# James Lane – Post –

September 2021

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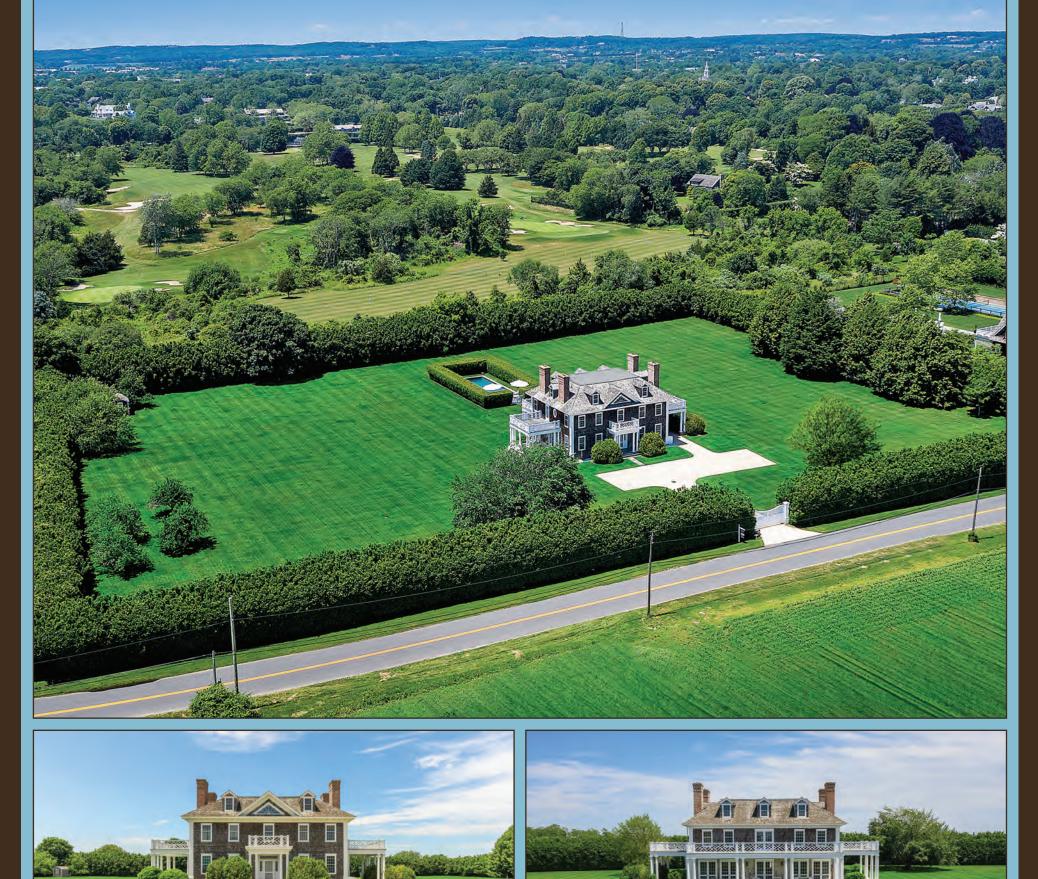


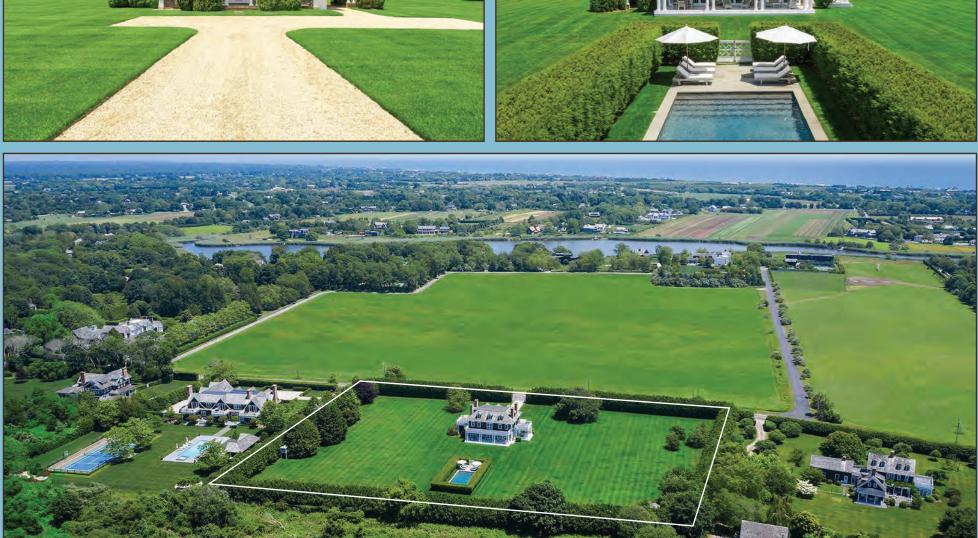
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t's the story of a woman who knows the true meaning of Labor. The story of a women who fought not only for her right to fair pay, but for the rights of women across this country.

Her name is Lilly Ledbetter.

She took her fight for equal pay all the way to the United States Supreme Court and then to the United States Congress. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 was the first piece of legislation signed into law by President Barack Obama. She penned a book, "Grace and Grit," that is now used in many college curriculums. And today a feature film about the life of Lilly Ledbetter is in the works. In "LILLY," directed by Rachel Feldman, she will be played by Oscarnominated actress Patricia Clarkson. But first, some backstory. Ledbetter worked for 19 years at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in Alabama, as a night supervisor. She took the job in 1979 at age 39 to help her family, who were struggling to make ends meet. She had grown up in poverty in Possum Trot, Alabama, with no electricity or running water, picking cotton for eight cents per day, striving to be part of the middle class. She knew the value of not only a dollar, but also a penny. When she was nearing retirement, she describes receiving an anonymous note alerting her that the salary of her male coworkers, who held the same position, was 40 percent higher than her own paycheck.

be truthful," she said. "But I couldn't because I still had a mortgage. I still had car payments. I had kids in college. I had bills to pay. I couldn't quit. So I had to stay and work my 12hour shift."

Even though she was two years away from retirement, "I was entitled to equal pay," she said, knowing that John F. Kennedy had signed the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

"I got 80 percent of my base pay, my check was \$28,000. The guy on the day shift that took it got \$85,000."

She lost her case in the Supreme Court with a 5 to 4 vote. It was ruled she was not within the 180-day statute of limitations for filing an equal-pay lawsuit regarding pay discrimination.

"But Ruth Bader Ginsburg spoke from the bench and spoke to Lilly directly and said, 'Lilly, there is one more thing you can do. You can go to congress and tell your story," Feldman recalled.

years, she was paid less than her male colleagues for the very same work. Over the course of her career, she lost more than \$200,000 in salary, and even more in pension and Social Security benefits - losses she still feels today."

"I'm so proud of the Ledbetter bill because it was sponsored and co-sponsored with Republicans and Democrats and some Independents," said Ledbetter.

The law overturned the Supreme Court's decision in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber, and amended the Civil Rights Act of 1964, making each paycheck that contains discriminatory compensation a separate violation, no matter when the discrimination began.

Knowing she would not received any additional payment from Goodyear, Lilly kept her fight alive for all women in the workforce.

#### The Film

"I saw Lilly on television at the Democratic Convention in 2008 and while I had heard her name before, I really didn't know her story and I'd never heard her speak. And when I heard her speak with that beautiful Alabama mountain accent I was just driven to know more about her -I called her the very next day," said Feldman, whose directing credits include "Criminal Minds" and "Blue Bloods."

While many are familiar with Lilly's political achievements, the film aims to tell a heartbreaking family narrative exhibiting the personal toll it took for her to challenge a large corporation.

"The movie will not be for me, but it will be for the young people and the people out there today working across this nation," said Ledbetter.

"I saw that there was a way into this film from a psychological point of view as a political thriller, to really show the audience an exciting roller coaster ride of euphoria and heartbreak that this woman experienced and to tell it in a very Hollywood commercial way like 'Erin Brockovich' or 'Spotlight' or any of the social justice dramas that have come before us," Feldman said. "My goal is to tell a story about a woman, who put her personal life on the line and the psychological costs of fighting for justice when you're a small town Alabama

to get this picture made," said Feldman. "Lilly has a remarkable personal story. As a woman who's been working in Hollywood since my 20s and has endured gender discrimination and exclusion in my industry in a very significant kind of way, I've been awakened and woke to what gender discrimination and exclusion does for women in employment. And so her story spoke to me on a personal level and a political level."

Feldman has been speaking out against gender discrimination in Hollywood for many years. "I'm so grateful that within my own lifetime, I see a change," she said. Feldman also noted that she will hire mostly women and people of color for the heads of department on the film.

The film itself is completely independently financed, with over \$10 million raised in equity investment and non-profit contributions. Unusually so for a feature motion picture, people who are interested in supporting the making of this film can make tax deductible donations via The Film Collaborative by visiting thefilmcollaborative.org/fiscalsponsorship/ projects/lilly. To date, donors have contributed over \$1.5 million dollars, demonstrating the strong resonance of the film's message.

The producers of the movie, inspired by Lilly's persistence in working for social change, have started a related social action project, +Rise. The purpose is to elevate women in the workplace by making it equal, fair, and safe for all. They're building partnerships with brands and leading non-profits working in these areas to drive collaboration and make effective change.

To celebrate the film, James Lane Post partnered with hosts Christine Prydatko, Jayne Baron Sherman, Abigail Rose Solomon, Wendy Federman, and Kerianne Flynn to host a conversation with Ledbetter and Feldman to discuss the film. The event included a cocktail reception with dishes create by Lulu Kitchen & Bar's Chef Philippe Corbet and managing partner Steven Jauffrineau.

Ledbetter's advice to women who might be experiencing gender discrimination in the workplace?

"Be proactive," she said. "Research that company and make sure you're getting the rightful pay that you're entitled to. Because once it's gone, there's not any way an individual can get it back. It's gone forever." She noted how crucial it is in terms of retirement and social security. "I've learned that the average woman in this country, we outlive our spouses by 10 years. I'm now going into my 12th year as a widow. The women don't make near the money the man might," she said. As of 2020, women earn 82 cents for every dollar a man earns, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics data. "That's the problem. Women are locked in these jobs," she continued. "They're afraid to say something. They know that if they do they'll lose their jobs, and this is not right." With Labor Day around the corner, we recognize the contribution of all laborers in this country. The fight for equal pay is ongoing in the workforce, and Ledbetter has spent years leading the charge for positive change.

