Bard to Participate in RecycleMania

By Katy Kelleher

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or the first time ever, Bard is participating in RecycleMania, a nation-wide recycling competition. RecycleMania is a friendly competition among colleges and universities in multiple categories, including the largest amount of recyclables per capita, the largest amount of total recyclables, the largest amount of trash per capita, and the highest recycling rate. In the 10-week period between January 28 and April 7th, Bard will be competing against schools like Harvard, Yale, Tulane, etc., in efforts to promote recycling and other environmentally friendly practices on campus.

Although Bard is generally a pretty environmentally conscious school, the percentage of our total waste recycled is embarrassingly low. Multiple programs have been introduced to help deal with this, including appointing a BERP (Bard Environmental Resource Person) to every dorm; however, we continue to generate excessive amounts of waste. RecycleMania is designed specifically to increase student awareness of sustainable living—both through recycling and through other small changes, like using the shuttle instead of driving and buying locally grown food.

Bard’s official goal is to raise our percentage of recycled materials to 19% of our total waste. Considering that winning universities have a recycling rate of 30% or more, this is certainly a modest goal. However, even if Bard doesn’t win RecycleMania, in participating we will gain a better understanding of where we are generating the most waste and how to change the habits of students and staff. Most of the trash on campus comes from residence halls and dining halls, so students clearly have a lot of control over what goes in the trash and what is recycled. RecycleMania needs the help of faculty and staff, but it is up to us (the student) to make the biggest changes in what we throw away.

So, a quick lesson on recycling. Blue bins are for the REUSE store. Red is for news paper. Yellow is for all other paper. Green is for plastic and glass containers and Black is for garbage. Also, we are competing in the food waste competition, so only take what you can eat and make sure you leave all your leftovers on the tray to be weighed and composted. If your dorm is missing a bin, put in a service request for a new one.

Multiple contests and gift certificate giveaways from local businesses are helping to promote RecycleMania on campus. BERP’s and RecycleMania coordinators (Thomas Demasi and 1) will be giving away prizes to students caught green-handed in the act of recycling. We have already started several contests to promote RecycleMania, and new ones will be announced from now up until April 7th, when RecycleMania ends. Our sponsors include: The Hook Deli, Max’s Memphis BBQ, Taste Buddha, Village Pizza and many, many more. So keep an eye out for contests on campus, and you could win a free meal.

RecycleMania is going to need the help of all students and faculty to be a success, so if you see someone who is not recycling, let them know how important it is to think green. RecycleMania is one of the few inter-collegiate competitions we have any chance at winning, so let’s go Bard, Recycle On!

B&G Contract Negotiations Stall

On Tuesday, December 5, members of the administration involved with negotiating the new contract for B&G employees put their final offer on the table. On Monday, December 11, the union voted it down.

According to one union officer, who asked that his name be withheld from the record so as not to further complicate ongoing negotiations, members found the proposed pay increase and healthcare benefits disappointing but satisfactory; it was the college’s refusal to budge on the issue of retirement that had them voting “no.” Currently, Bard contributes to the retirement funds of its employees one percent of their income for every year they have worked at the college. First year employees receive one percent, second year employees receive two percent, and so on, until the tenth year of employment, where the percentage no longer increases, but plateaus. What the union proposed be included in the new contract was a starting percentage contribution of ten, which would increase to 12 by year two. As of the latest contract proposal, the administration has refused to alter the system.

Over the last five years, the administration’s budget has increased by 54 percent. Yet, since 2001, B&G’s budget has only gone up by two percent. In light of the disparity in the direction of funds and resources along with the massive recent additions to the campus in the form of ambitious building projects, starting wages ranging from $10.82 to $11.32 per hour in a county where it takes $15.17 to survive, and an expired contract negotiations for a new one have become increasingly problematic.

As of now, it is unclear what will happen next. Union members say that talks will most likely resume over intersession.

B&G Contract Negotiations Stall

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B&G Contract Negotiations Stall

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AIDS Relief Program Flawed

State of Labor at Bard

AS0 to play at SM0G

The Fountain Review
November report from the Center for Public Integrity details how the $15 billion dollars pledged to fight AIDS by the Bush Administration has been largely ineffective in solving the AIDS crisis, due in large part to the prerequisite for faith-based abstinence only education. Following Bush’s request at the 2003 State of the Union Address, Congress created the “President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—PEPFAR”—a program similar in substance to the agenda for reproductive health education implemented domestically in the last decade.

