

# THE NATIONAL ARTS CLUB BULLETIN

15 GRAMERCY PARK • NEW YORK CITY 10003-1796 • SINCE 1898

IN REVIEW: SUMMER 2007

## HONORING VISIONARIES & THEIR VISIONS



### A GENTLEMAN AND A SCHOLAR: PROF. HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.

On May 24, the National Arts Club awarded its first Medal of Honor for lifetime achievement in African and African-American scholarship to Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The Dinner Chair was member Dr. Katherine Vidal Harrington who was assisted by a committee of Dianne Bernhard, Chrishaunda Lee and Aldon James. Over two hundred and fifty members and guests assembled to hear tributes from Alphonse Fletcher, Jr. of Fletcher Asset Management; Thelma Golden, Director of the Studio Museum in Harlem; Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higgenbotham, Chair of the the African and African American Studies Program at Harvard University; Lewis P. Jones, President of the Harvard Club of New York City; Richard Plepler, Executive Vice President of HBO; and Chrishaunda Lee who introduced a film clip by Oprah Winfrey.

President Aldon James presented the Gold Medal to Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.,—the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and the Director of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute at Harvard. Dr. Gates introduced his family to to the Club—his brother and father. He related his lengthy academic career at Yale, [SEE PAGE 2, "GATES"](#)

**Upper Left (left to right):** Honoree Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Dinner Chair Dr. Katherine Vidal Harrington and Vice President Dianne Bernhard **Upper Right:** Dr. Stanley Burns and Honoree Bruce Davidson.



### BRUCE DAVIDSON: DISCOVERING MEANING IN CIRCUMSTANCE.

The Photography Committee awarded the Gold Medal to New York-based photographer Bruce Davidson. The speakers were Melissa Harris, Editor-in-Chief of *Aperture Magazine*; Deborah Willis, Professor of Photography and Imaging, NYU; and Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, President of the Foundation for Landscape Studies.

When Davidson left military service in 1957, he worked as a freelance photographer for *Life* magazine and in 1958 became a full member of Magnum Photos. From 1958 to 1961 he created such seminal bodies of work as *The Dwarf*, *Brooklyn Gang*, and the *Freedom Rides*. Classic bodies of work from his 50-year career have been extensively published in monographs and are included in many major public and private fine art collections around the world. He continues to photograph and produce new bodies of work.

Thanks to a contribution made by committee member Shawn Bridges, we were able to exhibit Davidson's images of Central Park. The images have rarely been shown, so we were very lucky. Another amazing thing about the evening was that Bruce actually showed slides and talked about his work as part of his acceptance speech. That was a first for us at the club, and it was wonderful about his life. The evening is another [SEE PAGE 3, "DAVIDSON"](#)

## MUSIC IN THE MANSION

Spring music programs included four outstanding events. Cherry Provost and the Literary Committee collaborated with Music to present a reading of Arnold Steinhardt's *Violin Dreams*. Mr. Steinhardt is the Guarneri Quartet's first violinist and an internationally recognized virtuoso. *Violin Dreams* is an engaging and well-reviewed narrative of his serial love affairs with more and more intriguing violins, teachers, and colleagues, and particularly with Bach's D minor *Partita*, of which two of his performances—40 years apart—accompany the book on a CD. Mr. Steinhardt concluded his reading with a 30 minute performance of the *Partita*; a literary and musical combination which will be long remembered. At Music Chairman Daniel Schiffman's request, Mr. Steinhardt graciously agreed to return next season in a dual recital with one of his protégés, reviving our long-dormant Sorcerer and Apprentice series. We thank NAC members Harvey Zirotsky and Dr. Sharon Dunn for introducing this great artist to our Club.