"I was devastated," said Ledbetter. "I was just humiliated."

"I didn't know how many people in the factory knew it," she continued. "I didn't know how many people were laughing behind my back and making a joke about it. I just could not believe that a major corporation like Goodyear Tire & Rubber would be doing this to me and my family. This was devastating because I was a middleclass family. It was hard. It was really hard. We went through tough times. My husband lost his job and with two children it was really difficult."

After working over a decade in a position where she was often paid overtime, and her 401K and retirement were all based on her salary, she knew she had to fight for the pay she had rightfully earned.

"I just wanted to run and hide to

#### RBG to the Rescue

She warned her family that she would file a charge with the U.S. Equal Employer Opportunity Commission in Birmingham. The fight would be a long one. And it was. It took nine years from start to finish. The lower federal court awarded her \$3.8 million, though she would only be entitled \$60,000 of that.

Goodyear appealed the verdict. And her case, with the help of young civil rights lawyer Jon Goldfarb, went all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

"They heard my case loud and clear," said Ledbetter. "It was proven there just like it was in the lower court — beyond a shadow of a doubt I had been discriminated against for no other reason than I was a female."

According to Ledbetter, to this day Goodyear claims she was a poor performer. But the argument made by her and many others is: Why would they employ and promote a poor performer over a 20-year period?

"The men treated her abysmally," said Feldman about Ledbetter's time at Goodyear. "This was hard, grueling, dirty work - she was always the first one in and the last one out."

"She suffered tremendous psychological and emotional harassment, let alone sexual and physical harassment — they slashed her tires, they cracked her windshield, they filled her car with tobacco juice, they tried to run her off the road, they threatened her family," said Feldman. "And yet her desire to keep her family in the middle class compelled her to be able to surmount these awful circumstances until she found out they were cheating her."

The company offered her a buyout in 1998, which she took. "I should have never taken the buyout. That's the worst mistake I made," she said.

She was met by the American Civil Liberties Union, The National Women's Law Center, and several other organizations that wanted to help educate her and fund her trips to Washington. At the time, she was also dealing with personal trauma, her husband Charles, her high school sweetheart, was terminally ill with cancer.

"He wanted her to keep fighting no matter what," said Feldman. And fight she did.

Since the Supreme Court verdict was made Ledbetter's motto has been, "Everyday I must make a difference for someone," she said.

Ledbetter spoke at the 2008 Democratic National Convention. And when President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 into law, cementing Lilly's story in American history, he stated "Lilly Ledbetter didn't set out to be a trailblazer or a household name. She was just a good hard worker who did her job - and did it well - for nearly two decades before discovering that for wife, mother, and factory worker."

In an aptly cast film, Feldman said that to have Patricia Clarkson play Lilly Ledbetter, with Josh Lucas as her husband Charles, and Thomas Sadoski as her attorney Jon Goldfarb is "really a dream come true."

Ledbetter and Feldman both expressed their excitement for the cast in place for the film.

"The center of this movie is a love story between Lilly and Charles," said Feldman.

"The fella that's playing my husband, I said, 'All he needs is piercing blue eyes.' And I understand Josh Lucas has that," said Ledbetter of the "Sweet Home Alabama" star.

Clarkson brings to the role the experience of growing up in the south with her mother, Jackie Clarkson, working in politics in New Orleans for decades.

"She grew up in the South, so she'll understand the southern drawl," said Ledbetter.

Clarkson "will bring both delicacy and gravitas, which is exactly what Lilly has," said Feldman.

"It's been a long journey for me

"She is a women of tremendous grace, and tremendous grit," said Feldman.

For Lilly, it's knowing that, "When I'm gone I want the last thing they say is, 'She did make a difference'."



## The Show Must Go On

### **Hamptons Fundraising** Season in a Fluctuating **Pandemic World**

#### By Nicole Teitler

t's been an atypical events season, as non-profit organizations were up against the challenges of fluctuating pandemic protocols. Keeping up-to-date on briefings, while setting realistic expectations, proved to be a challenge, but one worth navigating. Local charities were able to pivot in order to keep guests safe, while raising much-needed funds.

The South Fork Natural History Museum (SOFO) remained diligent during the weeks preceding their gala, as attendees were advised through both invitations and email blasts that proof of vaccination or negative Covid-19 tests would be required upon arrival. To help expedite the checkin process on the day of, guests were provided the option to upload their vaccine cards directly onto a site.

"From the moment we decided to host our benefit, we made the safety of all of our guests, staff, and volunteers a priority. Our guests were delighted to know that their well-being was of utmost importance to us, and our turnout was wonderful," said Diana Aceti, SOFO's director of development.

The annual Hamptons Happening

remained on par with previous years, as the event raised over \$400,000 for cancer research. Wylie Tene, director of marketing and communications for the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation, explained, "We were concerned that Covid-19 would decrease attendance. But, as the event approached, we heard from many attendees that they were excited to be attending again."

Despite the concerns over attendance, and the logistical complications, confidence regarding overall turnout remained high.

The Southampton Animal Shelter Foundation's Unconditional Love Gala intentionally undersold tickets so that guests could feel properly spaced from one another. Kate McEntee, director of animal relations at SASF noted, "Guests were enthusiastic as our dogs made their way to the stage for a dog parade ... and we have been setting up official meet and greets at the shelter with those who met pets they want to adopt."

It was a season of adaption as well as adoption. As part of its Forever Home campaign the Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons (ARF) campus has been under construction, forcing the organization to forego a traditional tented event. In turn, board members and donors alternatively hosted smaller viewing parties and the annual Bow Wow Meow Ball set a new record for net income raised.

Kristina Curatolo, chief development officer at ARF said, "We're overwhelmed by the generosity of this community, its love for ARF, and the thousands of animals saved by our work."

Similarly, Stony Brook Southampton Hospital's 63rd annual Summer Party "Gala In Our Gardens," was held with a "host at home" format again this year, with each event catered by Elegant Affairs and delivered to each host's door.

Throughout it all, the Hamptons community continues to come together. Julie Ratner, co-founder and chairwoman of The Ellen Hermanson Foundation observed, "My sense is that there is more kindness in the air. I have noticed that people seem to try to comfort and encourage each other as they navigate the challenges of living with Covid."

While the 26th Annual Ellen's Run surpassed predictions, the organization's gala, held at the tail end of summer, migrated from an indoor event to an outdoor soirée hosted by the Hampton Racquet Club. Ratner expressed ahead of the event, "We are doing everything we can to make sure our Back in Black Benefit reassures our guests that it is safe to come out and have a good time while supporting an important cause."

Funds from annual summer benefits on the East End, most of which did not happen or happened virtually in 2020, oftentimes make up a large portion of each local non-profit's year-round operating budget.

In lieu of its SummerFest Gala altogether, the Southampton Arts Center opted for smaller events throughout the season to ensure the safety of guests and provide a more intimate setting.

"These smaller events have actually proven to be quite the success with guests having a great time while also feeling safe," Tom Dunn, executive director of SAC, said. "We have been incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated and generous group of individuals that have long supported our institution and continue to do so."

LongHouse's SAY YES gala curated a new type of experience as musicians were situated throughout its 16-acre property, foregoing a sitdown dinner entirely as done in previous years. "Many people wanted to be outdoors and not seated at a table. The energy was amazing and the whole vibe felt over the top in the most fun way," said Matko Tomicic, the LongHouse executive director.

The Parrish Art Museum and Watermill Center both spread out their annual summer events so that they could host multiple events with smaller groups.

The reimagined annual event at the Parrish Art Museum featured three events over three days: a dance party, dinner and cocktails, and a family party and raised over \$1 million for the museum.

The Watermill Center held CROSSROADS, a summer festival as a week-long gathering to consider the meaning of ritual, healing, and hope at this moment in time, led by Carrie Mae Weems, in collaboration with Robert Wilson.

Guild Hall celebrated its 90th anniversary with cocktails on the water and dinner under an open-air tent. The event raised over \$800,000 in support of Guild Hall's year-round interdisciplinary programs.

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## #YouBelong

## A Day of Inclusion & Connections in Water Mill



n Saturday, August 14, in Water Mill, Fyli — a female founders mastermind with a focus on creating an ecosystem of support for leaders — brought together a diverse group of community activists, next gen impact experts, creatives, and entrepreneurs for an event titled #YouBelong, to celebrate diversity and inclusion, while rebuilding culture and reframing new mindsets.

Along with partners Nova Impact and James Lane Post, attendees were given the opportunity to share their unique perspectives and to form new friendships and partnerships. The Fyli community of female entrepreneurs met with guests from world-renowned businesses, angel investors, venture capital funds, and family offices.

"Our goal was to bring a diverse event to the Hamptons as it is known as a 'privileged' location and make sure there was ample representation between cultures, ages, and industries," said Jaclynn Brennan, the cofounder of Fyli.

"We were honored to spend the day celebrating with such an inspiring group of female entrepreneurs, creatives, and those looking to support the day's mission. Attendees were able to make meaningful connections through powerful conversations, all while celebrating community, art, and togetherness," said Christine Prydatko, the event host and co-publisher of James Lane Post.

The event kicked off with a guided meditation by Donna D'Cruz, followed by the "Great Awakening Panel" made up of strong, empowered women focused on how to support other under-represented founders. The moderators, Olivia Dell and Chelsea Toler, the co-founders of NOVA Impact, led the panel discussion around mentorship, tips, and tricks on how to inspire other trailblazers and what challenges and fears they have faced in the workforce. "As a woman in the investment space, I'm passionate about demystifying what it means to find agency in investment and beyond. We structured the event and our panel to focus on understanding how these incredible leaders in business, who happen to be female, found agency and what they're doing to ensure that the path to leadership remains clear for future generations. We know that the infrastructure of society has perpetuated an unjust distribution of agency and will continue to highlight outliers

paving the way to a more equitable and sustainable future," said Dell.

The panel included Netta Jenkins, the co-founder of Dipper and VP Global Inclusion of Unqork; Nadya Okamoto, the founder of August and PERIOD; and Kimberly Hatchett, the executive director, private wealth advisor at Morgan Stanley, Private Wealth Management.

