

COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

June 16, 2022

plus
Tri-State
Calendar
of Events



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CONCERTS: LEILA HAWKEN

Music Lovers Find the ‘Golden Section’ at Smithfield Church

The Greek Revival architecture of Smithfield Church in Amenia, N.Y., has welcomed worshippers since it was built in 1847, identical in appearance today to when it was erected. Designed by Nathaniel Lockwood, it is an example of the pure “Golden Section” of perfection in balance and symmetry, and it stands today on a hill at the bend in Smithfield Valley Road.

For a reason lost to history, that country corner, its abrupt curve in Smithfield Valley Road and the hill came to be known as “The City.”

Fans of authentic architecture

will find much to appreciate in the church detail, including the antique whale oil chandelier and the original vibrant paint colors. The tracker pipe organ, a gift from the Kent Congregational Church, fits right in, musically and architecturally.

As a bonus within today’s 1847 structure, the Golden Section creates superb acoustics for the Bang Family Concert Series, a series of remarkable public performances by the Smithfield Church Chamber Orchestra.

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... Golden Section

Continued from page 3

THE BANG FAMILY CONCERT SERIES

The church is well known for its Sunday worship and enjoys a reputation as one of the fastest-growing churches in the Hudson River area. But visitors are also attracted by the Bang Family Concert Series, endowed by a bequest from the late William Bang, father of Susan Bang, who is a church member.

Susan Bang's father was a lifelong amateur musician on the string bass and the tuba. An oboist herself, she recalls that he was fond of quipping that he was a child prodigy who never got any better.

Music ran in the family, although her father's career was in publishing, notably with the Hearst Corporation in New York City and later at publications in California.

"The concert series was his idea. We worked to create a concert series to allow local musicians to have a venue for their talent," Susan Bang told me recently.

"He was considerate and generous to the end," she added, noting that he was a founding member of the New West Symphony, an orchestra that still performs today. His philanthropy tended to focus on small enterprises where funding would make a difference.

"The Smithfield Church is so important to me," Susan said. "I came because of the annual Christmas

Concert and then started coming to worship services regularly. I came first for the music and stayed for the church. I found my faith again."

CONCERTS IN A TRUE CHAMBER SETTING

"We have our own orchestra," the Rev. Douglas Grandgeorge, Smithfield Church pastor, said as he welcomed concertgoers to the Bang Concert on Sunday, May 29.

He spoke of the rarity of a small church having a chamber orchestra, especially one versed in all musical tastes from classical to pops.

The orchestra on May 29 featured nine members including a string quartet, two clarinets, one trumpet, and two flutes. At the very last moment, Laura Thompson stepped in to fill a vacancy in the flute section when the call came that the scheduled flute player had tested positive that morning for COVID-19.

Matt Finley is the orchestra's director. His credits include 60 years as a jazz wind and brass musician with emphasis in Brazilian jazz. He said he had a similar musical experience to that of William Bang.

"I was a child prodigy by the time I was 14, and then plateaued [in his estimation], except for arranging music, a talent that has continued to develop."

During the May 29 concert, Finley demonstrated the art of arranging. First the string quartet played Gustav



PHOTOS BY LEILA HAWKEN

The Smithfield Church Chamber Orchestra performed their spring concert as part of The Bang Family Concert series on Sunday, May 29. An enthusiastic audience enjoyed a Memorial Day weekend concert featuring classical to Broadway to pops at the historic church.

Holst's 1918 composition "Jupiter," as written. The piece had earned wide acclaim in various forms, including this one. Then the orchestra played an arrangement that Finley created for the ensemble, broadening the tonal experience while staying true to the composer.

"It's months of work that come to fruition with each concert," Finley said, "and tremendous fun," for the performers certainly and for the audience.

The plan for the Bang Family Concert Series has always been to offer a concert on the first Saturday of each month. The pandemic interfered, Finley said.

If COVID permits, a fall concert offering is in the works. The orchestra will certainly perform for the annual Christmas Concert and Tea, already scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 3, Finley said.

For more information about the church and its music program, including a video of the May 29 concert, go to www.thesmithfieldchurch.org.



Since 1847 the Smithfield Church's Greek Revival edifice has stood on the hill overlooking Smithfield Valley Road in Amenia. Concertgoers on Sunday, May 29, were treated to another in a continuing series of musical performances by the Smithfield Church Chamber Orchestra.

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STREAMING: KAITLIN LYLE

Limited Series Shows On Hulu Shed Light On True Crimes

After a day spent sorting through the facts to write stories for my job as a reporter for The Millerton News, I often enjoy the thrill of dangling between fact and fiction by turning on the latest limited series that are alleged to be “based on a true story.”

As a journalist, I believe it’s my unwavering responsibility to uphold the facts and present the truth at all costs. Maybe that’s why these “true stories” appeal to me.

They lure me in with an interesting story to bait me into clicking “Play” on my laptop; before I know it, I’m on episode three and eagerly researching the full story to compare what’s been reported versus what’s been presented.

Born in 1994, I was far too young to be aware of O.J. Simpson’s murder trial in 1995 or of fashion designer Gianni Versace’s murder in 1997. Under the execution of director Ryan Murphy (known for the anthology series “American Horror Story” as well “Glee” and “Pose”), I watched both cases unfold as presented in Murphy’s anthology series, “American Crime Story.”

Though I’ve since become well-versed in the facts surrounding both cases, I was intrigued nonetheless to watch the actors reenact crucial moments (such as the O.J. Simpson Bronco chase) as well as their interpretation of the roles in which they were cast.

Though I’ll never be certain as to whether the conversations between characters were authentic or added for compelling storytelling, I find myself fascinated by even the most detestable figures; the fact that one of the world’s most beloved fashion

designers was gunned down by a man my age is nothing short of chilling.

If I enjoyed “American Crime Story: The People v. O.J. Simpson” — starring Cuba Gooding Jr. as Simpson, Sarah Paulson as Marcia Clark and David Schwimmer as Robert Kardashian — I devoured “American Crime Story: The Assassination of Gianni Versace.” Between Darren Criss’ portrayal of Versace’s murderer, Andrew Cunanan, and the flashbacks comparing Versace’s and Cunanan’s origins, I was hooked from the opening scene.

