



Photography courtesy of the Paper Mill Playhouse and Jerry Della

THEY WORK HARD FOR THE MONEY...Based on the hit film, *The Full Monty* tells the story of a dispirited group of unemployed steelworkers in Buffalo who are so desperate to make some quick cash that they turn to becoming male strippers at a local club. The musical comedy can be seen at The Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn from now through Sunday, July 12.

Paper Mill's *Full Monty* Has 'Full-Bodied' Flavor

By SUSAN MYRILL DOUGHERTY
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

MILLBURN — *The Full Monty*, now playing at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, is billed as a "grin-and-bare-it-all musical comedy," a disclaimer to those who might be offended with the display of male bare chests and suggestive pelvic thrusts.

Maybe those folks do not remember (or never saw) the famed Chippendale dancers from the 1980s who

Paper Mill's snappy, live version of the international hit film tells the present-day story of out-of-work steel mill employees in Buffalo, N.Y. Low self-esteem, money problems and other baggage that comes with unemployment are all too familiar themes presented in the two-act musical.

In his director's notes in the program, Mark Hoebee mentions that "the strength of the story lies not in the actual question of 'will they or won't they?' but rather with the vic-

tor of these underdogs."

The six underdogs need to work through their fears, self-consciousness and anxieties to make money. Their plan is to do a one-night-only performance for a female audience and take home the money for taking off their clothes.

Personal stories intertwine in this romp to engage all segments of the audience. There is a father who might lose the right to see his son because of delinquent child-support payments, a high-level executive who cannot bring himself to tell his status-seeking wife that he has been unemployed for six months, a disheartened husband whose new mistress is food and a gay man who struggles to come out of his closeted existence.

Director Hoebee, also Paper Mill's artistic director, has pulled together a team of stellar triple-threat singer/dancer/actors whose interaction is paramount in making Terrence McNally's book and David Yazbek's score work. Tom Helm's musical direction keeps the show humming with up-tempo, jazzy numbers as well as melodic, heart-wrenching ballads.

At the heart of the storyline are Jerry Lukowski (Wayne Wilcox) and his former wife Pam (Kelly Sullivan) who fight over their son Nathan (played alternately by Alex Maizus and Luke Marcus Rosen). The family dynamics — made more dramatic with a looming new step dad — are all very real.

At the end of Act I, the audience does not know if Jerry can scrape together enough money and raw talent to put on the X-rated show but is left with an optimistic feeling because of the clever "Michael Jordan's Ball" number.

Emmy, Tony and Drama Desk Award-winner Elaine Stritch, in the role of Jeanette Burmeister, enters in the second act to a thrilled fan base. She merely gives a side-glance to her fans, and they reward her with an ovation. In "Jeanette's Showbiz Number" at the top of Act II, Ms. Stritch gives those fans what they have come for by pulling out the proverbial stops.

She plays a showman pianist for the amateur strippers who practice nightly. With Jeanette cheering them on, the amateurs do a superior job with intricate, alternately-hilarious-yet-sexy choreography by Denis Jones.

Poignant moments include two married couples' songs with Harold Nichols (Michael Rupert) and wife Vicki (Michele Ragusa) and Georgie Bukatinsky (Jenn Colella) and husband Dave (Joe Coots) and a tender "You Walk with Me" by Malcolm MacGregor (Allen E. Read) and Ethan Girard (Jason Babinsky).

A standout performance is delivered by dancer extraordinaire Milton Craig Nealy in the role of "Horse," supposedly an older man. When he disrobes, his chiseled, muscular body reveals his real age that the clothing masks.

This funny, mildly risqué show, which runs through July 12, serves up a sizzling summer night for women and men alike.

Cranford Artist Featured At NYC's New Century

CRANFORD — The not-for-profit arts organization New Century Artists has accepted Cranford artist Theodosia A.G. Tamborlane as a member and will feature her works in an exhibition opening June 30 at the group's gallery in the heart of Chelsea, at 530 West 25th Street,

Suite 406 (between 10th and 11th Avenues) in New York.

The public is invited to an opening reception for the show on Saturday, July 11, from 3 to 6 p.m. The show continues through August 8.