It appears as though some organizations with little experience in HIV care are receiving large sums of money based on their ideological ties and it remains unclear whether this money is being effectively spent. The report cites organizations such as Food for the Hungry and the Orthodox Christian Charities as groups that started stand alone programs only after the distribution of PEPFAR funds began.

According to the report, some of the most problematic policies stem directly from PEPFAR’s policy of “Abstinence/Be Faithful education.” Other children are not taught of condom use in a school environment, even though they are already sexually active. Condoms can only be distributed to “at risk” teens outside of public schools. In countries like Uganda, one of the 25 “focus countries” specially selected to receive the majority of money from PEPFAR, the rate of new HIV infections has nearly doubled since 2003, when the emphasis on youth abstinence began.

Another inflexibility in the program is in regards to sex workers, who are often one of the most at risk populations, especially in underdeveloped countries where sex tourism is more prevalent. The program requires that any country that wishes to receive aid must sign an “anti-prostitution loyalty oath,” a declaration that they oppose prostitution. Under such conditions, there can be no regulation of the sex worker industry, a complete denial of one of the more important aspects of the spread of HIV. The report from the Center of Public Integrity came to the conclusion that, “PEPFAR has proved at times to be too simplistic and narrow to deal with the complexities of the epidemic,” further adding, “ideology has at times trumped science in the Bush administration’s rules, regulations and support of the organizations that have received taxpayer money.”

On Dec. 1, World AIDS Day, I had the chance to sit down at the day’s speak out with various students who had been involved in AIDS education projects in the local area and internationally. The discussion ranged on a variety of topics, from experiences working with affected populations to the current politics of the PEPFAR program to the development of new methodologies to be introduced in the near future with the intention of stopping the spread of the virus.

Bard students Nick Shapiro and Mariah Ernst talked about their experiences working with teens last year in Indonesia on the island of Bali, helping former heroin addicts affected by AIDS develop a curriculum for teaching secondary school students about reproductive education and healthy living. They explained the challenges of starting discussions about AIDS in a culture where talking about sex is often considered taboo. Ernst insisted that their relationship with the culture was “very complex,” and that considering that they were coming in and organizing a curriculum for people who had been working on the issue for some time before, they had consistently asked themselves, “What right do we have to be here and how can we do things as appropriately as possible?”

Nick Risko, another Bard student, detailed how the issue of a simple condom demonstration became a very political issue in his experience working this past summer in Tanzania, a PEPFAR focus country. He detailed how public schools would not allow the demonstrations at all, and for private schools it was up to the individual headmasters. The idea was that this would encourage them to have sex, but if you ask any of these same teachers and headmasters, which we did, at what age people start having sex. They would tell us that most of these kids are sexually active at 11 and 12.” They were also strictly prohibited from experiences working with affected populations to the

Continued on page 4
New Human Rights Exchange Program

AT SOUTH AFRICA’S UNIVERSITY OF WITWATERSTRAND

By Jason Mastbaum

T he International Human Rights Exchange (IHRE), starting in July 2007, will be offering a semester-long program on the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) campus in Johannesburg, South Africa. The university's main campus is in the Milner Park section of the city.

Students who participate in the program will take four courses. First off, there is the core course titled Human Rights: Perspectives from the Disciplines. This course will be broken into various two-week segments, with each segment being taught from a different disciplinary background. Two additional courses are elective seminars picked out of those available seminars. Finally, there is a semester-long practicum (internship).

The internship will be taken with an NGO or other organization in the Johannesburg area that deals with human rights. Possible internship opportunities include the Red Cross, the Foundation for Human Rights, and the Zimbabwe Election Support Network. For students not wishing to take an internship, there is an option to replace it with a normal Wits University course.

The Bard-Wits program is looking to draw about a 50-50 split of students from African universities and North American undergraduate students, and indeed, as Emilee Dickson, coordinator of the program at Bard, has said there will be 22 Wits students and 22 North American students at the program in Summer ’07. The program wants to foster dialogue between students from very different backgrounds. To this end, housing will be in dormitories mostly filled with Bard-Wits program attendees. Most students will be sorority or juniors, but for seniors graduating at the end of the year the program will consider applications from recent graduates. Additionally, there were over 1500 international students—about as many students as there are at Bard—from over 90 countries registered at the school in 2005. The Bard-Wits program is an opportunity to get a truly diverse, multi-cultural experience.

An obvious concern about going abroad—and not just to Johannesburg—is keeping safe in your temporary home. Housing will be restricted, and it is not allowed on campus if they have not been pre-approved to go to a certain location. Normal precautions about carrying cash and other valuables should be observed when in Johannesburg. Also, at night security will escort students so they don’t have to walk alone in the dark, and the campus is packed with emergency phones.

