

REFLECTIONS

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY TURBULENT FOR US, as it has been for so many others. The national emergency quickly closed down our university and the change in instruction from on-site to remote, of course, dramatically affected everyone. The normal rhythms of *Review* activities were significantly altered since there was no access to our offices, scheduling/receiving deliveries, mailing copies of the *Review*, etc. However, our staff continued to work at home putting together Volume 13, and we expect to follow the same pattern for Volume 14, which we expect to publish in November 2020.

We were graciously given permission by the Mailer Estate to publish an important short story by Norman Mailer, “The Last Night,” which was first published in *Esquire* in December 1963. It was the last short story that Mailer published in his lifetime and much credit goes to Michael Shuman for richly contextualizing Mailer’s science fiction in this issue. As our readers know, we have published several selections of early fiction by Norman Mailer in recent issues and we hope that these resources will encourage scholars to take a fresh look at his early work which, I believe, foreshadows, in strategic ways, his mature fiction.

Our readers are keenly interested in the quickly evolving nature of Mailer Studies and we are grateful to J. Michael Lennon for contributing an extensive interview chronicling strategic developments in Mailer Studies, identifying current trends and, perhaps most important, providing a glimpse into the immediate future of Mailer research with important implications. Professor Lennon’s interview is a rich source of insights and information.

We are pleased to publish an excerpt from Bonnie Culver’s play, *NORRIS*, which focuses on the life of Norris Church Mailer, and is scheduled for opening in California when medical conditions permit. The production will star Anne Archer and subsequent performances are planned in London and then New York City.

In this issue, Robert Begiebing examines the synergistic contributions of Joseph Ellis and Norman Mailer in addressing the nourishing of American

democracy. Raymond Vince contributes a penetrating comparative examination of works by Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Mailer as he examines dimensions of personal and cultural *angst* as rich creative fibers, released in powerful fictive representations by these canonical authors. These two explorations are a timely harbinger of our developing series exploring Mailer's connections, literary and otherwise, to other major figures. We plan to include comparative interpretive readings in future issues as yet another way of looking at Mailer's work through the larger prism of inherited literary and critical contexts as well as authorial legacies. T.S. Eliot's classical essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," is a germane theoretical infrastructure for this series.

The *Review* has always valued our section of creative work and this issue is no exception. Karen Brown once again graces our pages with a powerful tale of gripping relationships, tensely unfolding over time. Robert Guffey masterfully creates a surreal crime drama, inscribing his narrative with a wry sense of humor as he delves into the incongruity of mundane events. Richard Schreck gives us a glimpse into his novel, *Brain Game*. Further, we are pleased to publish crisp, cogent poetry by Gary D. Rhodes and Sal Cetrano, reflective artists who offer us penetrating explorations into inner folds of human experience.

When this volume was in press, we were shocked to learn of the sudden passing of Chris Busa, a Norman Mailer Society board member and Founding Editor of the *Provincetown Arts Magazine* for thirty-five years. Chris will be remembered in the pages of Volume 14.

Sadly, last year we experienced the loss of a cherished member of The Norman Mailer Society as Wilbur F. Hayes passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019. Wilbur joined the Biology department at Wilkes University in 1967 and remained a Professor of Biology at Wilkes until 2010, enhancing the lives of his students and colleagues for more than four decades in a very distinguished career. Wilbur was a spirited participant at our annual Mailer Society meetings and his presence and valuable contributions enriched our gatherings. I am saddened to know that I will not engage with him at future conferences. Wilbur always had something to say that was interesting and thought provoking. We will truly miss Wilbur's cheerful and insightful participation.

I would like to welcome a new editor to our staff, Gary D. Rhodes, an in-

ternationally acclaimed film scholar with approximately two dozen books to his credit. Professor Rhodes' extensive body of work includes several cogent articles on Norman Mailer's cinema. Welcome aboard, Gary!

Phillip Sipiora