

Out & About

Recorder Community Newspapers

GUIDE TO THE ARTS AND LEISURE • THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2017

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Professional Centenary Stage Company comes out of the shadows to take center stage

Young or old, traditional or cutting edge, big names or first-time performers, Centenary Stage Company (CSC) has a little something for everyone.

Unfortunately, that secret has remained a little too “well kept.”

“Everybody thinks we just do student productions here,” said Catherine Rust, CSC’s general manager.

Centenary Stage Company is a professional, equity theater in residence on the campus of Centenary University in Hackettstown.

“We’ve had Emmy Award-winning designers, writers, a Tony Award-winning director, so there’s some really great talent that comes out here that people don’t necessarily know about,” Rust explained during a recent interview.

The company’s biggest obstacle is to “get people to understand that Centenary Stage is not just student projects.” It is a professional company that attracts talent from New York City and beyond – and manages to do so without a considerable amount of corporate sponsorship that many other like-sized companies enjoy.

As a result, the company’s full-time staff of just six has become adept at multi-tasking: in addition to the many tasks required to successfully run a production, staff members also take turns at writing grant proposals, crafting press releases and advertisements, teaching classes and whatever else is necessary to acquire the funding to keep the house lights on, Rust said.

“That’s the way we survive. We are able to do multiple tasks and share the responsibilities. We have tremendously talented people on staff who are here because of their passion for the performing arts,” Rust said.

In addition, Centenary University students also play a crucial role in the compa-



ny’s success – as both participants and audience members.

Centenary University offers a bachelor’s degree in theater arts, which offers concentrations in costume design, dance, musical theater, performance studies, production management and technical theater. Hav-

ing a professional company on campus offers invaluable opportunities to theater students, Rust said.

“We are a professional company but students are apprentices and learn under top professionals here. They achieve a different standard of discipline and performance



Centenary Stage Company, the professional equity theater in residence at Centenary University in Hackettstown has something for everyone, from the Young Audience Series presentation of “A Thousand Cranes,” **left**, on Saturday, Feb. 18, to New York’s funniest curmudgeon Colin Quinn, **above**, who will perform Saturday, March 25, in the Sitnik Theater.

here. They have a high benchmark and the students are exposed to that.”

The company is also an economic boon to the surrounding community.

“Some people think we’re just

PLEASE SEE CENTENARY, PAGE 3

'Ravenscroft' opens on Bickford stage tonight

"Ravenscroft," an English drawing room murder mystery and comedy, opens at the Morris Museum's Bickford Theatre at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Thursday, Jan. 26, and runs through Sunday, Feb. 12.

Critics have praised the Don Nigro play as "written at the three-way intersection of Monty Python, Agatha Christie and Downton Abby." Directed by Bickford Theatre Producing Artistic Director Eric Hafen, "Ravenscroft" is a production of the Morris Museum and Drew University.

The puzzler begins simply enough. On a snowy night, Inspector Ruffing is called to a remote house to investigate the headlong plunge of Patrick Roarke down the main staircase.

Five alluring and dangerous women hold all the cards and all the answers: Marcy, the beautiful Viennese governess; Mrs. Ravenscroft, the flirtatious lady of the manor; Gillian, her charming but possibly demented daughter; Mrs. French, the formidable and passionate cook, and Dolly, a terrified maid. Ghosts on the staircase and skeletons in the closet intensify this psychological comic thriller with a twist. The suspense and laughter build to an uproariously chaotic conclusion.

Leading the cast of English oddballs is Inspector Ruffing played by Clark Carmichael.



Photo by Annie Belkin

Starring in the Bickford Theater's murder mystery, "Ravenscroft," are, from left, Clark Carmichael, Jessica Sroczynski, Molly Garner and Gloria Lamoureux.

chael of Montclair who most recently appeared on Broadway in "Jumpers." Molly Garner of Bloomfield plays the hilariously

wacky Mrs. Ravenscroft, Katrina Klein of New York City takes the role of Marcy, and Gloria Lamoureux of Succasunna plays

Mrs. French. The production includes Drew University students Erin Farrah of Fayetteville, Ark., as the often confused daughter, Gillian, and Jessica Sroczynski of Bayonne as Dolly.

"Combined with the thrill of a mystery, the laughter of a comedy, and the theatricality of its unique staging, Ravenscroft will play out in your mind as it does in the mind of our Inspector Ruffing," says director Eric Hafen. "We are pleased to bring this always popular show to the Bickford Theatre."

Tickets for Ravenscroft cost \$45 for the general public; \$40 for seniors; \$38 for members; and \$20 for students (ages 18 and under or with valid college ID). Group rates are available.

Tickets may be purchased online at www.morrismuseum.org, by phone at (973) 971-3706, or in person at the box office, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. Box office hours for phone sales are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Walk-up hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2; at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, which is an audio described performance; at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, Jan. 27 and 28 and Feb. 3, 4, 10 and 11; and at 2 p.m. Sundays Jan. 29, Feb. 5 and 12.

Explore the meanings of 'Red' at Hunterdon Art Museum exhibit

Discover the many shades of meaning for the color red at the newest exhibition at the Hunterdon Art Museum, 7 Lower Center St. in Clinton.

"RED," features works by 10 artists who use red not necessarily as a predominant color, but because it conjures up a specific emotion or plays a vital role in the work's narrative, organizers said.

As exhibition curator Heather Cammarata-Seale explains, red is a paradoxical color; a color of contradictions and extremes.

"Love and anger. Life and death. Good luck and danger. Royalty and revolution. Disgust and desire. These associations impact the way we react to the color," Cammarata-Seale said. "The way we respond to someone wearing the color red is very different than our response to someone enrobed in black."

And, while red is often used to attract consumers – think of the



"Checkmate," above, by Margeaux Walter is among the works included in "RED," on view now at the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton.

branding for Target, McDonald's or Coca-Cola – the color can signify quite the opposite, as demon-

strated by artist Julie Heffernan. Heffernan's contribution to the exhibition shows a resolute char-

acter fighting to survive in a world facing imminent environmental disaster, Cammarata-Seale said. The landscape and atmosphere of this world are suffused with red, a warning sign that the Earth is warming up to climate change.

Artist and environmental activist Pat Brentano also seeks to make everyone aware of the toll human action takes on the natural environment. While her work is heavily reliant on black, white and gray, she features pointedly positioned washes of red as a marker of urgency, danger and decay.

Serena Bocchino's art visually interprets American jazz music. Her "Fever" series, of which four works are included in this show, take the song made famous by singer Peggy Lee as its point of departure.

The artist uses red paint not only to represent the syncopated rhythms of jazz music but also to embody the heat and passion re-

lated in the song's lyrics.

Also included in "RED," are works by Emily Barletta, Cathy Choi, Valerie Hammond, Heidi Howard, Sean McDonough, Margeaux Walter and Kimberly Witham.

Two artists featured in this exhibition will lead programs in 2017 at the Museum: Serena Bocchino will lead "All About Line: Drawing Workshop," while Pat Brentano will teach "The Art of Observation: Drawing, Writing, and Learning to See." For more information on both workshops, visit www.hunterdonartmuseum.org

The Museum is at 7 Lower Center St. in Clinton, New Jersey, 08809. Our website is www.hunterdonartmuseum.org and our telephone number is 908-735-8415.

Museum hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and suggested admission is \$5. For more information, visit www.hunterdonartmuseum.org or call (908) 735-8415.

CENTENARY: Theater company's passion reaches beyond campus

FROM PAGE 1

entertainment but we are also heavily involved in the economic success of (Hack-ettstown)," Rust said. "We have something going on every weekend and that brings people to town."

The company often seeks ways to collaborate with restaurants in town, such as pre- and post-performance tie-in events and more.

"I think it improves the quality of the life of people in the area to have the arts. That is the heart of our passion. The theater is not arts in isolation. It's where everything comes together," Rust said.

Coming Up

With even more plays and performances, the Young Audience Series is part of the CSC's mission to serve the region's youth with dynamic performances and workshops throughout the year. The Young Audience Series returns to the Centenary stage at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, with "A Thousand Cranes."

