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The Journal News | SUNDAY, March 27, 2011

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ROCK STAR RESIDENT 10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT NEW ROCHELLE'S DAVID TOBEY



Carucha L. Meuse/The Journal News

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There aren't many Renaissance men floating around Westchester these days. But New Rochelle's David Tobey just might qualify.

Where to start? Tobey is a professional violinist who played at the weddings of Mariah Carey and Jon Bon Jovi. He's a middle-school music teacher and orchestra director who was named one of Juilliard's outstanding alumni.

And he's a high-profile artist and sculptor — George W. Bush once requested one of his paintings — with a new gallery show opening Wednesday at the White Plains Public Library.

Tobey also has a thing for science — physics, in particular — and he recently created a prototype of a levitating sculpture that will be on display at the library exhibition.

For Tobey, who started drawing at age 3, there's always been a pull between art and music. When he discovered the violin in elementary school, he pursued it with such intensity that he ended up in Juilliard's pre-college program — and later was accepted there as an undergraduate.

Although he pushed his painting aside for a while, he became reinvigorated after getting his master's in art at the College of New Rochelle in the late 1990s. "Something clicked in me, and I've been painting nonstop since then," he says.

Over the course of his career, Tobey has had more than 20 group and solo shows, including some in Manhattan. His exhibit at the White Plains library will feature 35 paintings and 15 sculptures made of both steel and wood.

Here are 10 more things you may not know about David Tobey:

1. Tobey's parents were well known in the arts. His father, Alton S. Tobey, was a prominent muralist and historical painter. His mother, Rosalyn Tobey, was an accomplished concert pianist and music teacher. Tobey's father, who worked in a studio in the family's Larchmont home, was his first art teacher.

2. For the past 13 years, Tobey has been the orchestra director at Albert Leonard Middle School and Isaac Young Middle School, both in New Rochelle. "The orchestras have tripled in size, in both schools, since I've been doing it," he says.

3. He met his wife, Moira, when they were both 18-year-old Juil-

liard students. They have two children: Elizabeth, 26, and Andrew, 27, and two grandchildren.

4. The couple is very attached to their pets: four dogs and four cats. Once, when they stopped at a diner on the way to the Catskills, they left their animals in the car and watched them through the window.

"People were getting up to look and pointing and laughing," says Tobey. "My wire-haired dachshund was in the driver's seat madly beeping the horn. It was like this dog was saying, 'Where are you already?'"

5. Tobey has performed at numerous celebrity weddings, including those for Billy Baldwin and two Trumps: Ivana and Ivanka.

6. Once he got a phone call for a gig on Long Island. Like many of his jobs that involve celebrities, everything was hush-hush, including the name of the person for whom he would be performing. "I'm walking around the corner of this huge house and I'm hearing the piano playing, and I said, 'Hey, that's a Billy Joel tune,'" recalls Tobey, who opened a set of French doors — and saw Joel himself at the keyboard. (That was the day Billy Joel married Katie Lee.)

7. He's played in the Radio City Christmas show and in many Broadway productions, including "Sugar Babies" and "Phantom of the Opera." Tobey also had a part playing the violin in Adam Sandler's "Big Daddy" — but that portion of the film ended

TOBEY: Art and music are his lifelong passions

up on the cutting-room floor. "They paid me anyway," he says.

8. Upon request from former president George W. Bush, Tobey sent a print of one of his paintings — "Fallen Angels," a Sept. 11 tribute — for inclusion in the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Texas.

9. In 2005, Juilliard president Joseph Polisi named Tobey one of the music school's 100 most outstanding alumni. Tobey was flattered to be among a "very illustrious" group of performers (cellist Yo-Yo Ma was on the same list, he says).

10. He gives back: Many of Tobey's art exhibitions have been benefit shows, with recipients including the American Cancer Society, the Westchester Philharmonic (he's one of their violinists) and The Juilliard School.

A portion of the proceeds from sales of Tobey's works at the library will benefit the Friends of the White Plains Library and The White Plains Library Foundation.

If you go

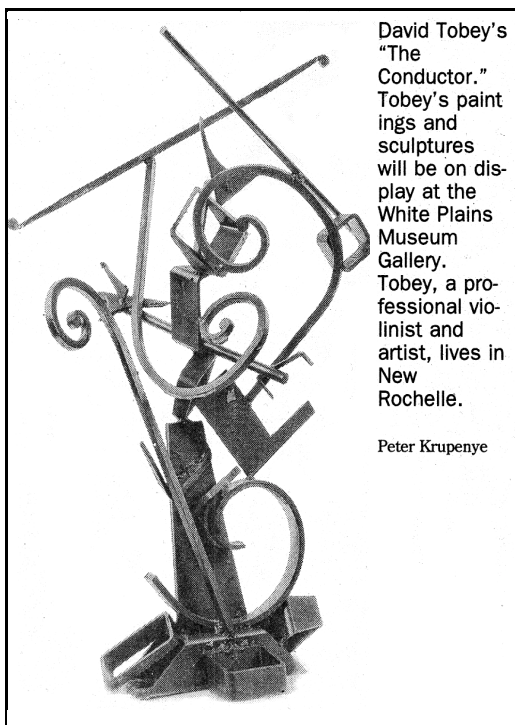
What: Exhibition of David Tobey's paintings and sculpture

Where: White Plains Museum Gallery, White Plains Public Library, 100 Martine Ave.

When: March 30 through June 15. Opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. March 30.

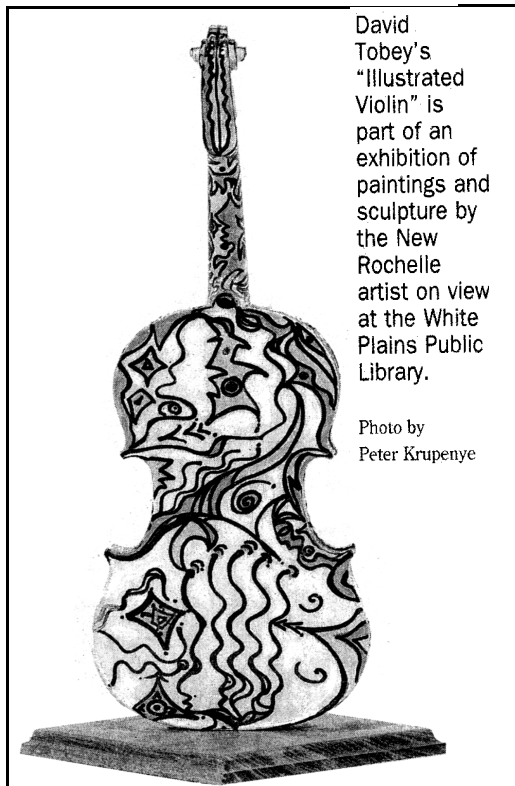
Admission: Free

Information: 914-422-1480 (library) or www.davidtobey.com



David Tobey's "The Conductor." Tobey's paintings and sculptures will be on display at the White Plains Museum Gallery. Tobey, a professional violinist and artist, lives in New Rochelle.

Peter Krupenye



David Tobey's "Illustrated Violin" is part of an exhibition of paintings and sculpture by the New Rochelle artist on view at the White Plains Public Library.

Photo by Peter Krupenye

The exhibition will be at the White Plains Museum Gallery through 6/15/2011.

For more information:

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