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Vacationing in the Middle East?

Taglit Birthright registration opened Thursday, giving Jewish students the opportunity to tour Israel free of charge this Spring.



Sports, page A8

Men's Basketball Begins Four-game Road Trip

Columbia will open a four-game road series this weekend against Brown and Yale. The Light Blue defeated both the Bears and the Bulldogs at home earlier this season.



Sports, page A8

Women's Basketball Faces Ivy Foes at Home

The Lions will begin a four-game homestand this weekend. They will be hosting Brown, who they beat on the road, and Yale, who they lost a close game to in New Haven.



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Doctor's Orders: Med Students Hit the Stage

The CU medical student members of the Bard Hall Players are ready to perform Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* on campus this weekend.

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A Double Shot of Literature in NYC

Find out more about the best café-bookstore combinations in New York City and take your latte with some light reading.

ONLINE

Spectacle

LiveBlogging the Way to Oscar Victory

Peter Labuza gives his take on the wins, losses, and memorable moments of this year's Oscars on The Spectacle. Be sure to check it out once the curtain rises.

NYPD Feels Strain of Budget Cuts

BY AARON KIERSH
Spectator Staff Writer

Even after helping to dramatically reduce crime rates over the past decade and a half, the New York Police Department will not be able to escape significant budget cuts as the city experiences a fiscal crisis of historic proportions.

According to Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposal, the NYPD—like every other city agency including education, parks, and social services—will lose about \$1.5 billion over the next two years.

No department firings have been announced yet. As Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly revealed on Feb. 10, the NYPD will reduce costs by eliminating the police academy class of 2010, which is comprised of about 1,000 recruits. Kelly added that another round of budget reductions may result in layoffs of patrolmen, which has not happened since the 1970s.

Officer James Harper of the NYPD's 26th Precinct, which encompasses the Columbia campus, said, "Having as many officers as you can get is ideal, and the presence of police is a crime deterrent. The more of anything you have at your disposal, the better off you are, that's obvious. But we will be able to make do with what we have." Harper explained that crime rates are up only slightly in recent months.

"This is not a doomsday scenario," explained State Sen. Bill Perkins (D-30th District), who represents Morningside Heights and most of Harlem. He said he was not aware of impending layoffs, and that he was not privy to any NYPD plans that have not yet been announced.

"We have enjoyed success in recent years, and we hope that this action won't lead to a reversal of that trend," Perkins said. "While the mayor could have made other choices in terms of his budget, I don't think that we should automatically conclude that a bad economy means the crime rate will go up. I am no sociologist, but I would not leap to that conclusion."

SEE CITY SERVICES, page 3

Rangel Talks Israel With LionPAC
Congressman Rangel Discusses U.S.-Israel Relationship

BY MADINA TOURE
Spectator Staff Writer

As Israel and Palestine remain locked in conflict, Columbia students are working to keep the issues alive on campus.

On Thursday afternoon, a small group of students attended a discussion with Congressman Charles Rangel (D-Harlem) on the importance of a strong relationship between the United States and Israel.

The purpose of the event was for students to learn more about current U.S. policy on Israel and the Middle East in general, although it was also regarded as an opportunity for students to express gratitude to Rangel for his ongoing support of positive U.S.-Israel relations. About 15 students met

with Rangel, who is chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means. The discussion was sponsored by LionPAC, Columbia's nonpartisan, pro-Israel political student group. Since the event was limited to a small space, there was no room for press. Students were available for reflection afterward.

The goals of the event were "to show our continued support as constituents of Columbia University," Sara Ashman, BC '10 and Political Affairs Director of LionPAC, said. Ashman said she thought it was important "to show that students at this campus care about the U.S.-Israel relationship."

SEE LIONPAC, page 3



Tami Epelbaum for *Spectator*

U.S. IN THE MIDDLE EAST | Rangel discusses his views on the subject in a chat with LionPAC.

HARDCORE ENGINEERING



Stefie Gan for *Spectator*

E-WEEK | At an engineering competition on Thursday in Lerner, team Hardcore uses the gas released from a bottle of Coca-Cola to inflate a balloon. Other tasks ranged from building a bridge out of spaghetti to freestyle rapping for a quiz show.

Water Supply May Be Contaminated by Drilling

BY LIZA WEINGARTEN
Spectator Staff Writer

Most New Yorkers would be outraged at the idea of drinking water infused with dangerous chemicals, but a recent push to drill for natural gas beneath the city's watersheds could lead to just that.

Every one of New York City's watersheds lies within the boundary of the Marcellus Shale, a mineral formation hundreds of millions of years old, which experts postulate contains enough natural gas to provide the entire U.S. with anywhere from two to 14 years' worth of energy. The danger in drilling for this gas is that numerous toxic chemicals, including hydrochloric acid, can be released into the area's supply of drinking water.

At a sparsely attended lecture on Thursday night, Kate Sinding, a senior attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council, outlined the public health risks associated with the potential development of and drilling for natural gas in the Catskill region of the Marcellus Shale.

"We do not, at the NRDC, take a no-drilling stance, but our concern is, will the

drilling occur properly?" Sinding said.

Drilling requires hydraulic fracturing or "fracking," a process that involves forcing chemically contaminated water into rock fissures at high pressure in order to pump natural gasses to the earth's surface. The problem is that chemically infused water can be discarded or run off into sources of drinking water.

Presently, New York City tap water is unfiltered and deemed fit for drinking by the Department of Environmental Protection. So why not just purify toxic water?

"If we needed to filter New York City drinking water, it would cost approximately \$10 billion, and that's an old estimate," Sinding said. In addition to the cost of filtering the water, such a program would cost about \$1 million a day to operate, she said.

Another problem is that the drilling companies are not required to disclose

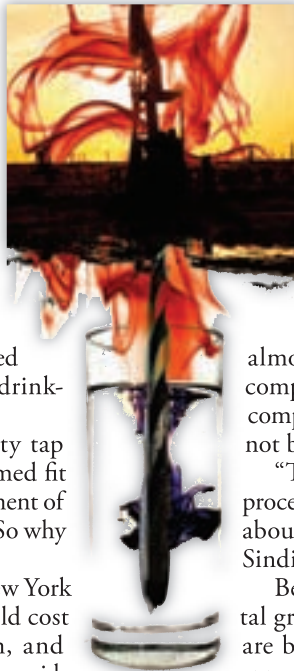


Photo Illustration by Yipeng Huang

what chemicals comprise the fracking fluid.

Sinding recalled one incident in which a worker at a drilling site got fracking fluid on his clothing, and became sick. When he was brought to the hospital, the nurse treating him had a negative reaction to the chemicals and became almost lethally ill, but until the companies released the chemical components of the fluid, she could not be treated.

"This should not have to be the process anyone has to go to find out about what chemicals are used," Sinding said.

Behind the scenes, environmental groups and drilling companies are bracing for a face-off in their opposite appeals to the government, with the former group requesting protection of the Catskill area and the latter pushing for permission to drill there.

SEE WATER, page 3

Spar to Travel From East Coast To Far East

BY JOY RESMOVITS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

As Barnard strives to amp up its international profile, President Debora Spar is learning how to say "ni-hao."

In a trend that aligns with Columbia's much heralded mission to become a global university, Barnard has recently launched a slew of initiatives to further connect with the world outside its gates. These plans came to the fore last spring when Hilary Link took on the newly created position of Assistant Provost and Dean for International Programs, and Gretchen Young was appointed Dean for Study Abroad in Link's stead. For her part, Spar stressed in her inauguration speech that she prioritized internationalization—including a larger flow of students to and from foreign countries—and made good on her word by visiting England shortly thereafter.

In March, Spar will once again pack her suitcases and travel to another end of the globe to tour China—a trip which will occur in close timing to the launch of Columbia's Beijing research center.

The journey centers on Spar's role as moderator of Barnard's first symposium in China. Entitled "Women Changing China," the event will honor the legacy of Kang Tongbi, BC 1909, Barnard's first Chinese student and a feminist advocate

SEE SPAR, page 3



File Photo

SPAR IN CHINA | Spar will travel to China in March to moderate a symposium and recruit.



**TONIGHT, FEBRUARY 20
@ 7:00 P.M.**

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BASKETBALL



EVENTS — FEB 20

Varsity Show West End Preview
Catch a preview of the 115th Varsity Show! The 2009 rendition of this Columbia tradition promises to be as hilarious as ever! Admission is \$3 at the door.

Havana Central at The West End, Friday, 9 p.m. and Saturday, 1 a.m.

Curry in a Hurry
Join the Columbia Japan Society for a fabulous buffet-style curry dinner! Other Asian student associations will provide their curries as well. Both meat and vegetarian curries will be available. Tickets can be purchased from TIC or at the door for \$5.

Friday, Lerner Party Space, 6 p.m.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“This [the NYPD budget cut] is not a doomsday scenario.”

—State Sen. Bill Perkins

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For general comments or questions about the newspaper, please write to the editor in chief and managing editor at editor@columbiaspectator.com.

Rangel Discusses U.S. Policy in Middle East

LIONPAC from front page

Rangel began the discussion by asking students which current political issues are most important to them. He then divulged his own opinion on the direction U.S. policy should take in the Middle East, emphasizing that it is essential to maintain a strong bond with Israel. “He spoke about the benefits of the U.S.-Israel relationship—Israel’s democratic ideals and how important that is to the region,” Jacob Shapiro, GS/JTS ’11 and president of LionPAC, said. In 2006, Rangel released a statement concerning the 58th anniversary of the establishment of Israel, stating that while Israel has become a “bustling country with a strong economy,” it is not universally

recognized. He ended the statement, saying, “Israel is one of our strongest and most important allies and its friendship is invaluable.” Ashman said that Rangel holds a stance shared by other members of Congress: The relationship between the U.S. and Israel should persist in the future. “He really showed that it is very much a bipartisan issue—cared about by Democrats and Republicans and the lefts and the rights,” she said. Michael Landes, GS/JTS ’11 and co-chair of KOACH, a Conservative Jewish student group within Hillel, stressed Rangel’s personable approach to speaking with students. “He was very in touch with the feelings of Americans and individual Israelis,” he said. “He was very personal

and individual and spoke from experience and familiarity of what people wanted. “The bottom line,” Landes said, “is that we need to have peace in the Middle East—if the relationship is strong, then peace is forthcoming.” Ultimately, Shapiro said, Rangel emphasized that Congress has to think not only about maintaining a relationship between the U.S. and Israel, but also about what will be beneficial to the United States. “[He] discussed how benefiting the U.S. first and foremost is what our policy needs to surround in the region,” he said. “He wants to make sure that the guiding force behind our decisions and strategies is what will be strategically helpful to the United States.”

