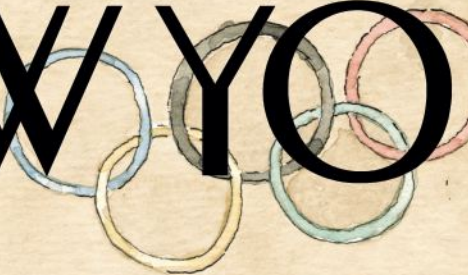


PRICE \$6.99

THE

FEB. 3, 2014

NEW YORKER



D. Blitt

JAMES
FRANCO

CHRIS
O'DOWD

**OF MICE
AND MEN**

WRITTEN BY **JOHN STEINBECK**
DIRECTED BY **ANNA D. SHAPIRO**

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT—18 WEEKS ONLY • PREVIEWS BEGIN MARCH 19

TELECHARGE.COM 212.239.6200 • LONGACRE THEATRE, 220 W 48TH ST • OfMiceAndMenOnBroadway.com

Photo by Robert Maxwell

THE NEW YORKER

FEBRUARY 3, 2014

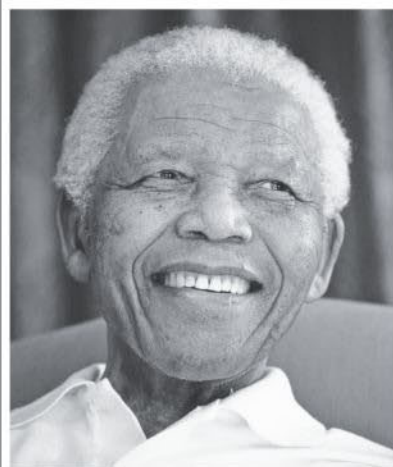
	7	GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN
	19	THE TALK OF THE TOWN <i>Amy Davidson on the Richard Sherman affair; the Grammys gala; New Jersey Super Bowl; Jonah Hill; a New Orleans musical reunion.</i>
PATRICIA MARX	26	A TALE OF A TUB <i>Travelling by freighter.</i>
TEDDY WAYNE	32	THE SACCHARINE METHOD
IAN JOHNSON	34	CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS <i>The rise of Waldorf schools in China.</i>
EYAL PRESS	40	A BOTCHED OPERATION <i>The making of an abortion business.</i>
KEN AULETTA	54	OUTSIDE THE BOX <i>Netflix and television's great disruption.</i>
DONALD ANTRIM	62	FICTION "THE EMERALD LIGHT IN THE AIR"
		THE CRITICS
		BOOKS
PETER SCHJELDAHL	70	<i>New perspectives on William S. Burroughs.</i>
ADAM KIRSCH	75	<i>Derek Walcott's selected poems.</i>
	79	<i>Briefly Noted</i>
		MUSICAL EVENTS
ALEX ROSS	80	<i>Experimental opera around town.</i>
		THE CURRENT CINEMA
DAVID DENBY	82	<i>"Generation War," "Ride Along."</i>
		POEMS
WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA	28	<i>"Reciprocity"</i>
STEPHEN DUNN	50	<i>"Ambush at Five O'Clock"</i>
BARRY BLITT		COVER <i>"Jury of His Peers"</i>

FROM ACCLAIMED POET

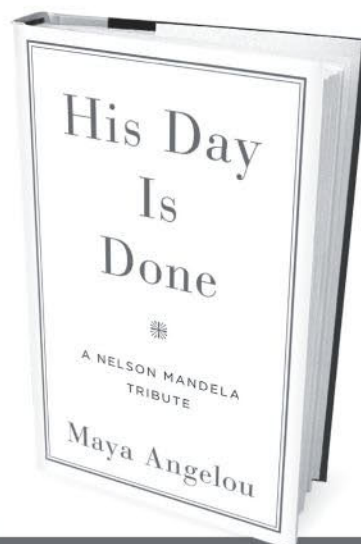
Maya Angelou



A TRIBUTE TO NELSON MANDELA



*A celebration of the iconic
leader, whose life and work
changed the world.*



A RANDOM HOUSE
HARDCOVER AND eBook

DRAWINGS Robert Mankoff, Barbara Smaller, Paul Noth, Christopher Weyant, Danny Shanahan, Drew Dernavich, Benjamin Schwartz, Zachary Kanin, Farley Katz, Edward Steed, John Klossner, Bruce Eric Kaplan, Michael Maslin, Roz Chast, Frank Cotham, David Borchart, David Sipress, Carolita Johnson **SPOTS** Guillaume Plantevin



2x Dining & Entertainment **1x** Other Purchases

Earning 2x ThankYou® Points adds up fast. Just how Ted Ligety likes it.

The Citi ThankYou® Preferred Visa Card.
Earn 2 points per dollar spent on
dining out and entertainment.
Citi, with you every step of the way.

To apply, go to citi.com/thankyoucards



Ted Ligety
U.S. Olympian - Alpine Skiing



MET MUSEUM PRESENTS



DIGITAL BUDDHA

JIN HI KIM | GERRY HEMINGWAY

FRIDAY, JAN 31 at 7 PM

A multimedia improvisation featuring
geomungo, percussion and video.

FREE WITH MUSEUM ADMISSION



SPARK: A CONVERSATION KOREA: FROM SILLA TO K-POP

DENISE LEIDY | SOYOUNG LEE

YOUNG JEAN LEE

WEDNESDAY, FEB 12 at 6 PM

Julie Burstein hosts a free-ranging
conversation on Korea's cultural
impact, from *Gangnam Style* to the
treasures of the royal tombs of Silla.

SINGLE TICKETS: \$30



metmuseum.org/tickets

In conjunction with the exhibition
Silla: Korea's Golden Kingdom on
view through February 23, 2014.

The exhibition and related education programs are
made possible by Samsung.

Additional support is provided by the Korea
Foundation and the National Endowment for
the Arts.

The exhibition was organized by The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, the National Museum of Korea,
and Gyeongju National Museum, Korea.

Digital Buddha © Witjak Widhi Cahya

Young Jean Lee © Blaine Davis

Soyoung Lee © 2013 MMA, photographed by Jackie Neale Chadwick

CONTRIBUTORS

EYAL PRESS (**"A BOTCHED OPERATION," P. 40**) is a visiting scholar at the Institute for Public Knowledge, at New York University, and the author of "Absolute Convictions" and, more recently, "Beautiful Souls."

AMY DAVIDSON (**COMMENT, P. 19**), a senior editor at the magazine, writes the Close Read blog on newyorker.com.

PATRICIA MARX (**"A TALE OF A TUB," P. 26**) is the co-author, with Sarah Payne Stuart, of the humor book "Home Colleging," which comes out in May.

WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA (**POEM, P. 28**), who received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1996, died in 2012. Her last poetry collection was "Monologue of a Dog."

TEDDY WAYNE (**SHOUTS & MURMURS, P. 32**) is the author of the novel "The Love Song of Jonny Valentine," which comes out in paperback on February 4th.

IAN JOHNSON (**"CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS," P. 34**), a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, divides his time between Beijing and Berlin.

KEN AULETTA (**"OUTSIDE THE BOX," P. 54**) has published eleven books, including "Googled" and "Three Blind Mice: How the TV Networks Lost Their Way."

DONALD ANTRIM (**FICTION, P. 62**) is a 2013 MacArthur Fellow. He is the author of several novels, including "Elect Mr. Robinson for a Better World."

PETER SCHJELDAHL (**BOOKS, P. 70**), the author of "Let's See," is the magazine's art critic.

BARRY BLITT (**COVER; ILLUSTRATION, P. 26**) is a regular contributor to the magazine.

ADAM KIRSCH (**BOOKS, P. 75**) is a senior editor at *The New Republic* and a columnist for Tablet. "Why Trilling Matters" is his most recent book.

THE NEW YORKER DIGITAL

WWW.NEWYORKER.COM

DIGITAL EDITION

SUPER BOWL

Reporting and
photographs from
the Meadowlands.

COMMENT

Daily news
analysis by *Hendrik
Hertzberg* and
others.

FICTION

Donald Antrim reads
his new story.

SLIDE SHOW

Images of
an education
revolution in China.

HUMOR

Daily satire on the
Borowitz Report
and Shouts &
Murmurs.

PODCASTS

Peter Schjeldahl talks to *Sasha Weiss*
about William Burroughs. Plus, *Tracy K.
Smith* on the Poetry Podcast, and the
Political Scene, with *Dorothy Wickenden*.

POETRY

Stephen Dunn reads
his new poem.

ARCHIVE

Our complete
collection of issues,
back to 1925.

CARTOON

A Daily Cartoon
drawn by *Tom Toro*.

EXCERPT

Poems from a new
collection of *Derek
Walcott's* work.

OPERA

A scene from the
Prototype Festival's
production of
"Paul's Case."

Subscribers: Get our digital edition for tablets and phones at no extra charge at the App Store or from Google Play.

THE MAIL

A TOTAL BUST

As Mattathias Schwartz shows, in his article about the human cost of the drug war in Honduras, you don't have to be a promoter of drug use to see that the war on drugs is wasteful ("A Mission Gone Wrong," January 6th). Studies over the past twenty years have shown that even as spending on interdiction continues to grow—I was astonished to read in your article that it's now fifteen billion dollars annually—the quantity of street drugs is increasing. Rather than concede that the task of interdiction cannot be achieved at a price that we are willing to pay, or increase spending on alternatives (like better education about the ill effects of drug abuse and treatment for those whom education does not reach), we make incremental increases in the budget for a failed policy. In addition, policymakers persist in listing marijuana as among the most dangerous narcotics, while many American adults have experienced marijuana to be more benign than alcohol. Is it possible that experimental use of marijuana, without adverse consequences, inures young people to the idea of breaking drug laws? Does the lack of adverse effect convince them that the prohibition of other, objectively more destructive drugs is a canard?

*Leslie R. Weatherhead
Spokane, Wash.*

I greatly appreciate Schwartz's in-depth reporting on a horrifying story about American foreign policy gone terribly wrong. However, he omitted important information. In particular, when discussing the Reagan era, he should have mentioned allegations that the C.I.A. condoned the importation of drugs on the same planes that were used to send arms to the Contras, in Nicaragua. Schwartz likewise could have included a discussion of the substantial laundered profits from illegal drug sales that benefit many corporations—banks, especially.

*William Rigby
Chapel Hill, N.C.*

TINKER TRACTOR FARMER SKY

Both Marcin Jakubowski and those who have donated money to his Global Village Construction Set project, which, to start, intends to build a self-sufficient community in Missouri, are naïve about technology ("The Civilization Kit," December 23rd & 30th). Buying a used machine is like buying a used car: you may end up with a broken-down piece of junk. Jakubowski's reaction—deciding that he and some novice designers could come up with a more cost-effective design—strikes me as poorly informed. Since Henry Ford began popularizing gasoline-powered tractors, in 1917, several companies, like Massey Ferguson and John Deere, have built strong reputations because they offer better products than their competitors, or than a back-yard tinkerer could bolt together. Jakubowski may like to frequently reference Robert Heinlein's quote that "specialization is for insects," but specialists offer both expertise and equipment for tasks such as drilling wells or designing machines. The open-source model, which is a proven way to develop computer software, does not translate to the manufacture of heavy machinery. This is because using open-source software requires only a computer, an Internet connection, and simple installation instructions. But the manufacture of multi-ton machines requires tools, as well as skilled workers. It is not at all surprising that many who showed up at Factor e Farm "display more enthusiasm . . . than expertise." Furthermore, technology may indeed improve the lives of millions of the world's poor. But, in many cases, poverty is linked to ineffective government, tribalism, and wars. Technology alone will not fix these problems.

*Thomas Johnson
Gilberts, Ill.*

Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number via e-mail to themail@newyorker.com. Letters and Web comments may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium. We regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter or return letters.

We Invite You Into Our World



NEW COMBINATIONS

JAN 31, FEB 5, 8 MAT, 11
Incl. Liam Scarlett World Premiere

SCENIC DELIGHT

FEB 4, 8 EVE, 12, 27, 28
Featuring Costumes by Valentino

20TH CENTURY VIOLIN CONCERTOS

FEB 13, 18, 19, 20, 22 MAT
Concertos by Prokofiev, Barber,
and Stravinsky

COPPÉLIA

FEB 14, 15 MAT & EVE, 16, 22 EVE, 23
Perfect for Valentine's Day

À LA FRANÇAISE

FEB 21, 26, MAR 1 MAT & EVE
Devoted to the music of French composers

PLUS: JR Art Series exhibit on
view at all performances

**NEW YORK
CITY BALLET**

nycballet.com or (212) 496-0600

María Kowroski Photo by Henry Leutwyler © 2012

THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED NEW NOVEL FROM THE
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *LOVING FRANK*

“Nancy Horan has done it again, capturing the entwined lives of **FANNY OSBOURNE** and **ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON** so uncannily, it reads like truth—and better.” —SARAH BLAKE, author of *The Postmistress*

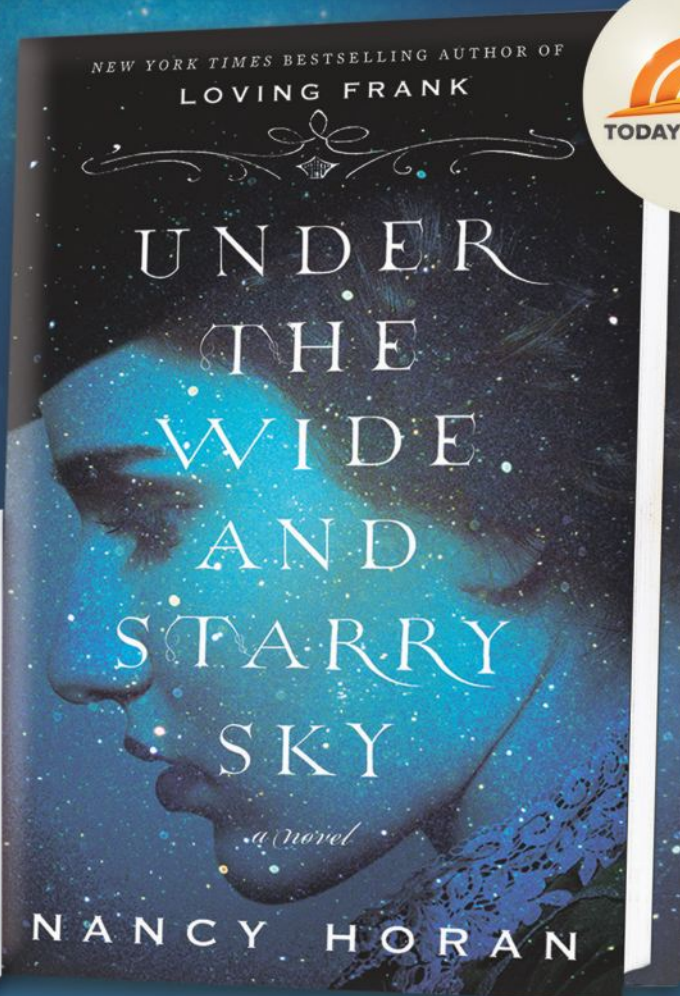
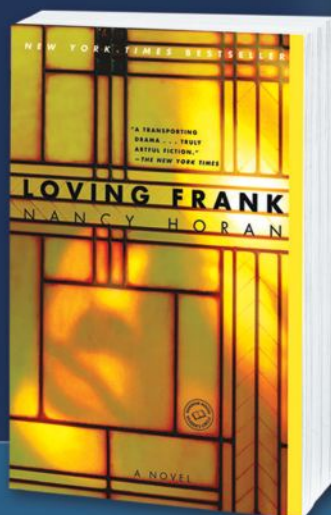
“Ambitious and often breathtaking, this sweeping story spills over with spirited, uncompromising life.” —PAULA MCLAIN, author of *The Paris Wife*

“Fans of *Loving Frank* will adore this **authentic, richly detailed, and utterly captivating new novel.**”

—JAMIE FORD, author of *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*

“Fascinating . . . a novel that shows how love and marriage can simultaneously offer inspiration and encumbrance.” —*The New York Times Book Review*

“Horan’s spectacular second novel has been worth the wait.” —*Booklist* (starred review)



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



JAN/FEB 2014 WEDNESDAY 29TH THURSDAY 30TH FRIDAY 31ST SATURDAY 1ST SUNDAY 2ND MONDAY 3RD TUESDAY 4TH

THE FUTURE OF the music business is in question, and institutions like City Opera have collapsed, but the Ecstatic Music Festival, started by Kaufman Music Center in 2011, is thriving, by encouraging contemporary classical artists to work with musicians from rock, hip-hop, and other worlds. The indie-pop band Hospitality joins the teen new-music ensemble Pannonia Quartet (all pictured above) on Jan. 31, to begin the festival; later shows include the acoustic trio Dawn of Midi with the electrified chamber ensemble Bright Wave and the sound artist William Basinski with the percussionists Man Forever. This year, according to the festival's curator, Judd Greenstein, is the first time that every concert features musicians who have not collaborated before. "So I know less about what's going to happen than usual, which is a good thing," he said.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ETHAN LEVITAS

ART | CLASSICAL MUSIC
NIGHT LIFE | MOVIES
FOOD & DRINK
THE THEATRE | DANCE
ABOVE & BEYOND



ART

MUSEUMS SHORT LIST

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-535-7710)—“The Flowering of Edo Period Painting.” Opens Feb. 1.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—“Isa Genzken.” Through March 10.

MOHA PSI

22-25 Jackson Ave., Queens (718-784-2084)—“Mike Kelley.” Through Feb. 2.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—“Carrie Mae Weems.” Through May 14.

WHITNEY MUSEUM

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3600)—“Rituals of Rented Island.” Through Feb. 2.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM

200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—“The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk.” Through Feb. 23.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Central Park W. at 79th St. (212-769-5100)—“The Power of Poison.” Through Aug. 10.

FRICK COLLECTION

1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700)—“Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Hill Collection.” Through June 15.

GREY ART GALLERY

100 Washington Sq. E. (212-998-6780)—“An Opening of the Field: Jess, Robert Duncan, and Their Circle.” Through March 29.

MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM

225 Madison Ave., at 36th St. (212-685-0008)—“The Little Prince: A New York Story.” Through April 27.

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. (212-534-1672)—“City as Canvas: New York City Graffiti from the Martin Wong Collection.” Opens Feb. 4.

NEW MUSEUM

235 Bowery, at Prince St. (212-219-1222)—“Report on the Construction of a Spaceship Module.” Through April 13.

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500)—“Carrie Mae Weems: The Museum Series.” Opens Jan. 30.

OF NOTE WADE GUYTON

Five canvases that were dragged through a digital printer, incurring swaths of delicately striated black and slightly soiled white, are nine feet high and fit snug to the lengths of walls that range from twenty-five to fifty-two feet across. The tenderly sensitive surfaces feel oblivious to their vast size and massive presence. It's as if something huge and brutal—say, a Richard Serra—fell to dreaming. Guyton's aesthetic perfect pitch extends to a reproduced museum coat-check counter, in walnut veneer, which shrugs off its lost function to become formidable sculpture. Through Feb. 22. (Petzel, 456 W. 18th St. 212-680-9467.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum

“Piero della Francesca: Personal Encounters”

What a shame that the Met has shunted four glorious paintings by the monarch of the early Renaissance into a gloomy interior gallery, hanging the works asymmetrically and letting the texts overpower the pictures. Luckily, Piero is tough enough to handle the sloppy display, and the quartet of devotional images, the largest just two feet tall, exhibit a reticence and a severity that make them look more modern than most of what's in Chelsea. His “Saint Jerome and a Suppliant,” from the fourteen-sixties, captures the saint's asceticism with a palette of beiges and browns; the Senigallia Madonna, made circa 1478, with skin tones like ice milk and light that streams harshly through a back window, oscillates between tenderness and austerity and settles on the latter. Piero isn't a comforting painter, but he's a perpetually incisive one, and that may be a greater accomplishment. Through March 30.

Morgan Library & Museum

“Visions and Nightmares: Four Centuries of Spanish Drawings”

This small show offers the ecstasy of discovery: art history has skipped over a chapter. Owing to the paucity of examples, scholars had long thought that the painters of Spain's Golden Age drew less than their contemporaries in Italy, France, and Flanders. (The twenty-one sheets here account for nearly half of the Morgan's collection.) In fact, as the curator, Edward Payne, argues, drawing was critical to artists such as Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, whose wondrous preparatory sketch for “St. Felix of Cantalice Holding the Christ Child,” done around 1665, articulates the friar's beard with just the barest intensification of gesture.

Those earlier examples make the more familiar achievement of Francisco Goya more profound. His “Nightmare” of 1816-20, in which a flying bull carries a terrified woman still tangled in her bedclothes, winks at a sixteenth-century drawing across the room, by the little-known artist Miguel Barroso, in which a bull lounges in the grass beside Saint Luke. Through May 11.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Thomas Struth

Disneyland is an obvious target for a photographer whose subjects have long included the construction of artifice, and the German photographer devotes nearly half of his show to very big color landscapes of Anaheim, California. These works combine pleasure and perversion to an impressive degree, but the series is not as satisfying as other pictures here, which range from a graffiti-covered back alley, in St. Petersburg, to a robot, at Georgia Tech. People are all but absent, replaced by sprawling, confounding arrangements of industrial and technological equipment. When a human body does appear, it's a faceless slab of flesh laid out on an operating table under predatory, plastic-shrouded robotic arms. Through Feb. 22. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 212-977-7160.)

“The Image Gallery Redux: 1959-1962”

The twenty-one photographers here all had shows early in their careers at an East Tenth Street storefront that, unlike the hundreds of galleries in New York today, had little to no competition. The works—street scenes, moody portraits—are strictly black-and-white, and the lingering evidence of the politically engaged Photo League is evident: social inequality, working-class subjects, and an emerging counterculture are prime concerns. The consistency of tone is striking and the quality high; look for fine images by Saul Leiter, Dave Heath, Enrico Natali, Sid Grossman, and Image founder Larry Siegel. Through Feb. 15. (Greenberg, 41 E. 57th St. 212-334-0010.)

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Liz Glynn

The L.A. artist, who scored a hit at last year's Frieze New York fair with her hidden, surreal speakasy, exhibits replicas of lost antiquities, arrayed like recovered loot. (Imagine a time-travel division of Customs and Border Protection.) An ancient-Greek astronomical calendar, Julius Caesar's purple robes, a Ming Dynasty bust from a sunken Portuguese galleon: each of Glynn's objects evokes a story of loss, but the coarseness of the papier-mâché and the hasty, sometimes cartoonish paint jobs reinforce that the salvage is a fiction.

Beyond the plunder is the partially wrecked hull of a British smuggling vessel, a piquant metaphor in an art world where the evasion of customs duties and similar taxes is treated by some as a birthright. Through Feb. 8. (Cooper, 197 Tenth Ave., at 20th St. 212-255-1105.)

Jackie Nickerson

Powerful color photographs of farm workers in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Kenya build on an earlier series that Nickerson made on African farms. This time, she's pushed her scale to larger-than-life size so the subjects assume the proportions of monuments and the works transcend portraiture. Obscured by the crops, sacks, and rubber tubes that they carry, the figures become armatures, sculptural and almost symbolic. They may disappear behind their burdens, but the laborers in Nickerson's show are not anonymous: she pointedly titles the pictures—“David,” “Catherine,” “Cephas”—after their subjects. Through Feb. 15. (Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 212-645-1701.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

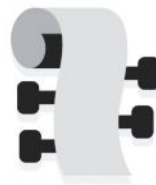
“Moira Dryer Project”

“She was the Katherine Hepburn of abstract painting . . . beautiful and wind-swept and fierce and intelligent,” Ross Bleckner has said of Dryer, whose death, from cancer, in 1992, at the age of thirty-two, cost the world a likely major artist. Her laconically soulful and witty paintings are part color-field abstraction, part conceptual art, and wholly poetic. Eight works by her—too few!—complement a group show, on Chrystie Street, of six appealing young artists (Julia Dault, Noam Rappaport, Jackie Saccoccio, Mika Tajima, Jeffrey Tranchell, and Mary Weatherford) who evince her influence. Call it Dryerism: a one-woman movement with a long fuse, detonating now. Through Feb. 22. (Eleven Rivington, 11 Rivington St. and 195 Chrystie St. 212-982-1930.)

“Stay in Love”

This satisfyingly diverse group makes a case for repetition, obsession, and monomania as strategies to keep the roaring world, outside and online, at bay. The curator, Chris Sharp, privileges analog, often futile gestures, including Josh Smith painting his own name over and over (at Gitlen) and Roman Opalka's decades-long effort to paint every number from one to infinity (at Cooley). In the best work here, fixation has a social charge: for nearly a year, Mierle Laderman Ukeles traversed New York to shake the hands of eighty-five hundred workers in the Department of Sanitation. “Thank you for keeping New York alive,” the artist told them. This two-gallery show deserves the same compliment. Through Feb. 2. (Cooley, 107 Norfolk St. 212-680-0564; Gitlen, 122 Norfolk St. 212-274-0761.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC



WEATHER MAN

A percussion virtuoso patrols the outer reaches of sound.

THE MASTER PERCUSSIONIST STEVEN SCHICK, who will present a two-night, one-man survey of his repertory this week at Miller Theatre, grew up on a farm near Clear Lake, Iowa. His earliest musical memory is of his mother playing Chopin on the piano late at night while the wind howled outside. “I remember the wind as much as the Chopin,” he said recently, on the phone from San Diego, where he lives. “And I remember the sound of the ice on the lake breaking up—this glass-wind-chime effect, as a huge wave of ice cubes broke on the shore. I remember wondering why that wasn’t music, too.”

The art of percussion is an endless patrol on the border between music and noise. In classical music, it is among the newest of genres: Darius Milhaud, Edgard Varèse, and John Cage, among others, pioneered the field in the early twentieth century. Solo percussion music is even newer. “We think of the repertory as always predating us,” Schick said, “but, turning sixty, I’m actually older than the first major work for a single percussionist—Stockhausen’s ‘Zyklus,’ from 1959.” (Cage wrote a solo piece three years earlier, but it wasn’t performed until 1962.) At the same time, percussion is immeasurably ancient, going back to the origins of music and, perhaps, to the first stirrings of human intelligence. Still, when Schick began teaching percussion, at the

University of California, San Diego, in 1991, many people in the classical world looked at him as an interloper.

The first concert at Miller, “Origins,” reviews the genre’s early milestones; the second, “Responses,” is a richly varied selection of the many works that Schick has commissioned from some of today’s finest composers. Anyone expecting a monotonous onslaught of sound may be surprised by the timbral variety that Schick can draw from his percussion battery, which ranges from drums, gongs, bells, and mallet instruments to brake drums, flowerpots, and other repurposed materials. Iannis Xenakis’s “Psappha,” in Schick’s version, builds to a brutal climax of pummelled bass drum and clanging metal bars. Morton Feldman’s “The King of Denmark,” by contrast, hovers at the edge of silence, its sounds produced by hands and fingers rather than sticks and mallets. Some works, such as Brian Ferneyhough’s “Bone Alphabet,” confront the player with dizzyingly intricate notation. Others, like the Feldman, allow the performer considerable latitude in determining the outcome of the piece.

What’s most striking about Schick’s playing, aside from his extreme physical virtuosity, is the narrative momentum he elicits from even the most abstract schemes: he is always telling stories with sounds, even if you can’t put those stories into words. “I spend so much time, month after month, simply exploring the worlds of these pieces, finding a way in or looking for a new way out,” Schick said. “Sometimes it feels like improvisation, but even when the notation gives me freedom I sense that I’m pursuing a clear idea. What you discover is the weather system of the piece, the rules by which energies and vortices relate to one another.” Schick is still pursuing the music of the Iowa wind. (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 212-854-7799. Jan. 30 and Feb. 1 at 8.)

—Alex Ross

Chef'sChoice®

Cordless Electric Glass Kettle

Savor the moments...
with style and elegance



Beautifully crafted: Elegant, heat-resistant glass and brushed stainless steel design. Kettle lifts from corded base and is perfectly shaped for easy lifting and pouring.

Efficient, conserves energy! Boils water faster than stove or microwave.



For a retailer nearest you:
EdgeCraft (800)342-3255
www.edgecraft.com

© 2014 EdgeCraft Corporation, Avondale, PA 19311

COLUMBIA

Executive Masters of
HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT
PROGRAMS



"It's my job
to recognize
a great
healthcare
investment
opportunity.
This is one."

Kathleen Regan
Partner, Radius
Ventures, LLC

**EARN YOUR MHA OR MPH DEGREE
WITHOUT INTERRUPTING YOUR CAREER**

**A two-year Executive Program
scheduled one weekend a month**

Information Session: Wed, Feb 5 at 6 pm

Columbia University Medical Center
Allen Rosenfield Building
722 W 168th Street

For more information or to RSVP visit
emph.columbia.edu



Columbia University
MAILMAN SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

See testimonial video at: emph.columbia.edu

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera

Joseph Calleja's irrepressibly sunny singing and bighearted presence enliven what would otherwise be a standard-issue performance of the Met's tried-and-true production of "*La Bohème*." Joining his dreamy, love-struck Rodolfo in Franco Zeffirelli's picturesque Parisian cityscapes are the appealing performers Alexey Markov, Irina Lungu, and Maija Kovaleska; Stefano Ranzani's brisk tempos convey the brash enthusiasm of Puccini's young bohemians but pass too quickly through the score's lovelier, more expansive moments. (Jan. 30 at 8.) • **Also playing:** Donizetti's "*L'Elisir d'Amore*," which debuted in 2012, features its potent original Adina, Anna Netrebko, and conductor, Maurizio Benini, with the dependable Ramón Vargas, Nicola Alaimo, and Erwin Schrott joining Netrebko in the leading roles. (Jan. 29 and Feb. 1 at 8. These are the final performances.) • Renée Fleming has returned to the house to lead the cast in "*Rusalka*," portraying the gentle wood sprite (one of her signature roles) who yearns to love like a human being. The distinguished singers Piotr Beczala, Dolora Zajick, and John Relyea join her; Yannick Nézet-Séguin leads Dvořák's richly symphonic score. (Jan. 31 at 8 and Feb. 4 at 7:30.) • A revival of "*Madama Butterfly*" features Amanda Echallaz, Bryan Hymel (a young tenor of exceptional promise), Elizabeth DeShong, and Scott Hendricks in the leading roles; Philippe Auguin. (Feb. 1 at 1.) • The director-lyricist Jeremy Sams and the book writer Douglas Carter Beane have turned Johann Strauss II's operetta "*Die Fledermaus*," a glittering comedy of late-imperial Vienna, into an intermittently funny middlebrow Broadway musical. But the talented cast—including Susanna Phillips, Christopher Maltman, Michael Fabiano, and Anthony Roth Costanzo—works hard, and the sets impress; Adam Fischer. (Feb. 3 at 7:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

Kremerata Baltica

Gidon Kremer, a tribune for freedom as well as a great musician, leads his personal virtuoso chamber orchestra from the concertmaster's chair in two familiar pieces—Britten's "Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge" and Pärt's "Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten"—as well as novel works by Shostakovich and the recently rediscovered composer Mieczysław Weinberg. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. Jan. 30 at 7:30.)

American Symphony Orchestra

If your idea of English music is of something invariably gracious and well-mannered, then this concert is not for you. Leon Botstein conducts pieces by four twentieth-century mavericks: Arthur Bliss, Britten's beloved teacher Frank Bridge ("Phantasm" for piano and orchestra, with Piers Lane), Robert Simpson ("Volcano"), and William Walton (the Symphony No. 2, a frenzied Cold War masterpiece that is as unsettling as it is elegant). (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Juilliard Orchestra: "Alfred Schnittke's World"

The annual "Focus!" festival, this year devoted to the turbulent and exciting music of the Russian-German composer and the brilliant colleagues who surrounded him, concludes, as usual, with a concert by the school's leading ensemble. Anne

Manson conducts the U.S. premiere of Schnittke's Symphony No. 8 (1993) on a program that also features works by Gubaidulina ("Fairytale Poem") and Kancheli. (Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, Juilliard School. Jan. 31 at 8. Free tickets are available at the Juilliard box office; for a full schedule, see juilliard.edu.)

The English Concert: Handel's "Theodora"

A concert by the eminent British period-instrument ensemble is always a considerable attraction. This time, Harry Bicket brings them to the city for a performance of Handel's dramatic oratorio, in which such singers as Dorothea Röschmann and David Daniels are assisted by the formidable Choir of Trinity Wall Street. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Feb. 2 at 2.)

Philadelphia Orchestra

The orchestra's kinetic music director, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, in town to conduct at the Met, calls his magnificent band up from Philly to offer Carnegie Hall a Central European musical-immersion experience: masterworks by Smetana, Bartók (the lyrical Third Piano Concerto, with the matchless Radu Lupu), and Dvořák (the sweeping, and seldom heard, Symphony No. 6 in D Major). (212-247-7800. Feb. 3 at 8.)

RECITALS

Alice Coote and Graham Johnson

The deep-toned mezzo-soprano, a regular at the Met, is also an impressive recitalist. Her all-French program with the dean of British accompanists begins and ends with Poulenc (including "Voyage à Paris") but also features songs by Fauré, Gounod, Debussy, and Satie. (Zankel Hall. 212-247-7800. Jan. 30 at 7:30.)

Ecstatic Music Festival:

Dawn of Midi and Bright Wave

Merkin Concert Hall's alt-classical jamboree revs into gear with a collaborative concert by the acoustic trio Dawn of Midi and the electro-acoustic chamber group Bright Wave (featuring the young composers William Brittelle and Michi Wiancko). (129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Feb. 1 at 7:30.)

Symphony Space:

"Music of Now Marathon"

Laura Kaminsky, the hall's outgoing artistic director, has arranged an ambitious day of concerts on the subject of sleep and dreams—a favorite theme of Shakespeare, among others. An array of fine musicians that includes the Metropolis Ensemble, Talujon, Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble, and the Cassatt and Carpe Diem String Quartets perform music by such composers as Stockhausen, Saariaho, Du Yun, and Monk. (Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. Feb. 1, beginning at 2.)

Parker Quartet

String-quartet fans searching for shelter this week can go to Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, where this Grammy-winning young ensemble will perform classics both old (Mendelssohn's Quartet in D Major, Op. 44, No. 1, and Shostakovich's Quartet No. 9 in E-Flat Major) and new (Thomas Adès's "Arcadiana"). (212-247-7800. Jan. 31 at 7:30.)

Lang Lang

The world's most famous pianist is back at Carnegie Hall, performing not only Chopin's tempestuous Four Ballades but also a clutch of sonatas by one of Chopin's favorite composers, Mozart. (212-247-7800. Feb. 4 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE



ROCK AND POP

Musicians and night-club proprietors lead complicated lives; it's advisable to check in advance to confirm engagements.

Laura Cantrell

It's easy to see why the Nashville native has chosen to settle in New York. Although her songs fall into the "country" category, they don't conform to the current, commercial framework of her home town's industry. Her music is at once too old-fashioned and too modern. Her songs are admirably direct and clear, like a good friend looking you in the eye and telling the truth about both you and her. Cantrell's new record, "No Way There from Here," is just out, and it's her first album of original songs in nine years, though she did write the title track to "Kitty Wells Dresses," her gorgeous 2011 tribute to her hero. (Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. 212-539-8778. Jan. 29.)

Endless Boogie

There's no better way to describe this band than with its name. Fronted by Paul Major, a devout record collector and the writer of Major Jams, a psychedelic-music column for *Vice's* music site, Noisey, this band knows its way down the path of sixties-influenced long-form garage rock. The group delivers meditative, fuzzed-out sets, driven by repetitious grooves, blistering lead electric-guitar lines, and Major's raspy howl. The songs are so classic-sounding that they'd be equally at home in a basement, a club, or a stadium. (Union Pool, 484 Union Ave., Brooklyn. 718-609-0484. Jan. 29.)

Kim Gordon and Jutta Koether

The bassist, guitarist, singer, actress, and clothing designer Gordon continues her busy post-Sonic Youth career with a rare appearance with the German visual artist and musician Koether. The two have been collaborating for more than a decade, and previous shows have featured noisy, richly textured soundscapes that relied on techniques like rubbing an amplified electric guitar on the contours of a drum set, along with scripted exchanges that touch elliptically on sexism and critical theory, among other topics. Their set at MOMA PS1 on Feb. 2, which includes visual elements, is being staged as part of a retrospective of the punk-leaning artist and musician Mike Kelley, who died in 2012, and who was a friend of Gordon's. (22-25 Jackson Ave., Queens. 718-784-2084.)

Habibi

Rahill Jamalifard, the lead singer of this local all-female quartet, which takes its name from an Arabic term of endearment, is second-generation Iranian, and she counts Persian folktales and Zoroastrianism among her influences. The band's garage-inspired songs, which take their cues from the Shangri-Las and other girl groups of the sixties, have an unexpected edge. They're celebrating the release of a self-titled debut album, in the company of two up-and-coming Brooklyn garage acts, **Hector's Pets** and the

Mystery Lights, a band named for an optical phenomenon observed outside of Marfa, Texas. (Baby's All Right, 146 Broadway, Brooklyn. 718-599-5800. Jan. 29.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

John Abercrombie

This inventive guitarist has been an inspiring force as an instrumental stylist as well as a consistently creative bandleader for more than thirty years. At the Jazz Standard, he brings together the pianist **Marc Copland**, the bassist **Drew Gress**, and the drummer **Joey Baron**. It's the same ensemble that recorded his current release, "39 Steps." The album is a tad undercooked, but in performance this quartet will undoubtedly ramp up the action. (116 E. 27th St. 212-576-2232. Jan. 30-Feb. 2.)

American Songbook

The work of the songwriter Randy Newman, with its inimitable blend of pitch-black cynicism and sunny jauntiness, poses special challenges to singers. Expect **James Naughton**, who has a lifetime of stage and screen experience, to handle Newman's odes to the good, the bad,

and the ugly with all the drama and mirth they deserve. He opens the season in the Allen Room on Jan. 28. The following night, the opera singer **Lawrence Brownlee** and the pianist **Damien Sneed** revisit the gospel songs on their new album, "Spiritual Sketches." Jan. 30: The former Drive-By Truckers front man **Jason Isbell**. Jan. 31: **Patina Miller**, who recently won a Tony for her work in "Pippin." (Broadway at 60th St. 212-721-6500. americansongbook.org. Through June 12.)

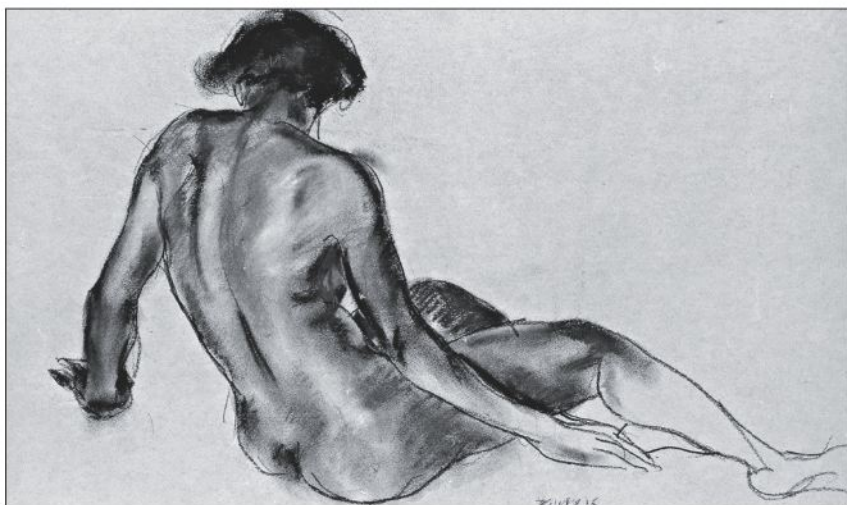
Mark Turner

There are all manner of odd, potentially conflicting influences to be heard in the saxophonist Turner's lean quartet—the free jazz of early Ornette Coleman and the cool stylings of Lennie Tristano for starters—but the contradictions lend an astringent poetry to the group's sound. Turner's curlicuing tenor lines and **Avishai Cohen's** stark-toned trumpet can be savored to best advantage in this ensemble, which has only bass and drums as support. (Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. 212-255-4037. Jan. 28-Feb. 2.)

Matt Wilson

A superb drummer and an irreplaceable jazz wit, Wilson has fostered a fruitful relationship with keyboardist **John Medeski** (of Medeski, Martin & Wood), who appears as a special guest on Wilson's new album, "Gathering Call." The release craftily mixes originals from the leader with outlier jazz tunes and Beyoncé's "If I Were a Boy." (Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Broadway at 60th St. 212-258-9595. Jan. 30-Feb. 2.)

SWANN
AUCTION GALLERIES



James A. Porter, *Bronze Figure*, color pastel and charcoal, circa 1931. Estimate \$4,000 to \$6,000.

Shadows Uplifted: The Rise of African-American Fine Art FEBRUARY 13

Specialist: Nigel Freeman • nfreeman@swanngalleries.com

Preview: February 8, 12-5; February 10 to 12, 10-6; February 13, 10-12

104 East 25th St, New York, NY 10010 • tel 212 254 4710

SWANNGALLERIES.COM



MOVIES

OPENING

CHARLIE VICTOR ROMEO

A docudrama about an airplane crash, based on dialogue recorded in airline cockpits. Directed by Robert Berger, Patrick Daniels, and Karlyn Michelson. Opening Jan. 29. (Film Forum.)

THAT AWKWARD MOMENT

A comedy, directed by Tom Gormican, about two twenty-something friends (Zac Efron and Miles Teller) who promise a heartbroken third (Michael B. Jordan) that they will stay single. Co-starring Imogen Poots. Opening Jan. 31. (In wide release.)

TIM'S VERMEER

Teller (of Penn & Teller) directed this documentary, about an inventor's efforts to understand and replicate the methods of Vermeer. Opening Jan. 31. (In limited release.)

12 O'CLOCK BOYS

Reviewed in Now Playing. Opening Jan. 31. (In limited release.)

Orson Welles's romantic, elegiac film noir "The Lady from Shanghai," from 1948, at Film Forum.

NOW PLAYING

The Birds

In 1962, between "Psycho" and "Marnie," his masterworks of raging id, Alfred Hitchcock, a city boy, filled the great outdoors with the incarnation of that impersonal fury. Entranced by Tippi Hedren's cold, luminous allure, he cast Bodega Bay in the shadow of lust: the attacks by the titular villains coincide with the arrival of a wealthy playgirl (Hedren) whose pursuit of a suave young lawyer from San Francisco (Rod Taylor) manages to alienate his mother (Jessica Tandy). (The two surrounding films put the blame on Mom as well.) Hitchcock's nature nightmare, which he filmed during the Cuban missile crisis, also reflected the political terrors of the age: the besieged locals call the assault an act of apocalyptic war, and shots of screaming schoolkids fleeing down a lonely road disturbingly presage the iconic news image of Vietnamese children escaping from American napalm attacks. Few films depict so eerily yet so meticulously the



metaphysical and historical sense of a world out of joint.—*Richard Brody* (MOMA; Jan. 29-31.)

Boudou Saved from Drowning

Jean Renoir's 1932 satire on the hypocrisies of bien-pensant humanism and mal-pensant indifference is centered on a satyr: Boudou (Michel Simon), a Paris clochard, who, after losing his poodle, tries to kill himself by jumping into the Seine. Édouard Lestingois (Charles Granval), a liberal-minded bookseller, rescues Boudou and puts him up in the family home. There, the uncivilized outsider wreaks havoc, ruining furniture and clothing, scaring off customers, thwarting Monsieur's trysts with the young housemaid (Séverine Lerczinska), and seducing Madame Lestingois (Marcelle Hainia). As played by the exuberant, curly-mopped Simon, Boudou is a willful, concupiscent child; he rattles through the household like a Marx Brother whose breakage costs money, whose insults sting, and whose priapic antics prove authentically destructive. Renoir's documentary-based attention to Parisian people and places turns Boudou into a proto-Borat—a self-aware provocateur, society's indecent shadow. In French.—*R.B.* (French Institute Alliance Française; Feb. 4.)

Gold Diggers of 1933

The glittery undulations of Busby Berkeley's opening number, "We're in the Money" (featuring Ginger Rogers), and the stomping lamentations of his closer, "Remember My Forgotten Man" (with Joan Blondell), are high on scenographic complexity but short on sensual pleasure. For this geometric wizard, who both choreographs and directs the Depression-centered comedy's musical sequences, sex depends on excess. The electric-light violins of "Shadow Waltz" engage in the world's largest game of Spin the Bottle, and "Pettin' in the Park" turns the pure superfluity of the city's open land into an erotic riot. Starting with the natural pressures of the mating urge, he spins out a florid display of sport and fashion. The backstage-Broadway plot, about a visionary producer (Ned Sparks), three struggling showgirls (Blondell, Ruby Keeler, and Aline MacMahon), a talented singer-songwriter (Dick Powell) who's a Boston blueblood in hiding, and his stuffy folks from home (Warren William and Guy Kibbee), is put through its clattery paces by the director, Mervyn LeRoy. But

the movie thrives and survives on Berkeley's genius; for all his spectacular theatrical flair, he's a sociobiologist in rhythm.—*R.B.* (Museum of the Moving Image; Feb. 2.)

Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit

An extremely sinister Russian oligarch, Viktor Cherevin (Kenneth Branagh), commanding a chic black-on-black office among the brilliant towers of the new Moscow, plans to unleash a terrorist attack on American soil and then sink the country's economy by selling billions in treasury bonds. Only Jack Ryan (a likable Chris Pine), a newly recruited young C.I.A. analyst, can stop him. The movie features Tom Clancy's signature character and reflects the author's end-is-nigh alarmism, but, since it's not based on any of his novels, it's distressingly shorn of his ecstatic talk about ordnance—armaments, calibres, and the like. Branagh is also the director; the crisp, gleaming images are by the cinematographer, Haris Zambarloukos; the lightning-fast editing is by Martin Walsh. With Kevin Costner, as the super-agent who recruits Ryan, and Keira Knightley, as Ryan's fiancée.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 1/20/14.) (In wide release.)

Labor Day

The year is 1987, and a teen-age boy named Henry (Gattlin Griffith) lives the quiet life with Adele (Kate Winslet), his divorced mother. Their routine is interrupted by Frank (Josh Brolin), a convicted murderer who has fled from custody and holes up in their home over the Labor Day weekend. His initial air of menace fades, and soon—absurdly soon, you might think—he becomes a part of the family, teaching Henry a range of manly skills and seducing the frail and loveless Adele. The seduction itself is waged largely by euphemism, as when Frank gets his hands all moist and juicy with a dash of home baking; at times like this, the movie—the first truly serious and joke-free tale to be directed by Jason Reitman—offers more to laugh at than most of his comedies do. It looks swell, and Winslet adds another portrait of pained watchfulness to her gallery of suffering heroines, but the result feels like a richly implausible dream disguised as a soulful drama.—*Anthony Lane* (1/13/14) (In wide release.)

The Lady from Shanghai

In this hectic 1948 film noir by Orson Welles, a tough but broke young man has only one chance to get close to the ritzy woman he loves: taking a job aboard the yacht on which she and her husband are cruising from New York to San Francisco. It's a recipe for disaster, which duly ensues. Welles also stars, as Michael (Black Irish) O'Hara, a writer, activist, and idealist who is easy prey for his cynical



employers—Arthur Bannister (Everett Sloane), a famous trial lawyer whose disabled legs suggest intimate infirmities, and Elsa Bannister (Rita Hayworth), whose neediness and vulnerability conceal deadly wiles. The lurid plot involves lust and murder, which Welles renders in a frenzied array of distorting and disorienting images. Cocked angles and high-contrast lighting are matched by an ear-catching relay of highly inflected voices of character actors, including Sloane; Glenn Anders, as Bannister's partner; Ted de Corsia, as his snoop; and Gus Schilling and Louis Merriall, as fellow-laborers. Welles and Hayworth were married at the time; he gives her closeups of unmatched rapture even while allegorizing his own fate as a free spirit caught in the trap of Hollywood's delusional pleasure dome.—*R.B.* (Film Forum; Jan. 31-Feb. 6.)

Like Father, Like Son

In film after film, the Japanese director Hirokazu Kore-eda has inspected the family unit—the many ways in which it can be added to, subdivided, and cracked. His latest work lays forth a rare but especially troubling case of damage: Ryota (Masaharu Fukuyama) and Midori (Machiko Ono) discover that their son, Keita (Keita Ninomiya), age six, is not theirs at all. The maternity hospital mixed up two babies, and, as a result, their real son, Ryusei (Shogun Hwang), has spent his young life in the care of another couple. Custom, genetics, and the law all specify that the boys must now be swapped around, and yet their years of upbringing can hardly be undone or ignored. The families belong to different social strata, one being poorer but more rumbustious than the other, all of which leads to strains of mild social comedy and a definite touch of the schematic. What stays with you, however, is the unlikely shadow of loss, not least in the hearts of the boys' mothers: how can a loving child, even the "wrong" one, be let go? In Japanese.—*A.L.* (1/27/14) (In limited release.)

One Day Pina Asked . . .

Starting from the modest premise of documenting several months of Pina Bausch's performances and rehearsals in the summer of 1983, the director Chantal Akerman realized one of the greatest of all syntheses of dance and cinema. She films the performers with a poised camera; her incisive angles and smooth pan shots emphasize the dances' visual counterpoint and overlapping rhythms. In Bausch's stagings, as in Akerman's dramas, ordinary gestures are emphasized and formalized into dances, and Akerman films Bausch's dancers as she films the actors in such movies as "Jeanne Dielman" and "Toute une Nuit." Observing the dancers behind the scenes and in their dressing

rooms as they dress, smoke, apply makeup, and sing, Akerman reveals their preparations and meditations to be continuous with their public performances; her interviews with members of Bausch's company are echoed in their dances. If Bausch's choreography no longer existed, Akerman's films could be excerpted to convey something of its essence—and Bausch herself, serenely avowing her poetic aspirations, becomes one of Akerman's characters. In German and French.—*R.B.* (Film Society of Lincoln Center; Feb. 1.)

Stranger by the Lake

The lake is in France, under the spell of summer, but who could the stranger be? Almost anyone could qualify: Franck (Pierre Deladonchamps), who wanders onto the shoreline every day in search of companionship; Henri (Patrick D'Assumcao), the corpulent loner who sits and surveys the scene; Michel (Christophe Paou), all muscle and mustache, who could have arrived straight from a French remake of "Magnum P.I."; and so on. The beach is a cruisers' idyll, and intimacy—often quite graphic—hangs within easy reach, even if one party knows nothing of the other, save the strength of his desires. When a swimmer dies, therefore, and foul play is suspected, the investigating policeman (Jérôme Chappatte) finds his inquiries thwarted at every turn. The director Alain Guiraudie's film is creepy, consumed by ritual, and quietly comic; only some eager bloodletting seems out of place. There is no music to be heard, and no getting away from the location, which feels like a paradise waiting to be menaced and lost. In French.—*A.L.* (1/27/14) (In limited release.)

12 O'Clock Boys

The documentary filmmaker Lotfy Nathan considers Baltimore's crews of young, mainly African-American dirt-bike riders—daring and talented stunt riders whose high-speed, large-group expeditions through the city spark official denunciations and bitter cat-and-mouse games with the police. He focusses on one young aspirant, Pug, whom he films in the course of three years. Dreaming of acceptance by the leading group—the 12 O'Clock Boyz—the adolescent Pug devotes exceptional time and effort to cultivating his acrobatic skills, even as trouble intrudes. His older brother, Tibba—something of a father figure to him—dies suddenly of an asthma attack, and Pug turns increasingly combative. Meanwhile, his lifelong affinity for and deep knowledge about animal life—he has long planned to be a veterinarian—go on the back burner. In slow-motion shots, Nathan captures the riders' pride in mastery and thrill in adventure. Discussions with Pug's mother and other relatives, his elder neighbors, and veteran riders reveal the underlying conflicts—the perception

of hostile authority and widespread indifference—at the heart of the defiantly public self-assertions.—*R.B.* (In limited release.)

24 Exposures

Billy (Adam Wingard), a photographer who specializes in what he calls "personal fetish photos"—all featuring young women in various states of undress and often pretending to be victims of violence—is questioned by a detective (Simon Barrett) who is investigating a series of unsolved murders. Meanwhile, Billy's relationship with his girlfriend, Alex (Caroline White), is tested twice—first by his attraction to one of his models, Callie (Sophia Takal), who joins the couple for a threesome, then by the informal photo shoot he arranges at home with a new participant, Rebecca (Helen Rogers), a waitress. In this sleek yet confessional drama by the prolific filmmaker Joe Swanberg, the boundaries of art and life are probed with a knowing yet uneasy directness. Billy admits that his photographs arise from his own fantasies and desires, yet struggles to keep them from becoming realities even as he stages them in studios and on location. The incongruously glossy camerawork (by Adam Pinney) suggests precisely the sort of soft-core saleability that Billy's—and Swanberg's—self-revelations skirt. As Billy attracts new models for his work, the movie audaciously displays the fantasies—and, perhaps, the realities—that these women, too, are pursuing.—*R.B.* (IFC Center.)

The Wolf of Wall Street

Martin Scorsese's three-hour burlesque of loathsome, crooked financial activity and extravagant personal debauchery is meant to epitomize everything that has gone wrong with the money culture. Leonardo DiCaprio's Jordan Belfort (a real-world scoundrel and swindler) comes right at us, narrating directly to the camera, like a low-rent Richard III; he pitches us his shady deals and his druggy, manic life. At the brokerage that Belfort sets up, DiCaprio, addressing the troops, arches his back, nearly swallows the mike, and preaches the gospel of winning, killing, and triumphing. Physically, DiCaprio's work is astounding, but it's also one of the most completely externalized performances in movie history—Jordan Belfort is not, in the end, very interesting. Neither is the movie: Scorsese stages the money-making, orgies, and drug-taking with such jubilant, unreflective vitality that they might be part of a Broadway musical—a knock-the-tourists-dead show called "Greed!" With Jonah Hill, as Belfort's henchman; Kyle Chandler, as a relentless and surprisingly subtle F.B.I. agent; and Margot Robbie, as the inevitable blond trophy wife.—*D.D.* (In wide release.)

ALSO PLAYING

Aatsinki IFC Center.
I, Frankenstein: In wide release.

REVIVALS AND FESTIVALS

Titles in bold are reviewed.

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—In revival. Jan. 31-Feb. 6 at 1:30, 3:20, 5:10, 7, and 9: "The Lady from Shanghai."

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (212-875-5610)—The films of Alain Guiraudie. Jan. 29 at 7: "No Rest for the Brave" (2003). • Jan. 29 at 9:15 and Jan. 30 at 7: "That Old Dream That Moves" (2001). • Jan. 30 at 9: "Sunshine for the Scoundrels" (2001). • "Dance on Camera." Jan. 31 at 3:30: "Tap or Die" (2013, Jackie Paré). • Jan. 31 at 8: "Miss Hill: Making Dance Matter" (2014, Greg Vander Veer). • Feb. 1 at 11 A.M.: "One Day Pina Asked . . ."

FRENCH INSTITUTE ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE

55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—"Remastered and Restored: Treasures of French Cinema." Feb. 4 at 4 and 7:30: "Boudou Saved from Drowning." The 7:30 screening will be introduced by the director Henry Bean.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—"An Auteurist History of Film." Jan. 29-31 at 1:30: "The Birds." • "Roadshow." Feb. 1 at 1:30: "Gigi" (1958, Vincente Minnelli). • Feb. 1 at 4:30: "Finian's Rainbow" (1968, Francis Ford Coppola). • Feb. 1 at 8:30: "Funny Girl" (1968, William Wyler). • Feb. 2 at 2: "Camelot" (1967, Joshua Logan). • Feb. 2 at 6:15: "Cabaret" (1972, Bob Fosse).

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"See It Big! Musicals." Jan. 31 at 7: "A Star Is Born" (1954, George Cukor). • Feb. 2 at 2: "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944, Vincente Minnelli). • Feb. 2 at 4:30: "Gold Diggers of 1933." • Feb. 2 at 7: "Pennies from Heaven" (1981, Herbert Ross). • "Massa Gaze." Feb. 1 at 1: "Solomon Northup's Odyssey" (1984, Gordon Parks). • Feb. 1 at 3:15: "Which Story, What Story, and Whose Story Is Being Told?," a panel discussion with Sheril Antonio, Jelani Cobb, Stanley Crouch, and Khalil Muhammad, moderated by Warrington Hudlin. • Feb. 1 at 5: "Who Gets to Tell the Story? Why and Why Not?," a panel discussion with Neema Barnett, Warrington Hudlin, Malcolm Lee, and Shola Lynch, moderated by Felicia Lee. • Feb. 1 at 6:30: "Burn!" (1969, Gillo Pontecorvo).



GOINGS ON, ONLINE

Visit nyr.kr/nightlife for more night-life listings, including details on shows by Drowners and Albert (Tootie) Heath.



DVD OF THE WEEK

A video discussion of Carl Theodor Dreyer's "Ordet," from 1955, in our digital edition.



FOOD & DRINK

BAR TAB LONG ISLAND BAR

110 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn
(718-625-8908)

The proprietors of this bar—including Toby Cecchini, of the former, iconic Passerby—have the right idea. From 1949 to 2007, the space was home to an unpretentious diner that catered to the dockworkers at the end of Atlantic Avenue. It was vacant for six years, and the new owners wisely chose to retain the original signage (a gorgeous neon beacon), handsome Art Deco bar and red-and-cream booths, original terrazzo floors, and acoustical-tile ceiling. They're courting the Cobble Hill-Brooklyn Heights hipster-stroller crowd, on the same turf as the quintessentially antiques Brooklyn boîte Henry Public, across the street. But Long Island Bar has a casual authenticity that starts with the neon and continues inside. The concise cocktail menu includes a nice gimlet, made with gin and a tart lime-ginger cordial, and a refreshing Rip City Fizz, with aquavit, lemon, and a strong whiff of honey. One night, conversation swayed toward middle-school applications and then, less depressingly, what to name a baby if you want her to become a country singer. The bartender brought a Boulevardier (bracing, like a Negroni with rye instead of gin) to a man who'd been talking about it but had not yet ordered. The man asked, "How'd you know?" The bartender groused, "I have holes in my head, I heard what you said." It could have been Patchogue.

—Shauna Lyon



TABLES FOR TWO

FUNG TU

22 Orchard St. (212-219-8785)

IN HIS 2009 BOOK, "Chop Suey: A Cultural History of Chinese Food in the United States," Andrew Coe makes a troubling proclamation: "Like their ancestors fifty and a hundred years ago, most Americans still expect Chinese food to be cheap, filling, familiar, and bland." Certainly, a wide gulf continues to exist between American Chinese food (slick lo mein with carrot and cabbage, beef and broccoli in "brown sauce") and authentic Chinese food (complexly flavored dishes with hard-to-parse names like "spicy cold jelly" and "home made style blotch soup"). The former is everywhere, the latter available mostly in out-of-the-way, drably decorated dining rooms in or near cities with large immigrant populations. But expectations are changing, not only because authentic restaurants are increasingly targeting the mainstream (Han Dynasty, a new Szechuan place in the East Village, shames timid diners by listing Americanized dishes like fried rice and spring rolls in the "Kids/Baby Adults" section of its menu) but also because a generation of young chefs is bridging the gap.

Last fall, Jonathan Wu, a Bronx-born Chinese-American who once cooked at Per Se, opened Fung Tu, a "creative" Chinese restaurant on the Lower East Side, in what used to be a small noodle factory. (Wilson Tang, a co-owner and the proprietor of Nom Wah, New York's oldest standing dim-sum parlor, helped secure the lease.) The fashionably designed space bears no remnants of its former tenant, but the menu tells a deeply personal Chinese-American story. A relative of Wu's who grew up in Shanghai before the Cultural Revolution remembered fondly a dish from his childhood—smoked black Chinese dates stuffed with red-bean paste, then egg-washed and deep fried—so Wu reimagined it, piping Medjools full of shredded duck-leg confit and dipping them in a buttermilk batter. A dish of stir-fried celtuce, a lettuce-like vegetable hard to find outside of China (tracking it down in outer-borough markets each week has been "a great source of stress," Wu says), gets topped with a soft-boiled egg like the one Wu's Taiwanese mother adds to her pig's-foot broth.

As a nod to Nom Wah, which claims to have invented the egg roll, Wu came up with the Original Egg Roll Version 2, filled with pork belly and, surprisingly, olives. His mother likes to snack on what are known as Chinese olives (actually an olive-like fruit) marinated in chiles and anise, so Wu tried the same treatment on Picholine and Niçoise. The effect is a bit muddled—there's something disconcertingly enchilada-like about the filling—and intention versus outcome is a problem across the menu at Fung Tu. But the dishes that work—like those duck-stuffed dates, and a plate of impossibly silky roasted beet slices daubed with salty fermented tofu—really work, and Wu's ideas could go a long way toward redefining American Chinese food.

—Hannah Goldfield

Open Tuesdays through Sundays for dinner. Entrées \$19-\$28.

ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW HOLLISTER

THE THEATRE



OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

The Correspondent

Rattlestick presents a play by Ken Urban, in which a widower hires a woman to communicate with his late wife. Stephen Brackett directs. In previews. (224 Waverly Pl. 866-811-4111.)

Dinner with Friends

Pam MacKinnon directs the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Donald Margulies, from 1999, about two couples whose friendship is tested when one of the couples gets a divorce. In previews. (Laura Pels, 111 W. 46th St. 212-719-1300.)

Dr. Du Bois and Miss Ovington

New Federal Theatre, founded by Woodie King, Jr., presents a play by Clare Coss, about the flirtatious relationship between two founders of the N.A.A.C.P. Kathleen Chalfant and Timothy Simonson star; Gabrielle L. Kurlander directs. In previews. Opens Jan. 30. (Castillo, 543 W. 42nd St. 212-941-1234.)

I Call My Brothers

The Play Company presents the New York premiere of a drama by the Swedish playwright Jonas Hassen Khemiri, about the circumstances surrounding a young man's involvement in a suicide bombing. In previews. Opens Feb. 2. (New Ohio Theatre, 154 Christopher St. 866-811-4111.)

Kung Fu

Signature Theatre presents the premiere of a play by David Henry Hwang, about Bruce Lee's journey from young dancer to martial-arts star. Leigh Silverman directs. Previews begin Feb. 4. (Pershing Square Signature Center, 480 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529.)

London Wall

The Mint presents a play by John Van Druten from 1931, about the lives of several women working as typists at a London law firm. Davis McCallum directs. Previews begin Feb. 1. (311 W. 43rd St. 866-811-4111.)

Love and Information

Caryl Churchill's play explores the ramifications of information accessibility. James Macdonald directs the New York Theatre Workshop production. Previews begin Feb. 4. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 800-982-2787.)

NOW PLAYING

Craving for Travel

Andy Sandberg and Greg Edwards's comedy consists of many phone calls between two competing travel agents and a slew of their kooky clients, all of whom are played by Michele Ragusa and Thom Sesma. The fun of the play is supposed to be not only the wild ride of two actors switching characters at breakneck speed but also the characters themselves, who are, for the most part, impossibly demanding. The problem is that, under Sandberg's direction, the clients—gays, the wealthy, the elderly, mothers, Lithuanians—are one-dimensional clichés, and the jokes are too tame. (Peter Jay Sharp, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

Grounded

The nameless heroine of George Brant's timely, fluent monologue for Page 73 has traded blue skies for gray screens: though she used to fly fighter jets, she now reclines in a BarcaLounger, guiding drone aircraft thousands of miles away. "It's not like a video game," she says. "A video game has color." Under Ken Rus Schmoll's spic-and-span direction, an assured Hannah Cabell voices the pilot's experience with focus and poise, tracing the psychic toll that remote battle exacts. Homer might have written different epics, she says, if Odysseus or Achilles punched out every night. Brant keeps the classical allusions coming, as though unsure of the script's import. But the questions the play invites matter without recourse to myth. Is combat possible without mutual risk? When you fight the war from home, can you ever leave it? (Walkerspace, 46 Walker St. 866-811-4111. Through Feb. 1.)

Loot

If you're curious about Joe Orton's plays because you've read John Lahr's definitive, superlative 1978 biography, you'll have to wait for another production of his work to understand what made the late British-born playwright so entertaining. What you'll see in this Red Bull show is what can go wrong when Orton's signature style—music hall meets farce meets smut—is too little understood and too quickly digested. The fast-paced, very funny two-act piece, from 1965, is the story of Hal (Nick Westrate) and Dennis (Ryan Garbayo), confused lads without much direction who've robbed the bank next to the funeral parlor where Dennis works. Hal's mum has just died, and

they hide the money in her coffin. Fay (Rebecca Brooksher), the saucy blonde nurse who looked after the dying woman as Hal and his father, McLeavy (Jarlath Conroy), looked on, wasn't, it turns out, very interested in medicine. And when Truscott (Rocco Sisto), a detective, enters, insult is very amusingly added to injury. But here, Jesse Berger, working in a variety of confused styles—first farce, then naturalism, then something else altogether—doesn't give the actors direction that can help them or us. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-352-3101.)

Machinal

Lyndsey Turner directs this 1928 play by the journalist Sophie Treadwell, inspired by the infamous 1927 Ruth Snyder murder case. Treadwell's protagonist—called, simply, Young Woman (Rebecca Hall)—is the only daughter of an overbearing mother (Suzanne Bertish), who offers no solace to her perpetually frazzled child; instead, she pushes her into a loveless marriage with her former boss, Husband (Michael Cumpsty). Eventually, Young Woman falls for the wrong guy, Lover (the attractive Morgan Spector), but at least it's her choice—one of the few she's allowed to make for herself. Hall has an interesting, off-center rhythm that slows the action down even as the script and the director want to speed it up—you may mistake the subtlety of her movements for depth, but clouds are surface attractions, and Hall's performance is mostly just that. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/27/14.) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300.)

Tyson vs. Ali

What keeps us watching Frank Boudreaux's piece (a 3-Legged Dog and P.S. 122 production, directed by Reid Farrington) is its speed. The hour-long show, set in a boxing ring, is a work of historical invention—the real boxers never fought each other—that addresses the present. The violence is orchestrated, in the same way that violence levelled at black men in general—department-store profiling, stop-and-frisk—is often orchestrated by what some might call the police state. A number of actors—Dennis A. Allen II, Roger Casey, Femi Olagoke, and Jonathan Swain—play Mike Tyson and Muhammad Ali, and all of them are physically beautiful and clearly aware of what the play is about: self-invention. As a referee (Dave Shelley) separates the battling stars, another Ali and Tyson speak into microphones, telling their stories and sharing their bravado and their fears: they are imprisoned by their own iconography and, like all of us, by their own bodies. (1/27/14) (3LD Art & Technology Center, 80 Greenwich St. 212-352-3101. Through Feb. 2.)

ALSO NOTABLE

AFTER MIDNIGHT

Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 877-250-2929.

BEAUTIFUL—THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL

Stephen Sondheim, 124 W. 43rd St. 212-239-6200.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.

THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY

Schoenfeld, 236 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

BRONX BOMBERS

Circle in the Square, 235 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.

BUYER & CELLAR

Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-868-4444.

THE COMMONS OF PENSACOLA

City Center Stage I, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.

CRY, TROJANS!

Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 212-966-3651.

A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE AND MURDER

Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE

Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

INTIMACY

Acorn, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.

KING LEAR

BAM's Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.

KINKY BOOTS

Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER

Atlantic Stage 2, at 330 W. 16th St. 212-352-3101.

A MAN'S A MAN

Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. 866-811-4111.

MATILDA THE MUSICAL

Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

THE NIGHT ALIVE

Atlantic Theatre Company, 336 W. 20th St. 866-811-4111. Through Feb. 2.

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR

Samuel J. Friedman, 261 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.

ROW AFTER ROW

City Center Stage II, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.

STOP TITING YOURSELF

Claire Trow, 150 W. 65th St. 212-239-6200.

THE TRIBUTE ARTIST

59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.

TWELFTH NIGHT / RICHARD III

Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 212-279-4200.

WICKED

Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-239-6200.



GOINGS ON, ONLINE

See extra classical listings at nyr.kr/classical, including a Chinese New Year gala concert presented by the New York Philharmonic.



DANCE

hip-hop productions that actually work as unified, evening-length shows. The first was “Rome & Jewels” (2000), a hip-hop adaptation of “Romeo and Juliet,” with a d.j. and warring gangs. (The Caps do hip-hop; the Monster Q’s do Africanist dancing.) In 2003 came “Facing Mekka,” which included a bone-chilling solo, “Lorenzo’s Oil,” based on a memory of jogging beside the Schuylkill River and seeing a dead body float to the surface. In the solo, Harris jerked and trembled and crumpled, and then froze in those poses, making the picture even more frightening. (In the freeze-frames he was using Japanese Butoh, and proud of it.) His dreads smacked across his face. Sweat poured off him, onto the floor. Later, Harris combined “Lorenzo’s Oil” with another solo, “Endangered Species,” which he had made for himself after an experience he had had while touring in Jamaica: for six hours he had been chased by a group of armed men trying to rob him. On the accompanying audio tape, you can hear him gasping for air, his heart pounding.

Part of the glory of classic hip-hop dancing is its sheer punch: the locking and popping and flipping and spinning on your head. But this is also aggressive, or at least challenging, competitive. Harris grew up in a rough neighborhood in North Philadelphia. He met his father only once. As he told an audience in a post-performance talk one night, he was molested as a child. He saw people shot. Two of his brothers went to jail.

So Harris’s history, as well as his skill, fitted him to hip-hop’s tough-guy-ism. But eventually, he has said, he tired of the emphasis on manliness. Like very many hip-hop artists, he resented the way that the form was represented on TV and in the movies, and he feels that this was partly where it acquired its testosterone surplus. Violence is much criticized in “Rome & Jewels.” (When Rome hesitates to fight, one of his friends says to him, “You sit down when you piss?”) But the distortion of hip-hop—and the general commercialization of it—seems to have left him discouraged. Several times, he has dispersed his dancers and then reassembled them, and he hasn’t made much major work in the past decade.

This week, at the Joyce, his company, Rennie Harris Puremovement, will have a six-day run, consisting of five pieces, including an excerpt from “Rome & Jewels.” All this work is more than ten years old. Catch it while you can.

—Joan Acocella

HIGH STREET

Hip-hop’s boldest choreographer, at the Joyce.

RENNIE HARRIS HAS SAID that he never really liked most of the work that he choreographed. That is a minority view. Harris, age fifty, is the most respected—and, to my knowledge, the most brilliant—hip-hop choreographer in America. Hip-hop dancing is very hard to transfer to the stage. As in other “street” forms, most of the dances are short, improvisational solos, and they don’t travel much. They’re meant to be done more or less in one spot. Also, because they have so short a time to make their point, they do not build gradually. They go from here to the moon in one shot.

Yet Harris—and, in my experience, he alone—has created

New York City Ballet

The main event this week is a new ballet by Liam Scarlett, a young Briton who, since 2012, has been the resident choreographer at the Royal Ballet, in London. Scarlett's first piece for this company is set to Poulenc's *Organ Concerto* in G—an eccentric but intriguing choice that hints at dramatic possibilities—and sets in motion three couples and a male soloist, backed by a corps of ten. The untitled work opens Jan. 31 on a program that also includes the moody “*Vespro*,” by Mauro Bigonzetti, and Angelin Preljocaj's “*Spectral Evidence*,” a ballet loosely inspired by the Salem witch trials. (Check nycballet.com for casting one week in advance.) There are two more opportunities to catch Balanchine's lush triptych “*Jewels*,” with music by Fauré, Stravinsky, and Tchaikovsky. • Jan. 29 at 7:30 and Feb. 1 at 2: “*Concerto Barocco*,” “*Kammermusik No. 2*,” and “*Who Cares?*” • Jan. 30 at 7:30 and Feb. 2 at 3: “*Jewels*.” • Jan. 31 at 8: “*Vespro*,” “*Spectral Evidence*,” and new Scarlett ballet. • Feb. 1 at 8: “*Dances at a Gathering*” and “*Union Jack*.” • Feb. 4 at 7:30: “*Bal de Couture*,” “*DGV: Danse à Grande Vitesse*,” and “*The Four Seasons*.” (David H. Koch, Lincoln Center. 212-496-0600. Through March 2.)

Niv Acosta / Tess Dworman

In the solo “*I Shot Denzel*,” Acosta, who is transgender, questions normative notions of black male identity through a monologue, excerpts of Stravinsky, a desultory mix of ballet and voguing, and affectingly beautiful song. In the trio “*Macromen*,” Dworman, who has danced with Tere O'Connor, works impressively in an O'Connor-like mode: formally inventive, unpredictable, strange, and sometimes absurd. (New York Live Arts, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 7:30.)

Dance on Camera 2014

Among the diverse offerings during the festival's forty-third iteration are films about the teacher Martha Hill, the music-video choreographer Vincent Paterson, the tap dancer Derrick Grant, and the Bharata Natyam veteran Malavika Sarukkai. There's rare footage of Rudolph Nureyev and of mid-twentieth-century ice-skating spectacles. Especially notable is “*Creative Domain*,” a rare glimpse into the rehearsal process of Paul Taylor. Visit filmlinc.com for full schedule. (Film Society of Lincoln Center, Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-875-5610. Jan. 31-Feb. 4.)

Krasnoyarsk National Dance Company of Siberia

This large folk troupe, founded in 1960 by the Soviet dancer and

OF NOTE BALLET IN CINEMA / “LOST ILLUSIONS”

Ballet lovers won't want to miss this live broadcast of Alexei Ratmansk's interpretation of Balzac's great novel “*Illusions Perdus*,” created for the Bolshoi in 2011. Based on a simplified Soviet libretto, the ballet tackles the book's themes of ambition and loss of integrity, while cleverly translating the action from the world of journalism to the opera house. Thus, Lucien becomes a composer whose fictional scores are the basis for two ballets-within-the-ballet. His love interests are ballerinas styled after Maria Taglioni and Fanny Essler, famous nineteenth-century rivals. The ballet and its sophisticated and witty score, by Leonid Desyatnikov, encapsulate French ballet history and style. (Big Cinemas, 239 E. 59th St. 212-371-6682. Feb. 2 at 10 A.M.)

choreographer Mikhail Godenko, specializes in spirited, high-flying renditions of Siberian traditional dances. The impeccably trained dancers leap, stomp, and spin with panache as they interpret folktales about barnyard animals and blushing brides, accompanied by a band of balalaikas, accordions, and singers. (Whitman Theatre, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 718-951-4500. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Pam Tanowitz

A choreographer whose disassembly and reassembly of ballet and

Cunningham-influenced modern dance can be thrilling, Tanowitz makes her Joyce Theatre debut with two premières. In “*Pas-sagen*,” the electrifying dancers Melissa Toogood and Maggie Cloud remix recent Tanowitz choreography while the onstage violinist Pauline Kim Harris plays John Zorn. In “*Heaven on One's Head*,” a cast of nine takes on the knotty complexity of Conlon Nancarrow's *String Quartets Nos. 1 and 3*, played live by the Flux Quartet. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. Feb. 4 at 7:30. Through Feb. 6.)

ABOVE & BEYOND

Super Bowl XLVIII

The nation's eyes will be focussed on New York (or, technically, East Rutherford, New Jersey) come Feb. 2, and there are about as many related high-profile parties taking place in the city as there are passengers on a rush-hour subway. Unfortunately, many of those events are impossible to get into, but a few are more accessible. Times Square is being turned into “*Super Bowl Boulevard*” from Jan. 29 to Feb. 1, featuring football clinics, player appearances, a display of the Vince Lombardi trophy, and a toboggan run, in honor of the first cold-weather, open-air Super Bowl. (nfl.com/superbowl/48.) The Barclays Center's “*Kickoff in Brooklyn*” event includes a WFAN concert with the Red Hot Chili Peppers and other groups on Feb. 1. (barclayscenter.com.) The 50 Yard Lounge, a fifteen-thousand-square-foot pop-up restaurant near Madison Square Garden that's open from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2, is the place to hang out with top chefs, including Michael White, Marc Forgione, and Bill Telepan, as well as retired football greats like Doug Flutie and Joe Theismann. (50yardlounge.com.)

“The Big Picture”

David Krakauer, a clarinet virtuoso noted for his inventive take on klezmer, explores his religious and social heritage through reinterpretations of classic movie music drawn from a range of films that touch on the Jewish experience, from “*Funny Girl*” and “*The Producers*” to “*Sophie's Choice*” and “*Life Is Beautiful*.” The musical performances will each be accompanied by short original films by the visual-effects company Light of Day. Krakauer's ensemble includes Mark Helias, on bass, and Rob Schwimmer, on piano, keyboards, and theremin. (Edmond J. Safra Hall, Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Pl. 646-437-4202. Jan. 29 at 7:30 and Wednesdays at 7:30 and Sundays at 2 from Feb. 2 to Feb. 23.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

The hordes that lined up recently at the Frick to see Vermeer's “*Girl with a Pearl Earring*” testify to our enduring fascination with the Old Masters. Sotheby's great expectations on Jan. 30 lie with a group of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings,

several of which have not been on the market for decades—such as “*A Child and Nurse in the Foyer of an Elegant Townhouse*” by Jacob Ochtervelt, a bright, pleasing composition of interior and exterior space that was previously unknown by experts. The sale of drawings on Jan. 29 is led by a pair of Venetian street scenes by Tiepolo that capture late-eighteenth-century life with characteristic lightness and humor. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.) • This week, Christie's is also touting the number of works in its sales of Old Masters (Jan. 29-30) that have spent years hidden away in private collections. Among them

is the top lot, a formidable self-portrait by Artemisia Gentileschi, one of the few women to make a name for herself in the masculine world of the Italian Baroque. In addition, the auctioneer is holding its second annual sale devoted to Renaissance art (also on Jan. 29), led by an exquisite sixteenth-century Flemish book of hours, lavishly illustrated for the imperial court, and owned for more than a century by the Rothschild family. A sale of drawings and watercolors, including works by Géricault, Mauro Gandolfi, and Giovanni Migliara, follows (Jan. 30). (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)

READINGS AND TALKS

“Brooklyn Voices”

The lecture series, organized by St. Joseph's College and Greenlight Bookstore, presents Jennifer Senior, who will discuss her new book, “*All Joy and No Fun: The Paradox of Modern Parenting*,” with Jodi Kantor. (Tuohy Auditorium, St. Joseph's College, 245 Clinton Ave., Brooklyn. 718-246-0200. Jan. 29 at 7:30.)

Poetry Project

Wayne Koestenbaum and Khadijah Queen read from their poetry. (Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-0910. Jan. 29 at 8.)



Websites with greater visibility

A hibu Website helps improve your online visibility in places where customers are looking.

Our websites are designed for phones, tablets or laptops, and fully optimized for search engines.

To boost your reach even further, our hibu Wave service submits your business profile to hundreds of online business directories. Plus, we can create Facebook and Twitter pages that reflect the design and branding on your website – helping you get spotted more easily on social media.

To get a website with greater visibility go to **hibu.com/websites** or call **877-761-hibu**

hibu
made for business™

websites ● mobile and tablet sites ● e-commerce ● search marketing ● display advertising



THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT GAME CHANGE

By the time the contenders for Super Bowl XLVIII were set, two weekends ago, a hero and a villain had been chosen, too. The Denver Broncos' quarterback, the aging, lovable Peyton Manning, had outplayed the Patriots to win the A.F.C. title. Meanwhile, in the N.F.C. championship game, Richard Sherman, a cornerback for the Seattle Seahawks, became the designated bad guy. With thirty-one seconds left to play, Colin Kaepernick, the San Francisco 49ers quarterback, had the ball on Seattle's eighteen-yard line—the 49ers were losing by six points and needed a touchdown. He spotted Michael Crabtree, a wide receiver, and sent him the pass. Sherman twisted up in the air until he seemed almost in synch with the ball's spiralling, then tipped the ball into the hands of another defender for an interception, and won the game.

Sherman was swarmed by his teammates but broke away to chase after Crabtree. He stretched out a hand and said, "Hell of a game, hell of a game," to which Crabtree responded by shoving him in the face mask. Moments later, Sherman was surrounded by reporters and cameramen; by then, he had acquired an N.F.C. champions' cap, which left his eyes in shadow, and his long dreadlocks hung loose. When Erin Andrews, of Fox Sports, asked him about the final play, he more or less exploded. "I'm the best corner in the game!" he proclaimed. "When you try me with a sorry receiver like Crabtree, that's the result you gonna get! Don't you *ever* talk about me!"

"Who was talking about you?" Andrews asked.

"Crabtree! Don't you open your mouth about the best, or I'm gonna shut it for you real quick! L.O.B.!"

L.O.B.: that's Legion of Boom, the nickname of the Seattle defense. The video of the "epic rant,"

as it was called, went viral. Andrews told *GQ* that the response was so overwhelming that her Twitter account froze. She added, "Then we saw it was taking on a racial turn." Some people expressed alarm that an angry black man was shouting at a blond-haired woman. (Andrews immediately shut down that line of complaint.) Many people expressed a hope that Manning would put Sherman in his place. The names that he was called were numerous, offensive, and explicitly racial, but one that stood out—it was used more than six hundred times on television, according to Deadspin—was "thug."

It's worth noting that Sherman, who grew up in Compton as the son of a garbageman and a social worker, was his high school's salutatorian and that, according to *Sports Illustrated*, "eight players from Sherman's graduating class earned scholarships to Division I schools, several of whom had walked into the coach's office at one point or another to ask, 'How do I get into college? Because if I don't, Sherm is never going to let me hear the end of it.'" Sherman turned down the University of Southern California for Stanford. He said, "I had to prove it was possible: Compton to Stan-

ford." He did well there academically; he also stayed in touch with his high-school friends, helping to make sure that they graduated, too—something that, according to several studies, many colleges fail to do for their athletes. After the Seahawks drafted him, in the fifth round, he became known as an inventive verbal provocateur on the field, as well as one of the best players in his position. But he is, by all accounts, a considerate and community-minded teammate.

Sherman said that he first grasped the power of words at the age of twelve, when he saw a



documentary about Muhammad Ali. If Sherman lost control of that power in his interview with Andrews, he regained it quickly. The next day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, he posted an essay on *Sports Illustrated's* Web site with the title "To Those Who Would Call Me a Thug or Worse." ("It was loud, it was in the moment, and it was just a small part of the person I am.") Later, he said that he regretted going after Crabtree ("that was immature"), while making it clear that he still didn't like him. At a press conference, on Wednesday, Sherman talked about the word "thug": "The only reason it bothers me is because it seems like it's the accepted way of calling somebody the N-word nowadays. . . . What's the definition of a thug, really?" If it's something other than a person who occasionally forgets that he is supposed to be humble, it is hard to discern thug-gishness in the way that Sherman seems to conduct his life. On CNN, he talked about the switch he has to turn on and off to play "a very barbaric sport." (Crabtree's shove in the face may have given it a flick.) We watch violence on the field and expect the young men meting it out to be as detached from it as we are.

But there is more at work in the thug issue than the very real racial angle. Professional football has never been more profitable or more popular, bringing in annual revenues of over nine billion dollars. Yet the sport is changing, with the

end of a decades-long dodge about what the constant collisions do to its players. The stories of former stars brought down by early dementia, depression, A.L.S., and suicide are now familiar. The N.F.L. has, after much pushing, agreed to a seven-hundred-and-sixty-five-million-dollar settlement, the bulk of it as compensation for retired players. (The judge who has to approve the settlement doubted that the sum would be enough.) There is a risk that the sport will become like boxing—too dangerous to encourage one's own children to play, and, therefore, marginal. For now, there is too much money—and even the players would say, too much pleasure—for the league to have a problem finding takers.

What bargains will we be making when we cheer for the players on Sunday—for Peyton Manning or Richard Sherman (or the Seahawks' underestimated quarterback, Russell Wilson)? Some people might find it convenient to dismiss players as thugs. Discussions about the ravages of the game often come around to questions posed mostly to give fans some dispensation, such as: Given where these guys are from, how good were their other choices? What worth did their futures hold anyway? That sort of rationalizing serves only to make watching a beautiful but violent game less uncomfortable. And that's the most thug-gish thought of all.

—Amy Davidson

DEPT. OF HOOPLA NAMES



You've probably seated your share of dinner parties: writing the names of the guests on place cards (wishing your handwriting was better) and trying to calculate who might thrive next to whom. So imagine the dinner is for some nine hundred of the most famous and sought-after people in the world—luminaries who, at any other party, would be the cynosure of all eyes but on this evening might not even merit favorable *placement*.

That was the challenge facing Clive Davis, the music mogul, and his son, Doug Davis, an entertainment lawyer and sports agent, late last week, as they met in Bungalow 3A at the Beverly Hills Hotel to seat the Davises' annual pre-Grammys gala, which is always held at the Beverly Hilton, the night before the awards. Each guest's name had been written in Sharpie on a white magnetized tile, and the tiles were affixed to a whiteboard, on which an

outline of the Hilton's International Ballroom had been drawn, showing the stage and some eighty tables, of twelve seats each, arrayed throughout the room.

Assistants had arranged the tiles alphabetically around the edges of the board. The Davises stood before it—the son a head taller than the father—absorbed in social calculation. Clive wore a blue blazer, a crimson tie with a matching pocket square, cream-colored slacks ("slacks" was the only word for them), and red patent-leather Prada sneakers. ("I've got a pair in every color," he noted.) Doug wore jeans. Were you ignorant of the proceedings, you might have assumed they were engaged in a family parlor game that combined Celebrity, Scrabble, and Jenga.

Davis père, who is eighty-one, read some of the names on the tiles, rolling them in his mouth like sips of Pétrus.

"You've got India.Arie, Buzz Aldrin, the astronaut, Irving Azoff, the manager, Apple's Tim Cook, Miley Cyrus, Daft Punk, Neil Diamond, Missy Elliott, Gloria and Emilio Estefan, Jane Fonda, John Fogerty, Jamie Foxx, David Foster, Larry Gagosian, Berry Gordy, Lucian Grainge, Herbie Hancock, Jennifer Hudson, Magic Johnson,

Quincy Jones, Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz, her husband, Gladys Knight, Kris Kristofferson, Lang Lang, the Chinese pianist, Cyndi Lauper, Jared—is it *Laito* or *Leeto*?, Lorde, John Mayer and Katy Perry, Metallica, Doug Morris, Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne, Nancy Pelosi, Bob Pittman, Brett Ratner, L. A. Reid, Rihanna, Joan Rivers, Robbie Robertson, Smokey Robinson, Nile Rodgers, Rod Stewart, Taylor Swift, T.I., Robin Thicke, Steven Tyler, and



Clive Davis

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER, NOW IN PAPERBACK

includes a new essay by the author, with images

THE FLAME THROWERS

A magnificent novel about an unforgettable young woman and the worlds she encounters.

NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY

*The New York Times • Vogue • O, The Oprah Magazine • Time • The Daily Beast • New York Magazine
The New Yorker • Slate • Flavorwire • The Los Angeles Times • The San Francisco Chronicle • Salon • Complex*



BY RACHEL KUSHNER

*"I loved Rachel Kushner's *The Flamethrowers*."* —JONATHAN FRANZEN, *THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW*

"Electric...addictive...smart and satisfying." —KRISTY DAVIS, *O, THE OPRAH MAGAZINE*

"Superb...scintillatingly alive...a pure explosion of now." —JAMES WOOD, *THE NEW YORKER*

"Seductive...alluring...astonishing." —RON CHARLES, *THE WASHINGTON POST*

"Brilliant and exhilarating." —EUGENIA WILLIAMSON, *THE BOSTON GLOBE*

Also available as an ebook



SimonandSchuster.com

Neil Young. Did I say Katy Perry?"

The sausage-making began. The evening includes performances as well as dinner—Doug Davis said that organizing the party was like putting on the Grammys and the Golden Globes at the same time—and Clive was determined to seat the most enthusiastic music fans, such as Sean (Diddy) Combs and Mary J. Blige, at the tables in front. Their tiles were deployed on the "A-list ledge."

Tables began to fill. "We have two-thirds of Nirvana," Doug reported to his father excitedly, "because Krist Novoselic is coming, and we're seating him with Dave Grohl."

"What about Russell?" Clive asked. Simmons was placed with Rihanna, and next to Tim Cook, who was next to Lucian Grainge, the head of Universal Music. "That's a good table," Davis said approvingly.

Where to put Nancy Pelosi? An assistant noted that Andrew Cuomo's office had called to say that the Governor had made space in his schedule for the party. He went next to Pelosi. (He later cancelled, and was replaced by Hoda Kotb, from the "Today" show.) Maybe Buzz Aldrin could discuss "Gravity" with a movie producer? "Brian Grazer is coming," Clive said. No one was next to Miley yet. How about Robin Thicke? Definitely not.

Though the elder Davis remains active in the music business, he is not always up to date on the latest feuds, firings, and flings among his guests;

that job falls mainly to his son. When Clive wondered about putting Katy Perry at a table with Taylor Swift, because they share "a commonality of being young female artists," it was pointed out that they also shared a commonality of boyfriends, in John Mayer (Swift had an unhappy affair with him; Perry is dating him now). "We might look for a different seating," Clive allowed. Perry and Mayer ended up at a table with Sara Bareilles, Lorde, and Lorde's father, Vic.

