

CROSSED THE BAR

Matthew Douglass McGuire

Matthew Douglass McGuire, of Ashfield MA and New York City, died unexpected in his sleep on Tuesday, December 15, 2020.

Born in Northampton MA on June 3, 1977, he was the only child of Christine Douglass of Northampton and James McGuire of Florence MA. He leaves behind a wife, Dr. Mingke Wang, and their daughters, Charlotte and Catherine; his father James; two aunts, Catherine Douglass and Constance Harvard; and an uncle, Bruce Douglass. Five Douglass cousins and a large contingent of McGuires of Long Island join in mourning his passing, as well as many friends close enough to be family.

Matt grew up in Northampton. He attended Bard College at Simon's Rock as well as Hampshire College, from which he received a degree in philosophy. He moved to New York City in 2005, living first in Brooklyn and then in Manhattan before returning to Massachusetts with his wife and children earlier this year.

He met the love of his life, Mingke, on New Year's Eve 2006, and they were married in 2011. Their first daughter Charlotte was born in 2011, and their second, Catherine, in 2013. He threw himself into the role of stay-at-home dad, finding a renewed sense of purpose in the daily challenges and joys it presented. Matt's compassionate nature and empathy for those less fortunate led him to work at inMotion (now called Her Justice), a nonprofit organization that provides free legal help to women living in poverty. He also contributed generously to many worthy causes, including music programs for children and soup kitchens. That compassion was part and parcel of his life as a spiritual quester, which also included a long-time meditation practice.

Music always played a central role in Matt's life-- in addition to playing the bass, he was both a devoted music collector and an amateur but avid critic. Matt also enjoyed his eclectic collections of art and of new and old books. His labor-of-love blog *Hunkered Down in Brooklyn* (subtitled "A Stay-at-Home Dad and His Unwitting Baby Daughter Survey the Greatest Music of All Time") contains insightful, humorous and poignant reviews of hundreds of albums. As it grew over the years, it evolved into both a curated tour through his musical world and a love letter to his girls, one which he hoped they could turn to in the future as a guide to the man their dad was and the beautiful experiences he wanted to share with them.

But of course, they weren't the only beneficiaries of his perspective. Whether they be readers who never met him or friends he'd known for years, Matt's unique combination of intelligence, warmth and humor touched many.

Matt was an organ donor. His remains will be cremated, and his ashes spread at places of significance to him and his family at a later time. Donations in Matt's memory may be made to either the Little Orchestra Society of New York - www.littleorchestra.org or the Dakin Humane Society - www.dakinhumane.org