



Members from the cast of *Les Misérables* after the show. All shows were sold out before opening night and a Saturday matinee had to be added.

## Success on the Stage: Mitty does *Les Misérables*

By Hannah Moeller  
Staff Writer

During the last few weeks of preparation for Mitty's spring musical *Les Misérables* the Performing Arts Wing was a hidden world of intricately winding hallways and scattered rooms, all full of laughter, music, and excited chatter. Mitty's performances of the Broadway hit ran for two weekends—the last weekend of March and the first of April. *Les Mis* tells the story of an ex-convict that is hunted by a law-obsessed officer, all while the students of Paris revolt in 1830s France.

The Performing Arts Department decided during the second semester of last school year that it would perform this ambitious play in the spring of 2009. *Les Misérables* is usually performed on a rotating stage or "revolve" as actors and directors call it.

"I didn't want Mitty to perform the show if we weren't going to have the revolve," said Performing Arts Department Chair Mr. Kimont. Before he made the final decision for his department, Mr. Kimont had to determine if building this mechanical

feat was even possible. To fully assess what was possible, and who could make it happen, he turned to Mr. Fairley, the faculty moderator of the Mitty Robotics Club.

Mr. Fairley asked Robotics President junior Lucas Bolster and Stage Manager senior Carol Friedenbach to do the job, since both have strong backgrounds in robotics and theater set technologies. For about a year, Mr. Fairley, Bolster, and Friedenbach met every few weeks. They researched, designed, and constructed aspects of the revolving stage in order to make this complex set a success.

"It was a lot of math," said Friedenbach. "The revolve was built to go on top of the stage and extended outward. But the real challenge was making it last. The revolve is a long-term structure."

The stage has to survive dozens of actors and stage managers walking across it for weeks of rehearsals and two weeks of performances. In addition, the performing arts department is planning on using the revolving stage for future productions.

"It held up very well," said Friedenbach. "Any problems that arose were quickly fixed."

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Photo Courtesy of Ryan Parker  
Ryan Parker with his band.

## Ryan Rocks Mitty: Meet Rockit Zombies

By Morgan McEnery  
Staff Writer

Mitty junior Ryan Parker, has made his band, the Rockit Zombies, the new sensation on campus. Students are wearing Rockit Zombies shirts and stickers, and many classes have taken breaks to watch them on YouTube.

Although he is only 17, Ryan is an experienced musician. He has been playing guitar for seven years and has explored other instruments as well. Ryan knows that his passion for performing and song-writing is endless, so if he does not pursue a musical career, he will continue to play and write "because it is what makes me happy," he says.

Music has always been a big part of Ryan's life and has taken up a majority of his time, but like most musicians, it is the best way

that he can express himself.

"Playing for people is an indescribable experience for us, and is a feeling I haven't found anywhere else," says Parker.

Ryan describes his performances at big parties where everyone is singing and dancing along with the music: "When people tell us that they liked us or had a great time at our shows, I feel like I have done my job and given back to the community I have always felt a part of."

With several years of musical experience under his belt, Ryan has been fortunate enough to have met amazing people and played with a number of great bands while doing what he loves.

For those of you who do not know what the Rockit Zombies is, it's a punk-rock band comprised of four teenage guys: Ryan Parker on guitar and vocals, Noah Sanchez De Tagle on upright bass and

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# OPINIONS

## The Economic Crisis: What to Do with the Money

### NATIONALIZE NOW! KEEP BANKS PRIVATE!

By Alex Fong  
Staff Writer

It is a historical fact that governments protect banks. From the year 37 A.D., when the ancient Romans instituted a “bailout” for failed banks to the early 1990s, when Sweden supported its failing banks, “bailouts” aren’t uncommon at all. There have even been a few in the U.S., most notably, in response to the 1980s Savings and Loans Scandal. But today’s crisis, which is dwarfed only by the Great Depression, demands more than just government intervention. Today’s failing banks need more than a simple bailout; they need to be nationalized.

The U.S. government needs to nationalize certain banks and financial institutions because of the breadth of the current economic debacle. Real estate prices have taken a nose-dive, the stock markets have reached new lows, and unemployment rates around the world have skyrocketed. Something in our financial system is rotten at the core and infecting the rest of it.

The big banks and insurers, including Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch, Citigroup, Bank of America, and AIG, are failing and bringing down the rest of the economy. Unfortunately, simply allowing them to collapse is not an option. Why? Because they are the pillars of our entire financial system. If they fail, international economic depression will ensue. Given the gravity of the situation, it is clear that government intervention is a necessity. The question is exactly how much.

That question is best answered through an examination of the banks’ balance sheets. Several important banks, notably Citigroup, are insolvent, meaning that they have unequal amounts of assets and liabilities. And because of a critical shortage of capital, they cannot lend. This is one of the major causes of the recession. Now, in response, the Obama administration recently gave bailouts to certain banks in order to reactivate their ability to lend. However, merely giving a failing bank money in this way is not nearly enough; it is still burdened with “toxic” assets and other debts, and must have enough capital before it can resume lending.

Nationalization is the right way to deal with these kinds of problems. In nationalizing, the government takes over toxic assets and completely pays off debts, essentially granting a bank the ability to re-balance its balance sheets. Without immediate debts to pay, banks can start lending, and the economy can start to rebound.

This solution may seem revolutionary, but in reality nationalization is, as *New York Times* columnist and 2008 Nobel Prize winning economist Paul Krugman writes, “as American as apple pie.” The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has been seizing insolvent banks at a rate of about two a week. After replacing bank management and eliminating all shareholders, the FDIC gives clean banks a fresh start, and sells banks to the private sector once they are back in the black. So in truth, nationalization is not as convoluted as is commonly thought. It’s a piece of cake (or pie), really.

If nationalization can save the economy, why hasn’t it been implemented?

One reason may be that, unfortunately, the infinitive, “to nationalize,” has become a slur in the United States. This is because we often associate it with the end of free market capitalism—though some wonder whether or not, after the catastrophes of recent months, capitalism is worth saving after all. However, we must remember that nationalization is only temporary, and that banks will be returned to the private sector.

President Obama has taken drastic measures to save the banks, but those measures will prove inadequate. By avoiding nationalization, the government has forged a highly unfavorable partnership with bank shareholders. If banks fail, taxpayers will have lost a lot of money. Moreover, the recipients of the bailout money, the bank shareholders, can simply walk away much wealthier without having helped the economy. Here, we enter a situation Krugman sums up nicely—“Heads they win, tails taxpayers lose.”

Economically, nationalization makes sense. It will save our financial system and ensure long-term profitability. But will it bring a return to the status quo and allow for the existence again of a “culture of excess” on Wall Street? Do we really want to allow banks to toy with the nation’s economic health by taking risks and making unwise decisions again? And does it make sense that AIG can still reward its careless executives even though taxpayers own 80% of the company? The obvious answer is “no.”

But the truth is that if we do not nationalize, the wrong people remain in charge, and the pervasiveness of corporate greed, a sense of entitlement among executives, and a lack of restraint on Wall Street will only continue. If the government controls a bank, the bank acts for the general interest, and corporate malpractice and ridiculous executive bonuses may become a thing of the past. In truth, the banks *have* resumed lending, but to foreign corporations. Americans are left high and dry as the banks use *our* bailout money to lend to other countries.

A nationalization of the banks would give the banks the ability to resume lending, replace ineffective and untrustworthy corporate leadership, and, most importantly, realign the economy on a pro-growth track. President Obama, don’t be afraid of nationalization! As Alex Blumberg from *This American Life* says, nationalization is “the traditional way governments usually fix banks.” If we are going to avoid further catastrophe, better the economy, and reform the broken financial system, it needs to be used soon.

Nationalization of the banks is not the answer to our financial crisis. In fact, it will allow the currently grave situation to spiral out of control, with the government in the driver’s seat and the destination looming closer to the far left of the political spectrum, thereby promising even further economic ruin.

As it is now, independent banks give credit and loans based on their own evaluations of a company or an individual’s ability to repay it. Obviously, many banks have failed in their efforts, giving loans to people who had no possible way of repaying them, which led to the housing bubble and triggered the economic collapse. It is important to note that many banks made these risky loans due to the prodding by the government through the Community Reinvestment Act, which encouraged banks to lend money to people they would ordinarily deny. In some cases, good loans turned bad when the economy declined.

Additional oversight is needed of the banking industry to make sure that banks employ less risky, nationally crippling practices. The government shares part of the blame for failing to properly supervise the banking industry. Clearly, there is a role for the government to regulate the private sector, but it should not turn private into public.

Should the government take over the banks, the government would be the one determining who received loans and who didn’t. Think about that for a minute. If you are as skeptical about the government as I am, you can see that this would be disastrous.

First of all, the government can’t manage

its own finances. The ever-growing national deficit is the best evidence of this trend. Look at the various floundering federal agencies, such as Medicare and the near-bankrupt Social Security. Why should we trust these people to run our banks? Banking touches all other industries – if they fail, the whole country fails.

To take over the banks, the government would have to wipe out

the banks’ shareholders. This causes people with stock in the company to suddenly see their investments become worthless. Banks weren’t considered risky institutions in which to invest – conscientious investors would be punished for no reason at all; their money for college and retirement would vanish.

Secondly, government intervention of this magnitude is inherently risky given the state of partisan politics in this country. Politicians’ motives are to get re-elected. Does this mean that they could decide that only the groups of people they believe

would vote for them or their party would be entitled to receive money? While it may sound far-fetched, but it’s quite possible. The government is, traditionally, the regulatory board so if the government is running the bank, there will be little to no regulation of their practices.

Essentially, the government would decide who gets a house and who doesn’t, who gets to start a business and who doesn’t – basically, who gets richer and who gets poorer. Does this sound like free enterprise capitalism to you? It shouldn’t – it should sound like communism.

The bailouts themselves were unfortunately necessary. If the government allowed banks such as AIG to fail, the entire industry would collapse as they are all intertwined through the credit-default loan system. Complete failure is not an option – too many people would lose their jobs, and when the free flow of capital in the market stops, businesses fold, leading to extreme economic distress.

The House of Representatives passed legislation that would tax bonuses at 90% if a household makes \$250,000 or more a year if an individual in that home works for a bank that received government money. The Senate is working on a similar bill. If this were to become law, the banks will find themselves in an even bigger hole.

First of all, this does not just hurt the AIG folks or people receiving millions in bonuses. This hurts hardworking people who did nothing wrong. For example, a secretary at Citigroup married to a doctor would see 90% of his/her bonus go to Uncle Sam. Even bankers reigning in over \$250,000 would be unwarrantedly penalized. In the banking industry, the protocol is to underpay workers in salary, and pay bonuses to top-performers. It’s an incentive system, and it hasn’t led to the collapse of these institutions. So those hard-workers, who did nothing wrong, would receive a meager 10% of the fruits of their labor.

Some believe this is a ploy meant to force the banks to fail so the government can take them over to further its social policy. Why else would it run the best in the banking world out of banking? This isn’t the only instance that has pointed to this conclusion. In February, Senator Chris Dodd, Chair of the Senate Banking Committee, stated it might be necessary for the government to nationalize the banks. The ramifications? Shares of Citigroup and Bank of America fell as much as 36%, according to Reuters, at a time when both companies’ stocks were at record lows.

If the government is interested in seeing the banks truly succeed and overcome this difficult period, it would stifle even the discussion of nationalization. It should try to foster confidence in the banks so more people would be willing to invest in them. By having a conversation about nationalization, it injects fear into an already hostile market, which leads to massive drops in the stock. Nationalization of banks would destroy the American ideal of free enterprise, leading to a government with far too much power over its citizens.







## ISRAEL IS JUSTIFIED AND OBLIGATED TO DEFEND ITSELF

By Marlena Vasquez  
Staff Writer

It is a country roughly the size of New Jersey, but there is nowhere on Earth that receives as much media attention. For the past century, the land of Israel has been one of the most hotly contested territories on the face of the planet. From its dramatic beginnings as a state to the present-day conflict in Gaza, Israel has always aroused tension and controversy in academic circles, the media, and the general public alike.

However, there is a disturbing trend which has been very noticeable in the news coverage of the recent Israeli offensive: the vilification of Israel. Criticism of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) has taken a new and increasingly extreme turn, in part because of some of the mainstream media's tendency to consistently place Israel in a negative light.

From the beginning of the conflict at the end of 2008, facts and figures surrounding the conflict have been grossly distorted. The foremost of these were exaggerations of Palestinian civilians killed by the Israeli offensive in Gaza (Operation Cast Lead). Early reports contested that out of the roughly 1,300 Palestinian casualties, nearly 900 were civilians, including 400 children. However, these figures are simply untrue. According to recent IDF tallies, about 600 casualties were militants belonging to Hamas, the terrorist authority in Palestine. Only 309 of the deaths have been identified as civilian deaths, 189 of them children.

The death of innocent civilians is indeed tragic, but it is the sad reality of any military conflict. Indeed, the IDF took numerous precautions during the offensive to avoid killing innocent Palestinians, focusing their efforts on crippling Hamas leadership. These efforts included dropping leaflets with instructions on how to avoid danger in areas they intended to attack, allowing civilians to escape from the area in order to avoid being harmed or injured, and stopping their offensive for several hours each day to allow for food and medicine to be distributed to the population.

Yet, despite Israel's avoidance of civilian casualties, Operation Cast Lead has been denounced as an "inappropriate use of force" – a description which is dangerously misleading. Israel has endured years of terrorism by militants, including suicide bombers and most recently, rockets being launched into civilian communities in southern Israel. In June 2008, Hamas and Israel arranged a ceasefire after months of mediation – a ceasefire which was immediately broken by Hamas terrorists launching rockets into Negev. These rockets terrorized southern Israeli villages, forcing residents including young children and the aged to take shelter in bunkers multiple times a day. In Sderot, a Negev village, terrorism is a constant nightmare, with nearly 94% of children exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress due to the constant bombardments.

