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Chris Van Dyke and John Holowach
BOT-MAN:

On the Ground, Beneath her Feet

Bot-Man, Volume 3, Issue 6, 1999

Created By: John Holowach & Chris Van Dyke
Copyright (c) 1999 Holowach/Van Dyke
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Special Thanks To: Salman Rushdie, for being such an incredible person and author, people who go to rallies, for having now inspired at least a dozen issues of this comic; Mumm-Ra and the Tower of Omens for kicking my ass all the way across the Atlantic; and of course Duke, under whose guidance I have won half the battles even if I seem to be losing the war. (Bot-Man docs not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Bard Observer.)
Salman Rushdie Kicks Off National Book Tour at Bard

Author shares passages from The Ground Beneath Her Feet, discusses its creation, and responds to audience questions

**ACCLAIMED AUTHOR** Salman Rushdie made a surprise visit to the Bard campus on Monday, April 12, and gave a reading from his new novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet.* The appearance preceded the first published stop in his American tour at Cooper Union in New York City. His tour is heading towards the West Coast this week, promoting his new novel.

The student body was informed of the public reading only the previous day, in an e-mail from Dean of Students John Becker, who requested that for security reasons only the local community be told of the event. Rushdie spent most of the hour reading from his newest novel, while sitting on stage with President Botstein, and answered questions from the student audience for the remaining time. The excerpt he read introduced the main characters: an Indian rock star and a photojournalist who becomes obsessed with her.

"I was delighted he chose to launch his book at Bard," remarked President Botstein about the event. "It was a pleasure to have him on campus. I'm very proud of the quality of the questions asked by the students. I think he was very impressed as well."

The discussion sparked by the questions varied from the significance of the Orpheus myth in his latest fiction, to his relationships with celebrities such as Madonna and U2. Very little of the discussion focused on the death decree that has so shaped his life in recent years.

While introducing Rushdie, President Botstein mentioned his invitation to the author to teach at Bard. When asked what he thought of the likelihood that Rushdie would accept the offer, President Botstein replied, "I think we have a good chance of getting him. He's very well disposed to the college. He has a great affection for Bard."

After the hour-long reading, Rushdie spoke as a guest in Professor Brad Morrow's "Contemporary Innovative Fiction" class. The discussion allowed students the chance to pose direct questions to the author about the process of writing his new novel and the stylistic mechanisms at work. The class was provided with advanced copies of the book, which was released in stores the next day. The class of 20 students included five photographers whose inborn flashbulbs punctuated the discussion.

Despite Dean Becker's notice, a press conference took place at Bard Campus the Sunday before the public reading. A score of photographers and journalists were present as the reading on Monday afternoon.

Rushdie has lived and traveled in secret since 1989 when the Shiite Muslim theocracy of Iran issued its now famous death decree, for what it interpreted as blasphemy in his fifth novel *The Satanic Verses.* Through the now more moderate leadership of the Iranian government officially distanced itself from the *faux* last September, many conservative Muslims believe it is too irreconcilable, including one Iranian foundation that has issued a $3.8 million bounty on the author.

**Bard-Backed Charter School Proposed**

New York Charter School Act allows for development of community-run institutions... A charter school may develop its own curriculum, as well as establish partnerships with other groups and institutions...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**New Smolny Blazes Path**

The college, modeled after Bard, champions progressive education

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Charter School Proposed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

delineate an educational plan and will describe an intended curricu-

lum and organizational structure for the school. In order to receive a

grant approval, the charter application must demonstrate a strong

organizational framework, as well as show that the planned school

will be diverse and innovative, and will fulfill a present community

need.

The local charter group has met regularly for the last few months

on Bard campus, and has grown to include between 70 and 80 indi-

viduals from the local area, including Bard Professor Daniel

Berthold-Bond and Chris Lindner. Though most participants are

from Red Hook, Rhinebeck, the Hyde Park, Pine Plains, Germantown, and Poughkeepsie districts are also repre-

sented in the group.

The group has recently drafted a mission statement stating the

values, goals, curriculum focus, and educational approach of the

proposed school. The mission statement describes a plan for an inte-

grative and participatory curriculum that will heavily emphasize a

creative approach to learning and that would be supported by the

involvement of families and groups in the local community.

Professor Lindner mentioned the excitement he shares with so many in

the group currently involved in the planning of the interdiscipli-

nary curriculum for the school.

As well as crafting their mission statement, the charter project

group has formalized their committee structure, and is working to

increase awareness and support from communities in the area. Their

Outreach Committee, in fact, aims to make this very goal possible.

Organizer Susan Hinkle (who was head of the Pack College

Institute in New York City for many years) stresses that a major goal

of the project is to establish strong connections with families and

community groups at this stage in development.

As an important part of the mission and spirit of the project, accord-

ing to Hinkle, is the development of positive, cooperative relation-

ships with local school boards. The charter project aims to augmen-

t and enhance the primary and secondary education available to all chil-

dren in the local area, as well as to fill the present need, and so hopes

its involvement with district schools will be mutually beneficial.

The challenge facing the process is that local districts will lose

funding from the state for each student that attends a new charter

school, rather than the district’s school. Despite this fact, Deb

Newport, chair of the Outreach Committee, reported that recent

meetings with local district superintendents have allowed a friendly

and positive exchange of concerns and ideas about a possible new

school to go forward.

An important challenge that faces the group is the building of

financial support necessary to begin such an institution. The

group will meet with the President on April 28 to present their

work to date, including their new mission statement, and discuss possibil-

ities like Bard financial support for the school.

The group has until October 1 of this year to submit their appli-

cation for charter approval to the state. If the application is approved

and charter is granted, the organizers can begin immediately to

secure or build facilities, hire all staff, and instate their organization-

al structure. The school would be able to open in the fall of 2000,

but could take another year if necessary, before admitting students

does Grades K through 12.

In the meantime, Susan Hinkle hopes that students and faculty

will actively participate in the planning of the school, as well as its

realization. For her, as for so many involved, cross-generational com-

munity involvement in the charter school would represent a fulfill-

ment of its mission to draw the community closer together.
Pemstein Ready to Rock
Since December, new VP of Development/Alumni Affairs has brought big-city expertise to Bard's fundraising program

DI PETER MUIRHEN

LATE LAST YEAR Susan Gillese left the position of Vice President of Development and Public Affairs. She did not leave Bard, but went on to become the director of Institute of International Liberal Education. However, her old office on the third floor of Ludlow remained empty until December, when Bard hired Debra Pemstein. When Pemstein arrived, the name of the position changed to the Vice President of Development and Alumni/Affairs.

Pemstein is a powerhouse in the world of raising money for the arts. She graduated from George Washington University with Honors, earning a bachelor's degree in business administration. Since then, Pemstein has worked to raise cash for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, the Paul Taylor Dance Company, and the New York City Ballet.

Someone at Bard knew of Pemstein's reputation, and when the Development position opened, that person recommended her. When I asked her who this person was, Pemstein laughed, and said “I never found out that exactly.” Any rate, Pemstein took the position here at Bard and the surrounding area. Not only that, but her family felt that it was time for a change. Previously, Pemstein, her husband (a painter), and her two young daughters, were living in New York City.

Being the Vice President of Development and Alumni/Affairs involves what fund raising people call “cultivating and soliciting.” That is, Pemstein spends her time cultivating good relations with potential donors, and then soliciting them for money. Back in ‘96-’97, Bard raised $8.7 million in Gifts and Donations. The figure remains around $9 million every year, and it is Pemstein’s job to keep it there.

