

Out & About

Recorder Community Newspapers

GUIDE TO THE ARTS AND LEISURE • THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018

TALK OF THE TOWN

'Great Conversations' celebrates 10 years of talk on April 26

By **AMY BARATTA**
OUT & ABOUT EDITOR

Thanks to Morris Arts, the lost art of conversation will make its annual comeback on Thursday, April 26, in Morris-town's Madison Hotel, 1 Convent Road.

Great Conversations, a fundraising event in which guests can speak in-depth with a specific host selected in advance, will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year by honoring its founder, Joen Ferrari.

Ferrari, also one of the original co-chairs, "brought Great Conversations to us 10 years ago after her daughter in Atlanta had heard about a similar event there," said Gina Moran, director of development for Morris Arts.

The event was a success from the get-go, Moran said, and it has only grown in popularity.

"I've heard it described as the best dinner party you've ever attended, but on a grand scale," she said.

"It's really flourished," she noted. "It's become a very well-known event."

This year, the evening will begin with a 6 p.m. reception during which guests can mix and mingle with the 29 conversationalists scheduled to attend.

Dinner will begin at 7:15 p.m. and at that time, the conversationalists will head to their appointed tables, which seat eight to 10 people.

That's when the fun – and table talk – really begin.

"Usually, you go to a gala and there are a lot of different speeches, presentations, a silent auction and a raffle," Moran said. "We don't do any of that. We really focus on the fine art of conversation."

A few minutes at the beginning of the program are spent talking about Morris Arts, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1973 that is dedicated to building community through the arts with a special focus on arts



Mix and mingle with 29 great conversationalists, including, from left, Irene Chang Britt, Retired Col. Jack Jacobs, Christina Baker Kline, and Bill Stephney, at Morris Arts' 10th annual Great Conversations fundraiser on Thursday, April 26.

programming in schools and throughout the area, arts advocacy and support of Morris area artists and arts organizations.

Then the participants are introduced.

"Everyone is really excited to see them," Moran added.

"It's one table, one conversation," she said. "You're not having a side conversation with somebody you work with."

At the time guests purchase their tickets to the event, they are asked to list their top five choices of conversationalists.

"They can choose anyone from a sports star to a climatologist," Moran said. "There's a very wide variety of people."

The event's organizers then put together the seating arrangements.

"We craft these tables very carefully so that (not only do) people get (one of) their top choices but we also have a mix of people at the table," she noted. "Everyone at the ta-

ble is part of the conversation."

This year's host conversationalists include:

Arts, Music and Media: Tom Bergeron, editor and chief content officer, ROI-NJ, a new multimedia business publication and former NJBIZ editor; Joanne Del Rio, art collection manager, Novartis, overseeing the company's extensive art collection in North and South America, and board chair for Save Ellis Island; Leia Gaccione, chef/owner, South + Pine American Eatery in Morristown, former chef de cuisine for celebrity chef Bobby Flay, competitor during three seasons of "Iron Chef America;" Mark Gross, jazz saxophonist, recording artist and educator with two Grammy® award-winning projects who also performed on Broadway and with Dizzy Gillespie and the Duke Ellington Orchestra; fac-

ulty members, Rutgers Mason Gross School of the Arts; Christina Baker Kline, author of the New York Times bestsellers "Orphan Train" and "A Piece of the World;" Carly Murphy, vice president for Global Client Development, contemporary art, Sotheby's; John Servidio, general manager of NJTV and vice president of subsidiary stations for WNET; and Bill Stephney, co-creator and producer for rap group and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame members Public Enemy, former president of Def Jam Records, Broad Market Media principal and New Jersey Performing Arts Center producer and curator

Business: James Kraus, Crum & Forster senior vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary; Jason Levine, Mondel z International regional chief marketing

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THROUGH THE GLASS, FONDLY

Glass artist Jake Pfeifer to leave his native state

By ANNE ABRAMS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Art, like life, is rarely linear. It comes from someplace primal, an instinct that drives its creator, unwilling to abate until the muse is appeased.

When the art is made from molten sand and minerals, heated to its white-hot liquid form and turned, bent, stretched by the hands of the artist and the elements, it can be even more unpredictable, and it's the rare craftsman who chooses to, quite literally, play with fire.

Jake Pfeifer of Peapack-Gladstone is that rare artist, the one who can take molten glass and give it a life of its own. In his hands it becomes a living thing, even as it solidifies, capturing the rippling flow of the jellyfish, the streaming rays of a July sun, the pulsing new green of May.

Looking at his work, one might not be able to tell that Pfeifer, 30, is as much of a rarity as the beauty he creates. The fact that he should be among us at all seemed unlikely when, at age 5 he was diagnosed with stage III malignant rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare childhood cancer that developed into an inoperable tumor behind his left eye, penetrating his brain. Pfeifer's parents were told the news: Their young son had a five percent likelihood of living to see his 8th birthday.

During the following 10 years, Pfeifer was repeatedly hospitalized as his parents opted to have the doctors treat his disease aggressively, in the limited hopes of his survival. All told, he spent 18 months in the hospital, often for weeks at a time, as his young body was assailed by three different types of chemotherapy, and he was administered a lifetime dose of radiation to his head.

During the years when he was so critically ill, Pfeifer was given a Make-A-Wish



After years of creating glass art locally, artist Jake Pfeifer of Peapack-Gladstone is getting ready to leave New Jersey for Columbia, N.C., where he is opening his own "hot shop" studio and gallery called "Hot Glass Alley." A reception for Pfeifer will be held 6 to 9 p.m. Friday April 6, at Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery in Bernardsville, where his art pieces, including those shown below, have been displayed and sold for the past 15 years.

Foundation trip that he took with his family. More than one time, young Jake Pfeifer's parents made funeral arrangements for the son it seemed they would likely lose soon. Before he was 10 years old, the boy had attended many funerals for other children with whom he had become friends while

hospitalized.

Pfeifer says learned "an early understanding of life and death, the true meaning of friendship, commitment and determination," during that time in his life.

Today, Pfeifer has begun to cement his place in the art world as a glass artist, a

craft that, like his seemingly miraculous survival, captures the fluid and makes it solid. He says he fell in love with the art form on a family vacation to Bermuda.

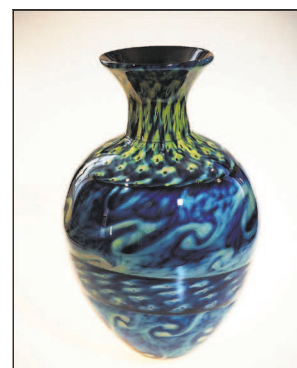
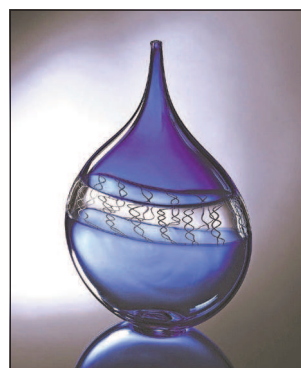
"I was fascinated with the thick, free flowing gather of hot glass, the blowing, molding and the adding of color. I could see the technical challenges, but also the range of possibilities in using glass as an art medium. I was 14. During my four years of high school, I began learning to blow glass and create glass art pieces; I have never looked back. It is my passion," he says.

Pfeifer made it his mission to study the art and learn all of its intricacies. In May 2010, he received a bachelor's degree in fine arts in Glass and Glass Sculpture from the Rochester Institute of Technology, in Rochester, N.Y. He did internships and apprenticeships, served as a teaching assistant, and took part in as many workshops as he could find.

It would seem all of his hard work paid off. After years of intense study with modern masters of this ancient craft, Pfeifer, whose work has been frequently displayed at galleries throughout New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania, as well as in Kentucky and Florida, is getting ready to leave New Jersey for Columbia, N.C., where he is opening his own "hot shop" studio and gallery called "Hot Glass Alley."

A reception for Pfeifer will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 6, at Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery in Bernardsville. Studio 7 gallery owner Kathleen Palmer has represented Pfeifer for 15 years.

