

MIDDLE-AGED HIPPIES RELIVE THEIR GLORY DAYS
MEAT LOAF: MAN, GOD, OR LOAF OF MEAT? • SMILE! YOU'RE ON YOUTUBE

the eye

COLUMBIA ON THE STREET

VOL. I, ISSUE 10, 11.16.06

...T LIKE A BUTTERFLY

MUR

WHY HE FIGHTS

ONE STUDENT
DREAMS OF THE
ULTIMATE FIGHTING
CHAMPIONSHIP

GO HARD
OR
GO HOME



the eye

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Ian Corey-Boulet, Amanda Sebba

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If you have questions, comments, or letters to the editor, e-mail Tim Shenk, editor in chief, at eye@columbiaspectator.com. You can also call us at (212) 854-9547. To place an ad, call (212) 854-9558.

"I shall smash your skull like a clam on my tummy!"

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On the Cover



Rolling With the Punches

Brookdale Community College student Tom Gallichio trains for 42 hours a week, and all he has to show for it is a black eye. Sometimes, to become an ultimate fighter, you have to get hit when you're already down.

Urbanities

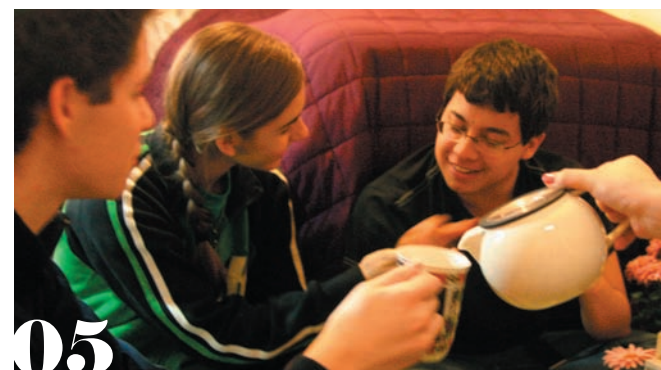


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ITube, WeTube, YouTube

Forget Facebook, MySpace, and all those blogs. Find out why so many students now consider sharing videos the ultimate form of self-expression.



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Let's see. There's W3690 Deep Sea Thought, V2301 Philosophy Hegel-Nietzsche, W3711 The Big Ambitious Novel in Contemporary America, W3926 Historical Origins of Human Rights, BC3167 Milton, W4902 World War II, W3931 American Cultural Criticism, BC2120 Existentialism, W2587 Is Anyone Still Reading This?, W3121 Plato, V2108 Philosophy of History, W4419 The Age of Discovery. Maybe an independent study would be cool. And Squash. Can't forget Squash.

By my count, if I registered for all those classes next semester, I would be taking about eight billion credits. (There's a reason why there are no math classes on the list.) Since I'm a senior, I have one semester left to take advantage of the amazing opportunities a Columbia education affords, and each of these classes looks like it could easily gobble up all of my time.

But there's something competing with the Columbia education, something else that could easily gobble up all my time: Nintendo Wii (pronounced "we," as in "Weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee, I have the new Nintendo and now after twenty-one years of random drifting my life finally has meaning!"). For those who have (A) non-virtual lives and consequently (B) no idea what I'm talking about, the Wii is Nintendo's newest video game console. Besides having the latest technological developments—including 512 MB of internal memory, 787 blah blah of dodah, and all sorts of other jibber-jabber—the Wii comes with built-in Wi-Fi, backward compatibility for old Nintendo games, and a nifty motion-sensitive controller.

It also comes with *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*, which one nerdy video game Web site (I know—I was surprised they existed too) has called "quite possibly the single greatest launch title in the history of videogame consoles." The equation is so simple even I can do it. Observe:

(Twilight + Princess) / Zelda^{Wii} = awesome.

There's also a game called *Super Monkey Ball Banana Blitz*, but I would need to use derivatives to prove how good it will be.

In short, the release of Nintendo Wii will be the best thing to happen in my life since ... well ... I guess nothing that has happened in my life so far provides an adequate comparison for how awesome this will be.

By the way, I'm sure that at least some of the Nintendo games will involve fighting, just like Dan Haley's saucy minx of a cover story this week. What a coincidence! If you want to find out why people fight in real life, instead of just in video games, flip on over to page seven now.

But, even after I finish reading that amazing story, I am still torn between two options: I could spend next semester binging like the head cheerleader on prom night, except on classes and not crappy drinks; or I could play Nintendo Wii and never leave my room. Decisions, decisions...

Tim

INTERVIEW

By Sally Cohen-Cutler

All the Things musicals Aren't Usually About



Robyn Goodman

co-founded the Second Stage Theatre, a not-for-profit off-Broadway theater dedicated to revisiting neglected masterpieces and developing new plays. Some Second Stage offerings include *subUrbia*, *The Little Dog Laughed*, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Now a commercial producer of many successful plays and musicals, including *Avenue Q*, *Altar Boyz*, and *Barefoot in the Park*, Goodman is preparing for another big opening night: *High Fidelity*, based on the book by Nick Hornby, opens Nov. 20. As she recovers from the madcap high of the show's final dress rehearsal, Goodman sheds light on the process that led her to this point.

What do you consider the job of a producer to be?

The most important thing a producer does is choose their projects, which defines who they are sensibility-wise, taste-wise. That, and when to close the show, are the two most important decisions you make. After that, it is putting the team together. The other part of the job is keeping the temperature of the room in mind. Seeing where the issues are, where the problems are, who needs to be talked to, who doesn't need to be talked to, who needs help, support ... And the most difficult part of the job is raising all the money, doing a budget that's economically sound.

What's the best part of your job?

Today [the final dress rehearsal] was one of my favorite parts. After all the work has been done, and we've spent many hours talking with the writers and giving them notes, down to things like, "This lyric isn't helping the lead character," and discussing the direction the show should go. And today we saw all the changes put together for the first time, and they were fantastic. So I guess working on the development is my favorite. Working on the budget just isn't as much fun.

Why did you choose to do High Fidelity?

I went to a small little basement over in the West Bank Cafe, and Amanda Green and Tom Kitt were performing songs from this new musical they were

writing called *High Fidelity*, based on Nick Hornby's book, and [my partners and I] fell in love with the songs. They were witty and audacious and rock 'n' roll and tuneful, and we love the book. We said, "This is a real challenge to make this into a musical because it's contemporary and it's about slackers and straight guys—all the things that musicals are not usually about. Let's do it."

At this point, are you more excited or anxious about the show opening?

Both. After what I saw today in the rehearsal room, I'm really excited. Everybody has been working so hard together to get this story told, and I think we finally found it. There was such warmth in the room. In those kinds of moments, the audience is almost an intrusion, because you create a family when you produce a play, and the family had a very happy moment today. Nobody could have a better job than mine on a day like this. But I'm anxious because we deal with critics, and they're tough and you never know what they're going to say. But ultimately, I know with a musical ... the audience will decide.

What does Nick Hornby think about High Fidelity, the musical?

He hasn't seen the show yet. He's coming to opening night. How scary is that? It's all right—he'll like it. It's good.

When's the best time to see a play? Opening night, closing night, or in the middle of the run?

It's best to come to a preview. Before you've heard anything, you haven't read the critics' opinions, and the tickets are cheaper. And the actors are at their most excited, in a funny way, because they're still finding it. They still don't know what everybody thinks, and their enthusiasm, not that they don't always have that, [is] something special.

What's your favorite play or musical that you've ever produced?

I like them all. I can't give you a favorite. I only do musicals because I'm passionate about them. Once I feel that, I feel it for life. I never turn on a play. I may turn on a person, but I'll never turn on a play.

Could you name the one most important part of a production?

The script. It all starts with the words. And then the actors and the director. But it all starts with the words. If it's not on the page, it's not going to get to the stage, as we say.

Before you cofounded Second Stage Theatre, you were an actress. Why the switch to production?

I was acting for about eight years. I was growing up with Meryl Streep, who's a friend of mine, and Glenn Close. I looked at them and I looked at myself, and even though I was making a living, I thought, I'm not going to be them. And ultimately, being an actor is not going to satisfy me intellectually and other ways. I fell into producing some plays in London. I was cast in them and we went over, and the producer had lost his money so we had to take over, and they became very successful. So I had kind of a trial by fire. When I came back [to the U.S.], Carol Rothman approached me, and she said she wanted to start a theater and she was looking for the right partner.

What was that experience like?

It was thrilling to take these plays that everyone had rejected and see them become huge successes. And we were just operating on instinct. We weren't worrying about money—everything was very cheap back then. We just did whatever we wanted with our friends, who are now mostly stars. There's something wonderful about knowing that you're going to be involved with four productions a year with really top-notch creative young people, our own age at the time ... We worked with David Mamet and a lot of people who were established, but mostly we were discovering people our own age.

If your 6-year-old self were sitting here, what would you say to her?

Well, she's here! I'd tell her don't take everything so serious. Life works itself out. I wanted to be an actress so badly at that age and I was so focused. I'd say just relax. Or, as my leading lady said to someone the other day, simmer. Just simmer. It's going to be all right. Life is long—things will work out. And if they don't, you learn something from it. ■

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There are 2 honors for this video

a bonding experience for people with similar senses of humor. It seems as though every week a hot new video makes the e-mail rounds, and if you haven't seen it, you won't understand why your floormates crack up every time someone says "Cheese is made from milk!"

Hicks described how she and the girls who live in her hall watch old music videos together, explaining, "We like to laugh and look at what we used to watch when we were 13."

If you're more of an exhibitionist than an introvert, YouTube provides an easy outlet for your creative endeavors. Earlier this month, Columbia's CTV uploaded the pilot of their new soap opera, *The Gates*, allowing students who missed the premier to stay in the loop. And a handful of intrepid students from the film division of the School of the Arts have uploaded their homework assignments and experimental projects, which should certainly be interesting if one of them becomes the next Tarantino.

