

ISSUE #14 / SPRING 2010

nyu ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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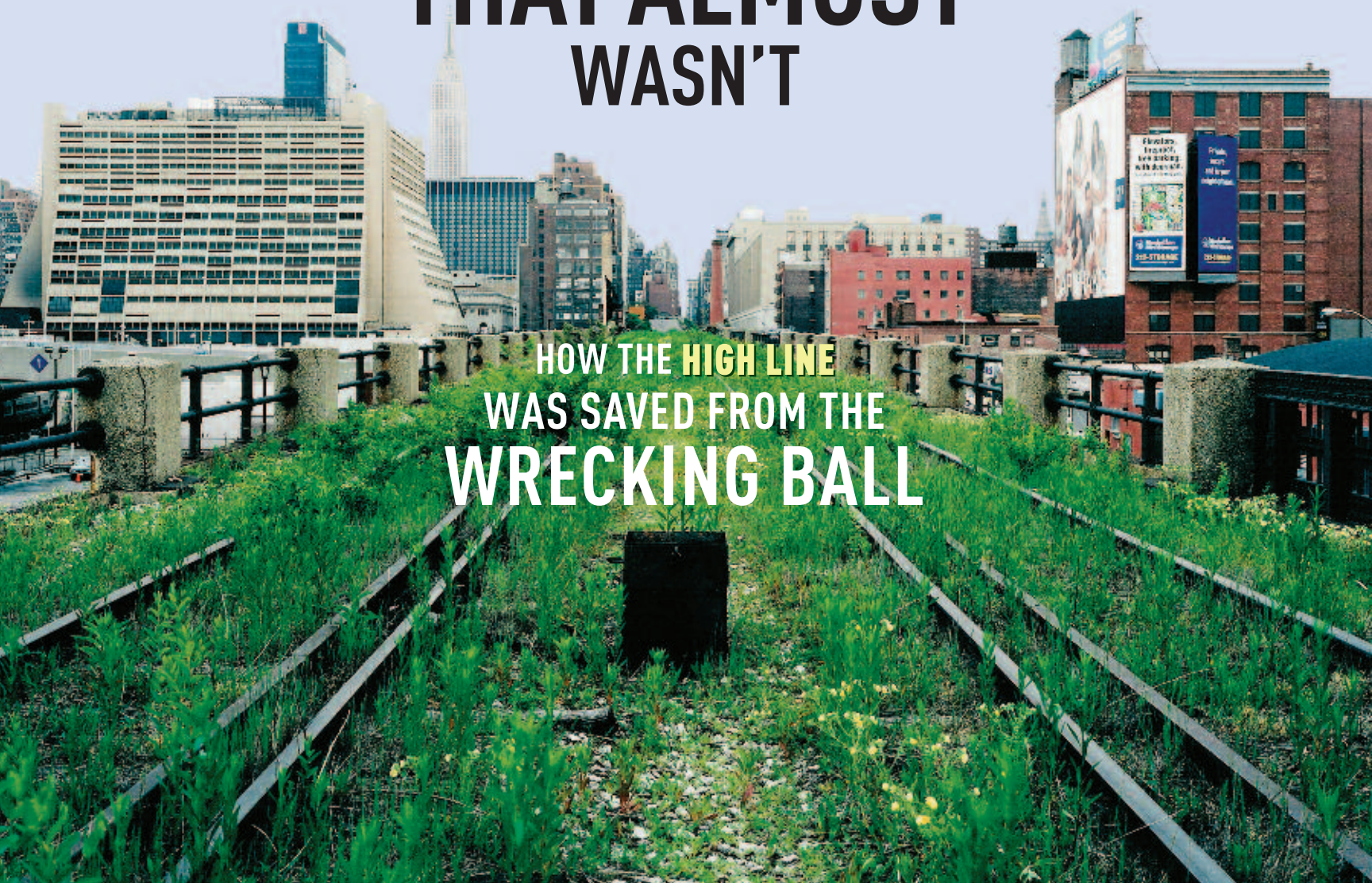
IRAQ'S "DEVIL
WORSHIPPERS"

PHILIPPE DE
MONTEBELLO
PROFESSES

MAKING SENSE
OF THE CENSUS

THE ICON THAT ALMOST WASN'T

HOW THE **HIGH LINE**
WAS SAVED FROM THE
WRECKING BALL



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NYU Abu Dhabi officially opened the doors to its downtown campus last December with a dedication ceremony that featured His Highness Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, crown prince of Abu Dhabi. Some quotes from the event's speakers are presented below.

"Early in our class, I noticed that John [Sexton] would usually pick on many of my contributions. He would make me [feel] as if 'you should have thought more before you said that....' I thought maybe he didn't like me, but then I started seeing the way he treated other students and I understood that he was actually trying to squeeze us, trying to make us learn something while we were talking.... This style of teaching and this course opened our minds and taught us critical thinking, to have a broader vision, to place ourselves in others' shoes. [It taught us] discipline, respect, the value of having initiative, and—I don't mean anything by saying this—but he also taught us to have a healthy disrespect for authority."

—MOHAMED AL MAHMOUD, ALUMNUS OF THE INAUGURAL CLASS OF SHEIKH MOHAMED BIN ZAYED SCHOLARS, AND FIRST CHAIR OF THE SCHOLARS' ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

"Mohamed, you know that I love you, but I will never accept less than the best that you can do. I will put high demands on you. I almost feel like hugging you. Although I hug students in New York, in Abu Dhabi we only do this—[*the two bump fists*—because I said when I came here that if I cannot shake the hands of some of my [female] students, then I will do nothing with them and nothing with you that is different."

—NYU PRESIDENT JOHN SEXTON, IN RESPONSE TO MOHAMED AL MAHMOUD

HEARD
ON CAMPUS

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—ALFRED BLOOM, VICE CHANCELLOR OF NYU ABU DHABI

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COVER PHOTO © JOEL STERNFELD / COURTESY FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

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IN KEEPING WITH NYU'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY, THIS PUBLICATION IS PRINTED ON FSC-CERTIFIED PAPER THAT INCLUDES A MINIMUM OF 10 PERCENT POST-CONSUMER FIBER. (THE FSC TRADEMARK IDENTIFIES PRODUCTS THAT CONTAIN FIBER FROM WELL-MANAGED FORESTS CERTIFIED BY SMARTWOOD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL.) FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NYU'S GREEN ACTION PLAN, GO TO WWW.NYU.EDU/SUSTAINABILITY.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Each semester, as we gather engaging stories from alumni, faculty, and students for the next issue of *NYU Alumni Magazine*, we are usually forced to impose some limits on our coverage of arts and culture. The problem is NYU's community is so rich in such pursuits that they can easily overrun these pages. However, in our Spring 2010 issue we've given in to this abundance. Sometimes you just can't fight a good thing.

In this "Culture Issue," as we've dubbed it, "Back From the Brink" (p. 30) offers a stroll through the historic development of the High Line, a park and architectural masterpiece that has thrilled tourists and natives alike since it opened a year ago on Manhattan's West Side. "The Master's New Gig" (p. 38) profiles Philippe de Montebello, the famed former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on his debut in the classroom, while "The Vanishing



PHOTO © MATTHEW SEPTIMUS

Yezidi of Iraq" (p. 42) takes a rare look at an ancient minority culture now caught between a modern-day Scylla and Charybdis of religious and state violence.

But the focus on art, history, and style doesn't end with the feature stories. In addition to our regular Culture section, this spirit has swept into other parts of the magazine, where readers will find stories on new modes of teaching both studio art and ancient studies, pro-

files of creative alumni, and our regular "Best of New York" column (p. 20), which spotlights eclectic ideas on where to eat, shop, and play in the city.

As with all issues of the magazine, we hope this latest effort evokes readers' curiosity, imagination, and inspiration. This is the aim of arts and culture and, ultimately, the mission of the university as well. Enjoy.

JOHN SEXTON

CONTRIBUTORS

JILL HAMBURG COPLAN is an adjunct professor of journalism at NYU who writes for a variety of women's, parenting, and business magazines. She also serves as a writing consultant to the United Nations.

ANDREA CRAWFORD has covered cultural news as a writer and editor for 15 years. She has been senior editor at *ARTnews*, contributing editor at *Poets & Writers*, and a contributor for *Tablet*.

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MEGAN DOLL (GSAS '08) is a grad-

uate of the cultural reporting and criticism program at NYU. She has written for *Salon*, *ARTnews*, *Bookforum*, *Poets & Writers*, and *The Believer*.

PETER GREGOIRE is an Emmy Award-winning photographer whose work has appeared in *Sports Illustrated*, *USA Weekend*, *Golf Digest*, and *The New York Times*.

JARETT KOBEC (GAL '02) is a writer who lives in Los Angeles. He is currently preparing his first novel for U.K. publication in 2010.

COURTNEY E. MARTIN (GAL '04) is a writer who lives in Brooklyn. You can read more about her work at www.courtneyemartin.com.

AMY ROSENBERG is a contributing editor for *Poets & Writers*. She has written for *The National*, *Bookforum*, and *Psychology Today*, as well as other publications.

MATTHEW SEPTIMUS (STERN '83) is a commercial photographer based in Brooklyn who began his career at NYU's *Washington Square News*. His clients include the French Culinary Institute, Fashion Institute of Technology, *The New York Times*, and the Museum of Modern Art.

ELWOOD H. SMITH's illustrations have graced the pages of *Newsweek*, *Time*, and *The New York Times*, as well as numerous children's books and advertising campaigns.

NYU

Issue #14 / Spring 2010

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OPERA STAR ANDREA BOCELLI (RIGHT) SANG "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" TO FORMER NEW YORK GOVERNOR MARIO CUOMO AT A RECEPTION HONORING THE RENOWNED TENOR WITH THE NYU PRESIDENTIAL CITATION.



OSCAR-WINNER EMMA THOMPSON HELPED OPEN "JOURNEY," AN ART INSTALLATION SET UP OUTSIDE WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK THAT TELLS THE STORY OF A WOMAN TRAFFICKED INTO SEXUAL SLAVERY.



ACTOR MATT DAMON AND THE LATE HISTORIAN HOWARD ZINN (WSC '51) DISCUSSED THEIR HISTORY CHANNEL FILM ON U.S. SOCIAL CHANGE, *THE PEOPLE SPEAK*.

STAR

TOP-DRAW ALUMNI AND FRIENDS PUT ON THE GLITZ FOR NYU



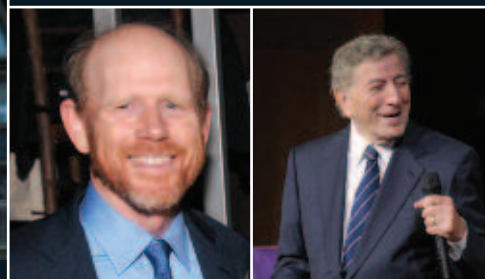
EMMY-WINNING ACTRESS GLENN CLOSE SMILED FOR THE CAMERAS AT THE 2009 TISCH GALA.



PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN (TSOA '89) AND JOHN ORTIZ WENT HEAD-TO-HEAD AS IAGO AND OTHELLO, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE PUBLIC THEATER'S CONTEMPORARY TAKE ON THE SHAKESPEARE CLASSIC, WHICH PREMIERED AT NYU'S SKIRBALL CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.



ACTOR AND COMEDIAN AZIZ ANSARI (STERN '04) PERFORMED STAND-UP AT THE SKIRBALL CENTER.



RON HOWARD WAS HONORED AT THE TISCH GALA.

TONY BENNETT CROONED AT THE KIMMEL CENTER.



We Hear From You

Thank you to everyone who responded to the Fall 2009 issue. We are delighted that NYU Alumni Magazine continues to provoke conversation and comment.



A SIZABLE ERROR

Editors' Note: As many of you noticed, an unfortunate mistake appeared in the Fall 2009 issue. The text on the final page of our cover story, "Size Does Matter," was printed incorrectly. As soon as we realized the error, we sent out a link to a corrected version, available online at our Web site www.nyu.edu/alumni.magazine. But we never expected the flood of positive messages we received in response. Thanks to all of those who reached out to us for the first time. Again, we apologize for the inconvenience and hope you enjoyed the issue.

Having been a reporter, editor, and a corporate communications professional since 1961, I can tell horror stories for hours—from page-one headlines gone way wrong to errors of serious consequence in corporate annual reports. The easy way out, of course, would have been for you to simply run a correction in the next issue. But, once again, NYU has maintained its reputation for being first-class. Thank you for e-mailing.

Arthur Samansky
WSC '65, GSAS '77
Old Bethpage, New York

Thank you for supplying us with the last three paragraphs of the article on the CCPP department. I was sure the remainder of the story was sucked into a black hole! As someone who has always been quite interested in cosmology and quantum mechanics, I was pleased to learn that NYU has started the first center in the world to merge these two disciplines.

Marc Miller
WAG '75, STERN '81
Bellmore, New York

I thought it was funny how I was back at the beginning two-thirds into the article. I was imagining that this was one of those extra dimensions they are looking for with the thingamajig. Keep up the good work.

Helmut Calabrese
STEINHARDT '96
Toms River, New Jersey

I do appreciate the update and the rest of the article to which I turned to first in this issue! I'm fascinated by the collider project and was delighted to see NYU so significantly involved. Thanks!

Brian Preston
STEINHARDT '94
White Plains, New York

HOME-SCHOOL

The article "Master Plan" [notes] that the economic downturn has motivated many to turn to grad school for "refuge, inspiration, and know-how." I'd like to add that schools serve to satisfy our instinctive need to identify with others and belong. Schools are the blank-

ets in our lives, our comfort zone. Returning to school is going home to the place away from home.

Loi An Le
CAS '96,
STEINHARDT '98
Brooklyn, New York

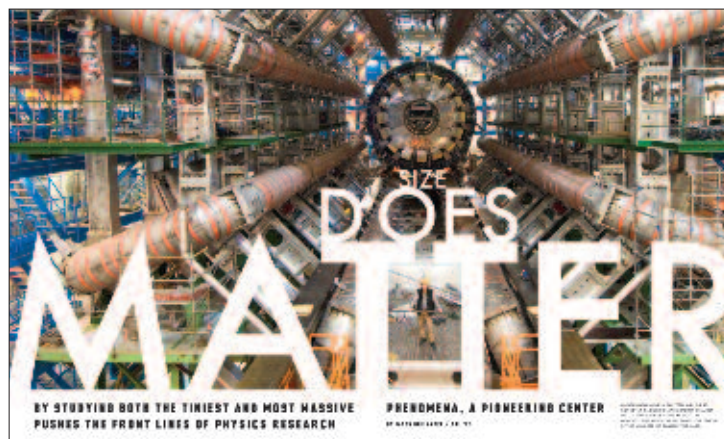
RESPECTFUL DISAGREEMENT

The story "An Island Unsilenced" is about lawyers who are working pro bono to obtain for terrorists in Guantánamo Bay [prison] access to the American legal system in contradiction of international law, common sense, and with no regard for the safety of this nation or its soldiers and citizens. Those who wage war against civilians or soldiers, who do not represent the armed forces of any nation and do not wear uniforms, have no rights under the Geneva Convention.... Unfortunately several of the lawyers

have close connections to NYU and their papers will be housed in the NYU Tamiment Library. Obviously the self-preening lawyers have no interest in the reality that there is a war on terrorism that has already resulted in the murder of many American soldiers and thousands of American civilians. NYU should not in any way be a party to their efforts.

George Rubin
WSC '55
Bronx, New York

Editors' Note: The Supreme Court has said that those detained at Guantánamo Bay are not beyond the purview of American (and international) law, and as such, have a constitutional right to challenge their confinement in U.S. courts. Even if one disagrees with the Supreme Court, there can be no doubt of the future value of these papers.



Please send your comments and opinions to: Readers' Letters, NYU Alumni Magazine, 240 Greene Street, Second Floor, New York, NY, 10003; or e-mail us at alumni.magazine@nyu.edu. Please include your mailing address, phone number, and school and year. Letters become the property of NYU and may be edited for length and clarity.

YOUR GUIDE TO THE SCHOOL CODES

THE FOLLOWING ARE ABBREVIATIONS FOR NYU SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, PAST AND PRESENT

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| ARTS - University College of Arts and Science ("The Heights"); used for alumni through 1974 | GAL - Gallatin School of Individualized Study, formerly Gallatin Division | NUR - College of Nursing | TSOA - Tisch School of the Arts, formerly School of the Arts |
| CAS - College of Arts and Science ("The College"); refers to the undergraduate school in arts and science, from 1994 on | GSAS - Graduate School of Arts and Science | SCPS - School of Continuing and Professional Studies | WAG - Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, formerly Graduate School of Public Administration |
| CIMS - Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences | HON - Honorary Degree | SSSW - Silver School of Social Work | WSC - Washington Square College, now College of Arts and Science; refers to arts and science undergraduates who studied at Washington Square Campus through 1974 |
| DEN - College of Dentistry | IFA - Institute of Fine Arts | STEINHARDT - The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, formerly School of Education | WSUC - Washington Square University College, now College of Arts and Science; refers to alumni of the undergraduate school in arts and science from 1974 to 1994 |
| ENG - School of Engineering and Science ("The Heights"); no longer exists but is used to refer to its alumni through 1974 | ISAW - Institute for the Study of the Ancient World | STERN - Leonard N. Stern School of Business, formerly the Graduate School of Business Administration; Leonard N. Stern School of Business Undergraduate College, formerly School of Commerce; and College of Business and Public Administration | |
| | LAW - School of Law | | |
| | LS - Liberal Studies Program | | |
| | MED - School of Medicine, formerly College of Medicine | | |

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NYU

SQ THE JOURNAL OF RACE



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sociology

WHAT COLOR IS AMERICA?

THE 2010 CENSUS AIMS TO ANSWER THE QUESTION FOR A VITAL REASON, SOCIOLOGIST ANN MORNING SAYS

by André Tartar / GSAS '10

This March, every American household received a 10-item questionnaire from the U.S. Census Bureau. Question 9 asks: “What is your race?” The myriad answers to this, to be released in December, are of great interest to Ann Morning,

assistant professor in the department of sociology. For the past decade, she’s studied how people conceive of racial differences, which is also the subject of her forthcoming book, *The Nature of Race: American Understandings of Human Difference* (University of California).

Morning, who grew up in

Harlem, traces her fascination with racial classification back to high school at the U.N. International School, where classmates insisted she wasn’t black. Instead, they used words such as *métis* or *mulatta* to describe her. “Everyone has a clear idea about how other people should be labeled,” Morning notes.

SOCIOLOGIST ANN MORNING HAS STUDIED PERCEPTIONS OF RACE FOR THE PAST DECADE.

"It's just that those labels vary a great deal across the world."

NYU *Alumni Magazine* recently asked Morning some questions about the labels used in the 2010 Census and what they mean for us.

WHAT DO RACIAL CATEGORIES ACCOMPLISH?

Those categories help us know something specifically about discrimination. If the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission receives a complaint that a particular employer in New York City is discriminating, the government will look at the census data about the racial composition of the city to get an idea whether that employer's workforce looks more or less like the surrounding community. So, in that sense, it helps us know something about our society.

However, I wouldn't say it's the best reflection of how people understand themselves. That's not its job. As it stands, the census doesn't recognize Hispanic or Latino as a racial category. When you get to that question, your options are basically white, black, Asian, or American-Indian. If you feel, as a Latino, like those categories don't work for you, you're kind of out of luck.

IF "HISPANIC" ISN'T CONSIDERED A RACE, WHY DOES THE CENSUS INCLUDE IT AS AN ETHNICITY?

[The government] counts how many people identify as Hispanic and treats that pretty much the same as people who identify as black or Asian, as a group that might be subjected to discrimination. However, there's an historical precedent that led the government to not technically treat Hispanics as a race. In the 1930 Census, the government introduced the category "Mexican," but a lot of people protested. The Mexican government argued that

its citizens and their descendants should be understood to be white. And so the [U.S.] government pulled back. They said they're an ethnic group, recognizable for their cultural practices, language, descent from former Spanish colonial empire, and we've preserved that division since. Now there is talk among demographers about whether to include Hispanic as a race option, but it's not going to happen in 2010.

SOME COUNTRIES, SUCH AS FRANCE, BELIEVE THAT COLLECTING RACIAL DATA OPENS UP PEOPLE TO DISCRIMINATION.

In France, the sense is that if the government were to suggest that its citizens were anything but a united body, that would be a dangerous road to go down. They can certainly point to aspects of American history that are unsavory. The truth is we've had these racial categories on our census from the very beginning, from 1790. In that era, racial categorization wasn't on the census to help people of color, but quite the opposite.

The French look at our long history and see census race categories as part and parcel of that older oppressive regime. They can also point to the fact that these statistics helped the federal government intern Japanese-Americans during World War II. Having said that, the French are going to have to find some way to measure who is being discriminated against. If you can't, it's easy to turn a blind eye.

SO IS THE CONSTRUCT OF RACE USEFUL?

