Chris Heuertz: Making Jesus known among the poor

BY JENNA VAN OORT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After volunteering with Mother Theresa, providing homes for children in India, writing a book and fostering relationships with people in nearly 70 countries around the world, Chris Heuertz has become a well-known voice in the progressive Christian scene.

A published author and social activist, Heuertz will bring his knowledge of the mission field to our campus by speaking in chapel on Monday, Feb. 15, and Tuesday, Feb. 16, on the topic of “Friendship at the Margins: Reimagining the Centers of Community.”

Heuertz has been the International Executive Director of Word Made Flesh (WMF) since 1996 after he graduated from Ashbury College. WMF is a non-profit organization based out of Omaha, Neb., that serves the most vulnerable of the world’s poor, including prostituted women, children with AIDS, drug addicts, refugees and homeless children. He and his wife, Phileena, have established two WMF homes in Chennai, India, for children with AIDS, leprosy and special needs.

According to its Web site, the Word Made Flesh vision statement reads, “We focus our energy to make Jesus known among the poor while reconciling the church with the poor.”

Heuertz contributed to “Christianity Today,” “The Other Journal” and “Lausanne World Pulse” prior to publishing his first book, “Chapel speaker” on pg 2.

Theater creates steampunk fairy tales

BY MEAGAN MCDouGALL
STAFF WRITER

Most people can look back on their childhoods and remember how they would watch their favorite fairy tales and princess movies with twinkles in their eyes, imagining their lives in the make-believe tale. The Northwestern theater program is finding that inner child through this year’s musical production, “Into the Woods,” which will be performed in the England Theater Feb. 18-20, 24, 25 and 27 at 7:30 p.m.

“Into the Woods,” written by James Lapine, with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, is a Tony-Award winning musical that fuses together a collection of fairy tale characters in a unique plot.

Cinderella, played by senior Beth Kosters, Rapunzel, played by junior Renee Ausborn, Little Red Riding Hood, played by junior Greta Hays, and Jack from “Jack and the Beanstock,” played by senior Austin McCombs, begin by sharing their desires and wants as they pursue their destinies in the woods. Throughout the story, a baker, played by sophomore Andrew Stam, and his wife, played by junior Heather Craven, search the characters for ingredients to a potion.

“O, the premise is about fairy tales that don’t always end happily ever after,” Hays said. “These characters all wished for things, but they aren’t necessarily happy when they come true.”

Director Jeff Barker says the show is “a tribute to parenthood—an exploration of the essential human relationships to be found in families of varying kinds. They’re fairy tales, but we take them seriously.”

Barker also said that it is “especially thrilling” to see the “steampunk” set and costume designs, which incorporate science fiction with fairy tale to create a fantasy vibe.

Production of “Into the Woods” has been especially demanding for both the theater and music departments because of the large cast and the music’s level of difficulty.

“The music is incredibly challenging,” Hays said. “This is a big undertaking for NW, especially considering that we are launching a fully produced musical. That comes with its own set of challenges.”

Junior Anna Pitney, who plays one of Cinderella’s stepisters, said that having a fluid rehearsal schedule the last few weeks has been challenging because of a variety of departmental conflicts.

“We just need to work hard for the next week and make the most of our time,” she said.

Despite the last-minute rush to the opening curtain, Barker is excited to see it all come together.

“It’s a great opportunity for the audience to see such a large and difficult musical fully produced in excellent fashion,” he said.

Computer programming team: To China and back

BY SARAH LUPKES
STAFF WRITER

Northwestern’s computer programming team traded this brutally cold Iowa weather for a week in the equally cold city of Harbin, China, as part of the Association for Computing Machinery International Collegiate Programming Contest world finals.

The team competed Feb. 1-6 and received an honorable mention.

Seniors John Calsbeek, a computer science major and Curt Van Wyk, a mathematics teaching and computer science major, along with junior Mark Haselhoff, a computer science and mathematics major, traveled across the Pacific to compete alongside 110 other teams from across the globe.

NW was among 21 U.S. colleges and universities represented at this stage of competition. Only thirteen of them, schools like Duke, MIT and Stanford, joined NW in returning to the world finals for the second consecutive year.

“It was amazing to be at the competition again, surrounded by universities with way bigger computer science departments than ours,” Calsbeek said. “There are not many computer programming contests in the world, so to qualify for the world finals twice is quite an honor.”

The contest is a test of the team’s algorithmic problem-solving abilities. Each team is given five hours to write computer programs that are capable of solving specific problems that they have not seen beforehand. Each team is given 11 problems to solve. The winner is the team to complete the most problems with 100 percent accuracy.

