conniff Singers. Pat entered the professional ranks as a featured dancer in a Las Vegas show. She was with Ray Conniff since the first West Coast tour in 1960. Pat is also an accomplished violinist, and in her spare time teaches violin.

The contralto in the Ray Conniff Singers was **Vangie Carmichael**, who, for ten years, was under contract to the Sacred Record Co. Vangie also appeared as a guest soloist on the Lawrence Welk TV show and was seen in vocal groups on other TV shows. She recorded with such stars as Nat 'King' Cole, Al Martino, Bobby Darin, Stan Kenton, Pat Boone, Pete King and Roger Williams. She also joined Ray Conniff on many of his concert tours.

If you study the picture on the back cover of "*Speak to Me of Love*" carefully, you will realise that several of the male and female singers were married to each other. I already mentioned **Betty and Jimmy Joyce**, but also **Sally and Dick Castle** were a couple, and so were **Karen and Dick Wessler**, and **Myra and Bill Stephens**. Also, Jackie Allen's husband joined the Conniff Singers now and then.

And finally, here are words from **Jay Meyer** about "the thrilling experience to work with Ray Conniff": "His arrangements are so exciting, we [always] look forward to doing his recording sessions and concerts. We always left the studio singing one of the songs we had just recorded." Like a couple of other singers, he rejoined the Conniff Singers in 1999, when Ray recorded his 4th Christmas album, "'s Christmas".

Before we close this chapter, covering the year 1963, I must not forget to tell you that Ray received yet another gold award for his fabulous album "Christmas With Conniff" in that year.

What an exciting year that was! In the next part of my *Ray Conniff Story* I will tell you about 1964, which was similarly interesting. Wait and see! Until then all the very best to you,

Serge Elhaik

Please check out the special entry on page 20 for Serge's book about Paul Mauriat, titled "Une vie en bleu".

ЛЕГКОГО ПОВЕДЕНИЯ

Музыка

Андрей АРХАНГЕЛЬСКИЙ

...За всем этим московским кошмаром, в который мы были погружены не так уж давно, совершенно потерялось сообщение о смерти Рэй Конниффа, знаменитого американского композитора и аранжировщика: он умер в середине октября в 85-летнем возрасте в больнице Сан-Диего. Коннифф начинал с таких книг, как Фрэнк Синатра, Джони Матте, Гай Митчелл, Джимми Рэй; еще большую славу ему принесли сольные работы со своим оркестром... За 60 лет творческой жизни он написал более 100 альбомов и даже получил Grammy за музыку к американскому «Доктору Живаго». Рэй вообще много чего сделал, но ныне наиболее актуальной для нас является вот какая его особенность: он был из тех редких людей, которые умели писать музыку для мирной жизни.

Коннифф обладал уникальной способностью выслушать, уловить некий общечеловеческий камертон, который не вызывал отторжения у большинства слушателей.

В свете по-

следних событий это качество едва ли не самое важное для художника.

Ибо одной из причин, по которым мир опять разламывался на противоборствующие цивилизации, является именно псевдокультурный стандарт, который в последние годы совершенно туго навязывался всему живому в качестве единственно верной эстетической константы. Глобализация началась с грубого, тотального вторжения в нашу жизнь некоей наднациональной культуры, быта, способов поведения. Этот стандарт строится по принципу механического упрощения, унификации — из-за чего автоматически происходит выхолащивание любой национальной, этнической самости, лишении права быть отличным от других... Под какой бы маркой эта глобальная культура ни подавалась — американской ли, европейской ли, — на самом деле она является ВНЕэтнической, лишённой запаха и привкуса. Главная беда этой культуры в том, что она совершенно не претендует на ПОНИМАНИЕ другого — еще и лишает человека выбора, по привычке: «не нравится — не ешь». Обиднее всего, что задолго до этого уже был выработан другой, более щадящий и оптимальный путь по созданию особого культурного эсперанто!

Рэй Коннифф еще двадцать с лишним лет назад понял, почувствовал, как можно снять конфликт различных культур. Свидетельством тому — альбомы «Рэй Коннифф в Мексике» (Ягуаши, на Гавайях, в Германии и т.д.). Сверхзадача Конниффа была именно в том, чтобы при помощи шадящей аранжировки сделать национальные мелодии ОБЩИМИ, близкими для всех. Коннифф не сделал особых открытий в музыке, но благодаря его оркестровкам слушатель любой национальности получал возможность полюбить, понять совершенно неизвестный материал. Как Коннифф этого достигал? Очень просто: достаточно взглянуть в знаменитую обложку пластинки «Рэй Коннифф в

Москве». На фотографии видно, что Коннифф попросту вживался в характер страны. Вот он с дочкой и женой гуляет по Красной площади... Они даже одеты до того-то советское, улыбаются по-нашему! Коннифф был истинным, а не назначенным послом мира; он как бы предлагал: ребята, давайте и передадим ваши красивые слова и музыку на общий, понятный язык...

Коннифф был одним из зачинателей эры easy listening — легкой музыки. Во времена конца 50-х, когда родилось это направление, мир уже вновь потрясал ядерной бомбочкой... Легкая музыка не значит упрощенная. Просто нужен был язык, понятный большинству людей в мире и не вызывающий отторжения. Но говорить на этом языке мог только человек максимально толерантный к другой культуре. Человек, умеющий делать музыку солнечную, оптимистическую, позитивную, которая придает жизни гармонию и смысл. Что-то в этой музыке было от бродвейских мюзиклов, что-то от джаза, что-то от рок-н-ролла. И еще в ней непременно участвовали национальные инструменты: гавайские гитары, африканские бонги, тропические дудки — все это многообразие вызывало у большинства в любой стране ощущение, что он пребывает в маленьком земном раю... Под эту музыку можно было соблазнить девушек или пить коктейли впрямую, танцевать и флиртовать... Именно так — максимально нейтрально, пройдя между рифмами национальных особенностей, — Коннифф находил этот общий, понятный музыкальный язык.

...В холодном декабре 1974 года Рэй Коннифф был приглашен фирмой «Мелодия» в Советский Союз, где ему предстояло выпустить альбом современных советских песен в собственной аранжировке. В тот сложный момент взаимонепонимания между Штатами и СССР Коннифф очень хотел отказаться от визитки, но практически вышло, что ни одна песня в альбоме не отличалась от того, что уже было канонизировано советской песенной эстрадой тех лет.

Однако на тот момент этот вариант был едва ли не единственной возможностью найти общий язык с советским офицером, и Коннифф это понял и наступил на горло собственной песне... Советские люди, слушая этот альбом, ловили простой кафф от того, как свои родные вещи уважительно исполняются чужими людьми. Это был подлинный компромисс между советской и западной музыкой, но Коннифф сумел это сделать. Он был первым американцем, который доказал, что можно понять и принять и советскую, и индонезийскую, и любую другую музыку. И в этом была высшая правда Рэя. ■



Памяти Рэя Конниффа, глобалиста и человека



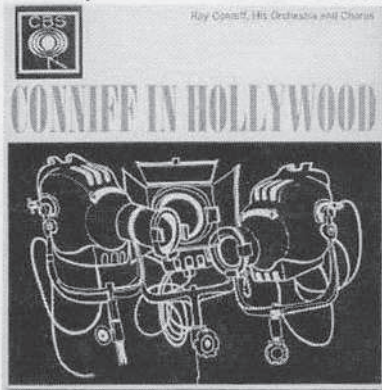
↑ The above article appeared in a Russian magazine, titled ОГОНЕК (No. 45 / 4773, November 2002).

← Club member Igor Karpov in the studio of a Moscow radio station. He co-hosted a couple of programmes in the honour of Ray in November 2002.

Many of you wrote to me that they enjoyed the new column that featured rare record covers. OK, here are some more items that you may not have seen before:



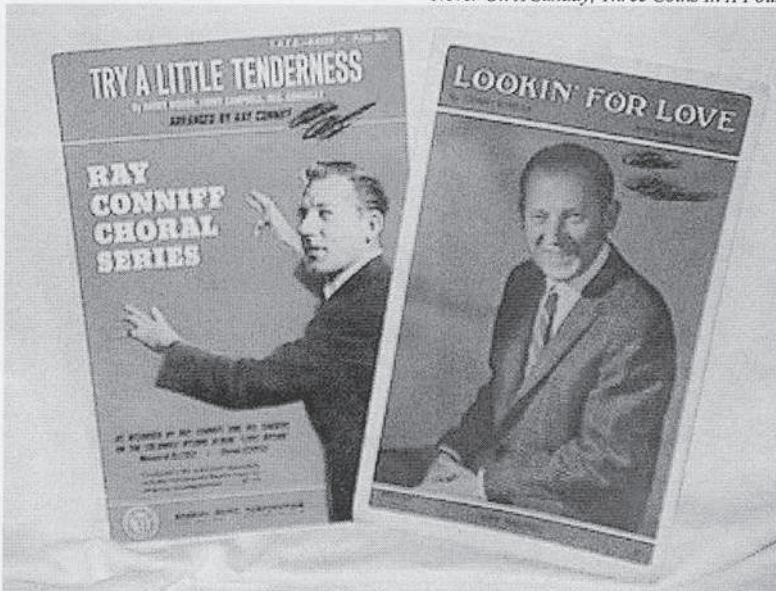
↑ Cover of a single from Spain, which had "Brazil" on side 1, coupled with "Theme from Swan Lake Ballet".



