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[TERMS]

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[CORRECTIONS]

1. In the November issue's sport section, two words were misspelled in a single headline. This was actually intentional, and we would appreciate all those who corrected us to please send apology letters to bardfreepress@gmail.com. Thanks!

2. Hmm...Can't think of anything else. Guess we're perfect. Cool!

3. Have a great winter break, everyone. Or don't. IDK

DEAR [UNDERGRAD],

A RESPONSE TO ARTHUR HOLLAND'S OPINION PIECE

I want to respond to the short article about inbox clutter that was in the last FP. I recognize that every faculty, staff, and student has to negotiate a glut of Bard related emails every day, sitting right next to the other list-serves we currently subscribe to. It can seem endless, exhausting, the wrong waters to swim in daily.

I want to ask the Bard community a few questions. How do you get information about events at Bard? How do you want to?

When <Amii LeGendre> shows up in your inbox, I might be representing Health and Counseling Services, the Wellness Committee (a group of about 10 faculty, staff and students), Peer Health, occasionally BRAVE, the Chaplaincy, even Kline, and any other campus organization who has an initiative related to health. Everyone in these departments creates posters for almost every

event, and put each on the Announce Daily Mailsystem. We have heard from many students that these are not the methods they use to tune into what's going on. We hear over and over from students from students that e-blasts are the most effective shoulder tap to not forget about an event they already wanted to go to, or try something off their beaten path if it fits into the day.

But what about events you never knew existed? What about events you'd never go to but knowing they exist makes you happy? These are practical questions but real ones, all that they demand is a willingness to look at briefly and then delete emails.

The practical questions beg the larger ones about civic engagement. What is your responsibility for your spot in this community? What do you need to know? What if you're a PC and want to point residents

to events that might matter to them? What if you're having a terrible semester and for the first time think you should get yourself to a meditation event? Do you have any responsibility to know about or occasionally check out a new event that's not up your usual alley?

We've found that there is no more effective way of inviting students to events that staff and faculty find necessary, edifying, or worthy without than using e-blasts. We all agree it's a total pain in the neck. We all agree. Is it possible to see them as the expression of the massive collection of various passions and curiosities that make up a community? Outside of supporting your friend's senior concert or your department's visiting lecturer or your roommate's basketball game, what should you know about?

This is a real question. We're totally uninterested in being

rhetorical or lecturing. What do you need to know or do to live in a closed community that you are a part of? Maybe you have to delete a lot of emails really fast every day. They don't want your money, they don't even always want your time or participation—at the very least, they want you to know about the breadth of activity going on in your neighborhood.

Remember when you were in high school and there was nothing going on?

Love,

Amii LeGendre (Wellness)
Matt Hunter (Athletic Center)
Jen Baressi (Health and Counseling)
Jen White (Health and Counseling)
Raf Rodriguez (BEOP Office)
Bethany Nohlgren (DOSA)
Brian Mateo (Student Activities)

NEWS-BRIEFS

[CONTINUED ON PAGE TWELVE]

STUDENTS RALLY FOR FOOD INITIATIVES

A new student-led initiative is seeking to create radical food reform at Bard. About 32 students and community members met on Monday, Nov. 19 in the Campus Center Multipurpose Room to discuss goals and plans of this project, which hopes to work with Chartwells to provide healthier and more local options.

"We want to hear what everyone wants to see food at Bard look like," said sophomore Carter Vanderbilt, the initiative's leader. Vanderbilt was also instrumental in starting the Bard Farm.

The primary goal, Vanderbilt said, is to have 60-80% of the food served by Chartwells come from within a 200-mile radius. The model closest to this project's

goal is the food system at Bennington College in Bennington, VT, where about 60% of the food served—agriculture, dairy, and meat—is local.

The project has support from Vice President for Administration Jim Brudvig, as well as from Chartwells. Brudvig, according to Vanderbilt, is "interested in putting millions of dollars into reshaping food at Bard."

Forum members expressed concern over several issues, including labor fairness, finding feasible prices, and providing appealing food for the varied palates of the student body. Vanderbilt said he is interested in addressing these problems and finding compromises.

A main priority of the project is involving as many students as possible. As many forum attendants noted, everyone eats, and nearly everyone eats at Kline.

"There are possibilities for people putting in their energies and efforts, making people feel more connected to the process," Bard Farm Coordinator John-Paul Sliva said.

To move the project forward interested students will be forming a working group and looking for methods, such as online surveys, to involve the entire student body.

"We want students that aren't coming to these meetings to get their voices in one way or another, whether they like it or not," Vanderbilt said.

THE SWAN GOES DOWN

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

WITH REPORTING BY ANNA DANISZEWSKI, JEREMY GARDNER,
JP LAWRENCE & KURT SCHMIDLEIN

Thursday, Dec. 7 began as an average night at the Black Swan Bar in Tivoli. By about 2 a.m., though, post-party damages exceeded what was to be expected. What follows is a compilation of several students' accounts of a night that ended in four arrests and the bar's eventual loss of its liquor license.

Sam Jaffe-Goldstein (*Bard student, senior, of age*): There was a party planned for graduating seniors.

Nolan Reese (*Bard student, senior, of age*): I came around 10:50. We tend to alienate ourselves, so it was a chance to get out.

Morgan Rosen (*Union College student, freshman, underage*): My girlfriend goes to Bard. We heard it was 18 and up on Thursdays. My girlfriend's friends had gone before.

Elizabeth Weinberg (*Bard student, freshman, underage*): It was Thursday, and that's what kids do on Thursday.

Jakob Friedman (*Bard student, junior, underage*): I was gonna grab a drink and party with some girls.

A bouncer was at the door, asking patrons for IDs. Those over 21 were given a wristband. Those under 21 had black X's drawn on their hands.

Schulyer Helford (*Bard student, senior, of age*): It was super crowded—earlier than it usually is.

Reese: I saw a ton of underage people at the bar ordering drinks. They [The Black Swan] obviously just don't give a shit.

Weinberg: There was a dude standing next to me at the bar who I'd never seen before, and he wasn't talking to anyone or ordering drinks.

Rosen: I got a whiskey sour. The [bartender] looked at me, and I just said, 'Whiskey sour, please.'

Ben Ellman (*Bard student, senior, of age*): I saw one woman who looked a little bit out of place... I know the Black Swan isn't a place you dress up to go out to, but she was really dressed down. She turned out to be one of the undercover cops.

Rosen: One lady [who later was revealed to be an undercover cop] literally watched me buy the whiskey sour for [my girlfriend].

Friedman: All of a sudden, really without warning, a couple of guys with flashlights walked in through the front door.

William Crowley, Director of Public Affairs at the New York State Liquor Authority (SLA), said that undercover officers "made the observations of



patrons who appeared to be underage purchasing and consuming alcohol," and then called the Sheriff's Office for reinforcement.

Jaffe-Goldstein: Around 11:45, 11:50, a cop walked in. That didn't really bother me. Is it okay if I call him Mountie? He had a big Mountie hat.

Arthur Holland Michel (*Bard student, senior, of age*): I was standing on the porch. There was a panorama of people having a great time. And then suddenly, there was a panorama of miserable, dejected, hopeless faces.

Weinberg: The cops walked up to the bar next to me, laughing as they came over. They told a bartender to stop serving and that the bar needed to shut down.

Nicolai Eddy (*Bard student, junior, of age*): I saw one cop at the door, and I thought it was a regular checkup. Then, someone next to me took off his sweater and had a badge.

Ilya Smirnoff (*Bard student, senior, of age*): We started noticing the undercover cops who had pulled out their badges and were walking around the bar, and at that point we realized it was much more intense than just two undercover cops sitting in the bar.

According to Lieutenant Frank LaMonica of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department, four officers from the Sheriff's Department arrived shortly after midnight. The New York State Liquor Authority, he said, had been in the bar since the beginning of the night.

Holland Michel: What was crazy was how much of an operation this was. When the cops arrived, they did not exchange words with the bouncer. They just walked past them.

Sofia Celadon (*Bard student, junior, underage*): It was very unclear to everyone, I think, what they were doing there.

Jeremy Gardner (*Bard student, sophomore, underage*): Usually, the cops come to the bar and are like, 'Alright, noise complaint,' and then they leave. That's why I knew something was amiss, right when I knew there were cops inside.

Nicole Rosato (*Bard student, junior, underage*): I came out of the bathroom with my friend and she had a drink in her hand ... They were like, 'come with us.' They took us into the pool room and there was this whole big deal, because she had a drink in her hand that she had gotten from the bar. It was really intense.

Eddy: They blocked off all the doors. They went and stood at each exit. They asked everyone for an ID before they left. No ID, you had to be breathalyzed.

Gardner: I very quickly realized, 'Alright, they're finally getting busted for serving the minors.'

LaMonica said officials gave alco-sensor tests to patrons that appeared to have been drinking. SLA Chairman Dennis Rosen called addressing underage drinking a "priority" for the SLA. "The Liquor Authority has had complaints of underage drinking, and so have I," said LaMonica. "The last complaint I had was from a parent of a student complaining that their kids were drinking who were underage."

Rosato: I heard some kids talking to the cop, they asked him, 'Can I get out of here?' and he was like, 'Have you been drinking?' and he said, 'No, I had a cognac truffle earlier.' And he hands him the breathalyzer, and he blows whatever he blew, I don't remember, and that cop was just like, 'That was a really strong truffle. Go sit



photo by jeremy gardner

down.'

Rosen: They took us into the back room with the pool table and took our IDs. [The undercover officer from the SLA] basically came back with a bunch of pieces of paper and explained ... we weren't going to get in trouble with this, they just needed to know our interactions with the bar and people working there.

Jaffe-Goldstein: The cops were very methodical. They knew they weren't going to catch everyone, but that wasn't

get?' 'What drinks were they?' 'Did the bar ask you for ID?' 'Did they make sure you were not 21?' She wasn't mean or hostile or anything. She was pretty nice.

According to a press release by the SLA, the SLA fined the bar \$2,000 on Aug. 23, 2006 for excessive noise, and \$4,000 on May 72, 2009 for employing unlicensed bouncers and employees off the books.

Weinberg: With people over 21, they were just like, 'Get the fuck out.' With

Nickerson is one of the most genuinely nice human beings I have ever met.

The SLA issued an Emergency Summary Order of Suspension under the State Administrative Procedure Act on Dec. 12, charging the bar with 18 violations, including underage sales, unlicensed bouncers, paying employees off the books, and failure to supervise the premises. "There was enough evidence for the SLA board to determine that the bar was wilfully suspending the law," Crowley said.

Ellman: I really hope it doesn't close down. It's a real cultural institution for Bard.

Gardner: It's just like any college bar. Every once in a while they're going to get their license suspended. Who knows how many kids bought with fakes and then showed the officers their real IDs? Who knows if they actually knew they were serving the minors? As far as I'm aware, they were very good about that.

Jaffe-Goldstein: No matter the details, cops showing up at the Black Swan and parties in Tivoli doesn't seem like an odd occurrence to me.

"They're entitled to a hearing, and then it will go back to the board to either fine them or permanently terminate their license," Crowley said. Tivoli Mayor Bryan Cranna said that the town has been working with the SLA for the past six months on complaints regarding the Black Swan. "I'm very proud of the Sheriff's Office and the SLA for taking this issue so seriously," he said. "It's a serious violation, and it needs to be treated as that."

Helford: Yeah, everyone was taking photos with the cop car in the background and people were like, 'Where should we bring the party?'

They took us into the back room with the pool table and took our IDs. [The undercover officer from the SLA] basically came back with a bunch of pieces of paper and explained ... we weren't going to get in trouble with this, they just needed to know our interactions with the bar and people working there.

the point.

Rosen: She said their job is to make sure kids underage aren't sold alcohol. She explained that the only reason police are here is for support, so no one can leave until everything gets processed.

Celadon: I was like, 'Alright, this is real. This is a planned event.'

Rosato: They asked if we were drinking. We hadn't, so we didn't say anything. They were kind of mean about it. They were wanting us to rat out even though we hadn't drank at the bar.

Rosen: She explained we're not going to get in trouble as long as we cooperate. She said she would ask us some questions, write down our answers, give us our ID's back, and tell the trooper at door we could leave. It started off pretty basic; name, where are you from, stuff like that. They asked, 'How many drinks did you

underage kids, they were like, 'You're dumb, you need to fess up.'

Jaffe-Goldstein: Now that I'm over 21, the cops busting parties is one of the few pleasures I get in my life.

Four were arrested after the raid. One patron, Benjamin Moss, a Bard freshman was charged with Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument. Michael Nickerson, the bar's owner, and Sarah Munger and Jonathan Nandor, the bartenders, were charged with Prohibited Sales under the NYS ABC Law and Unlawfully Dealing with a Child in the First Degree. The cases were scheduled to be heard in the Village of Tivoli Court on Dec. 17. Neither Nickerson nor Moss was available for comment.

Ryan MacLean (*Bard student, senior, of age*): These are good people who run this place, and they try their best. Mike

BACK TO THE WILD

STUDENTS FOCUS ON PRIMITIVE SKILLS

BY REBECCA SWANBERG

Down the trail through the Tivoli Bays, over the stream, past a field of waving tall grass. Tucked away behind thorny bushes and naked trees, at the top of a hill. If you weren't listening, you would have walked right past them.

The only sounds up there are the ones you're supposed to hear: leaves picked up by the wind, a Barred Owl's hollow call, the rustle of disturbed wildlife avoiding your path. A wave of quiet laughter stood out as different but not intrusive.

The Bard and Vassar students were sitting in a circle together, gathered around a teepee made of kindling and stuffed with tinder at the third Primitive Skills Workshop, hosted by Bard Outdoors Club. Tama Jackson, Naturalist and Permaculturist, blew on a coal, padded with cattail seed. He cupped the potential fire in his hands and brought it to each person in the circle, offering them a chance to give the fire oxygen. And with a final breath, he released the flames into the teepee. The students bent to blow on the fire. It crept up the sticks and enveloped the teepee.

"Most of the time, we practice core basic survival skills," Jackson said. "How to build a shelter to survive a cold night, fire-making skills by rubbing sticks together, how to find water you can drink, and how to track animals by following their footprints and the subtle signs they leave behind."

Jackson has been working with permaculture, primitive skills and nature awareness programs for the past 10 years. His relationship with Bard, however, is new. Co-head of the Bard Outdoors Club, sophomore Antonia Perez, contacted him with her idea of the Primitive Skills Workshop, and the series started in October. Once a month, Jackson comes to Bard from New Paltz and stays almost the entire day. The workshop starts around 9 a.m. and is set to end by noon, but the group then cooks lunch together—sometimes over a campfire—and works on revitalizing the Bard Community Garden. But it's not just Bard students and Jackson. Perez, after meeting the head of the Outing Club at Vassar, invited their students to join.

"We're learning how to connect to our

Bard environment and use the woods as a place to have fun and feel like you can go there to relax, rather than the tension that a lot of people have going outdoors," Perez said. "People say, 'okay, I'm going to go on a hike, get to the peak, and come back down.' [The workshop] can make the experience more nurturing, and make you realize that the outdoors can be a home."

