

THE BOHEMIAN

your 3 a.m. magazine

TOWERING ARTS

how the Bromo Seltzer keeps time with its ever-changing city

MUSIC MIGRATION

meet Sabreena da Witch, a Palestinian rapper now at home in Baltimore

VINTAGE AVENUE

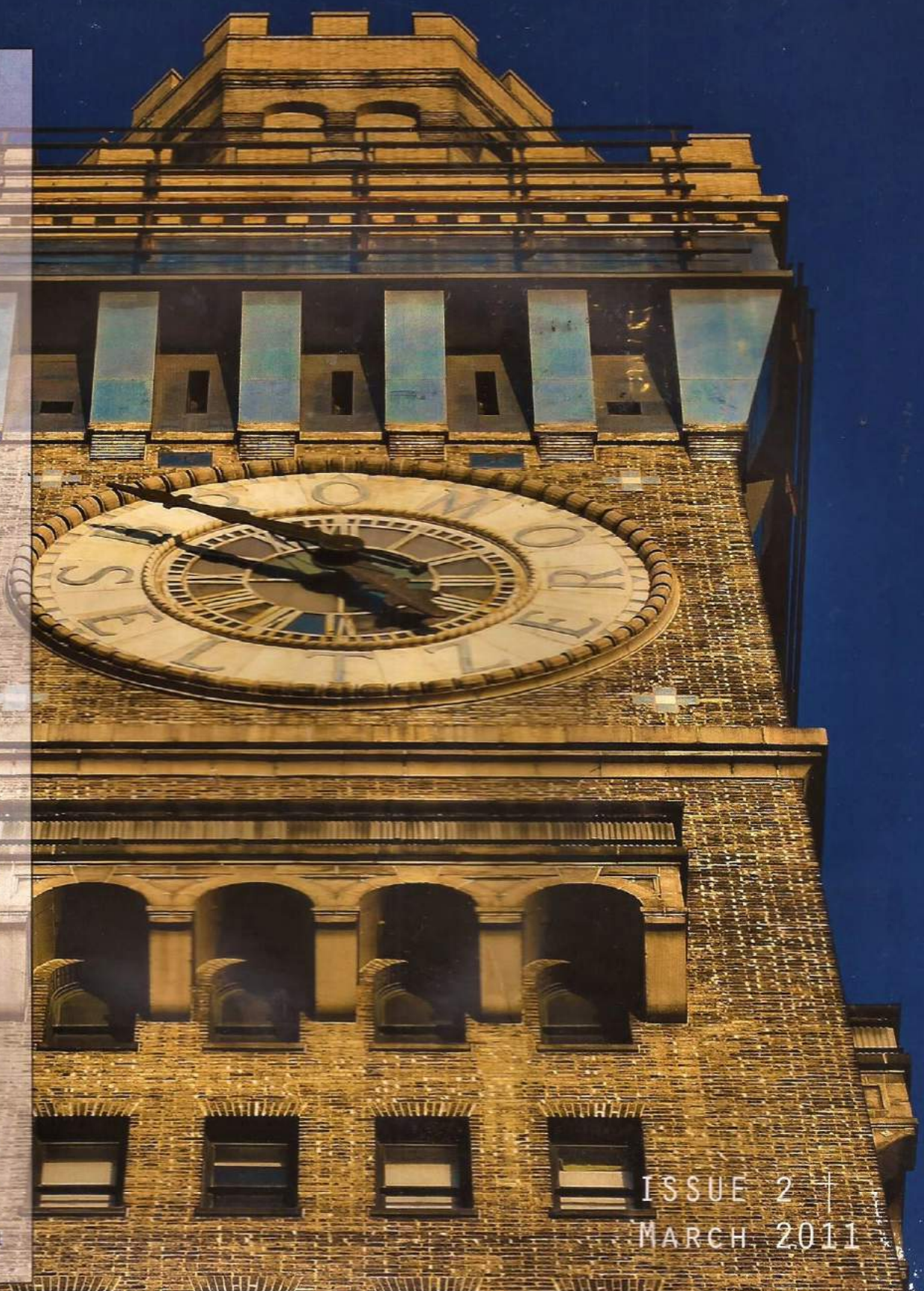
a fashion tour of Hampden's 36th street

SKATERS' SANCTUARY

off the streets and into the park: how they achieved it

INSIDE

Natty Boh on tap, urban *renewal* in unlikely places, & Jonathan Carney's mission to strip classical music of its stuffy reputation



ISSUE 2 |
MARCH 2011



**COLLECTIVE ART MEETS
GRASSROOTS PASSION**

Meet the Misty Hill Music Community.

A recording space, music school and gathering place for local musicians to unite and create, the do-it-yourself music collective offers a fresh atmosphere for artists hoping to break into the recording industry.

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welcome [back] to the BOH

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This pseudo-spring has got us thinking about renewal. Botany itself is a phenomenal concept—life just sprouting up from some unseen womb—but our renewal is of another kind. To be frank, the sophomore slump almost drowned us whole. Overwhelmed by infancy, our little seed nearly tucked its head and burrowed back into earth. A publication is a risky thing. But this defines anything worth doing.

What better to inspire us than our own content? Baltimore is a city of rebirth. The Bromo Seltzer Tower (p. 26) spent its first life as a factory and now boasts artists of every discipline. Hampden's main drag lends relevance to vintage clothing, arguing that the old can be better than new again (p. 19). A Palestinian rapper relocates to Baltimore—and finds her new home not so dissimilar from the last (p. 16).

The anomalies continue (until, some would argue, they're no longer anomalies at all). A coalition of skateboarders fights for—and wins—a space to call its own (p. 29).

Baltimore's beloved Natty Boh bursts on tap for the first time in 15 years (p. 18). With rebirth all around us, our own became inevitable.

And so we moved onward—and online. To ignore the internet would be archaic. As Jeopardy depressingly proved last week, computers can do what we cannot—and so between our print editions, you can find our thoughts circulating the Bohemian website 24/7. You can support us, too, through the simplest possible means of donation.

But in no way do we plan to give up on print. We continue to believe that true creativity does not have an on/off switch, and it does not need to be tweeted or blogged or networked to be appreciated. Sometimes, it's nice just to turn the page. And that can be its own form of renewal.

With love,

STEPHANIE DELMAN
PAYAL PATNAIK
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

KING OF THE GARDEN:

Alexandra Byer confronts the eggplant

Oh, that elusive eggplant. What to make of its peculiar oblong shape and bruised purple color? To the touch it is smooth yet tense, like plastic. I find the eggplant to be a mystery. How does this bizarre vegetable end up in a myriad of wonderful, vastly different dishes?

After last month's bacon overload, I put my health ahead and my qualms behind, and plunged right into the eggplant's puzzling orbit.

Often, the eggplant is used as a substitute for meat because of its hearty texture and ability to serve as a template for so many flavors. The plant can be cut into thick slices and used in burgers and sandwiches to replace beef or chicken.

Most Americans recognize eggplant in this fashion—as the unfortunately ubiquitous eggplant parmesan. This is a fine dish, but the eggplant has so much more potential than being doused in cheese, breadcrumbs and tomato sauce! I looked around Baltimore for lighter eggplant dishes that allow the vegetable's flavor to explode.

A favorite among Bmore's tapas restaurants is Kali's Mezze in Fell's Point. Along with Mediterranean staples like baba ghanoush and beef moussaka, their menu features oven roasted eggplant.

The small plate consists of two slices of perfectly soft, roasted eggplant packed with tomato, onion and a variety of bright herbs. The eggplant is topped with a bubbling piece of melted haloumi cheese. The dish would be perfect if it weren't for the cheese. This Greek goat-and-sheep cheese contrasts too heavily with the gentle textures and flavors of the eggplant; when eaten together, the bite of grilled cheese completely overpowers the vegetable. The cheese

seemed overcooked and would have been more appropriate as a softer, subtler goat cheese instead.

Looking for a pared-down dish, I found the eggplant gyro at One World Café in Charles Village. This is the ideal eggplant-as-meat sandwich for a vegetarian, vegan, or even your average carnivore looking for a healthy alternative.

Huge pieces of grilled eggplant are stuffed into a thick, warm pita along with fresh spinach, feta cheese, roasted red peppers and black olives. It's wrapped in foil to maintain warmth and served with lemon tahini sauce and tortilla chips. The feta and olives are kept to a minimum, which allows the eggplant to really shine. My only small complaint is the juiciness of the sandwich. Since eggplant absorbs a lot of liquids while cooking, when paired with roasted red peppers (another drooling vegetable), there is an excess of juice in the pita. This can get a bit messy—but it's completely worth it.

Lastly, an Asian version of eggplant. The Eggplant Sauté at Suzie's Soba in Hampden is made with Japanese eggplants, which are much thinner and occasionally a lighter shade of purple. The eggplant is cut into thin slices and heavily marinated in a soy-ginger sesame sauce, and served with white rice, zucchini and asparagus.

I think the fatal flaw in this dish is in the eggplant's prep. It tasted like it may not have been degorged (see below) and remained quite bitter. I found the sauce overbearing, too salty, and the eggplant was more rubbery than soft. I was especially disappointed by this dish because Suzie Soba's food is usually so good—I suppose I'll have to stick to the noodle and rice bowls from now on.

This assignment didn't seem complete unless I myself conquered my fear of cooking eggplant, which I've always assumed must be extremely difficult. Wrong!

Here's the simple DIY eggplant recipe that I tried. Buy one large eggplant (the deep purple, oblong ones—not the long skinny ones or small round ones), a small onion,

one green bell pepper and four medium tomatoes. Dice the onion and pepper, chop the tomatoes and cube the eggplant into one-inch squares. Place the eggplant into a colander and cover generously with salt. Let this rest for about an hour. This process called "degorging" will get rid of the eggplant's bitter taste and stop the vegetable from absorbing too much oil while cooking. After an hour, rinse the eggplant thoroughly and squeeze out the excess water with your hand.

In a large, hot skillet, sauté the onions and peppers in two tablespoons of butter until the onions are translucent. Then add in the tomatoes and simmer for a few minutes. Next, add the eggplant along with half a teaspoon of basil and a few pinches of oregano. Place a lid on the skillet and cook the vegetables until they're tender—about 15 minutes.

This dish is a cousin of ratatouille and can be served as a side dish to a steak or halibut, but I served it over quinoa as a main dish. Since the vegetables used in this recipe are fairly simple, don't be afraid to jazz it up with ethnic spices. I think it would go great with cayenne pepper or paprika, or maybe even some garam masala. Regardless, this dish, along with many others, proves that the eggplant really isn't so elusive after all.

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The Silent

written by David Morgan

No definite articles with this musical twosome. For those of you that have been saying it wrong, it's plain and simple—Silent Whys. No "The."

Why such a resistance to specificity? The name is vague enough, isn't it?

"We were looking for a name and hadn't come up with anything we really liked. When we were out of ideas we just started looking through books of poems—you know, looking for little snippets that sounded cool. Silent Whys is from an e.e. cummings poem. It's not like it necessarily means anything," says Austin Tally, one half of the local music duo.

While Tally and his counterpart Amanda Glasser, admit there's no real significance to their name, they're quick to point out that omitting "the" was a deliberate decision.

"I like [the name] because it's chiasmatic," Glasser says. This means, they tell me, that it's bookended by sound—that long "i" sound. Melodious sound clearly matters to these two.

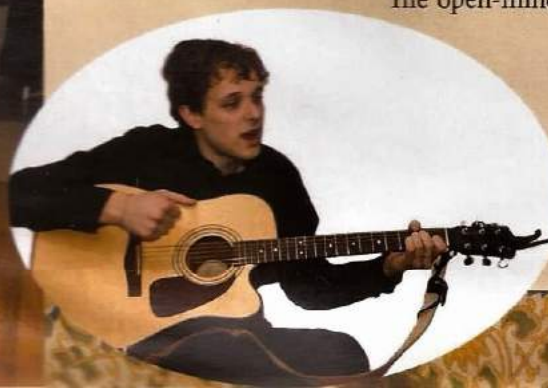
When I meet Silent Whys at Glasser's Charles Village apartment, our conversation runs in surprising directions. Topics include why they enjoy playing in Baltimore, why they only drink liquor after a performance ("You don't want to be drunk when you're playing," affirms Glasser), and the perceived "lameness" of Sade (pronounced *Shah-day* for all of you who either weren't hip enough or weren't out of grade school in the 80s and 90s).

According to Tally, Baltimore is a close community, and "it's easy to find like-minded musicians who play similar styles of music, or are open-minded enough to share a bill."

In this warm environment, Silent Whys have perfected an intelligent blend of lyric and melody that is affectionately referred to as "sex folk" by some.

The open-mindedness they speak of has also nurtured experiments with not-so-ordinary equipment.

Such pieces can be seen in their live performances and heard on their up-



Whys show us their stuff

photos by Daniel Litwin

coming full-length album, due out this spring.

I'm here to disambiguate the band's vast array of instruments.

Fender acoustic guitar: Huddled amongst all of the other instruments, Glasser's Fender acoustic is pretty non-descript, though it does maintain a quiet quaintness.

