

PROLOGUE

News from Mohonk Mountain Stage Company

Vol. #9 Issue #2 February 2004 Robert G. Miller, Producing Director

Our Ninth Year!

FROM THE PRODUCER...

Thanks, Captain



When Bob Keeshan appeared on our small, black-and-white TV screens in 1955, with his walrus mustache and his oversized pockets stuffed with treasures, we welcomed him into our hearts. Captain

Kangaroo stayed in our hearts and in our children's hearts for over 35 years while his show ran on CBS and PBS.

Keeshan did not work in front of a studio audience. He wanted us kids at home to feel that he was talking directly to us. And we did. He chose a grandfatherly persona because he recognized the special relationship that existed between grandfathers and grandchildren and knew that children would respond. And we did. But we loved him for other reasons.

He never patronized us. He never thought we were too stupid to appreciate beauty or recognize the grace and mystery of nature. He didn't treat us

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Home Cooking: The Short Stories and Essays of

Laurie Colwin

Saturday, January 31, 2004

@ 8 PM

**St. Andrew's Church on
Main St. in New Paltz**

Admission \$7

"One of the delights of life is eating with friends; second to that is talking about eating. And, for an unsurpassed double-whammy, there is talking about eating while you are eating with friends." So begins Laurie Colwin's **Home Cooking**, one of her many love letters to the joys of food.

Colwin, who died unexpectedly and tragically in 1992 at the age of 48, authored several novels and collections of short stories, as well as countless essays through her regular food column in *Gourmet* magazine. She amassed a large following for her warm tales of love, family and food, and was honored with an O. Henry Award for her short story collection, **The Lone Pilgrim**, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1987. She attended Bard College, the Sorbonne, the New School for Social Research and Columbia University before embarking on a career in publishing in 1965, and served on the editorial staffs of several leading publishers, including Putnam, Viking Press, Pantheon Books and E.P. Dutton. In 1969 she sold her first story to *The New Yorker*, and in 1975 published her first novel, **Shine On, Bright and Dangerous Object**. In 1977 she left publishing to devote herself completely to her writing.

Food was central to Colwin's life and career. She cooked for anti-war protesters during the 1968 campus uprisings at Columbia, and later volunteered at the Olivieri Center for Homeless Women. For many, her regular column in *Gourmet* magazine was the beginning of their lifelong friendship with this warm, unpretentious writer who, as Michelle Brode wrote, "makes life feel appealing, warm, intimate, real and brave."

continued on page 2, col. 2



Knowing Women

by Suzanne Logan

**Saturday, February 14,
2004 @ 8 PM**

**St. Andrew's Church on
Main St. in New Paltz
Admission \$7**

As our Valentine to the Hudson Valley, we are pleased to present an encore reading of this delightful new play, which was "sold out" during our premiere presentation last fall. What happens when you take five women over ninety and sit them down in the same room? Set in a space deliberately meant to blur the line between a nursing home and a kind-of cosmic waiting room, the women come together to explore their lives, past and present: the importance of husbands and lovers, politics and religion, work and play, the imminence of death and what, if anything, lies beyond it. The result? Exhilarating, as they laugh, cry, joust and quibble their way through nearly half a millenium of collective living.

Based on Logan's interviews with a diverse group of women, all of whom lived into their nineties, **Knowing Women** is being revised and further developed for this special encore performance. You'll meet (or rekindle your friendship with) Anna Fischer, a German/Jewish emigre, social worker and art collector; Pauline Thompson, a nurse at the Battle of the Bulge, teacher, and passionate devotee of 19th-century poetry; Sarah Brady Moore, the wife of a Kentucky sharecropper and mother of 10 or 12 (so many died at an early age she was no longer sure of the exact number); Sophia Mumford, a former suffragist, Greenwich Village bohemian, and the wife of Lewis Mumford, one of the great minds of the 20th century; and Carrie MacDonald, waitress and survivor of the Dust Bowl. These strong-willed, strong-minded ladies will shake up every preconceived notion you have of old age, and steal your heart in the process.

Knowing Women

will once again be read by Elizabeth Askue, Ruth Berg, Ann Duthers, Laura Love Kroll and Rosemarie Navarra, with Christine Crawfis directing and Laurence Carr as dramaturg.



Vanguard Voices Journal

For the second year in a row, MMSC's **Vanguard Voices Project** has provided a home where writers of the future can develop new works in a nurturing environment. This season's **Project** featured the plays of six young writers, chosen from current and past students in Laurence Carr's Dramatic Writing Program at SUNY/New Paltz, and culminated in two compelling evenings of cutting-edge theatre and thought-provoking talk-back sessions following the readings.

