

Fanwood Poetry Series To Feature Three Poets

FANWOOD – The Carriage House Poetry Series invites the public to attend a poetry reading by Gail Gerwin, Yehoshua November and Ed Romond on Tuesday, June 17. The free performance will begin promptly at 8 p.m. in the Patricia Kuran Arts Center on Watson Road, off North Martine Avenue, adjacent to Fanwood Borough Hall (GPS use 75 N. Martine Avenue).

Gail Fishman Gerwin, a Paterson native, lives in Morristown. She is the author of two poetry collections: "Sugar and Sand," a 2010 Paterson Poetry Prize finalist, and "Dear Kinfolk" (ChayaCairn Press), which earned a 2013 Paterson Award for Literary Excellence. Her poetry, reviews, fiction and essays appear in numerous media and her plays and monologues have been performed in several venues.

Ms. Fishman's trademarks are specificity, candor, and gorgeous imagery. Gail is the founder of "inedit," a Morristown writing/editing firm, and she is associate poetry editor of the journal *Tiferet*.

Yehoshua November lives in Morristown. He earned a BA at Binghamton University, an MFA at the University of Pittsburgh, and studied in Yeshiva for two years. In his poems, he tracks the shifting intersection of faith, daily life, and poetry. His debut collection of poetry, "God's Optimism," won the Main Street Rag Poetry Book Award and was a finalist for the LA Times Book Prize.

Mr. November has been featured on Garrison Keillor's National Public Radio program "The Writer's Almanac" and he won Prairie Schooner's Bernice Slot Award. He has taught at Touro College and Rutgers University.

A native of Woodbridge, Edwin Romond lives in Wind Gap, Pennsylvania. His poems have been fea-

ured on National Public Radio, in anthologies, college texts, and in journals such as *The Sun*, *Exit 13 Magazine*, *Tiferet*, *Barrow Street*, *Edison Literary Review*, and *Poet Lore*.

His most recent books of poetry are "Alone with Love Songs" and "Dream Teaching" (Grayson Books). Ed was awarded poetry fellowships from the New Jersey and Pennsylvania State Arts Councils and the National Endowment for the Arts. Before retiring in 2003, he was an English teacher for 32 years in Wisconsin and New Jersey.

The Carriage House Poetry Series is currently in its 16th year at the Kuran Arts Center, an historic Gothic Revival structure that was once a 19th century carriage house, hence the name of the series.

The June 17 reading is free and open to the public. An open mic will follow the featured performances. This will be the last reading of the spring before the series takes its usual July-August hiatus. The series will resume on Tuesday, September 16, with featured poets Renee Ashley and Peter Murphy.

For more information call (908) 889-7223 or (908) 889-5298 or visit carriagehousepoetryseries.blogspot.com.

Vance Gilbert Perform at UCPAC

RAHWAY – Vance Gilbert will perform on Saturday, June 7, at 8 p.m. at The Loft at the Union County Performing Arts Center located at 1601 Irving Street, Rahway. Tickets are \$20. To purchase tickets, call the Box Office at (732) 499-0441 or visit www.ucpac.org.

POPCORN

"Chef"

Cooks up the Comfort Food of Film
3 popcorns

One Popcorn, Poor — Two Popcorns, Fair — Three Popcorns, Good — Four Popcorns, Excellent

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
Film Critic

Before venturing out to see Jon Favreau's deliciously convivial "Chef," make arrangements for an après-cinema meal to complement what is sure to whet your appetite. Oh, it needn't be haute cuisine; just, as the moral gist of this film suggests, good, honest fare prepared with equal parts passion and care...perhaps a food truck if the hour permits.

Cooking up his triple threat (write, direct, and star), what Mr. Favreau forgoes in conventional movie recipe he sumptuously rectifies with a feel good lilt that dishes up a hearty helping of warmth. No disingenuous reductions of this or that, drizzled with essence of sanctimonious glaze...not here.

