

## Lenga, Taliaferro Exhibit 'Images & Impressions'

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

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Art Association (WAA) is presenting "Images & Impressions: A Journey Through China and the Mind," an appealing exhibition of travel photography by Sheila Lenga, as well as mystical pastels by Diana Taliaferro at the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts' (NJWA) Westfield Art Gallery. Both artists are WAA members.

Each of Ms. Taliaferro's 13 pastels contained a common theme — a face emerging from or built into a floral backdrop.

One of her best pieces, "Love Leaves" showed the profile of a woman's face, shrouded in sadness, rising amid long flower petals, while the faces of a couple seemingly floated



"Love Leaves," by Diana Taliaferro, pastel, \$350.

below. Perhaps she was emerging from the end of a relationship and growing in its wake. The true interpretation is open to the audience, but this appears to be the theme.

"Moon Dance," a dreamy pastel with two fairies dancing in the moon, included what seemed to be the profile of "The Woman in the Moon." A similar ethereal tone was found in Ms. Taliaferro's "Butterfly Spirits," in which faces hover amid the wispy wings of faeries.

Speaking to the artist's remarkable command of the medium and unique interpretation of "a journey through the mind," it is simply amazing how, at first, the audience only notices the flower or floral backdrop and later discovers the faces nestled within.

"Iris & Blue Fairy" is a perfect example of this. Using primary colors of yellow, blue and red, Ms. Taliaferro depicts a gorgeous yellow bearded iris. Upon first glance, that is



"Girl in Tiananmen Square - Beijing" by Sheila Lenga, photograph, \$150.

the only thing you see. But, delving deeper, a face begins to take shape, and as the viewer, you almost become part of a fairytale.

Throughout the exhibit, Ms. Taliaferro uses remarkable pastel illustrations of mums, black dahlias, wild roses and lilacs to draw us in, but near the end of the exhibit we can always anticipate looking for the hidden face or faces she has cleverly incorporated.

Perhaps the artist is assigning a unique personality to each flower, but the pieces "Butterfly Heart" and "Feather Heart Flower" are extremely similar in content and composition; therefore, they should be exhibited together as a set.

Undoubtedly to her credit, Ms. Taliaferro's depiction of figures and faces remarkably mimics the trademark style of the Russian-born painter, Erté. She seems to take care and consideration of every line and detail.

The photography of Ms. Lenga truly takes the audience on an adventure to a faraway land. There, we learn to appreciate the industrious, creative and innocent spirit of the Chinese people.

One of Ms. Lenga's most prominent pieces is "Girl in Tiananmen Square - Beijing," which encapsulates the pure innocence and sweet spirit of a young girl adorned in white.

Ms. Lenga also captured the hardworking determination of a humble Chinese businessman in "Merchant, Fengdu on the Yangtze River." The man's worn and textured face still manages to reflect optimism and joy despite the burden of his difficult work.

In two photographs, "Tang Dynasty Acrobats, Xian, China" and "Tang Dynasty Show, Xian, China," Ms. Lenga's lens manages to translate the cultural pride of the Chinese as they perform with instruments and colorful props. For a brief moment, we can put ourselves in the front row of one of these performances.

The only time the artist strays from this type of "travel photography" is "Butterfly on Geranium." While this is a strong floral photograph, it really isn't as unique as her series spotlighting China, which is really her best effort.

Does the viewer feel like he or she has just experienced a journey through China and the mind? The answer is an emphatic "yes." I look forward to my next adventure with these dissimilar artists in future WAA exhibitions.

"Images & Impressions" may be viewed at the NJWA's Westfield Art Gallery, located at 150-152 East Broad Street in Westfield through Sunday, October 30.

For more information, please call (908) 789-9696.

### Town Book Store Hosts Two Meets & Greet

WESTFIELD — This weekend, The Town Book Store of Westfield will be hosting two different Meet & Greet book signings by New Jersey authors.

On Saturday, September 24, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Susan Schanerman will be in the store to promote her new book, "Play or Pay: 77 Ways to Have Fun or Suffer the Consequences and End up Paying the Price."

Then, from 2 to 4 p.m., veteran Union County teacher and resident, Margaret Greten, will be signing copies of her new novel, "Deliberate Cruelty." Anyone unable to attend these events may call (908) 233-3535 to reserve an autographed copy.

