

BLUE NOTES

BLUE MOUNTAIN CENTER'S COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER 2019



Session 3 residents meandering through the Marion River during the 12 Mile paddle excursion.

Widening Our Work

IN THE YEARS PRIOR to Blue Mountain Center's founding, the land assumed many identities. Its original human stewards were the Haudenosaunee people, who used the region as seasonal hunting grounds. Stolen from them by multiple waves of European colonizers, it was occupied by a dime-store novelist, groups of farmers, and later developed by a railroad baron's son into a failed golf resort. Eventually it was bought by the Hochschild family who turned it into their private summer home. Before any of that, it was just itself: noble mountains, pristine lakes and quiet woods inhabited by the many plants and animals who make the land their home.

Remnants of the property's past incarnations still linger — meadows once mowed for golfing, nineteenth century builder Reuben Varney's initials carved into a boulder, horse bridals in the hayloft, and many structural details that remind us how the buildings were designed to enforce boundaries between workers and the guests they served.

We'd like to think we don't abide by this architecture today, but small details such as the "servant's" bedrooms in the back of the clubhouse, the peephole to peer through the swinging doors between the dining room and kitchen, and the "butler's pantry" remind us of the ways staff were kept attuned to guest needs, but always separate. Today, these details can also remind us of what our work is in contrast: an ongoing experiment in sharing and shaping, rather than

merely maintaining or sequestering, the gift of this place.

It has been a year of evolution for BMC, as we explore how this institution can better embody the kinds of changes we've always sought to support in the world — from extraction and domination to liberation and interdependence. This has meant renewed attention to welcoming and wellbeing, including creating a community agreement in collaboration with residents and formalizing one-on-one resident check-ins with staff. It has meant reexamining our physical spaces with an eye towards accessibility, cultural representation, and safety. It has meant widening and diversifying our circles of decision-making, outreach and visioning, which has resulted in unprecedented diversity of residents and experimental programming.

We hope this growth shines through in this year's *Blue Notes*, alongside the rich heritage that we have all built together. As we continue to stretch and evolve, input from you — our community — is the greatest gift. We are eager to continue integrating the wisdom of your experiences into this work.

We are committed to the belief that hospitality is a deeply interconnected practice, vital to the work of equity and justice. We value this work, and the ways in which it in turn values the work of our community. If you have an idea of how to increase the capacity and inclusivity of what we offer, please be in touch.

2019 PROGRAMMING

Much of this year's programs stemmed from the input and participation of BMC alumni collaborators — our Advisory Committee, a generative body of residency and conference alumni that help steer our conference program, and the resident alumni who designed and implemented our two Fall focus residencies. We are excited to continue cultivating collaborations between our community, staff and trustees, and to use our shared appreciation for what BMC offers to support more great work in the world.

CONFERENCES



Participants and Staff during Troy: Building Youth Power.

Navigating the Great Unravelling

The Post Carbon Institute and the Institute for Policy Studies convened thought leaders and influencers to explore the urgent question: *How can humanity navigate the interrelated energy, economic, environmental, and equity crises of the 21st century?* The gathering was divided into three phases of discussion and activity: (1) Setting the Context (2) Imagining Scenarios and (3) No Regret Strategies. The group navigated tensions between theory and application, grief and action, and between knowing that we can't "solve" this crisis but are still committed to doing what we can. Participants were invited to collectively and vulnerably imagine an unthinkable future, arrive at strategies outside of conventional thinking, commit to the work of decolonizing our value systems, and welcome dynamic tensions as crucial to the work.

Alliance of Families for Justice

The Alliance of Families for Justice began their statewide organizing campaign to educate the public about felony disenfranchisement in January 2018 with the goal of eliminating it in New York State. During their retreat, they planned how to best mobilize people directly impacted by mass incarceration to participate in elections. They completed an assesment of what they have accomplished and what work remains to be done. They also analyzed the ways in which Democrat-controlled New York state Senate has, or has not, been a benefit to their campaign efforts. Their campaign seeks to unleash the political power of 84,000 people who have recently regained the ability to register to vote.

#VetsVsHate

#VetsVsHate, a veteran led movement launched in 2016 in collaboration with Iraq Vets against the War to push back against the anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant rhetoric of the 2016 election season, is a vertern coalition who speak out against Islamophobia, xenophobia, transgender discrimination, and white nationalism in order to stand for the true core of our American values. In response to the growing threat of fascism and white supremacy, a core group of veteran organizers formed Common Defense, a focused organizing group committed to elevating progressive veteran voices and building an inclusive populist movement. During their gathering at BMC, they provided advanced organizer training on campaign development and strategized ways to bridge movement sectors for maximum impact.

Troy: Building Youth Power

This gathering brought together youth and their adult mentors from five grassroots youth organizations in Troy, NY. They were joined by a local leader of the Poor People's Campaign and two local government officials. The conference had two goals: to deepen relationships as organizations and individuals, and to empower youth by creating opportunity and building mutual support. Half of the agenda was designed and facilitated by youth themselves, with conversations falling in three categories: needs and challenges in the lives of youth; structural analysis of racism and poverty; and identifying immediate opportunities to strengthen the political voice of people of color and poor people in Troy. The gathering served as the jumping off point for a visioning process around grassroots political action in Troy, with the shared goal of forming a new political coalition.

Internationalism

BMC Advisors John Cavanagh, Opal Tometi, along with organizer Khury Peterson-Smith, continued their series of Internationalist gatherings at BMC. These gatherings convene movement leaders in immigration, climate, labor and peace work with an emphasis on developing an internationalist perspective, while countering the rise of xenophobia and authoritarianism in the United States and around the world. Through facilitated discussion and topical presentations they examined the state of transnational progressive organizing, reactions to the rise of the “far right” and shared new models, as well as lessons learned, to help strengthen and inform global alliances.

