



Natural Selections

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

For Your Consideration – *And They're Off!* Edition

JIM KELLER

Last year I equated the Oscar race to a horserace where each studio bets on its thoroughbreds and hopes that they can at least place at the end. I explained that the studio is the owner, the public relations department is the jockey, and the horse is the actor or film in the analogy. Here we thrust those roles I've discussed in the three-part *Ones to Watch* edition under a microscope to separate the nominees from the contenders and to identify the power players for each studio. I've also included my rankings as they stood on the eve of the Oscar nominations—the number in parenthesis indicates my placement following nominations. I chose the maximum ten nominees for Best Picture and all categories reflect five nominees. The top five in the chart were my nominee picks, those that fall outside of that were outside chances that I had listed. There is only one actual nomination that I did not have in my picks or as having an outside chance, *Philomena* for Best Picture.

In our July/August summer issue, I once again dove headlong into my favorite race, Best Actress. Here were the roles I discussed and where they are now:

THE QUEEN BEE: Meryl Streep – *August: Osage County* (director: John Wells, studio: The Weinstein Company):

FYC: Streep landed a nomination despite what many critics described as “overacting” in her role as Violet Weston—a character cut from the cloth of Tracy Letts’s Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play of the same name. I wholeheartedly disagree with those critics and feel that the film overall was given short shrift. Here’s to Streep’s 18th nomination, though a win is not in the cards, despite Screen Actors Guild (SAG), Golden Globe and Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA) nominations alongside

a slew of various other critics groups nominations.

AMERICA’S SWEETHEART: Sandra Bullock – *Gravity* (director: Alfonso Cuarón, studio: Warner Brothers):

FYC: Not only did Bullock earn a nomination, but she remains somewhat of a threat for the win. I say “somewhat” because at this late stage, it would take something akin to a miracle for someone to pry that winning statuette from the hands of Cate Blanchett for her work in *Blue Jasmine*. Still, enthusiasm for the film is as high as ever and if the Academy decides to reward it big, Bullock could benefit. She has also earned the requisite SAG, Golden Globe and BFCA nominations among countless others.

THE RISING STAR: Bérénice Bejo – *The Past* (director: Asghar Farhadi, studio: Memento Films):

FYC: Bejo is our first casualty of the season. After her Best Actress win at this year’s Cannes Film Festival, she failed to earn anymore favor and fell out of the hunt for Oscar.

WORLD’S GREATEST MOM: Kate Winslet – *Labor Day* (director: Jason Reitman, studio: Paramount Pictures):

FYC: While Winslet managed a Golden Globe nomination, the buck stopped there and Winslet too fell by the wayside in the quest for gold.

THE FOREIGNER: Marion Cotillard – *The Immigrant* (director: James Gray, studio: The Weinstein Company):

FYC: Chances are you heard little outside my column of Gray’s latest film, let alone Cotillard’s performance—which is said to be one of the best of her career. That’s because the Weinsteins bet on their other

horse, August: Osage County, and the film wasn’t even released. It will be released this April, so perhaps Cotillard and her film will be back around the track.

THE NEW YAWKAH: Cate Blanchett – *Blue Jasmine* (director: Woody Allen, studio: Sony Pictures Classics):

FYC: Not only did Blanchett earn an Oscar nomination after holding onto the number one spot since the film’s bow this past August, but she will likely be dragging Oscar home with her. She has won the SAG Golden Globe, and the BFCA awards, leaving no major losses in her wake.

Not to be outdone, the leading men were covered in the September issue. Let’s see where they stand:

THE DECORATED SOLDIER: George Clooney – *The Monuments Men* (director: George Clooney, studio: Columbia Pictures):

FYC: Clooney’s film and Best Actor chances were washed away in October when the film was uprooted and planted in early 2014. Like *The Immigrant*, look for this film to strike this year—or not, many a pundit has said that the film isn’t an “Oscar” film.

THE INDUSTRY VETERAN: Robert Redford – *All Is Lost* (director: J.C. Chandor, studio: Lionsgate):

FYC: While Redford picked-up Golden Globe and BFCA nominations, he failed to connect with SAG, which spelled the end of his Oscar quest. Redford is one of the biggest Oscar snubs this year.