"This was such a beautiful and inspiring event to join - especially as my first in-person panel since the global pandemic. The last year has been one of so much overdue cultural reckoning with the need for further diversity and inclusion in all industries, and we've all been thrust into our own journeys of un-learning and learning," said Okamoto. "We often talk about how we can create a more thoughtful future of women's leadership and empowered young women, and being on this panel and at the event felt like a real step and experience of that future."

"I look around this event and see such a diverse crowd in the Hamptons. It is my responsibility to press that elevator button to see more people that look like me sit with me in the work place and have a voice in this world," said Kimberly Hatchett.

"My experience as a speaker for Fyli was absolutely amazing. The audience were engaged and empowered. This event was intimate which allowed for many to feel comfortable to make meaningful relationships. I have never attended an event that embodied love and belonging. Every single person I interacted with spewed love and support," said Jenkins.

The panelists shared deeply personal stories about how they overcame their own challenges and struggles, how they experienced hate and prejudice in their own personal and professional lives and how they reframe those experiences to fuel their careers and advocate for others. James Lane Post hosted the panel discussion "Working Toward A More Inclusive Tomorrow" with leaders within the Hamptons community including Minerva Perez, the executive director of OLA of Eastern Long Island, Aivana Smith-Williams, the executive director of the Shinnecock Indian Nation, and Patricia Assui Reed, the founder of Matriark in Sag Harbor. The panel was led by James Lane Post's co-publisher and managing editor Bridget LeRoy.

to help others that are less privileged . . . Giving back is huge for me," said Assui Reed. "With Matriark we are supporting women-owned businesses . . . The idea is to help them thrive but to also give back and donate to women and girls' focused communities."

"I focus on indigenous communities whether it be my nation or others indigenous communities," said Smith-Williams. "The Shinnecock Nation is the only federally recognized tribe on Long Island and essentially what that means is that the United States recognizes the nation on a government-to-government basis, but there are a lot of other indigenous people on Long Island that don't have that same privilege ... I really try to bring voice to those nations, because I understand what it means to be a state recognized tribe."

"The work that OLA is doing is work that benefits and strengthens the entire East End," said Perez. "We do focus on five East End towns. Since the pandemic we've found that there's a lot of work that we didn't even realize we could do that we're doing in relation to health equity, mental health, and mental health support for adolescents."

"The day led to conversations that are important both globally and locally. Each panelist is a leader within this community and is working toward a more inclusive tomorrow," said Jessica Mackin-Cipro, editor and co-publisher of James Lane Post. "We want to highlight those giving back and pushing for positive change, and we hope to continue these conversations."

Throughout the day guests enjoyed food from Calissa Restaurant in Water Mill, beverages from Vide, Montaukila, Swoon, Voss, Troop, La Crema, and picnic style seating by Wisp and Wild. Isaac Boots' Torch'd Shoppe provided an outdoor lounge, complete with Out East Rosé, with a meet and greet with the celebrity fitness trainer, who has recently launched the East End Fund for Children, partnering with seven local non-profits that help children. Following the panel discussions guests enjoyed a happy hour hosted by Pomp & Whimsey. Throughout the day a Garden of Wonders hosted activations by Sundays Nail Bar, Mind Body Soul Market, Nannacay, Musings Magazine, and Sara Joy. Artists Amanda Flowers and Listen displayed artwork for guests. Sponsors included Sara Joy, Vide, Omnifique, Marco, and Studio Misfit.







"No matter where you are in life you should try to use your privilege, even if it's a small amount that you have, to try



# James Lane

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### Editor's Letter

We'd first like to open this Labor Day issue note with gratitude to all of those working on the East End this summer. While many people, especially within the understaffed hospitality industry, may not have Labor Day off, and Tumbleweed Tuesday may seem like a thing of the past, we want to acknowledge the hard work done by those during a summer like no other.



For this issue's cover we feature Lilly Ledbetter, an American fair pay icon, and an all-around empowering woman in American history. Lilly is 83 and has been fighting against gender discrimination for decades. James Lane Post's #YouBelong event (story above) worked to amplify Lilly's message, aiming to level the playing field for female entrepreneurs and to promote inclusivity and diversity in business as well as on the East End. A more inclusive Hamptons is what we hope and strive for.

We hope you enjoy our latest issue and we wish you a wonderful end to summer 2021.

Sincerely, Jessica Mackin-Cipro Editor-in-Chief, James Lane Post

# Dede Gotthelf

## A Look Back at the Journey of a Female Banker, Broker, Builder, & Hotelier

Inspired by fair pay icon Lilly Ledbetter, James Lane Post has launched a series that will focus on female business leaders within the East End community, as a way to tell the stories of the obstacles they've faced and overcome, and to learn about the trails they continue to blaze in their own professional careers. Our first up in our series is Dede Gotthelf, the owner of Southampton Inn.

began in an apartment in Manhattan during the era just slightly after Mrs Meisel. I too had an Aunt Rose with a sprawling West End Avenue apartment and a library of hand painted plates in the 20-volume Book of Knowledge.

My earliest memory of answering the question "what do you want to be when you grow up?" was in the back of an Oldsmobile 98, driving down Fifth Avenue. It is possible that Aunt Rose was in front with my parents. I unhesitatingly responded "a bride."

During elementary school, I read the New York Times every Sunday and loved furnishing the floor planned apartments in the real estate section. At that point I wanted to be an architect. My Upper East Side school, the all-girls Brearley School, mission was to prepare students to do everything. We learned how to speak Chaucerian English, Latin, sciences, and grammar, and were told over and over that ladies could go on to be and do anything we wanted. There were no limits to the female brain. I became a believer.

Forward to college. The applications included the requisite question: "Why do you want to attend?" For Williams College, which was just going co-ed that year, I took a black magic marker and wrote across the middle of page one: "After eight years in a single sex school, I want to attend a multi-sex college." I was accepted.

And so it began. I was one of 10 women in my class the first year. We were housed in a "charming" historic elderly fixer-upper white house with a porch, stairs, bath tubs on legs and faucets with separate hot and cold taps. It was around a mile away from the assigned eating house — formerly known as "fraternity" which were banned along with the advent of women. These were the early years of assimilation of "girls" into the formerly "male" bastion of higher education.

During that first week I would ask directions to a building and would be pointed to the opposite end of campus. I sat in a u-shaped seminar where no "man" would take the seat on my left or right. The professor walked in with his giant dog and declared that: "this seminar is too big. There are 19 of you ... plus her."

I was asked by admissions to take a group of "girl" applicants on a campus tour. Each pre-selected dorm room was opened by a naked student ... in front of all those young applicants and their parents. The pranks were almost endless. The support was not yet in place. And the determination to be anything I wanted was heightened by the experience.

Fast forward to senior year in college. There were dozens of recruiters on campus seeking to interview well-educated Williams graduates. I had hoped to be in advertising or publishing. The interviews were with banks, electric companies, and insurance firms. Chase Manhattan Bank offered \$200 per year more than Citibank so I accepted that offer and entered the Global Credit Training Program with 200 mostly single trainees between 20 and 30 years old, studying together to learn banking and finance.

I believe there were around 15 women. Towards the end of the six months we were asked to provide preferences for assignments. I spoke fluent French and asked for Paris. However, there was a "girl" in France who didn't do well so that wouldn't be possible. I opted for six more months of training and entered the Real Estate Department construction lending group — to come full circle back to furnishing the New York Times floorplans from my youth.

One particularly scary moment was getting off a plane in Georgia to complete a foreclosure on a strip shopping center. There were men with trucks and guns waiting for the Chase banker to step off that plane. I did ... and they were still waiting for the banker. I ran into airport, picked up the rental car, and headed out. The men with guns were still waiting for that banker. I have to say, there are some positive things about being a female banker.

After banking, I went on to bureaucrat, broker, builder, and then ... hotelier. It has been, and continues to be, a journey. Certainly had not been planned nor pre-ordained.

Half of the Chase real estate department went to the New York State Urban Development Corp to oversee



a \$1 billion portfolio of urban renewal projects. To gather enough monies to buy a co-op, a car, and a cat, I left government to become Director of Investment Sales at Julien Studley Inc.

From Studley, I was offered the job from heaven, to start a New York City office for a Washington D.C. developer. But with the Washingtonian on the verge of bankruptcy, we separated the projects, and I started Catcove Group Limited. Since the late 1980s, Catcove has morphed into Catcove South Cove Corp, a waterfront building at Battery Park City; Catsheep Corp, a redevelopment in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn; Riverside Catwalk, Southampton Catcove, Catcove Corp, and then some.

It was an historic movement, a swelling of sentiment and confidence that women could do anything they set their minds to. Even banking, finance, construction, real estate development, hotel management.

What drew me to the hospitality business? I have to admit that most of this was random. Hospitality was as result of a local broker who asked me to put together an offering plan for the Southampton Inn and its adjacent International Plaza commercial complex. I did. And then received an acceptance letter for my then fouryear old to go to kindergarten. Thinking both children would be in school daily, I decided to make an offer. The offer was accepted with a small down payment and a big handshake. The rest is history.

From a short term fix-and-flip initial concept, to 23 years at the helm of the 90 room Southampton Inn with its gardens, lawns, pool, tennis, conference, banquet, and dining facilities, and three buildings of commercial and retail on an adjacent parcel, life pivoted from Manhattan to a rural lifestyle on the Eastern End of Long Island.

As of this moment, there are plans pending for expanding the inn to 140 units with one- and two-bedroom high-end luxury suites with kitchens and private balconies and porches, some overlooking an Olympic lap pool. Approvals for this are pending. I believe it is my civic duty to assist with housing in the community. With experience and perhaps capability, I do hope to be able to ameliorate some of the housing crisis. Even if just a small bit.

For female entrepreneurs, my recommendation is to follow your passion. Be sure to begin with the economics. Finance and banking proved invaluable in meandering down my career path. And never be afraid to pivot. Life tends to throw things at us. Try to catch the ones that inspire you. They likely can be caught and steered.

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## Michelle Brooks

## A Fork In The Road: 'Hitler's Tasters' Comes to Guild Hall

By Bridget LeRoy



magine that every time you pick up a fork, it could be your last meal? And imagine that you are forced to pick up that fork, no matter what.

Then imagine that you are a teenaged girl, with all of those possible attendant food issues that might come with that, and you'll have the barest inkling of what "Hitler's Tasters" is about.

And it all really happened.

#### Kind of.

"Hitler's Tasters," which will be presented at Guild Hall September 9 through 11, is a dark comedy by Michelle Kholos Brooks (yes, Mel is her father-in-law, Max is her husband) about four young German women who had the "honor" of being chosen as Adolf Hitler's food tasters.