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M’Side Aims to Balance Police Safety, Resources

CITY SERVICES from front page

Yet some see the city’s worsening economy and a police force already stressed by the demands of counterterrorism as a dangerous combination. The NYPD was already down to its lowest number of employees in more than decade before the financial crisis devastated the city budget. Commissioner Kelly announced that the police force will be no larger than 34,771 after July. “Crime has not been a major issue in recent years because Commissioner Kelly has been able to camouflage personnel losses, and do more with less, but the NYPD may be nearing a point of no

return,” Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels, a safety patrol group staffed by volunteers, said. “A student of history knows that every time there is an economic downturn, there is an increase in crime. Whoever argues to the contrary is hopelessly wrong.” Sliwa predicts that the NYPD might allow crime to rise in the outer boroughs, and try to turn Manhattan below 96th Street into a “fortress.” He also suggested that the Columbia campus may be particularly vulnerable to a rise in crime. “People can try to come on to the campus and steal things. They’re just going to try to lift, snatch and go, sell it cheap. Easy

pickings. Security is going to have to be more vigilant.” Local groups are already trying to fill a void which may be created if the NYPD loses manpower. Marjorie A. Cohen, executive director of the Westside Crime Prevention Program—an Upper West Side-based community watch organization—said, “When there are fewer officers, it is important that they are deployed in the best way they can be. My group is trying to promote the idea that people can report crimes and unsafe conditions so the police have the right information on hand when they decide how to deploy officers.”

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Environmentalists Face Off With Drillers

WATER from front page

“This is an issue that has really mobilized the environmental community as well as grassroots organizations across the state,” Sinding said. But Thursday night’s turnout did not reflect this mobilization. Although organizers anticipated a crowd of 50-60 people, fewer than 15 showed up. “I guess we should have put up fliers,” Jason Patinkin, CC ’09, one of the co-

ordinators of the lecture, and a member of EarthCo, said. Members of the small crowd seemed to enjoy the talk, though. Mike Zamm, the director of education for the Council on the Environment in New York City, educates high school students around the city on environmental issues. He expressed shock at his own ignorance on the subject and was pleased to be briefed on the quietly ensuing battle over the future of the Catskill region.

After the lecture, Patinkin expressed his disappointment with the lack of students in attendance. He emphasized that, apart from the sanitation of the water they drink every day, Columbia students have another reason to care about drilling in the Catskill region. “I think it’s especially important because COOP [Columbia’s outdoor first-year orientation program] goes there,” Patinkin joked.

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Registration Opens for Spring Birthright Trip to Israel

BY TABITHA PEYTON WOOD
Spectator Staff Writer

Despite regional tumult, many Jewish students at Columbia still feel compelled to travel to Israel this summer. “Regardless of how you feel about it [Israel], going to Israel is an important part of exploring the Jewish identity,” Sarah Brafman, student president of the Columbia/Barnard Hillel and CC ’10, said. Brandon Hammer, CC ’10, went to Israel with Taglit-Birthright in January 2008. He echoed Brafman’s view, saying, “The trip allowed me to remember my connection to and renew my exploration of Judaism.” Columbia/Barnard Hillel is coordinating with Taglit-Birthright to send a group of Jewish Columbia students on a 10-day trip to Israel, free of charge. Registration for a May or June trip opened yesterday and will close in early March. Birthright trips, which are conducted several times each year, allow students to tour Israel, meet Israeli soldiers, and learn more about the country’s history and culture. According to Brafman, students who were born to one or two Jewish parents or who have converted to Judaism are welcome to register for the trip, as long as they have not previously been on an organized trip to Israel. “It’s very open-ended,” Brafman said. “Any affiliation is acceptable.” Brafman said that while the recently inflamed conflict between Israel and Gaza may cause a slight decrease in the number of students who wish to participate in the trip, interest in going holds strong.

Hammer said that while his visit was not affected by an immediate threat, “my trip took place only 18 months after the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. Indeed, it was fascinating to go to a number of cities and towns in northern Israel that, just a year and a half earlier, had been shelled.” Hammer remains adamant that students considering registering for Birthright should not be deterred by violence in the region. He said, “more people die from car accidents ... than from terrorist attacks.” He also points out that he “felt, and was, completely safe during the entire trip. Birthright takes security extremely seriously.” Cara Buchanan, CC ’11, went to Israel with Birthright in January 2009 and characterized her experience as “priceless.” Having grown up in a fairly secular Las Vegas household, she initially questioned whether she was “Jewish enough” to take part. Now she endorses the trip for all Jewish students who have any interest in travelling in and exploring another culture. Birthright is a great opportunity “no matter how religious ... you are or how much you know about Judaism,” Buchanan said. Birthright trips are funded by donations from community groups and individuals around the world, as well as by the Israeli government. According to the program’s Web site (birthrightisrael.com), Taglit-Birthright is presently working to raise funds to take 10,000 people to Israel this summer. Anyone interested in participating can apply through Columbia/Barnard Hillel by visiting freisraeltrip.org.

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In China, Spar Will Moderate Symposium on Kang Tongbi

SPAR from front page

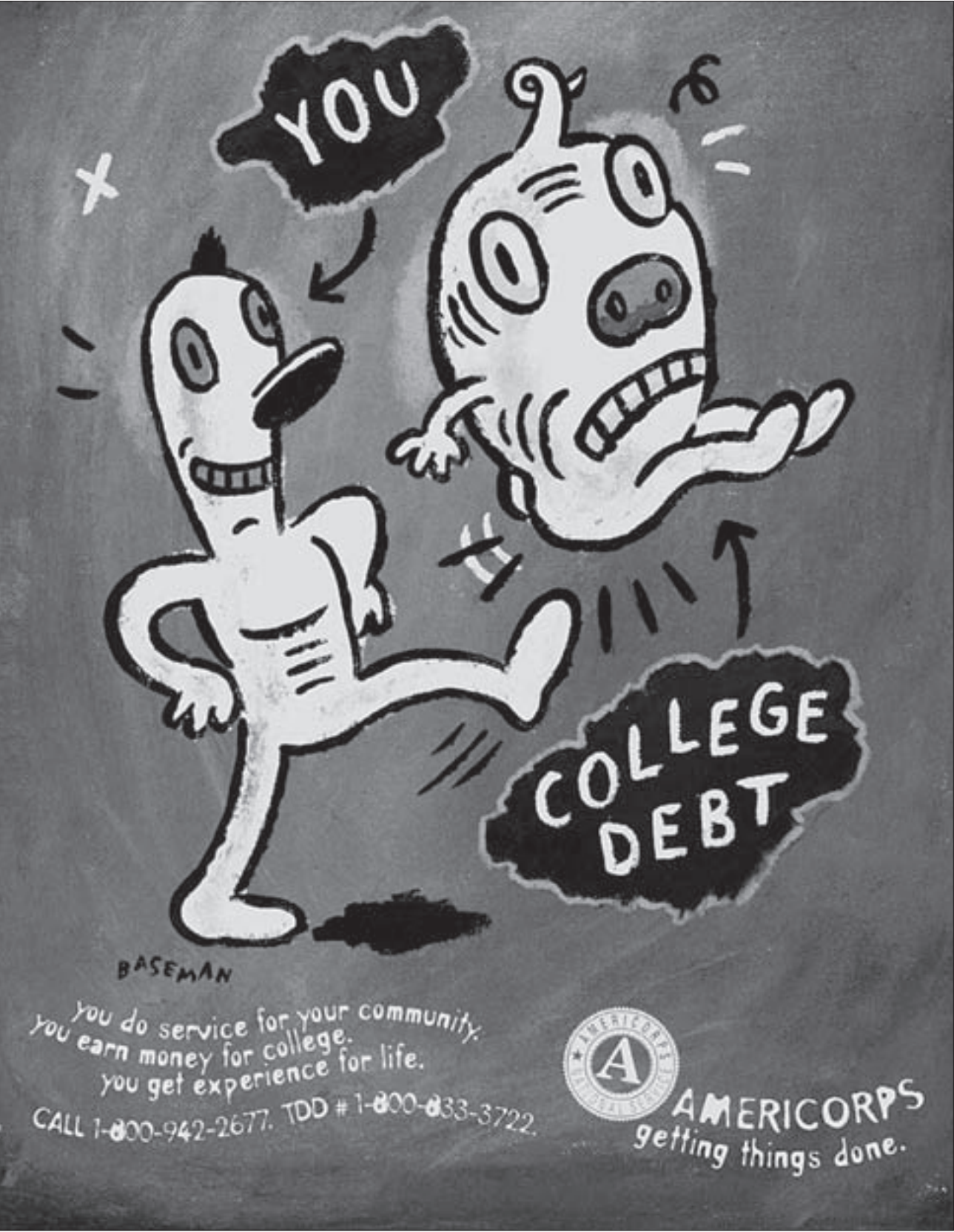
known for railing against the tradition of foot-binding. The symposium will be sponsored by Paul Hastings, and will feature panelists renowned in China such as English professor and women’s advocate Wu Qing, novelist Yang Geling, Chinese-American filmmaker Ruby Lang, and talk show host Lang Yan—whom Spar called “China’s Oprah.” “The China event exploded out of nowhere,” Spar said. “We’re doing it on a shoestring.” In fact, a memo from the Admissions office spawned the planning of the symposium. Barnard’s application asks for several mini-essays, one of which inspired a prospective student to write about Tongbi. Admissions Dean Jennifer Fondiller did not recognize the name, and upon research, learned about Tongbi’s advocacy and time at Barnard. She sent a note to Spar’s office about the essay, and the trip’s plans were set in motion—the applicant was added to the list of accepted students, as well. Tongbi received an associate’s degree in journalism from Barnard in 1909. According to the symposium’s Web site, Tongbi was a media darling when she arrived in America. Around the time she was finishing her studies at Barnard, the site lists, she was quoted in the *New York Evening Mail* as saying, “When I finish here, I am going back to China to wake up my countrywomen. I am deeply interested in suffrage, and hope to arouse the women of China to a realization of their rights.” After graduation, Tongbi returned to China to pursue her feminist agenda. She edited and wrote for one of the country’s first women’s publications. According to the Web site, Tongbi “followed the inspiration of her father, political reformist Kang Youwei, and helped to



Courtesy of Barnard College

KANG TONGBI

eliminate the traditional practice of foot-binding in China.” She banded with other women to establish Tianzuhui, the “Natural Feet Society,” to help end the practice of foot-binding and enable women to be physically active. Further information on the symposium is available at barnard.edu/womenchangingchina. Aside from the symposium, Spar is using the trip as a research and recruiting venture. Spar will meet alumnae of Seven Sister schools in China, and will have a fundraising meeting with Hong Kong’s Barnard alumnae. She will also meet with headmasters of high schools in the country, and will end her trip with a visit to Seoul. Joy Resmovits can be reached at joy.resmovits@columbiaspectator.com.



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Matt Sherman / Staff Photographer

BRINGING HIM DOWN | The Columbia wrestling team will head north to New England to take on Harvard and Brown this weekend as it competes in its final two dual and conference meets of the season.

Columbia Wrestling Wraps Up Ivy Season on the Road in New England

BY JACOB LEVENFELD
Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia wrestling team will head north this weekend to visit Harvard and Brown, concluding its Ivy League season. Head coach Brendan Buckley has laid out very clear objectives for the season's final Ivy trip. "If we win both of these matches we should take 3rd in Ivy team race," he said in an e-mail. Both of the Light Blue's opponents enter the action on the heels of strong performances last weekend. Harvard took on American International College

on Friday, where both teams started out the night with a forfeit at 125 pounds. But the Crimson won eight of nine bouts overall en route to a lopsided 34-3 victory. On Saturday, Harvard followed up with a close 25-19 loss to Brown, and then pulled out another big win, 33-10, over Wagner. With a 4-10 overall record (1-2 Ivy), Harvard is neck and neck with Columbia (3-12, 1-2) going into this final weekend of duals. If the Lions pull out a win, they have a good chance of finishing the season ahead of the Crimson, who still have to face the Big Red's 10-2 squad on Saturday.

