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Jill Krementz Celebrates the Life of Thomas Hoving



The mummies weren't dancing — but who knows? They might have taken a twirl around the halls of the Met in the dead of the night — before family and guests arrived on a springlike morning at the Temple of Dendur to celebrate the life of Tom Hoving.

Celebration of the Life of Thomas Hoving January 15, 1931--December 10, 2009 A Memorial Service at the Temple of Dendur

Tom Hoving was only 35 years old when he was appointed Director of The Metropolitan Museum. At the time, he was working for his good friend Mayor **John Lindsay** as the Parks Commissioner. Worried about leaving Lindsay in the lurch, Hoving was encouraged by the Mayor's words: "You'll make the mummies dance." This admonition would become the title of Hoving's irreverent and wonderful memoir.



During his ten-year tenure at the Met (1967-1977), Tom Hoving transformed the somewhat stodgy institution into a magical museum. Huge banners were draped on the front façade. *The Harlem on my Mind* exhibition of photographs by the black photographer **James Van Der Zee** reached a populist public (and enraged many of his WASPY board members). Hoving also oversaw the blockbuster



Tutankhamun show, the **Andrew Wyeth** exhibit, *The Great Age of Fresco*, *Masterpieces of Tapestry*, and a display of gold treasures from the Hermitage.

His acquisitions included **Frank Lloyd Wright's** Prairie House (Wright's living room is reconstructed in the American Wing), the **Robert Lehman** collection, the **Velázquez** masterpiece *Juan de Pareja*, and the medieval ivory antiquity known as the Bury St. Edmund's Cross.

And then there was The Temple of Dendur, which, with Hoving at the helm, was won by the Met in a competition among U.S. museums set up by the Egyptian government.

Thus it was fitting that it was in this magnificent space that his family, friends, and colleagues gathered last week to honor this lovable man and gifted maverick who died of lung cancer on December 10th.



Out in front of the museum: Officer Claude Carmel with "Pete," a Percheron who has been tromping through the Park for seven years. They were there to honor Tom Hoving. Prior to being Director of the Metropolitan Museum, Hoving was the Commissioner of New York City's Department of Parks and Recreation.



Photographs of Tom Hoving were projected on many screens around the Temple of Dendur.



Philippe de Montebello, Director Emeritus, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The beautiful sprays of flowering cherry blossoms were done by Chris Giftos.

Judy Collins sang "Both Sides Now," a song she had once dedicated to Tom Hoving when he was Parks Commissioner.



Michael Thomas.

Liz Baker, Alice McAdams, and Henry Baker, who are Quaker Hill neighbors of Nancy Hoving's.



John O'Keefe and Harold Holzer.



Bobby Kennedy Jr., who is a close friend of Tom Hoving's nephew, John Hoving.



Philippe de Montebello, Nancy Hoving, Trea Hoving, and Trea's three daughters, Amelia, Katie, and Matilda.



Grandchildren Amelia, Katie, and Matilda, 2009. Photo: Mike Carsley.

I love Popop's laugh and his funny way of talking.
—Amelia

I miss his funny faces game.
—Matilda

I got my inspiration to be an Egyptologist from Popop, and if he is in heaven, I hope he has a great time there. For the nine years he's been around for me, he has taught me a very special lesson: always be your own person.
—Katie



At the end of the program, Judy Collins sang "Amazing Grace," urging the audience to join in.



Emily Rafferty, President of the Metropolitan Museum, with Thomas B. Campbell, the Director of the Metropolitan Museum.



Philippe de Montebello and Thomas B. Campbell.



Jules Feiffer.

Victoria Wyeth with her uncle, Jamie Wyeth.

As a little girl I clearly remember meeting Tom and being amazed by his love and passion for both my grandfather and his work.

Tom taught me the importance of listening to what my grandfather had to say about his work, rather than accepting what art historians said my grandfather was thinking.

I am certain that Andy and Tom are up in heaven raising hell.

The Wyeth family will miss Tom dearly.

-Victoria Browning Wyeth



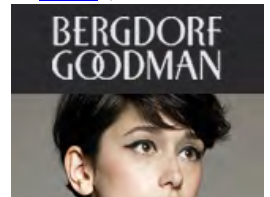
Judy Collins and Trea Hoving, Tom's daughter.



Jamie Wyeth standing in front of a portrait of Tom Hoving by Andrew Wyeth. The painting was done in 1995 and is entitled *The Director*.

Morrison Heckscher, Chairman of The American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum.

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Phyllis Yampolsky, Amanda Douberly, and Bolek Ryzinsky. Ms. Yampolsky is a seminal figure in participatory arts, and created "Hoving Happenings" throughout the New York City Parks System. Ms. Douberly is a graduate student of art history at the University of Texas in Austin where she is doing her dissertation work on the work Ms. Yampolsky did with Mr. Hoving. Mr. Ryzinsky is an architect and contractor.



Dick Button, Jock Howat, and Edith de Montebello.



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Michael Gross.



Elizabeth Weber, a close friend of Nancy Hoving's. They worked together on Citizens Committee for Children.



Edith de Montebello, Ashton Hawkins, and Emily Rafferty.

