

PROLOGUE

News from Mohonk Mountain Stage Company

December 2004 - Vol. #9, Issue #10 Robert G. Miller, Producing Director

Our Tenth Anniversary!

FROM THE PRODUCER...



"Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear . . . out of the past comes the thundering hoof beats of the great horse Silver. **The Lone Ranger** rides again!"

Many of us remember those magical days of yesteryear, sitting around the radio, which was then the size of an icebox, listening to the wide world of news, music and imagination ride the radio waves through the ether into our homes.

Television was actually available in the late 1930s, but the government banned its commercial development so that TV technology could be used in the war effort. But in 1945 War II was over, and the ban on TV was lifted. Within several years most of the best-loved radio programs, including **The Lone Ranger**, had migrated from the large screens of our imaginations to the small black and white screen of the TV set.

But during its Golden Age, radio sustained the soul of the nation through the Great Depression and held us together during World War II. Radio helped us to see the real world and to escape it when we needed to. No one who

(continued on page 3, col. 2)

New York Writing Including the winners of the Vanguard Voices of the Hudson Valley Poetry Contest 2004



ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY!

*Saturday, December 4,
2004 @8 PM
St. Andrew's Church,
163 Main, New Paltz
Admission: \$7*

* * *

As seen through the eyes of many writers, New York will shine on December 4th in rich and illuminating ways. And in honor of its Tenth Anniversary Celebration Season, MMSC is proud to present the voices of the very best Hudson Valley poets as the work of the winners of the **Vanguard Voices of the Hudson Valley Poetry Contest** for 2004 is performed by the MMSC Readers Theatre Group.

With over two hundred submissions to the 2004 competition, the First Place was awarded to **Nancy Baker Rullo of Mt. Tremper, NY**. Second and Third Place were awarded, respectively, to **Will Nixon of Woodstock, NY** and **Leo Vanderpot of Red Hook, NY**. In addition, ten Honorable Mentions were selected.

Judges for the 2004 Vanguard Voices competition were William Connors, Stella Deen, and Don Wildy, with Barbara Adams serving as the final judge. "Choosing three Winners and ten Honorable



Mentions out of over 200 poems submitted was no easy task," says Ms. Adams. "There were many fine poems among the ones we didn't choose. It was an honor to read the poetry of my Hudson Valley colleagues."

In addition to the public performance in **New York Writing**, all prize-winning poems are being pub-

(continued on page 2, col. 2)



A Celebration of Old Time Radio TWO PERFORMANCES ONLY!

Friday and Saturday
December 10 & 11, 2004 @ 8 PM
Unison Arts and Learning Center
Mountain Rest Road in New Paltz
Admission: \$9 for Unison members
and \$12 for non-members

Imagine for a moment what wondrous, magical devices both the telephone and radio must have seemed to the folks of the 20's and 30's and how quickly they came to be taken for granted, much the same as we take our cell phones and computers for granted today. But it was the universal focus on sound and the imagination that made those first years of wildly popular transmissions so very different from anything that preceded it or succeeded it. It provided a sorely needed means of escape from some of the most trying years in humanity's collective history.

It was the glow of that radio dial, day or night, but far better at night. The glow of that dial, and almost imperceptibly, the faint glow of the tubes behind the grill cloth of the cabinet. It was almost hypnotic.



By the mid-1930's the enormously popular American radio shows featured all the popular genres of American entertainment: comedy, drama, horror, mystery, romance and music. Among the best-

known performers and shows: The Marx Brothers, Burns and Allen, Abbott and Costello, the Shadow, Flash Gordon. In this joyous program, MMSC's favorite performers will recreate the shows, routines and personalities of the golden age of radio.



Coming soon to the MMSC Web Site
MMSC's Blog Notes
Are you ready for this?!?! Keep watchin'.

(continued from page 1 col. 2)

lished in MMSC's *Vanguard Voices of the Hudson Valley – Poetry 2004*, Volume 1, Issue 2. In affirming MMSC's decision to begin publishing as an integral part of its programs, MMSC's Producing Director, Robert Miller, noted, "As a company dedicated to celebrating the written word, MMSC recognizes its responsibility not only to revel in the work of gifted authors past and present, but also to contribute to the development of a body of literature yet to be written." MMSC Publishing's *Vanguard Voices of the Hudson Valley*, a semi-annual literary journal, focuses on the development of new plays and a regional poetry competition.



Readers for this very special evening dedicated to writers writing about NY, as well as the winners of the Poetry Contest, will be William Connors, Don Wildy, RoseMarie Navarra, and Christine Crawfis.

Winners of the 2004 Vanguard Voices Poetry Contest
Judges: William Connors, Stella Deen, Don Wildy
Final Judge: Barbara Adams

First Prize

Nancy Baker Rullo, Mt. Tremper, NY
Rocks Wood, Earth, Water and You - for Tony
Between the Ocean and the River – Our Dark Light

Second Prize

Will Nixon, Woodstock, NY
My Late Mother as a Ruffed Grouse

Third Prize

Leo Vanderpot, Red Hook, NY
Frank

Honorable Mention

Nancy Beard, Kingston, NY - *Uncle Ike*
Matthew Spireng, Kingston, NY - *Floating Things*
Andre Moul Ross, Stone Ridge, NY - *Girl Talk*
James Finn Cotter, Newburgh, NY - *Suzhou*
David Applebaum, New Paltz, NY - *The Ninth Elixir*
Linda Melick, New Paltz, NY - *Housemaid*
Raymond B. Anderson, New York, NY - *The Dangling Man*
Bobbi Katz, Port Ewen, NY - *Unavailable: A Love Story*
Kate Hymes, New Paltz, NY - *Back to School*
Geri Rosenzweig, Ossining, NY - *The Sitar Player and the Rebbe*

A Brief History of the Golden Age of Radio 1935-45



1935 - Radio became the “central medium” of Depression America; 2 of 3 homes had radio sets, the 4 national and 20 regional networks provided programs everywhere in America 24 hours a day, advertising agencies shifted money from newspapers to radio as public trust in print media declined but grew stronger in radio.