Justice for the Land

Robin Kimmerer, BMC resident alumni and advisor, brought together representatives of Indigenous Nations, their allies and diverse conservation entities to strategize around how to collaboratively develop a vision to address shared goals of land management and indigenous land justice in New York and beyond. The group tackled questions such as: *What would justice for the land and people look like? How do conservation organizations seeking to restore land and water also recognize Indigenous land rights and the inherent rights of Mother Earth? How do we create a framework of partners and practices to further this vision?* Participants explored land trusts, archeological conservancies and cultural conservation easements as models that strive to protect sacred sites and cultural landscapes, and restore human relationships with land.

Sunrise Semester

Sunrise Semester 2020, a crucial aspect to the Sunrise Movement’s organizing, is a program that will train 300 young people in the skills needed to fight for bold solutions to the climate crisis, support new leaders to implement a Green New Deal, and join forces with other movements to drastically influence the political landscape. Closing out the BMC season, Sunrise convened the leaders of Sunrise Semester 2020 to prepare for the program’s launch in January. This retreat brought together political, management, campaign, and operations & compliance sides of the organization. Together conferees worked to build relationships and skills, and prepare to better hold roles and welcome hundreds of new people into leadership roles to the movement.



Embodying Creativity to Sustain Justice residents explore the forest floor. (Photo by Sumitra Rajkumar)

FOCUS RESIDENCIES

Black BMC:Collectively Developing Creative Space for Black Artists and Organizers

This gathering was organized by Black BMC alums, artists, movement builders, and convenors in partnership with BMC staff as an experiment in creating and nurturing an all Black residency space - including a guest chef, Chef Fresh! The goals of the residency were to (1) to make space for Black artists to create individually and collectively for a concentrated period of time (2) to reflect on Black residency experiences and explore possibilities for building more Black creative spaces at BMC and beyond; and (3) to explore BMC as one potential hub for Black led movement convenings in BMC’s conference hosting capacity. The week-long gathering balanced individual time and space for creative practice, rest, and rejuvenation with a series of informal intentional discussions, presentations, and impromptu offerings of sermons and sound circles designed to leverage the wisdom of participants for building, developing and nurturing future Black residency and movement spaces. In addition to identifying how the group will continue to stay connected after Black BMC, the participants generated a list of recommendations for future Black creative and organizing spaces at BMC and beyond.

Embodying Creativity to Sustain Justice

This focus residency, a ten-day writers retreat, convened feminists of color who each embrace the tension of taking radical collective action while also sustaining an embodied creative life. Participants — organizers, heads of grassroots organizations, teachers, radical lawyers, journalists, and healing practitioners — used BMC as a place to experiment with and practice sustainability in their particular combinations of political, artistic, intellectual and healing work. Participants co-created a nurturing, generative container for this experiment, gathering spontaneously to share work, somatic practices and offer attention and reflection. Organizers Sumitra Rajkumar and Alta Starr were happy to report that the group’s time together allowed them capacity to be present with one another, solitude and nature while collectively cultivating an embodied practice of writing to take back into the world.



*Resident Onnesha Roychoudhuri delighting in the beauty of the Buddha bed.
(Photo by Kalima Young)*

What Grows Here

THE ADIRONDACKS have a notoriously short growing season. Winter comes early, freezes deep, and stays late. Loamy soil sitting atop dense glacial till limits the types of plants that can successfully grow here. Indeed, the word “adirondack”, from the phonetic translation of the Mohawk word for porcupine or “bark eater” is, in part, a reflection on the difficulty of direct subsistence in the region. Despite these challenges, the BMC garden has remained a beloved, perennial fixture throughout the life of the center. The trial and error of ambitious staff and guests, some amateur farmers and others arriving with years of expertise, has helped to create a space that yields both productive crops and a deep sense of collaboration and care.

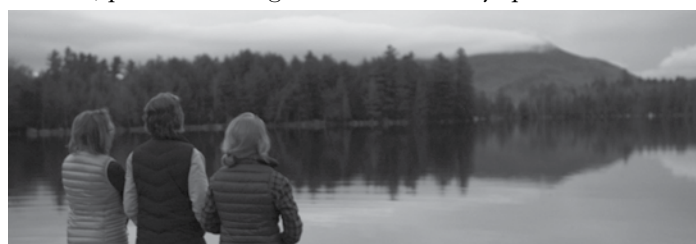
Many hands have tended the garden over the years, nurturing the numerous varieties of flowers, herbs, vegetables and fruits that have fed, inspired and informed life in this place. Zohar Gitlis, former BMC staff turned farmer, recalls her early experiences learning from the land: “The BMC garden was the first garden I ever really tended and it’s where I fell in love with growing vegetables. There was something incredibly gratifying about realizing that we had the space to grow enough lettuce to feed all of our residencies that got me hooked.”

Ken Lang, former BMC gardener extraordinaire, also reflected on the small joys of the space. “Many residents are city dwellers and have little or no experience growing food,” states Lang, “so to always have carrots in the ground to pull out, smell carrotiness and eat right there is a huge first for [a surprising number of] people.” This experiential and often conversation-driven mode of participating fosters bonds between residents and staff alike. “There is an openness and vulnerability that unfolds when you’re working in a beautiful space doing repetitive tasks,” says Program Assistant Thomas Giardini. Carrying this connection from the garden, to the kitchen, to meals themselves furthers the rewards of pitching in. “The feeling of success that comes with eating food that you planted, tended, or harvested is so

palpable, healing, immediate... In my time at BMC it was a joy to witness people having those moments,” Gitlis recalls.

Outside of collaboration, the garden also serves as a place for restoration and solitude. “Gardening is one of the ways I meditate,” says alumni Darren Miller, who temporarily joined the program staff earlier this season. “When I moved to BMC I was excited to keep my practice going.” Even without burying your hands into the earth, the rock spirals, abundant flowerbeds tended for years by former chef Alan Stafford, and the breathtaking Buddha garden, meticulously maintained by volunteer Lynne Nathan, offer spaces for contemplation and remembrance.