Pemstein does not do this all by herself. She heads up the Development Staff, which consists of 12 people including her. She also works closely with the Board of Trustees. Boardmembers are mostly Bard alumni/ae, who often donate money themselves. Sometimes Boardmembers will solicit potential givers, and then refer them to Pemstein. After Pemstein gets a name of a possibly generous source, she starts to develop a strategy to win them over.

First, she finds out as much about the person as she possibly can. She learns exactly what it is about Bard that would appeal to them. Then she invites them to come find out for themselves. This might involve inviting the person to tour Bard, or to hear Leon Speak. She also works hard to match their interests. A film buff, for example, should be invited to learn about the film department, and possibly see films by some of Bard’s students.

She is not always the person to “make the sale,” as she puts it. If anyone in the Bard community is good friends with the potential donor, then she asks the friend to do the actual soliciting. It’s all about psychology: The donor has to know that he or she is appreciated.

Bard gets donations from a variety of different sources. In the past, the New York State Council of the Arts, and the Olm Foundation have both given grants to Bard. Government agencies, foundations, and corporations give money; and on a smaller scale, there are also the friends and supporters of Bard, the parents, alumni, and the Board of Trustees. Sometimes, donors will even bequeath money to Bard in their wills.

Pemstein is in charge of a couple of different giving campaigns, including a phone-a-thon, wherein Bard calls up those people who have given in the past. (Incidentally, anyone who thinks that they have the courage and tact to solicit by phone can help with the phone-a-thon. Pemstein’s can be reached at 7405.)

Bard recently finished the Bard College Campaign, which raised $90 million so that Bard could have an Endowment. In the past, Bard required (Incidentally, anyone who thinks that they have the courage and tact to solicit by phone can help with the phone-a-thon. Pemstein’s can be reached at 7405.)

Bard recently finished the Bard College Campaign, which raised $90 million so that Bard could have an Endowment. In the past, Bard required $90 million dollars in Gifts and Donations every year to balance the budget. Now, the school can rely, at least partially, on the investment interest from the $90 million. Every year, this money can go toward expenses, or possibly new scholarships.

Increasing the Endowment is part of Pemstein’s job. By soliciting the various sources who gave to the Bard College Campaign, Bard set a precedent. Because they gave money, these contributors are part of the community. After someone gives money to Bard, Pemstein explained, we always send them a thank you letter, telling them exactly where their money went, “and then we ask them again. And if that works, “Then we send them a letter to thank them, and we’re on them again.”

Smolny Leads Way in Education
acquiring of Russian accreditation, the trips by both Shkliarevsky and Gillespie benefit to the school, and the active recruiting of North American students. According to both Gillespie and Shkliarevsky, the accreditation is not far from becoming a reality. A representative from the Russian Ministry of Higher Education has already visited Smolny and spent several days with Pemstein.

A decree by the Ministry will validate this “new direction in Russian education,” said Shkliarevsky. Smolny marks a change in the system of higher education in Russia. One immediate example is that with the accreditation, it will be the first institution to grant a BA in liberal arts. In its past two years, students could take classes at Smolny but could not receive a degree.

In a long-term sense, Smolny will mark a change in the role of education at it relates to careers and life in Russia. As stated in the mission statement, Smolny sets out to achieve four different goals: “To cultivate the intellectual, cultural, and moral aspects of an individual through the pursuit of higher education; to develop in students critical and creative thought, a sense of individual worth, independence, and respect for human life; to prepare students for life in the increasing global contemporary world;” and “to democratize education and guarantee the accessibility of contemporary educational programs.” Since this is a new direction in Russian education, Shkliarevsky mentioned that along with a lot of support and interest, exists some skepticism. “I think the most important thing for us to address in the recruitment of students themselves. We have to convince them and their parents that this is a valid education that will give them a good head start,” he said. During Shkliarevsky’s trip he met with secondary school teachers in St. Petersburg, in order to “establish connections with high school students.” He said he received a lot of positive feedback from this visit and many teachers showed quite an interest in the methodology. “This interest developed into a strong conviction, and what started as a utilitarian objective, that is, to recruit high school students, “developed naturally into a stable relationship with several private schools,” in St. Petersburg, three such as founded a group, which will meet regularly at Smolny to further explore the particular methodology. Students who have participated in Smolny classes in the past, also responded quite positively when reflecting on their experiences. In a survey of Smolny students, answering the open question, “What was the most important thing for you in the liberal arts style of studying?”, the respondents stated that “the courses improved their knowledge of the subjects” “enriched their methodology” “stimulated them to study the subject in depth.” Thirty-four percent of the respondents pointed out that the questions raised during class discussions were debated after class. Smolny’s educational philosophy draws upon a lot of ideas fundamental to a Bard Education. In many ways, Smolny is modeled on its American cousin. Gillespie mentioned that some Smolny professors have visited Bard “to see how we teach.” They understand very well that they need to change the way they teach. In the past, what they would have is a lecture.

Given the great emphasis on teaching style seems to be well received by the students, according to Gillespie. “They seem to be enjoying it. The students are quite lively in the class,” she said. Smolny will use Bard’s structure in many ways. As Gillespie explained, Smolny will have a Language and Thinking workshop, First-Year Seminars, Moderations and Senior Projects, and have the same distribution requirements as Bard. As far as recruiting Russian students, Smolny has been hosting several open houses and will start registration in May 1999. Admission standards remain stringent, but the school’s educational philosophy draws upon a lot of ideas fundamental to a Bard Education. In many ways, Smolny is modeled on its American cousin. Gillespie mentioned that some Smolny professors have visited Bard “to see how we teach.” They understand very well that they need to change the way they teach. In the past, what they would have is a lecture.

Another requirement will be an English examination as this will be a bilingual institution, offering classes in both Russian and English. In the previous to North American students, Gillespie and Shkliarevsky both stressed the fact that one does not have to be a Russian studies major to study at Smolny. Though some language experience is required, Smolny offers a whole range of courses. The curriculum, modeled itself after Bard is focused around programs, which are specific to Russian and differ from Bard. An example that Shkliarevsky cited was the greater emphasis on Asian studies and democratization. One concludes that at least 60 percent of class titles include “The Popular Song and Avant-Garde Compositions in the Soviet Era,” and Gillespie also insists students who may be interested in some capacity to respect the diversity. While they may read in the newspapers, “There’s plenty to eat, the buildings are heated and one can actually manage very well over there.”
Norman Manea and the triumph of the Artist

The acclaimed writer and Bard Professor discusses personal victory in the battle between the artist and the regime

By EMILIA DANE

NORMAN MANEA WAS BORN IN 1936 IN SUCEAVA, ROMANIA. AT THE AGE OF FIVE he was deported to the concentration camp Transnistra, in the Ukraine. After WWII, he returned to Romania, and survived the next four decades under the totalitarian dictatorship of the Communist regime, which was not overthrown until the violent revolution of 1989. By then he had emigrated to America, and taken up residency at Bard College.

Through the course of his life, Norman Manea has written novels, collections of essays, and volumes of shorter fiction; and his writing has been translated into an array of languages. His work is known for describing life in concentration camps, within totalitarian social orders, and in exile. His many honors and awards include the MacArthur Foundation and Guggenheim Fellowships, the Writer's Union of the Socialist Republic of Romania Award (which was withdrawn on demand of the communist authorities), and the National Jewish Book Award for On Clowns: the Dictator and the Writer.