An exciting new aspect of this year's project is the inaugural publication of MMSC's official **Vanguard Voices Journal**, containing the revised scripts for all of the plays presented in the 2003 Vanguard Voices Project and slated for publication in late March. This journal also marks MMSC's publishing debut; a second journal highlighting the literary efforts of Hudson Valley writers is planned for publication this fall.

Advance copies of the **Vanguard Voices Journal** are \$20 each if reserved with a \$10 pre-publication deposit by February 15 (see form on the back page; make checks payable to "Mohonk Mountain Stage Company," and send to MMSC, P.O., Box 507, New Paltz, NY 12561). Post-publication copies will be \$25 each. (Postage and handling are an additional charge.) Reserve your copy now!



Laurie Colwin - *continued from pg. 1, col. 2*

MMSC's cozy evening will highlight Colwin's love of cuisine in vignettes like *Alone in the Kitchen with an Eggplant*, *Repulsive Dinners: A Memoir*, and *The Glory of Chutney*, while her talents for writing fiction will be featured through the short stories **The Lone Pilgrim** and **Intimacy**. Reading these delectable morsels will be Ruth Berg, Christine Crawfis, Ann Duthers and Rosemarie Navarro.

First Chapters

And in the beginning...

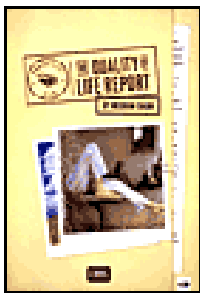
Saturday, February 21, 2004 @ 8 PM

St. Andrew's Church on Main St. in New Paltz

Admission \$7

If you're one of "those people" who decides whether or not to finish a book based on your reaction to the first chapter, or you're so stymied by the vast number of wonderful new books that you can't decide which one to choose first, we have the perfect solution for you. Join us on Saturday, February 21, when we'll read the first chapters from these seven debut novels on *The New York Times*' "Notable Books from 2003" list:

And Now You Can Go, by Vendela Vida. One afternoon, 21-year-old Ellis is held at gunpoint by a man who wants to shoot himself and her. She manages to talk him out of it, but her recovery from the trauma leaves her psychologically reeling. The novel traces her sometimes frustrating, sometimes unexpected steps toward a return to normalcy. Vida's unconventional, unsentimental book turns what might have been just another tale of recovery into a compelling story with keenly drawn details, a fresh voice, and heart.



The Quality of Life Report, by Meghan Daum. Lucinda Trout, a young assistant producer for a New York City television morning show, is sent on assignment to Prairie City, a small Midwestern town. Embracing the charms of affordable real estate and country hospitality, she soon moves to

"P.C.," as the locals call it, but finds that life in the heartland is not all she expected.

The Bug, by Ellen Ullman. This compelling story vividly traces the fate of computer programmer Ethan Levin as he wrestles with an elusive and destructive computer bug that jeopardizes the future of the database start-up for which he works. A thrilling, edgy piece that is part psychological drama, part love story, and wholly fascinating.



The Dogs of Babel, by Carolyn Parkhurst. Paul, a linguist living in Virginia, learns that his wife, Lexy, has died mysteriously in a fall from an apple tree in their back yard. Lorelei, Paul's Rhodesian Ridgeback dog, is the only witness to the event, and Paul resolves to teach her to talk so that she can reveal what happened.

The Eyre Affair, by Jasper Fforde.

Picture an alternate world where literature is more revered than professional sports, and vending machines spouting Shakespearean soliloquies dot the landscape, and you have the setting for this quirky, clever debut. The intrepid heroine, Thursday Next, is an operative in the Literary Detective Division, placed in charge of an investigation to find master criminal Acheron Hades. Hades has stolen a device that allows people to enter into literary works, and has subsequently kidnapped Jane Eyre. By the end of the novel, Thursday manages to thwart Hades' evil scheme and give *Jane Eyre* a more satisfying ending, as well.



The Hazards of Good Breeding, by Jessica Shattuck. The comfortable existence of Jack Dunlap, scion of a blue-blooded family in Concord, MA, is about to be turned on its ear: his wife, who left him two years before and now lives in NYC, has returned to Concord, his daughter Caroline has come home for the summer after graduating college, and Eliot, his 10-year-old son, is reeling from the unexpected and unexplained departure of his beloved baby sitter, Rosita. In a carefully crafted novel using multiple viewpoints, Shattuck illuminates the isolated lives of her characters and the fragile aristocratic social structure that traps them.