Having waited patiently for its arrival on Hulu, I look forward to watching the series’ latest installment, “American Crime Story: Impeachment,” which promises to examine the affair that threatened Bill Clinton’s presidency.

All three “American Crime Story” seasons are currently available for viewing on Hulu.

One story that recently inspired me to binge watch (a rarity for me) was “The Dropout,” which began streaming on Hulu in early March. Starring Amanda Seyfried as the titular dropout, this series (based on the podcast of the same name) tells the story of Elizabeth Holmes, a Stanford University dropout turned self-made billionaire, who founded the blood-testing startup company Theranos.

Despite the company’s claims that it could quickly diagnose diseases using small amounts of blood, the too-good-to-be-true technology being offered by Theranos was proven to be fraudulent, and Holmes’ carefully constructed coverups of the flawed technology were exposed.

After finishing the series, I can honestly say I’ve never been more enraged by a story or more engrossed

by a show. The fact that Holmes was found guilty of four out of 11 charges of fraud earlier this year offers little comfort.

“The Dropout” is available to watch in full on Hulu.

For more shows based on true stories that made the headlines, Hulu is also streaming “The Girl From Plainville” (based on Michelle Carter’s “texting-suicide” case); “Candy” (based on housewife Candy Montgomery’s murder case); and “Pam & Tommy” (based on the story behind the leaked Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee sex tape).

I admit I’ve never been one to fol-

low the latest long-running series on television; I’ve yet to finish “Breaking Bad” and “Game of Thrones.”

So being able to watch these stories in the limited series format is a definite plus for me.

I never need to worry about missing a critical plot point or a subtle point of character development because it’s all there, in just eight or 10 episodes. Above all, what intrigues me as a viewer is the nagging sensation that I’ll never know the full story. If these shows have imparted any sort of wisdom on me as a viewer, it’s that the truth is rarely told in a single account.

What intrigues me as a viewer is the nagging sensation that I’ll never know the full story.



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The season for exotic vintage cars has begun. Lans Christensen will share some special items throughout the summer, including this rare 1953 Hudson Hornet, see photo below. Many specialty cars can be seen touring on the area's scenic roads, or at small car shows. Mecca for these mechanical delights is of course the race track at Lime Rock Park in Lime Rock, Conn.

This year's Historic Festival will be over Labor Day weekend, as always. For the full schedule of events at the park, go to www.limerock.com/calendar/.

COOL CARS: LANS CHRISTENSEN

Vintage Vehicles That Can Inspire Dreams & Bring Back Memories

Truly a legendary piece of American automotive history, the Hudson Hornet was only manufactured from 1951 through 1954. It was one of several Hudson models, but by far the most popular and sought after.

With only four years of production there just aren't many of them available or even in existence.

This perfect example, a 1953, belongs to Ron Devito of Sherman, Conn., who has owned it for more than a year.

The Hornet appealed to this discerning buyer, who wanted a little something special, rather than a model from Ford, Chevy or the other

Detroit giants. (The Hornets were made by Detroit's Hudson Motor Car Company.)

The Hornet's sleek and "aero" bodywork put it ahead of the crowd. The "step down" design lowered the car and improved its handling.

Remarkably, it sported a six-cylinder engine when the competition was already on eights — and yet the Hornet was the dominant NASCAR champion, winning 64 of its 108 races!

Among its devoted owners, Jay Leno has one in his famous "garage" and raves about it in a half-hour production on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPolb3zTGcA).



PHOTO BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

Some extraordinary cars show up on our area roads. This 1953 Hudson Hornet was on Main Street in Kent, Conn., at the end of May.

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THEATER: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

At Sharon Playhouse, Beloved Classics With a Twist

Sharon Playhouse is bursting into its 2022 season with what can best be described as a bespoke selection of much-loved theater classics.

The first Big Show of the season will be “Guys and Dolls,” which will run from July 29 to Aug. 14 on the main stage at the Bobbie Olsen Theater — which is air conditioned for the first time ever this year. Although the theater seats have been cooled for several years now, the actors (up there dancing their hearts out in heavy costumes with hot lights blasting at them) can now enjoy a little AC too.

‘WHEN YOU SEE A GUY ...’

“Guys and Dolls” opened on Broadway in 1950, was made into a film starring Marlon Brando and Frank Sinatra in 1955 and was brought back to Broadway in 1992 with a cast that included Nathan Lane, Peter Gallagher and the amazing Faith Prince.

Certainly any small community theater can put on its own revival and everyone will love it; the story and the songs are timeless and universally appealing. But can anything be done to this beloved show that, honestly, hasn’t been done already?

Justin Boccitto, Sharon Playhouse’s interim artistic director, has found a way. A talented hooper who has starred in several Sharon Playhouse productions in recent years, Boccitto has planned a “Guys and Dolls” that is enlivened with the use of tap.

For Boccitto, tap isn’t simply a period-appropriate add-on to the show. It’s another language, a form of physical expression that elevates the script and songs of a well-known and well-loved play.

“Tap intensifies the story. You’re singing and dancing because the situation is so heightened that you can’t talk about it anymore,” he explained. “With a show like ‘Guys and Dolls,’ tap can create tension, celebration, abandonment, romance.”

Boccitto happily recounts the history of tap in America, and emphasizes that “tap is a Black art form based on rhythm. It’s not the dancing you see in Broadway shows today. When we do our tap ‘Guys and Dolls,’ it won’t be two hours of time steps and rolling shuffles.”

As always, the production will feature beloved local residents including Sharon Playhouse Board President Emily Soell (as General Cartwright) and David Fanning (as Big Julie). Amanda Lea LaVergne returns as Sister Sarah and Broadway veteran Lauralyn McClelland will be the endlessly patient Adelaide. Broadway veteran Robert Anthony Jones will step into the big shoes of Frank Sinatra and Nathan Lane, in the role of Nathan Detroit. And C.K. Edwards takes on the role of Sky Masterson.

SHEER FUN (AND MADNESS!)