Each workshop so far has taken on a different theme. The first day, there were about five Bard students and five Vassar students. They focused on awareness in the outdoors, how to use what Jackson called "owl eyes"—a wide-angle vision and awareness—as a method of paying attention to more than just the ground. The next month, the number of Bard and Vassar students almost tripled, and they learned about building a fire with only the resources around them. For the third workshop, a weekend during finals, there were more students from Vassar than from Bard. The December workshop focused on creating a shelter from only sticks and leaves—a shelter that could keep you warm in freezing weather, without a sleeping bag.

"We're learning how to sustain ourselves with what we can find [outdoors], the ability to survive without anything, and knowing the land and what trees to use that are best for shelter or fire. Things that we tend to forget now that we have all these fancy gadgets," Perez said.

But according to Perez, more than just Jackson teaches at the workshops. Though he acts as their facilitator, the students have their own skill base. They use the time to learn new skills, and share prior knowledge. Head of the Vassar Outing Club Tony Sola thinks of this new partnership with the Bard Outdoors Club as an opportunity to share that prior knowledge and to fulfill their own club's mission statement.

"Vassar Outing Club is about the expansion of experiential horizons. Meeting Bardians is an exciting opportunity to expand our experiential horizons, because we're exploring new spaces, like Bard campus, knowledge, like primitive skills and spirituality, and relationships with Bard

students," Sola said.

Many students that apply Vassar was also apply to Bard and vice versa, Sola says, so the student populations are similar. Bringing the student bodies together in this context—what Sola dubbed the "Bard-Vassar Experiential Learning Initiative"—allows for more skill-sharing and also new friendships. I see the intersection of communities as a much-needed and long-anticipated meeting of two groups that can learn a lot from each other and enjoy each other's company," Sola said.

Jackson thinks it is important for any student, Bard or Vassar, to take time for a day in the woods. The physical skills he teaches, practiced over time, are the foundation for "growing compassion, self-awareness, [and] kindness in human beings." But more importantly, Jackson says it is about utilizing the day to connect to one's surroundings, an activity that could play into your everyday interactions.

"If you have the thoughtfulness to concern yourself with the subtle body language of a Junco, and you hear what she is saying, then what impact would that have with how you interact with other people?" Jackson said.

Though the workshops have ended for the semester, the Outdoors Club plans to continue the series in the spring. As the group left the woods at the end of the day, they discussed workshops on winter camping and bird calls. As the Vassar participation continues to grow, Perez says she hopes to see more Bard students stepping out of their routine and joining in for a morning.

"We want to encourage learning and encourage people to feel comfortable in the outdoors," Perez said. "They shouldn't be pressured because they feel like they don't know enough, because we are all learning, and there's so much that we don't know."

'We're learning how to connect to our Bard environment and use the woods as a place to have fun and feel like you can go there to relax...'

DOES TWO BOOTS NEED TO BE SAVED?

BY DAVID DEWEY

You were excited when you first heard about it: Two Boots is coming to Bard. A cool place to go with friends. You could get some pizza, a couple of drinks, grab a booth in the corner and listen to some sweet live performances. You and your pals had a new place to go on Friday and Saturday nights, and when you get a hankering for some midday slices, there's a great place just across the street. It was going to be great. The only thing is, how many times have you actually gone?

"I wanted to create a place for the students to have to themselves," Phil Hartman said, Two Boots co-founder. Hartman stood across from me behind the bar in Two Boots Bard on a cold November night. He peered at me over the rims of his glasses as he sipped red wine. A couple sat at the other end of the bar, reading over the menu as they huddled together for warmth. A family sat behind us in the dining area, quietly discussing their plans for the upcoming week.

something different. Now it's slowed down a bit as the locals are trying to fit it into their established community," Kelly said. "Like any restaurant, we have our busy times and our slow hours. We do a lot of take-out orders and deliveries, and on weeknights we usually get a decent amount of people eating in, not enough that we're swamped but enough to keep us busy."

One new approach that Hartman and crew hopes will bring attention to the restaurant is the new Happy Hour. Between 4 and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, patrons are presented with a virtual gold-mine of deals. A buy one drink get the second for 25 cents deal, 25 cent wings, one dollar meatball sliders, dollar cheese slices and two dollar specialty slices all contribute to the perfect early-evening dinner destination.

"Happy Hour is something that is done at all of the other Two Boots locations with full bars," Kelly said. "We like to offer quality deals

As a new business in the area, Two Boots is still working not only to find its footing on the student front, but also as a restaurant overall.

"At the same time, we're working to create a friendly atmosphere for members of the local community," Hartman continued. This balancing act has placed Two Boots Bard in an awkward position: caught between the hopes of the students for an off-campus space with live music and a nightlife, and the desire to accommodate members of the local community in a family-friendly setting. "We're working on opening up the space to students during the week. We want to start a late night program and allow students to use the performance area."

While none of these initiatives have concrete start dates, Hartman says that they are committed to changing the atmosphere. As a new business in the area, Two Boots is still working not only to find its footing on the student front, but also as a restaurant overall.

"We don't even have shutters on the windows yet," Hartman said. "When you open a new restaurant, or any business really, not everything is perfect on day one. So we're still settling in."

The same is true from a financial perspective. According to hostess Jess Kelly, the number of customers has decreased since the summer.

"I think that we got a lot of traffic over the summer from non-locals who came in to try

to attract the early-evening crowd. In the best case scenario, it'll draw them in for a full night of good times at Two Boots."

In addition, the Bard location is now offering "Bard Wednesday" deals, a ten percent discount to all Bard students with a valid ID every Wednesday. But to some extent, the new deals are in vain. Word is not getting out to the students as quickly as expected.

"I work next door [at the Office of Development and Alumni/ae Affairs], so I should really go in, but I haven't yet," sophomore Stephanie Presch said. She reiterates a sentiment that has echoed across campus, that Two Boots is doing nothing truly unique to stand out from the crowd.

"It's a slow start, but no more so than we expected," Hartman said. "Every Two Boots location is unique with its own charms, this one no less so than any other. It's just that trying to find what works takes some time."

So maybe Two Boots is not the cool new hangout spot. Maybe it will not be a haven for live performances. It's still growing—but as of now, it's just another restaurant nearby. On the other hand, it provides a valuable service to the Bard community as a whole: pizza delivery.

THE WIZARD OF THE COURSE BOOK



BY DAVID GIZA

With the turn of each page, and the musty smell momentarily brings one back to a simpler time.

But now things are not so simple. "Course creation is a full-time, year-round process," Gadsby explained. "The students may only be aware of it during the final weeks of the semester, but it is a year-long task. The departments are working on the courses for next fall right now."

The process is a long and arduous one. First, each department discusses what courses it will be offering during the semester, making sure to offer the requisite number and variety of courses. Then, the department lists go to a faculty-wide curriculum committee who makes sure that the lists from each department meet distribution requirements and that students can take courses that are required for graduation. Overseeing all of this is Dean of the College Michelle Dominy.

Everything is put onto a list to be sent to the Office of the Registrar and is later downloaded into the campus-wide integrated database. Those working in the Registrar provide another level of oversight, working out any scheduling conflicts that are present. They notify the departments of any problems. The Registrar then receives the updated list and oversees course selection and management.

"The main problems that we find are schedule overlaps," Associate Registrar Diane Smith said. "This math class cannot be held at the same time as this science class because they have to be taken together. Simple things like that—too many courses in the afternoon, not enough in the morning, not enough lab space, etc."

Smith said that this nitty-gritty affair usually takes about three solid weeks of crunch time.

"I'm constantly making edits and trying to

fit everything in," Smith said. "Even room assignment can lead to issues. Professors like to teach in the same room year after year, and it can be a struggle to accommodate that."

These efforts all lead up to the night of registration, when students log onto the Bard server to register for classes. Dean of Studies David Shein said that while the site's frequent crashes can be annoying, it's better than the old system, when students, with registration cards in hand, camped in lines outside their teachers' doors.

"Nobody thinks the systems that we have now are perfect, but you don't want to change things and make it worse," Shein said. "You don't want to just shift the problem."

But these mundane problems belie the true nature of the course list creation process. At a macro-level it bears all the signs of a well-oiled machine, one that is

impervious to the sands of time.

"Computers and databases make the process faster and simpler, but it's still the same basic process it was 18 or even 100 years ago," Gadsby said.

Gadsby continues to turn the pages of the old ledger, and the amount of names begins to drop off. Then 1918 comes, and all of the names leave the college. "Look at that, every single one. 'Called up [for WWI service].'" Amazing, isn't it?" Gadsby remarks. Then the names resume, much more cramped together this time, 50 to a page. Then, on the last filled out page, Gadsby stops and points out a smudge mark to me. "See that?" he says. "A course correction. Things never really change, do they?"

DRONES! DRONES! DRONES!

BY KURT SCHMIDLEIN

Bard will be offering a two credit seminar on the interdisciplinary study of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), more commonly known as drones, in the Spring of 2013. The seminar was conceived and initiated by seniors Arthur Holland Michel and Dan Gettinger.

The seminar, titled "Drones," will meet once a week and is designed to address the topic from an interdisciplinary approach, according to Holland Michel. The course will feature several guest speakers from various academic and professional fields.

"They're people who are involved in many different disciplines," Holland Michel said. "Computer scientists, journalists—the author of the book 'Kill or Capture,' for example—artists, and specialists in a variety of different areas will be speaking."

"Multidisciplinary is the key word," Gettinger added.

Holland Michel conceived the plan for the seminar during the summer while working at the Paris Review in Brooklyn, New York. Once he described his vision to Gettinger, Holland Michel approached President of the College, Leon Botstein, who supported his idea. Holland Michel and Gettinger then wrote a hypothetical description for the class, composed a budget for a speaker series, and approached several professors: Thomas Keenan, Human Rights Program Director, who will teach the course in the

spring; Roger Berkowitz, Academic Director of the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics; Gregory Moynahan, Historical Studies Director; Keith O'Hara, Computer Science Program Director; Maria Cecire, Experimental Humanities Director; and others.

Gettinger, who is writing his senior project

at human rights, at literature."

But Holland Michel's initial idea didn't end with a seminar.

"The idea struck me that we should have an academic center for the study of the drone," he said. Such a center, Gettinger added, would hopefully have some sort of academic output on the subject of

disaster in India which is stored on the Human Rights Program website.

David Shein, Dean of Studies, said that fledgling programs such as the Environmental and Urban Studies major and the Science, Technology and Society concentration have grown from students telling faculty members what they want and then working with the faculty to make it a reality.

But this process is reliant on a number of factors. Linguistics, for example, despite interest from both students and some faculty, has never gotten off the ground, Shein said. Proper planning is key.

"I'm not quite sure what it means to have a program of study in [drones]," Shein, who said he spoke to Holland Michel about the idea, said. "That seems awfully specific to me."

In terms of developing an academic center, Berkowitz said it was a work in progress.

"There is no official plan as of right now," he said. However, he does not see such a center being affiliated with any particular major, but rather operating similar to (and probably in cooperation with) the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics, as well as other Bard programs that are currently studying questions involving UAVs.

But for now, the seminar will go forward as the opening play to what could become something bigger, although what that something could be is still unknown.

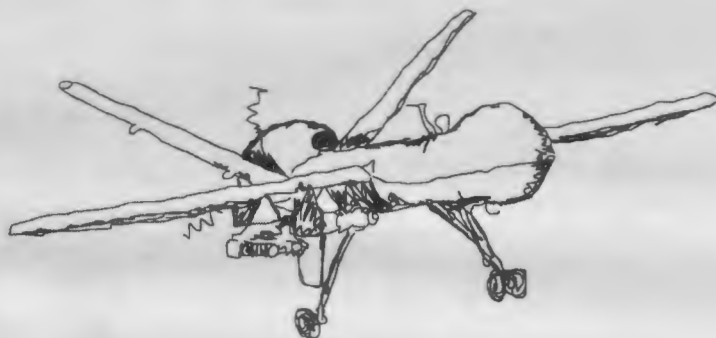


illustration by austen hinkley

ect about drones, pointed out that approaching professors and professionals from different fields was imperative since drones are used for much more than military purposes.

"The hope is to think about how the use of drones by the military, police forces, and civil groups will change society," Berkowitz said. "Drones are a lens through which we can look at technology,

drones. This spring's seminar will begin the process of creating and publishing that work, in what form is not yet clear.

"Another possibility would be to have an ongoing set of classes, projects and lectures linked to this concept, such as earlier happened in relation to the Bhopal Disaster and related environmental/genetic accidents," Moynahan said, referencing an archive about an industrial

STUDENT-TAUGHT COURSES ARE COMING

BY LEELA KHANNA

The recent effort put forth by the Student Life Committee (SLC) to introduce student-taught courses was approved by the administration, and the committee has already begun receiving teaching proposals by students.

"[Proposals] are still coming in. It's finals, so I have extended deadlines for many students," SLC head Rosette Cirillo said.

Cirillo hopes to begin student-taught courses in Spring 2013. The classes, according to the information provided to the student body, can range from anything academic, to more skill-based, such as fire breathing, knitting, or the art of stripping.

"Bard students are an interesting, diverse bunch, so there is a good mix," Cirillo said. "I've gotten a few traditional academic, some discussion groups, some creative courses, some pop culture stuff, and some skills. Many clubs are looking to offer courses, [clubs such as] the Squeegee [Collective] and Student Labor Dialogue."

Though administration encourages the idea of students teaching a subject to one another, the courses will not count for college credit.

"Look, organizing a class sounds dynamite," Dean of Studies David Shein said. "Students getting together to explore a topic? That sounds groovy, but getting credit for it is another

story."

There are several complications involved with student-taught courses that will prevent them from counting for credit, Shein explained, including the possibility of these courses replacing classes taught by professors, issues with tuition and the academic legitimacy of the courses.

"If a bunch of people are shooting cameras, and one of them knows more, and that one person teaches the other people something they didn't know, is that worth credit? No, that's just someone being a good friend," Shein said.

Though Cirillo understands the limitations in providing credit for the courses, she hopes that the Spring 2013 semester can act as a pilot series.

"This is just a trial run. I didn't intend for these courses to have credit at the start," Cirillo said. "Applying for credit for this would be quite a process, so I would like to see a successful trial at first."

Though Shein doesn't see any possibility of student-taught courses counting for academic credit in the future, Cirillo's long-term plans seem hopeful.