Senior Derek Sickles will face a tough matchup against Harvard's J.P. O'Connor, a junior who is the reigning Ivy League Wrestler of the Year and who went 13-0 in duals last season. At 157 pounds, this heavily anticipated bout will take place early on Friday, and may set the tone for the rest of the meet. Columbia will compete again on Saturday in its final Ivy meet at Brown. Brown (5-10, 2-1) is coming off a weekend road sweep of Harvard, Wagner, and Boston University. The 49-0 win over the Seahawks helped give the Bears the confidence to edge the Terriers 17-15.

The Lions are coming off a 1-2 home weekend that included a 32-6 drubbing at the hands of the Quakers. They will have to turn up the intensity in order to climb up the conference standings. "We are looking forward to competing again this weekend and proving that we are a better team than the way we competed on Sunday," Buckley said. "We do have to wrestle well, but do feel we are a better team than Brown and Harvard." The match against Harvard is set to begin on Friday at 5 p.m. in Cambridge. Saturday's match in Providence is scheduled to start at 2 p.m.



File Photo

BACK IN THE SWING OF THINGS | After losing to Ivy rivals Princeton and Cornell at the ECAC Championships, women's tennis returns home to face nonconference LIU.

After Falling to Two Ivy Foes, CU Returns Home to Face LIU

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The women's tennis team will return home this weekend after dropping two matches to Ivy League foes in the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championships this past weekend. Columbia will take on Long Island University this weekend. Despite losing 6-1 to 52nd-ranked Princeton and by an identical score to Cornell in the consolation bracket, Columbia remains confident that it can take some positives out of the matches. "I thought they competed well against Cornell," head coach Ilene Weintraub said. "Especially at the top of the lineup, they had opportunities." In particular, sophomore Natasha Makarova, playing at No. 1 singles, had her opportunity against Natalia Sanchez from Cornell. Makarova fell in three sets, despite winning the first set 6-2. "Natasha played a good match at No. 1," Weintraub said. "She won the first set quickly by attacking her opponent's backhand, and in the third set she came back from 1-4 down to make it 3-4, and that was a match that was very, very close. "There was a point toward the end of the match when it looked like we might come back in three of the top singles matches," she said, "so I put my rally cap on, but Cornell was tough." Stephanie Zilberman and Marlena Hall, Columbia's No. 2 doubles team,

defeated Cornell, 8-6, to give the Lions their only win in doubles play. However, the Lions lost the doubles point in both matches, and will be looking to reverse that trend this weekend. Long Island comes into this match without having played competitively since Feb. 1, when they were defeated 6-1 by Massachusetts. Overall, the Blackbirds come into Saturday's matchup with a 0-2 record and two 6-1 defeats this spring. They were, however, picked to finish second in the Northeast Conference behind Quinnipiac, a place in the conference standings they have held on to for the past five years. The Blackbirds have three returning players who were all-NEC first team last season, and two players who were all-NEC Second Team last season. The team is led by Selma Babic, a junior who is originally from Bosnia, was all-NEC first team in singles as well as doubles last season, and is currently 2-0 this season, including a dominating 6-0, 6-0 win against Albany's Susan Ma. Weintraub, however, is certain that the Lions will not overlook a non-conference opponent after seeing their peers in Ivy competition last weekend. "I think we can be successful outside of our conference," said Weintraub, "in February and March and that hopefully will lead us into playing well in April [during Ivy play]." The women's match will follow the men's, and is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Saturday at the Dick Savitt Tennis Center.

Men's Tennis Takes Break From Ivy Play

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The men's tennis team will try to erase the memory of its heartbreaking defeat by Harvard in the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championships on Monday by getting back on track with two matches against nonconference competition. Columbia will take on both St. John's and Fairleigh Dickinson University at home this weekend. "I am looking forward to playing," head coach Bid Goswami said. "Every indoor court is a different court. On ours, the ball stays low and fast. If you get used to a certain court, it is always better to play on it, since you get to know it and its bounces very well. "I think we have one of the best courts to play in," Goswami continued. "If you slice the ball, it stays low, and if you hit with topspin, it stays up. And it works to our advantage because we play there all the time." In particular, the coach believes that junior and No. 1 singles player Jon Wong will be the biggest beneficiary of the home courts. "Jon Wong is a shot-maker," Goswami said, "and I think that these courts are tailor-made for him. He can hit so many winners." Junior transfer and No. 3 singles player Mihai Nichifor is also a player that Goswami believes could be helped by the courts uptown, where he will be playing his first home dual match. In the fall, Nichifor won the A flight of the Columbia Classic in his first matches on the indoor court without dropping a set the entire tournament.

At the ECAC Championships, the Lions got an early look at one of their opponents, as the St. John's Red Storm was one of two non-Ivy teams to play in the tournament. "I saw a little bit of their match against Cornell," Goswami said, "and they played well against Harvard too. Even though the score was 4-0, they won the third doubles and they were close matches, well-contested sets. It is the best team I have seen over the years as they barely lost to Cornell and have beaten Dartmouth." St. John's enters this match with a 3-2 record on the season, with both losses at the hands of Ivy teams at the ECAC Championships. The Red Storm is led by sophomore Asaf Honig, who plays No. 1 singles. Behind Honig is freshman Milo Hauk, who leads the team with a 4-1 record



File Photo

BOUNCING BACK | The men's tennis team will look to recover from a difficult loss to Harvard when it takes on two nonconference opponents at home this weekend.

at the No. 2 singles position. Hauk and teammate Martin Kosut are undefeated on the season in doubles at the No. 3 spot. Last season, Columbia nudged St. John's 4-3 in a match played at the Dick Savitt Tennis Center. On Saturday, Columbia will host Fairleigh Dickinson in its final match of the weekend. "We beat them pretty handily last year, but they are a solid team," Goswami said, referring to a match when only one Lions singles player dropped a set and the closest set otherwise was 6-3. The Knights are undefeated this season in dual matches, entering with a record

of 2-0. Sophomore Matt Gordon leads the team at No. 1 singles, having won both of his matches over Lehigh and Queens College, a Division II school, thus far in the spring. Last season, Gordon pushed then-senior Mark Clemente to three sets before losing in a tiebreak at No. 1 singles. "They had a good recruiting class and I don't know that much about them since they are a young team," Goswami said, "so we will have to be aware." Columbia will host St. John's at 2 p.m. on Friday and Fairleigh Dickinson at 2 p.m. on Saturday, both at the Dick Savitt Tennis Center.

Fencing Needs Outside Help to Defend Title

FENCING from page A8

stronger team than Harvard is this year so as far as what can happen, it is unlikely that Harvard will win." On Feb. 16, the *Spectator* reported that three fencers on the Penn team came down with cases of meningococcal meningitis before the first round of the Ivy championships two weekends ago. Columbia's fencers were all given an antibiotic treatment of Cipro during the week in order to prevent any infection that might have been acquired through contact with the Quakers. Despite the health risk, Kolombatovich reaffirmed that the medical status of the Penn students

would have no bearing on the outcome of the Ivy championships. "None of Penn's starters were affected," he said. "Whether it is a starter or a sub, everyone wants to be part of an Ivy championship team. I don't really expect any major change." Columbia also faces injuries among a few of the team's starters. Senior co-captain Max Czapskiy injured his knee in his final bout against Harvard, and although he did not fence competitively over the past two weeks, his status will be unknown until Sunday. Junior sabreur Alex Rudnicki dislocated his shoulder against the Crimson, and while he tried to fence with his opposite arm at the New York

University multi-meet, the attempt was unsuccessful. Rudnicki's status is also unknown. For the women, junior co-captain Daria Schneider suffered a sprained ankle in a World Cup event before the first weekend of Ivy play. She did not compete for Columbia until the NYU multi-meet, where she fenced only three bouts. "Clearly Daria is talented enough to deal with whatever is out there, especially with an injury," Kolombatovich said. "She is certainly strong enough to take care of herself and know what she is capable of." Columbia begins its final two rounds of Ancient Eight play in Providence on Sunday at 1 p.m.



COLUMBIA vs. BROWN, FRI. 7 P.M., PIZZITOLA SPORTS CENTER

COLUMBIA vs. YALE, SAT. 7 P.M., JOHN J. LEE AMPHITHEATER

BY THE NUMBERS

POINTS PER GAME



FIELD GOAL PCT.



REBOUNDS PER GAME



POINTS ALLOWED



BY THE NUMBERS

POINTS PER GAME



FIELD GOAL PCT.



REBOUNDS PER GAME



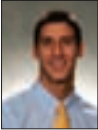
POINTS ALLOWED



BROWN BEARS

Player	Yr	Pos.	No.	Player	Yr	Pos.	No.
M. Coleman	Fr.	G	2	G. Leffelman	So.	G	31
S. Friske	Sr.	F	5	M. Mullery	Jr.	F	45
S. Gruber	Jr.	G	10	C. Skrelja	Sr.	F	22
J. Harris	Fr.	G	44	P. Sullivan	So.	F	25
S. Kaluz	Fr.	C	50	C. Taylor	So.	F	01
S. Kane	So.	G	15	A. Williams	So.	G	11
M. Kelly	So.	C/F	21				

PROJECTED STARTING FIVE



Peter Sullivan, G
14.2 PPG, 5.0 RPG, 1.7 APG



Chris Skrelja, G
5.9 PPG, 6.5 RPG, 3.6 APG



Adrian Williams, G
12.2 PPG, 2.5 RPG, 1.3 APG



Matt Mullery, F
16.0 PPG, 5.9 RPG, 2.0 APG



Scott Friske, F
6.3 PPG, 5.1 RPG, 3.2 APG

LAST FIVE

Opponent	Date	Result	Top Scorer
vs. Princeton	Feb. 14	W, 61-43	Matt Mullery, 19
vs. Penn	Feb. 13	L, 73-52	Adrian Williams, 15
@ Harvard	Feb. 7	L, 64-63	Matt Mullery, 27
@ Dartmouth	Feb. 6	L, 63-61	Scott Friske, 19
@ Columbia	Jan. 31	L, 65-59	Peter Sullivan, 18

LAST TIME THEY MET



59 42

January 31
AT
Levien Gym

January 30
AT
Levien Gym



65 53



COLUMBIA LIONS

Player	No.	Yr.	Pos.	Pts.	Rebs.	Asts.
Patrick Foley	5	Jr.	PG	10.7	1.7	2.3
Jason Miller	45	Sr.	F	10.3	7.0	1.0
Noruwa Agho	1	Fr.	G	9.3	3.2	1.8
Niko Scott	42	Jr.	G	8.4	2.5	1.6
K.J. Matsui	4	Sr.	G	6.8	1.4	0.5
Joe Bova	33	Sr.	F	6.3	4.6	0.9
Asenso Ampim	0	So.	F	5.9	6.0	1.1
Kevin Bulger	11	Jr.	G	5.2	3.7	2.5

