

by SAM ADAMS summer@alibi.com

Dracula Goes to Church

Vampires like sinking their teeth into organs (the kind that spurt blood). Organists, on the other hand, have proven to be quite adept at impressing their creative chops on vampires.

When *Nosferatu*, F.W. Murnau's 1922 silent adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* first premiered in Berlin, it was accompanied by a large orchestra. The original score got dismantled over the years, but musicians of all sorts—from goth metal bands like Type O Negative to traditional organ players like Dorothy Papadakos—have since put their harmonic stamp on the godfather of bloodsucker flicks.

In that tradition, Papadakos, the celebrated longtime organist at New York's Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine will be improvising a 90-minute live piece to *Nosferatu*. The event takes place at Albuquerque's Cathedral Church of St. John (318 Silver SW). Playing on its Reuter Organ—New Mexico's largest pipe organ—this will be Papadakos' second Halloween performance at the cathedral. Last year she played along to *Phantom of the Opera*.

"It's a large, perfectly suited instrument for what Dorothy is coming down to do," says St. John's Director of Cathedral Music Maxine Thévenot. "It's got lots of color, lots of panache, louds and softs. It's the best organ in the state."

Set in the dimly lit old cathedral, pew seating and a 15-foot projection screen only further the the eerie experience. Attendees are also encouraged to come in costume. "It can be whatever you want to be," says Thévenot. "I'm going as Wonder Woman." The screening/performance is part of St. John's Friends of Cathedral Music, a nonprofit series that uses funds from events like this to put on about half a dozen classical-leaning concerts a year. Prior to the performance, Papadakos will give a brief talk and play Bach's haunting "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor."

While *Nosferatu* lacks some of the things we've come to associate with modern vampire flicks—relentless gore, shirtless Taylor Lautner—this classic is one of the spookiest films ever made. Thévenot credits the dean of St. John's for "opening the doors to this kind of an event, where people can come in costume to a sacred space and watch a *Dracula* movie. Not all priests would allow that." You might also take comfort in knowing that you will be surrounded by crucifixes and holy water. ☺

Nosferatu with live soundtrack

FRIDAY, OCT. 28, 7 P.M.

The Cathedral Church of St. John
318 Silver SW

\$20, \$15 seniors, \$5 students (with ID)
Tickets available at the door beginning at 6:15 p.m.
stjohnsbq.org

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▶ GALLERY REVIEW

Memories Are Made of This

Richard Maitland's life on view at Gallerie Imaginarium

BY SAM ADAMS

He shared the stage and partied with Marilyn, exchanged correspondences and artwork with Jackie O., and introduced *The Twist* to India. The son of a New York City truck driver and Pinos Altos gold miner's daughter, dancer and artist Richard Maitland was born in Bisbee, Ariz., 86 years ago. He spent his formative years—and much of his life, for that matter—on the road. In the year of the Great Depression, his family moved to San Francisco. That's where he got his feet wet as a dancer—performing in his first production at the age of 8.

Before settling in New Mexico in the mid-'60s, he worked in movies and Broadway productions with the likes of Ethel Merman and Richard Burton. He taught and performed ballet in India for six years with support from Indira Gandhi. That's also where he started showcasing his artwork, as well as where he met Jacqueline Kennedy, who fell in love with his paintings and became a collector.

Those colorful memories inform and consume Maitland's artwork and his world. He's a self-proclaimed "nostalgist," something that is evident in *Collected Memories*, a show of more than 40 collage, painting and mixed-media pieces on display at Gallerie Imaginarium. "I've been living in the past since I was a kid," he tells the *Alibi*.

This is also clear at Maitland's Rio Rancho home, which feels more like an autobiographical museum of a life in art and showbiz. There doesn't seem to be a square foot of the place that isn't decorated by photos of old Broadway stars he collaborated with or works of art he created or collected throughout his busy, wanderlust career. He's a performer and storyteller of the highest degree, and it's an exercise in futility to draw a



Maitland plays his ukulele at home. Behind him is a prized autographed picture of Monroe.

PHOTO BY SAM ADAMS

line between the man and his nostalgic surroundings; they define him, and he embodies them.

It's also hard to put a stylistic label on Maitland's work. A self-taught artist, his pieces run the gamut from surrealism to folk art, always inhabited by complex and personal narratives. He uses doll parts, bones, feathers, old photos of himself—just about anything he can get his hands on to convey his messages. His ideas are dark, grotesque, whimsical, beautiful and bittersweet. Along with a quality of vivacious celebration for a life fully lived, there is often an infinite sadness in his work.

The latter can be seen in "Minister's Son," a collage framed inside a rusty red wagon that shows a faded sepia tone photo of a young man with a despondent look on his face. Pasted on his shirt are daguerreotypes of stern-looking adults. At the bottom of the piece is a dead bird. It's easy enough to read into it as an allegory for death—an altar of sorts—but when Maitland unravels the narrative, the piece becomes even more pointed and poignant.

He once knew a young Mormon man who committed suicide after his father found out he was homosexual. The red wagon was a gift given to the boy from his father. It's a bit like a more tragic iteration of *Citizen Kane*, marred by brutal intolerance. Maitland is incensed when he looks at the parental figures in the collage. "They are so mean looking—these strict, Victorian assholes."

That undercurrent of sociopolitical commentary persists in much of Maitland's work. In his hallway hangs a witch doll that he's outfitted with a Sarah Palin hairdo and glasses. "I make comments on politics and religion," says Maitland. "I'm very much a secular humanist. I hate fanaticism, and I hate bigotry and narrow-mindedness. I love nature

and animals. And I think love is what rules the world."

It's not immediately evident that this is the intention behind "A Spot in Heaven," another work on display at Gallerie Imaginarium. Mixing oil and collage on canvas, the piece calls to mind a hallucinatory desert town, and its backdrop of a wide ocean—blocked from the land by doors of various, vivid hues—brings forth a multidimensional disconnect that grounds the piece in surrealism.

The scene is populated with creatures both angelic and menacing. A leopard in a blue and black dress with human arms and seal flippers leads a prancing walrus across the flat, open courtyard. Mischievous green- and red-eyed foxes stare out from a side of the building. An eyeless pig with horrific tusks and a jaw of exposed bones brings to mind some nightmare vision from a Guillermo del Toro film.

A large, pink mouse swims in the distant ocean. Proportion and scale are as unreal as in a dream. The boarded-up building in the courtyard looks like a ghost town saloon. In line with his humanist philosophy and twisted imagery, Maitland sees this assemblage of oddballs as what the hereafter should represent. "It's a spot in heaven that tolerates everything," he says.

Maitland doesn't mince words when it comes to his own mortality. "We all die, which I think is dreadful, especially when you still think young." Regardless, he has a youthful exuberance and flair to his character that is irresistibly magnetic, transcendent of years.

Hearing Maitland speak only adds depth and color to his beautiful collection. That's why you should stop by his closing reception on Friday, Nov. 4. He'll be on hand. And I'm sure he'll be more than happy to share a memory or two. ☺

Collected Memories

Gallerie Imaginarium
301 Central NW
(entrance on Third Street just north of Central)
Runs through Nov. 5

TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS AND SATURDAYS, 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

Closing Reception Friday, Nov. 4, from 5 to 7 p.m.
286-9500, gallerieimaginarium.com
richmaitland.com

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