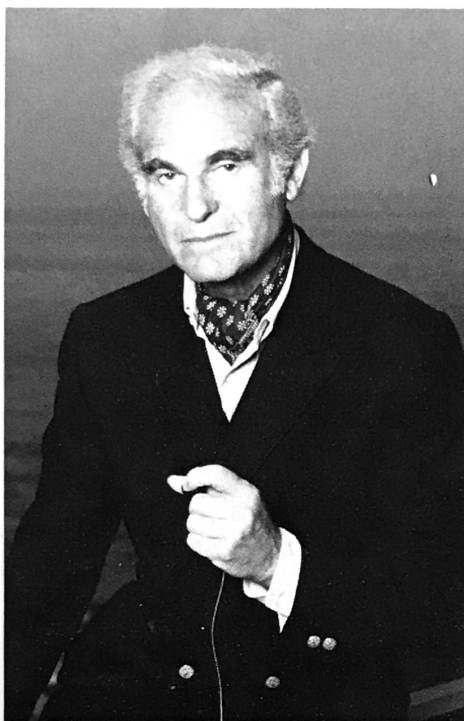


# Bernard L. Schwartz 1914-1978

Bernard Lee Schwartz, 64, board chairman and principal shareholder of Sherman, Clay Co., world's largest keyboard retail chain died of cancer at his home in La Jolla, Calif. on Dec. 31. Gifted with an enormous spectrum of talents, his life embraced a succession of careers. Prior to the purchase of Sherman, Clay early in 1960 from the late Clay Sherman, NAMM president, and Richard Abbott (descendants of the founders), Schwartz had revolutionized the carpet industry with the invention and development of the first successful woven synthetic fabrics. More recently he had achieved international fame as a portrait photographer whose hundreds of distinguished subjects included world leaders like Prince Charles, Pope Paul, Lord Mountbatten, and Moshe Dayan, as well as celebrities like Twiggy, Yehudi Menuhin, Arthur Rubinstein, Larry Adler, and Malcolm Muggeridge.

Survivors include: his wife, the former Rosalyn ("Ronny") Ravitch, to whom he was married in 1944; two sons, Michael and Eric, who are active in the real estate and retail operations of Sherman, Clay; a daughter, Tilda (Mrs. Joseph N. Costello, Jr.); and three brothers. Mrs. Schwartz' brother, Don Ravitch, has been president of Sherman, Clay since 1960 and has served as an NAMM director.

One of Bern Schwartz' favorite maxims was to always try to turn a minus into a



**BERNARD L. SCHWARTZ**, Sherman Clay chairman, achieved distinction in the last three years as a portrait photographer.

plus, firmly believing that any disadvantage or unfortunate situation in life or business could be made into an asset or a useful character trait. Born in New York City

on June 18, 1914, his family moved to Allentown, Pa., five years later.

Last fall, on November 2, Bern Schwartz was honored with a reception at the Covent Garden Opera House in London, England, to commemorate his new book, "Contemporaries, Portraits by Bern Schwartz with a foreword by Lord Kenneth Clark." (Lord Clark more recently hosted the extended Public TV Series in the U.S. entitled "Civilization.") Addressing the audience of famed guests, many of who appear in the book, toastmaster Sir Claus Moser, chairman of the Royal Opera and the Royal Ballet, paid tribute to Schwartz' artistry and added, "I don't think that there has ever been such a distinguished group of people under one roof, beginning with Lord Mountbatten." Graciously and urbanely, Schwartz recalled some humorous episodes in the course of photographing England's leaders and concluded:

"It's a pleasure for Ronny and myself to be here to welcome you all. It's a great thrill and one of our greatest days. As Sir Claus said, it is a joint effort of Ron and myself. It is a great partnership and we have always done things together in photography and business all of our lives."

Unsuspected by the audience, one day earlier, Schwartz had learned that he had terminal inoperable cancer. The same day he also received an invitation to go to Rome to take the first official portrait of Pope John Paul II. Schwartz earlier had photographed both Pope Paul and the shortlived Pope John Paul I.

