

## Michael C. Martin (1943-2016)



March 11, 2017

A specialist in music composition who also directed Chapman's 20th Century Chamber Music Series, retired faculty member Michael C. Martin passed away in December, 2016.

Martin began teaching at Chapman in 1980 and retired as an associate professor of music in 2006. For many years, he was the only music composition instructor on campus, leading the composition division while also teaching Music Theory III and IV and Music History III and IV.

At Chapman he organized the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music Concert Series. Professor Martin has performed throughout the United States, Canada and London, England.

"Michael was one of the smartest, most knowledgeable people I have ever known," said Amy Graziano, Ph.D., a Chapman University professor and chair of the Hall- Musco Conservatory of Music. He earned the Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, and Doctorate degrees from the University of California, Berkeley.

He is the recipient of an Alfred Herz Memorial Scholarship, and was also awarded the George Ladd Prix de Paris in Composition, as well as a Fromm Foundation commission for a work which was performed at the Tanglewood Music Festival.

"He was very well-read in philosophy and all sorts of obscure literature, he could recite the libretto to most of the entire *Ring Cycle* from memory, and he had eclectic musical taste – once I had a conversation with him where he talked enthusiastically about Wagner and then suddenly switched to an equally enthusiastic discussion about Björk," Graziano said. "He knew so much about quirky, non-American films and their music that I asked him to guest lecture in my film music class for many years (even after he retired)."

In addition to teaching and performing in annual recitals and chamber ensembles at Chapman, Martin also taught many young pianists and composers in his private studio, among them the child prodigy Kit Armstrong. He also was a member of the Music Teachers' Association of California and contributed to the theory exams administered by that group. Martin is survived by his wife, Jessica.

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