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ISSUE
61



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A look back
at first 5 years

Cold Weather
Company

Carolyne Mas

Blinded By
The Light

Disrupt Festival

Williamsboy

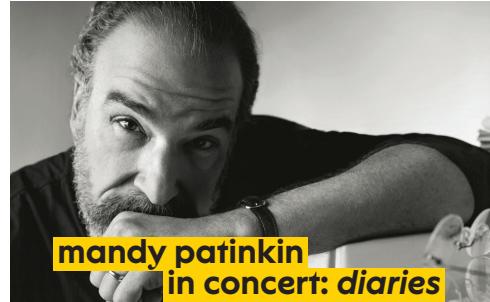
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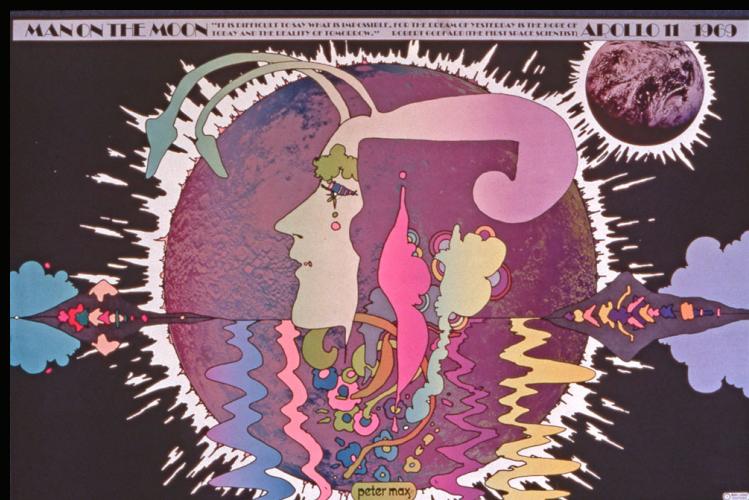


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Williamsboy: An Old Soul

by Gary Wien

Songwriters write songs for many reasons. Matt "Billy" Williams, a singer-songwriter in Burlington County who performs as **Williamsboy**, writes songs about the human experience with one

central goal in mind - to let people know they aren't alone.

The latest release from Williamsboy is called *Then & Now*. It's a unique collection of songs which represent a ten year journey for

the artist. The first seven tracks or so are from a period in which he aimed for a much harder, full band rock and roll sound. The last seven show his songwriting maturing, changing, moving towards more of a rootsy, Americana type sound. Considering you are far more likely to see him perform as a solo artist, the change makes perfect sense.

"I'm not the same person I was when I started this album," said Williamsboy. "I've learned a lot, I've lost a lot, but I've also gained a lot as well. Living takes a while

to understand, and my hope is that somewhere within the songs I've put together others can find wisdom, solace, help, comfort, laughter, and a general sense that no matter how alone you think you are, you're not."

Williams bounced around shore towns in New Jersey while growing up, spending time in Ocean, Cape May, and Atlantic County. Some were rough neighborhoods and his family never had much money. His father abandoned them when Matt was very young.



Listen to "Dead Beyond The Day" by Williamsboy

His mother would later die from Shy-Drager syndrome - a rare, degenerative neurological disorder that is similar to Parkinson's and carries a similar death sentence to that of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Sadly, tragedy seems to have followed him throughout his life. Music is what keeps him going.

"My personal belief is that music is a primal thing," explained Williamsboy. "It's a vehicle; a way to take your feelings and get them

out there. I believe I have things to say. People come up to me and say, 'Hey man, I understand what you're feeling. I've felt that way.'

"The way I grew up, you weren't allowed to have feelings," he continued. "It wasn't manly to talk about your issues and stuff. You suck it up, you do your job. If you have to deal with something you shake it off. I guess that's growing up Irish; they don't care. There's no such thing as feelings, you just do your job and push through it."

Despite being one of the hard-

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est working musicians in the state - performing multiple shows each week and treating music literally as his second job - Williamsboy hasn't gotten or sought as much press over the years as he's deserved. Part of that is because he doesn't believe his music is sellable as the music industry's modus operandi is to be easily disposable. And part of that stems from having trust issues. He's been burned by family, by life, and by the music industry. He never stops creating, but treats his songs

like pages of a diary. People can choose to hear them if they want or put on the latest song to top the charts that will be forgotten in a week or two. It's not so much he doesn't want an audience for his music, it's he doesn't know if such an audience exists.

"I'm more of an older soul and I write the old way," he explains. "I write from the heart. I guess my demographic is limited and I don't necessarily know how to catch that. I don't know how to hone that in without spending thou-



Listen to “Dust” by Williamsboy

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sands of dollars for an algorithm I don't have."

The songs on *Then & Now* include some he's been playing for years, although the versions on the record are not how he originally envisioned them. As life went on he changed and the temperature and mood of the songs changed as well. For many artists, these changes come from acquiring new tastes like a rock fan who starts listening to country or vice versa, but Williamsboy says he rarely listens to music. It's not other songwriters

that inspire him, it's real life. One of the songs on his new album that proves that point is "Rosalita."

When a music fan in New Jersey scans the song titles on *Then & Now* and sees a song called "Rosalita" odds are pretty good they will think it's a Bruce Springsteen cover, but the two songs could not be further apart.

Matter of fact, Williamsboy says he has never even heard the song by Bruce; his "Rosalita" is based on a woman from his own life, but he did change her name.



Listen to "Rosalita" by Williamsboy

"The story behind that song was from when I lived in Philadelphia in 1997 and had a fire," recalled Williamsboy. "A couple of my friends died. That was another delicious piece of trauma that life threw out at me. I saved my friend, but as I turned around he was burning to death and I heard him screaming. I couldn't get that out of my head for months. I was 19 at the time, seeing doctors and stuff. They were just pushing pills down my face. I ended up moving out and getting an apart-

ment down in Ocean City with some friends just trying to clear my head. There was a girl I knew. I had just come off all this trauma and lost a girlfriend and we hung out one night. We had hung out a little in the past, but we spent that night together and it was awesome. It was, I guess, the best rebound sex you could have. It was the way she treated me; I had never been treated that way before."

"I was scared, so the next morning I took her home and dropped her off," continued Williamsboy. "I



Listen to "You & Me" by Williamsboy

said I needed a little time. I regret that because a couple of months later she died in a car accident. She had some addiction issues, so the song is basically about 'wake up, you can do this.' I was trying to coax her out of it and she was saying if she had someone like me in her life it would be easier, but I just wasn't ready for that. It wasn't the baggage; I wasn't ready for the responsibility to be that."

"That song is basically you can gather this, your train is leaving at five, stop doing this shit," said

Williamsboy. "But I had to change the name because for some reason when I was writing it her name didn't sound good. I was listening to a Steve Earle song and he said Rosalita in it. I'm like, I could probably use that name. It just sounded better and it helps me to not be so attached to it, because she meant a lot to me."

Williamsboy has the knack of writing songs that just sound authentic. His stories sound real because they largely are real. When he sings, 'One last drink Sam before last



Watch Williamsboy perform "Roads"

call,' you're transported to a tavern where you can actually smell the beer in the air and see the clock coming up on 2:00am. The lyrics sound true because they were inspired by actual conversations.

"This is the way I approach writing - I have to feel it," he explains. "It's why I'm so hesitant to work with other people because if it's not something I've either been through, can see myself going through and pulling out of, or seeing it affect me in a certain way then I can't be honest about it. I'm

not going to waste a quick word just for a silly rhyme. I don't have the patience for that. It's just not real. That's unfortunately what I hear today. I can't even turn the music on that's out there now. I have zero connection to it because it just doesn't make any sense. It doesn't feel heartfelt. It's written well, but it's not well written. It doesn't come from a spot that, to me, feels natural. It feels contrived."

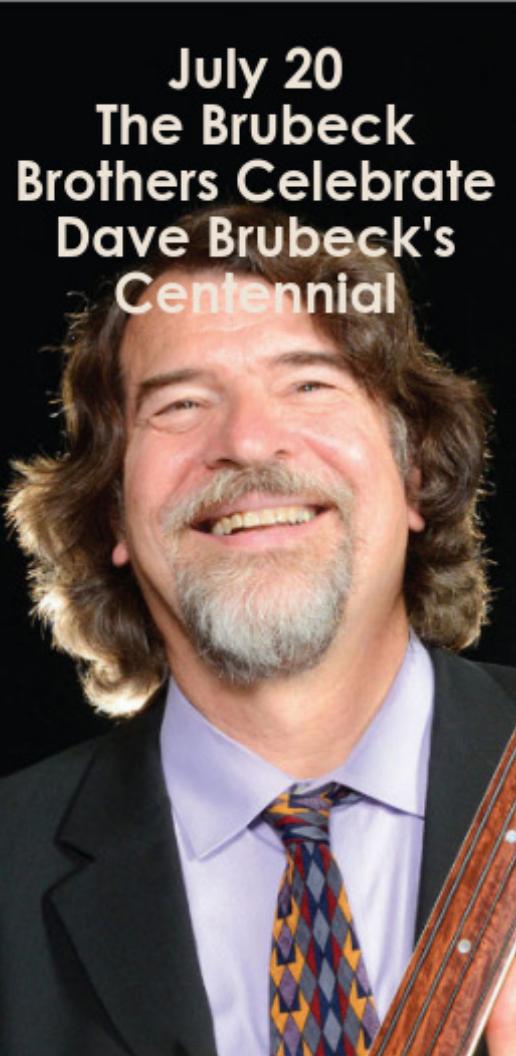
About a decade ago, Williamsboy was approached by a lyricist who flew him down to Nashville



Watch Williamsboy perform “Analog”



July 11
Comedy Night
Jess Salomon
Eman El-Husseini
& Nortex Belma



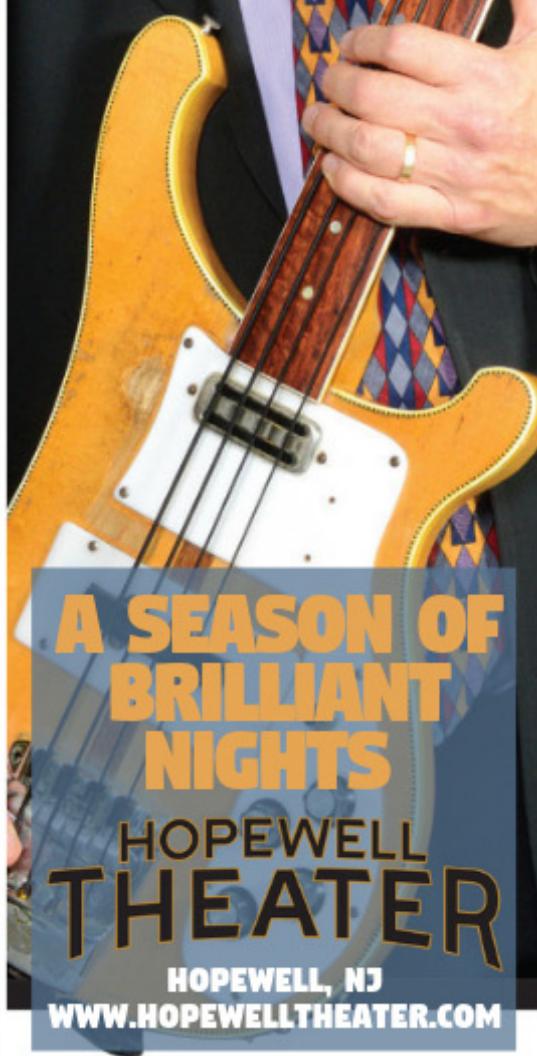
July 20
**The Brubeck
Brothers Celebrate
Dave Brubeck's
Centennial**



July 27
Sloan Wainwright



July 13
**Traveling Lantern
Theatre Company:
My Mother
The Astronaut**



July 31
**Matt O'Ree Band
with The Mad Kings**

to meet a few industry professionals who had big-time credentials. Having local audiences and local writers tell you your writing is good is one thing, getting praise from people who have won Grammys is something else. He was beyond flattered that they thought he could be seen as someone they would want to write for them. Unfortunately, they also wanted him to write a certain way and it meant trying to figure out a way to balance his family responsibilities with the

opportunity. Several years after that, he was approached by another record executive who wanted him to be part of their team in Chicago. While these offers were coming in, he was taking care of his kids. Now that they're much older, he's more willing to push his own work and take chances.

"It's weird, for the past 12 years of my life I was changing diapers and taking kids to the doctor," said Williamsboy. "That's why it took so long to make the second album. I don't know why I was so



Watch Williamsboy perform “Hey, Hey, My My”

blessed to have the opportunities that I had and I kept saying no. I kick myself sometimes, but I do have kids who are happy and healthy and that's awesome. One reason I'm proud of this album is that it was a huge thing for me to be able to work through the adversity that I had to go through to get to this point and there are songs in there that real people could identify with."

"My songwriting is totally indicative of being through hell, 41 years on this rock, floating in

the space that's been given to me," he continues. "I'm lucky to have it. I wouldn't trade it for the world, but it has totally shaped the way I write."

You can often find Williamsboy performing at wineries and taverns throughout the state and he will be taking another shot at raising his profile in September when he performs at Americanafest in Nashville on September 11th. It's a major industry event that brings thousands of artists, fans, and industry professionals from all



Listen to "Last Call" by Williamsboy

over the world to Nashville. When he gets his chance to perform he will likely try making a connection with someone in the audience like he did at a recent show in Connecticut. If he does, the trip will be a success whether or not it does anything for his career.

"There's a song I wrote called 'Only You'" recalled Williamsboy. "After I did it, a lady came up to

me and said, 'I went through that too. Thank you so much for your story because now I know I'm not alone.' That right there hit me. As humans, we are a social species. That was the ultimate compliment when she said thank you because she knew she wasn't the only one to go through this. That was huge." ♦

For complete list of upcoming shows go to Williamsboy.com

Aug 1 @ Heritage Vineyards, Mullica Hill

Aug 2 @ Iron Plow Vineyards, Mount Holly

Aug 4 @ Mainbrook Tavern, Englishtown

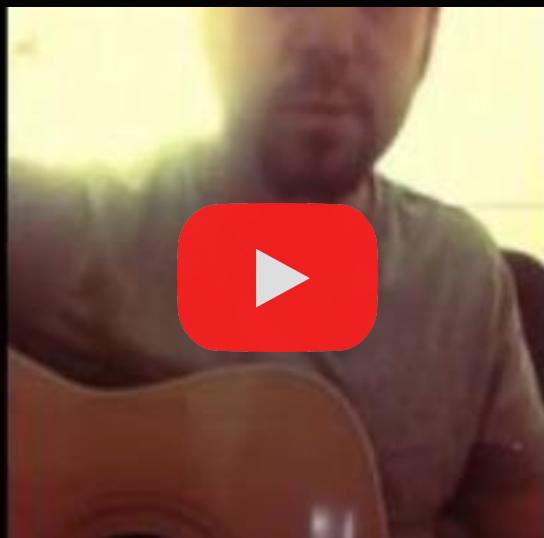
Aug 9 @ Hurricane Jacks, Levittown, PA

Aug 24 @ TirNaNog, Trenton

Aug 29 @ Heritage Vineyards, Mullica Hill

Sep 5 @ Nottingham Tavern, Hamilton
Danny Coleman's Rock on Radio Happy Hour

Sep 11 @ Americana Fest, Nashville, TN



Watch Williamsboy perform "Only You"

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Why Don't Indie Artists Put Out Best Of Albums?

Interview with Apollo Ali
Anywhere Is Here
When I Last Saw Jesse
The Dead Won't Die

Canadian Bluesman
Anthony Gomes

Photo by Stephen Jensen

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ISSUE 59



Sound & Vision
In Iceland

Lauren Davidson • Secret Sound • Joshua Lance



Huge Film Issue!

The Reservoir • Late Night • John Wick 3
Clarence Clemons: Who Do I Think I Am?
Interview with Doug Bollinger
Sing You A Brand New Song



Blinded By The Light

by Eric Hillis

In recent years there has been much talk among the cultural commentariat regarding the need for onscreen diversity. Of course everyone should be able to see themselves represented in movies, whether that be by a reflection

of their race, gender or sexuality; but it's important not to lose sight of the fact that artists don't need to share your own specific cultural attributes in order to speak directly to you. As a white Irishman, I've seen the distinctive traits of

my culture represented a lot more accurately in Japanese and Korean cinema than in the movies of my own country's film industry. As a teen I found the music of U2 so alien that Bono and co. might as well have come from another galaxy rather than a few miles down the road from my house; rather I connected, like so many young working class kids in the British isles have over the decades, with the music of African-Americans; Miles Davis showed me what he was feeling with his heartfelt mu-

sic, unlike Bono, who simply told me his troubles in his lyrics.

In music, as in cinema, I've always favored the emotional over the literary, so I've never been able to really connect with the sort of "three chords and the truth" music of the likes of Bruce Springsteen, though I can recognize his talent. As such, I went into *Blinded by the Light* worried that I was about to see a hagiographic love letter to the artist known as The Boss, and when the pop music landscape of 1987 is presented, I couldn't



Watch the trailer for *Blinded By The Light*

help thinking how much more joyous and moving a piece of music Level 42's "Lessons in Love" is than anything Springsteen has ever recorded. Thankfully my fears were dispelled, as while director Gurinder Chadha's film is bound to win Springsteen a few new fans, it commendably recognizes that his music wasn't the only show in town in the '80s, arguably the last great era of popular music.

Unlike myself, the young protagonist of Chadha's film, the 16-year-old British-Pakistani Ja-

ved (Viveik Kalra), very much finds himself represented in the music of Springsteen. Like any teenager, Javed is confused about what life has in store for him, but along with the usual frustration regarding the inattention of girls, Javed has to deal with his strict father's (Kulvinder Ghir) suffocating aspirations for his son, along with the unwanted attentions of the racist skinheads on his estate in suburban Luton. When schoolmate Roops (Aaron Phagura) loans him a couple of Springsteen cassettes,



Javed instantly finds a kindred spirit in the American songwriter. Soon, Javed is dressing in double denim, following his dream of becoming a writer and nabbing himself a girlfriend in young activist Eliza (Nell Williams).

The history of pop music in the second half of the twentieth century was essentially a back and forth cross-pollination between the US and UK, from The Beatles and Stones repackaging blues and rock 'n' roll, to the young African-American futurists of '80s Detroit

who combined their obsession with British synth pop with the 4/4 beat of disco to create Techno. Fitting then that a British movie should delve into the essence of a none more American artist like Springsteen. Comparisons are made between Javed's home of Luton and Springsteen's New Jersey, both once thriving industrial boroughs devastated by unemployment in the '80s.

