

ARTS ENTERTAINMENT



Get Outta The House

By CAROL F. DAVIS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

The **Wossing Chinese Music Ensemble** will perform at the First Congregational Church of Westfield, 125 Elmer Street, for the continuation of its acclaimed series of free, half-hour, noonday concerts, the Mid-Day Musicales, on Wednesday, March 13. This program will offer music from the classical Chinese repertoire as well as some modern interpretations of folk music of the oral tradition. The musicians, who come with a long list of honors and awards, will use traditional two-string fiddles, a hammered dulcimer, and drums. Following the concert, a soup and sandwich luncheon will be available in the church's social hall for \$5.

Temple Emanu-El's **Annual Kids Carnival** offers an afternoon of the whole family can enjoy, especially those with young children between the ages of 2 and 10. Carnival activities include games, arts and crafts, a silent auction, refreshments, prizes, and more. The Carnival will be held on Sunday, March 10, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at 756 East Broad Street in Westfield, and is open to the public. Admission is free. Once there, you will need to purchase tickets in order to take advantage of the games, entertainment, and other activities. Proceeds benefit the Temple's Early Education Program.

If you are a fan of **Ragtime**, you will enjoy **Once on This Island**, an exciting musical that tells that oh-so-familiar tale of a peasant girl who falls in love with a boy from the other side of town. It's all about unrequited love, but not without first exploring class distinction, the pursuit of dreams, clashing with your parents, and even death. There will be several performances at both The First Congregational Church in Westfield (March 9 and 10), and The United Church of Christ in Plainfield (March 16 and 17). It's just \$12 for adults, and \$6 if you cannot get a babysitter. All performances begin at 8 p.m. Choose your church, and purchase tickets at Marylou's Memorabilia or the Town Book Store in Westfield, and at Margie's Cakebox and The Plainfield Performing Arts Center in Plainfield.

On Sunday, March 17, Temple Sha'arey Shalom in Springfield will highlight this year's theme of "**Finding Wholeness in Judaism**" with a day of Jewish learning and celebration of the Torah. It begins at 12:30 p.m. with a variety of workshops, with topics including Adult Torah Study, ideas for a creative Seder, and even a Passover craft project for kids. Later, at 3 p.m., noted composer, performer, and educator Sam Glaser will present *Kol Bamidbar*. It means "A Voice in the Desert" and it is an interactive musical which will both entertain and educate. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. \$5 for kids, and no more than \$25 for an entire family. Call them at (973) 379-5387.

Richard Lewis

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Super neurotic and chockful of angst, Lewis, who was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., has been able to look at his darker side (and we don't mean his wardrobe of black garb), and help others with similar vices. His volume, **"The Other Great Depression: How I'm Overcoming, on a Daily Basis, at Least a Million Addictions and Dysfunctions and Finding a Spiritual (Sometimes) Life,"** might just build a bridge between the famous comic and his audience, once again.

Mel Brook's 1993 comedy, *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* featured Lewis, just after he starred opposite Jamie Lee Curtis in ABC's short-lived sitcom, *"Anything But Love"* (1989-1992). More recently, he has begun his third season on the award-winning HBO series *"Curb Your Enthusiasm."*

All joshing aside, we're hoping Lewis can curb his issues long enough to prove again to his audiences what a stand-up guy he can really be.

Schubert and Mozart Pieces Set at Holy Trinity Church

WESTFIELD - Two rarely heard works for Passiontide will be performed on Sunday, March 17, at 4 p.m. at The Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity, Westfield Avenue and First Street, Westfield.

The Holy Trinity Choir, Soloists, and Orchestra will present the *Grabmusik* (K.42) by Mozart and the *Stabat Mater* in

POPCORN™ Dragonfly: Let Us Flee From This Fly That Is Flawed

One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
1 popcorn

When Dr. Joe Darrow (Kevin Costner) begins telling friends and coworkers that his recently deceased wife, Emily (Susanna Thompson), is trying to make contact with him through hospital patients experiencing near-death experiences, they think he's crazy. But he soon has company. Because after about 30 minutes of sitting through director Tom Shadyac's bogus attempt at making like filmmaker M. Night Shyamalan (*The Sixth Sense*), you think that surely you'll go crazy.