Obviously, any country faced with constant terrorist threats will take measures to defend their citizens and preserve their sovereignty. What would the United States do if Canada or Mexico began launching rockets across the border? In fact, Israel has shown incredible restraint by letting the rocket fire continue for months after the ceasefire had been broken. This restraint, along with the IDF's efforts to avoid hitting civilians, reveals that Israel is simply doing what is necessary to defend their country – no more and no less.

The reality is that Hamas, guided by an ideology that proclaims hatred of Israel, has acted with little regard to the Palestinian civilians who they outwardly claim to protect. Hamas broke the ceasefire with Israel, leading to the IDF's Operation Cast Lead. Hamas uses innocent Palestinians as human shields, using areas heavily populated with civilians as launching pads for their rockets. In January, it was reported that the IDF bombed a UN school full of civilians using it as refuge. In reality, it was later proved that Hamas was using the school as a cover for sending deadly mortar shells into Israel. The IDF attacks were aimed solely at Hamas militants, and the death of civilians was the unfortunate but inevitable result.

The fences built along Gaza and the West Bank – sometimes referred to as "apartheid fences" in anti-Israeli rhetoric – have proven themselves effective and necessary for protection from terrorists who send rockets and suicide bombers into Israel from these areas. Without the perpetuation of terrorism from extremists and militants, there would be no need to build a fence separating the Palestinian territories from Israel.

As media coverage of the conflict increases and anti-Semitic incidents increase along with it, it is not difficult to guess why this is so. Bubbling beneath the surface of the controversy surrounding Israel is an ugly anti-Semitism, which carefully hides beneath a veneer of denouncing the actions of Israel. This is not to say that everyone who criticizes Israel is anti-Semitic, but it could be a slippery slope from anti-Zionism to anti-Semitism.

In a situation as complex and politically charged as the Israeli conflict, it is easy to be swayed by generalizations and half-truths. However, in order to find the true nature of the conflict, it is important to regard both sides critically. Israel is not perfect – no country is – but, like any country, Israel has a fundamental right to defend itself from militants who terrorize their citizens and threaten their existence.

Recently, President Obama has pushed for a two-state solution, arguably the most feasible way to resolve the conflict. With the leadership of the new president, negotiations between Israel and Palestine could possibly take place. It is only when both sides are willing to put aside their differences and let go of hatred that this decades-long conflict can give way to peace.

## NATIONALISTS GAIN POWER IN ISRAEL

By Bao Tran  
Staff Writer

The February legislative election in Israel highlights a dangerous power balance that could easily turn sour for Israeli-Palestinian relations.

The split between center-left Kadima, chaired by the lackluster Tzipi Livni, and the hawkish Likud party, led by Binyamin Netanyahu leaves no clear majority in the Knesset, and this bodes poorly for the already-stagnant peace process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Disturbingly, this is the best scenario out of the possibilities. Netanyahu has stated that a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine issue is not possible, and characterizes the Palestinian Authority as weak and ineffectual.

Yisrael Beiteinu, the party of anti-Arab politician Avigdor Lieberman—who has made statements advocating the drowning of Palestinians in the Dead Sea—makes up a significant portion of the right-wing Likud coalition, and it is easy to see Netanyahu currying favour with Lieberman's party, which, among other policies, advocates the transfer of majority-Arab settlements to Palestinian Authority control and the encouragement of Jewish immigration. Lieberman has incited violence against several countries, including Egypt—a country that has signed peace treaties with Israel. This is hardly the message Israel wants to send to the rest of the world in light of the recent conflict in the Gaza Strip which was a public image nightmare. Furthermore, Lieberman has demanded that non-Jewish Israelis swear an oath of loyalty. Many refer to Lieberman as a racist or, worse, a fascist.

For the near future, it's difficult to see any significant development in the peace process because of parliamentary gridlock, but this may be for the better, as Livni's centrist Kadima party is the only opposition capable of neutralizing Netanyahu's hard-right policies. Arabs and Arab-Israelis are also reluctant to negotiate with people such as Lieberman, effectively dividing Israel from the Arab world.

The right-wing nationalist parties gained a decisive victory in February, but that is just part of democracy. The people of Israel elected them and that is the government they receive. The true tragedy, however, is that the Labor party, which has resisted the more right wing elements of Israeli politics, has joined the nationalist coalition led by Netanyahu and Lieberman. As is standard in Israeli politics, the Arab-Israeli political parties were not even invited to join this coalition. Hopefully with the change in Washington and growing international ire over the Gaza conflict, Israel will not allow itself to become too alienated from the rest of the world.

## OBAMA'S GREEN TEAM

By Elise Sudlow  
Staff Writer

While the economy may be taking center stage, Barack Obama must also work on the environment.

Obama's team is made up of a wide variety of experienced individuals:

Carol Browner has previously held the position of Administrator of the EPA. It is a topic of debate whether she is a good choice or not, having worked for Al Gore in the past. She shares some of Al Gore's very outspoken opinions on global warming, which may work against her when trying to reason with other officials in Washington.

Nancy Sutley worked under Brown-er before becoming the top energy and environmental official in California. Afterwards; she became the head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

Lisa Jackson worked for the EPA as well, February 2006 to November 2008. Some have praised her for her work as New Jersey's top environmental official, still others have claimed her handling of toxic waste sites in New Jersey have been questionable. Regardless, she has been known to always lend an ear to individuals on every side of an issue, and this will be advantageous when dealing with such diverse opinions in Washington.

Obama's pick for head of the Agriculture department, former Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack, is a proponent of ethanol and agribusiness, both of which contribute to global warming and global hunger. Ethanol is not as efficient as gasoline and produces just as many greenhouse gases. Agribusiness consists of large factory farms that are unhealthy to consumers as well as the environment. Both require tremendous amounts of

soy and corn, which could otherwise be used to sustain hungry people all over the world.

Finally, there is Steven Chu, a Nobel Prize winner. He has been in the Energy Department's Lab working on energy efficiency as well as renewable energy. He was named secretary of Energy by Obama and is most definitely qualified and ready to lead this team toward their goals.

The EPA has the power to work steadfastly regulating green house gases, without any approval from Congress. People on Capitol Hill are upset that the EPA are the only people who decide how to regulate this. Once they get upset, then you must start to worry about passing the environmental bill. It is open to court opposition, and they take a risk in ignoring Congress.

In the state of the economy today, much of Barack Obama's plan is expected to fail. However, with so many people out of work, and the unemployment rate so high, why not create more green jobs and put people back on their feet at the same time?

Obama's plan to lower carbon emissions may not however lead to putting people back to work. For the businesses who do not decrease their emissions will be taxed. Moreover, the taxes that those businesses cannot pay will be passed on to consumers, and how many can actually afford that at the time being?

This legislation may be pushed aside with all of the bailouts going on, which is a terrible waste of an opportunity for green jobs and the economy. But, it is up to Obama, and he can start by ratifying Kyoto and making up for the ground lost during the last eight years.





## ABOLISH CIVIL MARRIAGE Time to Reevalutate the State's Role in Marriage

By Isabel Sausjord  
Staff Writer

The separation of church and state, guaranteed by the First Amendment, is at the heart of the debate over gay marriage, but opposing groups interpret it in vastly different ways. Because many religious organizations oppose same-sex marriage, they contend that being forced to recognize gay marriage would infringe upon their religious freedoms. Advocates for gay marriage argue that religious groups should not be able to impose their beliefs regarding marriage on other members of society. These conflicts arise because of the interference between religious marriage and governmental marriage. The easiest and most satisfactory conclusion to this debate is to eliminate civil marriage entirely.

Marriage as we know it describes two very different institutions. Religious or social marriage is a celebration of love and commitment, and is usually ministered by priests or other spiritual leaders. However, marriage can also be interpreted as a legal contract granting certain benefits to two partners.

Civil rights leaders argue that all people should be allowed this government-backed civil marriage, but many religions forbid gay marriages and want the government to reflect this belief. If civil marriage were abolished and replaced with civil unions, this conflict would be resolved. Any two consenting adults could reap the benefits of a civil union, and they could opt to wed under any religious or cultural tradition that allows their marriage.

This would truly be a win-win solution: churches would not be forced to bless gay marriages or any other unions that fall outside the religion's dictates. At the same time, homosexual couples could attain the status and benefits of civil unions. In addition, they could marry under any religious tradition that would take them, or even hold a secular wedding, as do many non-religious and inter-faith couples.

By accommodating a variety of family types, this arrangement would help other groups who are denied equal protection under the law. The current system prevents those caring, committed people who are uninvolved in romantic relationships from receiving the advantages of marriage. Two siblings whose parents have died have trouble gaining joint custody over their younger brothers and sisters.

Platonic friends who wish to make a home together and combine assets cannot file their taxes jointly, take sick leave to care for one another, or share social security benefits. Such unwed couples are also denied immigration benefits, medical-decision making rights, shared insurance policies, and other benefits of marriage.

All committed relationships, not just romantic ones that produce children, can form families, and the law should be flexible enough to acknowledge this. These people deserve to be recognized under the law as families, even though they do not meet the conventional standards. After all, committed relationships – whether or not they procreate – are the foundation of society as we know it.

However foreign or infeasible this proposition may seem, it is slowly coming to the public attention. Here in California, two college students just launched an initiative to replace civil marriages with domestic partnerships throughout the state. If passed, this would raise awareness on the national scale and could bring the issue to the federal level. Unfortunately, though, the petition is unlikely to accumulate the 694,354 signatures necessary to place the issue on the November ballot.

Opposed to certain “heterosexual supremacist views” which favor granting Civil Unions but not Civil Marriages to homosexual couples, this approach ensures equity between heterosexual and homosexual couples by eliminating the discrepancy all together.

If the conflict arises from the gap between the reaches of religious law and civil law, we must make sure that civil law does not encroach on religious law and vice versa. If the state were to give couples of all genders the same legal benefits, licenses, and terms while not forcing this on the churches, a compromise could be reached, allowing for the rights and privileges denied to same-sex couples to be finally granted.

We already see a huge variety of marriage traditions – from huge, lavish weddings to small, simple ceremonies, both religious and secular. Marriage is a deeply important part of many people's lives, but it does not need to be narrowly defined by the government.

Let the government distribute legal contracts, and allow everyone to marry as they wish. It's time to step down on dogma and ideology in the gay marriage debate and allow reason and rights to take center stage. That is the true separation of church and state.

## GEORGE BUSH IS INNOCENT

By Veronica Lewis  
Staff Writer

In the March issue of *The Monarch*, Paul Dougherty wrote that President Bush was guilty of crimes against humanity and that our troops had died in vain in Iraq. This is my response to that article.

I looked up the definition of crimes against humanity in Webster's New World Dictionary and found this: *A crime or series of crimes, such as genocide, directed against a large group because of race, religion, country of origin, or other reasons unconnected with any individual's responsibility for having committed a criminal act.*

I searched for any factual media reports that convicted our former President of being involved in any of these atrocities and could not find anything other than opinions and editorials, nothing of fact. I do know Saddam Hussein was found guilty of these crimes. History shows that he killed thousands of people to remove their race from the planet. I see no evidence that President Bush was guilty of cleansing the world of any race, invoked slavery, or denied freedom to people, other than suspected terrorists. We can argue that the Iraqi war is just or not. What we can't argue is that forty thousand Kurds were gassed in 1988; I think we can say they died because of Mr. Hussein's orders.

When President Bush was accused about lying to Congress about the WMD's, that is simply politics. Mr. Bush went to Congress, they read the same reports, the intelligence committee agreed with those reports and the vote to invade Iraq and enforce the UN resolution was approved. Also, the United State has never been occupiers of countries, but rather liberators. When Germany surrendered in WWII, American military stayed there to assist in the rebuilding of the Country, not to occupy it.

No military personnel, serving our great nation has ever, nor ever will have died in vain. Our military is **voluntary**. Kathy Roth-Bouquet, the wife of a Marine said, “Those who argue that a soldier's death has meaning only if politics are “right” misunderstand military service in America.”

Serving in the military is born on an individual's belief system—a belief in our constitution, the citizens who send them

to battle, and a belief that our Country has meaning and worth. These rare and brave individuals are the ones willing to lay down their lives in order for us to have freedom. If we as citizens fail in our decision and resolve when sending our military into harm's way, it dishonours those who serve and those who order them into battle. President Lincoln, speaking to a group at Gettysburg, urged fellow citizens gathered to fight for the survival of the United States so that those interred in the ground would not have died in vain. They die for us and they risk their lives to keep us free and safe.

General George S. Patton said, “It's foolish and wrong to mourn the lives of soldiers lost. However, we should thank God that such men once lived.” We can argue the value of sending our soldiers off to foreign lands to fight. What we cannot argue, is that any military personnel has died in vain.

It cannot be denied that 3000 people died on September 11, 2001. They were not military personnel; they did not volunteer to fight a war and certainly did not know that morning they were under attack and would sadly die. To believe that our soldiers have died in vain to protect our freedoms would mean that the poor innocent souls lost that day also have died in vain.

Since the 9/11 attacks, and invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, our country has not been attacked by terrorists; that's over 7 1/2 years. President Clinton, President Bush Sr., President Regan, and even President Carter's administration cannot say that.

President Bush had a resolve after 9/11, that was to protect our Country and the citizens from future attacks. No doubt freedom is not free and has come at a high cost to our country, but he is only guilty of pure Patriotism, not crimes against humanity. The American people gave President Clinton the benefit of the doubt when he lied under oath to a grand jury about an affair. And the American public did not call for his resignation, only politicians did. Perhaps it is time to give President Bush the same benefit and respect. After all he still has not lied under oath.

