

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

New generation of art takes shape in Bellows Falls

Youth art show on Saturday

By Allison Teague
The Commons

BELLOWS FALLS—"I got bored ... then realized there's a lot of creative kids around here," said Nina Simoneaux, the idea person behind the one-day youth art exhibit being held at 33 Bridge St., from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 14.

Simoneaux, 18, of Langdon, N.H., a former Fall Mountain School student who will attend Pratt Institute in New York this fall, said that when she realized the number of youth in the area who had no place to showcase their work or come together as a group, she saw the exhibit as a natural outcome.

"They shouldn't have to wait [until they are established artists]. We can make our own community," Simoneaux said.

"There's not really any place to take life drawing classes or printmaking classes that aren't geared towards artists who've been doing their art for, like, 30 years. It can be extremely intimidating. At a special event like this, we can showcase our own work, and we wouldn't be

so intimidated," she said. "I'd like to see [someone] do this again, do more art shows [for youth] to encourage kids to be artistic," Simoneaux continued. "They should know that it doesn't have to be a solitary thing."

She doesn't know if anyone will pick up the torch after she leaves for school.

Caitlyn Brackenbury, a 19-year-old home-schooler, said she will work toward earning her GED over the next year before she heads to San Francisco to pursue hair-styling school.

"I'm passionate about hair," she said, smiling demurely. "It's like sculpting."

"She's good at it too," Simoneaux added.

Brackenbury's contribution to the art show will be a dress that employs used and emptied tea bags as material.

"I drink a lot of tea, and I didn't want to waste the paper," she explained. "The tea bags are a lot like fabric, and I love sewing."

"I'm not always doing art," she said. "But I like to have

■ SEE YOUTH ART, PAGE 10



Israeli films coming this month to Brattleboro and Dover. Above: *A Matter of Size*, which makes its Vermont debut. Left: *Mrs. Moskovitz and the Cats*. Inset: *Ruth*. Below: *Bruriah*.



Food + Film

By Joyce Marcel
The Commons

BRATTLEBORO—Four years ago, Shir HeHarim — which means "Song of the Mountains" and is the name of the synagogue of the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community — was looking for a fundraiser.

First they hit on the idea of showing Jewish films. Then they expanded the concept to Israeli films — films that are not necessarily written or directed by people who are Jewish.

Then they added food, and a festival was born.

"Being a Jewish organization, food is very important," said Shir HeHarim president Marty Cohn. "So we not only

list the menu in the program but include recipes as well for some of the Mid-Eastern fare."

This will be the community's fourth annual Israeli Film and Food Festival, and it features four award-winning films — two on Saturday evening, Aug. 21 at the Hooker-Dunham Theater in Brattleboro, and two different films on Sunday afternoon, Aug. 22, at the Mountain Park Cinema in West Dover.

The festival joins other established Jewish film festivals in Burlington and in Massachusetts' Pioneer Valley, as well as the Brattleboro area's own LGBTQ film festival and its Women's Film Festival.

"The idea was to showcase Israeli cinema as a way to introduce people to the vibrant industry that is flourishing in

Israel," Cohn said. "Also, coincidentally, it's a fundraiser."

The first year, "we got a couple of films and showed them just in West Dover. We sold out every seat at the Mountain Park Cinema — and that's about 200 seats. So in year two, we introduced a second day of the festival and brought it to Brattleboro," Cohn said.

"I'm proud to say that not only do we sell out every ticket, but we have people walking out saying, 'I'll see you next year.' It's become an event that people really look forward to," he added.

Ruth and *A Matter of Size* will be shown at the Hooker-Dunham Theater starting at 7 p.m.

■ SEE FILM FESTIVAL, PAGE 10

Festival celebrates Israeli cinema



A life drawing Nina Simoneaux, made in 2009 with graphite, ink and charcoal. Simoneaux, who is organizing a youth art show on Saturday, will attend Pratt Institute in New York in the fall.

Family album

Dysfunctional Family Jazz Band weaves stories of families and friends, love and loss, through poetry and music

By Jeff Potter
The Commons

GUILFORD—For a musical group that turns family conflict into identity and branding, the members of the Dysfunctional Family Jazz Band demonstrate some exceptional functionality.

The band, which has released its second CD, *Come Over*, features longtime area musician Patty Carpenter singing duets with her daughter, Melissa Shetler, 38, now of Brooklyn.

Shetler's father, Scott Shetler, complements the women's smooth, warm harmonies, accompanying them with tenor and baritone saxophone, clarinet, mandolin, clarinet and penny whistle.

He is also Carpenter's ex-husband.

A little awkward? Not really, Melissa Shetler says.

"People love it that Mom and Dad love each other even though they split up," she says brightly, noting that "sometimes people can love each other but not be able to live with each other."

