



the
eye

THE FASHION
WEEK ISSUE



RUDY GIULIANI'S FAVORITE NUMBER • IN NACHO'S RUINS • OUR OFFICE
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07-10

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Cathy Horyn, the *New York Times*' chief fashion critic, knows the value of subjectivity. She's the rare editor who uses her personal voice to critique the collections of designers whose dinners she later attends—and blogs via BlackBerry. Recently, she has added other voices to her blog, most notoriously the precociously monikered “L’Autre,” who posts about pop topics in a decidedly academic manner.

In a recent post, L’Autre traced correspondences in Jonathan Demme’s *The Silence of the Lambs*, the turbulent, truculent Imitation of Christ show for Spring/Summer 2002, and a new video shot by Marcelo Kraslicic for Kai Kuhne’s upstart label *Myself*, featuring Chloe Sevigny. (YouTube that later.) In a 7,000-word critical analysis, L’Autre claims, “we’re not losing the private sphere, we’re losing the public sphere.”

Horyn is dealing with privacy at a meta level. The Weblog is a log—a literal trail of where one has been. Though the editing function undoes much of its impact, the semiotic significance remains: this is a personal entry, a node in a Web-like system.

Is there any more blurring of public and private than the undergraduate college experience? Logistically, there’s the dormitory, a place

where people down the hall can hear you having intercourse, where everyone’s excretions are recorded on an improperly flushing toilet.

Then there’s the identity on campus. With a controlled number of people sharing campus space, beyond the range of friendship but not necessarily beyond recognition, the campus becomes a network of codes, among which clothing is of high priority. Beware: classroom etiquette is another. One of my good friends (now on staff) said she was interested in meeting me for my “triangle-shaped hair.”

And so we justify our renewed interest in Fashion Week. Twice a year, editors, buyers, tourists, and wannabes descend upon Bryant Park, where American designers present their visions for the coming season. It is also, L’Autre says, a process of identity-building. In the Kuhne video, Sevigny presents and re-presents herself to the camera, which assumes the position of a mirror. Her vision of herself—she, Chloe Sevigny!—is nonetheless mediated by and contingent upon you (me!), the viewer.

And so, increasingly, given a culture where perfection and entitlement rule, “someone’s work

truly is for all, and has its own autonomy, never fully reducible to the private.”

And so every time we turn to the mirror, we put on something new, we expend abstract credit for a new suit or dress, we reposition ourselves something new. Writing this letter, I re-present myself new.

Last week I extolled the catharsis back to school. Actually, this week was it. On top of New York Fashion Week, Chelsea’s galleries re-opened. Blow on your shofar, because it’s Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, time of re-birth.

Moreover, it’s the second week of school, when people “stop being polite, and start getting real.” And so that public space - those perfectly laid out sweater sets: give way to entropy, and sweatpants.

Alex Gartenfeld

Cover Art By Milano Chowkwanyun

EYE TO EYE: SARA DAVIS INTERVIEWS LOCAL CHEFS



DEDE LAHMAN AND NEIL KLEINBERG MET AUSPICIOUSLY AT A RESTAURANT, the West Village's A Salt and Battery. Seven years of marriage, two fights, and one baby later, the husband and wife team is opening up Community Food & Juice in the space formerly known as Nacho's Kitchen, formerly known as Nacho Mama's. Met with success at their downtown endeavor, Clinton St. Baking Company, Neil and DeDe hope to envelop Morningside Heights in a warm embrace of fresh local produce, community-minded atmosphere, and general good cheer. Community F & J opens in October.

What is the concept for Community F & J?

DEDE: The concept is a simple, American-eclectic neighborhood restaurant and juice bar with seasonal, local ingredients—organic whenever possible. We want it to be a place that you can eat at more than once a week, like you could come for every meal and really be comfortable.

NEIL: Fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, very comforting breakfasts, excellent lunches with a big emphasis on salads. At dinner we'll have homemade soups and really great meats that are locally raised in Vermont.

DEDE: We'll have a steak of the day, a fish of the day, and we're going to do a signature dish which is a rice bowl—it actually doesn't sound as good as it is—rice with julienned vegetables, almost Vietnamese in flavor, with diced peanuts, marinated pickled vegetables and your choice of barbecued short ribs, chicken, salmon, or tofu.

How do you break down your respective duties?

NEIL: She tells me exactly what to do, when to do it, and how to do it, and then I try to follow her instructions and do it.

DEDE: I do a lot of the front of the house and Neil runs the back of the house, but we do all the menus together. And we have a wonderful amazing chef, Manny Perez, he worked at Le Bernardin for three-and-a-half years, and he's fantastic. We're really excited to have him.

So how about in your regular, non-restaurant lives, what kinds of things do you eat?

NEIL: Since May we've been doing Fit for Life in the morning as best as we can.

What's that?

NEIL: It's all juices and fruits and vegetables in the morning up until noon.

DEDE: It's kind of like a very '80s program, but we really like the philosophy. We're not hard core strict about it.

NEIL: But we have a juicer, and we juice every morning. And the only juice that I'm allowed to make is Dede's concoction, which is apple, carrot, and orange.

DEDE: Our baby drinks it too.

NEIL: She drinks it without orange juice because it's too acidic.

DEDE: Other than that, Neil cooks a lot of delicious foods and when we're not in a fight I'm really happy about what he makes.

What?

NEIL: We're in a fight right now.

Oh! Why?

DEDE: It was a work-related spat.

NEIL: Could you tell?

No! Not at all!

DEDE: That's part of our whole thing—we're really good at fighting, 'cause it's hard for couples to work together. So we fight, and then we move on from it. We're both really passionate about what we do.

What were you guys like in college?

NEIL: I was a poor student in high school, and then I found culinary school in Brooklyn and became a straight-A student. So I kind of found my calling at 17. I was a truant and cut class and barely graduated from high school then I just like ... found it. It became my love, my labor of love.

What's your favorite thing to cook?

NEIL: I like to cook fish, seafood, and shrimp. And I make a great sandwich—I'm like the master of the sandwich.

DEDE: Everything he makes is amazing.

What's your favorite thing that he makes?

DEDE: He makes these amazing maple glazed carrots. And we are serving them at the restaurant. I mean, he's famous in the city for his pancakes, but he also makes great everything from foie gras to bacon and eggs.

Neil, what's your favorite thing that Dede makes?

NEIL: Reservations. No—Dede makes a good—her roast chicken is good. She makes a good hummus, when she's ... I don't know ... well, she made a good hummus once.

DEDE: What about my dressing?

NEIL: She makes a really good dressing. Really good sauces. And she makes a great lemon pasta.

