

**NINE PAINTERS AT ASHAWAGH B3 SALON AT PARRISH B3**



**Sag Harbor Express**  
**INSIDE & OUTSIDE**

**TRAGICAL HISTORY TOUR B5 BUCKING REALTY BIZ TREND B6**



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2016



**HOLLY HUNTER** stars in "Strange Weather."

**FILM**

**A Full Slate at 24th Annual Film Festival**

More than 125 features, shorts and docs

BY DAWN WATSON

For movie buffs, nothing beats sitting in a darkened theater and being transported to a different time and place. Especially for East End film lovers, there's no better day at the cinema than Columbus Day weekend when the Hamptons International Film Festival arrives.

Screening more than 125 features, shorts and documentaries, and beckoning more than 25,000 audience members to South Fork theaters to watch them, HIFF brings the world to our doorsteps during its five-day schedule. From big name actors, directors and writers to obscure and emerging talent in front of and behind the camera, and drawing from subject matter as vast as the ocean that surrounds us, there's sure to be something for everyone in the profusion of movies that are screened at the annual film festival.

In keeping with the high bar set in the past decade, this year's HIFF is not to be missed, says Artistic Director David Nugent. Now in its 24th year, the films that will be shown at the 2016 festival are of similar superlative quality to previous outings, which have included the Best Picture Oscar winner in 7 of the last 8 years.

During the past eight years, HIFF films have garnered a total of 230 Academy Award nominations. Last year alone, movies screened at HIFF went on to earn 36 Academy Award nominations—including four Best Picture nominations and five Oscar winners in 7 of the last 8 years.

"We try to pick the best," Mr. Nugent says simply of how HIFF screens so many standout films.

The "big" films—the Opening, Cen-

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**BEN REZENDES** as Garrett, left, and **BEN COLE** as Meathead, in "Moondog Airwaves."