The combination of incredulity and boredom that *Dragonfly* is certain to engender in poor unsuspecting viewers is mind-boggling. But it inevitably leads to the real brain teaser: trying to figure out how Kevin Costner is able to continually make movies like this and still maintain a mailing address, let alone a fashionable one.

Few denizens of Hollywood could sustain the career-crushing damage of a *Waterworld* (1995). But that flub was just an appetizer from Costner. He has since managed to follow it up with *The Postman* (1997) and *3,000 Miles to Graceland* (2001).

Yet they're still asking him to make movies. Which can only suggest that the actor has star power and the ever-loyal niche audience that comes with it.

He is a modern take on yesteryear's matinee idol, playing a sensitive, hopeless romantic whose specialty is lost causes and the re-kindling of old loves. He is a package that arrives with a tacitly implied promise: If this guy loves you, he's not ever leaving. Guaranteed. Possessing such an attribute is not quite like having talent, but it sure comes in handy if your critical successes have of late been far and few between.

Now with *Dragonfly*, it appears that director Shadyac would like to parody that heartthrob cachet into a little supernatural hocus-pocus — maybe even cash in on having audiences confuse Costner with Bruce Willis for a little while. The resulting mish-mash is a transparent combining of ideas from the aforementioned *Sixth Sense* (1999) and the dreadfully saccharine *Message In A Bottle* (1999).

Of course it doesn't work...artistically, that is. But again, considering Costner's track record, maybe that's beside the point. Because if nothing else, Kevin the Romantic rides again.

For gosh sakes, his wife's dead this go-round and he still won't give up. Remember, though, Costner is the Energizer Fantasy. He just keeps on loving. No second marriage for this guy after a respectable period of grieving. No siree. He mates for life, and maybe even death.

Dr. Joe Darrow, though strictly a man of science who poo-pooed any talk of an after-life prior to his wife's disappearance in the jungles of Venezuela, is now willing to believe practically anything. Ah, but did you catch the use of the word "disappearance," and not "death" this go-round? Yup, right out of the daytime soaps.

You see, the bus that was transporting Dr. Emily Darrow and her fellow Red Cross workers on that fateful day six months ago, tragically cascaded down the side of a mountain. And of those victims recovered, there were no survivors. Of course, they never found the pretty humanitarian's body.

Naturally, or maybe supernaturally, that leaves the door wide open for all sorts of conjecture. But evidencing no filmic sleight of hand to intrigue us with, filmmaker Shadyac merely dumps a smorgasbord of haphazard clues on the table and lets us wallow in the possibilities.

Thus, while the true fate of Dr. Joe's dearly beloved hangs in the balance, the lack of skillfully crafted suspense leading up to the climactic revelation betrays the very essence of mystery.

Ironically, for all its talk about souls, *Dragonfly* is a mere shell of other movies' concepts, a zombie of a film with no creative animus to call its own.

The coming attractions boast of a surprise ending, again a shamefully obvious attempt to associate *Dragonfly* with Shyamalan's superb thriller. And while the twist conclusion actually isn't bad, such fancy footwork in the film's 11th hour is a proverbial case of too little too late.

Some engaging characterization along the way might have helped. But a distractingly overweight Kathy Bates as the ever so logical law professor next door plays like an

inconsequential side-bar, and no one else in the cast has a part big enough to warrant discussion.

So that leaves just you, the popcorn and Kevin in a darkened theater. And for some that might very well be enough. As for the rest of us, *Dragonfly* is one love bug whose bite we'd be wise to avoid.

Dragonfly, rated PG-13, is a Universal Pictures release directed by Tom Shadyac and stars Kevin Costner, Kathy Bates and Susanna Thompson. Running time: 115 minutes.



A piece by Roberto Masi, represented by Galleria D'Arte Paviglianiti in Florence, Italy.

Artexpo New York

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more traditional in flavor, Chicago native Joseph Lorusso, represented by the Kennebeck Editions, demonstrated his education in and love for the technique of Italy's master painters in pieces such as "Close to You."

Florence, Italy resident Roberto Masi, who utilizes color in ways that would seem almost foreign to Lalonde and Lorusso, chooses a more poetic, subdued technique in pieces he presented at Artexpo, such as his sweeping landscapes.

