



Joan Gilbert

January 1, 1943 - January 10, 2021

Joan Gilbert was a musician from a Memphis musical family. She was the daughter of Flora Eason Gilbert and Noel Gilbert, a Memphis musician who performed as a violinist and conductor in both the classical music field and the popular music field, mainly in Memphis recording studios. Joan followed her father's example, was also multitalented and performed both as a pianist and as a violinist. She may be heard with her father as a violinist on Isaac Hayes "Shaft", Elvis Presley's "In the Ghetto" and Carla Thomas' "Gee Whiz".

As a young girl, Joan began her piano study with Myron Myers at the Memphis College of Music. She attended Memphis public schools and Oberlin College where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She then attended The Juilliard School which awarded her a Master of Music degree and a Juilliard Scholarship for excellence in piano performance.

Joan's piano teacher at Oberlin was Jack Radunsky. In New York at Juilliard she studied with Eduard Steuermann. Joan also attended the Accademia Chigiana and the Conservatorio di Musica "Santa Cecilia" in Rome.

As a pianist, Joan performed as a recitalist, soloist with orchestra, and chamber musician. She was a founding member of several piano trios, and toured the United States and throughout Europe. She recorded for the Musical Heritage Society and for National Public Radio.

Professor of Piano and Chamber Music at the University of Memphis, Ms. Gilbert was a recipient of the University's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Joan Gilbert died on January 10, 2021, after a long illness.

Joan is remembered affectionately by her brothers:

Michael (and Yoko Takebe) Gilbert

Robert (and Christiane Petitprez) Gilbert

By her nephews, niece and their children:

Alan (and Kajsa William-Olsson) Gilbert; Noemi, Esra, and Lia

Jennifer (and Harvey) De Souza; Romy and Milo

Daniel (and Lori Williams) Gilbert; Isai, Calum, and Eva

Anthony Gilbert and Barbara Beltram.

Joan is also remembered by relatives, friends, colleagues and beloved students.

The family would like to thank the exceptional team of health care workers at Page Robbins Adult Day Center and Belmont Village Memory Care Neighborhood.

A celebration of life will be held when Memphis is free from the pandemic. There will be a private graveside service for the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to the Greater Memphis Music Teacher Association, the Beethoven Club of Memphis or any charity of the donor's choice.

Comments



“ My god, such a sweetheart. I am so sad to see this. But - know what? the fact that I got to be some of the moss growing on the side of the Gilbert family tree means tons. I cannot say how happy that Joan and I got together one of the last times i was in Memphis. I made a point to look her up. Not only laugh about the past, but check to see if our memories coincide!! And speaking of the Gilbert family, I so wish I could have attended a "Gilbert Family Concert." I'll bet you guys were a bit above mediocre ;-)

And I really hope to meet the Gilbert family sometime soon. I have a couple of Noel stories to share. (Was he not a hoot or what?)

Rest in peace, love.

p

Peter Hyrka - June 09, 2021 at 02:35 AM



“ Signe Dysken is following this tribute.

Signe Dysken - February 01, 2021 at 10:48 PM



“ My husband Maurice and I were so sorry to learn of the loss of Joan. Joan was my roommate for three years at Oberlin College, and we kept in touch over the years. Joan was a terrific friend to me and later to both Maurice and me. She was a phenomenal pianist -- extremely gifted and proficient on the piano. Joan also excelled in her liberal arts classes in college. She had wide-ranging interests, but was especially taken with art history. She was modest about her excellence in music and in academics, and was a most loyal and trusted friend. She was generous and kind, always, but also had a sparkly and witty sense of humor. I know she was devoted to her brothers and their families. I can only imagine what a great piano teacher she must have been. We send deep condolences to Alan and Bob and to their families.

Signe Midelfort Dysken

Signe Dysken - January 30, 2021 at 09:09 PM



“ Nous pensons à toute la famille et vous embrassons chaleureusement.
Ghislaine Duhem et Dominique Petitprez
86300 Chauvigny - France

PETITPREZ - January 22, 2021 at 04:39 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of Joan's death. I only saw her a few times as an adult, but in junior high school she, Kaye Lawler, and I were good friends. She was kind and gentle, but also disciplined when it came to practicing. Michael and Bobby, you and your families are in my thoughts.
Martha Logsdon
Logsd1mg@cmich.edu

Martha Logsdon - January 19, 2021 at 10:41 PM



“ I was so sorry to hear of Joan's demise. Although I didn't know her well, I was (am) friends with her brothers. I also played French horn in various orchestras conducted by their father Noel.

