

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

UNCSA grad earns raves at Cannes Film Festival

At the recent Cannes Film Festival, University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA) School of Filmmaking alumnus Jeff Nichols achieved major filmmaker status by competing in the main competition (for the Palme d'Or) and garnered major press for his newest film, "Mud," starring Matthew McConaughey and Reese Witherspoon.

Though it did not win, the film "is a surefire best picture nominee at next year's Oscars," said Jason Solomons in the U.K.'s The Guardian.

The LA Times said: "At 33 and with just two features under his belt, Nichols came to Cannes as the youngest and least experienced of the North American directors, an estimable group that includes Wes Anderson, Lee Daniels and David Cronenberg. But he emerged with perhaps the best-received film of them all with "Mud," a coming-of-age drama graced occasionally by thriller touches."

A native of Little Rock, Ark., and resident of Austin, Texas, Nichols received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Directing from UNCSA in 2001. He first emerged on the scene with his critically acclaimed 2007 drama "Shotgun Stories." He reteamed with that film's star, Michael Shannon, on "Take Shelter," an apocalyptic, psychological thriller that premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival, where it was in the Dramatic Competition. The film won both the Critics' Week Grand Prize and the FIPRESCI award at the 2011 Cannes festival.



Nichols

NBTF favorites receive federal support

Rhodesa Jones and Idris Ackamoor of the San Francisco-based theater group Cultural Odyssey have just been selected as "Arts Envoys" by the U.S. Department of State, Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau.

As two of the Bay Area's most revered artists, they have received federal grant support to represent San Francisco in South Africa, where they will soon travel to continue their work inside the Naturena Women's Prison in Johannesburg. They will then journey to Grahamstown to participate in the National Arts Festival.

Jones and Ackamoor, who have brought productions to Winston-Salem's National Black Theatre Festival for the past 20 years, call the grant funding "unprecedented support for Cultural Odyssey's international cultural exchange program and a testament to their artistic vision."

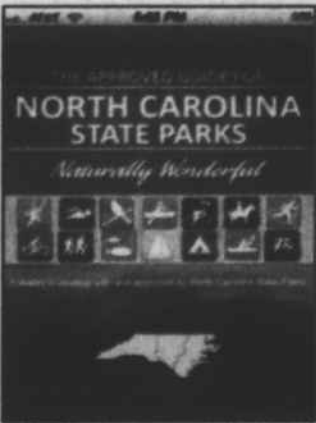
N.C. state parks mobile app makes Top 100

The free Pocket Ranger mobile application for North Carolina's state parks, developed for smartphones by ParksByNature Network, has been ranked among the top 100 free navigation applications by Apple's iTunes, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation announced.

Apple's iTunes ranked the North Carolina State Parks Pocket Ranger Mobile App 43rd in popularity, based on the number of times the application has been downloaded. The mobile application, or app, was introduced in May 2011 by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation in partnership with Friends of State Parks and ParksByNature Network. The app was among the first such comprehensive mobile applications for state parks systems created by New York-based ParksByNature.

The downloadable application for iPhone and Android smartphones allows visitors to plan trips and explore state parks with details readily at hand about park locations, trails, facilities, reservations, events and special news alerts. It also allows GPS-aided, state-of-the-art navigation of state parks, storage of detailed topographic maps and enhanced interactive features for social media. An "alert" feature supplies GPS coordinates to designated contacts in case of emergencies.

The mobile app for North Carolina state parks can be downloaded from the iTunes Store and Android's Market by searching NC State Parks or NC Pocket Ranger or by logging on to www.officialstateparkapps.com.



Renee Matthews-Phifer poses with members of the Kimberley Park Singing Eagle Girls Chorus.

Eagles give soaring performance at Carowinds

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Director Renee Matthews-Phifer took the Kimberley Park Singing Eagle Girls Chorus to the 2012 Carowinds Festival of Music on Saturday, May 12.

The group earned raves for its performance. Judges rated the girls "Superior," the highest rating possible.

The Carowinds Festival of Music provides music students an opportunity to perform and play before nationally-known adjudicators, who listen, evaluate and comment on each group's performance. Choruses were judged on factors such as tone, technique, interpretation, intonation, balance, musical effect and diction.

Plaques and ribbons are awarded for

"Superior" and "Excellent" ratings.

Kimberley Park Singing Eagle Girls Chorus performed "2 Poems of Emily Dickenson" by Neil Ginsberg and "Who has heard the Music?" by Julie Myers.

