



COURTESY OF HANNAH MONTOKA / FACES OF BARNARD

THE RESULTS ARE IN | Madelyn Popkin, BC '14, was elected Student Government Association president. She has never served on SGA.

Two undergrads to lead SAC for first time since 2006

BY CECILIA REYES
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

For the first time since 2006, two undergraduates will lead the Student Affairs Committee, which represents the interests of students from all of Columbia's schools in the University Senate.

Matthew Chou, CC '14, and Akshay Shah, SEAS '14, who have both served as senators for a year, were elected co-chairs of the committee last week. SAC focuses on University-wide student concerns, which elevates it above school-specific student councils.

At least one graduate student has co-chaired the committee since Chris Riano, GS '07, and Marcus Johnson, CC '07, were elected in 2006.

Chou and Shah, who have worked together before, said they were able to make the case that having two undergraduate co-chairs wouldn't be a handicap.

"If you have two undergraduates, there could be a perception from others, maybe those outside the committee, that, 'Hey, we have these two leaders of a University-wide body who are actually just

interested in undergraduate affairs,'" Chou said. "That's a perception that we have to be very careful not to bring on."

Both senators said that one of SAC's most important projects is the Quality of Life survey, started by former SAC co-chair Adil Ahamed, Business '12. Shah said that the survey—which was sent out this week to all Columbia students—has received around 3,000 responses so far and that the committee is working toward a goal of 9,000. SAC plans to publish a report on the survey in the next year, Shah said, looking to address the three most important issues that are identified.

"A lot of the times, administrators write off the issues," Shah said. "We want to make our arguments extremely strong whenever we're recommending something."

Beyond the survey, SAC has a major influence on other senate policy.

"Typically, 60 senators show up to every plenary, and if we have all of SAC show up, 24 student senators have 40 percent of the vote," Shah said. "Even on the smoking issue,

SEE SAC, page 2



DOUGLAS KESSEL / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

MAKSHAY | Akshay Shah, SEAS '14, and Matthew Chou, CC '14, have taken the lead on issues like the Quality of Life survey.

P/D/F policy, passed by CCSC, sees mixed reactions

BY TRACEY WANG
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

A Columbia College Student Council resolution that would require all CC first-years to take all non-Core classes pass/D/fail in their first semester has drawn mixed

reactions from students since it was passed Sunday.

The proposal, which would also change the cap on the number of credits students can take their first semester from 22 to 18, must be approved by Columbia College Dean James Valentini and the Committee

on Instruction before going into effect.

Advocates for the policy change, spearheaded by CCSC Academic Affairs Representative Steven Castellano, CC '13, say it would help students adjust to the college workload and ease the

transition from high school.

Many students agreed. "The transition to college would be easier," Josephine Wei, CC '13, said. "If I were applying to Columbia again, this would definitely be attractive."

SEE P/D/F, page 6

Walcott faces opposition to co-locations at town hall

BY AVANTIKA KUMAR
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

New York City Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott did little to assuage concerns about co-locations at a West Harlem town hall meeting Wednesday.

The town hall, moderated by District 3 Community Education Council President Christine Annechino, drew about 50 people, including local elected officials, teachers, parents, and staff, and discussed a range of schools issues—most notably, co-location, the controversial process of opening charter schools in public school buildings.

The meeting was held in the Wadleigh Educational Complex on 114th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard, a building that houses Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Frederick Douglass Academy II, and, as of this school year, a branch of the Success Academy charter school network.

Walcott defended the practice of co-location and the Success network.

"Our goal is to make sure students are getting an education, and a high-quality education, and Success has been successful in doing that," Walcott said. "I do not have a problem at all with Success growing because they've been able to produce results."

Multiple parents said they were concerned about the

SEE WALCOTT, page 2



DAVID BRANN / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SPEAK OUT | "I'm going to keep talking because I refuse to keep silent," Sexual Assault Awareness Month keynote speaker Harmony Reid said Wednesday at an event in the Diana Center Event Oval.

Reid's lecture marks start of SAAM

BY ABBY ABRAMS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

"I've channeled my energy into those around me," Harmony Reid told a group of 50 students on Wednesday. "I'm going to keep talking because I refuse to keep silent."

The power of narrative is a key tenet of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which kicked off Wednesday with a talk from Reid, who was raped during her first year of college in 2006 and is now a volunteer educator for the Clery Center for Security on Campus.

At the event in Diana Center Event Oval, Reid described her struggle to cope with the attack and her battle to report the incident, in addition to her current work, through which she

provides support and services to victims of sexual violence.

SAAM will host events throughout the month that focus on creating discussions around sexual assault and violence, culminating in a speak-out after the Take Back the Night March next Thursday.

Columbia Health's Sexual Violence Response organized Reid's lecture with support from V-Day, Take Back the Night, FemSex, and Alpha Chi Omega.

Danielle Fong, BC '14 and an AXO sister, said she found the talk moving.

"It's important because one out of four women on college campuses experience sexual violence," Fong said. "Our society can't just keep hiding this as an issue. If we don't have events and discussions to promote this

issue—to move us from saying 'don't get raped' to 'don't rape,' which needs to happen—this won't stop, and it needs to stop now."

Reid told the story of her attempts to seek justice from the police and then her school, Plymouth State University. When both avenues failed her, she became depressed and spent time in therapy.

Reid said she has now dedicated her life to advocating for victims' rights and working to prevent sexual violence and that even seven years after her rape, she is still recovering.

"I was a victim in more ways than anyone should ever have to go through," she said.

After Reid's speech, audience

SEE VIOLENCE, page 6

WEEKEND, PAGES B1-B4

At 5Pointz, graffiti art is no work of vandals

A hallmark of Queens, the graffiti institute faces threats to its existence with aplomb and commitment to continuing its artistic tradition.



OPINION, PAGE 4

Brainy business

Aniruddha Das on Obama's BRAIN initiative and why we should care.

Relieving stress

The Editorial Board supports the proposed P/D/F policy for first-years.

SPORTS, PAGE 3

Lions begin Lou Gehrig Division Play

First-place Columbia will play two doubleheaders against Cornell, whose dominant starting rotation could prove a challenge for the Lions' offense.

SPECTRUM, ONLINE

In bloom

Blogger Emma Finder looks into the Columbia- and Barnard-themed flowers lining the local Broadway Malls.



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ABOVE: STEVEN LAU / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER, BELOW: ABIGAIL FISCH FOR SPECTATOR

POPETASTIC | Above, Jessica Coppola, CC '11, Chris Ruenes, CC '13 (a Spectator Arts & Entertainment staff writer), and Mary Joseph, CC '15, discuss Pope Francis. Below, Pope Benedict XVI in Vatican City.

Questions remain about Pope Francis for locals

BY CECILIA REYES
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

A month into the term of Pope Francis, the Morningside Heights and Columbia communities have been struggling to cope with a spiritual leader who some see as a paradoxical figure.

Stories about Francis celebrating mass at a youth detention facility, washing inmates' feet instead of holding Holy Thursday at or near the Vatican, and choosing to live in a guest room rather than at the traditional Apostolic Palace of the Vatican have gotten major media attention. But locals are skeptical about Francis' conservative policy stances and divided on whether his emphasis on simplicity is authentic or a stunt.

Heidi Neumark, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church at Amsterdam Avenue and 100th Street, was in Argentina working for a nonprofit human rights organization when Francis, born Jorge Bergoglio, was the head of the country's conference of bishops. Neumark said she was disappointed he didn't listen to voices in the Catholic Church asking for increased rights for women and the LGBTQ community.

"The Roman Catholic Church in general has become more conservative since Vatican II," she said, referring to the second Vatican council in the '60s, which addressed the church's relationship with the modern world. "When I was in Latin America, the more liberal bishops and cardinals ... were replaced with more conservative ones who were less friendly to the liberation movements within the church." She expects Francis to continue that trend as pope,

she said.

Alistair Drummond, pastor of West End Presbyterian Church at Amsterdam and 105th Street, concurred, saying that he doesn't expect to see any change in the church's stance toward gays and lesbians but that the ordination of women is a possibility.

He also wondered how well Francis "will be able to resist the negative forces within the Catholic Church," referring to incidents of sexual abuse of children.

"He's not a PR figure. He's an example of holiness, which isn't always easy to identify with."

—Nathan Grubb, SEAS '13

However, Drummond said, Francis is "clearly a man of strong character" who can address church corruption.

Others agreed that the pope's image is admirable.

"He's not concerned with, 'Let me break with everything that's been done before to do these things just because I can,'" Elizabeth Murray, SEAS '13 and co-president of the Columbia Catholic Undergraduates, said.

Murray said that there hasn't been a lot of excitement on the Columbia campus about Francis' election because the University's environment does not lend itself to discovery of the church.

"People just aren't that interested. It's a college campus.

People feel like they don't have to do the things their parents told them to," like going to church every week, she said.

"There's an incentive for college students not to think about it [religion] because they might not like the implications," she added.

Katherine Kohler, School of Social Work '13, said that a sense of mystery surrounds Francis.

She said that, during the tenure of the previous pope, Benedict XVI, "Some people didn't identify with his love for liturgy and love for theology and philosophy." With a pope more focused on the people, "It's a great way for people to identify with that to see another piece of the fullness of the church," she said.

"It's a life and a vocation, as opposed to a job, that he's trying to make the church look good," Kohler said.

Still, Nathan Grubb, SEAS '13, said that it's not exactly the pope's job to be "relatable."

"He's not a PR figure," Grubb said. "He's an example of holiness, which isn't always easy to identify with."

Jessica Coppola, CC '11 and a member of the Columbia University Gospel Choir, said Francis' elevation could be a sign of reforms to come in the church.

"If you can allow someone from the people to get to this role, maybe women can be put in leadership roles," said Coppola, who was raised Catholic but does not identify as such. "Catholics want change, but the institutional papacy is slow to implement those changes."

Avantika Kumar contributed reporting.

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DOT looks to slow traffic near W. Harlem school

BY CHRISTIAN ZHANG
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The Department of Transportation unveiled plans to lower speed limits and reduce crossing distances on roads near West Harlem's P.S. 154 at a community meeting Wednesday night as part of an ongoing initiative to improve school safety in the city.

Members of the Community Board 10 Parks, Recreation and Transportation committee approved the plan Wednesday with the condition that co-chairs Karen Horry and Deborah Gilliard reach out to the school's principal. P.S. 154, also called the Harriet Tubman School, stands on 127th Street between Frederick Douglass and Adam Clayton Powell boulevards.

The current plan calls for

neckdowns—extensions of sidewalks that reduce crossing distance—at nearby intersections and pedestrian shelters along the median of Adam Clayton Powell.

Neckdowns will also force cars to slow down before turning and increase pedestrian visibility before crossing.

Joe Menzer, a representative from the engineering firm RBA Group, which is working for the DOT, said that the school was selected because a large percentage of its students walk or take public transit to school every day, resulting in large numbers of children on nearby streets before and after school.

According to the DOT, between 2006 and 2011, there were 73 accidents within a 200-foot radius of the school, 22 of which involved

pedestrians. Sixty-five percent of all students at P.S. 154 currently walk to and from school, and 24 percent take public transit.

Menzer said the area's speed bumps, some of which locals have criticized as dilapidated, would be fixed while the other measures were addressed.

Messages left at the school's assistant principal's office went unanswered Thursday.

P.S. 154 is part of the second round of schools that the DOT identified in its Safe Routes to School program, which has already funded changes at and around 135 schools in the city.

The DOT will finalize the plan this summer, with construction to take place in the summer of 2015.

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Chou, Shah plan to leverage SAC power in senate

SAC from front page

there were quite a few faculty members that were trying to convince SAC to vote one way or another."

"We are perhaps the most important caucus within the senate, and we intend to leverage" that power this year, he added.

Chou, who sits on the senate education committee and helped present a report on University-wide implementation of open course evaluations, said the senate has often been successful in passing its most important resolutions but acknowledged that

it often takes time resolving these issues.

"Columbia has so many administrative bodies, much like the federal government," Chou said. "So if you pass something, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's going to be implemented right away."

During past meetings, SAC decided to vote separately on the smoking ban resolution brought up at the last plenary meeting.

