TOMPKINSVILLE PARK, STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK CITY

April 24th, 2010

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE BOOK

St. George Day

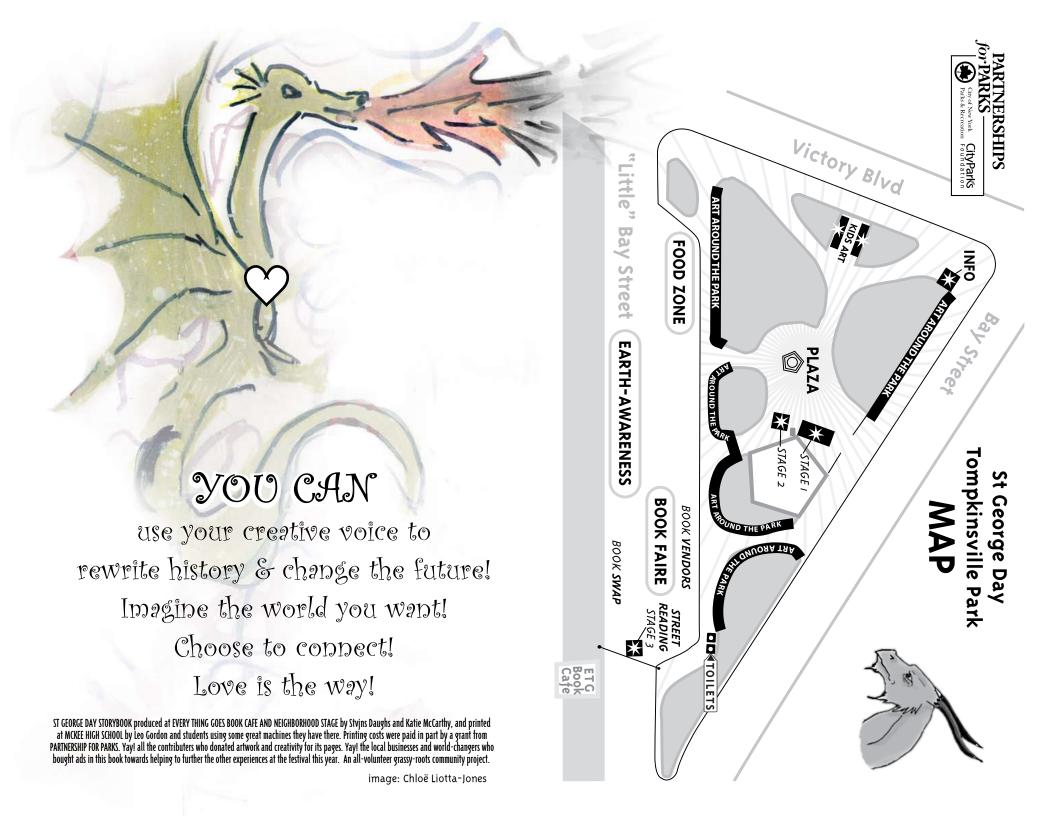
AN ART & LITERARY HAPPENING
TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY



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SICRYBOK

CAN YOU IMAGINE?



ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

by Gordon Reggae III

renowned far and wide in the time of our ancestors' ancestors. There was a great spring here, a watering hole for all the creatures of the region to drink - the townspeople and their dogs, the deer and the muskrats, the squirrels and the chipmunks, and especially the Dragon of Staten Island.

Yes, there was a Dragon who lived in the hidden caves of Staten Island. She was beautiful and proud and kind and brilliant, and forever thirsty. And once a year, when the

winter snows had thawed, she came to relieve her parched throat at the Tompkinsville watering hole. She drank in peace among the villagers and their dogs, the deer and the chipmunks and all the other creatures.

