

REMEMBERING MARY BUDD HOROZANIECKI — “MRS. H”

Esteemed violinist and pedagogue, Mary Budd Horozaniecki, known to her students as “Mrs. H,” passed away last October after a long and valiant battle with cancer. Her impact on string playing and teaching, especially in Minnesota, is immense; she will be sorely missed.

Mary was an Honors graduate in violin performance from Indiana University School of Music where she was privileged to study with Josef Gingold. She also mentored with Margaret Pardee of the Meadowmount and Juilliard Schools, Emily Austin of the Detroit Symphony and Menahem Pressler of the Beaux Arts Trio.

Mary was proud of her “violin family tree” and encouraged her students to research theirs. For instance: Mary studied with Gingold, who studied with Ysaÿe, who studied with Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps. Vieuxtemps studied with de Beriot, who was a grand-student of Viotti, a friend of Haydn and Beethoven. Mary passed her favorite Gingold quotes on to all her students: “You must change the dutiful to the beautiful.” “Without purpose to practice, there is no progress.”

Throughout her lifetime career, Mary was in equal demand as an outstanding violinist, distinguished scholar, classical performing artist and honored pedagogue. Recognized as one of the area’s favorite performing artists, Mary performed in a piano trio with John McKay and Harry Dunscomb at the Minnesota Valley Sommarfest, as first violinist of the Sartory String Quartet, and as the violinist for the Chiara Piano Quartet. Also a champion of contemporary music, she performed and recorded numerous world premieres including works by Phillip Rhodes and pianist/composer Donald Betts. Her most recent concertmaster performance was with the St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral Music Series, *Elijah*, in May 2019.



Mary was frequently invited to present master classes, recitals, and lectures throughout the United States and Canada. She gave master classes at venues that include the String Academy at Indiana University, the Crane School of Music, SUNY, Potsdam, the University of Iowa, the Uni-

versity of Nebraska, Ohio State University, the University of Manitoba and the University of Central Florida. She presented 4 times at the ASTA national conference including *The Violin Duo Literature: Have you Overlooked Teaching Gems?* presented with friend and colleague Dr. Sarah Hersh of the Crane School of Music, and *Studying the Violin at the College Level: Perspectives on Progress and Process*.

The work on violin duos was lauded in the article, *Vertical Climb* by James Reel; *Strings Magazine*, Feb. 2006.

Mary enjoyed a distinguished career

spanning decades as studio instructor of violin performance and pedagogy. She taught pre-college level violin at MacPhail Center for Music in the 1980s and 1990s. She taught violin at Carleton College for 24 years, retiring as Senior Lecturer in Violin and Viola in 2017. She also taught violin performance and pedagogy at Augsburg University and Macalester College. She received MNSOTA’s Master Teacher: Studio award in 1993.

Mary served as faculty for numerous summer workshops including MNSOTA’s Upper Midwest String Camp, where she developed the successful intern/mentor program that gives college students experience coaching chamber music assisted by a mentor. Mary’s passion for pedagogy continued even when she was under hospice care—a pedagogy meeting with former students, now colleagues, was scheduled the week she passed.

Mary’s students have gone on to lead active careers as orchestra directors, concert artists, and teachers. We are happy to share some of their stories here.

Information on Mary’s life taken from her bios at schools where she taught, from the obituary in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, and from an article she wrote on Josef Gingold in 2007 for this magazine. †



Mary Horozaniecki knew before I did that the violin would become an integral part of my identity. Perhaps Mrs. H saw something special in me that led her to that belief, but I think she saw something of that potential in every student. Nevertheless, her faith in me is in large part the reason that I am a musician and teacher today. I’m glad to have this opportunity to share some experiences that speak to Mary’s wisdom and caring. I draw on these stories time and again when my own wisdom and caring need some reinforcing.

