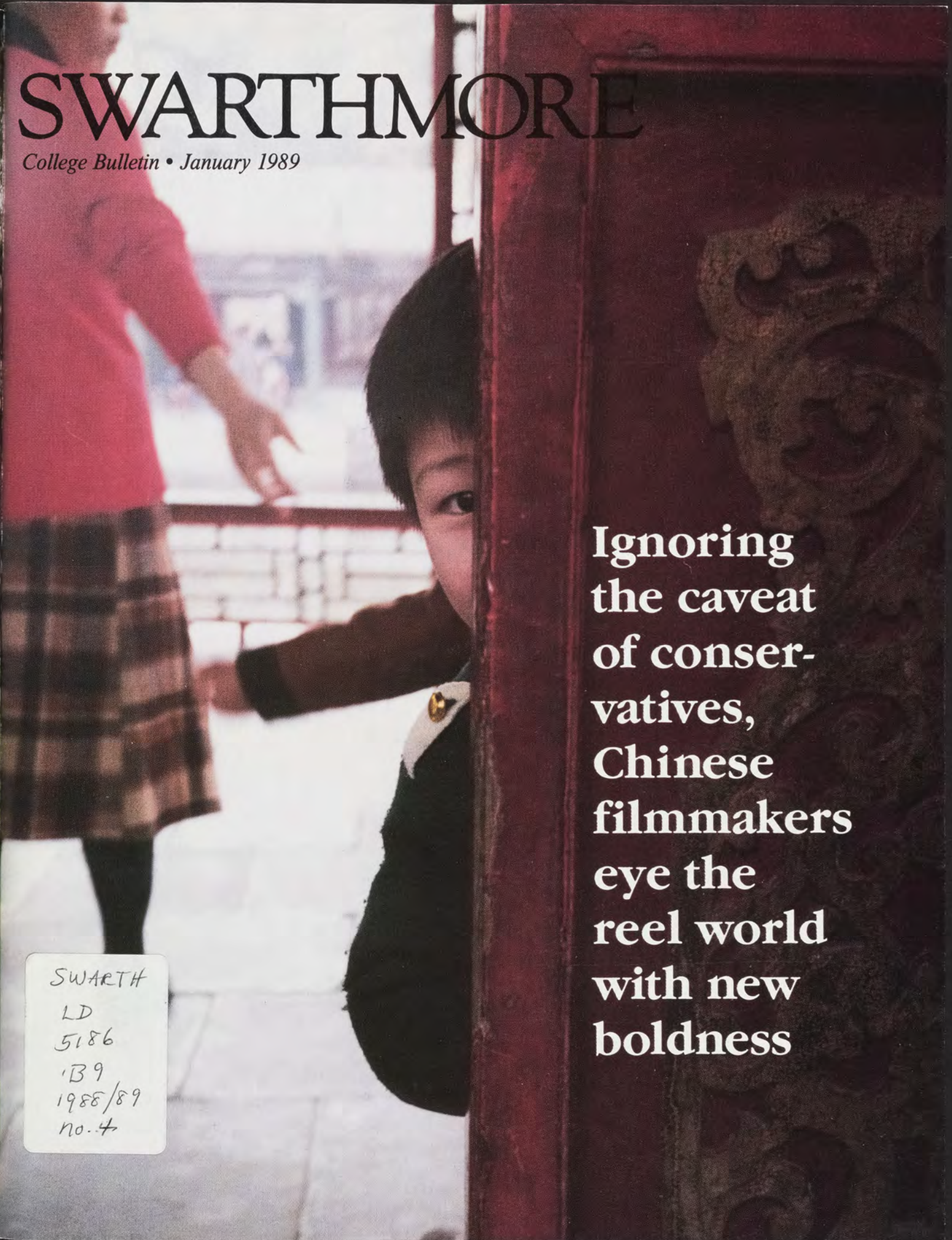
SWARTHMORE

College Bulletin • January 1989



Ignoring the caveat of conservatives, Chinese filmmakers eye the reel world with new boldness

"Sometimes when I had mixed a color and was going to put it on the wall, I found myself trying to paint the air." (Gulley Jimson from *The Horse's Mouth* by Joyce Cary)

Artist Valerie Hollister assumes a Gulley Jimson-like pose atop the scaffolding she used while painting the mural Winter Light, *a shimmering fest of blues dappled by pink clouds and ribbed with fluid, somber lines suggesting bare tree limbs. The mural was created with water-based acrylic paints over a seven-week period on the side of old Tarble (see "Riddle" p. 27). Inset photo by John Dominis.*

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COLLEGE BULLETIN • JANUARY 1989

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The Swarthmore College Bulletin (ISSN 0888-2126), of which this is volume LXXXVI, number 4, is published twice in September and in December, January, March, and June by Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA 19081. Second class postage paid at Swarthmore, PA, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Swarthmore College Bulletin, Swarthmore, PA 19081.

REEL COURAGE REAL ART

Chinese filmmakers resist didacticism with boldness and brilliance

by Alan Gershenfeld '84

When most of us think about movies from the People's Republic of China, we usually conjure up images of frenetic kung fu thrillers or tedious boy-meets-tractor melodramas. While both of these genres are still well-represented in the cinema of mainland China, recently there has emerged a new wave of young filmmakers who are producing politically and artistically daring films.

Despite receiving rave reviews and major awards at festivals around the world (a feat previously considered inconceivable for a Chinese film), many of these films, along with their filmmakers, have come under vehement attack from conservative officials within the Chinese bureaucracy. The result has been an intense debate that has energized the once moribund Chinese film industry and has raised many intriguing questions about the role of film in society.

I have recently returned from a five-month trip, funded by the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program (ACACP), to study current trends in the Chinese film industry. The grant was unique in its intention: not to finance scholarly research, but instead to finance projects that would involve

PHOTOS BY ALAN GERSHENFELD '84

extensive people-to-people contact enabling participants to cement life-long relationships with the people of China.

When I heard about the grant, I was about to enter my second year working as the production coordinator on a problem-plagued Hollywood feature film that had gone wildly over schedule and over budget. I knew that as soon as the film was finished, I would need a respite from the Hollywood shuffle.

Although I had never seen a Chinese movie, I teamed up with a friend and co-worker, who was also intrigued with the possibility of meeting with Chinese filmmakers in China, to apply for the ACACP grant. The initial research for our proposal turned up a variety of tantalizing tidbits. We learned, for instance, that the Chinese sold approximately 20 billion movie tickets a year—which translates into an astounding 55 million movie tickets sold every day. As far as we could tell, this made the Chinese the world's most avid movie audience not only in terms of sheer numbers, but also in terms of population percentage.

We also learned that the obscure American television movie *Nightmare in Badham County* played to over 200 million people in China, that the equally obscure American television series *Garrison's Guerrillas* used to be a hit among those with access to television, and that *Love Story* was the current rage in the cinemas. What this indicated about the Chinese taste in movies, however, was hard to ascertain.

Our research also gave us very little insight into the dynamics of the Chinese film industry and almost no sense of what types of movies China's 16 major studios were turning out. The various levels of grant committees, though, thought it would be worth finding out, and our project was funded.

Now that we had money, we had to figure out how to go about meeting Chinese filmmakers. Anybody who wishes to do an official project in China must first line up a "receiving unit," which refers to any organization in China that is willing both to invite and to take responsibility for you. In Los Angeles we were fortunate to befriend Xie-Fei, the vice president of the Beijing Film Academy, who was on a Luce Fellowship at the University of Southern California. He suggested that the academy should be our receiving unit and insisted that he would take care of everything.

When it came time to leave, we had still not heard from the Beijing Film Academy, and Xie-Fei was out of town. We also found ourselves without a translator since, at the last minute, our translator was hired to work

Writer Alan Gershenfeld '84 (left) is joined by brother Neil '81, a doctoral candidate studying engineering physics at Cornell University. Neil, participating in a U.S.-China exchange of scientists, rendezvoused with his brother in Guilin.

Clockwise from top left: Three of China's avid film-goers enjoy the silver screen without paying; a scene from the movie Old Well, *directed by Wu Tianming (inset), awarded best picture at the Tokyo Film Festival; a future star in inner Mongolia.*

on a feature film shooting in China. Unfortunately our plane tickets were nonrefundable, so with no translator or receiving unit, off we flew to China.

Our first few weeks proved disastrous. We discovered that with our command of Chinese (I could say, "I am an American" and "cinema"), it was not really possible to study current trends in the Chinese film industry. The following entry in my journal aptly describes our initial degree of success:

> Breakfast was a nightmare. By mistake we ordered 60 instead of 16 pork dumplings. Even though the waiter must have known that we didn't want 60 pork dumplings for breakfast, I'm sure he figured that the best way for us to learn the difference between "leo-shi" and "shi-leo" was to serve us 60 pork dumplings. We decided, though, to get the last laugh and tried to eat all 60 dumplings. After about 30 dumplings we felt sick and conceded defeat. We asked for a doggy bag, which promptly split open, spilling 30 dumplings into a brownish sauce that splattered all over us. The waiter seemed to enjoy this. . . .

Before long we began to suffer a crisis of confidence. Not only were we having trouble with our breakfast, but we also found ourselves unable to meet with anyone remotely connected with the Chinese film industry. Just when depression started to set in, our luck changed.

We contacted a contact of a contact from Los Angeles, who introduced us to a friend of a friend (literally), who turned out to be a perfect translator. Because of all the negative stories we had heard about government translators, we had avoided getting one, and it turned out to be a wise decision.

Our translator, a student at the Institute of International Relations, changed the tone of the whole trip. Aside from being fluent in English and extremely bright and funny, she had played Pu Yi's mother in the film *The Last Emperor* and was close friends with many of the young filmmakers in Beijing.

Suddenly we were not only meeting and interviewing filmmakers, we were becoming good friends with them. We spent long afternoons hanging out at the Beijing Film Academy and Beijing Film Studio watching movies, talking about movies, and meeting with everybody and anybody. Again I quote my journal, which I think best captures the shift in mood:

> I feel like the toast of Beijing. The last two weeks have been a blur of lunches, dinners, and parties with all sorts of Chinese film people. We've gone to parties at Maxim's of Beijing (yes, there *is* a Maxim's of Beijing), we had a triathlon of badminton, pingpong, and swimming with a cameraman and a film critic, we got drunk with one of China's premier actors and watched him re-enact the Japanese invasion of China to the Talking Heads' song "Little Creatures," and I taught our translator to say, "I'm rubber and you're glue, everything you say bounces off me and sticks to you." Next week we travel to Huhehot to visit her family and the Inner Mongolia Film Studio. . . .

In China, if you want to get anything done, you need *guanxi* or connections. This is as true for foreigners as for locals. Now we had guanxi. We were able to meet with studio presidents, we were able to screen previously unavailable films, and we were treated to such oddities as the "Mao Room" at the Beijing Film Studio. Prior to the death of Mao in 1976, virtually every scene in every film would have some sort of Mao prop (a painting, for example, or a statuette). But with the rise of Deng Xiaoping, Mao's images became rare in film. So this is where the hundreds of Mao props were stored. A disconcerting sight, to say the least.

More important, we began to get a sense of the film industry, both its history and current trends. Throughout the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, the Chinese film industry was alive and flourishing in Shanghai. Even during the Japanese occupation and civil war, the industry continued to turn out numerous popular films. When the Communists took control in 1949, the industry was split up; some filmmakers fled to Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek, some fled to Hong Kong, and others stayed. Many of those who stayed were sent to a variety of regional film studios being set up throughout the country.

