

**POPCORN**

**Once Upon a Time in Hollywood**  
The Golden Age, Tarnished  
4 popcorns

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

By Michael S. Goldberger  
film critic

While Quentin Tarantino has won two Oscars for his screenplays, with *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, his most profound motion picture to date, he might finally gather up those statuettes for best film and best directorial effort. The provocative and quirkily philosophical work is thoroughly entertaining proof that he is one of America's most accomplished, living directors.

Whereas many filmmakers doubtlessly come up with a novel idea for a film that, for one reason or another doesn't make it to the silver screen with the inspired creativity of its genesis intact, Tarantino's signature talent is in making his movie dreams come true. His unique brand of outlandishness won our initial, critically approving attention. And now, after wowing us with a couple decades of screaming fastballs and devastating curves, he pulls a humanity-laced changeup from his quiver in a robust flourish of his greater, inner depth.

Here, his film characters abandon the semi-comic, representative caricatures they inhabited and, in a variation on how stereotypes are generally depicted, are imbued with as much soul aschutzpah. As a result, in the waning, last days of Hollywood's Golden Age that Mr. Tarantino's photoplay cherishingly deconstructs, we truly care about fading glamor boy/leading man, Rick Dalton, and his stunt double/sidekick, Cliff Booth, played by Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt, respectively. The times, they are a changing, and the winds heralding said sociological watershed are profuse with uncomfortable presentiments.

For some it is business as usual, with all the gimcracks of opulence, swagger and devil-may-care attitude being displayed in the best golden calf tradition. But, as Bob Dylan sings in "Ballad of a Thin Man," which isn't included in the movie's era-defining musical score, but would have been apt if not too obvious, "...something is happening here but you don't know what it is. Do you, Mr. Jones?" As Rick and Cliff cruise up and down The Strip, hustling from sound stage to set, to meetings with conniving and dilettantish movie moguls, the so-called regular world goes about its historical path.

Flower children proliferate Hollywood Boulevard, hitchhike and occasionally yell an obscenity at the cops they call pigs. And while no mention is made of the thousands of American GI's being killed in a war to supposedly halt the communistic encroachment by governments that have since been invited to tilt our elections,

memory of the perversion is thick as we imbibe with the advantage of 20/20 hindsight. But more immediately, we wince as Tarantino injects Sharon Tate into the scenario. Portrayed with a startlingly childlike innocence by the very pretty Margot Robbie, she lives right next door to Rick with husband and famed director Roman Polanski. Suddenly discomfited and set to wondering how Tarantino will play this, we are put on tenterhooks. But all in due time.

Right now, all attention is paid to the frenetic mishegoss of Rick trying to stay relevant in Tinseltown, and Cliff, who harbors a dark secret, picking up the crumbs that come of any success his pal achieves. Rick frets about maintaining an audience built mostly of a TV series and a handful of films. Psst. He's more famous than he realizes, or that his blubbery, self-pitying hissy fits would indicate, and which Cliff is inevitably able to calm. This is the best buddy pairing since Newman and Redford in *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid* (1969) and, in its idiosyncratic way, the most touching in recent memory. Alas, men usually aren't as simpatico, either in film or real life.

Rick's career angst doesn't go unnoticed by movie bigwig Marvin Schwartz, a devout fan of the actor's rough-and-tumble shoot-em-ups whose penchant for correcting people's mispronunciation of his name implies volumes about the assumed culture of Hollywood. Waxing enthusiastic about how he and his wife reserve one night a week to watch Rick Dalton pictures, he is a hoot. If anyone can take a typecast to another level, turn it inside out and say something socially insightful in the bargain, it's Pacino in this little more than cameo role. Well, Mr. Schwartz has a plan. Oh, hmmm...well, that might work.

Some characters in Tarantino's opus are real, some are fictitious and some are, well, semi-fictitious. But like most of his eccentric ruminations, whether operating just on the fringe of meditative truth or smack dab in the middle of some feverish lunacy, it cajoles your indulgence. It is a breath of fresh air, whooshed into an institution forever threatening its certain demise in a pyre of decadence. And so, in the case of this jaded cineaste, seeing *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* was like being transported to the movie house just off campus, a college kid, discovering anew the audacious, fairy tale magic of film.

*Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, rated R, is a Columbia Pictures release directed by Quentin Tarantino and stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt and Margot Robbie. Running time: 161 minutes.

**Netherwood Heights House Tour Tickets on Sale Now**

PLAINFIELD — Advance tickets are on sale now for the Netherwood Heights Neighbors house tour to be held on Sunday, September 29, from noon to 4 p.m. Rain or Shine.

Tickets are available for advance purchase at: The Coffee Box 1359 South Ave, Plainfield, Swain's Gallery 703 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, Online at <http://netherwoodheights.org>.

The advance purchase price is \$35. Otherwise tickets are \$40 on the day of the event. Store locations can only accept cash or check made payable to Netherwood Heights Neighbors.

The tour starts at the registration tent located at 551 Belvidere Avenue, Plainfield. Here attendees will receive a program booklet and map.

This is an educational house tour of Plainfield's Netherwood Heights neighborhood, featuring historic homes built as early as 1894. The Netherwood Heights Neighbors, a non-profit community group, are sponsoring a tour of seven historic Plainfield homes, built from 1894

through 1929. Come celebrate the 150th anniversary of Plainfield's incorporation by visiting some of its earliest residences, and learning how the city transformed from a rural village to a fashionable suburb for America's post-Civil War elite. The tour will celebrate the fascinating past of the neighborhood, while giving a glimpse at how the homes have evolved to meet the needs of everyday modern life.

The neighborhood in which the tour takes place was once largely defined by the location of Netherwood Hotel. A variety of styles of homes include one built ca 1927 which represents the Tudor Revival style, loosely based on medieval English building traditions; a "storybook style" cottage built around 1928 for \$15,000. The style originates in the Cotswold region of England and is characterized by stone siding and steep gables; an 1890s farm house has been updated to meet modern tastes yet respects its lengthy past; a Spanish Style period revival built ca. 1912.

**UCPAC Hosts 'Out of the Woods' Featuring Bryan Hansen Band**

RAHWAY — Union County Performing Arts Center (UCPAC) is to present "Out of the Woods" on Friday, August 23, at 8 p.m. at the Hamilton Stage in Rahway.

"Out of the Woods" is a night of music featuring Bryan Hansen Band with Jared Milian, UCPAC's ICON 2018 winner and the cast members of UCPAC's upcoming production of the musical *Into the Woods!* All proceeds are being donated to featured charity, Inroads to Opportunities.

Inroads to Opportunities is a 501(c)(3) organization located in Roselle that provides vocational rehabilitation support to individuals with disabilities.

Inroads to Opportunities will be holding a fundraiser on Friday, April 24, 2020, at the UCPAC Main Stage. Pre-sale tickets for the Inroads to Opportunities Spring 2020 fundraiser, as well as *Into the Woods* performances will be available for purchase in the lobby on the day of the performance. The lobby opens at 7 p.m.

**Story-Time All Stars Aug. 8 at The Clock**

CRANFORD -- Today, August 8, at 10 a.m. is the final summer, Cranford Public Library Story Time at the Clock in downtown Cranford. The theme is Story-Time All Stars. The story time will be aimed at children ages 3 through 5, and will have an outer space theme. The children's librarian Lauren Antolino organizes the event.

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*Charles Addams: A Look at The Leader Stories of Westfield's Most Notable Artist. We will reprint stories of Addams leading up to the town's celebration of Addams in late October.*

**Westfield-Born Addams Spooked Fans for Years**

By STEVEN KRAKAUER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD—Dah-dah-dah-dah; neat. Dah-dah-dah-dah; sweet. Dah-dah-dah-dah, dah-dah-dah-dah, dah-dah-dah-dah; petite.

Sound familiar? Of course! "The Addams Family" has delighted and frightened audiences ever since it's premiere on television in 1964. Continuing on TV and then going into the theaters in 1991, the show has brought along quite a following. But the roots of this odd family originated long before it's release in 1964. As a matter of fact, it all began in a little town in Central New Jersey — Westfield.

Charles Addams, the creator of the Addams Family, was born on January 7, 1912, in Westfield. The spookiness of his childhood is actually quite sparse. There were supposed brief stints of mischievous behavior, including sneaking into a neighbor's garage and drawing a skeleton. Also, the young man was rumored to stroll through graveyards at night. For the most part, however, Addams had a calm and "normal" childhood.