When Javed's father, Malik, falls victim to the recession and loses his job at the local Vauxhall car

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plant, a stick is thrust between the spokes of Javed's runaway ambitions. Does he follow his dreams and head North for university in Manchester or stick around and help support his family by taking a soul-crushing factory job? It's here that *Blinded by the Light* takes a step back from the exuberant positivity of Springsteen's American dream iconography to examine the realities of following your aspirations. Springsteen may have gotten out of Asbury Park, but he didn't have a struggling immigrant

family to take care of.

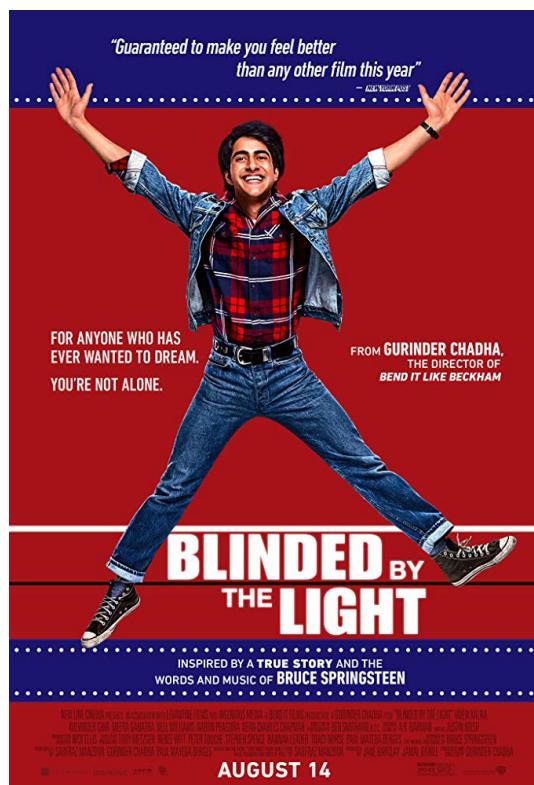
Chadha's film recognizes too that not everybody shares the same dreams, and that we should understand we don't have a monopoly on how we should live our lives. Javed's initial obsession with The Boss gives him a newfound confidence, but it also turns him into something of a narcissist, looking down his nose at the pop music he once enjoyed. Javed has a moment of clarity when he reluctantly accompanies his younger sister to a daytime disco. Initially donning



his headphones to shut out the Banghra-infused pop music, Javed looks around and sees hundreds of kids dancing in unfettered exuberance. The headphones come off and he lets himself enjoy the simple pleasure of dance (some-

thing few of Springsteen's songs allow for). Ultimately, the lesson of *Blinded by the Light* is that culture is a conversation, not a monologue. If that isn't a message for 2019, I don't know what is. ♦

the lesson of *Blinded by the Light* is that culture is a conversation, not a monologue. If that isn't a message for 2019, I don't know what is.



Blinded By The Light

3 ½ stars out of 5

**Directed by: Gurinder Chadha
Starring: Viveik Kalra, Kulvinder Ghir,
Meera Ganatra, Nell Williams,
Aaron Phagura, Hayley Atwell,
Dean Charles-Chapman, Rob Brydon**

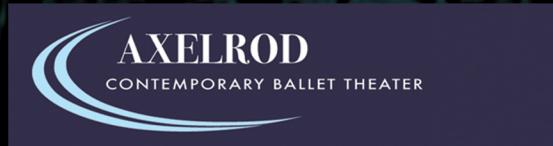
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Memoirs of a Forgotten Man

Long before “fake news” entered our lexicon, it was called propaganda. And in the Soviet Union, circa 1938, it was the grease that kept Stalin’s machinery of terror in motion. *Memoirs of a Forgotten Man* by D.W. Gregory is a play that takes us to a world where justice is arbitrary and freedom as we know it does not exist. It involves a Soviet journalist with the gift of total recall. A psychologist seeking to rehabilitate herself. A government

censor with a secret past. Over two decades their fates become entwined as victims and collaborators in Stalin’s campaign to rewrite public memory.

[New Jersey Repertory Company](#) presents the play from August 15 through September 15 as part of its National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere. Other theaters participating in the rolling World Premiere include Contemporary American Theater Festival

in Shepherdstown, West Virginia and Shadowland Stages in Ellenville, New York.

NJ Rep's production is directed by James Glossman and stars Amie Bermowitz, Steve Brady, Andrea Gallo, and Benjamin Satche. A special talk-back with the playwright and director will be held after the first preview on Thursday, August 15.

D.W. Gregory is a playwright and educator residing in Washington, DC. Her work examines and critiques American culture with a

political lens and comedic twist, and has won and been nominated for numerous awards. As a teaching artist and artist in residence, she's also had the opportunity to write for youth theatre. She is a member of the Dramatists' Guild, an affiliated writer with The Playwright's Center in Minneapolis, and an affiliated artist with National New Play Network.

The rolling world premiere (RWP) is the National New Play Network's flagship initiative. It helps shift the new play paradigm of the one-



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and-done premiere to diversified, traveling, multi-production premieres. This process for developing and producing new plays results in stronger work overall and the momentum needed for a play to join the repertoire of frequently produced new American works.

Each production supports three or more theaters that choose to mount the same new play within a 12-month period, allowing the playwright to develop a new work with multiple creative teams in multiple communities. The playwright is part of the process, working on the script and making adjustments based on what is learned from each production.

The National New Play Network has championed the rolling world premieres of 90 new plays with over one million dollars in financial support. These plays have gone on to receive hundreds of subsequent productions and citations in markets across the world,



D.W. Gregory

been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, won Steinberg/ATCA, Stavis, PEN and Blackburn awards, and adapted into feature films.

New Jersey Repertory Company is located at 179 Broadway in Long Branch, New Jersey.

Performances are Thursdays, Fridays at 8:00pm; Saturdays at 3:00pm & 8:00pm; and Sundays at 2:00pm. ♦



Makin Waves with Cold Weather Company

by Bob Makin

For six years, the harmonic New Brunswick-based acoustic trio **Cold Weather Company** have methodically and impressively grown a large following on social media and music streams and at live shows east of the Mississippi River.

It was on the banks of the Ol' Raritan as students at Rutgers University that the three vocalists - Steve Shimchick, who also plays keyboards, and Brian Curry and Jeff Petescia, who also play acoustic guitars - banded together in 2013.

Since then, they strategically have released and marketed several singles and videos and embarked on tours in support of three well-conceptualized and designed LPs, all DIY without a manager, agent, label or publicist.

With their latest collection, "Find Light," released at the beginning of the year as Makin Waves Record of the Week, the trio expose their darkest experiences and share the ways in which they keep on keepin' on. Unlike the first two releases, 2015's "Some-

where New" and 2016's "A Folded Letter," the 16-song collection expands upon the trio with several special guests, including members of Hub City peers Cook Thugless.

Ever creative, Cold Weather Company recently released a new single, "Rainfall," a piano improv by Shimchick that he is crafting into a fan-generated video. The trio have a gig on August 16 at Mercury Lounge in New York City with Bandits on the Run, Stereo League and Evan Petruzzi.



Listen to "Hazel" by Cold Weather Company

And ever-professional, these three young men have approached their music with as much hard work as fun and as much passionate business sense and as compassion for fellow humans and the fragile, threatened nature that surrounds and sustains us.

Enjoy the following interview with three members of Cold Weather Company.

Tell the story how you guys met and how that evolved into Cold Weather Company.

Steve: We met while students at Rutgers-New Brunswick! Brian and Jeff met first in 2011 through a chance encounter on a park bench at Passion Puddle on Cook/Douglass, where they both had their guitars, same guitar case, and even the same type of shoes. They exchanged info and, a year later, met me at a monthly open mic on College Ave. Fast forward

to 2013, and we started playing together in our dorms on campus, where a friend of mine asked if we were a 'band.' Upon my hesitant 'yes,' we were invited to play our first show in the College Ave. Student Center, and the rest is history.

What was the New Brunswick music scene like when you first started compared to today? Have there been many changes?

Steve: It's pretty safe to say we wouldn't be where we are if it weren't for the New Brunswick/Rutgers music scene. As mentioned above, our first solo performances in town were on campus, and our first band show was in a campus building. The Rutgers University Musician's Guild, the basement scene, and organizations like RUPA, were extremely supportive and allowed us a variety of opportunities to play and build a local following.

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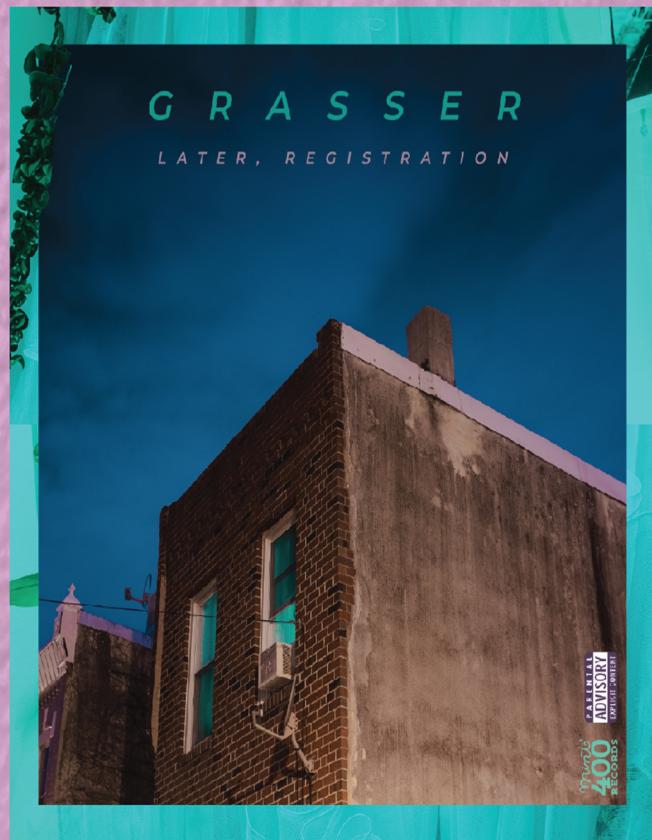
- ANTHONY RANERI OF BAYSIDE 8/10
- RICHIE RAMONE 9/7 • NINE NINE NINE 10/28

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GRASSER

"LATER, REGISTRATION"

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Mint 400 Records



When we started, there were only a few off-campus venues in the area that hosted live music. Jeff and I graduated in 2015. Brian was a few years before, but we stayed in the area. Since then, the basement scene has still been a great piece of NB, and I'd say more venues offer opportunities for local musicians. Regardless, the music scene, as a whole, has stayed welcoming and inclusive throughout the opening and closing of different venues.

Are there a lack of venues in New Brunswick? If so, what do you think should be done about that?

Steve: There may be a lack of traditional venues that support shows with audience members that are under 21, but there have certainly always been options for musicians in town. As mentioned, we've seen a rise of more local restaurants and shops hosting open mics and opportunities. The DIY scene has always been a part of the NB culture, allowing plenty of local and



Listen to “Brothers” by Cold Weather Company

touring artists opportunities. With the opening of the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center coming up, it'll be interesting to see how it caters to artists throughout the city as well.

To keep the community's momentum going year after year, it's definitely important to have supportive locals and business owners who want to be a part of it. That's where Hidden Grounds came in, for example, and continues to make such an impact today across all of their locations. Shout

out to their new store, Simply Chai, opening in Hoboken.

Caroline Romanelli of Embrace DIY also deserves a shout out for her hard work booking shows. They're always a lot of fun to go to/play at and a perfect reminder of what makes the community special.

Celebrating nature and the environment are very important to you as a band and individually. What would you say to voters about the past three years to



Watch a video for “Unbound” by Cold Weather Company

influence their choice for president?

Brian: Considering the only candidate in the race who actively opposes any form of responsible environmental policy is the sitting president, I'd say literally anyone other than that guy is a better choice.

I like that your name has three words, which harkens back to a wonderful time in music history with bands like Creedence Clearwater Revival and Grand

Funk Railroad. How did you come up the name Cold Weather Company and how does its meaning relate to the band?

Steve: Thank you! Glad you like that element. The flow the words gave definitely helped our choice. After our first show back in 2013, we spent a few weeks going back and forth trying to find something that represented us. Eventually, we landed on 'Cold Weather Company.' We formed in November, so the play between the coming winter and our use of nature



Listen to “Mount Desert Island” by Cold Weather Company



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imagery throughout our lyrics worked well.

We also became 'company' for each other during the colder months through playing and writing together. These days, the fact that listeners reach out to say our music has been company for them through particular seasons or emotions cements the choice in our heads as the right one. Plus, our band is built on this idea of three distinct styles coming together, so a word for each of us was a nice extra feature.

You have released three albums that have told many colorful stories set to a lot of organic music and fabulous harmonies. Which one of those stories best tells the tale of the band and why?

Steve: 'Mount Desert Island' off our latest album would probably be the best choice. In October of 2017, we visited Maine for a

weeklong residency with the Barn Arts Collective located on Mount Desert Island. Shortly after arriving, we started playing around with a melody that became the main riff in the song. Considering we went to Maine specifically to work on new music, and this idea came to us quickly, we split the song up allowing for each of us to sing lead across distinct sections, but having everything come together at the end.

Each song of ours is a new opportunity to bring our different ideas together, and so lyrically, MDI also allowed us to speak individually to where we were emotionally when we arrived for the residency. A week was the longest time we took just to write and explore, so it was important to memorialize where we were when we got to such a beautiful place, because we left with so many new ideas.

Has the songwriting process for each album been similar or different?

Brian: I think it's been similar because it's different (laughs). We never really have a tried-and-true process for songwriting. Every song kind of finds its own way of being written. Sometimes one of us will come to the others with a riff or a melody; other times, we'll all land on something at the same time during practice. Lyrics are normally written and performed by the person who feels most connected to the song.

Comment on the story behind the 'Find Light' song cycle of 'Clover,' 'Do No Harm,' 'The Things You Saw' and 'Atlas.'

Steve: We joke about my trilogy from our first album, where three-quarters of the songs I sing lead were essentially inspired by the same situation. I didn't really expect to do something like that again, but when 'Clover' was being written in early 2017, everything else just kind of followed naturally. 'Clover' is essentially about wanting to retain luck, hope, and optimism in a relation-

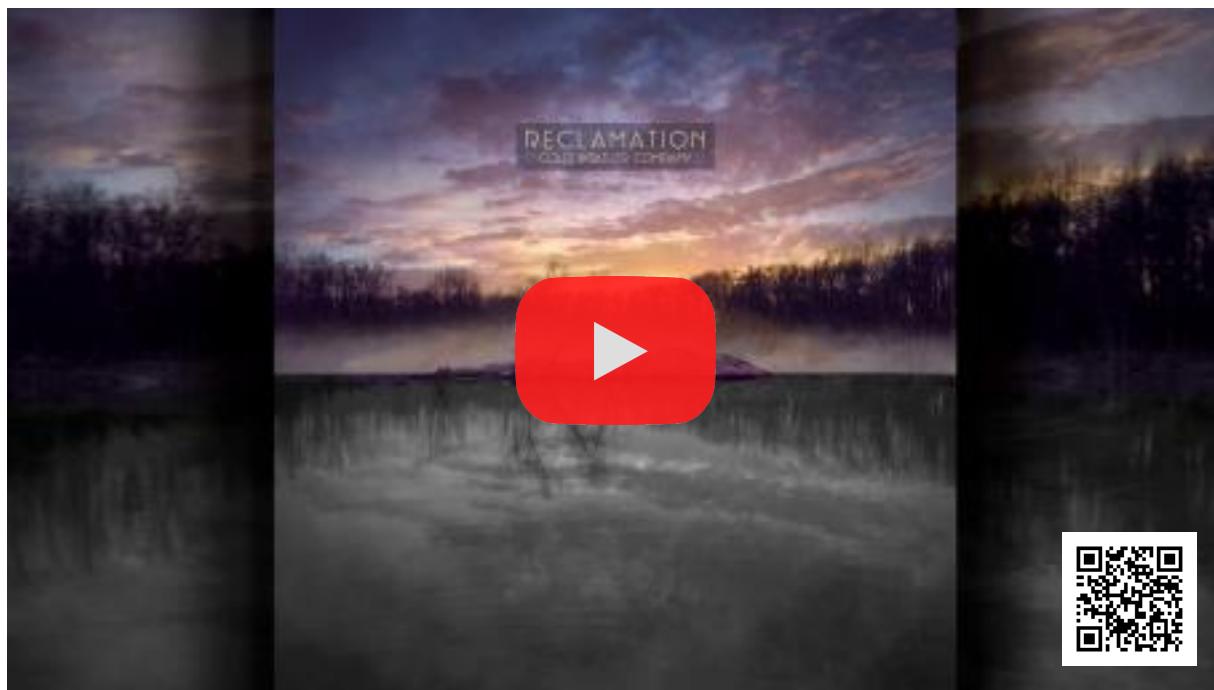


Watch a video for “Clover” by Cold Weather Company

ship that's clearly not meant to be. It was written during the relationship, when those feelings were the strongest.

Then, things fell apart, and 'Do No Harm' came together. It's one of our moodiest songs and really gave me an outlet to work through the final pieces of the relationship while showing that the optimism that 'Clover' had didn't carry over. I also love strings, so it let us have some fun and really let them shine. Shout out to Nicole Scorsone on violin and Kevin Lucero on cello.

'The Things You Saw' and 'Atlas' started coming together during our time in Mount Desert Island. At that point, one of the biggest things I tried to do in Maine was let any weight from that 'Clover' and 'Do No Harm'-era fall away, and so 'The Things You Saw' recognizes how small issues can be when you're able to remove yourself and view them differently. 'Atlas' focuses on the importance of the new people you interact with, how they've shaped you, and how valuable their experiences are.



Listen to “Reclamation” by Cold Weather Company

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One of the wonderful things about music is that it can take a harrowing personal experience and translate it into meaningful and uplifting art. Comment on how 'Reclamation' does that.

Brian: 'Reclamation' definitely transformed some pretty terrible moments into memories I can find pride in -- events to grow from. Through the writing process, I was able to work through those memories, analyze them, and see what I learned from them. Writing has always been therapeutic for me --

it allows me a new perspective on my own thoughts and experiences. In this case, I was able to find empowerment where I felt defeat, and, to just throw that metaphor out there again, to find light where I thought none could be.