Darren, who holds a unique perspective on the space as both a former resident and staff member, spent much of early spring collaborating with chef Intaba Liff-Anderson to plan seasonal crop successions. “We wanted a lot of greens—they are useful, nutritious, store well, and are really easy to grow. I planted lots of varieties of things and hoped whatever didn’t survive would be replaced by what did [and] eventually fill-in and appear abundant.” And while the garden gifted us profuse amounts of garlic, snow and snap peas, raspberries, currants, blueberries, kale, potatoes, green beans and tomatoes through the summer months, not everything grew according to plan. “The mixed-magic results are part of what’s continuously gratifying,” notes Assistant Director Nica Horvitz. “Even the disappointments are chances to reflect, scheme, pause and be grateful for the ways plants teach us.”



(Photo by Darren Miller)

RESIDENT UPDATES

Iddo Aharony, when not attempting to teach college students about digital music, songwriting, and sonic ecology, has been collaborating with a poet, a flutist, and a filmmaker, creating together a new work for bass-flute, electronics, and video. • **Ian Allen**'s "The Far Right's Apocalyptic Literary Canon" appeared in *The New Republic*. • **Tom Athanasiou**'s work on international fair shares has been integrated into Bernie Sanders' version of the Green New Deal. • **Shimon Attie**'s work will be featured in the Triennial exhibition, *American Portraiture Today*, at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery through August 2020. He was awarded a Lee Krasner Achievement Award by the Pollock Krasner Foundation, and a NYSCA/NYFA artist fellowship. • **Olive Ayhens**' solo show, *Urbanities and Ur-Beasts* at Bookstein Projects, NYC, ends December 21, 2019. • **Howard Axelrod** has been named the Director of Creative Writing at Loyola University Chicago. His book, *The Stars in Our Pockets: Getting Lost and Sometimes Found in the Digital Age*, will be published in 2020. • **Polly Baca** received the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Colorado Democratic Party. In 2018 the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute honored her with the Henry (Hank) Lacayo Lifetime Achievement Award. • **Rachel Tzivia Back** published *What Use Is Poetry, the Poetry Is Asking*. • **Helen Benedict** is still working on her novel about refugees, and is back to teaching journalism students how to write about social justice. • October was the launch date for **Jane Bernstein**'s novel, *The Face Tells the Secret*. • An essay about **Celia Bland**'s poetry collections appeared in *The Georgia Review*. Reviews of *Cherokee Road Kill*, her latest book of poetry, appeared in *Rain Taxi*, *Blackbird*, and is forthcoming in *The North Carolina Literary Review*. • **Jennifer Block**'s book, *Everything Below the Waist: Why Health Care Needs a Feminist Revolution*, was published by St. Martin's Press. • **L.M. Bogad** is working on *COINTELSHOW: A Patriot Act* for the New Orleans theatre troupe Mondo Bizarro. He will perform his personal family history show, *A Fair Fight* at San Francisco's Exit and Marsh theatres. • **Alan Brown** is creating a series of interconnected short films. After a twenty-year hiatus from fiction writing, he is working on another novel. • **Wendy Call** is completing a Fulbright in Colombia, translating the work of indigenous women writers into English. • **Kelly Candaele** is working on a documentary about Marvin Miller who revolutionized baseball by turning the Players Association into a real union. • **Kristin Casaletto** is participating in group shows in Augusta, GA, Kansas City, KS, Dallas, TX, and Muskegon, MI. She is preparing for a solo show in Grand Rapids, MI. • **Irene Chan** performed *R.I.P. Body Landscape* at the ITINERANT Performance Art Festival. • **Anelise Chen** is a 2019 National Book Foundation 5 under 35 nominee. • As 2020 Composer-in-Residence at Carnegie Hall with National Concerts, **Andrea Clearfield** is completing a work

on "what is home" for February premiere by a consortium of treble choirs from across the U.S. • **Henri Cole**'s tenth book of poetry, *Blizzard*, is forthcoming from Farrar, Straus & Giroux. • **McKayla Conahan** is nearly halfway-done with their MFA program at VCU and now rocks a black and orange deathhawk. • **Dan Connell** had an updated third edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea* published by Rowman & Littlefield. • **Meehan Crist** published an essay for the *London Review of Books* on Rachel Carson and the legacy of *Silent Spring*. She wrote about why it's so hard to tell stories about the climate crisis for the *New Republic*. • **Neta Crawford** published "Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War", a paper that was widely reported in the news media. • **Neil Curry** is about to publish *William Shensstone, Landscape Gardener and Poet*. • **Charles Davis** is serving a three-year term on the Board of the Society of Architectural Historians. His book, *Building Character: the Racial Politics of Modern Architectural Style*, has been published by University of Pittsburgh Press. • **Carina del Valle Schorske** will spend the next few months in Puerto Rico, conducting research in jungle caves and poetry archives for her debut nonfiction book, *The Other Island*, forthcoming from Riverhead in 2021. • "Loving Mao," a piece from **Page Delano**'s collaborative



Session 3 Residents & Staff rejoice at the top of Castle Rock.

memoir, *Red Heads*, was published in *They Said: A Multi-Genre Anthology of Contemporary Collaborative Writing*. • **Emily Doolittle**'s *green/blue* was performed by Symphony Nova Scotia in Halifax, NS. The premier of *Bowheads* was performed by the Kapten Trio in Banchory, Scotland. Her article "Why Yes, I do Want my Music Performed," was published on NewMusicBox. • **Sunny Drake** is a playwright-in-residence with Canada's largest theatre, Stratford Festival. He has a new comedy, *Men Express Their Feelings*, premiering in Calgary in 2020. • **Maggie Dubris**' book, *BrokeDown Palace*, has been published by Subpress. • **Carmen Einfinger** was commissioned to make street art in Long Island City, NY by