"Chas" Addam's lived on 522 Elm Street and went to high school at Westfield High. As a matter of fact, Addams drew cartoons for the *Hi's Eye*, Westfield High School's school newspaper. The school was situated in what is now the Westfield Board of Education Building located on 302 Elm Street.

Somewhere between those two locations Addams saw the house which was his inspiration for the creepy residency that we saw for TV's Addams family. 411 Elm Street is the supposed basis for the house, and it

shows. Although much less eerie, the design of the houses resemble each other greatly.

Currently residing in the 411 location are the Diddells. They were unable to be reached for comment.

The Addams house at 522 Elm Street is currently 93 years old. Now living in it is Earl Frawley, who's lived there for 29 years. Although it is the original house, Frawley has spent over \$100,000 to renovate the house. There is now a new porch, a deck, new kitchen, and new flooring, among other changes to Addams residency.

Besides creating the Addams Family, Charles Addams was also a highly renowned cartoonist. He was featured regularly in *New Yorker* magazine, and also appeared in *TV Guide* and *Colliers*.

Ronald C. MacCloskey, a huge Charles Addams fan/collector that has written about Addams and contributes to the Unofficial Charles Addams Web site, hopes to educate Westfield citizens about their famous cartoonist.

Mr. MacCloskey, who also went to Westfield High School, has proposed a house next door to the town's Municipal Building to be turned into a Charles Addams museum. All you have to do is listen to the song: Their house is a museum. Where people come to see 'em, they really are a scream. The Addams Family.

Could this museum be a "scream" for Westfield? Only time will tell. The only thing we know for sure is that Westfielder Charles Addams brought the town into a slightly odder light than before.

Story was originally published in *The Westfield Leader / Times* on August 31, 2000.



The Rialto by Charles Addams

**Tatiana Palivoda Presents Solo Art Show of New Work**

AREA — Re-Emerging Artist Tatiana Palivoda presents a Solo Art Show at the Middletown Library, throughout the month of August. The library is located at 55 New Monmouth Road, Middletown. An Artist Reception with light refreshments will be held Monday, August 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Artist Tatiana Palivoda is pleased to introduce a new collection of work that offers the chance to challenge the mundane. Come reflect on the beauty of nature interpreted with unexpected color arrangements. Find a visual voice with letters, words and phrases presented as layered abstracts that cannot go unnoticed. Celebrate life and all of its aspects in artwork speaks

**Charlie Cruz to Perform Free Tonight**

NEWARK -- Tonight, August 8, from 5 to 9 p.m. Charlie Cruz takes the stage as part of Horizon Foundation Sounds of the City series of free outdoor concerts at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) Chambers Plaza. Also appearing is 3D Rhythm of Life (Latin/tropical soul band).

One of the fastest rising stars in salsa music, vocalist Charlie Cruz was born in Puerto Rico and spent his teenage years in Paterson, where he first grew to love salsa. As a young performer, he spent two years in Puerto Rico honing his skills as a vocalist in the Domingo Quiñones Orchestra. Soon after, he shared a stage with Gilberto Santa Rosa, Victor Manuelle and Tito Nieves. That concert led to a contract with Sir George Records, where Cruz has produced a string of hit singles, including "Bombron de Azucar," "Amarte es un Problema" and "Déjala que Baile." His latest album is *Tu Con El*.

Photo submissions of Westfield are being accepted for *This Is Westfield*. Send all hi-res submissions for consideration to [ae@goleader.com](mailto:ae@goleader.com).



FOOD AND FAME...Jamie Foerst, age 11, of Westfield competed in the Food Network series "Chopped Junior" on Season 9, Episode 6, *Duck, Duck Chopped!* His cooking style is Italian with other styles rolled in he said in the episode. While he was not crowned champion, he was a force in the Chopped kitchen, where he had to make three rounds of dishes with ingredients such as mussels, duck, and peanut butter lasagna.