Sun, who has "been a filmmaker since high school" and participated in numerous film festivals, kept the footage he shot from last year's Culture Shock event for the Asian American Alliance "[under] wraps until people started requesting to see them." Columbia's multicultural organizations were looking for an easy way to raise awareness about various minority issues, and YouTube provided them with the perfect outlet to garner attention.

Still, there can be a downside to having an enormous audience one mouse-click away.

When friends of Kristine Hizon, BC '10, witnessed her performance of a silly dance routine to rap music, they encouraged her to post it. And while Hizon suspects that most of her YouTube audience consists of close friends, she still receives comments from complete strangers.

Nevertheless, the demand for Columbia students to broadcast themselves—in accordance with YouTube's slogan, Broadcast Yourself—is still on the rise. As Sun put it, there's "no way you can say no to sharing information on the Web." ■

"WITHOUT YOUTUBE, YOU WON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR FLOORMATES CRACK UP EVERY TIME SOMEONE SAYS 'CHEESE IS MADE FROM MILK!'"

The New Wave Of Broadcasting

How YouTube Is Linking Columbia Students

BY ARIEL KARLIN

"Daterape Birdgirl says 'No!' to unauthorized intercourse!" This declaration is not a public service announcement, but rather the description of a YouTube video by Katherine Hicks, BC '10. The video, titled *Spoonbananascissorhands and DR!*, chronicles the adventures of a girl who has a spoon, a banana, and a pair of scissors instead of hands. Her companion—half-bird, half-human—warns viewers about the dangers of acquaintance rape.

Hicks, who is considering a major in film studies, has found that YouTube, a free Web site for sharing videos, provides her with an ideal opportunity to post her short films.

"I think YouTube is an amazing tool," said Hicks, who used the site to stay informed during the Minutemen protests last month, watching clips of news and talk shows documenting the controversy. "MySpace is great and Facebook is fun ... but I think YouTube is actually very informative."

Although YouTube lacks Facebook- and MySpace-style profiles, it allows users to connect with each other by subscribing to other users' channels, bringing a new dynamic to the tired lists under the "Favorite Music" section. Through a network of links to favorite videos, users can directly experience others' interests instead of just reading about them.

Calvin Sun, CC '08, admitted to watching "whatever videos my friends send me," citing political and comedic videos as some of the most common choices. These videos, in turn, add another social dimension to the Web site by providing

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One For the Record

Reni Laine Trades in Campus Life For Studio Success

BY JILL LARSON

Being a teenaged pop singer these days always seems to bring to mind images of Britney Spears prancing around in a Catholic school-girl uniform. Sex, after all, sells. But singer/songwriter Reni Laine, CC '10, doesn't buy into it: "I'm not the type of artist who's going to try to use blatant sex appeal. I'd rather let my music stand on its own."

But dispelling stereotypes and working on her second album (under the label Slow NY) aren't the only things taking up Laine's time right now—she also has midterms and classes to worry about. With so much to do and very little time in which to get it all done, the recording studio seems to be a second dorm room for Laine, who claims that it's not uncommon for her to "sleep in the studio after working until 5:30 in the morning, then wake up, take the subway, and make it in time for [her] 9 [AM] class."

For Laine, balancing work and school is all about keeping a realistic attitude. "I neglect work more than I should," she admits. "I'm not going to be sad if I don't get As." But being realistic also means knowing the real value of what you are doing. "In the end, it's all about trying to contribute to the discussion and the learning," Laine notes. Yet despite the three to four days per week she spends recording, the self-described "weird, disappearing chick" in high school hasn't missed many classes at Columbia, other than the occasional freak accident. "A cappuccino maker exploded in my face and I had to miss class for that," she explains, "be-

cause I had second-degree burns all over my face."

So will Laine be writing a song about a combustible coffee maker any time soon? Probably not. "Past experiences inspire, but it's important to look at what is going on now," she said. Her music, which she describes as "Snow Patrol meets Radiohead," is comprised of songs that are more relevant and directly related to universal, deeper issues. "I write about what young people go through—the tough decisions before coming to college."

Song subject material aside, Laine tries to keep things from getting too heavy. Life, she claims, isn't hectic. "It's very scheduled. I'd more say that it's very full, very good." Laine somehow squeezes in time to play in a side group called "Rabbit" with friend and producer David Pattillo, and another friend, David Poe. She even manages to maintain close ties with the Columbia community. "People ask me for help with their stuff, and I like to be involved at some level," she said. "In fact, CU Records is going to help me promote this upcoming album."

After graduating, Laine wants to tour and travel. "I want to reach more people," she said. "I want to get out there to inspire people to follow their dreams." Down the road, Laine can picture herself "married to some cool rock star, and maybe assembling the kids into a Mamas and the Papas remake." For now though, she doesn't have a boyfriend. "I'm too busy—if I get a boyfriend, he'd have to be very understanding," she says. "I have crushes, but I'm attracted to people who are intellectually sexy." Looks like Columbia boys stand a chance. That is, if they can keep up with her pace. ■

HOW TO

By Daryl King and Risa Chubinsky

Keep It Clean

Alcohol-free fun that won't kill the buzz

Forget everything you learned from *National Lampoon's Animal House*, because not every night out has to end with a hangover. So put down that bottle of Nikolai Vodka, take the time and money you would have spent in cramped campus bars, and use those precious resources to explore new ways to keep your night jumping without having to worry about beer stains on your shirt.

Have Your Own *Project Runway* Design Challenge: If you're one of the many *Project Runway* fans who has thought, "I could have designed something better," why not pretend you're the next Jeffrey Sebelia for a night? Get a group of friends together and break up into pairs of "models" and "designers." Next, browse through fabric megastore Mood for an hour to get your basics. Then hunt around the fashion district for finishing touches like beads and brooches. Of course, since *Project Runway* is about ingenuity, you might just want to pin back, cut up, and re-stitch your current wardrobe. Once you have all of your supplies, each team has three hours to cut, glue, and sew together a garment that would make Heidi jealous. All that's left is a strut down the catwalk (or your hallway) with a judgmental friend criticizing your outfits in a faux German accent.

(Try to) Become Mildly Famous in New York City: Your chances of becoming the next Madonna may seem slim to none, but if the Material Girl can make it in New York, then so can you. Take the money you would have spent on booze and buy yourself a subway ticket downtown. There, you'll find a number of great smaller venues that give potential celebrities a crack at their big break. Bembe, the Knitting Factory, the Living Room Lounge, and the Bowery Poetry Club are a few places that are extremely welcoming to a whole spectrum of upcoming artists. If you're lucky, pretty soon all your underage friends may be begging you to sneak them in under the red velvet ropes.



SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE LACK OF BOOZE? GUESTS WILL SMILE IF YOU TELL THEM THE TEA IS SPIKED.

Host an Asian-style Tea Party: When the thought of a Long Island Iced Tea sends your stomach into a tailspin, it may be time to relax at home with a cup of the softer variety. A traditional Asian tea party is very structured and ceremonial, but that doesn't mean you have to follow all the rules. For decorations and ceramic dishes, check out the Asia Society on Park Avenue or Pearl River Mart in Chinatown. In order to keep the eats fresh and cheap, buy your food locally—M2M on Broadway stocks unique goods like kimchee, Korean dumplings, scallion pancake batter, miso noodles, and Ban Chan, not to mention many varieties of black and green teas. Before you put the water on, stop by Kim's Music and Video to pick up one of the latest hits from Japan, China, or Korea. ■

MIX-IT-UP

This week's drink:
Pumpkin Cocktail

Ingredients

- 2 parts Aboslut vanilla vodka
- 1 part pumpkin schnapps
- Splash of cream
- Sprinkle of nutmeg

Directions

Shake all the ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice. Strain into a martini glass. Garnish with nutmeg and cherry, and enjoy.

Eat Around the World

Instead of Studying Abroad, Avoid Airport Security and Sample a Variety of Ethnic Cuisine Here in New York

BY LYDIA ROSS

Not everyone is jetting off next semester to study abroad. If you are aching to escape from the United States for a while, or even for a night, travel to these three restaurants to be transported to a faraway country without having to leave the island of Manhattan.

JAPAN: Kenka, 25 St. Mark's Place (between Second and Third avenues)

What you'll find: Kenka is an izakaya, or Japanese pub. Inside, diners sit on tiny wooden chairs at small and short wooden tables. The restaurant is a large space with a hut over the cooking area, colorful pictures, and old speakers blasting oriental World War II propaganda music. The menu warns that no vomiting or masturbation will be permitted within the restaurant.

What to order: Kenka's menu consists of over 100 dishes, and the slogan translates to "Fast, cheap, delicious!" The portions are small, but nothing exceeds \$7. While the restaurant doesn't offer sushi like the typical American Japanese restaurants, you won't be disappointed with its options. The food ranges from a traditional eel-over-rice bowl and salted edamame, to bacon-

wrapped asparagus, to the more absurd dishes like grilled bull penis and turkey testicles. Also served are glasses of incredibly cheap beer (\$1.50!) and a great selection of hot and cold sake. The most amusing item, costing only \$1, is the Old School Ghetto Snack, a kind of Japanese pancake with egg. At the end of the meal, each guest is given a small cup filled with sugar to use at a make-your-own cotton-candy stand. How can anyone resist such a bizarre combination of disgusting and sweet?

SENEGAL: Dibiterie Cheikh Restaurant, 231 W. 116th St.

What you'll find: A sparsely decorated but inviting room that features two flat screen televisions playing Senegalese programs. You will hear a mixture of French and various other Senegalese languages spoken over the speakers and by the staff, but don't worry if you have to speak in English. The televisions, while somewhat distracting, also provide the illusion that you are in another country, listening to the local news or watching local soap operas.

