

Out & About

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GUIDE TO THE ARTS AND LEISURE • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2017

JANUARY THAW MUSIC FESTIVAL

HEAT WAVE?

Centenary Stage Co. raises the temperature in January with hot jazz lineup

Three sizzling jazz acts heat up Centenary Stage Company next month as the annual January Thaw Music Festival returns to the Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University in Hackettstown.

This year's lineup features Freda Payne in a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14, Danny Bacher in "Swing that Music! A Jazz Tribute to the Three Louis" at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21, and the Brazilian Bluegrass of Matuto at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27.

Freda Payne scored a No. 1 hit with her 1970 pop anthem, "Band of Gold." She has toured the world in concerts, theater performances, one-woman shows, as well as appearances in films and television. Payne celebrates Ella Fitzgerald's 60-plus year career from her 1934 award-winning Apollo Theater debut through her celebrated career as a vocalist.

The festival continues with vocalist-saxophonist Danny Bacher performing a tribute to the three Louis: Armstrong, Prima and Jordan. The performance pays homage to the era of jive with a dollop of Dixieland.

Finally, the January Thaw Music Festival wraps up with the Brazilian bluegrass of Matuto. In Brazil, Matuto is slang for "country boy," but these urbanized virtuosos have headlined renowned bluegrass, jazz, and world music festivals across North America, as well as recent collaborations with Carnegie Hall.

Advance tickets cost \$30 for Payne's performance, \$25 for adults and \$17.50 for children under 12 for Bacher's show, and \$22.50 for adults and \$17.50 for Matuto. Ticket prices increase by \$5 the day of the performance. A flex pass that grants entrance to all three performances costs \$66 in advance.

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 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and two hours prior to every performance. The box office is located in the Lackland Performing Arts Center at 715 Grand Ave. in Hackettstown.



Centenary Stage Company's January Thaw Music Festival lineup features Freda Payne, **above left**, in a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14, Danny Bacher, **above**, in "Swing that Music! A Jazz Tribute to the Three Louis" at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21, and the Brazilian Bluegrass of Matuto, **left**, at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27.

FIRST NIGHT MORRIS

Morris Arts to host 26th annual New Year's Eve bash

The upcoming New Year's Eve, Sunday, Dec. 31, marks the 26th year of New Jersey's biggest and brightest First Night Morris County, a celebration of the arts featuring nearly 200 artists and 85 events in 24 venues in downtown Morristown.

While other First Nights across the state seem to be disappearing, First Night Morris County is expanding, organizers said.

For all 26 years, Morris Arts has been First Night Morris' artistic programmer, securing talents that attract thousands from throughout the state and beyond. More than half of the program features new artists or artists returning after several years, many of whom have performed venues like the White House, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Opera and others, won international recognition, performed on national radio/TV, in major films and/or collaborated with superstars of performing arts.

First Night offers everything from a Metropolitan Opera soprano to inflatable dinosaurs.

Music

On the rock/bluegrass/blues front, **The John Ginty Band** rocks the house showcasing Ginty on Hammond B-3 organ, Ginty toured/performed with the Dixie Chicks, Jewel, Santana and received two Grammy nominations as a founding member of Robert Randolph & the Family Band.

Silk City brings its unique blend of bluegrass, roots and honky-tonk music and features artists who have performed with Hot Tuna at Carnegie Hall and with artists like Vassar Clements and David Bromberg.

For full-throated blues with a touch of funk, R&B, country and jazz mixed in, the **Cobra Brothers**, who have performed at The Stone Pony and The Bitter End, will fill the bill.

First Night would not be complete without its own jazz pianist, **Rio Clemente** – the “Bishop of Jazz” – with his inventive improvisations.

With performances at The Blue Note, New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC), international jazz festivals and The Whitney Museum, **Mauricio de Souza's** band, **Bossa Brasil**, adds his brand of smooth, Brazilian-tinted jazz while **James Langton** takes it “Nice & Easy,” swingin’ the Great American Songbook, recalling the glamor and the standards of the era.

A Night of Broadway Stars transports the Great White Way to First Night, featuring actual Broadway stars singing their songs from Broadway productions such as “Phantom of the Opera,” “Wicked,” “Aladdin” and “Beauty and the Beast.”

Folk Music is in store with award-win-



First Night Morris offers a world of unique experiences on New Year's Eve, from the Korean Traditional Dance of Choomnoori, left, to the music of Grammy-nominated mallet master Greg Giannascoli, right.



ning singer/songwriter **Christine DeLeon**.

For musical satire, there is “the Jon Stewart of Music,” **John Forster**, a four-time Grammy nominee whose works were recorded by Judy Collins, Roseanne Cash, heard on NPR and admired by the musical satirist, Tom Lehrer; himself.

For classical music fans, the artistry and musical magic of Metropolitan Opera Soprano **Jennifer Check**, whom the N.Y. Times called “a rare talent that can send chills down a listener's spine” will be heard. She has sung under the world's top conductors like James Levine, Loren Maazel and Seiji Ozawa in top venues like the Met, Covent Garden, Tanglewood and Spoleto Salzburg.

She will be joined by award-winning pianist **Andrew Rosenblum** who has performed internationally, as well as at the Kennedy Center and Alice Tully Hall.

On the Juilliard faculty, Grammy-nominated mallet master **Greg Giannascoli** performed at Carnegie Hall, on NPR and PBS.

First Night also offers the artistry of the **New Jersey Festival Orchestra**, the piano virtuosity of **Laryssa Krupa** with her trio, the grand brass of **Solid Brass Lite** and the polish and inventive programming of the award winning **Harmonium Choral Society**.

One can even meet “Beethoven” himself as **Dennis Kobray's** Meet the Musicians shares the life and works by the composer.

World Culture

First Night's sampling of world cultures includes the **Korean Traditional Dance of Choomnoori** whose costumes and distinctive movements showcase the traditional

dances of Korea.

The intricate and exotic **Music of the Middle East** will which spotlight two of the world's best on their respective instruments, Armenian oud master **Ara Dinkjian** and Turkish kanun virtuoso **Tamer Pinarbasi**. **Melanie Mitrano** performs the songs of both Portuguese Fado and Brazilian song traditions while champion Irish fiddler, **Brian Conway** with guitarist **John Walsh** will perform.

The Didge Project blends the sounds of the Australian aboriginal didgeridoo with world rhythms and tribal beats. Latin dancing lovers can join in the salsa, merengue an tango with **Daniel Herrera's DREAMS dancers** or move to the rhythms of **Folk Music of Colombia with Viva Vallenato's** cumbia and vallenato.

Theater Comedy

Morris First Night also offers theater comedy with the wit and humor of comedian **Moody McCarthy**, featured on late night shows with David Letterman – twice – Jimmy Kimmel, Conan O'Brien, Last Comic Standing, Star Search, America's Got Talent and Gotham Comedy Live.

HypnoMarc's Comedy Hypnotism will make observers feel imaginary heatwaves or talking shoe. Laughs also accompany award-winning master magician and illusionist **Great Scott!**, who, with his feathered blue/gold macaw partner, Thurston.

Robert Costello becomes Abraham Lincoln, sharing his folksy stories, sorrows, and triumphs as the 16th President.

The Mayhem Poets blend poetry, hip hop, improv, stand-up comedy and theater to tell

truths about life.

Story Telling

For story telling, **Kit's Interactive Theater** drafts the audience directly into the performance of Cinderella's “Fairy Godmother.” Storyteller **Julie Pasqual** brings her playful, physical theater skills into play, sharing stories from around the world.

When it comes to dance, First Nighters can savor the fancy footwork and dazzling routines of **New Jersey Tap Ensemble** soloists **Maurice Chestnut** and Morristown's own **Jeffry Foote**. Visitors can try out Square Dancing with Caller **Mary Moody**.

