

FACING THE MUSIC

DECONSTRUCTING SPIVAK • HAVANA NIGHT
AT THE THEATER • A FINAL IN FASHION

the
eye

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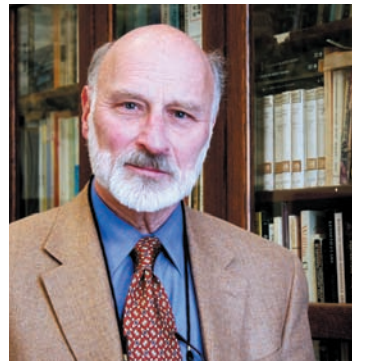
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From the Editor...

Christopher Hitchens is no stranger to pointing fingers, as he so eloquently demonstrated to a hostile television audience last year. So it should come as little surprise that the controversial writer and pundit would come out so vociferously against "You."

The essay, published this week for *Slate*, does not merely take aesthetic offense to that dreadful *Time* cover, though its onanistic patting on the back certainly manifests the offense. The '80s "me" generation, argues Hitchens, has displaced into "you": me, essentially, but with charitable pretensions of reciprocity. Hitchens traces the invidious pronoun through the empty subjectivity of choice structure within limitations: from emptily encouraging Rite Aid buttons to limited room service breakfast menus to depression medication (one might empathize on this last).

What could be more about "you" (but really about "me") than an Ivy League education?

It's nauseatingly self-referential and every April, as mimbos prematurely wriggle about the lawns, a hand-selected troupe of soon to

be narcissists wring their grubby little hands around their acceptance envelopes.

School pride (or arbitrary group pride) is nothing new: "The class of 20xx is the brightest and most accomplished ever"; "The Knicks are #1"; "The German spirit is the most expressive"; etc. ad inf. What is relatively new is that the media (disproportionately Ivy League graduates) acts as a reaffirming press machine for the powerful, institutional university.

As per usual, the *New York Times* leads the pack of the most self-satisfied. There's the statistical onslaught of "A Great Year for Ivy League Colleges, but Not So Good for Applicants to Them" (April 4, 2007), striking panic into the hearts of parents, and gilding those of the accepted and alumni. Four days later, "High Anxiety of Getting Into College" (April 8, 2007) aspires to expose, but reads as myth. "The pressure is literally making children sick," an admissions officer from MIT says, and the reporter agrees.

What's more, not only are recently admitted college students intelligent and high

achieving, but they're quirky and neurotic, too! Everyone (that's you!) is a grown-up Little Miss Sunshine. And more of you are socially acceptable: not just students at Stanford or Duke or Tufts, but, according to the *Times*, Williams and Wesleyan are OK, too.

And if you're anything like the wonderkinder of the *New York Times* articles, even if college doesn't take you, it's not you who missed out. Your destiny awaits.

It's even worse closer to home. In "CC Leads in Admissions Selectivity" (April 5, 2007; sorry *Spectator*) it's claimed that Columbia was "at the forefront of record low acceptance rates"—as if that means anything. Only 8.9 percent got in—that's you!

The *Harvard Crimson* got in on the festivities, too, saying, "You now have a better chance of surviving a particularly fatal strain of the Ebola virus than getting into Harvard College." (April 2, 2007). I dare not speak it, but Yale's admissions levels actually rose. The *Yale Daily News'* assessment of the situation, alarmingly titled "Admission rate rises,"

(March 30, 2007) is a painstaking example of dashed hopes and explaining away. Something went awry in New Haven. Thirty more people were admitted into Yale undergrad.

Now that you've matriculated at an elite institution, feel entitled to Gchat during lecture. Don't trouble yourself to read your assignments for the Core. In fact, for most majors you don't even have to write a thesis! What's important is that "you" decide and "you" have choices. According to the Columbia University Web site, there are 95 majors and 27 libraries—one for every personality type!

Just be happy with your choices. And what could be more self-satisfied than the smirky whiffs of marijuana smoke that fill dormitory halls? A regular dosage of anaesthetic—but don't worry, you need it!

In a month, most students of the humanities will graduate to a fancy diploma and an entry-level position. Choose from a pre-selected set of impersonal, unsatisfying occupations. You, stop complaining and You, do your work.

AG

General Schmenereal



PHOTO BY TINA GAO

You might have class with **Adrienne Herrera**, *GS, but you might never know that she once sang with Fleetwood Mac, belly-danced professionally, or performed with a Mexican Elvis impersonator. Students in the School of General Studies are often enigmatic, but it took several sessions of an English seminar before I realized that Adrienne was quite a character. Once, discussing a production of Hamlet she had seen, she said that she felt unconvinced by the actor playing Hamlet. “I mean, did you really believe,” she said emphatically, “that he was, like, a melancholy Dane?” And when our class read Oscar Wilde’s Salome, Adrienne spontaneously revealed that she had once played the title character (who is famously seductive and intense) in a Los Angeles production. Needless to say, I was impressed.*

So when did you start acting?

Right out of high school. Well, I started at community college where I was taking all these classes like *biology* and I think I lasted about two classes and then I dropped out. I mean I had had no intention of going to college—none whatsoever.

Because you wanted to be an actress?

I don’t think I wanted to be anything. I think I just was an idiot. My dad bribed me into going to college and he bought me a car—that was a good bribe.

But you dropped out?

He didn’t say I had to stay in! And I decided I wanted to go to acting school. I’d moved back to Orange County and there was this good acting school in Los Angeles and with my new car I would drive every day to study acting. And I couldn’t really afford the classes ’cause they were really expensive so I would sweep the floors and empty garbage and stuff like that.

Did you start working professionally?

Yeah. And at that point I was like literally right out of high school. It wasn’t like I cared so much about being a star, I just wanted to be a good actor, and I was, like, wow, there are people that think I’m a good actor! And that’s a huge thing when you’re very young.

So you did mostly theater?

Yes. And I did a lot of music videos and some commercials...

What kind of music videos?

I was in a Counting Crows video and REM videos—like three REM videos...

Wow, were you the “hot girl”?

In a couple of them ... I did one PM Dawn one where I was one of the hot girls and I was in a Foo Fighters video and I was ... well, I don’t think there were any hot girls, it was kind of a creepy video.

What song?

This song called “Everlong.” I think I had like a little streak there for a year or two when I was really skinny and I was, like, taking diet pills and I might have filled that role, but ... No, I never thought that about myself. I always wanted to be an actor, I never wanted to be the, like the...

Babe?

Yeah, ’cause the babe was never the interesting character. Like even in *Hamlet*: if you had to pick between Hamlet and Ophelia and all other things were equal, who would wanna be Ophelia? She croaks!

Oh, but Ophelia is pretty cool.

Yeah, but she doesn’t have all the speeches.

What were your favorite roles that you did or most interesting ... and also like weirdest or also like worst and most horrible?

Most horrible, I did a movie like a B B B minus movie and I played this woman who comes and takes pictures at a restaurant. So I was supposed to go [sings, and simulates holding a camera] “Hello, my name is Tamara and I’ve got this camera and if you really love her you’ll want a picture of her,” like that. And the guy in the scene was like a second-rate TV actor and the woman was a Playboy Playmate and so the two of them proceed to coach me on how to do my thing and I’m thinking, like, “Oh! These lines are so despicably bad and the premise of this film is dreadful and there is this Playboy Playmate coaching me. She’s giving me, like, direct line readings, she’s singing ...” Horrible!

So did you say that you had played Salome?

Yeah. That was interesting. I had done some belly dancing...

Like, professionally?

Yeah.

So what was your dance of the seven veils like?

Well ... I wasn’t a great dancer then, so I would say it was very searching and sort of, um ... well, I was doing my best.

Were you naked under your veils?

No! I had, like, a top with some things coming off of it. I think I was pretty uncomfortable.

Why did you decide to come back to school?

So, I had done acting for a long time and I sang in a rock band, a couple of different rock bands, and I was a backup singer...

For whom?

Well, I was in a, uh ... Mexican Elvis impersonator’s band called El Vez.

Wow. Is it in Spanish?

Well, what he does is he takes Elvis songs and changes the lyrics to make them about Chicano positive themes and I was one of his background singer/dancers. And then I worked on the road crew for Fleetwood Mac and Jane’s Addiction and I actually got to sing with Fleetwood Mac.

Wait, what do mean on the road crew? Did you move heavy stuff?

No, it was catering... No, I set up the dining room. My job was, like, literally setting up the chairs and tables and doing little flower arrangements and making sure that this person had their wine and this person had their soda water and this one had her brussel sprouts.

How did you end up singing with Fleetwood Mac?

One of their singers was ill and I just ... well, background singing is, you know, it’s not like being the lead singer. And with a band like Fleetwood Mac they have like nine or 10 people on stage.

Why Columbia?

Because if I was going to go back to college I was going to do it in a big way. Like, I wasn’t going to go to community college or some state school. Because to me, going to college at this time is extremely subversive. *Extremely* subversive. None of my family members went to college. My dad was always trying to get me to go and I was always resisting and, you know, none of my friends have done it. It’s been amazing. I’ve had some really great experiences with books. ■

urbanities

Hate Crime vs. Bias Incident

The technical jargon behind the violence

BY MIRIAM DATSKOVSKY

Hate is no stranger to Columbia. The now infamous Ruggles vandalism incident a little over a year ago, the homophobic messages found in East Campus last spring, and the inception of the student group Stop Hate on Columbia's Campus, among other things, have made that more than clear.

But what constitutes a hate crime, or even a bias incident, has proven more difficult to discern. What is the difference between the two? When and how is someone convicted of a hate crime?

Strictly speaking, the police cannot arrest someone on hate crime charges—they can only determine whether a crime constitutes a bias incident. Perpetrators are not charged with hate crimes until indicted. But how a bias incident or hate crime is determined is also tricky.

According to the Hate Crimes Act of 2000, there are a number of criminal offenses that, if the perpetrator intentionally committed the crime "in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation" would constitute a hate crime (as opposed to simply assault, for example). But the perpetrator's intent is first determined by the victim's, or other witnesses', statements.

In other words, the perpetrator may insist he or she was drunk and had no hateful intent, but if the victim feels he or she was threatened on the basis of any category listed in the Hate Crimes Act, the perpetrator will be charged with a hate crime. Furthermore, if a person is charged with a hate crime, the hate crime is deemed one category higher than the original offense—so instead of first-degree assault, a perpetrator is charged with second-degree assault. By the time the case goes to court, the

perpetrator's intent needs to be clear, or chances are the judge will convict him or her of the lesser offense, as jails are already overflowing.

The Ruggles vandalism case provides the perfect example: Matthew Brown, CC '07, and Stephen Searles, SEAS '08, were originally charged with criminal mischief as a hate crime, a class E felony. Six months later, the case was dismissed when the judge accepted a deal between the defendants' lawyers and the district attorney's office. Brown and Searles were required to attend sensitivity training and therapy counseling, but they did not have to admit they were guilty. At the time, Searles' lawyer attributed the fact that he was drunk and from Montana to his lack of sensitivity.

