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AN ALTERNATIVE
EDUCATION



Mika Miko puts the punk in spunk



PHOTO BY JEREMY HOGAN

The five-girl troupe Mika Miko (Jessie Clavin, Jenna Thornhill, Katelyn Hall, Jennifer Clavin, and Michelle Suarez) spread their time among a number of projects, but they're full-time Black Flag fans and mainstays on the Los Angeles club scene. Their first LP, C.Y.S.L.A.B.F. (Kill Rock Stars, 2006) showcases 13 songs and 21 minutes of tongue-in-cheek punk madness. They will soon release their new EP, 666, which was recorded on June 6, 2006.

My name is Jenna.
This gal is Jennifer on speakerphone.
Hi, this is Michelle!

I can't differentiate between your voices really, so don't be offended if I confuse you, OK?

Jenna: Do you want us to say our name before we say something?

I feel that would be kind of unnatural? But if you feel uncomfortable being mislabeled.

Jenna: But if someone says something really dumb that no one else wants to get credit for—

Are you practicing right now?

Jenna: Actually, it's only three of us also, two of us couldn't make it.

How does practice go without the other two?

Michelle: It's pretty good, like what we do is just we hang out and write e-mails, and then go out to eat. I'm reading a magazine right now. I'm reading *People* magazine.

Two of you go to school still. Do you live on campus?

Jenna: I live at home, on community college campus.

Michelle: Yeah, I live at home.

How did you like high school?

Michelle: Well, Jenna and Jennifer dropped out.

So not so much.

Jenna: No, it was all right. Michelle's the only one who graduated high school. But high school was all right—I mean, Cory graduated while she was in the band. But we didn't go to her graduation.

How did you start playing?

Jenna: Basically we met Jim from the Smell [an all-ages venue in LA] when the Smell was closed down or repaired to make it fire safe or something. And he saw us play and when it reopened we played there. And people were like, "Yeah, wanna play this?" We did it.

Jennifer: When we met him, the shows we were playing were at our friend's squat house. So basically we went from playing squat houses to the Smell. And from the Smell to like

bars where we were getting kicked out.

Michelle: On our first tour we played at [B-movie director] Bruce Campbell's old house, in Detroit.

Jenna: I don't know—do you believe those people?

Michelle: I totally believe those people.

Could you tell me about your side projects? Do you get jealous because other people in the band are in more side projects?

Michelle: Actually, I'm playing music with my friend this weekend 'cause he's like "man, I want to be in another band," and I was like "Hey, I just want to be in another band too—with you."

Why should you be in another band?

Michelle: Just 'cause it's... I don't know. I don't even know why. I just said yes. Because playing music is awesome, and like, you know, Jenna's going to be going on tour with Silver Daggers and I'm probably not going to be doing anything the whole time, so being in another band would probably fulfill that time area.

So whose widow's peak were you talking about in "I Don't Like Your Widow's Peak"?

Michelle: Um, it's about this guy named Chode.

Jenna: Well, his real name is Emmanuel but he likes to be called Chode. He prefers it.

Can you tell me about your new EP, maybe versus your last one?

Jennifer: The last one, we took a long time to record it, and we made sure that everything sounded the way we wanted it to sound. And then this one, the new one, we recorded in one day, on 6/6/06, and there were just six songs, and it's more—

Michelle: It's more of a tribute to Satan than anything else.

Jennifer: Cause the LP is more, like, we worked really hard on it and made it sound like—not really professional-sounding, but really professional-sounding for us. And the 666 one we wanted more of a live sound.

Michelle: Also with the first one, I think it was a lot of songs we had for a really long time, like weird things we had like a really long time ago. And these songs are all songs that are from like the last year.

So what are your favorite things in LA?

Jenna: Um, I really like this [ice cream] place called Scoop. And I know that everyone will agree with me...

Jennifer: Yeah seriously, this place Scoop is just like the best. The guy who works there—he just makes these flavors...

Michelle: The guy who owns the place also makes these flavors, and it's like vegan, he has at least four different vegan ones, and they're just like the craziest flavors. Like Chocolate Wasabi.

Jennifer: Earl Grey Vanilla.

Michelle: It was interesting. It was like Balsamic Vinegar.

That sounds really gross.

Michelle: It's just crazy. It tasted like seaweed.

Jenna: He's an ice cream genius.

Do you like In 'n' Out? The patties are so thin!

Michelle: I don't eat meat. I just get grilled cheese.

Jennifer: Grilled cheese is so good!

Jenna: You could just get a double-double. You get more patties!

But you lose the juice.

Jenna: Maybe. Maybe you do.

Jennifer: And it's all about spread.

Michelle: It's all about the spread.

Jennifer: But when you go there—there's this one on Sunset, you go there at night and you will find just the craziest people. I don't know. It's just awesome. It's such a cool place. And I like the food.

You just got off tour. Did anything memorable happen?

Jennifer: Almost everyone got their tarot cards read and they're currently living out the futures that were dealt to them.

Jenna: I didn't even get it.

Jennifer: Mine inspired me to learn the art of the tarot, and now I'm reading my own cards.

It's so hard!

Jenna: It's like a party trick.

Jennifer: It is so hard, but I seriously have like four books on it.

Jenna: That was memorable though. We're still dealing with the repercussions.

What repercussions? Just the curse of knowledge?

Jennifer: You think you want to know everything, and then you're like "Oh no, that's not gonna happen," and then it happens and you're like, dead.

Michelle: You're like, "Man...whoa."

Did anything happen that was predicted?

Jenna: You're getting a little personal here.

Michelle: Mostly just relationship stuff...

Jenna: Relationships...

Michelle: And like, uh... family stuff. Weird. ■

urbanities

Donate Your Body, and Your Dignity, to Science

BY HILLARY BUSIS

It's difficult to walk past Butler and impossible to walk into Schermerhorn without being accosted by a plethora of brightly colored fliers making enticing promises: "Watch Movies and Get Paid," "Earn up to \$20 in ONE HOUR," "Do you think? Do you have feelings? Participate in a new and exciting fMRI study!" If you're like most people, you probably give the fliers a cursory glance, then continue walking—who has 30 minutes or an hour to waste?

If you are like me, though (read: ineligible for work-study, which makes it pretty difficult to find a job on campus, but too lazy to venture off campus to find employment) you might write down the e-mail addresses on the fliers and set up appointments to participate in a few research studies. If you're really like me, you might find yourself signing up for even more studies after you finish up with the first few. And more after that.

Last semester, there were weeks where I did four or five studies a week, some administered by the psychology department, others by the Behavioral Research Lab in Uris 304 (sign up for information about these studies yourself at <http://columbia-brl.sona-systems.com>). Other students, too, are research study junkies: "I like

making money in small increments over a long period of time," Josh Schwartz, CC '08 says. Those small increments of money really add up. Some studies pay \$5 for half an hour. Others, though, pay \$15 or \$20 for a full hour—and if you're good at filling in surveys quickly, it will probably take only 40 minutes to completely finish the study. Twenty dollars in 40 minutes is equivalent to earning \$30 an hour. By contrast, minimum wage in New York is \$7.15 an hour.

Be forewarned that you sometimes have to do pretty weird things to earn your cash. I can't give many concrete details—disclosing the particulars of an experiment after participating in it is strictly forbidden, since, as psychology professor Patricia Lindemann puts it, "it could seriously mess up the researchers' subject pool if people know too much about what goes on in the study."