**FILM**

**When Bay Burger Played a Sinister Role**

Local eatery was scene for short horror flick

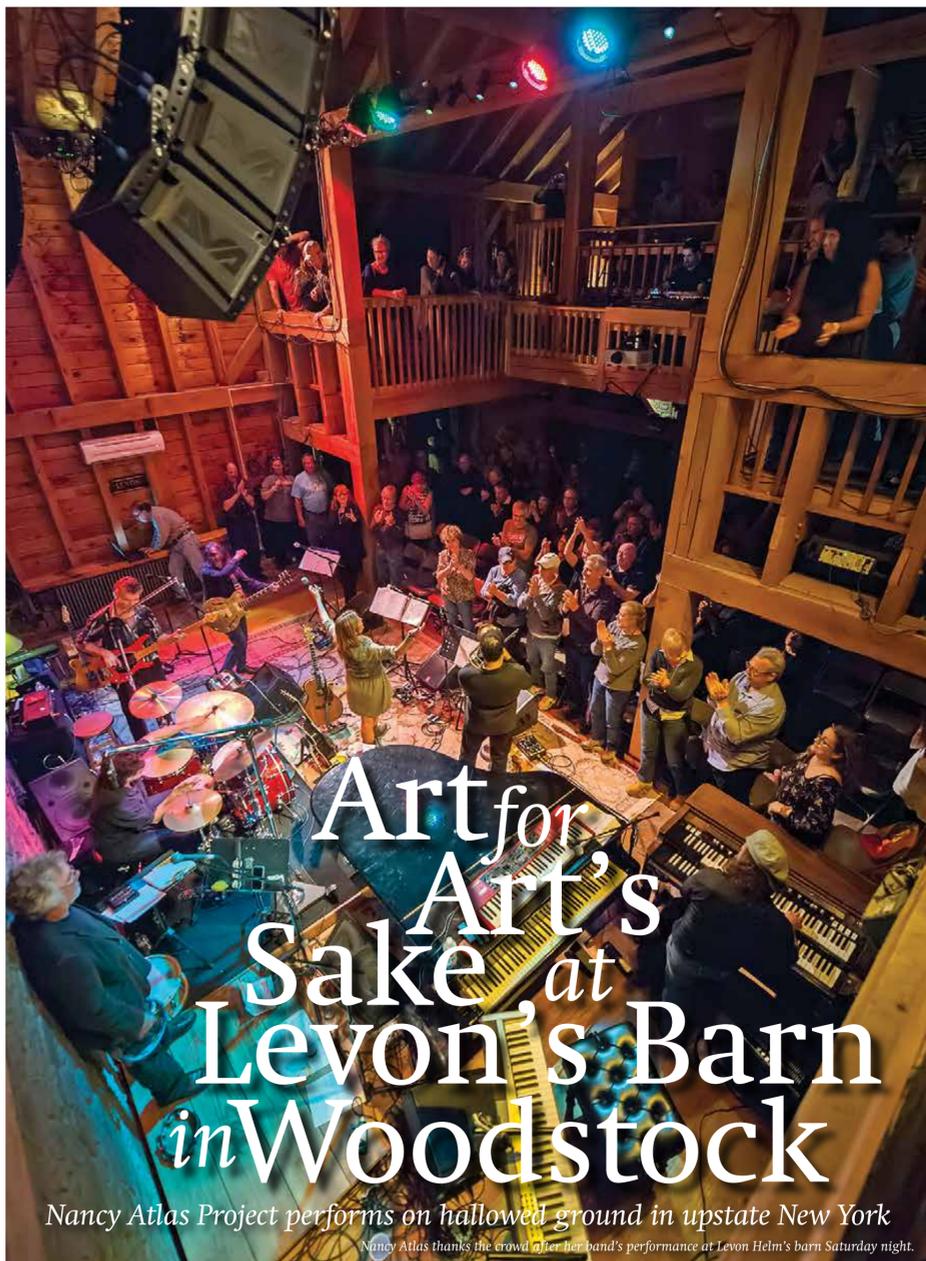
BY DAWN WATSON

Transforming Bay Burger into a moody, retro late night diner was an exciting adventure for filmmaker Ari Selinger. Setting the scene there for a bloodthirsty monster to show up and take over the joint was even more fun.

The popular Sag Harbor eatery owned by Joe and Liza Tremblay was the primary setting for Mr. Selinger's 33-minute short comedy/horror/love story film, "Moondog Airwaves," which was shot back in 2013. The story, written and directed by the student as his thesis for New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, will screen for free at the Sag Harbor Cinema on Saturday, October 8, at noon, 1:30 and 3 p.m.

Starring Ben Rezendes, Steven Ogg, David Rysdahl, Ben Cole and Charlotte Buck, with voice work also included from the famed late disc jockey Wolfman Jack and appearances by Jason

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**Art for Art's Sake at Levon's Barn in Woodstock**

Nancy Atlas Project performs on hallowed ground in upstate New York

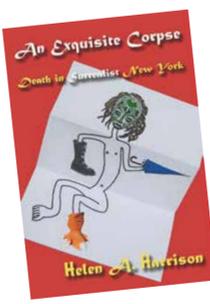
Nancy Atlas thanks the crowd after her band's performance at Levon Helm's barn Saturday night.

BY GAVIN MENU

michael heller photo

The performance started simply enough, a seasoned songwriter explaining how she slowed down her cover of a classic song to make it her own. It was clear by the time Nancy Atlas finished performing her soulful version of Dolly Parton's 1974 hit "Jolene," however, that this was no ordinary night, and certainly no ordinary venue.

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**BOOKS**

**A Murderous Parlor Game**

Debut novel takes readers inside the art world of the 1940s

BY JOAN BAUM

For many of a certain age the phrase "exquisite or rotating corpse" may call to mind a paper-folding parlor game that was a staple of childhood arts and crafts: a person draws a head, then folds the paper down so that the next person to contribute can't see what the first person has drawn. Brief start marks are indicated, and the second person draws a torso or arms, folds that

part down, and passes the paper to the next in line, and so it goes until the feet are done. The final picture is a full figure, likely to be weird or comic-monstrous. But as a journalist and art historian Helen Harrison points out and draws on in her debut work of fiction, a murder mystery titled "Exquisite Corpse," in the hands of artists, "exquisite corpse" came to exemplify attitudes, techniques and subject matter associated with the surrealists, especially those who fled

Nazi Europe in the 1930s and settled in New York. Originally called "le cadavre exquis" and representing a poetry game, the exquisite corpse — when it turned visual — could become serious art, as seen in a color reproduction Ms. Harrison includes in her book, a collaborative, pen, ink and crayon drawing executed by Man Ray, André Breton, Yves Tanguy and Max Morise in 1928.

