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T H E B A R D FREE PRESS

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Volume I Number 2

Tuesday, March 28 2000

Annandale-on-Hudson, NY

New Elections Commissioner Appointed

David Gamache promises students the right to vote

RAFI ROM

After three closed ballots, the Dutchess County Republican committee selected a new candidate for the Republican Elections Commissioner. The meeting held Thursday, March 23, brought together over 300 Republican committee members.

David Gamache, director of public information at State Bridge Authority, was selected to replace William Paroli Sr., the last Republican Elections Commissioner, who finally stepped down after pleading guilty to one count of extortion.

Whether Gamache will be officially elected to the position depends upon how the Legislature votes. Not only does he have to gain the approval of the Democrat legislators, but also the endorsement of William

Steinhaus, the County Executive.

Another issue standing in the way of Gamache's victory is his position on student voting rights. In particular there has a series of vicious allegations from Steinhaus himself, saying Gamache was "tied to the Paroli faction." Paroli was solely responsible for the rejection of voter registration cards from college students.

Monica Elkinton, first year Bard student and SAVE leader, said "We've heard from other Republicans that he supports student voting." Gamache has not returned the calls of Elkinton, other SAVE members, or the Free Press.

A more definitive statement was made to Kristen Jemiolo, member of the Dutchess County Legislature. "I explained to him that I could not vote for any candidate that he did not sup-

port our recommendations that our committee came up with. He seemed very responsive to students needs, and said he would commit to our recommendations. I was thrilled."

Gamache promised to make a commitment in writing before the legislature votes on his appointment Monday at 4PM. According to his verbal commitment, Gamache promised that students can register wherever they choose their residency. "Gamache did agree to honor that," Jemiolo said.

Despite the outcome of the election, SAVE will continue to pursue their lawsuit against the county. "Even if Gamache does support us, the next election commissioner may or may not," Elkinton said. "We're doing this lawsuit to ensure students can vote in this county."



Dr. Movie: Brakhage, recipient of honorary Fine Arts doctorate

Stan Brakhage Speaks to the Free Press

LUKE COHEN

Legendary American filmmaker and poet Stan Brakhage, widely regarded as one of the most important filmmakers alive, will receive an honorary doctorate from Bard College this Tuesday March 28th. The ceremony will be followed by the world premiere of his three latest films, *The God of Day Had Gone Down Upon Him*, *Persian Series No. 9*, and *Water for Maya*. These films are Brakhage's latest creations since his trilogy of 1998.

For nearly half a century, Stan Brakhage has distanced himself from commonly held conceptions of what a filmmaker is. In a medium thought to be dominated by narrative plot structures he has taken a stand. As Larry Karshish, curator of film exhibits for the Museum of Modern Art, New York said, "He's the most important nonnarrative filmmaker of the past two generations, and he's still conquering new artistic territory."

His position in the world of art has given us glimpses of an innovative realm of film aesthetics often neglected by popular culture. Originally influenced by predecessors such as Jean Cocteau and Maya Deren, as well as poet Gertrude Stein, Brakhage has been able to construct an entirely independent view of the language of film. His oeuvre consists of hundreds of films, all of which have remained visionary, speculative, poetic, and entirely individualistic. Of Brakhage's art novelist and poet Robert Kelly, Professor of Literature at Bard wrote, "It is for that courageous insistence on film itself that we honor him."

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Democratic Elections Worldwide

BRYAN GUNDERSON

The three recent international elections in Iran, Taiwan, and Russia establish a trend towards more open democracy, and free market economies in these countries. They will both tremendous influences on the countries themselves, as well as an influence that will carry itself into the American political arena.

Conservatives Are Ousted in Iran

Reformists beat out the conservative establishment during the parliamentary elections held on February 18. Voters were merciless, forcing many of Iran's head politicians to step down. Two term conservative president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was pushed from his high position in Tehran. The reformists captured 27 of the 30 seats in Tehran, and hold 136 out of the total 290 parliamentary seats. Along with their tremendous hold in parliament, they have aligned with current President Muhammad Khatami. These events have made their victory seem overwhelming.

The reformists won the election through traditional western style politics, putting out catchy slogans and utilizing the full force of the media. Candidates used phrases

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WAXING POETIC: Precious Bedell (right) with Roving Readings' Kate Schapira.

Between the Bars: Prison Poetry

LESLEY PFENING

Last Thursday, Hettie Jones, Precious Beddell and Jan Warren visited Bard for a night of poetry and prison awareness. The Prison Initiative program, headed by Max Kenner, sponsored the event along with Roving Readings. In this program, Bard students will work with prisoners at Fishkill Correctional Facility located past Poughkeepsie on Route 9. As of now, students have supervised YAP (Youth Assistance Program), which is a "scared straight"-style program in which prisoners talk to local junior-high and high school students.

Interestingly, while Marist and Vassar have had programs of this type for decades, Bard has yet to consistently become involved with a prison program. Not suprisingly, prisons are hesitant to let such pro-

grams inside. Kenner declared that, "Our ultimate goal is to facilitate a long term relationship between Bard and a number of correctional facilities in the Hudson Valley," but that, "We are so much at the mercy of the prison people right now."

A main obstacle to a prison program becoming established is the lack of a faculty member committed to continuing the program as each crop of Bard students graduates. Kenner believes the program can enrich the lives of Bard students in many ways, they will get to know prisoners as individuals and learn about national prison issues. He said of human rights groups that only do international work, "There are human rights issues here." Kenner is looking for committed people to join his program, he wants to have a group go to

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Gerhard Richter page 10
Early works reviewed by Huffa Frobes-Cross

Reading Between the Bars

Bard Prison Initiative Sponsors Night of Poetry

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Fishkill weekly and would also like to eventually arrange a program in a women's facility.

Hettie Jones, a self-described card-carrying member of the beat generation, read some of her works and explained her philosophy about poetry, saying, "It goes from the heart, to the breath, to the line." She read one of her poems from 1966, as well as a more recent work that dealt with the homeless. Jones also spoke of the importance of looking out into one's community and the problems faced when writing poetry, claiming that there is plenty, if not a surplus, "of poetry written looking at your navel." She talked a little about her work at the Bedford Hills prison, where she has been teaching poetry to the incarcerated since 1989. She showed a short film of the prisoners in her class reading their work.

Khalil Huffman, a first-year student motivated by the evening said, "I really enjoyed the film. I'm trying to get involved in the prison initiative program. Watching the film really gave me inspiration for

what I can do to help prisoners."

After the movie, Jones gave some sobering statistics about prisons in the United States. There are two million people in prison in the United States, 25% of all people in prison around the globe, despite the fact that the U.S. contains no more than, roughly, 4.5% of the world population. Any place you stand in New York State, you are 40 miles from a prison.

Precious Beddell then got up and recited some of her works, such as "Ode to Linda Girl," a poignant piece about a battered woman who fought back. In this poem, Beddell incorporated the imagery of a proud African woman, "walking a secret walk, balancing with quiet dignity."

Beddell was incarcerated for twenty years at Bedford Hills. While there, she earned both an undergraduate degree and a Masters in psychology. Unfortunately, this opportunity is no longer available to most prisoners, the government outlawed giving educational grants to prisoners and few prisoners have the



Free Verse: Bedford Prison Poetry Coordinator Hettie Jones Talks About the Program

income to sustain a college career.

Jan Warren took the platform next to read several poems, such as "Don't give me that look," a humorous and disturbing collection of things mothers say. Jan Warren was politically active in prison, lead-

ing the only prison chapter of the National Organization of Women. Warren also talked about the Rockefeller drug laws, which do not allow judges to rule by the individual instance; instead every person caught with the minimum amount of drugs with the intention to sell receives 15 to life. Warren was incarcerated for nearly 15 years because she sold two grams of cocaine once. She received the same penalty as a drug kingpin would receive. The governor of New York recently pardoned Warren.

Bard students had an enthusiastic response to the evening. Senior Melissa Tremblay said, "Hettie Jones is really important, she shows that she is not just an ex-beatnik and ex-wife of Amiri Baraka [formerly LeRoi Jones]. I read her 'How I became Hettie Jones' and she wasn't what I expected but her performance was really riveting." Colin Tedford had a similar response, saying that Jones "was not at all what I expected," and adding that a lot of "smart revolutionary people tend to come out of prison, they're in there, they get bored, they get educated, they come out and—ahhhhh [denoting the sound of relief]."

American Bar Association Project Director Urges Death Penalty Moratorium

Bard alum speaks to students about legal assistance for prisoners on death row

JONNY CRISTOL

Elisabeth Semel, the Director of the American Bar Association's (ABA) Death Penalty Representation Project, spoke to a crowded Olin 101 about legal aid for death row inmates. The talk on March 22, entitled "The Whole World is Watching," focused on the legal complications of the death penalty, including a discussion of inmates receiving inadequate counsel, and, at some stages of their trials, no attorney at all. Semel described the inmates as, "victims of a system

that deprives them of a fair trial."

Semel's first steps toward a career in law started here at Bard, where she received her BA in 1971. She has had a history of working on criminal defense cases, including a number of capital offenses at the trial and post-conviction stage. Semel has also written extensively about legislative and judicial developments affecting the rights of the accused.

Drawing on her career experience and research, Semel said that it takes at least 1000 hours to properly investigate a case, and that many countries pay defense lawyers a few thousand

dollars just to try such a case. She explained that this forces lawyers to either work for an unlivable wage or spend insufficient time on each case. Most attorneys go the way of the latter, according to Semel.

In response to a question asked by junior Max Kenner about Presidential candidates' positions on the death penalty, Semel explained that while Gore supports the death penalty, Texas Governor George W. Bush's lack of hesitation in using the death penalty is far more troubling. Texas leads the nation in executions, putting to death more convicts than

all other states combined, said Semel. To concerns raised about the Mumia Abu-Jamal case, Semel said that in terms of inmate advocacy, "it was the wrong case, the wrong focus, and the wrong attention."