THE LOOK-ALIKE: Tom Hanks – *Saving Mr. Banks* (director: John Lee Hancock, studio: Walt Disney Studios):

FYC: Hanks’ role in this film ended up be-

ing a supporting role as discussed in the *Ones to Watch, Vol. 3 Edition* in the December/January issue. Despite the shift, Hanks has found himself on the outside, not only in one, but in two categories (the other being Best Actor for *Captain Phillips*) and is perhaps the biggest Oscar snub this year. He earned only critics group nominations for this role.

THE LONE WOLF: Leonardo DiCaprio – *The Wolf of Wall Street* (director: Martin Scorsese, studio: Paramount Pictures):

FYC: DiCaprio has broken his two-year Oscar nomination snub with this role, has won the Best Actor in a comedy Golden Globe, and earned a BFCA nomination to boot, but failed to earn a SAG nomination. It's not likely that DiCaprio can beat the frontrunner, Matthew McConaughey, for his performance in *Dallas Buyers Club* (see below).

THE CHANGELING: Steve Carell – *Foxcatcher* (director: Bennett Miller, studio: Sony Pictures Classics):

FYC: Similar to *The Monuments Men*, Miller's film and therefore Carell's chances were moved to this year back in September. Look for Carell's chances to pop back up when the film is released.

THE MINORITY: Chiwetel Ejiofor – *12 Years a Slave* (director: Steve McQueen, studio: Fox Searchlight Pictures):

FYC: Ejiofor is still very much in this race having earned SAG, Golden Globe, and BFCA nominations among several other critics group nominations. But, he hasn't managed to win any of the major awards, which doesn't bode well for his chances at a win.

THE LATE BLOOMER: Bruce Dern – *Nebraska* (director: Alexander Payne, studio: Paramount Vantage):

FYC: Having won the Best Actor award at this year's Cannes Film Festival, Dern went on to earn all of the major nominations (SAG, Golden Globe, BFCA), but like Ejiofor, hasn't won. Unlike Ejiofor, Dern has been in the industry for a long time and hasn't been rewarded for it. This is the chance for the Academy to make good on a debt and they could go for it.

THE OUTLAW: Matthew McConaughey – *Dallas Buyers Club* (director: Jean-Marc Vallée, studio: Focus Features):

FYC: McConaughey looks to be the de facto winner at this juncture, despite having placed third after his film's bow at the Toronto International Film Festival in September. Unlike his counterparts, he has managed to rack up Golden Globe, SAG, and BFCA wins and appears to be unstoppable.

Just last month the *Ones to Watch* series concluded with a look at the Best Supporting Actor and Actress races. I avoided discussing them for a while due to the constant shifting that the races often see among their players, but the picture was pretty clear by then. Let's see how their contenders have stacked up following January 16th's Oscar nominations:

~THE GENTS~

THE TRANSFORMER: Jared Leto — *Dallas Buyers Club* (director: Jean-Marc Vallée, studio: Focus Features):

FYC: Much like his Dallas lead, Leto has been proving himself a force to be reckoned with on the Oscar circuit and unless the Academy has other ideas, he will be the likely recipient of the Oscar in this category. He has matched McConaughey's wins in all of the major precursors: SAG, Golden Globe and BFCA. Look for him to take it home.

THE LOOK ALIKE: Tom Hanks — *Saving Mr. Banks* (director: John Lee Hancock, studio: Walt Disney Studios):

FYC: As I mentioned earlier, Hanks was snubbed for both his role in this film and his leading role in *Captain Phillips*. No nominations = no dice.

THE SCALAWAG: Michael Fassbender — *12 Years A Slave* (director: Steve McQueen, studio: Fox Searchlight Pictures):

FYC: Well, Fassbender pulled it off and finally earned some much-deserved Academy recognition. While he too earned SAG, Golden Globe, and BFCA nominations along the way, a win isn't likely.

THE RENAISSANCE MAN: Matthew McConaughey — *The Wolf of Wall Street* (director: Martin Scorsese, studio: Paramount Pictures):

FYC: McConaughey's career resurgence led me to not count him out in any category. But when the curtain lifted on Scorsese's latest this past December, it became obvious that this supporting role would be just a flash in the pan. Lucky for McConaughey,

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his performance in *Dallas Buyers Club* looks to be just the thing to seal the deal.

THE NEWCOMER: Barkhad Abdi — *Captain Phillips* (director: Paul Greengrass, studio: Columbia Pictures):

FYC: When push came to shove, the Somali-transplant-turned-actor, Abdi earned a nomination where Hanks couldn't. He has received SAG, Golden Globe, and BFCA nominations as have several of his fellow Oscar nominees, but the odds are not in his favor.

