

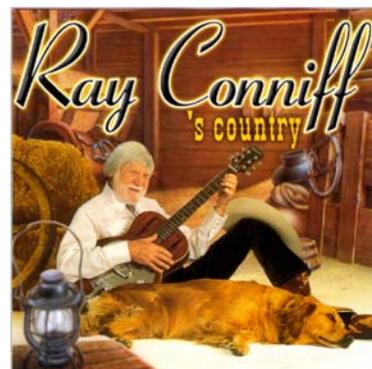
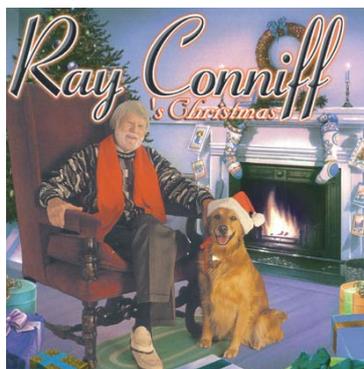
Ray Conniff

The International Ray Conniff Fan Club Magazine No. 4 / 2000 (Christmas 2000 EDITION)



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Ray Conniff on Abril Music:



Welcome

to the Christmas edition of 's Conniff, which is a bit thinner than usual. This is not because there was not enough material about Ray and his music to fill, say, 30 pages. Please let me explain:

You may remember that a while ago I mentioned "a Millennium Surprise" in my editorial, which was to be sent out to you, the club members, for Christmas 2000. In fact, a couple of people have been working on this project for a year now, and I must admit all of us are very sorry to tell you that due to unforeseen technical difficulties, this project did not materialise in time for Christmas. Well, I am not going to reveal here what this surprise was going to be, as I still hope we will be able to mail it to you all in early 2001. However, I would like to tell you I had thought that it could count as a double issue of "'s Conniff" because of its special value, and therefore neither Serge nor I had the usual amount of finished articles available for publication at the end of November. On the other hand, we did not want to delay the news of Ray's new album to those who do not know about it from our Internet web sites, and therefore it was decided to mail a thin edition (like the former "Ray Conniff Newsletter") to you, and we hope you will understand.

When I saw Ray in LA this summer, he mentioned the possibility of recording an album, completely devoted to the songs of Roberto Carlos, the Brazilian songwriter and singer. Well, Ray did record it in September. His Brazilian audience will love it, I am sure, but with all due respect to the fact that Ray is with a Brazilian record label now, I think it is a shame that his albums for Abril Music have not been released outside Brazil so far. Anyway, please find all the details on the "Do Ray para o Rei"-album available at the end of November 2000 in this edition. I must admit I felt gratified by the note from Ray, which gives evidence of how much he has appreciated our support throughout the years.

After completion of the new album, the Conniffs went on their usual motor home trip to Pennsylvania, Virginia etc. They returned home in early November.

That reminds me of Ray's birthday on November 6. On Sunday, November 5, in the afternoon my phone rang, and to my surprise it was Australian radio station 2UE (Sydney), who wanted to have me on the air, commenting on Ray's music and the fan club because of his 84th birthday. First, I

wanted to tell them that they were a day early, but then I realized that down under they were ahead of us – time-wise, of course. Well, to make a long story short, I enjoyed chatting with host John Kerr and only realized later that I could be heard all over Australia then. (They told me that on average there was an audience of 250,000 at that time of the day.) I remember I told John about Ray's enormous success in Latin America, especially in Brazil, and he took this cue to announce and play "Tico Tico" by Ray. Later, I asked our representative down under, Chris Couldrey, whether he had anything to do with this matter, and he wrote, "Yes, this will be as a result of that item I sent to 2UE a little while back about Ray Conniff. I didn't get a reply at the time, otherwise I would have let you know. However, my betting is that the information I sent to John Kerr has been filed for retrieval on Ray's birthday! Seems it may have done some good after all. I'll drop a note to John over the next couple of days and thank him for his coverage!" Well, let's take this opportunity to say **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR RAY AND MANY HAPPY RETURNS! ALSO, THANK YOU FOR BRINGING SO MUCH JOY INTO OUR LIVES WITH YOUR MUSIC!**

Sometimes, my representatives or I receive wonderful letters commenting on Ray's music, and I would like to quote from one sent by Charles Sieber (Cheektowaga, NY, USA) which also (I believe) expresses our feelings and wishes: "*I can't put into words the enjoyment I get listening to Ray's records, especially the Singers who record with Ray. What a God-given talent that man has. He certainly deserves the reputation, in my opinion as the best arranger in good wholesome music. May he enjoy the fruits of his labor of love for years to come!*"

