

SPORTS

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MARIO HUDON 1960-2023

Mario Hudon, a sportscaster and friend gone too soon at 63

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As people across Quebec bid farewell to singer Karl Tremblay of Les Cowboys Fringants, sports fans in the Capitale-Nationale region were also mourning the death of Mario Hudon, who lost his battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) on Nov. 20 at age 63.

Mario, who was diagnosed with ALS in 2020, fought tooth and nail to raise money for the research that would hopefully find a cure for this deadly disease. ALS is a neurological disorder that affects motor neurons, the nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord that control voluntary muscle movement and breathing.

The most famous person to have died from ALS is former

New York Yankees star Lou Gehrig. He played 2,130 consecutive games for the Yankees before retiring on May 2, 1939. He died of ALS in 1941.

Mario was not a talented athlete like Gehrig, but his talent and passion for sports and radio had no limits. He studied at Collège Radio Télévision de Québec because he wanted to be a sports broadcaster. He loved hockey and the Chicago Blackhawks. Mario was a fan of the White Sox, the Cubs and the Bears, all the sports teams from Chicago, but hockey was his first passion, with boxing a close second.

He was a strong advocate for the return of the Quebec Nordiques. He had Excel spreadsheets detailing the teams with the lowest attendance records, and built a document where he showed why Quebec

City should have an NHL team.

Mario also loved local senior hockey. In hopes of getting a job as a play-by-play announcer, he practised describing beer-league games at the Galeries de la Capitale skating rink. When the Québec Radio X hockey team was granted a franchise in the Ligue nord-américaine de hockey, Mario got a job at CHOI-FM. His broadcasts became legendary because of his passion for the game, and also for the rough stuff that happened during the matches.

I met Mario when he worked at Québec 800 (CHRC), a sports radio station. I had chronicles on NCAA football twice a week, and Mario would often call or email me to ask if I would do more on his nighttime show. It was an instant friendship for both of us.

Personally, I can thank Mario for pushing me into more contracts as a sports public address announcer throughout Canada. At the Hockey Canada Telus Cup in Lévis in 2010, Mario was broadcasting the games live on Québec 800, while I was the PA announcer for the championship. The folks from the 2011 Telus Cup in St. John's asked me if I was interested in going to Newfoundland as their PA announcer. I asked for some time to think about it, talked to Mario and our mutual friend, Remparts play-by-play man Ray Cloutier, and asked for their advice. Both pushed me to go, and Mario was direct: "Luc, you have the voice, and you're perfectly bilingual. Go ahead, you may never know after." I did go, and I got many opportunities across the country as a result, and Mario can



Photo via Facebook

Beloved local sportscaster Mario Hudon died Nov. 20 at age 63 after struggling with ALS for several years.

get some credit for that.

With his last days counted, Mario wanted to say goodbye to all his friends on Dec. 2, before receiving medical assistance in dying on Dec. 7. However, his health took a turn for the worse, and he was admitted to hospital two days before his death.

Mario is survived by his spouse Nancy, his children

François and Jessica, and grandsons, Isaac and Nathan, both the pride of his life.

My dear friend, you may have lost your battle with ALS but you gave it a hell of a fight. One day, researchers will find a cure for ALS, and at that time, I'm sure you'll be looking down on us with a huge smile and we will hear you say "Mission accomplished."
Adieu Mario.

REVIEWS

Club Musical presents the joy and sadness of Mozart's music

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An intimate concert, part of the Club Musical de Québec's new series called *Échos du territoire*, was presented at the Palais Montcalm on Nov. 23. Four musicians and the entire audience (approximately 150 people) gathered onstage and in the balcony directly above the stage.

The program, entitled *Mo-*

zart, de la joie à la tristesse (Mozart, from Joy to Sadness) featured harpsichordist Luc Beauséjour, who provided music lovers with the rare opportunity to hear the pianoforte belonging to the Fondation des Violons du Roy, which took centre stage.

He was joined onstage by Antoine Bareil (violin), Juan-Miguel Hernandez (viola) and Cameron Crozman (cello) as they presented works by Mozart and Beethoven. Beau-

séjour introduced each selection as if he were the young and exceptionally talented Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), who started his professional career at the age of six. Mozart's magnificent Piano quartet in G Minor was the highlight of the evening.

Beethoven's set of variations on the duet "*Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen*" from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute) dates from 1801. As "Mozart" explained, it was

magical to hear how Beethoven created a musical dialogue with the pianoforte in the role of Pamina and the cello answering it as Papageno.

The next concert of the *Échos du territoire* series takes place on Dec. 10, featuring award-winning soprano Elisabeth St-Gelais accompanied by pianist Louise Pelletier. For details, visit clubmusicaldequebec.com.



Photo by Shirley Nadeau

Luc Beauséjour, who played the pianoforte, is joined onstage at the Palais Montcalm by cellist Cameron Crozman, violinist Antoine Bareil, violist Juan-Miguel Hernandez and the entire audience who had the rare opportunity to see and hear these musicians perform at such close quarters.

Concerts Couperin at cathedral features trombones and harps

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The charming Sunday afternoon concert at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity on Nov. 19 opened with two pieces by a brass trio, Raphaël Léveillé (trombone), Gabrielle Lavoie (trombone) and Émile Savard-Tardif (bass trombone), who played the soothing Trio Sonata No. 2, Op. 3 by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713). They continued with the modern *Variations on a Cornish Tune* for brass trio by William Lewarne Harris (1929-2013).

The star of the afternoon was the *Stellar Sonata*, opus 51 for electroacoustic harp composed and played by local



Photo by Shirley Nadeau

A talented trio of trombonists - Raphaël Léveillé, Gabrielle Lavoie and Émile Savard-Tardif - perform at the Concerts Couperin before the harpists take centre stage.

composer Caroline Lizotte on a beautiful golden instrument which amplifies, echoes and at times intentionally distorts the sound of the strings. As Lizotte explained, *Stellar Sonata* recounts the Greek myth of the

Minotaur and his half-sister Ariadne.

The concert ended with two more pieces, *Raga* opus 41 and *Suite Galactique*, also composed by Lizotte, joined by Isabelle Fortier, principal

harpist of the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec.

The next Concerts Couperin presentation takes place at the Cathedral on Feb. 25. For details, visit couperin.ca/programmation.



Photo by Shirley Nadeau

Isabelle Fortier joins composer Caroline Lizotte as they play her *Raga* opus 41 for two harps during the Concerts Couperin performance at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity on Nov. 19. Behind Lizotte stands the concert grand electroacoustic harp on which she played the *Stellar Sonata*.

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