

HANDMADE HOLIDAY

Holiday Shopping Has Never Been This Much Fun!

The Handmade Holiday Craft and Gift Show drew rave reviews when it returned to the Academy last year after a two-year hiatus. This year's show, promises Vivian Wachsberger, chair of the Handmade Holiday Committee, "will be bigger and better than ever."



This much-beloved event will run Friday through Sunday, November 25-27, and Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4, from 10am to 4pm each day. Holiday shoppers and gift-givers can choose from a wide array of jewelry, quilts, band boxes, cards, children's toys, bread boards, baskets, scarves, hand-knit socks, ceramics, handmade books and papers, tin sconces, cut paper art, holiday ornaments, decorated wreaths, and delicious edibles. In addition to supporting local artists and artisans, a portion of the sale proceeds help fund Academy programs. Admission is free.

A varied roster of craftspersons

This will be the Academy's ninth Handmade Holiday and feature works by Erika Adams, Andrea Angerame, Sue Anderson, Amanda Bagnato, Lisa Bouchard, Michael Boyer, Christina Byron-Steen, Beth Carlisle, Kay Castelle, Felicita Chipak, Maria Crespo, Frances Culley, Pamela Dalton, Mary Anne Davis, Victoria diNardo, Brigid Dorsey, Joe Duclos, Bina Evan, Randy Ezinga, Walter Fleming, Joyce Flower, David Foley, Ulrike Grannis, Patricia Gravett, Liz Hamann, Ali Hermann, Douglas and Kim Houska, Tony Jannetti, Kris Kanter, Lisbeth Karlsson, Erin Kelly-Dill, Sharon Koomler & Jerry Grant, Melody Lea Lamb, Bill Morency, Donna and Ed Mullet, Clarke Olsen, Sarah Omura, Alicia Peck, Fritz Platt, Elizabeth Post, Howard Reznikoff, Barbara Rosenthal, Pat Rotondo, Seema Sudan, Lucy Swope, Prudence Theriault, Sabrina Tranchita, Vivian Wachsberger, Fahari Wambura, and Margaret White.

"We have 53 vendors this year, almost half of whom are new," says Vivian. "Shoppers will find hundreds of unique and gorgeous items, at prices to suit every budget."



Spencertown Academy Annual Appeal Capturing the Momentum

Our future is bright—but challenges remain. Your gift will help. The Spencertown Academy is not one thing but many: An arts center. A concert venue. An educational resource. And it has been an irreplaceable part of our community for nearly half a century.

But the reality is that the Academy today continues to face a constrained financial environment. Public funding of the arts has largely evaporated. The quest for foundation support is time-consuming and all too often proves frustrating.

As a result, we've looked for ways to reduce expenses, paid down our debt and, four years ago, shifted to an all-volunteer

footing. Absent an endowment, we raise 100% of our operating expenses every year, managing budgets to ensure that fixed costs and bare-bones maintenance are covered.

The good news is that these measures have enabled us to survive, and to begin revitalizing and expanding our program offerings. The past year has seen a full schedule of gallery shows... the joyous resumption of concerts and recitals...and, once again, Handmade Holiday. What's more, our signature fundraising events—Revels, Hidden Gardens and Festival of Books—were all very successful.

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what's coming up

HANDMADE HOLIDAY

Curated craft and gift show sale
Friday-Sunday, November 25-27 and
December 3-4, 10:00am-4:00pm
See article, this page.

THE GALLERY

Members Art Show

Works in a wide range of media
by 29+ Academy members
Saturday-Sunday, December 10-11
and 17-18, 1:00-5:00pm
Opening reception:
Saturday, December 10, 4-6pm

Spoken Word

"Grant & Twain"

Staged reading of a new play by
Elizabeth Diggs. Reception following.
Saturday, December 17, 4pm



100 Years of Cole Porter

Concert featuring
Lincoln Mayorga, Sheri Bauer-Mayorga
Benefit for Kids Need Music
Sunday, January 15, 2017, 2pm

Revels

Annual Winter Revels party and dinners
Support the Academy while enjoying a
festive evening of great food and friends
January 28, 2017 Watch for details

spencertownacademy.org/events



from the President's iPad

A Season of Thanks—and Giving

These are exciting times for the Academy



Where has the year gone?

Suddenly, the holidays are within view, with a new year close behind.

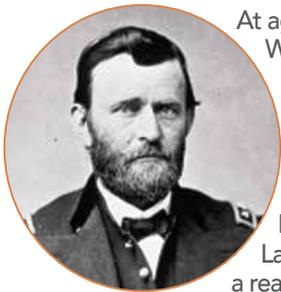
But as we look ahead to 2017, we've earned the right to take pleasure in all that's been accomplished at the Academy in 2016. Our signature events—the Festival of Book, Revels and Hidden Gardens ran smoothly and profitably and drew rave reviews. Music returned to our performance space; our beloved Handmade Holiday was back for a second year. Turnouts for our gallery shows were huge and enthusiastic.