Based on true events in history, with anachronistic shades of 2020, "Hitler's Tasters" — winner of the Susan Glaspell Award and Best of the Fringe at Edinburgh (the gold standard in new works) — explores how these girls navigate friendship, patriotism, and poison during the Third Reich.

The idea for the play came about when Brooks heard tell of the Fuhrer's real food tasters;

ers would have been. Their dreams and desires would be the same. I wanted the girls of "Hitler's Tasters" to feel very present and very alive. I did not want them to be sepia-toned people in history.

It also bears mentioning that I just happened to be writing this piece during the 2016 election. The dangerous rhetoric being spewed was in perfect parallel to that of the 1930s and '40s in Germany. The more I worked on this play, the more critical, relevant, and contemporary it felt. Let's put it this way — the quotes were all over the news. I never actually had to quote Hitler.

#### It feels a little like "Waiting for Godot." Did you base your style on Beckett and the minimalistabsurdists? What style was your inspiration?

A few people have mentioned that to me and, while I'm deeply flattered by the comparison, it never consciously entered my mind. But there is, in fact, the element of waiting — in the case of the girls, waiting to see if they are going to die after every meal. So, I got to explore how young women would fill up time in that limbo state. It is truly amazing how much drama and comedy can come out of waiting. When you're bored and scared and you can't lash out at the monster in charge, people will, unfortunately, turn on each other.



and director, Sarah Norris. I'm very fortunate to have worked with this cast and crew in New York, Chicago, Edinburgh, and LA, and I'm thrilled that they all agreed to get back on stage at Guild Hall. I have had some terrific theater experiences, but this is a group of magical unicorns. No exaggeration.

#### Another member of your family is well-known for includ-

When New Light Theatre Project first brought this play to the city, it was through a residency in a teeny tiny (but wonderful) theater in the West Village. By the time we caught on, the three-week residency was over. After so much success in four other cities, New Light is trying to get this production back to New York in the spring. I know they're fielding interest from producing partners and possible investors now. New Light is an unusually brave and inspired theater company, and their extraordinary work deserves to be seen.

young women chosen to die for their country. Margeret Wölk, the one survivor, began to speak of it in 2012, when she was 95 years old. She passed two years later.

We had a chance to catch up with Michelle Kholos Brooks and discuss her work, her process, and her family.

#### First of all, how did you come by the information about Hitler's tasters? And what made you want to write about this little-known part of history?

It was an absolute fluke. I happened to be at a war museum in Indianapolis with my writing partner at the time. As we looked around a WWII exhibit, he said to me, very casually, "Did you read that story about the young German women who were Hitler's food tasters?" And then he kind of walked away as if he hadn't just changed my life. "Wait," I said, "Halt. Reverse. What did you just say?"

Everything that pushes my buttons of concern is encapsulated in this story; the way society treats young women as expendable; the way children are used as tools and shields of war; the complicated relationships young women have with themselves and each other — not to mention the complicated relationship that young women have with food! And the idea of young women stuck in a room together waiting to see if they were going to live or die after every meal? Could there be a riper situation for drama and (dark) comedy? I mean, isn't adolescence hard enough?

#### You chose an anachronistic retelling, with selfies, dancing to modern music, and so on. How did you get that idea? And what are you trying to achieve?

Times change, people don't. One day I watched a group of young women take photos of themselves in pursuit of the perfect selfie, and I realized that those women — those girls, really — were likely the same age that the tast-

#### Without giving too much away, what is true and what is dramatic license, besides the anachronisms?

To my knowledge, there is very little information about the actual tasters. My research was based on articles published in 2013 about a German woman named Margot Wölk who, in her nineties, came forward with her extraordinary story of being one of Hitler's food tasters. According to her there were 15 tasters — all German, by the way — how crazy is that? But for the purposes of this play, I focused on a small group to explore personal stories and ever-shifting relationships.

I have been asked how I predicted that events in the play would transpire in current culture — for instance, how did I know that children would be separated from their parents? When I wrote the play, I had no idea that this would happen at our borders. But I did know that it had happened in history. I didn't have to be clairvoyant to know what takes place when cruelty is in charge.

#### I know this was recognized at Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Can you tell me about that?

Edinburgh Fringe was an absolute dream! The all-female cast and crew went there with absolutely no idea of what we were getting into.

We were warned that, with over 4000 shows, our little production would likely fall through the cracks. But we started getting buzz before we even got to Edinburgh, and we ended up with a 100 percent sold-out run, turning away people at every show. We were even voted one of the 10 Best of Fringe by The Stage.

At face value, it helped to have an extremely winning cast of young women. But what I don't think people expected was the depth of talent and the breadth of bravery by our actors ing Hitler in his works — your father-in-law, Mel Brooks, who wrote "The Producers" and the song "Springtime for Hitler." (James Lane Post interviewed the show's director and choreographer, Susan Stroman, in its August issue.) What kind of feedback or advice did you get from him (if any) about how to inject comedy into a very serious situation?

Mel and I have an agreement that I have Hitler on loan for this show. But in all seriousness, I didn't tell him anything about the play until he came to the first reading. He's been incredibly supportive ever since. He hasn't given me any direct advice about comedy, but he has always said this, "If you're going to climb up to the bell, ring it!" So, whenever I worried that I would offend or go too far in this current culture, I remembered the bell. He helped me realize that as long as the moments are honest, boundaries are there to be pushed.

The one direct piece of advice did Mel give me — it was an order, really, was to keep the title. He said it would scare some producers, but that it was more important to state exactly what the play was and to own it. He was correct on all accounts.

Side note: Susan Stroman came to an early show in our tiny New York theater and generously gave us a marvelous quote. She said "Hitler's Tasters" was "One of the best evenings I've spent in the theater in a long time. It was interesting, entertaining, and it made you think."

## What do you hope the future will bring for "Hitler's Tasters"?

I have been approached about turning this play into a series, a book, a graphic novel, a screenplay — all the things you can imagine. But if I could choose just one, it would be for this very production to get back on stage in New York City.

#### I *always* ask this one — what is it like with two writers in the house?

For us it's great. My husband and I write very, very different kinds of stories, so we are great readers for each other. We know that if we can make the other love our stories (him: zombies, me: adolescent girl relationships) then we are onto something good.

Also, we both get that we need time alone to create. We trade off dealing with home stuff and our kid's school stuff depending on who is on a deadline or in a groove. I am very aware of how lucky I am to have a partner that values my work as much as I value his.

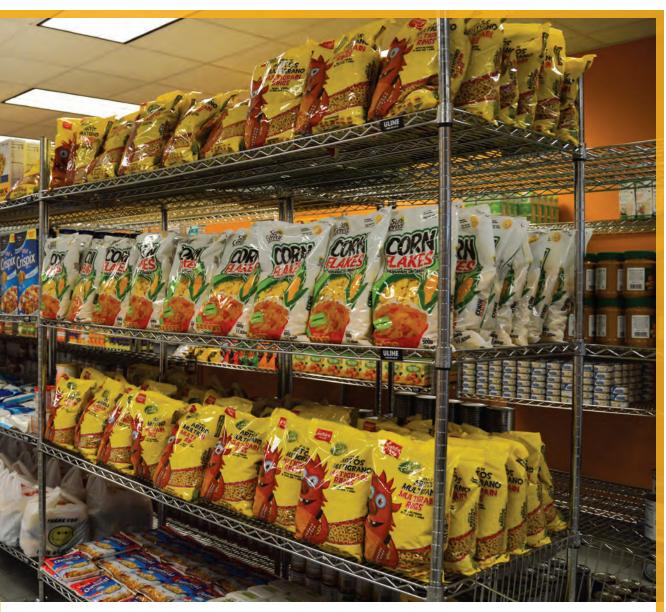
You have a son who's around the same age as the girls in the play — what has his reaction been to this work, or the reaction of other teens?

My son, who is 16, has been terrific. He's very honest about what scares him and what makes him laugh about the play. He's got quite an interest in history, so it's sparked great conversations and interesting questions.

I've been very pleased by the reaction by other teens and young adults. I've been told they especially appreciate the anachronisms in the play, because it makes them feel like these girls could be their friends and contemporaries. I've also had parents and teachers tell me that they brought kids back to see it so they could use the play as a jumping-off point to talk about World War II. I could not have hoped for more gratifying feedback.

To get tickets for "Hitler's Tasters," visit the Guild Hall website atguildhall.org. To learn more about Michelle Kholos Brooks and her other works, visit michellekholosbrooks.com.

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#### James Lane Post

## Alex Rosenberg

## The Art of Living to 103

By Bill McCuddy

lex Rosenberg calls it the way he sees it. And he's seen a lot. He divides his time between the Upper East Side of Manhattan and a waterfront art-filled Water Mill home that he shares with his devoted wife of 44 years, Carole. That luggage by the driveway is a sculpture. He talks about his friend Salvador Dali. His only "Sandy" Calder — another pal — is a rug in the TV room.

He regrets not buying more of his famous friends' work. But other than that he's a man of few regrets. Or apologies. As we sit overlooking Mecox Bay he takes calls, checks emails, and is genuinely concerned that I don't require coffee or even a water. If it's his water, maybe we should all be drinking it. Here is 103 years of wisdom.

#### How has the art world changed in the 80-plus years you've been involved in it?

Up until World War II, art in the United States was basically the property of the rich. Commercialization existed, but it wasn't known to the middle class. The middle class collected art merely for decoration with perhaps the exception of ancestral paintings. They were into music, books, but fine art belonged to the elite.

After World War II the American artists returned and recaptured the art market. European artists returned

#### What do you collect?

I'm a very bad example because I only took art from the people I worked with or bought art from. I was too close to them. People always ask "Why don't you have a major piece of work from Alexander Calder?" I was so friendly with him. I never thought he would die! I never thought any of these people would die.

#### Well, that's easy for you at 103 because you've outlived them all.

(Laughs) Nevertheless I was so surprised one day when Calder's daughter called and said Sandy couldn't have lunch with us because he had died. How was that possible?

#### But they don't die if the art lives on.

Ah, only some cases. I can name an endless number of important artists who have very little reputation today.

#### Have you ever been fooled by a fake?

I would say very often. It's impossible to avoid it. I'm supposedly an expert on Dali. The fake Dalis that have been coming onto the market are so well done that it's becoming increasingly difficult for me to be certain.

