



Boyer College of Music and Dance Mourns the Loss of Faculty Member, John Douglas

Philadelphia, PA -- July 13, 2010

John Douglas, associate professor in the Department of Voice and Opera and music director and conductor of Temple University Opera Theater, lost his battle with cancer yesterday. He was 54.



Since joining Temple's faculty in 1989, Douglas directed 50 productions and brought the opera program to national prominence, garnering four prestigious National Opera Awards and receiving rave reviews for cutting edge productions such as last year's productions of Lee Hoiby's *A Month in the Country* and Leos Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen*. He was honored with the Temple University Faculty Award for Creative

Achievement in 2006.

Douglas ensured each of the twice-annual, fully-staged productions were meticulously produced so that students had performance opportunities that would groom them for major operatic roles. In an April 2010 interview with [The Philadelphia Daily News](#), he said, "We treat our productions in the same conceptual way that are done in a professional company, with no less time, interest or detail."

"John's dedication to teaching generations of opera students and his unparalleled enthusiasm for excellence, will be missed by his many colleagues, current and former students," said Robert T. Stroker, dean of the Boyer College." He was the backbone of our opera productions and worked tirelessly not only as an ambassador of the program, but on behalf of the Boyer College and Temple University. Our deepest condolences go out to his wife and children."

Before coming to Temple, Douglas was on the faculty of the Boston and New England Conservatories. He has conducted at Opera Delaware and held positions at Chautauqua Opera, Ash Lawn-Highland Summer Opera Festival, the Merrimack Lyric Opera Company, Central City Opera, the Boston Concert Opera, the American Opera Theater of Boston and Boston Camerata. For the past seven summers, Douglas has directed the young artists program at Lake George Opera. His conducting of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Lake George was named the "Best Performance by an Orchestra" by operaonline.us.

Also a pianist, Douglas has appeared in recital with Denyce Graves, Victoria Livengood, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, David Holloway, William Lewis, and hosts of others in venues across the country. Always

generous with his time and talents, he regularly accompanied the children enrolled in Temple Music Preparatory Division's Community Music Scholars Program for the biannual concerts. In addition, Douglas presented master classes for organizations such as NATS, NOA, Opera America, and Classical Singer. As a board member of the National Opera Association, he established an online network at Temple with national opera companies to share resources, ideas and creative solutions.

"Although I enjoy my professional work, I think my creativity is more stimulated by my work at Temple," Douglas once said. "I get a special pleasure from finding unique solutions to the types of challenges our young singers present, and being a part of their early successes — successes I know they will remember the rest of their lives."

Douglas' legacy is carried forward not only through the numerous singers in the opera houses and theaters around the world, but also through the many vocal and opera coaches who acquired their skills while pursuing their masters degrees in piano accompanying and opera coaching, a program he established.

Douglas, a resident of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, leaves behind his wife, Melissa, their two children, Matthew and Willa Rose, parents Dr. John Douglas and Marilyn Douglas of Abington, Pennsylvania, his sister, Sara Douglas of Beachwood, Ohio and many nephews, nieces, aunts and uncles.

Funeral services will take place on Sunday, July 18, 5:00 p.m. at:
Unitarian Society of Germantown
6511 Lincoln Drive
Philadelphia, PA 19119