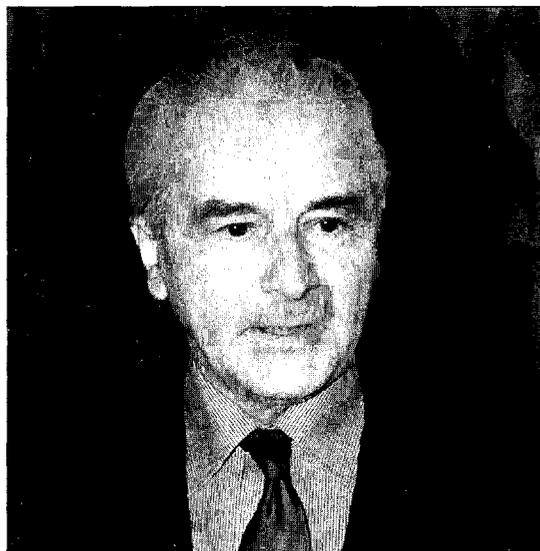


In Memoriam

Rudolf Goerike, co-founder of AKG, Vienna, Austria, and an AES honorary member, died on September 7 at the venerable age of 87. He engaged me as a freshman out of university and was my boss for 14 years. However, he was much more than just a boss: he taught the young engineers everything he knew about transducers, which was quite a bit. He showed us how to experiment; and he was a determined experimenter. He showed us how to invent; and he was a great inventor. He took the word “developing” in the literal sense: bringing to light facts and functions. He was a man of subtle taste and an excellent industrial designer. He was a great believer in patents and filed about 200 of them.

He set landmarks in the history of transducer development and, I think, ranks among accomplished developers such as Harry Olson, Benjamin Bauer, Hugh Knowles, Walter Grosskopf and Georg Neumann. Some of his milestone developments should be remembered as part of the history of audio: the use of a “masstube” to load the diaphragm of a dynamic microphone, thus extending its bass range an octave or more, and, at the same time, using this element as part of a phase shifting network to achieve the cardioid (unidirectional) polar pattern (D12, still world famous); the slotted bass tube as used in the D24; the first supraaural headphone with openings at the rear (K50); a polyplanar loudspeaker



Rudolf Goerike
1907-1994

diaphragm as licensed to Yamaha; and the famous large diaphragm condenser transducer CK12 with an adjustable acoustical resistance between the back plates of the two systems, not to mention hundreds of microphone and headphone designs and improvements.

Goerike was a perfectionist, not always to the liking of Ernst Pless, his partner and cofounder of AKG, who couldn't wait until a new microphone or headphone finally came out of development and production because he had already sold thousands.

Goerike was not an easy man, never at ease with himself, completely devoted to his work and never satisfied with the results—his own as well as those of his engineers. He led a shy and modest life, but he taught us how to dress and appear distinctively and elegantly, in the best Viennese tradition. Although he was a private art collector and violinist, he was averse

to any public appearance or public honors.

Born in 1907 in Linz, Austria, Goerike studied physics at the Technical University in Vienna and at the University in Innsbruck, where he was granted his doctorate in physics. He began his career as a development and sales engineer in 1929 at Henry Radio in Vienna. He installed hundreds of sound systems in theaters and cinemas in Austria, Yugoslavia, and Hungary. Immediately after the war he founded AKG together with Ernst Pless, first repairing cinema projectors and sound systems,

traveling with rucksack and bicycle in the then Russian zone of post-war Austria. Paid with food such as sugar, beans or meat, he shared everything with his few employees.

Inspired by Goerike's ideas and Pless' commercial talents, AKG grew and flourished and became a worldwide presence and an appreciated member of the professional audio family. Many changes occurred but Goerike continued to work in his white lab coat, remote, intense and demanding until 1993 when a severe disease took the soldering iron out of his hand, and he was no longer able to walk into his private anechoic chamber.

On a personal note, I am very proud of the moment when he congratulated me on the foundation of Neutrik—as one of my tutors he contributed more to it than he thought. He will not be forgotten.

Bernhard Weingartner
Liechtenstein