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the
eye

MANHATTANVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PLENTIFUL JOBS COMMUNITY BENEFIT
REEMENT GRANT HOUSES IN KIND BENEFIT
RESIDENTS TRANSPARENCY DISBAN
TAX EXEMPTION INTERNAL REVENUE
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WHERE HAVE ALL THE BENEFITS GONE?

Fall 2011 fashion week, pg. 6 and 11



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WHERE HAVE ALL THE BENEFITS GONE?

Checking in on 2009's Community Benefits Agreement, pg. 07

by Maggie Astor
contents photo by Maria Castex

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Earlier this month, a long piece in the *New York Observer* reported what we above 110th Street have instinctively known for a long time: NYU and Columbia will soon top the Catholic Church as the city's biggest private landlords. Columbia's new Manhattanville campus will transform not only Columbia, but the character of the city itself.

The debate on campus and in *The Eye* about Manhattanville has changed pretty radically in only the past few years. When it was first announced: Why do this? What, and who, is at stake here?

After the discovery that eminent domain was being used to secure land for Columbia, the questions shifted: Is this legal? Is this ethical?

And finally, last June, when the New York State Court of Appeals ruled that eminent domain was, in fact, legal, we had to ask: What happens now?

Today, the expansion is a sure thing, but that doesn't mean all the loose ends of

the debate have been tied up nicely in one landmark court decision. The Community Benefits Agreement, for instance, has been left largely unquestioned.

In the CBA, signed in 2009, Columbia promised the Manhattanville community certain benefits to offset the impact of the expansion. This week, in our lead story, Maggie Astor reports that the CBA has been largely left by the wayside, forgotten by those who may have focused instead on the eminent domain battle, and overseen by a group whose tax-exempt status, reportedly, was recently revoked.

The stakes of the CBA's future are high: \$150 million in funding for affordable housing, a new school, legal services, and other perks. The city's biggest landlord has some pretty big promises to keep, and it's worth investigating how Alma Mater has been doing so far.

Amanda Cormier
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ILLIN' THE DOS AND DON'TS OF COLD SEASON

BY MARGARET BOYKIN

Despite the warming weather, it seems like everyone is hacking or sneezing into sleeves this

week. Avoid illness by following the rules of one regretful invalid's photo checklist. They may seem simple, but they're the keys to your health and happiness, or your viral demise.

HOW TO GET SICK



☐ drink excessively



☐ go out too much



☐ smoke



☐ eat exclusively from the vending machine in the basement

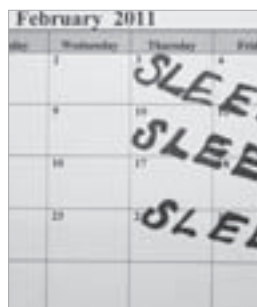
HOW TO NOT GET SICK



☐ eat well



☐ drink fluids



☐ actually sleep



☐ take vitamins

BY THE NUMBERS FIVE BIG NEWS ITEMS YOU SHOULD KNOW

BY RACHEL ROSEN

We've all been there. Someone at a party brings up a hot topic, like "Egypt" or "Julian Assange" or that thing, what's it called? Oh, right, "health-

care," and you're stuck mumbling, wishing you'd played less video games last week and picked up a newspaper instead. Well, we're here to help.

1 PRESIDENT OBAMA RELEASES NEW BUDGET

Obama released his proposed budget for the 2012 fiscal year on Monday. The budget aims to reduce the deficit (projected to reach \$1.6 trillion, a new record) while still providing for spending in areas seen as crucial for long-term economic growth.

2 GRAMMYS

This year's Grammy Awards included a number of surprises, such as Arcade Fire's win for Album of the Year (beating more mainstream artists like Eminem). Other memorable moments include Lady Gaga hatching from a giant egg onstage.

3 EGYPT, CONTINUED

The military government put in place following Hosni Mubarak's resignation on Friday has laid out a six-month timetable to elect a new government and create constitutional amendments, which will then be submitted to a popular referendum.

4 RADIOHEAD

Radiohead announced information about the re-release of their eighth album *The King Of Limbs*. No, you can't pay what you like, as you could have for *In Rainbows* (guess they regretted that one), but the \$9 digital copy is being released on Feb. 19, with a physical copy coming out May 9.

5 BAHRAIN

In keeping with the pattern of increased protests seen in the Middle East since the development of the situation in Egypt, thousands of Bahrainis are calling for governmental reforms and an end to discrimination against the Shiite population. Two protesters have been killed so far.

OPEN LETTER DEAR UGG BOOTS,

BY MARGARET BOYKIN

Listen, I don't know why you're still hanging around here. I wasn't going to say anything, but Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Fall 2011 has ushered in a whole new crowd of footwear—metallics, gorgeous wedge heels, surprising peep toes, fur in interesting places—and honestly, the fact that you're still here is just getting uncomfortable.

This whole collaboration with Jimmy Choo is straight-up gaudy. Megan Fox and Heidi Klum trying some strange, studded version of you on for size doesn't mean you're back—it just means you're desperate.

I won't pretend not to remember the golden years. In seventh grade, the coolest girls paired your blocky, shearling-lined suede with our plaid uniform and pranced around in cheerful dinosaur feet. I begged and received my own pair for Christmas, and felt extra cool for months as I navigated the snow-covered streets of New York, insulated by your practical warmth.

But, UGG, that air of newness was gone at the end of 2005, and it just ain't ever coming back. You're somehow still out there on College Walk with black leggings worn as pants, peeking out from bulbous winter coats, even somehow still paired with denim miniskirts. You've tried different lengths, fabrics—there was an especially ugly foray into knits—and colors, but no matter what you do, I just can't seem to believe in you anymore. Doesn't matter if you're channeling Jimmy Choo or Dennis Rodman, you're just not chic, and you never will be again. Kindly get out of Columbia, Manhattan, and the world at large, and make room for the superior boots of Chloé, Alexander Wang, Frye, and Jeffrey Campbell.

In the words of Rihanna—"You've put on quite a show, you really had me going, but now it's time to go." The curtain is, finally, finally closing.

It's been real,
Concerned Consumer



Bert, Ernie, and Puck

puppets make their way into serious theater past *avenue q*

BY JESSICA WHITLUM-COOPER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEPHANIE MANNHEIM

Just a few blocks away, at the Riverside Theatre, James Rutherford, a senior MFA student in the School of the Arts, recently incorporated puppetry into his sinister adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Why is it that in this age of extraordinary special effects, professional theater is turning to puppetry? The re-emergence of the puppet is neither confined to Sesame Street, nor to our MFA program. Puppetry has seen a distinct rise in popularity during past years in theaters around the world. The modern godfather of theater puppetry, *Avenue Q*, was praised by The Times in London as having copious amounts of “angst, expletives and full-on puppet sex,” and went on to win the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Puppet Design.

The Broadway musical production of *The Addams Family* incorporated work of the globally-lauded puppeteer Basil Twist, who was praised as “wonderful!” by Ben Brantley. Twist has also done puppet work for the recent *Pee Wee Herman on Broadway* and *The Scottsboro Boys*.

