

**PETER KASS**, a director, an actor, and a former College of Fine Arts assistant professor of theater, 85, on August 4.

A CLIFFORD ODETS protégé, Kass directed the out-of-town tryouts of Odets's *The Country Girl* in 1950 and moved to the cast when it went to Broadway. He had acted in the American premiere of Sartre's *No Exit*, directed by John Huston, and other Broadway productions, and went on to direct four Broadway shows, including Lorraine Hansberry's *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, starring Rita Moreno, and an ill-fated revival of Odets's *Night Music*. He also directed off-Broadway, the early fifties television series *Assignment: Manhunt*, and several television commercials, winning two Clios. He both directed and wrote the 1962 film *Time of the Heathen*, an intricate morality tale.

But, as his *New York Times* obituary notes, Kass's "main notoriety was as a fervid and prolific preparer of actors," at BU from 1955 to 1959, at New York University in the 1960s and 70s, and as a private instructor. The fifties were "still a time of declamatory acting," says Robert Banov (CFA'60). "He wasn't a method or a Stanislavski teacher, but much like that, because he was teaching young people who hadn't had a lot of experience, and he wanted them to use their imaginations to understand the emotions."

"He was brilliant at looking at a scene and putting his finger on what was wrong, absolutely brilliant," says Marvin Starkman (CFA'58). "Sometimes he would pursue you fiercely. He wanted you to understand your part



Peter Kass

not only intellectually but also emotionally; he wanted the truth. It could be very painful."

For Starkman and countless others, it was "exciting, stimulating." But for some, Kass could be intimidating. Mary Ann Donahue (CFA'57;'58) confesses, "I was pretty young; I found him a little scary."

The emotional truth Kass taught grew out of his understanding of a script. He directed a BU production of *Flowering Peach*, Odets's play about Noah. "My family had taken me to see it on Broadway," Banov says. "It was a kitschy comedy there. But it was really about family relationships," and that was the core of the also-humorous BU production.

Kass stayed in touch with many students, who included Olympia Dukakis (SAR'53, CFA'57, HON.'00), Faye Dunaway (CFA'62), Maureen Stapleton, and Val Kilmer.

Starkman and Banov speak warmly of the help Kass gave them over the years, professionally and personally.

Born in Brooklyn to Russian immigrants, Kass went from high school into the Army, and after World War II, into the theater. "He said he got his education standing at book stalls," Starkman says.

*Natalie Jacobson McCracken*

**ALLAN MACURDY** (CAS'84, LAW'86), 47, a School of Law visiting associate professor, on June 23.

MACURDY, WHO DIED after a lengthy battle with muscular dystrophy, had defied medical odds by living for more than twenty years on a ventilator.

A staunch disability rights advocate who had managed BU's Office of Disability Services since 1996, Macurdy was outspoken and honest about what he described to the *Boston Globe* in 1999 as the "constant, grinding reality" of being perceived as mentally deficient, incapable of communicating, or simply unhappy.

"I have a happy life," he told the *Globe*. "The fact that few people can see that probably says more about what's wrong with the way we, as a society, look at ourselves than it is any indication of what my life is really like. We have this mythical idea about physical autonomy, physical perfection — we're the society of diet crazes and bizarre body-consciousness. In terms of building your happiness in life, the outside package matters so little. I love my work. I have a strong family. I love my wife. I love my dog."

In his role at the Office of Disability Services, Macurdy was responsible for disabil-

ity policy, and he monitored and promoted the University's efforts to ensure full and equal access to curricula, employment, facilities, events, and services. "May we always remember the service Allan gave the University and the passion with which he advocated for the rights of all students," says Kenneth Elmore (SED'87), BU's dean of students.

Macurdy also taught Conflict of Laws, Admiralty and Maritime Law, Federal Indian Law, and Legal Rights of Individuals with Disabilities at the School of Law. He published and lectured widely on constitutional law, civil rights enforcement, individual liberties, federal jurisdiction, and law and disability.

He was a board member of the Franciscan Children's Hospital, a founding board member of Partners for Youth with Disabilities, a past president and board member of the Disability Law Center in Boston, and a member of the Massachusetts Bar Association.

Donations in Macurdy's name may be sent to the Allan H. Macurdy Memorial Fund, Boston University, 595 Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 700, West Entrance, Boston, MA 02215.

*Caleb Daniloff*

**RICHARD R. TOWLE** (SMG'39), 90, retired School of Management professor of accounting, on December 23, 2007.

TOWLE, A BU professor for more than forty years, also had a long career as a certified public accountant with the international accounting firm Pannell Kerr Forster in Boston.

After earning an under-

## Guiding CFA to New Heights

Norman Dello Joio hailed as prolific composer, talented leader

BY NATALIE JACOBSON MCCrackEN

College of Fine Arts and University Professor Emeritus Norman Dello Joio, a widely honored and prolific composer and dean of the College of Fine Arts from 1972 to 1978, died on July 24. He was 95.

