

OBITUARY

Rodolphe “Rudy” Meyer, 1918–2013

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Rudy at the memorable ISAPS Congress in Zurich organized by Trudy Vogt in 1989

On May 4th, Rudy Meyer put down for good the scalpel and the paint brush. He certainly was the internationally best known Swiss plastic surgeon of the second half of the 20th century.

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Like many pioneers in plastic surgery of his generation, his training included general, ENT, and maxillofacial surgery, and on his road to fame, he spent time with some of the great teachers of the time on both sides of the Atlantic, including Dufourmentel in Paris, Schuchhardt in Hamburg, Sanvenero-Rosselli in Milan, McIndoe in London, Barret-Brown in St. Louis, Ivy in Philadelphia, Converse and Webster in New York, just to name a few in a long list.

Rudy was typically Swiss, fluent in the three principal languages of our country, German, French, and Italian, but he spoke also English and Spanish, having elected the Costa Brava as his secondary residence. A good skier, of course, but also an accomplished gymnast, he remained in good physical shape until late in his life.

I had the good fortune to have the opportunity to work with Rudy at his clinic in Lausanne in 1973. I had taken a three-month leave from my job as Senior Resident at the Department of Surgery at the University Hospital of Basel in order to get more training in aesthetic surgery. He was at that time Assistant Professor in the ENT department of the University Hospital of Lausanne and in charge of the plastic and reconstructive unit. What initially was planned to be just a training visit led to a partnership that lasted for almost 30 years until his retirement.

In 1977, we founded the *Centre de Chirurgie Plastique de Lausanne*, which in the many following years has seen trainees from all over the world. They were attracted by Rudy's numerous publications and presentations he gave worldwide. A tireless traveler and hard worker, he was able to perform an impressive number of surgeries, present at an equally impressive number of international meetings, and, on the side, write what was at the time (1964) the most comprehensive handbook on nose surgery in Europe. All this would not have been possible without the support of

his loving wife, Liliane, who would proof read, sort slides, help manage the meetings he organized, and remain his most reliable script director.

Rudy was a founding member of the Swiss Society of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery and he also participated in the creation of ISAPS, where in the glorious seventies great teachers like Gonzales-Ulloa, Pitanguy, Guerrerosantos, Ortiz-Monasterio, and others gave aesthetic surgery form and protocol.

I cannot conclude without saying a word about the man that Rudy was. He enjoyed the good things in life, liked making new friends, of which he already had a great number all over the world, and he loved a good party. Being a talented painter he also had many friends outside the medical circle and his contagious good humor gave him an ease of contact in any surrounding. The family of plastic surgery mourns today a brilliant technician, an innovative mind, and a wonderful friend.