“Each problem presented a situation and a problem that needed to be solved in that situation. The objective was to write a program that would solve the specific problem,” Calsbeek said. Although the NW team did not solve any problems with 100 percent accuracy, they still enjoyed their time in China.

“My favorite part of the competition was trying to figure out as fast as possible which was the easiest problem, then writing a program that can solve that problem as fast as possible,” Calsbeek said.

While in China, the team also had time to explore the sites China had to offer. On their first day in Harbin, the team members were on their own, so they tried to find a local restaurant. The guys were successful; however, none of the staff at the restaurant they found spoke English. Luckily, one of the patrons there at the time had some experience speaking English, so they managed to place an order after all.

Another memorable experience the team is not likely to forget was the chance to visit all the snow and ice sculptures that Harbin shows off this time of year. “It is amazing what you can do with snow and patience,” Calsbeek said.

The team appreciates the opportunity they had in China. Calsbeek said, “It has been amazing to work with these amazing teammates, from Mark and Curt to the other people I have competed with in the past. What an honor.”
Celebrating Black History Month

By Linden Figgie, Contributing Writer

As the month of February commemorates the plight of African Americans in their struggle to obtain civil freedoms, and more importantly, equality, the question of what is to be celebrated and remembered is upon Americans. The Civil Rights Movement has undoubtedly left marks and milestones in the history of America and the unity of its citizens across all races and backgrounds, precipitating awareness of the need for diversity, equality and peace.

The height of the Civil Rights Movement in America influenced all areas of society including schools, businesses, community activities and both local and national government.

African-American and Caucasian students used to be segregated in the classroom simply because of skin color. Communities exhibited blatant discrimination through race-selective services and businesses—whether it was a barber denying his shears or a tailor denying her needle—and it wasn’t until the late 1800s that African-Americans witnessed a change in their government and social involvement. Labeled by many people as the turning point of national desegregation efforts, the right to vote was awarded to African-Americans in 1964.

Recognition of Black History in America is not just a time of past events and memorials. According to The Association for the Study of African American Life and History, every day is an opportunity to further educate citizens culturally and racially.

Black History Month is an event of both sorrow and celebration. The nation praises the continued unification of our country’s people while still remembering the inflictions imposed by one citizen on a fellow American.

In order to prevent future discrimination, Black History Month highlights the moments in our nation’s history attributing to peace-making occupations and remembers those who were pivotal in fighting for the cause of equality. The event marks members including Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., Shirley Chisholm and the like as crucial figures in the revolutionary change of America’s policies, rights and unity. Visit history.com for more information.

Nine solos, seven songs, one jazzy concert

By Shelby Vander Molen, Contributing Writer

The nineteen members of Northwestern’s jazz band have been busily preparing for their upcoming performance. The concert, scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 13, at 7:30 p.m. in Christ Chapel, includes seven pieces that cover a variety of styles.

Junior Nick Crippin said, “We’re playing a pretty good mix of songs, including slow swings and some faster Latin pieces.”

The ensemble will also perform numbers including “Children of the Night” by Wayne Shorter along with “Count the Aces” and “Front Burner” by Sammy Nestico.

Director Timothy McGarvey said, “Some of the music originated from some of the biggest names in jazz history.”

Special touches from NW participants include several solos and even some improvisation.

Senior trumpet player Dan Mangold is one of nine soloists.

Playing solos “is fun because you get to uniquely express yourself,” Mangold said. “However it is also very intimidating as jazz solos can be difficult to get the correct style and make it sound like it’s supposed to.”

Sophomore Sarah Bartz will entertain with improvisation. With a versatile role as the piano player, Bartz provides background and solo parts while “adding splashes of musical color to the piece and keeping it melodically interesting.”

One of the highlights for Bartz is in Nestico’s piece when she gets to improvise alongside the bass and flute. Bartz said it is “nerve-wracking but extremely fun” because the result always slightly differs.

Bartz says the concert will be “a great experience to come and hear the variety of pieces we play. There is such a wide range of styles, it means everyone can get into it.”

Chapel speaker

Cont. from pg. 1

book, “Simple Spirituality: Learning to See God in a Broken World,” which is a collection of accounts from his life and work. He also co-wrote a book with Christine Pohl called “Finding the Margins: Discovering Mutuality in Service and Mission.” The book will be released later this year.

Heuertz is also an ordained minister through the Association of Evangelical Churches and Ministries and an adjunct professor at the Lakeview Seminary in Chennai, India.

Heuertz found his calling in serving the oppressed and acts as a prophetic voice, calling the church to respond. He speaks at conferences such as Urban Youth Workers Institute, Catalyst and Passion each year.
The Right to Reason: Genetically Modified Organisms

‘I do not want GMOs to be hurried into the world and cause unfathomable problems.’