MicroKORG: A unique and somewhat vintage-looking item, Silent Whys' microKORG comes complete with a vocoder. The player can talk or sing into it while playing the keys, making him or herself "sound like a robot." Admittedly, Peter Dinklage comes to mind when hearing about this capability. Tally informs me, though, that it's more like the effect achieved by Daft Punk.

"Dusty's accordion": Glasser explains, "My favorite. I got it from a friend named Alan. It was in his basement and I was supposed to be singing in this band with him that never really happened. I would always just be playing with it and he was like, 'Do you want that?'" Considering its age and Italian origins, the asking price of \$35 would be hard for anyone to pass up. Adding to its charm, a sticker on its side declares that it was once the property of one Dusty Tex Adams.

Drums: I'll say it. These have perhaps the most visual appeal. They're retro and plastered with "Silent Whys" on the front head of the bass drum. But Tally admits its technical deficiencies. The drum set, acquired from a roommate, is "a piece of shit. It's not like it's a good drum set." However, it beats tapping a tambourine with your foot—a technique used prior.

Appalachian Dulcimer: I'll let Tally explain this one: "The funny thing about these things is that there's no company that makes them in a factory. You'll never find one with a brand on it because they're all homemade. It's been a lot of fun. We don't use it as much as the other stuff because it's very quiet and almost impossible to [amplify]—in fact, we've only used when we play completely unplugged. We use it in this one song to mimic the melody line that's being sung. It brightens it up."

Rainstick: This one belongs to Glasser and it is the oldest item. "I've had it since I was a little kid," she says. "It's made from cactus and, well, it sounds like a rainstick." Pretty self-explanatory.

Mandolin: Tally is demonstratively modest while describing this item. "It's nothing special, just an Epiphone." This instrument, it turns out, is more of a placeholder. Having wanted a mandolin for a long time, Tally was delighted when he received a particularly nice one as a gift. However, it was "too valuable and fragile to bring back to Baltimore." Ah, yes, Baltimore: the city that reads...and destroys mandolins.

Dobro Round Neck Resonator: Much like the accordion Glasser's favorite, this "shiny one" holds a special place in Tally's heart. Different than a guitar, it is used in open tuning. "On the album, Amanda plays it with a violin bow."

Fender Resonator Banjo: What would any folk band be without a banjo? That's a question I'd rather not have answered. Luckily for me, Silent Whys have one and use it for their more "blue-grassy numbers."



Field Recorder: This piece does look odd amongst all the other equipment.

Glasser's digital recorder comes in quite handy, though, as it records high-quality sound. Glasser also notes that she uses it to capture "birds, and water, and interesting sounds."

Many of these "found sounds" will make appearances on the album.



MTV's Got Thin Skin

written and illustrated by J. Braedon Jones

By now you'd think I'd be used to MTV fucking up. Haven't seen a decent music video on there since the premiere of the Notorious B.I.G.'s "Victory". I can't count how many fantastic cartoons the network canceled after six episodes while letting Ashton Kutcher run amok on *Punk'd* for years. Not to mention the fact that MTV is the reason that I, and anyone else, know Carson Daly's name. But, alas, I had high hopes when I heard that MTV was going to remake the hit British teen drama *Skins*. I think it goes without saying that MTV fucked it up.

The British version of *Skins* was this very quirky, gritty version of *Dawson's Creek* with sex and drugs a-plenty. It addressed issues like depression, drug abuse, virginity and many problems that these kids have with class and economic strife. Including its oh so appropriate indie rock soundtrack, *Skins* sounds like it would have been perfect for MTV...in 1996. With all of its underage foul-mouthed nudity one would think that *Skins* would feel much more comfortable on HBO or Showtime than at the home of *Jersey Shore*.

There did seem to be one saving grace for America's *Skins*. Months before the show's

debut, MTV announced that it was going to be set in Baltimore. This was a brilliant idea. Baltimore is an old city with a long history of class conflict, a rich youth culture and this beautiful aesthetic that matches the original series' visuals almost perfectly. It was an ideal setting to capture the universal themes that come along with *Skins*, while tailoring it to an American audience and making something new. Instead, MTV reshot the British pilot, almost verbatim.

When I say MTV reshot it, I mean that MTV's *Skins* is a shot for shot remake of the original with much worse actors. It's like that remake of *Psycho* with Vince Vaughn: bad and uncomfortable. The acting in this thing is simply horrific. I applaud MTV for casting actual teenagers in the show but the network clearly tried too hard to match its actors to the hip aesthetic of the original instead of trying to find good, competent, actors who could make these characters their own.

Even if you hadn't seen the original *Skins* (I've only seen the first episode of the original) the whole affair feels stale and copied...because



it is. It lacks all of the subtlety of the British series and doesn't even attempt to make the show feel American. For instance, there is a scene when

one of these teens buys some marijuana from a brothel that just feels all kinds of awkward and untrue. I don't know how things work in the United Kingdom, but

if I may be blunt (pun only a little intended), it's harder for an American teen to get beer than weed, and if the show had remained in Baltimore, I can assure that this drug storyline would have been infinitely less bland. Fixing details that make the show more relatable could have gone a long way to creating a better *Skins*.

I'm almost certain that the sloth of these writers is why MTV changed the location of the show from Baltimore to Toronto to give it a more "universal" aesthetic. Baltimore is a very distinct, very American, city that could have given this show a lot more character and forced it to address issues that are troubling urban American youth. For instance, there is a Muslim character of unknown Middle Eastern decent named

Abbud Siddiqui whose ethnicity and religion are never addressed or spoken about. The UK has always had a rather sizeable Muslim population so it makes sense, but if the show

had been set in Baltimore, chances are their Muslim friends would be black. The Nation of Islam had some strong roots in this city and many of their followers converted to actual Islam decades ago, and their kids (lifelong Muslims) would be teenagers now. African Americans were some of the first Muslims in the US and MTV missed the opportunity to explore that or anything of social relevance or interest. Excuse me, they cover teen sex and drug use. Ground breaking stuff, guys.

MTV missed too many opportunities with *Skins*. While the British series addresses issues of class in their story, the show is more about how the characters talk about each other and physically react to each other. Americans will call you poor. We'll call you snobby. We'll call you bourgeois. We may not do these things to your face, but they are said. We're going to joke about our Muslim friends being terrorists because we're cool like that, and we're going to talk about the crazy black girl passed out at the party. We have a different culture.

Americans are a crass and imperfect people, and MTV could have had a hit on its hands if the network had the nerve to address some of these

MTV could have had a hit on its hands if they network had the nerve to address some of these issues. Instead we got reheated fish and chips.

issues. Instead we got reheated fish and chips. MTV could have saved itself a lot of time and some money if it just showed reruns of the original.



Notre Maison holds its Poetic Sits on the first Thursday of every month, from 9-11PM. \$5 at the door. 18 West 25th Street, Baltimore.

reviewed by Nancy Hoffman
photographed by Clare Richardson



Locally-grown poetry thrives at Norte Maison Poetic Sit

For the last nine years, Notre Maison Tea House on West 25th Street has held a Poetic Sit on the first Thursday of each month. That adds up to equal hundreds of hours spent reciting and appreciating quality original poetry—and the devotion shows through.

Hosted by Baltimore poet and performer Marvin “AdLib” Dobson and Notre Maison owner Jacqui Cummings, the atmosphere at the Poetic Sit strikes the perfect air of familial and welcoming. The style is open-mic. At the beginning of the night a sign-up sheet circulates the room, although the indecisive may jump in as the night proceeds.

Notre Maison welcomes anyone to read or recite, no matter his or her level of experience. When I attended on February 3rd, one poet was on stage for his first time. But the range is remarkable; certain members are more established and even host alternate readings in and around Baltimore. Immediately upon entering, the camaraderie among the poets becomes clear. The participants jest and share stories, but newcomers are very welcome.

Within a minute or two of settling myself in the audience, Jacqui Cummings came over to introduce herself to me and

the other new faces. Obviously, Cummings has learned over the past decade that the best way to sustain a poetry series is to engage newcomers immediately.

The emphasis at the Poetic Sit is on the spoken word, an aspect that can easily be forgotten in the quiet, solitary moments of writing. Hearing and seeing a recitation—even as opposed to a live reading—brings in a great dynamism that can be missing from printed, text-based poetry. The poem becomes the backbone of a performance, a one-time event heavily reliant on the poet’s physical presence and mannerisms. With a focus on spoken poetry, particular devices become unusually prominent. A number of poets achieved a hymn-like feel through the repetition of phrases and structures. Slick assonance and consonance catch and intrigue a listening ear.

In terms of content, there was a poem for almost every topic imaginable. Particularly though, with Valentine’s Day approaching, relationships and love were on everyone’s minds. Some spoke of wars halfway across the world. The evening finished with a few poems on the preciousness of family.

Anyone interested in the pleasures of poetry should be on the lookout for read-

ings as open and easygoing as at Notre Maison, where all attendees are encouraged to get behind the microphone. With poets of various levels of skill and experience, every listener can not only have a fun night, but also find something to learn, something previously unconsidered. For those who come on the hungry side, Notre Maison serves desserts, teas and other non-alcoholic beverages—the Tea House is a clean, non-smoking, non-drinking zone—throughout the night.

The last poems of the night were, for me, the most involving. Host AdLib pointed out that there were a few newcomers who, although we had been listening intently, hadn’t gotten up on stage. He summoned me to the stage and asked me to give him three words to inspire three different freestyle poems. His verses were deft and complex, combining responses to earlier poetry of the night while bringing in his own personal poetic sensibility.

When AdLib finished, we in the audience were instructed to make a new friend before leaving. Cummings encouraged me to bring a poem to read for the next Poetic Sit, and I certainly plan to do so—I now know where I’ll be on first Thursdays from here on out.

VOICES

New writers present poetry and prose.

Rising

Sara Luterman

When you say
all women are
whores,
and you say

no, no, not you,
I am a whore or
I am not
a woman.

Which am I?
The skin of my
belly is
soft.

There is a callus
on my left knuckle
from holding a pen.
It is where I love.

My breasts
bob in bathwater
like soap bubbles.

When I laugh, it is also
like soap bubbles:
a gasping,
popping

climbing up
my ribs and
through my lips and
settling

on the surface of
the water.
Perhaps I am not
a woman.

Perhaps I am not
a whore.
Perhaps I am
a soap bubble.

I am a
bursting
iridescent
fizz.

I will float up
and up and up
until
I am nothing.

Crossing Over

Kelsey Miller

One day – we were together, going nowhere – the road lead us straight towards a bridge. Recalling what you'd read, philosophizing – you, who holds a grudge so well – that life requires breaking down that psychic wall between any two people, you almost missed what I saw. And when I showed you it, the split, you said, well, so? It was a path between the trees. I made us go, descend the hill, to where the concrete archway gave way to the corresponding lack, the high-walled cave which was the bridge, but not. And in that space, we played. There was a stream. We made our twig-and-leaf boats ply a part of it, until they slipped our hands and sight, and broke. (The pieces, now unseen, and separate, I guess are still there, racing in the river bed.) There was graffiti on the walls – some good, some bad – and we, with pen and pencil, added some more bad, although such fearless color and imagination – a blend of "I Love X" and teenage intimidation – made even you be quiet. Then I said, Hey – minnows. You didn't look this time. Instead, I nearly missed your line – the fish twist, instantly invisible – I just feel close to you, you know? (Impossible to think you said these words. I almost want to call you up, confirm it. But I think that would be cruel to someone. Anyways,) with that said, we both resumed our modus operandi. As your big heels rammed into the hill, abandoning a hard, flattened edge with each step, I tried to keep up. But I knew you fled not just the bridge, its reversal, or what you might have said. When you crossed over somewhere, and split us up, it seemed between some construct and its absence, you lost me.

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Rabbit

Audrey Szepinski

The doctor bit his lip. "You have to get rid of him," he said.

Nora had made this appointment for Tom because Tom wasn't eating. He was happy otherwise, living with Nora. Every night she stroked the length of him as usual. She slept with her head next to his if she could, although sometimes his head would be tucked unseen at his center. And sometimes (joy of joys) he would drape himself over her and remain until she got up in the morning, a reverent untangling.

The trouble was that Tom was ignoring the white rabbits. They relaxed too much—they had the audacity to use Tom like some tiled warren, navigating him, springboarding off his head. Each day, Nora palmed the uneaten rabbits and released them into the apartment's courtyard, where they bred in the bushes. Nora had always felt the telepathy flowing between herself and the snake, but in this case her powers were inadequate.

It had been three months since Tom's last meal. He used to feed regularly, every ten days.

Now the veterinarian was telling Nora to **get rid of him, as if he were a father who only thought he understood. Nora put her hand on Tom's head as he lay coiled on the examining table.** It would be wiped down with disinfectant after they left as though Tom were some dog that rolled in its own waste. There was a girl who lived in the same apartment with her little white dog, and Nora had watched the dog rolling. Tom had grace. His love was deeper than a dog's love.

"Thank you for your time," she said. She began to gather Tom in her arms.

"Nora," said the doctor. He started to take Nora by the shoulders, but Tom was covering them. He put his hands down. "Tom is measuring his body against yours. He's starving himself on purpose and one night he's going to swallow you while you sleep."