"I am very proud of what he has accomplished in the 15 years that I have represented him," said Palmer, adding that the gallery will continue to carry his art pieces. She invites Pfeifer's collectors and fans to the reception "to wish him well on his new adventure."



Bickford Theatre to host dynamic jazz duo on April 5

Celebrating a musical partnership that spans more than 25 years, pianist Jerry Vezza and singer/songwriter Grover Kem-

ble will perform at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at the Bickford Theatre, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township.



Pianist Jerry Vezza, left, and singer/songwriter Grover Kemble will perform at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at the Bickford Theatre inside the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township.

The “Tales and Tunes Together” concert also will feature bassist Rick Crane, saxophonist Anton Denner and drummer Tom Sayek.

Kemble’s entertaining style has captivated audiences not only in the New York-New Jersey region, but also at internationally known places such as the Newport Jazz Festival, The Bottom Line, The Other End, Wolf Trap in Virginia, The Roxy in LA, the Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival, and the Spoleto Arts Festival in Charleston, S.C.

Early in his career, he sang with Sha-Na-Na and then fronted the popular Za Zu Zaz. His partnership with John Pizzarelli led to a lifetime friendship and several recordings, while his collaborations with Vezza have led to sold out shows at Madison’s Shanghai Jazz, one of the highest-rated jazz clubs in the country.

Vezza, who appears regularly at area jazz clubs, is a musician who embodies the classic jazz values of melodic warmth, rhythmic subtlety and true elegance. Jazz critic Zan Stewart wrote that “Vezza sings with his hands” and “plays resplendent jazz pi-

ano.”

Crane is a highly sought-after bassist whose work draws on a gorgeous melodic style. He has worked with many of the top jazz artists including Pizzarelli, Vic Juris, Cyrus Chestnut, Joe Morello, Warren Vache, and Benny Golson.

Saxophonist Denner has played alongside some of the greats including Ray Charles, Rosemary Clooney, Mel Lewis, and Clifford Jordan. As an educator, he has taught at the Stanford Jazz Workshop, Seton Hall University and the Montclair Music Studio.

Sayek, on drums, has worked with Vezza for many years. A graduate of the Berkeley School of Music in Boston, he brings a tasteful, steady rhythm to the mix and can be heard regularly around the state.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door; for Morris Museum members, admission is \$20 both in advance and at the door.

Tickets to the show can be purchased online at www.morrismuseum.org, by phone at (973) 971-3706, or in person at the Bickford Theatre Box Office. Box office hours for phone sales are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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great conversations

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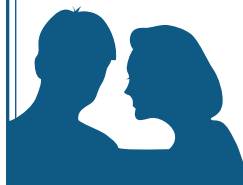
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Promotional Support for Morris Arts provided by
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morrisarts
 building community through the arts



TALK: Morris Arts hosts 10th annual 'Great Conversations'

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officer North America; Ned Linen, Avis Budget Group executive vice president and chief human resources officer; Robin Rotenberg, BASF Corporation vice president, corporate communications and chief communications officer; former president, BASF Canada Entrepreneurs and Tech: Irene Chang Britt, independent board director and strategic advisor with 30 years in consumer packaged goods including president and C-Suite executive at Pepperidge Farm; Michael Engel, PwC intelligent process automation leader for emerging technologies, adviser to the Institute for Robotic Process Automation; Aaron Price, chief executive officer and founder of Propelify, one of the country's largest innovation communities, and NJ Tech Meetup and tech community expert for the White House during the Obama administration, Gov. Phil Murphy, and the Wall Street Journal; Linda Wellbrock, chief executive officer

and founder of Leading Woman Entrepreneurs, a media and events company that recognizes outstanding women business owners and entrepreneurs.

Healthcare and Pharma: Carsten Brunn, Ph.D., Bayer Pharmaceuticals president, Americas region; Nancy Corcoran-Davidoff, Hackensack Meridian Health Network executive vice president and chief experience officer; Alex Kelly, Allergan executive vice president and corporate affairs and chief communications officer; Carrie Eglinton Manner, Quest Diagnostics senior vice president, advanced diagnostics, and chair of the board for Thrive Networks; Suneet Varma, Pfizer Essential Health global president; Joe Wilkins, Atlantic Health System senior vice president and chief transformation officer

Law: Jami McKeon, Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP partner and chair, named among The National

Law Journal's "75 Most Outstanding Women Lawyers"

Military Service: Col. Jack Jacobs (retired), Medal of Honor recipient for service in Vietnam, NBC News military analyst

Real Estate: Leslie E. Smith Jr., Rockefeller Group former executive vice president, developer of the International Trade Center/NJ Foreign Trade Zone in Mt. Olive, principal, Smith & Main

Science and Medicine: Lisa Goddard, Ph.D., Columbia University director and senior research scientist at the International Research Institute for Climate and Society, global expert on El Niño, La Niña and near-term climate change; Dr. Allen Keller, New York University (NYU) School of Medicine associate professor of medicine and director of Center for Health and Human Rights, director of Bellevue/NYU program for survivors of torture



Carrie Eglinton Manner, left, and Leslie E. Smith Jr. are among the 29 conversationalists with whom guests can mix and mingle at Morris Art's Great Conversations fundraiser on Thursday, April 26.

Sports: Bruce Driver, New Jersey Devils defenseman, captain, and Stanley Cup champion, two-time NCAA Division I national champion, Olympian; Brent Qvale, New York Jets offensive lineman No. 79

Select tables are equipped with

hearing loops to assist hearing aid wearers.

Tickets to Great Conversations cost \$250 and can be purchased online at www.morrisarts.org. For more information, contact Morris Arts by calling (973) 285-5115.

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Mayo's Starlight Gallery to showcase young artist's works through April 2

Andrew Weatherly, an emerging young artist with Down's Syndrome, will exhibit a variety of works through Monday, April 2, in the Starlight Gallery at the Mayo Performing Art Center, 100 South St. in Morristown.

Weatherly, who has found his voice through art, is insightful and intuitive and he fuses these heart-felt traits, revealing the ingenious spirit of a very perceptive young man.

His sincerity and passionate realizations are expressed through an array of artistic avenues. He explores life through the blending of paint colors while uniting his thoughts, his heart and his soul with pen, paper and creative flare, or capturing the world through the lens of his camera embark on a unique journey of self-expression.

His resolve has allowed him to overcome many obstacles, while

his insightfulness has remained one of his greatest gifts to all.

He has exhibited and participated in a variety of juried shows, including Heart & Sold, Manchester, London; 22nd International Art Ability Exhibit, Bryn Mawr, Malvern, Pa.; Sandy Bennett Gallery, Bergen Performing Arts Center, Englewood; 21st International Art Ability Exhibit, Bryn Mawr, Malvern, Pa.; and V.S.A. International, Emerging Young Artists, "The Journey", The Kennedy Center at the S. Dillon Ripley Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

For more information about the Closter resident, visit www.andrewweatherly.com.

The Starlight Gallery is open before performances and by appointment.

Call (973) 539-0345, ext.6505 for more details.



Andrew Weatherly, an emerging young artist with Down's Syndrome, will exhibit a variety of his works through Monday, April 2.

History presentation, art show on Farmstead calendar

"Pickets & Persistence, War Service & Women's Suffrage: American Women's Fight to Win the Vote" will be presented by living history enactor Carol Simon Levin at 2p.m., Sunday, March 25, at Farmstead Arts, 450 King George Road in Basking Ridge.

Levin will portray Jeannette Rankin, the first female member of Congress, and tell the intertwined stories of women's suffrage activism, war service and political calculus that brought the support of President Woodrow Wilson, Congress and state legislatures to achieve passage of the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. There is no charge to attend the event.


Also at the Farmstead, the "Women in the Arts" art show and sale will run through Sunday, April 15, in the Farmhouse Galleries.

The event features works by five prominent central New Jersey art-

ists: contemporary/abstract artist Gail Winbury from Westfield, working in multiple media as a painter and collage artist; Liberty Corner resident Linda Arnold, an award-winning watercolor painter; Tracy Mistichelli, of Three Bridges, who works in acrylic and oil on canvas and specializes in still life, animals and landscapes; Basking Ridge painter Tammy DeVoe, creating abstract landscapes; and, reflecting her love for the past and the passage of time, Warren artist Margaret Fanning, who works in oil, ink, and watercolor to recreate images based on vintage and contemporary photographs.