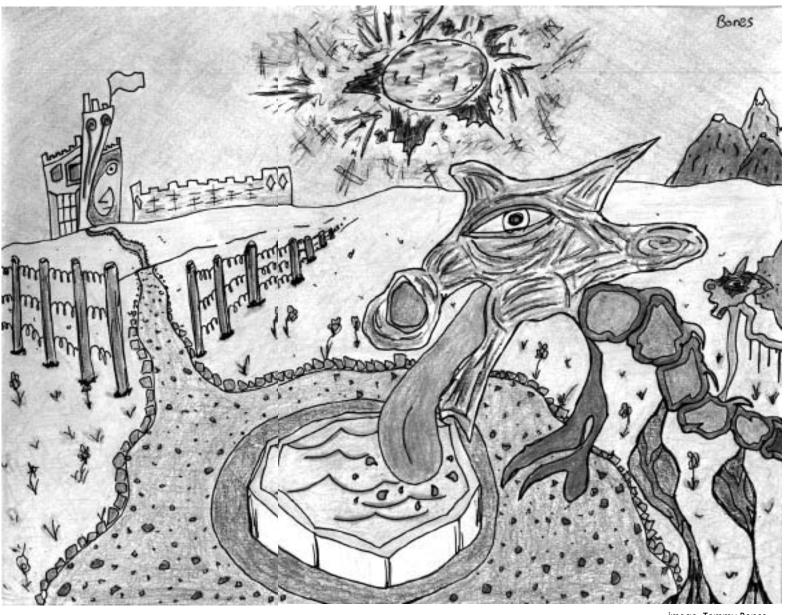


image: Tommy Bones

But the hearts and minds of people can be fickle. As more and more villagers settled here, they needed more and more water for their gardens, lawns, dish washing, and baths. They grew afraid of this great fiery creature with her gigantic thirst. One fateful Spring, as the Dragon flew low over the beaches toward

the watering hole, she found her way blocked by the villagers. The villagers surrounded her, throwing sticks and stones. "Go away monster! Kill it!" they shouted as they descended upon her. Only when the Dragon blasted a few short fiery snorts did the villagers retreat, leaving her to drink her fill. And so it went from that Spring onward, Spring after Spring after Spring.

But the hearts and minds of people can also be wise and brave and compassionate. Fortunately for our story there lived far and deep in the garden of Tompkinsville one of those wise and brave old folks who can make a fairy tale like this come out right. That human's name was George.

One bright day in early Spring, George made a rare visit to town.

George entered the square, approached the villagers there and asked them what the problem was. "Every Spring, this big mean Monster comes to attack us, burning our houses and taking our water! Can you help us destroy it?" pleaded the villagers. "I'll see what I can do!" George replied.

With a brave heart George made the way to the caves of Staten Island. George called out to the Dragon once, then again. Suddenly there she was, huge and brilliant in the sunlight. George cleared his throat. The Dragon looked down and eyed George warily.





image: Brendan Coyle

"I have been coming to drink at the watering hole for hundreds of years," bellowed the Dragon. "We dragons can get VERY VERY thirsty. But when I come to drink, the villagers attack me! They only let me drink when I shoot a few fiery blasts to show them how burning hot my throat is. These people are crazy!"

George returned to the village and explained: "Every Spring the Dragon needs a dragon-sized drink of water. You must let this Dragon drink from the watering hole as she pleases."

"But," replied a villager, "we need the water for our dishes and clothes, gardens and lawns. If that dragon takes our water, we won't have enough!" George replied, "There is enough for everyone if you use only what you need, and share the rest." The villagers' eyes brightened. "Yes," they sang, "We think we could do that!

The people of Tompkinsville park called to the Dragon to join them at the watering hole. The dogs yelped happily. The chipmunks smiled their chipmunk smiles. "Please, Dragon, drink!" invited the villagers. "Drink your fill to cool your fiery throat."



SOME
SUGGESTIONS
TO ALL OF US:

Meet your neighbors...
Appreciate our diversity...
Say hello to a new face...
Smile at people...
Pick up litter...

Take a walk...

Plant a tree...

Slow down...

Shop locally...

Give a hug!



image: Phoebe Blue

And so they became friends again, the people of the Tompkinsville and the Dragon from the caves of Staten Island. And long after the Dragon and George and the villagers had passed away from this world as time does flow, the people told the Story to remind themselves of how they did not need to be afraid. But time flows forever spiraling, and so even the story passed away, until there came another Fateful Spring... and now WE remember it and tell it once more and again.