Perhaps the most admirable and impressive quality of Artexpo 2002

came from the artists' and organizers' dedication to provide the attendees more than just something pretty to look at. This year, there was more to ponder and reflect upon — unfortunately stemming from a city which is obviously a little more introspective and guarded since the world changed on 9-11.



"The Swinging Artist" by Joseph Watchman Kaliher

Mogielnicki

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formed in their Young Artist Program. She also participated in the Westminster Choir College Vocal Institute Chamber Choir and the Middle School Vocal Camp for three consecutive summers.

As an eighth grader at Roosevelt Intermediate School, Celine received the Nelson A. Keller Memorial Award, given by the Westfield Foundation for musical achievement.

A member of The Westfield Choral, Celine is involved in her high school Chamber Chorus and Symphony Orchestra. She plays several instruments, including piano, violin and harp. She plans to pursue a career in operatic performance.

Art Carlson

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Front Porch," came to Carlson when he decided once again, on the advice of one of his daughter's friends, to get off the beaten path and trek to a small, working class island off the coast of North Carolina.

Harkers Island, one of those places where "almost every one of the mailboxes and store signs had one of four surnames," is not a destination for most, but for Carlson, it was an inspirational experience.

This grandfather proves that it's never too late to pursue your dreams, and unleash your hidden talents.

Published in the fall of 2001, the book is now widely available and can be found at Amazon and Barnes & Noble websites or by special order at most bookstores. In fact, there is a review on Amazon's website by Alex Williams, a former Mayor of Westfield and the author's good buddy.

The book can also be purchased directly from Carlson by calling him at (908) 281-6922.

By the way, the answer posed by the title, "Why Everyone Needs a Front Porch," makes a lot of sense. Here's a clue: air-conditioning. Pick up the book before you begin to remodel your entryway. If it were up to Carlson, it would be the law.

WESTFIELDERS WIN AT NJPAC FESTIVAL
WESTFIELD - The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark announced that Westfield residents have been named winners of auditions for this year's New Jersey Youth Orchestra Festival.

The weekend-long event, which will be held at NJPAC from Friday, March 8 to Sunday, March 10, will include Kelly Yang, flutist, Matthew Velderman, bassoonist, Thomas Killian, 3rd, violinist, Carl Baron, cellist, and Christopher Velderman, French horn player.

Tickets for the performance are \$12 for general admission and \$7 for children. To purchase tickets, please call (888)-GO-NJPAC.

Requiems On Tap With Oratorio Singers

WESTFIELD - The Oratorio Singers will present its 22nd annual concert with the requiems of Mozart and Fauré on Sunday, March 10, at 3 p.m. at The First United Methodist Church in Westfield.

The chorus and orchestra, under the direction of Trent Johnson, will be joined by soloists Jeannette Ferrell Maraffi, soprano, Betsy Mackenzie-Stubbs, mezzo-soprano, David Scott, bass, and Rufus Müller, tenor.

General admission tickets are \$15, with senior and student admission at \$10.

For concert information, please call the church office at (908) 233-4211, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking is available adjacent to the church.

This arts program is made possible in part by a 2001 HEART Grant (History, Education, Arts — Reaching Thousands) from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Alexander Mirabella, Chairman.

Junior Optimist Club of Westfield Announces Photography Contest

WESTFIELD - The Junior Optimist Club of Westfield has announced the second annual Photography Contest for children and teenagers in grades K-12. The theme for this year's competition is "Westfield in Action."

Gift certificates and other prizes will be awarded to first, second and third place finishers in each age group. The four age groups will be Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12.

Children interested in participating must submit one color photograph of their favorite scene of Westfield in action, in a size no smaller than 4-inches by 6-inches. The child's name, age, grade, address and telephone number should be printed on the back of the photograph.

Entries must be received no later than Wednesday, May 1, and should be forwarded to the Junior Optimist Club, c/o Miriam Zichlin, 515 Mountain Avenue, Westfield, 07090.

Winning entries will be displayed at a location, to be announced, in June.

ae@goleader.com



TECHNICOLOR PERFORMANCE...The cast and crew of *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* are pictured, above, while rehearsing for the March production.

Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat Comes to Roosevelt

WESTFIELD - Roosevelt Intermediate School (RIS) will present the Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* on Friday and Saturday, March 8 and 9 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 10, at 2 p.m. in the Alice Lee Roosevelt Auditorium.