This is a true story of the young Japanese girl Sadako Sasaki, who inspired an international peace movement. "A Thousand Cranes" combines Japanese and American language, music and dance, and highlights Japanese society in the after-math of World War II. Sadako was 2 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. When she later developed radiation sickness, Sadako remembered an old story: if a person will just make 1000 cranes, the gods will grant her a wish and make her healthy. Sadako did not live to finish her



Tartan Terrors will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 11, at the Sitnik Theater in Hack-ettstown. The Tartan Terrors are their own Celtic Invasion, mixing rock's energy with traditional folklore, dance, and comedy.

cranes, but her friends took up the task and built a monument for her and all the children killed by the atomic bomb.

Women Playwright Series

Initiated in 1992 to provide a working platform for the underserved voices of women writing for the theatre, the Women Playwright Series has featured and helped to

develop the new work of more than 50 playwrights from around the country, and produced 15 world premieres in as many years, from works developed in the playwright series. Plays selected for the series receive rehearsal with a professional cast and director, providing an opportunity for the playwright to collaborate with other professionals during the development process. They are

presented script-in-hand in staged readings for audiences, which affords the playwright further opportunity to develop the work, in the presence of an audience.

The series next selection – a world premiere – is "The Surrogate" by Patricia Cotter, which will be staged from Friday, Feb. 17, through Sunday, Mar. 5, at the Sitnik Theater. When Billy and Sara ask their best friends Margaret and Jen to be the guardians of their precious Tallulah (and yet – to be – born baby Carroll), lives change and friendships are tested, and the definition of what makes a modern family is rewritten. Tickets cost \$27.50 to \$17.50.

Music And More

CSC hosts a vast array of musical acts throughout the year, from blues and jazz to rock-folk mashups, like the Tartan Terrors, who will perform at 8 p.m. Sat. March 11, on the Sitnik stage. The Tartan Terrors are their own Celtic Invasion, mixing rock's energy with traditional folklore, dance, and comedy. With an arsenal featuring classic pipes and fiddle, driving drum tones, and signature guitar styles, the performance also features award-winning Step and Highland Dancers.

Two weeks later, New York's funniest curmudgeon, Colin Quinn, takes to the Centenary stage at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 25. Tickets cost \$48 for orchestra seating and \$43 for balcony seating.

For more information about Centenary Stage Company and its upcoming performances, visit www.centenarystageco.org.



STAR STRUCK

Celebrate Valentine's Day at the Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) Planetarium in Branchburg. The Planetarium will present "Romancing the Stars," Saturday, Feb. 11, and Tuesday, Feb. 14, with both shows at 7 p.m. The star show for couples ages 16 and older will offer an evening that focuses on stars, constellations and stories that all celebrate love. Cost is \$16 per couple. Reservations are strongly suggested. For additional information, call (908) 231-8805 or visit www.raritanval.edu/planetarium.

Out & About

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NEW JERSEY HILLS MEDIA GROUP

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To be considered for Out & About, please send information by Tuesday, the week before the publication date.

Fort Mandan, Sacajawea, and the winter of 1804-05

Editor's Note: This is the ninth in a monthly series detailing the discoveries made during the author's road trip following the trail of Lewis and Clark. The Road Trip of Discovery's next stop will be the beautiful Yellowstone River on the way to the Headwaters of the Missouri River.

Before leaving North Dakota we stopped near present day Washburn to see the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and the nearby replica of Fort Mandan where Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery spent the winter of 1804-05.

At the Interpretive Center we were greeted by three 12-foot tall statues of Lewis and Clark and the Mandan Chief Sheheke by Tom Neary. Inside the center are exhibits about the journey and the life of the Plains Indians living in the area in the 1800s. They included a buffalo robe, a cradle board such as Sacajawea might have used to carry her baby, and a canoe made from a cottonwood tree.

Overlooking the Missouri River is a 6-foot high, 1,400-pound steel sculpture of Lewis's Newfoundland dog, Seaman. The overlook is even named for him, "Seaman's Overlook." He is mentioned many times in the journals as a faithful companion and sometimes as a hero alerting the men to danger and chasing off bears and buffalo. Lewis bought him in Pittsburgh when he was gathering supplies for the trip.

By the time the Corps reached the area of the five Mandan and Hidatsa Villages, they had been on the river nearly six months – from the middle of May until the beginning of November 1804 – laboring upstream all the way. Clark estimated that they had traveled 1,600 miles from the mouth of the Missouri River to this point.

It took the Corps about six weeks to build the triangular Fort Mandan, which Clark described as having two rows of huts joining each other at an angle. Opposite the huts was a picketed wall. The original fort disappeared long ago, and the site is somewhere under the Missouri River. The McLean County Historical Society completed building the authentic-looking replica fort in 1972. It is now operated by the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department.

An enthusiastic interpreter gave us a 50-minute presentation about the Corps' time there. A room was furnished as it would have been for the captains, complete with dress uniforms. Another was set up as a blacksmith shop, another with supplies.

At the end of November, the men moved into the fort on the banks of the Missouri River. There was a great deal of contact between the Corps and the local tribes. The natives brought corn and beans to trade for medicines, beads, buttons, and blacksmith-



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



ing services such as mending their axes and hoes and making war hatchets. This food was crucial to the Corps' survival over the winter.

Both captains administered medicines to the natives. On Jan. 27, 1805, Clark writes, "I Bleed the man with the Phurisy today & swet him, Capt. Lewis took off the toes of one foot of the Boy who got frost bit Some time ago." (Excerpt is from the Moulton edition of the Journals). Bleeding and sweating the patient were the medical treatments of the day for many ailments.

It was to be a bitter winter. Clark recorded readings of -20 and -40 degrees and speaks of some of the men suffering from frostbite while out hunting.

Fort Mandan is where Lewis and Clark hired the French Canadian fur trader Touissant Charbonneau to accompany them the rest of the way to the Pacific. He was to be an interpreter and translator as he had had dealings with various Indian tribes and knew some of the languages. He and his two wives moved out of the Mandan Village and into the fort.

Sacajawea (one of many spellings of her name) was one of Charbonneau's wives, and she was chosen to accompany the Corps west. Since she was of the Shoshone tribe of the northern Rockies, the captains thought she could serve as an intermediary and interpreter in negotiations to obtain horses from the Shoshones when they neared the mountains. And...she was pregnant.

At about age 12 Sacajawea had been captured by a Hidatsa war party near her homeland in what is today Idaho, and brought back to their village, located in present-day North Dakota. It is not clear when she became the wife of Charbonneau.



Above: The McLean County Historical Society completed building the authentic-looking replica of Fort Mandan in 1972. The original fort disappeared long ago somewhere under the Missouri River. **Below:** The captain's quarters at Fort Mandan are reimagined.



It is thought she was purchased by him as a slave or won in a card game. In February 1805, at the age of 16, she gave birth to Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, whom Clark affectionately called "Pomp." He accompanied the Corps the rest of the trip, mostly strapped to his mother's back.

When the Corps of Discovery left Ft. Mandan in April of 1805, Lewis sent the keel boat and two canoes with cargo of various flora and fauna specimens back down the Missouri to St. Louis and then overland to President

Jefferson in Washington, D.C. They also sent copies of their journals, which they had been working on all winter. Many of these treasures are on display at Monticello, Jefferson's home in Charlottesville, Va.

This would be the last communication from the Corps until they returned nearly one and a half years later in September 1806. When the Corps left Fort Mandan and headed west, they might as well have been going to the moon. The 'Great Beyond' was a complete unknown.

Presenting the 'Rajan Rules' of wine etiquette

Rule 1: There are no rules. The moment you open the door to that 'r word', you are letting the Mistral in to your home to shatter your china and crystal collection. Can you hear the cacophony of shattering glass and porcelain? You got it. Rules are a magnet for more rules and the virgin purity of fine wine becomes unduly shackled like a damsel in chains in the high tower. Instead, let her languid body and her sinewy arms and her cascading hair flow unbridled by pretense of etiquette and the explicit signal of elitism.

As I write this Socratic tome, every pore in my soul is calling me a liar, a blatant hypocrite and a two-timer as I am the ultimate wine-nazi, obsessively particular about glass and goblet, stance and hand posture, a boor who is judgmental and downright bourgeois. Shame on me but don't judge. Just stay put and listen to my rules.

Rule 2: Yes. Rules rock. Provided they improve form and function. German auto engineers got it many moons ago and it shows in their metal. Hence the way to hold your wine glass is to make a pistol with your thumb and two fingers and slide the two fingers under the base of the glass and use your thumb to clasp the top of the base.

