

AMICA International Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association Honor Roll

Rudy Martin (1930 - 2017)

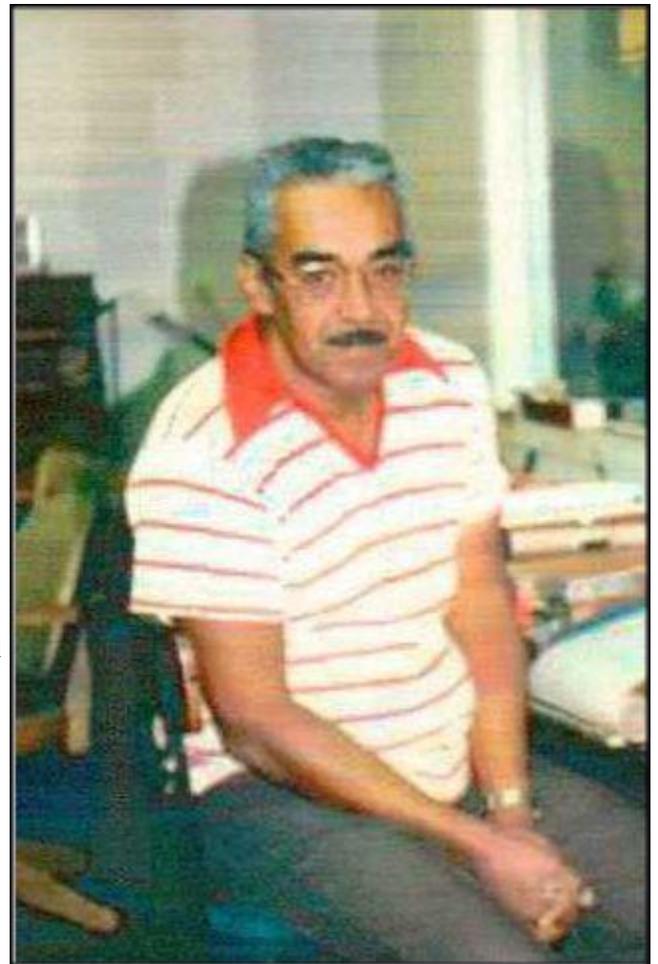
Pseudonyms: Johnny Lopez, R. J. Leonard, Whitfield & Ticker, et al.

Rudy Martin, born May 8 1930 in New York City of Puerto Rican descent, had hopes as a young man to become a classical pianist. Rudy studies classical music for eight years before beginning a career as a pianist with Latin bands at the *Palladium Ballroom* and *the Latin Castro*.

In 1964 while walking through the Bronx, Rudy noticed a sign at the QRS Music Co.. He applied to Gertrude Kortlander, Max's widow, and was hired part-time to run the machinery at QRS. At the time, Hi Babbit and Dick Watson were the arranging staff. Rudy wanted to learn the business, and did. Upon joining the arranging staff in 1965, he became the first artist to record classical music for QRS since the 1930's. his first roll was the "*1812 Overture*".

In 1966, Ramsi Tick bought the company and moved it to Buffalo New York. Rudy packed his family up and came to Buffalo as the primary arranger for the QRS company. When QRS sold to Me. Dolan, Rudy stayed on (as did most of the staff).

Rudy was arranging QRS's *Tiger Rag* "Played by Farrante & Ticher" when Ed Openshaw was visiting Buffalo. The duo-pianists were long-gone and the work was being done from old 'marked' rolls. Ed tells the story that Rudy says, "No player can handle that chord, so I'm going to take out some notes here" - and so forth. Upon playing the roll, one can easily tell which parts were 100%



arranged by Rudy and which were the jerky cadenzas "based" (?) upon the marked rolls. Remember, there was only one piano at QRS, so Rudy was working from two different rolls beyond adding his own material.

Although his work entails a full knowledge of music, a special knowledge of player-pianos, and a good feel for current musical styles, Rudy Martin is a quiet man who likes little praise for his contribution to the production of player-piano rolls. Nearly every roll produced by QRS since moving to Buffalo has, in one way or another, passed through Rudy's hands before it was put into production. Each and every one of us can acclaim to Rudy's great ability upon listening to our rolls produced at QRS here in Buffalo, New York.

(Above words by: Norma Marciniak; with some unattributed quotes from MMD articles by Douglas Henderson of 4/1/97)

From Felix Klempka, Chief Engineer, Retired, QRS Music Technologies, Inc.:

Rudy Martin, Chief QRS Music Roll arranger, died on June 16, 2016. Rudy was a marvelously talented man and a joy to work with. His soft-spoken manner and warm sense of humor was responsible for creating a congenial atmosphere in his department, as well as the rest of the QRS establishment.