

# Arts & Entertainment



**FOREIGN FLAVOR...**Reiko Hasegawa of Fanwood, a graduate of Pratt Institute in New York, has been making a splash with her depictions of foreign lands, such as those featured above. Hasegawa, who is currently freelancing, has hopes of taking her skills to London, where she might travel with her camera, capturing diverse landscapes and cultures.



## Fanwood Photographer Reiko Hasegawa Will Springboard Camera Skills Beyond the Borough

By MICHELLE H. Le POIDEVIN  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times  
**FANWOOD** — If she could travel to every corner of the Earth, perhaps even to the outer limits of the universe, Fanwood resident Reiko Hasegawa would most likely return

with the most prized snapshots, framing the rarest treasures and sites around her. "In my fifth grade yearbook, the caption underneath asked what we wanted to be when we grew up and I said I wanted to be a photographer,"

recalled Hasegawa, currently a freelance shutterbug, during an early morning interview with *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*.

"I knew even then," said Hasegawa, clutching her leather-bound portfolio of black and white and color photography.

Through her critical, yet creative eyes, Hasegawa takes an eclectic blend of qualities into consideration before taking a photograph. She looks specifically for the type of light, subject matter and shapes, and when she finds something that fits together uniquely, Hasegawa does a quick *carpe diem* and grabs the moment. "Often, it's really happenstance," said the young Pratt Institute graduate. At Pratt, Hasegawa earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Photography with a minor in Art History, topping the Dean's List each semester.

"Photographs are a way to show parallel realities," said Hasegawa, "the real and ever-present one alongside the subconscious one. Photographs also can deal with the multiplicity of time."

While Hasegawa admitted that she appreciates the freedom to take an assignment wherever her imagination will lead her, she told *The Leader/The Times* that she is also capable of

sticking to specific directions and goals in a project.

Either way, Hasegawa believes, as is genuinely mirrored in samples of her photography, that there are stories behind the subjects of each photograph.

She continued, "The photographic image marks a fixed point in the past, yet the image is often captured while traveling from place to place. After the photograph is taken and printed, it can momentarily restore the excitement felt at the moment it was taken and it is also a way of making the past tangible."

In "Wanderlust," a senior year project at Pratt, Hasegawa explained that there was "a lot of work that lead up to the opening night." Approximately one year of work, she said, adding this first professional show included the freedom and "leeway" she values.

In "Signs," a project related project to "Wanderlust," Hasegawa cleverly arranged an approach to both her subject matter and her technique that would serve as an exceptional challenge. Given a pad of white paper, individuals snapped for pictures scrawl their responses to the question, "What is love?"

As varied as the definitions were—some ranged from deeply psycho-

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### Pen & Ink: The Last Word

#### Teaching 9/11: Will Children Learn Truth or Liberal 'P.C.' Distortions?

By MICHELLE H. Le POIDEVIN  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Through its newly-launched "Remember September 11" website, The National Education Association (NEA) and its Health Information Network have advised educators to implement their lesson plans and activity sheets as a means of helping students cope with their post-9/11 emotions and to deliver their version of what exactly happened on that day of unspeakable tragedies.

In conjunction with the American Red Cross and the National Association of School Psychologists, one of the curriculum's lessons asserts that the blame for 9/11 (which has pointed unwaveringly to radical Muslim extremists and Osama bin Laden), cannot be truly defined.

"Blaming is especially difficult in terrorist situations because someone is at fault. In this country, we still believe that all people are innocent until solid reliable evidence from your legal authorities proves otherwise." Did it slip the minds of NEA, which represents 2.7 million professionals in the education industry, that legally admissible evidence has pointed time and again to bin Laden and the lunatics that carried out the 9/11 attacks?

The blame admittedly lies with these terrorists. In fact, a previously unseen videotape by bin Laden's faithful shows bin Laden saying, "By God's grace we have formed with many other Islamic groups and organizations in the Islamic world a front called the International Islamic Front to do jihad against the crusaders and Jews. And, by God's grace, the men...are going to have a successful result in killing Americans and getting rid of them." Sounds like the NEA had its ears plugged and blinders on when this man made it crystal clear that he is out to kill us.

Instead of facing the honest lessons which should be taught to our children, so that they know who their real enemies are, the NEA lessons suggest that children in grades K-2 filter out their feelings through lala-land activities. Consider this: the NEA has devised a 45-minute project, "Floating Your Feelings Away," in which youngsters sit in a circle, talk about their feelings since 9/11 and assign each feeling to a bubble, which magically disappears into the air. If life were only that easy with every conundrum, you say. Unrealistic, I say. How can K-2 level children benefit from putting their feelings on a bubble, letting it sail into oblivion? Pupils can also decorate Styrofoam cups with markers depicting their feelings, filled with the bubble mixture, before watching them "blow their feelings up and away."

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## Take the Stage

With Susan M. Dougherty

### Dames Deliver On Land and Sea

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

**WESTFIELD** — Everything old is new again. *Dames at Sea* was the vessel that launched a 17-year-old Bernadette Peters to Broadway in 1968, and could possibly start a bon voyage celebration for any of the six Broadway hopefuls in the version recently presented by the Westfield Young Artists' Cooperative Theatre, Inc. (WYACT). Held at the charming Algonquin Arts Theater in picturesque Manasquan, the run ended last weekend.