Music Committee member W. Garner Robinson took the lead in continuing our tradition of promoting works by young composers. The two performances which Garner brought to us were the *Guernica Trio* by Spanish composer Octavio Vasquez and *Flit of Fury: The Monarch* by New York-area composer Aaron Severini. The Vasquez piano trio premiered at the Club on April 27th, timed to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the April 26, 1937, bombing of the Basque town for which it is named. Violinist Cyrus Beroukhim, cellist Eric Jacobsen, and pianist Maria Yefimova played to a Sculpture Court packed with Club members, guests, and the composer himself; all were intent on the trio and each of its unusual five movements. The Committee's final concert of the season on June 18th was a program of works for two pianos: Sergei Rachmaninoff's Suite no. 2, Op. 17 and young composer Aaron Severini's *Flit of Fury: The Monarch*. On two pianos (one generously on loan from Steinway), the concert's three pianists Eliran Avni, Steven Beck, and Stephen Gosling garnered thunderous applause from an audience of almost 200. Mr. Avni will return next season for a quite different chamber music program. We hope to see all of these accomplished artists at NAC and are appreciative of Garner Robinson's successful efforts to engage younger artists and composers in the best tradition of our Club.

NAC Member and Steinway Artist Rosa Antonelli, through the cooperation of Governor Guy Frazier, appeared in recital on May 16 in the Grand Gallery, introducing many of her admirers to the Tilden Mansion. Professor Antonelli is a distinguished educator as well as a pianist who was granted U.S citizenship as "an artist of extraordinary ability." Critics have **CONT. RIGHT**

## HAIKU HIGHLIGHTS

On May 22 an overflowing crowd gathered in the Grand Gallery to take part in the Literary Committee's Celebration of Haiku and Baseball. Billy Collins, former Poet Laureate of the United States, delighted the audience with a reading from his book of haiku, *She Was Just Seventeen*. His work is characteristically humorous and laughter repeatedly filled the gallery. Introducing *Baseball Haiku*, an anthology he recently co-edited for Norton, Literary Committee member Cor van den Heuvel described the relationship between baseball and haiku: both are closely involved with nature and the seasons.

He read a few of his own baseball haiku and then introduced three of the poets featured in the book: Brenda Gannam, a Yankees' fan from Brooklyn, had the gallery laughing again with her comically erotic baseball senryu (a kind of haiku about human nature); Ed Markowski, a Tigers' fan from Detroit, entertained the crowd with poems on box scores, September leaves rattling on a backstop, and the hot stove league; and Alan Pizzarelli, one of America's foremost haiku poets, hit a series of haiku homeruns to wrap up the evening. One sample:

bases loaded—  
at the crack of the bat  
the crowd pops up

This event coincided with the Literary Committee's online haiku contest. See page 4 for all the entries and a list of winners.

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**CONT FROM PAGE 1, "GATES."** Cornell, Duke and Harvard, and the support he received from former Harvard President Neil Ruden who was a guest that evening.

The contributions Dr. Gates has made to African-American history are legendary and his audience is deservedly international. The Club was certainly a setting for a significant award. The floral arrangements by Dianne Bernhard and her team of David Carter and Mary Cava amazed the guests and transformed the gallery.

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**CONT. FROM LEFT** hailed her as a leading exponent of Spanish and Latin American music, and correctly so as was evident from her performances of Ugarte, Albeniz, Piazzolla, and Granados. Her worldliness, through her extensive concertizing, showed in her interpretations of Chopin and Liszt. The Music Committee is particularly pleased that so much of our work this season was done with the enthusiastic cooperation of other NAC committees and members.

—Linda Zagaria  
Music Committee, Secretary

## HOT HAUTE HEATHERETTE



On Thursday, June 21 the NAC bestowed a citation for Fashion to Haute Couture and eccentrically exciting design team, Heatherette. The Club bestowed this award through the Fashion Committee, chaired by Chrishaunda Lee. Other committee members like Guy Frazier and Nancy Ozelli were on hand to enhance the "fashionable feel" of the evening. Heatherette's grand fashion shows, normally shown in the largest tent at Bryant Park during the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week still compared to the turnout of the NAC's cocktail-themed honoring. Though there was no runway on which leggy models could prance, fabulously dressed mannequins strategically placed throughout the parlor, and the place was still packed to the hilt. Individualists and Heatherette fans like Kelly Osbourne were there to celebrate and there were fashion photographers galore.

One-half of the Heatherette duo Richie Rich was extremely grateful for the honoring. When National Arts Club president Aldon James asked him if he was interested in joining the club, Richie responded, "Where's the application!?" A stylishly fun night was had by all.