Already that’s a lot of customized fun for a small community playhouse. But that’s not all. Next up on the main stage is “Shear Madness,” which will be performed from Aug. 27 to Sept. 11.

This quirky murder mystery is a custom theater experience right out of the box. It was first performed in the late 1970s by actors Marilyn Abrams and Bruce Jordan in upstate New York, as an adaptation of a German play called “Scherenschnitt,” that



PHOTO COURTESY SHARON PLAYHOUSE

Sharon Playhouse’s own Michael Kevin Baldwin has been in the national tour of “Shear Madness,” and will appear in this summer’s production in Sharon.

Celebrate – Celebrate – Celebrate



Join us on Saturday, June 18th at 9 a.m. at the intersection of Main Street and Beebe Hill Road in Falls Village, for the Rainbow Crosswalk—a community public painting event to commemorate Juneteenth and Pride Month. Rain date is Sunday, June 19th, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The Rainbow Crosswalk will serve as a “welcome mat” for all visitors to Falls Village during this summer season—all are welcome! Visit www.fallsvillageartcrosswalk.org.

In these difficult times, we hope this commemoration will help remind us of our common humanity.

Did you know...

- The historical events leading to Juneteenth and Pride Month took place 104 years apart.
- **Pride** celebrations started in the 1970s with demonstrations by the LGBTQ+ community as a counter narrative to the Stonewall Riot in June 1969. These gatherings united the community, contrary to the objectives of the over-policing that took place at The Stonewall Inn in New York. To read more, go to www.them.us/story/the-complete-history-of-pride.
- **Juneteenth** has long been celebrated by the African-American community, but it is American history, as it observes the emancipation of all citizens. Juneteenth was declared an official National Holiday in 2021, in response to the social unrest and worldwide protests following the unjust death of George Floyd in 2020. The word “Juneteenth” is a mash-up of June and nineteenth, the date in 1865 that the last of the enslaved peoples in Texas were informed they were free—two years after the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation. To read more, go to www.nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/historical-legacy-juneteenth.

The Falls Village Equity Project thanks its members and all who participated in making this event possible, especially its collaborator, artist Rika Laser of Falls Village. The Rainbow Crosswalk was made possible by a grant from the CT Department of Economic & Community Development, Office of the Arts. Email fvequitygroup@gmail.com for more information.

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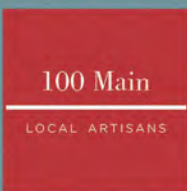
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SUNDAY, JULY 10TH
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... classics with a twist

Continued from page 7

was written by Paul Portner.

Abrams and Jordan injected big fun into what had been a serious drama. "Shear Madness" is now listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the longest-running nonmusical in U.S. theater history.

"Shear Madness" is, like a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, adapted for every performance and location. For the Sharon Playhouse production, the action will take place in a hair salon at the Sharon shopping plaza. There are six cast members, but the audience also participates, changing the plot as the show goes on. No two performances are ever alike.

That's potentially a lot of chaos, and steady hands are needed to keep the show from running aground. For this production, one of the six cast members is Salisbury, Conn., native Michael Kevin Baldwin, who is Sharon Playhouse's director of education

and associate artistic director.

Baldwin is a "Shear Madness" veteran, who has performed in the national touring company and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., as Tony Whitcomb ("hairdresser and suspect," Baldwin said).

Which is exciting, but better still: Bruce Jordan himself will be directing the show. Not only is he the show's creator, he's also worked with four of the cast members, who performed under his direction in the touring company and at the Kennedy Center.

"This show is literally his baby," Baldwin said. "And he knows that Sharon Playhouse is the perfect venue for it."

Many New York City theater pros, according to Baldwin and Boccitto, are beginning to see the possibilities of doing experiments and explorations in Sharon, away from the pressures of Broadway. Sharon Playhouse



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The season will end with a more serious production, Lorraine Hansberry's study of racism in the mid 20th century in Chicago, "A Raisin in the Sun." It will be performed Oct. 7 to 16 in The Bok.

YOUTH THEATER: A CUT ABOVE

And as with those famous late-night television ads, there's still more!

Of particular importance to Boccitto and Baldwin are this summer's youth theater programs. There will be a teen production of the beloved film "Shrek," in a version that's been modified for the stage and young actors; and a teen production of playwright Kate Hamill's adaptation of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice."

"The cast will be dressed in period costume," Baldwin said. "The action will take place inside a boxing ring, with the audience on the stage."

Baldwin, as director of education, is determined to make Sharon's educational theater program much more than an extension of school productions.

Right from the start, many of the professional actors and staff will be helping with the student shows.

"The teachers at our area schools are fantastic," said Baldwin, who also works with theater students at the Indian Mountain School in Lakeville, Conn. "But when you have the young actors on a campus where professional theater is happening, it elevates them."

The shows will also look fantastic, Baldwin promised.

"We carve out a significant portion of our production budget for youth theater costumes and props," he said. "These students are on a professional stage with professional staff and designers. I'm proud of our production

values."

And still there is more being offered at Sharon Playhouse this summer, more than can be included in this article (but keep an eye out for future articles as shows come up).

The best way to learn about all the excitement on tap for this summer at Sharon Playhouse is to attend the Red Carpet Tour on Friday, June 24, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 each for what will be like a circus of multiple performances going on in different parts of the Playhouse campus.

Boccitto and Baldwin will give an introduction of plans for this season's shows. At The Bok, there will be performances by ACM Collective, a New York City tap company. It will be a literal variety show, with one-hour performances on the stages.

Find out more about all this and more online at www.sharonplayhouse.org.



PHOTO COURTESY SHARON PLAYHOUSE

C.K. Edwards will play Sky Masterson in this summer's tap dance version of the Broadway classic "Guys and Dolls."

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TRAILS: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

In 2022, the AT Has Grown in Length and In Number of Hikers

I haven't done the math on this, to be honest, but I'd be willing to wager that there are more miles of hiking trails in the Tristate region than there are paved roads.

There are trails everywhere, running through woods and fields and alongside rivers and creeks. They go uphill and downhill. Some are easy, some are hard. Some have views that extend for miles, others don't.