It's useful for the precise purpose of tracking discrimination. Having said that, I wish we academics did a better job making clear the ways these categories are socially constructed. We are not using them because human beings come in four flavors or six flavors. These are man-made categories. ■

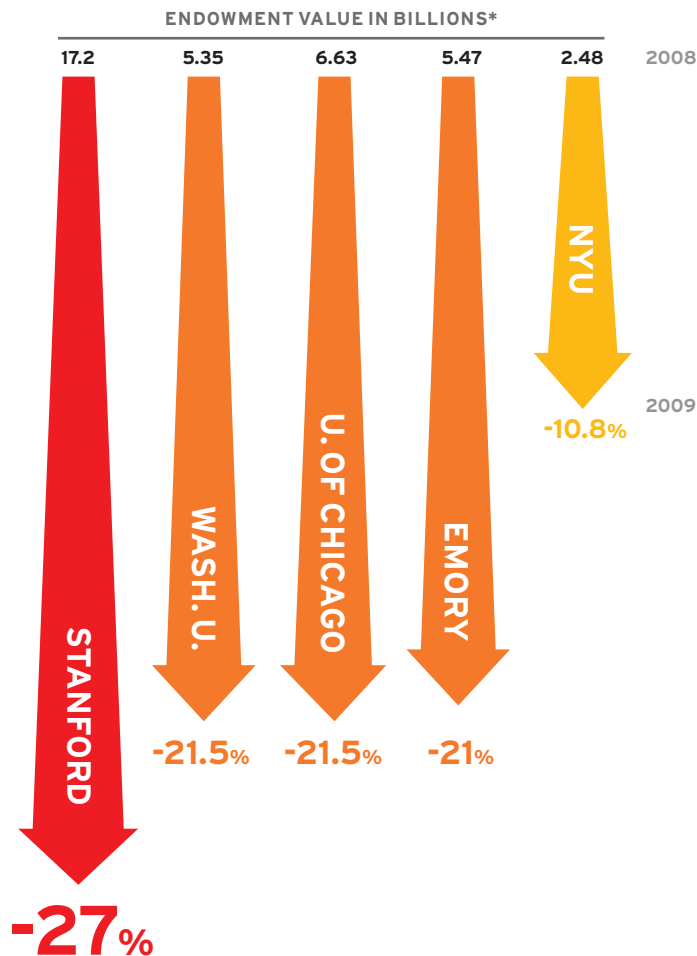
scorecard

THE SMALLEST LOSER

Last year, millions watched in horror as their mutual funds and retirement accounts withered in the recession, and university endowments were no exception. Several Ivy League schools lost more than a quarter of their endowments' values—Harvard's fell by 27.3 percent—while many other colleges saw decreases of more than 20 percent.

In contrast, NYU avoided riskier investments and its endowment shrank just under 11 percent. This financial prudence, along with general administrative belt-tightening around campus, has paid off for students. In 2009, the university's financial aid to undergrads rose by more than 16 percent—to an all-time high of \$144 million.

Here is how our investments matched up with competitors:



* end of fiscal year 2008 and 2009

History, Not Taught in a Nutshell

A NEW LOOK AT THE WORLD'S OLDEST CULTURES

by Lori Higginbotham / GSAS '11 / with Jason Hollander / GAL '07

PHOTO © ANDREA BRIZZI

In April 2007, classics professor Roger Bagnall was on an excavation at the Dakhleh Oasis in the middle of the Egyptian desert when a car emerged on the horizon, coughing up a trail of dust. In it was Shelby White, whose \$200 million gift had recently helped establish NYU's new Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, or ISAW, which focuses on the period from 3000 BCE to 800 CE. She had trekked halfway across the globe with ISAW advisory committee chair Daniel Fleming to talk to Bagnall, their newly hired director, in person. She was anxious to start molding the institute's mission. After all, there was no time to waste if they were going to reinvent the model for studying ancient civilization.

The goal was fairly simple: White, a renowned art collector and trustee for the Leon Levy Foundation (named for her late husband), had grown frustrated with the fact that ancient studies was a field full of specialists, and not much more. Near-Eastern scholars didn't study Greco-Roman cultures, Chinese scholars didn't study Mesopotamia, and, as Bagnall says, "none of them thought about Central Asia." So the team created an institute, housed in an elegant 1899 Italian Renaissance townhouse on East 84th Street, where an interest in connecting these dots is not only welcome, it's required.

To accomplish this, ISAW pools the best experts on the planet, along with what will eventually be eight full-time faculty and a number of visiting scholars, to work directly with students. Thus, an ISAW doctoral student—the program offers only PhDs—may spark a conversation among an Arabic science expert at Columbia University, an Assyriologist at University of California, Berkley, an Egyptologist at University of Oxford, and a Persian historian at the Sorbonne. If that doesn't yield enough food for thought, there are also some 18 affiliated specialists available right here at NYU. "I think at ISAW we are being connected more than taught," says Mehrnoush Soroush, a first-year student focusing on water management in the Middle East. "More than ideas, we are seeing connections between places and histories of places."

This spirit of union also drives the institute's public programming. Last fall, an above-the-fold front-page article in *The New York Times* spotlighted the exhibit "The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley, 5000-3500 BC," which featured artifacts from museums in Bulgaria, Moldova, and Romania that had never been on display in the United States. Among them was the male figure from Hamangia, Romania, widely known as *The Thinker*, perhaps the most famous art object from prehistoric Europe, and copper works by



THE INSTITUTE'S GRAND SPIRAL STAIRCASE, WHICH CLIMBS UP THROUGH FIVE FLOORS, WAS INSTALLED IN 1928 WHEN THE BUILDING WAS REDESIGNED IN THE NEO-ITALIAN RENAISSANCE STYLE.

those considered the best metal artisans of their day. The pieces from this sophisticated yet ancient period—especially the numerous goddess figurines and decorated female images discovered in shrines—have stoked debate over the extent of women’s political power and the female-centered cults of Old Europe. The *Times* noted that with this show, which ran through April, a “little-known culture is being rescued from obscurity.” Amazingly, “a great many archaeologists had not heard of these Old Europe cultures,” Bagnall told the paper.

Zoë Misiewicz, a first-year studying ancient mathematics, has experienced a similar process of discovery since coming to ISAW as part of its inaugural class. Instead of conducting her research linearly, she has opted to work backward through time by learning ancient Akkadian cuneiform, and then forward, which means adding Arabic to the Greek, Latin, French, English, and German she already knows. She also stumbled upon the ancient traditions of astrology this year while taking a seminar on the exact sciences. Though initially dubious about its relevance because most now consider it a pseudoscience, Misiewicz discovered that it played a major role in Mesopotamian mathematics, and this edification has changed her perception of just what constitutes “science.”

Questions beget questions, as any good scholar knows. This is exactly what ISAW wants to instill in students—a feeling of being on a path that must inevitably morph and adjust to new insights, while fighting the popular academic urge to specialize. “Our idea is to destabilize that,” Bagnall says. “At the end they may still have an idea that’s similar to what they started out with, but it will have become a lot more complicated and interesting in the meantime.” ■

■ history

GALILEO'S LENS

A CONFERENCE EXAMINES HOW THE VENERABLE SCIENTIST AND HIS TELESCOPE TURNED THE UNIVERSE ON ITS HEAD

by Amy Rosenberg

In 1609, it was still possible to look up into the night sky and think that all was right with the universe—for there was Jupiter, orbiting Earth, exactly as it should. A year later, such assurance was a thing of the past. In January 1610, the Italian philosopher, mathematician, astronomer, and physicist Galileo Galilei perfected a telescope strong enough to observe four moons orbiting Jupiter. It marked the beginning of the end of geocentric theory, the centuries-old idea that all celestial bodies revolve around Earth.

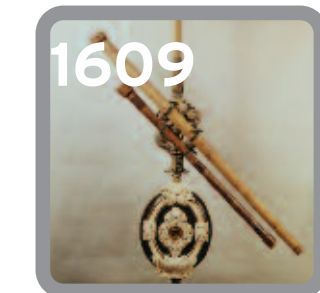
This spring, in honor of the 400th anniversary of that telescope’s creation, Polytechnic Institute of NYU, along with NYU’s Humanities Initiative, the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, and the New York City History of Science Working Group, are co-hosting “The History of the Telescope: Exploring the Boundaries Between Science and Culture,” a conference designed to examine the wide-ranging impact of Galileo’s innovations. “The telescope,” says Myles Jackson, one of the conference organizers and professor of the history of science at Gallatin and Dibner Family Professor of the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology at NYU-Poly, “demonstrates very effectively the ways in which science and culture overlap, because it enabled humans to look at the universe in a way that was impossible previously.”

With his breakthrough, Galileo

showed that Copernicus’s 16th-century theory that heavenly bodies revolve around the sun *was* correct. With that assertion, accepted beliefs about God and political and social hierarchies were called into question—hence the Roman Inquisition, which forced Galileo to recant and later placed him under lifelong house arrest. “This shift led to a critical sociological one,” Jackson explains. “It meant, in part, that theologians were no longer the only ones who could speak legitimately about God; natural philosophers could as well.”

While Galileo’s telescope may have cleared the path for modern science, the subject inevitably moved away from the masses, notes Thomas Settle, conference participant and guest scholar at the Institute and Museum of the History of Science in Florence. “Through the 17th century and beyond, the percentage of people who cared about and understood the importance of Galileo’s discoveries were about the same as those who cared about and understood Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity in the 20th century,” Settle explains. “Science was born—but it immediately went out of the common culture.”

One aim of the conference, according to Jackson and co-organizer Matthew Stanley, associate professor of the history and philosophy of science at Gallatin, is to reinforce the broader idea that science and culture do still influence—and can even illuminate—



each other in useful ways. Accordingly, event participants will be using disciplines such as economics, anthropology, art history, and comparative literature to elucidate the history of the telescope. For example, speaker Eileen Reeves, professor of comparative literature at Princeton University, has argued that Galileo’s training as an artist allowed him to not only draw convincing sketches of what he saw but also influence early modern painters, such as Peter Paul Rubens and Diego Velázquez, forcing them to rethink standard tropes and techniques. As Jackson puts it, “The scientific enterprise is a cultural enterprise.” ■

A FRESH CANVAS

STEINHARDT HAS BUILT A DIFFERENT KIND OF ART PROGRAM—AND PEOPLE ARE COMING

by Megan Doll / GSAS '08

When Nancy Barton came to NYU from CalArts in 1997, she noticed a striking difference between the two coasts. “There was a time when, in New York, the good artists didn’t have anything to do with the universities,” remarks Barton, now chair of Steinhardt’s department of art and art professions. East Coasters stayed in their own art world bubble, while a less developed market and gallery system on the West Coast led local artists to become involved with the universities. As a result, California schools in the 1970s and ’80s increasingly empowered individual students and drew industry stars who wanted to educate them in contemporary critical theory. “[Out West], every important artist taught—it was the

fers degrees in everything from costume studies to art education and administration—the program has enriched what was a rather conservative conceptual base, revitalized the faculty, and given more voice (and freedom) to individual students. With an ever-rising pool of applications, a spate of alumni successes, and a now-enviable roster of teachers, it’s getting serious attention. In the past decade the number of applicants to the department’s MFA program—which enrolls only 10 students per year—has ballooned from 106 in 1999 to 337 in 2009. Similarly, BFA applications jumped from 250 in 1998 to 400 in 2010.

Even before this turnaround, the Studio Art program had a history of fostering creative talent, including such renowned alumni as painter Ross Bleckner (STEINHARDT ’71), sculptor Joel Shapiro (WSC

talent. Adding to a faculty that already boasted some art world stalwarts—such as Peter Campus, Kiki Smith, and John Torreano—Barton lured critic David Rimanelli, multimedia artist Sue de Beer, photographer and video artist Lyle Ashton Harris, and painter Jesse Bransford early in her tenure. More recent hires have included Bleckner, multimedia artist Carol Bove, and conceptual artist Trisha Donnelly—who all have a firm finger on the pulse of the modern art world. Added to this is a revolving array of prominent visiting artists: painter Elizabeth Peyton, who had a recent survey show at the New Museum, and Renee Cox, who was teaching at Steinhardt during the 2001 controversy in which Mayor Rudy Giuliani accused her work, *Yo Mama’s Last Supper*, of being anti-Catholic.

It was not enough, however, to raise the caliber of the faculty. The department has aimed for an increasingly collaborative approach to education, in which students and faculty work side by side designing curriculum, special programs, and exhibition spaces. The emphasis on criti-

cal theory has also fostered a climate for animated debates on the marketplace, the role of an artist as a public intellectual, and the relevance or obsolescence of print. Recent graduates have garnered myriad accolades and honors—including Afruz Amighi (STEINHARDT ’07), who won the

Victoria and Albert Museum’s first biannual Jameel Prize in 2009; Beatrice Glow (STEINHARDT ’08), who received a 2008 Fulbright grant to study performance art in Peru; and Bove (STEINHARDT ’00), Amy Granat (STEINHARDT ’07), and MK Guth (STEINHARDT ’02), who all exhibited in the last Whitney Biennial.

Of late, the department has focused on a new frontier: extending opportunities for studio art students in Accra, Ghana, and Berlin, as well as creating a global-art minor that includes coursework in such cities as Florence, Prague, and Shanghai. Barton and faculty are now looking to develop projects in Abu Dhabi, Paris, and Madrid. “Every year we think: What will make a visionary art program?” Barton says. “And we try and go forward.” ■

“There was a time when the good artists didn’t have anything to do with the universities.”

way people communicated,” Barton recalls. “And the schools in New York used to have a lot of better, failed artists.”

The past decade or so has changed that. Following the ascent of innovative departments at Yale and Columbia universities, the Studio Art program at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development has also undertaken something of a renaissance. Housed in the department of art and art professions—which of-

’64, STEINHARDT ’69), and sculptor and installation artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres (STEINHARDT ’87). But many, not surprisingly, were primarily attracted to NYU for the location rather than the instruction.

When Barton arrived at Steinhardt, first as the director of the undergraduate program, she and her colleagues sought to change that perception. They quickly assembled a more avant-garde, West Coast-style collection of teaching

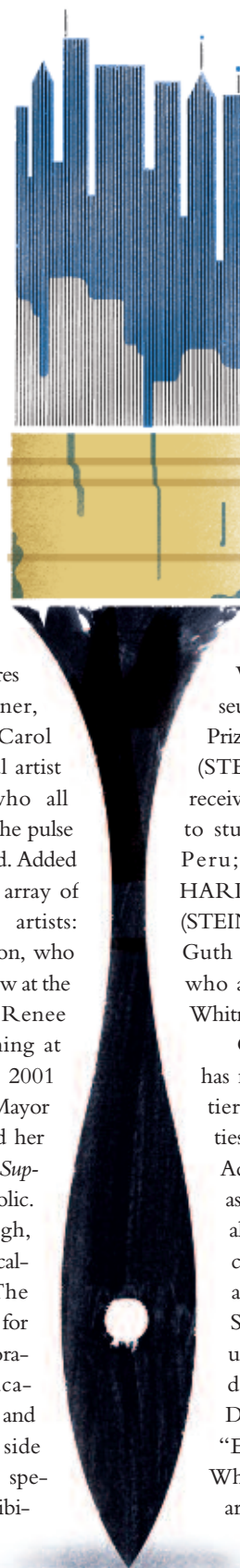


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IN BRIEF

SMILING FOR THE CAMERAS

National exposure is almost as rare for a student filmmaker as family-friendly programming is on cable television. So the Hallmark Movie Channel is doing a double service with Film Positive, a new competition for inspirational short films open to undergraduates and graduates at the Maurice Kanbar Institute of Film and Television in the Tisch School of the Arts. The winners—which are airing on Hallmark (and at HallmarkChannel.com)—will be up to 30 minutes long and were selected by a panel of judges including actors Alec Baldwin (TSOA '94), Billy Crystal (TSOA '70), and Marcia Gay Harden (TSOA '88). Tisch Associate Dean Sheril Antonio describes the quirky style of the submissions as “upbeat-offbeat.” In a film called *The Grey Woman*, for instance, the titular character lives in

a black-and-white world until she discovers color. “For people interested in upbeat films,” Antonio says, “we’re bringing [something] new.”

OBAMA'S ARTS GUIDE

Last November, Mary Schmidt Campbell, dean of the Tisch School of the Arts, sat down with First Lady Michelle Obama and others for the first meeting of new appointees to the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. As vice-chair of the group, Campbell is helping advance discussions on the arts in public education, the ways artists serve their communities, and how the arts drive local economies.

As former executive director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, which played a role in the revival of Manhattan's 125th Street, Campbell is no stranger to these topics. But she believes her new work as

adviser to the White House and the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities will provide her with “a broader understanding” of issues facing artists today, which will inevitably help to refine the training and programs at Tisch.

NEW LEADERSHIP COMES TO CAMPUS

From East to West Coasts and beyond, NYU recently recruited three top academics to take the helm of schools in their respected disciplines.

Peter Blair Henry replaced Thomas F. Cooley as dean of the Leonard N. Stern School of Business. A former Rhodes scholar and member of the Obama Transition Team, Henry has advised governments from the Caribbean to Africa. His last post was as professor and associate director of the Center for Global Business and the Economy

at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

From across the pond, Patricia Lee Rubin arrived as the new director of the Institute of Fine Arts, a position previously held by Mariët Westermann. Rubin was formerly a professor and deputy director at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, and is an acclaimed scholar of Italian Renaissance art and literature.

Lynn Videka was appointed dean of the Silver School of Social Work, replacing Suzanne England. Videka is the former vice president for research and a distinguished service professor at the University at Albany-SUNY, and a former Fulbright Fellow. Under her guidance, Albany saw a 400 percent increase in annual fund gifts and a 200 percent increase in externally funded grants.

Campus Projects Move Onward

Even in a recession, NYU has benefited from donors who are keeping several ongoing renovation projects and academic initiatives aloft. Here are some of the contributions:

A \$100 million gift from Stanley and Fiona Druckenmiller (STERN '89, NYU Langone Medical Center Trustee) will help to establish a new neuroscience institute at the Langone Medical Center. The institute will be designed to attract top scientists and researchers, allowing Langone to become a leader in translational neuroscience.

Renovations continue at the Stern School of Business with the help of a \$20 million gift from John Paulson (STERN '78), founder and chairman of the hedge fund Paulson & Co., Inc.

The gift will also endow two faculty chairs and provide scholarships for undergrads.

The Elmer and Mamdouha Bobst Foundation has made a gift of \$10 million to support the next phase of the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library renovation, which will focus primarily on floors 4 and 5. Highlights of the project will be new spaces for individual and collaborative study, dedicated areas for graduate students, and reconfigured services and technology.

A \$10 million gift from NYU Trustee Constance Milstein (ARTS '69) will help establish a new campus in Washington, D.C. The NYU-DC Center will be part of the university's global network. Students enrolled at any of NYU's campuses will have the opportunity to spend semesters at NYU-DC, as well as the home campus in New York City and other global sites.

A groundbreaking and reception

will be held September 20 for all DC-area alumni, parents, and friends.

The university's Paths to Peace Program has been created and underwritten for the next 10 years by alumnus Howard Meyers (STERN '64). His \$10 million gift will enable the program to continue recruiting Israeli and Palestinian students who come to NYU to learn skills for leadership, advancing reconciliation, and coexistence for the future.

NYU Life Trustee Marie D. Schwartz, through the Arnold & Marie Schwartz Fund for Education & Health Research, has made a \$1 million inaugural gift in support of the Center for Genomics and Systems Biology. In recognition, the university will name the Arnold and Marie Schwartz Lobby in the center, which is currently under construction at 12-16 Waverly Place.

Finally, Emmy and Golden Globe award-winner Alec Baldwin (TSOA

'94) has donated \$1 million to the Tisch School of the Arts to help students in need of tuition aid. Scholarship recipients will be named the Alec Baldwin Drama Scholars.



A RENDERING OF THE NYU-DC CENTER.



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CUTTING-EDGE

music

MADONNA MEETS MOZART

by Lori Higginbotham / GSAS '11

Like most media, music is riding the digital tide. This year music downloads are projected to account for 35 percent of all sales, with nearly 1.4 billion singles streaming to computers across the globe. That's a lot of files. And while the search engine on iTunes or the similar-song device at Pandora.com are both nice options for those looking to expand their libraries, the future of music retrieval, according to Juan Bello, lies in studying a song's DNA—visually mapping its texture,

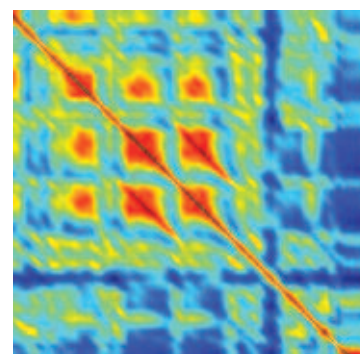
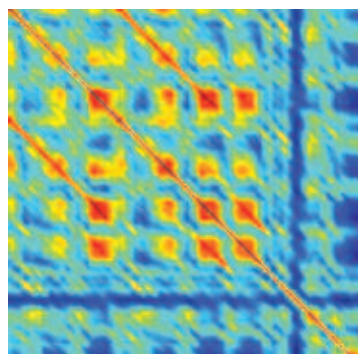
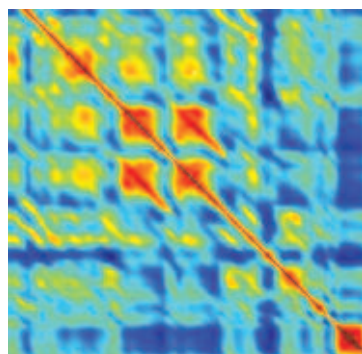
rhythm, and harmony.

The concept is almost as biological as it sounds. Bello, assistant professor of music technology in

the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, is a leader in the nascent field of Music Information Retrieval, which he believes may “do for musicology what bioinformatics has done for the life sciences.” As a founding member of NYU's Music and Audio Research Laboratory, he's helped to create software that literally draws the compositional elements of a piece of music—allowing researchers to

visually link components of such odd-couple artists as Madonna and Mozart.

