

COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

June 17, 2021



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PHOTO COURTESY OF AMP



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LIVE MUSIC & SHOWS ALL SUMMER LONG! *Something For Everyone*

DRIVE-IN STAGE



Saturday, July 3
@ 8pm
**AMERICA'S
SWEETHEARTS**



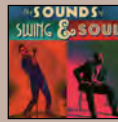
Saturday, July 10
@ 8pm
DANCING DREAM
ABBA Tribute



Saturday, July 24
@ 8pm
**MOTOWN UNDER
THE STARS**



Saturday, August 7
@ 8pm
**SWINGIN' WITH
THE RAT PACK**



Saturday, August 21
@ 8pm
**THE SOUNDS OF
SWING & SOUL**



Friday, August 27 &
Saturday, August 28
ELO LASER ENCOUNTER
Both Shows @ 8pm



Saturday, September 11
@ 8pm
THE RAVE-ONS
Buddy Holly Tribute

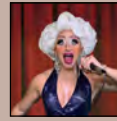


Saturday, September 18
@ 8pm
**CONNECTICUT
VIRTUOSI CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA**

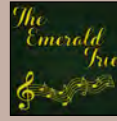


YOUTH THEATER

PATIO STAGE



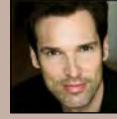
Saturday, July 17
@ 8pm
**CACOPHONY
DANIELS**



Sunday, July 25
@ 2pm
**THE EMERALD
TRIO**



Friday, July 30
@ 8pm
**WALKIN' AFTER
MIDNIGHT with
CARTER CALVERT**



Friday, August 6
@ 8pm
HUGH PANARO



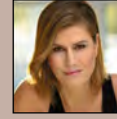
Friday, August 20
@ 8pm
**MICHAEL
BROWN**



Sunday, August 22
@ 3pm
**JOHN
DAVIDSON**



Friday, September 3
@ 8pm
**MARIA B.
HICKEY**



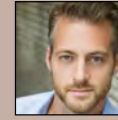
Friday, September 10
@ 8pm
KERRI LOUISE
Comedian



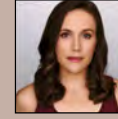
Sunday, September 12
@ 2pm
JALYNN STEELE



Friday, September 17
@ 8pm
**WANDA
HOUSTON**



Sunday, September 19
@ 2pm
**TREVOR
MARTIN**



Friday, September 24
@ 8pm
**AMANDA LEA
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Programming Subject To Change

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PHOTO BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

America's Sweethearts will return to the outdoor stage at Sharon Playhouse this summer — but the stage will be bigger and better and the shows will be (even) grander than before.

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THEATER: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Sharon Playhouse Offers Something for Everyone This Summer

The motto of Sharon Playhouse Artistic Director Alan M-L Wager and Managing Director Robert Levinstein might just be, “That worked well, let’s try it again but go even bigger this time!”

And thus the 2021 season of theater and education will be similar to the 2020 season — but bigger (and, of course, even better, although 2020 was pretty great).

COVID-19 kept audiences and performers away from the main stage last summer. But Levinstein and Wager took to heart the classic summer theater motto: We’ve got a barn, let’s put on a show!

The shows actually took place outside the barn, on a stage specially constructed to hold a small number of performances that ranged from live music to film screenings.

Socially distanced parking spaces were created in the parking lot, including a hilltop area at the back where socially distanced tailgate parties offered a fun way for theater patrons to visit with each other before the shows commenced.

This summer, the stage will be larger, and will be covered. The shows themselves, therefore, will have a little more space and the performers can be more expansive.

There is also a plan to put a screen behind the stage, so there can be visuals and graphics to enhance the performances.

The stage is the setting for only one portion of this summer’s entertainment at the Playhouse: the Drive-In Stage shows (which include tribute shows dedicated to Swedish super group ABBA, the super cool Rat Pack of the 1960s, the Detroit sound of the Motor City aka Motown and more).

For the Drive-In performances, audiences reserve a parking space and arrive in/watch the show in their vehicles (trucks in back, smaller cars up front). Last year, tickets were sold for the Drive-in Stage on a per-vehicle basis; this year, tickets will be sold per person.

There will also be more intimate performances on the patio next to the main stage building. Three of the performances are daytime brunch shows; the rest are dinner theater. Meals will be provided by two local restaurants.

Among the shows scheduled for the patio are local favorites Wanda Houston and Michael Whitney Brown; drag artist Cacophony

Continued on page 4

COMPASS

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John Heck • Cindy Heck

... Sharon Playhouse

continued from page 3

Daniels performing show tunes; heartthrob/actor/singer/game show host John Davidson; and the return of a Playhouse favorite, Amanda Lea Lavergne doing a cabaret-style show.

Don't wait to order tickets for the Aug. 6 patio performance starring Hugh Panaro, who has performed multiple times in multiple roles (including the title role) in the Broadway production of "The Phantom of the Opera."

There is also a robust schedule of programming for children, including theater education programs led by Director of Education Michael Baldwin and choreographer Sarah Cuoco (both are Salisbury natives).

The youth programs will culminate in performances of "Frozen Junior," "Seussical Kids" and,

for teens, "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

The big question for 2021 (and beyond) is of course: When will the main stage open again? The Playhouse team announced on June 3 that they will follow the example of Broadway and open the main building in autumn with a BIG EVENT.

They promise that details will be available soon.