Taught by his father, an organist, singer, and vocal coach, Dello Joio became an organist and choir director at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church on City Island, New York, when he was fourteen.

He graduated from City University of New York and turned to composing as a graduate student at Juilliard. In 1937 he won the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Award for his piano trio, the first of a succession of honors, among them two Music Critics' Circle Awards, an Emmy, and in 1957 a Pulitzer Prize for *Meditations on Ecclesiastes*. Religion was a dominant theme of his work, particularly the life of Joan of Arc, the subject of three operas and a symphonic piece.

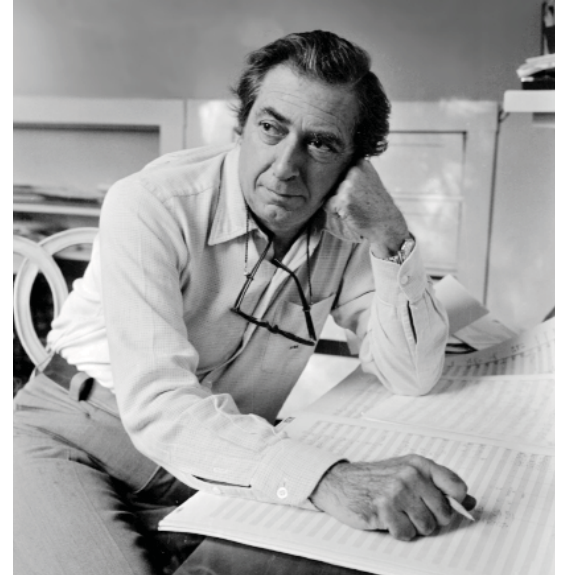
His massive oeuvre also includes more than forty-five choral works, nearly thirty pieces for orchestra, ten for band, twenty-five for solo voice, ballets (two commissioned by Martha Graham), nine

television scores, and other works for piano (some for children), flute, clarinet, harmonica, and organ.

He taught composition and choir at Sarah Lawrence College from 1945 to 1950 and composition at the Mannes College of Music from 1960 to 1972, when he was appointed dean of CFA by President Emeritus John Silber (HON.'95). He also was executive director of the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, which offers music programs during the summer for high school and college students in association with Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Silber says Dello Joio transformed the college and "brought it to its highest mettle of artistic achievement in the recruitment of many outstanding artists to the faculty: the sculptors Harold Tovish and Isabel McIlvain, the painter Philip Guston, the theater director Alan Schneider, the pianist Anthony di Bonaventura, the composer David Del Tredici, for master classes at Tanglewood the soprano Phyllis Curtin, and many others."

Under Dello Joio's deanship, Silber



adds, the BU Orchestra, conducted by Joseph Silverstein, won the silver medal at the Herbert von Karajan Festival of Student Orchestras in Berlin.

"A dedicated artist himself, he devoted mornings to composition and spent the afternoons and evenings overseeing the work of the college and its various programs," Silber says.

Dello Joio's works continued to be performed throughout the United States during his deanship; Silber and his wife, Kathryn, attended premiere performances of his compositions by the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, and at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

"His presence and that of his wife, Barbara, added new dimensions to our lives," Silber says.

graduate degree from BU, Towle joined the U.S. Navy. He served as a lieutenant aboard an aircraft carrier in the Pacific during World War II and was awarded nine battle stars and a Purple Heart.

He joined the School of Management faculty in 1945 as an instructor and retired as a professor of accounting in 1987. He was a member of the American Institute of

Certified Public Accountants.

Towle is survived by his nine children, five of whom attended BU: Richard, Jr. (CAS'66, SED'70), Doretha (SMG'66), Douglas (COM'69;73), Thomas (SMG'78), and Steven (SMG'79). *Katie Koch*

**ROBERT L. TREESE (STH'53, GRS'58), 88, School of Theology professor emeritus of practical theology, on January 1.**

TREESE, A BU faculty member from 1956 to 1983, also was associate director of field education for STH students. A passionate crusader for social justice, he espoused the role Christianity could play in foster-

ing equality for minorities, women, gays, and underpaid workers.

After working as a machinist in Chicago, Treese moved to Boston in the early 1950s to pursue a career in the ministry. He earned an STH degree in 1953 and joined the faculty while earning a doctorate in biblical studies. He taught courses on parish administration, pastoral leadership, evangelism, and other practical ministerial matters.

He was known for taking brave stands on controversial issues. He marched for civil rights in Selma in the early 1960s and was jailed in California for striking with grape pickers. He hired the first female faculty member

at the School of Theology and fought for inclusiveness in the workplace.

In 1965, Treese helped found the Council on Religion and Homosexuality, an interdenominational coalition of liberal church leaders and gay rights groups. The council's conference in San Francisco led to Treese's 1966 paper "Homosexuality: A Contemporary View of the Biblical Perspective," which is still cited in defense of the Bible's tolerance of homosexuality.

While at BU, Treese also served as minister of the Allston and Quincy Methodist churches and as an elder in the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. *KK*