The puppet trend has now manifested itself in campus theater. On Jan. 26 the curtain went up for Rutherford’s production at Riverside Theater, a local venue commonly used for third year MFA productions. Rutherford’s chosen play often provokes imagery of love triangles, and lighthearted humor. Yet, Rutherford has a much different vision for *Midsummer* than most of his predecessors. He looked beneath the surface of the bard’s classic tale to find its dark side. “Farce is just tragedy sped up, often containing rape and violence—just at a break-neck speed,” says Rutherford.

A Midsummer Night's Dream has often been classified as one of Shakespeare’s ‘problem plays’ along with *Winter’s Tale* and *The Merchant of Venice*. The play closes with a supposed happy ending, but Demetrius, one of the four lovers, remains under a love spell.

Rutherford believes Shakespeare’s opening and closing deliberately demonstrate how love conceals something unmistakably sinister — “comedy hides the sardonic,” he says.

In fact, Rutherford’s dark and sexual production seemed more a nightmare than a dream, due in no small part to his use of puppets. The eerie and uncanny atmosphere of the play was only enhanced by the work by the Brooklyn-based puppetry group Piehole.

Rutherford feels he is fighting a battle against the misconception that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a comedy. Puppets here are



no joke. They are fundamental elements in his strange, disturbing, and, frankly, frightening contemporary reading.

Piehole created extraordinary, life-size, cardboard and fabric puppets to tell the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. They also represented Titania’s fairies as a selection of small, metal, and definitely creepy robotic puppets, one of which had a ghostly, glowing red light.

PUPPETS HERE ARE NO JOKE. THEY ARE FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS IN HIS STRANGE, DISTURBING, AND, FRANKLY, FRIGHTENING CONTEMPORARY READING.

Rutherford says he feels that the addition of puppetry both enhances and defines the theatrical experience. “Theater lies between the extreme artificial and that which cannot be faked,” says Rutherford.

“When people see puppets come to life, they have a transcendent experience, because of the way in which something inanimate overcomes its state,” says Tara Ahmadinejad, co-founder of Piehole. According to Rutherford, this adds a desired, but decidedly strange, consistency to the show. “Puppets naturally veer more easily toward creepy than most media. This is due in part to our cultural associations with them, and in part to their inherent uncanniness,” says Jeff Wood, co-founder of Piehole.

But the question remains: we know theater productions use mind-blowing special effect technology (the latest example being *Spider-Man*) so why turn to puppets? Rather than simple relief from notoriously faulty cables, and actors subsequently falling a perilous thirty feet mid-performance, it seems that puppet popularity rests on two factors: the visual and the childish.

“Puppets are a strongly visual way of telling a story that lets you establish the kind of rhythm, mood and sensitivity that you want the audience to share with you,” says Wood. Puppets also remind us of simple story-telling, an art that relies on imagination as well as what we see in front of us. “We are drawn to puppets for their simplicity. Too much movement and you can muddy up the action,” Ahmadinejad says. ●

Get Your Head in the Game

how athletics impact mental health at college

BY LIANA GERGELY AND JON EDELMAN
ILLUSTRATION BY THUTO DURKAC SOMO

The mental health of athletes hasn't traditionally been an important concern in sports. If you could play, you played; if you couldn't, you sat. The reason was unimportant. But with an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the mind, the sporting world has slowly begun to recognize mental health as a legitimate issue, most prominently seen in Major League Baseball's creation of a "mental disabled list." The mental health of college athletes has also become of particular concern.

Athletic success at the Ivy League level can require a borderline-invincible mindset. "There is a representative model of the ideal athlete as being physically strong and invulnerable to weakness," says Joseph Reynoso, supervising psychologist at Barnard's Furman Counseling Center. "On many sports teams, there is an ethic or culture of playing through pain, gutting it out, and pushing yourself to the limits of endurance."

This tendency can become extreme, says Curtis Kachline, a freshman in CC and a member of the men's crew team. "As a college athlete, I have had to completely change my daily mindset. You train yourself to never let the cowardly thought of quitting into your head."

But according to Mark Aoyagi, director of sport

and performance psychology at the University of Denver, such suppression can be unhealthy. "It takes a lot more toughness and courage to experience and process emotions than it does to suppress them," he says. "Mental and emotional toughness doesn't mean not feeling emotion—it means understanding emotion and dealing with it properly."

Part of this mentality is due to what Aoyagi calls the "power and performance approach" of sports. Because of the structure of athletic games, players must conquer their opponents in order to win, pushing athletes to be bigger, stronger, faster, and better than those opponents.

But this pressure can have negative psychological consequences. "The pressure to impress a coach, to demonstrate that you can push yourself when you feel you can't, to push yourself because you're being punished when you were giving it your all to start—these are the things that break you day to day," says a Barnard freshman who wished to remain anonymous and was formerly a member of the women's crew team.

This stress can extend into other areas of athletes' lives. "You start to doubt your ability to perform as an athlete, and that lack of security can end up transferring to affect your confidence academically and socially," she says.

However, many athletes have found that, while athletic life is challenging, being on a team is extremely beneficial and rewarding, both academically and socially.

"Athletics, in fact, alleviate the stress of academics and leave one less time to dwell on how hard Columbia is or how much work you have, and instead are forced to simply get it all done," says Brendan Doyle, a junior in CC and a golfer. Although the time commitment and stress of playing a sport at Columbia can be intense, Doyle says he feels that it actually makes him feel more secure about his abilities and motivates him to work harder.

Others attribute academic benefits to the discipline required by the athletic life. "I think that the commitment forces people to have much better time-management skills," says Blair Bloomquist, a freshman at Barnard who is a member of the swim team. "Without being on a team, I don't think

"AS A COLLEGE ATHLETE, I HAVE HAD TO COMPLETELY CHANGE MY DAILY MINDSET. YOU TRAIN YOURSELF TO NEVER LET THE COWARDLY THOUGHT OF QUITTING INTO YOUR HEAD."

that I would maintain the high level of academic success. Though there are times where I feel super overwhelmed, I know that most of my time would be wasted if it didn't have to be structured."