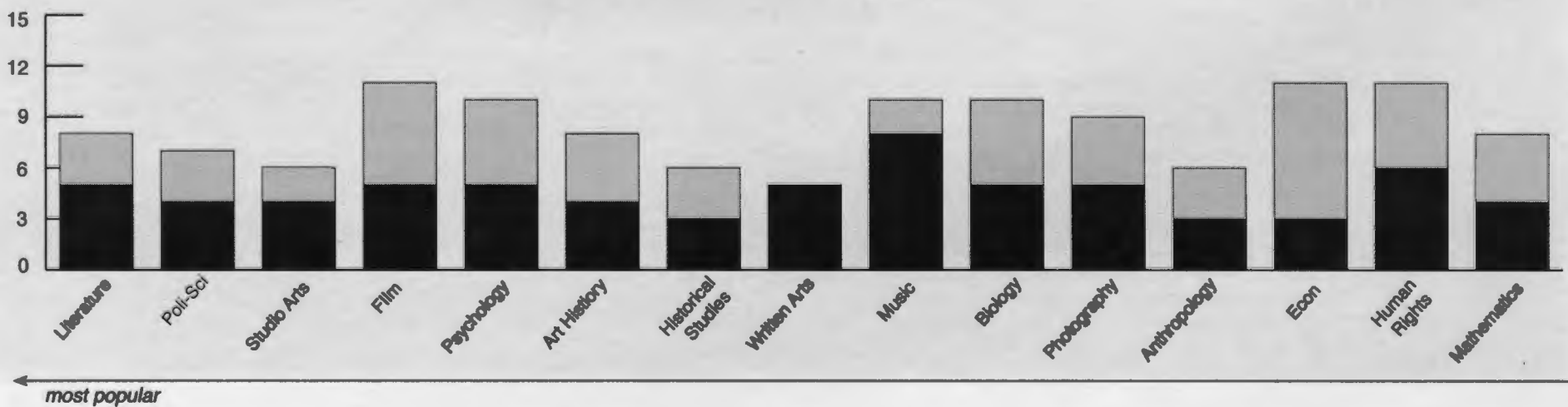
"I think if one day the courses could have credit," she said, "that would be cool."

MAP IT OUT

COMPILED BY JP LAWRENCE



illustration by giulio santini



What's the most popular major at Bard? The answer is more than academic. The Free Press looked at the numbers. Over the past three years, literature grads have produced the most senior projects, although the trend was broken last year, when political science majors produced the most graduates. Meanwhile, physics students existed.

In the graph to the left, we looked at the percentage of graduates in each major and compared that to the percentage each state takes up of the United States. For instance, literature majors make up 8.3% of Bard's total graduates, and Texas is 8.5% of America's landmass (not including Alaska and Hawaii). Basically, the more people who graduate in that major, the bigger area of the state or states that major gets. We also took in consideration the nature of each major when assigning states. The map should be read like this: how big is a particular major? Well, apparently if it were a state it would be a small state like Maine.

Sometimes, the varied state of Bard majors can be forgotten by students. We hope to promote discussion between students of different majors by taking the math major and the biology major and the American studies major and making them aware of their place in the fabric of Bard.

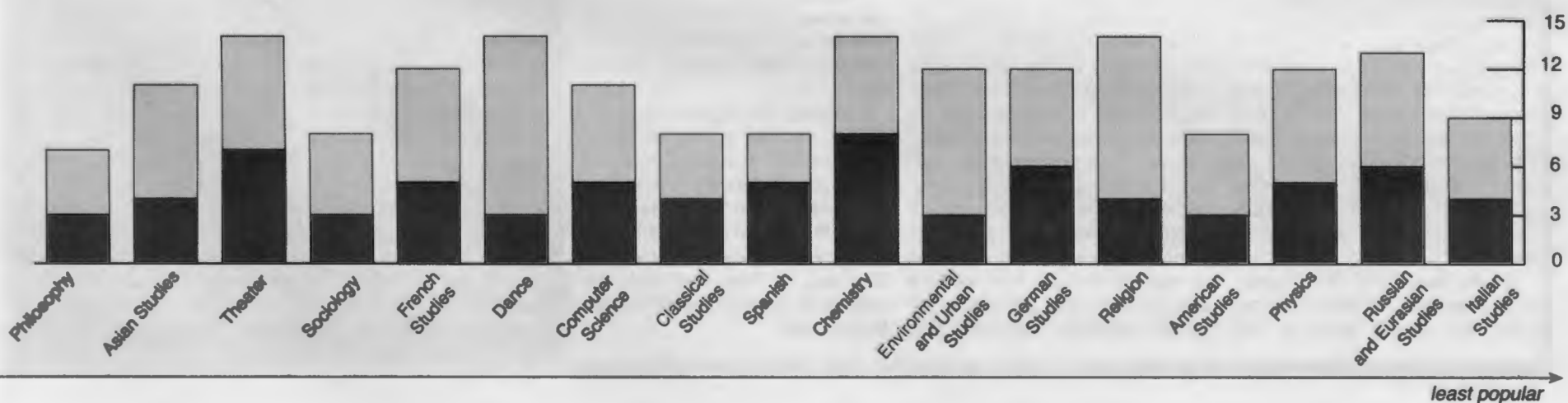
We were going to make fun of individual majors, but then we looked into the archives and saw that stereotypes about certain majors have existed forever. The following chart comes from Aug. 5, 1990 issue of Bardvark, a Bard publication which existed for two years.

Some Popular Majors Compared

Major	Fears	Pastimes	Favorite Vice	Goal	Future
English	Might Realize They Have No Talent	Arguing Pointlessly	Self Doubt	To Become a Great Writer	Teaching High School
Music	Others Might Realize They Have No Talent	Not Listening To Pop Music	Beatles Trivia	To Become a Great Musician	Session Guitarist For K-Tel
Drama/Dance	Might Develop Sense of Shame	Annoying Others	Being Really, Really Loud	To Become First Performance Artist on Moon	Wandering the Streets Saying, "Gimme a Dolla"
Science	Will Begin to Bore Self as Much as Others	Explaining Why They Went To Bard	None	To Get a Real Job	A Real Job
Film	Running Out of Money for Supplies	Disliking Films	Getting In Other People's Way	To Make the First Worthwhile Film Since 1965	Film Critic For Local Free Newspaper
Art	Might Realize Professors Have no Talent	Discussing Their Art	No Favorites	To Get A Grant	Waiting Tables
Classics	Latin Might Become Useful	Avoiding Reality	Used Books	To Never Leave School	Never Leaving Bard
Psychology	Might Read Something Which Would Apply To Them	Figuring Out What's Wrong With Those Around Them	Fights With Parents	To Help Little Underprivileged Kids Develop in a Healthy Way	Holistic Social Worker
Political Science	Might Disagree With Professor	Talking Loudly in The Library	Pomposity	To Return to Native Country	Seeking Political Asylum
Sociology	Might Get Something Right	Being More Politically Correct Than Everyone Else	Blood and Sweat of the Urban Proletariat	To Save the World.	Learning to Repair VCRs at Home
History	Might End Up In Law School	Drinking and Falling Down	Brewskys	To Not Go to Law School	Law School

Below is a chart of majors at Bard sorted by number of senior projects and by number of required classes. Classes on the left have had more majors over the last years compared to classes on the right. Each bar shows how many classes are required to moderate (black) and graduate (grey) from that program. Note: some required classes here are less than four credits, and film, psychology and theater each have two sets of requirements for majors. Also: this chart is meant to promote discussion. This is not meant to show which major is hardest. It does show, however, that some majors are more flexible than others.

■ requirements before moderation
■ requirements after moderation



NEWS-BRIEFS

/ BARDFREEPRESS.COM

DTR RENOVATION HAPPENING SOON

The familiar yellow walls of Down the Road Café—more lovingly known as DTR—will soon be gone. However, the color that will take their place is yet to be seen. “Blues, mochas, muted reds, greens, or grays with blue color accent walls,” were the choices provided in the survey that was distributed by the Student Association Student Life Committee. The survey officially closed Tuesday, Dec. 4, and produced inconclusive results. The 300 votes of the student body culminated in a tie between muted reds and green, with blue coming in at a very close third.

The conversation about DTR renovation, Cirillo explained, has been going on for quite some time. It “came up in Student Life Committee last year but we didn’t really get around to it. People have been interested in revamping the space for a while now,” Cirillo said.

The tie will ultimately be broken by the members of the Bard Arts Collective. The Collective is introducing a revolving collection of student art on the walls of DTR in part with the renovation process and deciding which color will be best

suited for a gallery space.

The money for renovations is coming from the Laundry Fund, which consists of the fee students pay to do their washing and drying.

“Most of the money put into the machines goes into maintaining them, but a very small amount rolls over year to year,” Rosette Cirillo, President of Student Life Committee said. “This is what we’re using to pay for renovations.”

The painting of the space is scheduled to be completed over winter break. Cirillo also spoke of renovations in the future, mentioning the possibility of new furniture and lighting.

“It would [keep] DTR pretty much the same, it would [be] a replacement of the tables,” Cirillo said. “We might even keep the chairs, and the benches would stay. It’s just an initiative to update the space.”

While new paint and lighting will be introduced over winter break, new furniture would not be introduced until later in the semester. Cirillo also hopes for a vote on the furniture as well, in an attempt to “keep the process as democratic as possible.”

BARD WORKS OFFERS NEW CAREER PLANNING

Bard juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to participate in a five-day job and career workshop Jan. 19 through 25.

The workshop, “Bard Works,” will put students in a “job mindset,” Erin Cannan, Dean of Student Affairs and Associate Director of Center for Civic Engagement said.

After going through conferences on networking, financial literacy, and public speaking, students will leave with a revised resume, a preliminary cover letter, and a start on job searches.

“You’re not living here forever,” Cannan said, as she described the intent of the program. “We’re going to make people do a job search. By the end, we want to push people to a job they’re actually going to apply for.”

Juniors and seniors in good academic standing will not have to pay for the event, although

students will have to pay for an additional week on the meal plan.

So far, 30 students have signed up, with 10 undecided, Dean of Students Bethany Nohlgren said.

A typical day will include small workshops until 5 p.m., and then social activities, such as formal dinners, in the evening.

Students will be able to pick and choose which conferences they attend. If students do not want to go to the Powerpoint and Excel class, they can attend a personal assessment or a mock interview conference.

One night, Nohlgren said, will be devoted to what not to do when looking for a job. On other nights, she and Central Campus Area Coordinator David Pack will be teaching students etiquette.

Bard Works will conclude with a networking event in NYC with Bard alumni and parents.

Registration began online in November. The form asked to report what careers interested them and where in the world they would like to live. Bard Works staff will use that information to try to match each student with a mentor in that field and that location. After the workshop ends, Cannan hopes students will keep in contact with their mentors for networking and advice.

Bard Works will give students a safe place to practice business etiquette, Cannan said, adding that the goal is to help students translate what they learn at Bard to skills in the business world.

“Something that Bard students are not very good at is actually understanding what a transferable skill is,” Cannan said. “They have all these skills, but they don’t know how to translate that into the job market.”

STUDENT GOVERNMENT MINGLES N’ JINGLES

Donned in Rudolph the Reindeer bobble head ears, President of the Student Government Association Cara Black began this semester’s

Student Government Retreat in the Robbins Third Floor Study Room on Dec. 1. The “Jingle Mingle,” as it was officially named, had representatives from all sections of Student Government: Central Committee, Student Life Committee, Education Policy Committees, Planning

Committing, Student Activities Board, Peer Review Board, and the Student Judiciary Board, as well as one student body observer, Una Radovanović, whose self-proclaimed title is, “Cara’s Best Friend.” Black promised in her email invitation that the holiday-themed event, mandatory for all members of Student Government committees, would be a “truly bonding experience.” Despite the poor initial turnout of only 13 members—roughly five more students trickled in between 12 and 3 PM—the attendees agreed that

their mingling opportunities were “bonding.” Black even included games, prizes, and Dunkin’ Donuts treats.

The discussions surrounded both the current semester’s achievements and plans for the upcoming spring. Many recurring themes came up, including viable student space, restyling Down the Road and the possibilities of a 24-hour coffee house; funding and safety surrounding Spring Fling, especially regarding the parking lots; fundraising for dorms; how to best utilize the Student Government Facebook page; email overloads; alumni relations; and how to get the average student more involved. Multiple Student Government members expressed interest in a ‘Student of the Press,’ an individual who would work as an unbiased liaison between all committees, the student body, and Student Government. The retreat displayed a greater need for direct communication and student body feedback this upcoming semester.

HOUSEKEEPERS HEAD TO ARBITRATION

Bard College and its housekeepers will be taking their current contract disputes to arbitration, a technique for settling disputes out of court, this winter. At issue is the firing of six housekeepers last June.

On one side, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 200 and the Bard Student Labor Dialogue (SLD) claim the firings, which occurred 15 days after a 90-day probationary period, violated the contract signed by the school.

On the other side, Jim Brudvig, Vice President for Administration, calls the union’s case a “red

herring.”

“[The SLD’s campaign] has nothing to do with the housekeepers’ actual performance,” Brudvig said. “That’s what we wanted to judge, not to qualify people under some imagined technicality. There’s nothing that says one minute after 90 days, you have to make a decision.”

Senior Zeke Perkins of the SLD says he disputes the worker evaluations used by the college, which he calls “inadequate and suspect.”

The SLD has created a petition to reinstate the six fired workers and delivered the petition, which Perkins estimates had more than

750 signatures, to Brudvig’s office Monday.

“We had to take a moral stand on this issue as a student organization wanting to uphold the rights of workers on this campus,” Perkins said.

Ultimately, Brudvig says, the case will be decided by the arbitrator. The one-day arbitration date will occur either in January or February, depending on the schedules of the union, the college and the arbiter.

“We were following the procedure that we had, and that’s the case we’ll make to the arbitrator,” Brudvig says.

BARDIVERSE

LEVY INSTITUTE CONFERENCE IN BERLIN

BY LEELA KHANNA

The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College hosted its annual Hyman P. Minsky Conference in Berlin this year, pursuing an international agenda and expanding its global influence. The conference brought together top economists and policymakers from around the world for two days in late November to discuss the financial instability facing the European Union.

The conference topics included the Eurozone crisis, general instability in the United States and Europe, and what steps need to be taken to have a more functioning financial system.

"[These] are a variety of topics, but they are all linked in a way that gives opportunities to economies and to policy makers to have their own views about what the root causes of the problems are and what kind of solutions one should propose," Dimitri Papadimitriou, President of the Levy Institute and Vice President of the College said. "If you put people

from various constituencies and equal footing together, things might get better and some policy prescriptions might come about."

The conference, which is generally hosted in New York City, took place in Berlin for the first time.

"As by now I'm sure everyone knows, Berlin is the center of gravity in the Eurozone," Papadimitriou said. "In addition, Bard now has a campus in Berlin and it is always an interest to have students be given an opportunity to come to the conference."

The conference attendees, who mostly focused on discussing the financial stakes of the European Union, shared the general consensus that the present measures being put into place would not effectively solve the financial instability of the EU.

"The idea is, as we have explained through the work of the [Levy] Institute, that the financial structure of the EU is ill-conceived," Papadimitriou said. "You cannot have a United States of Europe without having

a same structure as the United States of America. In the United States we have a single Secretary of Treasury, we collect taxes and we distribute the taxes to the various states, which doesn't exist in the EU."

The Vice President of the European Central Bank, Vítor Constâncio, suggested one of the most viable solutions for the EU, in Papadimitriou's view. He spoke about the importance of creating a fiscal and banking union in Europe, where banking insurance would be exactly the same in each country.

Papadimitriou felt that the conference was very timely and was successful in bringing together people who could share ideas about relevant issues.

