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Campus Mourns Lawrence Campbell

August 3, 2011

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The Illinois Wesleyan University campus mourns the death of Dr. C. Lawrence Campbell, the Fern Rosetta Sherff Professor of Piano at Illinois Wesleyan University, who died July 25.

“We are deeply saddened to lose a long-time member of our Illinois Wesleyan community,” said President Richard F. Wilson. “Dr. Campbell was an outstanding pianist and performer, who made many contributions to the University. We mourn his passing.”

A professor of music, piano, piano pedagogy and literature, Dr. Campbell was a member of the Illinois Wesleyan faculty since 1978. He was named to the Fern Rosetta Sherff Professorship in 1998, honoring his distinguished teaching, research and service to the University.

“All of the faculty, staff, and students in the School of Music have lost a dear friend, colleague and teacher,” said Director of the Illinois Wesleyan School of Music Mario Pelusi. “Larry Campbell was a remarkably gifted pianist and a superb teacher of piano, whom we – and the music profession in general – will miss deeply.” Friends and colleagues of Dr. Campbell at the IWU School of Music are planning a memorial concert in his honor to be scheduled later in fall semester.

A passionate educator, Dr. Campbell served frequently as adjudicator, guest clinician and lecture recitalist on many university campuses, and conducted master classes for the Illinois Wesleyan Chamber Music Camp.

Devoted to the development of student musicians, Dr. Campbell judged concerto competitions for young artists sponsored by the Chicago Symphony and the Des Moines Symphony. When appearing in concerts at universities around the nation, he conducted master classes to work with students. He was sought after as a judge for university and civic orchestra competitions, as well as auditions of the Artist Presentation Society in St. Louis. When active with the Music Teachers' National Association (MTNA), Dr. Campbell conducted master classes at various state conventions and also judged divisional and state competitions.

An artist who performed throughout the United States, Canada and Great Britain, Dr. Campbell was a true believer in the art of performance. He lamented those who preferred to listen to CDs of music rather than hear it live. “The audience is actually part of the performance. [It gives] the sense that you're there, that this is happening now and that it will never happen again,” he said in a 2003 interview. “In life, we like to be where something is happening, not where things are so predictable.”

As a performer, Dr. Campbell professed a marked affinity for the works of Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven and Liszt. In 1986, the centenary of Liszt's death, Dr. Campbell presented more than 30 recitals devoted exclusively to the music of that composer. In that year, he was the featured artist at recitals of the Beethoven Society at the Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and at conventions of the Missouri Music Teachers' Association and the Wisconsin Music Teachers' Association.



Dr. C. Lawrence Campbell, the Fern Rosetta Sherff Professor

Dr. Campbell held degrees from Northwestern University and Indiana University, where he was awarded a doctorate of music degree with the highest distinction. He studied under such pianists as Pauline Manchester Lindsey, Gyorgy Sebok and Alfonso Montecino.

A celebrated artist who held many distinctions, Dr. Campbell was named a winner or finalist in several national competitions, including the Chicago Young Artists' Competition, the Allied Arts Piano Competition, the Talman Musical Arts Competition and the international auditions of the Artists' Advisory Council.

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