

THE WRITER'S DAUGHTER

DANIELLE MAILER

It has been a great pleasure to bring another member of the Mailer family to the Norman Mailer Society. We always have Mailers at our meetings. Over the past few years, as you know, we've been asking a different family member to come every year. This will keep going for a long time, we hope. By the time we're done, we can begin again. This year our speaker, like her father, is an artist, and she has been an artist for longer than any of her other siblings. I believe that's the case. Isn't it, Danielle? Yes. She's been a painter and a sculptor for decades, although if you look at her, you can see she looks to be about twenty-eight. For many years, whenever she was recognized in the art community—and she's been recognized many times, articles in Art Forum and a lot of other art magazines—invariably, her father's name would be mentioned. You know how the journalistic mind works. The first paragraph had an obligatory sentence saying that Danielle Mailer was the daughter of the literary lion, Norman Mailer. And then there'd be mention of his Pulitzer-Prize winning books and so forth. But over the last few years this has changed because of her many exhibitions, and other achievements, including major commissions—outdoor sculptures for museums and libraries. She just had an exhibit outside the New York Public Library. Her ship has come in, and she has reached a plateau of eminence; people in the art world know who she is and talk about her all the time.

I should add that Danielle is not just a visual artist, as I learned several years ago after her father's death when she wrote something about him. She's also a verbal artist. She chose to go into painting and sculpture, but she could very well have been a writer. It is with great pleasure that I ask you to welcome Danielle Mailer.

Keynote Introduction by J. Michael Lennon

DANIELLE: In honor of Norman, I would like to begin by uttering the words my father often used when first addressing his audience: “Can you hear me in the back?”

I have given my share of talks by now and some are more successful than others. I certainly don’t have my father’s polish. The good news, however, is that I’m certain that he’s up there micro-managing this talk today. So we need not worry.

This has been the most extraordinary weekend. He has come back to me with such clarity through the panels, the reading, and the lectures. I feel his presence quite strongly today. And of course, I have to credit Wilkes University and the Norman Mailer Society for making this happen. Bonnie and David Light and now Sean, who’s working the slideshow, have taken such good care of us, and I’m grateful for that. I have to say that I am actually sleeping better now knowing that these brilliant scholars, who are part of the Norman Mailer Society, are heavily strategizing about how to keep Norman’s literary voice alive and well. Thank you for all of this!

At the end of my father’s life, he talked much about the importance of family, and his worry that when he was gone, we, his children, would not remain close. So much so that in his last days while he was still able to talk, just before they put the feeding tube in, he said to me, with surprising strength “Listen, honey, this family is a tapestry. You’ve got to make sure you all remain tight, and don’t ever let that tapestry unravel.”

With his passing and then Norris just two years later, we all felt a bit unmoored. There were two people that really helped us tremendously in this process of getting our equilibrium back and that would be Mike and Donna Lennon. They are beloved friends, really more like family members, and we go back now some forty years. I first met them when I was a teenager in Mount Desert Island, Maine. Mike had recently made my father’s acquaintance and was teaching Mailer at the University of Illinois. Dad had extended an invite and so they made the trip up to Maine with their three boys, who were babies then. Donna not yet thirty, a slip of a gal, who made mothering three energetic sons look easy. We took to them instantly and we have remained loyal and close ever since. So I just wanted to thank them both for all these years of support and friendship! (Applause)

And the other thing is—the other real glue of our family is my Aunt Barbara or Aunt B., as we call her. And I offer her here today the highest com-

pliment, which I'd say, even when I was a teenager, "Aunt Barbara, you are the mother without the baggage." (Applause)

So, speaking of mothers, I want to begin with Adele Morales Mailer. My mother is ninety, and has a tenuous hold on life. She has dementia now. And curiously it has really softened her edges. She has returned to loving my father without any trace of her former rage. She is certain he visits her regularly, and who knows? So one of the small and only pleasures of her dementia is that she has forgotten the ugliness between them.