For Children

Children's/ family programs include **Dinoman Dinosaurs** with Bob Lisaius- life size, inflatable dinosaurs. **Rizzo's Reptile Discovery** shares live reptiles and other animals under the watchful eye of a seasoned animal handler. Clowns, face painting balloons and organ grinder will be at the **Children's Fun Festival**. **Transformations Face Painting** shows each face becoming a living work of art. Perennial favorite and skilled circus performer, **Mr. Fish** will be back with Phenomenal Physics, sharing tricks that actually have scientific explanations.

The early session for younger children from 4:45 to 6:45 p.m. includes hula hooping with **Whirled Revolution**, art making activities with artist **Samantha “Sam” Matthews**, **Art 4 Kids** and the **Fun with LEGOs**.

To check out the full lineup of artists, visit: www.firstnightmorris.com.

Hot House Jazz winners swing into the holidays tonight

The Bickford Theatre and Hot House Jazz Magazine salute the 2017 Fans Decision Jazz Awards with a holiday concert at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Thursday, Dec. 14.

The concert features Female Jazz Vocalist winner Champion Fulton and Male Rising Star winner "King" Solomon Hicks, along with the celebrated emcee for the awards ceremony, singer Antoinette Montague, and other surprise guests.

The gala awards ceremony takes place each October each year and is hosted by Hot House Jazz Magazine, the oldest jazz publication in New York, and the Metropolitan Room, one of New York's top jazz cabaret clubs. This year's event honored several legends of jazz, including impresario George Wein and longtime greats, Roy Haynes and Harold Mabern.

Internationally acclaimed pianist and vocalist Champion Fulton was the winner in the Female Vocalist category. She has released eight recordings, including her newest CD, "Christmas with Champion," which received four stars from both Downbeat Magazine and All About Jazz. The concert will feature Champion and her quartet playing selections from the album.

Only 22 years old, guitarist "King" Solomon Hicks effortlessly merges jazz and blues, opening for blues superstars like Joe Bonamassa and then performing with jazz stars such as Tony Bennett and Lee Ritenhour, organizers said. His performances have been hailed by critics in The Washington Post, The New York Times, the Daily News, and on PBS. And he has become a



Guitarist and singer "King" Solomon Hicks, left, will perform a holiday concert with pianist Champion Fulton, far left, Thursday, Dec. 14, at the Bickford Theatre inside the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township.

popular headliner at Shanghai Jazz in Madison. He will perform both as a solo artist and with the Champion Fulton Quartet.

Raised in Newark, singer Antoinette Montague is no stranger to New Jersey audiences. Drawing on a repertoire of standards, swing, blues, bebop and storytelling, she captivates listeners with her passion and her wonderful voice, organizers said. She has been the emcee for the awards ceremony for the past three years.

Gwen Kelley, the publisher for Hot House, promises a great evening with some surprise guests.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Bickford Theatre to bring this entertaining eve-

ning of Christmas music from our Fans Decision Jazz Award Winners," Kelley said. "We will also be sharing film clips from this year's awards ceremony since it is almost impossible to get a ticket to the star-studded event. We hope our New Jersey friends will join us for what will become an annual hol-

iday concert at the Bickford."

Concert tickets cost \$18 in advance or \$20 at the door. Museum members pay \$17. Purchase tickets at www.morrismuseum.org/jazz-showcase, by phone at (973) 971-3706, or in person at the box office, 6 Normandy Heights Rd. in Morris Township.

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'The Man Who Invented Christmas:' The Dickens, you say

By **MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER**
FILM CRITIC

Once upon a time, a woman at a party who learned I was a film critic crossed the crowded room and asked, "From whence do you get your inspiration?"

So O.K., she didn't really say "whence." But anyway, I was a bit flummoxed and, making it as clear as I could, answered, "Well, I see the movie that I intend to review."

That said, I belatedly thank her for the entrée to my review of "The Man Who Invented Christmas," director Bharat Nalluri's long-winded treatise on the alleged torment Charles Dickens suffered trying to conjure inspiration for "A Christmas Carol."

While Mr. Nalluri's mini biopic/fantasy may or may not be based on fact, I know that, personally, I don't particularly enjoy watching a fellow tradesman, especially one I hold in such high esteem, anguishing so desperately. But even being a bit less subjective, it behooves noting that the screenplay by Susan Coyne, based on the book by

>> MOVIE REVIEW

"The Man Who Invented Christmas," rated PG, is a Bleecker Street Media release directed by Bharat Nalluri and stars Dan Stevens, Christopher Plummer and Jonathan Pryce. Running time: 104 minutes

★★☆☆

Les Standiford, froths with the clichés generally paraded out when the subject concerns the agony and ecstasy of artistic creation.

You know the drill. The artist, perhaps Schumann or Shubert, or any of those olden day longhairs, is stuck for a melody. So, to temporarily escape the rigors of being a musical genius, he and his sweetie take a carriage ride into the country. Happily, and most serendipitously, only a little way into the pastoral retreat our composer hears a bird in a tree issue a stirring trill. "That's it!" he exclaims... the basis of his next sym-

phony...the one that'll make him financially independent. Now he and Ilsa can be wed. I only hope he invites the bird to the wedding.

Mr. Nalluri's take on the creative process amps up that dramatic platitude to the degree that nary a line of "A Christmas Carol" seems to have originated from good old Charlie himself, but rather, from the story within a story that wraps itself around the plot like ivy around a tree. In the fall of 1843, hard-put to write a literary hit after three commercial failures, Mr. Dickens frets. He's accustomed to a rather privileged lifestyle, has a gaggle of kids to feed, and yet hasn't the heart to ask his wife to economize. Has the muse forsaken him? Shh. Don't say "writer's block."

But not to worry. I need a movie to review this week, and Charles Dickens, played by Dan Stevens, must continue pursuing one of the finest literary careers in history. Thus, no sooner than you can say Tiny Tim, the celebrated scribe rolls up his sleeves and adjusts his brain to allow any and every possible circumstance and entity around him to serve as the root and origin of the book that will foreseeably right his belletristic ship. Never mind that he has no working title, let alone a subject.

Once that old miser who he overhears ranting about decreasing the surplus population becomes his Scrooge (Christopher Plummer), everything else follows. Soon, he imagines the entire dramatis personae of what will become "A Christmas Carol" making themselves at home in his study, each lobbying for a proper part in his creation. It gets quite homey, their intrusive but well-meaning counsel not too unlike the

support Marion and George Kirby tendered Cosmo Topper.

It's kind of cute for a while, the hyperactive author dashing back and forth from the realities of his household to the phantoms and spirits suggesting their ideas for the novel that he has promised his publisher will be ready for print just before Christmas. We muse, "Oh, so that's where that character came from. And here's how he got that idea." On and on it goes ad nauseam until the billions of mental pixels coalesce into a leather bound copy of "A Christmas Carol," the epiphanic tale essentially mirroring the moral lessons Dickens learns along with Ebenezer.

I don't think I'd like a bunch of apparitions rummaging around in my writing cave, offering their two cents, not that I couldn't use the help. Shamefully, my own notion of how the creative process works is fraught with far more supernatural illusions, which egotistically attribute artistic talent to some spiritual gift over which the writer has little say. Whereas in this film, the fantasy is that creativity can be engineered, albeit cobbled together by imaginary souls. Fact is, if anyone could unearth the secret of imagination, they'd be knocking out those best sellers like sausages.

Granted, director Nalluri's film does a decent enough job of establishing time and place, replete with the usual atmospheric images of Victorian England, good, bad and terrible. But by parsing and dissecting "A Christmas Carol" according to which specter inspired what, "The Man Who Invented Christmas" inadvertently implies that Mr. Dickens had his book ghostwritten.