Continued on Pg. 4, col. 1

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e-mail: mmstageco@aol.com

First Chapters - continued from pg. 3, col. 2

The Minotaur Takes A Cigarette

Break, by Steven Sherrill. The Minotaur, a mythical half-man, half-bull, has endured 5000 years of immortality and now lives in the Lucky-U trailer park in a small North Carolina town, working as a line cook at Grub's Rib. He has learned to cope with the limitations of his existence -- deadly horns, communication largely reliant upon grunts, and a body not meant for clothing -- but his greatest challenge is dealing with people. When he falls in love with Kelly, a waitress prone to epileptic fits, he must navigate the tricky path to happiness that is threatened by two cruel and obnoxious young waiters at the steakhouse. "One of the most original and oddly moving novels in some time . . . funny, touching, haunting." -- *The Charlotte Observer*



Readers for this evening of firsts include Laurence Carr and Ann Citron. Let "First Chapters" pique your curiosity about these intriguing new works. We hope these first impressions will leave a lasting impression on you.



Bob's notes -

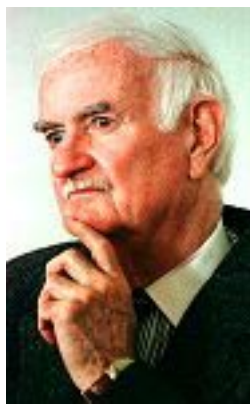
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cynically as a market to be exploited, or as potentially lifelong consumers of a particular brand of cola or cereal, but as people, capable of understanding and caring.

"We have respect for our audience," he once told a *New York Times* reporter. "We operate on the conviction that it is composed of young children of potentially good taste, and that this taste should be developed."

Bob Keeshan died on Friday, January 21. We would like to dedicate our bedtime story series to him -- and to the Captain.

Bob



Uncle Bob's Special Cozy Tuesday Night Sleepytime Series

A Unique Cookies & Cocoa
Bedtime Stories Opportunity

Tuesday, February 3,

Tuesday, February 10, and

Tuesday, February 17, 2004

at 7:30 PM

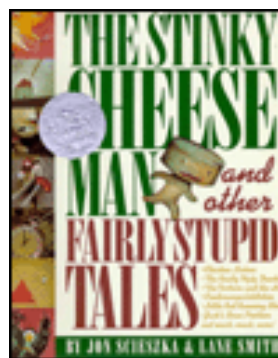
St. Andrew's Church on Main St. in New Paltz

Admission \$7 for adults; \$4 for children

What better way to combat the cold-weather blues than by indulging your "inner child" (or indulging the children within your household) and joining us on the first three Tuesdays of February for **Uncle Bob's Special Cozy Tuesday Night Sleepytime Series**. We have three specially-themed evenings for your snuggling pleasure that will include well-beloved bedtime stories and new soon-to-be favorites. Each cozy evening will begin at 7:30 p.m., a half-hour earlier than usual, so that our young audience members can join us. This series is strictly BYOB -- bring your own blanket -- and we'll offer prizes each night for the best pajamas.

February 3 - Bob's Bedtime Back-to-Basics

We'll start off the series with a sampling of everyone's well-loved favorites: *Make Way For Ducklings*, Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Runaway Bunny*, *Good Night Moon*, a handful of nursery rhymes, and more.



February 10 - A Bubble Off Plumb

Think of them as bedtime stories with a twist! Among our offerings will be *The Stinky Cheese Man*, *Politically Incorrect Stories*, Shel Silverstein, the works of Roald Dahl and, of course, the inimitable Dr. Seuss.

Continued on Pg. 5. col. 2

Save Those Trees!

We would like to continue to send *Prologue* via e-mail to as many members of our mailing list as possible this year: it's fast, it's inexpensive, it doesn't clutter up your mailbox, it's in color, and you will get your newsletter before your neighbor. Many of you are already receiving your MMSC news this way and can vouch for our claims.

Remember, to use this service, you will need a computer with a high-speed Internet connection (with a dial-up connection it will take you approximately 3 months to download the newsletter) and *Acrobat Reader* as a PDF file. (You can download a free version of *Adobe® Reader®*, the latest *Acrobat Reader* incarnation, by going to <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/> and clicking on the "Get Adobe Reader" button on the bottom right of the page.)

