

Gallery&Studio *arts journal*

Winter

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Vol. 1, No.2



Screenwriting
In Hollywood

*Women's
Universe
Xenia Hausner
Forum Gallery*

Hiplet
Ballerinas

African American Art
Bill Hodges Gallery

Competition
Winners

Gallery&Studio arts journal

In this Issue:

The new *G&S Arts Journal* was set up to give a voice to those who are not heard, those who need a wider platform, a larger amplifier. Therefore, as we celebrate Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March, here in the United States, we have turned a special spotlight on these two groups for this issue. That is not to say that we do this to the exclusion of others, nor do we forget these groups throughout the year. Our hope is that by sharing the arts, we learn to value individuality as well as finding compassion and a generosity of spirit towards humanity.

As this second print issue sees the light of day, we extend our thanks to all our wonderful donors who have already shown that spirit of generosity. We couldn't do this without you. We would particularly like to give special thanks our newest board member, who wishes to remain anonymous, whose donation made our first print issue possible.

—The Editors

Cover image: "On Fire" ©Xenia Hausner, Courtesy of Forum Gallery, New York

Gallery&Studio arts journal

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My Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance Period



Romare Bearden (1911-1988), "The Rites of Spring," ca. 1941, Gouache on Cardboard, 31 1/3 x 48in.
©2020 Romare Bearden Foundation / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY

In the late 1960s my husband, Ed McCormack, and I started spending many hours walking from one gallery to the next, along Madison Avenue and 57th street. Ed introduced me to many special galleries and over the years we developed a route of our favorites. I remember Cordier & Ekstrom along Madison where we saw works by Man Ray and Richard Lindner, among others. Then there was Willard Gallery where we saw mystical works by artists such as Mark Tobey and Morris Graves. It was always so special to anticipate the next new show at our favorite galleries.

During our adventures we also stopped at the Whitney Museum and MoMA, (which at that time

occupied the same building) where I first saw the works of important Black artists from and influenced by the Harlem Renaissance period like Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden. Ed admired these works for their "improvised qualities that [he] also saw in Jazz musicians." Ed was painting figurative pieces in those days and these works gave him great inspiration.

Jacob Lawrence, is best known for his Migration series, depicting the massive movement of African Americans from the southern states to the urban north after the end of slavery. Ed also first saw Lawrence's works in a museum (Lawrence was the first African American to be acquired by MoMA), and says of

seeing his work, "I always loved how he combined the decorative effects of abstraction with social commentary. He integrated humanism and abstraction in a way that few artists have ever done."

Romare Bearden, who didn't find fame as easily as Lawrence, struggled in his early years. Ed calls Bearden's earlier works "what a doggedly ambitious painter can go through as he explores and discards influences – the arduous process jazz musicians call "paying dues." His earlier works were good but "derivative of the frescoes of the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera and the temperas of his friend Lawrence". However as soon as Bearden started experimenting

and the Bill Hodges Gallery

by Jeannie McCormack

with collages, he found his own voice. One of his major innovation was merging photo-images of African masks with the faces of local people, particularly in Harlem where he lived.

In later years we began to visit Bill Hodges Gallery on 57th Street after he opened in 1993 and discovered that his gallery was known for representing all the great black artists of the Harlem Renaissance period, as well as important contemporary artists. Not only was it an important venue for African American artists to show their work, but his gallery represented many of the artists making Black history available, in visual terms, to the general public, with many narrative artworks depicting the joys, sorrows and difficulties particularly encountered by African Americans.

Bill Hodges also represented two artists that we had come across one day while visiting an outdoor art show in the village in the early 1970s. We saw the work of Joseph Delaney who painted city scenes. Ed explained that Joseph was the brother of a more famous artist named Beauford Delaney, both Harlem Renaissance artists who produced bold colorful paintings of African American life.

Charles White was

another important Black artist at Bill Hodges Gallery, whose work Ed first saw in a book called "The Insiders." The premise of the book was based on going against the popularity of abstract expressionism of the 1960's by featuring figurative artists whose works were imbued with emotional content. Influenced by the Harlem Renaissance artists at a young age,

White produced bold, black and white, iconic graphite prints of African Americans and was also known for his murals.

After our hiatus in publishing *Gallery&Studio*, I was working on the new distribution list for our first non-profit issue of our printed magazine and was very disappointed to learn that Bill Hodges was no longer on 57th Street. I thought to

myself, "How quickly things change when you are not looking." After a little more search on the computer however, I learned that he will be shortly moving to a new location in Chelsea, continuing to make history and African American art available for us all. G&S



Al Loving (1935 - 2005) Untitled, 1966-68, Oil on Canvas, 68 x 61 in.

The New Bill Hodges Gallery

by Marina Hadley



Norman Lewis (1909 - 1979) "New World Acoming" 197, Oil on Canvas, 73 x 87 in.

© Estate of Norman Lewis; Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY

Bill Hodges Gallery will be opening its latest 5,000 square foot gallery in Chelsea with a blockbuster show titled "Romare Bearden & Co."

It's the culmination of a long career feeding an insatiable addiction. An addiction for art that started when he was still working his way through Rutgers University, where he was studying Political Science and History. Walking by a gallery, he was drawn to a

Salvatore Dali print of one of the artist's 100 illustrations of Dante's *The Divine Comedy*. This is the first work of art that he bought. He paid for it in installments.

He started to buy other works. He carefully studied the artists and their works, researched prices at galleries and started to go to PB84, the junior annex of Sotheby Parke Bernet, where the second rung of estate sales were auctioned. There he purchased his first Romare

Bearden for \$50. He often met with Bearden at Books & Company on Madison Avenue where the artist often hung out.

Starting in 1979 he would buy the artwork and sell them via small ads in the *New York Times*. It was an inspired way to start in the art business. He named his business AFTU, an acronym standing for Arts For The Uncontrolled, "because of [his] obsession with the beauty and acquisition of art."

He learnt how to run a business and the art of selling from a jewelry and diamond merchant on Canal Street, by working for free for him on Sundays. These Lessons were to stand him in good stead for all his other businesses. He ended up opening several stores in the Flower District of New York selling pottery made in Malaysia. (How he got into that is another article unto itself!). However, like his inspired art acquisitions and sales, Bill Hodges researched extensively, studied his markets and followed his instincts.

One day looking through the *New York Times*, he saw a notice of Norman Lewis's artwork for sale from \$300-\$5,000. Making the call to find out more, he spoke to the widow of Norman Lewis and went to visit her and the artwork. The upshot was that he ended up managing the artist's estate and it culminated in him opening his first gallery on 57th Street in 1993. Interestingly although the gallery was ostensibly set up to sell Norman Lewis's artwork, his first show was titled "Romare Bearden & Co." He has come full circle.

This is the second Bill Hodges Gallery in Chelsea. After over 20 years on 57th Street, Hodges closed that gallery having on his own admission "burnt out." He took a



Edward Clark (1926 - 2019), "New York Ice Cream," 2003, Acrylic on Canvas, 72 1/8 x 57 7/8 in.

well-deserved sabbatical, but it was not to last long. A small space on 20th street in Chelsea brought him back for a couple of years, but this time he has upgraded to a much larger space in the same building at 529 West 20th Street on the 10th Floor.

Hodges notes that the market for African American artists and women artists is strong particularly due to the deaccessioning (divesting of art) occurring at many museums who are then looking, in many

instances, to replace them with these two categories of artists who have long been under-represented. He has been experiencing strong demand for Edward Clark, Norman Lewis, Frank Bowling and the photographs of Roy DeCarava amongst many others.

Hodges is well known for his acquisition and promotion of African American artists, however it is not his sole arena. His interests are broad and there are many Latin American, Asian and European artists within his roster as well. He says he buys "what I feel. I search my heart and soul and go for what I feel." This "feel" is educated as usual by his rigorous research.

He does encourage the museums to acquire African American art. He also encourages African American collectors to gift such work to the museums. He has long been one of the few bastions in the New York artworld to appreciate these works and understand their value. His desire to spread the word is bearing fruit. The artworld is ready for the opening of the new Bill Hodges Gallery. G&S

Bill Hodges Gallery
529 W. 20th Street, NYC
Feb. 27 - Apr. 11
billhodgesgallery.com

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The Women's Universe of Xenia Hausner

by Bobbie Leigh



©Xenia Hausner, Courtesy of Forum Gallery

Walt Whitman wrote, "Resist much. Obey Little." These rebellious feelings register in the faces of the women portrayed by acclaimed international painter Xenia Hausner. Whitman's words echo in virtually every one of the portraits in Hausner's recent show at New York's Forum Gallery. "My characters are disobedient. I am disobedient" says the artist.