Adele Carol Morales was an interesting character in her own right. She came from immigrant Peruvian-Spanish parents. They lived in Coney Island in what she referred to in her memoir as "a Spanish Woody Allen household," and she was a Brooklyn girl. (Using a Brooklyn accent). She talked like this, she was a gum snapper, she was probably going to marry "Vinny" up the street. But she also was an artist, and she had aspirations to reinvent herself and have a different kind of life. So at nineteen, she did a very brave thing. She left her very strict Catholic family, and she crossed the bridge, moved into Manhattan, got a cold-water flat, started dating Jack Kerouac, and became very close friends with Dan Wolf. She enrolled in The New School and lost her Brooklyn accent, studied with the renowned Hans Hofmann, the abstract expressionist, and in her class were such luminaries such as de Kooning and Helen Frankenthaler and Jackson Pollock, etc. Perhaps my mother might have gone on to become a successful painter, but she met Norman, and her role as his muse, well, that was a full time job.

It began at 12 am while she was in bed, reading *The Sunday New York Times*. She got a phone call from Dan Wolf, and he said, "Listen, you've got to come out and meet Norman Mailer. He's lonely. He wants to meet a beautiful woman." And she said, "Oh, for God sakes, Dan, it's midnight; I've got my curlers in." He said, "Pull yourself together." And she refused. So Dad got on the phone, and in his incredibly gravelly, sexy voice, he recited *The Last Tycoon* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. "Come on" he said. I'll spring for a cab." She was totally seduced, and she took that cab to meet Norman. They were together for the next ten years, a very stormy, passionate, problematic marriage. He had two failure books while he was married to her—failure by the critics' standards—*Barbary Shore* and *The Deer Park*. I think he suffered a great deal with depression after the success of *The Naked and the Dead*. Anyway, and I don't think she could keep up with him at all. It just got worse and

worse and built to that very violent crescendo. My sister and I were born into that chaos. I'm sure there were some calm times, but there was an awful lot of tension, culminating with the stabbing, Mom hospitalized, Dad in jail/Bellevue and the inevitable split.

I love this picture, and looking at it makes me want to cry just because there's so much emotion in that face of hers. She was beautiful, but so pained. But strong too and she pulled herself together, and started a new life with her daughters. She went back to painting and devoted herself to raising her girls. A routine began and we started living with Adele during the week and with Norman on weekends. Dad bought the Brooklyn heights apartment and Mom rented eccentric west village floor-throughs. She always picked the room with the best light to do her art, usually that turned out to be the living-room. There were unfinished canvases everywhere and a small army of cats running the household, sometimes a dog or two, usually not housebroken. The apartments were always a mess but I remember it as creative chaos. She was into faux leopard, before it was in vogue, whole walls with painted fern motifs and yards of purple velvet covering the furniture. These eclectic, colorful, spaces of my childhood were perfect places for the artist within to take root.

And then time with Norman. Dad was very vigilant about having his daughters every weekend. At that point, my sister Sue was in Mexico much of the year. It was just me and my sister Elizabeth in New York. And no matter what was going on, he would pick us up on Saturday or Sunday. It's no exaggeration to say that the Museum of Modern Art was our church, and we would go there regularly. He loved Cezanne, so we would head to the Impressionists Wing, straight back to the Cezanne section, and there we would remain. It began when I was six, my sister three or four. He would launch into this very sophisticated lecture about Cezanne's use of drapery and how he would use fifty shades of white. He would take his hands, crop out a square, and say, "Look. Look at these mountaintops. The drapery. They could be mountains!"

In this way Cezanne was the first artist that really entered my psyche. And afterwards, we'd go across the street to Rizzoli's, and he'd buy us one of these enormous, Taschen books—Matisse, Picasso, Hieronymus Bosch, to name a few and I poured over those plates. After that we would always lunch at Trader Vic's, with chicken on a spit. Some beautiful Polynesian waitress would bring my father his customary whiskey sour. It was incredibly cozy,

just the three of us, a ritual I look back on with relish. He was in his way very devoted, and this routine went on for years.