"You don't understand," said Nora.

She draped Tom's upper half over her shoulders and Tom did

the rest himself. He glided heavily forward off the table as Nora stood beaming. He circled once around her waist and once around her throat, coming to rest with his smooth head pressed to her cheek. His tongue flickered against the side of her nose. Nora thought of a caption in a psychology textbook she

owned. "Today's teenage relationships often have a playful quality," the caption said.

She turned and left the room. A little girl with a

puppy in her arms shuddered against the side of the hallway as Nora and Tom passed her. "He belongs in a tank!" the doctor called after them.

As they approached the end of the hallway, Tom licked Nora's nose again. "Let's go take a nap," she said. She caressed him at her waist and felt their minds flux.

It had
been three
months since
Tom's last
meal.

Art 101:

Brendan Sullivan



At any coffee shop or restaurant in Baltimore, the person standing behind the cash register is often a thousand times more talented than you are. And though this may make ordering a latte a somewhat stressful affair, it also leads to the most artful conversations.

Reporter REBECCA MCGIVNEY recently had such a revelation upon discovering that **Brendan Sullivan**, a graduate of MICA and an employee of her second home (Carma's café) was not only an artist, but also one of the founders of Open Space and a member of the band Weekends. The two spoke recently about the awkwardness of performing, the beauty of group exhibits, and the strangely egotistical role of the artist.

Rebecca McGivney: When did you start considering being an artist?

Brendan Sullivan: That's a hard question to answer because it makes it sound like it was something I considered as a trade, but I guess it was more of something I fell into very naturally. In elementary school I would get into trouble for drawing all the time in class and not doing my work. I went to [an art-focused high school] and it just felt natural to want to continue going. I always wanted to go to art school, so I applied to colleges. It was just natural, step after step.

RM: You went to MICA—so how was it being a student in Baltimore? Did it affect your art in a large way?

BS: It definitely did affect my art in a big way, because the city was a big influence. All the work I was making in high school and my freshman year of college was all kind of work you'd make in a studio. Then in my sophomore year some of my work was more out in the city, walking around and taking photos and doing momentary sculptures out and about, so kind of moving away from working in a studio. Aside from that, it's hard not to be influenced by your surroundings. Baltimore has a lot of personality so I'm sure it has influenced me in ways I don't even realize.

RM: It took awhile for Baltimore to grow on me, but I really love it now. I like that it's smaller and that you actually feel like you're welcome at different venues, while in New York I feel like nobody really wants you there.

BS: The social circle surrounding MICA is very small, but that also goes for greater Baltimore. It's a very small scene of people and it's really nice that wherever you go, you start to recognize people and it's easier to form relationships that way, where somewhere like New York can be very isolating if you don't know people already.

RM: You frequently concentrate on performance in your work. Has performing with a band influenced that a lot?

BS: Yeah, definitely. [My last two performances] in a way really came out of that because they became about the expectation of an audience. The performance itself was about, in a way, how weird it is for someone to want to single himself out and want to stand in front of an audience, and to do something that is watched by all of these people at one time. To perform for others is such a strange thing to want to do because you don't know whether you're doing it because you just want to be entertaining, or whether there's an idea that you're trying to get across that you think will really enlighten other people or make their lives better. I think about it that way, it feels like there's this





TRUST ME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

whole ego thing, like “I know something you don’t know and I’m here to tell you about it.” Or, the whole other side of it is the talent show mentality—like “I have this skill that I can show off.” But I think it’s just more naturally inherent that people will only make something if they want to share it with other people.

RM: So, what medium do you prefer to work in?

BS: I did a lot of video work in school. I’ve always been really drawn to cinema and the effect that cinema has had on how I view my outside world. Also, drawing. I guess I’ve been more drawn to drawing in the last few years just because I don’t really have a studio right now, so it’s easier to just do these things to get out ideas. I really like Erwin Wurm. A lot of his works will be like drawings that are plans for a performance, potential things like that and I feel like a lot of my drawings kind of end up like that. They’re kind of silly or tongue-in-cheek but they’re serious to me, in a way, I feel like it’s almost a proposition for a performance or something that could happen.

RM: Do you curate any of the shows at Open Space?

BS: I’ve only really been involved in group curating. I haven’t really curated a show alone yet, which I want to do soon, but it’s been a long process for me. I really wanted to help, I wanted to open a space. I love art and I love looking at art, but I think I realized that I really like making it more than curating it.

RM: How did Open Space come about?

BS: It started out with a much larger group of people running it, but the core group was me and some of my friends who were graduating from MICA. We wanted to open some sort of an artist shop, like a bookstore, which we’re doing now—we’re adding a library to the space. We just got a very nice donation to finish that space, to have an artist book library and reading room. But we were talking about wanting to do something, and we all decided that we didn’t want

to leave Baltimore, uproot ourselves and move to New York as many people who graduate from MICA tend to do. More and more people are staying.

RM: I was wondering about that actually...

BS: There are definitely more and more people sticking around are good things happening [in Baltimore]. It’s the type of community where if you start a space you know you’ll get people coming to it because they’re excited about it. But I’m trying to think of how it all actually happened. I think that [fellow Open Space founder] Neal Reinalda, or maybe his girlfriend at the time, found an ad on Craigslist for a studio space that this guy who owns the Baltimore Body Shop was renting out to artists. We contacted him just to be like “We have this many people, we want to start a gallery and we’d like to live here,” and surprisingly he was on board for the whole idea and just kind of sectioned us off a corner of the building in late May [2009]. But we gave him a few months and he sectioned off a whole zone and built a second floor, in an apartment style loft, and since then we’ve moved in people. We started out with a core group of like 13 people running the space, then lately it’s been about five and now it’s kind of upping again, there are more and more people getting involved, so it’s been good, it’s been an interesting ride.

RM: What is probably your favorite exhibit that you’ve seen recently?

BS: It’s hard not to be biased for my own household. I’m really into the show we have up right now called “Falling Off the Edge.” There have been others outside of my own abode though. DUOX, which is a duo of Dan Wickerham and Malcolm Lomax, they had a show called “The Museum of Modern Twink.” It was a momentary show in this building down in Mt. Vernon, which used to be the Gay and Lesbian Coalition building. I was really into that.

CHATTER

WITH Jonathan Carney:
THE BSO CONCERTMASTER
riffs on the Grammys, “risqué
composition”, and the pleasures of
life on the farm
told by SARAH GRANT



“We’ve got about an hour before I lose service,” says the concertmaster of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, as if he were about to be launched on the Apollo 13. He might as well have been. Thirty-five miles north of Baltimore city, Jonathan Carney goes home to his country haven. “The farm is a real place of respite,” says Carney, who is beginning his ninth season with the BSO. “I love land. I’ve always wanted land. I find it very liberating to have space, probably because I’ve spent so much time in close quarters with people. It’s freedom and when I feel free, I get much more creative work done.”

The concertmaster, accomplished solo violinist and proud father of three can be found rosining his bow at 5:30 a.m. for sunrise practices during the warmer months. This Wordsworthian vision is also the backdrop to Farm Fest, the annual music festival Carney and his family host every July on their sprawling 50-acre property. Farm Fest began on a small scale with friends and musicians from the Carneys’ inner circle. “Every year we grow and bring in more diverse, quality bands. I’ve always enjoyed seeing bands get better over time too, like the Flying Eyes, who have played several years.”

Last year, Farm Fest brought in about 500 concertgoers—triple the original number—Carney expects even more this coming year. “It doesn’t take many poison apples to spoil the bushel, so every year to deal with the crowds, we try to come up with logistical solutions so the festival remains enjoyable and safe for everyone.” As for the similarities between organizing the BSO and Farm Fest? “None whatsoever,” Carney says, “except when it comes to musical choice. I have lots of control over that in the Symphony, but I’d like to have a bit more influence over bands

in Farm Fest as well.” Carney explained the main goal is to promote fun as well as quality music. “I don’t think it has any bearing on my reputation as a musician, but I just like to be surrounded by good music whether it’s rock, pop, jazz, classical, hip hop and so on.”

Farm Fest, which an attendee described as having both “awesome music” and “some naked people running around,” harkens back to the bold and blithe atmosphere of festivals like Woodstock. But it is the classical music of the 1960s that most inspires Carney. “Since music mirrors what goes on its society, [60s] music was very turbulent—that music is hardly played [in symphonies] now, it is still considered too risqué, too far left.” While Carney enjoys playing 18th and 19th century standard fare like Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart and Haydn (“the war horses, as they say”), contemporary composers are equally fascinating to him. “One of the most avant-garde compositions since the turn of the millennium is by the composer John Corigliano, who composed the AIDS Symphony,” Carney tells me. He describes how the names of New York-area AIDS victims were projected on the theater’s walls as the symphony swelled. “It was very powerful and very moving. Similar to watching *Apocalypse Now* during the Vietnam War. It had a high degree of social consciousness that has sort of disappeared in this generation of composers. Life has gotten too easy. When times gets tough, music gets tough.”

With this fervent mindset, Carney takes seed and sickle to Baltimore’s own expansive musical landscape—albeit one with sirens instead of roosters. “Baltimore is a diverse city, and fortunate to have so many quality institutions such as the Symphony,” Carney says, “but the Symphony has always been viewed as a cultural institution enjoyed by the elite, a small percentage of Baltimore. We are working very hard to change that.”

Carney has made music education his personal initiative since moving to Baltimore. A board member for the Baltimore School for the Arts and the head organizer of the BSO’s education initiatives in inner city schools, he stresses that his goal is to make a difference in kids’ lives: “The numbers aren’t so overwhelming here—it is

actually possible to get in there and have an impact on kids in their schools and hopefully draw attention to what the symphony can offer,” he says. “There is nothing negative that comes from having music in your life.”

The night before Carney and I spoke, fusion artist Esperanza Spalding became the first jazz music musician to win a Grammy for Best New Artist. Carney equated this with his experience in the Symphony: “When we get crossover musicians coming in, those are always the best weeks. They don’t have the technical straight jackets that many classically trained musicians of older generations have, so it is very liberating to hear, say, a classical violinist that can do jazz and country too.” The ability for musicians and composers to expand their repertoire and learn to change is the new direction of classical music.

Carney’s enthusiastic voice grows raspy as the reception cuts in and out. I can tell his car is becoming further engulfed by the amoebic landscape. It will not be long until Carney falls off the map for the night.

He ends our discussion talking about the necessity of eschewing fear of new music. If you aren’t a crossover instrumentalist, become a crossover listener, was his message. “We all have our artistic judgments, but most of them are based in ignorance. We need to move away from that.” It all starts with the live performance. “It’s really important to experience live music making no matter how experienced with music you are. The ballet of what occurs onstage among musicians and how the whole thing actually happens is incredible. I will go to concerts still and wonder ‘How do they do that?’”

Music is worthwhile whether it happens at the farm, at the symphony or somewhere in between, Carney says. “Just go,” he urges. “See what happens.”



MISTY HILL, A DIY MUSIC COLLECTIVE

written by Rebecca Fishbein
photographed by Daniel Litwin

The Baltimore music world is no stranger to grassroots innovation, and the Misty Hill Music Community—run for musicians, by musicians—is a prime example of how collective artistic passion and support lie at the heart of the city’s cultural scene.

Located on sprawling farmland right next door to the progressive Park School, Misty Hill is at once a recording space, music school and community for local musicians to come together and create. In addition to hosting two state-of-the-art studios and production teams, the facility offers consulting services for new bands looking to break into the recording industry, as well as addendums such as private drum, bass and guitar lessons, jam sessions, and drum circles in the summer months, redefining the concept of an all-encompassing music collective.

The founders, Alexei Misoul and Dan Book, along with producers/engineers Matt Thomas and Ryan Keaton and music educator Jordan Goodman, are no strangers to the local music scene.

“We all grew up playing music,” says Goodman, who is currently the drummer for indie band The Dialogue.

Goodman began playing shows at the Recher Theatre in Towson with Misoul, Keaton and Thomas when the latter two were working with the popular punk band Adelphi.

“[Adelphi] was the first band that pulled us into that scene,” Goodman says. “They were starting to get a good following, and it was nice because for a few years we could play every weekend. The DIY venues would draw a couple hundred kids, and we could sell out Recher every other month or so.”

From there, the musicians signed record contracts with different labels—but it wasn’t quite enough.

“We knew those things wouldn’t last forever, and wouldn’t make the most financial sense,” Goodman says.

According to Goodman, the idea for a local collective music space had been circulating among the group for some time.

“It was an idea that we had for years,” he says, “as far as creating a music school or music community that would serve as a central hub for all the people in our inner circle, as well as give a chance for others to join and network.”

When The Park School cut its equestrian program two years ago, opportunity struck. Misoul’s family owned the property on which the school’s stables and riding ring had been built; the vacancy motivated Misoul to convert some of the unused space into a recording studio, where he and Book set up shop as producers and music engineers.

Thomas and Keaton, inspired by Misty Hill’s dedication to fostering and producing new and local artists, joined the community just under a year ago.