This is mecca for hikers, but a great many of the recreational pedestrians who come through this region (and again, I haven't done the math) are just passing through on one of America's greatest interstates: the Appalachian Trail, which has its terminuses in Georgia and Maine and which passes right through many of our local towns.

Perhaps you've seen the hikers as they trudge along roadways or stop at post offices and libraries to catch up with family and friends back home. You might have sat near them at a café while they wolf down entire pints of ice cream. If the café was indoors, perhaps you moved away to a distant table, your senses assaulted by the scent of many days on the trail without any bathroom facilities of

any kind. One of our Lakeville Journal summer interns once wrote that Appalachian Trail hikers smell like the 18th century.

It's an annual tradition at The Lakeville Journal that we send our summer interns out in search of hikers, preferably those who are trekking the full expanse of the trail. Every hiker has an interesting story to tell, and provides a great interview opportunity for a young writer. All our interns enjoy this assignment; one went on to do a documentary about AT hikers for a high school project and more than one has decided to hike the trail him or herself. You can read in this issue the story of our 2021 intern Sadie Leite, who writes about hiking the trail last month with her sister, Petra (see story on the next page).

We generally shorthand the length of the trail and say it's 2,100 miles but its actual length changes every year or two, as repairs are made and sections are rerouted.

For 2022, the trail is officially 2,194.3 miles long, thanks in part to trail work done by the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) on sections in New York and Connecticut. Much of the AT runs through privately owned



PHOTO BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

Hazmat, at left, and Boo Boo are hikers on their way to Gorham, N.H., to complete their journey along the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail. They are from Georgia and have been doing the trail, section by section, over the course of several years.

land; this new work by AMC members shifted the trail over onto National Park Service lands.

You can get details about the AMC (which maintains sections of the trail between Maine and Washington, D.C.) and find out how to volunteer for future work details at www.outdoors.org. The website also has useful information on, for example, where there are overnight shelters along the trail. You can learn about the Appalachian Trail parent organization (the Appalachian Trail Conservancy) at www.appalachiantrail.org.

But if you're looking for serious up-to-the-minute data (and if you want to register as an AT hiker), then you should go to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's registration pages at www.atcamp.org. There you can find explanations of why you should bother to register, and tips on when and where to begin your journey.

As a journalist, I particularly like the page that shows how many hikers have registered and started walking. If you've lived in the Tristate region for long enough, you start to see the hikers as an indicator of the seasons. Sometimes the lilacs bloom late or early; sometimes the first hikers appear earlier or later.

In 2020, shortly after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were

only 42 hikers who started out on April 1, and the numbers dwindled from there. In 2021, the majority of hikers doing the traditional south-to-north journey started out on April 1. There were 56 hikers on that date.

In 2022, there were 65 hikers who registered to start on April 1, but the following day (April 2) there were 66 hikers. On April 3, an additional 63 hikers headed north and the numbers have remained steadily high since then.

The first hikers began to appear in our towns in mid May. If you see a hiker on the road, give him or her a wave but don't be surprised not to get a response. Often, to help them survive the many hours and days of walk, walk, walk the hikers go into a sort of fugue state. They're most likely to be most friendly if you see them seated and relaxing with a lot of high-calorie food outside a grocery store.

If you want to help a hiker along the way, think about leaving some food or cold drinks in a cooler with a sign that says Trail Magic. Or if you see a hiker or two who are depleted and hoping for a ride, pull your car to the side of the road and let them clamber in if you have space for all their gear. But keep in mind that you might want to roll down all the windows first.

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TRAILS: SADIE LEITE

The Leite Sisters Hike The AT with Caterpillars And Cinderella

I don't really know where the idea came from. There are a lot of sources I can point to. My family has a house in Salisbury, Conn. I often see thru-hikers stomping toward ice cream at LaBonne's market.

Mostly, the lack of profound reasoning behind my decision to spend two nights on the Appalachian Trail (AT) with my sister, Petra, rests in the real, boring explanation. When I came home from college, there was this awkward space. I had three weeks before I drove to Boston, Mass., to settle in a house for the summer.

I'd done enough of sitting in parking lots with high school friends. When I suggested hiking to Petra, she agreed and, to my absolute advantage,

she planned most of it.

Our mom dropped us off at some point along Route 4. We got our picture taken and started walking.

The AT is a trail stretching almost 2,200 miles between Georgia and Maine, passing through 14 states. The brave, sturdy individuals who hike the whole path are called thru-hikers. They're either "nobos" (north-bound from Georgia to Maine) or "sobos" for the opposite.

Thru-hikers will hike 12 to 20 miles a day. Usually, it's more like 20. Petra and I planned 6 for day one.

Petra is a lot of things. She's a rising sophomore who is pre-med and a math major. She's the other sibling in my family with red hair— though

it's lighter and straighter than mine. I'm not sure how people mistake us for twins, but I understand when they think she's older. Petra is an EMT. She's decisive, a little taller than me, and when we hiked, she always led.

We sat in the dirt, dodging caterpillars that fell from the sky. Creepy crawly things in places you can't see is worse than wood chips stuck in socks. Petra took out a Sloppy Joe mix.

We were so excited for our first trail-cooked meal. However, it was inedible. It may have been our fault for forgetting the ketchup needed as an add-in.

Over the next 3 miles, we crossed brooks, passed a thru-hiker who lost his self-awareness for stench long-ago, and side-stepped boulders.

Pine Swamp Brook Shelter was quiet. We were tired, so we read some messages in the notebook left in the lean-to to keep us from passing out before 6 p.m.

A lean-to is a structure built at most campsites to sleep in, and they often have notebooks for hikers to write in.

"I've had two moths enter my mouth without permission! I hate Connecticut the same I always have," Cinderella wrote.

Certainly, Cinderella could be a respectable name, but I'd bargain it's a trail name — names gifted to thru-hikers for a personality trait or a funny story. Booty-shorts, Oomo and Mad-Dog also wrote in the book.

Petra and I don't have enough experience to have had someone title us, so we used a childhood memory for our signature. Once we dressed as Salt and Pepper for Halloween.