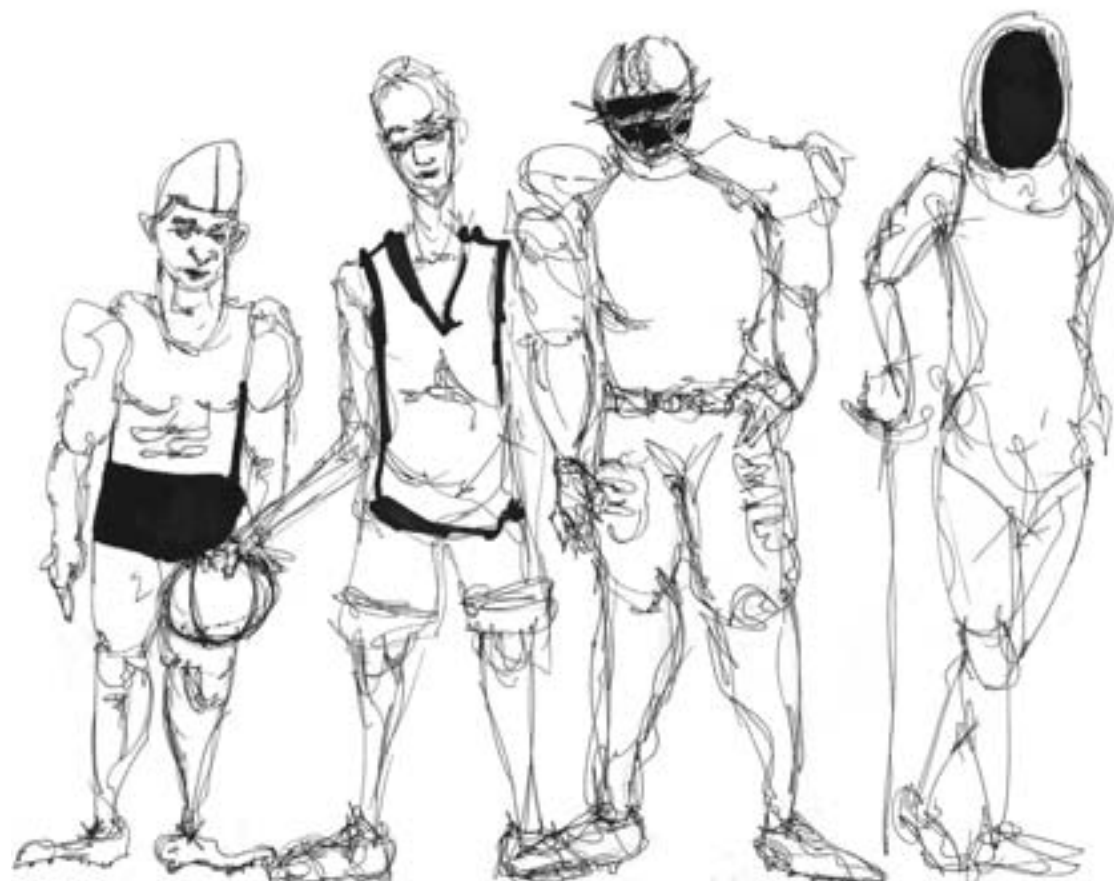
Doyle agrees. "Athletics demands a much better sleep schedule and requires you to stay on top of your schoolwork," he says. "As a result, I need to keep track of all my due dates and start my work early on."

A supportive coach can be key to maintaining a healthy balance. "If coaches create an environment that is welcoming of the range of emotional expression and model emotional awareness, athletes will quickly learn that in all aspects of their lives," Aoyagi says.

This is just what Jim Bolster, the head men's swimming coach, tries to accomplish.

"We try to create an environment where the athletes feel they have a say in the way we do everything," he says. "We try to understand our athletes' lives and see issues from their perspective. We solicit their input and then come up with a practice routine that is in line with their expectations."

Although some feel that the disciplined mentality that comes with high-level athletics helps them in the rest of their lives, it may prove detrimental for others. But with an increased understanding of the role that good mental health plays in athletic success, the sports world may move toward better help for its athletes. ●



STYLE / FASHIONWEEK

Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week came to Lincoln Center for the second time ever last week for the Fall 2011 collections. *The Eye* was there to capture the sensory overload. From Irina Shabayeva's intricate paper snowflake dress (right) to extreme beehives and neutral tones at Zang Toi (below), indulgence—and the occasional coiffed socialite in the audience—were on full display.

Clockwise, from right: Irina Shabayeva, Irina Shabayeva, Academy of Art University, Zang Toi.

See page 11 for more color photos from Fashion Week.



MIKE DISCENZA



MIKE DISCENZA



CATHI CHOI



YUN SEO CHO



THE COALITION TO PRESERVE COMMUNITY IN A 2009 PROTEST. / FILE PHOTO

WHERE HAVE THE BENEFITS GONE?

Twenty-one months after the Community Benefits Agreement was signed, Maggie Astor questions who is *actually* benefiting.

photos by Maria Castex and Samuel Draxler

More affordable housing, a new public school, plentiful jobs for local residents: These were among the perks Columbia offered to the West Harlem community to offset the impact of its Manhattanville campus expansion and make good on its promise that the neighborhood makeover would be for the better.

These promises were codified in a so-called community benefits agreement, or CBA, which was signed in May 2009. But since then, the group tasked with overseeing it has fallen into disarray, jeopardizing the benefits that the CBA was supposed to guarantee. It has no headquarters, no contact information, and no tax-exempt status, and even some local officials are in the dark about its operations.

The University reports that it has already paid \$1.5 million into a fund controlled by the West Harlem Local Development Corporation, an ad hoc group of local representatives and politicians that was formed in 2006 to negotiate the terms of the CBA with Columbia officials on the community's behalf. So far, the LDC has not distributed any of the money to the projects specified in the agreement, though members say they are close to establishing a new organization to administer the funds.

In other words, for nearly two years, while all eyes have been on the legal battle surrounding the state's use of eminent domain to turn private properties over to the University, another battle has fallen through the cracks: the fight to secure the \$150 million in benefits that Columbia promised to the community.



The Promise

If carried out in full, the community benefits agreement will be worth \$150 million. Of that total, \$74 million will fund specific projects agreed upon by the University and the LDC during the CBA negotiation process. The remaining \$76 million is unencumbered, meaning the LDC can distribute it as it sees fit.

Of the \$74 million in earmarked funds, \$20 million will go toward affordable housing, and \$4 million toward offsetting the cost of legal services for tenants. \$30 million will help fund a new public school, and \$20 million is designated for “in-kind benefits,” which would allow community access to certain University facilities.

The majority of these benefits are intended to ease the economic impact of the project and to address widespread concerns about gentrification. Like Harlem as a whole, Manhattanville is known for its diversity and its working-class roots, and critics of the expansion argue that the project will increase property values and the overall cost of living beyond the means of many current residents.

These fears are not without merit. In 2009, a full 25 percent of households within ZIP code 10027, which covers most of Manhattanville, had yearly incomes of less than \$10,000, and more than half had incomes under \$35,000, according to the real estate website, CLRSear.ch. And, as property values inevitably rise, the project will also require the demolition of about 135 existing housing units, many of them rent-controlled, according to the General Project Plan for the expansion.

The CBA is meant to mitigate problems including decreased affordable housing, but by how much, no one knows for sure. In addition to its \$20 million pledged for new housing, Columbia has promised not to privatize the Grant Houses or Manhattanville Houses, two existing public housing complexes in the expansion area.

In addition to helping low-income residents in the short term, the CBA includes funding for initiatives to address the root causes of pervasive problems, such as unemployment, in the long term. Among these is the Teachers College-affiliated Demonstration Community Public School, which should open by the end of 2015 if the timeline given in the CBA holds.

The CBA provides few concrete details on this particular project, describing it broadly as “a high-performing neighborhood NYCDOE [Department of Education] public school ... that will support family development and be a community school in the sense that it will associate other services such as after-school programming, community educational programming, and a professional development hub.”

Columbia has also promised \$20 million in “in-kind benefits”—namely, public access to unspecified “existing CU facilities, services, and amenities” until 2045, or until the market value of the benefits reaches \$20 million, whichever comes first.

In theory, this should allow Manhattanville residents to take advantage of the University’s academic and recreational resources, thus fulfilling the promise that the community would benefit from having an expanded research university in their backyard. In practice, though, it is unclear exactly which resources will be made available, to whom they will be made available, or what impact they will have.

