

## John Ferzacca

July 26, 1940 - May 21, 2020

John B. Ferzacca left this world on May 21, 2020, at the age of 79. John passed away peacefully with his trademarked breakfast tray, designer coffee cup, and energy bar resting on his lap.

John was born on July 26, 1940, in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to “Frosty” and Marion Ferzacca. He was preceded in death by his parents and will be sadly missed by his loving sister, Mary Sullivan (Ferzacca) Pierce, a niece and nephew, 5 great nieces and nephews, and his many beloved friends.

While our hearts ache with this immense loss, John’s independence, creative spirit, numerous artistic talents, and incomparable sense of humor will live on in all of us.

Drawn to drama and art at an early age, John participated in every theatre and drama class available throughout his grade school and high school years. If John was not acting, he was designing sets, serving as assistant director or producer, or coaching others in learning Cockney accents. He graduated from Shorewood High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with the intent to pursue a theatre major in college. He attended undergraduate school at Northern Michigan University, in Marquette, Michigan, where he majored in drama and art. It was at Northern where his prodigious talent for drama flourished under the mentorship and tutelage of James Rapport, head of the NMU Drama Department NMU. His love of theatre never wavered, so he went on to pursue a Master of Arts Degree in Theatre at Michigan State University in 1971.

An inspiring teacher, he first taught at Lansing Sexton High School, where he continued to direct plays and teach theatre and art classes. From Lansing, he went on to Sunny Hills High School, in Fullerton, California, for 3 years. The remainder of his teaching career, almost 40 years which ended in the fall of 2019, was spent at Orange Coast College where he will be remembered as, “... the coolest teacher you will ever meet, and the best teacher I have ever had. I know he knows what he is talking about. I know he loves what he does. I know he loves his students.” He mounted demanding and rigorous, often first

run, musical and theatre productions at OCC which earned the praise, acclaim and recognition from theatre critics from the LA Times.

John was truly a Renaissance man, as comfortable with art and design as he was with football. He loved bulldogs, the Green Bay Packers, cooking, video games, Ed Hardy, books, music and film and cars. At the time of his death, he owned 3 Lincolns. He was known for his amazing array of antiques, art, movie and record collections and, his beloved, Frank Sinatra and Doris Day memorabilia. John always made each home a welcoming and loving place for every guest where he enjoyed preparing a fine meal and creating a special memory for his loved ones.

In retirement, John never stopped his love for writing, acting, drama and film. During the past year, he completed 5 stage and screenplays. His work is currently being reviewed by critics with whom he has exchanged critiques and revisions, hoping to produce another play or movie by the age of 80.

Actor, artist, author, son, brother, friend, John was a man of many, many talents, all of which he shared with the world. He lived a rich life without regret, and he would want his legacy to carry on through all of us doing the same. John's own words, from his most recent screenplay, speak most profoundly of his philosophy of life and the legacy he leaves behind: "I want to thank you for all you've brought me. You are trying to create a world that you can fit comfortably in, not conform to one that leaves you no space. That's not selfish; that's strong. The world is lonely enough without the added burden of trying to live any life but your own."

# Comments

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“ John's play FAILURE TO ZIGZAG was directed by me at Cabrillo College, in Santa Cruz, Ca, back in the 1990's. It was and is an important and wonderfully written play which was both challenging to stage and brilliantly received by both the Monterey Bay audiences who adored it, and many of the survivors of the S.S. Indianapolis and their families who came to our opening night. It was a reunion for them and a chance for our actors to meet them and thank them for their service. I am sorry I did not get to know John but will always be grateful for his artistry.

Wilma Marcus Chandler  
Santa Cruz, CA.

Wilma Marcus Chandler - October 26 at 05:52 PM

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“ I met John in 1999 when I lived in San Diego for a short while. A cousin of mine working on our family tree suggested I contact him to see how we were related. We met in Carlsbad at the outlets. We talked for quite a while...John was quite a character and so much fun to talk to. "What you won't do for love" by Bobby Caldwell came on overhead while we were having a soda and trying to figure out how we were related. We both stopped and commented and sang along. He told me he met (or knew) Bobby Caldwell.

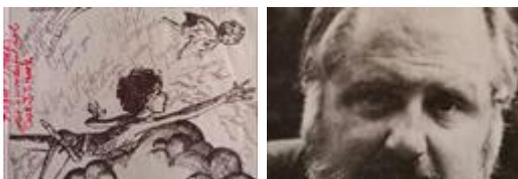
That is when I discovered his love for Sinatra and Jazz. We never did find out how we were related. John had a date after our meeting and invited me along! I declined but we ran in to his date as he was walking me to my car. She encouraged me to join. The three of us had a fun dinner. I moved and never saw John again but I will never forget John. Elisa Ferzacca

Elisa Ferzacca - October 11 at 09:20 AM

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“ My husband, Roger, was one of John's students at OCC and stage managed a couple of productions for John. Roger's favorite was Peter Pan in 1983. This is a photo from the playbill. My condolences to all John's family and friends.



Sandy Pritchard - August 07 at 01:24 PM

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“ Ferzacca, thank you for the most enlightening 21 years and your gifts of guidance and support. I was truly blessed to have you in my life. Love, Fosse.

**Susan Fosse** - August 01 at 03:04 PM

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“ I went to OCC in 1969-70....I LOVE Musicals and being a music major I gravitated to the theater Dept. I met John there, thought he was such a warm friendly and Charasmatic guy. I was rehearsal accompanist for his production of Follies, in the chorus with my mother on Fiddler on The Roof and rehearsal accompanist on Jesus Christ Superstar. I had the time of my life working with him. He taught me the total appreciation and commitment for working on a production and the joy of making a beautiful experience out of working on a theater production. These were some of the first musicals I ever did and I went on to being a musical director and making a wonderful career in theater.

I thank you John for being such an inspiration, you changed my life.  
You will always be remembered, RIP, much love Bill Wolfe

**Bill Wolfe** - June 21 at 10:38 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Cynthia Corley** - June 20 at 10:56 AM

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“ John was an Icon at Orange Coast College. Thanks for the memories.  
Sharon Jones  
Retired Faculty

**Sharon Jones** - June 19 at 09:17 PM

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“ My deepest condolences to family and friends. Mr. Ferzacca was a favorite teacher of many at Sexton High School.

**Barbara Wood** - June 15 at 10:08 AM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Barbara Wood** - June 15 at 10:06 AM

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“ John was the most amazing man I have ever met. I loved him for his wit..intellect and what a knowledge. We met a year ago on POF. Just adored him and his style. He was a man I will never ever forget. John Barry Ferzacca rest in PEACE. MISS YOU!

**Linda Artilean Bowie** - June 06 at 10:19 PM

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“ I had John for a drama class back in 1995. He was tough, you had to work for a good grade. He was supportive and if he liked your performance you could tell. All round friendly guy.

**Natalie Walker** - May 31 at 06:26 PM