Here's how it works: Imagine the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. As the program graphs the trajectory of the piece's tempo and volume, a black line jumps around the screen, much like an Etch A Sketch. Bello then traces thousands of other songs and determines, often to his surprise, which overlap. His goal is to even-



IMAGES © JUAN BELLO

NEW SOFTWARE CAN MAP YOUR MUSIC, SUCH AS THE MOVEMENTS IN BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH SYMPHONY (ABOVE).

nursing

Where There Is No Doctor, Technology Steps In

by André Tartar / GSAS '10

A thirtysomething woman in a Seattle research study breaks into tears after the tablet computer in her hands asks whether she's depressed. She is, not to mention HIV-positive and struggling with a drinking problem, but it's the first time she's ever been asked and doesn't mind that it was by a computer. Really asking the questions is CARE+, a counseling tool developed by Ann Kurth, a professor at the College of Nursing, that involves an interactive questionnaire embedded with literature and skill-building videos.

This is just one of the ways that technology is bridging the social taboos and financial chasms that can keep patients from the care they need. “We all would prefer to have a really wonderful, empathetic, well-trained health provider who listens to all of our issues, but that doesn't always happen,” notes Kurth, who's bringing CARE+ overseas to help extend scarce health-care resources in Africa. A new study in Kenya, for example, will use the tool's videos to get people thinking about safer sexual habits, such as how to correctly use a condom. The tablet computers

give patients a judgment-free zone to discuss such sensitive issues, and Kurth says that the touchscreen technology is more intuitive for inexperienced computer users than keyboards.

Another project that Kurth runs in Africa plans to test up to 3 million people for HIV—a feat that would have been logistically and financially impossible until recently. In Kenya, locally trained staff on motorcycles is visiting 2,400 couples in their homes, which often have no addresses, and tracking them via the GPS on their cell phones. There they conduct surveys with PalmPilot-like devices and take blood samples to test for HIV/AIDS and pregnancy using simple reactive strips. Meanwhile, teams in Uganda are testing for HIV using Google-powered phones, which connect to the patients'

records via a bar code on their clinic card, to chart a treatment plan for those who test positive.

Doctors in underserved places are also harnessing new telecommunications technology to talk among themselves. In Ghana, where each doctor is responsible for 11,000 people on average, Brian Levine (GSAS '03, MED '08) noticed that these providers all had cell phones but were unable to communicate with one another cost-effectively. So Levine, who is an obstetrics and gynecology resident at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, introduced MedicareLine, which connects doctors with free cell phone minutes—so they can easily make referrals, follow-up appointments, and send emergency bulletins. The project has since spread to Liberia, Tanzania, and Kenya, with plans for Rwanda and India.

biology

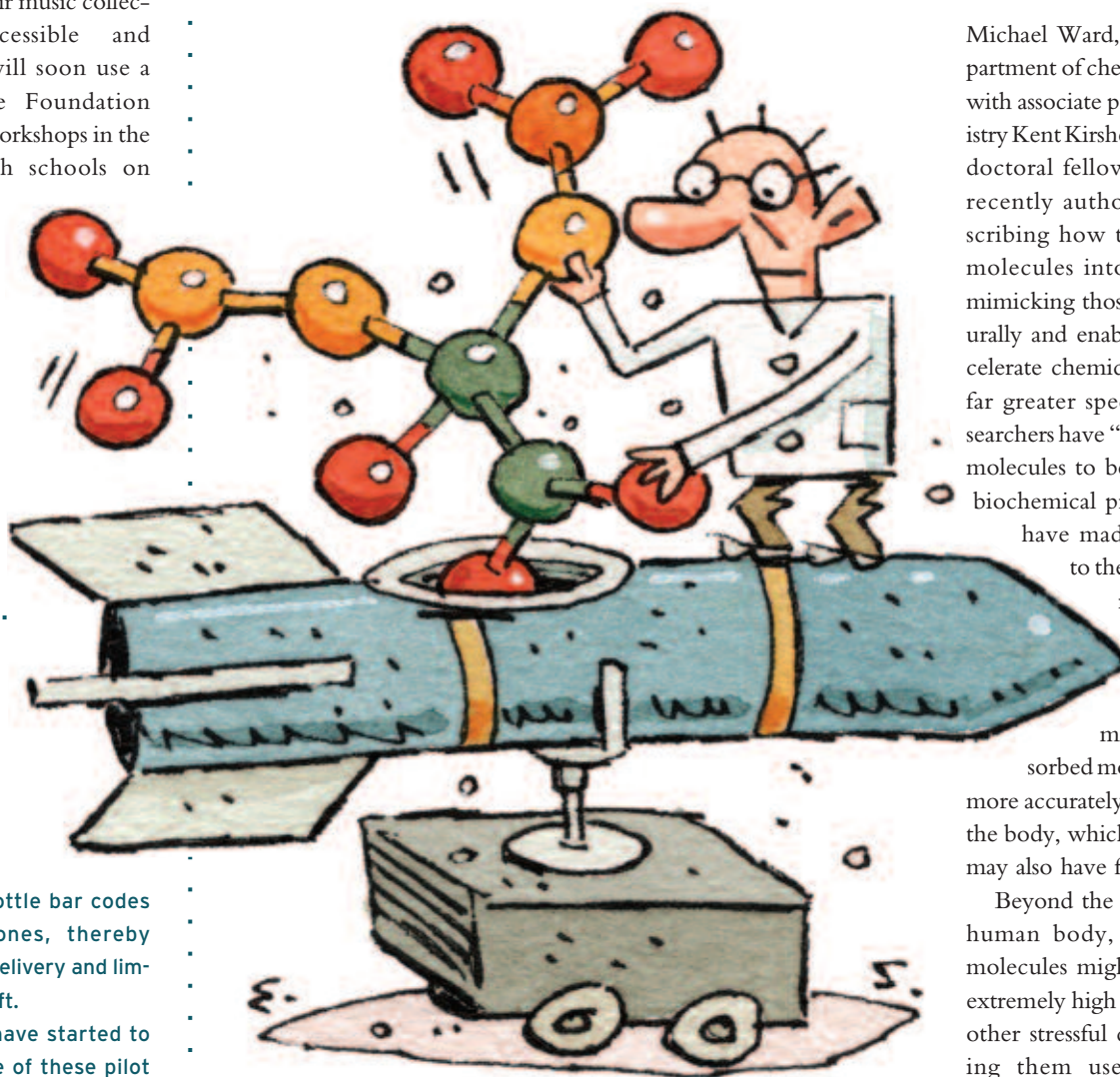
MOLECULES WITH A TWIST

by Kevin Fallon / CAS '09

tually bring this technology to consumers so that they can expand their spheres of sounds, but for now he's focused on the applications for expert users, such as musicologists. He's even teamed up with the NYU Division of Libraries to make their music collection more accessible and searchable, and will soon use a National Science Foundation grant to conduct workshops in the city's public high schools on the points where math, science, and music intersect. It's part of his greater vision of finding connections in unlikely places. "Music is just an excuse in this case," Bello says. "But it's a pretty good one." ■

In Ghana, Levine is working on another project called SmartTrack, which would track the distribution of HIV drugs to patients by scanning pill bottle bar codes with camera phones, thereby speeding up their delivery and limiting waste and graft.

Positive signs have started to emerge from some of these pilot projects, but many questions still remain. For example, Levine asks: "How do you get a \$600 device to people who can barely afford food on their tables?" Kurth also cautions that the right balance must be found between health-care providers and the newly available gadgetry. She explains: "We [cannot] replace the need on the ground for more bodies." ■



WE ALL READ WITH CONCERN THE SIDE EFFECTS WRITTEN ON PILL BOTTLES AND LABOR THROUGH

those warnings at the end of pharmaceutical commercials. But those lists may soon get a whole lot shorter thanks to scientists who are now constructing "bulletproof" molecules that may

make the drugs you take stronger and work faster, with fewer potential downsides.

"We're improving on things that nature does and doing things nature can't do," explains

Michael Ward, chair of the department of chemistry. He, along with associate professor of chemistry Kent Kirshenbaum and post-doctoral fellow Galia Maayan, recently authored a study describing how to fold synthetic molecules into helical shapes, mimicking those that occur naturally and enabling them to accelerate chemical reactions with far greater specificity. The researchers have "tuned" these new molecules to be consistent with biochemical processes but may have made them resistant to the effects that cause regular molecules to break down. Thus, medicines may soon be absorbed more efficiently and more accurately engage targets in the body, which means that they may also have fewer side effects.

Beyond the challenges of the human body, these synthetic molecules might also withstand extremely high temperatures and other stressful conditions, making them useful in creating industrial chemicals, polymers, and plastics. This could eliminate a time-consuming step in a range of manufacturing venues. "If you think of the process as an assembly line that can be used to generate lots of different products," Kirshenbaum says, "what we've done is create a tool that will allow us to speed up that assembly line." ■

poverty

BREAKING THE CYCLE?

A REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM OFFERS CASH TO THE POOR FOR MEETING HEALTHFUL GOALS

by John Bringardner / GSAS '03

It was the fall of 2005, and Michael Bloomberg felt good about his chances for reelection. His first four years as mayor of New York City had been marked by bold school and health initiatives, not to mention tremendous economic growth. But his opponent, Bronx Democrat Fernando Ferrer, was gaining ground by hitching his campaign to one major issue the billionaire couldn't boast about: poverty. Even as the city had prospered overall under the Bloomberg administration, poverty remained steady at 19 percent, one of the highest levels in the country. Attempting to defuse Ferrer's attacks, Bloomberg named a blue-ribbon commission to tackle the issue.

And they did. After winning a second term, Bloomberg pushed his commission for ideas. One member, J. Lawrence Aber, professor of applied psychology at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, suggested a study of so-called conditional cash transfer programs, known as CCT, that had effectively reduced poverty in rural Mexico and Brazil. *Oportunidades* had revolutionized welfare in Mexico by giving money to the poor in return for completing certain goals, like enrolling their children in school and making regular doctor visits. It was designed to break the cycle of poverty by providing poor families with the cash to meet short-term needs, like buying food, while incentivizing habits

that lead to better physical and financial health in the long-term. A quarter of that country now participates in the program, and by 2006, nine years after its start, extreme poverty in Mexico had dropped from 37.4 percent to 13.8 percent. The commission, and the may-

and run by two nonprofits—launched in 2007 with about 4,800 families and 11,000 children receiving benefits for an initial three-year run. The program works by offering a series of financial incentives—ranging in value from \$25 to \$600—for meeting any of a list of

“We use incentives in every other segment of society....Why would we exclude poor people?”

or, were intrigued. “I think Bloomberg liked it because we use incentives in every other segment of society,” Aber says. “Tax breaks for the wealthy, tax breaks on mortgages for the middle class. Why would we exclude poor people?”

Opportunity NYC—a CCT sponsored entirely by private groups

22 goals for both parents and children, covering education, health care, and job skills. Going for an annual medical check-up is worth \$200. Graduating from high school is worth \$400. No restrictions are placed on how participants spend the money, and it's not counted against eligibility for government

OPPORTUNITY NYC OFFERS \$25-\$600 FOR MEETING GOALS COVERING EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND JOBS.

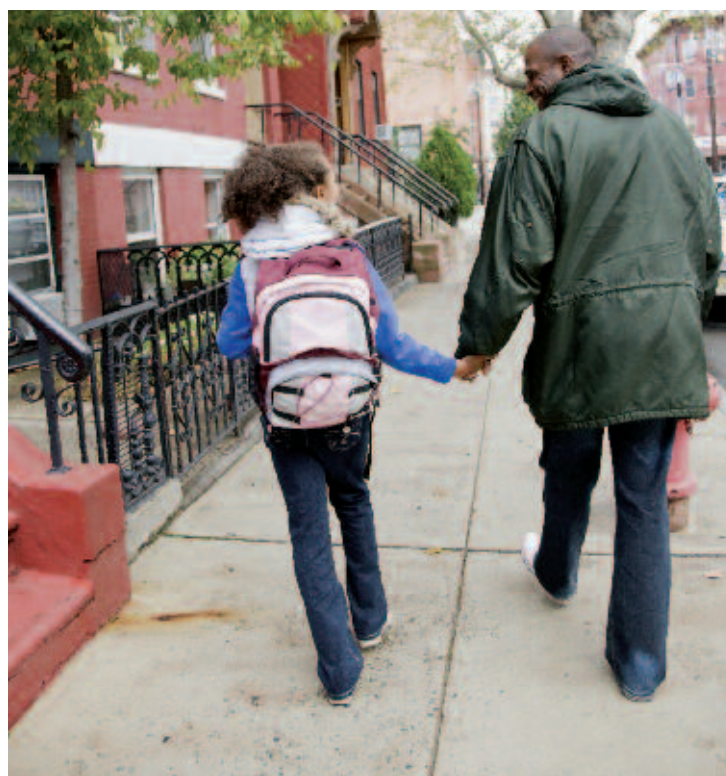


PHOTO © PHOTO LIBRARY

programs, such as welfare. The incentives are especially helpful for parents who, say, must take time off from an hourly paid job to take a child to the clinic. “It’s not bribing people to do the right thing,” Aber says. “It’s reducing the opportunity costs.”

This February, Aber and MDRC, one of the nonprofit groups running Opportunity NYC, released the first report on the program’s progress, with mixed results. By the end of 2008, more than \$14 million had been paid out to families. Ninety-eight percent of the participants received money, averaging more than \$6,000 per family in the first two years. While the program had cut “severe poverty” by nearly half, reduced food insecurity, and improved banking skills and savings—the short-term effects it was supposed to have—the researchers noted no change in student achievement, especially New York State Regents test scores among fourth and seventh graders. Though long-term poverty reduction is the ultimate goal, the program’s educational incentives had dovetailed nicely with Bloomberg’s earlier school reforms, and its limited effects on test scores have cast a shadow on Opportunity NYC’s future.

The three-year trial run ends this August. Though the Bloomberg administration has no plans to extend it as yet, Aber and his team will continue to follow participants to see whether the positive changes brought by the program survive the loss of benefits, the true test of its effectiveness. A final report is due in 2013. How the Bloomberg administration interprets those results will determine whether Opportunity NYC becomes known as a failed experiment or if some pieces of the pilot offer new tools for reducing poverty in New York, and perhaps the rest of the country. “It’s not the be all end all,” Bloomberg acknowledged at a March press conference. “The responsibility we have is to try to tune the program.” ■

dentistry

Handling With Care

STUDENTS HELP VICTIMS OF TORTURE COPE WITH TRIPS TO THE DENTIST

by Kevin Fallon / CAS '09



PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES
WHILE NOT A WELCOME SIGHT FOR MOST PEOPLE, THE VIEW FROM THE DENTAL CHAIR IS ESPECIALLY HARROWING FOR TORTURE SURVIVORS.

Harsh, blinding lights; the piercing sound of a drill; a stranger wielding sharp, metal tools near your face. Most people dread, yet deal with, these discomforts when they visit the dentist. But for victims of torture and sufferers of post-traumatic stress disorder, the experience can be infinitely more intense, reminding them of a time when they were subjected to horrors at the hand of someone who intended them bodily harm.

With this in mind, a dozen select students are learning the nuances of treating these patients as part of the College of Dentistry’s Program for Survivors of Torture. Launched in September 2008 as the first of its kind in the nation, the program offers free dental services to survivors of torture and war traumas from more than 80 countries. The student dentists—trained by social workers, psychologists, translators, and immigration lawyers—treat up to

25 patients each week at the College of Dentistry and, to help prepare, sometimes even sit-in on patients’ physical exams or therapy sessions. “The goal is to give back to patients whose dignity has been taken,” says Steven Resnick, clinical assistant professor at the dental college and co-director of the program.

The challenges and obstacles to treating these patients are wide-ranging. Some have been tortured by sleep deprivation, usually by being subjected to constant bright lights and loud noises. “So you wouldn’t just flip on the light and shine it in their eyes,” Resnick says. Instead students start with it pointed to the floor, and slowly bring it up to the mouth. Survivors of waterboarding are often bothered by the suction hose, so they are allowed to hold it themselves to maintain control. Dentists must also reconsider machines that give off a burning smell, which may remind some of being scorched with lit cigarettes, and

dental masks, which may trigger fears of suffocation. Perhaps the most complicated factor, however, is that doctors were often complicit in the torture, notes co-director and clinical assistant professor June Weiss, so it can be difficult to gain trust or to persuade patients to sign consent forms, as many were once forced to sign false confessions. The key is to give detailed explanations of every step of every procedure, says Weiss, noting, “even down to ‘I’m going to put water in this cup.’”

The program is a companion to Bellevue Hospital Center’s Program for Survivors of Torture, launched in 1995 in response to New York City being a common refuge for those fleeing persecution in their home countries. While Bellevue provides comprehensive medical care, mental health care, social services, and legal services to victims of torture, war traumas, and their families, patients with dental issues had limited options. But the new program goes beyond just treating cavities and gingivitis. For example, dental students helped one patient quit chain smoking. He’d started as a way to cope with his ordeal, but lighting up inevitably brought back haunting memories. Another patient received a permanent appliance to fill the hole where several teeth had been knocked out by a rifle butt, so she no longer had to remove her denture daily and relive the violence. As Resnick says: “The question for these dentists is not just how good was this root canal therapy, but what impact did it have on the patient’s life?” ■

ENNYC

the insider

BEST OF NEW YORK

NYU FACULTY, STAFF, AND ALUMNI
OFFER UP THEIR FAVORITES

by Renée Alfuso / CAS '06

**AS TEMPERATURES RISE, KEEP COOL WITH A DAY AT THE BEACH
OR COCKTAILS ON THE HUDSON**

MARATHON MAN

When Joe Salvatore, who teaches educational theater at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, started training for his first New York City Marathon last year, he fell into the familiar regimen of running and recovering. The first part he satisfied in **CENTRAL PARK**, which provides perfect running terrain with its six-mile loop, meandering paths, and unexpected hills. Plus, the final stretch of the marathon takes place in the park, so practicing there paid off for Salvatore, who met his goal of finishing in less than three hours and 40 minutes—with six seconds to spare. “The last two miles were probably the toughest,” he says. “Central Park South felt like it went on forever—like

Columbus Circle kept moving away from me as I ran toward it.” After, he rewarded himself with pizza and french fries—and a massage at **RENEW & RELAX**. At just \$50 for a 50-minute rubdown, Salvatore says, it’s one of the city’s most affordable spas.

50 THIRD AVENUE
(BTW. 10TH AND 11TH STREETS),
212-388-9821;
WWW.RENEWANDRELAXSPA.COM

ROCK THE BOAT

Growing up just outside the city that never sleeps turned Isabelle Dungan (GAL '06) into an expert night owl. And she knows that because outdoor space is such a hot commodity in the spring, most rooftop bars are either too cheesy or ultraexclusive. One exception is the roof garden café at the Met-

ropolitan Museum of Art, where Dungan says the open-air art exhibits and view of Central Park make it perfect for drinks at sunset. For a more unusual setting, climb aboard the **FRYING PAN**—an historic lightship built in 1929 that sat at the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay for three years before being resurrected as a funky bar docked at Chelsea Piers. Dungan has been visiting the Frying Pan since discovering its eclectic live music and DJs, and still loves to explore the ship’s unusual nooks and crannies, complete with rusty, barnacle-covered walls. “You feel like you’re on something that’s from another time,” she explains. “It’s not just your run-of-the-mill rooftop.” Try your sea legs on the massive dance floor or head upstairs to enjoy views of the Hudson River and the ship’s surf-and-turf menu.

PIER 66 (AT WEST 26TH STREET

AND WEST SIDE HIGHWAY), 212-989-6363; WWW.FRYINGPAN.COM

SAIGON SUB

New York magazine recently hailed the bánh mì as “the most addictive new sandwich in town.” Maybe it’s the layers of pork stuffed into a crispy baguette, or the combination of sweet and spicy pickled vegetables, hot peppers, mayonnaise, and cilantro, but New Yorkers can’t seem to get enough of the Vietnamese import. “It’s just gathered so much more mainstream appeal in the past year,” says Duy Nguyen, an assistant professor in the Silver School of Social Work who grew up eating Vietnamese cuisine. Many stylish eateries have given the sandwich a gourmet makeover—and price tag—but Nguyen notes that the classic bánh mì is simply cheap and tasty street food. “It’s not a meal that I would associate with sitting

JACOB RIIS PARK

BÁNH MÌ SAIGON BAKERY

FRYING PAN

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © OPTO DESIGN (2); © ISTOCK; © FRANK CELLENZA/THEYOUNGANDHUNGRY.COM



down at a restaurant and ordering,” he says. “I expect more of a no-frills-type place.” So for the real thing, Nguyen suggests **BÁNH MÌ SAIGON BAKERY**, which was serving the sandwich long before it became a craze. The tiny counter is tucked into the back of a Chinatown jewelry store, but that doesn’t stop hungry crowds from lining up daily. The freshly baked bread is filled to capacity and, at less than \$4, is a rare deal for the Big Apple. **138 MOTT STREET (NR. GRAND), 212-941-1541**

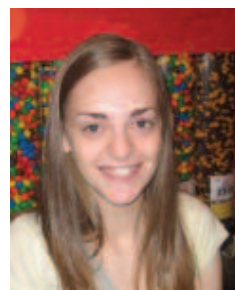
OUTER-BOROUGH OASIS

When things heat up in the summer, most local beaches are overrun with hordes fleeing the city’s hot concrete in search of a cool ocean breeze. So Brooklyn native Dante DeSole (STEINHARDT ’91) was surprised when he and his son stumbled upon **JACOB RIIS PARK** in the Rockaways. “I

thought it was odd that it wasn’t crowded,” he remembers, but this out-of-the-way oasis isn’t as easy to reach as Coney Island or Manhattan Beach. One must drive, or catch a bus or ferry, but DeSole says it’s worth the extra effort. And without any amusement park rides or concession stands, Jacob Riis is an ideal spot for more traditional activities such as surfing, picnics, and volleyball. Those seeking shelter from the sun can explore the grand Art Deco bathhouse—an architectural landmark opened in 1932 that now houses historic exhibits and adds to the shore’s striking view. “If you turn around, you can see the Manhattan skyline from the top of the beach,” DeSole says. “But you just don’t feel like you’re in the city.”