In the UK, Ray's voice could be heard on the radio. Between 8th August and 12th September BBC Radio 2 featured a series of radio shows titled "The Arrangers". The 25 minute programmes were devoted each to the following conductor / arrangers of Easy Listening: Mantovani, Percy Faith, Geoff Love, Bert Kaempfert, James Last and Ray Conniff. Ray's segment was broadcast on 5th September 2000 at 10:04 pm (25 min). The tunes featured were *Moscow Nights / Davenport Blues - by Bunny Berigan and his Orchestra, with Ray on trombone / Band Of Gold - by Don Cherry with the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus backing / 's Wonderful / Somewhere*

My Love / Music To Watch Girls By / The Continental / Besame Mucho / One. The show featured interview segments with Ray and Perry La Marca, which were taped in LA in mid August. I must say this series was expertly done, and was a far cry from the usual, because it gave insight into the way of writing arrangements, creating sounds, and above all, was highly objective because of the integration of authentic interviews by the artists themselves. I also taped a couple of statements for this show, but I guess because of Ray and Perry's contributions there was not room enough for my comments. After all, they also had to provide music samples to support the statements given. The series was presented by Richard Niles; research by Dominic Black; produced by Lynsey Moyes.

Ray also appeared in another very interesting radio programme, titled "Music Maestro" on WFHB, Indiana; hosts were Jim and Helen (Sweet Girl) Gross, who taped a telephone interview with Ray on June 24, 2000, and used it for their broadcast on August 1. Ray was special guest, and his interview was presented in parts throughout the 2 hour programme.

I hope that even though this is not the usual magazine, you will enjoy reading this edition. My sincerest thanks go to everyone who contributed to it. Please pay attention to Ramon's details concerning the 2001 Convention in Barcelona. I hope to meet many of you there.

A very merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all. Please keep your fingers crossed that we will be able to send you your "Millennium Surprise" together with the next edition. Best wishes to you all,



Für deutschsprachige Leser

Liebe Leser,

eigentlich sollten Sie zusammen mit diesen Zeilen eine ganz besondere Weihnachtsgabe erhalten. Daraus ist aus technischen Gründen leider nichts geworden. Ich will nicht verraten, was für eine Art Überraschung das gewesen wäre, denn ich hoffe, wir können sie Anfang des kommenden Jahres nachreichen. Serge und mich traf die Mitteilung völlig unvorbereitet, und das ist auch der Grund für diese relativ dünne Ausgabe. Wir bitten dafür um Entschuldigung, denn es ist ja

nicht so, dass wir nicht genügend Material hätten, um 30 Seiten über unseren Lieblingskünstler zu füllen...

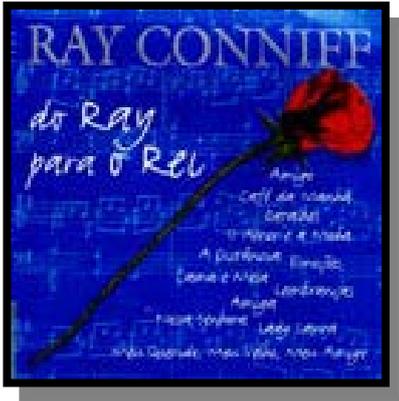
Nun, immerhin gibt es gute Nachrichten bzgl. einer neuen Conniff-Platte. Im September nahm Ray ein Album auf mit der Musik von Roberto Carlos. Der Titel „Do Ray para o Rei“ ist ein Wortspiel: Auf Portugiesisch klingen „Ray“ und „Rei“ identisch. „Rei“ bedeutet „König“. Man hätte es durchaus auf Ray beziehen können. Gemeint ist jedoch Roberto Carlos, der zum Beginn seiner Karriere als brasilianisches Pendant zu Elvis Presley („The King“) bezeichnet wurde. Dieser Name ist ihm immer noch zu eigen. Sagt ein Brasilianer „Rei“, dann ist Roberto Carlos gemeint. Nun, das neue Album sollte eigentlich Anfang November in Brasilien erscheinen, jedoch wurde die Auslieferung in letzter Sekunde wegen etlicher Druckfehler verhindert. (Z.B. fehlte Rays Danksagung an uns, die Fans; und die Clubadresse war nur sehr schwer zu lesen.) Das in dieser Ausgabe abgebildete Cover ist aus dem Internet. Da es dunkelblau ist und eine rote Rose (von links unten nach rechts oben) zeigt, ist es sehr schwer zu reproduzieren. Ich hoffe, ich habe für die nächste Ausgabe eine bessere Druckvorlage. Das Album wird es vorerst nur in Brasilien geben. Interessenten mögen sich an Clubmitglieder (Adressen in dieser Ausgabe) wenden.

Ein zweiter wichtiger Punkt ist das alle zwei Jahre stattfindende Treffen von Clubmitgliedern. Vom 25. bis 27. Mai 2001 findet es dieses Mal in Barcelona statt. Anmeldungen müssen (verbunden mit einer Anzahlung) bis spätestens Ende Januar an Ramon erfolgen. (Adresse im Heft.)