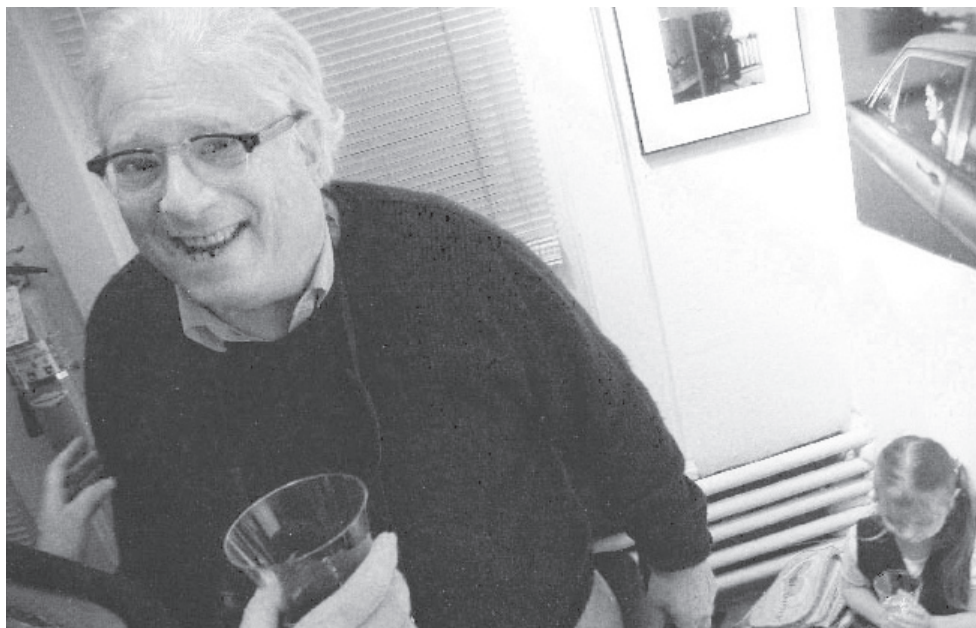
I can tell you that I once participated in a study in which I was hooked up to an EEG machine, which



measures brainwaves through electrodes placed on a subject's scalp. It took 20 minutes to remove all of the electrodes from my head, and when the experiment was over, my hair was drenched with electricity-conducting goo. The researchers provided me with some shampoo and a sink.

I've also done studies involving electric shocks. The researcher assured me that the shocks would be "uncomfortable, but not painful," which was true—the machine that administered the shocks looked like something out of an old science fiction film.

By and large, though, most studies are rather boring. One Barnard student, who wished to remain anonymous, confesses, "I don't really understand the point of most of them." ■



COURTESY OF JACK EISENBERG

From Canon to Canon

Jack Eisenberg takes his Columbia connections downtown

BY DIANE BOTTA

Upon entering the Leica Gallery in Soho to see *The Columbia Connection*, an exhibit featuring photography by Columbia alumni Jack Eisenberg and Edward Keating, the presence of that familiar New York archetype—the self-assured commentator—is all too apparent.

branching into the field of social work in his hometown of Baltimore. As he became increasingly active in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam movements, so did his photography career, and his artistic work has captured urban Baltimore, Vietnam veterans, and the state of Israel.

With a voice that almost seems to radiate from the frame-painted walls, Eisenberg, CC '62, gives a culturally inclined family an individual tour of the gallery. Loosening his grip on the camera that he carries with him, Eisenberg poses to take a picture with the family. He's suddenly sheepish, and clearly not as comfortable appearing on this side of the camera as on the other.

After completing his undergraduate degree at Columbia, Jack Eisenberg began a career as a high school history teacher before

With a verbal nonchalance that suggests that he has repeated his life story many a time, Eisenberg says, "1966 was about the time I got serious about photography [when] I took the picture of the New Orleans poor." Employed as a social worker at the time, Eisenberg recalls that, to him, "Photography and social work, the attitude of concern for people, [are] the same thing."

But Eisenberg's passion for photography predated his social work. "For some reason, I got interested in photography as a very little kid," he says. "I still have the remains of a plastic camera I got when I was five." His artistic interest resurfaced at Columbia. "Around my junior year I took the picture of the protest on Low with Susan Sontag," he recalls.

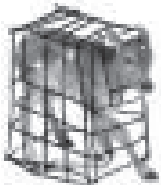
Five years later, Eisenberg began to approach photography more seriously. "One summer, I saw a book [that] had the Robert Capa photo 'Moment of Death' on the cover, and it was as powerful as anything Goya could've drawn," he remembers. "At that moment I realized the real power of photography. For me, photography is a wonderful way to explore the world. It's not just a great eye at work, it's a great mind."

Eisenberg's insistence on the necessity of mental dexterity for the production of great art correlates with his rewarding academic experiences at Columbia. Calling to mind his most memorable class—Contemporary Civilizations—Eisenberg insists on the importance of critical thought. "Too often people are spoon fed. I'm not afraid to make people think."

It remains, after all, no coincidence that Eisenberg's first exhibition at New York's Riverside Museum in 1967 was titled *The Concerned Photographer*. Forty years later, *The Columbia Connection* advertises him as a "humanist documentarian," continuing to share his compassion through his photography. ■

books

Animal Rights and Moral Philosophy Julian H. Franklin



If you want to win your next vegetarianism debate, don't just take Professor Julian Franklin's popular political science class on the theory and practice of animal rights—read his book, *Animal Rights and Moral Philosophy*. First published in 2005, Franklin's work was praised as “a valuable contribution to a vital debate” by J.M. Coetzee. Since then, the book has continued to appreciate in relevance, in light of PETA's persistent criticism of Columbia's primate testing.

Franklin, a professor emeritus of political philosophy at Columbia University, is an expert on the history of political thought whose academic efforts have typically focused on the philosophies of the 16th and 17th centuries. His previous works include *Jean Bodin and the Rise of Absolutist Theory* and *John Locke and the Theory of Sovereignty*.

While Franklin has always had a passion for animal rights, as evidenced by his impressive 20-plus years of vegetarianism, his decision to explore animal rights theory came, in his words, “late in [his] career,” occurring largely after his retirement from full-time teaching in 1996. Franklin's academic interest in animal rights may be a relatively recent development, but judging by this book, his efforts have been more than successful.

This dense yet persuasive effort summarizes and evaluates the foremost philosophical arguments for animal rights, leading readers through the most significant perspectives and providing sound criticism of each proposal.

Franklin opens with a review on Peter Singer, perhaps the most recognized (and recognizable) name in the field of animal rights. Franklin takes significant issue with Singer's “utilitarian” approach, rejecting Singer's contention that death is acceptable so long as it causes the victim and the survivors neither pain nor fear. One of his major points of

Animal Writes Columbia's professor Franklin hates the sin, disputes the Singer

BY REBECCA EVANS

disagreement is the circumstances under which it's acceptable to kill animals. Franklin also provides a succinct explanation of utilitarianism, presenting a clear argument against its practical implications. This section of the book is intricately crafted and well-written, and it deftly integrates Franklin's commentary into a comprehensive summary of utilitarian thought.

From here, Franklin turns to Tom Regan, one of the first philosophers to address and define the “theory of animal rights.” Franklin briefly reviews Regan's argument, agreeing that the principal that each life possesses “equal inherent value” while deftly illuminating the argument's fundamental flaw: Regan assumes that we are intuitively incapable of treating animals “in just any way,” yet never provides any sort of persuasive ethical foundation for this claim.

Much of the rest of Franklin's book is devoted to finding this foundation. To that end, his treatment of Kant is brief, effective, and revolutionary—a feat to be appreciated by anyone familiar with the works under scrutiny. It is this achievement that has been most praised by critics and professors. Cynthia Bowman, a professor at the Northwestern University School of Law, found his “modified Kantian ap-

proach” to be “essential reading,” while Mark Rowlands of the *Times Literary Supplement* described the achievement as “subtle” and “intricate.”

Franklin concludes that Kant's categorical imperative must be revised until it addresses the treatment not simply of humans but of all “sentient beings.” This would provide the missing foundation for Regan's claim—but the next section of the book, which attempts to examine this in light of post-Kantian rationalism, begins to collapse in on itself. Unfortunately, here Franklin traps himself in repetitive cycles of semantics and as he juggles a number of philosophies, his own argument becomes muddled and his critiques begin to appear self-contradictory.

Animal Rights and Moral Philosophy proves a keen survey of the major animal rights philosophies. Franklin provides incisive dissections of more obscure philosophies, among them Albert Schweitzer's universal reverence for life and the ecofeminist “ethic of care.”