ROCKAWAY BEACH BOULEVARD (AT CHANNEL DRIVE) IN QUEENS, 718-318-4300; WWW.NYHARBORPARKS.ORG

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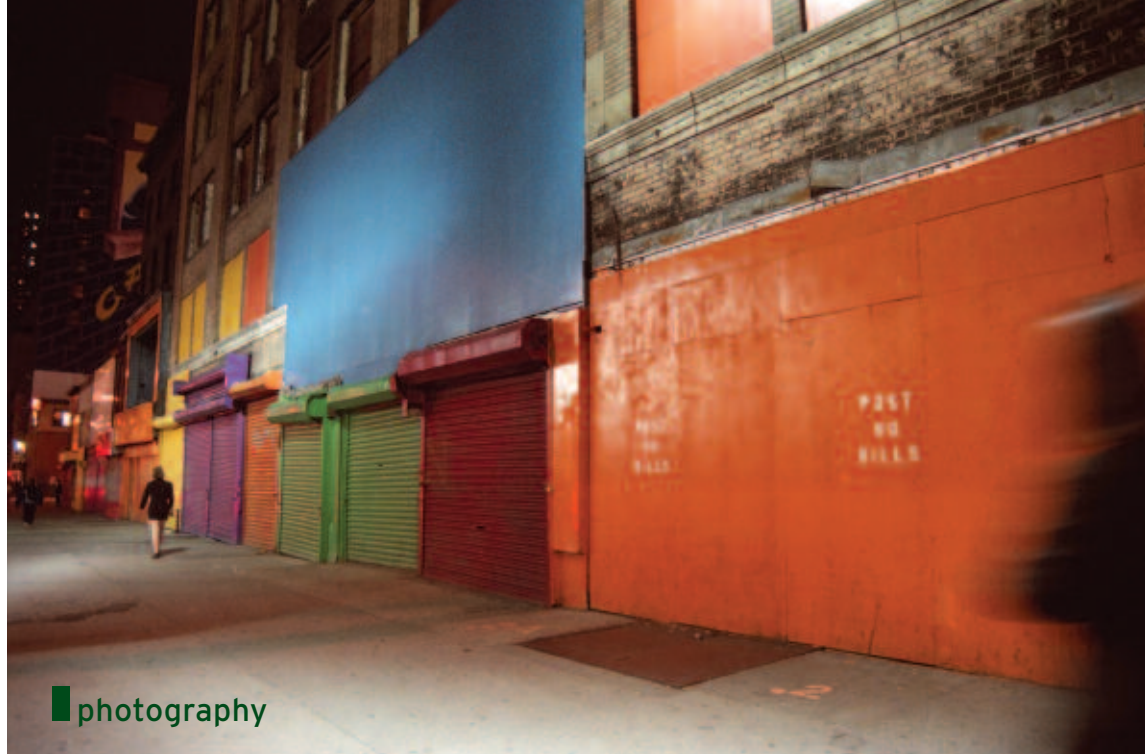
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photography

BRIGHT NIGHTS

PHOTOGRAPHER LYNN SAVILLE SEES NEW YORK CITY
IN A CERTAIN LIGHT

by Nicole Pezold / GSAS '04

Photographer Lynn Saville generally works alone. With a small, collapsible tripod and two cameras, she scouts New York City's unpopulated, weed-choked fringes, from Gowanus in Brooklyn to Hunts Point in the Bronx, by both bus and foot. She may wander up and down a desolate block absorbed by angles and, especially, points of illumination. She shoots at twilight, when the sky fades in cinematic tension with freshly lit street lamps and floodlights. "I feel drawn to these places that seem almost pastoral, that had been industrial and now things are shifting; forgotten unloved places," Saville explains.

Unloved they may be, but Saville's lens, as revealed in her recent book *Night/Shift* (Mona-

celli), bestows them with an unexpected beauty. Luminous blues, from desert turquoise to cobalt, accented with pinks, oranges, and amber, highlight empty rail yards, loading docks, shells of warehouses, the bellies of overpasses, and elevated subway platforms. Saville admits she felt some urgency to record these streetscapes because—even in the midst of a recession—it seems only a matter of time before they're claimed for condos, bank branches, and Duane Reades. "I love the way the city looks now and have this fear that developers will come and collapse whole blocks and put up something anonymous," she says. Saville, who co-teaches the "New York at Twilight" course with night photographer Kay Kenny at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, has amassed two

decades worth of nighttime images, much of them focused on the city's architecture, and pieces from her oeuvre grace the collections of the Brooklyn Museum and the New York Public Library. Art critic Arthur Danto, in *Night/Shift's* introduction, compares her to Eugène Atget, the ambitious photographer who documented Paris's empty streets in the early 20th century.

Saville is no preservationist. She was trained at the Pratt Institute as a street photographer. In the vein of celebrated artists André Kertész and Garry Winogrand, she set out to capture the experience of street life at random moments—but was drawn to the urban landscape instead. She credits her fascination with light to a drawing class, where a model was sitting under a spotlight. The assignment was to fill a piece of pa-



PHOTOS © LYNN SAVILLE

LEFT: IN "WEST 42ND STREET," SAVILLE CAPTURES THE SEEDY TIMES SQUARE OF 1998 BEFORE ITS FULL CLEANSING. RIGHT: SHE HAS ALSO TRAINED HER LENS ON LESSER KNOWN INDUSTRIAL QUARTERS, SUCH AS THE HACKENSACK BRIDGE.

per with charcoal and then erase to find the image. "It was a major moment for me," Saville says, to realize one could bring light out of dark. Ever since, she has tried to replicate that grainy contrast in her photos. In her 1997 book, *Acquainted With the Night* (Rizzoli), this aesthetic lent a film noir look to black-and-white images of New York and far-flung places such as Greece and India.

Recently, Saville has started to confront a problem: people

ethereal figure made the picture. Her next project is to capture more of these sorts of anonymous interlopers. Some neighborhoods, however, are now so clogged with foot traffic that they no longer lend themselves as subjects. Today it would be impossible to re-create "West 42nd Street," taken just off Times Square in 1998. In the photograph, a wall of shabby, rainbow-shuttered businesses looms at the viewer, while a leggy woman, likely a prostitute,

Saville felt some urgency to record these streets before they're claimed for condos, bank branches, and Duane Reades.

walking into her shots. As she was snapping "39 Washington Street," in the DUMBO section of Brooklyn for her latest book, a young woman in a white dress hurried into the shadows of the frame. At first Saville was annoyed, but sifting through the negatives she realized that this

sashays into the background. "I was actually scared that someone was going to mug me," Saville remembers of the shoot. "Now the problem is somebody will trip over your tripod." ■

Saville is represented by Yancey Richardson Gallery.

fashion

Music That Wears Well

They're paired with skinny jeans and a scarf at Urban Outfitters. They're on the rack next to the LnA collection at Bloomingdale's. They're pictured in the pages of *Nylon* magazine and on *Vogue*'s blog. Jeremy Wineberg's Music Tees have arrived—now if only they were easier to explain.

Wineberg (GAL '11) came up with the idea to put the cover art (on front) and track names (back) from new albums onto T-shirts. Simple enough, right? But the shirts also come with a tag displaying a code that enables fashionistas to download the album from Music Tee's Web site. And despite Wineberg's initial difficulty explaining the concept—he kept reinforcing that the shirt doesn't actually play music—Music Tees have attracted a cultish following and collaboration with artists such as David Gray, Mos Def, and **Perez Hilton (TSOA '00)**, pictured below. "It's still fairly new but has this cool factor," Wineberg says.

The grad student will soon expand his fashion horizons with the Movie Tee, which features art from upcoming films and lets wearers download them after release. Just think Netflix meets American Apparel.

—Lori Higginbotham



PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES

CREDITS

ALUMNI ON THE HUNT FOR AWARDS SEASON GOLD

GEOFFREY FLETCHER (TSOA '99) became the first African-American screenwriter to win an Academy Award when he took home the Best Adapted Screenplay statue this year for the drama *Precious*, for which he also won Best First Screenplay at the Film Independent's Spirit Awards... **JUAN JOSÉ CAMPANELLA** (TSOA '78, '88) snagged the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film for *El Secreto de Sus Ojos* (*The Secret in Their Eyes*), which he wrote and directed... **NICKIE RAN HUAI** (SCPS '04), **SHAHAR LEVAVI** (SCPS '04), and **BRETT MCCONNELL** (SCPS '03) worked as part of the groundbreaking visual-effects team on James Cameron's \$400-million-blockbuster *Avatar*, which won three Oscars—including Best Visual Effects—of nine total nominations, among them **GWENDOLYN YATES WHITTLE**'s (TSOA '84) nod for Best Sound Editing... **SALLY MENKE** (TSOA '77), who edits all of Quentin Tarantino's movies, was up for Best Film Editing for *Inglourious Basterds*... The dark comedy *A Serious Man* earned **JOEL COEN** (TSOA '78) and brother Ethan two Oscar nominations, including Best Picture, as well as a nod for Best Director at the Spirit Awards, where they were also honored with the Robert Altman Award alongside the film's casting director **RACHEL TENNER** (WSC '92)... **CARY JOJI FUKUNAGA**'s (TSOA nongrad alum) immigration thriller *Sin Nombre*, which he wrote as his NYU graduate thesis, scored three Spirit Award nods, including Best Director and Best Feature... The star-studded musical *Nine*, produced by **MARC PLATT** (LAW '82), racked up four nominations at the Oscars and five more at the Golden Globe Awards... **ALEC BALDWIN** (TSOA '94) pulled off a hat trick this



awards season with three Best Actor wins—at the Emmy, Golden Globe, and Screen Actors Guild awards—for his role as the sharp-tongued network suit on the NBC comedy *30 Rock*... *The Hangover*, directed by **TODD PHILLIPS** (TSOA '94), was named Best Comedy at the Golden Globe Awards, where **MARTIN SCORSESE** (WSC '64, STEINHARDT '68, HON '92) was honored with the Cecil B. DeMille Award for lifetime achievement... **MICHAEL C. HALL** (TSOA '96) won Best Actor statues at both the Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild awards for his performance as the titular serial killer on Showtime's *Dexter*... **STEVE BODOW** (TSOA '95), **DAVID JAVERBAUM** (TSOA '95), and **ELIOTT KALAN** (TSOA '03) scored Emmys for Outstanding Writing for their Comedy Central hit *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*... **STEFANI GERMANOTTA** (TSOA nongrad alum), aka Lady Gaga, took home two Grammys for her multiplatinum debut album, *The Fame*... **KAREN ORZOLEK** (TSOA '01),

better known as front woman Karen O of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, was up for two Grammys, including Best Alternative Music Album... At this year's Sundance Film Festival, **DEBRA GRANIK** (TSOA '01) won both the dramatic Grand Jury Prize and the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award for writing and directing the bleak family tale *Winter's Bone*, with cinematography by **MICHAEL MCDONOUGH** (TSOA '98)... **NICK QUESTED** (TSOA '93) executive produced *Restrepo*, which follows a platoon in Afghanistan and was chosen for the U.S. documentary Grand Jury Prize... Audience awards at the festival went to **LUCY WALKER** (TSOA '98) for her documentary, *Waste Land*, about scavenging at the world's largest landfill, in the World Cinema competition, and TV actor **JOSH RADNOR** (TSOA '99) for his debut comedy *happythankyoumoreplease*, which he wrote, directed, and starred in... The Best of Next award—honoring a low-budget film—was given to *Home wrecker*, the screwball romantic comedy co-directed by **BRAD BARNES** (TSOA



'05), who penned the script with **SOPHIE GOODHART** (TSOA '03). Fellow alum **DANIEL VECCHIONE** (TSOA '09) was the film's cinematographer... **BARBARA WHITMAN** (GAL '88) is a producer of the Tony Award-winning musical *Next to Normal*, now in its second year on Broadway... Next month's romantic comedy *Letters to Juliet* stars Vanessa Redgrave and Amanda Seyfried, and was inspired by the eponymously named book by Ceil and **LISE FRIEDMAN** (GAL part-time professor). —Renée Alfuso

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BACK ON THE HORSE

A ONCE-PROLIFIC WRITER
OVERCOMES THE
CACOPHONY OF SUCCESS

by Amy Rosenberg



In the title story of Elizabeth Gilbert's short story collection, *Pilgrims* (Penguin), 19-year-old Martha Knox leaves her home in rural Pennsylvania and finds work as a ranch hand in Wyoming. She saves her money to buy a scrawny horse and, when a co-worker dares her to ride away to Mexico with him, she calls his bluff. She begins to ride off, until he awkwardly climbs onto the saddle with her and they both tumble to the ground. As they lie there, unhurt, he watches a shooting star fall across the sky. But Martha is undistracted. "If [she] saw this," Gilbert writes, "it was only as she was reaching up already with one hand for her horse's reins, and it wasn't something she mentioned."

The story may have autobiographical elements—like her protagonist, Gilbert (WSUC '91) grew up on a Christmas tree farm, and she spent a year working on a ranch in Wyoming—but that final image says the most about her:

tic Makes Peace With Marriage (Viking Adult). When she sat down to compose this one, she had those familiar reins in hand. But then she looked at her 500-page draft and knew that there was a problem. "The voice didn't

For the first time in her life, Gilbert was trying to satisfy millions of readers.

a young woman reaching for the reins while everyone else is still catching their breath. That same unhesitating determination has carried Gilbert through the stages of her career. Or at least it did until she attempted to write her newest book, *Committed: A Skep-*

sound like me," she explains. "The voice didn't sound like anybody." And she had no idea how to fix it—how to "write naturally."

Gilbert buried the manuscript in a drawer and asked her publisher for more time. She went to work in her tomato garden, dig-



PHOTO © LAURA PEDRICK/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

Book, and National Book Critics Circle awards), it was *Eat, Pray, Love* that introduced her to the greater public. With 57 weeks at No. 1 on *The New York Times* paperback nonfiction best-seller list, translation into more than 30 languages, and international praise, the book made Gilbert famous in a way that she never anticipated.

Needless to say, she was happy about its reception, but she also found her popularity somewhat perplexing. After all, she had been writing stories steadily since high school, refusing to stop despite accumulating five years of magazine rejection slips. When she was finally published in the pages of *Esquire*, she landed an agent and a job as a journalist, but she thought she was launching a literary career that might appeal to a small circle of readers. As she embarked on *Committed*, with five million copies of *Eat, Pray, Love* in print, expectation reared its head for the first time. Gilbert knew her next book would be subjected to an avalanche of attention—"probably more than anything else I'll ever write," she says.

Committed truly deserves attention. It elegantly combines Gilbert's personal story about her decision to remarry with an exploration of the history of marriage and the ideas that have shaped the institution. And it's written with the same warm intimacy that drove the voice in *Eat, Pray, Love*, which is how she finally conquered the creative barrier that fame produced. "I discovered that the only way I could write again was to vastly limit, at least in my own imagination, the number of people I was writing for," says Gilbert, ticking off the names of about 25 family members and friends who have offered her love and support and conversation "over many cups of tea and booze." And then she let the conversation flow again—naturally. ■

ging in the dirt for a few months while she puzzled out what was stymieing her. She meditated for a long time before realizing the problem: For the first time in her life, she was trying to satisfy millions of readers.

Those throngs were the devoted fans of *Eat, Pray, Love* (Viking Adult), Gilbert's memoir about a year she spent exploring cuisine in Italy, finding God in India, and seeking equilibrium in Indonesia after a devastating divorce. Though Gilbert had published three books before it (*Pilgrims*, a novel, and a biography), and though those books had won acclaim (a Pushcart Prize, two *New York Times* Notable Book designations, and nominations for the Pen/Hemingway, National

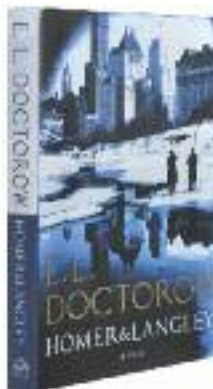
■ bibliofile

DOROTHEA LANGE:
A LIFE BEYOND LIMITS
(W.W. NORTON)
LINDA GORDON
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY



This vivid biography trains an eye on Dorothea Lange, the demanding yet sensitive woman who visually defined the Depression by documenting its most desperate victims. Marked by her parents' separation and a childhood bout of polio, the photographer headed from a middle-class, East Coast upbringing to bohemian San Francisco. There she married famed Western painter Maynard Dixon and—as her social conscience awakened—later left him for progressive economist Paul Schuster Taylor. Interspersed with this tale are selections from her oeuvre—a black girl studiously churning butter, a son on his father's shoulders at a Japanese internment camp—as well as portraits of the artist herself. Though Linda Gordon's affection for Lange is palpable, she doesn't whitewash a personal life as raucous as the times. —Nicole Pezold

HOMER & LANGLEY
(RANDOM HOUSE)
E.L. DOCTOROW
LEWIS AND LORETTA
GLUCKSMAN PROFESSOR
IN AMERICAN LETTERS



In his latest novel, E.L. Doctorow reimagines the real-life Collyer brothers, recluses who rose to fame for their compulsive hoarding in the first half of the 20th century in New York City. Homer, the novel's sightless narrator, recounts with sensitivity how he and Langley come to fill their Fifth Avenue mansion with all manner of things "bought or salvaged in expectation of their possible usefulness." Eventually the brothers grow besieged by the cascading walls of "collectibles" (and filth)—including an eclectic array of pianos (from their childhood Aeolian to an electronic keyboard), a Model T Ford parked in the salon, and ceiling-high piles of newspapers—and an isolation-induced hostility toward the outside world. With this yarn, *The New Yorker* noted, "Doctorow has evoked an American folk-myth writ small."

—André Tartar

What I'm Reading: Poet and Author Stephen Haven

Stephen Haven (GSAS '95) doesn't fit the poet stereotype. He's just as happy talking about the Boston Celtics as he is Byron. And in addition to holding an MFA in poetry from the University of Iowa, he went on to earn a PhD in American Civilization at NYU, which helps him write with both poise and intimacy about everything from abstract expressionists Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman to his time spent touring China as a Fulbright lecturer.

The author more recently penned *The River Lock: One Boy's Life Along the Mohawk* (Syracuse University Press) about his conflicted adolescent years with a minister father in an Upstate New York mill town. The memoir was nominated for a National Book Award in 2008, and Haven, currently an English professor and director of the MFA program at Ashland University, was named Co-Ohio Poet of the Year in 2009.

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

I recently finished a book by [artist and writer] Nicolai Cikovsky about George Inness [American painter known for his nature studies].

WHY GEORGE INNESS?

I'm writing a poem about his painting *Summer Landscape 1894*, so I decided to read a critical biography of his life. I believe it was one of the last paintings he completed before his death. I'm also reading about 10 pages an



PHOTO © ALLISON HOOVER

hour of this thick philosophy book, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth*, by theologian David Bentley Hart, and I'm holding my breath to see if it will influence my writing in about 10 years.

DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES THAT INFLUENCE WHAT YOU READ?

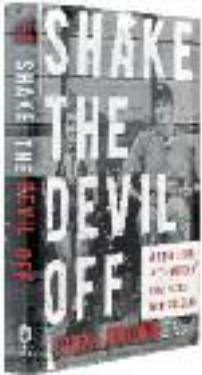
I'm an NBA basketball fan. Bill Russell [Celtics center from 1956–69] was a hero in my childhood, so I read everything I could about the Boston Celtics. In graduate school at the University of Iowa, I took a class with a Melville scholar who was also a rabbi, Jay Holstein. He loved basketball, and he gave me biographies of Russell with all the savory details [of Russell's wild personal life] that I wasn't allowed as a child. So I was studying Melville with a rabbi who knew more about basketball than I did. —Lori Higginbotham

For centuries, American Jewry had rightly seen itself as a net importer of Judaica from Europe and had self-critically believed that in terms of Jewish culture, religious or secular, the Europeans did it better than the Americans, occupants of the backwater of the Jewish world. [Post-WWII] the denizens of the Jewish hinterland, the United States, had no one to rely on. If they sought a vibrant Jewish life, they had to do it themselves.... Reform Rabbi William Berkowitz, in a 1961 book...opened with “A Message to the Twentieth Century Jew,” articulating a common sentiment of the postwar years: “We, today, have witnessed one of the darkest chapters in our long history. Our mighty centers of culture have been destroyed, the Yeshivoth of Poland, of Austria, of Hungary are no longer on the map.... In the span of our lifetime we have witnessed the massacres of one third of our nation.” He then asked, “Are we,” the Jews of the United States, “prepared and willing to assume a dominant role in Jewish cultural activities?”

EXCERPTED FROM HASIA R. DINER'S *WE REMEMBER WITH REVERENCE AND LOVE: AMERICAN JEWS AND THE MYTH OF SILENCE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST, 1945-1962* (NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009). USED WITH PERMISSION.