The people of our great nation should focus on our future, and pray the President Obama will be successful in pulling our Nation together not divide it further apart.

## SEEING HOMELESSNESS FIRSTHAND

By Philip Budriunas  
Staff Writer

Homelessness and poverty: we hear about it every day, but for most of us it is a distant issue. For myself, however, homelessness and poverty are very real. My girlfriend, Katie, just recently found a place to live after she and her family had been living in motels, friends' houses, and in places that most would not call home.

What was the cause of all this? Her family could not pay for the rent on their house and were forced to sell it. Katie's mom did not have a job to pay for rent and were thereby relying on child support from Katie's dad every month. When Katie's dad stopped paying child support, they were unable to pay for the most basic needs of living.

The scary part of this story is that it is very similar to those of the 20,000 homeless members of our community in Santa Clara County alone. And this number continues to grow with unemployment recently breaking the 8% barrier.

The major problem for those who are currently living in poverty is the cost of living. In order for a family of four to be deemed as living below the poverty line in California, that family must make less than \$21,200 a year. This qualifies them to receive federal support.

When you consider the various costs of living, such as rent, childcare, food, and other necessities of life, this means that if a family of four makes \$21,200 and lives in San Francisco with a rent of \$1,000 a month, that leaves only \$9,000 to pay for all other expenses for the rest of the year, including any taxes, thus rendering living in this area for those in poverty nearly impossible.

However, we may begin to see many major steps to improve the situations of these men and women. According to the official White House Website, the Obama administration is seeking to improve those in poverty by “Helping Americans Grab a Hold of and climbing the Job Ladder.”

This idea is one of the most significant ways we will see improvement in the American economy, because once the unemployed begin to go to work and collect a paycheck, the economic stress on a population of Americans who are neither producing any income, nor consuming American goods will subsequently decrease. Once this population begins to make money, they will begin to spend money and slowly cause the economic wheel to begin turning again.

In a community and area as opulent as ours, it is hard to believe that wealth and comfort can disappear so quickly, leaving behind despair and desperation. We should pay close attention to those who have little in our society and are not able to afford even basic rights. It isn't enough to count our own blessings, we must actively use them to combat the injustices that trap so many of neighbors.



# Arts & Entertainment

## Video Games: Between Good and Evil

By Scott Whitman  
Staff Writer

Just who are you? All right, so maybe this isn't the first thing that most of us would envision a videogame asking, but in the last few years it is nonetheless a question that has become increasingly found in a number of high-profile titles.

From the high-tech galactic society of *Mass Effect* to the war-torn battlefield of *Call of Duty 4* or the familiar universe of *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, modern day videogames are placing an emphasis on ethics and morality that would have seemed unprecedented a mere ten years ago.

Such games offer the freedom to explore the extremes of human behavior in a digital world without permanent consequences, where the mere touch of a button literally erases the effects of an action.

We all play games or watch movies for our own reasons, it must be admitted, but it would also be fair to say that for the greater majority of us, we partake in such forms of digital entertainment as a way to escape. Whether intentionally or subconsciously, the average person most often is seeking to temporarily immerse themselves in another world, usually one where the rules of conduct are changed, where the fantastic storylines we crave can take place.

With the ever greater degree of freedom offered to the player in videogames today, the question becomes not "What will happen next?" but rather "What do I want to make happen next?"

The aforementioned is perhaps best illustrated through a cursory glance at what is arguably the greatest moral quest ever seen in a videogame: *Fallout 3*. Early on, the player's character comes upon the town of

Megaton, named after the undetonated atomic bomb that lies in the crater at its center – which, unbeknownst to residents, is still very much alive. Sought by mysterious "interests," the player is faced with the choice of whether to sacrifice the town for personal gain or to selflessly disarm the nasty nuke and risk the terrible wrath of said "interests." No matter what course of action the player chooses, their actions have lasting consequences in the game beyond mere rewards.



Even when the fates of a hundred people are not placed in our hands at a given moment, we find ourselves acting in ways which seem to reflect how we would act in real life. Would you really tell someone that their life's work seems pointless? Of course not, because it would hurt that person's feelings, but in a videogame we are endowed with far greater power over our actions than in real life, such morals often become less than clear.

Most often, when presented with such choices as these in a game, how we choose to act tends to be based

upon how we think that action will make us feel. In the world of the videogame, where real physical consequences are essentially nonexistent, virtually anything is now possible. Are you the type of person who helps escaped slaves find their way to freedom, or do you reveal their hideout to the money-laden slavers who are chasing them? Or do you simply eliminate one group entirely – or even both if you're feeling especially angry? Games thus give us a chance to act in ways which may be often frowned upon in society, or otherwise out of reach.

Yet despite how we might contemplate acting, convincing our consciences that what we perceive is not real proves to be quite another thing, and no amount of logic or reasoning can remove the fact that our moral compass will almost always be at work whenever we act.

Much like Roger in the microcosmic portrait of society presented in the classic book *Lord of the Flies*, who, despite being stranded on a deserted island, initially found himself unable to hit another boy with a rock as a result of deeply-ingrained societal inhibitions, we too find it difficult to let go of our fundamental moral dictates.

There will always be people playing both the dark and light sides, and the moral quandaries that we face in videogames will only increase in number as long as more games continue to be released.

The next time you face such a dilemma, be it in real life or in a virtual world, consider this: is the question you face not "What should I do?" or "What do I want to do?" but rather "Why do I want to do what I am considering?" It might not be easy to know what the answer is, but there can be no doubt that whatever conclusion you ultimately arrive at will be as illuminating as an examination of conscience.

## Fashion in a Recession

By Geraldine Slevin  
Editor

Economic downturn. Sub-prime loans. Recession.

Where does fashion fit in among all of the talk of economic disaster that currently dominates television, radio, and conversation across the country? In the increased concern for frugality among not only everyday people, but also among designers, that has become increasingly evident in the fashion world.

During Fashion Week in February, designers such as Betsey Johnson, Carmen Marc Valvo, and DKNY cancelled runway shows in favor of smaller, less expensive collection presentations.

And the Fall 2009 shows were significantly less substantial than in

previous seasons: even several established and relatively financially stable designers—John Galliano, for example—cut up to twenty less-sellable looks from their shows.

So what does this mean for fashion in the long run?

It means increased economy in fabric and shape, and a more fiscally conscious form of chic. *Vogue's* January issue featured an article

on "recessionista" fashion, which touted clothing-swap parties among friends as a solution to your average fashionista's economic woes. Trading Balenciaga leather jackets for last-season Louboutin ankle boots isn't necessarily the most relevant and accessible of solutions, but the fact that *Vogue* is even paying attention to this is indicative of a change in the fashion world.

An increased consciousness of the financial state of the country is emerging, even among fashion's elite, as trends such as, say, fur sprayed with gold particles (yes, this exists) become less acceptable demonstrations of unnecessary extravagance and luxury.

That's not to say that \$400 slip dresses and \$1000 purses are going to disappear from fashion editorials and runways in New York, Paris and Milan. Yves Saint Laurent isn't going to be launching a line for Wal-Mart anytime soon, and Saks Fifth Avenue is still, well, Saks Fifth Avenue.

But in a financial situation this dire, some things are undoubtedly going to change.



## Under the Radar: Elvis Perkins

By Nicole Haaser  
Staff Writer

Before its release on March 10, 2009, alt-folk musician Elvis Perkins shared his second album, *Elvis Perkins in Dearland*, with the public and NPR Morning Edition's Steve Inskeep. Perkins' sound is unique, blending folk, rock, and various other genres of music, old and new, to create something fresh but at the same time nostalgic.

Two years ago, Perkins released his debut collection *Ash Wednesday*, also a thoroughly beautiful album. *Dearland* does exhibit some notable new sounds, however. This time around, the drummer of Perkins' band used a marching drum, which Perkins explains seemed to fit in very well with songs he had previously been dissatisfied with, making everything fall into place. There is more than just a marching drum to be noted, however; as usual, there is a tremendous variety of instruments harmonizing with one another in his music, including brass and tambourine.

Perkins labored over every song, transforming some like "Doomsday," from slow, waltzy dirges into a far more upbeat ballads. Besides this, the somewhat ominous lyrics of some of Perkins' new songs contrast with the upbeat tone of each song and the album in its entirety.

Overall, Perkins seems to feel that his songs are a way of saying exactly he wants in ways he otherwise couldn't: "I have never been a very good storyteller in real life. But in these songs, I feel I can say my piece and feel more successful than I would in a regular conversation."

Perkins is often asked about his songs and their connection to his mother and father. His father, famous actor Anthony Perkins, Academy Award winner, famed most for his role as Norman Bates in *Psycho*, died of complications from AIDS when he was a teenager. His mother, Berry Berenson, noted photographer, was aboard one of the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center on September 11. Perkins says eloquently of the relationship between his songs and his parents: "I come from them and they come from me. In a sense, the songs are their grandchildren they didn't get to meet."

Perkins is both tender and good-humored about his songs, saying, "They strike me as offspring from time to time and some of them on the new album kinda stare back at me a little funny," as one's children have a tendency to do. It's clear that the musician truly puts his heart into his songs, crafting each with care and attention, and the payoff of this process is clear.

No matter what, whether changing dirges into something much more upbeat, or shifting around anything else, Perkins' album is a product of creative, innovative collaboration between him and his friends. Literally, because Perkins wrote the songs and he and his band performed them, but also because together Perkins and his band clearly labored to produce something authentic and satisfying for both the artist and his listeners.





# Look Out for Detox...Still?

## Dr. Dre's Legendary Album Still Surrounded in Mystery

By **Rahul Pandya**  
Editor

He is one of the biggest names in music, and yet we haven't heard any original music from him in ten years.

Dr. Dre, the artist known for the development of a style of music that was violent, overly sexual, drug-related, and above all, popular, has spent the better part of a decade working on his third and final album, *Detox*.

Obviously this is no normal set of circumstances; no artist today could possibly be expected to take so long to put out an album. But Dr. Dre is no ordinary artist. As head of his own label, Dr. Dre is in no way obligated to put out an album by a certain time. He has the unique luxury of taking his time to produce an album that will celebrate his own legacy, the product of years of creative input and editing.

This mysterious album remains incomplete for many reasons. After initially announcing the idea for his third album, Dr. Dre chose to put his own work on hold in order to help produce music for other artists on his label, including *The Game*, 50 Cent, Busta Rhymes, and Eminem. He at one point had many other artists on his roster, but once again Dr. Dre's perfectionist tendencies prevented him from actually completing any full-length projects with these artists. This obsessive quality is also the reason that *Detox* has become more of an urban legend than anything else.

So why has *Detox* recently become such a popular topic of discussion? Over the past few years, fans and followers have had more reason than ever to believe that *Detox* may actually be released. Hints have included Dr. Dre's appearance at the VMAs two years ago, and then the news that he would be introducing a line of alcoholic beverages to promote this forthcoming album. Of course much was

made of Interscope's "Three Headed Monster," the plan for 50 Cent, Eminem, and Dr. Dre to all release their albums after one another. Though this whole progression was halted due to the death of Dr. Dre's son from a drug overdose in August, 2008, development of the three albums has since resumed, with *Detox* set to come out after both Eminem's and 50 Cent's releases.

But aside from the release date, fans are also very eager to hear what the long-awaited music on the album will sound like. Dr. Dre's music tends to reflect the sound of the musicians he works with at any given time. Recently, many of the songs he and his fellow musicians have produced have been laced with heavy jazz influences. A few times, they have tried to break out of this mold and go for a more experimental sound, but either way, both critics and fans would agree that this music isn't quite as



mind-blowing "as a Dr. Dre beat should be." Moreover, since he has produced such a limited number of songs over the past couple of years, this music gives no hint as to how *Detox* will sound.

Another unanswered question is how he plans to reintroduce himself to the world. At 43, he isn't exactly relevant to today's new generation of listeners, and rap music as a whole is currently in a sort of limbo, with artists sacrificing their own integrity to make money with blatantly commercial songs. Will Dr. Dre's legacy be good enough to guarantee success, or will he, with supposed writers T.I. and Lil Wayne, the former's involvement recently confirmed by song leaks, choose to change his music for the times?

Few things are absolutely certain. We know that Bishop Lamont, *Aftermath*'s newest signee, will be heavily featured on *Detox*, and that the guest list will include some of Dre's

usual collaborators, like Snoop Dogg and Nate Dogg. Many rappers have actually professed to working on the project, including veterans like Nas and Jay-Z and upstarts like Slim da Mobster. But seeing as there are over 400 potential tracks, and since Dre wants only 12 songs on the final track list (as in a 12-step detoxification program) only he knows which will make the final cut.

Knowing all of this, at this point, all we can do is wait. When the album will be released is still uncertain, and fans only know that Dr. Dre is currently hard at work on the album, as he has been for so many years. Nonetheless, with all of the anticipation surrounding the album, it's hard not to think that it may not live up to the hype. What if the music really isn't all that great, and it ends up being a disappointment? Dr. Dre puts so much pressure on himself to release great material, but how can fans not speculate that this long wait won't end with *Detox*'s downfall? Also, what will it take for this long-awaited album to be considered a commercial success? Guns N' Roses' *Chinese Democracy* sold well below expectations after thirteen years in the making. Will *Detox* suffer the same fate, and if so, will this tarnish Dr. Dre's reputation?

Dr. Dre's greatest strength throughout his career has been his ability to both shock and impress the world with his music, especially with regards to his solo efforts. He consistently sur-



passes expectations to amaze music fans everywhere. He is able to work with virtually anyone and create great music. In the end, I believe that we will be able to trust Dr. Dre's judgment. Who knows—*Detox* may very well be one of the most incredible albums of our lifetime.