On Clowns includes an essay by Mr. Manea entitled "The History of an Interview," which explains the circumstances leading to his censorship by the Communist government. In 1981, Mr. Manea participated in an interview in which he gave guarded, yet honest answers to a few questions; among other things, his views on the place of the artist, and his own work, in society. The interview was ultimately published as a great risk in all. The result was a scandal in which the powers in control of the Romanian literary scene attempted to discredit and prevent his work from being published. In response, Mr. Manea, precipitating his eventual emigration to the West, wrote, in 1987:

"If we translate these two terms for a broader category of population, the contradiction between solitude and solidarity is in a way valuable. It was a way of finding a dialogue with unknown, intelligent, invisible people. It was very important, and it was also a way of keeping your privacy. To lock yourself in a room with a book protects you in a way from the outside world. I think it protects you even here, yet there is a lot of danger and risks. A lot of things I might say which happened there, happen here also, but in a different way, in a milder way. The tragedy has become less switched mainly to control, less to violence, not very dangerous, not a heavy one... It's perhaps the difference between blacklist and carnival."

Under solitude, under dissatisfaction with trivial daily life, we face an inner, deep need for something different, higher. In a closed society the possibilities of expressing this need were drastically reduced. In many cases people there became readers, and very faithful, sophisticated readers, due to the fact that they didn't have a big choice. How to avoid or overcome the basality and/or daintiness of daily life? It was a way of finding a dialogue with unknown, intelligent, invisible people. It was very important, and it was also a way of keeping your privacy. To lock yourself in a room with a book protects you in a way from the outside world. I think it protects you even here, yet there is a lot of danger and risks. A lot of things I might say which happened there, happen here also, but in a different way, in a milder way. The tragedy has become less switched mainly to control, less to violence, not very dangerous, not a heavy one... It's perhaps the difference between blacklist and carnival.

The individual is here also under the outside pressure of a lot of vulgar and cheap things. However, they are not so hostile, they are not so risky, they are not so dangerous. There, the fact that it was a large readership for books, a growing one, had also a political-social explanation. And we are now, after things changed, that we are the readership changed. So it's not the difference between a newborn American and a newborn Romanian. It's about society... and the relation between individuals and their social environment.

CL: What was your education like in literature during Romania's totalitarian regime? Did you depend on a black market in books?

NM: I graduated as an engineer in hydraulics and I worked as an engineer for more than ten years. But I was, from my childhood, a very avid reader, and even started to write very early. The reason why I studied engineering was quite complicated, related to the sociopolitical pressure and distortions. In fact, I was in love with literature. You may remember what Kafka said when he chose to be a lawyer. It wasn't affinity for his profession, it was, rather, the hope that it could protect his indifference. He said, "I'm indifferent to anything which is not essential." Which means literature, of course... And he added, "I must find a profession which allows me this indifference, without hurting too much my vanity."

When I graduated from high school it was still a kind of Stalinist

tradition, between solitude and solidarity becomes the contradiction between self-interest and the common interest. Regard a work art? The criteria for evaluating art are different, more fluid and complicated, of course. The "competition" became, unfortunately also in this area, more and more a commercial competition, distorting the essential way at deals with solitude and solidarity.

Q1: What most compelled you to write when you began writing in Romania? Do you believe there is a particular thing, within a dictatorial regime, that motivates a "true" artist?

NM: Under solitude, under dissatisfaction with trivial daily life, we face an inner, deep need for something different, higher. In a closed society the possibilities of expressing this need were drastically reduced. In many cases people there became readers, and very faithful, sophisticated readers, due to the fact that they didn't have a big choice. How to avoid or overcome the basality and/or daintiness of daily life? It was a way of finding a dialogue with unknown, intelligent, invisible people. It was very important, and it was also a way of keeping your privacy. To lock yourself in a room with a book protects you in a way from the outside world. I think it protects you even here, yet there is a lot of danger and risks. A lot of things I might say which happened there, happen here also, but in a different way, in a milder way. The tragedy has become less switched mainly to control, less to violence, not very dangerous, not a heavy one... It's perhaps the difference between blacklist and carnival.

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When I graduated from high school it was still a kind of Stalinist
or post-Stalinist period when literature was very propagandistic. I am a self-made man of letters through my reading and my writing. During thirty years after the war (I mean my high school period), which politically was very tense, I took advantage of reading the great Russian literature. It was a period when the Russian literature was heavily and very well translated into Romanian. So even in that tough and crazy period you could find some very good books, and I mean not only good Russian literature. I followed up to the western classical literature and the Romanian one of course. When I was already an employee, there was a cultural opening in Romania, a lot of modern literature came in, and I followed up again.

From time to time, through friends, to connections in the West, I also received modern and contemporary books that were never translated and brought into Romania, smuggled in by different underground channels. More or less I was in touch with the evolution of western literature, and also the American one. It wasn't like here: you go in a library... you go in a book store and you buy whatever you want or you order and then finally you have the book about which you heard or you were told. It was an effort for every book, to have it to read it, a great excitement and to risk to read something which is forbidden.

It was not through the black market. It was only through friends, a changed, a kind of underground channel, but not for money. A kind of cultural conspiracy.

I remember my first visit to Paris in the late seventies. I assured that huge FNAC bookstore, and... and I almost fainted there. Going from one shelf to another and trying to make a list and to see... what I can select, I wanted to buy everything. I had money maybe for three books. How to choose these three books from the thirty; at least, which were on the first line of my preference? We were really absurd, very hungry, curious to know. It was hooey, in a way, and quite rewarding, despite the risk and the tension, quite rewarding to remain culturally alive.

Q: What was the experience of emigration to America like for you? 

W.M.: One is reminded of Cervantes' book, The Captive Mind, in which he discusses the experience of being a disdant writer and mentions the feeling of loss for the exile who cannot contribute to the literary consciousness of his people by writing in his nation. Was there a similar feeling on your part about emigration?

W.M.: It's not easy for anybody to uproot himself, from a culture, from a family, from memory and the past. It is much more difficult for a writer. The language grows in the writer from the moment when he as a young person becomes a reader, until he hears his own voice in his own language... to lose this suddenly is a disaster. The Romanian writer Cioran said that a writer to switch languages is a disaster greater than any historical disaster in the world. And it happens paradoxically in the moment when you are free—from exile as well, as it was in our cases, freedom. It meant leaving a closed prison type of society and penal colony, reaching finally a shore of freedom. Yet in the same moment, the tongue was cut; I mean, exactly in the moment you had to say about your experience.

So, the linguistic exile is quite schizophrenic. I propagated to the very, very last minute this very tough decision as I didn't want to leave Romania not because I was happy there, I was childish enough to fool myself that I don't live in a country, that I live only in a language. So I did not want to separate myself from my language which was my real homeland. I was forced in the end to leave. Certainly, I was very happy that I still left in time, that I succeeded to escape, that I saved, in a way, my sanity. Of course I had to go through difficult experiences here.

So on one hand I'm, I should say, very grateful being here. On the other hand I still face my own personal problems as a writer in translation, usually as a betrayed writer... starting to write again, trying to reach the foreign reader. It's a problem of language and other hand I still face my own personal problems as a writer in translation, usually as a betrayed writer... starting to write again, trying to reach the foreign reader. It's a problem of language and other things which disturb me, and a lot of other things which I like. I'm still amazed by the extraordinary energy of this country, even if not always going in the right direction. Optimism, creativity, energy, liberty, charity, inventiveness, resilience... I do hope that as some point in the future I will be able to write about my American experience. I don't dare to say about the American side of my personality. I'm not yet sure about that, although it is already a part of my life.

And I hope that the view of the newcomer, who is not even so, can bring something fresh and interesting to the vision of the country. I'm glad that it happened so that I landed at Bard. I'm here already ten years. It became certainly my real American home... I have been noticing that it keeps being more for me a familiar, even a family—new, American family—environment.

I had quite a difficult time with authorities. Finally, I changed the internal exile to exile itself.

Q: How does the current state of things in Romania, considering both the sociopolitical changes that have taken place since the revolution and the ongoing struggle in its style in as a new republic, effect your sense of identity as a Romanian writer?