So how does this legal jargon translate? Technically, a person is innocent until proven guilty. Thus bias incident is the most accurate way to describe a hate crime before a conviction. It provides the perpetrator with the benefit of the doubt. But choosing the phrase bias incident instead of hate crime can seem belittling, particularly to the people victimized by the attack.

Of course, opinion pages have more power to illustrate the implications of a hate crime or bias incident. In late March of last year, an NYU student was killed by a car in Harlem while he was fleeing a group of black teenagers. Witnesses reported that the perpetrators were yelling "Hey Whitey!" and "Get the white boy!" as the victim tried to flee. The *New York Post* and the *New York Daily News* immediately called upon the city to charge the boys with a hate crime, slamming the city when they did not. The *New York Times*, however, refrained from doing the same. The reason why the publications differed is unclear.



PHOTO BY NOELLE DZIEDZIC

Spectator news writer Eleazar David Melendez, who is also the crime beat reporter, relayed an argument he had with his fellow deputies last year when SHOCC boycotted the bar Mona after a woman had been sexually assaulted there. "To me the news was that there was this new, at the time relatively small, student group that was effectively boycotting a popular neighborhood bar. But to the other deputies, the news was that someone had been sexually assaulted. You do get to choose the news." In the end, Melendez's briefing highlighted the boycott.

In many ways, what constitutes a hateful offense depends upon the community that contextualized the offense, the perpetrator, and the victim. What constitutes a hate crime, and whether it is highlighted, often changes depending on those involved. But inevitably, a hate crime is troublesome as it has the power to intimidate not just one person, but an entire society. Calling it a bias incident might be most accurate and give the perpetrator the benefit of the doubt, but when it comes to hate, shouldn't we be thinking about the victim? ■

Committing It to Heart

Muslim students dedicate their free time to memorizing the Qur'an

BY SARA MARIA HASBUN



PHOTO BY ASIYA KHAKI

book from memory.

Although not a requirement, becoming a hafiz (singular of huffaz) brings honor and spiritual rewards. "On the day of judgment, every verse we know will send us higher up in heaven," Faisal Khan, CC '09, says.

In the Muslim Students Alliance prayer room, Faisal Khan, Imran Khan, a graduate student in SEAS, and Athar Abdul-Quader, CC '08, sit holding the Qur'an. After several minutes of reading in silence, Imran says quietly, "I'm ready." He begins to recite his passage in a rhythmic manner, even though the Qur'an is not intended to be sung.

"[During Ramadan] everyone is at their most spiritual, when you're fasting and listening you recognize the beauty of it [the Qur'an]," Faisal recalls from listening to recitations this past September. "I really wanted to be closer to it [the Qur'an]."

"It's very hard to learn, and very easy to forget if you don't work on it," he adds. He estimates six to eight years for someone of college age, although children can learn it in

a couple years if they attend special schools, the madrasa.

Hafiz studies at Columbia are divided into a "brothers" group and a "sisters" group. Members of both, however, stress that the division is not due to any religious laws or discrimination.

"There are no gender differences as to who learns the Qur'an," Mehvish Poshni, a graduate student in SEAS and a member of the sisters group, says. "I just feel more comfortable that way," she explains. "I don't have a singing voice, it's embarrassing. So it's a very sisterly thing."

Children begin learning the Qur'an from their parents or in school. Many Muslims already know the last chapter, which is recited five times in daily prayers. As their studies progress, Muslims move backwards—many verses repeat and as Muslims learn the words, they learn to recite them with the right rhythm and tones. Learning recitation technique alone can take up to eight years, according to Athar.

Suzanne Motwaly, BC '09, notes the difficulties of discerning the actual meaning of the words—although she was raised in Egypt, her Arabic dialect is very different from that of the Qur'an. "None of us are very familiar with the Arabic language," Faisal says sheepishly, looking around the room. "You need to get your Ph.D. [to really understand the meaning of the Qur'an]," Suzanne says.

Even though almost every mosque has a program to help prospective huffaz, the students opt to stay at Columbia. "It's a community thing," Imran says. If any of them desire to use the title hafiz before their name, however, they will have to pass rigorous tests at a nearby mosque.

Faisal insists that learning to be a hafiz is not an added stress or chore: "The idea of having to balance daily life with Islam—you must understand that Islam is a part of your life, you shouldn't have to balance it with anything, it shouldn't take away from anything." ■

Whether it be a ballerina, an astronaut, or a professional baseball player, our childhood musings about our grown-up selves typically do not align with our adult identities. En route to becoming a grown-up, pasts get traded for futures—and the old pointe shoe and baseball glove lie abandoned, a misbegotten dream.

But for *Spring Awakening's* leading man, Jonathan Groff, his childhood dream is alive and well. He reaffirms it every night when he grabs his hand held microphone and takes the stage at the Eugene O'Neill Theater.

"That was the moment where I was like—I've got to figure out what this is because it's too exciting," he says, smiling in reminiscence. It was during an elementary school performance of *Annie Get Your Gun* at the local high school in Lancaster, Pa., when Groff decided that musical theater was the one thing he desperately wanted to pursue. Still able to recall the name of the lead actress who played Annie Oakley, he recounts the proceedings of that day with genuine enthusiasm, an almost uncanny clarity to his thoughts. At the time, Groff was in fourth grade.

Now, only a little over 10 years later, Groff is on Broadway playing Melchior, *Spring Awakening's*

Living the Childhood Dream

Leading man JONATHAN GROFF tells of his *Spring Awakening*

BY LAURA HEDLI

tragic hero. The story centers on Melchior and his teenage love affair with Wendla, played by actress Lea Michele. Based upon a drama written in 1891 by Frank Wedekind and with music and lyrics by Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater respectively, *Spring Awakening* explores topics ranging from child abuse and suicide to homosexuality and teenage abortion.

But instead of gearing up for the impending Tony awards, Groff was originally supposed to be getting ready to don his cap and gown at graduation from Carnegie Mellon in May. He decided to defer his admission for a year when he landed the role of Rolf in *The Sound of Music* while auditioning in New York in December of 2002. And later, when it came down to staying in Pennsylvania or moving to New York, he packed his bags for the city on Oct. 20, 2004 and began waiting tables on Oct. 21.

"The logical choice would have been to go to college, and the safe choice would have been to go to college, but I couldn't deny what my gut was telling me," explains Groff. "I wasn't ready to go to school and I knew it."

Even after living in the city for nearly three years, Groff says that when he returns to small town life, it feels as though he has never left.

"I just went home to Lancaster to do a benefit concert for this community theater I worked at a lot called the Ephrata Playhouse," he says, holding a recent copy of his hometown paper, the *Lancaster New Era*, where his homecoming made front page news.

"Fans from the stage door road tripped to Ephrata, Pa. to see my benefit concert ... which was crazy! We [the cast] are lucky we have our fans, though," he adds. "They're great, and we love them."

Gesturing to a wooden basket filled with fan mail and leafing through a homemade red scrapbook with his name, picture and yellow cut-out stars plastered on the cover, he says that *Spring Awakening* "is really a sort of word-of-mouth show."

"The producers have said that the reviews have, of course, helped significantly to improve our au-

diences, but even more than that, the word-of-mouth has been so strong."

He explains that the challenge for a show like *Spring Awakening* was to see if it would catch on with a younger student audience, while still getting attention from those patrons who normally frequent the theater.

"During previews when we were on Broadway in November and early December we couldn't sell half the house," Groff confesses. "No one really knew what to think of us, and what to expect. It was a big risk for everyone involved."

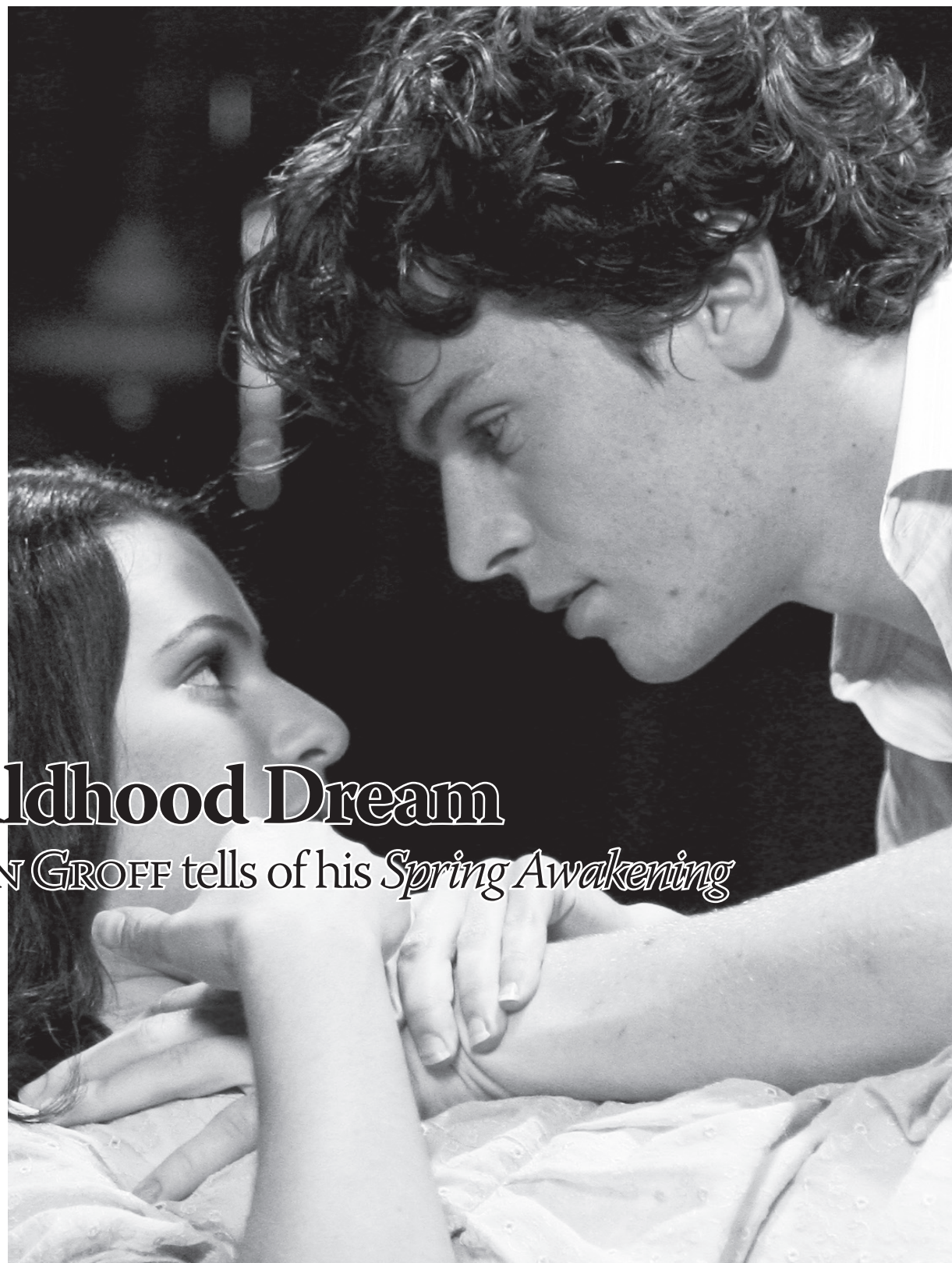
"And this is the first time, and I think I can speak for everyone in the cast, that we've ever done something this huge, out of control, massive, that we're the frontrunners of," he says. "We've all taken this insane journey. These are people that I know will be in my life forever—it's like the college experiences."