When I first started, and the preponderance of the work was real and fakes were coming onto the market

Alex Rosenberg, May 5, 2009. Portrait by Michael Halsband threw a brick through the window. New York. So that caused a number of artists to come out here. The other Now he's got a story. thing was the railroad coming out

#### But you contend that a story like that cut against his talent and his credibility.

It created a situation that for years hurt his reputation. The academics of his period saw him as a clown. Not as an important artist. So in the universities they didn't teach who Dali was. He could put on the most ridiculous acts.

#### And you were his wingman.

here. The rich came out and certain art schools opened out here. William Merritt Chase opened a school in Southampton. Maxfield Parrish came out here. Simultaneously the impoverished artists in New York could afford land out here. It was selling for nothing. And there were barns and homes that farmers had given up.

Perfect example is Jackson Pollock who paid \$1500 for a house with 20 acres. Also European artists spent summers out here. Guild Hall did an excellent show about it a few years ago that included the work of all these foreign artists. Word got around that you could live out here for cheap.

#### Will there always be art?

Yes. It's a basic form of expression. The form will change. And unfortunately art has become fashionable. Everything now has been sped up. So that in my lifetime I have seen so many famous artists forgotten. But the production of art will always be there because the people who produce it, whether they are influence by money or not, have something to say.

#### Why do you keep working? You don't have to.

I like it! One, I'm able to work be-

to Europe. And out of that came "Pop Art." And so for the first time the middle class was interested. We used to joke and say they "followed the advice of their dentist." They had no one else to go to. Gradually, over the years, art became commercialized. But the upper class was always commercializing art. The sales were from one rich person to another rich person.

Now we have an art market that is basically going downhill. Because the middle class is gradually losing its wealth and is selling off what it owns. At the upper level where we have artists like Basquiat, de Kooning, the sales again are being made by the very wealthy. We are shocked when we hear how much people are paying to acquire art. What had originally been a cultural tool is now an economic tool.

#### So money ruined everything?

If you put it that way, then yes.

#### What about living versus deceased artists? Can success spoil them?

Not necessarily.

#### Warhol opened a factory.

Well, there are two categories. There's the large category of people who have a reputation and when they die their reputation dies with them. And then there are those who outlive that like Warhol. Also Calder and Basquiat, de Kooning, there's a number of them. But it's so hard to forecast today which of the acceptable artists, the ones we consider important, will survive.

it was relatively easy. Statistically it was in my favor. As time has gone on you must remember the number of correct Dalis is a finite thing. The number of fakes continues to grow until we're going to reach a day shortly that almost every piece we see on the market is fake. Because the real ones have already been absorbed into collections. And qualitatively the fakes are fantastically well done.

#### What was the greatest misconception about Dali?

That he was a clown. He was a brilliant man, beyond belief. He made a bad decision. But maybe it was right at the time he lived. He felt PR was more important than his ability.

#### He was way ahead of his time.

Yes. But he made it up. Like the famous story about breaking the window at Bonwit Teller. He told me it's a fake, the whole story.

The owner of the store asked Dali to do a window. At that time the windows were being done by a 16- or 17-year-old boy. So the kid had done a window. And Dali came in and redid the window. The kid comes back and says "Who changed my window?" And he changes the window back. Dali comes out of the St. Regis across the street and sees the window has been changed. And he's angry. So he goes in there to fix the window again and the kid comes in. And they get into a tussle. And a bathtub breaks the window.

That's not a story. So he tells it that he walks down the street, sees that his window has been changed, so he

We went to Maxim's one day for lunch and he says he wants his table. He never made a reservation so there are people sitting at what he called his table. So they give us the equivalent table but on the other side of the room. And Dali is mumbling and gets in an argument with the waiter and we leave. And I realized he didn't want lunch he wanted to make a scene at Maxim's. I wasn't his only sidekick but I was his favorite one for about five years.

#### What's the secret to long life?

I guess there are several. One, the right genes. And two, the right wife. I can say sincerely I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for my wife Carole's efforts. When I had pneumonia at 98 the doctors gave me up. She stormed into that hospital told the doctors "This man works every day. You've got to make him well!"

#### Did you smoke? Drink?

I smoked till I was about 60 or 65. One day when I had three cigarettes lit at the same time I realized if I didn't stop I was going to get cancer. So I was able to cut it off. I always ate relatively well. I played tennis very often until I was 65 and my hips gave out.

#### What is it about the eastern end of Long Island that has attracted so many artists over the years?

Two major things. When the Morans came here, Thomas Moran noticed that the light was different. The color of the sky was different than what he was accustomed to in

#### Those were the days.

I would say 1960 was the high watermark. Almost every important artist you can think of came out here.

cause I'm in good shape and two, I'm in good shape because I work. You have your choice. (Laughs)

### Did you have any idea you were going to last this long?

No, I never thought about it. And then one day I woke up and said "I'm not dead."





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## Kobi Halperin

## A Showcase of Fall 2021 Fashions at Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation Luncheon

#### By Jessica Mackin-Cipro

n its eighth year, the Collaborating for a Cure Ladies Luncheon, an annual event benefitting the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation, took place on Friday, August 20, at the T-Bar restaurant in Southampton.

The Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation is an international organization dedicated to curing and preventing cancer.

The luncheon honored philanthropist Jean Shafiroff for her continual support of SWCRF and included a live fashion show by renowned designer Kobi Halperin, who showcased his fall 2021 fashions and introduced his newest blouse collection. Halperin is known for unique designs, a love for details, and dressing women who "celebrate getting dressed every day."

We caught up with the designer to learn more.

How did you become involved in the Samuel Waxman Cancer Research Foundation? Few years ago I started my involvement with the foundation, donating pieces of my collections to different events. In November 2019, I was honored by the foundation during their annual gala. I was very touched and since then became more involved. Constantly thinking how to create ideas which could generate additional donations and awareness to the foundation.

### Tell us about your show at the luncheon?

First of all the idea of bringing people together for a good cause is always exciting to me. Then . . . the fashion! [It's] our fall '21 collection and in addition, the launch of the special capsule we did in collaboration with Lauren Levison, which was my muse and inspiration to create a capsule which is a bit more dramatic as Lauren, who tends to overdress.

### Talk a little about your work as a mentor.

It is one of the things I enjoy the most. I love guiding the next generation with anything I learned throughout the years. For the last 15



years I am part of the critics panel at Shenkar College of Engineering and Design, where I graduated from. Each year I fly out to Tel Aviv to work with the students on the their final project. A couple years ago I also did it with SCAD in Savannah and last year with FIT in New York. I always enjoy it a lot. I constantly learn a lot from the students and enjoy the energy and pureness they have. It's a great way to give to the new generation and at the same time learn what inspires them and their way of thinking.

#### What do you enjoy about Hamptons? Any favorite places you like to visit?

Since I was born in Israel and lived my childhood by the sea, I love spending time in the Hamptons. I love being surrounded by nature and near the ocean. It is the most powerful source of energy and inspiration to me.

### What's next for you and your business?

A lot is cooking. Our collection is expending to more locations and the next focus is the international business. We are planned to show the collection during next Paris Fashion Week in September. In a addition, I am now the designer for the French brand UNGARO, we are launching our first resort collection in November. I am extremely excited about this. It brings me closer to Paris which is always a source of inspiration to me.

Visit www.waxmancancer.org



## Kristen Glosserman



## 'If It's Not Right, Go Left'

#### By Jessica Mackin-Cipro

ife coach Kristen Glosserman, a resident of the Hamptons for many years, will launch her new book "If It's Not Right, Go Left" in September. As a life coach she helps busy New Yorkers "get things done." Along with her husband Marc, they own Hill Country BBQ in Manhattan. They recently collaborated with Olivier Cheng on his Celebration Home initiative and created a unique Hill Country BBQ home package for Hamptons delivery which includes custom menu, seating cards, playlist and more.

We caught up with Glosserman to learn more.

### What inspired you to become a life coach?

I've always been a natural motivator and cheerleader. I decided to become a life coach after 10 years of working in sales and management. I love working with people and finding solutions — it's just that, I wanted to be selling products less, and start selling people on themselves more.

### Tell us a little about your practice.

I got my start coaching on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, where I coached Wall Street executives. Today, I run a boutique practice. Currently all my clients are CEOs and founders; I work very well with entrepreneurs and thought leaders. I excel at focus, discipline, goal-setting, and accountability that's the essence of my practice and my coaching philosophy.

#### Tell us about your background and what brought you to this point.

I've dedicated my new book, "If It's Not Right, Go Left" as well as my body of work, to my brother Michael, whom we lost in a ski accident when I was just a teenager. Losing someone so close at such a critical time in life changes you forever, and I felt I had a lot I wanted to accomplish for the both of us. I couldn't be more proud of my family, my partner, and all that we've succeeded at creating and doing together so far.

#### Talk about your collaboration with Olivier Cheng and the Hill Country BBQ Home Package for Hamptons delivery.

I just can't say enough about Olivier Cheng and Jennifer Zabinski. They are really remarkable professionals. When the pandemic began, the events business was challenged, as so many were, so they pivoted to at-home experiences. And after trying those experiences at our home, twice, I was really motivated to collaborate with them. I had met Jennifer before at Hill Country, and when I called her, she was immediately open to the possibility of doing something together. We tried the Hill Country Experience At Home over the July Fourth weekend, and it was simply amazing — our guests were raving, and we had a really good time. It's such a special experience: a party in a box.

#### Tell us a little about your upcoming book "If It's Not Right, Go Left."

My new book, "If It's Not Right, Go Left" comes out on September 21. It's an approachable, beautifully illustrated lifestyle guide that's structured around 11 Life Lessons that I've learned, and that get me through almost any situation. Part memoir and part self-help guide, it's designed to encourage and help readers, no matter where they are in their journey. The lessons have helped me so much, and they continue to, so I'm thrilled to be sharing them.

### What is your perfect day like in the Hamptons?

I love waking up, opening the drapes, and seeing the blue skies and the sun. I go downstairs and make some coffee — we have a beautiful little coffee nook outside of our kitchen, where my husband Marc and I sit with our dog and have some "coffee talk." Then the kids get up and run for a swim, and we have family and friends over for casual alfresco dining. Marc is always on the grill, while I'm usually preparing something with fresh ingredients from one of the local East End farms. My perfect day is just an amazing day with summer tunes on the radio and flip-flops on my feet — it's magic, and I feel so grateful to have this home to share with the ones I love.