Am 6. November 2000 wurde Ray 84 Jahre alt. Aus diesem Anlass wurde ich von einem australischen Sender angerufen und gebeten, etwas live über den Äther über Ray, seine Musik und den Fanclub zu erzählen. An seinem Geburtstag waren Vera und Ray mit ihrem Wohnmobil unterwegs. Sie fuhren wieder an die Ostküste (Pennsylvania, Virginia usw.). Ich habe mir erlaubt, am 6. November per Fax die besten Glückwünsche aller Clubmitglieder nach Hollywood zu faxen.

Ich wünsche nicht nur etwas Freude an dieser ungeplant dünnen Ausgabe von „s Conniff“, sondern auch schöne Weihnachten und einen guten Rutsch! Bis zum nächsten Jahr also. Herzlichst, Ihr / Dein / Euer





DO RAY PARA O REI

This is Ray's third album for Abril Music. (The cover shown here was taken from the web site of an Internet record store, www.submarino.com.br*. It appears to be dark blue with Ray's name in silver. The cover is diagonally divided into two halves by means of a red rose, which I guess is hard to see when reproduced in black and white.)

Do Ray para o Rei - The pun in its title refers to the "King" (rei) Roberto Carlos, who this album is dedicated to. (In Portuguese, the pronunciation of "Ray" and "Rei" is identical.) Some fans from Brazil informed me that Carlos started recording in 1963, and he soon became very popular among the young people, especially the girls. In some small way, in Brazil, he became a kind of Elvis Presley, who, as you know is referred to as the

* I found the following text for the new album on their web site:

Do Ray Para O Rei - Hits de Roberto Carlos com o sabor de Ray Conniff

O trombonista, arranjador e maestro norte-americano Ray Conniff começou sua carreira profissional nos anos 40, como músico da orquestra do clarinetista Benny Goodman, o Rei do Swing. Em 1955, com o declínio das bandas de swing, Ray decidiu criar sua própria orquestra, acompanhando cantores como Johnny Ray, Tony Bennett e Johnny Mathis. Em 1960, descobriu a "fórmula sonora" que o transformaria em um dos músicos mais populares do mundo: arranjos vocais gravados em contraponto ao naipe de metais, transformando as vozes em "instrumentos de sopro". Emplacou sucessos como "Besame Mucho", "La Mer", "Stranger In Paradise" e "Aquarela do Brasil". Passou a visitar constantemente o Brasil e a gravar MPB. Neste CD, lançado em novembro de 2000, Ray faz um tributo a Roberto Carlos, recriando doze canções do repertório do intérprete. Estão aqui, com o "padrão Conniff", sucessos do Rei como "Amigo" (que ele já havia gravado anteriormente), "Emoções", "Café Da Manhã", "Detalhes", "Cama E Mesa" e "Nossa Senhora". Fãs do cantor e do maestro vão gostar.

King. Brazilian Ray Conniff fans wrote to me that in those days people started to refer to Roberto Carlos as the "King Of The Young", and later, "King Roberto Carlos". Until today, he has been the all-time best selling Brazilian artist, including all Latin American countries. He returned to the concert stage only recently after an absence of about one year, after his wife passed away.

All 12 tracks were written by Roberto Carlos and Erasmo Carlos. Ray recorded them in September. In a live telephone interview during one of the Amaury Jr. talk shows on Brazilian TV, Ray said in late October that the new album was to be released on the Abril Music label in Brazil in December. (Actually, the release was scheduled for the second week of November, but because of several misprints, wrong names, missing details and some illegible items, such as the fan club address, all copies were withdrawn and the release was postponed.)

The new album was recorded in stages: Together with Perry La Marca the maestro produced tracks with a combination of synthesizers, brushes on the snare drum played by Jerry White and many guitar overdubs played by Jim Lum who also works on Perry's projects. (As for other personnel, please see next page.) Then these tracks were taken to the "Private Island Trax" studio in Hollywood, and brass and saxes (3 sessions) and then singers (3 sessions) were recorded and mixed from September 13 through September 23, 2000. The album was mastered at Bernie Grundman Studios in Hollywood by Chris Bellman.

Although Ray previously recorded most of the tracks for various albums (see notes below the list of songs), the fans may expect slightly different arrangements and a more contemporary "radio-ready" sound. (At the time of writing these lines, I have not heard the new album, but I am sure many fans will like to review it for the #1/2001 edition of "'s Conniff".)