Of course, we will still send you *Prologue* in the old fashioned way, through snow, sleet and rain, if you so desire. However, if you would like to try electronic delivery, please let us know by calling 845/255-3102 or contacting us at mmstageco@aol.com.



Promotional Announcement

Sleep, Nefertiti, Sleep

Written and directed by
Frank Crocitto

Performed by
The Present Company
at The Schoolhouse,
62 Plains Road New Paltz

This new play dramatizes the difficulties Akhnaton, the renegade Egyptian pharaoh, has in ruling his kingdom and his sister/queen, Nefertiti, one of the most beautiful women of the ancient world.



Performances: February 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29.
Fridays & Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m.
Tickets: \$10.

Call (845)255-2533 for reservations or
e-mail: info@discoveryinstitute.org

Hold A Seat For Me!

The seats at St. Andrew's were filled on January 17th with many new, as well as many loyal, MMSC "attentive listeners" as we presented **Father and Son: The Short Stories of John and David**



Uddike, the first program of our Winter/Spring '04 Season. We are, of course, delighted to be continuing the wonderful growth in our attendance. With so many exciting events planned for the coming months, we want to make sure that you, our loyal long-time listeners, don't get left out at any MMSC readings. So, we take this opportunity to remind everyone about our **HOLD A SEAT FOR ME** Program.

We will take your name for our "hold-a-seat-for-me-until-7:45 PM" list. Just call us at (845) 255-3102 and leave your name, the number of seats you want held, and the date of the performance you want to attend. We will hold those seats until 7:45 on the evening of the performance; after 7:45 we will release them to those waiting in line.

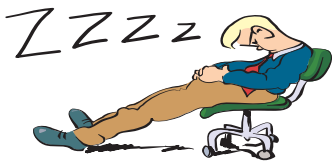


Bedtime Stories - continued from pg. 4, col. 2

February 17 - Slightly Scary Stories

We'll explore the wilder, scarier side of bedtime literature with ghost tales of the Hudson Valley, *Rip Van Winkle*, *Jumanji*, *Where the Wild Things Are* and Edward Gorey. We won't have a campfire (St. Andrew's won't allow it), but you can bring your own flashlight and prepare to be spooked (a little) on our final night of the series.





You snooze,
You lose.

Here's The MMSC Line-Up of Events for Winter/Spring 2004

Here's a handy-dandy, short reference list of all the exciting programs coming up.
Check your current edition of **Prologue** for details about each program.
Call 255-3102 for further information and to reserve seats.

January

Saturday, January 31 - **Home Cooking: The Short Stories and Essays of Laurie Colwin** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

February

Saturday, February 14 - **Knowing Women** by Suzanne Logan - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Saturday, February 21 - **First Chapters: And in the beginning...** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Tuesdays, February 3, 10, and 17 - **Uncle Bob's Special Cozy Tuesday Night Sleepytime Series** - St. Andrew's Church - 7:30 PM - Admission \$7 adults; \$4 children each night

March

Saturday, March 6 - **The Bus Driver Who Wanted To Be God: The Very Short Stories of Etgar Keret** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Saturday, March 20, Thursday March 25, Friday March 26 and Saturday March 27 - **Copenhagen** by Michael Frayn - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$10

April

Saturday, April 3 - **Cold Buffet II: MMSC's Audience and Actor Challenge** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Saturday, April 17 - **Spring Training: Roger Angell and Our National Pasttime** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Saturday, April 24 - **Heart Songs: The Short Stories of Annie Proulx** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

May

Saturday, May 1 - **The Dark Corners of Daily Beings: The Short Stories of William Trevor** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Saturday, May 8 - **Crazy Ideas: The World According to David Sedaris** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Friday and Saturday, May 14, 15, 21 and 22 - **The Waverly Gallery** by Kenneth Lonergan - Unison Arts and Learning Center - 8 PM - Admission \$9 for Unison members and \$12 for non-members; students with ID will be admitted for \$5

June

Saturday, June 5 - **First Lessons: The Wisdom of Phyllis McGinley** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

Wednesday, June 16 - **Bloomsday** - St. Andrew's Church - 8 PM - Admission \$7

VANGUARD VOICES JOURNAL

Pre-publication Order Form

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CITY _____ STATE _____

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E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

_____ # of journals ordered (\$10 non-refundable deposit each)

Vanguard Voices Journals are \$20 each if reserved with a \$10 pre-publication deposit.

Advance order deadline: **February 15, 2004.**

Post-publication copies are \$25 each.

Postage and handling will be an additional charge.

Send to MMSC, PO Box 507,
New Paltz, NY 12561