



Winter 2011 E-Newsletter Volume XII No. 1

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**Peter Sellars**

**To Keynote Springfield**

**DIA Gathering 2011**

**July 27 – 30**

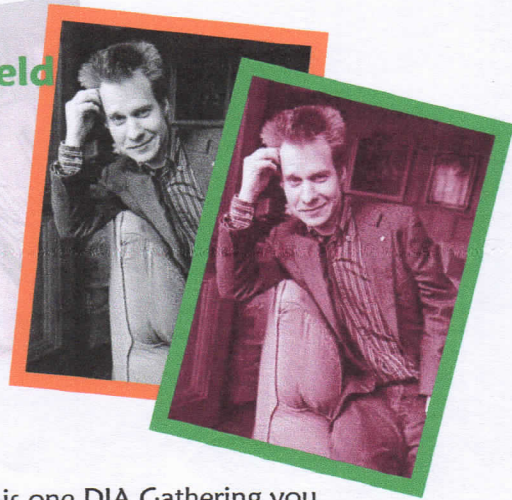
Peter Sellars—with an A? You mean that outrageous, spike-haired enfant terrible of world theatre who never met a classic he couldn't "vandalize"? What's he doing at a peaceful DIA Gathering? Well, if you find that hard to imagine, try a few other "unimaginables." Picture an international celebrity of stage, screen, and opera house who believes in the power of the arts as *preaching*. Imagine him as a college professor who can attract students with Hollywood ambitions to enroll in sold-out courses entitled "Art as Social Action" and "Art as Moral Action." Imagine a man with a Wikipedia entry whose second subtitle is "Controversy" who is eager to meet an assembly of artists who happen to be nuns, priests and associates.

DIA members who regularly devour the pages of the New York Times Arts and Leisure section will be the first to recognize *this* Peter Sellars as the director who stages Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* in a swimming pool and Mozart operas in settings that range from Trump Tower to Cape Cod. Are you beginning to feel that

this is one DIA Gathering you cannot afford to miss?

Once you're satisfied that the Planning Commission really does mean the star of Salzburg and Glyndebourne, your next question will surely be: "How could he be persuaded to come to Springfield?" Well, perhaps Dominic DeLay OP didn't really need to resort to arm twisting when he mentioned to Sellars that DIA artists share his belief that art and faith need each other, that theology needs art to access transcendent mysteries and that they share his passion for social justice.

Widely labeled an "art activist," Sellars' lectures in the Art & Activism series at UCLA provoke "shock and awe" when he takes on issues like the level of world hunger, the viciousness of public discourse, and the





“failure of the arts to humanize the country we’re living in.” Sellars’ own productions find unique ways to address such problems. His 2006 Lincoln Center production of Mozart’s *Zaide* featured a pre-concert discussion about contemporary slavery and the prospect of abolishing it. In each city where he staged a Greek classic focused on the plight of immigrants, his cast included refugees living in that city, and after the performance, he arranged for them to share a meal and conversation with government officials, some of whom had never before spoken to a real live refugee.

Perhaps, this world-renowned artist is hoping to recruit some more “woman power” to advance his favorite causes. In several of his interviews, Sellars has expressed an admiration for the spirituality of women and its importance for social change.



“Women’s spirituality tends to be *in the body*,” he has commented. “You are Mother Mary. You are carrying God’s child. It’s not an idea. It’s your flesh and blood . . . connected to the earth . . . to the miracle of birth. It’s very different. . . . Women are the ones asking the proper questions for theology . . . Who is starving? What are we doing about it all over the world?”

The more we learn about Peter Sellars, the more it begins to feel that the artist who is famous for transforming “the silly into the sublime” just might transform the 2011 DIA Gathering into a pretty scary challenge. The DIA will be sharing both the delight and the challenge of Sellars in two sessions open to the public.

**Make your plans now to attend the DIA Gathering 2011 in Springfield, IL  
July 27 - 30 Registration Packets were emailed and mailed out to you!  
Invite other Dominicans to attend with you!  
Contact Mary Fran Gorman OP 217-299-6471**

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### **DIA Music Premier: An Invitation from Michael Burke OP & the Planning Commission**

Michael Burke, O.P., familiar to DIA regulars for his gentle piano background accompaniment for performers at many annual Gatherings, will step into the foreground in Springfield, Illinois this summer with a new composition for cello, flute, and viola. Michael created the trio during a six-month sabbatical at the Benedictine Abbey in Covington, Louisiana. Based on the Gregorian chant “Ave Maris Stella,” the piece is entitled “Port of Rest.”

Those attending the 2011 Gathering will be the first to hear the new work performed—provided we can assemble the three instrumentalists the score requires. If you are a flutist, cellist, or violist—or can persuade one in the Springfield area to accept Michael’s invitation-- he will send you a copy of the score to rehearse ahead of time. This is a wonderful opportunity for DIA musicians and/or their friends to enhance personal resumes while providing an exciting experience for the DIA.

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