



**GIGANTIC PIPES...** Before assembling the new organ, one of the 16-foot pedal pipes is displayed by St. Paul's Minister of Music Charles Banks, left.



**TRIUMPHANT SOUND...** An integral piece of the organ's composition, the antiphonal trumpets arrived this week at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

## Cranford Dramatic Club To Offer *Proof* in February

**CRANFORD** — The Cranford Dramatic Club (CDC) will present David Auburn's 2001 Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning drama *Proof*, opening Friday, February 4, for three weekends. *Proof* made its mark as the longest running Broadway play since Harvey Fierstein's "Torch Song Trilogy" when the drama closed at the Walter Kerr Theatre on January 5, 2003 after 918 performances and 16 previews.

*Proof* is part mathematical mystery, part family drama and part contemporary romance. One of the most acclaimed plays of recent years, *Proof* explores the complexities of love as much as it does the mysteries of mathematics.

On the eve of her 25th birthday, a young woman (Catherine) who has spent years caring for her brilliant but unstable father (Robert) must deal not only with him, but also with the arrival of her estranged sister (Claire) and with the attentions of a former student of her father's (Hal) who hopes to find valuable work in the 103 notebooks that Robert has written. As Catherine confronts Hal's affections and Claire's plans for her life, she struggles to solve the most perplexing problem of all: how much of her father's madness —

or genius — will she inherit?

CDC's production team includes veteran director Peter Clark and producer Art Kusiv. Danielle Shepard and Richard Sibello, both of whom starred in CDC's fall production of *Company*, are cast as Catherine and Hal. The role of Robert is filled by area veteran John Correll, with Tracey Randinelli taking the part of Claire. Understudies Patty Maurer and Paul Bettys round out the cast.

*Proof* will be staged on Fridays and Saturdays, February 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19, all at 8 p.m., with reserved tickets priced at \$15.

For more information and ticket reservations, please call the box office at (908) 276-7611 or visit [www.cdtheatre.org](http://www.cdtheatre.org).

The theatre is also offering mini-subscriptions for this show and its season closing musical, *Into the Woods*, for \$30, a savings of \$5. *Into the Woods* will be presented from Friday, May 6, to Saturday, May 21.

The theater is located at 78 Winans Avenue in Cranford, off Centennial Avenue near Exit 136 of the Garden State Parkway. The theatre features a newly constructed handicapped accessible restroom in the first floor lobby in addition to the upper lobby facilities.



**GOOD ORIGAMI...** Second grade students at The Wardlaw-Hartridge School learn the step-by-step procedures of origami from Westfield resident and guest speaker Kumiko Spitz. The demonstration was part of a six-week unit on various geographical locations including Mexico, Japan and Africa.

## Origami and Japanese Culture Taught at Wardlaw-Hartridge

**EDISON** — At the request of her neighborhood friend and Wardlaw-Hartridge second grade teacher Bev Fantini, Kumiko Spitz, a native of Japan, offered a demonstration on the art of origami and discussed Japanese customs and culture.

"How lucky am I?" asked Ms. Fantini of her acquaintance. "We are doing a six-week unit on Japan, Mexico and Africa. Kumiko agreed to come and do origami with the children and two of my other friends from Mexico and Africa will come to speak as well."

To begin the January 11 afternoon presentation, Mrs. Spitz asked the children, "Who knows Pokemon?" She informed them that the popular comic originated in Japan. From there she spoke of the importance of numbers, especially odd numbers. "March 3 or 3/3 is Children's Day in Japan," she explained.

The children's books she brought in for display were in Japanese; the children were able to deduce that the characters were written vertically, not horizontally. Mrs. Spitz explained that another difference is that the Japanese language is written and read from right

to left. With loads of artifacts and mementos from her own life and childhood, she showed the class bamboo dolls, shoes and games. Since the students were just at the beginning of their unit of study, they had a myriad of questions on customs, food and clothing.

Mrs. Spitz brought a kimono for one student to model. Rida Aziz of Woodbridge got to experience the feel of the silk apparel that belonged to the former Japan native's sister.

Ms. Fantini displayed and gave the class flowers she had made from colored paper, but she also gave the students a crane. When she was younger, she and her sister made and sent 1,000 cranes to their sick grandfather since the Japanese belief is that cranes in that number will bring good health.

Next, each child got newspapers to try out origami for him or herself.

"I decided to use the large paper for the younger children to accommodate their dexterity at that age," said Mrs. Spitz, who is also a teacher. Step by step they folded the paper as they were instructed to make hats that were then worn and proudly displayed.

## Choral Art Society

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pieces set to Elizabethan texts, and written in honor of the British jazz pianist George Shearing. These madrigals, sung by the full choir, were accompanied by piano and bass fiddle. Some were definitely in the jazz idiom, while others sounded more "classical," but with modern harmony.