BY CAMERON CARLOW

If God wanted everything on earth to be perfect he would have made it that way. That is my theory on genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Since the dawn of creation, humans have been sowing seeds and reaping crops. They have faced many foes of insects, weather and weeds even without having GMOs to increase their crop life and help prevent insect plague.

Professor Delmar Vander Zee, professor of biology and environmental studies at Doane College, said in Christianity Today Magazine that GMOs are “morally repugnant, because if there is one thing in the Creation that should be free, it is the ability to enable fruitfulness on the part of seed-bearing plants.”

In 1995 the first genetically altered plants were introduced to America. The GMO companies claim they will help develop the farming industry and causes no side effects. This is very similar to what cigarette companies said to their marketing audience before lung cancer struck the world like a new Lady Gaga single. Premature promises like these can cause more pain down the road than anyone can predict.

Since the development of GMOs, an increase in allergies has been shown, especially in children. If allergies to the substances added to our organisms continues to increase, over time it will be more harmful than helpful to produce GMOs.

Another side effect of the GMOs has been the superweed. This weed has adapted to the GMOs and can resist the pesticides and herbicides. According to the companies, no one should fear, because the plant cannot reproduce. Well, in that case, why not have the Mark McGuire of the weed world roaming free with no concern? If a rabid dog is neutered it does not take away the fact that this rabid. The concept of extra vitamins and nutrients being added to rice and corn is amazing. But the seeds are so expensive that the Third World countries cannot afford them. Not only that, but companies are working on products that cannot reproduce, so a new shipment is needed every year. The companies soon abandoned this plan after everyone caught on to what would happen. Even if these countries could afford the shipments, costs to store these products are also more expensive. So it only creates a bigger gap between the rich and poor in these countries.

With GMOs, the cost of crops is actually decreasing across America. Good, now you can buy your fruits and vegetables at a lower cost. Do not get too happy, though, because these GMOs may take away the effect of antibiotics. As you save your money you can put that money into research for the cancer that won’t be cured.

The GMOs are not only being used in plants but in animals too. Cows receive a growth hormone to make them stronger and help to produce more milk. The hormone has an increased amount of the hormone IGF-1, the one most commonly connected with breast and prostate cancer. Nothing goes better with milk than a great big serving of cancer. I’m not saying that GMOs are not going to help the world someday. I am saying that we need to wait and see what all the side effects are. If the world knew what cigarettes were going to do, they would never have spread as much as they did. I just don’t want GMOs to be hurried into the world and cause unfathomable problems.

The Northwestern College Beacon is proud to be a student-run newspaper. Anyone interested in writing an article for the Beacon is encouraged to attend the staff meetings and contribute their writing. To contribute please contact the editor at beacon@nwciowa.edu. All students are welcome to become a part of the long standing tradition.

OPINION

‘The chemicals selected are positive attributors to health and survival.’

BY LINDEN Figgie

What if the solution to world hunger is in the pinch of a pipette? With the Franken-foods label encompassing an accurate, liberal view of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), I ask that we not too hastily abort the seemingly robotic construction.

As science takes giant leaps in equally distant directions, it is no wonder experimentation has begun to impact the identity of our foods. While stereotyping the opposed party as granola-eating hippies, the humanitarians may find potential in the chemically altered foods.

GMOs are foods injected with chemicals and protein in order to manipulate growth and production. Many argue that the ever-greater use of chemicals in everyday life need not continue into food production. While it is certainly a valid argument, I have an alarming positive side to propose.

As war and politics take much of the bulk of our daily news, the welfare of nations is continuing to raise concern. Families are separated due to job constraints, children are dying of malnutrition and women and men alike are trafficked into forced-labor industries. Though it seems a minute factor, a single alteration in the miniscule DNA sequence of a seed could be the difference between a flourishing farm and fatal famine. Injecting plants with chemicals can help increase the survival and resistance of plants, especially in harsh and unstable environments. GMOs can also be a health benefit. Poverty and accessibility make it difficult for Third World countries to obtain necessary medications for health issues that arise from poor water quality and unsanitary habits. Medication, vitamins, and proteins can be selected and injected into offspring generation crops and then distributed to farmers and families across the world.

By artificially reproducing the plants with the desired traits, people can save time and money on pharmaceutical cost, production and distribution. In modifying the organisms at the genetic level, scientists may be able to alter the course of poverty and health levels in many suffering countries.

I realize that the ordinance of GMOs is not conducive to a naturalist view, but because the chemicals selected are positive attributors for both health and survival, it would benefit scientists and citizens to contemplate the overall benefits to our world.