↑ I have no idea where this EP was released. I found it on the website of eBay.
Tracks: *The Song From Moulin Rouge, Gigi, Never On A Sunday, Three Coins In A Fountain*



↑ An LP cover from Japan. The title of this compilation album is "Grand Prix"



↑ Sheet music ("Try a Little Tenderness" and "Lookin' For Love"), as advertised on eBay



↑ One of several Columbia Record Club magazines featuring Ray on the cover. This is Vol. 5 No 12



↑ The cover of a 3 LP set from Mexico, titled "Los Grandes Exitos"



↑ EP set from Thailand
Tracks: The 1st and last medleys from "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" plus "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town", from "Christmas With Conniff"



↑ No rain, but laughter: Japanese cover of Ray's album "Laughter in the Rain"

There's more to come in future editions of 's Conniff. Your contributions are always welcome!

In October, only a few days after Ray had passed away, I got these lines and the documents featured below from Doug. He wrote:

Hi Manfred,

Several months ago an instructor at a college in Arizona contacted me wanting information about Ray to use in a class on big bands. I responded and provided some biographical information and included a copy of the Japan video in case they wanted to show Ray performing.

I get requests for information all the time so I didn't think much about it. I did forward the letter to Ray. Given his condition at the time, I thought it might cheer him up.

In July I received another letter. This time there were more details. The class was a 4-part seminar titled *Exploring The World Of Music*. Ray was the focus of the 4th part which was offered twice on October 3rd for about 120 people.

I had this information all ready to send to you in late July. I'm sorry to say it got buried under a mountain of paper and never got mailed. I did manage to get a copy off to Ray though and he sent an autographed photo to the school. This week I received a message from the instructor Fred Case. Apparently the class was a huge success and the class will be offered again next year.

I checked the recent newsletter and realized that I forgot to mail you the information. The class was offered by Rio Salado College as part of their "Rio Institute for Senior Education" Perhaps there are fans in Arizona who would like to attend in the future.

Take care, Doug

Here is the first letter from Fred Case, dated 12th May 2002:

Doug: I teach a Big Band Class at our local college, RIO SALADO COLLEGE here in Surprise. Because Ray Conniff has played such a major part in American music, we have decided to feature Ray in our heavily attended class... both his music and history of Ray's career and life will be discussed and of course his musical pieces will be played throughout the class.

With this in mind is it possible to obtain any hand-out material that we can distribute to each member of the class...we have over 60 students?

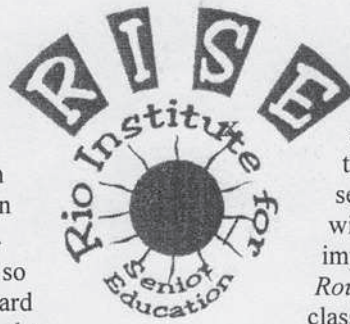
Also can you tell me if Ray's first three albums, S' Wonderful, S' Marvelous, and S' Awful Nice are available for purchase and from whom we can purchase them ?

Any information you can provide would be deeply appreciated. Also if there is any additional information you feel would be helpful for our Ray Conniff Class we are most grateful. Thanks Doug. Fred Case

Well, when Fred acknowledged receipt of all the material that Doug sent him, he wrote:

Rio Salado College, 12535 Smokey Drive, Surprise,
AZ 85374 (480) 51 7-8770 • Fax (480) 517-8779

Doug: Many thanks again for all your help with background and bio material on Ray. We sure hope Ray's health continues to improve... such a vital and talented man that he is... pop music lovers everywhere are thinking about him I'm sure.



To give you some background on the class featuring Ray it is scheduled to begin Oct. 3rd. I will be the class instructor or as it is now called "facilitator". There

will be a morning session as well as afternoon class... each two hours long. The class will open with a short biography followed by Ray's early years including his arranging for Berigan, Shaw, and James and then info on his vocal backings. Two audio selections from his big band arranging days will be featured to illustrate Ray's style of improvisation... *Jumpin' On The Merry Go-Round* (Shaw) and *September Song* (James). The class will then be brought up to Ray's great creative effort with audio selections starting with "'s Wonderful" probably title song and "Speak Low" (as a former musician I am absolutely captivated by the *Speak Low* arrangement)...a few more audio selections will follow from various albums. This will all culminate in the superb video you so kindly sent which I consider one of the best videos I ever seen.

I have this great feeling that this class is going to be a knockout and no doubt we will repeat several times throughout the future semesters. I should mention we expect about 120 people for this class.

I need to ask you two more questions: You mentioned possible other videos available from Europe sources? Are these contemporary videos i.e. color and with similar quality of the Tokyo Video you sent me? Also, if it is at all possible could you forward an autographed photo of Ray which we would place in our music department.

Thanks again for everything Doug... you have been more than kind! Again we wish Ray continued recovery and best wishes always. Hope to hear from you. You may reply via E-Mail except for photo if available,

Kindest regards, Fred

The course was advertised as follows:

Beginning this trimester, **EXPLORING THE WORLD OF MUSIC** is being offered (repeated) in both mornings and afternoons in an attempt to accommodate a larger number of you music lovers.

124. Exploring the World of Music Continuing Series 4 seminars 9:00-11:00 a.m. / 1:00-3:00 p.m. Meets Sept 12, 19, 26; Oct 3

"A Pocket Full of Dreams" - Part 1 (focus: Bing Crosby) / "A Pocket Full of Dreams" - Part 2 (focus: Bing Crosby) / "Velvet, Ivory, Brass & Potpourri" (focus: outstanding vocalists, pianists, trumpeters and some unusual instruments in American popular music)

"RAY CONNIFF: S' WONDERFUL"

(Seminar 4 - Oct 3)

Musician, bandleader and most notably one of the greatest arrangers of them all. A true American musical genius, Conniff's musical creation combining orchestral arrangements with vocal choruses is stunning in its effect. Fred introduces audio selections, followed by a superb video presented to RISE by the Ray Conniff Fan Club!

Facilitator: Fred Case, professional musician, USC graduate, big band historian

... and here's the announcement of the next seminar:

Exploring the World of Music

Continuing Series 3 seminars
1:00-3:00 p.m. Meets Mar 26; Apr 3, 10

'S MARVELOUS (Seminar 2 - April 3)

By popular demand, Fred repeats his class of last fall by again featuring Ray Conniff and his orchestra plus The Ray Conniff Singers. There will be a variation on audio selections from those presented previously, but the superb video remains as before... a dazzling visual and audio display of uncommon musical talent.

Facilitator: Fred Case, professional musician, USC graduate, big band historian.

Thanks to you, Doug, for promoting Ray's music. I am sure the seminar was a knock-out! Who would not have wanted to attend? Check out their website Web: <http://rio.Maricopa.edu/rise/> for follow-up seminars!

News of the Past

Does this ring a BELL?

What a coincidence: Earlier in 2002 I tried to find entries on the Internet concerning Ray and I deliberately misspelled his name "Coniff" and "Connif" and to my surprise came across the most unusual items. One of them concerned a website for a duo called **THE BELL SISTERS**. (They were famous in the early 50s, and one of their greatest hits was a song titled "Bermuda".) When I studied the respective website (URL: <http://www.bellsisters.com/more-about-recordings.html>), I found Ray's name listed quite a few times, as well as those of other greats, such as Nelson Riddle, Al Hendrickson, Si Zentner, Jack Pleis etc. I learned from that website that a double CD on was in preparation for the Jasmine label that had also released a CD titled "The 's Wonderful Ray Conniff", featuring vintage material from the big band era. Well, to make a long story short, later on in 2002, the Bell Sisters' greatest hits plus other rare gems were released on the 2 CD set "**The Bell Sisters: The 'Bermuda' Girls - The Original Hits & Lots More Fun!**" (Jasmine JASCD 634).



The set also features tracks with Spike Jones, Bing Crosby and Phil Harris. The recordings with Ray in the orchestra of Henri Rene (leader: Jack Pleis) are as follows: **Bermuda, June Night** (Nov. 12, 1951), **The Poor Whip-Poor-Will** (Move Over, Move Over), **Wheel of Fortune** (Jan. 24, 1952), **Rutza, Rutza** (Hurry, Hurry), **Boo-Hoo** (March 29, 1952), **If'n, There's a Ship Comin' In** (Aug. 29, 1952), **Piece A-Puddin', Hi-Diddle-Didle** (Sept. 22, 1952). Ray cannot be heard playing any trombone solos, nor is he given arranging credits, but these recordings are nice documents of what kind of bands Ray played in in the early 50s. Surely, this is for the 200% fans who want everything that has to do with Ray. However, be warned: This 2 CD set does not list Ray's name at all. In order to check out further details about musicians, locations etc., check out the above mentioned website.