What to order: As an appetizer, the way to go is the nan-fataya, a fish patty that consists of fried dough stuffed with catfish, onion, tomato, and spices. The fish tastes fresh and spicy and comes served with a delicious red gravy sauce. Based on what is available that night, for a main course decide between the Ceebu jen, a strong marinated fish that is the national dish of Senegal; the Yassa, chicken or fish simmered in onion with a garlic, mustard, and lemon sauce; or the Dibi, a simmered, grilled lamb

dish served with white onions. The entrees are served with either couscous (the best I've ever had) or vermicelli. The portions are large, and one order can easily feed two people. Most importantly, do not leave Dibiterie without imbibing the bissap cocktail. It is made from the hibiscus plant and is similar to but sweeter than cranberry juice. The bissap cocktail is liquid magic.

AUSTRIA: Café Sabarsky at the Neue Gallery, 1048 Fifth Ave. at 86th Street

What you'll find: A fin de siècle Viennese Kaffeehaus. The beautiful room is covered with wood paneled walls and marble tabletops with flowered, velvet-upholstered booths in the back and a dramatic grand piano by the door. The crowd is considerably older than the typical college crowd, but the myriad of languages floating throughout the space lends a sense of sophistication and creates the feeling that you're being transported to Europe.

What to order: Because Café Sabarsky is fairly expensive, I would recommend going for coffee or tea and dessert. Teatime starts at 11 a.m. and goes until closing at 9 p.m. The tea options, all served in dainty china cups, include blood orange, pineapple papaya, mint, and chocolate. Served with a pastry, most flavors would be overwhelming. But the chamomile lavender blend is lovely, with a full, herbal flavor that is potent but not overwhelming. If you decide on coffee, it will come to you on a silver tray. The café offers a wide range of delicious desserts. Depending on your choice of tea or coffee, opt for the Sachertorte, a classic Viennese dark chocolate cake with apricot confiture; the Apfelstrudel, apple strudel; or the Esterházy schnitte, a hazelnut cake with vanilla-butter creme. To continue your mini European vacation, visit the adjoining museum, the Neue Gallery, after you eat. ■

LISTINGS

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239 W. 105th St. (B'way/Amsterdam.) 212-666-8825. Excellent food, moderate prices. Free delivery. 10% off w/CUID.

GREEK

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544 W. 113th St. (B'way/Amsterdam) 212-865-1011. Authentic Greek cuisine—the best in town. Low prices, warm ambiance, garden dining. Open 7 days.

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1260 Amsterdam Ave. (122nd St.) 212-932-2901. Brick oven. Full bar. Private party room. Catering available for all occasions.

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3143 Broadway. (Tiemann/LaSalle) 212-222-8666. Pan-Asian dishes. Sushi bar. Live music. Back to school special—10% off w/CUID. Free delivery.

IN A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

How to Punch and Kick
Your Way From
Working Class
To World
Class

november 16, 2006 | 07 | the eye

Last April, Tom Gallicchio found himself on his hands and knees, looking up at six feet of muscle, sweat, and polyester boxing trunks. Two hundred people sat in the stands watching. Then—wham!—his opponent kicked him square in the face. Then it happened again. Gallicchio's mother watched, just a few feet away.

That night marked Gallicchio's first bout as a professional Mixed Martial Arts fighter. Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) is a type of competitive fighting in which combatants may attack using grappling moves or punches and kicks, known as strikes. It's about as real as regulated fighting gets. Gallicchio had trained for six months, and, after two swift blows to the face, he was stunned and on the floor. Half a year appeared to be on the verge of becoming a waste of time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Months later, sitting in his macroeconomics class at Brookdale Community College, Gallicchio, 20, rests his head on his palm. He looks like any other bored (although remarkably fit) student, struggling to stay awake. But Gallicchio is not bored—he just hasn't eaten in two days. He's trying to cut weight for his next fight.

When the class bell rings, Gallicchio's classmates file out and head back home. He sets out for the gym to work out and spar, as he has done for nearly 42 hours each week for the past year. In the cafeteria, he avoids much of the buffet with the vigilance of a recovering alcoholic. Gallicchio, it goes without saying, is not like other students.

But back to that first match. From the spectators' perspective, Gallicchio was the underdog. His opponent, Mark Stevens, had already fought in four professional fights and had won three. Gallicchio's friends and family watched as the 20-year-old ate punch after punch. He staggered out after the first round.

The second round seemed to promise more of the same. Desperate, Gallicchio attempted a shot on Stevens, lunging forward to take his legs out from under him. But Gallicchio missed his target. Stevens jumped back and Gallicchio landed on his hands and knees. He looked up, his face exposed like a golf ball on the tee of his neck. Stevens drew his leg up and kicked him in the face, making no pretense of mercy. Stevens allowed the blow to sink in for a second and then kicked again, driving his instep directly into his opponent's forehead. The kick is called the soccer kick and is illegal in most MMA contests.

Stevens lost points and Gallicchio was given five minutes to recuperate. He caught his breath and embarked upon an astounding rally.

Gallicchio would dominate the rest of the second round and then the third, taking the victory. With his glove raised in the ring, a bruised, bloody, and shirtless student looked on as the crowd cheered, his face wrenched with pain and glory. He walked away with a lot more than \$700.

Gallicchio's victory made his lifetime passion for fighting a tangible part of his life. His interest in professional fighting was first piqued by an infomercial for the Ultimate Fighting Championship. The UFC league was founded in 1993, but its Web site traces its lineage to "the Olympic Games in Athens." UFC Fighters square off against each other under loosely regulated conditions, although new, business-minded owners tightened the rules in 2001. That means no biting, no eye-gouging, and no small joint manipulation.

Before 2001, the "no-holds barred" UFC was too violent and disorganized to be recognized by state athletic commissions, and so it was prohibited from turning a profit. New owner Dana White convinced the Nevada Athletic Commission to approve the UFC as a legitimate sport. UFC events are now televised sensations in Brazil, Japan, and the UK. Like professional wrestling before it, UFC first penetrated the American market through Pay-Per-View. Now, over the last few years, cable's Spike TV has continued to add to its UFC programming. The network features *UFC Unleashed*, a sort of greatest knockouts of the sport's most tense and violent moments. The reality television series *The Ultimate Fighter* features a group of fighters living together and competing with each other for a \$100,000 contract with the UFC. *The Ultimate Fighter* averages between one and three million viewers per episode, and it is as idolized by young males as it is loathed by mothers and activists.

The UFC phenomenon has given rise to martial arts clubs on college campuses across the nation. Though Columbia has no MMA league, more regulated fighting styles are completely institutionalized on campus.

"When I got to Columbia, I was walking around looking at flyers and realized that Columbia has a whole lot of martial arts clubs," explained Nick Tenev, CC '08 and treasurer of the Columbia Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu club. "I think we have three different forms of kung fu and several different kinds of karate, as well as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Muay Thai."

Tenev, who is tall and lanky, was a member of his high school track team. In college, he missed the physicality and aggression of his varsity experience. He noted a poster for the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu club meeting; on it, Darth Vader heaved, "You won't need the force if you take Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu." Tenev was convinced.

"The primary reason why I liked [Jiu-Jitsu] was because the first day they taught us a couple moves and then they said, 'Partner up and roll with the person,'" explained Tenev. "Obviously," Tenev said, "I wrestled with my friends before, but this was different." The other combatants were highly technical. They were graceful, well-practiced, and willing to share their secrets: "At the first meeting, they just throw you right into it, and it's physical right off the bat."

In addition to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Tenev takes Muay Thai kickboxing. Together, the two disciplines form the building blocks of mixed martial arts. However, Gallicchio's MMA also allows for striking—punching and kicking—and wrestling, which is known as grappling. Muay Thai is commonly regarded as one of the most effective striking disciplines. Fighters not only punch and kick, but they may also use their elbows and knees. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, on the other hand, is a grappling discipline, specializing in chokes, joint locks, and takedowns. Tenev, unlike Gallicchio, would never combine the two disciplines.

"In the sense that a lot of us are learning both BJJ and Muay Thai, our training could be compared to MMA training," said Tenev. "But none of us really spar MMA." In other words, Columbia students get kicked in the face less often than Gallicchio does.

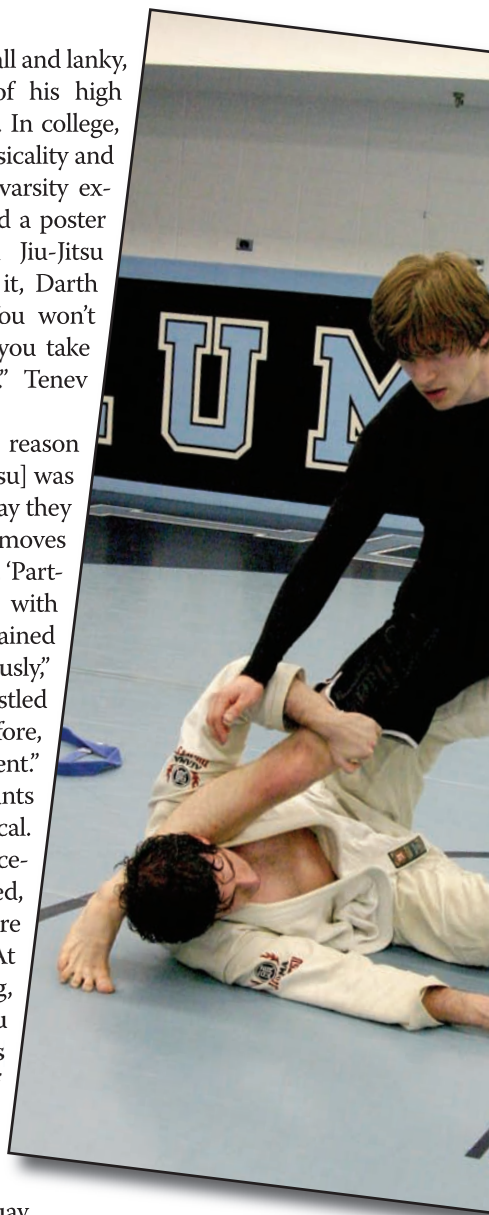
Asked whether he would consider competing as a professional MMA fighter, Tenev paused. "At this point in my life, I'm a student and I can see what I need to do to get my degree, and then after that I'll see what I need to do to get a job," he explained. He knows his priorities, and they do not include a career in fighting. "It seems to be working out pretty well for me," he concluded assuredly.