W.M.: Despite the fact that Romania changed the political system through a violent fight—the only country in eastern Europe that did this way, because it was the toughest dictatorship in the sense—despite this fact, which had a heroic side, I must say that this change brought a lot of fear and manipulation was going on. Partially, the change was dismissed by the secret police which succeeded for a while (and I'm not sure about today) to be behind the scene, to manipulate the political scene even after the change. A lot of official writers, privileged people and people involved with the secret police became after the change very rich, and gained a kind of freedom and power which they did not have even with the communism. Serving the communist system assured you some privileges but you were still under control all the time. Having money, you are not any more under any control. This is absolute power. The situation is boiling still there. A lot of corruption and lies and manipulation is going on. The normal people, the working population, has a very difficult time. Capitalism entered there with a very tough helicopter. It's difficult to predict anything. It's a chaotic type of situation, which can grow (step by step, I mean, not by force) to a mild type of democracy, or to a new type of authoritarian system. Yet, for me, the past scene was never really the same as it was, cannot be—but it can be despotism. The place has a Byzantine tradition... and those 50 years of communism really did a lot of harm to the core of the Romanian civilization itself. It's difficult to recover. A lot depends on the West. The West is as, we know very well, as it has always been. Capitalism itself is going through a new phase, even a crisis, and there is a lot of questions about the future of global capitalism. Usually the West intempest in the East only when some trouble appears, not before. And this is much always later.

My relationship to the country is still not the best. I criticized the old and new post-communist nationalism in Romania. Coming from the famous exile in America, this criticism was not taken in the best way. I was still a complicated relationship with the place. I have friends there of course, and I have people with whom I have an interesting dialogue. Yet the connection to the country is still tense. I am more and more here than there.

Q: How do you view your place here in America? Do you consider yourself a Romanian-American? How do you characterize yourself in the political, academic, or literary world you are now in?

W.M.: Well, I live here. I own an apartment here. I have a job here. I have students here. I published my books here. I have plants for the future here. It is more and more my place. Of course I will have the translation problems, or other very specific problems related to my writing. As a citizen, if this is what you ask me, I am more and more here. I will never pretend to be a typical American. I am not even convinced that America needs a lot of typical Americans. I think my work here can contribute to the spiritual climate of the country. I watch carefully with great interest what happens. I think the country goes through a political and moral crisis. It's a huge and strong country. It's still an immense human laboratory, and I don't want to believe that something wonderful will not happen to establish this great democracy as a leading spiritual force of our troubled world.

I am quite often disturbed by the huge contrast between the wealthy and the poor, about health insurance, for example, for the wealthy and the poor. About the market trade of cultural values, the overwhelming trivialization of political and cultural life, the cynical violation of privacy. I am quite uncomfortable with the system of election, which is as in the end the expression of a real democracy. Do you need to be a very wealthy man in order to be a new candidate in an election? To express the will of the people? Success, which is at the core of the American civilization is usually and unfortunately measured first of all financially. Yet a lot of men and women that succeeded miserably in their human enterprise and intellectual adventure and yet were poor, or even died poor or unknown. From the human and sociopolitical view of the unity of the society, I think that this brutal emphasis on money is not the best simplification of life.

There are of course many, many other things which disturb me, and a lot of other things which I like. I'm still amazed by the extraordinary energy of this country, even if not always going in the right direction. Optimism, creativity, energy, liberty, charity, inventiveness, resilience... I do hope that as some point in the future I will be able to write about my American experience. I don't dare to say about the American side of my personality. I'm not yet sure about that, although it is already a part of my life.

And I hope that the view of the newcomer, who is not even so, can bring something fresh and interesting to the vision of the country. I'm glad that it happened so that I landed at Bard. I'm here already ten years. It became certainly my real American home... I have been noticing that it keeps being more for me a familiar, even a family—new, American family—environment.
CCS Spring Shows
Present Diverse Works
Graduate students bring year-long creative process to end

By KERRY CHANCE

AS PART OF THE SPRING THESIS SERIES, the Center for Curatorial Studies (CCS) fea­
tured three experimentally distinctive exhibitions: “Fluid,” “Sound Foundations,” and
“Variations on Themes: Selections from the Marieluise Hesse Collection.” These exhibi­tions, curated by graduate students Henry Estrada, Benjamin Portis, and museum director Ananda Cruz, respectively, ran through March 28.

The thesis exhibitions were the culmination of a year-long process in which graduate students developed a theme, chose artists, and used their professional skills to illustrate the integration of concept and artwork.

Soiled Foundations
For his Master’s thesis, Portis presented recent videos that focus on the impor­tance of sound as an integral but often overlooked part of video art. The six artists featured—Janessa Bronson, Amy Jenkins, Christian Marclay, Daniel Pfamm, Alyson Shonts, and “Scenes” (Willy Le Maître and Eric Rossmann)—explored new approaches to the medium in the technical and formative realm. Recent advances in computer technology have allowed for the synchronization of sound and video. This technology was used in “Flashback,” by Scenes, which depicts the regeneration process of the detritus of daily life, a crumpled paper moved in union with the tempo of the soundtrack.

These artists also broke away from the former tradition in video art which, like tele­vision and movies, demanded a narrative form. Alyson Shonts’s video evoked such a demand as it depicted a female figure in a mirrored costume almost merging with the wooden background and moving to a soundtrack of underwater recordings. This piece, like the others in “Sound Foundations,” was repetitive and cyclical, allowing for the possibility of multiple interpretations dependent on length of viewing or position in the room. Aside from varying perspectives, Shonts said she intended to convey “the border between humans and nature but also the
continuity that is seen when the mirrors dissolve into nature, but never do fully.”

While nature sounds accompanied several of the pieces the music of popular cul­ture and machine were also included. With all these different sounds and images in his show, Portis explained that he had “to make the [exhibition] more than a sum of its parts.” In doing so, he brings “the more subtle aspect of the act: sound” to the fore.

Fluid Exhibition
In this exhibit, Estrada explored the ways in which sculptor Thomas Glanzford, painter Paul Henry Ramirez and conceptual artist Edith Shipron, challenged the standards of their mediums by treating each piece as a fluid or form of Estrada’s exhibit­ion, he explained that “in the field of contemporary art, a curator authors a concept that acts as a framework for new trends in art.” Authoring an exhibition demands a clear struc­ture in the yearlong planning for the event. However, according to Estrada, “an exhib­ition is not completely realized until an audience views it and brings their respons­es and discussions to the individual artists’ pieces.”

Variations on Themes
Cruz’s exhibition, though not a part of the spring thesis series, drew from the sculptures in CCS’s permanent collection. These pieces balanced the more con­temporary artists featured in the students’ exhibitions and created a more linear, historical theme.

Using a minimalist starting point, she traced the evolution from the geometric forms of the circle and square of the 1950s and 70s to the human body that emerged primarily during the 80s. “There are links between themes” said Cruz, pointing to furniture like Jackie Winter’s blocky, granite “Pair of One Part Chairs,” and to the illusion of the body that appeared in Felix Gonzalez-Torres’s metaphoric candy spill. Because the show was arranged from pieces in storage, Cruz said that the exhibi­tion simply required “a light curatorial touch.” She added, “I enjoy working with the artists because through them you can see and learn about different experiences.”

