### THE EPOCH TIMES

# ARTS© TRADITION



Gannets feature in this watercolor by Lyn Kriegler. The illustration was part of a series of New Zealand travel guides that Kriegler completed when she first came to New Zealand. The guides were part of an advertising campaign for Mobil.

The Colorful Life of an Illustrator

From America to New Zealand...4



**ARCHITECTURE** 

# OUR NEED FOR BEAUTY

# A Look at Architecture

### **JEFF MINICK**

There is a deep human need for beauty, and if you ignore that need in architecture, your buildings will not last, since people will never feel at home in them. – Roger Scruton

Let's begin with a visit to the Basilica of Saint Lawrence in downtown Asheville. North Carolina.

When we enter this Spanish Renaissance church, designed by architect Rafael Guastavino, we know immediately that we are in a sacred place. Often, tourists who just moments before were laughing loudly and debating restaurants for lunch fall silent when they step from the bustling sidewalk into the basilica. Here in the quiet shadows, candles glimmer. From the walls, statues of saints look into eternity, while at the front of the church are the figures of Mary and Saint John mourning the Crucifixion. Covering the walls of the apse are polychrome, terra cotta portraits of the Four Evangelists and the angels Raphael and Michael. Above the sanctuary is the largest, freestanding, elliptical dome in North America. This space announces its purpose: worship and prayer.

Let's leave the basilica and wander down the hill, cross the bridge over the expressway, and stroll along Flint Street. Here we find houses a century old or more: eccentric structures with wraparound porches, cupolas, gazebos, and broad lawns shadowed by tall oaks and maples. Those who designed these homes clearly wished to enhance the lives of the families occupying them.

Now we'll reverse course and head to the downtown area. In 1929, Asheville was a boomtown, mecca to the rich and famous, and a gathering place for The Great Depression ended the boom. The city spent the next 50 years paying off its debts and lacked the ability to help finance skyscrapers or other modern structures. As a result, nearly 200 art deco buildings escaped the

Here we find such treasures as the Flatiron Building, a knockoff of its New York sister; the S&W Cafeteria with its lavish mix of blue, gold, and silver ornamentation; and the Grove Arcade with its gargoyles and carved lions, its ground floor of shops and restaurants topped by apartments and condominiums replete Milene Fernandez reports that Scruton with hanging flowers and iron grillwork. "called architecture 'a most important The driving architectural forces behind realm of artistic practice' and criticized

these and other nearby buildings were beauty and utility.

A short distance away, we find the Biltmore House, America's largest privately owned home, with its many valuable paintings, sculptures, and tapestries. Close at hand is the Grove Park Inn, built in the early part of the 20th century in less than a year by 400 men working 10hour shifts six days a week. As William Jennings Bryan said in his dedication speech at the Inn, no doubt taking in the massive rock walls, "It was built for the ages." Yes, and for beauty's sake.

Not all public buildings must be imposing to please the aesthetic senses. Near my daughter's home in Front Royal, Virginia, for example, is a white clapboard Methodist church topped by a high steeple. Framed by mountains and fields, this church would strike most passersby as an object worthy of praise. The Happy Creek Coffee Shop in Front Royal, where I am writing these words, was built as a livery stable in 1885, and the craftsmanship of its antique brickwork and milled beams and joists still fetches the admiration of tourists.

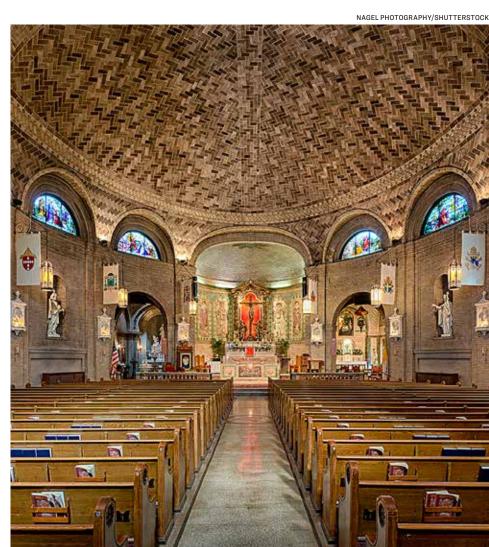
### The Modern Blight

So what happened? Why do so many of our buildings, from high-rise apartments to fast food restaurants, from megachurches to schools, fail to elicit our esteem? Why, in short, are so many of our buildings so ugly?

Perhaps our propensity for glass and plastic stems from the misapplication of Louis Sullivan's "Form follows function." Perhaps the philosophies of utilitarianism and relativity account for the absence of beauty and charm in so many of our buildings.

Whatever the case, this ugliness horribuilders, craftsmen, and architects. fies even some of the builders. In "From Bauhaus to Our House," Tom Wolfe's famous attack on modern architecture, Wolfe writes that many architects "profess to be appalled themselves. Without a blush they will tell you that modern architecture is exhausted, finished. They themselves joke about the glass boxes."