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GEORGE STREET PLAYHOUSE

Kathleen Turner reigns supreme in 'An Act of God'

By JOHN KAZMARK
THEATER CRITIC

With Christmas quickly approaching, we are all naturally excited about the health and strength of the American economy and, of course, deeply moved following the gloriously competitive sales on electronics.

There are, however, rumors that the origins of Christmas may have been tied to a religious event of some significance. For those who have come across these rumors and may have some interest in hearing more about them firsthand, God will be speaking at the George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick over the next few weeks. Cleverly borrowing the corporal trappings of Kathleen Turner, God calls the presentation, well... "An Act of God."

Written by David Javerbaum, whose credits include 13 Emmy Awards, a Grammy Award and three Peabody Awards, the play contains all of the biting humor one would expect from the former executive producer of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Fans of, well...anything that's funny, should bring along their portable oxygen units to help them regain their composure between God's explanations of everything from the trials of Job to the invention of Spanx.

All of this side-splitting humor is delivered, for the first time with a woman in the lead role – not that anyone who has ever seen Kathleen Turner act in theater or on the silver screen would view her as anything other than Divine. However, in this

particular role, her commanding voice and deadpan delivery lends more than a little authenticity to the portrayal.

God/Turner is joined by two other very talented actors, Stephen DeRosa and Jim Walton, who portray the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Both have previously appeared at George Street Playhouse and each has an extensive list of Broadway performances on their resumes. Neither approached their role on "a wing and a prayer" as one might expect for anyone sharing the stage with either God or Turner. And, resultantly, both garner a good deal of well-deserved laughter from the audience.

The set design, by Timothy R. Mackabee, grabs the imagination of the audience, well before God takes the stage. Bright blues and white create a brilliantly lit version of what Heaven's living room surely looks like. Additional lighting and sound effects, delivered by Jason Lyons and Scott Killian, respectively, remind us of what a displeased God has at their disposal.

David Saint, a regional divinity in his own right, does the directorial honors for "An Act of God." As is a hallmark of his direction, the timing and delivery of this funny and sometimes touching production keeps the audience rapt and waiting for the next line to be delivered.

"An Act of God" is the second production of the season and the second play to be staged in George Street's temporary theater, located at 103 College Farm Road

on the Cook College campus. Decidedly, a smaller space than Saint and his staff are used to having, both productions have presented only one problem. That is, a scarcity of available tickets in this smaller venue. The remedy seems obvious for theatergoers who don't want to miss any of the three upcoming productions...buy ahead!

Two years until the new Playhouse is completed in downtown New Brunswick may seem like a long wait. However, two years of productions like "An Act of God" will seem

little more than a twinkle in God's eye.

So, to paraphrase an old Ohio State, Woody Hayes story: If you're in New Brunswick over the next few weeks and you hear a deep and commanding voice that seems to resonate from the firmament, please realize that it is not that of Kathleen Turner. The voice is from God, he thinks he's Kathleen Turner.

"An Act of God" runs through Saturday, Dec. 23. For ticket information, call the box office at (732) 246-7717 or buy online at www.GSPonline.org.



Photo by T. Charles Erickson

Kathleen Turner, middle, stars as God in David Javerbaum's "An Act of God" at George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick with her archangels Stephen DeRosa, left, as Michael and Jim Walton as Gabriel. Performances continue through Saturday, Dec. 23.

On New Year's Eve The Town Becomes...

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The love-hate relationship between wine and spice

"No one can hate you more than someone who used to love you." – Rick Riordan

I concur but wine and spice are strange bedfellows. They can be a pair of ardent lovers and, before you blink, vehement haters. And their rare harmony is earned from heaps of luck, knowledge, preparation and an adventurous palate.

All that happened a blistery cold Friday evening at Aarzu, a jewel-box of a bistro in Freehold that renders modern and eclectic to spicy Indian fare.

My Tasting Council of six ubered to this cupcake of a venue to embark on host Kamal Arora's tasting challenge: Pairing wines to spicy Indian Tapas. Kamal is a restaurateur par excellence, having earned his stripes and, yes, some stars, with his inspired, stylish recast of the Indian "joint" experience.

No blah ambience here. His spaces are mood-engineered like Rick's Café in Casablanca. His partner in aesthetic crime, Archana Sharma, had choreographed the tasting room in a silver screen mood that was part Marrakech, part Hall of Mirrors in Versailles.



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

A brilliant idea of pairing a wine for each of the inspired morsels that came from the chef's kitchen had found inspired expression and immaculate execution. Like the Paris Exposition of yesteryear where Picasso, Renoir and Monet would each showcase their works, each one of my tasting council, palate artists in their own right, brush-stroked the Aarzu canvas of heavenly bites with our prized juice.

The debut was a fenugreek-infused cottage cheese kebab with a sprinkling of garlic and tomato reduction. Yes! this is Indian food, if you can believe it. That's Aarzu

and that's Kamal and Archana. The grape complement had to combat this in-your-face spice factory and pair the texture and flavor signals of this compact bullet-shaped delicacy.

White or red? White, check. Sweet or Dry? Dry, check. Chilled or cool? Cool, check.

Two relatively lesser known whites were up to the task. A Hungarian Furmint and an Austrian Grun Veltliner. These well-balanced acidic potions with just the right measure of fruit were served simulcast (snob term for wines served at the same time in two goblets for parallel tasting) for the council to jury over which of the two, if any at all, paired the kabab. Victory! The consensus voted the Furmint as the stand-alone drinker and the Veltliner as the pairer with some overlap. Shoo! One mating consummated. With fanfare.

A marmalade of dill on river trout with an underbelly of coconut beet salad was the next course, paired with a delightful mouthfeel of a Haut Brion Blanc, a veritable white Bordeaux whose semillon vibes were haunting to the sip. Would an iconic wine, a die-for aperitif, a drink-alone overwhelm the trout? Distract the pairing? Those lingering doubts were abandoned when the first bite met the first sip. Once again the balance of its semi-sweet and acid signals were heavenly.

Same exhilaration with the next performer: a mini ice-cream cone cornette deftly holding a dollop of minced meat topped with a mousse of crème fraiche, which was paired by an exotic Rhone white, a Chapout-

ier Ermitage, Le Meal with its notes of white pepper, honeydew and warm sourdough bread sang such a lilting solo that I was inclined to believe that it would crush the other singer in the duet. Wrong again. Together they made wonderful melody.

The next spice train arrived from Malacca enroute to Venice and Genoa via Kerala, the original spice route loaded with chili, tamarind and pepper elegantly rubbed on duck and tucked in flaky crisp naan bread rolls. It was paired with a red, a Crozes-Hermitage, a Syrah blockbuster gently synchronizing the fruit with the complexity derived from the winemaker infusing grapes in its entirety, stems, skin and all. This was a tough pairing, the succulent duck in no mood for a surly companion, yet, welcomed the Crozes with a bear hug.

A hearty clove-smoked lamb loin medallion followed intuitively eager to pair with its erstwhile soul mate, a big Cab, much like a waltzer at a ball looking for her lost partner. Before the lamb could blink, a new suitor proposed, not a Cab but a charming Spanish Rioja, a Lopez Vina Tondonia Reserva with its ripe aromas of dried fruits, plums, prunes and autumn flowers. Deal done.

A citron glace palette cleanser looking polished in its own lime cups, another Aarzu touch, gave the palate athletes a pause in this decadent decathlon.

Drum roll for the final course. Cardamom chicken lollipops in a swamp of saffron sauce with a sidecar of mushroom

PLEASE SEE WINE, PAGE 7

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Masterwork Chorus to present seasonal tradition, Handel's 'Messiah,' at Ridge PAC, Carnegie Hall

The Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra will return to local and New York City stages in December to present their signature work, Handel's "Messiah."