'Find Light' has more special guests than either of your previous albums. I particularly like the New Orleans-spiced jam 'n' groove that Cook Thugless added to 'Pocket.' Comment on your connection to that band?



Listen to "Pocket" by Cold Weather Company

Jeff: Thanks! Yeah, when we were writing that song, we instantly knew it had room for some awesome horns, bass, and percussion. I actually grew up with Brian (Cook Thugless sax player) and Jim (guitarist/producer) and have worked on music projects/ been in bands with them for a long time. We go back to the elementary school days together in Sparta. I was also a founding member of Thugless when it started in our apartment on the Cook campus our sophomore year, after

we met and became friends with the other guys the previous year. I'm on most of the songs on the first album, 'Space,' and one of the songs on the second album, 'Time.' The Thugless guys will forever be close buds, and it's exciting to continue to collaborate with them. You can expect to see more of that in the future.

Another thing you have in common with Thugless, among other acts, is that you methodically release singles and videos in the



Watch Cold Weather Company perform “Steer”

build up to an album. That approach has gained you nearly 53,000 monthly Spotify listeners and 3,200 YouTube subscribers. Those kinds of numbers are very difficult for a band to obtain and maintain themselves without a great deal of tedious hard work that typically is not as enjoyably creative and cathartic as the music. Do you enjoy that management aspect of the band, and if so, why?

Steve: Outside of us meeting and realizing we could work well together musically, we also learned early on that our non-music specialties could really benefit us. I've run our social media, Brian has handled things like graphic design and photography, and Jeff has managed finances. Thanks to us all having specific roles, we've been able to keep things organized and efficient. I think we all feel there are pieces we enjoy, and they certainly allow us to use

skills we learned while pursuing our degrees, but you're right about there being more tedious parts. That said, dealing with the tedious parts has been rewarding, and knowing that our work has contributed to more than just music, but an established brand, has been a huge motivator.

Given those numbers, as well as that of your social media engagement, have record labels, agents and managers expressed interest in the band, and do you have an interest in them or do you prefer to remain DIY and why?

Steve: We've received inquiries over the years from different music services, but after working on something completely in-house for so long, we really focus on finding the perfect fit. Each opportunity we're a part of is because it felt natural and like it was meant to happen when it did. So, if we feel a genuine connection mov-



FRIDAY, JULY 26

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SUMMER STAGE 2019

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SAT AUG 03		SHUT UP * with HOT BLOOD & FETAL RAGE *	
THU AUG 08		STEPEHN MARLEY * DJ Shacia Payne *	
THU AUG 15		THE WAILERS' JULIAN JUNIOR MARVIN	
SAT AUG 17		SAVES THE DAY / JOYCE MANOR * AWAKEBUTSTILLINBED *	
MON AUG 19		THE DISTILLERS * DEATH VALLEY GIRLS *	
WED AUG 28		MEATLOAF presents: BAT THE GREATEST HITS OF MEATLOAF * WITH THE NEVERLAND EXPRESS and CALEB JOHNSON *	
THU SEP 19		THE AQUABATS * with KOO KOO KANGA ROO and MC LARS *	
FRI SEP 27		THE HU * THE GEREK TOUR *	
WED OCT 02		GRAVEYARD * BLACK MOUNTAIN *	
FRI OCT 11		MELVINS with REDD KROSS and S**tkid (from Sweden)	
SAT OCT 19		MELVIN SEALS & JGB * featuring JOHN KADLECICK *	
FRI NOV 01		NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALLSTARS	



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STONE PONY		SUMMER STAGE 2019
JUL 26	KILLSWITCH ENGAGE & CLUTCH	
JUL 28	THE FLAMING LIPS & THE CLAYPOOL LENNON DELIRIUM	
AUG 01	JOHN BUTLER TRIO	
AUG 02	BEN FOLDS & VIOLENT FEMMES	
AUG 04	REBELUTION	
AUG 09	PAPA ROACH	
AUG 10	DARK STAR ORCHESTRA	
AUG 22	SQUEEZE	
AUG 23	OLD DOMINION	
AUG 24	GAME GRUMPS LIVE	
AUG 30	UMPHREY'S MCGEE	
AUG 31	SOCIAL DISTORTION & FLOGGING MOLLY	
SEP 15	STONE TEMPLE PILOTS & RIVAL SONS	

ing forward in any element of our band, that door is certainly open!

What is it about creating and touring together at an independent level that keeps the resulting challenges and obstacles worth continuing to overcome?

Brian: It's funny -- we've been a band for just about six years now, which is ridiculous to think about, and while it hasn't always been easy, and we've had our share of highs and lows, I don't think there has ever been a moment where any of us truly considered giving it up. This band represents our shared dream -- it's a body of work we've put our lives into, and we're equally committed to seeing it through.

As far as what makes it worth it, for me, it's the idea of turning something you love most in life into a career. While we had high hopes in the beginning, I don't know if any of us could have seen

ourselves six years and three albums later. We still have so many songs to write.

Steve: I'd also add that the messages we've received over the years from listeners have been incredible motivators for us. To Brian's point about thinking about six years and three albums, we also never thought about just the general support, kindness and openness that listeners have shown in person and online. The feeling of hearing that songs we wrote to express certain, often personal moments had a positive impact on someone else is something we can never really put fully into words.

You're still touring in support of 'Find Light.' What has been the most significant gig for the band this year and why?

Steve: We've had a lot of significant moments so far, but our album release show at Mercury Lounge in January was the first

time playing live with six other musicians, and to our largest NYC crowd, so we'll never forget that. It definitely kicked off our next level as a band, and we've since performed with different arrangements and plan to continue to expand our live performances.

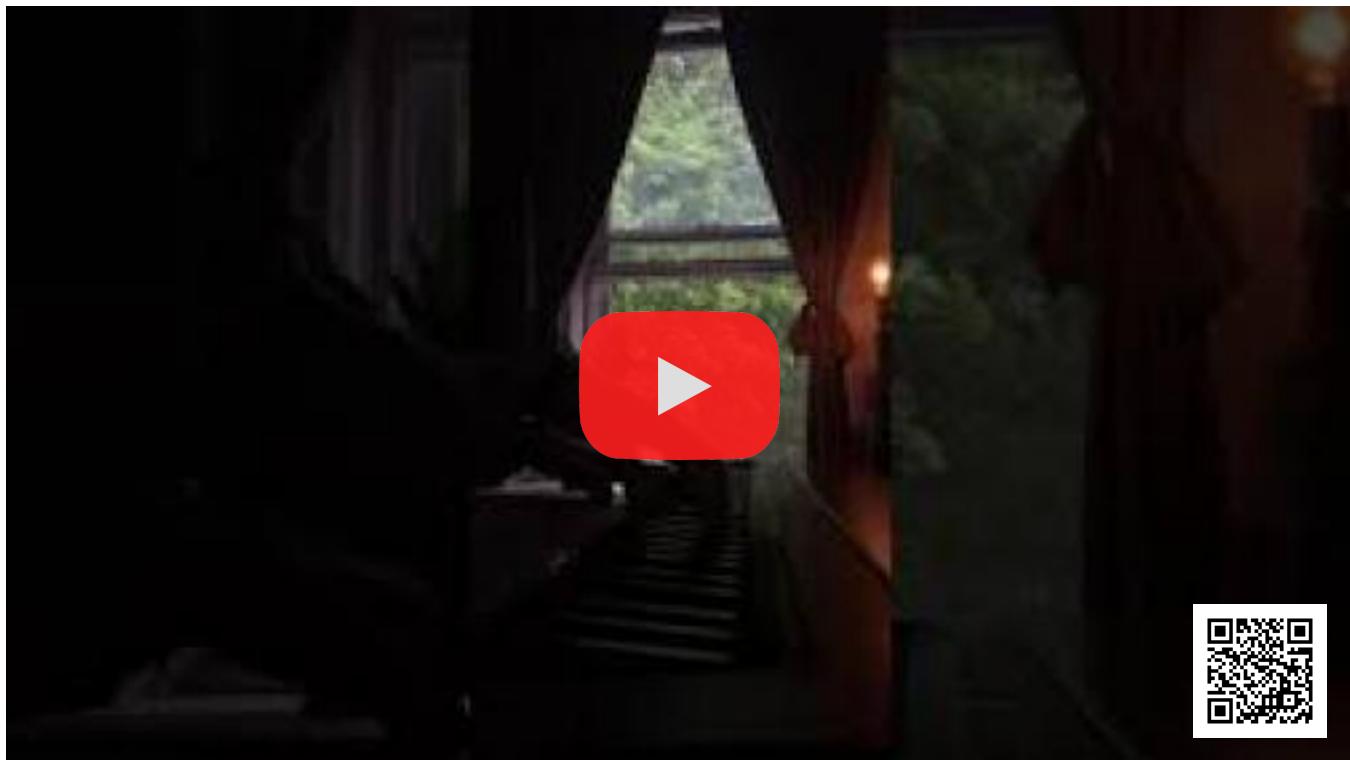
What is yet to come for the band during the remainder of 2019?

Jeff: We have some really exciting things coming up including a new single due out in August. Ad-

ditionally, we are in the process of writing another batch of songs, so you can expect an EP out in the fall, plus some bonus tracks.

What is 'Rainfall' and the fan video project for it?

Steve: This was a lot of fun for me, as I really had no idea what to expect. I have hours of piano improv but I've never really shared it with anyone; sometimes not even Brian and Jeff (nothing personal, guys!) This time around, I was planning on hosting a piano im-



Listen to “For A Rainy Evening (Piano Improvisation)”

prov livestream on Instagram one rainy evening. Before I got started, I recorded a few minutes to test my video/set-up, then I ended up sharing the result on Instagram. It was well received, so I thought to share it on Spotify. Then I wanted to take it a step further.

Since most people are around rain pretty frequently, I asked our audience to send in videos from wherever they are in the world when it rains and received submissions from all over the place. I left submissions open for a while, so

I'm in the process of finalizing the video for YouTube now. Looking forward to sharing it!

Have you started writing songs yet for album four? If so, how are they taking shape, and if not, when and how will that process begin?

Jeff: We are thinking of putting out an EP this time around, five to six songs potentially with maybe some bonus tracks or singles, but that's all still TBD. We have begun writing, and we're really excited



Listen to “Pocket” by Cold Weather Company

2019 WOODBRIDGE TOWNSHIP MAYOR'S SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Mayor
John E. McCormac

Golden Oldies Monday 7:00 PM PREVIEW BAND 7:30PM HEADLINE BAND ON THE LAWN AT WOODBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

June 24



The Duprees
w/Gerard Esposito

July 1



The Fabulous Greaseband
w/Jukebox Legends

July 8



**Johnny Maestro
Tribute Band**
w/Blu Lilly

July 15



**Stan Zizka's
Del Satins**
w/The Belle Towers

July 22



The Capris
w/Nostalgix

July 29



**Mahoney
Bros**

August 5



The Cameos
w/Stiletto & Saxman

August 12



**Sounds of the
Street**
w/Teresa & Emil

August 19



**Shadows of the
60's**

August 26



The Infernos

Tuesday Tributes 7:30 PM ON THE LAWN AT WOODBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

June 25



Sail On
(Beach Boys)

July 2



**Best of the
Eagles**

July 9



**The Doobie
Others**

July 16



Starman
(David Bowie)

July 23



Green River
(CCR)

July 30



Broken Arrow
(Neil Young)

August 6



Guthrie Brothers
(Simon/Garfunkel)

August 13



**Back to the
Garden 1969**
(Woodstock)

August 20



**New York
State of Mind**
(Billy Joel)

August 27



**B-Street
Band**
(Springsteen)

Woodbridge Wednesday

June 19 Martin Barre

June 26 Amy Helm

July 10 Jann Klose Band/Matt Nakoa Trio

July 17 Duke Robillard Band

July 24 Daby Toure

July 31 The Weeklings

August 7 Larry Campbell & Teresa Williams

August 14 Tami Neilson

August 21 Remember Jones

August 28 Emily Duff Band/The End of America

September 4 Ed Palermo Big Band w/Rob Paparozzi

7:30 PM PARKER PRESS PARK

Local Band Thursday

June 27 Blame it on Richie/The Girl

July 11 Shaman

July 18 9 South

July 25 Black Rose

August 1 Dead Cowboys

August 8 Marty and the Martians

August 15 Seven Stone

August 22 Shore Soundz

August 29 The Neighbors

September 5 Revolver

7:30 PM TANZMAN PARK

Across From
Woodbridge Train Station

Country Sunday

June 30 Southern Steel

July 7 Parrot Beach (Buffett Tribute)

July 14 Cash is King

July 21 The Hillbenders

July 28 Linda Ronstadt Experience

August 4 Kinderhook

August 11 Panama Dead (NRPS Tribute)

August 18 The Everly Set

August 25 The "THE BAND" Tribute

7:30 PM PARKER PRESS PARK

Please bring a non-perishable food item to help us restock our food pantries



about what we're working on. I'd like to think 'Find Light' is our best work yet, and these new tunes may just top it.

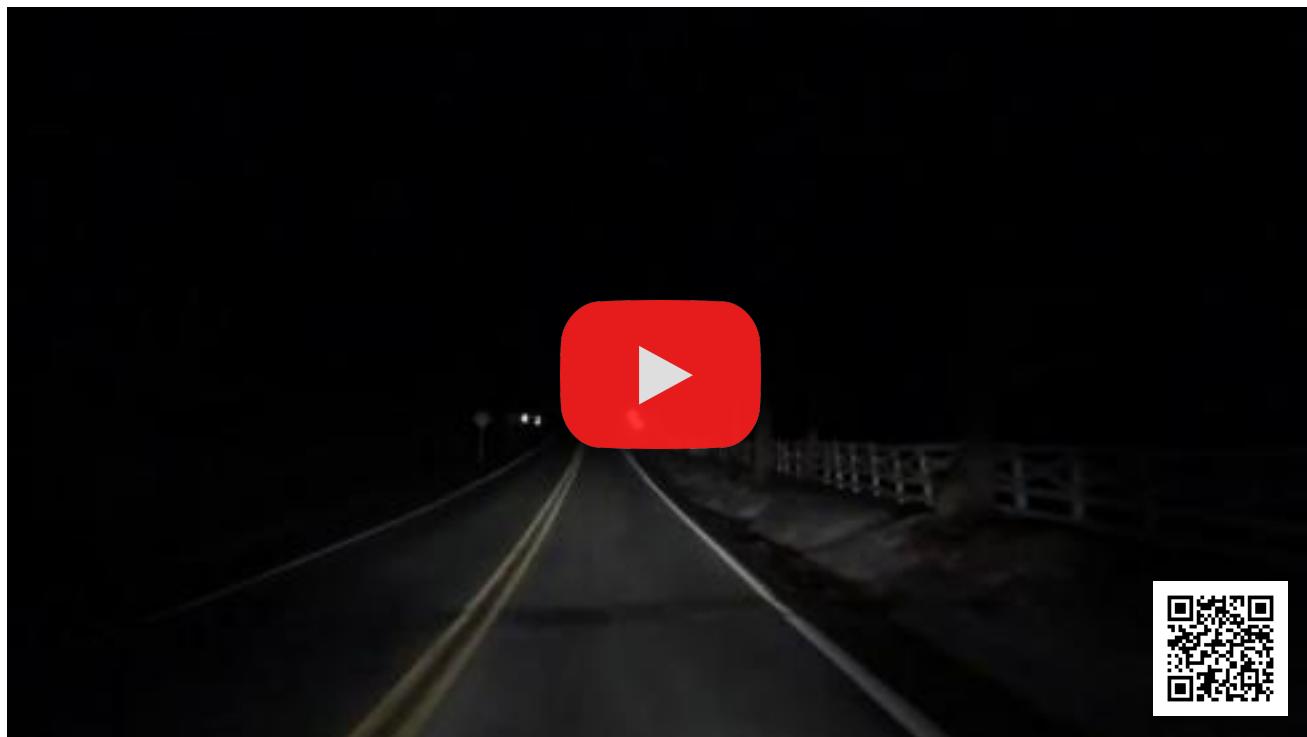
Are there any side projects on which the three of you also are working? If so, what and what's up with them?

Brian: I have some solo music that I'm working on, though a snail's pace is a little too fast to compare my progress to. I've been focusing a lot on improving my photography and videogra-

phy ability, so that should make for some interesting CWC content.

Jeff: I'd like to eventually put out another solo album and have the songs ready for it, but for the foreseeable future all my time is devoted to CWC.

Steve: I also have a variety of projects I'd like to work on. It's always been a dream to record piano/string instrumentals for instance, so 'Rainfall' may have been the gateway to that. But, as Jeff said, CWC is the priority.



Watch a video for "Gettysburg" by Cold Weather Company

Are any of your day jobs as rewarding for any of you as the music and why?

Brian: I definitely find my day job rewarding, but pursuing music is a whole different story. I think it's fairly common for people to find that their field of study/career path doesn't necessarily align with that good ol' fashioned childhood dream. This probably sounds strange, but sometimes it's like I want to reach back in time and high-five my high school self for having the courage to chase music.

Jeff: My day job is rewarding in a different way, and I'm lucky to have it and work with people who support CWC so much. Life is a balance -- music is my passion and ultimate goal, but you have to work for it (sometimes literally with a day job). Plus, my day job is also a career in itself that I'm also passionate about.

Steve: My day job has been an important step forward career-wise, and I'm also lucky to be surrounded by supportive people, many I've known for years. Plus,



Listen to “Old But True” by Cold Weather Company

there are things I've been able to learn from the job and the people that will absolutely benefit me in the years to come.