The two women in the painting titled, "On Fire" (2018), hold a hammer and a chisel, tools that can be used to destruct or create. Their faces are serious, concentrated, almost sad. The contrast between their sober facial expressions and the painting's vivid colors and dynamic brush strokes is striking. One of the women wears a bright red hat and an intense blue jacket. She stares at the viewer with an almost threatening gaze. The other woman, blondish hair falling to her shoulders, averts her eyes but at the same time, she clenches her wooden mallet with two hands, ready to attack or defend herself. The back story is lost to us. Like most of Hausner's portraits, this one is ambiguous and resists definitive interpretation.

The same is true for "Emergency" (2017). Two young women lean against each other. Their situation is unfathomable. They are beautiful, rosy cheeked with red lips and long golden and

bright red-orange hair. Whatever they are enduring on this lonely voyage, perhaps on a ship, we never learn.

"Borodino" (2019) portrays three women, two of whom seem to be lost in thought. (The title refers to the 1812 Battle of Borodino, the deadliest of the Napoleonic Wars.) A third woman with short wispy blonde hair in a leopard spotted pale green coat, slightly resembles the artist. She leans on a handrail and stares out at the viewer. The women could be in transit, heading for some unknown destination.

Their situation may be ambiguous, but not the artist's palette. This painting is all about color. No skin tone is simple. No lipstick is just bright red. Each shade has subtle variations and depth. Eyebrows might be green brown or black, but –they are arched and elongated individually. What this demonstrates is the artist's perfectionism in creating specific characters in striking colors whose inner dramas are hidden from us.

Hausner's portraits are staged events in specific settings that she builds in her Berlin studio and then invites women to inhabit them. She takes several photographs of her installation before she begins painting. Relying on her training as a scenic designer, Hausner's environments are imbued with mystery. "My

pictures tell stories that elude a straightforward reading," she says.

Born in Vienna in 1951, Hausner grew up in an artistic family. (Her father was the Austrian painter Rudolf Hausner, described as the first psychoanalytical painter.) She studied painting at the academy in Vienna and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London. From 1977 to 1992 She designed more than 100 theater, opera, and film productions. Beginning in 1992, she moved to Berlin where she still lives part of the year and devotes herself to painting and other projects. Recently, this versatile artist designed the sets for the new production of *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Staatsoper Berlin.

Hausner's work is powerful, explosive, and exceedingly bold. It has attracted attention and plaudits from galleries and museums around the world. She has been featured in many solo and group exhibitions in Europe, Russia, China, Japan and the United States and has been awarded several prestigious art prizes. Although still mid-career, her work will be presented in a solo retrospective exhibition at The Albertina Museum in Vienna in April, 2020. G&S

Forum Gallery
475 Park Avenue, NYC
forumgallery.com

“Celebration” Competition Winner—Harriet Serenkin

by Kate Barnby

If you see a woman walking along and occasionally swooping down to pick up a shiny metal object, a sparkling gem, an interesting shaped piece of plastic, or a textured card or paper, it could be me,” says Harriet Serenkin, a native New Yorker working full time as an artist since retiring as a freelance technical writer.

Her favored medium is collage and assemblage, much of it made with paper and magazine cuttings combined with found objects. Serenkin’s simple paper collages are a nod to the father of modern collage, George Braque, in his more colorful period between the world wars. She prefers Kurt Schwitters. However, her inspirational artist is Joseph Cornell and it is easy to see his impact on her work. Many of her works are similarly set inside boxes. Cornell assembled items within a theme in his boxes, however Serenkin’s works are more than themes – they are full blown stories.

She doesn’t set out to necessarily tell a story. She might start with a theme and some specific pieces that she wants to use for a new project, however what transpires she says is “serendipitous.” She prefers to allow “her gut, her unconscious” to drive her creativity. Some of her more recent work involves computers and machine parts. Taking these components, she up-cycles them into new, unique creations. They evoke a whisper of the Russian Constructivism movement of the early 20th Century.

At first glance Serenkin’s work can easily be described as whimsical, but on further inspection there is a depth to her imagery that indicates a more complicated dynamic at work. There is mystery in many of her pieces and depending on the mood of the viewer, the impact could be



“Village City Dancing” 3.5x3.5”, mixed media

quite varied. She says she creates her work for “happiness” and “to relieve stress” which perhaps suggests an understanding that life is not always a bed of roses.

This understanding may be explained by the other part of Serenkin’s life, where she spends time working with her dog to provide pet therapy to reduce the stress of others at the Lighthouse Guild for the Blind and the Juilliard School. She also runs courses at a non-profit called Gifted Hands that helps participants build self-esteem and learn new skills. Her course on collage and mixed media art emphasizes “No rules, no mistakes, just fun.”

Serenkin’s “Village: City Dancing” was chosen by Ed McCormack as the winner of the Inaugural *Gallery&Studio Arts Journal*, Visual Arts Competition, as the best artwork fitting the competition theme of “Celebration.” The three-dimensional boxed collage shows a couple in a dynamic pose, exuberantly dancing in a city street. Intriguingly there appears to be a shadowy figure behind them, perhaps watching benevolently, curiously, or otherwise. It is up to you the viewer to decide. *G&S*

Harriet Serenkin
harrietserenkin.com

Runner-Ups



Teruhisa Tahara "Graphical Notation as the Olympic Symphony No. 6" mixed media



Cheryl
Finfrock
"Gravity's
Exquisite
Pull"
acrylic on
clayboard



Janini Williams "MoonFlower"
mixed media



Jonna Pedersen "Mars M20" acrylic on canvas



Jenny Belin "Toni" acrylic



Bjorn Eriksen "War Is Over" oil on canvas

The Latest Out Of Chicago: Hiplet™ Ballerinas

by Marina Hadley

Viral sensations are often a flash in the pan; here today, gone tomorrow. What gives it longevity? Homer Bryant and his Hiplet™ Ballerinas are looking for the answers.

In 2016, clips of a group of teenagers doing Hiplet™ on morning TV, chat shows and online news feeds, received over eight million views. They also faced backlash from some viewers about poor technique, the “ghettoization” of ballet and amateurish performances. These were harsh words for a group of young teenage students with no professional experience.

Hiplet™ was born from the rap ballet classes that Homer Bryant held in the 1990’s at his dance school, that became known as the Chicago Multi-Cultural Dance Center (CMDC). He rapped out ballet instructions, making it fun and relevant for youngsters who had little connection to the old European dance style. As time went on, it evolved into Hiplet™, a term Bryant coined. A combination of Hip Hop, Urban, Latin, Jazz dance styles with ballet which came to be another way of having fun on a Friday afternoon and keeping youngsters off the street. They dance to everything from Bach to Beyoncé.

Homer Hans Bryant was a principal dancer with Arthur Mitchell’s Dance Theatre Harlem in the late 60’s and 70’s and has a reputation as an excellent teacher, strong on technique and discipline. His catch phrase is “The Fun is in the Discipline, The Discipline is in the Fun.”

The demand for Hiplet™

has continued to grow. They have starred in advertisements for major brands, performed at Paris and New York fashion weeks, showcased in TEDx talks, trotted the globe and joined in on cultural celebrations. The credit card company VISA used them to demonstrate the “New Normal” and Homer Bryant has been labeled a “Ballet Disruptor;” a term he relishes. Nia Parker, the sole remaining dancer from the original group that became a viral sensation explains that in Hiplet™ “you embody...a more empowered feminist perspective” than the more ethereal classical ballet.

It was inevitable that Bryant would create a professional company. The Hiplet™ Ballerinas as a professional organization has only been in existence since September 2019. They are in the midst of their first tour. They have added male and female dancers who do not dance on pointe to the group to make them more inclusive and accessible to dancers and audience alike. Cheryl Taylor their manager says, “Pointe work is difficult and takes years of training but the Hiplet™ experience is for everyone.”

At a recent APAP conference in New York, the Hiplet™ dancers performed several short showings to give a flavor of their repertoire to industry insiders. They were sharp and focused, in turn sassy and elegant, technically skilled, engaged as a group, and connected to the audience. They were professional and they looked like they were having fun.