"SAC as a whole wants to resolve this issue to move on to different parts of the agenda. This has come up for years now," Chou said. "This really just comes down to

communicating to everyone that this is going to be our last shot at making sure that we resolve this issue."

Committee co-chairs traditionally serve on the executive committee, which consists of three student senators total. The third member of the executive committee will be elected next fall.

SAC is comprised of 24 elected student senators and one non-voting observer from the Union Theological Seminary. There are 15 re-turning senators, and 9 will be elected.

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CHRISTIAN DOUGLASS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

FACE TO FACE | New York City Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott, right, talked to parents and locals who were largely unhappy with co-locations at a town hall meeting Wednesday night.

Chancellor defends Success Academy charters

WALCOTT from front page

frequency of charter school co-locations with public schools in District 3, which includes the Upper West Side, Morningside Heights, and parts of Harlem.

Beth Servetar, Parent Teacher Association co-president at Booker T. Washington Middle School, said that District 3 is overburdened and has acted as a host to charter schools in both a "biological" and a social sense.

Wadleigh teacher Anthony Klug said that co-locating his school with the Success branch had caused problems for Wadleigh, including crowded hallways and the loss of a dedicated science laboratory.

"What reassurance can we have with you that our students receive more, and not less, help that they need for our school to improve?" Klug asked, adding that the Success branch, which occupies the building's fifth floor, has had all of its classrooms remodeled.

But Walcott said that Success Academy schools' test scores reflect their value to the community.

"Success has results that benefit the students," he said.

Walcott said that the law mandates a "dollar-for-dollar" improvement scheme in which charter schools and public schools in the same building receive the same amount in capital improvements. However, the way this money is used can differ from school to school, Walcott added.

While Servetar said she was grateful that Walcott and several staff members chose to come to District 3, she wished he had given more specific answers, adding that he had a tendency to address issues in broad sweeps.

Servetar added that the DOE would be "disingenuous" to claim that it had chosen charter school sites thoughtfully, given that several schools were experiencing space crunches following co-location.

"We've borne the burden for a long time," Servetar said.

Marisa Maack, chair of Community Board 7's Youth, Education and Libraries Committee, agreed that District 3 has had a disproportionate number of co-locations. She said she felt that Success Academy has so many branches in District 3 because the organization got its start in

the neighborhood.

"This is where they began," Maack said, adding that Success Academy "focused its strategy on Harlem" in its early years.

She added that the issues raised at the town hall were mainly old or ongoing ones.

"I didn't hear a lot of new information," Maack said.

Also at the meeting, principals of both Wadleigh and Frederick Douglass II said their respective schools had made major strides after being slated for closure last year and subsequently spared.

Frederick Douglass II principal Osei Owusu-Afriyie noted that the school received an A in its last progress report, a measure indicative of the "great work that we're doing."

Wadleigh principal Tye Chin also said that his school has "made some significant changes," including new leadership, and is overall moving in a "very positive direction," noting that the school has also seen an 80 percent decrease in suspensions.

"We're changing culturally what's going on in the building," Chin said.

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Glance needs time to fix basketball team

In sports, there's nothing easier to root for than the comeback story. Be it the comeback team or the comeback kid, we all want to rally behind underdogs and claim them as our own. We've all been underdogs before. We all want to see the unexpected happen—we want to see the little dog beat the big dog.

Sometimes it seems like it only takes one small jolt to spark the comeback. One home run. One tackle. One lucky bucket. Other times, it takes a more significant change to bring about the turnaround. The addition of a high-profile player to the team, or, perhaps, as in last week's case right here on our own campus, the addition of a high-profile coach like Stephanie Glance.

After going 70-153 during an eight-year span under former coach Paul Nixon, the women's basketball team was in desperate need of a makeover from the top. Glance has worked with NCAA all-time winningest coach Pat Summitt, and she succeeded Hall of Fame coach Kay Yow at North Carolina State. Perhaps a coach with her background is far more than we could have bargained for.

But with our overwhelming pride at having acquired such a knowledgeable and experienced figure in the coaching world of women's college basketball, it's easy to fall into the mentality of "she's the one."

"Coach Glance will right the ship," we'll think. "She'll revamp the reputation of Light Blue women's basketball and fix all of the mistakes that have been plaguing the team for nearly a decade. She'll lead the team to an Ivy championship in her first season as coach." In other words, Glance will incite the rise of the underdog.

It's come to my attention that, as fans of New York teams, we're solely interested in instant change and instant success—slow progress is not to be tolerated. With this mentality, Columbia students likely had some of the aforementioned thoughts last Wednesday when Glance was formally announced as the new head coach. She brings with her a 39-27 overall record in her three seasons as a head coach, as well as a WNIT semifinal showing with her last team, Illinois State.

"There's no way she can't turn this squad around," you might think. And this, dear reader, is the kind of mentality that serves as the foundation for endless heartache and long, sleepless nights.

Before we set the bar too high for Glance, we should approach the situation with caution. We need to better understand where the problems for the women's basketball team were coming from in the first place. Yes, sometimes it just takes a new face preaching the same old mantras for the stuff to sink in, but that's not always the case. Yes, sometimes the source of the team's problems lies with the coach, but this is not always the case.

Glance's strong suit is her ability to recruit phenomenal athletes. Fine. But at the end of the day, what we need is the coach who can lead the team to wins and, ultimately, the championship. Recruitment is indeed an important part of the equation, but the execution of what takes place on the court on game day is more important.

That is not to say that Glance can't redirect this Columbia program for the better. She absolutely has the potential to do so. What we should be wary of is giving her too much or too little time to effect change.

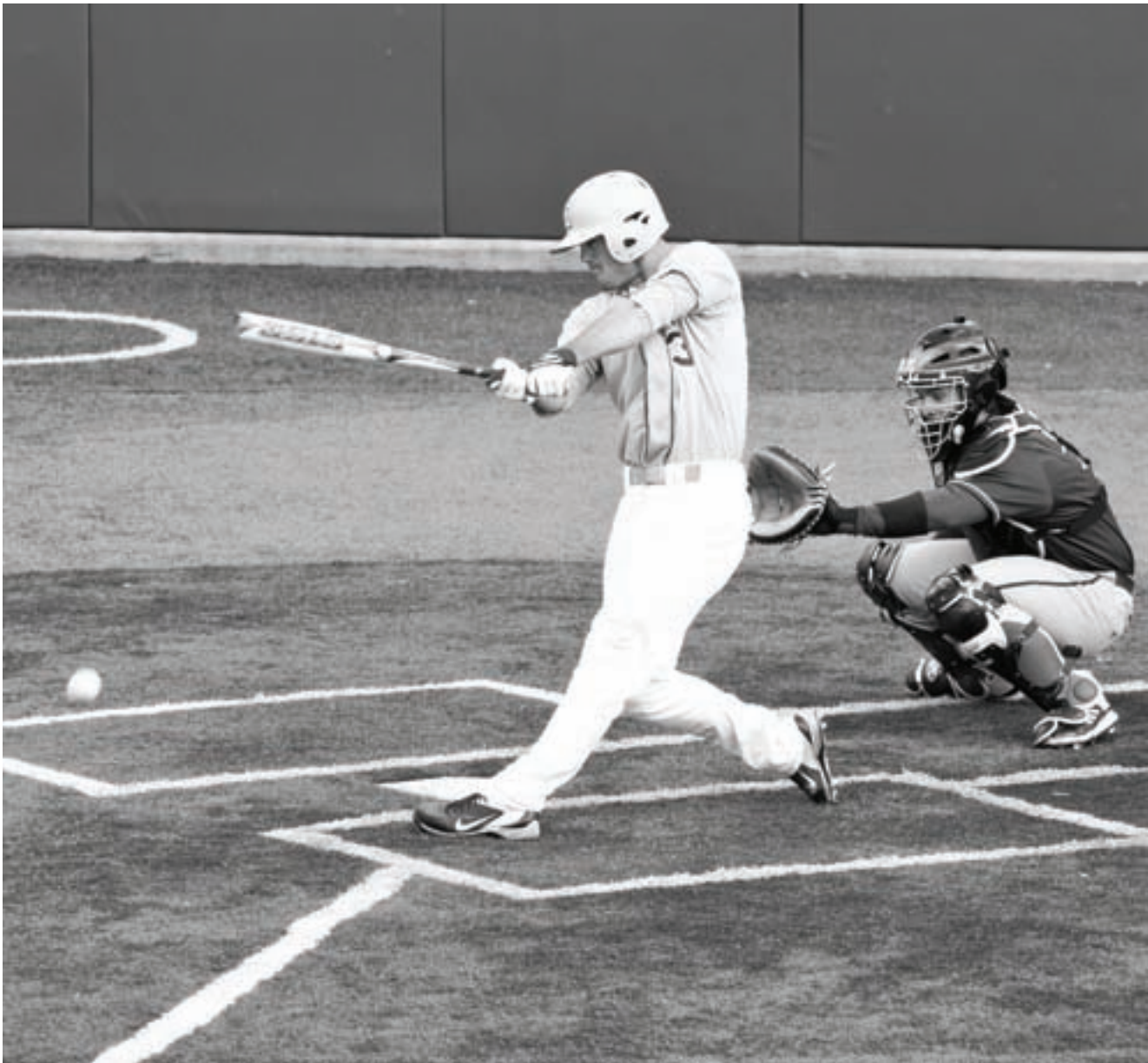
If we realize in a couple of years that the women's basketball team is still struggling, even after Glance has had the opportunity to completely clean house and rebuild with her new recruits, then perhaps she is not the answer to the problem, even with her credentials.

We should consider next year a transition year for the program, rather than indicative of what the future will be under Glance.

Melissa Cheung is a Columbia College sophomore. Closing In runs biweekly. sports@columbiaspectator.com



MELISSA CHEUNG
Closing In



DOUGLAS KESSEL / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

STEALING SERENA | Jordan Serena's 15 stolen bases lead the conference and rank in the nation's top 60.

Lions to face Cornell's dominant rotation at home

BY MOLLY TOW
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The Empire State rivalry is back, and this year both Columbia (14-15, 6-2 Ivy) and Cornell (17-10, 5-3 Ivy) have something to prove. Not only does Columbia have the best record in the Ivy League and a five-game winning streak, but it's also starting off Lou Gehrig Division play against the defending Ivy League champion.

Head coach Brett Boretti is optimistic, given his team's performance of late. Their last time on the field, the Lions beat the St. John's Red Storm 5-3, with great performances at the plate from sophomore third baseman David Vandercook and sophomore center fielder Jordan Serena.

"We're in a good spot right now, and I think we've just got to continue to bring it and keep playing with confidence," Boretti said.

Last year's series between Columbia and Cornell saw the Big Red prevail, taking the first three games and dropping the fourth. Pitchers Connor Kaufman, Brian McAfee, and Nick Busto—all returning this year—recorded wins for Cornell. The only victory for the Light Blue came against then-senior Rick Marks.

The Lions will likely face the combination of Busto and Brent Jones on Saturday and will see McAfee for Sunday's first game. Sunday's probable game two starter for Cornell is Zach

McCulley, who threw the first complete game of his career last weekend against Dartmouth, scattering four hits across seven innings with five strikeouts for a shutout. Cornell's team ERA sits at a 3.18—significantly better than Columbia's 3.94.

"Scouting them, we know they're a very good pitching team," Boretti said. "They do a good job of limiting free bases and walks. We've got our work cut out, as far as trying to get things going offensively."

Cornell saw its last action against Harvard and Dartmouth last weekend. Whereas the Lions swept the Crimson and were subsequently swept by the Big Green, the Big Red split with both. Notably, though, the Big Red's dominant pitching staff only allowed one run to Dartmouth in the entire series, while Columbia gave up 10.

"We know we're going to face good arms," Boretti said. "We need to find ways to continue to put pressure on the defense and make things happen. Getting two-out hits is always going to be a crucial thing to try to continue to be consistent with the at-bats."

Offensively, the Big Red is not as threatening. It has a solid two-spot hitter in JD Whetsel, who leads the team with a .312 average, but overall the team only bats .253. Cornell also lost a few key position players last year.

"Their lineup is different this year offensively," Boretti said. "They lost [Brian] Billigen, they lost [Marshall] Yanzick, and at short they got [Chris] Cruz, who's back from an early injury, who's a guy in the middle of the lineup that you've got

to definitely be aware of."

