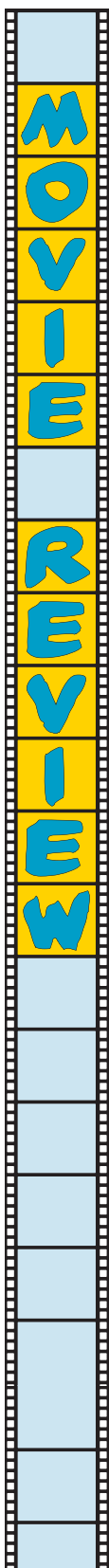


'Can You Ever Forgive Me?' at Orinda Theatre

By Derek Zemrak



Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation All Rights Reserved Photo Mary Cybulski; © 2018

Sometimes life is stranger than fiction. If your friends in Hollywood wrote a script about a popular author who starts forging signatures to pay her rent – no one would believe it. So, this is where the real-life story comes in and makes the new film “Can You Ever Forgive Me?” believable, interesting and enjoyable.

The story is about Lee Israel, brilliantly portrayed by Oscar nominee Melissa McCarthy, who made her living in the 1970s and '80s profiling the likes of Katharine Hepburn, Tallulah Bankhead, Estee Lauder and journalist Dorothy Kilgallen. When Lee is no longer able to get published because she has fallen out of step with current tastes, she turns her art form to deception, abetted by her loyal friend Jack (Richard E. Grant). An adaptation of the memoir “Can You Ever Forgive Me?” relays the true story of the best-selling celebrity biographer.

The film is directed by Marielle Heller (“The Diary of a Teenage Girl”) and it truly captures the essence of who Lee Israel was. Yes, she was once a celebrated best-selling author but was also a curmudgeon and a lost soul. McCarthy is stellar in the role of Lee Israel. She will receive an Oscar nomination for the performance. McCarthy is an outstanding actor when given the right script. If you have never seen “St. Vincent,” a small indie film from 2014, where McCarthy stars opposite

Bill Murray (it is not a comedy), please do yourself a favor and watch it. It is a charming film and one of my all-time favorites. McCarthy is deserving of the Oscar for Best Actress but this year the competition in the female category will be tough with Lady Gaga (“A Star is Born”) and Glenn Close (“The Wife”). Any other year McCarthy would be a shoe-in to walk home with a gold statue.

Richard E. Grant also gives an Oscar-worthy performance in the role of Jack, Lee’s partner in crime. Grant has had a long career as a character actor in such films as “Gosford Park” and “The Iron Lady.” Grant should receive an Oscar nod for the role. He was amazing.

It is that time of year to start seeing all the Oscar contenders. When the Oscar nominations are announced on Tuesday, Jan. 23, you will be hearing “Can You Ever Forgive Me?” read more than once.

“Can You Ever Forgive Me?” – now playing at the Orinda Theatre – is rated R for strong language, brief male nudity, implied sex, plus alcohol and drug use. The film has a total running time of 1 hour and 46 minutes.

Magician, Timothy James returns to the Rheem Theatre this Saturday, Nov. 17 for two shows at 6 and 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the Rheem Theatre box office.

Lynn's Top Five

What is ESG investing and why does it matter to so many?

By Lynn Ballou CFP®

Socially Responsible Investing. Impact Investing. Sustainable Investing. And most recently, ESG Investing. In these current strained political times, more and more investors look more closely at their investment selections and discuss these options with their advisors. And of course as citizens of the Bay Area, we are more attuned to this topic than most. So, what exactly is ESG Investing and what might it mean to you? I recently discussed this important topic with two members of EP Wealth Advisors’ Investment Committee. I think you will find their remarks, which follow, very valuable.

Defining ESG Investing: Geniffer Takacs, CFA and associate portfolio manager with EP Wealth Advisors, explains that “Technically, ESG investing stands for Environmental, Social and Governance, although the acronym is used interchangeably to cover a wide spectrum of goals and strategies that involve responsible investing that cover a variety of humanitarian, environmental, ethical and social concerns.”