~THE LADIES~

THE ICON: Oprah Winfrey – *Lee Daniels' The Butler* (director: Lee Daniels, studio: The Weinstein Company):

FYC: To many, Winfrey was the one to beat in this category and even up until nominations were announced last month, it seemed that the race was between her, Lupita Nyong'o for *12 Years a Slave* and Jennifer Lawrence for *American Hustle*. She earned SAG and BFCA nominations, but her failure to get a Golden Globe nomination spelled trouble for her Oscar chances. No one could've guessed that she too would end up being one of the biggest snubs of the year.

THE PATSY: Lupita Nyong'o – *12 Years a Slave* (director: Steve McQueen, studio: Fox Searchlight Pictures):

FYC: Winfrey's loss was Nyong'o's gain and it seems she will be the winner in this field. She won the SAG and the BFCA, but lost the Golden Globe to Lawrence, who is the only person that stands in the way of her Oscar glory.

THE COOT: June Squibb – *Nebraska* (di-

rector: Alexander Payne, studio: Paramount Vantage):

FYC: Early on, Squibb was just inside the top five, but she easily could've been pushed out. Steadfast she stands an Oscar nominee with SAG, BFCA, and Golden Globe nominations in tow. Still, this won't be enough to pull off a win.

THE LYNCHPIN: Jennifer Lawrence –

American Hustle (director: David O. Russell, studio: Columbia Pictures):

FYC: As I mentioned, Lawrence took the Golden Globe from Nyong'o, but at 23, it isn't likely that the Academy would award her two back-to-back Oscars. We'll see!

THE PRETTY WOMAN: Julia Roberts – *August: Osage County* (director: John Wells, studio: The Weinstein Company):

FYC: Like her co-star Streep, Roberts weathered critical hellfire to earn this nomination and it is well-deserved. She too earned nods from the big three: SAG, Golden Globe, and BFCA, but that won't be enough to fend of Nyong'o or Lawrence. ☉

With that, I give you my predictions as they currently stand:

2013 OSCAR CONTENDERS						
Rank	Best Picture	Best Director	Best Actor	Best Actress	Best Supporting Actor	Best Supporting Actress
1	<i>American Hustle</i> (2)	Alfonso Cuarón - <i>Gravity</i> (1)	Matthew McConaughey - <i>Dallas Buyers Club</i> (1)	Cate Blanchett - <i>Blue Jasmine</i> (1)	Jared Leto - <i>Dallas Buyers Club</i> (1)	Lupita Nyong'o - <i>12 Years a Slave</i> (1)
2	<i>12 Years a Slave</i> (1)	Steve McQueen - <i>12 Years a Slave</i> (2)	Chiwetel Ejiofor - <i>12 Years a Slave</i> (2)	Sandra Bullock - <i>Gravity</i> (3)	Michael Fassbender - <i>12 Years a Slave</i> (2)	Jennifer Lawrence - <i>American Hustle</i> (2)
3	<i>Gravity</i> (3)	Paul Greengrass - <i>Captain Phillips</i>	Bruce Dern - <i>Nebraska</i> (3)	Judi Dench - <i>Philomena</i> (4)	Barkhad Abdi - <i>Captain Phillips</i> (5)	Oprah Winfrey - <i>Lee Daniels' The Butler</i>
4	<i>Captain Phillips</i> (7)	David O. Russell - <i>American Hustle</i> (3)	Tom Hanks - <i>Captain Phillips</i>	Emma Thompson - <i>Saving Mr. Banks</i>	Bradley Cooper - <i>American Hustle</i> (4)	June Squibb - <i>Nebraska</i> (4)
5	<i>Nebraska</i> (6)	Martin Scorsese - <i>The Wolf of Wall Street</i> (4)	Robert Redford - <i>All Is Lost</i>	Meryl Streep - <i>August: Osage County</i> (5)	Daniel Brühl - <i>Rush</i>	Julia Roberts - <i>August: Osage County</i> (3)
7	<i>Her</i> (9)	Spike Jonze - <i>Her</i>	Christian Bale - <i>American Hustle</i> (5)	Amy Adams - <i>American Hustle</i> (2)	Jonah Hill - <i>The Wolf of Wall Street</i> (3)	Sally Hawkins - <i>Blue Jasmine</i> (5)
7	<i>Dallas Buyers Club</i> (4)	Alexander Payne - <i>Nebraska</i> (5)	Leonardo DiCaprio - <i>The Wolf of Wall Street</i> (4)			
8	<i>The Wolf of Wall Street</i> (5)					
9	<i>Saving Mr. Banks</i>					
10	<i>Blue Jasmine</i>					
	<i>Rush</i>					
	<i>Philomena</i> (8)					