> Over the last few decades, other prominent critics, including Prince Charles of Great Britain, have also assailed modern architecture. One such detractor is philosopher Roger Scruton. In her essay for The Epoch Times on April 10, 2017, "Celebrating the Philosopher of Beauty,"



The beautiful interior of the Basilica of Saint Lawrence in Asheville, N.C., gives an immediate sense of a sacred place

the modern architect Le Corbusier for destroying the artistry of architecture. The functional concrete and glass architecture that has overtaken cities around the world is a style that is familiar to everyone. 'It's horizontal layers of kitchen trays stacked until you've got to the limit of your budget, he said, as the audience laughed."

And yet... There is reason for hope.

Organizations like the Institute of Traditional Architecture and the Catholic Art Guild, both of which promote forms of more humane building, are springing up. The website New Traditional Architecture offers a fine array of pictures that reveal more than words can say about blending older forms of architecture with modern

Within a few miles of the Happy Creek Coffee Shop lies Christendom College, a small Catholic school where teachers and

The driving architectural forces behind these and other nearby buildings were beauty and utility.

students treat seriously the three transcendentals-truth, beauty, and goodness. That the college has a high regard for beauty may be seen in its buildings, most of which are constructed in a "traditional Virginia style." The library is particularly beautiful, with "the basic form inspired by the college's guiding principles: The octagonal, domed entry hall stands as a metaphor for Faith, while the two-story atrium at the core of the library embodies Reason," according to the college's website.

This year the college has begun building a chapel in the shape of a cross, with a seating capacity of 750 and a Gothic tower 130 feet high. Like Roger Scruton and others, those erecting this chapel recognize the importance of a building's beauty. They understand that if they are to teach beauty, they must offer examples of that beauty to their students.



It is dismaying to believers in tradition and the saving powers of truth, beauty, and goodness to be confronted daily by a culture imbued with the crass and the vulgar–not only in architecture, but also in all the arts and in the public square. At times, that culture seems vacant of any possibility of redemption; it's like a vast, empty parking lot with a few scraps of paper blowing across the asphalt.

If we look closely, however, we may observe cracks in that bleak pavement. Pushing up through those cracks are the flowers of beauty.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, North Carolina. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Virginia. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

(Top) The Flat Iron Sculpture in front of the Flatiron Building, on Wall Street in downtown Asheville, N.C. (Left) The Biltmore Estate in





IN DECEMBER 2000, a few months after we began publishing, more than a dozen of our reporters were arrested in communist China. They were given 3 to 10 year prison terms for the crime of reporting the truth. All were tortured.

Since then The Epoch Times continues to bring truthful and uncensored news to people oppressed by the lies and violence of communism. We've grown to publish in 23 languages and in 35 countries, with our headquarters being in New York. All this time, we've maintained a serious and rigorous approach to news: report truthfully, dig deep, and remain non-partisan. Go to ReadEpoch.com to find out more.



It's the only sane newspaper amidst all this insanity. STAN KRZYSTON, PASTOR

It's broad. It's inclusive and it's truthful. PAUL TAYLOR, **CANDIDATE FOR U.S. SENATE** 





**SUBSCRIBE NOW AND GET** THE REAL NEWS!

**LEARN MORE:** ReadEpoch.com

(Top L) An English teapot, cup, and

saucer that Kriegler inherited from

her mother are featured in this illus-

tration for Joan de Hamel's "Hemi &

tion in "Chen Li and the River Spirit"

by Anthony Holcroft captures the

moment when Chen Li is rewarded

(Bottom) New Zealand's native owl,

the morepork, is one of the birds Lyn

Kriegler illustrated in "A Bundle of

Birds" by Dorothy Butler.

(Middle) Lyn Kriegler's illustra-

the Shortie Pyjamas.

for his selflessness.

**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE** 

### The Colorful Life of an Illustrator From America to New Zealand

Children's book illustrator Lyn Kriegler tells her story

### **LORRAINE FERRIER**

AUCKLAND, New Zealand–For nearly 40 years, children's book illustrator and oral storyteller Lyn Kriegler has worked with some of New Zealand's most celebrated children's authors, illustrating 155 children's books to date. As a keen writer, Kriegler has also been published in books and magazines.

Born in upstate New York, Kriegler comes from a creative family. Her mother is a gifted embroiderer and seamstress, and her father is a retired watchmaker, a jewelry designer, a diamond inlayer, and a highly skilled engraver the river. of precious metals. He was gifted at drawing, but it was always on rivers or streams in the car, and I pewter, gold, or silver, she said.

### A lot of children give up too easily now when it comes to developing anything that takes craftsmanship.

Kriegler graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a bachelor's degree in fine arts and fashion illustration. She has been an illustrator for Mademoiselle and The Washington Post. A stint working on "The Dick Cavett Show" sparked her interest in puppets, which she now uses in her oral storytelling.

Here, she shares poignant moments in her life: how she began drawing, how she had her big break in London, and how children's literature has changed. Her story is peppered with characters who are just as animated as those she illustrates.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are your earliest memories of art in your life? LYNKRIEGLER: I began drawing with my crayons on chairs, floors, and walls when I was quite small. When I was reprimanded for that, I was really incensed because I felt the house I lived in was very dull, and it needed decorating.

It was a typical bungalow in a very small town called Hopewell, Virginia, which stank to high heaven because it was a chemical town where they made rocket fuel, Dupont paints, and aluminum, so all those companies seemed to dump just about everything into

I remember going over those could see all the colors on top of the water making rainbow colors, but it was actually all the chemicals. I was fascinated by these colors. Of course the smell precluded going near this rainbow slick that was probably highly toxic. But that's probably one of my first memories of seeing colors.