“I was with Adelphi and signed with Drive Thru records, toured the country, did that whole thing,” says bassist Thomas, who did much of Adelphi’s production. “But I wanted to get more into the production game and help younger bands find their voice.”

With the addition of two new production engineers, Misty Hill needed to expand its space. The facility underwent major renovations, adding a new studio—called “the Ark,” with the original studio dubbed “the Sub”—and increasing the use of its extensive outdoor acreage.

“This past spring and summer, we renovated the whole area,” Goodman says. “That’s when we expanded on



different ideas, like the drum circle. It gives others the opportunity to socialize, while using as much of the ground space as we can.”

The addition of Thomas and Keaton also aided Misty Hill in expanding its band repertoire, as each production team specializes in different genres of music. Misoul and Book, who split their time between Baltimore and Los Angeles, focus on R&B and hip-hop, as well as pop rock and pop punk. Thomas and Keaton work more with indie and alternative bands.

“If there’s a band coming here, there are two very different but confident production teams that we can match them up with,” Goodman says.

But music engineering and production is only part of the Misty Hill experience. The consulting services are designed to help bands build both an album and an image, thus effectively aiding them in navigating the greater music world.

“With most studios, a band will come in with their set songs, they’ll record, and that’s it.” Goodman says.

“What [Thomas and Keaton] are really good at is the pre-production side before their tracking. They will sit with the band, demo songs first, help them consider song structure, and define clear goals for the band and for the songs, which most people don’t think about. They’ll really nurture it so they can come up with the most defined product.”

The bands with whom Thomas and Keaton work vary significantly in their levels of experience. A recent band that employed their services came in a month ago with only a few songs and little sense of collective direction.

“They didn’t even look like four guys that would hang out with each other,” Goodman says. “But in the past month they come in and have a way more professional presence to them. They started with five songs and have signed on to do another eight, and they have a much clearer vision of the process of nurturing songs.”

According to Thomas, the consultation services are key aspects of his work.

“That’s something [Keaton] and I have enjoyed most,” Thomas says, “the production engineering, and building bands from square one all the way up to however far they want to take it.”

The consultation services don’t stop with the recording process, either. The facilities also include a stage area that allows bands to get a feel for playing live.

“We’ll set them up on the stage, usually if they’re about to play their first big show, and run through the nuts and bolts as if they’re going to show up at a place like Recher or Sonar,” Goodman says. “We’ll show them how to set up their gear, go through a sound check, and make sure the stage presence stuff is down.”

Bands can learn how to book and promote shows, deal with venue staffs and show promoters, as well as the etiquette of playing with national bands.

“These are all things we had to figure out for ourselves,” Goodman says. “We made plenty of mistakes, but we also had a measure of success with it, so we feel that we have something incredibly unique to offer.”

Up until now, Misty Hill has relied on most of its advertising via word of mouth.

“Usually when we get one band in here, we

get two more bands just from their referrals,” says Goodman, who handles much of Misty Hill’s media.

But for the past few months, Goodman has worked extensively on increasing awareness about Misty Hill, first and foremost by overseeing production on their upcoming website, www.mistyhillmusic.com, which is due for release in a matter of weeks. The crew has also been in talks with local radio stations about starting up a podcast highlighting both the music coming out of Misty Hill’s studios and the music coming out of the greater Baltimore community.

“We want [Misty Hill] to be a central hub that can get Baltimore noticed,” Goodman says. “We want to put a spotlight on the music that’s coming out of here. In the past few years, Baltimore has done a really nice job of that, and it has definitely stepped up the profile for [the city].”

In addition to the website and podcasts, Goodman, who has spearheaded Misty Hill’s music education program, hopes to amplify the local music community by running a camp for kids on the premises in the summer, as well as by holding more drum circles and other group music activities in warmer weather.

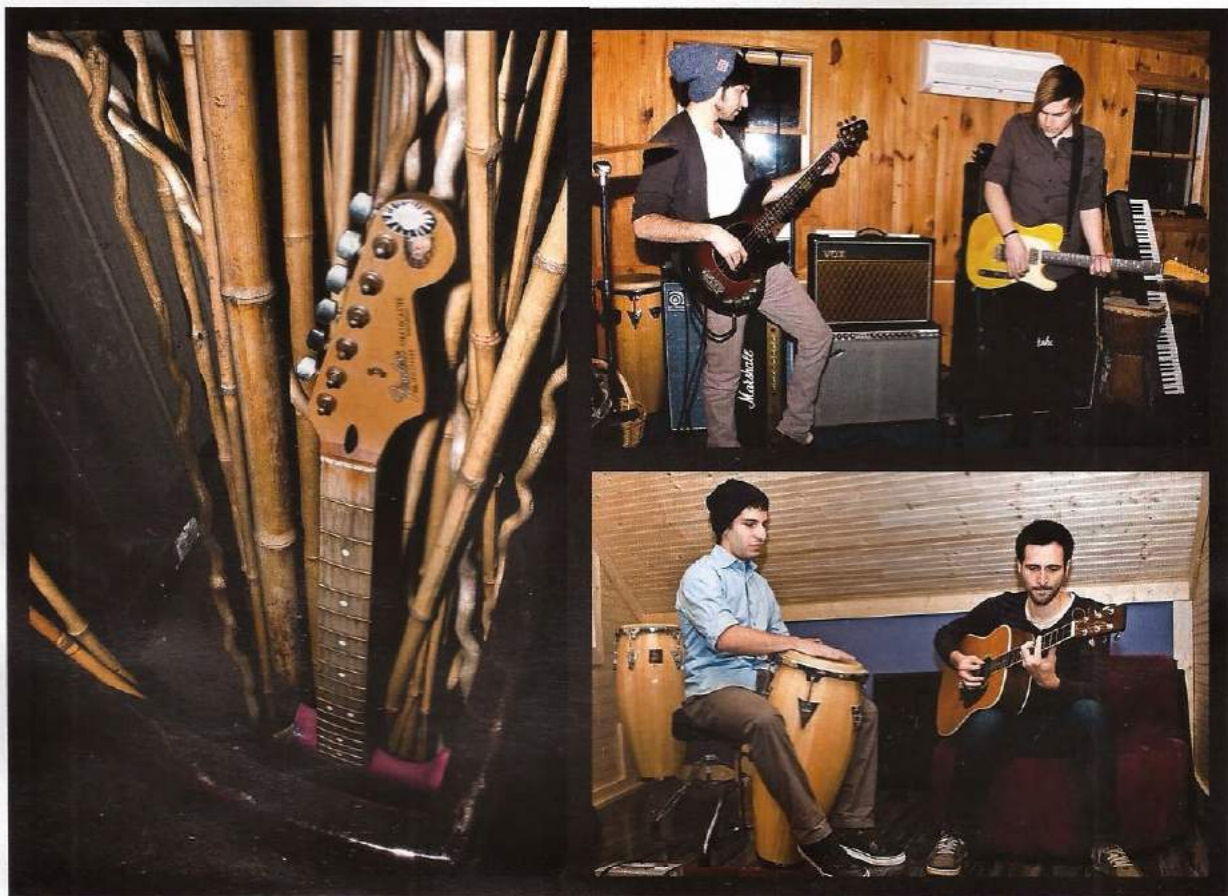
“It’s all about building community,” Goodman says. “We’re all passionate about creating and spreading culture, and we’ve learned that there’s strength in numbers with that.”

TOP RIGHT: Samantha Darnell and the Attaboys warm up before recording

BOTTOM RIGHT: Jordan Goodman (left) and Matt Thomas (right) play for THE BOHEMIAN

“We want [Misty Hill] to be a central hub that can get Baltimore noticed.”

— JORDAN GOODMAN



The man is an island:

How **MIKE MCFADDEN** writes, sings & stays afloat

As told to
Barbara Lam

MIKE MCFADDEN, with his unzipped Hopkins hoodie and boyish blonde hair, is on his third PBR at the Charles Village Pub.

He addresses the waitresses by name and introduces me to a friend from the neighborhood. After returning from a smoke, he informs me that he just met someone new outside. "A firefighter. I told him 'thank you' and he said he doesn't hear that often. Can you believe it?"

Given a few more hours there, Mike would probably have been on a first-name basis with everybody. He has a laid-back charm and an ease to the way he lounges in the booth. He's right at home here—not just at CVP, but in Baltimore.

It's no surprise, since the McFadden family has always been intertwined with the city's history. His grandfather Brent Gunts, the General Manager of WBAL, pioneered the evolution of live television in Baltimore, and his Emmy-award winning uncle Bucky Gunts got his career start in Roland Park where he was born and raised. McFadden isn't so different from us, though—he likes to grab a beer after work, he gets hooked on *Lost* seasons at a time, and he picked up the guitar as a teenager playing Blink 182 songs with his friends ("Pop-punk rock was huge in Towson," he says, citing it as an undeniable influence on his early music career). But—and maybe this is where his Baltimore-artist roots come into play—when he announced he wasn't going to college and was going to be a musician, he was serious.

McFadden released his first album before he turned 17, with a group of his friends in high school.

"I just kind of threw something together because...I wanted to. I thought it would be fun."

After that, he began playing wherever they'd have him, from coffee shops to local institution Recher Theatre.

"I played in these crappy cafés. I knew I sucked. My singing sucked, my

playing sucked, but I also saw myself getting better. I didn't want to stop." Forging his way through the Baltimore music scene hasn't been easy for him as a folk-alt artist. "I was always on the outskirts of the music epicenter [of Baltimore]," he says. One of his difficulties was finding similar bands to play with.

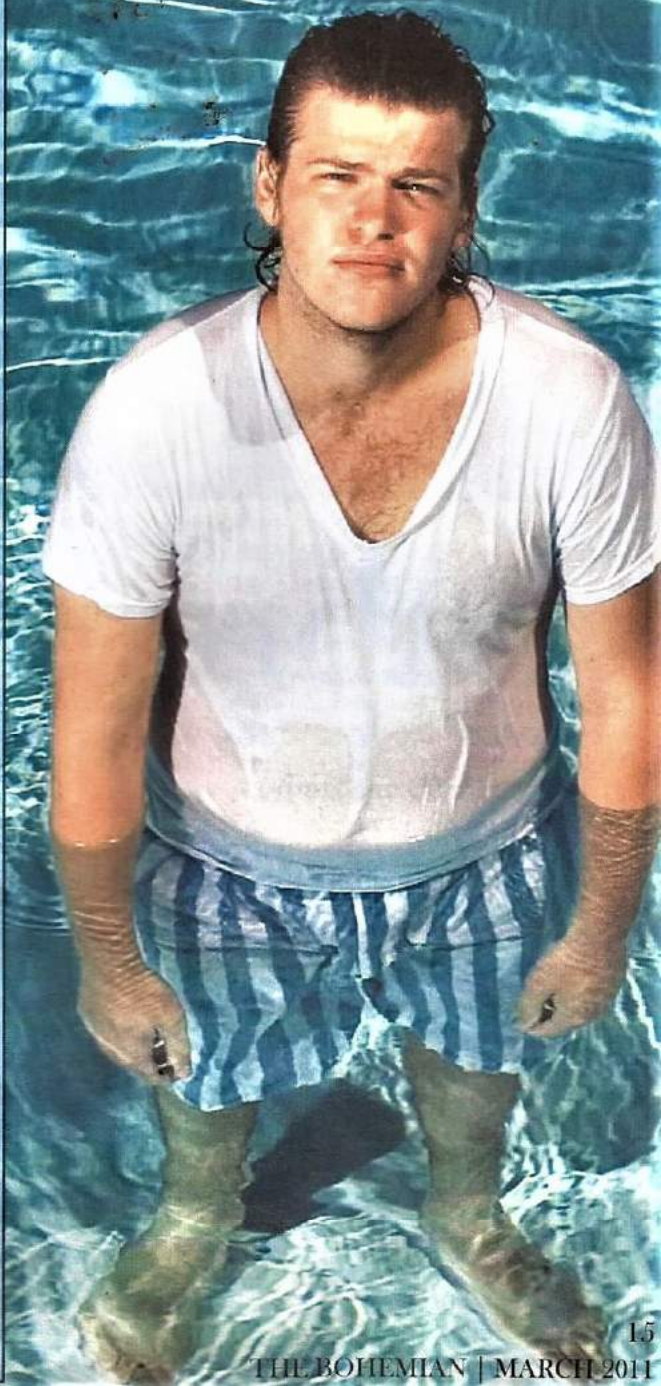
"I remember one of my first shows, there were three other bands: one was reggae, one metal, one a jam band. It was like, what the fuck? But—" he pauses and laughs, thinking back, "—it was a lot of fun."

Despite the challenges, giving up is the last thing on his mind. "The first show where I got people out, and had the whole sound system, a full band—that was it for me." It was the moment in which he realized playing music was the only way for him, and that college would just be a distraction. Turns out, he made the right choice for himself.

Working for Johns Hopkins security, he's been able to get a head start on a solid career while simultaneously pursuing his dream of making music. Now, promoted to a managerial position and having just released his most recent EP "Walking Slow" in December, he's done well.