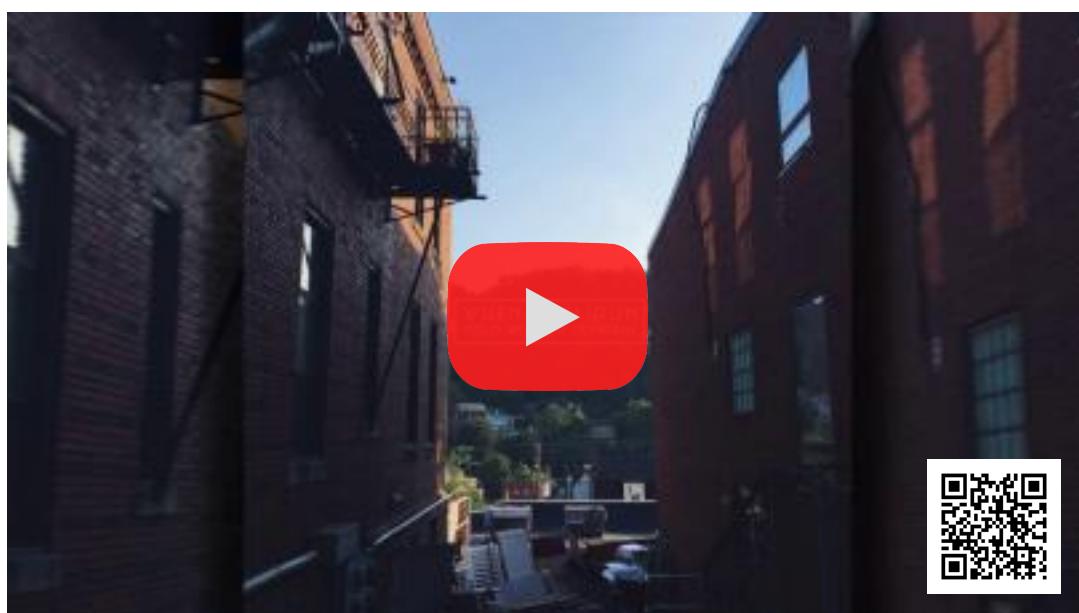
Is there anything I didn't ask on which you would like to comment?

Steve: As our social media guy, I'd be remiss to not mention that you can follow along with what we're up to on **Instagram** (@coldweathercompany), **Facebook**, **Twitter** (@coldweatherco), and more! You can also listen to our music on all streaming platforms, including Spotify, Apple Music, Google Play,

and Bandcamp.

You can also check out our upcoming shows on **coldweathercompany.com**. Feel free to send us a message there or on any social platform, we'd love to hear from you! Thanks! ♦

Bob Makin is the reporter for [MyCentralJersey.com/entertainment](#) and a former managing editor of The Aquarian Weekly, which launched this column in 1988. Contact him at makin-waves64@yahoo.com. And like Makin Waves at [www.facebook.com/makin-wavescolumn](#).



Listen to “When You Run” by Cold Weather Company

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AT CARTERET WATERFRONT PARK
4:00-11:00pm • 100 MIDDLESEX AVENUE

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JUNE 30th

MOONLIGHT MILE

New Jersey's Best Rolling Stones Tribute Band



JULY 7th

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Elton John Tribute



JULY 14th

AMISH OUTLAWS

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JULY 21st

GARDEN STATE RADIO

Pop-Rock Hits from the 80's to today



JULY 28th

The INFERNO'S

From Sinatra to Today's Favorite Hits



AUGUST 4th

BEGINNINGS

Chicago Tribute Band



AUGUST 11th

JERSEY SOUND

New Jersey's Favorite Classics



AUGUST 18th

RED ROSE JAZZ COMBO

Great jazz played & written by women



AUGUST 25th

NEW POWER SOUL

Classic to modern hits



Concerts in the Park

JULY & AUGUST 2019

Live music at Carteret Park 7:00 p.m. Fridays

JULY 5th

BILL TURNER
& the Blue Smoke Band



JULY 12th

MEMPHIS RAIN
Jazz, R&B, Motown, 50's to Today



JULY 19th

PARTY OF FIVE
Doo-Wop, Motown, & Rock Classics



JULY 26th

LARRY STEVENS BAND
Dynamic & energetic originals



AUGUST 2nd

THE CROSSTONES
Doo Wop Love Songs & More



AUGUST 9th

KARICKTER BAND
Jazz, R&B, Motown, & Contemporary



AUGUST 16th

THE SELL OUTS
Rockin' six piece cover band



AUGUST 23rd

MASTERPIECE
The Best Classics



AUGUST 30th

STRICTLY 60'S
60's Pop & Rock Favorites



BOROUGH OF CARTERET
NEW JERSEY



TIMESTORM

by Gary Wien



SHARE BUTTON

Timestorm, which launches on August 1st, is a fiction podcast revolving around 12 year old twins Alexa and Beni Ventura who are yanked into another dimension. There they meet a distant cousin who gives them an extraordinary

mission: travel through time to preserve their culture's true history.

In the 21st century, the twins must navigate school, friendship, and family while keeping their time-traveling quests a secret. When a natural disaster devastates islands

across the Caribbean, Alexa and Beni understand what's at stake for their ancestral homeland. As Puerto Rico faces an uncertain future, the twins do all they can to witness, find, and remember its past.

Timestorm is produced by [Cocotazo Media](#) with support from PRX and the Google Podcast creator program. The series is written by Dania Ramos and fea-

Ramos. "After Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, I rewrote the plot so that the contemporary scenes took place in 2017 in the days leading up to, during, and following Hurricane Maria. This meant addressing the storm's impact on the Ventura family and portraying the extraordinary fundraising efforts that took place in Newark and the surrounding towns at the

Ramos says the initial idea came from a proposal she wrote in 2013 for a stage play about New Jersey history.

tures sound and music by her husband Michael Aquino. It features the voices of Leilany Figueroa from Montclair; Walter F. Rodriguez from Budd Lake; Alicia Rivas from Jersey City; and Orlando Segarra from New York City.

"We began the main development process for *Timestorm* in the spring of 2016," explained Dania

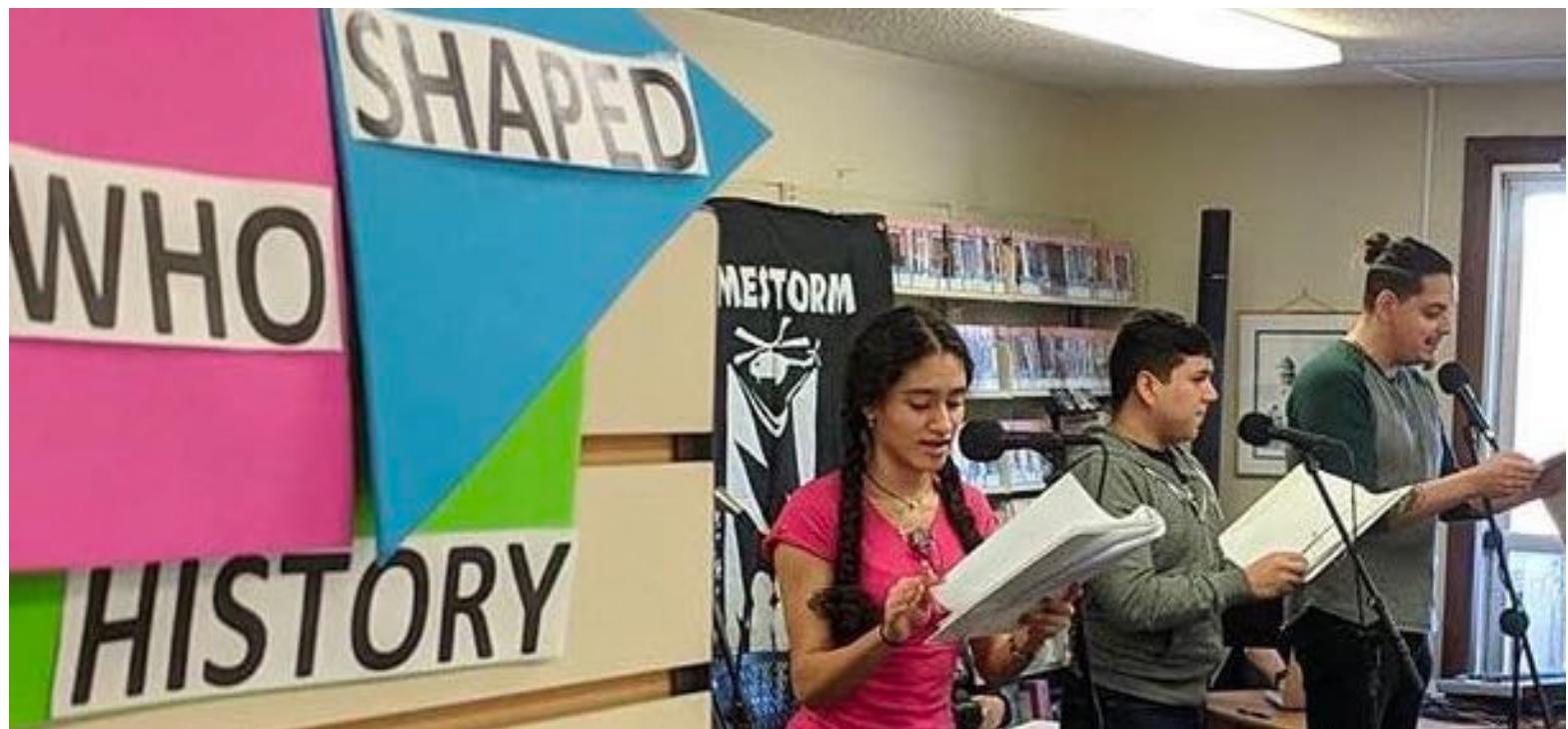
time. Michael (Aquino) and I drew on our own experiences being unable to reach family living on the island for several weeks. It was an extremely difficult period for so many in our community and we hope people find that we've represented it with truth and respect."

Ramos says the initial idea came from a proposal she wrote in 2013

for a stage play about New Jersey history. Once the idea was expanded into an audio drama series, the premise shifted so the twins were time-traveling beyond New Jersey.

The first two episodes of *Timestorm* were performed as part of a live reading during the New Jersey Theatre Alliance Stages Festival and was showcased at WBUR's CitySpace in Boston. This gave them a chance to see how the podcast story would be received in the Garden State and beyond.

"We loved seeing the reactions from New Jersey families and we gained valuable feedback that helped in the development of the series," said Michael Aquino. "The Boston performance was more of a podcasting industry presented and a celebration of *Timestorm* at the conclusion of the PRX Google Podcasts creator program. We presented audio clips from the first five episodes and talked about our vision for the series. That audience was a podcast hungry audience so they were very enthusiastic!"



Timestorm performed live. Photo by New Jersey Theatre Alliance

Timestorm was one of six podcasts out of over 6,000 to be selected for the inaugural cohort of the PRX Google Podcasts creator program. According to Aquino, PRX is a media company at the forefront of the podcasting industry and Google Podcasts is very motivated to see the international podcasting landscape take off with a mix of more diverse voices. The program offered them training, mentorship, and seed funding.

"The podcasting landscape is so wide and varied," explained

Aquino. "Interested in listening to a podcast? Think of a subject or a genre and you're likely to find a nice lot. The international podcasting scene is exploding as well with a lot of interest in countries like Chile, Argentina, India, and Brazil. Podcasts are relatively gate-keeper free, so you don't have to wait for someone to give you the opportunity. That's the beauty of podcasting - we're hearing stories we might not hear otherwise."

They see their target audience as being speculative fiction fans,



Watch a trailer for *Timestorm*

children between 8-12, parents, and middle-grade teachers.

"Families and kids are a growing podcast audience," adds Ramos. "Podcasts are a great screen-free source of entertainment. We're members of an excellent organization called Kids Listen, which is a grassroots organization of advocates for high-quality audio content for children."

They currently have four seasons of 10 episodes mapped out, along with bonus content between seasons. It's like *Back to the Future* with a larger purpose.

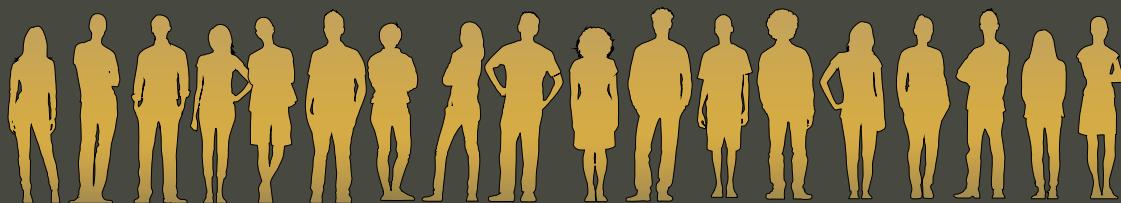
"Alexa and Beni are New Jersey kids to the core, but they have a genuine curiosity about who and what came before them," continued Ramos. "While exploring their culture's past, they start to take ownership over it. Since the twins are traveling back in time and witnessing moments from their culture's past, they gain a deeper understanding of how

complex and mixed their Puerto Rican heritage is. Their travels will include trips to Europe and Africa as well as the island before the arrival of the Spanish. The twins' quests also bring up questions about gaps in the history they've been taught: How and why are certain people celebrated and remembered while others are mostly forgotten?"

Eve Batey of Inside Podcasting says, "It's audio fiction with a mission, a fun kids' sci-fi show that embeds its Latinx history message in young-adult appropriate adventures."

Aquino utilizes many of the skills he's learned from recording his own music and adapts it for audio fiction.

"In *Timestorm*, we're employing various mixing techniques to create the three different environments in our show: contemporary Newark (stereo), the past (mono), and inside the Timestorm (binaural).



A CHORUS LINE

Conceived and Originally Directed and Choreographed by
MICHAEL BENNETT

Book by **JAMES KIRKWOOD & NICHOLAS DANTE** Music by **MARVIN HAMLISCH** Lyrics by **EDWARD KLEBAN**

Co Choreographed by **BOB AVIAN**

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ral or 3D audio)," explained Aquino. "We've also recorded some of our own foley as well as utilizing an online sound effects library to create the soundscapes."

The two work well together, which as Ramos points out, is good since they're married! But their skillsets also mesh well together and enhance the project.

"Michael has an excellent ear and he's an incredibly talented audio

engineer," said Ramos. "His sound design places you right in the middle of a given setting, ranging from the otherworldly timestamp to contemporary Newark and various locations in other centuries. He also wrote the theme song and other original music for the show. Music plays a large role in the series, so it's great that he's also a gifted musician." ♦





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Peter Max & the Moon Landing

Some of us at New Jersey Stage may not have been alive to see it, but we were all watching the plethora of televised specials celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo astronauts landing on the moon on July 20th. It's still cool thinking that the second man to walk on the moon (Buzz Aldrin) was a Jersey boy.

One person who did watch the moon landing live was artist **Peter Max**. He was captivated with the idea of space travel from a young age, creating cosmic poster art to commemorate the moon landing in 1969. He created posters in his '60s cosmic- collage style to celebrate the event after the successful mission and when the astronauts returned home safely. He honored the historic and heroic event again on the 30th anniversary in 1999, with his vibrantly colored paintings

and posters of Buzz Aldrin's historic first walk on the moon and the Apollo 11 blast off.

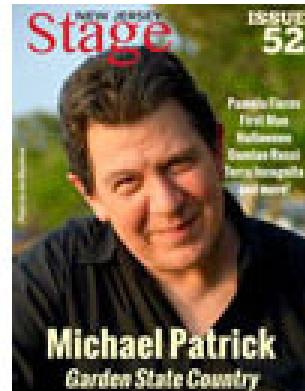
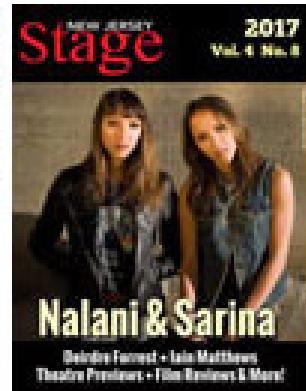
"From the time that a German scientist told me when I was young that the diameter of the sun was about 100 times bigger than the earth, I've been fascinated with our universe and everything in it. That made me start thinking about all of the stars and how big they were and our moon, and our place in the universe," said Peter Max.

"I wanted to express my new understanding visually, and I sketched images of planets with strange suns, futuristic vistas, and flying saucers hovering above land," Max added. "I went from doodling futuristic cities in class to conceiving of huge alien landscapes that, to me, were as real as anything I could see or touch— maybe more so." ♦



PETER MAX APOLLO 11 - WALKING ON THE MOON 1969/1999

ALP.COM



The First Five Years of New Jersey Stage magazine

by Gary Wien

In publishing you rarely get the chance to stop and take a look back at your work. Once a magazine is completed, the work for the next issue begins. It's a never-ending process and you have to love what you're doing to keep doing it. Thankfully, we do love our work. We launched New Jersey Stage five years ago in July 2014 and this issue begins our 6th year of publishing.

Our goal from day one was to cover the arts in a state that has seen coverage in newspapers greatly diminished over the last two decades. Newspapers learned long ago that covering the arts was not nearly as profitable as other avenues and so when budget cuts had to happen arts coverage was among the first to go.

New Jersey Stage has run feature articles on more than 300 artists in this magazine alone and published our 17,000th article online earlier in July

I'm proud to say that New Jersey Stage has run feature articles on more than 300 artists in this magazine alone and published our 17,000th article online earlier in July. While we do not shy away from covering major artists (we've done pieces on Grammy winners, Tony Award winners, members of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, legends of the Garden State and beyond, etc.) we have worked hard to cover lesser known artists and even those just starting out. For us it's always been about the story. If we believe it's a good story, we'll cover it and give it exposure. Speaking of exposure, our website stats are starting to jump in a big way and we are on pace for 500,000 unique visitors in 2019 with a goal of reaching one million in 2020.

So here's a look back at our first five years of the magazine. We'll offer brief highlights of each year along with a slideshow of the magazine covers. Each issue is still available online and we hope you'll take a look at any issues you may not have seen. Thanks, as always, for reading New Jersey Stage.

-- Gary Wien, publisher

New Jersey Stage essentially began with the concept of recreating a previous print publication called Upstage Magazine and bringing it into the digital age. We wanted to take advantage of audio, video, and create a magazine that was interactive. That concept began with our first issue in July 2014 which featured Jack Skinner on the cover. As we did with Upstage Magazine, we wanted to launch the publication with a New Jersey artist on the cover. Five years later, we have Jack's latest single as our **Featured Music Video of the Month**. That first issue also included features on comedians Colin Quinn and Dom Irrera.

Throughout the final five issues of our first year, we included pieces on music, theatre, film, comedy, dance, and art. Cover stories included Red Wanting Blue, Vic Dibitetto, an illustration by Robert Nicol, Willie Nile, and an image for the play *Catch Me If You Can*.