DEDE: It's my signature dish.

NEIL: I gotta say—it's great. And she twirls it with the tongs like 400 times ... she loves to keep mixing it. But it's excellent: it's anchovies, garlic, capers, parsley, olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest cooked with pasta. It's really good.

What were you [DeDe] like in college?

DEDE: I was a hard core smoker. I was really unhealthy: I smoked like two packs a day and every day for breakfast I had a Tab and a Snickers bar.

How did you meet?

DEDE: We met in a restaurant. We met as random patrons at A Salt & Battery on Greenwich Ave. We just started talking to each other.

Who started talking to whom?

NEIL: I started talking to her.

DEDE: So we were talking, and I really liked him.

NEIL: She thought I was gay.

DEDE: I did think he was gay because it was the West Village, and he was so friendly. And then I saw him a few weeks later at the video store. We were both friends with the owners. And they said, "Oh yeah, he's the chef across the street." And then it turned out that the video store and Neil's place were having a joint Christmas party. And we were together from that moment on, and then we married 10 months later.

NEIL: And we haven't been apart in seven years for more than for one night.

DEDE: Well, we've been apart two nights.

NEIL: What two nights were those?

DEDE: We had two fights.

Really? One of you never goes away?

DEDE: We live together and work together and where are we gonna go? We want to go away together!

When do you open?

DEDE: Beginning of October. We're very excited. We hope that the community embraces us as much as we have embraced them because that would be really sucky if we love them and they don't love us!

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEDE LAHMAN AND NEIL KLEINBERG

URBANITIES THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FUNDAMENTALISM

BY MIKAELA BRADBURY
PHOTO BY TINA GAO



MARK LILLA LIKES TO BEGIN A semester with a book that puzzles him as much as it does his students—a work that he has perhaps read only once and will devour slowly and thoroughly with his class. It's a process of "slow reading ... much like the Slow Food movement," he adds as an aside. This may come as a surprise from the newly appointed professor of humanities and religion, who teaches a Lit Hum section to first-years, a core class typically known for its drive-through version of the Western canon. "It's the Chicago method," he concedes. One that he hopes will bring "magic" to the classroom.

By the "Chicago method," Lilla is presumably referring to his time spent at the University of Chicago, where he worked most recently in the Committee on

Social Thought. This only begins an impressive list of the institutions with which he has been affiliated. Lilla went to school at the University of Michigan, and in 1990 received his PhD from Harvard. He then went on to work at NYU and Oxford University, later moving on to the University of Chicago, and then finally coming here to Columbia, which is exciting, not least because of the ideas he brings with him. As the faculty biography succinctly explains, Lilla's "central concerns have been the relation between religion and politics and the legacy of the modern Western enlightenment."

And he has made most of these ideas public. He is a regular contributor to the *New York Times*, *New York Times Book Review* and the *New York Times Magazine*.

If you search his name on the Web site, the results are too numerous to sift through.

Magic has in some form popped up throughout Lilla's career—magic and miracles. In his 2005 essay, "Getting Religion," Lilla speaks of his teenage years with a Catholic Pentecostal group, praying in tongues and reveling in ecstatic communion. Above all, Lilla recalls encountering a "power and comfort I was never to feel again," which prompted him to suggest that the divine is often sought simply "out of joy and gratitude for what seem like miracles." Today, it seems that Lilla no longer attributes the ecstasy of communion to a divine creator per se, but he still strongly suggests that we come to understand how one could.

He outlines that path to understanding in his most recent cover article in the *New York Times Magazine*, titled "The Politics of God." In it, Lilla traces the contest between Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment thinkers over political theocracy in order to better understand how a religious world view, or rather the need for one, could arise. That becomes more clear and immediate when put into the current world context. For Lilla, the modern conflict between Western Secularism and Islamic Fundamentalism necessitates a consideration of our own history, meaning that the history of the West itself might explain the need for fundamentalism. He says, "if we can hear political theology speaking in a more recognizable tongue, represented by people in familiar dress with familiar names, perhaps then we can remind ourselves how the world looks from its perspective".

Lilla goes on to explore the trajectory and logic of political theology in the West, starting in its initial phases during the Middle Ages to a counter-Enlightenment presence. He stresses that idea of a counter-Enlightenment, and claims it was born out of a certain "yearning" and "nostalgia" that has lasted up until the 20th century.

It is difficult to get to the roots of Lilla's ideas without mentioning other names. He references Hobbes and Rousseau, who, as he explains in the article, shifted the attention away from "God's politics," to "men as believers in God," inciting skepticism of the divine authority of God and promulgating instead what is

now our familiar liberal democratic order. He explains that the "children of Hobbes" became the founders of modern liberal democracy while the "children of Rousseau" still retained hope in morally justified and rational faith informing politics, which they saw as the expression of man's "natural goodness."

Lilla further develops these ideas in his new book, which significantly (if perhaps coincidentally) came out two days ago, on Sept. 11, the day liberal democracy and theology famously and violently clashed. The title, *The Stillborn God*, alludes to his idea that the liberal theology of Rousseau's children has essentially failed and has delivered a "Stillborn God ... unable to inspire genuine conviction among a younger generation seeking ultimate truth," with a "thirst for redemption" and for a "direct relation with the divine." This has left a void and desire for a more robust faith. The rest of the story—the reemergence of fundamentalism and political theology in the Modern West—is, as we can probably say, history.

The final and perhaps most important point, is that after considering that history of Western political theocracy, it becomes increasingly difficult to point a finger at Islamic fundamentalists as so radically Other. As Lilla points out, given the "messianic energy" of America's political rhetoric and the proliferation of faiths across the nation, such as those that Lilla himself participated in during his own student days, it is a "miracle" that America has managed to keep religion and politics separate.

That separation is of course debatable. Christopher Hitchens, famed atheist-about-town, points out in an article responding to Lilla, that there were many "dress rehearsals" before America's relative success in the matter. He also claims that there has been more progress than Lilla gives us credit for. Either way, at least we are now examining that progress, globally and perhaps, individually. As Columbia students, is the "magic" of classroom debate, the semi-conviction in semi-truths, the mediated connection with ourselves and our peers, enough? And if not, can we begin to understand why fundamentalism may be an attractive option?

ALL NATURAL, ALL LOCAL

BY DENA YAGO

PHOTOS BY DIANE BOTTA



MANY COLUMBIA STUDENTS CAN DRINK kombucha without even flinching. It is no surprise then that one of the 44 New York Greenmarkets is located on Broadway between 114th and 115th Streets, directly outside the main gates of Columbia's campus. The year-round farmers' market, held on Thursdays and Sundays, attracts both students and faculty, and tugs at the consciences of the environmentally and socially active student body. Fresh produce in general is hard to come by in Manhattan, especially for students on a meal plan. The main appeal of shopping at farmers' markets for most students is the personal benefit of eating fresh and (as many mistakenly assume) organic produce.