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American Pipe and Tank Company. • **Ryk Ekedal** completed a 3-week residency in Ballinskelligs, Ireland. • **Kathy Engel's** *The Lost Brother Alphabet* will be published in 2020 by Get Fresh Books. In January she is leading Collaborative Poetics retreat at Lalela, South Africa. • **Jason Eskenazi** published two books in 2019: *Black Garden* and *Departure Lounge*, completing the trilogy with his first book, *Wonderland: A Fairy Tale of the Soviet Monolith*. • **Zeph Fishlyn** is in their final year of the Art and Social Practice program at Portland State University. • **Kermit Frazier's** non-fiction piece, "Snow," was a runner-up in the 2018 Jeffrey E. Smith prize. It was published this year in *The Missouri Review*. • **Denice Frohman** is continuing to work on her debut poetry manuscript. • **Leslie Fry** finished a sculpture commission in Vermont. She has an upcoming solo show of sculpture and drawings at Martine Chaisson Gallery, New Orleans. • **Ellyn Gaydos** is finishing up this year's harvest on the farm and continuing work on a book about pigs, plants and their keepers. • **Bianca Giaever** has been working at *The New York Times* making episodes of *The Daily* for kids. • **Owen Gray** had his 11th solo exhibition, *Habitat in Peril*, with Blue Mountain Gallery. • **Miriam Bird Greenberg** is living on a ranch outside of Austin, TX. She was a Mona van Duyn scholar at the Sewanee Writers Conference. *The Other World* is forthcoming from the Center for Book Arts, where it won the 2019 limited-edition letterpress chapbook prize. • **Lowell Handler's** film, *Terefu and Her Children*, has been placed for digital distribution with WGBH in Boston. In 2020 he will appear in a new PBS documentary about **Oliver Sacks'** life and legacy. • **Amy Harwood** invites everyone to the 2020 annual 45-mile walk to protect sacred Oak Flat from the largest proposed copper mine in North America, held by the Apache Stronghold. • **Kylie Heidenheimer** co-curated a 13-artist



AFJ Conference attendees and BMC Staff sharing smiles at breakfast.

painting exhibition at the LES's Clemente. She has participated in NYC group exhibitions at 56 Henry, Waterhouse & Dodd, and Casimir Effect. • **Robbin Henderson's** exhibition, *Immigrant Girl, Radical Woman*, is at Detroit's Walter P. Reuther Library and Labor Archives through the end of 2019. She received a juror's award at the Richmond Art Center. • The Portland (Maine) Symphony Orchestra will pre-

miere **Robin Holcomb's** commission "No Thing Lives to Itself" on January 19 and 21, 2020. • **Mimi Holmes** donated her Mail Art Archives to the University of Minnesota. Her exhibit from the collection *Stamped and Posted* ran at the Elmer L. Andersen Library in 2019. • **Ginnah Howard** read "Tupperware Story" from their novel *Rope & Bone* on *The Strange Recital* podcast. • **Joyce Hwang** completed a vertical habitat installation, *Life Support*, in Canberra,

Australia. • In April, **Reginald Jackson** presented photographs from the *Resurrection City Series* at the Library of Congress, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Poor People's Campaign. • **Bill Jacobson** had a solo show at Houston's Hiram Butler Gallery. *Regards* is a survey of four bodies of work created between 2007 and 2016. • Work from **Debra Jenks'** ongoing project, "The Strange Woman and Seven Diamond Miners," was included in *UMBRA: New Prints for a Dark Age* at the International Print Center, NYC. Excerpts from the project were published by *Tiny Spoon Lit Mag*. • **Simen Johan** is exhibiting new works at the Yossi Milo Gallery through December 7th. • **Hillary Jordan** is adapting her second novel, *When She Woke*, for the screen and is a new member of the WGA East. • **Gregory Jost's** article on how organizers can effectively use data disclosure to fight displacement and gentrification was published in *Urban Omnibus* in September. • In June, **Si Kahn's** album *It's a Dog's Life* topped the folk charts at #1. • **Joel Katz** completed *The #1 Bus Chronicles*, a documentary film that uses a bus stop on an industrial highway in New Jersey to create an interwoven series of portraits of the lives that intersect there. • **Jennifer Karaday's** work was featured in the group exhibition *Suffering from Realness* at MASS MoCA. The show includes six photographs from her *Soldiers' Stories* series, along with a film that documents her process of working with one veteran to make a photograph. • **Rachel Kauder Nalebuff** is trying to spin only one or two plates after all her revelations at BMC. The

SHARE YOUR STORY

Is there a BMC residency or gathering you participated in that sparked something significant to grow? We are collecting impact stories to help illustrate how organizations, initiatives, coalitions and projects have evolved as a result of convenings at BMC. If you have an anecdote you would like to share please write bmc@bluemountaincenter.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

plates include getting her book *Stages* (Thick Press, 2020) ready for publication! • **L.A. Kauffman** published *How to Read a Protest: The Art of Organizing and Resistance*. She co-organized high-profile protests that spurred major museums around the world to cut ties with the Sackler family over their role in the opioid crisis, and created, with **Onnesha Roychoudhuri**, a fictional “UnPresidedent” edition of the Washington Post. • **Billy Keniston** just returned from a nine month research trip to South Africa, Angola, Botswana, the UK, Portugal and Denmark funded by Fulbright. The book will follow after the dissertation is finished! • **Sarah K. Khan** is working on defying erasure of black and brown people, specifically women, through multimedia stories, graphic illustra-

gram for Critical Response Process are open now. • **Muriel Leung** is currently on her fellowship year at USC’s PhD program in Creative Writing and Literature, and has been named one of Radar Production’s Show Your Spines residents. They will produce work based on research done at San Francisco Public Library’s James C. Hommel LGBTQIA Center. • **Mark Lipman** spent three days filming the 50th anniversary celebration of New Communities, the first community land trust in the United States that developed out of the civil rights movement in 1970 in Georgia. • **David Lloyd** has published poems in recent issues *Gathering of Irish and American Poets*. • **Josh MacPhee’s** *An Encyclopedia of Political Record Labels* was published in October by Common Notions. • **Anne**

2019 BARLOW, CHERTKOV, & MARGOLIS AWARDS

Congratulations to our 2019 Barlow, Chertkov, and Margolis residency award recipients! These residencies are funded by alumni and friends of Blue Mountain Center to honor the work of Harriet Barlow, Boren Chertkov, and Richard J. Margolis, and support individuals dedicated to social justice.