The Sharon Playhouse season begins July 3; tickets went on sale on June 3.

For more information on shows, dates and tickets go to the Sharon Playhouse website at www.sharonplayhouse.org. Keep an eye on the website; new programs and more information are added often.

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SHOOTING: LANS CHRISTENSEN

Bustin' Clays as A Way To Entertain Yourself This Summer

Summer entertainment doesn't have to involve restaurants or dance parties or going to the theater.

Your favorite sport can be your summer's entertainment. For me, that sport is sporting clays, but for you it might be fly-fishing. Either way, I heartily recommend Orvis Sandanona in Millbrook, N.Y., as a relatively affordable place to pursue or learn to fish and shoot.

As a sporting clay devotee for more than 20 years, I have spent many entertaining, challenging and happy days at Orvis. It is "the oldest permitted shotgun shooting club in the U.S." and their facilities are the equal of any club anywhere, in my opinion. Seasoned wing and clay shooters can try two clays courses, both with a variety of

target presentations.

But perhaps the best offering at Orvis is instruction for the first-time shooter or fly-fisher. The instructors for both "games" are highly experienced and qualified "pros."

Chief Shooting Instructor Paula Moore is a five-time member of Womens World Team USA, who holds many championship titles. The fishing instructors, like Mark Searle, can boast equal accolades and achievements.

Clay shooters always say to new shooters "when you see your first clay break, you're hooked." You can see this proven daily at Orvis Sandanona.

Information about sporting clays, wingshooting and fly-fishing instruction and curriculums can be found at www.orvis.com/sandanona-shooting-grounds.html.



PHOTOS BY LANS CHRISTENSEN


Paula Moore, at right in photo, teaches a first-timer how to shoot sporting clays at Orvis Sandanona.



Instructor Mark Searle, far left, with a fly-fishing class.

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CINEMA: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

The Moviehouse Comes Back to Life — With an Elevator and an Ice Machine

The region enjoyed a collective sigh of delight and relief over Memorial Day weekend as the new owners of The Moviehouse in Millerton, N.Y., enjoyed a successful soft opening (showing the films “A Quiet Place 2” and “Dream Horse”).

Carol and Robert Sadlon were the creators of The Moviehouse, which opened on Memorial Day weekend in 1978 — which was the reason new owners Chelsea Altman and David Maltby pushed hard to open on the same holiday weekend this year.

After Robert died in 2019, his widow and partner began making plans to turn the theater to new owners — and felt very fortunate to have found Maltby and Altman earlier this year.

Ownership changed hands in March; and in a perhaps ironic twist, the COVID-19 pandemic became kind of sort of a good thing. It allowed them to get in quickly with construction crews and do updates to the interior and, of course, add the elevator that theater patrons had been asking for (and making donations toward) in recent years.

“And we have an ice maker now,” Altman said in an interview by phone

“From an operations perspective, we can open slowly and see how it goes, and not be overwhelmed with four theaters and the bar, all at once.”

on May 10. “Apparently that was something people really wanted.”

Ice will come in handy for more than soft drinks from the concession stand. Maltby and Altman both have backgrounds in the entertainment and hospitality industries and they will be part of a new trend toward making movie theaters more like entertainment centers.

Of course it will still be possible to come and just see a movie; but there will be options for making it more of a Night Out.

The small upstairs theater that was in recent years a screening room will be available for parties and events. It’s possible that patrons will someday be able to enter by a separate door that takes them right upstairs to have a glass of wine, even if they’re



PHOTO COURTESY THE MOVIEHOUSE

Moviehouse owners David Maltby and Chelsea Altman, left and center, and manager Casey Lehman.

not seeing a film, Altman said. The logistics on that are still being calculated out.

Altman did not expect the upstairs space to be open by Memorial Day weekend — and in fact it wasn’t.

“We had wanted to do a soft opening on Memorial Day weekend, with just the two downstairs theaters open,” she said.

“There were some construction delays upstairs, it’s an old building and this is a big job. And from an operations perspective, we can open slowly and see how it goes, and not be overwhelmed with four theaters and the bar, all at once.”

The expected grand opening date will be July 4 weekend.

Altman and Maltby feel fortunate to have found a general manager, Casey Lehman, who moved here from Ohio for this job, which he learned about from an online careers website.

“He wanted to hear about any film job, anywhere, and then he saw

this one,” Altman said. “He’s been the perfect guy for the job, charming and intelligent and knowledgeable about films and also about the service industry. He found a place to live, easily. It feels very Meant To Be.”

Changes small and large are in evidence at The Moviehouse, with fresh paint and new carpet and even a new sign outside.

“But we’re not changing the name,” Altman promised. Nor will she and Maltby swerve dramatically from the high-quality film offerings that area cinema fans have traditionally found and loved at The Moviehouse.

Even the website will remain the same, at www.themoviehouse.net, although the site will get updated and spiffed up this summer. For now because of COVID-19, but possibly on into the future, moviegoers will have to reserve their seats online ahead of time. Tickets will also be sold at the door, but at that point there will likely be fewer seats to choose from.



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July 17
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July 31
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August 7
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August 14
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August 21
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August 28
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PHOTOS BY GARY DODSON

The Esopus Creek in Phoenicia, N.Y., is a dream spot for fly-fishermen.

ANGLING: PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

Why I Fish Where I Fish

Patrick L. Sullivan is The Lakeville Journal Company's award-winning fishing columnist (in addition to being the newspaper's senior reporter).