"Messiah" is a part of the fabric of The Masterwork Chorus, organizers said. With these appearances, the ensemble will have performed this oratorio 260 times, with 121 of them occurring in Carnegie Hall.

Under the direction of Chris Shepard, the chorus will perform the holiday classic at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at the Ridge Perform-

ing Arts Center in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township and again at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 23, in the Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Maestro Shepard is joined by soloists Karen Driscoll, soprano, Helen Karloski, mezzo-soprano, John Tiranno, tenor, and Chai-lun Yueh, bass-baritone.

Tickets are available online at www.masterwork.org or www.carnegiehall.org or by calling (212) 247-7800.



The Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra return to local and New York City stages in December to present their signature work, Handel's "Messiah."

WINE: Indian tapas create challenge

FROM PAGE 6

pilaf. Bravo! Aarzu is a relentless pleaser. Another simulcast was marshaled, this time a pair of reds, a California Morlet that tap danced with the lollipops in aesthetic pairing precision while the second red was quarantined for a few minutes to have its own go as an aperitif.

Calling the Cheval Blanc Bordeaux an aperitif is like calling Mohammed Ali a guy with gloves. What a sublime brew of Cabernet, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Pow! A knockout. Dish and Juice.

The bookends of this Bacchanalian feast were a Billecart-Salmon Rose champagne and a Chateau Ruissec sauternes, both anchors to the tasting/pairing evening at Aarzu. I will remember it as a riveting anthology of edible and sippable poetry.

Grace Church Choirs to stage candlelight Evensong

The Grace Church Choirs will present a candlelight Evensong at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at Grace Church, 4 Madison Ave. at Kings Road in Madison. The service will also feature Bach's "Cantata 140, Wachet Auf," with an orchestra of oboes and strings. Featured soloists include Susan Goodman of Summit, Ted Roper, Eric Roper and Katie Hendrix of New Providence, and oboist Teddy Love of Mt. Tabor.

The event is free and open to the public, with a reception following the concert. For more information, call (973) 377-0106.

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The Pacific, Fort Clatsop, and the Columbia River Bar

Editor's Note: This is the 20th in a monthly series detailing the discoveries made during the author's road trip following the trail of Lewis and Clark.

"The Columbia Bar" is where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean, and when my husband, Richard, and I first viewed it from the north side of the mouth of the Columbia, it looked like a line of peaceful white foam. Very deceptive! The powerful river smacks into strong ocean waves and the area is called the "Graveyard of The Pacific." More on this later.

On Nov. 7, 1805, Clark recorded in his notebook, "Ocan in view! O! the joy." He wasn't quite seeing the ocean yet. The mouth of the Columbia is so wide, it just looked like the ocean. There was a storm coming in from the west, making conditions pretty dismal — rain, wind, rolling water. It was so bad, some of the Corps and Sacagawea were seasick.

The corps had difficulty finding a suitable location to make a winter camp. Their first try was on the north side of the Columbia River, but the weather was terrible and the terrain not suitable for building winter huts. Clark named this campsite "Cape Disappointment."

The State Park at this location has a wonderful arrangement of exhibits depicting the timeline of the expedition. There are also trails, beaches, campsites and two lighthouses. This is where we first saw the Pacific Ocean.

The corps believed the Chinook Indians were charging them unfair prices in their trades, and food was scarce. However, the Clatsop Indians on the southern shore of the Columbia reported that game was plentiful there, and they did seem friendlier.

So, Lewis and Clark took a vote as to which side of the river to locate their winter quarters. Each member's vote counted



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.



equally, including Clark's slave York and Sacagawea, probably the first truly democratic vote by Americans. The decision was to go to the southern shore, where they built Fort Clatsop, named for the tribe located in the area.

The fort, similar to the one they built near the Mandan Village in North Dakota the previous winter, had six rooms — one for the captains, one for the four sergeants, one for Sacagawea and family, and three rooms for eight men each, with a small room for supplies. This, at least, protected them from the weather somewhat. Lewis lamented the fact that he couldn't take celestial observations because of the constant bad weather and often mentioned the rain in his journals.



Fort Clatsop, **above**, was the encampment of the Lewis and Clark expedition in the Oregon Country near the mouth of the Columbia River during the winter of 1805-1806. The captain's quarters at Fort Clatsop are shown at **left**. The explorers endured many hardships at the fort, including fleas, constant dampness, poor and scarce food and illness.

It was a lovely day when we visited the replica of Fort Clatsop built in 2006. Costumed rangers related a wealth of information to us. The explorers endured many hardships, including battling fleas, constant dampness, poor and scarce food, and illnesses. During the three and a half months the Corps spent at Fort Clatsop, they mended clothes, made moccasins, and repaired their equipment. The captains worked on their journals: Lewis describing all the flora and fauna while Clark refined the maps he had painstakingly drawn throughout the journey.

When it was reported that a whale had washed up on the beach, Clark and some of the men went to see if they could obtain some of the blubber. Sacagawea insisted on joining them, stating that she had come all this way with them and she deserved to go and see the whale and the ocean. When they arrived, the whale had pretty much been picked clean by the natives.

The captains had sent a contingent of five men to the coast for a month to make 150 pounds of salt for the return trip. Even though they couldn't obtain any blubber, Clark was able to bring back some salt from the salt makers and pronounced it good.

After visiting Fort Clatsop near the Pacific Ocean, we went into the town of Astoria, Ore., about 10 miles inland. John Jacob As-

tor established this town in 1811 for his fur trading business, and it's the oldest settlement on the West Coast. The Columbia River Maritime Museum near the boat dock was extremely interesting. Here we learned more about the treacherous Columbia River Bar and waves that can exceed 40 feet in severe storms.

There are 300-400 rescues each year. One exhibit featured a retired Coast Guard boat in the act of making a sea rescue. An interactive shipwreck map highlights the terrible losses that have occurred here with more than 200 shipwrecks highlighted. To cross the Bar, a ship has to have a skilled licensed Bar Pilot. Tankers have to wait inside and outside the Bar for a pilot and favorable seas.

There also were engaging exhibits about the salmon fishing and canning industry, paddle wheel steam boats and the lightship Columbia.

Now it was time for us to sail back up the Columbia River to Portland, Ore., where our time on the American Empress would come to an end. However, this would not be the end of my time on the river. There was more to learn about Lewis and Clark's adventures on their return trip.

Next stop on the Road Trip of Discovery: My experiences in Portland and back up the Columbia and Snake Rivers.



The treacherous Columbia River Bar has waves that sometimes can exceed 40 feet in severe storms. A tanker ship, **above**, crosses the Bar on a calmer day.

• POTPOURRI •

ECO-FUN

N.J. Audubon: N.J. American Kestrel Nest Box Project, presented by William Pitts, senior zoologist at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, at the Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road in Bernardsville. The American Kestrel numbers are declining, particularly in the northeast. Pitts will present the state Endangered and Nongame Species Program's kestrel nest box program, from inception to the present: preliminary findings, nest box installation, expansion, and the lessons learned along the way. Pitts will also discuss the 2012 species listing, their geo-locator project, landfill issues, and the work that's being done to minimize those types of impacts. Register by Thursday, Jan. 18, for this free program by calling (908) 396-6386.

