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Questions by & Compiled by Robert Tomlinson

CROSS CONTEMPORARY PARTNERS PRESENTS
A FINE ART BENEFIT FOR THE WOODSTOCK FILM FESTIVAL

THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE:
A New Way to Visit with Outdoor Explore Kits

TODAY BUILDS TOMORROW:
Sustainability, Innovation, Culture
By Robert Tomlinson

11 QUESTIONS FOR ARTIST MARYNA BILAK
Questions by & Compiled by Robert Tomlinson

RODNEY ALAN GREENBLAT:
SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO

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THANK YOU ESSENTIAL WORKERS!
Carlo DeVito
Please tell us about three books that have been meaningful to you and why.

*The Great Gatsby*: I read it in sixth grade and have reread it many times since. I have a first edition of it in my personal library. To me, other than *Huckleberry Finn*, it is the quintessential Great American Novel. Simple. Elegant. It is about the American Dream.

*The World According To Garp*: I fell in love with all its characters. I never wanted the story to end. Each time I reread it it is like going home.

*A Christmas Carol*: I loved the story so much I wrote an entire book about it. INVENTING SCROOGE about how, why, and where Dickens drew his story lines from.

Is there a book or author that you have read that you feel is under-acknowledged or notably underrated? Why?

I love Fredrick Exley’s *A Fan’s Notes*. It was a big deal when it first came out and his reputation and the book’s seems to have faded. It remains an important read.

Another is *Appointment in Samarra* by John O’Hara. O’Hara has faded immeasurably. But the book is a timeless study in manners, mores, and fate.

When you go to a bookstore—what section do you go to first?


Have you ever bought a book that you knew nothing about and ended up thinking it was really great? If so, what book?


What are you reading now (do you read more than one book at a time)?

I read several books at a time always. Right now I’m reading:

*Sea of Glory* by Nathaniel Philbrick
*Astrophysics for People in a Hurry* by Neil de Grasse Tyson
*Working* by Robert Caro

If you could visit the home of any deceased writer from any country, who would it be and why?

I have done it many times. I have visited the houses of Hawthorne, Melville, Dickinson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others. My favorite thus far was the Mark Twain house in Hartford, CT. I was so entranced I wrote a book about it, *A Mark Twain Christmas*.

Work habits can be so individualized … do you have a working schedule that you impose upon yourself? If so, please describe.

I write when I can. I prefer to write in the morning or late at night. Sometimes both. I have a favorite writing quote by Jo Miller: “I hate writing. I love having written.”

What are you working on now? And what are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?

I’m writing a bio of Weeb Ewbank, who won the two most important games in the history of the NFL. His Baltimore Colts beat the New York Giants to win the first overtime NFL championship game which cemented the relationship between the NFL and television. He also won Super Bowl III when his New York Jets beat his old team the Baltimore Colts. This game cemented the merger between the NFL and the AFL, giving us the modern game we know today.

I have also been asked to revise my book *Big Whiskey*.

I am writing a memoir about my father and step-father with a working title called *Fathers and Son*. A sequel will be entitled...
Mothers and Son. It has been bittersweet to write. I hate writing about myself.

I have three more planned beyond that.

My greatest challenge is keeping focused. Balancing life, work, art, and family.

Rita Gentile
Please tell us about three books that have been meaningful to you and why.

I have often and again picked up any collection of R.W. Emerson’s inspired essays and addresses. He was the romantic literary voice of reason, logic, common sense, and transcendence; writing about the self, divinity, human nature, the power of the spirit. Poems precede his prosaic essays which, imbued with soft spoken, authoritative wisdom, are quotable and eloquent at every page. He lived for a time on my native Staten Island, NY where Emerson Hill was named for him.

“The Paper Door” is a translation of original Japanese short stories by Shiga Naoya. I like contemplating the author’s message about characters and their take on particular events. The structure of the stories have a different sense of time and focus. It’s an exciting and liberating to read and riddle out cultural differences inherent in the story-telling techniques and devices of foreign authors.

Long ago, I read Carl G. Jung’s Man and His Symbols. This was my introduction to formalized symbols, icons, archetypes, and the notion of a universal subconscious. I read about thought transmission and communication (telepathy) amongst humans despite distance or time. This helped me to understand that I, too was part of the vast oneness, and this philosophy rendered definition to my sense of truth.

I enjoyed reading a fiction novel called Let the Great World Spin by Colum McCann. Although it is not contemporary (2009), it takes place during dramatic world events in NYC when people are confronting their own mortality, grappling with fear, jealousies, dealings of power, greed, but, also summon great humanitarianism, generosity, random service, volunteerism, and community outreach, and love. I guess, much like today.

Is there a book or author that you have read that you feel is under-acknowledged or notably underrated? Why?

I’m sorry, I don’t know. Some of the writers I’ve heard read in Catskill are captivating and should be published if they are not already.

When you go to a bookstore—what section do you go to first?

Art, which is process based, Philosophy /Spirituality, which is result based (opposites?), Poetry, Contemporary Writing.

Have you ever bought a book that you knew nothing about and ended up thinking it was really great? If so, what book?

Not so directly, though, recently I bought Ocean Vuong’s On Earth We Are Briefly Gorgeous, and was well pleased at how moving and creatively written it is. I was already cued in to the concept of the book. I thought it was great for the untrodden path this young author pursued in writing this confessional in the way he did.

What are you reading now (do you read more than one book at a time)?