The next day, we had 11 miles ahead of us. It started off OK, until I

learned walking uphill is as painful as walking down.

As we shuffled down the last stretch to our campsite, I thought my feet wouldn't carry me. Crawling was a suggestion.

I made it because you always do. Until you don't. Then you don't make it.

My feet were puffy, purple, blistered. I laughed at myself. Petra approached, confused. Then I cried, she hugged me, and I stopped.

In the tent later we watched a television show before a sleepless night. We never learned about the dampness or how hard the forest floor really is. Petra's head was closer to the flashing lights, and she turned back, notably, and stared at me.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Just checking on you," she said.

Though I'm not going to detail it, we did get out. Our mom picked us up on the side of a different road.

I'm fully sure I decided on this adventure because I wanted something to do, but there's the question of why I needed to fill an awkward space I could've just slept through. I could've enjoyed a summer break before returning to Boston, where I'll work three jobs.

Though turning 20 in March seems widely unrelated, it really isn't. Most of my life right now feels like an awkward three-week break at home in Connecticut between two things happening.

Hiking the AT was beautiful, painful and buggy. I came away with something I've known: My sister is the best. That's what's important now, and maybe I'll continue with unjustified ideas just to learn I already knew their simple whys.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Sisters Petra, at left in photo, and Sadie Leite, at the entrance to one of the trails leading to the Connecticut section of the Appalachian Trail.



PHOTO BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A good strawberry shortcake doesn't have to be fussy; you can make one quickly with a simple homemade jam, ladyfingers and whipped cream from the can.

FOOD: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A Shortcut To Strawberry Shortcake

Sweet red strawberries from California have been at grocery stores for weeks now, and soon we will begin to see the smaller, tarter local berries.

Even though strawberry is my favorite jam flavor, I rarely make it. But this year I figured out a berry preserve “cheat” that is delicious even if it’s not perfect.

A really good strawberry preserve is thick and sweet. That’s what you’ll get if you use raspberries for this recipe.

If you use strawberries, you’ll get more of a gel than a jam — which in fact makes a perfect filling for strawberry shortcake, the kind you make with golden cake or with the delicate little ladyfingers that you can find in the produce departments at most groceries at this time of year.

This is more of a technique than it is a recipe; the quantities will vary. I

find that I never finish an entire box of strawberries before the berries begin to soften. That makes them less fun to nibble on but once they’re ultra ripe it’s the perfect time to preserve them.

This jam takes literally about 10 minutes to make. And the little shortcakes take another five. If you make a lot of strawberry jam, then spread it over the flat side of one golden cake. Cover the jam with whipped cream (the stuff from the can is fine!). Cover with the other cake (most cake mixes give you two cakes).

For a smaller amount, do the same thing with ladyfingers instead of cake.

One of the nice things with this jam is that you don’t need much sugar to make it “jam.” I’ve made this recipe with a half cup of sugar and it tastes splendid.



TEN-MINUTE BERRY JAM

4 cups of berries, fresh lemon juice, up to 2 cups of sugar, 1 pack of powdered gelatin (I used Knox; if you prefer a vegetarian option you can use Japanese agar agar, which is made from seaweed)

Pour a half cup of warm water on a small plate. Sprinkle the gelatin evenly over it. Set aside.

Put the berries in a small non-metallic pot with the sugar and a few squeezes of lemon juice. Bring to a gentle simmer and continue to cook for about 5 minutes, while the gelatin “gels” with the water.

Remove the berries from the stove and gently slide the gelatin into the pot and gently mix them together.

Put in a jar or bowl, cover and leave in the refrigerator overnight, trying your best not to move or shake it.



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DAY TRIPS: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Bard College: Worth the Drive for Music & More

Distances seem to become daunting, even insurmountable, here in the Tristate region. Perhaps it's because we're all so comfy in our country homes — although I think actually what happens is that, emotionally, we all begin to set up Boundaries that Must Not Be Crossed.

People who live in Salisbury, Conn., rarely venture down to Kent, Conn., and vice versa, for example. And yet, the 40-minute travel time is really not that significant; doesn't it take that long to travel by surface roads from the Upper West Side to SoHo? Even the subway isn't much faster.

The same prejudice applies to travel between Litchfield County and the Hudson River Valley. Come on folks, it is not really that hard to get to Red Hook, N.Y. (the one up here, not the one in Brooklyn) — especially when you think about all the benefits that a scant 40-minute car ride will bring.

First, there's the beauty. In autumn and winter, it's nice to travel to Red Hook at sunset; the views are crushing they're so gorgeous. But this is summer, and the sun won't set until after dinner.

So you'll just have to be content with endless views of farm fields and forest, with birds wheeling around the sky. Sorry that there won't be a lot of honking cars and traffic; you'll just have to be alone with all that beauty and bird song for three-quarters of an hour, or maybe a little less, depending on where you live and how you drive.

And what is so special, you ask, about Red Hook, other than that it shares its name with a hip section of Brooklyn? Red Hook is the home of Bard College (although the official literature refers to it as Annandale-on-Hudson). Bard offers super interesting cultural events throughout the academic year, with talks and con-

certs in an intimate setting by artists and writers (I personally have seen Fran Lebowitz, Neil Gaiman and Alan Cumming there).

The campus doesn't go to sleep in summer, which is when the multifaceted Bard Summerscape explodes, with classical concerts, chamber music, drag performances, the Hudson Valley Chamber Music Circle concerts, the more offbeat programs in the Spiegeltent and opera, ballet and more — most of it in the Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center, which is worth a trip to Red Hook (I mean Annandale-on-Hudson) in its own right. The Bard campus has beautiful gardens, plantings and buildings, most of them in a classical vein; and then there is the wobbly metal design of the Fisher Center. It's amazing and definitely worth the drive.

SUMMER MUSIC

This summer's chamber music series started on June 4 with the Emerson String Quartet, going on their farewell tour in anticipation of retiring with a concert at Alice Tully Hall in New York City in October 2023.