With his raw, powerful voice as his greatest instrument and his unrelenting hard work (he tells me about plans to venture into electronic music, meet up with an old friend to write more songs, and further experiment with the banjo—all within the next week), McFadden is making a name for himself in Baltimore. He's not worried about making it to mega-stardom though; for him, the most important part is getting to play music.

"It takes a lot of time to get ready for a show," he says. "It's like you've played four shows before you even go on. I want to get to the point in my career where everything's already set up for me. Someone will drive me there and all I have to do is walk on, walk off. That's the dream."





Sabreena *da* Witch

After cross-continental move, Palestinian rapper finds a “sister hometown” in Baltimore

reported by Diana Stern

If anyone knows the process of reinvention, it's the Palestinian-American musical artist known strictly as Sabreena da Witch.

She moved to Baltimore from Lydd, Israel in 2007, and in doing so, started her own production company and took hip-hop to another level. With her partner Ben Baker-Lee, she created Sabreena Now Productions from scratch. She draws on her resources: fiery creativity, spiritual drive and as many relevant library books as she can find. All in the name of furthering her craft—and without an external source

of funding—she became her own agent, business person, and lawyer. After releasing her first album, “A Woman Under the Influence” in March 2010, she has now begun to work loosely on a second. This woman's real name is Abeer Alzinaty. She says she has found her “sister hometown” in the city of Baltimore.

Alzinaty can recall the circumstances that inspired her extreme cross-continental relocation.

“I didn't choose it, it chose me,” she says, in reference to her relationship with Baker-Lee, filmmaker, cinematographer and animator also on Sabreena Now Productions. The two met in Jerusalem.

“I said, ‘Where are you from?’ and he

said, ‘Baltimore,’” she laughs. “I had never heard of the city before. Never.”

Without ever having been to the United States, Alzinaty decided she would “try out” Baltimore for a few months before making a permanent move. In August of 2007, she prepared for her resettlement in a few ways—one of which included listening to “Baltimore” by Nina Simone many times on her flight over.

“In the end of the song [Simone] says that she's getting out of there and never going back. I was like, ‘Woah—why?’” Alzinaty muses.

That was not the only time she stumbled across depictions of the “less convenient side” of Baltimore. She sighs when she recalls the

photographed by Will Manning

experience of learning about the peculiar and foreign city in which she was planning to live.

"I watched a show called *The Wire*," she says with a knowing look. The HBO program is known for showing the rougher side of Baltimore.

Baltimore's reputation in the media is far from New York's glamour or California's laid-back lure. Alzinaty prepared for the worst. She found, however, that the city was not so different from her own.

"I found my sister hometown," she says warmly. "Where I come from is exactly like this. [My hometown] is a small city mixed with Palestinians and Israelis and in just the last week, the Israeli government demolished seven houses without warning."

Although a depressing concept, the shared struggles helped remind Alzinaty of her own homeland.

"Just like here, [in Lydd] they force everybody to go to the county, so we can have more WalMarts around, or whatever is the reason to kick out people from their city. Drug issues, a bunch of a shootings a day—you hear about it on the news, randomly! They don't even care that much."

She adds with affection, "It's a very sweet, cute, fucked-up city. You just want to hug it."

Alzinaty was relieved that Baltimore spared her from stereotyped visions of America that she received at home.

"I'm very happy to be part of the more humble cities, the more ignored and neglected. That's where I belong. I love it because you really know the experience of the 'right here, right now'—this is what people go through and you gotta go through it with them. You can't go to New York and pretend it's all hoop-la."

Alzinaty was put off by the whirlwind of people, colors, sounds, and smells that bombarded her in the Big Apple during her layover. "It was a monster," she says.

Now that she has settled in, though she loves her resident city, there are elements of the States that strike her as troubling. When it comes to the arts, she has encountered an unexpected gap.

"I expected racism, I saw things coming, but I did not expect art to be so cheap and not appreciated and if it's real or deep...it's very commercialized. I have never been in a more

commercialized country in my life," she says.

She also misses the more accessible and affordable world of art and culture back home. There, if an event looks cheap, "then it's because they didn't have a big enough budget to put on a good show," she said. "It's weird here—either it's very well funded and empty of content and just selling a product, or there's an activist doing a non-funded event. It's very hard to find something in-between: good poetry but in a nice place, you know what I mean?"

On the other hand, Alzinaty has benefited from certain opportunities afforded to her by the U.S. "I definitely have more freedom," she says. In Lydd, she had to go completely underground with her music career because hip-hop, as she says, "has subjects that my family was very scared of me entering."

"I reached a point where I couldn't tell them that I was performing, or recording," she continues, "So I couldn't be on TV or in newspapers, I couldn't be in photography. My name wasn't mentioned anywhere: even at a show, the audience only knows when I'm already on the stage. Coming to the States changed that fully. I'm exposed to more people, but some people saw that as chasing fame or the 'American dream.'"

Releasing *A Woman Under the Influence* allowed her to set things straight: the album reached people back home, and they could hear her message.

Despite the advantage of being in the public eye, when I ask Alzinaty how she feels about being received as an artist and a woman in the U.S., she responds, "That was a big disappointment."

She explains, "It's a man's world in this country, too. Your famous women are Sarah Palin and Hillary Clinton, and many women I can name who don't have what I consider to be humane opinions, so it's hard. It's very hard to be here as a woman, an artist, a Palestinian."

She reflected, comparing her discoveries of reality to her expectations, "I knew it wasn't going to be wonderful. But I didn't know that, let's say, capitalism was this strong, and I didn't know that sexism was this strong either."

She elucidates her statement:

"I lived 23 years back at home, a Palestinian inside of Israel, and you definitely know how hard life is. [It's a] hard existence, because there is no identity for you. Most people are born to the privilege that they are citizens of the country. I was not that privileged. I was born on my occupied land. In daily life, [the Israeli police] are pretty nice people, but when it comes to checkpoints, walls, they are not that nice," she recalls. "[Here], though, we are constantly forced to be stressed somehow, and this is all in addition to our jobs, and our studies, and our self-exploring."

This is where Alzinaty turns to music.

"Singing, writing and yoga help me reach that road of 'OK this is the world, and we're going to have to not only accept it, but also

learn how to deal with it calmly," she says.

A fan of Baltimore club music, she hopes to integrate her affinity for the city and its groove into future songs.

She imagines such a collaboration: "[The result would be] local artists on club music, where I'm not singing a lot but I'll just add weird fusions here and there, and maybe even bring in some Arabic."

Alzinaty's music style is as eclectic as her selection of cities. On her track "Barra" which you can find on YouTube, she raps half of it in English over a hot rock beat that is complete with her Palestinian flare. The playful, almost Saturday night-sound of the song highlights the irony of her lyrics. Another video, an album promo, combines two songs, the first of which is called, "Sajel, For the Record." Here, a heavier beat tinged with plea drives one of her more serious stories, which she shares through intense, striking lyrics that are translated into English at the bottom of the screen. Narrowing her music style into one boxed genre is nearly impossible.

"You can pray on it. I guess soul music would describe it, because it's coming from a very honest place. [It's also coming from] a place of luxury—that I can write and be able to put ideas out. Every song for me involves many hours of thinking and dreaming and writing many, many things into a tiny summed up sentence and a three-minute beat."

She raps in two different languages: English and Arabic.

"I find it a bit easier to be spiritual in English. I can express compassion more easily in Arabic. When I speak of an issue that I learned in my society, I can't say it in English."

Sometimes Alzinaty writes in Hebrew, but she doesn't perform in it because she says it is "not easy to pronounce things and still be who I am." Because of her trilingual practice, she receives many requests for translations, mostly from Arab children born in the United States to Arabic immigrant parents.

"I'm always humbled and honored when people ask for translations because they don't find it enough to listen to it, they also want to know what I mean."

Though there is demand for direct translation, it is not Alzinaty's goal or main concern that people understand each word of her spirited raps.

"I always hope they get my intention and my feeling. If they understood it word by word, they might not relate to me so much. Because our stories are similar on a general idea, but not specific dates and places and people," she explains.

Despite the pros and cons of her various living situations and the unexpected parallel inequalities that have followed, Alzinaty's music—and her day job as a yoga instructor—keep her sane and strong.

"I'd rather stay grounded and remember my intention, which is always to live well and not stop other people from being."

Return of the Boh

written by Payal Patnaik
photographed by Daniel Litwin

Natty Boh on tap is back.

The official beer of Baltimore returns on draft to local bars. While we Baltimoreans often speak up to claim Natty Boh as unequivocally ours, the long-distance Boh-mance be-

tween the beer and the city has been tenuous. The beer, now brewed by Miller Brewing Company in Eden, North Carolina, attributes 90 percent of its market share to the greater Baltimore area.

Natty Boh's distributor, Pabst Brewing Company, is looking to push the beer's comeback to the area. Our favorite beer served on tap is one of its initial steps to expand the brand more extensively into the mid-Atlantic region.

With Pabst's investment in Natty Boh, the company is essentially confident in the long-term success of the beer in Baltimore. Natty Boh was built to represent Baltimore, what we identify as Maryland, as it extends from the "Land of Pleasant Living," the Chesapeake, to the outer limits of the mountains of Western Maryland.

Not only has Natty Boh historically sponsored Baltimore sports teams, it was tagged as the "Official Beer of Baltimore" (much to the Gunther's stolen eye), as it was served in the 60s in Memorial Park, probably because National Brewing Company's president Jerold Hoffberger also owned the Baltimore Orioles.

Brewer's Hill in Southeast Baltimore reopened as a historical district in 2004. With these recent strides taken by Natty Boh, the beer is repositioning itself clearly as its one-eyed icon twinkles at us (or at the Utz Girl) from around the city.

From the Natty Boh Tower, the Boh man surveys the city, winking at us like Santa Claus, protector of the city and the representation of everything we call home.

The Tower, on the corner of O'Donnell and Conkling streets as the former hub of operations for the beer, serves now as a nostalgic memorabilia that we dub ours.

Launch parties around the city commemorated Natty Boh's return to draft. Baltimore bars and clubs celebrated its newly acquired Boh-cessibility mid-February in an excited city-wide hype.

Cast aside your "nostalgic beer" brown bottled memorabilia and make way for what's real: a fresh glass of Natty Boh straight from the tap. Celebrate the comeback: some of us have Natty Boh pyramids stacked on our kitchen counters (guilty as charged), but when we want to call it a day, we can now head down to Brewer's Art and enjoy the uniquely visceral satisfaction of our Baltimore Boh. The good times are here, folks. And it's even more of ours to enjoy it.

The Madison may not be coming back to vogue anytime soon, but we'll have our Baltimore Boh—gritty, cheap and practical beer—to pass the time.

For a list of local bars and clubs that carry Natty Boh on tap, visit our website, www.bohemian-monthly.com.



Fifteen years ago, National Bohemian Beer left Baltimore. It moved from its production plant in the Baltimore suburb of Halethorpe upon being sold first to Stroh Brewery Company, and eventually to Pabst Brewing Company. Dubbed as the "official beer of Baltimore" since its presence at baseball games at the old Memorial Stadium, Natty Boh has garnered a legacy of almost mythical proportions within the city fueled by its recent return.