The Bard-Wits program looks to be a very rewarding experience. The program’s site seeks, “Students with a commitment to social justice and/or a history of academic or personal involvement with human rights issues are particularly encouraged to consider IHRE. We [also] encourage students of all backgrounds to apply—no previous study of human rights is required.”

Finally, a brief word about applications is in order. The program works on the basis of rolling admissions, so the sooner your application gets in prior to the March 1st deadline, the better, especially considering that there are only 22 spots available for the entirety of North America. Dickinson suggests that candidates apply as early as January. The program will work with you to transfer as many of your financial aid packages as possible.

And there is good news to be had for those not interested in the IHRE program—Bard students can directly enroll at Wits as a PSE student. In fact, several Bard seniors were at Wits in Spring ’06 via this opportunity to directly enroll there. Go to http://www.bmeonline.com/news for more information. Emilee Dickson has offered her contact information for anyone interested in studying at Witwatersrand. Her email address is dickson@bard.edu and her campus extension is x7076.

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BSO PLANS CONFERENCE FOR SPRING SEMESTER

By Meghan Black

ack in the 21st Century: Defining and Re-Defining Blackness, Free Speech, and Race in the Classroom was a conference organized by the Black Students’ Organization which was slated to take place over winter intercession from January 19th to the 21st. They had planned to bring in several high calibre speakers including Ewuare Osayande, M1 of Dead Prez, and hopefully Ruth J. Simmons President of Brown University, Kwame Appiah, and A.J. Mayer who would confront the issues of “identifying as a Black person in today’s society.”

With this conference, BSO hoped to open up discussion with the Black student body on campus as well as in the greater Hudson community including those of other ethnic backgrounds as well. “We plan to discuss the current climate that exists on many of our college campuses and current events that affect us as students of color,” say BSO in their project proposal. Gerald Pambo-Awich, one of the co-heads of BSO, feels that it is “important to look at the different arguments for what being black is such as what it means when a Black student is told they are ‘acting white’.”

BSO’s greater mission is to foster an environment where students both of color and non-color feel comfortable “to engage in issues relevant to the black community,” said Linda Tigani, the other co-head of BSO. “Race is such a delicate issue,” said Pambo-Awich, “that often students are hesitant to approach the topic.” This conference would significantly help to solidify their mission and open up a dialogue about the Black students’ role in the classroom regarding ‘course work, career choices, and their overall growth,” said Tigani. In addition to this the conference would strengthen ties between Bard students of color and organizations in the surrounding area as well as among students, faculty, and the administration on campus.

The Student Planning Committee has been trying to encourage more educational events in addition to entertainment-based venues and BSO’s conference is very much in harmony with these wishes. Tigani was “reassured that BSO wanted to do a conference,” said Karen Soskin, chair of the Student Planning Committee. “In the past BSO has planned some very successful hip-hop events and film screenings, but this conference will add a whole new dimension to their involvement with human rights issues are particularly encouraged to consider IHRE. We [also] encourage students of all backgrounds to apply—no previous study of human rights is required.”

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The Interdisciplinary Studies Committee

Are you involved in an Interdisciplinary Program at Bard? Do you have something important to say about programs like Gender and Sexuality Studies, American Studies, Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Science, Technology and Society or Integrated Arts? Would you like to be involved in the process of shaping the future of Interdisciplinary Programs?

The Student Association approved the formation of an ad-hoc Interdisciplinary Studies Committee to discuss these issues and to be involved in ongoing conversations with the faculty, the administration and the student community. If you are interested in being involved with the committee or if you have a concern or idea you would like to address by the committee, please feel free to e-mail the Educational Policies Committee (epc@bard.edu) who will gladly pass your thoughts along to the co-chairs of the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee. Members of the committee will hopefully be appointed before the end of this semester.

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The Bard Observer
T he Student Association and Central Committee discussed at the last student forum and the subsequent Central meeting a strategy for including student views in the Middle States document, a self-study necessary for continued accreditation that describes in-depth the workings and culture of the college in a meaningful way. The self-study both qualifies the College and its students to receive federal financial aid and offers a set of action points to strive toward over the next ten years or so.

The consensus at both meetings was to develop a two-pronged approach. First of all, we decided to add to the Middle States document so that it includes more information reflecting actual student experience, and at least some sense of the structures and processes in which students participate on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, the self-study process itself is highly partitioned, demonstrating the sorts of issues that the Middle States Commission views as necessarily or heavily pertinent to an assessment of Bard’s healthy, functional performance. For better or for worse, it seems as through a number of the issues students would like to raise as part of an institutional self-examination don’t quite fit within the sections established for the report. So we resolved also to offer a separate document, not as lengthy nor as all-encompassing as the report itself, but at least enough to speak as a student body.