But the beat goes on, quite literally, with a concert by Sō Percussion on Saturday, June 18, at 7 p.m. in Olin Hall (which is a Bard College auditorium; it's not the Fisher Center but it's two minutes away by car, you can visit it before your concert begins).

I am not personally familiar with Sō Percussion, described by The New Yorker as offering an “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy, rigor and bedlam.”

A restful interlude follows on Saturday, June 25, also at 7 p.m. in Olin Hall with a concert titled “Beloved Piano Quartets.” Although the focus is on the piano, the star of this show might well be violinist Jaime Laredo,

The logo for the Music Mountain Summer Festival is composed of four overlapping rectangular blocks. The top block is dark green with the word 'Music' in white. The second block is a lighter green with 'Mountain' in white. The third block is dark brown with 'Summer' in white. The bottom block is a medium green with 'Festival' in white. The blocks are arranged in a staggered, descending pattern from top-left to bottom-right.

JUNE 19 3 PM

Balourdet Quartet with Benjamin Hochman, Piano

HAYDN String Quartet in B Flat Major, Op. 76 #4, “Sunrise”
WOLF Italian Serenade
BERMEL Intonations
DVORAK Piano Quintet in A Major, Op. 81

JUNE 26 3 PM

Cuarteto Latinoamericano with Thomas Gallant, Oboe

MOZART Oboe Quartet in F Major, K. 370
PIAZZOLLA Oblivion for oboe and string quartet
VILLA-LOBOS String Quartet #1 and more

JULY 3 3 PM

Arianna String Quartet with Judith Gordon, Piano

HAYDN String Quartet in G Major, Op. 54 #1
ESMAIL String Quartet (Ragamala)
BRAHMS: Piano Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34

JUNE 25 7 PM

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JULY 2 7 PM

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JULY 9 7 PM

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Continued on page 14

... Bard College

Continued from page 13

who is described as “one of the top violinists of the late 20th century.”

A more contemporary menu comes up at the Bard Spiegelent at the Fisher Center, which offers events from June 24 to Aug. 13, beginning with the Black Roots Summer weekend. There will be a concert by Mwenso and the Shakes on Saturday, June 25, at 8 p.m. and continuing into the next day, from 4 to 7 p.m. with an all-ages, all colors, all body types party hosted by the Black Roots Summer cohort. There will be live music, DJs, dancing and more “for a late afternoon of joy, hope, healing and BBQ.”

Swinging back again toward the classical, there will be a new translation of Moliere’s “Dom Juan” performed from June 23 to July 17 at the Fisher Center.

Bard College President and orchestra conductor Leon Bottstein presents

a deep dive into the world and work of Sergei Rachmaninoff for the 32nd Bard Music Festival (Aug. 5 to 7 and 12 to 14).

And there will be a performance of a Richard Strauss opera, “The Silent Woman,” from July 22 to 31.

That’s not even all that’s offered. Certainly it’s worth a 40-minute car ride through some of the most beautiful parts of Dutchess County to get there.

BUT WHAT ABOUT DINNER?

There was a famous restaurant near Bard’s campus called Mercato that closed down early in the COVID-19 pandemic. It has reopened, with a new name, in nearby Tivoli, N.Y.

Now called GioBatta Alimentari, the cozy farmhouse-style restaurant serves Italian classics, exquisitely prepared with Hudson Valley ingredients.



PHOTO OF FISHER CENTER BY PETER ARON/ESTO

Frank Gehry’s Fisher Center is reason enough to make a trip to Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., and the Bard College campus, but there are also concerts and performances there throughout the summer.

I personally love arancini, the Italian fried rice balls that are so hard to find, but are on the menu here, along with all the beloved favorites: meatballs, lasagna, panini, antipasti, pasta and the kale salad that was made famous at Mercato (lacinato kale, lovingly massaged with lemon juice until it becomes tender, served with currants, pine nuts, pecorino cheese slivers and a simple dressing of olive oil and more lemon juice).

Get the address and see the full menu at www.giobatta.com.

I also really like a large, bustling, somewhat rowdy Italian restaurant in nearby Kingston, N.Y., called Savona’s. The food is also very good, but the

atmosphere is at the other end of the spectrum from GioBatta Alimentari.

After two years of COVID, I’m particularly nostalgic for good sushi. There are a few small but high-quality Japanese restaurants in the area. In Red Hook there is Hana Sushi (www.hana-sushi.com). In nearby Rhinebeck, N.Y., there are two more upscale sushi eateries called Momiji (www.momijiny.com) and Osaka (www.osakasushi.net).

To find out more about Bard College’s many summer culture offerings at the Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., campus go to www.fishercenter.bard.edu/whats-on/programs/summerscape.

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TRI-CORNER CALENDAR

Send items to calendar@lakevillejournal.com. All entries can be found at www.TriCornerNews.com/events-calendar.

ART

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, 258 Main St., Ridgefield, Conn. www.thealdrich.org
Run On Art: Run to Celebrate 52 Artists, June 16, 6 to 8 p.m.

Argazzi Art, 22 Millerton Road, Lakeville, Conn. www.argazziart.com
Sandrine Kern: Paintings, on view.

The Clark Art Museum, 225 South St., Williamstown, Mass. www.clarkart.edu
Exhibition Opening Celebration: Rodin in the United States—Confronting the Modern, June 17, 7 to 9 p.m.

D. M. Hunt Library, 63 Main Street, Falls Village, Conn. www.huntlibrary.org
Community Art Crosswalk, June 18, 9 to 11 a.m.

Great Barrington Public Theater, Great Barrington, Mass. www.greatbarringtonpublictheater.org
GBPT Presents PERSIST: An Evocative Art Show by Seven Women Exploring Themes of Persistence in These Challenging Times, June 4 to Aug. 6.

Kent Art Association, 21 S. Main St., Kent, Conn. www.kentart.org
President's Show, June 3 to 26.

MASS MoCA, 1320 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, Mass. www.massmoca.org
TIME OF NOW: Festival of Thought & Performance, June 25, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Re Institute, 1395 Boston Corners Road, Millerton, N.Y. www.thereinstitute.com
Pattern and Time: Geoffrey Young, Carol Diehl, Moira Kelly, Mark Olshansky, Tara Foley, Stephen Westfall, May 7 to June 25.