I call it the "perch" because it has the aesthetic of a dove (the goblet) perched on a limb of a tree. That's form. Now, the function. The perch gives you a wider orbit to twirl, to lift the goblet to the light at an angle, to observe the color and the legs (waves of glycerine on the glass), to twirl again before the journey to your puckered lips begin and onward to palette and beyond. Form and function validate my rules.

Rule 3: I have said this before in prior columns and like a broken record, I will repeat. Abandon paper and plastic cups and with them, short, stubby and thick-walled glass. Life is short but your goblet need not be. Indulge in a couple of tall skinny stems with a chalice-size bulb, to urn your wine. The perch sequence in Rule 2 only works with this goblet.

If you made a buck in the recent stock market rally, indulge in a Zalto or Reidel, the gold standard in goblets. Or be smug with remarkable look-alikes at Crate & Barrel.

Rule 4: Explode the stupid myth of serving reds in room temperature. The room in that myth was an underground cellar in distant France where the temperature was about 50-60 degrees. That is the sweet-spot temperature for reds and about 50 for most whites.

Home wine cellars deliver that temperature but absent a cellar, the good old ice-box



Ash Rajan

READ BETWEEN THE WINES

The writer is a French certified Maitre' Du Vin Du Bordeaux and a Wall Street wealth strategist at Janney Montgomery Scott. Email him at arajan@janney.com on wines and tasting-pairing events.

can do the trick with a 15 minute immersion pre-corking. Or here is a secret that will make wine snobs gag: Drop one clean ice cube for three minutes in your glass and remove. Don't fret. No one noticed your surgical strike. It is akin to the proverbial five-second rule with an M&M on the floor. And no dent to the wine's flavor profile either. You are now ready for perch at the right temperature.

Rule 5: Re-purpose, don't re-drink yesterday's wine: I have to admit that a Chateau Margaux many years ago and more,

recently a Gaja Barbaresco tasted divine overnight but these are rare comet-like occurrences.

Most mortal (cheap) wines that I have had sour overnight. But they make great cooking companions if you or your partner is up for a Chicken Marsala or Duck in a Burgundy reduction. A tad easier, cut some oranges and apples and make a sangria.

Rule 6: Decant older wines and blends: Most new world wines, as in Argentina, Chile, Australia and South Africa, with some exceptions, do not need decanting. French, Italian and Spanish almost always do.

Bordeaux is a must decant and every time I break that rule I am running on just two cylinders of its extensive flavor profile. One recent exception was Legende from the House of Rothschild via Paternak, their well-regarded American importer.

My tasting council that meets occasionally to review newer wines had arrived early and I took a chance on pop and serve. Wow! The Legende from St. Emilion, in particular, had a seamless balance, yet with a sat-

iny mouth feel for such an accessible wine from a legendary chateau. On the other hand, the Hungarian Reds from St. Andrea that I recently had, courtesy of David Germroth of 3W Beverage Importers in Washington, D.C., needed decanting. The Merengo and Hangacs, both complex but delightful reds played hard to get at first, but with 30 minutes of decanting sang like the Viennese Choir. Older vintages tend to have plenty of sediment.

So decanting and filtering mitigates most of it to the last one inch of the bottle. Blends or meritage wines that have two or more grapes benefit from decanting as their multiple DNAs are constantly evolving and decanting achieves the balance that the winemaker intended at bottling. That's the function in this decanting rule. The form is in the architectural svelte of the decanter itself, their whimsical shapes and undulations are eye-candy and, like a retro Hollywood starlet's allure for men in uniform, the decanter is wine's own livery and regalia.

There, you have a handful of the "Rajan Rules." Make my day! Break them.

CENTENARY
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A WORLD PREMIERE
by Patricia Cotter
FEB 17 - MAR 5

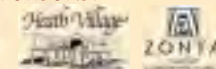
"When Billy and Sara ask their best friends Margaret and Jen to be the guardians of their babies, friendships are tested, lives change, and elements collide (often hilariously!) to rewrite the description of what makes a 'modern family'. A smart, funny play about whether we'll get any of our important life decisions right!"

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• ART CALENDAR •

Welcome Neighbor: Sharing Cultural Art Traditions II will be on view from Thursday, Feb. 2, through Monday, Feb. 27, at the Bernardsville Public Library, 1 Anderson Hill Road. Organized by the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission as a touring show, this exhibition features 2- and 3-D indigenous artworks created by diverse New Jersey artists representing their ethnic cultural traditions, accompanied by background text on each featured art form. Among the indigenous art traditions on display will be Hungarian felt making, Celtic interlace, Japanese raku, Nanticoke Leni Lenape crafts, Ukrainian pysanky, Asian Indian sanganeri (block printing), batik and mehndi (henna), Philippine parol and origami, paper cutting traditions, reverse glass painting, Russian wood and bone carving, and traditional Chinese landscape painting. The show can be viewed in the Community Room during regular library hours unless a meeting is in progress. For further information, call the library at (908) 766-0118.

The fourth annual Highlands Juried Art Exhibit will be hosted by the New Jersey Highlands Coalition through Wednesday, March 15 at Morris Arts' Atrium Gallery, located on Floors 2-5 of the Morris County Administration and Records Building on 10 Court Street in Morristown. The exhibit, featuring a mix of photography, paintings, and mixed media, focuses on the natural, historic and cultural resources of the New Jersey Highlands. The exhibit is curated by New Jersey photographer and Coalition trustee Dwight Hiscano; and juried by Emmy award-winning filmmaker Elliott Ruga, who is also policy director for the coalition; Kristy Brucale Jach, director of Speakeasy Art Gallery in Boonton; and Anita Fickenburger, Senior Art Consultant for ArtPlus, corporate art consultants in Livingston. The work will be judged and first, second, and third place prize-winners selected by Alexandra Willis, curator for the Morris Museum.

"In Flux" is on view now through Thursday, Feb. 16, at Gallery at 14 Maple, located at 14 Maple Ave. in Morristown. The gallery is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fridays, and by appointment. Call (973) 285-5115 for additional information.

NJ Audubon: Wayrick Gallery Volunteer Art Show will be on view through Monday, Feb. 27, at the Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road, Bernardsville. The exhibit will feature a variety of artwork 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



'BEGIN IN CHAOS'

The fourth annual Highlands Juried Art Exhibit will be hosted by the New Jersey Highlands Coalition through Wednesday, March 15 at Morris Arts' Atrium Gallery, located on Floors 2-5 of the Morris County Administration and Records Building on 10 Court Street in Morristown. The exhibit features a mix of photography, paintings, and mixed media, including "Begin in Chaos," **above**, by Natalia Pas of Roselle Park.

to 5 p.m. Sundays. It is closed Mondays.

The annual Winter Friends and Family Show of the Art League of the Chathams will feature Monique Hendricks' solo exhibit in the Lundt-Glover Gallery in the Chatham Township Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road in Chatham. The exhibit will remain on view until Friday, March 10, 2017. "Before and After the Operation: The Evolving Art of Monique Hendricks" will include 45 paintings depicting the transformation of her art after undergoing Deep Brain Stimulation, a delicate neurological procedure. In addition to Hendricks' art collection, in the strolling gallery the Art League of the Chathams will exhibit artwork of the artists as well as artwork of the artist's friends and family. For more information, call (973) 635-4600.

The J. Cacciola Gallery W Winter Invitational will be on view through Saturday, Feb. 25, at J. Cacciola Gallery W, 35 Mill Street, Bernardsville. This exhibit features a selection of work from 12 established regionally, nationally and internationally known artists, including Serena Bocchino, Wes Sherman, James Lahey, and Tom Palmore. An opening reception will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 13. All are welcome.

"The Garden State: Living off the Land in Early New Jersey," is on view through Sunday, Sept. 3, at the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts at 9 Main St. at



"Rare Wildlife Revealed, James Fiorentino Traveling Art Exhibition," **above**, will be on view through Tuesday, Feb. 28, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center Art Upstairs Gallery, 100 South Street in Mor-

ristown. This exhibit will be in partnership with Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery of Bernardsville and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey. Gallery hours are 3 to 5 p.m. Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesdays, two hours prior to performances for ticket holders, and by appointment, which can be made by calling (973) 539-0345 ext. 6506.

"Engineering Brick Art" is on view through Sunday, Feb. 26, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. The LEGO brick has sparked the imagination of artists near and far. Join us this winter to explore how this simple toy has been transformed into a medium of art and design. Visit www.morrismuseum.org for more information.