Like the Light Blue, the Big Red's fortes on offense are small ball and base running. Both teams have similar power numbers, with the slight edge going to the Lions—a .362 slugging percentage and 13 home runs to Cornell's .353 and 10. Both teams also feel at home on the basepaths, with the Big Red stealing more bags (49, to Columbia's 40) and the Lions stealing bases at a slightly higher success rate (.800, to Cornell's .766). In addition to leading Cornell in batting, Whetsel also leads in steals, with 12.

"They're going to try to run," Boretti said. "They're one of the top running teams in the league, and I think we have to do a good job of controlling the running game there."

Naturally, there is a lot of pressure on the Lions both to keep their winning streak alive and to make a statement in their division, but Boretti feels that the team's current embodiment of a specific type of mentality will bode well for Columbia this weekend.

"We know where we're at right now heading into the weekend," Boretti said. "We've got four games, and you just have to take them one at a time. I think the guys are doing a really good job of that right now, as far as game one, focusing on that, and not worrying about the other three until it's time to worry about the next one."

Game one is set to begin at 12 p.m. on Saturday at Robertson Field at Satow Stadium, with game two slated for 3 p.m. The same schedule holds for Sunday. molly.tow@columbiaspectator.com

Lacrosse team still looking for first Ivy win as it faces Yale

BY ROBERT MITCHELL
Spectator Staff Writer

The Light Blue lacrosse (2-9, 0-5 Ivy) team heads to Oceanside High School this weekend to face off against Yale (6-5, 0-4 Ivy), a matchup of two winless squads sitting at the bottom of the Ivy League standings.

The game is a part of a LAX Loves Long Island event intended to raise money for damage done during Hurricane Sandy. The Lions and Bulldogs are headlining the event, with each team having the opportunity to pick up its first Ivy win. Organizers hope the event will raise up to \$75,000.

Yale has found it difficult to score in conference play, averaging just seven goals a game on 33.3 percent shooting. The keys to a Bulldogs win will be Devon Rhodes, who has 27 goals and 13 assists on the year, and

Nicole Daniggelis and her 26 goals. Each tallied four goals last weekend against Princeton. Despite playing an even 6-6 second half against an elite offensive team, a 6-0 run in the first half doomed the Bulldogs in the 14-9 loss.

For the Lions to prevail, they will need strong performances from junior Paige Cuscovitch and senior Kacie Johnson. While the Light Blue has split its last two games against Fresno State and Penn, the team has done a much better job of avoiding major defensive lapses. It also continues to force turnovers at a league-leading rate and is sixth overall in the nation with 116 forced turnovers. Moreover, Cuscovitch's 33 ground balls this season lead the Ivy League, a mark that is also eighth best in the nation.

The match begins this Saturday at 3 p.m. at Oceanside High School in Long Island.

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WOMEN'S GOLF
Seventh Annual Roar-EE Invitational
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TRACK AND FIELD
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Spring Invitational
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Saturday, all day



TRACK AND FIELD
at Army Quad Meet
West Point, N.Y.
Saturday, all day



MEN'S GOLF
at Princeton
Invitational
Princeton, N.J.
Springdale Golf Club
Saturday, 12 p.m.



SOFTBALL
vs. Cornell
Columbia Softball Stadium
Saturday, 12:30 p.m., 3 p.m.



HEAVYWEIGHT ROWING
vs. Princeton, Penn
Childs Cup
Ridgefield Park, N.J.
Overpeck Lake
Saturday, 9 a.m.



LIGHTWEIGHT ROWING
at Yale, Penn
Dodge Cup
Philadelphia, Pa.
Schuylkill River
Saturday, 10 a.m.



WOMEN'S TENNIS
at Brown
Providence, R.I.
Saturday, 12 p.m.



BASEBALL
vs. Cornell
Robertson Field at Satow Stadium
Saturday, 12 p.m., 3 p.m.



MEN'S TENNIS
vs. Brown
Dick Savitt Tennis Center
Saturday, 2 p.m.



LACROSSE
vs. Yale
Oceanside, N.Y.
Saturday, 3 p.m.



SOFTBALL
vs. Cornell
Columbia Softball Stadium
Sunday, 12:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m.



WOMEN'S TENNIS
at Yale
New Haven, Conn.
Sunday, 12 p.m.



BASEBALL
vs. Cornell
Robertson Field at Satow Stadium
Sunday, 12 p.m., 3 p.m.



MEN'S TENNIS
vs. Yale
Dick Savitt Tennis Center
Sunday, 2 p.m.



BY PHIL GODZIN
Spectator Staff Writer

Softball splits doubleheader, to face Cornell this weekend

The softball team (16-16, 4-4 Ivy) couldn't sweep a struggling Saint Peter's team on Thursday, losing the first game of the doubleheader 3-0 before holding on for a 6-5 win in the second game.

In the first game, the Peacocks jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the first inning with three doubles, scoring what would be the only runs of the game. Pitcher Tori Feorenzo earned her first win of the season with a three-hit, complete-game shutout. The Lions had their best and only chance

SEE SOFTBALL, page 7



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Mapping the last frontier

BY ANIRUDDHA DAS

On April 2, following an earlier hint in his State of the Union address, President Barack Obama announced the BRAIN Initiative (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies), with a proposed \$100 million per year in public funding for “giving scientists the tools they need to get a dynamic picture of the brain in action.” This initiative was catalyzed by a proposal for a “Brain Activity Map,” floated last year by a group of six scientists, including Columbia’s Rafael Yuste. While it is important to be realistic about the promise of the BRAIN Initiative, Obama’s announcement was as refreshing for its potential benefits to neuroscience as for his enthusiastic endorsement of science overall.

Understanding the brain—“the three pounds of matter that sits between our ears,” as Obama put it—remains one of today’s foremost scientific challenges. The last 50 years of research have taught us a tremendous amount about how individual nerve cells and circuits fire, about how the firing in one cell may signal the presence of a particular face, while the firing in another cell may control where we turn our eyes. But we still lack crucial conceptual links to connect these patterns of neural activity in the brain with the cognitive realm of perception and behavior: How do we see and recognize a friend? Open and walk through a door? What makes a person depressed? Autistic?

In the history of neuroscience, such major conceptual leaps have typically followed the development of new tools. Developing tools is precisely the focus of the BRAIN Initiative. And the field is ready for it, with tools that are rapidly growing more sophisticated. For example, it is now possible to turn specific groups of cells in a mouse brain on and off with pulses of light, inducing specific behaviors like depression or autism. This gives us hope for understanding similar complex behaviors in humans. Such a targeted effort to develop neurotechnologies will be a powerful boost to the field overall.

It is important, however, not to oversell the BRAIN Initiative, and to be realistic about the timeframes involved. Here, we can look to the Human Genome Project, which will soon celebrate the 10th anniversary of its completion. On one level, the Human Genome Project has been an unequivocal scientific success. The full sequencing was completed ahead of schedule and spawned amazing technology, such as ultra-cheap sequencing machines. For certain types of cancer, it is now routine to tailor chemotherapy regimes to a genotype of the individual patient’s tumor.

However, the Human Genome Project also brought a major surprise and a bit of a disappointment. It turns out that humans have very few distinct genes (about 21,000 protein-coding sequences, compared to about 20,000 such genes in the roundworm, or nematode). The real coding complexity lies in the interactions between multiple genes and with epigenetic material. So earlier hopes of the decoded genome leading to simple insights about risks for different diseases have been largely unmet.

Understanding brain function will likely be much more complex. Unlike the Human Genome Project, where the goal—identifying all the elements in the genome—was well defined, there is no such endpoint in brain research. Different questions will likely require descriptions of the brain at very different scales, making the BRAIN Initiative inherently more open-ended.

Finally, many in the scientific community have expressed fears that the BRAIN Initiative funding will get earmarked to a specific project, such as the earlier proposed BAM (of which many neuroscientists had been critical). But such fears are unfounded. The major step in the initiative so far has been the creation of an advisory body of neuroscientists, which has been charged with getting input and advice from the scientific community. The neuroscience community here at Columbia is, as one of the strongest anywhere, heavily involved, especially as the Mind Brain Behavior Institute becomes operational.

But why should we fund this initiative? In economic terms, the answer is clear: Each dollar invested by the government into the Human Genome Project returned an estimated \$60 to \$140 in this first decade of its completion, similar gains could be made by the BRAIN Initiative. Perhaps more important are the technological payoffs, which could be spectacular. A prosthetic arm fine enough to play the piano and strong enough to play basketball. Visual prostheses for those whose sight has been destroyed by macular degeneration. All these innovations and more await a better mastery of the brain.

So is Obama’s BRAIN Initiative a good thing? Of course. And it should be embraced—enthusiastically, but mindfully.

Aniruddha Das is an associate professor of neuroscience and psychiatry in the department of neuroscience.

Silence is golden

Two weeks ago, I violated my own boundaries. I made myself more vulnerable than I was ready for, and after I did, I felt like I was living in a fishbowl.

After my last opinion column came out and I told the world I used to cut, I made myself invisible on my Gchat list. That entire weekend, I was scared readers would define me by the number of cuts I’d had on my wrist. I tried to hide in the privacy of my suite that weekend, and when I was outside my suite, I surrounded myself with friends who knew me well, who wouldn’t define me by the cuts I’d inflicted on myself. I worried about pity, I worried about stigma, I worried about being a “psycho.”

In her column (“Courageous silence,” Feb. 25), Ayelet Pearl lauded the courage of opinion writers who have been able to write about their eating disorders, their sexual traumas, their difficulties. She hit the nail on the head by reminding us that not everybody can speak up, writing, “As some of us come out with our personal struggles, as it becomes increasingly accepted to do so, it becomes harder and harder for others to remain silent and alone. Surely some may have the occasional visceral envy for those who can speak out.”

Her choice to use words like “visceral envy” makes more sense to me than ever before. Because, as I’ve come to realize, readers have a tendency to lionize someone’s decision to “come out” about a difficulty in his or her life, sometimes unintentionally. The person who comes out becomes a courageous figure, an inspirational figure. In a manner of speaking, he or she becomes a hero. It can be difficult for others not to feel a twinge of envy. I admit, I felt it when Rae Binstock spoke about her courage a few months ago (“Saying goodbye to my bulimia,” Jan. 22). I felt it when José Ricardo Moreno spoke about his anxiety over possibly having HIV (“The fear of being HIV positive,” Dec. 4). I was mildly envious because I wished I had the courage to tell others about similar difficulties. I wanted to receive the support they did in the comments and in Facebook shoutouts.

After writing my first column this semester, I thrived on that thought—of being a source of inspiration, of being a “hero.” I don’t mean to sound arrogant. Putting myself out there as a “public good,” to provide a voice for others



ANDREA GARCÍA-VARGAS

The Elephant in the Room

who had gone through similar difficulties—it seemed like a win-win situation. I could help others through my writing, and then I could enjoy being seen as brave. The feelings that many people had stigmatized throughout my life were finally being validated.

Two weeks ago, however, I didn’t feel brave. What I had revealed in my column made me feel exposed and naked, and I wasn’t at all ready for so many eyes to see it. Though many people thanked me for writing that column, and though I am thankful that my column put the issue of self-harm in the open, I still feel a bit of regret. Performing a “public good” had made me forget to consider my own comfort levels. “What will entice others into reading?” became a more important question than “Do I truly feel comfortable writing this?” And, despite a couple friends’ insistence that I not write the article, I still went ahead.

It seemed like a win-win situation—I could help others through my writing, and then I could enjoy being seen as brave.

I learned the hard way that some of my struggles might be better discussed in a therapy session or with a group of close friends, rather than in a public forum.

I don’t mean this as a prescriptive statement. To the past op-ed writers and column writers who’ve made shock waves with their beautiful tales about personal difficulties: I support what you’re doing. Every little bit of me does. To cut a slice of ourselves and put it in a public forum—where the biggest trolls and assholes sometimes lurk—is a choice we all at one point might make as nonfiction writers and as people, and if you are willing and ready to make it, then make it.

But if you’re not ready, you’re not ready. Some people can recover under the public eye. For others, it takes the comfort of a private space. Sometimes, silence—silence in an unrelenting public space—is golden, especially for our own health and well-being.