And so... every Spring, to the delight of our friends and our families and even the touring tourists from the gardens of Manhattan and Brooklyn and beyond, we speak of these things with pictures and words, because our heart and minds are fearful, but also brave.

FIVE HAIKUS by Gordon Reggae III

"Not slay," said George. "Play." He had had a change of heart. But had the dragon?

George felt his own breath,
Searing and sharp like fire.
Still he held his ground.

The dragon snorted twice,

Scorching a lilac bush.

He cocked his huge head.

Two fire breathers,

More the same than different,

Meet at the crossroads...

The rest is legend.

Frequent dips in the cool lake
and beach volleyball.



SIX HAIKUS by David Kunin

Mountain on water: darkness. Dragon emerges. St. George stands: sworn to

defend, attack. Face to face. Fangs bared. Sword drawn. Blood will flow. But a bird

> nearby sings. Beauty stops time. Frozen fear can melt. Bouquets of purple

crocuses, not seen
before, stand proud between them.
Earth rises above

the mountain: spring comes, and a new moon sings of the new: sword and fang can

build future. Man! Dragon!

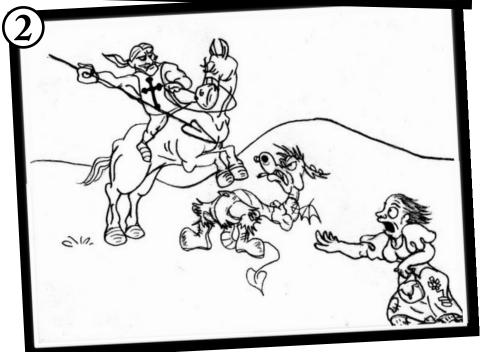
Here! Now! A chipmunk drops her
food, approaches, sniffs.



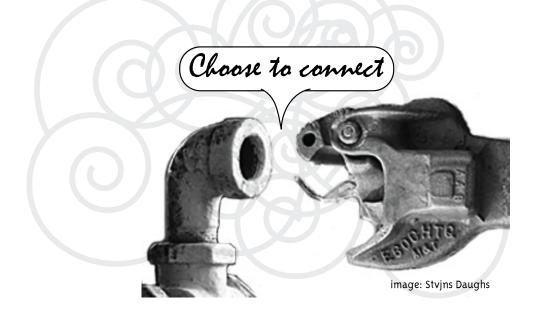
image: Colin Spink, Jim Full & Stvjns

$\textbf{ST GEORGE CARTOON} \ \ \text{by Mariel Avedon}$









SIR GEORGE & THE DRAGON a song by Gary Moore

Sir George showed up in town, his armor shiny and bright "I've come here to slay a dragon," he said. "It's what I do.. I'm a knight!"

The people cheered and crowded around, a hero for to see "Slay our dragon for us and you'll live in history!"

"It's not for fame and fortune that I go to do the deed, it's because it's right that I fight this fight..excuse me, I must leave!"

So he walked on out of the small, quiet town, the peoples cheers behind him. The day was as sharp and as crisp as a sword, if he needed any remindin'.

Meanwhile, the dragon sat in his cave, hearing the sound of the crowd. He wasn't an Einstein, but he wasn't a dumbo, he knew something was about to go down.

"Well, let them throw their best at me," the dragon thought with a sniff. "They've thrown their best at me before, and they were gone plenty swift."

And then the dragon went outside to meet the knight halfway. He saw him coming on over the hill, his hips swaying this and that way.

"This guy'll be easy," thought the dragon. "One big gulp oughta do!" But inside, he was beginning to wonder about what he would have to go through.

And George, when he saw the dragon, did blanche a bit at first, his nerves started in to tingle, his throat developed a thirst...

"I can slay this dragon, I have my sword and shield. I will not rest till he's laid down. I will not run nor yield!"

But inside of him, George thought about this ongoing charade, and much to his surprise, he felt himself become afraid.

The dragon, too, was fearful, so when they finally met he stood high on his back legs and exhaled a long, drawn breath.

"Say listen, you seem like a nice enough chap and, for my part, I would certainly hate to kill you and hate even worse to die. So how about we sit in my cave over a cup of fresh brewed tea and discuss how we can somehow find some way to agree?"