At the next Student Forum, which will take place on Wednesday December 6th at 7PM in the Kline committee room, the Central Committee hopes to put wording for both documents before the Student Association. Any students who wish to read the report in whole or in part should ask at the Dennis office in the basement of Ludlow and any students who wish to add to or amend either the original document or the Central Committee’s additions should certainly come on the 6th.

Other topics that will be under discussion for the Student Forum include the thirty-thousand-dollar Reserve Fund, the SMOG expansion, interest in a TV lounge, and the election of a Peer Counselor representative to the Student Life Committee. This will be the last forum of the semester, the next will be the Spring Budget Forum in early February.
THE STATE OF LABOR AT BARD

* BY JIMMY SHELLTON *

Labor relations on campus have been a huge issue this semester. The teachers, petitions, and protests outside Ludlow that have been happening since September have made it abundantly clear that an ethical contract for B&G workers (and all campus employees, for that matter) is something that is important to the Bard student body. However, when Bard College made its final contract proposal to the B&G negotiating committee on Tuesday after months of administrative squirming and stalling, it seemed clear that this message had been wholly disregarded by Jim Brudvig and the rest of the Bard administration.

This final proposal includes a good health care package and wage parity with Marist College buildings and grounds workers, but not much else. The contract that was offered responds minimally to the specific labor issues on campus that have been vocalized most over the past two years (health care and living wage) and fails to respond at all to the underlying sentiment behind all this student/labor activism, which is that the Bard community demands ethical treatment of all its employees. When inspected a bit more closely the contract that Ludlow has proposed proves to be utterly patronizing and offensive to both students and workers, and leaves one wondering just how progressive Bard really is.

In regard to retirement, the Bard administration refused to budge on its position. B&G had asked that their retirement package be brought up to par with the rest of the campus. Under the current system, it takes a B&G worker ten years to earn the same amount in retirement savings that a non-union campus employee earns in a single year. B&G did not ask for a superfluous 4000% plan, they merely asked to be treated like all other workers on campus. Apparently this was asking too much.

In regard to retirement, the Bard administration refused to budge on its position. B&G had asked that their retirement package be brought up to par with the rest of the campus. The most disturbing aspect of this contract, and arguably one the most troubling realities of Bard labor in general, is how to disperse the staff down at the post office. The B&G negotiating committee on Tuesday after months of administrative squirming and stalling, it seemed clear that this message had been wholly disregarded by Jim Brudvig and the rest of the Bard administration.

If any significant change is to occur on campus, we must continue to make our voices heard, and impossible for anyone to ignore.
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his famous 1946 essay, "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell argued that modern English is full of bad habits that prevent us from thinking clearly. It could have been written in 2006. We write and speak in clichéd metaphors, idioms, and phrases that pop out of our mouths and pens, ready-made. But when we take these shortcuts in expressing ourselves, Orwell argues, we obscure the meaning of what we are trying to say - even to ourselves.

These 'bad habits' include: dying metaphors (e.g. play into the hands of, bend over backwards, the bottom line), verbal false limbs (e.g. make contact with, give rise to, give grounds for, play a leading role), pretentious diction (e.g. extraneous, clandestine - words with Latin or Greek roots that sound more 'academic'), and meaningless words or words like 'fascism,' 'freedom,' 'justice,' or 'patriotic,' that have been used, and abused so often and for so many different ends that their meanings are entirely amorphous and vague, associating little more than a basic value judgment, such as whether or not what it describes is desirable.

We like to feel as if we understand something, and political language allows us to feel this way, but we do not. The fact that we are not simply being fooled - that in many ways we are choosing to think simply or not at all - places the responsibility for a degenerate politics on us.

"Political language," Orwell writes, "is designed to make less sound truth and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind. One cannot change this in a moment, but we do not. The fact that we are not simply being fooled - that in many ways we are choosing to think simply or not at all - places the responsibility for a degenerate politics on us."
Dear Sex Column,
I have been hooking up with a guy who has a really beautiful dick. I love giving him head, but the one time we had sex we didn’t use a condom. I don’t want to unprotected sex again. Should I just put a condom on him next time or should I ask him to put the condom on himself?
From, Latex Lover

Dear Latex Lover,
Protection and safety (condoms or dental dams) are the responsibility of both parties. Personally, I prefer to put the condom on my partner because I like to know that it is properly on. But sometimes the moment does not always allow for this to happen. You should just follow your instincts. Pick a certain time when you are comfortable asking, “Do you have a condom?” or come prepared and whip it out yourself.