"Nossa Senhora" is the only track not previously recorded by Ray. Here are further details:

The CD features the following 12 tracks in this sequence:

1. **Lembranças** (Recuerdos)¹ (3:20)
2. **Nossa Senhora**
(featuring a trombone solo by Ray) (3:20)
3. **Amigo**¹
(featuring a new rhythm
arranged by Perry La Marca) (2:53)
4. **Emoções**³ (2:59)
5. **Meu Querido, Meu Velho, Meu Amigo**¹ (3:03)
6. **Café da Manhã**² (3:22)
7. **Detalhes**⁴ (3:45)
8. **Cama e Mesa**³ (3:14)
9. **A Distância**⁴ (2:44)
10. **Lady Laura**² (3:04)
11. **Amiga**⁶ (2:25)
12. **O Amor e a Moda**⁵ (2:44)

(Annotations: 1 = first recorded for "Exclusivamente Para Amigos / Exclusivamente Latinos"; 2 = first recorded for "Entre Amigos"; 3 = first recorded for "Amor, Amor"; 4 = first recorded for "Exitos Latinos"; 5 = first recorded for "Superonico"; 6 = first recorded for "Fantastico".)

Ray also recorded a new version of "El Progreso" (first recorded for "Exitos Latinos"), but this will remain unreleased because he thought this was not as perfect as the other tracks.

A Note from Ray:

I would like to express my sincere thanks to those of you that have supported my music over the many years that I have been recording. Music has been a wonderful part of my life and it has been you, the fans, that have made that wonderful life possible. May God bless you all,

Ray Conniff

The engineers were Dick Bogert and his assistant Bernard Gresez. Ray Conniff was the arranger, producer and conductor of the recording sessions. The master recording is owned and copyrighted by Ivy Music / Ray Conniff. The recording sessions were supervised by Perry La Marca.

Personnel:

Singers:

Laura Savitz (1st soprano), Sandy Howell (2nd soprano), Erin Theriault (1st alto), Lisa Semko (2nd alto), Jeff Gunn (1st tenor), Enoch Asmuth (2nd tenor), David Loucks (1st baritone), Jeff Dolan (2nd baritone and vocal contractor); assistant vocal contractor: Dave Theriault.

Musicians:

David Gardner (1st trumpet), Don Clarke (2nd trumpet), Don Smith (3rd trumpet), Jack Redmond (1st trombone), Bob Payne (2nd trombone), Ernie Tack (bass trombone), John Bambridge (1st alto sax), David Hill (2nd alto sax), Brian Scanlon (1st tenor sax), Phil Feather (2nd tenor sax), Jennifer Hall (baritone sax), Greg Huckins (alto flute), Jerry White (drums), Jim Lum (guitars), Perry La Marca (piano solos, and keyboard and synthesizer programming), Ray Conniff (trombone solos).

As this album (like "s Country" and "s Christmas") will not be available outside Brazil, you may contact the following club members there to obtain copies:

Mr **Laércio Monzani Junior**,

Rua Dr. Betim, 498,

13042-020 CAMPINAS, SP, Brazil

Email: laerciojr@aquarium.com.br

Shop web site:

<http://www.aquarium.com.br/laerciojr>

Mr **Daniel Marchi de Oliveira**,

Rua Bueno de Paiva No. 480 Méier,

20.720-05 Rio de Janeiro – RJ

Email: marchi@domain.com.br

I am sure that also **Elias** is willing to help you obtain copies. (His address is on the "Committee"-page.)

← These are the liner notes I mentioned in the editorial.

Unfortunately, as of November 20, the order No. was not available, sorry!

Here is news about previously unknown CD's and brand new releases:

RAY CONNIFF IN MOSCOW

The CD version of this album (made in Russia) is now available through www.amazon.com.

We learned about the following compilation CD through the web site of Sony Music, Italy. So far, nobody seems to have a copy of it, therefore I cannot let you have its cover. Here are details of

MUSIC TIME

(Italy, Columbia 491606 2) I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing / Happiness Is / Don't Cry For Me Argentina / Blue Moon / Smoke Gets In Your Eyes / Melodie D'amour / You Stepped Out Of A Dream / Jamaica Farewell / Miss You / If I Knew Then / The Sheik Of Araby / Cabaret / Love Story / The Way We Were

The 3 CD set from Reader's Digest "MEESTERS VAN DE SFEERMUZIEK" (B 98 017 BB 3), of which I featured details in the last edition of "'s Conniff", has also been released with a booklet in French and was re-titled "MASTERS OF MELODY" (Reader's Digest B 98 017 BW 3). It became available in autumn 2000. Frank Deckers wrote that the Dutch version might be deleted now, because he received the French version when he ordered the Dutch one. (Both sets, by the way, were manufactured in The Netherlands.)