By the time I got into first grade, I could draw most things.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Please tell us about when you first arrived in New Zea-

MRS. KRIEGLER: It was absolutely surreal because I lived in a converted boat bunker at the end of Cheltenham Beach in Auckland, and I woke up and looked out of the window, and there was the water. There were big piles of seashells that the tide would pull in and out, and they made the most beautiful tinkling sound like wind chimes. It was enchanting. And I thought, I'm staying. This is paradise.

I thought the best thing for me to acclimatize was to draw all the new flowers, trees, plants, and birds; and that's what I did. Those drawings became my first book,

"The Legend of the Kiwi," which was presented to Prince Charles and Princess Diana for Prince William by the Royal New Zealand Air Force, which is funny because it's about a kiwi who can't fly. So my first book ended up in Buckingham Palace, which was

For a time, I worked for an advertising agency. I was penned in with a lot of artists who became notable New Zealand artists, and some rogues! I didn't thrive in that environ-

I was doing chil-Children's book dren's illustrations on my lunch hour. I didn't know how I was going

to break into it. It's a closed world unless

Three sad moreporks

illustrator and oral storyteller Lyn Kriegler, on April 25,

And writers and illusyou get a toe in. Then I met, by trators were all passing through chance, a representative of Collins from England because Dorothy's

books. An Englishman, in a tweed

suit with a briefcase, called John

Hall, and he wanted to represent

me as a children's book illustrator.

ing all the time.

At the time, every-

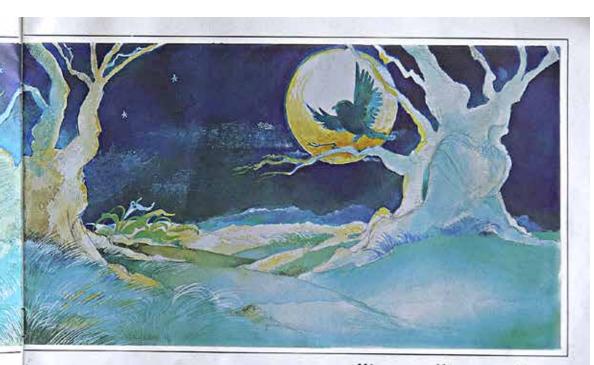
one who was anyone

was trying to write

and coming through

Dorothy's bookstore.

He said I should be doing children's books and that I should go and see the children's writer Doro-It took me two years to get up the courage to go and see Dorothy, who reigned like a queen in her huge children's bookstore in Glenfield, on Auckland's North Shore. The store had classical music play-



Dorothy Butler's series of books "A Tale of Old New Zealand" features true New Zealand stories, a subject close to Lyn Kriegler's heart. This painting is part of that book series and in the book "Seadog: A Tale of New Zea-



Lvn Kriegler's front cover illustration for the first children's book she wrote and illustrated: "The Legend of the Kiwi.'

If you can understand beautiful language, you can express vourself well, you can communicate, and you can solve problems.

bookstore was one of the mustcalls if you were Down Under. Dorothy had a huge office, with books and boxes everywhere. One of the boxes had her little dog Gre-

tel in it; another one was full of bananas, because she ate bananas to give her strength. She had a big executive desk with stacks of books on it. The first time I saw her was just these two little eyes looking through these piles of books.

straight to the point. She hit one just the most beautiful shoe. of the boxes and she said, "Pick up that manuscript and read that. I then he and Dorothy had these think this girl is going to be rather good." It was Margaret Mahy's "A Lion in the Meadow."

New Zealand publishers had passed it over for publication. Dorothy said, "I'm sending this to England. This woman is brilliant." Because in those days, Margaret was a solo mother slaving away as a librarian and she only had time to write at midnight, tapping out all these wonderful stories on her typewriter.

After going through my artwork, she banged her fist on the desk and said, "Lyn, you must leave advertising. You must do children's books." I asked her how. She said firmly, "I am working on a book for Kestrel in London. You can illustrate it." That was "The Magpies land, Dorothy introduced me to Said: Stories and Poems from New Zealand." I had to produce all the illustrations beforehand with no

Then Dorothy said to me one day, "I was asked to open the Puffin Book Fair in London. Why don't you come with me and we'll have some fun. We'll try and sell them some books."

The opening for the Puffin Book Fair in London is quite an event. This was 1980. Roald Dahl was there wearing a sweater with fuzz enough to face up to difficult situballs all over it. He was signing autographs for queues and queues of little boys with Harry Potter glasses, pudding-bowl haircuts, and little round faces. It was the most extraordinary event.

going to see Patrick Hardy," who was a legendary editor in England. I sat in the waiting room to see him with Dorothy's book "The Magpies Said: Stories and Poems from New Zealand" that I illustrated. Patrick had sort of insinuated they might publish it, but they had to meet me. looked at so many books. They had us on tenterhooks over

like slang or street talk. In her last days, I said to Dorothy, what are you reading to your grandchildren? Because she was an emphatical fan of reading to children aloud at night

When I stayed with her, I could hear her reading to the grandchildren in the next room. She would read to them for hours and hours. Her grandchildren would go around parroting Shakespeare, and it was marvelous. I said, what are you reading to them now? And she said Dickens: "That's the only language worth hearing these days."

today-it's a step backward, in my

opinion-is that publishers have

gone for the more sensational sto-

ries. That's not literature. The lan-

guage is not supportive. It's almost

language. If you can understand beautiful language, you can express yourself well, you can communicate, and you can solve problems.