Gallery hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Wednesday.

For more information, visit www.farmsteadartscenter.org, call (908) 636-7576 or email admin@farmsteadarts.org.



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A second discovery voyage up the Columbia River

Editor's note: This is the 22nd in a monthly series detailing the discoveries made during the author's road trip following the trail of Lewis and Clark.

My traveling companion, Marilyn, and I began our second day in Portland, Ore., by walking north from our hotel to find Powell's Book Store, said to be the largest new and used book store in the world.

It fills an entire city block with four floors, an elevator that opens on three sides depending which floor a person wishes to visit, and a coffee shop where one may take as many as five books to peruse while eating. (Sticky fingers? Hmmmm.)

One could easily spend a day here browsing or in a comfy chair with a good book.

I remembered a book from my childhood and checked to see if they carried it and, by gum, they had a copy.

"The Story of Cooky," by Marian Kennedy, was published by Rand McNally in 1944. It's about a little dog who loves cookies — big cookies, little cookies, fat cookies, thin cookies. You get the idea. Only \$9 and no shipping and handling!

We also made one last stop at the Portland Museum of Art to view their outstanding collection of Native American beadwork and basketry.

Included were items of clothing with exquisite beaded designs, as well as moccasins, bags and cradle boards. The baskets varied in shape, size and intricate designs.

It was now time to board the National Geographic's "Sea Lion" and meet our expedition leader and three specialists — a historian, a naturalist and a photographer/videographer. There were only 56 passengers, which made it easy to get to know everyone. The emphasis of the cruise was on nature, history and the rivers.

Some of the places we visited were the same Dick and I had seen on the "American



Jennifer Fischer

ROAD TRIP OF DISCOVERY

The writer has been traveling and writing about her adventures on the road for many years. Formerly a resident of Chatham, she and her husband Richard now live in Basking Ridge. She may be reached at: jwfischer.nj@gmail.com.



Empress" the week before, but there were many new discoveries.

One was the charming town of Hood River, located in the Columbia River Gorge where the Hood River flows from the south into the Columbia River.

We spent a little time wandering around town and exploring lovely small art galleries and shops.

When we awoke the next morning, Marilyn said, "Did you see what's out the window?"

Glorious, majestic snow-capped Mt. Hood! Only a half hour later it was hidden by clouds and we didn't see it again.

On April 2, 1806, William Clark mentioned in his journal that he could see Mt. Hood, covered with snow as the Corps of Discovery reached the mouth of the Willamette River. Here I was seeing exactly what Lewis and Clark had seen more than 200 years ago.

A bus transported us to Rasmussen's Fruit Farm, where we have never seen apples and peaches so huge. The ship's cook loaded up on fruits and vegetables for the coming days.

And the corn maze there was twice my height. Luckily, the exit choices were minimal, or we'd still be trying to find our way out of the "maize maze."

Next, we journeyed upriver to the town of The Dalles, where we had several choices of activities.

Marilyn chose to take a six-mile bike ride along the Columbia riverfront. I chose the "history" tour, which included a stop at "Camp Rock Fort," where historians be-



Above: A barge and tow are among the water traffic on the Columbia River near The Dalles. **Below:** A breathtaking view of Mount Hood is not to be taken for granted, as clouds can quickly descend and obscure the landscape.

lieve Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery spent a short time on both the outward bound and homeward bound journeys.

Clark wrote, in October 1805, "as it was necessary to make Some Selestial (sic) observations we formed our camp on the top of a high point of rocks, which forms a kind of fortification in the Point between the river & creek, with a boat guard," according to the DeVoto edition of the Lewis and Clark Journals, page 267.

They repaired their canoes and met with people from the Chinookan villages and gave the chiefs peace medals. A riverfront trail leads to the campsite with interpretive signs.

As Lewis and Clark traveled among the natives, they often administered medicines to them in return for food and other necessities. In mid-April of 1806, on their way back up the Columbia against the current, they realized that if they could trade for horses it would be easier to transport some of their belongings.

In his journal entry of April 18, 1806, Clark described treating one of the chiefs and giving his children some trinkets. Then he treated the wife for back pains, utilizing "camphere" and applying warm compresses. She soon felt much better and Clark used the opportunity to trade for two much-needed horses.

After viewing Rock Fort, we were bused to Sorosses Park, where we had a panoramic view of The Dalles and could see the



twisting and turning of the river below.

In the distance, cherry orchards lent some green to the brown hillsides. Cherry production is a big industry there and all the cherries are handpicked by migrant workers from June into September.

Next stop on the Road Trip of Discovery: More adventures and sights on the Columbia and Snake rivers, including a full-size concrete replica of Stonehenge.



The Portland Museum of Art features several items decorated with intricate Native American beadwork.

• MUSIC CALENDAR •

CLASSICAL GUITAR

Gladius, a classical/flamenco guitarist, will perform from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday, April 2, in the sanctuary at the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church, 1 E. Oak St. in Basking Ridge. The free event is open to all, subject to room capacity, and is part of the Bernards Township Library's Monday Afternoon Concert series. Other musical acts that will be featured in the series include the Guthrie Brothers on Monday, April 9; Ivory and Gold, on Monday, April 16, and Deb Shebish and Gabriel Donahue playing traditional Irish music on Monday, April 23. No registration is required. For more information, visit www.BernardsLibrary.org or call (908) 204-3031, Ext. 116.

CELTIC

Lunasa, an Irish acoustic group, will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 24, in the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University, 715 Grand Ave. Hackettstown. The quintet plays a diverse selection of music, including their own compositions and melodies from Celtic regions including Brittany, Galicia, Asturias and Scotland. The music is made on a mix of traditional instruments, such as the pipes, fiddle and flute, and supported rhythmically and harmonically by a bass and guitar to give it a modern twist. At 7:15 p.m., performers from An Clar School of Irish Dance in Byram will provide pre-show entertainment in the lobby of the performing arts center. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 on the day of the performance. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystageco.org or call the Centenary Stage Company box office at (908) 979-0900. The box office is open from 1 to 5

p.m. Monday through Friday and two hours before each performance.

Doolin', France's premiere Celtic band, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 20, on the Minstrel Stage at Morristown Unitarian Fellowship Church, 21 Normandy Heights Road in Morristown. The band, whose name is derived from the little village of musical fame in southwest Ireland, was created in 2005 from an encounter between six accomplished musicians, all natives of Toulouse. The result was a group that embraced a mixture of novel musical genres. While some of the band were immersed in the world of traditional Irish music, and others were active in the jazz scene or in the pop rock wave of the 1980s and '90s, they found a common love in traditional Irish music. From ballads to furiously fast jigs, from their own compositions to traditional tunes, Doolin' offers a rich palette of sound that combines instrumentals, vocals and original compositions. Band members worked with legendary Irish guitarist John Doyle to achieve a sound uniquely their own – deeply rooted in traditional Celtic music but wonderfully flavored with French chanson, American roots music and even hip hop straight from the streets of Paris. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$20 at www.FolkProject.org or at the door for \$25. For more information, call (908) 591-6491 or email concerts@FolkProject.org.

CLASSICAL

"**Music Made Here**," the second of a four-concert series sponsored by the Center for Musical Excellence (CME) and the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon, will be presented at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 8, in the church sanctuary, 2 Lee's Hill Road in New

Vernon. Tickets are \$30 for adults 18 and older and can be purchased online at www.cmehills.org. Tickets also will be available at the door.

COUNTRY

Charles Esten and Clare Bowen, stars of the hit television series "Nashville," will perform an evening of country music at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 31, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown. Esten, who portrays Deacon Claybourne, has played the Grand Ole Opry, the historic Ryman Auditorium, and the Blue Bird Café, headlined a St. Jude Country Music Marathon Concert at the Bridgestone Arena, and performed on the CMA Fest Riverfront Stage, at the 2016 C2C Festival in London and the 2017 CMC Festival in Australia. Singer/songwriter Bowen, who hails from rural Australia, plays Scarlett O'Connor and now tours the country between shoots with Esten and her singer/songwriter fiancé, Brandon Robert Young. Show tickets are priced from \$39 to \$89 and can be purchased online at www.mayoarts.org or by phone at (973) 539-8008.