I have three books from the library which I glance at all, but more regularly I am reading The Upanishads, a classic of Indian spirituality. The others are Dylan Thomas Collected Poems, and Jean-Paul Sartre On Being and Nothingness. I must admit, I watch artist documentaries and repair tutorials on YouTube instead of what I would have been reading in the past.
If you could visit the home of any deceased writer from any country, who would it be and why?
I believe I would rather meet Fredrick Law Olmsted, the pioneer landscape architect, with whom I could take a nature walk. Or maybe Sylvia Plath who must have been quite brilliant! Challenging. Or maybe as a writer, I would visit with Abraham Lincoln, who wrote with fascinating meter, wording, and candor.

Work habits can be so individualized … do you have a working schedule that you impose upon yourself? If so, please describe.
During Shelter in Place, I have stopped leaving early morning to work which enables me to reincorporate a formal morning (health) ritual, to go about walking or reading news, breakfast, etc. I write randomly all day whether an immediate entry from a dream, or a phrase that I want to explore, or more formally typing essays and stories (nonfiction) on computer, usually later in the afternoon.

I have been struggling with restructuring my schedule which I believe would be beneficial, though instinctually there are certain things I will only do at certain periods of the day. I have taken on more projects and project revisits. Perhaps the same amount of process takes place but without a more highly organized schedule, distractions hijack my full attention, and my sense of accomplishment becomes as randomized as the time of day.

What are you working on now? And what are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?
It must be due to the question of mortality, or that I have finally improved on my tendency to procrastinate, that I have been completing clean ups, quilts, repairs, art projects on hold, poetry transcriptions, and a series of large paintings which was conceived of in 2015, partially worked in 2016.

I’m currently challenged by these paintings, not so much their relevancy as the mechanics of the medium and composition.

More importantly, I have set before me to define; what does the “New Normal” look like for me. Maybe “normal” just defies definition. Nevertheless, I am finding that the New Normal is like the Old Normal, only our perspectives have changed a bit. We could easily slip into the indifference of everything going back to business as usual, which was not normal, even after this time of contemplation, clean slate, and potential, which would be unfortunate and lazy.

Our time has come to make the world, ever more so, the place we know it must be, to restructure the entire paradigm, for Earth’s and our physical, mental, spiritual health, and to defy the imposition of injustice, power, and greed, by working from a place of love. This is possible now more than ever.

I am challenged to do better to uphold my life-long environmental principles more strongly, more radically than I have in the past.

I share this article for interest on this subject: https://forge.medium.com/prepare-for-the-ultimate-gaslighting-6a8ce3f0a0e0

Karen Schoemer
Please tell us about three books that have been meaningful to you and why.
The Fire Next Time, James Baldwin
Moby Dick, Herman Melville
To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf

All three of these books affect me on the sentence level—the way the authors corral the rhythms of language, the slopes and valleys of sound, to evoke aspects of human experience. The content of what they say is important too, but I respect them most of all for representing human voice and thought in their writing.

Is there a book or author that you have read that you feel is under acknowledged or notably underrated? Why?
I’m a huge fan of Jean Rhys’s early novels—After Leaving Mr. McKenzie is my favorite. She looked at cast-off women on the fringes of society, who would have been extras or walk-ons or paper cutouts in a Hemingway novel, and made them the centers of her stories.

As a writer, Rhys was brutally honest and yet deeply sensitive.

When you go to a bookstore—what section do you go to first? Fiction or poetry.

Have you ever bought a book that you knew nothing about and ended up thinking it was really great? If so, what book?
Years ago, in Key West, FL, a bookstore owner convinced me to buy Last Train to Paradise, by Les Standiford, about Henry Flagler’s Key West railway and the hurricane that knocked it out in the 1930s. He said it was the only book in the store with a money back guarantee. It was as great a read as he promised—transportation is a weirdly dramatic aspect of American life and history.

What are you reading now (do you read more than one book at a time)?
The Black Unicorn by Audre Lorde; Ask the Dust by John Fante; and I still have 180 pages left in Don Quixote, which I have been reading for two years!

If you could visit the home of any deceased writer from any country, who would it be and why?
I would love to visit the Brontë home. Doesn’t everyone wants to see those moors and that cramped house that fostered their imaginations? Also I’d like to visit the little bright colored row house in Prague where Kafka lived. I’ve been outside Langston Hughes’ brownstone apartment in Harlem, but I’d like to go inside—it’s a cultural center now.
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www.TheGreenPalate.com
Work habits can be so individualized … do you have a working schedule that you impose upon yourself? If so, please describe.

I try to write in the morning from about 10 to noon. If I’m not working a job, I try to do another shift in the afternoon, and I try to spend time reading poetry or a poetry craft book.

What are you working on now? And what are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?

I’m trying to write more poems. The pandemic has been a good time for me as a writer, since I have been fortunate not to get sick or have sickness among too many close friends or family. I’m not very good at submitting poems—I wish they would submit themselves.

Laura Taylor

Please tell us about three books that have been meaningful to you and why.

The Liar’s Club by Mary Karr. When I first read this book, years ago, it blew me away. I love that she tells her story in that kid voice. She just barrels along. I always think, every time I read it … how the hell does she DO THAT?

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard. I first read this book in art school. It was “required reading” by my teacher at the New York Studio School. It changed the way I looked at reality. It made me realize how subjective our perceptions of even the physical world are (not to mention the world that is not visible all around us).

The Four Quartets by T.S. Eliot. This book was my “bible” for many years in my twenties for much of the same reasons that The Pilgrim at Tinker Creek had such a profound affect on me. But mainly, with Eliot, it is that incredible, uncanny ability to put the wordless into words!

Is there a book or author that you have read that you feel is under acknowledged or notably underrated? Why?