Ultimately, Franklin is at his best when discussing logical or moral errors—when attempting to reconcile them, he is less effective, particularly when juggling multiple theories. ■



MONKEY DON'T GIVEN THE CRITICISM OF COLUMBIA'S ANIMAL TESTING, FRANKLIN'S MORALS ARE EVEN MORE RELEVANT

Finishing School

Text: Jill Colvin

Art: Tina Gao

Regina Wellington is an intimidating presence. With piercing blue eyes and sharp, pointed features, she is confident, well-spoken, and meticulously put together, with a penchant for fine scotch and cashmere. Vocal and confident, unapologetic in her views—a Miss Porter’s girl trained in the arts of conversation and high society, with friends in all the right circles. Last week, she says, she nearly made a boy cry when he dared to disagree with her point in class. She has powerful connections, interns 35 hours a week, and has just landed a coveted summer position at one of the top financial firms in the city. This is the kind of girl who seems to be going places.

But Regina, whose name has been changed to protect her identity, has other plans.

According to the Barnard junior, she came to college with the sole intention of becoming a wife.

“It’s not that I want to get married and not do anything, which is the popular view. I mean, if you want to be the super-wife who raises the greatest kids and is on every social committee, and is the perfect social wife for your husband and always does all of the right things, that’s a lot of work. It still takes being superwoman. And that’s exactly what I want to be.”

While her views represent the far end of the

career/life balance spectrum, Wellington is part of a small but vocal minority of girls on college campuses across the country who are unafraid to say that they came to school not for the education, but because they wanted to find husbands. And even for those with less extreme views, Ivy League universities like Columbia—where large numbers of potential bachelors are likely to strike it rich as lawyers, doctors, and Wall Street financiers—are opportune grounds on which to stage the hunt.

The idea of the MRS Degree dates back to the 1950s, when the gloss of Leave It To Beaver’s domestic perfection dominated the cultural imagination. Pronounced M-R-S, like the acronyms of standard college degrees, the term was used to describe women who went to college primarily to find a husband who could provide for them later in life. According to Barnard history professor Rosalind Rosenberg, who teaches a course titled American Women in the 20th Century, the term was typically used as a criticism, implying that a woman was choosing a man at the expense of her education and relying on him instead of supporting herself.

For Regina, the priorities are clear: a relationship always wins out over school work. “I definitely choose guys over my academics. Absolutely,” she says. As a result, her once top-notch grades have

noticeably suffered.

Nonetheless, she believes the trade-off is reasonable. “Grades are important for getting a job. And since I would rather be married as a job than have a job, it makes sense to prioritize that,” she explains.

Yet she also expresses some regret. “Sometimes it makes it harder, when I’ve had breakups, to look at it and see my grades and be like, ‘Wow, my grades suck because I was dating someone, and it didn’t work out.’ And that can make me repentive. But I still do it,” she says.

Wellington doesn’t seem to think much of her education. “I sort of think that college is only socially legitimizing. I don’t think it’s actually useful, and I don’t think I’ve learned anything since I’ve been here,” she says.

So why bother? Why submit to the stress of classes and papers and deadlines and exams, not to mention the tens of thousands of dollars in tuition and residence fees?

“I can’t get my head around it,” concedes Wendy McKenna, a psychology professor who teaches a course at Barnard on the psychology of women. “Nobody... almost nobody’s gonna spend all that money and make all that effort. Even if you’re rich to begin with and you don’t have to spend money. You have to work hard to stay in and be a good stu-



dent,” she argues.

While Regina may not be interested in education for its own sake, a Columbia degree is well worth the investment. What matters to her is the social capital that comes with graduating from a prestigious, brand-name school.

“For any of the life partners I would want, they wouldn’t want to marry someone who didn’t go to a college like ours,” she explains.

Attending an elite school gives women an entrée into circles that would otherwise be socially inaccessible, Regina says. She describes her experiences at Dorian’s, a bar on the Upper East Side, as an example. “When you go to Dorian’s, everyone immediately asks, ‘Oh, where did you go to school? Who do you know?’ And it’s an immediate connection or an immediate disconnect.” A response of Columbia, she says “creates a conversation with the type of people you’d want to meet.”

For those with less prestigious diplomas, the encounters are less promising. “I have a friend who went to Syracuse, and when we’re at Dorian’s with her, she says she went to Syracuse, and it just kind of ends the conversation.” For many men, Regina says, a sub-par graduate may be good enough to take home and sleep with, but would simply not be considered as a potential girlfriend or marriage partner. About that friend of hers, Regina says, “Once I actually heard a guy say, ‘Well, like, who would get serious with her?’ ‘Cause I mean, like, you wouldn’t want your kids to be like, ‘My mom went to Syracuse,’” she recounts, mimicking the condescension with a laugh.

While most women at Columbia are more concerned with finals than prenups, for Regina, a high-powered career comes a distant second to a traditional domestic role. “I always have wanted to have that nuclear, stereotypical, conservative family. And I don’t think it’s a bad thing to want,” she says. “I think that’s a harder goal than saying that I want to be a progressive

woman with a real career.” The stakes, she insists, are much higher with motherhood than any other job. “It’s scary. Because if you fail, you really fail ... It’s not like you just get a crappier job.”

She points to uninvolved parents, too busy with work to know what’s going on in their children’s lives, for many of the problems affecting today’s youth. “The way that it is now, I just look around and see so many of my friends who are just so messed up and have so many emotional issues and, you know, are on tons of drugs and a billion different things,” she says.

Growing up on the West Coast, Regina was the only child of a single mother who worked long hours as an accountant. “I had a mother who worked all the time and I hated it.” She recalls how much she envied friends who lived the traditional family life she lacked. “I have a lot of friends who are Mormon and have big families, and we’d always go over after school and their moms would have apples and caramel sauce, fresh-heated, and everything. And I’d stay for dinner, and we’d all pray before dinner started. They made us just sit at the table for hours and hours with their family,” she remembers. “I totally thought that that was wonderful.”

As a result, she questions the value of “progress” and says that she wishes that the world were a little bit more like the ’50s. “I idealize that, and perhaps I shouldn’t,” she says. “But that’s what I would like. That’s sort of the world that I would prefer to live in.”

Unlike Regina, Lindsey Brooke, CC ’08, did grow up in a traditional family, with a “stay-at-home, housewife mom” and a “successful dad” who themselves met while enrolled at Columbia.

While she would like to have some sort of career after graduating, the Florida native with an infectious smile says that her career will always come second to her family. “The most important thing for me is having a stable and happy family life,” she says. She values the “traditional female role” and envisions a future “nurturing, care-giving, cooking food, cleaning up after

your husband, taking care of him,” she says. “I guess a part of me is interested in that whole [idea of] being the perfect housewife.”

Lindsey came to Columbia expecting that she would find a husband, just like her mother had decades ago. When she was applying to college, she says, she made a chart of all the schools she was considering. First came the school’s name, then its location. And then came the school’s male-to-female ratio. “Columbia was the only one with more men than women and, I mean, I ended up here,” she says. Lindsey missed just one crucial factor: “I didn’t know about Barnard at the time, so that totally wrecked that ratio,” she laughs.

Regina and Lindsey are not alone.

In September of 2005, the New York Times ran an article, titled “Many Women at Elite Colleges Set Career Path to Motherhood.” According to the article, female college students are increasingly reporting that they plan to suspend or end their careers following the birth of their children.

The article reported that roughly 60 percent of 138 first-year and senior female Yale University students surveyed said that they planned to cut back on work or stop working entirely when their children were born. Only two of the women interviewed said they expected their husbands to remain at home while they pursued their careers, while two others said that which partner stayed home would depend on whose career was most lucrative.

As the article points out, “there is nothing new about women being more likely than men to stay home to rear children. ... What seems new is that while many of their mothers expected to have hard-charging careers, then scaled back their professional plans only after having children, the women of this generation expect their careers to take second place to child rearing.”

While the research techniques used for the study have come under question, perhaps more important than the findings was the controversy that they stirred among academics who had long professed the importance of developing women for leadership positions in

business, government, and science.

“It really does raise this question for all of us and for the country: when we work so hard to open academics and other opportunities for women, what kind of return do we expect to get for that?” Marlyn McGrath Lewis, director of undergraduate admissions at Harvard, and dean for coeducation in the late ’70s and early ’80s, told the Times.