[Marina Abramović at MoMA](#)

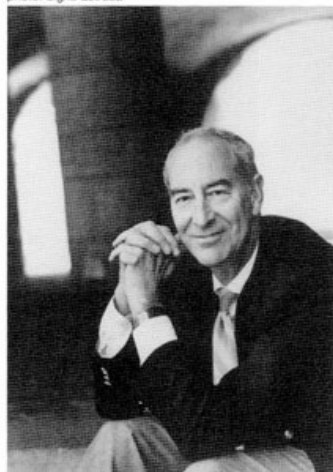
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I hope Tom knows how very much those who worked most closely with him admired what he achieved in his tenure as Director. I was witness to all of his remarkable initiatives and achievements, which were the outline for many—if not most—of the great achievements that followed under Philippe's leadership. Tom's brilliance about the master plan was only one of the things he will be long remembered for. I also loved working for him—there was no one I ever met who could equal his humor, enthusiasm and profound understanding of what the Met was and needed to become.

—Ashton Hawkins

photo: Sigrid Estrada



Lisa Phillips, Director of The New Museum, and Tom Armstrong, former Director of The Whitney.

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Jerry Lawton, lawyer, friend, and former business colleague of Tom Hoving's.

Art critics Walter Robinson and David D'Arcy. Mr. Robinson is the editor of *ArtNet Magazine* and Mr. D'Arcy writes for *Art & Auction* and for *Art Newspaper*.



Leon Falk, an independent film producer and a professor at NYU, writing a post for the wall. To his right, with a camera, is Michael Henry Adams. People were invited to write notes of remembrance and affix them to the wall at the Met.



Mr. Falk at the Wall.



The Wall of remembrance.



Phyllis Yampolsky, the wall's creator.



Detail of the wall.

they wanted. We put it up on the lawn near 79th Street in Central Park with a squad of recreation parkies supervising. It was a splendid all-day controlled riot of the visual arts resulting in a marvelously crazy carnival paingsset. From then on, anything I did that seemed unstructured and spontaneous was called a Hoving Happening. ☺



Self-portrait, drawn at the original Hopping in Central Park, 1966

I have to admit that I've never given much of a damn for clothes. Some people are emotionally moved by clothes; others think of them only as something with which to ward off the elements. I am among the latter. I spend

minutes purchasing a business suit but days to acquire a powder suit for hell-skiing. Has it got the right number of pockets, placed correctly? Are there Velcro fastenings? To my ears, Gore-Tex is a name sweeter than Fortuity. I can pick apart foul-weather suits for ocean racing the way Bernard Berenson dissected Florentine paintings for the Renaissance. ☺



Thomas Hoving skiing and clowning around in Canada in the '50s.



George Munroe.



Donovan B. Moore Jr. and Anne Moore. Mr. Moore is a former producer for ABC's *20/20*. He and Tom Hoving were colleagues when Mr. Hoving was a correspondent for the show.



Trea Hoving.



Nancy Hoving, widow of Tom Hoving.



Joan Sandler, who once worked for the Department of Cultural Affairs when Tom Hoving was at the Met.



Officer Bruce Langston, Inspector Robert Reeve, and Officer Jordan Phillips, City of New York Parks and Recreation.



Sphinx of Hatshepsut: This colossal sphinx, weighing more than seven tons, portrays the female pharaoh Hatshepsut with the body of a lion and a human head wearing a nemes headcloth and royal beard.



Following the memorial service there was a reception hosted by the Hoving family.



Snappy guest.



Chris Giftos came out of retirement to do all the flower arrangements.



These two photographs were on easels at the entrance to the Temple of Dendur. Photo of TH in Dendur by Arthur Schatz, 1975; photo of TH on the porch with Buffalo by Sigrid Estrada.

	<p>The Metropolitan Museum of Art April 5, 2010</p> <p>WELCOME Trea Hoving</p> <p><i>Moments With Tommy, a video</i></p> <p>REMARKS</p> <p>Philippe de Montebello Director Emeritus, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Fiske Kimball Professor, The Institute of Fine Arts</p> <p>Harry Parker III Director Emeritus, Dallas Museum of Art Former Director, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco</p> <p><i>Both Sides Now, Judy Collins</i></p> <p>The Honorable Henry J. Stern Former Commissioner, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation Founder, New York Civic</p> <p>Donovan B. Moore, Jr. Former Producer, ABC, 20/20 Managing Director, Bessemer Trust</p> <p><i>Amazing Grace, Judy Collins</i></p> <p>IN CLOSING John Hoving</p> <p>A RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW</p>
<p>Thomas Hoving January 15, 1931–December 10, 2009</p>	

The Memorial Program.



Tom Hoving, Mary Lindsay, Mayor John Lindsay and Nancy Hoving, January, 1967. Photograph by Jill Krementz.

When Thomas P. Hoving resigned as New York City's parks commissioner to become director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a farewell dance was given for him in a huge pink-and-white tent in Central Park. Peter Duchin played and the guests all danced. And as Mayor Lindsay predicted, for the next ten years Thomas Hoving did make the mummies kick up their heels and have a very good time.

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