This talk relates to her work in the Death Penalty Representation Project, which informs the bar and the public about the lack of representation available to death row inmates. The Project works to address this need by recruiting competent volunteer lawyers, offering them training and assistance. The Project also proposes systemic changes that would assure representation by qualified, and adequately compensated counsel.

The ABA has called for a national moratorium on executions, and presently only Illinois Governor George Ryan has done so. As Semel points out, the problems are overwhelming. She reported that over 3,600 people are on death row and every week about two people are executed by the state. Still, as the title of the talk suggests, the United States has found itself under international as well as domestic pressure. Most Western countries have abolished the death penalty, and the United States remains one of the only nations in the world to execute juveniles and the mentally retarded. According to Semel, until the death penalty is abolished the United States has no right to consider itself a leader in human rights.

Compulsory Student Fundraising Upheld by Supreme Court

Decision Affects Colleges and Universities Nationwide

JOSHUA MILLER

On March 22, the Supreme Court voted unanimously to uphold a practice, widespread among public universities, which requires students to pay into university funds used to support multifarious campus organizations.

The ruling comes in a case involving the University of Wisconsin, whose funding system was challenged by conservative students who objected to being forced to pay for activities that offended their political sensibilities. The system, they argued, violated their First Amendment rights, and a federal appeals court agreed.

But the high court reversed this decision, affirming that public universities are entitled to significant leeway in fostering the free exchange of ideas.

"The university may determine that its mission is well served if students have the means to engage in dynamic discussions of philosophical, religious, scientific, social and political subjects in their extracurricular life," Justice Anthony M. Kennedy wrote. "If the university reaches this conclusion, it is entitled to impose a mandatory fee to sustain an open dialogue to these ends."

But University of Wisconsin students were allocating funds for activities like political lobbying. In one spectacular instance, \$45,000

was allocated towards the Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group, which supports environmental and other left-leaning causes. According to the decision, the method of allo-

cation must be "viewpoint neutral," which is clearly not always the case.

One issue, the "viewpoint neutrality" of the student referendum system used by the University of Wisconsin was deemed questionable enough to kick back to the lower courts to untangle.

Though these decisions deal exclusively with public universities,

they are based on non-public precedents, meaning that a similar ruling could eventually be extended to affect private universities too. With this in mind, it is interesting to note

that the University of Washington's questionable referendum system bears no small resemblance to the Planning Committee/ Budget Forum system right here at Bard.

"IF THE UNIVERSITY REACHES THIS CONCLUSION, IT IS ENTITLED TO IMPOSE A MANDATORY FEE TO SUSTAIN AN OPEN DIALOGUE..."

-Justice Anthony M. Kennedy

Rockefeller Institute; opening doors to science

KERRY CHANCE

Bard College and Rockefeller University have established a collaborative program that will create new educational opportunities for students at both schools. Beginning in the fall semester, Rockefeller will offer a weekly biology seminar to Bard students. The course will expand scientific education at Bard, allow Bard faculty members to conduct research projects at Rockefeller, and integrate elements of Bard's liberal arts curriculum into Rockefeller's.

"The relationship between Rockefeller and Bard will offer many opportunities to students and faculty. The point . . . is to expand the study and conduct of science among Bard undergraduates," said President Leon Botstein.

Science and Math Professor, Mathew Deady also said, "We expect there to be a variety of benefits for all students at Bard, but in different ways. Through interactions here at Bard and down at Rockefeller, science students will be able to interact with researchers who are active in some of the fast breaking fields of biomedical research. That means mostly biology students, but problems in biology are drawing attention from all the sciences, so I expect us each to gain something."

The first course offered to Bard students, "Bacteria, Viruses and Cancer: Perspectives on Human Disease", will be taught by Rockefeller President Arnold Levine, Dean Sidney Strickland, Dr. Terry Gaasterland and Dr. Betsy Hanson. Every Monday, Bard students will drive to Rockefeller for dinner and a three-hour lecture.

"The Program will allow for extensive consultation between those with scientific and liberal arts backgrounds, enriching the perspectives of all involved," said Levine. "Bard students and faculty will interact with leading scientists, and Rockefeller with have the opportunity to expand and extend its outreach to small prestigious colleges."

An article on the program that appeared in the New York Times recently alluded to the possibility of Rockefeller graduate students gaining teaching experience at Bard, though according to both Botstein and Deady, this information is not necessarily correct.

"You should never believe everything you read in the New York Times or hear on the grapevine. [T]he first class taught to Bard students will be taught by the faculty of Rockefeller and not graduate students," said Botstein. "There may indeed be post-doctoral fellows who teach and there may even be graduate students who have contact with our undergraduates. All classes will be subject to the same careful scrutiny that we apply to our own faculty and courses."

"In no sense would we be farming out course teaching to outsiders. [Rockefeller's] post-doctoral workers and graduate students might be involved in some of this as teaching or laboratory assistants. It depends on the situation," said Deady. "We know that Bard students came here partly because they did not want to be at a large university, being taught by graduate students whose main focus is not on teaching. We will maintain that emphasis at all times."

"The bottom line," says Math Professor Ethan Bloch, "is that we want to do things that benefit the Bard students. If we try some form of course that doesn't work out for our students, we will then reassess that type of course."

National News Analysis:

Clinton and Giuliani Turn Dorismond Case Political

ROB PONCE

For the third time in 18 months, New York police have shot and killed an un-armed black man. Not surprisingly, New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani sided with the police force. He has been accused of "rushing to judgment" by First Lady, Hilary Rodham Clinton, Giuliani's opponent in the upcoming New York state senatorial race. Clinton said she was disturbed that the mayor did not wait for a "full and fair" investigation to be completed before deciding that the officers in question "GIULIANI DOES NOT SEEM TO THINK THAT HE IS RUNNING A RISK BY ALIENATING HIMSELF FROM THE BLACK COMMUNITY..."

Giuliani released Mr. Dorismond's juvenile records (included is a history of domestic violence) as an attempt to justify that he



Who Dis? Giuliani stays in touch

had a history of violence and the shooting was something he brought

upon himself by acting in a violent manner.

Patrick Dorismond was a security guard at the 34th street Partnership. Last week, as Dorismond and his co-worker were waiting on 8th avenue for a cab, an undercover officer approached the pair, asking them if they could sell him some marijuana. Supposedly Dorismond had some nasty words for the officer and told him to get on his way.

After that, the story becomes unclear. The NYPD claims that Dorismond and his co-worker attacked the officer. This prompted back up officer Vasquez to jump to his partner's aid. Vasquez's lawyer claims that the gun went off when Dorismond tried to grab the officer's firearm. However, the security guard's co-worker says it was the under cover cop who threw the first punch.

It is hard to dismiss the charge that the police acted aggressively towards the un-armed men considering the long list of police brutality complaints (predominantly towards blacks) that have stacked up during Giuliani's two terms as mayor.

We will never know exactly what happened on March 16th, but what we do know is how the two senatorial candidates are exploiting Dorismond's death for their own political gain. Mrs. Clinton, currently running strong amongst African-

American voters, is comparing this latest event to the highly controversial Diallo case in which four officers were tried and acquitted of killing an un-armed man in the Bronx, after firing 41 shots. Clinton went as far as to imply that if Diallo and Dorismond had been two white men living in an all white neighborhood, they would still be alive.

The mayor is currently under harsh criticism for releasing the juvenile records of Mr. Dorismond. His release of the records was an attempt to show that this was no normal, law-abiding citizen: Patrick Dorismond was once accused of punching his girlfriend in the head. Giuliani, calling Dorismond, "no alter boy", justifies placing blame on the mans bad temper, instead of the possible faults in police procedure. Rudolph Giuliani is being scrutinized by critics for not revealing the disciplinary records of the two officers involved in the altercation.

The Mayor's reaction to this case baffles many political theorists. As the only serious contender for the Republican Senatorial nomination, his current strategy seems like it may do more harm than good. Bard Professor of Political Studies, Joseph Luders explains, "Fewer than ten percent of African American voters voted for Giuliani in the last election and he knows this. Being 'tough on crime' appeals primarily to white voters and until these voters begin to

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World Renowned Novelist Nuruddin Farah Reads to Eager Crowd

CAMPUS EVENTS BRIEF

Reading at seven o'clock last night in Room 115 of the Language Center was the 1998 recipient of the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah. Farah's first novel, *From a Crooked Rib*, won him instant international cult status and his work has since met with the praise of such writers as Salman Rushdie (*Midnight's Children*) and Bard's own Chinua Achebe (*Things Fall Apart*). Achebe, who introduced Farah at the event, says of the distinguished writer that he "excels in giving voice to tragedy in remote places of the world that speak directly and familiarly to our own hearts."

Published in 1970, Farah's *From a Crooked Rib* told the story of a Somali woman's struggles against the constraints of her traditional society. Farah's next three novels (*Sweet and Sour Milk*, *Sardines*, and *Close*

Sesame) and the three following (*Secrets*, *Maps*, and *Gifts*) respectively comprise two trilogies that are celebrated worldwide for their portrayal of life on the African continent.

Farah's appearance at Bard also gains an added importance this month, as only a few weeks ago his most recent book, *Yesterday, Tomorrow: Voices from the Somali Diaspora (Literature, Culture, and Identity)* was

published. Sponsored by the Human Rights Project at Bard College, the event was free of charge. Members of the community as well as the public at large were glad to hear, in Salman Rushdie's words, "one of the finest contemporary African novelists" as he read from a selection of recent writing.

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Democracy Across the Globe: Elections

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like "I am just like any other democrat," which to a country virtually controlled by conservatism.

The enthusiasm that these victories created in parliament, must be checked by the hardships the reform party will have to go through in October to carry out their main objectives. They intend to make a concerted effort to respect Iranians' private lives, and abolish the morality police, who for years have arrested youngsters getting together in cars, restaurants, and parks. Further the reformists seek to establish real freedom of speech, demonstration, and press. These are all noble concerns, but huge institutional hurdles remain.

Clinton said that this democratic victory was, "An event of historic proportions." The administration intends to use this event as a stepping-stone to better relations with Iran and the Islamic community. This is much easier said than done. The reformists are still bitter toward the U.S. and have a general attitude of defiance, so we can expect stumbling blocks in the forging of this fragile relationship.

