

Pianist brings music to A&M in show, class

By Adrea L. Warrenburg
Reporter

It began in the days of World War I with young boy plunking out melodies on the neglected keyboard of a neighbor's old upright piano. Instead of donating the piano to the USO, the neighbors recognized his talent and carried it across the street to become a permanent member of the Rose family.

For five years later, Werner George Rose has traveled the world with his music and is now at Texas A&M sharing his talent with students as coordinator of music in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities.

Only child of German immigrant Rose began piano lessons shortly after receiving the gift and continued with his music throughout childhood in Union, N.J.

He remembers sitting at the keyboard in the summer and watching the children play stickball in the street from the window.

"Working individually on an instrument is an isolated activity," Rose said. "But I can't think of anything more exciting to do."

Because he was a promising student, his piano teacher would schedule him last to allow extra time.

"When I was eight-years-old, the Loranger was my favorite radio program," Rose said. "I never missed it."

Until his piano teacher, who Rose called a "taskmaster", scheduled his lesson right before the airing time of the Lone Ranger. "He was so involved in a piece at the end of the lesson that we kept going and going," Rose said.

"Finally I burst into tears and we had to quit because I didn't want to miss my show," Rose said.

At high school he was concertmas-

ter of the school orchestra and organist for his church. He attended Montclair College on a music scholarship and received his bachelor's degree in music education.

Two professors acknowledged his talent and encouraged Rose to attend graduate school. He received a full scholarship to Yale where he received all his graduate training. His postgraduate work includes studying with Beveridge Webster, a concert pianist of the Juilliard School of Music in New York for three years.

Professor Rose came to A&M in June from a 22-year tenure at the University of Wyoming to spearhead development of music in the College of Liberal Arts.

"Making music and expressing the art I love so much are very fulfilling," Rose said. "Coming to A&M is an extension of the feeling I have."

"This is a unique opportunity and the possibilities are limitless," Rose said. "We have a solid core of teachers and the philosophy for which to build on."

The intention is not to establish a school of music, but to fulfill the great need of providing an opportunity to learn, Rose said.

In the past, few music classes were available, primarily music appreciation and theory taught by lecturers, Rose said. But music has many dimensions and A&M wants to offer courses to explore the different dimensions and student's interests.

Music from an academic standpoint is in a fledgling stage at A&M, Rose said. If A&M wants to become a greater institution, these things must be present for students.

Objectives for the program include offering a greater number and variety of courses in music, advanced interdisciplinary courses, and providing an opportunity for



Werner Rose

Photo by Jay Janner

students with an inclination toward the keyboard to audition and take individual piano lessons for credit.

As new faculty is added, lessons will expand to other instruments, Rose said. The newest addition is composer Dr. Peter Lieuwen coming from the University of California at Santa Barbara, he said. Presently a search is on for a musicologist, a specialist in music history, he said.

Courses added this fall included Chamber Music, Life and Music of Mozart and Music in the 20th Century, Rose said.

Eventually, A&M may be able to offer a bachelor's degree in music.

The music program being established by the Department of Philoso-

phy and Humanities is completely different from the present instrumental and choral extracurricular organizations on campus, Rose said. An incorporation is not being discussed, he said.

His newly remodeled office is on the fourth floor of the Academic Building, complete with grand piano and bust of Johannes Brahms. A rehearsal room next door is almost completed and the psychology sleep lab will become additional faculty offices.

Possibly in the future, an entire center for the fine arts will become a reality, Rose said.

The University Chamber Series is also expanding as part of the depart-

ment. The series will present a full season of six concerts this year. The first concert will be Rose's A&M debut as a concert pianist tonight at 8 p.m. in Rudder Theater.

Rose will perform works from Johannes Brahms, Bela Bartok, Franz Liszt and a piece titled "Sonatina" composed in 1981 by Lieuwen. "It's wonderful working with him," Lieuwen said. "I feel lucky."

Rose also is serving as the pianist for the Western Arts Trio. The trio consists of Rose, Brian Hanly, violinist, and David Tomatz, cellist. The professional trio has toured four continents, recorded six albums

and has received raving American and International reviews.

It is another dimension in creativity, Rose said. It is very meaningful to be the first to play a piece, the first to bring it to reality, he said.

The trio will perform Oct. 10 as part of the Chamber Series.

"Response from the students to the expansion has been wonderful," Rose said. "They are eager and delightful."

Students should not be afraid if the course number is in the 400s, Rose said. It is just a number, there are no prerequisites, he said.

"People taking music because they love it is precisely what it's all about," Rose said.

Smithsonian combines Tex-Mex music in Hispanic Heritage Week

AUSTIN (AP) — The Smithsonian Institution will flavor this year's Hispanic Heritage Week celebration with the sounds of Tex-Mex music, Latin jazz and ballads called "corridos" that trace the lives of Mexican-American workers of the industrial Midwest.

The history of Puerto Rican garment workers, the unheralded contributions of the Hispanic woman, and the changing traditions of the Hispanic family will also be celebrated in the weeklong observation that begins Sunday and ends Saturday.

This year's theme is "500 Years of Hispanic Heritage, 1492-1992: The Women's Contribution."

"They (the women) are the carriers of the culture and traditions and a very important part of their work was in the family, the community, the workplace and the church," Luz Maria Prieto, program coordinator for the program in Hispanic-American history at the National Museum of American History, said.

"They did the nudging, the reminding," Manuel J. Melendez, her colleague at the

museum and coordinator of Hispanic Week for the Smithsonian, said.

"The woman has always played a pivotal role, a crucial role in her community," Prieto says, with Melendez adding: "They were the ones who had to hold it together, while the husbands were out there working, being those figures in the midst of change, with the unions, and with changes in the political structure."

"Unbeknownst to them, their ingenuity was integral to the labor movement — when their husband came home from work, they

would bounce their ideas off the women and how they handled it is a reflection of the countless conversations that take place in the home," Melendez says.

The Smithsonian will celebrate the woman's contribution — going back to Columbus' arrival in the New World in 1492 — with a special ceremony Wednesday at the National Museum of American History.

As part of the commemoration, Ruby Nelda Perez of San Antonio will perform a one-woman play, "A Woman's Work,"

based in part on her own writings.

Prieto describes the play as "an intergenerational dialogue talking about traditions and changes within the Hispanic family through the eyes of the women."

After Perez's performance, Jesus "Chuy" Negrete of the Mexican Cultural Institute of Chicago will perform some of his "corridos" — narrative ballads based on the lives and histories of Mexican-American workers in the industrial Midwest.

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