

Arts & Entertainment



'DIRTY JOBS'...Rapper Dirty Mac, representing Scotch Plains, took his unorthodox rhyming style to the Stone Pony in Asbury Park last week.

Rapper 'Dirty Mac' - From Park Middle to the Park of Asbury

By TOM FORTUNATO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

ASBURY PARK — On Thursday, Scotch Plains resident and up-and-coming rapper Dirty Mac shared the stage with five other New Jersey rap acts and the band Flight's Kool, who performed live backing instrumentals.

At Thursday's show, Dirty Mac performed all new material to be featured on his sophomore album, "Service With A Style," in addition to "NJ Mindframe," a song from his first album, "Uncommon Courtesy," which he performed as an impromptu *acappella* to fill time while Flight's Kool was figuring out the melody of the last song.

Dirty Mac, also known as James McNamara, was born in Edison and

lived most of his early life in Elizabeth until March 2000, when, at the age of 13, he and his family moved to Scotch Plains. He attended Park Middle School and Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, where he graduated in 2005, and then went on to Rutgers University, where he is now finishing his studies as a journalism major.

In "NJ Mindframe," Dirty Mac pays homage to his home state by using a string of clever puns derived from the names of places from throughout the state, such as: "told the Millburn, a Woodbridge was made, out of a Long Branch, it gave Maple Shade. Made a Pilesgrove right after I was done, sent all the trees back to the Town of Lumberton."

The end result is that no matter what part of the state one happens to be from, upon hearing that song, the listener finds at least a part of it to be familiar.

"People always make claims that they're from New York, that they're from Detroit, they're from California; they always have these distinct, specific places that people represent," Dirty Mac explained, "and I feel like New Jersey is a little bit more of a cult in a sense that people inside New Jersey embrace New Jersey, but no one in New Jersey wants to embrace each other to help one another make it."

"I think New Jersey is worst when it comes to haters because I think everyone is trying to be that one person from New Jersey [who] makes it," he continued. "There's been many different rap acts [from New Jersey], but I think more so now than ever, people are still coming out of New York, the midwest, Chicago, L.A. . . and New Jersey just doesn't really have that different thing, it's always been undermined for the most part."

Dirty Mac earned his name out in the underground hip-hop community when he began competing in the End of the Week MC Challenge, a global hip-hop competition that started in New York City in 2000 and now is held in nine countries across three continents.

In 2008, Dirty Mac won the MC Challenge of Champions, and then went to London to represent the United States in the International MC Challenge. Dirty Mac has also been featured on the VH1 Hip-Hop Honors in 2007 and 2008, as well as on BET's "106 & Park" in 2008 and 2009.

"At the end of the night, if I get people to tell me that I'm different than any of the other acts, that makes me [believe that] the music and the people need me," he said. Dirty Mac explained, "As I was leaving [The Stone Pony], the security guard told me, 'You're different; I like you.' That's what I hope for, because if I sound the same [as any other popular artist out there], I'm not doing my job."

"I don't have a date yet [for 'Service With A Style']," Dirty Mac told *The Leader* and *The Times*, "but it will be no later than March 2011. All the recordings [are] mostly done; a lot of the mixing, artwork, prepping for iTunes are still in the works. I would say one song still needs to be recorded, just one."

As he jokes in "NJ Mindframe," Dirty Mac has really moved up from the "showcase in Park Middle (School) to the Park of Asbury," and still continues to rise.

To learn more, visit dirtymacmusic.com.

Tamborlane's Paintings Selected in Competition

CRANFORD — Cranford artist Theodosia A.G. Tamborlane has been selected to exhibit her work in a national juried exhibition at the Florida West Arts Gallery in Bonita Springs, Fla.

As reported by gallery director Patrick Distasio, from the hundreds of art works entered, artists were selected from 15 states, with Ms. Tamborlane being the only artist selected from New Jersey. The exhibition is open through December 16 at the gallery, located in Bonita Springs.

The use of dynamic colors and the expression of movement are hallmarks of Ms. Tamborlane's oil-on-canvas paintings. The colors are chosen and personally mixed by her for each painting to express a spiritual contact with nature. Many of her paintings explore life as a unique and significant journey during which a person has opportunities to be one with nature and to work for peace and progress or, voluntarily or involuntarily, to support activities that diminish or destroy the world.

