

5/28/21

Creativity Is Moving Outside

To The Monoliths At The Montgomery Pinetum

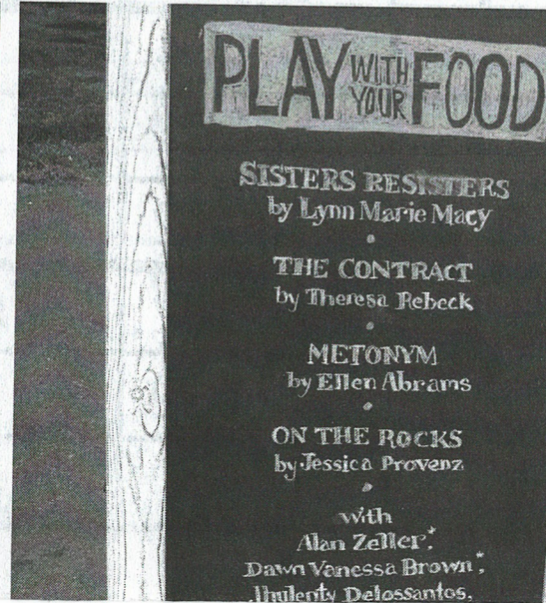
BY ANNE W. SEMMES

There's a semicircle of standing stones newly christened in Cos Cob as the backdrop for outdoor theater. Before them, a small group of performers held some 60 attendees spellbound in a captivating series of short plays last Thursday week. Amongst the captivated was the person who had first envisioned this "Performance Circle"- Bea Crumbine.

Crumbine was instrumental in saving those Monoliths once part of an extraordinary marble amphitheater that existed almost a stone's throw away



A new "Performance Circle" framed by the marble Monoliths as envisioned by Bea Crumbine. Photo by Anne W. Semmes.



on the way, when Horton O'Neil's work of art was due to be bulldozed away [the seating saved for Sarah Lawrence College], Crumbine saw the monoliths likely crushed for driveway gravel. With help she managed to save them, seeing them bringing magic and drama elsewhere.

"As we watched the plays progressing to the audience's joy," Crumbine shared post performances, "I felt as if I had given birth to a wonderful, new Greenwich venue for theater, music, poetry, and quiet reflection."

"It was a very special day of celebration," echoed Diana Muller, the producer of JIB Productions that has long been presenting "Play With Your Food" as indoor performances at the Greenwich Arts Center, but with Crumbine's vision is now offering outdoor performances at the Pinetum. The group will return in June for their next

"I felt as if I had given birth to a wonderful, new Greenwich venue for theater, music, poetry, and quiet reflection." Bea Crumbine

outdoor performance.

All that is required to attend is a folding chair, a mask, and as performances are at noon, a lunch box with your own offering, or a specially ordered box lunch. Forty dollars for the drama, and bring your lunch, or \$60 for that box lunch treat with drama. From the commentary aired in the Q&A following the performances on the four plays, there was much that was enjoyed.

"So, what do you envision happening next in that play," the artistic director Carole Schweid queried the audience on the first two-actor play, "Sister Resisters," described as "a

timely reminder that you never know who you might meet in the ladies room!" "I'm so glad that you asked that question," came a reply, "because I walked away thinking I want to see the next 10-minute play." Another response: "This is at the very least a conversation starter, to realize that we have commonalities between us and yet still may be opposed in certain ways."

"Every actor up here has worked as a professional actor," Schweid introduced the set of five actors "That's one of our specialties because you cannot pick up a script like this and make this happen if you're not a

professional."

So, how much do you rehearse the plays? "We rehearse every play maybe an hour and a half," shared Schweid. And we rehearsed over zoom because somehow the focus is so strong...and it seemed to be pretty effective."

Schweid mentioned how the actors had presented the set of plays twice before in Fairfield, "So, this whole audience is seeing something that was different on Tuesday and different on Wednesday. And by the time we get to Greenwich, we've done it a few times, and it changes in a beautiful way. So, we learn from you, the



Above: The line up of plays given by Play With Your Food the Pinetum on May 20. Photo by Anne W. Semmes. Below: Four of the five actors performing. L to R Susan Vanech, Brian J. Carter, Allan Zeller, Dawn Vanessa Brown (not pictured: Jhulenty Delossantos) Photo by Anne W. Semmes.

audience."

Likewise came from the audience, "Well, my vocabulary has certainly been improved!"

For more information or

to buy tickets for the June performances of "Play With Your Food" visit jibproduction.org or call 203-293-8729