Life on a Roll



Outside rear-view mirror by Elodie Pauwels

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

AILEEN MARSHALL

We all know that the third Monday of January was Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the holiday established to honor the civil rights activist. But do you know how it came to be an official federal holiday? This writer can remember a time when the holiday didn't exist.

Martin Luther King, Jr., born January 15, 1929, was a significant civil rights activist in the 1950s and 1960s. King was an ordained Baptist minister and had a degree in sociology from Morehouse College in 1948 and graduated from Crozier Theological Seminary in 1951. After he completed his Ph.D. at Boston College in 1955, King became the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It was there that his history of civil rights activism began. In 1955 Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus, in defiance of local segregation laws. That spurred King to organize a city-wide bus boycott by the African-American community. Activists also challenged the bus segregation law in the courts. (The law was eventually overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.) King went on to encourage more non-violent acts of civil disobedience. Martin Luther King, Jr. was known for this style of making protests without aggression, such as sit-ins at lunch counters. His efforts and those of others led to the end of segregation laws in twenty-seven cities. King's most famous event was the 1963 March on Washington, which included his "I Have a Dream" speech and emphasized his belief that one day all Americans would be equal and live in harmony. In 1964, he became the youngest man to win the Nobel Peace Prize. King was assassinated in 1968 by James Earl Ray while standing on his motel balcony in Memphis where he traveled to support a sanitation workers' strike.

The King family started the drive to have King's birthday declared a holiday soon after his assassination. A few years later, in 1976, a labor union petitioned to declare it a holiday. The bill went up for a vote in Congress in 1979 but fell five votes short. The idea of the holiday was protested by several state politicians. One argument was that there were already too many paid holidays for

federal workers and that another one would be too costly. Another argument put forward by Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina was that King protested the Vietnam War. Governor Evan Mecham of Arizona argued that King had Communist ties and compiled an extensive report on the alleged communist activities, which. New York Senator Patrick Moynihan called "a piece of filth." Senator John McCain of Arizona originally voted against the bill and later reversed his position due to overwhelming support for the holiday. Also, McCain was criticized for not opposing his state governor's protests against Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Stevie Wonder released his single "Happy Birthday" in 1980 in support of the campaign. Ronald Reagan signed the bill in 1983 and the holiday was celebrated for the first time in 1986. In May of 2000, South Carolina made Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday an official paid holiday for state employees. Before that, workers could choose either Martin Luther King, Jr. Day or one of three confederate holidays.

In Virginia and other southern states, Robert E. Lee Day was already a long-standing tradition. The irony of having a Lee/King Day was pointed out. In 2000, in Virginia, Lee Day, was moved to the Friday before King Day, so that they would always be on different days. Mississippi is the only state that still celebrates both holidays on the same day.

Outside the United States, other cities celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. In Toronto, Canada, it is an official holiday. In Hiroshima, Japan, the mayor holds a banquet as a way of uniting the city's call for peace with King's message of human rights. Citing the shared concern for civil rights, there has been a ceremony each year since 1984 in Israel to honor King. Israel also named one of their national forests for Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1994, a federal regulation was signed making it a national day of service. Americans are encouraged to use the day to perform some sort of community service. If you want to do some volunteer work next Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, go to United We Serve at www.serve.gov. ◉

NATURAL SELECTIONS



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NEEDS YOU!



New York State of Mind

This Month Natural Selections interviews Melvin White, Environmental Assistant, Laboratory Safety & Environmental Health.

From: The Bronx
Been here: 30 years
Lives in: Manhattan

Do you feel that New York has a sense of community?

I do. I've had so many rough experiences, and as a whole I've received good love from my community, even when I've made mistakes. Sometimes you see somebody with a mean face walk by, but if you met that same person in a different environment, you'd probably have so much in common. That's what makes this city so social.

Do you like to escape the city?

Yeah, I love camping. My favorite spot is Ten Mile River Scout Camp, which has this ten-mile road. If you can ever see a sun half-way in the air when it's yellow and trees are covering it and there's nothing but a long road and maybe a tiny bit of fog – that's this road every day to me.