"I am flattered to join New Century Artists at the invitation of Chana Benjamin, the gallery's director," Ms. Tamborlane noted. The New Century Artists show will include five of the artist's oil-on-paper collages: "Cosmos," "Mountains' Morning," "Ravens' Roost," "Golden Daze" and "The Surfer."

Ms. Tamborlane's art career has been prolific and successful, highlighted by 26 solo and group shows in the last three years, including a juried show at the Pen and Brush Gallery in New York City. She has earned three First Place awards, and accepted a coveted invitation from the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra to create a painted theme violin for its ArtStrings 2009 fundraising auction.

Ms. Tamborlane is a member of the Allied Artists of America and the Contemporary Art Group of New Jersey. Her paintings are permanently displayed at Simply Gallery, located at 11 Walnut Street in Cranford.

Ms. Tamborlane may be reached at (908) 276-4967 or Tamborlane.com.



GRIN AND 'BARE IT' (ALL)...Pictured, from left to right, Allen E. Read, Michael Rupert, Joe Coots (center front), Wayne Wilcox, Milton Craig Nealy and Jason Babinsky strut their stuff in *The Full Monty* at Paper Mill Playhouse.

made a bundle of money, dollar by dollar, by dancing in a leopard print, silver or bright red thong for women who were having their girls' night out.

Mustang Sally Coming To Oak Ridge Park, July 8

CLARK — The Union County Summer Arts Festival 2009 concert series moves to Oak Ridge Park in Clark on Wednesday evening, July 8, with a "contemporary country" performance by Mustang Sally. The country music concert begins at 7:30 p.m.

Mustang Sally features five young women based in Nashville. They have played with such stars as Big and Rich, George Jones, LeAnn Rimes, Dierks Bentley and Josh Turner. They have performed in Union County's Summer Arts Festival series for several years.

The Union County information van will be at the concert site with staff to answer questions and offer information about programs available to Union County residents.

The Summer Arts Festival concerts are held throughout July and August on Wednesdays beginning at 7:30 p.m. The location of this summer's concerts will alternate each week between Echo Lake Park in Mountainside and Oak Ridge Park in Clark. Lawn chairs, blankets and picnic baskets are encouraged. Refreshments and snacks will be available from vendors.

The other free concerts in the Union County Summer Arts Festival series include:

July 15, Joey Arminio and The Family (musical variety show), Echo Lake Park.

July 22, The British Invasion Tribute (rock), Oak Ridge Park.

July 29, Jobonanno and the Godsons of Soul (rock), at Echo Lake Park.

SP-F Music, Athletic Boosters Join Forces

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Music Boosters Association and the Scotch Plains Fanwood Blue Raider Athletic Booster Club are joining forces this summer to offer the annual golf outing on Monday, August 31, at Shackamaxon Golf and Country Club as a joint fundraising event. Proceeds from the outing will be shared equally by the two organizations.

There are many ways in which the public can participate at this event. Golfers will enjoy the 18-hole, 71 par, Tillinghast-designed course, lunch and dinner, (includes beer, wine and soda) and the use of a cart and putting green for \$200.

Supporters can come for dinner and enjoy live music by some of

Scotch Plains' and Fanwood's premier high school and alumni musicians. The cost for dinner is \$60 per person (and includes beer, wine and soda).

Corporate sponsorships are reasonably priced. Some previous corporate sponsors include Schiller and Pettinger, P.C. Counselors at Law, Dr. and Mrs. Frank Besson, Memorial Funeral Home, PNC Bank of Fanwood, VandV Landscaping, Fanwood Dental Group, R.J. Michael's and Co., the Scotch Plains Music Shop and Espo's Tree Service.

For more information about golf and dinner or to request corporate sponsorship information, contact spfmbagolf@tntennis@yahoo.com or call (908) 400-3115.

WF Community Salutes British Prom Concerts

WESTFIELD — Thomas Connors and the Westfield Community Band continue their summer season by paying tribute to the British Prom Concerts on Thursday, July 9, at 7:30 p.m.