In the 1950s and early '60s, the bulk of films produced in China were thinly veiled propagandistic melodramas that were low on artistry and high on dogma. With the advent of the Cultural Revolution in the mid-1960s, when nearly all the artists and intellectuals were sent to the countryside for re-education by the peasants, brutally harassed, or even murdered, the film industry was essentially shut down. The entire decade, until the death of Mao, saw the production of only a handful of patriotic operas usually handpicked by Mao's wife (a former actress) Jiang Qing. In the late 1970s, after the purge of the Gang of Four and the entrenchment of Deng Xiaoping's more liberal policies, the Beijing Film Academy (China's only film school) reopened and the studios gradually started producing again.

An astounding 55 million movie tickets are purchased each day by the Chinese, the world's premier movie-goers. The dramatic Potola Palace (top), Tibet's holiest monastery, remains the silent symbol of an old and besieged culture.

Co-grant recipients Alan Gershenfeld (right) and Jim Taylor on the road to Lhasa, Tibet.

The first group of students to attend the Film Academy after it reopened in 1978 were different from the previous, pre-Cultural Revolution classes in a number of ways. Most of them were already in their 30s and had spent the previous decade in the remote countryside often doing hard manual labor. At the academy they had access to more foreign films, modern equipment, and generally more information about the world outside than had their predecessors. The horrors of the Cultural Revolution also filled them with a passion to express on celluloid their feelings about Chinese history and the Chinese psyche.

This group of students became known collectively as the "Fifth Generation" filmmakers, and their films have had an enormous impact on the Chinese film industry. It all started with the 1985 release of Chen Kaige's *Yellow Earth*, which created a sensation at the Hong Kong Film Festival. Critics were not so much upset by the film's political content—the story, set in 1939, describes a young soldier from Mao's Red Army who is sent to educate (by collecting and disseminating folk songs) a remote, impoverished village—as they were by the film's slow, non-narrative format and the depiction of Chinese peasants as ignorant and superstitious. Proponents lauded the film's stylized direction, realism, and stunning cinematography and insisted that the film marked a breakthrough for Chinese cinema.

As more politically and artistically daring Fifth Generation films were released to favorable reviews abroad (and by intellectuals at home), the debate within the industry intensified. The powers-that-be criticized these young directors for abandoning socialist goals in pursuit of artistic excellence and for making films only a select few could understand. When Fifth Generation films strayed too close to sensitive topics (such as the Sino-Vietnam war), the films often were not released or were drastically recut.

As young filmmakers struggling to make innovative films in Hollywood, we were naturally drawn to this debate. Our allegiance drifted to the Fifth Generation, not just because we had become friends with a number of them, but because generally we found their films much better than the bulk of Chinese films that still tended to be artistically bland vehicles for socialist education.

On the other hand, we were sympathetic to some of the government's criticisms. After all, China does have an enormous, avid film audience whose needs must be met. Someone needs to be making more accessible films for this audience. And yet it seemed insane to stifle the talents of gifted filmmakers.

At the center of the debate was (and is) a man named Wu Tianming. Whenever we would talk with anyone about film in China, invariably the name Wu Tianming would come up. We learned that he was not only an acclaimed director, but also president of the Xi'an Film Studio and one of the strongest supporters of the Fifth Generation. From all that we heard, he sounded like a remarkable man, so we set out to meet him.

After spending a week with Wu Tianming in Xi'an, it became clear why everybody was talking about him. In less than four years, he turned what was arguably the worst film studio in China into one of the country's most artistically progressive, financially successful, and internationally respected studios. To accomplish this he had to embark on a bold, unprecedented series of reforms (practically unheard of in China) like severely punishing the corrupt, sending all who had not finished their education or training back to school, and setting up a substantial bonus system for those who made films that were both critically and financially successful.

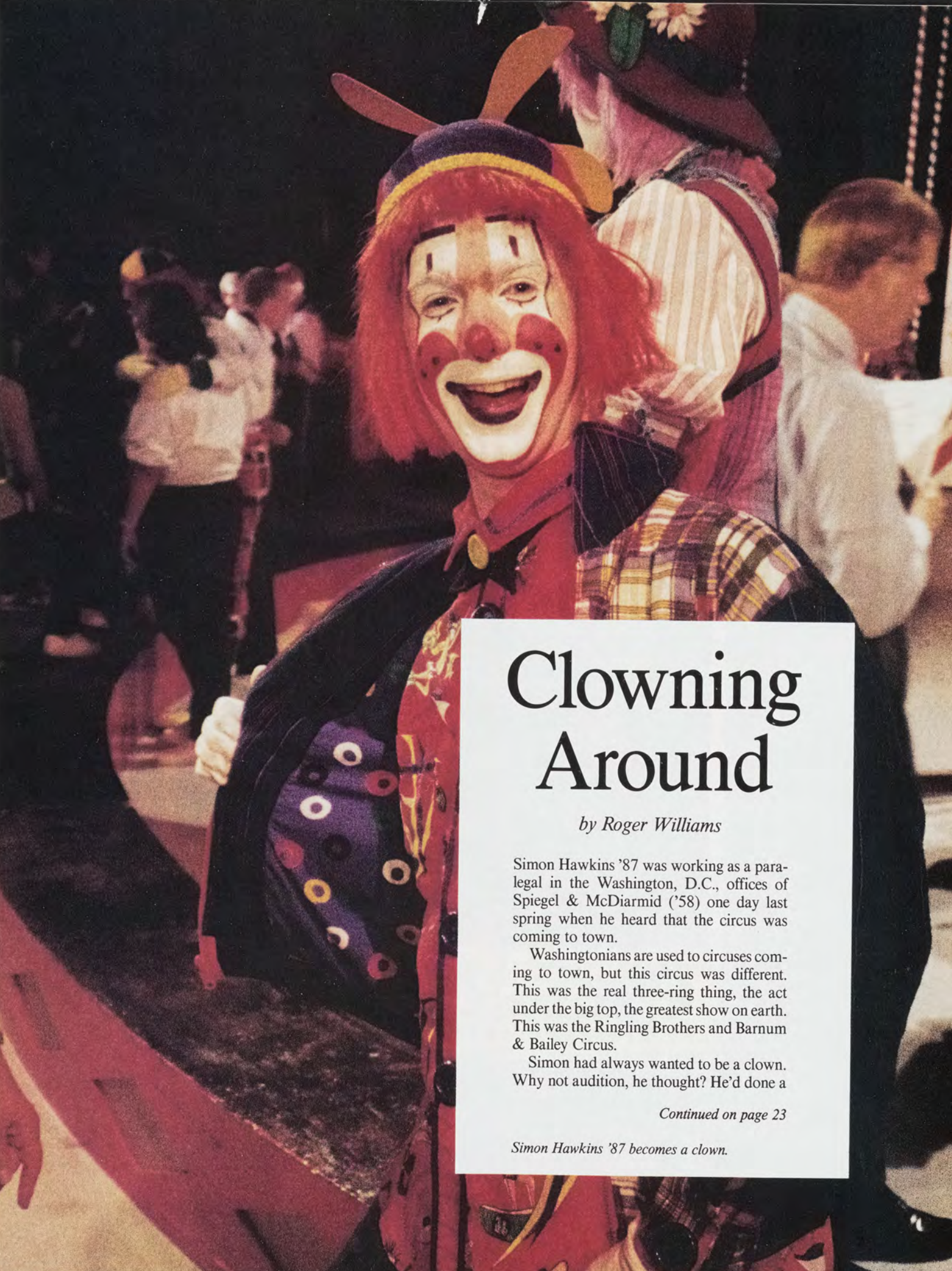
Even more controversial, he sponsored Fifth Generation filmmakers and backed innovative films that no other studio would produce. To finance these films (which often lost money) he also set out to produce popular films (like the hit kung fu film *The Magic Braid*) as part of his policy of "foresting art films with entertainment films." His success was remarkable. In addition to producing a number of critical and financial hits at home, his films began winning prizes all over the world.

Despite all this success, Wu continues to be criticized and harassed by the more conservative elements of the film bureaucracy. He is accused of everything from being anti-socialist to having too many affairs (he is happily married). He is constantly called to Beijing to defend his actions and must deal with government "vice presidents" sent to Xi'an to watch over him. In many ways the government's handling of Wu Tianming and the films he sponsors serves as a good indication of which faction is currently wielding control in Beijing.

After we had finished our project in China and were traveling in Asia, we were pleased to read that films from Xi'an won first prizes in the Tokyo Film Festival (*Old Well*, directed by Wu) and the Berlin Film Festival (*King of the Children*, directed by Chen Kaige). Equally significant, we recently learned that *Old Well* and *Red Sorghum* tied for the Best Picture Golden Rooster, China's equivalent of the Oscar. Each of these films, along with about a half dozen other Chinese movies, has recently been purchased for American distribution.

It seems inevitable that Chinese films will only get better and will continue to play an increasingly important role in international cinema. We consider ourselves lucky to have blundered into such a unique film community at such a fascinating period in its development.

Even more important, when we ran into the Chinese delegation at the recent Cannes Film Festival, we ran not only into other filmmakers, we ran into friends. This, after all, was the goal of the grant.



Clowning Around

by Roger Williams

Simon Hawkins '87 was working as a paralegal in the Washington, D.C., offices of Spiegel & McDiarmid ('58) one day last spring when he heard that the circus was coming to town.

Washingtonians are used to circuses coming to town, but this circus was different. This was the real three-ring thing, the act under the big top, the greatest show on earth. This was the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Simon had always wanted to be a clown. Why not audition, he thought? He'd done a

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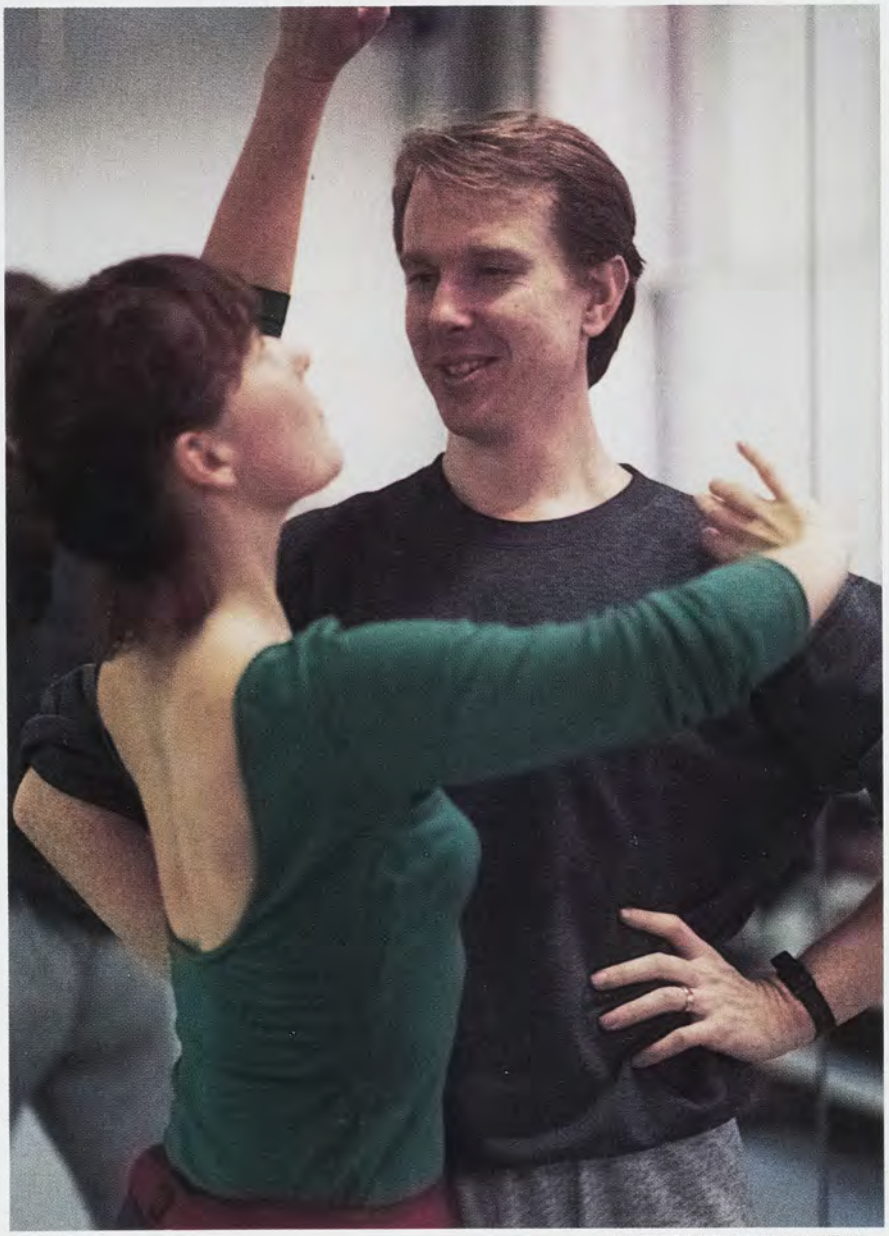
Simon Hawkins '87 becomes a clown.