The madrigals explored the gamut of moods, from the hauntingly beautiful "Draw on, sweet night," to the upbeat "Come live with me," with its syncopated rhythms and "ooh-ah" vocal harmonizing. It was fascinating to hear both this madrigal and "When daisies pied," which followed, as they were composed hundred of years after their counterparts sung earlier in the program.

Despite the difficulty of the first half of the program, as a whole the concert was performed brilliantly, with the pieces having been carefully chosen and well suited to the ensembles. Once could easily have listened to at least another half hour of madrigals.

This writer looks forward to the group's next concert. It surely will further demonstrate Mr. Little's appealing choices of repertoire and the choristers' ability to execute a strong performance under his expert direction.

## Lightbulb Players

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ber of scripts but don't know if they want to do a straight play or a musical.

"I just know that I want the company to continue after we all graduate," she shared.

Since the oldest teens in the troupe are sophomores, they don't have that proverbial bridge to cross for another two years.



POPCORN™

## Million Dollar Baby Pulls No Punches

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER

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It takes quite a director to pick a cliché, tear it down to its basic essence, build it back up again, and in the process make it seem like we're seeing it for the very first time. But then Clint Eastwood is quite a motion picture director. And he proves it once again with *Million Dollar Baby*, an extraordinarily sensitive, two-fisted delve into the boxing world that isn't afraid to go the distance.

In just a few minutes you dismiss any qualms you may have had about the gimmicky value inherent in the saga of a female boxer. Hilary Swank as Maggie Fitzgerald, the gal desperate to disassociate herself from haunting trailer park roots via success in the ring, sees to that.

Keeping up her reputation as the one to call when the role is offbeat, Swank's spunky Missouriian out to show the world what she's really made of is invested with a plethora of interesting character traits. So she quickly and affectionately convinces us that to focus on the presumed novelty of her vocational choice would be both silly and shortsighted.

Frankie Dunn (Eastwood), on the other hand, a grizzled boxing trainer who runs a gym in downtown L.A., doesn't share our liberal point of view...at least not at first. Maggie shows up on his doorstep beseeching to be trained by the quietly acknowledged legend. And he'll have none of it.

Maybe it was all that wincing Eastwood's Man With No Name did back in the spaghetti western days, when he was watching the masterful Sergio Leone direct. For now, in his national treasure period, his characters sport a wrinkle for every reason d'être, a furrow for every misgiving. Matching crow's feet symbolize a life spent fending off the glaring pain of guilt, Eastwood style. Among those crevices, a symphony of forewarning says "don't do it...don't take on this young lady."

Of course it's not that easy. Complex and conflicted characters of the sort filmmaker Eastwood revels in (*Unforgiven*, *Mystic River*), fraught with all the strengths and weaknesses the Greek dramatists personae first exemplified, also have that grace and redemption thing going on. Maybe this will be it...a chance to wipe the slate clean, to be exonerated of every sin committed in the name of survival, vanity and fear...a disinfecting of the soul with room to spare before judgment day.

Maggie's winning and winsome ways, along with some prodding from his old pal Scrap (Morgan Freeman), convince him. It's once more into the breach. At least the audience is all the better for it. That is, if you can take the good with the bad.

This film should come with a warning label. Eastwood, working from screenwriter Paul Haggis's adaptation of a story written by real-life trainer and cut-man, F.X. Toole, pulls no punches. This is tough stuff told straight, and the last half hour of *Million Dollar Baby* offers the roughest going of any film in recent memory.

Making the movie's last five rounds all the more difficult are the fine characterizations Eastwood and company weave. You see, we truly like the trio at the core of the story. Each embodies a portion of the

## Brazilian Jazz On Tap At Watchung Arts Ctr.

**WATCHUNG** — Brazilian jazz vocalist Vera Mara will return to the Watchung Arts Center in Watchung on Friday, January 21, at 8 p.m. for a concert performance with piano virtuoso Cidinho Teixeira.

Both performers, who have toured North and South America, Europe and Africa, respectively, are known for their contributions to Brazilian jazz, a genre, which contains upbeat, percussive pulse, generally adhering to a samba rhythm.

Tickets are \$13. The center is located at 18 Stirling Road in Watchung. Ample parking is available.

For more information, please call (908) 753-0190 or visit [www.WatchungArts.org](http://www.WatchungArts.org).

## Arts & Entertainment

# Scotch Plains-Based Quilters Group Exhibits at Church Gallery in Clark

By MARYLOU MORANO  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**SCOTCH PLAINS** — Quilting and other techniques of fabric art are currently on display at Diversity Art Gallery, located at the Union County Baptist Church in Clark. "Quilt and Fabric Art II" is Diversity Art Gallery's 13th exhibit and its second quilt and fabric show.