Sometime, half a decade later, we were going to visit him over the weekend. I'm sure that most of you are familiar with the Brooklyn apartment with the ship theme. Well, due to lack of space our bedroom was an alcove off the living room. My sister and I slept there for years. We shared a bed. There was a deep-sea-fishing net with buoys, as our only curtain. Because we were old enough to be modest we used the Buoys as a method of seeking cover. As awkward as it was, we never complained. And as Mailer children arrived so then did makeshift bedrooms like little cubbies in the galley of a ship. The Brooklyn apartment under Norman's supervision was fashioned to be a boat in every way possible with planks and catwalks and ropes, etc. But one night, we were in our bed asleep. This was when Dad was running for mayor, and we had this lovely woman, Heddy Diggs, who had taken care of the family—Jamaican. She was with us, and I'm sure some of my other siblings were sleeping. But at any rate, this guy busted through the door, wild-eyed. He looked like kind of an Abbie Hoffman, revolutionary-type, and he said, "Where's Norman? I've got to kill him!" And he had a gun. We were terrified. We were huddling in our little alcove pushing ourselves down the bed to be as inconspicuous as possible. He was walking through rooms and checking the bedrooms, and he just said, "This is it, man. We've got to kill Norman." Anyway, finally Heddy talked him off the edge and got him to leave. And hours later (we were very worried) Dad came home, and we could hear him huffing and puffing up the four flights of stairs and coming in. He had that smell of bourbon and cigarette smoke, and he had his customary trench coat on—the beige trench coat. And we rushed to his side and gripped him. We said, "Daddy! Daddy! This guy came, and he wanted to kill you!" He sat back and said, "Hmm. Wonder who it was." (Laughter).

So that was my early childhood with Norman and Adele. Then summers. At this point, there were quite a few children; all but my brother John had been born. So we were summering in Provincetown and, even though I was pushing into past thirteen and really had things I wanted to do, sort of teenager things, Dad was adamant, he wanted all his children together in the summer months. That was just sealed in stone. We did Provincetown for years and then eventually, Mount Desert Island, Maine. Dad was fascinated

by the Bar Harbor society and sailing. So he finally bought a Ludar 16 and rented a house on Somme's Sound. It was a Frank Lloyd Wright inspired building. Part camp barrack, and part shabby sheik. It was very funky and rustic, and we all had rooms off the side of this long corridor. Dad, by now had enough children that he could finally have a "crew." He learned to sail from a book. He enrolled us in sailing school, which we hated. My sisters, who were bookish and not particularly athletic, wanted to just curl up in bed and read, and my brothers were very young and did not much understand the whole sailing thing. But I was the good daughter, anxious to please Daddy, and so I learned the proper knots and boat conduct but my heart was never really in it.

And then came the big day where we started racing, and so this is how our morning unfolded. We would be sleeping and about 6:00 am Dad would do his wake up call. He would begin by blowing a real bugle followed by a loud bellow army style, "Drop your cocks, pick up your socks, get out of your fart sacks, you bastards!" No one could sleep after this. And following a quick breakfast there came the complicated choreography of making lunches. We had to cut the peppers without any pulp on them—he was very picky about his tuna fish, and part of being in the Mailer family was that you had to learn to make a Norman Mailer tuna fish salad, properly. My sister Susan is the oldest, but when she was in Mexico, the role would fall on me—I was responsible for getting all my siblings set. So we had the coolers and the outfits and the rain gear and the food. And we all managed to get on the boat and make it to the starting line right on time. Our family had been practicing quite a bit for this first big race. We lined up, and they sounded the bell. We picked up wind, and we were just doing beautifully. Gliding along, keeping up and our father was pleased and proud, then all of a sudden out of nowhere, we went into irons, which means there was no wind. Maddeningly, all the other boats were picking up wind, "Hello, Norman!" they called cheerfully, one by one gracefully gliding past us! Dad was getting angrier and angrier, barking orders forgetting his sailor's decorum. My brothers nearly falling overboard, my sisters were in the lower decks seasick. It was all on me and finally I turned and said, "Dad, you know what we are?" and he barked, "What?" I said, "We're the Polish Navy." He laughed, and laughed. His mood lifted and the wind returned to us, a gift. And after that he lightened up over the sailing. We never amounted to racers but we did continue sailing. We had a couple of mishaps, like the boom whipped

around and knocked my brother off the boat, among other things. But Dad kept his good humor and sailing in the end was not so bad.