Michael and Bobby, please know that you have my condolences in the loss of your sister. She was only a year or two younger than I, and it makes me feel very vulnerable and mortal. I was unaware of the distinguished career she enjoyed and sorry that I couldn't have heard her play piano. I do remember her playing the violin at the summer concerts at the Shell in Overton Park.

I am sorry that the pandemic caused a public funeral to be impractical, for I surely would have been there.

Sincerely,

Susan Logsdon Berne

Susan Berne - January 19, 2021 at 01:49 PM



“ I was saddened to learn that Joan passed in Jan. 2021 after a long illness, She was talented, smart and accomplished, and also had a wonderful personality. She was an exemplary human, and she will be missed by family and friends.

Best Wishes, to Michael, bob, and your loved ones, Bruce Nelson

Bruce Nelson - August 21, 2021 at 10:06 PM



“ I knew Joan from childhood, as her father, Noel, was my violin teacher. He also taught my brother, Bill. Our family knew the Gilbert family pretty well, since we lived in the same neighborhood. Occasionally, my mother would drop teenaged Joan off at her piano lessons. I will always remember Joan as a kind and gentle soul, much like her mother
My sincere condolences to all the Gilberts.

Laurel Thurman - January 18, 2021 at 11:26 AM



“ So sorry to hear the loss of Joan- I grew up across from the Gilbert household on Eva St Memphis, TN. 1950's early 60's. The entire neighborhood knew of the musical talent within their household. I can remember Joanie practicing away daily for hours on piano. Michael on Violin and Bobby on French Horn. Wonderful memories, wonderful family. May God rest her everlasting soul.
George Covellis on 721 Eva St.

George Covellis - January 17, 2021 at 06:06 PM



“ Joan was one of our most outstanding graduates of Central High. We all knew she was talented and she fulfilled her destiny becoming a superstar.

George Flinn - January 17, 2021 at 01:19 PM



“ Growing up, Joan was a hero to me, she was my cousin and I wanted to be like her. She was always kind to me as a kid and they never changed about her. Peace be with you, Bob and Michael.

Linda Page - January 17, 2021 at 11:35 AM



“ Riding the bus in NYC, we passed Lincoln Center. I remarked “there’s Juilliard.” A complete stranger responded, “That’s where Joan Gilbert is!”

Bindy Snyder - January 16, 2021 at 01:48 PM



“ I just learned of Joan's passing on March 24, I guess 2 months & better since she left this world in Jan. I was just sitting down at a resort watching a little TV & Joan crossed my mind & I decided to just Google her only to be sadden reading of her passing. Joan prob had the most profound affect on me in my study of classical piano. She was my piano teacher when I attended Memphis State University in the early 1980s. Joan had brilliant piano artistry, technique I'd say 2nd to none. I absolutely loved & cherished studying with her. She wouldn't let you settle for nothing less then what she felt & knew your potential to be was. I've thought of her endlessly since my days at Memphis State & caught up with her on occasion when I was able to hear information of a performance she was doing. I have so many memories of our time & in lessons. Joan discovered that I played heavily by ear as well, whatever style or genre of music it was, from Jazz, pop, gospel etc. & classical as well. I would sometime start playing at a peice I hadn't officially studied before or seen the music to yet, just heard from listening over & over to recordings of different works. Some were technically very difficult but I would play at the peice because they drew me ears to them musically. And the next thing I know, I'd come in her office for a lesson on an occasion & she'd be handing the music to this List Rhapsody or Chopin Concerto that she heard playing at & say "start working on this peice", only to leave my mouth hanging when I saw the score to the music. Joan would push you to aim as much as possible for perfection but to have fun & enjoyment with whatever peice you undertook. I have & will always hold dear & cherish the musical importation I recieve from Joan Gilbert. My prayers & thots are with her family. The wonderful musicianship & beautiful spirit & person of Joan lives on in all the students & people lives in general she touched. Rest in peace ♫. .

Derrick Jackson

Derrick Jackson - March 24, 2021 at 10:40 PM