Matthews-Phifer said her students took responsibility and ownership of the songs, reaching high F notes and mastering three-part singing.

"Experiencing the result of hard work is a reward within itself," said Matthews-Phifer. "When I saw that Superior plaque, I lost it! I was completely overwhelmed with emotion because we had worked very hard to be musically prepared for this event, even Saturday rehearsals. "I'm so very proud of

See Eagles on A9

Breathtaking gardens highlighted at Museum

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

In conjunction with its current exhibition, "A Genius for Place: American Landscapes of the Country Place Era," Reynolda House Museum of American Art will screen the Emmy Award-winning "Gardens of the World with Audrey Hepburn" series beginning this week.



The gardens at Jardin du Luxembourg in Paris are featured in the series.

The museum will show the complete eight-part series on Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon from June 5 through June 28. The first show, "Roses and Rose Gardens," was screened on June 5; "Formal Gardens" will be screened today, followed by a June 12 showing of "Country Gardens," a June 14 screening of "Public Gardens and Trees;" a June 19 screening of "Flower Gardens" and a June 21 screening of "Tropical Gardens." "Japanese Gardens" will be shown on June 26, and "Tulips and Spring Bulbs" will end the series on June 28.

The beautifully-shot series was filmed on location in seven countries in 1990. Hepburn interviews gardeners and authors, relating notable gardens to works of literature and art. In her words, "The arts of the garden, like those of the theatre, painting,

music and dance, nurture and comfort the human spirit."

"A Genius for Place" is on view through Aug. 5. The exhibition includes photographs of seven estates across the country, using the art of photography to illustrate the art of landscape design during the period of 1890 through 1930.

Admission is free to museum members and students, and free with museum admission to non-members. For more information, visit reynoldahouse.org or call 336-758-5150.

Rare banknotes with local ties to be auctioned

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Two rare banknotes steeped in Winston-Salem history are scheduled to be auctioned on Saturday, June 9.

The older of the two notes is a Series 1866 \$5 National Currency from The First National Bank of Salem, N.C. According to the National Banknote Census, this banknote is the only one of its kind to be reported. No others are known to exist. The signature at the bottom right of the note is that of the bank's founder and first president, Israel George (I.G.) Lash (1810-1878), the grandson of Jacob Loesch, one of the 11 original Moravian settlers who came from



See Auction on A9

Drama School dean chosen

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Carl Forsman, the founding artistic director of the New York-based theatre Keen Company, will become the new dean of the UNCSA School of Drama on July 1.

Forsman is also the producer of dozens off-Broadway and off-off-Broadway plays and an award-winning director.

"Everyone I've spoken to about Carl has the same reaction: 'I love his work!'" said UNCSA Chancellor John Mauceri. "He is a true man of the theatre, who believes in the importance of 'the work' and the necessity for technical training, combined with the moral imperative of encouraging creativity and exploration. Carl Forsman is the right person at the right time, and he will take our great drama school to new and even more exciting places."



Forsman

Forsman succeeds Gerald Freedman, Dean of the School of Drama for more than two decades, who is retiring June 30. Freedman has nothing but praise for Forsman.

"From the first moment I met Carl Forsman, I knew we were the same kind of theatre folk," Freedman said. "We talked the same language; it was like old friends catching up. We share the same values about rigorous conservatory actor training, but he is also a theatre director and producer in the thick of it in New York City, and knows what the expectations are for our graduates first-hand."

Forsman has been artistic director of Keen Company in New York since 2000. He was awarded a Special Drama Desk Award in 2005 "for moving and enlightening audiences with plays that build upon our theatrical heritage," as well as eight Drama Desk nominations over the years. As a director, Forsman was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Director for Keen Company's revival of "The Voice of the Turtle," which transferred to an extended run off-Broadway. His direction of the American premiere of Conor McPherson's "The Good Thief" earned an Obie Award for star Brian d'Arcy James and Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle nominations for Best Solo Performance.

"My professional work has all been unified by my belief that theatre is a collective expression of hope and humanity," Forsman said. "I believe the theatre is a chance to celebrate and question our capacity for the finest in human nature: kindness, generosity, sympathy and exuberance."

A Wild Birthday Bash



Photo by Carly Fleming

A black bear enjoys a berry birthday pie at Grandfather Mountain. Each year, the state park holds a birthday party for all the animals that live there. This year, it will be held on June 13. In addition to the celebration for the animals, there will also be programs and games for human guests. For more information, visit www.grandfather.com or call 800-468-7325.