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## LOCAL NEWS

### Former gay sex film star commits suicide

Friends say Barry Rogers 'loving, caring person' who 'had his demons'

By [DYANA BAGBY](#)

Friday, November 19, 2004

Barry "J.T." Rogers, known as Johnny Rahm in scores of gay sex movies, committed suicide in Atlanta on Nov. 7. He was 39.

Rogers hung himself with a wire on the fence line of the Atlanta Botanical Garden, according to the Atlanta Police Department.

A memorial service is planned for Sunday, Nov. 21, at noon in the gazebo in Piedmont Park, said Adam Kahn, Rogers' friend and roommate. The service will be informal and those who knew him are asked to share stories, Kahn said.

Rogers was born June 11, 1965, in Milledgeville, Ga. He was buried there next to his grandmother on Nov. 10, said Jamey Rousey, Rogers' cousin. Rogers, who was HIV-positive, is survived by his parents, two sisters and a brother, according to Rousey.

Rousey said he and Rogers were raised fundamental Baptists and attended a Christian high school in Macon and also attended Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C.

"He was a kind and gentle soul and as tragic as his death was, I hope he's found the peace he couldn't find in life," said Rousey, who works with the Atlanta AIDS Partnership Fund.

Rogers moved to California in the late 1980s and worked for about a decade in the gay sex film industry, Rousey said. In recent years he worked in Atlanta with producer Dick Wadd, according to Kahn.

Rogers was the winner of the 1993 Gay Video Guide's Best Supporting Actor Award for his role as a mafia don in "Body Search," directed by gay porn favorite Chi Chi LaRue. He also won the 1995 Best Supporting Actor award for "All About Steve."

Rogers had been living in Atlanta on and off since 1999 and since April, was living with Kahn in Midtown.



**J.T. Rogers**, who appeared as Johnny Rahm in numerous gay sex films, will be memorialized Sunday at Piedmont Park. Rogers committed suicide Nov. 7 in Atlanta.

#### MORE INFO

##### Memorial service for J.T. Rogers

Nov. 21, 12 p.m.

Piedmont Park gazebo

Memorial contributions may be made in Rogers' name to any Atlanta AIDS service organizations, including AIDS Survival Project, Positive Impact and the Atlanta AIDS Partnership Fund.

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"He was a sweet guy, a very loving, caring person — although he had his demons," Kahn said. "Within five minutes of meeting him, people loved him. He was always the comedian and wanted to make people laugh and feel good about themselves."

J.C. Adams, a columnist who writes about the gay sex industry in "Adams Report," said that as Johnny Rahm, Rogers had a devoted fan base.

"What was a little unusual about him is that he was actually a very good actor," Adams said. "He never became a superstar like Jeff Stryker, but he did several films that are still remembered."

Some of Rogers' better movies include "The Devil and Danny Walker," "Straight to the Zone," and "Badlands," said Adams, who has also been editor of Inside Porn Magazine and Unzipped Monthly.

"He knew how to use his voice and body. As a sexual performer, Johnny told me he really enjoyed what he was doing. He was having fun and that came through onscreen," Adams said. "That is one of the main reasons fans adored him and remembered him through the years; Johnny's light and spirit was evident."

Kahn said Rogers was never shy about what he did professionally and also tried his hand at stand-up comedy. But while he may have achieved some fame in the gay sex film industry, he struggled financially in his last months. Since about April, Rogers was trying to get financial assistance to find his own home, Kahn said.

"He was on the phone every day trying to get SSI and it seemed like he kept getting the runaround. His major frustration was not being settled," Kahn said. "He never did anything bad except to himself."

"He wasn't your run-of-the-mill porn actor. The biggest part of him was making sure everyone around him was happy. He will be greatly missed," Kahn said.

Adams interviewed Rogers in 2001 and said Rogers was truly humbled when he read him some of his fan mail.

"It's good to know that I made a difference to some gay guys out there," Rogers told Adams, "even if it was inadvertent. I feel honored to have that kind of devotion."

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