For condom application:
1. Open the condom package carefully, making sure the condom does not tear. Do not unroll the condom before putting it on. Dip a couple drops of lubricant on the head of the penis before putting on the condom.
2. If the penis in question is not circumcised, pull back the foreskin. Place the condom on the head of the penis.
3. Pinch the tip of the condom and roll it down the shaft of the penis until you reach the base. (Note: The condom will not roll down if it is put on backwards. Take off the condom and throw it away. Start again with a new condom. Do not pass Go. Do not collect $200)
4. After condom application, pinch the tip of the condom again to make sure there is space at the tip for ejaculation and that the condom is not broken.

If he refuses to put on a condom, explain to him why safe sex is important to you. (E. STDs, pregnancy, or splooge in your ear). If he still refuses, tell him that he can fuck his own hand.

SIDENOTE—
Dental dam application is a bit trickier to maneuver

For dental dam application:
1. Open the dental dam package carefully, making sure the dental dam does not tear. Dip a couple drops of lubricate on the dittor in which to be pleasures.
2. Coordinate who is to hold the dental dam. Some people prefer to have the person giving head hold the d-dam, some prefer to have the person receiving hold head the d-dam. Either way it needs to be held down.
3. Go at it.

Useful information to think about:
* Condom types are a matter of preference. Condom companies make thinner condoms for enhanced pleasure, condoms with lubricants (a local anaesthetic that desensitizes the penis), condoms with studs, and condoms with extra lubricant. (THE DIMESTORE NOW HAS FREE CONDOMS!!! Check out an order form in the post office)
* Latex d-dams protect against STDs more affectively than polyurethane d-dams.
* Lots of lube always helps.
* Check your condoms expiration dates!
* Always make sure you have more than one condom on hand. Just in case the only one you have breaks or is defective.
* Never re-use condoms.

This is more information than you really needed to know. But it doesn’t hurt. Good luck.

Love,
Fiona

(This column was written with the help of Genya Shimkin.)
REPORT: A SMG to perform at SMOG

by Carl Kranz

After months of speculation as to which famed act will perform at SMOG, reports state that the American Symphony Orchestra will perform there sometime during the spring of 2007. Not only are we pleased to be chosen to headline SMOG, said Leon Botstein, music director and principal conductor of the ASO, but it is also an honor to perform in such a hallowed concert hall with the likes of Wolf Parade, Man Man, Black Dice, and many other accomplished musical acts having performed there over the past few years.

According to the head of SMOG, Brandon Rosenbluth, the process in finding the right group to perform was not an easy one:

“We spent a lot of time looking for the right group, the right sound, for the spring. We were thinking of quite a few groups, but when it came down to it, we felt that the American Symphony Orchestra would be the right fit for this upcoming semester.”

This will not be the first time the American Symphony Orchestra will perform at SMOG, having done so in 1999. However, this year’s concert will be much more in order this year.

Back at the ’99 show, we allowed people to bring alcohol into SMOG with them to see the ASO play, but the show had to be cut short because the orchestra complained that people had been too rowdy. Of course, I’ve heard differently from those that were at the show.

However, Botstein argued that Rosenbluth was downplaying the severity of the accident seven years ago. “Mr. Rosenbluth was not there firsthand to see the dramatic unfolding of the event. Malt liquor bottles were heaved at the orchestra after we finished warming up. They believed it was our act, shouting, ‘We’ve heard that already’ and ‘Not original’. We had two violinists and a clarinetist rushed to the hospital for serious head trauma. In fact, one of the violinists fell into a coma for over a week.”

However, due to Bard’s new dry campus policy, the ASO will gladly perform at SMOG once again. “We never really wanted to not play at SMOG. We just wanted to keep our performers safe.”

Rumors that the American Symphony Orchestra would play at SMOG ran rampant across campus over the past week, with the students somewhat divided in opinion.

“I’m really excited that the ASO may perform at SMOG,” said junior Reed Sharpton. “I mean, sure, lots of people have seen the ASO perform, but I’m gonna be able to see them in SMOG. I can’t wait to tell that to my friends back home. ‘Hey, have you guys seen the ASO perform?’ and they’ll be like ‘Yeah, yeah, and the ASO perform at SMOG!’”

“What? Wait, for real?” asked senior Noah Waston. “We’re booking the ASO to perform at SMOG?”