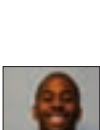
LAST FIVE

Opponent	Date	Result	Top Scorer
vs. Harvard	Feb. 14	W, 60-59	Jason Miller, 19
vs. Dartmouth	Feb. 13	W, 65-52	Noruwa Agho, 20
@ Princeton	Feb. 7	L, 63-35	Zack Crimmins, 5
@ Penn	Feb. 6	W, 74-63	Jason Miller, 21
vs. Brown	Jan. 31	W, 65-59	Jason Miller, 14

YALE BULLDOGS

Player	Yr	Pos.	No.	Player	Yr	Pos.	No.
C. Andrews	Sr.	G	1	R. Mantilla	So.	G	21
P. Braswell	So.	G	4	R. Morin	Sr.	F	00
J. Davis	Jr.	F	3	P. Nelson	Jr.	C	32
G. Fiddler	So.	F	44	T. Pinick	Sr.	G/F	5
J. Gibson	Jr.	F	11	M. Sands	So.	F	42
B. Katz	Fr.	G	10	R. Willhite	Fr.	G/F	22
G. Mangano	Fr.	F	50	A. Zampier	Jr.	G	24

PROJECTED STARTING FIVE



Alex Zampier, G
12.9 PPG, 2.9 RPG, 1.9 APG



Chris Andrews, G
2.8 PPG, 1.6 RPG, 2.8 APG



Garrett Fiddler, C
6.7 PPG, 3.9 RPG, 0.9 APG



Travis Pinick, F
9.8 PPG, 5.9 RPG, 3.0 APG



Ross Morin, F
12.7 PPG, 5.9 RPG, 1.1 APG

LAST FIVE

Opponent	Date	Result	Top Scorer
vs. Penn	Feb. 14	L, 68-63	Alex Zampier, 18
vs. Princeton	Feb. 13	W, 60-48	Alex Zampier, 13
@ Dartmouth	Feb. 7	L, 57-54	Ross Morin, 17
@ Harvard	Feb. 6	W, 87-66	2 tied, 15
@ Cornell	Jan. 31	L, 64-36	Chris Andrews, 7

KEY MATCHUP



Jason Miller vs. Matt Mullery
Last time they played, Miller was able to hold Mullery to just eight points, but it remains difficult to contain Brown's leading scorer.



KEY MATCHUP



Niko Scott vs. Alex Zampier
Scott was able to hound Zampier into a 2-for-8 night at Leven. A repeat performance from Scott would go a long way for the Columbia effort.



PIXBOX

WEEK 5



Lisa Lewis
(23-9)



Max Puro
(22-10)



Matt Velazquez
(22-10)



Jelani Johnson
(21-11)



Jonathan Tayler
(19-13)



Jonathan August
(19-13)



Mike Shannon
(17-15)



Charles Young
(16-16)



Jacob Shapiro
(16-16)

Columbia vs. Yale (+3.5)	Coach Jones	Columbia	Columbia	Columbia	Columbia	Columbia	Columbia	Columbia	ROAR!
Cornell vs. Brown (+10.5)	Big Red	Cornell	Cornell	Brown	Cornell	Cornell	Brown	Cornell	Cornell
Dartmouth vs. Penn (-3.5)	Big Green	Penn	Dartmouth	Penn	Penn	Penn	Penn	Dartmouth	Dartmouth
Harvard vs. Princeton (-4.5)	Vard	Harvard	Princeton	Princeton	Princeton	Princeton	Princeton	Princeton	Princeton
Oklahoma vs. Texas (+8.5)	Texas Fight	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Texas	OU	Blake Griffin	Oklahoma	Texas	Sooners
Louisville vs. Cincinnati (+7.5)	Cincinnati	Louisville	The Ville	Cincinnati	Pitino	Cards	Louisville	Louisville	Cinci
Hornets vs. Lakers (-5.5)	Kobe	Lakers	Lakers	Lakers	Fuck you August	Best in the NBA	Lakers	Lakers	LAL
Celtics vs. Phoenix (+6.5)	Ugh. Celts	Celtics	Celts	Phoenix	Rondo	Phoenix	Phoenix	Celtics	Celts

THE BEST PART

My Life = Fashion Week + Meeting Sophia Bush + Relay For Life Kickoff Tonight at 10 p.m. at Lerner 555!

Happy birthday mom!

As of Thursday morning, the KC Chiefs were selling Larry Johnson jerseys for \$6.99 plus s/h. By the afternoon all men's sizes sold out. Who bought them?

Congrats to Jelani for missing deadline.

Room in Vegas: \$0
Corvette: \$0
UCLA game with Marshall August: Priceless

There're some things the NYT can't buy.

Damn I wish I was in Vegas...

"Game over."

Just when you thought VC and T-Mac could be reunited in Houston, one of them gets injured. The more things change, the more things stay the same.

Will Paxson just leave already?

CU Could Miss Home Crowd This Weekend



MAX PURO

PURE OVERTIME

Cameron Indoor Arena. Rupp Arena. Allen Fieldhouse. The Dean Dome. All of these are prestigious men's basketball arenas, which give their home teams (Duke, Kentucky, Kansas, and North Carolina, respectively) a distinct advantage.

It would be silly to group Levien with the aforementioned stadiums, but the atmosphere surrounding the small, underground gym has changed drastically from last year and even from earlier this season—helping to produce a very respectable 7-5 mark.

Prior to this season, there were probably more games than not, particularly during the non-conference portion of the schedule, where I could count the number of fans in the stands. The same was true for the first six games of this season.

These first six home games produced an average attendance of 694. Let me repeat that: An average of 694 kids attended each of the opening six games for Columbia. Not surprisingly, the home court advantage that could be felt in the smaller gyms of the Ivy League was missing from Levien.

A 2-4 record corresponded to those first home contests. Granted, a number of them occurred over winter break when most students were home (and not thinking of Columbia basketball). But, still the change since the start of Ivy play is nothing short of remarkable.

Starting with the New Jersey Institute of Technology game (a week before school resumed) and including the last five Ivy contests, the attendance has increased by 1.6 times to a respectable average of 1,104 per game. Columbia's record during this stretch is an impressive 5-1, with its only loss coming at the hands of Ivy favorite Cornell.

Now at games, I turn to my colleagues and look up at the stands to see the student section nearly filled to the top with pretty knowledgeable and avid (albeit probably drunk) fans. While in years past there had been a respectable number of fans, it seemed as though they didn't want to cheer too loudly and potentially be ostracized by friends.

This year, that has gone out the window. The fraternities and sports teams that show up for games, in true Columbia spirit, have thought of some fairly witty (and some obnoxious) chants during games. But so far it seems to be working, particularly in the second half.

The past two home weekends saw the Light Blue come from behind against two of its opponents, while maintaining slim leads in the other contests. While success can't be credited solely to the fan support, such support is clearly a motivational tool—one that could get any player fired up. Playing in front of a big crowd (something I rarely did in high school) makes individuals want to perform to the best of their abilities. Maybe the fans have contributed to that (in addition to distracting opponents). The only problem with this youthful Lion squad has been the drastic drop in performance on the road.

While their 2-6 road record is almost to be expected, given the relative inexperience of the Lions, some of these losses have been rather surprising. Losing to Cornell and American—two potential NCAA tournament teams—is to be expected, as is losing to Big East foe Seton Hall.

But St. Francis (N.Y.)? Lehigh? St. Francis currently ranks below Columbia, while Lehigh is slightly ahead. At home, Columbia has beaten teams ranked slightly higher than it is (Yale, for instance). Is home court advantage that important in college basketball?

With two road contests on tap for this weekend against two teams that the Lions handled fairly easily at Levien, this idea of home court advantage may rear its ugly head. It's hard to say if the Lions will keep up their winning streak, but in order to do so, they will need to defy those road woes.

Max Puro is a Columbia College senior majoring in history. Sports@columbiaspectator.com

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

MEN'S TENNIS

vs. St. John's
Baker Field, 2 p.m., Feb. 20

WRESTLING

vs. Harvard
Harvard, 5 p.m., Feb. 20

WOMEN'S TENNIS

vs. Long Island University
Baker Field, 6 p.m., Feb. 20

MEN'S TENNIS

vs. Farleigh Dickinson
Baker Field, 2 p.m., Feb. 21

COLUMBIA (10-12, 5-3)
vs. BROWN (7-15, 1-7)
FRI., PIZZITOLA SPORTS CTR., 7 p.m.



RADIO:
WKCR 89.9 FM
WWDJ 970 AM
WWW:
GOCOLUMBIA
LIONS.COM



COLUMBIA (10-12, 5-3)
vs. YALE (9-13, 4-4)
SAT., LEE AMPHITHEATER, 7 p.m.



Brian Chan / Staff Photographer

TAKING IT TO THE RIM | Jason Miller will lead the men's basketball team as it tries to continue its winning ways on the road against Brown and Yale this weekend.

Lions' Climb Up Standings Hits Road

BY MAX PURO
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Coming off of a weekend sweep and winning five of its last six matches, the Columbia men's basketball team will travel to Brown and Yale with the hope of continuing this success.

During Joe Jones' tenure, the Lions have achieved a road sweep twice in 15 attempts, both of which came against Harvard and Dartmouth. One of the perfect pairs came last season, pushing Columbia's Ivy League record to 5-3—the same as its current record.

The Light Blue improved to 5-3 last weekend with victories over the Big Green and the Crimson. Against Dartmouth, a 17-2 run to start the second half (amounting to a 30-5 run over two halves) gave Columbia a lead it would not relinquish on its cruise to a 65-52 win. Freshman Noruwa Agho had a solid game all-around, scoring 20 points and grabbing nine rebounds, while also earning two steals and two blocks.

The Harvard game was much closer, as Columbia needed the last-second heroics of Kevin Bulger to eke out a 60-59 victory. Bulger hit a one-handed floater that dropped with only 4.2 seconds left to give the Lions the victory. Ivy League Player of the Week Jason Miller finished with 19 points on 7-of-9 shooting and eight rebounds to lead the Lions in both categories.

In Columbia's first meeting against Brown (7-15, 1-7 Ivy), the Lions fell behind 37-35 with 16 minutes to go before Patrick Foley scored the next five points, leading to a 24-9 run. However, Brown responded with a 10-1 run before Columbia calmly made its free throws to ice a 65-59 victory.

Columbia held Brown to 29.6 percent shooting for the second half (37.7 percent for the game) and was able to shut down Brown's leading scorer, Matt Mullery. Mullery, a junior forward, scored only eight points on 2-of-11 shooting, far below his Ivy League average of 17.1 points.

In order to sweep the season series against the Bears, the Lions will need to contain Mullery by guarding him with the more physical Jason Miller, as they did in the opener. The Light Blue also needs to do a better job on the glass than it did in its first matchup. Brown was able to snag 13 offensive rebounds, which resulted in 12 second-chance points.

To prevent this from happening, Miller and the rest of the Light Blue will have to battle both Scott Friske and Peter Sullivan, who combined for five offensive rebounds and 17 total during the last outing.

Against Yale (9-13, 4-4), the Lions will need to do exactly what they did in the second half of their first game against the Elis: defend.

In the first half, the Bulldogs were able to score 27 points while shooting 48 percent from the field. However, the Lions buckled down in the second half, allowing only 15 points on six field goals to take a commanding lead down the stretch.

