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entertainment

Personal dramas play into these players' works

Real-life experiences usually translate into great art. That's certainly true for these Long Islanders, including an actor playing a famous captain, a budding musician whose songs stem from moments in her life and a filmmaker who chronicled a life-changing family incident.



— DANIEL BUBBEO

ERIC SCHELL

21, from Rocky Point

THE GIG He plays Capt. Robert Scott in "Peter and the Starcatcher" at the Argyle Theatre in Babylon through Oct. 21.

HIS STORY Schell, who now lives in New York City, wanted to be an actor after appearing in "Les Miserables" at Theatre Three in Port Jefferson while a senior in high school. "Peter" is Schell's first role since graduating from Pace University in June, and he's the only cast member who plays a real person. "He was this great British captain who sailed to the Antarctic," says Schell, who researched the role, "but then he didn't have enough food or supplies to come back. He ended up staying in the Antarctic and kept a diary of what happened."



WHAT'S NEXT Schell wants "to end up in Colorado with a big dog and a family" but not before either landing a role on Broadway or working in television and films.

VAEDA BLACK

16, Centerport

THE GIG This singer-songwriter's single "Suicide Love" comes out Wednesday.

HER STORY Black began singing in kindergarten and has performed in local theater productions. Last year she released her first single, "Face Down," which was about accepting your deep, dark desires. "Suicide Love" is a love song that Black says was inspired by a text message her boyfriend sent her. "I thought it was very poetic and wrote a whole song about it," she says. Black adds that she's not into "bubble-gum pop" and describes herself as an alternative artist, whose strong suit is writing lyrics and melodies.



WHAT'S NEXT She'll perform at 8 p.m. Sunday at the Long Island Fall Festival at Heckscher Park in Huntington. Then, at 9:45 p.m. Tuesday, she'll do a nine-song set at Arlene's Grocery on Stanton Street in Manhattan. "Ultimately, I would love to have a following and go on tour and connect with people," she says.

STEVE MASON

43, Merrick

THE GIG "Eight," a short film he directed, starred in, co-wrote and co-produced, premiered at Bellmore Movies last week.

HIS STORY Mason, who grew up in Patchogue, left his finance job to pursue show biz eight years ago and has acted and done stunt work on such series as "Gotham" and "Orange Is the New Black." For the past year, his pet project has been "Eight," an intense film in which Mason plays his father, a former Suffolk County policeman. The title refers to Mason's age — he was 8 when his father killed himself. Making the movie has been cathartic, he says, but he also hopes it provides a service. "I want enough people to see it, so that even if one person might be contemplating taking their own life, it might influence them to go seek help."



WHAT'S NEXT Mason is working to book more screenings for "Eight," and he'll be seen in an episode of Syfy's "Happy" and USA's "The Sinner."

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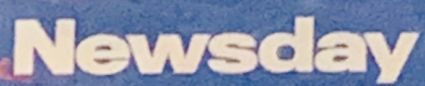
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