As for the \$76 million in unencumbered funds, it is up to the LDC to decide where they will go, and there is no indication of when or how it will do so. LDC member Pat Jones, the former chair of Community Board 9, says only, “Appropriate processes are in place to make determinations of what charitable purposes funds should be used for.”

The CBA requires the University to pay the promised funds in four-month installments over the course of 16 years. In the 21 months since the agreement was signed, Columbia has paid \$1.5 million into a benefits fund administered by the LDC. It has also paid half of its \$20 million commitment for affordable housing into a fund controlled by the city. While it was mentioned in the CBA, this particular benefit was negotiated earlier with Borough President Scott Stringer, not with the LDC.

The Process

A community benefits agreement is a contract in which a developer promises certain perks to offset the impact of construction, and the community representatives with whom it negotiates agree to support the developer’s project in return.

In theory, the CBA negotiation process should

account for a full spectrum of local interests, and the final product should be readily enforceable. But because the process lacks standardized criteria and takes place with little governmental oversight, critics say it tends to produce agreements that exclude parts of the community and cannot be enforced.

The Manhattanville CBA process began in 2006 with the establishment of the LDC. Initially, the group consisted of 13 neighborhood residents and representatives for seven elected officials, with the latter serving in a non-voting, advisory role only. Community Board 9 selected the members to represent various constituencies, such as tenants, business owners, and supporters of the arts. Over the next three years, the LDC negotiated with University officials and drafted an agreement, and in May 2009, it voted to approve the final CBA.

But it was never that simple. The negotiations were tense from the beginning, with some members alleging that the process was skewed in Columbia’s favor, and these tensions escalated into outright hostility when the elected officials’ representatives were given votes on the board.

“The idea was that we would have representatives from the politicians, but they would be advisers and not have any voting power—it would be a community-based organization, and it should primarily function to benefit the community,” says Walter South, a member of Community Board 9 who was involved in the establishment of the LDC. “But ... [Congressman Charles] Rangel said if he didn’t have a vote, he was going to kill it, so they caved and gave them a vote. But by them all voting in a bloc, they were able to almost manipulate what the organization was all about.”

Other members, including Susan Russell, chief of staff for New York City Council member Robert Jackson, argued the opposite: that the elected officials served to broaden the of the constituencies represented by the LDC.

Infighting reached a crisis point at the end of 2007, when five of the LDC members most critical of Columbia—Tuck-It-Away Self-Storage owner Nick Sprayregen, who is best known for his unsuccessful lawsuit against the use of eminent domain in Manhattanville; Tom DeMott and Joan Levine, members



TOM DEMOTT OF THE COALITION TO PRESERVE COMMUNITY. / FILE PHOTO

of the local activist group Coalition to Preserve Community; Earl Kooperkamp, a CPC member and pastor at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church on 126th Street; and resident Luisa Henriquez—resigned in protest, calling the negotiations “rigged.”

The controversy did not end when the LDC approved the CBA in May 2009. Just days beforehand, the executive committee of Community Board 9 had voted unanimously to reject the agreement, deeming its contents insufficient and questioning how it would be enforced. The board’s decision was non-binding, but served as a recommendation that its two representatives on the LDC—Vicky Gholson and then-chair Pat Jones—vote “no” on the final ballot.

Many critics of the CBA cited the community board’s opposition as evidence that the agreement did not represent a full spectrum of interests. But the LDC approved the agreement with 15 years, two nays, and three abstentions, and this result raised questions about whether the LDC or CB9 was better qualified to represent the community.

Critics also condemned what they saw as a lack of transparency in the process.

“I tried one time to go to one of their meetings, and they threatened to arrest me if I didn’t leave. That’s how democratic they were,” South says. “I think most of the community has been closed out of what’s theoretically happening.”

Local activists raised similar complaints when they were barred from the building during the LDC vote. Then-LDC Vice President Donald Notice, who is now president of the organization, defended the decision to make the vote private, telling the protesters that they had been too unruly at previous meetings. But this did not placate those who felt they had been excluded from the whole process.

Nearly a year later, in March 2010, the New York City Bar Association released a report that criticized the CBA negotiation process—not only as it played out in Manhattanville, but the process itself. The report argued that ad hoc groups like the LDC are not always representative of the communities on whose behalf they are negotiating, and that CBAs may be difficult to enforce because these groups usually disband after approving an agreement and because there are no formal standards governing the process.

The Progress

In Manhattanville, true to the Bar Association’s

warnings, the LDC has very little accountability. It has no headquarters and no phone number, and a spokeswoman for the Internal Revenue Service says the IRS revoked the group’s tax-exempt status “for failing to file a yearly information return for three consecutive years.” She cannot say exactly when it was revoked, but the New York Post reported the same information in May 2010, indicating that the group has been operating without 501(c)(3) status for at least nine months.

This could potentially jeopardize the entire CBA, because without tax-exempt status, the LDC cannot dispense any of the money it receives from Columbia.

When asked whether he thought the CBA was being well enforced, South laughs and responds, “Well? I don’t think it’s being enforced at all.”

He adds, “I find it amazing how inept they are, and you can quote me on that.”

Jones, however, says the LDC was only tasked with negotiating the CBA, not enforcing it, and that a new organization—the West Harlem Development Corporation, or WHDC—will be created to oversee enforcement.

“The work that’s being done now ... will be toward the application for 501(c)(3) status for the development corporation,” she says. “The consultants have been working for several months and we had been anticipating that all of this stuff would have been filed by now, but it seems like we’re probably a couple weeks away.”

Notice gave a longer timeline, saying the WHDC should be established by “the middle of spring.”

Asked why the LDC’s 501(c)(3) status was revoked, Jones and Notice say the group never applied for tax exemption because it wasn’t supposed to oversee enforcement.

“Right now, the money that Columbia puts in for the community benefits agreement goes into the Fund for the City of New York, which acts as a fiscal agent for the LDC,” Notice says. “They have 501(c)(3) status, but the LDC itself never intended to have it, and we don’t have it. It wouldn’t have been revoked because we never applied for it. It was never intended for the LDC to carry on the function of implementation of the community benefits agreement.”

IRS records, however, indicate that the LDC was once tax-exempt, and South says, “I got the tax-exempt status for them when they were incorporated.”

Currently, “No money is going directly to the



COLUMBIA'S EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION CENTER IN MANHATTANVILLE.

LDC,” Notice says. “It’s going for the community benefits agreement, but we don’t have a fiscal organization set up yet. We are working aggressively trying to get that set up. We’ve worked through the whole summer. We are behind schedule on it, but we have worked vigorously trying to get it set up.”

He adds, “Right now we cannot do it [distribute money] because there are no operation procedures.” But once the WHDC is incorporated with tax-exempt status, he says, “We can hit the ground running and start running programs.”

CB9 members “were told that they [the LDC]

WITHOUT TAX-EXEMPT STATUS, THE LDC CANNOT DISPENSE ANY OF THE MONEY IT RECEIVES FROM COLUMBIA.

were reorganizing, and we were told they had a small board of directors, and we were told that CB9 would have two seats [in the new organization],” South says. “But being told something and seeing something real are two different things.”

Another common allegation has been of a lack of transparency throughout the process.