Miller and Foley led the way for Columbia's offense, scoring a combined 28 points, while Miller grabbed a team-high 11 rebounds—greatly outplaying his Yale counterpart, Ross Morin. Morin currently ranks twelfth in the Ivy League in points per Ivy contest (10.9) and ninth in rebounding (5.5). Miller is going to need to do the same job defensively this time as he did in the first matchup.

Tip-off is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. for both nights.

STRUGGLES DOWN THE STRETCH?

Last year, the Columbia men's basketball team entered the second half of the Ivy season with a 5-3 record and an outside chance at the title. However, the Lions lost four of their last six games, finishing the season with a 7-7 record. The team hopes that history won't repeat itself this season.

2007-08

L

67-52

Record After
Eight Ivy Games:
5-3



2008-09

Feb. 20

W

68-62



Feb. 21

W

61-54



Feb. 27

L

63-47



Feb. 28

L

74-64



Mar. 06

L

69-67



Mar. 07

7-7

Final
Record

?



Kenneth Jackson / Staff Photographer

AGAINST ALL ODDS | The Columbia fencing team will try to defend both the men's and women's titles in Providence, R.I., at the final weekend of Ivy Championships.

Lions Aim for Split Title at Ivy League Championships

BY JONATHAN AUGUST
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Success in the Sunday finale of the Ivy League fencing championships may not be in Columbia's control, but that doesn't mean the team is without hope.

"It really is possible that there could be upsets," head coach George Kolombatovich said. "First off, though, it comes down to focusing on what we have to do, which is do well against Princeton and Cornell."

The men will face only Princeton on Sunday, while the women take on the Tigers and Big Red to close out Ancient Eight play. Winning all three matches will not be enough to secure a tie for the Ivy titles—the Lions will have to rely on victories by other teams. For the men, it will

require a victory by either a Harvard team that is currently sitting at 0-3, or a Yale squad at 1-2 Ivy over a 3-0 Penn team that scored an 18-9 win over the Lions at Levien. On the women's side, either 0-4 Brown or 1-2 Penn will need to defeat 4-0 Harvard in order to give Columbia a chance at a tie.

When asked to handicap this weekend's action, Kolombatovich understood that nothing is automatic, but that Columbia should also not be expecting to come home with any trophies.

"There is no tournament ever that is guaranteed for anybody," he said. "We're looking at what we can do first of all to give us a chance at a tie. Penn's men's team is definitely a

SEE FENCING, page A6

Columbia Returns Home to Face Brown and Yale

BY MICAH MILLER
Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia women's basketball team will be back at home this weekend when it faces off against Brown and Yale. To continue the success they had against second-place Harvard last weekend, the Lions will have to focus on playing strong defense and controlling the boards.

In its first meeting against Brown, Columbia was able to dominate all aspects of the game. The Lions outrebounded the Bears 41-22, allowing the former to put up 14 second-chance points. Sophomore forward Judie Lomax led Columbia in rebounds with a total of 15. On the offensive side, the Lions were able to get a huge boost from cocaptain Sara Yee, who scored 20 points during the contest. Yee was not the only Lion who was on fire that night—Lomax and Danielle Browne also put up big numbers.

The key for the Lions this weekend will be preventing the Bears from getting open looks—something they were able to do in their last meeting, as Brown shot only 35.4 percent from the field. The Lions should also look for smart opportunities to send the Bears to the free-throw line. While it was stronger than Columbia from the free-throw line, Brown record was paltry—just over 50 percent.

Columbia's first game against Yale was more difficult, as the Lions fell to the Bulldogs 63-61. During this contest, Yale was able to force 27 Columbia turnovers, limiting the latter's scoring. However, the Bulldogs only shot 35 percent from the field and 31 percent from behind the arc for the entire game. Despite this poor shooting, Yale was able to come away with the victory because of its excellent foul shooting, hitting 80 percent of its free throws. The Lions will have to be careful in creating contact with the Bulldog's top shooters.

The Light Blue will also have to establish a bigger presence on the glass against the

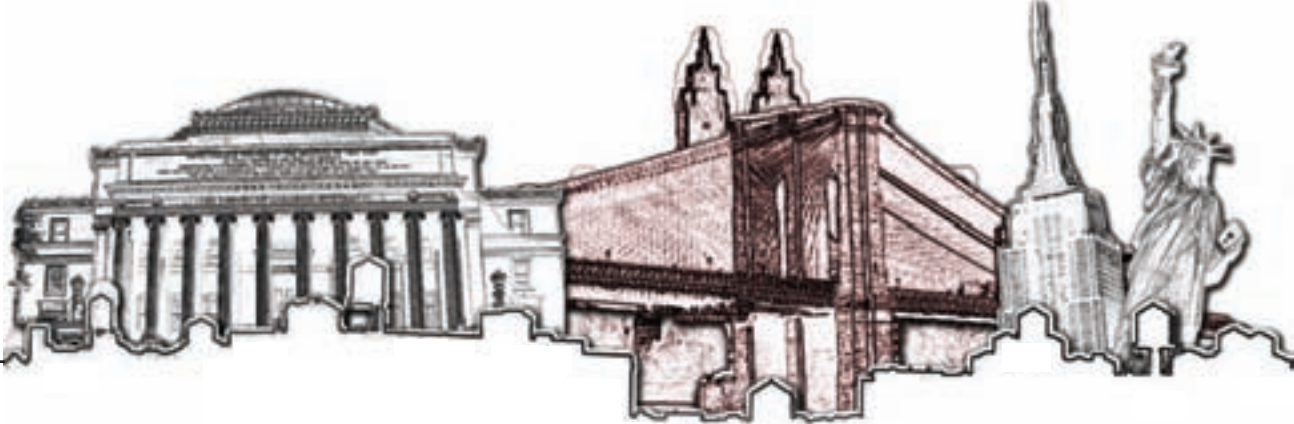


Dan Fainstein / Staff Photographer

LOOKING TO SCORE | Women's basketball returns to Levien this weekend to begin a four-game homestand.

Elis. The Lions were only able to muster up eight second-chance points last time, while the Bulldogs had 12 in the second half alone. Additionally, Columbia will have to put pressure on Yale's offense to allow the transition baskets that have been a key aspect of the team's game plan this season. Finally, Columbia will need to count on strong play from its bench. In its previous meeting with Yale, the Columbia bench totaled just 12 points.

The Lions will face off against the Bears at 7 p.m. on Friday night in Levien Gym, when Columbia hosts Pink Zone Night. The event raises breast-cancer awareness, and half the proceeds from ticket sales will go toward breast cancer research. The game against Yale is set to begin at the same time on Saturday in Levien.



THEATER



Courtesy of Shannon Nees

THE PLAY'S THE PRESCRIPTION | Columbia University medical students bring Shakespeare's classic tragedy to life on the stage this weekend, with all the drama and tension of a hospital operating room.

BY RUTHIE FIERBERG
Spectator Staff Writer

Trading in their scrubs for gleaming swords and flashy new pairs of tights, Columbia medical students take some time off from medicine to indulge in another passion: theater.

Tackling William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* for their winter play, which opened Thursday, medical students of the Bard Hall Players step into their acting shoes. Established in 1967 as a branch of the P&S Club of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Bard Hall Players—now the largest and most well-known branch of the P&S Club—explores a wide range of student talent outside of the operating room.

Producing three shows a year—a fall musical, and plays in the winter and spring—BHP “works to give kind of a creative outlet to medical students and other health science students on our campus to either start being involved in theater or continue being involved in theater,” co-president of the BHP and second-year medical student, Shannon Nees, said.

Though the majority of participants are first- and second-year medical students—before the going really gets tough—the BHP expands to the nursing, dental, and public health schools. Juliet herself is a nursing student.

Working to bridge the gap between the multitude of Columbia undergraduate

Wherefore Art Thou Stethoscope?

Columbia’s Thespian Physicians-in-Training Offer Audiences a Taste of Shakespeare With *Romeo and Juliet*

and graduate schools as well, the BHP has a record of law and undergraduate student involvement—though these participants have to be willing to make the trek to Washington Heights.

Angela Ricci, current stage manager of *Romeo and Juliet* and second-year medical student, agreed that the creative release is the most important aspect of the BHP. “While people get serious about it [the show], I think that primarily it is a diversion.”

“Medical school is stressful, and we are a group of dedicated people, and more and more over the past decade we have become more interesting and multifaceted people, and this gives us an opportunity to explore our talents

you are playing a role onstage you have to figure out who that person is, how they interact with people, you know, stepping into someone else's shoes. It's sort of the same way when you're a doctor.”

As the co-president of BHP and producer of this year's productions, Hingula explained that “being involved in BHP in a lot of other aspects teaches you to make a lot of crucial decisions.”

BHP's decision for the winter play was easy thanks to Chris Kutches' vision for the classic Shakespeare tragedy. This time around, the Capulets and Montagues represent Republicans and Democrats.

The cast works hard at “breaking the play free from the stodgy Shakespearean vision people have coming in—to make it accessible and help people clearly convey the intent of certain characters,” Ricci said.

Whether making creativity more accessible to medical students or theater more accessible to audiences, the Bard Hall Players certainly have their work cut out for them.

And for those of you who think that undergrad is your last chance for extracurricular activities, these future doctors prove you wrong.

Romeo and Juliet will play in the Alumni Auditorium in the Black Building on the Medical Campus, Friday, Feb. 20 at 6 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$7 with valid CUID and are available at cuarts.com and the TTC.

MUSIC

BY ROSIE DUPONT
Spectator Staff Writer

Hotel lobbies are notorious for playing mediocre jazz on repeat. GEM Hotels, a new collection of boutique hotels in NYC, wants to change that.

“Room for Tunes” is GEM Brand Hotels’ new marketing initiative to fill its lobbies with the trendy sounds of New York. The boutique hotels, with three New York City locations, pride themselves on their intimate connection to the neighborhoods in which they are located. Ritesh Jariwala, president of Gemini Hospitality Management, the company that owns GEM, decided to showcase local musicians in the hotels’ lobbies in an effort to further this neighborhood connection.

New York artists are encouraged to leave their CDs in the lobby of any GEM Hotel in New York through May 31. If their album is selected, their songs will rotate on the hotel lobby’s playlist. Then—this is the real perk—the artists will receive a free room at the hotel, which they can use for what GEM calls a “staycation.”

A “staycation” is a vacation that doesn’t include getting on an airplane (which means there

are no worries about baggage or taking Dramamine). “If they [the bands] are students, it’s a good get away from roommates in their apartments or dorms for a weekend, and a good opportunity to visit different neighborhoods and enjoy at least one night,” Jariwala said. There are no transportation or hotel costs, and the “staycation” includes a mini bar and crisp, turned down sheets.

Though Jariwala said that the hotels are looking for any and all genres of music, with only “restrictions based on language,” it is hard to imagine anything but easy listening. Unless GEM Hotel wants its customers rocking out in the lobby, it is probably selecting a certain kind of music—music that is not too loud, not too depressing, and not too weird.

Additionally, music plays a minimal role in these settings—it should be nonintrusive and calming. As it stands, local artists might have reservations about associating their music with GEM Hotels. It is questionable whether the “Room for Tunes” campaign will be beneficial to either GEM Hotels or local artists—why not hire a young hip DJ to pick out a good playlist?



Ian Kwok / Senior Staff Photographer

FIVE-STAR TUNES | GEM Hotels give musicians the opportunity to be featured in their “Rooms for Tunes” promotion. Winners get a free room for an NYC “staycation,” as well as free publicity—their music will be played in the lobby of the hotel.