One of Ms. Tamborlane's paintings selected for the exhibition, "Ombrello's Nature's World," (48 by 36 inches in size) compels one to acknowledge the majesty of the world from its deep, rock-laden core to the heavens above.

Another selected work, "Bouquet in Grandma's Bowl, Fleurs Des Temps," (32 by 27 inches in size) challenges the viewer to see the exquisite geometry present in various flowers.



"Bouquet in Grandma's Bowl, Fleurs Des Temps"

Ms. Tamborlane has her paintings in personal collections in the United States and the Netherlands. Her gallery is Simply Gallery in Cranford. She is a selected member of the New Century Artists Gallery and a member of the Pen and Brush Gallery in New York City, the Contemporary Art Group of New Jersey, the Woodbridge Artisan Guild and Studio Montclair.

Ms. Tamborlane is currently affiliated with the Art Students League in New York City and can be reached at Tamborlane@aol.com or at Tamborlane.com or (908) 276-4967.

WSO's 'Home for The Holidays' Sets Perfect Tone for the Season

By BARBARA THOMSON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Westfield Symphony Orchestra, "Home for the Holidays," December 4, The Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Symphony's Christmas concert on Saturday set just the right tone for a happy holiday season. The church was beautifully decorated with garlands and Christmas trees; there was a Yuletide sing-a-long, and the program of holiday favorites left everyone with a happy glow. All that was needed was a blazing fireplace and a cup of eggnog.

What a pleasure it was to hear traditional favorites like "White Christmas" and "Sleigh Ride" played by a full symphony orchestra. Other lesser-known works, like the "Christmas Waltz" and music from the movie *Polar Express*, added to the seasonal repertoire. Three selections from the perennial Christmas favorite, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* had several children literally dancing in the aisles as their smiling parents swayed in their seats.

The closest they came to a "classical" work was the beautiful prelude to Humperdinck's opera *Hansel and Gretel*, which is built around the touching prayer the children sing as they go to sleep, lost and frightened, in the dark woods. The suite from Bernstein's *West Side Story* has only marginal holiday associations (off to the theater for a special outing), but the music is timeless, beautiful and exhilarating, leading to a roar of applause from the audience. (As an aside, hearing a full orchestra play this, I couldn't help but think how the enormous down-sizing of Broadway's pit orchestras has dimin-

ished their musical product. Hearing Bernstein's lush orchestration versus a few players with a synthesizer — there is just no comparison.)

The players seemed to be having fun, too. The orchestra's three percussionists were busy all night, what with sleigh bells, castanets, slapsticks, xylophones and bongo drums adding spice to the evening. Barry Centanni left his usual post at the timpani to show all those rock-and-roll wannabes how to handle a drum set. Harpist Anna Reinersman shone in her extended solo in the *Nutcracker's* "Waltz of the Flowers," and the orchestra's principal clarinetist, William Shadel, switched hats to play the tenor sax lead in the "Christmas Waltz." The orchestra always sounds good, but these commercial arrangements had wonderful parts for the brass instruments, and the large section of four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba lent a wonderful richness to the sound.

Maestro David Wroe lent a light touch to the proceedings with his spoken commentaries (who knew the Waltz was once considered scandalously provocative?). Originally British, he drew a laugh from the audience by introducing a familiar tune as "I Saw Mummy Kissing Santa Claus." After going back and forth between Mummy and Mommy, he finally ended in mock exasperation by announcing "I Saw My Mother Kissing Santa Claus!"

The final section of the program was a sing-a-long. With words printed in the program, the audience swayed and smiled and sang along with such favorites as "Frosty the Snowman," "Here Comes Santa Claus" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." A standing ovation led to a reprise of the *Nutcracker's* "Trepak" as an encore.

This was billed as the orchestra's first Christmas pops concert; both the large audience and I hope it will be an annual event.



THE YULETIDE'S A TURNING...The Westfield Symphony Orchestra welcomed the holiday season with a program of seasonal favorites last Saturday at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield. The evening featured a wide array of songs, from the traditional "White Christmas" to music from the movie *Polar Express*.