“The WHLDC has literally not held a public meeting since the CBA was passed in January 2008 and formally signed in 2009,” DeMott says in an email. “There is no implementation pace; there are only secrets, control, and manipulation—all of which shield Columbia quite well.”

Community Board 9 has pushed for stronger enforcement of the CBA, and chair Larry English says he believes the LDC will have its affairs in order soon.

“It is no secret that the community has not been happy about the slow pace that the LDC has taken to organize,” English says in an email. “However, I have spoken with the LDC and have been assured that they will have a new entity in place in the next several weeks. I have expressed that it is important for the LDC to move forward with its mission as quickly as possible and with total transparency.”

Former LDC President Julio Batista, who resigned last year for reasons that were not made public, did not respond to requests for comment.

But it takes two to tango, and the other party

FACTSHEET

TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION

Nonprofit organization eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. To get 501(c)(3), or tax-exempt, status from the Internal Revenue Service, an organization must work exclusively for an IRS-approved purpose, such as religious, charitable, scientific, or educational.

LARRY ENGLISH

Current chairman of CB9.

DONALD NOTICE

Former vice president of the WHLDC. Became president when Julio Batista resigned in 2010.

COMMUNITY BOARD 9

Consists of appointed officials that represents Morningside Heights, Manhattanville, and Hamilton Heights.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT

Legally binding document that stipulates the benefits Columbia has agreed to provide to the Manhattanville community in exchange for being allowed to build its new campus. The CBA, which was negotiated between Columbia and the West Harlem Local Development Corporation, includes funding for affordable housing, a new public school, job training programs, and various other initiatives.

DEMONSTRATION COMMUNITY PUBLIC SCHOOL

New public school, affiliated with Teachers College, which the CBA indicates will open by 2015.

MANHATTANVILLE Neighborhood of West Harlem in which Columbia is building a new campus. The project zone encompasses 17 acres west of Broadway, between 125th and 133rd streets.

STUDENT COALITION ON EXPANSION AND GENTRIFICATION

Student group at Columbia that collaborated with the Coalition to Preserve Community in the lead-up to the WHLDC's May 2009 vote on the CBA. Also known for protesting the use of eminent domain in Manhattanville. The group is currently inactive.

WEST HARLEM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

An ad hoc group that negotiated the CBA with Columbia between 2006 and 2009. Consists of 13 community members and seven political representatives, all chosen by CB9. Recently, has come under fire for allegedly not enforcing the CBA.

COALITION TO PRESERVE COMMUNITY

Group of local residents that has criticized various aspects of the Manhattanville expansion project. They allege that the WHLDC was unrepresentative of the community and that the CBA negotiation process was biased in favor of Columbia.

JULIO BATISTA

Former president of the WHLDC, who resigned in 2010 for unspecified reasons.

PAT JONES

Member of the executive board of the WHLDC, and the former chair of CB9.

SCOTT STRINGER

Manhattan borough president, who sent a letter to Julio Batista in early 2010 that criticized the West Harlem Local Development Corporation for allegedly not enforcing the CBA.

is Columbia. Spokeswoman Victoria Benitez says in a statement that the University “has diligently fulfilled its responsibilities under the agreement and worked cooperatively with the WHLDC.”

Columbia promised to give local residents and minorities priority in hiring for project-related jobs. So far, Benitez says that 68 percent of contracts, worth a total of \$19 million, have been given to “minority, women, or locally-owned firms,” and that between August 2008 and September 2010, 66 percent of construction work hours were done by minority, women, or local workers. She did not break down the total into individual percentages for minorities, women, and locals.

THERE IS STILL NO CLEAR INDICATION OF WHERE THE LDC IS GOING OR WHETHER THE WHDC...WILL DO WHAT ITS MEMBERS INSIST IT WILL.

But it is not just about hiring local residents for construction jobs. The CBA also calls for training programs that would enable unskilled workers to get better positions in the long term.

“The real job training programs in this beginning stage that were envisioned as part of the CBA and which might begin to address Harlem’s unemployment rate—well over 50 percent for black males—are instead supplanted by Columbia’s evictions of the small businesses and landowners and the loss of jobs,” DeMott says.

Another key component of the CBA, the new school, has also made uncertain progress.

“The Demonstration Public School, I think, is getting way too little attention,” says Ben Totushek, a student in the joint General Studies-School of International and Public Affairs program and a member of the Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification, which has worked closely with the Coalition to

Preserve Community. “This is small in the context of the project or even the CBA, but it’s one thing that actually does help the local neighborhood.”

Totushek says that, according to his discussions with University officials as a member of the Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification, Teachers College is conducting a study of the current educational conditions in the neighborhood.

“I honestly do feel like TC is moving forward in good faith,” he says. “The problem seems to be with the new chancellor of public schools. This new person is having trouble providing Columbia with an actual space.”

Teachers College President Susan Fuhrman did not respond to a request for comment.

According to the language of the CBA, if University officials determine that building a school is unfeasible, they can legally transfer that portion of their financial commitment to the LDC’s unencumbered benefits fund—a fund that cannot be distributed to the community so long as the LDC remains without tax-exempt status.

What’s Next

While some negligence is clearly apparent, Jones emphasizes that the LDC—or its presumptive successor, the WHDC—is not responsible for enforcing every item in the CBA.

“Some of the things that are set forth in the Community Benefits Agreement are obligations that Columbia is bound by under the restrictive declaration that was signed with the city of New York, as well as the General Project Plan, which was signed by the state of New York,” she says. “The CBA clearly says that all community benefits included in the CBA that are provided for in the governing documents shall be governed solely by the governing documents, enforceable solely by the state or local government authorities.”

While many of the benefits stipulated by the restrictive declaration and the General Project Plan are restated in the CBA, they actually predate it and are separate both legally and financially. These items

“do not come out of the funds that Columbia would be making to the Development Corporation pursuant to the CBA,” Jones says.

As the LDC struggles to reshape itself and community members seek nonexistent transparency and accountability, Benitez says Columbia’s Office of Government and Community Affairs “is in regular contact with members of the WHLDC and other community leaders.”

But there is still no clear indication of where the LDC is going or whether the WHDC, if established as Jones assured, will do what members insist it will. And given the bitterly fought negotiation process, the still-pervasive belief that the CBA does not do enough, and critics’ deep distrust of Columbia’s and the LDC’s intentions, success or failure will likely be an all-or-nothing affair. If even one promise fails, it could destroy the credibility of the entire agreement for critics.

“I have met numerous times with the management team of Columbia’s Manhattanville project and can honestly say that they have been honest and forthcoming and are making a genuine effort to ensure that the construction process is positive for northern Manhattan,” English writes in an email.

But, he adds, “Columbia has to recognize that ... it is viewed, all too often, as placing its interest ahead of the greater community. ... The university has to realize that taking 17 acres on the island of Manhattan is the equivalent of seizing a small city. In doing so I believe it assumed greater obligation to community than just being a good neighbor.”

Regardless, the success of the CBA—and in turn the quality of life for Manhattanville residents for decades to come—will most likely hinge on local advocates’ willingness to keep constant pressure on it, and groups like the Coalition to Preserve Community seem more than happy to do so.

“The [expansion] project was presented as, ‘It’s going to help the community because of the nature of the institution,’” Totushek says. “Everyone wants to see that be true.”



