

20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF FPA SCHOLARSHIP FUND AWARDS

by Jan Latus

No need to get desperate, Journalism is not dead yet. As evidenced at the recent FPA Scholarship Awards Dinner, our award recipients are talented, well educated, multilingual and optimistic about their professional future. "I want to do this for the rest of my life" – stated simply this year's first prize winner, Kim Wall from Sweden.

The FPA Scholarship Awards were presented on May 9 at the 20th Annual Awards Reception. It also happened to be the 95th Anniversary of the FPA so a big celebration was in order. The reception and dinner took place at the elegant Roosevelt Hotel. Among nearly 200 guests were diplomats, representatives of the companies sponsoring the Scholarship Program, journalists, members of FPA and their friends.

The guests were welcomed by the Director of the FPA Suzanne Adams. She introduced some distinguished attendees, such as the Ambassador of Japan to the United Nations, Mr. Kazu-

yoshi Umemoto. She also explained the process of choosing the candidates for scholarships and expressed her gratitude to our contributors who keep the Scholarship Program running. "This lends credence to the longevity and relevance of our organization" - she said. She also thanked the members of the Scholarship Awards Committee for their tireless efforts in selecting the five winners of the 2013 Awards: Bill Blase, Roberto Socas and Laura Thompson

"Kudos for Suzanne Adams" – said Roberto Socas, President of the FPA Scholarship Fund, who thanked her for her relentless work. President of the FPA, Alan Capper, shared his sentiments. "Suzanne,



Photos by John Rizzo

and each of them said a few words.

The Foreign Press Association 2013 First Prize Scholarship Winner was Kim Wall from Sweden, a student at Columbia University School of Journalism. Two students from New York University were selected to receive Second Prizes, Anders Melin from Sweden and Jamie Lee from Singapore. Two students were selected to receive Third Prizes. They were Joanna Marguerite-Giecewicz, with dual citizenship from France and Poland who is a student at the University of Maryland, and Silvia Higuera who is from Colombia and a student at the University of Texas. [Please read bios of the laureates in our previous FPA newsletter.]

This years winners where congratulated by another distinguished guest, Sreenath Srinivasan, a former Dean of Student Affairs at The Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism,

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you are one hell of a woman! Thank you and bless you" – said Mr. Capper. After dinner and a few rounds of toasts, the winners were presented the awards

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and now its first Chief Digital Officer. Sree, as he is popularly called, introduced our Keynote Speaker, Raju Narisetti.

Raju Narisetti is a Senior Vice President and Deputy Head of Strategy for the new News Corp. He has run papers in three continents - The Wall Street Journal Europe, Mint in India and as Managing Editor of both The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal Digital in the United States. He managed teams that won three Pulitzer Prizes at the Washington Post.

In his speech he recalled how he - a newcomer with very limited resources and no contacts- got lucky 23 years ago by being accepted to Indiana University. He had an encouraging message for foreign students of journalism:

“Whether it is your accent, skin color, difficult to pronounce name (...) there is always hope, always an editor and a newsroom willing to take a chance on you and organizations such as the FPA to lend a hand.”

In his analysis of current problems of journalism, Narisetti countered prevalent pessimistic opinions about the future of newspapers. *Print*, he said, *isn't*

going away because newspapers still remain the least expensive ways for advertisers to reach their audiences. High quality and relevant journalism will be always appreciated but media needs to create great experiences for the user, e.g. adding video footage and integrating content with the way it's presented.

Our guests left The Roosevelt Hotel well fed and in a good mood, uplifted by Narisetti's educated optimism. It is even more uplifting and hopeful to consider there are fantastically talented young people who still want to be journalists.

WHICH WAY IS THE FRONT LINE FROM HERE?

by Claus Mueller

On April 16, with support from HBO's documentary division, a screening was arranged for FPA members and friends. Held at HBO's theater, the documentary **WHICH WAY IS THE FRONT LINE FROM HERE? THE LIFE AND TIME OF TIM HETHERINGTON** was presented followed by a Q&A session. This was the third screening program the FPA has held with support from HBO which previously included *WARTORN 1861-2010* and *THE SOUND OF MUMBAI*.

