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DECEMBER 2023

On Wednesday, November 1, the BBC celebrated Greenwich Village's storied literary history by showcasing the rich and diverse talents of current Villagers in its 8th annual Literary Soiree. Memoir, poetry, fiction, and personal essay were among the genres read by a roster of very accomplished and engaging writers to an appreciative audience.

Michele Herman is a devoted teacher at The Writers Studio, a developmental editor, a writing coach, an award-winning translator of Jacques Brel songs, and an occasional columnist at *The Village Sun*. Her work has appeared in recent issues of *Carve*, *Ploughshares*, *The Hudson Review*, *The Sun* and other journals Michele read several of her poems.



Richard Eric Weigle is an award winning film producer and is one of the organizers for the annual Greenwich Village Film Festival. Richard Eric has had many articles about Greenwich Village, and actresses **Eva Marie Saint** and **Kim Hunter**, published in local newspapers and national magazines. Richard read a new piece entitled "Remembering Kim Hunter."



Stacey Miller is a native New Yorker. When she was eight she would take the subway by herself or with another 8 year old girl from Queens to the Greenwich House Music school. She has been an artist since childhood. She has written nonfiction stories about her life along the way. Stacey read a piece about how it's OK to feel what you feel.

Michael Anastasio is proud to have self-published his 300-page memoir, "Gay Boy's Life" two years ago and is currently working on the manuscript for his second book with the working title, "I Didn't Think to Ask for More. Michael read his "Second Grade Saints" chapter from "Gay Boy's Life."



Stephanie Urdang is a healer and a writer, is in the process of seeking an agent for a novel called *What They Did Instead*, or possibly it will be called *The Deeds of Desperate Women*, to be decided at the time of publishing. Stephanie read a chapter called, *A Beautiful Life*.



Kathleen Squires is an award-winning journalist, author, film producer and *Wall Street Journal* columnist, with a concentration in food and travel. She is now currently finishing a film about the legendary restaurant Raoul's. Kathleen read her essay entitled *An Upscale in neighboring Manhattan Restaurant for Bookworms and Barflies – Gotham Restaurant has built a restaurant in the bar.*



Joe Gramelspacher spends all the time he can on his stoop meeting the citizens of Grove Street. He writes about them, and the lessons they carry too. Joe read a few poems, and some prose, which seek to capture a bit of the old and new. For all who may find the great fortune of walking these streets we call home.



Jane Marx is featured in the documentary *Falling Forward*. She recited her poems at the Museum of Modern Arts; first open poetry mic and read her story *Dressing Up; at the City Winery*. Jane is a NYC Tour Guide, and storyteller extraordinaire. Jane read *From Start To Finland To Blink*.



Laura Fredricks is the recipient of the Ralph E. Chamberlain Award for extraordinary leadership in the field of fundraising and lifetime of service to the profession, and the New York Nonprofit Network's 50 Over 50 Award for excellence in media and philanthropy. Laura read from her latest book, *Hard Asks Made Easy: How to Get Exactly What you Want*.



Most of all, thanks to ALL of you who attended our literary soiree. It was such a fun evening, and so wonderful for us all to be together again, celebrating the writers and writing of our beloved Greenwich Village.

The BBC sends our condolences to the family of **Maureen Dorsey**. She was a long time member and resident of 72 Barrow Street. She will be remembered as kind, cheerful and she loved the neighborhood.

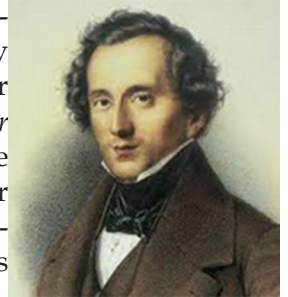
2023 GUIDE TO HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Christmas Eve, at 5:00pm is the traditional time to celebrate the holiday with carols at the Washington Square Arch. "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men" will ring out to remind us all of the true meaning of the holidays as we celebrate virtually from our homes.