In Britain, these concerts are a series of daily orchestral classical music concerts. Started initially at the Royal Albert Hall in South Kensington, London, there are now Proms in the Park events across the United Kingdom. Short for promenade concerts, it began with the practice of audiences strolling in the concert hall during the concert.

The Rampant Lion Pipe Band from Basking Ridge will join the Westfield Community Band in concert. They formed in 2007 to teach and perform traditional Scottish bagpipe and drum music, emulating the traditions and style of the military bands of the Scottish regiments.

The Rampant Lion Pipe Band will be featured in three special arrangements for wind band and pipe band, "Scotland the Brave, Black Bear and



The Rampant Lion Pipe Band

Highland Laddie," "A Man's a Man for All a' That and Within a Mile o' Edinburgh Toon" and "Ensign Ewart's Air," all arranged by Calum Gray.

An additional highlight for the evening will include Helen Bartolick, featured on flute, with the performance of "Meditation from Thais" by Jules Massenet. Helen, a Garwood resident, is a music educator in the Edison Public Schools. A graduate of Kean University, she has been with the band for 19 years.

Audience members will also be treated to the euphonium duet "Au Fond du Temple Saint" from the opera *The Pearl Fishers* by George Bizet. Composed for the tenor and baritone leads in the opera, the duet recalls both men falling for the same women at the same time. Euphonium soloists Ralph Ciotti and Joel Fleck take on these parts.

Additional selections for the evening include "Handel in the Strand" by Percy Grainger, "Harry Potter Symphonic Suite" by John Williams and "March Fantasia — Colonel Bogey on Parade" by Kenneth Alford.

The band will conclude its concert season on Thursday, July 16, followed by the Westfield Community Swing Band "Nostalgia" on Thursday, July 23.

Mindowaskin Park is located next to the Westfield Municipal Building at 425 East Broad Street in Westfield. The event is free to the public; audience members are encouraged to bring blankets or chairs. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will be held in the Westfield Community Room in the Westfield Municipal Building.

For further information, contact (908) 789-4080 or go to westfieldcommunityband.com.

POPCORN™ Year One: Cross it Off Your Movie-going Calendar



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

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
@popcorns

While indeed true that Lerner and Loewe didn't write a hit every time, it is still difficult to grasp that director Harold Ramis (*Caddyshack*, *Ghostbusters* and *Groundhog Day*) thought the unforgivably dreary *Year One* was funny. It's like learning that Albert Einstein secretly wished he had conceived of Nutty Putty instead of just $E=MC^2$.

The misfire isn't merely humorless. It is "Please be over already," bone-achingly, mind-numbingly boring. You wonder, what's worse: your most wearying grammar school teacher droning on in pre-air conditioned June, being dragged by your mother from one department store to the next on a Saturday afternoon or *Year One*?

Almost as confounding, there's nothing terribly egregious about the script Mr. Ramis penned with Lee Eisenberg and Gene Stupnitsky. It just doesn't work. And other than it crossing your mind that it's all a big practical joke, one assumes it looked witty on paper. Or maybe it was just getting late and they said, "Oh, all right already. It's good enough."

Adding further quandary to the theories of failure, the film inherently engenders the curiously flat portrayal contributed by Jack Black as Zed, a slacker caveman with a quippish rationalization for everything.

Essentially a road movie without a comedic compass, in rare instance when *Year One* does glint a shard of inspiration, it seems a modern attempt of the Hope-Crosby jaunts. Problem is, the journey that begins in prehistoric times and inexplicably lands among Biblical folk does not have the least anchor or plot animus to counterpoise its flights of fancy.

That is, Mr. Ramis's journey into the world of past-tense conjecture and satire never establishes its own nature. Rather, it seems a derivative giambotte of several seen-it-before styles. We can envision Mel Brooks getting laughs, about 20 years ago, when a tribal leader explains circumcision to Zed and his sidekick Oh (Michael Cera).

Yet, no one comes to the rescue. Apparently afflicted with whatever misadventure has skewed Mr. Black's portrayal, the supporting cast barely manages to attain even a lackluster level of performance. Well, at least they are not overshadowed by the scenery or music, both of which demonstrate absolutely no element of artistic merit.

