



Douglas Arthur Lew

December 25, 1931 - December 20, 2025

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Doug Lew passed away peacefully on December 20, 2025 at N.C. Little Hospice in Edina, MN just five days short of his 94th birthday with his children at his side. Born in Shanghai, China where, like all school children, he trained extensively in calligraphy, Doug came to the United States at age 15 where he finished high school and earned his MFA from Bradley University in Peoria, IL. It was there that he by chance met his wife Linda of 60 years as she was painting a theatre set for a summer stock production of Finian's Rainbow.

Doug's professional career as Creative Art Director for advertising agencies in New York, Columbus, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis coincided with the glamorous, creative, high-pressure world of television's Mad Men. Except Doug did not sell dreams; he believed the dreams with an integrity that earned him awards and accolades for print and TV commercials for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Cub Foods, and Perkins Restaurant among many other clients.

But it was Doug's post-professional career as a watercolorist where he truly flourished. Art was Doug's life, and Doug's life was a work of art. Watercolor was his chosen medium for its fluidity, motion, life. His subjects included but

were not limited to figures, landscapes, interiors, sports, dance, abstracts.

Upon relocating from Los Angeles to Minneapolis in 1974 Doug soon discovered artist Florence Hill's life-drawing cooperative in the California Building in NE Minneapolis where every Sunday for 50 years Doug and fellow artists would gather and draw from a live model. A powerhouse herself, Florence organized extended trips to Brittany, France where artists lived cooperatively in a farmhouse cooking, keeping house, and painting en plein air. Doug and Linda's letters to their daughter Cindy in 1990 brought that experience to life with descriptions of late nights, community meals, local wine, laughter, unscreened windows, and impossibly enormous blue hydrangeas.

In 1992 Doug and Linda had the good fortune to rent a friend's house in the heart of Florence, Italy. Settling down to live as locals for a month Doug found himself painting not historical sights but ordinary things that captured the look, smell, and feel of Florence.

Evidence of Doug's talent and love of watercolors are everywhere: In galleries, exhibitions, businesses, institutions, theatres, homes, private collections. www.doglew.com . His legacy is vast with books, videos, honors, awards, signature memberships in art societies, publications, an Adjunct Professorship at the University of MN.

Despite his numerous recognitions and achievements, his children Brian and Cindy remember him as Dad: Impractical, guileless, trusting to a fault. On a vacation to Palm Springs in 1969 Doug and Brian drove into the desert to play "Lawrence of Arabia" where their tires sank in the sand necessitating a rescue.

Growing up with an artist father the lines between Art and Life are blurred. Doug loved his family, his friends, his home, a good meal as much as he loved

art. He didn't just practice art, he lived it. "I strive to achieve a sense of force and lightness, of energy and ease, a careful carelessness, and a sense of the poetic".

Doug was preceded in death by his beloved wife Linda, his parents, his sisters, and his brothers-in law. He is survived by his daughter Cindy (Bob) Severt, son Brian Lew, nieces and nephews in Hawaii, California, Alaska, Illinois.

Please join Cindy and Brian on Saturday, May 23rd 2026 at Washburn-McReavy Edina Chapel in a Commemoration celebrating the life of Doug Lew. We look forward to your anecdotes and fond memories of Doug during a visitation at 1pm and a service at 2pm followed by a reception.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **23**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436

Memorial Service

MAY **23**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Edina Chapel
5000 West 50th & Highway 100
Edina, MN 55436

Tribute Wall

LT

“ Love, Larry, Lisa and Casey Tong purchased the *Enchanted Cottage* for the family of Douglas Arthur Lew.



Love, Larry, Lisa and Casey Tong - May 20 at 02:01 AM

TF

“ The Fonfara Family purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Douglas Arthur Lew.



The Fonfara Family - May 19 at 09:20 AM

DT

“ Dennis and Daisy Ting purchased the *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* for the family of Douglas Arthur Lew.



Dennis and Daisy Ting - May 18 at 12:13 AM

WE

“ it was fun to see him paint at the California studio with Florence Hill . I am so sad i never got books he wrote autographed. Thanks for your time in the studio a great admirer of you work. love to your family Wendy Kay Carle

wendy - May 06 at 09:46 AM

KS

“ *Cindy and Brian,*

Craig and I feel so incredibly fortunate to have known both your wonderful father and your dear mother. His memorial reflects him so perfectly—capturing that rare blend of genuine kindness, curiosity about others, and his lifelong passion for learning.

Your dad had such a special gift for making everyone feel not only welcome but truly seen; we always walked away from our conversations feeling a little bit wiser thanks to the stories and artistic insights he shared. He was a truly remarkable man, and we are so looking forward to honoring his beautiful legacy and celebrating his life with you this spring.

Karen & Craig Scofield

Karen Scofield - January 19 at 04:00 PM

BL

“ *I so fondly remember your Dad and Mom. Gifted, talented and kind.
Barbara Levie (formerly Marvy)*

Barbara Levie - January 18 at 02:13 PM

LL

“ Beautifully written, Cindy. "...impractical, guileless, trusting to a fault" indeed. And a **WORLD CLASS** painter. These attached are just my collection. :-)



Larry LaVercombe - January 17 at 03:49 PM