Iris Murdoch wrote 24 novels. I only recently discovered her myself and feel that if she had been a male author she’d be a lot more widely read. Not that she had no recognition at all. She was, after all, made a Dame, but whenever I ask really well-read friends if they like Iris Murdoch, very few of them know of her. I’m not a book critic so don’t have the language to describe her writing in a few sentences. All I can say is that I plan on reading all 24 in succession.

When you go to a bookstore—what section do you go to first?

I tend to go to bookstores having a specific book in mind that I am looking for. I do gravitate towards fiction. For awhile I was definitely going towards the memoir section (since that is what I’m working on) but then I felt like I needed to find my own voice and not be overly influenced by the way other people have written their memoirs. So back to fiction for me.
Have you ever bought a book that you knew nothing about and ended up thinking it was really great? If so, what book?
Well, I guess that leads me back to Iris Murdoch. Although, I don't think I actually bought the book I am thinking of. It was *Henry and Cato*. I saw it on the street in my neighborhood where books are always being put out for people to take. It had a beautiful cover, which is why I picked it up and it has led me on an amazing journey ….

What are you reading now (do you read more than one book at a time)?
I am reading *The Green Knight* by, guess who? I do sometimes read more than one book at a time but usually I then leave the others and finish the one that most compels me. I find that if I read more then one novel at a time I lose the thread. But I can read more then one memoir or essayist book. I almost never read non-fiction as in books on politics or history.

If you could visit the home of any deceased writer from any country, who would it be and why?
I would love to visit Beatrix Potter's home. I just want to see where that incredibly imaginative woman lived! I picture mice and rabbits running around, an incredible vegetable garden with a stern gardener running around with an axe to chop the tails off Bad Rabbits.

Work habits can be so individualized … do you have a working schedule that you impose upon yourself? If so, please describe.
I try to write first thing in the morning. But I also try not to be locked into a schedule. It’s important for me to be able to pick it up at any time of day because there is always a lot going on in my life. I don’t want to lock the door against my family. I feel like that has always been a very male way to do art of any kind and I fight the impulse to do that. The work should live and breathe in my life. I also hate the attitude that what I’m doing is “so important” that it supersedes other responsibilities and the desire to do things like garden etc. etc. So it is a hard balancing act but I feel like the balancing is, in fact, as important as the final product, (whatever that ends up being).

What are you working on now? And what are the biggest challenges you are currently facing?
I am working on a memoir. My biggest challenge is that I was silenced and told I didn’t have a voice … couldn’t have a voice … for most of my childhood. My sense of reality was questioned from a very early age so to write that this happened or that happened, and to write in the doubt about my own perceptions, while writing in a coherent way … that is challenging!
For those looking to purchase a great work of art for a worthy cause, Cross Contemporary Partners, an art advisory and digital marketing firm for visual artists, is hosting an online art sale through July 19 with all proceeds going towards supporting the Woodstock Film Festival, a 501(3)(c) organization.

The Woodstock Film Festival has been integral to the development and sustenance of art in the mid-Hudson and Catskills regions of New York State. Now in its 21st year, the WFF is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to present an annual program and year-round schedule of film, music, and art-related activities that promote artists, culture, inspired learning, and diversity. The Woodstock Film Festival started out as a grassroots arts organization driven by a sheer love for film and community and is committed to showcasing passionate, creative, and thought-provoking work by some of today’s most promising and accomplished independent filmmakers from all over the world. A growing regional film industry has taken root thanks to the Festival and has contributed more than 250 million to our area’s economic development. However, the Covid-19 virus threatens this year’s Film Festival as gathering in cinemas may be banned. The Woodstock Film Festival has been screening much of its program this spring online for free however the losses from Festival ticket sales threaten the viability of the organization for the future. Generous donations of artwork by area artists have been made available with all proceeds going to the Woodstock Film Festival.

Organized by Jen Dragon and Katharine T. Carter, the fundraiser features works by prominent artists generously donated by:

Scott Ackerman, Nin Brudermann, Jim C., Susan Copich, Linus Coraggio, Linda Cross, Ford Crull, John Cuneo, Peggy Cyphers, Josh Dorman, Stuart Farmery, Mary Frank*, Ginnie Gardiner, Jane Gennaro, Michel Goldberg, Brenda Goodman**, Kate Hawes, Clarity Haynes, Julie Hedrick, Sol Hill, Vandorn Hinnant, Catherine Howe, Heather Hutchison, Mark Thomas Kanter, Ellen Kozak, Janice La Motta, Elliott Landy, Mari Lyons,
* courtesy of Elena Zang Gallery
** courtesy Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

Private donations from prominent collectors include important artwork by Judy Pfaff, Helmut Newton, and Sir Terry Frost will be available as well as a rare Albrecht Dürer engraving. Cross Contemporary Partners has launched a virtual 3D installation available online accessible to patrons 24/7 to display and experience the artwork. The pieces can be purchased at their listed value with the option of making an offer above the artist's reserve price.

