

Monday, September 2, 2013  
Greetings Friends,

September arrives and we move the rich Other Side stew that has been simmering on a backburner all summer to the front of the stove and get back to some serious cooking. And, I must admit to some ambivalence as I taste the broth and find it seasoned equally with excitement and trepidation. When the 2012/2013 season, our most successful ever, wrapped up on the very high note of the *Rag & Bone Shop Poetry Theater* reading of Whitman and Ginsberg to a packed and appreciative house, we were left elated but also relieved at the prospect of a summer break from all the effort required to keep it all happening. So as we put on our aprons again, we need to remind ourselves why we do this crazy cooking

The Other Side (TOS) and its for-profit neighbor, the Café Domenico are both by design deliberate attempts to build or, perhaps more accurately, to *relearn* community. As such, their purpose is a conscious resistance to the mainstream economic forces and mainstream consumer culture that has destroyed community and is now killing the planet. If that all sounds a bit heavy, let me remind you that the revolution we pursue is one that invites you to dance, sing, write poetry, make music, paint, draw, share ideas, have unmediated fun, fun that doesn't depend on sitting in front of some sort of flat-screen electronic device ("not that there's anything wrong with that," but there is plenty wrong if the media cause us to forget the world's need for our unmediated, real presences).

If all goes according to plan the fall schedule at TOS will include the ambitious launching of our new gallery space (9/14), more stellar jazz shows, more stimulating lectures (including, besides our regular *Imagining America* talks, Dr. Eugene Nassar on Robert Frost and John Zogby on his latest book), more poetry readings from the Rag & Bone Shop crew, a poetry chap book publication venture, the Outside/Inside reading group, a new men's film series, and much more, including the Harvest Moon Festival brainchild of board member Paul Kawam (planned for October 19-20), and other surprises I'm sure. If you find yourself at all curious about what keeps The Other Side going, besides the dedicated work of Board members and Kim and myself, you might want to consider checking out one of my favorite Other Side activities, Kim's monthly Sunday morning *Temenos Talks*. These reveal the soulful, mythological underpinnings of all our other work and invite you, over and over again, to take on your own artistic insanity.

Look around town with open mind and eye keen to new life and you will see that there is something happening here. Utica is becoming a very cool place to live, and that is not by coincidence. Utica's new life is a product both of larger economic forces at work that will favor small cities in the near future and of the hard work of many dedicated, creative entrepreneurs and visionaries who see the potential of this place and who understand the importance of commitment and of putting down roots. We hope you will find your own creative way to join us in this work and play this fall at TOS,

Purposefully yours,  
Orin Domenico, TOS Board Chair