

He also was a respected mentor. “Rob had this magnificent, soothing, Brahmin accent—I still remember the first time I heard it,” Tolan says. “He was one of the reasons I came to BU. He helped me see research projects that wouldn’t have been visible otherwise.”

Hausman left a lasting impression on many of his students as well. “Rob was not only a memorable mentor,” says Bukhtiar Shah (GRS’93), who worked with him while pursuing a PhD, “but also a very fine human being.” Hausman, he says, treated his students “like family. He was always prepared to listen to and solve our problems.”

He was equally dedicated to his own research, says Bill Eldred, a CAS professor of biology. Hausman specialized in nervous system development, focusing on the retinal and muscle development in chick embryos. He discovered and purified a protein in chick retinas he called *cognin*, which enables retinal neurons to recognize each other and group together, playing an important role in the overall development of the retina.

According to both Eldred and Tolan, Hausman’s passion for his research played a key role in his ability to develop a strong neurobiology curriculum at the University. “Before Rob arrived,” Eldred says, “there were practically no neuroscience courses at BU.” Hausman, says Tolan, “has left a great legacy.”

## “Virtuoso” of the Visual Arts

*Renowned Expressionist David Aronson developed the School of Visual Arts*

By Mara Sassoon



As the first chair of the School of Visual Arts, David Aronson built the core curriculum that “shaped much of the foundation program still in existence today,” says Lynne Allen, dean ad interim of the College of Fine Arts.

A key figure in the Boston Expressionism movement—with art marked by the use of bold brushwork, dark satire, and, often, spiritual themes—David Aronson created sculptures, paintings, and drawings that reflected his complicated relationship with religion. These works include six-foot charcoal and pastel drawings and an almost eight-foot bronze door.

“It would have been easier to go ahead and make smaller works,” says his longtime art dealer, Bernie Pucker, “but rather than giving in to his facility, David always challenged himself.”

Aronson, a professor emeritus of art who taught at the College of Fine Arts for more than 30 years and developed the School of Visual Arts, died on July 2, 2015. He was 91.

In 1955, Aronson became the first chair of Boston University’s new Division of Art, today known as the School of Visual Arts. BU’s visual arts program launched during a national change in education for professional artists, when studio programs within university settings were increasing in popularity over traditional art schools and private studio classes. Aronson undertook the task of building a strong visual arts core curriculum alongside BU’s exist-

ing liberal arts course requirements that would prepare students before they chose an area of specialization.

The curriculum Aronson created with the help of the prestigious faculty he recruited—which boasted distinguished artists such as late professors emeritus Conger Metcalf, Joseph Ablow, and Jack Kramer—emphasized drawing, requiring students to take six to nine hours of drawing classes a week for the duration of their time at BU. “David’s vision of an art school has shaped much of the foundation program still in existence today,” says Lynne Allen, CFA dean ad interim. During his tenure as chair, Aronson also established the Boston University Art Gallery at 855 Commonwealth Ave.

Aronson resigned from his position as chair of the School of Visual Arts in 1963 to focus on teaching senior- and graduate-level painting courses, which he taught until he retired in 1989. He continued to build the program, and even recruited painter Philip Guston to teach a monthly seminar at the University.

Aronson forged his career on his own terms. His Orthodox Jewish father, a rabbi, had wanted him to follow in his footsteps, but Aronson pursued his own

artistic passions and enrolled in the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, where he studied painting under Karl Zerbe, a leader of the Boston Expressionist movement, and eventually taught. There, he met his wife, Georgianna, who had been his student. (Their son, Ben Aronson, CFA'80,'82, is also a painter, based in Framingham, Mass.)

His work garnered national accolades. In 1946, when Aronson was just 22, the Museum of Modern Art selected him as one of the artists for its "Fourteen Americans" exhibition. Aronson was the youngest in the small group that included noted artists Saul Steinberg and Robert Motherwell.