And the family connections keep going.

Travis Light, 20, frequently performs with the rest of his family. He is Carpenter's son with her current husband, documentary filmmaker Charles Light, who serves as the album's executive producer.

Scott Shetler's wife, Jill Gross, and his cousin, Brooke Lundy, provide harmonies. Alan McCarthy, Melissa Shetler's husband, a jazz historian by day, helps with booking and has designed the band's logo.

When the band plays family

parties, people find the complicated, yet genial, family relationships comforting, Shetler says.

"We all have the goal of making music," she adds. "That makes us tolerate quirks."

Performing together can create some challenges, "sometimes in an eye-rolling way," she says. "Friends will come to a show and come up to me in the intermission and ask, 'Are you mad at your dad?'"

Even performing professionally, when it's family, "it's all out there," Shetler says — a quality her mother says "makes it very honest."

Writing life into poetry and song

About 40 years ago, Patty Carpenter and Scott Shetler — like so many young people caught up in the back-to-the-earth movement — came to one



Patty Carpenter, left, sings with ex-husband Scott Shetler and their daughter, Melissa Shetler, in the Dysfunctional Family Jazz Band, which has just released its first album of original music. The band will launch "Come Over," which integrates poetry by Guilford poet and longtime friend Verandah Porche, at a celebration Sunday that also will serve as a fundraiser for the Vermont Citizens Action Network.

of the communes in Guilford, the town where they first started making music.

She left for Oregon. She returned to Guilford. She moved to Greenfield. Now she's back in Guilford. Carpenter keeps returning to this place, both in real life and in the music that graces *Come Over*.

The songs chronicle love, the loss of a friend to suicide, Travis as the "babe on the hip," Melissa and Alan's anniversary — the moments of a family's life.

Shetler says when the songs, mostly written over a period of several years, were assembled chronologically, "musically,

they just happened to work."

Woven into the album's musical tapestry is poetry by Verandah Porche, Carpenter's friend since the commune years in the early 1970s, whom she describes as Melissa Shetler's "second mother."

As the album's liner notes

■ SEE FAMILY ALBUM, PAGE 10



Caitlyn Brackenbury displays her teabag camisole top and Nina Simoneaux shows a knapsack, their respective entries in the youth art show that Simoneaux has organized.

■ Youth art

something to do that is not studying or watching movies. "I like working with my hands," Brackenbury said. "When I'm done with this piece, I'll feel like I've really invested myself in it."

Simoneaux and Mariah Edson, co-producer of the art show, expect between 8 and 14 youth aged 17 to 20 to bring paintings, sculpture,

and poetry, handmade items like Brackenbury's dress and Simoneaux's knapsacks and artful long underwear. "We're just going to hang out together, and hopefully people will come see our work," Simoneaux said. "People can bring musical instruments too if they want. There will be music and we're going to have food to eat."

FROM SECTION FRONT

"In the spirit of a mini farmers' market, teenage artists from the area and beyond will show their work," Simoneaux wrote in the event's press release. The event will also include crafts, sculpture, paintings, weaving, clothes, poetry, and food. The show is open to the public and is appropriate for all ages.

■ Family album

say, the two friends "wrote their life into song" — a process that resulted in 12 tracks that marry the poetry and lyrics to music in a variety of genres, from jazz to reggae. The title song describes the chaos and anarchy of life in the number of communes in Guilford — and the cold — as well as the spirit of pooling resources and sharing. ("Sister, I've got a jar of peaches from the orchard, still sealed," Porche reads. "Let's make a meal of it. Come over.")

That same spirit went beyond the communes, says Shetler, who was born at Johnson Pasture. It came from the native Vermonters too, particularly when the idealistic sheen of country living wore off and young commune-dwellers had to learn how to build fires in their

woodstoves. They came over, too, so to speak, and helped them, Shetler says. "When people say they don't know what to make of the album, 'I get people to listen to it,' Carpenter says. 'I tell them to close their eyes and listen to the music, and I try to win them over that way.'"

Both mother and daughter now work full-time on their musical pursuits, which include various permutations of solo gigs and duets (varying in frequency from twice a month to three times a week), mostly in and around New York City. Father/ex Scott Shetler, who has found a lucrative niche performing on Martha's Vineyard in the summer months, completes the Dysfunctional Family Jazz Band when he can. When not performing, Carpenter has worked for years developing programs that bring music to senior citizens. Shetler has worked as an HIV educator and in theater.

Consequently, *Come Over*

is self-produced and self-marketed. "We're self-everything," says Shetler. "We're self-everything."