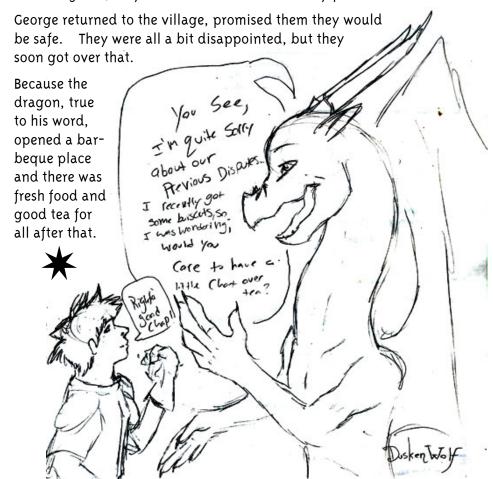
George exhaled his own breath and suddenly felt relieved "Well, Dragon, that idea has merit, I do believe!"

So, they sat and talked over freshly brewed tea Each seeing eye to eye, each agreeing that is was kind of foolish for either of them to die.

"I'll stay away from the villagers, if you build me a place to rest.

I can do all my hunting away from town in the forest."

"And I, for one am sick and tired of the slaying and fouling of air." And so agreed, they shook on it... a most unlikely pair!



ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

by Ira Goldstein

If you looked across the bay from Richmond Terrace in 2006 you would have seen people jumping off the sides of the ferry. It was the only escape from a dragon that boarded without buying a ticket. He sat in the lower deck watching all the people there run screaming back to Manhattan. People on the upper deck did not know what was happening so they just read their papers, lined up at the concession, stared out the window and generally took in the soothing vibration that put most of them to sleep. So it remained until mid way to Staten Island when the Italian shoe shine brothers came up from the lower deck screaming "Dragon" instead of "Shina". Everyone looked at them strangely. Usually they just strolled around staring at shoes, making eye contact now and then when there was a real dirty pair of shoes. This time they looked strange and terribly frightened. "DRAGON" they yelled dropping their precious wooden shoe boxes on the ferry deck. People started getting scared also, not knowing what was happening. Some of them looked over the railing for a Sea Monster of some sort.

"Calm down" the Dragon shouted. "I am just looking for a job, stop getting so excited."

"What kind of job" one of the patrons yelled

"Something in the Arts", the dragon said.

"There's no jobs in the Arts" he answered but when the Dragon stared him down he promised to look.

Several days later Dragon got a call in his new St. George apartment.

in fear.

The voice sounded familiar, maybe the guy from the ferry.

"Your help is needed in Snug Harbor" the voice said.

image: Cheri Brunault

"What kind of help" the Dragon asked.

He was an

"Undercover"

"What"?

"Undercover". You just need to use that fierce look of yours when we tell you. You will be paid well.

He used the look and many people disappeared from Snug Harbor. He never asked why and just collected his check. Most people working there looked scared. He went about his business. He couldn't help noticing that the place was getting weird. Doors to the public were closed, artists were leaving, the museum was getting duller. He didn't like that. artist after all. He noticed people

fighting a lot and he kept getting asked to scare more and more of them. He was in conflict. After talking to the few remaining artists in the once flourishing studio space, he decided he would get one as well.

Doing art with other artists changed him. He no longer scared anyone except once in a while but spent entire days painting. He felt alive even though he noticed the atmosphere was charged and people kept quitting or being fired. Talking with the artists and painting kept him in touch with himself and the meaning of his surroundings. He felt sad as everything deteriorated but kept painting and this kept his balance. Now he drew fire on canvas but didn't use it literally. Eventually, his scary look softened; he started teaching art to children. They loved him. He let them climb his tail and then draw or write about the experience. He loved his life and was happy when around the children's smiling faces or in his studio. Even as Snug Harbor got darker and more distant to the community, he never again responded to requests for scaring anyone. After four years of teaching and showing in galleries he was invited to become CEO of Snug Harbor but he declined immediately since he wanted to remain in touch with his art.