I never mentioned the CD on the left (nor included it in my Ray Conniff Discography), because I always thought it was the CD with the same title that I have in my collection, featuring poor imitations in Ray's style (well, sort of). However, Doug surfed the net and found it listed on the

Mexican web site of Sony Music, and now I know that it is a compilation CD, which was released a decade ago, but is still available:

HOMENAJE A RAY CONNIFF

(Mexico, Sony Music CDDI 463721, released on August 8, 1990) New York, New York / Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head / Nadia's Theme (The Young And The Restless) / Green Eyes / Say It With Music / Besame Mucho / Three Coins in the Fountain / Stranger in Paradise / The Continental / Love Letters in the Sand / La Mer / Night And Day / Frenesi / Brazil / Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing

Because of this confusion I have to let you have details of two CD's which appear under "Ray Conniff" on the web site of www.submarino.com.br, but feature poor imitations of some unknown artists:

Please note that although Ray's name is stated in bold letters on the covers of these CD's, they do not feature original recordings by Ray. No.1 is titled

TRIBUTE TO RAY CONNIFF

It shows Ray on the cover (see →) and sells at R\$ 11.90 at Submarino and features 16 tracks. The ones marked * were never recorded by Ray! The 16 tracks are as follows:



Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / Mamy Blue / Sunny / Do You Know The Way To San José? / This Guy's In Love With You / Rose Garden / Sugar Sugar* / What Now My Love / Yellow River* / Strangers In The Night / My Way / Oh Happy Day* / Where Do I Begin (Love Story) / My Sweet Lord / The Fool On The Hill* / Michelle*

The second CD listed there is titled

THE COLLECTION COVER HITS: RAY CONNIFF

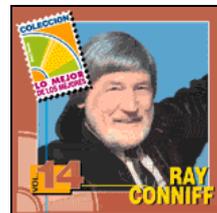
(and sells at R\$ 8.90). Interestingly, this CD features the same selections as the one above. OK, don't get me wrong, I do not intend to promote these CD's – on the contrary, I just want to warn you of them!

Doug (and a couple of other people who collect each and every Conniff CD released throughout the world) would like to have information on a couple of CD's from Mexico and Colombia. If you have copies or know where to buy them, please contact Doug. His email address is dmitchell9@aol.com. The CD's in question are as follows:

← 1) **Homenaje a Ray Conniff**

2) Lo Mejor de Los Mejores

Released in Colombia (Sony/Columbia M2473347). Brazil / El Amor Es Una Cosa Esplendoro (Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing) / Hey Jude / Laughter In The Rain / Candida / Love Story / Happy Together / El Tema De Lara Del "Doctor Zhivago" / Only You / The Entertainer / Volare / Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / Kiss And Say Goodbye / Aquellos Ojos Verdes (Green Eyes) / Honey Come Back / Mi Cafetal



3) Coleccion Estelar Sony

Released in Colombia (Sony/Columbia M2473134) Besame Mucho / El Mar / Tico Tico / Siboney / Malagueña / Adios / Frenesi / Brasil / Volare / Besos De Fuego (Kiss of Fire) / Dama De España (Lady of Spain) / Patricia Es Patricia / La Mucura / Maria Elena / Lisboa Antigua



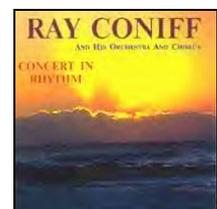
4) El Sonido Brillante de Ray Conniff

Released in Colombia (Sony/Columbia CDC464547) El Condor Pasa / Alone Again (Naturally) / Brasil / Mi Cafetal / Little Music Box Dancer / Ravel's Bolero / Mozart In Latin / Pajaro Chogui Boogie / El Dia Que Me Quieras / Cuando Sali De Cuba / Me Olvide De Vivir / I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing / Smoke Gets In Your Eyes / The Shadow Of Your Smile / Bridge Over Troubled Water / Love Theme From The Godfather / Caballo Viejo / Y Como Es El



And finally, this CD came to my attention only recently. (Thanks, Igor!)

