

The written word

Writing as a Craft and a Business

The Academy holds its inaugural writing conference

All Write COLUMBIA A select group of experienced and beginning writers took part in All Write Columbia this October, the Academy's first Nonfiction Writing Conference.

The intensive five-day course comprised a mix of virtual and in-person presentations and workshops, as well as talks by acclaimed memoirists, agents, editors and marketing experts who discussed both the craft and the business of writing essays, biography, memoir and narrative nonfiction.

Fostering a community

"The make-up of both the class and faculty reflected our commitment to diversity and an all-encompassing and equal world," says Academy Vice President Madaline Sparks. "The goal was to challenge, inspire and foster a writers' community that will continue beyond the workshops—and to help writers develop both creative skills and marketing savvy." All Write Columbia was made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The conference concluded with an October 23 wine-and-cheese reception at the Academy, open to the public, where participants shared excerpts of their work. There were also readings by author and conference director Donna Kaz and author and workshop leader Pramila Venkateswaran.

"We're planning to make All Write Columbia an annual event," says Madaline. Next year's focus, she adds, will be on fiction.

Festival of Books postscript

Just Like Old Times The Festival of Books returns in person

FESTIVAL OF BOOKS With the pandemic beginning to show signs of easing its grip, the Academy's

Festival of Books returned in all its glory as an in-person event on Labor Day weekend and drew record crowds.

"The turnout was amazing and beyond our expectations," says David Highfill, who co-chaired the Festival with Wayne Greene and Carl Atkins. "After holding the Festival on line for two years, there was tremendous pent-up enthusiasm for getting back to the Festival as it's always been known."

The Festival is always a major fundraiser for the Academy, with sales of books, CDs, DVDs and vinyl LPs accounting for most of the weekend's proceeds. As in past years, unsold items are donated to under-resourced public school libraries and to non-profit organizations.

Focus on readers and writers

This year's Festival featured an exceptional range of author presentations, the best book sale around and a variety of activities for children. "While the event is geared toward read-



what's coming up



Writing Workshop

What's Love Got to Do With It:
Writing From the Right Side of the Brain
Writing workshop with Jamie Cat Callan,
Wednesdays, January 25-February 15, 3pm



Revels

Annual Winter Revels Party and Dinners
A festive evening of great food and great company
Saturday, February 11



Music At The Academy

Blues Network Concert Series
"Women in Blues" with Amy Ryan, Jill Burnham &
Thomasina Winslow
Saturday, February 25, 8pm



Book Talk

Conversation with Jonathan Darman about his new
book, "Becoming FDR: The Personal Crisis that
Made a President"
Sunday, March 5, 2pm



Roots & Shoots

Steve Katz (former member of Blood, Sweat & Tears)
Concert & Reminiscences
Saturday, March 25, 8pm



Sidewalks of New York: An evening of original and vintage songs about NYC.

Alt/Indie artists Rachelle Garniez & Erik Della Penna
Saturday, April 22, 8pm

spencertownacademy.org/events



from the President's iPad



Happy Days Ahead Looking forward to a great year

With the holidays in the rear-view mirror and the first crocus sightings seemingly eons away, it's easy to slip into a midwinter funk. One remedy that always works for me is to remember that the winter solstice is also behind us, the days are already getting longer—and Spring is on the way!

Of course, winter at the Academy also has its charms, starting with the glorious return of Revels on Saturday, February 11. The Academy's longest-running signature event, the Revels is a wonderful way to come in from the cold, connect with friends, enjoy a delicious dinner and support the Academy. (See article below.) Looking further down the road, our all-volunteer committees are hard at work planning a rich variety of concerts, gallery shows and cultural programs for 2023.

That's the forward view and it's an exciting one. But we can also look back with immense satisfaction on all we accomplished in 2022. The Festival of Books and Hidden Gardens

ran smoothly and profitably and drew rave reviews. And turnouts for our concerts and gallery shows were huge and enthusiastic.

As always, we couldn't have achieved a fraction of our success last year without the talent and hard work of our amazing volunteers. They're the ones who plan, create and produce the extraordinary programs and activities on the Academy's calendar. In that connection, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate Betsy Winters Russell on being awarded the Mary Zander Award for extraordinary Volunteer Service at the Volunteer Appreciation Party in November. And I'm delighted to welcome two new additions to the Spencertown Academy Board—Lisa Bouchard Hoe and Charlie Baum.

Meanwhile, my deepest thanks for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you this year at the Academy.

Nick Van Alstine



Music & art at the Academy

Deeper than the Skin

"Deeper than the Skin" is the title of both a musical presentation and an art show offered at the Academy this fall. Reggie Harris and Greg Greenway, musicians and long-time friends,



explored aspects of race in America through story and song; in conjunction with the concert, artists in the Academy's annual Regional Juried Show investigated the same theme in their submissions.