WHICH WAY IS THE FRONT LINE FROM HERE? is a superbly constructed portrait of Tim Hetherington, a British born photo journalist who covered major armed conflicts and civil wars. The film was directed and produced by Sebastian Junger and James

Brabazon, two award winning writers and film makers, and was funded by HBO with Sheila Nevins as the executive producer. Sebastian Junger and Tim Hetherington directed the 2010 Afghanistan war documentary *RESTREPO*, thus Junger had access to footage depicting Hetherington in that country and others like Liberia. As the fast moving film shows, Hetherington was not so much interested in obvious manifestations of war such as overt violence and bloodshed. He was more attracted to recording the human face of war, the motivations of soldiers drawn into it, the theatre of war's appeal to child soldiers, and the havoc conflicts created for civilian populations. Driven by the desire to understand the human level of conflicts Hetherington spent most of his time in the war zones of Liberia and Afghanistan and joined war correspondents in

Libya where he was killed in 2011. As the images from *RESTREPO* and *LIBERIA: AN UNCIVIL WAR* in this documentary show, and the Q & A session after the screening confirmed, it is the interaction between the young soldiers, their bonding and what they mean for each other which intrigued Hetherington, rather than their role of warriors. In battle their primary motivation is to protect and save their fellow soldiers and not the hate of the enemy. Death is a steady companion, but what affects them most is the death of a buddy as Sebastian Junger learned when his close friend Hetherington was killed in Libya.

Ed. Note. Special thanks to Claus Mueller for arranging this remarkable presentation

A NOTE FROM JAMIE LEE OF SINGAPORE

All scholarships are special, but this one is particularly so because it's meant to honor foreign journalists. And as a reporter from out of the United States, it is an incredible encouragement to be acknowledged for one's good work by such a well-

respected association, The Foreign Press Association. The support from Suzanne Adams, Director of the FPA has also been immense. This scholarship award will help ease the financial load of studying and living in New York. That cer-

tainly helps to keep the inspiration alive. My sincere thanks to the Foreign Press Association Scholarship Fund for the award.

HUDSON YARDS... ON THE GROUND UP IN THE AIR

by Hadar Harel

The “Dancing Towers” as they are fondly called by the architects are on their way to change the NYC midtown skyline.

The majestic project is being built in midtown Manhattan on a huge lot between the Westside Highway and 10th Avenue on the East, and between 30th Street on the South and 33rd street on the North.

Dancing towers? The Four towers have a variety of angles and shapes “Depending on one’s location around town, the towers will look a little different. It will almost function as a compass” said Michael Sanuelian, representing “Related Companies” the privately owned real estate company developing the new center of commerce, culture and community at Hudson Yards, together with the Oxford Properties Group. Of the two towers (the East and West ones) that Michael was talking about at the meeting with the FPA members, which took place at the Center for Architecture in NYC, he emphasized that the East Tower will be 80% commercial, mainly headquarters for International retail companies and 20% residential expected to be completed in 2015, while the West Tower will be 80% residential and 20% commercial, expected to be completed in 2017. “With a unique mix of uses – private, commerce, theater, dining and new transportation access we anticipate the location will soon become a major destination for locals and visitors”.

COACH has bought the largest space, 740,000 sq ft of the South tower. Because they bought it in the planning stages, they had the opportunity to customize their space – 15 floors of atrium allowing a sense of community to their employees”. Other companies are L’oreal and the German company SAP. “In May 2008, when we signed the contract, while everybody else locally was pessimistic, the International companies showed support in our vision”.

The developers didn’t count on one retail flag store (such as Macy’s) and instead decided to have a sophisticated food court as an anchor. “We are also looking at adding a movie theater complex on the 4th and 5th floors with the thought of keeping the place vibrant after business hours” said Michael.

A ‘hot question’ concerned apartment prices. “We will have studios and probably 3 and maybe even 4 bedroom apartments. We want a mix, singles as well as families; we will have some affordable housing too, as it was part of the agreement with the city”. OK... but how much? We never got a straight answer to this one during the meeting.

In case you are wondering, the project is being built on top of the rail yard leading to and from the Penn Station.. It was, is and will be fully active under the whole project! “While putting the foundation to the towers, we had a very limited space to do so, between the rails” Michel states.