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**Nancy kicks it up**

continued from page B1

Ms. Atlas and members of her band, the Nancy Atlas Project, who have been riding a musical roller coaster for the better part of two decades, reached another high point Saturday night with a performance that shook hallowed ground in the music studio of the late Levon Helm at his home in Woodstock, where Mr. Helm's wife still lives and family and friends gather to perform and record some truly incredible music.

"There's a symbiosis that occurs in the music business from time to time when a band and a venue come together in perfect harmony, in which the moments before, during and after the performance seem bigger than they might have in a bar back in Montauk or an all-too familiar stage on Amagansett's Main Street.

The last three years have been an impressive mix of hard work, smart marketing, good luck and strategic connections for Ms. Atlas, 45, and her band, whose popular Fireside Sessions at the Bay Street Theater heightened awareness of the group, its rock-solid musicianship and charismatic lead singer. "I have been promised the moon and stars for years and yet our band still stands very much on the beaten dirt of the earth," Ms. Atlas said in an interview last week before making the trek north to Woodstock. "Jim just try to sit back and soak it in. Enjoy it. The fact that we could get booked for a show like this with no manager or strings attached is a very nice compliment to a lot of hard work."

Ms. Atlas played without two cornerstones of her band on Saturday as guitarist Johnny Blood was out because of a previous commitment and drummer Richard Rosch sang back up vocals but was unable to play because of a hand injury. Sitting in on guitar was Klyth Black, a stalwart of the East End music scene who is no stranger to the big stage and recorded at Mr. Helm's old barn on the same Woodstock property in the late 1970s. Dan Hickey, an accomplished session drummer, played drums and joined band regulars Brett King on bass, and Neil "Surfer" Thomas, who flexed his talents while playing keyboards, piano, accordion, harmonica and even the house's beautiful Hammond B-3 organ. Annie Morgan joined on back-up vocals and accomplished trombone player Clark Gayton helped to fill out a big band stage in a big time house.

Mr. Gayton, who was a member of the Levon Helm Band and the incarnation that followed Mr. Helm's death in 2012, performed in the studio about 250 times before. He met Ms. Atlas years ago in New York City, and joined her for a few of the Fireside Sessions at Bay Street in Sag Harbor. With further assistance from Tony LoBue, a resident of Shelter Island who helps run Levon Helm Studios, Ms. Atlas and her band earned their ticket to Woodstock last weekend, where approximately 150 fans turned out. As a result of the turnout, and the all-around good vibes, Ms. Atlas and her band were asked to return for another date.

"They were over the moon with the

night and have already told us we will definitely be back," Ms. Atlas said, referring to the management team. "Our whole band felt overwhelmed by the turnout of people who came out from the East End. It was unbelievable. While we put on a solid show, it was really their effort that helped us get asked back and we are just so touched by it."

"The highest compliment of the night came when Barbara, who has run the place for a very long time, told me that our show reminded her of Levon's Ramble and that he would have absolutely loved it," she added. "I don't know what else I would need than that."

Mr. Helm found international success as a member of the iconic 1960s rock group, The Band, and later with The Levon Helm Band, which won a pair of Grammy Awards and helped shine a light on Americana music and its fusion of folk, country, blues, R&B and rock and roll. Mr. Helm's Midnight Ramble sessions, essentially held in the expansive living room of his home studio, became legendary with an army of music royalty including Phil Lesh, Elvis Costello, Dr. John, Emmylou Harris, Taj Mahal, Kris Kristofferson, Chris Robinson, Donald Fagan and Norah Jones, among many others, joining in on the action.

"There's a lot of bullshit that surrounds the music industry," Jim James of the group My Morning Jacket told The New Yorker in 2012. "But Levon always conveyed a great sense of community and spirit, and put the music first."