Do you have a favorite museum?

The Transit Museum. If you haven't done that yet, do it.

Do you take advantage of New York's literary scene?

When I was young, I was part of this program that encouraged you to write and be good since we came from areas that weren't so great. They brought us to the second performance in my life, and it was one of the greatest things I've ever done. This was our spoken word show that we put together. There were a lot of people, lots of cameras; made us feel like we were stars. But that was a long time ago. I've always wanted to go to the Nuyorican Café. I love that you can go almost anywhere and find spoken word poetry.



What is one memorable New York moment?

This one time when I was young, I went to see my friend in the Village area. We're walking up the block and these girls ask us for directions, and somehow this girl says she sings and dances, does art and poetry, and my boy says, "Oh he does, too!" So this girl just starts singing, and I flowed right in with a song I wrote. Then her friend starts beatboxing and my boy starts beatboxing, I'm rhyming, she's singing, and everybody around was quiet. It's rare that you get a hundred people in one area quiet. They didn't even know we had just met five seconds ago. That is the most spontaneous and beautiful thing.

If you could change one thing about New York, what would it be?

Cell phones, texting, the looking down. Phones are beautiful, but they steal from social life and causes a lot of accidents. Being a biker, do you know how many people I have seen walk out into the middle of the street with their heads down?

How do you feel about de Blasio tackling the rich-poor gap in NYC?

I've lived it, so I have first-hand experience seeing what it's like to have to be harassed, to be poor, to not get a job based on where you're at. It puts you at a poorer position because you have to settle for what you can get. I went back to Harlem, where I used to live, and I had to look up at the street signs to know where I was. It looks just like down here now. Years ago when I was 15, we were saying this was going to happen. We always wanted better. It'd be fine if the people could afford it, but we can't, so it's forcing people to move out and go even cheaper places because now they're raising rent for even worse places. To tackle that topic is beautiful.

Has stop-and-frisk ever affected your life?

One day I was jogging to get this free phone before they closed. So I'm running and these cops pull over and tell me to put my hands up. I ask him why they stopped me and he said I looked suspicious. "Listen, I've seen you running, you looked like you were holding something in your coat." And this is broad daylight and not even crowded. And then he starts checking my pockets and I just had to stand there and let them do that. I was a grown man, old enough for them not to treat me like that. And these guys, after they finished, didn't even say sorry. Just humiliated me, got into their car and drove off. And that's happened many times. So as far as Stop-and-Frisk goes, no, I've never agreed with that. The right to stop and frisk is basically saying that if you look it, I have the right to treat you like it. And it just means you have to change the way you look and be careful about what you're saying, and that's not free to me.

Midday Melodies

DEREK SIMON

What makes great art? This is a question that thinkers have been pondering ever since civilization's infancy and I dare not attempt to answer it in less than a page. Instead, I'll posit what makes a great artist by using, in my opinion, the classical music world's finest champion: Ludwig van Beethoven.

Of all composers, Beethoven is probably the most well-known. Haydn wrote 104 symphonies but almost none are recognizable to the casual listener. Mozart wrote 41, but the first 20 or so are completely forgettable. Beethoven wrote only nine symphonies but at least two are so famous that even people that have never listened to a piece of classical music have likely heard them: the first movement of the Fifth Symphony (duh-duh-duh-DUH) and the last movement of the Ninth, the Ode to Joy. Beyond that, numerous other pieces of his music are easily recognizable (the Turkish March, Für Elise, and the Moonlight Sonata are examples.) But why is this? Clearly, there's something universal about Beethoven's musical idiom, something in the sound he produces that appeals to most humans. Therefore, universality is the first characteristic that I believe defines a truly great artist.

Beethoven completed Symphony No. 5 in C-minor in 1808, and he described it as "fate knocking on the door." Evidently fate knocks really loud, because we are still hearing those profound opening tones today. Indeed, Beethoven's symphonies are the most performed pieces of music in history. Clearly the master's music has staying power and I choose this as the second characteristic that defines a great artist.