I'm always hearing stories from

wonderful chats about all these famous people they knew. I just felt At the very end of the meal, I saw

a Daimler convertible outside with illustrations that support it. beautiful men with elegant Emper-A book artist or illustrator has ors Crown flowers on stalks. They to support and extend the words;

To find out more about children's book illustrator Lyn Kriegler, visit BookCouncil.org.nz less we have written the story ourselves. Then

From then on, I didn't look back. When I came home to New Zeaother writers.

work published in England, you'd

made it. Because England in those

I think writing in New Zealand

Patrick took us out to lunch. Not

a word was said about the book. I

was nearly in tears, thinking this

is it: I'm not good enough. I'd pre-

pared some drawings, which were

in a folder by his foot, his beautiful

We had this gorgeous meal, and

so small; I didn't know anybody.

were waiting for Patrick. I

thought what a life! If only

As he was leaving,

Patrick touched my

portfolio with this foot

and took my arm and

said, "Oh, by the way,

with this."

we've decided to go ahead

I could go with them.

to be published in England first.

days was home.

We did 18 picture books, Dorothy

THE EPOCH TIMES: J.R.R. Tolkien believed that children's stories shouldn't be sugary and insipid. They should address the same issues as adults literature, but the language should be adapted. What are your thoughts on this?

MRS. KRIEGLER: A child's childhood should be full of joy. There's time ations when they are older. Children's literature should reflect a world that is a bridge between them and life: The book becomes a bridge between the child and the world. That then gives them life skills, gives And Dorothy said, "Now we're them coping skills, and gives them the self-confidence to apply their own solutions to a problem rather than having to run to mommy or daddy. That is not present in a lot of today's children's literature. I shouldn't make such a blanket craftsmanship. It takes time, it statement, but I can because I've takes patience, and you can't be

Dorothy always said that there's this book, because if you were in a big difference between literature laughing at what you're doing. New Zealand and you got your and sensational stories. The over-

She was a great fan of beautiful

employers who'd hired kids with has now come of age. You don't have no communication skills. They can tap out an email, they can whip out a message in code, and on WhatsApp, but in terms of having an actual conversation where they express their innermost feelings, desires, and goals, the language has She was no-nonsense and patent-leather-encased foot. It was been compromised. A wise teacher I know said that the speed of com-

> Technology is great; don't get me wrong. But there will always be a place for a printed book with good, strong, powerful, rich language and

> > that's our job. We don't work like painters, painting something that comes from the heart. We are constantly supporting and extending someone else's words, un-

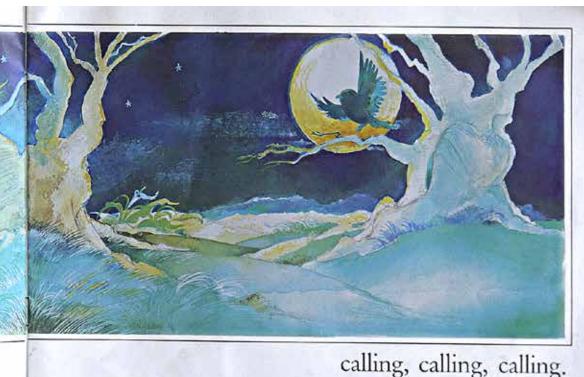
we are free to do what we I was asked several times: Why don't you take some courses in computer artwork? I said, "I've spent a lifetime developing hand skills. I like the look of hand-done work.

If you want me to do that kind of

work, then go find someone else." My dad taught me that, because of his hand skills; everything was done by hand. He taught me engraving, and he taught me the difference between digging into pewter and gold and what kind of pressure you've got to use. He was very good at calligraphy lettering, and he taught me that too-how to draw beautiful letters, illuminated manuscripts, Old English writing-and how to set type on a slug, too. Or he'd say, just for fun, let's copy Chinese, Japanese, or Cyrillic script, and we'd spend hours with him coaching me, and me practic-

things have stayed with me lifelong. A lot of children give up too easily now when it comes to developing anything that takes disheartened by a letter of rejection or someone walking past and You've got to have the dedication.

ing all this calligraphy. All of those



There will always be a place for a printed book with good, strong, powerful, rich language and illustrations that support it.

# Gold and Clay: The Nuances of History

A case for learning about our past

**JEFF MINICK** 

he most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history. –George Orwell

In May, David Garrow, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for "Bearing the Cross," his biography of Martin Luther King Jr., revealed the existence of FBI tapes documenting that King had multiple extramarital affairs, engaged in orgies, abused women, and even offered encouragement and laughed as another pastor raped a parishioner.

If true, these squalid affairs tarnish the reputations of both King and the FBI. The FBI agents who planted the bugs in various hotel rooms, attempting to link King to the Communist Party, made no attempt to stop the rapist. As for King, the tapes more than confirm long-standing rumors that the civil rights leader was a womanizer.