On a strictly economic level, GMOs provide industry benefits. Farmers can modify crops in an energy-efficient manner. Money and resources are wasted on herbicide and pesticide products. If farmers could eradicate this issue with a simple alteration, the economy could potentially witness visible success.

Many areas of study do not require lab-induced chemicals and therefore moderation and deliberation is necessary. However, dismantling the process of artificial selection and genetic modification could hinder the potential for health and economy-related progress.

From the Strip

Don’t forget about the ones next door

BY HOLLY LAWRENCE

In keeping with last semester’s chapel theme of caring for the alien, the orphan and the widow on August 26, 2012, chapel Harlan Van Cott talked about how we should make sure we care about the poor, unfortunate people who are living in horrible conditions.

Yes, we should care about them and mission to them, but we also shouldn’t forget the ones that may even live next door to us. While we’re sitting in our bright kitchens waiting for our parents to bake us a nice apple pie, there might be a girl next door who is struggling with restraining herself from eating her pie.

Some of the words Harlan said were “God loves rich people. But he really loves poor people”. Well, the God I know doesn’t discriminate. He doesn’t care if you have money in the bank, He only cares if you’re rich in faith. Only a small percentage of well-off people are born rich. The rest have to work at it using their God-given talents such a way that the payoff happens to be money. So, according to Harlan’s logic, God doesn’t love my parents as much as he loves a homeless man on the street eating newspapers because my parents worked hard in order to get me to a school that encourages faith!

Not everyone with money only spends it on designer clothes and expensive houses. They’re also giving money back to the people. We are all children of God, regardless of wealth and power. His is to be a font of love and help to the poor, but if you look all around you, you’ll also discover that many rich people need to be missioned to as well. Having plenty of material things doesn’t mean that your life is perfect. Right now there is a mother in Sudan that can’t buy food and an anorexic girl in California. So to which should we give the most attention to? Both!

We focus so much on outside missions that we forget about the ones next door. We must not forget to give support to those who are not lacking material possessions.
Melt heart in the microwave

BY HOLLY STEWART
STAFF WRITER

While there are many things you can give to your sweetheart this Valentine's Day, making a delicious treat is a romantic gesture that can be easy, too. Don't have a Valentine? This is a day to celebrate with everyone that matters to you. So make something for your roommate, RA or your favorite professor.

Chocolate-covered pretzels are tasty and very easy to make. All you need is one package of semi-sweet chocolate chips, two tablespoons of butter, whole pretzel rods and sprinkles—perhaps red, white and pink?

In a microwave safe bowl, melt the chips and butter. Microwave on high for two and a half minutes, then stir. Scrape the chocolate mixture into a tall glass then dip the pretzel rods about halfway or three-quarters of the way into the mixture. Place sprinkles on a plate and roll the freshly-dipped pretzel in sprinkles. Let them cool for about ten minutes. To give this sweet and salty snack as a gift, wrap in plastic wrap.

Most people are familiar with rice cereal treats, but here is a twist on an old favorite. The needed ingredients are: one-half cup of butter, one package of rice cereal, one package of marshmallows, one package of candy hearts, and three-quarters cup of semi-sweet chocolate chips.

Melt the butter and marshmallows and stir until smooth. In a large bowl, combine rice cereal, red candy hearts and chocolate chips. Add marshmallow mixture and stir quickly to combine. With buttered hands, press into a cake pan. While mixture is still warm, press candy hearts with messages into mixture about one inch apart. Refrigerate about an hour, then cut into squares. For a different taste, use chocolate rice cereal.

Woo your crush with an edible Valentine with no cooking required. (Guys, are you reading?!) The only necessary ingredients are:

- One package of semi-sweet chocolate chips
- Two tablespoons butter
- One package of rice cereal
- Three-ingredient treat mix

For the adventurous, try making brownies in coffee mugs and adding your personal touch with frosting. Use single-serving brownie mix and microwave the mixture instead of baking it.

Whether you're looking to cook something for your sweetie or satisfying your own sweet tooth, these dorm-approved recipes will help you celebrate this weekend.

Community built out of needles and yarn

BY ANNA HENKE
STAFF WRITER

Knitting and crocheting have become something of a phenomenon on campus. In female dorms, knitting and crocheting are common hobbies and it’s beginning to spread to the male dorms as well. Most knitters learn to knit or crochet from someone on their wing, so it works as a community builder.

It is also common to see a classmate casually work her way through a scarf, mittens or blanket while a class discussion is underway on this knitting. Knitting and crocheting seem most common in Granberg Hall, home of the English department, because this subject tends to be the most amenable to such a practice.

Knitting is impractical in a math or science course because these classes require more consistent notes. Professors generally have no problem with knitting or crocheting in class; in fact, most seem rather impressed by the hobby.

