

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
WILLIAM C. RACE**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for William C. Race, Professor of Piano, has filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM C. RACE**

Dr. William C. Race, Priscilla Flawn Regents Professor of Piano at The University of Texas at Austin, died June 22, 1999. He was born in Denver, Colorado, on November 28, 1923. He is survived by his wife, Katherine Parmelee Race, son Charles, son Stephen and daughter-in-law Carolyn Cantu, daughter Susan and son-in-law Kevin Groves, and granddaughter Kathleen Groves.

Dr. Race was a member of the keyboard faculty at The University of Texas for thirty-two years, and served as its chair for twenty years, during which time he was largely responsible for establishing the national and international prestige of the piano faculty and its programs. His highly-regarded reputation as artist/teacher was complemented by an acclaimed career as soloist, chamber musician, collaborator, and, in later years, duo pianist with his daughter, Susan Groves. Always a favorite performer on the University campus, he concertized all over the United States, as well as in Europe and Asia. His Town Hall, New York City, debut heralded an important career that won admiration and respect from performers and teachers in all musical circles, including major national and international schools of music. He received accolades from prestigious critics in New York and Los Angeles, and in many other important locales, and recorded an impressive range of piano literature.

Dr. Race recruited students from all over this country and abroad and enabled many exceptional talents from mainland China to study at the University. His achievements as a teacher brought him his greatest pleasure; he especially loved teaching high school students in the summer workshop. The relationships he maintained with his students showed a special rapport that was mutual and deeply rewarding. Numerous students have distinguished careers of their own, teaching at important music schools in the United States and concertizing in major music centers worldwide. Many of them have won international competitions. As a legacy to his expert training, they carry on an important tradition which reaches near and far.

Among his honors, Dr. Race held the Doty Professorship in Fine Arts at The University of Texas and an Honorary Professorship from the Sichuan Conservatory in China. He was included in Benjamin Saver's book *The Most Wanted Piano Teachers in the U.S.A.* (Los Angeles, California: Xin Hua Ma Publishing, 1993). Dr. Race was invited to present master classes at many of the most important music schools in this country, and at top conservatories in China, Poland, the former USSR, Germany, and Japan. He hosted visits to Austin by music teachers from the Sichuan Conservatory and taught a workshop on campus for forty visiting Taiwanese piano teachers. Prior to his fatal illness, he had been invited to participate as artist/teacher in the Van Cliburn Teacher's Institute in Fort Worth, Texas, and he still planned to teach The University of Texas High School Piano Performance Workshop a month later in July.

After his childhood, spent in Hays, Kansas, Dr. Race studied at the University of Colorado for one year, whereupon his studies were interrupted by World War II. An avid skier, he enlisted in the Ski Troops and served in Northern Italy. Following his discharge, he returned to Colorado and earned his BM degree with high honors (1948) and MM degree (1950). In 1958, he earned his DMA degree in a record 15-month period from the University of Michigan. He held teaching positions at Colorado Woman's College,

Mississippi State College for Women, Northern Illinois University, and North Texas State College (now the University of North Texas), before coming to The University of Texas in 1967. Among his proudest accomplishments since coming to Austin were the initiation of The University of Texas High School Piano Performance Workshop, the establishment of the Fund for Chinese Pianists, and his extensive and successful initiative to approach legislators, gather statewide support, and secure passage of a bill to award waivers of out-of-state tuition to selected scholarship holders. Since the passage of this bill in 1971, waivers worth more than \$8,000,000 have been given by the School of Music.

Additional mention is made of his activities as a columnist to the *Piano Guild Notes* and the *American Music Teacher*. As critic, his activities were diverse, running the gamut from a review of Kenneth Drakes' *The Beethoven Sonatas and the Creative Experience* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1994) to a Byelorussian magazine article about the recordings of contemporary Byelorussian piano music.

Dr. Race loved hiking, color photography, nature, and the outdoors. The Race family spent many summer vacations in the mountains of Colorado, Washington, and Canada. He and his wife Kay traveled to many breathtaking places, ranging from the Swiss Alps to the Himalayas, and their travels were documented through his striking photography in works of high quality.

A memorial tribute was held at Bates Recital Hall on July 8, 1999, attended by many former students, as well as a large number of Austin music lovers, colleagues, UT music students, and friends. Family, colleagues, former piano students, and friends gave testimony, through spoken and written words and music performance, to a man who will long be remembered for his dedication and compassion, for his devotion to his profession, for his humor, for his thoughtfulness, and for his tremendous energy and zest for life. Perhaps the highlight of the tribute was the broadcast of William Race's masterful performance of Chopin's Barcarolle, reminding all in attendance of his exceptional artistry and poetic gift. Bill Race was remembered bounding up the stairs two and three at a time, jogging, whistling, and jiggling his keys. Amidst all his accomplishments, he always had time for his family, his dog, and his perfect lawn. He never wanted to retire, and he never had to. He was an inspiration to those whose lives he touched and he will be missed by all. The William Race Memorial Scholarship Fund, UT School of Music, Austin, Texas 78712, has been established in his name.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Danielle J. Martin (chair), Gerard H. Béhague, and John W. Grubbs.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts, the Executive Vice President and Provost, and the President on December 17, 1999. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, FAC 22, F9500. This resolution is posted under "Memorials" at: <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/>