## As Heard on TV

### The Small Screen Leads to Big Success for Emerging Musicians

By **Ryan Meyer**  
Editor

There is a movement in the television and music industries that you're sure to have noticed. While only just a few years ago the music featured in a television series was mainly composed scores, TV shows eventually began integrating pop songs into their episodes, and have now become quite the platform for exposure for upcoming artists and indie bands.

This cross-media phenomenon is launching artists into stardom and single-handedly boosting their songs to Top 40 Hits status. Television shows, specifically dramas (repeat offenders include *House*, *Bones*, and *Grey's Anatomy*) have the habit of playing impossibly catchy songs over a summarizing montage that shows how far their characters have come. Such recap-sequences are a factory for transmitting undiscovered songs into public consciousness.

Arguably the first series to originate

the trend was primetime teen soap opera *The O.C.*, which ended its run in 2007 but not before releasing 6 soundtrack compilations under the title of *Music from The O.C.* over its four years on the air.

These "Mixes" all experienced success on the music charts and became a way for fans to extend their devotion for the show into their music tastes. The show's theme song, "California" by Phantom Planet, exploded after already substantial popularity when it was featured over the title sequence. "Hide and Seek" by Imogen

Heap became famous for its use in a pivotal death scene at the end of the show's second season, and soon enough, mainstream giants like Coldplay and U2 were debut-

ing their latest singles, "Fix You" and "Sometimes You Can't Make It On Your Own" on the series.

Shows are not the only place where

artists are finding the spotlight on TV. Apple Inc., known for its hip media campaigns for its computer and music-player products, has its own influence on the music industry, specifically catering to underground artists. Its simple yet attractive and memorable commercials cause its products to become synonymous with the songs featured in their advertisements and in the minds of consumers.

When it debuted its ultra-thin MacBook Air, it chose "New Soul" by unknown French-Israeli artist Yael Naim. Within a couple weeks, the song was taking Top 10 positions on The Billboard Hot 100 and Hot Digital Songs charts, thanks to the Apple commercial. The same happened with "1234" by Feist, which was used in an iPod Nano advertisement that ran for months, and "Shut Up and Let Me Go" by The Ting Tings.



In-grid Michaelson found a boom in her popularity when her "The Way I Am" was used in an Old Navy winter sweater commercial two years ago. The way her soft jazz-tinged pop blended with the images of models trying to escape the cold winter proved a stroke of marketing brilliance, one that no doubt proved just as successful for Old Navy clothing as it did for Michaelson's career.

This sensation has been a fruitful venture for those shows and companies that use it to their advantage, and of course for the artists featured. No doubt it will continue to grow, as the lines between the worlds of music, television, and also the Internet become increasingly blurred.





# MONARCH CRITICS

## U2

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

By Zoya Qureshi  
Staff Writer

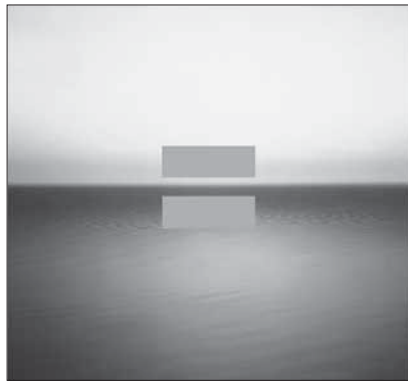
On February 27, one of the most widely known bands in the world, U2, released their twelfth album *No Line on the Horizon*, in memory of Rob Partridge, who signed their first record deal in 1979 and recently passed away. This album features the promotional single, "Get On Your Boots," released on February 19.

The tracks on their new release feature songs that range from hard rock to mellow, and soulful to touching, without ever losing the U2 signature style.

However, each song has a set of lyrics unique to anything they have done, basically picking up where they had left off on the previous album *How to Drop an Atomic Bomb* released in 2004. The new album features hard rock and raw songs like "No Line on the Horizon," "Magnificent," and "Get on Your Boots," and at the other end of the spectrum, ballads, like "Cedars of Lebanon."

These new tracks are not as classic as the material U2 has done in the past—songs like "One" and "Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For"—nevertheless, the music on their new album does closely resemble many of the hard rock songs that they have been known for in the past.

The group has announced that they hope to follow up this album up with another called *Songs of Ascent* due to be released later this year.



## Duplicity

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

By Grey Traynor  
Staff Writer

In a basic sense, is a fun film. A spy comedy that brings Julia Roberts and Clive Owen together to heat up the screen, keeps the audience attentive throughout many twists and turns.

involves a pair of corporate spies who start a romance whilst working for two rival companies, and eventually concoct a scheme to strike it rich. As it happens though, the basic rule of being a spy is to trust nobody. So who is playing whom? Is Julia Robert's Claire pulling the strings? Or is Ray actually the puppet master? It seems that this non-linear spy story was never written to be predictable, yet the audience expects (and receives) a big twist at the film's conclusion.

is written and directed by Tony Gilroy, the director of last year's underrated . If you look hard enough, you'll realize that both films follow a certain kind of formula. Despite 's superiority, this format still works well for both films. Julia Roberts gives us an exceptional performance as the sexy spy character she's been developing since , and Clive Owen is debonair, rugged smooth talker that we all know he can be. Paul Giamatti and Tom Wilkinson also stand out as very entertaining, hyper-competitive business owners.

Ultimately, the one factor that sets apart from being truly great is that it seems to know it is a breezy film made purely for entertainment value. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but a great movie never spawned from something that didn't take itself seriously.



## Knowing

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

By Shivali Singh  
Staff Writer

*Knowing* is a film about John Koestler (Nicholas Cage), a professor at M.I.T. who contemplates the methods of the universe. After the death of his wife, he believes that things happen fortuitously, but his ideals are soon challenged when his son, Caleb (Chandler Canterbury), brings home a letter that has been encased in his school's time capsule for fifty years. John realizes that the seemingly random digits in the letter actually foretell disasters that have taken place over the past fifty years. The last three events on the document, however, are still unaccounted for, and John comprehends that further catastrophe will take place shortly. When no one believes what he has to say, he attempts to change the course of events, but he sees that they are not alterable. He scrambles to discern the last of the numbers, and his findings indicate that death will soon take place on a cataclysmic level.

This movie is an insightful, stirring watch. The viewer leaves the theater questioning the role of fate in the lives of humankind. The special effects used in the disaster scenes were remarkably vivid, and the appearances of tall, shadowy strangers throughout the film were eerie and rather frightening. On a deeper level, it dawns upon the viewer that love knows no bounds and that death is inevitable. In addition, there are many intriguing religious references throughout. Overall, seeing this film was a powerful experience, and I recommend it to any who would enjoy a profound and touching film.



## Tokyo!

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

By Nicole Haaser  
Staff Writer

*Tokyo!* is along the same vein as *Paris Je T'aime*, in that it is a love letter to its respective city, revealing intimate connections between the people and the city, and questioning the influence of one over the other: particularly in regards to the city's transformation, anarchy, and rebirth. *Tokyo!* features three separate films—a "trilogy"—directed by French director Michel Gondry, famous for *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*; French director and writer, Leos Carax; and South Korean writer and director, Bong Joon-Ho, respectively.

Michel Gondry's film, *Interior Design*, cleverly described as the "transformation," follows a character caked Hiroko, as she moves into Tokyo with her boyfriend, an aspiring film director. As she searches the city with her boyfriend to find a nice apartment so that she can move out of her friend's tiny flat, she finds herself asking very serious questions about her own purpose and passion. Gondry exhibits an excellent eye for balance—the cuteness and quirkiness of the film never become overwhelming or irritating, and it maintains an air of seriousness throughout.

The second film, *Merde*, is a far more chaotic story. Leos Carax follows the proceedings of sewer creature, whose only given name is, "Merde," a French curse word. *Merde*'s antics both terrify and fascinate the city, as its citizens take sides as to whether or not to support *Merde* and his "philosophy" or not. All in all, it is rather unclear exactly *what* this philosophy is, or what it is Carax is thumbing his nose at, besides, perhaps, his audience.

The third and final installment of the triptych is Bong Joon-Ho's, *Shaking Tokyo*, following an agoraphobic hermit who refuses to go outside or make eye contact with any of the delivery men who come to his home. Ending *Tokyo!* with the rebirth, this film could stand alone very well, but perhaps falls a little flat as a conclusion to the feature as a whole.



## I Love You, Man

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

By Jon Lacson  
Staff Writer

Peter Klaven (Paul Rudd) has recently proposed to his girlfriend Zooey. All the plans are set for a storybook marriage: a romantic proposal, a beautiful fiancée, and an outdoor wedding near a gorgeous Santa Barbara beach. However, amidst the setting of this seemingly perfect wedding, one thing is missing for Peter: a best man.

A "girlfriend-guy" for the majority of his life, Peter never really put any effort in developing any of his relationships with his male friends. This was clearly illustrated when his own dad admitted that one of his own best friends was his brother Rob (Andy Samberg). Late one night, Peter eavesdrops on a conversation between Zooey and a friend, and to his dismay he hears the girls express concerns over Peter's lack of male companions. It is then that Peter embarks on a series of "man dates" in search of a best man, and it is then that the real hilarity ensues.

Enter Sydney Fife (Jason Segel) who Peter stumbles upon at his own Open House for Lou Ferrigno's mansion. Peter is at first taken aback by Sydney's blatant honesty and crude openness, but he quickly learns that Sydney is his counterpart and begins to come out of his shell little by little the more time he spends with him.

As the title suggests, "I Love You, Man" is another splash into the successful wave of "bromantic comedies" that have been released as of late with parts equally vulgar and sweet. At its heart, this movie is a tale about the platonic friendships of men, and all the laughing, jam-out sessions, screaming, and fights with Lou Ferrigno that they entail.



## Watchmen

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

By Tessa Krey  
Staff Writer

Directed by Zack Snyder, *Watchmen* is based on the eponymous and hugely popular graphic novel. The film centers on Rorschach, a vigilante investigating the murder of an ex-superhero with help from other former superheroes.

Without a doubt, the most outstanding feature of this film is the stunning visual effects. The opening sequence in particular is amazing, setting an incredibly dark tone which pervades the rest of the movie. The acting in *Watchmen* is solid as well; most notably, Jackie Earle Haley manages a believable portrayal of the deeply complex Rorschach. Malin Akerman, who plays ex-superhero Laurie Jupiter, also proves surprisingly competent in a part that is almost the polar opposite of her previous roles.

At times, the quick scene changes are a little confusing, especially during flashback sequences, some of which seem rather unnecessary. This aspect of the film does, however, gradually become more bearable. But the most upsetting thing about *Watchmen*, though, is probably the film's ending. For a movie nearly 3 hours long with an interesting and action-packed storyline, *Watchmen* seems to be headed towards a thrilling and dramatic conclusion – something which it ultimately never delivers. The revelation of the main villain proves to be a very predictable sequence, and the absence of action in the finale is equally anticlimactic.

Despite these flaws, *Watchmen* still proves to be a worthwhile movie. The undertaking of such a faithful adaptation of the graphic novel was a hugely ambitious project and a tremendous challenge for any director, so despite the disappointing conclusion, Snyder's film is for the most part successful.





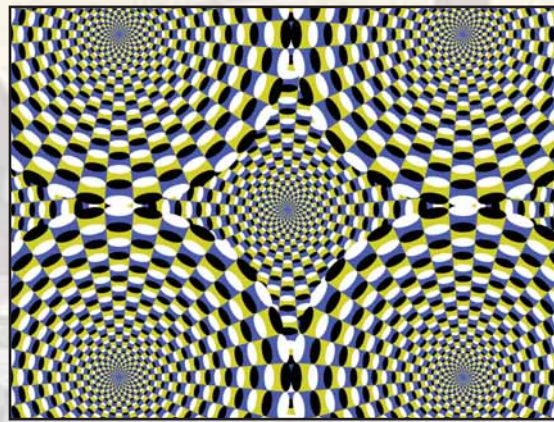
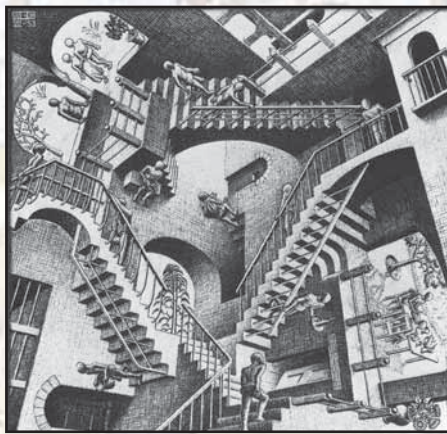
# OPTICAL ILLUSIONS: PSYCHOLOGICAL ART

By Linda Nguyen  
Staff Writer

Optical illusions mesmerize us by disrupting our perception of reality, enthralling children and art critics alike. Perhaps one of the most popular optical illusions is *Relativity* by M.C. Escher.

This work is known best for its mind-boggling points of view of one building. He epitomizes the objective of optical illusions by playing with the mind's perceptions. It consists of three different staircases, each on a different plane and incorporating many different angles. If you follow the staircases from the bottom of the picture, you can reason that the architecture is logical since they flow smoothly into one another. However, when you look at the entire piece as a whole, you see lopsided views of several staircases in the image. Escher manipulates and misleads our minds into seeing dimensions that we do not always see in everyday life.