Church of St. Luke in the Fields, 487 Hudson Street, Dec.7, 2023- 7:30pm (lecture at 6:30pm with **Dr. David Schulenberg**) Christmas with the Bach Family David Shuler, music director with Baroque in the Fields orchestra The program of festive music for the holiday season includes **Johann Sebastian Bach's Cantata 91** (Gelobet seist du), *the Magnificat* (Berlin version) by his son **C.P.E. Bach**, and *Uns ist ein Kind geboren* by **Johann Ludwig Bach** (one of J.S.'s third cousins). \$40 general admission, \$30 students and seniors

Greenwich Village Chamber Singers

Sing We Now: A GVCS Holiday Concert, Friday, December 15, 8:00pm, Our Lady of Pompeii Church, 25 Carmine Street, NYC. In our newest performing home at Our Lady of Pompeii Church, come hear GVCS present Poulenc's *Four Christmas Motets* alongside the moving J.S. Bach double choir *motet Komm, Jesu Komm* and traditional carol arrangements. Works by **Chaim Parchi, Felix Mendelssohn, Hugo Chaim Adler, Wilametta Spencer and Rosephanye Powell** round out a program that will warm your hearts for the holiday season. Tickets at www.gvcsingers.org, and \$25 at the door.



Felix Mendelssohn

West Village Chorale Greenwich Village Caroling Walk Saturday, December 9 at 2:00pm. Get out your Christmas sweaters (ugly or otherwise!), your Santa suits and your festive holiday finery, and warm up your



fa-la-las! Join us for our 49th annual Caroling Walk—and stroll with members of the Chorale through our historic West Village neighborhood, singing along as we lead seasonal favorites! It's fun for the entire family, it's free (donations gladly accepted), and we even supply the music...which will feature some new carols, added this year by popular demand! Come sing with us!

Light of Hope, A Song of Peace, December 17, 8:30pm, Judson Memorial Church. As we approach the shortest day of the year, come celebrate the light and warmth of the season with the West Village Chorale's annual holiday concert! In addition to reprising several fes-

... tive favorites from years past, the program features gorgeous arrangements of beloved secular and sacred carols, as well as new favorites from many traditions, ornamented by the **Caliope Brass** quintet.



You'll even get the chance to sing along on a few numbers! Advance Tickets: \$30 general/\$20 student At the Door: \$35 general/\$25 student.

Municipal Art Society of New York. *Christmas Day in Rockefeller Center*, December 25 10:00am - 12:00pm ET Join architectural historian **Anthony W. Robins** for this popular annual Christmas Day tour of Rockefeller Center, the private real estate venture that has evolved into the public square of midtown Manhattan and an urban wonderland during the holiday season. Discover the surprising history, remarkable art and stunning architecture of the development conceived as a new home for the Metropolitan Opera but built instead as Radio City. Tickets \$20 members, \$30 non-members www.mas.org



Our Lady of Pompeii. Christmas Activities (Roman Catholic) (212.989.6805) 25 Carmine St.

Sunday, December 24, 5:00pm: Vigil Mass; 12:00am, Midnight Mass
Monday, December 25, 9:00am: Mass; 11:00am: Mass; 12:15pm: Mass

Judson Memorial Church (Ecumenical) 55 Washington Square South at Thompson Street. For Christmas service times, please call 212.477.0351.

Church of St. Luke in the Fields (Presbyterian) 487 Hudson Street. Sunday, December 24: Festive Chorale Eucharist, Caroling begins a 9:30am, Monday, December 25, Services 8:00am, 9:15am, 11:15am.

Greenwich House Fall Benefit, Many Doors, One Mission was held on November 14 at the Tribeca Rooftop, NYC. This event will raised mission-critical funds to support Greenwich House's programs in arts and education, older adult services, and mental and behav-

...ioral health, and to preserve and modernize Greenwich House's historic West Village buildings and spaces.

Greenwich House recognized the remarkable efforts of our teams, programs, members, and two distinguished honorees — Shannon Carr and BBC's own Kathy Donaldson. This memorable event, hosted at the scenic Tribeca Rooftop, brought together over 250 neighbors and supporters.



Shannon Carr, Kathy Donaldson, Darren Bloch (Chief Executive Officer)



Arthur Makar, Kathy Donaldson, Ken Jackson



Ken Jackson, Richard Eric Weigle, (Tom Burrows was nearby)

THE FIRST SONG

Have you ever wondered why there's so much singing at Christmas? This is the story of the first song. It's a true story, just as all stories are, if you believe in them.