PHOTOS BY STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

Choreographer and dancer Mark Taylor '75 joins a member of his New York dance company, Mark Taylor and Friends, to create a new movement during a rehearsal in his Broadway studio. The artist's consummate creativity is mirrored in his latest work, opening this month in New York City.

On the stage of Mark Taylor '75

All The World's A Dance

When I first met Mark Taylor for drinks several months ago, I was a little apprehensive. I thought that as founder of his own New York dance company, Mark Taylor and Friends, he might prove intimidating, using baffling, technical terms like "saut de basque" and talking graceful circles around me. I thought he'd be elegant and slightly blasé. I guess I thought he might wear tights and maybe some kind of cape.

Five minutes into our conversation, I had to admit I'd been wrong. Taylor was energetic and dynamic, leaning forward on his bar stool as he told me about his newest project, an evening-length work based on the novel *Invisible Cities* by the late Italian writer Italo Calvino. "I'd love to talk to you about it," he said, making little circles on the bar with his beer. "But I really don't have time." Taylor would be out of town at a SUNY-Brockport residency for the next six weeks. That gave me a lot of time to think.

The more I learned of Taylor, the more interesting he seemed. His enthusiasm for his work is infectious: I found myself fascinated by the innovative approach that characterizes his life as a dancer. Taylor, who'd planned to major in music, had never danced before he came to Swarthmore, yet he landed a coveted scholarship with the Merce Cunningham Dance Foundation immediately after graduation and went on to study with stars Lawrence Rhodes and Melissa Hayden. Only four years after graduation he established his own company—now recognized as one of the city's strongest—and had also begun to build a reputation for his ingenuity.

Tagged "astonishingly inventive" by *The New York Times*, Taylor has built up a meaty, complex repertoire, combining his daring choreography with evocative original music and provocative staging. (In "Freefall," a 1984 piece based on Taylor's childhood fantasies about flying, a taped narrative recounts a fictional levitation to the ceiling of his parents' living room while dancers toss themselves through the air; in "Lost Continent," which explores issues of extinction, Taylor plays taped interviews with kindergarteners. Clearly, this is not "The Nutcracker.")

Even with critical acclaim, Taylor has refused to settle into a niche. He received a 1988 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Fellowship in Choreography but is in the process of applying for another one to make videos. He has a solid, reputable company behind him but is working on independent ventures, including an electronic blues opera and choreography for production of a play about Don Juan. He simply never stays put—and this wanderlust may have brought him to dance.

At Swarthmore Taylor was first wooed by the performance of a visiting company, then ambitiously set to work as a novice with dance Professor Pat Boyer. Many of the dancers in his company followed the same route: They found themselves as artists only after they found themselves as people.

"I tend to think," Taylor says, "that people who start early have it physically

by Cindi Leive '88

He explores the reduction of meaning to pure imagination.

Guided by a desire to lend his dance the full context of theater, Taylor works with members of his company to create a fusion of music, dance, and narrated language in a piece based upon Italo Calvino's novel Invisible Cities.

easy yet become locked into a narrow aesthetic." For him, pushing into new territory seems the essence of dance.

Most of all, though, I am impressed by the sheer brashness of his latest, admittedly most experimental, project. *Invisible Cities* is a dense, poetic, confusing work. As I first stood puzzling over the novel in an East Village bookstore, an eager clerk told me, "It's a meditation on the nature of narrative; it's about the twisted redundancies of language itself." Not the sort of piece that cries out for a musical score. But for Mark Taylor, it is perfect material.

As Taylor and I sit in the large-windowed Brooklyn apartment he shares with his wife, Barbara Sieck Taylor '75, a foundation executive, he tells me that the new piece serves as a breakthrough in his work. "I always have several directions I would like to go," he explains, thumbing his paperback copy of the book. "And for me this is a whole new form." Whereas his previous pieces used only music and text to illuminate the dance, this project, he says, fuses composer Elise Tobin's music, Taylor's dance, and Calvino's text as parts of a cohesive whole: a true multimedia event.

Taylor likes this idea. "It does look pretty original to me," he says, grinning. "But it's also a step forward for me in terms of being able to break out of some habits I've had as a choreographer. I've always been an extreme formalist, and one of the negative things that can be said about my work is that it's just movement. Of course," he continues, "a lot of dance now is just movement, but I can sympathize with the criticism." Audiences, Taylor says, need dancers prepared to offer more than just pretty tricks. "I mean the quality and invention of movement are really important to me, but I find it even more important to give [dance] a context, so it becomes a piece of theater. This project is richer; it's got more levels, more things going on."

One of those things, Taylor tells me, turns out to be an investigation of imagination and fantasy, elements that he has played with since the days of "Freefall." "I wanted to work on the problem of narrative in dance," he says, clasping his fingers together. "It's an issue that a lot of people are addressing, but I don't see a lot of great solutions." He raises one hand, waving the green-and-white paperback vaguely in the air. "*Invisible Cities* is about dialogue," he explains, "a fictional encounter between Kublai Khan and Marco Polo. They tell each other these fantastical tales about cities they've visited, but by the end you realize that they're all imaginary, that they're just sitting there telling each other stories." His dance, he says, tries to recreate this mystical quality, this reduction of all meaning to pure imagination.

This is where the text comes into play. To get the fantasy effect, explains Taylor as he pulls an unmarked cassette from its case, he's tried to bring out "the beauty of the language itself, as music." He flicks on the stereo. "I think we really did create musical form from the language," he observes. Words begin to float from the speakers. But wait. Chinese? "Yeah," he says. "Here we took away the traditional music entirely and made a tape based on Chinese, Italian, and English narrations of a particular text from the book." A resonant English voice swims somewhere beneath the insistant, guitar-like Chinese words. Taylor sighs. "The Chinese is gorgeous. And I think when we get the Italian in there. . . ."

If Taylor's musical finesse works well with Calvino's text, though, his choreography leaves you speechless. I sit hunched in front of his VCR, mesmerized by the ways his dancers manage to create the blurry, surreal sense of imaginative play that the readings invoke. Two men circle each other, their movements fluid but courtly, angling alternately away from and toward one another. Tobin's cello whines hypnotically, sounding vaguely like a cross between Laurie Anderson and Maurice Ravel. And a voice says, "Newly arrived and totally ignorant of the language, Marco Polo could express himself only with gestures, leaps, cries of wonder and of horror." Other dancers begin to flood the stage, raising their arms briefly toward one another, offering their own short narratives with full, expressive movement. They begin to make webs with their bodies, lifting themselves into tenuous, imaginary shapes that dissolve in seconds. The cello overtakes an unintelligible voice. Words become a low pulse behind the music.

Taylor shifts abruptly in his seat. "It's all so beautiful!" He reads from his text, " 'Cities in the shape of Kyoto or Los Angeles'—this is great. The actual surface meaning of it is quite ambiguous, but it's great!" No kidding, I want to tell him, but I'm still staring at figures arching, touching, and breaking apart on the screen. These images stay with me long after Taylor has snapped off the TV, long after I've packed up my tape recorder and Taylor has seen me to the door. I sit on the subway, oblivious to the mutterings of the drunken woman next to me. I imagine myself light and liquid, my body moving in time to Tobin's hypnotic melody, my movements as illusory as Marco Polo's invisible cities.

Taylor had worried that "the danger in a project like this is that it requires a great deal of generosity from the viewers." But Taylor himself is a generous artist: spiriting a cerebral text into a full-bodied and evocative theatrical piece, giving himself fully to this project while still dreaming of other, future directions. He thinks of courting vampire-schlock novelist Anne Rice as a collaborator. He mentions exploring dance through video. And he says something, cryptically, about Hawaii.

Cindi Leive '88 graduated with high honors and holds a position as editorial assistant at Glamour *magazine. She reports that Mark Taylor's newest dance, titled XANADU/ THE MILLIONS, will be performed at New York's P.S. 122 on January 6,7,8; Philadelphia's Painted Bride on March 13,14; and the Baltimore Museum of Art, March 18, 19. The dance is based upon Italo Calvino's novel* Invisible Cities.

They begin to make webs with their bodies, lifting themselves into tenuous, imaginary shapes that dissolve in seconds....

The Men Who Would

by Roger Williams

One Republican, one Democrat, two Swarthmore issues directors serve in the 1988 presidential race

Late in the evening of Election Day 1988 at an on-campus party in front of large-screen television, a member of the Dukakis for President contingent, sporting an oversize Duke '88 button and surrounded by an increasingly melancholy crowd, remarked cheerfully, "We won."

He went on to explain, hastily, what he meant: A Swarthmore College alumnus served as issues director for each campaign, an indication of the remarkable influence and eclecticism of alumni, and a positive, vital sign for the College.

That startling fact, certainly a first for Swarthmore and very possibly a historic precedent in America, may suggest how stimulating an environment the College provides for bright students of varying political ideologies. And it demonstrates to many that a view of Swarthmore as exclusively liberal or left-leaning is about as accurate as the notion that the College is single sex.

Certainly the two issues directors—Robert Zoellick '75 (the Bush campaign) and Christopher Edley, Jr., '73 (Dukakis '55)—have plenty in common. Both had gone from Swarthmore to Harvard Law School, and both had served in previous administrations. Both men are in their 30s and married (Zoellick's spouse is writer Sherry Ferguson Zoellick '77). Both, significantly, are products of a Swarthmore education that encourages rather than diminishes differences in ideas and political discussion. As issues director, each had great power and responsibility, managing a team of some 35 foreign and domestic policy advisors and five or six speech writers.

Their differences, however, are noteworthy. One is white, one black. One is the son of Midwesterners who are not college educated, the other the son of academically ambitious parents who graduated from Howard University. (Edley, whose father also graduated from Harvard Law, is the first second-generation black to become an alumnus of the prestigious law school.) One is a Republican, one a Democrat.

The two discussed their lives as issues directors in brief conversations held several weeks before the election. Edley paused to consider the campaign at the end of a long day spent on campus; Zoellick made room for a conversation in the midst of a hectic afternoon at Bush-Quayle headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Their observations on daily campaigning, on themselves, on the media, and on their respective candidates are excerpted from those conversations.

