

the
eye

VOL. 3, ISSUE 10
NOVEMBER 29, 2007

THE COLD WAR

STEAMY WAYS
TO WARM UP
FOR WINTER

PARADE OF WOLVES • FLEA
CONTROL • LIE TO LIE • CZECH-
ING IN ON EUROPEAN FILM



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Spectator Publishers
John Davisson
John Mascari

Contact Us:
eye@columbiaspectator.com
eye.columbiaspectator.com
Editorial: 212 854 9547
Advertising: 212 854 9558

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DANGEROUS LIAISONS 07-10

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Posted by hmm: [#1] [reply] [track] (posted November 9, 2007 at 12:27 PM)

what happened to the eye?

Posted by moi: [#2] [reply] [track]
(in reply to #1) (posted November 9, 2007 at 12:40 PM)

alex gartenfeld took over.
you were asking why it sucks now,
right?

This first question was posted in response to a Bwog Quickspec feature that lacked mention of *The Eye*. The response, written by one of my less adoring fans, leads me to reflect upon two conditions:

1. All IPs are traceable on the Internet now, which is a fun fact. So if I find you, you will get a warm mention in next week's issue of *The Eye*.

2. This is my penultimate issue running *The Eye*. By next week, there will be a new editor, and I will be forced to acknowledge them, and sing their praises.

And so I will take this time to reflect

upon my tenure as Editor. *The Eye* is a magazine with a small staff, and reflects the efforts of everyone involved. So for every bit that "sucks," there is indeed a bit of me in it to blame. What has happened to *The Eye*?

For one, what began as a fun, college-looking magazine now models its aesthetic after German architecture magazines. In the last semester, we have put to press more white space than any other publication on campus, much to the chagrin of our cherished production editors, chiefly Emily Greenlee and Danielle Ash.

This week, we present a photo shoot, photographed by Joey Shemuel and styled by Xiyin Tang. This caps off *The Eye's* progress from magazine to full-fledged photojournal, with photo editor Tina Gao at the helm. We've replaced one page of substantive content with our editor's favorite things.

But elsewhere, we've moved toward longer, more developed pieces, particularly in the Urbanities section, under Medaya Ocher. We've published the most idiosyncratic interviews under Sara Davis, who single-handedly presaged

the Community Food & Juice wave that threatens to consume as all.

In any other publication I would find the addition of a humor section tacky, but under J.D. Porter's leadership I chuckle fervently. This week, he supplements what has evolved into a veritable section with an interview with an elusive designer with a penchant for recycling quotations from earlier issues of *The Eye*. The designer, who specials in eco-chic cliché, reminds me of no one more than myself.

And so this letter ends as it began, with me. There were so many things I wanted to do with this magazine, and some of them were achieved. Lastly, I would like to thank all of the editors and contributors to *The Eye*, equally.

Alex Gartenfeld

EYE TO EYE: RYAN REINECK INTERVIEWS JOE HEAPS NELSON



When a friend of mine received a nearly life-sized painting of five pom-pom-toting cheerleaders as a housewarming present, I was intrigued. Later, at Gawker Artists, a showcase of up-and-coming local talent, I discovered that my friend was in possession of an original work by the self-proclaimed “world’s greatest cheerleader painter,” Joe Heaps Nelson. A Brooklyn-based artist, Heaps works mainly in series. Aside from cheerleaders, his subjects include tugboats, bulldogs, and mammoths. His work was recently shown at the third incarnation of the Guild of the Black Eagle, a salon exhibition held semi-annually at Hochbaum Studio on Second Avenue. It can also be seen at Jack the Pelican Presents in Williamsburg.

How would you describe your painting style?

It’s really informed by pop sensibility. But I like the texture of the paint, too. If I think about painters who have had an influence on me, Manet would be a big one. So, I might have a pop subject matter, but I like to keep my brush strokes a little bit sexy.

You’re from Iowa, right? Do you think that has had an influence on your work?

Well, whenever you’re in a place, you’re always thinking about a different place. And being from Iowa is one of the things

that makes me different from my peers. My hometown is Des Moines, Iowa. That midwestern perspective makes me unique.

When did you realize that you wanted to focus on cheerleaders?

When I started doing cheerleaders I thought it was fun because it’s a sort of grassroots-level show-biz. So you know, I get a kick out of that—pageantry, the big show. But then I realized I was onto something when I started getting into trouble for photographing cheerleaders.

Uh-oh. What kind of trouble?

The principal and the cops threw me out of a high school football game. And I realized I was onto something pretty good.

It seems like a lot of your work is inspired by where you come from—but almost in jest of your past.

Well, I mostly paint stuff that I get a kick out of. Stuff that amuses me. But I hope that others will appreciate it too. I think about what my work is going to look like in context. Context is everything, especially if you’re working in a pop mindset. I think my work may point out something about pop culture and our society in a very didactic way. The underlying context is always prosperity.



OREGON STATE CHEERLEADERS (LEFT), HOORAY FOR AGRICULTURE (RIGHT)

It’s always prosperity?

Yeah. We have a very rich country that provides us leisure time for baroque pursuits, like cheerleading. So that’s always present in my work.

I think that’s especially the case in your painting *Hooray for Agriculture* (image top right).

Yeah, yeah. That painting is a signature piece. That one was a great breakthrough for me because it was a chance for me to take the cheerleader thing to a new level and it’s a spoof on marketing without using any brand names. Although they are agricultural commodities like milk, corn, beef. But it’s also a sincere tribute to the farmers that produce our food. We need them!

How have your cheerleaders changed since you started the series?

Oh, they’ve gone through lots of different phases. I started in 1999, right after I had done a painting of stewardesses, and I thought I’d do cheerleaders. When I first began I was enamored with my subject matter. I thought it was a really fun idea and I didn’t want to leave anything out. I almost took a journalistic approach. I thought, “People in New York City wouldn’t even believe how funny this is.”

So you had a definite interest in documenting cheerleading?

Oh yeah, I almost felt like I was from National Geographic or something, bringing back this exotic culture. I became a little less literal just a couple years after that and I began focusing more on figure and motion. It became more of a formal practice of painting. And then I became more imaginative and started incorporating other sorts of comments, for example in *Hooray for Agriculture*. I use the cheerleaders as a way to say something else.