Most of the sixteen dancers in the company have had some

previous professional dance experiences, however for many this is their first experience touring as a professional company. Although some have been dancing Hiplet™ for many years, several for as long as 12 years, others are relatively new to the genre.

Overall, they are a young group in a very young company. The oldest are only 26 years of age. Yet they all show a maturity in performance, teamwork and demeanor far beyond their years. In between sets, the group were chatty and friendly, happy to talk about the company, Homer Bryant, their own personal lives, exercise and make-up tips, audience engagement and the importance of giving back. They were comfortable commenting on the negative feedback: “yes there are risks but no more than any other form of dance or sports,” “the audience doesn’t see the hours of practice that we put in”, “we did years of classical ballet before we started Hiplet™.” They talked of being a team, practicing and performing as a unit “one for all and all for one,” helping each other ‘clean-up’ their technique and style, of “being punctual” so that they don’t miss anything and make it difficult on their fellow team members. Their positivity, enthusiasm and joy in performing and being a part of the company is truly refreshing.

Hiplet™ has weathered the initial storm of criticism and grown to be a thriving professional company – they have 17 engagements during February 2020’s Black History Month alone. Whether they will



Hiplet Ballerinas at APAP 2020 NYC. Top row, center: Nia Parker; middle row, l. to r.: Alexandria Franklin, Chantal' Ashanté Hill, Allison Harsh, Tay'Hiana Welch, Elexis Gibson, Cameryn Stevens; bottom, l. to r.: James Williams ("JStatic PlanetX"), Roberto Whitaker ("Aero Da Avatar"). Other company members: Camryn Taylor, Trevon Lawrence, Alexis King, Jayda Perry, Taylor Edwards, Yetunde Washington Photo by M. Hadley

blossom into a fully-fledged dance form with longevity will depend on the ability of Bryant, his dancers and choreographers to develop enough of a unique Hiplet™ vocabulary like the

"Duck-Walk" and "Vivian" to create dances that will continue to engage a wider audience.

The dancers of the Hiplet™ Ballerina company are ready

and determined to take it to the next level. G&S

Hiplet Ballerinas
For more information:
hipletballerinas.com

Old-Fashioned Storytelling

by Shiva Kumar

I remember recently meeting a younger Executive Producer (early forties, I'd assume) who seemed quite eager to see my reel after I mentioned that I am a filmmaker with over three decades of experience. I showed him selects from my many PBS documentaries, my many films for foundations and non-profits, commercials and corporate image films, which he watched politely enough but I could tell he was less than impressed. A little chagrined, when I pressed him a bit further he told me how content was everywhere and he was looking for new ways to tell stories to cut through the chatter, indicating that clearly my approach to storytelling was not what he considered a new way.

I thanked him for his time realizing that not every meeting turns into a work opportunity, but the encounter played itself out in my head for many days after. Part of it was that familiar sinking feeling that maybe I was becoming obsolete in this very young industry. The majority of people whom I have known and worked with had been replaced, had moved on, retired or just left the business. Most of the younger people who have replaced them tend to work with people they are familiar and have a rapport with.

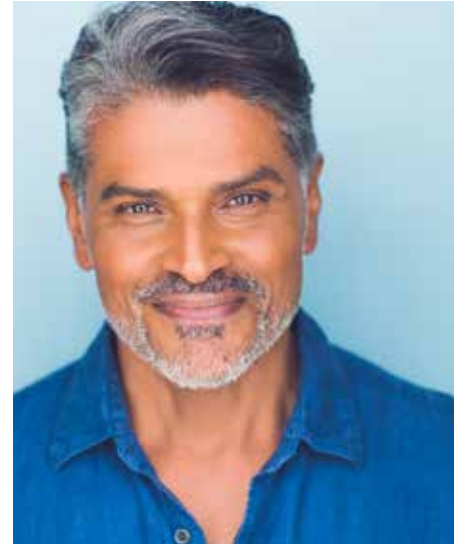
But the bigger issue for me was the idea that there were new ways to tell stories that maybe I was missing out on. Filmmakers have always tested the tools of their trade, from different lighting techniques, latest cameras, lenses, dollies, jibs, filters, nets and on and on. There is a wonderful feeling of accomplishment when one masters a particular visual style or camera movement or captures an image with that gorgeous shallow depth of field. And there

are as many ways to edit a film as there are types of editors. There are always new ways to introduce type, animation and other graphic devices. One can choose from music and sound effects libraries from all over the world to add mood and tone to films but is that what constitutes a new way to tell a story?

I thought back to the many films I had scripted, directed and edited over the years and realized that they were all storytelling in the 'old fashioned' way. I like telling stories that complicate thinking, has layers of meaning and has a beginning, a middle and an end. I thought about all the books I had read, art I have appreciated and music that I have cherished and they always transported me with a story I connected with. Many filmmakers, myself included, swoon over beautiful cinematography, gorgeous lighting, crisp editing and want to emulate styles we admire but when the storytelling is muddled and elevates style over substance, the many wonderful techniques we admire so much leave most of us unmoved. This seems obvious, right? But still, we see so many mega budget films where the story is clearly flawed but somehow the studio got it made. I am sure many working on the film knew there were flaws in the story but it had star appeal, great locations, major computer graphics artists who could create magical worlds, so it got made and then just slid into oblivion.

The methods of creating stories have clearly evolved over time but has the nature of storytelling actually changed?

I thought back to most of the clients I have worked with over the years and none of them were as concerned with the latest visual



Shiva Kumar, storyteller

techniques as they were with a story well told even if they could not always articulate it. Telling a story, be it on film, in the theater, at a gallery or at a party is an immersive process. We need to engage intellectually, emotionally and also rationally. In the worlds we create, we have to make sure all the points connect for a satisfying outcome, not necessarily happy or even positive but satisfying. Humans have been telling stories going back to the first tribes huddled against a fire listening in awe to the storyteller weaving fantastic tales of gods, heroes, thrilling hunts, great battles, unrequited love, pain, sacrifice and joy. We still connect to these basic visceral emotions when it comes to our stories.

When we listen to a piece of music, view a painting or a photograph, watch a film, or read a book, we can and should admire the masterful technique those practitioners bring to their art, but for that work to become transcendent, it needs to speak to us beyond technique and envelop us in a story we can care about.

Continued on page 28



Gallery & Studio

arts journal

Second Juried Arts Competition

Our next juried arts competition is for visual artists of all media, who include writing in their artwork.

Theme: Artwork with writing. It may be a cartoon, comic strip, illustration or any other artwork which includes writing.

Submission: Up to 3 images per entry. Images must be of artist's own original work.

Prize: A review of the winning artist's work will be published in the Spring 2020 print issue. Images of runners up will also be published.

Deadline: **March 15th, 2020.**

Entry Fee: **\$20** for 3 images.

For further information, guidelines and to submit entries please go to: galleryand.studio/competitions



Gallery & Studio

arts journal

Writing Competition

We are offering a prize of **publication in the next issue** of Gallery & Studio Arts Journal for the winner of our first writing competition about the Arts.

The submission must be a previously unpublished and original piece between 250 and 500 words about another artist and their visual artwork, not your own.

The writing must be submitted in conjunction with 1 - 3 images (hi-def – 300dpi) of artwork that you have the authority to publish.

The deadline is **March 15th, 2020**. **Entry Fee is \$20** per piece entered. For further information and to submit entries please go to: galleryand.studio/competitions.

Charles Ethan Porter: African-American Still-Life Painter

by Bobbie Leigh

One of the most skilled and under-appreciated American still-life painters is supreme colorist Charles Ethan Porter (1847-1923). In his last years, Porter was reduced to such dire poverty that he could barely put food on the table. The irony is that

paintings door to door because no one would buy the work of a black man. Often, Porter traded paintings or bartered them for necessities. Perhaps hundreds of his painting of fruits, flowers, insects, and landscapes still hang in Connecticut living rooms,

His talent was recognized early even in high school. In 1869, just a few years after the Civil War, he was the first African-American to attend the National Academy of Design in New York which was founded in 1825. After his studies, Porter set up a studio in Hartford



"Untitled "(Cracked Watermelon), ca. 1890, Oil on canvas, 19 1/8 x 28 3/16 in. (48.6 x 71.6 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Nancy Dunn Revocable Trust Gift, 2015 (2015.118)

while he was painting luscious apples and juicy watermelons his cupboards were bare.

