

BARNES AND NOBLES: NEW BOOKSTORE, OLD PROBLEMS

BY: BENJAMIN PERRIELLO

It has always struck me as somewhat of a miracle that Baltimore, the “city that reads,” has so few books, be they held in public trust or private stores. The new Barnes and Nobles campus bookstore hardly makes good on that dubious claim. This sanitized excuse for a bookstore seems to have as much space devoted to clothes and trinkets bearing the university insignia as it does to books. Yet again, this reads as another chapter in the sad story of private gain trumping the common good.

Well, you might think to yourself, the point of private gain is all well and clear in the market-driven madness of our society, but the public interest? Let’s not forget the obvious: this is first and foremost a university bookstore, and therefore it serves more than one purpose. The aim of such an institution is to put within affordable reach of students and scholars those books relevant to the disciplines studied at the university. But a campus bookstore has another equally important role: it is a market of ideas and not just dol-

lars, a possibility to encounter something different from the norm, for us to keep an open and accessible account of just what it is that we do as scholars. The world is full of many curious minds outside the sacred grove. Those persons who take their leisure moments to browse in a campus bookstore deserve a rich and full selection of works not available at other bookstores. Buying a Hopkins mug or t-shirt

bookstore can be a vital part of our mission to educate through an offering of the first fruits of our intellectual explorations.

A hue and cry deserves to be raised. Now that more than a week has passed since its grand opening, we cannot excuse its glaring omissions. A trot down to this over-lit mini-mall will make the point. If you haven’t already, make a trip down to the corner of St. Paul and 33rd Street.

Are your faculty members represented in the section devoted to Hopkins authors? Does your discipline have a comprehensive section? If not, have a word with your department chair. They will surely want to see that their books line the shelves. Together, we might persuade the good people of Barnes and Nobles to pay due diligence to a resource that rests in our name, and in all of our interest.

Barnes and Nobles Johns Hopkins University does not offer much more selection than the Inner Harbor Hub, but is located at 33rd and St. Paul.



is all well and good, but our

Opinions expressed in the Grad News do not necessarily represent those of its staff, the GRO, or graduate students in general.

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“It is better to offer no excuse than a bad one.”

—George Washington

BALTIMORE TREASURES: 2ND CHANCE

BY BEN TILGHMAN

One of the things Baltimore has going for it is the great number and variety of old houses, businesses, and civic buildings that have survived. There's a great richness of the early industrial-era vernacular architecture that has all but disappeared from most of Baltimore's peer cities. Of course, in one respect, they stand as a testament to the city's struggles, as they have survived primarily out of neglect; back in the sixties and seventies, when "urban renewal" meant wrecking balls and bulldozers clearing the way for bland concrete-and-glass high-rises, Baltimore was simply too poor, and too deep in the hole, to see much of that kind of "progress." It's a little weird to say that Baltimore is lucky in that respect, but it is.

Nonetheless, some great buildings still come down, for a variety of legitimate or, in the case of the Ro-chambeau apartments, spurious reasons. Fortunately, whereas in the past everything was simply scooped into dump trucks and hauled off, Baltimore now has a burgeoning architectural salvage industry that can save, if not the whole building, much of the fabric that gave it its character. Before an historic building is taken down, trained craftspeople can scour it for the woodwork, windows, ornamental hardware, even the floorboards and doors – all the things that mark it as something that couldn't be built today – and store it to be reused in renovation projects or even in new buildings. The fruits of their labor can be found at this month's Baltimore treasures: Second Chance and Housewerks.

Second Chance is the older, and much larger, of the two. Sprawling across four warehouses along two blocks of Warner Street, Second Chance is chock full of dazzling treasures, useful second-hands, and random stuff that hap-

pily falls in between. I'm a total sucker for this stuff. I might be willing to trade my left pinky for the ticket booth from the old Philadelphia Civic Center that Second Chance has on display. It's made of brushed iron with little brass and copper florets all over it, and a classic art deco pattern along the top. I'm not entirely sure what I'd do with it, but I'd probably find more uses for it than they would for my left pinky, so I think I'd come out ahead in the deal.



While there's a lot of stuff that we grad students don't really need (eight-foot crystal chandelier, anyone?), there's plenty of flotsam and jetsam sitting around that's cheap and, if you rationalize it right, worth having. Silver plated spoons from the US Naval Academy? Big chunks of colored Blenko glass? Old hand-painted wallpaper? That's the kind of stuff that can give a tiny apartment a little more character. Plenty of area businesses have learned this: benches from an old bowling alley, which I saw on my first visit, have since turned up in the Golden West and Club Charles. "Spot-the-Salvage" has become a great, if entirely nerdy, game to play in Baltimore's independent restaurants and stores.