VITALY DRUKER



YUN SEO CHO



CATHI CHOI



VITALY DRUKER

Clockwise, from top left: Norman Ambrose, Cynthia Rowley, Norman Ambrose, Zang Toi. ●



The Social Artwork

high art? there's an app for that

BY FRANCESCA GOTTARDO
ILLUSTRATIONS BY NICCI YIN

Eyes agog. Your pupils dance over Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. You stargaze and stare. You want to touch the painting to feel the brush strokes, but you can't—not because of a grumpy museum guard, but because the painting is a mere image on a reflective screen. Instead of seeing Van Gogh's signature brush strokes, you confuse your reflection with the pixelated disarray of colors on your computer screen. You envision Van Gogh in his Provencal studio, toiling away at his magnum opus, and then you see a blinker flashing: "One new message!" You close out of your online-museum experience and return to the real world. You procrastinate and chat with your friend, then type in Van Gogh on your search finder and "Like" it on Facebook.

The museum has entered the modern-day duel between technology and antiquity. Most museums have iPhone apps. In addition, the Brooklyn Museum offers something called "1st fans," which is a membership based on social networking—their app allows viewers to "Like" works on display. The MoMA is also embracing technology. A Flickr site accompanied Marina Abramovic's "The Artist is Present," which set a new precedent for ways in which exhibits can be experienced online.

Viewing art has become a matter of synergizing the virtual and visual. These innovations are redefining how we look at art — for better or for worse.

"SEEING A WARHOL FILM OR SILKSCREEN IN PERSON IS NOT THE SAME AS WATCHING OTHER RANDOM PEOPLES' UPLOADS ON A WEBSITE. AND IT JUST NEVER WILL BE."

MoMA's current exhibition, "Andy Warhol: Motion Pictures," running until March 21st, features a collection of Andy Warhol's cinematic studies, as well as famous Screen Test portraits of celebrities like Allen Ginsberg and Susan Sontag. MoMA has continued in the tradition of its Abramovic Flickr and launched a website along with the exhibit, onto which patrons can make their own Warholian Screen Tests and watch others. Some might argue that the website does not do justice to the exhibit—that the experience of sitting inside a dimly-lit, ash gray room with flecks of film around you is irreplaceable. War-

hol's images are unquestionably more striking in person than on a computer screen. The self-uploaded Screen Tests are filmed against a variety of backgrounds: low-lit bedrooms, fluorescent bathrooms with the subject brushing his teeth, and the beach with sun-kissed bikini babes, lending them a decidedly do-it-yourself air. The online exhibition is more democratic, but also more static. Any viewer can create and upload a Warholian "artwork" in a matter of minutes, but are these pieces worth the viewer's time? "Seeing a Warhol film or silkscreen in person is not the same as watching other random people's uploads on a website," says Barnard senior and art history major Elizabeth Bernick. "And it just never will be."

While the online "exhibition" is not consistently creative, the all-inclusive concept may inspire viewers to tour MoMA and witness Warhol's cinematic oeuvre with their own eyes. "It's a matter of how you are relating to people. I think the whole idea is good," says Thomas Bettridge, a CC junior and art history and philosophy major. "I think the best art is the kind that inspires people to be productive, to make them want to do things in reaction to it." After all, the "Motion Pictures" website for viewers is a gathering spot for reactions to Andy Warhol's screen tests at MoMA. Viewers want to create their own Warholian screen test because they are inspired to contribute to the art world in a convenient, entertaining, and perhaps amusing way.

Although for many the new accessibility of interacting and viewing art isn't all for the better, the nature of museum-going in modern day culture will inevitably change. Bettridge suggests that the virtual artwork experience may be creating a chaotic group of people who just like art because it's famous and intellectual. "I think one problem that arises is what kind of viewer you are fostering—a passive viewer, a viewer who is satisfied to be there, or one who is in awe of these artists and wants to partake in the experience. Now there is a growing idea that people can interact with media and become creators of culture," says Bettridge.

This raises an interesting question: will the Internet create a whole new audience for art, an audience of passive viewers? Will it create too many artists?

It is fitting that Andy Warhol's 15-minute cult of the celebrity has manifested itself in not only a traditional exhibit, but in a do-it-yourself art website that lets anyone have their minutes of artistic fame without doing much artistic work.

"I certainly get worried when I see an artist selling their work in a downtown gallery who never went to art school, never took an art class, and knows nothing about art history," says Bernick. "The artists that I find the most relevant are the ones that have maintained ties to traditional methods of making art, be it sculpting or bronze casting or oil painting, who have a sense of who and what has come before them, and what they had to say, and then bring in their own experiences and their own reality."

But is the democratization of museum websites actually detrimental, or are they invaluable complements to the museum experience? Technology can broaden the art world to more

people than an exclusive, affluent elite, informally educating the general public in the process. "I think that anything that museums can do to make art more accessible is a good thing, because art is so often viewed as an elitist world," says Liz Gipson, a sophomore art history major at Barnard. "If social media can help to break down those barriers I'm for that. I think museums for a long time have enjoyed this role as an elitist place and I think they are coming to realize that is not the best place to be in our economy right now." If an art-lover lives in Kansas and wants to participate in a MoMA exhibit, that experience is just a few clicks away. And that's where museum websites like the MoMA Warholian screen tests come in to play.

INNOVATIONS LIKE IPHONE APPS, FACEBOOK GROUPS, AND EXHIBITION WEBSITES ARE REDEFINING HOW WE LOOK AT ART.

Technology is unmistakably becoming part of not only the art world, but also art historical pursuits. The website ArtSTOR is a favorite among art history majors. It provides high-resolution images of every famous art work imaginable. So when art history majors have to write a paper wee into the hours of the night, they don't have to trek all the way back down to the Cloisters or downtime to the MoMA for a second or third time. However, some think ArtSTOR should be a complement, not a substitute, for the real

thing. Bernick says, "They are spaces devoted to art, they offer a complementary experience to the works of art themselves, but they are not 'art.'" In other words—like Facebook friends, online artwork should not be a substitute for the real thing. The subject of online art galleries and iPhone applications is of the same nature. Pixels do not equal brush strokes.

Most recently, Google has launched its ground-breaking Art Project. In conjunction with several museums including MoMA, The Met, and The Frick Collection, Google has collated a series of over 1,000 artworks into a single online gallery. A high-resolution photograph was taken for each online image and converted into 7,000 "gigapixels," creating the most realistic view of the image ever uploaded. Viewers can interact in an online symposium accompanied by a MoMA video that features viewers' perceptions of Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. To further enhance the virtual museum experience, the online street view feature enables website visitors to navigate the Google Art Project as if they were walking through the museum. Users can make their own gallery via the "Create an Artwork Collection" and discover their inner curator, as well as share comments with other viewers.

As technology changes, the art world is faced with the challenge of finding a balance between modernity and tradition, between the virtual and the visual. The rest is up to the viewer.

"I feel that the point ultimately of going to a museum is that you have an actual experience which you could never have virtually, but anything that gets people back to the actual presence of the object is great," says Barnard Art History professor Anne Higonnet. "Social media is a means toward an end." ●



The Art of Editing

art in america's new editor on telling stories from the art world

BY LIANA GERGELY

ILLUSTRATION BY CINDY PAN

Lindsay Pollock, BC '93, took the reins as editor in chief of *Art in America* in January. She mixes journalistic skill with a love for the art industry, and took a moment to talk to *The Eye* about how she is bringing the publication into the digital future.

