

## Bette H. Waddington, SLSO violinist

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POST-DISPATCH CLASSICAL MUSIC CRITIC

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Bette H. Waddington, a violinist who played in the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra for 37 years, died Dec. 21, 2009, at home in St. Louis after a long illness. She was 88.

Ms. Waddington and her twin, Marjorie, were born in 1921 in San Francisco to John and Marguerite Waddington.

"She had interests and talents in both art and music," said a friend, Marilyn Beabout. She held degrees in both subjects, as well as a degree in library science, from schools that included the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco University and the Julliard School.

Before joining the symphony here, Ms. Waddington was a member of orchestras in Erie, Pa., and Dallas. She and Beabout, a cellist, auditioned together in the spring of 1958 in New York City and joined the SLSO that fall. It was a time when few women found jobs in symphony orchestras; they were two of a group of seven here.

"She was a constant student," auditing classes at Washington University for the sheer love of learning, recalled Beabout. "Whenever we visited a new campus on tour, she immediately went to the bookstore. She had a wall filled with books — half on art, half on music."

Tall, with excellent posture and "big hair," Ms. Waddington was an imposing figure. A colleague, horn player Nancy Schick, recalled that Ms. Waddington left Powell Symphony Hall one night and was confronted by a mugger, who bopped her on the head. Ms. Waddington was wearing a hat, and had just had her hair done that day; the blow glanced off with little effect. "She chased him down the street," said Schick. "She was definitely one of a kind."

Ms. Waddington retired in 1995, as did Beabout. In 1998, Ms. Waddington suffered a stroke; Beabout helped to care for her at Heritage House, where they both lived.

Ms. Waddington is survived by her twin sister, Marjorie McMullen of Oakland, Calif. A memorial service will be held at 4:30 p.m. Sunday at Heritage House, 2800 Olive Street. Interment will be private, at a chapel in California.