Church Welcomes Trumpet Ensemble

WESTFIELD — The First Congregational Church of Westfield, located at 125 Elmer Street, presents the Montclair State University (MSU) Trumpet Ensemble as part of its Mid-Day Musicales concert series on Wednesday, December 15. These free, half-hour noon concerts are followed by a soup-and-sandwich luncheon available in the church social hall for \$7.

The Trumpet Ensemble, directed by Charles Bumcrot, is part of an active chamber music program at The John J. Cali School of Music at MSU. The ensemble, consisting of the 10 top trumpet students at the school, has developed an extensive library with varied repertoire and performs programs and recitals both at the Cali School and off campus.

Performances in their inaugural year, 2009-2010, included concerts at the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church, the New Jersey Music Educators Association conference in East Brunswick, the Kaleidoscope concert at MSU, the opening of the Leshowitz Recital Hall at the Cali School of Music and performances with internationally acclaimed trumpet soloist Christian Jaures. At the opening concert of the new Recital Hall, the Trumpet Ensemble sounded the first "performance" notes ever heard in the new hall.

The fall 2010 MSU Trumpet Ensemble has already had an impressive array of performances to its credit. At this year's Kaleidoscope concert, the ensemble presented a world premiere entitled "Concert Fanfare" by Joseph Russo, composed specifically for the Cali School Trumpet Ensemble and the 2010 Kaleidoscope concert. Other performances have included chamber recitals, recruiting visits and clinics and a split recital with the Tuba/Euphonium studio at MSU.

For further information or to make an optional luncheon reservation, call the church office at (908) 233-2494.

SPFHS Rep Theatre Stages Hairspray in March 2011

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD — Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School's (SPFHS) Repertory Theatre has announced that its spring production will be *Hairspray* and that behind the scenes, it will be an alumni affair.

To begin, *Hairspray's* music and lyrics were written by Tony- and Emmy Award winner and five-time Oscar nominee Marc Shaiman, who

the past several years, takes on the added responsibilities of production co-coordinator.

Jan Allen, choral director at the high school, will be the production's musical director, and Durand Thomas is, once again, the pit band director. Gisa D'Iorio returns as choreographer.

"This is a very exciting time to see how our alumni are giving back to the



Co-Directors this year for *Hairspray* are Matthew Capodicasa (2005, SPFHS) and Christine Perrotta (2002, SPFHS). Both starred in Rep productions all four of their years at SPFHS and went on to study theater in college.

grew up in Scotch Plains and attended SPFHS.

Returning to Rep Theatre after a four-year hiatus is producer Laurie Wellman, an SPFHS alumna. Ms. Wellman was choral director of the high school for 26 years and produced and directed 11 previous Rep Theatre productions.

Co-directors this year are Matthew Capodicasa (2005, SPFHS) and Christine Perrotta (2002, SPFHS). Both starred in Rep productions all four of their years at SPFHS and went on to study theater in college. Mr. Capodicasa graduated New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in 2009 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Drama, and Ms. Perrotta graduated from the University of Indiana in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre and Drama.

Joanne Sprague, another alumna who has been involved with Rep since the late 1970s and who has been the costume designer for Rep Theatre for

district. I can't think of anyone else that could lead a high-school musical better than Laurie Wellman, and to have Matt and Chrissy as directors...well, it's going to be an amazing performance," said Fine Arts Supervisor Vinnie Turturiello.

Hairspray garnered eight Tony's, including Best Musical, in 2003. A family-friendly musical comedy, with a score influenced by the rock, pop, R & B and soul music of the early 1960s, it tackles the social injustices of that period with humor.

Performances will be held on Friday, March 11, at 8 p.m.; Saturday, March 12, at 8 p.m.; Sunday, March 13, at 3 p.m.; Thursday, March 17, at 7 p.m.; Friday, March 18, at 8 p.m., and Saturday, March 19, at 8 p.m.

All performances take place at the Manya Ungar Memorial Auditorium at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, located at 667 Westfield Road. Ticket information will be announced after the first of the year.

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