In fact, it's just that sort of gourmand pretense that sends Mr. Favreau's Carl Casper on his gustatory journey. Divorced from, but still good friends with, Inez (Sofia Vergara), the beautiful mom of his son Percy (Emjay Anthony), the noted chef de cuisine is now wed to his status at a famous L.A. dining room. But trouble brews in paradise.

Resulting from an inauspicious visit to his revered *salle à manger* by foppish food reviewer Ramsey Michel (Oliver Platt) — an unflattering caricature that serves us critics right — Carl and his patron-restaurateur (Dustin Hoffman) have a bone to pick. In a funk both in the kitchen and in his life, the lines often blurring, the title character wants to reignite his career with a new and creative bill of fare. But "no, no," warns the boss. Profits are high, and Carl should note on which side his baguette is buttered.

The chef quits over creative differences...the front-loaded revelation about artistic freedom thus delivering the plot complication in the exposition rather than just before the denouement. Reading the English side of the menu, it means Carl, at Inez's suggestion, decides to take his gastronomical show on the road and go the food truck route. Hopefully it'll give Carl and Percy a chance to rekindle their relationship.

Mixed in with the sweet and savorily seasoned array of things culinary, this is a touching ingredient that will, if you were so blessed, jog a steady stream of wistfulness. Oh, to be with Dad, even if only a ride to Sears to get paint, just you two. He might tell a story as he tussles your hair... maybe about when he was little like you... your favorite kind. Indeed, Mr. Favreau's script tugs at, if not manipulates, the heartstrings with little compunction...and we're glad to soak up the soppiety with our own memories.

A happy, upbeat jauntiness permeates most of the magical virtual tour that spells coming of age for Percy and rejuvenation for

Carl...aided and abetted by John Leguizamo as Martin, that very important element in such tales of bonding. Former number 3 man at the chichi watering hole, he's like that best friend/crazy uncle who's stowed aboard to champion Dad's virtues whilst joyously spewing a narrative of life-affirming non sequiturs.

Adding a contemporary nuance to the genre, a savvy commentary on social media cracks wisely to form the subplot. The kid, representative of his generation's adroit command of texting, twittering and whatever other telecommunicating modes might be invented before film's end, becomes the chronicler and hawker for the scrumptious odyssey. Quicker than you can say Mark Zuckerberg, hungry E-followers from Miami to Los Angeles salivate in anticipation of devouring Carl's instantly legendary Cuban sandwich.

Mr. Favreau as the foodie extraordinaire amiably personifies the democratization of Carl's art while serving up big dollops of that indulgent fantasy: telling the boss where he can go and then basking in the glorious, gypsyesque independence of food truck-ism. Comfortable in his noticeably overweight casing, he exacts an emotional mélange of untarnished enthusiasm, ambition, uncertainty and pride.

And, if you go by that old axiom about the unseen qualities of just average-looking fellows who have won the attentions of very attractive women, he must be some guy. Sofia Vergara's sagacious Inez conveys an upbeat perceptiveness that says volumes about the chef's character and talent. Young Mr. Anthony as Percy, the boy who wishes for what most children of divorced parents yearn for, also does a nice job...his digital proficiency imparting an introspective, running gag about our Technological New World.

Adding to the bittersweet flavor of the epiphanies Percy and his dad share, a splash of realistic tartness is imparted by Dustin Hoffman's inflexible impresario. But the perfect *amuse-bouche* is Robert Downey, Jr., who contributes a sublime nuttiness as the fast quipping Marvin, a possibly shady businessman and Inez's previous spouse.

Granted, portions, while always generous, are a bit pie in the sky-ish. Still, despite a concoction of plot fixings that don't quite follow the usual order of courses that stirs together a storyline, the end result is a *pièce de résistance* you'll want to queue up for when "Chef" rolls into your movie house.