Revels 2023

Save the Date - Saturday February 11



Push Back on Winter! Revels returns!

As life shows signs of returning to normal, there's no better way to shake off the Winter blahs than to join your neighbors at the Spencertown Revels.

After a year's absence, this beloved midwinter event will be back in 2023 and better than ever. The date: Saturday, February 11. For nearly four decades, Revels has been an opportunity to come in from the cold, enjoy a great dinner, meet new friends and support the Academy.

As in past years, the festive evening will begin with a gala cocktail reception at the Academy. Then it's off to one of the many elegant dinner parties hosted by Academy members. Tickets are available for purchase at spencertownacademy.org.

the Academy

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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.

In the gallery



Crafts: Art by Any Other Name

A gallery show straddles the line between crafts and fine art



“This show challenged that notion, highlighting the intrinsic artistic value of crafts, and the creativity and skill that goes into their creation.”

“I’ve always found it astonishing when craftspeople are not referred to as artists and their work not prominently displayed in galleries,” says Barbara Lax Kranz, curator of the recent gallery show, Crafts: Art by Any Other Name.



Concert notes

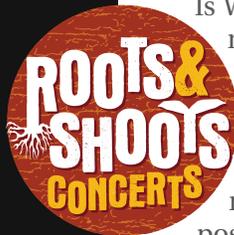


Music Lives at the Academy

Roots & Shoots & a tuneful autumn

The Academy’s popular Roots & Shoots concert series continued at full throttle through the fall, with performances by some of the music scene’s most creative and durable artists.

“Single-handedly created a folk genre”



In November, singer-songwriters Christine Lavin and John Forster performed at the Academy in a cabaret-style evening of shared musical mayhem entitled “Anything Worth Doing Is Worth Overdoing.” Both artists have long and varied resumes and have performed in many different musical genres, but are joined by one constant— their songs are clever, irreverent and often wickedly funny. Lavin has released 25 solo albums and produced 10 compilations showcasing the work of nearly 100 songwriters she admires. Forster is a composer, lyricist, playwright, humorist, music producer and four-time Grammy nominee.

First up was pioneering folk-jazz-blues musician Jim Kweskin, who made history in the 1960s by founding the Jim Kweskin Jug Band. “Along with Geoff Muldaur, who graced our stage a few years ago, he rescued African-American jug band music from obscurity and served it up for a new generation,” says Gerald Seligman, member of the Academy’s Music Committee. “Over the years, Jim added much more, but the bulk of his repertoire is from the 1920s, ‘30s and ‘40s. Now in his 80s he makes history again by playing as well as ever and keeping the tradition alive and thriving.”



Anything Worth Doing... Is Worth Overdoing

Plans for Roots & Shoots’ 2023 season are under way. Watch for dates and details at spencertownacademy.org.

building community through the arts

Kids Need Music

Instruments of Learning

A flamenco concert brings music to Hudson schools



Maria Zemantauski, one of the world's most celebrated flamenco-style guitarists and composers, performed at the Academy in September, joined by Colombian flamenco dancer La Nina and percussionist Brian Melick.

The concert was a fundraiser for Kids Need Music, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that under-resourced schools in Hudson have musical instruments for their music program. According to Kids Need Music president Craig Bender, "Seventy-eight percent of the children in the Hudson City School District are classified as underprivileged and can't afford to rent or purchase their own instruments. Kids Need Music ensures that every child who wishes to participate in the music program in the Hudson City School district is able to do so by repairing

old or purchasing new instruments."

To date, hundreds of students have benefited from the program.

"Music participation has increased from 10% to 40% of all those in grades 4-12 because instruments have been made available via Kids Need Music," Craig says. All proceeds from ticket sales, along with any additional donations, go toward the purchase of instruments. Adds Craig, "If you'd like to support the project, donations are welcome at www.KidsNeedMusic.org."



Author, Author

Race, Bias and Wall Street

Best-selling writers Emily Flitter and William D. Cohan in conversation at the Academy



"The racial wealth gap in the United States, which has existed in an extreme form ever since the country's founding, is alive and yawning," writes Emily Flitter, author of *The White Wall: How Big Finance Bankrupts Black America*, an explosive, deeply reported look at the systemic racism inside the American financial services industry.



Flitter, who covers banking and Wall Street for *The New York Times*, was in conversation with William D. Cohan at the Academy on November 6. The event was co-sponsored by the Academy and the Chatham Bookstore. Cohan, a former senior Wall Street investment banker, is the author of several bestselling non-fiction books. Books by both authors were available for sale and signing following the conversation.