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CONT. FROM PAGE 1, "DAVIDSON" historical date to add to our long legacy of supporting photography, which began with the exhibition Stieglitz organized and held at the club in 1902. The Central Park exhibition was part of the Magnum Festival '07, which celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the legendary Magnum Photographers. It was an honor for us to be a part of that. Also in attendance that evening was our committee member we like to call our "Ambassador to the West Coast," Neville Berman and his wife Pam who fly in each year for the Medal of Honor. They have generously set up the Neville and Pam Berman NAC Grant for Photography. The Committee will be announcing the first recipient of the grant in the fall.

—Catherine Johnson  
Photography Committee, Chair

## A MOST COMMANDING PERFORMANCE



Left: Heatherette designer Traver Rains, Kelly Osbourne, Aldon James and designer Richie Rich take in an eclectic evening of couture at the Club. Above: Russ Kassoff, Valerie Lemon, Jason deMontmorency and Michael Gilbert usher out the 2007 season in the venerable NAC style.

A spectacular evening of entertainment was enjoyed by a record crowd of members at the Command Performance on June 22. The Russ Kassoff trio played a brief set of jazz in concert featuring Russ on a humorous and buoyant stride piano solo. The singing stars for the evening, Eric Michael Gillett and Valerie Lemon, both world renowned concert and Broadway veterans, mesmerized the audience with their sophisticated selections of great American Standards. One particular highlight occurred when Ms. Lemon danced with the evening's venerable organizer Jason deMontmorency in a moving rendition of "Embraceable You."

## FRENCH CABARET WITH O LA LA LEGERE!

On June 14, Le Cocktail Français and the Roundtable presented chanteuse, accordionist and pianist, Phoebe Legere. She sparkled with those favorite French cabaret songs that make you feel like you're in Paris, but she also surprised with some Cajun moves and songs from her home state of Louisiana. The delicious buffet à la française complete with French wine deserves similar accolades. Over 110 diners enjoyed the event and made it succès fou.

The response to the note went out to the membership in June regarding free French lessons has been overwhelming. Classes will be held in the evening, as most people requested. Day and time will be announced soon.

—Constance Brock  
Le Cocktail Français, Chair

# The NAC Literary Committee Haiku Contest

This spring, the Literary Committee celebrated the season with an online haiku competition. The haiku is a centuries-old Japanese poetic form that traditionally celebrates spring and the effervescent nature of life. The competition was curated by Literary Committee Co-Chair Cherry Provost and author of *Baseball Haiku*, Committee Member Cor van den Heuvel. Below are all the haikus for your enjoyment.

A very special thanks to our judge, Sarah Manguso, author of two poetry collections: *Siste Viator* and *The Captain Lands in Paradise*, which was named a *Village Voice* Book of the Year. Next year she will be the Joseph Brodsky Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome.

This year's winners of the Literary Committee prizes are:

First Prize: Dee Shapiro, "[Frozen Pond]"

Second Prize: Constance Brock, "[Darkening city street]"

Third Prize: Chetra E. Kotzas, "[Sunset, ripe, rests red]"

This year's winner of the guest judge prizes are:

First Prize: Dee Shapiro, "[frozen pond]"

Second Prize: Dee Shapiro, "[waning gibbous moon]"

hovering shadow  
still sitting and reflecting  
on its fleeting life  
—Ramona Bechtos

lovely peony  
your beauty unfolds each spring  
awakening the soul  
—Ramona Bechtos

kaleidoscope turns  
teasing the eye with colors  
vibrant and ever-changing  
—Ramona Bechtos

Heart in the sun  
burns into pale fire  
the ground shivers  
I find the sky  
—Miriam Berger

Darkening city street  
Peartrees tossing clouds of petals  
Imagining young brides.  
—Constance Brock

I weep Spring, he laughs  
words and numbers I don't know,  
love, one the other  
—Mary DeWitt Smith

Aging has nothing  
To do with maturity  
I want my Mommy!  
—Bettijane Eisenpreis

Flowers on bonnets  
Wilt amid the snowflakes.  
Who says it's Easter?  
—Bettijane Eisenpreis