Despite these sordid allegations, it is unlikely, given the investment of so many in the legacy of MLK, that there will be an outcry to do away with Martin Luther King Day, to remove statues of him, or to change the names of schools and highways honor-

Nor should there be.

### **Erasing Our Past**

Whatever else he was, Martin Luther King was a giant in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. He was the key figure in ending segregation in the South and leading the fight for the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

However these revelations about MLK shake out, they provide a window of opportunity to reflect on history and those who were once called heroes.

As most of us know, certain groups and the distinction between the two usages. individuals have recently attacked various artifacts of the American past. Since 2015, for example, legislatures, governors, mayors, and in a few cases, mobs have removed more than 110 Confederate statues and memorials from the public square. Some univerpolitically incorrect.

So, where does the destruction stop? Do because of his trysts in the White House? Do we dump Dwight Eisenhower in the dustbin of history because he had a mistress during World War II? Do we close down Monticello because Thomas Jefferson owned slaves? Do we burn Mount Vernon to the ground, bulldoze Confederate graveyards, and blow up the Confederate Memorial Carving on Georgia's Stone Mountain?

Why stop there? Should we not do away with works by William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, and a hundred other great American writers because their work reveals the prejudices of their time? Should we not make a bonfire of Bibles and books advocating Western philosophy? Should we not destroy those films and television shows like "Father Knows Best," "It's a Wonderful Life," and "Gone With the Wind" for their portrayals of race, gender, and male-female

### **Destroying More Than the Past**

In June, the San Francisco Board of Education voted to paint over, at the cost of \$600,000, Russian-American artist Victor Arnautoff's 1936 mural of the life of George Washington. Arnautoff's painting features slaves working Washington's fields and a dead Native American at the feet of pioneers. Arnautoff intended the work as a realistic look at Washington's life.

Are such critiques also now forbidden simply because they remind some of past crimes? That is, are those who spoke honestly about their own times not allowed a voice? Should we not ban, then, the books of Mark Twain—who criticized the prejudices of the South using the language of the time? Or the television show "All in the Family"which attacked bigotry using a bigot?

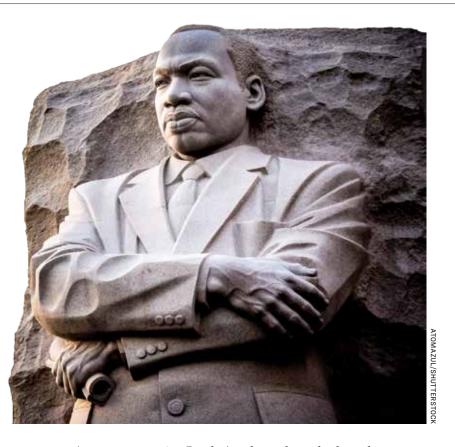
### Without Our History, We Are Children

Children misunderstand the nuances of language. If they hear in a story the words "Were they potty?" they assume the author means a toilet. If the author is British, however, he has instead suggested "Were they crazy?" As the children grow, as they become more sophisticated, they recognize

Like these children, our present-day iconoclasts are all too often ignorant of the nuances of history. Google "Lack of Historical Knowledge," and take your pick of the websites that pop up. Americans these days, young and old, are ignorant about such sities have renamed buildings or removed monumental achievements and events as plaques, portraits, and busts of men deemed the Bill of Rights, the Battle of Gettysburg, the end of slavery, and the war in Vietnam. we eradicate all mention of John F. Kennedy Royal, Virginia, the courthouse lawn sports a statue of a Confederate soldier on a high pedestal. There he stands, a marble man fac-

> For most of us living in Front Royal, that statue is invisible, a part of the downtown background, a figure that no more draws our attention than the grass on the court-

ing north, armed and ready to repel Yankee



Should this memorial be taken down? No.

A Confederate mon-

ument dedicated in

1911. It sits in front

of the Warren County

Courthouse in Front

Royal, Va.

But let's take a closer look at the statue. The marble soldier looks like an ordinary man, not a rich man. Let's ask why he took up arms. It can't be simply for the defense of slavery, as most historians put the number of slaveholders at a peak of 25 percent of the population. So why did the guy living in a cabin and scrabbling to feed his wife and children put his life on the line and go off to fight against the Yankees?

Many thought they were fighting a new American revolution, battling for states' rights. Others fought for home and family. In a 1997 interview, Civil War historian Shelby Foote remarked: "You have to understand that the raggedy Confederate soldier who owned no slaves and probably couldn't even read the Constitution, let alone understand it, when he was captured by Union soldiers and asked, 'What are you fighting for?' replied, 'I'm fighting because you're down here."

"Because you're down here." Think about it. Would not most people

fight against invaders of their native land?

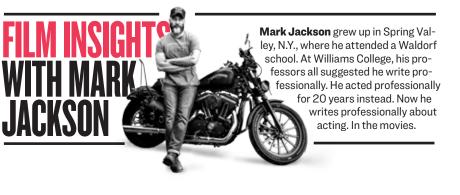
### **Learning Our History**

Here's a suggestion: Instead of tearing down monuments of our past, why not add nearby monuments or markers explaining the darker side of these subjects? Instead of erasing history, why not teach it?

Cicero famously said, "To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain forever a child."