EDUCATIONAL

Musician Grover Kemble will reminisce about his career and accomplishments as an innovative music therapist and the holiday celebrations at Greystone during a special Morris County Historical Society presentation at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at Acorn Hall, 68 Lafayette Ave. in Morristown. Kemble's creative occupational therapy, the holiday programs and work done by Greystone staff perpetuated Greystone physician Thomas Kirkbride's philosophy of creating a warm and caring environment to improve the health of the mentally ill. The son of a Greystone psychiatrist, Kemble began his career in therapy as a young volunteer at Greystone in the 1960s. By the 1980s, following his formal education and with a career as a professional musician, Kemble returned to Greystone and spent more than 20 years leading, growing and broadening the hospital's occupational therapy program. Tickets cost \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, \$7 for students, and are free for historical society members and children. Seating is limited and advance ticket purchases are recommended. Buy tickets at www.MorrisCountyHistory.org, or by calling (973) 267-3465.

MUSEUM

Tea and Tour: "Fascinating and Unusual Tools from the Early 1800s" will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morristown. From curling irons to knitting implements, this collection is filled with unique and curious contraptions that are both puzzling and ingenious. Join us for this Tea and Tour with Robin Buchanan to

learn about many unusual household items from the 1800s. Tickets cost \$10 for members or \$15 for non-members and must be purchased in advance by calling (973) 971-3706.

OUTDOORS

Members-only Hike at the Refuge will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 16, at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, 32 Pleasant Plains Rd., in the Basking Ridge section of Bernards Township. Participants should meet at the Bluebird Parking lot on Pleasant Plains Road. See the beautiful winter stalks of a variety of plants that call the refuge home. Many different species of wildfowl can be found making their winter homes in the impoundments of the Great Swamp Refuge, as do mammals such as coyote and fox. Lots of resident birds will also be busy searching for seeds and berries in the area. Participants should dress warmly. Registration required. Register online at GreatSwamp.org or call (973) 538-3500.

Gong Meditation Journey will be held from 7 to 8:15 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at Schiff Nature Preserve, 239 Pleasant Valley Road in Mendham. As the frequencies of the gong

travel through your body, you are enabled to relax and enter a deep meditative state during some experience a journey outward, and a profound expansion of mind state. Member fee is \$15; non-members pay \$20.

Winter Solstice Sunrise Hike: Moderate, for ages 16 and up, will be held from 6:30 to 8 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 21, at the Morris County Parks Commission's Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Boonton. Welcome the rising sun on the first official day of winter and one of the shortest days of the year. This hike costs \$5 per person.

New Years Intention Setting Workshop will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 28, at Schiff Nature Preserve, 239 Pleasant Valley Road in Mendham. Join Schiff Volunteer and Yoga instructor for a mindful workshop on letting go and breathing in New Years goals. This workshop will include guided meditation and silent walk among a few other surprises. Dress for the weather. Member fee is \$15. Non-member fee is \$20.

NJ Audubon: Merrill Creek and Alpha Grasslands Field Trip will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon Sunday, Jan. 28, at Merrill Creek in Warren County. Led by Terry Car-

ruthers, an Audubon associate naturalist, participants should see snow geese and wintering raptors and ducks. Alpha Grasslands is home to Horned Larks and Lapland Longspurs. Participants should meet at the Merrill Creek car parking lot, 34 Merrill Creek Road in Washington. Use GPS directions for Harmony, N.J. The hike costs \$15 for Audubon members or \$20 for non-members. Register by Friday, Jan. 26, by calling (908) 396-6386.

Frozen Falls Hike with the Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 20, at Grace Lord Park in Boonton. Participants should meet at the Morris Avenue trailhead parking lot, approx. 223-243 Morris Ave. in Boonton. Dan Ross, a GSWA education associate, will lead this hike along the banks of the frozen Rockaway River. Rivaled only by the Great Falls of Paterson, these falls were once the cornerstone of a thriving industry at the turn of the century. While there is no longer any active industry along its banks, visitors to the park sometimes discover relics of the park's industrial past. This will be an easy, 1-mile hike. Registration is required and can be made at www.GreatSwamp.org or by calling (973) 538-3500.

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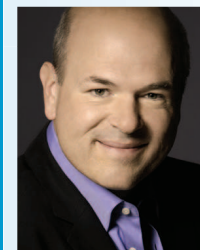


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· THEATER CALENDAR ·

COMEDY

Manhattan Comedy Night presents: Rich Vos and Friends will be staged at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 29, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Opie and Anthony regular and New Jersey native Rich Vos headlines an evening of stand-up comedy. With Melvin George, Moody McCarthy and Shane Gillis. Mature content, language. Adults only. All seats cost \$30.

The Capitol Steps: "Orange is the New Barack" will be staged at 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 5, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. The Capitol Steps began as a group of Senate staffers who set out to satirize the very people and places that employed them. The group was born in Dec. 1981 when some staffers for Senator Charles Percy were planning entertainment for a Christmas party. Their first idea was to stage a nativity play, but in the whole Congress they couldn't find three wise men or a virgin. So, they decided to dig into the headlines of the day, and they created song parodies and skits which conveyed a special brand of satirical humor. More information



at <http://www.capsteps.com> Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

MUSICALS

"A Chorus Line" will be staged by Big League Productions at 8 p.m. Sat., Jan. 20. The singular sensation is back. "A Chorus Line" examines one day in the lives of 17 dancers, all vying for a spot in the chorus line of a Broadway musical. Funny, heartbreaking, and refreshingly honest, "A Chorus Line" won the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony Award for Best Musical in 1975. This exciting production features the groundbreaking direction and choreography of Michael Bennett. Tickets cost \$25 and \$35 and can be purchased at www.rvccarts.org.

PLAYS

"It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play," staged by the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and directed by Doug West, will run through the holiday season, with its final performance a 2 p.m. matinee Sunday, Dec. 31. As adapted by Joe Landry, a group of actors and technicians gather in a 1940s radio station to perform a live broadcast of the holiday classic, replete with Foley sound effects, commercials from the era, music and humor. For information and tickets, call the box office at (973) 408-5600 or visit www.shakespearenj.org.

"Accomplice" by Rupert Holmes will be staged in nine performances from Thursday, Jan. 25, through Sunday, Feb. 4, at the Bick-



ford Theatre inside the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. From the political satire of The Capitol Steps, left, to Christmas standards, like "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play," above, theatergoers have plenty of choices in coming weeks.

ford Theatre inside the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. The story begins in Dartmoor, England, at the weekend retreat of Derek and Janet Taylor, and both adultery and murder are in the air. But we will soon learn that all is never as it seems in this electrifying game of trickery and misdirection. Who is the hunter and who is the hunted...and precisely who is the title character of "Accomplice?" This theatrical roller coaster features adult situations and content. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 25 and Feb. 1; at 8 p.m. Fridays, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2, and Saturdays, Jan. 27 and Feb. 3, and at 2 p.m. Sundays, Feb. 28 and Feb. 4. Tickets cost \$45, \$40 for seniors, \$38 for museum members, or \$20 for students with a valid ID. Purchase them by calling (973) 971-3700 or at www.morrismuseum.org.

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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Thomas Edison will be topic Jan. 25 in Madison

The Museum of Early Trades & Crafts, 9 Main St. in Madison, will present "Edison and the Origins of Electric Lighting," a lecture by Paul Israel, director and general editor of the Thomas A. Edison Papers at Rutgers University in New Brunswick.

In his talk, which will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 25, Israel will explore Thomas Alva Edison's inventions and how electric lighting became a part of everyday life.

Admission costs \$8, or \$5 for museum members and seniors. Registration is required and can be made at www.metc.org. This talk was rescheduled from Sunday, Oct. 15.

• ART CALENDAR •

The fifth annual Juried Highlands Art and Photography Exhibit will be on view from Tuesday, Jan. 9, through Thursday, Feb. 18, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. The three top prize winners also will be shown at Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery, 5 Morristown Road in Bernardsville, throughout March 2018. The exhibit is curated by New Jersey photographer and New Jersey Highlands Coalition trustee Dwight Hiscano, juried by a panel of prominent local artists and gallery owners, and judged by Alexandra Willis, curator for the Morris Museum.