AMERICAN STANDARDS

"**By George**," a tribute to George Gershwin, will be presented at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 5, at the Church of the Redeemer, 36 South St., Morristown. The program will be performed by Coro Lirico under the direction of soloists Rachel Policar, soprano; Bradley Lassiter, baritone; Tim Metz, bass,

and Eric Borgi, drummer. Conductor and pianist Helms also will play "Rhapsody in Blue." Tickets are \$25; \$20 for seniors and students. For more information or to order tickets, call (973) 887-6336 or visit www.corolirico.net.

SIXTIES

"**Carnaby Street Band Concert, a Musical Tour of the 1960s**," will be presented from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, April 8, at the Bernards Township Library, 32 S. Maple Ave. in Basking Ridge. The free concert, sponsored by the Friends of the Bernards Township Library, will kick off National Library Week. Registration is requested. To sign up, visit www.BernardsLibrary.org or call (908) 204-3031.

ACOUSTIC

Emily Mure and Joe Crookston will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 6, at the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, 21 Normandy Heights Road, Morris Township. The concert is sponsored by the Folk Project. Mure, a native of New York City who will open the evening, has journeyed from playing concert halls as a classically trained oboist to busking as a singer-songwriter on the streets of Ireland. Crookston, the evening's headliner, is an Ohio native and American folksinger whose keen musicianship as guitarist, claw hammer banjo player, fiddler, singer and songwriter fuse contemporary and traditional styles. Admission is \$10 per person at the door. Children 12 and under are admitted free of charge. For more information, call (973) 335-9489.



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• THEATER CALENDAR •

READING SERIES

Writers Theatre of New Jersey's annual New Plays New Jersey reading series will feature three upcoming performances. Suzanne Trauth's "La Fonda" will be presented at 7 p.m., Friday, March 30, in the Bickford Theatre at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morristown. Hal Corley's "Nichiiwad" will be performed at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 25, at Short Stories Bookshop and Community Hub, 23 Main St. in Madison. The same venue also will host Darrah Cloud's "Turning" at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 31. Readings are free, with a \$10 recommended donation, and are part of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance's Stages Festival, a celebration of theater that brings free and low-cost performances to the state's audiences every March. Each reading is followed by a community discussion with the writer, director, and Writers Theatre Artistic Director John Pietrowski, giving the audience opportunities to share their insights with the writer and to help further shape the work. For more information on Writers Theatre's programs, visit www.wtnj.org, call (973) 514-1787, Ext. 20, or email info@wtmj.org.

MUSICAL THEATER

"A Dog Story," a new musical comedy, will have its New Jersey premiere from Thursday, April 12, through Sunday, April 22, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morristown. Performances will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays, April 12 and 19, 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays, April 13, 20 and 21, and 2 p.m. Thursday, April 19, and Sundays, April 15 and 22. The show tells the tale of Roland, a career-driven lawyer, who thinks he must be married to get the partnership he desperately wants. So he follows the advice of his best buddy, Guy, and gets a puppy named Cupid as a chick magnet for his Hamptons vacation. With first dates, angry tangos, and a sudden disappearance, Roland ends up discovering there's more to life when you "get a dog." There will be an opening night party with the cast and creative team for Bickford Theatre subscribers



"The Young King" will be staged by Slingsby at 1 and 3:30 p.m. Sunday, April 15, at the Theatre at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Tickets cost \$10.

on Friday, April 13, and a Thursday Night Chat with cast and creative team on Thursday, April 19. Tickets cost \$38 for museum members, \$45 for non-members, \$40 for seniors 65 and older, and \$20 for students with a valid form of school identification. A \$3 convenience fee will be added to each ticket purchased. For more information, call (973) 971-3706.

OPERA

Gaetano Donizetti's "The Daughter of the Regiment," directed by Jamie Baer Peterson and Lauran Corson, will be presented by Light Opera of New Jersey, at 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday, March 23 and 24, Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, 140 South Finley Ave., Basking Ridge. Tickets can be pur-

chased at <http://www.lonj.org/tickets/> or by calling (908) 655-6023.

DANCE

"Esther" will be performed by Nimbus Dance Works as part of Centenary Stage Co.'s annual Dance Festival at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 25, in the Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University in Hackettstown. Nimbus Dance Works brings to life the powerful story of Biblical heroine Esther, an inspirational young woman who arose from very humble beginnings. Esther's evolution from a position of passivity to possibility, and ultimate empowerment, examines the questions of "How is power wielded?" "Who gets to be the boss?" and "What role does gender and sexuality play in all of

this?" Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for children. To purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystage-co.org or call the Centenary Stage Company box office at (908) 979-0900. The box office is open from 1 to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday and two hours before each performance.

PLAYS

"Venus in Fur," featuring Joseph Guadara and Sky Spiegel Monroe, will be presented by the Chester Theatre Group at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 23 and 24, and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 25, at the Black River Playhouse, 54 Grove St. in Chester. The production, written by David Ives and directed by Stephen Catron, follows playwright Thomas Novachek, who is at a loss as he searches for an actress talented enough to be his leading lady. In walks Vanda, a mysterious actress with the uncanny ability to inhabit his character, and the audition quickly escalates into a seductive power play. The play, which features mature content and language, is not suitable for children under age 16. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at www.chesthertheatregroup.org. For more information, call (908) 879-7304.

"Trying," by Joanne McClelland Glass, will be performed through Sunday, April 8, at the George Street Playhouse, 103 College Farm Road in New Brunswick. The play is directed by Jim Jack with Philip Goodwin and Carly Zien. Performances are scheduled for 2 p.m. Thursday, March 22, and Sunday, April 8; 8 p.m. Friday, March 23, Wednesday, March 28, Friday, March 30, Tuesday, April 3, Wednesday, April 4, and Friday, April 6; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday, March 24, Thursday, March 29, Saturday, March 31, Thursday, April 5, and Saturday, April 7; and 2 and 7 p.m. Sunday, March 25, and Sunday, April 1. The production follows internationally known Francis Biddle, chief judge of the Nuremberg trials, opponent of the Japanese internment camps during World War II, and attorney general under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He is 81 years old, elegant, sharply cantankerous, and trying to put his life in order. When a young,

new secretary is hired, the two struggle to communicate but come to understand how two strangers at very different places in their lives can unexpectedly and forever influence each other. The play is based on playwright Glass's real-life experience as Biddle's secretary. For tickets, call (732) 246-7717 or visit www.georgestreetplayhouse.org.

"The Young King" will be staged by Australian theater company, Slingsby, at 1 and 3:30 p.m. Sunday, April 15, at the Theatre at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. A naïve boy raised by goatherds turns out to be the heir to the kingdom. Untold treasures and privileges are laid at his feet, but at what cost to others? The Young King is a coming-of-age story that grapples with the ethics of leadership and compassion. This show is recommended for ages eight and older. Tickets cost \$10 and can be purchased by calling (908) 725-3420, or online at www.rvccArts.org.

SPOKEN WORD

Writer and humorist David Sedaris will perform at 8 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown. With sardonic wit and incisive social critiques, Sedaris has become one of America's pre-eminent humor writers. He is the author of "Barrel Fever" and "Holidays on Ice," "Naked," "Me Talk Pretty One Day," "Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim," "When You Are Engulfed in Flames," and his most recent book, "Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls," each of which became an immediate bestseller. The audio version of "Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls" is a 56th Annual Grammy Awards nominee for Best Spoken Word Album. Sedaris' pieces appear regularly in The New Yorker and have twice been included in "The Best American Essays." A book signing will follow the event. Tickets cost \$39 to \$69. To purchase, call (973) 539-8008 or visit www.mayoarts.org.



DAVID SEDARIS

Centenary Stage Co. to premiere 'Hitler's Tasters'

The Centenary Stage Company production of Michelle Kholos Brooks's "Hitler's Tasters" will premiere on Friday, April 6, and run through Sunday, April 22, in the Kutz Theatre at Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University, 715 Grand Ave. in Hackettstown.