To view and purchase one of the artworks, visit Cross Contemporary Partners at bit.ly/wffbenefit20 and to visit the 3-D Virtual Reality Exhibition visit bit.ly/woodstockfilmfestivalbenefit

For additional information, contact Jen Dragon at crosscontemporarypartners@gmail.com or 845 247 3438, or Meira Blaustein at info@woodstockfilmfestival.org

ABOUT THE WOODSTOCK FILM FESTIVAL
The Woodstock Film Festival, now celebrating its 21st year, is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to present an annual program and year-round schedule of film, music, and art-related activities that promote artists, culture, inspired learning, and diversity. Founded in 2000 as a grassroots arts organization driven by a sheer love for film and community, Woodstock has quickly become one of the premiere independent film festivals in the U.S.
The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is now offering a new and innovative way to visit the historic site located in the Village of Catskill. Visitors can pick up a packet of information and supplies to enjoy a self-guided hour-long visit to the historic grounds and building exteriors. With the new Outdoor Explore Kits, visitors can step up onto the porch to sketch Cole’s favorite view with a new custom sketchbook and pencil, learn about the gardens and historic interiors in the printed Explore Guide, read Cole’s “Essay on American Scenery” on the bench under the historic Honey Locust tree, find maps to other nearby adventures, and more.

Outdoor Explore Kits come in “Basic” ($12) and “Family” ($14), and pick-ups are available every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings. Reservations must be made in advance to pick up during a specific time slot. All pick-ups are outdoors and contactless. They take place outside of Thomas Cole’s 1839 studio building on the historic campus. Outdoor Explore Kits include: an Explore at Your Own Pace Guide Book, an Outdoor Explore Welcome Card with recommended itinerary; Thomas Cole’s “Essay on American Scenery” Book, Cole Site Custom Sketchbook and Cedar Pencil; View on the Catskill Postcard; Take Action Cards; Walking Directions to a nearby public park with a creek that Cole frequently painted; Mini Hand Sanitizer; Thomas Cole Site & Art Trail Brochures; Changing Landscape Activity Book (Family Kit exclusive) and Box of Crayons (Family Kit exclusive). Kit reservations are available at thomascole.org/outdoorexplore. Members receive a 15% discount on all Kits and priority access to reserve the first morning time slot for pick-up. Visitors can become members at thomascole.org/membership.

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is offering its Outdoor Explore Kits for free for schoolchildren and their families within the Greene and Columbia County public school systems. Please e-mail education@thomascole.org anytime or call 518 291 9525 Wednesday through Friday to arrange a free kit pick-up.

This education initiative builds on years of free educational programming that the Thomas Cole Site hosts for local schoolchildren, both at the historic site and in classrooms when it is safe to do so. The organization designed its educational programs to meet teacher needs by using American art to teach American history curriculum themes and ensure that art has a place in the classroom. Additionally, the organization created free digital lesson plans and activities for remote learning that are available at thomascole.org/teacherresources. Even more educational content for audiences of all ages is available at thomascole.org/events.

The Thomas Cole Historic Site programming and operations are continually evolving under its initiatives for Diversity, Equity
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**The Thomas Cole National Historic Site**

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is an international destination presenting the original home and studios of Thomas Cole, the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, the nation's first major art movement. Located in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House; Cole's 1839 Old Studio; the recently reconstructed New Studio building; and panoramic views of the Catskill Mountains. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System. The Thomas Cole Site's activities include guided and self-guided tours, special exhibitions of both 19th-century and contemporary art, printed publications, lectures, extensive online programs, activities for school groups, the Cole Fellowship program, free community events, and innovative public programs such as the Hudson River School Art Trail—a map and website that enable people to visit the places in nature that Cole painted—and the Hudson River Skywalk—a new walkway connecting the Thomas Cole Site with Frederic Church's Olana over the Hudson River. The goal of all programs at the Thomas Cole Site is to enable visitors to find meaning and inspiration in Thomas Cole's life and work. The themes that Cole explored in his art and writings—such as landscape preservation and our conception of nature as a restorative power—are both historic and timely, providing the opportunity to connect to audiences with insights that are highly relevant to their own lives.

Visit thomascole.org/events for information on Outdoor Explore Kits and other outdoor experiences as well as digital content that you can enjoy now. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @thomascolesite.

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PhoeniciaVoiceFest.com  Ulster County, NY
As we examine the climate crisis and calculate how we will survive, sustainability becomes the key word that marries the practical with the idealistic in terms of planning how Today Builds Tomorrow.

In this column, we will identify specific issues that we can act on locally, maximizing the beneficial outcome through thoughtful, attainable actions.

We will present facts and the resources to back them up as we explore realistic options to address and solve the climate crisis that we have, through neglect or carelessness, created. By understanding how our daily actions increase or decrease our carbon footprint we will learn to take responsibility for making sound decisions to improve the quality of life for all of the earth’s occupants.

TODAY Builds TOMORROW

Sustainability ~ Innovation ~ Culture

By Robert Tomlinson

Let’s get started! Here’s a list of six things that you can do as an individual, beginning today, that will have a dramatic effect on reducing your carbon footprint and helping to fight the climate crisis:

1. Put three dryer balls in your dryer. They will reduce your drying time by 20% to 30%.
2. Eliminate herbicide and pesticide usage.
Congratulations!
You are now a climate crisis fighter!

3
Out in the world: bring reusable bags, non-plastic water bottles, cups and utensils

4
Sign up for Community solar. Participating in using alternative sources of energy is effective and powerful

5
Swap traditional cleaning supplies with cleaner, plant-based alternatives

6
Purchase toilet paper and paper towels made from recycled materials
At what moment in your life did you realize that you were an artist? And how did that shape the important decisions you needed to make from that point forward?
The moment I realized I was an artist came long after I started to paint or draw, or make things. Only when I began questioning myself why I make what I make did I start to consider myself an artist. From that time forward I wanted everything to be meaningful and speak about particulars. It became harder to make things. There was more time of inaction in the studio. And there were more spontaneity and deeper questions.