"Nature Photography" by Rachel Ritter of Morris Township will be on view throughout September in the Haggerty Education Center at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Ave., Morris Township. Ritter draws her inspiration from the gardens of Morris County and her photographs are a perfect blending of art and nature. Admission is free.



"Abstract Photography," including "Storm Approaching," **above**, by Charlann Meluso will be on view in February in the Lower Gallery of the Watchung Arts Center, 18 Stirling Road in Watchung. An opening reception will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5. The reception and the exhibition are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.WatchungArts.org or call (908) 753-0190.

Shakespeare Theatre reveals 2017 season offerings

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey announces its 2017 lineup featuring beloved classics, as well as an epic new work.

"I have a special feeling about this season. I feel like we've come up with a splendid mix of shows that will appeal to all people of all ages — fun, funny, thought-provoking, moving, comforting, inspiring, and all offer sublime theatrical adventures that will transport and delight our audience," said artistic director Bonnie J. Monte.

The 2017 season begins in May and continues through December with five productions presented at the F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre in Madison, and one summer production presented on The Outdoor Stage — the Greek amphitheater on the campus of The College of Saint Elizabeth in Florham Park. Special events like the "Lend Us Your Ears" series and the popular one-night-only events, "Something Wicked This Way Comes" and "Something Merry This Way Comes," will be returning for the 2017 season. In addition to these events, the Theatre will present "Something Lucky This Way Comes," a brand new, one-night-only event on St. Patrick's Day.

The Shakespeare Theatre will launch its 55th season in May with Shakespeare's dark comedic masterwork, "The Merchant of Venice." The Theatre has not produced this play in 17 years.

"Never has there been a better time than now to present this 400 year-old-play," said Monte. "It mirrors our current society so closely in so many ways that one could imagine it was penned just yesterday." Performances begin Wednesday, May 17.

Following "The Merchant of Venice" is a much lighter Shakespeare comedy, "A Midsummer Night's Dream." One of the Bard's

most popular and beloved plays, Monte will both direct and design this production which will feature a set and costumes made largely with items that would normally end up in a landfill but will instead be transformed into beautiful and magical creations. The production will also feature a lively music underscore and other surprises that will make this timeless classic feel brand new. "A Midsummer Night's Dream" will run on the Outdoor Stage beginning Wednesday, June 14.

Next on the Main Stage will be "The Bunter," a rarely produced Molière comedy in an English version by Richard Wilbur, the preeminent Molière translator. It tells the tale of a hopelessly inept young man who has fallen in love with a gypsy girl. He employs his wily servant to help him win her hand in marriage. Each clever plan from the servant is inevitably bungled by his clueless master. Brian B. Crowe will direct this delightful comedy that will begin previews on Wednesday, July 5.

The third Main Stage show of the season will be Joe Orton's outrageous farce "What The Butler Saw," opening on Wednesday, Sept. 6. This will be the first Orton play produced at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey during Monte's tenure. Like "The Merchant of Venice," this play speaks to the world today, but in a very different way and about very different matters, as the fragile nature of "truth" is explored in a hilarious and provocative manner. Audiences should be warned that this play from 1969 was considered scandalous at the time it was first presented, and it does feature partial nudity. It is not appropriate for children. Long-time company member Paul Mullins will direct.

In the fall, "Shakespeare in Love" will take the stage and transform the F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre into an Elizabethan playhouse. Monte will direct. Based on the Oscar-winning film, the story follows William Shakespeare in his prime as he struggles to find the words to his greatest works and win his true love. The stage version by Lee Hall is adapted from Marc Norman's and Tom Stoppard's screenplay and the production features music by Paddy Cunneen — originally produced on the West End by Disney Theatrical Productions & Sonia Friedman Productions, directed by Declan Donnellan, and designed by Nick Ormerod. Performances begin Wednesday, Oct. 11.

"I am utterly thrilled to be directing this grand, exuberant love-letter to Shakespeare. The film remains one of my all-time favorite movies, and it's sublime kismet that it's landed in our hands as next season's fall centerpiece production," Monte said.

To finish the season, the Theatre is thrilled to present "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play." The stage adaptation by Joe Landry was an audience favorite when presented as last year's "Something Merry This Way Comes." The holiday classic will be directed by Doug West, and will feature the beloved characters that have become so familiar from the 1946 film. The production begins just in time for the holiday season on Thursday, Nov. 30.

Special Events

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey will continue its tradition of presenting special one-night events that have become audience favorites, including a new addition to the Something Series, "Something Lucky This Way Comes." In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, this holiday special will feature works from famous Irish writers and Irish music. The event will take place on Friday, March 17. In October, the delightfully frightening "Something Wicked This Way Comes" will take place just before the holiday on Monday, Oct. 30. To finish the series, the Theatre will present "Something Merry This Way Comes" on Monday, Dec. 11.

Lastly, The Shakespeare Theatre's "Lend Us Your Ears" Play Reading Series will feature two or three script-in-hand readings providing patrons with the opportunity to join the Theatre in exploring classic texts and potential production choices for later seasons. Dates and times will be announced soon.

Complete Works subscriptions are now on sale and smaller and flexible discount packages will go on sale in March.

Single tickets go on sale on Monday, March 27. The 30 Under 30 program is returning for the 2017 season, as well as free tickets for kids ages 18 and younger for the Outdoor Stage production. For more information on these programs and subscription options, visit www.ShakespeareNJ.org or call (973) 408-5600.

BELIZE TRAVELOGUE

The New Jersey Audubon will offer a Belize Travelogue led by associate naturalists Phil and Becky Witt from 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, at the Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary, 11 Hardscrabble Road in Bernardsville. Becky Witt's photograph, "Keel-Billed Toucan" is shown at right. Becky and Phil will present stunning photographs of tropical birds, caimans, and rain forests from their trips to Belize. On the Yucatan Peninsula in Central America, Belize serves as a meeting point for species from both North and South America. The program is free for members or \$5 for non-members. Register by Friday, Feb. 17, by calling (908) 396-6386.



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Drew Forum features Seth Meyers, Earl Monroe and Ron Chernow

A late-night comedian, an iconic New York athlete, and the author who inspired the Broadway hit "Hamilton" are featured in Drew University's lineup of Drew Forum speakers this semester.

The upcoming appearances by comedian Seth Meyers, former New York Knick Earl Monroe, and Alexander Hamilton biographer Ron Chernow follow those of Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred and New York Times columnist Gail Collins in the fall portion of the 2016-17 lecture series at Drew University in Madison.

2017 Lineup

- In a change of venue for the series, Seth Meyers will appear at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South St. in Morristown.

The host of "Late Night With Seth Meyers" first made a name for himself as a writer and performer on the legendary "Saturday Night Live" TV show. During 13 seasons at "SNL," he earned an Emmy as a writer, co-hosted the show's "Weekend Update" segment, and headlined the 2011 White House Correspondents Association Dinner. For his accomplishments, Time magazine recognized him as one of the 100 most influential people of 2014.

- Hall of Fame basketball star Earl Monroe will make his Drew Forum appearance at 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 14, at the Concert Hall in the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts on the Drew University campus at 36 Madison Ave. in Madison.

In an "In the Game" talk with "Earl the Pearl" and Pulitzer Prize-winning sportswriter Ira Berkow, the audience will hear how the former New York Knicks guard influenced the sport with signature moves that piled up points with style. Monroe also will discuss "life after basketball," which includes running a record label and earning a Peabody Award for producing the documentary "Black Magic."

- As this year's Thomas H. Kean Visiting Lecturer, the esteemed biographer Ron Chernow will illuminate the life and times of Alexander Hamilton, the subject of his 2004 book, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, in the Simon Forum on the Drew University campus.

The author recently entered the popular-culture consciousness when Lin-Man-



The Drew Forum features comic Seth Meyers, **above**, at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4, and biographer Ron Chernow, **below**, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 5.



uel Miranda, creator of the Pulitzer-Prize winning musical "Hamilton," credited him with inspiring his work. Chernow is also the play's historical adviser.

Tickets for the Seth Meyers program at the Mayo Performing Arts Center are \$45 and can be purchased online at mayoarts.org. Tickets for the Earl Monroe and Ron Chernow talks are \$32 each and are available online at tickets.shakespearenj.org.