Chris Edley, Jr., '73

On becoming issues director for Dukakis (not Jackson):

Why did I work for Dukakis and not Jackson? The short answer is that Dukakis called, and Jackson didn't. The other answer is that I am a pragmatist, and I eagerly joined the Dukakis effort because I believe his candidacy represented an outstanding opportunity for black America. The opportunity theme was at the core of his campaign and his career. And the fact that I viewed him not only as the right candidate but as electable, and did not view Jackson as electable, made it no contest.

The signals that I got from black leaders across the country suggested they were not only pleased with what I was doing, and where I was doing it, but proud of the fact

HARRY KALISH

Be Kingmakers

that I was. I think it's important that the issues director in the Dukakis campaign is black. It's an important fact about the role of blacks in the Democratic—capital D—political process.

On the daily grind:
This duty requires fifteen-hour days seven days a week. But then I'm looking forward to a month of vacation. I have a terrific staff, incredibly good people. The staff numbers about 42 including five speech writers. These people are wonderfully dedicated and talented. Many are in their mid-20s, some in their early 30s, a few in their late 30s. Campaigning, after all, is for youngsters simply because of the pace. When I leave at night, between 9 and 11:30, half my staff is still there, more than half. There are always a couple who remain all night, and you just can't do that month after month unless you're young. And you can't do it if you're the candidate, either. You have to pace yourself.

On the media:
I'd say about half my day is spent talking to the media, and I'll tell you, journalism can make you a cynic.

The media's strengths and weaknesses? It's difficult to speak in generalities simply because there's a tremendous range. The difference between the scope given to a first-rate reporter at the *Wall Street Journal* to write a detailed, substantive analysis of the trade positions of the two candidates and the scope given to a political reporter at *USA Today* makes the two jobs as different as an orthopedic surgeon and your neighborhood butcher.

Christopher Edley, Jr., '73 talks politics with animated students on campus before the 1988 election.

But having said that, much of journalism is dominated by concerns for consumer preference, if you will. Most obviously in respect to broadcast journalism. They're worried about attention span, visual interest, simplified presentations.

And most producers feel that competition is the thing of most interest to viewers. To use a sports metaphor: the horse race. I think this proves a disadvantage to a candidate like Dukakis, who is more thoughtful.

There is another very important structural problem. The reporters who cover the campaign are, by and large, political reporters, which is a species of sports reporter in some sense. The political reporters, who are very inexpert on specific issues like environmental policy or the Super Fund or the modernization of the land-base leg of the nuclear triad, sometimes can't recognize a good idea if it hits them over the head.

Meanwhile the "substantive" reporter who has the beat—the environmental beat or the defense beat—is sitting back at the head office usually with instructions not to write about the campaign because that's assigned to the political desk. So it means that day-to-day coverage is written by inexpert observers for producers who have their eyes on consumer tastes and with the constraint that it be designed and packaged to create "tapioca pudding."

Maybe another way of putting it: It's as though you're a composer who has created a symphony, but you're told that the music critic in attendance that evening will consider only that part of the performance that is fortissimo; otherwise it might as well never have been sounded. This is not good for democracy or the democratic process.

On successes and failures:
On a personal level I've grown a great deal. And I've learned a lot, obviously, in terms of policy, particularly on the national security side. I realized this the other day during

Both men went from Swarthmore to Harvard.

a CBS interview that covered an incredible range of questions.

There has been growth for me in learning to manage a significant number of people and a very complicated organization under tremendous pressure, very tight resource constraints, with difficult tasks.

It's also been personally rewarding getting to know Mike Dukakis well. He is an interesting, complicated, admirable person, and I've learned plenty from watching his character be tested and his judgment applied to dramatically changing circumstances.

When I consider what I've done wrong, I realize that I'm more skillful today at managing my "shop" than I was a year ago. I think, in retrospect, that I lost a few bureaucratic battles I probably should have been more forceful about winning. In particular, I wish that in the winter and spring I had demanded a larger budget to hire speech writers. You know, had we developed more of an in-house speech writing capacity earlier, we would have been in better shape at the end, with less pressure on everybody. People would know how to write in "Duke speak" rather than having to get up to speed during the crucial weeks.

I think that if I had to do this all over again, I would organize my operation so that I had fewer responsibilities for the daily management of policy development and more opportunity to work with members of Congress in communicating our message to their constituents and to the press. I enjoy policy development—a lot—but that's self-indulgent.

On Dukakis:
He has a very clear sense of the kind of speech he wants to deliver—the ideas, the cadences, the language. The words you put in front of some politicians are the words that come out of their mouths. Dukakis is not that way at all; he's difficult to program. He processes it all himself; he owns it. In this organization everyone has the sense that the boss is better at it, that he knows more. And he does.

This is not to say we don't have arguments. For example, I went through a long exercise with my staff one night to create a memo trying to persuade him to change his mind on a point I wanted to include in our housing initiative. I spent an hour on the phone with people on the plane to educate them to all the nuances so they could present the arguments on both sides to him. That kind of thing may or may not cause him to change his mind. But that's exactly the way the issues team ought to work.

On life after Nov. 8, 1988:
[My wife Tana] has been wonderfully supportive, but it's been tough. She's a management consultant with an office at the house and daily responsibility for our 4½-year-old son who just started kindergarten. I'm looking forward to spending a lot of time with them.

I don't know what I'll feel after Nov. 8. I am physically and emotionally exhausted. Even if we win, the idea of just dropping out completely is a real possibility. I've worked in Washington and at the White House before, and there is no particular job the prospect of which excites me.

Susan [Estrich] and I were joking the other day that we're just about the only people on the campaign with a job to return to on Nov. 9. Having tenure at the Harvard Law School, you know, ain't a bad spot in life, especially after 19 months of not seeing my wife and kid. And there are things I want to write. So I guess I'm saying that unlike many people in politics, I have a well-defined alternative that is very attractive.

I know I'll replay in my mind a lot of meetings, a lot of speeches, a lot of issues papers—I know that I'll do a lot of soul-searching about things I may have been able to do better, win or lose.

And I will feel deeply sad for the country, especially the "have-nots" in our society, if we lose.

Robert Zoellick '75

On origin:
Mike Dukakis was on the cross-country team, and I was captain of the cross-country team for two years. He ran the Boston Marathon, I ran the Boston Marathon. He was at Harvard, and I was there, so we have a similar background in that respect. I am not, however, the son either of a doctor or of immigrants. I am the son of some plain old Midwestern people. There you go. I lived about 25 miles west of Chicago. It's kind of flat out there. As James Field [Isaac H. Clothier Professor Emeritus of History] used to say, "America starts west of the Appalachians."

On becoming issues director for the Bush campaign:
I got here because of Secretary James Baker—a small number of us came over from the Treasury Department with him. After I left Swarthmore in 1975, I worked basically as an economic research person at the end of the Ford administration. Then I went back and did a joint law degree and public policy program at Harvard. Then I took two leaves of absence, and one of them was a Luce Fellowship in Hong Kong. Sherry and I came back early on that because placement wasn't all that good and I was eager to get back and finish up at Harvard, where I had one semester left. Then I was in private practice in Washington, and worked on a sort of board of appeals for the D.C. circuit, and eventually came over to Treasury. I've been at Treasury for about three years.

On the daily grind:
I'd never worked a campaign before—it's very chaotic. I'm always suspect of people who talk about the long hours—it's the sort of thing Swarthmoreans do—but for a marathoner who's worked hard hours virtually all my life, it's the most exhausting experience I've ever had. I'm here from 7:45 a.m. to 11 p.m. virtually every day.

My job involves me in everything from issues proposals, whether foreign policy or domestic, to the message through speech writing—I'm in charge of the speech-writing staff. Then there's sort of a feast of other things: debate preparation, issues favors as Congress tries to use the last weeks to push through an agenda that is as much politically related to the elections as it is of substance.

My job is very operational. I participate each morning in a small senior staff meeting with Baker and ten other people—and I raise any points that need to be raised. Then I come back and have my own meeting of policy people and speech writers and determine what needs to be done.

I am by nature a careful editor, and I do a lot of writing in this job, too. A lot of stuff for the vice president I'll edit or send to somebody else, but sometimes I end up writing a good chunk myself.

On being labeled a conservative:
I view myself instead as a person of a political nature. I think most of the people who know me will endorse that. I have worked for a variety of accomplished people in Washington, both in the public and private sectors and in different parties as well. And I think most people who look at Secretary Baker's tenure would consider it accomplished in terms of overall mainstream American internationalism, and I can give you an example—the Canada Free Trade Agreement, which I worked on quite a bit. A lot of what I have done [in Washington] consisted of trying to protect the taxpayer from whatever interest group wants to be bailed out.

So I mean, relative to the Swarthmore population which I would not care to represent more than the United States population, I tend to be moderate to conservative. That is somewhat rare at Swarthmore. Swarthmore is always very proud of its consideration of those in the minority, and here you've got somebody in the minority, right?

On negative campaigning:
I would think the criticism about not focusing on issues is unfair. I mean, we put out proposals on energy, ethics, education, environment, child care, drugs, defense, foreign policy—they're all over the place. For example, we had a major foreign policy speech in Chicago, and we set out some seven principles for Bush foreign policy. So what the TV news ran was a picture of a guy nodding in the audience.

So one point is this: There are a lot of issues and ideas out there that a lot of people don't get to see and hear. A second point is that, by and large, the conduit to the American people, the media, don't tend to reward long Adlai Stevenson-type speeches.

But a third point is that there's this blurry category between issues and values that actually tells a lot to the American people. You know if you fundamentally believe in democracy, as I do, you sometimes feel a bit suspect of what I consider a slightly elite opinion on how you are supposed to select people. The American people, by and large, make some pretty good choices.

To understand complex ideas people will use generalized slogans or concepts. In the debate, for example, I think people saw the issues, but they saw something else. They saw two very different personalities, one who was a very good technical debater with good facts and figures, whose diction and sentence structure were, I think, very good in explaining his points; but I think—put aside my views—the columnists said he still looked more like a machine. He doesn't do well on the likable test. He smiles in the wrong places.

Now Bush, on the other hand, might stumble over some words, but people sort of think, hey—that's a normal human being. To a degree, the American people are selecting someone they want as a head of state, as well as a head of government. Which I think is one of the reasons why Reagan has been such an enormous success. And this is something a Swarthmore intellectual may not fully grasp: The president is both the head of state and the head of government. He's very important in terms of symbolic leadership.

On Bush:
He has been the best check, a constant check, on ideas and policy shaped by his staff. Bush has spent much of his life in government. We may bring him an idea that is good politics, but he'll say, well, gee, you know if I were governing, I couldn't really promise that. And this is a very good, healthy situation. Bush views our proposals as a responsible person who is governing; he decides on that basis how to accept them.

On himself and life after Nov. 8, 1988:
I've always been interested in public service, and I'm sort of an old-fashioned American nationalist. I think this will have been an interesting few months for me upon reflection, learning about the country, the election process, the candidates.

I've always had a love of military history, too. I think part of it is that military history is an interesting way of having a sense of the most basic essence of life and conflict. You read about the sense of comradeship, the community of people—I mean you get down to some of the most basic elements of life. It's just sort of a personal interest.

I consider myself a private person, by and large, so neither my wife nor I tend to have a particularly active external life. Sherry, as you would expect from someone from Swarthmore, is a very independent, self-sustained person. We've agreed that we will take at least ten days off on some islands in the Caribbean when this is over.

After that it depends, but I'll probably be somewhere in the administration.

PHOTOS BY BRUCE REEDY '68

The Fiction of Franzen

A young alumnus unveils an acclaimed first novel

Jonathan Franzen '81 stands in the kitchen at the home of his former German professor, George Avery, and watches Mrs. Avery break two breakfast eggs into the belly of a pan brushed with butter. The yokes rise like binary suns, perfect yellow orbs, and Franzen waits, watching the unblemished whites run out to full circles.