When did you start? And how has your experience been switching to your new position?

Well, I've been here for a month and was really intrigued when this opportunity arose. Editing is a different animal, a lot more idea generation and working with a team of people—a very collaborative process. Being a reporter is much more of a solitary activity, and both of them have a competitive element. I thought it would be great to experience working with a team of people.

What excites you most about your new job?

I am exploring the questions of journalism in 2011. What is the role of a magazine? What is the role of a website? There's all these big questions surrounding publishing and media today, so I thought it would be a great opportunity. *Art in America* is a very distinguished publication; it's been around since 1913, and it's very well known in the U.S. for its very serious scholarship and writing on progressive art. It seemed like a great opportunity to take the magazine forward.

How do you feel about taking on this new role during a time when many people would argue that the industry of print journalism is in decline?

That's a great question. I think art is particularly well-suited to the printed medium because of its very nature—it's very visual, and beautiful artwork translates well onto the page. Also, I'm seeing that content is always going to be valuable, because people will need a mechanism to filter the world, especially the growing art world, as the art industry and art production have become very global. So I believe there's a big future for people talking, thinking, writing about art. For the time being, I think magazines will remain successful. In the future—I don't have a crystal ball—but things seem to be pointing to a digital future. So it's just figuring out the bridge to get there. And it's a really exciting challenge.

In the art world, especially during this big transition, what is the significance and importance in having a magazine like *Art in America*?

I think there's a real place for a publication and a platform which helps not only keep people up to date on what's timely, what's important, and what's the issue of the day, but can provide

people an in-depth look: the important topics, the important shows, the important trends, the important artists. We make it a goal in our magazine to make it highly readable, so it's not an esoteric, overly scholarly publication, even though we are exploring sophisticated and in-depth thoughts, ideas, and art movements. So, we're readable, we're thought provoking, and we aim for a level of intellectual sophistication. We're doing a lot of things at once, actually.

I AM EXPLORING THE QUESTIONS OF JOURNALISM IN 2011. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A MAGAZINE? WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A WEBSITE?

How has art itself changed over the past couple of years, and where do you see art going?

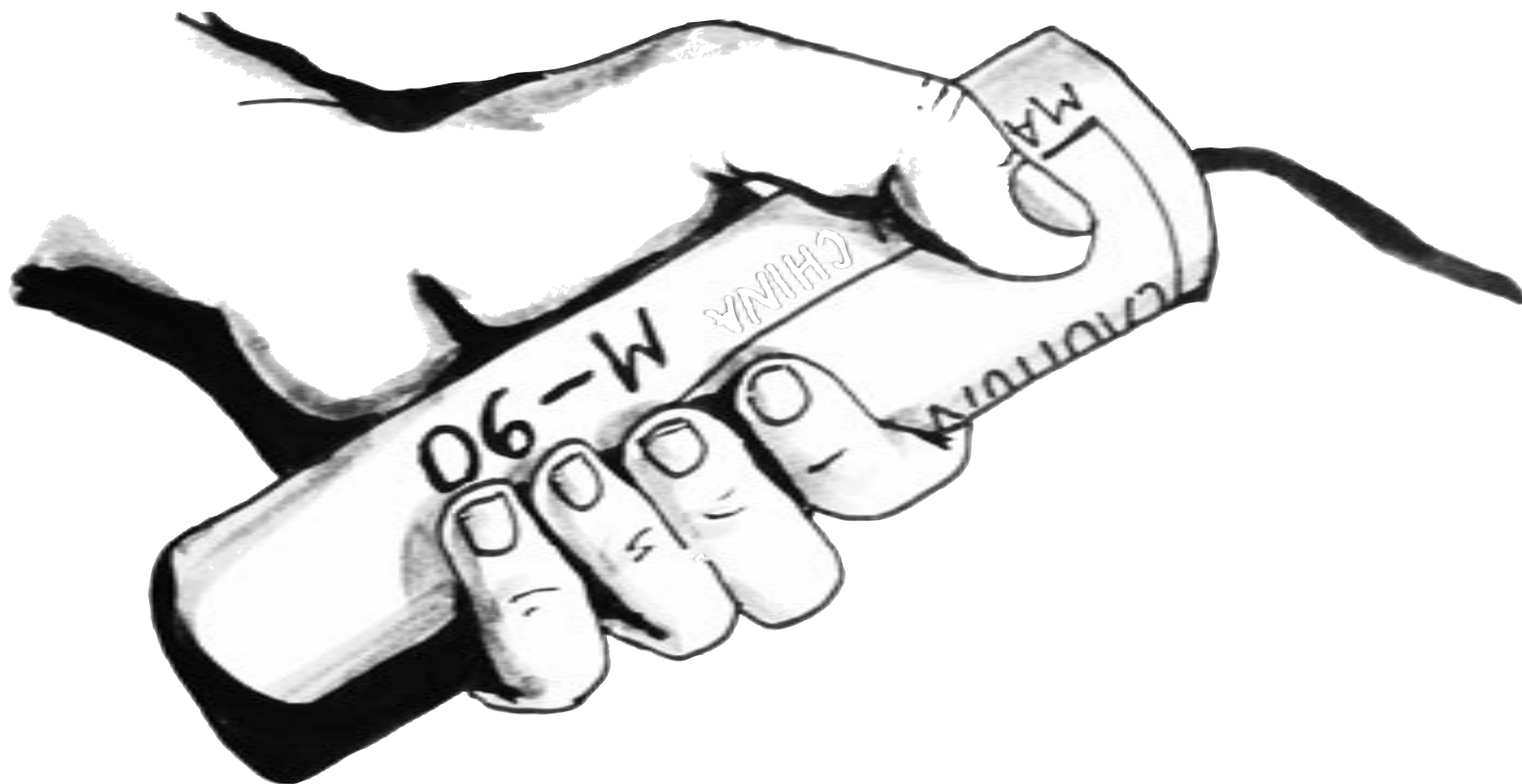
When I studied art history, we looked at art through these narrow schools: the impressionists, the post-impressionists. Art can be put into little boxes by art history, and these days the art world has become very global and unrestricted, because it's very hard to distill trends, for example, when

everything is so vast. But I think that's also really great too, because art has become a lot less hierarchical. There's a lot of things that can be considered art. Once an artist deems it art, that's the first step. I think we're going to have this continued trend of globalization, and we don't know where the next terrific piece of art is going to come from. It's really exciting. It's not really the old places where one thinks art was made.

Who are your favorite artists?