When we are ignorant of the nuances of history, when we fail to account for the mix of gold and clay in human beings, when we demand that all the players and makers of history be saints, we do more than condemn ourselves to perpetual childhood. and in so doing, we debase our own humanity as well.

eff Minick has four children and a growng platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, North Carolina. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Virgina. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.



## The Maiden Voyage of an All-Maiden Racing Crew

### **MARK JACKSON**

**T**he Whitbread is a brutal, 33,000-nautical-mile, nine-month sailing yacht race. It kicks off in Southampton, England, races around the world, and returns to Southampton.

Up until 1989, the prestigious Whitbread Round-the-World Race had been the exclusive territory of all-male crews.

And so, rudely disrespecting the first allfemale boat crew ever to compete, one grizzled British sportswriter dubbed the Maiden (the women's boat) "a tin of tarts."

At first, my response was: Nice. Classy. Way to go you old sod; that's the welcome you extend? Now, I can't wait for these women to put some dead crow on your plate and make you eat it!

However, after getting to know these exceptional women (not a man-hater among them) and 24-year-old skipper Tracy Edwards, who loathed the term "feminist," I realized the film was framed in such a way as to incite righteous indignation. It wasn't necessary to do that.

These women just loved sailing. They burned for it with immense passion. Talk about a Hero's Journey fraught with danger. You ain't seen nothing until you've seen deadly storms out on the freezing black Southern Ocean near Antarctica, with 500-foot-high water geysers from gargantuan waves caroming off ghostly icebergs in the mist. There's no hope of a rescue down there, should things go, er, south.

What makes this documentary so riveting is that this was no crew of wannabes. These women were world-class sailors. Not only that, they're warriors: seafaring warrioresses, with a formidable opponent. Not men. The Ocean. As Edwards says at the outset, "The ocean is always trying to kill you." She wasn't joking.

### 'Maiden' focuses largely on spitfire Tracy Edwards, the 24-year-old British captain.

### **Men Against Women in Sports**

**THEATER REVIEW** 

What's weird is why it's taken exactly 30 years to bring "Maiden" to the world. This is the Billie Jean King versus Bobby Riggs of boating, and two crew members videotaped the entire trip. Why did it take this long to get it out there?

**DIANA BARTH** 

(Top) The groundbreaking all-female crew of the Maiden in an around-the-world,1989 race, in the documentary "Maiden." (Bottom) Tracy Edwards (L) and a fellow crew member.

with gasoline and set on fire. My favorite example of "girls aren't as good as boys" was when diminutive rock climber Lynn Hill free-climbed, solo, the hardest route ever at the time—"The Nose" on El Capitan—in 1993. It had never been done by a man. It absolutely stunned the climbing world. Hill aced The Nose and joked, "It goes, boys."

"Maiden" focuses largely on spitfire Tracy Edwards, the 24-year-old British captain. When she was 10 years old, her stereospeaker salesman dad died. Tracy's mom, trying to hold down the fort, was eventually forced to quit by her deceased husband's business cronies. This went a long way toward firing up an inner flame in Tracy, to be as independent and self-reliant as possible. No woman had heretofore ever been allowed

to captain a crew in the Whitbread, so Tracy worked her way up from the bottom, starting as a deckhand and charter boat cook. Even then, she had to break down many barriers.

eyes in a chiseled yet somehow teenage face, looking like a much prettier version of Captain Ahab, hell-bent on taming the ocean with a yacht full of powerhouse women.

Planet Earth is a big place, and in its far reaches, one's bound to find people who are into every conceivable thing humans can get up to. And while the world is big, the community of sailing, like any community of specialists, is small. One by one, her crew of top-notch female sailors gathers.

kings were created for.

vessel. They buy an affordable boat, and it's a serious hunk of junk, looking like it'll spring a hundred leaks the minute they cast off. However, there's a wealth of shared boatbuilding, carpentry, restoration, and can-do attitude among the ladies, and they set to and make do.

I enjoy when these stereotypes get doused

Edwards is a powerful presence: fierce cat-

However, sponsorship is a tricky business. Either the sponsors think an all-female crew about the concept but don't think it's realistic to expect a return on their investment. This is exactly the kind of situation Saudi The last tricky thing is finding a seaworthy



# Documentary Starring

# Tracy Edwards, Jeni Mundy,

Mikaela Von Kosku **Running Time** 

1 hour, 37 minutes **Release Date** 

### And They're Off! September 1989, to be exact. As Tracy's

voiceover informs us at the outset, "What it takes to sail around the world is, first of all, you have to be a bit crazy. You have to be different than the normal bloke." So it is with all extreme sports–mountaineering without oxygen, fighter-jet piloting, Formula One racing, ultrarunning, and so on.

These are all warrior types, drawn to the death-defying edge where adrenaline runs high, and massive endurance is called upon for a variety of reasons. Like being strapped to the front of the boat as a sacrificial human ice-floe bumper, with the subzero winds flaking bits of your face off as you grit through the freezing spray of mountainous black waves in the sunless, eternal night of the Antarctic Ocean.

The talking-head interviews demonstrate this passion to an amusing degree. Especially one crew member who, with a slightly manic gleam in her eye, recalls how while surfing the great valley of a monstrous wave, the bow of the boat appears suspendis outright doomed, or they're enthusiastic | ed in air just before it comes crashing down.

