

Memorial Minute for Dana Professor Emeritus of Theater Martin Edward Andrucki

Delivered by Kati Vecsey, Senior Lecturer in Theater and Vocal Director

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Martin Edward Andrucki was born in the Bronx, New York, on October 11th, 1945. He earned a bachelor's degree in English, magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, from Columbia University and a doctoral degree in English from Harvard University.

Martin began teaching at Bates in 1974 as an Instructor in the Department of Theater and Speech. In 1975, upon receiving his terminal degree, he was promoted to assistant professor and that year began his decades-long service as department chair. He earned tenure in 1983, was promoted to full professor in 1990, and in 2001 was appointed as a Charles A. Dana Professor of Theater. Martin Andrucki retired in 2021 after 47 years of service at Bates, and to honor his career, the College renamed the Black Box Theater as Martin Andrucki Black Box Theater.

Martin's arrival at Bates for the 1974–75 academic year coincided with theater becoming a major for the first time. From the beginning and throughout his tenure, Martin worked fiercely to create a curriculum that emphasized literature, theory and productions of serious drama on stage. He wanted theater majors to be broadly educated in theater and drama and to make sure that theater is, and remains a fundamental part of the Bates College liberal arts education.

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Martin taught 30 different courses! Courses on theater history, dramatic literature, directing, and playwriting. I co-taught with him the off-campus “Central European Theater and Film” short term course between 1999 and 2019. We took 200 students to Budapest together and created the longest running off-campus short term program at Bates.

Martin directed more than 50 theatrical productions at Bates, in the U.S., and abroad. His directing ranged widely: classical and Shakespearean works such as *Antigone*, *Hamlet*, and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; European modern and political theater including *Three Sisters*, *Endgame*, and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*; American and contemporary plays such as *Bus Stop*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Eurydice*, and *Love/Sick*; as well as original and experimental projects including his own *Marie and the Nutcracker* and his radio-play production *Radio Waves*. As director, Martin believed that every script was sacred. If a comma appeared in a sentence, he challenged the students and wanted to know why. If a character sighed, the actors had to examine the sigh. He had a gift for making everyone around him on the production team — cast, artistic staff, stage crew — to feel good about themselves and believe that their work was significant no matter how minor or major it was. After each production Martin thanked all those involved with the famed cast party he and his wife, Judy, would host in their home.

Martin was a prolific writer. His writing appeared in *Modern Philology*, *Theatre Journal*, *Text and Performance Quarterly*, and *The Columbia Encyclopedia of Modern Drama*.

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He also wrote four plays, including *Manny's War*, which was nominated for the New Play Award of the American Theater Critics Association and staged at Bates in 2000 in collaboration with The Public Theatre of Lewiston.

Students and colleagues loved and admired Martin. Probably no other professor has been so often quoted, imitated in skits or remembered as legendary while still alive.

Martin died on February 8, 2026. He was 80 years old.

Thornton Wilder said: "The highest tribute to the dead is not grief but gratitude."

Thank you, Martin.