During our conversation, his co-star Michele stopped by to chat about the *Lost* episodes she had just watched. Groff had hosted a *Lost* party for the cast over at his apartment a few nights before.

"The past three [episodes] we've caught up on have been really good," she says, lingering in the doorway before disappearing into her adjacent dressing room. "I'm exhausted. Are you tired?" she asks.

"No, I'm okay," he replies.

But Groff admits that there are days when he does feel tired or frustrated.



COURTESY OF JONATHAN GROFF

"But whatever is going on, you can express it in the blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah," he says, laughing. In the second act Groff leads the cast in singing one of the show's title tunes called "Totally Fucked." And like the monosyllabic jargon used by the teacher in *Peanuts* cartoons, the chorus is punctuated by the word "blah" repeated over and over as the cast jumps onto ladders and off of chairs, neon lights flashing, an electric guitar coming alive with Sheik's inspired riffs and chords.

"I've really been taking advantage of that lately. Just trying to live in that [moment] and let everything go ... It's such a release," he says.

Between starting work on the daytime soap *One Life to Live*, stealing time to watch *Star Wars* movies, and walking the runway in Jill Stuart fashion shows, Groff finds that his daily life always comes back to the theater where he performs eight times a week. He calls it "*Spring Awakening* tunnel vision."

"But you know," he remarks, "some guy at the stage door said to me the other day that the reason he comes back to see the show over and over again is because he feels like he's watching the beginning of 13 people's careers. This is the springboard for everybody ... This is everyone all together for a limited piece of time, starting out."

From an inspired fourth grader to a Broadway star at 22—his only regret seems to be that elementary school students can't come to see the show. ■



A New 'Post-' for Spivak

The noted academic is named
University Professor

BY ALISSA ROMANOW

For a full transcript of our interview with
Professor Spivak, go to eye.columbiaspectator.com.

PHOTOS BY ISABELLE MILLS-TANNENBAUM

These are the biographical fragments that follow Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: she was born in Calcutta in 1942; she graduated from the University of Calcutta's Presidency College at 17 and at the top of her class; she completed a dissertation on Yeats under the direction of the literary theorist Paul de Man at Cornell in 1961; she translated and wrote a celebrated preface to Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* in 1974; her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) was met with praise and contempt for its suggestion that the "subaltern"—the socially dispossessed—cannot be heard by the socially privileged (including those in postcolonial studies speaking for the subaltern as one of its avatars); she came to Columbia in 1991, which was also around the time that she got involved with educational reform in India (rural literacy and teacher-training); she is the director of the Center for Comparative Literature and Society and teaches comparative literature and the politics of culture (classes on modernism, literary criticism, feminist psychoanalysis, Derrida, and Gramsci, etc.); now, she is a University Professor. "The institution's highest faculty rank," as the Columbia Web site puts it. University Professors are those who "have made contributions to their fields that transcend national boundaries, assume international significance, and add importantly to the human store of knowledge."

In fact, Spivak has never "transcended national boundaries" so much as questioned how those boundaries are written, and she has not quite "added to the human store of knowledge" so much as asked what counts as knowledge and who says so. It is only appropriate that one of the most vocal advocates of interdisciplinary learning in the University should now be able to teach in any of its departments—but Spivak has never needed permission from the administration to exceed her disciplinary borders.

Marco Roth, now one of the editors of the intellectual journal *n+1*, is a former student of Spivak's. "Gayatri is a wonderful and underrated teacher," he says. "She liked to puncture both academic hypocrisies and Ivy League students' sense of entitlement." He recalls "some rather painfully humiliating episodes in seminars" as "a highly demanding form of negative encouragement ... I got the sense that her teaching was a different way of playing out the conflicts that she deals with her in theoretical work—the relations between aesthetics and politics, one's responsibility to literature, to the historical circumstances

in which we find ourselves, to one's own motives for action, to power ... She made me feel that a constant rage against complacency is necessary for any higher learning worthy of that name."

While Roth appreciates Spivak's harshness as a pedagogical tactic, and Spivak herself chalks it up to a reaction against students' assumptions and lack of preparation, one also gets the sense that Spivak is simply a rigorous thinker in a time of anti-intellectualism and complacency. Spivak herself would not say that her harshness is justified, but her dissatisfaction bears the mark of a true "rage," as Roth puts it, that what is "good" in this culture is what is comfortable and affirming of what one already knows.

Spivak is most often described to me as "brilliant" (and she has been described to me repeatedly: by way of full disclosure, I, like Roth, am a former student). Avital Ronell, a fellow member of the "Derrida family" (as Ronell puts it) and chair of the department of Germanic languages and literature at NYU, remembers meeting Spivak in 1989 in Paris. "She was just this gorgeous, brilliant goddess that everyone was drawn to. She was generous and kind and everything—just stunning and luminous." Étienne Balibar, the French post-Marxist philosopher, calls her "the grande dame of contemporary critical thought," and Hamid Dabashi, a professor of Iranian studies in MEALAC, notes her "awe-inspiring aura."

For all this otherworldly rhetoric, one might forget that Spivak has worked extremely hard. Bruce Robbins, a professor in Columbia's department of English and comparative literature, recalls walking into his office (which had been Spivak's office before she moved into the Heyman Center) to find her "copying out Chinese characters when it was already my desk"—she had needed a quiet place to study and could not find one. "Of course she is very brilliant," Robbins says. "But if you want to play with the big boys, with the biggest boys, it's not just a question of confidence but of earning that confidence, being backed up by learning languages deeply, knowing Kant and Hegel and Marx enough to quote chapter and verse."

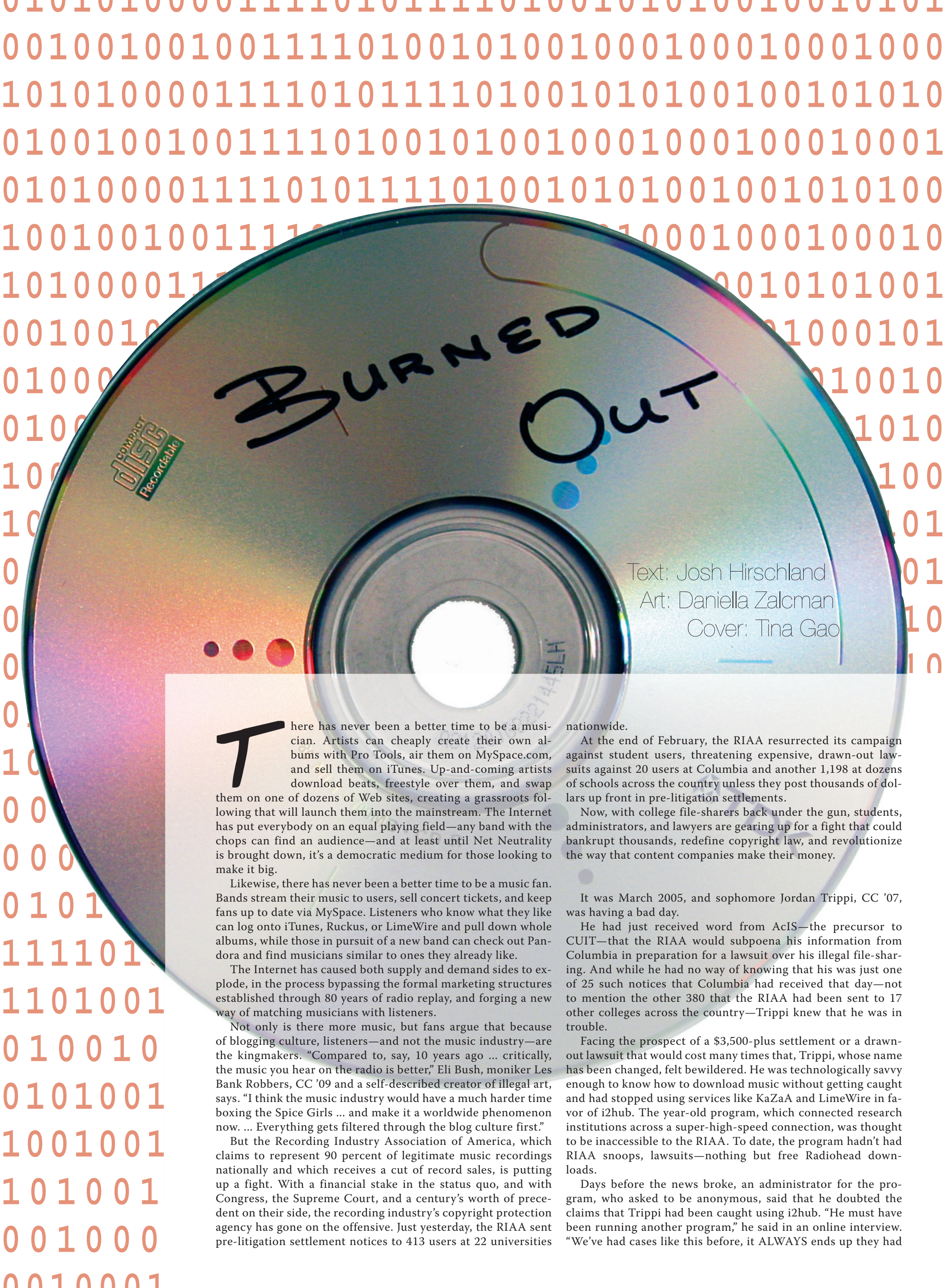
Spivak's work is associated with "post-s": post-structuralism, post-colonialism, post-Marxism. What is Spivak coming after? Spivak did not simply arrive on the intellectual scene after structuralism, colonialism, or Marxism, but ushered in the "post-" by exposing the limits of European thought, suggesting that their universal claims could only hold up so long as they excluded

non-Europeans, women—"the other," in theory speak. "In a significant way she begins to change the rules of the game," Dabashi says. "Her particular contribution is when she speaks from a post-colonial perspective—a perspective missing from the European theoretical game—and then when we are enamored with a post-colonial perspective, she does a somersault and subjects the result to a feminist critique." Much of Spivak's work has not only been devoted to showing that a given "universal" stance is, in fact, "particular" to a certain time, place, and people, but also with challenging the fetishes and false sense of solidarity extended to the "others" who have interrupted the European "theoretical game."

The most praised points of Spivak's work are also the most criticized: where some see Spivak weaving a text of disparate parts to testify to the heterogeneity of her subject matter, others, like Terry Eagleton, see a "reluctan[ce] to be left out of any theoretical game in town." Where some praise the difficulty of her prose as a challenge to lazy reading and to the "mastery" of a text, others disdain it as willfully obscure and elitist. Ania Loomba has criticized Spivak for depicting those under colonial rule as only colonized, without any identity beyond the scope of that rule, and Benita Parry has suggested that Spivak's emphasis on the "epistemic" violence of imperialism and the shattering of the colonized subjectivity effaces the material violence of imperialism.