There is still a 1995 agreement that bans Americans from investing in, or trading with Iran. Oilmen are justifiably furious, as other countries snatch up prime drilling spots and stakes in the Caspian pipeline. Clinton has the ability to irradiate all of these sanctions without approval from Congress. So why doesn't he just sign a bill disabling all of these trade sanctions? The problems revolve around the United States' fear that Iran, if given economic freedom with the U.S., will use the money associated with a new thriving economy to pour money into its military and weapons of mass destruction.

The reformists, and the U.S. both now have an unexpected opportunity to move forward, release sanctions, and rebuild a relationship between democratic nations. The question is, will they take advantage of it?

Taiwanese vote in Reformer

The elections held on March 18 were significant in that two term president Lee Teng-hui was forced to step down. The 77-year-old incumbent took his seat as president after the death of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek whose Chinese forces took over Taiwan after the defeat of Chairman Mao's army in 1949. Mr. Lee won one election under a rigged system and the other under a self introduced sort of quasi-democracy.

His successor, the radical Chen Shui-bain, will push Taiwan toward independence. Mr. Chen is a long awaited new face, who will carry with him a completely new type of politics. He is adamant about making the 51 year split with China permanent by disbanding from them, and establishing formal independence. China is still leery of the elections outcome, and says that the results "will not change the status of Taiwan as a part of China." But this statement issued to the media soon after the election

may prove false when the widespread enthusiasm for formal independence begins to surface.

Amongst ecstatic supporters, Chen said that he hopes "we can use closer cooperation and exchanges and use patience and respect and together Chinese society can create a peaceful and happy new century."

Clinton congratulated Chen on his victory, and urged him to renew the dialogue between China and Taiwan which was suspended with the Chinese government five years ago. In response to the election, Clinton said Chen's win "clearly demonstrates the strength and vitality of Taiwan's democracy."

This is a landmark victory. The military scare tactics China has been using proved incapable of change the minds of Taiwanese voters. Almost 83% of the 15 million Taiwanese voters showed up to cast their vote. Excited, Chen said, "Brave Taiwanese used to love and hope to overcome terror and used our votes to show our determination to maintain our democracy."

This new victory has not gone without protest. Just hours after the Taiwanese nationalist party had rioters gathering outside Mr. Lee's door. Former supporters of Lee's felt as if he had let them down. People who have been accustomed to Lee's rule for more than fifty years, have now consequently turned against him. This resulted in a short period of political instability, during which Mr. Chen urged bot U.S. and Taiwanese citizens to remain calm.

After a brief, but harsh, 3% stock market plunge, and a series of violent uprisings earlier last week, the political and social tumult in Taiwan subsided. The one issue that continued to cause political unrest was Mr. Lee's stay in his post. He had previously agreed to step down in September, a year earlier than planned, but Taiwanese wanted him ousted immediately. Despite the people's vehemence, Chiou I-jen, Chen's campaign manager, said that, "We still have confidence in President Lee's government, and we fully trust President Lee's ability to handle the situation." Amidst controversy, Mr. Lee announced his resignation during an emergency party meeting last Friday.

America's decision to side with Chen, which is partly linked to a stronger military relationship with Taiwan, will assuredly complicate China's plea to gain admittance to the WTO. This summer the U.S. congress will decide whether or not to grant China permanent normal trading relations, which will be an integral step toward entry to the WTO. At the moment, the odds appear to be in China's favor. The current sense of tranquility in Taiwan, and the presence of a strong lobby in Washington, have led many advocates to be optimistic about the vote's result. Clinton said that if the U.S. does not grant China permanent trading status, it would be devastating for United States-China relations.

Russia elects new President

Vladimir Putin, a 47-year-old former KGB agent, won the March 26 presidential elections with almost no effort. There were seven other candidates, all of whom fell short in their attempt to put together a powerful campaign against Putin. But despite



The Big Easy: Russia's new president Vladimir Putin, elected March 26th.

his virtually uncontested walk into the presidency some Russians are unsure about his methods and his intentions.

He seems curt and ambiguous in his one-word answers to Russia's needs: proclaiming "Patriotism, Efficiency, Honesty, Determination." To American eyes this weariness, is only a testament to how little Russians expect of their politicians. This is not to say that Putin has nothing to say. As a former law student, he is well versed in politics and their nature; by that same token he is at times elusive.

He has no nonsense ideas, never denying Russia's harsh history, most of which he outlined in his manifesto for presidency, which he put out in late February. He stated, "Russia should shed its delusions of wealth and grandeur and realize that it is a poor backward country, where the top priority is the economy. Lawlessness and bad government are the prime causes of poverty; the rule of law, properly administered, brings prosperity. It is a patriotic duty to be honest." Putin's ideas seem sensible and well thought out; his problem will be implementing them. It is one thing to acknowledge the fact that a country is backward and impoverished; it is a whole other story to try to change it.

Putin has already encountered some difficulties. His goal is both to rebuild Russia's industry, as well as to integrate Russia into the international economy. These two things by themselves are not contradictory but the way he has approached them is problematic. He desperately wants to hold onto Russian monopolies he endorses bankruptcy law for all companies.

Putin feels that Russia should overlook its place on the international sphere until it mends its wounds at home, he further stated, "anyone who insults us does so at his peril."

It will be interesting to see how things pan out in his presidency, and whether or not these apparent contradictions are just campaign double-speak. The Russian people have mixed reactions for Putin, noting the fact that he is well traveled and a man of high intellect, while at the same time being gruff and rough around the edges. He speaks about "rubbing out terrorists, even in the shit-house." And was said to have raised a toast to Stalin at a recent private banquet. As a former spy, he really is a man of intrigue, and he has the reputation of being a "gray cardinal," a man who wields great power, quietly behind the scenes.

Putin's realistic outlook on Russia makes a legitimate goal of a successful market economy, a possibility. In his manifesto, he wrote "We can count on a worthy future only if we manage to naturally combine the principles of a market economy and democracy with Russian realities." He said that Russia is not ready for classical liberalism, and would not soon, if ever, come to resemble the USA or UK.

Shortly before the election, Putin expressed his intention to integrate his former friends from the KGB into his presidency in an effort to smother Russia's almost infamous political corruption. He said, "I am bringing into my inner-circle people from law enforcement bodies who are in no way connected with the people and structures which may be associated with any form of corruption." This process is an attempt to cleanse Russia of its corruption, in order to make the government more trustworthy to its citizens and western investors alike.

Putin's thoughts on progress are grounded in a deep understanding of the political and social reality in Russia. This, in conjunction with Putin's hard-lined tactics opens the possibility for tremendous movement toward a successful liberal democracy.

Is all of this enthusiasm just part of post-election fervor, or are these election results the first real steps toward progress? Judging by the vehemence and strength of these new leaders, it is not too ambitious to hope for the latter.



Chen Shui-bian: President Elect

Gore and Bush Look to the Past

Campaign 2000 Presidential Candidates Emulate their Forebears

ROB PONCE

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan are widely accepted as two of the most influential Presidents of the 20th century. Democrats are always heard referring to their party as the "party of FDR." Even more frequently, you can hear Republicans calling their party the one of Ronald Reagan. The two contenders, Gore and Bush find themselves in an awkward position. Both candidates thrive on name recognition. Al Gore has been the vice president under Clinton, a president who has been credited with the success of a solid and prosperous economy. George W. Bush Jr. is the son of former President Bush. This name these personalities give each candidate a natural presidential aura. However, neither one of the leading candidates seem too eager to associate themselves with the Presidents that gave them these political advantage. Americans still remember the economic recession that lost Bush the election in 1992. Gore, on the other hand, would like to take credit for many of Clinton's accomplishments but at the same time, has attempted to disassociate himself from only the second impeached president in history. So, which U.S. Presidents do the current candidates try to associate themselves with?

Many historians have ranked Franklin D. Roosevelt as the greatest President in the nation's history. Although some historians would rank Lincoln or Washington before Roosevelt, almost all agree that FDR is, at least, the greatest President of the 20th century. Roosevelt is credited with leading the allies to victory in WW2, writing the new deal, get-

ting America out of the worst economic depression the country has ever seen and forming the United Nations. Also, unlike any President in history, Roosevelt served four terms as president, proving the long term adoration the public had for the polio stricken world leader. Opinions regarding Ronald Reagan's two terms in office have been mixed. Reagan is widely seen as responsible for winning the cold war by escalating an arms race to the point where Russia could no longer compete. He buried Russia economically and left the United States as the world's only super power. Although "Reaganomics" and the "Star Wars project" which ended the Cold War were the primary causes of the economic recession that occurred during the Bush administration, Republicans constantly talk of Reagan's great ability to speak and of his greatest accomplishment, bringing an end to half a century of world tension. Branded "The Great Communicator," Democrats and republicans alike try to emulate Reagan's style of public presentation when on the campaign trail. Al Gore is running a moderate democratic campaign focusing on issues such as social security, gun control, a more socialized health care and campaign finance in schools, the Vice President is simply advocating the ideas of FDR. Roosevelt created social security so that citizens above the age of 65 were guaranteed payment every month after a lifetime of labor. Today, FDR's system is on the verge of falling apart. It has been widely predicted that the "Baby Boomer" generation will drain the bulk of social security funds, leaving nothing for the next generation.

Gore has made the social security crisis one of the biggest issues of his campaign. He has said that as President, he will use a large portion of the budget surplus to save social security. Republican critics say the goal of this surplus should be used to pay the national debt but Gore is aware that the public is more concerned about having social security around in thirty years than paying a national debt that is not problematic to the currently booming economy. Like Roosevelt, Gore is appealing to liberals who think the government is an institution that should help people in need.