One writer commented that because of racial prejudice in his Connecticut neighborhood, Porter had to ask a fellow painter, a Bavarian artist who shared his studio, to sell his

unrecognized as the work of an artist with timeless skills. Ambitious curators or maybe the TV program *Antique Road Show* might turn up some hidden treasures someday.

Charles Evan Porter was born in Rockville, Connecticut, to a free African-American family.

which was visited by Frederick Edwin Church and another local resident, Mark Twain, both of whom recognized and admired his talent. By 1881 he had his heart set on studying in Paris. Porter sold about 100 of his paintings and moved to Paris where he attended the French National Academy

for Decorative Arts and the Academie Julian.

"I am aware that there are a goodly number of my Hartford friends and others who are anxious to see how the colored artist will make out," Porter wrote to Twain from Paris in 1883. "But this is not the motive which impresses me. There is something of more importance, the colored people –my people– as a race I am interested in, and my success will only add to others who have already shown wherein they are capable the same as other men."

During his two years of study in France, Porter explored the French countryside and began painting landscapes incorporating elements of the then popular Impressionism in his work. Returning to Connecticut in 1884, the beauty of local fields and woods continued to inspire him. But times had changed. His new work didn't sell. According to Michael Rosenfeld of the New York-based Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, Porter's academic style

was considered out-of-date. Rosenfeld has championed Porter's work for almost 30 years. As an African-American painter Porter has been more or less overlooked until recently.

In 2008, the New Britain Museum of American Art assembled 51 paintings –still-life arrangements of flowers, fruits, vegetables– for the first museum exhibition of Porter's work. His subjects depicted gentle imagery suitable for home décor. Other exhibitions followed and in 2015 Sylvia Yount, the Lawrence A. Fleischman Curator in Charge of the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, acquired Porter's "Cracked Watermelon," a major Porter painting which you can see in the American Wing's War and Reconstruction Eras and Legacies gallery.

An intimate porcelain plaque of roses, Porter's only known decorative arts object, will be in The Met's June show, New York Art Worlds, 1970-90. "An

unusual medium for Porter, the work suggests an experimental approach to what would become a favorite subject for the artist," says Yount. "The Porter plaque reveals his savvy sense of fashionable taste – namely that associated with the Aesthetic Movement..."

Yount notes that "Porter is best known for his painterly, light-infused, table-top still lifes of fruit and flowers, but we're excited to have a wider range of work at The Met that reveals him to be both talented and versatile, experimenting with different progressive styles and subjects in an effort to earn a living from his art –a challenge for any artist at any time, but especially for a black man in late 19th and early 20th century America." *G&S*

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery
100 Eleventh Avenue, NYC
michaelrosenfeldart.com

West Side Arts Coalition: Art Oasis On West Broadway

Owould never have guessed that an art gallery called the West Side Arts Coalition can be found in a beaux arts building in the middle island on West Broadway and 96th Street. Surrounded by honking horns and busy traffic, the WSAC organization presents their members' art work in what was a 96th Street subway comfort station. A group of artists who wanted a place to exhibit their art works founded the WSAC when the comfort station was being renovated 40 years ago. This Oasis in the middle of the two busy Broadway streets provides a venue for art and craft exhibitions as well as a performance space for poetry and music. Their next exhibition will be Black Renaissance which runs through March 18, 2020.

To inquire: The West Side Arts Coalition,
wsacnyc@gmail.com. web: wsacny.org *G&S*



Poetry

by Alison Johnson



Black History Month Divorces America

if this poem
had a hashtag
it would be
#BlackLivesMatter

if this poem
leaned in closely
it would block out
all that white noise

if this poem
had a year
it would not be
1820

seeing
that it would be

only

three-fifths full

Best Picture 2019

Your friend says that *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *BlacKkKlansman*, and *Vice* are up for Best Picture this year. She reminds you that the Academy Awards are on next Sunday.

You try to figure out how to pay the cable bill online. You watch Christian Bale laugh as Dick Cheney. You remember Donald Rumsfeld talking about unknown unknowns.

You think about your own known unknowns. Or maybe your known knowns. You flip through your Twitter feed. The President's thumbs rage about a wall and a witch hunt.

In the middle of the night, you feel pain in your left arm. You think of Susan Lucci, her 19 Emmy nominations, and her 90% heart blockage.

You Google "heart attack symptoms in women." You ask yourself if your jaw hurts or if you have experienced unusual fatigue.

You look at CNN online. You stare at a man in blackface and another in a KKK costume. One of them may be the Governor of Virginia. Or not. He may be thinking about moonwalking tonight.



Camping trip, 1944

Countless pine needles
lie where they fell
strands of hair
recording the departure
of an entire forest.

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Tribute To The Architecture Of The Past

by Christine Graf

Mary Lou Alberetti, a mixed media artist, will be in a show at Blue Mountain Gallery that runs from Feb.25 to March 21. Her art is a reverent echo to the architecture of the past and antiquity. Alberetti transports the viewer through time. We visit imaginary epochs through her architectural eye. She offers a plethora of possibilities as if each art work is a postcard from history. History reimaged. A dazzling amount of texture, from scraping, crackling, and fire from the kiln imbues each piece. She captures the wearing away that time creates with ceramics, oils, and collage using her material fearlessly. She restructures the old and lost ruins from the past, makes them new and beautiful again in her interpretation.

Alberetti crams much into each piece. We need to study it. Like a child discovering something new each time she looks at an image. One is enamored of the detail and energy of the work. In the piece titled, "Fractured" Alberetti creates the illusion of a building with an arched doorway and shows us how weather and time changes the places where we live. One imagines that some of her structures simulate rubble from a war or natural catastrophe. She rebuilds what has been broken, with resplendent effects and reconstructs it into an art work, a new home.

Alberetti has traveled to France, Spain, Turkey and Morocco. She knows design and demonstrates a Moroccan-Spanish influence in the work titled, "Muro Norte." She creates a crackled frame with tinted blue swirls and in the center features a block that has the markings of Middle Eastern icons.

One is intrigued by how Alberetti creates her dimensional



"Night Shadows" 2019, ceramic relief, 16" x 15" x 2.5"

shapes and what techniques she uses with ceramics. In "The Rise And Fall of Empires" she lines up architectural shards askew as if we were watching a building fall, frozen in time. The windows suggest it might have been a palace and memorializes this into leaning shapes, covered in a crackled, beaten surface. One wants to touch these pieces, to sense their cragginess, to intuit the world she's created.

The work titled, "Oneric" is another ceramic relief, abstract in composition with a compelling surface. A bold white, curved form is set off center between horizontally placed elements that look like punctured and pocked wood, or stone. It appears to be

off kilter, yet the half moon shape asserts itself.

Alberetti is a master of technique with her aged surfaces. We travel with her in our imaginations to all those places in the world that influences her. One hopes she'll keep creating such exquisite work. She might be issuing us a gentle warning. To protect our architecture, our history and to respect and celebrate this important art form. G&S

Mary Lou Alberetti
Blue Mountain Gallery
530 West 25th Street, NYC
through March 21
bluemountaingallery.org

“Weathering With You”—When It Rains, It Pours

by Sébastien Aurillon

“Weathering with you” is the most recent masterpiece animé by Japanese director Makoto Shinkai, whose name became famous in 2016 after the enormous success of his critically-acclaimed international hit “Your Name”.

The action of this movie is set in Tokyo, Japan where the rain is so dense, and lasts for such a long time that it almost embodies its own character centerpiece as well

Hodaka is offered room and board in exchange for an internship at Keisuke’s basement apartment, a place he shares with his puckish niece, Natsumi.

The constant interviews and articles temporarily set the tempo of Hodaka’s life, until a pivotal turn of event occurs when our teenage hero bumps –literally– into Hina, a barely-older-than-him girl whose independent spirit will make Hodaka lose his heart for her

business here, or a rain-free fun afternoon for their daughter in the park there.

More floods and several police chases ensue until the movie climaxes, reaching its most dramatic twist. A mysterious curse is cast upon all maidens of the weather and Hina is now in great danger.

“Weathering with you” is visually stunning in the great tradition of Japanese animation



Copyright ©2019 Courtesy of Gkids

as it awfully bums the Tokyoites. It is a constant deluge, a drencher, a flood.