YOUR TABLE IS READY

Prix Fixe Dinners at the Black Forest Inn

By Deb McCoy

Prix Fixe dinners are a big hit at the Black Forest Inn in Stanhope. From 5 to 6:30pm on Wednesdays through Fridays, early bird diners get a real treat at the Black Forest Inn's Prix Fixe Dinners. The extensive menu created by their award-winning, European-trained chefs features a wide variety of Continental entrees along with some of their German specialties. The Black Forest Inn Prix Fixe Dinner starts with your choice of soup, salad or appetizer. It is followed by entrées including some seafood favorites such as Grilled or Poached Salmon, Icelandic Sole in a potato crust, or a Linguini with Scallops, Shrimp, Salmon and Sole. Also available are items like the Breast of Chicken with a choice of Gruyere, Française or Zucchini, Mozzarella au Gratin or the Beef Stroganoff. Naturally, some of their German-style favorites like Sauerbraten, Beef Rouladen or Roast Pork, Roastbraten with Fried Onions and Veal Schnitzlette Gruyere, one of their signature dishes, are also available. The Early Bird Prix Fixe comes with your choice of dessert: Apple Strudel, Chocolate Mousse, Cheesecake, Assorted Ice Cream flavors, or Rice Pudding. Coffee or tea are also included. The price of the Black Forest Inn's Early Bird Prix Fixe Dinner is \$26.50 per person plus tax and gratuity.

Another special happening at the Black Forest Inn is a Ticket-Only event, the Winter Harvest Game Dinner. Three events take place in February, with the first one being on Friday, February 3rd. Check the website for information.

The restaurant is open on Valentine's Day, Tuesday, February 14th. The website will feature a Valentine menu soon.

As always, attention is not only given to culinary delights at the Black Forest Inn. An extensive beer and wine menu offer the perfect accompaniments to any meal.

The Black Forest Inn is conveniently located at 249 US Highway 206 North in Stanhope, NJ, just a minute or so from exit 25 off of Route 80. The restaurant is open Wednesday through Sunday with luncheon being served Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 11:30 am until 2. Dinner is offered Wednesday through Friday from 5 pm until 10 pm, and on Saturday from 5 pm until 10. Enjoy a Sunday meal from 1pm until 8. The restaurant is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. For reservations and more details, call the restaurant at 908-347-3344 or visit the website www.blackforestinn.com.

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• MUSIC CALENDAR •

BLUEGRASS

"Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry" will be presented by The Hillbenders at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3, at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg. Forty-five years after its initial release, The Who's iconic rock opera, "Tommy," has been transformed by The Hillbenders into a full-length bluegrass tribute. Tickets cost \$15 or \$25 and can be purchased at www.rvccarts.org.

CHORAL

"Fit for a King," will be presented by Masterwork Chorus at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at the Concert Hall at Drew University. This performance features Handel Coronation Anthems and Bach Cantata BWV 207a. It's all about pomp and circumstance as Handel, in his first work as a British citizen, crowns King George II of England, and J. S. Bach celebrates King Augustus III of Poland. Tickets to the performance and a champagne reception cost \$55, or \$38 for the concert only.

"From Heaven Distilled a Clemency" will be presented by Harmonium Choral Society at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at the Cha-

tham United Methodist Church, 460 Main St, Chatham. This concert will feature Durufle's "Requiem" and works by O'Regan, Poulenc, Heath, Chesnokov and Nico Muhly, with strings, harp and organ.

CLASSICAL

National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine will perform at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. The program will include "Overture to La Forza del Destino" (Verdi), "Violin Concerto No. 2" (Stankovych); Violin Soloist: Dima Tkachenko, "Pathetique;" Symphony No. 6 (Tchaikovsky). Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

INTERNATIONAL

Taj Express will perform at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. Taj Express explodes with the sounds of India and Bollywood, capturing the vibrant, expressive spirit of the world of Bollywood movies. Go on a high-energy celebration of Indian pop music and Bollywood culture and traditions, featuring colorful costumes, joyful dance and thrilling live music. Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

JAZZ

Chris Botti will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 17, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. Trumpet legend Botti is the world's best selling jazz instrumentalist. Tickets cost \$49 to \$99.

OLDIES

The Temptations and The Four Tops will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 4, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. From "Baby, I Need Your Loving" to "My Girl," enjoy an evening full of your favorite Motown memories from two classic 1960s hitmakers. Tickets cost \$69 to \$109.

Rickie Lee Jones and Madeleine Peyroux will perform at 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 6, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. Two-time Grammy winner Rickie Lee Jones exploded onto the pop scene in 1978 with "Chuck E's In Love" and has made a career of fearlessly experimenting with her sound and persona over 15 critically acclaimed albums. Since 1996, Madeleine Peyroux has drawn comparisons to the likes of Billie Holiday for her original works and her intimately



SAL VALENTINETTI AT MAYO

Sal Valentinetti, the 20-something golden-voiced crooner who nearly swept Season 11 of "America's Got Talent," comes to Morristown's Mayo Performing Arts Center at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24. Known as "Sal the Voice," he follows in the footsteps of traditional entertainers like Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Tony Bennett with old school class and charm. Tickets cost \$29 to \$69.

arranged covers of classic blues and jazz. Tickets cost \$29 to \$69. 232-9400.

OPERA

"Opera To Die For! – 'La Traviata'" will be presented by New Jersey Festival Orchestra (NJFO) at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 5, at the Concert Hall at Drew University. Verdi's soaring arias and passionate duets have long made "La Traviata" one of the most popular operas of all time. A cast of internationally acclaimed guest performers assembled from Maestro David Wroe's extensive contacts in European and American opera houses joins NJFO to present, acted and in costume, this powerful romantic drama. Tickets cost \$28 to \$76 and can be purchased by calling (908)

PIANO

"Return of Dueling Pianists," presented by Discovery Orchestra, will be staged at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26, at the Concert Hall at Drew University. Sensational pianists Ko-Eun Yi and Daniel Hsu will leave you breathless with their performances of virtuosic gems from the piano repertoire, with commentary from Maestro Maull. Discovery Concerts are hosted by artistic director George Marriner Maull. They are appropriate for ages 10 and up. Tickets cost \$40 for adults or \$20 for seniors, students and groups of 10 or more. To purchase tickets, call (908) 226-7300, ext. 10.

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 12

• POTPOURRI •

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Dried Flower Workshop with Marge Hulstrunk will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, in the Haggerty Center at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Avenue in Morris Township. The promise of spring is given glorious expression in these richly romantic wreaths made with assorted dried herbs and flowers from our own cutting garden. Hulstrunk, a professional floral designer and owner of Flowers by Marjorie in Morris Plains will guide you through the process of making your own dried flower wreath in either of two totally different designs. One is a single 15" diameter wreath, the other is a trio of small wreaths hung from a branch. Choosing will be the hardest part. The snow date for this program is Sunday, Feb. 19. This program costs \$45 for members or \$50 for non-members. Register by Saturday, Jan. 14, at www.arboretumfriends.org.

BOOKS

Introduction To Book Publishing will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Feb. 1, 8, 15, and 22 at Chester Camera, Route 206 in the Shop Rite plaza in Chester. The instructor is author Loren Spiotta-DiMare of Tewksbury Township. The class costs \$100 and registration by Friday, Jan. 27, is required. For more information or to register, call (908) 879-7100 or email chestercamera2@gmail.com.

COOKING

Cooking Demonstration: Comfort Food will be presented from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29, at the Haggerty Center at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Avenue in Morris Township. Certain foods promise solace as much as they do fuel. What better way to spend a chilly winter afternoon than learning some new recipes that will quickly become your favorite comfort food. In this cooking demonstration, chef and master gardener Cynthia Triolo shares some of her best recipes to warm your heart and hearth. This program costs \$20 for members or \$25 for non-members. Register by Sunday, Jan. 22, at www.arboretumfriends.org.

Eating With The Seasons will be presented from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26, at the Schiff Nature Center, 339 Pleasant Valley Road in Mendham. Join our Schiff naturalist as we explore ways to cook for a compassionate planet, healthy body, and peaceful mind. This workshop will focus on winter foods that brighten your mood and revive your metabolism. Guests will leave with a dish to enjoy at home, recipes and with a good

sense of how to consume and cook with the seasons. This event is for ages 18 and up. Members pay \$20. Non members pay \$25. To register, call (973) 543-6004 or visit www.schiffnaturepreserve.org.