Whap happened to the phrase “Socially Responsible Investing”? Takacs notes that “negative and exclusionary screening has been the primary method of Socially Responsible Investing. For example, one of the first major movements in SRI was divesting from companies doing business in South Africa during apartheid and redirecting those investments. Unfortunately, one of the main drawbacks to SRI was traditional investors sacrificed diversification from their portfolio by excluding certain companies/industries. Over time SRI has evolved from in-

vestments based on moral objections to include investments that aligned with investor values-based preferences which is known as ESG investing.”

What are some typical ESG considerations or “screens”? Sid Ean, senior portfolio manager with EP Wealth Advisors, points out that “there a number of different factors, metrics and data to consider in constructing an ESG strategy. Typically these factors are industry specific key issues such as climate change, human capital and labor management, corporate governance, gender diversity, privacy and data security, to name a few. The risks and opportunities of companies differ industry to industry therefore companies should be evaluated on the key issues specific to their respective industries.”

Is ESG investing now standardized? Not yet! “There are a variety of challenges in using ESG data and the ESG metrics are weighted differently across different fund managers and data providers,” according to Takacs. Ean provided the perspective that when SRI was first introduced different analysts weighted specific areas more than others. He also explained to me that a chart of the issues has evolved in the industry. As an example, “environmental” screens would include climate change issues, pollution and waste, as well as environmental opportunities. Further, “social” screens can include human capital, product liability and stakeholder opposition. And “governance” screening looks at corporate governance and corporate behavior. Complex indeed.

Should I only own ESG screened investments? Although there is emerging research

that an ESG based portfolio can at the very least hold its own compared to the performance of other, more traditionally asset allocated portfolios, Ean hastens to point out that “An ESG strategy is not a silver bullet when it comes to investing. Having a solely ESG strategy does not guarantee that you will outperform the rest of the market. An investor should define what they want to achieve and determine what approach they want to take when incorporating ESG investing into their portfolios.”

While this is an exciting, some would say nerve wracking, time to be an investor, it’s important to stay current on what you hold and why, and all your options. Reach out to your team of advisors, including your Certified Financial Planner, to clarify your goals and resources to be sure you remain on the right track.



Lynn Ballou is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional and Regional Director with EP Wealth Advisors, a Registered Investment Advisory Firm in Lafayette. Information used in the writing of this column is believed to be factual and up-to-date, however, we do not guarantee its accuracy. This column does not involve the rendering of personalized investment advice and is not intended to supplement individualized professional advice. A financial, tax and/or legal professional should be consulted before implementing any of the strategies directly or indirectly suggested and discussed. All investment strategies have the potential for profit or loss.

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Service Clubs Announcements

Lafayette Rotary Club

Step in on a Thursday and join us for our lunch meeting. Thursday at noon Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette.

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| November 15: Lorraine Granit Ph.D. “The Meaning of Service in the New Age” | November 22: Thanksgiving- no meeting |
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www.rotarylafayette.org
www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Lafayette-CA

Not to be missed

POLITICAL GATHERINGS

Lamorinda Republican Women Federated's meeting will take place at 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 15 at the Orinda Country Club. Please join us to hear Allison Johnson discussing water conservation and the importance of Central Valley Farmers. Johnson is the co-president of the Saint Mary's College Republican Club. Cost: luncheon and speaker \$36; speaker only \$15; speaker only student discount price \$5. Reservations needed; please contact Elsie Euing at ejeuing@comcast.net or (925) 254-8614. For more information, go to <http://www.lamorindarepublicanwomen.org/>.

GARDEN

Moraga Garden Club presents Live Birds, Taxidermy, Artifacts and Fun with Jenny Papka at 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 15 at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 Center St, Moraga. Jenny Papka graduated

with honors from UC Davis in Environmental Interpretation. She has been involved with native wildlife since 1988. Her working experience includes working with more than 30 species of raptors. Join us to learn how these birds of prey see their world, their place in the wild, and how they adjust to captive life. This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments. For more information go to moragagardenclub.com.

The Montelindo Garden Club's November meeting will be at 9:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 16 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Community Hall. Presentation: Saving the Monarch Butterfly. Victoria “Tora” Roche, the former Park Supervisor for the City of Oakland until her retirement, is a champion of Monarch butterflies. She will speak about the alarming decline in their population and resulting local efforts to foster the development of Monarch caterpillars and to create habitat for Monarchs.

Please submit events:
calendar@lamorindaweekly.com

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