



Mr. Rudolph "Rudy" Jenkins

JUL 10, 1925 - APR 19, 2012



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Rudolph (Rudy) LaValle Jenkins of Houston, Texas, passed away peacefully on 19 April 2012 at the age of 86. He was a talented, hard working and kind man who was adored by so many. He was born in Shreveport, LA on July 10, 1925 to Agnes Corbitt Jenkins and Trenton O'Brien Jenkins. His mother raised him and his sister all alone during the great depression era. Beating extreme odds, he graduated from high school at the age of 16 and at age 17 managed to buy a home in Shreveport for his family. The real estate agent wanted Life Magazine to do a story on this amazing young man but his mother would not allow it due to the attention it might bring. He moved to Houston in 1942 and worked as a welder at Todd Houston Shipyards until 1945. He worked for Pan American World Airways from 1948-53. Rudy began his ballet career at the age of 24 in Houston, Texas. He studied under Alexander Kotchetovsky and Roland Guerard. In '52 he danced in "The Nutcracker," as the Prince in Charleston, WV and also as the Prince in Houston at all Nutcracker recitals for Kotchetovsky and Geurard. His dance partners were Vivien Altfeld and Julie Rozan. There were no dance venues in Houston, so he danced at the Shamrock Hotel and at The Rice Hotel with Orian McBride. By invitation from Sir Anton Dolin and Nathalie Krassovaka in 1953, Rudy went to London to train under Dolin and Lydia Kyasht. In 1954-55 he received a scholarship and was in New York studying with the American Ballet Theater and trained under Alexandra Danilova, Valentina Pereyaslavec, Edward Caton, Anatole Vilzak, William Dollar, Robert Joffrey and Maria Swoboda. While in NY, he also appeared on television in "The Imogene Coca Show" and "The Fred Waring Show." In 1956 he performed in 11 musicals (Summer Stock) in Kansas City, MO. In 1957 he worked with Alexie Ramov in Scranton, PA as a guest artist. From 1958-59 he went on national tour with Music Man as a dancer. In 1959 he went to Hollywood, CA to train with George Zoritch and Michael Panieff. He danced in a review with Patricia Morrison at The Coconut Grove and danced a year



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at Moulin Rouge. While in Hollywood he taught ballet to several stars including Paula Prentiss and Cyd Charisse at Riabouchinska Studios. Returning to Houston in 1960 he taught ballet for 2 years as an associate teacher at La Delle Stevens School of Ballet. In 1962 he then built and opened his own dance school, "Rudy Jenkins Studio of Ballet," in Bellaire, TX on Atwell. He taught all levels of ballet and operated the school until his semi-retirement in 1983. He then taught for 15 years during summers for Marina Svetlova in Dorset, VT. During his career, he taught classes in Caracas, Venezuela and Madrid, Spain and held guest teaching assignments throughout the US. Many famous ballerinas were close friends: Alexandra Danilova, Tamara Toumanova, Irina Baronova, Tatiana Riabouchinska, Anton Dolin and Nathalie Krassovska. Rudy was a true gentleman and always dressed the part. When he wasn't in his dance teaching clothes, he wore a suit and tie with shoulders straight and head held high. He loved his students and friends dearly and remained close friends with many of them for decades. He is preceded in death by his mother, Agnes Corbitt Jenkins, his Grandmother Virginia Jarvis Corbitt, 4 uncles and 2 aunts, 1 cousin. He is survived by his sister, Jarvis W. Jenkins of Houston, his daughters, Penny Avery of Royse City, TX, Pamela Avery of Houston, 3 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren and cousins Brandt Mannchen (Lilibeth) of Houston and Kurt Mannchen (Margaret) of Miami, FL. The family wishes to thank everyone who helped with Rudy's care during his time of need.



Memories only last if you share them

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