

Artists' exhibition. — Sharyn Flanagan

Art Collides, Saturday, November 7, 2-4 p.m., free, Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, SUNY-New Paltz, 1 Hawk Drive, New Paltz; (845) 257-3844, www.sunynewpaltz.edu/museum.

Alex Minewski exhibition at Wired Gallery in High Falls

A MEMORIAL EXHIBITION of the work of the late New Paltz artist Alex Minewski (1917-1979) will open on Saturday, November 7 at the Wired Gallery, with a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. sponsored by Stone Ridge Wine and Spirits. The exhibition will include works from Minewski's estate, including drawings inspired by his frequent visits to Monhegan Island, Maine, as well as oil paintings, watercolors, ceramics and a bronze sculpture.

"Alex Minewski was one of the most

loved and influential artists and teachers [at SUNY-New Paltz] of the 1970s," say Natalie and Andrew Minewski, his widow and son, respectively. "We hope that this exhibition of his drawings and paintings not previously shown in this area will delight people who knew him and be an eye-opener to people who did not have the privilege." The exhibit runs until November 18 and is on display alongside a retrospective show by Judith Hoyt, who was one of Minewski's last students at SUNY-New Paltz.

Born in 1917, Minewski left home at age 14 with sketchbook in hand exploring the American West. He studied with Sarkis Sarkisian in Detroit and at the Art Students' League in New York with Jean Charlot, Ernest Fiene, George Grosz and Vaclav Vytlačil.

After serving in World War II as a member of Merrill's Marauders, he studied in Paris for two years and then returned to study in New York City with the renowned German Abstract Expressionist Hans Hofmann. While in New York he maintained a studio where he painted,

framed and provided restoration services. In 1966, Minewski became a teacher at the State University College at New Paltz (later named SUNY-New Paltz).

During the '50s, Minewski added his name to the roll of artists who spent creative time on Monhegan Island. About his yearly visits to the island, Minewski once said, "For the past 20 years, summers on Monhegan Island, Maine have become the focal point for my absorbing visual interest in land, sea and sky. My research into the world of fish led me to explore all varieties of undersea life. I have tried to stress the conceptual value of things 'seen,' rather than simply what the eye 'looks at.'"

SUNY-New Paltz has established a memorial scholarship in Minewski's name for excellence in painting and fine arts.

The Wired Gallery is located at 11 Mohonk Road in High Falls. For more information, visit www.thewiredgallery.com.

category come Emmy Awards season.

But before it was a fictionalized TV series, *Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison* was a nonfiction memoir by Piper Kerman, a middle-class Smith College grad who ended up in federal correctional facility in Danbury, Connecticut ten years after she helped a former lover smuggle a suitcase full of drug money. "Heartbreaking, hilarious and at times engaging, Kerman's story offers a rare look into the lives of women in prison — why it is we lock so many away and what happens to them when they're there," says GoodReads about the book.

Orange is the New Black has been selected as this fall's community read for One Book/One New Paltz. Readings, panel discussions, screenings and presentations related to the book are scheduled every day from November 15 to 22 at various



venues around New Paltz. Probably the biggest draw will be an appearance by Barbara Rosenblat, the actress (above) who plays the character Miss Rosa on the Netflix series, taking place at 7 p.m. on Saturday, November 21 at Studley Theatre on the SUNY-New Paltz campus.

Also of special interest to fans of the show will be a talk by Hudson Valley resident Bernetta Calderone, a former corrections officer who serves as a technical advisor to the program's producers. That event begins at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 19 at the Elting Memorial Library at 93 Main Street. The library will screen "I Wasn't Ready," Episode 1 of Season 1 of *Orange is the New Black*, the following evening at the same time, with discussion to follow.

At 7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18 at the Unison Arts Center at 68 Mountain Rest Road, *New Paltz Times* columnist Susan Slotnick will screen her film *The Game Changer*, about her work teaching modern dance to prisoners at the Woodbourne Men's Correctional Facility. Two of her students will perform. It's but one of several One Book/One New Paltz events that will tap the experience of local artists, educators, professionals and volunteers who have taught classes, led workshops or done other work at prisons in the Hudson Valley.

For the full schedule of *Orange is the New Black* happenings, visit <http://onebookonenewpaltz.com/events>. As part of the community read, Barner Books and the Inquiring Minds Bookstore in New Paltz are offering a ten percent discount on the purchase price of the book. Copies can be borrowed from the Elting Memorial Library on the corner of Main and North Front Streets or the Sojourner Truth

SebSi Studio in Saugerties to host Art Esopus gala/auction

THE ESOPUS CREEK Conservancy's annual Art Esopus event — a fundraiser for one of the great natural resources of the region (and accompanying trail system, in Saugerties) — gets underway this week. Dozens of top local artists will drop off canvases that they've been working on to capture the creek in question in various ways for a one-week show and sale that kicks off with a gala party and auction next Saturday, November 14 and then closes the Sunday after, on November 22. Work is as diverse as the landscape, and the wide assortment of artists participating.

Art Esopus works get dropped off November 7 for the November 14 sale and November 22 closing event, all at SebSi Studio on Main Street in Saugerties.

— Paul Smart

Art Esopus gala/auction, Saturday, November 14, 6-8 p.m., \$10 entry, 100 works \$100/each, closing event, Sunday, November 22, 1-5 p.m., SebSi Studio, 252 Main Street, Saugerties; (845) 246-2047, www.artesopus.com.