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■ Film festival

FROM SECTION FRONT

Having its Vermont premiere, *A Matter of Size* is an international award-winner that has Cohn especially excited. "It's been shown all over the world and has won numerous awards," said Cohn. "It's about these four Israelis who happen to be overweight. They've had problems all their life with being ridiculed, but they decide to learn to accept themselves by becoming Sumo wrestlers. So it is a comedy about a coming out, but of a different kind."

Ruth is the story of an adolescent girl who lives in the most dangerous place in Israel, where she must fight to interpret her faith in her own way. *Mrs. Moskowitz and the Cats* and *Bruriah* will be shown at the Mountain Park Cinema starting at 1 p.m.

Mrs. Moskowitz tells the story of a retired French teacher who wakes up in a hospital geriatric ward and is convinced that it must be a mistake. *Bruriah* portrays a woman's desire to assert her individuality and womanhood within the borders of the religious world.

At both venues, the doors will open a half-hour before the films begin. Raffle tickets

for prizes from local merchants will be offered, and traditional Israeli and Middle-Eastern desserts and snacks will be served during the intermission. Since the festival began, Cohn has been getting to know the people involved in the Israeli film industry. He started just by Googling the topic. "I let my fingers do the walking on my keyboard," he said. "I came up with directions to something called the Israeli Film Fund. Believe it or not, it was founded in 1979 by the Israeli government to promote the film industry. We're talking about a young country. The fund was established only 30 years after the country was founded. Now it's responsible for marketing Israeli films around the world."

Cohn said in 2004, 80,000 viewers watched Israeli feature films in cinemas around the world. "The numbers rise each year. Since then, over one million viewers around the world each year watch the films, which are coming into the mainstream of other countries," he said. Now that the festival is

established, producers send Cohn their films all year, hoping to be included. "It's been exciting for me, personally," he said. "Over the course of the year, they send me screeners to select what we're going to be showing. So I get to see a lot of Israeli movies. This year, I got so many that I enlisted a committee. After our first pass, we narrowed it down to 12 movies. From that, we brought it down to the four that are going to be screened at this year's festival."

Festival-goers will also receive a program book with information about the Israeli film industry, reviews of the films — and the recipes. ■

IF YOU GO: Ordered in advance, tickets are \$18 for each day. Tickets purchased at the door are \$25 (if there are seats available). You can order tickets for either or both days by calling (802) 257-1959. Checks made out to BAFC can be mailed to P.O. Box 2353, Brattleboro. Tickets will either be mailed when payment is received or held at the door. For more information, visit www.bajvc.org/events/2010-08-film-festival.shtml



Samirah Evans



Charles Neville

Making the Most of I benefit concert on Aug. 21

BELLOWS FALLS—A benefit concert for Making the Most of I, featuring Samirah Evans, Charles Neville and Moonlight Davis, will be held Saturday, Aug. 21, from 7:30-9:30 p.m., at the Stone Church Arts at 14 Church St.

Making the Most of I is a small nonprofit organization that serves low-income women in transition in Vermont. It provides free opening classes for women hoping to make healthy changes in their lives. MMI has served more than 1,200 women in the 12 years of traveling around the state of Vermont. "We provide a stepping stone, a hand up, to women who may feel they are not moving forward in their lives," said Nancy Clingan, founder and director of the program. "Many women need a little extra help, and we want to be free and available to all women. That's why we have fundraising concerts, in order to bring people together for a good time, and to raise money to keep our program going."

Clingan said she wanted an exciting benefit concert, one that would draw a diverse crowd, so she called and invited people she loved as musicians and singers. First on her list was Samirah Evans.

Evans, before transplanting to Brattleboro with her husband after Hurricane Katrina, was a regular fixture in New Orleans and well known for her dynamic voice and repertoire of music, from raunchy blues to smooth jazz classics and originals. She has shared the stage with legendary musicians and appeared at the most well known clubs and festivals worldwide.

Once she was on the lineup as the star performer for the concert, Clingan discovered Evans had played with Charles Neville, renowned sax player for the world-famous New Orleans rhythm & blues band, the Neville Brothers.



Moonlight Davis and Morning Star Chenven

A longtime fan of the Neville Brothers, Nancy contacted Charles directly, who said, "I'd love to join Samirah onstage for this benefit."

Moonlight Davis will bring his powerful, yet dreamy and smooth, voice to renowned renditions of soulful gospel and blues. Davis began singing in church as a boy and has built his artistic and professional life around traditional gospel. He has embellished that with contemporary blues, jazz and original music.

The pièce de résistance is Rebecca Holtz, who will open the show with keyboardist Greg Flower.

Born and bred in the Connecticut River Valley, Holtz has been singing for as long as she could walk and talk. A graduate of Fall Mountain High School, and first-year-to-be at Smith College, she is a veteran of the local performing arts scene. She will pursue theater and jazz voice.