Do you believe that art can be taught?
Art is in a race with its interpretation. There is no grammar in making art, but rather a plurality of rhetoric. Craft is part of art making and craft can be taught and should be taught. It is good to know and have “tools” in case you want to use them to deliver your artistic message. What is the difference between a musician and a painter? Why should a musician learn how to play a musical instrument and how to read notes and spend all those hours of practice? I don’t want to take myself too seriously in the studio, but there is a desire to shoulder responsibilities for what I’m making and how I’m making it.

Can you please describe your creative process and how it has changed over the last 10 years?
I started to see in layers. Whether it is painting, or drawing, or sculpture, I learned how to build in layers and how to reconstruct in layers. Every layer is very abstract, but at the same time very specific and very important and cannot be skipped. And with this discipline came an amazing freedom in my touch. I’ve developed more respect for the materials and honor the knowledge that comes with them. It is very important for me now that the subject matter speaks to the material I choose, and vice versa.

In terms of composition I’ve become more democratic—everything counts, everything is important, each corner of the picture plane is taken into consideration.

How do you experience failure in your work and what are your coping processes?
For me failure is another word for an experience. I have tried so many things. I keep trying. It is a good thing to fall, hit bottom and have the leverage to push yourself up with stronger energy. Failure brings a sense of richness. Failure brings possibilities.

As you look back on your career, if you could do it differently, what would you change?
Experiment more, and work as if I will die in a couple of years.

What are you currently working on?
I am sticking with my frescoes and plaster high reliefs. But there is a desire to get rid of intention of making a “work of art.” I want to be closer to cave artists and folk artists, where people actually made things for some practical/spiritual use.

Partly I know what I want, and partly I just watch to see what will emerge in my hands and I will collaborate with it. And, simultaneously, these days being a young mother I am absorbing the experience of motherhood, feeding my imagination, getting pregnant with new ideas.

What other art forms have inspired you in your work?
A weird combination of dance, cooking and embroidery always inspired me and felt very natural. I do all of those things and
see so much in common. Among many characteristics there is a gesture, there is a color and there is a discipline.

Would you give us an example or two of other artist's works that you admire and tell us why?
There are too many of them and I don't feel like selecting just a few would be fair to the way I feel. And besides, I don't even know names of those who made cave paintings, or most of the African and Oceanic sculptures. Those are my true heroes. Even though I experience their work visually and look at it as pure art, I know that behind each work there was a practical purpose. And perhaps that is the key to the reason I'm so drawn to them.

What is the hardest thing about being an artist?
To stay honest to yourself without fear of being judged and misunderstood. Being authentic and trying to catch that change in my own growth and development is not easy. And even on an everyday basis it is hard to go to the studio and start doing something without any instructions: what, how and why are constant questions.

What is the best thing about being an artist?
The best thing about being an artist is the kind of freedom that gives you the permission to be willing to do something that may not work out. Making what you feel passionate about and at the same time walking on edge and not staying in a safe place gives such tremendous energy. I take it as a luxury calling myself an artist.

If you were reading a review of your work, what would you want it to say?
I do care about how people look at my work and what they see. I love my work to carry the dichotomy of being open and yet being mysterious. I love when viewers complete their own stories while looking at my work. I want people to relate and be engaged and to be challenged. The more comments on one piece, the better I feel about my work.
Rodney Alan Greenblat is a visionary artist, designer, and writer who has been making whimsical colorful artwork for over thirty years. In addition to his contribution to the downtown New York art scene, he has designed album covers, video game characters and fantastical worlds. One of Greenblat’s more notable contributions to pop culture was the 1990s Sony Playstation game PaRappa the Rapper. Greenblat’s new and archival works are on display in this playful and engaging show.

Hudson Hall is located at 327 Warren Street in Hudson. Exhibition hours are Friday from 1 to 5 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm. Reservations are required for entry, with a maximum of 6 people per tour, and 10 reservations maximum per hour. Tickets are $10, free for members, and are pre-purchase only. For more information, please visit hudsonhall.org.

*Please note: In keeping with New York State guidelines to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, visitors to Hudson Hall must comply with safety protocols, such as social distancing and wearing a mask. Hudson Hall reserves the right to refuse entry to anyone who does not comply with these guidelines or make reservations in advance. In keeping with state guidelines, check our website for updates regarding tours and hours.
As the Mid-Hudson Region enters Phase 4 of re-opening, the Hudson River Maritime Museum will be open to the public on a new reduced schedule starting Friday, July 11, 2020. Open Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 12:00 pm to 5 pm, the museum galleries will operate at 25% capacity. Admission pricing remains the same as before the pandemic: $9 for adults, $6 for seniors and children.

All visitors must wear masks inside the museum building and adhere to social distancing whenever possible. If visitors do not have masks, masks will be provided by the museum. The museum will also operate with a unidirectional entrance and separate exit. All hands-on activities, touch screens, and interactive displays will be closed for everyone’s safety. Bathrooms will be open and hand sanitizer stations available.

The Wooden Boat School will remain closed to the public. Boat rides aboard the 100% solar-powered tour boat Solaris are currently available for private charter only. Public rides will be available starting the weekend of July 17-19, 2020. All passengers must wear masks while on board and each ride will be limited to 10 passengers.

As always, the museum’s outdoor exhibits are open to the public, but we encourage social distancing at all times. The museum’s docks are open to transient boaters but shore facilities remain closed for the time being.

Located along the historic Rondout Creek in downtown Kingston, the Hudson River Maritime Museum is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the maritime history of the Hudson River, its tributaries, and related industries. For more details, including Solaris charter and tour information, please visit hrmm.org or call 845 388 0071.
Kaatsbaan Cultural Park in Tivoli announces that it will present a Summer Festival, with performances of dance and art, over nine consecutive weekends to celebrate its local community and artistic communities. With over 40 acclaimed dance artists and outdoor art and film installations, the Summer Festival will take place outside following social distancing and safety protocols on Kaatsbaan’s expansive 153-acres in the Hudson Valley.

