

John Pruitt. Photo by Pete Mauney, Bard College '93 MFA '00

Editorial

Remembering John Pruitt (1952–2019)

By Liza Palmer & Tim Palmer

A scholar and a gentleman, John Pruitt, professor of film at Bard College, avant-garde film devotee, opera and baseball fan – the list of distinctions (and sometimes incongruities that only he could make work as the last of a dying breed of Renaissance men) goes on and on – had a reach perhaps longer than even he knew. Indeed, *Film Matters* would not exist today if not for the singular work and mentorship of John. Liza (Shippey) Palmer, as a Bard College undergraduate, established *Cinematrix*, a magazine for the Bard College Film Department (affectionately referred to as the People's Film Department of Bard College), with fellow student Gordana (Bojovska) Warga at the urging of John. He found the funding for us, provided the professional guidance and moral support, and was an enthusiastic contributor and reader. During our admittedly short run,



Cinematrix published the work of undergraduate authors (analytical essays, film scripts, poems, interviews, etc.) alongside pieces by Stan Brakhage and Jane (Brakhage) Wodening, among other avant-garde superstars – we certainly went out on a high note. But, with *Cinematrix*, an idea was born that would see fruition in *Film Matters*.

John Pruitt's love of publishing is not surprising, given his early work as associate editor for *The Downtown Review*. Looking at tables of contents for the extant issues of this journal now, it rather reads like a one-man show, so integral to the operations were John's contributions. A passion project that he clearly willed to life, much like *Cinematrix*. *Film Matters* is proud to trace its lineage through all of these publications.

Chief among John's distinctions, however, were: devoted husband – to Sheila; and loving father – to Ida and Willa. We imagine he would most like to be remembered that way.

He will be missed. But his influence lives on in these pages.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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