Cream pink petals, bow  
their rose faces, blushing pale.  
Morning sun rises.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Breathing in; snowflakes,  
scattering like white swans adrift,  
swim in iced river.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Midnight silent wakes,  
leaving clouds beckoning dawn.  
Morning glories sleep.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Sun covers itself.  
Rain tumbles, brightening dew.  
Deserts sleep, dreaming.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Ink blackens blank page;  
Soft thoughts ending, dress desire  
in laughter and lust.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Forsythia wind  
whispers into crisp sail flying.  
Ibis take off and swoop.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Sunset, ripe, rests red  
upon furled sails, slender bows  
waiting for sunrise.  
—Chetra E. Kotzas

Round purring cat  
Whiskers window shutters aside  
Peering at the night.  
—Heidi Scheuber

Walking in a wet forest.  
Disturbed branch cascades  
Cold tears.  
Like pins.  
—Heidi Scheuber

waning gibbous moon  
in the mirror  
her mother's face  
—Dee Shapiro

sun sets at seven  
under a cover of snow  
forsythia buds  
—Dee Shapiro

late April snow  
teenage daughter  
wears flip-flops to school  
—Dee Shapiro

first rosebud  
asleep in the carriage  
granddaughter  
—Dee Shapiro

dusk  
raven's silhouette  
on the lawn  
—Dee Shapiro

blanket of snow  
one purple crocus  
raises its head.  
—Dee Shapiro

frozen pond  
his letter  
of apology  
—Dee Shapiro

# The President's Letter

Dear Members,

Every summer, I like to ask a few members what their events were of the past season.

**BRIAN McCONVILLE:** "My favorite event of last season was the Gold Medal of Honor dinner for Mr. Hans Neuendorf, CEO Artnet Worldwide. I say this because it was really magical to have so many friends and colleagues gathered to honor achievements that I see affecting people every day."

**MICHAEL MARTIN:** "The 108th Annual Meeting was an extraordinary contrast of the Club's rich heritage with its exciting role as a cultural pioneer. As one of the Club's younger members, it was a very memorable event."

**W. GARNER ROBINSON:** "The only thing better than starting a new season is ending the previous one with a bang, and that we did this past June with two pianos, three pianists, and a packed Grand Gallery for the Rachmaninoff/Severini concert."

**KATE SCHELTER:** "My favorite NAC moment is every time I walk through the club doors and find myself engaged in a thoroughly unique and riveting conversation with Aldon! Seriously, popping in and out of the club, on a daily basis, is such a neighborhood comfort that is very unique to the club and it's intimate, cozy contribution to Gramercy Park. Oh, and the fashion shows!"

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And don't forget to VOTE for your favorite entry in the Open Online Exhibition on the NAC website. Voting ends August 30. Winners will be announced September 10.

Stay cool,



## SAVE THE DATE!

Opening Night: September 4 • *Amour et Piano*: September 24 • Hospitality Night & the Literary Committee Members' Reading: October 23 • Architectural Committee Medal of Honor: November 1 • The Literary Committee Medal of Honor: November 6 • The 106th Anniversary honoring the Institute for Art Research: November 15 • The Visual Arts Department Medal of Honor: January 17 • The Photography Committee Medal of Honor: May 30

## MEMBERS @ WORK

*Sparks*, a new play produced by member **PAT ADDISS**, was selected for the 2007 TRU Voices reading series.

**DEBORAH CHAPIN'S** work was selected for the 28th Annual Mystic International, September-November, 2007.

**ROSEMARY CONNOR'S** Tricentennial Landscape Exhibit was on view at 30 Bridge Street, New Milford, Connecticut from March 8 - May 31, 2007.

This May and June, photographs by **CAROL FONDE** were on view at the Westwood Gallery in Soho.

Sumner Glimcher's documentary film **A TASTE OF PROVENCE** was shown in June at the Artesenal Gallery in Central Park.

**GARTH HALL** and **SCARLETT ROUX** have launched *filmcommunity.com*—a free social MEDIA Network for film, filmmakers or anyone interested in the Cinema.

A new edition of Literary Committee member **PATRICE HANNON'S** book, *Dear Jane Austen: A Heroine's Guide To Life And Love*, was recently published by Plume.

Landscape paintings by **BRAD MARSHALL** will be on display at Fischbach Gallery in Chelsea, September 6 - September 29, 2007.