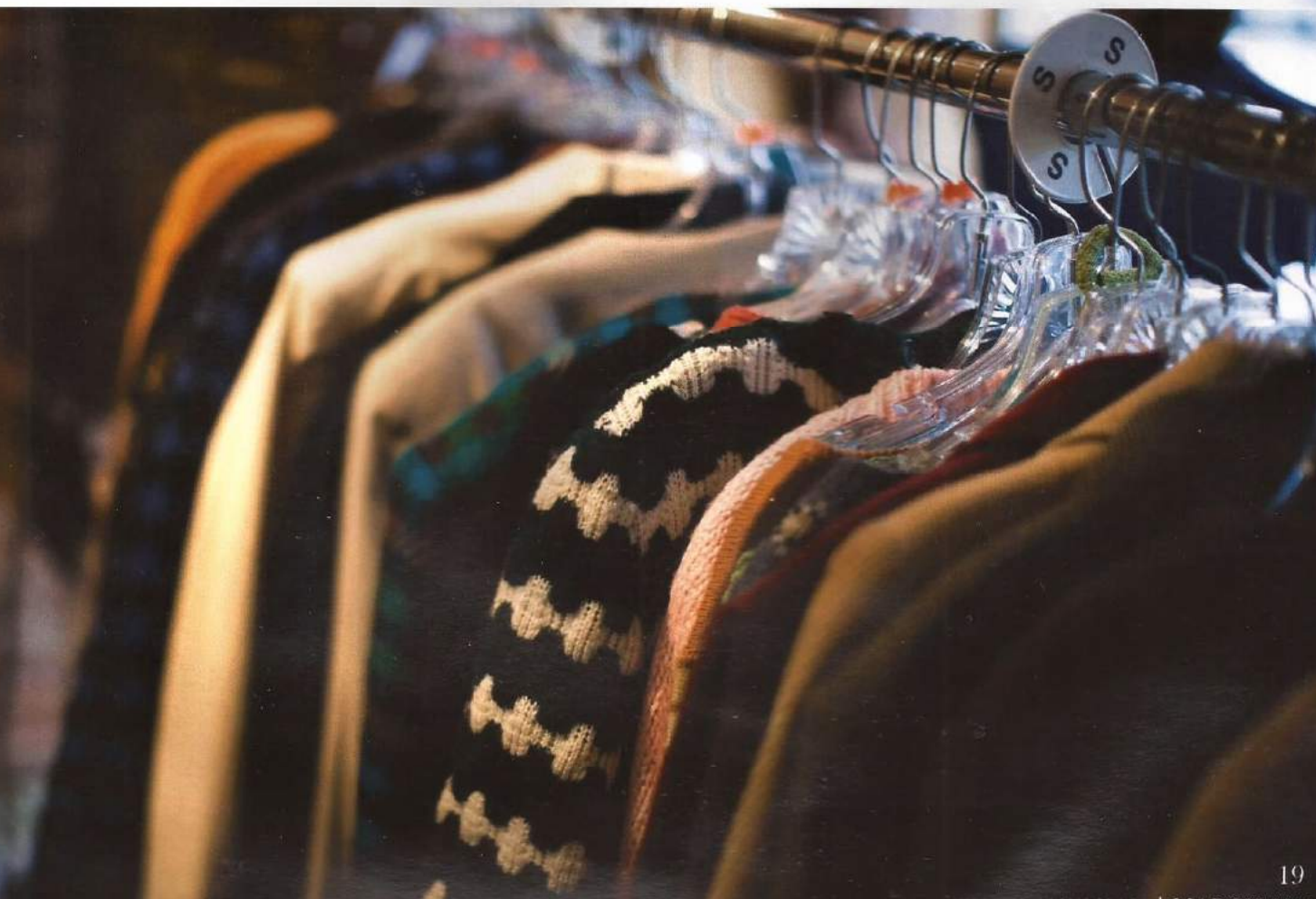
STROLL ON THROUGH THE AVENUE

West 36th Street in Hampden is undoubtedly the heart of Baltimore vintage. Known simply as “The Avenue”, this stretch hosts some of the best offerings in town, from Common Ground’s fantastic hot chocolate to the kitschy couches at David’s Consignment. But we at THE BOHEMIAN visit Hampden first and foremost to get our fashion fix.

As the snow was melting we popped into three of our favorites: MINÁS, 9TH LIFE and CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT, located respectively at 815, 833 and 837 West 36th Street. The fact that such beacons of fashion are located like three ducklings all in a row—and each store with its own unique feel—shows why Hampden is such a shopper’s dream.

The street is a community.

text & styling by AMANDA BOYLE *images by* WILL MANNING





Minás

is both a store and a gallery, owned by the duo Minás Konsolas and Peggy Hoffman, originally opened in Fell's Point in 1992.

Those days, Fell's Point was the vibrant center of Baltimore art and fashion, but in the early aughts, Minás and Peggy felt the winds of change and moved across town to their current location.

Minás, who greets his favorite customers with a hug and smile, moved to Baltimore from his native Greece in the 70s.

He attended MICA and graduated with a degree in graphic design. He told us that Baltimore has a long history of producing clothing (his sisters have worked in the garment industry) and he's always thrilled when an original Baltimore piece comes into the store, for reasons of both sentiment and quality (hand-stitching is common).

MINÁS FEATURES TWO STORIES OF CLOTHING: FUR, SEQUINS, SILK, TUTUS AND FEATHERED BOAS.

The garments span eras.

"I've never been a trendy person," Minás shrugged, "trends come and go."

His focus, instead, has been on cultivating a store full of vintage and new clothing that allows the customer to create their own look. "Fashion is not just one piece on its own, but how you put it together."

In fact, Minás is a popular destination for local costume designers. The owners like trading clothes as costumes for theater tickets, so as to watch their clothing in action.



9th Life

also started out in Fell's Point, debuting in the late 90s and relocating to Hampden in 2007.

The current owner, bubbly blonde Angela Grube, is originally from Baltimore and worked for 9th Life in her late teens and early twenties.

She bought the store from its last owner in December 2008. While she herself does not wear vintage, she is a pro at picking it out.

The aesthetic of 9th Life has been consistent throughout its existence, a mixture of punk and girly with bright colors, heavy nostalgia and the cutest hand-written tags.

"I even went shopping for the store on my vacation!" Angela laughed.



These stores did not always call Hampden home.

She'll stop anywhere in search of great finds: estate sales, thrift stores or "grandma's yard sale."

Angela puts her hands to work as well as her eyes: she sells clothing that she has stitched herself.

For one black and white dress she took off the sleeves and

shortened it from floor-length to above the knees, creating a cute cocktail dress—a modern fit with vintage flair.

She's also available for alterations of out-of-store garments, which proves useful for that one-of-a-kind dress you *must* get but needs to be taken in two inches around the waist.





And then we descend upon

Charlotte Elliott.

This three-story shop is a family affair. The name comes from the children of the family, and Charlotte Hays Murray heads the joint. Charlotte harbors a longtime love of fashion—she previously worked as a theater costume designer. She carries from this the passion and skill for dressing people. “I won’t let anyone leave the store in something that doesn’t look good,” she promised.

At Charlotte Elliott you’ll find a massive spread of decades: beautiful floor-length gowns from the 1910s, candy-colored dresses from the fifties and sixties. “I’m coming to terms with the 80s being vintage,” she joked, “I was alive then!” Charlotte’s basic philosophy is that everyone needs a stylish piece for his or her wardrobe.

It is clear that her clothing and accessories were chosen with care. As she said, “There’s goodwill and then there’s good vintage.” For the black necklace shown on the model, even the clasp was a work of art. For most of the shoes, there’s the slightest scuffing on the bottoms, if any.

Quality is top of the charts. The rest of the store is filled with antiques (furniture, paintings, silverware) and books. The book section is the latest addition: Charlotte Elliott expanded last spring when Salamander Books moved out.



A Plea to the Modern Museum and its Patron

told by Suzanne Gold
photographed by Clare Richardson

Contemporary art can have an alienating effect on its viewers. I have worked in enough museums, galleries and installation spaces to know that it takes a lot of cajoling, surreptitious flattering and enduring of bad jokes about "Who did that one?" (in reference to a radiator or picturesquely-placed window) to convince the average lay person of the worth of contemporary art. This is because contemporary art bears no comforting physical resemblance to what we call real life: that is, the world living around us.

I find that the world becomes divided on the subject: those who claim and claim again that there's nothing whatso-

ever to be enjoyed about the modern and contemporaries, and those that champion modernism, post-modernism, and everything that came after, between and since. These of the avant-garde-inclined are allies, but a simple insistence that a work is significant (or, at the very least, that it should not be discarded as mere rubbish) is not sufficient. One major challenge the modern museum faces is displaying contemporary works in a context that will create the most meaning.

Traditionally, paintings could be recognized as paintings. Sculptures could be recognized as sculptures. Canvases made transformations into windows

onto other worlds, however idealized, or onto our world, however bleak. Art after World War II could not find a recognizable means to convey the atrocities of war. Many artists were pent up with that dark-night-of-the-soul aggression that only artists can feel, and what came bursting forth was not a clear depiction of their life and times, the world around them in pictures and faces: horrifying portraits and burning landscapes.

No, what came out instead was the feeling of the moment. And what grew out of that tradition has denied any canonical notion that came before it.

Fear not, dear reader, for I am not about to set forth the entire history of art since 1945. I only mean to posit

art since this confusing period in world history as a dilemma for museums looking to create meaningful experiences for their visitors. Here's why: when I walk into a museum gallery, the last (and I really do mean last) thing I want to encounter is a whole clump of wall text. Many argue for the importance of situating the art in the gallery within a historical, personal or stylistic context depending on the artist or artists in question whose work is contained within that gallery.

However, I think we can all agree that inching forward at the back of some line several people thick just to read when the artist was born and where they like to eat a sandwich has little to do with whether the art in question (which, by the way, we can barely see over all the trudging masses near the exhibition's entrance) has successfully created meaning for us. This type of experience is just no fun at all, and probably the reason for why we sighed and rolled our eyes every time our mothers suggested a trip to that dreaded, echoey place as kids.

So, how can museums contend with this problem? Their visitors want to be informed, to feel that they need information in order to appreciate the art within those meticulously curated galleries. But somehow that comforting chunk of wall text doesn't seem to cut it. Something gets lost in the translation. It may be that recent art demands a new kind of viewing, a more active interaction between work of art and visitor. To be frank: something new needs to happen. Something new and global.

Administrators watch as visitors trudge through their contemporary wings with puzzled looks on their faces, searching for information and finding none, looking and looking at a work of art only to find questions and some feeble tombstone information (Artist, title, date, medium).

Of course, these are gross generalizations. There are, undoubtedly, those who stand dumbfounded in front of certain works of art, Stendhal-stuck to the linoleum beneath their feet. And that is precisely what this art is all about: it's more about how a work affects the viewer than what the work is



“Art need not be so alienating.”

trying to communicate to the viewer. It is an interaction, a conversation, a dialogue, if we're lucky.

Whereas traditional master painting sought to convey a scene or a view or a procession or a wedding or a duke or a seamstress or whathaveyou, contemporary art does very little to convey its meaning to a viewer. In fact, it is the viewer that must decide what the work's meaning is to them. This kind of art begs for interaction. It is willing to meet the visitor halfway, but it comes not without its labors.

Maybe the problem isn't the museum itself, but the way we have been raised to act in museums. We've all learned as kids to be quiet, meek and tightlipped about our opinions. We fear our words will echo through the halls to be judged by some intellectual lurking behind a sculpture. It is necessary, somehow, to breed a new crop of museum visitors, ones who are willing to part momentarily with their inhibitions. This tribe will treat an interaction with a work of art more like therapy than textbook learning, asking questions like “How does the

work make you feel?” and “Where does it seem to begin?” and “How is it changing your perspective of the space around you?” and even, “How is it changing your concept of what art is supposed to be?”

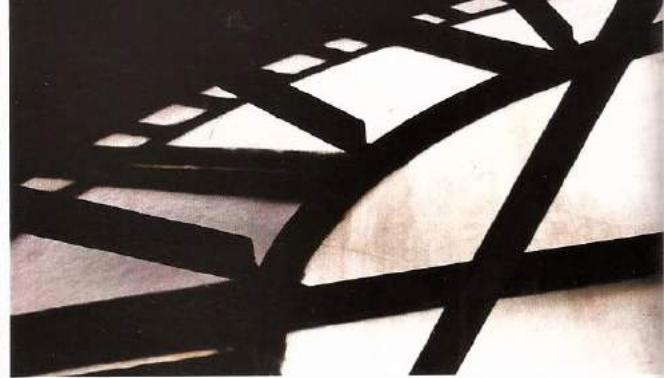
It is important for people to know that any, absolutely any comment they have to make about a work of art is completely valid, as long as they can base their comment in observation. Art need not be so alienating.

So, the next time you find yourself confronted by a painting you absolutely abhor—maybe one whose canvas has been replaced with plastic, or whose paint has been replaced with crackling burn marks, one whose meaning you momentarily fear you have no hope of accessing—take a moment to explain (to yourself, or whoever you dragged along with you) why you dislike it. Is it the color? Is it the tone? The texture? Does it feel dead? What does feeling dead even mean? Since when are you the sort of person who would describe anything as feeling dead?

See, you're learning already.



Interacting with art at the BMA.



