The Summer Arts Scene, on Stage and Screen (and Then Some)

By Victoria Lassonde



Mark your calendar for these upcoming opportunities to take in the fine and performing arts throughout the county.

For the month of June, **Pine Shores Art Association** in Manahawkin features the work of artist Ada Barber, whose painting "Autumn Beach" was included in the coffee table art book, *Long Beach Island Rhapsody: Paintings of the Island by Sixty Contemporary Artists.* Barber is a retired teacher and counselor who paints watercolor and acrylic scenes of the Jersey Shore and the Florida Keys. She exhibits in local libraries and galleries and at the Cheshire Cat in Chatsworth, and she is a teacher in the Stafford Township Education Foundation's annual Young at Art program.

Pine Shores is a nonprofit, volunteer-run art organization "that provides educational opportunities for artistic, cultural and social development." Instruction is provided by qualified artists in various art media to artists of all skill levels from beginner to professional. The association also helps members learn how and where to exhibit their work.

Visit the gallery (admission is free) on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 3 p.m.

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Hundreds of moviemakers and movie lovers took part in last year's inaugural **Lighthouse International Film Festival** at nine venues throughout Long Beach Island, and this year's "sequel," scheduled for the weekend of June 4, 5 and 6, is shaping up to be another surefire winner.

The festival, a nonprofit entity, brought in state-of-the-art sound and visual equipment to showcase a wide selection of dozens of films, many from other such prestigious festivals as Cannes, Sundance, New York Surf, Tribeca and South by Southwest Film Festivals. The four-day festival was complete with a star-studded red carpet event on opening night, Q&A sessions, networking opportunities, and awards given out to the best feature, documentary and narrative or documentary short by a jury of film critics and industry professionals.

This year's event will be three days filled with independent films, features and shorts, documentaries, family films and student works, in honor of its namesake, the historic Barnegat Lighthouse.

Last year, Festival Director Charlie Prince said the planning for the 2010 festival would begin just days after the 2009 event ended. After the first event proved to be such a rousing success, Prince was buoyed by the enthusiasm of the participants and audiences.

"You can't do something like this without the support of the community," he said. Prince is an entertainment attorney by trade, who dreamed and talked of organizing a film festival for many years before making the dream a reality.

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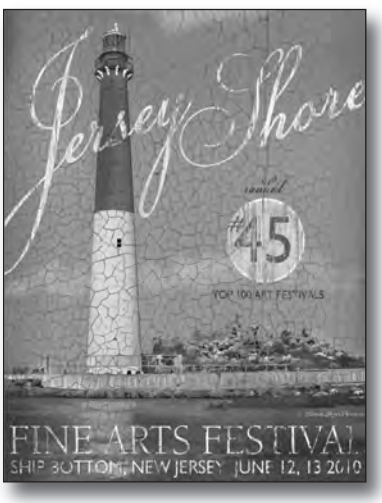
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One of his main goals from the start was to expose first-time visitors to the beautiful setting of LBI and to build the film culture there.

As part of its mission, "The festival also seeks to serve the community by presenting unique programs that inspire, engage and challenge a diverse audience through the art of film."

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Another large-scale event gearing up for its second go-'round after a successful debut last year, is the **Jersey Shore Fine Arts Festival,** taking place June 12 and 13 at the Ethel A. Jacobsen Elementary School in Surf City, presented by the Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce's Destination Marketing Organization. By April, nearly 100 exhibitors had already signed up to exhibit and sell works in a wide range of media including clay, fiber, wood, glass, jewelry, leather, metal, painting, photography and sculpture.



The festival runs in conjunction with the Chamber's Art and Leisure Weekend, in which local restaurants participate by creating special three-course prix fixe meals in honor of fine art and artists.

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For theater buffs, opportunities abound.

Surflight Theatre in Beach Haven presents five musical gems this summer; for dates and show times, visit surflight.org.



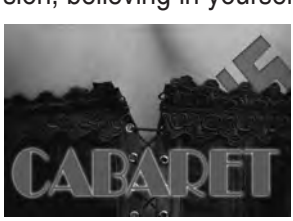
"On Your Toes," which made its groundbreaking Broadway debut in 1936, is a "riotous romantic romp" that combines gangsters, vaudeville and the Russian Ballet.

Next up is "The Drowsy Chaperone," a musical that pays homage to the silly, predictable gems of the golden age of musical theater. Surflight describes it as a "sequin-drenched lollapalooza of a show, from the time when stars had charisma, Broadway had romance and Rodgers had Hart."

Then comes "42nd Street," a Cinderella tale about a dewy-eyed, would-be starlet from Middle America who, through a series of lucky coincidences, gets the opportunity of a lifetime to become a leading lady.



"High School Musical" is a family-friendly musical that tells the story of high schoolers struggling with issues of popularity, first love and the value of friends and family. Running throughout are uplifting themes such as the importance of self-expression, believing in yourself and following your dreams.



The provocative and wildly entertaining "Cabaret" has been called a "darkly comic masterpiece" about an American in pre-Nazi Germany finding himself increasingly tempted by the nightclub life and its characters.

Our Gang Players presents Gershwin's boy-meets-girl tale "Crazy for You" at the Stafford Township Arts Center in June and "Thoroughly Modern Millie" in August. Check out ourgang.org for details.

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Exit 82 Theatre Company is also putting on a production of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" at Toms River High School North, July 29 through August 1. "Millie" is a tap-dancing musical comedy set in 1920s New York City. For details and tickets, take the information superhighway to exit82theatre.com.

The Guild Theatreworks, formerly known as the Brick Players, presents a dramatic reading of Neil Simon's "The Prisoner of Second Avenue" on Aug. 25 at the Bob Anstett Brick Cultural Arts Center. Admission is free. Visit guildtheatreworks.org for more information.