Every year when fishing season begins, Sullivan again journeys to his Prized, Secret A1 Litchfield County angling spots (and no, we won't tell you where they are).

But as summer comes, he begins to disappear to Phoenicia, N.Y., where he fishes in the Esopus Creek.

In this article, he explains the differences between his two favorite destinations.

My trout fishing is centered around the Housatonic watershed in Litchfield County, Conn., and that of the Esopus Creek in Ulster County, N.Y.

These systems have some similari-

ties and some important differences.

Both rivers are on the big side and wading can be tricky.

Both rivers have abundant public access.

Both rivers have a good network of tributaries that in turn provide good access to anglers.

And as a general rule, if something's hatching in New York, it's probably hatching in Connecticut, too.

The differences start with water temperature. The Housatonic gets warm in the summer and is full of bass, pike and other warm water species.

The Esopus below the Shandaken Tunnel (aka "The Portal") is a tailwater and has more in common with Connecticut's Farmington River than the Housatonic. A steady flow



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of cold water comes from the north through a long tunnel and empties into the Esopus in Allaben. The 11 or so miles between the Portal and the Ashokan Reservoir remain cold (or coldish) throughout most of the season. You might find some dinker smallmouth down by the reservoir, but nothing like the Housatonic's abundance of bronzebacks.

The Esopus has wild trout — rainbows, to be specific. They are known locally as “silver bullets.” They are small and fiesty.

And they are about to become the dominant species, because New York state has finally listened to anglers and agreed to stop stocking the Esopus with hatchery browns.

Without these interlopers competing for the same food, the rainbows will thrive.

There will still be brown trout, but they will run up from the reservoir in the fall to spawn. So after a few years Esopus trout of any sort will be, if not wild in the strictest sense, at least wild-ish. What they won't be is fresh from the hatchery.

There are other significant differences.

Phoenicia and environs have far more **Buddhists** than the Region One School District in Connecticut's Northwest Corner. There's a Buddhist retreat center next door to my place,



in fact, and another one downstream in Mount Tremper, N.Y.

Cell service. If you think it's spotty in the Tri-state area, consider that it is essentially illegal to build anything like a proper cell tower within the Catskill Park. It's not completely devoid of service, but if you are traveling west on Route 28 it conks out around Boiceville and doesn't return until you get near the Delaware County line, a distance of some 17 miles.

Hipsters. Like Marlin Perkins on “Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom,” I observe from afar, and send Jim in to actually wrestle the alligators or buy the small-batch heritage vintage artisanal whatever. I have concluded that the eastern Catskills have more hipsters than the Northwest Corner.

However, the Northwest Corner has more art galleries and retired investment bankers.

Things have gotten livelier in Ulster County in recent years. The Phoenicia Diner on Route 28 used to be the greasiest of spoons, but the new own-

ers fixed the joint up and it is always packed. With hipsters, but still.

Phoenicia also has not one but two fly shops, which has not been the case for decades.

The Esopus has several prominent hatches. The Hendrickson hatch. The sulfur hatch. The isonychia hatch.

And the rubber hatch.

Because the flow in the 11 miles between the Portal and reservoir can be easily manipulated, the Esopus has for years been home to whitewater events — kayaks, mostly — and to a tubing industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic took out the oldest and most prominent tubing concern, but I have no doubt that sometime this summer I will have to stop fishing and watch as a flotilla of pleasure-seekers bobs by in their rented tubes, intent on sunburn and hypothermia.

The Housatonic's recreational boaters tend more toward the raft, canoe and kayak.

So which watershed do I prefer? The one I have time for.

ART IN THE OPEN

MASS MoCA

massmoca.org | North Adams, Mass.



PHOTO BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

A hatchery brown trout

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ART: DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

Work Continues On the Epic Ode to American Workers

The lengthy process of assembling and installing the massive mural at the heart of the American Mural Project (AMP) in Winsted, Conn., continues, under the direction of artist Ellen Griesedieck.

The mural, which is about 80% complete, offers a salute to American workers and how they have defined this nation, which is appropriate in scale and topic to the setting it is in.

The 120-foot long, 48-foot high and up to 10-foot-deep three-dimensional painting is so large that two former mill buildings on Whiting Street in Winsted had to be renovated just to house it and the adjacent visitor's

center.

After years of effort, with help from artisans, craftsmen and school children, the mural is expected to open to the public in spring of 2022. So far, the artist has traveled to 17 states to create pieces of the mural with groups in each of those states.

Griesedieck still has several large sections of the mural to install, as well as additional three-dimensional pieces and components that will be displayed in the ramp gallery.

As work on the mural continues, AMP staff, including Executive Director Amy Wynn, have been holding Open Mill Tours. To check for an-



PHOTO COURTESY AMP

Ellen Griesedieck is close to completing the American Mural Project.

nouncements on upcoming dates, go to www.americanmuralproject.org/open-mill-tours. The tours offer visitors a first-hand sneak peek into the installation process.

In the meantime, programming is being offered for schools, teachers, after-school partnerships, summer enrichment camps and an apprentice-style internship program.

The Summer Enrichment Programs for kids, tweens and teens, ages 7 to 17, run from June 29 through July 30.

Each week features a different theme and runs Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The programs are led by teaching artists

and art educators, and each program offers indoor and outdoor music, art, work and play.