Through her careful planning by the curators, the shows allowed the artists to contribute to a larger theme while well representing their own work.
The Baro Observer ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT Thursday, April 22, 1999

THE BARO OBSERVER ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 1999

Stanley Kubrick is Not Dead, He's Downloaded

By J.C. Canale

Two weeks after completing the film Eyes Wide Shut, which will be released in July, Stanley Kubrick downloaded his consciousness into a mainframe somewhere to be resurrected at a later date. The official word was that he died in his sleep at his home in England. I'm not buying it. Knowing Kubrick's career and maverick reputation as I do, it is impossible to accept that he merely "passed away." I'd rather cling to the notion that his head is in a cryogenic tank next to Walt Disney's, merely awaiting the day when A.I. (Artificial Intelligence) can be brought to the screen with the advanced technology of the twenty-first century. A.I. was Kubrick's legendary project that consisted in filming a young actor literally growing up over the actor's lifetime. The official word is that he died of a heart attack in his London home in February 2001. "Drew, put the camera left," he might say on his next film shoot.

Kubrick's reputation as a recluse and extreme taskmaster on his film shoots is the stuff of legend. From 1953 to 1999, Kubrick only made 13 films. They have become a literal bible of filmmaking for anyone who has ever wanted or dreamed of making their own films. He is without doubt the most influential and important filmmaker of the post-war generation. Not only for the films he made but in the way that he made them. His films have aroused controversy and have made taboo topics such as pedophilia, nuclear annihilation, rape and gang violence, the evil of technology, and the horrors of war, viable and entertaining subjects for the cinema.

Kubrick started at a Look magazine photographer when he was 17. He eventually shifted into motion pictures and garnered the attention of the public with his third feature, The Killing (1956). This lead to the anti-war picture Paths of Glory (1957), which starred Kirk Douglas. In 1960 Douglas hired Kubrick to replace director Anthony Mann on Douglas' gladiator epic Spartacus. Douglas assumed the still-movie director would be overwhelmed by the scope of the picture and would be tractable. This was far from the case. Kubrick and Douglas battled for creative control of the entire shoot. This was Douglas' baby, but Kubrick was not used to being a "yes man." Spartacus is the story of slave leading a revolt against the Roman Empire. The behind-the-scenes fight became so intense that Kubrick was shipped to Douglas. "What the real deal of this movie?" or something to that effect. After this experience, Kubrick fled to England where he lived and worked for the rest of his life. He vowed to always have authority over his own set.

Kubrick was an innovator. He shot Barry Lyndon (1975) completely by natural and candlelight using a special lens that was originally created by NASA. He was instrumental in developing the Steadicam, which his film The Shining (1980) was the first to use. His film 2001 (1969) raised the level of special effects in film by leaps and bounds; making films such as Star Wars possible. His most controversial film A Clockwork Orange (1971) caused riots in London and had to be pulled from theaters. It is to this day banned in England.

It is said that Kubrick lived like a hermit. Supposedly he didn't socialize. He never flew. He never gave interviews. However, Kubrick had a pilot's license, loved baseball, had many friends in and out of the film industry, and raised a family. Last year he accepted a lifetime achievement award from the DGA. He did not appear at the ceremony, but instead sent a video tape of his acceptance speech. I think that sums up Kubrick perfectly. He was not nearly as secretive as people would have us believe, but he was not the "publicity hound" that many celebrities are, either. To Hollywood this made him seem strange. But we loved him for that. The stories of forcing actors to do take after take of a scene, his productions always being shrouded in complete secrecy, his ability to replace actors and re-shoot all of their scenes, are what make him the idol of nearly every young filmmaker today.

The stories of forcing actors to do take after take of a scene, his productions always being shrouded in complete secrecy, his ability to replace actors and re-shoot all of their scenes, are what make him the idol of nearly every young filmmaker today. By average standards he acted like a nut, but who in the hell likes average. His last completed film, Eyes Wide Shut, took over two years to make. Kubrick replaced two cast members and re-shot all of those scenes, and wound up costing Warner Bros. in excess of 65 million dollars before the film was finished. And no one at the studio ever got to see it until Kubrick was done. That's power. That's madness. It's pure Kubrick.

I just hope the truth is revealed in my lifetime, the truth that Stanley Kubrick is not dead. He's just out there somewhere waiting for a new society to emerge so he can push their limits as well.
Creating A New World With Universal Power

A troupe of performers takes on social issues with theatre

By Stephanie Schneider

“Four elements of hip-hop, we be the fifth,” exclaimed the four performers who made up the Universes, as an introduction of themselves and their performance.

The Universes, a group that embraces the elements of hip-hop along with theatre, creates a performance that is unique. Made up of three men and one woman, two of whom are Bard alumni, the Universes shared their talents with Bard Students on Friday, April 10 in Bard Hall.

The beginning of the performance started with a promise that this would be a show of creativity and boundless expression. The show started off with the members in the back of the room making varied sounds of warm-up singing exercises. Each performer took on an individual sound and when they reached the front of the room, congealed into a unified group.

This example threaded itself throughout the whole performance, that is four individual actors separating themselves and uniting again and again. The performance consisted of small individual monologues intermixed by unified group-oriented bits. This perhaps was the most impressive aspect of the performance: each member branched off into separate characters but then managed to return to the whole.

The individual performances concerned drug addiction, police brutality, living in housing projects, feelings of worthlessness, loneliness, and struggle. The audience witnessed the drug addict “inhal” fancy cars and “rude reality,” as he questioned sanity and insanity and how the borders blur. The female performer sang with expressiveness in Spanish about the tragedy of her “Soldado” and when she finished, joked, “I can sing in Chinese, too.” (The “samurai” who “kills with words” questioned, “OJ is free—but is Mumia?”)

These are some of the social issues addressed by a group that encourages their audiences to take on an active stance, a new stance with a new energy. One performer said, for example, that he didn’t want to hear anymore about the phrase “revolution will not be televised.” Instead, he encouraged, “Take a pen, erase the ‘R’ in revolution, let it be evolution, and bring it live.”

The Universes stem from a greater organization known as The Point. The Point’s home base is located in the South Bronx, in a 12,000 foot building, along with a community center; the facility was renovated with the help of fundraising campaigns, New York State Council on the Arts, and the Booth-Finley Fund.

“When all was said and done, the Point’s total expense for architectural services rendered was $150,000 and a lifetime of gratitude,” read their website at the point.org. The Point is a community-based organization that offers a variety of resources, including an institute of photography. As one performer said, it is “a diamond in the rough.”

Two of the Universes, the founders of The Point (both are Bard graduates), Mildred Ruiz and Steven Sapp, urged Bard students in the audience to take advantage of resources of Bard. Sapp studied Drama and later worked for Admissions in 1990 to 1992. He has continued his interest in theatre by writing, directing, and choreographing six theatrical productions, including the critically acclaimed “Purgatory and Another Doe Slowly.”

Mildred Ruiz majored in Languages and Literature during her time at Bard and later worked at the Deveraux Foundation, which is a residence home for emotionally disturbed males from ages 14-21 in Red Hook. She actively works in her community by organizing ethnic festivals and cultural heritage presentations.

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THE BARD OBSERVER ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 1999
Two Bardsians Explore Life in "Hell's Kitchen"

Siblings Samir and Maria Vural produce drama in NY

By Roe Vorr

Images capture us. Poetry enchants us. Social issues displace and confront us with the dissonance between our lives and the reality of the world at our periphery.

"Hell's Kitchen" accomplished all of this. The two stars I experienced "Hell's Kitchen," at Bard in the fall and recently at its NYC debut at The Actors' Fund at Union Square on E 16th St, were of special significance to me. This is not only because its censers, Maria and Samir Vural, have attended Bard, but also because I have been blessed to witness the sincerity and strength with which they, as a family, confront the struggles of their lives. The multimedia dimensions of the "Hell's Kitchen" performance are tied together by this integrity, showing in microcosm the victory of the human spirit over the multiple social challenges that accompany a rapidly developing world.