Maybe because “Room for Tunes” is a compelling mixture of buzz marketing and mutual interest advertising. It is subliminally accessing the deepest insecurity of every musician. Will someone make room for my songs, my voice, my artistry? GEM Hotels will.

Symbiotic relationships are the kind artists crave. Especially musicians. Musicians need sponsors, writers, fans, and venues to launch their artistry. Consumers need music to inspire them, to look hip, and to feel good. “Room for Tunes” is promoting one such

relationship. So what have you got to lose? You’ve got tunes? They’ve got rooms.

GEM Hotels have three locations in NYC: SoHo at 135 E. Houston St., Midtown at 449 W. 36th St., and Chelsea at 300 W. 22nd St.

Pio Pio Brings Sabor From Peru



VALERIYA SAFRONOVA
WEST SIDE FLAVORS

At the ripe age of 14, I discovered the truth about borscht. For longer than a decade, this brightly colored, delicious

soup had been a symbol of my Russian heritage. But as it turned out, borscht is not Russian after all. It is Ukrainian.

To most people, this realization probably seems minor. To me, however, this cultural mix-up is symbolic of the state of the world. Cultures that a few hundred years ago would have never even dreamed of intersecting, are mingling, connecting, and changing constantly today.

Food is an inherent aspect of these interactions, these limitless spaces, these crossovers. Some see this as a problem. They say that we now have too many options, leaving us utterly lost and confused. After all, how much authenticity is there in a kitchen specializing in ethnic rotisserie chicken next door to a KFC?

These people might have a point, but I, personally, do not feel the least bit upset by the amount of choice I have when it comes to dinner. The restaurants in this city create spaces for themselves where they develop their own cultures, dreams, and ideas. Though they are able to interact, they can also distance themselves from one another. A city is a place that gives restaurants the freedom for both mutual exchange and individual expression.

Three stops away from campus on the 1 train, on 94th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, stands a Peruvian restaurant by the name of Pio Pio, an Upper West Side outlet for the famous chain specializing in rotisserie chicken. Said by some to be the best of the seven locations, the place is warm, loud, and very affordable.

Peruvian cuisine is a prime example of cultural fusion. It combines the influences of its native population, its colonizers, and its recent immigrants. Incan tradition meets African spices, Japanese elegance, and Chinese flavor to create the wide range of dishes that make up “typical” Peruvian fare.

With such a large selection to choose from, it is no wonder that Pio Pio’s menu is so varied. Though the food is all traditional, the choices span a wide range of tastes and elements. The menu offers dishes such as Arroz Chaufa or Cebiche Limeno, made with Corvina and lime juice.

The most famous dish, however, is the rotisserie chicken, which as I discovered, is succulent, spiced just right, and most importantly, cheap. The best way to try the chicken is with other dishes at the restaurant, which is possible with the Matador Combo.

For only \$28, this five-piece dish can feed an entire family, plus the dog. Included are a salad made with soft avocados, fresh tomatoes, and just enough vinegar; a plate of sweet, fried plantains; rice and flavorful beans; and French fries with miniature hot dogs (salchichas) on top. To compliment the meal, I recommend trying the fruity, rich, and refreshing sangria.

Maybe the fact that Peruvian cuisine can be found a few blocks away from a Starbucks or a McDonald’s is a negative sign of globalization. I, however, think it is one of the positive and more exciting aspects of it.

Maybe it stands for the overwhelming amount of choices available to the average consumer, and the dilemma they create. Well I, for one, like to have options besides John Jay and Hewitt.

Pio Pio is a nice reminder that we are in New York, that it is the age of boundless exploration, and that all you really need to discover the edible delights of the city is two dollars.

Valeriya Safronova is a Columbia College first-year. West Side Flavors runs alternate Fridays.

WEEKEND PICKS

THE EDITORS’ BEST BETS FOR THE WEEKEND AHEAD

THEATER
The Winter’s Tale. *Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street), ongoing through March 8, showtimes vary, tickets start at \$30.*
The BAM version of this classic Shakespeare play captures the story of a king driven mad by jealousy and a prince who has fallen in love with a woman of lower birth—very *Romeo and Juliet*, but with a wintery twist.

DANCE
Parashakti’s Dance of Liberation. *Jivamukti Yoga School, 841 Broadway (between East 13th and East 14th streets), Friday, 8:30 p.m., \$22.*
Stressed out? Liberate your inner light with spiritual leader Parashakti in this monthly event at the founding studio of Jivamukti Yoga. Participants simultaneously dance blindfolded to shed inhibitions and embark on a “vision journey.”

TV
Kathy Griffin Live. *Madison Square Garden (between Seventh Avenue and 32nd Street), Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m., Sunday, 7 p.m., prices vary.*
If you’re not up on pop culture or down with non-stop swearing, this *My Life on the D-List* star’s stand up may not be for you. But whether it’s with uncontrollable laughter or gasps of horror, comedienne Kathy Griffin definitely knows how to get the crowd going.

FILM
Oscar Nominees in One Day. *AMC Empire 25, 234 W. 42nd St. (between Seventh and Eighth avenues), Saturday, all day, \$30.*
Feeling unprepared for Sunday’s Oscar telecast? See all five nominees throughout Saturday for a discounted price, with free popcorn and soda.

FOOD & DRINK
Founded on Oyster Shells: Fundraiser for New Amsterdam Market. *Focus Rental Gallery, 599 11th Ave. (between 44th and 45th streets), Saturday, 5 p.m., \$50.*
According to popular belief, oysters were only OK to eat in months with the letter “R,” making February an unsuspecting—but, thanks to the silent letters, kosher—time to indulge. Eat oysters, drink beer, and fundraise for the New Amsterdam Market. Purchase tickets in advance at newamsterdampublic.org.

ART
Going Postal. *49 Bogart St. (between Seigel and Moore streets), Brooklyn, Friday, 7:30 p.m., free.*
This weekend, Ad Hoc will celebrate Martha Cooper’s new book featuring her photographs of graffiti sticker art in true Brooklyn style. Be prepared to buy, sell, and exchange home-made stickers while dancing to DJ Theo G’s deft scratching and hip-hop infused mashups.

MUSIC
Leonard Cohen at the Beacon Theatre. *2124 Broadway at 74th Street, Friday, 8 p.m., \$65-250.*
For the first time in 15 years, Leonard Cohen, one of the most prolific and influential artists of all time, is on tour. No, it isn’t cheap, but as far as musical priorities go, this is up there. How can you put a price on an icon?

BOOKS
Muldoon Makes a Rackett at the Bowery Poetry Club. *308 Bowery (between Houston and Bleecker streets), Saturday, 8 p.m., \$15.*
Join Paul Muldoon, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poetry editor of the *New Yorker*, and the Princeton-based band Rackett, for an evening of poetry and rock and roll. There will also be a surprise guest poet.

WILDCARD
Barbie’s Birthday. *Bloomingdale’s, 1000 Third Ave. (between 59th and 60th streets), Friday-Sunday, hours vary, free.*
In honor of Barbie’s 50th birthday, 120 different Barbie dolls will be on display at Bloomingdale’s in a Barbie-themed boutique filled with classic paraphernalia. But some of the dolls are more suited to reminiscing than to purchasing—first edition dolls are valued at \$25,000.

WILDCARD
Vintage Archive Sale at What Comes Around Goes Around. *13-17 Laight St. (between Varick Street and Avenue of the Americas), Friday-Sunday, hours vary.*
This coveted vintage archive, including brands such as Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel, and Ungaro, is normally available only through private appointments. But thanks to a moving sale, its selection of clothing, handbags, and shoes is now open to the public with discounts of up to 90 percent off.

SEARCH FOR THE BEST { CAFÉ AND BOOKSTORE COMBINATION

BOOKS

Cappuccino With Your Cervantes? Try These City Staples



Graphic by Hannah D'Apice

BY MALLIKA NARAIN
Columbia Daily Spectator

The bookstore-café combination is one that is essential to New York’s artistic culture. For reasons unknown to most rational beings, the experience of poring over various books of choice can only be enhanced by a perfect cup (or three) of coffee. The following vendors can help you achieve this sought-after, shall we say, literary-gastronomic coupling.

Head down to Skyline Books (13 W. 18th St.) for one of the better selections of used fiction in the city. Advertising itself as a seller of “books, rare and well-done,” Skyline has been around for 18 years, and is positively bursting with that independent-store attitude we love so much. “Our specialties are photography, art, out-of-print books, and first editions,” owner Rob Warren said. “In addition, we have a lot of American lit from the ’50s and ’60s.”

Delightfully cramped and filled with unusual texts, the bookstore perpetuates its atmosphere self-consciously, but with the enthusiasm of a much younger store. Shelves of books on topics as disparate as literary criticism and ancient Greece are juxtaposed with copies of used plays and old Hardy Boys box sets. Be careful not

to step on Linda the cat or knock over the poster of William S. Burroughs on your way out.

The City Bakery is only a few doors down from Skyline, and offers savory organic food, a great study space, as well as some of the best cookies and pastries in Manhattan. Most importantly, however, The City Bakery’s annual hot chocolate festival, which ends on Feb. 28th, means that its frequenters have the opportunity to try a different flavor of this delicious drink each day. A shot of thick hot chocolate could be just the thing to complement that copy of Steinbeck’s *Cannery Row* you picked up at Skyline.

Alternatively, to move from the comfortable and musty to the exotic and slightly psychedelic, East Village Books and Yaffa Café, at 99 and 97 St. Marks Place, respectively, provide patrons with an eclectic experience that is not to be missed. East Village Books is decorated with black-and-white photos of authors, charmingly creative handmade signs, and the occasional classic rock poster—as expected, it has an extensive section of music texts, including songbooks and biographies.

The bookstore’s collection of used CDs, while not quite inexpensive, includes some rare world music offerings. Yes, you can find

that Tibetan chant music you were searching for here. Ultimately, many of East Village’s clients frequent the store for the relatively bizarre genres it specializes in—science fiction, occult, religion, and new age, to name a few. “Does the mysticism section overlap with the erotica section, by any chance?” a customer was overheard inquiring. The response? “Sure, why not.”

After you’ve had a chance to ogle the sample of Nabokov’s handwriting on sale for a couple of hundred dollars at East Village Books, turn your sights to Yaffa Café. This vaguely Mediterranean, semi-’80s, vegetarian-friendly restaurant is hard to pin down, but it cannot be denied that its lattés are fabulous. In addition, the décor is like nothing you’ve ever seen: the Christmas lights and zebra-print furniture somehow manage not to contradict each other irrevocably, and even the bathroom has mood lighting. In the summer, customers can brunch outside on the picturesque patio.

While the aforementioned bookstores may not satiate your textbook and stationery needs, they are certainly welcome alternatives to the Morningside offerings. At the very least, your chances of finding some great used literature are incomparably higher.

MODEL BEHAVIOR



Angela Radulescu / Senior Staff Photographer

RUNWAY FIERCE | Fashion designer Anna Sui shows off edgy takes on classic pieces as part of New York City’s Fashion Week. Julia Halperin explores the intricate and surprising social code governing these ritzy and coveted events. Note for standing room attendees: get prepared for great views of models’ hair.