Statistics show that the women of our generation will enter the workforce in higher numbers than ever before. They will receive more education, be married for less time, get married later, and have fewer children than those in past generations. They have equal and often higher admission rates to the top colleges and graduate schools and land careers in high-paying fields. Nonetheless, according to the U.S. Census, the number of children being cared for by stay-at-home mothers has increased nearly 13 percent in less than a decade, while the percentage of new mothers returning to work has fallen from 59 percent in 1998 to 55 percent in 2000. Two-thirds of mothers who work do so fewer than 40 hours a week, and only 5 percent work 50 hours or more—an expectation in many high-power fields.

As Barnard President Judith Shapiro told graduates and their families in her 2004 commencement speech, “Your diploma is a ticket—a piece of paper that, as such, has no intrinsic value. It’s only good if you use it.” She added, “We’ve given you these tools, and now it is your responsibility to use them.”

But what does it mean to “use” one’s degree? Is a woman who chooses not to enter the workforce in effect “wasting” her education? Is motherhood compatible with leadership? What becomes strikingly apparent after speaking with Columbia women is that these are issues that they are longing to discuss.

“Nobody gets to talk about this. You’re not really allowed to ask these kinds of questions,” complains Amy Glass, GS, whose name has been changed at her request. She expressed frustration that the fear of coming off as intolerant often stifles necessary discussion. “I’m not even allowed to explore whether that’s true or not, essentially because everything is so politically correct,” she says.

Regina, of course, has heard all the criticism: “You need to want to be so much more. How can you just wanna be a mom? You’d be bored. That’s such a waste.” Yet she and others who share her views assert that what they make of their education, as well as of their lives, are their choices, and their choices alone.

But professor McKenna disagrees. “It’s not a personal choice when only one gender does it. What it is is an example of what Kate Millet said 30-some-odd years ago, that the personal is political. If only women do it or if only men do it, it’s not a personal choice,” she asserts. Personal choices, she says, are not based overwhelmingly on one social category, like gender or race. “If indeed it’s a personal choice, then more power to them. But it’s not.”

However, McKenna also questions whether a woman who comes to college to find a man is really all that different from those with other, more widely accepted motivations. “Is it any different from a guy saying, ‘Well, I came to Columbia so I could make good business connections?’” she asks.

Annette Kahn, BC ’67, says that if a woman wants to stay at home to raise her children, she should be allowed to do so without fear of accusations that she is betraying her education. “The feminist movement was supposed to give us choices,” she says. “That was the whole point. You have to allow people to think the way they want to think.”

Dean Dorothy Denburg, who herself has been a working mother for 30 years, says that most women at Barnard with whom she has spoken over the years expect to have fulfilling personal and professional lives. She believes that even when a woman chooses not to work, an education is never wasted. “One of the things that an education does is prepare you to live comfortably in your own head. One doesn’t have to be working to live a satisfying life,” she asserts.

But many students take issue with Regina’s plans. “It’s almost wasteful for someone to come to an academic institution like this with the intention of getting

married and not the intention of having a real college experience and getting a valuable education,” Liz Dellheim, BC ’07, contends. On the other hand, she praises stay-at-home mothers and credits much of her own success to her own stay-at-home mom’s involvement and attention. “People can use their knowledge and do things that are meaningful and impactful in a variety of different situations,” she insists.

The contradictions here are obvious. Women are free to make their own choices, but the choices they make are political. They are told that raising children is a valuable contribution, but those who try to stay at home to raise them are often made to feel as though they are wasting their lives. At the same time, many young women who watched their mothers try to juggle the rigors of family life with a high-powered career are realizing that “having it all” may be a liberal feminist fantasy.

“We still live in a world in which it’s extremely difficult to combine family and work,” professor Rosenberg explains. “We still live in a world in which that burden of balance is expected to be borne by women more than men. This is a problem that remains unfairly a women’s problem, and something that we have to figure out,” she says. “We have to create a society in which it’s possible for everybody to have a full life.”

Kathryn Wittner, Columbia associate dean of student affairs, says that she has seen the pendulum of women’s aspirations swing from one extreme to another over time. “In the 1950s, the ideal was Joan Cleaver with the apron and home-baked cookies. Then, in the ’70s, it was women burning their bras, going into the workforce, saying, ‘I want to have it all’ and trying to figure it out.” Now, she says, she has observed a “push-back,” where women “often make the decision to step out of the race,” at least temporarily.

“This was not the way it was supposed to be,” laments Lisa Belkin, author of *Life’s Work*, in her article, “The Opt-Out Revolution,” published in the New York Times Magazine in October 2003. “Measured against the way things once were, this is certainly progress. But measured against the way things were expected to be, this is a revolution stalled,” Belkin writes.

“There was a time when women were determined they could have it all,” Wittner explains. “They couldn’t. You have to adjust your expectations.” Today, she says,

women are increasingly aware of the hurdles they face and must consider their priorities. “What’s the real barometer to measure success?” she asks. “Managing a Fortune 500 company or raising 3 healthy kids?” The two, of course, need not be mutually exclusive.

From professor Rosenberg’s perspective, the changes in values are also likely part of a recent cultural shift to the right. “I do think that these feelings wax and wane with feminism. Certainly the idea of defaulting to marriage and children was less popular in the 1970s than it was as conservatism became a more powerful political force in the country,” she says.

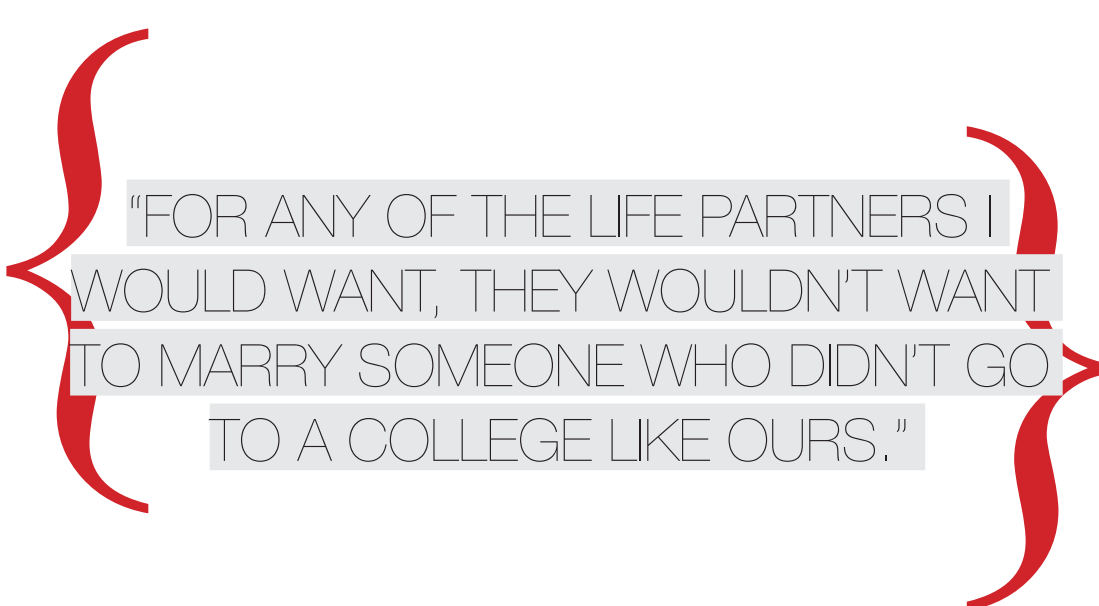
But Regina and others say that they have experienced significant hostility for their views, both within and outside of the classroom.

Regina says that in her first-year seminar at Barnard, she was “attacked by my professor and all of the students in the class about how my opinions are wrong.” She complained that her personal life was inappropriately brought into the classroom as a source of discussion, and that she received lower grades for papers that included her more traditional opinions. “It’s definitely hard to be a minority. And at times I wish I would have gone to a different school,” she says.