The name "Second Chance" refers not just to the second life that its customers give to the salvage, but also to the social scope of their activities. Second Chance is incorporated as a non-profit

job training organization, with the mission of teaching the arts of deconstruction, architectural salvage, and carpentry to low-income Baltimoreans, ultimately providing them with skills they can take into the marketplace on their own. Like Sylvan Beach Ice Cream, you can feel good about where your money is going when you buy their wares.

Housewerks isn't nearly as big as Second Chance, but what they lack in variety they make up in intensity. This is evident in the very building: instead of sprawling warehouses, Housewerks shows their wares in a stunning old gas company headquarters, a classic 19th-century brick public edifice that looks like it could have been an old bank. Housewerks focuses primarily on decorative elements: giant painted theatre drop-cloths, elaborate mantelpieces, stained-glass windows. The little stuff they have – the escutcheons, doorknobs, etc. – looks like it came from the houses Baltimore's great 19th-century shipping magnates and railroad barons. Again, like Second Chance, they have some nifty small stuff, too, that you can buy to console yourself when you realize that a 1920's cast-iron Oriole stove is not a sensible purchase. My current favorite is a pile of original drawings of architectural details, like wall sconces and door pulls, that were submitted to clients for approval; the best of them are lovely works of art in their own right.

So, if you're looking for some cool old stuff to add to your home, or just in the mood to enjoy the results of a different kind of deconstruction, head down to Second Chance and Housewerks. It's like archeology without the tedium.

*Second Chance: Open Tuesday through Saturday, 9am-5pm
1600 Warner St. (directly south of M&T Bank Stadium)
410-385-1101 www.secondchanceinc.org/*

GERMAN AND PHILOSOPHY HALLOWEEN PARTY

BY ANNE FLANNERY

Royalty of all types abounded at this year's annual German and Philosophy Halloween Party. The theme of this year's festivities was "Duets", or more loosely interpreted "Doubles" and everyone made a good showing.

As one entered the Hamacher House, there was no shortage of greetings from ghosts, priests, politicians and cartoon characters a like and upon leaving one could not really discern what was happening. The Blues Brothers, on a mission from god, were also a spectacle to be seen particularly in the basement where dancing ensued until 3am.

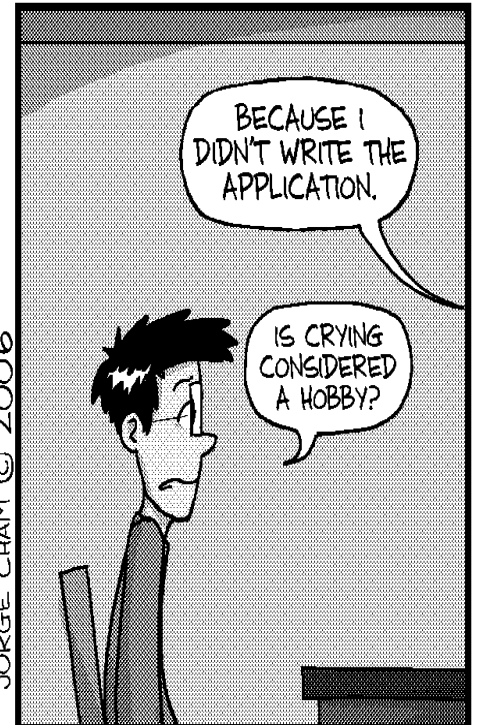
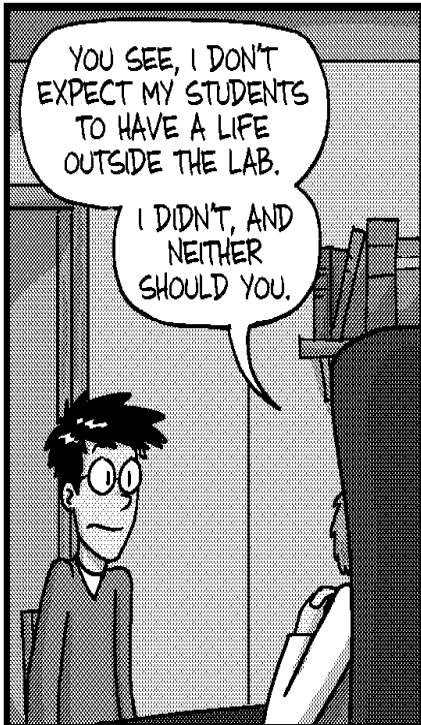
A hearty thank you goes to the residents of the Hamacher House and everyone who made this year's party possible!



