



Sunday, January 21, 2018 at 3:30
Temple Emanu-El
756 East Broad St., Westfield, NJ

Brahms, Trio for Horn, Viola and Piano
Bartók, Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet and Piano
Hindesmith, Duo for Viola and Cello
Dohnányi, Sextet for Horn, Clarinet, Strings and Piano

\$35 at the door; free under 21
www.mostlymusic.org
973-762-0108

Other concert dates:
February 18, 2018
March 4, 2018
April 22, 2018

Arts & Entertainment

Artistic Director of Mostly Music, Continues Impressive Season

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

WESTFIELD – Bringing world class instrumentalists to Westfield is nothing new to the organization Mostly Music. The artistic director, violist Paul Neubauer, spoke on the phone from Sarasota, Fla. with *The Westfield Leader* and *Scotch Plains/Fanwood Times* about the upcoming January concert. The second in the five-concert series, the January 21 concert, to be held at Temple Emanu-El at 756 East Broad Street in Westfield at 3:30 p.m., will feature clarinet, horn, violin, viola, cello and piano.

Mr. Neubauer explained that this season builds on the history of the Mostly Music program. "Our audience has come to expect superior quality and that's what we try to deliver on a consistent basis," he said. In this, his second year as the artistic director, he explained that the programs are dictated by a "fluid course of action." He sets the season by spreading out the afternoon concerts over the season and likes to offer variety. "Because our audiences are open to new music, we like to bring in some contemporary pieces at times," he said.

Mr. Neubauer, whose musical history includes being the youngest principal string player in the history of the New York Philharmonic, utilizes, primarily, the talents of instrumentalists he has worked with in the past. His background includes

being featured on "Live from Lincoln Center," CBS's "Sunday Morning" and "A Prairie Home Companion." Although he was called by the *New York Times*, "a master musician," Mr. Neubauer said the program should not be based on his viola performance. "The work that we do here is collaborative in nature," he explained. "There needs to be a chemistry within the groups we assemble and not feature just one person."

"Variety is an important component of what we present," he continued. "With small ensembles, we are limited only by the constraints of the instruments."

Mr. Neubauer played in the programs of Mostly Music for years before he became the artistic director last year. The January concert's program will include Brahms', "Trio for Horn, Viola and Piano," Bartók's, "Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet and Piano," Hindemith's, "Duo for Viola and Cello" and Dohnányi's, "Sextet for Horn, Clarinet, Strings and Piano in C Major."

Before performing each work, the musicians offer musical and historical insights about the composer and his or her intentions and inspirations in creating the work. They also discuss the joys and challenges of learning and performing the pieces. Mostly Music began in the late 1970s with informal chamber music performances in the homes of a small group of Westfield residents. As it grew in popularity, it

needed to be housed in a permanent locale. Since 2016, Mostly Music, which has been acclaimed by both *The New York Times* and *The Star-Ledger*, has been performing at Temple Emanu-El in Westfield that seats 500.

Tickets for the upcoming concert will be sold at the door for \$35 for adults and free for anyone under age 21.

CDC Plans Auditions

For *Once Upon A Mattress*

CRANFORD – CDC Theater, New Jersey's oldest continuously producing community theatre, announces auditions for its May production of *Once Upon A Mattress*. This rollicking musical retelling of the *Princess and the Pea* will make sure audiences never look at fairy tales the same way again.

Auditions will take place at the theatre's 78 Winans Avenue, Cranford home on Tuesday, January 30 and Thursday, February 1 at 7 p.m. Callbacks will be by invitation only Sunday, February 4 at 10 a.m.

Auditionees are asked to prepare a 32-bar cut of a comedic song and to bring sheet music in the appropriate key. An accompanist will be provided. Headshots and resumes are not required but will be gladly received. Additional information can be found by visiting cdctheatre.org.

NJACT Directors Say Good-bye After Nearly 27-Year Run

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

AREA – It's never easy to shut the door and walk away from a program that you have built, nourished and cherished for almost 27 years, but Cynthia Meryl and Ted Agress are doing just that. The directors/producers of New Jersey Youth Theatre (formerly Westfield Youth Artists' Cooperative Theatre), have decided it's time to retire.

In a phone interview with *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*, Ms. Meryl spoke about the decision. "Sometimes in life, you realize it is time to step aside," she said. The husband and wife duo, both Broadway veterans themselves, are proud of the work that they have done with teens and college-age students for a quarter of a century. "A number of our students have gone on to Broadway themselves, which is gratifying because they are living their dreams," she said.

And the community is heartbroken to see them go. When they posted on Facebook that they were shutting their doors, they saw hundreds of comments added to their post daily. Their famed summer theater program, the only known tuition-free program for teens in the area, was funded by many philanthropic organizations, specifically The Geraldine Dodge Foundation, the NJ State Council of Arts, the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation and the Westfield Foundation. According to the husband and wife team, "The Dodge Foundation not only offered financial support, but guidance and friendship."

"Now, sadly, bitter sweetly," Ms. Meryl said, "the time has come for New Jersey Youth Theatre to close its doors. We are so grateful for having

worked with such great theatres, producers, designers, stage managers, crew, musicians, music directors, young actors, and technicians."

She offered thanks to the theatres around the state who welcomed them: the Algonquin Arts Theatre, the Bickford, Centenary Stage, the Kasser, the Wharton Institute for Performing Arts, Kean University, and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) and to the NJYT staffs: designers, crews, technicians, stage managers, music directors, company managers, musicians – everyone who pulled together to "make the magic." The duo has donated costumes, props, mirrors and other items they have amassed through the years to the theatre departments of Kean University and Montclair State University.

"We applaud the teens who put in the long summer hours in intense rehearsals, who grew not only as performers, but as human beings learning about teamwork, dedication and commitment." Also, she gave thanks to the students who took class and realized the importance of learning technique and the art of listening and reacting, and to the audiences who supported NJYT, the young actors and the NJYT companies each year.

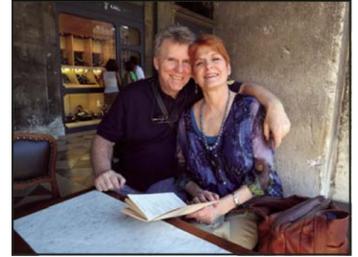
"We are so grateful to and for all of you! NJYT has filled the lives of Ted and me and, even in the most stressful

of times, we were honored and blessed to do something we absolutely loved," she said. Ms. Meryl offered practical advice to all young performers. "Take Class! Don't be fooled by the one-in-a-million winner on 'America's Got Talent.' You need to learn 'technique,' whether it be for singing, acting, or dancing. When you are hired to do eight performances a week and just cannot 'pull out' that one last Sunday matinee, it's 'technique' that will get you through."

Additionally, she stressed for students to have interests other than theatre. "While waiting for the agent to call you with a callback, get a job, take a class in something unique, become a well-rounded person. Live life every minute."

Ms. Meryl especially wanted to give recognition to Holly Logue from Kean University and to Sanaz Hojreh and Phillip Thomas of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) for opening the door at NJ PAC and believing in the vision of professional-level youth theatre. Of course, specific shows stand out in Ms. Meryl's mind. "The memories we share and friendships we made will last all of our lives," she explained. Those memories include a deep friendship with choreographer Sherry Alban, whose choreography "made the shows sparkle and without whom these

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Cynthia Meryl and Ted Agress

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