THE DRAGON SONG by Joan Caddell

What's it gonna take to change an old dragon's heart? How you gonna stop him from tearing this town apart? Every single day he's looking for a sacrifice. What you gonna do to change that dragon? How you gonna keep him on the wagon? What's it gonna take to make that dragon nice? What's it gonna take to make that dragon nice?

"Hey St. George put down your sword and just try to relate. You know nothing good can come from matching hate with hate".

"Hey Little Princess you're looking so fine but did you ever stop to say hello? Didn't King Daddy ever teach you that you reap just what you sow? Think about it!"

Well they put their heads together and they came up with a solid plan. And then they asked Mr. D:
"Do you want to start a little band?"

Now every single night he's singing at the ETG. Turns out he was quite the rocker. Sounds a little like Joe Cocker with the Princess strumming and St. George playing the keys.

Only took a little music. Only took a little night music.

Only took a little music to soothe the beast.

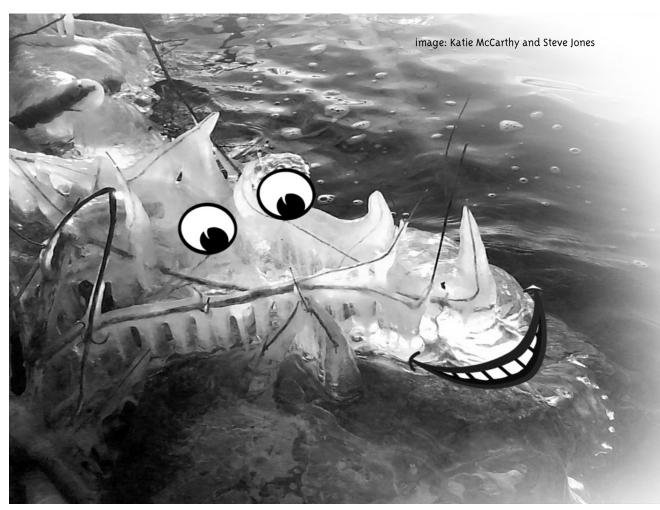




image: Robert Civello

THE DRAGON by Aviva Bezilla

The dragon within, the dragon without. Which one exists, which one persists, sustaining your life...

The fear? The courage? The impression of the dragon out there (in here)?

Dragon, Dragon, come outside. And play! Engage with all the others while I watch you fight and dance.

Oh Dragon, my dragon, will you turn me wilder? I am so scared of the chaos we might create. If I make you docile will you light my fire?
Will I become idle?

Tell me, what is your nature? Are you sexy? Are you violent? How close are sexy and violent in my world? Should I kill you?

Could I kill you?

Am I contemptible for those thoughts? Are they contemptible thoughts?

Oh Dragon, my Dragon, I see your brilliance, your beauty, your magnificence, your temptation, your danger.

Let's try again. This time as comrades with a cause. Wait...

We need to find a cause. Is there something worth burning? Blasphemy (that means there is a true faith)

Corruption (as if there is no corruption in us...)

Wait... maybe that's our work: to cease blasphemy and corruption in us.

Burn Dragon, burn my heart. Are you blushing?

You would rather turn the fire towards others. I know the temptation. I know the excitement.

And still, there is so much to learn, or we might destroy the wrong thing. Lets keep practicing discipline in our heat.

We will play with each other like two Dragonesses of Leisure!

You don't like that. You want to be a pirate. I know that point of view. But pirates cause so much mayhem...

Our fire for each other, is our love. Let's shape the wildness, leaving an edge.

Embrace me.

Ahg those scales... Could we get rid of them?





ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON by Leslie Greenwood

"I'll see you dead", the dragon said,
To Saint George when they met.
Said George, "Then tell me what I've done, For I myself forget."

"You've been sent", said the dragon, "To cut off my head That's a horrible act, indeed Why shouldn't I torch you right here and now? I'm fed up with those of your breed."

"You're right," replied George, "I did mean you harm, But seeing you so distraught, I'm sure we can think of alternatives to This dilemma in which we are caught."

George explained to the dragon
His mission to stop
The creature the villagers feared
And prevent the event that their
Animals, children, and homes might be seriously seared.