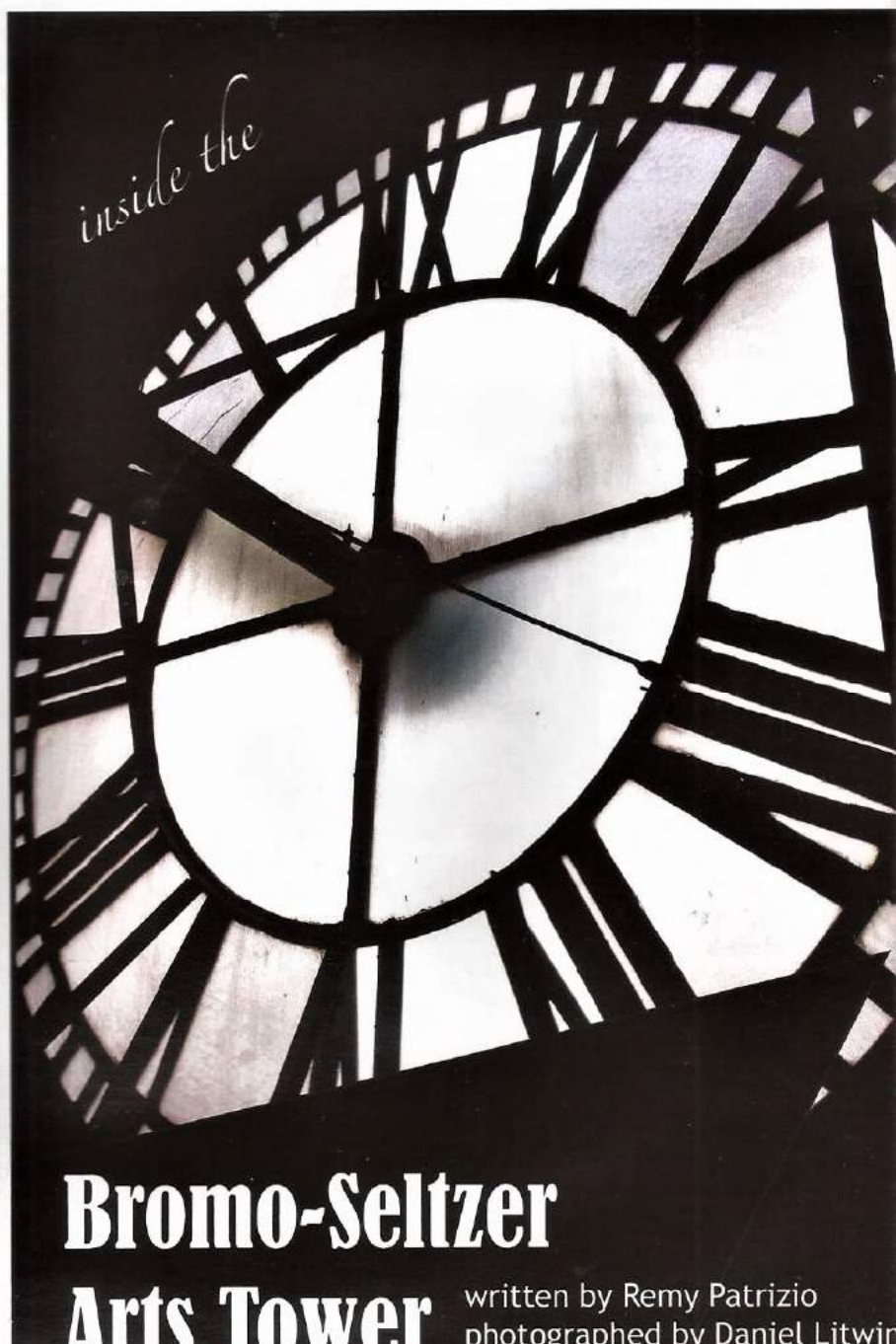
Among the vibrant examples of Baltimore's transformation from a dry, industrial town to a bright, creative haven, the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower may reign supreme. It may also be the city's best-kept secret.

Constructed by Captain Isaac Emerson in 1911, the building was once the tallest in Baltimore and a symbol of Emerson Drug Company's mighty influence over the city. The Tower served as headquarters for Bromo-Seltzer soft drink: a fizzy, granular beverage loaded with tranquilizers. To the disappointment of the unruly and the neurotic (consider college students everywhere), the drink was deemed unsafe and as a result, discontinued. To add insult to injury, the rotating bottle of Bromo-Seltzer at the building's pinnacle—a beacon of tacky advertising kitsch—was removed due to its erosion of the architecture.

So what remained when the soft drink disappeared? A spindly, Palazzo Vecchio-inspired edifice, complete with 15 flights and the largest four-faced gravity dial in the world. What was to be done with this gorgeous, strangely ticking place? As it turned out, an artistic reformation was in store. After serving a stint as the Mayor's headquarters for his Advisory Council of Arts and Culture, the building was repossessed by philanthropic power-couple Eddie and Sylvia Brown. It was reborn, in 2007, as a studio space for visual and literary artists seeking an unusual perch. To quote the building's Facility Manager Joe Wall, the Tower became a "distinctly Baltimore sort of place": a living, breathing symbol of the city's industrial artistic community.

I traveled to the Bromo Seltzer for its monthly open house, a rare chance to meet the varied artists who now work and play in this archaic interior. It quickly became evident that the skinny building, measuring only three feet on one side, had a filmic beauty—a Hitchcockian grandeur and a cool previously unseen.

Before interviews, Wall, jolly and flannel-shirted,



Bromo-Seltzer

Arts Tower

written by Remy Patrizio

photographed by Daniel Litwin

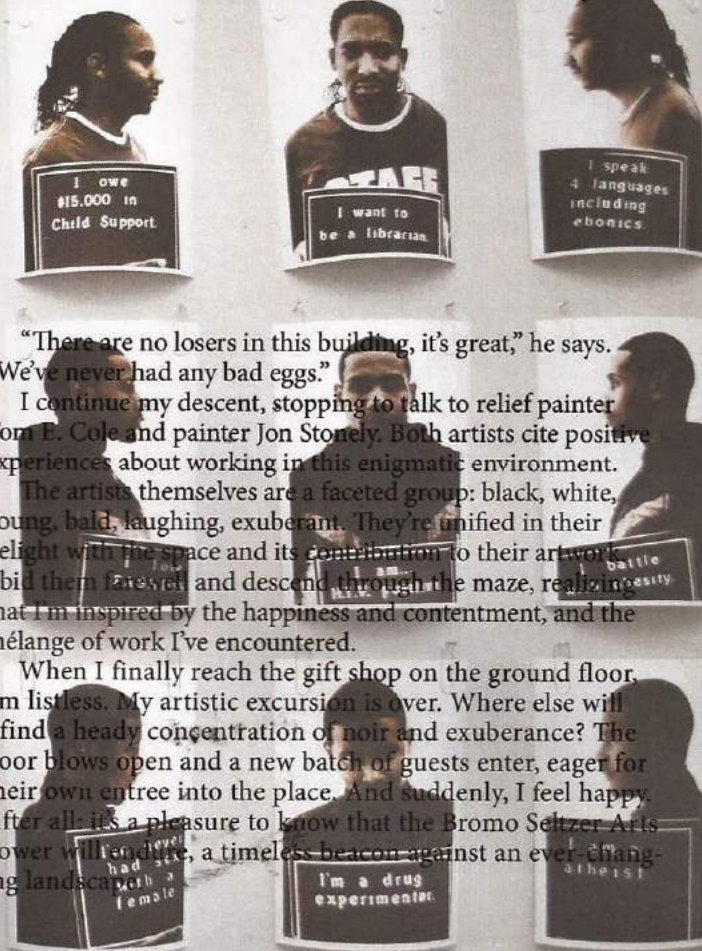
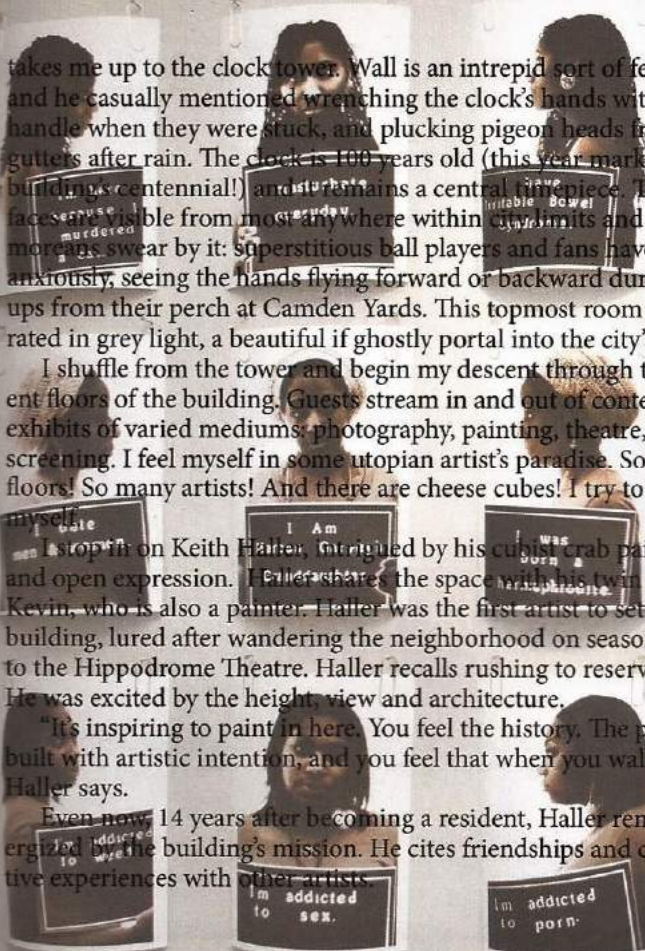
takes me up to the clock tower. Wall is an intrepid sort of fellow, and he casually mentioned wrenching the clock's hands with an axe handle when they were stuck, and plucking pigeon heads from the gutters after rain. The clock is 100 years old (this year marks the building's centennial!) and it remains a central timepiece. The four faces visible from most anywhere within city limits and Baltimoreans swear by it: superstitious ball players and fans have called anxiously, seeing the hands flying forward or backward during tune ups from their perch at Camden Yards. This topmost room is saturated in grey light, a beautiful if ghostly portal into the city's heights.

I shuffle from the tower and begin my descent through the different floors of the building. Guests stream in and out of contemporary exhibits of varied mediums: photography, painting, theatre, silk-screening. I feel myself in some utopian artist's paradise. So many floors! So many artists! And there are cheese cubes! I try to contain myself.

I stop in on Keith Haller, intrigued by his cubist crab paintings and open expression. Haller shares the space with his twin brother Kevin, who is also a painter. Haller was the first artist to settle in the building, lured after wandering the neighborhood on seasonal trips to the Hippodrome Theatre. Haller recalls rushing to reserve a space. He was excited by the height, view and architecture.

"It's inspiring to paint in here. You feel the history. The place was built with artistic intention, and you feel that when you walk in," Haller says.

Even now, 14 years after becoming a resident, Haller remains energized by the building's mission. He cites friendships and collaborative experiences with other artists.

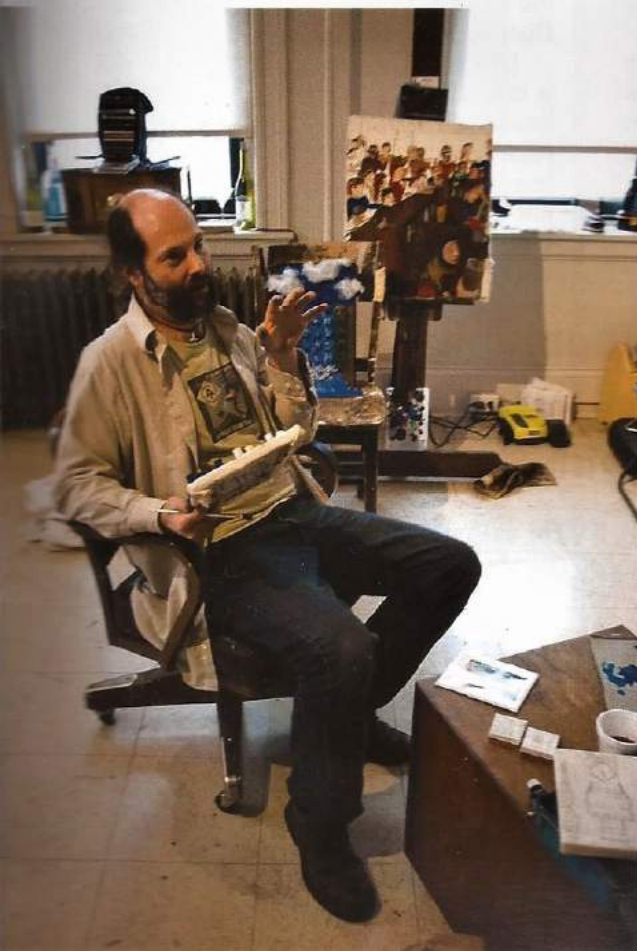


"There are no losers in this building, it's great," he says. "We've never had any bad eggs."

I continue my descent, stopping to talk to relief painter Tom E. Cole and painter Jon Stonely. Both artists cite positive experiences about working in this enigmatic environment.

The artists themselves are a faceted group: black, white, young, bald, laughing, exuberant. They're unified in their delight with the space and its contribution to their art work. I bid them farewell and descend through the maze, realizing that I'm inspired by the happiness and contentment, and the mélange of work I've encountered.

When I finally reach the gift shop on the ground floor, I'm listless. My artistic excursion is over. Where else will I find a heady concentration of noir and exuberance? The door blows open and a new batch of guests enter, eager for their own entree into the place. And suddenly, I feel happy. After all, it's a pleasure to know that the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower will endure, a timeless beacon against an ever-changing landscape.



TOP ARTWORK:
done by Lyndsay Tufts ~
Jon Stonely pictured on left and studio captured on bottom right.



WELCOME TO HIGHLANDTOWN

In every city, one hears a constant call, from citizens and government leaders alike, for improvement and change. In Baltimore — a city, we are constantly reminded, that is plagued by unusually high crime and unemployment rates — the urgency of betterment is particularly poignant. But what constitutes “better”? And, more contentiously, who is reaping the benefits?

reported by Amanda Giorgio
photographed by Daniel Litwin

In Highlandtown, one of two Arts and Entertainment Districts in Baltimore, citizens are working to find successful answers. In its heyday, according to Kevin Burnhard, President of the Highlandtown Community Association, the neighborhood was comparable to Canton now. But in the eighties and nineties, due largely to citywide and national trends of deindustrialization, the neighborhood thinned out, and became one of many areas struggling with drug use and crime.

The community has been slow to recover, and as recently as five years ago was home to, according to one citizen, “hookers all over the place.”

