

Golden Ego Radio #29 and #30



Remembering the Firesign Theatre's Peter Bergman (11/29/1939 – 3/9/2012)

In April of 2012 I attended a memorial service for Peter in Kirkland, Washington. I was joined by my fellow Firehead friends Phil Fountain, Maureen Weston, Brian Westley, Cat Simril Ishikawa, Keith Jones, and Gretchen Steiner. Sadly, this would be the last time I would talk with the late Phil Austin. The passage of time is unrelenting.

My history with Firesign goes back to 1972, when I placed an ad in Rolling Stone magazine for my "Firemail" newsletter, which later became "It's Just This Little Chromium Switch Here." I first met Phil and Peter and Dave and Phil at the premiere of "Martian Space Party" at the Director's Guild in Hollywood. On the 1974 Firesign album "The Giant Rat of Sumatra", my newsletter was mentioned in the liner notes. I saw the Firesign Theatre perform in Chicago on their "Anytown, USA" tour, and met with them again during the recording sessions for the "Next World" album. That was 1975, the same year I married Deborah, who was an avid Firesign follower as well. In 1980, before moving back to Lincoln, my hometown, we were living in North Hollywood, just a few miles from the KPFC studios where all things Firesign began. I didn't reconnect with the guys until decades later, thanks to the internet. I was privileged to come on board Peter's "Radio Free Oz" team in 2010 as webmaster for his daily podcasts. We were just a month or so into the new Oz format when Deborah passed away

suddenly. She lived with Multiple Sclerosis for 23 of her 59 years. Peter was kind enough to dedicate a Radio Free Oz show in her memory. For the Firesign Theatre to have such a long-lasting effect on so many lives including mine, is testimony to their genius. And for the man who planted the seed that was Firesign, Peter Bergman, I thank you for your friendship, inspiration, enlightenment, and passion. As you often said on "the new" Radio Free Oz - "We'll all get through this together"

Additional material for "The Late Saint Peter Bergman" [*Radio Free Oz* 3/6/2012 and *Attention Convention* 1956] from Tom Gedwillo collection

Thanks to Taylor Jessen, Dennis Miller, KBOO, Dave Malony, WHYI, Penn Jillette, Rev. Ivan Stang, KPCC, and The Firesign Theatre