When Mona Kent, played by 17-year-old Lauren Linden, sings "Wall Street," one might think she is crooning about the mercurial stock market of

do a number of impossible theater tasks, her answer in a repeated Betty Boop voice is, "I'll try." And the audience knows she will not only try, but will succeed because this is musical comedy at its saccharine best.

The last of the female trio is Joan, an enormous talent packed into Marisa Cucuzza, who plays the typical unnoticed chorus girl. Yet, the spotlight seems to follow this gal wherever she goes. The audience adores her bravado and accent, which she could parlay into a stint on "The Sopranos." The gum chewing, wise cracking dame has a belt to knock out the back wall.

Christian Stuck, another dynamo of talent, plays the lead role of Dick. Despite his young age, the actor has a truckload of impressive credentials including NBC's sitcom "Ed," the soap opera



Susan Dougherty for The Westfield Leader and The Times  
**MAKING A SPLASH...**WYACT cast of *Dames at Sea* Marisa Cucuzza, top, Todd Kubrak, Lauren Lindner, Corey Grigg, Christian Stuck, and Alexis Slade get ready for the finale complete with wedding attire.

today, not 1930, the setting of this parody. Effective staging on a small black platform and right-on-the-money lighting by Chris Dallos bring her number to life.

Mona, the stereotypical superstar barracuda wears her self-absorption and greed for attention like a sheriff's badge. Though we're supposed to hate her, one can't help but admire this young girl's strong voice, command of the stage, and self-assuredness.

Enter the antithesis of Mona's character in the form of Ruby, the young waif from the Midwest, who is ready to step on the Broadway stage to tap her way to the top. Sound familiar? The script admittedly spoofs *42nd Street* on lots of levels.

Alexis Slade's Ruby is the perfect mix of wide-eyed wonder, naiveté, and indefatigable confidence. When she is asked by the stage manager to

"Guiding Light," and a national commercial for AT&T.

Stuck's character is a sailor and moonlighting songwriter dying to be discovered. In typical Broadway fashion, after 20 seconds of getting acquainted with Ruby and realizing they come from the same town in Utah, he declares his love for her in one of his musical creations, "It's You." Then Mona "discovers" him and the plot thickens.

Rounding out the cast is Todd Kubrak as Lucky, and Corey Grigg in the roles of Hennessey and the Captain. Both high school students, their endearing characters show depth and originality.

Costume designer Debra Reed's *Sunset Boulevard* outfits for Mona are just over the top enough to expand her cutthroat/Prima Donna image.

"Choo-choo Honeymoon," sung by Joan and her sailor love interest Lucky, is hilarious with sight gags and clever bits delivered with near-perfect timing.

And those bits don't just happen. Artistic director and choreographer Cynthia Meryl, a 30-year veteran of theater and television, knows every theatrical trick to pull the best from this show and its actors.

When Mona stretches out on the piano and croons to Dick, she pulls a seemingly never-ending scarf out of her bodice. When the sailors dance, their mops become partners, not inanimate objects. When the "Raining in My Heart" number begins, out come the big black boots, the yellow slickers and the oversized red umbrellas, à la Broadway's version of "Singin' in the Rain."

The music, presented with ease under the baton of musical director Jeffrey Smith, a virtuoso on the piano who conducts the compact musical team of bass and percussion, proves to be as professional as the rest of the production.

Not one of the songs is famous or recognizable, but that didn't stop the man sitting behind me from humming some of the tunes, and then giving in to the urge to sing the last bars of a few. At intermission he confessed he was a retired Navy man who, because of the nautical setting, adored this musical when it first came out.

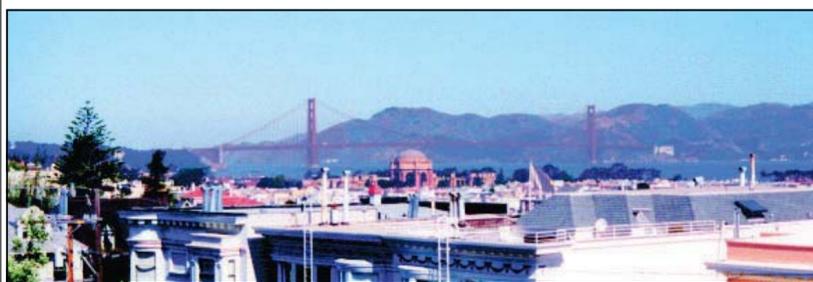
As a parody of those '30s Warner Brothers musicals, is some of it pretty

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Cheri Rogowsky for The Westfield Leader and The Times  
**ECHO LAKE FIELDS FOREVER...**"Beatlemania, the Mahoney Brothers" took audiences back to the early 60s and 70s when they performed Beatles classics on August 6 at Echo Lake Park in Westfield/MountainSide. If you didn't catch them at the park, they will be at the Village Green in Scotch Plains tonight.

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