"Chef," rated R, is an Open Roads Film (II) release directed by Jon Favreau and stars Jon Favreau, Sofia Vergara and Emjay Anthony. Running time: 115 minutes



GRADUATION RECITAL...The Junior Musical Club of Westfield will hold its annual Graduation Recital at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm Street, Westfield, on Thursday, June 12, at 7 p.m. Performers, pictured, left to right, are: high school seniors Katherine Purachev, Kristin Hauge, Samantha Tropper, Belle Lin and Tiffany Chen.

NJ Festival Orchestra

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cussionist and fellow colleague, Taylor Goodson, noted, "There is usually an additional antiphonal timpani off stage, but tonight we only had the one set on stage." This trimming down was the case in every major section of the orchestra. Therefore, it would seem the venue would preclude the orchestra from giving an authentic performance of this symphony. However, this was clearly not the case: the orchestra and chorus adapted beautifully to their environment and at times even used it to their advantage.

The Harmonium Choir flanked the orchestra on each side in the balcony, directly above them. This is a common practice for this stage (I can clearly recall the same layout when they programmed Beethoven's Ninth Symphony four years ago). But it was quite clever having the renowned soloists, soprano Lianne Coble and mezzo-soprano Sarah Nelson Craft, take turns singing up on the pulpit, like a priestesses proclaiming to their assemblage.

Having these wonderful singers placed slightly above the orchestra was visually moving and resulted in an almost angelic quality quite fitting to the character of this magnificent work.

As noted in the program, Gustav Mahler was not a religious man. A Jew who converted to Catholicism for practical reasons, he practiced neither his former religion, nor the latter. It was simply easier to function as a Catholic in Viennese Society, given the extreme anti-Semitism of the time. However, one cannot

help but see the religious significance of this symphony. Not in the traditional sense of the word or specific to a particular religion, but rather dealing with universal elements, common to all humankind. The concepts of eternal life, conquering death, renewal and rebirth are all present.

Mahler has taken us through this transfiguration, and the mezzo is the affirmation of life everlasting. She is the angel of salvation — where better to place her than a pulpit? I briefly spoke with mezzo-soprano, Sarah Nelson Craft, after the concert. She agreed that "being in the midst of the orchestra was an exhilarating experience — one that I had not had before."

So, ideally, we leave transformed — reborn, in a sense. Using Beethoven's Ninth as a model, Mahler guides us through that ever-so-popular journey of dark to light in a completely "maximalized" way, as Richard Taruskin, the renowned musicologist put it.

Every player shows off the full potential of their instrument. Every saturated feeling is achieved by maximizing the intensity. When two of the most prestigious ensembles in our state came together, a whole world was created. After all, it was Gustav Mahler who famously said, "A symphony must be like the world. It must contain everything."

The NJ Festival Orchestra and Harmonium's exhilarating performance certainly contained everything.

Sounds of Summer at the NJWA Music Studio

WESTFIELD — Summer is the perfect time to pursue a new interest or improve upon an existing skill. Musicians of all ages, ability levels and musical interests will have many opportunities to do so during the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts Music Studio (NJWA) summer sessions.

Those who wish to have private vocal or instrumental instruction may enroll for a 30, 45 or 60 minute lesson at the Music Studio, which is staffed by highly skilled music educators and professional musicians. The regular summer session runs daily from June 22 to August 15. Call for teacher availability.

The Parent Partner Continuation will offer instruction for a parent and child on violin, viola, cello or string bass in three levels: Beginner, Advanced Beginner and Elementary. Classes will be held on Tuesdays, from July 1 to August 12, at 6 p.m. at the NJWA studios.

Students in grades 3 and up, who are interested in playing a band instrument at the beginning level, may join the Beginning Wind Ensemble. This class will meet on Tuesdays, from July 1 to August 12 at 7:15 p.m. at the NJWA location.

