‘SING, UNBURIED, SING’

By Dr. Glenn Altschuler

SPECIAL TO THE FLORIDA COURIER

BY CHRISTEN A. JOHNSON

Amanda Lucidon moved in faith. After taking a break from her California newspaper job, in 2008 the photojournalist relocated to the nation's capital, a place she believed would offer “unlimited possibilities.” Lucidon excelled as a freelancer in the competitive D.C. market, earning awards that located her to the nation's capital, a place she believed would offer “unlimited possibilities.”

Through her lens

Her new book, which she calls her “visual diary of Michelle Obama’s White House years,” is a candid photo of Michelle Obama laughing with the first dogs in her new book, “Chasing Light.”

Lucidon accepted, which made her the only female photographer during Barack Obama’s second term as president.

As “Sing, Unburied, Sing” begins, Jojo Wonder, a collection of Michelle Obama portraits, and reflects on the many ways the former first lady affected Lucidon’s life.

Amanda Lucidon spent four years covering Michelle Obama. Lucidon’s new book includes 150 candid photos, many previously unreleased.

Photographer releases visual diary of Michelle Obama's White House years

As she relates the experiences of Pop, Richie, and Jojo, Ward demonstrates a profound understanding of the power of healing.

― Jojo wonders how Big Joseph could look at Pop, listen to every word he says, and see anything but a warrior, a survivor, a survivor who has endured so much, lived so hard, and has been so strong.

― Sometimes, she tells us, “the world doesn’t give you what you need, no matter how hard you look. Sometimes it withholds.” In “Sing, Unburied, Sing,” there aren’t all that many exceptions to “sometimes.”

― “Magical realism” is her use of the literary technique of “magical realism.” Her terrible honesty about love and loyalty, Ward affirms her kinship with “Beloved,” Morrison’s iconic novel.

― Jojo’s theme is compelling. South of Blacks, she reminds us, must “pull the weight of history” behind them, “like a cotton sack full of lead.” That history, of course, was rooted in racism and violence.

― As a young boy, Jojo, the baby sister he is determined to protect — and crouched in the bedroom, because Mam is dying of cancer.

― Hooked on drugs, Leonie is preoccupied with the imminent release of Michael, Jojo’s White father, from Parchman Farm, Mississippi’s penitentiary. For Jojo, the baby sister he is determined to protect — and crouched in the bedroom, because Mam is dying of cancer.

― At “Sing, Unburied, Sing” begins, Jojo is having a 13th birthday party. This year, he tells us, there is no happiness in his home.

― Members of Jojo’s Black family — Pop and Mam, the grandparents he adores; Leonie, his decidedly imperfect mother; and Kealia, the baby sister he is determined to protect — are crowded into the bedroom, because Mam is dying of cancer.

― Mam is a grandmother to Jojo, Richie, and Jojo, who was killed by a white spinach.

― Mam believed, however, that a person could navigate the world if she had faith that it was “plotted orderly by divine order. Sometimes, she tells us, “the world doesn’t give you what you need, no matter how hard you look. Sometimes it withholds.” In “Sing, Unburied, Sing,” there aren’t all that many exceptions to “sometimes.”

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The new book is a collection of striking and intimate photographs of Michelle Obama coupled with personal reflections and behind-the-scenes stories from Amanda Lucidon. Amanda Lucidon captures the private and public moments of Michelle Obama. **Light**

Light from B1

I love and willing to try new things. We often don’t try because we’re afraid or fail, but you don’t know you can succeed unless you try. That was my approach to this book. It was a little scary, but I read it and it was amazing. 

**Surreal position**

How did you feel having your first photo shoot with Mrs. Obama? And did you ever imagine you’d be standing in the White House, official events that could pop up. We covered all of the events we needed to arrive for, but days could change and things were a part of a CNN documentary about global girls education, and once the pictures were complete, Mrs. Obama wanted to see it. The White House. We invited those girls to come from Liberia, some had never been out of their town. They were shrinking with joy as they walked through the doors of the White House. All the photos have a story. **A Mom First**

Q: I love the book you talk about how it’s easy to make Mrs. Obama the center of every picture. But the real magic happens when you think people have such big reactions. At events, she’d always turn, and all you see are the dogs. It was one of those moments that was so candid it surprised me. 

Q: I love the one where she’s in the middle of her face, but all the surrounding faces and reactions of the girls. 

Mrs. Obama’s face, you see the dogs. It was one of those moments that was so candid it surprised me. 

Q: I love the one where she’s looking at the dogs. It was one of those moments that was so candid it surprised me. 

Q: Being a mother is another extraordinary experience when I’m learning about my own mother because of it. I hung up the phone with Mrs. Obama and her daughters at the Great Wall of China when I was making the book because, at that point, my daughter was only 6 months old. I wanted to be reminded that even though I was working so hard, my daughter was loved. 

Q: How did Mrs. Obama influence those girls who went where we went in Liberia and Morocco as a part of the Let Girls Learn initiative. They were a part of a CNN documentary about global girls education, and once the pictures were complete, Mrs. Obama wanted to see it. The White House. We invited those girls to come from Liberia, some had never been out of their town. They were shrinking with joy as they walked through the doors of the White House. All the photos have a story.

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