Konstanze Baron and Tove Holmes enjoy the snacks!!



Two Worlds Collide: Caroline Domenghino and Malte Wessels.



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN AND AROUND THE JOHNS HOPKINS COMMUNITY

GRO HAPPY HOUR!!

Come Join the Fun!

When: Thursday Nights form 7-8 pm.

Where: The Banquet Room of the Hopkins Deli located at 110 West 39th Street

Why: To meet new people, have a drink (or not) and relax even if for just a moment.

GRAD NIGHT!!!

When: Mondays at the Den from 8pm till closing

Where: The Den is located at St. Paul and 34th Streets in Charles Village

Why: Come one, come all for cheap drinks and good, and at the very least empathetic, company

GRO WINE TASTING EVENT

A Selection of Wines from the Varied Landscape of Spain

When: Friday, December 1st 8-10pm

Where: In the Great Hall of Levering, adjacent to the HopStop.

Details:

Tickets will be sold for \$12/person. Look for an e-mail announcement about when and where to buy tickets. If you would like to volunteer to pour wine along side an expert from the Wine Source send an e-mail to gro@jhu.edu.



MARYLAND FOOD BANK FUNDRAISER!

Happy Hour fundraiser for the Maryland Food Bank

When: Friday, November 10th 8 pm-midnight

Where: At Hucka's(2nd Floor) in Canton on Boston Street

Details: Meet your med-school counterparts while enjoying free pool tables and premium draft beers \$10/person collected at the door. All \$ from ticket sales goes to the Maryland Food Bank.



EDITORIAL: ETIQUETTE AMONGST THE INTELLIGENSIA

BY PAUL LEFKOWITZ

As graduate students, we represent the next generation of academic, intellectual and scholarly study. Across the board, in the humanities, social sciences and life and physical sciences, we tackle the most grandiose subjects with the intention of expanding human knowledge for the betterment of humankind. In this vein we take on the most complicated subjects, whether it be strategies for eliminating preventable diseases, the development of new and improved materials, elucidate genetic disorders, or developing a unified field theory; broadly speaking, the studies in the humanities are dedicated to exploring the human condition. And, yet, in grad school, it seems that we, the models of investigation and exploration, are absolute failures at understanding ourselves and our own personal relationships on a daily basis.

There is an open secret in academia. While few studies exist on the complexities of graduate school, university culture and, more interestingly, the unique behavior of intellectuals and scholars, there seems to be a theme floating around Hopkins, and laypersons, that professional academics are socially awkward. This is an important issue because it has all sorts of ramifica-

tions in the private and professional lives of graduate students. Social awkwardness is an unspoken problem at Hopkins that leads to all sorts of negative behavior.

The major problem is that we do not know where this socially awkward behavior begins. We are only aware of this issue when it becomes manifest before our very eyes. Moreover, the form of socially awkward behavior is unpredictable. There are countless examples—that may be worth exploring.

For instance, I think it's fair to say that most people have picked their nose at some point in their life. Perhaps some of us pick our noses more than other people. At times, there may just be no other way to get the buildup of dried mucous that clings to the inner surface of your nasal cavity membrane out of your nose. Who knows, maybe even some of us enjoy the activity as much as others enjoy the taste or aroma of a good cup of coffee—which doesn't exist in Baltimore—or a fine glass of wine; a *chacun son truc, n'est pas?* But is this a viable way of overcoming a stereotype?

How can this stereotype of social awkwardness amongst intellectuals be overcome by us as a community? Perhaps you have never given it a thought, even in passing. Now, some people may

think such a subject is uncouth. Yet, this topic is open for discussion, because there is no policy on the subject. Others might think this subject is off limits, because it implies judgment and that is not politically correct or culturally sensitive. However, I put it to the graduate student community at large, *is social awkwardness a real problem in scholarly environments?*

Many graduate students cope with daily stress by inhaling countless cigarettes. Others rely on a continuous stream of caffeine via the horrid coffee available on campus. But how can one really deal with the pressures and concerns of graduate student life without letting it rule every aspect of life?

Okay, so maybe this sounds preposterous. You may need to judge for yourself.