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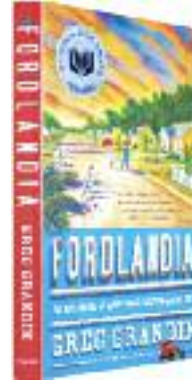
SHAKE THE DEVIL OFF: A TRUE STORY OF THE MURDER THAT ROCKED NEW ORLEANS (HENRY HOLT)
ETHAN BROWN
 GSAS '98



"Please help me stop the pain" were the words spray-painted on the ceiling above the bed of 28-year-old Zackery Bowen, who committed suicide by jumping from the roof of a New Orleans hotel in 2006. Soon after, police found the charred, dismembered body of Bowen's girlfriend, Addie Hall, in his oven. New York journalist Ethan Brown was vacationing there with his wife when the story broke and moved to New Orleans the following summer to investigate why a charming young bartender, so beloved in the French Quarter, would commit one of the most gruesome crimes in city memory. Brown's harrowing portrait of Bowen's life as an Iraq war veteran suffering from untreated PTSD is just as startling as the author's firsthand account of a deteriorating post-Katrina New Orleans.

—Renée Alfuso

FORDLANDIA: THE RISE AND FALL OF HENRY FORD'S FORGOTTEN JUNGLE CITY (METROPOLITAN BOOKS)
GREG GRANDIN
 PROFESSOR OF HISTORY



In 1927, Henry Ford founded Fordlandia, a vast plantation on a fork of the Amazon River, to provide rubber for his automobiles. If one person could bring "white man's magic" to the Brazilian jungle, as the *Washington Post* declared, it was the magnate synonymous with efficiency. Anti-intellectual, anti-dairy (he was obsessed with soy), and anti-Semitic, Ford dreamed of building a model Midwestern town, which his cars were ironically transforming back home. Plagued with corruption, Fordlandia instead became a lawless frontier town, its overseers failing to grasp basic Amazonian ecology. A National Book Award finalist, the work was called "Conradian" and a "reflection of one man's personality—arrogant, brilliant, and very odd" by *The New York Times*. —N.P.



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ONCE SLATED FOR DEMOLITION, THE HIGH LINE IS BORN AGAIN—THANKS TO A PERFECT STORM OF PUBLIC WILL, PRIVATE INTERESTS, AND (UNCHARACTERISTIC) CITY COOPERATION BY JILL HAMBURG COPLAN

IN THE SPRING OF 2001,

writer Adam Gopnik (IFA '84) climbed 30 feet up onto a derelict freight railway, tucked mostly out of sight between 10th and 11th avenues. He began near its northern terminus at 34th Street, sliding under a chain-link fence and skirting a wild glade of ailanthus trees growing between the rails. Farther south he found a junkyard and a homeless encampment. He was following photographer Joel Sternfeld, who was recording four seasons of shifting moods on the viaduct, which had become, after 20-odd years of disuse and decay, an accidental meadow in the sky.

In “A Walk on the High Line,” published in *The New Yorker* with Sternfeld’s photos that May, Gopnik wrote that

the space “combines the appeal of those fantasies in which New York has returned to the wild with an almost Zen quality of measured, peaceful distance.” The magazine piece would be, it seemed, the High Line’s eulogy—though he did note in passing that some local preservationists hoped to turn the structure into a park. The idea “seemed to me both completely quixotic and wonderfully bold,” Gopnik says today. “I also thought: It doesn’t stand a chance of ever happening.”

Gopnik’s story, it turned out, was just the broadsheet that advocates needed to make their case. The article was the first improbable turning point in the creation of New York’s newest icon—one of the boldest reinventions in a city constantly reinventing itself. Set to celebrate its first anniversary in June 2010, the High Line has been drawing crowds of as many as 25,000 people a day since it opened as a public park. Resurrected by a who’s who of global design and landscaping luminaries, the space has been lauded in newspapers and magazines from Turkey to Argentina, and beyond. On a recent Sunday afternoon, Korean landscape design students admired the river, a yogi in red stripes did sun salutations, and an elderly couple chatted in German. Amid the hoopla, it’s easy to forget that the space was once slated for destruction.

The 1.5-mile High Line hugs the West Side, from Gansevoort Street up to a fishhook swing around the West Side Rail Yards at 34th Street. Built in the early 1930s by the New York Central Railroad, it rolls in places inside warehouses and factories, where trains shunted milk, livestock, produce, and other goods. It replaced a street train that collided so often with traffic that 10th Avenue was once nicknamed Death Avenue. In 1980, its last delivery was three carloads of frozen turkeys. With time and neglect, Chelsea landlords called the trestle a blight and Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s administration condemned it to be torn down. Had Conrail (later CSX) and the city not been deadlocked over who’d pay the millions for removal, it would have been demolished long ago.

Its survival is a credit to the visionaries who saw a possibility that was far from obvious, as well as the unusual alignment of commercial interests, city government, and the foundation sector, which found common cause in the healing process following September 11. Joshua David, a writer, and Robert Hammond, a painter, formed Friends of the High Line in 1999 but got little notice until Gopnik’s article, and later, the terror attacks, brought attention and a change in perspective. New Yorkers wanted to help the wounded lower West Side. Michael Bloomberg’s election soon after marked the next turning point, as



PHOTO © IMAN BAHN / COURTESY FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

advocates released feasibility studies proving that the park would create enough new tax revenue to pay for itself. Just like that, the mayor and a growing circle of politicians got on board.

In one of Bloomberg's early acts after taking office in 2002, City Hall proposed that the High Line be designated a federal rails-to-trails park under a 20-year-old act that's converted 15,000 miles of U.S. railroad into recreational space. Soon, the High Line became the centerpiece of the administration's plans for reviving the West Side and caught fire with Congressional reps, state legislators in Albany, and corporate donors and celebrities including actor Kevin Bacon, whose father was a Philadelphia urban planner. Clothing designer Diane von Furstenburg and her husband, NYU Trustee Barry Diller, donated \$5 million early on; Diller also commissioned Frank Gehry to design his IAC/InterActiveCorp company headquarters beside the railroad. It took four more years for the park project to weave through a bureaucratic maze before, in spring 2006, ground was broken.

Part of the credit for putting the High Line on this relatively fast track should go to NYC Planning Commissioner Amanda Burden. An early advocate of the project, Burden, according to *Crain's New York Business*, helped devise a plan that won the support of certain building owners by allowing them to erect structures larger than the neighborhood limit. Adrian Benepe, commissioner of the NYC Parks and Recreation Department, believes that this was a key driver of the process, noting the irony of Giuliani's original desire to demolish the rails because they were blocking real development. Mitchell Moss, Henry Hart Rice Professor of Urban Policy and Planning at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, calls the mass effort a "remarkable convergence" of skilled activists, and an enthusiastic mayor, planning commissioner, and city council who all envisioned a project that would somehow benefit every interest involved. In the scheme of New York undertakings, Moss says, "this was really one of a kind."

Architects flocked to it: Some 720 teams entered a design contest run by the city. The winners were marquee names: James Corner Field Operations (now heading up the transformation of Fresh Kills landfill into a park) and Diller Scofidio + Renfro (master planners for Governors Island Park and the new Lincoln Center redesign). A dozen-plus firms were picked for engineering, lighting, soil science, and irrigation. Tracks and rails were removed, tagged, and stored; steel and cement were sandblasted, waterproofed, and repaired. Then came constructing stairs, ramps, elevators, and installing drainage, paths, an amphitheater, hundreds of plant species, seating, and LED lighting. Section 1 (Gansevoort to 20th Street) cost \$86 million, and Section 2 (20th to 30th Street), which will open later this year, came in at \$66 million, says Katie Lorah (GAL '05), spokesperson for Friends of the High Line.

TODAY, THE TOUGH GRASSES

that poke through walkways, the rugged geometry of old rivets, and the metallic stairs pay tribute to the clang of bygone industry. Bits of salvaged rail peek through drifts of perennials. Visitors may be easily enchanted by the High Line, but architecture critics have also sung its praises, comparing the meandering path to Rome's Appian Way, Victorian and Japanese stroll gardens, Italian futurist visions of floating trains, and even the elevated cable cars of Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man*. Part of the charm can be attributed to its unique height, says Hilary Ballon, University Professor of Urban Studies and Architecture at Wagner. "We have street-level views and we have skyline views, but this third-story view, which slices through the city, is exciting and different," she notes.

Creating public parks with an eye on real estate and commercial benefits is not a new concept. Green spaces have inspired urban renewal in New York since the Parks Department was created in 1870, Ballon says. Even with the heavy economic recession, the High Line has already triggered 33 developments, from housing (500 units, with 800 more planned) to hotels, Commissioner Burden says. In October, the Whitney Museum of American Art announced that it was buying a city-owned meatpacking plant on Gansevoort Street for a new downtown satellite building by star architect Renzo Piano. It will join other high-profile edifices in the High Line's shadow—including Gehry's and one recently designed by Jean Nouvel.

Renewal was on city planners' minds when they fit the High Line, puzzle-like, into the rezoning of the warehouse and manufacturing district, explains James Stuckey, divisional dean of the NYU Schack





1. Gansevoort Stairs

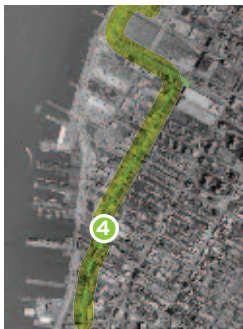
At the High Line's southern end, where Gansevoort and Washington streets meet, a glass-walled steel-and-aluminum staircase is cut into the structure, exposing its giant beams. Up top, the overlook offers a window onto the Meatpacking District, and nearby is a mini forest reminiscent of the ailanthus groves that sprouted here (though as an aggressive invader, it hasn't been planted).

2. Sundeck

Above 14th Street is a popular hangout: a wooden sundeck with dark hardwood benches and chaise lounges facing the Hudson River. Set on wheels, the seats roll along the rails and are coveted spots on sunny days and at sunset.

3. Chelsea Market Passage

The High Line railroad once passed inside warehouses, including the Chelsea Market, to make deliveries. One loading dock is now an airy tunnel where a wall of factory windows has turned public art in Spencer Finch's *The River That Flows Both Ways*, 700 panes of glass stained the many colors of water and drawn from photos the Brooklyn artist took of the Hudson.



4. 10th Avenue Square

At 17th Street, a wooden amphitheater is suspended vertiginously above the middle of 10th Avenue. The view allows visitors an unobstructed gaze both uptown and down to the Statue of Liberty. At night, soft LED lighting, at waist level or lower, avoids upstaging the sky and city lights.





Institute of Real Estate at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. A longtime developer of private-public endeavors, Stuckey gave the High Line official approval in stages, from 2004–07, as president of the New York City Public Design Commission. The goal was saving the “view-cape,” he says, so even as the complicated viaduct winds between and through old structures, no new buildings obstruct sightlines, either toward the city or the Hudson River. “Preserving the structure created a unique open area that would otherwise have been covered by the canyon effect,” Stuckey explains.

Planners hope that the High Line will eventually work its magic north from 30th to 34th Street, though that stretch is still owned by CSX. In March 2010, the first hurdle was cleared as Midtown’s Community Board 4 voted in favor of allowing the city to acquire the remaining platform. The High Line there is soot-blackened, draped in barbed wire, and surrounded by construction sites, but planners would like this last, undeveloped corner of Manhattan to become a corridor of offices and apartment towers linked with Chelsea. A flowering High Line would anchor it all.

THE HIGH LINE’S SUCCESS

has already inspired other cities to imagine repurposing their aging civil engineering. Movements are afoot to reclaim railways for parkland at the Reading Terminal viaduct in Philadelphia, the Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago, the BeltLine in Atlanta, and the Harsimus Stem Embankment in Jersey City. The “quixotic” idea that Gopnik noted in his *New Yorker* piece actually proved to be quite practical. “It’s a model for reusing any old infrastructure for the public’s benefit,” Stuckey says.

Today Gopnik, who’s authored two best-selling memoirs, is delighted and amazed at the small role that

his story played. His son, who was a little boy when he wrote the piece, is now 15 and spends countless hours on the High Line with his friends. “They use it the way Italian 15-year-olds use a piazza,” Gopnik says. “They go strolling, I imagine talk to girls, and have their lunch. I thought it might be a lonesome place, but it’s crowded with people. It filled a need we didn’t even know we had.” ■

5. Chelsea Grasslands

Around 18th Street, the Empire State Building comes into view and an urban prairie flourishes. The fashionably unkempt style uses tough, low-maintenance grasses and perennials to evoke the untamed meadow described in the *New Yorker* story. Hundreds of species of sedges, catmints, and coneflowers, among others, mound in the hot months and die back in winter. The long cement planks of the path are tapered, like fingers, allowing plants to fill the gaps and overgrow remnants of the original rails.

6. Northern Terminus

Section 1 ends at 20th Street, though work is proceeding on Section 2, which will extend to 30th Street. Plants go into the soil this spring, and the viaduct will be painted a fresh green. As shown in the rendering at right, the High Line is narrower here—30 versus 60 feet wide to the south—and straighter, but it, too, will have distinctive architectural features, such as a glass-bottomed bridge.





PHOTOS 5 & 6 © IWAN BAAN / COURTESY FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE; 6 © JAMES CORNER FIELD OPERATIONS AND DILLER SCOFIDIO & RENFRO/COURTESY THE CITY OF NEW YORK



GREEN STREETS

It's a fair bet that the Manhates Indians—the original Village “locals”—would be awestruck if they walked along West Fourth Street in 2010. They'd find tall edifices, honking cars, and a stream of people inexplicably consumed with their Black-Berries and iPhones. But at the

corner of West Fourth and Washington Square East, they'd also find a garden that just might offer a little sense of home and comfort amidst the chaos of the modern world.

Situated between Bobst Library and Shimkin Hall, NYU's Native Woodland Garden boasts 39 species of native plants, including assorted ferns, sedge, wild ginger, and sarsaparilla. The 2,200-square-foot patch offers a small, rare glimpse of the landscape that the Manhates might have known in 1609. In the centuries since, these species have become so foreign here that some seeds had to be imported from Ohio, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The new plot is an ecological anomaly on an island once marked with valleys, grasslands, oak forests, salt

marshes, wetlands, springs, ponds, and streams.



The Native Woodland Garden is the first to be planted as part of the Mannahatta Project, an effort by the Wildlife Conservation Society to remember and re-create the natural history of New York City. A legacy gift of NYU's Class of 2008, the garden was designed by American Horticultural Society award-winner Darrel Morrison and serves as a reminder of how easily native flora thrive in contrast to exotic plants, which need to be constantly watered and pumped with chemicals. “It'll take two years to get it established and then, hopefully, we just leave it alone,” says head gardener George Reis (CAS '10), who aims to make NYU “a horticulturally significant place.”



PHOTOS © GEORGE REIS

Reis has been working with Cecil Scheib, director of energy and sustainability, to enhance NYU's landscape—from

planters around Pless Hall bursting with fresh vegetables, which are free to the public, to the tulip garden at Coles Sports Center, which inspires spontaneous photos all spring. “I've found the public takes it personally,” says Reis, who often fields questions and suggestions from passersby. And unlike schools with sprawling, bucolic campuses, NYU's green patches are under an unusual microscope—constant foot traffic means that far more people will see them in a given year than see the New York Botanical Garden. As Reis says: “Any garden that we do at NYU is a public garden.”

—Jason Hollander

THE MASTER'S NEW GIG

FORMER MET DIRECTOR—AND FIRST-TIME
PROFESSOR—PHILIPPE DE MONTEBELLO TAKES THE
PODIUM TO EXPLAIN HOW COLLECTORS HAVE
ANOINTED “ART” THROUGH THE AGES
BY ANDREA CRAWFORD

Any person who has ever undertaken a sustained attempt at the pedagogical arts will tell you: There's nothing so hard as teaching your first class. You overprepare material and underanticipate the demands of your students. You exert considerable and unexpected physical and mental effort standing before a class-

room, trying to keep students fully engaged.

One such neophyte sinks into a chair. His two-hour lecture ended some 20 minutes earlier; finally, the last question has been answered and the last student has left the room. Graying, bespectacled, and wearing a tweed jacket over a V-neck sweater and tie, the teacher—despite his newness to the pro-

IN HIS FIRST COURSE, DE MONTEBELLO
TACKLED AN EXPANSIVE, YET OFTEN
OVERLOOKED TOPIC AMONG ART HISTO-
RIANS: THE HISTORY OF COLLECTING.



fession—is the very image of a professor of a certain age.

“It’s just exhausting,” says Philippe de Montebello, Fiske Kimball Professor in the History and Culture of Museums, and special adviser to the provost at NYU Abu Dhabi. “I’ve never worked so hard in my life.”

Could this really be?

In 31 years as director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, de Montebello increased the number of annual visitors by more than 30 percent—to 5.2 million people. He also doubled the museum’s physical size, steered the institution out of years of budget deficits, and negotiated an innovative landmark agreement that secured a series of major art loans from the Italian state in exchange for the return of almost two dozen classical artifacts of questionable provenance—including, most famously, the Euphronios krater, a Greek terra cotta bowl once used to mix water and wine. Discussions with the Italians were reportedly so stressful that de Montebello broke out with shingles.

Could teaching graduate students really be more difficult? It seems unlikely. But in deciding to enter a second career as professor at NYU’s Institute of Fine Arts, or IFA, the 73-year-old has chosen no easy path. He is not returning to his original specialty, Netherlandish painting of the 15th and 16th centuries (“My scholarly expertise was rapidly extinguished after I...left my curatorial work,” he says). Nor is he teaching the management of museums, a topic he knows more about than perhaps anyone else alive. Instead, he has chosen to take on an emerging field that many feel has been overlooked by art historians in the United States: the history of collecting—a tale driven by politics, religion, and culture that spans the ages.

Some may ask why it matters what some wealthy magnate bought decades or centuries ago, but collectors are essential to understanding art because they determine what is deemed worthy, particularly in the United States where museums are shaped by private collector-patrons rather than by the state. A booming art market has fueled much of the popular attention on individual collectors, along with high-profile repatriation cases—of disputed classical antiquities as well as artworks confiscated by the Nazis. But the issue also concerns artistic authenticity, reputation and biography, and art as an aesthetic as well as commercial experience. America’s major museums, now well over a century old, have only just begun to look at their histories to understand how they fit into a broader story.

To promote exactly this type of scholarship, Jonathan Brown, IFA’s Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Fine Arts, helped the Frick Collection establish the Center for the History of Collecting in America in 2007. “In Europe, it’s a very developed field,” says Brown, whose specialty is 16th- and 17th-century Spanish art. “But in the United States, that hasn’t been the case.” On this side of the Atlantic, he estimates that “there’s 95 percent of it still to be done.” Anne Poulet (IFA ’70), director of the Frick, be-

lieves this is why de Montebello is the perfect man for the job. She explains, “There’s no one teaching it from the particular perspective that he offers”—that of a former museum director of one of the world’s greatest institutions of art, who personally knows most of the major collectors of the late 20th century.

Brown agrees: “Philippe has a breadth of knowledge that very few can match,” adding, “and I’m sure he knows where a lot of skeletons are hidden.”

Each Tuesday morning last fall, some 20 students entered through the double doors of their classroom, the public auditorium at IFA, a former private mansion on East 78th Street and Fifth Avenue. It is the same building where de Montebello was once a PhD student before dropping out in 1963, when the Metropolitan came calling. (He eventually completed his master’s at IFA in 1976.)

Master’s candidates in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development’s arts administration program, as well as advanced doctoral students at the institute, aspire to be art historians, dealers, writers, museum curators, administrators, and educators. Even in the rarified air of the IFA, they arrive to class burdened by the usual detritus of modern academic life: coffee cups (despite official rules against food and drink in the room), water bottles, backpacks, laptops. Artemis Baltoyanni, from Athens, Greece, carries a skateboard to her front-row seat. Her professor—that man whose very name and patrician bearing is synonymous with cultural elitism—teases her about her creative mode of transportation.

They are here for de Montebello’s inaugural outing, a survey class titled “The Meaning of Museums,” during which he walks his students through the classical antecedents for museums, highlighting Greece and Rome. The presence of libraries predates museums, and he details the inventory at the Royal Library of Alexandria, created in the third century BCE, and the Athenian Treasury at Delphi, built around 500 BCE, where priests guarded the objects, acting, de Montebello notes wryly, as the first curators.

In fact, though, “museum-like behavior” occurred much earlier. Using the third millennium BCE as a starting point—because it marks the birth of great cities, the introduction of writing, and the codification of laws—the professor explains, “Of course there are no museums at this point, but there are accumulations of precious objects, and there are even, in those days, inventories,” which prefigure the important step of cataloguing. An excavation at the ancient Sumerian city of Ur, in modern-day Iraq, found what is considered the oldest museum label: a 19th-century BCE tablet describing an object, then 100 years old, presented, as it read, “for the marvel of the beholder.”

“My view is that the moment you have an aggregation of works of art, the moment that people have even limited access—even if it’s limited people who have access—you have the process of a gaze,” he says. “You have monuments, statuary, pre-

cious objects that are seen, and the moment they are seen, whether by artists or by, say, ordinary people, then they evoke some form of influence either on the artists or on people—if only—and turn some people, sometimes, into collectors.”

