



News

HAROLD RACKIN, 'RENAISSANCE MAN' AND BUSINESSMAN

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Services were scheduled today for Harold Rackin, an international businessman who has been described as a Renaissance Man because of his work as a painter, lecturer, photographer, musician and world traveler. Mr. Rackin, who died on Friday of heart disease, was 68.

Mr. Rackin had "boundless energy and an insatiable curiosity about everything," said his son, Richard, of San Francisco. Mr. Rackin spoke German, French, Italian and Spanish and taught himself to play the accordion, piano, saxophone and clarinet.

In late 1984, Mr. Rackin founded the **Lauderhill** Culture Club. He lectured once a week on art, music, film or literature at the old City Hall building. In addition, he was a member of the city's Arts and Culture Committee and lectured at the Inverrary Country Club.

He also hosted Hal Rackin's World of Art on the American Cablesystems cable television system from 1984 to 1987, but was forced to quit the show after losing his eyesight because of complications linked to diabetes.

"It was really tragic . . . It put a damper on his activities, both the TV show and his ability to produce his own stuff," his son said.

Mr. Rackin was born in Newark, N.J., where his parents worked in wholesale produce during the Depression. After graduating from Central High School, he attended New York University, the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts and the University of Illinois. He started work in the air- conditioning field in 1947 and in 1953 took a job with the Worthington Corp.

At Worthington, Mr. Rackin traveled the globe setting up air-conditioning units for large companies. He touched down in 85 countries a year as Worthington's international marketing director. Because his family was in the United States, Mr. Rackin used much of his free time to attend concerts and visit museums overseas. He photographed much of the art and countryside that he saw, and during the 1960s several of his landscape photos were used in airline calendars.

Although he was colorblind, Mr. Rackin painted with oils and acrylics, often choosing subjects from his travels or experiences.

"He was primarily a surrealist. He was very much of that school," his son said.

"At times comical errors were made" because of Mr. Rackin's color blindness, Richard Rackin said. In one case, Mr. Rackin was contacted by an overseas business associate and asked to do a portrait of the man's daughter. In the finished painting, the girl's lips were green.

Still, Mr. Rackin had several one-man exhibitions around the country and many of his paintings are now in private collections, Richard Rackin said.

In 1973, Mr. Rackin retired from Worthington and moved to Coral Springs. He founded Ecco Engineering, an air-conditioning contracting firm, in **Fort Lauderdale** that year and operated it for five years before retiring.

Surviving are his wife, Anne; two sons, Mark and Richard; two brothers, Martin and Donald, and three grandchildren.

Services will be at 11:15 a.m. today at the Star of David Memorial Chapel in Fort Lauderdale.