"The ideas we presented were outside of the mainstream and were well-received and that's a major accomplishment," he said. "People do not like to deviate from conventional wisdom."

AN INSIDE LOOK INTO

THE BARD GRADUATE CENTER FOR DECORATIVE ARTS, DESIGN HISTORY, AND MATERIAL CULTURE

BY LEXI ECHELMAN

Racing through the streets on Manhattan's Upper West Side, we almost passed by without noticing this dark-colored building. Inside this building, the Bard Graduate Center, located at 18 W 86 Street, there are currently two exhibits: "The Circus and the City 1793-2010," and "The Islands of Benoit Mandelbrot: Fractals, Chaos, and the Materiality of Thinking."

The Mandelbrot exhibit, which closes on Jan. 27, 2013, presents the diagrams and sketches of a mathematician who strived to capture scientific understandings of chaos and fractals through his constant mapping of coastlines in various parts of the world.

With these exhibits, the Graduate Center wishes to explore uncommonly studied subjects and present them to the general public.

The circus exhibit caught a comprehensive view of the circus in America. It shows spectacular events in the history of the circus and the changing perceptions of this form of entertainment.

On the website, there are paintings about performances of the elephant Jumbo, nicknamed "the children's pet" by circus managers. When the Barnum and Bailey Circus wanted to get the most viewers possible to see the new elephant they purchased in

1882, they decided to do a menagerie tour through the streets of NYC.

There was a famous act where an experienced performer held a trapeze and was lifted about 50 feet in the air. As the trapeze continued to ascend, it would start to spin, and then the performer would grab the trapeze with her teeth, posing elegantly as people gazed in wonder.

The changing perceptions of the circus is also a key theme in the Graduate Center's display.

Nina Stritzler-Levine, chief curator and executive editor for gallery publications, highlights the relationship between the American circus and NYC's growing industrialism.

"The streets of New York were the access routes for the circus parade; performers used the energy of the urban landscape to enhance their routines; artists and photographers depicted circus performers and the gritty [and] at times marginalized dimension of the circus as their subject. In the exhibition we capture this multidimensional phenomenon," Stritzler-Levine said.

Sarah Bechtel '11 attended the exhibit, and recommends it for other Bardians.

"The Graduate Center presents both exhibits well, shows part of Bard's intellectual

domain, and emphasizes New York City's history and culture," said Bechtel.

In particular, Bechtel thought the exhibit conveyed an intimate feel because the lack of casing on their various artifacts allowed her to closely inspect the costumes, paintings, and more.

The Bard Graduate Center, which was founded in 1993, got the inspiration for the circus exhibit from Matt Whitmann. He is a faculty fellow at the Graduate Center, and he worked with Susan Weber, who is the director of the Graduate Center. Together, they found circus artifacts at the Shelburne Museum in Vermont. All this information was provided by Nina Stritzler-Levine, who is the chief curator and executive editor for gallery publications.

According to Olga Valle-Tetkowski, Administrator of Curatorial Projects, the two exhibits exemplify the Graduate Center's desire to present issues and ideas within the decorative arts, design history and material culture that are generally unrecognized by the general public.

To Bechtel, the pairing of these two exhibits was random and off-putting.

"I found both exhibits to be really fascinating, but the juxtaposition of mathematical chaos after looking at pictures of Jumbo,

was a little incongruous," Bechtel said.

Valle-Tetkowski had a different view of these two exhibits together.

"I think that the exhibits complement each other because they are so different. It's interesting to bring different perspectives and ideas together, and it keeps the viewer alert and active," Valle-Tetkowski said.

For the future, the Graduate Center has new exhibits prepared. The titles for the major galleries are "William Kent: Designing Georgian Britain 1686-1748" and "Artek: Design, Domesticity, and the Public Sphere." The latter exhibit will be about the culture of Swedish wooden toys.

The Bard Graduate Center is presently planning a summer program of courses in the decorative arts and material culture, to begin in summer 2014, and in the near future a 3+2 joint degree program in which Bard undergraduates will be able to earn their B.A. degree and a Bard Graduate Center M.A. degree in five years.

"The summer and joint-degree programs expand the range of courses available to Bard students interested material culture studies, the history of the decorative arts, design history, museum studies, and anthropology," said Batkin.

I WAS THERE

WHEN PALESTINE WAS RECOGNIZED

BY CASEY ASPROOTH-JACKSON

It was a particularly hectic day at Al-Quds Bard Honors College. On the afternoon of Nov. 18, the prospect of a victory at the United Nations General Assembly was a distant afterthought to everyone other than the officials of the Palestinian Authority.

For most Palestinians, the collective focus was singular: it was just four days after a drone strike on a vehicle, carrying Ahmed al-Jabari, announced to the world—along with a video of the Hamas leader's assassination tweeted from the now-infamous Twitter handle “@IDFSpokesperson.”—that the Israeli state was beginning a new assault on the long-blockaded Gaza Strip.

By the time the final class of the day had begun on that Sunday afternoon, the death toll had nearly reached the halfway mark. Faculty and students alike were glued to their phones and computers, watching the latest news from journalists and citizens in Gaza, reported instantaneously on their screens. Al-Quds University students hung green Hamas flags all over campus, and set up information tables in an act of solidarity with the besieged Palestinians in Gaza.

Throughout the West Bank, others demonstrated their solidarity in the streets, protesting in front of IDF soldiers at sections of the Annexation Wall— the 440-mile-long barrier that divides the West Bank from Israel. A constant reminder of Israeli control and occupation, the Wall is a particularly familiar sight to students at Al-Quds University, who walk by it

every day on their way to class. It is more familiar still to the residents of Abu-Dis, where the University is located. And that Sunday it was this familiarity, combined with the anger over deaths in Gaza, that produced a similarly familiar response. When protesters in the village outside the campus began throwing stones at the Wall, the IDF soldiers responded as they often do—with tear gas and rubber bullets.

Whether due to poor aim or plain disregard, a number of these tear gas canisters landed inside the walls of the University, and quickly filled the campus with their unmistakable smell. Students ran from their classes to see what had produced the aggression, only to find IDF soldiers standing at all of the campus exits. For what felt like hours, protesters—now joined by many of the enraged students—exchanged stones for more rubber and gas at the doors of the University, in an effort to prevent the soldiers from encroaching further into the school. Inside the halls of AQB, many students huddled together in fear, while others debated joining the protests. Finally, after injuring a number of students and arresting five others, the soldiers retreated back beyond the Wall, and students and faculty were able to leave campus through a rear-exit of the University.

An air of vulnerability remained on campus for days after, as the smell of tear gas lingered in the hallways of the school. It was not until the ceasefire was finally signed and the bombardment of

Gaza halted, that the weight of fear was lifted, and a rare moment of celebration ensued. Along with Palestinians throughout the West Bank, Al-Quds students rejoiced in the belief that the people of Gaza would be able to sleep through the night without fear that their houses would be targeted for “Hamas affiliation.” The green flags remained—now a symbol of declared victory, more for the Palestinian people than for any particular party.

And when a second rare victory for the Palestinians was won at the UN just a week later, the contrast between the two rounds of celebration was telling. News outlets around the world mistakenly reported widespread “euphoria” among Palestinians after Mahmoud Abass’ success at the General Assembly - the feeling in the streets was closer to one of reluctant hopefulness. Despite promises of statehood and independence from their political leaders, people here have lived through enough moments like this to know that a UN vote won’t change the facts on the ground. The occupation of the West Bank will continue unhindered; the confiscation of Palestinian land will only accelerate; Gaza will remain blockaded and vulnerable to IDF strikes.

And while it might feel like a small step in the right direction, for students at Al-Quds University, the vote provides little assurance that the IDF won’t attack their school the next time a defiant rock is thrown at the Wall in Abu-Dis.

UNITING TO MOURN GAZA

BY JP LAWRENCE

The conflict in Gaza November 14 to 21 sparked discussion for students such as Abby Lutsky and Sarah Stern. On Nov. 28, students of J Street U and the Muslim Student Organization held a vigil in honor of those who died during the conflict. The Free Press spoke to those at the vigil to recreate an oral history of that night.

The conflict in Gaza Nov. 14 to 21 sparked discussion for students at Bard. Students of J Street U and the Muslim Student Organization held a vigil on Nov. 28 in honor of those who died during the conflict. The Free Press spoke to those at the vigil to recreate an oral history of that night.

Sarah Stern, senior: It was sort of something that a lot of campuses thought necessary, because there are a lot of protests that are being held that were very one-sided. So they were either 'Stand with Israel' protests or 'Free Gaza' protests. And these people didn't really talk to each other or talk about the people dying. So the idea was to create a space where we could recognize anyone on either side who died.

Abby Lutsky, sophomore: The first thing that happened? We lit candles. It was outside in the meditation gardens across from the Fisher Studio Arts Center. And we just put candles around the bench.

Stern: It was close to 100. Visually, it was sort of striking.

Lutsky: There were five of us that were lighting all of them, before everyone came.

Hannah Khalifeh, junior: It was very dark, and all I could see were what looked like hundreds of candles lined up on the benches.

Iman Salahuddin M. Muhammad, Muslim Chaplain at Bard: It was frigid. It was cold. But it was warmed up by the people who were there. They brought some cocoa and some coffee. And they had candles lit.

Stern: We all made a small circle.

Lutsky: We had some poems, and we read [some] background stories, and a couple prayers were said.

Stern: First we had Iman Salahuddin do a prayer that I think he sort of free-styled. It was in English. Then we had the rabbi, David Nelson, do a prayer, which was for healing.

Muhammad: I was there with the Muslim Students Organization, and I said a little prayer for peace.

Rabbi David Nelson, Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion: When I heard the vigil was being cosponsored by J Street U and the

MSO, I immediately decided that this was important enough for me to be there.

Muhammad: What was going through my mind was, this is something that we should all be a part of, because we who have understanding of the beauty of human life should feel bad when any human life is lost.

Nelson: The prayer that I chanted was the traditional Jewish prayer that is recited at a funeral, at a burial. It's a memorial prayer that essentially prays for the peace and the eternal rest of the souls who have died. It's very simple and very traditional.

Stern: For me, hearing the Jewish prayer was very meaningful. I also came from a strong Jewish background, and I don't really engage with it that often at Bard. So just hearing Hebrew, which remains an emotional language, in a prayer, ties me into meditative thought.

Stern: Then Abby read a poem.

Lutsky: It was by Yehuda Amichai... It's talking about the rights of people and how all this violence happened, but we have to remember they are still people.

Stern: After that, we had two biographies of people who died. One Palestinian, and one Israeli.

Lutsky: I think that everyone was really in the moment as things were going on.

Nelson: I can't speak for anyone else; what was going through my mind was deep frustration and sadness with the fact that this kind of flare-up of hostilities over Gaza is now just one in a series. I have no illusions that this was the last one.

Stern: I heard other people gasp at parts of the biographies. I think just hearing about what actually happened to these people is very meaningful.

Lutsky: It was a small group of people together. At least for me, I was thinking about everything. All of the violence that had happened. It's hard to express exactly what has happened through these poems or through these background stories, but we were able to bring a glimpse of it and bring a focus on what has

happened so far away from Bard. It's easy to disconnect.

Stern: I think that the circle, all of us standing at attention, obviously everyone being there together, gave me like sort of communal feeling. A lot of the time at Bard, around the flare-up in Gaza, I felt very alone. I was reaching out to people I knew were reading the news or whatever, but everyone was going on with their lives. Everyone was doing homework, looking at memes on the internet.

Lutsky: I just kind of felt that there are people here who really care about this and are reading the news just like I am, but I kinda felt I needed to do something more. I needed to get that sense of community.

Stern: I think this issue interests people in a very academic way, and I think I've started to see that translate to a sort of emotional connection.

Khalifeh: I am usually cautious about approaching the issue of Israel and Palestine with my peers, because I know we have differing ideologies, and I don't want to get into a conversation where both of us are trying to convince the other of something.

Stern: After that, I gave closing remarks. This is a moment to focus on people and not just politics.

Lutsky: People mingled a little bit. It was very cold. There were a lot of hugs and people thanking other people for coming. I just felt really happy that people came and that we had that moment together.

Khalifeh: I think it was a really good idea to hold a vigil, because with all the politics behind the attack, it's easy to forget the human side of it. And it was nice to have just a peaceful moment to think deeply about what was happening without debating about the issue or reading the news.

Nelson: I would hope we would never have to do anything like this again. I don't think that hope is realistic at all. We will gather again, whether it's this year or next year or the year after that, many more times, before the killing is over, on both sides.

A FAREWELL KISS

BY NADEEN HOUSHEYAH

It was a long day for a child, waiting, filled with excitement. Her cousin in Jerusalem had promised to take her to the amusement park. That morning, he came to see her and her parents in Ramallah.

But now he was gone. He said he'd be back in a couple of hours, and he had kissed her, a farewell kiss. He walked to the door—then turned suddenly, came back and hugged her tight.

A couple of hours passed, and the child got sad. She went to her parents with glowing eyes, full of tears, "He promised to be here, and he is not!"

Her dad was confused. He heard about an argument between the Israelis and Palestinians close to their house, and he knew the cousin as a man full of passion and pride for his country.

Then came a knock on the door. The little girl started to scream with joy and happiness. "He's here! He's here!"

But when the door opened, everything turned upside down. The girl heard someone scream, "He's dead!"

Some started crying, and some remained silent, but everyone was shocked. That little girl stood and wondered, "What is this

all about?" Emotions were like a river, outraged. She felt the martyr's soul hovering over her head.

The little girl began imagining what death was like, and what martyr means. Her thoughts kept lighting on and off. She listened to her parents from afar while they talked, trying to build her thoughts and hopes.

Today that little girl is a student. She thinks.

When will this occupation end? How much longer does Palestine have to wait for freedom? When will every child born in this society be able to live and enjoy their

childhood?

She says she won't forget when her cousin's soul left his body while she waited for him to take her to the amusement park. Something like this is unforgettable and scars the mind, never to be erased, persisting.

Yet she hopes that soon the occupation will end and that no one will have to experience what she went through.

"I understand that transition from one state of mind through another is not an easy process," she says. "It is often coupled with pain."



THE B THE V

BY

#1 BALLANTINE

When I was young, I used to make pumpkin pie. It was so quaint because I didn't know how to make it and it was a huge failure and I just bought a pie. This beer tastes like pie. Smooth, spicy, how apologetic.

A fragrant aroma like the springtime of childhood. The flavor is and this one's so flavorful. What the hell say.

Is this...decent beer is real or if I'm just

"Ooo, yes." "Much different a - Overheard at the Taste Test.

One of those 40's gives you when you're faced and you blast on a couch in your those 40's.

The foam is over the lip hair. Aftertaste

Method: For this important test, the Free Press scoured Red Hook for all the 40's we could find (which was only 5) and assembled a secret group of 40's aficionados as taste testers. To ensure impartiality, the 40's were slipped into wool socks to shield their labels. There was one round of tasting for each 40, during which each reviewer was given two minutes to taste and freewrite, L&T style, their reactions to the

sample. At the end of the tasting, the connoisseurs were asked to rank the 40's from best to worst. We present you with the definitive results and the best of the reviewers' freewrites.