In "Hell's Kitchen," current Bard senior student Maria Vural portrays all eight of the characters, drawn from figures and social issues surrounding her and her brother Samir's youth in the Midtown Hell's Kitchen area of New York City. The dialogue between these voices is achieved through the building production and directing genius of Samir, a Bard film graduate of '98. Through a combination of video projection and interactive live performance, the impeccably timed show rotates through a conversation between Maria, live as Esperanza, the spiritual mother of the show, and Maria on video as Paulie, a quirky, sometimes-outspoken Italian Telesman. Esperanza can, and the video cuts between Paulie organizing over the phone, and Abdul Abdulla preparing water and chips in the back of the restaurant in which "Hell's Kitchen" is set. Abdulla disappears from the video display and a moment later is live onstage to deliver snacks to the audience, which is seated at cafe tables incorporated into the performance space. All of "Hell's Kitchen" works with this smooth transition between characters and settings. Images of NYC life are blended with shots of Vural's characters going about their business on the screen, leading to the authenticity of the production.

Inseparable siblings and the red nose "Hell's Kitchen" sign illustrate the characters as they reveal their personal struggles with the changing neighborhood, and their unique strengths and pains in dealing with it. Zarathustra, the security guard, blames dropout youths for ruining the neighborhood, predicting "we will burn if we don't learn." Paulie recalls the once-peaceful community of Hell's Kitchen, blaming the "idiot box" for the demise of the Unions, while Irene, with "lungs full of charcoal but a heart full of lemon-lollipops" laments the assimilation by Starbuck's and McDonald's. Maggie, an African-American bag lady, tames the audience, crying on the some shoulders, shoving defensively at others, building to the emotional spot of the performance when she screams that God "took, He took, He took!" — Esperanza explains behind her that she has lost two children to AIDS.

However meaningful the issues dealt with in "Hell's Kitchen," its commentary avoids alienating the viewer by remaining wedded to the particulars of life. Thus when Maria enters playing herself, down from Bard for a visit, her complaints west without ever seeing the Hudson River sunset ... We're just Hell's Kitchen.

The triumph of "Hell's Kitchen" lies not in its artistic presentation of so many troubled voices, however, but in the ways they rise above fear, individually and together, to claim hope, peace, and purpose amidst the confusing paths of everyday life. To Abdul Abdulla, cleaning the floor is "sweeping away the decapitate" of the neighborhood. And Esperanza, in advice that also helps us take in the performance in its full complexity, sums up to "listen to the voices that keep you searching, that help you, doubt, and question what's around you. That's how you find the soul."

The multiple talents of the Vurals are showcased beautifully in "Hell's Kitchen," and it is well that they should find at home there. The visual and verbal poetry of Samir, the abundant personality of Maria, and the vibronce of both was nourished by their mother and grandfather—and the other people whom they thanked after the show—in Hell's Kitchen, NYC. In "Hell's Kitchen," then, we see a tribute performed to those who shaped them, a willingness and ability to erase social problems head-on, and a demonstrated commitment to the arts they call home, acted out in hope and not fear. What we can learn from "Hell's Kitchen" is exactly what we can give.
Searching for G-Spots and Good Men at Bard

While I care for you and all your problems deeply, I must confess part of the joy I receive from writing this column is that it allows me to rant to my heart's content. I will spare you the gory details, but certain events have arisen which have caused me to continuously ponder the question: are there any "good men?" While this is partially spurred by the forthcoming letter I received, my recent conversations with women have led me to believe that perhaps only I know all the "good men" because these women seem to have very little faith in the male gender. I tend to give men the benefit of the doubt, and I will say that I believe I consort with a good many upstanding young gentlemen on a regular basis. Yet I have ceased to be amazed by the number of women who are just plain fed up with them. I know what your thinking: "Oh, please, like I haven't heard this bitch foot before, tell me something I don't know." Well, grin and bear it baby, cause I'm going to ride this until the saddle breaks. Here's what I wear: feedback. Men, defend yourselves, write and tell me why you shouldn't condemn us. Women, write and tell me why we can't just let them go.

Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,
I always how the women around campus talking about how there are no "good men" at Bard. I don't have a girlfriend right now and from the people you talk to I know you must have some idea of what they're looking for in a man. How should I proceed from a positive first encounter, and what makes the perfect man? Yours,

Hungry for Love

Dear Hungry,
That's a pretty tall order. You want me to tell you what makes the perfect man? Well, I can only tell you what I (and several of my intimate friends) think is perfect. I mean, some people like Yanni—whatever floats your boat. So anyway, I'm not exactly sure what the perfect man is, but I have a pretty good idea of what an almost-but-not-quite-perfect man should be. I plan on pushing his button (see below) pretty soon. We're talking about a "good man" here. So I guess we should figure out what constitutes a bad man. Uhmm, let's see, He doesn't change his socks very often. Nah, we can let that slide. He wears said socks in bed. No problem. He snores. Buy some earplugs. He never listens. Talk louder. He still does.

"Oh please, like I haven't heard this bitch foot before, tell me something I don't know." Well, grin and bear it baby, cause I'm going to ride this until the saddle breaks. Here's what I wear: feedback. Men, defend yourselves, write and tell me why you shouldn't condemn us. Women, write and tell me why we can't just let them go.

Or for pets' sake just help me figure out what a "good man" is, 'cause I'm damned if I know.

Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,
I recently saw a Cosmo with the headline "Male G-Spot" on the cover. The article didn't help me understand exactly how a guy or girl should "push the button"—in fact it seems kind of dangerous. I need it in private and didn't notice a big difference. Can you explain this mystery? How does this thing work?

Signed,
Ready to push the button

Dear Ready,
Three words: practice makes perfect. I think your first mistake was trying to "push the button" in private. Get a little duo action going on. (i.e. I'll push yours if you push mine).

The "Cosmo" article to which you are referringhas grabbed the attention of many a man as he went through the checkout line while buying his twelve pack of Meister Beiu. Most of these men didn't even know women, let alone men, have G-spots. So, basically you are curious as to why you can't get this thing up and running. The way I understood the article, the male G-spot in kind of like one of those red "in case of emergency buttons." No, scratch that, it's like the eject button on a VCR; there that's better. I mean, you could pop the tape out of the VCR, but it's so much easier with the eject button, and much more pleasurable to boot. AAhuhh, she eject button, the way it makes the tape just pop smoothly right out of that VCR. But I digress. This analogy is wearing thin (if it ever had any weight).

I think your main problem may be that you just need to get used to this new "toy" of yours. In the "Cosmo" article, which I am sure was based on highly scientific medical experiments, they pointed out that it may take awhile. So don't fret, satisfaction is on the horizon. I suppose the only advice I can give you is to persevere.
From Blu to XTC, Via Chicago
Pop Moves in New Directions While Post-Rock Gets Promiscuous

By Scott Stanton

In 1995, Blur released a self-titled album that consciously departed from their household names in Britain, ironically winning long-deserved commercial success in America but leaving more than a few old fans a little confused and somewhat skeptical. The group toyed with new ideas and styles, took a few steps away from excessive pop percussion, and delivered an album that is at times frustratingly inconsistent and tentative in its experimentation. They needed to shed their skin and stylistically reinvent themselves. Their new release, the most moving possible that they succeeded. A dense, experimental can play

The artistic triumph of [Push Comes to Love] virtually legitimizes Chicago post-rock scene's inescapable nature.

By William Ruhlman

The artistic triumph of [Push Comes to Love] virtually legitimizes Chicago post-rock scene's inescapable nature. It's an album deserving of much praise that reflects the continuing interest in and enthusiasm for the genre. Wilco builds upon several

The artistic triumph of [Push Comes to Love] virtually legitimizes Chicago post-rock scene's inescapable nature.

