In Memoriam

Phyllis Wright, 1916-2007

Phyllis Wright, longtime supporter of the School of Music, Theatre & Dance, died on December 17, 2007 at the age of 91. An actress and local patron of the arts, she received her bachelor’s and master’s of fine arts from the University of Oklahoma. Before coming to Ann Arbor, Wright danced with choreographer Agnes de Mille and worked at Paramount Studios. In Ann Arbor, she acted in dozens of local plays, winning a Civic Theatre Award for best actress. She served on the boards of Ann Arbor Civic Theater, the Arts Theater Club, and the Ann Arbor Summer Festival.

Performance Network named her an Angel of the Arts in 2004. She was president of the U-M Faculty Women’s Club and a charter member of the Women’s City Club. In 1997, the group Celebration of Women honored her as one a leader in community service. A gathering in celebration of her life was held on December 19, 2007 at Glacier Hills Retirement Community. Memorial contributions may be made to the Phyllis B. Wright Scholarship in Theatre, sent to the School of Music, Theatre & Dance, 2005 Baits Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2075.

Donald Walden, 1938-2008

Donald Walden, associate professor of jazz saxophone at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance, died in April at the age of 69 due to complications from cancer. “Few musicians have embodied the soul of the Detroit jazz scene as powerfully in recent decades as Donald Walden,” wrote Mark Stryker in The Detroit Free Press, and later added, “At medium and fast tempos his solos boiled intensely; his ballads were shorn of sentimentality.”

Walden came of age in Detroit in the 1950s during that city’s golden age of modern jazz. He studied at the Larry Teal School of Music in Detroit, learning improvisation from Detroit pianist and bebop great Barry Harris and saxophone from Yusef Lateef. He toured and recorded with Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, the Temptations, and the Four Tops. In 1990, he produced “Yardbird Suite” at the Detroit International Jazz Festival, a tribute to Charlie Parker that brought together a big band, 18 strings, and a choir; the concert is still remembered to this day. Walden nurtured other young jazz players, including Geri Allen and Robert Hurst, both now on the MT&D jazz faculty. He also created the New World Stage in Harmonie Park in Detroit in the 1980s, a space that became a training ground for young musicians. “With his long-tall frame and distinguished carriage,” Stryker wrote, “he was a standard bearer for jazz in Detroit, a mentor to generations of students and a beacon of ambition and integrity for his peers.” He is survived by his wife Marsha of Detroit and two daughters, both of New Jersey.

H. Wiley Hitchcock, 1923-2007

H. Wiley Hitchcock, who taught at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance from 1950 to 1961, earning his master’s in music lit in 1948 and the Ph.D. in musicology in 1954, died last December at the age of 84. Hitchcock taught at Hunter College from 1961 to 1971 and in the CUNY system until his retirement in 1993. He was the world’s leading expert on the music of French Baroque composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier, the composer’s sacred music the focus of his dissertation; Hitchcock published a comprehensive catalogue of his works in 1982. Along with his scholarly interests in French and Italian music of the 17th century, he developed a growing zeal for American music, publishing the widely influential textbook Music in the United States in 1969, now in its fourth edition. Hitchcock devoted much of his research to the music of Charles Ives, serving as president of the Ives Society for many years and editing a definitive critical edition of Ives’s songs, published under the auspices of the American Musicological Society, which he served as president from 1990-1992. He founded the Institute for Studies in American Music at the Brooklyn College of City University of New York, which he directed from 1971 to 1993 and which became a focus for studies in American music, with a series of publications, visiting lecturers, and performers. The institute will be renamed the Hitchcock Institute in his honor. He was the joint editor, along with English musicologist Stanley Sadie, of the New Grove Dictionary of American Music (1986), an accomplishment some consider his crowning achievement.

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1930s

ELINOR (WORTLEY) DOTY, BM '32, in organ, died November 29, 2007

JEANETTE X. (RABINOWITZ) MILLER, BM '33, in piano, died December 2, 2007

EMMA M. (FOOTE) MAACK, MM '36, in organ, died December 17, 2007

1940s

ELWOOD H. BALL, BM '47, MM '52, in music theory, died March 2, 2008

PAUL EDWARD CAIRNS, MA '40, in theatre, died June 18, 1999

ELISE M. CAMBON, MM '47, in organ, died December 30, 2007

RUTHANN PERRY FITZGERALD, BM '48, in voice, died February 18, 2008

MARGARET (MARTIN) EDMONDS, BM '42, in voice, died January 18, 2008

MARJORIE E. (GOULD) HOLLAND, BM '44, in music education, died March 20, 2008

KEITH LUSTED, BM '49, in organ died February 21, 2008

MURIEL LOGAN POTTS, MM '42, in music education, died March 10, 2008

1950s

MORRETTE L. RIDER, BM '42, in music education, died January 14, 2008

JUNE P. CHRISTENSON, MM '50, in music education, died March 16, 2008

BETHYNE (BISCHOFF) EMERY, MM '51, in music theory, died March 20, 2008

PAUL G. FISHER, MM '51, EED '69, in music education, died December 17, 2007

CHARLES B. HOUSER, MM '51, in music theory, died October 15, 2007

NANCY (LEWIS) KOCHENDERFER, MM '50, in organ, died January 27, 2008

MARTIN R. RICE, MM '51, in music literature, died November 14, 2007

JUDITH A. (JORSTAD) ROSE, BM '54, in music education, died December 14, 2007

SARAH L. SAVARINO, BM '58 in music literature, died February 26, 2008

DOROTHY O. SCHUMACHER, MM '43, in music education, died December 19, 2007

MARION JOE SHERER, MM '54, in music education, died January 15, 2008

1960s

CHARLES W. STOUT, BM '50, MM '63, in music education, died January 22, 2008

MELVIN LEO WAGNER, MM '51, in music education, died November 24, 2007

LYNDELL P. WATKINS, SR., MM '51, in music literature, died November 13, 2007

1970s

KAREN ELISE CLARK, MM '79, in organ, died July 14, 2007

JEFFREY G. LEDUC, BM '76, MM '78, in organ, died January 6, 2008

DAVID K. REIMANN, MM '79, in organ, died January 15, 2008

1980s

SALLIE L. HAZEN, MA '83, in music composition, died February 6, 2008