Ronald Reagan whole heartedly opposed much of what FDR stood for. Reagan denounced welfare and other so-called "tax and spend" programs that he believed wasted the taxpayer's money. He did not feel that the government should help people in need by supporting them with government funds. Instead, he thought that if the government returns more money to the people, by lowering taxes and encouraging the economy people in need would be able to take care of themselves. The flaw in Reagan's plan was that tax cuts only really benefit the rich. Obviously the more money you make, the more you pay in taxes, and the lower the taxes, the more you save. This means a lot to someone with a 6-figure salary but it means almost nothing to someone living below the poverty line. Nevertheless, George W. Bush has embraced Reagan's plan of tax cuts. Bush has said time and time again, that hard working Americans deserve to have more of their money returned to them, a sound bite that is very Reaganesque.

On the issue of foreign policy, it is

even clearer that the Republican front-runner is trying to resurrect Reagan's agenda. Reagan's most memorable words as President were "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall," referring to the Berlin wall that was the symbol of the Cold War. In November of 1999, George W. Bush vaguely outlined his own foreign policy. Speaking at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Bush said, "Even in this time of pride and promise, America has determined enemies, who hate our values and resent our success; terrorists and crime syndicates and drug cartels and unbalanced dictators. The Empire passed but evil remains." One cannot deny that this last line is a direct attempt by Bush to align himself with Ronald Reagan. As President, Reagan called Russia "The Evil Empire."

In an election year where candidates are left searching for issues that Americans are passionate about, this campaign is sizing up to be more about character than substance. With a bustling economy and a peaceful world abroad, neither Bush nor Gore can swing many votes by continuing to tell Americans that they will make their lives even better. Instead, the candidates have resorted to history to help their future. Al Gore and George Bush both know that it is appealing to remind Americans of Presidents that flourished during times of great struggle, now that we are living in a time in which a President has less access to glory. Unless some major issue develops during the upcoming months, Next fall we could see a presidential race between mediocre imitations of Roosevelts and Reagans of mediocrities.

Corrections From Issue 1

In the Children's Rights article, we forgot to mention that 1.9 million people have died in Iraq due to sanctions. Mneesha Gellman did additional reporting for the Children's Rights article. Bryan Gunderson wrote the Diallo News Analysis article.

Students Discuss Race Issues

The Office of Multicultural Affairs has begun a series of discussions on racial issues at Bard. Nicole Woods, director of the program, says the goal is to provide a forum for substantive debate and "to teach each other how to deal with these issues in a healthy way." Some of the topics considered include white privilege, stereotypes, and racial relations among students.

Up-coming workshops will be held every other Wednesday at 7:00 pm in LC115, from April 12th through May 10th. For more information, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at x7092.

-Vincent Valdmanis

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OPINIONS

Dorismond

continued from page 3

regard Giuliani as too insensitive to police misconduct, he has nothing to lose and the senate to gain."

Giuliani does not seem to think that he is running a risk by alienating himself from the black community because he currently runs strong amongst white New Yorkers who will be the back bone of his campaign. However, incidents like this latest shooting have been the major theme for Giuliani's two terms as arguably the most controversial mayor the city has ever had.

Currently, New York City is regarded as the "safest large city in the country" which means that when studied proportionally, New York has the lowest crime rate of any major city in America. In the past eight years, Giuliani has cleaned up the streets with tactics that his critics have at times called "fascist". In spite of this, the Mayor appears confident that his successful record as mayor will prove to be an advantage over the first lady, who has never held a political office or even lived in the state of New York. For this reason, the mayor assumes it is safer to keep his "tough on crime" attitude because it keeps his white republican supporters content and while it may anger African-Americans, the mayor could not care less because they did very little to help him get elected in the first place.

Hillary Clinton should be concerned that she is in dangerous waters by turning the Dorismond shooting into a campaign issue. She will most likely win the over-whelming support of African Americans in November but by continuing to criticize the mayor for his handling of the shooting, she is leaving herself vulnerable to the criticism that she is using a tragic incident to her own political advantage. Unless a pending investigation proves that the mayor handled the shooting in an illegal manner (specifically by releasing juvenile records that may have infringed personal rights) it may be in Mrs. Clinton's best interest to leave the issue to rest.

We all know that the mayor is not particularly sensitive to police brutality, but if the First Lady hopes to swing some of the more conservative voters over to her side next fall she will have to assure them that as senator she will support a "tough on crime" policy that does not condone police brutality.

It is a terrible mistake for both the republican and democratic candidates to use this unarmed shooting as a political issue. It is too soon to draw inferences on whether or not the Dorismond shooting was a direct result of police brutality that towards African Americans or if it was just an innocent blunder on the part of the NYPD.

This election year is rather lack-luster because there is prosperity across the country. Americans in general are feeling safe and secure, which leaves candidates scrambling for issues. In the New York Senate race, candidates will be sure to draw criticism from both the media and the voters if they continue to make character attacks based on sensitive issues like police brutality.

Student Labor Coalition Take on Legal System

MICHAEL CHAMEIDES

On Tuesday, March 21st, two Bard students, Kat Gaborsheski and I, went to court. We are two of the nine Bard students arrested at the February 28th demonstration to end the death penalty and get a new trial for Mumia.

While the official protest ended on February 28th, our protest of the criminal

[in]justice system has continued. The criminal justice system fails to rehabilitate the evils of society and, instead perpetuates an oppressive structure of race and class domination.

The police and the courts specifically target people according to race and class. Police use racial profiling, brutality, and intimidation in poor, minority neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the courts give harsher punishments to minorities than whites. Statistics have shown that people of color get more jail time than whites when they commit equivalent crimes. In addition to targeting the poor and minorities, the institution of jail continues to cause harm to our

communities. No one benefits when the least privileged people of our society are locked up. People in jail quickly learn that our system is based on force, violence, and oppression. These qualities are crystallized in jail as people are forced to stay in an enclosed area with few rights, in constant threat of violence from the state, and racist treatment.

The criminal justice system is a farce, and we protest the institution. Going to jail and court was a moving experience. Even as a privileged male, and a rich college student, cops used excessive force on me and attempted to degrade me.

The courts are a bureaucratic process that intimidate and threaten people. Neither the cops nor the courts are user-friendly, and often presume guilt before innocence.

Kat and I spent one day in court. Kat plead guilty and got a \$50 fine and one day probation and I plead not guilty and will stand trial over the summer. If we were poor people and weren't part of a group of 186 arrested activists, we would have been in

jail for days and it would have taken several court appearances for arraignment and sentencing. If we were poor people without an activist network, we would have been beaten by the cops. As privileged individuals, we get off easy.

I decided to plead not guilty in order to protest the U.S. system of injustice. Going to court is an act of solidarity with "criminals" around the country. I will learn more about the process as well as face some of the same threats that the poor and people of color face everyday. I am putting myself on the line against this evil system. Ultimately, the government cannot try everyone's case. Trying hundreds of activists will clog the courts, and hopefully, some people will walk free because of our actions.

Mumia's case is representative of the evils of our system. A poor, black man can be targeted, given a sham trial, and then assigned the death penalty. The United States has made anti-oppression and anti-violence illegal. Given this system, I've gladly resigned myself to a life of crime. I urge you to join me.

In the streets,
Michael Chameides

Organic Peruvian What?

The Village of Tivoli, soon becoming the home of Yuppie Culture

JONAH WEINER

The most recent weed picked from the organic garden that Tivoli's main street is fast becoming was Bruno's Delicatessen, forced to close down late last month for chiefly financial reasons. While it is a bit hard to romanticize a local deli whose food was by no means spectacular, whose shelves were often bare, and whose kitchen conditions were unclean to say the least, it's even harder to stomach those businesses Tivoli's economic scene has enthusiastically embraced instead.

What do posh sushi bars, gourmet coffee shops, and vegetarian restaurants all have in common? One might think it safe to answer that what they have in common is that they have *nothing* in common with the character of rural upstate New York. Not true, apparently. As we can see from nearby Rhinebeck—a precious, ultra-sanitized "village" whose main street looks more like Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, Brooklyn, than anything you'd want to ever find in the Catskills—there is money in the Hudson Valley and it likes the idea of juice bars.

If we're talking about money then, of course, we've got to mention the crucial role Bard students play in all this. Tivoli is, after all, as close to a college town as anything



Catskills and...Catfish: Complete with Pagoda, Osaka is Tivoli's New Sushi Bar Photograph by Dan Lichtblau

we've got around here. Students keep the gears moving. By pumping enough cash into the registers and enough Saab 900s and Volkswagens into the landscape, we ensure that the project to gentrify Tivoli has as nurturing an environment as possible. An interesting footnote completely relevant to these concerns is the proposal, still being deliberated upon by local government, to extend the Metro-North train line out of New York City straight through

Tivoli.

Like it or not, the mentality that fawns over these self-conscious and largely posturing "new-agey" businesses is, albeit on an admittedly smaller scale, part of the same frightening mentality that fuels the growth of such monolithic products of the yuppie culture as Starbucks cafés, Barnes & Noble bookstores, North Face jackets, and iMac computers. To be sure, it would be ridiculously far-fetched for me to categorically reject or demonize the patronage of local small businesses on these somewhat abstracted ideological grounds alone. That's not what I want to do. What I do think is necessary, however, is that we consider just to what extent the above-mentioned yuppie mentality is working on us when we celebrate the untraditional juxtaposition of something like Organic Peruvian Roast and the rural Hudson Valley.

Submissions, Comments, or Responses to any Opinion piece in The Free Press are encouraged:

bardfreepress@hushmail.com
P.O. Box #71

Thousands Expected in D.C. for IMF Protest

Bard Students Argue IMF Does More Harm than Good

JACOB GORDON

There will be a massive action against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank as they hold their annual meetings on the weekend of the 16th of next month. Thousand of protesters from varying concerns will converge at the IMF building to voice their concern and outrage at the IMF and World Bank's exploitation of the third world countries with which they do most of their business. The action is expected to be of similar scale to that which occurred in Seattle in November to protest the World Trade Organization. The IMF and WB are similar to the WTO in their intentions and a similarly diverse activist base is predicted.

