



MAKING AN IMPRESSION...The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, will present "The Age of Impressionism," from Tuesday, June 18, to Sunday, September 8. "Three Dancers" by Hilaire-Germain-Edgar Degas, pastel on paper, will be featured in the exclusive exhibition.

Charlie Brown Production To Aid Cancer Foundation

SCOTCH PLAINS -- A single night's benefit performance of the Broadway musical *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* by the Brick Community Players will be at the Union County College Theatre on Friday, May 31, at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the \$15 admission will benefit the Emmanuel

Cancer Foundation, headquartered in Scotch Plains. Filled with familiar characters, much of this show's charm and humor is timeless. Refreshments will be available. For ticket information, please contact Monica at (908) 322-4323, extension no. 17.

A&E bids farewell to its "Artist of the Week" feature, which will be replaced by more byline stories in future editions. Over the past 3-4 years, we have featured everyone from Amedeo Modigliani (circa 6/17/99) to the most recent artist, Lisa "Left-Eye" Lopez. We hope you enjoy the Modigliani reprint, featured below.

ARTIST OF THE WEEK Amedeo Modigliani, 1884-1920

Italian painter and sculptor, Amedeo Modigliani, battled poverty, tuberculosis and an addiction to drugs and alcohol, while cultivating a unique style through his striking portraits and nudes.

"Life is a gift from the few to the many from those who know and who have to those who know not and have not," Modigliani mused. Influenced by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Paul Cezanne, Modigliani settled in Paris in 1906 and mastered his style which includes patches of flat color, distortion of figures, and elongation of facial features.

One of his most famous pieces, "Young Redhead in an Evening Dress" (1918) is an oil on canvas which captures his distinct signature style.

Living with his wife and favorite model, Jeanne Hébuterne, Modigliani died in Paris at the age of 35. Jeanne committed suicide



"YOUNG REDHEAD IN AN EVENING DRESS" (1918) BARNES FOUNDATION, MERION, PENNSYLVANIA.

thereafter. The price of a Modigliani painting ranges from \$1 to \$15 million.

Songwriters Benefit Concert Scheduled at Trailside Center

MOUNTAINSIDE -- Eight New Jersey singer/songwriters will host a benefit concert on Friday, May 31, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Westfield Municipal Building at 425 East Broad Street in Westfield.

A \$5 admission benefits the Trailside Museum Association. For more information, please call (908) 789-3670.

Organized by singer/songwriter Kenny Woods, the Songwriters in the Round Benefit Concert will include both performances of original songs and conversations about the songwriting process.

The performers include: Kenny Woods, Andy & Denise, Brooke Fox, Samantha Kane, Amy Marie Keller, Ginny Johnston, Tina Vero, and Ray Winch.

'Photocentric Traveler' Demo Organized With Jomo Kenyatta

WESTFIELD -- Jomo Kenyatta will present his demonstration of travel photography at the Westfield Art Association's meeting on Sunday, June 9, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Community Room of the Westfield Municipal Building at 425 East Broad Street in Westfield.

Kenyatta will take attendees on a trip to the Caribbean, particularly to Jamaica and Dominica with photographs of images that the tourism industry

does not show.

Tutored by Tom Jinks, a former freelance photographer, Kenyatta attended Northern Virginia Community College and developed the technical skills that have brought his photography to the close perfection he seeks. While there, he entered his images in photographic competitions and had them successfully placed. Kenyatta also placed twice as finalist in the publication, "The Best of Photography Annual," and he has received recognition for his works in the Westfield Art Association's (WAA) Downtown Art Show in recent years.

The artist feels there is more to the Islands than just what is seen through the tourist's eyes and he wants to share the beauty and simplicity of the Caribbean culture, which he has photographed, to show every minute detail. He has titled his exhibition, "Caribbean Unseen," and it has been displayed recently at The Consulate General of Jamaica in New York City.

Kenyatta is a member of the Advertising Photographers Association, New York Chapter, and the WAA.

The demonstration is free and open to the public. The Community Room is handicapped accessible.

For more information, please call Tobia Meyers at (908) 687-2945.