That gushing fact sets the mood from the beginning of “Weathering with you,” when a tired and starving 16-year-old runaway, Hodaka, lands in an unwelcoming capital. The story doesn’t tell why he ran away from his remote island but a fortuitous encounter on the ferry with Keisuke, an adult who runs an occult magazine, will prove to be useful.

After a few days of struggling in the maze of a metropolis filled with gangsters and meanies,

in less days that it took to create the world.

The two start bonding like 3 peas in a pod (the girl has a younger brother, Nagi, already “a ladies’ man” by Hodaka’s definition) and viewers soon discover that Hina has a wonderful power: using her prayers, she is capable of making the clouds disappear while calling out for sunshine.

The three kids are broke and after a quick website set up, generous bookings start pouring from locals wanting to solicit Hina’s weatherly abilities to secure a sunny flea market for their



studios like Ghibli and has a pace of runaway horses galloping for their lives. In an era of climate change happening all over the world, the movie is also an opportunistic reminder, exposing the risks of darker times that may come. GS

“Weathering With You” (2019)
Running Time: 111 minutes
In selected theaters near you.

Mystery And Layers Inform Renée Khatami's Art

by Christine Graf

Renée Khatami's art echoes of Hans Arp, the German-French abstract artist of the 20th century. Though one is reluctant to compare a present day artist to a master, the intention is to demonstrate how the masters inspire contemporary artists.

Khatami has a mystery and calm to her work and shows a reverence for her materials. She chooses soft pinks, blues and grays in the piece, "Double Curve" which consists of an ovoid configuration cut in half and looks like a split-shape egg in an embryo. This work feels otherworldly, as if we are viewing the inside of the body and its mysteries before birth.

Khatami's art reminds one of veils. Sheaves of silk on top of one another, and how they play off each other. The mood of the work has a dream-like quality. As if one wakes up in the morning and tries to hold on to the image of last night's dream. One can't quite grasp it, yet Khatami attempts to capture a floating blue background, with rectangular shapes meshed with a pale rust in the work titled, "Alternate Connection". In "Blue Space" she juxtaposes geometric forms, curves and straight edges in a conversation with one another on a bed of bold blue.

In a change of mood, "By Dint of Red" the organization of elements is placed in a classic grid shape with red, orange and gold forms that create a warm and pleasing composition. The work titled, "In The Balance" are two block-like shapes inside a curve on each end that butt up against each other. A change in viewpoint, where space is cramped and insinuates less of a floating feeling and more of a jamming of elements. Powerful in composition the art is still anchored in its dream.



"Blue Space" 2018, mixed media on 300 lb. paper, 16" x 20"

The layers Khatami creates informs the richness and complexity of our lives. The phone, computer screens, social media, are the outer layers of our lives. We have the personal layers, our inner spirit, family, friends. Perhaps Khatami suggests we look inward. We can be inspired from her cathedrals of color, line, shapes.

The poet, Stanley Kunitz, in his signature poem says, "Live in the layers, not the litter." G&S

Recently seen in
Prince Street Gallery's
50th anniversary exhibition.
princestreetgallery.com

Holiday Cheer at Jadite

by Anne Rudder

December heralds a season of festivities and I found reasons to celebrate in these joyous days at Jadite Gallery, as curator Basha Maryanska mounted a beautiful exhibition of ten talented artists showing small paintings to delight viewers in a large way. 'Small is Great!' debuted on December 3rd 2019 and graced the gallery walls for two weeks. Just in time to provide discerning observers the opportunity to purchase gifts of wonderful art for friends and family.

Joanna Owidzka's exquisite woven pieces were the first works to catch my eye as I entered the gallery. "Kowary" and "Pilgrims" are textiles woven in picture frames

simultaneously acting as looms and supports to the forms created. Kowary is a place in Poland with textile factories and Owidzka, using yarn remnants found there, weaves pieces of shimmering movement and grace, particularly in "Pilgrims" where vertical lines in natural colors undulate across the work's surface in pleasing optical illusions.

Artist Krystyna Malinowska incorporates experimental digital techniques in a female analysis of relationships between men and women which she brings to the pictorial forefront. Women's disembodied black and white legs and high-heeled shoes become fetishes against vibrant patterned

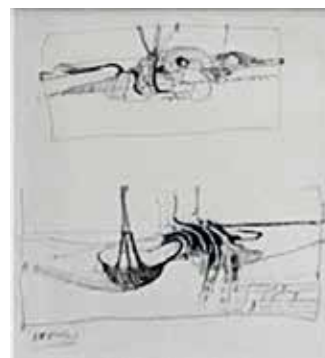
backgrounds of abstract floral prints. Black and white men's hands, strategically placed on gartered feminine limbs, provide subversive sexual commentary of sly wickedness and irony that is thoroughly enjoyable.

Virginia Donovan presents a tour-de-force in her series of dramatic Warsaw paintings/assemblages that are passionate breakthroughs, expressing reactions to the holocaust she experienced during her recent trip to Warsaw. There are no tentative explorations here and she approaches her subjects boldly with gravitas. Reacting to the story of "Life in a Jar," where a woman saved Jewish and Catholic

Continued on page 30



Joanna Owidzka



Kathryn Hart



Virginia Donovan



Maria Maciega



Katia Gerasimov



Krystyna Malinowska



Barbara Wozniczko



Neela Pushparaj



Basha Maryanska



Anna Pietruszka

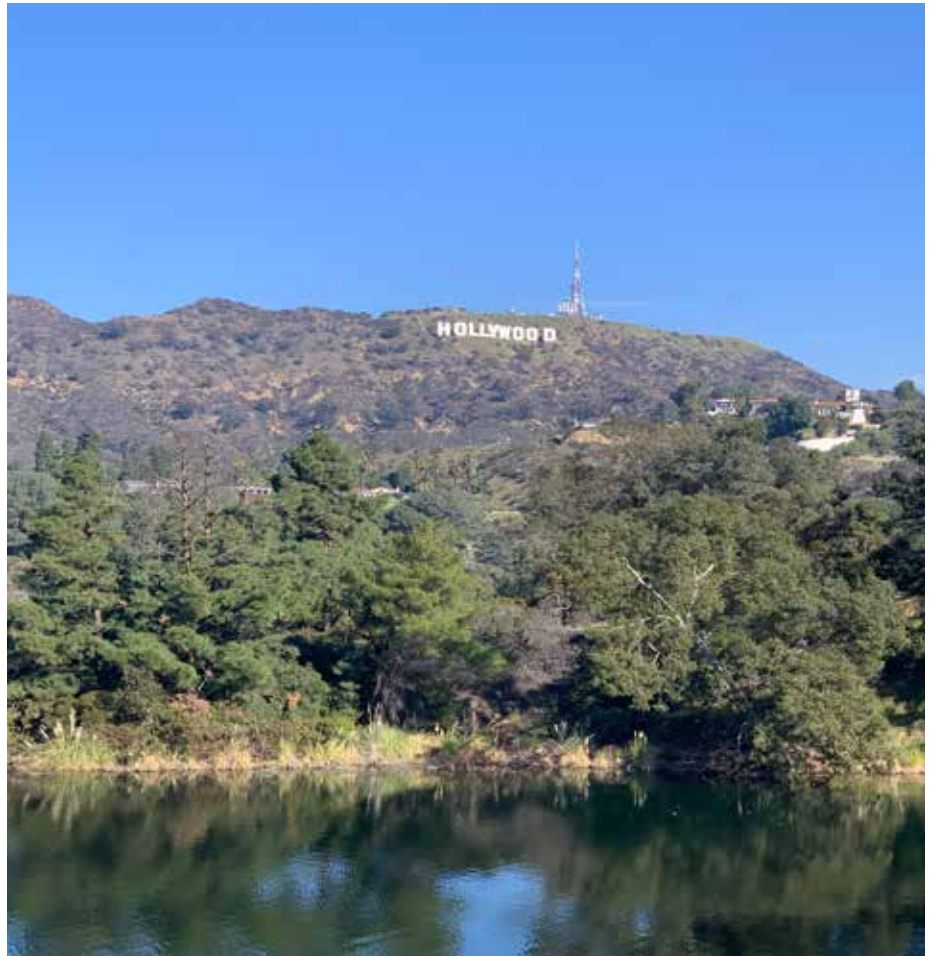
Screenwriting: From Page To Hollywood's Red Carpet

by Rachelle Masters

Hollywood. It's magic. It's synchronicity. It's filthy. It's my home, and this is where I write, not far from the Red Carpet events and the growing population of tent cities. I just turned forty three, and I moved here 10 years ago from Rhode Island with a few careers under my belt. I have been an accounting manager, an English teacher, and now, a writer. I began writing as a way to heal from the trauma of being brought up in a religious cult. Now I write because the written word is what makes my heart sing and what drives me. Plays about Celtic goddesses, poetry blending the whimsy of art and astrology, feature films that tickle my funny bone, and at present, I'm in the process of getting a semi-autobiographical short film about my childhood experiences from the page to the screen. That's the magic, but it isn't all glitz and glamour.