Bard has formed a large affinity group to take part in the actions of the 16th and 17th. They are planning massive non-violent civil disobedience as well as legal protests. Bard's group is linked with other groups around the country through extensive activist networks. The week before the protests will be the Carnival Against Capitalism: a week of training, art, and a chance for activists to meet and plan. The primary trainer of activists for the April 16th action is the Rukus group. The Rukus group trains people in non-violent social and political action and legal issues and will hold a two-day camp at Bard on the 25th and 26th for the surrounding Mid Hudson area.

Almost every group attending the A16 protest emphasizes non-violent action. Their intentions are to disrupt the talks and make a statement to the world that they will not stand for the First World's oppression of the poorer, global South. They will practice civil disobedience and there are expected to be many arrests.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are private organizations that were formed soon after World War II. Their stated intentions were to provide aid to damaged countries by providing loans that could re-vitalize their trade and build and rebuild infrastructural projects. Until the 80's the two groups (working invariably in conjunction) were relatively unnoticed by the public. Early in the 80's the groups took on the role of what they claimed was assisting countries that were suffering from poverty. They began making numerous loans to Third World countries.

At the same time they announced the implementation of the new Structural Adjustment Loans (SAL), or Structural Adjustment Plans (SAP). A country receiving loans from the IMF and World Bank now had to make drastic changes in their government and economy as a condition of receiving aid. Many countries in Africa, Asia, and Central America accepted the conditions with little alternative and little concept of what repercussions the SAPs would have on their countries.

The details of the SAPs vary from country to country but are often very similar overall. The purpose of the programs are to maximize the trade output of a country while

minimizing other expenses in order to rapidly pay off debt. SAPs often involve the privatization of public resources (like the recent sale of Costa Rica's communications network to Sprint), trimming down government employment (making massive lay-offs), and building industrial projects (like India's infamous coal burning power plants). But the result of trying to quickly maximize a country's output is devastating. Massive inflation insues as a result of sudden change in national product. In many counties, government employment is the only reliable source of jobs. The privatization of public resources and selling them to the highest bidder vastly reduces the country's ability to govern itself and creates dangerous monopolies. Many of the industrial projects implemented by SAPs have proven to be environmental hazards.

But the real effect of the IMF and World Bank on poor countries is in the death count. In every country that have had Structural Adjustment Programs instituted, the infant mortality rate has risen. Health care and education have quickly deteriorated as hunger and malnourishment have gone up. Unemployment has skyrocketed and the work that remains if often dangerous, oppressive and grossly under paid. The declared

motives of the IMF and World Bank are to be helping "developing" countries develop, but the outcome seems to be quite the contrary.

Structural Adjustment Loans continue to be dolled out today. And not only that, but they continue to be given to countries that are already struggling to pay off their previous IMF and World Bank loans. The problem of "papering over" standing debt is one that gets progressively worse as countries fall deeper into it. The diplomats who accept them are either non caring elitists or powerless to create their own solutions for their withering countries.

The IMF has been under pressure from many angles to reform their methods. Congress recently issued a statement saying that the IMF should begin to take responsibility for its initial statement of purpose. Many national and international pressure groups have also been rallying for the reduction or elimination of Third World debt, which they see as a tool for oppressing the Global South. In a speech in Africa, Rev. Jesse Jackson said, "They no longer use bullets and ropes. They use the IMF and World Bank." But there seems to be little mobilization in government along the lines of reform. President Clinton, after much deliberating, endorsed a

German candidate for the unoccupied position of president of the IMF, Horst Kohler. And even if there is growing consciousness in Washington about methods of the IMF and World Bank, Mr. Clinton's endorsement seemed to be a tactical one, rooted more in maintaining good relations then in making any sort of changes in the way that the Third World receives aid. Horst Kohler is a conservative with a history of heading similar organizations in Germany.

There is a mass opposition to global politics of this nature as was proven in Seattle, but it is clear that government is slow to respond to the world's growing suspiciousness of the IMF and World Bank. The Bard Affinity group hopes that the mobilization in Washington DC will be as powerful a message as the one created in Seattle against the WTO. The DC police seem to think so as they have been training their police in riot control for months already and have stocked up on rubber bullets, pepper spray, and tear gas.

Further info on the IMF and World Bank and Structural Adjustment Loans can be found at:

www.50years.org

Bard Joins Workers' Rights Consortium

Anti-Sweatshop code sets campus precedent

JULIE ENDY

The Bard Student Labor Coalition successfully passed an anti-sweatshop code of conduct in May of 1999. Although the activities surrounding the enactment of the code have remained somewhat low-profile since then, students have been working hard to ensure that the provisions of the code are taking effect. A three-person student committee was set up early last semester in order to oversee this work. An additional member of the committee, James Brudvig, Vice President for Administration, acts as the administrative liason.

The code itself is an asserts that it is against the principles of Bard College to do business with any long term sub-contractor (such as Barnes & Noble or Chartwells) who obtains goods produced through exploitative labor conditions. In order to realize these principles, however, we as students have to address the essential problem of monitoring the numerous sub-contracting companies and each of their respective factories or farms who produce the goods that students consume. This is a problem that requires the cooperation of both Bard students and the administration. The Workers' Rights Consortium (WRC) is a nascent organization developed (and still under development) by United Students Against Sweatshops, a coalition of students in over 150 colleges and universities across the country who are working to end sweatshop labor.

The WRC was conceived as an

alternative to the Fair Labor Alliance (FLA), a monitoring group set up by the Department of Labor as a partnership between the government, corporations, and five or six major NGO's. Recently, however, controversy surrounding the efficacy of the FLA has come to the foreground of the fair labor movement. Three out of four of the biggest NGO's on the FLA board have resigned in opposition to the level of company control that is allowed by the FLA's monitoring process. Under FLA rules, monitors are not only paid by the companies whose factories they are inspecting, but they are also only allowed to inspect those locations that are previously selected by the company. Monitoring is not done on a regular basis and no unannounced visits are conducted. What's more, only a small percentage of factory locations need to be certified in order for a company to be certified as "sweat free," further, public disclosure of the findings in these locations is not required.

By contrast, the WRC is not in the business of certifying companies. Created upon the principle that both public disclosure and objective monitoring practices are critical to uncovering violations of fair labor standards, its primary goal is to provide a system of verification and complaints. It will do this by communicating with local non-governmental organizations in the producing areas in order to allow workers to voice their own complaints, and will then in turn supply universities with the information necessary to enforce their codes. For

example, if a Champion worker making Bard t-shirts were to complain of forced overtime, the WRC would receive that information through the local NGO who presumably already has connections with the local population. The WRC would then supply that information to Bard for allowing the college to take action by putting pressure on Champion. In this way the WRC is built on connections between workers, local NGO's, and colleges and universities.

The advantages of Bard joining this group are numerous. It ensures an effective monitoring mechanism for the apparel industry while simultaneously helping to strengthen the coalition of colleges and universities working towards this same goal. It also allows us to focus our own time and energy towards developing ways of investigating labor practices in industries which are not commonly covered by national monitoring organizations, such as the food industry, and which are covered under Bard's code of conduct.

If you are interested in finding out more about our activities or just want some additional information, feel free to contact any one of the following members of the student organizing committee for the code: Shankar Gopalakrishnan (x4158/sg584), Michael Chameides (x4005/mc753), or Julie Endy (756-3814/je543). Also, the code can be viewed at the following website: <http://student.bard.edu/~sg584>.

8 ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Spring Thesis Exhibits Unveiled at CCS

J.R. VALENZUELA

The first four exhibits in the series of the spring thesis exhibitions are now on display in the Center for Curatorial Studies until April 16th. Each exhibit is curated by second-year students in the Center's graduate program, who have organized these exhibitions as part of their final master's degree projects.

Anyone who has walked through the Campus Center recently will have noticed the giant orange ball that dominates the lobby outside the theatre. This is the Superflex Biogas system, the main component of "Superflex in Company-Economic Potentials," curated by Teresa Williams, which presents and continues a collaboration between Superflex and Bard College students. The Biogas system converts animal dung into methane gas, which is then used for fuel. Superflex itself is a group of three artists based in Denmark who actively co-ordinate relationships between specialized experts in a given project. While most of the events relating to the exhibit have already occurred, the Campus Center display is still up and running.

The first exhibit one encounters upon entering the CCS is *Looking Back*, curated by Lisa Hatchadoorian, which focuses on four contemporary artists who freely appropriate and rework the motifs of old master paintings. "In an act of both homage and insubordination," states the exhibition pamphlet, "artists have consistently copied and translated the styles and practices of previous masters in order to learn techniques, gain recognition by association, glean inspiration, or rebel and stake themselves against solidified trends." This statement certainly rings true for the artists selected.

Working with Polaroid photography, Jeannette Christensen directly emulates the narrative content and compositions of the paintings of

Vermeer, using both herself and male models as substitutes for Vermeer's subjects. The relatively small size of the Polaroid reinforces her decision to reduce the original scenarios to their barest elements, so that they function primarily in terms of the quality of light and gesture. However, by substituting men and herself for the women caught in moments of intimate concentration, she does break away from Vermeer's original images.

Matt Leiderstam's pieces are two color photographs of a 16th century painting of a young man. What look to be two separate but similar images are actually the same painting, before and after restoration. The artist sees the language of homosexual cruising, and the coded behavior necessary to maintain 'normalcy' as analogous, and in many cases manifest in the codified meanings and symbolic vocabulary of classical painting. By the process of restoration, one can see the attempts that were made to homogenize and rework the portrait, and as Hatchadoorian points out, "it becomes a meditation on the numerous repressive and disclosing aspects of desire with portraiture."

Both photographer Cindy Sherman and painter Julie Heffernan contributed self-portraits. Sherman transformed her form through lavish costumes and various prosthetics to emulate classical portraiture and standard art history images. Heffernan paints her face on other bodies, as in "Self-Portrait as He-Man," where she shows herself as a chiseled strongman, surrounded by the trappings of classical 19th century portraiture. Her mixture of well-rendered, fantastic self-exploration, coupled with an arcane and in many ways truly disturbing array of visual elements and objects is a strong one.