Organic—that ubiquitous buzzword—is a driving force for Greenmarket shoppers, though they are misguided in presuming that is what they are buying. The counterculture mentality of the modern health movement, which has been popularly translated as simply eating “organic” food, has seen something of a reversal. Becoming organic is in fact about as “establishment” as a farm can get.

Margaret Hoffman, the Greenmarket manager, explains that the USDA requirements for organic certification dictate that there are no chemical or hormone additives. That method of farming is far too expensive and time-consuming for local farmers. The standards for certification have also been compromised, Hoffman adds, so that larger companies such as Horizon Organic can more easily market their products. Horizon, the largest organic dairy provider in the United States, was actually boycotted in 2006 for overgrazing cows and not complying with the standards of certification. The “organic” label, however, didn't change.

The method that is more manageable for most of the farmers local to the New York area is “all-natural.” All-natural farming allows for the use of chemical pesticides

but still adheres to the standards of purity that larger produce and dairy farms overlook.

The two largest farms at Greenmarket's Columbia location, Stannard Farms and Samascott Orchards, also carry heirloom produce—yet another alternative to organic. Popularized by the recent heirloom tomato fad, the hands-off process of farming leaves the produce to grow without breeding or handling until harvesting. Heirloom is by far the most temperamental of methods, but because of high demand and high prices, it is also the most profitable.

Ironically, the organic movement has actually threatened many non-organic local farmers. It often relies on misconceptions of what environmentally efficient organic farming is in practice. For example, one can purchase organic produce from more fertile lands on the West Coast or overseas, but the migrant labor and fossil fuels expended for harvesting and transportation might actually negate the benefits of a chemical-free planting environment. Think back 60 years ago to the banana wars or 30 years ago to Bananagate. What would have happened if Americans shopped locally? All of the produce at the farmers' market has been transported for only the few hours that it takes to drive from many of the farms in New York and the surrounding area, CIA-intervention-free.

Unlike many organic farms, which harvest their produce early so that it ripens in transit, the all-natural local farmers pick their fruits at their naturally ripened state and travel a median 90 miles from farm to city. The only form of storage preservation is in the winter. In the colder months, produce like apples, pears, and potatoes are kept in dry, locked vaults. This method, which is aptly called bolt storage, is necessary for an all-year farmers' market because of the limited variety of winter seasonal produce.

Though primarily a produce market, the Greenmarket also sells turkey, fish, and cheese. This raises the ques-

tion of how clean or fresh the meat is, and whether this is a situation in which prepackaged grocery-store meat is actually a wiser choice. With only a few hours of refrigerated travel from farm to city, one can be assured that this meat is far less susceptible to attracting bacteria than the chilled neighborhood grocery. Hoffman assures that customers can also rest easy knowing that the animals are not penned or fed hormones.

Along with the meat, Millport Dairy sells cheese and Stannard Farms sells wool. The use of animal products other than meat displays a sense of sustainable accountability that is not apparent in larger meat-slaughter companies.

If there is any lingering distrust in non-organic meat or produce, there still remains perhaps the strongest argument for buying Greenmarket products: to support local farmers. The council on the environment for the city of New York organizes Greenmarket, and the two main mission goals of Greenmarket, as market manager Hoffman says, are to bring fresh produce into the city and to preserve small local farms. At the end of the day, most farmers donate their food to City Harvest. Unlike larger grocery providers, buying from Greenmarket ensures that around 70 to 80 percent of every dollar earned is returned to the farmer. The benefit of shopping at the farmers' market isn't necessarily just in buying unmodified fresh food. It is in maintaining locality, which is not at all ensured by the larger markets, riding on the wave of the organic craze.

HUMOR

STEADFAST RUDY

GIULIANI REFUSES TO LEAVE GROUND ZERO

RUDOLPH W. GIULIANI

confirmed today what many analysts have suspected for months: the former New York mayor will not leave the World Trade Center site for the remainder of his presidential campaign.

“I’ve said for months that this is a one-issue election,” Giuliani says. “Well, now it’s a one-location election as well.”

The move marks a crucial change in strategy for Giuliani. Until now he has coupled his steadfast emphasis on the collapse of the World Trade Center with a physical presence in other places. Nonetheless, top aides have stated that Giuliani’s frequent calls for “a return to the lessons of Sept. 11” were always more than they seemed.

“He’d get that look in his eye and we all knew,” campaign manager Michael DuHaime says. “It was only a matter of time before he literally returned to the site of his greatest triumph.”

Analysts first began to suspect Giuliani’s latest move three days ago, when he formed an exploratory committee to park an RV near the ruins of the south tower. Some say that he may have been inspired in part by a recent poll showing that a majority of Americans place the image of Giuliani on the rubble of the twin towers in the “somewhat iconic” to “iconic” range.

“The numbers don’t lie,” Giuliani

says. “My approval ratings soared when those towers fell. It would be a mistake to forget the lessons we all learned on that day.”

Giuliani says that more time at the site of the Sept. 11 attacks will enable him to further widen the gap between his own knowledge of global terrorism and that of his opponents. DuHaime adds that Giuliani will be able to “stay as worldly and internationally experienced as he has ever been.”

So far Giuliani has spent much of his time at the site issuing challenges to the other Republican candidates.

“Where are you, McCain?” Giuliani asks, standing near the fence surrounding the site. “Couldn’t be bothered? Our national sorrow just not important enough to fit your schedule?” He adds, “I see how it is.”

Early polling data indicates that voter approval of Giuliani has soared since he left the presence of the voters. In Iowa alone his approval rating appears to have jumped from 36 percent to 79 percent in a single day.

“Ah yes, I remember now,” Iowa native Bess Conklin says. “He really gets it.”

For his part, Giuliani has vowed commitment to remaining on message.

“I’ve been there,” he says, “And I’m still there today. We must meet our future looking squarely into the past.”

WRITTEN BY J.D. PORTER



GRAPHIC COURTESY J.D. PORTER

SAYING SORRY

FAMOUS POLITICAL APOLOGIES

BY RAPHAEL POPE-SUSSMAN

RECENT REVELATIONS HAVE SHED

light on the dirty secrets of Washington. Scandal, though, has always been a part of government. And since we have had scandal, we have had excuses. Here are some of the most famous Beltway excuses in times gone by.