## Arts & Entertainment



BEJEWELED...Gena Spil (left) of Due Sorelle offers a piece of her hand-picked jewelry to Juxtapose proprietor Gerri Gildea (right), who marvels at the array of colors and designs offered by Gena's company, which she partners with her sister Tania.

## Due Sorelle Jewelry Offers Fashionable, Classic Style

By MICHAEL POLLACK  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — Gena and Tania Spil comprise Due Sorelle, a jewelry-designing duo, with separate lives on opposite coasts. The jewelry of Due Sorelle, meaning "two sisters" in Italian, is displayed in Juxtapose Gallery on Elm Street in Westfield. On October 1, Juxtapose will feature a formal jewelry trunk show highlighting the work.

Due Sorelle offers "bella" jewelry in the form of necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Pieces feature pearls, semi precious stones and glass beads. Everything, Gena stressed, is hand-picked from national shows, mostly in New York City.

Recently, Due Sorelle struck a cord with Hollywood and TV. Due Sorelle jewelry, this year, accessorized members of *Gilmore Girls*, *George Lopez* and *Friends*.

Gena explained that sister Tania works with costumers in the movie industry and understands, as a wardrobe assistant, how the stars are outfitted.

Gena is modest when talking about the stars wearing her jewelry, but says, "I take pride when I watch TV and see it. It's very exciting to see your pieces on TV."

What she's most excited about is coordinating with the new *Poseidon Adventure* movie due out in May of 2006.

"It's going to be really exciting to work with a blockbuster. It could be huge. It will be a \$50 million movie with Kurt Russell, Richard Dreyfus and a member of The Black Eyed Peas," she said.

On the horizon, Gena said she's met with the stylist for tennis star Serena Williams, who had Gena over to arrange certain pieces to go with Serena's wardrobe.

Due Sorelle started seven years ago doing home shows. Now, Gena explained, her goal is to "sell nation-

wide." She has a customer base on both coasts, while the south and Midwest remain untapped. "To take the next step, we need to be nationally known," she said.

Gena explained that her pieces are certainly "not trendy." And, while her jewelry's style is "classic," each show does have a different theme. "What changes are the colors. We're seeing a lot of long pieces, long chains, col-



orful stones, pearls and chunky multi-strands," she says.

When asked how to describe a typical piece, Gena laughs because the styles are so diverse. Finally she says, "fashionable, yet classic season after season," she says, satisfied.

The Spils come from a diverse background. With Cuban parents and Jewish, Russian grandparents, "we grew up in a diverse area. We traveled a lot. My mom had a boutique so that's where, I think, my sister and I got our eye for style," she said.

Gena explained that in New York City, during shows, people wear comfortable clothes because, and she demonstrates, "they are literally on their hands and knees in bins searching through hundreds of pieces to get the perfect strand and quality. I handpick for hours." She said the process can even be competitive, with people staking claim to specific pieces, while sorting through the equivalent of geological chaff.

"It's an important process to hand-pick," she said. "You're actually digging through bins to perfect clarity and color combos," she added, saying

that her hands are literally black after digging for hours, and then must wash the stones before rendering any pieces.

Gena explains that sister Tania attends shows on the West Coast and tends to create "faster" pieces that appeal to a Los Angeles atmosphere, while Gena fashions a more "classic" approach. She said that while the same gems and stones are used, it is only in the final manifestation where one can see how each sister's style and taste differs. Due Sorelle finds that customers unknowingly will purchase a piece from each sister to mix and match different designs.

Gena refers to her pieces as "one of a kind, one strand. They don't have a mass manufacturer look of big stores."

Juxtapose Proprietor Gerri Gildea said that she loves displaying Gena's pieces, noting that Due Sorelle offers "fresh new designs," and nods in agreement when Gena relates the comments that she most often hears from wearers of her jewelry — "The color combos are just exquisite."

"And they're not the obvious ones you'd imagine," Mrs. Gildea adds.

Gena says that creativity and altering common jewelry archetypes is key; otherwise "the process gets stale. I always want to reinvent, create and try something new."