ECO-FUN

The regular meeting of the North American Butterfly Association will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at the Haggerty Center at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Avenue in Morris Township. New members are welcome.


EDUCATIONAL

The Benjamin Blackburn Scholarship Lecture will be held 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4, at the Haggerty Center at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Avenue in Morris Township. R. William Thomas, executive director of Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa., will speak. Dr. Blackburn taught botany at Drew University, authored numerous books and papers on horticulture and hosted a popular radio program for many years. His work at facilities of the Morris County Park Commission, Willowwood Arboretum, and his counsel on the development of The Frelinghuysen Arboretum were important contributions to the continuing legacy of beauty at these properties. Thomas is the executive director of one of America's most beautiful, romantic and imaginative gardens – Chanticleer. Thomas' talk will feature his new book, "The Art of Gardening: Design Inspiration and Innovative Planting Techniques from Chanticleer." Proceeds from this lecture benefit the Blackburn Scholarship, which is offered to students of the Landscape Technology program at County College of Morris. Admission costs \$20. For information and to pre-register, visit arboretumfriends.org.

A lecture on the Utah Bears Ears National Monument will be held from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, at the Library of the Chathams, 214 Main Street, Chatham. The Sierra Club Loantaka Group will present Debbie Young, Sierra Club Utah Issues Coordinator, who will talk about her fight to promote the establishment of the Utah Bears Ears National Monument. She will have lots of pictures to share. Join us and learn about this beautiful part of our country. The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information, call (908) 233-2414.

Edison's New Jersey will be presented at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the Morris Museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road, Morris

PLEASE SEE POTPOURRI, PAGE 16



Hello book lovers & book groups

We are planning a monthly feature on local book clubs and we would love to hear from you.

This is a sampling of what we are looking for:

- ~ How would you describe your group?
- ~ Do you have a name, how many members, professions, what do you have in common?
- ~ How is your group structured?
- ~ Where do you meet? Members' homes? The library? How often do you meet? any annual events? traditions?
- ~ How do you choose your books? Do you focus on any themes? Are there any rules, like the book must be available in paperback? How far in advance do you pick your books?
- ~ Do you have any special activities? For instance, do you celebrate the club's anniversaries? Trips? Dinners out?
- ~ What have been your most interesting discussions?
- ~ What have been your favorite fiction selections?
- ~ What have been your favorite non-fiction selections?

And please don't forget to include a picture of your group and who and where you are from.

Email your information to Roberta Burkhart (Editor) at rburkhart@newjerseyhills.com. Any questions, call Liz Parker (Exec. Editor) or Roberta at (908) 766-2118.

Thanks and we look forward to hearing from you.

· THEATER CALENDAR ·

COMEDY

Howie Mandel will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 27, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Comedian and America's Got Talent judge Howie Mandel returns for another off-the-cuff, anything-goes evening of laughs. Language, Mature content. Adults only. Tickets cost \$49 to \$99 and can be purchased at www.mayoarts.org or by calling (973) 539-8008.

Bobby Collins will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Comedian Collins is a storyteller whose heartfelt humor engages audiences with a hilarious blend of characterizations to which everyone can relate. Language, mature themes. Tickets cost \$39 to \$59.

Piff the Magic Dragon will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, March 3, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Piff is back and funnier than ever in an all new magic show! Piff the Magic Dragon, the standout star of 2015's America's Got Talent, returns to MPAC with his one-man magic show that features lots of laughs, jaw-dropping magic tricks and his sidekick, Mr. Piffles, the world's first magic performing Chihuahua. Tickets cost \$29 to \$49.

Graeme of Thrones will be staged at 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 29, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. This original, hilarious and unauthorized take on "Game of Thrones" comes direct from London's West End. Unhappy with how his beloved books were realized for the TV series, avid "Thrones" fan Graeme shows you how it should have been done. He may lack talent and performance skills, but he's sure George R.R. Martin would



'ONCE' AT MAYO

"Once," the winner of eight 2012 Tony Awards including Best Musical and winner of the 2013 Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album, will be staged at 2 and 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 12, at Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. "Once" tells the story of an Irish musician and a Czech immigrant drawn together by their shared love of music. Over the course of one fateful week, their unexpected friendship and collaboration evolves into a powerful but complicated romance, heightened by the raw emotion of the songs they create together. Tickets cost \$49 to \$89.

approve. See it before the inevitable lawsuit! Tickets cost \$29 to \$59 and can be purchased at www.mayoarts.org.

MEDIUM

Kim Russo will call the spirits at 8 p.m. Thursday, March 30, at the Mayo Performing

Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Known as "The Happy Medium," Russo is no stranger to the paranormal world; she's been able to communicate with spirits since the age of nine. Join the star of Lifetime Movie Networks' hit show The Haunting of... for a very special spiritual journey as she shares insights from beyond. Tickets cost \$29 to \$59.

MUSICALS

"Into The Woods" will be staged at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Venture back "Into the Woods" with the Tony

Award-winning musical classic by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine that has been remounted like you've never seen it before. Tickets cost \$49 to \$89.

ONE-MAN SHOWS

"One Woman Sex and the City" will be staged at 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 22, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street, Morristown. Go on a laughter-infused version of all six seasons of "Sex and the City." Comedic whirling dervish Kerry Ipema brings all of your favorite characters to life as they brunch, banter, argue, support each other and swoon over men and Manolos. Tickets cost \$25 to \$45.

OPERA

Gioachino Rossini's "The Barber of Seville," will be presented by the Light Opera of New Jersey at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, April 7 and 8. Tickets for can be purchased online at <http://www.lonj.org/tickets/> or by calling (908) 655-6023.

Stephen Sondheim's "Sweeney Todd" will be presented by the Light Opera of New Jersey at 8 p.m. July 14, 15, 21 and 22, and at 2 p.m. July 16 and 23, 2017, at South Orange Performing Arts Center, 1 SOPAC Way in South Orange. Buy tickets at <http://www.sopacnow.org/> or by calling (973) 313-2787.

PLAYS

"Ravenscroft," will be staged in 12 performances from today, Thursday, Jan. 26, through Sunday, Feb. 12, on the Bickford Theatre stage inside the museum, 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morris Township. Tickets cost \$45 for the general public, \$40 for seniors, \$38 for museum members, \$33 per person for groups of 10 or more, or \$20 for students under age 18 or with valid college ID. Tickets may be purchased online at www.morrismuseum.org, by phone at (973) 971-3706, or in person at the Box Office.

The world premiere of "The Surrogate" by Patricia Cotter will be staged from Friday, Feb. 17, through Sunday, March 5, at Centenary Stage Company's Sitnik Theater in Hackettstown. When Billy and Sara ask their best friends Margaret and Jen to be the guardians of their precious Tallulah (and yet-to-be-born baby, Carroll), lives change and friendships are tested, and the definition of what makes a modern family is rewritten. Tickets cost \$27.50 to \$17.50. To purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystageco.org, call (908) 979-0900, or go to the Lackland Center box office, 715 Grand Ave. in Hackettstown.

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'Hidden Figures' amounts to an important tale

By **MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER**
FILM CRITIC

>> MOVIE REVIEW

Watching director Theodore Melfi's "Hidden Figures," about the African-American women working for NASA who were instrumental if not indispensable to getting our first man in space, we scratch our heads and can't help but ask ourselves, "How come I didn't know this?"

But figuring the truth here isn't rocket science. So many years after the fact, it's the same depth of prejudice that hampered Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson and their sister colleagues from convincing the space agency of their genius that has squirreled away their story.

This is a civics lesson, especially important at this tremulous juncture when a sizable portion of our population wishes to forego the humanitarian advancement of our species for the sake of a personal interest that they've been tricked into believing is at war with all progressive thought.

As such, its dramatically satisfying treatise on the snail's pace of civil rights is just as much pragmatic as it is sweetly idealistic. By personalizing the tale through the eyes of its three protagonists, the screenplay studies the stresses, fears and ingrained mysteries of bigotry.

Thus we shockingly learn that, at Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., where Al Harrison, played by Kevin Costner, heads the Space Task Group of the era's supposed Best and the Brightest, Jim Crow is very much alive and at work, keeping humankind from its destiny. There, working at the segregated West Area Computers section, circa 1962, Katherine, a math wiz played by Taraji P. Henson; Dorothy, a team leader portrayed by Octavia Spencer; and Janelle Monáe's Mary Jackson, an engineer, crunch important numbers in relative obscurity.