Which is where the symbiosis with Nancy Atlas comes into play. "The only thing that really matters to me is honoring the craft of songwriting," said Ms. Atlas, who is a mother to three children, Cash, 10, Levon, who is 4 but not named after Mr. Helm, and Tallulah, who is 3. "Everything else is gravy. People don't realize that early on we went on two grassroots tours, played a lot of out-of-town gigs in Nashville, Memphis, Florida, Alabama, Chapel Hill, just to name a few. In New York alone we have played The Mercury, The Bowery Ballroom and, of course, our favorite, The Parkside Lounge, for countless years. It was a lot of fun but not particularly realistic now that I have three kids."

There were other big name connections that came to light during the Fireside Sessions at Bay Street, including performances by Chad Smith, the drummer for the Red Hot Chili Peppers. This past summer, Mr. Smith played a show with the Nancy Atlas Project at the Stephen Talkhouse in Amagansett alongside Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins, and many billed it as the show of the East End summer.

"Taylor didn't know me from a hole in the wall, and I remember Chad saying, 'Don't worry, she has our back,'" Ms. Atlas recalled. "Chad knew that he wanted to have a fun night out, duel drums, and that I was going to put something together that worked with what they wanted to play. The phone call to play the Chad Smith and Taylor Hawkins show was 20 years in



the making. Not just some freak coincidence. We have earned those calls. I enjoyed that show immensely."

So with all these big-name artists and big-time venues, Ms. Atlas when we posed a question. After 20 years together, is a new and possibly more prominent chapter in the progression of the Nancy Atlas Project currently being written? The truth — something Ms. Atlas is big on — is that the answer is murky. And Ms. Atlas, who measures her band's longevity in dog years (140 years and counting), is not one to offer false optimism.

"We were one of the house bands at The Stephen Talkhouse for 16 years," said Ms. Atlas. "We were playing to packed out houses 10 years ago and five years ago I was sweating in the

front lines as well. Any performer knows that things ebb and flow. You could be playing to 300 people one night and 30 the next. I don't think we are any more popular now than we have been in the last 10 years, it's just that a different branch of people have discovered it."

Following Saturday's show in Woodstock, Ms. Atlas had family and friends sign the back of her dress, which had the words "Levon Helm's Barn" and the date inked into the cloth. Even as floors were swept and the night came to a close, there remained a strong feeling of inclusiveness.

"I think we could honestly be a great representation of keeping the spirit of what Levon was doing here for so many years," Ms. Atlas said. "I think



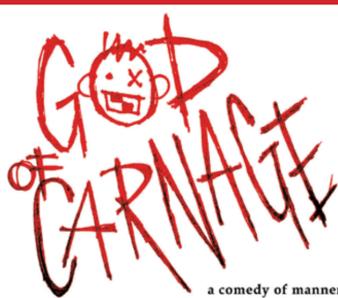
it was built for the kind of nights like tonight."

When asked further whether the band might have new opportunities to seize as the result of greater exposure, or some newfound fame around a soon-to-be passed corner, Ms. Atlas peered out with her usual calm and

spoke like she does in her songs, telling the truth as she sees it, which, in the end, is what matters most.

"I am going to focus on being my children's mother, being the best songwriter I can be and giving you everything I have in each show performance wise," she said. "It doesn't matter if the show is here or Tucson, Arizona. Hard work plus blood and guts — that cocktail has worked for me for 20 years so I'm just going to stick to those two ingredients. Fame is overrated. Great art, however, is not."

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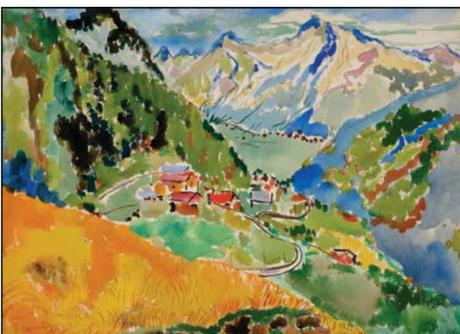
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