

Helga Winold

Professor of Strings

Born in Munich, Germany, just prior to World War II, Helga Winold sensed at an early age she was destined to be a musician. Although attracted to the music of the opera (“I wanted to be an opera singer”), she eventually realized that she did not have the voice for it, and took to the cello. Her studies ultimately led her to Cologne, and, at a later time (1963), she matriculated at the IU School of Music to study with the world-renowned cellist and pedagogue Janos Starker. By 1967 she had earned her doctorate in cello performance and literature, and in 1969 she was invited to join the IU faculty.

Her contributions to the IU string department and cello division of that department during her almost 40 years here have been enormous. One of her great interests during her tenure has been research and analysis of movement in string playing, which she began with the late Esther Thelen of the Department of Psychology. That interest has led to research and a wider arena, which now takes her occasionally to Freiburg, Germany, where she serves as a consultant to the Institute of Music and Medicine of the University of Freiburg. At the Jacobs School of Music, she was the first to institute required graduate courses and syllabi in cello literature and pedagogy. She serves on innumerable doctoral committees, not only for cellists, but for all the other string instruments, and even instruments outside the department. She is highly organized, yet flexible in her approach to teaching. As she put it, “My greatest joy has been working with so many talented students with such varied backgrounds. There was never a lesson where I did not learn something from each of them. I can honestly say that I did my very best to help them to accomplish what they were seeking to do.” Her mentor, Janos Starker, recently nominated her for the President’s Award for distinguished teaching, which she received at the Celebration of Teaching Dinner March 30.

It was at IU that Helga found the love of her life, Allen Winold. They met in the basement of Merrill Hall, where Allen was then not only teaching music theory, but also heading up the undergraduate advising office. According to Helga, “We met in Allen’s office in the room that is directly below the studio where I now teach. He was trying desperately to light a pipe but did not know how to do it properly . . . so I showed him.”

Helga looks forward to the next chapter in her life with great anticipation: “I have fantastic children and grandchildren, who all, unfortunately, live far away. Now I will be able to see them more often.” She also plans to carry on her research in the analysis of movement in string playing, as well as keeping close touch with public school music teachers and students.

We will certainly miss seeing her so frequently in the hallways, at meetings, and at the many functions of the Jacobs School of Music. But we know that she is not far away in the hearts and minds of not only her legions of former students, but also her grateful colleagues.

Lawrence Hurst