#### Are there any East End charities that you support and would like to bring attention to?

Marc and I have been really active with philanthropy. We always try to support charities focused around food and family. We are proud supporters of No Kid Hungry, which most recently hooked up with Long Island Cares — some friends and I have discussed doing a No Kid Hungry chef's dinner out here later this summer/fall.

## Brian Stokes Mitchell

### Will Tell Our Story at WHBPAC

#### By Georgia Warner

Your sword could be a sermon, or the power of the pen," sang legendary actor and activist Brian Stokes Mitchell during his Tony-nominated run as Coalhouse Walker in the original Broadway production of "Ragtime." As for Mitchell himself (or "Stokes," as he endearingly prefers to be called), his sword has always been the stage.

On the heels of his sold-out Lincoln Center concert series, Stokes is getting — (nope, not saying saying it) — geared up to "tell our story" in a poignant and uplifting musical concert on September 11 at 8 PM at the Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center, marking his third show at WHBPAC.

"I love that theatre, I love that audience," he enthusiastically exclaimed. "It's an arts-loving audience in such close proximity to New York City, so the audience is very savvy and appreciative. Also, it's an intimate house, and I love that feeling of 'performing in my living room' when I do it. Having a smaller house makes for a really great, intimate way to share music with people."

And Mitchell knows a thing or two about performing in his living room.

"Even a pandemic can't keep artists down! When you can't sing on Broadway, sing over Broadway!" he said, referring to his notable nightly tributes to New York City health workers, during which he would sing "The Impossible Dream" from "The Man of La Mancha" (Don Quixote is another character Mitchell quite notably donned) from his home balcony to appreciative passersby below.

"It was very bittersweet knowing that I was singing 'on Broadway,' the avenue, every night during this panthat work in that theatre. Even when somebody thinks they're seeing a 'one man show,' there's a host of other people involved; and all of them were suddenly and unexpectedly unemployed as well."

But after many months of Zoom and balcony concerts, Stokes is cautiously yet confidently making his return to the stage — or, parking lot?

"I got to do two socially-distanced concerts during the pandemic: one was in Michigan in a 600-seat theater for 45 people in the audience; and the other was in the Berkshires, where the Colonial Theatre's production of 'Godspell' (which was brilliant) had been moved into the back parking lot and had set up 50 seats for 50 lucky audience members, and I got to do my concert there in the same lot."

Most recently, Mitchell performed six evenings of a free outdoor concert hosted by Lincoln Center for an audience of 1000 — all for whom COV-ID-19 vaccination was an attendance requirement.

"New York is largely vaccinated," Mitchell stated proudly, "and especially the arts-lovers and theatre-goers. For them, being vaccinated is not an impediment; it's like a golden ticket to get back into life. Frankly," he added, "I wish the rest of the world would see it that way too."

As to whether his concert may be taking a more political turn, Mitchell mused, "Well, that depends on what people consider political. Everything seems to be political nowadays. You can't talk about clothes without it being political somehow! So in a sense it is, but not purposefully so."

More intentionally, Mitchell's latest concerts have been crafted and customized to reflect the shared journey we've taken together through these trying times.



want to bring people down. We've been down; this is a time to celebrate!"

#### A Star-Studded New (Big) Deal: Black Theatre United

With Broadway beginning to re-open, Mitchell is celebrating alongside the rest of New York — "I would love to be at every opening and re-opening night on Broadway," he exclaimed while also working hard to instigate positive changes within the theatre community. Quoting his friend, actor Daniel J. Watts - one of the first guests on the Stellar Original series Crossovers Live!, the new monthly live streaming talk show Mitchell is hosting, in which he prompts candid and often comical conversations with celebrities who've dabbled in multiple performance mediums - Mitchell shared the statement, "Broadway can't come back; it has to come forward."

It is a profound sentiment supported by Black Theatre United, an advocacy group that Mitchell co-founded which includes Audra Macdonald, Billy Porter, Norm Lewis, and many other iconic black theatre artists. In fact, just on August 23, Black Theatre United unveiled their proposal, "A New Deal for Broadway," which calls for actionable inclusivity in what has previously been a primarily whitedominated industry; already, it has been signed and agreed to, with landmark unanimity, by the owners and operators of every single Broadway theatre. "Since the tragedy of George Floyd's death, people have been having an awakening like the one that happens to the character of Mother's Younger Brother in 'Ragtime,' when he goes down and listens to Emma Goldman speak, and sees the people, and hears the problems firsthand. That self-education is so important. There are lots of incredible books, many of which have been around for years, about what race means in this country, and what exactly white privilege means; and now suddenly people are reading these with a new curiosity, because their hearts and minds are opening up in a way that they weren't before."

the many gifts that live theatre has to offer.

"When you see people onstage that are going through the same things that you're going through, or to be sitting in an audience and feeling and experiencing others responding, reacting to that story that is going on on that stage in the same way that you are. It brings people together and makes people feel less alone. It gives people greater empathy."

Mitchell took the time to share one such pivotal moment in his own career:

"When I was doing 'Ragtime' ---and this fits right in to what we're going through now, and what we have been going through for hundreds of years - there was an African-American gentleman in Texas named James Byrd Jr., who was dragged behind the truck of two white supremacists until his body disintegrated. It was a shocking thing that happened to the country. I remember recalling this in front of the 'Ragtime' company; we would often discuss things before we did a show that would kind put into perspective why we were doing the show we were doing," he recalled.

"Well, just a few days before this conversation — in fact, Byrd might have been being dragged while this was happening — were the Tony Awards. And we did not win Best Show, and I did not win Best Actor; and as much as you are trying not to be disappointed in a situation where this?'— and then I get to the last paragraph of the letter, which said, 'The reason I'm writing you this letter is because a couple of weeks ago, I came to see your performance in 'Ragtime;' and when I left the theatre, I realized I've been a racist all my life and didn't even know it."

#### A New York State Of Mind

In further recognition of the power of art, empathy, and the city that (almost) never sleeps, Mitchell's voice and joyful spirit soars amidst the impeccable, star-studded ensemble of the new music video cover of Billy Joel's iconic "New York State of Mind." The powerful tribute was shot in every borough of New York, and showcases real New Yorkers dancing in the streets and celebrating together.

"That's what I love most about New York," Mitchell shared. "It demonstrates the possibility of 'What happens when you put all of these very different people together in one very small space?' Well, New York City happens! When you're essentially forced to live so closely with all different types of people, you start discovering the delights of eating food from different countries, and the nuances of different languages, and the different ways people dress, and maybe you adopt some of that; maybe it inspires the way you view the world around. You get this wonderful mixed salad not a melting pot, where everything all blends together; a salad, because there are still very different identities here, and everyone gets to be independently exactly who they are. And we're creating together, challenging each other, listening to each other. If everyone everywhere would try to educate themselves, listen to others, and enter into this important conversation with humility and grace, we'd solve so many problems."

demic, while thousands of people were unemployed and unable to sing on Broadway — including me!"

Mitchell and his wife, Alyson Tucker, were four days from opening a show at City Center's Encores! when Broadway suddenly shuttered; the release of his new album, cleverly titled "Plays with Music," was delayed, and the TV show on which Mitchell was recurring, the movie he was preparing to shoot, and all of the many concerts he'd been planning got shut down too.

"I'm not saying this because 'poor me," the leading man said of his cancelled concerts. "I'm saying it as a way to illustrate that when a concert gets cancelled — for instance, I could be doing a concert with an entire orchestra — well, that's an entire orchestra that's not working. And the backstage crew, the design team, all the people

"I can't do a concert and not acknowledge that; it's the elephant in the room," he said. "But, more importantly, I want it to be a celebration of life, and of how we're almost out of the woods - not quite yet, but we can see the edge of the woods at this point - while still acknowledging how difficult it's been to get here, and the collective loss that's been felt. So I'm using some songs that I've been doing already, so people will hear the things they hope to when they come to a concert, but I've also introduced some new songs to help tell that story of what we've been through and where we're going," he said.

"And I wanted to do it with humor and excitement and delight — a few moments are reflective, but I didn't

These transformative moments of epiphany, Mitchell posits, are one of

you didn't win, it's hard not to be. But a few days days after the Tony Awards, during our curtain call on the same night we'd heard about and discussed this story of James Byrd, I remember feeling deeply ashamed that I was feeling bad that we didn't win, because that suddenly seemed so trivial in comparison to what the show was saying about America, about racism," he continued.

"Now, the coda of that story is that about two weeks after that, I received the most incredible letter I have ever received in my life — it must have been seven or eight pages, hand written, from this young man who I believe lived in Florida. He wrote, 'I'm 20 years old and I'm Caucasian'— and then he proceeded to tell me about this ordinary life he was living, and I'm thinking, 'Okay, where's he going with

Would that we may all soon ride on the wheels of that not-so-impossible dream.

For tickets to Brian Stokes Mitchell's upcoming WHBPAC concert, visit WH-BPAC.org or call 631–288–1500. For more info on Stokes, Crossovers Live, "Plays with Music," and Black Theatre United, head to BrianStokes.com.

## Curated Wines

### **Creating Dream Cellars**

#### By Jessica Mackin-Cipro

rom collectible to cult wine, to the wine you bring out for special occasions, to the everyday staples, Curated Wines + Cellars is one of the latest services available on the East End to create a client's dream wine cellar.

Duo Donna Paitchel and David Shuster founded Curated Wines + Cellars in 2020, servicing the tri-state area with a large focus on the Hamptons. The company was born out of the Covid-19 pandemic, after the two spent 30 years working together producing high-profile events.

"I am so excited to be launching our new business Curated Wines + Cellars. After more than 30 years producing amazing events around the world, many of which included fabulous wine components, this new venture is a natural segue for us," said Paitchel.

The team had worked together on events including the Olympic Games, US Open, World Cup, and PGA Championship, to name a few. Their work brought them to wine regions across the globe from Bordeaux to Napa and beyond, expanding their vast knowledge on the subject.

The company builds client's wine cellars with a blended collection of varietals from around the world from untapped to premier regions.

By using a tracking software system they are able to create "a cellar that can be fully utilized by the client and it also gives us the tools to analyze their consumption, continuing the process of tailoring the wine cellar," shared Shuster.

"It's kind of like one stop shopping for wine," said Paitchel, as she explained how they wanted to make it easy for clients, so that they can simply enjoy the wine selection that has been curated for them.