While Escher's pieces focus on spatial interpretation, many other illusions focus on making a person misinterpret an abstract image. For example, one such illusion is Kitaoka's *Throwing Cast Nets*. This was designed so the circles would gradually expand if

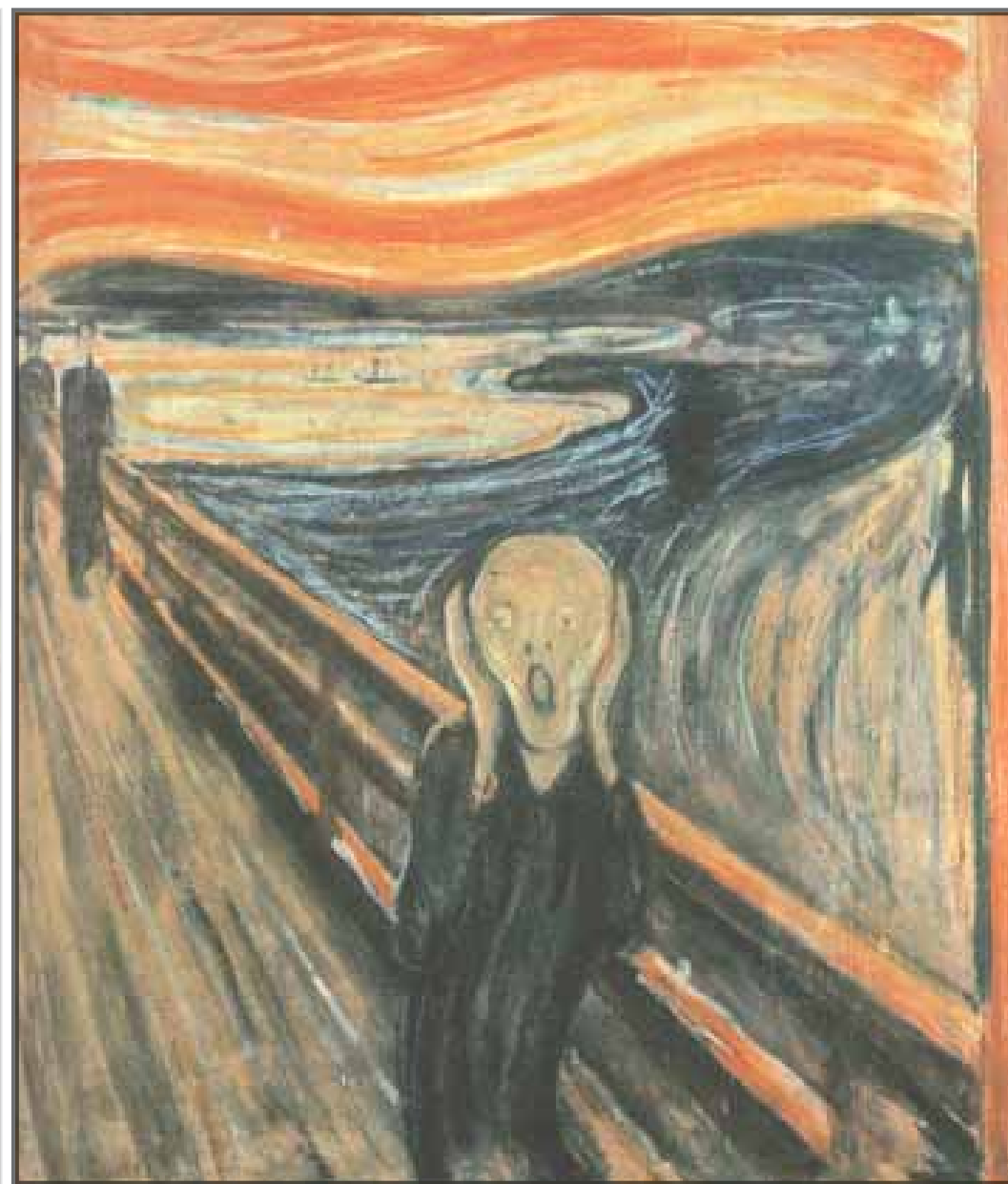


one stared at it long enough. Now, one must consider the visual neurology behind optical illusions. According to Professor Michael Bach, there are several reasons why our minds detect motion in this still image. First, the asymmetric luminance steps power the motion detectors imbedded in our mind.

The different colors contrast each other, making

it so that light meets with black, green meets with white, and so on. This and other geometric factors contribute to the motion we may see when we stare at Kitaoka's image.

Illusions make us realize that perception and reality are two entirely different concepts by manipulating our very way of thinking and tricking our minds. Ultimately, we may never be able to see true reality, because we constantly live in an illusion.



## San Jose Museum of Art

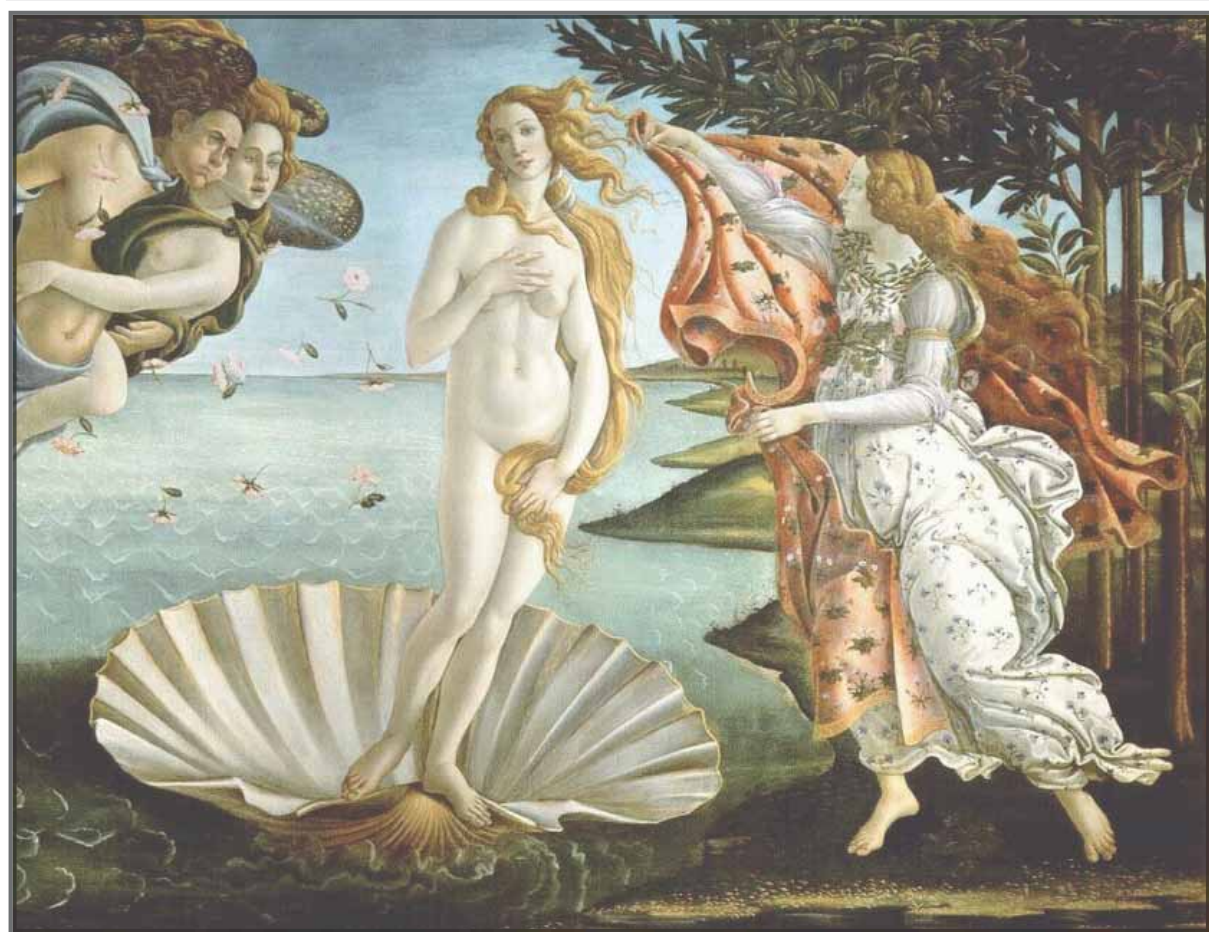
By Andrew Yen and Alyssa Yu  
Staff Writer and Staff Editor

From The Prints of Andy Warhol to Culture of Spontaneity: San Francisco Abstract Expressionism to Todd Schorr: American Surreal to the ceramics of Jun Kaneko, diverse exhibitions such as these are currently featured at the San Jose Museum of Art. The museum was established in 1969 as a small civic art gallery, and it has since then evolved into a museum recognized for its contemporary collection. This museum is a central place of the Bay Area art community, with its array of both national and international art.

As one of the most popular exhibits at the San Jose Museum of Art, **The Prints of Andy Warhol** displays iconic portraits of Marilyn Monroe, Jackie Kennedy, and Elizabeth Taylor from perhaps the best-known leader of the Pop Art movement. The collection provides an overview of Warhol's career through more than sixty lithographs and screen prints dating from the 1960s through the 1980s. Not only does the exhibit highlight Warhol's art, but it also features a documentary video that examines his life from his bed-ridden childhood to his debut of West Coast Pop Art.

Another exhibit unique to SJMA, **Culture of Spontaneity: San Francisco Expressionism** explores abstract art from the mid-1940s to early 1960s of San Francisco. This era is often considered a second-generation spin-off from the more famous New York painters like Jackson Pollock, who is defined by his notorious drip painting. This exhibition brings together work in the Museum's collection of local artists only now being recognized as pioneers of this movement.

Currently housing six exhibitions and a permanent collection of 1,400 twenty-first century artwork including paintings, sculptures, new media, photography, and drawings, the museum is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San Jose. Tickets to visit this extraordinary display of contemporary art is only \$8 dollars for adults. However, take advantage of the SJMA's 40th anniversary on May 10, when it celebrates with free admission. An adventure to this museum is sure to be an enjoyable experience. So if you ever find yourself bored on the weekend, grab some of your friends, hop in the car, and visit the San Jose Museum of Art.



# focus on ART

Here are the names of the famous art works (along with their respective artists) in the background of this page, listed from top left: "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte," by Seurat; "Scream," by Munch; a Marilyn Monroe print, by Andy Warhol; "Birth of Venus," by Botticelli; "Mona Lisa," by Leonardo Da Vinci; "Starry Night," by Vincent van Gogh; "Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa," by Hokusai; "Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?" by Gauguin; "Liberty Leading the People," by Delacroix



## abstract art mediums

By Jennifer Campbell  
Staff Writer

A phoenix triumphantly rises out of the flames that once engulfed its existence. Such a momentous scene is visualized in the vibrancy of yellows, oranges, and reds—colors characterized by passion and power. Colors enigmatic of the resurrection such an image portrays. The very colors of your post-it notes.

Indeed, such a classic, beautiful panorama has been created entirely out of the vivid scraps of paper we use as reminders. Could this abstract approach to creation ever be considered a noteworthy art form, or just an experimental hobby?

As art continuously evolves into the modern world, people progressively incorporate new elements to the approach of art. For instance, George Vlosich broke new ground by utilizing a 1950s classic toy—the Etch-

A-Sketch—to depict notable figures such as the Beatles, Tiger Woods, and our newly inaugurated President Obama. Involving over 70 hours of work and drawing with a single line—such a skill cannot be disregarded as unimpressive. It's laborious efforts, if not unique circumstances, makes the skill the equivalent of Picasso's *Guernica*.

Perhaps the incorporation of colloquial items within art is an idea that still needs to be explored. Andy Warhol first introduced the idea of the everyday being art through his depictions of accessible items—a banana, a can of Campbell's soup, a coca-cola can. Art has hence become something that is not limited to landscapes and nature—it is something seen in a grocery store, something universal to grasp—discovering art in the ordinary and everyday.

## Art of the Far East

By Jocelyn Tan  
Staff Writer

### Chinese Fan Art

Iron fans for self-defense? Fans as indoor ornaments? Believed to be first created during the Shang dynasty, fans that served many different purposes were widely received by Chinese society. Made of jade, feather, plant leaves, silk, bamboo, iron or paper, fan art was a favorite pastime. Serving as a compact canvas for paintings, the artist displayed their exquisite designs of nature or animals on fans.



Fans were also used to showcase calligraphy produced by the cultured and to conceal *nu shu*, a secret language created by women originating from the Hunan Province, from men. Varying in a wide range of sizes, from as small as a coin to as huge as a door, Chi-

nese fans were initially round in structure; only when the Japanese introduced folding fans were these traditional fans replaced by the ever-popular Asian fan we associate with today.

### Japanese Flower Art

Otherwise known as *Ikebana*, this form of Eastern Asian flower arrangement is an art in and of itself. While Western methods focus on parallelism and color arrangement, *Ikebana* emphasizes shape, line and form. Believed to draw nature and humanity in a common sphere, a stolid flower depiction on paper is brought to life during *Ikebana*.

Minimalism is an important element of this Eastern method of flower arrangement, as it sets a minimum number of blooms that can be arranged between a certain number of flower stalks. Attempting to create



a perfect balance among the elements, silence is observed during this practice, and all material, such as the flower and vase, must be organic. One goal of *Ikebana* is to use as few stems and leaves as possible to spotlight the flower's beauty. Modern twists has been added to this Japanese flower art. *Moribana*, the simplest style and *Nagaire*, which utilizes a narrow container, can be easily taught to novice arrangers.

### Korean Mask Art

Have you ever heard of traditional Korean dramas? Korean dramas are sometimes combined with lively dances which makes use of special masks known as *t'al*.

Performing artists wearing these masks can represent a person, animal or supernatural being. *T'al* also identifies the age and sex of a character. For instance, an artist portraying an old man will wear a mask that is all black, while one depicting a young man will wear red mask, while white is reserved for young women. Interestingly, *t'al* representing the aristocracy are always in some form defaced, as these masks derived from ancient mask-dance dramas portray feelings of spite the common people had towards the elite class during the imperialistic era. A common feature of *t'al* is black cloth tied to the back of the mask to secure its place and mimic black hair.