This lively tale incorporates comedy and dance with an eclectic mix of music, ranging from country western to calypso to 1950s rock n' roll. Tickets will be on sale in the lobby 45 minutes prior to each performance.

Roosevelt's new drama teacher, Taryn Glist, is directing the show. Vivian Kaludan is the musical director and will be assisted by the orchestra pit coordinators Michael Fackelman and Brice Freeman. Eduardo Rioseco is a professional colleague of Ms. Glist and is the guest choreographer from New York City. RIS art teacher, Robert Greenwood, has created the scenic design.

Stephen Markowski will perform the title role of "Joseph." Allison Siko and Stephanie Christiano will share the role of the Narrator at each performance. Max Lazar will play Joseph's father, Jacob, and Aaron Eisenberg will portray Pharaoh.

Ted Chou is Potiphar and Julienne Niemiera is Mrs. Potiphar. Alex Forsteinhauser is the Butler, while Leah Fertig-Cohen is the Baker.

The Brothers will be played by Caitlin Jennings, Rachel Mack, Lucas Baran, Matt Renart, Annie Greenberg, Patrick McGowan, Caity Costello, Patrina Caruana, Nichole Vendetti, Sean Sullivan and Pat McCabe.

Featured dancers include Kristin Agüero, Ellen Scariati, Christine Kandigian, Catherine Porta, Julie Shelman, Katherine Itz, Noelle Kandigian, Allie Sisto and Kathleen Solan.

Completing the chorus are Mike Burns, Greg Nelson, Bobby LaForge, Alex Pitchen, James Hooper-Hammersley, David Purdy, Joe Faustine, David Panayiotou, Matt Anzalone, Claire Fox, Deborah Siegel, Jane Kim, Lauren Huff, Elena Tinfow, Emily Kieczkowski, Kayley Graham, Tegest Hailu, Jaelyn Nicoll and Carolyn Haggerty.

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Masterwork Chorus Concert to Include Local Residents

AREA - Westfield resident Richard A. Barker and Scotch Plains residents David K. Barker, Anastasio Carumpalod and Ann DeCamp are members of the Masterwork Chorus.

They will appear with the chorus in a concert entitled, "War and Peace," at the Community Theatre in Morristown on Sunday, March 10, at 3 p.m.

Single tickets are \$20 and \$30. For ticket information, please call the Community Theatre box office at (973) 539-8008.

Evening Recital Set By Musical Club Next Wednesday

WESTFIELD - The Musical Club of Westfield will host an evening recital on Wednesday, March 13, at 8 p.m. at The First Baptist Church in Westfield.

Janet and Paul Somers, Program Chairpersons, have selected a program of varied composers, ensembles and soloists, featuring new and member artists.

Performances will include Elizabethan works by Anon and Sheperd and Thomas Brown, and other works by Johan Joachim Quantz, Mendelssohn, Francis Poulenc, Franz Schubert, Mr. Somers, Peter Warlock, Hugo Wolf, Ned Rorem and Mozart.

Refreshments will be served by the hospitality committee, which is chaired by Daniel Belcher.

For membership information, please call (908) 232-2173.

County Funds Now Available For Arts, Cultural Programs

COUNTY - The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders invites community arts organizations, schools and other non-profit organizations that wish to present cultural programming to apply for funding from the Union County Arts Grant Program.

"The purpose of the grant program is to enrich the quality of life in Union County by stimulating and supporting the production, presentation and creation of all the arts," said Freeholder Chairman Lewis Mingo, Jr. "Arts activities taking place between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2003 are eligible for consideration."

"We are pleased to offer both Special Project and General Operating

Support Grants," stated Freeholder Vice-Chairwoman Mary Ruotolo, Liaison to the Union County Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board.

"Both arts organizations and other non-profit groups providing arts projects are eligible to apply for funding."

"We are very proud that the New Jersey State Council on the Arts has designated our Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs a Major Arts Service Organization for the fifth consecutive year," added Freeholder Mingo.

The Union County Arts Grant Program is administered by the Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs in the Union County Department of Economic Development. Funds for this program are made available through the Local Arts Program of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State.

To request an application and guidelines, or information on other programs and services, please contact the Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth, 07202, call (908) 558-2550, dial 7-1-1 for relay users, or e-mail scoen@unioncountynj.org.

Bravo Center for Dramatic Arts

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