**'Just Be You' Free Seminar Offered for Young Performers**

RAHWAY — A series of free seminars designed for kids and teens in the creative arts will be hosted by Just Be You Performing Arts in Rahway. Developed for youth interested in a career in the performing arts from ages 5 to 18 year's old, the free seminar will be held on Thursday, August 22, from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Rahway Public Library in Rahway. Created and instructed by, award-winning actress, Mahogany Reynolds, the "Just Be You Seminar" is a continuation of her organization's mission to be what she calls "champions for children".

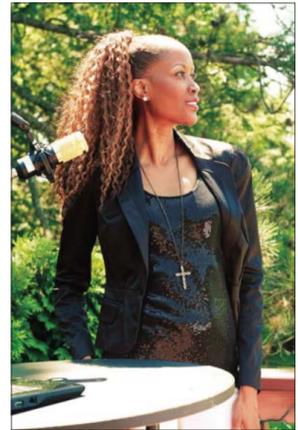
Just Be You Performing Arts; a New Jersey based mentoring and enrichment organization was founded in 2013. Since that time, the organization has hosted several free workshops for kids and teens. No acting or performing arts experience is required to participate in the workshops. The programs are designed to help young people express themselves in a fun, creative and inspiring way. Kids and teens age 5 to 18 year's-old can register for the Just Be You

Seminar being held at the Rahway Public Library by email to: [justbeyoustudios@gmail.com](mailto:justbeyoustudios@gmail.com). Registration is required. Deadline to register is August 20.

The workshop series is also being offered, free of charge, to kids and teens, during the 2nd Annual Just Be You Performing Arts Youth Film Festival, to be held on Friday, August 30, at the Paul Robeson Campus Center Dance Theater, Rutgers University, 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Newark.

"My primary objective is to help these young people realize the value and importance of knowing who they are. By teaching them this at a young age, it will hopefully stick with them, as they grow in the industry. Knowing who you are and embracing the concept of 'just be you', is a great foundation upon which to not only build a career with substance, but a life of substance," said Ms. Reynolds.

To learn more about the seminar series, or to become a sponsor or vendor, visit their website: [www.justbeyouperformingarts.org](http://www.justbeyouperformingarts.org).



Award-winning actress, Mahogany Reynolds

**Restaurant Week Returns to Downtown Cranford, Aug. 11-16**

CRANFORD — Restaurant Week returns to Downtown Cranford this month, with a number of restaurants offering prix fixe dinner menus from August 11-16.

Check out the list of participating restaurants below, and view all of their menus on the Downtown Cranford website.

There are options for everyone's tastes, from casual to fine dining, from French cuisine to Irish, Italian, American, and more. With the return of Restaurant Week, there will also be Snap, Share & Win! From August 9-

18, when dining downtown, snap a picture, email it to us ([dmc@cranfordnj.org](mailto:dmc@cranfordnj.org)), and tell us what the meal was and where you enjoyed it. You could win a gift certificate to the downtown restaurant of your choice! Go forth, dine, and enjoy!

Participating restaurants include: Cafe Paris, Garlic Rose Bistro, Il Gabbiano, Kilkenny House, Little Buffalo, Marino's Seafood, Pairings, Pizzeria Bel Giardino, River & Rail Cantina, Romola's Seafood & Grille, Sonny G's, and Tablespoon Café.

**Scotch Plains Reschedules 'Live Band Karaoke Night' for Aug. 26**

SCOTCH PLAINS -- The Township of Scotch Plains has rescheduled "Live Band Karaoke Night" for Monday, August 26, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in downtown Scotch Plains on the Alan Augustine Village Green, located at 430 Park Avenue.

"Live Band Karaoke Night" this year will feature the band U-Rock Live, and participants will get to be the "lead singer" for the band and sing songs live from a variety of genres and decades including the Swingin' '60s, Groovy '70s, the Big '80s, the Grungy '90s, the 2000s and Beyond, plus Karaoke Classics.

Participants can choose a song, own the stage, and bring a cheering section for a rockin' night in downtown.

For those watching, bring a blanket and a chair and enjoy the show.

Live Band Karaoke Night is a free, family event that is open to people of all ages. To participate in Live Band Karaoke Night, just simply sign up to sing on August 26 between 7 to 7:30 p.m. and then the singer will be called on stage to join the band to sing their favorite song.

For more information including the song list, visit: <https://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/calendar/live-band-karaoke/>.

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