Some of our favorite stories from the year include a look at Stormin' Norman Seldin, a true Jersey Shore music legend; a story about a Jersey band whose photos from 1980 were discovered by a film collector in Calgary who was able to track down the band via social media; an interview with David Cassidy who spoke at lengths about his Jersey roots growing up; Dan Lauria (best known from TV's *The Wonder Years*) who helped lure television and movie stars to New Jersey Repertory Theatre; Carolyn Dorfman talking about *The Night of Broken Dance*, which shows hope and human spirit at the beginning of the Holocaust; photographer Erin Feinberg talking about her book *Diehards*; plus Williams Honor, Anthony D'Amato, Nikkole Salter, Brent Bourgeois, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. For a detailed list of articles, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY Stage

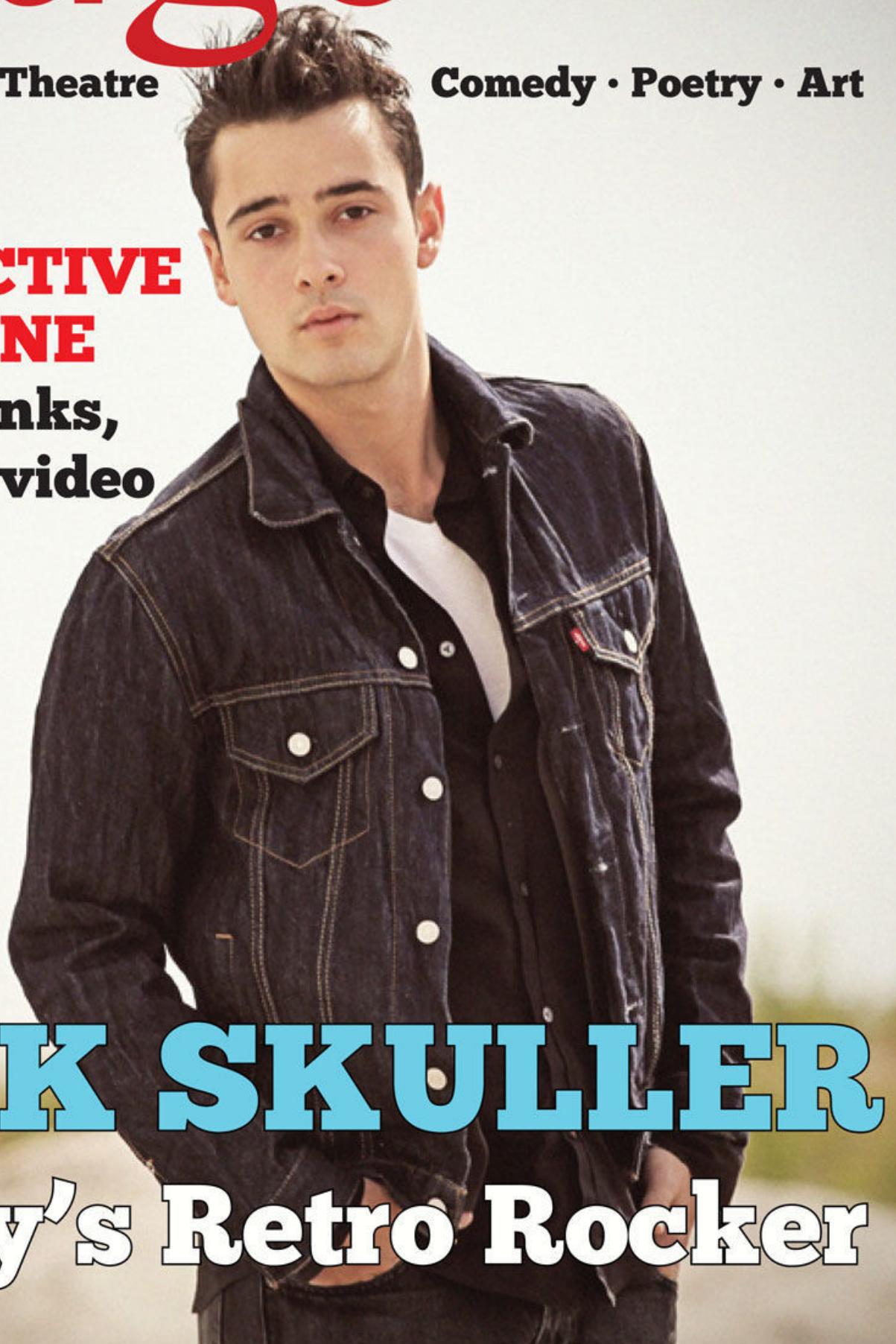
Music • Film • Theatre

Jul/Aug 2014
Vol. 1 Issue 1

Comedy • Poetry • Art

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JACK SKULLER
Jersey's Retro Rocker

Some of the highlights of our first full year included the legendary John Waters giving us plenty of stories about hitchhiking across America; taking a deep dive into the career of Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Nils Lofgren from his days in Grin to playing in the E Street Band; and speaking with Chris Lemmon about his one-man play that answers the question "What was it like to be Jack Lemmon's son?"

Speaking of one-man shows, Charles Ross explained how he runs through the entire Star Wars trilogy alone on stage; Cyd Katz spoke with us about the website New Jersey Isn't Boring; and we talked with the author of the *Pork Roll Cookbook*.

Cary Elwes recounted tales from the making of the beloved 80s film *The Princess Bride*; Eryn Shewell showed us how she's bringing classy back; and Richard Barone gave us the scoop on his Sorrows & Promises project featuring music composed in Greenwich Village in the 1960s.

We talked about comedy with Vicki Lawrence from the *Carol Burnett Show*; featured the Atlantic City Ballet finding a home; and learned about how actor Donny Most (of *Happy Days* fame) now tours the country as a swing and big band leader.

Amy Ray of The Indigo Girls covered everything from college radio in the 80s to tackling racism; filmmaker Steve Tozzie told us about his film *Riot on the Dance Floor*, which detailed the wild days of the Trenton club City Gardens; and we interviewed artists such as Melissa Etheridge, Ian Anderson, Alan Parsons, Grace Potter, Joe DiPietro, Tammy Ryan, and many more. For a detailed list of articles, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY **Stage**

January 2015
Vol. 2 Issue 1

Music • Film • Theatre • Comedy • Dance • Poetry • Art • Literature

Ellen Lewis Has A Gun Story



Bob Gruen • Alan Parsons • NJ Film Festival Preview

2016

Some of the highlights of 2016 include the news of Paper Mill Playhouse becoming the third New Jersey theatre to ever win the Regional Theatre Tony Award; talking about the art of busking with Bobby Strange; and looking back at the Jersey history and influence behind the music of Brian Fallon of the Gaslight Anthem.

We spoke with Kelly McCarthy about *The King of Jabip* - the first World Premiere to be presented by The Eagle Theatre in Hammonton; gathered the members of Days Awake to talk about a reunion show that we never expected to see; and spoke with comedian George Lopez about his largely autobiographical television show.

Rutgers alum Ben Rosenfeld helped us understand what it's like to be a Russian-American Jewish comic with a double major in Philosophy and Economics; Bobby Bandiera took us a ride throughout his legendary career; and a dozen artists let us know about the Bruce Springsteen songs that best represents their own lives.

One of our favorite stories was how a New Jersey company found a print of the 1984 film *Ninja Busters* in a storage room in the Mojave desert. The only print to the film was lost when the distributor went to prison.

Douglas Taurel spoke with us about his one-man show, *The American Soldier* and how emotional it is for him to perform across the country. We spoke with filmmaker Kevin McLaughlin about *Riot*, his film detailing the Newark riots of 1967. And singer-songwriter Arlan Feiles told us the story behind the song that literally changed his life.

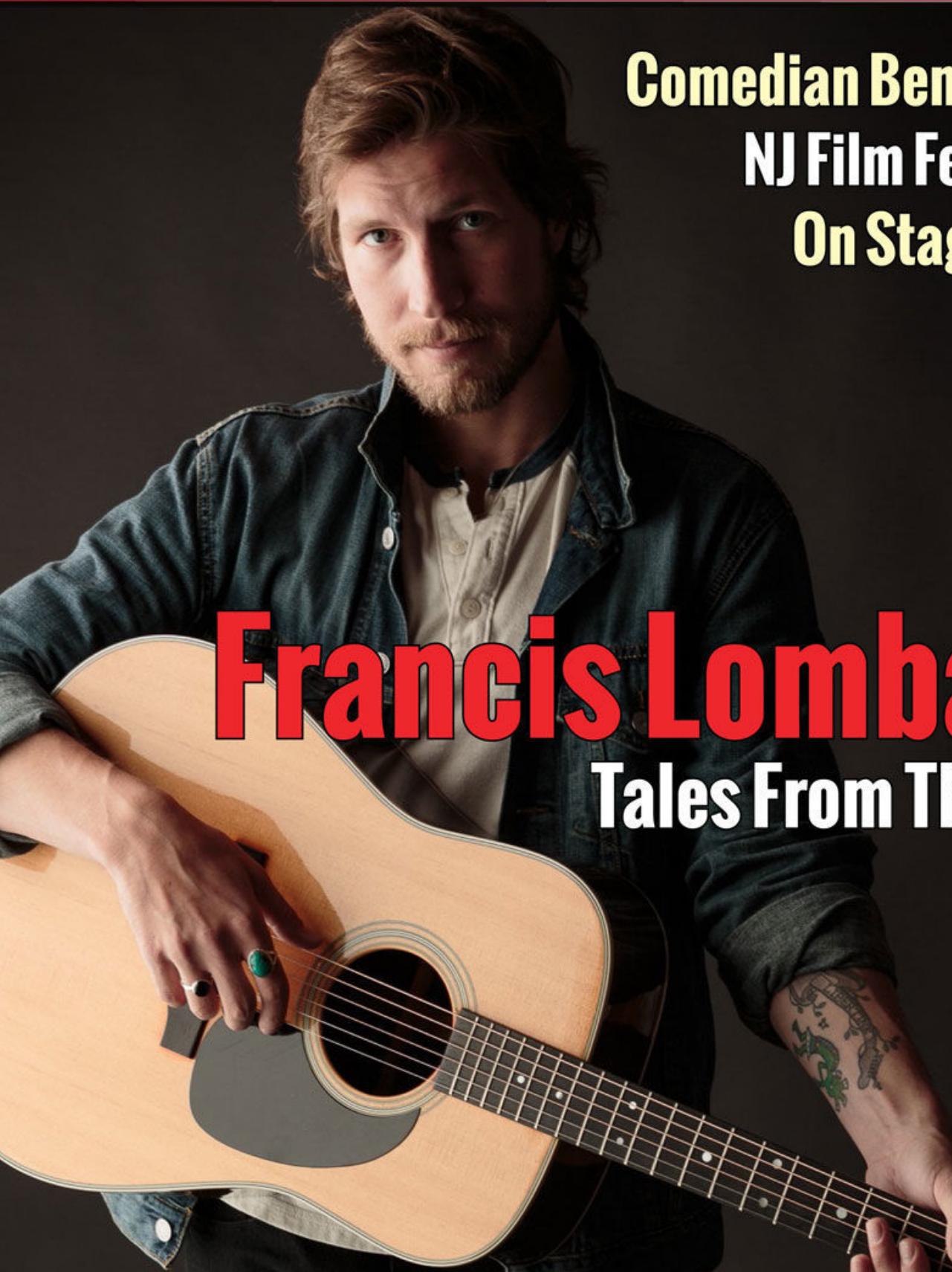
For a detailed list of articles in 2016, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY Stage

2016
ISSUE 1

Comedian Ben Rosenfeld
NJ Film Fest Preview
On Stage: Theatre

Francis Lombardi
Tales From The Road



Some of the highlights of 2017 included Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Ann Wilson of Heart talking about her solo album and tour; catching up with Jersey native and current Nashville resident Nicole Atkins about what is arguably her best album to date; and Leslie Ann Coles gave us the story of *Melody Makers*, a film that detailed the history of the legendary music magazine.

We asked several theatre professionals "How will theatre react to the changing political climate?" and famed prankster Joey Skaggs spoke about *Art of the Prank*, his history of activism and how he might have been the founder of fake news.

Long-time Jersey rockers Steve Conte and Tom Kanach were featured. The former spoke to us about a reunion show of his former band Company of Wolves; the latter spoke about his wonderful new record - an epic 30 song masterpiece. Deirdre Forrest opened up on how her inner struggles influence her songwriting; Joan Osbourne spoke about covering Bob Dylan; and Beatles authority Kenneth Womack spoke about his first of two books on the life of George Martin.

We spoke with comedian Louie Anderson, twin rockers Nalani & Sarina, and featured the classic rock tarot cards of Anthony J. Parisi. We spotlighted the new Grammy Museum Experience at the Prudential Center in Newark. Playwright Matt Barbot explained the importance of a Latino superhero. We caught up with Victoria Williams, a musician that first introduced many music fans to Multiple Sclerosis; and offered our memories of George Street Playhouse while the theatre prepares for its new home. For a detailed list at this year's articles, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY Stage

2017
Vol. 4 No. 1

NJ Film Festival Preview
The Bitter Chills
A United Kingdom
Jersey On Film
Theatre Preview



Founder Of Fake News?

2018

Some of the highlights of 2018 included the inspirational story of Ryan "Gooch" Nelson who refused to let a truck accident leaving him paralyzed from the neck down stop him from creating music and helping others; paid tribute to Pat DiNizio with his own words; and shared the story of Tom Richards - a musician's musician who battled an incurable form of cancer while striving to leave a legacy behind.

We learned that the songwriter behind "Rhinestone Cowboy" was actually a guy from Jersey (Larry Weiss); spoke with Charles Evered about *An Actor's Carol*, his unique take on the holiday classic revolving around someone who has played Scrooge one too many times; and showed why we thought Springsteen on Broadway deconstructed many of the myths of The Boss.

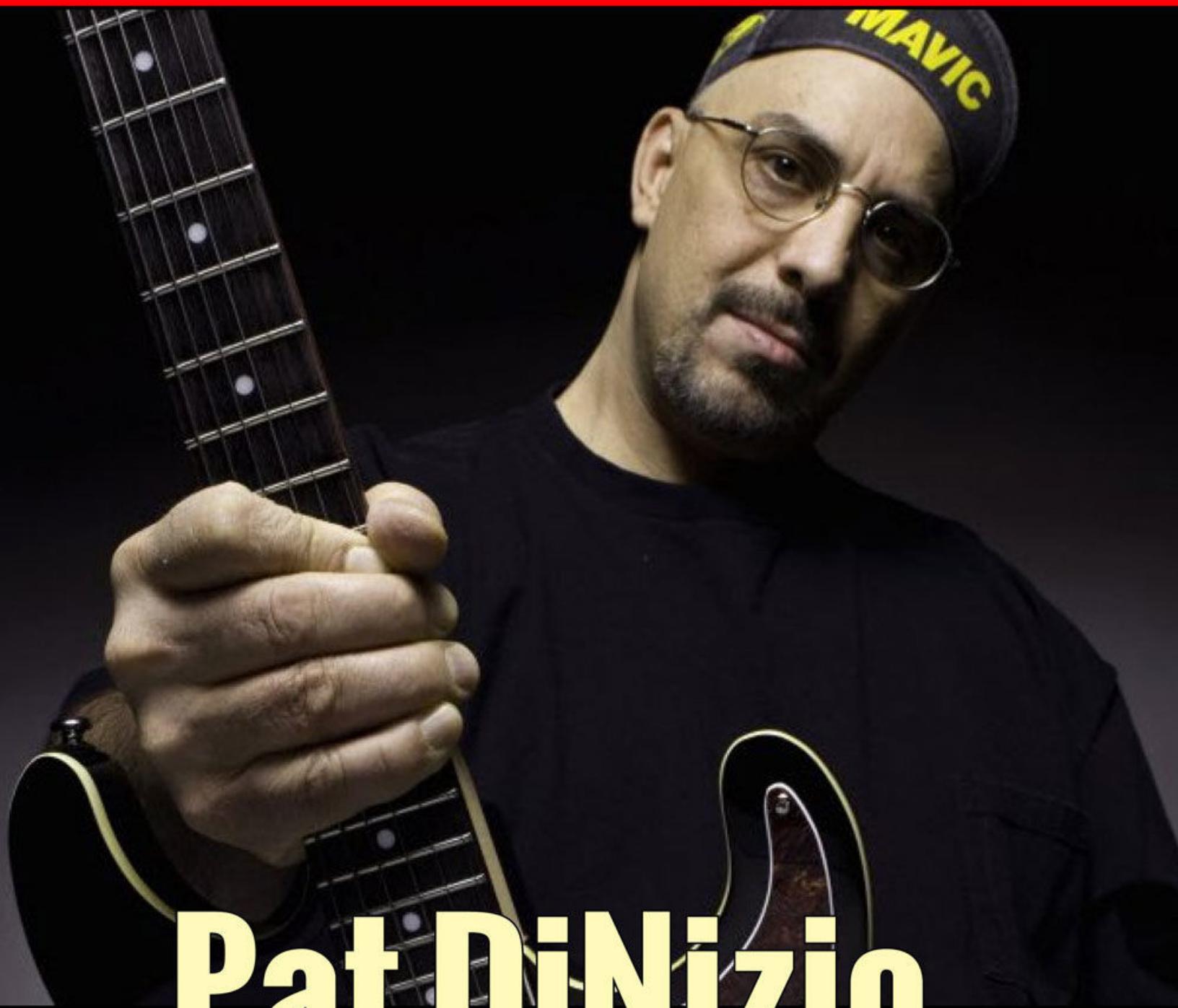
We spoke with Tony Award winners Dori Bernstein and the team behind *Urinetown* (Greg Kotis and Mark Hollman) on how to create a Broadway musical. Yankees great Bernie Williams talked with us about his second act as a Grammy nominated jazz musician; Rock and Roll Hall of Famers John Oates and Richie Furay; and Grammy nominated artists Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Steve Greenwell were also featured.

Filmmaker Jay Schlossberg gave us details on his upcoming documentary on the classic radio station WHFS; playwright David Seaborn told us about creating *The Eleventh Hour!* from its early days at CoLab Arts to its New York City premiere; and Linda Chorney spoke about When I Sing - the film that details her career from unknown artist to earning a Grammy nomination.

For a detailed list of the year's stories, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY Stage

ISSUE
43



**Pat DiNizio
In His Own Words**

In the first six months of 2019, some of our favorite stories include Academy Award winner Franke Previte (forever associated with his songs in *Dirty Dancing*) and Lisa Sherman teaming up on a show called Calling All Divas; singer-songwriter James Dalton getting his chance to headline a big show at Monmouth University and bringing some friends along for the ride; and Matt O'Ree talking about taking his band on the road for the first time in five years - a period in which he got married, toured Asia as a member of Bon Jovi, and recorded a song with Bruce Springsteen.