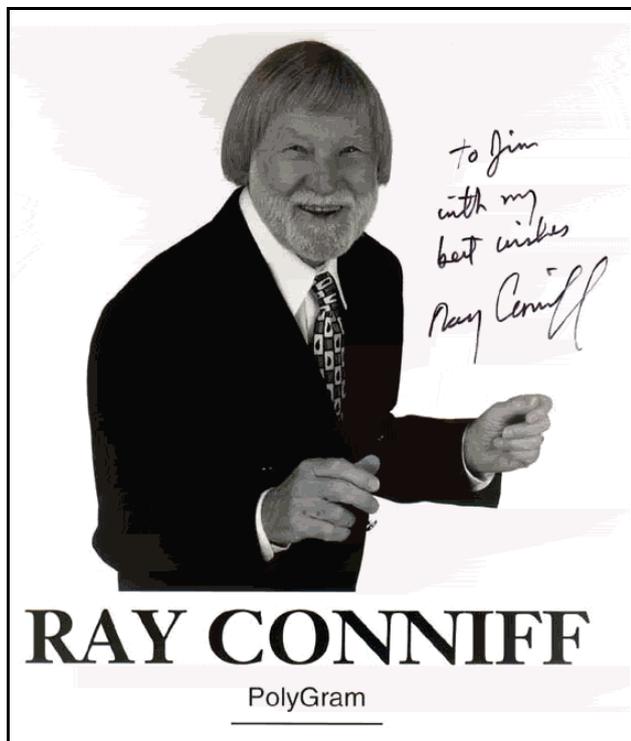
Ray's "Concert in Rhythm" was released on CD in Russia in 1997 with a cover showing a beautiful sunset (CDMAXIMUM CDM 1197-34). It was probably a bootleg.



The Record Exchange

If you are looking for the following, please contact Manfred: LOVE AFFAIR (CD, USA, Columbia Legacy CK 64868), THIS IS MY SONG (CD, USA, Columbia CK 65018), RAY CONNIFF'S HAWAIIAN ALBUM (CD, USA, Columbia Legacy CK 65019), YO ESCRIBO LAS CANCIONES (I WRITE THE SONGS) (Cassette, Spain, CBS 40-81179), TICO TICO (CD, Saludos Amigos CD 62090), THE MANY MOODS OF RAY CONNIFF (CD, USA, Sony Special Products A 15903), WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS (CD, USA, Columbia CK 8692); Perry La Marca's FIRST LOVE (CD, 2 copies); GREAT FILM HITS, a compilation featuring 12 tracks by various artists (Kostelanetz, Bennett, Nero, Faith, Barry, Carr, Conniff) (CD, Argentina, Columbia 2-463219), UN MUNDO DE MUSICA, VOL. 2: LOS EXITOS DEL CINE, a compilation of 19 tracks by various artists (Kostelanetz, Cacho Tirao, Caravelli, Faith, Conniff, Nero, Barry, Damone etc.) (CD, Argentina, Orfeo 2-484958), and UN MUNDO DE MUSICA, VOL. 2: LOS EXITOS INSTRUMENTALES, a compilation of 18 tracks by various artists (Faith, Kostelanetz, Legrand, Mitch Miller, Conniff, Caravelli, Bonetti etc.). If you want further details, please do not hesitate and contact me.

Found on the Internet



It is amazing what you can find on the Internet when you look up "Conniff" in a search engine. For example, at <http://www.usdreams.com/AchieversLettersConniff.html> you can find this autographed photo by Ray saying "To Jim with my best wishes, Ray Conniff", and also the accompanying letter, which answers two questions asked many celebrities, as follows:

Ray Conniff

P.O. Box 46395, Los Angeles, Calif. 90046
Tel. 213 - 874-1659

Question #1 : What does the American Dream mean to you?

Answer : Not to have to be trudging around in the mud in Kosovo with all my belongings and my home gone!

Question #2 : What advice would you give to someone chasing after their dream?

Answer : Pray to the Father for direction and guidance!

Ray Conniff

Question #1: What does the American Dream mean to you?

Answer: Not to have to be trudging around in the mud in Kosovo with all my belongings and my home gone!

Question #2: What advice would you give to someone chasing after their dreams?

Answer: Pray to the Father for direction and guidance! Ray Conniff

Alan Bunting would like to draw our attention to a very interesting web site for music lovers like us: Please visit www.egroups.com and key in the search word "poporchestra" as written here.

Alan also created a great web site of his own, devoted to the works of Percy Faith. If you are interested in his recordings, all those many CD reissues on the Taragon and Collectables labels, please visit <http://homepages.tesco.net/~alan.bunting>

A very bad example, however, is a site whose URL is <http://members.tripod.lycos.nl/conniffvsbaker/home.htm>. This must have been done by a Conniff fan, who did not care too much about accuracy. The text about Ray, which is completely in Dutch, states that he was born in 1924 in New York. I sent an email with many corrections, but never got a reply.

Please note that Bear Family Records have a new fax No. It is now +49-(0)47 48-82 16 20. Their web site address is www.bear-family.de. In their 25th anniversary catalogue they offer quite a few CD's by Ray, including a 2 CD compilation from Spain, titled "Grandes Exitos" (released in 1994).

