The Luxury of Silence

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A Warm Welcome

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me return to silence where the chances are greater for me and my work to be inspired by God’s will. In the mysterious work of poem-making, the more silence, the more I find the unsayable, the big game of poetry. Blindly craft. Did ever an art contain more cluelessness than poetry?

One of my fellow writers at Yaddo let me into West House, a smaller wooden structure behind the large stone mansion. We went up a flight of stairs, Tiffany glass and antiques all around. So different from my apartment in San Pedro, murder capital of the world. Then we went up a set of thirteen white steps that turned in the middle to the garret studio that Sylvia Plath had once used. I could still hear my students laughing and cheering, playing soccer on their cement court, while I lay down my books. Particles of snow drifted down like the stactic from the black and white 1950s TV of my childhood.

Plath was an early fascination for me. The violent laceration of self and unleashing of anger, leading to her suicide at the age of thirty, spoke to my young suffering. Ariel goes for broke. It still captivates me. But as time passes, regarding her subject matter, my interest is moving away from damage and onto something else. What’s this? Henry James wrote that art makes life. Ariel made her life, yes, yet her life also made Ariel. Or her death. In my case, the abandoned and abused girls, whose poems I was hoping to publish in Spanish and English, were altering me as poet and priest. There was such hope in those girls, called desechables (which means “trash”). The ceiling loomed high. My head brushed the ceiling. A giant library table and bookshelves went up a flight of stairs, leading to her kitchen, stuffing the tea towels under the door, placing her head despondently into it. White light. Light that filled the room every day. And in love in that studio; they returned to me as poet and priest. There was such hope for “orphan”), despite their appalling histories. Was that faith? A faith brought to me by the girls? In the silence of my days there I could hear the voices of the girls I taught. I started to hear a bigger voice. I was being pulled forward like a clock’s hand. The February Sarajinjo moon makes my shadow long. My long shadow a black clock hand ticking against the vast face of the clock face. I left Yaddo and moved on by fall to my crowds from the shore, but because there was no other crowd from the shore, but because there was no other

Friday Night, Brought to You by Yaddo

Not sure what to do this weekend? The plays, musicals, TV shows, books, and more produced by Yaddo Artists can keep you occupied for days. Never be bored again!

Craig Lucas is the writing talent behind one of Broadway’s hottest tickets—An American in Paris, which New York Times critic Charles Isherwood praises as “gorgeously danced—and just plain gorgeous.” More Downstage? The Barrow Street Theater has revived Annie Baker’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play The Flick. Dee Rees makes her mark on prestige television with Bessie, starring Queen Latifah, on HBO. Kate Wolber’s novel The Sunken Cathedral explores the transformation of Chelsea as a superstorm bears down. Brad Gooch, biographer of Flannery O’Connor, switches genres to remember the 1960s in Smash Cut. In Noah Baumbach’s While We’re Young, Gen Xers make friends with millennials. Joseph Kosinski and Elisa Diaz perform in Praktikos at Lincoln Center, about the demons in Sergei Rachmaninoff’s head. The textile renais-

OUT AND ABOUT

over the May 15 weekend, Yaddo board members and other supporters travelled to Louisville, Kentucky, to take in a full schedule of art and culture. The trip was coordinated by Nana Lampert.

Highlights included the premiere of Donor Hagen’s opera A Woman in Morocco and visits to two outstanding private collections. The Reverend Al Shands accompanied the group on a tour of his estate, with site-specific works by Maya Lin, Cy Twombly, and Judy Pfaff. Then, at Steve Wilson and Laura Lee Brown’s exquisite Woodlands Farm, 21c Museum, we took in a full schedule of art and culture. The trip was coordinated by Nana Lampert.
OVER THE MAY 15 WEEKEND, YADDO BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER SUPPORTERS TRAVELLED TO LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, TO TAKE IN A FULL SCHEDULE OF ART AND CULTURE. THE TRIP WAS COORDINATED BY NANA LAMPTON.

YADDO PRESIDENT ELAINA RICHARDSON AND BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT WILLIAM LYNCH (SHOWN ABOVE) WERE CENTER STAGE ON FEBRUARY 23, AT AN EVENT ORGANIZED BY THE CAPITAL REGION CREATIVE ECONOMY PROJECT. RICHARDSON SAID THAT GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC LEADERS INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZE THAT VIBRANT CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SITES ARE ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC GROWTH. YADDO PURCHASES MOST OF THE GOODS AND SERVICES NECESSARY TO OPERATIONS, FROM FOOD TO FUEL TO BUILDING SUPPLIES, THROUGH LOCAL VENDORS.

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THE REVEREND AL SHANDS ACCOMPANIED THE GROUP ON A TOUR OF HIS ESTATE, WITH SITE-SPECIFIC WORKS BY MAYA LIN, CY TWOMBLY, AND JUDY PFAFF. THEN, AT STEVE WILSON AND LAURA LEE BROWN’S EXQUISITE WOODLAND FARM, 21C MUSEUM CURATOR ALICE GRAY STITES LED A TOUR OF THE HOUSE, WHICH HOLDS WORKS BY CHRISTIAN SCHOEDEL, BILL VIOLA, VIK MUNIZ, AND MANY OTHERS.

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CRAIG LUCAS IS THE WRITING TALENT BEHIND ONE OF BROADWAY’S HOTTEST TICKETS—AN AMERICAN IN PARIS, WHICH NEW YORK TIMES CRITIC CHARLES ISHERWOOD PRaises AS “GORGEOUSLY DANCED — AND JUST Plain GORGEOUS.”

MORE DOWNTOWN? THE BARROW STREET THEATER HAS REVIVED ANNE BAKER’S PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PLAY THE Flick. DEE REES MAKES HER MARK ON PRESTIGE TELEVISION WITH BESSIE, STARRING QUEEN LATIFAH, ON HBO.

KATE WALBERT’S NOVEL THE SUNKEN CATHEDRAL EXPLORES THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHelsea AS A SUPERSTORM BEARS DOWN. BRAD GOOCH, BIOGRAPHER OF FLANNERY O’CONNOR, SWITCHES GENRES TO REMEMBER THE ’80s IN SMASH Cut. IN NOAH BAUMBACH’S WHILE WE’RE YOUNG, GEN XERS MAKE FRIENDS WITH MILLENNIALS. JOSEPH KECKLER AND ELISA DAVIS PERFORM IN PRELUDES AT LINCOLN CENTER, ABOUT THE DEMONS IN SERGEI RACHMANINOFF’S HEAD. THE TEXTILE RENAISSANCE IS STILL GOING STRONG: POLLY APFELBAUM IS IN PATHMAKERS: WOMEN IN ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN, MIDCENTURY AND TODAY, AT THE MUSEUM OF ART AND DESIGN. AND SEE WORKS BY YADDO ARTISTS JACOB LAWRENCE AND AMY SILLMAN IN AMERICA IS HARD TO SEE AT THE NEWLY-REOPENED WHITNEY.

A WARM WELCOME

Continued from front cover

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We recently received a preliminary report on developing outreach to underrepresented and underserved populations of artists, prepared by Kemi Ilesanmi, executive director of the Laundromat Project, a community-based arts organization in New York. Ilesanmi conducted site visits to Yaddo and interviews with staff, artists in residence, and board members, as well as staff at peer institutions, to provide recommendations for a sustainable program of engagement. The report was made possible thanks to funding from the Hearst Foundation.