1856: PRESTON BROOKS

Maligned for: Beating Senator Charles Sumner to within an inch of his life with gold-tipped cane.

Explanation: “Piece of shit piñata!”

1860: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Maligned for: Civil War

Explanation: South left flaming bag of shit on log cabin doorstep.

1901: WILLIAM MCKINLEY

Maligned for: Failure to complete term of office.

Explanation: Multiple bullets lodged in brain.

1923: WARREN G. HARDING

Maligned for: Sucking.

Explanation: “I am not fit for this office.” (Actual quote)

1972: RICHARD NIXON

Maligned for: Watergate

Explanation: Controlled by aliens and/or worldwide Jewish banking conspiracy.

1979: JIMMY CARTER

Maligned for: Iranian hostage crisis

Explanation: Peanut farming not the best preparation for the presidency.

1987: RONALD REAGAN

Maligned for: Iran-Contra

Explanation: What did Iran ever do to America?

1998: BILL CLINTON

Maligned for: Monica Lewinsky

Explanation: “This job is so hard ... That’s what she said!”

2006: GEORGE W. BUSH

Maligned for: Leading the country into a hellhole quagmire of a war with series of calculated lies and fabricated evidence.

Explanation: Saddam had rape rooms! Rape rooms!

A fashion magazine cover featuring a row of young men sitting. The man in the foreground wears a dark jacket and glasses. The man next to him wears a shiny black leather jacket and glasses. The man in the red suit is looking forward. The text "FASHION WEEK SPRING 2008" is overlaid on the left side. At the bottom, it says "COVER BY JOEY SHEMUEL · PHOTOS BY NICOLE FRIEDMAN, TINA GAO, & DANIELLA ZALCMAN".

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BADGLEY MISCHKA



ERIN FETHERSTON

'70S EROTICA IS BACK FOR SPRING BY MOIRA LYNCH

Not surprisingly, the '70s are in for spring. Cynthia Rowley aimed for a '70s-French-Sportif style, which meant swingy jackets over long dresses or wide-legged pants, a look that was seen on many runways during fashion week. And not one but two designers mentioned the glamorous and erotic French photographer Guy Bourdin as a major inspiration.

J. Mendel was the first to cite him, though his collection had much more of a light, disco feel than one of charged sexuality. Bourdin's influence was more evident in Derek Lam's collection, with chic, flowy pieces in dark-gold lame, satins, and animal printed chiffons. Sue Stemp showed a more bohemian lady-of-the-'70s with long dresses, big jackets and wide-legged pants. The colors were muted, and the materials were soft, light, and often silky or printed. So break out that bodysuit and some glitter paint and be sassy.



THUY



TWINKLE

TREND BREAKDOWN: FULL SKIRTS, BABIES, AND NEON FOR SPRING BY XIYIN TANG

It's been a crazy week.

Gwen Stefani brought Kingston to the L.A.M.B. show, proving that even the most jaded of fashionistas will still coo at the sight of a baby, at least when it's the offspring of music and fashion icons. Nicky Hilton debuted her collection to the standing ovation of fans like Russell Simmons and Arden Wohl, and, well ... the beloved babydoll dress and bubble silhouette of seasons past were finally blown a goodbye kiss.

"Something has to be very comfortable and more body conscious," Israeli designer Yigal Azrouel says of his surf-happy spring collection. He was one of the first to abandon the infamous tent dress last Wednesday, replacing it instead with tightly-woven bamboo wrap dresses and body-hugging jersey. "I took [the collection] to a place that was very neutral, very rustic," he says.

Neutral did seem to be a theme of the week, as everyone from Richard Chai to Rag & Bone turned out dresses, minis, trenches, and slim pants in varying shades of cream with metallic accents to finish. It was, perhaps, spring's minimalist answer to fall's similarly grown-up, gray aesthetic.

But lest we think spring fashion has become somber and dull, there was plenty of neon and Day-Glo to balance it all out, from blue hair at Marc Jacobs to highlighter-yellow jackets at Diesel. Everyone's favorite club kid, Agyness Deyn, wore it best at Anna Sui, in a

shocking striped red dress with pink hair to match.

Though the influence of menswear still prevails—this time in daring, deconstructed, tuxedo-like dresses ala Alexandre Herchcovitch and more conventional lightweight trousers at DKNY—my favorite trends of the week were the full skirts that ballooned down the runways—Thakoon's was punchy in pink, while even Nicky Hilton surprised with a little black number flouncy enough for the biggest party girls.

Of course, no summer jaunt to St. Tropez would be complete without the perfect beach hat, and whether they were bucket hats at MaxAzria or the wide-brimmed sun hats—some cleverly cinched in the back for a new silhouette—that popped up at Tracy Reese and Yigal Azrouel, they were summer's answer to winter's oversized beret.

But my favorite collection of the season had to come from no other than 23-year-old Alexander Wang, whose roomy shorts, tiny menswear dresses with hidden pockets, skinny belts, and slouchy button-downs were so simple, so pristinely tailored, and so chic—perfect for a summer getaway, a balmy New York roof-top, or even a breezy Sunday brunch. And really, that's what summer is all about, isn't it? Sure makes waiting through the winter months that much harder.

WE LOVED CHRIS BENZ BY MOIRA LYNCH

The time Chris Benz spent interning for Marc Jacobs and designing dresses for J. Crew is evident in his namesake line's easy, casual sensibility.

Last fall, his models were nerdy chic, wearing quadruple breasted blazers, thick glasses, and oxfords. This spring, he is showing clothing for a more sophisticated woman, but one who's not afraid to have a little bit of fun. He hits one of the key trends this season with luxe clothes that synthesize elements of the French Riviera with '30s chic.

The models were grouped into "tableau vivants," separated by the vibrant colors that made up the collection—ranging from apricot, coral, pink, and beige to light greens, yellows and chartreuse to turquoise, green, and navy.

The collection is not bogged down in its referents, however, as Benz's expert color pairings and layering of textures gives the clothes a decidedly modern feel. There are slouchy jackets and vests, shown over silky dresses or paired with wide-leg pants and slip dresses that touch the floor. Accessorized with raffia sun hats, chiffon scarves, and colored sunglasses, Benz's clothing is undoubtedly the mark of an emerging talent who has finally arrived.



RAG & BONE

THE NEWCOMER: REBECCA TAYLOR BY RACHEL WEISS

Rebecca Taylor may not have the same experience or multi-decade loyalty as some other designers under the hallowed Bryant Park tents, but she certainly has garnered an ardent following. Known for her flirty, structured pieces, Taylor’s brand is gaining momentum among editors and celebrities (including Reese Witherspoon and Cameron Diaz), as well as the sleek and stylish girls about town.