## ANIMALS AND ART

By Lisa Patel  
Staff Writer

Have you ever heard of Congo the chimpanzee? For years, scientists have been fascinated with chimps and their human-like abilities, such as their ability to learn sign language and use it to communicate.

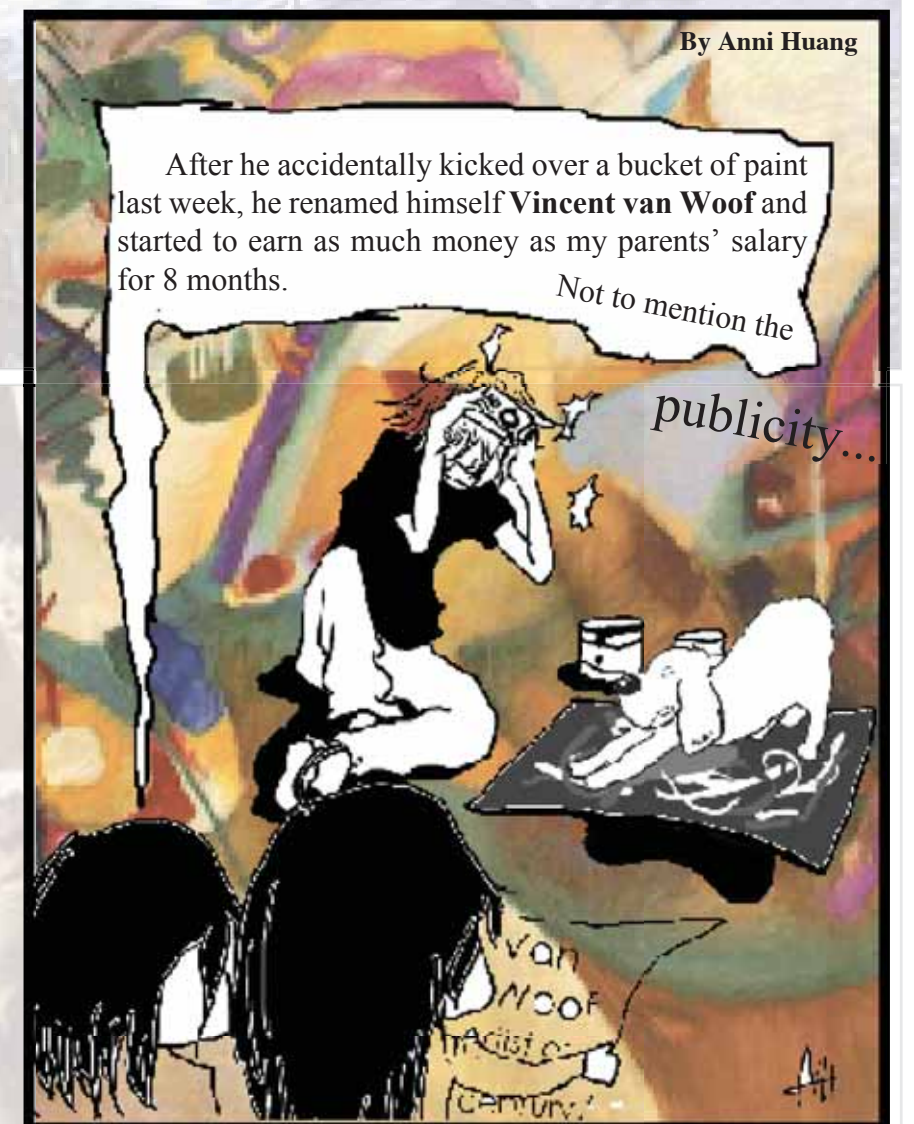
Recently, studies have shown that chimps and a variety of other animals have learned how to create art, a phenomenon that intrigues scientists and behaviorologists alike. Congo is just one of the more famous and successful of these animals, with one of his paintings selling for a whopping \$25,000.

Other animals besides chimps have also been found creating art. The Animals Art Project is dedicated to studying and



collecting the works of art created from a variety of animals, even those having no relation with humans.

In addition to having chimpanzee art, this organization also houses art done by elephants, dolphins, belugas, dogs, horses, pigs, and even snails. Other projects sell paintings created by elephants and use the money to help with elephant conservation. Who would have thought that animals could create better art than most humans?



By Anni Huang



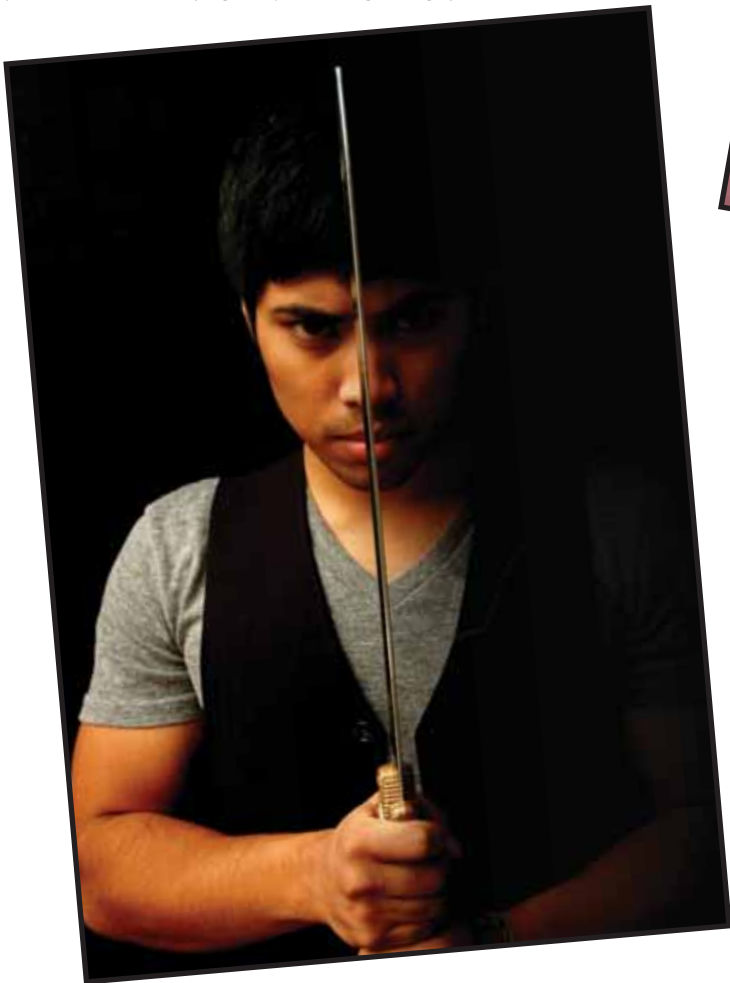
# Through the Lens

a close-up look at Mitty's photographers



## Nam Ho

*Nam Ho is currently a senior at Mitty. He grew up in San Jose with both of his parents and continues to reside there. In addition to photography, other interests of his are lacrosse, surfing, body-boarding, and golf.*



### **What attracted you to photography in the first place?**

*I really didn't expect photography to grow on me so fast. I like it because the thought of being able to save a memory and look back at it has always appealed to me. Also, I have a great interest in urban fashion and apparel. I thought that if I were to pursue business and fashion in college, it would be nice to have an understanding of photography when creating a look book, a catalog, or putting together a photo-shoot.*

### **What is your favorite thing to photograph?**

*I have always been a fan of pictures that combine nature and macro because you can really see the details that you usually miss with the naked eye; sometimes less is more.*

### **What inspires you?**

*One of my first inspirations was one of my friends Lawrence Sharma. He definitely has taught me a lot about using a dSLR and being creative during fashion photo-shoots by using unusual props and angles. Lately, I've been taking more notice of fashion ads in hopes of getting more inspiration for out-of-the-ordinary settings, props, and overall creativity.*

### **Describe the favorite photo you've taken:**

*My favorite photo is definitely one of a pink rose that was in my back yard. The flower just happened to have a very photogenic blossom. Other than slightly brightening the pink and doing a couple touch-ups on some minor blemishes, nothing too extreme was done in Photoshop.*

### **Where do you plan to take this hobby?**

*I plan on sticking with photography for a long time. In the future, I plan on going into the urban clothing and street wear business. I hope that photography will help me have a better understanding in creating visually appealing apparel and ads.*

### **How would you describe your photographic style?**

*Crisp. Creative. Fun...with a hint of contrast.*





*Kimberly Niedermaier*

**“While walking in Boston’s North End this summer, a helicopter flew overhead and luckily I had my camera in hand. I cropped the photo to emphasize the subject and the stark contrast between the white clouds and the dark helicopter silhouette.”**



*Kendra Breunling*

**“My brother pitching at a little league baseball game: I was pleasantly surprised that I was able to capture the intensity of the game in a single shot.”**

# Snapshots



*Claire Bredenoord*

**“My little cousin is in love with his superman costume, and his cat. I just love his and the cat’s facial expressions.”**



*Corinne Sliva*

**“This picture was taken on a swinging bridge deep in the jungles of Maui, Hawaii.”**



*Sean Robbins*

**“I was in Europe and the famous French landmark caught my eye. I was impressed by how massive, yet how intricate it was up close, in person.”**

Like what you see?  
If you would like to be a featured photographer in *The Monarch*, send your photographs to [photomonarch@gmail.com](mailto:photomonarch@gmail.com) and your work may be shown in an upcoming issue!



# Justice Awareness

## Profiles in Justice

### SPOTLIGHT ON INVISIBLE CHILDREN

By Angela Hodge  
Staff Writer

It's called the **Rescue Plan**. It's being put into action April 25<sup>th</sup> in cities across the world, including Los Angeles. And, if you participate, you'll be helping to stop the abduction, enslavement, and slaughter of thousands of children in what has been called the most neglected humanitarian emergency on Earth.

**Northern Uganda** is the site of Africa's longest-running war, a bloody battle between the detached and ineffectual Government of Uganda and the rebel organization known as the Lord's Resistance Army. Led by brutal terrorist Joseph Kony, the Lord's Resistance Army has lost the support of the people. Now **more than 90 percent of its troops are unwilling soldiers abducted as children.**

In 1996 the Ugandan government attempted to protect its citizens by forcibly crowding them into small camps, but with no further support, these people were left in total poverty, suffering and dying from starvation and disease. While hopeful attempts at peace were made in the last decade, the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed in August 2006 has expired as Joseph Kony has for a fourth time failed to sign the final agreement to peace. And now, since September 2008, the violence of the Lord's Resistance Army has reached its peak. Increasing numbers of children are being abducted, tortured, drugged, raped, and forced to kill.

There is hope. The organization **Invisible Children**, founded by three young men from San Diego who witnessed these nightmares themselves, has been actively increasing awareness about the plight of Uganda's children since its first documentary was released in 2003. Since then, it has gained a following of thousands of young people who want to take part in the rescue. Many Archbishop Mitty students and staff met the Invisible Children Roadies who visited our school themselves Feb. 27 to spread awareness of Northern Uganda's situation and encourage us to take part in the abduction on April 25.

This abduction is the third mass demonstration orchestrated by Invisible Children. Two years ago, supporters night-commuted to highlight night commutes and kidnappings in Uganda; last year, they displaced themselves to bring home the displaced child soldiers.

This year, to stop child abduction, people in one hundred cities in nine countries worldwide are abducting themselves. Participants will mass in groups reminiscent of the citizen camps in Uganda, where they will wait to be "rescued" by a representative of media or government authority who will pledge to support the Invisible Children cause. To learn more about the Rescue Plan and how to participate, you can get more information on the organization's homesite at [www.invisiblechildren.com](http://www.invisiblechildren.com).

The purpose of these seemingly small efforts is best expressed by the members themselves: "Our culture is determined by three forces: money, media, moguls. It's a fact: money makes the world go round. The media decides what stories in the world are worth telling. And moguls compete for the attention of the media. And this cycle repeats itself over and over again, defining and redefining our priorities. The truth is: they need us. And when the masses take action, they have to listen. And history is rewritten. A slave is freed, a vote is counted, a war is torn down, and a revolution begins."

## STATE BUDGET CUTS MAY ELIMINATE SPORTS PROGRAMS

By Kanishka Khanna & Gabby Cordero  
Staff Writers

The United States is in what many experts refer to as the worst recession since the Great Depression. As a result, states have been pressured to make serious cuts across the board to balance their budgets.

In light of the current recession, the need to limit government spending has consequently preempted funding for public schools, terminating arts and athletic programs and leading to the laying-off of teachers on staff. Districts, such as the East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) located in San Jose, have been compelled to make such decisions that highly impact students, having little choice other than to lay-off teachers and ask for extra money to re-establish sports teams.

Recently, ESUHSD held various meetings to discuss and execute plans that may help soften the impact of the limited state budget. The money allotted for funding education is not nearly enough to also include related school programs. According to the California Teachers Association, the state budget package includes \$15 billion in spending cuts, \$12.5 billion in new revenues and \$11.3 billion in loans. In order to meet these funding constraints, the school board has formulated a budget that includes a 10 percent lay-off of approximately 3,100 teachers and staff—not to mention the proposed termination of all sports programs.

This is understandably a nightmare for many of the students who participate regularly in these programs. Imagine a volleyball, basketball, or football player who can no longer play for their school team because the team no longer exists. Five meetings have so far been held by the East Side District at Independence High School to determine new proposals that will fix the budget and this crisis for the students.

At one of the five meetings, held by the East Side District at Independence High School on March 10, the school

board of trustees proposed and vetoed layoff notices to 100 teachers and 116 staff members. These individuals received a pink slip on "Pink Slip Friday," March 13.

Also, as a part of the meeting agenda, they came to quell the public's dissatisfaction with the lack of sports programs. The crowd was filled with student athletes, parents, teachers, staff, counselors and administrators. After hearing the arguments from numerous groups, the trustees finalized their ath-



Teachers protest the unfair budget cuts hurting school programs.

letic agreements.