"Having had a home in the Hamptons for more than 30 years, I understand the lifestyle and what people want in their homes and how they entertain," said Paitchel. During the time of Covid-19, when many people are entertaining in their homes for small groups, they also make sure to have the go-to wine for every night, so that clients can always "experience the culture of wine." "I'm always looking for the next interesting thing out there," said Paitchel of the types of wines they bring to their clients.

The team officially launched their digital space this spring, where visitors can discover ways to enhance their wine cellar.

To learn more about Curated Wines + Cellars, visit curatedwinescellars.com.

#### James Lane Post

## Food & Sustainability

### By Susan Rockefeller

n his book, "We Are the Weather," the brilliant Jonathan Safran Foer writes, "Saving the planet begins at breakfast." Foer explains, "The real choice we all face is not what to buy, whether to fly or have children, but whether we are willing to commit to living ethically in a broken world, a world in which human beings are dependent for collective survival on a kind of ecological grace ... How can we create limits to share what is left?"

As a filmmaker, I've had the privilege of speaking to audiences around the globe about our environment, our oceans, and our food supply. I'm deeply aligned with Foer's powerful point that "Every time we say crisis, we are also saying decision." Last year, I produced two films that underscore the importance of paying attention to the natural environment — "Kiss the Ground," and "Gunda" by the amazing Viktor Kossakovsky. Back in 2014 I made a film called "Food for Thought Food for Life" which illuminated the problems associated with agribusiness practices and introduced viewers to the farmers, chefs,

researchers, educators, and advocates who were offering real solutions. It was a labor of love that was designed to inspire communities and individuals ready to make a difference.

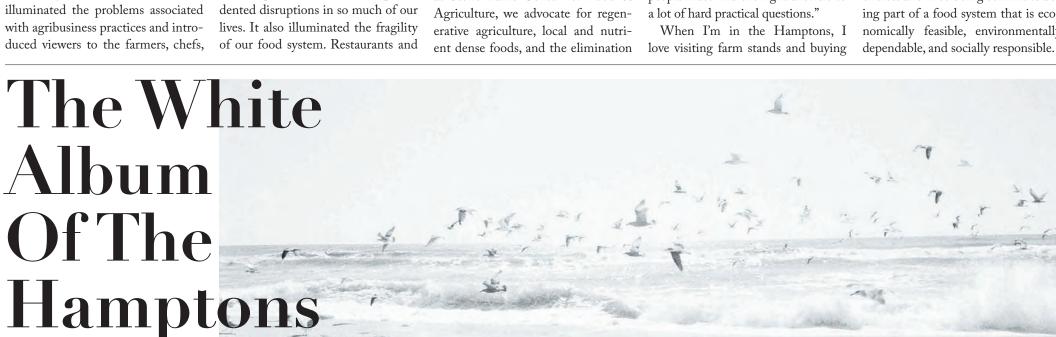
In the last several years, I've gone to eating 99 percent plant-based for my nutritional needs. It's what looks best to me for both planetary and human health. Animal agriculture's tremendous impact on our planet has me putting far more emphasis on fruits, legumes, and vegetables and eating more simply. I think of Michael Pollan's wise comment that everything he's learned about food and health can be summed up in seven words: "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants." The simplicity of the basics appeal to me as does the concept of moving from consumption to creativity, taking delight in savoring simple foods. There's nothing better than a ripe tomato with sea salt and basil or a simply roasted baked potato.

As we all know too well, the Covid-19 pandemic caused unpreceschools closed and there were farms and products with no markets. These disruptions magnified the existing inequalities and problems. There's far too much food loss and waste (an estimated 30 percent of the food produced for human consumption globally is lost or wasted somewhere along the food supply chain). The pandemic has provided us with a unique opportunity to commit to changing our food systems for greater efficiency, health, sustainability, and equality.

My husband and my mantra is to "Protect What is Precious." We believe in healthy soils and healthy seas. As board members of Oceana, we work to protect the oceans and at Stone Barns Center for Food & of food waste at every stage of the supply chain. We need visionaries to transform our food system to make it nourishing, regenerative, and equitable. Policymakers must aspire to more fundamental changes in the food systems to address issues around disease, climate, the economy, and conflict. We all can vote three times a day for a food culture that nourishes us and takes care of our planet.

Wendell Berry, the famous author, poet, naturalist, and farmer in Kentucky writes movingly of the care a farmer bestows on the land: "If the supply of food is to be continuous for a long time, then people must work in harmony with nature. That means that people must find the right answers to

from local vendors who have passion for delicious food. Every year I look forward to early corn lightly steamed, or cut kernels added to a salad. In Bridgehampton, I have my own garden and relish the abundance of it all. Growing of plants deepens my love of what nature provides for us. I do know that when people get involved in growing and making their own food, their relationship to food and our earth can change profoundly to one of reverence and delight. My hope is that people understand that the act of eating is both a spiritual, environmental, and political act and a celebration of community, farmers, culture, soil, and soul. We all can make choices and in so doing commit to being part of a food system that is economically feasible, environmentally





ward-winning photographer and bestselling au-\_thor, Christophe von Hohenberg, began taking photos at the young age of fourteen. He was inspired by his stepfather, the photographer Wendy Hilty, who presented Christophe with his first camera, a Rolleiflex Twin Lens 2.8.

These days, Von Hohenberg is widely known for his photographs at Andy Warhol's memorial service in 1987. In his latest book, "The White Album of the Hamptons," he sets his sights on capturing the magic of a storied New York coastline.

In the book's pages, Von Hohenberg's black-and-white photographs of

the Hamptons give the impression of squinting against the glaring summer sun - bleached-out details blur and faint gestures carve out the presence of painterly human figures against a vast expanse of ocean and sky. By allowing himself to be "blinded by the light," von Hohenberg captures the harmony, stillness, and nostalgia of these shores.

We caught up with Hunsberger to learn more.

#### What inspired you to start Elements Fitness Studio?

I was inspired to start a client focused studio after working for many years in the fitness and dance Industry. In the early 2000s the boutique industry was just starting to boom and I was working a lot in the New York City area and felt the city needed more client driven studio experience fostering a deeper connection between client and trainer.

#### Tell us about your classes and what attendees should expect.

Our classes based on our signature Elements Formula which is a combination of yoga stretches Pilates core work and ballet conditioning. We use a special formula based on musical phrasing that groups these exercises together to transform the body. Our classes are intimate and client focused. We cap our attendance to keep from over crowding to allow a very personalized experience in a group fitness atmosphere.

These photographs - haunting and serene - are sure to evoke in viewers feelings of the sublime. Though a departure for an artist whose lens is typically focused on human subjects, "The White Album of the Hamptons" demonstrates Hohenberg's mastery no matter the subject. By employing a style that plays with light and exposure he captures the dream-like beauty and breathtaking soul of these familiar beaches.

The book can be found locally at Southampton Books, Sag Harbor Books, and BookHampton. The photography featured in the book is currently on view at MM Fine Art in Southampton.

## Andrea Fornarola Hunsberger

## **A Talk With Elements Fitness Studio Founder**

#### By Jessica Mackin-Cipro

ndrea Fornarola Hunsberger is the founder of Elements Fitness Studio in East Hampton Village and soon to be the Upper East Side. In addition to being a fitness guru, she is a professional dancer, musical theatre performer, and actor, who has been dancing and creating movement patterns since

#### her early childhood.

Elements Upper East Side will open this fall in Manhattan. The new flagship facility features a threefloor, multi-studio design including Elements signature studios, private training spaces, a streaming and media studio, curated wellness boutique, express beauty barre and more.



#### Tell us a little about your new location.

We are so excited about our new Upper East Side location! We are three floors of fitness at the corner of 68th Street and 3rd Avenue. Set to open fall 2021, Elements UES,

houses two studios, a wellness boutique, a juice bar, and private training. We are building a new studio with state of the art technology, remote streaming equipment and enhanced Covid-19 HVAC systems with built in sanitization precautious.



## Kiss & Tell

By Heather Buchanan

## Brazilian Bikini Bottoms, Matricidal Goldfish and One-Legged Seagulls

dreams are disturbing. Really disturbing. In the morning when I wake up, I often consider finding the nearest Jungian Institute to check myself in as a subject. I must admit I was never much of a Freud fan but I do have matricidal goldfish dreams. Oedipal goldfish drama aside, I did find out that although they don't kill their mothers, these fish do actually eat their young quite often or anything else that fits indiscriminately in their mouth. Maybe it's just all their collective unconscious drama of being flushed down toilets after so many school fairs that they tend not to get attached.

They say the subconscious controls our dreams so I wonder what the hell I ever did to mine that it serves up a nightly stream of anxiety and horror. (And for the record clinics define one to two nightmares a week which cause you distress to be sufficient cause for concern.) Everyone has drama in their lives but growing up as a WASP the fear of wearing white after Labor Day just scratched the surface of what wasn't talked about over Tanqueray and tonics. Jung said, "I have noticed that dreams are as simple or complicated as the dreamer is himself." Lack of non-inclusive pronoun not-withstanding, maybe it is my very rich imagination and ability as a writer to tap into a world between light and dark, past and future and seen and unseen which fuels this nightly chiaroscuro.

One of the ways to combat bad

dreams is to make sure you destress during your day so I often take long walks on the beautiful beaches here to take in the amazing feeling of the sand in my toes and waves washing onto the shore and children and dogs and people experiencing the joy of nature and I wonder with all the Brazilian bikini bottoms in fashion now do swim suits cost less because there is practically no fabric used.

And then I see it. The one-legged seagull. For some reason this image fills my waking life as well as my sleeping life. For most people a seagull with a limp does not even register in their consciousness. They are more concerned it will try to steal their gourmet sandwich. And yet I wonder, does it matter if you have a bum leg



if you have the ability to fly? Well at some point even birds need to land.

So, similar to my goldfish googling I learn from my online research that seagulls often stand on one leg as a way of heat regulation. It is apparently not an uncommon sight. And yet in our polluted oceans a gull may very well get a leg tangled in a net or plastic which renders it unusable. And according to ornithologists, one-footed seagulls often lose their mate or have more difficulty finding a partner, especially as the courtship displays requires two strong legs. So as a writer attuned to the romantic life of all creatures, maybe I am picking up on something, concerned for the courtship displays of one-legged gulls the way I am for the courtship displays of girls who don't have the perfect body for that bikini.