The Harriet Barlow Residency celebrates her moral vision, “the commons” - the natural gifts and social creations that we share - by supporting individuals whose work focuses on our shared responsibility to one another and the planet. This year’s recipient, **Juan Fuentes**, is a cultural activist, artist, teacher, and printmaker based in San Francisco. His work has empowered local communities of color, addressed the need for social justice, and highlighted international struggles for liberation. He has produced prints that focus on the figure or portrait as a means to tell a story, elaborating on the human condition, and connecting to a collective humanity.

The Boren Chertkov Residency for Labor and Justice is granted annually to a BMC applicant whose work embodies the spirit of the late Boren Chertkov, a champion of workers’ rights and social justice, and a beloved community member at Blue Mountain Center. This year’s recipient, **Sarah K. Khan**, is a multimedia maker and scholar with a focus on women, migrants, biological and agricultural diversity, and sustainability. Through photography, film and video art, printmaking, maps, and writings, Khan reveals and honors the often-invisible lives and labor of women and migrants. Her work explores the emotions and lived experiences of those she encounters.

The Margolis Award is granted annually to a promising new journalist or essayist whose work recalls Richard Margolis’s warmth, humor, and concern for social issues. This year’s recipient, **Ellyn Gaydos**, writes about the complex yet neglected cultural identity of rural America. Her work explores issues such as elder care, internet accessibility and animal breeding in small towns. She is currently working on a book-length piece of experimental nonfiction about an IBM microchip manufacturing facility in northern Vermont - a speculation on the future of an increasingly post-industrial northeast and a document of the culture at one factory within that schema.

tions, and printed material. She focuses on food/culture/migration and builds collaborations with other BMC-ers. • **Joan Larkin’s** *Naked Hand: Selected and New Poems* was published in English and Bengali by Birutjatio Books, Kolkata as part of the Bangla American Poetry Project, Spring 2019. • **Eric Laursen’s** *The Duty to Stand Aside: Nineteen Eighty-Four and the Wartime Quarrel of George Orwell and Alex Comfort* was published in 2018. He is working on a biography of Comfort, the British poet, biologist, anti-nuclear activist, and author of *The Joy of Sex*. • **Sujin Lee** had a solo exhibition, *Language Is Treacherous* at Wumin Art Center, Cheongju, South Korea. • **Jeffrey Lependorf** is living the life ekphrastic: he’s focusing on making visual art while serving as Executive Director of The Flow Chart Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to exploring the interrelationships of various art forms. • **Liz Lerman’s** *Wicked Bodies* will tour in 2020. Applications for her certification pro-

Makepeace was on the road with Tribal Justice. It screened this fall in Taiwan, Minneapolis, and Palo Alto. • **Alison Mandaville** is working with future teacher-leaders on cre-



Residents Ndinda Kioko & Benjamin Krusling on the Clubhouse porch.

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ative and empowering language arts education at Fresno State California in the dry central valley. • **Sara Marcus** is a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Southern California. She is completing a book about political disappointment and US culture. • **Alex Marzano-Lesnevich's** *The Fact of Body: A Murder and a Memoir* received two French literary prizes. "Body Language: How to Tell a Genderqueer Story," an excerpt from a book in progress, will be published by *Harper's* in December. • **Valerie J Maynard** will have a show in 2020 at the Baltimore Museum of Art. • **Maureen N. McLane's** *What I'm Looking For: Selected Poems* was bought by Penguin UK. • **Erika Meitner's** *Holy Moly Carry Me* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle and Library of Virginia Awards in poetry. It won the 2018 National Jewish Book Award in poetry. • **Holly Metz** published *The Untold Life of Peter Lee, "born of slave parents, the property of Colonel John Stevens."* • **Tai Moses** is living in Portland, Oregon and working on a new memoir. • **Amanda Michalopoulos's** *God's Wife* is forthcoming from Dalkey Archive. • **Ellenor Milkowski Dahlgren** is in Nebraska forging new communities and making new work amidst a sea of blowing prairie grasses tucked inside a skeletal farm house named Victoria. • **Winter Miller** produced and directed her play *No One Is Forgotten* in NYC with a team of 90%+ women, POC, trans and queer folks (at a fair wage!) It will be published by Samuel French. • **Carla Murphy's** essay, 'Why We Need A Working Class Media' was published in *Dissident* and led her to an offer for a year-long writing fellowship from the Economic Hardship Report-



Session 1 resident Amy Pleasant shares her work during open studios.

ing Project. • **Danica Novgorodoff** is working on a graphic novel adaptation of *Long Way Down*. She signed a contract with First Second Books for a graphic novel on climate change, and welcomed her second daughter, Ada, to the world. • **Pat Oleszko** did big jigs at the Havana Bienale, participated in the Innovative Costume in the 21st Century exhibition in Moscow, and created a massive celebration for the 25th Anniversary of Civitella Ranieri at the castle. • **Kathleen O'Toole's** poetry collection, *This Far*, was published by Paraclete Press. Her poems have appeared or are

forthcoming in *Antiphon*, *Public Poetry*, *Smartish Pace*, *The MacGuffin*, and on the blog *Vox Populi*. • After a decade in Italy, **Celia Owens** is enjoying New Mexico. Painting, writing, improv work and hospice care are all coming together. Yes, it's possible. • **Micah Perks'** beloved parent, Joe Mahay, Adirondack activist, one of the founding members of the Residents Committee to Protect the Adirondacks, and named Ad-



Session 2 residents Denise Frohman & Muriel Leung beaming during lunchtime.

