

Art in the Time of Covid

December 24, 2020

The elves were distracted, and made two errors in this morning's edition so we're sending it again. Enjoy! Happy Holidays!

Barbara Adolfi

"The Corona-19 has stopped me in my tracks. I can't hug my grandchildren, but I want connection. Remembering the large cans of Italian Christmas cookies which lured us to the warmth of my Nonna Teresa's home, I decide to attempt recipes I have not made in many years. But there are realities that I must confront. For 17 years I have privately, now openly, battled the unpredictable episodes of fatigue and loss of motor control of Parkinson's Disease. It has been many years since I made those cookies. I vaguely remember the process. I called my dear friend and well known personal chef Sylvie Rowand, to work with me.

A heartwarming experience defeats the pain and isolation of corona-19.

The cookies, shared between us, were given to family and friends, further extending the tangible and intangible connecting net. Tradition resurrected. Friendship deepened. Happy holidays to all."

Sylvie Rowand

"I am a fairly private person, yet I have been missing face-to-face contacts. So, when my friend Barbara Adolfi asked if I would help her with making traditional Italian Christmas cookies, I was delighted. We weaved connections on more levels than I would have thought.

For several hours, we focused on making cookies and on each other – just the two of us! We are connected to Kate (Barbara's mother) and other family women from past generations as we try to execute the very simple -- but not necessarily easy -- instructions ("add as much flour as the dough will take"), or understanding how to roll and twist the dough exactly so to make... coronas (crown-shaped cookies).

The recipes tie us to Calabria through ingredients common to that area (dry figs, anise, wine) and times of scarcity: instead of fat, wine (then plentiful and inexpensive) is used to tenderize and bind the dough; some recipes don't contain eggs, and none is very sweet. The cookies are truly special because of



Sylvie

the time it takes to shape them. Barbara recalls how fast her aunts made those perfect crowns – that takes practice!



We weigh our ingredients, write down what we do, so the recipes can be executed more easily: some will be available through Kevin's (Barbara's son) web site. Kevin manages a large heirloom grain flourmill on the West coast. We are using his flours today. Cairnspringmills.com



Sylvie and Barbara

Making cookies was not part of my childhood, but here I am, and all is well for now."

Linda Croxson

"When I think of Art in the time of covid, I think of these things:

Matisse working in the south of France while World War II was raging and the outcome was unknown .



I think of the man playing the cello in the bombed out rubble of Sarajevo in the midst of that war.

I think of the soloist in Italy singing arias from her balcony during the first covid lockdown.



In all of those fraught and tragic times, human beings carried on creating art, practicing their art and being nourished by art.

I think of the poem written on the wall of a gestapo prison cell, which became integral to the second movement of Goreki's Third Symphony.

This time of pandemic is no different. Art is always with us. We persevere; we continue to make art and we continue to be sustained by it."



Rosie Wharton

"When Patsy Cline and Loretta Lynn were famous in the country music business I loved every one of their songs. I wrote down the words of their songs so I could sing along on a cassette with them, I bought their records, the 45 records. I played them on a battery operated record player. As I played the record and sang along, one day I said to myself "I can write my own lyrics!" So I wrote my first poem. The title was "Little Rag Doll." That was 57 years ago and I have been writing ever since. I have written over 500 in that time. I sent two of them to a company in Nashville and had them set to music for songs, I have them on CDs. I listen to that sing-along cassette quite often and it brings back good memories. I thank Patsy and Loretta for inspiring me to become a poet/songwriter... but I thank God most of all for giving me a talent I really love. God bless."

Isolation

I am isolated within myself But free in heart and mind, Jesus watches over us
He's with us all the time,
I am a writer of the words
To help me make it through,
If you get the right mind set You can easily do it too,
I take out pen and paper
And write what's in my heart, And get lost in the moment
The bad things don't have a part, We are, alone together
It helps to ease the burden
In any situation,
It will feed your faith
And starve your anxiety,
It will put your heart at rest That's what it does for me,
Serious things are going on
In this old world these days,
It will get somewhat worse
If people don't change their ways, When trouble knocks
on your door Send faith to open it now,
Put your trouble in God's hands He'll work it out
somehow,

Paul Riesler and Cheryl Toth

"As we approach the end of this tumultuous year, we offer you a song that we wrote in April with members of Rapp at Home. [Together Again](#) expresses how much we long to be with our friends and family - without masks or distance or worry.

We are grateful for your support and friendship, and we wish for you a healthy holiday, along with a fervent hope that we will all be Together Again in the very near future."





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