"Actually," he says then, "I've changed my tune on eggs. I like the yokes broken, although it's probably a violation of aesthetics." He smiles solicitously as Mrs. Avery hurries to lacerate the plump centers, bleeding together yokes and whites.

Now the mixture forms an imperfect and violently achieved integration of colors. Franzen is pleased. That's the effect he wanted.

How the 29-year-old Franzen likes his eggs is how he likes his fiction: plot and characters bled together in ways that are by turns violent, unorthodox, comic, unexpected, ambiguous, and utterly absorbing. His first novel, *The Twenty-Seventh City*, a 517-page tale published in September by Farrar Straus Giroux, has appeared to what can only be labeled raves—the kind of reviews that put your name in lights. Critics have called his book "a clever narrative of Pynchonesque intricacy" (*The New York Times*); "perceptive as well as imaginative" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*); "unsettling and visionary . . . a book of memorable characters, surprising situations, and provocative ideas" (*The Washington Post*); "a novel of our times" (*Los Angeles Times Book Review*); and "a little Dickens, a touch of Ruth Rendell, a dash of Salman Rushdie, the literary extravagance of the nineteenth century and the matter-of-fact weirdness of science fiction . . . a big, lavish novel of creepy realism" (*Newsweek*).

Looking at him, tall and gangly with skin so pale he appears faint, wire rims framing watery blue eyes that move often and restlessly, you wonder where the writer hides. He is boyish, self-effacing. So polite it's almost embarrassing. Funny and wry, a straight-faced showman who might be underestimated as shy. But this is a literary novelist whose fiction reveals a tough, fearless quality that belies appearance. Where is the fire in Franzen?

Other young American male writers who have captured the worlds of book critic and popular reader before the age of 30 often as not meet success like rodeo cowboys—they ride into it bucking and fighting, whiskey-drinking or drugging or womanizing or rocketing through the world of cocktail parties and fame—until the pace throws them, and they're left unable to write at all, or unable to write as well as they first did, or just plain unable.

Or so it sometimes seems. There is no sign of this wildness in Jonathan Franzen, however, not at breakfast the morning after he has traveled to Swarthmore to read from the novel. No scars or bloodshot eyes (Hemingway), no rising suddenly in midsentence to leave his hosts' table without another word (Faulkner), no handguns or cowboy boots (Thomas McGuane), no Kerouacesque romanticism or chemically induced walkabouts into the heart of darkness (Ken Kesey or Robert Stone). Unlike, say, Jay McInerney (*Bright Lights, Big City*, age 29), Jonathan has not come home to breakfast from a night on the wild side. He has come back to Swarthmore at a moment when praise, pride, and some degree of glamour surround him, and he greets them in an unironed, oxford button-down shirt open at the neck, a neat, nondescript pair of trousers, and no-name running shoes probably acquired on sale from an unknown shoe outlet. He looks like a poor but tidy graduate student who may well break in mid-dissertation and run for a job writing catalog copy.

In truth Franzen is disciplined, tough-minded, and relentless, and in the world of fiction he's a loner, as the remarkable and distinct pattern of his young literary life suggests. After graduating from Swarthmore, he traveled on a Fulbright to Germany, where he studied German playwrights (in 1987 he translated a Wedekind play for production at the College). Then in 1982 he returned to the States, married, and gave up the academic life entirely. Both Franzen and his new spouse, Valerie Cornell '81, decided to write, and they did it together in a way that suggests just how much fortitude it takes to succeed and how much they have.

They took part-time jobs, Franzen at Harvard University's Department of Earth and Planetary Science, where he worked as a research assistant in a seismology lab and acquired some knowledge about earthquakes (important to the plot of his second novel, he reveals), and they lived in tiny quarters in Cambridge. Later they moved to the Queens neighborhood of Jackson Heights to be closer to the New York publishing world. They wrote for eight to ten hours each day, according to Franzen, and then read all evening, for years. At no time between 1982 and 1988 did Franzen or Cornell, who has not yet published her first novel because, says Franzen, "she hasn't yet found an editor smart enough for it," ever attend a writers workshop or enroll in one of the hundred or so master of fine arts writing programs around the country.

That in itself is a remarkable fact since few writers in America publish anymore without some form of participation in the university network. *Esquire* fiction editor Rust Hills introduced his summer fiction issue several years ago with a comment that continues to prove true, apparently, for almost all writers except the young novelist from Swarthmore: "If one but stands back a bit and looks, one sees that it is no longer the book publishers and magazines, but rather the colleges and universities that support the entire structure of the American literary establishment—and, moreover, essentially determine the nature and shape of that structure. . . . There can scarcely be an American writer in his 30s who hasn't been involved in a university writing program somewhere, sometime in his life."

Meet Jonathan Franzen.

Editor's Note: Awarded a $25,000 Whiting Writer's Award for 1988 in late October, Jonathan Franzen read from his newly published novel, The Twenty-Seventh City, *during a recent visit to campus. Following the reading he discussed his life as a writer and his book, ostensibly the story of a violent siege of St. Louis, Mo., by a cabal of Indians.*

by Roger Williams

Singh was right. It sounded bad. The Probsts were having a putrid, corny, weepy holiday, God and sinner reconciled, and Barbara Probst more clearly than ever an agent for the Thought Police, appealing to her husband with a calculated tremolo, wearing down his resistance with her self-help honesty and putting him to sleep with the notion that everything was fine. The instrument of repression: "love."

Jammu called Singh. "Nice going. They're happier than they've been in years."

"On the surface, yes. But I've thought it over—"

"Probst isn't even arguably in the State and it's almost January."

"As I was saying, I've thought it over and I think we're all right, because Probst will never trust her now. She pressed her luck, she mentioned me. She's still nailed."

Maybe. But with so much talent, so much investment, so much technique and theory trained on such a very few men in St. Louis, Jammu thinks it's reasonable to demand resounding victories. She owns the scalps of Meisner, Struthers, Hammaker, Murphy, Wesley, Hutchinson, and she has liens on all the rest—except Probst's.

Singh told her to cheer up. He read her a reference from a poem in *The New Yorker*:

> For Gary Carter, Frank Perdue,
> Bono Vox and S. Jammu!
> Then he hung up.
> (from *The Twenty-Seventh City*)

Q: How long did the novel take you to write?

A: I guess I started in the fall of 1981 and had a final draft in the spring of 1986. And I hadn't finished cutting until the spring of 1987. So, subtracting two years for other things, I spent about four years. But during those four years I was working eight, ten hours a day.

Q: How much cutting did you do?

A: I cut about 25 percent, about 130 pages or so. In fact I typed the original 1,013-page manuscript, and then I cut 200 pages out of it and typed it again, and then I cut out 60 more pages and retyped 300 at that point, too. I used a typewriter.

Q: Sounds painful. But for you does that retyping process also involve some rewriting?

A: Yeah, it forces you to see your sentences. Anything that gives you another chance to strike out something bad is good.

Q: Are you surprised by the reviews?

A: That's a hard question to answer. I'm a little surprised by the number of them—25 or something at this point. Two years ago I was only hoping to find a publisher and expecting no more than that.

Q: I read the short story *Facts* that first appeared as an entry in the fiction contest at Swarthmore your senior year, then was published last year. In both that story and the novel, at some point, you drop a hapless white suburbanite in a black urban jungle. Is that something you think about, the foolish white lost in blackland?

A: Yeah. I think it's a little bit tendentious to say blackland, but sure, it's a fear a lot of people have in this country. Being shot to death in a bad neighborhood is something you might work with if you're trying to write affectingly. It sounds bad to you, and you guess it sounds bad to other people.

Q: Have you been criticized at all for your depiction of minorities, Indians in particular, or blacks?

HARRY KALISH

He looks like a poor but tidy graduate student who may... run for a job writing catalog copy.

A: One review called the book a total flop, from top to bottom ribaldly written, preposterous, racist, insulting. People are sensitive to this, as they should be, and all I can say to them is read the book and see if you think it's racist. I think I got a lot of mileage out of making fun of Americans, especially middle Americans' feeling about people unlike themselves. I definitely see myself more on the side of the Indians in matters of race and culture than on the side of the Midwesterners. But it's true that the stark outline of the book might appear racist. And in fact a cooperative bookstore in St. Louis run by former hippies—that's not a good way to characterize them—run by very good, very liberal individuals had a problem with the book, not because of its treatment of Indians, but because of its portrayal of blacks as politically unorganized and susceptible to manipulation.

Q: Is it difficult for you and your wife to pursue the same creative process all the time while living cheek to jowl?

A: It's good for the writing; it's bad for us. We have felt that it was us against the world for many years and continue to feel that way, and we have been equal. Suddenly this success drops into the household of hard-working people, and just as suddenly we find ourselves unequal in the eyes of the world.

Q: How do you handle that? Do you talk about it, laugh about it?

A: We feel everything from anger, to laughter, to whatever. It's been particularly bad in New York because it's right at the center of the industry and you see close up what a very commercial thing it is. When you're a little farther from New York, I think it's easier to have illusions about what drives the publishing world. That's impossible in New York. Everywhere you go you're just reminded of what the industry is like.

Q: It's more than just crass, though, isn't it? In one of your interviews you said that you had set out to be a literary novelist, and not something else, and the publication of this novel suggests there are people, agents and editors and a reading public, looking for that kind of writing.

A: Yes, there are, but it's a realistic business, too, and they almost always have to see a chance of making money. They're hard-nosed, yeah, but editors are in the very contradictory position of appearing both committed to literature and committed to corporate profit.

Q: Did you work closely with a quintessential big publishing house editor who sat down and looked at your work and made recommendations?

A: Changes were made before the manuscript reached the editor. I have a very, very fine editor whose chief occupation with regard to the book has been to recognize that it's good. And I was so afraid of not being able to sell it that I worked it over very

thoroughly on my own. Obviously Valerie is very central, too, because it's not possible to keep an objectivity as you rewrite something for the sixtieth time.

Q: That sounds very difficult, asking your wife to look at your work and be honest about it. That might grate upon a lot of people. How do you avoid the irritation?

A: Well, we try to work it out. There's no way to make, "This is bad, change it," anything but hurtful. But we try to discover the bad times of the day to say, "This is bad, change it."

Q: How did you organize this rather massive plot and the many characters you present?

A: I worked a way I wouldn't want to try again, very haphazardly. You go back and forth between writing and planning. You can't plan anymore because you're so sick of planning, so you go back to writing, and then you can't write anymore because you don't know enough, so you go back to planning, and that's probably a pattern. Straight dialectic.

Q: What does that mean?

A: That you go back and forth because neither planning nor writing is complete in itself. One contains the seed of the other, which contains the seed of itself, and that is the process.

Q: Do you find that part of the process laborious, uncomfortable, unpleasant?

A: Oh, it's all unpleasant. From top to bottom, start to finish, the process is unpleasant.

Q: What compels you to do it then?

A: Well, occasionally it's very satisfying, and otherwise—Flannery O'Connor had the best answer. When people asked why she wrote, she said because it's what I'm good at. You have to do something, and it's my fortune or misfortune to do something which is very hard but very rewarding, too.

Q: Do you feel that events that appear to be random may be related by some kind of providence or plan, or is this an attitude you adopt only when you sit down at the typewriter?

A: I would draw a very careful distinction between literary technique and actual honest perception of the world. What it takes to tell a story and look at the world in the way I want it looked at may be a point of view in real life I don't find applicable. So no, I'm not a paranoid believer in conspiracy. At the same time I'm a little paranoid, and I very much believe in large conspiracies that are generally common knowledge, open secrets such as a group of 250 people conspiring to wreck the remaining wilderness on a continent.