Morning Star Chenven will perform a duet with husband Moonlight Davis, as well as perform her fiery and heartfelt original piece of music to honor women with Miro Sprague on the piano, Jason Ennis on the guitar, Jon Fisher on drums, and Alec Derian on bass.

Tickets (\$15; \$10 for students and seniors) will be on sale at the door only. Anyone unable to pay the full fee can make a donation. Included are complimentary refreshments and door prizes.

Charlie Jarras will videotape the concert for future broadcast on Falls Area Community Television. CDs by the artists will be available for sale at the concert.

For more information about the concert, call Clingan at (802) 869-2456.

The Commons SPORTS & RECREATION

Vermont loses again in Shine Maple Sugar Bowl

It was the same result for New Hampshire as the previous nine wins, but this year, it was achieved slightly differently. This year's Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl game was billed as a battle between the fast-paced, no-huddle spread offense of Vermont and the power running game of New Hampshire's Wing-T offense.

As usual, power won out as New Hampshire rolled up 300 yards of rushing for a 34-20 victory at MacLeay-Royce Field in Windsor on Saturday. New Hampshire leads the series 42-13-2, with a 10-game winning streak dating back to 2001.

While Vermont's passing attack was somewhat effective, with 311 yards in all, the Green Mountain Boys failed to take advantage of a sloppy first half by the Granite Staters. Despite five first-half turnovers, New Hampshire took a 27-14 halftime lead.

New Hampshire did not play particularly disciplined football either, with 18 penalties for 165 yards, plus an ejection when Milford's Brian Atroll punched a Vermont player.

Plymouth's Kyle McAuliffe returned an interception for a 90-yard touchdown, the first of two interceptions for the day. McAuliffe led a strong New Hampshire defensive secondary that kept Vermont's passing attack from making any big plays.

Considering that New Hampshire usually fields bigger and stronger players than Vermont, it stands to reason that the Granite Staters would emphasize the run and the Vermonters would choose speed and deception as the way to counter the size and strength advantage of their opponent.

The Vermonters tried that approach last year, and the result was a 40-6 whupping by New Hampshire. After ten straight losses, it might be time for the Green Mountain Boys to try something different.



RANDOLPH T. HOLHUT
Sports Roundup

had seven tackles in Saturday's game, including one that forced a fumble.

It was also Freeman's last football game. He's headed to Coastal Carolina University, where he will major in business.

Bellows Falls linebacker Josh Pratt rounded out the local contingent in Saturday's game. He had one sack and saw plenty of action on special teams.

Fall sports practices begin soon

The Shrine game both marks the end of the summer sports season, and the beginning of the fall high school sports season. It won't be long before the fields around Brattleboro Union High School will be filled with football, soccer, field hockey and cross country athletes.

The first BUHS varsity football practice will begin on Monday, Aug. 16, with double sessions from 8 to 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 to 6 p.m. There will be a player/parent/coaches meeting on Sunday, Aug. 15 at 5 p.m. The meeting will be preceded by equipment hand-out. Seniors should report at 4 p.m., juniors at 4:15 p.m. and sophomores at 5 p.m.

A scrimmage with Mount Anthony in Bennington is planned for Saturday, Aug. 21. The Colonels' season opens at St. Johnsbury on Saturday, Aug. 28.

The first practices for the other sports at BUHS will begin on Monday, Aug. 23. There will be a mandatory player meeting for interested boys soccer participants on Sunday, Aug. 22 at 6:30 p.m. Practice times for the first week of boys soccer will be as follows: freshman who do not wish to try out for JV or varsity will practice Monday through Friday, 4 to 5:30 p.m. JV and varsity practices will be from 7 to 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

On Thursday and Friday, the JV team will practice from 4:30 to 6 p.m., while the varsity will continue double sessions, practicing 7 to 8:30 a.m. and 5:15 to 7 p.m. Practices will be at the TIC Field.

BUHS girls soccer tryouts will begin with solo practices on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 5 to 7 p.m. On Tuesday and Thursday, there will be double sessions, 7 to 9 a.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Practices will be at Fort Dummer Field.

BUHS cross country practice starts at 9 a.m. on Aug. 23 at the Natowich Field track. Participants should bring completed paperwork and be ready to run.



DOUG MACPHEESPECIAL TO THE COMMONS

Brattleboro's Devin Rhodes runs out on the field for pregame introductions during Saturday's Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl. Rhodes, a center, was selected to the starting lineup.



DOUG MACPHEESPECIAL TO THE COMMONS

Brattleboro's Davin Freeman, seen here attempting a halfback option pass in a Colonels game last fall, was the third Freeman selected to play in the Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl. His father Jim and his uncle Dan also played in the Shrine game.

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