RESTAURANT REVIEW: MATSURI RESTAURANT

BY KELLY DUKE-BRYANT

In Japanese, Matsuri means festival and this is an apt name for this outstanding Federal Hill restaurant. Walking into Matsuri Restaurant on a recent Saturday, we were met with the pleasing aroma of vegetables and meats on the grill. Although we had arrived late enough in the evening to miss the heaviest Saturday crowd, there was a short wait for a table (none for the sushi bar). The restaurant is very small—cozy, really—but that made waiting for our table a little awkward. Fortunately, we were seated at one of the ten or so tables after a few minutes, and our waiter promptly appeared to take a drink order. The restaurant is eclectically decorated with paper lanterns, a large fish tank, Baltimore Ravens memorabilia, and a number of recent “Best of Baltimore” awards in frames on the walls. The décor suited us fine, and was ultimately made irrelevant by the outstanding food.

This is neither a Japanese steakhouse nor strictly a sushi bar; the menu has more to offer, including sushi, noodle dishes, bento boxes, soups, and salads. Nearly everything on the menu is very affordable, especially if you are not ordering sushi. On that chilly evening, we were in the mood for hot entrees, and stayed away from the sushi as a result. After perusing the menu for a while, we finally made up our minds. We ordered warm sake to drink. This comes in carafes of two sizes (small or large) and is poured into tiny cups. We shared a small order (\$4.00), which

was enough for both of us to enjoy a taste. We started our meal with a seaweed salad (\$4.95). The seaweed was tossed in a delicious, tangy dressing with sesame seeds. In addition, our entrees came with starters—a house salad and a cup of miso soup. Although the house salad could have been more interesting (it consisted of iceberg lettuce and carrot), the creamy sesame dressing on it was absolutely mouthwatering. The miso soup was good, if not spectacular. It was a bit bland, as are most miso soups I have tried, but it included a generous amount of tofu cubes and seaweed.

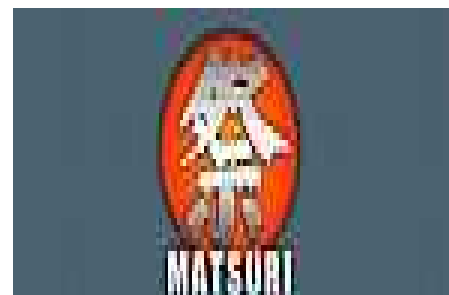
Next the waiter brought out our appetizer, mixed vegetable tempura (\$5.75). These deep-fried delicacies included two large slices of sweet potato, two asparagus spears, and one slice each of zucchini and eggplant. A bowl of soy sauce for dipping accompanied them. These were very tasty, but how can you go wrong with fried food?

Our entrees were the stars of the evening. Served in large quantities on white, square plates, the entrees provided us with Saturday dinner as well as exciting leftovers for our Monday lunches. I ordered the vegetable teriyaki (\$10.50) while my date ordered Vegetable Yaki Udon noodles (\$9.95). Both were outstanding. The vegetable teriyaki included carrots, cabbage, onions, zucchini, and tender strips of seitan. The teriyaki sauce provided a nice balance of salt and sweetness without being syrupy. The dish was served with a bowl of sticky rice. My date’s vegetable udon consisted of udon noodles stir-fried with carrots, cabbage, onions, broccoli, and seitan strips. The salty sauce was

flecked with a good amount of black pepper. Our only complaint about this dish was that it was a little short on udon noodles. In both of the entrees, the vegetables were well cooked yet crisp. Despite the fact that both dishes included essentially the same vegetables, their tastes and textures were quite different. Our entrees complemented each other well.

Having eaten so many courses already, we were not interested in desert. This turned out to be a good thing, as the selection of deserts, consisting of several flavors of ice cream, seemed to be the most uninspired part of the menu. Overall, our experience at Matsuri Restaurant was fantastic. The waiters were attentive and friendly, the atmosphere was pleasant, and the food was terrific—and also pretty cheap. We ordered a huge amount of food for just over \$40.00, including tip. Considering the fact that we each had enough left over for lunch, this is quite a bargain for two people. I highly recommend Matsuri Restaurant. We will go back.