Andrea García-Vargas is a Columbia College senior majoring in English literature and creative writing. She is a former Spectator editorial page editor. The Elephant in the Room runs alternate Fridays.



ILLUSTRATION BY JIYOUN HAN

STAFF EDITORIAL

Support pass/fail

The transition to college isn’t an easy one. But the resolution that the Columbia College Student Council passed on Sunday—requiring students in their first semester to take all non-Core classes pass/D/fail and lowering the first-semester credit limit to 18—has real potential to reduce some of the stress of that transition. Cushioning the blow of potentially sub-par academic performance during the first semester will impact different types of students in vastly different ways, helping some and possibly hurting others, but we believe that the benefit to student wellness outweighs the possible detriments. This policy, if accompanied by other institutional changes, would be an important step toward alleviating the high-stress culture that exists across the University.

Every student arrives at Columbia with a distinct educational, personal, and social background. There are many students who had less rigorous high school academics and are unaccustomed to the structure and pacing of college coursework or who are less equipped to live independently, and consequently, the playing field needs some leveling. A mandatory pass/D/fail policy for first semester would give all students time to learn the ropes, routines, and rigors of life at Columbia without worrying about their GPAs. Still, implementing this policy should not make Columbia complacent when it comes to reducing academic stress. First semester pass/D/fail should be accompanied by other measures to help students transition smoothly to college, including the continued improvement of the Center for Student Advising. At the very least, advisers need to have

conversations with all incoming students about what they can realistically handle in their first semesters.

The potential for significant collateral damage tempers our support of this measure. The change will hurt some students who are motivated by grades, thus preventing the development of the work ethic and study habits that they will need in subsequent semesters. It is important to remember, though, that assessments would still be graded throughout the semester, and students would be able to see unofficial final grades for each course on Student Services Online. Grade-motivated students, then, will still know how they are doing, and students with poor work habits would be well aware that they need to improve.

Critics of the CCSC resolution have suggested making first-semester pass/D/fail optional, but we agree that if the policy is implemented, it should be mandatory. Allowing first-years to opt out would effectively defeat the goals of the resolution. If some students have transcripts with letter grades and others have transcripts with Ps, the students with Ps will be disadvantaged when applying to jobs, schools, and fellowships after graduation. This disadvantage would encourage many students to forgo the pass/D/fail option.

If the policy is mandatory for all first-years, though, we believe it would not tangibly affect students’ summer internship and post-graduation opportunities. Universities such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Johns Hopkins University have already pioneered first-semester pass/D/fail programs, acclimating employers and graduate school admissions offices to their existence. Columbia’s career office should follow MIT’s example and work closely with graduate and professional schools to help them understand Columbia’s policy. And while students who excel in their first-semester courses wouldn’t

see the corresponding GPA bump—another disadvantage of this policy—they can still request letters of recommendation from professors, which would reflect their hard work and good grades.

CCSC, led by academic affairs representative Steven Castellano, CC ’13, prepared and passed this resolution only after a great deal of due diligence. Council members researched the efficacy of similar policies at other universities and surveyed about 600 students, confirming that the policy would be popular. And now that CCSC has voted in support of first-semester pass/D/fail, the Columbia College dean’s office and the Committee on Instruction will need to approve it, ensuring that both students and faculty fully support it before it is implemented. We applaud CCSC for fulfilling its duty to respond to the concerns and needs of its student constituency.

That said, a first semester pass/D/fail policy would have its drawbacks, as outlined above. And while CCSC’s proposal provides some data on how the policy has fared at other schools, its impact on Columbia’s student body will not be known until it has been implemented. Perhaps the policy won’t reduce stress as much as we expect it to, or perhaps many students will fail to develop the strong work habits in their first semester, simply delaying the challenging college transition. Because of the possibility that the policy will not be as effective as hoped, we believe that a trial period is necessary, during which the wellness of students of different academic backgrounds, both in their first semester and in subsequent semesters, is closely monitored through surveys and conversations. With cautious optimism, we urge Dean James Valentini and the Committee on Instruction to approve this policy for a three-year trial period.

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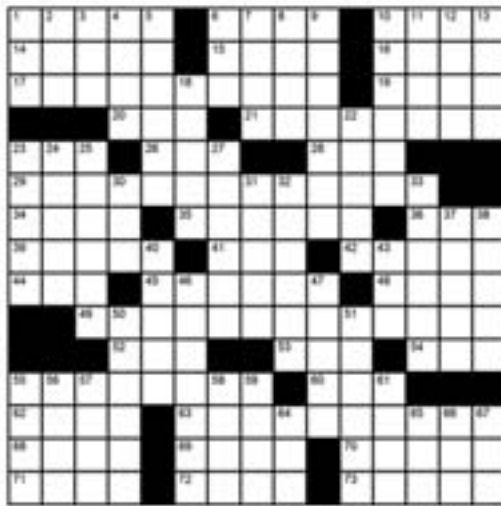


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10. President Obama should acknowledge that He has **NOT FULFILLED HIS OBLIGATION** to that "**OFFER**": "to assist" in resolving the **very important issues of TRUTH, JUSTICE, and the PROTECTION of FREEDOM AND LIBERTY**.

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Gregorek wins first place in steeplechase

BY MELISSA CHEUNG
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The men's and women's track and field teams will be running split-squad this weekend, with some athletes competing in the Army Quad Meet and others in the George Mason Spring Invitational.



At West Point, N.Y., the Lions will race against teams from Binghamton, Colgate, and Middlebury. The Mason Spring Invitational in Fairfax, Va., will feature a wider range of schools, all from the East Coast region.

The Lions are returning to action after several strong performances at the Sam Howell Invitational in Princeton last weekend. Among the top performers for the Light Blue was junior John Gregorek, who brought home a first-place finish in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 8:52.85, good for eighth best in the nation.

"I was content with my performance this past weekend," Gregorek said.

He has seen his success from this past indoor season carry over to the outdoor season, but the veteran is not resting on his laurels just yet.

"There's a lot of room for improvement in fitness and technique, so I'm looking forward to the next few weeks of training and racing," he said.

Despite the fact that the Lions

have been running in meets for four consecutive weekends and counting, it is to their benefit that some of the meets from the first half of the season, including the ones taking place this weekend, are significantly smaller than the rest. The Light Blue can use the larger meets with more elite teams to gauge its performance level. At the smaller scale meets with more localized competition, the squad can practice its racing strategies and perfect its techniques.

"The team's main focus is keeping a steady improvement curve from meet to meet and achieving good qualifying times moving into the postseason," Gregorek said.

The way Gregorek sees it, this early phase of the season is just a small part of the team's steady buildup to the peak of the season, at the end of this month and into early May. If the Lions continue to work hard and stay motivated, then they will not have a problem reaching the goals they have set for themselves, he said.

"On the whole, myself and the rest of the team still need to keep our noses to the grindstone. We plan on having our best performances later in the season, in the conference and regional championships," Gregorek said.

The Army Quad Meet and the George Mason Spring Invitational will both begin on Saturday.

sports

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COURTESY OF JOHN DONLEY

FIRST-PLACE FINISH | John Gregorek won the 3,000-meter steeplechase last weekend at the Sam Howell Invitational.

First-place Light Blue to face Brown, Yale

BY IKE CLEMENTE
KITMAN
Spectator Staff Writer

Following last weekend's successful homestand, the Columbia women's tennis squad will hit the road this weekend, facing Brown on Saturday and Yale on Sunday. After defeating Harvard and Dartmouth last weekend, the Lions sit atop the Ivy League with a 3-0 record in conference play.



Last Friday, the Lions jumped to an early 3-0 lead against Harvard before the Crimson rallied to even the score at 3-3 with three consecutive singles victories. Junior Bianca Sanon, who just moved into the national rankings for singles at No. 115, edged her Crimson opponent in three close sets to give the Lions a hard-fought 4-3 victory.

"Overall, we slipped past them because we are a little bit more prepared and a lot more hungry," head coach Eileen Weintraub said.

On Saturday, the Light Blue easily topped the Big Green 7-0. No. 70 senior Nicole Bartnik, Sanon, and freshman Kanika Vaidya earned quick two-set victories in first, second, and third singles, respectively.

"Dartmouth was an easy match for us. They weren't able to hang with the speed and consistency of our team," Weintraub said.

This weekend, the Lions will face a mixed bag of Ancient Eight competition. The Bears

(6-9, 0-2 Ivy) are in last place in the Ivy League after falling to Penn and Princeton last weekend by scores of 4-3 and 6-1, respectively.

The Bulldogs, though, pose more of a threat for the Lions. Like the Light Blue, the Bulldogs haven't dropped an Ivy match, having felled the Tigers and Quakers on the road last weekend. At 13-2 overall, the Bulldogs also hold the best overall winning percentage in the Ancient Eight. Yale's team captain, Elizabeth Epstein, is ranked No. 46 in the country, but she has dropped both of her Ivy matches this season.

With only four matches left in conference play, the undefeated Lions are strong contenders for an Ivy title. In addition to the ranked Bartnik and Sanon, Vaidya and sophomore Crystal Leung have also starred in singles for the Light Blue, holding 10-1 and 11-1 records, respectively.


"We have the three best players in the league, and our four through eight have improved their level through training with our top three," Weintraub said.

The Light Blue's match against Yale will likely prove to be the Lions' toughest obstacle on the path to an Ivy title. But the Lions, Weintraub said, are ready.


"We do not go into matches with any preconceived notions about another team," Weintraub said. "We're not nervous, or playing with pressure. We're approaching matches in a businesslike manner."

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FRIDAY FULL COUNT



VS.



COLUMBIA

Jordan Serena (CF)
AVG: .230, OBP: .336, SLG: .370

Nick Crucet (2B)
AVG: .256, OBP: .362, SLG: .300

Eric Williams (DH)
AVG: .218, OBP: .373, SLG: .299

Alex Black (1B)
AVG: .276, OBP: .379, SLG: .429

Nick Ferraresi (RF)
AVG: .267, OBP: .327, SLG: .396

Logan Boyher (LF)
AVG: .264, OBP: .273, SLG: .377

Aaron Silbar (SS)
AVG: .313, OBP: .352, SLG: .385

David Vandercook (3B)
AVG: .200, OBP: .301, SLG: .300

Mike Fischer (C)
AVG: .194, OBP: .311, SLG: .355

CORNELL

Brenton Peters (2B)
AVG: .279, OBP: .392, SLG: .349

JD Whetsel (CF)
AVG: .312, OBP: .423, SLG: .419

Matt Hall (C)
AVG: .297, OBP: .374, SLG: .376

Chris Cruz (RF)
AVG: .273, OBP: .400, SLG: .576

Ryan Plantier (1B)
AVG: .240, OBP: .315, SLG: .323


Tom D'Alessandro (SS)
AVG: .258, OBP: .381, SLG: .355

Conor McCabe (LF)
AVG: .130, OBP: .130, SLG: .174

Kevin Tatum (DH)
AVG: .225, OBP: .369, SLG: .363


Eliot Lowell (3B)
AVG: .154, OBP: .185, SLG: .154

GAME 1




Nick Busto
Cornell
ERA: 1.38, K: 26, BB: 11

vs.




David Speer
Columbia
ERA: 2.13, K: 32, BB: 11

GAME 2




Brent Jones
Cornell
ERA: 3.33, K: 20, BB: 12

vs.




Joey Donino
Columbia
ERA: 4.10, K: 31, BB: 12

GAME 3




Brian McAfee
Cornell
ERA: 2.45, K: 21, BB: 4

vs.




Tim Giel
Columbia
ERA: 3.15, K: 29, BB: 11

GAME 4



Zach McCulley
Cornell
ERA: 1.69, K: 22, BB: 4

vs.



Adam Cline
Columbia
ERA: 4.40, K: 34, BB: 8

KEYS TO THE GAME

- 1

Playing in the clutch
Facing a team with a dominant starting rotation that boasts an ERA of 3.18, the Lions will need to be able to get hits with two outs in order to produce runs.
- 2

Controlling runners
Cornell tends to steal a lot of bases, so the Lions will need to pay attention to baserunners, especially JD Whetsel, who leads the team with 12 steals.
- 3

One game at a time
Columbia and Cornell will be playing four games against each other over two days. It will be important for the players to think about each game as it comes before worrying about the games ahead of them.