Junior Ashley Wright learned to crochet from a girl on her wing last year, and regularly crochets in classes which don't require steady note-taking. For her, crocheting in class is "definitely a focus thing," said Wright. She finds it easier to focus in on the discussion when her hands are occupied.

Junior Anne Philo, who commonly knits hand warmers, got into knitting for the theater department last year. She learned from a friend on campus, and now prefers to make her own patterns. Philo knits in class because, as she said, "I realized that it kept me awake."

Rebecca Alsum, Residence Director of Stegenga Hall, has started a knitting group on Saturday afternoons in her apartment. Although she already knew how to crochet, Rebecca learned how to knit this year from a girl in the hall. She said, "That’s what has been so great about it; more experienced knitters teaching other girls—it hasn’t even been me leading it."

This group has been both a community builder and an opportunity for service for Stegenga residents. Recently, the group began knitting for a cause. "The girls started saying how they had knits like 15 scarves," said Alsum, "so we decided to make a service project out of it."

Alsum’s mother-in-law, Barb Alsum, has been knitting hats for chemotherapy patients for years, and she visited the knitting group to show them the pattern. The group received donations of yarn and needles for the project, so anyone can come and participate.

Rebecca Alsum believes that knitting is a great community activity because people can talk and build relationships while their hands are busy.

Valentine's Day Dinner @ The Hub

Sunday, February 14
5 PM - 8 PM

Serving: Steak, French Fries, Side Salad and a Soft Drink for only $9.99
Pondering from Across the Pond
From the Precocious Mind of Emily Muilenburg
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT FROM THE ESTEEMED OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Last weekend I watched the Super Bowl from 11:30 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. We ate fancy, stinky cheese and chocolate-covered biscuits and the British announcers were so clueless that even I knew what they were talking about. There were no commercials.

I realize I’ll never get to say “that year I watched the Super Bowl in Oxford” again, but I definitely felt the gaping absence of the comforts of home. I wanted nachos covered in melted cheese and guacamole and bean dip. I wanted a Coke. I guess this kind of cultural comparison was going to get to me eventually; I didn’t realize it would manifest itself in the form of American football.

Another form of culture shock that took me by surprise came in the form of, you guessed it...Integration of Faith and Learning. Last week I went to a lecture about Old English poetry, during which the professor said, “I do hope all of you are familiar with the idea of Christ dying and resurrecting as a central part of the Christian faith—the Gospels contain four accounts of what is called the Passion, or the events surrounding Christ’s death, and I encourage each one of you to read at least one of them.”

For the first time during my time here, I felt like I had an academic advantage over some of the others in the class because I’ve read and studied the New Testament for years and years. The lecturer was looking at Christ’s death from a purely academic perspective, as a piece of literature that was central to the context of a specific Old English poem.

She mentioned the crucifixion without any assumption that students had read it or even heard of it, and she encouraged its study, not for spiritual reasons, but for academic pursuit. This was, of course, starkly different from the daily spiritual food from chapel, discipleship groups and devotions in class.

I live with a group of American Christians, but I have a feeling our faith doesn’t put us in the majority here at Oxford. I guess this means I’m slowly learning to mold together my faith and learning in such a way that I don’t need scheduled integration from the institution.

At a Bible study last week I prayed that God would teach me something this semester. I don’t know what that will be, but I see him already revealing Himself through my schoolwork; I get to read Tolkien, Milton, and C.S. Lewis, all guys who loved Jesus with their hearts and souls, but especially with their minds. Definitely something I want to improve on.

Dorm Beat: West goes nuclear

BY SARA CURRY
STAFF WRITER

Those who aren’t talented enough to choreograph complicated dance routines or brave enough to salsa with a professor had their own opportunity to “pop, lock and drop it” Tuesday, Feb. 9, at the third annual West Hall Dance Party.

With its rowdy black light raves, reminiscent party hits from the ’90s and hip-hop favorites, West Hall transformed into a tri-level, Club ® N-Dub-to-the-extreme.

The campus-wide event was created two years ago as a way to get students more involved outside of their own residence halls. Now the West Hall Dance Party has become a trademark of the dorm.

“We realized that West didn’t host anything for the rest of campus and we decided to create something that people could come and participate in,” West RD Seth Currier said. “And we like to dance.”

With its multi-level structure, students were able to hang out with people from all sides of the campus green and enter three different worlds of dance all under one roof.

Complete with glowsticks, strobe lights, trippy, cosmic screen savers, mock beer cans and hard liquor bottles and laundry detergent graffiti, the dance party more than lived up to its “clubbin” reputation.

Sophomore Nikki Doorenbos, a satisfied dance party participant, reinforced its overall positive approval with the simple but profound statement, “It was freaking awesome.”