### MS's Barbara Burke To Sing in State Opera

MOUNTAINSIDE — Barbara Burke of Mountainside will sing in the New Jersey State Opera's 40th Anniversary gala concert — "Great Moments from Grand Opera" at 3:00 p.m., Sunday September 25 at the PaperMill Playhouse in Millburn.

This concert will feature the NJ State Opera Chorus with professional soloists performing famous choral scenes and arias from favorite operas. Tickets are priced at \$25 and \$50 and can be ordered at the PaperMill Box Office at (973) 376-4343 or online at [www.papermill.org](http://www.papermill.org). For more information, visit [www.njstateopera.org](http://www.njstateopera.org)



## Get Outta' The House

By CAROL F. DAVIS  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Elizabeth's Ritz Theater is kicking off the 2005 concert season with a performance by *America* and *Air Supply* on Friday, October 7, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$35 to \$45, and are available by calling (908) 351-7575 or online through [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). There is a public parking lot right behind the theater.

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This weekend, September 23 through 25, marks the famed 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Peters Valley Craft Fair at the Sussex County Fairgrounds in Augusta. This year's show will feature over 170 artists working in a variety of mediums, demonstrations, food and a performance by Richie Havens. Admission to the fair is \$6, and concert tickets are \$30 to \$35. For information, including ticket reservations and directions, call (973) 948-5200 or log onto: <http://www.pvcrafts.org/craftfair.htm>. The event will be held in rain or shine.

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Why not do something different this autumn? Alba Vineyard in the Village of Finesville (near the Delaware River) needs volunteers to throw off their footwear and help them stomp the season's harvest on Saturday, September 24, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. You must sign-up in order to participate. Call (908) 995-7800 for details.

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*Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass: The Sesquicentennial Symposium* will be held September 22 to 24, at The College of New Jersey in Ewing. The three-day event celebrates the 150th anniversary of *Leaves of Grass* with scholarly panels, poetry readings, an art exhibition, a one-man play and a performance of Fred Hersch's jazz composition *Leaves of Grass*. General Registration is \$50. One-day registration is \$25. Log onto: [www.tcnj.edu/~whitman](http://www.tcnj.edu/~whitman).

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You've read about *Delian League* in the November 25, 2004 edition of *The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* (<http://www.goleader.com/04nov25/20.pdf>). Tomorrow, Friday, September 23, is your opportunity to see them perform, along with several other bands, at the Starland Ballroom in Sayreville at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$16 to \$18, and can be purchased through Ticketmaster or at the door. Check out [www.starlandballroom.com](http://www.starlandballroom.com) for more information.

### Early Amer. History Relived at Harvest

MOUNTAINSIDE — The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities will host the 24th annual Harvest Festival, rain or shine, on Sunday, September 25, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Trailside Nature and Science Center, located at 452 New Providence Road in Mountainside.

At this year's Harvest Festival, visitors will have the opportunity to observe a variety of displays and demonstrations, such as: a Revolutionary War encampment, quilting, canoe building, gunsmithing, soap making, candle dipping, colonial games, basket making, fur trapping and trading and butter churning.

The Harvest Festival will feature storytelling and musical performances. The festival will include Native American lodge and artifact displays, colonial and Native American crafts and work skills, a petting zoo, pony rides; log sawing and shingle splitting. The event will feature the Build-a-Scarecrow contest, which requires a nominal fee for participation.

Admission is \$3 per person, with children ages seven and younger admitted free of charge. For more information call (908) 789-3670 or visit [www.ucnj.org](http://www.ucnj.org).

### Club FACT Running Eighth Annual 5K Race

WESTFIELD — The Club FACT (Fighting Against Cancer Together)/Teddy Roosevelt Rough Runners eighth annual 5K will be held on Sunday, October 2, at Roosevelt Intermediate School, located 301 Clark Street. Registration for the race will continue until 8:45 a.m. on the day of the race. Start time is scheduled, rain or shine, at 9 a.m. Pre-registration (non-refundable) is \$12 and includes a newly designed T-shirt.

It must be postmarked by Friday, September 23. Same day registration is \$15 and T-shirts will be given while supplies last. Checks should be made payable to Roosevelt School Fund. All proceeds from the race will be donated to the American Cancer Society at Relay for Life in Union.

For more information, call (908) 789-4560 and leave a message for Kira Brady.

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