Men's tennis to host Yale and Brown

BY ALEXANDER
BERNSTEIN
Spectator Staff Writer

Following a dismal showing last weekend that featured a pair of close road losses at Harvard 3-4 and Dartmouth 2-4, the men's tennis team will welcome Yale and Brown to



the Dick Savitt Tennis Center this weekend.

The first match of the weekend for the now-No. 49 Lions will come on Saturday against the Bears. This weekend, Brown (12-7, 1-1 Ivy) will be forced to break out of its three-way tie with Dartmouth and Yale. So far, the Bears have had an up-and-down season, splitting their first two Ivy matches with a 5-2 victory against Penn and a 4-3 loss

to Princeton. The most consistent player for Brown has been Mike Hill, who has won both of his league matches. His matchup with Columbia freshman Dragos Ignat at the No. 2 spot should be among the most exciting of the match this weekend.

Yale (15-4, 1-1 Ivy) will come into the Dick Savitt Tennis Center this Sunday as the No. 65 team in the nation. The Bulldogs will visit Cornell

before they head to Harlem on Sunday.

For the Lions, Winston Lin has remained as solid as ever in the No. 1 position, amassing a 10-5 overall record. He defeated Dartmouth's Xander Centenari last weekend in straight sets, 6-4 and 7-5. In order to get back in the win column, the rest of the Lions will need to follow suit.

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Lions to play four games against Cornell

SOFTBALL from page 3

in the third inning, when two singles and an error loaded the bases with one out. Feorenzo went on to strike out Alix Cook and induce Liz Caggiano to hit a grounder back to the mound. Only one Lion reached base, on a walk, in the last four innings.

In the second game, it was the Lions' turn to jump out to an early 3-0 lead against

Feorenzo, who started the second game as well but lasted just a third of an inning. A single, a double, and a hit batter loaded the bases for Macy Shrum, who smashed a bases-clearing double to left.

The Lions extended their lead to 6-2 in the sixth inning, but two costly errors by Shrum at short in the top of the seventh allowed the Peacocks to rally back. Two singles and a

wild pitch brought in three runs, putting the tying run in scoring position with one out. But Brooke Darling struck out the next two hitters to end the game.

Up next for the Lions are four weekend games against Cornell with whom they are tied for third in the conference with 4-4 Ivy records.

Cornell has won four consecutive South Division titles,

and its offense will be tough for the Lions to contain. The Big Red has seven starters hitting above .300 on the season, led by Erin Belles (.406, seven home runs) and Christina Villalon (.396, 23 RBIs). Pitcher Alyson Onyon is among the league leaders in wins, with 10, and she has an even 100 strikeouts on the season.

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DAVID BRANN / SENIOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ALL CLEAR | Freshman Macy Shrum cleared the bases with a double to left in the Lions' win.

SGA presidential election was divisive, hotly contested

SGA from front page

Hassine exchanging fiery comments during the campaign season. Current SGA President JungHee Hyun, BC '13, said, “This year has been a little more of challenge. Aliza is such a well-regarded class leader, and Maddy has been a well-regarded leader in her community as well. They both represent very different communities and I think it caused some tension.”

Some members of SGA also pledged allegiance to the candidates. “That caused some organizational drama,” Hyun said. “Other than that, as always, these elections do get challenging in terms of personal relationships.”

Hyun said that having worked with Popkin earlier this semester to establish gender-inclusive bathroom signage, she was pleased to hear that Popkin was interested in running for her position.

“We were really happy and definitely encouraged her when she said she wanted to run,” she said.

“Having done this for a year, I absolutely think she’s going to be a great president.”

“Even if you have had previous SGA experience, there’s exponential growth one has to do for the position.”

—JungHee Hyun, BC '13, SGA President

Hyun said that since the presidential position is so different from all the other positions on the board, it is a strength that Popkin is coming in having had no experience.

“Even if you have had previous SGA experience, there’s exponential growth one has to do for the position because it is so challenging

and different,” she said.

Spectator was unable to reach Hassine for comment.

Tauber said that her main goal is to facilitate more communication on finances between students and the administration. She plans to mandate that the Financial Advisory Council hold a yearly town hall.

In other notable races, Adrienne Nel, BC '16, won the election for the newly created representative for arts and culture, beating out Lindsay Forcade, BC '14. Julia Qian, BC '15, was elected representative for diversity.

“My biggest challenge as representative for diversity is to fight for the rights of the marginalized and, at the same time, make the best decision for the student body as a whole,” Qian said. “I want to promote diversity on campus but also maintain unity. This is a challenge, but it’s not an impossible task.”

She said that she hopes to work with the admissions office and the language departments to translate the admissions website and

parent newsletters into different languages.

“People who don’t speak English, like my mom, will be able to know how amazing Barnard is and be proud of her daughter being a Barnard woman,” she said.

In the class council elections, Stephanie Fernandez and Nikki Weiner were elected senior class president and vice president. Fernandez beat out Candace Fox and Ashley Wagner.

Hannah Rosenwein and Lissa Soares were elected junior class president and vice president. The representative positions for both the senior and junior classes remain vacant.

Shivani Vikuntam and Rachel Chung were elected sophomore class president and vice president, Pascale Dugue will serve as the sophomore class treasurer, and Anjali Agarwalla will be the class secretary.

For a complete listing of winners, see [columbiaspectator.com](#) [tracey.wang@columbiaspectator.com](#)

SPORTS BRIEFLY

LIGHTWEIGHT ROWING

After a weekend that included a pair of road victories against Navy and Delaware, the lightweight rowing team will travel to Pennsylvania for its first showdown against other Ivy League teams. The Lions will be rowing against Penn and Yale in the Dodge Cup, in what should prove to be an exciting day of competition. Penn, Yale, and Columbia have all had strong showings this season, but they have yet to step into competitions that feature Ivy League opponents. The crews will hit the water at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

—Kyle Perrotti

WOMEN'S GOLF

The women's golf team will host the Seventh Annual Roar-EE Invitational on Friday at Spook Rock Golf Course in Suffern, N.Y. As the Lions prepare to compete this weekend, they are poised to fare well against Ivy League competitors Penn and Dartmouth. Penn is the only previous champion in the competition this year, but the Lions beat the Quakers three weeks ago at the C&F Bank Intercollegiate.

Columbia has previously dominated individual competitions at the invitational. Then-senior Nancy Shon won the Roar-EE Invitational in 2010, and current junior Michelle Piyapattra won back-to-back titles in 2011 and 2012. Although the Lions have not faced Dartmouth this season, the Lions are ranked fourth in the league—two spots above the Big Green. The Lions will also face Boston University, Central Connecticut State, Hofstra, LIU Brooklyn, Quinnipiac, Siena, and Wagner.

—Sara Blad

MEN'S GOLF

After a strong seventh-place showing at the Yale Invitational, the men's golf team will have another opportunity to dominate at the Princeton Invitational at Springdale Golf Club on Saturday and Sunday. The event consists of a 36-hole event on Saturday and an 18-hole final round on Sunday. Last year, the Lions had an impressive third-place showing at the invitational, finishing just two points behind the winner, Yale. Sophomore Brandon Jowers could continue his shot streak after posting a career-high fourth-place finish at the Yale Invitational.

—Eric Wong

HEAVYWEIGHT ROWING

Coming off a successful outing at the Alumni Cup last Saturday in Worcester, Mass., the heavyweight men's rowing team will return to its home waters at Overpeck County Park. The Light Blue will be rowing against Ivy foes Princeton and Penn in the Childs Cup. The Tigers, like the Lions, have had a strong season thus far, defeating Georgetown, Navy, and Syracuse in their first two weeks of competition. The Quakers have defeated MIT and Mercyhurst, and they came in third in the Matthews & Leonard Cup, losing to Harvard and Cornell. The action commences Saturday at 9 a.m.

—Kyle Perrotti

Some students say pass/D/fail policy would be too restrictive

P/D/F from front page

Sammy Simon, CC '14, said that since students come to college from different academic backgrounds and need time to adapt, the policy would be beneficial.

“It’s supposed to mark an easy transition for high school students who aren’t as well prepared,” Simon said. “I think it’s a great incentive.”

“It’s difficult for students who work incredibly hard and who would normally get an A.”

—Catherine Perloff, high school junior

University, said that her first semester grades were especially important for her transfer application.

“I’m a transfer student, and I wouldn’t have been able to come here if my old school had a policy like that,” she said.

In the proposal, Castellano cited Columbia’s peer institutions that have already adopted a pass/D/fail policy or having begun conversations about it. At MIT, first-years are graded on a pass/no record basis. If students receive a grade of C or higher in a course, it is recorded as a pass on their transcripts. If they receive a grade of D or F, there will be no record of their having taken the course at all on the transcripts. Swarthmore and Johns Hopkins both have similar policies in place.

Catherine Perloff, a high school junior who was on campus on a college tour Tuesday, said that the pass/D/fail policy would be detrimental to students who work hard to receive good grades.

“It’s difficult for students who work incredibly hard and who would normally get an A,” Perloff, who is from Los Angeles, said. “Getting an A is different than getting a B.”

“If it’s just a pass, then you’re grouped with everyone who passes, and you won’t get as much recognition or credit for how much you’re really working,” she said.

[tracey.wang@columbiaspectator.com](#)

Violence Against Women Act could affect campus policies

VIOLENCE from front page

members asked questions that covered topics such as the definition of “rape” versus that of “sexual assault,” how to explain one’s rape to a child, and universities’ roles in preventing and adjudicating instances of sexual violence.

During her attempts to report her own rape, Reid said her university considered her “someone who was putting a blemish on our school’s reputation. I was ruining our public image by coming forward.”

Reid said that while she believes society has more work to do in the way it treats victims of sexual assault, colleges and universities are improving.

After helping Senator Jean Shaheen (D-N.H.) write her Senate floor speech in support of the Violence Against Women Act earlier this year, Reid said the increased media attention around sexual violence has made her hopeful.

“I think us as young adults focus on this ... but when a law is passed in our government, that transcends generations,” Reid said. “Passing VAWA will increase the popularity of this topic. The passing of it is a big step.”

VAWA—which was highly contested in Congress before its passage last month—included the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act, the most significant piece of legislation about college rape in two decades.

The act aims to increase transparency and change the culture on college campuses with regards to sexual violence by requiring schools to report more statistics and provide awareness programs for students and staff members.

While it’s difficult to tell how the act will be interpreted, students at Columbia and schools across the country are hoping universities will use it to make significant changes.

Zoe Ridolfi-Starr, CC '15, said she met with a group of students at the beginning of the semester to discuss Columbia’s policies on sexual assault. Now that VAWA has been passed, she said she is eager to see how Columbia will respond. “For me, refocusing the conversation around prevention, around discussion with men and women about consent, about responsibility, about substance abuse, about how all of these things—how everyone can participate in these conversations to make it a safe campus is really important,” Ridolfi-Starr said.

Students at the SAAM event Wednesday echoed this sentiment, with many of the questions for Reid focusing on educating about consent and bystander awareness.

“As a society, we have a lot more work,” Reid said. “We’re getting there, but it’s really slow. It’s an uphill battle, but we’re getting there.”

[abby.abrams@columbiaspectator.com](#)

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“THE BEST FILM OF THE YEAR! TREMENDOUSLY ACTED!”
-Newsweek

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-Marie Claire

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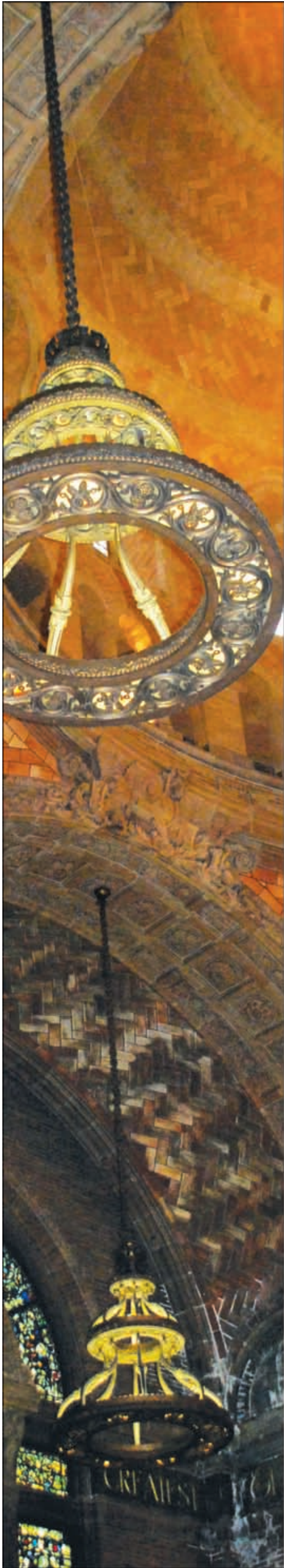
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2013 BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

The Baccalaureate Service is an interfaith service celebrating the completion of each undergraduate's academic career.

