

Mara Lane Cary (b. 1940 – d. 2016)

Mara Lane Cary died in Los Angeles on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at the age of 75, after a seven-year battle with metastasized melanoma and breast cancer.

Born in Poughkeepsie, NY Mara spent her childhood winning horse riding trophies with her three sisters. After graduating from Vassar College she became a professional actress, working at Arena Stage in Washington DC and Hartford Stage Company where she married Richard Montfort Cary as the Beatles White Album played. She moved to Nantucket Island in 1970 to raise a family and published two successful books on basket weaving: "Basic Baskets" and "Useful Baskets." Mara worked in the Nantucket Public School system for years as a librarian and was also the creative force behind many original school plays and puppet shows.

In her 40s, Mara went back to school earning a Masters in Library Sciences from Simmons College. She then continued her teaching career at Milton Academy where she was the head librarian and ran the theater program.

Throughout she continued to act, performing in numerous shows at both The Nantucket Theater Workshop and at the Actor's Theater of Nantucket. Memorable performances include starring roles in The Miracle Worker, Agnes of God, Wit, and After-Play.

In 2004 Mara moved to Los Angeles to both "get back into the business" and help raise her grandchildren. Amongst the many roles she took during this time: she starred, beside Iggy Pop, as the voice of Barbara Bush in the Comedy Central series "Lil' Bush" and mounted a multi-media, one woman show about her life called "W.O.W." She also earned rave reviews as "Grandmother".

Mara was a long time member of A.A. and recently celebrated her 38th year of sobriety. She honored the many friendships she made there.

Mara loved the theater and books and music and poetry and puppetry and wrote every day. As she battled cancer she was hard on work on her memoir "Enthusiasm for Silly Things." Here is an excerpt:

"A Flock of Stars"

One Recent afternoon, I saw a flock of stars crossing the sky; ten to twenty stars moving effortlessly East across the deepening blue. I am in my seventies, and I have never in my life seen such a thing. Well, after a bit they became seagulls, with the sun's reflection on their white bellies, just masquerading as stars. But OMG they were beautiful.

So I emailed my granddaughter, Amadi and told her about them.

The next time I saw her, she said "Gruther (my young grandson's name for me) I have noticed that you sometimes get very enthusiastic over silly things."

Yes, I thought, yes! Thank you Amadi, I said.

Mara is survived by her sisters Dorothy Decker and Alice Meyer, son, Donick, daughter-in-law Kim and grandchildren Amadi Jean Cary and Otis Montfort Manning Cary who call her "Gruther."

A memorial Service will be held at the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, 2936 West 8th St, Los Angeles. In lieu of flowers please send donations to: The Nantucket Theater Workshop Mara Cary Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 1297, Nantucket MA 02554