Did you know that Ray performed the theme song of a TV series titled **ARCHIE BUNKER'S PLACE**, starring Carroll O'Connor (left)?



When this show was still titled **ALL IN THE FAMILY**, Ray recorded the show's closing theme, "Remembering You", which was featured on Ray's album "After the Lovin'" ("If You Leave Me Now" in the UK). The producers of the show must have liked it so much that they asked Ray to re-record his version

for the TV show plus another well-known theme from that show, titled "Those were the Days" (not the song from Ray's album "I Love How You Love Me"). However, the version of "Remembering You" featured in the show was a little different than the one on his "After the Lovin'" album. Ray also recorded several jingles for that show, which ended the show's segments before the commercials. If you want to listen to Ray's rendition of the other song, titled "Those Were the Days", a lovely Dixieland-type version, please visit this website: <http://victorian.fortunecity.com/rushdie/485/abp.html> and click on the link in the middle of this page, have your speakers turned on - and listen to an ultra-rare Ray Conniff recording! What a shame this was never released on any of his albums.

Tributes to Ray on British Radio

I cannot thank Barbara and Les Peckham enough for taping quite a few tributes to Ray in the weeks after Ray passed away from British radio. One of them featured a 1966 interview by Keith Skues, recorded in London and broadcast on the BBC World Service. Other tributes ran in the radio shows of Ed Stewart, Bill Rennels, Grant James / Sue Dougan, Dewi Griffiths, Desmond Carrington, Bill Rennels, John Bennett, David Jacobs, Paul Barnes, Frank Wappat and Malcolm Laycock.



RAY CONNIFF

Uma conversa franca com um velho maestro que ainda sabe usar a batuta...



Passaram-se oito horas e dezessete minutos para serem percorridos de trem, os quase 500 quilômetros, entre Brisbane e o coração do Deserto de Gibson, na Austrália, onde a temperatura escaldante anunciava o desconforto

pelo qual passaríamos, embora estivéssemos em uma amena manhã primaveril. A morosidade do traslado ajudou a propiciar uma maior cumplicidade junto aos poucos e peculiares companheiros de jornada. Perguntas sobre nosso objetivo de viagem e piadas sobre os filmes "Crocodilo Dundee" não foram escassas, demonstrando a simplicidade interiorana de um povo que não representa o alto nível sociocultural do país.

*Entretanto nossa viagem mal havia começado, pois foram necessários os préstimos de rastreadores aborígenes para alcançarmos nosso destino, o lar de nosso entrevistado, que tomava sopa e criava sapo, em um choupana de sapé, no sopé do Monte Kociusko, o pico culminante australiano. O rosto rubro, pela ascendência européia, e o sorriso emoldurado por alvos barba e bigode, transmitiam a inquietude de uma alma, que em busca da continuidade de sua obra, negou e renegou a inexorabilidade da pacata aposentadoria na Flórida, para um recomeço aos 81 anos, num país estranho, e ainda por cima, em um local de clima inóspito. Obviamente que estamos nos referindo à **Ray Conniff**, um dos maiores maestros e arranjadores do século XX, que apesar do bucolismo extremo optado como modo de vida, ainda exhibe alguns poucos momentos de fama que experimentou, como um pôster fotografado no dia em que orquestrou a canção popular "Balança Caixão" no velório de John Fitzgerald Kennedy, o JFK; ou ainda na premiação do Grammy 78, pelo arranjo da música "Medo de Avião" de Belchior, encomendada para encorajar os sobreviventes do acidente aéreo, que veio inspirar o filme "Perdidos nos Andes".*

A simpatia e a nostalgia, presentes em todas as nossas longas conversas ao pé da fogueira, que invariavelmente invadiam a madrugada, ficaram como marcas registradas de um senhor que apesar de consciente da proximidade do fim de sua vida, não teme em desenvolver novas habilidades, tanto que se matriculou recentemente em cursos de afinação de harpa e neurocirurgia por correspondência. Todas as impressões e

curiosidades sobre tão importante personalidade que apresenta fortes traços de senilidade, você, leitor, confere abaixo, nessa transcrição de uma vida que foi, está sendo e continuará repleta de atividades, e que além do grande prazer na realização dessa matéria, causou-nos espantos dignos de planos econômicos argentinos.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Após tanto sucesso e reconhecimento mundial, porque o senhor resolveu se isolar em um deserto?

RAY: [gargalha] É, realmente tenho que concordar que não foi uma atitude usual, mas não me arrependo não. Acho que não importa o que o ser humano faça desde que seja feliz sem prejudicar os outros.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Tudo bem, mas quanto aos motivos reais que o fizeram escolher exatamente esse lugar? Por que não Galápagos? Ou o Saara?

RAY: [gargalha] Veja bem, eu não cansei da música, isso não. Tanto que tenho um cravo, um trombone e uma citara [instrumento hindu], e até continuo a compor, só que optei por não mais anotar minhas composições. Agora tudo flui naturalmente, a música se tornou para mim um fenômeno da natureza. O fato de eu ter escolhido aqui para morar....

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Não importa mais, esqueça!!!

Das milhares de apresentações ao redor do mundo, qual a que foi mais marcante, será que é possível eleger apenas uma?

RAY: Oh, sim. Teve uma em 67, me lembro por causa da Olimpíada de Munique [que foi realizada em 72], nos apresentamos em um hospital de crianças surdas-mudas em Nova Deli, na Áustria [Índia]. O interessante é que além da big band ninguém ouvia absolutamente nada. Só que o som chegou ao serpentário do hospital. [gargalha]. E uma naja se encantou com o som, e se apaixonou pelo nosso trompetista.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Como assim se apaixonou?

RAY: Ela o seguiu até o hotel, e ficou em frente à porta do quarto dele a noite toda.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: E o que fizeram com ela?

RAY: Misteriosamente ela desapareceu [gargalha]. Na manhã seguinte estávamos todos na delegacia, por que o trompetista foi acusado de tê-la escondido.

"...é que durante a contracultura eu compus o melô do sexo anal..."

E esconder cobras na Suíça [Índia] é crime.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Falando em crime, o senhor já teve alguns problemas com a lei, não é?

RAY: É, bem, digamos que sim [encabulado, segurando a gargalhada]. Para mim nunca teve problema algum, é que durante a contracultura eu compus o melô do sexo anal, só que a censura não aprovou, então lancei-o mascarado de música infantil. [gargalha como se fosse uma atitude digna]

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Que música era essa?

RAY: [Pega a citara e entoia] "Quero ver você não chorar/ nem olhar pra trás/ nem se arrepender do que faz/ Quero ver o amor nascer/ mas se a dor nascer/ Você resistir e sorrir"

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Caralho, seu velho filho da puta, eu cantei essa música na minha formatura de pré-escola, sem saber dessa podridão.

RAY: [gargalha] pois é, tem muita coisa que você não sabe.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: E é por isso que o senhor não pode mais tocar na América do Norte, pela acusação de pedofilia?

RAY: Exato, eles me acusaram de ter incitado a iniciação sexual precoce. Fui preso e enrabado no Presídio de Alcatraz. Mas a bronca é que tenho



sangue irlandês, a Xaxa [Xuxa] no seu país, pulava com shorts menores que uma gravata borboleta e nunca foi presa, eu sei porque fui no programa dela no Brasil, lá em Montevideu [Rio de Janeiro].

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: O

senhor foi deflorado na cadeia, mas ao que me parece isso não é um tabu para o senhor?

RAY: Na realidade, não...

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Mas os senhor disse que sim!!!

RAY: Sim, fui deflorado, mas a primeira vez não foi na cadeia, sabe como é os anos 70 foram um pouco doidos de mais. Estive em Woodstock, e eu já estava sem roupa na ida. Imagine lá. [gargalha]

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Meu Deus!! Seu velho nojento. Como consegue?

RAY: Ah, é só aceitar um pouco de tudo que te oferecem em uma festa cabulosa e você vai ver o que acontece. Perder a cueca é pouco. Tipo..... me passe aquele pote, por favor.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Qual? O marrom de cerâmica?

RAY: Não, o do meio!!!

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Mas só tem dois? Você quer o de vidro?

RAY: Você é muito burro [gargalha] o da ponta parece um Schuberry, mas é um pote!!

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Ah tá!! Tome.

RAY: Então, ponha isso [uma pílula] de baixo da língua, e eu ponho uma também.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Não sei, mas não faz mal?

RAY: Você parece minha mãe falando, ponha logo seu pirralho [gargalha]

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: Tá. ela tem um gosto de morango [gargalha]

RAY: Sussu [Sossegado], a minha tá com gosto de hóstia não benta [gargalha]

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: [gargalha] Como você sabe, seu traquina [gargalha]

RAY: Vá saber, eu nem sei o que é que eu não sei, ou não.