That shit is whack. Oh, and read my three articles and comic strip in this issue’s Observer. The comic’s mad funny, son. Word.”

The biggest question that remains is who will be booked to open for the American Symphony Orchestra.

“We would have like someone just as big in celebrity to open for the ASO, but because we won’t have much money left to spend on other groups, we were thinking of just having a Bard band open for them, like Palimpsest, or Five Limbs,” added Rosenbluth.

“Hopefully, we’ll get more money next semester so this won’t be a problem. But if we don’t. I’ll be okay with it. I mean, the Wine And Cheese club needs money too.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9
t Shog this Sunday part, under a video screen draped like a banner of war, the members of Black Dice, while remaining almost wholly still, conveyed the message of their power with the eloquence of generals. As is appropriate to the sense of reversal implied by their name, what they produced was almost, in a sense, not music.

There is barrenness in Black Dice that is not present in other music. They have found a land of their own, staked away broken and abused. She sees this now looking at him. Sad, it is his duty. But someone else will come. It is their duty; it is happening.


“Make me a present,” he says. “I would like you to come with me. I want you. You are my present.”

She stands up and looks out the window knowing she needs you Donald. America needs you Donald. I need you.”

“No. No. He’s gone; he’s left for good. No, he won’t be back soon.

She clicks on the ringer and lets it ring for a few moments before stopping. Moments later, “Hi-yah,” and the door slams open against the wall. The force disconnects a stuffed zebra head that he had given to her as a gift from one of his African safaris.

Donald comes out seconds later with a large cardboard box in his arms.

“What was that?”

“The zebra head.”

“Oh, I see. It’s from Asia.” She knows that there are no zebras in Asia, but she loved it when he Donald said Asia. It made him sound distinguished. She does not challenge his desire.

She can only see some photographs of his wife and children poking out of the box, but she knows everything that was in his office is in that box: a loaded 9mm, a half-drunk bottle of Johnny Walker Black she had given him after Operation Desert Storm and Ape, a stapler, a couple of socks, a toothbrush and toothpaste, steel toed work boots, a bullet proof vest, a stuffed zebra head that he’d knocked off the wall.

“Don’t say that Mary. Not now. It hurts too much.”

She has heard this before. Carthum, she remembers. But she does love Donald, and hopes he will drop his box, but they won’t understand you the way I understand you. Oh, Donny.

“They have all shared sherry with her, all whispered sweet nothings softly into her ear with cupped hands, and as they napped beneath the titanium, bomb resistant desk installed by Caspar Weinberg in 1983, she etched their doomed relationship into the desk. Each time she would scratch it out. How many times would she etch his name scratched out? She had hoped she would never have to do it again.

“Be kind to me,” he says in an imploring voice. “Understand my position.”

“She fights back tears and runs to pick up the zebra taxidermy that had knocked off the wall.

“Yes, you,” she says holding onto the zebra head. “Yes, but they won’t understand you the way I understand you. Oh, Donny.”

“Understand my position.”

“We were the soldiers who, although unable to translate every phrase of that foreign language, were roused by its very cadence, so atonement, so redolent of marble columns and the blotting of the sky.”

Thank god for Black Dice. They most likely thrash around for a few years, never really make it big, and then drop into obscurity like this is because, besides from providing a morbid wonder, that is what monsters do.

The Surrealist Training Circus’s Fall performance was held outside Kline Nov 28., By Michael Newton

T he devil thinks.

reversal implied by their name, what they produce was almost, in a sense, not music.

The disorientation produced upon first hearing them live is to control and combine these disparate and harsh elements into a single entity, a mass of subjects. The crowd at Smog was reduced, by degrees of seduction, into a single entity, a mass of subjects. Listening to Black Dice means entertaining a worldview in which torture noises are valid composition. What this music really turns at is the possibility that this worldview springs not from an imagined reality, but rather our own. It is a bewitching message to hear and Black Dice rides in on a conquistador’s horse to deliver it. On Sunday night they became foreign generals who, on the eve of war, deliver a rallying sermon to a conscripted army. We were the soldiers who, although unable to translate every phrase of that foreign language, were roused by its very cadence, so atonement, so redolent of marble columns and the blotting of the sky.

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“Goodbye, Mary.” He tells. “Hi-yah,” and kicks open the door. Thud! The door strikes a man and knocks him unconscious. It is incoming Defense Secretary Robert Gates who has come to see if Donald has cleaned out the office. He walks out, steps over Gates, and she hears his footsteps as the door clicks shut.

She notices the zebra head now lying on her desk is staring at her. She sees the light blinking on the silent phone. She clicks on the ringer and lets it ring for a few moments before answering.