Lindsey has also found that, while the idea of an MRS degree is not defunct, it is very much looked down upon by students at the school, and that even her friends have difficulty relating to her aspirations. “They can’t understand, I guess, why I would value a relationship with a person over becoming a highly successful, driven career person,” she says. However, she says, “Even if girls don’t admit that, maybe that is part of why they’re here.”

Even Regina’s mother disagrees with her traditional views. “She hates it. She gets so mad when I say anything. We’ll get in huge arguments. She’ll just be like, ‘I’m not paying for you to go to school to just meet a husband,’ and I’m like, ‘Well, you are.’”

But Regina’s assessment that an education is less about books than boys may not be that far from the norm. In *Educated in Romance: Women, Achievement, and College Culture*, anthropologists Dorothy C. Holland of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Margaret A. Eisenhart of University of Colorado, Boulder, argue that, for women today, higher education is often less about enriching one’s mind than finding a



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mate.

The researchers followed a group of 23 women at two pseudonymous universities through their college careers and found that many women soon “come to accept the fact that grades on sexual attractiveness are more important than their grade-point average.” A woman’s real value in college, they write, “will be determined by attractiveness and proximity to high-status men.” In this sexual environment, Holland and Eisenhart found that young women’s career aspirations “evaporate, go underground, or get derailed.” They begin to narrow their professional ambitions and put

“I MEAN, IF YOU WANT TO BE THE SUPER-WIFE WHO RAISES THE GREATEST KIDS, AND WHO’S ON ALL THE SOCIAL COMMITTEES AND WHO IS THE PERFECT SOCIAL WIFE FOR YOUR HUSBAND, AND ALWAYS DOES ALL OF THE RIGHT THINGS. THAT’S A LOT OF WORK. IT STILL TAKES BEING SUPERWOMAN. AND THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO BE.”

their boyfriends’ dreams ahead of their own, soon “fall[ing] into reliance on men for marriage and economic support.” In the long run, once aspiring doctors become nurses, future-professors become teachers, and once-promising women fail to maximize their earning potential.

Whitney Hall, SEAS ’08, who also subscribes to traditional family roles, reports that she has watched herself scale down her career aspirations while trying to accommodate boyfriends’ goals. When she came to college, the Alabama native wanted to be a doctor. “I was gung-ho about going to med school,” she says. “End of story. Nothing was going to stop me.” But then came a relationship. He wanted to go to grad school, so she decided to search for alternative jobs and postpone or forgo medical school altogether. “I kind of started putting him as a priority, and our relationship as a priority, over my dreams.”

She says that her ex never would have done the same for her. “They’re gonna do what they wanna do,” she says of men.

Hall says that when she arrived on campus, she was surprised to hear how prominent a role the MRS degree plays in Columbia’s culture. “When I very first came here, freshman year,” she describes, “I started hearing all these rumors about how all these girls were here to get their Missis Degree, to find Mr. Right, for finding, you know, that rich guy to marry to be the trophy wife and all that kind of stuff.”

Perhaps the popular tagline that “all Ivy League women become housewives” is more true than most of us would like to admit. A 2001 survey of Harvard Business School graduates from the classes of 1981, 1985, and 1991 found that only 38 percent of women surveyed were working full-time. A 2000 survey of Yale alumni from the classes of 1979, 1984, 1989, and 1994, conducted by Yale’s Office of Institutional Research, found that, among the alumni surveyed who had reached their 40s, only 56 percent of the women still worked, compared with 90 percent of men.

And the stereotype has become a popular campus joke at Columbia.

Last year’s Varsity Show featured a memorable scene depicting a group of girls having a slumber party with English professor Margaret Vandenburg. “I want a husband!” screamed one of the giddy girls, upon hearing mention of

a guy. This month’s edition of *The Fed* includes a parody eulogy to Anna Nicole Smith, which ends with the kicker: “Following this tragedy, President Shapiro and the Barnard community mourned the death of this fine example of a strong, successful woman. She managed to achieve what all Barnard women strive to do: marry rich and pop out a few babies.”

But according to professor Rosenberg, author of *Changing the Subject: How the Women of Columbia Shaped the Way We Think About Sex and Politics*, the MRS degree has never played a prominent role at this school. “This was

never a place to come in order to get married... The point of college was to prepare for productive work in the world, to make a contribution to the world.”

According to Rosenberg, in the period immediately following World War Two, “there was a great deal of commentary throughout the country about the importance of colleges fulfilling their responsibility to their female students, by teaching them not only the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, but also how to make a good Basque paella.” She says that then-Dean and later President Millicent MacIntosh and others “were very troubled by what they saw as an anti-feminist backlash in the 1940s” and “worked particularly hard to make sure that Barnard was not a place that fell victim to that kind of ideology.”

But according to Kahn, who now works in the Barnard Office of Alumnae Affairs, during the ’60s, when she was a student at Columbia, marrying in college was pretty much expected. And, she says, the same holds true today. “I honestly don’t think that it’s changed that much. I think the idea of an MRS degree... maybe it’s gone underground and people don’t talk about it as much, or they feel maybe they shouldn’t talk about it. But,” she says. “That’s just the way things happen.”

It is important to note that not all women at Columbia on the search for husbands are interested in motherhood. For others, the search for Mr. Rich-and-Successful is less about traditional family values than about the impending reality of sky-high New York rents and acquiring the means to sustain an affluent lifestyle post-graduation.

Dellheim never thought she would consider marrying for money when she enrolled at Barnard nearly four years ago. But as the short and spunky senior with dark hair and cats-eye glasses nears graduation, the prospect of a husband has become more attractive—if not necessary.

“I always joke that I want to be a trophy wife. But I definitely didn’t come to college with that idea at all. I didn’t come to college with any notion of that,” she says. “All that said, as I’m approaching graduation, I’m definitely thinking about how I’m going to live.”

For many who grew up in well-to-do homes, the harsh realization that pursuing their passions may not support the lifestyles they’ve grown up with comes as a shock. “It’s scary and weird. Even graduating from an excellent educa-

tional institution, it’s weird to think that this probably isn’t gonna cut it.”

Liz wants to work in the arts. But after growing up in one of the most expensive neighborhoods in the country, the pay cut seems overwhelming. “I know there are a lot of girls who come to this school with plans of meeting a rich husband. Those people want to be moms and stay at home and have kids and be a wife. And while I guess having a rich husband is totally appealing to me, it’s appealing for a completely opposite reason.” For Liz, instead of serving as a means of avoiding a career, snagging a rich husband would be “a way for me to pursue what I really want to be doing.”

And if it means giving up love, Liz is open to compromise. “Shit, man. I need to find a reasonable income as much as love.”

Like Liz, Isang, CC ’09, who spoke only on the condition of anonymity, has no intention of abandoning her career for a husband and family—she plans to go to medical school after college. Nonetheless, she says that she feels a great deal of pressure to marry a wealthy man in order to ensure financial security.

She watched as her single mother struggled to raise a family on her own and now believes that men provide a necessary, reliable source of income. “You need a man,” Isang says. And she believes that Columbia is a great place to find one. “Women are shoppers,” she asserts. “And this is the best place to shop.”

Glass has been there before. At 37, she’s turned down five marriage proposals to date, but she has seen many of her friends succumb to the temptation of a well-to-do man and witnessed the fallout that followed.

She is skeptical about the idea of the MRS degree. “It’s a very expensive dating service, isn’t it?” While she said that although she understands the appeal of being taken care of by a well-off guy, she questions whether it is worth the sacrifices that, in her experience, come when people settle for someone who has a big checkbook but isn’t necessarily the best match. “They have stuff,” she agrees. “But at what cost?”

Regina herself has experienced difficulty achieving her goal of landing a husband by graduation.

When she arrived at Barnard, she had a clear and definite plan: she would meet a successful Wall Street up-and-comer by sophomore year, date him until May of senior year, and then be engaged by graduation. She hoped to be married and to have given birth to her first child within two years of receiving her diploma.

But that plan was driven off course when she and her boyfriend, an investment banker with whom she lived for two years, ended their relationship. Now, faced with just over a year until diploma time and a bare ring finger, she has had to drastically alter her plans—or at least push them back a couple of years.

