



## Douglas MacDonal

December 26, 1955 - December 29, 2021

Douglas James MacDonal (December 26, 1955 - December 29, 2021) was born to Penelope Wynn Kerr MacDonal and Glenn Winchell MacDonal on their 13th wedding anniversary at Bethesda Naval Hospital, while the family was living in Maryland, just before moving to the community of Lake Intervale in the Mountain Lakes region near Parsippany, New Jersey. Eldest brother Bruce Thomas MacDonal and middle brother Roderick Mark MacDonal, staying with their grandparents in Florida, reunited shortly thereafter.

A irrepressibly mischievous imp in childhood, irreverent class clowning began early; enjoyed by fellow students, certain teachers (and sometimes, his parents) likely had a different perspective of his antics. When a teen, though the elder brothers remained North, the family moved South, to the neighborhood around Lake Winnemissett in Florida, and Douglas entered Deland High School. (Roderick later joined them.)

There, through HS graduation, and later attendance at The Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, perhaps his greatest gift, of so many, began to become evident: collecting friends -- added wherever he went, they were dearly held throughout his life, forming what one recently called the "Doug Diaspora", a now fairly far-flung assemblage of often wildly disparate individuals, all beheld in love for and from this "caring, giving, strong, sweet, goofy, can put a smile on anyone's face kinda guy", as another friend noted.

Over time, the circles of his friends, flowing through his passions, evolved from (but were by no means exclusive to) the beach, the classroom, the band, the office, the stage, the studio, the workshop, in photo shoots, in role-playing games of Dungeons & Dragons and The Call of Cthulhu, frequenting airshows, setting off fireworks, and voracious motorcycling -- indeed, the last time all three MacDonald brothers were together, before Rod's sadly early death, was on an adventure riding from Stephentown, New York to Acadia National Park in Maine, through the Green Mountains of Vermont, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and back.

In 1981, encouraged by his brother Bruce to leave Florida and come North to join a theater company in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the next phase of his life took shape, as he ultimately worked with a host of area companies: The Berkshire Public Theatre, Mixed Company (a founding member), Berkshire Opera Company, Austin Riggs Center, Main Street Stage, Town Players of Pittsfield, Our Own Productions, BrickRoad Productions, Aglet Theatre Company, and Homespun Productions, among others.

In theatre, he plied his talents not only as an avid actor, but as a graphic designer and artist, in set painting and construction crews, in box office and concessions, helping backstage in numerous capacities, and in most aspects of tech, including as a musical improv connoisseur.

He was a devotee of a wide range of musical forms, but with particular delight was the original drummer for the reggae group INI, later renamed Dread I, through the time he had risen from a staff artist at the national headquarters of KayBee Toys in Pittsfield to become their Art Director; thus, though his "day job" left him unable to join the band on tour, when they returned, he became their percussionist for several years.

In 1995, he definitively switched professional gears from the corporate realm, burned his silk tie "nooses", and, wanting something he felt more personally fulfilling, became a Certified Nursing Assistant with the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association, where he remained for the rest of his days, giving much-needed aid to the sick.

In this profession, he was deeply valued by his coworkers, and especially his clients, and it was even arranged for him to work within the hospice program for a time to stay with some for as long as they lived. He took on a few private duty clients as well, his "after work work". Lauded as always being respectful to them, upbeat, caring, liked, and trusted, he was integral to helping them remain at home, and in handling their severe health issues with dignity. Not surprisingly, many also considered him a friend.

In 1987, a fall production at The Berkshire Public Theatre brought the one who proved to be his soulmate, Diedre Devere Bollinger, into his life. He was 31. She was 18, smitten from the first moment she saw him, as she walked down the aisle to much of the cast already arranged in a circle on the stage: seated furthest stage left, a man wearing a fedora, maroon-and-white buffalo plaid shirt, acid-washed blue jeans and brown leather boots, was regaling the crowd -- everyone joined in laughter -- his head flung back in the most boisterous, infectious laughter of all, with dimples straight to his eyes, became a memory she will never forget.

One evening, they happened to turn up as the only cast members who didn't realize a rehearsal had been canceled. The dashing man, in his executive garb of the fedora, a trench coat, silk tie, button down shirt, pleated pants and wingtip shoes, raising an eyebrow and smiling warmly, asked the star-struck rookie on a date. They picked a movie from the lineup at random: "Fatal Attraction". Their romance began that night, and continued, for the next 34

years.

Among myriad aspects, their union came to encompass a plethora of theatrical productions together, in manifold competencies and companies, even touring together when she formed her own. Living in a variety of places in the Berkshires and New York, they finally settled in Stephentown, New York in 1999, where they continued to indulge in their love of the arts, gardening, and animals.

In spiritual Sympatico, they shared a world of joys, discoveries, hopes, dreams, disappointments, successes, private jokes, lots of kisses, and perfect hugs. For many years, they spent Labor Day week at a campground amid the high peaks of the Adirondacks, in their favorite cabin in the woods on a lake, directly opposite Whiteface...their heaven on earth.

In that magical wilderness, though the eternal spirit of his courageous, great soul is too vast to be contained, the earthly remains of the sparkling essence of his eyes, his smile, his kindness, his generosity, his humor, his friendliness, his wit, his sweetness, his tenderness, his strength, his compassion, his talents, his decency, his daring, his protectiveness, his extraordinary wonderfulness, and so much, much more, will reside in his ashes spread.

Hence, too, in tribute, this love letter, to one so very, very full of love, perhaps his body simply could no longer bear it, as he succumbed to a sudden, massive heart attack from which he, mercifully, did not suffer long.

As yet another friend noted: "God rest ye, merry gentleman."

Predeceased by his parents "Pen and Glenn", middle brother Rod, "unofficial in-laws" Ralph and Mary Ann Bollinger, and beloved pets Manchester, Vivien, and Chaz, he is survived by eldest brother Bruce and his daughter, niece

Darwin Lain MacDonald, Rod's children, Ryan and Christine, his life partner Diedre, her sister Cheryl Eveland and her husband Evan, and their children Connor, Logan, and Colin.

For those so inclined, in lieu of flowers, consider a donation in his memory to a local theatre group, an environmental charity, an animal welfare organization, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the ACLU, or with a subscription to Mother Jones.

Given ongoing pandemic concerns, plans for a service to mourn his death and celebrate his life are to wait for warmer weather where friends and loved ones can more comfortably gather, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, May 21, at 2pm, in Pittsfield State Forest. The idea is solid, the details are not, yet. Please contact Dwyer-Wellington Funeral Home for further clarification, or Diedre directly, at [diedrebollinger@gmail.com](mailto:diedrebollinger@gmail.com), as the time draws nearer.

Hug your loved ones close. Never waste a single chance to do so; there is never enough time desired. Invite the possibility. Blessed be.

# Tribute Wall

JR

“*Doug took care of my dad, Albert Ricci. He was so genuinely caring. He helped us care for dad till his death. He was so likable and caring. So to his wife and many friends I am very sorry for your tremendous loss. The Ricci family.*”

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**john m. ricci** - January 23, 2022 at 11:04 AM