Last-minute changes were called in from other rooms in the hotel, and the staff fielded R.S.V.P.s. Quincy Jones wanted to bring Rashida and Kidada, two of his seven children. David Geffen cancelled. Kenny G confirmed. They were still waiting for Britney Spears. "Tom Brady's manager sends his regrets," Doug reported, "but he wants an invitation anyway. He just wants to see it."

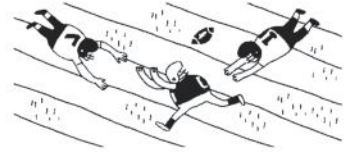
Davis took these changes in stride. Nothing could compare to the disruption the party suffered two years ago, when Whitney Houston was pronounced dead, three hours before the gala. Their last meeting was in Bungalow 3A, two days prior to her death. "She was sitting there, I was sitting there," Davis recalled. "She was showing me 'Sparkle'—her last film—and I was playing songs I was gathering for Jennifer Hudson." He fell silent, composing himself. At the awards ceremony, Hudson sang "I Will Always Love You," as a tribute.

By the end of the day, the board

was mostly filled, but the senior Davis continued shifting tiles. "I'm still tweaking," he said, "until they tell me I have to go."

—John Seabrook

NEW JERSEY POSTCARD LITTLE MONACO



Last week, Jim Cassella, the five-term mayor of East Rutherford, New Jersey, welcomed a visitor fresh off the 164 bus from Port Authority. "I just finished shovelling my walk, like Mayor de Blasio," Cassella said. That task had distracted him, briefly, from his anger. East Rutherford sits on four square miles in Bergen County, a third of which is devoted to the Meadowlands, where the Giants and the Jets play, and where, on Sunday, the Super Bowl will, for the first time, be played outdoors and above the fortieth parallel. Cassella's borough is the smallest municipality ever to host the event, and he was beginning to feel underappreciated. "It's so obvious that they're being disrespectful to New Jersey," he said, noting that the N.F.L. was installing a hundred-and-eighty-foot toboggan run in midtown Manhattan, rather than in Secaucus. "People around here thought, The Super Bowl is coming! The Super Bowl is coming! But I knew from the beginning this was going to be a New York event."

Cassella has been the state's leading Super Bowl Cassandra for years, but others had begun to join the chorus. A spokesperson for Medieval Times, a theme restaurant in Lyndhurst, complained that the organizers had backed out of hosting a dinner there, during the game, for the bus drivers hired to shuttle fans to and from East Rutherford. The cover of the official game program features Manhattan, with only a sliver of New Jersey in the background. "Super Bowl committee to East Rutherford: Drop dead," the Newark *Star-Ledger* declared, after the N.F.L. announced that fans would not be allowed to walk to the game, and parking passes were scarce, forcing local





9.8 million

jobs – that's what energy produces.

In 2011 alone, the oil and gas industry's operations and investments in new energy projects helped support 9.8 million jobs across the economy, from construction to manufacturing to IT. And no one invests more in American energy than ExxonMobil.

Energy lives here.

ExxonMobil

Brands of ExxonMobil

EXXON Mobil Mobil 1

residents who managed to get tickets—Cassella didn't know any who had—to travel to Secaucus and take a train or a bus back into town. Perhaps hoping to smooth things over, Bergen Community College, in Paramus, had created a course for locals to learn how to make Super Bowl visitors feel welcome. Nobody signed up.

Cassella, who has always lived in East Rutherford, offered a tour in his Jeep, which was painted Giants blue. He is a season-ticket holder, but was quick to emphasize the town's non-football attractions. "I don't know if you knew this, but we were recently named one of the ten best cities in the country for hipsters," he said, citing a survey that ranked East Rutherford nine spots ahead of Brooklyn. Cassella admitted that he didn't really know why, and, at sixty-seven, in a navy blazer with gold buttons, a blue collared shirt, and a striped tie, he also didn't play the part. "There are quite a few restaurants in the area," he said, with a shrug.

Much of the town, Cassella said, has changed since his grandparents moved there, in 1914. It's an industrial region that doesn't have much industry anymore. "This used to be Flintkote, which made shingles for roofs," he said, driving down Paterson Avenue. "This was East Rutherford Syringes. They made syringes. This was Rutherford Machinery—I'm not even sure what they made."

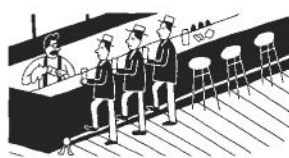
Cassella speaks with his hands, even while driving, and he became especially animated as he approached the football stadium. "I compare it to the country of Monaco," he said, noting that the Jets and the Giants do not pay property taxes, but make a much smaller annual payment to the city instead. "They don't care what the laws are anywhere else. They've got their own little domain down here." In the parking lot, half a dozen front-loaders were clearing snow. A sign welcoming visitors featured Chris Christie's name, but not Cassella's. "Forget it—they don't even know I exist," he said. "If the N.F.L. keeps annoying me, maybe I'll have Route 120 shut down—maybe I'll throw a few barricades up there."

Cassella dropped his visitor at the Rutherford train station; the next train wasn't for an hour, so he recommended lunch at the Blarney Station, a local bar.

Half a dozen people were inside, each nursing a light beer. It was just after 1 P.M. on a Wednesday. "It's gonna be busy," the bartender said, of the Super Bowl, mentioning that, because the N.F.L. had prohibited tailgating in the stadium parking lot, the East Rutherford Civic Pride Association was putting on an unofficial tailgate party outside the bar. "Manhattan's gonna get most of the action, but hopefully there will be some for us," the bartender said. The visitor pointed out that you could see the stadium from the street. "Yeah," he said, pouring another customer his second beer. "A mile away."

—Reeves Wiedeman

THE PICTURES ALL GROWN UP



The Jonah Hill audiences fell in love with in "Knocked Up" and "Superbad" was an overgrown baby—a pudgy, party-loving scamp who'd hide behind cardboard cutouts of himself in movie theatres, then jump out to scare people. The Jonah Hill enthroned in a corner seat at the Dead Rabbit, a pub near Wall Street, the other night was a different man: trim, short-haired, dignified in a dark suit and tie. As the bar filled with traders, Hill shook hands with a waitress and listened gravely as she listed the complicated ingredients in the house punch.

He ordered a Pilsner, disappointing both the waitress and the manager, who'd dropped by to suggest one of the bar's nogs, flips, or possets. "I have not engaged in the high palate of interesting drinks," Hill explained, adding, with a grin, "Though knowing about spirits is a great way to make it socially acceptable to drink a lot." As he faced his thirtieth birthday, he was determined to act his age. "Turning twenty-nine was way heavier than I thought it would be," he said. "Because I felt, I'm at the end of my twenties—it has to be the best year of my life! I used to have Fear of Missing Out. FOMO, as the little rascals call it. If there was a birthday party, and I didn't want to go, I'd go

anyway and have a miserable time. Or I'd do films I didn't connect to, because I worried what would happen if I didn't. I thought, They're going to live life without me." He gave a rueful laugh.

In "The Wolf of Wall Street," Martin Scorsese's film about Masters of the Universe excess in the eighties and nineties, Hill plays Donnie Azoff, one of the leaders of the crooked brokerage firm Stratton Oakmont. Donnie, a darker kind of overgrown baby, is the poster child for FOMO. He seizes every chance to stage a threesome, gobble a Quaalude, or toss a dwarf. As research for the role—which has earned him an Academy Award nomination—Hill and the film's star, Leonardo DiCaprio, "shadowed some Wall Street people from Bank of America—but they seemed like European-boarding-school-type folks. Donnie's a Long Island hustler who wanted lots of money to feed his appetites and would do anything to get it. He's what would happen if you took the people from 'Jersey Shore' and gave them a billion dollars. I have family from Long Island"—his parents—"so I already knew Donnie."

Really, the character was defined by his prosthetics: blindingly white false teeth intended to dazzle and a large fake penis for handy fondling. The only problem was that the dentures gave Hill a lisp. So he dialled his way out of trouble. Years ago, he got his first film audition, for "I Heart Huckabees," because Dustin Hoffman was impressed by a CD of prank calls he'd made, and the phone remains his favorite instrument for developing a character. "You have no idea what a stranger is going to say," he said. "As Donnie, I'd call this Best Buy in Hawaii," and then talk for hours to shed the lisp and acquire insight. "They stay on the phone the longest—they have amazing customer service."

At the film's premiere, Hill said, he'd steeled himself before greeting Scorsese; he was still nervous about taxing the patience of a director with whom he'd spent six months. "And then Joe Pesci comes up, and we all have a thirty-minute conversation, and it was, like, O.K., I can die now. I'm not being asked to leave this conversation. I finally have a seat at the grownups' table. Joe Pesci gave me some of the most interesting advice I've ever received. He said,

'Go buy a helmet and put it next to your bed. And put the helmet on every day. And, if the helmet doesn't fit one day, that means there are some people up here'—and he pointed to my ass."

The pub now rang with full-throated celebration of the Dow, up two hundred and ninety-two points that day. Taking a sip of beer, Hill said that for the first time in years he didn't have an acting job lined up. "My twenties



Jonah Hill

were one hundred per cent about work. My excess was moviemaking—I made over thirty films. Now I want to focus on being around, physically present, for the possibility of relationships to happen—marriage, kids." He hastened to add, "I mean, it's not *over*, it was great, it is great, it will still be great. I don't know what the hell I'm talking about. Cheers!"

—Tad Friend

THE MUSICAL LIFE REUNION



Troy Andrews, the horn player better known as Trombone Shorty, and Jonathan Batiste, the hot-shot pianist, first met when they were twelve and eleven, at jazz camp, in their hometown of New Orleans. Andrews was already something of a star; he'd been a bandleader since he was six. Batiste had only just taken up the piano, having

grown up playing percussion with his family, in the Batiste Brothers Band. Andrews had admirers, a circle of kids who tried to talk the way he did. Batiste kept to himself and didn't talk at all.

They reconnected in high school, at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, and became friends. Andrews started a band called Orleans Avenue, with Batiste on keys. They skipped classes to teach each other musical tricks. Batiste gave Andrews books and taught him new words. "One was 'fallacy,'" Andrews said the other day. "'Fabricated fallacy.' That was a trip. I'd hang around him and say something stupid just so he could correct me." Sometimes Andrews and the others robbed Batiste of his lunch.

Batiste was offered a full ride to Juilliard and went north. Andrews stayed. Batiste blossomed into a jazz virtuoso. (He still performs with a band of Juilliard classmates called Stay Human. They sometimes play guerrilla sets on the subway, in what he calls "love riots." He's also the artistic director-at-large at the National Jazz Museum, in Harlem.) Andrews did the New Orleans thing, toured with Lenny Kravitz for two years, and developed a sense of how to do it on a grand scale. "Johnny went to Juilliard, and I went to the school of rock," Andrews said. The two are now, at twenty-eight and twenty-seven, their generation's most prominent ambassadors of what's still possible and fresh in mixing up the music of New Orleans. "I didn't know what the word 'genre' meant till I was twenty years old," Andrews said.

Andrews and Batiste met up a few weeks ago at Red Bull Studios, on West Eighteenth Street. Andrews was there to help produce a record for the Original Pinettes Brass Band, an all-female group from New Orleans. The Pinettes had won a competition back home, and the prize was a recording session in New York with Trombone Shorty and the rapper and hip-hop producer Mannie Fresh. Batiste, just back in town from Qatar, stopped in to say hello. They hadn't seen each other since Mardi Gras last year.

Batiste and Andrews embraced. Andrews had on black track pants, orange-black-and-blue Air Jordans, and a gray T-shirt. His upper lip was mottled, like a bruised fruit—a life in brass. Batiste

was wearing an Irish cap and a tailored overcoat cinched at the waist with a Royal Army Ordnance Corps belt. Underneath, he wore a blue gingham suit he'd designed himself, cuffs tucked into black boots. He had a melodica in a Rag & Bone shopping bag. "He came up here and became a whole 'nother person," Andrews said. "You should be in *GQ* or something."

"I'm already there," Batiste said. "We did a shoot. It's coming out in a couple of months." He quoted Art Blakey: "They see you before they hear you."

He went on, "I remember, Troy always used to say, and he said it before the first gig we ever played together—I was fourteen—'Let's not make it *gigs*. Let's make it a *show*.'"

"You've got a long-term memory, man," Andrews said. "What I remember is, you had an obsession with Alicia Keys. I gave you the CD and all you wanted to do was *look* at it."

The Pinettes were finishing up a lunch break. They filed into the recording studio, ten formidable ladies armed with trombones and trumpets, plus a sousaphone, a saxophone, and some drums. Batiste, in his overcoat and hat, sat down, with impeccable posture, at a Fender Rhodes and began vamping something that sounded a little like the theme from "The Flintstones." The Pinettes started in on their horns. Andrews pushed in next to Batiste and played little keyboard fills with his right hand. Then he stood and gestured for the trumpet in the hands of a teen-age girl in sweats and glasses, named Jazz Henry. She passed it to him and planted a kiss on his neck. He played a few bars, loud and clear, zero to sixty, and then handed it back and went over to play the drums for a while. The jam lasted nearly half an hour, none of it recorded, and then Veronica Downs-Dorsey, the choir director at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, in New Orleans, and the mother of a Pinette, nudged her way through the room and took over on the Fender Rhodes. Batiste moved to a Hammond B3 organ, Andrews picked up a trumpet, and they played a gospel trio. An unfallacious fabrication, in the extreme. The Pinettes took out their phones to film it.

—Nick Paumgarten

A TALE OF A TUB

Why go on a cruise when you can go on a freighter?

BY PATRICIA MARX



The aroma of my cabin was a base of l'eau de diesel, with top notes of hamster.

Call him Ishmael. Call *me* Insane. Some time ago, I had a hankering: wouldn't it be lovely to take a break from the hurly-burly of landlubber life and the oppressive, never-ending connecting with everybody and everything? What could be more restorative than to voyage across the Atlantic aboard a merchant vessel, and, as Melville said, see the watery part of the world? How great would it be to have the time to read "Moby-Dick" instead of just talking about it? Oh, really? Now that I am about to board the Rickmers Seoul freighter (Chinese-built, German-managed, Marshall Islands-registered), being a passenger on a cargo ship seems a lot like being an inmate in a prison, except that on a ship you can't tunnel yourself out. Please try to imagine the privations I will brave for three weeks

on this six-hundred-and-thirty-two-foot-long, thirty-thousand-ton hunk of steel as it galumphs across the sea from Philadelphia to Hamburg, with brief stops in Norfolk (Virginia) and Antwerp. There will be no Internet, no e-mail, no telephones, no organized entertainments, no Stewart or Colbert, no doctor, no anyone-I-know, and no Diet Coke. There will be twenty-seven crew members, most from the Philippines, including a captain and a handful of officers from Romania, and, piled high on deck and deep in the holds, an assortment of cargo consignments from the world over that might include yachts, submarines, airplane fuselages, generators, turbines—everything, in short, that would elate a boy of five. There are no freighters that haul vats of sushi or Yonah Schimmel knishes, but

somewhere out there is a vessel that carries La Mer face cream, and I hope the Rickmers Seoul collides with it.

After checking in at the Philadelphia Tioga Marine Terminal with a stevedore named Rhino, I teetered up a steep gangway to the main deck, where I was greeted by a broad-shouldered, doughy Romanian (age thirty-two) with a handsome face and a clipboard. In his orange jumpsuit, he looked like a giant Teletubby. "I am Paul," he said. "I am chief man."

"What does the chief man do?" I asked.

"Chief *mate*," said the Romanian fellow (age twenty-nine) by his side, a Sean Penn look-alike with a ponytail and false front teeth, the consequence of tripping on the ship last year, not far from where we were standing. "Chief mate is first mate. I am third mate. I am Raul. You could say I am safety officer."

"Can I look at the cargo sometime?" I asked.

"You must get permission of captain, which is dangerous, of course," Raul said.

"The captain is dangerous, or the cargo?" I said. We laughed, and I still don't know the answer. Before disappearing into one of the many recesses on deck, Raul handed me a list of rules. ("It is absolutely forbidden to bring any weapons on board of the vessel"; "In Islamic countries possession of alcohol and/or sex magazines could lead to heavy fines"; "Do not drink excessively, neither on board nor ashore.") A couple of O.S.s (ordinary seamen, or entry-level mariners) showed up and wordlessly ushered me and my cumbersome luggage up four flights of stairs to my cabin. In the fluorescent-lit hallway, a merry Filipino A.B. (able-bodied seaman, one rung up from O.S.) passed us, and enthusiastically informed me, "We are going to have a party with a band and we all dance to Beatles music!"

"O.K.," I said, because what do you say?

I was pretty sure I had an outfit for the occasion. Here is some of what I brought: a poncho for rain, a down vest for snow, dental putty in case a crown fell out, art supplies in the event that I acquired talent, a shortwave radio for lonely nights, and hair dye for the other

nights. Other supplies included a thousand packets of Splenda, fifty protein bars, an electric kettle, powdered lemonade, tuna fish (which I don't like but was inspired to throw in upon hearing that Mike Tyson subsisted on it in jail), hundreds of books loaded onto two Kindles (one might break—Noah knew what he was doing), a U.S.B. drive with more movies than are watchable in a year, a monocular that can serve as a telescope or a microscope, and a box of a hundred monitor wipes for my laptop. I ignored the advice of friends who insisted that I could not last without whey powder, incense, Mace (recommended by two people), limes to prevent scurvy, and a shark cage.

Feeling as neglected as a stowed anchor, I surveyed my cabin. It was fourteen square feet, including a small bathroom with a tiny shower stall. A college freshman would regard it as a plum room assignment, especially since the metal walls, which were varnished to look like beige oilcloth, seemed indestructible. In an alcove, there was a built-in queen-size bed on which had been placed a small towel folded into the shape of a peacock. A madras curtain could be drawn to separate this berth from the sitting area (or to put on a marionette play). There was a wooden desk containing a multilingual Bible, a coffee table bolted to the blue floral carpet, an L-shaped sofa in a mauve-and-blue tweed, a nonfunctioning mini-refrigerator, and a clunky TV, which, along with CD and DVD players, was strapped to the credenza—for an understandable reason, but, still, it didn't make one feel like family.

From my dirt-speckled porthole, I could see the water and a fire-hose box (location, location, location!). Hanging near a print of Renoir's "Dance at Le Moulin de la Galette" was a placard indicating that the signal for "Abandon ship" is a repeating sequence on the ship's horn of one short blast and one long blast. According to an accompanying chart, in the event of a disaster I was designated to be in Seat 24, next to the steward, in the free-fall boat. This is a neon-orange enclosed lifeboat that looks like a ride at a Soviet-era water park. Lodged on precipitately slanted tracks for easy launch into the water, the boat contains flares, rations, and tools for fishing, but no Netflix streaming.

As I took in the aroma of my room, which can best be described as a base of *l'eau de diesel* and cigarette smoke, with top notes of rotten nectarine and hamster (perhaps a result of Rule No. 4: always keep your windows closed in port and at sea), an alarm sounded—a loud, unbroken tone. "Attention, attention, attention!" a man's voice boomed over the P.A. "Crew proceed to the Muster Station. Passengers remain in cabins." I dutifully stayed put for what seemed like hours and then, failing to hear any all-clear signal, ventured out to explore. My cabin was in the Accommodation, a seven-story, elevator-less box that juts up like a billboard from the main deck of the ship's stern. It was the color of provolone cheese, and pockmarked with rust. The Accommodation houses the living quarters, which include not only the cabins but the kitchen, two mess halls (one for the officers and passengers, the other for the crew), laundry facilities, a rec room (with a drum kit, some guitars, a dart board, and two old Nautilus exercise machines), a passenger lounge containing a lot of Louis L'Amour paperbacks and scratched DVDs, an unfilled swimming pool not roomy enough to satisfy even a trout, and, next to it, a place called the Blue Bar. This pine-planked party room featured a Ping-Pong table, Christmas lights, and a curved wooden bar with sides of sea-foam-green leather. Perched at the very top of the Accommodation is the bridge, a large control room with panoramic windows from which the captain and the officers helm the ship (I hoped).

On a lower deck, there is a "hospital," a white room with a hospital bed and a bathroom worth getting sick for (porcelain tub). The hospital is stocked with everything from prednisone to tetanus immunoglobulin, from oil of cloves (for toothaches) to condoms (don't ask me). Morphine is locked in the captain's room. The second mate, who took a one-week first-aid course in the Philippines, serves as doctor. I didn't see any of this until later, however, because in the stairwell I ran into Raul. "No, you did not ever have to stay in your room, of course," he said with amusement. "Now we have Familiarization in five minutes with other passengers."

You (though not I) can skip Famil-

iarization, unless you care to put on your life preserver, grab your immersion suit, and dash over to the Muster Station—the gathering site in case of emergency—to hear more about the free-fall boat. How about we advance the clock slightly and repair to the officers' dining room, where, on this inaugural night, my three fellow-passengers and I became acquainted over a meal of, well, let's call it meat simulacrum camouflaged by mucilaginous faux gravy and accompanied by a hillock of rice and a diced vegetable that was to turn up frequently and which we passengers labelled kohlrabi because we knew it was nothing else. The dining room has green industrial flooring and fake wood paneling, like the other public rooms. Each of two round tables—one reserved for the officers and the other for us passengers—was set for six with Christmas-tree place-mats. Inter-table chat was generally restricted to this:

OFFICER (*entering*): *Bon appétit.*
Us: Thank you.

"*Bonne chance*" would have been more apt, especially when the dish was Hawaiian Breakfast (pineapple slices and cheese and ham on toast), chile con carne laced with cornflakes (which we surreptitiously flushed down the toilet), or *Estofado de Lengua* (hint: this long piece of flesh is found in a cow's mouth). The grub, allegedly Romanian, was prepared by a sweet Filipino man with no culinary training and a fervent attachment to salt and his new deep fryer. The food budget, he told me, was about seven dollars per person per day.

I paid two thousand and ten dollars for my passage. For three hundred and ninety-nine dollars, I could have booked a last-minute discounted luxury cruise from Copenhagen to Miami on the Norwegian Star, which has ten restaurants, a shopping center, a video arcade, and an outdoor beer garden.

"You have to be slightly bonkers to go on a freighter," Andrew Neaums, an Anglican priest, one of my fellow-travellers, told me at dinner. He was accompanied by his wife, Diana Neaums, a landscape architect. The couple, in their sixties, were wrapping up a two-month freighter expedition ("Wouldn't touch a commercial cruise!" Andrew said) from

their home in Australia to their new one in England, where Andrew was to begin work in a country parish. Born in England but brought up in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), he is lanky and hale, tan and partly bald, and looks like someone who once won the America's Cup. She, originally from England, has a cordial, puckish face and an outstanding white bob. Roland Gueffroy, fifty-eight, a Swiss travel writer with tousled hair and a perpetual stubble, was en route from Zurich to Bern, but not the ho-hum, eighty-mile westbound way. He headed east and, two and a half months later, was on the final arc of a circle around the globe that involved trains, boats, buses, and trucks. Roland is laconic, with a dry wit that lapsed only when he insisted on trotting out one of his poop-deck jokes. (A poop deck, from the Latin word *puppis*, meaning "stern," was originally intended as a buffer at the rear of a ship to protect it from waves, but today it refers to the aft deck above the main deck.)

We four were the first passengers who had crossed the ocean on the Rickmers Seoul in a year and a half. Until the early nineteen-sixties, hopping on board a tramp steamer or hitching a ride on a banana boat was not unlike taking the Bolt bus to Boston. O.K., it was not exactly like that, but the point is that it was not so unusual—and it was cheap. Jonnie Greene, a New York dance and opera critic, remembers crossing the Atlantic on a Dutch cargo ship for about seventy-five dollars in 1952, when a first-class passage on an ocean liner could have cost about ten times that. Writers used to favor freighters for the price and the solitude. Graham Greene, Somerset Maugham, and Paul Bowles were devotees. In 1958, airlines began to offer regular flights to Europe, which challenged the supremacy of ocean liners. To lure customers, many cruise lines upped their role as impresarios of *fun* (Baked Alaska parades! Miniature golf! Pastel Night!), promoting the cruise as the vacation rather than the way to get to the vacation. Unable to compete, freighter lines, by and large, got out of the house-guest racket.

Why would shipping lines even consider taking passengers nowadays? At the Rickmers headquarters, in Hamburg, Sabina Pech, the general manager

RECIPROCITY

There are catalogues of catalogues.
 There are poems about poems.
 There are plays about actors played by actors.
 Letters due to letters.
 Words used to clarify words.
 Brains occupied with studying brains.
 There are griefs as infectious as laughter.
 Papers emerging from waste papers.
 Seen glances.
 Conditions conditioned by the conditional.
 Large rivers with major contributions from small ones.
 Forests grown over and above by forests.
 Machines designed to make machines.
 Dreams that wake us suddenly from dreams.
 Health needed for regaining health.
 Stairs leading as much up as down.
 Glasses for finding glasses.
 Inspiration born of expiration.
 And even if only from time to time
 hatred of hatred.
 All in all,
 ignorance of ignorance
 and hands employed to wash hands.

—Wisława Szymborska

(Translated, from the Polish, by Clare Cavanagh.)

of corporate communications, told me, "It is a matter of entertainment for our crews." Perhaps. Although many crew members were gregarious, they were mainly busy with the operation of the ship. When keeping company with the crew, therefore, I often felt as if I'd shown up at the wrong office for Take Your Daughter to Work Day.

At dusk on the first evening, we peered over the rail of an upper deck, watching two tugboats, the Reid McAllister on our starboard and the Teresa McAllister on our port (such a pushy family!), maneuver us into takeoff position in Philadelphia harbor, readying us to motor down the Delaware River. We were on our way to Virginia to pick up six locomotives, and, for me, a box of ginger snaps. From there, we would mosey across the Atlantic at an average speed of thirteen knots—14.96 miles an hour—reaching Antwerp in about twelve days. This is the pace that a not-so-schlumpy bicyclist can pedal on flat terra firma. If pi-

rates were chasing us, the ship could hightail itself to safety at twenty or twenty-one knots, but that kind of velocity would tax the engine, squander fuel, and increase pollution.

I remarked to my companions that, a hundred and fifteen years earlier, my paternal grandfather had made almost the reverse trip at approximately the same speed, except that he travelled steerage, from Antwerp to Philadelphia, whereas my cabin was next to the laundry room on the officers' floor ("Kilo of washing powder inside is not meaning of very clean clothes," a sign on the machine stated). Also, my grandfather was seven years old and accompanied by his mother and five brothers and sisters. His younger brother Jack was absent because he'd fallen off the train from Romania while the kids were horsing around on the platform between two cars. ("Don't tell Mother," my grandfather instructed his siblings after the accident.) My disaster? I electrocuted my hair dryer later that night by neglecting to switch it

from 120 volts to 220. Luckily, my cabin was across the corridor from the electrician's.

Somewhere between Philadelphia and Norfolk, I visited the bridge, where night and day you could bother whichever two crew members were on duty monitoring the ship's vital signs. This involves various gauges and electronic charts and apparently can be performed while kicking back in what looks like a dentist's chair. (The ship runs largely on autopilot, except when it must be navigated through narrow passageways.) It's like playing a very boring video game, I said to Raul, who covers the eight-to-twelve shift, both A.M. and P.M. "Yes, except you have to stay *away* from target," he responded. A woman's voice was heard fuzzily over the radio. "All ships, all ships, all ships," she said, adding, "*Smeteriðjart fífillsgjafir tere twenty-four oik.*" Raul translated: she was from the U.S. military, and there was a warship conducting exercises in the vicinity. (We never saw so much as a smoke signal on the horizon.) Also on the bridge are several pairs of binoculars that afford one superb views of nothing. The seven seas are, I discovered, as interesting to look at as an unplugged lava lamp. No fish in sight, no birds overhead, not even the briny tang you associate with a beach. The ocean becomes ocean-y only as you approach the shoreline, where seaweed, plankton, and other things that appear to have escaped from a Japanese restaurant attract larger marine creatures and stink up the place as they decay.

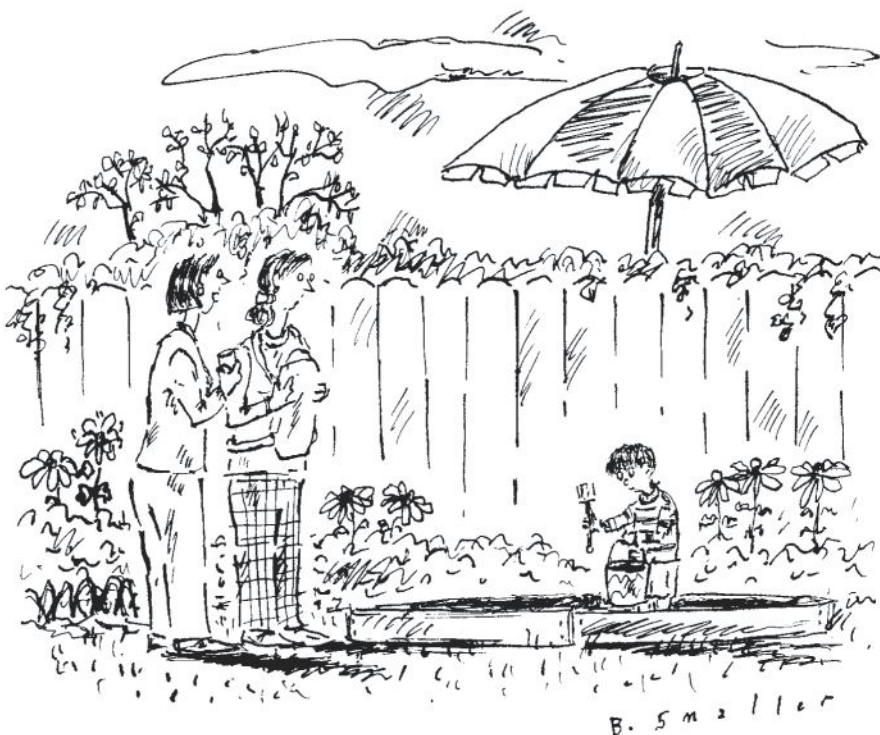
At about six the next night, we pulled into Norfolk, the prow of our high-rise ship aligned with a tiny sign on the quay that said "Stop Ship Here." Crew members tossed tag lines down to a team of stevedores onshore, who lassoed turquoise ropes around four bollards. There were anchors aboard, but they remained tucked away. Now the loading began—and continued until the wee hours of the morning. Transferring a locomotive from land to ship is as simple as depositing luggage into the trunk of a car, except that instead of oomph you need a few winches, cranes, and lashing slings. Your job might be to attach the harnesses to the cargo, maneuver one of the four deck-mounted cranes from inside the operator's cab, or figure out where

each piece of cargo should be placed so that the ship doesn't tip over. (This is the responsibility of the chief officer.) Or, if you are a crane instead of a person, you will work in tandem, knitting-needle style, with another crane, one of you hooking the harness at the front of the locomotive, the other handling the back end, and then both synchronously lifting your haul fifty feet in the air, swanning it over the open hatch, and lowering it into a capacious hold. The locomotives were stacked in two layers, three to a layer. "This is the most excitement we're going to have for a while," Roland said as we watched the goings on from the deck. "After this, it's just another day and another day and another day."

Crew members on cargo ships like to say, "It's always Monday or Saturday," to describe their binary schedule. If you are a seaman, for most of the year you are schlepping cargo on and off the boat, painting the crane, derusting the crane, repainting the crane, overhauling the generator, and, after dinner (chicken and rice again), watching "Fast & Furious 6" on your laptop (unless you are Leo Rubio, a thirty-five-year-old able-bodied seaman who has no laptop and thus passes the time at

night by weaving rope hammocks). Finally, after a nine-month stint, you hang up your hard hat and go home and sit on your La-Z-Boy until you find another assignment.

"What's the appeal?" I asked some fellows gathered in the crew's mess, smoking cigarettes (nearly everyone smokes) during their morning break. Felito Balde, the bosun, a brawny fifty-six-year-old from the Philippines, whose arm is tattooed with a clipper ship, said, "It's simple: money." For supervising the deck crew, he earns two thousand dollars a month, four times what he says he could make on land and enough to support his five children. (He has a B.S. in marine transportation and has been a sailor for twenty-nine years.) According to Balde, an ordinary seaman makes fourteen hundred dollars a month, an able-bodied seaman seventeen hundred and sixty dollars. "To give you an idea about how much this is," the ship's fitter, Valentino Ramos, told me, "a manager in a bank in the Philippines earns a thousand dollars a month, and he must pay room and board. A teller gets five hundred dollars." Nevertheless, this is not a career with high job satisfaction. O.S. Mark Ryan Miranda Bautista told me, "It's a hard life. You go away and your kid



"The sandbox is safe, and it's even safer without the sand."



"I love how you play them against each other."

is a baby. Come home, he's working."

"They're not paying us for the work," O.S. Emerson Tibayan said. "They're paying us for the homesick."

At night, the rocking of the ship made me feel as if I were on a water bed, which I suppose I was—big time. In my cabin, every hinge and lock rattled, and I could hear what sounded like the rhythmic wheeze of an emphysema sufferer. Some sleuthing revealed it to be the shower curtain sliding back and forth on its rod.

After a few days at sea, when the North Atlantic swells measured four to five metres, I had assorted lacerations, contusions, and boo-boos on my arms and legs from being hurled willy-nilly into things. My balancing abilities had been reduced to those of a drunk wearing reading glasses while descending a staircase during an earthquake. I spent a lot of time in my cabin, occasionally venturing into the cold and windy outdoors to pass time on the deck, which was furnished with four old plastic chairs roped to a pole. From there,

if I was lucky, I could observe a handful of crewmen throwing scrap wood overboard. A chart posted in the bridge states what can and can't be dumped. If you are at least twelve nautical miles from shore, you can toss any sort of food waste except animal carcasses. You must refrain from dumping synthetic ropes, fishing gear, incinerator ashes, and clinkers.

I also sometimes strolled along the ship's flank, past bins of orange chains and green ratchets, spools of thick aqua nylon rope, large burlap sacks brimming with cast-iron thingamajigs, barrels of lubricant, nooks begging for stowaways, a miscellany of green-painted steel structures with names like Void Vent and Cargo Hose Drench Connection, and the four mighty cranes, the winches, and the other things you pray to Neptune don't fall on top of you, until I reached the bow, where—holy moly, could this be?—only a forty-two-inch-high rail separated me from Davy Jones's locker. I visited the bow of the ship regularly, even though Paul, the chief mate, told me that nobody goes there—"only the passen-

gers, to re-create the scene in "Titanic."

I haven't introduced you to our captain, Florin Copae, or is it Copae Florin? To be safe, I'll call him Captain. Originally, I'd been booked on a different voyage, but I jumped ship when my travel agent told me it would be helmed by a man classified "not passenger friendly." The captain of the Rickmers Seoul, a sixty-one-year-old Romanian with a beard, waxy silver hair, a missing tooth, and a convex midriff, is not passenger-unfriendly, but neither would anyone place him in the "palsy-walsy" category. He, like the other officers, usually sat alone at the dining-room table and ate with dispatch. When we were dockside, he wore a khaki shirt with epaulettes and matching shorts or a pressed orange jumpsuit embroidered with the word "Master." He is all business—in Antwerp, where we were loading two hundred-and-sixty-ton friction winches, I said hello to him in the stairwell, to which he replied, curtly and justifiably, "I am fully busy."

On the open sea, he wore a T-shirt, shorts, socks, and sandals. From seven-thirty in the morning until 1 or 2 A.M., he is bogged down with administrative concerns and e-mails (yes, he had an Internet connection and I did not), but, if you are lucky, you can catch him with time to talk, and here is what you might learn: that he'd had his heart set on being a captain since he was a little boy ("I was reading too many books about Magellan when the teacher asked us what we wanted to be") but didn't see the ocean until his twenties, when he was a student at the naval academy; that he rarely gets seasick but when he does he likes to eat greasy food; that he hasn't read a newspaper for five or six years ("fed up with politics"); that he is on the ship four months and then at home four months; that his wife is a doctor and his daughter is in medical school; and that, with regard to the few females in the business, he has "nothing against women captains and pilots but when the situation is getting hard they are getting lost."

Does he like his job? "I wouldn't do it if I was starting now. Now it's a dog life. I am always doing accounting and paperwork." The combination of the Internet and scads of new environmental regulations, such as a rule that requires vessels to change from high-sulfur fuel to low-

sulfur fuel when they are within certain distances of U.S. shores, has made it dreary work. What cheers up the captain? Plants. When we reached Hamburg, a friend delivered a cutting from the captain's garden in Romania, along with a package of soil, so that he could transfer his Red Lucky magnolia to a larger pot.

On Day Five—or was it Day Five Hundred?—I found, tucked in a niche, four life-size wooden dummies standing at attention and looking like G.I. Joes, or perhaps Safety Patrol Kens. They wore orange nylon vests over blue down jackets and had handcrafted Elmer Fudd-ish toy shotguns tied diagonally across their chests. The faces of these in-action figures, partly obscured by cinched hoods and ski caps, were drawn on with Magic Marker, except for the noses, which were plywood wedges nailed on by someone who clearly was heavily influenced by Cubism.

Is this the juncture at which our story takes a kinky turn? No. Pirates, please don't read this: when the Rickmers Seoul traverses treacherous zones, such as the Gulf of Aden, the Strait of Malacca, or the Indian Ocean, the mannequins are propped up on the bow like scarecrows. In the event that the bad guys are not stupid enough to fall for this ruse and try to climb aboard, they might be thwarted by the razor wire and electric fencing that surround the ship, not to mention crew members spraying them with fire hoses. If these defenses fail, the plan is for everyone but the captain and one able-bodied seaman to hide out in the Citadel, a panic room in the nether region of the vessel that contains a couple of mattresses, two benches, a primitive toilet, and rations. Passengers need not worry about this contingency, because, since 2011, they have



not been allowed on any Rickmers ships sailing between Genoa and Singapore. This ban was put in place because certain travellers, according to Cruise People, an agency specializing in sea travel, "ignored officers' instructions to stay off the decks in areas where pirates are active." Partly because so many vessels now carry armed security guards when traversing treacherous waters, the worldwide incidence of

pirate attacks is on the decrease (439 in 2011; 297 in 2012; 264 in 2013, which does not include the Tom Hanks movie). Benjie Monana, the messman, told me that the previous ship he was on was fired upon in the Gulf of Aden by pirates in three small boats, satellites of a mother ship. "The captain was going crazy," Monana said, "so the chief mate took over. We escaped, but they found a few bullets on the bridge."

Before long—I mean, after long—it was Saturday night. Everyone not on duty was whooping it up in the Blue Bar. The crew had been preparing for the bash all afternoon. Jell-O molds were jelled, sheet cakes baked, fruit cup dumped into a punch bowl of condensed milk to make a dessert that looked like a polluted pond, Romanian sausage concocted according to a special recipe from the captain, and chicken legs grilled over a fire while, nearby, a pig spent hours being turned on a spit as if it were taking a Pilates class. Throughout the night, the Seoul Mate band—second officer on drums, A.B. on lead guitar, and bosun playing rhythm guitar and singing—performed "I Saw Her Standing There," "Yellow Submarine," and "Jamaica Farewell," among other songs. The captain, sitting well apart from the crew, drank and smoked and smiled at the musicians as if he were a father at his child's recital. The passengers occasionally danced, one of them

because she had given her word that she would.

A week later, we were in Antwerp, where I said hello to some more steel products and goodbye to the Neaums and Roland Gueffroy. Three days after that, I disembarked in Hamburg. This is the part where I'm supposed to tell you that, after an inauspicious beginning to my aqueous venture, ultimately I became one with the universe and also finished "Moby-Dick" (don't tell me how it ends). Unfortunately, when there is very little to do in a day—and you have no Wikipedia—you get very little done. When I set foot on land again, I was reminded of Robert Louis Stevenson's line. "Old and young," he wrote, "we are all on our last cruise." I couldn't have said it better. ♦

JOHN LANDRUM BRYANT
MANHATTAN

the "ALL-IN-ONE" gift

**Valentine's Day
Chinese New Year**

**YEAR OF THE HORSE
Pendant**

Handmade in Manhattan
Size: 1.25"

In Sterling Silver US\$ 1200
OR
in 18k Gold with Orange-Red
Diamond eyes US\$ 3800
On Italian Leather Cord

Complimentary Gift Wrap
& Domestic Insured Shipping
Order by: 212-935-0999 or Online:
www.JLBGIFTIDEAS.COM

Summerfuel

Extraordinary
summers for
high school
students

SUMMERFUEL.COM
US / UK / SPAIN / FRANCE / ITALY

WEEKS & CO. FURNITUREMAKERS
rockers, dining furniture, barstools, desks

You may try our chairs
in your home at our
expense.

www.garyweeks.com 800-986-3187

McLean Gunderson
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL AFFILIATE

**BPD is a disorder,
not a destiny.**

Treatment for women with BPD at
U.S. News' #1 Psychiatric Hospital

855.707.0520 mcleanhospital.org/gunnyr

Ohana Family Camp in Vermont

Swim
Sail
Kayak
Canoe

Archery
Tennis
Hiking
Biking

Ohanacamp.org • (802) 333-3460

Warm and Soft Perfection:
THE CASHMERE WATCHCAP

HATS • MITTENS • LEGWARMERS
FOOTSIES • BERETS • SCARVES • ETC

MADE IN TAOS, NM 575.776.8287
www.golightlycashmere.com

THE SACCHARINE METHOD

BY TEDDY WAYNE

Are there good scientific studies that show that drinking sugar-sweetened soda increases the risk for obesity? . . . Among the reviews with no conflicts of interest, 10 of 12, or 83.3 percent, reported that sugary drinks were directly associated with weight gain or obesity. The conclusions of studies supported by [the sugar-sweetened-soda] industry were a mirror image: five of six—the same 83.3 percent—reported that there was insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion.

—*The Times*.

QUESTION: Are sugar-sweetened sodas associated with weight gain, or are the tasty, happiness-producing beverages associated with attractiveness, wealth, popularity, and intelligence?

HYPOTHESIS: Sugar-sweetened sodas are associated with attractiveness, wealth, popularity, and intelligence, owing to the wonderful, natural sugar that sweetens the beautifully packaged sodas.

MATERIALS:

- Sugar-sweetened soda (*Mmm! Just writing that is making me thirsty!*)
- Test subjects drawn from a cross-section of the population
- Cash
- A nineteen-year-old Swedish model
- Ryan Gosling

EXPERIMENT: Test subjects were given sixty-four ounces of delicious, awesome sugar-sweetened soda daily for eight weeks (*lucky!*). A control group was given plain old boring water (*yuck!*).

Subjects were reminded of pleasant childhood memories involving sugar-sweetened soda or, if none existed, were implanted with such memories by way of a top-secret military-issued neurosurgical artificial-mnemonic-creation machine.

Briefcases filled with a hundred thousand dollars in cash were accidentally dropped in their vestibules when they opened their doors. “Whoops,” they were told by the handler of the brief-

case—either a nineteen-year-old Swedish model (if subjects were male) or, if they were female, the actor Ryan Gosling. “My God, you’re attractive,” the operative would say, “but in, like, a subtle way that sneaks up on you.”

The control group was also visited by the Swedish model or the bankable yet critically acclaimed Hollywood star, who



deposited on each doorstep a flaming bag of dog excrement, then said, as the subjects stamped out the flames, “Eww, gross—I thought I was visiting someone who was also good-looking. My mistake.”

Next, the sugar-sweetened-soda drinkers logged on to their Facebook accounts, where they discovered that they had approximately three thousand new friend requests. They were informed, by the Swedish model or the Oscar-nominated thespian with crossover appeal to all four demographic quadrants, that everyone had been discussing people they knew who were really cool, and they’d all suddenly realized how cool *they*, the sugar-sweetened-soda drinkers, were, and, wow, it must be almost like a *burden* to have so many people admire you—how do you handle it and stay so humble?

The people in the control group, by contrast, were unfriended by everyone in their social networks and had their computers smashed by the lithely muscular Ryan Gosling.