1936 - CBS began the “Columbia Workshop” series. In the November election, FDR used radio more effectively than Alf Landon, with both parties spending a record \$2 million on radio.

1937 - Archibald MacLeish produced an allegory on the growing threat of war in Europe with his radio play “The Fall of the City” on CBS, Arch Oboler produced “Lights Out” on NBC, Orson Welles began his “Mercury Theatre” series on CBS. When the Hindenburg exploded at Lakehurst NJ May 15, 1937, WLS announcer Herb Morrison and engineer Charles Nehlsen were making a disc recording and thus were able to capture the event “live” as it happened. This recording was so unique and dramatic that NBC decided to break its own rule banning records on the radio and allowed this recording to be broadcast on the network.



1938 - two radio programs in October exposed the growing national fear of war “Air Raid” by Archibald MacLeish; “War of the Worlds” by Orson Wells. “The Plot to Overthrow Christmas” by Norman Corwin was heard by Edward R. Murrow in New York, at home briefly from his European post, and began the long and close friendship of the two radio pioneers.

1940 - Radio News reached maturity with regular reports of the bombing of London by Edward R. Murrow, his “London After Dark” series broadcast by shortwave; In the November election, FDR’s radio skill helped him defeat Wendell Willkie and win an unprecedented third term as President. Music remained the dominant content of radio, occupying 50% of all programming. A federal



(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 1 col. 1)

listened to Edward R. Murrow’s broadcasts can say they did not see the bombs falling on London. And anyone who listened, actually rode with the Lone Ranger, or flew with the Green Hornet or cowered before the creaking door that opened into the Inner Sanctum.

The brain, not restricted by budgets, technology or FCC regulations, has always been free to explore new worlds. The catalyst for that exploration is often evocative language spoken by the human voice, conjuring images in the mind like no other medium. As Readers Theater, we have always felt a great kinship with radio. Like radio, our ideas, stories and characters ignite the imagination through sound. So return with us to those thrilling days and celebrate that Golden Age, when our imaginations rode invisible waves of energy and when the pictures were so much better.

Bob

Happy Holidays from
All of the Good Folks
Here At MMSC

Stay Tuned for the
announcement of our
Spring ‘05 Season.



www.mmstageco.com
**For all up-to-date
MMSC news!**

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Mohonk Mountain Stage Company
Fall '04 Season Schedule
MMSC's Special Tenth Anniversary Celebration Season



December

Saturday, December 4 at 8 PM

New York Writing

Including poems from the winners from the
2004 Vanguard Voices of the Hudson Valley

Poetry Contest

St. Andrew's Church, 163 Main Street, New Paltz

Admission \$7

Friday, December 10 and

Saturday, December 11 at 8 PM

A Celebration of Old Time Radio

Unison Arts & Learning Center

Mountain Rest Road, New Paltz

Admission \$9 for Unison members,

\$12 for non-members, \$5 students (with ID)

court had allowed radio stations to play records without the prior consent of artists or music companies, and ASCAP raised its rates. When some radio stations refused, and signed contracts with the new BMI, ASCAP arranged for compromise rates.

1941 - The FCC Mayflower rule prohibited stations from editorializing only one point of view, later to become known as the Fairness Doctrine. In New York, Martin Block started the first disc jockey show called "The Make Believe Ballroom" on WNEW when he pretended to be talking about live bands and performers, but was actually only playing records. No recording was made of the first news bulletin announcing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941. The famous recording by John Daly saying "We interrupt this program to bring you a special news bulletin. The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by air" was actually spliced together in 1948 for the Murrow record album *I Can Hear It Now* by Fred Friendly of CBS. The splice was made from two other later recordings, according to veteran radio announcer Robert Trout, and no news bulletin interrupted any network program on Dec. 7.

1943 - Only 700,000 radio sets were sold due to the wartime ban on non-essential electronic manufacturing, down from the 13 million sets sold in 1941. Shellac was also deemed a strategic war material, causing a decline in the production of phonograph records. The AFPS began using vinyl to make records for distribution to its military radio stations. The Army used wire recorders and developed the hand-held walkie-talkie radio set.

1944 - The percentage of radio time devoted to news increased to 20%, up from 7% in 1939, but music still dominated programming. In the November election, FDR defeated Thomas Dewey to win a 4th term, and 50% of the nation's radio homes listened to the election eve reports on November 7.

1945 - Edward R. Murrow reported the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp on April 15. Norman Corwin produced "On a Note of Triumph" on CBS. The Blue Network that had been sold by NBC in 1943 to Edward J. Noble became ABC. "Meet the Press" began on NBC, and would become the longest running radio show in history.

Sources: Bannerman, R. LeRoy. *Norman Corwin and Radio: the Golden Years*. University, Ala. : University of Alabama Press, 1986..

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