Was it also a way of preserving your hometown once you’d moved away?

Well, it was more a sense of sharing. To tell you the truth, when I was growing up, cheerleaders weren’t even that big of a deal. I’m from a pretty big town. So it was more the idea that I’d stumbled onto something pretty good. I couldn’t believe that Warhol or Rosenquist or that first generation of pop artists hadn’t seized upon it. Cheerleading is about the most pop subject in the world. It’s something that you’re supposed to look at. It’s supposed to be visually entertaining. And it’s just like making yourself into a human cartoon really, with all the smiling and flying around.

How do you choose what subject matter you’re going to paint in series? How did you get from cheerleaders to tugboats?

It depends on what I’m interested in at the time. And I can go off on these tangents where I do a lot of research and develop a body of work on a number of things at the same time. So depending on what I get interested in, that’s what I’m likely to develop into subject matter.

Any ideas for future series?

Well, that’s for me to know and you to find out. I often wonder what the next thing is going to be and its sort of a natural outgrowth of what I’m interested in. I always go back to truckin’ and tugboats and hot rods, and all that good stuff. So we’ll see. We shall see.

IMAGES COURTESY OF JOE HEAPS NELSON

URBANITIES

THE BENEFITS OF THE BUBBLE

BY MARTHA TUREWICZ



IT COMES UPON ALL OF US, HOWEVER long the wait: the time when, prying our eyes from dog-eared textbooks, extracting ourselves from the armchairs of Butler (having arrived early, of course, to snag the most comfortable one), we stumble into the thick and tepid air from beyond the doors. You may take advantage of this magical turn of affairs by loping victoriously into the barely-remembered embrace of your bed. This is all well and good, a natural physical reaction. However, supposing your studying has left you to emerge in a complete different state—the infinite ounces of Columbia coffee you drained to carry you through Herodotus have left your nerves fizzing, a lack of sleep has left you oddly energetic, or perhaps the sheer joy of having scaled the mountain of work before you has left you bursting with enthusiasm—well, what do you do?

Depending on the time of day, you could rally your friends to cruise student housing for whatever hedonism is proffered there. You could tackle, or attempt to tackle, in the cases of the less cartographically gifted, the cruelly capricious subway system to explore the other branches of Manhattan or perhaps investigate another borough, where you rationalize that something ought to be happening, at any hour, that would be worth the endless vicissitudes of sweaty train rides.

But maybe you've had your fill of dorm-room delights, spent enough time cruising other neighborhoods, in which case you ask yourself "What now?" fending off the vague guilt that comes from managing to find nothing of interest to do in New York City, of all places.

I suggest you take stock of the things

around you.

Maybe your immediate reaction to this concept was one of disdain: "As though there were anything interesting to do in the Morningside Heights Bubble! There's a reason people call it Boring-side Heights, you know." Pauline Brown, BC '11, notes: "If you're under 21, the only fun things to do are eat at restaurants, like the Indian one on Amsterdam." Sonya Bach, BC '11, chimes in "The only nice café to sit at is the Hungarian."

A few weeks ago, I would have agreed entirely with them. However, a bit of journalistic investigation has proved me wrong.

Proceeding in baby steps beyond Butler, we find events of note on our very own campus. Venture into the Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery to admire the current exhibit, *Revolutions: A Century of Makonde Masquerade in Mozambique*. When I asked around if people had heard of the gallery, Brown hadn't heard of it, while Bach offered that she "walked by it once by accident but never went in." The exhibition has been created under the direction of the curator Alexander Ives Bortolot, stemming from his research, which included a year spent living among the Makonde, who are indigenous to Mozambique. Included are over 60 examples of Makonde art, including helmet masks, drums, jewelry, and performance objects integral to mapiko, a performance genre unique to the region. The exhibit aims to display both the storied tradition and the evolution into contemporary times of mapiko.

Moving along, you could also take a seat in Miller Theatre for the performance of the opera *What's Next*, or *Bach for Orchestra*, or

Complete Beethoven String Quartet. Every month the theatre features a rich variety of performances. As Columbia students, you're eligible for discounted tickets at appealingly reasonable prices.

Mosey on down to the wonderful Postcrypt Coffeehouse in the basement of St. Paul's Chapel any Friday or Saturday evening to enjoy a candlelit acoustic experience. About a month ago I caught a great performance of New York recording artist Jenn Lindsay, who brands her music style 'anti-folk.' Beyond the tunes, the free popcorn and cozy intimacy of the venue (which seats 35 people max) enhanced the relaxing experience.

There are also film screenings to be found on campus, particularly in the small brick building which houses Maison Française, just a few steps away from St. Paul's. In there, you can check out their Cinema Thursdays series. Brown, who went to one of the screenings, said it was OK, and adds that "Maison Française is awesome. They have cool parties, like the Eurotrash one coming up." Bach enjoys their café events, while Eli West, BC '11, notes that "It's a good way to meet other French-speaking students."

If you're more interested in music than in film, try visiting Smoke restaurant and jazz club, which features various types of jazz every night of the week. At La Negrita café lounge, on Mondays you can attend Bluegrass Guitar with Toby King, or Trivia Night on Wednesdays. For something a bit closer by, check out the Jazz Brunches at Havana Central, held on Sundays at noon.

For those more readily engaged by literary pursuits, National Book Award-nominated

author Edwidge Danticat along with Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Jonathan Demme will discuss her new memoir *Brother, I'm Dying at Symphony Space* as part of the Thalia Book Club series, which will also feature, in addition to other prominent writers over subsequent months, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Ford. Also worth seeing are SIP coffee bar and lounge's literary readings, which are held on a weekly basis.

You could also stop by the Nicholas Roerich Museum, which features the eponymous Russian artist's work. A prolific painter of pieces that explore spiritual quests as well as mythology and the natural world (the museum permanently houses about 200), Roerich also wrote books and poems, and kept a daily commentary that he titled *Diary Leaves*. In addition to this, check out the Emmanuel Merisier Exhibit at the Mehu Gallery on 100th Street to absorb some abstract art or El Taller Latino Americano's Grady Alexis Gallery, which will be displaying the exhibit "Awakening", featuring paintings and mixed media by Colombian artist Turizzo Anaya.