The story begins a long time ago when Earth and Sun made the first beings — the very first plants and animals and people. It was Springtime and the Sun shone warm and bright from his high perch and Earth proud mother that She was held her newborns and relished them with tenderness and love.

It was a time of joy, it was a time of great delight. The Moon waned and waxed time and time again in the night sky and the Children of the Earth grew well and strong through Summertime. They played and danced and Earth and Sun watched over them.

Then Autumn came and the Earth began to sleep much longer every day. She grew tired and pale. She could no longer feed her children and had no strength to make new life. High above the Sun grew more distant and took longer to return each morning. The nights grew longer and cold winds blew where none had blown before.

And then one night Earth went to sleep and never did wake up. She wrapped herself in a blanket of snow and rested her tired head on pillows of dried leaves and She did not wake up. Her children could do nothing to rouse her from her slumber. They prodded her, they called her, but She would not awaken.

In the sky, the Sun was nowhere to be seen and the Children of the Earth felt fear and also despair. This was the longest night that they had ever known. "What shall become of us?" they pondered. "Earth Mother sleeps and Father Sun is so far away that we can barely see him in the sky. He is much too far to hear our calls. What shall we do?"

So they brought their questions to the Moon, the sister of the Sun. She closed her eyes, took a deep breath and looked within herself. She opened her eyes and said, "When hope is lost the best way to get it back is with a song. Climb you the tallest trees, the biggest hills and yule a song to reach the Sun"

Now yule is a word from one of the world's oldest tongues. It is related to words like

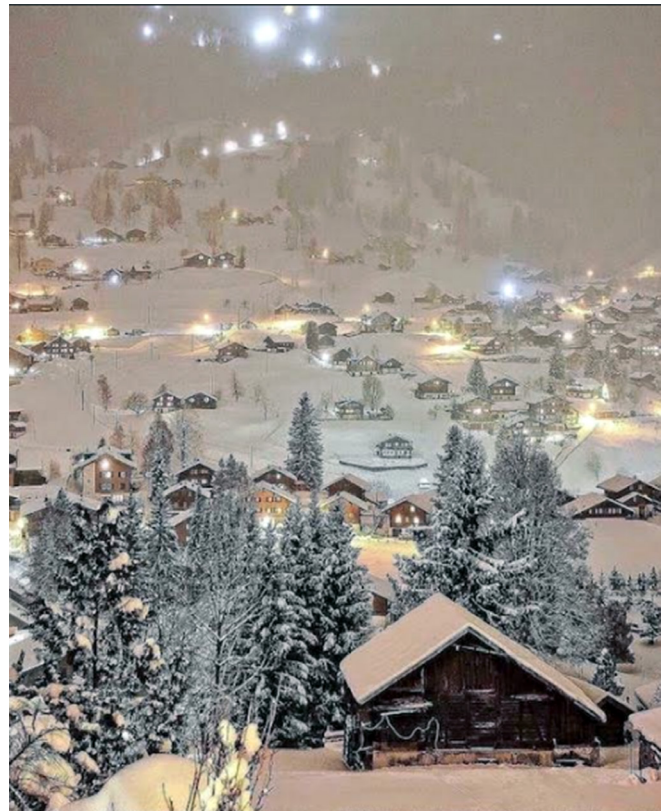
"yell" or "yodel" and it means "to call out in song." But the first beings had never heard a song so they asked the Moon's advice.

"Take the best of what you have, the best of what you are. Take what you love, take what you cherish most. Take your joys, your dreams, your hopes and weave them together in a sound." And so they did. They thought their finest thought, their most precious dreams. Their voices rang out and made a bridge to reach the Sun.

He heard and turned and wrapped himself in all his light and sped to where the yuling voiced called. And as he did Mother Earth dreamed a dream of Spring, And so the wheel of life made its first turn and hope and joy prevailed. And ever since, that time of the year has been called Yule in honor of the song.

But the first song had such power that the First Beings did not give it up and it was passed from generation to generation. At times the song is very soft but at Yule time, the song becomes very strong. We sing thanks to those who came before and sing our fondest wishes to those who will come after. We bask in the light of reawakened hope and we welcome Yule.

from The Winter's Night by Mother Tongue



Happy Holidays from the BBC