

## ... Talley interview

Continued from previous page

misfits." And the way we adorn our bodies can be a way to communicate who we are. In that way I think André's story is inspirational because it does show how he is a self-creation, but was never the protagonist in his own story. He hasn't spoken much publicly about the racism that he personally faced, or the pain of having to sublimate that struggle over the years. He feels now he can talk about, and we are in a moment where there's more of a discussion on race and racism in different industries. Anna Wintour was much more candid than I had expected talking about how the issue of race was always bubbling under the surface.

### On filming during the 2016 election.

**Novack:** I view André's story as an American success story, although it has a lot of pain and a lot of sacrifice. He wished his grandmother could have seen the Michelle Obama Vogue cover. By extension, he wishes his grandmother could have seen the first African American presidency. At the same time he's watching a car crash in the slow motion on the national political stage. Perhaps we haven't made as progress as many of us think or hope. One of my favorite moments of the film is when Trump is being sworn in and André just goes quiet. It's pretty rare that he goes quiet in public, and to me

it was so clear that he was distraught. Even though I wasn't one of them, I felt a profound guilt and shame that so many white women had voted for Trump. For André and me that morning was a moment of total despondency. I got to hide behind the camera, saved from having to think about everything else. But I almost felt like I owed him an apology. "I'm so sorry this is the country you live in."

### On capturing the private André Leon Talley.

**Novack:** He talks about growing up and his relatives sitting out on the porch when the weather was warm, telling stories. The movie is meant to feel like you're spending time with André, he's telling you his stories. He's really Southern. Some people are shocked that he lives in Westchester. "He doesn't live in SoHo?" But once you understand who he is, where he comes from, how that lives inside of him, the fact that he needs a front porch where he can sit and have trees and quiet makes sense. The fashion story of André was a wonderful, funny, enticing side of André. But sitting on his porch and watching bunnies in the grass is as much luxury to him as some beautifully aged Louis Vuitton trunk. He really is much more complex than a story of luxury.

For more info <https://www.biffma.org>

## MUSIC: FRED BAUMGARTEN

# Berkshire High Peaks Festival Preview

Entering its ninth summer, the High Peaks Festival has switched peaks: After years in the Catskills, the educational program of Close Encounters With Music (CEWM) has taken up residence in the Berkshires.

From August 6 through 16, the halls of the Berkshire School in Sheffield, Mass., will be filled with the sounds of some 50 earnest, aspiring chamber musicians — cellists, violinists, violists, and pianists — studying with 14 master professionals. Both students and faculty come from "every corner of the world," said founder and artistic director Yehuda Hanani.

The Berkshire School became available with the departure this year of the Berkshire Choral Festival, and Hanani was eager to have the High Peaks Festival "closer to home," specifically to tap into the audience and supporters of the Berkshire-based CEWM.

Each festival has a theme, and this year's is "the cross-influence of French and Russian culture and art" in the 19th and 20th centuries. Especially in the early 20th, "Paris was filled with Russian exiles — Diaghilev (impresario and founder of the Ballet Russes), Prokofiev, Stravinsky and others." At the same time, "French was the language of the Russian intelligentsia."

The 11-day program will include a wide array of concerts, talks, and master classes that will all be open to the public. Nearly every evening will feature a moonlight sonata, a performance by the talented student musicians. At least two concerts will be performed by faculty, and there may be programs mixing faculty and students.

Hanani touted the "family atmosphere" of the festival. "We eat together, take walks, faculty and students living in close proximity." And he invited visitors to "join us on any level they want."

"People are interested in



PHOTO BY PETER BLANDORI

### Yehuda Hanani and El Matsumoto

seeing what happens in the kitchen before you put a meal on," comparing that to "how a musical work is put together. So master classes are very popular, and people are welcome to sit in."

For Hanani, the greatest satisfaction is the international flavor. "I find it moving to see barriers disappearing between cultures, languages. Students sit together and make music. Nothing else matters. It goes beyond music, beyond borders or political dis-

agreements. It's a reminder of the power of music."

"Someday," he half-joked, "We may have the festival at the U.N."

For more information, go to [www.berkshirehighpeaksmusic.org](http://www.berkshirehighpeaksmusic.org).

## THE NEXT FESTIVAL AT MUSIC MOUNTAIN

The Next Festival of Emerging Artists will be in concert on June 2 at Music Mountain with the renowned soprano Tony Arnold.

Conductor Peter Askim will lead a string orchestra at 7 p.m. benefiting the David M. Hunt Falls Village Library.

Founded by Artistic Director Peter Askim, The Next Festival of Emerging Artists is an immersive residency for young professional string players. This year's festival takes place May 27-June 9. After a week at Music Mountain in Falls Village, Conn., the festival moves to New York City.

On June 2, the orchestra will be joined by soprano Tony Arnold performing in the world premiere orchestral version of "And Once I Played Ophelia" by Brett Dean. New music by Jessica Meyer, Liisa Hirsch, and Peter Askim will also be performed.

Music Mountain is located at 225 Music Mountain Rd, Falls Village, CT Phone: (860) 824-7126 <http://musicmountain.org>

## ... 'Disobedience'

Continued from previous page

logically, in every adverbial sense one can imagine, situated in a gray area.

But even in this gray area, there should be some electricity, and the dynamic between Ronit and Esti is largely devoid of spark. And the only thing worse than a dud of an on-screen queer relationship is when straight, conventionally attractive actresses play characters with marginalized sexual identities and then receive undue kudos for being edgy. What makes "Disobedience" such high-brow catnip is the fantasy of Weisz and McAdams,

two acclaimed actresses not known for getting naked, as star-crossed lesbian lovers. We're supposed to take it for granted that they enjoy looking at each other as much as we enjoy looking at them, which is where things unravel.

Watching "Disobedience," I was often reminded of "Carol," Todd Haynes's 2015 film about an illicit romance between Therese Belivet (Rooney Mara), an unworldly shopgirl, and Carol Aird (Cate Blanchett), a glamorous older woman, set against the conformist backdrop of the late 1950s.

Both movies rely on the negative space between the main characters — the things they don't say to one another, the physical distance between their bodies, the furtive glances and awkward pauses — to signal their unruly longing to be closer. But in "Carol," all of that restraint creates a tension that feels specific to its characters; in "Disobedience," Ronit and Esti always seem as though they're miles apart, even when they're, um, spitting into each other's mouths (spoiler alert number two).

There are some decent performances scattered throughout this nearly two-hour-long movie. But ultimately, the whole thing collapses under its own weight, and the romance between Ronit and Esti feels more like a vessel for a male director's existential musings than a fully rendered relationship.

"Disobedience" is playing at the Triplex in Great Barrington.

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