Of course, these suggestions are in no way the only things to do around these parts. See for yourself what else is out there—the important thing is to remain hopeful that you will find something exciting and will never have to leave the Columbia bubble.

PHOTOS BY TINA GAO

EYE TO EYE

THE EYE INTERVIEWS CU'S TWO RHODES SCHOLARS



GEORGE OLIVE, CC '08

Deans of Admissions dream of prospective students like George Olive, CC '08. When the Rhodes and Marshall scholarship recipients were announced earlier this month, Olive got two pleasant surprises—he'd been chosen for both awards. Because each scholarship is exclusive, Olive couldn't accept both, so he declined the Marshall. Despite his status as one of the most celebrated college seniors in the country, Olive is earnest and articulate, and he manages to render infectious his enthusiasm for international energy policy. We'd give him a scholarship, too.

—Alexandria Symonds

What made you decide to take the Rhodes?

The most important difference is that the Marshall allows you to study anywhere, and the Rhodes is tied to Oxford itself. I was planning to go to Oxford either way, and given that, I decided that I would rather be in the program that was centered at Oxford.

What are you going to be studying?

I'll be reading for a Master's in Economics ... I'm hoping to specialize in development economics surrounding energy infrastructure. That's what really interests me. Specifically, the research I'm hoping to do surrounds questions like, "What is it that makes a region or a country or an economy at a particular time suitable or not suitable for energy investment?"

So would you support nuclear proliferation in Iran?

Iran is an interesting case because they have so much fossil energy sitting under them. From a purely energy-security point of view, Iran is one of the weakest arguments for nuclear energy. I would say that for nuclear energy to re-emerge as a major contributor to total energy supply, what's going to have to happen is that we'll have to transcend this nation-by-nation

approach where nations assert their autonomous right to pursue any sort of energy they want.

As someone who is the face behind one of the numbers, what do you think of the Rhodes and Marshall numbers game that goes on—the competition between schools?

I think, for instance, it's pretty obvious that Yale has a structure that is more conducive to this game. The residential college system—they have people in those residential colleges who pick you out when you're a freshman or a sophomore and they help you from then on, and you're always under their tutelage and watchful eye. We don't have anything like that here. I mean, the Columbia way of doing things is particularly not suited for these sort of scholarships.

What's your number one piece of advice for someone who wants to apply?

Don't be afraid to march up to a professor who does something you think is interesting and ask them about it, and ask them if there's anything you can do for them. Kids at Columbia are smart, in general. When it comes to these kinds of things, you are your own worst enemy—as corny as it sounds. It's really just about thinking that you can do it. You figure out pretty early on, at least most people, that nobody is ever going to open a door for you and push you through here.

What's your life like besides being a Rhodes scholar?

I think I'm a pretty normal guy. I'm not really overly cerebral, I don't think. I snowboard. I'm from a small town in Missouri. Those sorts of things.



JASON BELLO, CC '08

Jason Bello, CC '08, recently helped Columbia break its five-year Rhodes Scholarship drought. In addition to general academic excellence, he holds officer positions in Gayava and the BSO, hosts a cooking show on CTV, and has run a marathon. He sat down with an old friend, me, to talk about things.

—J.D. Porter

Someone told me that if you're a Rhodes finalist the judges make you go to some kind of fancy dinner with them.

They make it sound like it's a fancy club, but it's not. What happens is if you're invited for an interview one component is social. I had a cocktail party at a fancy New York social club and the food was delicious. I think all the other finalists and I were like, it's OK to have a glass in your hand, to have a drink, but by no means eat anything.

Why?

Because for one thing it takes two hands and then you don't want to shake a greasy hand that's been holding a hotdog or something. So I think all of us went in saying we weren't going to eat anything. But then they had all this really great food. They had braised beef meatballs that were deep-fried, polenta fries with black truffles on top—really good food, and not a single person was eating it, myself included. And after a while of all this food passing by me, I just broke down, and started eating, and the food was delicious. I did not regret that decision.

Did anyone else break down?

No, I was the only one. Everyone was being so uptight and not eating, but you can look comfortable by comparison, that's what I thought. So I started eating.

Are you still getting up at 7:00 a.m. every day?

Yeah, because I have class at 8:30 a.m. — so that'll get you up.

Is that the secret to your success? Early to bed, early to rise?

It could be wrong. Different things for different folks. Or different strokes for different folks, I guess. That's the way it goes.

How did the marathon running go?

It was great. I ran with my friend James. I guess it's a bit misleading to say I ran it with James. I started with James, and he finished an hour before me. So it's a bit misleading to say we ran together for any length of time.

How long did it take?

It took me a cool four and a half hours.

How does that stack up?

It's middle of the pack. Or it's slightly worse than middle. I'd still call myself middle of the pack.

Which marathon was it?

Virginia Beach. It was sponsored by Yuengling, the beer company, and it was right after my 21st birthday, so my first legal drink was at the finish line.

You had a beer after running a marathon?

You know, you'd be surprised, after you've run 26 miles there is not a thing you want more. When you finish 26 miles and you've got this ice-cold beer in your hand, it's like a Coors Light commercial.

PHOTOS BY TINA GAO

EYE TO EYE

J.D. PORTER INTERVIEWS SOMEONE OBSCURE

Gustav Breman has been described by fashion king Karl Lagerfeld as “the rare designer who merges brilliant form with dazzling, world-conscious luminescences of intrigue.” After a notorious disappearance into the Italian foothills in 1986, he emerged to create the Institut de Mode Organic, the premier organization for creating and promoting organic fashion. We caught up with him outside of one of his five Soho apartments for a rare interview.

What are you working on right now?

I’m buried in plans for the spring line. The concept is a simple, American-eclectic neighborhood shops and boutiques with seasonal, local ingredients—organic whenever possible. It’s psychedelic, almost like a jukebox musical.

Sounds fascinating, as usual.

It builds anticipation ... and hopefully not so much expectation. Really drony, hypnotic, kinda glam-meets-regal.

How do you even begin to create something like that? What is your process?