“That’s something I think I kind of regret at school,” she says. “I think I too much counted on the plan that I would be, like, married or at least engaged by the time I graduated. And now that I’m not, and I’m a junior, it’s sort of like, ‘Oh no. What do I do with myself?’”

Her new strategy is to get into business school, where, she says, the prospects of meeting a husband are more certain. The day before speaking to *The Eye*, she accepted an internship at one of the most prestigious financial investment firms in the country to boost her chances of admission.

“Since the whole undergrad one didn’t work out, I figure I’ll do that [finance work] for two years, so I’ll get into a good business school. And that’s a really good place to meet husbands, because they’re like the right age,” she says. “I guess that the women’s movement just made you have to wait a little bit longer.”

Interestingly, Regina had previously turned down the same internship to take a less demanding job at a non-profit, a field she speaks about passionately, last summer when she was still in a relationship. “I was like, ‘Well, I already found the guy I’m going to marry. Why would I do that? Why would I be at work all the time? Like, I can do whatever I want now,’ she says.

“I feel a little bad about the fact that like I’m taking a job at [the firm] just so I can get into business school and get a husband. I’m sure there are probably lots of girls who would have liked that job because they would like to do business crap,” she adds.

But, for Regina, the search continues. ■



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Southern Rock's Hamlet

Son of a ramblin' man goes back to his roots

BY DENA YAGO

Oedipalizing, or overcoming the father and establishing an autonomous identity, is never an easy task. Working in a overwhelming field, and one still dominated by the father, is even more difficult.

That task falls to Devon Allman, who as a member of Honeytribe is trying to find his footing in the shadow of an aging classic rock legacy. The son of Gregg Allman, organist and singer of the famed Allman Brothers, Allman and Honeytribe are working to perpetuate the southern rock now dismissively tagged "classic"; any similarity to the musical stylings of his father, he claims, is incidental.

Call it a family resemblance.

"There is definitely something to be said for genetics," Allman says. "When I sing it happens to sound like my father. When I close my eyes and really feel singing it I can see where there are echoes of his world in my music, that's just part of being his kid." It's an explanation that echoes those of other sons of legendary rockers sons—Sean Lennon and James Garfunkel come to mind—trying to carve out their own legacies in a world that remembers their fathers. And it's a feat not often achieved without some criticism and doubt.

Allman, raised around musicians, has returned to the style of his father. But it isn't or lack of trying. Allman explains that he experimented with a variety of styles before eventually returning to what felt most natural. With Honeytribe, Allman embraces what he describes as his "organic" music. To avoid the signature, southern-classic-rock sound just because of his father would be dishonest and arbitrary. "By doing that I'm denying my true voice by not singing deeply from the heart," he says.

Call it whatever you want, but Allman insists upon maintaining a musical identity separate from that of his generational predecessors in the Allman Brothers Band. "I jammed with them plenty of times and, I mean, it is not some-

thing I really set my sights on as a goal," Allman says. "I wanted to make a name for myself, which seems like an obvious goal at the end of the day. I want people to think, 'Wow he something to say too.'"

In 2000, the young band took some time off after the birth of Allman's sons. Now re-united, Honeytribe is in it for the long run. "I need a 25-year vision of the band. I want to know that we can do

this for the next twenty or thirty years," Allman says. It's an approach strikingly more organized than that of his father.

As heir to a Southern rock tradition, Allman realizes that his place in its ultimate scheme is one of perpetuating a legacy—if not that of his father, that of the guitar virtuosos that he idolizes. "Our goals are pretty simple. I want to make some really classic, timeless records over the next 20 years. I want someone to listen to the records and still think that it's relevant and feel the same things about it as someone did

twenty years before. As far as status, it's really of no consequence to me. We feel that we are part of a bigger picture."

He sees the heirs of classic rock as having wised up to their musical surroundings and circumstances, "I think that keeping organic music alive is really important. Nowadays a lot of younger people from 15 to 25 are figuring out that there are other options than what is spoon-fed on the radio." Devon Allman and his band, Honeytribe, take their heritage seriously. They'll make papa proud. ■



DEVON ALLMAN SHREDDING HIS WAY OUT OF THE SHADOWS OF HIS FOREFATHERS

PHOTO BY JAMIE PECK



COURTESY OF MEGHA GUPTA

DIRTY PROJECTORS' DAVE LONGSTRETH NESTLED SOMEWHERE BETWEEN JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE AND 19TH CENTURY OPERA

Imagining the Unimaginable

Dirty Projectors sit in the eye of a shit-storm of head-spinning avant-pop experiments

BY JACOB BRUNNER

Ask anyone who attended Columbia's 2005 NSOP Concert and you're almost guaranteed to hear a case against Dirty Projectors. I can't blame anyone for being irritated, if not downright disturbed, by that bizarre display of avant-pop.

Few on Low steps could have been prepared for a twitchy guy in sunglasses, crooning dramatically as his drummer rubbed a snare drum with an alarm clock. I sure as hell wasn't. But I will take issue with anyone who tuned out and immediately erased Dirty Projectors from their memory. That concert was Columbia's introduction to one of the most perplexing and fascinating musical figures of the decade.

Dirty Projectors is the project of Dave Longstreth, a Yale drop-out who subsequently relocated to Brooklyn. While at Yale, Longstreth recorded the Beach Boys-inspired *The Graceful Fallen Mango*, an impressive but inconsistent debut that only hinted at his astounding musical potential. Longstreth took a huge leap forward with 2005's follow-up, *The Glad Fact*. Produced by Yume Bitsu's Adam Forkner, the album sounds like a precipitate of beautiful, honest pop ballads and multi-track experiments. Most of the album's 15 tracks are awash in tape-hiss and include, in no particular order, lyrics about Orange Crush, references to Longstreth's penis, Spiro T. Agnew, and a drum track of someone beating on the hood of a car.

The experimental spirit of these early recordings is not entirely reflective of the time Longstreth spent at Yale. "There were a few people that I met, mainly Larkin Grimm [psych-folk sorceress] and Sam Grossman [from Columbia's *The Wowz*]," he says. "We sort of started a little community for ourselves. By and large Yale was pretty indifferent to weird music. At the time I resented it—the hostility to small incoherent things like what I was trying to do, but now I'm sort of grateful for the isolation it put me into."

That isolation probably played a hand in the

meticulous composition of his third proper full-length, *Slaves' Graves and Ballads*. The first half of the album consists of dense orchestration arranged by Longstreth and performed by the First Orchestral Society for the Preservation of the Orchestra (It's no surprise that Longstreth lists "Baroque music on Sunday mornings as a kid" as one of his earliest moments of inspiration). In the album's second half, the instrumental and motivic complexity of *Slaves' Graves* is balanced nicely by the solo, sedate folk of *Ballads*. This is typically and accurately classified as Dirty Projectors' most accessible work, the eye of a veritable shit-storm of head-spinning pop experiments.

If albums like *The Glad Fact* and *The Graceful Fallen Mango* were largely ignored by the Yale community, the music that has followed in recent years might have incited a riot. In 2005, Longstreth dropped *The Getty Address*, an album so conceptually dense and stylistically varied that even the mastermind himself politely denied my request for an explanation.

Sonically, it's nestled somewhere between Justin Timberlake and 19th century opera. Choral and orchestral recordings are given the digital scissors treatment, spliced and reconstructed within a framework booty-shaking hip-hop/r&b. The storyline is even more impenetrable, a hauntingly mystical salad of parking lots, post-9/11 America, and Aztec mythology. The protagonists are—I'm not kidding—Sa-

cagawea and Don Henley of The Eagles. And as if that weren't enough, there's even a companion animated movie by James Sumner of Vs. Anna films. It's absurd, ridiculous, and unapologetically pretentious. It's also a strong contender for best album of the decade thus far.

The logic of disparate elements was pushed to an even further extreme on the follow-up to *The Getty Address*, 2006's *New Attitude EP*. To describe this compact head-trip is to put myself at risk of sounding like a wine-snob at a tasting ("I'm picking up cherries, oak, oats, some chocolate, varnish..."), but here goes: Turkish psychedelic music, Usher, West African minimalism, Paul Simon's *Graceland*, Michael Jackson, Sex rap, and video game scores of the '80s. And that's just the first track.