Note: We were unable to find such iconic 40's as Mickey's, St. Ides or Colt 45. Guess you gotta go to Kingston for that shit.

#5 MAGNUM

Would I marry this 40? There's a spark to this beer. The first taste is brash, and the bubbles go pop but then the aftertaste lingers unpleasantly. I feel that behind this beer's bravado and enthusiasm, is a small, meek and tepid personality. This beer would steal your underwear and brag to its friends about it. A cowardly beer.

God show me the way cause the devil trying to bring my beer down.

There is a hole in the wall of Broadway Pizza. You are almost too drunk to notice but you do and you peer into the crevice. Much to your surprise, you get sucked into a tiny log cabin in which a man is clipping his toenails. You were never seen again.

I wish my paper cup had been less full. This beer may be rotten. Can that happen? I am sad.

An eerie lack of aroma that's almost ominous. If car exhaust was liquified and diluted with seawater, it might taste like this.

I wish I didn't have taste buds.

This smells like my grandfather's breath as he lovingly tells me a story that he is unaware is clearly racist.

EST OF VORST

FP STAFF

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e Free Press 40's

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OLDE ENGLISH #3

No Kanye is playing. How do you expect me to do this without Kanye?

Thought experiment: what if my piss was carbonated? Would the doctor make fun of me? Would he laugh and bottle up my piss into 40 oz. bottles to be sold to unsuspecting youths? Yes, he would, because he's an asshole.

This 40 gets 12 dartboards out of a possible 6 Tupac posters.

This one is sour. It hurts my gums. I can't even think of a good metaphor.

This beer wins the most likely to become a priest award.

Seems familiar - the Platonic 40! Carbonation, small bite, pale color, it's all there. Tastes like freshman year when we would send the only kid in my dorm with a fake ID to the Getty and the guy at the Getty would send him back with an entire cardboard box of these babies.

Combo pack of carbonation and piss. Yummy. JK, really bad.

#2 BIG BEAR

photos by will anderson

Vomit. Passing cars. Hugging trees. The fractured memories of this wonderful alcohol.

I don't know how to describe beer. It all tastes the same.

When I was a boy, I would eat Lucky Charms, but never the marshmallows. I was weird like that. I hated the way the milk tasted after marshmallows had basked in them. Gross, overly sweet, luke-warm. This beer tastes like that, but more shameful somehow.

As far as foamy, bubbly urine goes, I would say this is among the most flavorful. The first sips are the best—a little woody, with a bite of cheap manufacturing. But by the bottom of the cup, I'm glad that I'm done.

I can see myself drinking this on a plane with Kanye West, club hopping between Vegas and LA.

Tastes like it could be Olde English. I like beer.

COBRA

#4

Whoever made this product probably hunts toddlers for sport. Two out of five dead toddlers. But winner of the best smile award.

Okay, this one actually smells like pee.

One time, on a dare, I licked a stop sign. It was winter, my tongue got stuck, and it hurt like hell. I remember it was sharp, jagged, cold, novel but ultimately embarrassing. Anyways this beer sucks.

When I was in high school, I used to party in huge open fields. My friends and I set up tents and built fires and regnant kids from Enumclaw would come and crash the party. Once, I went with a friend to pee in the woods. She ended up having to decide between peeing and vomiting. In the end, she multitasked. That is what this 40 tastes like. P.S.: no one noticed that she peed her pants.

This taste is a paean to the porcelain god; for you, mighty toilet, you have produced this alcohol and to you it shall return.

photos by michael ernst

SOLVING

THE

SPRING FLING

PUZZLE

BY WILL ANDERSON

For most, last year's Spring Fling was not ruined by Kevin Lytle. Rather, complaints seemed to center around the malfunctioning audio system that plagued headliner GZA's performance. Or the makeshift stage in the Olin Parking lot that featured no lights, no dance floor, and was isolated from the rest of the event. Or the long lines at the quickly depleted beer gardens. But the artist responsible for the 2001 hit "Turn Me On" didn't exactly help improve things either.

The students responsible for planning this year's event are, by now, familiar with these complaints. In fact, Jeremy Gardner, the newly appointed co-chair of the Spring Fling Planning Committee, will be the first to point out the flaws of last year's event. "My first goal is to make the event better than last year. I'm fully throwing myself into the planning and preparation to make sure this is awesome," Gardner said.

Since signing on in late October, Gardner has already

helped bring about a number of changes to directly address these complaints. After weeks of negotiations with Director of Student Activities Julie Silverstein and Assistant Director of B&G Randy Clum, Gardner has secured an actual dance floor for the Bloc Party stage. He also hopes to solve the sound system issues that vexed last year's event.

"Because we have a larger budget this year, we're gonna get a big-ass speaker system. There is going to be none of that GZA bullshit that happened last year," Gardner said. "We're gonna have nice speakers and lots of bass. Nobody is going to be complaining."

In addition to Gardner, there are four students in charge of individual days of Spring Fling. Junior Rushell Reid is in charge of Thursday, sophomore Karimah Shabazz is in charge of Friday, sophomore Majlinda Bacaj is in charge of Saturday, and junior Kimberly Sargeant is in charge of Sunday.

One of Gardner's first goals involved the committee itself. He said the group was lacking in diversity and breadth of taste. Three out of the four people on the committee have been involved since their freshman year except Bacaj, who joined this year. Preston Ossman, a sophomore who Gardner brought on to help plan the event, agreed that the committee wasn't a complete reflection of the Bard student body.

"I mean this in the least racist sense, but it felt like I was representing [white students]. I don't resent the other committee members, or their taste in music. But it just didn't fully represent Bard," Ossman said.

According to Reid, the committee this year is much more diverse than it was in the past. Before this year, clubs like Latin American-Iberian Studies (LAIS) and the Black Student Organization (BSO) were in charge of organizing the Tent Party and Bloc Party on their own. Now, with a central committee, Reid thinks that more of the student body can be represented.

Despite the increased input, or perhaps because of it, the committee has struggled to agree on musicians appropriate for an event like Spring Fling. In a survey sent out to the student body, the committee asked recipients to rank potential headliners they'd want to see.

"[When I saw the survey options], I became even more motivated to get involved with the committee. There was only one actual band on the list, and the rest were just rappers and pop artists," Ossman said. "I think that we should find people that Bard students genuinely like, and not choose someone ironically like we did last year with Kevin Lyttle."

Ossman is not alone in his criticisms. Students were able to anonymously submit feedback of the options provided. One student wrote, "This is horrible music, this stuff does not cross genres at all. It is all music that the people on the committee and their friends like."

Another wrote, "These are the worst options for performers. Over half are DJ's. Most people I know want a performer, (such as GZA last year) and not someone who presses play on a laptop and turns a few knobs. Give more variety with bands and better known rappers."

The question of which bands to bring became further complicated by another survey that was sent out around the same time as the Spring Fling survey. This additional survey, conducted by the Entertainment Committee, had nothing to do with Spring Fling, but seemed to offer a more diverse and wide-range selection of talent.

"The entertainment survey was awesome. They have a fairly wide variety of interests; they have DJ's, rappers, and theres a full range of options," Ossman said. The survey included artists and bands like Death Grips, Kendrick

Lamar, Flying Lotus, Cloud Nothings, and Tune-Yards.

Gardner disagrees that the Entertainment Committee's survey was superior to his, because their options weren't feasible, he says.

"We had reached out to every single one that was on that list, and I can tell you that half of those artists were not within the price range. Some of the artists, like Tune-Yards, got a huge response but haven't toured for six months and don't plan on touring anytime soon, and then, you know a few of them were really cheap, but they're not on our list because they're not a headliner," Gardner said.

According to Gardner, the Spring Fling committee's focus on DJ's was more out of necessity than preference. Bands often cost more because of the transportation and lodging costs that must be covered. In addition, bands and musicians often have contractual limits on how long they can play. Having bands and rappers fill the 8-hour time slots on both Friday and Saturday, and entertainment on Thursday and Sunday, would be nearly impossible due to budget constraints.

The committee has a budget totaling around \$30,000 for this year's event. Of that amount, \$10,000 is reserved for a headlining act, another \$10,000 is used for all remaining entertainment and the final third goes towards miscellaneous expenditures and operating costs. Last year, the committee's budget was \$23,000, and in 2010 they had \$8,000 to spend.

While the budget has clearly increased over the years, it still pales in comparison to those of schools similar to Bard in size and stature. The reason for this centers around two factors: Bard's lower-than-average student activity fee, and the fact that students are not charged admission for the event.

For the 2012-2013 academic year, Bard charged individual students \$170 to cover the student activity costs. This money goes towards all club funding, as well as Spring Fling. Vassar College, in comparison, has a \$310 student activity fee. Despite the higher number, Vassar's tuition (in total) is \$510 less than Bard's tuition. Wesleyan University charges \$270 to cover the student activity fee.

Though money restrictions prevent Bard from bringing in higher-budget bands, the Spring Fling tradition continues on. And this year, Gardner thinks that the fundamentals of Spring Fling won't change—but with a little more money and a little more consideration for the desires of the entire Bard population, hopefully the experience will be a better one.

"In the end, you're going to have a Spring Fling, and you're going to have a blast—if you can have fun at Kevin Lyttle, with the speakers not working, with him playing the same song over and over again, you're going to have a hell of a lot more fun this year," Gardner said.

THE COST OF BOOKING A BAND

THREE 6 MAFIA 25K+

LLOYD BANKS 25K

ARAABMUZIK 25K

RA RA RIOT 15K

TITUS ANDRONICUS 15K


PHANTOGRAM 15K

SKY FERREIRA 10K

SCHWAYZE \$10k

RJD2 \$10k

DEERHOOF \$8k



BARD'S LO-FI HEROES: BELLOWS

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

On a cold night in late November, the sound at SMOG cut out, as it tends to do. A crowd of heavily bundled students huddled in a half-circle around Bellows, the musical project of senior Oliver Kalb. Dimly lit by SMOG's assorted lamps and lanterns, the band moved away from their microphones, and the crowd helped them project their song, "You Are Not." Together, they repeated, "You are not the one who will come and save me/You are just a boy, you are just a baby." As the band played unamplified under the audience's voices, those who knew the lyrics led the song while others sheepishly smiled and picked it up as they went along.

Kalb, singer, guitarist and songwriter, started Bellows in the winter of 2010/2011, when the Northeast was buried under the most snow it had seen in years. He conceived the project as a shift away from the rock bands that he played with in his native New York and a gesture toward a more contemplative mode of songwriting.

"I played in bands in high school which were pretty rock and roll and very much about blaming other people for problems in your life," Kalb said. "So Bellows is sort of a movement to smaller thoughts."

The result was Bellows' full-length, "As If To Say I Hate Daylight" which Kalb self-recorded in the spring of 2011 and released that August. It is a collection of songs that are airy and warm, with hushed vocals and muffled drums. The album sounds organic, approaching Phil Elvrum and Bonnie "Prince" Billy's lo-fi folk as well as the slow, glacial churning of Low.

But when Bellows performs live, with senior Felix Walworth on drums, Gabby Smith on synth and Henry Crawford on bass, the album's subtle dynamic shifts become bombastic. The band shouts and hollers, the drums jump to the foreground, and Kalb's guitar becomes loud and lonesome, recalling Modest Mouse's earlier records.

"It's kind of like a failed translation of Oliver's recordings. And when I say failed translation I don't mean it to be a bad thing necessarily," Walworth said. "We try to stick to Oliver's master plan... but we're different people and we end up bringing different things to it."

The members of the group grew up

together in New York, playing in bands that took a more collaborative approach to songwriting.

"The bands always ended up sounding sort of muddled and confused because there were all of these different influences contradicting each other and confusing each other," Walworth said. "What we decided when we went to college was that we would have primary songwriters controlling each project, very much from the top down."

Together they formed a collective called The Epoch, which includes Eskimeaux, Told Slant and Small Wonder, the respective musical projects of Smith, Walworth and Crawford.

On Bellows' recordings, Kalb calls in assistance from his friends but records most of the parts himself. During the weekend before Halloween, while waiting for Hurricane Sandy to make landfall, he and Walworth recorded a five-song EP called "New Clothing."

"[It] was meant to be fresh, as in unplanned and not overwrought," he said.

Kalb, who is majoring in literature and completing a senior project on Cormac McCarthy, will graduate at the end of this semester and played his last show as a Bard student on Dec. 14 at the Root Cellar. After the semester closes, the band is heading on a tour through the South, the third tour they have embarked on so far.

Beyond that, he and Smith are thinking of moving to Chicago to pursue music full-time while waiting for Walworth to graduate. Kalb has also been talking with indie label Burst & Bloom, based in Portsmouth, NH, about the possibility of putting out an album.

"I remember in my first couple weeks at this school, I went to a show at SMOG and I was really jealous of the bands," he said of Bard's music scene. "There's a ton of great bands, especially surrounding the Root Cellar, which is a really amazing student space that we've become really involved in and where we've played our most life-changing shows."

Bellows' recordings and tour information are available on the group's Bandcamp page. They also encourage any Free Press readers from Jackson, MS to get in touch with them about booking a show there.

METZ / PISSED JEANS

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

21

culture

Metz's self-titled debut received widespread acclaim upon its October release. The album is frantic and thunderous, with thick walls of noisy distortion and huge sounding drums. At SMOG, the trio was tight and powerful, tearing through standout tracks from the album. After the band's performance, the Free Press talked with singer and guitarist Alex Edkins about the band's success, their songwriting and top albums of 2012.

How was the show tonight?

It was great. At first we didn't really know what to expect; it was freezing and we weren't expecting to play outside but, you know, it was really amazing. We had a killer time.

You've been getting a lot of attention for your debut album, from fancy publications like the New Yorker and Pitchfork. What has that been like?

It's been a nice surprise to be honest. We weren't expecting anything like that. We have always gone about making music in a pretty straightforward and kind of uncompromising way. We just make sure the three of us are happy, and we've never really had any bigger ambition than that. We made the record that we're proud of, and for it to be received that way is great. We're glad that other people can get into it and it's not just us who like it.

Has this opened up new doors for the band?

All three of us, up until now, have always been doing that balancing act—working 9 to 5 and then doing the band in the evenings and the weekends and stuff. But now we've gone full time with it. It's our main focus right now and it's definitely something we always wanted to do, so it's really cool that we can do it right now. And we're trying to just keep moving forward and trying to be as productive as possible.

I've heard that your songwriting process is very collaborative. Can you talk a bit about that?

It's funny, it depends on the tune. Sometimes they come really quick, and we'll be done by the time we walk out of the place, and then other ones will be bits, or beats, or grooves, or something that we've had in our back pocket for a long time that finally we find a spot for. It's just, when everything feels right, that's when we can put it to bed. We just go in there with, at the very most, an idea. Most of the time, not even that — just bare slate and

see what happens. Usually with the three of us, when you bounce something off us, something good can happen.

How do you approach the noise and drone aspects of your music?

I think honestly that's just kind of the way we play. It's always there; it's not something we think about. It comes naturally. We just happen to play in a noisy, kind of ramshackle manner. Obviously when we are recording, it's a bit different and we need to make space for certain sounds and certain production techniques or whatever. But it's mostly just a natural way to write.

