

# BACKSTAGE

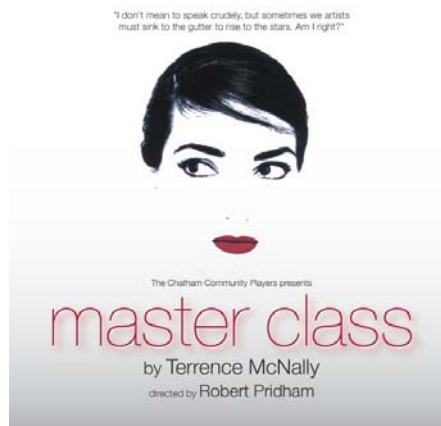
*Chatham Community Players Newsletter*

February, 2006

**COMING FEB. 17**

**“MASTER CLASS” by TERRENCE McNALLY**

The Chatham Community Players invites you to enter the world of Maria Callas, the legendary opera diva, who in this drama leads a master class for three unsuspecting students in a fascinating exploration of the obsessive drive—and the price paid—for artistic perfection. **Robert Pridham** is our Director. Audiences remember his work for us on past productions such as “*How I Learned to Drive*,” “*Side Man*,” and “*Proof*.” Pridham is excited to direct “*Master Class*,” and says, “The intimate nature of the Chatham Playhouse



gives us a chance to bring Callas' own signature brand of fire right into the audience. You miss nothing—not the glorious music, the wicked sense of humor, the fantastic flashback moments to the stage of La Scala—but watch out! La Divina has eyes in the back of her head, and you never know what she'll say.”

Our musical director, **Constantine Kitsopoulos**, was the musical director and principal conductor of Baz Luhrmann's production of Puccini's “*La Boheme*,” a hit in its recent Broadway season. He's also conducted in many opera venues, including New York City Opera staff, and was music director of Matthew Bourne's “*Swan Lake*,” and “*Dracula*.” Pridham commented, “Having Constantine join us for this production has given our actors a terrific opportunity to explore the history and complexity of the music they sing in the show. His vast knowledge of different musical styles enhances our rehearsal process and his ability to draw out the particular strengths of each performer has helped them to gain a sense of the power and attraction of opera.”

Playing Maria Callas is **Marguerite Wurtz** of New Providence. The three students are portrayed by **Kathryn Davis** of Mendham as Sophie; **Michelle Grobert** of Chatham as Sharon; and **Manoj Raghunandan** of Succasunna

as Tony, plus **Tony LaRusso** of Madison as the Stagehand, and **Constantine Kitsopoulos** as Manny.

Performance dates are February 17, 18, 24, and 25, and March 3 and 4, at 8 p.m., and February 26 and March 4 at 3 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.chathamplayers.org/tickets.htm](http://www.chathamplayers.org/tickets.htm) or by calling 973-635-7363. Prices are \$15 for adults and \$10 for youth/senior. Box Office hours: 7-8:30 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday; 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Saturday. The Playhouse is at 23 North Passaic Avenue, Chatham.

## ***“PIPPIN”* AUDITIONS ON FEBRUARY 21 & 22**

Auditions for our May musical, *“Pippin,”* by Steven Schwartz, will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, and Wednesday, February 22, at The Playhouse, 23 North Passaic Avenue, Chatham. Directed by **Bob Cline**, who led our production of *“Into the Woods”* last spring, and previously helmed *“To Kill a Mockingbird”* and Eric Johnston (*Spitfire Grill*) is the Musical Director, show dates run weekends May 5 through May 20. We have an Open Casting Policy: all roles are open, none pre-cast, all are welcome to audition; questions will be answered by Kristin Barber at 732-208-4184 or e-mail [casting@chathamplayers.org](mailto:casting@chathamplayers.org). Auditioners should be prepared to sing 16-32 bars of a song in the style of the show, or from the show (accompanist is provided), and should be prepared to move well.



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For the Ensemble, we're seeking dancer/singers and singer/dancers for a variety of ethnicities, body types, and ages; all will have an opportunity to be showcased.

**Roles:** PIPPIN – tenor or high baritone with strong falsetto, somewhere between 18 and 30. He's the firstborn son, heir to the throne, who seeks knowledge, longs to find a purpose in life; does not want to waste life with ordinary, commonplace pursuits; needs to be strong mover if not a dancer; any ethnicity.

LEADING PLAYER – tenor or baritone with strong falsetto; any age, sex, ethnicity; excellent mover & nearly a showman/woman; good narration skills, capable of creating good rapport with audience; strong vocals need-ed. He navigates Pippin through his journey by playing guardian angel and devil's advocate at the same time.

CHARLES – baritone, a player playing Pippin's father; virile king, has more presence than education.

LEWIS – baritone or tenor, age 18-30; player playing Pippin's half-brother, super vain mamma's boy; addicted to the physical.

