

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

Approved by the Regents

May 19, 2006

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Erling Blöndal Bengtsson, DIPL., professor of music (cello) in the School of Music, will retire from active faculty status on May 31, 2006.

A native of Denmark, Professor Bengtsson began cello studies at the age of three with his father in Copenhagen. He received his diploma in 1950 from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he studied with the celebrated Gregor Piatigorsky. After serving on the faculty at the Curtis Institute from 1950-53, he returned to Denmark and served as a professor at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music from 1953-90. He joined the University of Michigan faculty in 1990 as professor of music (cello).

Professor Bengtsson made his first concert appearance at age four, and first appeared as a soloist with orchestra at age ten. He has been a busy concert artist ever since, both in recital and as soloist, with scores of orchestras across the European continent. Since joining the University of Michigan faculty, he has performed as a soloist with symphony orchestras in Denmark, England, Germany, Norway, and Iceland, and has given numerous recitals and countless master classes. Professor Bengtsson has also produced more than 50 recordings, including highly praised recorded performances of all Bach suites for cello, the Kodaly solo sonata (chosen in 1998 by the "Guinness Classical 1000" as one of the top 1000 recordings of all time), and Beethoven sonatas for cello and piano. Among Professor Bengtsson's numerous awards are Knight, first class, of the Order of Dannebrog in Denmark and Grand Knight of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon. He is member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, was named "Chevalier de Violoncelle" by Indiana University in 1993, and received the "Award of Distinction" from the Manchester International Cello Festival, England, 2001. A life-sized bronze statue of Professor Bengtsson stands in front of the University Concert Hall in Reykjavik, Iceland as a testimonial to the esteem in which this legendary cellist is held across Scandinavia.

In addition to being a world-class performer, Professor Bengtsson is an exemplary teacher who has been an invaluable model for students and faculty alike. He has been a devoted champion of his students, a statesman in his interactions with colleagues, and an ambassador for the University of Michigan in the musical world here and abroad. Professor Bengtsson has made immeasurable contributions to the education of his students at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member for his dedicated service by naming **Erling Blöndal Bengtsson professor emeritus of music (cello)**.

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill
Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2006