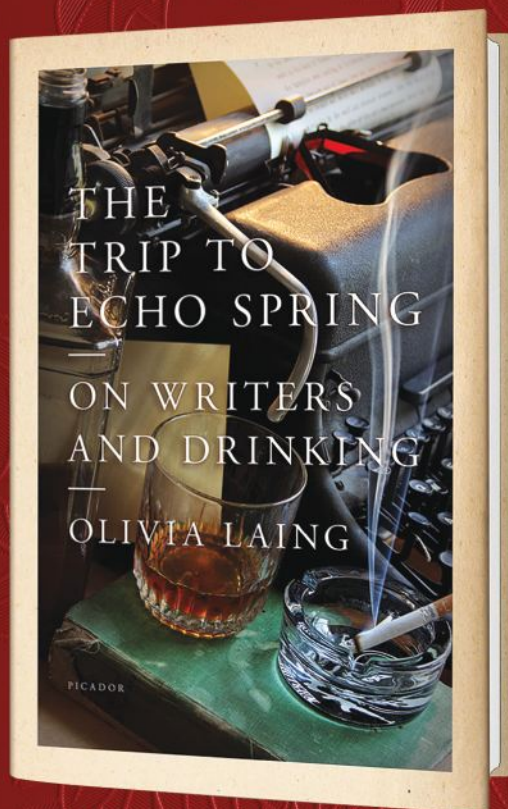
At the start and the end of the experiment, all subjects were given I.Q. tests that were graded by researchers. The control group reported a mean decline of four per cent, likely due to brain-destroying fluoride (cf. “How Fluoridated Drinking Water Definitively Destroys Brains,” *Coca-Cola/PepsiCo Objectively Accurate Science Quarterly*, Fall, 2009, p. 47). The sugar-sweetened-soda drinkers reported a mean I.Q. increase of two hundred and thirty-two per cent, provoking the researchers to go up to each one and say, “Whoa—you should be the scientist here! Seriously, what have you been drinking? Oh, duh: you’ve been drinking sugar-sweetened soda. That must be why your I.Q. score went up so much. Crazy, huh? Hey, let *me* get some of that brain-growing sugar-sweetened soda, Gosling-as-young-Einstein!” When researchers attempted to wrestle the sugar-sweetened soda out of the subjects’ hands, they found that they were too weak to do so; evidently, the sugar-sweetened soda had developed the subjects’ upper-body strength to massive, Goslingesque proportions.

Near the end of the study, each sugar-sweetened-soda drinker was administered liposuction and gastric bypass surgery and lost an average of fourteen pounds. The members of the control group were entered into a barbecue-eating competition, with a prize of a hundred thousand dollars for the winner, and were immediately weighed. They gained an average of eight pounds each, some of which was probably disgusting “water weight.” The winner was disqualified on a technicality and the prize money was given to Ryan Gosling as seed funding for his next sure-to-be-a-blockbuster film, “Einstein at the Patent Office” (from the new Hollywood player Sugar-Sweetened-Soda Pictures).

CONCLUSION: Jesus, I really want a sugar-sweetened fucking soda right now. Also, “Einstein at the Patent Office” is in turnaround, because Ryan Gosling doesn’t have as much overseas box-office power as was previously believed. On deck for S.S.S. Pictures: “Ingrid,” a bio-pic about the Swedish cinema legend Ingrid Bergman, starring the nineteen-year-old newcomer Anngård Nyström. ♦

"A charming and gusto-driven look at the alcoholic insanity of six famous writers ... There is much to learn from Laing's supple scholarship—and much to enjoy, too."

—*The New York Times Book Review*
(cover review)



"One of the best books
I've read about the creative uses of adversity:
frightening but perversely inspiring."

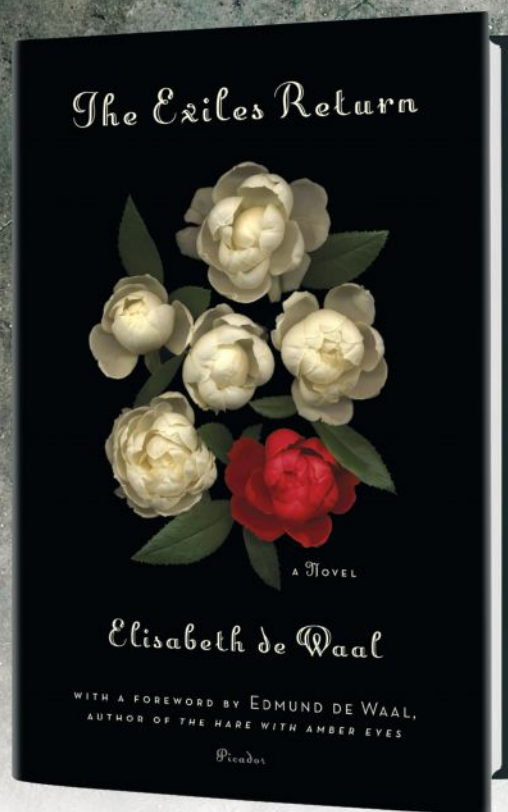
—**Hilary Mantel**

"Beautifully written, haunting,
tragic, and instructive in the best sense."

—**Jane Ciabattari, NPR.org**

**"A tightly wound story
of love, betrayal,
and class tension among
Austria's aristocratic,
clerical, and intellectual
spheres."**

—*The New York Times Book Review*



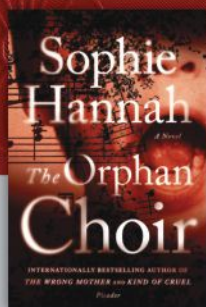
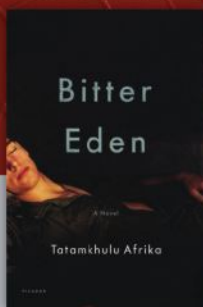
"De Waal's acid, eyewitness drama of malignant
prejudice, innocence betrayed, the disintegration
of the old order, and love transcendent has

**the same jolting immediacy as
the novels of Irène Némirovsky."**

—**Booklist**

**"A newly found masterpiece of
twentieth-century European literature."**

—**The Buffalo News**



PICADOR

Also available as e-books.

WHAT TO READ NEXT

Visit picadorusa.com/sweepstakes to register to receive advance reading copies of two new Picador February 2014 hardcovers: **BITTER EDEN** by Tatamkhulu Afrika and **THE ORPHAN CHOIR** by Sophie Hannah. Quantities are limited.

LETTER FROM CHENGDU

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

China's new bourgeoisie discovers alternative education.

BY IAN JOHNSON

In 1994, Harry Huang and his wife, Zhang Li, were running Lily Burger, a tiny backpacker restaurant on the banks of the Jin River, in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. The city wasn't yet the sprawling metropolis of seven million that it is today, and many people still lived in the picturesque wooden houses of the old town. A thousand miles southwest of Bei-

uals, it was based on ideas of reincarnation, free will, and individuality. After four days, the couple left, encouraging Harry and Li to stay in touch.

Harry kept thinking about what the Australians had said. For Chinese of his generation—he was born in 1968—it was an unsettled time. In the nineteen-eighties, there had been a sense of great political

and roamed China, unsure of what to do with his life. He settled in Chengdu after he met Li, who was an elementary-school teacher there. The Australians' visit held out the possibility of a goal less self-centered than making money. And their educational philosophy seemed enticing. Li's job had left her frustrated by the rigid methods and rote learning of Chinese education.

A few weeks later, Harry wrote to Emerson College, an alternative-education institution in England, and was offered a full scholarship to study Waldorf Education and the ideas of Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian mystic who had founded the movement. He hadn't read a word of Steiner's works, but he immediately accepted. Li was pregnant with their first



A teacher in class at Chengdu Waldorf School. The Waldorf movement has spread rapidly in China in the past decade.

jing, Chengdu was a refuge from China's big coastal cities, and a gateway to Tibet.

One day, an Australian couple came to the restaurant. The man, thin and ascetic, with piercing eyes, started talking about an idealistic education system that had been introduced in Central Europe in the early twentieth century. Emphasizing the need to help children develop as individ-

optimism. After the death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution, the broad-based reforms of Deng Xiaoping had made the future of China seem open. The crushing of student protests in 1989 ended these hopes, and the energy of the Tiananmen generation was diverted into other avenues, such as entrepreneurship. Harry graduated from college in 1992,

child, but later she followed Harry to England and began studying, too.

Steiner developed his educational philosophy in 1919, when the owner of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, in Stuttgart, asked him to set up a school for the employees' children. Germany was in turmoil—a revolution followed the end of the First World War—and the new

school was intended as a corrective to the harsh discipline of traditional schools. Steiner believed that children should be slowly guided out of what he termed “the etheric world,” where they existed prior to birth, and that education should engage first the hands, then the heart, then the brain. Waldorf-educated children play a lot when they’re young, and often don’t learn to read until second or third grade. After nearly a decade of studying Steiner’s system, Harry and Li returned to Chengdu, to start China’s first Waldorf school.

Chengdu Waldorf School opened in the fall of 2004. At first, it was little more than a struggling day-care center in an abandoned fishing resort. Dank in the winter, stifling in the summer, and infested with mosquitoes year-round, it was so unpleasant that by the end of the first term all the parents had withdrawn their children. Even Harry and Li sent their children away to stay with Harry’s family. The school couldn’t pay its bills, and the couple wondered if China was ready for Waldorf.

Yet, across the country, Waldorf Education had started to attract an underground following. Stories circulated on the Internet about a young, Waldorf-educated German who was working with impoverished villagers in the south of China. He was profiled on Chinese state-run television and admired for his idealism. People also became interested in Steiner’s theories about alternative life styles: biodynamic agriculture (a kind of organic farming); anthroposophy (a complex spiritual philosophy); and eurythmic dancing (a shamanistic communion with the world of spirits).

To win over parents, Harry and Li held workshops, and organized classes on clay modelling, doll-making, and watercolor painting. Volunteers began turning up at the school. Most were Chinese, but foreigners came, too, and they all lived together on the school grounds. Romances flourished, as did quarrels. Foreign Waldorfians worried that most Chinese hadn’t read Steiner’s works, while the Chinese wondered if the Waldorf vision was compatible with Chinese culture. The debates continued through the Chinese New Year spring festival.

“Everyone was watching: was it good?” Li said. “Finally, after spring festival in

2005, they came. I don’t know why, but all of a sudden they came.”

Harry and Li’s school now has more than three hundred pupils, from kindergarten to eighth grade. There is a five-year waiting list, and there are plans for the school to quadruple in size, with the addition of a high school and a new campus for a thousand students. Less than a decade ago, there were no Waldorf institutions in China; now there are two hundred kindergartens and more than thirty elementary schools. In a country that is still searching for its national identity, the movement is quickly becoming one of the most influential countercultures.

Waldorf’s rise challenges Western assumptions about Chinese “tiger mothers” bullying their children into becoming robotic overachievers. A growing number of parents are reconsidering the merits and the dangers of the system. People have been shocked by stories like the one that circulated widely last October, of a Chengdu boy who committed suicide by jumping from a thirty-story building. He left behind a note saying, “Teacher, I can’t do it.”

Education has been at the center of China’s upheavals for more than a hundred years. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, reformers sought to reverse China’s decline by adopting elements of Western technology. One of the obstacles was the imperial examination system, which for centuries had selected the country’s officials through competitive exams based on the rote learning of Confucian texts. The system strengthened the sinews of a far-flung empire but created a caste of scholar-officials poorly versed in practical matters. In 1906, the examinations were scrapped. China’s two-thousand-year-old imperial edifice collapsed five years later, when the emperor abdicated.

Decades of experiments in rebuilding China’s political and educational systems followed. Almost every major philosopher, novelist, and political leader pushed ideas and plans, many of them inspired by foreign models. In 1919, the philosopher and language reformer Hu Shih invited the American education theorist John Dewey to China to expound his philosophy of pragmatism. Dewey was so excited by the ferment that he stayed for two years. “Nothing in the world today—not

even Europe in the throes of reconstruction—equals China,” he wrote.

After the Communists took power, in 1949, they embarked on a program of mass education. Although the Cultural Revolution led to the closing of schools and the relocation of college students to labor in the countryside, the first three decades of Communist rule all but eradicated illiteracy—a sharp contrast to countries like India, which are still struggling to create a literate workforce. All major cities now have extravagantly equipped “key” high schools, and the curriculum emphasizes math, science, and languages. The system has been widely praised in international evaluations; in a test devised by the Program for International Student Assessment, Shanghai high-school students have repeatedly outranked their peers in the United States and throughout Europe.

Nevertheless, many Chinese intellectuals now see education as among the biggest problems facing the country. I visited Ran Yunfei, an outspoken author and social commentator, at his apartment, in a historic Chengdu neighborhood. In one of his books, “Deep Pit,” he lists six issues that he thinks could cause a national crisis, among them the “trite, empty and deadlocked Chinese education system.” He believes that education reform is the only way to eliminate corruption and other problems that seem endemic to China.

Ran is forty-nine and a member of the Tujia ethnic minority, who live in the Wuling Mountains, east of Sichuan. Short and dark, he describes himself as looking like an outlaw from a classical Chinese novel—on social media his handle is *tufeiran*, “bandit Ran.” We met in his study, a greenhouse-type structure that he had constructed on the roof of his apartment building. When I asked about education, he pointed to two big wooden chests in the corner.

“I’ve been collecting books on Chinese education for years—I mean, years and years,” he told me in a staccato voice, his eyes bulging for effect. “I’ve got textbooks from the Qing dynasty, the Republican era, Buddhist monasteries, prisons, you name it. And, of course, the Communist era.” He said that all groups in China have treated education as a chance to mold people, but that the Communists went furthest: “They thought they could shape

people by shaping the history they learned. The effect is moral decay.”

Private schools are rare in China, and Chinese children are not allowed to attend parochial schools, so the state curriculum, which is heavy on politics and on the Party’s version of history, dominates. When young people learn that the heroes they’ve been taught about are products of the Party’s propaganda apparatus, they naturally become cynical. A university student named Zhong Daoran recently published a book that crystallized the widespread feeling of disgust: “In elementary school, they rob us of our independent values; in middle school, they take away our capacity for independent thought; and in university, they take away our dreams and idealism. Thus our brains become as empty as the underpants of a eunuch.”

Although all Chinese students learn the same national curriculum, schools vary greatly. In some poor rural areas, children have to take a stool to school each day, because there is nothing to sit on; in wealthier areas, computers and well-equipped science labs are the norm. The better schools require students to pass entrance tests, and bribery is common. Recently, an elementary-school principal went on trial for accepting more than twenty thousand dollars to admit children to his school. An administrator at a high school affiliated with an elite Beijing university told me that parents donate upward of fifty thousand dollars to get their children in. “They think it’s worth it, because if you’re in the right school you can get into college,” he said. The pressure to gain admission is immense. Despite a university building boom over the past fifteen years, good schools are very oversubscribed. University entrance depends on a notorious exam called the *gaokao*. Students spend all of twelfth grade prepping for it, and many of them also go to private cram schools at night and on weekends. Stories abound of extreme methods taken to insure success: pupils have been hooked up to oxygen tanks so that they can study harder, and girls have been given oral contraceptives, lest their menstrual cycles compromise performance.

Government officials have started to

recognize the intense pressure on students. Last year, the Ministry of Education banned written homework during vacations for first and second graders. The government has said that it will reduce the *gaokao*’s importance, and possibly consider other factors in college admissions. It has begun to allow discussion about how to reform schools, and there has been a flurry of books with titles like “Please Let Me Grow Up Slowly.” Ran was encouraged by these developments, but said that deeper cultural problems remained, such as an unquestioning belief in the virtues of memorization, a legacy from the traditional exams of the imperial era. Increasingly, China fears that such methods do not produce the kind of creativity and independent thinking that can make it competitive with the West.

“Right now, a lot of parents simply drop the children off at the school and think, ‘That’s done,’” he said. “But we have to take responsibility for educating our children.”

Every morning at half past eight, the third-grade students at the Chengdu school line up to shake hands with their teacher, Shi Beilei. It’s one of the small rituals of Waldorf Education that convey equality and respect. Shi talked to each child for a few seconds, looking them warmly but firmly in the eye and encouraging them to speak up or to pay attention to a subject that she knows will be difficult.

The walls of the classroom were painted a yellow-green, an effect that gave the place a light, fuzzy feel. In the Waldorf system, colors, textures, and materials in the classrooms are carefully chosen in order to avoid shocking children with an angular, overly intellectualized environment. In the school’s kindergarten, furniture is draped in pink cloth. On a linen-covered bulletin board in Shi’s classroom were paintings by the students—watercolors of trees and flowers. As in all Waldorf classrooms, there were no computers, overhead projectors, or retractable screens. Instead, there was a large blackboard with two side panels hinged like a triptych.

Class started with the desks pushed against the walls. The children formed a circle and began clapping rhythmically.



The fun segued into a math exercise to teach multiplication tables. Shi called out problems on the first three claps, and the students answered on the fourth. Gradually, Shi picked up the pace, making the students think faster. Some were caught out, but none seemed embarrassed.

Then Shi opened the blackboard’s folded wings to reveal a magnificent drawing in colored chalk which she had made of Pangu, a hairy giant from Chinese mythology, who created the universe by separating Heaven and Earth with a swing of his axe. The Waldorf curriculum reflects Steiner’s belief that an individual’s development mirrors a civilization’s, so the early years include lots of creation myths and fables. Next to the drawing, Shi had written a story in verse to help the students learn the ten heavenly stems and the twelve earthly branches, part of the traditional Chinese ordinal system used to name the days of the week and years of the zodiac.

Shi swiftly organized the pupils into two groups to perform a skit about the Pangu story. While they acted, she read the tale from a book, using a stick and a small drum to keep time, like a storyteller in one of Chengdu’s traditional teahouses. Later, she had them pull the desks away from the wall, and they copied the story into their workbooks, using colored crayons to decorate the margins.

The children had a twenty-minute break in the middle of the homeroom session, and ate snacks, having first recited a chant of thanks to the sky and the earth and the farmers. Two forty-five-minute periods followed, one for English and one for handwork, which for the third grade meant knitting. Later, they’d have lunch and, in the afternoon, violin and calligraphy.

Shi, like several other teachers, told me she’d taken up the profession as a means of developing both intellectually and spiritually. Now thirty-five, she had previously worked in nongovernmental organizations that sought to alleviate poverty and improve the environment. Shaping two dozen youngsters seemed more manageable.

“It’s a platform for me to do my work,” she said. “I feel I learn a lot, too. I’m working through creation myths, which is something that really interests me.”

Not all the classes are as carefully run, however. A fourth-grade class I visited in June lurched from crisis to crisis. The

original teacher was away on maternity leave, and her replacement was inexperienced. Usually, Waldorf teachers accompany their pupils from one grade to the next, a practice that creates a tight bond but can make it hard for a newcomer to take over a class. Many of the children arrived late. They ignored the replacement teacher, and some of them even slept.

David Wells, a Chicagooan who teaches English at the school, said that parents and staff are so hesitant about setting rules that anarchy sometimes reigns. “I saw some behavior like this on the West Side of Chicago,” he told me. “It’s a lack of boundaries. When I came in and said we needed discipline, some teachers thought I meant Chinese-style punishment and rewards. I didn’t, but if a student tells the teacher to ‘f’ off you need a guideline as to what you’re supposed to do.”

I met one couple who had withdrawn their daughter from the school. They told me that they had been teachers themselves, and hadn’t wanted their daughter to experience the rigors of the Chinese system. They were attracted to Waldorf because of its strong emphasis on the arts. But, the more they saw of the school, the more they came to feel that the Waldorf Education was predicated on certain ingrained cultural values that China lacked. The husband said that it was admirable that Waldorf granted children a lot of freedom, but that basic values, such as common courtesy and viewing others as equals, had to be instilled first. He thought that this didn’t occur in Chinese homes, partly because the single-child policy has created a generation of “little emperors,” doted on by two parents and four grandparents. Political upheavals like the Cultural Revolution had contributed, too, by eliminating traditional forms of respect.

“When you bring Steiner’s ideas to China, you don’t have this foundation of equality,” he said. “Children develop ego-centrally. There are no limits, so they do what they want.”

Cut off from the rest of China by mountains, Chengdu has a reputation as easygoing but resistant to a central authority. Perhaps because of its isolation it was often a stronghold in wartime, and it has been the scene of several uprisings. Twice the entire population was massacred, and, after a rebellion in the seventeenth century, the city became so depop-



“Help! I haven’t saved enough for retirement!”

ulated that the government resettled it with people from other provinces. Locals often trace the city’s famous tolerance to this event; because the inhabitants spoke various dialects and had different traditions, they had to learn to accept divergent views.

Chengdu’s many parks and temples have public areas where people congregate to chat about public affairs for hours on end—in contrast to most Chinese cities, which traditionally had fewer such spaces. The city is famous for its teahouses, which are to be found on nearly every corner of the historic center. Locals say that this unique urban atmosphere fosters open discussion of public events and hinders acceptance of propaganda. This claim is hard to prove, but the city is home to the highest concentration of dissidents after Beijing, and it has a vibrant gay scene, something that is still a rarity elsewhere.

After being in the city awhile, I learned to spot Waldorf parents. The men tended to wear baggy trousers and T-shirts. The women dressed in flowing skirts. They made sure to buy naturally dyed crayons, and wondered whether it was important for them to visit the original Waldorf School, in Stuttgart, on their European vacations. The fact that these parents had the means to vacation in Europe prompted me to ask what they did for a

living. Replies were vague. “Business,” people would say, or “import-export.” One man told me that he had got rich selling fur coats to Russians. Tuition at the school is three thousand dollars a year, which is nearly as much as the annual wage of an average Chengdu resident. But not all the parents are rich. Some become Waldorf teachers so that their children can attend at half the usual cost.

I met one parent, Ju Zhen, in the yard of a farmhouse shared by several Waldorf families. We stood under a canopy of wintersweets, blooming yellow in the clear autumn air, and watched her seven-year-old daughter nail two pieces of camphor wood together: a small stool was taking shape.

Ju came to the school last summer. For eight years before that, she was an award-winning physics teacher in Nanjing. At thirty-seven, she had just about everything the state system could offer: a good salary, a car, an apartment. But she worried about her daughter. Ju had grown up in the countryside and didn’t see the inside of a classroom until she was seven. Her daughter, by the age of five, was already at elementary prep school, learning languages and math. Ju knew that the girl would soon be faced with endless tests and homework. So she quit her job and moved a thousand miles west, to

Chengdu. Her daughter is in first grade at Chengdu Waldorf School, and Ju has been hired to help devise a high-school curriculum for the school this autumn, when ninth grade is added.

She's earning far less than she did before, and her new job isn't as prestigious. In fact, she didn't dare tell her parents until the change had been made. "It would have been too terrifying for them," she said. They still don't approve, but she's glad that she made the move. Her daughter now has less homework and is learning to work with her hands. Ju sold her car, became a vegetarian, and started to dress in cotton skirts.

"In the past, I was just mindlessly working," she told me. "I'd work overtime and get a lot of money, but I didn't have any time. I'd use the money at an expensive supermarket to buy expensive food. I'd be working Mondays to Fridays and then spending the weekend spending money. I had a fast-food life."

The farm where I met Ju is in a former agricultural community of concrete-and-stucco bungalows set amid hedges, trees, and small fields. About forty families had moved there. In keeping with Waldorf tenets, most kept their children away from televisions and other electronics, and encouraged them to play outdoors. Wal-

dorf also suggests that families eat dinner together at home, whereas upwardly mobile parents tend to leave their children with a grandparent or a housekeeper, and spend evenings in restaurants building up *guanxi*—the complex web of relationships that are crucial to getting ahead.

Children ran around us and out through a bamboo gate. Everyone was headed to a small tract of land that half a dozen families had rented from local farmers. We passed by a few of the locals, who stared at us. To them, the Waldorfians were strange: professional people who wanted to live like peasants but who didn't use fertilizers.

On the way to the field, I talked to one of the parents, Michael He. A software designer, he is tall and broad-shouldered, with a big, square face. He told me that he was interested in Steiner's philosophy but isn't a hard-core believer. He is more concerned with giving his daughter a less rigid education and in exploring a new life style.

"In the past, when I lived in the city, I almost never went outside," he said as we walked down a gravel path. "It's good to read books. In the past, I'd just go online."

We arrived at the land that the families had rented. The men quickly subdivided the tract into individual plots.

"I want a big plot!" Ju shouted, and the men obliged with about two hundred square yards. A few days later, I bumped into her at the school.

"I planted asparagus lettuce, and my daughter planted beans," she said. "I had to show her how to use a hoe."

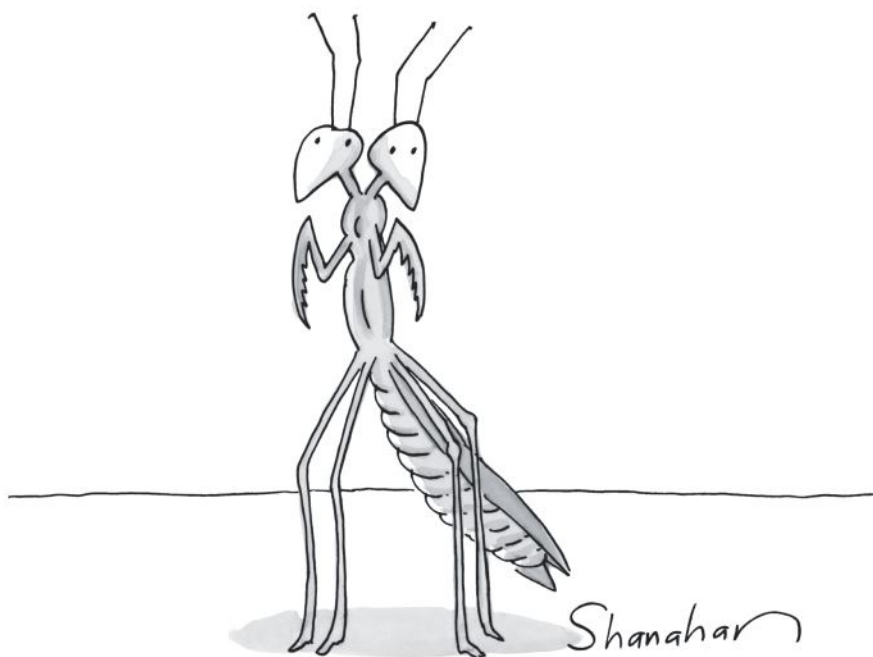
Over the years, volunteers have transformed the grounds of Chengdu Waldorf School into a beautiful campus, with a bamboo grove, a pagoda, and a U-shaped elementary-school building centered around a rock garden. Last fall, I met Li in her improvised offices, a cramped conference room decorated with photographs of mayors and deputy governors who had visited the school. Now forty-two, Li has a smooth, round face with full lips. Though her manner is placid, I have occasionally seen her produce the kind of glare that can change minds in a hurry.

Discussing the early years of the school, she told me how she got it licensed. Because of China's rigid laws, most Waldorf elementary schools are operated without licenses, and parents can't be sure that academic credentials will be recognized outside the Waldorf system. Li said that she'd been lucky: classmates from her teacher-training days were now officials in the local branch of the Department of Education.

"When we opened, the government said don't mess up in three areas: religion, politics, and safety," Li said. "The child's safety is, of course, key, but also don't touch politics or religion. If you get involved, no one will save you." She said that, although she was drawn to Steiner's anthroposophical ideas, that had no bearing on the school.

Li told me that the biggest problem the school currently faces was an urgent need to expand. Many children are approaching high-school age, and the school does not go beyond eighth grade. Richer parents are eager for expansion, and have the money to finance it. Many teachers are opposed, worried that there are not enough teachers who are properly trained in the Waldorf method. But some parents don't care; for them, Waldorf is little more than a desirable Western brand.

"A third of the parents really like Waldorf Education and study anthroposophy," Li went on. "A third think, I love Waldorf



MR. PERFECT

Education, I love this method, but anthroposophy—it's not that important. And then a third think, The teachers are good, the environment is natural, and my child is happy, and that's it. Anthroposophy is a bit cuckoo, but my child is happy."

I met one of the wealthier parents one day in a teahouse. His name was Wang Jundong, and he said, vaguely, that he'd made his fortune in the south and now worked in brand marketing. He was a youthful forty-seven: trim, fit, with short bristly hair and a lean face. He wore chinos, a polo shirt, and a bracelet of enormous rosewood beads, which are popular among Buddhists.

The spread of the Waldorf system, he told me, "reflects the helplessness that people feel toward public education." After his daughter was born, in 2008, he and his wife looked at various schools. Schooling abroad is becoming a favored option for wealthy Chinese, and Wang's work gave him the chance to emigrate. But he and his wife didn't want to leave, and settled on Waldorf as the best of the available choices. He seemed enthusiastic about the school, but thought that it needed to be bolder and to expand more rapidly.

"The biggest problem now is that the school is run by the teachers' committee," Wang told me. "If the parents donate time or money, the teachers don't pay attention. But now, to build a complete high school, we need a huge investment."

Li had found a developer who was willing to donate land in an enormous development south of the city for the new school campus. But even if the land is donated, construction and equipment could easily cost ten million dollars. "You can't get donations that big," Wang told me.

The abbess of a Buddhist temple walked past, and she and Wang began chatting. She said that she was there to meet one of her disciples, who ran the teahouse. After she left, Wang said that he would patronize this teahouse more in the future.

Wang went through the numbers with me. With a thousand students, the school would make a profit, but not so much that it would have to become a for-profit entity. It could then easily pay back interest-free loans provided by the parents.

"If the school is a little more open-minded, the money won't be a problem," Wang said. "It can protect its independent Waldorf decision-making. But give the

decision-making on practical matters to the parents."

It wasn't clear that Wang truly valued the Waldorf approach. "Waldorf isn't a mature philosophy," he said. "It's a bit idealistic. You can't realize it in today's society. It's been around for a century, but it's never attracted a big following. It never will." He went on, "I think children should attend a school more like Eton. The child's character is already formed, and needs better study methods. You



don't want your child to have a bad career, right? You want him to get a good position in society. So we need something like that for our high school."

Waldorf's growth in China has surprised its Western proponents. I met two of them in Beijing. One was Nana Göbel, the head of a German foundation that provides funds and training for Waldorf schools. The other was Christof Wiechert, a former head of Waldorf Education worldwide. They had come to see a new Waldorf school in Beijing, and were travelling on to Chengdu. We met in a recently built hotel on the edge of a dusty road jammed with tractors and trucks. The hotel was decorated with red velour wallpaper and filled with enormous, cartoonish copies of Louis XIV furniture. It felt like a reverse form of chinoiserie, an approximation of something Western that an Eastern designer had only glimpsed from a distance. A waitress brought us hot black coffee. She seemed uncertain how to serve it and opted for a large glass pitcher.

Wiechert is sixty-eight, amiable and round, but loves a good argument. He looked at Göbel and said that the Chinese experience was, in a sense, similar to the first Waldorf School's origins. Now, as then, people were in a hurry; Steiner's first school opened after just a few months of preparation. "When you look at how the first Waldorf School opened, we'd call what Steiner

offered a crash course," Wiechert said.

Göbel looked at him sharply. "But those were all people with Ph.D.s, who'd been in anthroposophy for years," she said. "They knew what it was about, and they were highly educated. The comparison is wrong, Christof!"

"And yet there was a willingness to improvise, to try something. It was right after the revolution, and they wanted something new," Wiechert said.

"It's true," Göbel said. "I've been telling people in Europe that China will be bigger in ten years."

Göbel's foundation operates around the world, and she said that no place is developing alternative education as quickly as China, where Waldorf is one of a few truly global alternative-education movements. The only serious rival is Montessori, which is usually limited to kindergarten and grade schools. She acknowledged that some people in the movement wonder if China will change Waldorf for the worse. Visitors are often struck by the flimsy knowledge some Chinese teachers and administrators have of Steiner's theories. Many Chinese have the impression that Waldorf is permissive, and allows children to play rather than to study. Göbel has tried to counter this misconception by sponsoring the first translation of Steiner's works into Chinese. Still, schools are opening that promise a "Chinese Waldorf" experience that allows for more memorization. A few offer Waldorf classrooms next to Montessori classrooms and traditional Chinese classrooms, where the Confucian classics are learned by heart. In some ways, it's not very different from how Zen and other Eastern philosophies were introduced to the West—as part of a jumble of exotic-sounding ideas that eventually coalesced into the New Age movement.

Göbel had been skeptical of the speed with which Waldorf in China was progressing. But, over time, she had also come to admire it. "They don't even know if their children will get a proper degree that will allow them to enter college, but they're willing to risk that, because they don't want a state education," she said.

Wiechert turned to her excitedly. "Can you imagine that in Europe? It's impossible. They're willing to sacrifice and risk everything—and we Europeans, we can only run after them and try to offer what we can." ♦

A BOTCHED OPERATION

Steven Brigham's abortion clinics keep being sanctioned for offering substandard care. Why is he still in business?

BY EYAL PRESS

In May of 1990, several hundred physicians gathered in a conference hall at an Atlanta hotel, as uniformed guards stood at the door. Colleagues traded tips about installing bulletproof glass in their offices and spoke about fielding hate mail and death threats. It was the annual gathering of the National Abortion Federation, or N.A.F., a professional association with a beleaguered membership. At the time, fewer than a fifth of the counties in the United States had abortion providers. Since the mid-eighties, clinics across the country had been blockaded, vandalized, and fire-bombed. Most of the physicians at the conference were well into middle age. The right to safe, legal abortion, which had been established by *Roe v. Wade*, in 1973, would be rendered meaningless if a new generation of providers didn't emerge soon.

There was at least one younger face at the conference: Steven Chase Brigham. A handsome, genial man in his mid-thirties, with a square jaw and sandy brown hair, Brigham was a recent graduate of Columbia University's medical school. Articulate, well dressed, and polite, he seemed unusually relaxed and upbeat for an abortion provider.

"You sort of notice the newbies, and he seemed like a very personable young man," Dr. Suzanne Poppema, a former director of N.A.F., recalls. "He was just getting started in the abortion-care business, and was really eager to learn and ask questions." When talking with N.A.F. members, Brigham repeatedly emphasized the importance of treating patients with respect. Dr. Curtis Boyd, one of N.A.F.'s founders, says, "He knew all the right things to say. He's very charming."

By the mid-aughts, Brigham was the owner of a large chain of abortion clinics, American Women's Services. There were more than a dozen branches, in four states: Virginia, Maryland, Penn-

sylvania, and New Jersey, where he was based. The chain had expanded, in part, because he advertised aggressively, promising "caring and supportive" counsellors and "very low fees." In addition, the number of abortion providers had continued to decline, creating a vacuum that Brigham was able to fill. "Dedicated to Reproductive Freedom and Quality Women's Healthcare," the Web site of American Women's Services proclaimed, above a photograph of a smiling female physician in a white coat.

Brigham, who was born in 1956, grew up in a middle-class family in Toledo, Ohio. A gifted athlete who excelled at wrestling and tennis, he also stood out academically. In 1974, he enrolled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he double-majored in physics and applied biology. He then entered an M.D.-Ph.D. program at Columbia. Although he embarked on a Ph.D. in molecular biology, he never completed a dissertation. Upon receiving his M.D., he did a yearlong internship in internal medicine at the Westchester Medical Center, then bounced around jobs: a few spells in emergency rooms, a stint at a smoking-cessation clinic.

One day, while reading the classifieds in the *Times*, Brigham noticed that a gynecology center in Flushing was soliciting applications for a staff-physician position. Although he was not trained as a gynecologist, he applied, and he was hired. He soon found himself observing, and then performing, various medical procedures there, including first- and second-trimester abortions.

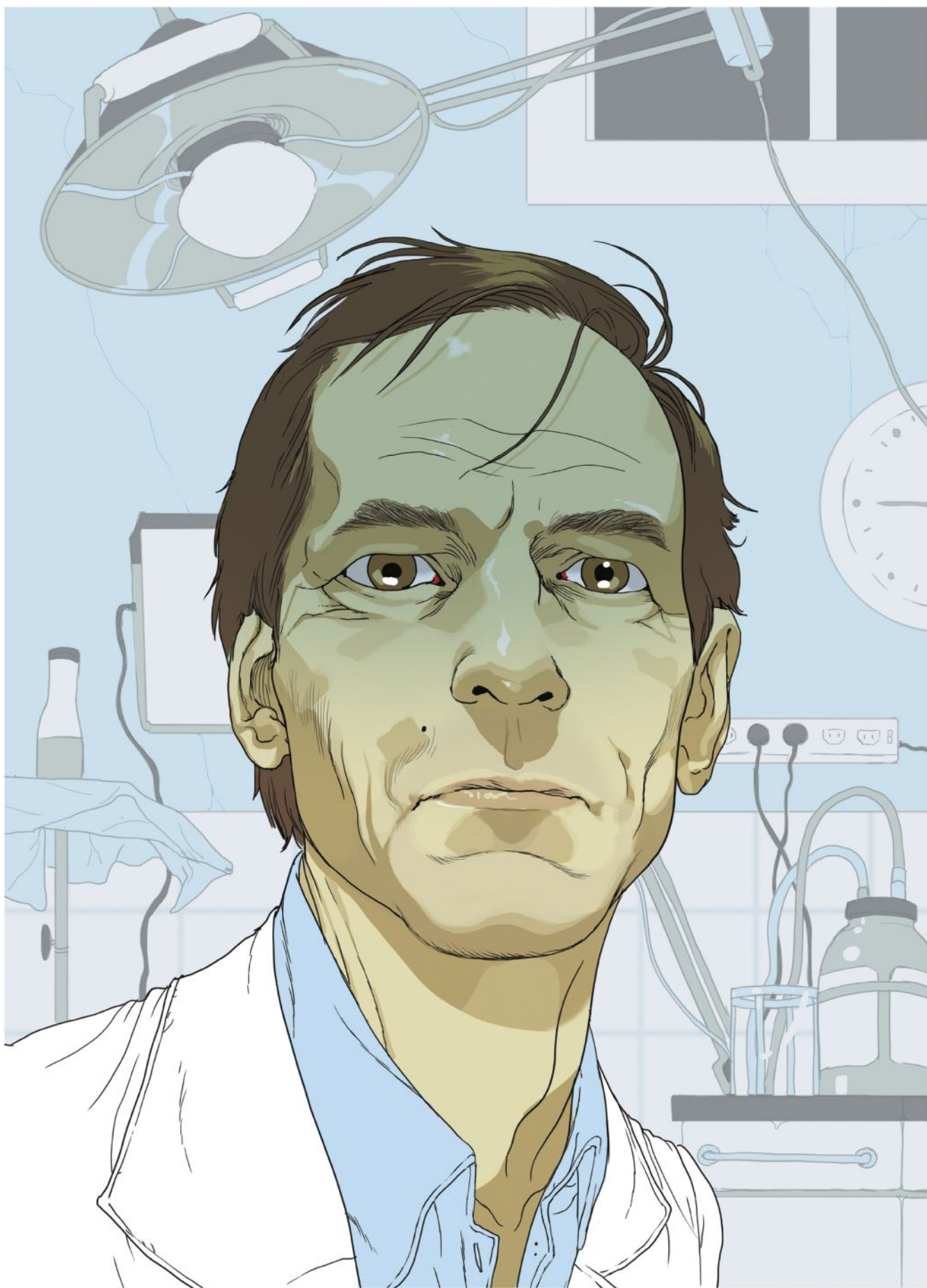
Brigham could see that there was a high demand for abortion, even in places where it was viewed with skepticism or hostility. In 1990, he travelled to a small, conservative town in southeastern Pennsylvania called Wyomissing and signed a lease to rent space on the

ground floor of an office building. For someone who had spent the previous decade in New York City, Wyomissing—a few miles west of Reading—was a curious destination. It was also a daring place to open an abortion clinic. Brigham told the building's owners that he intended to start a family-medicine practice, with abortion integrated into a broader repertoire of care.

Brigham began placing ads for abortion services in the Yellow Pages. The ads drew a steady stream of pregnant women to his office—and a steady stream of protesters, armed with placards and bullhorns. The commotion escalated, eventually prompting the owners of the building to petition a judge for a temporary injunction against the protesters; after the request was denied, they successfully obtained an injunction against Brigham, who, they claimed, had misrepresented the nature of his medical practice. The controversy attracted extended scrutiny in the local press. One morning, Brigham later recalled, he glanced at the front page of the *Reading Eagle* and spotted a story, below the fold, about a minor international development: the implosion of the Soviet Union. Above it was yet another story about the turmoil outside his clinic.

Many doctors in Brigham's position would have decided that there were easier ways to make a living. But he seemed immune to such stress. "Nothing bothers him," a former colleague told me. "I don't think he gets rattled."

Even before *Roe v. Wade*, the demand for abortions overwhelmed the capacity of those willing to supply them. In 1972, a year before the Supreme Court's ruling, a hundred professors of obstetrics signed a statement suggesting that practitioners who did not have moral objections to performing abortions should help meet the "staggering" demand for the procedure, once it was



Another doctor warned Brigham, "You can't do second-trimester abortions. You just started out, and you don't have the skill level."

legalized. "If only half of the 20,000 obstetricians in this country do abortions, they can do a million a year at a rate of two per physician per week," the statement noted. "Already we do more than a million other pelvic operations every year." This generation of obstetricians had seen women wheeled into emergency rooms, one after another, because they had paid someone without proper training to terminate their pregnancies.

After *Roe v. Wade*, many doctors believed that they could quietly incorporate abortion into their practices without inspiring hostility from pro-life activists. Among them was my father, Shalom Press, an Israeli immigrant who, only weeks after the Supreme Court ruling, arrived in Buffalo to complete an ob-gyn residency. By the mid-nineteen-eighties, he had opened a private practice there that offered many services, from delivering babies to performing abortions. Despite this approach, his practice was soon besieged by protesters. By 1988, my senior year in high school, the parking lot at his office teemed with protesters brandishing signs calling him a "baby-killer." They shouted and thrust pamphlets at his patients. Some of the protesters picketed our home. Eventually, they started blockading the doors of his office, in order to prevent women from entering.

The intimidation, the harassment, and the threats all help explain why Brigham was so enthusiastically welcomed when he started attending N.A.F. meetings. But not everyone in the pro-choice community was impressed by him. In 1991, according to a report in the *Eagle*, Nancy Osgood, the executive director of Planned Parenthood in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, sent a representative to visit Brigham's clinic in Wyomissing to determine if the facility should be placed on the group's referral list. While inspecting the facility, the representative noticed that important equipment was missing, including a sonogram machine. The clinic had no written arrangement with a hospital in case something went wrong. Although Brigham advertised "low fees," women were charged extra for things that were usually included in the price, like Pap smears and post-abortion checkups. Osgood was disturbed by these findings, and did not

put Brigham's clinic on the referral list.

Osgood was not the first person to develop doubts about Brigham. According to the *Eagle*, Brigham had approached Amy Cousins, a gynecologist who performed abortions in Pennsylvania and New York, about working with her. Cousins told the paper that she had doubts about his competence. "I remember him very vividly," Cousins said recently. "He told me he was a gynecologist, and it turns out he wasn't."

The vast majority of abortions in America are performed in the first trimester, when complications are very rare and any surgery is straightforward. But the rate of complications rises as women near the end of the second trimester, and terminations done after this point—which, typically, are legal only if the woman's life or health is in danger—pose a higher risk. In the early nineties, few doctors performed "advanced-gestation abortions" regularly. One who did was George Tiller, a physician based in Wichita. He was among the targets of the 1991 Summer of Mercy, a forty-six-day siege led by Operation Rescue, the militant anti-abortion group. Hundreds of protesters were arrested outside the clinic where he worked. Two years later, while Tiller was pulling out of the clinic's driveway, his car was sprayed with bullets, and he was wounded in both arms.

To people who viewed advanced-gestation abortions as tragic but some-



times unavoidable, doctors willing to be trained in such difficult procedures seemed brave. LeRoy Carhart, an abortion provider who worked with Tiller, recalls meeting Brigham at an N.A.F. meeting, in the early nineties: "He came and asked me if I would train him to do second- and third-trimester abortions." After learning that Brigham had limited experience doing first-trimester abortions, Carhart cautioned him against the idea. Privately, he was taken aback:

"He seemed like a nice person, but I was amazed that somebody would, you know, want to learn how to fly a jumbo jet before he learned how to fly an airplane."

In 1992, Brigham left Wyomissing. "I like Pennsylvania and I like the people, but I have bad feelings about the right-to-lifers," he told the *Reading Times*. "Their goal was to drive me from town." He moved to Voorhees, a town in southern New Jersey, and opened a practice there. He also performed abortions elsewhere, including clinics in Spring Valley, New York, and Flushing.

In 1994, the New York Department of Health moved to discipline Brigham for botching two advanced-gestation abortions. One of the women had bled for three hours before being taken to the emergency room. The other had suffered injuries when Brigham continued the procedure even after he accidentally perforated her uterus. A committee reviewing the cases concluded that Brigham had "used inexcusably bad judgment and that his negligence was life threatening." Brigham, testifying before the board, insisted that he had received "extensive training" in such procedures, mentioning a course that he'd taken at a Planned Parenthood clinic in New York City. The board was not persuaded, noting that he had never completed an ob-gyn residency and had never received a certificate for the course, which, in any case, focussed on first-trimester abortions. It charged him with gross negligence and revoked his license.