Intro to Jazz is a workshop in learning how to interpret jazz playing styles, using a variety of selections and training materials. Those who have two years of experience playing alto, baritone sax, trumpet, trombone, piano, bass guitar or electric guitar will meet at the NJWA studios on Wednesdays, from July 2 to August 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Those who have one year experience in playing a brass instrument and are interested in playing solos, duets, trios and quartets on the Alphorn, will meet on Tuesdays, from July 1 to August 12 at 8:30 p.m. at the NJWA studios.

The Training Orchestra will introduce, develop and reinforce the techniques and skills required in per-

forming the orchestral repertoire. Musicians of all ages, who play the violin, will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from June 2 to July 30, from 6 to 7 p.m. at the NJWA studios.

Returning for the 15th year is the NJWA Summer Symphony. To be eligible for the group, musicians who play strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion should have some ensemble playing experience. The orchestra will meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, from 7:15 to 9 p.m., at Zion Lutheran Church, 559 Raritan Road, Clark, beginning June 24 and will conclude with a final concert on Tuesday, July 22.

The recently formed and very popular Rock Performance Workshop, for teen vocalists or teens with one year of playing experience on guitar, bass, drums, piano, sax and trumpet, will meet at the NJWA Studios. Advanced groups will rock out on Saturday nights, at 6 and 7:30 p.m., starting June 28. Beginning Level Groups, for those in middle school with one year of playing experience, will do so on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays at 4:30 p.m., in four-week sessions, beginning June 23.

For more specific information regarding eligibility requirements and tuition for any of these programs, visit the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, located at 150-152 East Broad Street, Westfield, phone (908) 789-9696 or log on to www.njworkshopforthearts.com.

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Junior Musical Club Presents Graduation Recital

WESTFIELD - The Junior Musical Club of Westfield will hold its annual Graduation Recital at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm Street, Westfield, on Thursday, June 12, at 7 p.m. The concert is open to the public and free of charge. A reception will follow.

All the performers are local high school seniors, about to graduate and leave for college.

Tiffany Chen, violinist, and Belle Lin, violinist, both from Basking Ridge, will perform Johan Halvorsen's *Passacaglia*. Their string quartet, which includes Catherine Chen, violinist, and Elaine Lou, cellist, will play the first movement of Antonín Dvořák's "American Quartet in F Major, Op. 96, No. 12."

Kristin Hauge, a pianist and violinist from Westfield, will play Franz Liszt's "Liebesträume No. 3" and Frédéric Chopin's "Revolutionary Étude, Op. 10, No. 12" on the piano, and the "Allemande" from Johann Sebastian Bach's *Partita in D minor* for solo violin (BWV 1004).

Katherine Purachev, a pianist from Cranford, will perform Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Fantasia No. 3 in D minor," K. 397, Frédéric Chopin's "Minute Waltz" in D-flat Major, and Anton Biloti's "The Firefly."

Neeraj Shekhar, a pianist from Westfield, will play Johann Sebastian Bach's "Invention No. 4 in D minor," Joaquin Turina's "The Bells," and Moritz Moszkowski's "Étude in C Major, Opus 91, No. 11."

Samantha Tropper, soprano from Scotch Plains, will sing "I can't say no" from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma*, Ortolani and Oliviero's "Ti guarderò nel cuore" with words by Norman Newell, and "Vanilla Ice Cream" from Bock and Harnick's *She Loves Me*. The concert will end with Samantha Tropper singing Cleopatra's aria "V'adoro, pupille" from George Frideric Handel's opera *Julius Caesar* accompanied by a chamber orchestra including a viola da gamba, a Baroque period instrument, played by a guest artist.

Flying with Martha

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tants took their seats next to me back in coach.

The aisle was jammed with passengers getting their carry-ons and themselves situated when we spotted the Goddess of Domestic Perfection impatiently pushing her way towards the back of the plane where we were seated. One of her assistants jumped up and nervously asked her, "Is there something you need?" "I need you to get out of my way," Martha barked at her. "So I can use the bathroom."