Matsuri Restaurant
1105 South Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
<http://www.matsuri.us/>
(410) 752-8561



FILM REVIEW: *THE PRESTIGE*

BY THOMAS OWENS

The Prestige is writer/director Christopher Nolan's fourth major work. He announced his presence with the amazing mind bender *Memento* and with each subsequent film he has seen his stock rise. With *Insomnia* Nolan showed that he could take a big budget and a big-name cast and make an effective, smart thriller. Last year's excellent and successful *Batman Begins* announced Nolan as a force to be reckoned with. *The Prestige* shares many elements in common with these previous works of Nolan, from the complex narrative structure, to the dark feel and the psychologically maladjusted male protagonists and, though flawed, further demonstrates Nolan's storytelling prowess.

The Prestige tells the story of two rival magicians, Rupert Angier and Alfred Borden (Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale, respectively), in early 1900's London. The opening scene shows us, out of context, the incident that leads to Borden being condemned to death for the murder of Angier. From there, the narrative splits into three interwoven parts--two that take place in the past and one in the present. The present narrative shows us Borden's short trial and imprisonment. While in prison, Borden receives and reads the late Angier's diary, which recounts his journey to Colorado to seek out the reclusive Nikola Tesla (David Bowie), whom Angier believes to know the secret to an amazing magic trick devised by Borden. While on his trip to

Colorado, Angier deciphers and reads a diary, written in code, that he had stolen from Borden. The contents of the two diaries, as well as the contexts in which they were written, comprise the film's two narratives that take place in the past. They reveal how a tragic mistake by Borden costs Angier dearly and how the pride and obsession of the two lead them to take increasingly drastic measures to harm each other until it ultimately costs Angier his life and Borden his freedom. After the events surrounding Angier's death are revealed the present narrative takes over and blows your mind.

The story is interesting and is told with great skill. It's a thrill to watch as all the elements of the plot fall into place. This, added to the top-notch acting by the two leads as well as the supporting cast, which includes the aforementioned Bowie, Andy Serkis, Scarlett Johansson, and the venerable Michael Cain, is enough for me to heartily recommend *The Prestige*.

However, I do have some complaints. First and foremost is that the characters are not fully fleshed-out, which I attribute to the writing rather than the acting. There is so much going on with the narrative that we don't have time to really get to know the main characters. I never sympathized with the characters or fully understood what was driving them to take such extreme measures to hurt one another (and themselves in the process). Without strong characters, the complex narrative structure feels like an exercise in narrative. It becomes an end in itself rather than a vehicle for understanding the characters.

Another complaint I have is with the distracting meta-fictional elements throughout the film. It's hard to escape the film-as-magic-trick and filmmaker-as-magician parallels that Nolan is drawing, and this is particularly obtrusive in some climactic scenes where characters are not only speaking for themselves, but also for the filmmaker. I'm tired of filmmakers using their films to justify their existence as filmmakers. It strikes me as somewhat vain, as if I should care why Mr. Nolan really likes filmmaking. Other recent offenders on this front include Tim Burton (*Big Fish*) and, most egregiously, M. Night Shyamalan (*Lady in the Water*). I can only hope that Nolan has gotten it out of his system so he can get on with making a brilliant follow-up to *Batman Begins*.

Those complaints aside, I can say that *The Prestige* is an engaging film and a good time. It will leave you with a lot to think about. In my mind, the filmmaking skill on display here, added to the consistency of Nolan's previous work, secures him a place in the upper echelon of current filmmakers.



(out of five stars)

Director: Christopher Nolan
 Starring: Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale
 Running Time: 128 min
 Playing at: AMC Towson
 Commons 8 at 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10

NOVEMBER 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30 Coffee Hour! Levering Hall 3-4 pm	31 Happy Halloween!	1	2 HAPPY HOUR! Hopkins Deli 7-8 pm	3 Friday night Films at Mudd Auditorium	4
5	6 Coffee Hour! Levering Hall 3-4 pm	7	8	9 HAPPY HOUR! Hopkins Deli 7-8 pm	10	11
12	13 Coffee Hour! Levering Hall 3-4 pm	14	15	16 HAPPY HOUR!	17	18
19	20 Coffee Hour! Levering Hall 3-4 pm	21	22	23 Happy Thanksgiving	24 NO CLASSES	25
26	27 Coffee Hour! Levering Hall 3-4 pm	28	29	30 HAPPY HOUR! Hopkins Deli 7-8 pm		

If you have any events to add to the Calendar, Please let us know!

The Graduate Representative Organization

Is located in Levering Hall (inside the Student Activities office)

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Email: gro@jhu.edu

Website: www.jhu.edu/gro



The Johns Hopkins University

THE GRAD NEWS

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