We spoke with Meredith Ochs about her wonderful book, *Rock and Roll Women: The 50 Fiercest Female Rockers*; The Bouncing Souls revealed their plans for the seminal Jersey band's 30th anniversary; and David Mullen spoke with us about wine made in New Jersey - a topic he covers with his blog, *New Jersey Uncorked*.

New Jersey natives Matthew Runciman and Danielle Galietti told us about their adventures creating interdisciplinary, multi-sensorial artwork in Iceland; Lauren Davidson introduced us to "Urban Country"; and a group of Jersey musicians responded to our question "Why don't indie artists create their own best of albums?"

Some of our favorite pieces included conversations with filmmakers Peter Ventrella, Jeanie Bryson, and Jordan Rowe.

Sadly, it was also another year involving a tribute to someone dear to us. This time it was Joe Harvard - a musician, writer, and artist who became a legend in Boston and would bring his legend to Asbury Park.

For a detailed list of 2019 stories, [click here](#).

NEW JERSEY Stage

ISSUE
55



Experiment 34

Hard-charging rock mixed with punk, funk, and rap

Franke Previte & Lisa Sherman • NJ Film Fest
Little Girl Blue: The Nina Simone Musical & more!



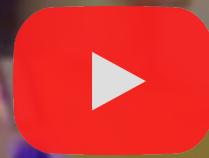
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Featured Music Video

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Dario Distasi - Stuck In Here
Sam Densmore - Damn The Consequences
Menny Feat. Sean King
Les Frakkin - Summer
Liz Kennedy - Hike Up Your Stock
TV Spot
Annemarie Picerno - Trouble feat. Kenny Lee

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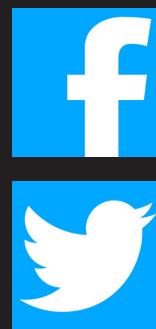


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Sat, August 10 @ 8:00pm



Richie Santa - Elvis Forever

Sat, August 17 @ 7:00pm



Springsteen's 70th Bash

Sat, September 21 @ 8:00pm



The Lion King

by Eric Hillis

"Doesn't this seem familiar?", one big cat asks of another in director Jon Favreau's remake of Disney's much loved 1994 animated musical *The Lion King*. Yes, yes, it sure does seem familiar. Remake, rinse, reboot, repeat. Such is the circle of life for Disney as the studio continues their campaign to

wring every last dollar out of their back catalogue with a series of 'live action' remakes that are now arriving at a pace few parents could afford to financially keep up with. We're only halfway through 2019 and we've already had remakes of *Dumbo*, *Aladdin* and now *The Lion King*.

Unlike Favreau's awe-inspiring *The Jungle Book*, which seamlessly mixed up Kipling's original tale with dashes of Disney's animated classic and a few original elements, *The Lion King* sticks firmly to the plot of the original. To be fair to the house that Mickey built, some of Disney's remakes have been worthwhile. Along with the aforementioned *Jungle Book*, *Maleficent* gave us a heart-warming new take on *Sleeping Beauty*, and with his update

of *Pete's Dragon*, director David Lowery was allowed to apply his particular brand of Americana. Most have simply been pointless, none more so than Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella*, which added nothing to the centuries old tale.

Others, like *Beauty and the Beast* and *Christopher Robin*, completely lost their charm in the translation from 2D animation to live-action. In the case of the former, the live-action rendering heightened the problematic element of its cen-



Watch the trailer for *The Lion King*

tral relationship, while the latter became a depressing dirge that no child would sit through.

Favreau's *Lion King* can't really be considered 'live-action' as every frame is animated to create the illusion that we're really watching life play out on the African tundra. The opening 'Circle of Life' sequence is quite something to behold, but the problems arise as soon as the animals start opening their jaws and beaks.

In the early '80s, the cult British comic 'Eagle' experimented with photo-stories, replacing hand drawn artwork with poorly framed photographs, usually starring whoever happened to be hanging around the office at the time. The comic quickly realized that such an approach severely limited the stories they could tell, as there are only so many scenarios you can create in a suburban office, while the pencil allows you to explore unlimited worlds. Fa-

vreau runs into the same problem here. If you want the audience to believe they're watching actual animals, you can't have them dancing around like they did in the animated version, so the musical numbers here are pretty much redundant. Where the original accompanied its songs with montages that exploited the potential of animation, Favreau simply has his animals trot along as the lyrics come out of their gaping maws in an unconvincing fashion.

Along with the comedy, which rarely lands here, the musical sequences jar with the rest of the movie. This *Lion King* is a tonal car crash. The photo-realism strips the story down to its Darwinian carcass, leaving us in no doubt about the cruelty of life in the animal kingdom. You can give Simba and his friends all the cute dialogue you want, but once you make him look like an actual lion you leave the audience in no doubt as to why

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- 7/31 Chris Isaak



Louie Anderson &
Rita Rudner

7/22

AUGUST

- 8/1 Herb Alpert & Lani Hall
- 8/3 Rob Thomas (*Sold Out!*)
- 8/4 Gavin DeGraw
- 8/13 Tony Bennett:
The "I Left My Heart" Tour
- 8/15 Summer of Love -
Woodstock Edition
- 8/20 Rock the Yacht 2019
- 8/22 Dwight Yoakam
- 8/27 Daughtry with Special
Guest Augustana



Chris Isaak

7/31



Gavin DeGraw

8/4



Rock the Yacht 2019

7/31

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he's the King - because he belongs to the most intimidating species around. When animals fight here, the realistic effects adds an element of grimness that traditional animation concealed. Prepare to witness a warthog gore a hyena with its tusks, a lion throw another lion off a cliff, and a wounded lion devoured by a pack of hyenas. Yes, more animals die in this thing than

Tuesday morning while the latter were knocked off at 4:30 on a Friday afternoon with one eye on the clock.

Despite *The Lion King's* failings, I remain an advocate of this sort of realistic animation. But Disney and others need to realize that if it looks like a lion it needs to behave like a lion. *The Lion King* doesn't work chiefly because it feels like

The animation is so convincing most of the time that the few moments when it's not so polished really stand out.

in Cannibal Holocaust. The lion might sleep tonight, but I'm not sure your children will.

The animation is so convincing most of the time that the few moments when it's not so polished really stand out. The lions look incredible, the hyenas not so much, as though the former were animated with enthusiasm on a

a human story has been shoe-horned into the kill or be killed milieu of the animal kingdom. No amount of goofy supporting characters and musical numbers can disguise the fact that free of its animated trappings, this is now a tale of the survival of the fittest. Remove the animals' speech and ditch the songs and this could

have been an affecting fable in the manner of Jean-Jacques Annaud's tales of the wild. There's one standout sequence in which Favreau's camera follows a clump of hair that strays from Simba's mane and ends up going on its own little journey, and at that point it becomes clear that this is the movie we should be watching, a story of life in the natural world, free of human interference. What might Terrence Malick do with this technology?

Sadly, when it comes to big-budget filmmaking, Hollywood appears to have adopted 'Hakuna Matata' as its creed. Just knock it out without much thought. For an example of how little consideration has been put into this film, consider the voice casting. All the animals speak with British or American accents, all that is, save for one who speaks with an African accent. Can you guess what type of animal it is? Yep, a fucking monkey. Old Walt would be proud. ◆



The Lion King

1½ stars out of 5

Directed by: Jon Favreau
Starring: Keegan-Michael Key,
Donald Glover, Seth Rogen,
Chiwetel Ejiofor, Alfre Woodard
James Earl Jones, Beyoncé



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<i>presented by Live Nation</i> |
| 21 Sun | 7:30PM | Tommy Emmanuel, CGP |
| 23 Tues | 8PM | Ladies of Laughter
<i>hosted by Bill Erolino</i> |
| 25 Thur | 7:30PM | Amos Lee |



Nick Kroll

AUGUST

- | | | |
|---------|---------|--|
| 2 Fri | 8PM | The Producers
<i>presented by The Performing Arts School & Benzel-Busch costumes sponsored by Neiman Marcus</i> |
| 3 Sat | 3 & 8PM | The Producers
<i>presented by The Performing Arts School & Benzel-Busch costumes sponsored by Neiman Marcus</i> |
| 4 Sun | 3PM | The Producers
<i>presented by The Performing Arts School & Benzel-Busch costumes sponsored by Neiman Marcus</i> |
| 5 Mon | 8PM | Cinderella's Tom Keifer
<i>presented by WDHA</i> |
| 6 Tues | 8PM | ABBA The Concert: A Tribute to ABBA |
| 8 Thur | 8PM | Dark Star Orchestra Summer Tour 2019
<i>presented by The Couri Family</i> |
| 9 Fri | 8PM | The Jim Breuer Residency
<i>Comedy, Stories & More Vol. III</i> |
| 15 Thur | 8PM | Classic Albums Live presents Queen |
| 16 Fri | 7:30PM | Anthony Michael Hall Live with a screening of <i>The Breakfast Club</i> |
| 20 Tues | 8PM | Squeeze – The Squeeze Songbook Tour
<i>presented by Jaguar Land Rover of Paramus</i> |
| 24 Sat | 8:30PM | Leila Forouhar & Mansour Live in Concert
<i>presented by Persian Planner</i> |



Amos Lee



Tom Keifer



Jim Breuer

SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|--------|-----|---|
| 13 Fri | 8PM | Dweezil Zappa |
| 14 Sat | 8PM | Robby Krieger & Leslie West |
| 22 Sun | 8PM | Joan Jett & The Blackhearts
<i>Benzel-Busch Concert Series</i> |
| 27 Fri | 8PM | Dennis DeYoung |



Dweezil Zappa

OCTOBER

- | | | |
|---------|--------|---|
| 3 Thur | 8PM | Vince Neil of Mötley Crüe
<i>presented by WDHA</i> |
| 4 Fri | 8PM | Steven Wright
<i>presented by Johl & Company</i> |
| 10 Thur | 8PM | Rick Wakeman |
| 16 Wed | 8PM | TOTO
<i>Benzel-Busch Concert Series</i> |
| 19 Sat | 8PM | The Jim Breuer Residency
<i>Comedy, Stories & More Vol. IV</i> |
| 20 Sun | 7:30PM | Sergio Mendes & Bebel Gilberto |
| 25 Fri | 7:30PM | Kathy Najimy with a Screening of <i>Hocus Pocus</i> |



Vince Neil



Bebel Gilberto

NOVEMBER

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---|
| 2 Sat | 2 & 5PM | Disney Junior Holiday Party! On Tour
<i>presented by PSE&G</i> |
| 7 Thur | 8PM | Postmodern Jukebox: A Very Postmodern Christmas |
| 8 Fri | 8PM | Patton Oswalt |
| 9 Sat | 8PM | Gilberto Santa Rosa
<i>with special guest DJ Ralph Mercado</i> |
| 10 Sun | 1PM | Mutts Gone Nuts |
| 12 Tues | 8PM | Paul Anka – Anka Sings Sinatra
<i>Benzel-Busch Concert Series</i> |



Patton Oswalt

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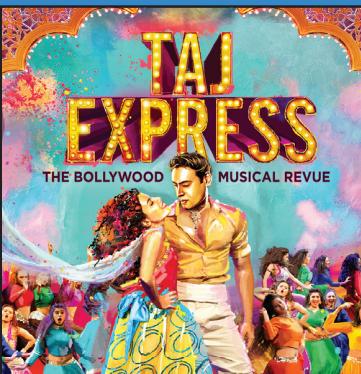
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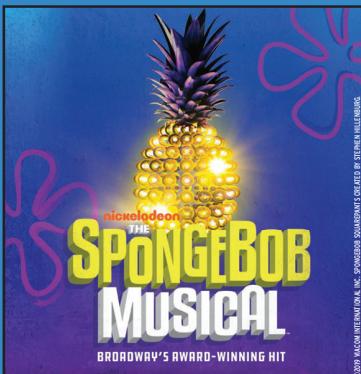


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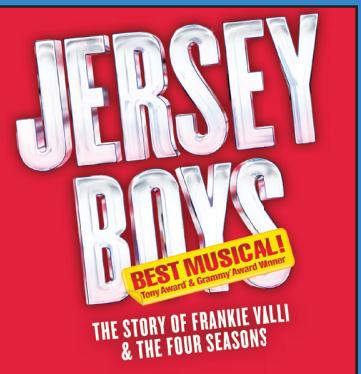


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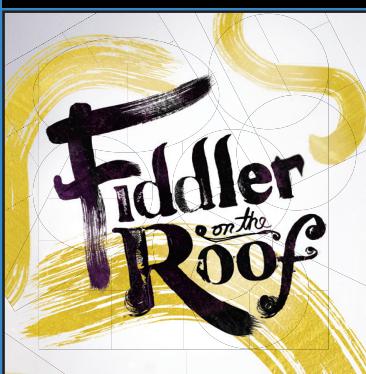
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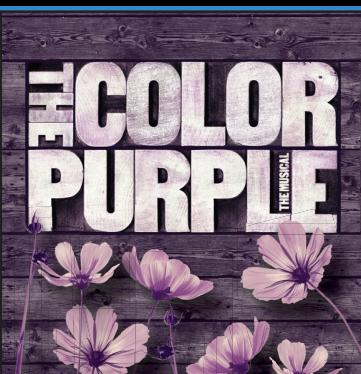


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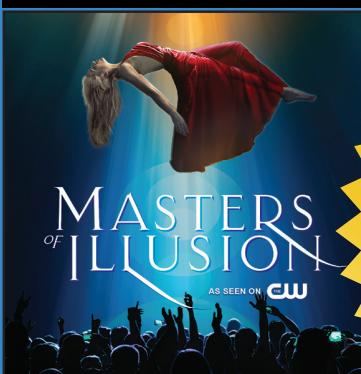
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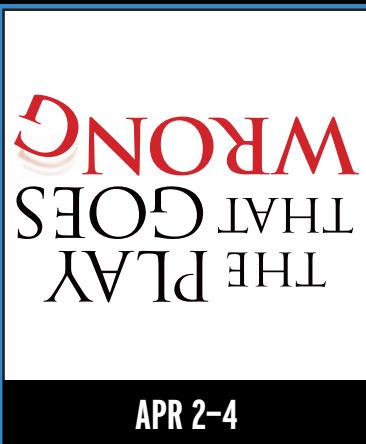


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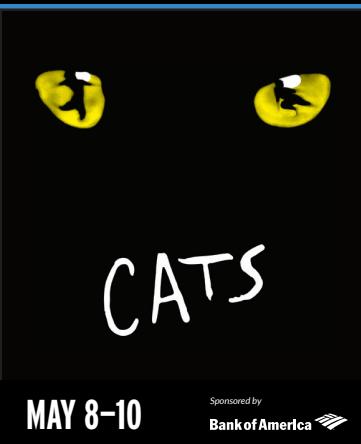


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THE RAINMAKER

By N. Richard Nash

Directed by Bonnie J. Monte

PERFORMANCES BEGIN JULY 31

(MADISON, NJ) – The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (STNJ) continues its 57th season, entitled *Incredible Journeys*, with *The Rainmaker* by N. Richard Nash. Directed by Artistic Director

Bonnie J. Monte, this compelling story of love and hope has captivated audiences since it hit the stage in 1954. Performances run from July 31 - August 18.

Set in the American West during a time of great drought, *The Rainmaker* is about a parched land desperate for rain, and the tough

but lonely people who live there, thirsting for love. This is a play about yearning, family, hope, and the magic that sometimes pours down on us from the unlikeliest of sources.

"This is one of my favorite American plays. It is filled with breathtaking moments and real characters whose story makes our hearts break and sing all in the short space of two hours' time. I am so eager to bring this exhilarating theatrical gift to our audience!" said Bonnie J. Monte.

The cast features newcomer Corey Sorenson as File and STNJ veterans Benjamin Eakeley as Noah Curry, Isaac Hickox-Young as Jim Curry, Anthony Marble as Starbuck, Monette Magrath as Lizzie Curry, Nick Plakias as Sheriff Thomas, and Mark Elliot Wilson as H.C. Curry. Anthony Marble, playing the famous dreamer/con-man, Starbuck, received great acclaim last season for his performance in Sam Shepard's *Buried Child*. Isaac Hickox-Young played Charley in *Charley's Aunt*, also in 2018.

Mark Elliot Wilson returns to The Shakespeare Theatre's stage after a long hiatus to portray the sensitive patriarch of the Curry family, and Monette Magrath as Lizzie plays the lone and lonely daughter of the family. She appeared at STNJ last season in *Blithe Spirit*. Benjamin Eakeley, a familiar

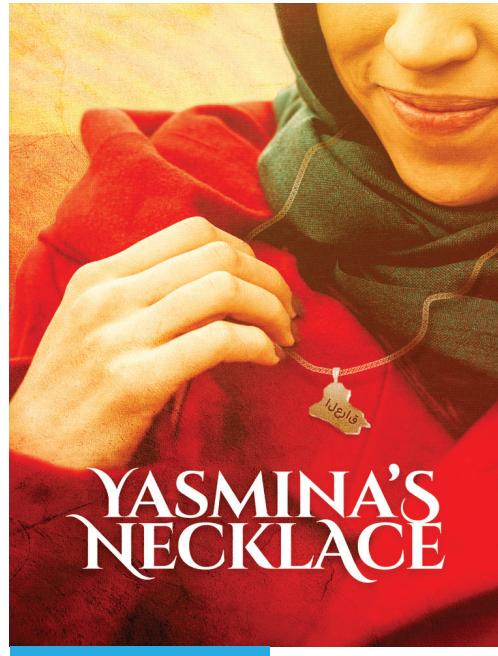
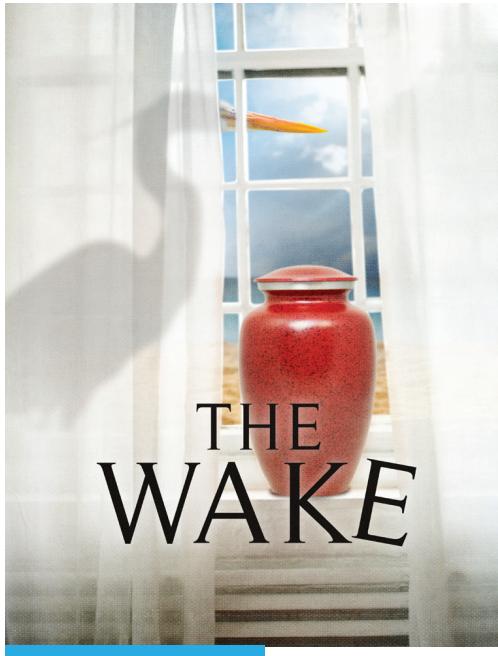
Broadway face, was also featured last year at STNJ as the ruthless Saturninus in *Titus Andronicus*.