Brookdale Community College does not offer the specialized training of a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu club that Gallicchio requires, so he seeks outside training at Rhino Kickboxing in Brick Township, N.J.

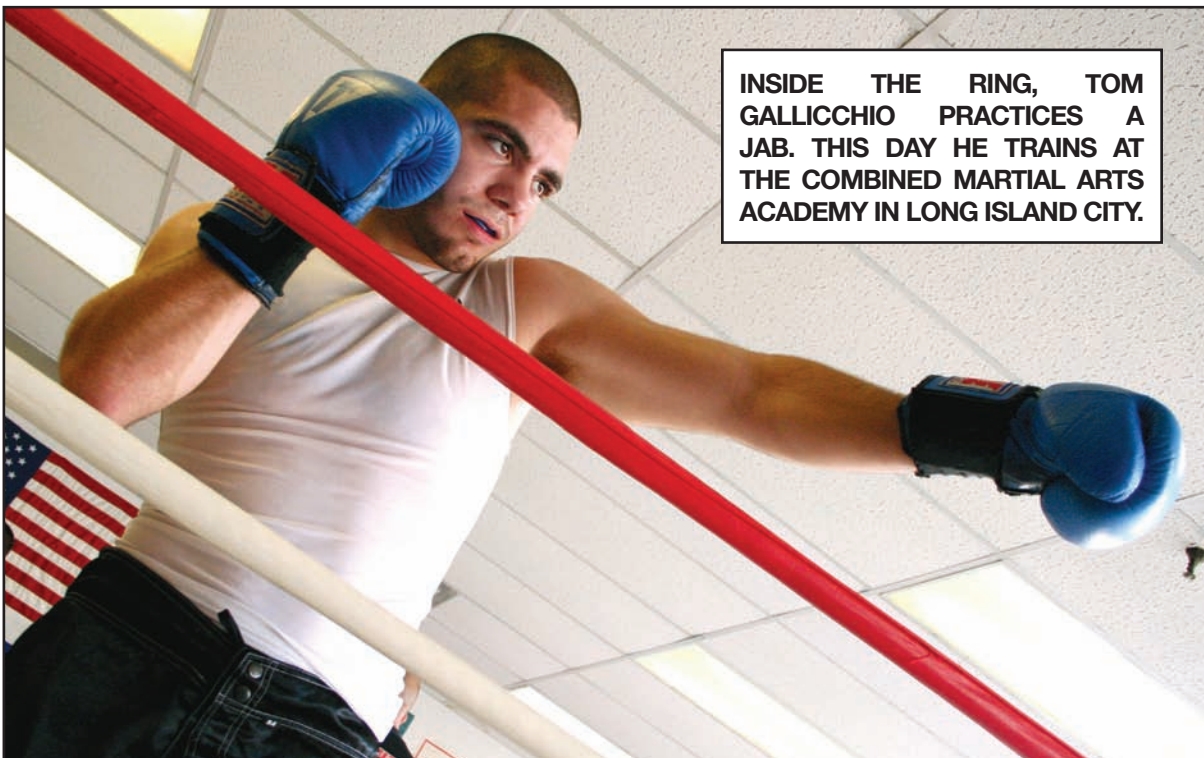
Gallicchio sets Thursdays aside for classes—this semester he's taking Math 151, Macroeconomics, Public Speaking, and Psych 106. Every other day, the fighter wakes up at 7:30 a.m. He must arrive at the horse farm where he works by 8 o'clock. He works for a few hours and then heads to Brookdale for a 1:30 class. By 4 p.m., he's training at Elite Wrestling, a club near his house in Howell, N.J. He practices wrestling drills and simulates rounds of live MMA. By 5:30, he's back in his car, heading over to Rhino Fight Team, his MMA school a half-hour away. Here, drilling and sparring can last until ten.

Gallicchio's day is not done yet. Before he goes home and does his homework, he sprints three to four miles.

The weekends of training and sparring run into the



INSIDE THE RING, TOM GALICCHIO PRACTICES A JAB. THIS DAY HE TRAINS AT THE COMBINED MARTIAL ARTS ACADEMY IN LONG ISLAND CITY.



TALK TO THE GLOVE

Fishhook

1) Hook one or more fingers into the side of an opponent's mouth, nostrils, or ears. 2) Pull. In extreme cases, the fighter can rip apart his opponent's cheek or nose. This move is illegal in the UFC.

Arm-Bar

1) Fully extend opponent's arm. 2) Wrap legs around opponent's upper arm, trapping it between the thighs. 3) Hold opponent's forearm against chest. 4) Squeeze thighs together, creating pressure. 5) Keeping hold of forearm, lean back until arm hyperextends, breaking at the elbow joint.

Soccer-Kick

1) Kick an opponent in the face when he is on the ground. This works best if he is on his hands and knees. Also illegal in the UFC.

Keylock

1) Hold opponent's wrist against the ground and next to his ear, bending his arm into a triangle. 2) Slip other hand under opponent's upper arm, clasping hand in question over hand that is holding opponent's wrist down. 3) Lift up with forearm and push down on wrist, turning opponent's arm as though it were a key. 4) Crank opponent's arm until it breaks at the shoulder joint.

weekdays. But weekend nights belong to Gallicchio.

"I try to find time to have a life of my own," he commented. "That said, I take so many fights I've got to leave my partying to a minimum. If there's a party going on, I'll be the designated driver."

Gallicchio's diet is even less flexible than his schedule, and it possesses the charms of both Atkins and anorexia. On an average day, he wakes up to a bowl

class—my economics class. My teacher's looking at me, and I'm thinking to myself, 'I'm not going to last.' I wind up falling asleep in class."

Gallicchio's body needs all the nutrition it can get. His face and limbs are consistently bruised and battered. "The most bad-ass thing about training would be leaving practices with your black eyes, your cuts, sometimes even limping, and just going into school or work the next day to show for it," he said, wearing each injury as a badge. They are certainly eye-catching: "The other students used to question, but now they know where it comes from. They're used to it. Next semester it'll probably be a whole new crop of kids, and I'll have to start answering all the questions again."

Gallicchio grew up in the Monmouth County town of Howell, New Jersey. It's a middle-class, mostly white community near the beach. He started wrestling in the fourth grade.

Wrestling has become a part of New Jersey culture. In fact, seven of the 30 members of Columbia's wrestling team hail from the state. And for the record, unlike many of Columbia's athletics teams, the wrestling team ranks among the highest in the nation.

"Wrestling is a suburban, maybe even a rural sport," said Gallicchio, who wears a t-shirt to cover the tattoo on his chest—a five of spades. "It's all about starting them young and the feeder programs from the middle schools. A lot of fathers who wrestled get their kids to wrestle." It's also a sport that, especially at its introductory levels, allows participation with little expense.

Gallicchio wrestled through his senior year of high school and got into his fair share of off-the-matt-fights during that time.

"When I was 17 or 18, I was fighting kids older than me," he remembered. One time, a group of Gallicchio's friends started to brawl. He didn't want to get involved—one informal rule of the MMA, which he has taken to heart, is not to fight your friends. All at once, another kid came from behind him and punched him in the eye with brass knuckles.

"I just got so mad," Gallicchio recalled. "I hit him, and I've never seen anybody run faster. I was chasing four kids down the street, screaming, 'I don't care if I know you, you're done!'" When the police came, he and a friend ducked into a local convenience store. His eyes were red and gushing blood. "That's the day I learned I could take a hit," he said.

Upon graduating high school, Gallicchio was offered a number of wrestling scholarships, but even with that supplemental aid, the schools were all too expensive. But he chose to fight and train for 42 hours per week rather than pick up another job.

Gallicchio's fights require him to sell tickets, from which he earns a small profit. This is the part of professional fighting that he likes the least. He always sells his tickets at the last minute, and the process usually trumps attending class.

Sometimes the community college gyms and venues will fill up, but more often than not, half the stands remain empty. MMA fights traditionally occur in a metal cage, but more typically they take place on simple wrestling mats.

"Nothing brings out more in you than a fight," said Gallicchio, posing for *The Eye's* photographer, his head shaved and his black tattoo visible on his chest. "You get the ultimate adrenaline rush. You do things you thought you couldn't do."

Wrestling never made Gallicchio feel alive in the same way that MMA does. Fighting, he explains, is more than a sport. It's closer to a genuine, necessary battle between two human beings.

The same sense of urgency fueled Tenev's interest in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. He loved the kinship he felt with his Jiu-Jitsu teammates, and that it was "physical, right off the bat." Granted, camaraderie develops within teams in any sport, but fighting is different. On a nightly basis,

fighters grapple and spar, choke each other, and bend each other's limbs backwards. They bring each other close to death, and it is only a fundamental trust keeps them from venturing too close to that line.

Fighting ignites a more primal instinct. Fists go further than baseball bats ever could, and no pads stand behind the fighters. Even sparring is an intense contest to elude pain. An opponent can see what another man looks like in the heat of confrontation—how he'd look were he suddenly forced to defend his life on a subway platform. The fighters see fear, anger, and occasionally calm.

Gallicchio speaks of his trainers and his sparring partners as though he were discussing relatives or life-long friends. Pacing along the walls of Rhino Kickboxing, he seems at home. And when his trainers admonish him, his head sinks, like a son deferring to his father.

Gallicchio believes that fighting has the power to change your life. He takes pride in knowing that he'll be able to face the world the day after a fight.

"You take a beating and you still go on," he said. ■

COVER PHOTO BY TINA GAO. INSIDE PHOTOS BY TINA GAO AND KIBBY MCMAHON.



of oatmeal with a scoop of peanut butter in it. The lump of carbohydrates and proteins carries him through his shift at the stables until lunch, when he snacks on some leftover grilled chicken. If it's not too close to fight time, Gallicchio adds a pinch of salt, which helps him retain water weight.

After a fight, Gallicchio makes dinner, usually an off-white collection of pasta or eggs. Late-night calories are a killer, and fitness never sleeps.