Kaatsbaan will bring communities together to celebrate movement and the arts in a unique and unprecedented cultural event as we begin to emerge from isolation mandates placed upon us from the COVID-19 crisis.

This Summer Festival is a direct response to both the violence inflicted upon the global Black community and to the needs of the many unemployed artists. It will also provide a means for local economic recovery. In a period of social unrest, the Kaatsbaan Summer Festival will be dedicated to action, healing, beauty and harmony that dance and related arts can inspire. We welcome one and all to experience a unique and unifying cultural event.

Kaatsbaan’s outdoor Summer Festival will also be presented on the organization’s social media platforms and YouTube channel, as well as on participating artist’s social media for worldwide access and inclusion. The Summer Festival is an invaluable resource that Kaatsbaan is proud to provide during this time, and will document the effects of the historical pandemic on global arts and culture.

All performance tickets are free, with a request for donations to Kaatsbaan, a portion of which will be donated to the NAACP and/or to suggested organizations made by the Festival’s Advisory Committee.

Advance registration is required to attend the Summer Festival in person, as there are a limited number of reserved spots for each performance. The Summer Festival will follow all New York State safety mandates and protocols, including temperature checks, mask wearing, and physical distancing. General registration will be announced shortly.

Kaatsbaan Cultural Park was founded nearly 30 years ago to create an environment for creative action and achievement in the Hudson Valley. Focused on dance and related arts, Kaatsbaan pioneered the concept of providing a service for artists and local communities in an untapped environment—that of subsidized space in the rural countryside—an unencumbered place to create, observe, and join forces with exceptional works of art. Committed to the artists and students who work daily in our studios, to the audiences who engage with their creative energy, and to the Hudson Valley community which is our home, Kaatsbaan prioritizes its focus to be a positive economic and cultural impact on the Hudson Valley.

Kaatsbaan Cultural Park is located at 120 Broadway in Tivoli. Please visit kaatsbaan.org for more information and updates.
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ripe raspberries picked just before you eat them are the tastiest. If you have a space in your backyard you can dedicate to growing raspberries, you can enjoy the thrill of strolling outside, picking a bowlful, and eating them for breakfast, perhaps with a dollop of yogurt or splash of cream.

Because of their delicate nature, raspberries are difficult to ship. On a store shelf, they can pass from ripe to spoiled in a day. That makes store-bought berries expensive, and probably explains why they’re often a bit sour. Berries don’t bruise or spoil as quickly if they’re picked underripe, but they’ll never reach their peak of sweetness. If you can’t grow your own, the best raspberries come from farmers’ markets, picked ripe by local growers and trucked a few short miles to the market.

Raspberries grow on canes that burst up from the roots in spring and quickly reach a height of three to six feet. First-year canes have green stems and don’t usually bear fruit; second year canes are brown and woody, blossom in May, and ripen fruit in July. Some varieties, such as Heritage or Encore are “everbearing” and do not ripen all their fruit at once, but continue producing berries into the fall months. Personally, I prefer summer-bearers like Latham or Meeker, which produce abundantly during a few weeks in July, to a harvest stretched out more sparsely through the summer. Of course, raspberry-lovers with plenty of space for a large berry patch can enjoy a bounty from everbearers for months on end.

In our climate, about the only kind of soil in which raspberries won’t thrive is soggy, poorly drained soil, a problem easily solved with a raised bed. For the biggest harvests and tastiest berries, rich, humusy soil that is not too acidic works best. Well-rotted manure compost can be dug in when planting a new bed, along with some kelp meal or a balanced organic fertilizer for extra nutrients. A handful of gypsum scattered over every four to six square feet of tight clay soil will help loosen it. Thereafter, mulching with compost once a year can help keep an existing bed producing well.

Most raspberries have a lax, arching growth pattern. In a large patch, a support system can train the thorny canes upright so they don’t bar a picker’s path. At the end of the season, the two-year-old canes that have finished fruiting should be cut to the ground, leaving the first-year canes to bear the following year. Raspberries multiply from suckers, easily removed with a shovel if they pop up out of bounds. Otherwise, the suckers can expand the patch to give ever-bigger harvests as the years pass—making it easy to indulge in a bowl of fresh-picked raspberries for breakfast.
We are all continuing to adjust to the new reality of living and working with the COVID-19 virus. It has changed the way that we do almost everything here in the Catskills, including getting outdoors, enjoying our beautiful Catskill Mountains and taking care of the Catskill Park. That means we’re learning a new normal where we recreate locally and responsibly, observe posted closures and ensure proper social distancing when we are outside.

For many organizations here in the Catskills, including the Catskill Center, the response to the pandemic has changed the way they work, but hasn’t changed their commitment to meet their mission.

Catskill Center Urges All To #RecreateResponsibly

As areas reopen and get busier, it can be confusing to navigate this “new normal” in terms of how to recreate responsibly. The #RecreateResponsibly guidelines give advice on how to get outdoors right now. When you choose to recreate responsibly, you are doing your part to keep yourself and others safe and healthy. No one wants to see our parks and trails re-closed, and we can all do our part to take care of each other and these places so we can maintain access. We all have a shared responsibility to care for these places and ensure they remain for future generations to enjoy. Lead by example and join the Catskill Center and the Catskills Visitor Center in learning how to #RecreateResponsibly at recreateresponsibly.org.