Performances are scheduled at 8 p.m. Fridays, April 6, 13 and 20, and Saturdays, April 7, 14 and 21, and 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, April 12 and 19. Matinees will be at 2 p.m., Sundays, April 8, 15 and 22, and Wednesdays, April 11 and 18.

Winner of the 2017 Susan Glaspell Award, this alternately engaging and compelling play, inspired by a true story, tells the story of the young women who were charged with tasting Adolf Hitler's food so that he would not be poisoned.

Three times a day, every day, the young women have the opportunity "to die for their Führer." While they wait, however, like all girls throughout time, they gossip, they dream, they question and dance, until the door opens and the guard appears with each meal.

Brooks's plays have been produced and seen from coast to coast. Her play "Hostage" was chosen as a finalist for the 2016-2017 Woodward/Newman Drama Award and was also a semi-finalist for Premier Stages Play Festival.

"Kalamazoo," co-written with Kelly Younger, was the winner of the Riva Shiner Comedy Award, Bloomington Playwright's Project and recently was published by Dramatists Play Service. "Family Planning" made its world premiere at the Colony Theatre in Los Angeles, and her play "Chair" was a finalist for the Firehouse Theatre's Festival of New American Plays. Other works for the stage include "Two Parents, Two Weddings, Two Years;" "See How We Are;" "Love and Other Allergies," and "Famous in Luxembourg."

The production will be directed by Sarah Norris, whose work has been seen both around the country and abroad.

Tickets to the show are \$27.50 for adults on matinee and Friday evening performances and \$29.50 for adults on Saturday evening performances.

Thursday evening performances are \$27.50 for all seats with a buy one-get one rush ticket special when purchased in person at the Centenary Stage Company box office beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Centenary Stage Company also is offering a buffet matinee for both Wednesday afternoon performances. The cost is \$45 per person and includes private dining and the performance. A minimum of 25 reservations are required for this offer.

The stage company also offers discount-

ed group sales for groups of 25 or more.

Centenary Stage Company also will hold a pre-show VIP reception beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 7. The cost is \$15 per person and the event is limited to 50 participants. The reception will include

light finger food, complimentary beverages, desserts and an opportunity to meet Brooks.

It is recommended that tickets are purchased along with a VIP reception reservation to ensure entry to the performance that evening.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystageco.org or call the box office at (908) 979-0900. The box office is open from 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and two hours before every event.

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Frescobaldi's Gorgona a journey from cell to cellar

Channel a medieval fairy tale and a few images fly past your mental screen: Peter Pan, Snow White, Cinderella and, yes, Frescobaldi.

To get to the latter, it helps, of course, to be in a wine mindset.

The winged nymphs were in full flutter at the Frescobaldi tasting a few weeks ago at the swanky Sub Zero Wolf Gallery in Manhattan, an apt stage to taste the Gorgona edition of the Frescobaldi suite.

Gorgona is an island in the Tuscan Archipelago, a group of islands off the west coast of Italy. Situated between Corsica and Livorno, this diminutive island has been valued most for its wildlife, not because it houses a cachet of prisoners serving their sentences but for the marine birds that are attracted to the grapes that grow on its soil.

Serving Time

The penal colony is home to 50 inmates with a long waiting list for other inmates awaiting transfer to the island. You would wonder why despite its isolation? Here, the prisoners are able to move freely on the



Ash Rajan

READ BETWEEN THE WINES

The writer is a French-certified Maitre Du Vin Du Bordeaux from the Ecole Du Vin in France. While his hobby passion is wine, Ash, a former Wall Street Strategist, is currently a V.P. Investments at Janney Montgomery Scott. Contact him at arajan@janney.com

grounds, tending to agricultural work, with only an evening curfew; their retribution, beyond repentance, is making fine wine with a Frescobaldi family face.

At the colony, prisoners tend to a vineyard owned by the Frescobaldi family, which has been producing wine in Tuscany for more than 700 years, adding this island estate to its gallery of star properties that include Tenuta di Castiglioni, Castello di Nipozzano, Castelgiocondo, Ammiraglia and Castello di Pomino.

Patriarch Lamberto Frescobaldi, now president of the family business, and his son Vittorio, whose obsession to innova-

tion in winemaking inspired this bold effort. Gorgona presented a canvas to express modernization of agricultural techniques, their mastery of production and viticulture hewn in the main estates and yet, with a societal upliftment motif that gave purpose to the most unlikely winemakers, prisoners, whose penance is now making fine wine. Gorgona is their journey from cell to cellar.

The wines were poured that afternoon amidst the stainless steel canyons of slick Sub Zero and Wolf machines, almost guilt by association for the elevated quality to follow. A contrast in narrative of the really modern meeting the really traditional.

The Vermentino and Ansonica grapes in the bright straw-colored island whites made no pause to flaunt the effect of the sea on their terroir; the 2012 vintage, just ripe enough on first bite followed by a mild mini-explosion of lemon-peel and grapefruit notes seeping through the layers of candied fruit, a wisp of white pepper leading to a sustained finish and a full mouthfeel. Its freshness was a final reminder of its organic bones.

Its more mineral-rich 2016 sibling was a conundrum of rosemary and thyme, a hint of lavender and a fruit basket of Ps — peach, pineapple and passion fruit. Its jammy overtones did not veil its freshness or the balance of this very complex white. A Godzilla in training, this Gorgona is going to seduce many a Michelin table, one already spoken for, in Florence.

A solitary red cousin tagged along to the tasting, the Montesodi 2013, an edgy Sangiovese from the Frescobaldi's Castello Nipozzano estate. It seemed almost lost in the Gorgona carnival but quickly regained its composure with its balance between the floral violet notes and the fresh and balsamic ones. Faint mint and orange peel with compressed tannins surrendered to Sangiovese's classic motherly hug of the palate. This wine was warm and cuddly.

What an afternoon — the striking oversized red dials of the Wolf ovens nearby, so tempting to touch and turn seemed like mission control, so apt for this very unique launch of the Frescobaldi craft and soul. Gorgona.

Joe Piscopo to host musical extravaganza on May 19

A Patriotic Concert for Veterans will be hosted by entertainer and Saturday Night Live alumnus Joe Piscopo at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 19, at the North Hunterdon High School Theater, 1445 State Route 31 in Annandale.

Marking Armed Forces Day, this musical extravaganza will include performances by local professional and student groups, including award-winning entertainer Kevin Gray and the SummerSwing 17-piece Big Band, Broadway and Trans-Siberian Orchestra star Bart Shatto, opera and Broadway sensation Debra Patchell, the 30-piece Hunterdon Symphony Youth String Orchestra, the 22-piece Voorhees Jazz Ensemble, North Hunterdon's Choral Group, Immaculate Conception student Olivia Turpin, and the award-winning Hunterdon Harmonizers.

Tickets to the event cost \$40 and will be used to assist veterans throughout the area with medical support, rehabilitation and personal needs. Tickets can be purchased at www.veteranconcert.org. For more information, call (908) 878-9431 or email veteranconcert@gmail.com.



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WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS SERIES



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• ART CALENDAR •

"Past Meets Present: The Paintings of John C. Traynor" opening reception, 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 23, at J. Cacciola Gallery W, 35 Mill St. in Bernardsville. All are welcome. The exhibit will be on view through Friday, April 6. For more information, contact the gallery at (212) 462-4646.