On the day of her runway show, Taylor, a self-proclaimed “pants girl,” sported dark skinny jeans with towering heels and a body-skimming gray silk shirt.

“This collection is one of the closest collections to the way I actually dress,” Taylor says. She tried to design clothes that have the ease of “wearing a T-shirt.” After working hard to lose her baby weight after carrying twins, the designer was “ready to show her body again” with a “closer—but not tight—silhouette.”

Her spring collection does just that, as Taylor sends sequined pencil skirts, dresses with tightly belted waists, and lingerie-inspired tops down the runway. Ruffle details and ethereal chiffons walk alongside embellished cardigans and calf-length skirts.

She is ready for a change in proportion—for the past couple of seasons “women have been swathed in fabric like they’re blobs.” By integrating a “clean, defined shoulder” into the collection, Taylor streamlines her more voluminous looks, while fuchsias, blues, and charcoals popped against the clean cuts. Pleased with the resurgence of the defined waistline, Taylor nips in her models’ waist with belts in a bevy of fabrics and widths.

In the future, Taylor wants to expand into a “lifestyle brand,” citing Vera Wang’s perfume line as an ideal example. She hopes to incorporate shoes and bags as well as perfume—a hope that she admits is something “a lot of designers say.” But should we expect a Kohl’s collaboration and a burgeoning line of accessories in the future? As Taylor appropriately says of the strange and fickle world of fashion, “never say never.”

WE LOVED... ZAC POSEN BY SHIRLEY CHEN

For Spring 2008, Zac Posen makes wheat look beautiful. Inspired by the early American settlers, Posen transformed the Great Plains and *Days of Heaven*, a film from Terrence Malick, into intricate, sophisticated pieces.

There are a number of classic black-and-white pantsuit pieces with his famous rigorous structuring and ruffling details. But what really inspires excitement is a champagne-colored dress that can only be described as an enchanting and surprisingly flattering wheat bundle.

Accessory wise, there were flirtatious straw hats and jewel-studded caps reminiscent of the early West. The highlight of the collection, however, are the gowns—in red, canary, champagne, cobalt, and black, elaborate and dream-like—without being gaudy. The show ended with Posen’s interpretation of romance and clouds with five billowing creations of white and blue. To be honest, we prefer the simplest cocktail-length version, as opposed to the six-foot train and voluminous masses of the other four. Posen is too talented a designer to resort to such flashy displays.



HEATHERETTE



MARC BOUWER

WE LOVED... BENJAMIN CHO BY XIYIN TANG

Smiths lover and Parsons drop-out Benjamin Cho doesn’t exactly follow trends—he defies them, whether it’s with morbidly humorous detached hands or floor-sweeping zippers. And he has the clientele to back it up: Chloe Sevigny, Arden Wohl, Cory Kennedy, and the asymmetrical-coiffed Misshapes are all die-hards and front-row regulars.

Cho continues to dazzle this time around with elaborate arts-and-crafts-type play, from dresses cut-out in the back and front like crepe paper—or a Chinese paper lantern—to twisted and woven rope threading in and out between soft satin, and a standout, bold-fuschia top folded like an origami flower to reveal a bare back. Simple dresses with an open chest or back revealed dreamweaver-like pieces of rock and shell embedded in a mess of rope, while other minis got a boost from ribbon wrapped around the waist like a cleverly packaged gift.

While it all may sound terribly conceptual, girls like Sevigny certainly won’t shy away from wearing it, thanks in small part to Cho’s smart color-coordination—a minimalist reduction of blacks and whites with pops of fuschia, royal blue, and some dazzling gold stripes. And if you’re not an indie tastemaker or a party-hopping hipster, pick up a pair of his always sleek and stylish black satin pants. They’re pretty much tapered and tailored to perfection, just like the rest of his collection.



ZAC POSEN

THE RETURN OF AMERICAN MENSWEAR



EAST COAST COOL BY JAMES DEWILLE

Before the chaotic opening of Olympus Fashion Week this year at Bryant Park, Nautica's new creative director, Mirian Lamberth is, well, a sea of calm.

Looking poised in a button-down shirt with neck scarf to match, Lamberth says she is excited not only to be christening the tents this year, but also to be taking Nautica's creative helm and setting a new course.

This direction reflects both a return to the company's roots—appropriate, given its 25th year anniversary this year—as well as a step forward creatively. Lamberth feels she must first “reconnect, then move forward.”

For upcoming Nautica collections, this means a deeper exploration of the brand's rich heritage of nautical themes, seaside-resort wear, as well as a shift towards more modern, uncharted waters.

Lamberth credits a skilled team of designers for bringing together the spring collection that evokes the style and class of warm St. Tropez holidays and Hamptons yacht parties. She sees a resurgence of this sort of preppy style with “men all over the city walking around with their collars flipped-up,” blazers, shorts, and striped tees, and she explains that the brand plans to integrate a sense of seaside-bound class into every look. For example, she plans to pair swimsuits with formal wear.

A love of sailing permeates the collection not only in palette and style, but tone was well. The look is poised and casually elegant.

While some may view Nautica's East Coast prep as privileged, stuffy, or even elitist, Lamberth is sure the appeal will be universal, saying “you only have to look like you could go St. Tropez someday.” And, after all, who wouldn't that?

WE LOVED TIM HAMILTON BY ALEX GARTENFELD

Spring 2008 might go down as the season of American menswear, but until Sunday night, that was merely by default. In a gallery space on 26th Street full of menswear cognoscenti (including the designer Victor Glemaud), Tim Hamilton presented this crisp, complex version of sportswear. The Iowa-born designer set 15 well-groomed models atop an elevated platform in his uniform for the American man torn by a utilitarian sense of purpose and a daredevil urge. Reversible bomber and motorcycle jackets come with parachute pockets, and five-inch seams shorts contrast with more formal Bermudas. Hamilton transitions between bold, metallic cobalts and duller work fabrics—particularly chambray—punctuated by shocks of technicolor red. A perfect finish.

ALL-AMERICAN ELLIS BY DARYL KING

Though menswear often defaults to the genius of Thom Browne or the legacy of the man who changed the whole game, Hedi Slimane, there's no disputing that John Crocco, the name behind Perry Ellis, has been quietly turning out pieces that continue the legacy Ellis left behind.

Ellis, the first president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) and the creator of the Perry Ellis Award, made clothes that seemed tailor-made for the sophisticated, tennis-playing, Hamptons-weekender set.