In a letter to friends written on Dec. 12, Schwartz wrote, "I resolved to accept the commission regardless of the cost in discomfort but on the 14th November, when we planned to go, I found the pain too great, and we returned home to LaJolla instead."

In 1931 he entered Lehigh University, but the sudden death of his father and straitened finances forced him to withdraw at the end of the freshman year, despite making the Dean's list both semesters. In 1932, at age 18 he moved to New York City "to seek his fortune." His first jobs included stints as a shoe salesman and a punching bag demonstrator in Gimbel's toy department during the Christmas season. The following year he became a salesman and designer for Electro Chemical Engraving Company, a manufacturer of decorative metal trim for the automotive and appliance industries.

In 1937, at the age of 23, he founded



**THE DAY AFTER BEING INFORMED OF HIS FATAL ILLNESS**, "Bern" Schwartz was guest of honor at a reception at the Royal Covent Garden Opera House in London to mark the publication of his book "Contemporaries." At left is his wife "Ronny," the former Rosalyn Ravitch. At center Sir Claus Moser, Chairman of the Royal Opera and the Royal Ballet with Schwartz's portrait of Lady Diana Cooper. Two weeks later, Schwartz had to forego photographing Pope Paul II because of his illness. See page 112.

Conference Hall of Fame. The seven were: Laurens Hammond, late founder of Hammond; William F. Ludwig, Sr., late founder of Ludwig Industries; Paul E. Murphy, past NAMM pres. and pres. of Steinert's, 120 year old Boston music store; Philip Werlein IV, past NAMM pres. and head of Werlein's, New Orleans retailer founded in 1842; M. H. Berlin, pioneering founder of Chicago Musical Instrument Co., now Norlin Music; Leo Fender, chairman of Music Man and founder of Fender; and Don Leslie, inventor of the Leslie speaker. In making the presentations, John F. Majeski, editor of *The Music Trades Magazine*, concluded: "May their example long serve as a guide for all of us as well as those who are to come." (An illustrated report of the ceremony witnessed by 1,100 industry members appeared on pages 38-40 in our July, 1978 issue but was overlooked by all other trade papers.)

On the financial front, publicly held companies posted healthy increases which augured well for the coming year. Norlin boosted its dividend 14% and Wurlitzer

raised theirs 20%. Baldwin posted new highs in every quarter as did Kimball and ARP showed a 34% increase in sales.

A number of anniversaries testified to the incredible durability of great names in music. Steinway marked its 125th year with a concert at the White House given by famed Vladimir Horowitz, (April p. 54, August p. 68 continued two part installments of the firm's history.) The 150th anniversary of Bosendorfer was celebrated in June with a week of concerts in Vienna culminating with a gala performance of the Viennese Philharmonic featuring Bosendorfer artist George Demus. Kimball chairman Arnold F. Habig addressed the audience which included the president of Austria (July p. 106-115). Bechstein was feted on its 125th anniversary. (See report in this issue) C. Meisel Co., a division of Avnet, marked its 100th year as a wholesale and importing firm (May p. 80).

Les Paul, guitarist and inventor, was guest of honor during the June trade show to mark his 50th anniversary as a performer (July p. 48). John F. Majeski, editor

of *The Music Trades* was painfully reminded of his 40th year with the magazine, and the fact that family enterprises are exempt from child labor laws.

In the hope of inspiring punctuality, Majeski was presented with a watch by publisher George Magliola whose observations provoked widespread rejoinders throughout the industry. Magliola who succeeded the late John F. Majeski, Sr. as 3rd publisher of the 89 year old magazine attributed his editor's rapid rise to nepotism but added: "Nepotism is no worse than any other system of selecting key executives for quick and lasting results. Strangers can lose their jobs but only family members can lose a business." (June p. 66).

Magliola, an accountant, has devised a new inventory system especially designed for the music merchant who is puzzled by FIFO and LIFO. (First in, First out or Last in, First out). The new system is called FISH and stands for First In, Still Here, "If you think your inventory stinks," he says, "you're using the FISH system whether you know it or not."