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA: [gargalha] eu tô ficando legal [gargalha], está tudo meio que assim. Só num

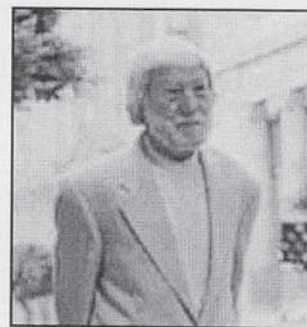
tô entendendo essa quentura nas minhas costas [gargalha].

RAY: Pois é agora você pode dizer que tem as costas

quentes.....[gargalha]

CRIPTOAGRONOMIA:

Ui!!!!



Ping-pong

Ray Conniff

Silvia Ruiz

ISTO É
Gente



São tantas emoções... O rei dos bailes, com sua inconfundível orquestração, faz uma homenagem ao rei do romantismo no CD Do Ray para o Rei. Aos 84 anos, Ray Conniff contou à **Gente** como foi gravar um disco só com composições de Roberto Carlos e Erasmo.

Como surgiu a idéia

de gravar esse disco?

Eu já conhecia o Roberto há alguns anos, ele já havia participado de um especial de tevê que gravei nos Estados Unidos. A gravadora Abril Music me ligou e contou que ele estava deprimido devido à morte de sua mulher. Eles sugeriram o disco, e achei que seria uma honra fazer uma homenagem a ele.

Qual a sua canção favorita de Roberto?

"Amigo", sem dúvida. Já toco essa música em meus shows sempre que vou ao Brasil e o público adora.

Qual foi o critério de escolha para as músicas do CD?

A gravadora me sugeriu as preferidas do público brasileiro. Eu procuro sempre tocar o que querem ouvir. E esse público sempre foi tão carinhoso comigo... É um fenômeno, mas acho que sou mais popular no Brasil do que nos EUA.

Depois de cinco décadas de carreira, já pensou em se aposentar?

Tocar é a coisa que mais me diverte na vida. Vou continuar enquanto puder. A única coisa que me alegra tanto quanto a música é viajar com minha mulher e meus cachorros em nosso trailler. Fazemos isso duas vezes por ano, e eu mesmo dirijo.

Note: I came across these items when I searched the Internet for articles about Ray after he had passed away. I thought you might like to find them here.

Ray Conniff - Hit Maker

Taught trombone by his father in Attleboro, Massachusetts, Ray Conniff did his first arrangement for his school band—"Sweet Georgia Brown." After playing in Boston, he played with Bunny Berigan in New York, followed by stints with Bob Crosby, Artie Shaw and Glen Gray as trombonist/ arranger. It was while playing with Artie Shaw that he found time to study orchestration properly at New York's famous Julliard School Of Music.

Drafted in 1944, he spent two years as arranger with the Armed Forces Radio Services and joined the Harry James band on release. In 1953, as a free-lance, he did a backing for vocalist Don Cherry on "Band Of Gold" and this hit was followed by a string of others with Johnnie Ray, Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell and Johnny Mathis. It was on the strength of these successes that he was given a solo album in 1956—'s Wonderful, which launched the Conniff sound. It caught on fast and remained a best-seller for nine months.

Ray Conniff is one of the 'very few Americans who didn't bring the ballyhoo with him when he visited us. To his surprise, he found it already here, waiting for him. Press receptions, reporters buggin' him, autograph hunters . . . the full treatment.

He doesn't like it. As the lights of the Juke Box Jury set fade, Ray stands and shakes the stillness out of his legs. This seems to be the signal for a stick of reporters to descend upon him. "Will you stand like this Mr. Conniff?" "Would you mind just sitting this way?" Ray takes it all in his stride. In the back seat of the car taking us from the studio to the Savoy, he opens up: "I like the quiet life. I hate giving time to publicity. It robs me of time to work." Quiet, unassuming and surprisingly modest in manner, he continues: "I suppose you're going to ask me all the usual questions about my electronics and how many singers I use and how many musicians I use and how many. . ." "Hold it!" we protest. His smile holds relief.

The important thing to Ray Conniff, it seems, is what he intends to give us in the future. Here is a man, who has created a sound, who has made popular a style that reassures us that good music is still in there with a chance—even in this era of psuedo and necromantic composers and lyricists. Not to mention the 'singers' who occupy high places in the Charts.

Anyone who has studied the Conniff technique will have noticed the almost imperceptible change that has taken place over his career of eighteen LPs. Play any consecutive two of his discs and only the keenest ear can detect it. It becomes more evident, however, when you play his first—then his most recent. Not only a change in the instrumental approach, but usually an electronic adjustment, too.

This is because Conniff is always making changes. He has always experimented and consequently the equipment has to be modified. The gear itself is kept secret. "It would be suicidal for me to divulge any information regarding this," he says. "Mind you, most of the technical data is out of my hands, so I probably couldn't tell you much, even if I wanted to." His experimenting reaches back to 1933, when he first learned trombone at high school. He kept at it until the late 'thirties, when he was

in New York City arranging for Bunny Berigan. Then on to 1956 when he conducted a full orchestra for the first time.

"That's when the sound came out?" we asked.

"No. I didn't hit this sound until 1957. It was the result of just another little idea I had. People have asked me to say that I suddenly woke up at three in the morning and thought of it—all kinds of things they wanted me to say. But I'm afraid it was made in the cold light of day, when we intended to make it. Anyway, I like to sleep at nights. If I thought that what happens to guys like Presley could ever happen to me, I'd be terrified! I prefer to be at home, working or listening to my own stuff. When I do listen, it's usually my latest because I've generally got it on my mind. Luckily, I can listen quite dispassionately, y'know."

Is he going to make more singles? "I doubt it. I think that the future of all recording is bound up in EPs and LPs. People seem to like LPs." Does he think that British singers and arrangers tend to copy the Americans? "I doubt it. They only seem similar because the Americans happen to have set a craze going. They set a standard. I don't pretend it's always a good standard—but sometimes it is. Record companies have to keep in line with what the public wants, I suppose. That is, if they want to stay in business." Conniff despises the 'art' of "Woe, woe—yeah, yeah," but admits its commercial value: "It's the teenager again," he says.

"But what I'm aiming at is something in between. A kind of a slice down the middle. I hope it will be accepted by teenage pop enthusiasts and not frowned upon by the long-haired ones. It'll involve about twice the number of musicians I use at present. It'll be a bigger sound—retaining the singers, of course." This new big sound may be on his next LP. Ray has found that when folk go in for a Conniff disc, they don't enter the shop and ask for a specific title. They simply ask what's the latest Conniff release, and buy it. They have heard the Conniff sound on the air and that's the sound they expect when they buy.

Conniff knows, in fact, that his public is conditioned and buys a standard of performance rather than a particular group of numbers. Therefore, Conniff feels obliged to be consistent. He cannot let his fans down by suddenly coming out with something entirely different.

Ray hints at some of his plans for the more distant future. We are let into a startling new idea. Visualise an LP with about fifteen numbers on each side. Basically, it would be just another to add to your set. But this time, instead of including only one or two of his own numbers, all of them will be his own compositions. On the LP the numbers will be arranged to form a story, the lyrics following a sequence to put the story across. In short, a small musical comedy with the first half on side one and the final act on side two. The LP will be sold to a television company. It produces a show that illustrates the story on the screen, using the LP as a musical background.

Conniff reckons that it would take all of a year to create, but he adds that he'd rather have one good show per annum than a third-rate effort every week or month. Simple—but how many people are going to say: "Why didn't I think of that first?"

Right on the Firing Line

What sort of a background to what you do today would you say your previous work with big bands gave you?

Oh, it was like going to school. I learned a lot, working with bands, as trombonist and arranger, down through the Swing band era—Bunny Berigan, Artie Shaw, Bob Crosby. It was just what you'd call being right on the firing-line; really a great way to learn to write music and play music.

It's nice to see, in your show, that you still get a blow on the horn.

Yeah, I get the horn out every time we do personal appearances, and do a show. It's kinda fun, and you can't go wrong with great fellows like John Best., Skeets Hurfurt and Johnny Guarmeri. I've worked in bands with Skeets and Johnny; not John Best, but our paths crossed quite a bit, because in those days the bands would go to see each other when they'd both be in town.

What's the set-up when you go on tour? Do you take a nucleus of these men, and use the local players to make up the band?

On this tour, everything was self-contained. I brought four musicians and sixteen singers from the United States, and the rest of the people I got here in London. The British musicians did a great job, too.

How did you actually hit on this successful sound of yours? Did it spring from your scoring for big bands?

Well, there wasn't really too much connection with the big bands. It was just an idea I had. I was scoring a background for an arrangement on CBS Records, where I used the voices as instruments. It turned out to be a good sound; so we did an album with the same sound. As it was a success, we did a follow-up of two more albums right away.

Your original concept, I suppose, was to feature the band as an equal entity to the singers. Since then, have the singers become of main importance?