Crocco, though only in his third season for Perry Ellis, has already turned out collections that lean smartly toward modernity, classicism, and that all-American lifestyle—a much deserved trip back home from the more European influence of his predecessor, Jerry Kayne, not to mention Marc Jacobs' brief and grungy stint at the label back in '86. Needless to say, Crocco has steered the label back to its roots.

“You know, my aesthetic and Perry's aesthetic are very similar,” he says backstage at his spring 2008 show. “So it's really an easy match. I utilize the archives a lot to just get inspiration from Perry. Then I just draw from my own experiences.” Crocco certainly lives up to his word: while on a sunset cruise in the Dominican Republic, he found the vision for his collection in the way that the sun touched the water and the horizon, using the hues of the sunset along with sand and ropes to paint “natural fabrics, such as linens, cottons, gauge wool, and technical fabrics, like nylon or poly resin fabrics” that harmoniously created a mixture of sportswear and casual wear.

Crocco, however, remains mute on the possibility of branching out into womenswear.

“We'll see,” he says. “I never thought that I would be a menswear designer, and here I am. So we will have to see what comes down the road.”

FILM BARELY LEGAL, BUT ALREADY A PRO BY ALEX SYMONDS



AT A PRESS DAY LAST WEEK FOR *HARRY Potter*-wunderkind Daniel Radcliffe's newest film, *December Boys*, Radcliffe and the film's director, Rod Hardy, sat down with journalists to discuss tourists in Australia, the green screen, and his already buzzed-about sex scene. The film is Radcliffe's first outside of the *Potter* series, though earlier this year he appeared in the stage play *Equus* in London. *December Boys* opens Sept. 14 in limited New York/Los Angeles release, at which points audiences can decide whether Radcliffe will ever escape *Potter*'s shadow.

Having worked with the royalty of British theater, did you feel the opportunity to nurture the relatively inexperienced cast of *December Boys*?

Daniel Radcliffe: Not really. I did feel slightly parental, certainly an older-brother-type thing.

Ron Hardy: There was an unspoken thing from Daniel and I, that if the boys were getting out of hand, Daniel would see that I'd rub my brow a number of times too many, walk past, and say "Do you want me to talk to the boys?" and I'd just nod my head ... and I had personally chosen those boys because I knew they weren't going to suddenly be in awe of Daniel Radcliffe in *Harry Potter*.

DR: They were totally unfazed.

RH: Totally unfazed by it all. So there was a knowledge that was passed on, because I could overhear Daniel mention, occasionally, certain things that he had done when he was 12 years old on the set of *Harry Potter*.

DR: When I was 12, on a film set, I was having a great time. And I wanted these kids to have a great time. In order to have a really fun time on the set, you have to work hard, because if you don't work hard, and you're just messing around, then the atmosphere on the set becomes incredibly tense.

What did you make of Australia?

DR: I remember we arrived at the Remarkable Rocks on Kangaroo Island, and they are amazing—they're these

incredible formations, and we got there and were like, "Oh my God, why don't they use these for films more often?" Because they're amazing, they're cinematic, they're incredible. Then we very, very quickly realized it was because every half an hour a tourist bus would pull up and about 30 tourists would pile out and wander around the set, and so you'd have to break for a bit and wait for them to leave for you to carry on.

Between *Equus* and *December Boys*, is it your goal to get away from the green screens and big sets and onto something a little simpler?

DR: I can't pretend I miss the green screen, because that's not the best thing about *Potter*. But to be honest, that's just the way it's happened so far. It's not that I want to just do things with no visual effects, or I just want to do indie movies, or I just want to do blockbusters—limiting myself to what I can do. But it is quite a welcome break. That's the weird thing: *Potter* is an epic story told within these huge proportions, and *December Boys* is an epic story told in the smallest way possible, because there's nothing bigger or more important in life than that growing-up stage. There's nothing more tempestuous and wild than that period in your life. But it's told very, very simply.

This is your first real major meltdown. How far did you have to dig deep to do that, since it's not something we've seen before?

DR: It was the last day of filming, and it was in our 16th consecutive hour of filming that day, and it was quarter past four in the morning on Christmas Eve. And so I was sort of having a meltdown, as was most of the crew. That was sort of an amazing day, actually. As an actor, in terms of your resources, the most valuable thing you can do is just listen to people, talk to as many people as you can, and find out what their stories are. If you find enough, then eventually they'll fit the situation.

Are you doing *Equus* on Broadway?

DR: Hopefully, yeah. It will be later next year. If it happens, I'll be there, obviously. I'm very, very excited. Terrified, obviously, but very, very excited.

The parts that you've played outside the *Harry Potter* universe have seen you exploring sexuality. What would you think about playing a gay character, and how might that affect you as an actor and a person?

DR: I would never play a gay character just for the sake of playing a gay character. You know, if the script was good, and it was a good gay character, then that wouldn't bother me. ... The point you make about playing characters who are exploring their sexuality, I think that simply arises—if you'll excuse that word—from the fact that, you know, I'm 18, and so the parts I'm going to be given will be for around that age range. And around that age range, that's when people are exploring sexuality.

There was so much ado made about your kiss in the last *Harry Potter* film.

DR: I know!

In this film, it's more of a sex scene. How did you approach that, and how was it for you?

DR: I was actually very pleased that it was Teresa [Palmer, his character's love interest], because in a way, the dynamic of the characters in the film reflect how we were on that day—because the character in the film is sort of, shall we say, "worldly," and Maps [Radcliffe's character] is sort of nervous and bumbling. And Teresa, having done a few of those scenes in the past, and me having never done any, she was sort of guiding me through it as Lucy does Maps.

So that was good.

DR: It was great, I mean, it was terrific. You've seen her.

Is this the extent of that scene, though? There aren't going to be any DVD extras?

RH: I think you can leave it to your own imagination, really.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER INDEPENDENT PICTURES

FRITZ LANG, HARDBOILED

BY EMILY RAUBER



“THE STREETS WERE DARK WITH SOMETHING more than night,” muses the troubled protagonist at the start of Fritz Lang’s 1944 noir, *The Woman in the Window*. Indeed, as the ill-fated professor soon discovers, his world is inhabited by the morally ambiguous heroes, leggy femme fatales, and smooth-talking crime bosses that are so often a part of the classic film noir.

And while the characters’ motives may be murky, director Lang’s influence on the style—with this and other films, as explored through a new 15-film series at the Museum of the Moving Image called “Fritz Lang, King of Noir”—is certainly much more clear-cut.

The Austrian director is probably best known for his 1927 silent film, *Metropolis*—whose distinctive poster has adorned many a film major’s dormitory walls—along with 1931’s *M*, starring Peter Lorre as a child murderer, which effectively invented the “serial killer” genre. Although many of his other works have only been seen by the most devoted of fans, they remain important contributions to the film-noir collective.