The journalist Charles McGrath once famously wrote that de Montebello “pronounces *Renaissance* in a way that practically reenacts it.” The former director’s voice and accent are familiar to anyone who has ever used an audio guide at the Met, and his classroom presence is what you would expect from a man well accustomed to giving public lectures. Standing behind the podium, he is erudite, humorous, charismatic, at times surprisingly intimate and conspiratorial. His lectures are laced with opinions on everything from ownership of cultural patrimony—“one of the reasons we have knowledge is precisely because it flowed freely across borders”—to what he thinks about the Louvre’s decision to open a McDonald’s, a point

says. “This is very different.” The course is fundamentally a dialogue with other scholars who are constantly questioning his thinking and demanding that he cite sources. At the beginning of the semester, he’d intended to trace an historical arc—from the Ottonian Renaissance, church treasuries, and the birth of the museum in the Enlightenment—to our modern-day institutions. But by the beginning of November, he was barely out of the 1400s and had not even reached the founding of the first official museum, the Museum Fridericianum, in Kassel, Germany, in 1779. Though he has smaller, issues-based colloquia and seminars planned for following semesters—including one this spring on cultural patrimony—the scope and format of this first course were a bit of a departure for a graduate curriculum where classes tend to be more specialized. It ran the risk of seeming elementary, as at least one student noted. However, Jonathan Brown, de

“UNLIKE THE MET, WHERE YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL,” DE MONTEBELLO SAYS, “THERE’S A TOTAL FREEDOM OF SPEECH AT UNIVERSITIES.”

that arises while describing how the ancient library at Alexandria included a place for scholars to eat.

Later, during the same lecture, he feels compelled to make an important—if also tangential—point. “Well, we’ll just set your minds to rest with the issue of the Euphronios krater,” he says, on the heels of a discussion about the high prices of art at auction following the Roman sack of Corinth in 146 BCE. “A lot of you have said to me, ‘Why did you return the Euphronios krater, painted by someone who lived in Attica, to the Italians? You might like to return it to Greece because it is their inventive genius; there’s nothing Roman about it.’ And my answer to this is the enormous difference there is between cultural property and cultural patrimony.” The Greeks made many of their greatest works specifically for export, he explains, and this bowl had been in the ground north of Rome for 2,600 years. “I think so far as the law compelled a return, it was a return to the country where it was found, where it lay so long,” he says.

As exhilarating as de Montebello appears to find teaching, he holds no illusions about its challenges. “In a public lecture, there are lots of flourishes, and they applaud and you walk out,” he

Montebello’s colleague, had another perspective. “It’s a gift from God,” he said, deadpan, and then laughed heartily. “I mean, the idea of spreading your wings wide and including such a vast sweep of time is something that, in the hands of the right person, is a legitimate enterprise.”

De Montebello could easily have filled his days as director emeritus or adviser to numerous institutions in any number of intellectually engaging and personally edifying ways. That he chose to enter the classroom suggests he has a particular mission. “There’s no question I’m hoping that I will inspire some good graduate student to opt for a museum rather than an academic career,” he says. And of those who become academics, he hopes to cause them to think in less abstract and theoretical ways. “What leads one to enter the academic world and the museum world is really a sense that one has a personal mission to enlighten and to help a lot of other people see things as we see them,” he says. “There’s a total freedom of speech at universities, unlike the Met, where you have to be careful that what you say does not embarrass the institution and its trustees. Now that I’m not there anymore, I may be freer to express myself.” ■



THE VANISHING YEZID

A YOUNG WRITER VISITS AN
ANCIENT PEOPLE AT THE CENTER
OF A MODERN CIVIL WAR

BY JARETT KOBEK / GAL 202



SHING OF IRAQ



AT THE END OF APRIL 2009,

I found myself in the backseat of a car crossing the Turkish border into Northern Iraq. Sitting beside the driver was my guide, a Turkish Kurd who'd nicknamed himself Montana. After a few minutes beneath the fluorescent lights of border control, we joined a long line of cars idling on a bridge over the Khabur River waiting to obtain our Iraqi entry visas. We spent the night in a border town, missing early the next morning and driving south until we reached the mouth of a crumbling asphalt road about 30 miles north of Mosul. It was guarded by two men in a ramshackle shelter with a single assault rifle resting between them. They spoke briefly with Montana and waved us through. Soon we were inside the valley of Lalish, the religious epicenter of an ancient people called the Yezidi. I had journeyed here for one reason: to see them before they disappear.

Like Iraq's other minorities, the Yezidi are exactly the kind of people for whom the ideal of Operation Iraqi Freedom held the most promise—a group long persecuted for their religious beliefs welcomed into the fabric of a newly “pluralistic” society. Reality has worked out differently. In the seven years since the American-led invasion, the Yezidi have suffered relentless violence and are presently caught in the middle of territorial disputes between the central Iraqi government and Northern Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government. The Kurdish director of Yezidi affairs told *The New York Times* in 2007 that of a population estimated between 200,000 and 500,000, more than 70,000 have fled into exile. “It's very grim,” said Samer Muscati, co-author of the Human Rights

Watch's *On Vulnerable Ground*, a recent report on minority communities in Iraq. “If the pressures they face continue and the Yezidi keep fleeing the country, the future looks bleak.”

MY father is a Turkish Muslim turned New Ager. My mother is Irish-American and raised me Catholic. This upbringing left me fascinated by those who elude easy categorization. So when I read about the Yezidi—whose practices resemble a spiritual pastiche with traces of Sufism, the mystical strain of Islam, as well as the ancient Persian religion Zoroastrianism and Kurdish folk belief—I was rapt. Yezidism holds that God created seven angels, chief among them Melek Ta'us, the Peacock

Angel, who in turn created the world and is the source of all beauty and good.

But for almost as long as there have been Yezidi, their culture has been misinterpreted by neighboring Muslims, who identify Melek Ta'us as Iblis, the Islamic Satan. Muslims believe the Yezidi worship the devil.

This has fueled centuries of persecution that reached a new height under Saddam Hussein. Throughout the late 1970s and '80s, Hussein's government subjected the Yezidi to “Arabization.” They were forcibly relocated and held in collective “villages” to cultivate their dependence on the state. Post-Hussein, the 2005 Iraqi Constitution granted Kurdish self-rule but avoided establishing borders. This has stoked tension between the Kurdistan Regional Government and central Iraq. Most discussion has focused on control of the oil-rich Kirkuk region, but the area that encompasses Lalish is equally contentious. Both the Arab and Kurdish governments claim this land as their own.

While these authorities wrestle for control, the Yezidi have come to know increasingly severe sectarian violence. The worst incident occurred on August 14, 2007, when four coordinated truck bombs exploded in two Yezidi villages, killing at least 500 people and wounding more than 1,500. It was the second deadliest terrorist attack in world history after 9/11. “Under Hussein, the establishment regarded Yezidis as the most expendable Kurds, who could be ill-treated without fear of public protest,” said Philip G. Kreyenbroek, director of the Institute of Iranian Studies at University of Göttingen, Germany, and one of a few scholars who had published widely on the Yezidi. “The new enemy, the Islamists, are driven by a more active hatred and have proved themselves capable of even greater horrors.”

The attack, along with two smaller incidents earlier that year, is widely believed to be part of a wave of radical Sunni Arab violence sparked, at least in part, in retaliation for the honor killing of a 17-year-old Yezidi girl, Du'a Khalil Aswad, who was reportedly dating a Sunni and may have converted to Islam. In April 2007, she was stoned to death by men from her family and Yezidi religious hard-liners. The incident was caught on video and prompted both Amnesty International and Sunni extremists to demand justice.

ALL of Lalish is considered sacred ground; a line of stone blocks prevents vehicles from entering the main portion of the valley, a moderately sized dale surround-



PHOTOS: PREVIOUS SPREAD © GUILLEM VALLE; THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT © JARETT KOBEN; © GUILLEM VALLE (2)

PREVIOUS SPREAD: INSIDE A TEMPLE OF THE YEZIDI, ONE OF MANY MINORITY CULTURES IN THE CROSSHAIRS OF STATE AND RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN KURDISTAN. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** BABA SHEIKH IS THE CURRENT SPIRITUAL LEADER OF THE YEZIDI, WHO BELIEVE THE WORLD WAS CREATED BY THE PEACOCK ANGEL, MELEK TA'US; THE VALLEY OF LALISH IS YEZIDISM'S MOST HOLY SITE AND A PLACE OF REGULAR PILGRIMAGE; WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN LALISH.

ed by rocky, scrub-spotted mountains. Other than the few people charged with upkeep and security, Lalish has no residents. It is a place purely for religious pilgrimage.

Lalish's most distinctive feature is a set of three fluted, conical spires that rise high into the air and mark the Yezidis' holiest site, the sanctuary and tomb of Sheikh Adi ibn Musafir. The historical origin of the Yezidi dates to the 11th century, when Adi arrived with the intention of founding the Adawiyya Sufi order. The central mystery of the early years is how a Sufi order morphed into Yezidism.

Several men greeted us at the walled entrance to the sanctuary. They led us into a courtyard and asked that we remove our shoes and socks, as custom prohibits footwear in the valley. We were then ushered into a modern room where tea was served. Among the men was Baba Sheikh, the current spiritual leader of the Yezidi. He was tall, with a long black beard, and was dressed in white robes. With Montana translating in Kurdish, I asked Baba Sheikh about Yezidism. He emphasized a belief in one God and focused on the core conviction that the Yezidi are the oldest people on Earth and descended solely from Adam. After Baba Sheikh finished, Montana, who is Muslim, turned to me and said, "I think he is afraid to say they worship the devil."

We then toured Adi's tomb. Inside, a long lamp-lit hallway contains an altar and a small spring-fed well, with whose water all Yezidi are expected to be baptized. The hall opens into the tomb of Sheikh Hasan, another Yezidi saint, which leads underground to the valley's second sacred spring, one of the few places barred from nonbelievers. Past Hasan's tomb, we entered the room of Sheikh Adi. Adi's tomb



A RAINBOW OF DEVOTIONAL ROBES COVER THE TOMB OF SHEIKH ADI, YEZIDISM'S 11TH-CENTURY FOUNDER.

This belonged to Mirza Dinnayi, a Yezidi who once served as an adviser on minority affairs to Jalal Talabani, president of Iraq's central government. Dinnayi had resigned in protest over perceived inaction on minority issues and exiled himself to Germany. He'd returned with several German scholars, who accompanied us up the mountain. As we walked, Dinnayi gave me his version of Yezidism. The gist was the same as what I'd heard before, but he emphasized its sun worship and relationship to Mithraism, a mysterious cult popular with Roman soldiers. It seemed slightly different than what Baba Sheikh described.

appeared pristine, peaceful. I asked Dinnayi how he envisioned the future. "I am not very optimistic," he said flatly. "With the Islamisation of society, there is a weekly exodus of 50 Yezidi from Iraq. The Kurdish government actively encourages anti-Yezidi policies, moving Muslims into Yezidi towns."

Although sectarian violence remains an enormous challenge, the greatest threat to the Yezidi may be the land disagreement between the Kurds and Baghdad. The Kurdistan Regional Government passed a draft constitution last summer claiming large swaths of the disputed territories, prompting Vice President Joe Biden to visit the region in an attempt to calm the situation. A recent report by Human Rights Watch warns the conflict has grown dire enough that it "risks creating another full-blown human rights catastrophe for the small minority communities" caught in the crossfire. By virtue of location, the Yezidi are on the frontline.

BEING YEZIDI IS A MATTER OF BIRTH RATHER THAN FAITH. THERE ARE NO CONVERTS.

stands against one wall of the room and is decorated in devotional cloths of many colors. The largest of Lalish's spires serves as the ceiling.

We wandered freely through the rest of the valley, moving in and out of its many shrines. Scattered throughout were sacred spots carved into the stone where olive oil is ritually burned. I was told that there are 365 such spots, one for every day of the year. When we returned to the reception room, Baba Sheikh was still holding court. A voice in English asked, "Would you like me to take you up the mountain?"

This was true of every conversation I had about Yezidism, which is best understood as a religious culture rather than a doctrinal religion. Being Yezidi is a matter of birth rather than faith. There are no converts. There is no written scripture, no book of rules. It is, and has been, a shifting oral culture passed down through families—and like any oral culture, it hosts contradictory ideas. Everything is a matter of debate, even the meaning of Lalish's rituals.

As we reached the top of the mountain, I could see out over Lalish's spires. The valley

AS I left Lalish, it was hard not to feel a sense of futility. Life under Saddam Hussein had been brutal for the Yezidi, but life since has been equally, if not more, blood-soaked. My mind wandered back to a moment as we sat drinking tea with Baba Sheikh. A piercing wail erupted from the courtyard. Emotion rippled through the room. In the end, it was only that a bee had stung a child. But the shriek had revealed something in the faces of the men beside me: fear.■



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CLAS S S NOTES



1940s

STANLEY TURKEL / STERN '47 / is a consultant in the hotel industry and author of *Great American Hoteliers: Pioneers of the Hotel Industry* (Authorhouse). Turkel serves on the board of advisers at the NYU Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management, where he also lectures.

ROBERT BRODSKY / ENG '48 / wrote *A Pilgrim Muddles Through* (Foxbro Press), a book of stories and essays that references John Wayne's famous epithet "pilgrim" and offers a glimpse of the trials and tribulations of a modern-day wanderer.

RONALD PROBSTEN / ENG '48 / is Ford Professor Emeritus of Engineering at MIT, and has been honored with membership in the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has published 10 acclaimed scientific books and more recently *Honest Sid: Memoir of a Gambling Man* (iUniverse), which follows his father's adventures in the world of bookies and bettors, fighters and fixers, and players and suckers in Depression-era New York.

WINIFRED STRONG / STEINHARDT '48 / celebrated the graduation of her grandson, **BENJAMIN BUSH / DEN '09** /, who will continue a four-year special-training program

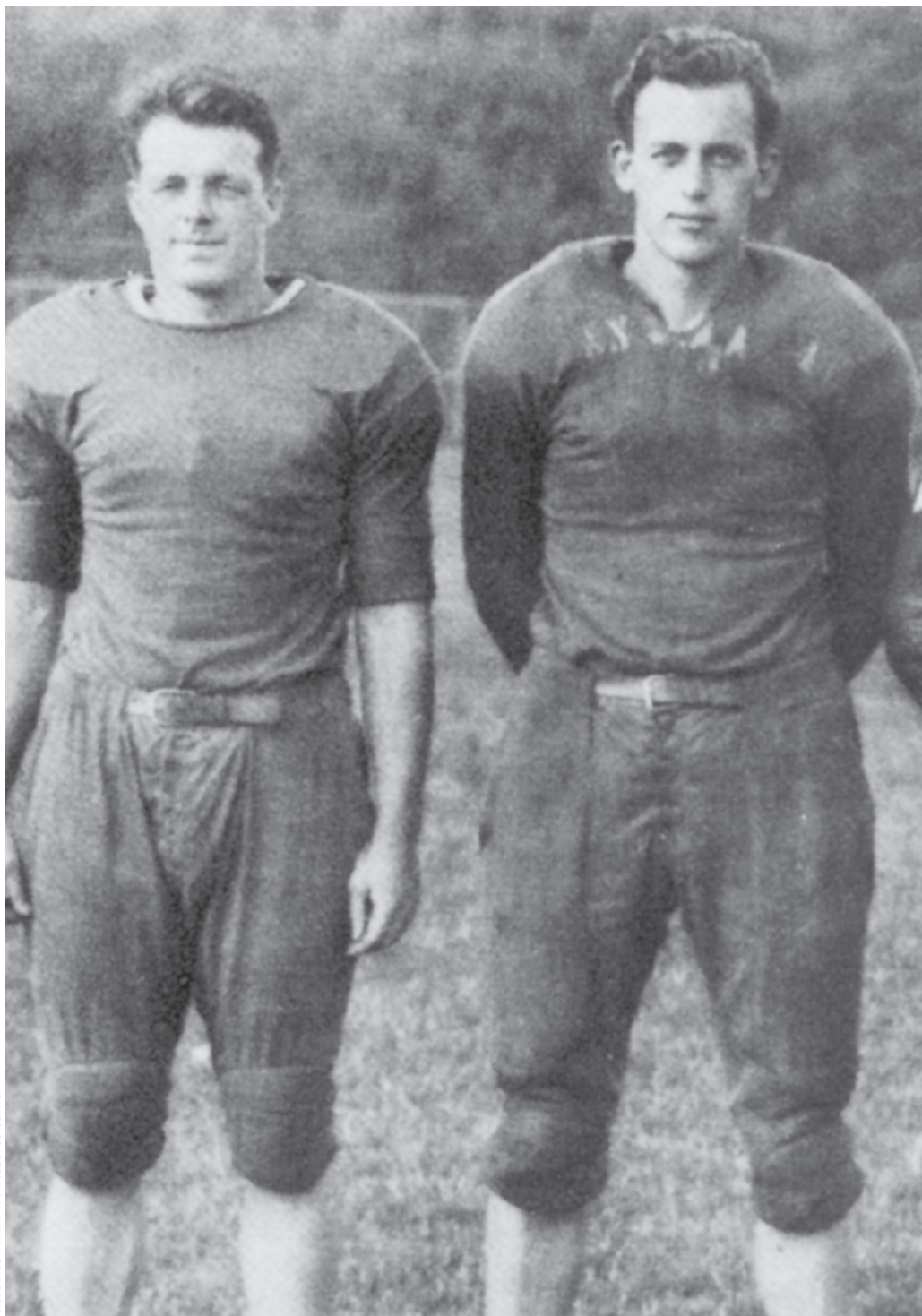


PHOTO COURTESY SAL SONMA COLLECTION

in oral surgery as a resident at Lincoln Medical Center in the Bronx, NY.

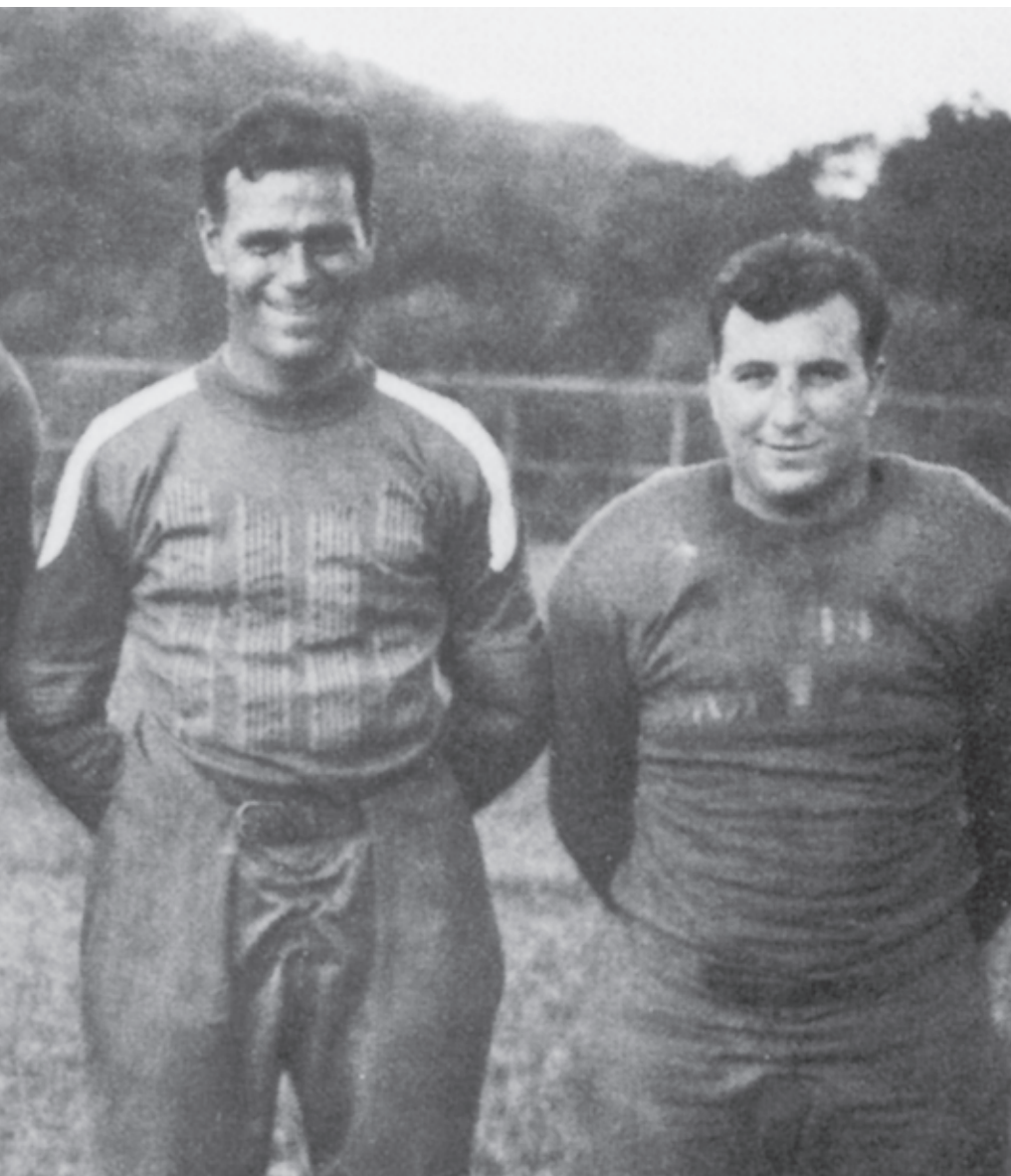
JEROME ROTH / STERN '49 / published his book *WWII—Army Air Force Chronicles* (Vantage Press), in which he provides an inside view of life in the Army Air Corps during the Second World War.

1950s

JULIUS TRAGARZ / WSC '50 / released *The Final Ethic* (Eloquent), a novel that follows Paul Bourveau, a budding Jesuit scholar who experiences an epiphany during World War II and is con-

vinced a divine force has assigned him the task of rectifying past wrongs.