That's right—it was an instrumental concept when I first did it. After about four or five albums, I made the first album called "The Talk Of The Town", where the singers sang the words. And from that point on, the singers became more important.

Have you kept some of the same singers who worked with you on the earlier records?

No, because the earlier records were made in New York City. I live in California now; so I have an entirely new bunch of singers.

Had you done any choral writing before these things?

I really hadn't. As a matter of fact, that was the first time I wrote for chorus, when I started backing different artists on the CBS label.

Had you listened to anything in the way of classical choral music?

I was exposed to it, but I didn't really sit down and study it - no.



Initially, did you think that this would be a way to bring the big band sound to people?

Not really. It was just an experiment that worked out good. I hadn't really any plans for it. You know, every time I ever write an arrangement, I always try something new, and it was just a new thing that I tried.

You still use the instrumental voice idea to some extent, don't you?

Yes, I put probably one or two songs in each album with that sound.

The coordinating of a show of this nature must be quite an undertaking.

We have an office in Los Angeles. It takes a few months to put it together, and quite a voluminous correspondence. For this, I've been very dependent on a lot of people in England. Like, the whole stage, sound and light crew are from here—and so are the tour promoters.

Do you travel as much as recording?

No, I mostly do recording. I travel very little. Most of the travelling I do is for pleasure.

You normally have everything written, do you, prior to going in the studio?

Oh yeah, everything's all planned and written down. We change it around a lot, but we have something to start out with.

And you score and visualise every part of an arrangement yourself?

Yeah, I do it all myself. You know, I've done it so many years now, I have a pretty good idea how it's gonna sound when I write it down on paper. Sometimes, of course, I'll try something new, and I'll have to hear it once before I'm exactly sure that's what I want. In general, I can usually tell before.

Your sound has spawned a great many imitators. What have you thought about all the other people who have had a similar kind of idea to yours?

Well, at first I used to kind of worry about it, and it bothered me that there were other people doing the same kind of thing I was. But in the last several years I've realised that the music business and recording business move so fast that you can't just stay on one thing constantly. And I've been constantly coming up with fresh sounds and ideas. If they want to copy me, they have to move pretty fast now, because styles change so rapidly.

Are you particularly pleased with certain of your arrangements?

Well, two stand out in my mind. I think *Somewhere, My Love* and *'S Wonderful* are the two that I would pick as being my favourites.

And they were also very successful for you. Have you used the voices in any other context than your own recordings?

I don't use them any other way than recordings and personal appearances. Well, I've done a little motion picture work, but not too much.

Being from a jazz background, and still playing trombone, how do you view the general field today?

I think it's fascinating. It's such a fast-moving and fast-changing business that you really have to be on your toes to stay abreast of what's going on. It's a very exciting business.

What do you think of the big band revival movement, with certain bands recreating the sounds of bands like Miller and Dorsey?

Oh really - I wasn't aware that was going on. But I really don't think you can revive things in music. I think music continually goes forward. I could be wrong—it's only a personal opinion.

But you yourself have been going a few years now, and the public expects you to repeat a lot of nostalgic things that they've heard on your old recordings, don't they?

Right. In concert, I find that they do expect to hear some of the old things, like "Wonderful, Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" and "Street Where You Live". So I play them in the concerts. But I try to initiate them into some of the newer sounds, too, like "Tie A Yellow Ribbon", "Harmony", "Gipsy Rose" and other things in the recent albums. I always mix it up on concerts.

It certainly is a classic sound, I don't think anybody who's tried to duplicate it has really got it the way you have it. Presumably, it's to do with the voicing.

Oh yeah, it's in the arranging, it's in the recording technique, it's in the performance, and it's in what I tell them at the record session. There's a lot of elements in it that make it what it is.

You have a certain way of getting the brass very close to the voices.

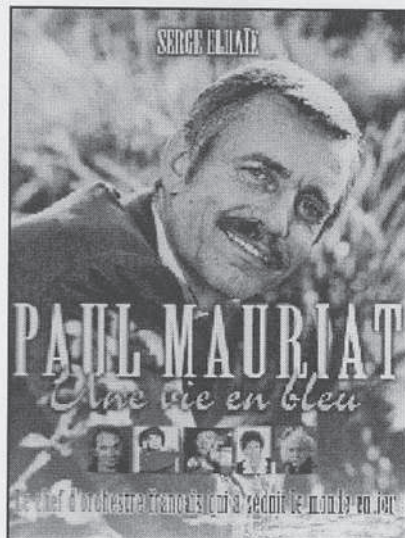
Yes, that's the engineering. It's very difficult to get that just right, by the way. They're scored together, but then when you mix 'em, it's hard to get them in equal volume. With equal volume, it's a nice different sound; but if the brass are louder you don't hear the voices properly, and if the voices are louder you don't hear the brass. It's easier now than it used to be in the days when we'd put everything on simultaneously. Now, with overdubbing, it's easier to get the sound.

Do you have any special thoughts about the future?

Well, I'll keep recording albums as long as people will buy them. Because I'm like everyone else—I'm always looking for a hit single. And it looks like we might have one with this "Harmony" that I have out now. We're selling about two million albums a year now. We have a very large catalogue—I've recorded about fifty albums. I try to keep abreast; I keep buying all the new singles that come out, and listen to what the younger generation are writing and recording. I try to stay on top of the market, and I use the sounds that will work into my style.

It's good to see as musical a product as yours so successful, I hope you can return to Britain soon.

Thank you very much. We'll try to come back; we don't have any definite plans at the moment. After I recover. . . It's been a very strenuous tour, and we're all very tired. The audiences were fantastic. We really enjoyed working to them.



Our resident writer Serge Elhaik, has just published a fantastic book about another musical genius in the genre of Easy Listening: *Paul Mauriat*. Its title is *Une vie en bleu*. The book contains everything a fan could dream of: A biography, many rare photographs, record covers, a discography, a list

of his own compositions (including "Chariot", which Mauriat wrote under a pseudonym and became a worldwide hit under the title of "I Will Follow Him") and much more. It is a heavyweight of more than 1,5 kg and about 340 pages (size: larger than A4). It took Serge quite some time to compile this wonderful tribute to a unique artist. (Visit the website of the Paul Mauriat fan club at <http://www.pluto.dti.ne.jp/~pmclub/>!) For his book, Serge conducted many interviews with celebrities such as Sacha Distel, Francis Lai, Eddy Barclay, and Raymond Lefèvre, plus the artistes who Paul Mauriat backed, including Charles Aznavour and Mireille Mathieu, to name but a few - and the maestro himself. The book is completely in French, but very enjoyable even for those whose knowledge of the language of love is only limited. Ray Conniff is also given a mention in a chapter titled "Destination Mexico: Avec Quincy Jones et Ray Conniff" on pages 180/181. Serge promised to translate it for one of the next editions of 's Conniff.

Publisher: Charles Herissey Editions, ISBN 2-9518922-0-9, Recommended retail price: € 45.00. Price (inclusive of postage) for members of the International Ray Conniff Fan Club (verification will be made by Manfred):

EUROPE: € 29.00 (inclusive of € 10.21 postage) / OTHER CONTINENTS (i.e. USA, Canada, South America, Japan, Australia etc.): € 36.00 (inclusive of € 16.77 postage)

Payment by International Money Order only. For further details you may contact Serge by sending an email to this address: serge.elhaik@wanadoo.fr or by sending a letter to :

**Dr. Serge Elhaik, 15, rue Isambard,
F-27000 Evreux, France**



Your book is ex-cel-lent, Serge. I only hope that you will devote your next book to Ray.

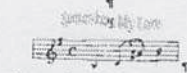
← Serge together with the president of the Paul Mauriat Fan Club, Minoru Nakamura, who also is a member of the Ray Conniff Fan Club.

's Always Conniff



Ray Conniff

6th November 1916 - 12th October 2002



His music will live forever!

The special memorial edition of 's Conniff will become available later on this year. It will feature many condolence messages from all around the world which I received after October 12. The ones below and on the following pages have only reached me lately, and therefore could not be included in the memorial edition. Thanks go to Doug Mitchell for forwarding them to me.

THESE MESSAGES ARE FROM THE YAHOO
"BEAUTIFULINSTRUMENTALS" GROUP*

**This is a chat forum on the Internet for fans of Easy Listening music*

I've just heard the sad news from Manfred Thonick of his Fan Club that Ray Conniff died today. Alan Bunting

Alan, What incredibly sad news. As a long time Ray Conniff fan and supporter, I dreaded the day when news such as this would come. Ray Conniff's style, his arrangements were so unique, colorful and could perk up just about anyone on a gloomy day.

I never had the pleasure of meeting him personally (wish I did) but I always heard from colleagues who did that he was a true gentleman.

Another giant lost.....and what a giant Ray Conniff was in the world of Easy Listening music. He will surely be missed and his contributions to the world of 'good music' will never be forgotten.

Condolences to fans everywhere and the Conniff family. I close how I began.....what incredibly sad news.