Finally, I come to what I believe to be the most important of my three characteristics. Rachmaninoff wrote a ton of popular music that even non-classical music listeners enjoy, but in a sense, they are all the same. Once Rachmaninoff found his voice, his works were confined within that style. The same could be said for Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. Mozart's early works are practically imitations of Haydn's, never really pushing the boundaries until his later years (to be fair, he did die young). Beethoven started his compositional career by imitating Haydn too (in fact, Beethoven's first piano sonata is dedicated to him). But, in 1805, Beethoven premiered his massive and powerful "Eroica" Symphony, a work so unlike

anything that had come before it, induced the 19th century critics' version of "WTF?!" Thus, Beethoven entered his Middle Period. From then on, each symphony would be a transformative event, a completely original work. His piano sonatas and string quartets matured and expanded throughout his life as well. In Beethoven's late period, his most bizarre and jarring works were written. Even today, the Grosse Fugue, Op. 133, sounds as if it could have been written yesterday. I believe that his continual growth and change as an artist is the characteristic that truly makes Beethoven not just great, but a genius.

Now let's see if these three characteristics can apply to other artists that are considered great. William Shakespeare certainly has more staying power than any other author in history, his themes are so universal that they are relatable today, and everyone, of course, would argue that there is significant growth in style when comparing Hamlet (1600) to Romeo and Juliet (1594). Shakespeare checks out.

In the realm of popular music, The Beatles are widely regarded as of one the greatest bands ever. Their music is certainly widely appealing; almost everyone has heard at least one Beatles song ("Can't Buy Me Love," "Yellow Submarine," "Hey Jude," "All You Need is Love," are some examples). Their music has staying power and is still widely played on the radio and in many forms of media. Finally, their musical style demonstrates remarkable change over time, from the early Rock n' Roll albums such as "A Hard Day's Night," to the psychedelic originality of "Sgt. Pepper" (the Beatle's equivalent to Beethoven's Eroica,) to the experimentation of the "White Album." I think The Beatles are definitely worthy of their reputation.

Great artists that produce great works exist in every creative genre and few are truly extraordinary, but they don't need to be. Great artists need not be bona fide geniuses to be enjoyable, but those rare gems like Beethoven enrich humanity all the more because they are so few.

The complete Rockefeller concert programs are incomplete, but please note that concerts will be held on February 7 and 21.

February 7: TBA

February 14: Valentine's Day Concert

Soyeon Kate Lee, piano, <http://soyeonkatelee.com/home.html>, Ran Dank, piano, <http://www.colbertartists.com/ArtistBio.asp?ID=ran-dank>, Nelson Lee, violin (Jupiter String Quartet), <http://jupiterquartet.com>, Livia Sohn, violin, <http://livasohn.com>, William Frampton, viola, <http://www.williamframpton.com/file/Welcome.html>, Tom Kraines, cello (Daedalus String Quartet), <http://www.daedalusquartet.com>

This romantically themed concert will feature a variety of chamber works for piano and strings. Robert Schumann (1810-1856) was best known for his innovative, Romantic-era piano music even though it was his wife Clara Schumann (née Wieck, 1819-1896) was the far superior pianist, though he was virtually unremembered as a composer. Robert and Clara first met as piano students, and as their virtuoso piano skills blossomed, so did their love. They eventually married in 1840. As homage, the Robert Schumann Piano Quintet in E-flat (the composer's most significant chamber work) will be performed with Clara Schumann's violin pieces interspersed between the movements, symbolically representing the musically and romantically linked couple. Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) is the undisputed master of the Argentine tango, the ultimate couple's dance, and his "Four Seasons of Buenos Aires" for Piano trio (piano, violin, and cello) does not disappoint. Additional pieces will include a work for piano, four hands, which requires the pianists to share the same bench and keyboard, and the lovely third movement of Rachmaninoff's Cello Sonata.

February 21: TBA

February 28: Boston Brass (brass quintet), <http://www.bostonbrass.com/index.php> <http://www.allianceartistmanagement.com/artist.php?id=bostonbrass>

This acclaimed brass quintet (two trumpets, one French horn, one trombone, and one tuba) has been performing for twenty-seven years and has featured some of the finest brass players in the world, tackling a diverse repertoire including pieces ranging from classical to jazz. Every performance is a unique and exciting experience. They've played in a wide range of venues from The CBS Early Show to jazz festivals across the country. ☉

Culture Corner: Music Roundup

BERNIE LANGS

In the past couple of months, I've been to live concert performances in the major music genres of jazz, rock, and classical music. I found myself reflecting after each show on how these differing types of music are standing up within my own personal test of time.