Any dieter will warn against the dangers of bingeing. When he passes the local bagel shop, Gallicchio must resist a sausage and egg sandwich. Sometimes he cannot. Sometimes he'll drink with his friends. Then there's Hershey's Moose Tracks Ice Cream, a rich vanilla ice cream mixed with fudge and peanut butter cups. You don't have to remind Gallicchio that one serving—a half-cup—comes with 160 calories and 9 grams of fat.

Gallicchio is constantly checking labels and watching his weight, but the days leading up to a fight are particularly intense. "The day before my last fight I had to lose five or six pounds," he recalled. "I hadn't eaten for two days and I was sitting in class and [I was] dehydrated, just no food in me and I'm falling asleep. I can't even stay up. The weigh-ins were Friday, and this was my Thursday



JIU-JITSU ENTHUSIASTS AND COLUMBIA STUDENTS BEN JACOBS AND NICK TENEZ PRACTICE ROLLING, ALSO KNOWN AS SPARRING, AT DODGE FITNESS CENTER.



Modest Mouse
With Marcellus Hall
Bowery Ballroom
Nov. 17-18, 8 p.m.,
\$30



Wolfmother
With Silversun
Pickups
Hammerstein
Ballroom
Nov. 22, 6:30 p.m., \$27



PERSECUTED PLASTICS: THEY MAY HAVE ENDURED CENSORSHIP AND POLICE BRUTALITY, BUT THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE CAN STILL PLAY MUSIC WITH PASSION AND FACIAL HAIR.

Playing Politics Why Being Plastic Isn't Always Shallow

BY EMILY BAIERL

From the protest music of the 1960s to self-proclaimed anti-Bush bands like Green Day, rock music has often existed as a voice of dissent in the political realm. The Plastic People of the Universe have a particularly uncomfortable relationship with politics—mostly because they claimed to have no political aspirations whatsoever. According to their main songwriter, Milan Hlavsa, “The Plastic People emerged just as dozens and hundreds of other bands—we just loved rock ’n’ roll and wanted to be famous.” The band was formed less than a month after the invasion of Czechoslovakia by communist troops united by the Warsaw Pact on Aug. 21, 1968, which put an end to the relaxed attitude toward censorship enjoyed during the Prague Spring. New censorship standards were enforced by the program of “normalization,” and many overt acts of protest were taken in response to the invasion, such as Jan Palach’s dramatic public suicide in Wenceslas Square. These circumstances wouldn’t permit the band to remain apolitical. The Plastic People’s simple refusal to acknowledge the increased censorship by stubbornly adhering to their established musical aesthetic proved an important act of dissidence.

Last Saturday, the Harriman Institute at Columbia sponsored a concert by the Plastic People of the Universe at the Cutting Room in honor of Václav Havel’s residency at Columbia. Havel’s involvement with the band began in September 1976 when he met the band’s artistic director Ivan Martin Jirous a week

before Jirous and band member Vratislav Brabenec were put on trial and, after claims that their music was vulgar and anti-social, accused of “organized disturbance of the peace.” Jirous was sentenced to 18 months in prison and Brabenec was sentenced to eight. The Plastic People had established a significant following as a result of the unofficial concerts they played outside of government control in the Bohemian countryside, so there was significant public outcry over the musicians’ imprisonments. The human rights organization Charter 77, of which Havel was a member, was formed partly in response to the plight of the Plastic People. Havel later offered his home as a recording space for the band when its members were no longer allowed to rent practice rooms because their professional licenses were revoked. He helped get their tapes to former band member Paul Wilson, who had been forced to return to Canada, where he had started a modest record label.

Wilson, during a symposium on Havel’s literature and politics that took place last

Saturday at Columbia, contended that much of the art produced in Czechoslovakia during the communist era can never have the same impact now as it did in its original context. Seeing the Plastic People play at the Knitting Factory in New York City in the year 2006 doubtlessly means something entirely different than seeing them play an illegal show in 1975 at a friend’s wedding knowing that the police could show up at any moment and find justification to inflict violence upon the crowd. But it is possible that in 2006 it is easier for one to appreciate the band’s purely musical merit.

The audience was encouraged to consider the band’s historical situation because it was announced as soon as the band took the stage that Havel himself was lurking in the back corner of the dimly lit Knitting Factory. This led to much excited murmuring and gesturing from the predominantly Czech crowd, likely scaring away the modest Havel, or at least causing him to retreat deeper into the shadows so he could watch the show in as much peace as possible. No mention was made of him for the rest of the night, but his presence was certainly felt.

The influence of the Velvet Underground on the Plastic People was immediately apparent, though mostly in the band’s emotional detachment and almost threatening stoicism. But this facade gradually melted away through their set. Between lengthy songs, Brabenec, the saxophone and clarinet player, snarled absurd comments like “this song is about waking up and you find a frog in your morning beer” that revealed an incomplete command

of the English language, which ultimately proved endearing in its deceiving naivete. He would then turn to the young bass player, who would whisper to him a translation of his statement, making him laugh. The band let loose most during the cathartic improvisational piece at the end of the encore, during which the stork-like Brabenec hit wince-worthy high notes as he played the saxophone and clarinet at the same time while thrusting his pelvis in a surprisingly fitting act of showmanship that betrayed his 70-odd years of age.

Songs were characterized by the circular interplay between unusual syncopations and a repetitive drone, over which an otherworldly saxophone and violin produced exotic tonalities. The pervasive lyrical and musical weirdness of the Plastic People of the Universe must have been what was most threatening to the communist regime. People fear what they can’t understand. ■

“THE PERVERSIVE LYRICAL AND MUSICAL WEIRDNESS OF THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE MUST HAVE BEEN WHAT WAS MOST THREATENING TO THE COMMUNIST REGIME.”

MORE INFO

PLAYING POLITICS IN THE CSSR

1948
THE COMMUNIST PARTY RISES TO POWER IN NEWLY LIBERATED CZECHOSLOVAKIA

1953
STALIN DIES

1956
KHRUSHCHEV DENOUNCES THE ACTIONS OF STALIN IN HIS “SECRET SPEECH”

1968
POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION UNDER ALEXANDER DUBCEK KNOWN AS THE PRAGUE SPRING.

SOVIET INVASION FOLLOWED BY A PERIOD OF “NORMALIZATION” DESCRIBED AS “STALINISM WITH A HUMAN FACE”

PLASTIC PEOPLE OF THE UNIVERSE BEGAN THEIR MUSICAL CAREER, DESPITE HARSHER CENSORSHIP STANDARDS.

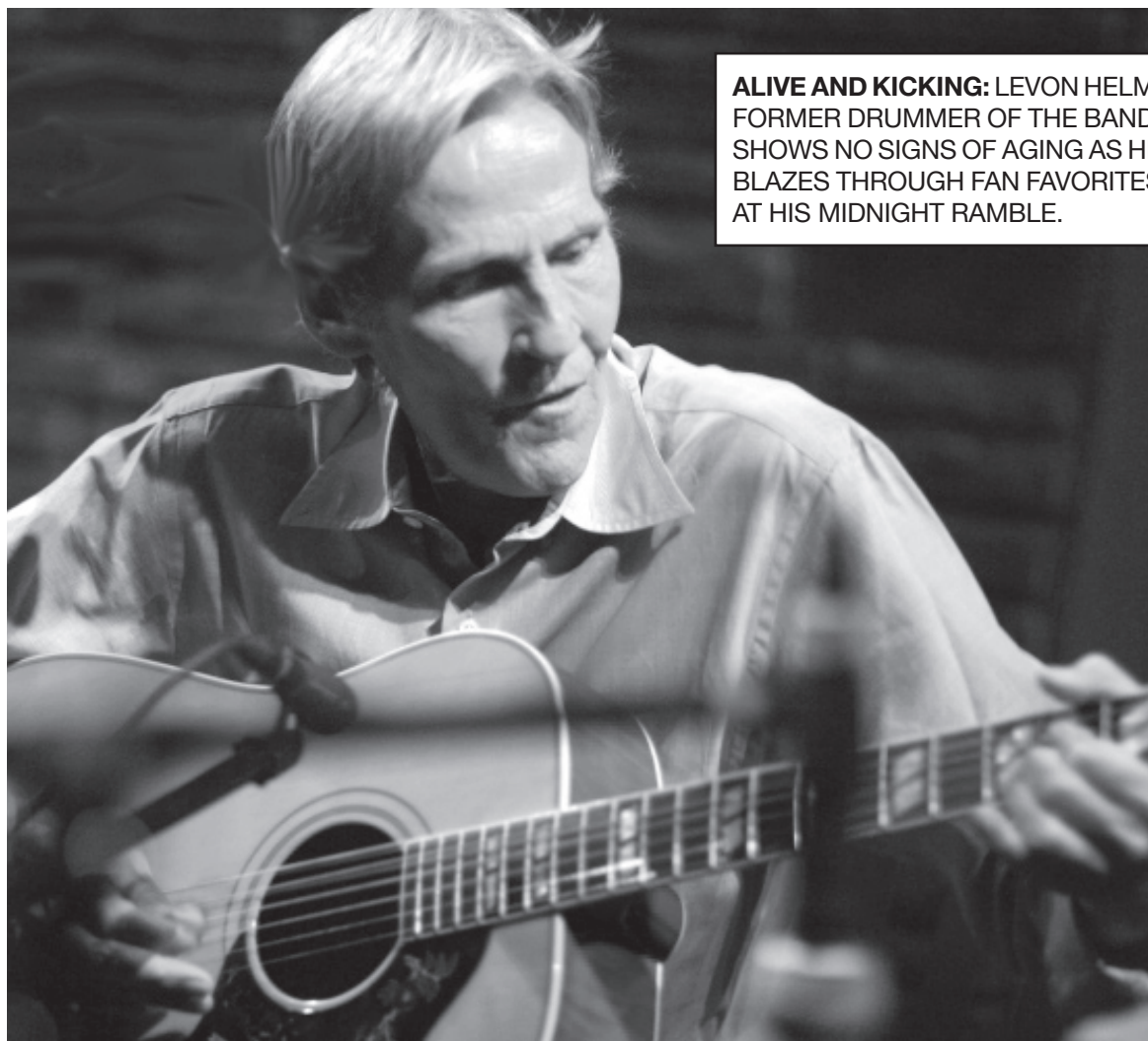
1976
IVAN MARTIN JIROUS AND VRATISLAV BRABENEC ARE TRIED AND CONVICTED OF “ORGANIZED DISTURBANCE OF THE PEACE”

1977
VACLAV HAVEL HELPS FORM CHARTER 77, PARTIALLY IN RESPONSE TO THE BAND’S FLIGHT.

1989
OVERTHROW OF COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT IN THE VELVET REVOLUTION. VACLAV HAVEL IS ELECTED PRESIDENT.