While the rails are below, at ground

level the planers had to integrate the famous “High Line” that already has become a *must see* in NYC “a third of the High Line is within our project. One of its parts, on the South East corner is literally under the South tower and will connect to the culture shed. The shed that will be owned by the city and run by a nonprofit organization is being planned to hold visual, and performing arts events as well as exhibitions. The shed is part of the public space “in order to get the needed permits and approve variances, the developers had to commit to dedicate no less the half the space as a public space”. This translates into 6.5 acres of open space, 1 acre of lush gardens, 240 trees and even monumental fountains.

Another great public space, this time up in the air located in the North tower, is a complex of an observation deck, bar, restaurant and even an event hall “like a cathedral in the sky”. At 1,337 ft, the tower will be the forth tallest tower of NYC and its observation deck at 1,100ft, will be a little higher than the one at the Empire State Building. Will the project be built in accordance to Green Building codes? “Yes. From energy efficiency to recycling, the minimum will be LEED Gold”.

So... How will we get there? Besides the obvious Yellow Cabs and 34th Street cross town bus, the big news is the extension of the number 7 train from Times Square all the way to 34th Street between 10th and 11th Ave, directly to the North Tower.

FPA FORUM

One of the main goals of the FPA is to help you build and maintain a good network and be informed about media related events that are relevant to our members.

With this goal in mind, we formed the FPA FORUM, an online forum where members are

invited to post media related information such as press releases and invitations.

If you are not already part of the forum, we would like to invite you to join us.

Once you are part of the forum you are welcome to post anything you think will be of interest to

other members and is media related.

Postings on the forum are NOT endorsed by the FPA. This is only a tool to improve communication among all of us.

If you are interested in joining (must be an FPA member), please e-mail Hadar Harel at h_h_v@yahoo.com

WELCOME TO INDONESIA

by *Dina Pinos*

“Welcome to Indonesia, come explore our country of 17,528 islands, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans,” announced Consulate General Ghafur Akbar Dharmaputra.

“Explore Indonesia,” was the theme of the gracious and extravagant event that the Indonesian Consulate organized for the Foreign Press Association and that is exactly what each member got a chance to experience. Situated in a traditional upper east side 1894 built 5-storey townhouse, the minute one entered, one was transformed into a centerfold of Indonesian hospitality. Greeted by smiling faces, including the Consulate’s organizers of the event, Ratih Astary, and Rosanna Suparmono, dressed in traditional batik, the ballroom setting was decorated with traditional Indonesia paintings, sculptures, shadow puppets, looms and Javanese and Balinese gamelans.

The best was yet to come as the evening was celebrated with delicious home-cooked Indonesian food, sweets

and drinks prepared personally by the Consulate General’s wife and culinary staff. The evening concluded with numerous dancers performing traditional dances in multi-colored costumes representing various regions in Indonesia. The evening continued with more food, drinks, photo opportunities and intermingling with dancers and staff. Members continued to explore Indonesia into the wee hours of the night and left with tourist material and gifts from the gracious hosts.

An economist, the Consulate General described Indonesia with its rising economy, focusing on its challenges and opportunities for Americans. Colonized originally by the Dutch for 350 years who originally desired the exotic country’s spices, nowadays, among the desired exports are palm oil, tin, computer chips, gold, copper, coffee, clothing and shoes. The 4th most populous country with its 240 million citizens, it is the world’s 3rd largest democracy, the 16th largest economy, and the largest moderate Muslim population in the world. It is a willing partner against jihadist networks. Con-

nected to the modern world, it ranks #3 with Facebook users.

According to Standard & Poor, investment in Indonesia is very high. The IMF projects Indonesia as having the fastest nominal economic growth. Indonesia is part of G20, APEC, and East Asia Summit. Indonesia is the 2nd highest growing economy in Asia, after China and India. Asia will be divided into 3 economic powers -- Greater China, Greater India, Greater Indonesia. Between 2003-2010, Indonesia’s middle class has grown by 55 million and it is this middle class that will determine the shifting of demand, market and resources. Investments in Indonesia are dominated by Singapore, Japan, South Korea, followed by the USA at 5.1% of the pie, at \$1.2billion.