Jim Masters

To all fans here in the BeautifulInstrumentals group and around the world who are learning of the passing of Ray Conniff today, our condolences.

His death will impact many people in many different ways today and beyond. Those who followed his career and music for years and those who became fans in later years. The die-hard fans and the fans of maybe just a few songs, but yet appreciative of Conniff's song selections and his unique arrangements.

So much music for so many years and with the holidays fast approaching, hearing his Christmas music will probably have an extra special meaning and feeling this year.

Ray was still active and recording, that makes the news all the more disturbing. He still had so much more to give. Thankfully, he did leave us with so much material that might have provide good memories for so many people.

Jim Masters

May I, too, add my condolences and well wishes going to the Ray Conniff family upon Ray's passing. He certainly left us with a tremendous amount of incredible music that we will continue to enjoy!!! It's yet another sad day for the world of beautiful/easy music.

Every time the life of yet another "truly quality musician" is snuffed out, I can't help but think of the expression always used in reference to Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and the Big Bopper's deaths back in Feb. '59---"The Day The Music Died". For me, I've applied that expression to all other fine musicians, over the years, as we all have when this tragic event happens in everyone's lives eventually. But, as we know, these fabulous musicians and entertainers have touched a part of each of our lives in ways that they could only begin to imagine. Music...truly good music is so important to all of humanity (even more than humanity will ever know) and while these musicians must have to ultimately leave us, thankfully their recordings will continue to help us not just enjoy yet another day with their beautiful sounds but I believe will continue to make the world for us a "better place" in which to live.

Finally, I have a special request of all of you. If you have Ray Conniff's album titled "Harmony" (Columbia LP #KC 32563) please play the selection entitled "Here Today and Gone Tomorrow". It's a song that Ray wrote and has always been one of my favorites. Unfortunately, it's especially appropriate for today.

Keep looking up.

Darrell Dady

As a lover of such a wide range of instrumental and light vocal music, I'm always saddened to learn that another of the great ones has left us. I'm wondering the same thing Tony is - why isn't it on the news? Someplace, it has to be.

I've never actually talked about him in the confines of this group, but I am a fan of Conniff. I've always been especially fond of those albums he did in the 70s, such as "Laughter in the Rain" and "I Will Survive." The song "Rain On" is a particular favorite of mine, still not yet available on CD. As far as instrumentals go, Ray did wonderful things with "Tara's Theme" and "I Wanna Hold Your Hand." He was truly an innovator and a pioneer of "our kind of music." He will be missed greatly but, as others have pointed out, the music will always be here for us and others like us to enjoy. Fortunately, several of the greatest Conniff albums ARE on CD now.

One thing I will say is, without this group I might not have known of his death, as I didn't know of the passing of Frank Barber, Syd Dale, and many others. It is sad news, but I'm thankful for having access to a place that does keep me abreast of such things.

Bradleigh

When I read of the passing of Ray Conniff among today's 'B.I.' posts (and, thus far, I've not seen it on the news yet), I must admit, my initial reaction was 'Conniff? I thought he'd live to be 100; I thought he'd be the George Burns or Bob Hope of B/EZ music'. Ray possessed that 'young at heart' manner that seemed to defy age, though it was obvious that he was physically aging, as the years went by.

I hope the obituaries won't relegate him to a mere chorus conductor who scored numerous hit LPs. That first and foremost, perhaps. But there was more to the Ray Conniff story than that. He was the first artist (here in the U.S.) to RELEASE a stereo LP ('S AWFUL NICE', 1958), the first U.S. artist to record an LP in Russia (1974) and, on a more PERSONAL note, he was the first artist that my

parents and I collected. Long before the 'German invasion' (Kaempfert, Last, etc.) swept our home, I was listening to Ray Conniff cassettes on our hi-fi, age 10 or 11. My parents had a few Conniffs on REEL-TO-REEL prior to that. Then came LPs to tape, then CDs. And 25 years from now, if they invent yet another 'new and improved' format with which to enjoy our music, there may be a few Conniffs there, too. I met Ray just once, at a party in Newport Beach 12 years ago. He struck me as a rather shy man. A down-to-earth type, reserved, even introverted. A sharp contrast to his music. (If you've heard him speak on his 'Live' records, you know what I mean). Some music text books regard Conniff as a 'one hit wonder' (that for his record of Maurice Jarre's "Somewhere My Love"). But when I assess Ray's career, it seems that he recorded just about every phase music went through from the 1950s on. "CONNIFF MEETS BUTTERFIELD" suggests that he might have made a good jazz arranger, had he chose to pursue that route.

"RHAPSODY IN RHYTHM" added a symphony orchestra to the "Conniff sound", and he utilized a string section better than one would think. But the consumers bought up the "Conniff Singers" and Ray chose to emphasize the chorus more and more. Ray ALWAYS went with the times, for better or worse. But whose to FAULT the man for conceding to changing public tastes when his first successes had been a product of them from the start: a trombonist with Bob Crosby and Harry James in the big band era; an arranger for pop singers in the 50's (Johnny Mathis' "Chances Are" and "It's Not For Me To Say"). More than most other B/EZ artist, and perhaps LONGER than any other, he recorded his 'takes' on an ever changing music climate.

Dated? Yes, much of it is. But in a fun, NOSTALGIC way. Like a Rodgers and Hammerstein show. It was described as "music that brings you up when you're down". That concept won't become dated anytime soon.

Ray, you taught the world to sing in "perfect harmony". Now, go grab your band members BILLY BUTTERFIELD, PANAMA FRANCIS, JOHNNY GUARNERI, SKEETS HERFURT, and your singers RICA MOORE, B.J. BAKER, JACK HALLORAN, DICK CATHCART, and the others up there, and put on a show! - MICHAEL BRIGHT

P.S. Don't forget a DIXIELAND tune or two.

Having been a fan since I first heard "'S WONDERFUL" being used as a theme tune for Pete Murray's (disc jockey) programme on Radio Luxembourg in 1956, I was very saddened by Ray's passing.

I bought all his Lp's till about 1973 and it was in that year (I think) that he made a concert tour of the UK. I saw him in Brighton and the sound produced was exactly the same as that on the records.

When CD's arrived, Columbia /Sony re-issued a large number of his discs and they sold well; several of the early ones are available as "2on1" from Sony UK:

"'S WONDERFUL" + "'S MARVELOUS" 484030 2, "'S AWFUL NICE" + "'S CONTINENTAL" 489804 2, "BROADWAY IN RHYTHM" + HOLLYWOOD IN RHYTHM" 497602 2, and with the Singers "IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOWN" + "YOUNG AT HEART" 493046 2

What I especially liked about Ray was that he gave completely NEW arrangements of those "standard" songs in the great "American Song Book" - Kern, Rodgers, Berlin, Porter, Lerner etc etc.

He only got the chance to record as a solo artist for Columbia after Mitch Miller had appreciated what he did as a "backing arranger/conductor" for people like Johnnie Ray & Don

Cherry - I believe it was Cherry's record of "Band of Gold" that opened the door for him.

Of course, he had a lot of experience as an ARRANGER, chiefly with Artie Shaw & Harry James (a few examples of his Harry James work are on a new James CD out this month

from Collectables).

Nigel Burlinson

The following condolences were sent via email to Doug Mitchell:

From: Vitor Matos [vitorpmatos@ig.com.br]

Sent: Saturday, October 12, 2002 9:12 PM

Subject: meus pesames

sorry, mi english it no good please translation text

"quero com esta singela mensagem deixar aqui os meus sentimentos pela morte do maestro que embalou a minha infancia, sempre fui fã de suas musicas e espero que ele esteja no ceu tocando com os anjos , meus sentimentos aos familiares"

From: Telmo Souza [ttsouza@uol.com.br]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 3:07 AM

Subject: Jamais

Jamais houve e haverá tamanho músico muito triste envio minha moção de tristeza. Aos 80 anos, eu conheci todas, todas as bandas. Ao surgir aquele jeito de batida, aquela combinação de vozes femininas e masculinas assemelhadas a instrumentos... fiquei, sou e continuarei fan do notável músico, musicista, maestro, monstro da música... E agora? Restam suas obras. Ainda bem...