Legal problems with their label have kept British pop group XTC from releasing an album the past seven years. Now that they are free from their contract with Virgin, the quirky collective of Alan Partridge and Colin Moulding has returned with two albums for 1999 under the title

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Rollerjam: Bastion of American Pride

The legendary tale of a sport that has taken up permanent residence in the hearts of the American experience

BY KEITH COHEN

COUNTER-TIMES I have had people say to me, "Hey, earth to Luke, quit dreaming, man, and keep up with reality!" And to this comment I would like to put my arm around Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and say, hey, this is America, land of the free, where dreams become reality. It is this land that gave rise to dreams such as Henry Ford's "Mobilee," Walt Disney's charismatic Mickey Mouse, and Mr. Zacky and family's delightful "Zacky Farm" chickens. Anyone who thinks these streets aren't paved with gold obviously has their head buried in the dirt, for those of us with our heads in the clouds can see these 25k highways and byways. We know that it takes a special man to find his way to these paths of glory, but we also know it takes a real "hero" to roller-skate them.

It was during the Great Depression, a time when money was scarce and living was no one's reward. Savor, aside from the hardships of this Dadsaint performance, one became accustom to the archeo of contemporary society. Gender issues of the thirties were quite apparent, for this was the first coed-full-contact sport at which Americans could marvel. This was a time before humanism permitted primly bucolic princesses venturing gin and potatoes on African landmine victims, a time when the weeping wrung the nuns hands, on wheels. It is a crying shame that the world seems to have forget­

the day Josephine Bogash and her son Billy first strapped on their skates. This 47-year-old housewife and 15-year-old broke down every social barrier placed in their path. Of the many issues of the '30s, alcoholism was something these politically charged "abolitionists" always stood firm against. Unfortunately, their bus driver Frank "Whiskey and Cheese" Wendelchut never took this oath of sobriety. February 12, 1937 was a night that almost ended rollerderby, as we know it. Heading through Salem, Illinois, a very drunk "Whiskey and Cheese" drove the bus off of a twenty-four-foot suspension bridge, killing 25 of roller derby's most loved skaters. The story of this surviv­

or was Josephine Bogash, who was able to hold her son in her arms until the ambulance came. Little Billy lived, but only one year longer. After having his arms and legs amputated, he decided that he would dedicate his life to bringing an end to drunk driving. He and the surviving roller-titans decided they would roller­

skate across America, starting in New York. As a part of the manifesto, little Billy's body was passed upon until they reached San Francisco. With support from the President and major steel corporations, they funded the first-ever long-range skate with an amputee. Spoon-feeding Billy peanut butter, they were able to keep him in constant motion for two weeks until they finally reached sunny San Francisco. Once there, his mother met him on the Golden Gate Bridge, where she hugged him and said that in heaven they would definitely give him his arms and legs back. Billy is reported to have said, through a very peanut-buttery phlegm,"As long as there are rollerskates on the feet of Americans, the fight against alco­

holism will never end." His sobbing mother kissed him, wrapped his skates around his neck, and threw him to the sea. After his tragic demise, skids were supposedly made which said "Billy Bogash, He gave us a leg and a leg to end drunk driving." It took a good year to bring roller­

derby back to the people. The majority of the players, too depressed to skate, looked to meditation to quilt their depression. With the loss of some of his greatest play­

ers, Le Seltzer knew it would take close to a miracle to bring the derby back to its feet. Nevertheless, by 1938, Leo and the remaining players where able to rally together a league that would shock the world. The year 1940 became the beginning of the roller derby "Golden Age." November 29, 1948 marked the first televised roller­

extravaganza. Within months, everyone who owned a television set was tuned into the withering of the day they could meet athletes such as the much-adored Johnnie Weston, captain of the Bombers. Jerry Seltzer, son of roller tycoon Leo, was the captain of the empire in 1958. Little Leo "Son of Roller Derby" Seltzer, proved he could do more than just follow in his father's footsteps. Those glorious days following Jerry's reign inspired such movies as the critically acclaimed "Derby." The legend thus found at con­

crete American truth; it had made it through World War II, gotten through the McCarthyism of the fifties, and by 1970 seemed almost indis­

uishable. The glory and prestige enjoyed by these few roller heroes seemed eternal, but little did they know that they only had three more years left to skate into the hearts of Americans. The Oil Embargo of 1973 proved to be a womanful set off Jerry's empire.

But now, as we stand on the cusp of the millennium, the world of roller sports has awakened from its slumber. With much care it has been able to heal the wounds inflicted by oil embargo's taxation. Jerry Seltzer lost the battle, but he definitely did not lose the war. With the help of TNN, the station which brought you country sensa­
tion Kenny Chesney, Jerry has been able to roll his empire back out into the limelight while meeting the demands of modern day soci­

ey. To take a step past roller derby is to take a step into the ring of "Rollerjam," which has proved to be a post-modern thrust into the realm of roller sports. With a dipped truck, the introduced us of in­

line skates, and a flurry of pre-game lights, one has a hard time lift­

ing one's jaw from one's lap. The hits not only seem stronger, but even seem to be more graceful as these vanguard ballerinas pirouette at each other.

It is hard to discern whether following these physical arists around the track or following them around the country is more exciting. There are six professional teams with names as exotic as the Florida Sun Dogs and the Nevada Hot Dice. And if this doesn't seem foolish to stand still when we Chris Seeger of the California Quakes points out that before Rollerskate she was a professional cage dancer, but she makes it very clear to us that she didn't strip. Stacey Blnch, a Quakes All-star, is a woman who left the kitchen years ago and knows no boundaries in cre­
ting the women's respect for women's masochism. "The thing I ever did was burger jumping tospleas while on spring break," she said. This two-fisted-throw on wheels proves to be a modern-day Olympian in every shape and form. The true humanism of this sport radiates from Amy Craig. When asked to look past her skating career she stated, "I'm thinking about geriatrics, I just like older people." Denise is the co-founder of the Florida Sun Dogs and a ballerina who finds herself quick to quibble with anyone that has a bone to pick with these brazier-burning purveyors of women's pride. Denise is rather defiant in her position as a multi-talented human being. She makes it very clear to all that her Rollerjamming career were sud­

dently to end, she could make a decent living with a special skill she calls "The Tongue Hall." The love of this love of sports of these teams prove to be as diverse as their women counterparts. Sean Atkinson lets us know that he is much more than your average hockey on skates. He is also very proud of his cooking and states that lasagna is his spe­
cialty. Of all these athletes it is Sam Martin who proves to be the true masochist. His speed earned him the nickname "The Flame," and aside from this he is very proud of his ability to jump off a twenty-five-foot-clip without injury. He has long debated which of his two talents to choose, but don't worry, he prefers the hard-hitting-trick spawned from Rollerjam to the corporate glamour of twenty-five-foot-clip jumping. Of his devotion to the uniform, he states, "My body becomes my best weapon and I'll do anything it takes to gain advantage for my team.

It is this idea of "the team" that makes me proud to have Rollerskate a part of my heritage. The devotion to "the team," of Sam "The Flame" Martin speaks volumes with that devotion to the ideal of the United States of America. Is life not a roller derby? Does it not seem foolish to stand still when we can move forward, so on wheels? If the future may seem to be more white trash than one can shake your soggy corn-dog at, but underneath, at the core of it, is the will to-power which made our country, the United States of America, free.

Drawing by Yuki Amekawa

Rollerjam may seem to be more white trash than you can shake your soggy corn-dog at, but underneath is the will-to-power which made our country, the United States of America, free.