I start with what one initially perceives. I think of it as creating systems of thought. It’s a form of intervention, a form of transformation, and it’s always about questioning frameworks, paradigms, and concepts. It means to be a designer of ways of looking at the world.

Fascinating. And does that mean you have to be as reclusive as everyone says?

Ah, well, I work in my apartment, because it’s the only place where I am somewhat sovereign over distraction. I cannot function in the office. Bad carpeting is inimical to good fashion, you know?

You’ve been one of the major names in fashion for years, but I’ve always wondered how you got into it coming from Duluth.

Actually it was a piece that *Time* magazine did in the early ’60s on the debutante industry. Of course it’s in that *New Yorker* prose, but it’s sort of a design of artistic and philosophical adventure. I just couldn’t believe what I was seeing, you know. The people writing this stuff were Truffaut, and Godard, and Alan Rennet. I had to know more.

And what about the organic aspect? Did your time in Italy change the way you thought about health?

Not really. Actually at the time, I was a hard-core smoker. I was really unhealthy ... I smoked two packs a day and every day for breakfast I had a Tab and a

Snickers bar. While I was in Italy, it’s kind of ironic that I didn’t study organic fashion at all but rather ancient architecture and civilization.

Did that influence you in terms of how ancient societies viewed natural fashion?

Well I shy away from going back to the past and idealizing indigenous communities because there are great stereotypes with those type of things.

You had a famous fallout with Patrik Rzepski over his contributions to the Institut. What happened?

You know, Rzepski’s collections tend toward the macabre. The Institut is about organic fashion, it’s right there in the title. I’m very attached to the concept, so that means someone making \$2,000 snakeskin dresses and even more indulgent python trenches may not qualify.

So if not Rzepski, who does the Institut want?

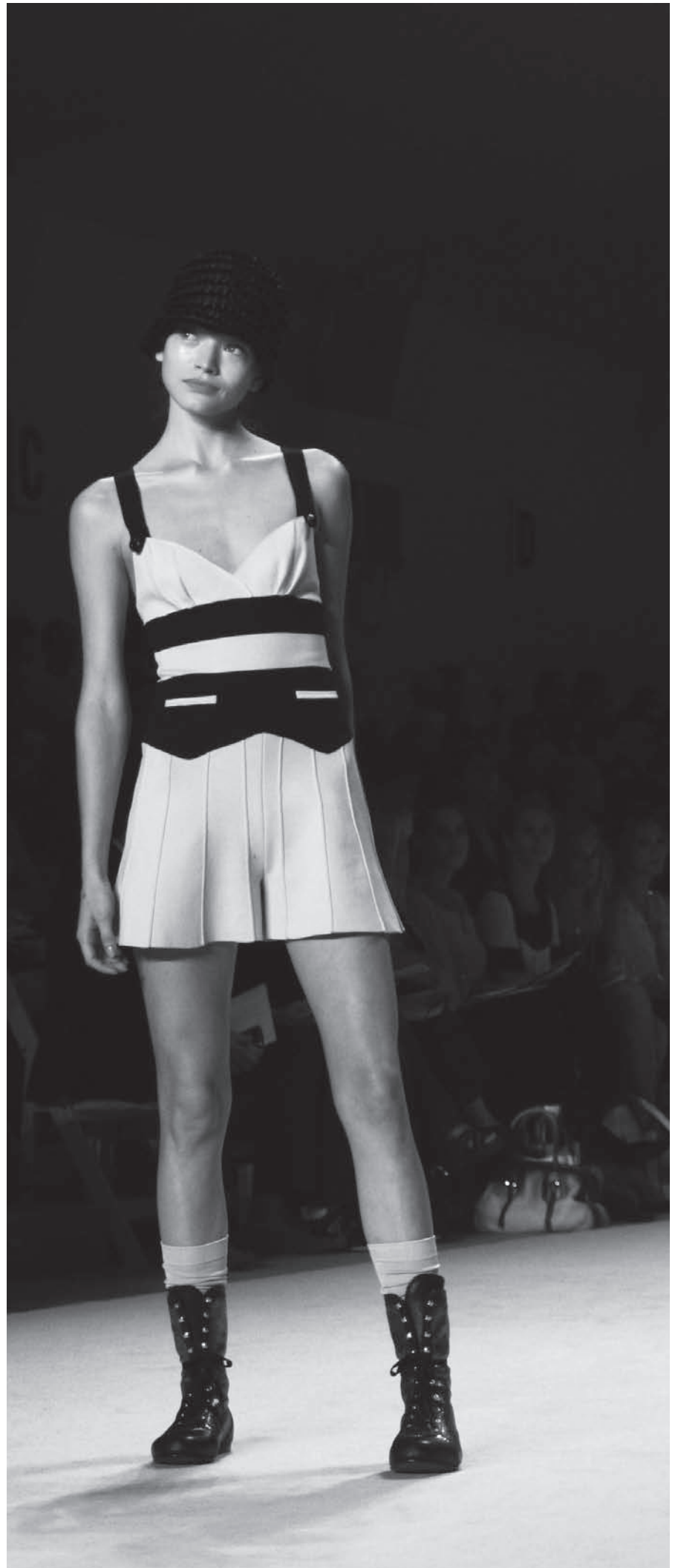
To a degree I need performers, like good performers, and I usually ask people to scream, or to stalk, or to leer, or lean.

Are Americans finally catching on to the Institut?

Americans connect very quickly but sometimes it can be a little bit surface, but maybe that’s the nature of it. By creating these kind of alliances with the more reliably cultured cultures, you know, the physicality of the medium changes the nature of what’s there. Sustainability is on everyone’s minds.

Next week is Fashion Week. Are you ready?

Oohhh [cringing]. Yeah.