“Hello,” she says with a tear falling down her cheek.

“Hi. He’s gone; he’s left for good. No, he won’t be back soon.

“Wasn’t he? Isn’t he?”

“Wants to hear. Words that would release him from his life and into her fantasies. They make eye contact. But being uncertain and lacking courage, he only gives a weak, trembling smile.

“Thank god for Black Dice. They will most likely thrash around for a few years, never really make it big, and then drop into obscurity like this is because, besides from providing a morbid wonder, that is what monsters do.”
Films that are personal to their writer or director often walk a thin line between greatness and mediocrity. When working on a film is passionate to the point of obsession, they will have a strong vision for what they want their film to be, which is crucial for a great film. However, the image of the film in their head may blind them to the film’s reality, and they will be unwilling to correct flaws lest it interfere with their vision. Emilio Estevez’s first film in sixteen years, Bobby, falls into this category. Estevez chose to make this film about the events at the Ambassador Hotel on the day of the assassination of Robert Kennedy because of his passion for the man who might have changed the face of American politics; and that passion is visible throughout the film. Sadly, it seems that Estevez’s passion impeded Bobby’s ability to achieve its potential. Because his vision hindered the creative process of filmmaking, the result is a labor of love that could have used a little less love and a whole lot more labor.

On June 9th, 1968, Robert Kennedy won the California Democratic Primary election, positioning himself to take the democratic nomination. Kennedy was seen as a visionary: a man behind whom the nation could unite, a man who could end the Vietnam War and solve racism (or so Estevez would have you believe). Bobby follows the lives of countless patrons and employees of the Ambassador Hotel (literally, it’s too many to count), which was Kennedy’s headquarters. The stories range from that of a hotel manager (William H. Macy) having an affair with one of his employees (Kearather Graham), two volunteer organizers (Kosha Jackson and Nick Cannon) who believe that Kennedy will save the nation, and a young bus boy (Freddy Rodriguez) who desperately wants to leave work to go to the Dodgers game.

There is no plot in Bobby, or at least far less of one than any of the other big interweaving plot ensemble films like Love, Actually, The Great New Wonderful, and Crash. The film, rather suttistically, chronicles the day of a group of people at the Ambassador Hotel. Occasionally there is conflict, but that seems to be more incidental to the film than the driving force behind it. Estevez seems more content to explore the issues of the time, ranging from racial tension to the revolution of sex, drugs, and rock ‘n roll, than to string together any sort of plot, or have any of the characters grow or change from beginning to end. “What’s the point?” is a question one might ask half an hour into the film, and after almost an hour and a half more (the film runs at 122 minutes), you will realize that there really isn’t any. The assassination of Robert Kennedy and the direct aftermath are one of the few touching moments, but it also highlights the pointlessness of the entire rest of the film. Then it’s finally over, and you can go home to do something more worthwhile, such as clipping your toenails.

There is no pointlessness of the entire rest of the film. Then it’s finally over, and you can go home to do something more worthwhile, such as clipping your toenails.

The film together is not what should be focused on to find enjoyment in this cinematic piece. What Aronofsky has done is paint an intriguing thematic portrait about the cycle of life and death, and how love can make someone unwilling to accept simple mortality.

The film was mixed in the equivalent development. Hell when concerns arose over the script and budget. Originally set to star Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film was shelved when concerns arose over the script and budget. Originally set to star Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film was shelved when concerns arose over the script and budget. Eventually, set to star Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film was shelved when concerns arose over the script and budget. Eventually, set to star Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film was shelved when concerns arose over the script and budget. Eventually, set to star Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film was shelved. The truth is that this film is more like a piece of art than a movie; it’s an artistic experience that just so happens to be produced on the medium of film. The focus when watching The Fountain should be on how the themes are presented and how the images, acting and writing all complement each other. But ambition can only take one so far without direction, and Estevez has no idea what to do with his ode to Robert Kennedy, except to paint the man, who is spoken of but rarely seen, as deserving of sainthood. Other than taking place in the same location, none of the stories relate to each other, and few go anywhere. Bobby’s worst flaw, however, is that despite Estevez’s obvious passion for his story, he doesn’t seem to actually say anything. His film is not inspiring, heartbreathing, or eye-opening. It just meanders along, drawing to a close only after its audience has grown impatient. Had Estevez been able to detach himself and look at his story objectively, and then focus it to give the film some sort of linear plot, Bobby might have been very good. But as it stands, it is a sloppy, disorganized, and utterly directionless film that wastes the potential of a fascinating premise.

