



Craig Richard Nelson

September 17, 1947 - March 3, 2025

Craig Richard Nelson, born on September 17, 1947, passed away on March 3, 2025.

Born to C. Craig Nelson and Ruth Tomlinson Nelson, Richard graduated from Skyline High School in Salt Lake City, Utah before earning a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Utah and later a Master of Fine Arts from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. His towering presence—both physically at 6'6" and in spirit—was felt across stage, film, and television throughout his long and accomplished bi-coastal career.

Richard's passion for acting was encouraged when, as a schoolboy working concessions at Pioneer Theater, a director asked if he could read. An actor had failed to show up for a performance downtown, and Richard stepped in without hesitation. From that moment forward, he dedicated himself to the craft, captivating audiences with his distinct voice and commanding stage presence. He was seen in everything from *The Carol Burnett Show* to *Star Trek* and everything in between.

Richard was a devoted husband to Stephen Greene, with whom he shared 33 years of love and partnership. He was a cherished brother to Carol Ann Nelson and Lorene Nelson de St. Aubin (Mark) and a beloved uncle to Olivia and Anna. His quick wit made him an engaging conversationalist among

friends, while his brain-power made him an invaluable resource to those around him. As much as he loved fine dining, a well made grilled cheese was always a favorite meal.

Richard lived by the philosophy that "It's not over until it's over," embodying resilience and presence in every moment. He would want us to remember to ask before we speak: Is it true? Is it helpful? Is it inspiring? Is it necessary? Is it kind?

May we each practice loving-kindness as a tribute to our dear Richard.

His laughter, quick smile, kindness, love and wisdom will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

A service of remembrance will be held for family and close friends of Richard on Friday, March 7, 2025 at 3408 Celeste Way. A 12:00 viewing will be followed by a service at 1:00pm.

Cemetery Details

Mountain View Memorial Estates

3115 Bengal Blvd
Cottonwood Heights, UT 84121

Previous Events

Family Viewing

MAR 7. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (MT)

East Mill Creek 16th Ward
3408 South Celeste Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Funeral Service

MAR 7. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (MT)

East Mill Creek 16th Ward
3408 South Celeste Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Tribute Wall

BL

“Great (I mean it) actor, wonderful friend and one of the sweetest, kindest people I've ever known in theatre and beyond. I saw him on an old episode of Fernwood Tonight shortly before he passed and of course he was brilliant and hilarious. He taught a guest artist master class when he was performing at Pioneer Theatre Company in the eighties and was incredibly inspiring and kind to young actors. One of the artists that the University of Utah can be very proud to have produced. He was a great guy to know in LA and I'm so glad that I was reintroduced to him. I'll truly miss him.

Bill Lawrence - May 09, 2025 at 07:22 PM

JR

“Craig was a fantastic character actor and equally a fantastic friend. For the last couple of years, he and I used to exchange Christmas cards and every time he wrote me back he was also so sincere, genuine, and it was joy to connect and keep in contact with him. I will miss him very much but at least there is comfort knowing that not only will he continue living on per celluloid via his various films and TV guest spots but also in the hearts and minds of those who were blessed to get to know him in the role he played best - himself! Here's to a life well lived Craig and I look forward to seeing you on the other side when I get there!

Joshua Ramage - April 21, 2025 at 12:14 PM

MP

“ 1 file added to the album Photos



Marc Paulsen - March 09, 2025 at 12:37 AM

HB

“ Was honored and privileged to share the stage with Richard when we were in school together at the university. He was always generous and kind, helpful and warm hearted. His exceptional talent made him one of the people that was always able to make others feel. They were important and wonderful. Rest peacefully, my friend.

Harry Breaux - March 08, 2025 at 10:52 AM

KF

I just found out that Richard has passed. He was my cherished friend at NYU and in Los Angeles. From Two Gents to Square Pegs, we shared working and incredible friendship. He was simply a brilliant person, a wonderful actor, writer and director...and so much fun to be around. I know he is hanging with Jim Steinman and David Schweitzer in the coolest "great beyond" ever.

Kim Friedman - March 22, 2025 at 08:30 AM