And after that, I went to college. At that point, I was almost eighteen and wanted to go to art school. I got into RISD, but my father said simply, “No. You’ve got to get an academic education. You’ve got to learn to write.” So I went to Bowdoin College in Maine, because I already had this great affinity for Maine. “You can major in whatever you want, but you’ve got to take Latin.” So I took Latin as a freshman. I had this professor, and he was this old lecherous New Englander. He was probably in his eighties and still teaching. I was hopeless at Latin. And at the end of that first term, he said, “You can kiss me on the lips and get a B, or you can kiss me on the cheek and get a C.” So I opted for the C and the cheek, but I laugh to think that that sort of thing could go on and that there was no sexual harassment law suit. But that was how I passed Latin!

In favor of brevity I’m skipping the next decade and going right to the slide show—this painting represents a piece that was in a style which I actually learned to paint, shades of Matisse, Cezanne, nothing like what I do now. But I show it to you because I painted it in my Dad’s studio. I decided I wanted to take a year and live with my father. I had been a graphic designer and had a pretty successful career, and I was getting to the point where I wanted to go back to my fine art. There we were, mostly just the two of us. Occasionally he would travel and I was free to paint in his studio. This still life I did during one of those times stands out as one my strongest works. Something about his writing environment—the energy, the power, the vibration—must have triggered a mindset that enriched my process. Later people would ask “What was it like living with your father for that year? It must have been really intellectually stimulating. You must have had wonderful talks.” And I said, “Well actually, we talked about food and what we were going to have for supper.” That was what really occupied his mind. He would say, “When you make that pot roast tomorrow, make sure you don’t mix the garlic with the meat, because the meat’s very offended by the fumes of the pot roast.” So that was the year of living with Dad and learning to make all his dishes just so. He always had some eccentric food regime. There were the bagels, that were emptied of their innards and filled with cream cheese (to cut calories), or oatmeal with green beans mixed in and the juice fasts and soups with every imaginable ingredient. I indulged his food philosophies, participated in all but the strangest

culinary suggestions and most of all loved that time when I had my father all to myself.

Years later, when I went through a divorce and my work started to change, I needed a job, and I had my daughter, Isabella, to support. I said to Dad, “I want to do more narrative. I want to reconnect with my inner reality,” for lack of a better word. And so he said, “Well, cut the crap, and get going.”

Later exiting my marriage and meeting my future musician husband Peter McEachern, I began to include the trombones, broken hearts and skull heads referencing the divorce, the adventure of a new life, the heartache over leaving the old, etc., and calling upon the inspirational elements of my childhood homes and my Peruvian heritage.

Periodically, Dad would check in with me and see what I was working on and say, “I like this, I don’t like that.” He was very opinionated, but he was excited about this transition into the narrative. Through all of these changes, he and Norris would come to my openings, and they would do a wonderful thing. They would buy a piece at the very beginning, which immediately put a dot on the painting. Then people would say, “Oh, things are selling,” and that would start the purchasing momentum.

The Art of Letting Go was a piece that I did about the dualism of having a very literary background and being very much in your head and letting go and letting the process take hold, not trying to micro-manage the creative process too much.

This painting is about menopause. For all you women in the audience—the sheep on her head is a metaphor for the hot flash. (Laughter).

You can see the book themes over and over again. The literary references and trying to capture that creative process with some sort of visual symbol of what transpires in my head as I make the art.

When Dad was dying, I had a show in New York City in a little gallery in the East Village. The opening was supposed to happen on November 15, and by November 3, Pops was in the hospital. I was running up there, carrying a canvas and my paints, sitting at his bedside, and painting. That’s where I did these pieces, because I had this crazy deadline but I wanted to be with him in his last days. *The Good Daughter* Series emerged. These works echo the grief and sense of impending loss. A portrait of a devoted daughter, with a backdrop of black, she is encased in white ferns, holding the very book, *Ancient Evenings*, that sits on my bedside table to this day.

His death was both terrible and freeing. I felt a lifting of an influence, a kind of lightness, all the while missing his presence fiercely. I had permission now to explore areas he may or may not have agreed with. He was gone; I could do exactly what I wanted. And yet he remained of course an internal voice to call upon when needed.

Although the progression from painting to public art was not entirely linear after Dad's passing, I began to think big and bigger, pursuing opportunities to do outdoor works. I carried Norman's tombstone words like a mantra with me at each juncture when I was feeling especially overwhelmed by my move into this unfamiliar territory.

"There is that law of life, so true and so just, that one must grow, or pay more for remaining the same."