Weekly themes include Latin, jazz and Afro-Cuban music; art projects using materials inspired by Robert Smithson's "Spiral Jetty" (water and stone), Maya Lin's "Wavefield" (soil and grass), and Ugo Rondinone's "Seven Magic Mountains" (painted stones); and "dabbling," with freeform projects such as decorating a treehouse, creating a board game, drawing a comic book or writing a poem.

To learn about available programs and to register (available spots fill up quickly), go to www.americanmuralproject.org/summer.

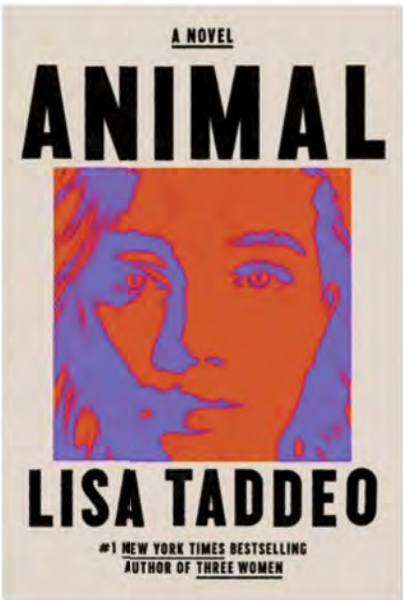













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PHOTO COURTESY AMP

The mural is a larger-than-life tribute to the American worker.

RAILROADS: ROB BUCCINO

Making Tracks To Admire and Enjoy Railroad History

There's something about railroad trains — from the way their horns scald the hillsides with sound, to the searing brilliance of their headlights at night, to the trembling of the earth as they roll by — that can't help but stir the soul.

It's not just our awe at the size, length and mass of these leviathans of the land, but also the window they open into a large part of America's history. Whenever we wander down abandoned rights-of-way or climb aboard mothballed locomotives at rail museums, we can envision what it took from the (mostly) men who labored to open up our continent.

Imagine, for example, that it's a blistering mid-August and you're shoveling a ton of coal by hand into a steam locomotive's fiery furnace. Think about what hands it took to drill into solid rock using hammer and steel, John Henry-style, in all kinds of weather. You'll start to appreciate how different life was a scant century and a half ago, and the tremendous work it took to link an expanding America's borders.

Because we live where three railroad-pioneering states join together, we're blessed with many opportunities here to marvel at train history. If you or your children are amateur ferro-equinologists (a fancy name for people who study the "iron horse"), one way to slake your curiosity is to start at the North Canaan, Conn., Union Station, first built in 1872.

CANAAN UNION STATION

A century ago, trains westbound from Hartford on the Central New England line crossed tracks there with the New Haven Railroad's Berkshire line (which still shoulders the Housatonic Railroad's freight traffic several times a day). The Victorian-style station was rebuilt at great expense after near

demolishment in a 2001 arson-related fire, and today houses a small museum with rail memorabilia (for more info, go to www.canaanunionstation.com; museum hours are Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) as well as a brewery and offices. Look skywards for the steam-train weathervane on the station roof.

And if you're interested in purchasing a piece of history, the station is for sale.

THE HOOSAC TUNNEL

Artifacts of bygone railroads pepper the area, from crumbling bridge abutments visible from Salisbury's Weatogue Road and a pergola on a causeway in Twin Lakes to the massive Hoosac Tunnel in North Adams, Mass.

Completed in 1874 after two decades of stop-and-go work, the tunnel was the second-longest in the world at that time. More than 190 men perished building it, earning it the sobriquet "the bloody pit."

It's still the longest active transportation tunnel in the U.S., east of the Rockies. An active freight corridor, it's closed to visitors, but its entrance is visible from the Florida, Mass., end, near Pittsfield. A free museum in a former railroad yard at 115 State St. in North Adams documents the history of the Hoosac Tunnel and related railroad lore.

The North Adams Museum of History and Science at Western Gateway Heritage State Park is temporarily closed because of COVID-19; go online to www.mass.gov/locations/western-gateway-heritage-state-park for information on its reopening.

CAMA IN KENT, CONN.

If hands-on contact with steam engines beckons you, a visit to the Connecticut Antique Machinery Association museum in Kent, Conn., might



PHOTO BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

You can ride an antique narrow-gauge steam engine train at the CAMA Fall Festival in Kent, Conn.

be what you crave.

Narrow-gauge locomotives and steam machinery there bring the Industrial Revolution to vivid life.

CAMA reopened quietly in May and, for now, will only welcome visitors on weekends. Usually, the best times to visit are the opening and closing weekends, in spring and autumn. There was no reopening weekend this year because of COVID concerns but the Fall Festival is scheduled for Sept. 24 to 26.

During the festival, the massive historic steam engines are powered up; there are swap shops on the lawn, with small bits of antique machinery for sale; and steam engine fans bring their most beloved antiques and either drive them around the grounds or put them on display under tents.

RAILROAD AND RAILWAY MUSEUMS

For visiting a treasure trove of full-scale locomotives, passenger cars, freight stock and track utility trains, the Railroad Museum of New England at the 1881-vintage depot in Thomaston, Conn., reopens in July. They occasionally offer excursion rides on the Naugatuck Railroad.

Danbury Railway Museum also has several diesel locomotives, passenger and freight cars, and a 1907 steam engine that once ran on the Boston

and Maine line.

WALKING THE LINE

No tracks remain on the CNE right of way, but walking trails in Salisbury, Conn., and Farmington, Conn., invite strollers and bicyclists to amble along level pathways where trains once ran.