Know Before you Go: Check the status of the place you want to visit. If it is closed, don’t go. If it’s crowded, have a plan B.

Plan Ahead: Prepare for facilities to be closed, pack lunch and bring essentials like hand sanitizer and a mask.

Stay Close to Home: This is not the time to travel long distances to recreate. Most places are only open for day use.

Practice Physical Distancing: Adventure only with your immediate household. Be prepared to cover your nose and mouth and give others space. If you are sick, stay home.

Play It Safe: Slow down and choose lower-risk activities to reduce your risk of injury. Search and rescue operations and health care resources are both strained.

Leave No Trace: Respect public lands and communities and take your garbage with you, including disposable gloves, and masks.

Day-Use Permits Required for the Peekamoose Blue Hole

On a busy summer weekend, anywhere from 600-800 people visit the Peekamoose Blue Hole area. The three-quarter acre footprint of the Blue Hole has been impacted with soil erosion, trampled vegetation, litter, food waste, human waste, pet waste, sound pollution, social trails, and wildlife impacts.

The Catskill Center, with support from the Rondout Néversink Stream Program, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and REI manages a stewardship program for the Blue Hole. Seasonal, full-time Catskill Center stewards are stationed at the Blue Hole from Memorial Day Weekend to the middle of September. The stewards are present to educate the public about best practices to enjoy the Blue Hole responsibly, while helping to make sure that all visitors of the area are able to enjoy a relaxing experience. The Blue Hole is public land, open for everyone to enjoy, but visitors may not understand the full consequences of leaving litter or trampling new trails in backcountry lands.

Permit-Only Access On Weekends and Holidays

In an effort to limit the overall use during peak visitation and to help protect the pristine quality of the Blue Hole, the DEC now requires that all weekends and holidays visitors of the Blue Hole book a permit.

Permits may be acquired online at ReserveAmerica.com, at a minimum of 24 hours in advance. Permits are available at no cost to the visitor, and each permit will allow access for up to 6 people. The goal of this permitting process is to limit the overall use during peak visitation to help protect the pristine quality of the Blue Hole.

Tips for an ideal Peekamoose Blue Hole visit:

• Visit during off-peak times, such as Monday through Friday or morning hours.
• Walk on designated trails or bare rocks to prevent further erosion and allow plants to regrow.

• Carry-in and carry-out everything brought to the area, including food scraps.

• Park only in designated areas along the road to avoid parking citations.

• No fires, portable speakers, or glass containers are permitted at the Blue Hole.

Kaaterskill Falls and Platte Clove
In addition to being located at the Peekamoose Blue Hole, Catskill Center Stewards are located at Kaaterskill Falls and at Platte Clove. There they interact with and help educate the thousands of visitors who come to these popular destinations.

Working to Make the Catskills More Accessible and Welcoming to All
Thanks to a recent Smart Growth Grant from NYSDEC to create a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Plan for the Catskill Center and to establish a working group to focus on JEDI issues within the Catskill Park. The Catskill Center looks forward to the opportunity to more comprehensively address these issues internally and is really excited to also explore them further with stakeholders Park-wide. If you're interested in learning more, please email cccd@catskillcenter.org.

Catskill Park Updates now Available for the Catskills Online
Due to the COVID-19 situation, local recreational opportunities are changing rapidly and the status of many outdoor related programs are changing. In place of regular trail conditions updates, the Catskill Center through Catskills Visitor Center is now posting updates related to the Catskill Park, Catskill trails, Catskill campgrounds and camping, Catskill boating and more at catskillinterpretivecenter.org/trail.
Visit the Catskill Park's Visitor Center Virtually
Before you embark on any adventure in the Catskills, be sure to stop at the Park's official Visitor Center, the Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Visitor Center! Located on Route 28 in Mount Tremper, the Catskills Visitor Center is your gateway to Catskills and the official visitor center for the Catskill Park, where you can learn about the vast outdoor recreational opportunities in the area as well as discover Catskills communities and rich cultural and natural history.

Please note that the Catskills Visitor Center building has been temporarily closed to the public as of March 14, 2020 to assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Staff remain available via telephone and email to answer questions and offer advice. Visit the Visitor Center’s website for more information. The Catskills Visitor Center site, trails and picnic areas remain open for the public to use and park information is available at the kiosk on the Visitor Center’s access drive, just off of Route 28. The CVC expects to begin offering limited, in-person services during the month of July. Visit catskillinterpretivecenter.org or the latest information on the reopening plans.

The Catskills Visitor Center is also home to numerous events and activities throughout the summer, including Family Days, interactive workshops and presentations, a Catskill Mountain Book Festival, guided outdoor adventures and more!

You can visit catskillvisitorcenter.org, call 845 688 3369, or email info@catskillcenter.org for more information. The Catskills Visitor Center is located at 5096 Route 28 in Mount Tremper.

A significant website upgrade is planned for the near future to better facilitate virtual Catskill Park visits!

Catskill Park Advisory Committee
Did you know that there is a group of Catskill Park stakeholders working together to address issues of park-wide importance in the Catskills? The Catskill Park Advisory Committee (CPAC) was established by the Catskill Center in consultation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) several years ago. The CPAC is a group of representatives from local governments and organizations currently chaired by the Catskill Center and provides a forum for communities and user groups of the Catskill Park and the Catskill Watershed. The purpose of the Committee is to provide assistance, advice and guidance to the DEC, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and other land managers in the management of the New York State Forest Preserve, the Catskill Park and the Catskill Watershed.