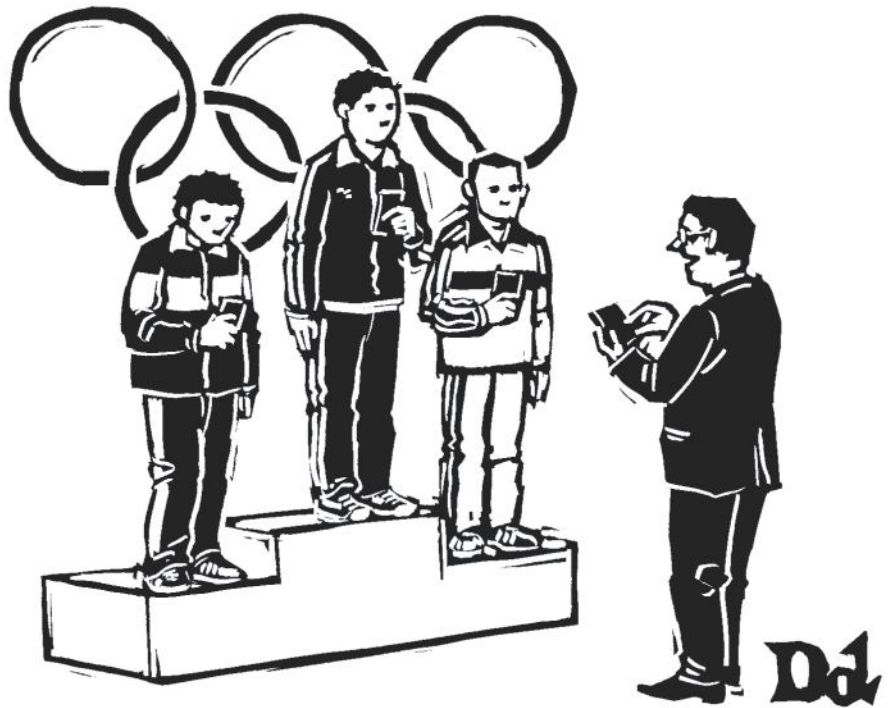
Not long after the ruling in New York, the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners prepared to render judgment on whether it should revoke Brigham's license, too. The case came before Joseph Fidler, an administrative-law judge. Brigham claimed that complications were inevitable with advanced-gestation abortions, and that his overall record was sound. Michael Policar, a respected gynecologist and a former national spokesperson for Planned Parenthood, testified on Brigham's behalf. The injuries that the New York board had attributed to negligence, Policar said, could have happened to patients "in the best of hands." (Policar told me that he had reviewed the medical records for only two patients, and had never vouched for Brigham's

general competence.) Several other physicians offered similar testimony. Judge Fidler described Brigham as “a sincere and credible witness” who drew satisfaction from his work, “primarily because he was helping women.” In 1996, he ruled in Brigham’s favor, faulting him only for having placed potentially misleading ads for “painless” abortions. Brigham took the judgment as a victory, telling the Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania, *Express-Times* that “the New York decision is clearly wrong.”

By this point, the protests outside abortion clinics had given way to violence. In March, 1993, a man outside a clinic in Pensacola, Florida, fired three bullets into the back of Dr. David Gunn, killing him. Dr. John Britton, who replaced Gunn at the clinic, was murdered in 1994. Four years later, a sniper hiding in the woods shot and killed Dr. Barnett Slepian while he was standing in the kitchen of his home. Slepian, an ob-gyn, worked at a Buffalo clinic that had been targeted for years by some of the same protesters who demonstrated outside my father’s office. After Slepian’s death, the clinic remained open, but my father became the last ob-gyn in Buffalo who incorporated abortion into his private practice.

Not coincidentally, the shootings occurred in the wake of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, a 1992 decision in which the Supreme Court sustained the “essential holding” of *Roe v. Wade*. Along with the bombings, the acts of arson, and the death threats routinely visited on abortion clinics, the murders profoundly damaged the image of the pro-life movement, whose leaders had once engaged in civil disobedience, invoking the example of Martin Luther King, Jr. Nevertheless, the violence effectively intimidated physicians, and the *Casey* ruling began to seem like a hollow victory for defenders of abortion rights. In an editorial published after Britton was shot, the *Times* observed, “Constitutional right or no, women cannot get abortions if there is nobody to perform them.”

One of the few physicians who didn’t seem unnerved by the violence was Brigham. In 1994, he flew to Pensacola and began performing abortions at the clinic where Gunn and Britton had been employed. He continued to promote



“And now to present you with the uploading of your bitmedals.”

American Women’s Services, placing ads in the Yellow Pages affirming that abortion was “A Woman’s Right.”

Some ads for American Women’s Services promoted low prices and free transportation for women who could not afford it; others promised “No 24 Hour Waiting Period” and “No Parental Consent Required.” Such ads appeared in telephone directories in Pennsylvania, even though state law mandated parental consent for minors and a twenty-four-hour waiting period. Just across the state border, in New Jersey, where such laws did not apply, Brigham operated clinics.

In 1996, N.A.F. sent copies of these ads to the attorneys general of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, requesting that they investigate Brigham’s operation and take “appropriate action.” At least within N.A.F., Brigham’s charm had worn off. Some of the organization’s leaders had sat down with Brigham and explained what he would need to do to obtain N.A.F. certification for his clinics. Suzanne Poppema recalls, “We told him, ‘You can’t do second-trimester abortions. You just started out, and you don’t have the skill level.’” Curtis Boyd says, “He did not take our advice—he just didn’t. That’s

when we realized he could not be salvaged—that he wouldn’t help himself.” N.A.F. eventually barred Brigham from its meetings.

Although American Women’s Services continued to market itself, over the next decade Brigham’s name stopped appearing in newspaper headlines. He concentrated on opening clinics in Baltimore, Virginia Beach, and Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

Phillipsburg is a half-hour drive from Allentown, Pennsylvania. In 1994, a woman named Jen Boulanger started working as a counsellor at the Allentown Women’s Center, an abortion clinic near the airport. Within three years, she had become its director. Boulanger is now the director of communications at the Women’s Centers, a group of clinics that has a branch in Cherry Hill, and she recently met with me at her office there. When I arrived, notebooks, papers, and manila folders were spread over the floor: all of it was documentation about problems at Brigham’s clinics.

Boulanger, a redhead in her early forties, recalls her first years in Allentown as often “hellish,” mainly because



*"Come on, men! This is for our kids to live in a free world!
And for our grandkids to grow up in a world where
they can spend hours a day looking at cats on some
sort of fantastic information machine!"*

of unrelenting protests staged by anti-abortion groups. But there was another, unexpected problem. "The patients I counselled would ask me questions about what they were going to experience," she explained. "And they would say, 'Because at the *last* clinic I went to...'" Their complaints were varied: the other clinic had been dirty; the doctor was rude; they were quoted one fee over the phone but charged another at the office; they received no follow-up care.

Many of these women had gone to Brigham's clinic in Phillipsburg. Sometime later, Boulanger began hearing similar complaints about a clinic that had opened up in Allentown, on Hamilton Street. Boulanger discovered that the facility, called Allentown Medical Services, was part of the American Women's Services chain. Disgruntled patients started calling her to complain about their experiences there, not realizing that by mistake they had reached

the Allentown Women's Center. Brigham's clinic had adopted a Web address (allentownwomenscenter.com) that differed by just one letter from hers (allentownwomenscenter.com). Boulanger came to believe that this was a ploy to confuse patients. After she sent Brigham a cease-and-desist letter, he changed the U.R.L.

Boulanger worried that her reputation would be tarnished, and she feared for the safety of women in the area. She began taking careful notes about what she and her colleagues were hearing. During my visit, she scooped up some of the files on the floor and began reading excerpts aloud. There were stories of abortions being done without a registered nurse on hand, of blood on the floor, and of drugs being administered by untrained personnel. There was a report of plastic instruments being washed with Dial soap and reused. In 2001, a patient said that, after calling the clinic with emergency complaints two weeks

after an abortion, she had been told to "have a shot of rum." In 2002, a former employee of Brigham's sent Boulanger an e-mail in which she described being "witness to a suction machine accident, in which a second trimester procedure was sprayed all over me and got in my eyes and mouth."

Boulanger looked pale. "It made me cry—that's how bad it was," she said. She emphasized that she hadn't witnessed any wrongdoing herself. In the files that she shared with me, the names of the patients who had relayed their experiences to her had been redacted, making the stories difficult to verify. But the names of some physicians had not been redacted. One of them was Robert Atlas, who is now the chairman of the ob-gyn department at Mercy Medical Center, in Baltimore. He used to work at Lehigh Valley Hospital, where he had seen women in the emergency room who had come from Allentown Medical Services. Although risks are unavoidable with abortion, Atlas told me, "the types of complications that we saw coming from them were so much worse—major perforations to the uterine arteries, defects in the uterus that we couldn't repair. I had to do three or four hysterectomies." He added, "I was scared for the patients."

Brigham was not himself treating the patients Atlas was seeing at the hospital. In 1992, just before he moved to New Jersey, he had signed an agreement to stop practicing medicine in Pennsylvania. The move came after officials launched an investigation of his business practices, prompted, in part, by the discovery that he had been shuttling women to an apartment building in Sinking Spring, a town near Wyomissing; this was apparently an attempt to circumvent the injunction that barred Brigham from seeing patients in Wyomissing. Brigham placed his license in Pennsylvania on "permanent inactive status," and the investigation was closed. The agreement, however, did not make him ineligible to *own* an abortion clinic in the state. Starting in the late nineties, in plain view of Pennsylvania officials, Brigham opened clinics in Allentown, Erie, State College, and Pittsburgh.

These clinics had no trouble finding patients to serve, and they attracted

idealistic employees. In the spring of 2006, Libbi Short, a college freshman, responded to an ad in Pittsburgh's alternative weekly for a receptionist position at an American Women's Services clinic downtown. The job paid only six-fifty an hour, but Short, an ardent feminist, was eager to put her principles into practice. She was interviewed by the clinic's manager, and was deeply impressed by what she heard: "This is a pro-choice clinic"; "We're providing this incredible service to women." When she got the job, she was elated. On her first day, she was asked to put on scrubs and observe in the procedure room. Later, Short called her mother to tell her how proud she was. "I'm the best feminist ever," she told herself.

Though Short was a nineteen-year-old with no medical training, her responsibilities were not limited to answering the phones. "I was pricking people's fingers and taking their blood," she told me recently. "I was assisting all of the procedures. I was administering drugs." She was shocked by conditions at the clinic: unsanitary rooms, doctors who coldly rushed through procedures, women in agony during abortions. "Screaming and writhing," she said. "It sounded like people being tortured." (Another former worker at the clinic recalled similar problems.)

One day, roughly a year after Short started working there, she left without bothering to collect her paycheck. She had concluded that the Pittsburgh clinic was exploiting women. "I didn't even know if I was still pro-choice," she recalled. She said to herself, "If women are so easily preyed upon in this vulnerable state, I just can't see a good thing here." Sometime later, a friend who'd become pregnant asked her to accompany her to another Pittsburgh abortion clinic. Short reluctantly agreed. But the clinic was clean, the staff gracious. She was deeply moved: this was how things were supposed to be. "My friend didn't cry after her abortion," Short said. "But I did."

A former women's-studies major with pale eyes and a blunt, sardonic manner, Short still identifies herself as a feminist. She now works as a coordinator at the clinic that her friend visited. She has a tattoo of Queen Anne's lace on her right arm, in honor of women

who used the plant's seeds as an abortifacient. She has not spoken publicly before about her experience at American Women's Services.

The caricature of clinics as "abortion mills" run by venal profiteers has long been a staple of the anti-abortion movement. As a result, pro-choice activists understood the potential dangers of drawing attention to any facility that might reinforce this stereotype. One clinic director told me, "We know the anti-choice community will manipulate any story, however minor, to paint the entire abortion-care community with the same brush." Politicians could cite such stories as justification for imposing burdensome regulations. Yet clinic owners also knew that some providers saw what they did as a business, not as a social mission. As reputable doctors, hospitals, and medical schools increasingly distanced themselves from abortions, it became more likely that substandard providers would fill the void.

Although Jen Boulanger knew the risks of going public, she decided to share her concerns with state officials. Near the end of our interview, she looked in a manila folder and fished out an official Pennsylvania Department of State complaint form, dated April, 2003. It described "potentially illegal and disturbing things happening at Allentown Medical Services," including abortions performed after twenty-four weeks, narcotics left unlocked, and untrained personnel; in some cases, patients had been transported to Allentown after their procedures were started in another state. Boulanger had heard about these problems—some of which potentially violated Pennsylvania's Abortion Control Act—from a former employee at the clinic, who, the complaint stated, "knows other witnesses and would be willing to report similar complaints."

Boulanger then showed me a one-page letter from the Pennsylvania Department of State, which was sent to her a month and a half after she filed her complaint. The letter noted that an on-site investigation had been conducted at Allentown Medical Services, and had revealed that patients in the recovery room weren't being properly monitored by nurses; according to a

follow-up inspection, the problem had been fixed. Boulanger's other complaints went unanswered.

Seven years later, in February, 2010, the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners and the New Jersey Attorney General's office received packets of letters about an enterprise called Grace Medical Care, whose Web site advertised second- and third-trimester abortions but failed to provide potential patients with basic information, such as the location of the facility. The letters came from staff members at the Cherry Hill clinic where Jen Boulanger works. Elizabeth Barnes, the clinic's director, informed the board that she had learned that Grace Medical Care, at a facility in New Jersey, was initiating cervical dilation in patients with advanced-gestation fetuses; later, the patients were driven to another state—most likely Maryland—for surgery. Why the elaborate protocol? In New Jersey, after the fourteenth week of pregnancy, an abortion had to be performed in a licensed ambulatory facility or in a hospital, to insure safety. Maryland had no such rule. New Jersey officials did not respond to Barnes.

Several months later, on August 13th, a procession of cars drove south from Voorhees, New Jersey, through Delaware, and across the Maryland border. Among the passengers was an eighteen-year-old African-American girl who was twenty-one weeks pregnant. The convoy stopped outside an unmarked storefront in Elkton, Maryland. Inside, Nicola Riley, a physician the girl had never met before, performed an abortion while another doctor—Steven Brigham, the founder of Grace Medical Care—observed. Riley seemed to be training on the job, the patient later told a Maryland investigator. During surgery, the girl's uterus was perforated and her bowel was damaged, and she was taken by car to a local hospital. She eventually had to be airlifted to Johns Hopkins Hospital. (The girl, who spent a week in the hospital, declined to be interviewed.)

A few days afterward, a detective in Elkton got in touch with the Maryland Board of Physicians to find out if Brigham was licensed to practice medicine in the state. He was not. The police obtained a search warrant and

raided the building in Elkton. Inside a dingy storeroom, officers pried open a freezer filled with red biohazard bags that contained thirty-five advanced-gestation fetuses—medical remains that had not yet been disposed of. Some of the fetuses were past twenty-four weeks' gestation, the point of viability. This ghoulish discovery triggered a grand-jury investigation, and in December, 2011, Brigham was arrested and charged with ten counts of murder. A week or so later, he was released, after posting bail of half a million dollars.

The investigation of the Elkton incident had thrust Steven Brigham back into the courts and into the headlines. Why had he taken such a risk? Last August, I called his cell-phone number. Brigham answered, and his voice was friendly but circumspect. When I explained that I was a reporter, his guard went up further.

"Oh," he said. "I haven't had very good experiences with reporters."

I sensed that we weren't going to be chatting much longer. Before hanging up, Brigham asked what had drawn

me to the subject of abortion. I mentioned that I was the son of an abortion provider.

"Who?"

I gave my father's name.

"I know who your father is!" he exclaimed. "How's your dad doing?" he asked, warmly. (They'd never met.)

We spoke for fifteen minutes. Brigham said that he'd like to talk more but needed to clear it with his lawyer first.

A few weeks later, we met in New Jersey, at the office of Brigham's attorney Joseph Gorrell. By that time, the murder charges had been withdrawn, because Maryland prosecutors had admitted that they could not prove that the fetuses found in Elkton had been aborted there. (Brigham had filed a motion to dismiss, arguing that Maryland's fetal-homicide law—created to punish men who harm pregnant women—does not apply to a physician who provides a lawful abortion.) But Brigham's legal troubles were hardly over. He was seeing his lawyer to prepare for hearings before an administrative-law judge in New Jersey, where he was once again

under investigation; the state had suspended his license, and he was fighting to get it reinstated.

Since the outcome of the case was pending, Brigham refrained from commenting on it. But he did discuss why he'd started Grace Medical Care. "What prompted me to start Grace was when Dr. Tiller was killed," he explained. On May 31, 2009, in Wichita, George Tiller was shot a second time and killed; he had been standing in the foyer of his church, on a Sunday morning. Brigham said he told himself that, in the face of such hatred, he had no choice but to step forward and help meet the needs of desperate women.

Brigham wore a tan shirt, a dark blazer, and a burgundy necktie. Now fifty-seven, he looked rested and well groomed; there was no gray in his neatly trimmed hair, and scarcely a wrinkle on his still handsome face. Despite his legal predicament, he seemed in good spirits. He poured himself coffee and, after taking off his blazer, he sat at the end of a table covered with boxes of legal documents and began speaking animatedly about his



Kevin

"Why do you have to come? Because I went to your Super Bowl, that's why."

decision to become an abortion provider.

Brigham portrayed himself as an altruistic idealist and said that he had been influenced primarily by his mother, a commodities broker who had been “very active in the women’s-rights movement.” He volunteered that she was only sixteen when she gave birth to him. It must have been an unplanned pregnancy, I ventured. “I imagine it was,” he said. (Brigham’s mother, now seventy-four, did not respond to a request for an interview.)

Brigham said that American Women’s Services had been inspired by a physician named Robert Spencer, who in 1919 had begun performing abortions—illegal at the time—in Ashland, a coal-mining town in Pennsylvania. Brigham said of Spencer, “He started, just out of the kindness of his heart, doing procedures, because he felt sorry for the young ladies.” Spencer, he said, came to be revered in his home town. (I later confirmed that this was true.) Before setting up the clinic in Wyomissing, Brigham explained, he had worked for a while at a clinic in Harrisburg, which is not far from Ashland. “I saw patients who had been patients of Dr. Spencer,” he said.

Brigham was cordial and ingratiating, and he never raised his voice. He seemed so convinced of the purity of his intentions and the bad faith of his detractors—they were either protesters or competitors, he said—that, while he spoke, it became difficult to imagine otherwise. He recalled that, in 1998, after Barnett Slepian was murdered, he arranged for a physician affiliated with American Women’s Services to work for several days at the Buffalo clinic where Slepian had been employed, as a gesture of support. I later called the clinic’s director at the time, and learned that this, too, was true.

Brigham told me that he had first learned to perform abortions at Columbia, during a rotation presided over by a physician named Jack Maidman. The tutorials took place early in the morning, and none of his peers had signed up. “It was just me and Dr. Maidman,” he said. I subsequently called Maidman, who said that he didn’t remember Brigham. Maidman emphatically dismissed the scenario, saying, “There was nothing that I would have done that

could have been construed as a formal training program in abortion for a medical student.”

The raid on the Elkton facility prompted Maryland officials to implement regulations for providers of surgical abortions. Inspectors were dispatched to the state’s sixteen surgical facilities, and found serious deficiencies at four of them—all of which were run by a group called Associates in OB/GYN Care. At one of the clinics, a woman had been left in a room with an unlicensed assistant who had not been trained to use the facility’s cardiac machine, which, in any case, was broken; after the patient had a cardiopulmonary arrest, she was sent to a hospital, where she died.

Maryland officials suspended the medical license of Mansour G. Panah, the medical director of Associates in OB/GYN Care. His license, it turned out, had been suspended twice before, for unwanted sexual contact with patients. Employees of Associates in OB/GYN Care initially denied having any link to Brigham, but, as they later acknowledged, he owned the entity that provided its clinics with physician services. The four clinics were listed on the Web site of American Women’s Services.

In July of last year, the *Times* published an article, with the headline “MARYLAND’S PATH TO AN ACCORD IN ABORTION FIGHT,” about regulatory reforms that had been instituted after the scandal at the Elkton clinic. The article reported that the licenses of the four Associates in OB/GYN Care clinics had been suspended in May. One morning, a few weeks after the *Times* story appeared, I visited one of the clinics, which was on the second floor of an office building in a run-down section of Cheverly, a Maryland suburb outside Washington, D.C. A sign on the door said, “American Women’s Services, Suite 6.” Several young women were waiting in a vestibule outside the office. It opened at 11 A.M., and the women went in. By noon, a dozen other women had squeezed into the waiting room, a

cramped chamber with linoleum floors that smelled of cheap disinfectant. A television mounted on the wall played the film “Wedding Crashers” at a blaring volume. The patients sat quietly, until the woman sitting next to me rose to complain that she wasn’t feeling well. “I’m dehydrated,” she told the receptionist. Moments later, the woman came back to her chair. “They got water, but no cups,” she said, sighing.

All but one of the patients were women of color; the surrounding area has a significant population of African immigrants.

How could a facility whose license had been suspended still be seeing patients? The suspension, I later learned, did not apply to medical abortions, which involve the administering of such drugs as mifepristone (formerly known as RU-486). The person who told me this works at an abortion clinic in Germantown, a wealthier Maryland suburb. Ten or so women who had gone to the Cheverly office—and whose medical abortions had failed—had been referred to the Germantown facility. They were now farther along in their pregnancies, and needed second-trimester surgical abortions. Staff members at the Germantown clinic were surprised by how frequently this was happening, because mifepristone—the most common and most effective method for medical abortions—is highly reliable. They then discovered that the Cheverly clinic was dispensing methotrexate, which was commonly used to induce abortions before mifepristone was approved by the F.D.A. A cancer drug that can have life-threatening consequences, methotrexate can take several weeks to terminate a pregnancy, whereas mifepristone works within two days. The Cheverly facility was charging patients for follow-up appointments. Brigham argues that patients should not be charged in advance for services that they might want to get elsewhere, but at most clinics follow-up care is considered essential, and is included in the initial fee to insure that patients show up for it.

Brigham told me that his clinics use methotrexate because mifepristone has been implicated in “numerous” patient



deaths. (Between 2000 and 2011, fourteen women died after taking mifepristone, but an F.D.A. investigation failed to find a causal link to the drug.) A counsellor at the clinic in Germantown suggested to me that Brigham had less lofty motives. Mifepristone pills “cost about ninety-four dollars apiece,” she said. A dose of methotrexate costs between five and twenty-five dollars.

In Maryland, a medical abortion generally costs about three hundred and seventy-five dollars. LeRoy Carhart, the doctor who had worked closely with George Tiller, told me that for a clinic that uses methotrexate “the profit margin is huge.” Carhart, now seventy-two, is an avuncular man with a shock of gray hair and soft pouches beneath his eyes. Based in Omaha, he flies to Maryland every week to perform surgery at the Germantown clinic. Since Tiller’s murder, there are only four doctors in the country who openly provide third-trimester abortions. Carhart told me that, the next day, he was seeing patients in Indiana. When *wasn’t* he working? “Never,” he said. “When George died, that was the last time I had time off.”

Since Carhart started performing abortions, in 1988, the number of abortion providers in the U.S. has fallen by a third—a decline that he attributes to protesters. “They have made it so the good physicians don’t really want to get involved,” he explained. “Now you have two types of doctors doing abortions—the doctors who are totally committed to women’s health and are going to do them even if they never get another dime, and the people that just want to take advantage of the situation and milk everything they can out of it.”

Allegations that Brigham took advantage of women—especially poor women—first surfaced back in Wyoming, when Planned Parenthood discovered that the “low fees” he advertised weren’t so low. In 1991, Nancy Osgood, of Planned Parenthood, told the Reading *Eagle* that Brigham’s prices for second-trimester abortions were considerably higher than those of his competitors. In addition, his clinic accepted jewelry and other personal property as collateral from indigent patients, who were then sent to a nearby loan office. Osgood called these practices “noxious.”

During our conversation, Brigham did not deny that such arrangements were made, but he portrayed them as unavoidable, even magnanimous. “The right-to-lifers called me the pawn-shop abortion doctor, but the patients didn’t have any money, because they’re poor, and Medicaid wouldn’t pay for it,” he told me. He said that he was acting in the spirit of Robert Spencer, who accepted payment on a sliding scale. “My kindness was turned against me,” Brigham said.

A different picture emerges in Jen Boulanger’s documents. There is an account of a woman who called to schedule a follow-up appointment at Brigham’s clinic in Phillipsburg, because she believed that she was still pregnant, but who was turned away because she couldn’t afford the fifty-five-dollar fee. “She said she feels sick now—very nauseous,” a write-up of her complaint stated. Libbi Short told me that, at Brigham’s Pittsburgh clinic, everything was done on the cheap. “It was all about money,” she said.

In a 2010 book, “Dispatches from the Abortion Wars,” Carole Joffe, a sociologist, writes about the emergence of “rogue clinics” that lure poor women with the promise of low prices and then provide substandard care. “Rogue clinics typically undercut prices,” Joffe told me. “They play fast and loose with laws. So that means their costs are less than those of other clinics that conform to other requirements. They typically prey on immigrant communities, and they prey on poorer women.”

In 2011, an extreme version of this phenomenon made national news: a filth-strewn, blood-spattered clinic in inner-city Philadelphia, run for decades by a doctor named Kermit B. Gosnell. As detailed in a grand-jury report, Gosnell’s crimes—severing the spines of viable fetuses with scissors, maiming women doped up on drugs—continued even though Pennsylvania officials had received many complaints about his clinic, which served a predominantly poor clientele.

Gosnell was convicted of murder in May. Since then, legislators in Ohio, North Carolina, and Texas have passed new restrictions, some requiring that abortions be done in a surgical ambulatory facility, others stipulating that a

doctor performing surgery at a clinic must secure local hospital admission privileges, even if he or she is flying in from another part of the country. Critics of such legislation argue that unethical providers can be shut down simply by enforcing existing laws, and that the new restrictions are designed to drive safe clinics out of business, under the guise of protecting women, and will ultimately expose them to more risk. This is the view of Joffe, who argues in her book that rogue clinics have proliferated as accessible options have vanished and the demographics of abortion have changed. Between 2000 and 2008, the over-all abortion rate fell by eight per cent. But among poor women it rose by eighteen per cent. African-American women are nearly four times as likely as white women to get an abortion. This shift is often attributed to rising inequality, with lower-income women having less access to the most effective forms of contraception, less sex education, and less ability to bear the cost of an unanticipated child.

Jen Boulanger told me that although many of the patients who complained to her about Brigham’s Allentown clinic were poor, some were middle-class professionals. Shame, not poverty, led many women to expect to be treated shabbily at an abortion clinic. Unscrupulous providers, she argued, exploited this stigma.

During a recent visit to Allentown, I met with a woman named Sarah Tomblor-Gimpel. Two years ago, after learning that she was pregnant, she typed the words “Pennsylvania” and “abortion services” into Google. A link to American Women’s Services appeared, and she clicked on it. Tomblor-Gimpel had had an abortion once before, at the Allentown Women’s Center, the clinic Jen Boulanger used to run. She felt that the care had been good, but she didn’t want to go back. “I was embarrassed,” she explained. “Here I am, I’ve gone through it once, got the birth control. I’m twenty-eight years old, and I can’t figure it out yet?”

Tomblor-Gimpel is passionately pro-choice, and she didn’t seem like the kind of person who would be vulnerable to such feelings. But the shame was there all the same, compounded by the memory of growing up on food stamps in a poor, single-parent home. Determined to avoid getting trapped in the



SHOWCASE BY HASSAN HAJJAJ "Kesh Angels," at the Taymour Grabne gallery, is an exhibition of photographs and other art works by a Moroccan-born, London-based artist that celebrates the biker culture of young women in Marrakesh.

same cycle—and to keep her abortion a secret—she sought out a clinic that was quick, cheap, and anonymous. “I was definitely looking for the fast-food experience,” she told me.

On October 26, 2011, Tombler-Gimpel showed up for an appointment at Allentown Medical Services, entering a waiting room with ratty carpeting and a jumble of chairs arranged against the walls. The wait “was hours, hours,” she recalled. Shortly after she was administered sedatives, a team of E.M.S. first responders rushed in, strapped her onto a gurney, and took her in an ambulance to Lehigh Valley Hospital. One of the clinic’s doctors had called the hospital and expressed worry that he had punctured a patient’s uterus after inserting a dilator “way too far” during an abortion.

At the hospital, a bedside ultrasound revealed a “possible defect” in Tombler-Gimpel’s uterus, but no sign of fetal demise. The next day, after she was discharged, Tombler-Gimpel received a call from Allentown Medical Services and was told to come back in two weeks—the amount of time that she needed to heal. Ten days later, she woke up feeling feverish, and soon developed chills. When her boyfriend visited her apartment, he found her curled up in a ball on the couch, moaning. As she later realized, she was in the throes of septic shock, a potentially life-threatening condition that could have been avoided if she had been put on antibiotics, or if someone at the clinic had followed up and arranged for her to undergo diagnostic tests.

Tombler-Gimpel called the clinic, hoping to speak with a doctor. “I don’t feel good, you need to finish!” she pleaded. She was told, “We can’t do anything for you—you need to go to the emergency room.” She went back to Lehigh Valley Hospital, where, after being given a diagnosis of a septic abortion, she underwent a dilation and evacuation. Afterward, the physician who treated Tombler-Gimpel told her that, had she waited another day, she might not have survived.

“I was literally dying,” Tombler-Gimpel said. At the hospital, she finally received a visit from the doctor at Allentown Medical Services who had sent her to the E.R. According to Tombler-

AMBUSH AT FIVE O’CLOCK

We were by the hedge that separates our properties
when I asked our neighbors about their souls.
I said it with a smile, the way one asks such a thing.
They were somewhat like us, I thought, more
than middle-aged, less dull than most.
Yet they seemed to have no interest
in disputation, our favorite game,
or any of the great national pastimes
like gossip and stories of misfortunes
about people they disliked.

In spite of these differences, kindred
was a word we often felt and used.
The man was shy, though came to life
when he spotted an uncommon bird,
and the woman lively, sometimes even funny
about barometer readings and sudden dips
in pressure, the general state of things.
We liked their affection for each other
and for dogs. We went to their house;
they came to ours.

After I asked about their souls
they laughed and stumbled toward an answer,
then gave up, turned the question back
to me. And because I felt mine always was
in jeopardy I said it went to the movies
and hasn’t been seen since. I said gobbledy

Gimpel, he advised her not to “make a big fuss about this,” because abortion clinics were already under so much pressure. Tombler-Gimpel hadn’t been inclined to make a big fuss: having kept her pregnancy a secret, the last thing she wanted was to spread the word about the abortion. The doctor left without offering to refund her money.

On October 2nd, hearings began in the case that will determine if Steven Brigham will get his license reinstated in New Jersey. The proceedings were held in Mercerville, before an administrative-law judge named Jeff Masin, in a fluorescent-lit courtroom with four rows of chairs reserved for spectators. When I arrived, these chairs were empty. Brigham walked in ten minutes later, and he smiled at me. “How are you doing?” he asked. He was wearing a black suit, a white shirt, and metal-frame spectacles, and he had a leather briefcase tucked beneath his arm.

I asked him where the 1996 hearings had taken place.

“Right here, in this same room,” he said, peering around the empty chamber. The earlier case had drawn many right-to-life protesters, he said, with a glimmer of pride.

Why weren’t any around now? “I think it’s because nobody knows about it,” he said.

At our previous meeting, Brigham had painstakingly recounted the harassment that he’d endured from right-to-life activists, pausing occasionally to ask me if my father had experienced similar treatment. The implication was clear: like George Tiller, like LeRoy Carhart, and like many other abortion providers, including my father, Brigham was a dedicated doctor, and the zealotry of the religious right was responsible for his troubles.

In an opening statement, Joseph Gorrell, Brigham’s lawyer, said that the proceedings were part of a nationwide

and I said gook. I found myself needing
to fool around, avoid, stay away from myself.

But my wife said her soul suffered from neglect,
that she herself was often neglectful
of important things, but so was I.
Then she started to cry. What's the matter? I asked.
What brought this on? She didn't answer.
I felt ambushed, publicly insensitive
about something, whatever it was.

It was a dusky five o'clock, that time
in between one thing and another.
Our neighbors retreated to their home,
but the woman returned
and without a word put her arms
around my wife as if a woman weeping
indicated something already understood
among women, that needn't be voiced.
They held each other, rocked back and forth,

and I thought Jesus Christ, am I guilty again
of one of those small errors
I've repeated until it became large?
What about me? I thought. What about
the sadness of being stupid?
Why doesn't her husband return
with maybe a beer and a knowing nod?

—Stephen Dunn

assault on “physicians who lawfully and competently provide a needed and desired medical service for women in this country.” Jeri Warhaftig, New Jersey's deputy attorney general, countered that the trial was simply about a “bad doctor”; it was not a referendum on the morality of abortion.

In all likelihood, Brigham's future will turn on a more technical question. According to the state, he violated New Jersey law by performing abortions after the fourteenth week of pregnancy at his clinic in Voorhees. The patients had their cervixes dilated and were given drugs to initiate fetal demise. According to Brigham, what took place in Voorhees was merely preparatory steps *before* surgical abortions were performed in Maryland.

Judge Masin will also have to decide whether the practice of sending patients across state borders compromised the women's safety. Although these women were not forced to patronize

Grace, it appears that some of them were deceived.

On October 18th, the patient whose ordeal triggered the raid on the Elkton clinic appeared in Mercerville to testify. Speaking in a soft, slightly tremulous voice, the young woman, whom the court identified as “D.B.,” said that she found Brigham's Voorhees clinic through Google. When she visited it, she was told that the surgical part of her procedure would be done in Philadelphia; no one mentioned Maryland. She also assumed that transportation would be provided. Instead, when she returned to Brigham's office on the day of the surgery, she had to climb into the back of her mother's car while reeling in pain: she had been given medication to dilate her cervix. Her boyfriend drove the car, following a caravan to an unknown destination. When the caravan reached Elkton, she climbed out, disoriented. “I just saw a building that looked kind of abandoned,” she said. The clinic had no

sign. Along with two other patients—one Indian, the other Latina—D.B. was escorted to a waiting room with bare walls. The Indian woman had her procedure done first, D.B. testified, because she was screaming the loudest.

Deputy Attorney General Warhaftig asked D.B. if she knew that Brigham didn't have a license in Maryland.

“No,” she said.

Did she know that Dr. Nicola Riley, who was based in Utah, had obtained her Maryland license less than a month before the procedure?

“No.”

Did she know that Dr. Riley was going to do the procedure?

“No.”

It all sounded eerily like a story from the era before *Roe v. Wade*. Indeed, D.B.'s mother, who testified next, said she had assumed that the enterprise was illegal. She recounted pleading, in vain, for someone to call an ambulance when it was clear that something was awry. Brigham and Riley eventually drove D.B. to the hospital.

After D.B.'s botched procedure, the Maryland State Board of Physicians ordered Brigham to stop practicing medicine in the state. Brigham, however, contends that nothing improper occurred. He told me that the out-of-the-way location was a safety precaution, taken to keep protesters away. Although he did not have a Maryland license, the state permitted out-of-state doctors to engage in consultation with peers who did. After our conversation, I learned that the licensed physician with whom Brigham “consulted” was a then eighty-eight-year-old man named George Shepard, Jr., who was too infirm to travel to Mercerville to testify.

Nicola Riley, the doctor who performed D.B.'s abortion, had been dishonorably discharged from the Army for stealing jewelry. According to the Salt Lake *Tribune*, after attending medical school she opened a practice in Utah that focussed on serving transgender patients and other marginalized groups. Her patients there held her in high esteem. It is unclear how much Riley knew about Brigham before appearing in Elkton, where she apparently started working to earn more income. When I contacted her about Brigham, she said, “It's unfortunate that certain doctors

undermine the work that other doctors or people have done to insure that women continue to have the right to choose."

In her testimony, D.B. alluded to reaching a settlement with Riley. D.B. considered suing Brigham as well, until her lawyer discovered that he didn't have medical-malpractice insurance—a revelation that surprised the prosecution, because Brigham had given a sworn statement affirming otherwise. The state investigated, and found that the insurance Brigham had been using came from a Bermuda-based company that hadn't issued policies since 2006, and whose owner has been jailed for fraud.

Sarah Tombler-Gimpel, the woman from Allentown, based her judgment of American Women's Services on its Web site. "It's really snazzy," she told me one night in nearby Bethlehem, where she now lives. When I told her that there had been complaints about the clinics for more than a decade, her mouth fell open. "I didn't go to an unlicensed, back-alley clinic!" she said, her eyes gleaming with anger. "I went to a place with the Pennsylvania Department of Health's seal of approval."

Tombler-Gimpel could not understand how a facility owned by a doctor who could not practice medicine in Pennsylvania had remained open. One reason was the tenacity—some might say shamelessness—of its founder. In 2009, the Pennsylvania Department of Health barred Brigham from "directly or indirectly" registering a facility in the state, because he had twice been caught employing medical personnel without proper credentials. Ownership of the Allentown and Pittsburgh clinics was soon transferred to a new entity, headed by a woman named Judith Fitch—Brigham's mother.

Tombler-Gimpel was even more upset about what had happened at Lehigh Valley Hospital: she felt that she'd been hastily discharged after staff repeatedly showed her sonograms indicating that the fetus was still alive, as if this news would thrill her, and then led her to believe, erroneously, that she could still have the baby. Although she was advised to return to the hospital if she developed signs of an infection, she was not put on antibiotics.

Lehigh Valley Hospital declined to comment on the case. Since the nineteen-eighties, abortions performed there have been limited to rare cases, such as pregnancies involving fetal anomalies.

One person who has watched such policies become commonplace is Sylvia Stengle. Now seventy-four, Stengle has flowing white hair that used to be flaming orange, earning her the nickname Rusty. In 1971, she founded the first abortion-rights group in the Lehigh Valley. Seven years later, she opened the first abortion clinic in Allentown, the Allentown Women's Center. That year, the majority of abortion providers in the U.S. were not freestanding clinics but hospitals. Clinics arose, in part, because pioneers like Stengle believed that women could get superior care at them. But, over time, she came to wonder about the tradeoffs. "In the long run, the fact that abortion was sliced off from mainstream medicine has had dire consequences," Stengle said.

Brigham's Allentown and Pittsburgh clinics finally closed, in 2012. When I asked him about these facilities, he spoke glowingly of them. "We had no deaths, ever," he said. "The patients were very happy." He added that the final inspection done by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, in 2011, found "no deficiencies." This is true, but after Allentown Medical Services closed down—it had lost its lease—the state sent a scathing letter to Brigham, noting that the Department of Health had long "witnessed a chronic inability by A.M.S. to comply with the most fundamental statutory and regulatory requirements."

It wasn't just protesters who failed to make Brigham question himself. When employees at other clinics raised concerns about American Women's Services, he dismissed them as cutthroat rivals. "Some providers try to use the disciplinary process for their competitive advantage," he said. When states reprimanded him, he insisted that they were seizing on one innocent mistake and ignoring the larger picture. But the larger picture *was* the issue: problems had surfaced at Brigham's facilities with disturbing consistency.

In the case of Kermit Gosnell, the substandard care was clearly driven by greed, and money has likely played a role in Brigham's story, too. At the Mercer-

ville hearings, a police detective from Elkton described raiding Brigham's office in Voorhees and finding a computer disk with a file on it: "Ten Ways to Make a Million Dollars."

It's hard to believe that, if Brigham had simply wanted to become rich, he couldn't have become, say, a plastic surgeon. It's also unclear how lucrative it was to keep pushing the boundaries of permissibility. In Mercerville, Brigham was asked whether financial pressure had led him to launch Grace Medical Care. "Would you agree with me that your cash-flow status . . . was not good?" Jeri Warhaftig asked. "We were having cash-flow problems," he acknowledged. (In 2010, the Internal Revenue Service declared that Brigham owed hundreds of thousands of dollars in unpaid payroll taxes.) Marie McCullough, a reporter who has extensively covered Brigham's legal troubles for the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, told me, "I've always thought that if he just played by the rules he could have been much more successful. I think he has a *need* to manipulate the system."

With his career, Brigham achieved a rare thing: he got both sides in the abortion conflict to agree on something. Women's-health practitioners were often the first to sound warnings about Brigham's clinics. Yet not all of his peers view him as a rogue provider. Among the expert witnesses at his trial was Gary Mucciolo, an abortion provider and an associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at N.Y.U.; he argued that Brigham's conduct did not deviate from medical norms. During a break in the proceedings, Mucciolo, who received fifteen hundred dollars from the defense, told me that he considered the trial "a witch hunt." (Later, he added, "Does Brigham have a good track record? Frankly, I don't know.") Another abortion provider told me, "The real story is that the government, the insurance companies, and the hospitals don't care. They don't want us in business, and that's exactly why people like Brigham exist—and you know what, maybe they *should* exist, because, if they don't exist, women will get abortions even more illegally. It's better than nothing, and nothing is coming."

I heard a variation on this theme from Katharine Morrison, the director of Buffalo Women Services, the clinic

where Barnett Slepian once worked. In 2002, Brigham tried to open a clinic in Buffalo, but reconsidered after he was intensely criticized in the local media. It was a rare instance where he did get rattled. Some might say that, as a result, vulnerable women were spared. But although Morrison is glad that Brigham didn't come to Buffalo, she sees a more systemic problem. She cited the case of a twenty-one-year-old African-American woman who came to see her in March. The woman was twenty weeks pregnant, overweight, and poor; she lacked health insurance, and she had a heart condition that, a doctor told her, made bearing a child potentially lethal. The woman, who had already undergone two heart transplants, learned that she was pregnant after going to the hospital with chest pain. Because of the woman's risk of complications from surgery, Morrison felt the only safe place to treat her was a hospital. This would not have been a problem a decade ago, when many hospitals in Buffalo admitted patients like her. Virtually none do so today, owing mainly to pressure from donors opposed to abortion. Morrison petitioned the ethics committee at Buffalo Women's and Children's Hospital, where women in medically compromising situations are still admitted—in theory, at least. Her request was denied, on the ground that, at the time of the committee's deliberations, the patient's condition was stable. Morrison appealed the committee's decision and, in a letter, reminded its members that, in the nineteen-fifties, hospital committees had often determined whether women merited getting abortions on the basis of "class, race and other non-medical issues." The denial was upheld, and Morrison ended up doing the procedure at her clinic. She told me, "I was faced with a choice of doing an abortion in a setting that was inappropriate, or forcing a poor girl to continue a pregnancy that could kill her. It's an example of what happens today to a poor, disenfranchised woman."

After Brigham's facilities in Pennsylvania were closed, a new state law imposed rigid specifications on things like air-conditioning systems and floors, forcing clinics across the state to undertake expensive, time-consuming renovations. Jane Green, who was running a



"Never bring a wife to a gunfight. That's Day One stuff, guys."

small clinic in Chester, serving a low-income clientele, was forced to shut down. "It was just financially impossible," she said. "I feel like a scapegoat." In one year, the number of clinics in Pennsylvania fell from twenty-two to seventeen.

One person who appears to be unintimidated by the new restrictions is Steven Brigham. On a drizzly morning in November, I drove to an office building, in northeast Philadelphia, with a pink façade and a new tenant: Integrity Family Health. The *Inquirer* had reported rumors that the facility had ties to Brigham, who has a history of setting up clinics with names like Goodness, Inc., and Kindness Corp. On the Tuesday I dropped by, the blinds on the ground-floor windows were drawn. The light in the foyer was off. I pressed to open the glass entrance door, but it didn't budge. I spent an hour standing around outside, watching rain spatter the pavement while I waited for someone with keys to arrive. No one did. The next day, I found out that the Pennsylvania Department of Health was suspending Integrity Family Health for its "failure to disclose" its affiliation with Brigham. Among other things, the clinic's toll-free number was the same as that of American Women's Services. (Brigham denies having a connection to the clinic.)

It is unclear how much of an impact the scandals have had on Brigham's business. In October, 2013, all four of the Maryland clinics shut down, but they may well reopen, and Brigham still operates clinics in Virginia and New Jersey. His conflicts with the law have not left him feeling chastened, even if things haven't turned out quite the way he hoped. Near the end of our interview, I asked him if he wished that he had done anything differently. "I have a lot of regrets," he said, leaning back in his chair. "I don't know where to start." He took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes. "I thought that I could go into this and just be a doctor," he said. "And the politics so overwhelm the medicine, and they overwhelm the medical boards, they overwhelm everything we do." He paused. "The whole thing is just disappointing. It's disappointing when it's unfair and unjust—when there are unfair or unjust criticisms levelled at you."