> Well, alrighty then. This is why we love a up and the inability of females to get along. good documentary–I'll take my monsterice-wave surfing vicariously, thank you very

### Loss and Gain

They win some legs of the race, and they lose some. I won't say which. But here's how you can tell the crew aren't true feminists: They aren't above using a bit of humor and feminine wiles to distract the awaiting press in Highly efficient.

the harbor from the fact that they lost a raceleg. They show up wearing sexy one-piece bathing suits, garnering headlines such as "British Boat Babes" and the like.

Regarding the menfolk, particularly skippers Skip Novak and Bruno Dubois, who talk about the perceived weaknesses of the Maiden's crew, they clearly don't expect a threat and start off with a friendly disdain that slowly morphs into a very satisfying, grudging admiration.

Aforementioned journalists Barry Pickthall and Bob Fisher are of that generation of men who clearly felt a woman's place was to be a cook in the kitchen, a lady in the parlor, and, er, compliant in the bedroom.

All the more satisfying to see these two divested of the burden of their misconceptions, and their faces light up with smiles at the wonders of the gifts the Creator gave to female humans. So nice to witness all these male athletes and journalists grow in their

Yet, in terms of the reporters, the questions reflect the perceptions of the day: They talk sailing shop with the men, and Edwards and crew get the questions about hair and make

One of the greatest takeaways of the film is to see one of women's talents that normally outstrips that of menfolk-intuition-eventually kick in. The Maiden crew, on this maiden voyage, barely talked to each other toward the end. Why? Because of rampant catfighting? No. Because they didn't need to. Each knew exactly what the others were thinking, without having to speak a word.

### **ANCIENT CULTURE**

### A Good Man Has Nothing to Fear, Even When Faced With Death

Socrates's last oration

### LORRAINE FERRIER

Tt's 399 B.C. Having been judged and condemned to death, Socrates, the an-Lecient Greek philosopher, reflects on his predicament. Rather than bemoan his fate, he relishes an opportunity for discourse, continuing to uphold his values as he had throughout his life.

While waiting to be taken to his death, rather than make a last-ditch appeal, Socrates makes a speech. Socrates's student Plato recorded this last oration in his "Apology," as cited in "The World's Famous Orations, Volume 1: Greece."

Socrates speaks first to his oppressors: As an old man, he knows that death is naturally upon him. All his enemies need do is wait. Yet, here he faces an early death.

his standards or to speak against his values

To escape death is easy, he says, but "it is it runs swifter than death." His accusers have been overcome with this "wicked-

ness," having accused him of impiety and corrupting the youth of Athens. The accusation of corrupting the youth comes from Socrates's chasing of true knowledge by questioning rather than accepting the status quo. The consequence of making such accusations is to be "condemned by truth, as guilty

of iniquity and injustice." Socrates predicts that a far worse punishment than what he faces will fall on those who condemn him, and that putting people to death will not allow any accusers to avoid being held

But he remains resolute, refusing to lower | accountable for their unrighteousness. It is best for "a man to take heed to himself" than to look at how others behave.

Then Socrates speaks to his supporters. much more difficult to avoid depravity, for He says that he has been guided by God throughout his life, and that when evil appears, God often warns him of it. While



"The Death of Socrates," 1787, by Jacques Louis David. Oil on canvas, 51 inches by 77 1/4 inches. Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1931.

waiting to be put to death, though, he has heard no such warning. Unwavering in his faith, Socrates believes that because he was not forewarned of any evil, the death sentence must be a blessing.

Accepting his fate, Socrates begins his

### What Is Death?

Socrates surmises that death could be two things: "annihilation" or the "passage of the soul" to another place. He compares annihilation to the best possible night's sleep, absent of any dreams or sensations. If death is like this, how can it not be a gain? he says.

If death is a transition from one place to another, then all of the dead could be in Hades. In Hades, he believes he would be judged by the "true judges," as is the fate of all men at the end of their days.

He lists all the honorable men he'd love to question, such as Orpheus, Hesiod, and Homer. What a wonderful opportunity: It must be a place of "inconceivable happiness," he says. He then asks his oppressors to meditate on this: "To a good man nothing is evil, neither while living nor when dead, nor are his concerns neglected by the gods. And what has befallen me is not the effect of chance," he says. Therefore, a good man need have no fears when he puts his faith in the divine. Socrates, in his final words, harbors compassion, not resentment, for those who condemned him to death.

His oppressors could help him and his family by chastising his sons if they ever put "riches or anything else before virtue, and, if they think themselves to be something when they are nothing." For this he hopes his oppressors would reproach his sons as he has done to his accusers, "for not attending to what they ought." This would be a righteous act. At the end of this earthly life, Socrates believed that each person would be judged

by how they had lived and that the sacred

scales of justice will prevail.

## Overcoming a Painful Past

EW YORK-One-person shows are generally not my cup of tea, but David Cale's autobiographical musical "We're Only Alive for a Short Amount of Time" grabs at one's emotions. He tells of growing up in the industrial town of Luton, once described, he says, as "the ugliest city in England."

