

SUNSTONE GALLERY

ODE TO JOY

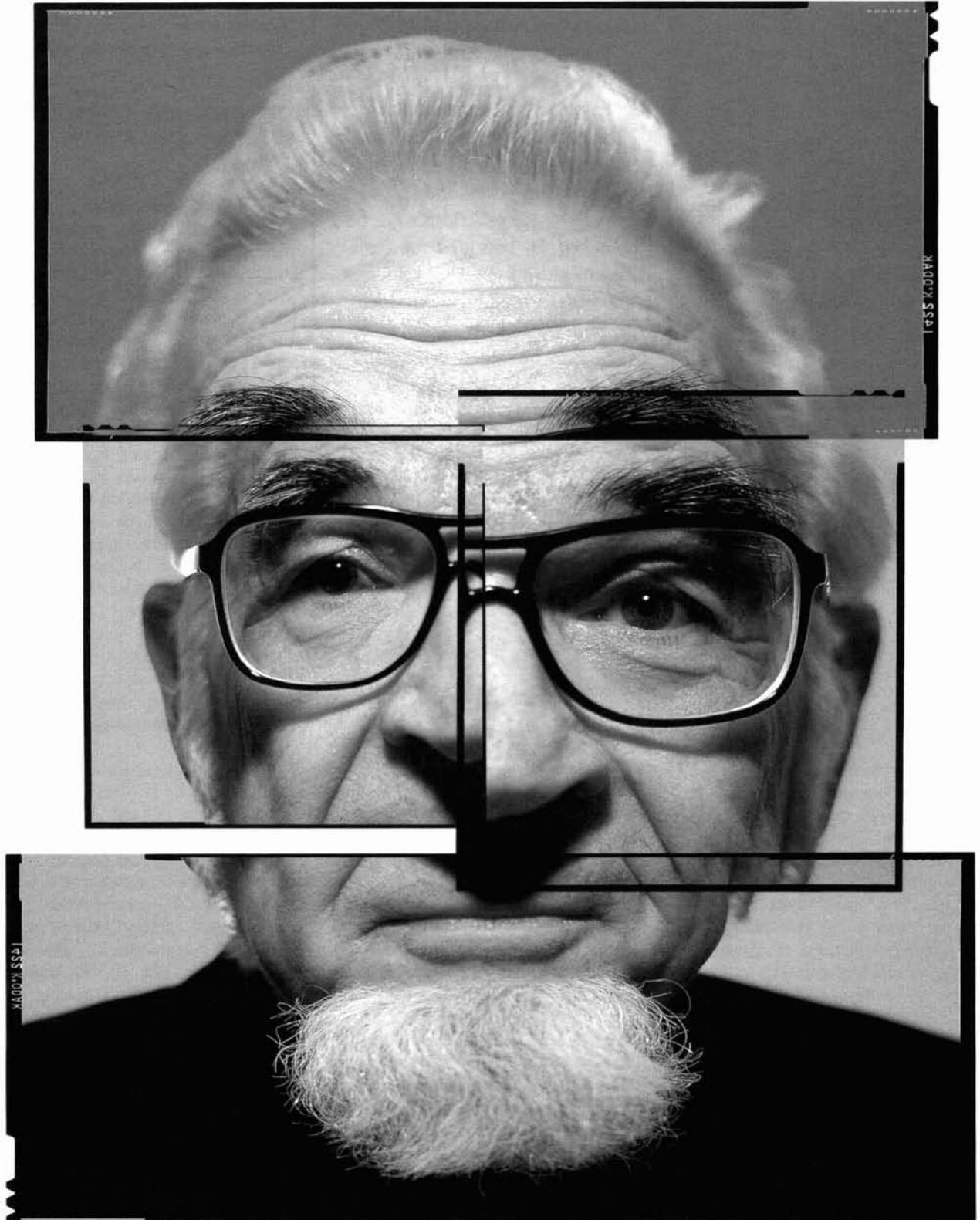
IF YOU'VE EVER attended a Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium, you know him. He's the man with the shockingly white hair and irrepressible spirit who has been leading us in wonderful musical adventures and teaching us through delightful conversation and commentary for all but one of Sunstone's twenty-three annual symposiums.

If you've engaged Ardean Watts for more than just a few minutes, you'll understand—as Michael Schoenfeld's portrait hints—that his is a soul that cannot easily be captured with just one frame. As his musical roots in jazz would suggest, you may think you've found the melody of Ardean's spirit, but just then a new theme, a new improvisation will emerge to captivate and delight you. He claims, "I've always been better without rehearsal."

Even without rehearsal, Ardean has achieved remarkable things. He is a father of eight, grandfather of thirty-two, and a husband of one, Elna, with whom he just celebrated a golden anniversary this past October. He's

retired from a distinguished thirty-year career as professor of music at the University of Utah. He was the pianist and associate conductor of the Utah Symphony for twenty-two years. He founded what became the Utah Opera Company. And in one particularly inspired improvisation, Ardean garnered national attention by camping out and playing a grand piano for three days on the steps of Salt Lake City's federal building to protest legislation that would cut all government funding for the National Endowment for the Arts. Ardean also finds great delight in the natural world. He has been a long-time activist for environmental causes and especially enjoys birds, wildflowers, and mushrooms.

The energy of honest inquiry, the love and laughter of family, the miracle of music that flows from the deepest reaches of his soul, the awe and surprise of nature encountered in her grandest and her quirkiest creations—all, and much more, make the life journey of Ardean Watts truly an ode to joy.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL SCHOENFELD