This event features a procession that includes undergraduate degree candidates from Columbia College, The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science, the School of General Studies, and Barnard College. School deans, the University Chaplain, and faculty and administrators also participate.

Families and friends of degree candidates from the schools listed above are welcome to attend the Baccalaureate Service.

Sunday, May 19, 2013
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

St. Paul's Chapel
Columbia University
1160 Amsterdam Avenue at 117th Street

Student Readers and Speakers

Maryam Aziz
Columbia College, '13
Muslim

Daniel Bonner
Columbia College, '13
Jewish

Kalin Gregory
Barnard College, '13
Christian

Talia Klein
Barnard College, '13
Jewish

Matthew Scanlon
General Studies, '13
Christian

Eva Suarez
Columbia College, '13
Christian

Maliha Tariq
Barnard College, '13
Muslim

Kapil Wattamwar
*The Fu Foundation School of Engineering
and Applied Science, '13*
Hindu

Student Musicians

Barnard-Columbia Chorus **Columbia University Bach Society**

Students must register to participate. Tickets are not required for admission.
For additional information, please visit columbia.edu/baccalaureate.

The service is coordinated jointly by the Office of the University Chaplain and the Commencement Office/University Programs and Events.

Aerosoul Art: 5Pointz thrives

NYC's top graffiti center powers on
despite redevelopment threat



This Weekend in \$26

Inside...

1. *Slice Pizza* (from \$8, p. B3)
2. *Screening of 'To the Wonder'* (\$13, p. B4)
3. *'The Light in the Piazza'* (\$5, p. B4)



BY BRENDAN DONLEY
Spectator Staff Writer

You can see it through the windows of the 7 train as it skirts along the East River into Queens: The big warehouse walls announcing in bold block letters that they're not just a shelter for beat-up halal carts, but home to the largest collection of graffiti art in New York. Down below, next to a dirty cement loading dock covered by as many tourists as delivery trucks, four men sit in plastic chairs, painting cartoon faces on black lightbulbs to sell as original art.

Meres, the leader of the group, takes breaks from his project to explain to clumps of international tourists that his newest mural, painted in a corner across several walls, all lines up if you look at it from a vantage point marked with a white X on the cement. But it might not be there for long, he tells them: The murals usually last somewhere between one week and two years. He pauses as the 7 train rattles by, pointing to the word "CHILD" in faded pink letters on another wall—the single piece remaining from the building's days as the Phun Phactory, a prior graffiti institute that ran the space before Meres took over and changed its name in 2002.

Meres—whose real name is Jonathan Cohen—is the curator of the 5Pointz Aerosol Art Center, an outdoor gallery of graffiti art in Long Island City that attracts top international artists to contribute detailed murals to the walls of a block-long industrial complex, whose interior hosts the aforementioned halal carts and other mundanities.

Recently, rumors of a demolition to clear space for two residential high-rises have put the future of 5Pointz in jeopardy, a possibility Meres only half-acknowledges. He addresses the situation with somewhat reticent skepticism: "I'll just say this—we're not going anywhere this year, and I doubt we'll be going anywhere next year." He'd rather get back to painting lightbulbs.

No date has been set for the demolition, but "Save 5PTZ" tags accompany existing murals on all sides of the building. In mid-2012, David Wolfkoff, the owner of the Long Island City property, submitted a demolition proposal at a community board meeting which named the target date as this September.

However, as recently as mid-March, a 5Pointz spokesperson told Business Insider that the demolition would need special clearance from the MTA and Amtrak, due to the property's close proximity to the train tracks—permission which has yet to be granted. Coupled with that, the arduous procedure of getting building approval from the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure board will likely tie up any demolition plans for months. Given that Wolfkoff stands to gain nothing from immediate demolition without the promise of building approval, it seems unlikely that the complex will be destroyed in a matter of a few months, as many outlets have reported.

Meanwhile, amid this high-stakes real estate drama, Meres keeps painting.

He gives his white-out pen a shake and touches up the cartoonish eyes on the

SEE 5POINTZ, page B3

Fanboy Drake sits in on ‘Sleuth’ sesh

Chris’ editor, Stefan, had a bad idea, and Drunken Spectator was born. This week, ginger ale and bourbon interfere with Chris’ viewing of the 1972 thriller “Sleuth,” starring Michael Caine and Laurence Olivier.

“I can’t wait to meet him,” my editor beamed, with a sort of “joie de vivre” that had been absent from the corners of his eyes since our coke binge came to an end.

I had just informed him that Drunken Spec’s biggest fan, Drake Tyler, was coming to our next movie screening.

At Drake’s insistence, we watched “Sleuth,” a movie starring Laurence Olivier as an English country gentleman who, predictably, likes to do shitty American accents and hates Italians—particularly Michael Caine, that sonnovabitch Italian-Englishman who’s “all up in Laurence Olivier’s wife’s britches, I’ll tell you what.”

Drake was asleep for the whole movie, which did not prevent him from farting the entire time.

[Ed. note: I don’t mention his farting in order to make a joke, which would be immature, but because Drake delenda est.]

Olivier is in his garden, hidden in a hedge maze, in his inner sanctum sanctorum.

“Gin will do,” Mr. Caine says. Then he finds out he’s an I-talian.

“Jewish? Catholic. Not Italian. Oh, fuck, Italian,” Olivier responds.

“I like this movie because there is a lot of anti-Italian racism from Laurence Olivier,” Drake said.

My editor, who is not Italian but who could pass for a Sicilian on a rough day, silently fomented.

My editor, who has no tolerance for “ethnic people,” continued to sneer at Olivier, while Olivier commenced to inform Caine that he was aware that Caine was fuckin’ his ole wife, Marguerite, and then they proceeded to play pool and banter wittily, which flung my editor into a blind rage in which he beat me savagely.

The ole L.O. gave ole M.C. a clown costume in order to make sure he felt like an idiot.

Our brains started hemorrhaging all over the place when we realized how British this movie is.

“Hold on, I wasn’t on board for ethnic cinema,” my editor roared.

Drake, you’re definitely farting.

Drake: “I didn’t eat anything 2day.”

Bullseye.

Meanwhile, those Brits continued being incorrigibly British.

“You are inCORRIGIBLE,” I thought to myself while shouting the same at my editor.

Drake continued to sleep. Olivier convinced Caine to pretend to rob his house while showing off his costume collection: one blackface mask and a bag tagged swag.

“This is sort of offensive,” I stupidly observed. “Stupid Chris, stupid Chris!” I shouted while hitting myself on the head.

“You have to understand that the British are a primitive sort, and they don’t have the same sort of capacity for emotional nuance and humanist sensitivity that civilized cultures have,” my editor observed, showing off his knowledge of ethnic people quite haughtily.

“He’s gonna be a sailorboy, getting that ole’ urethra reamed.”

“Write that down, and stop saying that.”

“But he’s really gonna get that urethra reamed. Do the emotions change so quickly in this movie? I posit that it’s because Laurence Olivier is such a dynamic character,” our biggest fan posited.

Then ole L.O. gave ole M.C. a clown costume in order to make sure he felt like a idiot.

“Ah, he’s tryna make a clown a’ him,” I observed in my resurgent trembling cockney.

“O’, li’l chras, oo’s th’ cuckol’ in this relationship, eh, li’l chras?” my editor asked, who had, like Kurtz, gone native in full-blown British sexuality.

He really does make a lot of jokes about sleeping with the other guy’s wife. And he store the vagina tissue. British society has progressed to such a level that even the most violent of actions are expressed through clever quips.

Olivier wants his place trashed so he can get insurance money, we’re talking “convincing but not Carthaginian,” a phrase that, as he muttered it, caused a ripping ole fanfare to erupt and, for the rest of the movie, we all found ourselves thinking, “CARTHAGO DELEND A EST.”

Olivier, unwilling to take THAT one lying down, responded, “And I’ll bet your chest is hairy and in the summer matted with oil. But most of all I hate you cause you’re a greasy blue-eyed WOP.”

DING DING DONG DWANG DWONG DWON GING

[Ed. note: We have a tendency, when hearing the ringing of bells, to resort to BELLONOMOTOPOEIA, from French “Bel Onomotopia,” literally, “beautiful sounds made with the mouth in imitation of flutulence.”]

Except Drake doesn’t drink.

Drake woke up saying, “Oh this is a really good part.” My editor was pissed.

We have 13 pages of notes. FUCK.

The last sentence will be: “And then the rest of the movie was Michael Caine and Laurence Olivier having sex.”

Chris Ruenes is a Columbia College senior majoring in music. Stefan Countryman is a School of Engineering and Applied Science senior majoring in applied math and is a former associate editor for the arts and entertainment section. Drunken Spectator runs when our editor in chief isn’t looking.



STEFAN COUNTRYMAN AND CHRIS RUENES

Drunken Spectator

Best of

Unusual art exhibits

Sometimes the best artwork isn’t hung on the gallery wall. If you aren’t in the mood for entrance fees, crowded rooms, and awful museum cafe coffee, check out one of these alternative art exhibits for an unusual experience. From dirt to mosaics to troll dolls, prepare yourself for something you’ve never seen—or expected—before. —BY CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW



The Troll Museum

122-124 Orchard St., #19

Curated by the self-proclaimed Saint Reverend Jen Miller, a Lower East Side performance artist, the Troll Museum’s collection contains literally hundreds of the throwback dolls. The Reverend Jen emphasizes the importance of each doll having a story, and thanks to this, she says, the official tour can sometimes take more than six hours. Viewings are on a by-appointment basis, set up through phone or email. Call (212) 560-7235 or write to revjen@revjen.com.

The New York Earth Room

141 Wooster St.

Artist Walter De Maria had an idea: He was going to take an expensive, second-story, 3,600-square-foot SoHo loft and fill it with dirt. This was in 1977. Thirty-six years later, it’s still there. The Dia Art Foundation, located both in the city and upstate, helps support the installation, which is watered and raked by longtime caretaker Bill Dilworth (a character in his own right).

The Mosaic House

108 Wyckoff St.

Every inch of the outside of this townhouse is adorned with bric-a-brac: Wire, glass, faux gems, plastic bugs, and ceramic tiles all jostle for attention on a run-of-the-mill street in Cobble Hill. The ongoing project is the culmination of over a decade’s work by artist and townhouse resident Susan Gardner, who says her work began in earnest after Sept. 11, 2001. The mosaic consists both of Gardner’s personal collection and of donations left on her doorstep.