## DEATHS

### Bernard Lee Schwartz

(Continued from page 24)

Pilot Products, an advertising display company and the first of his many ventures. In 1940 Pilot converted to making electronic components and during World War II was a sub-contractor for Western Electric and others in manufacturing radar equipment.

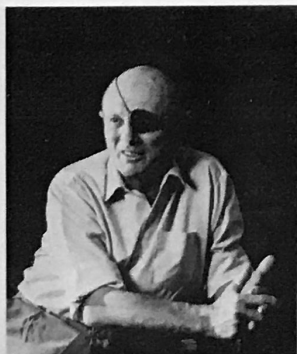
At the end of World War II, Schwartz started Pilot International Corp., a worldwide trading company with representatives in 50 nations, specializing in the export of textiles, steel, paper and other products. Pilot Products in 1945 pioneered in making coin meters for washing machines, making possible the advent of coin operated "washomats."

In 1954 Schwartz acquired control of Patchogue-Plymouth Co., a firm whose antecedents traced to 1864 with the founding of a textile import firm. More recently the firm had specialized in making summer rugs and especially carpet backing from jute and kraft-cord. Schwartz at that time was convinced that some form of synthetic carpet backing could be developed.

In 1963, Schwartz' firm patented and marketed the first all synthetic tufted carpet backing of woven polypropylene under the trademark Poly Bac. Five years later, he sold Patchogue-Plymouth to Standard Oil Company of Indiana. In recent years Poly Bac has been the world's largest supplier of carpet backing with over 60% of



MR. & MRS. SCHWARTZ with their friend Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Louis Mountbatten whose portrait by Schwartz appears immediately below at left. Schwartz achieved international fame in the last three years of his career as a portrait photographer.



**HUNDREDS OF DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUALS** from all walks of life sought out Schwartz because of his remarkable ability to evoke an individual character. Among his recent subjects shown above are left to right: Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Louis Mountbatten, last Viceroy of India; General Moshe Dayan, former

head of the Israeli army; Arthur Rubinstein now 92 at his home in Paris; Former Prime Minister of Israel, the late Golda Meir; and British Prime Minister Sir Harold Wilson.



the European Common Market and an even larger share of the U.S. \$3 billion carpet market.

Looking for new investments, in the late fifties Schwartz and his brother-in-law Don Ravitch were attracted to the music industry, in part by the remarkable growth of organ sales. After analyzing some 300 retail operations, they entered into negotiations to purchase Sherman, Clay Co. then owned by descendants of the two founding families, of whom only one was active in operations. A stormy episode almost ended the transaction but early in 1960, Schwartz paid \$4 million for the 90 year old west coast chain which then had 21 stores in three western states.

Schwartz foresaw a great potential and formulated several strategies new for the firm. Rather than handle every musical product, the company would concentrate on keyboards. By 1966, the firm had closed out all other products which had included radio, TV and hi-fi. Looking for new marketing concepts, Schwartz and Ravitch were also pioneers in developing mall stores. Sherman Clay now has 50 stores with sales of over \$20 million annually, making it the largest privately held chain of keyboard stores in the world. Its only reverses were abortive attempts to open stores in Kansas City, Boston and Philadelphia. More recently Sherman, Clay which had become a Hammond Organ dealer in 1936 has increased its specialization with total emphasis on Kimball pianos and organs.

During the last few years of his life, "Bern's" formidable energies found a new channel in portrait photography. His talent for his new avocation is admirably summed up by the distinguished art critic, Lord Kenneth Clark. In his preface to Schwartz' book "Contemporaries," he wrote:

"I believe that the historian of England in the 1970's will find these photographs an invaluable guide to the intellectual life of the time; and meanwhile we can enjoy them as wholly admirable examples of the art of photography . . . Since Titian, portrait painters have tended to give some indication of a sitter's status and occupation be it only by his pose. Bern Schwartz does so with tact and restraint."