Writing a screenplay and seeing it on the big screen are many long steps apart. First, the idea rushes in, and fingers fly across the keyboard (or slog, depending on the day and the presence or absence of the Muse). Once drafted, the screenplay is shared with others who will read it and offer notes. Based on these notes, the draft is rewritten. The script goes under the knife repeatedly as kind readers offer criticism and encouragement. A reading is scheduled after several rounds of rewrites are completed, and a group of actors gathers to read aloud from the script and to offer their opinions at the end.

Once the script is finalized, a budget is made and funding is considered –often the most daunting part of the project. A lucky few have the funds on hand and can begin production once the crew, actors, and producers are chosen. The rest launch



"Hollywood Reservoir" Photo by Sébastien Aurillon

crowdfunding campaigns, using sites such as Kickstarter or IndieGoGo, or find investors. Investors are usually interested in very specific types of projects, and only after talent with name recognition has been acquired.

The day production begins, lights, camera, sound, makeup, other crew members, and actors crowd onto the set to bring the words to life. The number of scenes and locations will dictate how many days are spent filming.

After the final, "Cut!" has been called by the director, the film is edited and colored at a post production studio. Audio, recorded separately from video, will be "married" to the images. At

this point, the film can travel many different paths. It may be submitted to film festivals. It may have a theatrical release. It may be uploaded and shared on the internet.

There are numerous ways for a screenwriter to find their way in Hollywood, but it all begins with some version of "Once Upon A Time." G&S

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A Jazz Life: Noriko Ueda

by Yasko Mori

There are a multitude of catalysts for choosing a career in music but falling in love with the soundtrack from an animated cartoon has to be an unusual reason to dedicate your life to it.

No career in the arts is easy. They all require hard work, dedication, perseverance and talent, topped off with at least a modicum of good fortune. Even within the world of arts, Jazz is a difficult world to navigate, with only 1.1% of the US music industry accounting for the genre, opportunities are rare. It has also been a heavily male dominated world particularly for the musicians with only a few notable exceptions. There were however always plenty of female vocalists to easily fill a top 100 list. Female double bass players on the other hand are still reasonably unusual. Noriko Ueda is one of these rare Jazz musicians.

Ueda is from Japan, a country considered by some to still have the largest population of Jazz fans in the world. She even grew up in a city near Osaka, considered one of the largest hubs of Jazz in Japan. However, her introduction to the genre, was the soundtrack to the animated film of gentleman thief, Lupin the Third. She had played the piano since she was 4 years old and had also taken up the electric bass guitar as a youngster, but it was the movie theme tune that piqued her interest in the double bass and jazz during her high school years.

She went on to study at the Osaka College of Music. She played in their big band and also started gigging in the city. Persuaded that she had to move to the US to further her studies, she told her mother to forget that she had a daughter because she may never return, and she moved to the



Noriko Ueda and Ayako Shirasaki Photo by M. Hadley

US where she went to study Jazz composition at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. There she was a B.E.S.T. scholarship recipient and graduated in 1997.

Since then she has lived and worked in New York, carving out an impressive resume of notable Jazz venues including Carnegie Hall, Blue Note NY, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Birdland and Small's. She has toured and recorded with the Frank Wess Quintet, Ted Rosenthal Trio, Grady Tate Band, Sherrie Maricle and DIVA Jazz Orchestra, Five Play and the Harry Whitaker Band. She has also travelled the world, including touring in Japan and going back to see her mother regularly. She currently also leads her own Noriko Ueda Jazz Orchestra as well as performing as a member of the international all-female contemporary Jazz supergroup, Artemis.

Ueda is a well-respected artist and performs over 200 events a year, often at venues that she has played at for over 20 years with

the same artists. She treasures her relationships with her fellow artists and these venues, understanding the business of performing and pleasing the audience. This was clearly in evidence on a busy winter's night at Grasso's, a popular restaurant out on Long Island, known for its music. Ueda with Japanese pianist Ayako Shirasaki entertained an appreciative audience with familiar standards and less well-known tunes. They asked for requests from the guests and they were able to oblige them all including a lyrical interpretation of "Spring can really hang you up the most."

Next on her agenda is to create an arrangement for a symphony orchestra, recording with Artemis on the Blue Note record label in between her regular gigs that she performs around New York. It's a busy life but one that Noriko Ueda loves, much to the enjoyment of her audiences. *G&S*

For more information:
norikoueda.com

“Sátántangó”—The Best of the Longest

by Woody Sempliner



Photo still courtesy of Arbelos

Irimias and Petrina (Mihály Vig, Putyi Horváth) accompanied by blowing garbage

While working on a somewhat contemplative video project, a young editor informed me that in television it is inadmissible to let a shot be over six seconds long. Beyond six seconds, it is reasoned, the viewer's ability to focus is overtaxed. Meanwhile, I have read that in Norway there is a popular television series that simply shows a fireplace (curiously, focus is the Latin for hearth) with a wood fire in it being tended by someone. People sit and watch the televised fire as they would their own and send in comments, advice, criticism pertaining to how wood is added and the poker used.

“No!” One imagines them protesting, “You’re cutting off oxygen to the middle when you do that.”

Or,

“Why on Earth would you put that piece bark down?”

It would not be surprising to learn that Norwegians or anyone have longer attention spans than Americans. I do not have the data to support such a claim and

would bore my all-too-American self to death trying to research it, but we must assume that fire-watching Norwegians settle in for uninterrupted takes far exceeding six seconds. And it’s not that there is nothing else “on” in Norway; there is also, I am told, a show about stacking firewood.

In closely examining “Sátántangó,” the masterwork of Hungarian filmmaker, Béla Tarr, someone (a Norwegian perhaps?) took the trouble to tally up the lengths of all the shots in the film to find an average length of six minutes. The film’s total running time is seven hours and twelve minutes and worth every second.

In film, as in life, timing can be said to be everything. But how a filmmaker uses time depends on what is being sold. If the product is intended to be a ripping good yarn, with action, love and adventure, then it needs to move along economically, and my young editor’s advice is ignored at the filmmaker’s peril. In “Sátántangó,” Tarr’s exorbitant use of time diminishes time’s value,

and the viewer is left with the stark power of image to be transported into the emotional life of a remote farming collective that has done the socialist equivalent of going out of business. The black and white images have a painterly power that, combined with movement, time and brilliant improvisational acting, sear themselves into the viewer’s retina and take up residence in the mind. In Tarr’s universe, plot, like time, must submit to the dominance of the visual. Like the movie’s characters, the viewer surrenders hours of life along with the right to know what exactly is going on; and that might be exactly Tarr’s point.

How people have watched “Sátántangó” in theaters, where it is doubtless at its best, I do not know. I envision blankets, pillows and picnic baskets. My immaculate three-disc set came from a friend who felt she was better off without it. I watched it in two sittings and will again...and again. *G&S*

For more information:
arbelosfilms.com

Comedy Gets Better With Age

by Rachelle Masters

Lynn Ruth Miller is the comedienne who is, in her own words, “Not dead yet.” She began comedy at the tender age of 71 and jokes that she didn’t want to “peak too early.” Born in Toledo, Ohio, on October 11, 1933, she is still going strong at 86. This spitfire arrived on the planet at a time when women were not meant to have careers, much less have a voice of their own. The directive was to get married, which she did. She recalls that her ex-husband used to beat her and she never even considered the notion that she was a victim of abuse at the time.

Taking to the stage in her old age isn’t the first time she’s done something outside of societal expectations though. She got her first degree (of three) from Stanford University in Journalism at the age of 30. She published her first book, about her personal struggle with bulimia, at age 67, and has won numerous awards for short stories.