Things weren't very pleasant at home either, as his alcoholic dad, Ron Egleton, made life miserable for his wife, Barbara. David learned to escape; he developed a

bird and animal hospital and took in injured creatures, with an assortment of tropical birds later reaching into the hundreds. One hen, which he named "Hennie Penny," used to follow him around. David's brother Simon was particularly

sensitive, and David served as his protector. David also developed a strong love for his mother, who once described their attending a film screening of "Cabaret" as one of the loveliest times she'd ever had with her son. Such a moment carries enormous poignancy with it when a later tragic event involving his mother changes David's life forever. In this way, the show takes on the

sense of being a tribute to his mother's

'We're Only Alive for a Short Amount of Time'

New York **Running Time** 1 hour, 25 minutes

The Public Theater

425 Lafayette St.

(no intermission) July 14

**Tickets** 212-967-7555 or



Cale sings some lovely original songs, such as 'Canada Geese.'

David's father is described as being the Diana Barth writes for several theater polar opposite of his mother: Ron's alcoholism is entrenched. One sequence describes nium." She may be contacted at diaba disastrous evening when father and son arth99@gmail.com

of Time." were out together, ending

David Cale in "We're Only

Alive for a Short Amount

Cale sings some lovely original songs, such as "Canada Geese," cowritten by himself and Matthew Dean Marsh. Though Cale's singing voice is unremarkable, his acting talent gives the songs impact, and he gets good support from the darkly lit musical combo that accompanies him. (Lighting design is by the talented Jennifer Tipton.)

in a violent, embarrassing

The entire production is under the capable hands of Robert Falls, artistic director of Chicago's Goodman Theatre, where the show first premiered.

Although the show has many dark moments, David Cale's ultimate optimism leaves one with the sense that he has overcome his demons and embraces the positive aspects of existence.

publications, including "New Millen-

# A Gloomy AND Befuddling Drama

#### IAN KANE

he opening scene in director Jan Zabeil's new would-be family drama "Three Peaks" is telling, despite being bereft of words. New father-figure Aaron (Alexander Fehling), sporting a pretty epic beard, is playing in a pool with his girlfriend's son, Tristan (Arian Montgomery). As they frolic underwater, we witness close-ups of the two trying to comprehend what they're saying to each other. It's emblematic of the alienation between the man and boy and sets the pace for the melancholic film.

From there, we are treated to sumptuous shots of Italy's Dolomites, as Lea (Bérénice Bejo) is revealed as Aaron's love interest. Their vacation is a sort of beta test to see how viable a match between the three could be. The scenes seem ripped from any idyllic family portrayal from the 1950s, but an underlying tension soon becomes apparent and threatens to divide them.



Alexander Fehling (L) and Arian Montgomery in "Three Peaks."

Cinematographer Axel Schneppat captures some beautiful natural scenery.

### 'Three Peaks'

**Director** Jan Zabeil

Starring

Alexander Fehling, Bérénice Bejo, Arian Montgomery

Running Time

1 hour, 34 minutes

Not Rated

Release Date

June 28





Can these three form a family? Tristan (Arian Montgomery, L), his mother (Bérénice Bejo), and his mother's boyfriend (Alexander Fehling), in "Three Peaks."

### The Big Divide

Aaron and Lea are contemplating a big move to France, and that would take Tristan far out of the orbit of his biological father. A quick-witted child with decidedly malevolent leanings, Tristan plays the passive-aggressive approach with regard to Aaron.

Aaron, in turn, becomes increasingly desperate to ingratiate himself with single mom Lea and her dastardly, conniving pup.

The unstable trio travel to a mountainside cabin, where Zabeil paints a gorgeous natural backdrop that is undercut by an ever-mounting tension. The sense of isolation, too, is almost palpable, punctuated by long shots of stillness.

Tristan switches seamlessly between expressing his supposed affection and disdain for his stand-in father. One moment, we see the boy embracing Aaron and looking up at him with doey eyes, and the next, scowling at him with abject derision.

We begin to wonder: Where does the boy's contempt for Aaron stem from? Is he merely opposed to having a replacement father, or is he still reeling from his biological father and mother's

Whatever the case may be, Tristan's hatred for Aaron escalates over time. This is exemplified in scenes such as when Tristan contemplates pushing Aaron off of a steep grade in the Three Peaks mountains. In another, the boy subtly threatens him with a razor-sharp saw.

At a certain point, Tristan even gets

all metaphysical and likens the trio of mountain peaks to a father, mother, and child. But there's a twist: His metaphorical story references a giant, which functions as what he considers the opposite of Aaron, further emasculating his would-be father.

Things come to a dramatic head during the third act. Just when it seems that there might be a chance at forming a real family, one of them disappears.

### What's the Point?

Although cinematographer Axel Schneppat captures some beautiful natural scenery, there is an overall sense of dread and despair that permeates the film. More than a "vacation gone wrong" piece, we are left with more questions than answers.

Why would Aaron, an attractive and intelligent single man, put up with Tristan's increasing disdain for him? Similarly, why does Aaron, an outdoorsy and manly man, seem so emasculated? Why is he filled with such self-loathing?

Is this film about the pitfalls of dating single mothers? The disintegration of Western families?

These are just some of the questions that arise in this bleak portrayal of a family that never was. It is emblematic of our times, though, with regard to the lack of stable families and the erosion of family traditions, at least as the film industry portrays them.

Ian Kane is a filmmaker and author based out of Los Angeles. To see more, visit DreamFlightEnt.com

