

Celebrating the Life of Iris Fribrock Ewing



September 11, 1925 – April 8, 2017



Iris Fribrock Ewing passed away at the age of 91 on April 8, 2017 surrounded by her loving family. She was born on September 11, 1925 in Seattle, Washington to Eric Fribrock and Emma Nelson Fribrock, and she was raised in the Magnolia neighborhood with her dear brother, Joe. Iris graduated from Queen Anne High School and the University of Washington. Iris had an ideal childhood and especially loved summers at Snug Harbor Packing, her father's remote salmon cannery on Cook Inlet, Alaska. She was surrounded by, and she embraced in return, people from all walks of life. She reveled in the rugged beauty of Chisik Island and developed a deep love of nature.

Iris was gifted with a beautiful voice and musical talent. She also had the discipline and drive to establish a respected singing career. As a student, she appeared in many University of Washington Opera Workshop productions, and she was chosen by Jan Peerce to appear with him in a Seattle concert. In 1950, Iris attended the Conservatoire Americaine at Fontainebleau, France. She studied under famous teachers, including Germaine Martinelli and Nadia Boulanger, and she was the winner of the Premier Prix de Chant. She went on to study in Sweden with Eva Pawlo. Iris made her European concert debut at the Konserthuset in Stockholm, and

critics favored her with enthusiastic reviews. In New York, Iris studied with Enrico Rosati. Throughout the 1950s, Iris performed in many operatic productions and recitals on stage and radio, including three appearances with the Seattle Symphony. She was well known for her performance as the Queen of the Night in the Symphony's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* in 1953. Under the direction of Milton Katims, Iris was a guest soloist on the Standard Hour and she received critical acclaim as the soprano soloist in the Seattle premier of Orff's *Carmina Burana*. She performed solo recitals at Carnegie Hall, New York, and the Comedie Francaise, Paris. In 1956 she won first place in the Pacific Northwest Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition. As a singer, Iris was loved and respected for consummate clarity, smoothness, beauty, and poise.

Iris met Walter Ewing at a social gathering in New York. Their love and respect for each other was palpable and together they created a meaningful life around their children and broad circle of wonderful friends. Walter was a proud Scot and Iris's family was Swedish. Together they cherished their European roots and also shared great fun and laughter as cultures collided in the Ewing household. The story is still told of the time Grandma Emma reminded Walter that "Scots are just shipwrecked Norwegians!"

Walter's career as an insurance executive caused them to move several times, and they made lasting friendships with neighbors, colleagues and church communities in New York, Seattle, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and New Jersey. Throughout this period, Iris was very active in local and national music organizations. She was always helping to plan events and was a frequent judge at singing competitions. Iris was president of the Ladies Musical Club of Seattle during its centennial year. Iris and Walter enjoyed extensive international travel to such places as Japan, Australia, Singapore, China, and Europe.

In their retirement, Iris and Walter returned to the Pacific Northwest and built a wonderful family home on Camano Island where they enjoyed countless hours walking the beach, crabbing, gardening, entertaining friends, and enjoying the experience of being grandparents. Iris loved her grandchildren dearly and was a wonderful role model to them.

In 1991, Iris and Walter lost their son, Bob, to a sudden illness. Walter passed in 1999. The grief of these losses was something that Iris carried deep in her heart. Her children take joy in knowing that Iris, Walter, and Bob are reunited.

Iris moved to Emerald Heights in Redmond, WA in 2002. She enjoyed many heartfelt friendships and engaged in many activities. Most recently she led the effort to select an extensive new artwork collection, a project that kept her busy and happily engaged with artists and fellow residents.

Iris is survived by her children Brenda Roach (Steve), Anne Cole (John), Eric Ewing (Bruce Redman); her grandchildren Kelly Roach, Amy Roach, and Ellen Aebischer (Dominick); and her beloved sisters-in-law Dorothy Fribrock and Anne Carmichael, as well as extended family in Seattle, the UK, and Sweden.

Iris was a gracious, lovely, welcoming, spiritual, spirited, cultured, intelligent, and wise woman. She was a trusted friend to many and a loving matriarch. Iris led a life well lived. In her own words, she said "I loved life. Life loved me."

Celebrating the Life of Iris Fribrock Ewing
Emerald Heights
April 17, 2017

Prelude Trio in D minor, second movement Felix Mendelssohn
Roberta Hansen Downey, cello; Cecilia Poellein Buss, violin; Li-Tan Hsu, piano

Welcome Rev. John Waltner

Invocation Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz
University Congregational United Church of Christ

Honoring Iris Kelly Roach, Amy Roach & Ellen Aebischer, grandchildren

Hymn Be Thou My Vision Unknown
Carol Churchill, piano

Pastoral Prayer Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz

The Lord's Prayer

Scripture Reading Psalm 100 Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz

Special Music Beau Soir Claude Debussy
Roberta Hansen Downey, cello; Cecilia Poellein Buss, violin; Li-Tan Hsu, piano

Words of Remembrance Iris's Family
Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz

Special Music Vocalise Sergei Rachmaninoff
Roberta Hansen Downey, cello; Cecilia Poellein Buss, violin; Li-Tan Hsu, piano

Prayer of Thanksgiving Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz

Music of Remembrance O Mio Babbino Caro, from Gianni Schicchi Giacomo Puccini
1951 recording of Iris Fribrock Ewing

Hymn My Life Flows On in Endless Song Robert Lowry
Carol Churchill, Piano

Benediction Rev. Peter Ilgenfritz

Postlude Trio Sonata in F Major, Andante Dieterich Buxtehude

Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
thou my best thought both by day and by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Light of my soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.

My Life Flows On in Endless Song

My life flows on in endless song;
above earth's lamentation,
I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn
that hails a new creation. [*Refrain*]

Refrain:
No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
how can I keep from singing?

Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing? [*Refrain*]

What though my joys and comforts die?
The Lord my Savior liveth.
What though the darkness gather round?
Songs in the night he giveth. [*Refrain*]

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
a fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his!
How can I keep from singing? [*Refrain*]