Q: Do you consider yourself a political person in a way that might make you attentive to the 1988 presidential election, for example?

A: I have issues that I vote on, but I consider myself political in the way that academics might. They might think about the world and history in political terms, but it's not necessarily related to the posters and phone calls. I think that's very important, however, and I worry about my own apathy. An election like this is so depressing. Just for self-protection, if you're young at this stage, you almost have to tell yourself it doesn't really matter because if you persuade yourself it matters, you go crazy with despair.

Q: Are you a fatalist or a determinist, as your plot might suggest?

A: Not a fatalist, not determinist, just a moralist, maybe.

Q: I remember hearing Adrienne Rich say that all writers have to be moral and political. Do you think that's true?

A: I always like to avoid generalizations about what writers should be or must be. I know what kinds of writers I prefer, but there are many ways to skin a cat. I think people who write from a purely aesthetic standpoint, who care about nothing but the beauty of what they are doing and allow no other considerations like politics—they're just fine, and it would be poorer for literature if they weren't working that way. Nobody should write badly. You can be the most moral and political person in the world and have the most heartfelt beliefs, but if you don't also have an unreasonable attachment to beauty and the aesthetics of your art, then who cares?

> "If you don't also have an unreasonable attachment to beauty and the aesthetics of your art, then who cares?"

Q: What writers do you admire the most?

A: This is a frequently asked question, and I have it down to a list: Dostoyevski, Dickens, Kafka, Flannery O'Connor, Thomas Pynchon, Joan Chase, Dennis Johnson, Joan Didion—I could rattle on and on. Kafka has been very important to me, although it may not show.

Q: In what way?

A: Because I started out with a conception of the book that would not make clear whether the conspirators were good or bad for their so-called victims, and the form that the conspiracy takes is to precipitate crisis in the family. It remains ambiguous throughout whether the same thing would have happened in the same way even without any intervention. I wanted there to be room for the possibility that the Probsts are not the victims they seem at first glance to be.

Q: You seem to have written and published this novel independently, and apparently you haven't acquired an M.F.A. from a writing program or hobnobbed in fiction workshops as most writers do.

A: No, I haven't, and it's not easy to say why. In part, I think, because you have to pay for those things, and there were two of us so we weren't in such acute need of emotional support. Also I don't particularly like the prevailing style—these workshops are made to order for short stories. And we wanted to get far away from the academic scene, having gone for it hook, line, and sinker while we were at Swarthmore. I felt that the study of literature and the academic treatment of literature were really very much at odds with the actual production of it. I think it's important not to receive false encouragement and not to think that the way literature is taught is the way it's actually read in this country.

And at one point Valerie and I did apply to a couple of schools when we were just acutely lonely, and the reason we did it is we wanted to make some friends who were writers. We didn't care about the instruction, but we thought we might get some money, and someone would pay our bills, and we'd get to know some people, and, hell, it wouldn't hurt to take these workshops. Stanford didn't want either of us, and Brown wouldn't offer us any money. That's partly because an excerpt from a novel, especially one based very much on context and on large structure, just can't compete with a well-made short story someone has slaved over for six months to make it absolutely sing. At the same time, what the country wants is the other way around. People don't really care about a finely tuned short story the way they do about a sprawling book. So I somewhat smugly felt popular culture was on my side.

Q: A final flip question. If you had to take a short passage of fiction and have it inscribed on your wall, what would you choose?

A: The end of *A Good Man Is Hard To Find* [Flannery O'Connor]: "Shut up, Bobby Lee, it's no real pleasure in life."

A View From The Border

In the hard hills once ridden by Geronimo and Pancho Villa, a Swarthmore senior sneaks a refugee into sanctuary

by Tristan Reader '89

Over the past eight years, an estimated 1 to 2 million refugees have fled the wars and political violence of Central America. The sanctuary movement is the organized response of hundreds of churches and synagogues and thousands of people throughout the United States to the Central American refugee crisis. In contrast to governments which arrest and deport refugees, sanctuary provides them with direct, humanitarian assistance.

As part of a Swarthmore College Eugene M. Lang Project of Social Change, I worked with the sanctuary movement along the U.S-Mexico border from June 1987 to January 1988, interviewing and counseling refugees, facilitating press coverage, and assisting refugees in reaching safe haven in the U.S. This account, using fictitious names, describes how sanctuary helped one refugee reach safe haven along *la frontera*, the border.

As we sat in the coffee shop of the historic Gadsden Hotel in Douglas, Ariz., waiting for Ben, a fellow sanctuary worker, my nerves were just about shot. Later in the day

Top: The unforgiving landscape faced by Central American refugees. The deaths of 13 Salvadorans in 1980 near this border location sparked the origins of the sanctuary movement. Right: A rancher's evil-tempered ponies go into a defensive circle near the Arizona-Sonora border. One refugee described a night spent in fear as he listened to a mountain lion yowling near his hiding place.

we were to begin a multiday trek from the U.S.-Mexico border northward, following a long, rugged route, with a young Salvadoran refugee. Three weeks earlier the woman's name had appeared on a death squad list that was circulating in El Salvador. If we were caught by Mexican or American authorities, Maria would be deported and most likely killed upon her return to El Salvador; we might be tried and imprisoned. And she ran an even greater risk staying in Mexico than coming into the U.S., for the tentacles of the Salvadoran death squads have been known to reach up through Mexico, and on many occasions Salvadoran women in Mexico have been forced into prostitution.

A sanctuary worker, Daniel, had spent days looking for Maria in Mexico City and had finally located her. The two had traveled by bus to a city near the U.S-Mexico border. From there a series of frantic and almost surely tapped phone calls led to the plan to use a multiday crossing through the desert canyonlands. We were to meet Maria and Daniel at the ragged, barbed-wire cattle fence that extends for 2,000 miles, separating the United States from Mexico. Then we planned to hike north for several days before driving to Tucson. It would, we knew, be a long and difficult week.

Author Alan Weisman writes in *La Frontera: The United States Border With Mexico*:

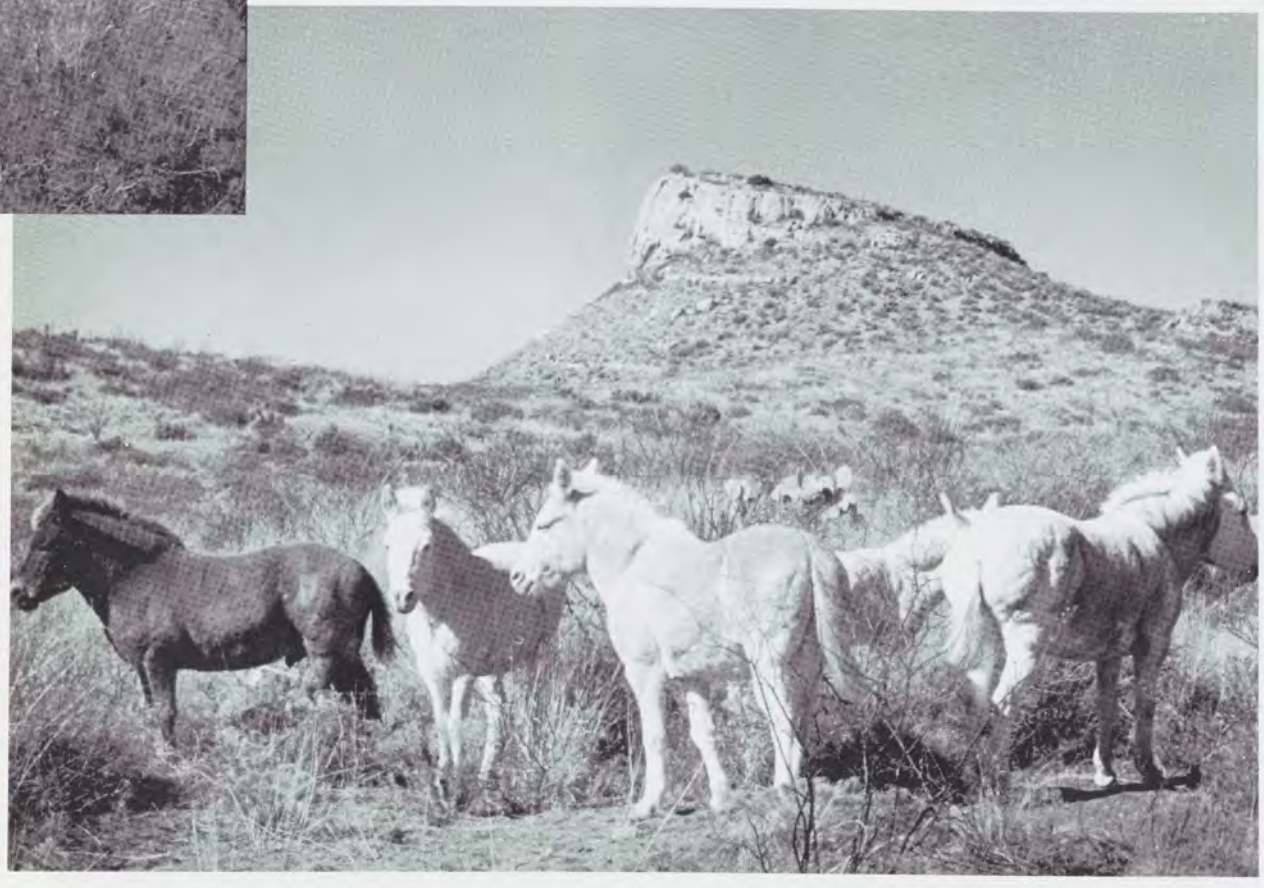
> West of the Rio Grande, the border ignores nature. Except for one short jog at the Colorado River, a series of straight lines adhering to treaty, not topography, define the boundary. As a result, the terrain along these political extremities often refuses to cooperate. Water flows where we don't want it; the land tilts unfavorably in one direction or another; and much of the frontier discourages access, even by the Border Patrol. . . . Like retribution for imposing distinctions where none should exist, the faint delineation between Old and New Mexico beyond Juarez and El Paso is one of the border's most violent excesses.

This made the area the logical, albeit difficult, choice for such a high-risk crossing.

But for the moment, I sat with Lillian, waiting, ignoring my coffee, in the aging hotel where Pancho Villa had often gambled and caroused. "Built in the early part of the century," Weisman writes, "the ceiling of its gilded rococo lobby rests on columns of rich French marble. Opposite the walnut registry is a grand staircase, slightly chipped from when Pancho Villa once ascended it on his horse." Villa had come across the border to this frontier town that had grown up around the copper mines and smelters that now lie idle, victims of cheap imports. Although alive and vibrant for Pancho Villa, Douglas has become a dying town. And I wondered if the famous revolutionary had ever been so scared and nervous that he could not eat.

Finally Ben appeared. His build and beard made him look like a giant, rough-and-tumble teddy bear. The three of us tossed three backpacks into the back of the truck and headed into the canyonlands. Driving down dusty roads through the hard-bitten country, no one said much. We drew near the meeting point, and the truck came to a stop in front of a locked gate. Months earlier, a sympathetic rancher had given us the combination to the lock, but I still feared a changed lock or a new combination. In my anxiety I felt my heart surge when the tumbler clicked in Lillian's hand and the lock fell open.