I've said it many times, but it bears repeating: We couldn't have achieved a fraction of our success this year without the commitment, talent and hard work of our volunteers. They're the ones who plan, create and execute all of the extraordinary programs and activities on the Academy's calendar.

drama at the Academy

A Story of Friendship and Courage

Playwright Liz Diggs directs a reading of "Grant & Twain" at the Academy



At age 62, Ulysses Grant was bankrupted in a Wall Street swindle. His only hope to restore his honor and save his family was an offer to write his memoirs of the Civil War.

What happened next is the subject of "Grant & Twain", a new play by playwright and long-time Academy member Elizabeth Diggs. Screen and stage actor Stephen Lang will head the six-person cast as Grant in a reading, produced and directed by Liz, at the

Academy on Saturday, December 17 at 4 pm. Twain, Grant's wife Julia, his valet, a Union soldier and Grant's former War Secretary Adam Badeau, will be portrayed by professional actors.

"The news of Grant's calamity brought his friend Mark Twain to his side," Liz says. "The author was infuriated by the terms offered

by the publisher and made an audacious proposal—to publish Grant's book himself and make it the biggest bestseller in American history." Grant agreed, but halfway through the book he was diagnosed with terminal cancer and found himself in a race with death—and threatened by a betrayal close to home.

The action takes place during the last 15 months of Grant's life in 1884 and '85. "The scenes are invented, but the events are true," says Liz. "It's a story of friendship and courage."

The performance will be a benefit for the Academy and be followed by a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception. Tickets are \$20 (\$10 for students) and can be purchased at spencertownacademy.org.

Meanwhile, my warmest wishes for Thanksgiving and the holiday season.

Nick Van Alstine



in the gallery

New at the Academy: Members' Art Show

Exhibit will feature a range of works in a variety of media

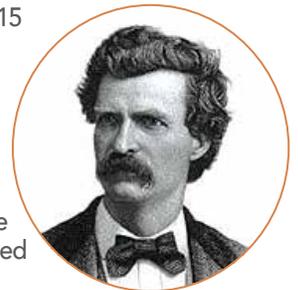
The Spencertown Academy's first-ever Members' Art Show, featuring works by more than 29 artists—all Academy members—will take place over two weekends in December.

"This is a new and exciting concept for the Academy," says show chairperson Norma Cohen. "The show is non-juried, fee-free, and open to all member artists from beginners to experienced professionals." Works will include oils, acrylics,

watercolors, pastels, collages, mixed media, photography and sculpture. All will be available for sale.

"The works will make very special holiday gifts," says Norma. "Of course, one of the best gifts that can be offered to any artist is wall space to show their work."

The Members' Art Show will be on view Saturday and Sunday, December 10-11 and 17-18, from 1-5 pm. The opening reception is set for Saturday, December 10, from 4-6 pm.



the academy

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MEMBERSHIP

Are you a current member of the Spencertown Academy? Visit our website to sign up or to renew your membership today! We thank you for your support.

PLEASE VISIT

spencertownacademy.org for information on programs, artsVOYAGE, membership, and volunteer opportunities or to subscribe to our e-blast list.

Festival of Books Recap

A Celebration of All Things Literary

Buyers and browsers through 11th annual Festival of Books



Since its inception in 2006, the Academy's annual Festival of Books has made its mark as "the best book sale around." This year's edition, held as always on Labor Day Weekend, in every way lived up to that standard. Many are calling it the best Festival ever—and arguably the best-attended.

It wasn't just about buying. The varied schedule of events ranged from author presentations to activities for children as well as some exciting new features, including a Teen Poetry Competition. Like the Teen Short Story Competition, launched last year, "it lets young writers know that we want to read and support what they're doing," says Jill Kalotay, who co-chaired the Festival with David Highfill.

"All the events drew engaged and enthusiastic audiences," adds David. "People seemed to really enjoy themselves—at both the events and the book sale—and that is vital to our mission of getting folks in the door and providing a fun experience."

Standing room only

A presentation by historian Russell Shorto (*The Island at the Center of the World*) drew an overflow crowd that had Festival volunteers scavenging through the Academy building and the patio café for



additional chairs. Among the local luminaries featured at the Festival was Ruth Reichl (*My Kitchen Year*) in a conversation with Academy board vice president Madaline Sparks, who asked volunteers and audience members to write down questions for the celebrated food writer. Another crowd pleaser was a panel discussion on the wartime presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, moderated by David, with authors David Pietrusza, Christopher Breiseth, and Will Swift.

Planning and producing the Festival requires a huge investment of time and effort beginning months in advance and continuing through Labor Day weekend—all of it the work of volunteers who sort books, order supplies, recruit speakers, and ensure the smooth running of a complex event with many moving parts.

Their work paid off in a Festival that was a success by every measure, netting over \$23,000—an increase over last year.