He incorporated New Testament themes into his early work, an especially daring act, as he grew up in a strictly Orthodox Jewish household. Angels were a prevalent motif, says Pucker, adding that the "introduction of angels was very much against Jewish tradition." Aronson was "questioning issues of what is holy and what is profane. He himself was wrestling with those angels. That, I think, would be a perfect way of understanding his work."

The prolific artist won many awards for his paintings, sculptures, and drawings, including a 1960 Guggenheim fellowship. He continued to challenge himself by not only experimenting with massive scale, but also by changing his mediums, from charcoal to pencil to oil paint to the more esoteric medium of encaustic (hot pigmented wax).

His eight-foot bronze door aptly titled *The Door*, a triptych of intricate panels made between 1963 and 1969, is on display at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. This work is another example of how Aronson challenged himself, says Pucker. "It's just a phenomenal work for a contemporary artist. He was not someone who had an entire studio. He did not have 20 apprentices helping him. There's a built-in restraint to being a virtuoso, and he showed it in this piece."

Aronson never considered a work of art finished, says Pucker. "David's is a very carefully, thoughtfully created body of work. It was only because of catalogue deadlines that we got the work away from him. I admired that."

**PETER DIAMANDOPOULOS**, 86, a College of Arts & Sciences professor emeritus of philosophy, on April 1, 2015.

Born in Heraklion, Crete, in 1928, Diamandopoulos attended Athens College. He immigrated to the United States in 1948 to attend Harvard University, where he earned a BA, an MA, and a PhD.

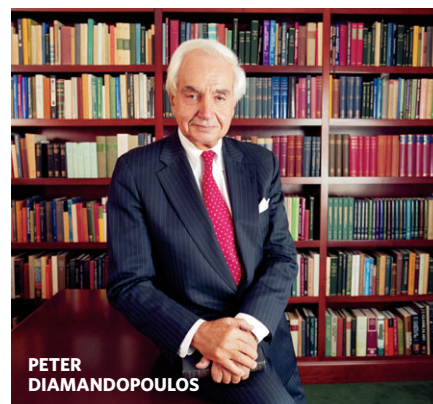
A lifelong educator, he taught at the University of Maryland and at Brandeis University, where he was dean of faculty from 1965 to 1971 and chair of the philosophy department from 1972 to 1976. He was also director of studies at the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs from 1969 to 1974.

Diamandopoulos was named president of Sonoma State University in 1977 and president of Adelphi University in 1985. Following his tenure at Adelphi, he was special assistant to the president and a professor of philosophy at Boston University. He retired in 2008. A proud son of Greece, he was known for his love of books, music, fine cigars, and cognac. He continued to support his alma mater as a trustee of Athens College.

**MICHAEL MARTIN**, 83, a College of Arts & Sciences professor emeritus of philosophy, on May 27, 2015.

Martin's former colleagues and students say the ex-marine's rough exterior belied a gentle personality. "Although he could be as tough as the former marine he was when it came to argument, he had a genuine Midwestern friendliness and a wonderful dry sense of humor," says Allen Speight, a CAS associate professor and chair of philosophy.

Martin grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, and joined the Marine Corps at 17. He earned a bachelor's in



business from Arizona State University, a master's in philosophy from the University of Arizona, and a PhD in philosophy from Harvard University.

In 1965, he joined BU's philosophy department, where he taught for more than 30 years. An analytic philosopher, Martin wrote numerous books on the philosophies of religion, social science, and law; in many of his works, he examined atheism, a subject he was passionate about.

It was one of those books, *Atheism: A Philosophical Justification* (Temple University Press, 1990) that inspired Tyler Wunder (GRS'06) to come to BU from Canada to study with Martin. "I was never disappointed with my choice," says Wunder. "Mike was superb. He was brilliant, knowledgeable, and generous with his time. He stayed on as my advisor even into his retirement." Wunder says Martin and his wife, Jane, a professor emerita of philosophy at the University of Massachusetts Boston, welcomed him to their home, even putting him up for the night when he had to defend his dissertation.

Lee McIntyre, now a research fellow at BU's Center for Philosophy & History of Science, credits Martin's generosity and mentorship with jump-starting his career. McIntyre had nearly completed a PhD in philosophy