The crowd favorite was the blast-from-the-past ’90s section, blasting Backstreet Boys, old-school Britney Spears, the one-bit-wonder Chumbie Wumba and Eiffel 65’s “Blue,” to which everyone made up their own words—Da boo dee da boo die, I’m in need of a guy, etc. This style brought the dancers back to the golden years of their youth.

Old-school music wasn’t the only twentieth-century flashback. Tributes to popular ’90s TV shows like Boy Meets World and Angry Beavers and even a commemoration of the has-been planet Pluto were a part of the overall homages to the junior high years that most love to forget.

Overall, the West Hall Dance Party served as a healthy midweek release from the stress of college life. The event catered to a variety of musical interests and was sensitive to NW students by making sure the speakers stopped blaring and the moves stopped busting in time for D-groups.

According to the critically acclaimed and credible Wikipedia source, the definition of a dance party is, “a gathering in a private house, bar, nightclub or community center where the guests informally dance to dance music such as pop, disco, electronic, house, techno and trance.”

But according to the critically acclaimed and credible Seth Currier, the definition of the West Hall Dance Party is, “Groovin’ and jivin’ so extreme, it borders on radioactive.”

Things to Give Up
Caffeine
Eating dessert
Facebook
Video Games
Complaining
Driving

Things to Take Up
Prayer Journaling
10 minutes of daily silence
Encouragement
Volunteering
Memorizing scripture
Devotion time

Does your apartment have what it takes?
The dorm rooms are being judged, and now it’s the apartments’ turn. If you would like your living space to be included in the judging, please e-mail us at beacon@nwciowa.edu
The garment of “Gainsbourg”—the family, the music, and the repute—can be both a robe and a shroud in the same year and still look good on the whole family.

Last year saw the reissue of Serge Gainsbourg’s 1971 recording, “Histoire De Melody Nelson.” On the coat-tails of a too-hot-for-radio hit (banned in five European countries for erotic risque), the Frenchman recorded an equally controversial concept album with young actress Jane Birkin. Its funky bass and sweeping string arrangements accompanied a spoken-word dialogue between its two characters: a Rolls Royce man and a nymphet, sung by real life counterpart Jane. The semi-autobiographical record is considered one of the most important of the 70’s and the French catalogue. It’s also the fabric from which daughter Charlotte’s record is woven.

Ironically, though, her album and life run perpendicular to her family history. In the leading and life run perpendicular to the record, sort of hems the tradition of Serge and the content of Charlotte. It’s something familiar for him, in part; “Sea Change,” was a similarly sad breakup album. Interestingly, it owed at least one track to Melody Nelson’s arrangements. And, despite my possibly misleading introduction, “IRM” retains a couple of basic things about making life, this record is more concerned with death and deterioration. And, again, there’s a personal story behind it: Charlotte’s near-disastrous brain hemorrhage in 2007. If you wondered what the album title was about, it’s essentially “MRI” in its French acronym. The title track actually uses the machine’s deranged sounds to cleverly imitate the paranoia of a doctor visit, or traumatic fear in general.

Beck, who wrote and produced the record, sort of hems the tradition of Serge and the content of Charlotte. It’s something familiar for him, in part; “Sea Change,” was a similarly sad breakup album. Interestingly, it owed at least one track to Melody Nelson’s arrangements.

And, despite my possibly misleading introduction, “IRM” retains a couple of basic things from the father’s masterpiece. First of all, this is accessible pop music. Tracks like “Heaven Can Wait” and “Master’s Hands” are catchy as heck, breathable despite the claustrophobic fit of the subject matter. Charlotte also follows suit in her unchallenging vocal range. As is typical of Beck, the hooks often occur in the minor key. The effect is realistic. Charlotte sounds exhausted at times (“Vanities”). In “Me and Jane Doe,” she has the flat aggression of Guyville-era Liz Phair. Likewise with “Greenwich,” although I’m reminded more of M.I.A. In the bluesy “Dandelion,” she is whispering upbeat remarks to whatever’s left of her after death.

One track breaks more intentional similarity to Serge’s work. “Le Chat Du Café Des Artistes” follows the same pace and structure with a noirish twist and cryptic lyrics (I don’t have an official translation, but I’m pretty sure she’s describing something close to her body being dissected and organs eaten). The intimacy matches Serge. It’s likewise tantalizing. The heavy chords in “Trick Pony” are sweaty, the swaying of “In the End” and “La Collectionneuse” sound fit for the bedside. But you wouldn’t know it from any lyrical analysis. This is because the brilliance of the record’s its earthy middle, demonstrated most in a lyrical centerpiece, “Heaven can wait/ And hell’s too far to go/ Somewhere between what you need/ And what you know.” It’s a gorgeous and dismal place, dressed up appropriately.