In the late nineties and early aughts, the area received limited attention due to its proximity to quickly flourishing and gentrifying areas like Patterson Park and Canton. Although high real estate estimates by city commissioners, followed quickly by the real estate bubble bust slowed development for several years, between 2003 and 2008, violent crime rates fell in the neighborhood by almost 20 percent. Now, the Highlandtown Community Association, along with local churches and businesses, are looking to accelerate progress.

Burnhard, an architect in his twenties, moved to the neighborhood several years ago because of its central location, affordable housing rates, and friendly neighbors.

“I was checking out the house and a woman, who only spoke Spanish, invited

me in for dinner,” he recounts, “I figured I found a good house for a good price, and great cooking, too!” The neighborhood has seen an influx of young entrepreneurs and professionals to the area, largely due to the feeling of community spirit that can be felt in the neighborhood.

“It’s a great place to live,” says Shannon Cassidy, owner of feel-good neighborhood pub, The Laughing Pint, “everyone helps everyone else out. Someone gets locked out of their house, twenty minutes later you’ll see someone carrying a twenty foot extension ladder down the street, at two in the morning, to help them get to an open window.”

A number of initiatives typically associated with the process of gentrification have been introduced, with varying cooperation of the city and varying success, into the neighborhood. New “Highlandtown” signs were installed by the city. Painted trashcans were installed, then largely abandoned due to the city’s refusal to empty them. The Southeast Community Development Corporation received a grant to hire a local artist to beautify crosswalks, although the city has yet to allow them to do so. Most significantly, perhaps, has been the rise of the Highlandtown

Wine Festival, which attracts more than 1,000 people every year. These initiatives, however, have not led, according to Burnhard, to a rise in income in the neighborhood. Instead, it has simply encouraged the neighborhoods legitimacy as an Arts District. A mixed blessing.

Diversity, Cassidy and Burnhard insist, is central to Highlandtown, a neighborhood that has become increasingly Hispanic. In the wake of anti-Hispanic violence over the summer, which took place just over a mile away from the Laughing Pint, Highlandtown seems like a haven for the Hispanic communities. The Southeast

Community Development Corporation, as well as a number of nearby churches, cater to Spanish-speaking citizens. Through the Southeast CDC, the Highlandtown Community Association

meetings, which are currently predominantly white, will be bilingual starting in March. Nearby, a branch of the International Rescue Committee works to find international refugees housing and jobs. A number of ethnic food shops are local favorites.

When neighborhood development

“Community associations are the new political power.”

— KEVIN BURNHARD,
HIGHLANDTOWN COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION

is driven primarily by a few enthusiastic individuals, and consists largely of a feeling of community and beautification, who gets left behind?

"Drug addicts," says Cassidy, "The way the laws are written now, all we can do is call the police and have them taken away." She continues, "drugs should be legalized, and addiction should be treated like the disease it is." Otherwise, the Highlandtown community has remained largely intact, and with a number of empty buildings in the neighborhood, it has room to expand.

Burnhard has another vision for the neighborhood.

"Taxes need to be reduced. And they're revaluing the houses, the state hasn't done that since 2000." Highlandtown doesn't want to be gentrified, it wants to be livable.

But the most significant development in the community is not beautification, or simple good feelings; it is the organization of the community into a political entity. Not what they do, but that citizens feel able to do something.

"When 30 people are doing a neighborhood walk...the mayor shows up. 'Oh look, I have constituents there!'" says Cassidy.

Burnhard adds, quoting a Liquor Board member, "Community associations are the new political power."



Skate's up for the
Skatepark of Baltimore
After years of struggling to bring a skate park to
Baltimore, one organization finally finds a place
in Roosevelt Park for city skaters to call home.



THE SKATE PARK THAT COULD

reported by Briana Last
photographed by Noah Scialom

In January 2008, over 100,000 viewers logged onto YouTube to watch “The Inner Harbor Incident.” Clips showing a Baltimore cop Salvatore Rivieri assaulting a 14-year-old boy for skateboarding in the Inner Harbor went viral as soon as it was posted, making Rivieri’s actions infamous well outside the city skateboarding community.

Though the Baltimore Police Department eventually fired Rivieri out of what some identified as political pressure—he was caught on tape a month later assaulting a local Baltimore artist—his charges were cleared, enraging local residents whose faith in the Baltimore police was already dubious.

The policeman’s assault made it clear to skateboarders that someone was going to have to create a safe haven for skateboarders through their own initiative. That’s where Stephanie Murdock came into the picture.

Murdock, and her grassroots, non-profit organization, Skatepark of Baltimore (SoB), named for its mission

to bring a public, custom-designed, concrete park to the city, had been in the works since 2005. But it wasn’t until three years later, when the Inner Harbor run in became front-page news, that SoB’s undertaking resonated with city people. Its mantra slowly but surely was becoming a real movement: “If your city doesn’t have a skate park, your city is a skate park.”

According to a 2006 US Census Report, the city of Baltimore has approximately 30,000 skateboarders. As skating is one of the fastest growing sports in America, the number keeps growing. The small-sized Caroll Park, located on Washington Blvd, has the capacity to hold about one-fourth of the city’s skaters. Skating is also prohibited in many areas of the city, which limits the capability of skateboarders to want to hone their skills.

SoB recognized this need early on. Murdock had already begun the arduous task of forging strong relationships with supporters. The organization appealed to former mayor Sheila Dixon for help; gained support from key public and private organizations as well as many Baltimoreans (both skating enthusiasts and not); and seized the spotlight the four-minute video shined on the city’s need in order to spread awareness for its cause.

After roadblocks and some initial opposition to their cause, SoB now has an established public-private partnership with

the city and is well on its way to building its dream state of the art park, which will be located in Hampden’s Roosevelt Park.

But SoB does not hope to gain a skatepark for the city. Murdock has her sights set on educational advocacy, hoping to inform and engage both young and old Baltimore residents to get involved in the skateboarding community.

Murdock was recently selected for a paid fellowship by The Open Society to launch an after school program serving at-risk middle school and high school students in Hampden, entitled “Skateboarding for Success.” The SoB’s mission statement

If your city doesn’t have a skate park, your city is a skate park.

declares that the project aims to engage the youth of Hampden through after school activities at Roosevelt skate park. As the SoB Web site reads, “The program will provide a safe place for youth to skateboard while learning important independent living skills and gaining leadership experience.”

Though the story of Skatepark of Baltimore is tremendously hopeful, the fate of recreational centers and parks in the city is more concerning. *The Bohemian* spoke to Diana Phillip, current Treasurer of SoB. Phillip, former regional director of The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in Texas, considers herself to be a “girls’ studies scholar interested in the experiences and

challenges of young women.”

Philip first got involved in SoB due to her interest in the use of recreational centers and parks in Baltimore. When she discovered Baltimore's intention to close the majority of its remaining 45 recreational centers in the fall due to the ever-dwindling budget, she was particularly disturbed: “I thought about youth's decreasing access to public space (in 1976, there were 159 recreation centers in the city)”

Philip proceeded to work with the nonprofit, Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD), an organization encouraging youth activism. She heard its rallies for more access to recreation and voiced anger at the mayor's announcement last spring about closing even more centers. According to Philip, “When pressed, adults in urban areas talk about the places youth should be found: school, jobs, home, juvenile detention centers. Using open public space shared with adults for the purposes of leisure, recreation or sport does not come readily to their minds.”

She was immediately disturbed by the ease with which Baltimore was willing to cut programs that serve to empower young people: “In a city like Baltimore that carries a negative connotation of being crime-ridden, youth gathered in public for any reason can bring wariness among adults who don't know any better than to think poorly about youth's right to play.”

After working with BUILD for some time, Philip decided that the types of centers they wanted to bring to the city were “gender stereotypical.” In other words, these centers mainly serve the needs of young males in the community.

It wasn't until February that Philip



found a cause she could get behind. She attended her first Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Advisory Council meeting. Murdock, on behalf of SoB, spoke at the meeting about her plans to build skate parks throughout the city utilizing all of the unused space in Baltimore for youth benefits.

Philip, intrigued by the organization's efforts, then attended a meeting of SoB volunteers and spoke to girls who were fighting for a park in Baltimore where they could practice alongside better, oftentimes male, skaters. She was instantly interested in getting involved: “From my perspective, a skate park does not replace youth's right to access public space and should be built to allow skaters the opportunity to work on different skills, but not be an invitation for the government to prohibit skating in public spaces. That's when I got hooked on SoB.”

But the positive effects of a skate park for the city are still not unequivocally positive for female skaters. Philip's involvement in SoB and research into skateboarding through the lens of a girls' studies scholar has demonstrated the discrepancy between the benefits for male skateboarders and female skateboarders.

Philip's research pointed to the fact that girl skateboarders are less likely to skate at skate parks than boys. This is due to a combination of factors, namely, according to her due to the fact that “male skateboarders act sexist only when female skaters are around by being openly disparaging, unsupportive, and separatist.” In addition, Philip's research led her to discover that in general, girls' access to transportation is more limited than boys' and that familial support for engaging in recreational activities is even

sparser.

If a skate park is built for Baltimore, it will only serve a portion of the skating community. According to a 2002 report by America Sports Data, females comprise about 25 percent of skaters. But Philip says the number is even smaller, lying somewhere around just 15 percent, which raises the concern: Will the skate park perpetuate the disparity between female and male skaters?

Murdock took it upon herself to begin not only her educational outreach program, but also a fundraising campaign that specifically promotes female skateboarders.

“Skateboarding for Success,” her after-school program, will encourage at-risk students of both genders to get involved in skateboarding. According to Murdock's, “For me, it's about keeping kids off the street, in school and in shape. Youth in Skateboarding for Success will participate in the design process for the Skatepark of Baltimore and will be involved in the development of the park by raising money and awareness in their communities, while sharpening their leadership and activism skills.”

Murdock hopes that if girls have the support of their peers, and play such a momentous role in the skate park planning, they will feel less trepidation about utilizing the park.

In addition to these efforts, Murdock and the rest of the SoB crew began a fundraising calendar to financially support and advertise the skate park. The calendar, “Girls of Skateboarding,” is filled with photos of female skateboarders in Baltimore, as well as their supporter counterparts.

Time will only tell if the SoB's efforts to encourage girls to become more involved in skateboarding will succeed.



A helping of Boh with a side of MARC

The Baltimore-D.C. commute

written by Burnest Griffin IV
illustrated by J. Braedon Jones

Within a few hours, you can get from Baltimore to virtually any other major city this side of the Mississippi River. Since occasional business trips are made easier by Baltimore's status as a central location, you would expect that an everyday commute to D.C., Baltimore's nearest metropolitan neighbor, would be just as painless. Fortunately, living in Baltimore while working in the D.C. area is not only a good idea but also quite popular.

Let's face it, housing in D.C. these days can be pricey. Young Baltimoreans may be inclined to want to take advantage of the comparatively cheaper housing options in town while commuting to Washington.

The MARC (short for Maryland Area Regional Commuter) is excellent for getting there and back quickly and for cheap. The MARC is a two-pronged line of commuter trains with the Penn Line carrying the bulk of the passengers. It seems like just about everyone who rides it works for the government so be sure to count the suits.

Even though it's not an express service like other Amtrak services, it costs about half as much and passes can even be used on buses and the Light Rail in Baltimore to help you get around. Single tickets can be bought on the trains but, watch out, an extra three bucks will be charged for the convenience. In the end, it's much cheaper than a car.

The MARC isn't without its problems. The trains can be very crowded on Monday mornings and Friday nights, which includes the mid-ride, pre-game crowd. Also, there's no dining car where you can buy overpriced muffins and egg sandwiches to quiet a rumbling stomach on your way home, but that's hardly consequential.

All in all, the MARC system is a cheap option of making the daily commute from Baltimore to D.C. The public commute is more cost effective than driving daily to D.C. or living there. More importantly, why wouldn't you want to live here? You don't have to leave Bmore club for D.C. go-go just yet to work a job in or around the Capitol. And at the end of the day, you can come back to favorites like Natty Boh and Old Bay (you know it's too gritty for those Washingtonians) for the cozy familiar Baltimore you call home.

"You don't have to leave Bmore club for D.C. go-go...to work a job in or around the Capitol."



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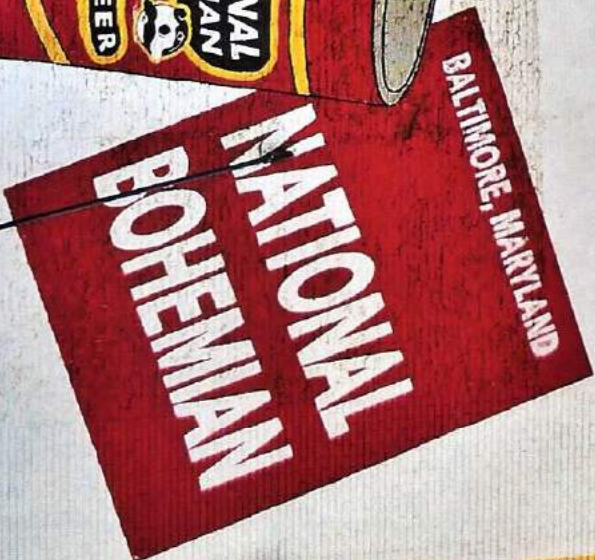
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