

Stephen Martin Mathai-Davis, CFA, CQF  
August 5, 1981 - July 22, 2022



Stephen Martin Mathai-Davis died unexpectedly on a bright summer Friday in July 2022. Stephen was a man of New York where he was born and raised. He carried with him the ebullient energy and dynamic force of the city he loved.

Stephen was a disciplined polymath with a restless mind who was an unyielding creative intellectual explorer. Stephen lived a life of highest ethical standards with compassion and embracing tolerance, whether he was dealing with business, professional colleagues, friends or strangers. His family was the rock on which Stephen's life rested. He adored his wife Maria and their two children, Stephanos and Sofia. He was a loving and caring son to his parents, Wallace and Prema, and "the big brother" to his sisters, Lisa and Tara.

Professionally, Stephen was acknowledged as one of the new generation fundamental innovators in the investment management industry, standing on the shoulders of the innovators before him, as he would say. He possessed a comprehensive and deep grasp of the history of classical investment thought combined with a commanding knowledge of modern investment theory and methodology.

Stephen was a full stack data scientist and financial technologist, as well as a seasoned and successful trader, global securities analyst, and macro-strategist within the conventional asset management paradigm. He was often noted for his multi-cultural and multilingual on-the-ground research and publications on the diverse markets of the US, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. However, Stephen's driving thoughtfulness and penetrating intellect was not satisfied by the

conventional investment paradigm. He became one of the small group of contemporary thinkers who had a different vision of how to understand not merely the known, but to discover the unknown currents of the investment markets.

Stephen sought to “know” investment markets within an entirely different system of “knowing.” He took complex theoretical notions and converted them to material forms of action. He was a gifted and fluid writer able to deconstruct cutting edge notions to reveal their import and how they could be practically realized. Stephen was the intellectual inspiration and charismatic Founder and CEO of the award-winning Q.ai, an artificial intelligence Registered Investment Advisor. Q.ai brought groundbreaking investment strategies to ordinary investors. Stephen had an abiding concern for the non-privileged investor— it was fundamental to Stephen’s thinking that ordinary investors should have access to the same investment opportunities to secure their futures as those persons whom fate has favored with great assets.

Q.ai, the company he founded and led, is now recognized as setting a revolutionary new standard in bringing AI investing to ordinary investors. Q.ai has won numerous awards, including “Best Deep Learning Platform” and “Best Fintech Retail Investment Platform” for an unprecedented two consecutive years in 2021 and 2022, among other notable awards, including the 2022 US Banking Tech Award for “Best Use of AI”. Stephen was also listed as one of the Top 100 in Tech from Johns Hopkins University, his alma mater, in 2021.

Stephen’s passion to “know” extended well beyond the worlds of equations and Investments. He was a reflective and erudite man of learning with a deep multi-layered knowledge of the Western Classics and the histories and cultures of the Middle East and South America. Stephen was flexible of mind, but unwavering in spirit with a laughter, joy and unflagging optimism at the core of his soul. He was in fact a philosopher with a light bright sense of humor and warm smile who would shift seamlessly from a serious discussion of Avicenna or geopolitics to cracking wise about his ill-starred NY Jets or the latest competitive video game. Stephen was a warm engaging fun guy who reveled in his friendships. With his friends Stephen could be counted on to be a loyal and authentic, always at the ready to support without judging and to share hopes, dreams, and disappointments. For his friends, Stephen was the epitome of the proverb “friendships multiply joys and divide grief”.

Stephen deeply believed that individual fullness lies on a path in which the world of the mind is inextricably linked to the world of the physical, in all its aspects. This belief was apparent in many dimensions of his life. Stephen held Black belts in 6 distinct forms of Karate –in the ring Stephen was known as fierce, but outside the ring he was called the “gentle giant”. As a teenager, he was Captain of the US youth delegation to the Nagano Olympics and a member of the US youth team to the Atlanta Olympics.

Stephen’s wife Maria and his children, Stephanos and Sofia were his North Star. They were what defined for him his purpose, and he knew his life within the circle of their unqualified love for him and each other. It was his unqualified love of his family that energized his soul and gave him the strength and faith to live the life he imagined. And they had real good times...Stephen’s and Maria’s weekly date night was an occasion to continuously create new moments with each other. Stephen was never happier than when carousing with his kids in his booklined study playing music while they danced, or just hanging out with his children, taking them to places like the Natural History Museum to learn about dinosaurs.

Stephen strove to live a life of compassion, empathy and respect for others. He had a calm peacefulness regardless of the challenge of the moment—he truly was the strong but “gentle giant”. Stephen was humble in his judgments. Superficial fame or fortune held no allure for him. He was a righteous man who lived by a simple principle in all that he did—just try to do the right thing. He could be eloquent in “talking the talk”, but this is a man who stood tall, strong, and “walked the walk.”

Stephen is survived by his loving wife Maria Vila, D.O., his two adoring children, Stephanos, 5 years old and Sofia, 4 years old; his parents Wallace and Prema Mathai-Davis, his sisters, Lisa and Tara; his parents-in-law, Francisco and Maria Vila; his brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Frank and Jenny Vila; and the extended Davis, Vila, Mathai and Kovoor clans -- all of whom love him dearly and will not forget this special man.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks you please send donations to St Jude’s Children’s Hospital in Stephen’s name.