Paintings by artist David John Rush will be on view through Sunday, Dec. 31, at the Morris County Library, 30 East Hanover Ave. in the Whippany section of Hanover Township. Rush's contemporary style, called Chromatic Structuralism, combines the elements of color theory and geometry. The library is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays. The library will be closed Monday, Dec. 25. For more information, call (973) 285-6930 or go to www.mclib.info.

The Art League of the Chathams Winter Friends and Family Show will include a solo show featuring the watercolor paintings of Deborah Fennelly in the Lundt-Glover gallery in the Chatham Township municipal building, 58 Meyersville Road. Fennelly is an actor, lawyer and musician as well as an artist. The exhibition features art by the general membership and invited guests. New this year will be a display of mini paintings – 6-inch-by-6-inch – by members. The winter exhibit runs through mid-March and is free and open to the public. For information about the Art League of the Chathams, go online to www.artleagueofthechathams.org.

"The Fibers of Time," an exhibition of Mira Sasson's recent works of art, will be on view through Friday, Jan. 19, 2018, at The Linda Grandis Blatt Gallery of Temple B'nai Or, 60 Overlook Road in Morristown. Gallery hours are during Temple B'nai Or functions and by appointment during business hours, Monday through Friday. Call 973-532-2268 to arrange a private viewing. In the last three years, Sasson has developed an original technique to invent unique works of art. Nails, threads, and fibers are woven on wood to create beautiful images. Included in her current show, "The Fibers of Time," Sasson not only unveils her latest works but also exhibits her art from 25 years ago. Also on exhibition is a debut photography show by Mira Sasson's daughter, Maya Sasson, "Instincts.." Maya Sasson has previously studied Animation at New York School of Visual Arts and is



"Vito's Market," above, which won first place in the Human Altered Landscape category in the Tewksbury Art Exhibit this fall, is among the works on view in "Landscapes and Florals by Eileen Bonacci" from Friday, Dec. 1, through Thursday, Dec. 28, at the Bernardsville Public Library, 1 Anderson Hill Road. The painting depicts a market in Berkeley Heights that was torn down after many years in business when the owner died last year. Vito would leave a box on his stand at night and people could purchase fruits and vegetables using the honor system. The owner left the land where his house and market were located to the township to build a park.

pursuing her bachelor's degree at Montclair State University.

"Nature is the Fountain's Head," an exhibition of paintings by contemporary artists Jessica Botalico and Wes Sherman, along with new sculptures by Jim Perry, will be on view through Friday, Jan. 5, 2018, at J. Cacciola Gallery W, 35 Mill St. in Bernardsville.

N.J. Audubon: Wayrick Gallery Volunteer Art Show will be on view through Monday, Feb. 26, at the Wayrick Wildlife Art Gallery at the Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville. The exhibit will feature a variety of artworks showcasing the talents of New Jersey Audubon volunteers, staff, and board members. Admission is free. The gallery is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. It is closed Mondays.

"icandy" is on view now through Thursday, Feb 15, 2018, at Gallery at 14 Maple, located at 14 Maple Ave. in Morristown. The exhibit features 28 works created between 2009 and 2017 by Morristown artist Dan Fenelon,

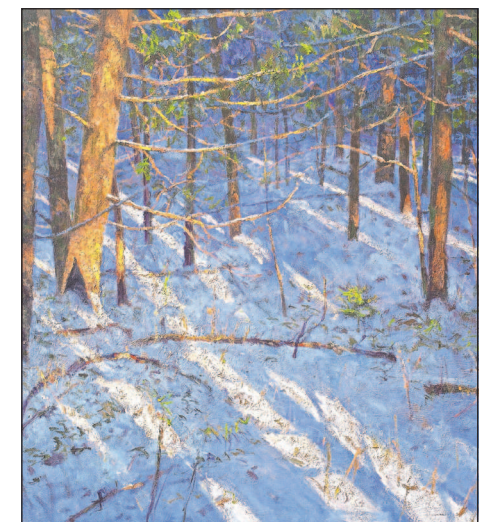
including paintings, mixed media, prints on wood and sculpture. Fenelon's dramatic imagery references ancient tribal petroglyphs and reflects his study of and interest in mythology, art history and early civilizations, organizers said. A free opening reception will be held at the gallery from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 28. The exhibit is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and by appointment. Visit www.morrisarts.org or call (973) 285-5115 for additional information, including the exhibit catalogue which contains details and sale prices for all works. The Gallery at 14 Maple is a barrier-free facility. Individuals needing special accommodation should contact Kadie Dempsey at (973) 285-5115, ext. 17 or kdempsey@morrisarts.org.

Morris Arts' Fall/Winter 2017-18 Invitational Exhibit is on view through Friday, Jan. 5, 2018, at the Atrium Gallery, located on Floors 2 to 5 of the Morris County Administration and Records Building, 10 Court St. in Morristown. The artists on display utilize oils, acrylics, mixed media, ink, and other media and range in style from the abstract to hyper-realism to pop surrealism. Most

works are available for sale, with details and pricing provided in the free catalogues found in the elevator lobby areas on floors 2 to 5. The Atrium Art Gallery is free and open to the public during business hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., from Monday to Friday and will be open from 7 p.m. to midnight at First Night Morris County on New Year's Eve. For more information, contact Lynn L. Siebert, gallery director, and director of Arts Participation and Communication for Morris Arts, at (973) 285-5115, ext. 10 or Lsiebert@morrisarts.org.

"Landscapes and Florals by Eileen Bonacci" will be on view through Thursday, Dec. 28, at the Bernardsville Public Library, 1 Anderson Hill Road. An artist's reception will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3. Bonacci, a Berkeley Heights resident, has had a lifelong passion for art and the beauty of nature. Working mostly with oils, she has produced many beautiful floral paintings and many landscapes from her travels in the U.S. and abroad. "I enjoy painting images of places I have traveled to with my husband. The majority of my landscapes are of the Tuscan region of Italy," she said. Following her retirement, she divides her time between art and her family. This exhibition will be on view in the library's community room during regular library hours unless a meeting is in progress. For more information, call the library at (908) 766-0118.

"Perceptions," an exhibit of oil paintings by new artist Peter Fiore, including "Winter, Golden Pass," below, will be on view at Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery, 5 Morristown Road in Bernardsville through Saturday, Jan. 27, 2018. Fiore is an American landscape painter who is best known for painting light with his striking use of color and his exploration of the implied narrative. The gallery is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays to Saturdays. For information, contact Kathleen Palmer, director, at (908) 963-0365.



· KIDS CALENDAR ·

CHRISTMAS

"The Nutcracker," below, presented by the New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet, will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15, at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, and at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17 at the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Center. There's magic in the air and a sparkle in every smile when The Nutcracker comes to town. In this dramatic presentation, the audience is invited to Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum's Christmas Party. Tickets \$28 for adults and \$15 for children under 12. 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 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and two hours prior to every performance and is located in the Lackland Performing Arts Center in Hackettstown.

HANDS-ON

It's Only Natural Seasonal Centerpiece Workshop, for grades 6 – 12, will be held from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morris Township. Using freshly cut seasonal greens, decorations, and a natural container, design and construct a centerpiece perfect for the table or mantelpiece and a second smaller arrangement to give as a gift. This program costs \$25 per person. Register by calling (973) 326-7601.

NATURE FUN

Sleep, Stay, Fly Away, intended for all ages, will be presented from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at the Morris County Parks Commission's Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Boonton. Enjoy a short, indoor discussion on the winter habits of wild animals followed by a winter family walk. This walk costs \$2 per person for ages three and up. Register by calling (973) 334-3130.