As Jung tried to point out, it may be all in the interpretation. Goldfish in dreams are considered good omens unless they are dead in which case it indicates you have stopped believing in your dreams. It strikes me of the two different meanings of dreams, one which is in your inner world when you sleep and the other is what you hope for yourself in waking life. The vulnerabilities and imperfections I see in the world and in myself do not need to impede my dreams or anyone else's. In fact, it's the very compassion and empathy I feel as I move through the world which makes me a better writer. But maybe, just maybe, a pleasant dream now and then would be nice.

## Latino Film Festival Of The Hamptons

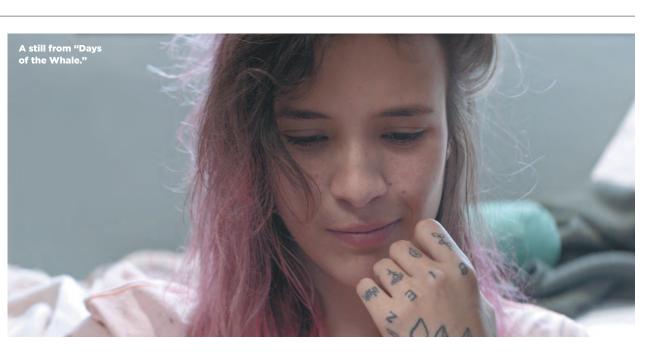
rganización Latino Americana of Eastern Long Island has announced the award-winning films in this year's 18th annual Latino Film Festival of the Hamptons, taking place at the Parrish Art Museum and Sag Harbor Cinema. The festival includes films

End venues," said Minerva Perez, OLA's executive director. "This year we are excited to offer an Under 21 event that will start at 9:30 PM and open with a short video/music installation."

All films have English subtitles, and each represents three very differ-

spective and a call for courage," said Perez. "They are raw as well as incredibly entertaining. We will have the opportunity to hear from each of the filmmakers. This is one of my favorite OLA festival lineups. Even with all of the critical advocacy work we are committed to, OLA understands the a screening of "La Llorona" / "The Weeping Woman" directed by Jayro Bustamante. There will be a light reception and museum tour of Tomashi Jackson's exhibit "The Land Claim," as well as a recorded interview with the director screened after the film. There will also be a screening of the short "Voices of Youth" / "Voces de la juventud" directed by Allura Leggard and produced by OLA Media Lab.

OLA's Under 21 Event at Sag Harbor Cinema will take place Saturday, September 18, at 9:30 PM with a screening of "Myth and Motion" / "Mito y movimiento," directed by Carolina Fuentes and "The Infiltrators" / "Los infiltrados" directed by Cristina Ibarra and Alex Rivera. There will be a live conversation with filmmakers after the film.



from Guatemala, Colombia, and the United States.

"We are fortunate to continue collaborating with Parrish Art Museum and Sag Harbor Cinema to bring these films to beautiful iconic East ent genres but hold at their center the importance of seeking and speaking the truth. Shorts from local filmmakers via OLA Media Lab are also included in the festival lineup.

"Each of the films offers a new per-

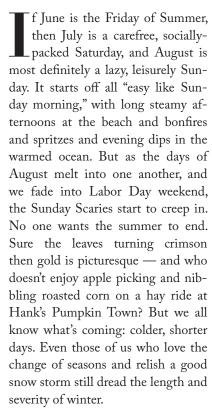
vital impact art has on bridging cultures and building understanding and harmony among neighbors."

The festival begins on Friday, September 17, at the Parrish Art Museum, starting at 6:30 PM with On Saturday, September 18, starting at 7 PM, "Days of the Whale" / "Los días de la ballena" will screen at the Sag Harbor Cinema. There will be a live conversation with filmmaker Catalina Arroyave following the film.



## **End-Of-Summer Blues**

By Tracey Toomey McQuade



As the beach season wanes and we trade our bikinis for sweaters and our rosé for cabernet, what can we do to stay motivated and keep our summertime glow? How do we march bravely into the darker, colder months? I turned to LaShonna Holloway-Johnson, senior Tracy Anderson trainer, and all-around-inspiring human who dances through life with power and grace, to help us find the antidote to the end-of-summer blues.

Here are her tips:

#### WORKOUT

"As a Tracy Anderson trainer, I make sure that I keep up with my own personal workout no matter how busy my schedule might get," said LaShonna. "Moving my body definitely helps me transition easier into the winter months when our bodies naturally want to hold onto weight to stay warm." Okay, so the first step is to keep moving and prioritize our sweat sesh — even when we would rather set our teeth on fire than put on sneakers and brave the cold.

#### MUSIC

"Music is such a great motivation!" LaShonna shared. "I enjoy so many artists and genres ... but I always look forward to the empowering sounds of Beyoncé or the motivating tunes of Imagine Dragons." Takeaway here? Start to take note of the music that makes you want to move your body and curate an energizing playlist for fall and beyond.

#### GLOW

"When the weather starts to turn cold, my skin gets extremely dry," said LaShonna. Most of us suffer the same affliction, and dull skin just makes us dread winter even more. How do we return to the glow we radiate in summer? "I use Skin Sequence Got Physical Balm," LaShonna said. "It's all organic, and it really helps keep my skin moisturized like it naturally feels on a warm, sunny day."

#### **SNACK**

"I'm a huge fan of matcha!" she said. "I personally enjoy it with almond milk and agave." Good to know we can warm up and get going with some caffeinated, antioxidant-charged sweetness.

#### MEDITATION

"When it gets cold out, it's hard to get out of bed, and I just wish I could click my heels and end up in the heated Tracy Anderson studio that feels so good," LaShonna said. "To help with this I get up a little earlier to take a long warm shower before I leave the house. I also use this time to reflect on what I'm thankful for in life and to let go of anything that I don't want to carry into my day." Long, hot, meditative showers to warm the body and focus the mind. Roger that.

Bottom line: don't feed the fears! Take the initiative and get moving, get dancing, get glowing even when your pool is sealed like a tomb, and cruising with the top down on 27 feels like a distant memory. One thing that has helped me survive winter is to book a trip to sunnier climates when I know I'll need it most. Getting out of Dodge in February for even a few days can help boost morale and your Vitamin D level.

And here's a fun fact: even the shortest day of the year, December 21, is the day we start turning back toward the light. So in our darkest and coldest days, we can rest in the awareness that summer is coming back toward us.

## Parrish Road Show

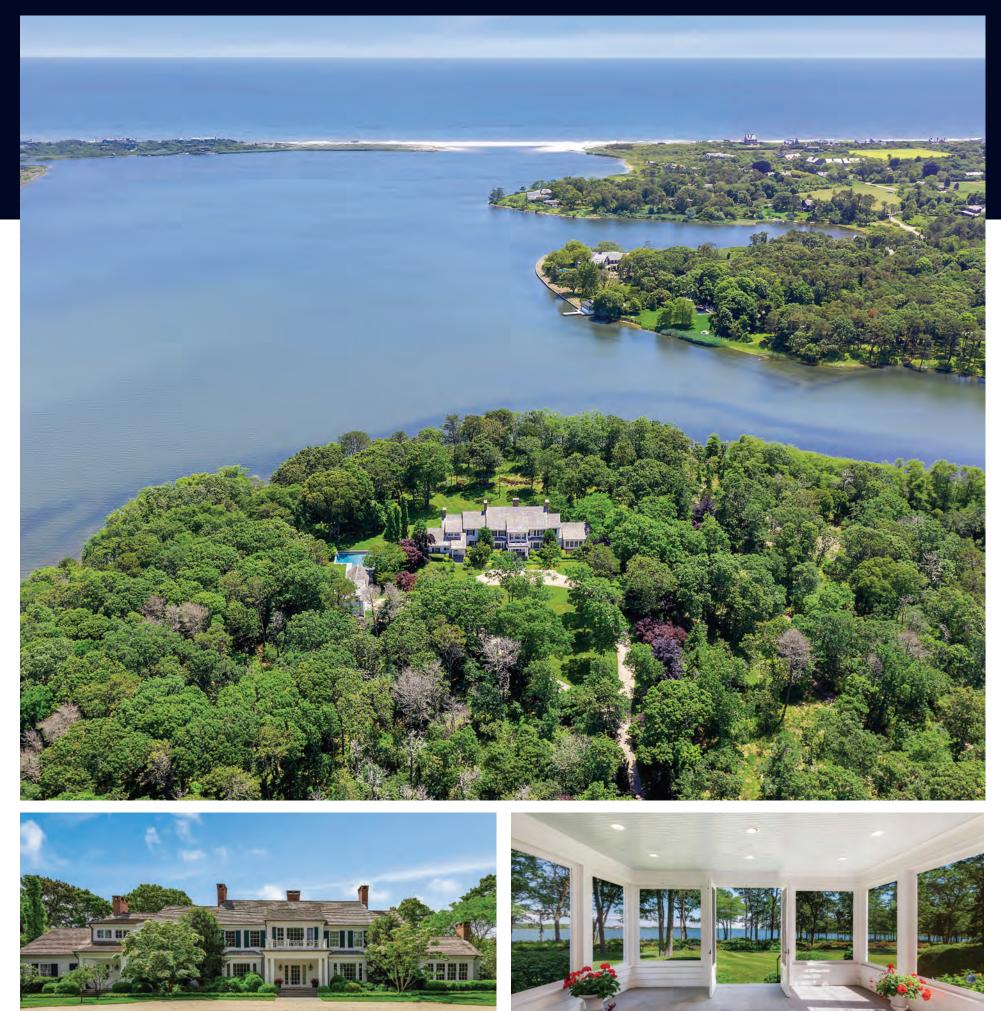


For the tenth season of its offsite exhibition series Parrish Road Show, the Parrish Art Museum invited East End-based Latinx artist Darlene Charneco to create a site-specific exhibition at Oysterponds Historical Society in Orient.

The multi-dimensional installation Symbiosome Schoolhouse extends the artist's life-long practice of examining human settlements, forms of interaction, and evolution through a biological lens. On view in both the Old Point Schoolhouse and on the Historical Society grounds, the exhibition features newly created works, largely made while Charneco was in residency at the William Steeple Davis Trust in Orient. Symbiosome Schoolhouse presents works on paper, sculpture, and video, as well as the artist's signature wall reliefs which she calls Touchmaps.

The exhibit is on view Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, until October 24.

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