My brother graced me with a ticket to see jazz saxophonist Joe Lovano play at the Village Vanguard. I hadn't been to the fabulous Vanguard in many years, but remembered it as a small and intimate space for a performance. After I insisted that we sit in the back of the club, my brother immediately guided us to seats just one table away from the small stage. And I'm glad he did. Mr. Lovano played with a fantastic group, consisting of a piano player, a bassist and two drummers/percussionists. His saxophone playing was on a virtuoso level as he hovered above us, and the songs were exciting and exuded an extremely positive vibe. Mr. Lovano also showed off great and complex chops on the flute and clarinet, literally wow-ing the audience, who at the end gave a very warm ovation, which was gracefully and gratefully received by the band members. Mr. Lovano's unique, complex, somewhat traditional sax melody lines, and his unwavering power and emotion on the ballads, will remain with me. I had written jazz off as a past interest, but this wonderful show rekindled my curiosity in this difficult form of music.

A few weeks later, I went to The Sands casino in Pennsylvania to watch the alternative rock band Weezer perform. The fact that I'd already been standing in the crowd for a couple of hours when Weezer hit the stage didn't help my mood, which was also tempered by finding myself to be one of the older dudes at the show. I'd anticipated that, but thought it wouldn't bother me. But it did. Weezer is led by Rivers Cuomo, an intriguing singer, guitarist, and songwriter who went to Harvard after being brought up in an ashram. With a kind of bookish look to him, he has always been celebrated as an outsider. I'm not the biggest fan of the group, but was pleased that the focus in the early stages of the concert was on an album I own, "The Green Album," and songs such as "Hash Pipe" and the boppy "Island in the Sun" were great to hear. But it was all downhill for me from there. The volume of the music seemed to increase with each song and soon the sound was just the voice of

Mr. Cuomo breaking through a distorted, cacophonous mush. I've been to plenty of loud concerts before—I have suffered a temporary and small loss of hearing, for example, after seeing Neil Young at Madison Square Garden—but the music had always come through in the past. I couldn't see the point in just a steady barrage of guitars and drums. It wasn't music. It wasn't art.

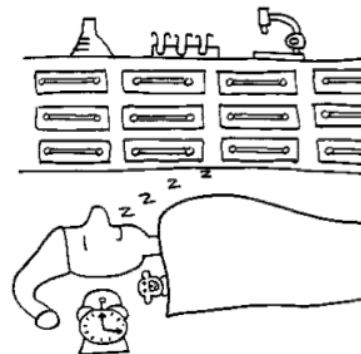
The audience at the Weezer show sang along on these songs of the celebration of being the one who is different in society. I was reminded of the scene in the movie "Monty Python's Life of Brian" where the would-be Messiah opens his bedroom window to find hundreds of his followers camped outside his house waiting for his words of wisdom. "You must think for yourself!" he implores them. They answer in unison, "We must think for ourselves!" Rock music will always remain closest to my heart and soul, since it is the music I compose and have given my whole life to. But a concert like this one, which began with promise and degenerated into what my father's generation called "noise", was terribly disappointing.

I was witness in November to the grand performance at Avery Fisher Hall of Mozart's Requiem conducted by Bernard Labadie with the New York Philharmonic. I use the word "witness" to emphasize that this was an historic evening for me, because when I left the hall with the reverberation of the massive choir's singing still ringing in my mind's ear, I felt it was the very best live piece of music I'd ever heard live. Mozart died during the composition of the Requiem, and it was rounded out and finished by a pupil of his. The strong opening theme of haunting majesty and power, however, is Mozart's. The four featured vocalists, Stephanie Blythe, Miah Persson, Frédéric Antoun and Andrew Foster-Williams, performed their solo portions with great style and nuance, and when they sang their harmonic lines together, they became a force of nature. But it was the choir, the New York Choral Artists, that kept me on the verge of the tears of appreciation of the ability of music to move celestial mountains, build bridges to heaven above, and take the soul soaring to previously unimagined heights. This may sound a little much and overblown, but I dare say it's the truth – as I see it, of course! ◊