It's fun to stop by the Poetry Tree on the 1.7-mile Railroad Ramble off Route 44 in Salisbury and peruse what local poets have posted.

A longer (18-mile) path, the Farmington River Trail, follows the former CNE right-of-way, connecting with the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail at Tunxis Meade Park in Farmington and at Drake Hill Road in Simsbury.

In nearby Millerton and Amenia, N.Y., there's easy access to the ever-expanding Harlem Valley Rail Trail, now paved from just north of the (still-operating) Wassaic Metro-North train station all the way to Ancram.

Farther west, the Walkway Over the Hudson State Historical Park lets you enjoy spectacular views as you walk across the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge. When completed in 1889, it was the second-longest bridge span in the world.

There's far more rail history in the area than this article can list, but these sites can give you a place to start. Check internet listings for opening hours and travel directions.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Lantern (located at 10 Main St. in the hamlet of Wassaic) is open at 2 p.m. Fridays through Sundays, enticing customers with wood-fired pizzas, homemade pasta and other culinary delights — and a beautiful garden space in which to dine.

ARTS AND FOOD: KAITLIN LYLE

Summer Arts and Edibles for all Ages

I've visited the hamlet Of Wassaic (in the town of Amenia, N.Y.), countless times — both as a reporter for The Millerton News and as cyclist on the Rail Trail.

I've come to love the stories behind the little collection of buildings in the valley behind the Metro-North train station, many of which are part of The Wassaic Project, an arts colony created in 2008 by (at that time) recent college graduates Bowie Zunino, Jeff Barnett-Winsby and Eve Biddle.

The buildings in the center of the hamlet, which is bisected by a still-active train track, are an important part of the region's agricultural history, the marketplace where farmers would sell their livestock

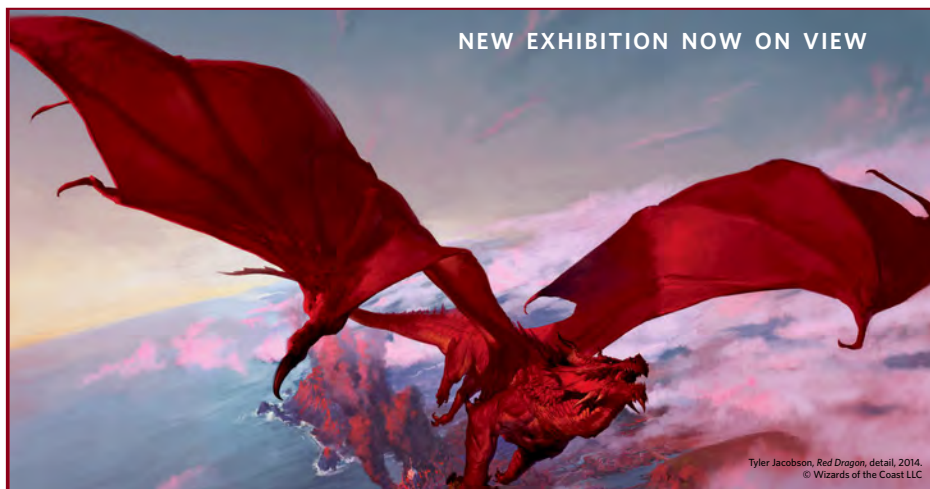
at auctions held in the Luther Barn, which is now home to studios for artists taking part in the Wassaic Project residency program.

The former Maxon grain mill that towers over the hamlet and the train tracks is now a multi-story art gallery.

I tell the tales of these and the other buildings again and again to family and friends and anyone who will listen, about Wassaic's notable buildings, and the many community activities that have helped bring the hamlet back to life after decades of dormancy.

SUMMER ART IN THE HAMLET

Wassaic Project Executive Co-Director Jeff Barnett-Winsby said two



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art exhibitions are in the hamlet this summer.

The first is in the Maxon Mills building and is called, "If You Lived Here You'd Be Home By Now."

The second exhibition will be in the form of a book, "Secret of the Friendly Woods." The new tradition of doing a print publication began last summer, when COVID-19 restrictions kept visitors from seeing art in person. The show is open Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. until Saturday, Sept. 18.

There will be a limit on the number of people who can see the show at one time. There won't be any reservations, it will be first-come-first served. Find out more at www.wassaicproject.org.

PARTIES AND OUTDOOR DINING

The Wassaic Project has been notable for its efforts to become part of the surrounding community. Two "Block Parties" are being planned for this summer, plus a party on

the Maxon Mills porch on Monday, June 26, with tours of the summer exhibition and a talk by New York magazine art critic Jerry Saltz.

Across the train tracks from the art-dedicated buildings is The Lantern, a bar that was once a popular spot for weekly meetings of area billiards leagues. The Wassaic Project founders have maintained some of the character of the old bar but have added upgrades including an outdoor eating area with picnic tables at which to enjoy the now-famous wood-fired pizza, fresh pasta, salads and weekly cocktail specials.

The Lantern opens at 2 p.m. on Fridays through Sundays. For now, dining is outdoors or by takeout; check the website to see what the new protocols will be as COVID-19 guidelines change (www.wassaiclanterninn.com).

FOOD PUBLICATIONS (AND FOOD) AT NEWSSTAND

Another draw on weekends is the Newsstand, a tiny structure designed

to look like an actual newsstand by architect Matthew Schnepf. The stand sells food-themed publications and actual food (often including pastries by Ari Paradise, baker at the nearby Troutbeck hotel in Amenia).