But, as necessity is the mother of invention, sometimes it can also be the arbitrator of racial tolerance: i.e. – As admirable as Branch Rickey's decision was to have Jackie Robinson break the Major League Baseball color line, it was essentially a way for the sport to at last avail itself of the vast talent pool swelling the Negro leagues.

Likewise, when it's discovered just how brilliant Katherine is, she's invited to work alongside her white counterparts. However, just like the famed Brooklyn Dodger, her admittance is fraught with rather unseemly resistance.

In a tragicomic comment on the invisible wall that defies reason in the name of deep-rooted bias, it is a while before Costner's Al Harrison, the egghead boss under pressure to catch up with the Russians

'Hidden Figures,' rated PG, is a Twentieth Century Fox release directed by Theodore Melfi and stars Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer and Janelle Monáe. Running time: 127 minutes

★★★☆☆

'By personalizing the tale through the eyes of its three protagonists, the screenplay studies the stresses, fears and ingrained mysteries of bigotry.'

following the Sputnik's success, becomes aware of the roadblocks Katherine faces. But he is a devoted scientist who doesn't suffer foolery.

So, when he discovers that Katherine is away from her desk for inordinate amounts of time because she has to run a half mile each way to the "colored only" bathroom, we cheer his abashment and resolution.

In smart, contextual contrast to the hard work of tearing down the unproductive, age-old injustice of discrimination that Katherine, Dorothy and Mary devote themselves to, director Melfi intersperses the drama with real-life images from the era. Footage of President John F. Kennedy exhorting us to noble deeds cannot help but bring a tear as we are reminded of the hope for social enlightenment that was snatched from us.

Putting it in perspective, while we Americans at that time, both Democrat and Republican, were of course devoted to our partisan ideologies, we were not so divided that we couldn't imagine a greater good – one we knew we were capable of attaining if we selflessly sought it. But the assassination launched a cynicism that eroded the postwar feeling of renewed innocence, vitality and goodwill, causing us a suspicion of conspiracy at almost every turn, too often corroborated. It helped fuel the revolutionary 1960s, was held at bay, but has now again reared its ugly head.

Our story takes place at the nexus between these two epochs, when the country still has an appetite for real, honest-to-good-

ness heroes and anxiously anticipates our astronauts catching up with and surpassing those darn Russian cosmonauts. The Cold War is being played out in the heavens.

Managing a balancing act between suing for their rights and nonetheless championing the pioneering efforts of a land that once counted them as 3/5ths of a citizen, the story of our mathematical troika is an uplifting, educational and compelling lesson in patriotism.

Coupled with the technical ins and outs of putting a manned rocket out among

the stars, this PG-rated cornucopia of human potential should be liberally shown in schools wherever parents want their children to be able to say, "Yes we can." Indeed, we are impressed as well as thankful when we learn that John Glenn insisted that Katherine look over the trajectory numbers before he would leave Earth.

For in the process, the mathematician did some trailblazing of her own, clearing the path for future generations to dream out in the open, and not as "Hidden Figures."



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• KIDS CALENDAR •

HANDS-ON

A Winter's Day on the Farm will be held from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5, at Fosterfields Living Historic Farm off Kahdena Road in Morris Township. Enjoy a tractor-pulled wagon ride, wood sawing, and watch as the farmers harvest ice on the pond, weather permitting. Meet the Jersey cows, draft horses, and other farm animals. Visit the farmhouse where food is being prepared and the atmosphere is warm and cozy. Admission costs \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$6 for children ages 4-16, and \$4 for ages 2 and 3. Friends members are admitted at half price with a current membership card.

Seedlings: Shadows of Spring will be presented for ages 3-5 from 11 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Feb. 22, at the Haggerty Center of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morris Township. Hooray! The days are getting longer, signaling spring is coming. Discover why plants need light and how it helps them grow. Hear a story read aloud, and take a guided walk through the gardens. Dress for the weather. This program costs \$5 per child.



Matilda's Tea Party, above, will be hosted from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 11, at The Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morris Township. At this annual tea, discover how the former resident, Matilda Frelinghuysen, dressed to play in the gardens of the grand Whippany Farm, now The Frelinghuysen Arboretum. Attendees will also learn that the bigger-is-better hat craze of the early 20th century launched the environmental movement of today. Begin the day by creating your very own hat from feathers, beads, tulle, and sparkles to wear and take home. Space is limited, and pre-registration is required.



MAPLE SUGARING

Watch the maple sugaring process from start to finish on Jan. 28 and 29 and Feb. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26, at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center in Chatham Township.

The cost is \$25 per person. This program is appropriate for adults and children ages 6 and older. For more information and to register, visit arboretumfriends.org or call (973) 326-7603.

NATURE FUN

Snowshoe Sundays: Moderate for ages 10 and up will be held Sundays, Feb. 5, 12 and 26, at the Morris County Parks Commission's Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Boonton. Enjoy an afternoon of guided snowshoeing and trekking. Call (973) 334-3130 to check conditions and to register. No experience necessary. Arrive by 1 p.m. if renting shoes or 1:30 p.m. if using your own. The trek costs \$5 per person, or \$15 if renting snowshoes.

Outdoor Adventure Skills: Keeping Warm for ages 10-15 will be held from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 1, at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd, Chatham Township. In this new series, older kids can satisfy their appetites for adventure and learn wilderness and survival skills. Each month's program features a different theme. In this class, learn why "cotton kills" and different techniques for keeping your body temperature at a safe level. This program costs \$10

per person.

Tree Time for Tykes: Valentines in the Forest will be held at 10 a.m. Monday, Feb. 13, at the Schiff Nature Center, 339 Pleasant Valley Road, Mendham. As winter is upon us, the wildlife and views of the forest change in response to the winter weather. Through story, walk, and craft, our Schiff naturalist helps children to explore the different ways the forest and all of its inhabitants thrive and survive the winter months. Ages 2-4 with an adult. Members pay \$10 per adult/child pair. Non members pay \$15 per pair. Advance registration is required by calling (973) 543-6004.

Winter Birds Hike: Moderate for ages seven and up will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, at the Morris County Parks Commission's Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area in Boonton. Learn to recognize some common birds by their songs. This weekend is the Great Backyard Bird Count. Learn how to be citizen scientists, and report local bird sightings. This program costs \$1 per person.

STORYTIME

The 11th annual Storytelling Festival of World Music and Story will begin at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 12, 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 and tickets can be purchased at <http://www.ccm.edu/tickets/storytelling.asp>.

THEATER

"YAS: A Thousand Cranes" by Kathryn Schultz Miller and based on the book by Eleanor Coerr, will be presented at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, in Centenary Stage Company's Little Theater, 400 Jefferson St. in Hackettstown. This is a true story of the young Japanese girl Sadako Sasaki, who inspired an international peace movement. "A Thousand Cranes" combines Japanese and American language, music and dance, and highlights Japanese society in the after-math of World War II. Sadako was 2 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. When she later developed radiation sickness, Sadako remembered an old story: if a person will just make 1,000 cranes, the gods will grant her a wish and make her healthy. Sadako did not live to finish her cranes, but her friends took up the task and built a monument for her and all the children killed by the atomic bomb. This show is appropriate for

grades 5 to 12. Tickets cost \$12.50 or \$10. To purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystageco.org, call the box office at (908) 979-0900, or go to the box office in the David and Carol Lackland Center, 715 Grand Avenue, on the campus of Centenary College in Hackettstown. The box office is open 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays to Fridays and two hours prior to every performance.

"The Rainbow Fish" – Sensory Friendly Performance will be staged at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. The most beautiful creature in the ocean is asked to sacrifice the one thing that makes her unique in order to share her gifts with those around her. This show is intended for ages 4-10. The performance features modulated sound and light levels and a relaxed environment where the audience is free to talk, vocalize, and leave and re-enter the seating area. Tickets cost \$12 or \$15 and can be purchased at www.mayoarts.org.

Dr. Seuss's "The Cat in the Hat" will be staged at 1:30 and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, March 12, at the Mayo Performing Arts Center, 100 South Street in Morristown. This show is intended for ages 3-10. Tickets cost \$12 or \$15 and can be purchased at www.mayoarts.org.