Gregory Sandoval curates *Unraveling Desire*, an exhibition that brings together artists Richard Hawkins and Karen Kilimnik. Both



Now Showing: Karen Kilimnik's "Me as Elizabeth Taylor in National Velvet before Horse Race" 1988

artists work within the realm of celebrity and popular images and the work presented reads like the walls or journal notebooks of a fan devoted not to one person, but rather the entire spectrum of entertainment media, in the end, that is precisely the point. Hawkins's pieces rework and recontextualize media-proffered male images. His work includes curt and pasted magazine images and large digitized prints of spectral floating male heads, bloodied and zombified. Kilimnik takes a different approach, and instead of reworking the images themselves, she creates self-portraits that explore a person's capacity to internalize an object of desire, to rework reality around fantasy. In "Me as Elizabeth Taylor in National Velvet Before Horse Race," the title insists that she is faithfully and lovingly recreating a person and a situation, but the effort is a failure. The image is slightly blurry, marked up in black, and really has nothing in common with what the title suggests. It should be tragic in its incongruence, but the title's insistence that it is what she says it is cannot be ignored. As Sandoval puts it, "we witness

Kilimnik's identification with the image and her acknowledgment of that impossibility." Both artists take popular, ideal images as a starting point and rework it to the point where the end result is independent of the original packaged meaning, to the extent that interpretation and expression overshadow a "correct" or popular outlook.

In *Sightings*, curated by Jeffrey Walkowiak, the collection of work centers around the languages of the different locations where anonymous sex occurs and contemporary art is exhibited. "In both cases, these languages are not readily available to everyone," says Walkowiak, "but only to those who are versed in them." Work includes D-L Alvarez's Super 8mm film "Stuttered Landscapes," installations by Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, and Tom Burr, as well as photographs by Dean Sameshima. The installations are directly inspired by the peep show environment. Burr in particular is reacting to the "Disneyfication" of Time Square by creating what he

Continued Page 11...

Bach at Bard...But Where Are the Students?

MATT AYRES

What makes an artist timeless? How is it possible that one can transcend his/her generation? Something must be stirred within the soul of the viewer, and often it is an indescribable emotion. Walter Pater called this ambiguity of feeling a "peculiar sensation," that is something we ultimately derive pleasure from.

Johann Sebastian Bach is certainly an artist who has elicited exuberant and passionate responses from his listeners for centuries. Bard

Student, Kerry Berry Brogan, went so far as to call Bach's music "levitating, soothing, and inspiring." On Sunday March 19th at 4 in the afternoon, Bach came to Bard. Four Sonatas arranged for violin cello and harpsi-

chord were performed impeccably by Sanford Allen (violin), Edward Brewer (harpsichord), and Bard's own, professor Robert Martin, on cello.

The program was approximately two hours in length and featured Bach's Sonatas for Clavier and Violin with Continuo, starting with No. 2 in A Major, No. 5 in F Minor, and after a brief intermission, No. 6 in G Major, closing with No. 3 in E Major. The

selections offered a varied and engaging selection of Bach's repertoire. The "Allegro assai," from A Major, featured Martin's cello which went

from a slinky line to a subtle, melodious drone which complimented Allen's violin. What was really impressive was the uncompromising musicianship of the trio, which articulated the depth of Bach's music with

grace and skill. They were able to go from a lively allegro tempo, filled with difficult and distinct runs set to a slow, melancholic, sweetly mournful tempo of the "Largo," or "Adagio" sections. And they did it with sensitivity that only the very gifted possess. What was even more impressive was the way that each instrument complimented each other, blending each voice at an enormous depth.

What was perplexing was the lack of Bard students attending such an impressive display of beautiful artistry. The crowd was composed almost entirely of non-Bard students. Colin Olson, a local resident said that he, "couldn't think of a more pleasant way to spend a Sunday afternoon." Perhaps a Bard student would come to the same con-



Bach to Basics: The German composer himself.

clusion if they invested their precious time in a classical music concerto, like they do to go see...Karate? You can go to Bard's website (bard.edu) to check out future performances.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Cat Power Covers Familiar and Unfamiliar Ground

Matador Records Releases the Much Anticipated *Covers Record*

DAN LICHTBLAU

Cat Power (née Chan Marshall) brings her folk based angst to another level in the much anticipated new album *The Covers Record*. As the title implies, *The Covers Record* is a collection of covered songs which have been carefully thought through and reinterpreted. The album includes covers of songs by Moby Grape, The Velvet Underground, Smog, Michael Hurley, The Rolling Stones, and Bob Dylan.

Although it can be easily argued that Cat Power's heavily morose style overpowers the original life of many of the songs, the album certainly has some brilliant moments. One such moment is her rendition of Bob Dylan's "Paths of Victory." Although she completely rewrites this song musically, she incorporates an amount of Bob Dylan flavor into her new version and succeeds in creatively covering a song while remaining true to the original ver-

sion.

Another strong moment comes with Cat Power's cover of the Velvet Underground song "I Found A Reason." Like she does on "Paths of



What Will the Community Think? Cat Power (aka Chan Marshall)

Victory," Cat Power completely reconstructs the music while remaining true to the style of the Velvet Underground. "I Found A Reason"

is, in fact, absolutely the high point of the album. The new melody that she writes is brilliant and her simple piano accompaniment is a perfect touch. While it is very rare that any cover is as good as the original version, because of the relative obscurity of "I Found A Reason" to start, I have no problem saying that Cat Powers' version is even better than that of the Velvets.

In spite of this praise of the album, it cannot be denied that the majority of *The Covers Record* is well below average. Cat Power's style overpowers her music to the point where many of the songs are practically indistinguishable from one another, and many are completely lacking anything musically interesting. The album begins with the Stones' "Satisfaction" which (although I have to admit I was amused by the first time I listened to it) is completely destroyed by Cat Powers' style. She succeeded in turning a song by one of the most

energetic bands in rock history into a three minute and two second lull of monotony.

Although this album contains more than one stroke of genius, it does not really go anywhere musically and is doomed to go down in history as just another mediocre cover album.

Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks: Artwork from *The Covers Record*



Jazz Legend Sam Rivers to Play at Bard with Thurman Barker

MATT AYRES

Jazz. It is difficult to dispute that it is one of the few innovative American art forms. It has the technical proficiency of classical music, yet allows space for supreme personal expression through improvisation. Jazz constantly redefines itself and ignores the boundaries defined by both popular culture and music.

Listening to John Coltrane's music, to take one example, is more than just listening to a man proficient on his instrument-it is a religious experience. It transcends all boundaries. But as an art form jazz is largely ignored.

Tomorrow night, Wednesday March 29th Sam Rivers will join Bard professor Thurman Barker in the Thurman Barker Quintet, at 8pm

in Olin Auditorium. Rivers is one of the most gifted jazz musicians of any time, a multi-instrumentalist best known for his work on the tenor saxophone. He has played with Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Holland, Charles Mingus, Cecil Taylor, Herbie Hancock, Tony

"HE HAS AN AMAZING VERSATILITY"

Williams, Freddie Hubbard, bluesmen B.B. King and T Bone Walker as well as the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. He has amazing versatility, and his range and depth of playing distinguishes him from most of his contemporaries.

Rivers has an intellectual depth in his compositions, which function as aural soundscapes enveloped by a complexity that is elusive to most. His playing has been extremely influential in the avant-garde scene, most notably in the loft scene of

New York's NoHo district in the 70's. He was nominated for a Grammy this year for his Inspiration album,



Jazz Genius: Sam Rivers plays at Bard tomorrow

there, playing with both his sixteen piece orchestra and his trio.

despite the fact that it was not easily accessible. At 76, he resides in Orlando and has been the center of the thriving jazz scene

history of jazz, despite the fact that most are unaware of his contributions. His performance on Wednesday, with Thurman Barker, an extraordinarily musical and expressive drummer in his own right, promises to leave a lasting impression on the Bard audience.

Editor's Note: I realize there is also a Richard Buckner performance in the Old Gym at 9pm, presented by the Entertainment Committee. Please check out Sam Rivers, even if you plan to go to the Buckner show, he is truly one of the most innovative and important jazzmen not only today, but throughout the history of jazz. Expand your horizons, come and listen, and you will not be disappointed.



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Ambiguity and Meaning in the Work of Gerhard Richter

Early Paintings of 20th Century Great Showing at Zwirner & Wirth Gallery



Sprungrühr zu Rosalind Zeh

High Dive: Richter's "Turmspringerin I," 1965, shown with other early works at the Zwirner & Wirth Gallery in NYC

HUFFA FROBES-CROSS

Gerhard Richter's paintings seem to be one of the greatest mysteries of the art world. Critics often begin articles on Richter talking about the elements of "contradiction," "ambiguity," or "confusion" present in any approach to Richter's work. This may not be a fault. Richter himself would seem to suggest that these critics have pinpointed his intention exactly, accepting, of course, the contradiction implicit in that statement. It is when these critics continue that they often fail to follow their own advice. Becoming frustrated they try to explain his contradictions in terms of coherence, his ambiguity in terms of overarching clarity, and his confusion in terms of an intelligent intention.

In 1966 Richter wrote, "I pursue no objectives, no system, no tendency; I have no programme, no style, no direction. I have no time for specialized concerns, working themes, or variations that lead to mastery." Richter's note is characteristically straightforward in its phrasing, but when one turns to his work his words become more of a puzzle than an

explanation.

It was during the time of this writing that Richter fully invested himself in the process of painting from photographs that has occupied him throughout his career. The small Richter retrospective at the Zwirner and Wirth gallery focuses on this period. Although these paintings are all close reproductions of photographs, they do not, strictly speaking, use the photograph as a means to reach the real scene that was photographed. Instead they reproduce the physical aspects of the photograph itself. Distorted colors, lack of focus, and over/underexposure are all faithfully preserved in these images. Despite his faithfulness to the photograph, there are at least three significant differences present in Richter's paintings that distinguish them from the photographs they reproduce. His paintings have no grain, they are much larger in scale, and they are made of paint on canvas applied with a human hand.