Here's a cordial HELLO to my dear friends from Barcelona. This is from Ramon. I have been a big Ray Conniff fan since 1969. I am from the city of Barcelona, which is the capital of Catalunya (Catalonia), Spain. Some time ago I uttered my wish to organise a Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention in my city. As you will remember, through a popular vote, the majority of the participants in Rome decided that it would be a good idea. I accepted the task of organising it and obviously after such wonderful previous conventions, the standard has been set extremely high. However, I promise that the 20001 Convention will be very interesting, too. Along with my wife Marina I have been to Basle, Paris and Rome to attend Ray Conniff Fan Club Conventions, which we thoroughly enjoyed. We were not able to go to the Mini-Conventions which take place between the biannual "big" and official conventions, but I have been told that they were very good also. Therefore congratulations to Christian, Serge & Francis, Claudine, Luciano, Patrick and all the previous organisers, along with Manfred who has taken part in the organisation of almost all of the afore-mentioned conventions.

Barcelona is a modern, Mediterranean city with an important historical, artistic and cultural patrimony. Catalan is the language spoken in the family and on a general level, but as Catalunya is an integral part of Spain, Spanish is also spoken. Nevertheless, as it is well-known, English is widely understood. Ah, I promise you that I will have an interpreter at my disposition! Here are details of what I planned and some requests:

1. The Convention will be held in Barcelona from the afternoon of Friday, 25th May, all through Saturday, 26th May, and for those who can stay, Sunday, 27th May until about lunchtime.

2. The finalised schedule of events will be given in the next edition of "'s Conniff". However, as an "appetizer", here are some of my ideas:

3. In order to make things easier for me, I would appreciate it if you could only correspond with me with respect to anything concerning the convention, and it should be put in writing to my address given on the right. I will reply as soon as I can in English. You can write to me in Spanish, French, Italian or Portuguese. If you have to write in any other language, please try to write in English. If this is impossible, I will try to work it out somehow.

4. During the two days we could visit many interesting places, such as the following ones:

- **La Ciutat Vella:** This is the old quarter of the city, where many architectural treasures can be found from the Roman era to the medieval, Gothic era.

- The area of **La Rambla**, a unique street and a symbol of cosmopolitan Barcelona.

- We should stroll along the **Passeig de Gracia** which reflects Barcelona's Bourgeois period at the beginning of the last century. This street (together with **Rambla de Catalunya** represents Barcelona's most elegant shopping district where also the hotel is situated.

- Of course, I must not forget to promise you a visit to the architectural features of Barcelona known as **El Modernismo**, which is mainly represented by the architect Antoni Gaudi's creation of the cathedral of the Holy Family (see picture in the editorial of this edition of "'s Conniff").

- The mountain of **Monjuic** with its huge gardens and architectural monuments of the 1929 Expo (Palau Nacional, Font Magica, and the wonderful German pavilion, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe). Thanks to the Olympics in 1992, the area was remodelled and we can now admire such places as the **Olympic Stadium** and **El Palau Sant Jordi**, among others. The above mentioned **Font Magica** features an amazing show in a combination of water, light and music.

- Then there is the **port**, the **beaches**, the **Olympic Village** and its modern area with bars, clubs and restaurants.

- For those of you who like football, the **Nou Camp** might be of interest, where 100,000 fans are able to watch a match!

- If some of you intend to stay a few days longer, I can recommend some day excursions that can easily be done by train: For instance to **Montserrat** and **Vall de Nuria**. Here you can see some unique mountainous areas. Or perhaps you might want to go on a trip to the **Costa Brava** or **Sitges**...

5. I thought we could go on some of these excursions together, as always – on foot or by bus. (We might enjoy great music during the ride!)

6. There is always a choice of at least three different **meals**. I will try to combine fish with meat dishes, paella, baked lamb etc. OK?

7. **The hotel:** After a great deal of consideration I decided for a centrally located hotel. I made a tentative reservation for 50 people at the "**Crystal Palace**", which is a 4 star hotel. (I also made tentative reservations for the whole week preceding the Convention.) The price per night is as follows:

A double room for two people is 26,000 pts (*which amounts to DM 305,63 or € 156,27 or about £ 95.00 → figured out by Manfred. Please check correctness at your bank. You can rely on the amounts stated by Ramon in pesetas!*); a single room is 21,500 pts; a double room with single occupancy 24,000 pts.

Breakfast is not included. There is a breakfast buffet for 1,650 pts (or à la carte in the café).

7 per cent VAT must be added to all the above prices.

Please make your reservation before the end of January 2001. I will have to confirm the booking of the rooms by February 1. Then I also have to pay 50 % of the total sum. Therefore I ask you to effect payment to my bank account no later than January 31, 2001. Here are details:

Please remit your money to Ramon Vilaret i Reig (Ray Conniff International Fan Club), account No. 2013 0629 98 0200475231 at the Caixa Catalunya (that's the name of the bank).