For the first time, Brigham looked agitated, and I felt a shiver of sympathy. Then I realized that the only person he felt sorry for was himself. "I was looking into all kinds of specialties, all kinds of medicine," he said. "I'm a graduate of an Ivy League medical school. It's unfortunate that the politics of abortion have caused me to end up in this situation." ♦

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Netflix and the future of television.

BY KEN AULETTA

In the spring of 2000, Reed Hastings, the C.E.O. of Netflix, hired a private plane and flew from San Jose to Dallas for a summit meeting with Blockbuster, the video-rental giant that had seventy-seven hundred stores worldwide handling mostly VCR tapes. Three years earlier, Hastings, then a thirty-six-year-old Silicon Valley engineer, had co-founded Netflix around a pair of emerging technologies: DVDs, and a Web site from which to order them. Now, for twenty dollars a month, the site's subscribers could rent an unlimited number of DVDs, one at a time, for as long as they wished; the disks arrived in the mail, in distinctive red envelopes. Eventually, Hastings was convinced, movies would be rented even more cheaply and conveniently by streaming them over the Internet, and popular films would always be in stock. But in 2000 Netflix had only about three hundred thousand subscribers and relied on the U.S. Postal Service to deliver its DVDs; the company was losing money. Hastings proposed an alliance.

"We offered to sell a forty-nine-percent stake and take the name Blockbuster.com," Hastings told me recently. "We'd be their online service." Hastings, now fifty-three, has a trimmed, graying goatee and a slow, soft voice. As he spoke, he was drinking Prosecco at an outdoor table at Nick's on Main, a favorite Italian restaurant of his, in Los Gatos, an affluent community in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The sounds of Sinatra carried across the patio.

Blockbuster wasn't interested. The dot-com bubble had burst, and some film and television executives, like those in publishing and music, did not yet see a threat from digital media. Hastings flew home and set to work promoting Netflix to the public as the friendly rental underdog. By the time Block-

buster got around to offering its own online subscription service, in 2004, it was too late. "If they had launched two years earlier, they would have killed us," Hastings said. By 2005, Netflix had 4.2 million subscribers, and its membership was growing steadily. Hastings had rented a house outside Rome for a year with his wife, Patty Quillin, and two children and was commuting to his Silicon Valley office two weeks each month. Hollywood studios began offering the company more movies to rent; the licensing arrangements presented a new way to make money from their libraries and provided leverage against Blockbuster.

By 2007, when Netflix began streaming movies and TV shows directly to personal computers, it had all but won the rental war. Last November, Blockbuster said that it was going out of business; the previous month, Netflix had announced that it had thirty-one million subscribers in the United States, three million more than HBO, and that its stock was at an all-time high. In 2013, it launched an original-programming series, "House of Cards," which became a critical hit. During peak hours, Netflix accounts for more than thirty per cent of all Internet down-streaming traffic in North America, nearly twice that of YouTube, its closest competitor. The Netflix Web site describes the company as "the world's leading Internet television network."

Hastings has succeeded, in large part, by taking advantage of what he calls viewers' "managed dissatisfaction" with traditional television: each hour of programming is crammed with about twenty minutes of commercials and promotional messages for other shows. Netflix carries no commercials; its revenue derives entirely from subscription fees. Viewers are happy to pay a set fee, now eight dollars a month, in order to

watch, uninterrupted, their choice of films or shows, whenever they want, on whatever device they want. "Think of it as entertainment that's more like books," Hastings said. "You get to control and watch, and you get to do all the chapters of a book at the same time, because you have all the episodes."

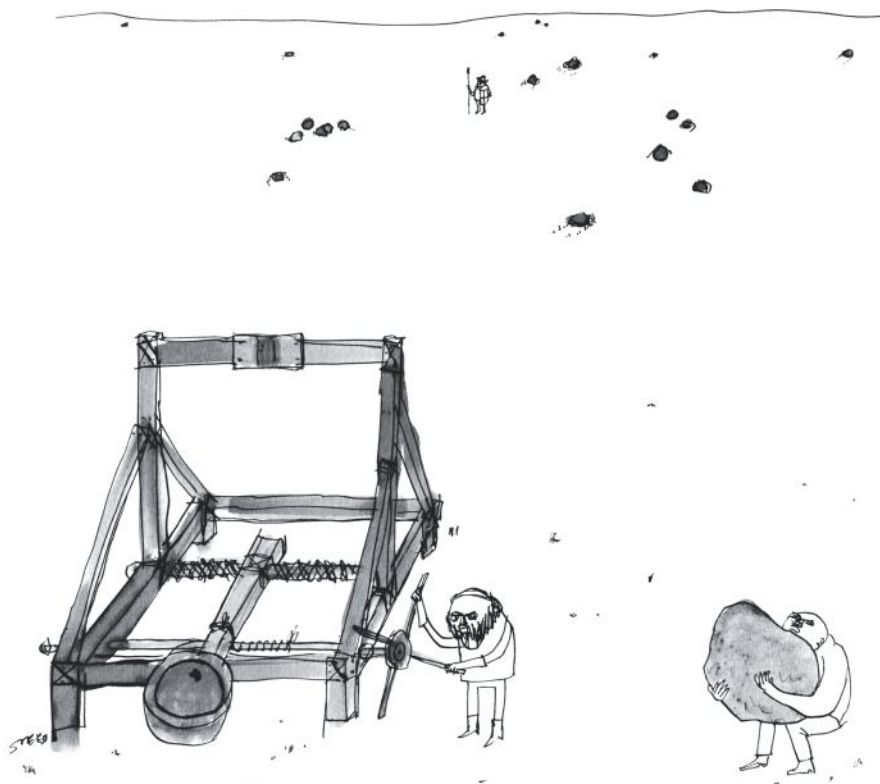
Television is undergoing a digital revolution. Last autumn, in the company's annual "Long-Term View" report to shareholders, Netflix argued that "the linear TV experience," with its programs offered at set times, "is ripe for replacement." Hastings told me, "We are to cable networks as cable networks were to broadcast networks." But Netflix is just one of many contenders. "It's like little termites eating away," Jason Hirschhorn, an Internet entrepreneur and a former Viacom executive, told me. "I don't think the incumbents are insecure enough."

In the early days, television was both a box and the black-and-white world that issued from it: quiz shows, soaps, Ed Sullivan, Edward R. Murrow, "I Love Lucy." Until the nineteen-eighties, the vast majority of the shows were commissioned and carried by ABC, CBS, and NBC, which started out as radio networks and were granted television licenses by the F.C.C., with the expectation that they broadcast at no charge to viewers. Audiences were rapt, and broadcasters made money by selling spots to advertisers.

Today, the audience for the broadcast networks is a third what it was in the late seventies, lost to a proliferating array of viewing options. First came cable-television networks, which delivered HBO, ESPN, CNN, Nickelodeon, and dozens of other channels through a coaxial cable. Cable operators and networks charged monthly fees and sold ads, and even commercial-free premium networks such as



During peak hours, Netflix accounts for more than thirty per cent of Internet down-streaming traffic in North America.



"You also had a very good feeling about the last one."

HBO made money for cable operators, because they attracted subscribers. Traditional broadcasters saw their advertising income slow, but they compensated by charging cable companies for carrying their content, a "retransmission consent" fee made possible, in 1992, by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act. Soon after, the F.C.C. relaxed rules that restricted the networks' ownership of prime-time programs, which opened a new stream of revenue from the syndication of their shows to local stations, cable networks, and other platforms.

The advent of the Internet and streaming video brought new competitors. In 2011, Amazon made its streaming-video service, Instant Video, available free to every customer who signs up for its Amazon Prime program, which, for seventy-nine dollars a year, also provides free two-day shipping. The arrangement inverts the traditional advertising model: instead of forcing you to view commercials, video is the gift you get for shopping. Amazon Prime subscribers number about

twenty million, although the number of those who are Instant Video viewers is certainly smaller. Last fall, Amazon released its first original series, "Alpha House," created by Garry Trudeau. Apple, which popularized the purchase of digital music, offers video sales and rentals through iTunes. It is not expected to develop its own content.

The busiest "television" platform in the world is YouTube, which is owned by Google and has a billion unique visitors watching six billion hours of video every month. Ynon Kreiz, the executive chairman of Maker Studios, the world's largest provider of online content, noted that its series "Epic Rap Battles of History," broadcast on YouTube, and which offers comical face-offs between, say, a faux Miley Cyrus and Joan of Arc, attracts on average forty million viewers—almost four times the viewership of the finale of AMC's "Breaking Bad." YouTube makes money through what Robert Kyncl, a vice-president at Google and the head of content and business operations at YouTube, calls "frictionless"

advertising, which allows viewers to click on a TrueView button to skip ads and asks advertisers to pay only when viewers watch the ad. YouTube claims that forty per cent of its views are on mobile devices, a leap from just six per cent in 2011.

"We now live in a world where every device is a television," Richard Greenfield, a media and technology analyst for the New York-based B.T.I.G., told me. "TV is just becoming video. My kids watch 'Good Luck Charlie' on Netflix. To my ten-year-old, that's TV." Consumers don't care "that a show is scheduled at eight o'clock," he said. Paul Saffo, a Silicon Valley technology forecaster, says that couch potatoes have given way to "active hunters," viewers who "snack" and control what they watch and when.

Leslie Moonves, the C.E.O. of the CBS Corporation, which includes CBS and other networks, says he is untroubled. "For twenty-five years, I've been hearing that network television is dead," he told me. "We're thriving like never before." CBS has been the top-ranked network in prime time for ten of the past eleven years. On the day before we spoke, last October, the company's stock price had risen to nearly sixty dollars a share, almost twenty times higher than its lowest share price in 2009. Moonves is the most richly compensated executive in traditional media; his total compensation in 2012 was sixty-two million dollars. He insists that advertisers need a mass audience to introduce products, an audience that only a broadcast network can deliver consistently. The CBS Corporation is less dependent on commercials, which now account for just over half of its revenues. The rest comes from its overseas sales, which totalled \$1.1 billion last year, and from licensing deals with cable and digital platforms such as Verizon FiOS and Netflix; Netflix pays CBS and Fox about two hundred and fifty million dollars each to let it air programs from their archives.

Other observers are more critical. The venture capitalist Marc Andreessen, who co-invented Mosaic, the first commercial Internet browser—it later became Netscape—told me, "TV in ten years is going to be one hundred per cent streamed. On demand. Internet

Protocol. Based on computers and based on software.” He said that the television industry has managed the transition to the digital age better than book publishers and music executives, but “software is going to eat television in the exact same way, ultimately, that software ate music and as it ate books.”

In 2007, in an effort to combat Netflix, NBC and Fox—joined, two years later, by ABC—created Hulu, a Web site that lets viewers watch current and many past television shows but is subsidized by the same complement of commercials seen on broadcasters’ Web sites. Five million viewers subscribe to Hulu Plus, which, for eight dollars per month, offers more current content and past shows, on multiple devices and with fewer commercials.

Last year, Hulu began to invest modestly in original programming. “Hulu is growing incredibly fast,” Jason Kilar, its C.E.O. from 2008 until 2013, told me. “It generates one billion dollars of revenue.” But Hulu has had an uneasy relationship with its parent companies. In February, 2011, Kilar wrote a five-page blog post that sketched out “the Hulu team’s point of view on the future of TV.” Traditional TV, he wrote, “has too many ads,” and doesn’t serve consumers, because viewers “want programs to start at a time that is convenient for their schedules, not at a time dictated to them.” Hulu, he promised, “is not burdened by that legacy.” In April of last year, Kilar chose to leave the company, to start a new venture.

The television industry has fared better than music and newspapers in part because its factions are dependent on one another for revenue, and none are eager to see the others vanish. Broadcast television has lost viewers to cable networks but syndicates programs to them to rerun. Cable systems battle with broadcast TV over retransmission fees but need access to its programs. All are wary of Netflix but welcome either the licensing fees or broadband customers. “Netflix is our friend, but also our competitor,” Moonves said. “As is everybody.”

Hastings grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he attended private schools, then got an undergraduate degree in math at Bowdoin College, in Maine. After two years

in Swaziland as a high-school math teacher for the Peace Corps, he earned a master’s degree in computer science from Stanford and landed in Silicon Valley. “I really loved software,” Hastings says. “I never loved anything so much.” But, he adds, “The big thing Stanford did for me was turn me on to the entrepreneurial model.”

In 1991, Hastings launched a company called Pure Software, built around Purify, a popular computer program he’d created that identified bugs in software programs. Andreessen, who used the debugging program for his Mosaic and Netscape browsers, describes Purify as “one of the reasons Mosaic worked and didn’t crash.” Pure Software took off, but Hastings was unprepared to manage a company that, by 1996, had grown to six hundred employees. “The product was excellent,” he said. “My management style was not excellent.”

In 1997, Pure Software was sold to Rational Software (which was later bought by I.B.M.) for seven hundred million dollars, and Hastings soon left. After “a period where I felt like a failure,” he concluded that he was spending too much time thinking about engineering and too little thinking about how to recruit and retain a team of capable people. He now lives in Santa Cruz with Quillin and their two teenage children. They have four shelter dogs, and, in the back yard, four goats and ten chickens. He is involved in various philanthropic ventures that promote charter schools and education reform. “Unfortunately, and weirdly, I have almost no hobbies,” he said. “I don’t sail, I don’t fish. I’m a pitiful failure as a Renaissance man.”

Hastings founded Netflix, in 1997, with Marc Randolph, who worked for him at Pure Software. To manage the technical aspects of the Web site, he recruited Neil Hunt, another mathematician and former colleague. Hunt helped to create a “personalization” engine that would decipher what each subscriber liked to watch, based on what the subscriber had watched before, and suggest what he or she might want to see next. Similar advisory algorithms were entering the home through TiVo, the digital video recorder introduced in 1999, and Amazon’s Web

site. In 1999, Hastings hired Ted Sarandos, who had been the vice-president of product and marketing for West Coast Video, a Blockbuster-like company with nearly five hundred stores. Sarandos had a deep knowledge of movies and television shows and began to broaden the range of material that Netflix made available. In 2002, the company turned profitable and went public.

Hastings pressed his team to begin streaming movies and television shows over the Internet. The film industry, worried about digital piracy, initially resisted licensing its content to stream; and Netflix lacked access to recent movies, because the studios had exclusive long-term deals to sell them to HBO and other cable subscription channels such as Starz. Finally, in 2008, Netflix made a deal with Starz to stream the movies it had acquired. “We agreed to pay thirty million dollars annually,” Sarandos said. “It was about three times my budget!”

Starz and other content providers realized that Netflix offered not only a new source of revenue but also a way to build audiences for current broadcast and cable shows, by allowing Netflix subscribers to watch prior seasons. The ratings for the fifth season of AMC’s “Breaking Bad” were more than double those of the season before, and several times higher than those of Season One. “It seems to me close to inarguable that, when past seasons were available, people were introduced to them through on-demand services like Netflix,” Josh Sapan, the president and C.E.O. of AMC Networks, told me. “They became engaged.” Between 2007, when streaming began, and the end of 2009, Netflix subscriptions jumped from 7.5 million to twelve million. Media executives dismissed the notion that Netflix was a threat. In 2010, Jeff Bewkes, the C.E.O. of Time Warner, told the *Times*, “It’s a little bit like, is the Albanian army going to take over the world?,” adding, “I don’t think so.”

Hastings told me that he treated Bewkes’s comment “as a badge of honor. For the next year, I wore Albanian Army dog tags around my neck. It was my rosary beads of motivation.” Netflix continued to expand,

making itself available on game consoles, mobile phones, tablets, and other streaming devices, such as Apple TV and Roku—and, for the first time outside the U.S., in Canada. It reached licensing agreements to air complete previous seasons of programs from ABC, NBC, Fox, CBS, and the leading cable networks.

Whatever Hastings's ambitions, he was eager not to appear to be competing with his sources of content. In its first-quarter report for 2011, Netflix declared that it was "fundamentally correct" to characterize the company as "rerun TV." But the broadcast networks would not sell Netflix the current seasons of television shows; customers had to turn to Hulu. For Hulu, the networks defensively bought the rights to popular cable programs like "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and "The Colbert Report," which are not available on Netflix.

Hastings sees his main competitors as Showtime and, especially, HBO. Both have lucrative arrangements with cable providers, through which they offer a library of shows and movies to watch on demand; and both now offer apps—HBO Go and Showtime Anytime—that enable cable subscribers to watch any of those channels' programs on any device. HBO has more than two and a half times as many subscribers worldwide as Netflix—a hundred and fourteen million—and its list of original hits, from "The Sopranos" to "Game of Thrones," is extensive.

In the spring of 2011, Netflix announced that it was aggressively entering the business of original programming. The company spent a hundred million dollars to make the two-season, twenty-six-episode political thriller "House of Cards," directed by David Fincher and starring Kevin Spacey. The director and the actor had approached several networks; Netflix offered to approve the project without seeing a pilot or test-marketing it with viewers. Last year, Spacey told an audience at the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival, "Netflix was the only network that said, 'We believe in you. We've run our

data and it tells us that our audience would watch this series. We don't need you to do a pilot. How many do you wanna do?'"

Netflix tracks not only its subscribers' preferences and habits but also how quickly they watch each episode and how many episodes they watch in one night. It has organized its library into seventy-nine thousand categories—



Foreign Sci-Fi & Fantasy, Dark Thrillers Based on Books—to better predict what you might want to watch next. "There's a whole lot of Ph.D.-level math and statistics involved," Hunt says. The Netflix database indicated that the original series on which "House of Cards" was based, a British

production with the same name, was popular with Netflix users. So were political thrillers, Fincher's films ("Fight Club," "The Social Network"), and Spacey, who has starred in a range of movies, including "Se7en" (another Fincher film) and "The Usual Suspects."

But, in September of 2011, Hastings made a major miscalculation. Netflix's DVD rentals were falling, and the company had announced that it was splitting its subscription in two: one for DVDs by mail, a second for online streaming. Hastings then announced that the DVD rentals would now be handled by a new entity, Qwikster. Hastings had seen how companies such as AOL had been slow to replace dial-up Internet access with broadband. "I was so obsessed with not getting trapped by DVDs the way AOL got trapped, the way Kodak did, the way Blockbuster did," he told me. "We would say, Every business we could think of died because they were too cautious." Netflix's combined subscription rate rose by sixty per cent, to sixteen dollars a month, and thousands of customers posted complaints on the company's Web site. Eight hundred thousand subscribers abandoned the service, and the stock price plummeted. By October, Netflix had reversed the decision to split itself into two companies.

The crisis soon faded. "House of

Cards," which appeared in February, 2013, won three Emmys—the first time a non-traditional television show had won the award. In October of 2013, Netflix's stock price surpassed its all-time peak, approaching four hundred dollars per share, although the company's third-quarter net income was only thirty-two million dollars. (HBO's earnings exceeded \$1.7 billion on five billion dollars in revenues.) By the end of 2013, Netflix's stock had tripled in value since the beginning of the year, and the board voted to boost Hastings's total compensation to six million dollars.

Television today faces two major threats. The first is to the advertising model. About fifty per cent of viewing households use a digital video recorder. Between half to two-thirds of those households skip the ads, and new features, such as those on the Hopper, a DVR with the Dish satellite network, allow viewers to do so instantly on select shows. Every viewer who skips an ad, or who leaves a broadcast or cable channel to watch Netflix or another ad-free service, is evidence to advertisers that television airtime isn't worth what it once was—a conclusion that will eventually mean less revenue for broadcast and cable networks. Sixty-six billion dollars—four out of every ten media dollars—is spent annually on TV commercials, according to Sir Martin Sorrell, the chairman and C.E.O. of W.P.P., the world's second-largest advertising and marketing agency. Sorrell told me that W.P.P. has shifted eighteen billion dollars, or thirty-five per cent of its advertising expenditures, to digital media since 2000.

The second threat is existential. Starting around 2008, viewers could stream video services through the television only by attaching another device, such as a DVD player, an Xbox, a Nintendo Wii, or an Apple TV. The streaming services are getting cheaper and easier to use. Last July, Google released Chromecast, a device that looks like a flash drive (you plug it into your TV's HDMI port) and allows you to stream from such sources as Netflix, YouTube, Hulu Plus, Google Play, or whatever you happen to be watching on Google's Chrome Web browser. The

device costs thirty-five dollars. As consumers grow more aware of such options, they are bound to ask why they bother subscribing to cable television.

The latest menace is Aereo; for eight or twelve dollars a month, the service connects each customer to a remote, dime-size antenna that allows members in almost two dozen cities to watch over-the-air broadcasts or record shows in a cloud-based DVR. Chet Kanojia, an engineer and the company's C.E.O., says that he created Aereo to help spare people the cost and the waste of the typical cable bundle. Technically, one can still watch broadcast television using just an antenna, but people have grown accustomed to the more reliable picture, and to the DVR functions, that cable provides; and broadcasters have come to rely on the retransmission fees. Still, Kanojia wondered, why should viewers have to pay an expensive cable bill if mostly what they want to watch are the broadcast channels?

"Consumers had the right to this programming because it was free to air," Kanojia said. As he describes it, Aereo merely allows customers to connect to antennae that receive broadcast signals. (You can fast-forward past the ads when watching recorded shows.) But TV executives don't see it that way. "It's a technology that basically wants to steal our signal," Moonves said. "How do you take our signal"—and the programs that CBS has paid for—"and sell it to customers?" So far, Aereo has successfully convinced some courts that the technology is little different from the antennae that television viewers once mounted on their rooftops. The Supreme Court is expected to rule on Aereo's legitimacy by July.

In 2013, at his annual investor conference, John Malone, the chairman of Liberty Media Corporation, which has investments in cable companies, said that cable executives needed to respond more creatively to these new technologies. He urged his colleagues to create an Internet-based streaming service to rival Netflix. As an example, he cited Comcast's XFINITY, which, like Hulu, offers streaming video. Last week, Verizon announced plans to acquire Intel Media, the chip-maker's digital-TV division, in a further effort to make TV available anywhere and on any screen.

Jeff Bewkes, of Time Warner, which no longer owns or has a stake in the cable company of the same name, assails the "lunacy" of the many cable-system owners trying "to protect their culture of gatekeeper." Last year, ABC, Fox, and NBC, which had been planning to sell Hulu, decided to hold on to it, to compete with Netflix. "The digital space was too important," Chase Carey, the president and C.O.O. of 21st Century Fox, told me. To keep viewers from skipping ads, the cable industry has embraced an antediluvian strategy: offer more comprehensive video on demand, including the newest episodes of many of broadcast TV's biggest hits, at no extra cost, but with fast-forwarding disabled.

Customers may be starting to revolt. Time Warner has lost cable subscribers in each of the past eighteen quarters. Cable-system owners blame the decline on the networks, which force them to carry expensive bundles of channels that many viewers don't want; according to analysts, ESPN alone accounts for roughly six dollars in every cable bill, even for viewers who never watch it. "The largest concentration of power is in the hands of a few content companies," Glenn Britt, who retired as the C.E.O. of Time Warner Cable in December, told me. "If a distributor wants ESPN, he or she has to pretty much buy everything Disney"—which controls ESPN—"sells, because that's how it's sold." Britt said that between those costs and the retransmission fees

paid to networks, which are projected to rise from three billion to almost four billion dollars this year, the portion of a subscriber's bill spent on basic cable television could exceed the current average of seventy-five dollars a month.

What Netflix and the other new platforms still can't offer is the kind of appointment viewing—the Olympics, the Super Bowl, the Oscars, "American Idol"—that has been the mainstay of broadcast television and certain cable operators. The networks pay huge sums for the exclusive rights to broadcast these events. The future of traditional television, Hastings says, is in airing more live events, which attract higher advertising rates. In December, NBC broadcast a live musical, "The Sound of Music," starring Carrie Underwood. Although critics panned it, nearly nineteen million people watched it that night, the biggest NBC Thursday-night, non-sports audience in almost a decade. Among the few executives who express no concern about the shifting television terrain are those involved in sports. "The only certainty is sports," David Stern, the commissioner of the N.B.A., told me. Hastings agrees. "For a hundred million dollars," he told me, "we could get the Badminton League!"

Without commercial interruptions, Hastings argues, the viewing experience has become more immersive and sustained. When Netflix released "House of Cards," it made the entire first



"I'm declaring my French citizenship."

season of episodes available at once, and viewers binged. Cindy Holland, Netflix's vice-president of original content, told me that the average Netflix viewer watches two and a half episodes in one sitting. The creative experience is different, too, she said; making "House of Cards" was akin to making "a thirteen-hour movie." There was no need to recap previous episodes or to insert cliffhangers. Increasingly, show creators can work without executives' notes, focus groups, concerns about ratings, and anxieties about whether advertisers will resist having their products slotted after a nude scene or one laced with obscenity.

"There's a reason why people now talk about this as the golden age of scripted drama," Michael Lynton, the C.E.O. of Sony Entertainment, told me. "You can write a character that grows over the course of thirteen hours of television. That's more attractive than a two-hour movie." The opportunities have enticed strong writers, directors, and actors. "What's happened as a result of this is a flourishing of an entirely new kind of television."

Netflix has also begun investing heavily in children's programming; last June, it signed a five-year deal with DreamWorks Animation, which will produce three hundred hours of original animated kids' shows. "We have become Netflix's single largest supplier of original kids' content," Jeffrey

Katzenberg, the C.E.O. of DreamWorks Animation, said. The effort is part of a long-term strategy to train viewers to watch Netflix. "It's habit-forming," Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer, said.

But there are other ways to consume video than those which Netflix has in mind. Brian Robbins, the founder of AwesomenessTV, a provider of YouTube channels, first gained recognition in the mid-nineteen-eighties as a young actor on "Head of the Class," an ABC sitcom. He went on to direct more than ten movies, including "Varsity Blues," before becoming a writer and a producer for long-running children's programs on Nickelodeon. Four years ago, his agent told him about Fred, a teen-ager from Nebraska who had his own YouTube channel. Fred recorded short rants in a screechy voice on such topics as staying in a fancy hotel room and dreaming of being a famous actor. His real name was Lucas Cruikshank, and his hotel riff drew twenty-three million views, more than the biggest hit show on television. Fred's videos were a few minutes long, perfectly tailored to the medium. Robbins came home that night and asked his tween children, "You know who Fred is?" They did.

Robbins decided to make a movie with Fred. "I had a relationship with Paramount but knew they wouldn't do

it," Robbins told me. So, in August of 2009, he put up a million dollars; four months later, he had a ninety-minute movie, about a boy trying to get a girl to fall in love with him. He sold "Fred: The Movie" to Nickelodeon, and it proved so popular that two more Fred movies and a twenty-four-episode series, "Fred: The Show," followed. Robbins decided to form a company, AwesomenessTV, to create content for YouTube channels—there are more than half a billion on YouTube.com. In the world of YouTube, not only is every device a television but every viewer is a potential network and content provider.

Robbins works in a brick-walled office in a two-story industrial building in West Los Angeles. He has thirty young employees, and he roams around in jeans, a T-shirt, and shiny black sneakers. Just before Thanksgiving in 2012, AwesomenessTV ran a promotion asking subscribers, "Do you want to be the next YouTube star?" Two hundred thousand teen-agers responded, and nearly half of them started their own YouTube channels, attracting sixty million unique monthly visitors. Today, eighty-five thousand kids have channels on AwesomenessTV, and thirty-one million teens and tweens have visited the site. "When you speak to kids, the No. 1 thing they want is to be famous," Robbins said. "They don't even know for what."

Advertisers want to reach this young demographic. Last May, DreamWorks Animation bought Robbins's company, for thirty-three million dollars. Katzenberg told me that, "by the end of next year, under AwesomenessTV, we could have as many daily active users as the Disney Channel, Cartoon Network, and Nickelodeon together."

Established executives in traditional TV are reassured by Nielsen ratings suggesting that, of the forty-two hours of television that Americans watch each week, only three hours are on portable devices or computers. But Pat McDonough, a senior vice-president of analysis at Nielsen, concedes that the company does not have the capability to compile smartphone usage among very young people. "For mobile devices, we are not measuring below age thirteen today," she said. And yet, she



"Thank you for really letting me occasionally text you during my dark time."

noted, “We think there’s a lot of consumption on their parents’ devices.” Although viewers under twenty-four watch less traditional television than ever, McDonough was confident that they would grow into the habit. “The older you get, the more you watch,” she said.

Robbins disagrees: “That’s like saying when color TV came in that people were going to go back to watching black-and-white television when they got older, because that’s what their parents and grandparents did!” He added, “The next generation, our audience and even younger, they don’t even know what live TV is. They live in an on-demand world.”

Hastings predicts that by 2016 half of all television will be delivered by the Internet, and he expects Netflix to be an ever bigger part of it. Over dinner, he asserted that the company can double or even triple its domestic audience: “I think sixty to ninety million subscribers is Netflix’s potential U.S. market.” Netflix is also expanding aggressively overseas, where almost a quarter of its forty-four million subscribers live.

To hold its own against HBO and video on demand, Netflix will have to invest further in original content. It spends only about two hundred and fifty million dollars on originals, some eight per cent of its three-billion-dollar programming budget. HBO spends four times as much. And unlike HBO, which owns the sixty-eight series it has produced, Netflix owns only the first-window streaming rights of its programs, including “House of Cards.” Sarandos boasts that eighty per cent of Netflix’s current spending is on “exclusive” content, but this simply means that Netflix licenses these programs exclusively for a limited period, after which they may be sold elsewhere. Netflix is still largely dependent on the film and television studios, which can raise their licensing fees as they wish.

Most Wall Street analysts extoll the virtues of Netflix, pointing to its impressive subscriber growth, but Michael Pachter, an analyst at Wedbush Securities, is a skeptic. He says that Netflix is spending more than what is

reflected in its earnings. In 2012, the company reported a net income of seventeen million dollars on revenues of \$3.6 billion, yet its free cash flow was a negative fifty-eight million dollars. At the end of 2013, its cash flow was a negative sixteen million dollars, while its net income was a hundred and twelve million. (Its cash balance, however, was \$1.2 billion.) The gap is hidden because the cost of programming gets amortized over the life of the license, Pachter says: “It’s a big ticking time bomb.” He believes that Netflix has to either slow spending or raise its monthly subscription price. But Netflix’s strategy—grab the market first, worry about profits later—is common among Internet startups, and has worked well for Amazon and Facebook. Hastings dismissed Pachter’s assessment: “Michael Pachter has been bearish about Netflix since 2005, when he put a three-dollar price target on us and wrote that we were ‘a worthless piece of crap.’ He continues to be wrong.”

In the long run, Hastings has a bigger worry: whether Netflix will be as readily accessible to its customers as it is now. Netflix, YouTube, Amazon Instant Video, and the other streaming-video providers all require a broadband connection. That’s an integral, and lucrative, part of the dread cable bill and will become only more so. “The future is broadband,” Hastings concedes. “That business has nearly one-hundred-per-cent margins.”

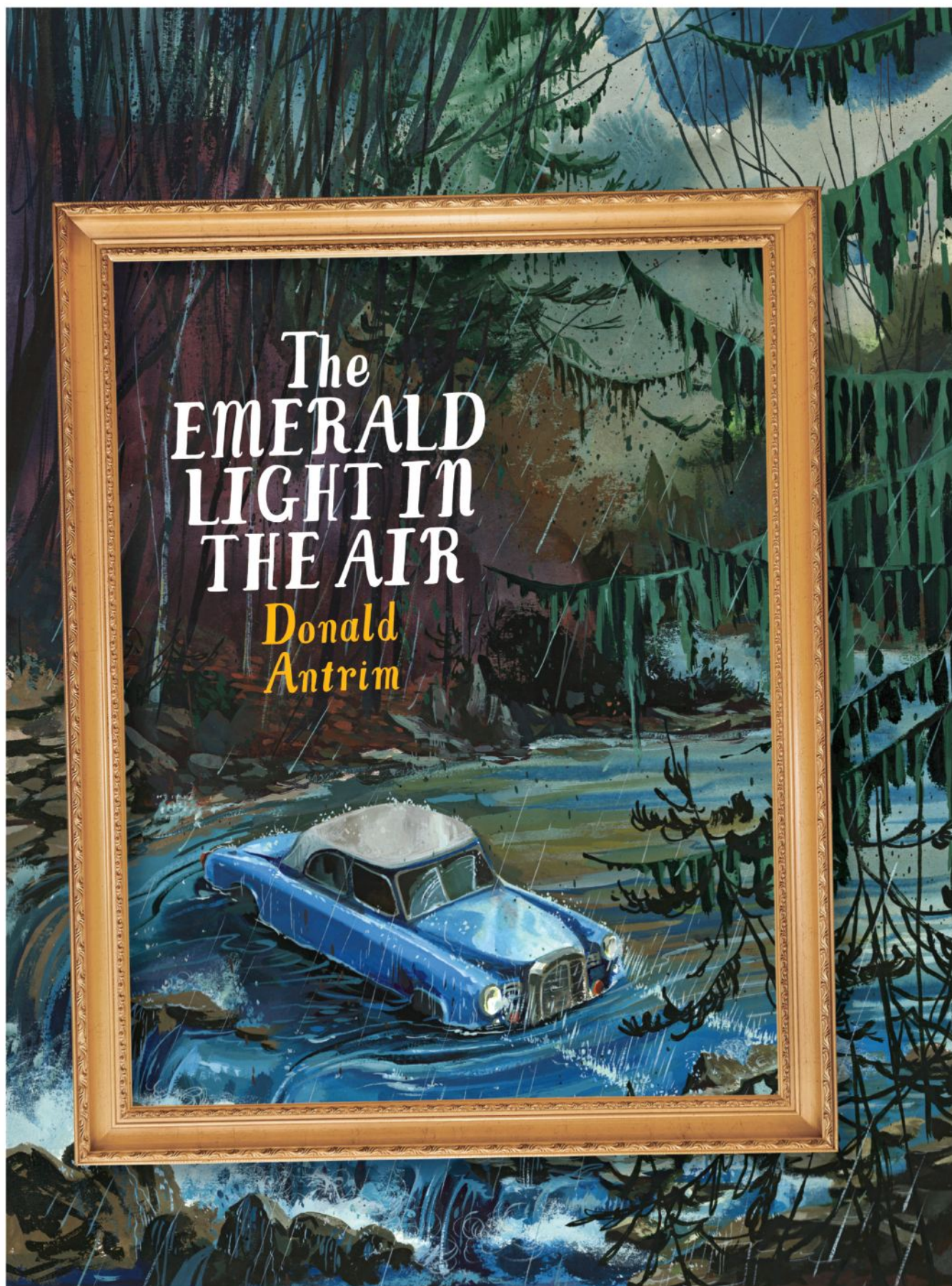
Glenn Britt, of Time Warner, said that he could envisage cable-systems operators giving up on the cable-television portion of their business altogether: “It may be perfectly viable in the future for a cable company to say, ‘I’m losing enough money selling television; I’m just going to sell broadband.’” Andreessen said, “The cable bundle is melting ice cream. Cable should aggressively shift over to a broadband service now and get out of programming and raise prices and free up broadband so it can offer higher speeds on all devices.” That would be a major blow to broadcast and cable networks, Britt said, but “right now the content companies are in denial that that could ever happen.” Verizon and A.T. & T. have broadband networks,

but DirecTV, Dish Network, and other satellite television providers, which together serve about fifty million subscribers, do not.

Presumably, cable operators will look for ways to charge more for broadband service, perhaps by placing a meter on subscribers’ Internet usage, just as power companies do with electricity. Last week, a federal court struck down F.C.C. rules, adopted in 2010, that required broadband providers to treat all Internet traffic equally. The decision appears to grant Verizon, Comcast, Time Warner Cable, and others much greater leverage in deciding how they can bundle and sell Internet access to their customers. The cable operators could work out deals with specific content providers—e-mail might cost less than gaming, and providers might offer, say, YouTube and Amazon Instant Video at a lower price, but Hulu or Netflix at a higher one. Last week, in a letter to shareholders, Netflix noted that providers “now can legally impede the video streams that members request from Netflix. . . . The motivation could be to get Netflix to pay fees to stop this degradation.”

The court’s decision will likely be appealed. “But, if cable companies try to charge more to Netflix and Google, digital companies may buy their own pipes,” Andreessen said. In 2012, Google launched Fiber, which offers Internet and television service that’s a hundred times faster than average broadband speeds, using fibre-optic cables; but so far Fiber has wired only Kansas City and Provo, Utah; Austin is next.

With Internet television, customers have grown accustomed to the idea that they might really have it all, whenever they want. What’s unclear is whether that freedom will cost more than the current bargain. Last week, in a conference call with analysts, Hastings said that if broadband providers tried to block Netflix this would “fuel the fire for more regulation.” But he also said that Netflix is considering a tiered-pricing plan; this might raise rates for new subscribers. And he emphasized his company’s leverage: the broadband providers “want to expand,” and providing “a good Netflix experience” is vital to that effort. “Our economic interests are pretty co-aligned.” ♦



The EMERALD LIGHT IN THE AIR

Donald
Antrim

In less than a year, he'd lost his mother, his father, and, as he'd once and sometimes still felt Julia to be, the love of his life; and, during this year, or, he should say, during its suicidal aftermath, he'd twice admitted himself to the psychiatric ward at the University Hospital in Charlottesville, where, each stay, one in the fall and one the following summer, three mornings a week, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, he'd climbed onto an operating table and wept at the ceiling while doctors set the pulse, stuck electrodes to his forehead, put the oxygen meter on his finger, and then pushed a needle into his arm and instructed him, as the machines beeped and the anesthetic dripped down the pipette toward his vein, to count backward from a hundred; and now, another year later, he was on his way to the dump to throw out the drawings and paintings that Julia had made in the months when she was sneaking off to sleep with the man she finally left him to marry, along with the comic-book collection—it wasn't a collection so much as a big box stuffed with comics—that he'd kept since he was a boy. He had long ago forgotten his old comics; and then, a few days before, he'd come across them on a dusty shelf at the back of the garage, while looking for a carton of ammo.

It was a humid Saturday morning. Thunderstorms had come through in the early hours after dawn, but now the rain and wind had passed, and sunlight lit the puddles on the road and the silver roofs of the farmhouses and barns that flickered into view between the trees, as he steered the ancient blue Mercedes—it had been his father's, and his grandfather's before that—across the county he'd grown up in. Maybe on his way back home he'd stop at Fox Run Farm for a gallon of raw milk. Or no. He'd drink a glass or two and then, in a month, have to dig the rest out of the refrigerator and pitch it. He reminded himself to vacuum the living room and clean the downstairs toilet. His name was Billy French, and he was carrying a Browning .30-06 A-bolt hunting rifle in the trunk of the Mercedes. He wasn't a gun nut, and he didn't hunt. He was a sculptor and a middle-school art teacher. Every now and then, he liked to stop on his way home from school and shoot cans off the rotting fence posts that sur-

rounded the unused cow pasture where, at sixteen, in the grass and weeds, he'd lost his virginity to Mary Doan. He hadn't thought about Mary in ages, and then, recently, he'd run into her—surprise, surprise, after all these years—at a bar in the Valley. He'd recognized her right away—he remembered her limp—but it had taken her a couple of tries to remember his name. They'd had a laugh over that, and he'd bought her a drink, and she'd bought him one, and now she was coming across the mountain, she was coming that night for dinner.

He'd told her seven-thirty.

Ahead on the road, a tree limb was down. He was on a small rural route, a cut between two lanes, not much used. He stopped the Mercedes, unbuckled his seat belt, and got out. A locust bough had sheared off in the wind. The bough was long and twisting, green with crooked branches and smaller, thorny stems. His tree saw and his axe were back at the house, but it might be possible to drag the bough from the tip and more or less swing the whole thing—swing wasn't the right word, maybe—over and around and off the road, enough at least for the car to pass. He reached through the leaves and grabbed a narrow stem that stuck up in the air. There were no flowers—it was late in the season for that—but the locust's seedpods had begun to sprout, and many of these were scattered across the asphalt.

He swatted a mosquito and got the branch in both hands. The wood was damp, and the end of the bough flexed and bent when he pulled. He moved down to a thicker part, planted his feet, and leaned back. After four or five difficult heave-hos, he'd opened enough clearance, he thought, to steer the car through. He was out of breath and his shirt was wet and sticky. He got in the driver's seat and eased the Mercedes onto the oncoming side of the road. The ground sloped down from the road's edge and the soil had taken on rain. As he was working his way around the branch, wheels partly on the shoulder, the car tipped to the left and then shifted further, and a piece of ground seemed to fall away underneath. It was startling: a little slide and the Mercedes plunged. Then the tires dug in, and, abruptly, a distance off the road and at a steep angle, the car settled and stopped.

Billy pushed his foot against the brake. He gripped the steering wheel. When he took his hands off, he saw that he'd scraped his palms on the locust. He was bleeding.

"Shit, fuck. Shit," he said aloud.

He turned off the engine. He hadn't slept the night before. It wasn't the thunder and lightning that had kept him up—he'd been going through the art works that Julia had left rolled in tubes or stacked against the wall in the upstairs bedroom that had been her studio. They were piled in the back seat now. The paintings, he thought, while sitting in the car perched on the berm, were not as strong as the drawings, which, though more or less precise studies for their oil counterparts, all rural Virginia scenes—trees in a field, a dying pond, a rotting house in a mountain hollow—nonetheless had about them, with their bold erasures and smudges and retraced pencil lines, the feeling of something abstract and, in comparison with the worked and reworked paintings, complexly three-dimensional. The paintings seemed to exist as strangely flat fields—they put Billy in mind of Early American naïve art—and, in looking at them and, back in the day, talking to Julia about them, he'd come to see how purposefully she distorted light and shadow. "I'm searching for something that isn't quite there," she'd once said.

He was fearful of shifting his weight and starting another slide—the car had gone four or five feet already, and the embankment fell maybe ten more. He could hear running water. Was there a creek off in the woods? He knew this country, or thought he did, but it was always surprising him, just the same.

He wiped his hands on his pants. Gently now, he ratcheted down the brake. He eased open the driver's-side door.

Anyway, her drawings and paintings—he knew better than to throw them out, but the fact of them in his house was terrible. He'd meant for some time to do something about them. At first, of course, he'd tried to get them back to her, but she'd told him—this was during one of their five or six phone conversations since her departure, two years earlier—that her old work was no longer meaningful or important to her. "I'm not doing that kind of painting

anymore,” she’d said. “I’m engaged with a more total realism.”

“Photo-realism?” he’d asked.

“No, nothing like that.”

He was standing in the kitchen in his socks and underwear, drinking bourbon and Coke—his mother’s drink. Ice rattled in the glass. The floor was brown and dirty, in need of mopping.

Julia said, “Billy, you’re drinking.”

Oh, God, how to get out of the Mercedes safely? The hillside was steep and the grass was wet. And what if he made it, with both feet firmly on the ground, and the car slid down on top of him?

He pushed the car door open all the way and, clutching the doorframe for balance, tumbled out onto the incline. Fuck Julia. He could take her pictures and toss them into the woods right now.

He had weed in the glove compartment. Might there be a stray Ativan or two in there as well? The thing to do was slog around to the uphill side, the passenger side, reach through the window, and feel around in the glove compartment for whatever he could find. But wouldn’t you know it? He got partway around the Mercedes, and the whole car seemed to shudder and tremble. Billy watched it start into another drop—it was as if the car were shaking its wheels free of the mire—and then down the grade it rumbled, through the mud and across the grass, sliding to a rest at last in a patch of milkweed at the foot of the hill.

He felt a raindrop, and another. The clouds were not in sight yet, but Billy could sense the weight of low pressure bearing down. An emerald light was in the air. The birds and other animals had gone quiet; the world was still, as it can be when bad weather is coming. He was thinking of Mary. By the time he’d managed to have sex with Mary, back in high school—she was a senior and he was a junior, and that fact alone was thrilling—she’d already had one abortion and one marriage proposal.

He half walked, half slid down the hill. The Mercedes was sitting in a gulch between the woods and the embankment. He heard running water again—the creek had to be close. He reached gently into his pocket and took out his phone. His hands were a cut-up mess. The garage he used for the Mercedes was on the other side of Charlottesville,

close to Julia and Mark’s farm, and, anyway, too far away for a tow truck to come. Could he drive back up to the road? It didn’t look to Billy as if there’d be much room to maneuver.

Daily life’s frustrations, even the big ones, no longer ruled him, not the way they had for a long time in his life. He’d been psychotic with agitation that had grown from his grief, and it was hard for him to remember what that had been like, exactly: not the grief—he had plenty of that still—but the urge to die. He’d got all but there. He’d had the Browning loaded. He’d had it ready and at hand, a few times.