Spivak actively highlights the limits of her own theoretical frameworks—deconstructivism, post-structuralism, Marxism, feminism—but does not write off what is limited as "wrong." Her critiques, incisive as they are, do not generally take the form of "I'm right, you're wrong," but tend more toward "we're both right, and we're both wrong." As Spivak herself says, her "way of thinking and doing and living is not to be opposed to the thing."

Spivak does not resist "opposition" on a philosophical basis—on the basis that opposing something only reinforces it—but on an ethical basis, where "it's always too soon to be opposed to anything." Spivak ushers in the "after," the "post-," and yet is always suspended in anticipation of a future that will make opposition impossible. Shuttling across the spaces in which she has made herself responsible—the university classrooms, villages in Bangladesh, lectures everywhere else—Spivak opens herself onto new threads, new interruptions, for her text. Within the embattled terrain of the university, one can only hope to imagine what Spivak will be weaving, and what will let itself be woven there. ■



Text: Josh Hirschland
Art: Daniella Zalcmann
Cover: Tina Gao

There has never been a better time to be a musician. Artists can cheaply create their own albums with Pro Tools, air them on MySpace.com, and sell them on iTunes. Up-and-coming artists download beats, freestyle over them, and swap them on one of dozens of Web sites, creating a grassroots following that will launch them into the mainstream. The Internet has put everybody on an equal playing field—any band with the chops can find an audience—and at least until Net Neutrality is brought down, it's a democratic medium for those looking to make it big.

Likewise, there has never been a better time to be a music fan. Bands stream their music to users, sell concert tickets, and keep fans up to date via MySpace. Listeners who know what they like can log onto iTunes, Ruckus, or LimeWire and pull down whole albums, while those in pursuit of a new band can check out Pandora and find musicians similar to ones they already like.

The Internet has caused both supply and demand sides to explode, in the process bypassing the formal marketing structures established through 80 years of radio replay, and forging a new way of matching musicians with listeners.

Not only is there more music, but fans argue that because of blogging culture, listeners—and not the music industry—are the kingmakers. "Compared to, say, 10 years ago ... critically, the music you hear on the radio is better," Eli Bush, moniker Les Bank Robbers, CC '09 and a self-described creator of illegal art, says. "I think the music industry would have a much harder time boxing the Spice Girls ... and make it a worldwide phenomenon now. ... Everything gets filtered through the blog culture first."

But the Recording Industry Association of America, which claims to represent 90 percent of legitimate music recordings nationally and which receives a cut of record sales, is putting up a fight. With a financial stake in the status quo, and with Congress, the Supreme Court, and a century's worth of precedent on their side, the recording industry's copyright protection agency has gone on the offensive. Just yesterday, the RIAA sent pre-litigation settlement notices to 413 users at 22 universities

nationwide.

At the end of February, the RIAA resurrected its campaign against student users, threatening expensive, drawn-out lawsuits against 20 users at Columbia and another 1,198 at dozens of schools across the country unless they post thousands of dollars up front in pre-litigation settlements.

Now, with college file-sharers back under the gun, students, administrators, and lawyers are gearing up for a fight that could bankrupt thousands, redefine copyright law, and revolutionize the way that content companies make their money.

It was March 2005, and sophomore Jordan Trippi, CC '07, was having a bad day.

He had just received word from AcIS—the precursor to CUIT—that the RIAA would subpoena his information from Columbia in preparation for a lawsuit over his illegal file-sharing. And while he had no way of knowing that his was just one of 25 such notices that Columbia had received that day—not to mention the other 380 that the RIAA had been sent to 17 other colleges across the country—Trippi knew that he was in trouble.

Facing the prospect of a \$3,500-plus settlement or a drawn-out lawsuit that would cost many times that, Trippi, whose name has been changed, felt bewildered. He was technologically savvy enough to know how to download music without getting caught and had stopped using services like KaZaA and LimeWire in favor of i2hub. The year-old program, which connected research institutions across a super-high-speed connection, was thought to be inaccessible to the RIAA. To date, the program hadn't had RIAA snoops, lawsuits—nothing but free Radiohead downloads.

Days before the news broke, an administrator for the program, who asked to be anonymous, said that he doubted the claims that Trippi had been caught using i2hub. "He must have been running another program," he said in an online interview. "We've had cases like this before, it ALWAYS ends up they had

something else running.”

Trippi scoffed at the pre-subpoena notice, saying that he was going to keep using i2hub. “Where else am I going to go?” he asked. “I like music and I’m not going to pay 20 dollars for an album.”

Two weeks later, when the RIAA filed the lawsuits, Trippi and i2hub had changed their tune, and public opinion had shifted. “I must say I am in shock and I gotta give it to them,” the i2hub administrator, who requested anonym-

ity, said. Trippi was shaken. “I don’t know how horrible this will be,” his voice quavered on the phone a few hours after the *Spectator* called to tell him of the lawsuits. “I’m just really scared about it.”

The RIAA continued to probe i2hub, searching for and suing file-sharers over the next eight months. The agency issued 635 lawsuits to users from college IP addresses—39 of which were aimed at Columbia—before pressuring the program’s designer to shut it down. While the group doesn’t divulge numbers regarding settlements, the suits racked up an estimated \$1.5 million for the agency. Once i2hub went quiet, so, too, did the RIAA, shutting down its college-targeting programs for 15 months.

But college students aren’t the only illegal downloaders caught in the RIAA’s crosshairs. The RIAA has sued in excess of 18,000 users to date for file-sharing, according to spokeswoman Jenni Engebretsen. College students are, however, the only segment of the population that has been specifically targeted.

Students are good targets for a number of reasons. First and foremost, college students are “disproportionately problematic,” Engebretsen said. According to a recent study from research firm NPD, college students made 1.3 billion illicit music downloads last year, comprising over a quarter of all such downloads, despite making up just 10 percent of the surveyed population. Students, and especially those in Morningside, are far from blameless—the Motion Picture Association of America recently named Columbia the worst school for movie downloads in the country.

Further, when seeking out college students, the RIAA hasn’t experienced the same kinds of PR gaffes that have occasionally occurred when suing the population at large. In 2003, in one of their first lawsuits, the RIAA targeted a 66-year-old grandmother. (The charges were later dropped.) Then in 2006, they sued an 83-year-old on dialysis for illegally downloading Snoop Dogg. Last month, the agency went after John Paladuk, a paralyzed stroke victim from Michigan. Perhaps most strangely of all, in 2005 the industry sued 83-year-old Gertrude Walton. Not only did Walton not own a computer, she’d died several months earlier. On the other end of the spectrum, the agency has have sued children as young as 10.

College students garner considerably less sympathy than do these people.

Additionally, the RIAA has said that it focuses on college users because students are at a formative period and that teaching them responsibility before going out into the real world will make them less likely to steal music in the future.

Finally, there is some evidence that lawsuits are the most effective way to cause students to change their downloading habits. When the RIAA started suing i2hub users, traffic on the program dropped by 20 percent almost overnight. “The lawsuits have done more to increase awareness than anything

“SCARING THE DICKENS OUT OF A DOZEN KIDS, THAT’S JUST AN AMUSING SIDESHOW. THEY’RE [THE RIAA] NOT FIGHTING A WAR ANY MORE THAN THE FOLKS WHO PUT ON CIVIL WAR REGALIA AND RE-ENACT THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG ARE.”

else we’ve done, and numerous surveys have shown that the number one or two reason that people have stopped illegal downloading is to avoid the risk of lawsuits,” RIAA president Cary Sherman said in an online press conference. “It’s sad that we have had to do this, but it’s been the most effective deterrent to date.” (It’s almost surprising that the RIAA’s educational video on the subject, available at campus-downloading.com—or, with delicious irony, on YouTube—hasn’t reached its intended audience.)

With all that said, there’s little evidence that the campaign against college students has succeeded. By the recording industry’s own admission, the number of students who download illegally is up each year.

“More and more students are coming to think that free music is a right,” Sherman said in the press conference. “There isn’t a college student in America today who doesn’t know that the online ‘sharing’ of copyrighted music is illegal. Yet file-trafficking on college campuses remains extensive and disproportionately problematic.” Specifically, Engebretsen says that the revamped campaign is part of a reaction on the part of the RIAA in response to the failure of past efforts.

According to Sherman, the agency intends to send about 400 of these notices every month, and RIAA general counsel Steven Marks said that the agency plans to target and sue 1,000 college users in a three-month period—as many as they have sued in the previous two years.

But bringing back a campaign that, by the Industry’s own admission, has not led to the kinds of results it wants, seems unlikely to succeed. As noted in an op-ed in the *New York Times* last Thursday, the RIAA “continues to give the impression that it’s doing something by occasionally threatening to sue college students who share their record collections online. But apart from scaring the dickens out of a few dozen kids, that’s just an amusing sideshow. They’re not fighting a war any more than the folks who put on Civil War regalia and re-enact the Battle of Gettysburg are.”

While the targeted campaign is legal and well within the RIAA’s jurisdiction, there are issues regarding the opaque methodology of the pre-litigation settlement campaign.

“This is a new process that we have put in place whereby students have the opportunity to settle the claims against them at a substantially discounted sum before a lawsuit is ever filed,” Engebretsen says. But while the agency touts the notices as a boon to students, the pre-litigation settlement figures are in line with those of the last few years.

File-sharing lawsuits have never made it to court. Of the more than 18,000 lawsuits that have been issued since the RIAA began suing consumers in 2003, none have ever gone to trial, Engebretsen says. Considering that the RIAA has vowed to present only pre-litigation settlement they intend to sue, the only anomaly of this new campaign and those of the past

is that, for those who take the offer, the RIAA saves the legal costs of a formal lawsuit and gets a resolution in 20 days or fewer.

The RIAA has almost no information about the people to whom it sends these notices. The agency doesn’t know the name, age, financial status, or any of the other myriad potentially pertinent facts about those being served with notices. All that the agency knows when they send out the notices is that the user is located at a college,

that they have shared a file with the name of a copyrighted piece of work, and that they did so from an identifiable IP address.

“What they’re doing is not illegal but extra-legal,” Corynne McSherry, an attorney with electronic rights protection group the Electronic Frontier Foundation, says. “There is no judicial oversight. ... They bypass procedure and since no one is keeping an eye on them, there is no standard.”

“Universities are serving as messengers for the RIAA and music labels, saving them costs,” McSherry adds. “They are forced into being agents”

In the case of Columbia students, it is the University that holds all of the cards. They are responsible for matching up the IP addresses with specific users. Further, if the University were so inclined, it could monitor the traffic going over its pipelines and the files on its servers. It could ban those who attempt to illegally share music. Finally, there is software called cGrid that the University could install that would automatically boot users who connect to peer-to-peer networks.