• COMING UP ON CAMPUS •

CENTENARY COLLEGE

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

- **January Thaw Music Festival:** Sweet Plantain Quartet performs at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28. Artfully fusing the western classical traditions in which they were trained with the hip-hop, jazz improv, and Latin rhythms on which they were raised, Sweet Plantain's unique repertoire and live shows educate and entertain. Through original compositions and arrangements, and with their use of extended percussive techniques, the group awakens audiences to new possibilities in chamber music. Advance tickets cost \$22.50 for adults and \$17.50 for children under age 12. Ticket prices increase by \$5 on the day of the performance.

- **The Music of Lisa Baldwin and Dave Haney,** a special concert to benefit 'Innovation Initiatives' by faculty, staff, and students of Centenary University, will be staged at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4 at the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Center. Tickets cost \$20 for adults or \$15 for seniors, children and students. Baldwin and Haney play acoustic music that includes Lisa's original songs, bluegrass, country, traditional folk, and the work of contemporary singer-songwriters. For more information about music from Lisa Baldwin and Dave Haney visit: www.baldwinhaney.com

- **The world premiere of "The Surrogate"** by Patricia Cotter will be staged from Friday, Feb. 17, through Sunday, March 5, at the Sitnik Theater. When Billy and Sara ask their best friends Margaret and Jen to be the guardians of their precious Tallulah (and yet-to-be-born baby, Carroll), lives change and friendships are tested, and the definition of what makes a modern family is rewritten. Tickets cost \$27.50 to \$17.50.

- **"YAS: A Thousand Cranes"** by Kathryn Schultz Miller and based on the book by Eleanor Coerr, will be presented at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, in the Little Theater, 400 Jefferson St. in Hackettstown. This is a true story of the young Japanese girl Sadako Sasaki, who inspired an international peace movement. "A Thousand Cranes" combines Japanese and American language, music and dance, and highlights Japanese society in the after-math of World War II. This show is appropriate for grades 5 to 12. Tickets cost \$12.50 or \$10.

To purchase tickets, visit www.centenarystageco.org, call the box office at (908) 979-0900, or go to the box office in the David and Carol Lackland Center, 715 Grand Avenue, on the campus of Centenary College in Hackettstown. The box office is open 1



'BETTE DAVIS AIN'T FOR SISSIES'

"Bette Davis Ain't For Sissies" starring Jessica Sherr, **above**, will be staged at noon and 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, at the Theatre at Raritan Valley Community College, 118 Lamington Road in Branchburg. In Jessica Sherr's one-woman show, audiences get a glimpse into Bette Davis' most defining moments as a tenacious young starlet fighting her way to the top, battling to win freedom from Hollywood's studio moguls.

to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and two hours prior to every performance.

COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS

214 Center Grove Road, Randolph Township

- 11th annual Storytelling Festival of World Music and Story will begin at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 12, 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 and tickets can be purchased at <http://www.ccm.edu/tickets/storytelling.asp>.

DREW UNIVERSITY

- The Morgenstern Trio will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18, at The Concert Hall at Drew University. To name a piano trio after the popular nineteenth century German poet Christian Morgenstern was the inspiration of Catherine Klipfel, piano, Stefan Hempel, violin, and Emanuel Wehse, cellist, who met during their studies at the Folkwang Conservatory in Essen, Germany. After

only two short years of working together, the Morgenstern Trio emerged on the German Music Scene by being awarded top prizes and awards, such as the prestigious US Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio Award in 2010. Tickets cost \$30 and can be purchased at <https://tickets.shakespearenj.org/Theatre-Manager/1/online?performance=9784>

- "Return of Dueling Pianists," presented by Discovery Orchestra, will be staged at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26, at the Concert Hall at Drew University. Sensational pianists Ko-Eun Yi and Daniel Hsu will leave you breathless with their performances of virtuosic gems from the piano repertoire, with commentary from Maestro Maull. Discovery Concerts are educational, interactive and entertaining, and are hosted by Artistic Director George Marriner Maull. The show is appropriate for ages 10 and up. Tickets cost \$40 for adults or \$20 for seniors, students and groups of 10 or more. For tickets, call the (908) 226-7300, ext. 10.

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

118 Lamington Road, Branchburg.

- "Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry" will be present-

ed at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3 by The Hillbenders. Forty-five years after its initial release, The Who's iconic rock opera, "Tommy," has been transformed by The Hillbenders into a full-length bluegrass tribute — with all of the original record's energy, instrumental showmanship and rock star vocals intact. The dynamic bluegrass quintet, known for its ability to bridge the gap between musical genres and fans, has recreated the legendary album with a banjo, Dobro, mandolin, bass, and guitar. A classic that appeals to music fans of all ages, this show covers the original album from start to finish, and includes audience participation. Tickets cost \$15 or \$25.

- "Chiflón, el silencio del carbon" will be performed by Silencio Blanco at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10, and 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11. "Chiflón, the Silence of Coal" explores the story of a young miner forced to work in one of the most dangerous mines in Chile. As he toils in peril deep underground, his family faces a day-to-day struggle of uncertainty and anxiety. High imagination and modest scale conspire to create a greatly accessible and deeply engaging puppet work for adults. Brimming with creativity and rich in detail, this exquisitely eloquent retelling of a story by the distinguished Chilean author Baldomero Lillo is played out in silence using simple white marionettes. Tickets cost \$20 for the Friday evening performance or \$15 for the Saturday matinee.

- "Dar He: The Story of Emmett Till" will be performed by Mike Wiley at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 17. In 1955, a 14-year-old black Chicago youth traveled to the Mississippi Delta with country kinfolk and southern cooking on his mind. He walked off the train and into a world he could never understand — a world of thick color lines, of hard-held class systems and unspeakable taboos. Young Emmett crossed that line and stepped into his tragic fate by whistling at a white woman. This riveting play chronicles the murder, trial and unbelievable confession of the men accused of Till's lynching. Tickets cost \$20.

- "The Last of the Red Hot Lovers" will be staged by the Walnut Street Theatre at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18. In the heat of the 1960s sexual revolution, a middle-aged married man sets off to celebrate the decade of free love... before it's too late! Overworked and overweight, Barney Cashman attempts to set up covert trysts with three potential lovers. Mishaps and hilarity follow as Barney begins to rediscover his humanity and learn what is actually missing in his life. Walnut Street Theatre brings its national reputation and unique artistic vision to this wonderful new production of Neil Simon's classic comedy that will leave you crying with laughter. Tickets cost \$25 and \$35.

POTPOURRI: Diverse diversions coming up

FROM PAGE 11

Township. Paul Israel, the director and general editor of the Thomas A. Edison Papers at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, will examine the inventor's impact on the state and discuss the many places in New Jersey associated with him. Tickets cost \$10 and can be purchased by calling (973) 971-3706.

GARDENING

The Tri-State Hosta Society will begin 2017 with a Lunch and Learn meeting at noon Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 East Hanover Avenue in Morris Township. New members are welcome to our annual food competition and short garden lectures by members. Bring an entrée,

side dish or dessert to share and be eligible to win prizes. Talks will be 15 minutes or less.

OUTDOORS

Eagle Watching Trip for ages 18 and up will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5. Participants will meet at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd, Chatham Township. Join this guided van trip into New York and Pennsylvania to view majestic, wintering bald eagles. Dress warmly and bring a bag lunch. Space is extremely limited, so register today. This program costs \$35 per person.

A Full Moon Night Hike will be offered from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11, at the Schiff Nature Center, 239 Pleasant Valley

Road, Mendham. Join a naturalist as we hike two miles around the trails of Schiff to experience the magic of the forest. This program is for ages 8 and up. Members pay \$10 each or our Members only special, \$30 for the immediate family. Non-members pay \$15 per person. Our night hikes are very popular and fill up quickly. Advance registration is required. To register, call (973) 543-6004 or go to www.schiffnaturepreserve.org.

POETRY

Poetry and Pastries, an open poetry reading, will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, at Cafe Beethoven, 262 Main St. in Chatham. Admission costs \$10, which includes coffees, pastries and poetry. Email Marcia Ivans at marciaivans@gmail.com for more information.

• POET'S CORNER •

Ghost

*Graying shadows of ectoplasm
Block the invasive light.
A bold chill lances
The still night air.
Lights dimming, doors opening, slamming,
Souls of old awaken this house.*

Marie DeRienzo
Bedminster Township

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