So grow I did, with the making of a giant cat and horse on Main Street in Torrington, Connecticut. A public art grant I received to create these permanent larger than life works incorporating my love for pattern, color, and desire for the bold statement. Then I received funding to create a piece outside the library in Salisbury Connecticut. And with thoughts of the New York Public Library lion, I designed a 15-foot Cobalt Blue Cougar to meet and greet library visitors. Inspired by the fact that Dad was always referenced as a "Literary Lion" Norman found his way into the belly of this beast. In an unprecedented step for me, I included his writing as part of my visual vocabulary. And so goes the simplest of dad's quotes, "In my ancient time, my boyhood, if you wanted to learn something, you had to get up on Saturday morning and go to the library." The only one I could find that was PC enough for this venue.

This move toward incorporating Dad's words into my work began to take off and found a foothold on the three giant muses created for a solo show in the winter of 2014 at a gallery in my community. This was a decision that left me shaken, but it felt right at the time, or at least necessary. I chose my favorite quotes that were liberally spoken all my life, over family dinners, at parties over drinks, etc. This quote along with two other favorites are inscribed on the figures' faces. "With the pride of the artist, you must blow against the walls of every power that exists, the small trumpet of your defiance."

I felt confident that the quotes offered just the right touch as I hung the work and received praise and lots of it. Then later I felt deflated, as the focus became the Writer's words. That old feeling of invisibility arrived. I thought

I was strong enough, formed enough, and the collaborative effort with Dad in this way had felt so correct. And yet . . . an elixir, an antidote, a balance, was required to keep my head above water. So what did I do? I had four giant canvases in my studio that were blank and I painted giant crows. The pure giving-in to this simple impulse reinstated my equilibrium. That's all I can say. I think that there's a lot of interesting symbolism in these works and crows fascinate me. I live in a place where there are lots of crows, and I've read a bit about them. But it was more than that. It was something about finding my way back to myself and these strange magnificent birds were the vehicle. And with a final crow painting that became a giant mural commission on the exterior wall of the Roger Smith Hotel in New York City I could reclaim Danielle all the while being comfortable as the Writer's daughter.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: How much of the iconography and symbolism are you aware of at the time you create, and what occurs to you afterwards where you're thinking of your own interpretation?

DANIELLE: At one point, I was doing a painting—my daughter was thirteen, and she was in the throws of “individuation” and I had this idea of wanting to have a child in prayer with a rope around her neck and the two parents on left and right cutting the cord with a scissor. I visualized the piece beforehand and it began to unfold with imagery that surprised me. In an attempt to paint my frustration (of being a parent to a teenager) some darker imagery surfaced, as for example, the addition of the mother figure with a knife in the apple in her belly.

My skull heads are frequently part of my repertoire of symbols, because I like what this does for a piece of work. It gives it an edge, it gives it a sense of mystery, and it's also a throwback to my personal iconography imbedded in my psyche from childhood.

FEMALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: How many assistants do you usually have working for you?

DANIELLE: Depending on the scope of the project I can have one college intern or a dozen high school art students. Heading into my fifteenth year of teaching middle school art I enjoy the good energy of these young people. This is one of the great aspects to these large-scale endeavors, involving the

kids! Meanwhile it echoes the tried and true concept, “Many hands make light work.”

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What material are you using?

DANIELLE: That would be coated aluminum.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: Your mother was an artist. What was her relationship to your art?

DANIELLE: This is a complicated question. My mother admired me and believed in my talent, but she never had the success that I’ve had, so I think there was a little part of her that was ambivalent and critical. She would say things like, “Honey, don’t you want to use a little more white? You need to explore gray? There’s too much color, maybe too busy?” Not to say that she was highly competitive with me, because it wasn’t that. Her sensibility was just so different. She was an abstract expressionist, so it was hard for her sometimes to relate to my work. But frequently her comments were spot on. And that was hard, too. But despite our differences I think my mother had a huge influence on me: her pallet, the beautiful things in our home that I would study daily as a child, and her approach. I mean, she’s just an artist to the core. I often tell people, “I’m a pedigree artist. I come from two artist parents.” When you grow up with art all around you and it’s all you know. It’s such a natural thing to choose that path.