irondack Man of the Year by *Adirondack Life Magazine*, died in August. • **Tenzin Phuntsog** was nominated a Flaherty Film Fellow. A major film institution has expressed interest in becoming the digital access point for the Tibet Film Archive of which Tenzin has been dedicated to collecting and preserving. • **Vincenzo Pietropaolo's** *Where Angels Come to Earth: An Evocation of the Italian Piazza* will be published in December. • **Howardena Pindell's** exhibition, *Autobiography*, is currently on view at Garth Greenan Gallery. • **Amy Pleasant** showed work from *She's Come Undone* at Chicago's Woman Made Gallery and Seattle's Pratt Fine Art. • **Gretchen Primack's** third collection of poems, set in a maximum-security men's prison like the ones where she teaches, was published in the *Editor's Select Series* from Willow Books. • **Ignacio G Rivera** contributed a "Pure Love" episode on *Single Parenthood* podcast, spoke at conferences about trans wellness, child sexual abuse, and sexual liberation, and is now offering sexuality coaching. • **David Robinson** is working on a book-length personal essay on whiteness, implicit bias, and antiracism. • **Liam Robinson** is the music director and vocal arranger of Tony Award winning *Hadestown*. Robinson & Rohe, the songwriting duo that include better half **Jean Rohe**, is recording a new record *Wait & See*, due out in 2020. • **Jean Rohe's** latest record, *Sisterly*, won Best Adult Contemporary Album at the 2019 Independent Music Awards. • **Paul Rucker's** TED talk, a solo cello performance, is now available online. • **Sheron Rupp's** *Taken from Memory* was listed as best photo book for 2019 by *Photo District News*. • **Jon Sands's** *It's Not Magic*, winner of the National Poetry Series, was published by Beacon Press. • In 2020, **Bill Schuck** is having a solo show at The Catskill Art Society, Livingston Manor, NY. Bill continues to

work daily in his studios in Brooklyn and Fishkill. ● **Tanya Selvaratnam** published a piece in *Glamour* titled “What Real Reparations Could Look Like for the Exonerated Five”. She wrapped up a year of producing inaugural season programming for *The Shed*. ● **Sejal Shah**’s essay collection, *This is One Way to Dance -- thoughts on identity, race, family, and place*, will be published in 2020 by University of Georgia Press. ● **Paul Shore** showed *Drawn Home* prints at the annual IFPDA Fine Art Print Fair. ● **Sarah Shroud** performed *The Box*, her play about solitary confinement, on Alcatraz Island. ● **Leslie Sills** was a recipient of the 2019 Blanche E. Colman Award. ● **Judith Simonian** had six paintings on display at the Sara Nightingale Gallery. ● **Judith Stein** is the recipient of the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women’s Caucus for Art. ● **Martin Steingesser**’s original ensemble work, *Etty’s Song: A Courageous Love Song to Life*, was the featured performance at the University of Southern Maine’s Symposium on Active Bystanding. ● **Kirsten Stolle**’s “Chemical Bouquet” collage and site-specific “Miracle Grow” wallpaper installation will be featured in the exhibition *Art’s Work in the Age of Biotechnology: Shaping our Genetic Future* at the Gregg Museum of Art & Design, Raleigh, NC, now through March 15, 2020. ● **Meera Subramanian** is continuing to focus on climate

to “translate” all 39 of Shakespeare’s plays into modern English. ● **Meredith Trede** published “Operation Weasel Words” in *Gargoyle* and “The Arch of Hysteria” in *AMP*. She



*Work Weekenders parading to the garden for a Remembrance Ceremony.
(Photo by Darren Miller)*

was published in *Tipton True Grit Anthology*, *Cultural Workers Datebook*, *Bright Hill 25*, and *Common Ground Review*. ● Photographs from **John Trotter**’s “No Agua, No Vida” project,

RESIDENT SUPPORT FUND CHALLENGE

Blue Mountain Center has long been aware of the obstacles people of color face when they come to BMC, including the financial burden of transportation, lost wages, childcare, and everyday expenses. The goal of our Resident Support Fund (RSF) is to ease the burden of leaving home and work for weeks at a time in order to pursue one’s activism and artistic goals in a quiet, nurturing community.

Established in 2017, the RSF has allowed us to provide support ranging from \$100-\$500 to 21 residents over the last two years. In 2020 we want to do MORE! Alumnus **Paul Rucker** has generously offered a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$5,000 to ensure that our \$10,000 goal is reached before the end of the year. Our board of trustees and staff are joining the challenge, and hope that you will too!

To find more information and to make a donation, visit bluemountaincenter.org/resident-support-fund

change as the Barron Visiting Professor in the Environment & the Humanities at Princeton University. ● **Sarah Sutro**’s pieces titled “Dark Matter” were part of a larger show, *Not a Pretty Picture*, at the Berkshire Art Museum. ● **Naoe Suzuki** had a solo exhibition, *Excerpts*, at the Hollister Gallery at Babson College in Wellesley, MA. ● **Billy Talen** staged an action on a South Australia beach. He blessed a thousand surfers who paddled out with an aboriginal “whale-caller” named Bunna in order to face-down the oil drillers in the whale nursery. ● **Andy Teirstein** recorded two string quartet performances including one based on Bedouin music he heard while hiking with the Azazme Bedouins on the Israel/Egypt border. He completed a score/screenplay for Carl Sandburg’s *Rootabaga Stories*, to be filmed 2020. ● **Andrea Thome**’s rendition of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* was performed as part of the PLAY ON! festival, which commissioned 36 playwrights

about the human alteration of the Colorado River, were exhibited at the 11th ImagesSingulieres festival of documentary photography in Sète, France. ● **Meredeth Turshen**’s *Women’s Health Movements: A global force for change*, is now available. She is pursuing a second career in visual art with work in the National Association of Women Artists exhibit in Highland Park, NJ and a solo show at the Hoboken Historical Museum

In Memory Of

Educator, founder of the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) and dear friend of BMC, **William “Buzz” Alexander**, died September 19, 2019. A legendary figure in the field of arts in correctional facilities, Buzz will be remembered for his deep commitment to social justice. A memorial service for Buzz will be held on Sunday, January 19, 2020 at the Michigan Union’s Rogel Ballroom in Ann Arbor, MI.