Though, you consider that some movie theaters distribute free passes to filmgoers inconvenienced by an inter-ruptive tear in the film, the absence of such technical difficulty may be a mixed blessing. Complimentary duets for another movie might at least serve as partial preparation for the pain and suffering *Year One* wreaks.

Just trying to describe the storyline deserves compensation. With no central running gag to lend identity, it is but a series of barely connected vignettes. Banished by fellow cavemen for his indolent ways (he is neither hunter nor gatherer), Zed takes to the trail in hope of an even lazier lot, and maybe women, too. His straight-man pal, Oh, is in tow.

Thereupon the refugees from an unfunny "Alley Oop" cartoon strip walk into an equally dull "B.C." panel, just in time to witness Cain's smiting of Abel. Promising they will not breathe a word of what they have seen, they are invited to his home. Adam's domicile then somehow becomes the setting for a variation on the one about the farmer's daughter.

Soon, Zed and Oh's fates are inextricably tied to Cain's, who sells them into slavery first chance he gets. Only good thing here (for them, not us) is that in bondage they meet up with Maya (June Diane Raphael) and Eema (Juno Temple), their unrequited loves from back home. Oh asks Eema what time she gets off. "Never. I'm a slave," she says.

That is one of approximately four jokes that work. Otherwise, the interminably random attempts to hang assorted shtick on the unimaginative mixing of eras fail at practically every turn. The repetitious formula plods on and on, and it soon becomes evident that the only hope for us befuddled masses is the beckoning, sympathetic glow of the exit sign.

Drat, the trailers seemed so promising. But grand expectations dashed make for more tedium than plain, unsolicited monotony. While this clunker may prove helpful to those writing a thesis on what effect boring movies have on us, viewers without such academic curiosity should allow *Year One* to uneventfully recede into the forgotten past.

Year One, rated PG-13, is a Columbia Pictures release directed by Harold Ramis and stars Jack Black, Michael Cera and Juno Temple. Running time: 97 minutes.



TURN OF THE CENTURY...Theodosia Tamborlane's "Cosmos," an oil-on-paper collage, shown here, is one of five of her artworks on display at the New Century Artists Gallery. See release at lower left.

Roosevelt Students To Perform July 8

WESTFIELD — Westfield elementary students in grades 3, 4 and 5 will perform the mini musical *When I Grow Up* by John Jacobson and Emily Crocker at Roosevelt Intermediate School on Wednesday, July 8, at 7 p.m.

Music teachers Karen Yula and Kris Morasso direct the performance.

This recital is part of the Artist Performing and Entertaining (A.P.E.) program that introduces children to life on the stage. Every summer for the last 20 years, Ms. Yula has directed a mini-musical as an enrichment program to those students who have the desire to excel in the arts.

2009 13th Annual Sweet Sounds Downtown Jazz Festival Westfield, NJ

Every Tuesday
July 7 – September 1
7 pm – 9 pm
(Raindate Wednesdays)

Visit www.WestfieldToday.com
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Carrie Jackson
Pat Cuttitta Quintet
Taino
Richard Reiter Swing Band

JULY 14
Nicole Hart
Pam Purvis and The Blues Skies Band
David Aaron Quintet
Grupo Yuri

JULY 21
Ron Kraemer & the Hurricanes
Eric Mintel Quartet
Marlene VerPlank
Bradford Hayes

JULY 2
Roamin' Gabriels
Arturo
Jazz Lobsters
No Name James & Butterball

AUGUST 4
Scarlett Lee Moore Band
Lauren Hooker Quartet
Chris Colaneri Quartet
Gordon James

AUGUST 11
Sandy Mack Band
Stein Brothers Quintet
Swingadelic
Radam Schwartz

AUGUST 18
B. D. Lenz
La Jumelles Quartet
Jennifer Jordan Band
Glenn Alexander Trio with Kermit Driscoll

AUGUST 25
Chuck Lambert Band
Karl Latham
Dr. Dubious and the Agnostics
Lauren Shub Trio

SEPTEMBER 1
Scott Hunter & The Soul Searchers
Emilio Teubel & La Balteuband
Stringbean and the Stalkers
Dave Leonhardt Trio

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