DANIELLE: I wish that my mother had been able to have a real painting career. She didn’t have a strong sense of self. I mean, she had self-esteem issues, quite obviously, And so she didn’t have the strength to say to him, “Go do your thing. I’m going to paint.” She really wanted to please my Dad and be his muse, and it didn’t leave room for her to explore. He wanted her to be a painter. He had liked the idea of her being a painter, but I think when you got right down to it, he wanted her with him at his side, and the kind of commitment she would have had to have made to be successful and to stick with it would have been hard on him. But then, when they split up, she did go back to the painting. For most of my childhood, she painted her abstract pieces, but she wasn’t able to get shows. It’s really hard to figure out what happened exactly. I think she was so thrown off by the stabbing that she never quite got her bearings. I have to say that. And I think, that was pre

post-traumatic stress, and we didn't have an understanding of how that would wreak havoc in a very subtle way. So it's hard to say, but she's painting now at ninety.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: These figures are so striking. How do they stand up over time?

DANIELLE: They're made out of aluminum, and they're coated with clear auto body coat, same as a car. I've had a few collectors purchase them for the exterior of their buildings, including Berta Walker in Provincetown. There's always that little part of me that thinks, "Oh, boy. If this starts peeling, I'm in trouble." But I've researched it pretty extensively. When you get into the public art arena, you really have to do your homework on how your surfaces stand the test of time.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: Did you have to get out and deal with the people at the car places then? Did they coat some of this stuff for you?

DANIELLE: Yeah, I have a whole team. I've got my sign maker. I've got my auto body coater. I've got my welder. I have my high school kids. I've got my husband who is top on the list!

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just remember you told me you brought some of your pieces first to these guys that spend their time coating cars.

DANIELLE: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Same thing. Their auto body shop. Right. And I had a welder who welded for me, and it was a rough scene, this machine shop. And here I was, little Danielle, with her dancing muses and these big burly guys with their torches. I had to get over that and convince them that I was serious. This is my cousin, Peter, by the way, who's also like a brother without the baggage. Well, maybe some baggage.

DANIELLE: Animal themes . . . it's possible. I did take lessons with Jack Carney for a lot of years, a lot of summers. You know, these things come out, and on a good day, it's a very organic process. On a bad day, you say, "Well, I have nothing left. I have nothing else to say." But when you have something to say and it comes out and then later, you stop and go, "Wow, that's interesting. I did that seventeen-foot cat!" That's kind of how it's gone for me. One

thing has led to another, to another, to another, in a pretty honest process without too many forced transitions. So I feel lucky for that.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: When looking at your visual artists, who would your great heroes and heroines be?

DANIELLE: It all started with Cezanne, of course. But no, the artists I look to are Matisse, of course. I love Miriam Schapiro. Niki de Saint Phalle, Gustav Klimt. I love pattern. I always have. And when I was in high school, I used to collect leather gloves and embellish them and sell them, just because I loved making patterns. I have a history in pattern making. But Matisse. If I picked one, I'd say Matisse.

FEMALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: Have you ever thought about writing?

DANIELLE: I do write. In our family, it is a prerequisite to being a Mailer. The lessons started in childhood for each of us. I don't write like my sisters however. They have made a profession out of it and two of them are perched to publish their memoirs. My identity has always been as the painter, the visual artist. But privately, I record ideas, feelings, memories, etc. that may someday ease into a bigger more substantial plan. For now I am happy to let other family members make their mark in this area.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do you work on a seventeen-foot statue?

DANIELLE: Well, the horse was welded in a sign shop, and then I painted it outside for the most part. The cat was done in a very high loft, and it was a freaking nightmare getting it in. It was crazy, but we did it. But generally speaking, I work a little smaller, and I borrow spaces, because my own studio is really tiny.

MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do you guys see yourselves as a family, as ambassadors for him?

DANIELLE: We will do right by our father by collectively attempting to keep his name alive. Whatever form it takes. We will also honor him by honoring our own creative impulses. He gave us a template for this kind of success: He would always say emphatically, "you are cheating the cosmos when you ig-

nore your desire to create.” We watched him succumb to “it” every day. He offered an example of discipline, perseverance, work ethic, etc. I think we all have a complicated relationship to fame and I for one do not yearn for this kind of recognition. To be on fire with inspiration though, and be able to pay the bills, I think that that is not a bad way to carry the torch.