Not once, but twice I “quit” lessons with Mary, both times while I was in middle school. I use the quotation marks because while I gave up on lessons, Mary did not give up on me. Both times, and unbeknownst to me, she told my mom, “I’ll hold your lesson time. He’ll come back. This is a part of who he is, he just doesn’t

know it yet.” Sure enough, after a couple of months of adolescent defiance, I found my way back to her studio, eager for the musical and life lessons that would follow.

Among the most memorable lessons are these: 1) scales matter, 2) as a musician you are part of something larger than yourself, part of an important history, part of a lineage to be passed onto future generations, 3) to be a violinist is to embrace hard work and be held accountable to high standards, but also to feel and express great joy.

Perhaps because I was something of a pain in the backside for the relatively new teacher Mary was at the time, some of these lessons has to be conveyed in a less than orthodox manner. For example, one day when I showed up to her third floor studio in the old MacPhail building—for the umpteenth time—without my scales prepared to her satisfaction (or prepared at all, for that

matter), Mary said something like, “Mark, your parents don’t pay me to listen to you practice. I’m going to the break room. I’ll be back in twenty-five minutes. I’ll hear your scales then.” Let me assure you, I practiced furiously for the next twenty-five minutes! When, maybe a year or two later, I again showed up unprepared, Mary said, “Mark, do you remember when I left you here to practice your scales while I went to the break room? Well, the break room is dingy and the vending machines aren’t that good. This is my studio and it has my violin, my piano and my window. I’m not letting you kick me out of my studio again. You should go practice somewhere else.” Somewhere else turned out to be the custodial closet across the hallway. Furious practice again ensued. For many years after that, I was known to other MacPhail teachers as the student Mary sent to the broom closet to practice.

I’ve never been one to love playing as a soloist. As such, when I was in ninth grade I told Mary that I would “no longer do recitals.” “Hmmm,” she said, “but recitals are required of all my students.” I was an immovable force. No recitals or I would walk from her studio! “Okay,” she said, “I’ll make you a deal. No more studio recitals, but... you have to give a senior recital.” I had her! She’d never remember that deal! Sophomore year—nada. Junior year—all quiet. The first lesson the summer before my senior year, with a knowing grin on her face— “So, Mark, what are you going to play on your senior recital?” She had trusted that I would eventually find in myself what she knew was there all along. So many experiences during my high school years prepared me for that question that I hardly hesitated. “Some solo Bach, and maybe we could work on the rest of the Kabalevsky?” “Good,” she said, “Let’s get to work.” I returned to Mary after college, asking for her help as I prepared to give a recital in my newly adopted community of Owatonna, not because I had to, but because I wanted to. Some years later Mary invited me to join her and many other wonderful musicians performing at Sommarfest, a chamber music festival in St. Peter. She invited me, not because I was their equal, but because she knew that I would now relish the kind of performance opportunity that I had once so strongly resisted.

One last story. Near the beginning of my high school junior year, Mary suggested that I consider changing studios. The venerable Mary West had an opening and, despite

my many transgressions, Mrs. H believed in my abilities and felt that moving me “up” to Mary West would be in my best interests. Mary observed my initial lesson, which was really an audition. During the lesson, Mrs. West successfully reversed a bow hold habit of mine that had vexed Mary. As we stepped into the hallway after the lesson, Mary stopped me and, with zeal that remains seared into my mind, asked, “How did she do it?! I’ve told you the same things, showed you the same things, but it never worked. What made this time different?” That’s the first time I remember thinking about how difficult and rewarding it must be to be a teacher. Mary’s desire to be the best teacher possible resonated with me then and continues to today. In the end, I decided to stay with Mrs. H instead of switching to Mary West, but I was a different student after that. I began to think as much about *how* Mary was teaching me



as *what* she was teaching me. This made me more aware of how other teachers were teaching, and how conductors were conducting, and how performers were performing. My perspective shifted and my journey towards who I would become began in earnest.

There are other stories I could tell, some funny, some poignant. All would illustrate the passion with which Mary taught and performed, and the love she had for her students. Mary was loved and respected deeply in return. We will miss her presence as a teacher, mentor, and musician. Thank you, Mary.

