Before the voyage to America, a journey inwards

BY MAXWELL PRICE

There’s a moment towards the end of “Philadelphia, Here I Come,” in which Adam Patterson ’11, playing the human embodiment of protagonist Gar’s subconscious (referred to as his private self), advised his public counter-part, played by Patrick Donworth ’12 to roll his mental video camera. It’s a subtle metaphor, for we’ve all experienced that sensation of trying to preserve a memory that we will replay in our minds over and over again. Likewise, we can view Irish dramatist Brian Friel’s play as a rare opportunity to watch a screening of that internal home movie through which we experienced not only remembered actions and words from one character’s point of view, but also his personal thoughts and feelings.

Yet just as an old copy of a VHS tape inevitably comes with its distortions and imperfections, BTU’s production of the play, directed by Cassie Seinuk ’09 showed some blemishes. Nevertheless, the power of the material itself was conveyed with enough sincerity and earnestness that it wasn’t too difficult to see through the rough edges.

The play details the final evening and morning before Gar, a conflicted yet hopeful young man from a small Irish village sets forth for the promised land of Philadelphia. The symbolic significance of the “New World” and its bold, surging vitality in contrast to the “Old World” of drudgery and tradition makes Gar’s move all the more meaningful. Gar lives with his estranged father, played by Ernest Leon Paulin ’09 and his wife, the whore. From the moment Olivia re-entered the space, it was obvious that this was her favorite scene. There were several things about this scene, but which made it the standout of the evening: the first ten minutes of this scene was a silent étude of seduction between Gar and “Max,” involving a heightening of the sexual tension with drumbeats and furious glances exchanged by both parties. The lack of dialogue only added to the feeling of voyeurism for the audience, punctuated by the well placed gasps and breathing of both actors.

Eventually, we were shown a montage of roleplay, which culminated in a series of flashbacks and through the interactions of his public and private selves. One of the most clever, artful uses of staging came in the first moments of the play when we were introduced to Gar’s private self. Patterson appeared with a lampshade over his head in Gar’s bedroom, and as the shade was suddenly raised up into the fly-space, it was as if Gar’s mind had finally come uncorked.

Sadly, at certain points I couldn’t help but wish that shade never had been lifted. Patterson’s performance emphasized the taunting, nagging aspects of the protagonist’s subconscious with great physical gusto. If the public Gar was constrained and stiff, the private Gar was wildly demonstrative in his movements, alternately flailing his arms and whispering in the fetal position on the ground. Yet by playing this opposition up to the extreme, Patterson neglected to convey the nuances of Gar’s dilemmas. For example, in recalling an emotion-ally powerful memory involving Gar’s relationship with his father, See JOURNEY INWARDS, p. 11

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BY ARIELLE KAPLAN

Pinter, by definition, is a man’s playwright. His works offer many creative, wall-rounded opportunities for male actors to work in his world—to develop worthwhile characters, so to speak. However, as Olivia Mell ’09 stated in the program, “the female is diminished, not evolved, and she fights a constant battle against submissiveness, not evolved, and she fights a constant battle against submissiveness, not evolved, and she fights a constant battle against submissiveness.” Mell portrayed managed to push his world—to develop worthwhile characters, so to speak. However, as Olivia Mell ’09 stated in the program, “the female is diminished, not evolved, and she fights a constant battle against submissiveness, not evolved, and she fights a constant battle against submissiveness.”

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My reflections on animation

BY SAMANTHA SHOKIN
Columnist

I grew up with cartoons. As a kid, I was so fond of moving pictures on the TV screen that I would smug any entertainment with real people in it. My current ethical foundation is based on whatever morals TV networks could pack into individual half-hour episodes throughout my childhood, save a few commercials in between. I am a devout fan of old-school Nickelodeon, and I am firmly set in my belief that ‘toons from the nineties are of a much higher caliber than the drivel they produce for the big screen. Over the past decade or so since Pixar released “Toy Story” (1995), the first animated film using only computer-generated technology, there have been many attempts to reach the initial success of this feature. Accordingly, Pixar and DreamWorks (the leading companies in computer animation) have produced several computer-animated films appealing to G-rated audiences.

After seeing enough of these adorable features, however, it is impossible to avoid a pattern that was rather unsettling for a cartoon-enthusiast like myself, giving me a sickening feeling of déjà vu. One can have grown through the twelfth talking animal movie, those snarky one-liners they all seem to have staying funny and start being predictable. The humor is directed towards the parents of young audience members but is constrained to G-rated boundaries. Thus, none of the jokes are ever actually towards the parents of young audience members. It now more than ever, Pakistan needs to work with the world, and the world needs to work with Pakistan. India and Pakistan need to work together. There is too much bloodshed in common and each is at stake here. Their destinies are tied together. They cannot afford not to be friends. Understand that there are extremists on all sides who do not want them to be friends. They do not belong to any religion. And they should not be allowed to destroy the peace and prosperity of the region. People have struggled and suffered far too long.