Because Columbia controls the information network, some students have claimed that the administration should stand up to the RIAA and protect the identities of the users on its servers. But so far, Columbia has supported the RIAA. It has complied with subpoenas, forwarded the pre-litigation settlement notices—along with a helpful list of pro-bono lawyers—to implicated students, and has advanced thousands of DMCA (Digital Millennium Copyright Act) take-down notices, which are basically the copyright agencies way of wagging their finger at file-sharers and telling them not to do it again.

“It is making it easier for the RIAA but nevertheless, I just don’t see it as a hard decision,” Columbia associate general counsel Beryl Abrams says of the University’s decision to forward the pre-litigation notices. “Imagine if you were a student accused ... and we didn’t send that along. Then what the RIAA would do ... is file a lawsuit, in which case they will subpoena the identifying information from Columbia which we’re required to turn over and the user becomes a defendant in a lawsuit.”

But the University has gone beyond simply complying with the RIAA, pro-actively discouraging file-sharing. From the moment students become Columbia students, they are bombarded with information about the legal issues: before creating a UNI address, a student must agree twice not to violate copyright law and are informed about the dangers and illegality of file sharing. Students receive a copy of the University’s copyright policy, with a basic overview of copyright law, which includes the axiom, “You must respect copyright.” Students are instructed not to steal in a mandatory session during the New Student Orientation Program, and computer labs have threatening posters on the walls. If that weren’t enough, every summer, students receive another letter from Columbia lawyers telling them not to steal music.

Provost Alan Brinkley, deans in every single school at Columbia, vice president for information technology Candy Fleming, public affairs officials, and the general associate's office have all sent messages reminding students that illegal downloading is, well, illegal. And bad. Very bad. The context and author almost don't matter—they're all pretty interchangeable—and those who haven't gotten the message yet either don't have a computer or just don't care.

While acknowledging that the RIAA has a right to sue whomever it wants, Brendan Ballou, CC '09 and head of Free Culture at Columbia, a digital rights advocacy student group he co-created this year, says, "What troubles my club ... is how complicit Columbia and the administration has been in just rolling over. ... Columbia, without missing a beat, sent those [pre-litigation settlement] letters out. It was just disgusting."

Not every school has complied with the letters. The University of Wisconsin became the idol of file-sharers everywhere when it refused to forward the pre-litigation settlement offers to students.

"We are required to pass on 'cease and desist' notices. We are also legally required to pass on a subpoena to the individual it's charged to," Brian Rust, communications manager for the UW Division of information technology, says. "Letters from the RIAA are settlement letters. They are neither subpoenas nor 'cease and desist' notices and have nothing to do with them. They have no legal merit ... there is no legal basis for this."

"The university feels that passing letters along puts us in an uncomfortable alliance with the RIAA as a legal agent for the RIAA," Rust adds. "The university doesn't want to be an intermediary. ... We do not want to make students think that we agree with what the RIAA is doing."

And while Wisconsin's move may turn out to be an empty gesture—Rust indicated that the university would comply when served with a subpoena—Ballou points to it as an example of how Columbia should operate. "The way that he [a Wisconsin administrator] was saying it is, 'These are decent kids, these are not criminals, and suddenly, they're facing a half-million dollar lawsuit.' ... We as a university have a responsibility to protect our kids."

For students like Ballou, the issue isn't just legality. Rather, they paint the debate in terms of the RIAA clinging to an outdated business model that must be challenged. Pointing to the 60 million or so illegal music downloaders in the U.S., Ballou paints those who are "stealing" music as average, good-hearted citizens who have turned to a life of crime because they were faced with an overbear-

ing, outdated, and flawed business model.

"Riaa," Ballou pronounces phonetically, "likes to paint this as 'these are mastermind hackers who are trying to do this,' but it's everybody. It's college students. It's college students' parents. Everybody's doing it."

"I think people have come to realize that it was never just criminal or just hackers using Napster or KaZaA—it was everybody, but there was a real stigma against it," Ballou adds. Referring to the fact that file-sharing is the distribution of a non-exclusive good, where one person having it doesn't deprive another person from using it, he adds, "In the mainstream media now, pretty much everybody realizes it isn't a crime like stealing a CD in a store is."

Ballou points to Comedy Central and NBC as content companies that are moving beyond the old model and into the right direction.

These television companies offer up several of their shows free to be streamed over the Internet. It's a win-win situation: users gain access to the content, networks get increased exposure. Further, because they know more about the viewer of an Internet program than through a televi-

sion program, the networks can directly target advertisements to specific niches of the market, meaning they can charge higher ad rates per viewer than they can on broadcast television.

Just last week, EMI—one of the "big four" music labels—announced that it would offer its entire catalog without the Digital Rights Management protections that limit access to the music that the RIAA has advocated. This means that songs downloaded from the iTunes store will be playable in any mp3 player, not just the iPod. This also means users will have an easier time swapping purchased songs with their friends. Microsoft also recently announced that it would strip down the DRM protections from its Zune portable music players. Meanwhile, on the consumer side, the hundreds of millions of songs that have been sold on iTunes and other legal online music retailers point to a public that is willing to pay for their content. ■

—Frances Bodomo contributed additional reporting to this article.



style

Look Smart

How professors bring their personal style to the workplace

BY ISABEL BOHRER

Hiromi Noguchi

PHOTO BY TINA GAO



Matthew Wallenfang

The runways of fashion and the realm of academia are often considered poles of the intellectual spectrum: the former is condemned as effeminate and superficial, while the latter is treated with distance for its unflinching seriousness.

Professors in particular have succumbed to widespread stereotypes: the tweed, the Oxfords, the thick glasses, the Marx-style beard. Ph.D. candidacy is a heady—and expensive—process, and one that is not above competitions of seriousness. And of course it would be a shame if all a student remembered from his four undergraduate years was his professor's towering pair of Christian Louboutins.

But that does not mean that style and school are irreconcilable. "I think it's very old-fashioned and inaccurate to think of university professors—as many people still do—as sartorially inept," Sarah Cole, associate professor of English and comparative literature, says. "I can call immediately to mind many colleagues—in my own department and around Columbia—who are interested in fashion, have great personal style, and look terrific in their clothes."

On CULPA, Cole is praised not only for her openness to discussion, but also for her style. "If this were a high school yearbook and I was giving out superlatives, Cole would definitely win for best-dressed," writes an anonymous reviewer of her modern British literature course. "Her up-to-the-minute fashion sense and phenomenal phy-

sique will leave you wondering how she ever had the time to receive her Ph.D."

While Cole hesitates to pin down her precise fashion style, she effectively articulates the compatibility of clothes and classes. "If a person likes clothes, and is interested in fashion," she says, "teaching at a university is a great job, since students are often creatively fashionable in their own right, and because it gives one a wide latitude for choice."

Clad in a gray wool mini-dress, opaque black tights, and boots, Cole manages a balance of casual and formal. "I like to dress nicely when I teach," she says. "I never wear jeans in the classroom, for instance, though I live in jeans the rest of the time, but I also like to be a bit casual—I never wear suits, either."

Matthew Wallenfang, assistant professor of biological sciences at Barnard, similarly acknowledges that clothes are an important part of his presentation as a professor. "I definitely dress differently on non-teaching days than I do on teaching days," he says. "Today it's jeans and a polo shirt, whereas on teaching days I tend not to wear jeans."

"You can't help but think of how you're being perceived visually by the students when you are on a stage, and there are 190 people there," Wallenfang says. "Self-consciousness is just part of what goes along with, I think, teaching a large intro class [to Molecular and Cellular Biology]. I try not to let it be kind of an overwhelming part of what I'm thinking about, but it certainly does factor in."

Though he does not mind the casual 9 a.m. attire in which students attend his class, Wallenfang maintains the importance of his own appearance to the efficacy of his teaching. "If I were to show up in whatever I rolled out of bed in," he says, "it would convey the sense to the students that it wasn't anything different than what's going on in their dorm room."

Hiromi Noguchi, associate professor in East Asian languages and cultures and a doctoral candidate at Teacher's College, regards the abundance of pajamas as an American phenomenon. "It would never happen in Japan," she says, explaining that in Asia, there is much greater pressure for people, and particularly for women, to dress in a presentable manner.

Cultural influence and her Japanese origin thus play a significant role in Noguchi's own presentation. "I want students to see me as one example of Japanese culture," she says.

In reference to her own carefully chosen outfit, which today consists of a brown-silk skirt and a similarly colored sweater, Noguchi says, "I'm just trying to match the color and look put-together."

Despite the emphasis on trends in both Japan and the United States, Noguchi reports that her style has changed little over the years. "I have more money now than before," she says, laughing, "so rather than Old Navy and Gap, I can go to Banana Republic now, that's all."

"I don't copy people," she says. "I pick clothing whenever I like it." ■

—Additional Reporting by Emily Rauber

art

Rosand-Colored Glasses

How the award-winning professor sees the Renaissance, the Core

BY MERRELL HAMBLETON

There are no uncluttered surfaces in David Rosand's ninth-floor office. Spillover from shelves arranged with art history books and jackets, curling with age and use, have taken over the ample room, filling up the desk space where you'd expect to find a computer.

My first meeting with Professor Rosand, which took place in this room last spring over the topic of a paper on Albrecht Durer, was conducted across dust-gathering stacks of paper and journals. A notebook balanced precariously in my lap, I remember Rosand, hands and legs folded neatly, looking at me matter-of-factly over the rim of his reading glasses.

"How's your German?" he asked, as though inquiring about the weather.

