

ROBERT S. MARGULIES (1927–2009)

Contributions to Los Angeles' Classical Music Scene



BOB and I have been good friends since the 1970s — both as colleagues at TRW and through our shared involvement in Los Angeles' classical music scene. Mary's and my friendship with Bob and Helen and our admiration of them grew very strong over the years. I had the impression that as a physicist, Bob and his lunchtime physicist friends believed all things in the universe could ultimately be explained by the laws of physics — if only the equations could be solved. . . . However, as I've been learning from my Methodist pastor, Jonathan Chute, Bob's activities — behind-the-scene work bringing the great gift of classical music to the community, his selfless support of Helen in her humanitarian causes, the time and care given to fellow musician and composer George Andrews as he struggled with Parkinson's disease, and I'm sure many other good things others know about — had all the earmarks of Bob doing God's work on Earth. Whether he knew it or not, as Bob left us on Sunday, July 5, 2009, he had all his bases covered.

I'd like to talk briefly about Bob's involvement in music with 1) the South Bay Chamber Music Society, 2) the Clickable Chamber Music Newsletter, 3) Sundays Live, and 4) Royce Malm's Monthly Musicales.

South Bay Chamber Music Society

WWW.PALOSVERDES.COM/SBCMS/

Bob, along with Helen, was a forward-looking member of South Bay Chamber Music Society's Board of Directors for over 30 years. The Society was one of the first concert series to have a presence on the World Wide Web. A few years after the website was established in 1996, Bob and I headed a team of volunteers to transcribe Sidney Stafford's extensive archive of programs dating back to the Society's founding in 1963. The index of performing artists reads like a Who's Who of the Los Angeles music scene, and Bob was the page-turner of choice for the pianists. For many years, Bob applied his expert computer skills to running the South Bay Chamber Music Society — each year adding the new schedule of

concerts to its website and archiving the concerts just passed, keeping the database of contributors, printing mailing labels, and much more.

Clickable Chamber Music Newsletter

WWW.PALOSVERDES.COM/CLASSICALCROSSROADS/CCMN.PDF

Bob has been an indispensable behind-the-scenes partner in my *Clickable Chamber Music Newsletter* from its first issue in November 1999 to late in 2008. The quality he brought to it through his amazing and expert proofreading each week is a primary factor in its continued growth to almost 5,000 subscribers today. Bob patiently and repeatedly corrected the spelling of Astor Piazzolla (there are two “z”s and two “l”s), and he knew obscure facts like the correct spelling of Meredith Willson (there are two “l”s in Willson).

Bob got so exasperated with my repeated date errors, he wrote something called a PERL script that automatically read the draft newsletter to find them. Then he wrote for me a marvelous all-purpose calendar utility in C (the programming language, not the key signature) that instantly generates correct dates that I paste into the newsletter. I’ll never type a date again. The program, which Bob dubbed CalM6, for **Cal**endar **M**argulies, **V**ersion **6**, is the best little utility I’ve ever seen. (More about CalM6 in a minute.)

Bob took pride in his proofreading prowess. He didn’t want it widely known that he was the Clickable Chamber Music Newsletter proofreader, because I often would add in last-minute un-proofed material, and he didn’t want people to think he’d seen it.

I always felt very humbled and honored that the chamber music newsletter was so important to Bob, and he never missed proofreading it. When I was late, he’d call me to find out where it was. Bob was considerably impaired with ALS when the Santa Monica Crossroads School selected the *Clickable Chamber Music Newsletter* for its annual EMMI Crossroads Chamber Orchestra Honoree Concert on Sunday, November 9, 2008. Bob had the date on his calendar for a long time and was determined to go. After a marvelous concert conducted by Los Angeles Philharmonic Concertmaster Alexander Treger, Helen, Bob, Mary, and I were hosted at a wonderful dinner celebration at Santa Monica’s Warszawa restaurant. This was the last of the countless concerts during his lifetime that Bob ever attended.

I saw Bob on the Thursday before he died, and it was clear then he was ready to leave us. I managed to get a smile from him when I told him how a team of 18

volunteers struggle each week to do the newsletter proofreading that he did so magnificently and single-handedly for almost ten years.

Sundays Live

WWW.SUNDAYSLIVE.ORG

Begun in 1948, Sundays Live is the longest-running live music broadcast in Los Angeles. In 2003, the City of Los Angeles' Department of Cultural Affairs faced severe budget cuts and was no longer able to underwrite the series. An intrepid group of volunteers that included Bob, joined forces under the leadership of Sundays Live Artistic Director Bill Vestal to rescue the series. It's now safe under the umbrella of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and it streams its weekly live concerts worldwide via the internet.

Bob became a loyal member of the Friends of Sundays Live Executive Committee and took over the development of its website. Bob helped develop and sent out the weekly e-mail Sundays Live concert reminders, indispensable to Southland music lovers who sign up for them on the Sundays Live website. The result is that the Bing Theater is often filled to capacity with the overflow listening to the concert in the lobby, as it was last Sunday.

Royce Malm's Monthly Musicales

I'm privileged to attend monthly musicales in the Palos Verdes home of retired music educator, composer, and recording archivist Royce Malm, where a group of us listen to selections of his very extensive and historic record collection dating back to the turn of the last century. Bob was part of the group that includes some of the most musically knowledgeable people I know, among them Sidney Stafford, Elizabeth Zuehlke, Paul Corneil, Natalie Fields, Barry Wally, Norman Neblett, and Jess Morton, to name just some. Being arguably the least musically knowledgeable person there, I learned a tremendous amount about music over the years listening to their erudite conversation. Bob's brother Ed joined us one afternoon and knows what I'm talking about.

I miss Bob. If he were here, I would have e-mailed this to him and asked him to proofread it. I have a present for each of you from Bob (he told me it was O.K.). It's his CalM6 calendar utility. E-mail a request to jeninger@yahoo.com,

and I'll send it to you with easy instructions. Every time you click it, think about Bob. I do, and I say to myself, "*Thank you, Bob.*"

Jim Eninger
Saturday, July 11, 2009