“Our object should be peace within, and peace without. We want to live peacefully and maintain cordial, friendly relations with our immediate neighbors and with the world at large.” These wise words were spoken long ago by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan, and they should not be forgotten, especially now. The most important goal is peace within, without which nothing will ever be possible. For as long as the peace process is stalled, they only will be hurting themselves and going in circles. One cannot expect total agreement on every issue, which makes it essential that we learn to disagree peacefully. Violence and anger never have and never will solve any problems.

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and violence of the evil people. The ultimate tragedy is the oppression and violence of the good people.” How tragic. And how tragic that a nation of 160 million people, a vast majority of whom are moderate, peace-loving people, lets such a small minority destroy their country! Pakistan has always been one of the most progressive Muslim countries in the world. It is essential to keep it that way. No compromises should be made with the people who are destroying schools and the country. People who are destroying schools are destroying the hope and possibilities for the future, and that should not be permitted.

What is the silent majority doing? Where have they gone? This silence must end now. Oh, please, by that people, wake up, please wake up. Don’t be silent any longer and don’t sit on the sidelines! Come out of your sleepy. Do something but don’t throw stones and do not yell at each other. Write and speak peacefully.

Someone once told me that hope is more powerful than love. Without hope, everything would be hopeless. The opposite of hope is despair and impossibility. It would be foolish to lose hope and live in a world of impossibility. We should create a world where children can continue to have hope and dreams for a better future. Together we can change the world. Let’s start now.

Write on a forum of hope: afuramoshaf@gmail.com

My dream for peace within Pakistan

BY MYRA CHAUDHARY
Staff

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Jean-Jacques Rousseau once noted that even if the ancient Athenians were wrong to put the Buddha on the top step, at least it was evident that they took his ideas seriously. This is the eternal dilemma I carry with me whenever I’m in the presence of the members of Students for a Democratic Society. It’s not just that they are shades more radical than their counterparts in Democracy for America, more outspoken, not clean-shav- en. More to the point, SDS members take ideas seriously—very seriously. How can a thoroughly bourgeois individual such as myself walk into their midst and remain unscathed?  

It was precisely this thought that raced through my Darcy-adjunct mind as I stepped into the back room of the radio station Wednesday night. Their hit talk show, “Tune In, Turn On, Drop Out”, had just wrapped up, and a replacement Bandeisen chat program, but the atmosphere was still charged and energetic, coming off of a heated discussion of the revived squatting movement on the Eastern seaboard.  

Carrie Mills, who goes by the radio handle of “Carrie Nation”, strikes a pow- erful figure. Her flowing blond locks and delicate features come from a heritage that marks her as a Daughter of the American Revolution; tonight, however, and pretty much every night, she elides the trappings of a conservative Connecticut upbringing to radicalize the Brandeis campus. At the moment, she cradles in her arms black and pink spray paint and a large plastic drop cloth, an indication that—as the youth pressers for future details, he could only tell students “to Stay tuned.” At 12:20, with the lunchtime stomach rumbles setting in, most of the campaign ers began gathering their things. Ms. Mills turned one last time to face the campus, warmed by the overhead sun but still eternally cool Johnny Cash t-shirt. Their Hoffman, a thin slip of a girl decked in an Union materials—Ms. Gruszko shrugged that “it’s not possible that he won’t win”, and returned to yelling at passerby. The Pigasus campaign clearly repre- sents a new direction for Brandeis politics. Mr. Rossman indicates that a large vote for Pigasus could signal a move towards leaderless democracy on campus. When pressed for future details, he could only tell students to “Stay tuned.”  

The green grass is showing (most days), the snow is gone (almost), and spring break is within reach…this means it is once again time for Brandeis University’s Spring Drag Show. Come see kings, queens, and all sorts of Brandeis Royalty perform with some added surprises!  

This year’s show will feature performances by new and past performers and groups such as Company B, Starving Artists, Michael Castellanos, Crowd Control, B.O.M.S. Slam Poetry Team, as well as special GUEST performer, slam poet Sean Patrick Conlon who will be performing some of his original performance pieces. His performance is sponsored by Triskelion and the Brandeis Open Mic Series.
Yeah, it’s a decent third album