

November 28, 2000

Dear Mr. Wustman,

Please accept this silly poem in honor of weekly "brownie unders" and all the other fun memories at U of I.

We met in Eureka
tanti anni fa
for two weeks of Master Classes,
then I was off to *germania*.

We snuck in the stage door
at the *opéra de Paris*
And worked for hours
in a room that was free!

We giggled a lot
at our clever little *coup*
over coffee and croissant
on some quaint Parisian *rue*.

To Amsterdam
for our next friendly tryst
where I first heard you play
the Petrarch Sonnets by Liszt.

I swooned and I clapped
and I *bravi'd* with glee
and in 1982
returned to university.

Lessons at 9 a.m.
singer or no
as often as possible
I would go.

I believed and I trusted
each word you would say.
"Legato is a way of life"
began my every day.

“Maybe it’s money calling,”
as you lifted up the phone.
I liked the thought
and the credo quickly became my own!

It was evident to us that the
loudest part was the dot.
We waited for the correct response
when others were put on the spot.

“Poem time,” you’d say
at the end of each tune
whether opera or song,
Habanera or *Clair de lune*.

We translated and studied
each orchestra score.
Attended all concerts
and then searched for more.

Trips to Chicago
the Lyric to see
even though we were in
the highest balcony.

I left after two years
with Master’s in hand
for New York’s and Philadelphia’s
musical land.

It’s been 17 years
the time sure has flown.
I’ve even paid off
my student loan.

I am just one
who was lucky to be
a part of your rich
musical legacy.

So, thank you, *grazie*,
merci, *Danke sehr*.
Your music lives on
in our lives *immer mehr*.

On a more serious note, I want to thank you for all that you've done and been in my life. As teacher, your lessons were priceless beyond measure. As mentor, a giant of an example of so much excellence. As friend, a richness, depth and honesty. All of these have moved through time and space, so that it matters not when or where. It simply is.

With much love and gratitude,
Susan