Mark Gitch

Mark Gitch studied with Mary in middle and high school. He later was a faculty colleague at MNSOTA’s Upper Midwest String Camp, conducting one of the orchestras. He is currently orchestra director at Wayzata High School and conducts the Concert Orchestra for GTCYS. †



At Mary Horozaniecki’s funeral, her daughter Sherry gave an eloquent eulogy. The word she used that encapsulated her work as a teacher and colleague was “*Visionary*.” Mary always seemed to be searching for ways to improve any experience for the students and to pass on information beyond herself.

Very early in her career as a young teacher, she saw the value of *Team Teaching*. She promoted this idea in helping to create the Chamber Music Clubs at MacPhail, the MacPhail String Academy, the Upper Midwest String and Chamber Music Camp, the Augsburg String Quartet Camp and at Macalester and Carleton Colleges. By working together, our teaching improved as we learned from each other.

She also came up with the idea of using *Interns* in the various summer programs at which she taught. This was a new idea in the

Twin Cities at that time. She understood early, the importance of giving college students the opportunity to teach before they do their student-teaching, the need to mentor them, and the help it was to the teachers and students in the programs. Over the years, these programs became more refined as she worked with the other teachers to improve the experience for the college students. Many of Minnesota’s excellent school orchestra and private teachers served as interns in these programs.

As a member of the Sartory String Quartet, Mary was an *Inspirational Performer*. I personally learned much from her about musicality and artistry. She also spearheaded our coachings with Josef Ginkgold (her college teacher), worked with us to present a series every year, bring in guests and apply for grants. She was *Creative* in finding titles for our concerts and her

spelling—I'll never forget when she submitted: "Koldogy – Duo" to the puzzled administrator at MacPhail. He was relieved when I revealed that she meant: Kodaly - Duo.

Mary was a funny, far-seeing, and creative woman. Her vision has had a lasting impact on string teaching in Minnesota and beyond.

Liz Ericksen

Violinist Elizabeth Ericksen was a teaching colleague of Mary's at MacPhail Center for Music, and at Carleton University. She played second violin with Mary in the Sartory String Quartet. †



It breaks me to write this, because writing it makes it seem more real. One of my greatest mentors left us this week. Mary Budd Horozaniecki was a force of nature, like a gravitational body bending light, space and time around her. There are few people in my life who affected my trajectory as much as she did. I am lucky to have called her my teacher and my friend. After I graduated Macalester College, we continued to work together every few years. Twice she worked with my orchestra students in Rockport, MA and twice I worked with her students at Augsburg and Macalester Colleges. Each time was like returning to the source for me, a reaffirmation of the path I've chosen for myself. I've never met a person who gave so much of themselves in every interaction. When she came to Rockport to play with my students, she brought her good fiddle. Her good fiddle was particularly good, and when asked why she would risk bringing it across the country to do workshops with 4th-12th graders, she said "because the kids deserve the best." I never saw her offer anyone anything less. Rest in peace, Mrs. H.

Nathan Cohen

Multi-instrumentalist performer, composer and conductor, Nathan Cohen studied violin with Mary at Macalester College and served as Intern at the Upper Midwest String Camp. He is currently Director of the Orchestra and Chamber Music Program in the Rockport, MA Public Schools. †



I was fortunate enough to visit Mary in her home a week before she passed and had a beautiful conversation of old and new memories. Even through her pain, her quick wit and joy shone through. She was a true mentor to me, and I will miss her dearly.