The dragon agreed that his fiery breath

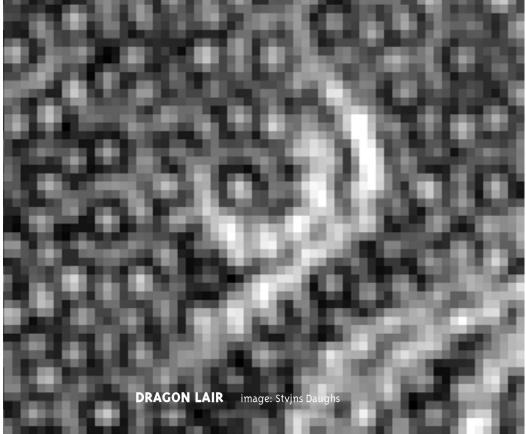
Combined with his temper could make

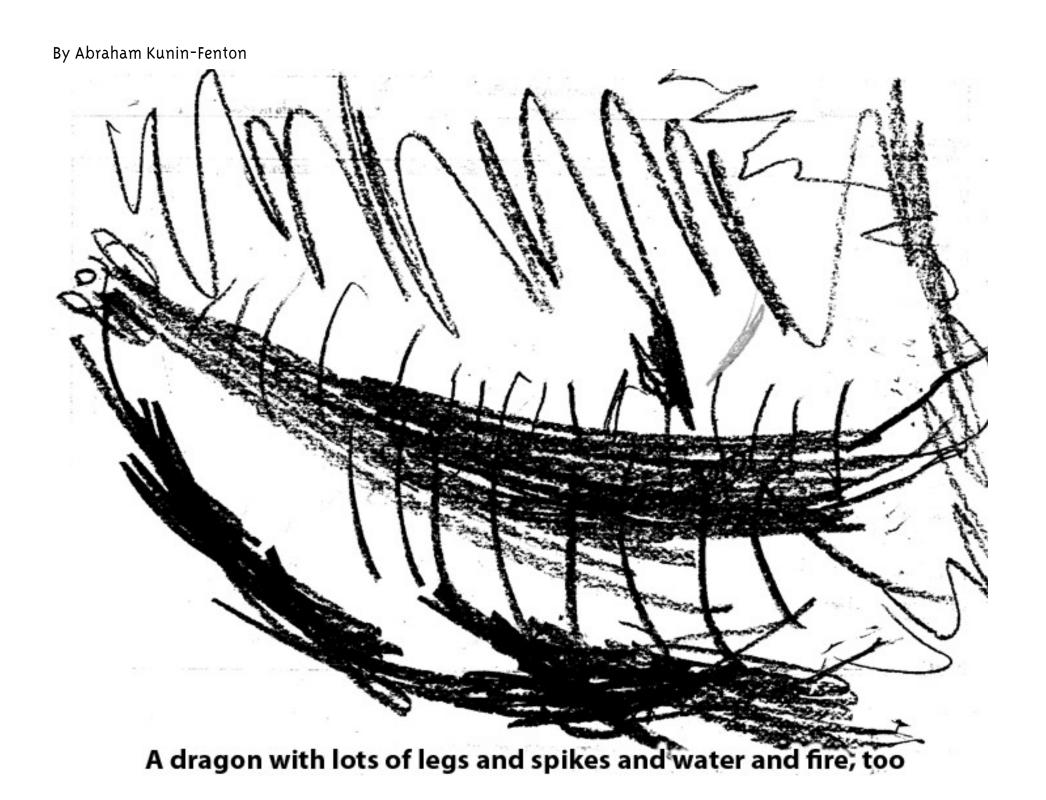
A regrettable scene for his neighbors

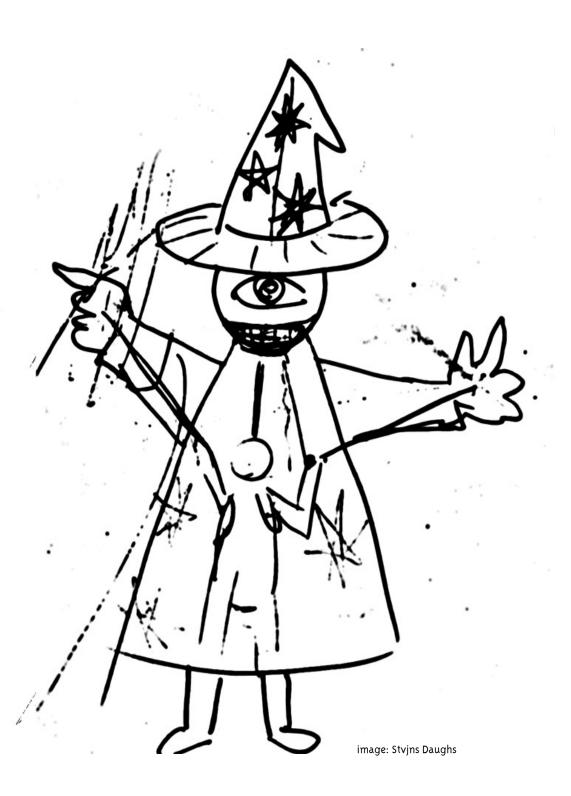
Who seemed to have taken all that they could take

Saint George said, "Aha! Let's transform the concern
That is troubling people the most
We'll break bread every day, think of kind things to say."
Said the dragon, "And I'll make the toast!"









THE FUNNY WIZARD by Stvjns Daughs

She

flung her fingers as
far as her arms would reach
them. Little lights danced away, like
pollen from a flower, pulse and flow, a
life of our own. Each little teeny bit of energy changing the world. But the Wizard didnt
care too much about each little eensy bit. She
just focused her imagination, as she worked,
on the Big Dream. And so it flows that each
little piece of invisible light was charged
by that dream. The fun was noticing,

it works!



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SPRING 2010 CONCERTS & EVENTS!