“Fritz Lang’s dark fatalism, fascination with modern, urban life, and his penchant for intricate, spiraling narrative structures all had a major influence on the genre,” says David Schwartz, chief curator of the museum and organizer of the Lang series. Lang’s history with the Expressionist film movement in Germany may have ultimately helped to marry the style with the noirs, many of which seem to bear a markedly dark, Teutonic influence.

As a genre, film noirs are perhaps best defined by their inability to be conclusively defined—unlike the Western, there is no requisite setting; unlike the romance, there are no definitive plot elements; unlike the horror, there is no singular reaction desired from its audience. Attempts at establishing a set designation for the term are usually met with strong criticism, and the boundaries for which a film may be considered “noir” are constantly shifting as these definitions change.

Luckily, most viewers already familiar with the concept of film noir, and Lang’s work throughout the ’40s and ’50s, especially, lends itself easily to the noir label. The previously mentioned *The Woman in the Window*, considered to be his first, true noir piece, follows an ordinary-yet-obsessive professor attempting to deal with an accidental murder.

Lang followed this with *Scarlet Street* in 1945, and—though it is comprised of the same major cast members (Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett, Dan Duryea) and follows roughly the same plot (obsession, adultery, murder, guilt)—*Scarlet Street* is an altogether bleaker and more tragic portrait. Conveniently, it also avoids the more unsatisfying elements of *Window*’s melodramatic ending.

Other highlights of the series include *You Only Live Once* (1937), with Sylvia Sydney and Henry Fonda, and perhaps the earliest example of a Bonnie-and-Clyde sort of story presented on film; *The Blue Gardenia* (1953), in which a single woman is accused of murder and pursued by a reporter who is trying to both woo and convict her; and *The Big Heat* (1953), in which a dismissed detective fights the criminals who murdered his wife.

Of course, the fact that some titles in the series are not mentioned here is by no means a reflection of their value—a quick comparison of the plot synopses of any of these films with those currently in the megaplex may cause depression and a sense of nostalgia for a time before you were even born.

Fortunately, some filmmakers are paying attention. Lang’s work has encouraged generations of noirs and neo-noirs, with imitations ranging from unintentional rip-offs to respectful tributes.

“David Cronenberg, whose film *A History of Violence* was clearly influenced by *The Big Heat*, is just one of many directors ... who were inspired by Lang,” Schwartz says, also pointing to Martin Scorsese, director of *Raging Bull*, a study in the moral descent of a boxer, and the Coen brothers, who directed the black-comedy neo-noir, *Fargo*.

Though noir has existed

in various forms throughout the decades, the genre seems to have had a resurgence of sorts—this time reclaimed by teenagers. Rian Johnson’s 2005 film, *Brick*, featured high school students solving a murder mystery while speaking the hardboiled language of a typical detective novel. The tightly scripted TV series *Veronica Mars* also borrowed elements from the noir canon, and while both these examples were generally well received critically, neither found the commercial success necessary to inspire a new movement.

It may be a sign of the state of the world, which has been entirely transformed since Lang first started making films. While politicians may be giving us plenty to rebel against, it’s nothing compared to the paranoia and hopelessness of the inter-war and World War II era. Lang knew how to effectively express these feelings, while also staying true to his own inspirations.

“The fight of man against his destiny or how he faces his destiny has interested me very much,” Lang said in a 1967 interview with BBC’s Alexander Walker. “It is not so much that he reaches a goal, or that he conquers this goal—what is important is his fight against it.”

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MUSIC

PAINT THE TOWN BLACK

BY JUSTIN GONÇALVES



THE FIRST TIME I HEARD OF BLACK LIPS, it was from someone complaining about guitarist Cole Alexander's decision to use his phallus in place of a guitar pick.

The band—part of the blossoming psychedelic rock scene in Atlanta, Georgia—has grown notorious for its on-stage antics, ranging from nudity to defecation and vomiting. Sure it's shocking, but it's not merely a distraction, and these Southern boys have got the music to back it up.

With Tuesday's release of *Good Bad Not Evil*, Black Lips continue to explore the origins of punk that frontman Alexander cites as the band's biggest inspiration.

"We personally listen to mostly old music, lots of old punk music from the '60s. If you dig, you can find stuff that was pre-Sex Pistols or the Ramones," he says. "We always try to find a mix of where the oldies were and proto-punk. After Sex Pistols and the Ramones you have this stereotype of what punk would be, loud and fast. We want to find the stuff that was punk before it was a style."

That's not to say that the band's not loud. Best played at loud volumes, *Good Bad Not Evil* sounds like the musical love-child of Gram Parsons and Keith Richards played through an old, broken, fuzzy amplifier.

That's not to say that the Atlanta-based quartet limits themselves to these somewhat-obvious influences. Alexander and his bandmates share a love for some dirty Southern hip-hop.

"We like a bit of dirty-south Crunk music and pretty much a lot of the regional hip-hop," Alexander says.

"Crunk is a hip-hop version of punk."

The band's appreciation of other musical stylings is certainly a product of their Atlanta upbringing.

"I definitely see a good integration in Atlanta," Alexander says. "They passed a law a couple years back that forced kids from my area to go to inner city schools. I think that was good for the musical community. We've got a good mix." And the musical community that has formed not only includes Black Lips and psych-rockers Deerhunter, but also some of the biggest names in hip-hop.

"There's a pretty good community," Alexander says. "André 3000 [of Outkast] and Cee-Lo have gone to shows, though not ours. And Lil Jon is really into the Atlanta punk scene. There's an actual integration in terms of black people and white."

Rather than associating with any particular genre or scene, Black Lips think of themselves primarily as Southern boys. Evidence of regional story-telling and musical traditions is easily found in the band's music.

The most obviously country-inspired track on *Good Bad Not Evil*, "How Do You Tell," was influenced by "truck-driving country." As Alexander explains, "In the '60s and '70s there was a huge truck-driving country scene that got big. When you're on the road, you kind of get bored, so it was about story telling. It was fun to listen to pass the time."

"How Do You Tell," which breaks the news to a young child that his favorite teacher has passed away in a car accident, is as heart-warming and sentimental as you might expect, with Alexander's howl backed by a simple shuffle beat and accented by soaring, Stinky-Pete-style pedal steel

guitar playing.

For those who haven't seen Black Lips, it may be surprising that a group that can produce a record as mature as *Good Bad Not Evil* could actually execute the aforementioned antics for which the group has become infamous. While it might now be the group's signature trait, it started as nothing more than a distraction.