Are these paintings the result of an artistic practice that pursues "no objectives, no system, no tendency...?" Richter has developed a system that he follows with the utmost strictness. All of these paintings are

constructed by strictly copying photographs. The only "effect" he allows himself is a blurring of the image. He does this by smearing the paint in such a way that not only blurs the image, but effaces his own strokes of paint. Thus he systematizes the creation of his paintings, and as a result hides (if not entirely removes) any aesthetic judgments he might make during their construction. Richter then has a specific process and this process produces a specific effect. Is Richter's purpose in using this system the removal of his own aesthetic judgments, or does this effect aim at something beyond itself, (objectivity, perhaps)? If one could find an answer to this question they might, very well, have an answer to the question quoted at the beginning of this paragraph.

Let us then assume that Richter has intentionally created this effect to make his paintings objective. He has nearly said as much on various occasions. Thus by displacing his own preferences with regard to the look of the painting, and copying only what he sees, these paintings become objective imitations of the photographs they represent. The first problem one runs into with this thesis is that the aesthetic judgment which he effaces in the process of his paintings is powerfully reinstated by another element in his art making. Richter chooses his photographs. Further, when looking at a body of his work, it is evident that he chooses them very carefully. These decisions, moreover, as one will see, are at their root aesthetic.

In the second room of the Zwirner and Wirth Gallery there are four seemingly abstract paintings. These four paintings are in fact copies of extremely out of focus, underexposed photographs. These paintings turn representation into abstraction, and more interestingly, turn abstraction into representation. These works are mimetic in the highest degree, and they imitate something which is by definition a kind of imitation. An abstract painting asserts its own existence as an object. The representational painting on the other hand is tied to objects beyond its physical being to which its visual presence refers. Richter's paintings seem not to refer to anything. Their visual presence taken alone gives an ambiguous sense of space, but besides this they are almost totally nonreferential. Yet if one knows Richter's process one recognizes these paintings as highly mimetic. These paintings, then, are visually abstract in that a viewer cannot recognize a referent solely by looking, but they are representational with regard to the process of their creation. Their status as objects is ambiguous. There is even more here, though. There is a doubling of this ambiguity. The thing that Richter represents has a similar status. These are photographs which seem to represent nothing, but which

become in some way mimetic by virtue of our knowledge that all photographs represent something. Richter has heightened the level of ambiguity by transferring these photographs to paint. We know a photograph is mimetic without doubt. Thus the status of an abstract photograph is ambiguous but clearly conceived, it is mimetic with regard to its process and abstract visually. Looking at Richter's paintings we no longer have this certainty. It is only with knowledge of the art making process itself that we are able to sort things out to any extent. Richter's works, in the end, are seemingly unsolvable ontological puzzles.

Suffice it to say these paintings would not be the paintings they are, and would not therefore have the same aesthetic status, had Richter chosen different pictures to represent. From the consistency of Richter's choices one can assume a certain internationality behind them. Thus there is an aesthetic judgment implicit in his choice of photographs, and a sense in which these paintings are no more objective than carefully composed photographs. Yet there continues to be a reduction of aesthetic judgment on Richter's part by virtue of his process. There is still an intelligible system which Richter follows even if it does breakdown at points. These paintings are thus strewn with contradictions, and they both support and refute Richter's statements about his own work.

Richter has said he is interested in painting most when it portrays an "absence of language." However, from one standpoint his paintings are at their most "realistic" in the way in which they *present* a particular way in which language functions. These works force the viewer to recognize the impossibility of stability in meaning, and simultaneously demonstrate that instability, far from being a hindrance, fosters meaning at its most complex.

The exhibition "Early Paintings" will be on display at the Zwirner & Wirth gallery (32 E 69 St. New York) until April 22.

CAMPUS ART IN BRIEF:

-There is a Student Moderation Show up in Fisher Studio Arts Building. The work of Salomeh Grace, Brendan Harrington, and Jamie Hamilton can be seen among others. The show replaces another student show, Club Art's *The Future Never Happened and When We Were Good*.

-*The Body in Photographs: A Recent Gift from Eileen and Peter Norton* will be on display through May 28 at the Center for Curatorial Studies. Curated by Amanda Cruz, the show includes works by many contemporary artists including Morrie Camhi, Eric Magnuson, and Cindy Sherman.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



We're Not in Chinatown Anymore *Polanski Tackles the Supernatural in Ninth Gate*

CHRISTINE CIOFFARI &
ELIZABETH LORENZ

Ending a six year hiatus, Roman Polanski brings us *The Ninth Gate*, a film based on the novel "El Club Dumas" by Arturo Pérez-Reverte. Featuring skilled performances by Johnny Depp and Frank Langella, the film is the latest in a series of



Is it Hot in Here? Frank Langella as Boris Balkan

supernatural/Satanic thrillers ala *Stigmata*, *End of Days*, etc. It is not without its variation on the theme, which leaves audiences filled with a multitude of unanswered questions, the most prominent being "What?"

Johnny Depp, all grown up since his days as Tommy Hanson, and with a none too shabby Tim Burton trilogy under his belt, becomes our amoral protagonist. Cast as Dean Corso, a buyer and seller of rare books, Depp accepts an intriguing offer from a fellow rare book enthu-

siast, and millionaire playboy Boris Balkan (Langella). Balkan, the proud curator of what is, conveniently enough for the film, the largest collection of ancient or rare texts about the devil, commissions Corso to investigate the authenticity of his most recent acquisition by seeking out possible discrepancies among his and the other two existing copies.

This text, titled *The Nine Gates of the Kingdom of the Shadows*, was written in 1666 by Aristide Torchia and purportedly includes illustrations of engravings carved by Satan himself. This black leather-bound volume, its cover embossed with a golden pentagram,

spawns both a global journey and a supporting cast of alternately supernatural and conniving characters. They all want the book. And thus, the plot.

Polanski is not subtle in his presentation of the film's ultimate theme: The supreme power of the devil is His ability to use human nature to bring about man's demise. We like this. Polanski's counterintuitive twist—that the devil doesn't want you if you're looking to serve and follow, that only disinterested

egoists with personal agendas (like Corso) need apply—works as well. Also successful is the director's fully conscious tactic of allowing this theme to manifest itself, both consistently and insistently, with a surprisingly gracious blend of black and deadpan humor. In one scene Boris Balkan bursts into what appears to be an *Eyes Wide Shut*-themed Halloween party—in fact a Satanic summons—and dismissively bel-lows, "Mumbo jumbo, mumbo jumbo. . ." This boisterous entrance culminates wondrously – Balkan turns to the gathered, pauses, emits a single "Boo!," and sends the crowd scrambling for cover.

In its last fifteen minutes the film begins to sputter. With what is simultaneously the silliest, least appealing, most deranged, and creepiest sex scene ever filmed (quick note: Depp's co-fornicator is Emmanuelle Seigner, Polanski's wife), the film's possibility of success starts to disappear. What had been a slowly evolving but highly engaging plot unravels rapidly. The special effects, used to some purpose



No Light Reading Here: Johnny Depp's Dean Corso studies Satanic Texts in *The Ninth Gate*

earlier, are now simply a tool of overcompensation: in the very last scene Johnny Depp vanishes into nothing short of a huge ball of other-worldly light.

Aesthetes among audiences will enjoy the close-ups of the engravings and Emmanuelle Seigner's character for their eerie beauty. Also, the portrayal of the rare book business is so intriguing—even when approached without any frame of reference—that one cannot help but take to heart Polanski's depiction of this field as fast-paced, murderous, and replete with mayhem. True, the film raises many questions and chooses not to answer them. But while this is will undoubtedly leave some viewers unsatisfied, those thoroughly engaged by the film will leave the theater in thought, considering their own answers to the questions.

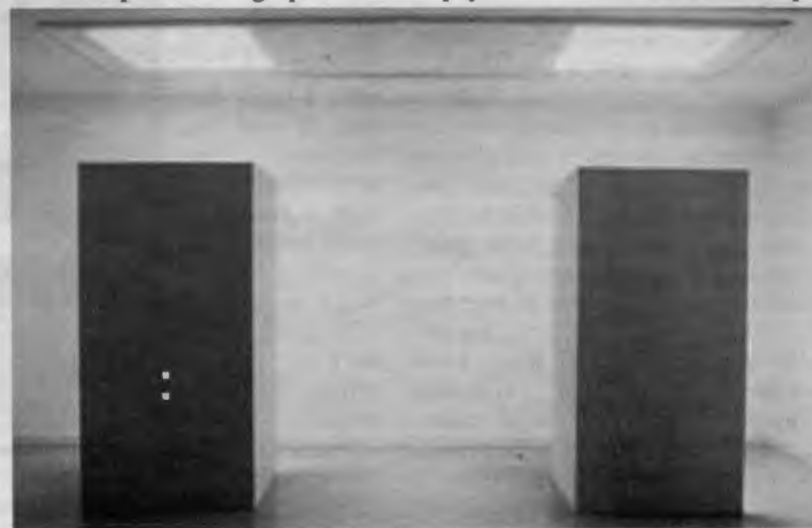
CCS Spring Thesis Exhibits Now Showing

...Continued From Page 8

called a sort of instant archeology, whereby he preserved certain elements of the spaces that were being destroyed. He then makes an installation out of these elements perfectly: clean carpet, a polished mirror, devoid of all the traces of the sex and seediness that was trying to be gotten rid of.

With the photograph of Dean Sameshinma, the element of anonymous sex doesn't make itself immediately apparent. His first set of large-format color photographs depict several buildings in Los Angeles head-on, precisely arranged within the frame. They are all untitled but will have parenthetical information (oldermen; 5 rooms, 3 televisions, 1 living room, 1 shower, 1 gloryhole platform). The second set shows views from Griffith Park of clearing and foliage, also untitled. Upon looking through the pamphlet and other supplements, what is alluded to in some of the parenthesis is made clear; the buildings are all popular gay clubs,

bars, and hangouts, and Griffith Park is the premier cruising area for Los Angeles. It is this room for ambiguity where the ultimate resonance of the exhibit depends in large part on the



Up Now: Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset's "Powerless Structure"

relative strengths and weaknesses of a personal, sexual and/or artistic vocabulary, which is probably the strongest aspect of the exhibit. It intelligently

probes the differences in perception that can exist between heterosexual and homosexual, a contemporary artist in-the-know and a relative neophyte. In addition to the color pho-

tographs by Gabriel Orozco, as well as a video installation, "Piplotti Rist's Blue Bodily Letter," and Dara Friedman's film installation "Jodie."