The Center for Contemporary Art Members' Juried Exhibition will be on view through Saturday, March 24, at Frontline Arts, 440 River Road in Branchburg. A benefit of membership at the center is the opportunity to submit work to Members' Exhibitions. Other benefits include free admission to artist demonstrations, reduced rates on art classes and workshops and discounted art supplies. Juror Frank May selected twenty-five pieces from 118 entries submitted by members of the center. May awarded six prizes. The "Best in Show" award went to Mariette Boerstael, of Boonton Township, and Honorable Mentions were awarded to Robert Diken, of Metuchen, Steven Epstein, of Edison, Margaret Fanning, of Warren, and Helen Marie Farrant, of Lebanon. The Solo Exhibition Award at M Galleries in Washington, N.J., went to Joseph Ursulo, of Highland Park. May is an artist, gallery owner and curator at M Galleries in Washington NJ, and a faculty member of the duCret School of Art in Plainfield, NJ. He graduated from Mason Gross School of the Arts with a bachelor of fine arts degree in sculpture, with a concentration in ceramics. His work has been shown and is in private collections in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. He founded M Galleries in 2016 to showcase New Jersey contemporary art and artists. At the duCret School of Art, he teaches Color Theory and Sculpture. Frontline Arts is located at 440 River Road in Branchburg. The gallery is open from noon to 8 p.m. Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, noon to 8 p.m. Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. For more information visit www.frontlinearts.org or call the Center for Contemporary Art at (908) 234-2345.

"Chasing Color," on display from Sunday, March 25, through Monday, Sept. 17, in the



"Chasing Color," featuring the works of award-winning artist Pam Gosner, will be on display from Sunday, March 25, through Monday, Sept. 17, in the Lundt-Glover Gallery at the Chatham Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road. An opening reception will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 25.

Lundt-Glover Gallery at the Chatham Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road. An opening reception for the exhibit, featuring the works of award-winning artist Pam Gosner, will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 25. Refreshments will be served and the event is free and open to the public. "Chasing Color" is part of the spring exhibit for the Art League of the Chathams (ALC). During this time, artists from the ALC will show their work in the Strolling Gallery at the municipal building.

"Go Van Gogh" will be presented from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at the Mendham Township Library, 2 W. Main St. in Brookside. Led by Mike Norris, an art expert who formerly worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the program features

a virtual tour of Van Gogh's masterpieces. Registration is required as space is limited. To sign up, call (973) 543-4018 or email programs@mendhamtwplib.org.

Youth Art Month Exhibit Part II, which features works of Somerset County students in grades 6 through 12, will be on view through Saturday, March 25, at The Center for Contemporary Art, 2020 Burnt Mills Road in Bedminster. Twenty-two art teachers from 16 schools participated in Youth Art Month in two exhibitions. Six works of art from Somerset County have been selected for a state-wide exhibition that will take place at the Statehouse in Trenton. There, more than 100 pieces of student work will be on view from every county in the state. The young artists selected from Somerset County

are Alyssa Pallitto, of Branchburg, in Grade 5 at Stony Brook School; Angelina Costa, of Highland Park, in Grade 5 at Montgomery Academy; Bridget Lim, of Bernardsville, in Grade 8 at Bernardsville Middle School; Natalie Turner, of Branchburg, in Grade 8 at Branchburg Central Middle School; Antonina Colombrioni, of Bound Brook, in Grade 10 at Immaculata High School, and Iris Brudi, of Branchburg, in Grade 12 at Somerville High School. The gallery is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For more information, call (908) 234-2345 or visit www.ccabedminster.org.

"Women in the Arts" art show and sale will run through Sunday, April 15, in the Farmhouse Galleries at Farmstead Arts, 450 King George Road in Basking Ridge. The event features work by five prominent central New Jersey artists: Liberty Corner resident Linda Arnold, an award-winning watercolor painter; Basking Ridge painter Tammy DeVoe, creating abstract landscapes based on the beauty of environments and cultural details of varied travel destinations; Warren artist Margaret Fanning, whose works in oil, ink, and watercolor recreate images on canvas based on vintage and contemporary photographs and reflect her love for the past and the passage of time; contemporary/abstract artist Gail Winbury from Westfield, working in multiple media as a painter and collage artist; and Tracy Mistichelli of Three Bridges, who works primarily in acrylic and oil on canvas and specializes in still life, animals and landscapes. While the show is running, the gallery will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays. For more information, visit www.farmsteadartscenter.org, contact Director Kathy Harris at (908) 636-7576 or email admin@farmsteadarts.org.

"The Dutch Golden Age: An Armchair Art Tour" will be presented by Michael Norris from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, April 12, at the Bernards Township Library, 32 S. Maple Avenue, Basking Ridge. The event is free but registration is requested. To sign up, visit www.BernardsLibrary.org or call (908)

204-3031, Ext. 116.

"Approaching Vibrancy," featuring selected works by 39 female New Jersey artists, will be on view through Friday, Aug. 24, at the Gallery at 14 Maple, located on the third floor of 14 Maple Ave. in Morristown. The artwork on display was chosen from more than 1,000 submissions by the exhibition committee of Morris Arts and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation along with guest co-curators Mary Birmingham and Sarah Walko, both from the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey. Focused on presenting the diversity of women artists working in this region, the exhibit will include art by Marianne Trent, of Bedminster; Parvathi Kumar, of Bridgewater; and Betty McGeehan, of Morristown. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday. For more information, all (973) 285-5115.

The annual Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) Student Art Exhibition again will be presented by the college's Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Department in two installments. The first exhibition will run from Friday, March 30, through Friday, April 13, in the Art Gallery at the college's Branchburg campus, 118 Lamington Road. Part II of the exhibition will be shown from Friday, April 20, through Friday, May 4. An opening reception for Part I will be held from 5 to 7 p.m., Friday, March 30. Refreshments will be served. The wide variety of work included in the exhibition was created by RVCC students and selected by faculty members from VAPA. Part I will feature an array of media from 2D design, ceramics, color theory, drawing, illustration, interior design and printmaking. The show is being coordinated by Darren McManus, assistant professor in the VAPA Department and RVCC Art Gallery coordinator. Gallery hours for the exhibition are 3 to 8 p.m. Monday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday; 3 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays; and 1 to 4 p.m. Fridays. The gallery will not open until 5 p.m. on Friday, March 30. For further information, contact the Visual and Performing Arts Department at (908) 218-8876 or visit <http://www.raritanval.edu/arts>.



RARITAN VALLEY HAPPENINGS

The Theatre at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg will host an array of musical, theater and spectacle acts in the coming weeks, including Machine de Cirque, **above**, and Grammy-nominated guitarist Martin Taylor, **right**. Machine de Cirque members will masterfully handle a teeterboard, juggling clubs, unicycles, drums and even bath towels at an 8 p.m. Friday, April 27, performance. Taylor, widely considered to be the world’s foremost exponent of solo jazz and fingerstyle guitar playing, will perform at 1 and 7 p.m. Thursday, April 12. Tickets for both shows can be purchased by calling (908) 725-3420 or by ordering online at www.rvccArts.org.



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'A Wrinkle in Time' promises more than it delivers

By **MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER**

FILM CRITIC

I expected more from director Ava DuVernay's "A Wrinkle in Time," an adaptation of Madeleine L'Engle's 1962 adventure-fantasy novel.

The book has been touted by a couple of generations of youngsters, including my own moppet, Erin, who in retrospect added that the freaky ideas were also a bit terrifying to a 9-year-old who hadn't to date "given that acid trip-type stuff much thought."

Well, that's gratifying, but in any case, I saw my critiquing mission as a sort of command performance and wanted to bring news of a nostalgic, era-capturing event.

Alas, 'twas not to be, and while I'm only the messenger, I somehow feel a bit of a failure. Oh, it's not quite as bad as promising a puppy that never materializes or skipping a dance recital ... heaven forbid, which is probably where Muffin, the delivered Yorkie, is now dining on slippers Provençale.

The sad fact is that L'Engle's once cutting-edge fable, a moralistic, science-oriented vision of dimensions beyond Way Out, isn't stirringly transported into our

>> MOVIE REVIEW

"A Wrinkle in Time," rated PG, is a Walt Disney Pictures release directed by Ava DuVernay that stars Storm Reid, Oprah Winfrey and Reese Witherspoon. Running time: 109 minutes.

★★☆☆

Pretty as it is, 'A Wrinkle in Time' is anything but subtle. Making things rougher, I also feel as if I'm letting Oprah down.

CGI-laden, take-it-for-granted world of wholesale psychedelia.

Still, there's no devaluing the high-minded aspirations of this story about a dad who goes missing whilst looking for other worlds and the valiant daughter hell-bent on finding and bringing him back to terra firma.