What's it like coming out of Toronto after last year Fucked Up had the biggest year ever and, on the other side of things, there was a lot of attention on The Weeknd and Drake?

I don't think anyone really thinks about it—it's just home, you know. We share a jam space with Fucked Up; they're friends, and they're a great example for everyone, you know; because they work, work, work, and they stick to what they're doing and they make it happen. Toronto's just full of amazing stuff, and if it's hip-hop, or if it's punk rock, or if it's something else, you know, pop music, it's all there. It's a pretty awesome place to be as far as music goes.

You guys have said that you have pretty diverse music tastes. Now that we're moving toward the end of the year, what are your favorites of 2012?

Right now I really like the new BEAK record, been listening to that a lot. As far as, like, a pop record goes, the Chris Cohen record is amazing, if you ask me. And one we jam in the van a lot is that latest Redd Kross record. I've always loved Redd Kross and I'm glad that they're making music again; that record's fantastic.

On the frigid night of Dec. 13, Pennsylvania's Pissed Jeans and Toronto's Metz closed out the semester at SMOG with an evening of noisy, sludgy punk. It has been said that you can tell a SMOG show was great if you wake up with black boogers the next morning. These bands kicked up enough dust for the audience to enjoy an abundance of obsidian snot when they rolled out of bed on Friday.

Pissed Jeans' music is gritty, noisy and furious; the sound of being dragged through miles of mud and whiskey, or as they have said, "staring at your zits in the mirror for an hour straight while crying stone sober." But they aren't without a sense of humor; at SMOG, singer Matt Kosloff belted out karaoke to Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'" while the band set up. Pissed Jeans is releasing their fourth full-length album, "Honeys," in February 2013 on Sub Pop Records. Before the show, the Free Press got in touch with Kosloff to talk sludge, "Honeys," and everyday life.

There's some metal in your sound, but you're pretty consistently placed on the hardcore/punk side of things. How do you view your relation to that kind of music and the sludge metal scene in general?

I agree that we have some sludgier, heavier aspects that people don't generally associate with us. It probably has to do more with our appearance—short hair, normal clothes, than anything else. I wouldn't call us a metal band, or a sludge-metal band, but we are definitely down to play shows in that scene or whatever. We try not to limit ourselves.

You recorded your new album with producer Alex Newport, who's worked on some fancy, big-name records. How does working with him affect your recording process?

He recorded our last album, too, so it was a welcome return more than any sort of change. I'd say this might be our rawest album yet, but at the same time, it's also our tightest. I am pretty psyched on it.

Can you give a preview of the new record in one sentence or less?

First world middle-class adult male problems.

Your lyrics cover pretty banal and

mundane subjects (i.e. ice cream, balding) but in a way that makes them sound kind of sinister or dark. So does everyday life suck, or is it just ridiculous? Thoughts...

I think everyday life can definitely suck and can definitely be ridiculous. It can also be joyous and beautiful, too. Pissed Jeans is definitely a release for us, so to write about something happy or heartwarming wouldn't really work.

You guys are playing with Metz tonight. Have you played with them before? Do you ever bond over how the music press compares both of your bands to The Jesus Lizard?

We played with them at Sub Pop's CMJ showcase earlier this year and a few years ago in their hometown of Toronto. Good band! If we are going to bond over anything, it'll probably be amps and pizza, not critical references.

Lastly, do you play a lot of college shows?

We play our share! They are always pretty different. They can be totally tame or totally wild, and we are cool with anything, really. So long as people are actively listening, that's all we can ask for.

VETS AT BARD AND NOT THE ANIMAL KIND

BY BEN ELLMAN

Audible Annandale is a podcast project by Ben Ellman. It was created to show the administration the kind of high quality product they could have expected if they had been able to go forward with the planned Bard FM radio station station, after it fell through in the Spring of 2012. The following is a transcript of an episode which can be heard at bardfreepress.com. Look for more episodes to come in the spring.

BEN ELLMAN: Bard prides itself on its ability to attract students with different kinds of life experiences. While they usually range from living abroad to spending a gap-year volunteering in Indonesia, there are students who have done something else. Part rigorous pre-college training program, part volunteer work, there are some Bardians who have served in the military, either in the United States or in their home countries. I wanted to talk to a few of these students to see what they have to say about transitioning from a military environment to one where the average reaction to military service is tepid at best.

I started by talking to Mark Neznansky, a senior math and physics major who spent some of his time after high school in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) before attending Bard. In Israel, military service is a fact of life for prospective college students, although there are ways to do both.

MARK NEZNANSKY: You can go to school and have your university be funded by the military, but then you also commit to seven years as a professional—whatever you studied, you take it to your service, but it's a very long commitment afterwards.

ELLMAN: Mark served for 14 months, significantly shorter than the average term of service, before hearing about Bard from a former high school teacher who had become a Hebrew tutor here. The two talked by email around the end of his time in the IDF, and he decided to look further into the possibility of coming to the United States for college.

NEZNANSKY: I replied to him, "Yeah, thank you for the recommendation, but I don't think so." He sent me another email that said, "I can't convince you from overseas, but next time I'm in Israel, I'll talk with you."

Just kind of out of curiosity I checked out the Bard website and—I mean, I guess probably every kind of institution's website is supposed to promote them and make them look very good, but beyond the representation, just reading about Bard on the website, it seemed like a school that would fit what [I was] looking for.

ELLMAN: After my conversation with Mark, I decided to talk with Dean of Admissions Mary Backlund about how often people in the military apply to Bard.

MARY BACKLUND: The number is not large, but if you talk about military personnel to include the children—not someone who has necessarily served him or herself but who is the child of someone who is in the service—then I can easily say probably 20.

ELLMAN: Backlund said that, while the admissions department doesn't look for anything different from military applicants, it tries to be a bit more understanding about their educational history.

BACKLUND: Let me bring up Department of Defense kinds of students. Often times, they've traveled an awful lot, and their academic records have been impacted by changing schools and not necessarily having circular structures that meld well. And so we take the fact that they have moved a lot into consideration.

ELLMAN: Junior written arts and anthropology major J.P. Lawrence was accepted to Bard during his senior year in high school, but decided to defer his admission by two years in order to become a military journalist with the National Guard. Earlier this month, he was called away from school to assist with and report on the Hurricane Sandy relief effort in the New York area.

J.P. LAWRENCE: Basically, I'm in the National Guard, which means they have the right to call me up in the case of any national disasters or anything like that. They called me and other members of my military unit up and we were sent to a staging area at Camp Smith [near Peakskill, NY]. I was at the headquarters of the recovery efforts there, which means whenever someone was doing something, it would be my job to take photos of it and do a writeup on it. There were a couple of things: there were soldiers guarding wires in Westchester, Putnam and Rockland counties. So what [my bosses] do is say, "Hey, go with these guys, take photos of what they're doing, talk to them about what's going on and then write a story about it." So I'd go over and do that for a day and then the next day they would be like, "Go to Long Beach, they're giving away food over there," and I'd go down and talk to the people there. Then they'd say "Go to this place, they're making generators. Go to this place, they're sucking water out of devastated areas."

ELLMAN: He found that when he first arrived at school, people were interested in hearing about his experience, but approached the subject rather clumsily.

LAWRENCE: People always ask me, "What do people in the military think about this, or what do people in the National Guard think about this?" When I [first got] to Bard people would always ask me that and I'd be like, "Come on, man!"

In anthropology, there's this reflective idea that you're not supposed to take another culture and turn it into a homogenous mass—turn them into an 'other.' A lot of people not familiar with the military take it and turn it into a homogenous other in the sense that asking "What does the military think about that" is like asking "What do all of you guys think about that? What does the hive-mind think?"

ELLMAN: Lawrence believes that a lot of the disconnect between the military and civilian population comes from the mythology put forth in movies and books that doesn't recognize anything but the infantry's point of view.

LAWRENCE: There's, like, 3 million people in the U.S. military and 4-4.5 branches, depending on what you do with the Coast Guard, and there are hundreds of jobs. There are so many different experiences and I had to go between them; I had to go travel amongst the different experiences. The idea that all of these people act and think in the same way I think is really strange. It's really weird when I talk to people about it and they reference certain movies and ask me if it's like that, it's like, "Yeah I guess, for a couple of people, for some people."



photo by an-my lê

AN-MY LÊ

THE GENIUS BEHIND THE GRANT

BY JP LAWRENCE

Bard Professor of Photography An-My Lê uses the mode of landscape photography to negotiate the complexities of the American military and its ventures abroad, while also deciphering national conceptions, memories, and fantasies of war. The Bard Free Press met with Lê to discuss her investigation. Lê's work has earned her the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellowship and \$500,000 five-year grant. The MacArthur Foundation awards grants to individuals working across fields who are "committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world."

Free Press: You've said you want to portray war in a more complicated and challenging way. How does one do that when the concept of war has so much baggage?

An-My Lê: It's not so much about how war is portrayed; I think with "Small Wars" I was interested in exploring the ideas of the memory of war—I wanted to explore that.

Because for young people, Vietnam

is such a myth, and it's perpetuated in movies. It's kept alive in people's imagination and numerous novels and books. With "29 Palms," I'm interested in the idea of preparation for war. We train militarily, but are we thinking about if are we ready morally? Are we ready economically to step into a war? Are we ready to deal with the consequences? Not photographing combat and war itself as it happens allows you

to do that. Because I'm photographing training. I'm photographing something that is not the immediate action—it's one step back.

FP: In your photos of Vietnam War re-enactors, what struck me was how you gave these people dignity, but not glory, necessarily.

AL: I'm glad you said that, because when I first discovered them and told my friends about them, everyone just

jumped all over me and said, 'You gotta publish these in this magazine or that magazine!' And I was tempted, and then I knew immediately that they would turn them into parodies and make fun of them and it would have been too easy, because they are extreme and they're sort of koo-koo, in a way. But it would have been a simplistic treatment.

FP: How do you feel about the

re-enactors?

AL: Reenactment is a phenomenon in itself and it has nothing to do with real war and real combat. It has to do with the idea of war, in this country, more than war itself. So it has to do with the idea of how war is represented, the idea of how war stories are told. It has to do with the memories of war.

Some of those young men had

fathers who had been in Vietnam, and some had brothers, perhaps. As boys they played war with toy guns, and they collect things—badges, knives, uniforms sometimes, flags of various battles.

And so it's taking all of that to an extreme, and you actually wear all of that stuff and you create a scenario and you create a narrative and you meet other people who are just as

interested you can play together and exchange the gear. It has nothing to do with real war.

FP: After that, you went to take photographs of Marines training for Iraq. Was that different from taking photos of re-enactors?

AL: Oh, absolutely. It's like day and night; it's two completely different experiences. I keep thinking, "could I do the reenactments after having done

29 Palms?" and my first reaction is "no." I would have been so dismissive of it all because I felt like, "Well I met the real people and the real soldiers."

FP: I was struck by how you took a photo of tanks in the desert, but the immensity of the mountains and sky made the tanks look small, like toys.

AL: Well, it has to do with the scale, you know. I could have just focused on the tank, but I'm always more

interested in giving context to the military endeavors. It's about putting military endeavors within the context of the landscape. So it does make you question the endeavor of war, the activities of war, and think about the futility of war, because there's something greater than us that we can't control in the end.

FP: So it's not like the traditional war photography, which is close-ups of the

shock and awe of war.

AL: But that's important too, because I think combat photographers interested in the individual story, and that's something that happened in Vietnam. It was important to tell the soldier's story, and say how awful war is, and how devastating it is. And it is.

FP: You're not trying to show the story of the individual, so whose story are you trying to tell?

AL: I'm interested in the military as an enterprise, so it's important to put it in context and the landscape is helping giving it context.

FP: What happens when one portrays the military without context?

AL: Taken out of context things can be simplified—maybe too much. And I work visually, with only images and minimal titles. I think it's possible to approach a subject in a complicated

way with only images, and that's what I tried to do. It's important to give context. One of the ways to do that is to use scale, whether it's a landscape or in a portrait. It's about the individual, his or her own psychology and individuality within the context of the workspace and within the context of the environment—that's a question of scale as well.

FP: What about the individual behind

the camera? How does that psychology fit into the context of the piece?

AL: Obviously this work I'm making is very personal. I grew up in Vietnam, during a war. My life, or my early life, has been influenced by conflict, and so that's what drives the work. But I always hope that my personal agenda is transcended in the pictures, and I think it is.

FP: As far as challenging portrayals

of war, do you ever get people who want you to 'expose' the military or show the horrors of war or show that war is good or bad?

AL: Well, it's complicated. Perhaps the idea is that I don't have one single message. People always expect a single message. All I'm interested in is to show what the military does, and to make you question the endeavor.

And if you think the military is

wasteful, then I think you can sort of see that, and it's good that you think that, but don't expect me to bring you a picture that spells [it] out.

But there are fascinating aspects to the [military], and I'd like to show that. The gear is amazing, a lot of the young people are so dedicated and so amazing.

And there are things that are questionable. You assume the military is

all-powerful, but I'd like to show contradictions in it—how fragile and how perhaps futile some of the things are. I think it's all there; I'm trying to pull it all together.

THE BOY WHO LIVED IN HIS TRUCK

A STORY ABOUT LIFE IN BARD'S BACKYARD

BY JP LAWRENCE

Sleeping bag in hand, I walk with Justin Gero to the parking lot near Manor. There, I find a black, somewhat battered pickup truck, a 1996 Nissan.

This has been Gero's home for the fall semester.

I will be his first overnight guest.

Gero opens the hatch of his truck topper, and I see the entirety of his possessions at Bard College: a grey-green sleeping bag, assorted bookbags and mason jars, two footballs. A plastic pipe, affixed to the sidewall, serves as a makeshift clothes rack.

He clambers in, and I follow. There is just enough space for the both of us. We shimmy into our respective sleeping bags, with my head resting against the tailgate, and his resting against the cab. An iPod plays hits of the '90s.

Outside, the winter air is cool but gentle. Inside the truck is warm and humid. The heat seems to stick to me inside my sleeping bag. The smell reminds me of a locker room. I lean my head back and try to fall asleep.

Let's rewind. Earlier that night, I meet with Gero in a classroom in Hegeman Science Hall. He has just completed his senior project on nitrogen-producing fungi, and tonight is his small celebration. He watches football and waits to drink champagne.

The blonde-haired Gero wears a red plaid flannel shirt and scratched up, nicked and muddied pants. The pants he wears are one of two pairs he owns. His wardrobe, pared down, has approximately 40 items.

"I think there're some people who think I'm really poor," says Gero, who receives financial aid from a scholarship, his parents, his work and money from his grandfather. "I think there're some people who think I'm trying to be a trendy hipster and going against the grain. And I think most people just see it as it really is: I just want to save some money and I'm an outdoorsy person, so living in my car isn't really that big of

a deal to me."

He credits his stinginess to his mother. Life in the lower middle class meant Wal-Mart shirts when he wanted Abercrombie and Fitch. Anything nice he'd have to pay for himself.