In 2003, she went undercover and posed as a student, enrolling at a comedy college in San Francisco. The objective was to expose them for charging for a talent she felt cannot be taught. Instead she exposed herself, revealing her gift of gag. She further exposed herself by combining comedy with cabaret. After a wardrobe malfunction involving a negligee and a microphone, she gave up the G-rated stripping and now does storytelling events, tutors writers, and performs onstage whenever the opportunity presents itself. I had the honor and privilege of meeting Lynn Ruth after a performance of her show “I Never Said I Was Nice” at Nickel Diner in Downtown Los Angeles, California. When I asked her for an interesting quote, she replied, “Interesting Quote.” The



Lynn Ruth Miller

authenticity of her show is evident because her passion and wry humor never waver, even long after the lights have gone down and we have repaired to a lovely Italian restaurant where we chat over wine about social issues close to her heart. She is by no means winding down her career in comedy; she is just getting started and has so much more to say – and sing.

She currently resides in England, where in her free time

she knits and takes her dogs for walks. She is an inspiration for many, but she will tell you, you don’t want to be like her, “I’m 4ft 10 and I’m constipated.” If you are interested in seeing Lynn Ruth Miller, she appears at venues all over the world, and can be booked for events. *G&S*

For more information:
lynnruthmiller.net

Magumi Yamada: Magic In The Air

by Marina Hadley

At the cusp of one year closing and the next unfolding, you will find aerialist Megumi Yamada, in quiet contemplation as she choreographs new acts for the coming season. "Writing is important in my creative process. I write about the past year, my feelings, my motivation to continue. I allow colors and emotions to inspire me. I am always looking to improve and be original." Says Megumi, known professionally by just her first name. Drawing on experience, playing with new ideas, improving and developing favorite moves, she creates unique acts that require flexibility, strength, and artistic skills.



"Drizzling Rain" photo by Ely Kay

Aerial work originated as a circus skill but has developed into a category of its own in the performing arts. It combines acrobatics, dance and theatre to create entertainment, atmosphere and a "wow!" factor for the audience. Today aerial work includes silks, Lyra hoop, straps, trapeze and rope for one or more performers.

Megumi specializes in several types of equipment, but her favorite are the silks. Using momentum, friction and gravity

she creates a mesmerizing performance, that to mere mortals in the audience, can appear at times ethereal and death-defying in turn.

Aerial work is no longer the hidden and secretive skill that it once was, passed on from one generation to the next, within families. There are schools in many major cities that teach circus skills to both children and adults for recreational and motivational purposes as well as providing training facilities for professionals. However, what sets apart the professionals is the skill level and artistry.

The seamless transitions from one pose to the next, connecting the twists, turns and falls, into fluid storytelling is what sets apart the best professionals like Megumi. She especially brings the Japanese aesthetic of allowing her equipment to "live" in her performances. This approach she says "makes the most of the silks by enhancing their beauty and elegance of movement rather than just being a means to an end of showing off a performer's physical skills." The silks become an extension of herself and part of the narrative and atmosphere that she creates.

Megumi is also a consummate storyteller and enjoys creating mimed stories of rooftop ninjas, a transformation of a chrysalis to butterfly or a homeless person into an aerial nymph.

Her personal story is also one of transformation. Originally, she was a successful professional belly dancer. At the age of 30 however she decided that she had to change her life and challenge herself. With no gymnastics experience at all, she decided to learn to do a handstand. She went to a gym that just happened to also train



"The Muse" photo by Andrew T. Foster

aerial skills, and that changed the trajectory of her life. Her desire to continue to challenge herself, her work ethic and determination led to her winning first place in a silk's competition in Hong Kong after only two years of study. She decided to move to the United States where she became a finalist in the Silks Division of the US Aerial Championships in New York.

Today she is a professional aerialist. She is the Aerial Director of Cirque du Nuit, a performance design company that specializes in audience-driven immersive and interactive theatrical events. She also freelances worldwide providing magical moments that most of us can only stare at by looking skywards and gasping in wonder. G&S

For more information
about Megumi Yamada:
megumicircusperformer.com

Sugar Snake Is Having As Much Fun As Possible

by Anaïs Schindler

From old friends to new collaborators, Corrin Evans and Jonathan Timchalk have come together to form 'Sugar Snake' and will be releasing their first single this month.

The pop-with-a-twist duo first met in elementary school while performing in 'Rugare Marimba Ensemble,' a marimba band put together by their music teacher in Tri Cities, WA. The two reconnected last summer when Corrin was looking for a producer to help her finish a long-forgotten song for her grandmother's 75th birthday. Their mutual respect and instant musical connection led them to a partnership that resulted in a year's work creating their upcoming album. No easy feat, as they live in separate states; Corrin in California and Jon in Washington.

Working primarily independently and sharing lyrics, music, revisions and ideas via email, iPhone recordings and over the phone, Sugar Snake came together only once in Los Angeles for a week to complete their album. A true labor of love and collaboration, the pair almost scrapped what will now be their first single "DYLT?" (An acronym for Do You Like That) before resurrecting it with a kicked up beat and pitched down vocals. Of the inspiration behind the lyrics, Corrin says "I was capturing that feeling of being absolutely terrified of falling for someone and not understanding them; but still wanting them desperately."

Corrin and Jon are creatives by nature and it's apparent when you listen to Sugar Snake. Utilizing the best of modern technology, they've created a sound that lies outside of



traditional pop music but doesn't fit squarely anywhere else either. They were influenced by hip-hop beats and the syncopation of swing and reggaeton. Even with their uncertainty of genre, one thing is for sure—they set out to have a good time. From the get go, Sugar Snake adopted a motto that is a through line in their music and the grounding force of their philosophy— AFAP: As Fun As Possible.

What's next for Sugar Snake? "I see us continuing to explore what Sugar Snake can be, evolving and refining our sound and style." Says Jonathan, who wrote, produced, and composed alongside Corrin and lent his vocals to several tracks. "I see us continuing to have as much

fun as possible, putting positive energy into what we make and trying to share it with the world. I think we'll continue to allow what's in our hearts and the music to be our guide. Wherever they lead, we'll follow."

Look out for Sugar Snake's first single "DYLT?". It will be available to stream on all streaming platforms this month. The duo plan to release more songs and eventually their album throughout the year. *G&S*

For updates on new music and release dates you can follow Sugar Snake on Instagram @sugarsnakemusic.

Diane Root: In Memoriam

by the Editorial Team

Diane Root was the epitome of a cosmopolitan woman. Born in Paris of an American father and a French mother from Nice. She was schooled in the United States, Holland, Switzerland and France. She traveled the world, spoke multiple languages, and for a time worked for the diplomatic service which probably accounted for her very open and accepting nature of all people and cultures. Her close friend Knut Svenningsen said “People fascinated her. She could start a conversation with anyone.” She was truly



father, Waverley Lewis Root, who was a news correspondent for several newspapers including the Chicago Tribune and Washington Post as well as a renowned author of books about food. She

writer, but she was an even greater storyteller. She scooped you up into her stories right from the beginning and took you on a fun adventure. She never disappointed. She wrote a wonderful piece about having lunch with Picasso when she was a child; “The Artful Dodger” appeared in the *New York Times* magazine in 2008. She also wrote science fiction short stories for *Boned* – “A collection of skeletal writings” edited by Nate Ragolia who said of Diane, “Even when she’d protest that horror or sci-fi or genre writing wasn’t her forte, she’d dazzle with a dark, thoughtful, complex story.”

She enjoyed writing about artists and their art. She understood artists, being one herself. She considered herself an artist before a writer, working in a variety of painting styles, all of which were expressive of her vibrant personality.

Kathryn Hart reminisced that “Diane

was a true creative in all she did, whether through her own visual creations, her writing about other’s art and the assortment of people she knew and gathered around her. Our conversations together were lively, full of stories (she had some tales to tell of the NYC artists of years past—it seemed she knew everyone), discussions about art and probably more than our fair share of wine. I would walk home from her apartment in the Village in the wee hours inspired by her energy, her generosity, and her continual artistic push.

Her work in process was everywhere in her apartment. Diane was a true supporter of artists, had such a huge heart and a golden pen. I will miss my good friend so much. She enriched my life and that of so many others.”