From: no [noweksler@hotmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 7:02 AM

Subject: to Vera Conniff

Vera, Chocada com a triste notícia, envio meus sinceros sentimentos pela perda do querido e insubstituível Ray, que estará para sempre presente em meu coração, Jamais esquecendo sua alegre e doce presença. Ainda bem que fui brindada com a possibilidade de assisti-lo no Brasil. Meu carinho, Noemí Weksler, São Paulo, SP - Brasil

From: Roberto Linhares [romali@uai.com.br]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 7:31 AM

Subject: Good-bye Ray Conniff

Hi Doug, Yesterday was one of the worst days of my life, all my childhood and youth disappeared with Ray Conniff. On those last years of my life I have been dedicating to seek for the whole world the work of Ray. When I get some CD or rare LP (many I attribute to you) I feel a great satisfaction. One of the largest pleasures for me is to classify and to always hear the oldest disks than they remind me the parties and my youth's of the sixties dances. It was with a lot of sadness that when opening the internet in Manfred's page, I found the tragic news. I wait as the whole world community of Ray Conniff that its page and Ray Conniff International Fan Club of Manfred, the newspaper ' S Conniff doesn't never stop, once you

are the largest responsible persons for the popularisation of its work. With a lot of sadness, Roberto

From: MARIA ZILDA MOREIRA MELCHIOR PA-DOVANI [mazilpado@ig.com.br]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 9:59 AM

Subject: Ray Conniff

Mr. Doug Mitchell,

The world lost yesterday your biggest musician - Conniff. Today, we are poorer than yesterday. The original talent of Conniff was gone, picking up with him the happiness and the smile that only Ray Conniff has. In every presentation, Conniff brings a contagious rhythm, with no other in the Earth.

The happy music of Conniff now is an echo in the Heaven, and we, in the land, have only a missing to feel more and more each day...

From: jlamoura@zipmail.com.br

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 10:25 AM

Subject: Pesar

Deus levou nosso maestro para tocar no céu, resta-nos a sua lembrança e sua obra que o imortalizara, o sentimento é de perca mas quem somos nos para entender Deus, que a familia entenda que ele cumpriu seu papel nos alegrando, pois seu dom vem de Deus e ele sabe epode tudo. José Leopoldo Alves de MOURA(Zeca)

From: Widal - UO [widal@uol.com.br]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 10:42 AM

Subject: Happy

We should be happy and not to lament, and we everybody knows that we have an end, but its work this there for the eternity. Ray Conniff always live

Waldoberto, 56 years, Araraquara-SP, Brazil

From: Edward W. Pierce [ned@cyberwc.net]

Sent: Sunday, October 13, 2002 7:02 PM

Subject: A sad day!

Just a note to let you know that I grew up with Ray Conniff's music. He will be sadly missed. Thankfully, I have most of his albums on CD... I WILL MISS HIM! While most kids were listening to The Beatles, Elvis and other rock stars, I listened to Ray Conniff, Percy Faith and others. Like your website...

Sincerely, Edward W. Pierce

From: Andre Gustavo Miura [andreMiura@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 12:37 AM

Nós sentimos muito pela ida do maestro. Ele nos transmitia muita alegria com as músicas e sua orquestra. Obrigado Ray Conniff. Obrigado Ray Conniff por ter estado em São José do Rio Preto, Brasil. Você nos deixa alegria e saudades. Abraços, André.

p.s.: de uma geração que pouco conheceu de você.

From: GUIDO MIRANDA [REYNAL-DITO1938@msn.com]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 1:10 AM

Subject: la muerte de un verdadero maestro de la musica.

Estoy muy triste por esta ingrata noticia y no tengo palabras para expresar lo que siento en este momento, por la pena que siente mi corazon. Solo se atropella en mi mente el recuerdo de cuando lo escuche por primera vez interpretando el "Besame Mucho", para luego convertirse en infaltable de nuestras fiestas, para hacernos bailar al compas de "Tammy", "Brasil" y tantas y tantas canciones con las que nos alegro a su propio estilo y tambien nos

dio calma en el espiritu en los momentos que necesitabamos meditar o simplemente descansar. Querido Ray yo solo se te has adelantado en el viaje de esta vida, pero seguramente nos esperaras en el mas alla para seguir regocijando nuestros corazones con tu musica. Paz en tu tumba.

From: Telmo Souza [ttsouza@uol.com.br]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 1:17 AM

Subject: The Best

I do suggest a Great Ray Conniff's Festival to remember him for the young people around the world. Please let me know if the RC's Band will be continue. Best regards.

Telmo.

From: IMPERIAL BOB WIRTH

[robert.wirth2@verizon.net]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 10:05 AM

Subject: RAY

Please tell me I've heard wrong that we've lost Ray. Yesterday evening a friend mentioned this to me in an email and I've been so sad since, and have not been able to catch the story myself on any other news broadcast...

Do you know is he still alive? I'm a 40 year old fan here in Arlington VA. Thanks. BOB

From: IMPERIAL BOB WIRTH

[robert.wirth2@verizon.net]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 10:07 AM

To: dmitchell9@comcast.net

Subject: SORRY

I opened my eyes and read the page and there was the news. WITH DEEP REMORSE AT THE LOSS.. BOB

From: Gilvan Fernandes Carlos de Mendon [gilvanfernandes73@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 10:28 AM

We Brazilians, will never forget the dear Ray Conniff!!!

Givan Fernandes, Recife-Pernambuco-Brasil.

From: Stillwagon, Wes [WStillwagon@trueposition.com]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 11:52 AM

Subject: Sincere regrets

Hello, I wanted to tell you of my sorrow to hear of the loss of Ray Conniff as I have been a fan for many years. He was a truly classy musician that had the guts to be his own man and yet accomplishes so much musically. I am sure that I speak for all Mantovani Fans.

Wes Stillwagon, Mantovani Fan Website

<http://www.hallowquest.com/mantiindex.htm>

From: Alejandro Marn [radiodosis@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 12:56 PM

Subject: Request for interview

Dear Mr. Mitchell, I'm Alejandro Marín of the Caracol Network in Colombia. I was very sorry to hear about Mr. Conniff's death. His life was always celebrated through his music in my house here in Bogotá, and I hold the best memories of my childhood totally sonorized by his angelical trombone. My father has always been a Ray Conniff die-hard fan. I was also one; quite a young fan (I was about six years old when first exposed to his albums), but a real fan indeed. I'm asking for 5 minutes of your time to share with us tomorrow between 6 am and 10 am (central time) a bit of Mr. Conniff's life and musical wonders. The show's name is "9AM", and it's hosted by Dr. Darío Arizmendi. Our show is broadcast to over 100 stations in Colombia and more than 40 in Latin America. I appreci-

's Conniff # 1/2003: Condolences

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ate your taking the time to read this message and hope to talk to you soon. Kind regards and sentiments,
Alejandro Marin. (Caracol Radio News Network official English-Spanish Interpreter, Caracol Radio, Bogotá, Colombia, South America.)

From: Tatiana Martínez [tatiana2210@prodigy.net.mx]
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 2:32 PM
Subject: I SAID A LITTLE PRAY FOR RAY.....
I AM MEXICANO...I HAVE 41 YEARS...AND I'M VERY SAD FOR THE LOST OF MR. CONNIFF.....HE WAS A GENIUS...THE WORLD OF MUSIC CRY FOR THE GREAT MAN.....I'M SORRY.... I LOVE YOU RAY! ALFREDO MARTINEZ, MEXICO,CITY....

From: Tiago Godoy [tiago@taodesign.com.br]
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 5:13 PM
Subject: telegram
Hi, let me introduce myself... My name is Tiago, and I'm from Brazil. My father played with Ray Conniff in almost all of his tours in Brazil. And we would like to send Mrs Conniff our condolences. Would you give us her address so we can send her a telegram? Thank you very much
Tiago Godoy

From: GSDM [gsdm@prodigy.net]
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 3:35 PM
Subject: hi from one who played with Conniff
Hi, Ray played Caracas in either 1977, or 1978 and swung his ass off... He brought Panama Francis to play drums, some great session trumpet player from LA, and a few others... Most of all he brought passion and swing... it was terrific. Sorry to hear of his demise... but somewhere that style is still playing... Gene Sittenfeld

From: Rodolfo J. Giacumbo [errege@cvtci.com.ar]
Sent: Monday, October 14, 2002 9:42 PM
Subject: Mi unico lider
Sr. Mitchell: Ray Conniff fué mi unico lider musical, me siento muy apenado por esta noticia, conversé con Ray en el año 1979 cuando estuvo actuando en el Hotel Sheraton de Buenos Aires, fué muy gratificante y me envió su biografía. Lo saludo atentamente. Rodolfo J. Giacumbo. Seguiremos escuchando su musica siempre.

From: disaba 870327 [pablogaravato@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 12:56 AM
Subject: Ray Conniff
I want to say only this:
RAY CONNIFF, YOU ARE FANTASTICO! THANK YOU FOR YOU MUSIC AND FOR LOVING LATIN AMERICA! YOU ALWAYS STILL LIVING IN OUR HOME (HEART) GRACIAS RAY!

From: JAMES MASTERS [mastersjim@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 1:07 AM
Subject: BeautifulInstrumentals Group
Hi Doug, It's Jim Masters here. Moderator of the Beautifulinstrumentals group at yahoo groups. What sad news about the great Ray Conniff. So sudden and utterly shocking. My best to all the fans (such as myself and many in the Beautifulinstrumentals group). Most importantly, our best to the Conniff family who are experiencing an incredibly sad time right now to say the least. Ray Conniff's legacy is in his music and it's enduring spirit will live on forever in all our hearts. Doug, if you'd like to address any other members of the BeautifulInstrumentals group at anytime, you are more than welcome to. Obviously since the group celebrates

Easy Listening music, we are remembering Ray Conniff fondly right now.