Among the many individual artists and artistic groups participating in the exhibit are the Harvest Quilters of Scotch Plains.

Founded in 1983, the Harvest Quilters, originally known as the YWCA Quilt Group, currently meets once a month at Cozy Corner Creations in Scotch Plains.

From the onset, the Harvest Quilters, numbering about 25 people, has used the time and talent of its members in a socially responsible way, performing many educational, service and charitable projects. They have created quilts for babies born with AIDS, children affected by floods in the Midwest, and children impacted by an earthquake in Japan in 1996.

Peace Quilts made by the Harvest Quilters have been presented in Russia, and individual quilt blocks have

been brought to YWCAs in Kenya, New Zealand and Canada.

In December of 2000, a five-day quilt show in Takamatsu City, Japan featured Japanese and American quilts shared by the Harvest Quilters.

Over the years, money raised by the Harvest Quilters Quilt Shows has helped support women's programming at the YWCA, funded a new playground at North Plainfield's West End School, and helped Girl Scouts and after-school programs.

Harvest Quilt Member Paula Pearl of Fanwood has several quilted pieces, including clothing, on display at Diversity Art Gallery's "Quilts and Fabric Art II."

"To me, quilting is a way of tying together the past and the present," explained Mrs. Pearl, who spearheaded the sharing of Harvest Quilters' quilts at the annual Harvest Festival at Trailside Museum.

The organization also participates in the Scotch Plains Street Fair.

"Quilts are the homespun artwork of women's history," commented Ann Eelman, one of the Harvest Quilters founding members.

Also exhibiting at "Quilts and Fabric Art II" are The Nubian Heritage Quilters Guild of Irvington, quilter



**ON DISPLAY...** Paula Pearl, a Fanwood resident and a member of the Scotch Plains-based Heritage Quilters Guild, created the quilt, pictured, above, which is displayed at the Diversity Art Gallery.

Debbie Lee of Springfield, and carpet designers Kennedy and Silvia Reyna of Rahway. Gini Pagdon, a Diversity Art Gallery volunteer who creates quilt clothing, and Laura Fyhr, who creates fabric dolls are also exhibiting.

"Diversity Art Gallery is one way of bringing church to the community," said Dr. Frank Papandrea, Pastor of Union County Baptist Church, and Director of the Diversity Art Gallery.

The Union County Baptist Church is located at 4 Valley Road in Clark, where the Clark Circle meets Garden State Parkway Exit 135.

For more information, please call the gallery at (732) 574-1479 or visit [www.diversityart.com](http://www.diversityart.com).

# Murphy's Mammoth Paintings Command Attention at Tomasulo

By MARYLOU MORANO  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**CRANFORD** — The larger-than-life artwork of Tim Murphy is presently on exhibit in a solo show entitled "Paintings," in the Commons area of Union County College's (UCC) Cranford Campus.

Mr. Murphy uses size and brilliant colors to evoke semi-abstract renditions of figures, landscapes, and other subjects. Several of the titles are presented in four and six panel compilations. His technique involves pouring paint on aluminum, a process that, for some pieces, took more than 50 gallons of paint. The artist calls the effect "psychedelic."

"For years I have been experimenting around with paint," explained Mr. Murphy. "I have thrown it, poured it, spit it, crawled in it, and rolled in it — all to just figure out a different way to make a picture."

Several of Mr. Murphy's paintings

are presented in a series. "In Red, Black and Blue," a series of three paintings of a pegged-leg officer, the viewer is led at first to believe that there is no difference between the three interpretations. However, once one realizes what sets each painting apart from the other, one wonders how the differences could have been overlooked.

In "Panorama," one of the exhibit's landscapes presented as mixed media on aluminum, Mr. Murphy uses vivid greens and blues as well as white to create a sense of expectation. This is

definitely not your every day, landscape painting of a tranquil mountain, river and forest.

Mr. Murphy's home and studio are located in Montclair. In addition to painting, the artist is also a sculptor. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree



**"Aloha,"** by Tim Murphy, mixed media on aluminum, 10' x 15', 2001.



**"AutoBio,"** (detail, one of seven panels) by Tim Murphy, mixed media on aluminum, 7' x 32', 2003.

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## Metro Rhythm Chorus To Serenade Sweeties For Valentine's Day

**AREA** — A quartet, sponsored by the Metro Rhythm Chorus, will serenade sweeties and valentines with two songs, a customized card, chocolate gift, flower and Polaroid photograph from Friday, February 11, to Monday, February 14. Orders should be placed before Wednesday, February 9.

The special package will be offered for \$50. To order or for more information, please call Becky at (732) 446-9782.