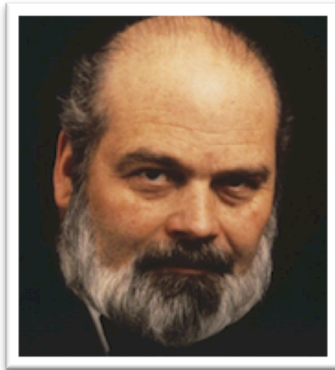




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Jerome P. Neff, Professor Emeritus of the Department of Music, passed away October 24, 2013. He began his career at CSU, Hayward (East Bay) in 1970. He retired in 1986 and participated in the Faculty Early Retirement Program through 1992.

The following is a remembrance of Prof. Neff written by Professor Emeritus of Music, David Stein.

Remembrances and Tribute to Jerome Neff, 1930-2013

Professor Emeritus of Music, Jerome Neff, passed away at his home near Canterbury, England, on October 24, 2013. He had been living there with his wife Jill since he retired from CSU East Bay (Hayward) in 1986.

Professor Neff held music degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Michigan. He also studied at Trinity College of Music in London and with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. His main fields of study were percussion, composition, conducting and carillon playing. Before coming to CSU Hayward, he taught at Hollins College in Virginia, the University of Buffalo, Millbrook School and the Vermont Academy. Jerry became a member of the CSU Hayward music faculty in 1970, teaching percussion students as well as a wide variety of music classes for majors and non-majors. Many of his percussion students have gone on to successful careers with prestigious musical organizations such as the San Francisco Symphony and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

My first meeting with Jerry came in the fall of 1971 when I was hired at CSUH and assigned an office in a trailer outside the Music Building, sharing it with Jerry. As office mates, we came to know each other quite well. I was a wet behind the ears new faculty member, and Jerry became a mentor to me giving advice on various aspects of collegiate teaching and sharing with me his musical expertise and his love for his art. I also learned what a fertile and creative mind Jerry had. He possessed an extensive knowledge about many fields both in and out of music which he used to advantage in his stimulating lectures to the students. This quickly became clear to me during our many Friday afternoon chat sessions in the office. Inside the office, Jerry had an amazing collection of percussion instruments that he had collected from all parts of the world as well as "noise makers" which he designed. If an object could produce a sound when struck, rattled, or manipulated in some way, it was part of his collection. (Car brake drums produce a very loud sound when struck.) The

instruments were used in various compositions that he wrote or that his University percussion ensemble performed. His ear for sound and how to utilize it in performances was amazing and very exacting. The sound produced by the instrument as well as how the performer produced the sound had to be just right.

One of our favorite Friday afternoon office activities was to play four-hand piano music, most often transcriptions of orchestral pieces. One favorite composer whose overtures were so fun to play was Franz von Suppé. With this activity began the seeds of what became the academic year-end P. D. Q. Bach concert in which we made every effort to make music as totally non-academic and hilarious as possible. Jerry, as well as I, knew and loved the performances of Spike Jones, who used all kinds of nontraditional noise making instruments in his music, such as gunshots, whistles, cowbells, bird calls and trash can covers. We decided to continue that tradition of spoofing stuffy old classical music in our own departmental productions that soon became a much looked forward to annual event. Jerry became my partner in crime, so to speak, and contributed his expertise as a percussionist and pianist to making truly memorable and outrageous slap stick performances over the years until his retirement.

Outside the University, Jerry performed many years as principal percussionist with the Oakland Symphony and other instrumental groups in the Bay Area. He also created, conducted and narrated a series of children's concerts - the Wee Pals Concerts in collaboration with the cartoonist Morrie Turner in the Paramount Theatre in Oakland, and the Oakland Museum concerts for schools were both very popular. One year he was the winner of the San Francisco Cable Car Bell-Ringing contest!

Jerry was well-liked and respected by his colleagues and students for his musical creativity, knowledge and expertise. Non-major students thoroughly enjoyed his classes, one of which, Music Of Our Time, was filled to capacity every time it was offered. His passing is a loss to many and I will miss my friend and colleague. Rest in peace, Jerry.

David Stein DMA, Professor Emeritus of Music

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