The Indonesian Consulate has a great community outreach, supporting its students studying in the US and promoting its culture. – Free classes in Bahasa Indonesia are taught. Martial art classes in Pencak Silat, traditional theatre and dance are also available upon inquiry.

AN EVENING WITH BLUE MAN GROUP

by *Anna Steegmann*

On May 14, members of the Foreign Press Association were invited to a delightful reception at Indochine, followed by a performance of Blue Man Group at Astor Place Theatre, where the show has been running in various incarnations since 1991.

Mark McKenzie, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton started in 1987 with appearances at the Performing Garage and PS 122. Their breakthrough came when La Mama Theater commissioned a full-length show and the New York Times reviewed it favorably. Awards followed, as did performances all over

the world, audio recordings, feature films, and TV appearances. In the words of their PR department, Blue Man Group transitioned “from cult figures to international icons.”

Now in its third decade, one of the longest running shows off-Broadway, some content has changed but much has stayed the same. Then as now, three actors portray the Blue Men, creatures in bald caps and blue makeup. The themes are still information overload, innocence and alienation. Then as now, the show combines percussion, comedy, and multimedia. What felt experimental and avant-garde in 1991, feels a lot more mainstream in 2013. Blue Man Group has be-

come a franchise with shows produced for Las Vegas’ Casinos and Norwegian Cruise ships.

Judging from the enthusiastic response of the audience, the wacky party atmosphere in the theater, Blue Man Group is pure fun for all ages. Audience participation is mandatory. Edith Finell, a member of FPA was plucked from her seat and dragged on stage during the performance we attended. She showed her talent for comedic acting when the Blue Men treated her to an elegant dinner of Twinkies. An unforgettable meal for her, an unforgettable evening for us.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

by Suzanne Adams

I would like to offer my appreciation to our members **Bill Blase, Roberto Socas and Laura Thompson** who served as judges to ensure the success of the FPA Scholarship Fund Awards. We have noticed that each year brings more submissions from students than previous years.

The major requirement in the application process was for each student to submit an OP-ED article of 750 words in which they were asked to discuss the following topic:

The debt crisis in the European Union has been one of the most important stories of the past year and news organizations have devoted major resources to the daily reporting of developments. For the purpose of this essay, assume that you are a journalist working for a news organization that is determined to do an in-depth article about some aspect of the crisis that has not been adequately covered. Your editor has offered to assign you to spend several weeks on the story with ample resources to travel wherever the story lead you.

Write a proposal that explains the

story you want to cover. Your proposal should offer a fresh angle and delve into the area for the benefit of the public's understanding of the debt crisis and its fallout. Your proposal must have a clear angle that defines your story and important and interesting questions that need answers. Discuss why your story needs to be told.

For the many hours they spent reading, re-reading and evaluating submissions from students at graduate schools of journalism in the United States, again, I offer my sincere thanks to the Scholarship Fund Awards Committee.

SINCERE THANKS

The overwhelming success of the FPA Scholarship Fund is due entirely to the support of our corporate contributors. We are extremely grateful for your continued dedication to this outstanding program.

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CHRONICLE

by Suzanne Adams

Heartfelt condolences to our esteemed editor, **Agnes Niemetz** on the sudden passing of her beloved Mother in Hungary. Agi was so devoted to her Mom and talked about her with so much love that I feel as though I knew her. How fortunate to have had a daughter like Agi. All of our love is with you.

It is with profound sorrow that I announce the tragic passing of our esteemed member **Boris Kiderman**. His presence will be sorely missed.

Our talented member, **Michele Kidwell**, was appointed a "writer in residence" in the Wertheim Study of The New York Public Library. It is one of three Scholar's rooms and was founded by Barbara Tuchman in honor of her Father. Barbara Tuchman is the renowned author who wrote "*The Guns of August*". Congratulations Michele. We are so proud of you.

Joan Ramirez has just had her short story published, *The Last Hurrah of General Jackson*. Good for you.

Our really good friend and colleague, **Sree Sreenivasan**, has been named the first chief digital officer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Sree spent several years on the faculty at Columbia School of Journalism and was responsible for mentoring the foreign students.

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