**STYLED BY XIYIN TANG
PHOTOS BY JOEY SHEMAUEL**

DANGEROUS LIAISONS



on sara:
blouse patrik rzepski
sweater telfar
zip tights patrik rzepski
patent heels dior

on cameron:
mesh vest, graphic tee, trousers
patrik rzepski





on sara:
cloche andrew parrish
blouse patrik rzepski

on reni:
hat andrew parrish



headwrap, scarf,
mittens 3-in-1
telfar
dress patrik rzepski
oxfords marc by
marc jacobs
purse balenciaga

thank you to:
shirley chen, dasha
chirkov, john mc-
govern, alex garten-
feld, and clara voss

special thanks to:
sara ziff, cameron
moir, and reni laine;
patrik rzepski and
kelly mills at black
& white pr; lucky
strike

MUSIC BRINGING FREAK-FOLK BACK HOME

BY EVA GONZALEZ-RUSKIEWICZ



BEDROOM EYES: MATTHEW HOUCK LAYS IT ALL OUT, BOTH LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY, FOR HIS BAND PHOSPHORESCENT. HE EVEN CONFRONTS TIGERS!

MATTHEW HOUCK, THE MAN BEHIND the Brooklyn-based alternative-folk and blues band Phosphorescent, is quite a charmer.

When I call him before his Cake Shop show on November 10, he apologizes profusely for the noise level, then jokingly yells at his bandmates in the car to be quiet. “Sorry,” he says, “We’re driving in our van and it’s kind of hard to hear, especially with them.” I can’t help but smile at this gruff affection for his band, especially since Houck’s MySpace page proudly proclaims that Phosphorescent is the “best band in America, I would not kid you.”

Houck’s latest release, *Pride*, combines his heart-felt lyrics with gritty production for a unique and soaring release. His simple instrumentation and occa-

sional voice-breaks remind me of an old-fashioned crooner—he creates a perfect balance between the soft and the loud. *Pride* cements Houck’s reputation as a brilliant songwriter. The *London Evening Standard* called him “the most significant American in his field since Kurt Cobain,” and *Paste* magazine featured Phosphorescent as “Band of the Week” in its October 26 issue.

For me, Houck’s appeal comes from this strange balance between sweetheart and bad boy. During the show I attended, just hours after speaking to him on the phone, he first passed around a steadily emptying bottle of Don Cuervo tequila to his band, then ran out in a semi-drunken stupor to thank the rest of Phosphorescent and the audience for being there. And he did it all in such a heartfelt and honest

manner, I almost blushed. Of course, the crowd loved it.

Houck isn’t one to downplay the success of his tour. “It’s been going really, really well, really amazing,” he said. “Yeah, this band that we have right now is great.” He claims that almost all of his shows have been incredible, with the exception of “a few stinkers.”

It makes sense that Houck loves the road—he got his start at the age of 18, living in his car and playing folk and country covers. Growing up, he listened to everything he could get his hands on. “I’m kinda of the opinion that every little thing gets you there somehow.” He made good on this promise at Cake Shop, at least, keeping with his roots and closing his set with a loud and relentless cover of Elvis Presley’s “Suspicious Minds.”

And as for the meaning behind his band’s enigmatic name? “I just thought it was a really pretty word. I’ve had that name for a lot of years now, and I’m trying to make it become its own thing. But when I originally named the band I thought it was just a really beautiful word, the connotations, the open-endedness of it.”

Asked what he thinks about the current state of folk, he laughs.

“There’s some good stuff out there,” he says. “There’s some really lazy writers, purely in terms of songwriting—I think that a lot of people are just writing a bunch of shit. But there are plenty of good things out there as well.”

Houck has explored the range of those

“good things.” I am struck by the overall difference in technique of Phosphorescent’s new album from its previous release, *Aw Come Aw Wry*. It’s not that the style of writing has changed, but the difference in the way the songs are recorded really intrigues me.

When Houck speaks about the changes, he says: “I don’t exactly know really why. I knew from the outset what I wanted this record to sound like and a number of times, it was just a matter of making it happen. I just think I became better at recording, and between now and the last record it, you know, it shows more. The way it sounds, just working towards this idea I had in my head of what I wanted it to sound like, and trying to make it happen.”

Unsurprisingly, Houck takes the praise he has received in stride. “I don’t know about the future. I don’t think I’m ever going to stop doing this, though. ... I just don’t know exactly what form it’s going to take.” One thing is for sure: Houck has fallen in love with New York City. He recently moved from Georgia to Brooklyn, and proclaimed to his Cake Shop audience that he has more fun in New York than most places.

And as evidenced by the crowd at Cake Shop, New York loves Matthew Houck as well. Though he isn’t the brightest star on the freak-folk scene—Devendra Banhart will always hold that position—Houck’s work grows ever more brilliant.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MYSPACE

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Mondays at Upstarts!: **\$10**
Tues-Thurs 9:30pm: **\$10**
Fri/Sat 11:30pm: **\$15**
After Hours: **\$5**

SET TIMES:
All Shows: 7:30 & 9:30pm
w/11:30pm set Fri/Sat.
Upstarts!: 7:30 & 9:30pm Mon.
After Hours: after last
artist set Tue-Sat.
Dinner served nightly.

RAISED BY WOLVES

BY ALEXANDRIA SYMONDS



TOP LEFT: THE INSPIRATION FOR IT ALL, TOP RIGHT: AIDS WOLF, BOTTOM RIGHT: WOLFMOTHER

THERE'S A YOUTUBE VIDEO SERIES CALLED "THE Last of the Hipsters." It isn't all that funny, but it does feature at least one pertinent answer to the question, "Do you think any girls survived the apocalypse?"

The response? "Well, I still only date girls who listen to Wolf Eyes seriously and Wolf Parade ironically."

It seems like a throwaway line, but think about it: both Wolf Eyes and Wolf Parade feature Sub Pop certification—the first step to discerning indie-kid approval—and favorable *Pitchfork* coverage. But Wolf Eyes is a noise-rock threesome that boasts legendary credentials: Andrew W.K. is a former member and they've toured with Sonic Youth. Wolf Parade started as a side project formed to support an Arcade Fire tour—in other words, way too mainstream for the shrewd hipster to pay serious attention.

It does beg the question, though: what's with the influx of lupine-themed bands and artists recording today? Parade and Eyes are certainly in varied—if not necessarily always good—company. Look at the Oh My Rockness gig listing on any given week and you're bound to find some combination of the ten or so groups on the scene who draw inspiration from the noble animal.

