

Celebrating

the Life of



† Daphne Eftychia Arthur

February 21, 1963 – January 21, 2023

Service Date March 19, 2023

Baltimore Science Fiction Society Building



Obituary

Daphne Eftychia Arthur (née D. Glenn Arthur, Jr.) was born on February 21, 1963, to Donald G. and Joanna Gavriel Arthur. Daphne grew up in Bowie, Maryland, the oldest of four siblings, followed by Maria, John, and Mark. She attended the Key School in Annapolis and the University of Dallas. Her college days were filled with music, Dungeons & Dragons, and math.

Daphne became known for her intellect and humor from a young age. Her brother John remembers that she taught him about music, computers, math, and anything else she was curious about. She enjoyed figuring out challenging problems. She moved back to Maryland in the mid-1980s and worked as a computer programmer, including for the firm K.L. Ginter and Associates and as a contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She shared an apartment with, as one friend and roommate described it, “A big shelf of SF books and a rotating cast of roommates.”

By this time, Daphne was involved in science fiction fandom and historical re-creation, and became immersed in the culture of filk and historical music. She had an interest in fencing and swordplay. She regularly attended medieval battle reenactments, including the Battle of Hastings, the Maryland Renaissance Festival, and the Pennsic War and was a member of the Society for Creative Anachronism and the Markland Medieval Mercenary Militia. Daphne was a regular at cons such as Arisia, Balticon, Disclave, and Darkover. She was known around science fiction fandom for her fabulous skirts and dresses.

She was also an avid amateur photographer both in film photography and digital photography. Her main focus was on art photography, but also made herself available to take portraits for her friends if needed. Some of her work is available online on The Pentax Users Gallery at <http://pug.komkon.org/general/PugDir1.html#D>. This art is listed under her former name: D. Glenn Arthur, Jr.

In the 1990s, Daphne began to experience chronic pain and sleep disruptions that kept her from being able to work with computers regularly. By the early 2000s, she turned her attention to music full time. She had already been deeply involved in professional music ensembles such as Thrir Venstri Foetr (Three Left Feet), Wild Oats, and the Homespun Ceilidh Band. In the late 90s, she attended the Society of Early Music and the Northern Maryland Chapter of the American Recorder Society. Daphne also composed her own music and enjoyed playing solos and duets. She tutored in mathematics and on guitar and recorder. She seemed to have at least one guitar with her wherever she went, and often other instruments. Her house was filled from top to bottom with guitars, drums, recorders, mandolins, and other musical gear.

Daphne enjoyed traveling to cons and house parties up and down the East Coast throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s. Sometimes she even brought her menagerie—at a couple of Northeast filk conventions she set up a wall of instruments and was delighted to see them used! She was more focused on being at home in recent years, and she still attended Balticon and Chessiecon whenever possible. She moved to Baltimore in 1998,

though she split her time between the Baltimore house and her mother's house in Bowie for several years. Daphne shared her home with her beloved cats: first Perrine, and then Guillaume.

Daphne's concept of gender developed and deepened over the years. At every turn, her loving and joyful choice to be her whole self was an inspiration to many. Starting in the Fall of 1991 and until her death, Daphne was a regular speaker at a University of Maryland class on Human Sexuality and was invited back every term to lecture on her experience. By 2017, she was using she/her pronouns exclusively and was in the process of choosing her name. Many friends were introduced to her new name at Chessiecon in 2018. Daphne was proud to testify in front of the Maryland legislature in 2019 in favor of legislation that allowed gender neutral markers on drivers' licenses.

The middle name she chose, Eftychia, represented her Greek-Cypriot heritage and means "happiness." Her first name also has a Greek origin. In Greek mythology Daphne was a Naiad nymph, who was pursued by the sun god Apollo. Daphne prayed to the Earth for relief and thereby was transformed into a laurel tree. The Greek word for laurel is δάφνη. Apollo became associated with laurels and victors at games held in Apollo's honor were crowned with laurels. Later laurels were used to crown victorious soldiers, athletes, poets, and musicians. The term "poet laureate" is an example of how laurels have become synonymous with prize-winners and victory.

Daphne was proud of her heritage, and glad to have a chance to visit Cyprus with her mother in 2013. She drew spiritual inspiration from her Greek Orthodox Christian roots and celebrated major holidays on the Orthodox calendar. She continued to identify as Christian throughout her life, with her religious views being loving, justice-centered, and comfortable with pluralism. She considered herself a Christian mystic, and believed that God and music were the two most important things in her life. To quote from her personal web page: "my fingers on the guitar could express what I was feeling—what I wanted to say to God—better than any words I could have whispered in prayer." She was licensed to marry people in Maryland and was the officiant in the weddings of many of her friends. Religion, philosophy, and justice were some of the topics she wrote about for her extensive following on LiveJournal, and its subsequent replacements like DreamWidth and Twitter. During the pandemic, Daphne continued to play music in the open air and on video. Her friend Karen Osborne remembers sitting on Daphne's front porch and playing music for themselves and passers-by as they talked for hours. Some of the videos from those sessions are posted on YouTube.

Daphne died at home on January 21, 2023, following a short illness. Her siblings plan to inter her ashes as part of a tree planting.

Daphne was many things to many people: Bandmate, inspiration, teacher, supporter, listener, creator, lover, and friend. Her intellect, humor, and kindness will leave reverberations on the greater community for generations to come.





Service

Pre-Service Music members of Three Left Feet

Suite of Stately Dances:

“Belle Qui”

“Chestnut”

“St. Martins”

Prelude Gary Ehrlich and Maugorn

“Daphne” (Hit and Miss)

Opening Rev. Lyn Cox

Eulogy Rev. Lyn Cox

Reflection Music members of the Homespun Ceilidh Band

“Nearer My God to Thee”

Prepared Reflections John Maxwell, Diane Kurilecz, Lina Dutky

Sharing Written Greetings

Prayer Rev. Lyn Cox

Meditation Music Jim Stimson

“Dark Maiden of the East”

Open Sharing

Celebration of Life Music members of Three Left Feet

“Saltarello”

Instructions & Closing Remarks Rev. Lyn Cox

Recessional Music members of the Homespun Ceilidh Band

“On Alexander’s Exile”

Musicians

Three Left Feet (Thrir Venstri Foetr)

Gary Ehrlich

Maugorn

Homespun Ceilidh Band

Jennifer Lubell

Karen Osborne

Jim Stimson

Mike Stoddard



In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to charities benefiting causes such as animal rescue, LGBTQ justice, health care access, or folk music.

