

whimsical touch, creating paintings of the houses in her village showing them with hens' legs, according to Gajdoš.

Warhol's art—the museum has two concrete Campbell's soup cans flanking the entrance—was not embraced in eastern Slovakia during his lifetime. His mother sent some of Andy's drawings to her family in the 1970s and '80s, but they threw them out when they moved.

But Medzilaborce residents have warmed to Warhol and his fans in the 16 years since the museum opened. A hotel was built across the street, and a fountain erected around a statue of the artist. The number of visitors has gradually increased, most of them coming from abroad, judging by the signatures in a guest book. Gajdoš says the residents of Medzilaborce have come to recognize the value and importance of the museum “through others.”

ARTS & LETTERS

Waiting for Cecil: A Widow's Tale

THE SOURCE: “The Literary Wife: Working With the Widow” by Peter Stanford, in *The Independent*, May 20, 2007.

SOME BIOGRAPHERS PREFER that their work be grounded in the written record, untouched by the memories and myths of family and intimate friends. Most to be shunned, perhaps, is the devoted wife. “The figure of the literary widow, guarding the great man's work and tending the flame of his reputation, is a



Cecil Day-Lewis attends the theater with his second wife, actress Jill Balcon, in 1957. Balcon served as a source for an authorized biography of the late poet and critic that discussed his infidelity.

familiar one,” notes Peter Stanford, a journalist and the author of numerous books.

But Stanford took the opposite tack. To write his authorized biography of lionized poet Cecil Day-Lewis (1904–72), he relied heavily upon the actress Jill Balcon, Day-Lewis's second wife, with whom he had two children (food writer Tamasin and Academy Award-winning actor Daniel). Balcon had been the first reader of much of Day-Lewis's work and, since his death, has edited several editions of his poetry.

But she also carried old hurts. Day-Lewis had a wandering eye that led him to pursue several extramarital affairs during their

more than 20 years of marriage. And Balcon resented the central role the novelist Rosamond Lehmann still occupies in discussions of the poet. (Lehmann and Day-Lewis were lovers for the decade before he met Balcon.)

Balcon was leery, with reason, of helping Stanford to write a book. Indeed, her late husband wrote a gently satirical poem, “The Widow Interviewed” (1965), about a woman who fetishizes her attachment to “The Poet.” After overcoming reservations, however, Balcon proved a game and valuable source, Stanford says. They hit upon a formula to determine what was off limits for treatment in the book, *C. Day-Lewis: A Life*, published earlier

this year. If it was in Day-Lewis's frequently autobiographical poems, detective novels, or several works of prose—even as subtext—it was fair to discuss.

Stanford has always been in the camp of biographers who believe it's necessary to like their subjects in order to write about them. And he did grow to admire the charismatic Day-Lewis for his idealism, "his refusal to accept easy answers in his struggles between duty and love," and "his consistent commitment to public service." But the biographer's close cooperation with Balcon also led

him to observe the wounds that Day-Lewis's infidelity and sometimes cruel treatment of her had inflicted.

"I felt guilty for putting her through it, but it was necessary and invaluable for the biography for it highlighted the greatest contradiction in Day-Lewis's character," he writes. "One part of him craved domesticity and the exclusive love of a woman who was in many ways his soul mate. Yet another part of him remained forever dissatisfied."

Stanford concludes that his book benefited tremendously

from his collaboration with Balcon, and that she managed to avoid the pitfall to which literary widows can fall prey: forcing biographers to "draw a veil" over their husband's betrayals, sometimes punishing uncooperative writers by refusing them permission to quote a single line of the subject's work. Many biographies have been crippled by such restrictions. "Contrary to the popular stereotype . . . , this book was for her, I came to appreciate, an act of unlocking and sharing a memory that she has held so very close to her for so long."

OTHER NATIONS

India's Creamy Layer

THE SOURCE: "The Effectiveness of Jobs Reservation: Caste, Religion, and Economic Status in India" by Vani K. Borooah, Amaresh Dubey, and Sriya Iyer, in *Development and Change*, May 2007.

NO NATION HAS EMBRACED affirmative action more fervently or for a longer period of time than India. When the British pulled out in 1947, India's new constitution "reserved" jobs for untouchables and other disadvantaged groups that had suffered centuries of oppression. Twenty-three percent of government jobs were set aside for members of "scheduled castes" and "scheduled tribes." Now a controversial new law calls for reserving another 27 percent of public-sector jobs and slots at the nation's top universities for members of "other

backward classes."

The change comes as India is struggling to meet the booming

economy's demand for educated workers. Vani Borooah, Amaresh Dubey, and Sriya Iyer, economists at the University of Ulster, North-Eastern Hill University in India, and St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, argue that since 1947, the reservations policy has resulted in the "scheduled" groups getting only



Medical students in cities across India demonstrated last year against proposals to reserve up to 50 percent of seats in the nation's elite universities for students from the "backward" classes.