



## Helene Fagin

November 15, 2022

Veering into mid-life, never-idle Helene Fagin took it upon herself to seek higher education. Ever fascinated and long-engaged with Art and Humanity, she soon secured a PhD, and pursued a lengthy career of sentient and empathetic guidance to those who sought her counsel.

Her doctoral thesis, 'Creativity and Dreams' spoke to Helene's belief that nocturnal odysseys often awaken artistry. Early-on, painters, poets, sculptors and dancers inhabited her realm of interest. From her childhood in the Bronx, studying Interpretive Dance with Ruth St. Denis, to her half-century of rapturous ballroom spins with husband David, she effortlessly aligned music with movement.

This unabashed obsession with The Arts prompted Helene and Dave Fagin to frequently explore distant geographies. Each adventurous odyssey etched vivid memories shared with Cliff and Cathy (the progeny) in colorful dispatches from faraway countries. After David's tragic death, Helene soloed for several years. Moving through her loss, she recognized the light of immersion into the cultures of the world she loved. She soon gained strength, inspiration, and new self-awareness, as a frequent attendee of myriad museums, exhibitions, theater, and multi-genre musical offerings. Her sustained acquaintance with creativity enhanced a new confidence; beckoning new friendships.

With her wonderful later-in-life mate, Sidney Silberman, who shared similar curiosity and passion for visionary endeavors, she once again stepped out and traveled to destinations both exotic and familiar. Until Sidney's death in 2003 they shared habitation in White Plains, NY and Longboat Key, Florida. It was at her home in Longboat, easing through her one hundredth year, that Helene died on November 15th.

She leaves an unfettered legacy of love for those who encountered her. Her often sought, well-considered and doled advice, was paired with an inherent ability to listen and to hear. Her measured, kind, responses were always tempered with wit, compassion, and a keen sense of irony.

Terre Roche, a dear friend of Helene's — and her favorite musician — penned a poignant farewell. Here it is in part:

For Helene

I would love to find the words  
Cause that's what I'm good at  
The words to help you on your way  
And be a part of that...

The journey that we never know  
Those of us still here  
And wondering where did you go  
And is it someplace near

And I am someone who  
You reached across the aisle  
And pulled into your shining sphere

And had my back all the while

I look up at the night sky

And see the shivering star

Hoarding all its mystery

“Good night, Helene, wherever you are.”

# Tribute Wall

JM

“ Helene was another mother to me, so kind and gracious. In the summer of 1963, I had befriended Cliff while hanging out at Deuterman's boatyard where I lived on my small sailboat. I was welcomed on many visits to the Fagin home on Cove Road, Mamaroneck, NY. One in particular: I got sick, a cold, flu, whatever. Helene insisted that I stay at the Fagin home ( a short walk from the boatyard) so she could take care of me for a few days. I am still amazed as I am grateful that she would offer such hospitality to me-- a college dropout, no job, no local ties, seven years older than Cliff, for all appearances a bum/loser. I tear up today--as on many days past--as I feel gratitude for her kindness.  
Jim Mason Jan 20, 2024

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**Jim Mason** - January 20, 2024 at 11:17 AM

AM

“ Helene encouraged students' artistic visions by interacting with our emerging student artists. Through the creation of the David Fagin Show, she impacted many young upcoming artists at the beginning of their careers. Helene inspired our young artists at Manhattanville College to pursue their own visual concepts, with her kind words and great spirit. Helene will truly be missed in the Manhattanville community, her encouragement and love of the arts will live through the art studios in Manhattanville.

*Alka Mukerji*

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**Alka Mukerji** - December 06, 2022 at 03:16 PM

GH

“ *Helene Fagin was such a lovely woman! I had the good fortune to get to know her when she annually came to Manhattanville College to participate in the jurying of student art work for an award that had been established in memory of her late husband, David. She was so interested in the students and the sources of their inspiration and made each one feel creative and valued. She will be missed. Gillian Greenhill Hannum*

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**Gillian Greenhill Hannum** - December 01, 2022 at 06:09 AM

JF

“ *This is a beautifully written obituary for a woman and aunt who had a loving family and an accomplished life. I remember when your parents would come and visit and dance in the living room. They looked so beautiful together!  
Mom still talks about all the fun the 3 couples had on vacations.  
Good memories! Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.  
Love, Joanie and Ed*

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**Joanie Fagin** - November 29, 2022 at 06:39 PM