On we drove until the road intersected with a dry arroyo that led to the border fence, and beyond, into Mexico. As we got out of the truck, Daniel, the young Salvadoran woman, and a young Anglo woman emerged from behind some cottonwood trees that stood gathered around the sporadic waterway. We all shook hands and exchanged nervous smiles. Because of our care not to reveal too much on the phone calls to and from Mexico, signals had gotten crossed; the Anglo woman, Laura, had befriended the terrified Maria in Mexico City and had promised to accompany her to Tucson. But we had only enough food and water for three people. A hasty discussion took place under the cover of the trees: Ben knew the first few days of the route; I knew the last few; Maria, having been raised very traditionally in El Salvador, would have been



placed in a very uncomfortable situation hiking, eating, and sleeping with two men for several days, and she had grown very attached to Laura.

It was decided that Ben would lead Maria and Laura north for the first half of the trip; I would then meet them with more supplies and hike the rest of the way with them. Ben, Maria, and Laura quickly hefted packs onto their backs and headed off. Lillian, Daniel, and I got into the truck and started back toward Douglas. As I wrestled the pickup over the rough terrain, I remembered what a Swarthmore alumna and fellow sanctuary worker had once said to me: "Anyone who wants to do this work is crazy. It is something that we must do, not something that we enjoy doing." I couldn't relax yet, not until everyone was back safely. So the waiting began. . . .

The chill that descends upon the desert on winter nights seeped into my bones as I waited for Daniel to come pick me up. In order to get to the rendezvous with the three hikers, we had to leave hours before dawn. And I've never been a morning person. But Daniel was, and as we drove, he told me stories recalled from his days as a shepherd in Montana: The sheep, he said, always began to move at dawn, and so did he and his dogs. This morning's 3:30 a.m. wake-up had been routine for him. For me, however, nervousness was only overcome by drowsiness.

As we neared the rendezvous, the gentle hues of the desert dawn were becoming visible. In contrast to the dramatic harshness of the mountains, the subtle yellows, reds, and tans of the earth were calming and beautiful. It was often hard to believe that the violence of humans could infringe so far into such a beautiful world. Yet I looked forward to a few days of hiking through that natural world, fleeing from the "authorities" who wished to send Maria back to the violence of her home. Weeks earlier, I had scouted this area with a Native American. With sadness and anger I recalled that in this same country, for years, the tenacious Apache chief Geronimo had eluded capture by government troops bent on extinguishing an entire race of people and its culture. Both sorrow and hope existed in these desert mountains I had come to know.

After miles on an old, dirt road, we turned off onto an unmarked jeep trail. Shortly we stopped and stepped out into the cold, gusty wind. The desert weather is harsh: cold, snowy, and windy in winter, hot and arid in the summer. We were worried about how the three hikers were holding up; the temperature had dropped into the low 30s the night before. As Daniel waited with the truck and extra supplies, I hiked in a couple of miles to the rendezvous point. Ben emerged from the brush, and we touched hands and exchanged a quiet greeting. He disappeared back into the brush for a few minutes and returned with Maria and Laura. Although Ben and Laura were looking fine, Maria was not. The long days of hiking had taken their toll; her feet were swollen and blistered, and never having been out of El Salvador's tropical climate, she was worn down by the cold weather, both emotionally and physically. I took Maria's pack, and we walked back to the truck.

There we sat down to evaluate our situation. The hike so far had been mostly uneventful. But now, the rugged terrain and weather had worked upon the somewhat frail Maria, and she was close to exhaustion. Realizing that it was she who had the most to lose if caught, Daniel carefully explained her options for getting to Tucson. We could follow our plan and continue the trek on foot, or we could drive out that morning. The risk of injury, which runs high when exhaustion begins to set in, would be avoided. But there would be a higher chance of being spotted by the Border Patrol as we headed out of the area.

> As we approached the Border Patrol car, it pulled into the opposite lane and moved toward us.

Maria sat quietly, then asked our opinions. As we discussed it, a consensus formed: Given the state of Maria's health, to drive out that morning would be the best option. She was visibly relieved and agreed. So we started to load the truck. There was a shell over the back, and a platform had been placed there which made sleeping comfortable. But in this case, it served another purpose; there was enough room created beneath it to allow a small person or two, like Maria, to crawl under and hide. I drove, and Laura joined me in the front; Maria and Daniel were hidden in the back; Ben headed home on his own. All situated, we headed off toward Douglas. With this arrangement, it would appear to an observer along the road that a young couple was heading home from a weekend of camping.

The drive to Tucson was relaxing at first. The stress of having to lead a refugee through a route which I had hiked only once was gone, and as the long journey commenced, Laura and I began to talk. She had abandoned a well-paying job in a multinational corporation six months earlier and had begun working with community organizations in and around Mexico City. She had no regrets, she claimed, about giving up all of the things that our society equates with success to help make the lives of a few people a little better. My thoughts have returned to that conversation many times since then, and I have been challenged by this woman with whom I have only spoken once. What will I do when I leave Swarthmore? How will I live my life? I still don't know.

Shortly after leaving Douglas, all of the tension that I had felt earlier returned in a sudden wave. A quarter mile ahead, ominously parked on the side of the road, sat a car painted in the characteristic gray-green of the Border Patrol. I looked around desperately but saw no roads onto which I could turn. Neither Daniel nor Maria, lying in the back, had any idea of the risk we were now being forced to take. So there was nothing to do but keep driving. And pray.

As we approached the Border Patrol car, it pulled into the opposite lane and moved toward us. Laura and I held our breaths and tried to look relaxed. Was the car slowing down to study our truck? I focused my eyes on a point far down the road and tried to draw us into that safe distance by sheer concentration. When the Border Patrol car passed us, my eyes locked on the rearview mirror, expecting to see it swing around. But it drew away, and we did not breathe easily again until its gray form had vanished in the distance.

A few hours later, we arrived at a convent in Tucson. There Maria would remain for a couple of days until she was able to join her relatives, already in exile somewhere in the U.S. After a brief goodbye to Maria and Laura, I drove home. Then, finally, all of the fear, nervousness, and tension flowed out of my body, leaving only exhaustion and the emptiness of sleep.

Tristan Reader reports that one week after arriving in Tucson, Maria was reunited with her family in a large city in the U.S. She remains in hiding, awaiting a time that promises her safe return to El Salvador.

Clowning Around

Continued from page 7

lot of acting, and he could ride the unicycle. Sort of, in one direction only. "So I called them and arranged to audition for Clown College, and they did the auditions in the afternoon while they were setting up for the evening show. We were out there auditioning while lions and tigers and elephants were being led in, and people were working—it was really exciting."

There's more to getting into Clown College than clowning around or proving you can sit on a unicycle though—you have to answer some very unusual questions. On the application form you encounter such personal queries as, "What is your worst phobia?"

It better not be falling.

The people at Clown College also want to know which foreigners intrigue you the most and which you dislike the most (they have a show in Japan these days). And when you last cried and why. And what it takes to get you mad. And a lot more.

Simon passed the initial audition and test and found himself traveling in August into the stifling flatlands of western Florida, south of Sarasota near Venice. The home of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College. "From day one it was really intense," he says. "Every day, all day.

"Several things become clear immediately. You have to get used to pain—things hurt there. People are always spraining ankles and necks, but for the dangerous stuff you have a mechanic around your waist—that's a sort of halter that catches you before you hit the ground. You learn all sorts of ways to hurl yourself to the ground, and you have to do it over and over. You're motivating yourself; nobody is telling you to do this."

What could be more fun than hurling yourself to the ground every day for two months? Simon learned to walk on the 6-foot stilts, ride the unicycle any direction but up, and walk on the rolling globe, a sphere measuring about 3 feet in diameter. Like any good clown, he can juggle on the unicycle and the globe, perform a range of rope tricks, work the trapeze ("sort of," he says) and the teeterboard (one clown is launched into the air by another who lands on the opposite end of the board), and do flips off the trampoline.

"It's great training for an actor," he reports, "but much more physical. Clowning, you know, is acting but acting broadly done. Every emotion you express has to be deeply and purely felt and expressed sweepingly so nobody will miss the point. You have to be pumped up all the time—I'm ANGRY, I'm SAD."

Among the 15 women and 40 men at Clown College, Simon reveals, were self-described hillbillies, a former rodeo cowboy, college graduates, high school graduates, even four Japanese. Each aspiring clown finally selected one of the clown types basic to American clowning: the classic white-faced clown fashioned after the 18th- and 19th-century French Pierrot; the character clown who plays off real features by exaggerating them—perhaps a bulbous nose, cauliflower ears, a twisted face that comes as a gift of nature, or a strange pattern of balding hair; or the Auguste clown of pink or red face and white eyes and of German origin (the word means silly or stupid in German, according to circus literature).

"I became the Auguste clown because that makeup worked for me and I felt better with it," he says. "He's dumber, the butt of tricks, slow to get the idea. Violence is a large part of clown humor, but it's caricaturized or surreal. It has to be amazingly broad so it never looks real. You're taught to portray yourself as a cartoon; it's all fantasy, and you don't want the reality offered by TV or the movies. We spent a lot of time watching old silent films, Laurel and Hardy and the rest, and studying their gags."

For a future graduate student in international studies who plans to take the foreign service examination someday, Simon has chosen an unusual avocation. "Maybe," he says. "But when you're behind the mask, you're empowered. You feel that you can do anything, absolutely anything, so there's a wonderful freedom in being a clown."

As a Clown College graduate, Simon will free-lance and offer the healing hilarity of his clown in occasional volunteer work, he says. And if Ringling Brothers should give him a call to offer him an open spot in the road show?

"I'm gone. I'll join 'em in a moment."

Cream pie humility is part of a clown's life. Simon Hawkins '87 (right) gives as much as he gets at Clown College in Florida.

THE COLLEGE

Lang retires from the Board

Eugene M. Lang '38 formally retired as chairman of the College's Board of Managers Dec. 2, passing the baton of Board leadership to Neil Austrian '61.

"The most important thing we can do if we believe in democracy is to make education accessible to all," Lang observed at a party in his honor. He exhorted Austrian to help Swarthmore "reach out into the community, to make education relevant to the needs of all Americans, and to take leadership—because if we don't, who will?"

Some 200 friends and family members attended a dinner for Lang given by the Board of Managers in Tarble in Clothier. Austrian, a 10-year veteran of the Board who serves as chairman of the Development Committee and head of the $75 million Campaign for Swarthmore, announced that the Board has commissioned a portrait of Lang to be given to the College.

In the meantime the Board presented Lang with a 30-inch by 40-inch photograph of himself (reputedly one of his favorites) in which the newly minted 1938 graduate is pictured in the shadowy background near commencement speaker Albert Einstein and College President Frank Aydelotte.

Salem Shuchman '85, speaking on behalf of the Lang Scholars, observed, "There are three things a person can give to Swarthmore: money, time, and ideas. Gene has given all three."

To these, Austrian said later in the program, "I would like to add a fourth—love."

Lang devoted eighteen years of service to the Board, including six as chairman.

Lang dinner celebrants (from the top): Former Swarthmore President John W. Nason and Vice President Kendall Landis '48; Chairman of the Board Neil R. Austrian '61 and Chairman Emeritus Eugene M. Lang '38; Sara Lawrence Lightfoot '66; former Swarthmore President Robert D. Cross; Lang with Lang Scholars Spring Haughton '84, Barbara Klock '86, and Salem Shuchman '85.

Survey surveyed

The College's 1988 alumni survey has produced its first statistic: an amazing return of nearly 70 percent.

As of the middle of December, 10,405 surveys were received out of the 15,047 mailed during the spring, with more coming in each day.

The directory, with updated addresses, class lists, and information on occupations, will be mailed to all alumni late this spring.

Robert Walker dies

Robert M. Walker, professor emeritus of art history who chaired the department during and shortly after World War II, died of a brain tumor Nov. 9 in Needham, Mass.