MANUEL LUCIANO DA SILVA / WSC '52 / co-authored, with his wife, Silvia, the book *Christo-*



GRIDIRON GLORY

AFTER AN EMBARRASSING 21-0 DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF FORDHAM UNIVERSITY IN 1935, NYU TEAMMATES SAL SOMMA (STEINHARDT '37, '45) AND ANDY BARBERI (STEINHARDT '40) HELPED THE VIOLETS TAKE REVENGE THE NEXT YEAR WITH A 7-6 UPSET THAT KEPT THE RAMS, AND THEIR OFFENSIVE LINEMAN VINCE LOMBARDI, FROM A BERTH IN THE ROSE BOWL. DUBBED THE "BATTLE OF THE BRONX," THE GAME WAS WON ON AN EXTRA POINT BY SOMMA, WHICH HE KICKED DESPITE A BROKEN COLLARBONE, AND MADE HEADLINES IN EVERY NEW YORK NEWSPAPER.

IN THANKSGIVING 1959, IN WHICH THE ABOVE PHOTO APPEARS, JAY PRICE, AN AWARD-WINNING COLUMNIST FOR THE *STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE*, RECALLS THAT GOLDEN ERA OF NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE FOOTBALL, AND HOW SOMMA AND BARBERI'S TIME AT NYU SOLIDIFIED A BOND THAT LASTED EVEN AFTER THEY BECAME RIVAL HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACHES ON STATEN ISLAND.

FROM LEFT: NYU'S 1936 FOOTBALL STARS CHARLIE O'CONNELL, GEORGE BLOMQUIST, SAL SOMMA, AND ANDY BARBERI.

pher Columbus Was Portuguese! (Express Printing). The authors used medical and scientific knowledge in their reexamination of historical documents. The book has been adapted into the

movie *Christopher Columbus, The Enigma*.

OSCEOLA "OZZIE" FLETCHER / GSAS '54, STEINHARDT '54 / was honored with a 2009 Sloan Public Service

Award recognizing his lifetime of public service. Fletcher earned two master's degrees at NYU during his 24 years in the NYPD. He's currently the community liaison in the Crime Prevention Division

in the Office of the District Attorney, Kings County.

JERRY SILVERMAN / GSAS '55 / authored a new book titled *New York Sings: 400 Years of the*

Empire State in Song (SUNY Press).

DAVID PERETZ / MED '59 / published his second novel, *The Broderick Curse* (CreateSpace).

1960s

DOMINIC MASSARO / STERN '61, WAG '65 / was nominated by Governor David Paterson to the New York State Supreme Court in the First Judicial District.

SUSAN RABIN / STEINHARDT '61, '66 / is an author, seminar leader, therapist, communications consultant, coach, lecturer, and media personality whose two best-selling books are still in print more than a decade after publication: *How to Attract Anyone, Anytime, Anyplace* and *101 Ways to Flirt* (both Plume).

SERENA NANDA / GSAS '62, '73 / is an anthropologist whose work focuses on culture, gender, and law. Her most recent book is *The Gift of a Bride: A Tale of Anthropology, Matrimony and Murder* (AltaMira), a mystery novel about violence against women in New York City.

STANLEY TRACHTENBERG / GSAS '63 / is the author of a new picture book, *The Elevator Man* (Wm. B. Eerdmans), intended for ages 4 through 8 and illustrated by Paul Cox.

GARY GUBNER / STERN '64 / was inducted into

the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and Museum last year at the Suffolk Y JCC in Commack, NY. At the 1964 Olympics, Gubner finished fourth in the heavyweight weightlifting class after an injury kept him from competing in the shot put at the same games.

BARNEY POPKIN / WSC '64 / published the article "Mining Challenges in Kosovo" in *European Geologist* magazine last November.

JUDITH WEIS / GSAS '64, '67 / has co-authored *Salt Marshes: A Natural and Unnatural History* (Rutgers University Press) with **CAROL BUTLER / STEINHARDT '67** / . Weis is a marine biologist at Rutgers University-Newark.

SANFORD ARANOFF / GSAS '65 / published the article, "How Is a Teacher of the Gifted Supposed to Teach?" in the Fall 2009 issue of the *Gifted Education Press Quarterly*. For more information, visit www.giftededucation.com.

ROBERT PILUSO / GSAS '65 / was honored by the French government with a Knighthood in the *Ordre*

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 51)

WENDY HILLIARD / GAL '88

Gymnastics for the People

by Courtney E. Martin / GAL '04

IN THE EARLY 1970S, WENDY HILLIARD SAT CROSS-LEGGED ON THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR, TRANSFIXED BY THE COMPACT RUSSIAN

women leaping across the TV screen. At age 12 and the youngest of four girls in a middle-class African-American family in Detroit, she had next to nothing in common with these gymnasts. But the determination was already flooding her face. "That's what I want to do!" she

yelled to her mother who, after some research and penny-pinching, found a gym for her daughter out in the suburbs, because there was no equivalent in the city then. When Hilliard came home from her first practice, she told her father, "Daddy, daddy, I'm going to do rhythmic

gymnastics!" He replied, "That's great, baby. What's rhythmic gymnastics?"

His unfamiliarity was not surprising. Gymnastics has long been a sport of the wealthy and white, thanks to the high price tag of training and traveling to competitions. Rhythmic gymnastics,

which involves twirling ribbons and dancing with balls and hoops, requires even more specialized training. Hilliard, who went on to become the first African-American to represent the United States in rhythmic gymnastics in 1978, is changing all that. In 1996, she founded the Wendy Hilliard Foundation to give girls and boys from low-income neighborhoods the opportunity

to participate in gymnastics and, more broadly, learn the indispensable life lessons therein. "There's nothing like gymnastics for teaching self-discipline and determination," Hilliard explains, reminiscing about the thousands of hours she spent in the gym under the stern eyes of Vladimir and Zina Mironov, the Russian husband-and-wife team who nurtured her early on.

PHOTOS: LEFT UNKNOWN; RIGHT © PENNY GRAVES



IN 1978, HILLIARD BECAME THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN TO REPRESENT THE UNITED STATES IN RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS AND WAS INDUCTED INTO THE GYMNASTICS HALL OF FAME 30 YEARS LATER. TODAY, THROUGH HER FOUNDATION, SHE TEACHES FREE CLASSES TO CHILDREN FROM LOW-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS.

Hilliard's foundation has now served more than 10,000 young people through free weekly gymnastics classes, summer camps, literacy and nutrition workshops, competitive rhythmic gymnastics scholarships, and annual girls' and women's sports clinics. Indeed, being a mentor and ambassador comes naturally to the former international gold medalist, who was inducted into the USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame in 2008. Since retiring from

her late, much-loved coach Zina on gymnastics and life: "It's hard, but hard isn't bad."

Hilliard has clearly passed this wisdom to her own students, some of whom are now competing at the highest national levels. At 14, Alexis Page is one of the most talented gymnasts to come out of the program and is considered an Olympic hopeful. Her training—four hours daily—costs upward of \$25,000 a year, almost all of it supported

Hilliard recalls the philosophy of her late coach on gymnastics and life: "It's hard, but hard isn't bad."

competition, she's helmed various organizations in the gymnastics world, and from 1995 until 1997 led the Women's Sports Foundation as its first African-American president. She also recently helped to design a 15,000-square-foot gymnastics center for Aviator Sports and Recreation, a new multimillion-dollar, multi-sports complex in the Marine Park section of Brooklyn.

Hilliard's next big dream is to find a permanent gym for her foundation, which currently operates out of a small office in Harlem and relies on a constellation of public facilities and gyms to host its programming. It won't be easy in these economic times, in this crowded city, but Hilliard recalls the philosophy of

by the foundation (especially since her mother lost her job). But it's not just money that Page gets. "Wendy believes that anything is possible," the young gymnast says. "She's taught me that if I work hard, rewards will inevitably follow."

But Hilliard isn't all hard work. On a recent Saturday at Riverbank State Park in Upper Manhattan, Hilliard was surrounded by a large circle of children wearing stretchy pants and goofy smiles as they jumped and squirmed indiscriminately. Hilliard's eyes twinkled mischievously as she shouted "T!" The kids suddenly froze in unison, their arms stretched out from their sides. "I!" Hilliard shouted next, and a hundred tiny arms shot up to the sky. ■

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49)

des Palmes Académiques for his successful endeavors in disseminating the French language and culture.

M. MEDHAT A. HAS-SANEIN / STERN '66 / of Cairo, Egypt, has been named a nonexecutive member of the board of Commercial International Bank. Hassanein, who served as Egypt's minister of finance from 1999

to 2004, is currently professor of finance and banking at the School of Business, Economics, and Communication at the American University in Cairo.

STEPHEN PAYNE / ARTS '68 / authored the new book, *How to Purchase Archaic Jade: On the Internet* (Trafford Publishing).

FREDERICK GOLDER /

LAW '69 / recently published *Uncivil Rights: A Guide to Workers' Rights* (Beachfront Press).

GERARD J. PELISSON / GSAS '69 / co-authored *The Castle on the Parkway: The Story of New York City's DeWitt Clinton High School and Its Extraordinary Influence on American Life* (Hutch Press). For more information, visit www.castleontheparkway.com.

1970s

GARY FORLINI / WSC '70 / co-authored the book *Help Teachers Engage Students: Action Tools for Administrators* (Eye on Education). Its three authors are educators with a combined 100 years of experience working with K-12 teachers and administrators.

EARL "BUD" WERTHEIM / STEINHARDT '71 / was selected to represent the United States with his sculpture, *Bamboo Flyrod Makers Challenge*, at the International Medallion Sculpture Congress to be held in Finland in June 2010.

WILLIAM HEATH / STERN '72 / published *Some Kind of Plant: Learning While Teaching in Taiwan and Hong Kong 2003-2009* (BookSurge Publishing). The book offers Heath's often witty teaching and tourist experiences in Asia.

KEITH DANISH / WSC

'73, LAW '82 / is a recipient of the Lawyers Alliance for New York's 2009 Cornerstone Award honoring outstanding pro-bono legal services to nonprofits.

CAROL HEFFERNAN / GSAS '73 / released a new book, *Comedy in Chaucer and Boccaccio* (D.S. Brewer).

BEATRICE LOERING HELFT / GSAS '73 / is now the academic director of the online business programs at CUNY School of Professional Studies.

SUSAN REVERBY / GSAS '73 / authored *Examining Tuskegee: The Infamous Syphilis Study and Its Legacy* (UNC Press).

SHISHIR K. BAJAJ / STERN '74 / has been named a director of Kotak Mahindra Bank, a Mumbai-based global financial organization. Bajaj is the chairman and managing director of Bajaj Hin-

dusthan Ltd., India's largest sugar and ethanol manufacturing company.

SHELDON ISAACS / STEINHARDT '75 / moved his Café Cinéma-thèque International and Senses of Cinema Foreign Film 101 programs to the Cinema Paradiso in conjunction with the Ft. Lauderdale International Film Festival. Isaacs also teaches at Florida International University and hosts an international film series for the Boca Raton Museum of Art.

PAUL GARBER / GSAS '76 / was one of 29 animal conservationists nominated to receive the Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation. A Brooklyn native and professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Garber was recognized for dedicating more than 30 years to the conservation of monkeys

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 52)

in Latin America.

CATHY E. MINEHAN / STERN '77 / has been appointed to the board of trustees of the MITRE Corp.

MARYLYNN SCHIAVI / WSC '77 / won an Emmy for her TV series, *Matter and Beyond*, which explores the ethical and spiritual dimensions of science and technology. The show won for its episode devoted to artificial intelligence. Schiavi served as the program's writer, associate producer, host, and narrator.

HELAYNE ANTLER / WSUC '78 / was promoted to senior vice president in the labor relations department at Sony Pictures Entertainment.

RON HARTNETT / WSUC '78 / published his first book, *The Complete Guide for Successful Umpiring: How to Survive Little League Baseball and the Soccer Mom* (Varsity Prints). It's the first amateur umpire book ever written that promises to meet youth baseball's needs head-on.

EMILY SANDERS / STERN '78 / is president and CEO of metro Atlanta-based Sanders Financial Management and received the World of Difference 100 Award in the entrepreneurial category from the International Alliance for Women, which recognizes those who have advanced the economic empowerment of women.

■ alumni profile

JOHN DELUCIE / GAL '89

A PLACE AT THE TABLE

by Christian DeBenedetti



The Waverly Inn is the kind of place that doesn't list its phone number because it doesn't need to. A place that counts models, moguls, and movie stars as regulars. A place where even the mac and cheese costs \$95 because it's flavored with white truffles flown in from Alba, Italy. To those who want to get in, it can seem impenetra-

ble. To those who do get in, it's the modern epitome of "see and be seen."

Back in the early 1990s, when John DeLucie was stuck in a cubicle at a Midtown employment agency, he had no idea that he'd someday be the executive chef and co-owner of such an establishment. His humble past is still evident on the menu, where patrons will find dressed-up comfort food—a simple yet stylish alternative to haute

cuisine. And unlike chefs at some exclusive restaurants, DeLucie, who recently launched his second Village venture, *The Lion*, warmly greets guests as though they're family coming over to dinner.

In his recent memoir, *The Hunger: A Story of Food, Desire, and Ambition* (Ecco), DeLucie offers readers an intimate look inside one of the hottest restaurants to hit New York in decades and tells

the tale of his unlikely rise to culinary fame.

Cooking had actually never been part of DeLucie's plan. Until he moved to Commack, Long Island, at age 5, he lived in then-working-class Carroll Gardens, where his father was a wedding band musician and his mother an office assistant. After college, he was again living in Brooklyn, laboring as a headhunter in the insurance industry—a job he



PHOTO © TONY CENICOLA

DeLUCIE FLED HIS CUBICLE JOB AND NOW CO-OWNS THE ULTRA EXCLUSIVE WAVERLY INN. "I LOVE IT WHEN IT'S CRANKING AND THE WATTAGE IS HIGH," HE SAYS.

hated. "I'd grown up wanting to be a fireman, a jazz musician, and here I was," he says. Soon after deciding "I can't do this gig one more day," DeLucie, who'd been practicing his mother's Italian recipes, realized his calling one night when he absent-mindedly whipped up some spaghetti for a group of friends. "I loved the vibe of making people happy," he writes. "It was like my father playing them a song."

DeLucie enrolled in a 12-week culinary class at the New School and, upon finishing, walked into Dean & DeLuca to ask for a job. The next day he found himself there chopping 40 pounds of onions. With that experience on his résumé, it wasn't long before he landed his first restaurant gig at Yellowfingers, an Italian café across from Bloomingdale's on the Upper East Side. And for the next 15

years, DeLucie, like many New York chefs, careened through several more restaurants until the fateful day that he and two business partners, along with *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter, inked a deal to buy a faded Greenwich Village restaurant known as Ye Olde Waverly Inn. It was a venture in which, he admits, "[I was] hardly able to believe that somehow I was involved."

The restaurant opened

to packed houses in 2006 and soon DeLucie was cooking for the likes of feared *New York Times* critic Frank Bruni, who praised the fare, which focuses on simple classics such as roast chicken, pork chops, and old-timey cocktails. While DeLucie ran the kitchen, Carter brought in throngs of writers, celebrities, and tycoons happy to bask in the buzz. "If they graced the cover of *Vanity Fair*, more than likely they graced the red leather banquettes of our dining room," DeLucie writes. Take a recent Thursday night: By 6:30, the front room had swelled with walk-ins hoping to score a glimpse of someone famous. Soon rapper Adam Yauch of the Beastie Boys arrived, cutting a low profile. By 8:30, Condé Nast publishing titan S.I. Newhouse, *GQ* publisher Tom Florio, and author Malcolm Gladwell had filed in (separately) as well. "It's industry night," DeLucie cracked.

Some critics have tasked DeLucie's dishes for being ordinary and overpriced; others disapprove of the Waverly Inn's meticulously cultivated exclusivity. But DeLucie shrugs it off. "We are certainly not on the edge of culinary innovation. But that's the point," he told the *New York Daily News* restaurant critic. "You come here to eat well and have a great time, not be challenged." For now, the real challenge is getting a table deep inside the restaurant's cozy inner sanctum—which is the kind of challenge that New Yorkers seem hardwired to take on. ■

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NYUAlumni

AFFINITY ADVANTAGE



SPOT ILLUSTRATIONS © ALAN KIRUCHI

Just because you're no longer a student doesn't mean you've lost passion for the things you believe in. Whether you're a green guru, a newly transplanted expat, a parenting pro, or a proud veteran, NYU's alumni affinity program offers everyone a forum for celebrating shared interests with fellow alums and reconnecting with the university.

Affinity groups bring together alumni of all ages and provide unique opportunities to engage in the activities that connected many of you as NYU students—or that

can create new bonds now. From volunteer initiatives and professional development workshops to inspiring lectures and networking events, there is a wide array of affinity activities to choose from every month.

To expand your NYU network, visit the alumni Web site, NYU-niverse, at www.alumni.nyu.edu. And if you have ideas for new groups, we welcome suggestions at alumni.affinity@nyu.edu.

1980s

JAMES BERG / GAL '80 / and co-creator **STAN ZIMMERMAN / TSOA '81 /** are executive producers of *Rita Rocks* on the Lifetime network. They have previously earned WGA nominations for *Roseanne* and *The Golden Girls* and have written for *Gilmore Girls* and both *Brady Bunch* movies.

RICHARD SILVERMAN / WSUC '81 / and his brother, **MITCH SILVERMAN / WSUC '82 /**, launched their own communications consultancy firm, Silverman Communications Group, which will be entering into a strategic alliance with a PR agency in Israel, K2 Strategic Innovations, whose co-founder and principal consultant is **LARRY KENIGSBERG / SSSW '83 /**.

BRIAN MCCARTIN / CIMS '82 / has been awarded the Chauvenet Prize for his essay titled "e: The Master of All." The Chau-

venet Prize is the highest award for mathematical expository writing and has been described as the Pulitzer of the math world.

MICHAEL J. NEWMAN / TSOA '82 /, chair of the Labor and Employment Appellate Practice Group of Dinsmore & Shohl LLP's Cincinnati office, has been appointed to chair the Federal Courts and Practice Committee.

LINDA ANDRE / TSOA '83 / published *Doctors of Deception: What They Don't Want You to Know About Shock Treatment* (Rutgers University Press).

NICHOLAS FENGOS / WSUC '83 / is a trial attorney for MetLife at Abamont & Associates in Garden City, NY. Along with his wife, Katherine Kostakos, MD, he celebrated the birth of their son, James Nicholas Fengos, on February 24, 2009.

BRUCE McBARNETTE / LAW '83 / was presented an award by USA Track and Field at a reception at the Embassy of Croatia in Washington, D.C., for setting two new American records last summer in the high jump for his age group.

CONSTANCE SISKOWSKI / WAG '83 / has been awarded a Lifetime Ashoka Fellowship and grant to expand the American Association of Caregiving Youth, the national outgrowth of the Caregiving Youth Project, which Siskowski established in 2006 as the first comprehensive program in the U.S. to address the challenges faced by children who take care of aging, ill, or disabled family members.

SUSAN M. BAER / STERN '84 / of Upper Montclair, NJ, has been appointed director of aviation for the Port Authority of New

York and New Jersey, overseeing the John F. Kennedy, Newark Liberty, and LaGuardia airports. Most recently, Baer was the agency's deputy director and COO.

MARY ANNE GALLAGHER / NUR '84 / is the recipient of the American Organization of Nurse Executives Institute for Leadership, Research, and Education Organization Innovation Award for Nurse Director 2009 and is currently the president of the Greater New York, Nassau, Suffolk Organization of Nurse Executives and is on the board of New York Organization of Nurse Executives.

DANIEL SCHULMAN / STERN '86 /, CEO of Virgin Mobile USA, received Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year Award in New Jersey and was named to the board of directors of Flextronics and also to the board of gover-

nors for Rutgers University, where he currently serves on the board of trustees.

LEANN STELLA / STEINHARDT '86 / recently established a private practice in the healing arts, focusing on energy healing and vibrational therapies. Modalities include Reiki, quantum-touch, healing touch, Bach flower essences, Tong Ren therapy, EFT, and sound healing. For more information, visit www.peacefulhealings.com.

JOHN W. BABCOCK / LAW '87 / of the law firm of Wall Esleeck Babcock, LLP, has been included in *The Best Lawyers in America* 2010 edition.

GEORGE BARRETT / STERN '88 / was named chairman and CEO of Cardinal Health, a \$91 billion health-care services company ranked 18 on the Fortune 500.

■ alumni q&a

ASEMA AHMED / CAS '00

Something Blue?

by Lori Higginbotham / GSAS '11

Among the bolts of rich velvets, creamy silks, flowing gossamers, and crinkly tulle that line the walls and much of the floor space at Magnolias Linens' narrow Upper East Side showroom, Asema Ahmed looks rather small. Figuratively though, she's a pretty big deal in the rar-

efied world of custom linens. Magnolias, which she co-founded with her mother and sister, and for which she serves as president, has brought to life the special events and nuptial visions for a long list of celebrities. The company has graced the pages of *InStyle*, *New York*, and *Elegant Bride*, and has an enviable contract with the Plaza Hotel.

But Ahmed will happily help any bride anywhere to create everything from fluffy, embroidered towels for a poolside wedding, tablecloths rife with peacock details, or white chiffon palisades for a winter wonderland in Palm Beach. She sits down with each client, sketches a design, and then directs a team of 20 to 30 artisans in India who handstitch the fabrics. Her first event was her own wedding in 2007, an elegant affair in New Delhi, India, where she made her own tablecloths, chair covers, and tenting fabric using a velvet-flocked gray satin.