ALIVE AND KICKING: LEVON HELM, FORMER DRUMMER OF THE BAND, SHOWS NO SIGNS OF AGING AS HE BLAZES THROUGH FAN FAVORITES AT HIS MIDNIGHT RAMBLE.



Levon at the Helm

The Legendary Drummer Sings the Blues at His Midnight Ramble

BY JUSTIN GONCALVES

Picture your grandfather getting together with a bunch of his old friends and playing blues covers for over two hours. Your aunt sings harmonies, your cool older brothers play guitar, your 70-year-old black “uncle” wails on the harmonica, and they play every song they can in their expansive repertoire of blues standards—fantastically at that. If your grandfather is Levon Helm, then you’ve probably experienced something similar to this. One Saturday per month, the former singer and drummer of The Band and his group, appropriately titled the Levon Helm Band, put together an intimate blues concert in Helm’s personal barn.

Playing predominantly blues songs, the band rocked each and every middle-aged former hippie in Woodstock, N.Y., that could afford the steep admission price of \$100. While the crowd patiently waited and enjoyed the two opening bands, both of which had been personally selected by Helm, it was clear who the star of the show was. As much of a legend as Helm is, he appeared particularly gaunt and skeletal—he has not aged particularly well—but when he took the stage, screams of “You’re the man, Levon,” and “Levon Fuckin’ Helm!” could be heard among the almost entirely middle-aged attendees, many of whom were a few beers into the night.

Unfortunately, the commencement of Helm’s performance did not match the intensity of his reception. Helm, starting on the mandolin, ran through a few bluegrass tunes, many of which were not adequately rehearsed, and it showed. His bluegrass set concluded with an especially disappointing rendition of the Band favorite “Rag Mama Rag,” though it did not seem like many people took notice. After what could have been the start of a doomed performance, the set picked up in no

time—well, as long as it took for Helm to pick up the drumsticks.

While the rest of the crowd was getting older by the second, Helm seemed to be getting younger as the band blazed through each song, taking detours from the blues standards to perform a favorite of The Band, “Ophelia,” certainly the night’s high point, and Bruce Springsteen’s “Atlantic City.” Helm’s howl soared over the four-piece horn section, led by exceptional trombonist Art Farlow. Physical frailty set aside, Helm’s voice showed little signs of age or the throat cancer that almost robbed him of his life. With closed eyes, one would swear he was once again 26 and singing in *The Last Waltz*, the film of The Band’s famous final concert.

Things have changed quite a bit since the days of *The Last Waltz*, most notably Helm’s notoriously estranged relationship with The Band’s songwriter/guitarist Robbie Robertson. After publicly criticizing Robertson’s management of The Band’s song catalog and his attitude during the latter end of The Band’s career, one must wonder whether or not the absence of many Band songs in the Ramble’s set has anything to do with Band squabbles. Helm has verbally accused Robertson of taking more songwriting credit than was due. This eventually proved to be a rather considerable financial setback for the other musicians in the band, none of whom collected songwriting royalties from album sales after The Band’s dissolution. Outwardly, Helm’s relationship with Robertson does not seem to have impacted his eagerness to perform and please well past his prime, proving that rock ‘n roll isn’t only for the teenagers anymore.

Helm was not the only person in attendance to defy his age. Most of the 200 people in attendance were reliving their youth with old friends, good beer, and great music. For \$100, Levon Helm’s Midnight Rambles allow people to feel young again, if only for one night. ■

FAST TRACKS

Album Reviews

Nina Simone

Remixed & Reimagined

As Twyla Tharp’s Bob Dylan musical recently illustrated, sometimes the classics just aren’t meant to be reinterpreted. *Remixed & Reimagined* appears initially to be a similar gaffe. Luckily, executive producer Scott Schlachter manages to assemble a collection of songs that tinkers with Simone’s sound without losing her style and musical strengths. The 13 tracks, each commanded by a different DJ, splice and loop the original material without butchering it. Though experimenting with songs as well known as Simone’s is tricky, the power and familiarity of her voice goes a long way toward making the album work. While the Groovefinder’s boisterous take on “Ain’t Got No-I Got Life” seems like a natural extension of the song, other tracks such as Tony Humphries’ remix of “Turn Me On” would fall flat without the resonating strength of the High Priestess of Soul. *Remixed & Reimagined* is a respectable effort to take the sound of Nina Simone in a new direction. —Margaret Eby



Bright Eyes

Noise Floor: Rarities 1998-2005

The newest release from Bright Eyes, *Noise Floor: Rarities 1998-2005*, is a collection of unreleased tracks that have previously been available online. This release feels slightly gratuitous following lead singer Conor Oberst’s 2005 releases, especially because Oberst’s fans have probably downloaded most of these songs. The songs were not recorded in a traditional studio setting, which makes them by turns wobbly and intimate. “I’ve Been Eating (For You)” and “Amy in the White Coat” are pathetic and might have been better left as rarities. In contrast, uplifting songs like “Devil Town” and the country “Seashell Tale” are nicely arranged and can almost justify the release of this CD. But Oberst might do well to listen to his critics. He has talent—he should just stop whining. Hopefully Oberst’s next release will be a little more restrained. —Maira Lynch



Jóhann Jóhannsson

Ibm1401—A User’s Manual

Icelandic music has always been cinematically inclined due to the influence of musicians like Sigur Rós, Múm, and Björk. Add Jóhann Jóhannsson to that list. In 2002, he released *Englabörn*, which received rave reviews. His new album, *Ibm1401—A User’s Manual*, follows suit. The IBM 1401 was the first widely distributed computer, and when it arrived in Iceland, Jóhannsson’s father, a computer engineer, discovered that its electromagnetic waves could produce melodies. Expanding on these tunes, Jóhannsson creates an homage to this machine. Majestic and sweeping, Jóhannsson’s music is enough to bring listeners to tears. Spliced in with the music are clips of a voice reading the user’s manual for the computer. These sections can be dull, but the music that follows revives the listener’s interest. Fans of Sigur Rós may find similarities in this work, but Jóhannsson’s music is more classically inclined and less rock-oriented. This is the album that will provide many listeners with those spine-tingling moments that they live for, and in the end, they may even learn about their PC’s ancestor. —Cedric Cheung-Lau





The Bond franchise's wrinkled teat looks a lot blonder these days. *Casino Royale* says there may still be life in it yet.
OPENS FRIDAY



What do Aztecs, cancer, stoned teenagers, hordes of over-zealous geeks, and Wolverine have in common? Darren Aronofsky's *The Fountain*.
OPENS WEDNESDAY



FRENCH KICKS: ON SET, DIRECTOR JACQUES AUDIARD IS IN COMPLETE CONTROL OF HIS FILMS.

Big Frenchman on Campus

Brilliant French Filmmaker Jacques Audiard Visits Columbia for a Screening and Q&A Session

BY MICHAEL DREYFUSS

In his film *The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, director Jacques Audiard impressively depicts a young Parisian struggling to decide his fate. Thomas, an aspiring pianist played by Romain Duris, tries to commit to piano as his profession, following in the footsteps of his deceased mother. His other, and often tempting, option is to follow a life of crime, essentially making his living by stealing real estate from poor illegal immigrants in the suburbs of Paris as his sleazy father did. The film focuses on the personal psychological experience of Thomas as he wavers between the life of his father and of his mother. Rather than make

abstract comments on morality and social issues, Audiard draws you into Thomas' personal struggle to find himself in a confusing world.

The film, Audiard says, is partially autobiographical. "The themes, the relationship between the father and the son," he says, are reflective of his own life. Duris is known in Paris for his honest portrayals of the experience of young Parisians, so when I met Audiard, who appeared at Columbia as a part of the French Film Office's "On Set" program, I had to ask if he had Duris in mind while writing the script. His answer was a curt, "No," but he commented that he wanted an actor who could be both "feminine and masculine."

For the same reason, Audiard chose young French actor Mathieu Kassovitz to play the protagonist, Albert Dehousse, in a prior film, *A Self-Made Hero*. Dehousse makes a life for himself in post-World War II France by making a lie out of his own life. He joins the resistance movement, and through well-told but grandiose stories of his past, achieves respect and a high rank in the French organization.

But with all the success he achieves for himself, Dehousse is still distraught by the fact that his life is a lie. In public, he is charming and impressive, but by himself he is weak and vulnerable, disgusted by the web of duplicity in which he has entangled himself. Audiard provides another impressive look into the psyche of a character, although he says his interest in lying came from his opinion of the French who wanted to deny their cooperation with the Nazis after the second world war. He deals with the issue in a very personal, yet light and almost comic way. "I thought of making an operatic movie, like Peter Sellers," he explains, saying he did not want the film to be heavy.

Audiard's style of focusing on the personal is reflected in the way he makes his movies. He writes and directs all of his films, which is the way things work in France, he says. He knows the story in a way no other director can, so it makes sense that he would make it himself. And when he begins the actual filming process, he forces the actors to know the characters in just as direct a manner as he does. By rehearsing semi-improvised scenes, the actors appropriate the personalities of the characters for themselves, so that when they start shooting, they have become the characters. This method of making films is how he achieves the uniquely personal quality that is the hallmark of his work.