A specialist in the history of European prints and drawings, he was known as a great teacher for more than thirty years at the College.

Walker was a graduate of Phillips Academy and Princeton University and received a master of fine arts degree from Princeton and a doctorate from Harvard University. He began his teaching career at Williams College in 1936 but left in 1938 to serve with the Office of Strategic Services.

Following his retirement from Swarthmore in 1974, Walker and his wife Alice continued to live in Swarthmore, then moved in 1980 to Wayland, Mass., and later to Needham.

He was a member of the College Art Association of America, the Society of Architectural History, the Print Council of America, and the Print Club of Philadelphia, where he was a past president and director. He also served on the advisory committee of the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Photography of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Michigan Senator Carl Levin '55 joined students recently on campus.

Riddle

My skin is brick, mortar, stone.
My heart's a room—a stair's my bone.
I was born just after the century's turn;
It took 79 years for my head to burn.
In the beginning I gobbled books—
Readers jammed my crannied nooks.
Then grand McCabe climbed up the hill,
Stole my knowledge, leaving me to thrill
My denizens with pool, pingpong, burgers, fries,
Darts, dances, plays, parties—
Till a thief in the night smoked my back
And face, an unknown pyromanic.
Now a sweet surgeon with a brush
Has painted my scars a winter blush,
Veined my face with clouds and limbs
Blue and coral as lighted hymns.
Say who I am, stone and gossamer—
Body by Tarble, blush by Hollister.

—CRAIG WILLIAMSON
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

Editor's note: For visual answer to "Riddle," see inside front cover.

Playful Race Relations

Under Our Skin, a musical play designed to lay bare racial prejudices, recently came to Swarthmore College. The performance represented the culmination of a year-long project to make young people in the Philadelphia area more aware of the racism that they encounter in their daily lives.

After rehearsing at Swarthmore over the summer, *Under Our Skin* found an audience at several local high schools and then returned to campus on Oct. 5, where it was presented in Lang concert hall.

Although most of the ten members of the cast are high school students, Katy Albright '88 tried out for *Under Our Skin* last May and found a job waiting for her when she graduated shortly thereafter.

The job wasn't an easy one either. Zara Joffe, one of the co-producers, commented, "Racial and cultural identity is fraught with misconception and myth in society. . . . By observing high school and college students as the performers, audiences will see their peers modeling the concerns, feelings, and behaviors that we all try so desperately to pretend aren't there." The other co-producer was Cynthia Jetter '74, who along with Joffe is a member of the Community Housing Resource Board of Delaware County.

The genesis of the project was a series of workshops last winter that explored racial issues and tensions among Delaware County students. From their input came *Under Our Skin*, which local author and playwright Don Belton wrote and for which Heath Allen, a music instructor at the Agnes Irwin School, composed the original score.

The play's other Swarthmore connection was Paula Sepinuck, one of the dance faculty at the College, who was responsible for the choreography and stage direction.

—Togo Travalia '88

Minority scholars program spearheaded by Fraser

Swarthmore College has led the way in creating a new program known as Minority Scholars in Residence, to be adopted by 19 highly selective private liberal arts colleges.

President David Fraser says the program will begin in the 1989-90 academic year and provide up to 30 fellowships a year for minority scholars to teach on the campuses. Swarthmore will host two scholars each year for the one-year appointments.

In an article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Fraser noted that the program will help the

schools demonstrate a commitment to the concerns of minority students.

"The particular kind of education that our selective liberal arts colleges offer is very good for some of the brightest students in the country," he said. "But we haven't been successful in alerting minority students to our interest in them and what we have to offer them.

"By joining together we can send out that message more clearly."

The consortium of colleges includes Bates, Bowdoin, Bryn Mawr, Colby, Colorado College, Davidson, Franklin and Marshall, Grinnell, Oberlin, Pomona, Reed, and Wellesley, among others. "Possibly no other colleges are working together to address the changes that need to be made to make minority students feel welcome," Fraser observed.

According to the *Inquirer*, blacks represent 2.3 percent and Hispanics 1.8 percent of faculty members at traditionally non-black colleges nationwide. At Swarthmore, black, Asian, and Hispanic faculty number 9.8 percent of the College's 182 faculty members. That figure includes full-time, part-time, and visiting faculty members.

Two classifications of scholars have been defined by the program: Dissertation Fellows (still in the process of completing their dissertations); and Postdoctoral Fellows (doing a year or more of additional academic work).

The Dissertation Fellows will be expected to teach one semester course or its equivalent during the year of residency, to participate in departmental seminars, and to interact with students. They will receive a salary based on an average of the salaries paid to starting instructors by participating schools.

The Postdoctoral Fellows will teach one course in each academic term of their residency, will participate in departmental seminars, and will interact with students. They will receive compensation based on an average of the salaries paid by participating schools to beginning assistant professors. In addition, "start-up" funds of between $3,000 and $5,000 will be made available to finance proposed research, subject to the usual institutional procedures.

The Minority Scholars in Residence program was first conceived at a Swarthmore College meeting of 30 private liberal arts colleges in February of 1987.

Layiwola Shoyinka '55, a Nigerian civil engineer and member of the Yoruba tribe, recalled his friendship with classmate Michael Dukakis in a fall interview with The New York Times. *Shoyinka is closely scrutinizing the July 1987 issue of the* Swarthmore College Bulletin.

The sporting life

Men's Soccer (8-9-2): The Garnet just missed a winning season, but the even record of the men's soccer team in the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) at 2-2-1 was good enough for third place and a successful end to the careers of several graduating players. Goalie Brian Barry '89 accumulated 35 saves and allowed only 8 goals, while achieving a save percentage of .813 for his nine MAC games. The star of the offensive attack was another senior, Rob Oliver, who led individual scoring with 5 goals and 3 assists in his MAC appearances.

Women's Soccer (8-8-1): The women strikers only broke even for the year in spite of the efforts of goalie Jeannine Mastre '91, who accounted for a superlative 74 saves and a save percentage of .866. Mastre and junior forward Kristen Tucker, who led the team with an average 2.4 points per game, promise to be important keys to the team's success next year.

Field Hockey (13-8): Squad spirit was responsible

for lifting the field hockey team's record to 13-8, despite a poor showing in the MAC playoffs. It is unfortunate for the team, however, that two of the tri-captains, forward Jackie Trockenbrod and midfielder Penny Berrier, will graduate from the team. Both were named to the PAIAW All-Star team. They are not the only ones leaving the Garnet: Lee Fineman, named All-Tournament forward at the Seven Sisters, and goalie Jessica Wagner are also graduating seniors. Fineman was third in scoring this year, and Wagner closed out her goaltending career with an impressive 72 saves, as well as a save percentage of .888 for seven MAC games. The Garnet won't be left dry, though: A host of new talent led by three-year veteran Whitney Nelson '90, recuperated from her ankle injury and back in PAIAW All-Star form, will be sticking with it come next fall.

Volleyball (10-21): The Garnet spikers were inspired to come back fighting next year as they closed out the season with a resounding victory over Washington College. When they return to the court, it will be once more under the leadership of captain Barbara Schaefer '90. Schaefer, also an ace softball pitcher during the spring, used her powerful right arm to rack up 289 kills and 31 aces as the top performer at the net and from the service line. An important season landmark came when the team won Coach Strawbridge's 100th Garnet victory, and two additonal upset victories over Division II rivals West Chester and Ursinus suggest that Swarthmore volleyball will be hard to beat next season.

Men's Cross Country (8-3): The men's team came out running and didn't stop, finishing with winning records and a promise of a bright future. The team registered an excellent season total, placing high in the MAC finals (3rd out of 24 teams), as well as in the regionals (8th/30) and the Allentown Invitational (7th/18). Junior star Robert Marx led the charge with first-place finishes in 9 of 11 dual meets and a close-up 7th in the regionals in a field of 217 runners. He was nipped by senior teammate Ken Leonard '89 in the MAC finals, but Marx will be able to concentrate on the competition and gun for another selection to the All-NCAA Mideast team.

Women's Cross Country (5-3): The women's team achieved superb big-meet results (2nd of 8 at the PAIAW and 4th of 8 at the Seven Sisters), proving that the team is stronger than it's been in years. In co-captain Kitty Keller '90, the women runners have a star and a leader. Named All-Regional for the second consecutive year and All-MAC for the third consecutive year, she will no doubt extend those streaks to three and four, respectively, as she leads the Garnet pack next year. Keller will also be trying to lower her personal mark of 19:36, which she ran in the regionals, just missing qualifying for the nationals.

Football (2-8): The Garnet gridiron didn't quite set the Centennial Conference or the world on fire with a conference record of 2-5 and three more losses against outside opponents; however, a quintet of senior stars bid farewell to their fans in fitting style. The dynamic duo of quarterback Brian Jones and wide receiver Bob McCann notched their places in Swarthmore lore with single season marks for passing attempts (285), completions (139), completion percentage (.488), passing yards (1,637), receptions (53), and receiving yards (767). The co-captains, running back Duane Seward and offensive lineman Matt Squire, are also seniors, and their leadership will be missed. Last but not least, cornerback Jay Peichel will depart from the Garnet, leaving the "Tide" with two selections to All-Conference and record kickoff return statistics: 28 returns for 535 yards. Nevertheless, the future is already in view as junior offensive tackle Marshall Happer was named All-Conference and led the team in both tackles and sacks.

—Togo Travalia '88

Wanted: Biographer

A search committee has been established to locate a biographer for Courtney C. Smith, ninth president of Swarthmore College. The committee is chaired by Professor Emeritus J. Roland Pennock '27 (215-543-2207) and staffed by Jeremy J. Stone '57 (202-546-3300). Interested persons or persons who have leads for the committee should contact Professor Pennock or Jeremy Stone.

A letter to the editor

As a former Peace Corps volunteer serving in Malaysia, I was particularly interested in the story of Cecilia Ng '75 in the September 1988 issue of the *Swarthmore College Bulletin*. Fortunately during the time I served (1963-66) there was relatively little racial violence in that country, and I had a marvelous 2½ years of teaching students in Malaysia and learning to enjoy the country.

Although I could not vote for Governor Dukakis ['55] because of his views on abortion, I was touched by his willingness to write to the Malaysian government on Ms. Ng's behalf. Hopefully his letter was partially responsible for her release. I think her experience emphasizes the precious freedoms we have in America, the freedom to dissent without fear of imprisonment.

I also wish to comment on the letter by Richard Stone '65 in the same issue. Like Stone, when I consider investing in a college, I look elsewhere. I believe there is a great difference between knowledge gained in the classroom and the wisdom necessary to put that knowledge to constructive use. In the book of Proverbs, the author Solomon states that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of God. In the beginning chapters of this book, he extols wisdom and urges his readers to consider it more precious than gold or silver.

So hopefully in the future when Swarthmore leaders are considering curriculum changes, they will work for ways to encourage students to strengthen their spiritual values. In this way the students will then be much more likely to seek the wisdom necessary to make a positive impact on their society. They will be encouraged to develop both intellectually and spiritually.

Michael M. Lister '63,
Perry, Ohio

It's a blast—I love it!
I always recruit my
friends to come
be hosts, too.
Come and join us!

BOB WOOD

PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Swarthmore alumni seem to have a special affinity for each other that transcends the separations of time and distance. Alumni Weekend offers the perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends and discover new ones and to share experiences of life in the real world. Joining you in celebrating an anniversary will be Swarthmore itself, marking its 125th, and the Scott Arboretum, its 60th.

Come back for one more rap session in the dorm and sniff the azaleas—your friends will be glad you did!

ALUMNI WEEKEND
JUNE 9-11, 1989