

Arts & Entertainment

SPFHS and WHS Nominated for Paper Mill's Rising Star Awards



SWEET SUCCESS...Westfield High School received seven Rising Star Award nominations and two student achievement nominations for its musical production of *Sweet Charity*. In the role of Charity Hope Valentine, Nicole Player, pictured right, was nominated for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role.

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

AREA - Both Westfield High School and Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School have received Rising Star nominations for their musical productions this school year.

Every year the Rising Star Award Corps of Evaluators from the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn attend 100 productions of high school musicals throughout New Jersey. The evaluators are theater professionals, performing artists, designers and theater arts educators. Each spring, the results of their evaluations from public, private and parochial schools are announced as the Rising Star Awards. Nominations for outstanding achievement by students and educators in the areas of performance, design, direction, choreography, technical production and overall excellence were announced recently and include area productions and name specific students.

The nominees and the winners will be honored for their work on Tues-

day, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. in a Tony Awards-type show that will be broadcast live on Comcast and online through Hometown Television HDTV of Summit. The biggest number of nominations, 15, this year went to Summit High School's production of *Pippin*. Westfield High School received a total of seven nominations and two student achievement nominations for its musical production of *Sweet Charity*. Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School's show, *Mamma Mia!*, garnered two nominations and a nomination for a dedicated student from the production department.

Westfield High School (WHS) drama department's production of *Sweet Charity* was named in the honorable mention category for Outstanding Overall Musical Production. In the role of Charity Hope Valentine, Nicole Player was nominated for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role. Her WHS castmate, Sean Marner, who played

Big Daddy Brubeck, was nominated in the category of Overall Outstanding Featured Actor.

The "Dance Hall Girls" from the Westfield show were named in the category of Outstanding Performance by a Featured Ensemble Group. Their director, Daniel Devlin, was given honorable mention for his outstanding direction. Also, Samantha Simpson was given a nod with an honorable mention in the category of choreography and staging. Artistically, Roy Chambers and Jack Frankola from WHS are finalists for Outstanding Achievement in Scenic Achievement.

Additionally, Jeffrey Allen and Rob C. Dietze, from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS), were named as finalists for that same category. SPFHS's production was also nominated for Outstanding Performance of an Orchestra.

In the category of Student Achievement Award nominees, SPFHS's Stage Manager Sarah Gorman is one of 19 nominees selected from the entire state. From WHS, Dance Captains Caroline Schafer and McKenzie Waddell are nominees in that same category. The Paper Mill will name 10 finalists at the televised ceremony.

Sponsored by Investors Foundation, the award show was created in 1996. Rising Star Award winners will be presented with an engraved crystal award from Tiffany & Company.



Artwork by Ricardo Roig

Experience Art at Ricardo Roig's New Gallery Opening May 18



SERVING UP ART...Artist Ricardo Roig, his wife Michelle, and their son Ricardo Hagop Roig stand in front of Mr. Roig's newly installed mural "Hoboken Hero" of tennis player Michael Chang on a wall adjacent to the tennis courts in the City of Hoboken. It is 40 feet by 43 feet and a hand-cut paper stencil spray-painted mural. The Roigs are opening Roig Collection Art + Framing in Westfield where there will be an installation of his screen prints, as well as showcase student art.

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD - A new art gallery, Roig Collection Art + Framing, is to host monthly "experience-driven opportunities." Artist Ricardo Roig told *The Westfield Leader* in a phone interview Monday. The first experience will happen this Saturday night, May 18, at the gallery's opening to take place from 6 to 10 p.m. at 305 South Avenue West in Westfield, where the evening will offer local bites and cocktails with music provided by DJ J Hart while perusing the modern space showcasing his hand-cut paper stencil screen prints. All are welcome to celebrate Mr. Roig's third gallery to open in New Jersey. His other two are located in Hoboken where his art career has taken off and has earned the notice of worldwide collectors, and Gallery 71, on the Upper East Side in Manhattan, who will represent his work.

Some already know Mr. Roig considering he graduated Westfield High School in 2001, where he was crowned Homecoming King, and later taught art at the public schools for seven years.

While teaching, Mr. Roig said he guided burgeoning artists to "unlock the artist within you and maybe that will make the world a more beautiful, peaceful place, because art is a part of peace, and we need more of it in this world."

And some may already own one of his distinctive, hand-painted screen prints. He was inspired by the concept while in art school at Kean University, where his professor urged him to try a new class, and Mr. Roig chose screen printing, then turned it

on its head by hand-painting the etched-out paper, a process that is normally done through computers. "I unlocked this joy that still gives me a thrill of a lifetime," Mr. Roig said.

He said he has always wanted to be an artist since he was in second grade. Mentors from Westfield include his high school art teacher Annora Happe-Conway, "She allowed me to know that art can be whatever you make it to be," he said, as well as his supervisor, while an art teacher in Westfield schools, Linda King.

Now, he is beginning a new journey in Westfield where he plans to showcase his artwork with an ever-revolving display of his art and a children's gallery wall. Local students in grades K through 12 will have a chance to submit art for consideration and if selected will have their art framed by Roig's gallery and displayed. He will also offer adult and family classes where he will teach his craft.

In addition to his screen printing, he recently was commissioned to paint wall murals in Hoboken, Jersey City and an Amazon warehouse lobby where he had help onsite from his Westfield friends and teachers, and his wife Michelle. This new venture is booming with additional requests for murals, he said. (Slh—news on this coming soon.)

Roig Collection Art + Framing in Westfield will also be a full-service custom framing shop offering great value, and a 10-percent donation to local PTO's will be offered for framing of student's artwork.

The gallery's regular hours (after May 18) will be on Tuesday, and Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., with later hours on Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For more information or to enroll in a printmaking class, contact info@roigcollection.com. See www.roigcollection.com for a collection of his artwork and more.



Artwork by Ricardo Roig



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