They determined that \$2 million dollars in private money needs to be raised for athletics. Thus, **students who wish to participate in their high school's athletic programs will be asked to pay a voluntary \$200 fee.** The board estimates that \$1.2 million could be raised in this way. Whatever deficit remains would have to be raised through other sources.

No compromise can be perfect, especially ones entailing financial limitations in these trying times. What will happen to athletes from low-income families who play sports?

It may be easy for a student who comes from a middle-income family to continue playing in teams if they opt

for club sports. But matters are not so clear-cut for students from low-income backgrounds to play outside of their school teams; costs are often higher and involve increased transportation, expenses which they may not be able to afford.

These students are now confronted with an ultimatum: either pay additional costs or give up playing sports altogether. The ESUHSD has made valiant attempts to keep their sports programs afloat. However, with funding of sports programs derived predominantly from students, low-income athletes are presumably left out in the rain.

Though almost \$100 billion is allotted to schools via the national education package, only about \$5 billion will actually go to school districts that reduce the achievement gap between poor and wealthy students. This may still seem a hefty sum, but unfortunately it is hardly enough to rid the country of its fiscal deficit for education, which now amounts to \$132 billion.

Undeniably, there are also those in our Mitty community who have been gravely affected by the economic downturn. As a private school, our parents pay not only for public schools through their taxes, but also pay tuition exceeding \$12,000.

Next year, the tuition will be increased another 5% to reach a tentative \$13,550. The administration adds that "at the same time we will be increasing the amount of Financial Aid we provide to \$1.7 million, which is more than \$200,000 over last year."

"We have been working hard to keep the tuition increase as small as possible while at the same time providing children with an excellent educational environment. We will continue to look for ways to cut costs and pass those savings on to our student's families."

As we see how neighboring schools are so impacted by the economic downturn, we grow more aware of our own opportunities and more cognizant of the fact that our education, least of all, should not be taken for granted.

## Pandemonium in Panzi

### DOCTORS HELP CONGO RAPE VICTIMS RE-ENTER SOCIETY

By Maya Raman  
Staff Writer

Women's rights, feminism, how 1950s, right? Wrong. While girls today have little concept of an existence without life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, these same rights are denied to our sisters who are just a plane ride away.

We live, never once questioning these basic rights, while women and even little girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo live afraid for their lives and their dignity.

According to vday.org, in the DRC province of South Kivu, a place smaller than the city of San Francisco, 40 women are raped every day.

Officially, the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo is over, yet soldiers continue to infiltrate the war-torn country. The people of DRC live in fear; the soldiers rape and abuse women and sexu-

ally mutilate men and then pillage them, leaving them with nothing.

The women raped are not only sexually violated but physically mutilated. A 40 year old woman from South Kivu testified to Amnesty International about her own experience.

"Towards midnight, I heard the crackle of gunfire all around the village...As I was trying to escape with my children, seven soldiers broke down the door to my house, threw me down to the ground and raped me. I lost consciousness till the next day...When I walk I have to hold my abdomen with my skirt, because it hurts so much. I cannot walk very far now and as the soldiers took everything, I can hardly manage to look after my children."

Dr. Denis Mukwege wants to help women like the one above by providing them with fistula surgery in order to al-

low them to live healthy shameless lives once again.

A Congolese gynecologist, Dr. Mukwege works at the General Referral Hospital of Panzi in Bukavu, on the eastern side of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The majority of patients at the hospital are victims of sexual violence.

After treating these women, the hospital helps them become active members of their communities, no longer ashamed of being the victims of rape.

They are given technical training in a number of disciplines including sewing, soap making, animal husbandry, and marshland cultivation.

To help the women of the Democratic Republic of Congo there are two paths we can take. The first would be to write letters to His Excellency, the President of the Democratic Republic of

See PANZI, p.13



**PANZI** | *continued from p.12*

the Congo, Joseph Kabila Kabange. The letter would ask him to put a stop to the violence that is occurring in the Congo.

Mail letters to U.N. Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, P.O. Box 3862, New York, NY 10163, and they will be mailed to the President of DRC.

The second way to help out these women would be to donate towards the Panzi Hospital through [vday.org](http://vday.org) or through the Panzi Hospital collection box placed in Campus Ministry. By doing this, the money donated also is put towards building the City of Joy, a safe haven for victims of sexual abuse. Here

they can learn how to become politically active and speak out for the women of DRC.

For more information about this issue, you can go to [vday.org](http://vday.org) or the Panzi Hospital website at [www.panzihospitalbukavu.org](http://www.panzihospitalbukavu.org).

# WORLD AFFAIRS

By Esha Joshi

Staff Writer

## MELANCHOLY IN MARSEILLES



Major trade unions participated in a national strike on March 18, paralyzing shipping to airlines, ports, and railroads of France. Protesting President Nicolas Sarkozy's economic policies and his inaction to the global recession, the unions demand that the government start working to stem unemployment levels. The second major strike in two months, French citizens marched in the streets of Paris, Marseille, and Lyon, with intentions of trying to help the vital state their country is in with the financial crisis. Some

estimated there were 2.6 million, but the national police lowered the number to 1.4 million.

## THE SCOPE OF POVERTY IN INDIA

A World Food Program report last month revealed that India houses more than a fourth of the world's hungry, 230 million people in all, ranked behind almost 24 sub-Saharan countries on its Global Hunger Index. India is making an effort to better provide for its malnourished masses. It in fact runs the largest child feeding program in the world, the Integrated Child Development Services program. As experts concede, however, the program is inadequate to promulgate widespread change. While systems like these make effective changes creating soup kitchens in urban slums and villages, these efforts only ameliorate conditions on a short-term basis.



## DEATH PENALTY TO CULPRITS OF CHINA'S TAINTED MILK SCANDAL



Court rulings upheld the allegations finding siblings Geng Jinping and Geng Jinzhu guilty of producing and selling poisoned food by adding the chemical melamine to milk. The courts sentenced Jinping to the death penalty and Jinzhu to an 8-year prison period. Their adulteration of milk products caused the deaths of at least six people and sickened 300,000 others. This scandal may have compromised China's reputation for being reliable producers, but dairy companies are eager to make amends, offering compensation to the victims of the tainted products, ranging from \$300 to \$29,000 for each family.

## NEW MEXICO ENDS PRACTICE OF DEATH PENALTY

Gov. Bill Richardson signed a bill abolishing the death penalty in New Mexico, stating that the "system is inherently defective." He believes it is unable



to judge the true culpability of the convicted prisoner, and thus allows the chance the innocent could die. Since 1975, nearly 120 people have been released from death row after the courts verified their innocence. Gov. Richardson also addressed the point that "there is no reason the United States should be behind the rest of the world on this issue. Many of the countries that continue to support and use the death penalty are also the most repressive nations in the world. That's not something to be proud of."

## POLITICAL BLOGGER IN EGYPT UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED

23-year-old Dia' el Din Gad was arrested Feb. 6 by Egyptian police for participating in peaceful marches meant to express solidarity with those suffering in the recent Gaza strip conflict. Detained for exercising his right to free speech, Gad was interrogated about his blog, his involvement in other politically-motivated protests including the Egyptian Movement for Change, and possible affiliations with the terrorist organization Hamas. Though there is much speculation surrounding his arrest, he is charged with no conceivable offense, yet the Egyptian government has yet to exonerate him. According to Egypt's security, blogging is one source that cannot be tolerated and hundreds of such bloggers have been detained for having the potential to circulate subversive information concerning terrorist actions and organizations.



# POLITICAL UNREST GROWS IN PAKISTAN

By Manosai Eerabathini

Staff Writer

When the toxic legacy of former President Pervez Musharraf was finally ended last August, many Pakistanis hailed this as the turning point in the novel, democratic era of the nation. Politicians were successfully able to unite in order to force Musharraf from power and thus, institute a new form of power. But now the situation has become increasingly unstable.

Political uncertainty with Pakistan's two parties has ignited a state of chaos that creates an opportunity for Islamic extremists to destabilize the nation. The current president, Asif Ali Zardari, is the widower of assassinated Benazir Bhutto and also the co-chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). But his government hasn't been taking steps to ensure the prosperity of the nation is instead capitulating to meet the demands of extremists such as the Taliban.

In the Swat Valley of Pakistan, the government even struck a peace deal with the Taliban elements although the area has been terrorized for years. This situation is eerily similar to the early 1990s during which the Taliban domi-

nated the area due to the lack of Pakistani military presence. It has even been reported that the Pakistani military has been vacating posts allowing the militants to roam about freely enforcing their own rules such as demanding each family to sacrifice one son to the Taliban.

The inefficacy of the Pakistani government can be attributed to two substantial and intense disagreements between the PPP and their opposition, the Pakistani Muslim League. During the campaign for presidency, Zardari had repeatedly promised the reinstatement of the Chief Justice who had been ousted by Musharraf.

This vow has gone unfulfilled further enraging the people's discontent with the ineffectiveness of the government to take action for positive reform. However, just recently, the Chief Justice has been reinstated due to the immense pressure placed on Zardari, resulting in celebrations throughout the nation.

The second incident that has created dissent is the Supreme Court's ruling that upholds a ban on the rival opponent, Nawaz Sharif, to run for political office.

For years, Pakistan has experienced harsh political

conditions due to absolutist rulers like Musharraf but when given the opportunity to change this, the Pakistani president has failed to alleviate the situation.

The increasing frustration of Pakistanis has manifested itself in mass protests and riots in Lahore. But these specific incidents go only so far to show the immediate action required if Pakistan is to be removed from the brink of another period of political chaos.

Instead of displaying signs of weakness by seeking peace with extremists, Pakistan should be negotiating with allies such as the United States and Britain in order to defeat the growing threat of the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The genuine strength that Zardari possesses is the popular support of the public and this should be utilized in a manner that promotes unity and reduces division amongst rival parties.

Only if these limitations are overcome will the political situation in Pakistan will improve. Until then, the government should take all means necessary to address the nation's most immediate problem, insurgency, as this jeopardizes not only its internal stability but also its relations with other nations.



# SPORTS

## Golf: Putting Their Way to Victory

By Neil Jariwalla  
Staff Writer

The Archbishop Mitty Men's Golf Team is here – and they're on a roll.

Led by juniors Stephen Jahncke, Gable Ignacio, and Ryan Rankin, sophomores Neerav Sharma and Shotaro Ban, and freshman Sam Guterman, the varsity team is winning match after match, and cementing their status as an elite WCAL contender.

So far the Monarchs have performed spectacularly, earning a 11-1 record, winning blowouts as well as some close, one-stroke matches. Their most recent victory, 193-197 over St. Ignatius, revenged their only official loss of the year, a one-stroke defeat.

After a one stroke loss to Menlo-Atherton in a practice match Feb. 24, the team rebounded with an incredible winning streak, including a nine-stroke edge over rival Bellarmine, and a one-stroke victory over St. Francis.

"One of our biggest strengths is that we have four returning varsity players who are very consistent," says Coach John Mosunic. "We can usually depend on them to score around even par."

This consistency has been put on display throughout, as Jahncke, Ignacio, Rankin, Sharma and Ban have each medaled in at least one match.

Their leadership is evident in their scores, as in their first-game victory over Riordan, Jahncke led the pack with a score of 2 under par 34, while Rankin also shot under par with 35.

The Monarchs then put forth arguably their best performance so far, with Sharma shooting a 2 under par 34 against Bellarmine at Mitty's home turf, San Jose Municipal Golf Course.

While consistently sinking 30- and 40-foot putts, Sharma ended with four birdies at the end of nine holes. Rankin added a 1 under par score of 35, Ignacio and Ban contributed even par 36's, and Guterman added a solid 37.

Collectively the golfers finished two strokes under par with a score of 178. Mitty also shined in a one-stroke win over St. Francis in their fourth game, as Rankin rode an even par 36 score to a medal. The Monarchs also gained their lowest overall score, finishing at 176.

It was then Ban's turn, as he put forth a 2 under par



Photo courtesy of Pro Image

Freshman Sam Guterman eyes his drive in a victory over St. Francis.

34 with a remarkable five birdies in his team's 190-196 win over St. Francis. Mitty then followed with a comfortable win over Valley Christian with Jahncke, Rankin, and sophomore Sean Guzman putting up solid scores before Ignacio's hole-in-one highlighted the Monarchs second win over Bellarmine this season.

Like everything else, though, the Monarchs are not completely invincible.

"Since we play six players in a match our weakness is that we usually have two players in a match that are not consistent. They might score even par in one match and then eight over par in the next match," says Mosunic.

This inconsistency was displayed in a close win over Junipero Serra High School in their third game. Rankin delivered an even par 36 and Ban shot a 1 over par 37, but the others struggled. The combined score of 195 was unusually high for the club.

A one-stroke win over St. Francis just three days later showed the resiliency of the golfers, however.

One important factor that has contributed to the Monarchs' success is teamwork. Golf has always been traditionally considered an individual sport, where the primary focus is placed on individual performances while the word team is hardly mentioned. However, it is different for Mitty. In each foursome, there are two Mitty players and two opposing players.

According to Mosunic, this fosters a team aspect to the game: "The two players help each other with course management, club selection and lining up putts. Every stroke of each individual golfer is very important."

Most Mitty players concur that their teammates help in support and encouragement.

"We help each other look at things and make decisions so we can benefit from each other," says Ban.

In the end, the most important thing is the record – one thing that has worked toward the Monarchs' favor.

With their talent, skill, and teamwork, this dominant team looks like a strong contender in the matches to come.

## Softball Looks to Capture Another Title

By Josh Ferguson  
Staff Writer

With a winning tradition in place, the 2009 Mitty Softball Team again moves towards reaching its lofty, yet very realistic goals.