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WXBC 540 AM Programming Schedule Spring 1999

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tr>
<td>3-5 p.m.</td>
<td>Diana Olobo</td>
<td>Jeff Esman</td>
<td>Nancy Benes</td>
<td>Shawn Winter</td>
<td>Dan Hirsch</td>
<td>Repent What?</td>
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<td>5-7 p.m.</td>
<td>Amy Russell</td>
<td>Vance Serresman</td>
<td>Mike Ginsburg</td>
<td>Kim Koves</td>
<td>Hannah Adams</td>
<td>Luke Wyer</td>
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<td>7-9 p.m.</td>
<td>G.J. Schonslemp</td>
<td>Zak Vondal</td>
<td>Mickey Mendelson</td>
<td>Adam Phillips</td>
<td>Samir Boldy</td>
<td>Sari Plante</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-11 p.m.</td>
<td>Nina Koning</td>
<td>Lisa Meny</td>
<td>Art Tink with Ligen</td>
<td>Cassandra Bell</td>
<td>Judge Mazy</td>
<td>Howard Megdal</td>
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Earth Day celebrates the environment, but also presents a challenge. Authorities worry that the best undo is dangerous.

UNKNOWN THINGS, PESTICIDES, IRRESISTIBLE GENETIC MODIFIED: A CALL TO ACTION

According to the Worldwatch Institute, about 70% of the cotton you eat comes from genetically engineered crops.

CHILDREN IN CHAINS: SUNDAY SHOW

Donald Hoffman, author of Visual Intelligence, will speak on Monday, April 20, at 8 p.m. at some location on campus, probably in the 3102, according to a trustworthy source. Hoffman is a professor of cognitive science, philosophy, and computer science at the University of California, Irvine. He will speak on "the nature of vision" in different contexts. A must see lecture for anyone.

PHOTOGRAPHY LECTURE SERIES WINS SCHOLARSHIP

Photography major's lecture aims to "deconstruct" the role of photography in society.

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A Bit of Spring Fun with Paddles and Players

Saturday May 1, 1999 10p.m.—3a.m. in the Old Gym
Admission: $2 w/ID $3 w/o.
Free if you come naked (ID still must be on your person)

SUMMER JOBS FOR STUDENTS
The Bard Music Festival needs Ushers, Caterers
and Ticket Takers for this year's festival, running July 1 - August 20-22.
Contact: Jeremy Nett on Ludlow -306: X7410:

Get the
HELL OUTTA Here!
Mexico, the Caribbean or Central America—
$199 Round Trip.
Europe— $169 One Way.
Other World Wide Destinations—CHEAP!
Book tickets online @
www.airtech.com
or 212-219-7000

1 Bedroom Apts.
All new appliances, Air Conditioning,
Wall to Wall Carpet & Garage
$550/Month+Utilities
References and Security
Available NOW... While They Last
914-635-1880 During the Day
914-876-8822 During the Evening

Get the HELLOU TTA Here!
Letters to the Editor

to not have to be. people.

I took you to treat everyone as a potential rapist. I do not have to be discouraged by what you've done. I do not want to have to treat everyone as a potential rapist. I would like to see everyone talk, even just for one day, about sexual violence, about how it has affected them already, about how it could affect them in the future about what it would be like to feel safe walking in Tivoli Bays or down the street at night — to not have to treat everyone as a potential rapist. I would like to know that everyone would at least respect everyone far enough not to assault each other, physically or emotionally. The signs you put up do not allow this to happen. The signs you put up mock the idea of equality and the concept of respect. I, for one, cannot and will not tolerate it. You have the right to free speech and so do I so I will speak out against them. But there is something to be said for taking responsibility for this right. If you try to put up these signs again, put your name on them so others can respond to them. I will take them down like you did mine, but you will know that it was me who did it. If you want to hide behind a false e-mail name and pretend you're funny, feel free to do so. But if you want to talk about the issues you degraded, and you want to understand my anger or let me understand yours, and if you want to do something to change things for the better, talk to me. If you do not want to talk to me, talk to BRAVE, talk to the daphne, talk to your friends and professors, talk to someone and see what you come up with. If you disagree with what is being said or done, take responsibility for your actions and your words and try to construct something worthwhile and usable from it. But do not offend people, do not insult people, and do not silence people, because then nothing will change.

Sincerely,
Caia Pappas

PS---In the minimum amount of time I'm guessing it took you to make and put your signs — around three hours — sixty people, mostly women, were raped in the United States.

THE BARD OBSERVER OPINIONS THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 1999

Letters to the Editor

To offensive@bard.edu,

You, whether you are one person or many, recently put up some signs that imitated the signs I created for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The signs, with which you replaced mine, with phrases such as "Take it on your back," "Live it, display," and "Tit for tat the kitchen," were among the most juvenile, ama

To offensive@bard.edu, they can feel safe and supported when doing this. I think

To offensive@bard.edu, this is truly an accomplishment. But

To offensive@bard.edu, I write to you personally, and I care.

To offensive@bard.edu, to feel safe walking

To offensive@bard.edu, they are being funny. Maybe you felt about it.

To offensive@bard.edu, I am not a survivor of

To offensive@bard.edu, if you want to understand

To offensive@bard.edu, do not offend people, do not insult people, and do not silence people, because then nothing will change.

To offensive@bard.edu, I will speak out against them. But there is something to be said for taking responsibility for this right. If you try to put up these signs again, put your name on them so others can respond to them. I will take them down like you did mine, but you will know that it was me who did it. If you want to hide behind a false e-mail name and pretend you're funny, feel free to do so. But if you want to talk about the issues you degraded, and you want to understand my anger or let me understand yours, and if you want to do something to change things for the better, talk to me. If you do not want to talk to me, talk to BRAVE, talk to the daphne, talk to your friends and professors, talk to someone and see what you come up with. If you disagree with what is being said or done, take responsibility for your actions and your words and try to construct something worthwhile and usable from it. But do not offend people, do not insult people, and do not silence people, because then nothing will change.

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Rape, relationship violence, sexual harassment, and sexual abuse happen everywhere, and no one wants to think about it. Even fewer want to admit that it happens here too. I was extremely insulted and disturbed by your actions. I am not a survivor but I am part of the anti-rape movement. But I do not have to be either to be disgusted by what you've done. I do not want to speak for all of the survivors who may be at Bard, or those who may be working through an abusive relationship or memories of child abuse as I write this. I do want to try to give these people the opportunity to speak about their experiences in their own voices. I want to try and create an environment where they can feel safe and supported when doing this. I would like to see everyone talk, even just for one day, about sexual violence, about how it has affected them already, about how it could affect them in the future about what it would be like to feel safe walking in Tivoli Bays or down the street at night — to not have to treat everyone as a potential rapist. I would like to know that everyone would at least respect everyone far enough not to assault each other, physically or emotionally. The signs you put up do not allow this to happen. The signs you put up mock the idea of equality and the concept of respect. I, for one, cannot and will not tolerate it. You have the right to free speech and so do I so I will speak out against them. But there is something to be said for taking responsibility for this right. If you try to put up these signs again, put your name on them so others can respond to them. I will take them down like you did mine, but you will know that it was me who did it. If you want to hide behind a false e-mail name and pretend you're funny, feel free to do so. But if you want to talk about the issues you degraded, and if you want to understand my anger or let me understand yours, and if you want to do something to change things for the better, talk to me. If you do not want to talk to me, talk to BRAVE, talk to the daphne, talk to your friends and professors, talk to someone and see what you come up with. If you disagree with what is being said or done, take responsibility for your actions and your words and try to construct something worthwhile and usable from it. But do not offend people, do not insult people, and do not silence people, because then nothing will change.

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