Of course, the fusing together of comically incompatible styles isn't brilliant in itself. It's the passion and daring of these ideas that makes the music so remarkable. Dirty Projectors have taken the contemporary logic of sampling and mash-up and applied it as a compositional means to an astonishing end. The result is pure schizophrenic bliss, as mesmerizing as it is unique.

It should come as no surprise that Dave Longstreth is a pretty mysterious dude and almost a direct extension of his art. Much like in his music, Longstreth's influences run through him and then disappear.

"You just get touched by most things you encounter, or you don't," he says. "These questions about influence are a little hard to answer for that reason. When I hear something I love, it's the vibe of the music—it's substance or ghost—that I bow toward, not a rote specific effect or anything."

Following the membership of Dirty Projectors proves equally difficult, as Longstreth prefers to work with a rotating cast of musicians. To keep up with his evolving sound, Longstreth has played with twenty-seven different members since 2002. "The last few years I've just been into experimenting and purposefully not being one thing. I've been changing as fast as I can. It hasn't really behooved the tunage to keep with a steady band. There's a lot that I like about putting together a new band every few months—the epic difficulty, the inevitable mis-remembering, the cancerous pileup of new ideas on old ones—but I'm really enjoying the small band that I've got right now. They are all geniuses and amazing people."

It sounds like Dirty Projectors are content with this trajectory. A recent tour with Xiu Xiu has helped to expand their fan base, and a new album is forthcoming in August (I don't want to spoil it, but this time the magic ingredients are Black Flag, Borges and Don Quixote). As for those who were turned off at that fall concert, at the risk of sounding arrogant, I hope you'll at least give this band a second chance. Music this original deserves an active listen. If all goes well, you'll be transported to a musical space you never dreamed possible. If you don't believe me, listen. Or, in the words of Dirty Projectors themselves: "If you can't imagine it, imagine it." ■



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COURTESY OF MILESTONE FILM & VIDEO

INNOCENT VOICES *KILLER OF SHEEP*, PREMIERING IN NEW YORK TOMORROW, PORTRAYS CHILDREN IN THE WATTS NEIGHBORHOOD OF LA.

Truth May Be Beauty, but It's Also a Killer

After 30 years, the ultra-real *Killer of Sheep* is finally being released into theaters

BY EUGENE KOTLYARENKO

Whether you acknowledge it or not, the unique potential for truth of mechanically-produced images and sounds is the reason you're going to the movie theater in the first place. Film can evoke the experience of validation—someone else unveils an instant, event, lifestyle, situation that resounds within the soul as a personally felt truism, validating you as a human, one who is understood by other humans.

While all of this may sound lofty or, ironically, unrelatable, this truth is as simple as the way two heartthrobs look into each other's eyes or the grace of a well-choreographed fight sequence or the image of a child's face hiding behind a dog mask. Even a good piece of slapstick is truth—your laughter is a manifestation of that true connection between what is on screen and you.

The child in the dog mask warrants a second look because the quotidian moment has perhaps the biggest potential truth turnover. A "slice of life" can feel either endlessly banal or piercingly honest depending on who is controlling the camera and splicing the frames. In the aforementioned image from Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep*, a little girl, hiding behind a prosthetic droopy dog mask looks on as her father scolds her brother. The camera is placed at the height of a child, and the audience is asked to understand the altercation through her perspective. The child's-eye-view of the world frequently appears throughout the film and is one of its most pleasant surprises.

Going into a movie entitled *Killer of Sheep*, one doesn't expect a whole lot of focus on the world of children. Yet Burnett's debut film—the thesis project he began at age 30 and completed for under \$10,000—is one of the most uncompromisingly honest portray-

als of childhood ever put to celluloid. Yes, better than *Spirit of the Beehive*. Yes, better than *Small Change*. And if you haven't seen either of those please do, but see *Killer of Sheep* first. Nothing too precious or sinister or magical about these adolescents in the Watts neighborhood of L.A., circa 1975—just a bunch of kids running loose, riding bikes, getting chased by dogs, watching fumbled robberies, and looking at the world as if for the first time.

Ultimately, it would be hard to argue that Burnett's film is specifically about children, since we spend the majority of the running time with Stan, the adult protagonist. But Burnett's film is dedicated to a child-like perspective on the world. The camera is filled with curiosity and wonder, often framing scenes from low angles or unusual locations. Fascination is implicitly personal, and done well, it distinguishes between the self-indulgent and universally interesting. Ultimately, that new-look way leads to the true-look way as well, helping the viewer recognize the beauty of something she's seen many times before and creating an engagement stronger than most plot complications ever could.

Certainly all this talk involves a bit of conjecture and it would be difficult, if not dangerous, to construct a set of cinematic truth parameters. However, keeping that in mind, certain stylistic decisions by Burnett leave a deep-groove imprint on the memory.

The most prominent technique seems to be the

use of real time sequences. Stan dancing with his wife as the entirety of Dinah Washington's "This Bitter Earth" spins on the record player, or Stan and his buddy carrying a car motor down two flights of stairs—sequences which would have been cut drastically, if not entirely, in most other films, turn out to be extremely long, potent, and rewarding in Burnett's construction. And unlike full-fledged real-time dalliances (i.e. *Russian Ark*, *Rope*, etc.), where the mind, unaccustomed to staring at the single-take passages for so long, often wanders, Burnett wisely chooses to mix these extended temporal sequences with some more transient images and standard Hollywood set-ups—resulting in a rhythmic variability that keeps our focus perpetually fresh.

Another such element seems to be the lack of explicit psychological exposition used in pursuit of characterization. Unlike the more straightforward Hollywood characterizations or even the more calculated, latent psychological realism of contemporary Cannes darlings, the Dardenne brothers, the moments of hostility, insecurity, and rage in Burnett's film come from the truly banal. There are no heightened circumstances here: characters become angry and bitter and joyous and incommunicative for no reason other than their mood. It's just like ... life.

Also of note are the roaming camera and loose narrative threads, often focusing on whichever character is interesting in the moment and following them until the anecdotal fascination with them teeters out. Ultimately, the audience senses when the filmmaker is saying something personal—when it is translated into fiction and edited to the proper length and rhythm for consumption, that product is filled with truth, and it is impossible to look away.

Most of the written material about *Killer of Sheep* attempts to place it within a historical context—something about *Killer of Sheep* as a reaction to the Blaxploitation explosion of the 1970s, or a precursor to the Independent movement of the 1980s, or an American kin spirit of 1940s and '50s Neo-Realism. Certainly this is an independent film, made by a black man about a black community with no sensationalism and a real sensitivity towards the everyday, consequently giving those historical contextualizations weight. However, 30 years after the film's completion, at a time when the potential for cinematic allusion, quotation, reference, and homage is pretty damn near overwhelming, Burnett's vision should be taken for what it is first and foremost: a personal portrait of humanity—providing any interested spectator with a inimitable audio-visual refreshment, Poetic Truth (with a capital "P" and "T"). ■

After 30 years of general unavailability *Killer of Sheep* will be playing at The IFC Center starting March 30, and will be released on DVD with several of Charles Burnett's other films by Milestone, later on in the year.

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Giving Voice to Cinema's Forgotten Continent

Film in Africa has come a long way—and the African Film Festival is helping

BY JENNIFER MAYER

While the Academy may be making slight progress toward diversifying its range of Oscar recipients, it will take more than a few Best Actor awards to truly recognize the achievements of Africans and African-Americans in film.

The African Film Festival attempts to do just that by bringing the filmmaking talents of Africans from all over the continent to the United States. This year's festival, which takes place from Apr. 4-12 at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater, also celebrates the 50th anniversary of the independence of Ghana. Forty-seven feature films, documentaries, and shorts hailing from 20 countries will be shown in addition to archival footage unknown to modern audiences, which ranges from colonial propaganda films to newsreels shot at the moment of the announcement of a country's liberation. Our world may be shrinking, but it's an unfortunate reality that African films—made by Africans—have gone largely unnoticed by America's mainstream moviegoers.