Jim Masters, Moderator - BeautifulInstrumentals
mastersjim@msn.com

From: Dave Tuffin [dat26@ntlworld.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 7:50 AM
Subject: Ray Conniff

I would just like to add my condolences to those already given I only just found this site not having been on internet long and find it very good .I first fell in love with Rays music as a young lad of 20 back in 1960 when i heard his version of "Smoke gets in your eyes" playing on a jukebox in a cafe over here in the uk and have been a fan ever since. To me it was a marvellous arrangement and really hooked me to his music. Once again let me say sorry to hear of his death and my thoughts go out to his family .

From: Ron W. Narum [ihireu@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 11:13 AM
Subject: Condolences From A Life Long Fan

I just wanted to offer my condolences to Ray's family and fan club. I Just learned of Ray's passing this morning. I awoke to Willard Scott on the Today Show saying that Mr. Conniff had passed away. He will be greatly missed. I first was exposed to Ray Conniff's music back in the early 70's, when I was 11 yrs. old, by my dad. He had bought an 8 Track tape of "Alone Again, Naturally" and I was immediately attracted to his music. I started buying albums like crazy. My dad wrote Ray a letter to let him know that his 11yr old son was a huge fan. Ray sent me several personally autographed photos and albums. It was the greatest thrill of my life. For several years after that he would occasionally send a personally addressed Christmas card, album or photo. He was a wonderful person and musician and he will be missed greatly. Now at 38 yrs old and with over 70 albums and 50 CD's I still have a strong appreciation for his music. His music will live on with me forever. From a devoted fan
Ron Narum, Houston, TX USA

From: Saúl Mares [rodakqr@prodigy.net.mx]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 2:12 PM
Subject: RAY'S DEATH
WE ARE VERY SAD IN MEXICO FOR THE LOSS OF A GREAT MUSICIAN. RAY CONNIFF WILL BE ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS AND HIS MUSIC WILL BE REMEMBER FOR ALWAYS.
¡¡¡VIVA RAY CONNIFF!!!!

From: Robert C. Blase [letfloce@avantel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2002 3:09 PM
Subject: Ray Conniff

I am saddened to learn of Ray Conniff's death. I have followed him since his arranging days for Johnny Mathis and the launching of his first albums. He was a gentleman, a professional and a good citizen. He has left us with a treasury of music which will continue to live. His time with us has made our lives that much richer.
Robert C. Blasé, Celaya, Mexico

From: Wayne Blankenship
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2002 1:59 AM
Subject: Ray Conniff's passing

Dear Doug, I'm among the thousands that will truly miss Ray. The wonderful thing is that his music will last forever. As you know it's timeless, you can never get too

much of his joyous sound. WOW. What a swinging time they must be having in Heaven right now- with Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw & etc. Now the very best - Ray. I was fortunate to have sent him some of my CD covers about a year ago, and he was so nice to sign them and return them. Just wish we could talk Sony into putting his Japan concert on DVD. Again, we were blessed to have had Ray's music during our lifetime. Sincerely, Wayne Blankenship e mail waynespobox@msn.com

From: Wayne Van Dine Sr. [wvd@attbi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2002 6:49 PM
Subject: Re: TELL RAY HE WAS APPRECIATED
Thanks again for your response to my previous email. It's ironic that I would have found your site when I did, only a week before his death. He was a master and his work will remain with us for decades. Did you know him? You must have really admired him to create the web site.

From: Nuria Valderrama [nuriavalderrama@fbcyl.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2002 3:12 AM
Subject: RAY CONNIFF
ESTAMOS BUSCANDO UN DISCO MUY ANTIGUO QUE AUNQUE NO ERA EXACTAMENTE DE RAY CONNIFF NOS GUSTARIA CONSEGUIR Y NO TENEMOS FORMA DE ENCONTRARLO ES ALGO ASI "MUSICA DEL ESTILO DE RAY CONNIFF". SOMOS SEGUIDORES DE LA MUSICA DE RAY CONNIFF Y DESEAMOS HARCERLES LLEGAR EL MAYOR PESAME A SUS FAMILIARES Y SERES MAS CERCANOS QUE IMAGINAMOS LO ESTARAN PASANDO MAL. GRACIAS RAY CONNIFF POR TU MUSICA, QUE NOS ENCANTA LLEVARLA EN LOS VIAJES, DISPONEMOS DE VARIOS DISCOS AUNQUE IMAGINAMOS QUE NO TODOS. SI SABEN ALGO DEL DISCO QUE PEDIMOS INFORMACIÓN LES RUEGO NOS INFORMEN LO ANTES POSIBLE Y SI PUEDO CONSEGUIRLO EN BURGOS (ESPAÑA) O POR CORREO CONTRA REEMBOLSO GRACIAS POR ANTICIPADO

From: IMPERIAL BOB WIRTH [robert.wirth2@verizon.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2002 12:36 PM
Subject: RAY
Thank you for responding. I'm so glad to have Ray's music in my collection. It really makes me happy. I hope I can live to be 85. He had a full life. BOB

From: MrJ720@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2002 3:15 PM
Subject: Ray Conniff
It was with sadness that I learned about Ray's passing. My wife, Janet and I attended a concert in the 70's in Glasgow. What a night that was! Memories come flooding back to us both. Indeed, this is what I am playing regularly, 'Memories.' There are so many songs and tunes which simply flood the mind, all associated with Ray. Our condolences please to Vera and the entire family circle. Our thoughts are very much about them at this time of loss. May God sustain them each one. John and Janet Moore

From: claudiaanylu@prodigy.net.mx
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2002 1:36 AM
Subject: condolencias
Esta perdida en el ambito musical ha sido irreparable he sido admirador del maestro conniff desde los diecisiete

años y ha sido base importante de mi cultura musical en el ambito instrumental estoy muy consternado por la noticia, mis mas expresivas condolencias a la familia conniff de la cual me siento parte de la misma. atentamente uno de tantos fervientes admiradores ricardo diaz coot desde Mérida Yucatán México

From: Danusia [danusia_m@wp.pl]
Sent: Sunday, October 20, 2002 1:34 PM
To: Mitchell Doug
Subject: Ray Conniff passed away
Dear Doug, It is really very, very bad news. What to say in such moment? I am very sorry. I like Ray's music a lot and I am a fan of it. I think it is a good sentence by somebody - "His music will live forever". Regards Zbigniew Maciejewski, Poland

From: Daniel Chapman [dchapman61447@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2002 11:13 AM
Subject: Ray
I first started listening to Ray Conniff in 1960. His recording of "Love is the Sweetest Thing" by Ray Noble is my all time favorite recording by any artist or group. So many great band leaders are gone. Who's to take their place. -Dan

From: Ron Dawson [rwmd5012@onetel.net.uk]
Sent: Friday, October 25, 2002 5:43 PM
Subject: Sad News
I was very sorry to hear the sad news today of the passing of Ray Conniff. I am in my sixties, and for me, Ray and his music recall many happy events within my life. As his daughter said, he will always be with us by way of his music. What I'd like to say is "Thank you god, for Ray Conniff" Ron Dawson (Southampton England)

From: BS Lee [bslee1@maxis.net.my]
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2002 12:52 PM
Subject: Hello, I'm a long time fan of Ray Conniff. I'm saddened to hear of Ray's demise. His music had always been one of my Easy Listening favorites since the early 70's. Regards, BS Lee from Malaysia

From: garrett meadows [garrettmeadows@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 06, 2002 9:01 AM
Subject: There'll Never be Another Ray.
Just wanted to compliment you on your exemplary Ray Conniff webpage. Like all of Ray's legions of fans, I was saddened by his death. You will never guess where I'm always finding Ray's LPs? Local thrift stores. That's right. I can always count on finding at least one or two of Ray's LPs in the record bins of any given thrift store. Did Ray live in South America? I take it he was immensely popular "south of the border." Take care & thanks for your work on putting together such a great webpage. Peace be with you, Garrett

URL:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BeautifulInstrumentals/>
This is the LARGEST & MOST ACTIVE international music appreciation group filled with friendly, helpful & knowledgeable enthusiasts, faithful fans & experts who love, appreciate & collect instrumental and vocal "Beautiful/Easy Listening Music". Founded in 2000 to celebrate music referred to as "mood," "easy," "beautiful," "lounge," and/or "elevator" music spanning all eras & which was the #1 music format on FM radio for decades. Members only. Access easy: Apply for a password!

's Conniff
The International Ray Conniff
Fan Club Magazine

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It is compiled and edited by **Manfred Thönicke**, president of
The Ray Conniff International Fan Club.



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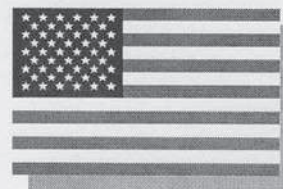
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The Official Ray Conniff Fan Club Website:

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