

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALBANY INSTITUTE TO HOST AUTHOR LYNN ESMAY FOR LECTURE AND BOOK SIGNING

Lady of Yaddo: Researching, Writing and Imagining the Life of Katrina Trask
Thursday, October 3 at 6PM

ALBANY, NY- The Albany Institute of History & Art will host local researcher and historian Lynn Esmay for a lecture about her book *Lady of Yaddo: The Gilded Age Memoir of Katrina Trask* on Thursday, October 3, 2013 at 6PM. Esmay will share her insights into the tumultuous personal life of Katrina Trask, the poet and gilded age socialite who founded Yaddo, the famous artist retreat, on her country estate in Saratoga Springs. After the lecture, Esmay will be available to answer questions and sign copies of her book. This lecture and book signing is organized by the Museum Shop at the Albany Institute of History & Art and is free with museum admission. It is also the kick-off event for the Institute's extended Thursday hours when the museum will be open until 8PM on Thursdays (except holidays).

The novel *Lady of Yaddo: The Gilded Age Memoir of Katrina Trask* is historical fiction. It is told in the voice and style of the real Lady of Yaddo, taken from correspondence, scrapbooks and records held in the Yaddo archives of the New York Public Library and from Katrina's own literary works. The memoir lives on a landscape of the social and economic dichotomies of the time: revelry of racetrack and casino and Victorian sobriety; bigotry and greed and progressive reform; factory sweatshops and elite summer colonies; drumbeat of World War I and the peace

of woods and water. The novel was released on May 8, 2013 by French Mountain Press. For more information, please visit the website: <http://www.ladyofyaddo.com/>.

The Secretary of the Interior has just designated Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, NY as a National Historic Landmark, based on its valuable contribution to American culture. Yaddo, gifted as a retreat for artists, has nurtured such cultural icons as John Cheever, Truman Capote, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Henry Roth, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Eudora Welty, Katherine Ann Porter, Bernard Malamud, Alice Walker, and Mario Puzo. Yaddo continues as America's premier artists' retreat and has been the inspiration for 66 Pulitzer prizes, 61 National Book Awards, 40 National Book Critics Circle Awards, a Nobel Prize and notable achievements in film and music.

Lynn Esmay has a degree in English from Sweet Briar College and a master's degree in history from Southern Methodist University. Esmay has taught in private schools in Dallas, Texas, Newport, Rhode Island, and Charleston, South Carolina. After touring Yaddo when the artists were not in residence, she felt a connection to the tragic, but triumphant Katrina story, and embarked on the research and writing. This is a debut novel.

The lecture and book signing will be held at the Albany Institute of History & Art, located at 125 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York. The Institute is now open until 8PM on Thursday evenings (except holidays). It is free with museum admission and no reservations are required. A limited number of copies of *Lady of Yaddo: The Gilded Age Memoir of Katrina Trask* will be available for purchase at the Museum Shop.

The Albany Institute is open Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM, Thursdays until 8PM, and Sunday Noon-5PM. On Tuesdays, the museum is open to registered groups only. The museum is closed on Mondays and some holidays. Admission is FREE for Albany Institute members; \$10/adults; \$8/seniors and students with ID; \$6/children 6-12; FREE/children under 6. For more information, visit www.albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478.

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The Albany Institute's distinguished collections and acclaimed exhibitions comprise the definitive expression of the cultural, historical, and artistic heritage of Albany and the upper Hudson Valley. From its world-renowned Hudson River School collection, to the famous Albany Mummies, to the wide range of lectures, outstanding educational and family programming, and special events, this distinctive and engaging institution provides visitors of all ages and interests with a splendid museum experience. One of America's oldest museums, the Albany Institute of History & Art was founded in 1791, during the presidency of George Washington, making it older than the Louvre, the Smithsonian, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

For more information, please visit www.albanyinstitute.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute).

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