Fri. 4/30/10 Staten Island Museum

75 Stuyvesant Place, Staten Island

7pm Chat

with MCCE's composer-in-residence Mohammed Fairouz

8pm Concert

Trio by Carl Weber, Poem by Charles Girffes and a commissioned world premiere by Mohammed Fairouz

Tickets: \$15 General; \$12 Museum Members; \$5 for students 22 and under (with ID)

Sun. 6/13/10 **Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art**

338 Lighthouse Ave., Staten Island

3pm Workshop

"Chinese Qigong for the Western Music Experience" 4pm Concert

featuring the commissioned premiere of "Even This is Paradise" by Andrew Sterman

(based on the 8th century text by Tibetan Sage Padmasambhava) Reception with the artists to follow.

Tickets: \$20 General; \$17 Museum Members; \$5 for students 22 and under (with ID)

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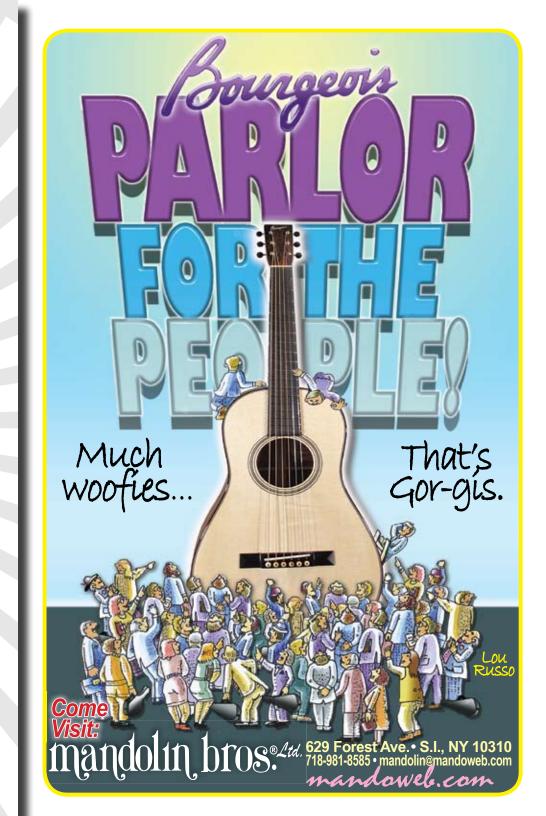
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THE ST. GEORGE COMMUNITY

A WONDERFUL

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