The design team includes set design by Bonnie J. Monte; costume design by Hugh Hanson; lighting design by Matthew J. Weisgable; sound design by Steven L. Beckel. The Production Stage Manager is Becky Abramowitz.

Tickets for *The Rainmaker* begin at just \$29 for preview performances and \$49 for regular performances. The Theatre is proud to continue its 30 UNDER 30 program where patrons age 30 and under can purchase tickets for only \$30 with a valid ID, subject to availability.

The F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre is located on the campus of Drew University at 36 Madison Avenue (at Lancaster Road) in Madison, New Jersey. ♦

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YASMINA'S NECKLACE

by ROHINA MALIK
directed by
KAREEM FAHMY
SEPT 5-22

Longing to shed his cultural identity, Abdul Samee changes his name to Sam, marries an American and does everything in his power to turn away from his heritage. But when Sam meets Yasmina, a beautiful woman from his father's homeland, Iraq, he begins to learn that a tree without roots cannot stand for long.

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Alice In Wonderland

(OCEAN TOWNSHIP, NJ) - **The Axelrod Contemporary Ballet Theater**, Monmouth County's newest (and only) professional ballet company, will present the second performance of its 2019 season, the world premiere of "Alice in Wonderland" - an original

work created, directed and choreographed by Chajnik based on the passages of "Alice's adventures in Wonderland" and poems by Lewis Carroll. Performances will take place on August 18, August 21, and August 25 at 7:00pm and August 25 at 2:00pm

"We're thrilled to continue our series of exciting, family-friendly dance events," says Axelrod Contemporary Ballet Theater Artistic Director and Choreographer Gabriel Chajnik. "Alice is a visual feast, filled with high-energy dance and a massive cast of talented performers appearing as flamingoes, cards, flowers, and hedgehogs, to name just a few!"

This 21st century ballet is a wholly-immersive experience and unlike traditional ballets. A theatrical, multi-media experience, it features an original score composed by David Winkler (Leonard Bernstein Composer Fellowship) with a live chamber orchestra conducted by Maestro Jason Tramm.

To help create the whimsi-

cal characters, Chajnik enlisted costume designer Jose Solis, who has designed for numerous fashion houses including Anne Klein, Ralph Lauren, Emanuel Ungaro, Oscar de la Renta, and Bill Blass.

A children's choir "The Wonderland voices" will serve as a compass to guide Alice through her magical Journey and serve as the character's inner voice, highlighting the rite of passage theme that defines Lewis Carroll's work.

According to Chajnik, "This relatively new dance genre complements and builds upon the Axelrod's outstanding reputation for musical theater. The original score incorporates songs and spoken word, which add mystery, excitement and humor.

This 21st century ballet is a wholly-immersive experience and unlike traditional ballets.

Lewis Carroll's Poems are woven into the fabric of this beloved story, which provides a unique dance experience."

First published in 1865 by English photographer and mathematician Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, "Alice in Wonderland" tells the famous story of the curious little girl in the blue dress. It explores Alice's journey through Wonderland, which began as a silly tale Dodgson told the Lidell's younger daughter Alice and her sibling during a boat ride. The novel, which recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, has been translated into several languages and has never been out of print.

This performance includes 10 live musicians, nine professional dancers, fifteen young actors and singers, thirty student dancers, the talents of associate choreographer Jolene Baldini, set design

by Fred Sorrentino, and lighting design by Erik Herskowitz.

The Axelrod Contemporary Ballet Theater was established in the fall of 2017 under the leadership of President Elise Feldman and Artistic Director and Choreographer Gabriel Chajnik. The mission of the Axelrod Contemporary Ballet Theater is to inspire an appreciation for dance—in both dancers and dance enthusiasts—through artistic excellence, innovative choreography, and exhilarating performances. As part of the organization's educational mandate, Chajnik and his team of dance professionals inspire and teach young dancers to express their talent, explore their creative spirit, and expand their artistic horizons. This training is designed to underscore the joy of dance and prepare young dancers for the challenges of a career in dancing or a life of loving dance. ♦

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Photos by John Posada

A brand new music festival came to the PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel on July 6 and photographer John Posada was on hand to snap away. The **Rockstar Energy Drink DISRUPT Festival** took place

in cities across America in June and July with unique line-ups in each location.

On the next two pages we have tons of photos to give you a taste of what the festival was like.





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Catching up with Carolyne Mas

by Gary Wien

Carolyne Mas came out of the Greenwich Village music scene in the 1970s along with artists like Willie Nile, Steve Forbert, and The Roches. For a while her career seemed destined for greatness, but a myriad of issues pre-

vented her from reaching that level. She was up against sexism in the music industry, bad record labels, a manager who stole her royalty checks, eating disorders, and a mysterious knifing attack which almost cost her life.

Several people have encouraged her to write a biography or have her story told in a documentary film, but Mas doesn't believe her story on its own would be enough.

"I always thought if you're not famous, it's sort of presumptuous to write an autobiography or make a movie about yourself," said Mas from her home in Arizona.

Looking back at her life, it's definitely a story worth telling and one

that might be able to help others as well.

Mas grew up on Long Island and studied opera for many years. She attended The American Musical and Dramatic Academy at 16 and became the youngest member of The Light Opera of Manhattan at 17. After being accepted at Juilliard School of Music, her plans changed when she played a folk festival in Hazleton, Pennsylvania and never looked back.



Watch Carolyne Mas perform "Amersterdam"

Record labels, radio stations, and royalty checks

Years before Graham Parker would release the classic song “Mercury Poisoning,” which many artists could relate to, Mas signed with Mercury Records. It was not the first record label interested in her though. She nearly signed with Infinity Records until they saw her perform live. They wanted her to record an album of ballads instead of rock and roll. Mas remembers being told, “a woman doing rock and roll will never sell”

in 1978 - a year before Pat Benatar began her run on the charts.

If you were not listening to the radio in the late 1970s, it’s hard to comprehend just how different New York rock radio was then compared to now. There were two major stations (WPLJ and WNEW) who competed for listeners and who actually took pride in breaking new artists. Mas was first heard on WNEW who played her demo tape when she was still an unsigned artist. Unfortunately, a great relationship with WNEW soured when she



Watch Carolyne Mas perform “Stillsane”

performed a concert for WPLJ on a bill with Eddie Money.

Decades later when WPLJ signed off for the last time on May 31st, long-time DJ Jim Kerr mentioned Mas in an interview with *Billboard*.

"I was completely flattered," said Mas. "I used to love their radio station when I was young and just starting out. I probably listened to WPLJ more than WNEW because I thought they were after a younger crowd and were edgier."

Mas never reached stardom in the United States but did have

singles like "Stillsane" and "Quote Goodbye Quote" crack the Top 100. Royalties were being made, but stolen by a manager who forged her name on checks from ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers).

"He forged my name for thousands of dollars during a period of time when I was living in Asbury Park and was struggling," recalled Mas. "I could actually have had a living and bought a house. I didn't even know about the royalties until David Landau who was play-



Listen to "Quote Goodbye Quote" by Carolynne Mas



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Fri, Aug 16 @ 7:30pm

El Caribefunk

Wed, Aug 21 @ 7:30pm

Sugar Mountain

Sat, Aug 24 @ 7:30pm

ing with Clarence Clemons and the Red Bank Rockers said to me, "How about those ASCAP checks for 'Sitting In The Dark'" which became a hit in Europe. I just said, "What ASCAP checks?" David wrote the song with me. That's how I found out about Europe."

Years later she would learn first-hand how popular her music was in Europe. She was at a club in Germany when "Sitting In The Dark" came on and saw people everywhere getting up to dance.

"It was an unbelievable feeling, especially having gone through that dark period of struggling," said Mas. "I had success there, but I had no clue. The record company never informed me. There could have been opportunities there. Maybe I could have moved to Europe in 1981 and been able to continue a very viable career there. Because of the negligence of people I trusted, they affected the career I could have had. That

wouldn't happen today because of the internet, but back then crossing the ocean was like going to another planet."

Mas eventually sued her manager through Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. She was unable to recover the money, but did get him to relinquish all rights to her work. The deal was supposed to give her the press clippings he had saved for years, but Mas was told he no longer had them. When he died in 2006, the press clippings were given to Mas.

Sexism and eating disorders

When Mas first began receiving press coverage it was often in articles that included a bunch of female artists. This was not only unfair to each of the artists, but, as Mas puts it, "the only thing we had in common was anatomy." Many times she was mentioned alongside artists whose musical styles were completely different or with

people who didn't play instruments. The sexism continued on the radio where it was common practice for many stations to avoid playing songs by two female artists in a row for fear of turning male listeners off.

When Mas first started making music she was conscious of having people focus on her songs instead of her looks. She often dressed in an androgynous style, once comparing it to a mime during an interview. "You don't think about sex with a mime, you think about

the art." So when she was often compared in her early years to Bruce Springsteen, it initially was very flattering. It meant people were listening to the music rather than focusing on her gender.

"But after a while, it got out of hand," stated Mas. "It became impossible to escape it. I had never even seen him play at the time and I wasn't a fan then either. When I finally did see him play I was so afraid to tell people because they'd say, 'See, you're imitating him.' It got so bad I re-



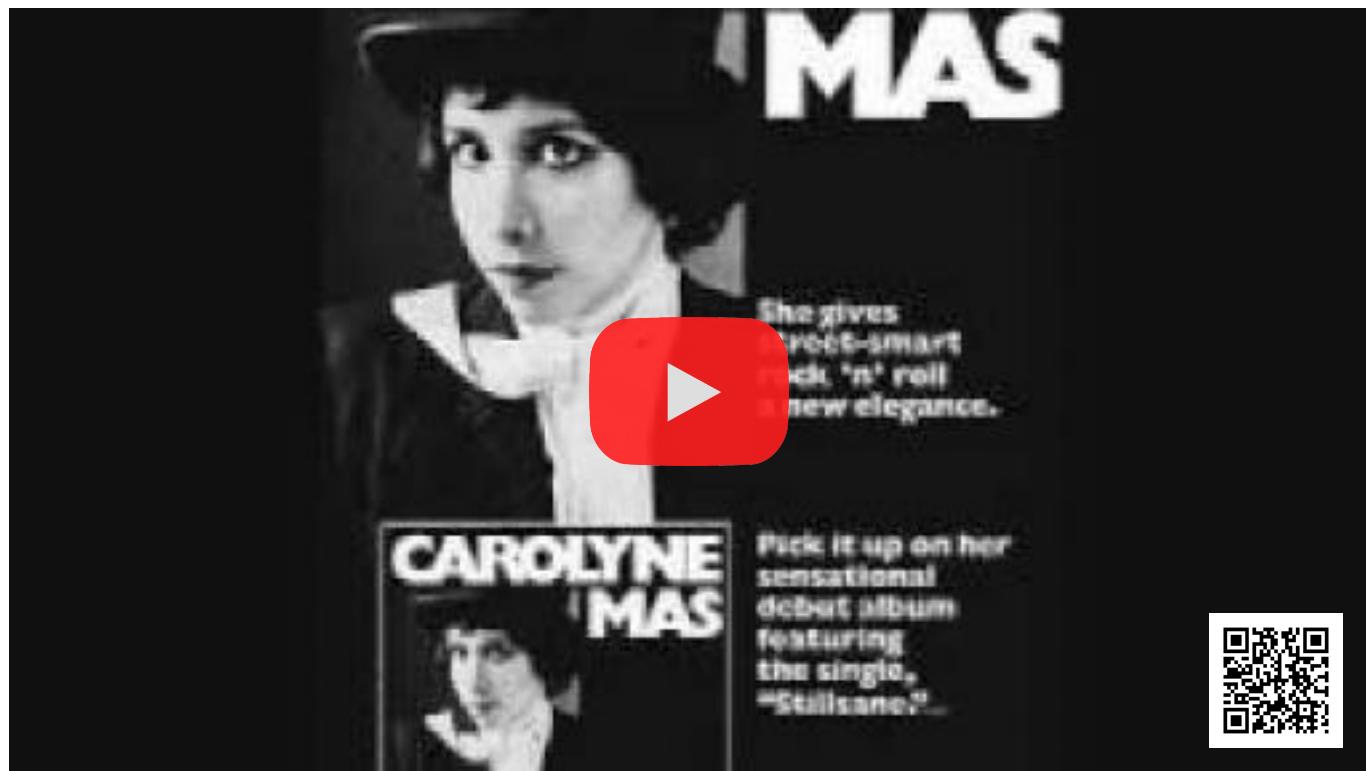
Watch Carolyne Mas perform "Come Together"

member being at a radio station in Paris, France and my husband at the time was with me. The interview lasted all of five minutes. The first question the guy asked was something about Bruce and then he said, 'Is it true your sax player's initials are CC like Clarence Clemmons? And is it true your guitar player is Jon Landau's brother?' My husband leaned over and said, 'Let's get out of here, he's cueing up the Mitch Ryder medley!'"

Nevertheless, she still had to battle image issues - even from

female writers. Mas never forgot a piece in the Village Voice that was published under the title "They're cute, but can they sing?" which mortified her by wondering if she was still cute after the writer noticed a tiny roll of fat over her waistband.

"My manager was furious with me," recalled Mas. "I was like I guess I can't eat anymore. I'll just purge every meal. Then it became a habit. It was a terrible thing to go through, but it's not uncommon. Women are under tremen-



Listen to “Snow” by Carolyne Mas



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dous pressure; the camera adds weight so if you're going to be photographed you have to be skinny. It was so hard to stop and I know I messed up my body in many ways. It was very hard to recover from and there are things I'm still recovering from because I did it for so long."

The night she got stabbed... nine times

Few artists have ever gone through an incident like Mas had one night in the apartment she was renting along the Jersey Shore in January 1986.

It was about one week after Mas had performed at The Stone Pony as part of a benefit to help workers affected by the closing of the 3M plant in Freehold. While she was sleeping, someone broke into her room, stabbing her nine times and slitting her throat. The person reportedly stole just two items - her Telecaster guitar and

her trademark hat. Somehow - and she's still unsure how she did it - she not only continued performing live, but did a show one week later, just days after leaving the hospital.

"I guess when you're young and something like that happens to you there's a part of you that's living in denial as a way of protecting yourself," explained Mas. "For example, to this day, I don't remember anything about it. I remember going to bed and I remember a knock on the internal door of the house. It was a house that people would rent for the summer and so you had a lot of yuppie students and such. I was living in the landlord's apartment at the time. He and his father would come weekends to do work on the house. Thankfully, he was there that night and sleeping on a sofa in the living room. He heard something - God knows what he heard - and knocked at

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the door. That was the first conscious moment that I remember.

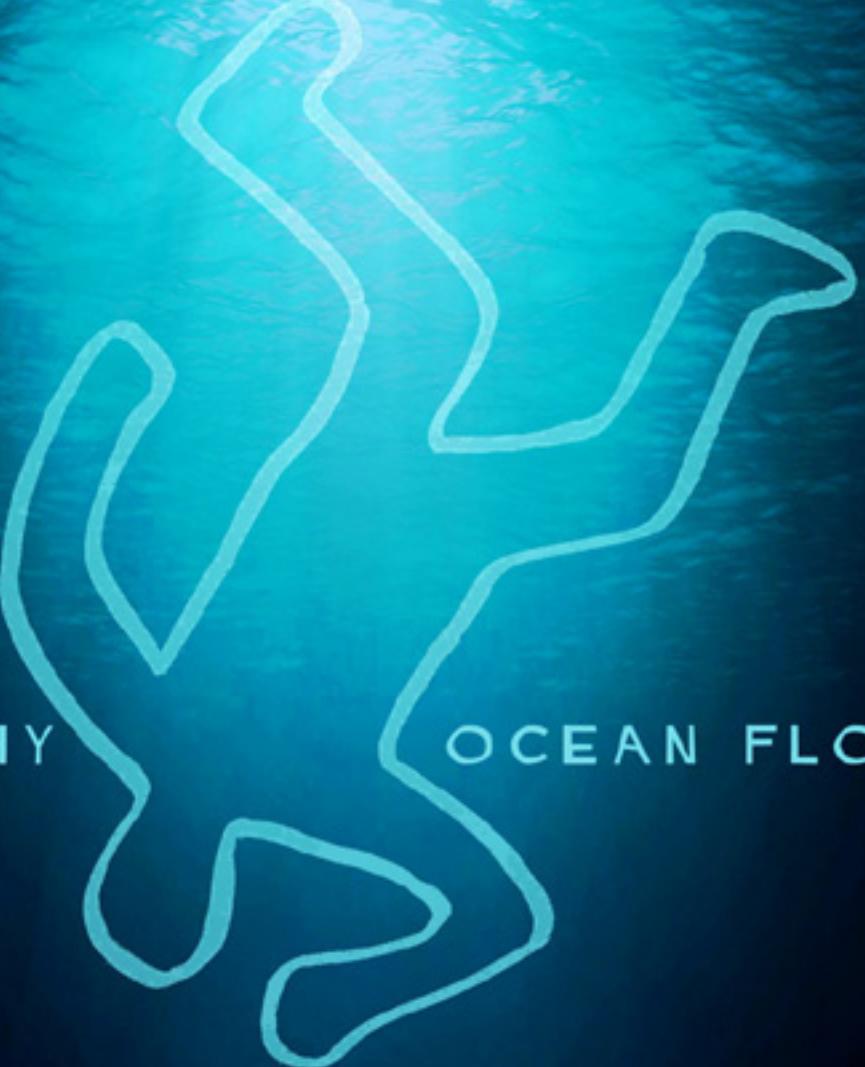
"I remember looking at the door, hearing somebody knock, and crawling to unlock the bolt lock," continued Mas. "Then I remember him saying, 'Who did this to you?' And I remember the chest tube, it's kind of hard to forget that. I don't remember anything else. I think that same sort of denial you have that allows you to function sort of allowed me to function and keep playing because it was all I was thinking about. My parents

said when they got there from Morristown, I was talking about canceling rehearsal. All I was thinking about was music - that's what got me through it."