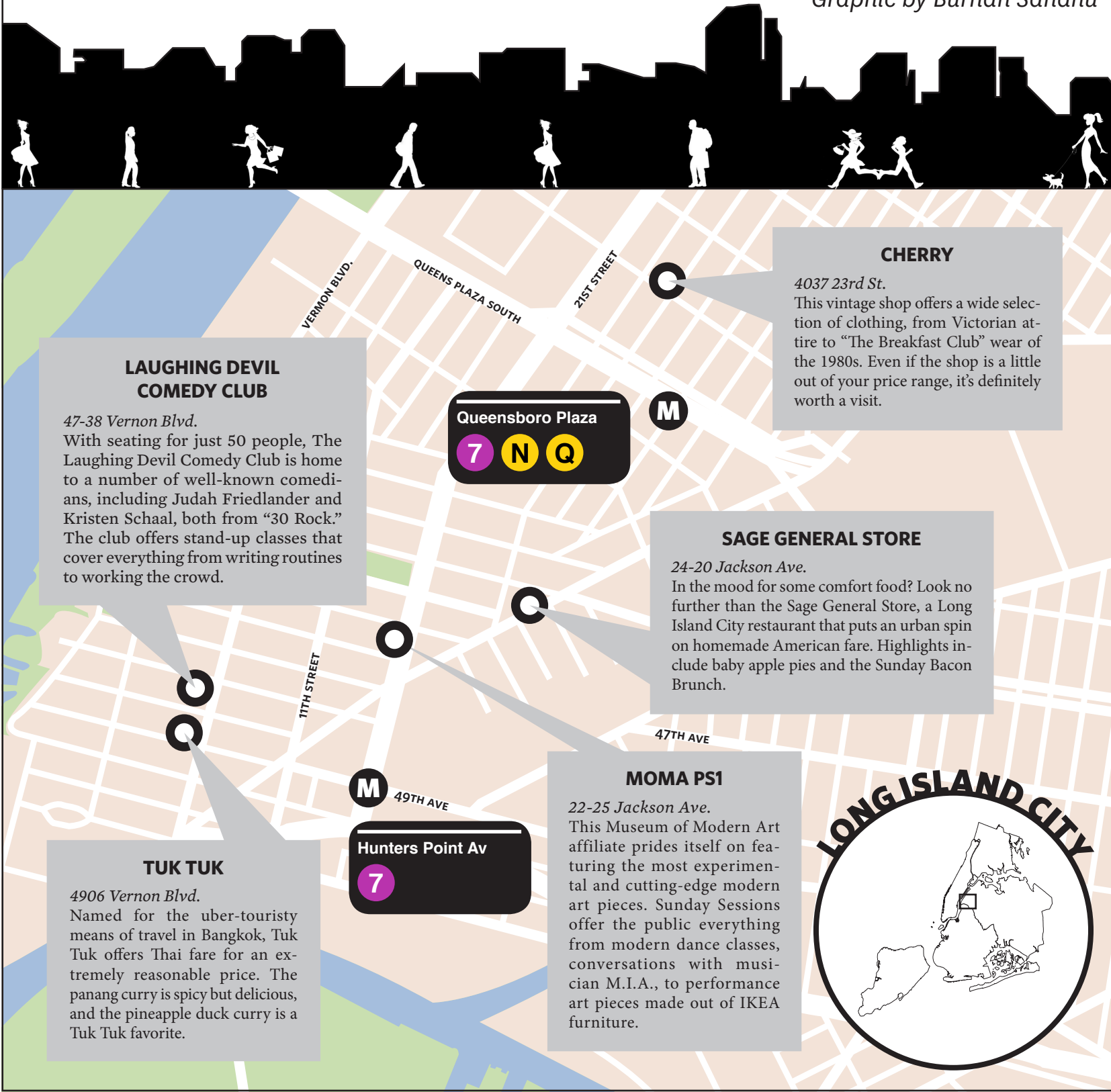


ILLUSTRATIONS BY IONE WANG

Neighborhood Watch

By Sarah Roth

Graphic by Burhan Sandhu



Slice Pizza a slice of heaven, downtown

BY YVONNE HSIAO
Columbia Daily Spectator

The West Village is full of quaint coffee shops, unique boutiques, and lots of experimental restaurants. Slice Pizza is certainly not out of place. While Slice originally opened its doors in 2005, after trips to Panama and China, restaurant owner Miki Agrawal did a complete overhaul of her restaurant, restructuring her staff and reopening her restaurant with a new direction and a new name, West (the name has subsequently been changed back to Slice). This romantic restaurant prides itself on serving local, seasonal, and sustainable fare that comes from farm-to-table. The woodsy, ivory-and-burgundy décor, with its mason jars and hemp ropes hanging from the ceiling, complemented its delicacies. I was at a loss for words after taking a bite—it was unbelievably delicious.

My friend and I ordered blood beets and Brussels sprouts “from the field” for our appetizers. The Brussels Sprouts Four Ways was very simple in its ingredients, yet very complex in its flavor and texture dynamic. Pure creaminess hits you first with the bacon crème fraîche, with floating notes of smoky bacon. The brussels sprouts give off a particular aroma that works perfectly with the bacon cream—they are crispy, sweet, layered, and charred, all at the same time. This dish is an achievement in terms of its choice of brussels sprouts as the main ingredient, and in the way it was made to keep your taste buds interested.

The roasted beets came atop a smear of citrus yogurt, a log of “ancient grain,” and two sprigs of celery leaves. The yogurt was creamy, but it was an awkward companion to the bed of barley that it was meant to go with, and I was disappointed that the citrus in the yogurt tasted artificial. I had expected to finish off the dish with the celery leaves and radishes as the bright notes, but the celery leaves were slightly wilted, and the radishes were also slightly warm and not ice water-shocked and crisp. The beets were the only redeeming quality to this dish—four perfectly-roasted chunks of sweet blood beets that had a charred, licorice-esque taste that was only achievable because of their freshness.

But nothing compared to the pizzas—the moment I took a bite of mine, I realized why this place had such rave reviews from top city and food magazines. My friend ordered the pear gorgonzola pizza, which in addition to generous slices of pear and drops of melted, crusty gorgonzola, was sprinkled with medjool dates and fresh rosemary. The smell was absolutely wonderful, and the flavors came together nicely. The slow-roasting brought out the pear’s sweetness and the sharp gorgonzola provided a nice juxtaposition, with the rosemary rounding off the hearty dish nicely with its distinct flavor. This pizza was crunchy, sweet-but-not-sugary, and had just the right amount of bitter with every bite.

My truffled ricotta with cracked pepper and olive oil was a hard combination to play off well, but Slice Pizza did it again. The truffle oil was cooked into the ricotta first, which was crusted and browned in various spots on the pizza. Sprinkled with pepper, the taste of truffle lingered as the top notes of this dish while the pepper tempered the richness of the ricotta and the crust. It was a very delicate dish that could easily be too rich, but its insistence on fresh ingredients redeemed it. These pieces of misshapen pizzas that look like naan but taste like thin biscuits are soft in the right places, and their imperfect shape speaks only to their gorgeous perfection.

Our check arrived with a heart around our total—a good \$50 that made my heart sink—and the message, “Come back again! Love, Erin.”

Yes, Erin. Despite the price tag, I will definitely be back. Slice Pizza has me not only by the stomach, but also by the heart.

*Slice Pizza is located at 535 Hudson St.
arts@columbiaspectator.com*



KIMBERLY FLORES / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

PAINT THE TOWN | Above are just some of the works by graffiti artists that adorn the 5Pointz structure.

Queens’ 5Pointz a legal haven for street artists

5POINTZ from page B1

lightbulb.

“There’s nothing like this around the world,” he says. “It’s one-of-a-kind. And not many places generate this kind of demographic.”

Over 11 years, Meres has cultivated the site into a destination for international artists and visitors, which he hopes to pair with a graffiti museum and school for aspiring artists. The 5Pointz name marks it as the center of graffiti in New York, indicating a convergence of the five boroughs, and its walls house the stylized nicknames of hundreds of artists.

One of its prominent graffiti artists, Bishop 203, calls 5Pointz the “Times Square of graffiti” for its rich mix of colors and visitors (gaudy advertisements not included).

“You can go there on a Saturday and see 20 different artists from five different countries painting there,” he says. “To me, that’s beautiful.”

The possible demolition is not simply another “there goes the neighborhood” situation—graffiti art and culture will turn out OK, but the art form stands to lose one of its largest monuments.

“5Pointz is centrally located in the minds of graffiti artists and viewers of art worldwide, so people see it and associate it with the history of graffiti writing in New York,” Gregory Snyder, a sociology professor at Baruch College, said. Snyder is the author of a book on the subculture of graffiti in New York.

For tourists, 5Pointz provides an alternative to the MoMA and Met—or a good companion to MoMA PS1 just down the block. But there’s no suggested donation, and the art is on the outside.

“I go to the Metropolitan a lot,” Meres said. “Where you have canvasses that are pretty big, but here it’s a lot larger scale, you know, it’s outdoors, it’s ever-changing.”

“It’s not that different than art in a museum,” Lou Albruzzese, a visitor from Long Island, says. “But when exhibits change in a museum, the Picassos always exist somewhere. You can always put them back up.”

The experience of 5Pointz reminds visitors of the museum experience, but it’s more organic.

Frames don’t divide one piece from another, and everything is contemporary.

“I have plans to come back next summer,” Albruzzese adds. “Just to see what’s new and what’s different.”

Graffiti art doesn’t look to the longevity of Greek statues for its inspiration—it updates itself and urges new creation.

“It’s constantly changing,” Snyder says. “It’s pretty democratic. It doesn’t keep the superstars up.”

5Pointz is not the definitive collection of graffiti art, nor does it claim to be. But it acts as a starting point to discover similar art on surfaces across the city.

“You can travel around the city with the intent or not of looking for art,” Snyder says. “With graffiti, you get this personal experience because you discovered it. It can be vandalistic, but it’s pretty fascinating vandalism.”

The New York City art Snyder admires is, for the most part, illegal, but the pieces at 5Pointz are done legally. With more time and space to work, the artists can pay more attention to detail and develop murals more substantial than those seen elsewhere.

“Painting legally gives you the opportunity to focus on the piece without worrying about getting busted by the cops,” says Zeso, an artist who has painted at 5Pointz about 80 times in the past three years. “You can really take time to schedule a multi-day production.”

Without the need to be secretive, Meres often lends his help to the projects.

“Ultimately I don’t want to be on every wall,” he says. “But sometimes if there’s a graffiti writer that’s really good, if he has a project that’s a little too big, I’ll help touch up the background.”

Meres finishes his box of lightbulbs and walks across the cement from his plastic chair to a mural he’s working on. It shows a creepy-looking cartoon kid sitting at a desk, with one of Meres’ signature lightbulb faces painted on the t-shirt.

Meres isn’t sure how long the piece will last, and there’s a tarp covering the unfinished bottom section. He still has work to do.

arts@columbiaspectator.com

Fidelity meets convenience

Occasionally, I see something that can serve as a microcosm for the current state of the music industry. Although certainly an invitation for overanalysis, I find these moments helpful in trying to make sense of a very confusing business. This week, I had my microcosm moment when I found out that Amazon is finally offering its AutoRip feature, which allows free MP3 downloads of any CD purchased, for all of its vinyl sales. While this might seem like an obvious move (have you ever tried to jog with a turntable strapped to your back?), it also perfectly sums up the conflicted nature of the average music consumer.

As I’ve mentioned in more than a few of my previous columns, we are as close to having an all-digital music industry as we’ve ever been. CDs have turned out to be nothing more than a useless stepping stone to their invisible counterparts—the watered-down sound of an MP3 without the portability—and the new MacBook doesn’t even have a disc drive. Most of my friends are perfectly happy to stream all of their music from services like Spotify and Pandora without ever purchasing their favorite albums. Of the ones who do buy from iTunes, most are content to buy a few of an artist’s hit singles and leave the rest of the album to rot in a digital wasteland.

I know I sound bleak, but this is where the microcosm comes in. Vinyl sales are increasing, and companies like Amazon are facilitating LP sales by offering their portable counterparts for free. Smaller music companies and labels have been offering deals like this for a while, but it’s obviously catching on and going mainstream. While I’m not naïve enough to expect a return to the golden age of vinyl, this trend shows that consumers of digital music are hungry for something more than the current reality. They yearn for a time when fidelity mattered, when album covers were more than just a thumbnail, and when music was something to be collected and saved. Even those who buy vinyl just for show (cough, hipsters) are doing so because they feel a certain “cool factor” or “legitimacy” missing from the current distribution model. Many people I know—primarily digital consumers—would rather purchase an LP than a CD for just the reasons I outlined above. Digital has its advantages and vinyl has its advantages, but CDs are the worst of both worlds.

Before I incur the wrath of the music industry, I’d like to point out that many, if not most, labels and music distributors are extremely forward-thinking when it comes to this issue. Several LPs that I’ve bought have come with a code for a free MP3 download, and Nonesuch Records—where I worked last summer—includes both a CD and an MP3 with each vinyl purchase from its website. The best record companies respond to their consumers, and right now, the consumers are showing that they want convenience, but that they also are dissatisfied with the throwaway culture that instant downloading seems to imply. As I said before, they’re hungry, but as of yet there’s no magic bullet that will satisfy them.