STYLE

A Fashion Virgin Learns the Rules of the Runway

BY JULIA HALPERIN
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Last weekend, I attended my first fashion show. I was assigned to review the collection of Costello Tagliapietra, a New York-based designer duo that, according to my Internet research, burst onto the fashion scene in 2005.

Although my fashion expertise includes little more than my mom’s subscription to *InStyle* magazine, I figured the high-waisted belt I borrowed from a friend would be enough to help me blend in with the glamorous spectators at Fashion Week.

Whether or not I looked the part, it became abundantly clear upon my arrival at the Altman Building—one of Fashion Week’s many satellite locations—that I had no idea what I was doing.

Instead of compiling notes on the clothes the models strutted down the runway, I was much more interested in the spectacle that surrounded the main event. To that end, I have

compiled a list of bizarre elements of this particular fashion show, with the hope that perhaps they will prepare any future out-of-place bystander for the circus that awaits.

- 1. Expect advertising—at least until the economy improves.**
Fashion show sponsorships have apparently become ubiquitous in these harsh economic times, so expect to be greeted by luxurious spreads of Budweiser, Evian, or POM juice. The less-than-subtle product placement and flawless lighting might look a lot like a scene from *Gossip Girl*. And although I was afraid to approach any of the tables for fear of coughing up cash, don’t be afraid to quench your thirst. The best thing about sponsors? They give away their products for free.
- 2. Not everyone is created equal.**
You might assume snagging a ticket to a fashion show is all you

need to rub shoulders with B-list actresses and reality TV show stars. But be advised: fashion show producers do their best to retain social divisions even inside the warehouses and tents. If you get a ticket for “standing only,” you’ll be pleasantly but firmly compelled to your place behind the risers. While it’s difficult to see the models from the waist down as they strut across the runway, you will get an excellent view of their hairstyles.

- 3. Awkward interactions abound.**
If you think stilted McBain elevator chat is awkward, just try eavesdropping on members of a fashion show audience. Just enough people seem to know one other that everyone feels compelled to introduce everyone else, but no one seems to know what to say. These interactions are the college “do-you-know-so-and-so” game on a massive scale. Instead of tossing around names from a Boston

suburb or UPenn, these people try to find mutual friends within the entire city of New York. And the most bizarre part is, from what I was able to overhear, some of them actually manage to do it.- 4. You will be left wanting more.**
The most surprising element of my fashion show excursion was undoubtedly its duration. I got to the show half an hour early, only to find that it started half an hour late. And as it turned out, I would spend more than five times as long waiting for the show to start than I would actually watching it. Although I didn’t time it exactly, my best estimation of the show’s length is about 10 minutes. I kind of wish I had known that a fashion show is more like watching a comet whiz by than it is ruminating on the beauty of the stars. Maybe then I would have paid more attention to the clothes.

FILM

African Diaspora Films Reunite at Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Rose Cinema



Courtesy of ADFF

FROM GHANA WITH LOVE | *Prince of Broadway*, one of the Best of ADFF films featured at the African Diaspora Film Festival, tells the story of African immigrants from Lebanon and Ghana and their trials and tribulations after migrating to Manhattan, a departure from the stereotypes of Hollywood’s African-American characters. Their story is being featured alongside other tales of dispersion at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Rose Cinema.

BY NNEKA MCGUIRE
Columbia Daily Spectator

Usual stereotypes of African Americans in film can be seen in many Hollywood pictures. But they are absent at the Best of the African Diaspora Film Festival presented by BAMcinématek, starting Friday and running through next week.

During this week-long series, BAM Rose Cinemas is showcasing 13 films lauded by critics and audiences alike. Displaying black filmmaking feats from five continents, the ADFF was launched in 1993 by ArtMattan Productions, an independent film distribution company.

Explaining the ADFF’s purpose, Reinaldo Barroso-Spech, ArtMattan productions president and ADFF co-director, said, “A lot of films that come from Hollywood present a very limited vision of what the black experience is. Our goal is to present quality products and expand that vision through film. Films can play a role beyond that of just entertaining people.” Presenting independent feature films, shorts, documentaries and animations, the ADFF honors inspired, unconventional filmmaking in Africa and throughout the African diaspora.

Some of the films being screened at BAM’s series boast big-name actors, such as *Gospel Hill* featuring Danny Glover, Angela Bassett, and Julia Stiles. Glover also appears alongside Carl Lumbly (*Alias*) in *Namibia: The Struggle for Liberation*, a film detailing the Namibian people’s fight for independence from apartheid South Africa, directed by Charles Burnett the

mastermind behind *Killer of Sheep* and *To Sleep with Anger*.

Prince of Broadway, another film in the series, includes lesser-known actors but possesses an equally engaging plot. Directed and written by Sean Baker, *Prince of Broadway* follows the thorny lives of two immigrants, one Ghanaian and the other Lebanese. Lucky (Prince Adu) and Levon (Karren Karagulian) are co-workers in Manhattan’s wholesale fashion district. Lucky’s days are spent luring customers into Levon’s store, in which both men peddle counterfeit or stolen designer merchandise. The auspicious connotation of Lucky’s name fails him when a toddler whom he supposedly fathered is thrust into his life.

Baker brilliantly challenges viewers’ conception of Lucky and Levon by every so often exposing a new layer of each man’s identity, effectively eroding any sort of pigeonhole in which one might be inclined to place them. And even if this innovative plot doesn’t rouse your interest, go see the film solely for Prince (Aiden Noesi), Lucky’s supposed love child.

The protagonists of *Prince of Broadway* and their predicaments are a perfect fit for the many cultures celebrated at the series. This festival is certainly a refreshing departure from *Get Rich or Die Tryin’*.

The Best of the African Diaspora Film Festival plays from Feb. 20-26 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Street, at Duane Street). Tickets cost \$8 for students. Prince of Broadway plays Saturday at 4 p.m., and Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. Look for continuing coverage of the ADFF here and online at columbiaspectator.com.

DANCE

Symphony Space Dance Class Gets Buggy With It in Tribute to the Year 1939

BY FRANK NESTOR
Columbia Daily Spectator

It was ten years after the stock market crash and two years before America entered World War II. But 1939 was much more than another notch in the road of America’s recovery from the Depression. During that year, individuals produced art in different media reflecting the spirit of the time. For the entire month of February, Symphony Space, located at 95th Street and Broadway steps away from the 1 train, will celebrate 1939 by discussing, displaying, and performing some of those artistic achievements.

The month-long series seeks to use 1939 as a springboard from which it will trace the evolution of American culture. The project began with screenings of Hollywood films, such as *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *Gone with the Wind*, that were released in 1939 and are now regarded as classics. The project also showed documentaries about the 1939 World’s Fair, which was held in Flushing Meadows in Queens, New York.

Esteemed scholars and authors are invited to discuss their works that include political histories about Franklin Delano Roosevelt and a panel about the Raymond Chandler novel *The Big Sleep*. Classical music, such as that of Béla Bartók and Henry Cowell, was performed on Feb. 12th, contrasting period European and American art form. More performances of jazz and classical music from professional quartets and orchestras will occur throughout the month.

Set amidst the backdrop of the gloom and melancholy of the Depression was an air of optimism

in the cultural products of the pivotal year of 1939. This feeling of hope and levity was present at the swing dancing event, “Jitterbug Dancejam,” at Symphony Space this past Tuesday night. It was not a panel discussion of the history of African-American culture, nor was it a screening of old film clips. Instead, it was an active display of what swing dancing truly encompassed at the time.

Mercedes Ellington, a well-known dancer and choreographer, taught a lesson at the event that demonstrated a whole list of solo jazz moves to incorporate into one’s dancing. Moves such as “Spank the Baby,” which involve gently slapping one’s own buttocks, brought many amused smiles to the diverse group of swing enthusiasts. Twenty-year-olds to senior citizens were side-by-side learning the new jazz moves. Ellington also explained the history behind some of these solo expressions in between her instruction. As one experienced dancer said, “It was nice to hear a different oral tradition.”

Then Ellington let participants let loose, and everyone began dancing on stage. Even though not all of the music was from 1939—there was some Rock ‘n’ Roll—the spirit of the night remained true to swing dancing and the lindy hop. The Savoy Ballroom, a popular Harlem dance hall in the 1920s through the 1950s, and the place where lindy hop originated, was one of the first racially integrated establishments in New York City. Within its walls nothing else mattered except if you could dance. People from as far away as Britain attended this event, and the old veterans



File Photo

BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY | Symphony Space hosts artistically and culturally diverse performing arts workshops and events.

happily danced with young students.

Though the world of 1939 seems completely different from that of today, similarities and connections are palpable. Seventy years ago, an economic crisis rattled the country and its citizens, yet Americans never gave up, and they found a way to use culture

to express their hope and lift their spirits. In 2009, perhaps it is time to remember and learn from those who suffered, but ultimately succeeded.

The Symphony Space’s 1939 series runs through Feb. 28th.

Street Art Paints the Meatpacking District in a Vivid Light

GRAFFITI from page B4

Fortunately, the glittery touch of posh restaurants and the models who don’t eat at them have not completely penetrated the dark alleyways past Ninth Avenue. Traces of the Meatpacking’s previous life may still exist in the plethora of graffiti that line the sidewalks like paintings in an art gallery.

On Little West 12th Street between Ninth Avenue and Washington Street—right beside the hoppin’ Cielo Night Club and a slightly less hoppin’ ATM—stands an iconic image accredited to the famous English graffiti artist Banksy. In front of a violently red backdrop, a man in Charlie Chaplin-esque attire kneels beside a metal detonator hooked up to a rat that hangs in midair several inches above him. Streams of neon pink and green paint shoot out of the animal’s body with such dynamic force that the sound of the explosion seems to ring in the air.

The scene provides a brief reminder of the dangerous excitement that defined Old New York—a New York that past generations speak of with nostalgia and slight disdain, and that new generations wish they could have experienced. But then with a stiletto step to the right the memory is gone, drowned out by techno and \$14 cosmos.

One longs for the graffiti in Meatpacking to offer a much-needed ironic, if not diabolic, touch to the Disneyland of urban life—but somehow it falls short. A few blocks from the Banksy, a striking wall displays a soldier holding a gun that fires splashes of colorful spray-paint. The piece seems like a novelty at first, but could easily be part of the ostentatious window display at Diane von Furstenberg’s mega store around the corner.

Even individual graffiti tags and a bubble letter “LOVE” sign scream out like brand items and fit right in with the neighborhood’s decorum. Packing trendy in the Meatpacking is not just about experiencing high-end nightlife, but also about cultivating a chic and hip persona—“Become a celebrity by association” might be the perfect ad slogan.

While its artistic merit cannot be denied, graffiti is a product of this consumer pop culture and an intrinsic part of Meatpacking’s cool façade. Yet to reject something so imbedded in society brings up a whole other slew of cliché labels (hipster, anyone?). So saunter down the alleyways, view the graffiti, maybe even splurge on a hamburger—just don’t drink too much of the Kool-Aid.



Kenneth Jackson / Staff Photographer

EYE TO EYE | Graffiti art represents an unadulterated look into the soul of the artist, who often remains unknown. Downtown, this urban art adds color to the streets.