Get Outta The House

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

Take a ride on Saturday, June 1, to the 14th Annual Appel Farm Arts & Music Festival, 457 Shirley Road in Elmer. From 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., the place will be rockin' with performers on two stages, like Jackson Browne, 4 Way Street, and Guy Davis. The Children's Village will feature puppet shows and other special activities, along with four hours of arts and crafts activities. More than 50 artists will show their wares and demonstrate their talents at the crafts fair, and refreshments, from vegetarian whole foods to your standard chicken and ice cream, will be available. This event is rain or shine, and tickets and information may be obtained by calling (800) 394-1211.

Wanna stay closer to home? Cranford will be the site of the 16th Annual Spring Fine Arts and Crafts at Nomahegan Park on Saturday and Sunday, June 1 and 2. With more than 120 professional artists, photographers, and crafters from the northeast and beyond, this show is sure to have something for everyone. This year's show will feature fine art, stained glass, fiber art, clothing, pottery, wood, and more. "Carnaby Street" will be entertaining the crowds with tunes from the 70s, and refreshments will be available. Admission is free, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine.

Three-time Grammy Award winner Harry Connick, Jr. will perform at The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) on Monday, June 10, and Tuesday, June 11, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets will cost you \$35 to \$65, depending on how close you need to sit to this handsome matinee idol, actor, and music icon. If you are a fan of Sinatra, this young crooner should do it for you. Call toll free, (888) GO-NJPAC.

Monopoly lovers, take note. A Hotel on Marvin Gardens will be playing at the 12 Miles West Theatre Company in Montclair through June 9. This new comedy was written by a New Jersey resident, is more than an all-say game of Monopoly — it turns out to be a metaphor for American greed. Shocking. Shows are on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8 p.m., and there is a Sunday matinee at 3 p.m. The theatre is located in the heart of downtown Montclair at 488 Bloomfield Avenue, in the lower level of the Claridge Cinema Building. For more information or to order tickets (\$15 to \$20), call (973) 746-7181.

Also through June 9, the Morris Museum's Bickford Theatre is featuring Dr. Cook's Garden, by Ira Levin. Yes, the same Ira Levin who brought us "Rosemary's Baby" and "Deathtrap" is at it again with this unnerving thriller. The play is set in rural Vermont, but the town is anything but serene with the discovery of the good doctor's shocking practice. Single performance prices range from \$12 to \$26. The theatre is located at 6 Normandy Heights Road in Morristown. Call for information at (973) 971-3706.

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A R T S E N T E R T A I N M E N T



BY THE SEA...Watercolor paintings, such as the piece pictured above by Westfield Art Association member Lise Masson, will be exhibited at Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside throughout the months of June and July. The exhibit will include the work of artists Sylvia Glesmann of Bridgewater, Jane Lux of Little Silver and Ms. Masson of Howell. For more information, please call (908) 233-3720, extension no. 5379.



POPCORN™ Star Wars: Episode II – Attack Of The Clones: The Stuff Continues

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

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
2 popcorns

Following a viewing of *Star Wars: Episode II-Attack of the Clones*, the latest installment of the quasi-campy, completely folklore-filled sci-fi phenomenon from George Lucas, I think I finally have this all straight now.

You see, this second prequel is actually the sequel to the first prequel. That's right. This is all the stuff that happened before all the other stuff, but not before all the stuff in the first prequel, *Star Wars: Episode I-The Phantom Menace* (1999). And there's going to be even more stuff that happened before the other stuff, meaning before episodes IV, V and VI, before they started all this prequel stuff. But it happens after this stuff. So it'll be a sequel to this prequel, and released in 2005; currently it's only referred to as *Star Wars: Episode III*. Don't worry. They'll add more stuff to the title.

Bottom line: like it or not, it sure is a lot of stuff. And with this jaunt around the galaxy you get a full two hours and 20 minutes of it.

Young minds with sponge-like capabilities who simply can't get enough of this, er, stuff, will sop it all up and have a blast piecing together all the lore and lineage. Because in solving Lucas' mythological jigsaw puzzle, doubtless there comes a certain serenity, a sort of affirmation that all is well with the world, even if it is a phony world: "Wow, Ryan. That's the grandfather of the guy who later becomes the evil dude in 'Episode Whatever.' Insane!"