Festival of Books 2017 is set to begin on Friday, September 1. Stay tuned for updates in the new year. "And, of course, if you'd like to be involved," says Jill, "please let us know."

events 2016

Think Global, Eat Local

A popular series offers food for thought



A trio of renowned food experts headlined "Think Global, Eat Local," the latest event in the "Conversations with Neighbors" series. The participants included area chefs John McCarthy and Rei Peraza and farm-to-table expert Patricia Wind. Journalist-photographer Mary A. Nelen moderated the illuminating discussion, which took place at the Academy on November 13.

Conversations with Neighbors is an occasional series designed to

spark neighbor-to-neighbor conversations and celebrate the richness and diversity of the Columbia County community.

"The afternoon was a fascinating exploration of global cuisine and creativity right in our own Hudson Valley backyard," says Lisa Bouchard Hoe, chair of the Conversations with Neighbors Committee. "What's more, the audience had a chance to taste the Asian and Spanish-influenced fare of these experts and pick up some great insider tips."



event 2017

Winter Wouldn't Be Winter Without Revels!

Join your neighbors and friends for an evening of good cheer and great food

For nearly 30 years, Revels has ranked among the most eagerly anticipated events of the Columbia County winter calendar. This winter's Revels takes place on Saturday, January 28, 2017.

Held annually, this moveable feast begins at the Academy, festively decked out for the occasion, with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Then it's off to one of the many intimate dinner parties hosted by friends of the Academy.

Academy board member David Highfill attended his first Revels 17 years ago, soon after he and Greg Vogler had moved into their house in Spencertown.



"We were underdressed—in jeans and flannel shirts—and a little embarrassed," he recalls. "It was snowy out so we wore work boots as the dessert party was in a barn. But my strongest memories are of the great food at the Academy, how welcoming everyone was, and how enjoyable the dinner conversation was. We've since hosted several Revels dinners of our own and have enjoyed them all."

If you would like to host a dinner or have any questions about the event, email the Academy at info@spencertownacademy.org or call 518.392.3693. Ticket sales will be announced soon.

building community through the arts

kids need music

Curtain Time and Away We Go

A fund-raising initiative brings music to Hudson schools

A concert of Cole Porter songs, originally set for September 25, has been rescheduled for Sunday, January 15, 2017, at 2 pm at the Academy. Internationally celebrated pianist-composer Lincoln Mayorga and vocalist-pianist Sheri Bauer-Mayorga will interpret a selection of Porter's best-loved songs as well as some lesser-known gems.

The concert is a fundraiser for Kids Need Music, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that schools have musical instruments for their music program. Kids Need Music president Craig Bender explains: "Every year dozens of underprivileged school students in the Hudson City School District are unable to join their school band or orchestra for lack of money to purchase instruments. 100% of the proceeds from ticket sales, along with any additional donations, go toward the purchase of instruments—and giving kids

the gift of music. Donations of instruments are welcome as well."

Last year's Kids Need Music concert at the Academy raised more than \$7,000. To date, 120 children are beneficiaries of the program. And new in the 2016/2017 school year is the creation of a Hudson City School District string orchestra in cooperation with Harmony Project Hudson. Kids Need Music has donated 21 violins and cellos towards this endeavor.

At the January 15 concert—"100 Years of Cole Porter"—the Mayorgas will be joined by bassist Otto Gardner, vocalists Jean Leonard and Derek Stannard, and emcee Cheryl Symister-Masterson.

The event is co-sponsored by The Chatham Synagogue Netivot Torah and the Spencertown Academy. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased on the website at spencertownacademy.org.



Spencertown Academy Annual Appeal

Capturing the Momentum

In short, it's been a busy and productive year—and 2017 is shaping up to be even more exciting. But there is so much more we need to do. In particular, our historic 1847 Greek Revival building remains in urgent need of restoration and costly repairs, including a new roof and a major electrical upgrade. But for now, the money simply isn't there.

Each year at this time, the Academy, like most not-for-profit

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



the rewards of volunteering

Make a Difference!

Volunteer at the Academy!

As an all-volunteer organization, the Spencertown Academy depends on the active and enthusiastic participation of our friends and neighbors.

More than 100 volunteers have helped out this year at Academy events and gallery shows, behind the scenes and in many other ways. They'll tell you that volunteering is rewarding, fun and a great way to connect with friends and neighbors. And, of course, there's the satisfaction that comes from knowing you're having a positive

impact on your community. organizations, looks ahead to the coming year and solicits donations. But our appeal in recent years has gained special poignancy and urgency. While the future of the Spencertown Academy is rich with possibility, the challenges facing us remain very real.

With your support, we can meet those challenges and build on our momentum. In this season of thanks and giving, please help us move forward into a new year and a rich and vibrant future.

impact on your community.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Academy, your timing couldn't be better. Our fourth-quarter calendar includes gallery shows and Handmade Holiday and we're already looking ahead to 2017.

There are many ways to participate—so please pitch in! We warmly welcome your ideas, your enthusiasm and your company. For more information, visit spencertownacademy.org, or email info@spencertownacademy.org.

