

This Is Still Not A Vacation

The Story of Edward Albee's
Completely Renovated Big White Barn

BY JAKOB HOLDER

What can I tell you that you don't already know?

You may already know we run a residency program with the somewhat windy name of The William Flanagan Memorial Creative Persons Center.

If you do, then you likely know it by its more affectionate (and mercifully shorter) name: The Barn.

We hope you know that it was started by Edward Albee who, seeing a dilapidated building hiding in the trees out in Montauk on Long Island, thought to himself, "this seems like a nice place to stick a bunch of writers and painters and see what happens when we give them run of the place for a month." If not, then put this issue down and pick up the one from fall of 2017. The one called The Albee Issue, dedicated to, and in honor of, Edward Albee, of course. The one in which we wrote an article called "This Is Not A Vacation," about pretty much the same building you're reading about here, only it was crumblier and draftier back

then.

Wait. We assume you know who Edward Albee is (not was, never was, always is.) If not, then put both issues down and don't read any magazine at all until you cover-to-cover devour *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* or *The Zoo Story* or *Three Tall Women* and get learning.

Do we sound silly imagining a Dramatists Guild member not knowing who Edward Albee is? Not having already read those plays (and hopefully the other 27 he wrote?) Well, we've long since learned not to assume anything at all because our assumptions are usually—painfully—wrong.

Ok, we'll wait.

Ok. Assuming you're now caught up to speed, let's see if we can tell you a few things you may not already know.

You may not know that the Edward Albee Foundation has run the William Flanagan Mem—sorry, The Barn—for almost 60 years (!!!) and has never once wavered in its dedication to serving not-yet-overly-successful playwrights (and

poets and novelists and painters and sculptors and other assemblers) who actually need the time and space we offer.

You may not know that we have been closed for more than five years now due to the double-whammy realities of a long-overdue complete rehaul of the entire site having run concurrently with a worldwide pandemic.

You may not know that we have always operated solely in the summer months because our Big White Barn was entirely uninsulated and anyone foolish enough to think they could enjoy the early spring or late fall out there would be set straight by the sight of cirrus clouds composed of their own breaths greeting them each morning.

You may not know that after years of hard work and maddening bureaucratic delays and fears of material shortages and the perseverance of local wood-boring bees and territorial squirrels, our Big White Barn is now totally hospitable in all seasons, which means we

can run pretty much year-round and double the number of residents we can accept annually.

You also may not know this, but our Big White Barn was never a functional barn but was actually a functional horse stable, and while we have no idea who dubbed it "The Barn" in the first place, we do know that "The Barn" somehow eases off the tongue more comfortably than "The Stable," so that's what it's called between people in the know.

You may not know that you can call it "The Shanty" or "Casa Albee" or "The Place I Think I Left My Sunglasses" for all we care, just as long as you take full and proper advantage of it should you get through the careful scrutiny of our adjudicators—all writers and artists themselves, all accomplished in their fields and, usually, folks who have stayed at The Barn at one time or another (i.e., creative people just like you, who swear a solemn oath to take really thoughtful care with your submission.)

It's also really great to tell you that we've fixed the joint up a bit. Actually, a lot. Total overhaul. It's really nice now. Every creative person gets their own en-suite bedroom. Every creative person gets their own private studio. The kitchen and library—both really, really nice—aren't private, but they're spacious and well stocked with books and records and wine glasses and spatulas.

We're very jealous of you.

It's also really really great to tell you that our Big White Barn is now ADA-compliant.

What else...

Anyone can apply. Yes, that means you.

Anyone can get in, so long

as they are talented and can demonstrate that the time and space could truly serve them well. Sure, that's not a guarantee you'll get in. But someone will. And it could be you. All you have to do is apply with your talent-rich play and your best "I can't stand my roommates" sob story. And it's super easy because:

It's free. Completely. Totally. No application fees. No rental fees. No hidden fees. All it takes is the time to apply. And wait. And hope. And refrain from the desire to call us and email us repeatedly asking for an update. And refrain from the desire to yell at us if

you didn't get in your first time around.

What else? Oh, yeah. We will be breaking up our submission windows into twice-yearly periods. The last one closed back on Halloween, so unfortunately you're reading this a little late. Unless you already applied back in October and are just reading this anyway because you already read the other articles and have nothing else to procrastinate with while trying to sort out that Act V problem you've been dreading. If so, good luck! Well, actually I think this comes out in December, so you probably already got your answer. If so,

congratulations and see you soon! (Some of you.) Or... please definitely try again! (The rest of you.)

The next submission window will open on February 1. So get that next (shorter) draft ready (and be kind to your roommates for the time being.)

Oh, our website. That could be useful. Here you go: www.albeefoundation.org

That pretty much covers everything.

Oh, you probably don't know who William Flanagan is. That's okay. You're forgiven.

You know who Edward Albee is, though, right?

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