Older non-fans and others among the great unwashed may want to double up on the Ginkgo Biloba before trying to assimilate the names, places, and legends that make the *Star Wars* series the modern operatic hit it is. If you haven't saved one of the handy-dandy librettos supplied by the Sunday supplements, it is suggested you enlist the aid of a young relative. By now they've seen it seven times. And for the chance of seeing it an eighth time, he or she will more than likely be willing to guide you through the voluminous tall tale.

If for one have enough trouble navigating my own heritage and the multifarious doctrines and mores that form its ethos without having to learn a synthetic civilization. Let's see...Shmuel begat Jedediah, who knew Lotte Lenya, and they begat Benny, or something like that. The main rule is you shouldn't look back or you'll turn to salt. That, and be good to your parents. Oh, and if you're in college, do your best to make it out in four years so the folks don't have to postpone their retire-

ment just so you can goof-off for another year. I'm a little shaky on the dietary rules, but I think they forbid the eating of any confections made out of Rice Krispies.

Of course there are cultural parallels that can be found in the galaxy according to Lucas. Otherwise it wouldn't be science fiction. That's the whole point of it. For some psychological reason or another, it is often easier to learn precepts when they come cloaked in a protective literary coating.

Among the big rules highlighted in this latest coming of *Star Wars*, which could borrow a title from the Andy Hardy series and be dubbed "Love Finds Anakin Skywalker," is the dictum: "A Jedi Shall Not Know Anger. Nor Hatred. Nor Love."

Hence it's a bit of a sticky wicket when handsome Hayden Christensen as Anakin Skywalker, Jedi knight in training, pulls guard duty and heartthrob Senator Padme Amidala (Natalie Portman) is the prize to be protected. Apparently, with the passage of time, heroes and religious leaders have not been immune to merger and acquisitions fever.

Thus a Jedi is ostensibly part Knight Templar, part Confucian, and part Buddhist priest. As tough luck would have it for Anakin and the comely Amidala, the ban on dating someone from the office has survived the ages. Call it Romeo and Juliet in Space.

That's only a mere angstrom of the plot. There are veritable parsecs and parsecs (a *Star Wars* measurement, doubtless much, much larger than a light year) of other story details and nuances. Problem is, non-fans should avoid like the plague any discussion of the gibberish-stuffed story.

And *Star Wars* freaks could only view as impudent any story description and/or analysis this heretical trespasser might have to offer. Yet a graduation oath sworn before my mentors at Olde Ivy Film Criticism College decrees that a basic plot outline be present in every movie

review. (In varying shapes and forms, I guess we all aspire to some degree of Jedi knighthood.) So here goes:

The bad guys want to take over the world. That's about it. Oh, of course, there are variations on the theme. For example, practically everyone's name sounds like it's been created by a Moog synthesizer: i.e.—there's turncoat Count Dooku (Christopher Lee), Jedi master Mace Windu (Samuel L. Jackson) and Anakin's Jedi teacher, Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor). Doesn't anyone get named Susan or Helen anymore?

In any case, there are random borrowings from "The Iliad," "The Odyssey" and The Bible, which makes you wonder how popular these subjects might be with school kids if each teacher had the \$100 million budget Lucas has to get his point across.

Then there's also smatterings of the sci-fi series of the 1930s, all re-worked in an overwhelming splash of computer generated special effects.

And finally, making it what it is, *Star Wars: Episode II-Attack of the Clones* is dubbed with the catalytic genius of impresario Lucas. But not enough of it. Or maybe it's just getting a little old, regardless of whether you call it a prequel or a sequel.

Fact is, there's hardly enough of the force left to lift this episode above its redundancy. Sure, diehard fans can once again gleefully immerse themselves in all the stuff that *Attack of the Clones* provides. But those of us without *Star Wars* pajamas, bed sheets, drinking cups and wallpaper are more likely to call it *Star Snores* and, at the risk of not finding out who will beget who in which episode, avail ourselves of a rather expensive snooze.

Star Wars: Episode II-Attack of the Clones, rated PG, is a 20th Century Fox and Lucas Films release directed by George Lucas and stars Natalie Portman, Hayden Christensen, and Ewan McGregor. Running time: 142 minutes.

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