Winter Solstice Celebration, for ages six and up, will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 20, at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd, Chatham Township. Join a woodland gathering around a campfire to experience the historical and ceremonial aspects of the solstice. Listen to storytellers, and enjoy hot cider and roasted marshmallows. This program cost \$8 per person. Space is limited. Register by calling (973) 635-6629.

Winter Garden Family Walk, for ages five and up, will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 26, at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morris Township. Explore the gardens after the long, busy, holiday weekend.



THINK PINK

"Pinkalicious" will be staged at 1:30 and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. A girl finds herself in a colorful predicament after her indulgence in too many pink cupcakes causes a severe case of Pinkitis. This show is intended for ages four to 12. Tickets cost \$12-\$15.

There's plenty going on, and there may even be plants in bloom. This walk costs \$2 per person. Register by calling (973) 326-7601.

NJ Audubon: Winter Animal Signs will be presented by Dorothy Smullen, a N.J. Audubon Teacher/Naturalist, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018, at the Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville. Daylight is short and nights are long and cold. How do animals cope? After an indoor introduction, we'll walk the trails to look for signs and tracks. Dress for the weather. Craft activities included. Pre-registration is required and can be made by calling (908) 396-6386. Class size is limited to 15. This program costs \$5 per child for members or \$7 for non-members.

THEATER

"Cinderella: A Holiday Musical" will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 17, at the Growing Stage in Netcong. The holidays have arrived, and with them the anticipated

Royal Ball! Cinderella's cruel Stepmother and Stepsisters are plotting to win the heart of The Prince, but a spunky and barefoot servant girl may just become the belle of the ball. This swashbuckling Cinderella just needs a little help from her Fairy Godmother and one ratty Footman to find her happy ending. The show runs 75 minutes and is recommended for all ages. Purchase tickets at www.growingstage.com.

"No Elves! No Elves!" will be staged at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 27, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morris Township. The elves are on tour with Santa's Mobile Workshop. They're trying to keep up with toy production while Santa visits malls to get last-minute holiday wishes from all the children. When most of the elves come down with the Elf Flu and toy production is halted, the children in the audience must be sworn in as honorary elves to help save the day in this colorful, highly interactive, music-filled adventure. Tickets cost \$14, or \$12 for museum members. Purchase them at www.morrismuseum.org or by calling (973) 971-3706.

"Bubbleology" will be presented at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 28, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morris Township. As seen on the Discovery Channel's Time Warp, bubble-man Keith Michael Johnson explores the secret world of bubbles. "Bubbleology" is a celebration of creativity, expression, invention, imagination and hard work. It's a blend of bubble effects, comedy, music and interactive bubble-magic. Tickets cost \$14 or \$12 for museum members. Purchase them at www.morrismuseum.org or by calling (973) 971-3706.

The Hollywood Special FX Show will be presented at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. From gruesome sci-fi monsters to huge explosions, get closer to the action than ever before in this interactive and action-packed family show in which special effects experts take you behind the scenes of your favorite action films to reveal the science and secrets of creating movie magic. Tickets cost \$20 to \$40 and can be purchased by calling (973) 539-8008 or online at www.mayoarts.org.

YOUR TABLE IS READY

Winter at the Grain House

By Deb McCoy

Once again, the holidays are approaching at record speed, and it hardly seems possible that another year has gone by. The holiday decorations are up and with cold weather finally here, the Grain House Restaurant provides a local haven to relax and enjoy cozy fireside dining next to several historic fireplaces.



The Grain House Restaurant at the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge always schedules a series of popular holiday events. The next event on the schedule is the Holiday Brunch Buffet scheduled for weekdays only December 13th – 20th (11:30am-2:30pm). The buffet features special holiday themed foods and provides a festive and relaxing break on a busy weekday. This event is an ideal opportunity for a daytime celebration with family members, friends or a group of co-workers in a unique atmosphere, and you can select a date that is convenient for you.

On Sunday, December 17th, the Bernardsville High School Choir has graciously agreed to sing at the Grain House throughout the Sunday Buffet Brunch (10:00am-2:00pm). Two groups of strolling student carolers will perform holiday music during the brunch, and you will not want to miss their beautiful harmonies!

On December 24th, the Grain House will again offer a Christmas Eve Buffet starting at 4:00 pm, with a special menu for the occasion. On a day when there are so many hectic preparations for the holiday, this is a welcomed chance to enjoy a relaxing meal. Many families have made the buffet a part of their holiday traditions.

Finally, in anticipation of 2018, the Grain House will offer a special dinner menu for New Year's Eve. Stay tuned because the menu will be posted shortly on the Olde Mill Inn website.

All of the special menus and details for the holiday events are posted at OldeMillInn.com (see the event calendar links in the website navigation menu, and also at the top and the bottom of the website home page). Reservations are recommended at 908-221-1150 or on OpenTable.com.

The Grain House Restaurant is within a building originally constructed in 1768 as a storage building for grain, and history suggests that it supplied the grain for George Washington's Army during the Revolutionary War.

The Grain House can be reached at 908-221-1150, and is located at 225 Route 202 (GPS: 225 Morristown Road), Basking Ridge, NJ 07920). Dress is casual, and the cuisine is American.

The restaurant is open seven days a week, with Lunch and Dinner served Monday-Friday, as well as a special à la Carte Brunch/Lunch menu and Dinner on Saturdays. There is an expansive Buffet Brunch on Sundays from 10am to 2pm, with Dinner starting at 2:00pm.

Fireside dining is available in several rooms of the restaurant. The Coppertop Bar at the restaurant serves 12 beers on tap and like the charming Childs Dining Room, offers casual dining.

Private spaces for all types of social events, including intimate weddings and parties, and for corporate meetings and events are also available at the Grain House. Call 908-696-2315 for details.

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• MUSIC CALENDAR •

CHORAL

Coro Lirico, under the direction of Warren Helms, will present "An Evening with Andrew Lloyd Webber" at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17, at The Bickford Theater inside the Morris Museum in Morris Township. The concert will feature selections from "Evita," "Cats," "Phantom of the Opera," "Sunset Boulevard," and more.

CHRISTMAS

Holiday Cheer: An Evening with the Black River Singers will be staged Saturday, Dec. 16, by the Chester Theatre Group, 54 Grove Street in Chester. Clifford Parrish and the Black River Singers will gather for an intimate evening of song and holiday cheer in this one-night-only event. Tickets may be purchased online at www.chestertheatregroup.org.

Handel's "Messiah" will be performed by The Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at the Ridge Performing Arts Center in Basking Ridge and at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 23, at Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage, in New York City. Tickets for the Basking Ridge performance cost \$75, \$48 and \$31 and tickets for the Carnegie Hall show cost \$13.50 to \$94. Both can be purchased at www.masterwork.org.

A candlelight Evensong will be presented by the Grace Church Choirs at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at Grace Church, 4 Madison Ave. at Kings Rd. in Madison. As well as Evensong canticles, responses and Advent hymns, the service will feature Bach's "Cantata 140, Wachet Auf," with an orchestra of oboes and strings. Featured soloists include Susan Goodman of Summit, Ted Roper, Eric Roper and Katie Hendrix of New Providence, and oboist Teddy Love of Mt. Tabor. The performance is directed by Anne Matlack of Madison, who is also the artistic director of Harmonium Choral Society. The Grace Church Choirs have



ALL-AMERICAN

"All Hands on Deck," an all-singing, all-dancing, All-American 1942 Roadshow and Radio Broadcast reproduction, will be staged at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown. Featuring a nine-piece orchestra, classic commercials, tight harmonies, impromptu skits, and more than 40 of the greatest American songs ever written, "All Hands on Deck" is a musical patriotic salute to America. Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

sung in residence at Winchester Cathedral in the United Kingdom. The event is free and open to the public, with a reception following the concert. For more information about the choir program or the service, call the church at (973) 377-0106.