I don’t know what the future will bring—but right now there is an interesting dichotomy between modern convenience and old-school reverence, and I feel as though whatever happens next, the music industry will probably embrace both of these simultaneously. The next great development would need to be completely portable with outstanding fidelity and make people excited to purchase and own it. As I’ve said before, though, it’s the industry’s job to sign great artists and remain nimble, not to concern itself too much with the next big distributional leap. No one knows exactly what that leap will be, but as the Amazon microcosm shows, the consumer will lead it.

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DAVID ECKER

Slightly Off Key

‘The Angels’ Share’ a mixed drink of comedy, drama, and very valuable malt whiskey

BY ELIZABETH SEDRAN
Spectator Film Critic

In bonnie Scotland, leave the wine—it’s the whiskey that’s worth dying for.

Blending classic cinematic narrative with realism, director Ken Loach and writer Paul Laverty’s “The Angels’ Share” creates a world where the harsh realities of life in poor Glasgow neighborhoods mix with teen antics, and the magic and elitism of whiskey auctions in the Scottish Highlands.

Robbie (Paul Brannigan) is a young man living in Glasgow haunted by a history of violence and crime, but determined to change his life and become a good role model for his newborn son. He’s sentenced to community service, during which he and the other members of his community payback team are mentored by their leader, Harry, who introduces them to the world of the whiskey trade. Robbie’s knack for identifying flavors catches the eye of a whiskey collector, and soon the team is entangled in the ruthless world of whiskey auctions and the sale of a casket of the unparalleled “Malt Mill.”

It’s a sharp departure from previous works by longtime collaborators Loach and Laverty (“Route Irish,” “Looking for Eric”), but the combination of elements provides for a great comedy that retains some serious overtures. While doing research for the film, Laverty took part in community service projects with individuals with similar backgrounds to Robbie, an experience which was “absolutely hilarious,” Laverty said in an interview with Spectator.

“It’s full of jokes, full of mischief, full of vitality, full of youth, full of plans, full of frustration and

anger,” he said. “I just wanted to tap into that.”

The whiskey acts as a metaphor for the complications within Robbie’s life and the inaccessibility of certain aspects of Scottish culture.

The whiskey “was almost, like, on their doorstep, but out of reach,” Laverty said. “That’s what life has been like for them in many ways. They’ve never had a chance to appreciate the wonderful things in life, so I just wanted to see if I could mix all of this with these young people.”

For Brannigan, the film’s charismatic star, the character of Robbie hit close to home. Brannigan was jailed and began working with the Violence Reduction Unit in Glasgow following his release, running soccer games on Friday nights. It was there that he met Laverty.

“He was very, very clever, and he just had a way about him that really drew my attention,” Laverty said. “I was very keen that he would get a chance when we did the casting.”

While not overtly political, “The Angels’ Share” enters into a debate about class and the economy within Europe and Great Britain.

“I think it’s very shocking how many young people look to the future with the realistic possibility of never having meaningful work in their lives, and that is devastating,” Laverty said.

For Laverty, the northern setting was an easy choice.

“I always get drawn back to Glasgow because it’s the city I know best,” he said. “It’s the cadence I write in.”

This setting also underscores the movie’s politics.

“For normal people in Scotland, working class



COURTESY OF IFC FILMS

SCOTCH OR WHISKEY? | Reforming local toughs are led astray by whiskey in “The Angels’ Share.”

kids, to see their own accents up on the screen and to see their own faces ... it’s actually quite important because you see ordinary people there of all sorts of shapes,” Laverty said.

“The Angels’ Share” includes subtitles to help viewer understand the heavy Scottish accents of the actors, a decision which “reflects their reality rather than put on some mid-Atlantic nonsense, which convinces nobody,” Laverty said.

“The Angels’ Share” may be Loach and Laverty’s first foray into comedy, but its light plot of a whiskey heist combined with quick dialogue and gritty struggles is a welcome, well-executed change of tone.

“Sometimes people think comedy can only be light and slapstick,” Laverty said. “But comedy can be very poignant and very touching.”

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Flipside Guide

‘To the Wonder’

Terrence Malick film lacks character development

BY OLIVIA WONG
Spectator Staff Writer

While the characters have little to say, “To the Wonder,” the latest film from legendary director Terrence Malick, speaks volumes. Known for his cinematic risks, Malick continues to stray from traditional narrative cinema, and with this film, he has created something absolutely unlike anything else you will see this year.

The film, which opens in theaters Friday, comes fresh off the major success of Malick’s “The Tree of Life,” a Best Picture nominee at the 2012 Oscars. In “To the Wonder,” Malick trades Brad Pitt for Ben Affleck, and the dinosaurs for landscapes.

The multilingual film features very little dialogue, focusing instead on voice-overs from characters in French, Spanish, and English, allowing the audience to truly get into the minds of the characters. The majority of the time is spent with Marina (Olga Kurylenko), a French single mother who travels to America to be with her lover, Neil (Affleck).

Each shot in the film is truly stunning. The disconnect between the images and the sound is clearly an important narrative tool for Malick, who prioritizes the camera over the characters to tell the story. “To the Wonder” is full of beautifully scored collections of shots of various landscapes, with the characters sometimes weaving in and out of those natural spaces.

Marina is the guiding force of the film and certainly the most compelling face on the screen. Kurylenko’s soft voice opens the film, paired with sweeping shots of nature: Parisian gardens, old castles, prairie grounds. But her tumultuous relationship with Neil is rarely seen on-screen and never explicitly explored in either the voice-overs or the dialogue.

The other voices heavily featured in the film are those of Father Quintana (Javier Bardem) and Jane (Rachel McAdams), though these are far less interesting. Bardem, a master of subtlety, is captivating, but his character seems to have little purpose other than to bring religion into the narrative of the film. And the section from Jane’s perspective is particularly unnecessary. Though beautiful, the scenes depicting Jane and Neil’s doomed romance were the least compelling by far, and Jane’s voice-over monologue lacks the subtlety found elsewhere in the film.

The film would have benefitted greatly if it included more of Neil’s voice. Left somewhat of a mystery throughout the film, Neil gets only a few lines of voice-over and has no voice in the narrative.

Both Marina and Jane exist in the shared space of the film because of their romantic entanglements with Neil, but the audience is never given the chance to understand how the two women affect him. Affleck makes the most of his role, which usually consists of him walking ominously behind Marina. His every movement is gentle, yet imposing, and his removed manner presents a Ben Affleck that audiences have not seen before. It is a shame that he is not given a more substantial presence in the film.

Although “To The Wonder” lacks critical character development, Malick certainly excels in his use of setting and filming technique, and while there may not be dinosaurs, it is a welcomed addition to Malick’s body of work.

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‘The Maybe’

Tilda Swinton performance piece eludes, intrigues

BY TALIA LAKRITZ
Columbia Daily Spectator

Most sleep-deprived Columbia students would probably appreciate the occasional nap. But it’s safe to say that few would be willing to do so inside a glass box in front of visitors at the Museum of Modern Art.

Academy Award-winning actress Tilda Swinton will be making unscheduled, unannounced appearances in a performance art piece titled “The Maybe” throughout 2013. The display, which opened on March 25, features Swinton napping inside of a glass case for the entire day, equipped with only a thin mattress, a pitcher of water, and a pair of thick glasses folded at her side.

The MoMA doesn’t know when she plans on coming, or where in the museum she will sleep when she does. The exhibition has not been advertised or promoted. All anyone knows is that Swinton is slated for at least six more appearances this year.

Consider that challenge accepted.

I visited the MoMA earlier this week on a mission to track down the elusive Swinton. I sought information regarding her whereabouts from various employees, only to receive the same bemused answer from all of them.

“Tilda comes when she wants to,” a woman at an information desk told me. “We don’t know anything.”

“They don’t tell us where she’ll be, so we couldn’t even direct you if she was here,” two workers behind

the counter of the gift shop said.

It appeared that I would be embarking upon this epic quest unaided.

The “Special Exhibitions” gallery on the third floor seemed like a logical place to begin. Every clear, reflective surface I encountered felt like another step closer, but alas, the large glass cases contained only models of Henri Labrouste’s architectural sketches. I continued to ascend the expansive floors of the museum, peering over the edge of the escalator for any sign of the sleeping actress.

I ended up on the fifth floor, where I ambled past the works of Matisse, Monet, and Picasso while sweeping the room for clues about Swinton’s location. I paused only to gaze into the swirling depths of Vincent van Gogh’s “Starry Night,” momentarily distracted from my search for “The Maybe.”

Then, from afar, I spotted a dense crowd of people wielding cameras and phones, murmuring excitedly. I maneuvered my way to the front of the group and, with my heart beating furiously, suddenly found myself face-to-face with the pale, androgynous, mummy-like figure of... “The Scream,” Edvard Munch’s iconic pastel work that is on display at the MoMA until April 29. False alarm.

A disembodied voice announced that the museum would be closing in 15 minutes. I dejectedly collected my backpack from the checkroom, accepting the fact that Swinton had not chosen that day to grace the MoMA with her slumbering presence.

As the 1 train wound its way uptown, I concluded that perhaps my error was being determined to locate Swinton in the first place. The intrigue of the piece is its spontaneity, its effect being the intrusive feeling of stumbling upon a normally private activity.

Will I try again? Well, maybe.

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COURTESY OF IFC FILMS

THAT’S AMORE | Rebecca Lowin, CC ’14 , and Geoffrey Hahn, CC ’15, play star-crossed lovers in ‘Piazza.’

‘The Light in the Piazza’

CMTS soars with new show set in Florence, Italy

BY REUBEN BERMAN
Spectator Theater Critic

Italy was made for lovers and “The Light in the Piazza”—the Columbia Musical Theatre Society’s latest production—indulges in this fact.

Although the plotline involves a pedestrian love story with humanizing complications, “The Light in the Piazza,” which will be performed on Saturday, brings Italy to life on the strength of its production alone. This is a testament to the directorial vision of Alex Hare, CC ’13.

While on vacation in Florence, Margaret Johnson (Shelley Farmer, BC ’14) and her daughter, Clara, run into a young, handsome Italian, Fabrizio (Geoffery Hahn, CC ’15). Clara and Fabrizio fall in love, and as the intensity of their infatuation continues unabated, the tourists are invited to spend time with Fabrizio’s family, much to Margaret’s chagrin.

Wedding bells quickly approach, but what starts as a love story reminiscent of “Roman Holiday” soon transitions to a more serious note when it is revealed that Clara is mentally disabled from a childhood injury. Trying first to keep Clara and Fabrizio apart, and then to keep Clara’s condition hidden, Margaret eventually comes to accept

that her daughter has the ability to pursue the relationship.

As the matronly Margaret, Farmer lends a degree of gravitas and skill that is well beyond her years, expertly transitioning from worried, to dominating, to apologetic at the drop of a hat. Her voice captures every ounce of emotion that she wishes to express.

As Fabrizio, Hahn is in top form, tripping over his English and rushing through his Italian. As a classically trained vocalist, he takes his songs almost to the level of opera, hitting and holding his notes beautifully.

Innocent and selfish, the chaotic Clara—played by Rebekah Lowin, CC ’14—is also fleshed out well by marvellous acting and good vocals.

In the pit, musical director Solomon Hoffman, CC ’14, leads the quintet of musicians in a magnificent accompaniment, which, although it begins as overpowering, quickly matches itself to the actors and enlivens an already fabulous production. Unfortunately, the singing was marred with microphone feedback as high notes were held during a dress rehearsal, but it did little to harm the otherwise impeccable singing.

The stage lies mostly bare, with a single platform of sorts constantly being converted into different props and columns of fabric hanging from the ceiling, but nothing more is necessary. The animated acting (complete with fast-paced Italian), beautiful singing, and expressive music brings the illusion of Florence to the Glicker-Milstein Theatre, so close that the chisel marks on Michelangelo’s “David” are almost visible to the audience.

“The Light in the Piazza” will be performed Saturday at 8 p.m. in the Diana Center’s Glicker-Milstein Theatre. Tickets are \$5 with a CUID.

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