Playing at Upstate Films This Week

MIFUNE

(Denmark, 1999 wr/dir by Soren Kragh-Jacobsen)

Lying to cover up your past is dangerous. Wrapped around the basic premise of the latest film produced by the Danish Dogma Collective (*The Celebration*) is an off-kilter dark comedy about an ambitious open hagen yuppie who's forced to confront his well-hidden past.

MR DEATH

(U.S., 1999 dir by Errol Morris)

Errol Morris, chronicler of the off-beat, odd and disturbing (*THE THIN BLUE LINE*, *FAST CHEAP & OUT OF CONTROL*) focuses on an infuriating man whose delusions of grandeur render him blind to his own shocking actions.

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Stan Brakhage Interviewed:

Legendary Filmmaker Talks about Film, Bard, and His Work Past and Present

Continued from page 1

Luke Cohen: What are your feelings on receiving this honorary doctorate? Do you have affections for Bard?

Stan Brakhage: All these years I have had reverberations, most of them usually pretty magic, in relation to Bard. Petter Hutton means a great deal to me. Mark Stream went to Bard, Jen Reves, these people and others (who I am sure I have forgotten at the moment). At any rate the name keeps reverberating in the important areas of my life and film. It's a good thing [receiving the doctorate], a meaning on the magic, on the magic spot, an honor.

LC: How did you form a relationship with Robert Kelly? What has been his influence on your work?

SB: I went to hear him read poetry in a coffee house in New York City, because he did come so highly recommended from Robert Duncan - I always got all my cues to what poets to go to.

That was my first introduction to him, and I cared for his poetry very much. Then, I think something was arranged that I come up and show some films. I think probably he arranged it because I stayed at his house. We had great conversations, great talks, aesthetic conversations. For example, just this one thing, think how important this could be, he said, "All filmmakers are predisposed to paranoia because all the other arts—because you [filmmakers] have always lived in a bad time for the arts, but previous other arts have had previous good times, where a person or acolyte could have a sense of the history of a master of some other art, painting or sculpture, you know, dying in bed surrounded by candles and his grandchildren." So, he said "but filmmakers have never had this."

LC: How do you view your progress in relation to that of your contemporaries?

SB: Well, you know I have very few contemporaries left and I do want to make a point of that. The sixties were—by contemporaries I would include those a generation older and those a generation younger than me, they were my contemporaries—and the sixties killed off most of them either outright through, you know, drugs or something or suicide, or madness crippled them. Some were in asylums. Some were in and then got out, weren't able to work again. Many just, maybe the hardest way of all, just couldn't work and just got a job and gave up. There aren't very many of us left. So, I've come to learn that where you have contemporaries, you could be inspired by their work, but the true inspiration, no one would ever know it. You know, it is so different what you do, that no one would guess unless you told them that so-and-so had inspired some of your art

and that you dedicate something to them. Progress is not the word I would use, more something like proliferation. I mean, I just take it day by day.

LC: Are there questions that reoccur throughout your films?

SB: Yes, certain themes. I once said, [when I was] very young, that birth, sex, death, and search for god were my subject matter, and that's a little facile, but to the extent to which words will carry a complexity of magic and feeling, I think that's still basically true, that's a true thing to say. There was a major turn in my work at some point where I wanted to make things that were so unique that

"I WANT AS MUCH BEAUTY AS IS REASONABLE, BUT ALSO ONE HAS TO ACCEPT THE BEAUTY OF THE CANCER."

- Stan Brakhage

they only could come out of me, not in some ego-centric sense, like look ma' it's all my painting, only I could have made it, but rather I wanted to give back to the world something in thanks for what it had given to me in the arts. All the

whole phenomenological world is such a gift and I wanted to add to it, like a new flower. The truth of this is that every human is absolutely unique and so in a way this should always be the process of making, that the maker is in some way, maybe subtly and not easily recognized by others, is doing something so unique it has never been on earth before.

LC: Do you find it frustrating that often people pay more attention to your experimental or "unconventional" methodologies, instead of looking to your work as constituting a greater artistic meaning? How do you feel when you see these techniques reoccur in other's work?

SB: Well, it is understandable, a lot of people who look at my films are filmmakers themselves, and of course they want to know how to do it so they can go through it and develop there own form of it, I presume. So, I've never felt like I should be niggardly in sharing them with them. However, there are some filmmakers who do and say, "get out of here that is my trade secret", or "that's my private making," who don't want a lot of people imitating them. The only times that that bothers me, of course, is when the imitation is stupid, because we all imitate each other to some extent, but it is painful to see something you've developed that comes back to you in an overtly dumb form. MTV just drives me up the wall. I mean it's such stupid stupid editing, and composition...these words don't even apply to MTV! I don't know what they do. They put their shots together in a box and shake them up and then splice them together? It doesn't even produce a reasonable chance operation. I studied with [John] Cage for years; I can't even find a decent chance operation process with MTV. It is just a god-

damn mess as everyone knows. That is very annoying, saddening and even frightening because I think that's terribly influential and it's undoing the growth of sensibility that so many people lived and worked and yes, even died for. It is just being unraveled on MTV. The other thing that makes one angry is if certain techniques that I have invented are used to lie to people, say in advertising or worse. Between all the people in my generation we have invented an enormous amount of grammar, film grammar, and I suppose a lot of people just took those as tricks.

LC: You are often pigeonholed for your avant-garde or "unconventional" methodologies, while your films are obviously separate from typical films, do you feel there is an implied narrative that can be attained through conventional interpretations?

SB: Yes, back in the sixties I was talking with Hollis Frampton at one time and he picked up something I said and made it a theorem that, when you are involved in passage of time in an art, in a continuity art, in other words, you're automatically involved in some sort of narrative. So that was one of the flags he would carry around for a while. I think it's true, it holds up. You know, [even] when I am listening to a symphony I am listening on one sense to a story evolving with tones.

LC: To what extent do you feel the ideas put into your work are received by the audience?

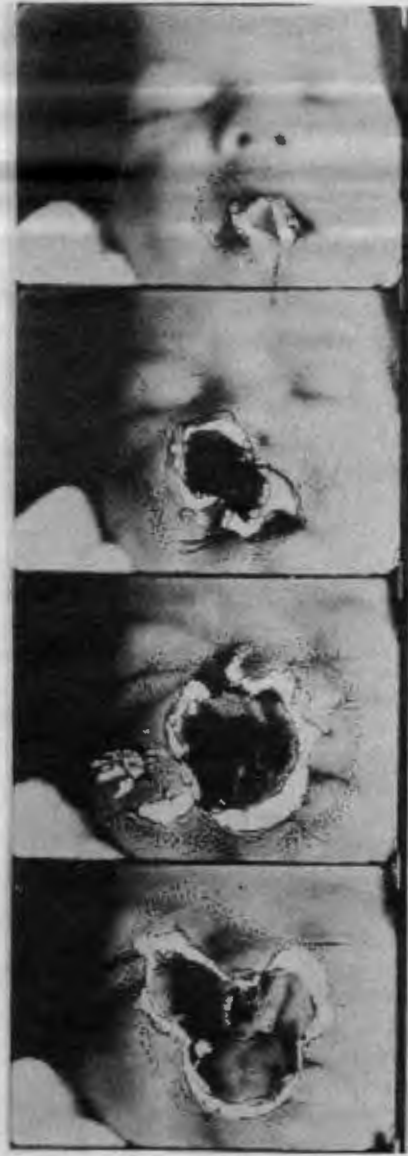
SB: I really feel that is not my business. The word received is such a confusing word because we live in a time in which people are selling things all the time. They're selling not just products on advertisement, but every movie is involved in encouraging certain aspects of the culture, weaning certain aspects of the culture, confusing them. So that is what you do if you are in the commercial film business. Art is made in relationship to other arts through mysterious persuasions that move through humans along the lines of their experiences and their abilities to create something, a painting, a poem, a film, something, speaking to other arts and or god.

When I was a boy soprano soloist singing in the choir's I sang for god. It wasn't my business how the people

were receiving this. It was my business to sing on pitch and with real feeling and follow the instructions of my choirmaster named David Pew, dear man. I was to stick to my job and try to make it as beautiful, to utilize beautifully the voice that was god given. So I didn't have hubris about it either. Here I was supposed to use it beautifully and it did not have to do with the reception of the congregation. So I guess those are my training grounds, and I think they are quite natural to most artists.

LC: There are many things at work in your films. While one can be taken back by the apparent beauty of your imagery it is apparent it isn't the only aspect of your work. Putting these images into the context of your film you constitute a greater meaning and deep psychological effect on the viewer that is very separate from just an appreciation for imagery. Can you comment on the relationship between these two aspects?

SB: Some of the disturbing psychological muck of the subconscious is what you mean. Beauty be but dark. The other form is candy bar stuff. I love it when something comes out just as beautiful as it can be but no more so. I want as much beauty as is reasonable, but also one has to accept the beauty of the cancer. It is not easy for me to say, but there it is, it's in the world, it has a beauty and whatever is in the world, including all the things that we regard as terrible are aspects also of whatever this existence is we are having. So that has to be all-inclusive and at the same time—the film I am going to be showing at Bard is called *The God of Day Had Gone Down*



A sequence from Brakhage's *Dog Star Man Upon Him*. I

have been working for three years on this since I went through my cancer and chemotherapy, every summer trying to make the third in the trilogy. So it's about death really, it's about that moment in mid-age crisis when one begins to know one is going to die. All of that has to be fully implicit, and the landscape darkens and is threatening, at times it gives you evidence of decay. It has to be, because it is, beautiful. It is because it's true. Truth is beauty. Beauty is truth. Keats was right. Yeah, Keats. So that is simple....