BLUE NOTES

in 2020. ● **Antonio Vega**, currently in Mexico City, is preparing to go to Australia to attend a few Fringe Festivals with a show called *A Special Day*. ● **Laura Von Rosk**'s work was included in the *Artists of the Mohawk Hudson Region*, Hyde Museum, Glens Falls, NY. ● **Hal Weaver** served as 2019 Harvey Quaker Scholar at Guilford College and Cadbury Scholar at Pendle Hill. He is working on his memoir, *Black Fire: An African American Quaker Activist- Scholar in a White-Supremacy Culture*. ● **Joyce Weinstein** had two works in the show *Obsession* as part

of the Southwest Print Fiesta at The Light Art Space in Silver City, NM. ● **Adam Welz** published a new piece in *Yale Environment 360* about Kenya's ecosystem-damaging program to build massive amounts of new infrastructure. ● **Lex Williford**'s novella, *Balsa and Tissue Paper*, is a selection in both the *Ploughshares Solos* longform issue and as a single e-book. ● **Tracy Winn**'s piece, worked on at BMC, will appear soon in *Solstice Literary Magazine*. ● **Victor Yang** is currently an MFA student in fiction at BU and really loving it!



Left: Juan Fuentes strolling down the dock (Photo by Erica Harris) | Center: Sumitra Rajkumar, Nathaniel Shara & Minal Hajratwala | Right: Rachel Kauder Nalebuff experimenting with textiles.

Wate(ve)r Works: Buildings & Grounds Update

SPRING BEGAN with stellar work-week-end volunteers seeding a large portion of the front yard where water lines were laid in 2018. The grass grew in beautifully, and we can confidently report that our well water system is now up to the Department of Health code (and more importantly the water tastes great).

The Clubhouse has seen several improvements that also began during work-week-end, with the installation of shelving underneath the main stairwell by a crew of industrious residents and the removal of a monolithic bookcase in the living room, spearheaded by our good friend Rosalyn Bodycomb. The screened porch, deconstructed late last season, was sandblasted and fully rebuilt by maintenance assistant Mark Anderson. Late summer saw more work on the Clubhouse with the southwest side of the building temporarily clad



Scaffolding on the Clubhouse during chimney repairs.

in scaffolding. GS Services, an Auburn-based roofing contractor, spent a week repointing and restoring the 120 year old stonework that makes up the building's central chimney.

Finally, we are thrilled to announce that BMC has officially acquired the garden parcel this year thanks to the generosity of the Eagle Nest homeowners association. This parcel has been incorporated into last year's transfer of our 12 acres to BMC ownership. As the new year approaches, we continue to think about future facilities and grounds projects that will honor this land and those who share it. Please visit our webpage for information on ways to support this initiative. We invite you to consider contributing to our accessibility fund as we strategize how to best make more areas of BMC navigable for all who visit.



(Photo by Erica Harris)

We are grateful to our 2019 donors and volunteers:

Iddo Aharony • Eli Aleinikoff • Sabrina Ali • Jonathan Allen • Ian Royce Allen • Amir Amirani • Khin Mai Aung • Ann Bailey • Anne Basting & Brad Lichtenstein • David & Allison Barlow • Harriet Barlow & David Morris • Peter Barnes • Thomas Bass • Micahel Bedford • Helen Benedict • Charles Biggs & Laura Howes • Jennifer Block • Timothy & Rebecca Blodgett • Michael & Rosalyn Bodycomb • Andrew Boyd • Jim Boorstein • Katie Booth • Deborah Bouton • Lisa Borders • Elizabeth Brina • Robin Broad & John Cavanagh • Irene Buszko • Lisa Cashdan & Peter Stein • Toni Cervantes • Bob Chlebowski & Gray Brechin • Henri Cole • Dan Connell • Barbara Cooley • Charles Davis II • Gary Delgado & Marcia Henry • Clare Dolan • Sawyer Downey • Carol Downs & Charlie Rose • Ryan Felder • Kermit Frazier • Susan Freireich • Juan Fuentes • Nora Gallagher • Joann Gardner • Lisa Garrigues • Joan Giannecchini & Stan Kaplan • Zohar Gitlis • Alice Gordon • Liese Greensfelder & Robert Erikson • Andrea Hairston & Pan Welland • Ann Hagedorn • Connor Hanwick • Malika Hardin • Erica Harris • Karin Hayes & Paul Rachman • Marcy Hermansader • Mark Herzing • Paul Herzing • Lizzie Hessek • Jan Hively • Jascha Hoffman Giving Fund • Melissa Houston • Andrew Hsiao & Lisa Chen • Tessa Huxley & Andy Reicher • Bisi Ideraabdullah • Denise Iris • Christine Jerome • Conrad Johnson • Sheila Kinney & Christopher Marzec • Sarah K. Khan & Henry Dremal • Ellen Kozak • Mary Kuhn • Benjamin Krusling • Langeloth Foundation • Jim Lardner • Joan Larkin • Mark Lipman • Elena Lloyd • Steven Lober • Rebecca Lossin • Josh MacPhee • Juliette Majot • Ashley Makar • Gregory Maguire • Lenore Malen • John Malpede & Henriette Brouwers • Jan Mammey • Kirk Marckwald & Christina Desser • Diane Margolis • Harry Margolis & Susan Phillips • Eddie Martinez & Andrea Thome • Susanne Mason • Jane McAlevey • Justine McCabe • Heather McGhee • Maureen McLane • Elizabeth & Steven McRae • Jil Medvedow & Richard Kazis • Oscar Melara & Kate Connell • Holly Metz • Michael Middelcer • Winter Miller • Jason Molesky • James Montford • Matice Moore • David E. Morse • Scott Moyer • Loubna Mrie • Carla Murphy • Lynne Nathan • Danica Novgorodoff • Susan Ochshorn & Marc Gross • Suzy Parker • Janie Paul • Russell Platt • John Provost • Adriana Ramirez • Andrea Ritchie • Andy Robinson & Jan Waterman • Terry Kay Rockefeller • Katherine Rogers • Onnesha Roychudhuri • Paul Rucker • Enrique Sacerio-Gari • Laurence Salzmann & Ayse Gürsan-Salzmann • Alyce Santoro • Catherine Sasanov • Brenda Schuck • Sejal Shah • Addy Shreffler & John • Jane Sloane • Susan Spector • Vincent Stanley & Nora Gallagher • Emma Steinkraus • Louise Steinman • Kirsten Stolle • Candice Stover & Jeff Toman • Sarah Sutro • Naoe Suzuki • Andy Teirstein & Olga Hiiva • Beth Thielen • Scott Wallace • Merry Wang • John & Elsa Weber • Harvey & Rhona Weinstein • Joyce Ellen Weinstein • Daniel Wentworth • Lisbeth White • Judy Wolf • Anna Laura Wolf-Powers • Kalima Young • Ronald Zweig & Christina Rawley

If we have accidentally omitted your name from this list, please let us know so we can properly thank you.