Jane Linde Capistran

Jane was a student of Mary's, and a long-time colleague teaching violin at the Upper Midwest String Camp. Jane recently retired from teaching and conducting at Concordia College Moorhead. †



Mrs. H was a pedagogue who could ignite the thought process of

any room. Whether you were a post-performance major entering the big leagues, or a 6th grader with tapes up and down your rosin coated fingerboard, she knew how to make us think. I never had a private lesson with Mrs. H, but I did have the opportunity to be a camper, a counselor, an intern, and finally a faculty member under her expertise at the Upper Midwest String Camp. Her sincerity for the love of teaching music was always relevant, and her intentions never failed. In fact, the greatest lessons she shared with me were often around a cafeteria food table where her message was shared through stories and life experiences. She would leave us wanting to know more about how the story ends, or what happened next. She excelled at challenging us to think of the greater picture through the smallest lens. While I did not learn the craft of violin from Mrs. H, I did learn how to have (by her modeling) a symbiotic love for music and teaching.

Nick Gaudette

Bassist Nicholas Gaudette worked with Mary at the Upper Midwest String Camp as a camper, counselor and intern, and then as faculty colleague. He is Orchestra Director at Edina High School. †



I am devastated by our collective loss. Mary was a true mentor to me. I have such fond memories of Upper Midwest and so much of it was due to Mary's influence—it was my first time teaching at a festival, and I never stopped learning from her. She, in many ways, guided me from a great student/teacher relationship to one where she showed me what it was to be a professional, a friend and a colleague. I remember our chamber music reading sessions where we read Schubert Cello Quintet and Mary led us into such beautiful lands with her warm and personal playing. She was all heart!

Katie Wolfe

Katie Wolfe studied with Mary during high school and later was a faculty colleague at MNSOTA's Upper Midwest String Camp, serving as viola teacher. She is currently Associate Professor of violin at the University of Iowa. †



My violin teacher and mentor since undergrad, Mary Budd Horozaniecki "Mrs. H" passed away in October. She had such an influence on her students that many of us followed in her path, becoming teachers and continuing as musicians in our own right.

I wasn't a morning person in undergrad and she very much was, but she had mercy on me and brought me hot chocolate every week when I ended up with the earliest Friday morning slot one semester.

When I didn't know what I was doing with my summer (or life at that point) beyond working at the coffeeshop, she said I needed to apply for interning at the MNSOTA Upper Midwest camp, where I learned from and networked with current and future string pedagogues (including current coworkers in the Robbinsdale district).

She was the one who let me know about my first classroom string teaching job at City of Lakes Waldorf School and pushed me to apply (“I don’t have time, I’m going back to school and working 3 jobs already.” ... “You’ll figure out your schedule, I know you will—you have to apply; string teaching is what you want to do, right?”)

So many of her students have stories like that. She was cheerleader, therapist, life coach, fine musician and master pedagogue. Her charisma, story-telling (which included her quirky wit and vulnerability about her own constant striving and progress on the violin) connected with those at any stage, little people to adults.

Thank you, Mrs. H. Your commitment to your students was constant—is constant—and your belief in the good that music could do for all of us always bright.

Anastasia Verdoljak

Anastasia Verdoljak studied with Mary in college, and was twice an Intern at Upper Midwest String Camp. Stasia currently teaches orchestra at Sandburg Middle School in the Robbinsdale district. ‡



I loved Mary’s energy—from playing concertmaster in the MacPhail faculty orchestra for the student concerto concert or playing chamber music at Upper Midwest Camp—she scarcely sat “down” in the chair but was rising out of it, almost leaping to her feet, as the music climaxed.

I loved Mary’s principles—never take a transfer student unless the old teacher calls you to recommend it, or if the student has had no teacher for 6 months or more.

I loved Mary’s passion for pedagogy and training a new generation of teachers—from the Augsburg pedagogy classes I co-taught with her twice, to the pedagogy component of Upper Midwest

that she designed and was constantly tweaking to give the interns a better experience.

It mattered to me that she was in the world. She remains in the hearts and minds and music of all those she taught.

Faith Farr

Cellist Faith Farr was a teaching colleague of Mary’s at MacPhail Center and the Upper Midwest String Camp. She has been editor of this magazine since 1996 and currently maintains a private cello studio at her home. ‡