FASTRADA – player playing Pippin's stepmother; alto or mezzo; devious, crafty, cunning, untrustworthy; feels sexy, needs attention from men, should have some dance experience.

BERTHE – player playing Pippin’s grandmother; alto/mezzo character singer; warm, strong, has seen enough to know what life is all about and not afraid to share it.

CATHERINE – age 18-30, alto/belter. Should be effortlessly beautiful, honest, has simple dreams and plans, is a mother; may be in for more than she bargained for—Pippin’s love.

THEO – player playing Catherine’s son; probably between 8-12 years old; must be able to sing; dancing a plus but not required; lovable boy who likes animals, seeks father figure.

## **HIGH SCHOOL CCP INTERNS WIN STATE AWARDS**

**Joshua Dick** (with **Alex McCarthy**) won “Best Improvisational Pair,” and **Mike**



**McFadden** won “Best Comedic Monologue,” in the Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey 2006 high school theater competition recently held. Both Joshua and Mike were seen in last month’s “*Peter vs. the Wolf*” Fantasy Theater production in our Playhouse. Joshua has also served as assistant stage manager for our production of “*Brighton Beach Memoirs*” in October, and played Ghost of Christmas future in our December “*A Christmas Carol*.” Congratulations to both

these young men.

## **COUNCIL POSITION OPEN:**

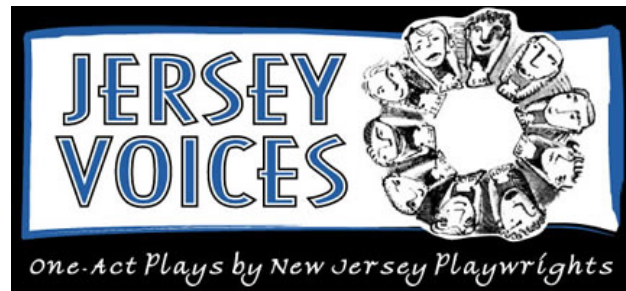
Our Voice-mail Coordinator Martha Ferko is leaving us to relocate in Boston! She also worked on Tickets and Subscriptions, and we will miss her. If you’re interested in an at-home job, and like to talk on the phone, then give Bob Denmark a call (973-952-0052) to discuss the details. No special equipment is needed.



## **MANY GATHER FOR DECEMBER’S HOLIDAY PARTY**

This past Holiday Party at the Playhouse attracted a large group of current Players and several that have been busy raising a family. The food was delicious, conversations were plentiful and everyone left filled with the Holiday Spirit.

## **“JERSEY VOICES” SEEKS SCRIPTS**



Wanted: one-act plays, short musicals, or dance pieces—original works by New Jersey authors, for Jersey Voices' 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Production to be performed July 28-29 and August 4-5 in our Playhouse. Last year's Voices produced six original pieces, selected from more than 100 submitted works, and was a sold-out run. Plays may be of any genre, style, and length, up to 20 minutes running time, and will be accepted through March 31, 2006. Mail submissions to Jersey Voices, c/o CCP, P. O. Box No. 234, Chatham NJ 07928. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of materials. For more information, call 973-506-4139, or go to our website, [www.chathamplayers.org](http://www.chathamplayers.org).

### **HERE AND THERE...**

...performing in Playhouse Association of Summit's "*The Lion In Winter*," directed by **Joann Scanlon** (who's directed and acted for us) are **Mike King** (in our "*Fiddler...*," "*...Carol*," and "*Into the Woods*"), **Megan Guinan** ("*Enchanted April*"), **Matt McCarthy** ("*Side Man*" & "*Proof*"), **Rick Holloway** ("*Mid-summer...*"), and **Chess Lankford** ("*...Mockingbird*" & "*Jersey Voices*")...**Jess Maschi** ("*Desperate Hours*") and **David Neal** ("*Jersey Voices*") star in "*Rounding Third*" at Villagers Theatre, Somerset...**Roy Pancirov** (our Vice-president), and **Peter Horn** ("*Pride & Prejudice*," "*Rumors*") are performing in "*On Golden Pond*" for Florham Park Players, directed by **Rose Pancirov** ("*Jersey Voices*")... **Gayle Boepple** (many musicals and melodramas for CCP) is performing in "*Daughters of the Lone Star State*," Barn Theatre, Montville (Gayle has also directed many shows in the area)...**Cody Dalton** ("*Enchanted April*," "*Brighton Beach Memoirs*") and **Voltaire Balderrama** ("*...Carol*") are starring in "*Fuddy Meers*" at Nutley Little Theatre...**Frank Malvasi** ("*Rumors*") with **Bruce McCandless** ("*A Little Night Music*") and **Desiree Caro** ("*Into the Woods*") star in fourth Wall Theatre's "*Kiss of the Spider Woman*"...theater is alive and well in New Jersey!

### **~ In Memoriam – Sarah J. Sullivan ~**

We will miss Sally, long-time backstage worker and CCP "Angel"