MTV Lends Glamour, Glitz to Reality Show Mainstay Hangout

CITY from page B4

But even without the sunny skies and oversized sunglasses, *The City* has made New York City feel posh and mysterious, complete with that same scenic magnetism that glued viewers to the gritty details of the lives of Lauren Conrad and other *Hills* and *Laguna Beach* stars. And most of the thanks goes to the Meatpacking District, which has lent its effortless chic to the young show.

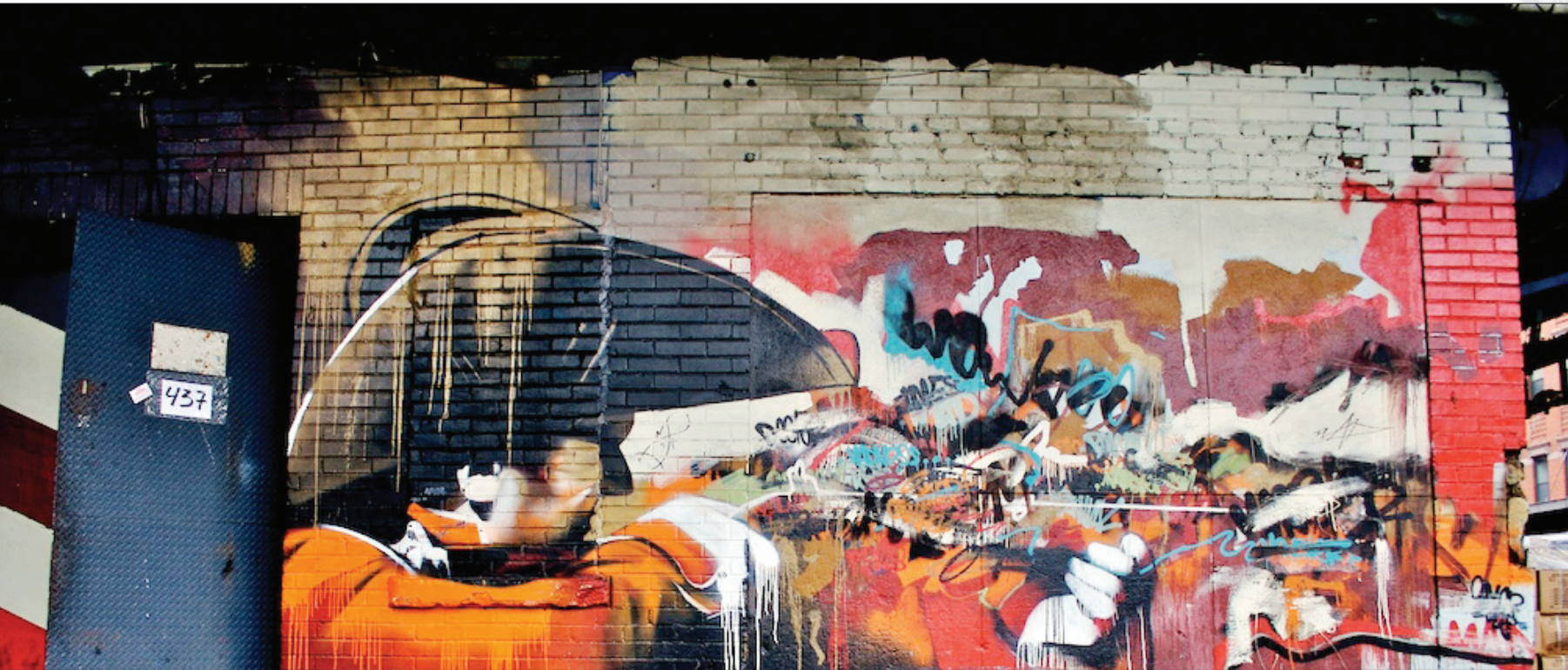
In the show’s pilot, Port and love interest Jay Lyon, a super-hip musician and Australian native, go on their first date at Meatpacking’s Nero, an Italian restaurant complete with the dewy glow of yellow streetlights and romantic candles. The show couldn’t have painted a more romantic first date spot for its budding couple. And, by the looks of it, no Columbian could go wrong by taking a date to this restaurant, now complete with the MTV stamp of approval.

In a more recent episode, “Mingling with the Commoners,” the show cuts to Lyon and Port, along with Port’s coworker and friend, socialite Olivia Palermo, at Hotel Gansevoort, where they are attending a charity function at which Lyon’s band is playing. Sipping cocktails in front of panoramic views of New York City, the cast could have not made this luxurious hotel, also located in the Meatpacking District, seem any cooler.

Maybe it’s the glitter that MTV sprinkles on the neighborhood, but thanks to *The City*, the Meatpacking District has never looked more appetizing.

The City airs on MTV Mondays at 10 p.m.

ART



Downtown Keeps Its Former Color With Graffiti Art

BY LIZA ELIANO
Columbia Daily Spectator

In the Meatpacking District, Oscar Mayer has been replaced with Oscar de la Renta. The area has quickly become one of the most trendy and expensive places to see and be seen in New York. Once a haven for social deviants and sexual experimenters of the 1980s—think less “free love,”

more S and M bondage—the Meatpacking District now looks like the cover of a glossy fashion magazine. Elite nightclubs and designer stores litter every corner like fast food franchises, sans the Dollar Menu. The neighborhood even has its own Web site brandishing the logo “MPD” that looks like it belongs on the side of a sneaker.

SEE GRAFFITI, page B3



Kenneth Jackson / Staff Photographer

HOLY COW | The streets of the Meatpacking District are a virtual museum of their own, proudly displaying some of New York's finest graffiti art, with subjects both abstract and concrete.

TV

MTV's *The City* Adds Spice to the Meatpacking District

BY CHRISTINE JORDAN
Spectator Staff Writer

Got a hankering for juicy drama? Look no further than New York's own Meatpacking District, where Whitney Port and the rest of the cast of MTV's *The City* are serving up the glamorous lifestyle.

This spin-off of *The Hills* is an installment of MTV's original *Laguna Beach* series, which exposed the effortless cool of rich California teens who spent their days tanning, partying, and, of course, getting into catfights. Much of the magic of *Laguna Beach*, as well as *The City*'s biological parent, *The Hills*, came from the portrayal of California as an island paradise, so finding a similar angle for the spin-off's new Gotham abode was a crucial point for *The City*'s first season.



SEE CITY, page B3

DANCE

Postmodern Dancer's Outpost for Creativity

BY CATHERINE RICE
Spectator Staff Writer

Hiding between the quaint Meatpacking District and the hip West Village, Merce Cunningham Dance Company is an innovative company all too frequently—and unfortunately—overlooked in the city.

Located at 55 Bethune St. (at Washington Street), the Merce Cunningham Dance Company offers a number of activities and events ranging from classes to studio performances, educational programs, and formal performances. The company is known for collaborating with other contemporary artists, including musicians, composers, visual artists, as well as other prominent choreographers.

Founder Merce Cunningham is still alive today, which allows the company as a whole to remain true to its roots and preserve the philosophy of the company. Cunningham says of his mission: “My work is, or at least what I attempt to do, is to take each person for what they are, both in the teaching and

in the making of dances, and try to find out what it is they are as dancers, and make that come out.”

As a result of Cunningham's continued influence and creativity in his perspective on dance and output of new compositions, the company is still in that nascent stage of development that most dance companies have long left behind. New works are constantly being created, and old works are being restaged and revised for new dancers. An example of a brand new initiative is *Mondays with Merce*, a series of webcasts that allows viewers to go behind the scenes and watch rehearsals, classes, and interviews with Cunningham.

The innovative educational outreach program originated in response to Sept. 11, when a group of students relocated to a school near the Cunningham Studio was brought in for a company rehearsal by their teacher, a former Cunningham dancer herself. The children were so captivated by the rehearsal and dancers that a formal program was established that allows students from grades 1-12 to observe a class, participate in a 30-minute-long movement session, and watch a 15-minute performance by company members for free.

As well as programs for children, general performances are held at the Cunningham Studio regularly, by both the company and by other dance companies. This weekend will feature a duo of dancers called X-tra Bullets in a program entitled *Cabin Fever*. While this duo is performing in the studio, the Cunningham Dance Company will perform in Beacon, NY, featuring old and new works by Cunningham himself.

Classes are offered at the studio for all ages, levels, shapes, and sizes. The classes are divided into four categories: back exercises (fundamental training), beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. A newly offered program for teenagers includes studio classes focusing on Cunningham technique and composition for dancers ages 13-17.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company offers activities and opportunities for virtually anyone, whether or not that person is remotely knowledgeable of the world of dance. Perhaps that is the reason why the small company, with only 14 dancers (seven men and seven women) has been so successful—it is able to mold and shape with the changing times, just like Cunningham's choreography molds and shapes with all the other art forms.

FOOD & DRINK

Meatpacking Merges the New and the Old With Trendy Restaurants

BY HANNAH LAYMON
Columbia Daily Spectator

The Meatpacking District, officially known as Gansevoort Market, takes its name from the industry that once dominated the neighborhood and lent it its stark toughness. But today, the only meat you are likely to see there is your \$28 steak from one of the area's many upscale restaurants.

The space west of Hudson between Gansevoort and West 14th streets was filled 100 years ago with 250 slaughterhouses and packing plants. In the last decade or so, however, the grime of the packing plants has been rubbed away by a wave of change that made the neighborhood one of New York's most fashionable. As meat companies left the area, their places were filled by expensive boutiques and restaurants that cater to the chicest of the chic.

Pastis, a brasserie at Ninth Avenue and Little West 12th Street, offers its sleek, black-clad clientele traditional French café fare, from croque-monsieur sandwiches to mussels with french fries, along with a thoroughly stocked bar and an ambiance of bustling cheeriness. Women compliment each other's Armani sunglasses, and men in turtlenecks discuss the latest

innovations in business and technology in the dim yellow light that issues from globes hanging from the ceiling.

For something more exotic, visitors to the district can try Jean-George Vongerichten's Spice Market at Ninth Avenue and 13th Street. Full of carved wooden ornamentation, brightly colored drapery, and pots of palm fronds, this restaurant's menu displays a wide range of Southeast Asian influences of which the most prominent are Indian, Vietnamese, and Thai.

Nevertheless, the neighborhood's old character manages to peek through the recent dusting of glitter these showy establishments have provided. The streets within the district itself are cobbled, strewn with trash, and flanked by crumbling, graffitied brick buildings with garage-like entrances. The one restaurant whose atmosphere seems consistent with this working-class image is Hector's Café, a diner on Little West 12th Street. Its checkered wall tiles, Formica tables, and Naugahyde bar stools, along with its simple menu centered on sandwiches and eggs, harks back to the diners of the 1950s.

Only yards from Hector's, within view of the river, you can observe one of the last vestiges of the industrial



Kenneth Jackson / Staff Photographer

WHAT'S FOR DINNER? | This downtown district offers a colorful array of dining options, with hints of its ultra-hip present and its less-polished past. Head down for a feast for the eyes and the palette.

identity from which this gritty atmosphere originated. Little West 12th Street and the adjacent stretch of 10th Avenue are lined with the plants of some of the 35 meat suppliers that remain in the

neighborhood. As forbidding as the rows of trucks and the heavy, locked metal doors may be, it is reassuring to know that such an elegant place remains tied to its humble roots.

Neighborhood Watch