He smelled storm. He might be able to drive for a while beside the road. The sun was high. Billy put his phone in his pocket and got back in the Mercedes. The car seemed all right. He drove slowly. He was in a wide but navigable trench. It wasn’t bad driving. The trench curved slowly around to the right, and then came to a straight section that reminded Billy of the Roman road that he and Julia had walked a length of during that difficult vacation in Italy, the winter before she left.

They’d gone to see the paintings and frescoes of Tiepolo. Billy had become vocal about Tiepolo after seeing “Bacchus and Ariadne” in Washington, and Julia had got into him, too. After Christmas in Rome, they had taken the train north to Venice, and had spent a week walking around in the cold, searching out churches and palazzos and wander-



ing the Gallerie dell’Accademia, where they had both become enchanted, though for different reasons, with “The Rape of Europa.” Julia got excited over the distant meeting of clouds and sea in the picture’s right-hand corner, while Billy fixated on the encroaching cloud plume to the left, the spire of pink and gray—it looked to him like a mushroom cloud—exploding upward from behind the rocky outcropping on which Zeus, transformed into a bull, seduces the

Phoenician princess Europa, dressed in white and attended by ladies-in-waiting. The cloud threatens to wipe them all out, but Europa and her entourage seem either unconcerned or unaware. She sits enthroned on the back of Zeus. Two other bulls wait nearby. A maid tends to Europa’s hair, and another bathes her feet; shepherds and an African are on hand, and putti fly about and urinate from on high, and a black bird perches on a strange little cumulus cloud that has floated in over the princess’s head.

There was the creek. It came out of the woods and flowed into a concrete drainpipe that tunnelled under the road. A stretch near the trees looked fordable. He could angle the car just so, over and between the rocks. Once he got to the other side, though, where was he going to go? Trees pushed against the embankment, and the way was overgrown. Billy nosed the car forward anyway. He felt a curiosity. The undercarriage of the Mercedes was not high, and when the wheels dropped into the water Billy heard and felt the bumper scrape the rocks. He jerked the car, not across but up the creek—maybe he could follow it out into a field or a yard somewhere upstream. The retirement home where his parents had ended their lives was up the way he’d come that morning, not on the little lane but on the bigger road at the end of it, heading down from the hills toward town. He saw lightning in the distance, and peered through the windshield at the dark clouds now crossing the sky over Afton Mountain.

He turned on the headlights and the wipers.

In the hospital, he’d had hallucinations. He remembered looking in his bathroom mirror—it was made of metal, not glass—and seeing his face deformed. He’d known better than to believe what he saw, but, on the other hand, he hadn’t known better, far from it: there it had been in front of him, his bent, misshapen skull. Now, as he drove into the forest, Billy recalled that, for a long time, the time of the locked ward and his sick brain and the torn-up suicide notes to Julia, he’d felt the burning. He’d felt it in his temple. It was, somehow, he knew, both imaginary and real, a beckoning, an itch, a need for a bullet. Of course he’d thought always of the Browning, of loading it and getting into position on the living-room

floor, or maybe out back in the barn, maybe laying down a tarp first.

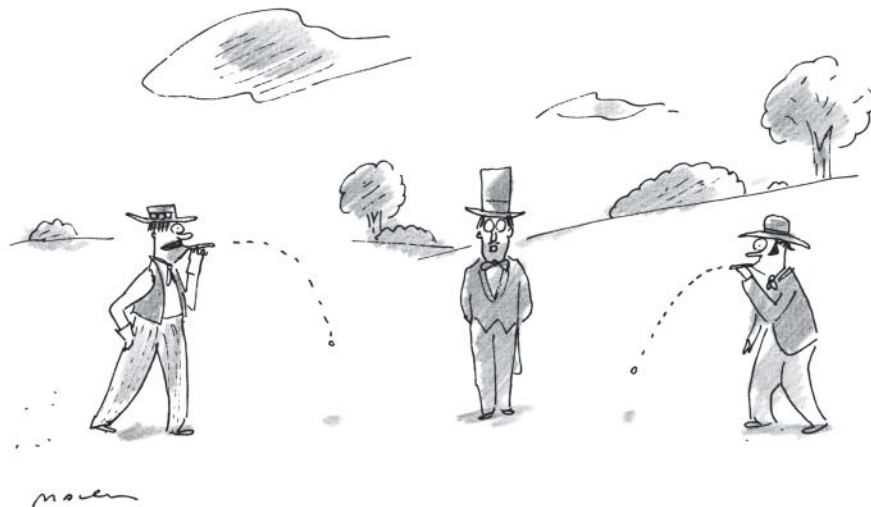
The barn on the hill behind his house—that was where he made his art. When he wasn't teaching seventh graders how to draw, he made big untidy installations that he referred to as his trash heaps. Along with the rifle and the comics and Julia's art, he had in the back of the Mercedes a canvas bag with about two dozen cans that he'd saved from trips to the shooting pasture. He was planning to include them in a piece. He needed more, but he didn't eat much canned food, and his personal use of the materials in his work was crucial to him.

The thing about Mary was that her limp looked good. It wasn't a very noticeable limp. One of her legs was shorter than the other. Billy remembered her swaggering down the hall in high school, thirty years before. Her father had been a country doctor, the sort who got out of bed and drove into the hills at all hours to treat people who couldn't pay or get down the mountain to town. Mary was a year older than Billy, but she'd let him put his hands down her pants. He'd ridden his bike up Route 250, past the Episcopal church, to her house. There was never anyone home but her. She'd been provocative and graceful and unembarrassed. He remembered her standing on her short leg, the other leg propped out at an angle, toes touching the floor, a dancer's pose.

What he needed to do was fix up the car. It was a 1958 220S with a white roof and a gray interior, and there had been rust on the body and the chrome and underneath, on the chassis, for a long time. Billy wasn't a car buff, and didn't know what this one might be worth cleaned up. People had offered to buy it. He remembered riding in it with his grandfather, who never drove faster than twenty-five miles per hour. His grandfather had told stories, actually, of driving his old Ford up creek beds, back in the thirties.

Billy urged the car up a mossy rise and over a little waterfall. Branches scraped the roof.

After Julia left, in his worsening he'd walked and moved as if crushed by some stronger form of gravity. The air had pressed him down, and he could not get out from under it. Some days, he'd curled in a ball on the floor and promised himself that soon, soon, soon—it would be



"Gentlemen, may I suggest peashooters at two paces, rather than peashooters at ten paces?"

his gift to himself—he'd walk up to the barn and lie down with the rifle.

The car was swamped. Or it wasn't, exactly, but the creek had risen and the tires now made a wake. The Mercedes didn't have much acceleration, and the steering felt loose. Billy powered over a high rock, or maybe a tree root—it was hard to see—then, suddenly, precipitately, the wheels dropped in front and the car slammed down and stopped.

Billy pressed the gas. The motor raced and the car shook but didn't move. He gave the engine gas again, and the rear wheels spun, churning the creek and throwing mud. He put the lever in park. Lightning hit, close and loud. Billy reached across the seat, opened the glove compartment, and felt around for the pot. There was the registration paperwork, and there was a pill bottle, his Ativan; and there were his pliers (he'd recently begun preparing the cans, tearing and disfiguring them before shooting), and the joint and the lighter, and the driving gloves that his grandfather had worn and that Billy's father had kept in the car after Billy's grandfather died, and that Billy had left there after his own father died. He took the gloves out and felt how old they were, then worked his hands into them.

On or off—he wasn't sure what felt better.

He put the pills in his shirt pocket, turned off the ignition and the wipers

and the lights. He remembered how the misery had bowed him over: he'd gone everywhere, in those days, with his head down, barrelling rigidly forward, compounding the pain by moving at all; but when he touched himself to find where the pain was coming from he couldn't find the spot.

It was dark in the woods without the headlights. He lit the joint and the car glowed inside. Julia's paintings were in back. She worked with tiny brushes, and he'd wondered, sometimes, when he saw her at it, what she was thinking while she slowly built up the paint on the canvas. He exhaled smoke and watched the saplings at the edge of the creek bend in the surge.

She'd talked to him, as they stood together at the Accademia, gazing at "The Rape of Europa," about the singular cloud hovering over Europa, its complete non-relation to the more natural-seeming clouds that dominate the painting as a whole, the delicate, pale clouds on the horizon, the spire of darker cloud rising up behind the rocks. "Everything is off in Tiepolo," she'd said. "Spatial relations don't cohere. It isn't simply that people fly with angels through the air. What world are we looking at? The paintings at all points lead the eye toward infinity." She might have been anticipating his own predicament, his own crisis of perception, when, nine months later, and again the following year, he'd lain on the

operating table, crying and holding the nurse's hand, while the doctors got him ready. The hospital ceiling was white foam tile with fluorescent lights, and the doctors had looked to Billy as if they were levitating beneath them, beneath the lights—as if they, the doctors, had descended from heaven to perform electroconvulsive therapy.

Someone was coming toward the car. A figure moved between the trees beside the creek. It was a boy carrying an umbrella. He was skinny and wore jeans and no shirt. He stepped down to the bank and splashed across to the car with the umbrella over his head. Billy rolled down the window, and the rain swept in, drenching him.

"Are you the doctor?" the boy said.

"Doctor?" Billy said.

"Luther said he saw car lights. We prayed you'd come. Are you smoking pot?"

"I'm stuck on this rock," Billy said.

"I see that," the boy said.

"I was making good progress, and the next thing I knew the wheels were spinning."

"Creeks aren't the best for driving in a storm," the boy said.

Billy rolled up the car window. He

opened the door and put out his foot. The rock was massive and slick; the creek was about to overtake it. He eased himself out and stood clear of the car. He was still wearing his grandfather's driving gloves, and holding the joint. He lowered one foot into the creek, leaped in, and lunged toward the bank, where his feet sank into the wet earth. "I'm fine," he said. "I made it."

"Don't you have your doctor's bag?" the boy asked.

He looked to be twelve or thirteen, the age of Billy's students, but Billy didn't recognize him.

"It's our mother," the boy said.

"Your mother?"

"She's up that way." He held the umbrella over Billy, who said, "What's wrong with her?"

"It's cancer."

"I'm sorry," Billy said.

"She's up here," the boy said.

There was no need to lock the car or take the key. Billy put the joint in his shirt pocket with the pills—it would get soaked; he should have left it in the car, but there was nothing he could do about that now—and said, "I doubt I'll be able to help her. I want you to know that," and then followed anyway, a few

steps behind the boy, to the place where the boy had crossed the creek on his way down. Billy watched the boy wade through the water, and then slogged in after him. The creek here was deep and fast. The car would be all right or not. Billy leaned against the torrent and struggled up onto the bank, and then he and the boy pushed ahead, slipping in the mud and on the mossy ground, pushing branches away from their faces. Once, Billy stumbled, and the boy held the umbrella over him while he got up. The umbrella was torn and bent, and water poured down it onto Billy's neck.

They went over a rise, and then walked down along what looked like a lane—maybe the land had been cleared at one time—a grassy, open promenade between the trees. The lane led into a hollow. There was a cabin, a shed, really, with a sinking roof and small square windows and a chimney overtaken by ivy. The cabin featured a porch, though not much was left of that, only a few boards elevated on piled stones, with no steps leading up from the yard to the door. The cabin had two front doors, oddly—one beside the other. Billy didn't see an actual road, or a car parked nearby, but there was trash littering the ground.

The boy hopped onto the porch, closed and shook the umbrella, and stomped clay from his shoes. Billy climbed onto the porch—he had to heave himself up—and kicked the red mud off his own heels. The boy pushed open the door on the left. "I brought the doctor," he called inside.

"Show him in," a man answered.

The boy held the door. Billy had to duck under the frame. Water ran from every part of him. The floor inside was missing in places, and the air felt cold, like a draft from underground. Water dripped through the roof. Two windows, one in the rear and one on the side of the cabin, let in faint light—their panes, if they'd ever had any, were gone.

Billy's eyes were adjusting. The cabin seemed bigger from inside than from out. As he came in, he saw, to the left of the door, a tumble of bags and suitcases. A dividing wall ran down the middle of the cabin, splitting the space—that explained the two front doors—and there was an interior door, partway down the dividing wall, leading to the cabin's right-hand side. The room on the left,



the one he was in, might have been ten feet wide by thirteen or fourteen feet deep. The fireplace and the chimney were over in the other half.

Billy saw a bed pushed up under the window at the back of the cabin. A woman was lying in it, and a man stood over her. The man spoke to the boy on the porch, "Caleb, put down that umbrella and get the doctor something to dry himself."

Billy heard the other front door open and close, and he heard the sounds of the boy moving behind the dividing wall. Billy could feel his footfalls traveling through the floorboards.

"She's struggling," the man said to Billy.

The bed was an old iron thing with a mattress on top. The woman had a coat draped over her, and a bundle of clothes for a pillow. Rain spattered the windowsill above the bed but didn't seem to be getting on her.

"We've moved her from corner to corner, all night, except where the floor's out. The water follows her," the man explained.

"It's been quite the storm," Billy said.

He picked his way across the damaged floor to the bedside. His shoes squished.

"Don't fall through," the man said.

The man was bald and hadn't shaved—he wore the shadow of a beard. It was hard to tell if he was old, or maybe just Billy's age, and he spoke with an accent that reminded Billy of the Appalachian mountain speech he'd heard when he was a boy, but which, even so, he couldn't place—it wasn't local.

"I'll be careful," Billy said. He felt as if he were seeing through a fog. The splashing rain on the windowsill made a mist in the air, but it was also the pot, deranging his balance, his sense of perspective.

At the bedside, Billy leaned down and saw the woman shudder beneath the coat that was covering her. Then she was still. The door in the dividing wall opened, and the boy appeared and handed him a damp, dirty piece of cloth, a towel, of sorts.

"Thank you," Billy said.

The man said to the boy, "Go find your brother and tell him the doctor's arrived." The boy left the room through the front door. To Billy, the man said, "We didn't mean to be staying here."

They stood over the woman on the bed. Why were there no chairs? Everything looked wrecked and rotten.

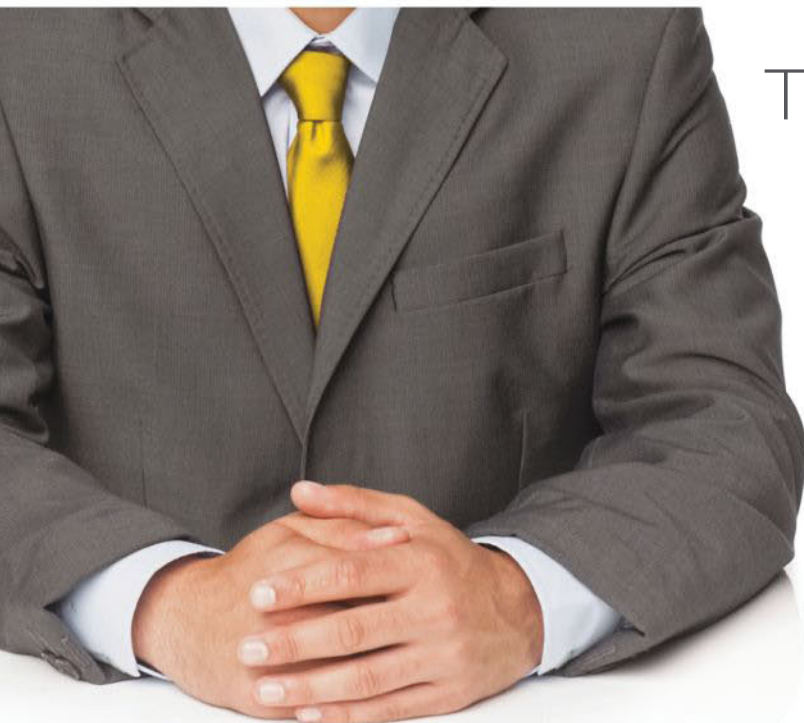
Billy went down on his knees. The man said, "I know there's nothing to be done," and knelt, too.

The woman's eyes were closed and her mouth was open. Her skin seemed stretched, and her lips were parched. The man told Billy that she'd taken neither food nor water for some time. He and Billy faced each other over her. There was a moment when Billy's heart raced. The man studied him. Billy looked down. The man said, "You're not a doctor, are you?"

"No, I'm not. I'm sorry."

"But you're here."

Billy explained, "I teach junior high



The perfect accent for a well-tailored suit.

Whether you want to get ahead at work or aspire to make a more personal impression, a new language can really help you stand out. After all, it's not all about what you wear—it's what you have to say that matters. The Rosetta Stone® approach to language learning is easy and fun. Our method gets you speaking from lesson one—which is key to building confidence that will really get you noticed.

- Start with the basics and build to phrases and conversations.
- Refine your pronunciation with our advanced speech-recognition technology.
- Reinforce what you've learned with available online features, like games and activities with other learners.
- Learn on the go on your tablet or phone with available mobile apps—the ultimate language-learning accessory.

Rosetta Stone

LEVELS 1, 2 & 3

\$399

LEVELS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

\$499

FREE 2-DAY SHIPPING
USE PROMO CODE: nys024



(866) 426-2576

RosettaStone.com/accent



©2014 Rosetta Stone Ltd. All rights reserved. Free 2-day shipping for products shipped within the contiguous United States only. Offer limited to TOTAL® CD-ROM set purchases made directly from Rosetta Stone and cannot be combined with any other offer. Offer valid through August 31, 2014. Rosetta Stone® TOTAL® includes interactive online services that require online access and are offered on a subscription basis for a specified term. Online services must be begun within 6 months of purchase or are subject to forfeiture. Rosetta Stone, TOTAL and other marks used herein are the property of Rosetta Stone Ltd. and are used and/or registered in the United States and other countries.



"Your people will remember you for the money you saved them by not building a pyramid."

over in Crozet. I was on my way to the dump to throw some things out."

"The dump's not up here."

"The road was blocked. I took the creek and wrecked on the rocks."

Billy heard footsteps on the porch. The door opened and the cabin shook as Caleb and his brother came in. The brother was bigger than Caleb, older, and wore a dark shirt. They stood dripping side by side at the foot of the bed, and Billy remembered sitting at his own mother's deathbed, feeding her a mixture of morphine drops and Ativan, squeezing her hand, and telling her he would miss her, while her breaths came farther and farther apart.

The woman on the bed inhaled. Her dark hair was fanned out around her head.

The man told the boys, "I want you two to go down to the creek and bring the doctor's car."

"It's stuck," Caleb said.

"That's what the doctor told me," the man said, and added, "The doctor and I will stay with her."

"The flood may have washed it away," Caleb said.

"Go see. Go on."

The brothers backed away from the bed.

The man asked Billy his name, and, in that moment, Billy could not say—he felt too dizzy to speak. He raised one hand and pulled the coat more neatly and more fully across the woman, tucking the collar around her neck; the tail reached almost to her feet. He saw that she was wearing socks. Her feet were tiny. He was shaking.

He tried to take a deeper breath. He felt his grandfather's gloves shrinking and tightening as they dried on his hands.

"I can help her," he said finally.

Light came dully through the window, and seemed to drip down between the beams overhead. Billy listened to the softening rain. He reached inside his shirt pocket and clumsily got hold of the pill bottle. He said, "This will help her rest."

It took him some time to open the cap. He peered down into the bottle. There was a handful of pills. He thought to take one himself, maybe more than one. But there were so few; he didn't. Instead, he asked the man, "Do you have any water?"

"Water?" the man said.

"Is there a tap?"

"No," the man said. "There's a pump out back."

Billy held the open bottle in one hand. With his other hand, he reached up to the window. He stuck his hand out to catch the rain in the bottle cap. He said to the man, "I want you to watch what I'm doing." Then he held the bottle cap over the woman's mouth. He let a drop, and another, fall.

He shook a pill from the bottle.

"Like this," he said.

He leaned over the woman. He held the pill unsteadily between his thumb and forefinger, between the raised seams at the fingertips of his glove. He tucked the pill beneath the woman's lower lip, near her cheek, and then reached up and caught more rain. "Give her water with the pill."

He shook the cap dry, then put it back on the bottle and told the man to give her four or five a day. "There should be enough here to get her through," he said.

"Thank you for your kindness," the man said.

After a moment, Billy left the bedside. He stepped across the broken floor planks and opened the front door. Thunder rolled in the far distance. He stood on the porch, in the drizzle, and tried to stop trembling.

It isn't the shock. It's the brain seizure, brought on by the shock. Atropine goes in, to keep the heart working. The anesthetic follows, and, after that, succinylcholine, which paralyzes the body. Life support is necessary. A blood-pressure cuff inflated tightly around one ankle keeps the succinylcholine out of the foot, which, when the shock is given, shows the seizure as twitching toes. The head and the heart are wired: electroencephalograph to scalp; electrocardiograph to body. A bite plate goes between the teeth, and an oxygen mask covers the face. The anesthetic has a sweet smell; the patient loses consciousness ten or fifteen seconds after it enters the blood. That done, the doctor places the paddles against the forehead. Optimally, the seizure, the convulsion, should last twenty, thirty, forty seconds. Shorter or longer is less effective. There must be enough anesthetic in the blood to keep the patient unconscious but not so much that it soaks the brain and

dampens the seizure. The anesthetic is short-lived, and the procedure is over in minutes. The anesthetic goes in, blackness comes, and then, suddenly, as if nothing had taken place, the nurse's voice asks, "Can you tell me where you are?"

He heard a noise and saw lights. It was the Mercedes, coming toward him along the avenue of trees.

He stepped down off the porch, into the mud.

The boy was driving. His brother sat beside him. The boy parked in front of Billy, like a valet at a restaurant. He rolled down the window and called, "We brought the car."

"You brought the car," Billy said.

"The flood almost took it down the mountain."

"I thought it surely would have."

"We got it in time," the boy said, and Billy said, "Your mother is sleeping."

The boy got out, leaving the door open for Billy. "Come on," he said to his brother.

The hood and the roof were covered with leaves, and scratches and dents ran along the body of the car, where it had crunched onto the rock.

The boy pointed. "Drive between the trees and don't cross the creek. Follow the side of the mountain. Turn left at the train tracks. There's a busted fence. Go through it and drive across the field. There's an empty house and a pond. Go past the house to the gate. The road is on the other side."

"O.K.," Billy said.

He watched the brothers climb onto the porch, kick the mud off their shoes, and go through the right-side door into the cabin.

Billy swept the leaves off the car with his hand—first the roof, then the hood—and pulled more from under the wipers. He got in the car. The rain had about stopped. He rolled up the window, just in case. His scraped hands hurt beneath the gloves, but he could hold the wheel.

He drove out of the hollow, and the gray sky opened to view. He heard the rushing creek on his left, and kept going. It wasn't long before he had to thread between trees and under branches. He saw only glimpses of sky. A deer jumped in front of the car and scared him, and several times he had to back up

and redirect the Mercedes around fallen logs. He didn't know how far he'd come, but he could feel the slope of the mountain rising beside him on his right.

He was on the tracks before he saw them. They were ancient and broken, buried in the weeds. He turned left and followed them. The Mercedes bumped along over the crooked ties. After a mile or so, he saw the field and the fence that the boy had told him to look for, and, beyond the field, the empty house and the pond. He relaxed his grip on the wheel and took his time crossing the waterlogged grass. He stopped at the gate, put the lever in park, and got out. The gate was chained and locked. He yanked on the lock. "Fuck me," he said, and walked back to the car.

He opened the trunk and retrieved the Browning, unzipped the case, and removed the rifle. He took a bullet from the box and loaded the gun. He walked over and stood about ten feet from the gate, raised the rifle to his shoulder, and aimed. It took one shot. The lock jumped and settled. Billy expelled the shell, walked up to the gate, removed the shattered lock from the chain, unwrapped the chain from the fence, and pushed open the gate. He carried the gun, the chain, and the lock to the car. He put the Browning into its case, and the lock and the chain into the canvas bag full of cans. Before shutting the trunk, he walked back to where he'd fired the gun. It took him a minute to find the shell. He picked it out of the grass, then tossed it into the bag with the other things. Before closing the trunk, he opened his box of comic books. He didn't take any out. He knew what they were, pretty much. He should have given them to the boys. He closed the trunk, took his phone from his pocket, got into the driver's seat, pulled off one of his gloves, and dialed 911. The operator, a woman, said, "What is your emergency?"

"I want to report a dying woman, a woman who's dying," he said.

"Can you tell me your name, sir?"

"My name is Billy French."

"Where are you located?"

Billy looked about. He said, "I thought I was below Afton Mountain, but things don't look right. I'm in a field. There's a vacant house near a pond."

"Can you be more specific, sir?"

Billy said, "She's in a cabin on the mountain. There's a man and two boys. You go through a field and along some rusted tracks. There's a kind of lane or alley or something in the woods."

"I'll need an address, sir."

"There is no address."

"I need to know where the woman is, sir," the operator said.

"I don't know," he said.

"Sir?"

"I'm not sure."

He hung up.

He turned off the phone and put it in the glove compartment. He put the driving glove back on his hand. He buckled his seat belt, steered up to the road, and looked both ways.

It was too late to make the trip to the dump. Mary was coming, and he had to get ready. He'd thought of braising rabbit. Did he still have time for that?

Left or right? He turned the car to the left.

As he drove, he decided that he would keep Julia's paintings a while longer. He could clear some space in the attic, or stow them under a tarp in the barn.

He went over and down a hill. He had the mountains on one side and a cow pasture on the other. The sky above the mountains glowed. Soon the sun would come out and the day would be blue again. He was certain that the road would lead him somewhere familiar if he drove long enough. He rolled down the window and felt the breeze on his face. The damp, shining road curved over the gentle foothills, and the trees alongside seemed to become greener and lusher in the growing light, and before long a car passed him going the other direction; and, a little farther down the road, he did in fact come upon a house that he recognized. He slowed the car and pulled into the driveway. How had he got so far from home? He was all the way up past White Hall.

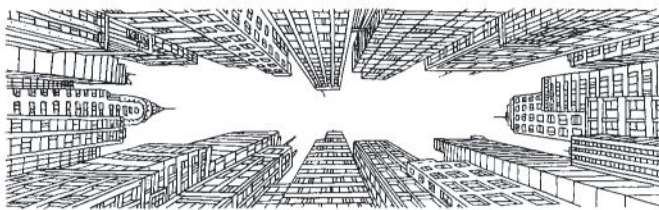
Soft white clouds and a few birds were in the air. The thunder and lightning were over at last.

Billy circled the drive, eased the Mercedes to the road, checked both directions, and went back the way he'd come. ♦

NYR.KR/THISWEEKINFICTION

Donald Antrim discusses his story.

THE CRITICS



BOOKS

THE OUTLAW

The extraordinary life of William S. Burroughs.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

I can feel the heat closing in, feel them out there making their moves.” So starts “Naked Lunch,” the touchstone novel by William S. Burroughs. That hardboiled riff, spoken by a junkie on the run, introduces a mélange of “episodes, misfortunes, and adventures,” which, the author said, have “no real plot, no beginning, no end.” It is worth recalling on the occasion of “Call Me Burroughs” (Twelve), a biography by Barry Miles, an English author of books on popular culture, including several on the Beats. “I can feel the heat” sounded a new, jolting note in American letters, like Allen Ginsberg’s “I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness,” or, for that matter, like T. S. Eliot’s “April is the cruellest month.” (Ginsberg was a close friend; Eliot hailed from Burroughs’s home town of St. Louis and his poetry influenced Burroughs’s style.) In Burroughs’s case, that note was the voice of an outlaw revelling in wickedness. It bragged of occult power: “I can feel,” rather than “I feel.” He always wrote in tones of spooky authority—a comic effect, given that most of his characters are, in addition to being gaudily depraved, more or less conspicuously insane.

“Naked Lunch” is less a novel than a grab bag of friskily obscene comedy routines—least forgettably, an operating-room Grand Guignol conducted by an insouciant quack, Dr. Benway. “Well, it’s all in a day’s work,” Benway says,

with a sigh, after a patient fails to survive heart massage with a toilet plunger. Some early reviewers spluttered in horror. Charles Poore, in the *Times*, calmed down just enough to be forthright in his closing line: “I advise avoiding the book.” “Naked Lunch” was five years in the writing and editing, mostly in Tangier, and aided by friends, including Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac. It first appeared in 1959, in Paris, as “The Naked Lunch” (with the definite article), in an Olympia Press paperback edition, in company with “Lolita,” “The Ginger Man,” and “Sexus.” Its plain green-and-black cover, like the covers of those books, bore the alluring caveat “Not to be sold in U.S.A. or U.K.” (A first edition can be yours, from one online bookseller, for twenty thousand dollars.) The same year, *Big Table*, a Chicago literary magazine, printed an excerpt, and was barred from the mails by the U.S. Postal Service. Fears of suppression delayed a stateside publication of the book until 1962, when Grove Press brought out an expanded and revised edition. It sold so well that Grove didn’t issue a paperback until 1966.

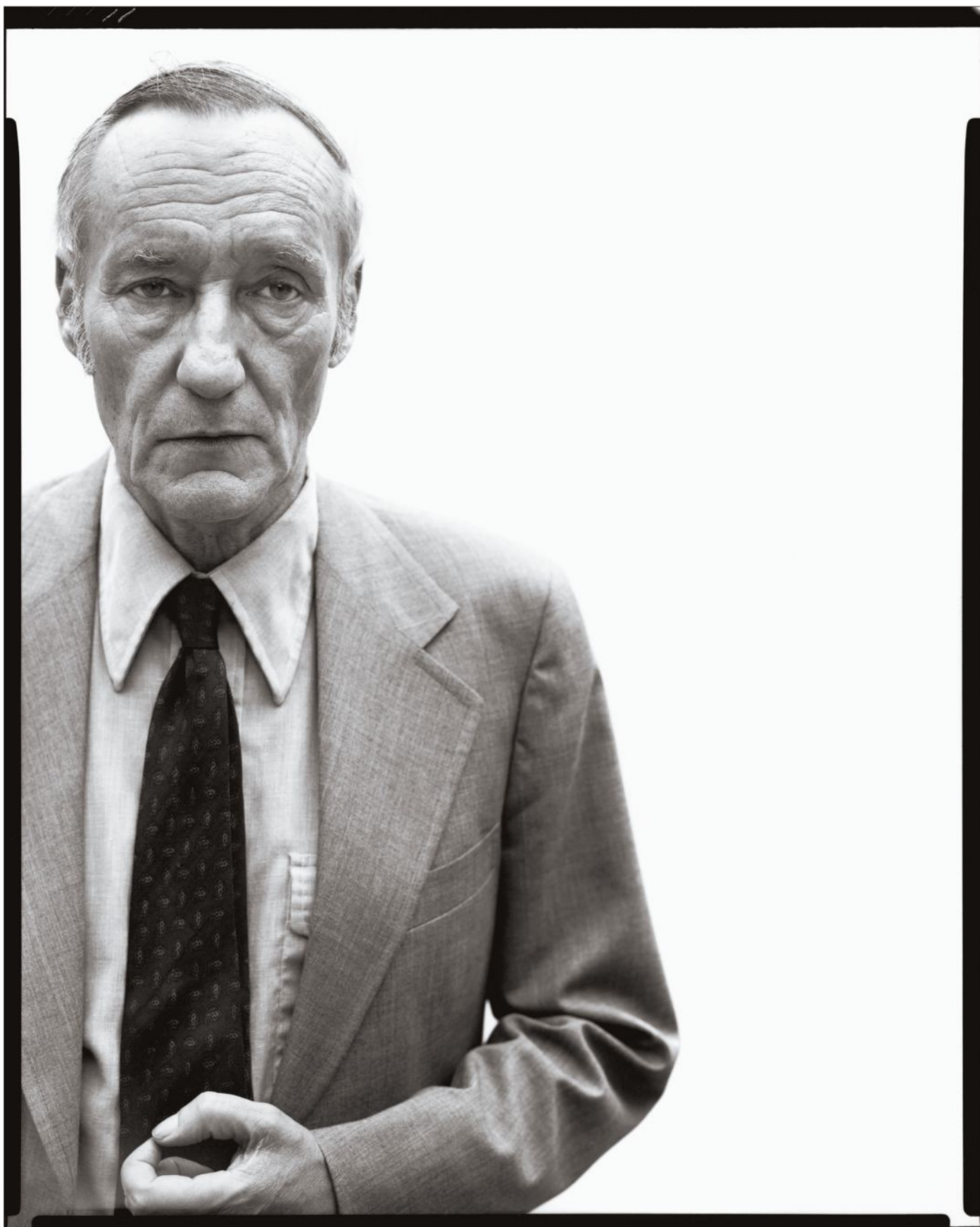
As late as 1965, however, a Boston court confirmed a local ban, despite testimony from Norman Mailer arguing the book’s literary merit. (Another supporter was Mary McCarthy, who, in the *New York Review of Books*, praised Burroughs’s “crankish courage” and compared “Naked Lunch” to “a worm that

you can chop up into sections each of which wriggles off as an independent worm. Or a nine-lived cat. Or a cancer.”) A year later, the Massachusetts Supreme Court reversed the ban, on the ground of “redeeming social value,” a wobbly legal standard in censorship cases then and after. Thus anointed, Burroughs’s ragged masterpiece brought to social notice themes of drug use, homosexuality, hyperbolic violence, and anti-authoritarian paranoia. Those temerities and his disarmingly starchy public mien—he was ever the gent, dressed in suits, with patrician manners and a sepulchral, Missouri-bred and foreign-seasoned voice—assured him a celebrity status that is apt to flare anew whenever another cohort of properly disaffected young readers discovers him. The centenary of Burroughs’s birth, on February 5th, promises much organized attention; an excellent documentary by Howard Brookner, “Burroughs: The Movie” (1983), is about to be re-released.

Contrary to Kerouac’s mythmaking portrayal of him—as Old Bull Lee, in “On the Road”—Burroughs was not a wealthy heir, although his parents paid him an allowance until he was fifty. His namesake grandfather, William Seward Burroughs, perfected the adding machine and left his four children blocks of stock in what later became the Burroughs Corporation. His son Mortimer—the father of William and another, older son—sold his remaining share, shortly before the 1929 crash, for two hundred and seventy-six thousand dollars. Mortimer’s wife, born Laura Lee, never ceased to dote on William; Mortimer deferred to her.

Burroughs started writing at the age of eight, imitating adventure and crime stories. He attended a John Dewey-influenced progressive elementary school in St. Louis and played on the banks of the nearby, sewage-polluted River des Peres. Miles quotes him recalling, in a nice example of his gloatingly dire adjectival style, “During the summer months the smell of shit and coal gas permeated the city, bubbling up from the river’s murky depths to cover the oily iridescent surface with

“Naked Lunch” brought to social notice themes of drug use, homosexuality, hyperbolic violence, and anti-authoritarian paranoia.



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

miasmal mists.” When Burroughs was fourteen, some chemicals he was tinkering with exploded, severely injuring his hand; treatment for the pain alerted him to the charms of morphine. He then spent two unhappy years at the exclusive Los Alamos Ranch School for boys, in New Mexico, memories of which informed his late novel “The Wild Boys” and other fantasies of all-male societies.

Burroughs was a brilliant student, graduating from Harvard with honors, in English, in 1936. He sojourned often in Europe; in Vienna, he briefly studied medicine and frequented the gay demi-monde. He had become aware at puberty of an attraction to boys, and had been so embarrassed by a diary he kept of a futile passion for a fellow-student that he destroyed it and stopped writing anything not school-required for several years. Later, in psychoanalysis, he traced his sexual anxiety to a repressed memory: when he was four years old, his nanny forced him to perform oral sex on her boyfriend. The tumultuous experience of having his first serious boyfriend—in New York, in 1940—triggered what he laconically called a “Van Gogh kick”: he cut off the end joint of his left pinkie.

After a short hitch in the Army, in 1942, Burroughs received a psychiatric discharge. He then worked briefly as a private detective, in Chicago, where, however, he enjoyed his longest period of regular employment—nine months—as a pest exterminator. His delectable memoir of the job, “Exterminator!,” the title story of a collection published in 1973, employs a tone, typical of him, that begs to be called bleak nostalgia: “From a great distance I see a cool remote naborhood blue windy day in April sun cold on your exterminator there climbing the grey wooden outside stairs.”

The creation story of the Beats is by now literary boilerplate. Burroughs moved to New York in 1943, along with David Kammerer, a childhood friend who had travelled with him in Europe, and Lucien Carr, an angelically handsome Columbia University student whom Kammerer was stalking. Ginsberg, a fellow-student, was enthralled by Carr, and later dedicated “Howl” to

him. Kerouac, who had dropped out of Columbia and served in the Navy, returned to the neighborhood in 1944. With Carr as the catalyst, and Burroughs, whom Kerouac goaded to resume writing, a charismatic presence, the Beat fellowship was complete.

Carr ended Kammerer’s pursuit of him late on the night of August 13, 1944, by stabbing him and dumping his body in the Hudson River. (The new movie “Kill Your Darlings” tells



the tale in only somewhat embellished fashion.) Burroughs then replaced Carr as the group’s mentor. According to Miles, Kerouac and Ginsberg didn’t yet know that Burroughs was gay, and played matchmaker by introducing him to Joan Vollmer, an erudite, twice-married free spirit with a baby daughter, Julie, of uncertain paternity. Burroughs and Vollmer became inseparable and, they believed, telepathic soul mates, but he continued to have sexual encounters with men. In 1946, he started on heroin. (An uncle, Horace Burroughs, whom he idealized but never met, was a morphine addict who committed suicide in 1915, when the drug was legally restricted.) Vollmer favored Benzedrine.

Postwar New York updated Burroughs’s trove of criminal argot. He saw a lot of Herbert Huncke, a junkie and a jack-of-all-scams—whom Ginsberg called “the basic originator of the ethos of Beat and the conceptions of Beat and Square”—and other habitués of Times Square, whose doppelgängers roam the fiction that he had not yet begun to write. In 1946, Vollmer became pregnant. Burroughs, who could be startlingly moralistic, abhorred abortion; and so a son, Billy, joined the family. Envisioning himself as a gentleman farmer, Burroughs had acquired a spread in East Texas, where he cultivated marijuana, though not very well. He drove a harvest to New York with

Kerouac’s “On the Road” icon, Neal Cassady—whom he disdained as, in Miles’s words, “a cheap con man”—but it was too green to turn a profit. After a drug bust in New Orleans, Burroughs jumped bail and settled in Mexico City. For three years, he took drugs, drank, picked up boys, hosted friends, and cut a sorry figure as a father. (With Vollmer also drinking heavily, the children’s lot was grim.) A Mexican scholar of the Beats, Jorge García-Robles, details the louche milieu in another new book, “The Stray Bullet: William S. Burroughs in Mexico” (Minnesota). He writes that Burroughs found the country “grotesque, sordid, and malodorous, but he liked it.”

During those years, Burroughs also wrote his first book, “Junky.” A pulp paperback published in 1953, under the pen name William Lee, it recounts his adventures through underworlds from New York to Mexico City. It features terse, crackling reportage, with echoes of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. The narrator’s first meeting with “Herman” (a pseudonym for Huncke) isn’t auspicious: “Waves of hostility and suspicion flowed out from his large brown eyes like some sort of television broadcast.” “Junky” attracted no critical notice. Burroughs wrote two other books in the early fifties that weren’t published until after “Naked Lunch.” “Queer”—centering, in Mexico City, on one of his arduous opiate withdrawals and a frustrating romance with a young man—saw print only in 1985. The most emotional work in a generally icy oeuvre, it was written around the time, in 1951, of the most notorious event in Burroughs’s life: his fatal shooting of Vollmer, in a drunken game of “William Tell.”

García-Robles and Miles agree in their accounts of Vollmer’s death. At a friend’s apartment, she balanced a glass on her head, at Burroughs’s behest. He had contracted a lifelong mania for guns from duck-hunting excursions with his father, and was never unarmed if he could help it. He fired a pistol from about nine feet away. The bullet struck Vollmer in the forehead, at the hairline. She was twenty-eight. He was devastated, but readily parroted a story supplied by his lawyer, a flamboyant

character named Bernabé Jurado: the gun went off accidentally. Released on bail, Burroughs might have faced trial had not Jurado, in a fit of road rage, shot a socially prominent young man and, when his victim died of septicemia, fled the country. Burroughs did the same, and a Mexican court convicted him in absentia of manslaughter, sentencing him to two years. In the introduction to *“Queer,”* Burroughs disparages his earlier work and adds, “I am forced to the appalling conclusion that I would never have become a writer but for Joan’s death,” because it initiated a spiritual “lifelong struggle, in which I have had no choice except to write my way out.” García-Robles avidly endorses this indeed appalling consolation, casting Vollmer as a sainted martyr to literature.

Miles relates that Burroughs had told Carr, after he killed Kammerer, “You shouldn’t blame yourself at all, because he asked for it, he demanded it.” Some of Burroughs’s friends, including Ginsberg, opted for an analogous understanding of Vollmer’s death as an indirect suicide, which she had willed to happen. Burroughs’s craving for exculpation eventually settled on the certainty that an “Ugly Spirit” had deflected his aim. As a child, Burroughs had been infused with superstitions by his mother and by the family’s Irish maid, and all his life he believed fervently in almost anything except conventional religion: telepathy, demons, alien abductions, and all manner of magic, including crystal-ball prophecy and efficacious curses. For several years in the nineteen-sixties, he enthusiastically espoused Scientology, in which he attained the lofty rank of “Clear,” before being excommunicated for questioning the organization’s Draconian discipline. And he furnished any place he lived in for long with an “orgone accumulator”—the metal-lined wooden booth invented by the rogue psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich for capturing and imparting cosmic energy. Miles begins “Call Me Burroughs” with a scene of a sweat-lodge ceremony conducted by a Navajo shaman to finally expel the Ugly Spirit, in Kansas, in 1992. The heat and smoke caused Burroughs to ask to truncate the proceedings.

Vollmer’s parents took Julie into their home, in Albany, and she dropped

out of her stepfather’s life. Burroughs sent Billy to be raised by Laura and Mortimer, in St. Louis, and joined them, in 1952, after they moved to Palm Beach, Florida. But he didn’t stay long; he set out to work on his third book, *“The Yage Letters,”* a quest through the jungles of Colombia for a fabled hallucinogen that, he had written in the last sentence of *“Junky,”* “may be the final fix.” He found and duly lauded the drug, but the journey seems its own reward, making for fine low-down travel writing. He needs a motorboat to take him upriver:

Sure you think it’s romantic at first but wait til you sit there five days onna sore ass sleeping in Indian shacks and eating hoka and some hunka nameless meat like the smoked pancreas of a two-toed sloth and all night you hear them fiddle-fucking with the motor—they got it bolted to the porch—“buuuuurt spluuuu . . . ut . . . spluuuu . . . ut,” and you can’t sleep hearing the motor start and die all night and then it starts to rain. Tomorrow the river will be higher.

The book wasn’t published until 1963. In the meantime, two volumes of a trilogy, *“The Soft Machine”* and *“The Ticket That Exploded,”* came out, soon followed by the third, *“Nova Express.”* These were written largely in London and Paris, between trips to Tangier, where Burroughs had lived for several

years, starting in 1954. They advanced his claim (with some precedents in Dadaism and Surrealism) to literary innovation: the “cut-up” technique of assembling texts from scissored fragments of his own and others’ prose. The trilogy is a sort of fractured science fiction, telling of underground struggles against forces of “Control”—the shape-shifting, all-purpose *bête noire* of Burroughs’s world view. It is easier to read than, say, *“Finnegans Wake,”* but hard going between such bursts of dazzle as the “resistance message”:

Calling partisans of all nations—Cut word lines—Shift linguals—Vibrate tourists—Free doorways—Word falling—Photo falling—Break through in Grey Room.

A second trilogy—*“The Cities of the Red Night,”* *“The Place of Dead Roads,”* and *“The Western Lands”*—published between 1981 and 1987, reverts to fairly normal narration, filled with scenes of sexual and military atrocity in a succession of mythic cities. Its heroes include Hassan-i Sabbah, the historical leader of a sometimes homicidal sect in eleventh- and twelfth-century Persia. “Nothing is true, everything is permitted,” Sabbah is supposed to have said (and was so quoted by Nietzsche). The prose is nimble and often ravishing, but marred by the author’s



“A ninja is silent as darkness, so—tippy-toes, people, tippy-toes!”

monotonous obsessions and gross tics—notably, a descent into ferocious misogyny, casting women as “the Sex Enemy.”

