FINE ARTS

Arts center opening celebrates West Windsor of bygone days

Community Collage in **West Windsor**

When: Saturday, September 25, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Where: 962 Alexander Road, West Windsor. Free event parking, Wallace Road train station permit lot only. Contact: (609) 919-1982, email (info@westwindsorarts.org) online at (westwindsorarts center.org)

By Janet Purcell SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

here is probably nothing more thrilling than to be present at a birth — unless maybe it's a rebirth. All of us will have the opportunity not only to witness, but to be part of such an event tomorrow when the West Windsor of years past will come alive again.

Strolling musicians, ribbon dancers, a drum circle, and neighboring arts organizations will be at the newly renovated firehouse to celebrate the grand opening of the West Windsor Arts Center with a block party at which all are welcome. There will be hands-on art activities for the whole family and plenty of music and dancing.

An art exhibit, juried by Tricia Fagan, will fill the walls of the new gallery space. Called a "Community Collage," all the works selected by Fagan relate to the West Windsor community as it is now and as it once was.

In "West Windsor Then and Now," Henry Innes MacAdam wrote about Alexander Lawrence Berrien who, in 1924, "had acquired enough property south of Princeton Junction station to subdivide it into 114 lots." He said, "Berrien City boomed in the last years of prosperity before the Crash of 1929, and in 1926 the Berrien City Fire Company was formed as a direct response to the rapid expansion." The firehouse that is now home to the West Windsor Arts Center was built in 1931.



Renee Kumar's watercolor "Charmed Lives" was inspired by an encounter with a farmer driving his tractor on a busy highway on his way to flow his fields.

"A Dream Come True," a painting of the building by Amy Frankel, who is on the center's board of directors, is part of the exhibit. "You could not get anything more



Kumar's watercolor/collage "Roundabouts and Long Agos" businesses that once made up West Windsor's "downtown" along Route

West Windsor and West Windsor Arts Center than that, so I decided to go over and do something on it," she says. "The architecture is very West Windsor because it sits in the older section of

town and is the vintage of the surrounding houses. It doesn't have a long driveway, and the small parking lot makes it close to neighbors and that gives it a good cluster feel. The way the building is on the top, like a step ladder, it makes me feel like I'm stepping into time."

Fagan, a West Windsor resident, selected works by 29 artists and says she was very moved by a number of the pieces submitted. "Some (artists) really embraced the philosophy of the show and had fun with it," she says. "You could tell they were thinking deeply about the West Windsor that I loveabout its past and present and how it's connected to the future."

Renee Kumar is exhibiting two paintings that she says are symbolic. "Charmed Lives" is a watercolor and collage inspired by a chance meeting she had while

biking on a local road. "(I) ran into my friend Ron driving along on his tractor, grandson on his lap, heading over to plow fields. He looked regal in an ironic sort of way. I was moved by the incongruity of this image: high-end cars whizzing by this slow moving tractor." She speaks of fields sold to developers and "vegetables now replaced by large houses."

Also on display is Kumar's watercolor/collage,

"Roundabouts and Long Agos," which includes former businesses that made up West Windsor's "downtown" along Route 571, but are now gone. In a style that is fresh and appealing, she lines up the Acme, which was pulled down two years ago; the Asian restaurant, BYOB, now closed; and Lick-It, a drive-through ice cream store that had been a community gathering place but is now closed.

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Art History Science

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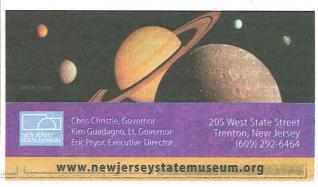
Fall 2010

Saturday and Sunday

One World, One Sky: 1 pm Ultimate Universe: 2 & 4 pm Stars: 3 pm

General Admission: \$5 per person







Thurs-Sat @ 8p Sun @ 3p

October 7-24

Tickets \$20-\$30 Call 609-392-0766 or visit PassageTheatre.org

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Trenton, NJ

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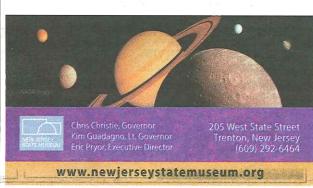
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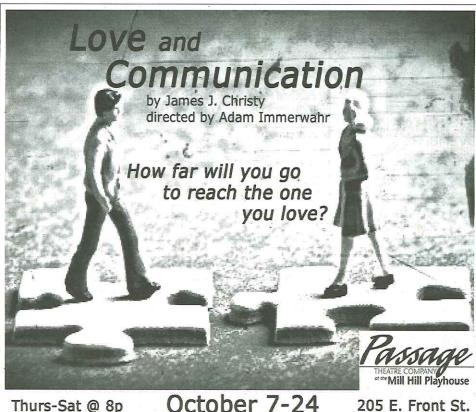
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