One Book/One New Paltz to spotlight *Orange is the New Black*

ONE OF THE most popular shows is the Netflix series *Orange is the New Black*, which wrapped up its third season last June. Balancing weird, off-the-wall, over-the-top characters with serious questions about the need for prison reform, it has earned an obsessively loyal audience, much praise from critics and the befuddlement of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, which can't seem to figure out whether it belongs in the Comedy or Drama

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READING

Poet Joshua Mehigan at SUNY-New Paltz

POET JOSHUA MEHIGAN (*The Optimist*, 2004, and *Accepting the Disaster*, 2014) grew up in upstate New York and earned a BA from SUNY-Purchase College and an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College. Winner of the Hollis Summers Poetry Prize, finalist for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize and named a Big Ten University Press Pick by *ForeWord* magazine, he has had poetry featured in several anthologies, including the *Swallow Anthology of New American Poets* (2009), *Poetry: A Pocket Anthology* (2007) and *Writing Metrical Poetry* (2006). His work has appeared in the *New Criterion*, *Poetry* and *Poetry Daily*, garnering numerous accolades and fellowships.

When asked how the impulse to write poetry formed his life, he says, "It's complicated! It's the thing I do every day, so it's like a job, but it's also a somewhat peculiar job. The economics of it are definitely supply-side. The possibilities are few, with respect to what I can do for money and also have time and energy to write." Not being independently wealthy, he describes always trying to get a job that will allow him to write and also to live a reasonable life. "I am always trying to figure out how to make time and energy to write. It's hard and frustrating work at times. But it has also obviously given me a tremendous amount of pleasure and satisfaction."

Did you find poetry as a reader before you began to record your own thoughts?

Just the opposite! I started out mostly interested in writing, and not so much interested in reading. Most reading took work (I have a couple of learning disabilities that were undiagnosed until I was an adult). But, over six or seven years, I did begin to find poets and fiction and nonfiction writers who made me say, "I want to learn to do that!" The writers I looked to, and who inspired me to keep going, were poets like Alan Dugan, Gary Soto and Elizabeth Bishop, and fiction writers like Stephen Crane and Flannery O'Connor.

Does "being a poet" serve to separate you out of the crowd, or does it make your connection to others stronger?

Both! It separates me – most definitely! – in that I'm deeply into something, day in and day out, in a fairly intense way, that most people aren't into at all. Most non-poets I've talked to over the years can't name a living poet. But in my case, it also strengthens my connection to the crowd in that I am always trying to think about other people. When I was young, I wrote to Hayden Carruth once, and he gave me a very good piece of advice. He said to try to place my sympathies with other people. I've always hoped to understand something about people, and I've hoped, also, to communicate whatever I can learn about people to them.

Is poetry an art that comments on our society, or does it actually, proactively form our world?

In terms of immediate cause-and-effect, it may be more of the former; but if you mean something like what William Shakespeare did in the 17th century and what Gwendolyn Brooks did in the 20th, then poetry in the US isn't really read by enough people to form our world – not relative to more popular artforms like TV, music, movies et cetera, or even, say, memes on social media. Also, a lot of poetry doesn't comment on society, really, or does so very elliptically. But I do think poetry helps form our world – of course! – or I wouldn't bother with it. I just think its effect is

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Poet Joshua Mehigan

probably very slow. It takes a long time to sink in. But I think good poetry lends gravity and permanence to the ideas it carries along with it!

How does writing poetry occur to you?

Constantly, inconveniently and usually in an extremely rough form.

You take on some sobering subject matter. Do you consider yourself a basically serious guy? Is there levity behind the words?

I do not consider myself an especially serious guy! I own at least two whoopee cushions. With my wife, family and good friends, I joke compulsively, usually in a scatological vein or in an attempt to shock them into laughing with extreme gallows humor. I wouldn't describe my poems as funny, I guess; but when I write about very serious things, for the sake of irony I do occasionally use certain mildly amusing verse techniques. And even in some of the serious poems that I've kept stylistically very plain, I'll often feel the presence there of something absurd and so maybe, occasionally, funny.

What inspires you?

Many, many things! Movies, fiction, nonfiction, science, poetry, nature, music, language I overhear, uncanny events, enigmatic occurrences, unusual states of mind, observing people, interaction with people, thinking, talking, sublime or horrible things that happen in real life, the need to articulate things, working out technical and mechanical problems in writing et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Mehigan will appear at the Honors Center in College Hall this Monday evening. The event, free and open to the public, is sponsored by the English Department and Creative Writing Program at SUNY-New Paltz.

– Ann Hutton

Joshua Mehigan reading/book-signing, Monday, November 9, 7 p.m., Honors Center, College Hall, SUNY-New Paltz, 1 Hawk Drive, New Paltz; (845) 257-2755, uchmanop@newpaltz.edu.

Library on the SUNY-New Paltz campus.
– Frances Marion Platt

Acme Mystery Company auditions in Rhinebeck

FOR NEARLY TWO decades, the Acme Mystery Company – based in Syracuse – has put on self-authored interactive mysteries, often in dinner-theater sessions and always in a way that actually paid its actors and backstage professionals. Now the company is setting

up a satellite repertory company in Poughkeepsie, and looking for actors to fill roles in its 20-plus different productions each year.

"Non-Equity performers ages 18 to 80 are encouraged to attend," reads the casting call for auditions on November 14-15 at the Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck. "The Acme Mystery Company is a paid repertory theatre. Actors must be able to work quickly and efficiently. Actors need to travel; learn multiple scripts; use crazy characters and accents; and most importantly, have fun with their audiences."

– Paul Smart

Acme Mystery Company auditions, Saturday, November 14, 2-4 p.m., Sun-

day, November 15, 8-10 p.m., Center for the Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Route 308, Rhinebeck; (315) 569-5488, terrylacasse@gmail.com, www.centerforperformingarts.org.

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www.sunyulster.edu