The odd thing is how many different—and specific—demographics these bands cater to. For Japanese punk lovers, there's Guitar Wolf. For the folksy-chillout-singalong crowd, there's Jason Anderson, better known as Wolf Colonel. Fans of high-drama, baroque-pop divas can look no further than Patrick Wolf (née Patrick Apps—the reference is deliberate, not a genealogical coincidence). If you like your music a little hard to listen to, there's dissonant experimental group AIDS Wolf. Not to mention Peanut Butter Wolf, Sea Wolf, Peter and the Wolf, the more mainstream Wolfmother, and We Are Wolves. For the Francophile, there's the arty, Broken Social Scene-meets-Sufjan Stevens seven-member group, Le Loup, who made waves at this year's CMJ Festival.

The wolf occupies a unique place in indie taxonomy—no other noun provides such a clear snapshot of the nebulous character of the indie scene. These bands fill small, specific sub-subgenres—it's dismissive to call a band like We Are Wolves simply "indie rock" without highlighting

their post-punk inclinations. Sure, there are the ursine and cervine counterparts—Panda Bear and Grizzly Bear; Deertick, Deerhunter, Deerhoof. But the examples are fewer and farther between, and taken together they don't represent the same complete landscape. And, of course, if you break out your vinyl, you can listen to the retro-kitsch (so popular with the Sub-Pop set) of Steppenwolf.

So what is it, exactly, about the wolf aesthetic that today's musician finds so fascinating? In most cases, it seems like the answer is lack of a better option. Wolf Parade's official bio tells the story of the band's nomenclature as follows:

"Great," they said. "Now we need a name."

"How about Wolf Parade?"

"No, that's stupid."

"Okay, well, what about Wolf Parade?"

"Who are you? I'm drunk."

"Wait, I've got it ... Wolf Parade!"

"Perfecto Mondo!"

AIDS Wolf's Serigraphie Populaire—Seripop to fans—explained in an October 2005 interview with *Discorder* that their name served as an homage to An Albatross and Sick Lipstick, as well as "a message that we as humans must take care for our animal siblings as their health is a barometer of our own survival." You think she's being sarcastic until she goes on to advise fans to pick up careers in organic farming instead of becoming designers.

Le Loup, on the other hand, may be part of a new generation of "wolf" bands: those that pile an extra level of self-awareness on top of the already dubious affinity for the animal. In an interview with the *DCist* blog, the band acknowledged that its name was rejected by a former project in which Le Loup co-founder Sam Simkoff was involved. "It was probably a joke—something along the lines of, 'Look how many bands right now use the word "wolf" in their name—how can we capitalize upon that? Now how can we make it sound even more pretentiously indie? Say it in French!'"

For Alex Brown Church, alias Sea Wolf, the association is a more earnest one. He told *TA Live* that "as an imaginative, only child that lived in the country and

played in the woods alone a lot, I identified with the wolf. I always had a strong love of animals, and I think I felt like I connected with them more than a lot of the people around me at the time. I think the thing I always liked about them was how intelligent and beautiful they are, and also felt like I related to how misunderstood they were." A real sea wolf is, of course, a kind of catfish—but don't tell Church that.

Maybe that's the irony of the wolf situation: the animal is rife with clashing symbolism that seems designed for the *Chunklet*-reading, free trade coffee-toting Lower East Sider. The wolf considers itself a loner—yet it travels in a pack for protection. There's a certain element of danger left over from fairy tales—but evil never wins out. It makes a lot of sense, then, that Alex Brown Church relates to the wolf as a fellow misunderstood spirit ... just like everybody else does.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CALIFORNIAWOLFCENTER.ORG, MYSPACE

FILM A BRAVE NEW CZECH-POINT BY EMILY RAUBER

Disney + Bunuel = Svankmajer's ALICE



ALICE
DIRECTED BY JAN ŠVANKMAJER
THE MASTER CZECH ANIMATOR
An extraordinary piece of work: brilliantly inventive
& piercing, original vision."—Terrence Rafferty, THE NEW YORK

"Disney + Bunuel = Svankmajer." —Miloš Forman
"Monty Python fans will
especially enjoy this!" —Washington Post



"Svankmajer is a fierce Czech genius, a highly
unconventional animator."

**FILMS BY JAN ŠVANKMAJER, ONE OF
THE LUMINARIES OF CZECH CINEMA.**

JUST BECAUSE MEMORIES OF VÁCLAV Havel's visit to Columbia have made way for more volatile world leader experiences, doesn't mean the Czech Republic's presence has disappeared completely from New York, or even from the University.

Sure, trips to beer halls in Astoria or Rangers games at Madison Square Garden have long served as reminders to those who seek them, but the city also benefits from a diverse range of offerings from the small-but-distinctive Eastern European country. In the last few years, Czech films—and not just the Hollywood blockbusters produced within its borders—have found more exposure with a growing audience, and there has been no shortage of festivals, series, and retrospectives spotlighting the country's cinematic achievements.

"The Havel residency last fall was great, because it allowed both me and, I think, a fairly wide swath of Columbia students to meet first hand a living legend of Czech literary and political life," says Christopher Harwood, an instructor of Czech language, literature, and culture in Columbia's Slavic department. "The activities of the Czech Center, the Czech Consulate General, and the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the U.N. bring a steady stream of Czech political and cultural celebrities through New York—a resource few other American cities can boast."

New York does have an advantage in this arena, and though many people may not be familiar with a wide range of Czech figures, Czech cinema has bred some followings.

"Czech cinema is as wide as American cinema," says Irena Kovárová, a programmer who has worked on a number of film series in the city, including retrospectives with MoMA, BAMcinématek, and the Anthology Film Archives. "You have some auteurs—[Jan] Švankmajer is a typical representative of that," she says, citing the seminal surrealist director with a penchant for stop-motion animation and crawling cow tongues. "Nobody else does that."

Though Švankmajer may be one of the most well-known Czech directors working today—at least to a certain crowd—he is by no means representative of Czech film in general. "[He] has an intense, international cult following that depends only partly on his work as a film maker," Harwood says. In fact, unlike most Czech directors, Švankmajer has found much greater success outside of his native country. "It could be because of him calling himself surrealist, which is probably not so well understood there. It doesn't have the same connotations," Kovárová says. "He's a category of filmmaker that has his own audience—except at home."