It’s yet to see whether Charlotte can hold her own in her debut, she collaborated with Frenchies, Air as most of the musical variety should be attributed to Beck on this release. But, in my opinion, as long as other people can dress her up, she’ll be quite the musical model.

Charlotte, the newest child of the Gainsbourg French pop music empire, just finished the record “IRM”.

Fiction: week 2 of the northwestern mystery

BY KEVIN WALLACE & JOSH DOORENBOS
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

James sat back from his computer after three hours, he had only written two paragraphs. James stood up from his computer and lay down on his couch.

“Still working on that Bib-Studies paper?” his roommate asked him. Jon Vander Van was another local boy.

“Yeah,” James looked up at the ceiling. He couldn’t stop seeing the scene. The coffee dripping off onto his chair, onto the floor, onto her red notebook. One small rivulet of coffee trickling toward Sheila’s white, right shoe.

Time seemed to stand still. Images, sounds, smells. The steamy almond wafting into the air, the chairs shifting and sliding, Audra’s scream, someone dropping to one knee and performing CPR, the cracking of her ribs, the police marching in and pushing back the five (or was it six?) onlookers. The police picking up the cup and peering at it, then tossing it away.

“Thinking about that girl, again?” Nut allergy, the cop had said. She had a red notebook. She was the last person she ever spoke to.”

James thought about the last things she said. She wasn’t used to the smell of Iowa, being from New York. She loved coffee. She had a red notebook. She was allergic to nuts, yet the coffee already had an almond scent. She should have noticed it. She should have smelled it.

James snapped back to cognition. Jon was talking to him and he wasn’t listening.

“You just got to let it go. You know there’s nothing you could have done. You just gotta let it go, man.” But he couldn’t. The almond scent so strong even from the disseminated pool on the table, on her red notebook, on her shoe. Her red notebook, the coffee cup the cop just threw away, the cracking ribs, her hand gripping her throat as she gasps out for air. The cup just slipped from her hand. Just slipped right out.

“Now you what I mean?” Jon finished, nodding his head as if there were no other way to see the situation. Just a nut-allergy.
Mel Gibson joins the dark side

Mel’s first return to the big screen since 2002 is a typical Gibsonian bloodbath.

BY BRETT MEYER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Mel Gibson is once again starring in a movie, something that he hasn’t done since 2002 (probably due to all the racism and drunk driving), I knew nothing about Edge of Darkness when I went into see it, however, simply due to Gibson’s presence in the film, I was expecting to come out enjoying it. I was wrong.

You’ve probably seen movies with Edge of Darkness’s story. As I was watching it, I realized that I’d already seen the same plot before in about twenty other movies. Basically, Thomas Craven (Gibson) is a cop investigating a murder, and he eventually realizes that what originally seemed like a normal case is actually a huge conspiracy involving an international corporation and the United States government. And like many of these other movies, everything eventually leads to Craven going on a bloodthirsty revenge-fueled rampage. There is no “Aha!” moment where we’re able to finally realize this was the work of the government, as we’re told almost immediately who the bad guys are. And there isn’t nearly as much tension as there should have been for a crime thriller/conspiracy movie, because the entire first half was too slow-paced to be interested in at all. There were several plot twists, but most of them could probably be predicted within the first few scenes. The story was extremely generic and predictable. In other words: Boring.

Another thing that the movie failed in was that none of the characters were particularly compelling. I found no reason to care whether they died or lived, or whether Gibson’s character succeeded in his mission or failed. In order for a character to be likable or compelling, they need to be believable. There wasn’t much of this movie that fit that description.

Yet despite this, the movie didn’t seem as though it was inherently bad. Deep down, it felt like it was a really good story that was just being given a really bad bad presentation. If Craven was a little less one-dimensional, maybe I would have cared about him and his daughter. If the movie didn’t alternate between boring interrogations and Taken-style shootouts, maybe I would’ve been more interested in the story. But unfortunately, it ended up this way, and we’re left with something that feels like a bunch of wasted potential.

Edge of Darkness is definitely not for those who are easily disturbed by gore. The movie is rated ‘R’ for “strong bloody violence and profanity.” Within the first ten minutes of the film, a girl is blasted at close range by a shotgun, almost tearing her in half. And that wasn’t even half as graphic as some of the later scenes. It seemed like a lot of it was only there for shock value. What really was disappointing about the violence, though, was that it both seemed to be taking itself too seriously and not seriously enough at the same time. In that regard, I guess you could say it fit right in with the rest of the film.

Actors, actresses and Oscars, oh my!