Ethical pronouncements spill from its seams, which would seem a bit much in more virtuous times. However, with the land currently awash in bad behavior and a tacitly official policy of amorality suggesting that not only shouldn't one give a sucker an even break, but that it is meritorious to outright swindle him, the more goody-two-shoes stuff the better.

This extra-added dollop of what it takes to be a mensch is all about bravery, self-esteem, good citizenship and caring for your fellow human beings not because it makes good copy, but because that's what the gregarious nature of our species requires.

It keeps us from slipping back into the muck and mire of might makes right. Meg Murry, the teen heroine here, epitomizes those qualities.

Played with likable credibility by Storm

Reid, Meg is the Jeanne d'Arc of her peer group, commissioned by the author not only to be a devoted daughter, but to serve as a model of female empowerment and, while she's at it, show how to invalidate the mean girl who's been bullying her.

Again, it's another important national issue addressed by the arts if not by those we've elected to do so. It's praiseworthy in that light, which makes the critic feel like a bit of an ogre for nonetheless submitting a negative appraisal.

In defense, you can't give the heart surgeon who repeatedly leaves instruments in his patients a pass just because he always brings donuts to the operating room.

The art of teaching life's lessons to children through film requires much more than an iteration of what good parents and dedicated teachers should be inculcating ad nauseam. Kids prefer to get their attitudes from colleagues and infatuating media creations that make it feel as if the ideas are their own.

Pretty as it is, "A Wrinkle in Time" is anything but subtle.

Making things tougher, I also feel as if I'm

letting Oprah down. She valorously tries to channel her humanitarian conviction into the role of Mrs. Which, an honest, female antithesis of Frank Morgan's Wizard of Oz. However, the obviously heartfelt portrayal comes off more preachy than life changing.

Reese Witherspoon and Mindy Kaling as her supernatural acolytes, Mrs. Whatsit and Mrs. Who, respectively, are equally ineffective.

Insofar as the plot itself, the screenplay adapted by Jennifer Lee and Jeff Stockwell, though afforded all the galaxies to explore, charts a neo-"Alice in Wonderland," follow-the-dots style that, perhaps for fear of being untrue to the source material, fails to color outside the lines.

We hopscotch from dimension to dimension, predictably alternating encounters ... good guys, bad guys, good guys, ad infinitum.

While Meg faces these outside challenges with true believer alacrity, the sudden bodysnatching by evil forces of her genius younger brother, Charles Wallace (Deric McCabe), a precociously annoying tyke, adds internal strife to the mix. Rounding out the troika of space and time travelers is Levi Miller's Calvin, Meg's schoolmate who, providing the example that there are good folks of every stripe, is the popular boy smitten with our heroic nonconformist.

So all the elements are there. But while not as bad, let us say, as a botched attempt by Scotty to beam you up, wherein your atoms and molecules are unable to reunify, the inability of all these positive particles to coalesce leaves parents in a quandary: to take or not to take Scarlett and Logan to see "A Wrinkle in Time?"

Of course, if the urchins insist, simply look at it as another dance recital.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

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>> SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 15

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Harlem Quartet to perform April 8 in New Vernon

The Center for Musical Excellence (CME) and the First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon will host the second of their four-concert series, "Music Made Here," at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 8, in the sanctuary of the church, 2 Lee's Hill Road in Harding Township.

The program will feature the Grammy-winning ensemble Harlem Quartet joined by Min Kwon, as they perform Robert Schumann's "Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Opus 44." Also scheduled to perform will be Lucy Lee on viola and Patrick Hopkins on cello playing Tchaikovsky's "Souvenir de Florence."

Tickets, which cost \$30, can be purchased at the door or online at www.cmehmusic.org.

• KIDS CALENDAR •

MAGIC

"The Magic of Anthony Salazar," 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, April 29, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St., Morristown. Recommended for ages 5 and older. Rising magic star Anthony Salazar performs fantastic illusions with a dash of comedy, juggling, music and audience participation in this high-energy show guaranteed to keep audiences on the edges of their seats. Tickets cost from \$12 to \$15 and can be purchased by calling (973) 539-8008 or online at www.mayoarts.org.

LASER SHOW

"Rockin' Rocket Ride," at 3 p.m. Saturdays, March 24 and April 28, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Recommended for ages 3 through 8. Put on your space suit and blast-off into outer space to visit the Moon, Sun and planets. A lively experience for young people, the show features selected music from Journey Into Space by Jane Murphy. Planetarium show tickets cost \$8 for one show or \$14 for two shows on the same day. Reservations are strongly suggested for all planetarium shows. For additional information or to make reservations, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

"SkyLights," at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 24, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Recommended for ages 3 through 8. The youngest audience members, and their families, can sing along to songs by Mr. RAY ("Family Ride," "Kalien the Alien") and Jane Murphy ("Moon Rock Rock," "The Planet Song"). Some songs are illustrated with lasers, while others feature video images.

"Laser Hollywood," at 8 p.m. Saturdays, April 7 and 14, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Recommended for ages 6 and older. Themes from popular movies have inspired this new laser concert, which features music from "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "The Pink Panther," "Star Wars" and "Beverly Hills Cop."

MUSICAL THEATER

"Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood Live: King for a Day," 2 and 5:30 p.m. Sunday, April 8, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St., Morristown. Recommended for ages 2 through 6. Daniel and his friends invite you for a brand-new musical adventure filled with fun that teaches valuable lessons of kindness, helping others and being a friend.



The Easter Bunny Express will depart at 1, 2, 3 and 4 p.m. Saturday, March 24, Sunday, March 25 and Saturday, March 31, from 1 Railroad Plaza in Whippany. The 10-mile, 45-minute roundtrip excursion from Whippany to Roseland will feature the Easter Bunny as a special passenger. Train fair is \$17 for those 12 and older and \$12 for children ages 1 to 11. There is no charge for infants under 1. For more information or to buy tickets, call (973) 887-8177 or visit www.WhippanyRailwayMuseum.net.

sons of kindness, helping others and being a friend. There are a limited number of tickets available for the 2 p.m. performance. Tickets cost from \$20 to \$50 and can be purchased by calling (973) 539-8008 or online at www.mayoarts.org.

"Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site – The Musical," at 12:15 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St., Morristown. This performance for schools is also open to the public for anyone on spring break. This is a relaxed performance suitable for children with autism, featuring modified sound and lights. Bedtime is approaching, and a team of construction vehicles needs to get their rest. But Crane Truck is cranky, Cement Mixer takes too long with bath time, and Dump Truck isn't sleepy. Excavator and Bulldozer find that preparing for bed is a job in itself. Will they ever get some shut-eye? Based on the best-selling book. Tickets are \$8 and can be purchased by calling (973) 539-8008 or online at www.mayoarts.org.

"Pete the Cat," at 4 p.m. Monday, April 23 in the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St., Morristown. Recommended for ages 4 to 10. This performance for schools is also open to the public for anyone on Spring Break. This is a relaxed performance suitable for everyone with modified sound and lights. Groovy, rockin' Pete the Cat sets out to turn the super square lives of the family he moves in with upside down in this far-out, fun adventure based on the popular book series. Tickets range from \$12 to \$15 and can be purchased by calling (973) 539-8008 or online at www.mayoarts.org.

"PJ Masks Live! Time to Be a Hero," 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 24, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St., Morristown. It's time to be a hero. Join Catboy, Owlette, and Gekko as they race into the night to save the day from triple trouble: Romeo, Night Ninja and Luna Girl. Tickets range in price from \$29.50 to \$99.50, which includes VIP meet and greet.

PLANETARIUM

"Astronomy Tonight," at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 7, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Recommended for ages 8 and older. Using the planetarium's DigitalSky digital theater, experience a guided tour of the night sky. Learn about some of the popular constellations visible from sunset to sunrise, as well as the stories behind them. Hear about how and where in the sky to find the brightest planets. Weather permitting, the 3M Observatory will be open after the show.

"Magic Tree House: Space Mission," at 3 p.m. Saturdays, April 7, 14 and 21, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Recommended for ages 5 and older. Join Jack and Annie as they discover the secrets of the sun, moon, planets and space travel. Who can help them answer the questions left for them by the mysterious "M?" The show is based on the same-titled, best-selling series of novels.