He decided to live in his truck last spring. He had lived in his car for two weeks the previous summer, and the ease of it convinced him to try it again during the fall semester. He found a truck in April, close to his birthday.

Now, he lives life in a small routine. He wakes up at 8 a.m. on weekdays, sometimes later if he's been out the night before.

"Sleeping in has lost some of its oomph," he says.

In the afternoon, after classes, he goes to gym. "I actually shower more now that I'm living in my car," he says, "because I go to the gym every day, and I shower because that's the only place I can shower."

And at night, he works here, in Hegeman.

There's a certain sense of untethered time when one comes home, time when one can sit on the couch or lie in bed watching movies, without care and without a schedule. Gero doesn't have that.

"I don't hang out in my truck," he says. "I go to the library or I go to Hegeman, and I do work."

It's a semi-spartan life, very minimalist, and it's just way Gero likes it.

When it's cold at night, he wears more layers in his sleeping bag. When he has to pee, he pees on a small, discolored patch of grass outside his truck—or in a bottle.

As for the other bodily function, he says has never had a late-night emergency call—yet.

"There've been a couple close calls in the morning, where I get up, and I'm like, 'alright, I'm driving to the campus center, right now,'" Gero says.

His love life, he says, has actually been more energetic since he began living in his truck, although no one, other than me, has slept over

in his truck.

"I came to the conclusion that if [a girl] was really someone that I thought was going to be worthwhile, she would be down with living in a car," Gero says.

"There was one point where I saw a car that I thought that someone was sleeping in, and later I saw a girl driving around in it, and I thought it was a match made in heaven," Gero says, but he was mistaken.

He began sleeping in his car a few days before school started. His first parking space was in the big overflow lot of the Fisher Performing Arts Center. It wasn't very inconspicuous, Gero says. Security guards would tap on his window to see if he was okay, or drunk.

His second parking space, in the Tivoli Bays, was even less successful. Within four nights, local police kicked him out.

The parking lot near Manor Annex, Lot C, proved to be the best fit, Gero says. But it was while parked there that Gero received a call from Bethany Nohlgren, Dean of Students. Ten minutes later came a call from Ken Cooper, Director of Security.

Nohlgren says she wanted to check up on him to make sure he was safe. Cooper says he offered him a place to stay, either at Cooper's home or on campus. Gero opted to stay in his truck. He hasn't received word from either one since.

In the future, however, both Nohlgren and Cooper say they don't anticipate more students like Gero.

"I can't have people living in cars," Cooper says, "but when you let someone do something that is somewhat over and above the official law, you get other people who think they can do that too, and I can't let that happen."

Cooper, who used to go on 22-mile bike rides with Gero, says he made the decision to let Gero stay on campus in his truck.

Perhaps he wouldn't have let another student

MOBY



DICK

BY TOM MCQUEENY

"You're going in blind," said my editor.

"What do you mean by blind?"

"The Bard alum running this Moby-Dick Reading Marathon hasn't emailed back. You'll have to find her and try to interview her."

"Listen, I've never been to Brooklyn. I'm too stupid to use the subways. And frankly, I don't think I'll make it there by myself."

"Yeah, so what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to assemble a team of the greatest Bardians known to man."

Some weeks ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no motivation to finish my essays, and nothing particular to interest me at Bard, I thought I would travel a little and do a story for the Free Press.

The story idea seemed pretty straight forward: call this Bard alum and have her guide me down to Brooklyn.

Sure, I didn't have a name or a picture, but who needs those things when the Bard alumni network is so helpful?

And who needed those things when you had the one and only Will Jevé?

Filled with grit and an inexplicable enthusiasm for "Moby Dick," I knew this adventure was riding on him.

"Does this girl even know we're coming?" asked Jevé.

"Nope."

"Do you know where we're going?"

"I think."

"You think?"

"The website was unclear to me."

"This doesn't sound like a great idea. You know I love 'Moby Dick' but I don't know if I should go. I have a lot of homework and..."

"We can't let this white whale get away."

"What?"

"Be my Queequeg."

In the most intense stare men can share without kissing, Will replied: "I'll be your Queequeg."

Following Will's recruitment, Kristen Vessey and Oliver Brooks were quick to join the team. Vessey was born from the depths of the city. She knew every in and out. Brooks was a man of the world who couldn't be outwitted.

After hours of train and subway rides, we were blocks away from the bookstore where the marathon was being held.

We weren't far.

Navigating by the sound of passing hipsters speaking about literary subtext and the sight of fixed gear bicycles, we could feel how close we were.

And then there it was: Molasses Books.

Small and cramped, it seemed impossible that anyone could ever find anything they were looking for.

But the alum was here somewhere.

Perhaps she was the one in the crowd crocheting a Moby-Dick scarf.

Perhaps she was the one sitting next to the homeless man dressed up like a captain.

Or was it a captain dressed up as a homeless man?

In the dim light of the cramped store, I just couldn't tell.

I stood at the door scanning the silent crowd as a lone man read aloud from the book.

The goal of these Moby-Dick Maniacs was simple: keep reading as quickly and articulately as possible until midnight.

The relentless march would continue at any cost.

Though it was only 6 p.m., the smell of coffee and tired sighs already filled the air.

Dignified professorial types broke character to do the high and low pitched voices of sailors as they read.

I could see young and old sitting together; some listening intently, some sleeping on each other's shoulders, and some who just plain looked like they'd rather be swallowed by a whale.

Across the room, a woman pointed at me to sit down on the floor next to her.

Sitting criss-crossed next to the speaker and quietly munching on the whale shaped cookies that were passed around, I felt like I was in a surreal adult version of kindergarten.

It was story time for adults.

I could only hope that show and tell would logically follow and the Bard alum would show herself.

My team was getting impatient as speakers went from chapter to chapter.

The woman sitting in the chair above me kept silently pointing at people.

The pointing was starting to get on my nerves.

It seemed to break from the immersive narration droning on next to me.

As I turned around to give the woman a dirty look, I started noticing some things about her.

Snickering at passages from the book.

Intense focus in her eyes.

Thick rimmed glasses.

This was the Bard alum.

I felt like Indiana Jones choosing the right cup in his last crusade.

I had traveled dozens of miles to end up sitting an inch away from her, incapable of saying anything.

I couldn't interview her now. There was dead silence. Maybe I could wait until it ended at midnight? No good. I won't be able to get home.

I looked at my team across the room and reluctantly signaled for us to leave.

Walking out onto the street, Will asked "Did you get your white whale?"

"You're not supposed to get the white whale."

A sullen wind beat against my sides; all hope collapsed, and the great shroud of the night rolled on as it always does.

live in a truck, he says.

But Gero is an avid camper and someone used to living on his own. Back home in Northampton, Mass., he used to spend nights in his car in high school after fights with his mother. After one fight, he spent two years living in a friend's pantry. The room, dubbed the "Nook," was just big enough for a bed.

On the back of his truck are the words "The Nook II."

The Nook II rumbles to Manor after a trip to Red Hook to buy crackers and cheese. Gero has been living on non-perishables and stolen meals from the cafeteria, but the beginning of winter has turned his truck into a makeshift refrigerator.

"Yogurt's on the menu now," he says.

At Manor, Gero celebrates the completion of his senior project and reminisces about his time at Bard. Soon, he will be going to Hawaii for five months to work on a coffee and macadamia nut farm. After that, he hopes to come back to Bard for graduation.

The plan after that: a train to Georgia. A hike up the Appalachian Trail. Hitchhiking out west. And then finding a job and a house out there.

"Especially if I want to start a relationship with a girl and be a real, functioning member of society, I'm going to need a house or apartment," he says.

For now, however, he is a student of Bard—one on the verge of being thrust out into life after college. "Being a member of society at large," he says, "is way different than being in college."

In the morning, I wake up from troubled dreams. I kick out of my sleeping bag and lift the hatch. The sky outside the rear window is white and blank and vast.

"The world," I say, "it's so big out there."

"Yeah," a groggy, half-asleep Gero says. "It's scary, isn't it?"

SPORTS

photo by robbie brannigan

A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO FIGHTING

BY MATILDA TUCKER

I'm on my side, trying desperately to get out of the death grip hold my opponent has put me in. Trapped in a firm headlock, I'm on the verge of losing my breath. I always imagined it would be much easier to defend myself in a situation like this. Shouldn't I just be able to find some hidden strength within me and hurl my attacker away from me? Or maybe I would somehow grab a pen or a key and injure him enough to wriggle free. But the reality is that I have no ballpoint pen and that my opponent is a grown man who weighs roughly one and a half times as much as me. I resemble more a frantically flopping fish than a determined street fighter.

Thankfully, despite the fact that I am being held in a headlock and feel as if my lungs are about to give out, I'm not in brutal street brawl in some dark alleyway. Rather, I'm in the Multipurpose Room at a self-defense seminar organized by Bard's International Martial Arts and Culture (iMAC) Club. I'm also not the only one pinned to the ground—I'm surrounded by numerous other pairs of combatants whose attempts at gaining the upper hand end just as unsuccessfully as mine.

My opponent is also no criminal, but Paul Ngai, a blackbelt in Taekwondo and my training group's facilitator during the seminar. We pause the struggle while Sifu Chow, the founder of Integrative Win Chun, who has been invited by iMAC founder Eric Arroyo to lead this seminar tells us: "even a big guy has a crack." Arroyo, who fights at the other end of the room, easily finds his opponent's "crack" and completes the movement with far more grace than I am able to muster. Then again, Arroyo has a long personal history with martial arts, having first pursued Taekwondo and boxing, among other fighting styles, before finding his way to his own version of Win Chun a few years ago and then finally starting the iMAC club at Bard last year.

David Hendler, another member of iMAC, enjoys martial arts because "it's a great way to learn about your-

self and other people." The club also gives him an opportunity to integrate his past training in Brazilian jiu-jitsu with other styles of fighting, he says. Usually, iMAC meets once a week in the aerobics studio in the Stevenson Gymnasium where both beginners and experienced martial artists are always welcome to join. The sessions, which typically consist of two-hour practices with light sparring or watching and martial arts movies, are based upon sharing and comparing different martial arts styles and techniques and learning about how they can be used in together.

Hendler's friend, who is also part of iMAC and goes by Fred, adds that what he loves about the sport is its applicability and versatility.

"You're not defined by what you're training in, but by your overall knowledge of martial arts. It's both mentally and physically engaging," Fred said.

Martial arts is an intellectual undertaking. It's all about technique, strategy and structure, he tells me. It's not just about winning over your opponent.

"In this club, we're all equals," Fred said. "We don't have competitions, we just train for the sake of training."

Win Chun, which was created 350 years ago by a Buddhist nun in China during the fall of the Han dynasty, embodies this emphasis on structure especially, since it was developed by and made for people of smaller stature and less physical strength than most men. It focuses primarily on shuffle steps, and very rooted stances that allow a smaller person to fight upwards to a taller opponent.

This unique approach among the various styles of martial arts makes it an ideal method for self-defense which is especially very popular with women. Sophomore Christeina Wade, for instance, was drawn to Win Chun seminar because she wanted to improve her self-defense skills.

"If I was ever to get into a situation, I feel like I could handle myself," Wade said.

We go back to work. The second time I try to get out of Ngai's hold, I know what I have to look for—even the smallest weakness. Ngai talks me through it. He shows me how to first free my hand and then use it to jab my opponent in the eye, while simultaneously lifting my left leg over his head so I can gain control. I struggle awkwardly, but I ultimately succeed by twisting him into an arm bar. As I get up, Ngai chuckles knowingly at my lack of experience, but then reassuringly tells me: "It's always good to know a little self-defense."



ONE SIDE OF SQUASH, PLEASE

BY TOM MCQUEENY

It had been my seventh time trying to serve, and I hadn't hit anything.

Behind me, two old men had stopped their game to laugh at me through the glass walls.

To my right, thousands of scuff marks lined the walls.

To my left, my friend on the Squash Team patiently told me all the things to keep in mind when hitting.

Extend the knee.

Elbow up.

Follow through.

Eye on the ball.

And I missed again.

Eighth time's the charm though.

My shoulders, along with my pride, were bruised from trying to hit the ball, missing, flying forward and hitting the walls.

I smiled, turned towards the old men, and gave them the thumbs up.

"It's a lot harder than it looks," said friend.

I hadn't thought it was going to be this hard when I watched them practice a few days earlier.

A few days before my humiliation, I was just a quiet and judgmental observer who went to see what the Squash Team does.

Munching on my DTR cookies, I thought I had learned all I needed to know from my seated position.

Frustrated cries echoed through the tiny glass boxes.

Sweaty palms were smeared against the glass.

Between all the clear glass and white paint, it seemed vaguely futuristic as if at some point in the history of mankind we decided to make Pong a real life sport.

At its slowest, it looked like these people wanted to punish walls.

At its fastest, it looked like a cartoon scene where a bullet endlessly ricochets.

And at a glance, it looks like the bastard child of badminton and tennis.

It just seemed like you needed to smack the ball and you'd be good. How hard could it be?

Appearances can be deceiving.

As head coach David Ames told me, there was more to this sport than the physical.

The goal of the game is to hit the ball into one of the four corners.

"It's the combination of both the physical and the mental, because if you're a great athlete and you can't think, you can't play well," Ames

said.

I listened and watched and began to see what he was talking about.

If you hit the ball into one of these four corners, you make it very difficult for your opponent to run to that corner to hit it back.

All the while, you have to predict where the ball is going to go, where to hit the ball, when to hit the ball, and you have to figure out the opponent's strengths and weaknesses.

"It is sort of like a physical chess game," said Ames.

Since both players occupy the same tiny glass box, knowing and moving your opponent is crucial to winning.

Ames said there are two kinds of players: the shooters and the grinders.

A shooter takes risky shots and always tries to get the point.

The grinders don't take anything and keep running around until their opponent makes a mistake.

Ultimately, he made clear that both were acceptable and welcomed on a team that desperately needs more members.

"Anybody can be good at squash; it's just a matter of putting the time and the effort in to learn."

I was a little less convinced on that first point as I played my friend a few days later.

I was running.

I was missing.

I was falling over myself desperately trying to keep the form in mind. And he wasn't even breaking a sweat.

"It looks like you're just running around trying to smash the ball but you're not; you want to hit it exactly where it's going to wear out your opponent," said Jackson Barr, sophomore and newbie on the team.

With the end of his season coming, he feels he has only improved a little.

Since he had to deconstruct his old habits before he could learn properly, he could only improve so much.

This didn't discourage him though.

The fast pace and constant state of alert holds rewards of its own.

"Suspense, momentum, and after a while it just gets really fluid and elegant, just going back and forth; to me that's much more interesting, when you just try to play your best and keep the game going," Barr said.

BAREFOOT BASKETBALL FOR CHARITY

BY TOM MCQUEENY

On February 6, basketball will be coached a little differently at Bard—in bare feet.

Bard will play Mount Saint Mary's at home in a game that is being held to raise awareness for the millions of children that go without shoes and to publicize Samaritan's Feet, a charity that aspires to help bring light to the issue.