Mas had to blow into a tube everyday to try to raise a ball up the tube in an effort to exercise her lungs and help them repair. Doctors told her it was a miracle that she could breathe effectively within a few days. She was well enough to practice the Thursday after the stabbing and play a concert the next day.



Listen to “In The Rain” by Carolyne Mas



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She does admit having some scary moments down the road though like the time a strange looking guy came up to her after an outdoor show she did for WDHA. The guy had thick glasses she describes as the kind psycho killers in movies often have, worn an army jacket, and just seemed a bit off to her.

"I remember at that point actually feeling panic, real panic, because I didn't know," added Mas. "It was very hard for the next few years because I always didn't know who stabbed me. The police at the time

would turn their attention to one friend and then to another friend, so at some point I became terrified at people I knew. And then suddenly they weren't a suspect but my friendship had been damaged. They even suspected the guy who found me. He was so angry that I would suspect him when he saved me, but they thought maybe he did it so he could save me. It was crazy. It was very hard to not be suspicious of people and that's probably one of the reasons I moved back to New York City because I felt safer there."



Watch Carolyne Mas perform “Midnight Confessions”

A second act and a happy ending

Thankfully, her story does have a happy ending. In May, she graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University (ASU) with a Bachelor of Science in Integrative Health and is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Medical Nutrition at ASU. She's got a blog called "Getting Older and Getting Better: Aging Well" which allows her to share some of the knowledge she's acquired from higher learning.

"I want to be able to help the

people that are my age," explained Mas. "I see so many people on Facebook being sick and struggling. They're not getting answers from doctors or not getting better. It seems to be assumed when you're a certain age that things are automatically going to fall apart as if your body was not designed to last throughout your entire life. I started this blog to share the things I've learned in college so maybe people don't have to suffer - that they know they have choices available."



Listen to "Crying" by Carolyne Mas

Her plans also involve the 38-acre parcel of land she has in Pearce, Arizona where she largely lives off the grid thanks to a solar home. After years of tax lien trouble, the property will be in the clear in August. That will allow her to move on to an idea she's had for a while. A friend of hers works with a veterans group called HomeFront Rising and Mas wants to turn her property into a place where veterans can live in tiny, solar homes and grow crops that don't require much water. In addition, she wants to convert part of her home into

a common area where she could teach cooking, wellness classes, and maybe even have concerts that are streamed on the internet. She gets excited thinking about the possibilities that could help veterans from drum therapy to meditation to yoga.

The project would also provide meaningful work for retired musicians like herself, who still have much to contribute to the world. It's always nice when a story has a happy ending. For Mas, it's not so much as a happy ending, but a new beginning. ♦



Watch Carolyne Mas perform “Sittin’ in the Dark”

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Makin Waves

by Bob Makin

Record Roundup with Reality Suite, Christine Mitchell, and Sunny Gang

For 10 years, childhood friends Brian King (drums), Antonio Valenti (bass) and Joe Padula (guitars) have been slugging it out in the local music scene as the three founding members of the North Haledon-based **Reality Suite**.

Their hard work and fierce determination have paid off. With Kimmii Heart, the melodic hard-rock band's adored lead vocalist since

2013, Reality Suite have released their international debut for the Denmark label Lions Pride Music.

The 12-track "Awaken (Deluxe)" features four great new songs added to the heralded self-released five-song 2018 EP, "Awaken." There are also three bonus tracks, including an unplugged version of the EP track "Grave," as well as radio edits of two new songs.

They are the LP's first single and video, "Kiss the Ring," a fun but furious refusal to conform within an abusive relationship, and the likely next single, "Wrong with Me," a self-examining survival saga of a fool in toxic love featuring great gang backing vocals.

The sassy "Kiss the Ring" is the Makin Waves Song of the Week, which can be heard four times daily at AsburyMusic.com, 6:45 p.m. on Friday and Monday on the station's "Radio Jersey" show, and at Makin Waves' Spotify & You-

Tube playlists. "Kiss the Ring" also can be enjoyed as one of the year's best videos by a Jersey band with Kimmii stepping into the ring at Savage Boxing & Fitness in Hackensack for a fun mix of beauty and beast infectiously lensed by Alex Kouvatsos of Blackwolf Imaging.

Co-produced with the band by hard-rock helmsman Mike Ferretti (Sevendust, Saliva) and pop/R&B producer Earl Cohen (Lady Gaga, Jessica Simpson, Pink), the LP version of "Awaken" also features the



Watch the video for “Kiss The Ring” by Reality Suite

new tunes:

- “Blame It on Angels,” a tale of redemption that’s as beautiful as it is exciting, especially Kimmii’s soaring vocal and Joe’s squawking guitar
- “Bury Me Alive,” poppy hard rock along the lines of Bon Jovi and Def Leppard but with better vocals and a particularly strong drum performance by Brian, all of which has been captured in the band’s latest fun video.

Their first full-length since the internationally acclaimed 2015 self-

produced effort, “Skinn,” Reality Suite’s latest collection of power chords and power vocals also features the “Awaken” EP tracks:

- “Live Now Forever,” a Randy Rhodes-like guitar scorchер balanced out by strong vocal harmonies.
- “Cut, Burn, Bruise,” a spirited salute to Brian’s late mother within a tug-of-war of love
- “Dead to Me,” a rockin’ stomp in which Kimmii takes on the role of Mafia Princess, while another fun gang backing vocal adds to



Watch the video for “Bury Me Alive” by Reality Suite



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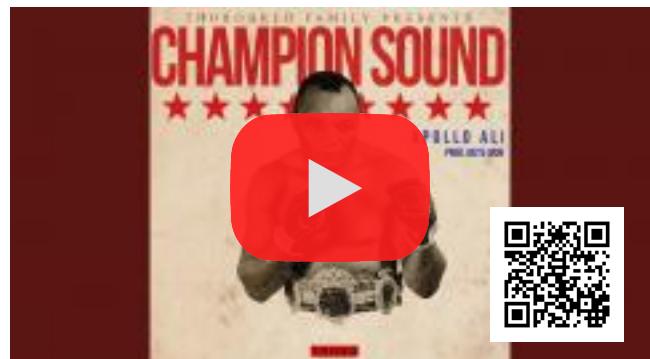
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the punch to the vengeful tale

• “Lust,” one of the strongest vocal turns on a tune about obsession.

Throughout the album, I like the way Kimmii’s vox goes from angelically sweet to witchy snarl within a verse; Joe’s guitars solos soar and explode, and the machine-gun rhythms of Antonio and Brian make it sound as if there’s a double-bass drum on some tracks. Check it out live when Reality Suite play Aug. 24 at The Chubby Pickle in Highlands; Aug. 30, Crossroads, Garwood with Centennials and Circle of Grief, and Oct. 11, Revolution Music Hall in Long Island.

Christine Mitchell makes folk and roots music that recalls ‘60s song-

stresses Joan Baez and Judy Collins. A beautiful voice tells easily relatable tales about relationships and dreams also within a setting of country gospel, jazz and good ol’ rock ‘n’ roll.

Christine’s five-song debut EP, “Table for Two,” opens with the title track, a sweet, sunny Colbie Caillat-like country-rockin’ slice-of-life that explores the mystery, anticipation and hopefulness of love. “Table for Two” is the Makin Waves Song of the Week, which you can enjoy four times daily at AsburyMusic.com, as well on Makin Waves’ Spotify and YouTube playlists.

I also love, love, love, “Not Lookin’ Back,” a country gospel-flavored look at a woman who refuses to be duped by a player.

Fans of Collins and Baez, as well as Joni Mitchell, may most appreciate the pretty pleading of "White Paint," which structurally recalls such folk songs as "If I Had a Hammer" and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," and lyrically resembles Kris Kristofferson's "Help Me Make It through the Night."

The lovely, spirited vocal turn of "All We Can Do" offers hope in an age when it's vanishing rapidly. While it's not as soulful as Curtis Mayfield's "Keep on Pushin'" or Al Green's "Keep on Pushing Love," this great track has a similar sentiment, plus a gorgeous lap steel contribution from Chris Colon of Levy and the Oaks.

The closing jazzy sass of "What's in It for Me?" offers the tale of a lass who comes to her senses and

exits a dead-end relationship with a two-timer who can't settle down. "What's in It for Me?" sports one of my favorite verses on the EP: "But it's time to admit that there's nothing in it for me, baby. There's nothing in it for me because I need a man who won't waste my time, and when I'm with him, I can call him mine. It's been nice. It's been real fun, but a girl needs to know when it's time to run."

"Table for Two" was produced by brothers Matt and Chris Dumbrow at Matt's Oceanport-based Firehouse Studio, where he also recorded, mixed and mastered. Christine has a dynamite all-star band backing her on the record. In addition to Colon and Chris Dumbrow of The Burns on bass/guitar/mandolin, there are Sophisticated



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Gentleman Owen Flanagan, drums/percussion; Gabe Sanderson, Matt Dubrow & the Captives, keyboards/guitar; Riley Schiro, Cranston Dean Band, guitar; Avery Mandeville, backing vocals, and a horn section of trumpeter David Myles Long and trombonist Andrew Ludwig. Some of them also will back her on a tour to be announced soon. In the meantime, they'll play July 27 at The Chubby Pickle, Highlands.

After an almost two-year hiatus, Newark punk-rap foursome **Sunny Gang** is back with a new five-song EP, "American Carnage," their first release since the 2016 debut full-length, "Party Animal." Produced by former Hidden in Plain View guitarist Rob Freeman at Audio Pilot Studio in Boonton, the EP was written and recorded over the course of the break while the band's members transitioned from college life into the corporate world. The frustration that comes with joining the ranks of the

working dead, putting their passions on hold in favor of sitting in cubicles and staring at the clock, has served as the main source of inspiration for the EP.

The theme of the five-track middle finger to corporate life and the status quo kicks right off with the opening "Push to Start," the Makin Waves Song of the Week at AsburyMusic.com, as well on Makin Waves' Spotify and YouTube playlists. The second verse of "Push to Start" are some of the strongest lyrics I've heard so far this year

from a Jersey band: "They said I need me a career, put a Bluetooth in my ear, cut my hair, buy a suit and be Employee of the Year. Happy hour with the bros, gotta go and crack a beer. Feelin' like I'm Patrick Bateman, make 'em all just disappear. They don't care about your dreams, and they hope that you ain't woke. Yeah, they praise if you're rich and abuse you if you're broke. It's a joke! Write your resume and fax it to the boss. Human capital, expandable, a factor of the cost. Operating at a loss, some-



Listen to "Push to Start" by Sunny Gang

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Photo by Anthony Vito Cosentino



thing they cannot accept. Either you live your life in debt or you work until your death. This is music for the deaf. Tie a noose around your neck. Hold onto what you got cuz you can lose it in a sec."

Wow!

Now, boys and girls, this is why Uncle Bobby always says, "Network, network, network" and "Brand, brand, brand," so that you make the American Dream come true with your music rather than have to live this American Nightmare. Eventually, this nightmare

will lead us to a real-life *Hunger Games* if we don't stand up and do something about it! And that's just how I feel about the first track on "American Carnage."

Then there's the title track, which, like much of the EP, sounds like *Rage against the Machine* with a menacing message delivered on a bed of fat, tight rhythms via scorching guitars. Yet, while guitarist Chris Bacchus continues to demonstrate killer chops and bassist Joe Sap and drummer Marshal provide the musical wave on

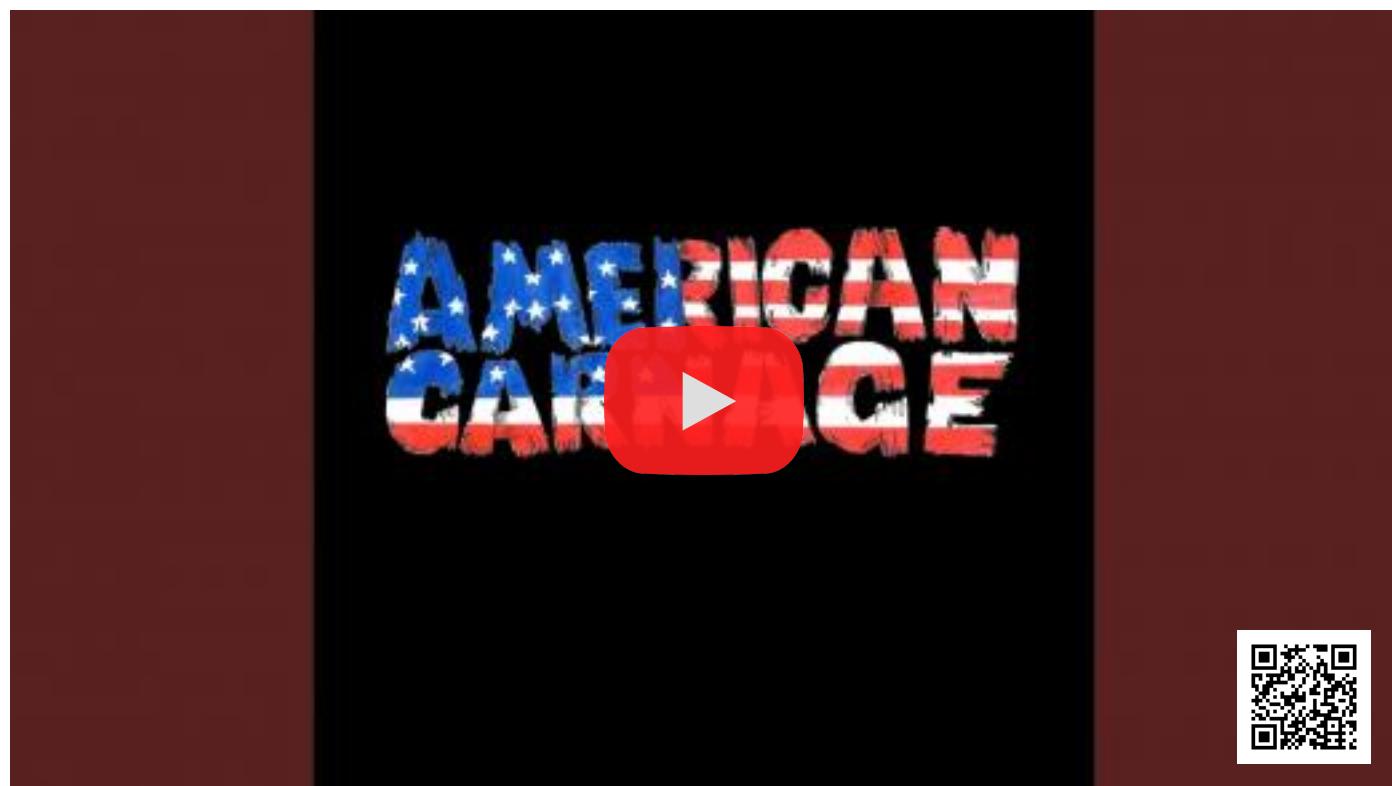


Listen to "American Carnage" by Sunny Gang

which he can surf, the centerpiece of "American Carnage," both the song and the entire EP, are the lyrics of rapper Nate Hitchcock. With the title track, Nate shares how money doesn't provide happiness, especially if you have to work yourself to death to maintain a lifestyle you can't afford, not only financially, but emotionally and spiritually. Nate has some great lines on this tune too: "I got a \$1 million home. It was worth \$2 million when I bought it. I got a black card in my wallet burning holes

in all my pockets ... I got a race horse in my barn. I pay some guy to clean his shit. I hate my fucking job, but I can't afford to quit!"

"Das Kapital" is critical of the failing capitalist system in light of the happiness that can be found in socialist countries, such as Denmark, Norway, Australia and Canada. "Turbo Pecker or the Wreck of The S.S. McNasty" examines loyalty: "I see clouds on the horizon. I can feel the storm approaching. If I catch you jumpin' ship, I might leave you in the ocean," while also



Listen to "American Carnage" by Sunny Gang

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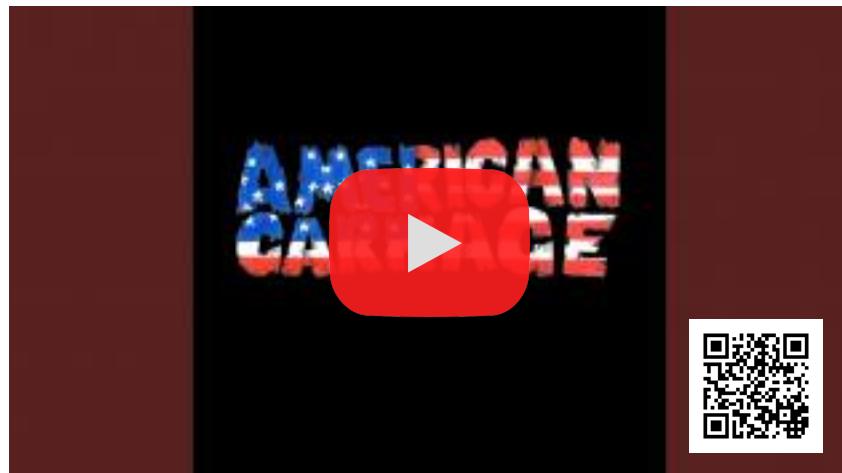
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making a statement about increasing wage discrepancy: "It's lonely at the top and claustrophobic at the bottom." Closing this impressive assault on the senses, soul and mind is the Black Sabbath-like "Death Wish," a morbid affair with a fat bottom that would make Tony Iommi proud.

You also can catch the fierce foursome this summer at Mad Liberation Festival in the Pine Barrens of Hammonton for their third year



Bob Makin is the reporter for [Home News & Tribune](#) and a former managing editor of The Aquarian Weekly, which launched this column in 1988. Contact him [via email](#) and like Makin Waves on [Facebook](#).



Listen to “Das Kapital” by Sunny Gang

running. Mad Lib will take place the first weekend in August with nonstop music, arts and camping, including a headlining set by New Brunswick indie rockers Scream-ing Females.

Hopefully, Sunny Gang will be able to stay out of those cubicles long enough to announce more shows for the fall. In the meantime, check out "American Carnage." It's well worth your time. ♦

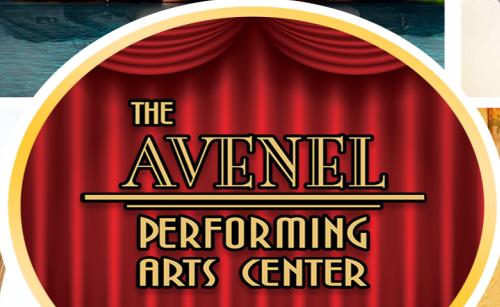
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