Installed by Ten Mile Table last summer, the idea behind the pop-up is to "highlight and support diverse, thought-provoking voices in food/wine/art print publishing, and makers in food, art and hospitality."

Find the Newsstand schedule (which might include a hamlet-wide clambake) at www.tenmiletale.com/wassaic-newsstand.

Another draw to the hamlet is the green barn purchased last year by Schnepf and his wife, Munawar Ahmed, which is now home not only to a shop selling everything from maple syrup to sheepskin rugs to furniture made by local artisans; but also a small bike rental shop, for visitors who want to use Wassaic as the stepping off point for cycling on the Rail Trail.

CHILDREN WELCOME IN WASSAIC

Wassaic is a particularly welcoming destination for families with children. There is an active streetlife in the hamlet now, with many families milling around and visiting with each other on weekends.

The Wassaic Project also offers summer arts programs for children and teens.

Varsity Arts Camp is for rising ninth through 12th graders; a Junior Varsity Arts Camp is for rising fifth through eighth graders; and an Art Scouts program is for rising first through fourth graders.

The arts campers visit the exhibitions at Maxon Mills and work on their own projects, which are shown in a mini-exhibition at the end of the week of their program. The camps are in August, with separate weeks for each age group.

To find out more, go to www.wassaicproject.org/education.

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Judge, Shawn Sullivan's painting, "Hydrangeas"

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PHOTO BY SOPHIE ZHAI

Live performances, including concerts by the Shanghai Quartet, return to Music Mountain.

CHAMBER MUSIC: FRED BAUMGARTEN

Chamber Music, Jazz and The Thrill of a Shared Music Experience

A year ago, many arts organizations in our region were staring into the abyss of a COVID year without live audiences or performances, and an uncertain future as a result. Many found creative ways to keep their audiences engaged through virtual means.

Music Mountain, for example, produced a dozen “Live from Music Mountain” livestreamed programs of music and interviews that found a ready audience. Somehow, it emerged stronger and even found the resources — with some help from local friends and businesses — to make some much-needed upgrades to Gordon Hall, its main concert venue.

Now entering its 92nd season, the Falls Village, Conn.-based summer chamber music festival is ready to welcome back live audiences and ensembles for an exciting and eagerly anticipated concert series.

The shortened season will open on July 4 with the Shanghai Quartet, a perennial Music Mountain favorite, playing works by Beethoven, Smetana and Chinese composer Zhou Long.

It concludes on Sept. 5 with the Cassatt String Quartet, joined by pianist Ursula Oppens, featuring works by two women composers, Amy Beach and Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (sister of Romantic-era composer Felix Mendelssohn), as well as a Mozart string quartet.

All of this is part of a season-long emphasis on diversifying the repertoire and combining the lesser known with the more familiar. Works by Florence Price, an African American woman, and William Grant Still, an African American man, will be heard; the Harlem String Quartet, another Music Mountain favorite, will perform a varied program including

jazz-infused pieces by Billy Strayhorn, Wynton Marsalis and Dizzy Gillespie.

From the Western “canon,” some of the compelling pieces on tap include Janacek’s String Quartet #2, titled “Intimate Letters,” which, as its name implies, is achingly beautiful and intimate; Dvorak’s breezy “American Quartet,” composed while he was living in Iowa; and Ravel’s Impressionist masterpiece, his String Quartet in F Major, the only quartet he wrote.

This summer, Music Mountain will also be making audience safety its highest priority. While the rapidly evolving easing of restrictions may change the situation, for now plans are being made for limited, socially distanced seating in Gordon Hall, with quiet fans, open doors and other accommodations for extra ventilation.

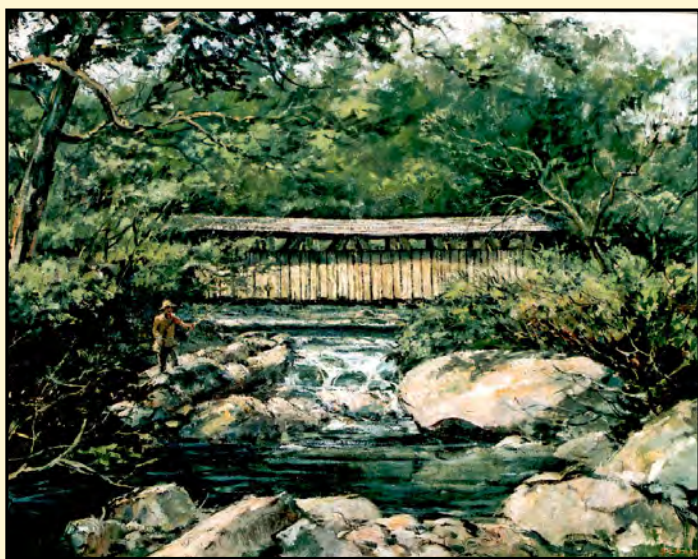
Outside, for the first time in its history, Music Mountain will formally offer lawn seating, with monitors and speakers. And concerts will continue to be available via livestream for those who feel at too great a risk being in a group.

A series of Saturday “Jazz and More” concerts is still in the planning stages. Announcements will be made on the Music Mountain website, www.MusicMountain.org.

For all of us, the prospect of enjoying live, in-person music again feels like emerging into the light after a long, dark journey.