Jeannie McCormack said, “I am grateful to have known Diane and for her special presence in the magazine. She helped us produce the first issue of the new *G&S Arts Journal* through her generous support, her writing and by giving us good ideas for new projects. We will miss her for her spirit, her unique and perceptive art writing and the lively stories she told. God Bless.” *G&S*



“A Tune for Three Tulips” (Photo courtesy of Viridian Gallery)

interested in the other person.

That curiosity and keen mind is what made Diane an accomplished writer although it took her a while to allow herself to acknowledge that. She adored her

thought writing was “his thing.” However, she eventually became an editor, working for several publishing houses as well as writing copy for several fashion and perfume companies.

She was a good

In Memory of Bob Hogge (1953-2016)



Jock the Beggar
By R.d.H.

Jock the beggar
Can you tell me?

With your golden fly machine
Why your children call you never
Why your pretty birds don't sing.

Jock the beggar
Can you tell me?

Why your dog's without a bone
He was loyal and he loved you
Now his heart has turned to stone.

In your castles made of silence
Built by frozen empty hands

Though they're rich and green
and plenty,
They're a picture painted sad.

Why todays are like tomorrows
And tomorrows never come.

In your castle made of silence
In your life of things undone.

STORYTELLING

Continued from page 14

After much pondering I have come to the conclusion that I don't really think there is a way to tell a story in a completely new way. All great stories have been told again and again over the centuries. Political, economic and cultural considerations might change some of the trappings but the core remains the same. With this I reaffirm my abiding faith that our purpose as storytellers is to use the latest tools and techniques to tell good old-fashioned stories that resonate intellectually and emotionally with our audience.

Shiva Kumar is a storyteller who through his production company, Silver Arc Productions has been telling stories for over three decades now. As an actor, a writer of science fiction and fantasy novels based on Indian mythology and a documentary filmmaker, Shiva is happily steeped in telling old-fashioned stories. He can be contacted at shiva@silver-arc.com. G&S

HOLIDAY CHEER AT JADITE

Continued from page 22

children during World War II, the artist memorializes this event in her applications of deep carmines to her canvases, along with adhesions of metal netting on shadowed surfaces, to represent the brutal concertina wire of the Warsaw Ghetto. Blood-red brights slice the dark pictures, underscoring the profound importance of the struggle for life in the face of the conflagration's horror, as Donovan captures this movingly in these pieces.

Curator Basha Maryanska regales us with a broad range of her talents where the canvases employ her signature gestural strokes of color combined with assemblage. "City Impressions" pulsates with the movement of traffic in quick swirls on wonderfully warm colored buildings. Her piece, "Renaissance

Window," is arresting for the expert handling of greens on panel where she adds painted yellows, collaged into the window at the center, reminding one of the reawakening of spring. Another beauty, "Seeking Purity," is a sublime piece of sparkling blues, and in contrast to these, the artist now explores computer graphics. Two bright coral pieces of dizzying movement happily foretell the artist's further development of this new-found technique for her.

Anna Pietruszka is a fresh addition to Maryanska's talented group via London, England. She provides a series of abstracts in color contrasts of mixed media on paper where, in four of the pieces, subtle earth toned greens play their delicate songs in soft internalized tones. These pieces provide counterpoint to works of deep ochres and purples and vibrant reds, all pieces using dark gestural lines to accent movement on the surfaces, thus creating lovely passages.

Katia Gerasimov, whose paintings frequently remind me of Arthur Dove's, follows the well-known dictum that "less is more". These pieces, with apt titles providing interpretations of Joan Miro's style, read concisely as a group. A thoughtful intelligence shines through these four works and I am always delighted at the originality Gerasimov brings to her paintings.

Watercolorist Neela Pushparaj discovers new diverse veins of creativity in a series of expansive pieces of gestural landscapes intimating the American West lightly-greened early Spring. With subtle color-kissed washes they conjure the happy feelings one experiences when refreshed by sea air. These works are much more abstract than Pushparaj's signature floral paintings and I look forward to seeing her future endeavors in this new area of exploration.

Kathryn Hart's five abstract ink on paper drawings are done in an almost intuitive way reminiscent of automatic writing. We think the

drawings are referent to animals in their abstract but anthropomorphic forms, but we can't be quite sure. The artist tantalizes us and mines her images from deep within, making the energies of the lines beautifully evident in the drawing process.

Barbara Bielecka-Wozniczko pays tribute to Leonard Cohen, illustrating passages from his works in deeply felt abstracts. "Different Sides" intimates human hands reaching for each other, yearning futilely to unite. The blues of "Suzanne" fade into a cerulean vanishing point with subtle red dashes in the bottom third of the canvas referring to the poem's "love of the lady of the harbor." Golden light runs in a line down the length of the painting, "Anthem," with three ghostly figures shadowing the background, while two seagulls soar triumphantly in a cosmic sky intertwining beauty with tragedy. Bielecka-Wozniczko captures this writer's essence and concludes her group of paintings with an ethereal, wordless piece where perhaps she is saying the poet is now part of peaceful eternity.

Maria Maciega presents paintings of light in varnished acrylics—luminous color meditations—where she synthesizes Gauguin, building up flat space with glorious impressionistic pigment. The artist moves the colors intuitively on these eight canvases in silent communion with splendor culminating in "Summer with a Swallow," where a tiny bird glides on the wing, above sparkling warm toned earth, gracing the group of paintings with a feeling of timelessness.

I greatly enjoyed this exhibition, artfully hung by the curator to feature the artists to their best advantages. It was a wonderful way for me to start the holiday season uniquely and radiantly. *G&S*

Recently seen: Small is Great
curated by Basha Maryanska
Jadite Galleries, 413 W. 50th St.
jaditeart.com

My Mostly Happy Life: Autobiography of a Climbing Tree

by Shelly Reuben, illustrations by Ruth McGraw

Reviewed by Mary F. Holahan
Curator of Illustration (retired),
Delaware Art Museum

In this fantastical tale, by turns charming and pensive, Shelly Reuben gives us a park-dwelling, talking tree as our storyteller. And this tree offers not idle chatter but glimpses into a rich inner life and – stationary though he is – lots of adventures.

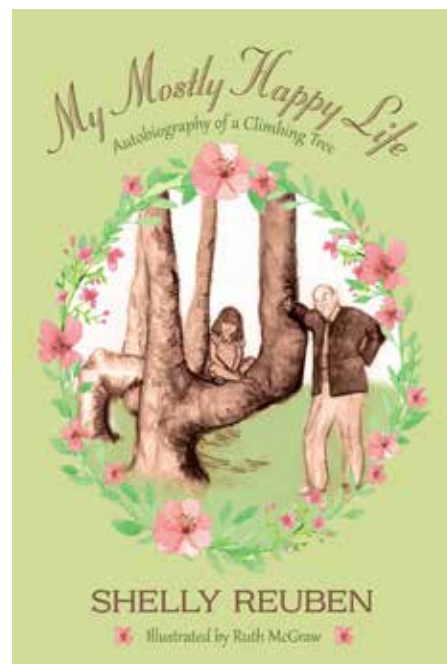
Through the tree's magical eyes and voice, we meet a panorama of very real people who find comfortable seating and deep solace in his welcoming branches. From this leafy perch, we too are viewers, observing a community's unfolding joys, sorrows, memories, and triumphs. All of the intertwined characters could be novels unto themselves.

Curious children, romantic couples, and sage elders share their experiences in a city's green park not knowing about the enchanted autobiography underway in their midst.



Samuel and Jack as children

The title is a reminder that even the most verdant refuge is never perfect. An interloper determined to bring dissension to the cast of characters must be uprooted. It is in this battle against evil and its



resolution – played out in scenes ranging from witty to poignant – that the book's deeper meanings come to the surface.

There's a lot to think about here. Our values, intergenerational bonds, justice, war and peace, care for nature, respect for the past, and hope for the future. The interdependence of all creatures. Most of all survival, especially of the human spirit.

It's a delicate balance, an idea that could easily turn saccharine: an imaginary being in the midst of real people. But brisk story-telling, adroit dialogue, and authentic emotion keep the escapades of the tree and his friends lively and light-hearted.

The black-and-white illustrations (color would have been too garish for the story's unearthly narrator) have just the right combination of realism and fantasy. Strong graphic lines mix with wisp-like images as if to echo the tree's magic powers. Otherworldly, but still...human. And humane. *G&S*

Richard Mayhew: Transcendence



"Southampton, 2013" Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 in.

The show runs from
March 25 - May 9, 2020



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