That's a good question, because at the end of the day it really is the art that keeps it so enthralling and so exciting. I have a broad taste spectrum, so when I go see certain museum and gallery shows, and I see something that really touches me it can be very powerful. But when I was at Barnard, for instance, one of my favorite classes focused on 19th century American paintings, so I really think it depends on the context, how work is presented, and if you're studying art, who your professor is. That makes it come alive to you. It's really hard for me to make a list of my favorite art, because I see a lot of art and there's a lot of art that I'm really fond of. And different types of art too. I like decorative art, sculpture, design, architecture, performance art. I really have a broad set of interests, and that's why I come back to work every day. ●





Explosions in the Stairwell

the wick is hot and it's short, too

BY JASON GOTLIEB
ILLUSTRATION BY CATHERINE WANG

We go downstairs and see this guy who has all his stuff spread out on his bed. He has cheap whiskey and cigarettes and clothing and a passport and rolling papers and fireworks and cash. He also has this moldy candy with bugs crawling all over it and he offers it to us but I say, "No, thank you," given the ants and whatever they call those little insects that are smaller and more menacing than ants. "So what have you been doing these days, man? You been here long?" I ask him. He tells me that he'll be here for a while longer on business.

He shows us these fireworks and asks if we're interested. We're interested. I ask him where he planned on lighting them and he says that he's just been doing it in the open stairwell and then he mentions that "there's this Korean kid" across the hall.

Suddenly we're all knocking on this Korean kid's door and this Korean kid can't really speak English well but he smiles at us and says something about going to sleep.

The one guy asks him to light the bomb for us and he agrees and then we're back in the stairwell again and I'm covering my ears and trying to stay away. My brother isn't covering his ears and is standing close and the one guy is jumping because he's so excited. Then this Korean kid lights it calmly and he doesn't seem so into it

until a moment later the explosion almost knocks me over and everyone is like "Woaaahhh!" afterwards. Now this Korean kid doesn't want to go to sleep and the whole time I'm thinking: "Shit. There's no way I'm about to light one of those things. No way."

Candy Man keeps encouraging this Korean kid to light the fireworks. Three times they go off until he asks me if I want to do it, saying something like, "Oh you can't get the full experience unless you light it yourself." And then I ask him, "So why don't you light it?"

HE SHOWS US THESE FIREWORKS AND ASKS IF WE'RE INTERESTED. WE'RE INTERESTED.

And he smiles and doesn't really answer and then he sits one down in the stairwell and he almost lights it but then he backs off and doesn't do it and starts to pass it off to this Korean kid again but then my brother steps in and takes the lighter. He offers himself with the tone of a question, like, "I'll light it?" and I'm thinking to myself, "Shit."

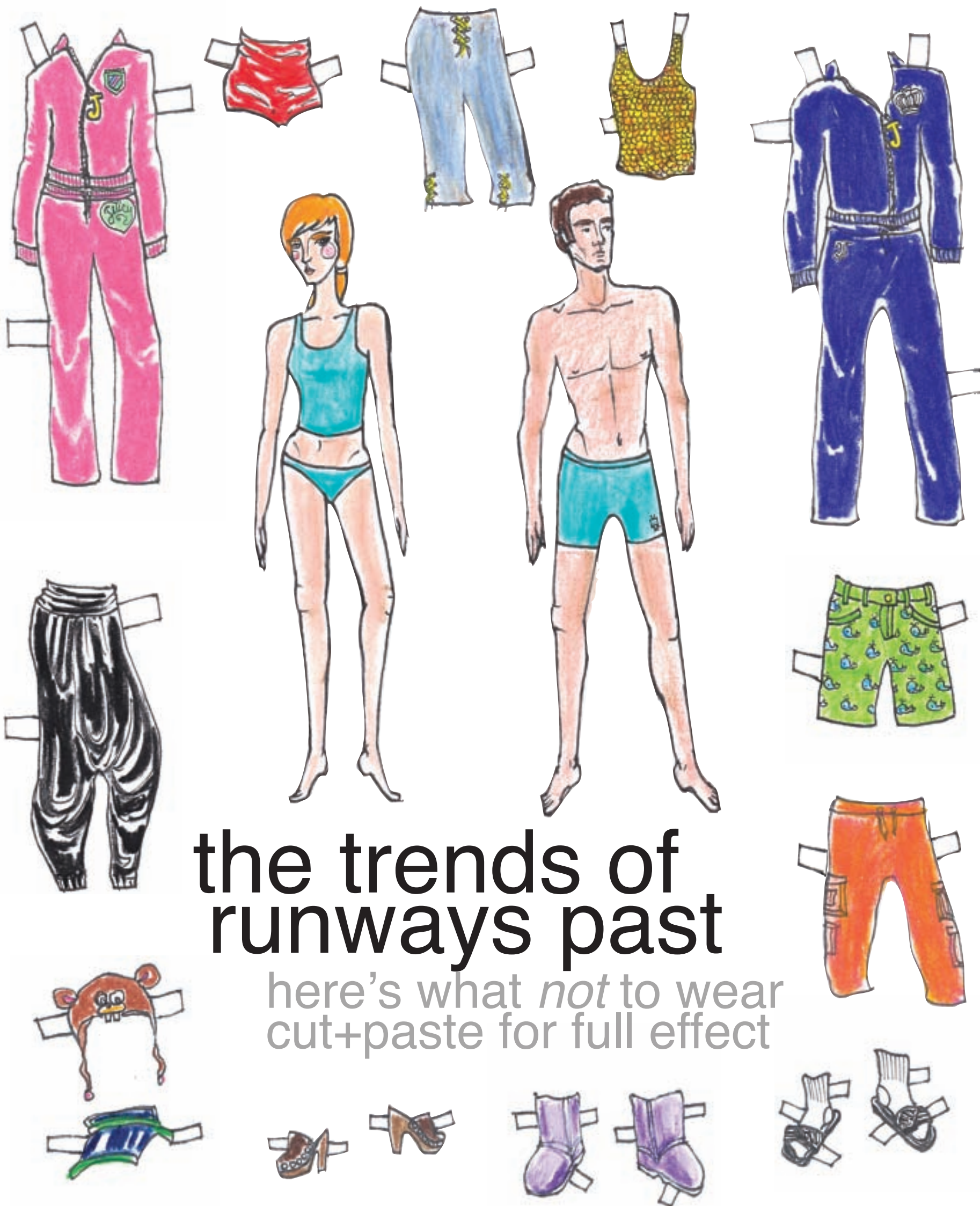
I go upstairs to watch from the second level because we're in this building that has an open

atrium and you can see the bottom floors from above. I don't really like the loud noise or the explosion and I'm a little unnerved and I just want to get a bit more space from all this stuff, in particular the stuff that's exploding. I know what I'm into and lighting fireworks in stairways isn't it, and I'm feeling almost shell-shocked.

So my brother is lighting it like a wimp and he keeps going up to it and flicking the lighter and then running away and each time nothing happens so he has to creep back out to the unexploded bomb. Rinse, repeat, and each time he goes up to it and tries to light it and then runs away and then creeps back, and each time my heart skips a beat and I'm yelling things down to him like, "Don't do it, man!" "It's a dud, just forget it." "You don't have to light that thing, man." "Stop being an idiot."

He keeps lighting it and it keeps not working and then he finally gets it. He runs away and you can tell that the wick is hot this time and it's short, too, because he's tried so many times to light it that it quickly booms and then it's over and we're all fine. My brother is laughing hysterically with the feeling you only get when you think you narrowly escaped death and I'm just sort of in shock on the second level.

I come downstairs so that we can all high-five or something, and then this Korean kid goes to bed and we sort of remember what just happened out loud to each other and then the three of us go out on the street to find some food. ●



the trends of runways past

here's what *not* to wear
cut+paste for full effect