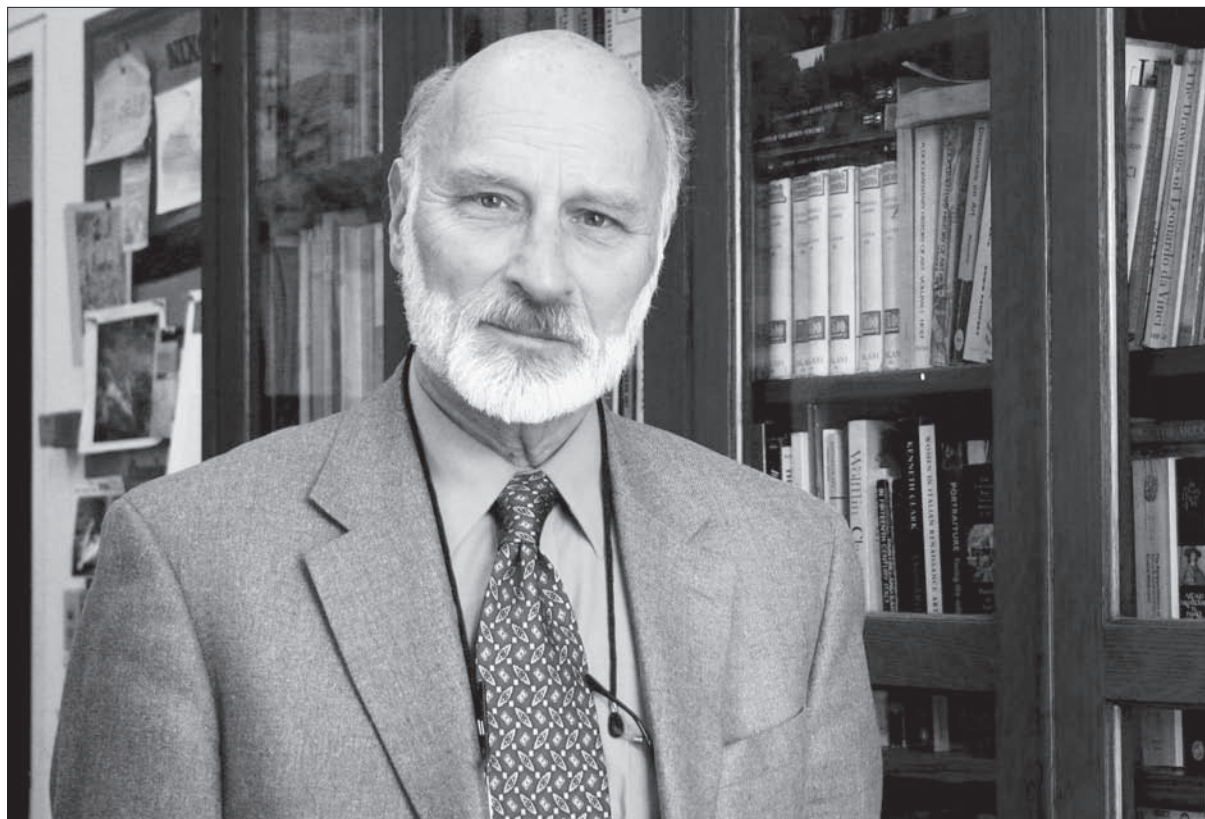
In March, the Renaissance Society of America awarded Rosand the Paul Oskar Kristeller Lifetime Achievement Award for dedication to the study of the Renaissance. In a sense, the award confirms my wide-eyed, underclassman conception of Rosand: the well-read, quick-spoken, unflinchingly bright, Old World-art historian.

Yet this image of Rosand lacks nuance. While the Kristeller award solidifies his position in the succession of notable Renaissance scholars, Rosand's intellectual interests are hardly restricted to pre-1700 Italy.

"When I graduated Columbia College, I wanted to be an abstract expressionist," Rosand says with evident amusement. Realizing his painting wasn't up to scratch with his scholarship, Rosand headed back to Columbia for a Ph.D. in art history. Still, Rosand found himself drawn to modernism—not surprising, given the era.

The late '50s were the heyday of Professor Meyer Schapiro, considered by many to be Columbia's pre-eminent scholar of modern art and whom Rosand, in a recent article, described as a man who "came to personify art history at Columbia and to stand for a particularly American approach to the study of art." Rosand recalls Schapiro lectures where "artists filled the front row—Barnett Newman, Saul Steinberg," to name a few. Rosand speaks eagerly about Leo Castelli's gallery on 77th Street, where in 1958 he saw seminal shows by two young artists, Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. A shift from abstract expressionism to pop art and conceptualism was dramatically changing the art world, and Rosand was witness. With some fellow graduate students, Rosand (who as an undergraduate at the college wrote for the *Jester*) began to write criticism in a self-published journal, *The Second Coming Magazine*.

There is clear nostalgia in Rosand's voice when he speaks of engagement with contemporary art, yet he describes his move to the Renaissance as though it had been



RENAISSANCE MAN PROFESSOR DAVID ROSAND USES HIS BACKGROUND IN MODERN ART TO RECONCEPTUALIZE THE CANON

PHOTO BY TINA GAO

a forgone conclusion. This move began in collaboration with Rudolf Wittkower, who at that time was doing important work on Venetian architecture and with whom Rosand would ultimately do his doctoral work.

As a young scholar, Wittkower had published a two-volume corpus of drawings by Bernini, work that had previously been dismissed as unworthy of serious study. Wittkower's faith in the significance of the line and the artist had a strong impact on the young Rosand, who began to understand a coherent trajectory that could be traced from artists and theorists like Titian and Alberti to Picasso.

Rosand speaks of the Renaissance in sweeping terms, as "a time when the world was being extended by artists." Even more critical than this, Rosand says, is, "the emergence of the understanding of the creative ... and critical power of the line." The Renaissance was simply the most logical place to start.

In many ways, Rosand's commitment to the Renaissance is just that—a starting point. As we talk, it's as if Rosand has taken the theoretical principles expounded by the Renaissance and applied them wholeheartedly to his study of art as a whole.

An incongruous piece of Chinese brushwork that hangs over Rosand's desk is proof of his fascination with the "creative and critical" line. Robert Harrist, professor of Chinese art and current chair of the art history department, describes the introduction to Rosand's book *Drawing Acts*, which deals with drawing in the West, as "one of the best things I've ever read about Chinese painting ... he [Rosand] writes about the power of lines to both define representational forms and to embody the physical act of making a mark on the surface"—elements that Harrist and Rosand understand as essential to

the understanding of painting and drawing.

Rosand's inheritance of Wittkower's broader definition of canonical art extends well beyond the 16th and 17th centuries. He speaks with great admiration of Wittkower's efforts to bring African and Oceanic art into the fold, not just as examples of a marginalized "Other," but as legitimate, aesthetic forms, and calls his mentor "responsible for the new direction of the art history department."

The specter of the Dead White Male has consistently proven a point of conflict between the critics and architects of the Core. One might expect that Rosand, in his enthusiasm for the inherent ties between Western and non-Western art, might fall amongst the critics. Yet when I inquire about Art Humanities, a class that reaffirms the Western canon (and includes the works of only one woman), Rosand offers a stern defense. "It's not a survey," he says. "It's meant to teach students how to talk about art."

According to Rosand's philosophy, this skill should provide a more-than-adequate foundation for learning about all art. As Harrist puts it, "Professor Rosand is able to see how the energy and animation that a Chinese connoisseur appreciates in a brush-drawn line are like those in drawings by Raphael or Rembrandt." Rosand, who was a student of art history at Columbia before there was such a thing as the "feminist" or "multiculturalist" discourse, presumably hopes that Art Hum will provide the analytical background necessary for understanding the expanded art historical canon.

Asked to discuss the state of Renaissance studies in the context of a broadening art historical discipline, Professor Rosand is less quick to defend the subject than anticipated. While he encourages expansion of new departments, he says that there is a degree to which the Italian Renaissance is "fading out."

And yet, "it is a period that needs to be rearticulated, defended," he says. "There are aesthetic reasons for the emergence of Michelangelo and Rembrandt ... Picasso is constantly going back to Rembrandt."

What might be viewed as Rosand's Western orientation is tempered by his active effort to identify common motives in art. The Renaissance may be his point of origin, but Rosand has every desire to see a world extended by art historians. ■

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THE MECCA OF ROCK 'N' ROLL SHOWCASING (ARGUABLY) THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MUSIC ACTS OF THE PAST CENTURY

COURTESY OF DEREK JENSEN

A Lasting Monument to Change

The Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame and Museum rewards innovation while wading in a sea of controversy

BY PARKER FISHEL

On the banks of Lake Erie, a stately glass pyramid rises from the depths of the water glowing with an ethereal veneer. Equal parts memorial and fortress, this holy site, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, designed by architectural guru I.M. Pei, is quite literally a time capsule, documenting the birth and subsequent evolution of rock and roll.

Just what rock 'n' roll is has long been considered a matter of subjectivity. "Rock 'n' Roll is a river of music that has absorbed many streams: rhythm and blues, jazz, rag time, cowboy songs, country songs, folk songs. All have contributed to the Big Beat," Cleveland-area disc jockey Alan Freed says. He should know—he is responsible for coining the phrase "rock and roll" and for inventing the rock concert when he threw "The Moondog Coronation Ball" in 1952.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum aims to "preserve, exhibit and educate the world about the importance of this art form," Terry Stewart, president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, says. The glass pyramid does an excellent job of protecting a variety of artifacts that unite rock 'n' roll past, present, and future in ways that honor and educate the artists.

Inductees into the hall—and memorabilia displayed in it—come from all sides of the musical spectrum, revealing the intangible connections that link even the most disparate corners of rock and roll and honoring their impact on the advancement of the form. Exhibits include everything from Hank Williams' white wool, felt 10-gallon hat to John Lennon's report card to a concert advertisement for a young Chuck Berry.

This year's group of inductees all took after Berry in their endless pursuit of liberating the soul by getting the hips shaking and the body moving through radical redefinition of rock 'n' roll. From punk poet Patti Smith and pop princesses the Ronettes, to '80s guitar gods Van Halen and indie pioneers R.E.M., the 2007 inductees into the Hall of Fame represent

various branches of the rock 'n' roll tree, though the most notable additions to the Hall are hip-hop innovators Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. To Stewart, this honor "validates the continuum we see in this music" because hip-hop merely revises the "instrumentation and melody structure" of rhythm and blues, while providing a contemporary outlook on the subject matter of "black street life."

Another group of street life chroniclers, early punk purveyor the Sex Pistols, were voted into the Hall of Fame this year but rejected the honor. Stewart laments the event as "unfortunate for them and their fans that they missed out on this incredible moment," but refutes the band's claims that the Hall of Fame was just out to make a profit off of them. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is a nonprofit organization, an entity refreshingly free from the corruption that plagues the music industry. While Stewart acknowledges the fact that "the music industry does impact how people make music," he states firmly that the purpose of the Hall of Fame and Museum is "not to have an impact on the industry," but to preserve music.

Yet, the Hall of Fame takes the subjective and presents it as objective, a problem with which all museums or archives are familiar. With limited floor space and a limited number of inductees per year, selection controversy is inevitable.

"When people don't see their artists getting in [to the Hall of Fame], they think there must be something wrong," Stewart says. The museum tries to ease the situation by displaying memorabilia from various types of groups ranging from REO Speedwagon to the Velvet Underground, however the argument is still frequently raised. It is here that the Hall of Fame proves to be an organization of music-lovers rather than a group of businessmen, as inductees are chosen based on their importance on the development of rock 'n' roll, not on the amount of money they've been able to generate for themselves and their record companies.

