

# REMEMBERING "ROSIE"

JIM ROSEVEARE, alias "Rosie," "Bud Rose," et al, popular Bay Area organist, bon vivant and all-around character, died December 11 at age 46. His sudden passing leaves a gap none of us knows quite how to fill.

Rosie's interests were many — there being few topics on which he was unwilling to venture an opinion — but music always came ahead of everything else. His formal training included lessons with Wallace Rolls in San Jose and Richard Purvis in San Francisco. Informally, Jim tried to learn from all the music and musicians he came into contact with; probably the greatest influences were organists Jesse Crawford and Ashley Miller, and composer-arranger Robert Farnon.

Rosie had the good fortune to become interested in theatre organs when many original installations were still available, beginning with United Artists in Berkeley. Others included the first Oakland Paramount and the State, Fox, Orpheum, and most particularly the Paramount in San Francisco. For about a year he was a mainstay of the Avenue where he played



JAMES C. ROSEVEARE - 1942-1988.

Ed Mullins Photo

before the picture and for the radio shows produced there in 1967.

He played a Rodgers for the Oakland Paramount reopening in 1973. As staff organist he participated in the design, installation and finishing of the Paramount's second Wurlitzer, which he adored. More recently, he participated in the Saturday and Monday work sessions for the Nor-Cal chapter organ. While a chapter officer, Jim co-produced a regional convention here in 1965. No fewer than five national conventions tapped him for concert appearances.

In whatever he did, Rosie set high standards, especially for himself. No amount of rehearsal was ever too much, nor a piece ready for performance until it was as polished as he could make it.

Often a promising arrangement would be abandoned after months of labor if he felt it didn't quite work. In selecting music, Jim never fell back on the familiar and safe. Instead, he relished challenging an audience, fully confident he could communicate what he found appealing in whatever he had chosen. He was seldom wrong.

Steve Levin

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Roseveare was known for his meticulous adaptations and demand for musical perfection. For the past twenty years, he had been playing concerts around the country and in Europe. Musicians from across the nation have expressed their sympathies at the loss of their fellow artist.

"His musicianship was surpassed only by his sharp wit," noted pianist Peter Mintun. In 1985, Mintun and Roseveare collaborated on a sold-out duet piano and organ concert at the Paramount. Because of the popularity of the show, a commercial recording of the performance was made.

Paramount General Manager Peter Botto said of Roseveare, "We've lost a great friend. The Paramount will seem very empty without Jim. Our Wurlitzer was his passion — and because of his dedication and love for the instrument, I always knew that it was being well taken care of." *Paramount Theatre Obituary*

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It is a well-known fact that Jim had the utmost respect for the music of the early period of Jesse Crawford. At a recent convention of ATOS, I mentioned to Jim my trials in collecting Crawford's discs up to 1938. This led to a wonderful conversation about Crawford (and Helen when in-duo). Jim must have sensed my genuine admiration for Crawford. He asked me to send him a detailed list of the 30-some Victor 78 RPM sides missing from my tape collection. Not only did Jim supply all the vintage Victor sides, he also included some rare Crawford recordings I'd not asked about. I had not begun to

consider my conversation on Crawford would lead to Jim's completion of my collection. Jim was a storehouse of knowledge on the era and playing style(s) of Crawford. I am very grateful he decided to share some of his knowledge and his collection with me. Now these recordings are even more of a treasure. *Tom DeLay*

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What can one say? It's heard to believe that Rosie is gone. Seeing him seated imperturbably at the console, he seemed to be indestructible. As a musician and artist, Jim made full use of all ten fingers and produced a soaring, panoramic style of organ playing that no one else ever came close to. A lifetime of study and dedication to the art of the theatre organ was evident in every note he played. I recall seeing him one time at the Oakland Paramount, practicing one phrase over and over until he had every single stop chosen, every swell pedal movement exactly placed. Such attention to detail in all his music insured a beautifully polished performance each time.

Although I never knew Jim too well, we still got along famously on those occasions when we met. His expansive personality and great good humor always made for a pleasant visit.

We will always remember him for his love of the best music and his dedication to the finest standards of organ playing. Happily there are many recordings of his work. Each time I hear them, there is always something new to discover in his interpretations. We can always be thankful that there was someone like Jim

Roseveare to show us the full range of expression that the theatre organ is capable of. When can we ever hope to hear his like again? *Lew Williams*

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While walking in the vicinity of his apartment, a week after Jim Roseveare's death last December, I sadly realized that never again would I hear that wonderfully sagacious, stentorian radio voice coming to me weekly in person or by "magic telephone." All personal appearances had been cancelled. Jim, who had lived life to the fullest, was gone.

