Michel Benamou was a Professor of French and Director of the Center for Twentieth Century Studies at UWM during the last four years of his life. Despite the brevity of his career at UWM the impact of his stay here will long be felt. He brought international distinction to the Center he directed. He managed to attract to our campus on a regular basis people of the importance of Eugène Ionesco, John Barth, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Umberto Eco, John Cage, and Samuel R. Delany. The symposia he arranged twice a year (all of which were subsequently published in book or periodical form) were widely attended by Europeans as well as Americans. The Center for Twentieth Century Studies, thanks to the untiring and inspired efforts of Michel Benamou, was known on both sides of the Atlantic and as far away as Australia.

Michel was himself a scholar of international importance. His two books on Wallace Stevens, Wallace Stevens and the Symbolist Imagination and L'Oeuvre-monde de Wallace Stevens, were among the handful of best studies on this American poet. His many essays, on a wide variety of subjects, appeared in such distinguished periodicals as La Nouvelle Revue Française, ELH, Etudes Anglaises, The French Review, Comparative Literature, Contemporary Literature, The Romanic Review, Critique, and Yale French Studies. He was also the author of several widely respected text books, including Mise en Train, première année de français which he wrote with Eugène Ionesco. (One of Michel's last articles to appear was a discussion of his collaboration with Ionesco on this ground-breaking enterprise.)

Michel Benamou was much respected in the profession of language and literature study in this country and abroad. He was recently nominated to the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association of America. He served since
1974 as an assistant editor for Pedagogy of The French Review. Since 1969 he was managing editor of Teaching Language Through Literature. He served as consultant for both NEH and NEA. He lectured widely in this country, as well as in France, Canada, South America, and Australia.

Despite his intense involvement in research Michel Benamou never forgot his commitment to instruction. To this area of academic work he brought all the force of his enthusiasm, so that both undergraduate and graduate students would receive the maximum educational benefit from the structure and substance of his courses.

A good illustration of Michel Benamou's willingness to instruct at all levels was the course entitled, "French Through Acting" which, implementing the methodology of the textbook Mise en Train, involved beginning French students in dramatic activities from the earliest point of their language experience. At the end of this course the students participated with much credit in a public performance entitled Spectacle Ionesco. At a more advanced level Michel stimulated the language student with novel concepts on textual theory and on the dynamism of the individual word. That words fascinated him could be verified in any conversation that one had with him, so that the course title "French Word Games - from Literature to Language Skills" was a natural extension of his linguistic interests.

There can be little doubt, however, that Michel Benamou's favorite teaching area was modern French poetry. His partiality for the symbolist and surrealist poets was matched by a deep comprehension of the literary and social conditions that evoked the twin phenomena of symbolism and surrealism. The students he taught respected his erudition, admired his innovative approach and, most important of all, were seized by his contagious enthusiasm.
Michel Benamou will be sorely missed by his students, by his colleagues at UWM, and by members of the international community of scholars.

Professor Teresa de Lauretis
Professor John Downey
Professor Melvin Friedman
Professor Thab Hassan
Associate Professor Andreas Huysen
Professor Howard Schroedter
Professor William Wainwright
Associate Professor Ian Winter