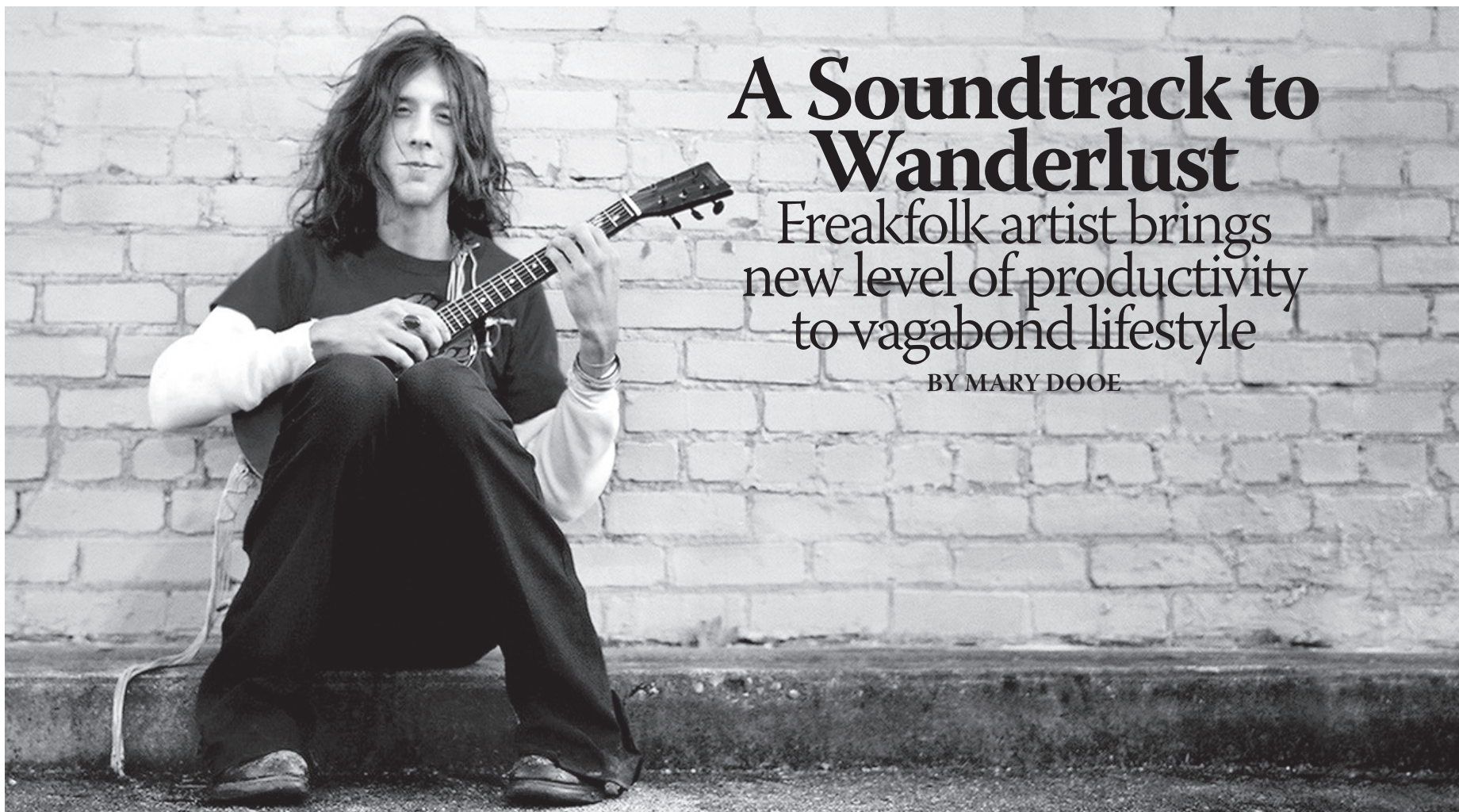
The Hall of Fame recently incurred the public's wrath over the induction of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. The public questioned the induction of the hip-hop pioneers by coupling arguments about the legitimacy of hip-hop with false reports of ballot fixing. During their acceptance speech at the 2007 induction ceremonies, the group acknowledged the influence of rock on their music and called for wider acceptance of hip-hop in the rock world.

"The reaction to it [the controversy] was the same as the reaction to the extension of R&B [into rock 'n' roll]," Stewart says. He elaborates his point by explaining that in such cases, purists are immediately going to be riled, but the exploration of new musical territory is ultimately necessary to revitalize the genre.

The nominating and voting committees for the Hall of Fame have each used this idea of artistic appraisal and reinvention to reorganize their structures in order to get some fresh blood in the selection group.

The induction process for 2007 inductees saw reductions of the size of both the nominating and voting committees, made up of distinguished industry executives, musicians, journalists, and other members of the rock community. According to Stewart, this was done to ensure "a high participatory rate amongst those in the committees," and to make sure that "the demographics were reasonably spread." The changes sought to eliminate any built-in biases that might hurt the induction chances of younger or more explorative groups and to produce a high level of enthusiasm among the remaining members of the committees. With these changes in place, the Hall of Fame looks forward to honoring a wider range of bands as the musicians begin to meet the eligibility criterion of having put out their first record at least 25 years ago.

On their 1969 album *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*, 1991 inductees the Byrds sang, "One hundred years from this day/ will the people still feel this way?" On behalf of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, 1995 inductee Neil Young would like to respond: "Hey hey, my my/ Rock and roll can never die!" ■



A Soundtrack to Wanderlust

Freakfolk artist brings new level of productivity to vagabond lifestyle

BY MARY DOOE

PALEO AKA DAVID STRACKANY WRITING A SONG EVERY DAY, SLEEPING ON FRIENDS' COUCHES EVERY NIGHT

COURTESY OF CARY NORTON

Boy gets girl. Boy becomes disillusioned. Boy loses girl and embarks on a cross-country journey, not really sure what answer he is looking for. (Run Forrest, run)

But this isn't a Tom Hanks movie—it isn't even a teen summer romance: it is the story of Paleo, aka David Strackany, a singer-songwriter who has been inconspicuously traveling the country for the past year.

And unlike Forrest, he actually did set out with a solid goal—to write one song a day for an entire year. What began as a simple concept quickly developed into an intoxicating project, as he and his fans became addicted to the music posted daily on his Web site.

Listening to his songs for the first time, one notices two things: eloquent poetry and an extraordinary range of both stylistic and emotional content on a daily basis, especially considering his limited access to instruments and studio space. Something about this haphazard environment allows for his creativity to fully develop. The simple songs and Web layout make his site truly about the music.

While the words are standouts both on his Web site and within the songs themselves, Strackany isn't an ardent lyricist. Instead the focus on lyrics comes as a result of writing in cramped and often inconvenient places. When he made the commitment to write a song a day no matter what, his musical style "became more about the words out of necessity"—not to mention that having friends lying next to you in a dark basement trying to sleep off their respective hangovers isn't exactly conducive to subwoofers.

Nudged toward music from a young age by his father and two older brothers, Strackany has nonetheless spent most of his own musical career searching for a style of his own.

"I'm not sure of the whole musical influence thing," he says. "Growing up, all my friends kind of listened to the same thing—Marilyn Manson, Nine Inch Nails, Smashing Pumpkins. MTV was picking the music for me and I guess, being an American in the '90s, shaping my aesthetic a lot. I tried to dig through all that stuff in order to shape my own style."

Also implicit in this particular mode of recording and distribution is its connection to recent technologies, especially those of the last few years. Strackany sees his project as one that is not necessarily original and could have been done 10, 20, even 40 years ago.

"Technology has been a big aspect in terms of distributing the music in a timely fashion, but older technologies were available," he says. "A similar proj-

ect could have been done in a different way 15 years ago, and similar projects were in fact done with the same idea behind them." However, the artist's ability to produce is predicated on his constant dependence on a microphone, a computer and the Internet, even while driving across the country. The tone quality and relative ease of transport have made it much easier to get his music out there and "digested."

Rather than tiring of the project, recording a song each day has become a habit that has been grafted onto his identity. When the rest of us wake up craving a bowl of Frosted Flakes, David is ready to write.

"I wake up in the morning and it's the first thing I think about," he says. "After a while you just stop questioning it." Inspiration can come from anything—past loves, shows he books en route, people he meets along the way.

In a world saturated with blogs, rapid-fire newscasts, and reality shows which could in fact not be further from reality, Paleo's site and music are a much needed respite. After a time, the project became even more than therapeutic. "I started to think of this as a novel more than a journal," Strackany says. It is in this way that his music does what pop music is intended to do—it's accessible and descriptive but also open enough for us to attach our own meaning to the songs.

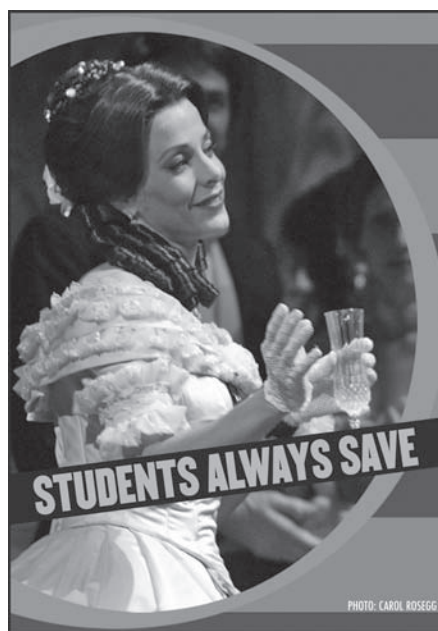
While Strackany reads the occasional review when handed to him, it does little to affect his project. While on the road, he has become so focused and driven that it is hard to think about anything but writing, booking shows, and when he'll come upon the next gas station. In fact, he is still unsure as to the legitimacy of even having critics. "I find more and more I know less and less about what is good music," Strackany says, and "that taste is all relative and that really all that matters is how a song affects an individual."

Every day he gets

e-mails from new people telling him how profoundly the newly uploaded song affected them. As for Strackany himself, he doesn't pick sides, and denounces the idea of a favorite altogether. "I love all the songs, they're like little children ... some are really gifted, but I love them all the same."

While the average person would probably feel a sense of imbalance and detachment as a result of such a journey, it in fact led Strackany to a new kind of structure. In some ways the typical musician, Paleo has for years depended on friends' couches as lodging and has no definite roots in any one place. Dedication to a project like this is stable ground in the life of a musician, which is often without any type of structure or organization. Making such a commitment allowed music to become, according to Strackany, "a type of home without a home, a type of job without a job."

As a natural by-product of such an all-encompassing endeavor, it will be a rather shocking adjustment to end such a project. Though he plans to settle down in Brooklyn after his final show on April 15, it won't be settling in the traditional sense. He will continue his nomadic lifestyle, most certainly free of such conventions as a job and rent. And of course, there will still be songs to write. "This business is incredibly unpredictable. I don't really know what the future has in store. But I think it will work out." Life really is just a box of chocolates, after all. ■



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{ROLLING} the eye

“I Didn’t Count On Falling in Love”

President Bollinger thought he had everything all planned out

BY TIM SHENK



WHEN A MAN LOVES A GROUP OF PEOPLE THEY CAN DO NO WRONG.

PHOTO BY TINA GAO

An intrepid reporter for *The Eye* recently discovered the text of President Bollinger’s planned commencement speech. Or maybe he already saw Bollinger give it because he just came back for the future. Or maybe robots! Space robots! Whatever. Here it is:

When the class of 2007 first set foot on campus four years ago, I thought I knew what to expect. Don’t let the youthful good looks and striking pos-

ture fool you—I’ve been around the being-president-of-a-major-university block a few times. It’s a nice block. There are trees on it. But in all the preparation, there was one thing I didn’t count on.

I didn’t count on falling in love.

It’s hard to explain how you can fall in love with an abstract entity composed of thousands of people. Most basically, how could you have sex? Huh, science guys, explain that to me. How?

But damn it, that’s what I did.

Not the science guys. I didn’t do that. I did the falling in love.