CLASSICAL

"Warm Winter Wassail" will be staged by the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14, at Grace Church, 4 Madison Ave. in Madison. The program includes: Marco Frisina's "Ricordi di una vita," Georg Christoph Wagenseil's "Harp Concerto in G," Camille Saint-Saens' "Morceau de Concert," and Ludwig Van Beethoven's "Piano Concerto No. 3." The featured performers are Paul Zeigler and Merynda Adams. Tickets cost \$40 for adults, \$30 for seniors, or \$5 for students, ages 22 and under with valid ID.

DRUMMING

Recycled Percussion will perform at 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown. Finalists on "America's Got Talent," Recycled Percussion is more than just a drumming show. Recycled Percussion rocks the house with talent and creativity in a dynamic high-energy audience interactive experience

at www.mayoarts.org.

JAZZ

The Birdland All-Stars featuring Tommy Igoe will stage "The Art of Jazz" at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 25, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown. Led by drummer Tommy Igoe, The Birdland All-Stars have been thrilling audiences for over a decade, organizers said. The group creates new arrangements of contemporary artists such as David Bowie, The Police and Steely Dan, as well as fresh treatments of iconic compositions by Charlie Parker, Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock. As the band performs, visual artist Jeremy Sutton will create works inspired by the music on stage. Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

"Puttin' on the Ritz," New Jersey Festival Orchestra's revue of American musical theater classics from stage and screen presented by guest vocalists direct from the Broadway stage and beyond, takes place at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 31, at Westfield High School, 550 Dorian Road in Westfield. Tickets cost \$40, \$55 or \$70. Tickets for children under 18 cost \$15 with the purchase of an adult ticket. Tickets are available online at www.njfestivalorchestra.org, by calling (908) 232-9400 or by visiting the office at 224 E. Broad Street in Westfield.



The Grace Church Choirs will present a candlelight Evensong at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17, at Grace Church, 4 Madison Ave. at Kings Rd. in Madison. The Grace Church Choirs is shown above during their 2015 appearance at Winchester Cathedral in the United Kingdom.

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

7	1	8	5	3	4	6	9	2
2	4	3	9	6	1	8	7	5
5	9	6	2	7	8	3	1	4
6	3	9	1	2	7	4	5	8
4	2	7	8	5	6	1	3	9
1	8	5	4	9	3	7	2	6
9	7	4	3	8	2	5	6	1
8	6	2	7	1	5	9	4	2
3	5	1	6	4	9	2	8	7

• COMING UP ON CAMPUS •

CENTENARY UNIVERSITY

Centenary Stage Company is a professional regional theatre in residence on the campus of Centenary University in Hackettstown.

- The Young Performers Workshop Winter Festival of Shows runs through Sunday, Dec. 17, with performances of "The Pajama Game," "Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and "A Class Act." Tickets cost \$12.50 for adults and \$10 for children under 12.

- "The Nutcracker" presented by the New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15, at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, and at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17 at the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Center. There's magic in the air and a sparkle in every smile when The Nutcracker comes to town. In this dramatic presentation, the audience is invited to Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum's Christmas Party. Tickets \$28 for adults and \$15 for children under 12.



- January Thaw Music Festival: Freda Payne, **above**, will celebrate Ella Fitzgerald's 60-plus year career from her 1934 award-winning Apollo Theater debut and through her celebrated career as a vocalist, during Centenary Stage Company's January Thaw Musical Festival. Payne takes the stage at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 14, in the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Performing Arts Center in Hackettstown. Advance tickets cost \$30.

- January Thaw Music Festival: Danny Bacher performs "Swing that Music! A Jazz Tribute to the Three Louis" at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21. Advance tickets are \$25 for adults and \$17.50 for children under age 12.

- January Thaw Music Festival: Matuto shares their Brazilian Bluegrass music at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27. Advance tickets cost \$22.50 for adults and \$17.50 for children under age 12.

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 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and two hours prior to every performance and is located in the Lackland Performing Arts Center on the campus of Centenary University.

COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS

214 Center Grove Road, Randolph Township

- 12th annual Storytelling Festival of World Music and Story will begin at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 11, in the student community center. Don't miss CCM's Annual Storytelling Festival featuring outstanding storytellers and musicians who will bring to life tales and tunes old and new. Admission costs \$6.

Planetarium shows include:

- "Our Perilous Universe" will be presented at 7 p.m. Fridays, Jan. 12 and Feb. 9. Space is filled with the greatest of dangers: from massive solar flares to black holes, the perils are mighty. This show will explore some of the greatest hazards the universe has to offer. This program is intended for ages 8 and up.

- "Shapes in the Sky" will be presented at 3 p.m. Saturdays, Jan. 13 and Feb. 10. Our storytelling series features fun myths and legends from around the world and throughout history. The whole family will enjoy the engaging tales told in the program. This program is intended for ages 4 and up.

Admission costs \$10 to planetarium shows. Advance reservations are



The New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet returns to Centenary Stage Company Friday to Sunday, Dec. 15 to 17, with four performances of "The Nutcracker."

strongly recommended and can be made by calling (973) 328-5076

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

118 Lamington Road, Branchburg.

- "A Chorus Line" will be staged by Big League Productions at 8 p.m. Sat., Jan. 20. The singular sensation is back. "A Chorus Line" examines one day in the lives of 17 dancers, all vying for a spot in the chorus line of a Broadway musical. Funny, heartbreaking, and refreshingly honest, "A Chorus Line" won the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony Award for Best Musical in 1975. This exciting production features

the groundbreaking direction and choreography of Michael Bennett. Tickets cost \$25 and \$35.

- Yamato – The Drummers of Japan will present "Chousensha – The Challengers" at 7 p.m. Fri., Jan. 26. This wildly entertaining group of energetic young Taiko drummers presents a high-energy spectacle of athleticism, superhuman coordination, and heart-pounding intensity, organizers said. With drums that weigh up to half a ton, the Yamato drummers display staggering physical strength. Continually challenging themselves to reach greater heights, this spirited performance celebrates the strength, hope, dreams and courage in all of us. Feel the uninterrupted vibration

of the beat throughout our bodies. Tickets cost \$25 and \$35.

To purchase tickets, call the box office at (908) 725-3420, or order online at www.rvccArts.org. Subscribers' packages are available for most Theatre series. Senior citizen, student and group discounts are also available for most performances.

Planetarium shows include the following:

- "Mystery at the North Pole" will be presented at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 15. Santa is sick! He's too ill to deliver presents this year. Who could have done this? Who would want to sabotage Christmas? Was it an elf? A reindeer? The audience will need to look at the suspects and figure out who is guilty. This RVCC student production is recommended for ages 10 to adult.

- "The Alien Who Stole Christmas" will be presented at 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16. Discover the stars visible in the winter sky. Then follow Santa on a trip through the solar system when a friendly alien kidnaps him. The kids on the other planets need presents too, you know! This show is recommended for ages 6 to 10.

- "Black Holes" will be presented at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16. Black Holes takes you on a journey through one of the most mystifying, awe-inspiring phenomena in the universe: a black hole. The program ponders a number of questions about black holes including: Where do they come from? Where do they go? How do we find them? Is there one on Earth's horizon? This show is recommended for ages 8 to adult.

- "Winter Wonder Lights" will be presented at 4 and 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16. Listen to holiday hits such as "Wizards in Winter," "Rockin' around the Christmas Tree," and "Dominic the Donkey." This show is recommended for ages six to adult.

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, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

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