"When we first started, we couldn't play well so we wanted to do different things at the shows," Alexander says. "Now, it's kind of an 'in-the-moment' thing. It's not something we every show. It just kind of happens. People kind of expect it."

Most of the time, it's up to the crowd whether the band will unleash its unadulterated musical and visual attack on the audience. "Nowadays," Alexander says, "a lot of the crowds are doing crazy stuff. Getting really fucked up and stuff. The crowd can be what makes it a good show or a bad show."

Other times, it's up to the band's collective bladder or stomach. "If I don't have to pee, I don't pee. If I need to vomit, trust me, I'll do it all over you," he says. You might want to bring an umbrella.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BIZ3 PUBLICITY

TOTAL CLIPSE OF THE HEART

BY JACOB BRUNNER

PHOTOS BY ANJALI VIALA

AT THEIR ENERGETIC 2007 COLUMBIA NSOP CONCERT, PUSHA T AND Malice of Clipse ran through a line-up of mostly Neptunes-produced jams like men possessed. In the studio, Clipse's flow tends toward a kind of smooth, menacingly laid-back iciness. But on stage, they have so much fun it almost looks life threatening. Simply put, the Clipse live experience is the rap show to end all rap shows.

In the current market, 'self-deprecating rap' is an oxymoron. In one of the music world's more fickle and crowded industries, cockiness has become a strategy for success. If you're on the radio, you brag about money, girls, and expensive alcohol. If you're not on the radio, you saturate your rhymes with whiny resentment, wax about "real" hip-hop, and reference Copernicus. Either way, ego is the way to go.

The Virginia Beach duo of brothers, Pusha T and Malice, wastes no time in following this trend and laying down the law on their 2006 masterpiece, *Hell Hath No Fury*. Only two minutes into the album, Pusha tosses this bomb: "I'm the best since he died and he lied/the spirit of competition/one verse could start jihad." It takes brass balls to anoint yourself heir to Tupac and Biggie Smalls.

But when Clipse brag about their credentials—and here's the rare thing—they're not far off. Unlike most other rappers, their hard-earned cockiness reads more like fierce determination.

Asked to name some worthy contemporaries, Clipse wouldn't even let me finish the question ("Are there any other rappers...") before they interrupted with a synchronized, "No!"

Ab-liva, a Philadelphia native and member of Clipse's Re-up gang, says, "Ain't nobody but us. There's a serious lack of lyricism in hip-hop. There's no thought, no depth. If you got a dance, then you got a hit song."

Pusha T agreed, explaining that there simply is no contemporary hip-hop he could turn to as a source of inspiration.

"I'm just inspired by old classic hip-hop," he says. "I'm into chasing that feeling of back in the day. ... Big Daddy Kane, Rakim, all that type of stuff."

After the Sony-BMG merger in 2004, they entered into four years of legal disputes with Jive records. As a result, the release of *Hell Hath No Fury*, completed in 2002, was pushed back until 2006. Clipse emerged bitter, angry, and hell-bent on taking over the game (to get a better sense of their hard-feelings, check out the "Mr. Me Too" video which pairs the line, "I'm sorry to the fans, but them crackers weren't playing fair Jive" with an image of two white record executives in the crosshairs of a sniper rifle).

The appreciation they have for their devotees borders on religious devotion.

"We just feel like we owe it to our fans," Malice says. "Our fans have been through a lot in terms of waiting, in terms of the merger. We owe it to them a lot."

At this summer's Pitchfork Music Festival, Pusha T actually laughed through the performance, as if he couldn't believe that his crew was blessed with so much talent and the opportunity to perform in front of 5,000 hungry fans.

"When you come to a Clipse show, you're coming to see the Clipse, and you're digesting everything," Malice says. "People are relating. You're feeding off of the energy and the expressions that they're giving."

In addition to touring, Clipse is already brainstorming a new record and planning the release of both the Re-up Gang record and the third installation of their excellent *We Got it 4 Cheap* mix-tape series.

But don't expect to hear Clipse on Hot 97 anytime soon. For all their talent (or, depending on how cynical you are, because of their talent) Clipse has failed recently in the sales department. Even after a monsoon of rave press and the relative success of their 2002 debut *Lord Willin'*—which went gold in 2 months—their fan base is still made up of mostly hipsters, music-snobs, and hip-hop nerds.

For Malice, that's a good thing. "Our fans know the records because they really love the records," he says. "It's not like they heard it on the radio. And I think that's going to help with longevity, a slow grind with making credible, authentic, official music. I don't mind going at this pace. It doesn't bother me at all. Our fans our real passionate. If they come out and they know the songs it's not because they heard it a million times on the TV or on the radio. It's because they're really into it."



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I once read that wasps lay their eggs in figs. I hope that's not true, because I do love dried figs. Skip those sugar gummy wheels and pick up these Turkish delights at Russ & Daughters on the Lower East Side.

ALEX GARTENFELD
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

CARROT CAKE RICE CREAM



Ice cream and carrot cake are two of my favorite foods, so carrot cake rice cream is just amazing since it has chunks of cake combined with rice cream. Sadly, I've yet to find it in stores around here.

TINA GAO
PHOTO

CORNBREAD



Pronounced "cone-bread," this side dish should never be sweet (listen up, Kitchenette!) Try Miss Mamie's Spoonbread Too on 110th Street and Manhattan Avenue.

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"ANTS ON A BOAT"



"Ants on a oat" is a homey delicacy, consisting of sliced apples, peanut butter (preferably crunchy and organic), and red California raisins. Also pleasing are "ants in a canoe" (replace the apple with celery) or "ants in an avalanche" (a mass of raisins, assorted nuts, and peanut butter swirled in a bowl).

DANIELLE ASH
PRODUCTION

VODKA



Vodka. I've lately been into doing a lot of push ups. I like the idea of drinking while I do them.

J.D. PORTER
HUMOR

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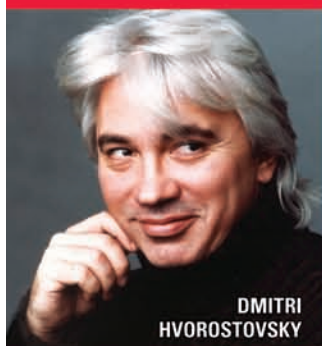
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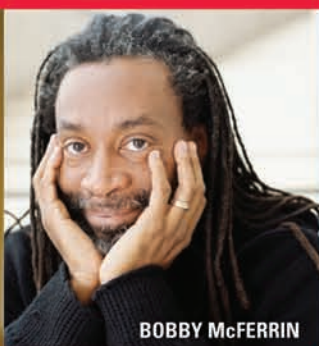
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