Music Mountain’s chamber music series — 10 concerts from July 4 through Sept. 5 — will take place, as always, on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m., in air-conditioned Gordon Hall, 225 Music Mountain Road, Falls Village. For tickets and schedules, go to www.MusicMountain.org or call 860-824-7126.

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DANCE: JENNY HANSELL

Jacob's Pillow: Live Dance Is Back

The beautiful grounds of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Mass., will be alive with art again this summer, literally: All of the live performances will be held either on the outdoor stage formerly called Inside/Out and now known as the Henry J. Leir Outdoor Stage, or around the grounds in site-specific works.

All last year, the Pillow found ways to keep people connected to dance, through online events, short films and, eventually, COVID-safe residencies for choreographers and companies. Now, an abbreviated season will include some returning favorites, cutting edge innovators and new voices, with a special emphasis on BiPOC creators.

Highlights include Dorrance Dance (June 30-July 4), Michelle Dorrance's tap company, which will perform on the outdoor stage in a world premiere featuring jazz trumpeter Keyon Harold. Dancers will also conduct "tap takeovers" around the grounds.

The Dallas Black Dance Theatre will premiere a new work by Darrell Grand Moultrie, who has worked with Alvin Ailey, Dance Theatre of Harlem and American Ballet Theater (Aug. 4-8).

The post-modern Brian Brooks/Moving Company performs alongside the wonderful Williamstown-based vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth (July 21-25.)

In their Pillow debut, Los Angeles-based Contra Tiempo, which per-

forms work rooted in salsa, Afro-Cuban, hip hop and contemporary dance, will present an evening-length work called joyUS justUS, about making joy the center of a more loving world (July 7-11.)

Among the site-specific events to be performed around the ground, a group of local Indigenous dancers, coming from the Mashpee Wampanoag, Seneca, Cayuga and Nipmuc nations will come together for a performance called Easter Woodland Dances (July 17.)

Each of the performances will also stream starting about 10 days after the in-person event concludes. Performances by international companies are online-only. The Nrityagram Dance Ensemble, an Indian classical

dance company from Bangalore, and the Paris Opera Ballet featuring Crystal Pite, are some of the companies featured online-only.

The Ted Shawn theater will remain closed — it is undergoing significant renovation to be ready for next summer — and the Doris Duke burned in a catastrophic fire in November 2020 (cause undetermined, according to statements from the Pillow).

Seating is planned for 25% capacity and so tickets are very limited. Sales for the general public open on June 1. As of now all patrons are required to wear masks on-site, but check the website, www.jacobspillow.org, before you go, for the latest guidance, as well as for tickets, information on live-streaming, and any schedule changes.

Among the site-specific events to be performed around the ground, a group of local Indigenous dancers, coming from the Mashpee Wampanoag, Seneca, Cayuga and Nipmuc nations will come together for a performance called Easter Woodland Dances (July 17.)

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PERFORMANCES: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A Tasting Menu of Uncommon Delights at Bard

It's 40 minutes from my front door in Lakeville, Conn., to Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., also known as the town of Red Hook (not to be confused with the one in Brooklyn).

It's a bit of a drive, but the ride is exquisite, especially at sunset. The famous Mercato restaurant in Red Hook has closed down, but its chef/owners Michele and Francesco Butroni (descendants of award-winning Italian pasta makers) have now opened GioBatta in nearby Tivoli, N.Y.

That might not be enough to tempt you deep into the heart of the scenic Hudson Valley — but then there is Bard SummerScape.

Anyone who thinks of New England and the Hudson River Valley as being home to more traditional

Anyone who thinks of New England and the Hudson River Valley as being home to more traditional music hasn't checked out the college's eclectic and experimental summer offerings in theater and music.

music hasn't checked out the college's eclectic and experimental summer offerings in theater and music.

"Eclectic and experimental" might be off putting, but when you combine them with the third E — entertaining! — then you have something worth a 40-minute drive.

There are several stages and venues at Bard including of course the Sosnoff Theater in the undulating, metal-clad Frank Gehry-designed building, which is worth a trip to Annandale-on-Hudson in its own

right.

There is also a new stage at Montgomery Place, the historic Hudson Valley estate just down the road from the main campus that was purchased by Bard a few years ago.

Montgomery Place this summer will host some of the younger, kickier events, including three performances from July 15 to 17 by transgender artist Mx. Justin Vivian Bond in "Your Auntie Glam's Midsummer Flutter."

For those who are not connoisseurs of the world of drag: The New Yorker magazine calls Bond "the greatest cabaret artist of this generation."

Other dance and theater programs on the schedule for the summer fall somewhere between Mx. Bond and the more traditional, classical end of the spectrum.

A highlight, for me at least, of this year's SummerScape will be the first fully staged North American production, at the Sosnoff Theater, of one of only three operas composed by Ernest Chasson, called "Le Roi Arthus."

This French-language opera tells the story of King Arthur and his betrayal by his best friend and his wife (and eventually his son, but that's not in the opera).

At the helm for this production (performed between July 25 and Aug. 1) is Bard's president as well as the SummerScape festival founder and artistic director, Leon Botstein. Botstein is eccentric, creative and talented and loves to put on worthwhile shows that are only rarely produced.

Sometimes, of course, there's a reason why no one has ever produced a

show before. "Le Roi Arthus" is a very long opera (the Gramophone recording is 2 hours and 47 minutes long). But Botstein is on record as being a huge fan of the opera, which has passages that are described as rich and gorgeous. The whole show might not be outstanding but (and this might be the theme of all SummerScape shows), what is life without a little experimentation.