It was love at first sight. As soon as I saw you all at first-year orientation, I began to feel feelings I never felt I could feel before. I think they are best expressed by Bonnie Tyler in her song “Total Eclipse of the Heart.” “Turnaround, Every now and then I know there’s no one in the universe as magical and wondrous as you/ And I need you now tonight/ And I need you more than ever/ And if you’ll only hold me tight/ We’ll be holding on forever.” That says it better than I know how to.

Sure, there were fights. Like the time I was talking about the global university, and I got this crazy look in my eye and asked how much you knew about Africa, then started yelling at you in Chinese to get out of my house. Or the time with the fun run. That got out of hand far too quickly.

But when it was good ... Do you remember all the times at the gym we used to have? I’d be running and I’d see you, and then you’d look away, because you didn’t want me to know that you saw me.

Well, I saw you. And I liked what I saw. ;-)

Oh, you all can’t tell that I have a sexy wink emoticon written here. Well, I do. This is the type of thing I love, how we still keep it fresh after all these years.

Then there were all the pet names we had for each other. You all kept calling me PrezBo, even though it’s not remotely clever and nobody realizes that it was from a Varsity Show from like 10 million years ago. I called you hotpants.

But now, you all are trying to tell me that we won’t be holding on forever. I know what you’re saying is that you want to graduate, but all I’m hearing is I’m too fat.

Listen, collective baby, it doesn’t have to be like this. Think of everything we’ve been through. Remember the time there was the huge graduate student strike three years ago? And remember the other graduate student strike from two years ago that was a lot lamer, but it was still nice that they were trying something? And then remember how everyone just stopped caring the year after? Do you think JP Morgan will give you that? I don’t think so.

You all may be ready to go into the world and sell your youthful idealism for 20 dollars an hour plus time and a half on weekends at the nearest law firm, but I’m not ready to let you go. I’ll do anything to change. Maybe not anything that involves actual changes to substantive policies. But I’ll have more fireside chats. Just you, me, a roaring fire, a bottle of wine, a bearskin rug, and the soulful crooning of Mr. Barry White. Maybe a little massage action. That sounds pretty nice to me.

Don’t leave me now. Not tonight. I need you more than ever. ■

👍 Point/Other Point: Bear or Lion? 👎

BEAR

Fact: Did you know that doctors have identified more than 23 types of bears, not including currently extinct types of bears? Now you know.

Polar bears can grow to over 10 feet long and weigh more than 1,300 pounds. This is the equivalent of a large white car with claws. Polar bears mainly eat seals.

According to the ancient Greeks, bears are the only animals to live in the stars. The story goes that a young maiden bewitched the god Apollo with her golden voice. He pursued her, but at the last minute, she sang a plaintive song begging him to let her go. His hear torn asunder, he

turned her into two bears, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, and flung her into the stars, where she sings to this day. Sound does not carry in outer space.



Since 2000, more than 18 people have been killed by bears, including one 93-year-old woman. She wasn’t even in the woods—the bear broke into her house, like a common gigantic thief.

Legend has it that President Teddy Roosevelt, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, once beat a bear to death with a big stick. Ever since then children across the globe have enjoyed the teddy bear®.

One of history’s best-known bears, Smokey the Bear, was discovered by lovable rescue workers when the entire forest he lived in burned to the ground. For years he helped teach children not to make the same mistake with their own forests. He is currently buried in New Mexico.

On one night in 1967, two different bears located 10 miles apart killed two different 19-year-olds in Glacier National Park. ■

LION

Three of history’s most famous lions are Aslan, Mufasa, and the MGM lion—best known as the lion who roars before Droopy cartoons.

China’s Forbidden City, one of the 10 wealthiest cities in the world, contains many sculptures of lions. Many cultures worldwide believe that lions “consume” evil spirits by eating them.

The lion is the mascot of the Hufflepuff house in the best-selling Harry Potter series. Harry Potter is a member of this house, noted for its history of educating England’s bravest magic guys.

Friedrich Nietzsche—who later got syphilis—ar-

gued that lions, as one of nature’s largest beasts, would ultimately overthrow dominant slave moralities and replace them with overlord moralities.



Between 1990 and 2005, lions attacked more than 500 people in Tanzania alone. Ironically, the famous Tsavo man-eaters, two lions that killed 130 people in 1898, were also located in an African na-

tion: Kenya. These lions suffered from tooth decay.

Disney’s *The Lion King* was for many years the highest-grossing animated film of all time. Over 20 million people see it on Broadway each year.

Unlike most animals, lions are not endangered. If global warming trends continue, however, all lions will die by the year 2008.

Juan Ponce de Leon, whose name translates loosely to “John the Lion-hearted,” was the second European in the New World and the first governor of Puerto Rico. Despite killing many Taino natives, he lost his title when Christopher Columbus’s son Diego Columbus sued the king of Spain. ■



Lai xiao zi (Walking on the Wild Side)
Directed by Han Jie
Starring Lu Jie
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In *The Italian*, a scrappy orphan flees his orphanage, and misadventures ensue. Not to be confused with the awful Brad/Julia vehicle, *The Mexican*.
OPENS FRIDAY



VIVA CUBA RENNY AROZARENA STARS AS THE TITLE SINGER IN *EL BENNY*

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More Than Just Mexico

The Havana Film Festival offers a window to movies, big and small, from across Latin America

BY EMILY RAUBER

While the U.S. Census Bureau may be reporting a rapid growth in the "Hispanic or Latino" population in the United States, the progress of Latin American cinema in this country's theaters is far less visible. In 2006, the only film among the year's 50 highest-grossing movies with a theme even nominally related to Latino culture was *Nacho Libre*, starring the unambiguously gringo Jack Black.

In sharp contrast, this week's Havana Film Festival—the incarnation in New York, not Cuba—seeks to introduce American audiences to new films from and about Latin America, and includes filmmakers and actors that can claim actual Latino heritage, rather than just impersonating it.

Of course, that isn't to say Latin American films were forgotten in the U.S., as 2006 was probably one of their most progressive and successful years—for Mexican directors in particular. *Pan's Labyrinth* (Guillermo del Toro), *Babel* (Alejandro González Iñárritu), and *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuarón) all received Academy Award nominations, in addition to other awards across the international spectrum.

"They all understand how hard it is to make movies—let alone good movies—so they've created a brotherhood," director Luis Mandoki says while promoting his Salvadorian civil-war drama, *Voces Inocentes*. Mandoki noted that in the past, fellowship among Mexican filmmakers was tense and characterized by envy, especially against those who left Mexico to work in the States. Another Mexican filmmaker once threw a drink in his face, saying, "Congratulations on your success in Hollywood, traitor." In such a hostile environment, it was difficult for new filmmakers to overcome the intense competition and focus on the creative and promotional processes. "You need a new mentality for the talent to come out," Mandoki says. "You need to believe in each other."

That mentality is most definitely manifest at the Havana Film Festival, a week-long, enthusiastic celebration of Latin American films at the Quad Cinema in Greenwich Village. While Mexican filmmakers may presently be the most successful group in the U.S., they are outnumbered at the festival by offerings from Cuba, Argentina, Peru, and beyond.

The festival also corrects for some of the mainstream bias of the Latin American films released in the U.S., as

with many foreign and independent productions. "It's not easy bringing Latino cinema to the USA," says Harold Trompetero, the Colombian director of *Dios Los Junta y Ellos se Separan*, which will have its U.S. premiere at the festival next Monday. "People here can only see the mainstream work from Latin America, which is not necessarily representative of our countries."

The dilemma of art versus marketability is particularly important for Latino filmmakers, who must decide whether to film in English or Spanish. While it may seem like an easy decision to make your story in your own native tongue, Spanish-language movies are much more difficult—even impossible—to get distribution and financing for in the U.S. "We got initial offers to finance the movie to do it in English, but I said, 'No, no, it has to be done this way,'" Mandoki says of *Voces Inocentes*. Ultimately though, this decision for the sake of truth and beauty may have severely handicapped the film's chances for screenings in the States. "As many distribution companies as there are in this country," Mandoki says, "that's how many times we got turned down."

The language gamble does, occasionally, pay off. Robert Rodriguez, who was born in Texas to Mexican parents, chose to make his first feature, *El Mariachi*, in Spanish. The film caught on, ultimately reaching the Sundance Film Festival and securing Rodriguez a studio contract. Although the film's success can't be entirely attributed to its language, it was certainly an important factor. It bridged two diverse demographics by combining elements of foreign films with action, which made it equally appealing to internationally-minded hipsters as well as violent teenage boys.

Though we may know Latin American cinema through Best Foreign Film nominees and works by Latino directors in English, these represent only a fraction of the work being produced on the rest of the American continent. And while a single film festival can't possibly give exposure to every good film, it can introduce the country to a few new filmmakers—and perhaps, as Trompetero hopes, "open a window on Latino cinema."

The Havana Film Festival starts tomorrow with an opening night gala, featuring the premiere of Jorge Luis Sánchez's *El Benny*. The festival continues through April 19 at various theaters throughout the city. ■

Front of the Queue

As an accountant in the West Village, Will Thompson, CPA, probably won't get a day off until taxes are due on April 17. But afterwards, he's looking forward to catching up on what he missed during his busiest working time. Here are the next five movies he plans to see:

- 1 *The Departed*—"I've been meaning to see it since it won all those Oscars."
- 2 *Meet the Robinsons*—"I'll probably take my sons to that animated one with the T. rex."
- 3 *Wall Street*—"Gordon Gekko isn't the best role model, but it's a good movie about money."
- 4 *Back to the Future*—"One of my favorites. I've been meaning to make my sons watch it."
- 5 *Grindhouse*—"Did that come out already?"

—By Emily Rauber

DOUBLE DVD FEATURE

- ☒ *Bobby* (2006)
- ☒ *The Graduate* (1967)



With graduation quickly approaching, the looming specter of life in the real world leaves most of us feeling depressed and anxious. Allow yourself to be transported back to a simpler, more exciting time—the '60s—because nothing sends the blues packing quite like a dose of the Age of Aquarius. Newly released on DVD is Emilio Estevez's stylized interpretation of the era, *Bobby*, which is filled to the brim with almost every nostalgic point of interest imaginable and cameos by most of Hollywood. After you've watched your favorite stars romp about in this modern recreation, it's time to watch Mike Nichols' canonized masterpiece, *The Graduate*. This ground-breaking film is ripe with the elements of a social commentary, like *Bobby*, and manages to keep its biting political ideas balanced with its even sharper humor. Dustin Hoffman became the poster child for his generation through his brilliant portrayal of newly graduated Benjamin Braddock, while Anne Bancroft became the object of every teen fantasy as the seductive Mrs. Robinson. There is no doubt that Benjamin's scandalous, fast-paced lifestyle will leave you with a new outlook on just how exciting post-grad life can be. —By Jacqueline Lang

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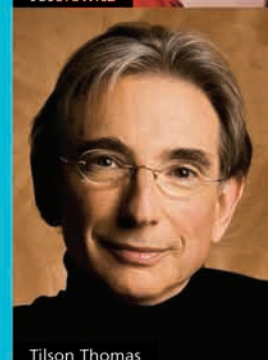
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