So, don't hesitate! After receiving this edition of "'s Conniff", please make up your mind and write to me as soon as possible. Here is my address:

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From the September 2000 edition of "Country Music People", page 11:

"Country Music Questions with Spencer Leigh"

(kindly sent by Barbara and Les Peckham)

Q: I heard that Ray Conniff once made an easy listening album with a lot of country stars. Can you tell me what it was? *Pete Jones, Leeds*

A: It's hard to fathom why old Easy Listening — sorry, Loungecore — albums have become so popular and why LPs by Andy Williams, Mantovani and Percy Faith are commanding high prices. Andy Williams has been quietly performing at his Moon River Theatre in Branson, Missouri and is now planning world tours again. Burt Bacharach has been working with Elvis Costello and has several other projects on the go. Columbia hasn't got round to reissuing the Ray Conniff catalogue but it could easily come.

Ray Conniff arranged many hit records for Johnny Mathis (*It's Not For Me To Say*), Marty Robbins (*A White Sport Coat*), Johnnie Ray (*Just Walkin' In The Rain*), Frankie Laine (*Moonlight Gambler*) and Don Cherry (*Band Of Gold*) before developing his own sound. The Ray Conniff Singers often sang wordlessly and their voices blended in with the instruments. Once he had decided what to do, it came together fairly easily as he could make a couple of albums a year.

Ray Conniff also recorded some special projects and he released *The Nashville Connection* in 1982. This featured his Singers with ten country stars, usually performing songs that they had not recorded before, and was produced by Billy Sherrill. However, the tracks with Barbara Mandrell (*A Very Special Love Song*) and Charlie Rich (*As Time Goes By*) are overdubbed versions of existing recordings. A shame as Charlie Rich could have made a whole album of standards with Conniff.

The chorus is often overpowering and spoils Marty Robbins' *We I-lad It All*. George Jones holds his own with *I Love You So Much It Hurts Me* and I liked the Spanish version of *The Most Beautiful Girl* from Johnny Rodriguez. Lacy J. Dalton pulls out all the stops for *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* and, manufactured as it is, I enjoyed Charlie Rich's *As Time Goes By*. The other performers are Charly McClain, Larry Gatlin, Zella Lehr and Johnny Paycheck.

The Nashville connection only has a playing time of 30 minutes, but it could be combined with outtakes from the sessions and photographs (where Ray actually met the performers. of course!) to make an attractive CD package.

After I had read both question and answer, I decided to write the following lines to the magazine:

Today I got a photocopy of page 11 of your September 2000 edition ("Country Music Questions with Spencer Leigh), and as the president of the Ray Conniff International Fan Club I read with interest both Pete Jones' question and the answer given, which is completely correct. Ray told me a couple of times that he was not too pleased with the "Nashville Connection" album. He had a completely different mix made, but the record company did not like it. In fact, he also recorded a couple of tracks, featuring his Singers only, and some of the outtakes include "Delta Dawn" with Tammy Wynette and the English version of Johnny Rodriguez' "The Most Beautiful Girl". I personally do not believe that Ray met most of singers in person for the recordings. I was told that all the Conniff backings were recorded in Los Angeles, whereas the singers' voices were added in Nashville. In some cases, the solo tracks existed before Ray added the backings. He made a couple of up-tempo demos for e.g. "We Had It All" and "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" (featuring trombone solos), but Columbia executives preferred the slow versions. So, don't blame Ray! In fact, it would be very nice to have this album on a CD, including all those unreleased tracks.

Regards, Manfred Thoenicke

News of the Past

The only two tracks by Ray I only have on a 78 rpm single from Britain are "**Piggy Bank Boogie**" and "**Short Stuff**". In October, Barrie Parker came across a 45 rpm version of it. Obviously, nobody has ever known of it. Barrie sent me a photocopy of the red label, which I found is identical with the one of my 78rpm record. The order number is as follows: Vogue Coral Series 45-QW5001 (matrix Nos. 45-L.7561 and 45-L.7563). Congratulations, Barrie! This is a real collector's item!

Igor Karpov (from Moscow) has collected many different releases of "**Ray Conniff in Moscow**" with quite a few different covers, including this 12" LP from **Tashkent**. Doug

will feature all the ones known on the Internet some time in the future. Some rare and unusual LP covers have already been uploaded. Check them out!



**'s Conniff
The International Ray Conniff
Fan Club Magazine**

is a publication for the discriminating collectors and admirers of the music of
Ray Conniff.

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

Honorary president is **Ray Conniff**

© November 2000 (Christmas Edition # 4/2000)



Subscription rates for four editions of 's Conniff :

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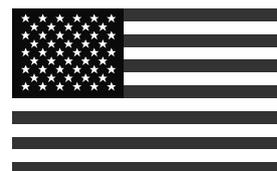
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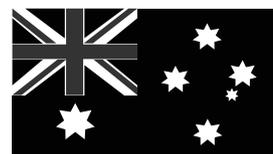
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