PHOTO © MAGNOLIAS LINENS



THE COUNTLESS STYLES OF TABLE DECOR AT MAGNOLIAS LINENS INCLUDE PINK FUSILI (TOP) AND ORANGE GALORE (BOTTOM), WHICH IS MADE WITH HAND-PAINTED SILK.

Why import fabrics from India?

I think people have an idea of what kind of fabric comes from India, but we wanted to show that it can look like anything. It can be any nationality, any concept; it can look classic, traditional, ethnic, whatever. So one of our goals was to show all the beautiful work that comes out of India and how skilled the different artisans are.

Are they less expensive?

It's not that cheap in India anymore, but we're also dealing with very high-

end fabrics. What is more cost-efficient for our clients is the fact that we don't go through a middleman, so there aren't price increases along the way. A lot of other companies that do production overseas go through about three or four other people before they get the final product.

Is there any fabric or design you'd discourage a bride from using?

Nope, they walk in here, and they can go crazy basically. And they love it because it looks like a big messy closet. ■

1990s

DOREEN LILIENFELD / WSUC '90 / is a recipient of Lawyers Alliance for New York's 2009 Cornerstone Award honoring outstanding pro-bono legal services to nonprofits.

LISA ROSS / WSUC '90 / is president of rbb Public Relations, which was named 2009 Boutique Agency of the Year by *The Holmes Report*. In 2008, rbb was also named National Agency of the Year by *PRWeek* magazine, after garnering Small Agency of the Year in both 2007 and '08.

WILLIAM BILA / STERN '91 / was elected to the board of directors of the Toronto Roma Community and Advocacy Centre and now holds the position of co-chair. This nonprofit organization provides support to refugees mostly through social settlement services but also through arts and culture programs.

CHRIS DAVIS / TSOA '91 / has joined RTI as vice president of corporate communications, where he will manage a staff with experience in a range of communications, including executive positioning, media relations, employee communications, graphic and visual design, and brand identity.

CHERYL HADER / LAW '91 / has joined the firm Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel, LLP as a partner in the individual clients group.

JOSEPH MACKIN / GSAS '91 / published the novel *Pretend All Your Life* (Permanent Press), about an enigmatic egoist hard-pressed to hold on to his place in a post-9/11 world he hardly recognizes.

ANNIE RYAN / TSOA '91 / was awarded Best Director in the 2010 *Irish Times* Theatre Awards ceremony, for direction of the play *Freefall*. She is the founder and artistic director of Dublin's Corn Exchange Theatre.

DENNIS HEAPHY / TSOA '92 / is the resident tinsmith for the Statue of Liberty and has developed, produced, and performed the lion's share of educational theater at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. He also takes the programs that he's developed out to schools and organizations across the nation.

JAY HOPLER / WSUC '92 / was awarded a 2009 Whiting Writers' Award in October at a ceremony in New York City. This \$50,000 award recognizes 10 young writers for their talent and promise.

JOHN RADANOVICH / GSAS '92 / released a new book, *Wildman of Rhythm: The Life and Music of Benny Moré* (University of Florida Press).

SUSANNAH APPELBAUM / TSOA '93 / wrote *The Hollow Bottle* (Knopf),

the first installment of the Poisons of Caux fantasy trilogy, a macabre and witty children's tale of herbs, magic, and poison. Printed in green ink, the book is accompanied by 13 original illustrations by award-winning artist Jennifer Taylor.

EVE MOROS ORTEGA / TSOA '93 / is series producer and managing director of *Art 21: Art in the Twenty-First Century*, a series that debuted on PBS in October 2009. The series previously won a Peabody award and has been nominated for an Emmy.

MICHELLE REYNOSO / TSOA '93 / was a finalist in the 2009 New York Book Festival and accepted an Honorable Mention Award in the poetry category for her book, *Do You?* (Xlibris).

WILLIAM SABADO / WSUC '93 / is deputy executive director for St. Vincent's Services, Inc., a nonprofit organization in Brooklyn, NY, that specializes in a family-centered approach to social services.

GIORGIO BERTELLINI / TSOA '94, '01 / authored *Italy in Early American Cinema: Race, Landscape, and the Picturesque* (Indiana University Press), which traces the origins of American cinema's century-long fascination with Italy and Italian im-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 59)



BOOKS IN MOTION IS AN INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE FOR CHILDREN, WHO ARE BROUGHT ONSTAGE FROM THE AUDIENCE TO PLAY A PART IN THE ACT.

plays adapted from Lebanese children's literature but sophisticated enough for all ages were performed at each stop. *What Is the Color of the Sea?* is a poetic story of teens who trek to the Mediterranean, and *The Slippers of Tanbouri* is a folkloric tale about an old man who, try as he might, cannot get rid of his filthy shoes. "We're not trying to heal the world," says Maroney, whose goal is simply to provide all people with smart, quality entertainment.

Maroney, who is half Lebanese, first dreamed of launching street theater over drinks with friends the summer before, while in Beirut for a wedding. Instead of dismissing this as idealistic bar talk, her literary agent friend Yasmina Jraissati suggested that they submit the idea—to combine literature and theater—to UNESCO, which had fortuitously chosen Beirut as its 2009 World Book Capital. The two then spent three exhausting, exhilarating days in a children's library in Paris, where Jraissati is based, searching for stories that could speak to a wide audience. After reading the entire Lebanese shelf, with Jraissati translating for Maroney, who does not read or speak Arabic, they settled on two.

That was just the beginning. Even once UNESCO green-lighted the project, they had to scramble to find actors,

PHOTO © ALEXANDRA SCHNEIDER

alumni profile

DENISE MARONEY / TSOA '06

TROUPING THROUGH LEBANON

by André Tartar / GSAS '10

LAST JULY, A CURIOUS SIGHT AROSE IN BINT JBEIL, A LEBANESE TOWN STILL HALF-STREWN WITH RUBBLE FROM THE SUMMER

2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. As a crowd gathered, a man strutted about on stilts, while others balanced a giant replica of a book overhead and plopped it down on the main thoroughfare. Books in Motion, a literature-infused street theater

troupe, tends to have this effect, founder and producer Denise Maroney says. By the time the stage is set—a process she calls “almost theatrical in and of itself”—an audience has materialized.

Bint Jbeil is not the only town that could use a show.

There is no national theater in Lebanon; no theater district, even in the cosmopolitan Beirut. What live entertainment there is, such as the country's renowned summer music festivals, can eat as much as two-thirds of the average person's weekly income of less than

\$150. “It's really an industry for tourists and the few people who can pay for tickets,” Maroney explains, which is why she started Books in Motion—to bring the stage to the streets, free of charge. Last summer, a troupe of six actors, five production assistants, and celebrated Lebanese director Lucien Bourjeily embarked on a nine-city tour. Two short

a director, and funding—all new terrain for Maroney, a costume designer by training who often works on off-Broadway shows in New York and had never produced before. However, with the help of many partners—from the Maison du Livre in Lebanon to New York City Children's Theatre Company—and several months of intensive auditions and rehearsals, things came together despite the predictable preproduction jitters. "I was terrified no one would show up," Maroney admits.

But the tour surpassed her dreams. Crowds in the hundreds were common, and one show counted 500. People of all ages came out—the elderly in the ancient seaside city of Tyre, surly young men in Beirut, and even soldiers in Bint Jbeil, near the Israeli border. In the mountain retreat of Jezzine, the children clamored so excitedly that the performance had to be halted to restore order. "The audience literally took us in," Maroney says. ■

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57)

migrants to the popularity of the pre-photographic aesthetic—the picturesque.

KRISTYN BURTT / TSOA '94 / has created a new Web series, *The Web.Files*, which launched its inaugural episode in July 2009. *The Web.Files* was planned as a weekly talk/interview show featuring five-to-seven-minute episodes.

JACQUELINE KLOSEK / WSUC '94 / published *The Right to Know: Your Guide to Using and Defending Freedom of Information Law in the United States* (Praeger), which illustrates practical methods for citizens to protect themselves and their communities.

KARA NEWMAN / GSAS '94 / wrote *Spice & Ice* (Chronicle), which brings the "hot" drink trend to the home bar with recipes for 60 drinks that make the most of fresh seasonal ingredients and spicy flavorings.

MICHAEL CONNORS / STEINHARDT '95 /, a West Indian decorative-arts scholar, published *Caribbean Houses* (Rizzoli), an illustrated account of the development of historically significant houses in the West Indies.

STEVEN L. ROSENHAUS / STEINHARDT '95 / co-authored the book *Writing Musical Theater* (Palgrave Macmillan) with Allen Cohen.

MARK ACKERMAN / WAG '96 / was named president and CEO of Lighthouse International, the 104-year-old nonprofit leader in health care, research, and services for the visually impaired.

BRENT E. ADAMS / LAW '97 / was unanimously confirmed as secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

LYNN TAYLOR / TSOA '97 /, a nationally recognized workplace expert, authored *Tame Your Terrible Office Tyrant™* (TOT): *How to Manage*

Childish Boss Behavior and Thrive in Your Job (John Wiley & Sons). She is an online workplace contributor to *Psychology Today* and *BusinessWeek* and the monthly HR columnist for SmartHRManager.com. As the CEO of Lynn Taylor Consulting, Taylor provides seminars to leading organizations. For more information, visit Tame YourTOT.com.

FRANK WESTON / GAL '97 / is the producer, director, and screenwriter for *Man in the Mirror*, which won the 2007 United Nations NGO Art and Humanitarian Award and the award for Best Original Story and Screenplay at Sol Film Festival. Weston established Zania Films Corp., LLC, to restore and complete the nearly lost classic motion picture *The Appleman*.

JOE CHAN / WAG '98 / was appointed to the Panel for Educational Policy by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

DAVID BECKER / TSOA '99 / recently produced a feature-length documentary titled *Saint Misbehavin': The Wavy Gravy Movie*, which premiered at the South by Southwest Film Festival and made its New York theatrical premiere in August 2009.

PETE CHATMON / TSOA '99 / is president and CEO of Double 7 Film, a production and marketing boutique that was profiled on the "Young Guns" segment of Fox Business Channel for entrepreneurs under 35 making their mark in business.

RICHARD GNOLFO / STERN '99 / co-wrote, associate-produced, and acted in the film *The Dog Who Saved Christmas*, which premiered on ABC Family in November 2009.

■ alumni connections

EXPLORING THE NYUNIVERSE



A new world of features awaits you on the NYU alumni Web site, which has undergone a complete makeover—and name change. Now known as *NYUniverse*, this one-stop resource for all graduates gathers more than 380,000 alumni from all corners of the globe into one online community. Users can create a customized profile to share information about their professional and personal paths since graduation or link their alumni profiles with existing social network accounts on sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

Once you're on *NYUniverse*, you can easily reconnect

with former classmates and network with fellow alumni who share your interests by joining any of the numerous affinity or regional groups. You can also find news and information about alumni events, benefits, career advice, and goings-on at NYU.

To get started, visit www.alumni.nyu.edu and click on "First Time Login." Then simply enter your personal information, as well as the 10-digit NYU ID number on the mailing label of this magazine. The whole *NYUniverse* awaits you!

2000s

KAZIM ALI / GSAS '01 /

has authored *Bright Felon: Autobiography and Cities* (Wesleyan

District in Massachusetts, she lives outside of Boston with her husband, **SETH LEVIN / STEINHARDT '01 /**, and their two sons, Sydney and Elijah.

ANALIA SEGAL / STEINHARDT '01 /

has designed Alex Kalpakian's new carpet collection, titled Design Carpets Author's Collection, which relies on differing heights, volumes, textures, and cuts. Segal is the recipient of grants from the Antorchas, Pollock-Krasner, and Guggenheim Foundations. Her "aleph" carpet collection was recently acquired by the Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art.

KAMI LEVIN / STEINHARDT '01 /

launched her blog, *The Fence*, dedicated to working moms (www.livefromthefence.blogspot.com). Recently hired as the K-12 social studies instructional coach for the Cambridge Public School

FANON CHE WILKINS / GSAS '01 / is a co-editor of the new book, *From Toussaint to Tupac: The Black International Since the Age of Revolution* (UNC Press).

KELLY KENNEDY MACK / STERN '02 /

was recipient of NYU's first Distinguished Young Alumni Award. Mack became president of Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group in 2006, where she previously served as executive vice president. Since her promotion, Corcoran Sunshine has become the largest new-development marketing group worldwide, with sales totaling more than \$9 billion since 2005.

BEN RHODES / GSAS '02 /

is President Barack Obama's only foreign policy speechwriter and was charged with writing his address to the Muslim world, delivered in Cairo in 2009.

DIANA CHAIKIN / GAL '03 /

graduated with a JD from Seattle University School of Law and passed the Washington State Bar Exam in 2009.

JOSEPH DISCEPOLA / STERN '03 /

has joined Marc A. Kaufman & Associates, a personal injury law firm with offices located in Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and Boca Raton. He holds a JD from the University of Miami's

School of Law and an MBA from its School of Business.

LISA FEIGENSON / GSAS '03 /

assistant professor in the department of psychological and brain sciences at the Johns Hopkins University Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, has won the American Psychological Association's 2010 Boyd-McCandless Award for her investigation into the cognitive development of young babies and children.

ALYCIA RIPLEY / GSAS '03 /

author of the novel *Traveling With an Eggplant* (Trafford Publishing), has written a new novel, *The Final Alice* (Trafford), an

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New York University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.

adult modernization and homage to fairy tales and children's stories to be released in 2010.

ARIEL CHURI / TSOA '04 / and **AMY PARNES / TSOA '04** / have co-founded Sparkle Labs, a new design firm that develops products that inspire. Their goal is to empower kids and adults to be creators, not just consumers.

JOEL DABU / WAG '04 / is currently completing a

one-year German Chancellor Fellowship in Leipzig, Germany. He is working at CIMA, a planning and economic development consultancy.

SHARON DISCORFANO / GSAS '04 / has been living in Tucson since 2004, where she founded Lyric Yoga and Wellness, a consulting company. She recently launched LettersToPushkin.com, offering people an opportunity to use

letter writing as a tool in coping with the loss of a loved one. People using the site have the options of keeping their letter private or posting online.

SEAN DONNELLY / TSOA '04 / and **ALESSANDRO MINOLI / TSOA '04** / are co-creators of the original short "Basement Gary," which was named winner of the Playboy Enterprises 2009 Animation Contest.

SARAH GARLAND / GSAS '04 / wrote *Gangs in Garden City: How Immigration, Segregation, and Youth Violence Are Changing America's Suburbs* (Nation Books).

DANIEL NAYERI / CAS '04 / co-authored the young-adult book *Another Faust* (Candlewick Press), the first of a series of modern retellings of classics. The novel was chosen as one of the top 10 new books to watch by Ameri-

can Booksellers for Children and is being released in audio format. Nayeri is currently working on *Another Pan*, to be published in 2010.

YANFEI SHEN / CAS '04 / graduated from the George Washington University School of Law in 2009.

JORDAN ANDERSON / WAG '05 / and **VAIDILA KUNGYS / WAG '05** / have created a Web site for New

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 63)

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York City bicyclists, ridethecity.com. The site helps riders find the safest routes in cities such as New York, Chicago, and Austin.

EDGAR BENJAMIN CABRERA / STERN '05 / works with Wokai (www.wokai.org), an organization that raises money for microfinance loans in rural China and an ardent supporter of long-term, fundamental social development, such as microfinance and education.

SIMRAN SACHDEV / STEINHARDT '05 / is currently pursuing her master's degree in global affairs at NYU-SCPS and is spending the summer in Belgrade, Serbia, working with an organization called Women in Black.

NICHOLAS COPE / GAL '06 / recently founded Green Painting, an eco-responsible contracting company focused on the environmental impact of building projects. For more information, visit www.green-painting.com.

NIKKI D'ERRICO / GAL '06 / recently co-edited, with Sheryl Feinstein, the book *Tanzanian Women in Their Own Words: Stories of Disability and Illness* (Lexington Books), a collection of oral histories that challenge readers to learn about both local and global health inequalities.

EMILIE ZASLOW / STEINHARDT '06 / has authored a book titled *Feminism, Inc.: Coming of Age in Girl Power Media Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan).

EDGAR JARAMILLO / STEINHARDT '07 / made his operatic debut in the role of Riccardo in a production of *A Masked Ball*, staged by the Brooklyn Repertory Opera in June 2009.

PATRICK OLESKEY / SSSW '07 / was promoted to director of independent living and behavioral health services at Presbyterian Children's Village in Philadelphia.

KERRY ALLISON / STEINHARDT '08 / is the latest winner of a national contest to identify socially responsible "It Girls" of the millennial generation. The "It Girl Essentials" contest was designed to recognize young women who embody the confidence, re-

liability, and poise of their generation.

DIANA MAO / WAG '08 / recently launched an anti-trafficking organization in Cambodia called the Nomi Network (www.nominetwork.org).

CASSANDRA L. CARBERY / MED '09 /, clinical assistant professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, has joined the Division of Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island.

MOLLY O'BRIEN / CAS '09 / is one of 123 Northwest Jesuit Volunteers, who began their service in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, or Washington in

September 2009. The volunteers work in many areas, including advocating for refugees, nursing in community clinics, teaching in schools on Native American reservations, assisting at shelters, and organizing a local response to climate change.

ADAM ZELLER / STERN '09 / has been promoted to director of digital media for Starz Media, LLC. He oversees the marketing of long-form content for digital and on-demand transactional distribution and also the management and product development for Starz Media's burgeoning gaming business.

Obituaries

New York University mourns the recent passing of our alumni, staff, and friends, including:

IDA GARFINKEL SCHWARTZ / WSC '31, LAW '34
FLORENCE PERLOW SHIENTAG / LAW '31
HAROLD GRUBIN / WSC '32, MED '35
OLOF HOGRELIUS / WSC '36
SIDNEY SILVERMAN / DEN '37
EDITH LEORA DENNIS / STEINHARDT '38
DAVID B. BLACK / STERN '40
SHIRLEY GROSSMAN KLEIN / WSC '40
FRANK ANGELL / STERN '41, FACULTY
SEYMOUR GRUBER / ARTS '41, MED '44
ROBERT S. McLELLAN III / STERN '41
JOHN C. ARMSTRONG / ENG '42
STANLEY FORMAN / WSC '44, GSAS '55
ELLEN ROSENHEIM LORCH / WSC '46
HAROLD MARANTZ / DEN '46
WILLIAM M. GRIM, JR. / ENG '47
RICHARD H. BREECE / MED '48
ROBERT PFISTER / ENG '48
ARTHUR D'LUGOFF / WSC '49
MURIEL H. SLATER / WSC '49

EWALD J. H. STECHHOLZ / STEINHARDT '50
THEODORE J. SULLIVAN / ENG '50
LILLIAN CROMEY / WSC '51
HOWARD ZINN / WSC '51
ANITA FOSTER / WSC '52
MARTIN KNEBEL / ENG '52
GEORGE MAKER / WSC '53
LILLIE MAE HARRIS FINCHER / STEINHARDT '54
YALE H. GELLMAN / ARTS '54
ELLENEVA WEENING / STEINHARDT '54
LEE A. ARCHER, JR. / GSAS '56
HARRY W. EICHENBAUM / WSC '57, MED '61
GLENN HAYS JOHNSON / GSAS '58
SIMON KARPATKIN / MED '58, FACULTY
HAMILTON STEPHENS / STEINHARDT '59
JACK LIBIDINSKY / ENG '60
JAY MAGID / ARTS '60
ARTHUR W. RHODES / STERN '61
ROBERT JONES / STEINHARDT '62
RICHARD V. DAVIS / STERN '63

HUGH OVERCASH / LAW '63
RENATO ALDEN / ARTS '64, STEINHARDT '65, GSAS '69
ABRAHAM EDELMAN / GSAS '67
NANCY LONGLEY AGNEW / STERN '68
DIANE ZIOR WILHELM / GSAS '69
INEZ STEWART BULL / STEINHARDT '72, '79
GARY I. RUSKIN / TSOA '72
CAROL VANDERMEIR / STEINHARDT '75
STEPHAN WOJCECHOWSKYJ / STERN '79
BARBARA JESTER / GSAS '81, STAFF
PHYLLIS J. KARNO / STERN '81
BRENDA BRUNO WHITE / STERN '81
TERRENCE K. FOSTER / TSOA '85
REBECCA LIPKIN / GSAS '86
BRIENIN NEQUA BRYANT / TSOA '00
ALLISON DIAMOND / TSOA '03
JUSTINE TORRES / CAS '04
AMIR PNUELI / CIMS FACULTY



WHAT

NYU VIGIL FOR HAITI: A PLEDGE TO REBUILD

WHERE

GOULD PLAZA

WHY

AT 4:53 PM ON JANUARY 26, STUDENTS LIT CANDLES TO COMMEMORATE HAITI'S EARTHQUAKE AND REMEMBER ITS VICTIMS EXACTLY TWO WEEKS AFTER THE DEVASTATING EVENT. THOSE GATHERED COLLECTED DONATIONS IN BUCKETS AND LISTENED TO HAITIAN STUDENTS TALK ABOUT THE PLIGHT OF THEIR FAMILIES BACK HOME. "IT WAS VERY REFLECTIVE," PHOTOGRAPHER SEAN KROSS (CAS '12) RECALLS. "I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE WERE SEARCHING AND SAYING, 'I'M HERE AND THIS IS GOOD, BUT WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?' "

—Renée Alfuso