And Czech directors do need their home audiences, as success in foreign markets is often limited to specialized distribution and festival screenings. Within the Czech Republic itself, Czech films can often hold their own against larger, imported productions. "Czechs go to see Czech films," Kovárová says. "There is huge support from the local community." That isn't true for other Slavic countries, like Poland, which may explain the Czech Republic's bustling film industry.

"There definitely has been a steady growth," Kovárová says, though she acknowledges that some of the stated growth may be attributed to the large foreign productions filming in Prague and the surrounding areas. The demand for crews to work on these movies has created a large, knowledgeable, and skilled workforce of film professionals ready to work in Prague.

Of course, now it can be hard for Czech filmmakers to even find crews for their features—when an epic production like *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* (currently filming) has an extremely large crew on hand, there are fewer opportunities for smaller productions to get the help they need.

Luckily, a number of filmmakers have broken through these problems to create unique works of art—and in New York, there is a good chance of actually seeing them in theaters. Earlier this month, BAMcinématek—the foreign, independent, and all-around more eclectic division of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's film programming—hosted its annual series of new Czech films from the past two years, titled, appropriately, New Czech Films.

Kovárová notes that the series has grown more popular every year since its inception eight years ago. The selections included a number of New York premieres, including *I Served the King of England*, whose director, Jirí Menzel, helmed the Oscar-winning *Closely Watched Trains* in 1967. Švankmajer also attended the series last year for a question and answer session on his latest film, *Lunacy*, which, since it was in the United States, and not in the Czech Republic, boasted a sold-out crowd of surrealist fans.

Another of Kovárová's long-running programs is the Czech Currents series at the Anthology Film Archives, which shows a Czech film from the last decade once a month. This month's film, which plays tonight (November 29), is *Silný Kafe* (*Bitter Coffee*), which was directed by the Icelandic Þórkur Gunnarsson but made with Czechs.

Kovárová notes that the film is a very immediate representation of young people and foreigners in Prague, particularly in the dialogue. "They are truly living conversations—it's as though you met them in a pub and they

started talking," she says, attributing much of this naturalism to the director's foreign heritage. Since Gunnarsson isn't a native Czech speaker, he let the actors improvise many of their lines, leading to a more spontaneous, sincere depiction. "The energy, the lightness of the film does translate," Kovárová says. For the most part, *Silný Kafe* has not been seen outside of the Czech Republic, which is a plight shared by many Czech films, and one that Kovárová hopes to help overcome. "Most of the films we choose are to promote something that doesn't have wide representation," she says.

The films of the Czech New Wave, of course, continue to be the most well-known Czech films, and perhaps some of their resiliency has come from the familiar cross-media origins of the movement. "I think one of the remarkable things about films of the Czech New Wave of the 1960s is how literary many of them were," Harwood says. "Many of them took their stories from modern and contemporary Czech literature, often collaborating with the authors on screenplays, ... they took the task of the cinematic adaptation of literature, and of championing in another medium works of their favorite authors, so much to heart."

It's easy to understand, then, why viewers respond to these films—especially when modern filmmakers like Švankmajer adapt near-universal stories like Faust, Alice in Wonderland, or Edgar Allan Poe. Harwood will explore these convergent themes of Czech literature and film of the 1960s in a course he is teaching next semester, called Prague Spring.

Looking again to the concept of the Czech film, Harwood noted a "penchant for lyricism, whimsy, and wistfulness," as well as in literature since medieval times. Kovárová also observed a certain balanced spirit. "[There is] this kind of humor and sadness sort of bound together," she says. "I think that Czech filmmakers really try to lighten up heavy topics with humor to make it a little more digestible for the viewer."

And for a country that was occupied by Nazi Germany during the Second World War, and ruled by Communists until 1989, a sense of humor was probably, evolution-wise, a very useful development.

Silný Kafe plays tonight at 6 p.m. at the Anthology Film Archives at 32 Second Ave. Kovárová is also planning a Miloš Forman retrospective at MoMA for next February, and Havel's newest play, "Odcházení (Leaving)" was published earlier this month.

IN SICKNESS AND IN FILM

BY FRANCES BODOMO



LAURA LINNEY AND PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN DEAL WITH THEIR SENILE FATHER IN *THE SAVAGES*.

WHILE THE RECEPTION OF MICHAEL Moore's latest documentary, *Sicko*, which deals with corrupt health care systems, may not have had quite the intense political effect Moore intended, it seems the film world, at least, may be listening.

This week three films are opening that deal with the human elements of illness. *Awake* stars Jessica Alba and Hayden Christensen as a happy couple faced with a debilitating sickness that forces Christensen's character to undergo surgery, during which he also experiences the frightfully common phenomenon known as "anesthetic awareness." *The Savages*, meanwhile, finds estranged siblings Jon and Wendy Savage reunited in a role-reversal as they are forced to take care of their senile father, recapturing memories from their troubled childhood. And walking the fine line between fiction and non-fiction is the French film *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, a film adaptation of the memoirs of journalist Jean-Dominique Bauby, detailing his life of almost complete paralysis after he experienced a massive stroke.

Where are these themes coming from? Unlike *Sicko*, these films don't directly

serve to fight the powers that be. Even if they only exist to rake in money at the box office, it follows that something about the times has created an audience for illness. Maybe it's because both Bruce Springsteen's band and the Decemberists have ailing members. Or because Oprah.com thinks we are worrying ourselves sick. Or that tips for shedding holiday pounds and getting healthier for the New Year are already popping up. But these are all normal, almost boring, "newsworthy" occurrences—not exactly sensational storytelling topics. Illness is basic, common, and, for humans, unavoidable.

In a world of public plight, these films are exploring personal, human stories. This is in contrast to many traditional views of cinema that value its ability to offer escapism and depict the new, the unusual, and the thrilling. Who wants to watch John McClane of *Die Hard* taking care of an ailing parent, when this could happen to any of us? As we see the life-changing effects of uncontrollable illnesses, the reality of the experience may feel too uncomfortable and immediate, which may explain why—until recently—these themes haven't been common in film.