The biography, after its eventful start, becomes rather like an odyssey by subway in the confines of Burroughs’s self-absorption, with connecting stops in New York, where he lived, in the late nineteen-seventies, on the Bowery, in the locker room of a former Y.M.C.A., and, returning to the Midwest, in the congenial university town of Lawrence, Kansas, where he spent his last sixteen years, and where he died, of a heart attack, in 1997, at the age of eighty-three. Miles’s always efficient, often elegant prose eases the ride, but a reader’s attention may grow wan for want of sun. Most of the characters run to type: dissolute quasi-aristocratic friends, interchangeable boys, sycophants in steadily increasing numbers. Names parade, from Paul Bowles and Samuel Beckett (who, meeting Burroughs at a party in Paris, denounced the cut-up method as “plumbing”), through Mick Jagger and Andy Warhol, to Laurie Anderson and Kurt Cobain. Most prominent is Brion Gysin, a mediocre artist of calligraphic abstractions. Burroughs met him in Tangier, in 1955, and bonded with him in Paris at a dump in the Latin Quarter, known as the Beat Hotel, whose motherly owner adored literary wanderers.

Gysin and Burroughs deemed each other clairvoyant geniuses. They collaborated on cut-ups, extending the technique to audiotape, and foresaw commercial gold for Gysin’s “Dreamachine,” a gizmo that emitted flickering light to mildly hypnotic effect. It flopped. Burroughs took to making art himself, especially after Gysin’s death, in 1986: he created hundreds of pictures, on wood, by shooting at containers of paint. These have been widely exhibited and sold. They are terrible. Burroughs had no visual equivalent of the second-nature formality that buoys even his most chaotic writing.

Ginsberg comes off radiantly well in Miles’s telling, as a loyally forgiving friend. He tolerated Burroughs’s amatory passion for him, which developed in the fifties, as long as it lasted. Much of Burroughs’s best writing originated

in letters to the poet, who took a guiding editorial hand in it. It was Ginsberg who hatched the title “Naked Lunch,” by a lucky mistake, having misread the phrase “naked lust” in a Burroughs manuscript. (I think of Ezra Pound’s editorial overhaul of “He Do the Police in Different Voices”—Eliot’s first title for “The Waste Land.”) Ginsberg effectively sacrificed his own literary development, which sagged after “Kaddish” (1961), to publicizing his friends and, of course, himself. Burroughs disparaged his puppylike attendance in Bob Dylan’s entourage. (Burroughs’s aloofness, like his obsession with mind control, reflected memories of a reviled uncle, Ivy Ledbetter Lee, a pioneering public-relations expert whose clients included John D. Rockefeller and the Nazi Party.) But Burroughs liked his own growing fame. He gave readings to full houses. Appearances on “Saturday Night Live,” in 1981, and in Gus Van Sant’s “Drugstore Cowboy,” in 1989, spread the popularity of his gentleman-junkie cool.

The biography’s most painful passages involve Billy, who both idolized and, for excellent reasons, resented Burroughs. What might you be like, had your father killed your mother and then abandoned you? In 1963, when Billy was sixteen, Burroughs, bowing to his parents’ insistence, briefly took charge of the troubled lad in Tangier. The main event of the visit was Billy’s introduction to drugs, condoned by Burroughs. In and out of hospitals and rehabs, Billy wrote three novels, of which the first, “Speed” (1970), detailing the ordeal of amphetamine addiction, showed literary promise. In 1976, father and son reunited at the Naropa Institute, in Boulder, where Ginsberg and other poets had initiated a program in experimental writing, and where Burroughs was teaching, with crotchety flair. Billy, who had received a liver transplant for cirrhosis, engaged in spectacular self-destruction. Miles writes, “Billy wanted Bill to witness the mess he was in; he was paying him back.” Billy died in 1981, at the age of thirty-three. Burroughs seemed to regret only that he had not sufficiently explained the Ugly Spirit to him. He responded to his son’s death by varying

his current methadone habit with a return to heroin.

“Virtually all of Burroughs’s writing was done when he was high on something,” Miles writes. The drugs help account for the hollowness of his voices, which jabber, joke, and rant like ghosts in a cave. He had no voice of his own, but a fantastic ear and verbal recall. His prose is a palimpsest of echoes, ranging from Eliot’s “Preludes” and “Rhapsody on a Windy Night” (lines like “Midnight shakes the memory / As a madman shakes a dead geranium” are Burroughsian before the fact) to Raymond Chandler’s marmoreal wisecracks and Herbert Huncke’s jive. I suspect that few readers have made it all the way through the cut-up novels, but anyone dipping into them may come away humming phrases. His palpable influence on J. G. Ballard, William Gibson, and Kathy Acker is only the most obvious effect of the kind of inspiration that makes a young writer drop a book and grab a pen, wishing to emulate so sensational a sound. It’s a cold thrill. While always comic, Burroughs is rarely funny, unless you’re as tickled as he was by such recurrent delights as boys in orgasm as they are executed by hanging.

Some critics, including Miles, have tried to gussy up Burroughs’s antinomian morality as Swiftian satire. Burroughs, however, wages literary war not on perceptible real-world targets but against suggestions that anyone is responsible for anything. Though never cruel in his personal conduct, he was, in principle, exasperated with values of constraint. A little of “Nothing is true, everything is permitted” goes a long way for many readers, including me. But there’s no gainsaying a splendor as berserk as that of a Hieronymus Bosch painting. When you have read Burroughs, at whatever length suffices for you, one flank of your imagination of human possibility will be covered for good and all. ♦

LOVE IS A WONDERFUL THING DEPT.

From the Times.

Pastor Bob Wilson, a United Methodist minister, is to officiate at a nondenominational ceremony incorporating Jewish traditions, including a canopy and the breaking of a glass wrapped in a Pittsburgh Steelers towel.

FULL FATHOM FIVE

Derek Walcott's seascapes.

BY ADAM KIRSCH

*Walcott in St. Lucia, in 1995, three years after he won the Nobel Prize in Literature.*

A poet who comes to consciousness on a small island—like Derek Walcott, who was born on St. Lucia in 1930—is doomed, or privileged, to spend a lifetime writing about the sea. The subject matter for Walcott is as consistent and inescapable, potentially as monotonous, as the five beats in a pentameter line. But, like so many great poets before him, he shows that constraints do not have to starve the imagination; they can also nourish it.

What is the sea to Walcott? In the more than six decades covered by “The Poetry of Derek Walcott” (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)—a rich and beautiful new selection of his life’s work, edited by Glyn Maxwell—it can be anything, like matter itself. For the teen-age poet, making his debut in the pamphlet *25 Poems*, the sea is “the rounded / Breasts of the milky bays.” In his twenties, Walcott watches as “the green wave spreads on the printless beach” and hears “the sound of water gnawing at bright stone.” In his thirties, the water becomes “ocean’s surplined choirs / entering its nave, to a censer / of swung mist,” or else “this sheer light, this clear / infinite, boring, paradisaal sea.”

The years pass and the images accumulate: “pages of the sea / are a book left open by an absent master”; “the pleats of the shallows are neatly creased / and decorous and processional.” The proliferation continues until the very last pages of the book, when Walcott, who is now an ailing man in his eighties, gives thanks for the balm of “the sea’s recitation re-entering my head.”

Of the Caribbean, Walcott writes:

Those who require vision, complexity,
tire of its distressing
limits: sea, sand, scorching sky.

But we require from the world only what we can’t supply from within ourselves, and a poet who can work so many transformations on the sea—and on the sky and the sand as well—never has to tire of it. Language becomes a means of mastering his surroundings, enabling him to gain an almost magical power over the elements; language is more real to him than reality itself. A few times in his career, Walcott has experimented with seeing himself as Robinson Crusoe. “The Castaway” was the title of his 1965 collection, and it was an

inevitable role for a man who sometimes finds himself yearning to get off the island of his birth: “The starved eye devours the seascape for the morsel / Of a sail.” But, if Walcott is a literary castaway, he is not Crusoe but Prospero, and his St. Lucia is an isle “full of noises, / Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.”

These magician’s powers are rare enough in twentieth-century poetry. But what is even rarer than the ability is the desire to write, as Walcott does, with such abundance and felicity. For, if there is one thing that defines modern poetry in English, it is the distrust of eloquence—the kind of intoxicating verbal richness that was the particular glory of nineteenth-century English poetry, from Keats to Tennyson to Swinburne. This way of writing seemed to have been killed in the First World War, the victim of an attack on two fronts. Politically, eloquence came to be seen as an accomplice of the recruiting poster, a tool for luring young men to their death for an illusory glory. War poets like Wilfred Owen turned the texture of their verse away from the fullness and splendor of the Victorians, priding themselves on speaking bluntly and seeing clearly.

At around the same time, the Modernists, led by T. S. Eliot, were teaching a new generation of writers to think of Victorian rhetoric as swampy, imprecise, and self-pleasuring, evidence of the decay of poetry’s mental powers. The sharp fragment, “The Waste Land” declared, rather than the sonnet or the dreamy ode, would be the twentieth century’s form. In 1930, the year Walcott was born, W. H. Auden—who himself had the gift of eloquence and wrestled with the proper way of employing it—published his first book, in which he sounded the astringent and alienating tones of the future. It might have seemed, in that year, that no one would ever again write English like this:

“Black is the beauty of the brightest day,”
black the circumference around her
rings
that radiate from black invisibly,
black is the music which her round
mouth sings,
black is the backcloth on which diadems
shine.

This is Walcott in “Oceano Nox,” from his book “The Arkansas Testa-

cover of "The Poetry of Derek Walcott" bears one of his landscapes. In "Another Life," an autobiographical sequence, published in 1973, that forms the first major peak in his work, he describes how his first artistic ambition was to paint. Decades later, in "Tiepolo's Hound" (2000), painting is still at the center of Walcott's imagination, as he braids his reminiscences of looking at art with a biographical narrative of the Caribbean-born painter Camille Pissarro. (Maxwell's selection leaves out most of the Pissarro material, concentrating on the memoiristic sections.)

The visual and the literary make uneasy partners, since they operate according to different temporal regimes: everything at once versus one thing after another. As a result, when a poet takes to describing what he sees, the result can be boring and static. Visual descriptions are usually the most skippable parts of any poem. But Walcott avoids this trap, by giving us not merely what is seen but the rhythm of seeing itself. His sentences can be confounding at first reading, because they extend on and on, using prepositions as conjunctions, spilling over line breaks, until they give a sense of bursting the limits of syntax:

The teak plant was as stiff as rubber near
the iron railing
of the pink verandah at whose center was
an arch
that entered a tenebrous, overstuffed
salon with the usual sailing
ship in full course through wooden
waves, shrouds stiff with starch.

By combining the grammar of vision with the freedom of metaphor, Walcott produces a beautiful style that is also a philosophical style. People perceive the world on dual channels, Walcott's verse suggests, through the senses and through the mind, and each is constantly seeping into the other. The result is a state of perpetual magical thinking, a kind of Alice in Wonderland world where concepts have bodies and landscapes are always liable to get up and start talking:

Blessed are the small farms conjugating
Horace,
and the olive trees as twisted as Ovid's
syntax,
Virgilian twilight on the hides of cattle
and the small turreted castles on the
Tuscan slopes.

Many poets, approaching Florence by train, might think of the classical

world, peeking out from beneath the present day like the traces of a palimpsest. Walcott's boldness is to go beyond reminiscence to identification: his Italy is made up of language; its texture is not sights and smells but remembered lines of verse. This may be the experience of a provincial visiting the capital, a place he has read about and thoroughly imagined before he gets there, but Walcott has always been proudly "convinced of the power of provincialism." Where Proust found the contrast between his imagined Balbec or Venice and the actual places to be a stinging disappointment, Walcott's trust in his own imaginative powers allows him to vault over that moment of disillusion. In a sense, he does not see the place at all, because he has already remade it in his own image. For this reason, it could be said that Walcott, the postcolonial writer par excellence, has an imperial imagination.

Empire, in particular the British Empire, has always been one of the restless ghosts of Walcott's verse. To the young poet, growing up on an island that was still under British rule, education meant reading the English and European classics. But, like postcolonial and minority writers throughout the English-speaking world, Walcott was faced with the question of whether this literature was his by right. The fact that he has both European and African ancestry made the subject especially fraught, and it elicits from Walcott some of his most raw and confessional writing. What does the poet do when the landscape of his life doesn't match the one in his books? At first, Walcott suggests, he longs to be changed:

from childhood he'd considered palms
ignobler than imagined elms,
the breadfruit's splayed
leaf coarser than the oak's,
he had prayed
nightly for his flesh to change,
his dun flesh peeled white by her
lightning strokes!

"The Poetry of Derek Walcott" shows that he has always strived to overcome this sense of racial and geographical alienation. The question of whether the Caribbean can sustain a great poetry was of the first importance to a man who knew, from very early

Generational Spice

Enjoy a lively retirement community in one of the nation's best intergenerational cities... as cited by MetLife Foundation and Generations United.

KENDAL®
at Oberlin
Together, transforming the experience of aging.

1-800-548-9469 • kao.kendal.org

www.dallaspridgenjewelry.com

DALLAS PRIDGEN JEWELRY

One At A Time, By Hand



1 inch

Juliet's Heart
Sterling Silver \$98
14k Gold \$998

Unconditionally
Guaranteed
1-800-477-1856

**American-made
furniture of the
highest quality.**



SCARBOROUGH &
FREEPORT, MAINE
866-883-3366
www.chiltons.com



**FEBRUARY
SALE**
Going On Now

SILVER HILL HOSPITAL
RESTORING MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1931

**Chronic Pain and
Recovery Center**

Adults with chronic pain co-occurring with
substance misuse or psychiatric disorders

www.silverhillhospital.org
New Canaan, CT • (866) 548-4455



Greek Fisherman's Cap \$32

85% Wool, 15% Nylon • Sizes 6¾-8
Black, Navy, Grey, Brown
Check or Credit Card w/Exp. Date.
Add \$4 shipping plus \$1 each additional
www.johnhelmer.com

John Helmer • Est. 1921 • (503) 223-4976
969 S.W. Broadway, Dept. N024 • Portland, OR 97205

Canoe Canada's Arctic

Fly-in canoe trips on the remote tundra rivers of North America's last great wilderness. Herds of caribou, muskoxen, white wolves, moose and grizzlies. Wildlife biologist guide. Operating since 1974.

CANOE ARCTIC INC.

Box 130, Fort Smith, NT X0E 0P0, Canada (867) 872-2308

www.canoeartctic.com



on, that his destiny was to be a great poet. In "Return to Dennery, Rain," Walcott finds his native climate conspiring against him: "So azure and indifferent was this air, / So murmurous of oblivion the sea, / That any human action seemed a waste / The place seemed born for being buried there."

Yet Walcott was too proud, and too rooted, and too humane, to endorse this feeling to the point of publicly rejecting his homeland. To do so would have been to follow in the footsteps of V. S. Naipaul, the other Caribbean Nobel laureate of Walcott's generation, who makes repeated cameos in his poetry as a symbol of the path that must not be taken. The man referred to in one poem as "V.S. Nightfall" reappears in "White Egrets," Walcott's latest collection, as "that bastard":

all the endeavours
of our lives are damned to nothing by
the tiring
catalogue of a vicious talent that severs
itself from every attachment, a bitterness
whose
poison is praised for its virulence.

Walcott vows to offer "a genuine benediction as his is a genuine curse"; "to curse your birthplace," he writes in "Midsummer" (1984), "is the final evil." To convert curse into blessing, as God did to Balaam in the Bible, Walcott seized on the very things the Caribbean

lacked—the ancient history and epic literature on which poetic imagination feeds—and insisted that their absence was the greatest gift of all. "Where are your monuments, your battles, martyrs?" he imagines being asked in "The Sea Is History," and he replies by pointing, once more, to the sea: "these groined caves with barnacles / pitted like stone / are our cathedrals." If Italian farms can conjugate Latin, Caribbean caves can summon Notre-Dame. Nature and culture, for Walcott, are not opposites but complements, each summoning up the memory of the other.

A poetic style that is as individual and omnivorous as Walcott's has a tendency to render its subject matter less urgent and sometimes even less detectable. Walcott was strongly influenced by Robert Lowell in the nineteen-sixties, and "Another Life" can be seen as his version of Lowell's "Life Studies." But even then Walcott was nowhere near as self-revealing as Lowell, and as time went on he would become less so. Many late-twentieth-century poets' biographies can be read in their books, but not Walcott's. Although, over the years, he mentions wives and daughters, the death of his mother, stints of living in New York and Boston, it is possible to read his collected works without gaining a strong sense of what he is like as a

person. The only vices he confesses to in his work are pride and, occasionally and obliquely, lust—as in "Sea Grapes," where he compares himself to the wandering Odysseus:

that father and husband's
longing, under gnarled sour grapes, is
like the adulterer hearing Nausicaa's
name
in every gull's outcry.

Neither does Walcott's poetry offer an almanac of his times, despite a few occasional poems about Bobby Kennedy and Barack Obama. The real events of his life seem to take place on the page, in the discovery of new images and metaphors.

The most significant turning point in Walcott's career came when he was able to embrace this fact about his style, and to dispense with the armature of subject matter almost completely. Some of his early poems work as anthology pieces, conscious statements on important themes—the claims of Africa, in "A Far Cry from Africa"; the legacy of the British Empire, in "Ruins of a Great House." But more often one feels that the poems of the nineteen-sixties and seventies are constrained by their conceits—that we are less interested in the sailor Shabine, or the unnamed political leader whose monologue is heard in "The Star-Apple Kingdom," than in the independent life of Walcott's language. The same holds true of "Omeros," his book-length poem of 1990, the only volume not represented in the new collection. The idea of re-writing Homer for the New World, translating him from the Aegean to the Caribbean, suits Walcott's preoccupations perfectly, but the momentum of the long poem is not sustained, and eventually it lapses from narrative back into lyric.

In middle age, Walcott seems to have recognized these limitations. "Today I respect structure, the antithesis of conceit," he announces in "Midsummer." And it is no coincidence that "Midsummer" is Walcott's best single book, the place where readers new to him should start. The untitled poems that make up this sequence have no argument or "conceit" except the poet's own inspiration. What they have instead is a solid but flexible "structure"—blocks of loose pentameter verse, irregularly



"You can pack this back up now."

rhymed, which can expand to fit whatever he notices:

On the dewy Savannah, gently revolved
by their grooms,
snorting, delicate-ankled racehorses
exercise,
as delicate-ankled as brown smoke from
the bakeries.

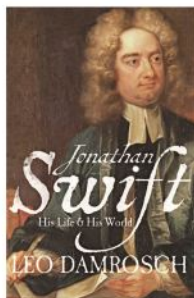
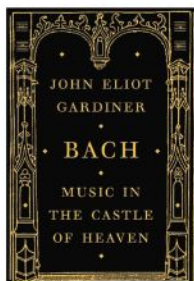
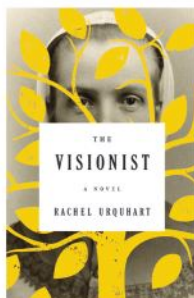
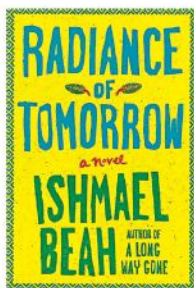
“Midsummer” sets the pattern that Walcott continued to follow in most of his later work. “The Bounty,” “The Prodigal,” and “White Egrets,” in particular, are long sequences, written in virtuosically roughened pentameter lines, which follow the poet as he travels the world and returns home:

On the warm stones of Florence
I subtly alter to a Florentine
till the sun passes, in London
I am pierced by fog, and shaken from
reflection
in Venice, a printed page in the sun
on which a cabbage-white unfolds, a
bookmark.

This is the transparency not just of the chameleon but of the painter, who sees without being seen. And in his late poems Walcott often seems like Monet, painting the same haystack again and again, finding new surprises every time. Europe and the Caribbean, the Old World and the New, and the relationship between them—these are no longer tormenting questions for the aging poet but accustomed themes that allow for endless improvisations. Thus we find Walcott abroad, observing that “Geneva was the color of a statesman’s hair,” or in a dream city where “two green bronze horses / guard a locked square like bookends.” Back home, he notices “how spray will burst / like a cat scrambling up the side of a wall, / gripping, sliding, surrendering.”

The final pages of “The Poetry of Derek Walcott” are full of intimations of death; like Prospero, Walcott could say, “Every third thought shall be my grave.” But he remains a poet of astonishing inventiveness—“The perpetual ideal is astonishment,” he writes. Perhaps the greatest proof of his achievement is that, after a lifetime of remaking the world in language, Walcott can force even death to submit to the power of his metaphors:

Accept it all with level sentences
with sculpted settlement that sets
each stanza,
learn how the bright lawn puts up
no defenses
against the egret’s stabbing questions
and the night’s answer. ♦



BRIEFLY NOTED

RADIANCE OF TOMORROW, by Ishmael Beah (*Sarah Crichton Books*). This first novel by a celebrated memoirist and former child soldier from Sierra Leone is an unsparing study of displacement and rehabilitation. When residents of a war-ravaged African town return to their land after a seven-year absence, they find houses burned to the ground and human bones strewn in pathways. Beah’s protagonist is a young father who tries to make a living as a teacher in a place rife with corruption and despair. Just as his community begins “shedding its image of war,” a mining company threatens to disrupt the newfound peace. “Beauty causes the wretchedness of this place,” the novel tells us, but though its message is powerful, it feels overly didactic.

THE VISIONIST, by Rachel Urquhart (*Little, Brown*). In this debut novel, set in New England in the eighteen-forties, a young woman, Polly Kimball, helps her family escape an abusive father by setting fire to their farm. Fearing repercussions, her mother sends Polly and her brother to a Shaker settlement. There the girl is mistaken for a visionist—someone capable of mystical visions—and she becomes the object of both admiration and suspicion. The story unfolds in shifting points of view, moving from Polly to a Shaker friend and the fire inspector who is investigating the blaze at the farm. Although the narrative wanders, it contains many exciting twists.

BACH, by John Eliot Gardiner (*Knopf*). Was Bach “the goody-two-shoes of legend” or a “reformed teenage thug”? Gardiner, a conductor famous for extensive recordings of Bach’s choral works, suggests the latter, citing evidence of general bad behavior among the youth of Eisenach, Bach’s home town. This book attempts to humanize the composer, too often seen as austere and a little dull, “a bewigged, jowly old German Capellmeister.” The biographical discussion is fascinating, if at times speculative. More persuasive is Gardiner’s attempt to know the man through his music, though a largely choral focus scants important parts of Bach’s output, such as the keyboard works. Still, Gardiner writes with an infectious passion, and he succeeds in proving that, “emphatically, Bach the man was not a bore.”

JONATHAN SWIFT, by Leo Damrosch (*Yale*). Swift “liked to be mysterious toward everyone,” Damrosch writes, in a biography that aims at sweeping away misconceptions, many of which were encouraged by the man himself. The result might have made for tedious reading, but Damrosch writes with wit and constructs a compelling portrait of the Irish clergyman, whose satires delighted and scandalized eighteenth-century Britain. Swift, we learn, loved fruit, abhorred strong odors, and had a high, grating speaking voice. Contradiction defined his character: he detested Ireland but did much to forge its national identity. Swift’s politics were staunchly Anglican and “more Tory than Whig,” but he was able to see beyond them. As he once wrote, “I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities, and all my love is towards individuals.”

THE OPERA LAB

The Prototype Festival rethinks a venerable genre.

BY ALEX ROSS



Jonathan Blalock in Gregory Spears's "Paul's Case," based on the Willa Cather story.

Cashiers at a supermarket endure another day of monotony. A war reporter is visited by the spectre of the slain American soldier whose corpse he photographed. A Pakistani woman fights for justice after being ritualistically raped. An effete young man whose proclivities put him at odds with his family commits suicide. No one will accuse the composers participating in the Prototype Festival—which, in mid-January, presented half a dozen new operatic pieces around New York—of ignoring contemporary reality. Happily, Prototype offered musical vitality alongside social pertinence. The recent demise of New York City Opera has been widely, and fittingly, lamented, yet in an eleven-day period Prototype managed to uncover more new work of substance than City Opera was able to do in the past decade or more.

The festival came into being last year, when the alternative-opera impresario Beth Morrison joined forces with Kristin Marting and Kim Whitener, who run the downtown arts space HERE. Their aim is to give a platform to

composers who might otherwise be forced to wait half their careers for an operatic commission, and who would run up against the inherent caution of so many American companies. Furthermore, Prototype encourages—though it hardly requires—composers to move beyond traditional classical techniques of singing and playing. The resulting body of work has been dubbed “black-box opera,” indicating a convergence of classical composition with the spirit of experimental theatre. Such a fusion is, of course, nothing new; Weill and Brecht pursued something similar in the nineteen-twenties. But, as the music publisher Norman Ryan argued in a recent issue of *Opera America*, there are economic reasons for the latest surge: in the wake of the recession, recent conservatory graduates have adopted a do-it-yourself strategy, instead of waiting for the Metropolitan Opera to come calling.

The black-box trend is international. At a competition in Sweden, Morrison encountered “Have a Good Day!,” a supermarket satire from the

Lithuanian music-theatre collective Operomanija; Prototype brought the show to New York, where it played at HERE, in a white-walled space under bleak fluorescent light. When the audience enters, ten women in blue aprons are seated on platforms on one side of the space, scanning bar codes and staring blankly. The libretto, written by Vaiva Grainyte and sung in Lithuanian, allows each cashier in turn to reveal her personality: one is a self-involved flirt; another spouts clichés (“Every day is a gift”); a third thinks obsessively about her son, who is in England. In choral passages, they mouth the liturgy of consumerism (“Hello, how are you? Thank you! Have a good day!”). The music, by Lina Lapelyte, combines the unsentimental minimalism of early Philip Glass with hints of folkish melody. All told, it is a tightly constructed, multi-layered creation, its humor pierced by melancholy. At its heart is a woeful two-note aria, sung by Milda Zapolskaite, in which an art-history major bewails her inability to find a job: “I wrote to *Art Echos*. They published some bits of my thesis. . . . I bought myself some good stockings and the rest I spent on wine and calming tea.” The downtown audience shuddered.

Prototype is a particularly bracing addition to New York musical life because it gives equal time to female artists. If misogyny is an implicit topic in “Have a Good Day!,” it dominates Kamala Sankaram’s “Thumbprint,” which dramatizes the experiences of Mukhtar Mai, a resident of a rural Pakistani village who, after being gang-raped at the order of a tribal council, in 2002, made history by bringing her case to trial. Sankaram, an Indian-American composer, singer, and sitar player, not only wrote the score but also performed the lead role. Here, too, Glassian minimalism came into play, intermingled with sinuous patterns from Hindustani classical music. This eclectic vocabulary, while adroitly handled, never quite conveyed the full horror of the subject; an excess of insistent ostinato patterns caused the mind to wander. Still, Sankaram brought clear conviction to her dual role as creator and performer. She is representative of a growing wave of composers who, in the vein

of Meredith Monk, Joan La Barbara, and Laurie Anderson, use their own voices as instruments; another is Kate Soper, whose theatre piece “Here Be Sirens”—an erudite, hilarious, furiously inventive meditation on the siren myth—had its première at Dixon Place, under the auspices of the Morningside Opera, while Prototype was ongoing.

The male protagonists of Prototype were a desperate, wounded bunch. At Roulette, in Brooklyn, the festival presented two one-act operas by the Stanford-based composer Jonathan Berger: “Theotokia,” in which a schizophrenic mental patient hallucinates a congregation of Himalayan yetis; and “The War Reporter,” which adapts Dan O’Brien’s play about the photojournalist Paul Watson, who was both celebrated and condemned for his picture of a soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. Vocal parts were sung by the four male singers of New York Polyphony, which alternates between early and modern fare, and by the multitalented soprano Mellissa Hughes. Woven around the voices is an intricate instrumental fabric that combines modernistic gestures with ancient-sounding chants. At times, Berger’s writing is too busy with refined detail, but the pivotal scenes make their mark—especially the wrenching sequence in which Watson, here portrayed by the expressive baritone Christopher Dylan Herbert, attempts to apologize to the soldier’s mother and is told never to call again. The bustling ensemble retreats, leaving the lead character starkly isolated.

It was haunted most of all by Gregory Spears’s “Paul’s Case,” based on Willa Cather’s classic 1906 tale of a doomed young Pittsburgh aesthete. On paper, it was the least adventurous piece in the Prototype lineup; American opera houses have a notorious weakness for dramatizations of public-domain literary properties. But Spears, setting a libretto that he wrote in collaboration with Kathryn Walat, avoids the trap of slavishly reenacting a familiar text. Instead, his plaintive, eerie score delves into the inner world of Paul, who defies his teachers, steals from his employer, lives grandly in

New York for a few days, and ultimately chooses death over shame. Spears, too, has minimalist roots, and draws also on the bittersweet textures of Renaissance consort music and the vocal ornaments of Baroque opera. While his musical language is predominantly tonal, he creates tension by adding acidic dissonances and by layering voices in claustrophobic ensembles, which represent the carping spirits encroaching upon Paul’s daydreams.

The young tenor Jonathan Blalock, a North Carolina native, proved integral to the success of the Prototype staging, which originated with the Washington, D.C.,-area group UrbanArias. A lyric tenor of the Mozart and Rossini type, Blalock had no trouble with the high-lying music of the title role, his sweet, pale voice shining through the silvery mist of Spears’s instrumentation. Beyond that, Blalock’s ironic smile and haughty poses signalled the character’s conflict with his humdrum surroundings. Generations of readers have concluded that Paul is gay; in the opera, a seeming flirtation with a Yale freshman, played by the tenor Michael Slattery, makes that subtext legible, although the two singers kept their body language properly ambiguous. (“They had started out in the confiding warmth of a champagne friendship, but their parting in the elevator was singularly cool,” Cather writes, leaving the rest to the reader’s imagination.)

The ending is as quietly harrowing as anything in recent American opera. Paul, having thrown himself in front of an onrushing train, has a split-second glimpse of the life he will not live—he sees “the yellow of Algerian sands, the blue of the Adriatic.” Kevin Newbury, the director of the Prototype production, had Blalock lie on his back as overhead lights descended upon him, stopping within inches of his face. The vocal line repeatedly comes to rest on a quick, courtly two-note descent; in its final iteration, the figure is pushed up another step, to a high, hopeful, heartbreaking A. The opera ends, as it began, with a procession of bell-like E-major piano chords, dissonant tones sounding in their midst. At once impassive, bright, and dark, they echo Cather’s cosmic closing phrase: “Paul dropped back into the immense design of things.” ♦

DESIGNATHARVARD

*“An unparalleled opportunity
to explore the world of design.”*

Architecture | **THE**
Landscape Architecture | **CAREER**
Urban Planning | **DISCOVERY**
Urban Design | **PROGRAM**

JUNE 9 - JULY 18, 2014

Harvard University Graduate School of Design
gsd.harvard.edu/careerdiscovery
617-495-5453

**ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT
ACQUIRING IMPORTANT
AMERICAN PAINTINGS?
WE OWN WHAT WE SELL.
OVER 1,000 MUSEUMS AND
COLLECTORS PURCHASE FROM US.**

Request our complimentary hardbound catalogue.

QUESTROYAL FINE ART, LLC

903 Park Ave. (at 79th St.) 3A&B, New York, NY 10075
(212) 744-3586 gallery@questroyalfineart.com
www.questroyalfineart.com



RETIRE TO FEARRINGTON

A charming country village
near Chapel Hill, NC with
bluebirds, belted cows and
fascinating people of all ages.

www.fearrington.com

French & Italian Holiday Rentals

Live like a European in your own chateau, villa or
farmhouse. Weekly rentals. Most regions.



www.villeetvillage.com

(510) 559-8080

VILLE ET VILLAGE®

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

**Small space has
big rewards.**

To find out more, visit
www.newyorkersmallspace.com
or contact Courtney Kelly,
at 877.843.6967.

ORDINARY PEOPLE

"Generation War" and "Ride Along."

BY DAVID DENBY



Tom Schilling in a miniseries made for German TV about the Second World War.

At the beginning of the ambitious German television miniseries "Generation War," five young friends (three men and two women) dance and drink in a Berlin bar. The time is June, 1941. Two of the men are heading to the Eastern Front, but the Führer has promised that the war will be over by Christmas, and the mood is charged, even celebratory. "The whole world lay before us. We just had to take it," one of the men says, narrating. Four years (and four and a half hours) later, after Germany's defeat, the survivors reassemble in the same bar. The bookends pull the series together, but the banality of the device is almost comical. "Generation War" (originally titled "Our Mothers, Our Fathers") was a sensational success in Germany and Austria when it aired there, last year. It depicts an enormous range of experience: vicious combat with the Red Army, ambushes, life in wartime hospitals, moments of shock and disillusionment. Yet it depends on the conventions of soap opera and popular melodrama (is a soldier hit with machine-gun fire

really still alive?), and some of it comes close to inanity. The Germans invaded the Soviet Union in June, 1941, with more than three million men, yet these five people keep bumping into one another on the Eastern Front as if they were crisscrossing a large fairground. "Generation War" has the strengths and the weaknesses of middlebrow art: it may be clunky, but it's never dull, and, once you start watching, you can't stop. Commissioned by the German television company ZDF (headquartered in Mainz), the series has been picked up by Music Box Films for theatrical release in this country, as a two-part movie; an airing on a cable network is also planned.

The director, Philipp Kadelbach, and the writer, Stefan Kolditz, have said that their intention was to start a dialogue with Germans who lived through the war. That idea might have made more sense a decade or so ago, when there were more people left to talk to. It's a little late now for this film to serve as the basis of a moral conversation. Still, better late than never, I suppose. The

filmmakers have produced a collective portrait of a generation: Wilhelm (Volker Bruch), stern and responsible, is a lieutenant in the Wehrmacht; he squares his jaw and does his duty. His bookish kid brother, Friedhelm (Tom Schilling), serves in the same unit, but he hates war and mutters bitter asides between battles. The brothers are fond of Greta (Katherina Schüttler), a singer who wants to be the next Marlene Dietrich, and her lover, Viktor (Ludwig Trepte), a Jewish tailor who has managed to get by in Berlin, a relatively liberal city, where anti-Semitism is not as virulent as elsewhere in Germany. The fifth member of the group is Charlotte, called Charly (Miriam Stein), an ardent and idealistic nurse. She and Wilhelm are in love but are afraid to tell each other. (Really? In wartime, young people tend not to be so hesitant.) Except for Viktor, they all do terrible things. The brothers take part in executions; Charly betrays someone who trusted her; Greta sleeps with a loathsome S.S. officer, first to protect Viktor, then to boost her career. "Generation War" has been much praised in Germany for its sense of accountability. The old accepted notion that the barbarians were confined to the S.S. and the Gestapo has been cast aside. The series acknowledges what scholars have established in recent years: that the Wehrmacht played a major role in committing atrocities in the occupied countries.

"Generation War" doesn't center on the war against Jews and other minorities, but the Holocaust has been widely discussed in Germany, and maybe this time the focus can be elsewhere. There are, however, other omissions and silences. Aside from Viktor, the characters are fervently patriotic but not ideological. They are surrounded by the S.S., yet none of them become committed Nazis. They are meant to be overwhelmingly young—a little foolish, not terribly perceptive, and essentially innocent. Is this a convincing picture of educated Berlin youths in 1941? By the time the story begins, the Nazis have advanced across Europe, invaded the Soviet Union, and killed Jews by the thousands in occupied lands. Jews have been disappearing even in Berlin. While destroying one myth, the filmmakers have built up another. The movie says that young men and

women were seduced and then savagely betrayed—brutalized by what the Nazis and the war itself put them through. Their complicity, in this account, is forced, never chosen. Aimed at today's Germans, who would like, perhaps, to come to a final reckoning with the war period, "Generation War" is an appeal for forgiveness. But the movie sells dubious innocence in the hope of eliciting reconciliation.

That said, the depiction of war is detailed, raw, and often moving. Kadelbach uses newsreel footage, and the grimy, blurred images of blitzkrieg and retreat are incomparable as an evocation of force and panic. After each newsreel segment, Kadelbach picks up with the brothers' Wehrmacht unit. He knits together scenes of staged fighting with much greater coherence than the directors of the American TV series "Band of Brothers" did, especially in an attack on a fixed Soviet position in a rubble-strewn street, which may be the best representation of close combat ever filmed. Kadelbach has a tactile feeling for terrain, weather, and the everyday horrors of a soldier's life. When not fighting the Red Army, Wilhelm and Friedhelm miserably do the criminal work of killing Russian civilians and Polish partisans. American viewers, wondering how we might have responded under such extreme pressure, will regard these Germans with intense curiosity: What did they think they were doing? What happened to them? Friedhelm, a virtual noncombatant at first, suffers an internal collapse ("You resist the temptation to be human," he says) and turns into a cold-eyed killer

who no longer cares whether he lives or dies. The disillusionment of his disciplined brother, Wilhelm, is more complicated. Disgusted and increasingly rebellious, Wilhelm goes AWOL for a while. He tries to survive morally as well as physically. Does this portrait amount to special pleading for a Wehrmacht officer? While re-creating the vast swing of German forces in and out of Russia, Kadelbach tries to capture the inner turmoil of two men. Call it half a victory.

Viktor, guided by a mixture of caution and opportunism, holes up with partisans in the Polish countryside. His improbable adventures make for a good story, but he doesn't get the in-depth treatment given the other men. And the women's roles get pushed into cliché. Katherina Schüttler's singer, carrying on with her S.S. officer, looks merely deduced to us, and I wish she hadn't taken a knowing drag on a cigarette after sleeping with her man—the mark of a fallen woman that goes back to the silents. Charly, an example of blooming German maidenhood, comes off as stupid; her blunders serve to advance the plot, not to illuminate the character. If only the filmmakers had realized that the most cataclysmic of wars required more than hackneyed TV drama. What we get is confounding—both silly and tragic, physically alive and morally obtuse.

In the hit comedy "Ride Along," Kevin Hart and Ice Cube are just funny enough to make audiences forgive some of the most careless movie-making in the long history of thrown-together commercial packages. Hart is

a video-game champ who wants to marry his girlfriend (Tika Sumpter), the sister of a veteran Atlanta police detective played by Ice Cube. The detective tests his would-be brother-in-law by putting him through a hellish day of police work, and they become buddies, or something like it. The plot is so lame and derivative that it keeps stumbling, even as farce: bad guys get caught in a huge explosion and then pop up again later the same day; the heavy-browed Bruce McGill plays a police chief whose lines seem to have been recycled from a seventies cop show. Nothing in the movie makes sense, but I prefer to think that "Ride Along" is just a badly told joke, rather than an insult to its audience.

Maybe next time the director, Tim Story, will go over the edge into parody. He doesn't, at the moment, have much talent for shoot-outs and chases, though he's good at milking these two actors for what they can do. Ice Cube has a stare as deadly as a meat cleaver and speech so precise that it seems etched; he has a good slow burn and a gift for tirade. Hart hops around him like an over-anxious terrier, chattering, falling, recovering. Like a lot of young comics, he teases male infantilism and stud swagger, but he does it faster than anyone since Eddie Murphy in his early days. The movie's success will no doubt yield between two and eight sequels. It would be nice to see the talent put to better use, but I wouldn't count on it. ♦

NEWYORKER.COM/GO/FRONTROW

Richard Brody blogs about movies.

THE NEW YORKER IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF ADVANCE MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS INC. COPYRIGHT ©2014 CONDÉ NAST. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

VOLUME LXXXIX, NO. 47, February 3, 2014. THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028792X) is published weekly (except for five combined issues: February 10 & 17, June 9 & 16, July 7 & 14, August 11 & 18, and December 22 & 29) by Condé Nast, which is a division of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: The Condé Nast Building, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. Elizabeth Hughes, vice-president and publisher; Beth Lusk, associate publisher advertising; James Guilfoyle, director of finance and business operations; Lynn Oberlander, general counsel. Condé Nast: S. I. Newhouse, Jr., chairman; Charles H. Townsend, chief executive officer; Robert A. Sauerberg, Jr., president; John W. Bellando, chief operating officer & chief financial officer; Jill Bright, chief administrative officer. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40644503. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. 123242885-RT0001. Canada Post: return undeliverable Canadian addresses to P.O. Box 874, Station Main, Markham, ON L3P 8L4.

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE NEW YORKER, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037 0684. FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADDRESS CHANGES, ADJUSTMENTS, OR BACK ISSUE INQUIRIES: Please write to The New Yorker, P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037 0684, call (800) 825-2510, or e-mail subscriptions@newyorker.com. Please give both new and old addresses as printed on most recent label. Subscribers: If the Post Office alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. If during your subscription term or up to one year after the magazine becomes undeliverable, you are ever dissatisfied with your subscription, let us know. You will receive a full refund on all unmailed issues. First copy of new subscription will be mailed within four weeks after receipt of order. For advertising inquiries, please call Beth Lusk at (212) 286-4454. For submission guidelines, please refer to our Web site, www.newyorker.com. Address all editorial, business, and production correspondence to The New Yorker, 4 Times Square, New York, NY 10036. For cover reprints, please call (800) 897-8666, or e-mail covers@cartoonbank.com. For permissions and reprint requests, please call (212) 630-5656 or fax requests to (212) 630-5883. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of The New Yorker. The New Yorker's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. Visit us online at www.newyorker.com. To subscribe to other Condé Nast magazines, visit www.condenast.com. Occasionally, we make our subscriber list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services that we believe would interest our readers. If you do not want to receive these offers and/or information, please advise us at P.O. Box 37684, Boone, IA 50037 0684 or call (800) 825-2510.

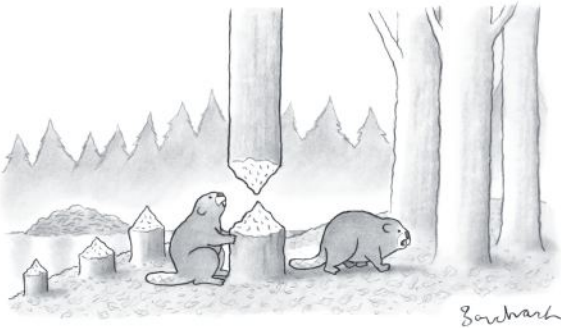
THE NEW YORKER IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RETURN OR LOSS OF, OR FOR DAMAGE OR ANY OTHER INJURY TO, UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS, UNSOLICITED ART WORK (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND TRANSPARENCIES), OR ANY OTHER UNSOLICITED MATERIALS. THOSE SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, ART WORK, OR OTHER MATERIALS FOR CONSIDERATION SHOULD NOT SEND ORIGINALS, UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY THE NEW YORKER IN WRITING.



CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Harry Bliss, must be received by Sunday, February 2nd. The finalists in the January 20th contest appear below. We will announce the winner, and the finalists in this week's contest, in the February 17th & 24th issue. The winner receives a signed print of the cartoon. Any resident of the United States, Canada (except Quebec), Australia, the United Kingdom, or the Republic of Ireland age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit newyorker.com/captioncontest.

THE WINNING CAPTION



*"I'll go see what's holding things up."
Lelee Brandt, Salisbury, Conn.*



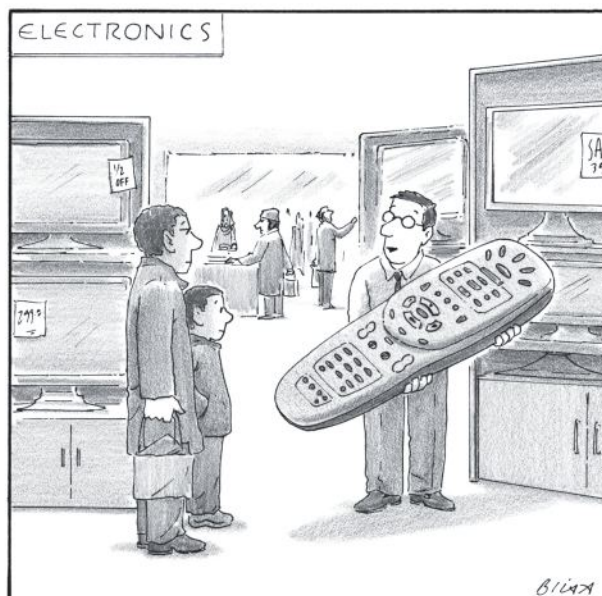
THE FINALISTS

*"Can't I just laugh till it hurts?"
Jack Serra-Lima, Yonkers, N.Y.*

*"Well, maybe, once, back in clown college."
Press Millen, Raleigh, N.C.*

*"I'm sorry, but I used all my condoms
to make balloon animals."
Melissa Guensler, Fredericksburg, Texas*

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



“

”

From the Pulitzer Prize & Tony Award-winning creators of *Next to Normal*

IDINA MENZEL **IF/THEN**

A New Musical



Also Starring

LaChanze

Anthony Rapp

James Snyder

Music by

Book & Lyrics by

Directed by

Tom Kitt

Brian Yorkey

Michael Greif

TICKETS ON SALE NOW · PREVIEWS BEGIN MARCH 5

Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 West 46th Street · IfThenTheMusical.com
Ticketmaster.com · 877-250-2929

DOLCE & GABBANA

light blue

AVAILABLE AT MACYS AND MACYS.COM