In addition to promoting African arts, the festival also serves to undo long-held prejudices and assumptions about African society while challenging America's own perspectives on tradition, modernity, and

ibility and awareness of African cinema in the U.S.," Peña says, and many African and African diaspora film programs have been created to follow in the footsteps of the 2003 original.

Born in Sierra Leone, many of Bonetti's relatives were forced into exile due to the negative aspects of post-colonial politics. Her experiences with African relations and media work in the U.S. led her to believe that visual culture could serve to do more than entertain—it could also educate and encourage positive change in the world.

"I know what Africa has given me and what she's capable of," she says of her inspiration for the festival in an interview with Dana Roc productions. "Although everyone was talking about Africa at the end of the 1980s, there was no African voice."

This year's films include *Bling: A Planet Rock*, which takes a different look at some of the same issues that were illuminated by this year's Academy-Award-nominated *Blood Diamond*. *Bling* is a satirical statement on the involvement of mainstream hip-hop's love of diamonds in fueling the 10-year civil war in Sierra Leone and follows hip-hop celebrities Paul Wall and Wu-Tang's Raekwon on a journey to the country's



COURTESY OF NEW CROWNED HOPE

NEW HORIZONS 47 FILMS FROM 20 COUNTRIES WILL BE REPRESENTED IN THE AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL

the role of women. Special programs like "Women in the Diaspora" and "Women of Zimbabwe" will combine multiple short features with archival footage on their respective themes.

The festival has gained credibility and popularity for its "reputation for presenting challenging, high-quality work from through Africa," says Richard Peña, who is both the program director for the Film Society of Lincoln Center and an associate professor in Columbia's film department. "The works are often controversial, especially to African audiences, but offer an insight into the ways in which Africans think about themselves and the world around them."

Although the festival didn't debut until 2003, Peña reports that it was conceived in the late '80s, after the current executive director, Mahen Bonetti, traveled to Europe and was impressed by the African films she witnessed there. She approached the Film Society in 1989 and joined forces with Peña. Although the Walter Reade Theater did not exist at the time, the two worked for years to secure funding for their project, which was eventually supplied by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. The first festival, in April 2003, titled "Modern Days, Ancient Nights," was a success. "It has widely been credited with increasing the vis-

diamond-mining communities.

The more serious "Young Rebels" program will feature shorts like "The Train," a co-production between Morocco and France; "Mama Put," a depiction of a resilient Nigerian mother; and "Meokogo and the Stick Fighter," a story about a solitary fighter living in the mountains that includes elements of magical realism. Many of the films will have their U.S. premieres at the festival, including "Mama Put" and "Meokogo," emphasizing the importance of exposure the festival can bring to these filmmakers.

While African film may presently be among the least represented in the world's theaters, it's certainly growing. The first African Film Summit was held in South Africa last year, and the French-Algerian-directed *Indigènes* was nominated for an Oscar at the most recent ceremony. Just because African cinema isn't currently widespread doesn't mean that it shouldn't be—and that's what the festival is out to prove. ■

Student tickets to all shows at the Walter Reade Theater are \$7. Those interested in becoming involved with the African Film Festival should attend a screening, or contact the organization directly at www.africanfilmny.org.

Front of the Queue

As editor-in-chief of *The Fed*, Columbia's most subversive newspaper, Kareem Shaya knows a thing or two about humor. But in all seriousness, and in the midst of preparation for the club's famous annual party—*Fed Bash*—Shaya offers us the next five movies he plans to see.

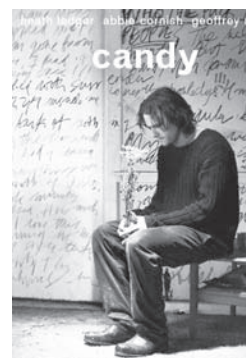
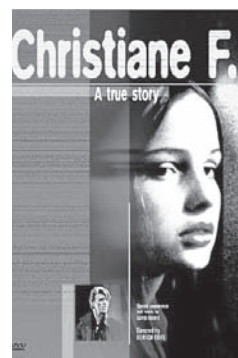
- 1 *The Departed*. Jack Nicholson can do no wrong.
- 2 *The Big Lebowski*. I have to watch this every so often to keep the potheads from taking it.
- 3 *This is Spinal Tap*. It's high time that I see it.
- 4 *Lawrence of Arabia*. Peter O'Toole is probably the world's best talk show guest.
- 5 *Manhattan*. I'll watch this happily, but from a sense of duty to *Annie Hall*.

—Compiled by Emily Rauber

DOUBLE DVD FEATURE

☒ *Christiane F.* (1981)

☒ *Candy* (2006)



Like all good songs about heroin, an effective film about the numbing drug begins deceitfully sweet, quickly reaching a euphoric spike. Then there's the comedown. *Candy* stars Heath Ledger and newcomer Abbie Cornish as a young couple who need each other in the worst way. Dan (Ledger) is a sensitive poet who, despite his earnestness, has a nasty habit—one he unfortunately begins to share with his girlfriend, the angelic Candy (Cornish). Directed by Neil Armfield, the film swiftly moves from the sweet pangs of love to the harrowing dilemma between self-destruction and sacrifice, using addiction as a metaphor for life in all of its ecstasy, selfishness, and pain. Similarly, the German hit *Christiane F.*, released in 1981, is a cautionary tale that makes the recent "disaffected youth" films of Larry Clark look like Disney flicks. Based on a true story, the film boasts a young cast of impressive first-time actors and a standout David Bowie soundtrack. Much like the innocent but easily swayed protagonist in *Candy*, the cherubic Christiane is too perceptive and pure for the world she enters: hustling for drug money, OD-ing in a bathroom stall, and withdrawing in her blood-soaked bedroom. By the time the film is over, we barely recognize her.—Natalie Guevara

CARNEGIE HALL presents

THURS, MAR 29, 7:30 PM

Zankel Hall

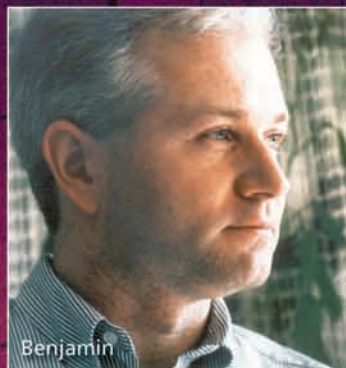
MAKING MUSIC: GEORGE BENJAMIN

GEORGE BENJAMIN, Conductor
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Piano • MISHA AMORY, Viola
HSIN-YUN HUANG, Viola
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Series Moderator

Works by George Benjamin, Bach,
Webern, Schumann, and Debussy

Perspectives concerts are made possible, in part,
by a generous grant from The Alice Tully Foundation.

Tickets: \$25



Benjamin

SAT, MAR 31, 8:30 PM

Zankel Hall

HOSSEIN ALIZADEH & THE HAMAVAYAN ENSEMBLE

Led by Iranian master instrumentalist
and composer Hossein Alizadeh, the
Hamavayan Ensemble performs new
works in the classical Persian music
tradition. The ensemble features
shourangiz and *setar* (lutes) as well as
percussion, with female vocal soloist
Afsaneh Rasaei.

Presented by Carnegie Hall in partnership with the World
Music Institute.

Tickets start at \$30.



Alizadeh



Robertson

SAINT LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID ROBERTSON,
Music Director and Conductor

Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

■ FRI, MAR 30, 8 PM

PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD,
Piano

Featuring Sibelius's Symphony No. 2 and
works by George Benjamin and Bartók

Perspectives concerts are made possible, in part, by a generous grant
from The Alice Tully Foundation.

Tickets start at \$26.

■ SAT, MAR 31, 8 PM

SUSAN GRAHAM,
Mezzo-Soprano

Featuring Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and works
by Mahler and John Adams

Tickets start at \$26.

These concerts are funded, in part,
by the National Endowment for the Arts.



Aimard



Graham



Chang

TUES, APR 10, 8 PM

Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

SARAH CHANG, Violin ASHLEY WASS, Piano

Featuring Beethoven's "Kreutzer"
Sonata and works by Richard Danielpour
and Prokofiev

Tickets start at \$25.



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