Trinity Lime Rock, 484 Lime Rock Road, Lakeville, Conn. www.trinitylimerock.org
Trinity Gallery Juried Show Reception, July 1, 5 to 7 p.m. Call for Artists, through June 26, drop off date June 26, noon to 2 p.m.

Wassaic Project, 37 Furnace Bank Road, Wassaic, N.Y. www.wassaicproject.org
2022 Summer Benefit, June 18, 5 to 7 p.m.

BOOKS

Kent Memorial Library, 32 N. Main St., Kent, Conn. www.kentmemoriallibrary.org
Annual Library Benefit, June 25, 5 p.m.

Merritt Bookstore, 57 Front St., Millbrook N.Y. www.merrittbooks.com
Ada Calhoun in Conversation with Kira Wizner @ Millbrook Farmer's Market!, June 18, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Noble Horizons, 17 Cobble Road, Salisbury, Conn. www.noblehorizons.org
Weekly book club with The Hotchkiss School's Carita Gardiner: "Island Queen" by Vanessa Riley, June 22 to Aug. 3, 5 to 6 p.m. (online).

Oblong Books & Music, 26 Main St., Millerton, N.Y. www.oblongbooks.com
Moon, Serpent, & Bone: Oddities & Curiosities Night Market: 4th Annual Summer Solstice Festival, June 17, 6 p.m.

Scoville Memorial Library, 38 Main St., Salisbury, Conn. www.scovillelibrary.org
Friends of the Library Book Sale, June 18, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

KIDS

The Cornwall Library, 30 Pine St., Cornwall, Conn. www.cornwalllibrary.org
Children's Drop-in Playgroup, Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. Afterschool Art Program, Thursdays, 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Grumbling Gryphons Traveling Children's Theater, www.grumblinggryphons.org
Theater Camp, July 18 to 23.

Kent Memorial Library, 32 N. Main St., Kent, Conn. www.kentmemoriallibrary.org
Music and Rhyme for Children from Birth to 3s, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. (online).

NorthEast-Millerton Library, 75 Main St., Millerton N.Y. www.nemillertonlibrary.org
Danny Sings About Everything, every other Thursday, 9:30 a.m. (online). Virtual Teen Writing Club, Fridays, 4 p.m. (online).

MOVIES

Gilson Cafe & Cinema, 354 Main St., Winsted, Conn. www.gilsoncafecinema.com
See website for showtimes.

The Moviehouse, 48 Main St., Millerton, N.Y. www.themoviehouse.net
See website for showtimes.

Stanford Free Library, 6035 Route 82, Stanfordville, N.Y. www.stanfordlibrary.org
Documentary Film Series: Contemplating Contemporary Art & Culture, every 4th Thursday of the month, meet and greet at 6:45 p.m., film begins at 7 p.m.

MISC.

Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, 120 Broadway, Tivoli, N.Y. www.kaatsbaan.org
COMMUNITY EVENT
COMMEMORATING JUNETEENTH, June 19.

Lime Rock Park, 60 White Hollow Road, Lime Rock, Conn. www.limerock.com
Round Hill Highland Games, June 26.
Salisbury Rotary Fireworks Show, July 1.

Norfolk Curling Club, 70 Golf Drive, Norfolk, Conn. www.norfolkcurlingclub.org
Flora to Feast Garden Tour, Dinner and Silent Auction, June 25.

MUSIC

The Center on Main, 103 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. www.thefvct.org/center-on-main
Twelve Moons Coffee House, first Saturdays of the month, 7 p.m.

The Egremont Barn, 17 Main St., South Egremont, Mass. www.theegremontbarn.com
Karaoke, Sundays, 7 to 10 p.m.

Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, 120 Broadway, Tivoli, N.Y. www.kaatsbaan.org
TAYLOR MAC, June 18.

NorthEast-Millerton Library, 75 Main St., Millerton N.Y. www.nemillertonlibrary.org
Northwest Passage, July 9, 6:30 p.m.

TALKS

Spencertown Academy Arts, 790 State Route 203, Spencertown, N.Y. www.spencertownacademy.org
Garden Talk with Tovah Martin, June 18, 11 a.m. to noon.

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main St., Hartford, Conn. www.thewadsworth.org
Conservator Talk: Blank's Torso, June 18, 1 to 2 p.m. Curator Talk: Thaxter's Love's First Dream, June 24, 1 to 2 p.m.

THEATER

Ancram Opera House, 1330 County Route 7, Ancram, N.Y. www.ancramoperahouse.org
STORYMAKING WORKSHOP with Celeste Lecesne, creator of POOF!, June 18, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Berkshire Theatre Group, www.berkshiretheatregroup.org
The Shot, June 16 to 19.

Great Barrington Public Theater, Great Barrington, Mass. www.greatbarringtonpublictheater.org
Solo Fest: Leave Your Fears Here, June 30 to July 10.

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FILMS: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

The Pavement as You've Never Seen it Before

Once childhood and childish games of hopscotch and “don’t step on the crack” are a thing of the past, most of us stop looking down as we walk. Certainly there are many reasons to hold one’s head up: The sky, the trees, the interesting architectural details, here and in Manhattan.

But if you’re walking every day, for 20 minutes or so on each outing, pretty soon you start looking for new ways to occupy your mind.

Varoujan Froundjian moved to Lakeville, Conn., five years ago after retiring from a career as a computer graphics designer for New York City publishing companies. But as he was preparing to enjoy a well-earned

rest, life threw a curve ball: He was diagnosed with leukemia and had to undergo a painful bone marrow transplant.

It took more than a year for him to recover, and part of his rehab regimen was to take a walk every day for 20 minutes or so. And as he walked, he began to see patterns and images in cracks in the pavement.

“My doctor would have preferred to have me walk with my head up,” Froundjian confessed. “But I became fascinated by these images and started to take photos and then videos as I walked.”

Froundjian said, “I’d always wanted to make experimental films but you can’t support a family doing



PHOTO BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Varoujan Froundjian has made an experimental film featuring the random patterns he sees, like cloud shapes, in the streets and sidewalks of Lakeville, Conn.

that.”