Schwartz' evolution of his second career



**A PAINSTAKING DEVOTION TO RESEARCH AND** detail marked all of Bern Schwartz's life as both industrialist and financier and portrait photographer. Above he is working with Israel's President Ephraim Katzir who first wanted to be photographed in his shirt sleeves. Schwartz tactfully suggested that a presidential portrait should include a necktie and jacket. Neither of President Katzir's neckties enhanced the dignity of his office so Schwartz persuaded the president to use his tie above.

as a portrait photographer spanned little more than three years. His first subjects included industry friends like Kimball chairman Arnold F. Habig, Henry Z. Steinway and his mother, the late Ruth G. Steinway. (Her portrait by Schwartz appeared in her obituary on page 83, Sept. 1978 issue of *The Music Trades*.) His first efforts were workmanlike but unpredictable of the talent that developed so quickly.

Schwartz generously credited his progress to two teachers, New York portraitist Anthony diGesu and Philippe Halsman, who has to his credit more *Life* magazine covers (101) than anyone else. Schwartz as pupil if only in the distinction of those who sought him out, quickly made his own way. Among the hundreds of notables recorded by his Hasselblad with motor drive were: H.R.H. Charles, Prince of Wales; Pope Paul VI on the 15th anniversary of his election to the papacy; Golda Meir; Sheik Hilmi Al Mukhtarsib; Moshe Dayan; Prime Minister Sir Harold Wilson; conductor Zubin Mehta; Lord Rothschild; Rudolph Nureyev; Arthur Rubinstein; Andres Segovia; Abba Eban; and Ephraim Katzir, President of Israel.

Active in many charities, Schwartz was

president of The Guild for the Jewish Blind in New York, a trustee of the Pomfret School, and a trustee of Widener College which awarded him an honorary L.L.D. He was also president of Parker, Pace Corp., and chairman of Ashuelot Paper Company. His last charitable interest undertaken after being apprised of his terminal illness was work on behalf of the blind. Two weeks before his death, he wrote to some friends:

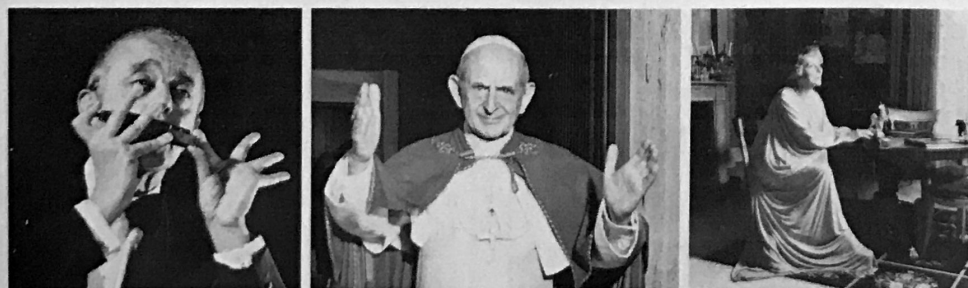
"There are a few human welfare projects that I have had in mind for some time. One of these is deafness . . . Most people are ashamed of being deaf . . . Lady Wright (head of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf) felt it would be helpful to show that someone as hard of hearing as I am has not let that interfere with a career. I have agreed to loan a collection of my portraits to be exhibited on behalf of the deaf. Ronny and I are also busy collecting literature and information on other programs on education and acceptance of the deaf in this country."

### Mrs. Jane Story Bull

Jane Story Bull, 72, widow of the late L. P. "Perk" Bull, long-time president of Story & Clark Piano Co., died Dec. 29 in Santa Barbara, Calif., suffering a stroke two weeks earlier. The granddaughter of Hampton L. Story, who founded Story & Clark in 1857, she was born in Chicago on September 25, 1906. Her father, Frank Story, was then president of the piano-making firm. After attending local schools, she studied for a year in Florence, Italy.

On March 27, 1926, she was married to L. P. Bull, the fourth generation of his family to be admitted to the Illinois bar. A vivacious winsome hostess with a lively wit, throughout her husband's career Jane

(Continued on page 116)



**SCHWARTZ'S ART TRANSCENDED HOSTILE BOUNDRIES** that included notable Arab politicians as well. Above, famed harmonica player, Larry Adler, an expatriate since the McCarthy era; Pope Paul's official portrait on his 15th Anniversary as Pope; and Lady Diana Cooper.