"Our goals have been the same as they have always been, to win league and CCS," according to senior catcher Sydney Frangieh.

The past four years the Lady Monarchs have won CCS, and this year looks to be no exception. So far the team has an undefeated record of 7-0, two of the wins in the WCAL, putting them in prime position to win the league and get them a strong bid for CCS playoffs.

In their seven games, the Monarchs have only yielded one run, while putting up at least four runs of their own in every contest.

Even so, while the Monarchs may have the same goals as the previous softball champions, this year's team could not be more different. There is a shift from the old players to many new faces, and also a change in play. Whereas in years past the Monarchs have been a power hitting team, now they focus on being a smaller, quicker team.

Senior Alaina Thomas says, "It's nice to see the new girls meshing so well together. So far we're seeing a lot of potential from every girl, and overall we're executing better as a team."

Even with the new talent for the Monarchs this year, the team is led by three seniors who already have scholarships. Keilani Ricketts will be attending Oklahoma; Shea Williams has signed with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo; and Alaina Thomas will be attending Providence in Rhode Island. So while this team may have some new faces, there is also a great deal of returning talent.

Senior Sydney Frangieh explains, "It's different this year, because we [the seniors] are a minority, and

it's nice to see the younger players transform into Mitty players."

One such player is freshman pitcher Vanessa Alvarez, who threw a shutout in place of ace Keilani Ricketts as the Monarchs cruised to a 10-0 victory over Independence High.

The team has helped her adjust to the high school game, as Alvarez remarks, "The retreat was the best, and meeting all new people" has made playing on this team so enjoyable for the freshman.

Junior Lindsay Norton also confirms the feeling, "We have a pretty young team, but we have a lot of young talent this year so I'm not too worried about the age of our team," meaning there should be nothing stopping this team from reaching the same heights as it has in years past.

To get there though, the Monarchs are going to have some tough challenges, which are most notably Presentation and Notre Dame Belmont.

The Monarchs have already defeated Presentation in a dominating 4-0 victory in which Ricketts racked up 16 strikeouts.

Recently, Ricketts was named the #3 senior player in the country by ESPN Rise Magazine.

The Monarchs are currently ranked #4 in California and may face off against powerhouse Sheldon, ranked as the number one team in the state and one of the best in the nation, at the Livermore Stampede.

To be able to beat such tough opponents, the Monarchs are going to play much differently than in years past.

As explained by the coach Sarah Thomas, "The



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

Senior Alaina Thomas focuses as looks to slap another base hit.

biggest difference is youth and inexperience, and how the youth handles the pressure of having 'Mitty' on their jersey. We are always a target for other schools, and our young team needs to play every game like it is the CCS title game. If we play the way we are capable [of playing], we should be in the finals."



# Baseball

## Monarchs Moving Up the Rankings

By Arjun Ravishankar  
and Ayman Ullah  
Staff Writers

This year's Archbishop Mitty Baseball team is off to a successful start as it begins the spring season. While they lost key seniors last year, the team approached this season with an abundance of determination.

With a typically brutal WCAL schedule that features opponents such as perennial powerhouses Bellarmine College Prep and Valley Christian, Archbishop Mitty is prepared for the challenge.

The Monarchs have maintained an impressive 12-2 overall record, and 5-2 in the hotly contested WCAL. The Monarchs most recent victory was a 24-3 demolition of Riordan.

Despite losing to rival Bellarmine, the team has come back and learned from that game. Directly following the crushing defeat, the Monarchs pummeled Sacred Heart Cathedral 21-3, the first victory in a four game winning streak.

Scott Masik, who is deemed "a team leader who comes through in the clutch" by Coach Hutton, explains, "The Bellarmine game was a wake-up call to the whole team. We went into the game thinking we were the best team ever and we came out of the game feeling horrible. That game made us realize that we need to play 100% all the time no matter what. Now we will not overlook our opponents and all of us can not wait until we can redeem ourselves against Bellarmine in April."

Considering this change in mentality and unbelievable bounce back from a tough loss, the Monarchs are similarly poised to avenge their loss to St. Francis, which snapped the winning streak.

The senior leadership is strong, with Cal-bound pitcher



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

**Junior Colton Goularte prepares to crush the ball.**

Trevor Hildenberger, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo-bound captain Mitch Haniger, outfielder Scott Masik, and pitchers Patrick Downey and Patrick Fletcher.

Sophomore pitcher Tyler Davis states, "All of the seniors on the team are leaders," and he professes a strong sense of unity among teammates.

Coach Hutton, while praising the leadership, acknowledges the benefits of the youth of the team: "Two talented sophomores, Brett Fuller and Tyler Davis, have both proven to be outstanding players."

Masik states, "The sophomores and juniors play an

important role on our team, from being there in the dugout to helping us on the field. The sophomores bring a winning attitude to us because they never lost as freshman and hate the feeling of losing. The juniors have a lot of heart that helps us keep going through tough times in games."

While the coach maintains a determined attitude, the team believes they have certain goals already in their grasp.

As captain and center fielder Mitch Haniger says, "We are on our way to completing our goal of winning the league title and CCS in May."

Although confident, the players are still determined to maintain perfection in everything they do. "We are very happy with this season," says Haniger, "Except for the two losses."

This determined attitude should provide much more success in the season as they have already come out on top of several tough games. The team agrees that one of the key victories was against Jesuit, the number five team in the nation.

The Mitty baseball team's drive has led them to much success both in the past and this season.

According to Masik, "Our teams greatest strength is that we never give up. There have been times when the game looks like it is over to most people, but not us. We keep working every pitch no matter the score. It is this determination that helped us beat Jesuit this year and also beat Wilcox in the championship game of a tournament."

Mitty has moved up in the ranks and are currently ranked #6 in the state by ESPN RISE/Cal-Hi Sports. Their progress seems endless and their determination for success remains evident.

## Swimming

RECORDS: 2-2 (M), 3-0 (W)

KEY CONTRIBUTORS: JEFF PETERS, HOWIE CHANG, ROBERT WEN, STEPHANIE WEI, LAURENCE DELISLE, AND ARENNE CLARK

COACH MILLER: "THIS YEAR'S TEAM HAS DIVERSE PERSONALITIES, IS TREMENDOUSLY TALENTED, AND A LOT OF FUN TO WORK WITH."



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

## Men's Tennis

RECORD: 12-6, 7-3 (WCAL)

KEY CONTRIBUTORS: DEVASHISH AND RUSHIKESH JOSHI, IVAN KRATVCHENKO, AUSTIN LENZ

DEVANSHISH JOSHI: "EVERYONE IS AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE TEAM AND EACH CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO OUR SUCCESS AS A TEAM... NOTHING IS MORE GRATIFYING THAN HEARING THE ENTHUSIASTIC CHEERS FROM THE TEAMMATES."



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

## Highlight Reel

Compiled by Jaslyn Johnson & Patrick Le

## Track

RECORDS: 2-2 (M), 2-1 (W)

KEY CONTRIBUTORS: LAURENCE DUTERTE, ROCKY MESZAORS, RAY GO, NATHAN WRIGHT, ALLY LOCKWOOD, LIZ DUXBURY, STEPHNIE JOHN, GRETA WICHT AND MARY KRIEGE.

EVERETT DAILEY: "OUR DEDICATION AND DRIVE IS PORTRAYED THROUGH OUR PERFORMANCE ON THE TRACK AND FIELD."

COACH OAKLAND: "WE HOPE TO REPEAT AS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS AND QUALIFY AS MANY ATHLETES AS POSSIBLE FOR LEAGUE FINALS."



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

## Badminton

RECORD: 4-1

KEY CONTRIBUTORS: TIFFANY JIANTO, CERENA CHEN, NICK TRAN, JEFF XU, ALLISON HENDRIX, SARAH SHEFFIELD, SATISH KONDAPAVULUR, KAMINI IYER

KAMINI IYER: "THE REASON OUR TEAM IS SO SUCCESSFUL THIS YEAR IS BECAUSE OF THE ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE OUR NEW COACHES HAVE BROUGHT IN."



## LES MIS *continued from page 1*



Even with the challenge of creating a revolving stage solved, many members of the Performing Arts Department remained unsure of Mitty's ability to successfully produce such an extraordinarily ambitious theatrical work.

"I was very wary," says Mr. Kimont. "The show is such a big production and is so difficult vocally, acting-wise, and set-wise. Also the orchestra has to play professional Broadway level music. Overall, the play is not dumbed down for high school level performers."

Actor and junior Logan Breitbart who is playing Javert was also concerned that Mitty's *Les Misérables* performance would fall short of expectations.

"When I first found out Mitty would be putting on *Les Mis*, I was absolutely frightened," says Breitbart. "I thought there was no way that we would actually be able to pull it off."

However, thanks to Mitty's amazingly talented students, the high school production went unbelievably well.

"I kept waiting for something major to go wrong, but nothing did," says Mr. Kimont. "The students were so on top of things. They treated the play and their roles with great respect. Everything went so smoothly."

Logan agrees, "I was pleasantly surprised. The ensemble was great, the orchestra was fabulous, and the set was incredible. I could go on and on."

Actress and junior Christine Freschi who plays Cosette was also proud of the play's progress. "It was amazing to be a part of such a great cast," she said. "There was so much talent. No role was lacking. What Mitty students did with the play is really impressive."

Mr. Kimont adds, "It's not only the leads that are great, the people in the surrounding roles did a fantastic job as well. Actors like Ryan Meyer (junior) and Trevor Bates (sophomore) made even the smallest part have an

important impact on the overall play."

Students began practicing vocals for the musical two months before regular rehearsals began. After much practice, students also had to become comfortable with the revolving stage. "Walking across the revolve is just like walking on a treadmill," said Freschi.

Student performers also rehearsed implementing the show's props and set changes. "It was such a complex set with so many props. It could be a little hectic," added Freschi.

Probably the greatest contributor to the success of the play was the students' dedication. Over twenty students and a dozen parents worked with set design and construction.

The actors themselves spent countless hours in daily rehearsals that lasted several hours. "Most people would be shocked at the amount of hours students collectively put into productions like this," says Mr. Kimont.

Mitty's production of the play also received some help from some very special guests. Noah Jackman, an elementary school student, is playing one of the major roles in *Les Misérables*.

Actors Joey Dippel and Joyah Spangler worked with Noah in Children's Musical Theater's production of *Peter Pan* and recommended him to Mr. Kimont for a part in *Les Mis*.

"He's extremely talented," says Mr. Kimont. "He can sing and act really well."

Two other children, Samantha Gorjane and Rosie Dippel, performed roles in the show, too. Samantha is the sister of a Mitty alum and Rosie is Joey Dippel's younger sister. All three children joined the high school students everyday in rehearsal.

"Overall, *Les Misérables* is a fantastic play," says Mr. Kimont. "There's a reason this is the one of the most widespread plays in the world."

"What makes our shows different compared to others put on by high schools is that from opening night until the last show, they are run completely by students. Mrs. McCormick conducts the orchestra, but that's about it."

The hair, makeup, costume changes, lighting, sounds, stage management, and stage exits and entrances are all controlled by students.

"You dream big, you do it, and it happens," says Mr. Kimont.



## New Religion Class Option: Mission to Catholic Education

By Kim Tran  
Staff Writer

A few weeks ago, a handful of juniors received letters notifying them of a "special opportunity for senior year." They were told to meet after school where they were informed of their opportunity to participate in a new religion class, Mission to Catholic Education.

This new addition to the Religious Studies Department was devised by the joint effort of Mr. Bill Kroenung, Associate Principal Mr. Dick Robinson, and Mrs. Megan Walker in hopes of "integrating service with academic curriculum."

Every Tuesday, students in both the sophomore and senior classes will leave campus during fifth period to perform community service at schools of the Diocese of San Jose where they will "study early adolescent development and learn of its tremendous challenges and opportunities for growth" by tutoring younger children.

The hope is that "through tutoring, mentoring, and facilitat-

ing discussions and workshops, students will develop a long-term relationship with younger students within a particular class," says Mr. Kroenung.

The class, taught by Mr. Kroenung, was created in an effort to have Mitty students reach out and share their knowledge with younger kids while learning more about their faith at the same time.

The students chosen for the class were mostly alumni of the schools that are participating in this program. Mr. Robinson wants students to serve and give back to their former schools. According to Robinson, the students will learn "about the history of the Catholic education in this country and how Catholic schools continue to serve immigrants and diverse ethnic, religious, and socio-economic communities."

Mission to Catholic Education will no doubt have a big impact here at Mitty: "Students will grow as educators and ministers, and explore possible career paths in Catholic education," says Mr. Kroenung.

## RYAN PARKER *continued from page 1*

vocals, Ryan Ventura with lead vocals, and Elijah Stoll on drums. Although this group has only been together for one year, it has accomplished a lot in quite a short time.

In the last year, they have performed at venues all over the Bay Area ranging from Nickel City to local high schools and even to the historic Brookdale Lodge in Santa Cruz. Open to any place that will have them, the Rockit Zombies have been able to spread their music by doing something they love.

The band is anxious for people to find and listen to their music. They will take any opportunity that arises to spread their original sound to audiences everywhere. "When people come to our shows and jump onstage to sing the words with us, or dance in the crowd, or wear our t-shirts and stickers, it makes me feel that I am making a real difference," says Parker.

Everyone wants to find something in life that they are enthusiastic about and that they can work toward and, lucky for Ryan, he has found his passion. Because of their relentless commitment to music, Ryan and the Rockit Zombies have made a tremendous impact on various communities, allowing people to connect to the music and to each other.

## The Monarch

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& Mr. Craig Whitt

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*The Monarch* is published for the students, faculty, and parents of Archbishop Mitty High School.

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