Rather than regret the years he lost to corporate America, he sees a silver lining: “That profession gave me all the tools I needed, like Photoshop and Adobe After Effects. These have become my main way of expressing myself.

“I can import a photo, change it, retouch it, change the format, and I incorporate all that in my movies.”

Froundjian’s interest in film became entwined with his daily walks and with the pavement patterns that he spent so much time studying every day. They began to take on symbolic and allegorical importance to him. And since he had his iPhone with him (as we all do these days), he began to capture images of what he was seeing.

“That’s the beauty of this modern technology,” he said. “You don’t need expensive movie cameras and other equipment. The iPhone is so sophisticated, the images are crystal clear and you can upload it all to your computer. Adobe After Effects lets me assemble all the little pieces. I can draw images and add them and add special effects, filters, music.”

The film that grew from his daily

walks doesn’t have music, however, or any narration.

“At first I was thinking of doing a voice over or narration but then I thought it’s not necessary, especially in an experimental, non-narrative non-character non-story film. There’s no story: The viewers watching these images create their own impression, their own stories.”

The only soundtrack is the pulse-like pounding of his feet on the ground as he walks.

Froundjian submitted his 10-minute film, “Pulses of the Pavements,” to some experimental film festivals — and won top honors in several of them.

Perhaps the best prize of all, though, was the uplift his film work brought to his medical checkups.

“When I went to visit my doctor, I had two things to be happy about: I was making a movie; and my heart-beat, breathing and blood pressure were on track, and I was regaining muscle from all my walking.”

To see the sidewalks and streets of Lakeville and New York City as you’ve never seen them before, go to YouTube.

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PHOTO COURTESY DAEDALUS QUARTET

Pianist Todd Crow will join the Daedalus Quartet, above, at Music Mountain in August, for a concert featuring Haydn's Sun Quartets.

MUSIC: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A New Day in the Sun For Music Mountain Summer Festival

Even during the worst periods of COVID-19, the Music Mountain Summer Festival in Falls Village, Conn., never went “dark” — although the weekly concerts at the venerable hall on Music Mountain were held virtually for one season during the pandemic; and the live concerts were reduced in 2021, with social distancing required for audience members.

Light and life return this summer with a full season for Music Mountain of 16 weekends of concerts including 17 chamber music performances and 10 jazz concerts. The New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players also return this year, on July 16.

Oskar Espina-Ruiz has been at the helm of the beloved chamber music concert hall through all the difficult days of the pandemic. He first came to the mountain in 2016, shortly before longtime leader Nick Gordon (son of Music Mountain founder Jacques Gordon) died, in 2017.

Espina-Ruiz is a concert clarinetist who took an interest in chamber music and began organizing festivals around the U.S. He had worked extensively with Music Mountain favorites

the Emerson String Quartet; and when the musicians heard there was an opening at the Falls Village venue, they encouraged Espina-Ruiz to interview for the position.

Espina-Ruiz is in an interesting position as the first non-family member to run Music Mountain. On the one hand, he wants to be respectful of traditions that have been in place since it was founded in 1930 (this will be the 93rd summer festival).

But the world continues to change and arts and culture need to reflect those changes; and Espina-Ruiz also wants to continue to attract new fans to the mountain, in addition to the venue's many loyal longtime supporters.

And so in the 2022 season, the concerts honor chamber music traditions, with string quartets by beloved masters. A focus of the festival will be different interpretations and performances of Joseph Haydn's “Sun” Quartets (known by that name, Espina-Ruiz said, because the music publisher put a sun on the cover of the first edition).

Continued on page 18

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... *Music Mountain*

Continued from page 17

In addition, there will be music by “living” composers and an increased effort to make the performers and performances more diverse.

“I try very hard to mix the programs so we have our beloved seasoned artists and some younger artists that are already extremely accomplished and that I think will do a fantastic job at Music Mountain,” Espina-Ruiz said, noting that this mix of traditional with new was always the emphasis at Music Mountain in its early decades.

He is also trying to be more inclusive in terms of the performers.

“In the last few years we had the pandemic,” he said, “but we also had Black Lives Matter and that has really had an impact on classical music programmers; Music Mountain is not excluded from that. We are sensitive to the importance of including all

cultures and ethnicities, in terms of composers and musicians.”

Jazz has long been a part of the summer schedule and continues to be this year (with a special performance in August by the popular local Jive by Five).

But holding it all together will be this year’s focus on the six Sun Quartets.

“Anyone who enjoyed the Beethoven cycle that we did in 2018 should try this, too,” Espina-Ruiz said. “Some of the performances will include pre-concert talks by musicians and scholars.

“And one of the concerts, by the Cramer Quartet, will be performed on period instruments and gut strings, on Aug. 14. That is the season’s theme, the traditional repertoire, the original instruments. Now violins have metal strings; this performance will be on



PHOTO COURTESY CRAMER QUARTET

The Cramer Quartet will perform a Haydn Sun Quartet in August, with a pre-concert talk by composer Alexandra Du Bois.

violins with gut strings; it’s a different sound.

“And then they will play a new work by a young composer named Alexandra du Bois, who studied all the Sun Quartets and composed this work in response to Haydn’s Opus 20.”

Du Bois will also give a talk about the composition onstage after the concert.

Anyone who drives around the Tristate region has also probably noticed the summer festival’s new logo and signs.

“The board for Music Mountain is more active than ever before,” Espina-Ruiz said. Dee Salomon, a former New York City publishing and marketing executive, is in charge of marketing for this festival.

“They did a rebranding and the new logo is part of that.”

To get a closer look at the old and the new and the harmonious way they come together, visit the Music Mountain Summer Festival website at www.musicmountain.org.

ERIC SLOANE, NA (1905-1985)



Western Sky

Oil on Masonite, 25" x 39"

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Auguste Rodin, *The Thinker* (detail), Original model
1881–82, enlarged 1903. Bronze, cast by Alexis
Rudier 1928. The Baltimore Museum of Art.
The Jacob Epstein Collection, 1930.25.1

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