"Hopefully we can raise awareness and get some level of publicity out there about it, so when people hear about it they can go look up the organization and donate," said Adam Turner, Assistant Athletic Director and Basketball Coach.

About 300 million children around the world don't own a pair of shoes, and often they get diseases that are acquired by being barefoot, including hookworm, tungiasis, podoconiosis, and schistosomiasis. Three billion can't even afford shoes because they live on less than \$2.50 a day.

Samaritan's Feet works by collecting money to buy new shoes at a price discounted to them by shoe companies.

"If you can donate 15 bucks, which normally can't buy a pair of new shoes, the organization can buy new shoes, send them to a country where it is needed, and have a child in shoes within a week or two," Turner said.

The Bard basketball team's goal is to raise \$5,000 for the charity. It's a goal that Turner admits is lofty but one that he thinks Bard can achieve. Despite the daunting goal, Turner looks forward to the game.

"I'm definitely looking forward to it. It's definitely going to be liberating, though I feel like I'll have to make sure I get a pedicure before the game," Turner said.

AN UPDATE ON THOSE AWESOME BASKETBALL LADIES

BY MATILDA TUCKER

The Women's Basketball team at Bard has been doing well recently. Really, really well, actually. Although league play doesn't start until the beginning of the second semester, the team has been securing victories and school records in non-league games left and right, having won five games this season already, four of which were against schools to which they lost last year.

They celebrated a victory over Yeshiva University on Nov. 20 which also broke a 1999 scoring record. A week later they defeated the College of New Rochelle with a score of 65-35. More recently, they played at Elms College where they won with a score of 65-56.

And with a new assistant coach this year, Kristie Worell, who is also a health teacher at Roy C. Ketcham High School, the team seems more ready than ever to tackle the rest of this season and whatever may come next semester.

"We have high hopes for the future. We really got a big push with the change of leagues," said head coach Sarah Lombard, alluding to Bard's recent inclusion into the Liberty League.

Lombard also hopes that this will further the promotion and enthusiasm for sports at Bard. As she puts it, "The future is very bright, not just for our team, but for athletics at Bard in general."



photo by anna low-beer

OPINION

BY ARTHUR HOLLAND MICHEL

Macintosh HD
 Bardiverse
 Culture
 News
 Opinions
 Sports

FOCUS Report

https://blp.bard.edu/cgi-bin/ibi.cgi/ibweb.exe?IBIF_webapp=/ibi_apps/IBIC_server=EDASERVE&I...

Course: GOV401: Being President of the Student Association Government
Professor: Your fellow student

Student: Cara Black
Final Grade: -

Mid-term Comments:

Cara had a strong start to the semester. She openly denounced the administration at a well-attended forum during her first assignment: the Great Shuttle Trouble. Her idea to form working committees around certain issues was brilliant and well-articulated. Alas, I cannot give her credit, as Cara did not cite her source for the idea.

I wish Cara would show the same zeal during her tenure that she showed in attaining it. As far as I can tell, since taking office, Cara hasn't sent out her girls with iPads. Nothing impresses an indifferent resident of Robbins more than an unannounced visit from the President at 11 p.m. I'd like Cara to consider the substantive change she might affect if she deployed the same tactics as President as when she was a candidate. Another kegger would garner support for student government better than a Jingle Mingle, though if it were off-campus, students would have to drunk-drive, or else join a working committee, to get home.

I am pleased with Cara's online presence and the new student government website. Usually, the extensive use of Facebook is discouraged in any GOV course, given the risk of massive procrastination, but here Cara has used it to good effect. Well done.

That said, I have on several occasions spotted Cara being chauffeured by Campus Security. She seems to have become a little confused: I can only imagine that she has accidentally read the syllabus of GOV402: Being a Dictator, and will promptly return to catching the shuttle, just like every other student. She also seemed to have mixed up her syllabi when she announced to her constituents, during a recent bean-bag crisis, that "If the person who took the chair is caught, there will be consequences." Cara might do well to be reminded that martial law does not count for class credit.

I'm looking forward to the second half of the course with Cara, and I expect no less than a completely renovated DTR, Spring Fling performances by 'big name bands,' and, of course, a successful campaign to raise fifteen million dollars, by May.

--Mid-Term Grade: B
--Mid-Term Absences: The Month of October

THE RACE SPACE

BY SAIM SAEED

In the International Student Organization (ISO) cultural show a few years ago, the emcee (the immutable Farah Akhtar Khan '12) made a joke about how the fourth floor of the library is the hangout venue for the Chinese students on campus. Recently, I had a friend who expressed her surprise at the perpetual Black Student Organization (BSO) meetings taking place on the second floor of the Campus Center. She can be forgiven, I think, for thinking they were BSO meetings. And as this semester ends, I have noticed that that my house (international neighborhood, Village L) has become a bit of a South Asian cultural center. Whether it is parties, movie screenings, momo making, or cooking (Indian food, naturally), South Asians—and those who like South Asians—from all over campus end up here. How does one go about thinking about race, and the way it organizes itself in particular, here at Bard?

One way of looking at it may be where it does not show itself. There are no visibly non-white students in my feminist philosophy class apart from myself. And that fact was particularly awkward when we

spent three sessions on Black Feminism. Reading texts by black feminists was all well and good, but the absurdity of having black feminists make their case to an all-white (plus me) class needs to be thought about further.

The Need for Racial Association

After spending time in India looking at how the caste system “works” and looking at racial structures here, one thing is certain: the dominant class tends to be the most classless in its perception of the world. Brahmins (upper castes) don’t think caste-politics should exist; they don’t form Brahmin student organizations and are the first to puff their chests out and say they don’t see caste.

You can see the parallels I’m making here. With an almost 80% white campus (not including white international students), one could almost incorporate the tenets of StuffWhitePeopleLike into the redrafted Bard constitution. And white culture—there is such a thing—is monolithic enough for non-whites (I hate the word colored) to have a visibly uncomfortable

time with it.

One can see the ISO cultural show as a push back. It is one of the very few opportunities for non-white people to claim a space of their own in front of the entire campus. This cultural assertion need not be subtle or nuanced—as the Caribbean booty-shaking can testify—but it’s something. I got up and cussed like a sailor in the guise of a song because it was empowering. Walking in Kline and getting dibs on food right after the show—all the while shouting “only performers!” was a similar experience.

But these moments are fleeting, and in the racial associations that one sees there’s a broader attempt to sustain a culture. Within racial associations, people do not have to change accents, languages, or topics of conversation, and thus, in some sense, can sustain their identities. Before my house became a watering hole for the brown people on campus and their affiliates, I missed being brown. I couldn’t talk about cricket, Coke Studio, or Deepika Padukone (look her up, trust me)—and had to settle for conversations surround-

ing the 2nd Amendment, LeBron James, or IHOP. It’s a bit of a relief to be able to do more of the former. And so, the physical space required to have those conversations becomes a necessity, and manifests itself as a table at Kline, someone’s room, or the RKC.

Is this a problem?

I do not want to say much about inter-racial relations, mainly because I don’t know if there’s anything to be said. Some people hang out with people within their race, some without, and some do both. I cannot—and neither do I want to—tell people who their friends should be, or how they should choose them. There is, however, something to be said about the discomfort in perceiving racial division. For one thing, it dispels the notion of post-racial societies. Bard can look more like a Rothko painting and less like a Benetton commercial. I don’t know if that’s a good thing, but I think it would help if we at least accept it, or better yet, talk about it.

THE CREATION OF HUMAN MOLECULES IN ERIC WHITACRE’S VIRTUAL CHOIR

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

The music in Eric Whitacre’s “virtual choir” project, in which a full choral ensemble was assembled from 2,000 Youtube videos containing singing faces responding to a conductor video (also posted on Youtube), is anything but ground-breaking, musically speaking. The algorithms for the Renaissance-style homophony employed in “Water Night,” for example, have been known since the 17th century and are taught in semester one of music theory. However, the Youtube video “performances” of this virtual choir are sonorous, possibly transcendent, and definitely poignant as an expression of the essential human struggle to establish a lasting legacy for oneself.

What’s really remarkable about the “Water Night” video is the way the camera pans across a matrix-style wall of videos with singer’s faces contorted, lips pursed, eyelids dangling below raised eyebrows as disembodied voices of each depicted individual combine synergistically and yet virtually—each from his or her own IP address island—to execute a homophonic dance of dissonance and resolution that would have brought Palestrina to tears.

“It’s the sound of pure devotion. Pure

empathy. Complete egoless connection. Democracy.” So says Paul, the Mormon missionary who introduced this video to me on a recent cross-continental flight.

“Egoless connection?” Look at the conductor in the video, with his flowing blonde hair, prominent cheek bones, and captivating eyes as he sensuously licks his hand and makes sweeping legato and performatively blissful cues with his wand, modulating melodies and defining the very pace of time as thousands of people obey the physical expression of his will. Look at the TED talk; he talks about how he got his start in a college choir, which he joined for the plethora of cute girls in the soprano section. This maestro stands before the screen of a thousand anonymous faces like some sort of enlightened despot reminding us that this was his idea, and that this music did not self-assemble in the series of trillions of switches that connect us via the internet, but rather he wrote it, and these are his disciples. He is successful—preserved, passed on as an individual entity—and they are not (at least not in any sense but symbolically).

However, another spin on that critique is that he stands as a reminder that each

of those anonymous faces has a different narrative and a different reason for recording his or herself singing. If there is any empathy expressed by this piece, it is arbitrary, because the individuality of the participant is obliterated from any glow of posterity this video earns.

But that is part of the video’s poignance: it is an expression of the eddy line—the turbulent intersection of contrary flows—between the sense that we are protagonists of a story whose outcome could not be more vital, and the more global and historical perspective that everything we do or create, no matter how beautiful, will be dissolved in the flux of information that gets transmitted at an exponentially increasing rate each day. The reality of our cosmic insignificance is at odds with our experience.

As a chemist, I believe that a synergistic relationship between many different parameters lies at the heart of all successful chemical transformations. For example, the loading of catalytic amounts of elemental iodine to the iodine source in a particularly bad-ass iodolactonization reaction occurs at a rate that balances the rates of active catalyst loading and subsequent re-

action with the substrate giving ideal face selection for enantio- and stereoselectivity. Likewise, I believe that the internet provides unprecedented means for producing massive synergy among common-minded people by excluding the factors that repel people from each other—physical appearance, “vibe,” congruence between action and essence. However, like the catalytic reaction described above, even the massive and brilliant synergistic creation of Eric Whitacre and his virtual choir is in grave danger of sounding banal. Especially when a video containing “the sound of pure devotion” is followed by a video of a cat doing backflips.

It is possible that the realization of the virtual choir’s charter is less an example of synergy (a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts) than it is a futile attempt to do justice to an extraordinary mass of individual endeavor. However, this ambiguity evokes a great loneliness in me that I might call poignant by its expression of something that by its very expression isolates itself.

ANTI 'ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT'

BY LENNY SIMON

The Hessel Museum of Art, that weird building with the giant metallic wishbone out back, recognizable through its deep and flat industrial lines off to the side on South Campus, is an underappreciated fixture on campus. Its commitment to not only ignoring the instruction manual, but also burning the book, (over and over again), can push the museum into interesting and unique territory.

The museum changes, and exhibitions come and go, but the perpetual confrontation with the status quo, the push for new methods and new art, prevails. One could understandably feel that the museum is a reflection of the community it is situated in.

So what are they doing? What are they creating at the Hessel?

The current exhibit is called Anti-Establishment. The exhibit is both a new iteration of modern art and somewhat of a departure from the canon.

One of the most memorable "pieces" in the exhibit places the viewer in a bizarrely constructed chair suspended with construction straps in a circular pink and white wooden chassis. Once situated in this contraption, one's attention turns to a television set with sock puppets engaged in a satirical play. The numerous sock puppets are engaged in what appears to be a never-ending dialogue applying a Marxist critique to elements of modern society. The satirical discussion can only leave the observer feeling almost as stupid and absurd as the sock puppets appear on screen.

The puppets leave one questioning the value of "intellectual" conversations, and challenge the notion that we even have the ability to critique the existing political structures. The exhibit, like most modern art, is about the subject perceiving the work; it assumes that the work itself is meaningless without a viewer.

Unlike the the target of the exhibit—the establishment—the exhibit lacks a distinct ethos or unifying strand. There are benefits to this style—the subject is left suspicious and curious as they turn every corner. On the other hand, people leave the space without a feeling of cohesion; the ability to process fragmented, highly varied rooms is difficult. What is more likely is that subjects leave focused on one portion of the exhibit and fail to see an overarching theme.

The drastically different works, collaged together under the banner of "anti-establishment," seem as po-

rous, vague, and un compelling as the "structures" we are compelled to call into question to re-image and re-create.

One visitor remarked that the Hessel is merely "a forum for the avant-garde art scene. I don't know why it's on campus," she said. "But really, why is it here?"

One of the video installations in the exhibit did live up to its name of being anti-establishment. It is a video in which people are seen constructing and deconstructing a pale and characterless structure. During this process, the builders, who vary in age, race, opinion and perspective, discuss and sometimes preach about gender and its implications. Some of the footage is powerful, especially when placed in context of their surroundings, which are constantly in flux, like the characters on screen.

Anti-Establishment has something interesting to show us, something to witness and experience. After going through the exhibit, the subject and the art itself must reconcile to reach a peaceful understanding.

As one student put it, "I felt it was really difficult to go through, but really rewarding at the same time."

Art with a political ethos should be difficult to experience. The reprocessing of old information and values weaves new truth. Ultimately, however, this exhibit does not challenge one to confront anything specifically, nor does it allow one to create new associations.

Without an effect upon the viewer, the exhibit feels more like empty rhetoric—simply another experience to be had and probably forgotten.

These collection of works contain some interesting elements, but they struggle to be more. The different pieces don't compliment or enhance one another to fully form a cohesive exhibition and without a stellar work to showcase, the exhibition is unimpressive.

Hessel is underappreciated at Bard, but it can be and should be better. Each room typically feels like an entirely new collection, and the installations themselves feel schizophrenic. Hessel should display more student work. That of a advanced art class could be more interesting and compelling than some of the work currently there and would give student's exposure.

Hessel, for all of its creativity, has lost its edge. It should work hard to get it back.

RE: BARD TWEETS

Robbie Brannigan @robbiebrannigan
Bard missed connection was written about me. Way less happy about this than I thought I'd be.

Jill Swan @hungrybees
black friday urban outfitters at 1:30 am has the highest concentration of hipsters I've seen since I was on campus three days ago

Il siira II @siiraSIIRAsiira
I wanna submit to likesomebardian but I don't know which of my 23 distance crushes to choose from. Is this a problem

Lissy Darnell @Lissums
When you text all your friends about going to the vocal moderation concert because you don't want to get slightly drunk in a chapel alone.

Beardkins @Beardkins
Two heteronormative pronouns walk into DTR. All the Bard students glare with disdain.

Connor Marley @connormarley
Eating raw pasta out of the Tewks sink. #yolo

Rory Moe @FeistyMidget23
: I AM NOW A COPY EDITOR OF THE BARD FREE PRESS - BE AFRAID, BE VERY AFRAID. :)

(we are)