CALL FOR INTERNS!

We are seeking talented, self-motivated individuals interested in joining us for 2+ month internships during our 2020 season. Prior experience isn't necessary, but a background in the arts and/or activism, a love of the outdoors, and enthusiasm for participating in a communal living environment all compliment this live/work opportunity. Interested applicants are encouraged submit a cover letter, resume, and contact info for three references to

bmc@bluemountaincenter.org

STAFF NOTES

Thanks entirely to the unfailing kindness of **Holly Mulder-Wollan**, **Harriet Barlow**, accompanied by **David Morris** and Harriet's son Toby, relished an evening with the divine Patti Smith at San Francisco Arts and Lectures, which Holly co-directs. ● **Sawyer Downey** came breezing in from the Florida sunshine with her colored pencils and a sense of adventure in tow. She cleared (and explored) all the trails around BMC with **George McCane** and kept morale high. ● **Krissy Eldridge**'s first year with Hamilton County Public Health went extremely well! "We've figured out a perfect balance of work and play in the Adirondacks!" ● **Wren Farrell** is living in the Bay Area and working at Pizzeria Delfina in San Francisco as a server and KPFA in Berkeley as a reporter for the evening news. ● **Ryan Felder** is back in school at Union Theological Seminary, teaching a class at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Harlem, and working with the Kairos Center and Poor People's Campaign. ● **Thomas Giardini** thoroughly enjoyed being back at BMC this season. This winter he plans to work on several collaborative projects between NY and CA and continue crocheting blankets. ● **Alice Gordon**'s year of writing, reading, theater going, and friend communing was briefly interrupted by a baby sea lion in the Sea of Cortes surfing onto her chest to look her in the eye. ● **Lizzie Hessek**'s year was a jagged topography of love and loss and trips to Europe. Her digital immersive theater project, *TrailOff*, will launch in spring 2020, so if you find yourself in Philly, download the TrailOff app and head to a local trail to experience some rad public performance art. ● **Nica Horvitz** spent her off time supporting organizing for climate justice and grassroots power in Troy, NY. Every two weeks she also got to be at BMC, where everything reminds you to take yourself more and less seriously at once. ● **Louise Howard** enjoys spending mornings in the beautiful BMC kitchen. Her interactions with the amazing staff and incredible residents add greatly to life in the ADK, where there are more trees than people. ● **Sophie Kazis** lives in Brooklyn, NY, where she works as an associate podcast producer at VICE News. She's currently working on a longform narrative series about the 2020 election. ● **Sheila Kinney** and HB visited the Bridge of Flowers in Sherburne, MA, a memorial stop in honor of **Nancy Strader**. ● **Kei Kurimoto** unpacked and repacked her mini skirts multiple times to achieve her bi-coastal life between the Tijuana border and the Adirondacks. ● **Elise Kylo** is in a two year artist residency through North House Folk School in Grand Marais Minnesota where she's focusing on felting and education, seeking to find the happy balance of craft and art with wool. ● **Ken Lang** competed in individual and relay swimming events at Gay Games X in Paris in August, and is looking forward to Hong Kong 2022! ● Highlights of **Sara Lepkoff**'s year include seeing a bobcat, stopping at Stewart's gas station close to every morning since April, and driving ten hours to see Harry and the Potters play in a library in Buffalo. ● **Intaba Liff-Anderson** continues to enjoy cooking for our wonderful guests, hiking in the High Peaks and volunteering at Caffè Lena, the Sanctuary for Independent Media and Capital Rep. ● Following springtime work at BMC, **Darren Miller** started as the new Photography Department chair at Columbus

College of Art & Design in Columbus, OH. He also received a Fulbright Research award for a community art project at the São Paulo State University (UNESP) in Bauru, Brazil in spring 2020. ● **Luke Nathan** and his partner Sam have a daughter, Paloma, who was born in March. ● This was the summer of The Grizzly Bear for **Suzy Parker**. She carried bear spray everywhere she went in Montana, Wyoming, British Columbia, and Alaska. Fortunately, she saw none. ● **Maia Pugh** just returned to the southwest desert after backpacking almost 400 miles solo through mountains and farmland in North Carolina where she found, strong in the face of political division, an abundance of generosity, resiliency, sense of community, and care for the land. ● **Quince Mountain** was a survivor on "Naked and Afraid", as reported in the *NYT*. ● **Sandy Schmitt** brought humor and good tunes to the BMC kitchen this season. ● **Alan Stafford** is doing well, but misses cooking at BMC — his sisters are keeping him busy traveling around New England. ● **Ben Strader**, when not following his kids to far-flung Adirondack soccer fields, has been advising The Cloudsplitter Foundation with their work to strengthen Adirondack communities. ● **Merry Wang** is in Seattle working with Americorps and helping people apply for citizenship (and other related things.) ● **Daniel Wentworth** misses BMC! He is enjoying his new life chapter as a staff writer and part-time student at UPenn. ● **Laura Wolf-Powers** is still teaching urban planning at Hunter College. She is also a backup singer with the band Turnpike, which released the album *Leaving Camptown* in June (visit turnpike718.com). ● **Malia Mulder-Wollan**'s regular Tip column (in the Sunday *NYT* magazine) featured BMC alum Leslie Hirst re: "How to Find a Four Leaf Clover".



Willing workers are welcome to join us for Work Weekend 2020, April 30 - May 3! All BMC alumni are eligible to enter the lottery for the 2020 Memorial Day Alumni Residency, May 20-25.
E-mail bmc@bluemountaincenter.org with subject "Work Weeknd" and/or "Alumni Residency Lottery".