When discussing cinema in general, Audiard notes, "Recently I am rarely shocked." Movies tend to cover similar stories with similar themes and in similar styles. He explains, "Film makes itself on the critics," whom he believes have become too accepting of mediocrity. Audiard reasons that the outsider's perspective drives the filmmakers to always achieve new and interesting forms and uses for film. Audiard's own work, however, is certainly not unoriginal. Hopefully, his future films will continue to impress and shock with their introspective and sympathetic characters. ■

Even Gordon Bombay Can't Elude the Evil Stench of Paul Haggis

On Jun. 5, 1968, Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated in a Los Angeles hotel kitchen. On Oct. 2, 1992, youth hockey classic *The Mighty Ducks* was released, and a star was born. These two historic events have collided in the film *Bobby*, a drama about the day of Senator Kennedy's assassination, written and directed by *Mighty Ducks* star Emilio Estevez.

Estevez, in furthering the recent Altman-esque trend of unacquainted ensemble films (*Crash*, *Babel*, etc...), makes the first of his many mistakes by overcrowding the Ambassador Hotel on that fateful day—there are simply too many people for the movie to focus on. Characters like Joshua Jackson's

political organizer get short shrift because there isn't enough time for the large and eclectic cast. The actor who makes the strongest mark is the vanity-free Sharon Stone as a frumpy, maternal hairdresser. Between this film and *Broken Flowers*, she's atoned for *Basic Instinct 2*. *Bobby* takes its cues from its most immediate influence, *Crash*, in attempting to use the dissatisfaction of the characters as a political point, and this film telegraphs its political ideas just as obviously.

The movie's strength is not its ability to make a political point (few recent movies have done this without seeming didactic, *Crash* included) but rather its characters. Estevez creates an atmosphere like that of an Altman film that doesn't quite hang together, allowing his characters to interact and reveal details about their lives in small but satisfying doses.

But some performers seem to be sleepwalking through the film, notably Anthony Hopkins, who, as the elderly doorman, adds nothing to the film besides its least lively or interesting moments. It's also worth noting that much of the dialogue—again, mainly that hinging on political issues like the war and race—falls flat. It is far more enjoyable to watch Lindsay Lohan (who is actually quite good) be



LINDSAY LOHAN IS WATCHING YOU: THE CAST OF *BOBBY* CHEERED IN SURPRISE WHEN LOHAN ACTUALLY SHOWED UP ON SET.

emotionally manipulated into a loveless marriage by the subtle and shrewd draftie Elijah Wood than to hear her discuss the Johnson administration's failings in Vietnam.

Bobby is not a great film of social significance, though Estevez believes it is. And it never truly comes together as a film—if it works, it does so as a series of disconnected vignettes. Yet these scenes cohere together to create a mood of nostalgia, tinged with failed grasps at sweeping statements, for a great idealist who died too young.
—Dan D'Addario

BOBBY
DIRECTED BY EMILIO ESTEVEZ



Jackson Pollock Gives A New Jersey Resident \$50 Million

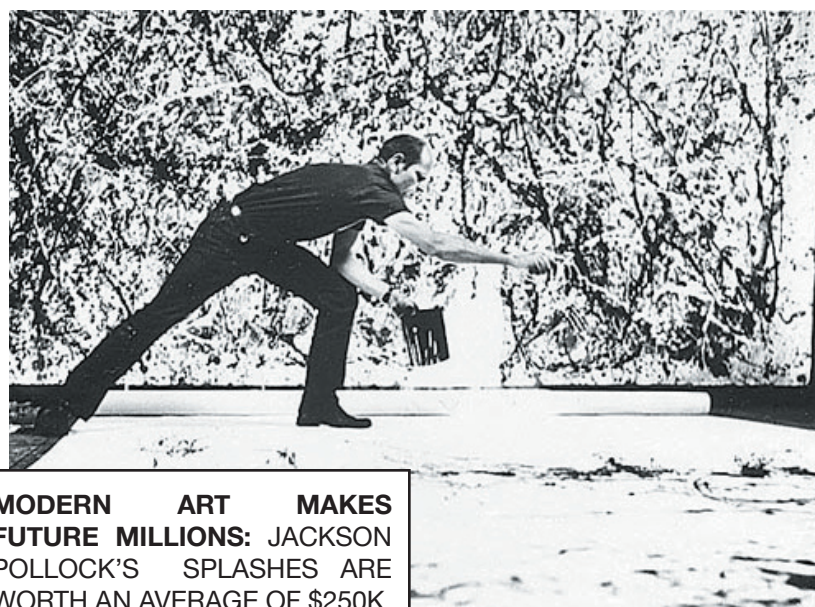
Who the #&% is Jackson Pollock? Those of us who haven't sat through hours of philosophical discussions in Art Hum might have precisely this reaction to one of Pollock's drip paintings. So did Teri Horton. When the 73-year-old former long-haul truck driver with an eighth grade education purchased a painting in a thrift store for five dollars, she was far from knowing who Pollock was and even further from knowing that her latest thrift-store find might actually be an authentic Jackson Pollock painting.

As the huge multi-colored, abstract drip canvas would

not fit into her friend's trailer, Teri wanted to resell the "ugly thing" at a garage sale when a local art teacher proposed that it might actually be a Jackson Pollock worth \$50 million. If it were real. Teri's typically vulgar answer—"Who the #&% is Jackson Pollock?"—marked the beginning of her battle with the art world. For 15 years, Teri has been fighting against art "experts," who refuse to acknowledge that her painting is real, despite the fact that fingerprints have been traced from her canvas to Jackson Pollock's studio in East Hampton.

As Teri continues her conflict with a world that places artistic connoisseurship over forensic evidence, Harry Moses' documentary *Who the #&% is Jackson Pollock?* tells her story with wit and humor. But her story is about more than just someone who found a treasure in a thrift store. It is a social commentary on class in America, as the humble background of the heroine clashes with the educated art establishment elite.

Replete with wit and sarcasm, the film effectively portrays the dynamics of the current art world and the



MODERN ART MAKES FUTURE MILLIONS: JACKSON POLLOCK'S SPLASHES ARE WORTH AN AVERAGE OF \$250K.

WHO THE #&% IS JACKSON POLLACK?

DIRECTED BY HARRY MOSES



process of authenticating a piece of art. Ultimately, the film leaves the audience questioning what would have happened if a so-called art "expert" had purchased the painting instead of Teri Horton. But it is precisely her energetic and funny character that makes the film so unforgettable. Despite having been offered \$9 million for the canvas from a Sultan in Dubai, Teri refuses to sell. Why? Because she, like Pollock himself, knows what the painting is worth and will not sell it for anything less.

—Isabel Bohrer



MINUTEMAN TIP OF THE DAY: GIVE POTENTIAL IMMIGRANTS AMERICAN FAST FOOD—POISONOUS, CHEAP, AND LEGAL!

(Greg Kinnear) travels to Colorado to discover the cause of the problem. Finally, fast food employee Amber (Ashley Johnson) becomes increasingly disillusioned with her job thanks to her quirky Uncle Pete (Ethan Hawke) and her friends in the Environmental Policy Group.

Though Schlosser initially attempted to turn his book into a documentary, he became enticed by the possibility of a fictional film after meeting with Linklater. The two agreed to take the book's title

and key themes and put the rest aside. The resulting film proves much more memorable and persuasive than a documentary on the subject would likely have been—rather than merely telling

the facts, the movie shows the truth by putting those facts into a context that bears an authentic vitality.

The fact that many cast members ceased fast food consumption after reading the book and even worked for free illustrates the personal commitments and values that are conveyed in every performance. Linklater amplifies the talents of the cast by defying Hollywood norms and making a film that doesn't cater to the audience. For example, keeping the dialogue between the Mexican immigrants in Spanish makes perfect sense, but seems revolutionary because it's so rare in mainstream American films.

Likewise, no movie has dared to conclude with several minutes of graphic kill floor footage instead of a happy ending, but the entire film is structured to leave the viewer with that moment.

As Schlosser notes, "if the movie works for you, you'll leave the theater thinking that somewhere in Colorado right now, this is happening." For better or queasy, *Fast Food Nation* does that to a tee.

—Caitlin Halpern

FAST FOOD NATION
DIRECTED BY RICHARD LINKLATER



Mmmm... Feces If McDonald's Served 99 Billion, Cows Would be Extinct. *Fast Food Nation* Looks Into Where Your Patties Really Get Their Meat.

Fast Food Nation is not a pleasant movie. It won't provide a fun time with friends, a wholesome family experience, or a romantic date, especially if watched within weeks of consuming fast food. The film, however, has tremendous success in transforming Eric Schlosser's dense nonfiction book into an engaging story that serves as a powerful indictment of the fast food industry.

Multi-faceted director Richard Linklater follows three intersecting plotlines that represent the basic steps in turning a cow into a ready-to-eat hamburger. Starting with a clichéd but compelling border crossing scene, the film follows three Mexican immigrants, Raul (Wilmer Valderrama), Maria (Catalina Moreno), and Coco (Ana Claudia Talancón), who find work at a United Meat Packing slaughterhouse in Colorado while struggling with drug abuse and assimilation into American culture. When Mickey's, the fictional fast food chain that buys from UMP, discovers that there's literally "shit in the meat," marketing executive Don

Fat Men Rock Satan's Socks Off

You've been patiently waiting for the most awesome film from the most awesome band in the world, right? Well, that film has come courtesy of Tenacious D, the joke band whose unique combination of vulgar humor and heavy metal rocking has launched them to cult status.

The D—as the duo is affectionately known by its fans—consists of actor/comedian Jack Black and Kyle Gass. Their new film, *Tenacious D in the Pick of Destiny* is a big-budgeted musical that tells of the band's journey to becoming the "greatest band in the world."

Park rock opera, part MTV, the film features 15 new songs and memorable cameos by Meatloaf, Ronnie James Dio, Ben Stiller, Tim Robbins, Sasquatch, and, of course, Satan.