When we first met at the San Francisco Paramount in 1960, Jim was an intelligent, shy, skinny kid with a penchant for creating original music of the first order. Over the years our friendship grew, our musicianship grew and Jim grew!

In 1973 when I relocated in San Francisco, he was in the initial stages of planning the specification for the Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer. Monday evenings were usually reserved at my place for dinner, drinks and discussion of the project. Never have I seen anyone more organized than Rosie. There were charts, graphs and numerous specs. There were occasional arguments. There was always a good time.

By 1981 the Paramount Organ was in place and Jim devoted every available moment to it. His favorite project, the Vibraharp, which has an entire panel dedicated to its control, reflects his scrutiny for detail. His athletic abilities in scaling chamber ladders were exceeded only by his prowess tending to the forever present daily maintenance problems.



More than anything, Jim Roseveare, the class act person, was a musician of consummate taste. In a musical arena where originality is scarce, his was a shining, though sometimes unappreciated, light. His global musical knowledge and high performance standards will never be taken lightly by his peers. Farewell, old friend. We love you.

John Seng



Jim Roseveare was the most devoted Crawford fan and the first Charter Member of the Jesse Crawford Theatre Organ Society. He worshipped Crawford, and when he spoke of him it was with an awed reverence.

Rosie was a renowned gourmet, delighting in the quantity as much as the quality of his food. He jokingly called himself the "Orson Welles of the Organ." He was my "best customer" at dinner parties and would liven them up with his unique sense of humor. I'll never forget the time I made my specialty, Duck a la Orange. We were seated at the dinner table and Rosie looked at the half duck on his plate and startled me saying, "Ed, this duck isn't cooked enough!" He then took a fork in his left hand and stabbed the duck. At the same time he had hidden a duck-call in the napkin in his right hand. A loud "quack" resounded each time he stuck his fork in the duck. It was hilarious! Rosie said it was not a comment on my professional abilities.

Jim could be very self-effacing at times. Comparing his playing to Crawford's, he once said that next to Jesse he was a neighborhood hack. Well, it would be a very nice neighborhood to live in. Jim and Jesse are now playing duets in that "Big Theatre in the Sky." So long, Jim. We all miss you.

Dr. Edward J. Mullins



Rosie was a true gentleman whose musicianship and desire for accuracy came from the heart. He enjoyed different styles . . . in fact, his playing gave me a new appreciation for the work of Jesse Crawford. His contribution to theatre organ as a musical instrument, not merely an organ, will be felt for years to come.

Ashley Miller



A large part of the reason I do what I do is because of the years in San Francisco in the late sixties. He was a tremendous influence on my playing and choice of music.

Lyn Larsen



Rosie was an influence, not only musically but also in other areas. He tried to teach me that honor and truth are the foundation of the gentleman. He espoused hard work at one's craft (my fingers are still sore from our rehearsals together). His philosophy about music is summed up in the one sentence I'll always remember: "Talk doesn't make a musician . . . making music does!"

Jim Riggs



# ORGAN-IZING

## POPULAR MUSIC

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### Bass Notes Make The Difference - Part II

Pedal bass notes are an important part of all music. Organists and students who play from a melody line with chord symbols have nothing to guide them in the choice of pedals to be played with each chord. This often results in unmusical repetition or unnecessary hopping around on the pedals. By using NUMBERS BELOW THE MELODY we can easily indicate which note of the chord should be played on the pedals to create the most musical effect.

As an example: near the end of "Everything's Coming Up Roses," which many organists play, the melody moves up the scale with a different chord on each note.

The numbers below the melody indicate that the pedals should move in contrary motion: (high) C - B - A - Ab - G - F# - F - E - D. Play this example first with the root of each chord on the pedals and then using the numbers and LISTEN TO THE DIFFERENCE. This should clearly illustrate the necessity for selecting your pedals carefully.

One of the best examples is "The Star Spangled Banner." Whenever you hear it played by a band or orchestra, notice how the bass part moves up or down to the nearest note in the next chord.

Where there is no number — play the root of the chord on the pedals.

The next step is to select several songs that you like to play and, wherever the chords change on every one or two beats, try moving to the nearest note and listen. Try to get three or more in a row and then write the chord note/numbers under the melody notes so that you will always play them that way.

If you do not understand these numbers, refer to the article in the July/August 1988 issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

*After silence that which comes  
nearest to expressing the inexpressible  
is music.*

ALDOUS HUXLEY