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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Literary Cocktail Hour honors John Updike

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3 TEXT BODY:

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4 The Brattleboro Literary Festival will host James Schiff
5 and Michael Updike for a virtual “Literary Cocktail Hour”
6 Wednesday, May 13, at 5 p.m.

7 Festival organizers said in a news release that they are
8 excited to host Schiff in conversation with John Updike’s son
9 Michael for a literary conversation focused on Schiff’s latest book,
10 *The Selected Letters of John Updike*.

11 “John Updike remains one of the most admired and
12 prolific voices in American Literature,” wrote organizers. “Over
13 five decades, he produced novels, short stories, poems, criticism,
14 and essays that examine faith and art, desire, and the American
15 experience in all its complexity.”

16 His tetralogy, the Rabbit novels, earned him two Pulitzer
17 Prizes and a place in the canon of 20th-century fiction. Beyond
18 his published pages, Updike was a dedicated correspondent. “He
19 wrote thousands of letters to family, friends, editors, and fellow
20 writers in ongoing intimate conversations that reveals the man
21 behind the meticulous prose,” said organizers.

22 In *Selected Letters*, Schiff offers readers a window into
23 that private world. Schiff presents a portrait of Updike “as both
24 craftsman and confidante, generous, witty, and endlessly
25 reflective about writing and life.”

26 Schiff was born and raised in Cincinnati. He received his
27 bachelor’s degree from Duke University and his master’s and
28 doctorate from New York University. He is professor of English at
29 the University of Cincinnati. He is the author or editor of six
30 books on contemporary American fiction, including *John Updike*
31 *Revisited* and *Understanding Reynolds Price*.

32 He serves on the John Updike Literary Trust which, in
33 2016, named him to edit a volume of Updike’s letters. He is
34 currently working on a biography of Updike and is the editor of
35 *The John Updike Review*.

36 Michael Updike spent his childhood in Ipswich,
37 Massachusetts, and has lived in Newburyport/Newbury since
38 1992. He is an artist, designer, and sculptor. For more than three
39 decades he has designed for Mariposa, an import tabletop
40 company and, for the past 15 years, he worked with stone. He
41 exhibits his carved slate tiles in galleries and art festivals across
42 New England.

43 Brattleboro Literary Festival organizers said it has grown
44 from year to year to become “one of the region’s most significant
45 annual events” and has presented more than 1,000 authors,

46 including winners of awards such as the Pulitzer Prize, National
47 Book Award, National Book Critics Circle Award, Women's Prize,
48 and the Newbery and Caldecott medals. The Festival will be
49 celebrating its 25th anniversary in October. To make a tax
50 deductible donation to the festival, go to
51 brattleborolitfest.org/donate-now.

52 Literary Cocktail Hour is free. To register, visit bit.ly/864-
53 [Updike](#).

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