• POTPOURRI •

ARTISAN SHOW

Meet Your Local Artisans Show and Sale, right, from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 7, at the Church of the Messiah, 50 State Route 24/County Route 513, Chester. Meet several local artists and learn more about their crafts. There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted. Complimentary coffee, tea and snacks will be provided. All proceeds will help to support the church's community outreach programs. For more information, call (973) 975-7192.

LECTURE

"Coming to America: The Great Waves of Immigration" will be presented at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 25, in the downstairs meeting rooms at the Clarence Dillon Public Library, 2336 Lamington Road in Bedminster. Noted lecturer and photographer Walter Choroszewski will discuss the first colonial wave through the mid-1800s wave of frontier expansion culminating with the third Great Wave that passed through Ellis Island Immigration Station in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These migrants brought their culture and traditions and blended into the melting pot of America. Admission is \$5. Registration is requested but not required. To sign up, call (908) 234-2325, email ref@dillon-library.org or stop by the circulation desk.

FILM FESTIVAL

The 37th Annual Black Maria Film Festival will be screened at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 21, in the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University, 715 Grand Ave. in Hackettstown. There is no charge to attend and no reservations are required. Since 1981, the Black Maria Film Festival has celebrated and preserved the diversity, invention, and vitality of the short film. The festival originated in New Jersey City University in Jersey City and is named for Thomas Edison's original West Orange film studio, which was dubbed the "Black Maria" because of its resemblance to the black-box police paddy wagons of the same name. Black Maria is an international juried film competition that has embraced its mission for 37 years by focusing on short films including those that shine a light on issues and struggles within contemporary society. Black Maria's touring programs always include provocative works. They advance and exhibit the work of diverse filmmakers from across the country and around the world. For information, contact Boris Gavrilovic, assistant professor of communications, at (908) 852-1400, Ext. 2256.



Meet Your Local Artisans Show and Sale will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 7, at the Church of the Messiah, 50 State Route 24/County Route 513, Chester. Participants will include a woodworker, jeweler, potter, soap maker, candle maker, knitter and stationery designer.

LASER LIGHT SHOWS

"Laser Led Zeppelin" will be presented at 8 p.m., Saturday, March 24, at the Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Enjoy a laser concert featuring such Led Zeppelin hits as "Battle of Evermore," "Stairway to Heaven," and "Houses of the Holy." Planetarium show tickets cost \$8 for one show or \$14 for two shows on the same day. Reservations are strongly suggested. For information or to make reservations, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

"Laser Light Waves" can be seen at 4 p.m. Saturdays, April 7, 14 and 21, in the planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Lasers dance across the planetarium dome while music is played. Songs include "Yellow Submarine" by The Beatles, "Tonight Tonight" by Hot Chelle Rae, "Counting Stars" by One Republic, and "Glad You Came" by The Wanted. Planetarium show tickets cost \$8 for one show or \$14 for two shows on the same day. Reservations are strongly suggested for all planetarium shows. For more information or to make reservations, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

PLANETARIUM

"From Earth to the Universe" will be held at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 24, at the

Raritan Valley Community College Planetarium, 118 Lamington Road, Branchburg. Learn which stars and constellations are visible in tonight's sky, then take an "Astronomy 101" class in under an hour. The sky always has been a place of wonder to man. Philosophers and scientists, from the Greeks to Galileo, began to unravel some of its mysteries and the invention of the telescope has allowed for still more discoveries. Fly by all the planets in our solar system, then travel beyond to view the birthplace and death of stars, and still farther to the myriad galaxies in our universe. Weather permitting, the 3M Observatory will be open after the show. This show is recommended for ages 10 and older. Planetarium show tickets cost \$8 for one show or \$14 for two shows on the same day. Reservations are strongly suggested. For more information or to make reservations, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

HISTORICAL PRESENTATION

"Pickets & Persistence, War Service & Women's Suffrage: American Women's Fight to Win the Vote" will be presented at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 25, at Farmstead Arts, 450 King George Road in Basking Ridge. Living history enactor Carol Simon Levin will portray Jeannette Rankin, the first female member of Congress, and tell the intertwined stories of women's suffrage activism, war service and political calculus

that brought the support of President Woodrow Wilson, Congress and state legislatures to achieve passage of the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. There is no charge to attend the event. For more information, visit www.farmsteadartscenter.org or call (908) 636-7576 or email admin@farmsteadarts.org.

WRITERS' SEMINAR

"I've Finished My Draft Now What," a seminar for writers, will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 5, at the Evelyn S. Field Library at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road in Branchburg. The event is sponsored by the New Jersey Authors Network, a free network for writers and authors that currently has more than 400 members. For additional information, visit www.njauthorsnetwork.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY

"Digital Photography Workshop 8: Creating Art with your Camera," led by Dave DesRochers, NJ Audubon Associate Naturalist, and "Confessions of a Nature Photographer," led by Phil Witt, NJ Audubon Associate Naturalist, both workshops will take place from 1 to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, April 7, at the Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road in Bernardsville. Sponsored by New Jersey Audubon, "Creating Art with Your Camera" will touch on new ways to see and capture a variety of subjects by using techniques such as motion blur, multiple exposure, and lens zoom. Searching for and capturing subjects that are often overlooked or seldom seen will also be covered. "Confessions of a Nature Photographer" will demonstrate the principles of nature photography, using images to illustrate the tricks of the trade concerning landscape, wildlife, and macro-photography from the initial camera capture to the eventual post-processing. The cost for each workshop is \$12 for members and \$25 for non-members. Call (908) 396-6386 to register by Thursday, April 5.

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer								
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6	4	7	2	3	1	5	9	8
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YOUR TABLE IS READY

Spring Has Sprung at The Stirling Hotel

By Deb McCoy

The sun will definitely come out and what better way to celebrate, than with a culinary experience at The Stirling Hotel. The Stirling Hotel kicks off the season on March 22nd with the Southern Tier Brewing United Rarity Event. This happening features limited release beers from two breweries and begins at 5 pm.

April 2nd is Music Monday and welcomes back "This Old Engine" at 6 pm. Be there for some good old Grateful Dead tunes.

April Sours with Brewery Ommegang is highlighted on April 11th and features sour ales and seasonal releases on draft. This brewery event starts at 5 pm.

This month's Community Supper takes place on April 18th, beginning at 5 pm. The event's beneficiary is the Somerset Hills YMCA Summer Camp. Stay tuned to the website for additional details.

To finish the month of April, The Stirling Hotel is hosting a Sunday Funday Tap Takeover with Allagash, Flying dog, Founders, Kane, Lagunitas, Oskar Blues, Troegs and more. Funday starts at 11:30 a.m. The amusement includes rare beers, raffle prizes and live music with the "Joe Cirotti Trio."

Looking ahead to May, the Beer Garden opens at 4 pm on May 11th. The "Garden" stays open from 4 until 10 pm on Fridays and Saturdays and from 2 until 9 pm on Sundays.

The day after the Garden opens, be ready for the Two Roads Brewery Tap Takeover, held in the Beer Garden at 3 pm.

Mothers' Day Brunch will be held at 11:30 am on May 13th. Watch the website for more delicious information.

As always, the menu changes seasonally. Chef Corey Berger is looking forward to an abundance of organic vegetables, sourced weekly from a local organic farm, starting in the summer. Chef Corey will infuse seasonal changes into the menu, as will the Hotel's bar managers when planning craft beer, wine and cocktail selections.

Lastly, I just had to mention a special on a recent menu. The Short Rib Burrito with scrambled eggs, jalapeño bacon and jack cheddar cheese, well, it made my mouth water!

The Stirling Hotel is located at 227 Main Avenue in Stirling within walking distance from the Stirling Train Station. In fact, there is a link to the train schedule right on the restaurant's website. This favorite eatery is open Monday through Saturday from 11:30 am until 10 pm and Sunday until 9 pm. The bar closes later. The restaurant can be reached by calling 908-647-6919. Details about events and daily specials can be found by visiting the websites. The Stirling Tavern is located at 150 South Street in Morristown and can be reached by calling 973-993-8066.

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