BY LISA WALTERS
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

I attended an Amy Grant concert when I was in 5th grade. It was a big deal. Not only was it a big deal because it was Amy Grant, but because my mom paid 25 dollars a ticket for us to go. That doesn’t seem like a lot to pay for a concert ticket now, especially considering you can purchase some venue tickets for up to $4000 a seat.

Now, $4000 sounds like a lot, right? What if I said an event happening this next month had tickets available for $175,000? With that money you could pay for about six and a half years of school at Northwestern, or buy a house, or you could perhaps attend one of the most prestigious award ceremonies of all time. Tickets to the Academy Awards are nearly impossible to come by, mainly because only 30 non-celebrities attend the event, and those 30 are drawn from a lottery of 20,000 Academy members. Attendees must also sign a contract committing not to sell their ticket. Yet, an Arizona-based company recently tried to sell a few of these rare tickets for $175,000 a pop before the Academy pulled the plug on their operations.

The first Academy Awards show, in 1929, had guest tickets priced at just five dollars. For me, that means 20 dollars less than a seat at the Oscars ceremony will cost you $175,000.

For a full list of all the nominees you can visit the official Oscar homepage at www.oscar.go.com. Also, if you feel as if a college student doesn’t have enough things to occupy their time, you can post to their message board, predict the winners, browse photos, watch videos, and even participate in their daily trivia game. And if that doesn’t seem to fill your Oscar appetite, you can have alerts sent directly to your cell phone. However, if you would still like to have people take you seriously, I would just recommend watching the show March 7, on ABC.
Men’s basketball defeats Dana and Morningside

The Red Raider men traveled to Blair, Neb., to take on Dana College on Saturday, February 6. After a back-and-forth first half, the game was tied 56-56 with 14:28 left to go in the game. Northwestern took control after that with a 17-4 run, finishing the game ahead, 98-79. Five Raiders scored in double figures as the team shot 57 percent compared to Dana’s 37 percent. Freshman Daniel Van Kalsbeek and sophomore Walker Seim each netted 20 points to lead the team. Van Kalsbeek also pulled down 11 rebounds, earning his fifth double-double of the season, and added three blocks and three steals for Raiders. Sophomore Ryan Stock added 14 points, while senior Ryan Hoogeveen and freshman Ben Miller scored 12 and 11 points, respectively. Freshman Mike Vorwald added seven assists and sophomore Ryan Stock added 14 points, while senior Randa Hulstein who added 13 points. Hurley added eight rebounds and five assists, while Hulstein added seven rebounds and four assists.

On Wednesday, the Red Raiders claimed a narrow 87-83 victory over Morningside to extend their winning streak to five games. Two Raiders registered double-doubles in the game. Hurley scored an impressive 31 points, pulled down ten rebounds and dished out seven assists. Dejong added 20 points and ten rebounds. Sophomore Val Kleinjan and Hulstein netted 15 and ten points, respectively and Hulstein had three blocks.

The victory over the 12th-ranked Mustangs improves NW’s record to 22-3, 13-2 in the GPAC. The Raiders moved up to fourth place in the conference.

Five-game winning streak for women’s basketball

The women’s basketball team got off to a fast start and never looked back in a convincing 91-48 victory over Dana on Saturday, February 6. Northwestern shot 60.3 percent from the field, led by junior Becca Hurley and freshman Kendra Dejong, who scored 14 points each, and senior Randa Hulstein who added 13 points. Hurley added eight rebounds and five assists, while Hulstein added seven rebounds and four assists.

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Track teams compete at the John Dalton Invitational

The men’s and women’s track and field teams headed to the John Dalton Invite in Vermillion, S.D. on Saturday, February 6. Junior Stacey Dietrich ran a fourth-place finish in the 60-meter hurdles with a 9.47, narrowly missing the provisional qualifying mark by .05 seconds. Junior Corrie Fautsch ran 1:41.23 in the 600-meter run to place fourth, while junior Krystina Smith placed ninth (1:45.6) and sophomore Teresa Scholten placed tenth (1:45.7) in the same event. Freshman Ana Morgan added a fifth-place finish in the 400-meter dash with 1:02.18. The women’s 4x4 team of Dietrich, Morgan, Fautsch and Smith captured second in the meet with a time of 4:09.68. Other top ten-finishers for the women were junior Jenna Sorensen (eighth-5:39) and freshman Corrine Muyskens (tenth-5:53) in the one mile, junior Kara Den Herder (ninth-4:54.25) in the weight throw, freshman Leslie Stover (tenth-2:23) in the 800-meter run, sophomore Becca Wiggins (tenth-3:29) in the 1000-meter run and freshman Jana Olson (tenth) in the pole vault. Olson’s vault of 10’7 tied the Northwestern indoor school record.

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