Directed by Liam Lynch, the film is an amusing if forgettable stoner comedy, most worthwhile for its spoofy Tommy-like opening and psychedelic musical number "Papagenu" and the riotous faux-concert piece "Master Exploder."

In an interview earlier this week held at the Gibson Guitar Showroom in midtown, Black and Gass spoke about the film and the band's future. While the film is based on the real-life encounter of Black and Gass—who first met in Los Angeles in 1985—no work of art can ever be entirely truthful. "What was the figure again?" queried Gass. "It's 87 percent true and 13 percent bullshit."

"Isn't there anything else in there?" Black chimed in. "Like two percent that's neither true nor false but from another dimension."

The movie was slapped with a hard R for some extremely crass humor. How is the D hoping to reach out to their underage fans? "Everyone's going to buy tickets to Happy Feet and sneak over to the D movie," explained Black.

File-sharing technology and the Internet have played a role in elevating the D to cult status, especially on college campuses. How does the D feel about people stealing their music? "It's a tough question," said Gass, "because everything on the Internet seems kinda free. Except for the really hot pay sex sites. Those aren't free."

Black's attitude was more dire: "There'll be a time probably when you can get every movie and every album and everything that's ever been ever put to tape for free on the Internet, and then the only way to make a living at music or acting will be live theater. We'll all be de-evolutionized to go back to the basics of the Greeks in ancient times."

With a major motion picture, the D might appear to have reached the very pinnacle of awesomeness. But Black and Gass have no plans of disbanding anytime soon. They go on tour later this month with a new show, in which they form a band in Hell with Colonel Sanders, Charlie Chaplin, and the anti-Christ. "It's pretty high production value," according to Black.

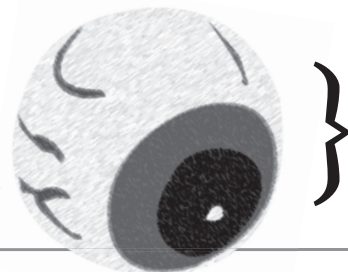
And what's next for the duo? "We'll be buying a small country, 'D Land,'" explained Gass. "Or we could go with our own religion." —A.J. Goldman

TENACIOUS D: THE PICK OF DESTINY
DIRECTED BY LIAM LYNCH

{ROLLING} the eye }

Some mornings, it just doesn't pay to
gnaw through those leather straps.

—Emo Philips, comedian



A WOUNDED SOUL TAKES FLIGHT...



Unbreak My Heart

A Daily Diary of Rebound Romance

BY MARK GONZALES

sunday

My girlfriend broke up with me last night. It was the same tired story everybody gets from their long-distance girlfriend when they break up after four years—the relationship wasn't going anywhere. She also mentioned something about it being “disgusting and probably illegal” for me to send those tastefully composed nude pictures of myself to her sister for her 15th birthday. Actually, most of the conversation revolved around the photos. I'm not the type to cry over a woman, so after I stopped crying I decided to move on. It's been a while since I went out with somebody, but I think I'll be able to pull it off by hitting The Heights tonight.

monday

The Heights has been played out for years. Who needs a crowded bar when you can drink whiskey alone in your room? I stepped on the empty bottle this morning and fucked up my foot. The nurse at St. Luke's was hot, so I tried to use my best lines on her, but all that came out of my mouth was a combination of vomit and cries of pain as she ripped the shards of glass out of my foot. I'll have to think of a way to bump into her again...

tuesday

While peeing on Alma Mater at about 2 this morning I realized how I could get another chance with that nurse. All I needed to do was break my hand just enough to need her to wrap it without turning me into the shrieking mess that I was on Monday. I spent twenty minutes trying to work myself up to punch the side of the statue, but I ultimately lost my nerve. She wasn't my type anyway.

wednesday

Ha! I knew I'd find somebody interested in what I'm selling. Putting myself in these contrived situations to

meet women is outdated. People meet on the Internet now. I spent all night on MySpace and was able to get a date tonight.

thursday

MySpace is bullshit. Whoever runs that thing should be shot. What kind of a world are we living in where 40-year-olds can claim to be twenty and transvestites can claim to be women? The worst part is that she ... he ... it didn't tell me until we were back at my place and I was rounding second base.

... AND CRASHES & BURNS.



friday

I've been aiming too high with medical professionals and middle-aged shemales. That's why I registered for five classes at Barnard next semester. I'll have my pick of all the girls who are too lazy to cross the street. And, hey, if that doesn't work out, I still have little sister's phone number. Fifteen's legal in New Jersey, right? Right?

THUS SPOKE DAN

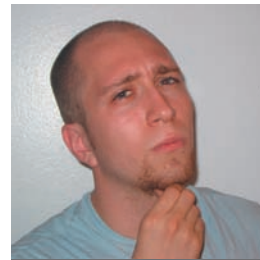
By Dan Haley

This Year, I Voted

Last Election Day, while my parents were voting, I was taking a nap. It was about 7:30 at night, and I had woken up at 1 p.m. Even though I hadn't left my house or gone anywhere, by the time 7 p.m. rolled around I was sprawled out on my couch, asleep, with Comedy Central playing on the TV.

Before they left, my parents asked if I wanted to vote with them. Truthfully, I had no idea where I was registered. For a while I had been registered at Columbia. But then I kept not voting because I'd go home for the Election Day holiday. After not being able to vote last year, I promised myself that I would re-register for my local district.

Looking back on things, though, I couldn't remember if I had re-registered or not. It seemed plausible that I could have, and I remembered being around the



post office a bit sophomore year, but I ... I just couldn't bring myself to believe I had actually done it. It had been over a week since I'd gone grocery shopping and my cable hadn't been working well since September—I'm not really a “go-getter” when it comes to doing things that aren't drinking or pleasuring myself.

So, it came as quite a surprise when my parents called and told me that they saw my name on the list of registered E.D. 10 voters. With a curse, I lifted myself off the couch and put a bubble jacket over my undershirt. I walked to my neighborhood's polling station, which is actually my old middle school.

When I got into the voting booth, I'm not going to lie, I felt a sense of civic duty. There I was, a citizen, ready to fire our incompetent leaders. I hadn't done much research on this midterm election, but I was pretty sure the Democrats were the ones who *weren't* going to waste all my money on making Dick Cheney's close friends wealthier. Eliot Spitzer (D) for governor? I like the death penalty, but damn if I can't use more (or any) financial aid money. Hillary for Senate? I wouldn't want to sleep with her, but that's a good thing in an elected official. I worked my way down to the state senate race and was ready to vote Democratic, sending my small-time, wheeling-and-dealing Republican state senator back to his catering business. But, to my chagrin, I saw he was running unopposed. I voted for him.

Was it worth it—getting off the couch? Considering that New York votes overwhelmingly Democratic and the only race I could really affect had the candidate running unopposed, probably not. But I still feel better about myself. Maybe I'll get my cable fixed too.

MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE
NOV. 23
9 A.M. to 12 P.M.

Staying in the city for Thanksgiving? Then it will be practically impossible to escape floating turkeys, SpongeBobs, and snowmen as they parade down Broadway to the beats of marching bands from around the country. But don't worry if you've skipped town—the parade (as well as others, like the one at Disney World) is the only thing on TV if you're awake Thanksgiving morning preparing the turkey, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce for your lazy family.



CHRISTMAS IN ROCKEFELLER CENTER
NBC
NOV. 29
8 P.M. to 9 P.M.

The Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center epitomizes the holiday season. Like everything else in American culture today, such an emblematic sign of seasonal Americana deserves its own television special, and *Today Show* weatherman Al Roker and newswoman Ann Curry are just the jolly people to host such a special. Christina Aguilera and Sting are two of the performers who will belt out Christmas carols while watching the tree-lighting ceremony, though it's unlikely that Aguilera will be dressed appropriately for the season.



VAMPIRE WEEKEND
THE CAKESHOP
152 LUDLOW ST.
NOV. 16, 9 P.M.

A bunch of recent Columbia graduates who are making music instead of becoming I-bankers? Well, despite the fact they now live in Brooklyn, they're not quite as edgy as one may think. For one, their influences reek of the classicism that comes with a Columbia education. And one of their songs is called "Oxford Comma." So while they may be on their way to the big time, it's still safe to say that they're true Columbia geeks at heart.



AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS
ABC
NOV. 21, 8 P.M.

Music awards shows are just an excuse to get a whole bunch of musicians to perform their current hits on the same night. It's like watching one big concert featuring only the songs on the radio. Or like what watching music videos used to be like, back when MTV still played them. The *American Music Awards*, hosted by Jimmy Kimmel, will provide viewers with the opportunity to watch Beyoncé, the Pussycat Dolls, Gwen Stefani, Mariah Carey, and others perform their catchy tunes, while the awards are presented by celebrity magazine staples like Nicole Richie, Ashlee Simpson, and a bunch of people from *American Idol*.



CASINO ROYALE
OPENS NOV. 17

He's already been dubbed the blonde Bond, and most people assume Daniel Craig will fail to live up to his predecessors, who include Pierce Brosnan and Sean Connery. Yet since Bond movies follow a simple formula (and chances are, even a blonde Bond prefers his martinis shaken, not stirred), Craig should be able to make an enjoyable blockbuster out of *Casino Royale*, the first of Ian Fleming's original James Bond novels. Also in Craig's favor: it would be almost impossible to make a lamer Bond movie than *Die Another Day*, no matter what the actor's hair color is.



OK GO
IRVING PLAZA
NOV. 18

They sing and dance on treadmills in a highly choreographed routine that first made waves on YouTube. Since then, they've performed their signature "Here It Goes Again" on MTV's Video Music Awards, and their video was number one on *TRL* for awhile. But a whole concert? What other tricks do these boys have up their sleeves? Treadmills certainly caught everyone's attention, but it will take more than that for them to prove themselves as valid musicians and entertainers to anyone besides 13-year-olds.

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— New York Times

Saturday, November 18 at 8 PM

Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

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JOHN BEAL, Bass
JACK CALVARI, Guitar

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