**FRIEDRIKE MERCK'S** bas relief "Paul Cadmus" will be in the National Portrait Gallery show, "New Arrivals," from June 8, 2007 - March, 2008.

**MICHAEL PONCE'S** paintings will be included in a three person exhibit at White Raven Studios in New Mexico July 14 - Sept 4.

Governor and Music Chairman **DANIEL SCHIFFMAN** was again recognized in two specialty categories by The Best Lawyers in America.

"Unspoken" by **MARISSA SOROUDI** was at the 2nd Annual Conference for Muslim Peacebuilding, Justice, and Interfaith Dialogue in Washington, DC.

Governor and Theatre/Drama Committee Chair **JEFFREY STOCKER** will be teach, "Acting For The Dancer," a course he created, at the Joffrey Ballet Summer Workshop.

**DEE SHAPIRO'S** paintings will be featured in the "Good Night Sun" exhibition at the George Billis Gallery at 511 West 25th street, from July 17 - August 18.

**ALEXANDRA YORK'S** *Crosspoints, A Novel of Choice* hit top sales in Russia with 10,000 copies sold in first two months.

*If you would like to include your announcement in Members@Work, contact the Art Director, Jennifer Knox at [jknox@thenationalartsclub.org](mailto:jknox@thenationalartsclub.org)*

# “SCENE” AROUND



4/24/07 John and Margot Catsimatides with Aldon James at the opening reception for painter Yannis Amaranos.



5/15/07 Peter Duchin, Bill Gallo, and Film Committee Chair Sharyn Grossman discuss the film *Toots*, a documentary of legendary Manhattan saloonkeeper Toots Shor.



4/25/07 Leonore Comorra with *Violin Dreams* author, Arnold Steinhardt (right).



5/24/07 Aldon James, Governor Chrisshaunda Lee and actor Chris Tucker at the Medal of Honor gala reception for Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



5/11/07 Eileen Wu, Governor Guy Frazier, ABC Eyewitness News reporter Patricia Wu, Governor Rose Billings and Helene Draculis at the Medal of Honor reception for rising star Mark Webber.



5/24/07 Playwright Rosary O'Neil, Mary Cava, and Nancy Ozelli salute Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

You can view these pictures, in color, and [many more](#) event photos at [www.nationalartsclub.org](http://www.nationalartsclub.org).  
Go to [Events](#), then [Photo albums](#)



6/7/08 Pat Kibbe of Kids to Kids International, Education Committee Chair Esther Dyer and Marilu Ramirez at the annual Creative Writing Festival.



6/14/07 Star of the cabaret evening, chanteuse Phoebe Legere, and John James.



6/8/07 Mayor Michael Bloomberg takes in the Hudson Valley Art Association exhibition with Dianne and Van Bernhard in the Grand Gallery.



6/14/07 Le Cocktail Français Chair Constance Brock and the NAC Roundtable Chair Linda Zagaria enjoying the spectacular French buffet at the cabaret event.



6/12/07 Best-selling Einstein biographer Walter Isaacson with Literary Committee member John James.



6/22/07 Aldon James and painter Joe Burns at the opening reception for Mr. Burns's exhibition of paintings.

# REMEMBERING RICHARD PIONK & SILAS RHODES



On Tuesday, June 5th, NAC Member, artist and President of the Salamgundi Club, RICHARD PIONK (above) died of cancer at the New York University Medical Center. He was seventy-one. Richard was also the former President of the Pastel Society of America. His classes in pastel at the Club were always overflowing with enthusiastic students of all ages.

SILAS H. RHODES (below), founder and chairman of the School of Visual Arts, died in his sleep on June 28, at age ninety-one. Silas was an educational pioneer and his connection to the Club was strong. Silas continued to design many of the vibrant subway posters for the SVA until his death. In June, Silas attended the Club's Medal of Honor ceremony for the SVA's Art Therapy Program.



The National Arts Club  
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## Summer 2007

### In This Issue:

Honoring Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr.  
and Bruce Davidson • Notes from the Music  
and Literary Committees • Winners of the Literary  
Committee's Spring Haiku Contest • A Fashionable  
Evening with Heatherette • Remembering Richard  
Pionk and Silas Rhodes • The President's Letter •  
Members@Work