The films don't seem to be defined by the misery of the sickness, but rather the way in which individuals adapt to the changing situations. Although dementia takes center stage as a causal factor in *The Savages*, the film finds its beauty in the portrayal of the family: neurotic, irrational, eccentric, but always engaging the audience with a sense of familiarity. Even without the Laura Linney link, it seems clear that *The Savages* is this year's *The Squid and the Whale*.

In *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* there is a more painful and immediate reality. Literally caged inside his body after his sickness (read: a light butterfly within a heavy diving bell), Bauby's everyday life is nonetheless poignant and inspirational. We are taken into the protagonist's mind with extreme point-of-view shots and quick, intermittent black screens to mimic blinking, which is the only movement he can make. What is important here, though, is the story of strength and resilience in Bauby, which, perhaps because it is based on a true story, manages to overcome triteness.

And although *Awake* is obviously resting on the star-quality of its actors,

using that overplayed Sia song, reminding everyone of *The Butterfly Effect*, and making use of almost every audience-ensuring factor in film—it most basically explores the sadness and irony of corrupt doctors willing to kill a patient for money.

As a more or less inevitable part of being human, it seems surprising that more films haven't been made about the everyday nature of illness. Perhaps it's a lack of sensationalized drama—a slow death doesn't translate very well on screen. Or maybe it's because it's even too dramatic—the human element makes it immediately applicable to our own lives, and that's a scary thought. These depictions of sicknesses do suggest a tendency toward increased humanism in film, and even if this does make our independent society uncomfortable, it is an important message.

PHOTO COURTESY: FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

EDITORS' PICKS

EXERCISE MOVES

TENNIS



Four years ago, I was up one set and four games against my school rival and the state champions. I proceeded to blow the match. If you Google me, it is the fourth article to come up.

ALEX GARTENFELD
EDITOR IN CHIEF

AFRICAN DANCE



African dance is not only my favorite exercise, it's my favorite class. We do the kuku, we sing songs about fatou and her giraffe, we snap our fingers, we wear sarongs. Maguette moves in ways I can't even describe. All the commotion does mess up my bangs, which is unfortunate, but a girl has to make sacrifices for her figure.

MEDAYA OCHER
URBANITIES

PLANK POSITION



Beware: this exercise is much harder than it looks. The objective is to hold your body flat above the ground while leaning on your forearms for as long as you can.

EMILY GREENLEE
PRODUCTION

CLIMBING UP TO MY BED AT NIGHT



I sleep on the top bunk and I don't have stairs—there are just widely spaced slats. So, every trip up to my bed ends up burning 17 calories.

ALEXANDRIA SYMONDS
MUSIC

CONTACT IMPROV



My only and favorite form of exercise at the moment is CONTACT IMPROV, courtesy of Barnard College. Not for the faint of heart! I roll around on the floor with my eyes closed making full-body contact with girls I have never met before. Then we spontaneously lift one another with our pelvises, or do an activity called "jump-jam." Like trust falls, but REALLY next level.

SARA DAVIS
EYE TO EYE

ONE-LEGGED BICEP CURLS



Lift a pair of 10-pound weights in a typical bicep curl, but on one leg. After completing a set of 15 reps, lift the weights straight above your head and hold in that position (still on one leg) for 15 seconds. Repeat on other leg. It's an excellent isometric move that will strengthen your core as well as your biceps.

DANIELLE ASH
PRODUCTION

FROWNING



Did you know that it takes twice as many muscles to frown as it does to smile? Doctors agree: a bitter outlook is the key to a healthy face.

J.D. PORTER
HUMOR

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Andrei Petreko, Chorus Master

Sat, **Dec 1** at 8 PM | Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

GLINKA Act I of *Ruslan and Ludmilla*
STRAVINSKY *Le sacre du printemps*

Tonight's program features Act I of Glinka's epic nationalist opera, *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, and *Le sacre du printemps*, Stravinsky's revolutionary score that has left its mark on generations of composers.

Tickets start at \$42.

Sun, **Dec 2** at 2 PM | Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV *The Snow Maiden* (Concert Performance)

Rimsky-Korsakov's stirring tale of love, sacrifice, and the supernatural—performed in this concert in its entirety

Tickets start at \$42.

(Only \$10* with student ID at the Carnegie Hall Box Office)

Tues, **Dec 4** at 8 PM | Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

Alexander Mogilevsky, Piano

Julia Mogilevsky, Piano

Maxim Mogilevsky, Piano

Svetlana Smolina, Piano

STRAVINSKY *Les noces*

BORODIN Act II of *Prince Igor*

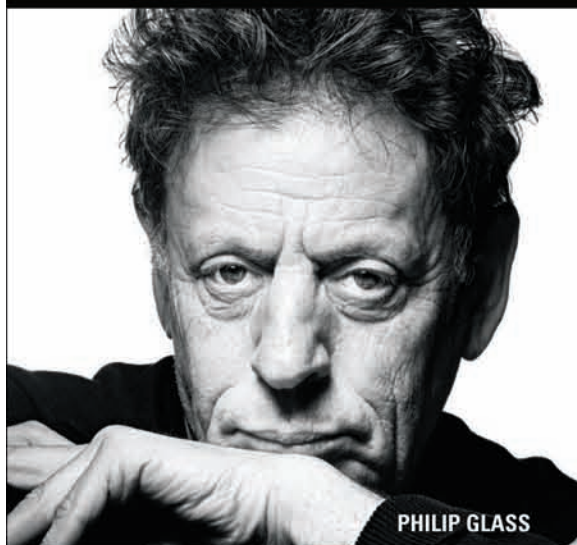
Stravinsky's *Les noces*, a gripping, stylized evocation of a Russian peasant wedding, is paired with Act II of *Prince Igor*, in which romance blossoms in the midst of war, leading to the exuberant "Polovtsian Dances."

Sponsored by Smith Barney

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PHILIP GLASS

Thurs, **Dec 6** at 8 PM | Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage

PHILIP GLASS: "EINSTEIN" IN CONCERT

Philip Glass and the Philip Glass Ensemble | Timothy Fain, Violin
Michael Riesman, Conductor | Lucinda Childs, Spoken Word

MUSIC FROM *EINSTEIN ON THE BEACH*

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