For those who fear that nearly three hours of an opera they've never heard before might be too much, the production will also be streamed, allowing the viewer to wander in and out.

Also at Bard between Aug. 6 and 15 will be the Summer Music Festival, built around the career of Nadia Boulanger and the musicians who influenced and taught her.

The list is long and, according to the preview statement of the festival, includes "music by her teachers and mentors, including Gabriel Fauré, Louis Vierne and Charles Marie Widor; her Parisian contemporaries, like Claude Debussy, Olivier Messiaen, Francis Poulenc, Maurice Ravel, Erik Satie and expats George Gershwin, Cole Porter and Igor Stravinsky; her male students, including Jean Françaix, Astor Piazzolla, and illustrious Americans Marc Blitzstein, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, Philip Glass, Walter Piston and Virgil Thomson; her female students, like Marcelle de Manziarly, Thea Musgrave, Julia Perry and Louise Talma; other women composers, Germaine Tailleferre and Lili Boulanger, Nadia's celebrated sister, among them; and some of the bygone composers whose music she vociferously championed, like Monteverdi, Bach and Brahms."

For full information on Bard SummerScape and the Summer Music Festival, go to www.fishercenter.bard.edu.



The Johnsons

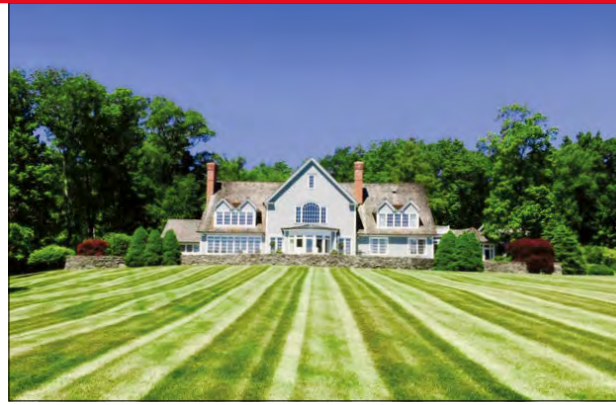
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CINEMA: CYNTHIA AND KATHARINE HOCHSWENDER

Cult Films and Craft Cocktails with Boondocks

In the film “Pat and Mike,” Spencer Tracy famously if coarsely praised co-star Katharine Hepburn’s figure, saying, “There isn’t much meat on her but what’s there is cherce” (cherce being a colloquial pronunciation of “choice”).

Similarly, there aren’t a lot of listings on the Boondocks Film Society schedule for this summer, but what’s there ... is choice.

Boondocks is a cult film screening/event programming enterprise run by Cornwall, Conn., residents Jeff Palfini and Cindy Heslin.

Events are scheduled about once every month. They center around a cult film classic, which is screened at a venue that is usually offbeat and/or unexpected. Usually there is some kind of food or cocktail element to the evening. Often there is some other form of entertainment, sometimes

musical.

As the explainer on the Boondocks website says, “We’re talking full-fledged events, not just nights out at the movies.”

It goes without saying that COVID-19 messed with the past year’s schedule. But there have already been three 2021 screenings (“On Her Majesty’s Secret Service,” “Empire Records” and “Serial Mom”).

Coming up on Wednesday, June 23, at 7 p.m., the featured film will be “Ghost World,” which is a favorite in my household — and which, like “Empire Records,” stars a young actress who will soon go from indie star to Hollywood Sensation (Renee Zellweger in “Empire Records” and, in “Ghost World,” the young Scarlett Johansson).

But the big draw, for my daughter at least, is star Thora Birch’s love

interest in the film, the actor Steve Buscemi, playing yet another seedy but kindhearted loser (his specialty). Birch’s character and Buscemi meet at a tag sale, where Buscemi is selling vintage vinyl records. Romance and complications ensue.

The screening of “Ghost World” will begin at dusk, at an outdoor art park called Turnpark Art Space in West Stockbridge, Mass. Until the film begins, DJ MAC will spin old records (78 RPM, so in fact quite old).

The food will be provided by SOMA catering. At the pre-film happy hour there will be themed craft cocktails made with Bully Boy spirits and craft beer from Collective Arts Brewing. Tickets are \$16.

The other film on this summer’s Boondocks schedule is Sam Shepard’s “Paris, Texas,” directed by Wim Wenders, and starring Harry Dean

Stanton, Dean Stockwell and the very beautiful young Nastassja Kinski, who was possibly one of the most famous starlets in the world at that time.

This very indy film made from Shepard’s play will be shown in a fairly conventional venue: the drive-in theater at Four Brothers in Amenia, N.Y.

The evening begins on Thursday, July 15, at 7 p.m. (there will be live music with William Lawrence) and the screening begins at dusk.

For anyone who has not yet been to the drive-in, it is enormous fun and there is usually a great deal of car-to-car socializing before the screenings begin. The ticket price had not been set when this issue went to press, but it’s likely to be between \$15 and \$20.

For more details on these Boondocks events, and on future evenings out, go to www.boondocksfilmsociety.org.

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Nikolai Astrup, *Growing Season at Sandalstrand* (detail), linoleum and woodblock, 1923; print, 1923. Savings Bank Foundation DNB / The Astrup Collection / KODE Art Museums of Bergen.

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