With that, she pushed past and headed for the lavatory. Amused by this ridiculous public behavior, I said to her minion sitting next to me, "She must be a handful to work for," to which the poor girl replied with a weak chuckle of agreement.

Thanks to more frequent air travel in recent years, I have largely conquered my fear of flying. But my bravery was tested a few summers back on an overnight flight from Newark to Portugal that I expected to be routine. Then the pilot, about 30 minutes after take-off, announced to us that we would be flying directly into a massive hurricane that had somehow formed out of the blue and was centered off the Portuguese coast.

We were told that all food and beverage service would be canceled for the duration of the flight and that the flight attendants were to remain seated until we landed—hopefully in one piece—in Lisbon. The pilot estimated that we would be encountering the hurricane in about three hours and that our nightmare would last about three hours, thus giving me ample time to begin counting down the hours and then the minutes until my certain doom.

Then it was daybreak and I could see the Portuguese coastline on a clear sunny morning. To loud applause from the passengers, a flight attendant then announced to us that our flight crew had deftly maneuvered us up and around the hurricane with not even the slightest of bumps.

On that same flight—as I awaited my coming date with destiny at 39,000 feet—I was seated in the middle seat. My traveling partner was fast asleep, hurricane threat or not, against the window while an elderly gentleman was seated next to me on the aisle. His wife, seated directly in front of him, busied herself with her knitting. Eventually, the old man dozed off in the middle of the night while I remained on storm watch. I saw his wife get up to use the lavatory. Then her sleeping husband, apparently having a disturbing dream, began to twitch and then started flailing his arms and legs, almost whacking me in the face in the process. Then he began moaning and yelling incoherently—all while he slept—as he waved his arms and kicked his legs.

Two flight attendants rushed over and tried to wake the thrashing man, who finally opened his eyes, realized

where he was and gradually caught his breath and then sipped some water that was brought to him. Eventually, the flight attendants returned to their own seats, leaving the old man sitting calmly next to a now-completely-rattled me.

A moment later, his wife returned from the lavatory, sat down in her seat in front of her husband and resumed her knitting for the rest of the flight—totally unaware of the chaos that had just ensued.

Speaking of chaos, last summer my flight to Paris was delayed repeatedly over a four-hour period before it was finally canceled, at 1:30 in the morning, due to a problem with the engine's fuel pump. Two hundred very tired and aggravated passengers were given hotel vouchers for the night and told to return the following afternoon at 4 p.m. for a new flight.

Fair enough. Stuff happens, and I would rather not fly at all than fly on a plane with an engine defect. But perhaps the airline could have called things off a little earlier instead of making us wait impatiently until deep into the night. In any event, we all returned the next day, got on board and were in good cheer as we taxied to the runway en route to Paris. Then the plane stopped and turned around and headed back to the terminal because—we were told, to our collective disbelief and anger—our aircraft was the same one that had malfunctioned the previous night and that the same fuel pump problem that had purportedly been fixed had somehow resurfaced.

I wondered why the airline would use the same plane after the prior night's mess. Then I further wondered why, if using the same plane and experiencing the same problem, the airline did not simply lie to us, tell us it was a different plane and invent a new problem, if only to avoid looking like fools.

Two years earlier, I was on a plane set to depart Paris for the U.S. when we were informed that we would be delayed for several hours because the airport's baggage-handlers had just called a strike, meaning our luggage would sit on the tarmac—right off my window!—for the next few hours while the strikers made their point.

The airline eventually managed to circumvent the work stoppage by temporarily hiring non-union baggage handlers employed by an Asian airline. The guys came over, loaded our bags and we were airborne within two hours.

So now that we have reviewed the rules of behavior when flying and looked back fondly on some of our more memorable flying experiences, next week we will begin exploring a variety of vacation spots in the U.S. and abroad, including Montreal, Dallas, Chicago, Edinburgh, San Diego, New Orleans, the Netherlands, Berlin and perhaps a few other locales, if our budget permits.

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