Meetings are held quarterly and are open to the public. If you’d like to learn more, join the mailing list or attend the next meeting, please contact the Catskill Center at 845 586 2611 or email them at cccd@catskillcenter.org with CPAC in the subject asking to be added to the mailing list.

Give Back to the Catskills
The natural beauty, the majesty of the mountains, the protection of the Catskill Forest Preserve, the region’s natural and cultural resources, all need your help! By supporting the work of the Catskill Center, you support: stewardship of our Catskill Park and its vast natural resources; the Center’s collaborative spirit as we convene, create partnerships and facilitate discussions that benefit the region; and the Center’s work to support education, arts and culture throughout the Catskills.

While the Catskill Center may not be able to interact in person for the time being, their staff continue to explore and launch new ways for them to remain connected with their members, supporters, and those who love the Catskills. Keep a look out for increased resources, virtual workshops, programs, and more from the Catskill Center and CVC websites. Stay tuned into their social media platforms—Twitter, Instagram and Facebook—for even more opportunities to engage, learn, and advocate with them.

Most importantly, know that by being a member and supporter of the Catskill Center you are helping protect and preserve the Catskill Mountains that we all love. This glorious Park will be even better preserved than before because of our collective hard work, and we will one day leave our homes to explore, travel, and enjoy everything this region has to offer once again.

To support the work of the Catskill Center, become a member online through their website at catskillcenter.org/membership or donate by mail: Checks made out to the “Catskill Center” can be mailed to Catskill Center, PO Box 504, Arkville, NY 12406.

Jeff Senterman is the Executive Director of the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development in Arkville, NY, a member of the Board of Directors for the American Hiking Society, the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce. Jeff graduated with a degree in Environmental Science from Lyndon State College and worked for many years as an Environmental Planner in New England before coming back to New York and the Catskills in the nonprofit sector. To learn more about the work of the Catskill Center in the Catskills, visit www.catskillcenter.org.
Silver Hollow Audio is proud to announce its next audiobook: Leslie T. Sharpe’s *The Quarry Fox: And Other Critters of the Wild Catskills*.

In *The Quarry Fox*, Sharpe chronicles the seasons and the vibrant wildlife of a landscape she cherishes, offering her keen insights in an engaging narrative that celebrates the splendor of the natural world. From crafty foxes and hibernating bears to vulnerable monarch butterflies, *The Quarry Fox* explores the creatures of the Great Western Catskills in loving, lyrical detail—which, at this particular moment in time, acts as a much-needed balm for our rattled senses. Heir to John Burroughs, who tramped through these mountains more than a hundred years before her, Sharpe revisits the meadows, the creeks, and the bobcat dens, and invites us to come along for the trek.

First published by Overlook Press in 2017, *The Quarry Fox* earned rave reviews. From *The New York Times*: “A poignant and modern reminder of untamed creatures so close to home.” From *Library Journal*: “This engaging portrait of the Catskill wilderness will appeal to nature enthusiasts of all stripes.” From *Guernica*: “Sharpe’s passion is heartwarming, but more importantly, it engenders a deep sense of regard for the future of these creatures and the often precarious wilderness they inhabit. What earns this book its place alongside those of John Burroughs, Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, and Annie Dillard are Sharpe’s elegant meditations on the interconnectedness of humans and the natural world.”

Leslie T. Sharpe is the former Vice President of the New York City Audubon Society, an environmentalist, and a lifelong naturalist living on Lazy Hawk Mountain in the Greater Western Catskills. She has taught writing and editing at Columbia University, New York University, and the City College of New York. *The Quarry Fox* is a contemporary addition to Silver Hollow Audio’s line of award-winning audio editions of nature classics that includes John Muir’s *My First Summer in the Sierra*, Henry David Thoreau’s *Autumnal Tints*, and Henry Beston’s *The Outermost House*, among others. Based in New York’s Catskill Mountains, Silver Hollow Audio specializes in spoken word recording and production. Its most recent independent project, the first-ever audiobook edition of Mary Austin’s 1903 nature classic, *The Land of Little Rain*, narrated by Emmy Award winner Ellen Parker, won a 2019 Earphones Award.

For more information, visit silverhollowaudio.com, or on Twitter @SHAudio.
“All art has this characteristic – it unites people.”

—Leo Tolstoy
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• Publishes the monthly **Guide magazine**, distributed throughout the Catskill Region and at New York State Thruway rest stops.

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<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>AugustineNursery.com</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
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<td>Brio’s</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>buttermilkfallsinn.com</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catskill Center for Conservation &amp; Development</td>
<td>catskillcenter.org</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catskill Forest Association</td>
<td>catskillforest.org</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catskill Mountain Foundation’s Kaaterskill Shoppe</td>
<td>catskillmtn.org</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catskills Visitors Center</td>
<td>catskillsvisitorcenter.com</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware &amp; Ulster Rail Road</td>
<td>durr.org</td>
<td>Inside Front Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Emerson Resort &amp; Spa</td>
<td>emersonresort.com</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNH Lumber</td>
<td>GNHLumber.com</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Hunter Mountain Realty</td>
<td>gordonrealty.com</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Green Palate</td>
<td>thegreenpalate.com</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greene County Economic Development Corp.</td>
<td>greeneountyedc.com</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure Catskills</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sportsman’s Alamo Cantina</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Villa Vosilla</td>
<td>villavosilla.com</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Windham Wine &amp; Liquors</td>
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The staff of the Catskill Mountain Foundation and the Catskill Mountain Region Guide would like to express our gratitude to all of the essential workers who are keeping us safe during the COVID-19 crisis.

“When I was a young boy and would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people that are willing to help.’”

—Fred Rogers