The Fountain is not a movie. Sure, you could classify it as a member of the science-fiction-fantasy genre and follow the structural weaving of three parallel storylines. But that would not do this film- I mean, this experience- justice.

Hugh Jackman stars in all three storylines. The first features him as a member of the science-fiction-fantasy genre and follow the structural weaving of three parallel storylines. But that would not do this film - I mean, this experience - justice.

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The Bard Observer

{ Bobby Review } 
BY THOMAS HOUSEMAN

The Fountain

Review

by Mischa Nachtigal

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The Bard Observer
I seem to have found one of those rare songs that makes me completely and undeniably happy every time I listen to it. It’s the third track on Peter and the Wolf’s recent album, Lightness, and it’s called “Safe Travels.” Ten seconds into this song and I am wading through a marshland wearing red galoshes, butterflies swimming overhead, a pine tree forest on either side. Know what I mean? Maybe not. And my friends don’t get it either; none of them really like it. But I am completely in love, and I’m on a mission to marry the guy who sings this song.

My name is Redding Hunter, better known as Red, who collaborates mainly with girly singer Dana Jean. I believe that Dana Jean is my. His voice has been compared to that of Cat Stevens, but I think he would say he was more in the direction of the Devendra Banhart who doesn’t know song, you know, all freak folk. Peter and the Wolf is the band with Whiskey and Apply Records, who advertise itself as “DIY Music,” whatever that means. Red is Dana Jean from Austin, TX, and apparently they are very strange. Specifically, they are self-proclaimed “occult enthusiasts.” They wear mostly black, and they only perform in churches and graveyards, which is creepy. Somehow, their creepiness just intrigues me further.

I will admit that besides “Safe Travels,” Lightness is not the most exciting album for a reason. The rest of the songs are pretty similar to each other—Red’s slow singing with Dana Jean’s soft crooning in the background with a few chords plucked out on the guitar. But while the songs are simple, they are simple in a comforting way. They are comforting and sad like a big cake hidden in a pine forest, and warm at the fireplace of lonely lyrics like “I should listen more carefully.”

My biggest complaint is that red says that the album is just too long. Is it all worth it? Well that is really up to the person listening in isn’t it? All I can say is that this album bodes well not only for Joanna Newsom, but for all those people who have beenino music and art. They are easy to listen to without having to pay much attention to them. I can base them, but I don’t want to get involved. Beyond that I can’t really praise this album. I think it is boring and sometimes infuriating in terms of its persistent barrage of cute.

Cake on Cake. Cake on Cake. Just say it. Imagine such a thing. A cake (with frosting and everything) on top of another cake. Two cakes. Then imagine eating that for a half hour. That is what Cake on Cake’s “I Guess I Was Dreaming” sounds like. Now it is everyone’s own choice as to whether they want to eat that. Personally, I can’t stand it.

This album is the pinnacle of cute music. Everything from the Cavas’ drum beats to the various bell noises, this album screams socially confused girl in high school. Maybe that’s why I don’t like it. I’m not a confused young girl. I’m not saying all confused young girls will like this, but I know that there are confused young girls that would love this.

Anyway. This music is basically trying to be as non-threatening as possible without seeming un-hip. It is very hip. In my opinion though, it isn’t very good.

So, what can I say about Cake on Cake that is positive? The fact that they are non-threatening means that they are easy to listen to without having to pay much attention to them. I can base them, but I don’t want to get involved. Beyond that I can’t really praise this album. I think it is boring and sometimes infuriating in terms of its persistent barrage of cuteness.

The Bard Observer

by Ted Quinlan

The electro-rock sounds of Whity’s new album “The Light at the End of the Tunnel is a Train” is a sonic journey you ought to embark upon—other cliches. Rough around the edges, yet rhythmically simple and effective. Whity is reminiscent of the thick drumming and faded vocals of Joy Division and Interpol while retaining a fidelity of sound on all tracks, though the most halted bass-guitar speaker setup. Sounds may loop ad nauseum and synthesized tones may leave you with musical nostalgia, but the album succeeds in its ability to rekindle the Britpop sound. Whity articulates a musical Paolo that not only longs for an almost forgotten musical past, but it sparks a possible new direction in its genre. Shedding its mythical musical chains and transcending the electro-musical norm, Whity’s album exists as a musical vanity of hindered originality and supercharging significance. No, I’m kidding. But it’s a good album. Check it out.

The Light at the End of the Tunnel is a Train

by Jartin Leigh

Lightness

by Eliza PW

Beast Moans

by Andrew Worthington

Whitey

by Ted Quinlan