Ten Years of Natural Selections

DANIEL BRISKIN

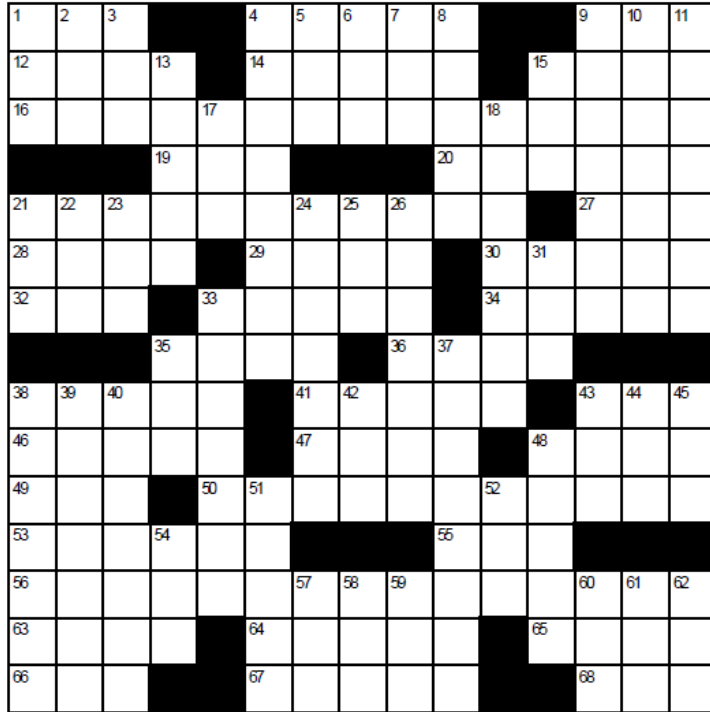
This month's issue marks the tenth anniversary of Natural Selections; issue one was published in February of 2004. In these past ten years, much has happened, on-campus and off. For all that has happened, however, much has stayed the same, including the humor. This year we are republishing the best and most timeless pieces from the corresponding month in 2004. ◊



Doubly Distinguished

GEORGE BARANY, JED FISHER, MICHAEL HANKO, AND MARJORIE RUSSEL

GB is a Rockefeller alum (1977); JF is a native New Yorker transplanted to the mid-west, where at the University of Notre Dame he continues to read, think, and write about important minutiae at the interface between biology and chemistry; MH is a NYC voice teacher, writer, and performer; MR, a long-time member of the Laboratory of Genetics, is currently an Adjunct Associate Professor at Rockefeller. For more puzzles by Barany and Friends and for the solution to this month's puzzle, visit <http://tinyurl.com/gbpuzzle>



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Across

1. Palindromic double-platinum Steely Dan album from 1977
4. Nick name?
9. Dance co. in the city where hearts are left
12. It's hailed by city dwellers
14. Shady sorts?
15. Sorvino of the screen
16. Only recipient of 68-Across 50-Across in Chemistry (1958, 1980)
19. Renaissance, e.g.
20. Attended Yom Kippur services
21. 16-Across's life's work made it possible to determine the structure of this
27. U.K. award
28. Ph.D. exam
29. Ifill of "Washington Week"
30. Recipient of 68-Across 50-Across, in Physics (1903) and Chemistry (1911)
32. Third biopolymer studied by 16-Across in his career, using a method now named after him
33. Anacin alternative
34. One using a saucer?
35. Hersher with a 59-inning scoreless streak

36. Salad veggie
38. Some spreads
41. Coeur d'____, Idaho
43. Second biopolymer studied by 16-Across in his career
46. Domicile
47. Venus de ____
48. Bellyacher's litany
49. Presenter of shows for G.I.'s
50. They may lead to scientific immortality
53. Kind of mutation giving a non-viable phenotype
55. Building blocks for chains determined in the 56-Across: Abbr.
56. First biopolymer studied by 16-Across in his career, it starts with glycine (A-chain) and phenylalanine (B-chain)
63. CBS series with a spin-off that takes place in LA
64. Type of jacket favored by the Beatles
65. It might be square
66. Interjection favored by a cartoon "Menace"
67. Panache
68. Highest number of 50-Across ever awarded to an individual

Down

1. Feds who smashed stills during Prohibition
2. Bump
3. Bunyan's blade
4. Fall behind
5. The Diamondbacks, on scoreboards
6. IBM competitor from Japan
7. Shatner book series (with "War")
8. Silk-producing region of India
9. Two gentlemen of Verona, say
10. Something for nothing
11. Only recipient of 68-Across 50-Across in Physics (1956, 1972)
13. Exemplary
15. 6 on a phone
17. Sea eagle
18. Took Marie Antoinette's advice?
21. Coal : Scuttle :: Bricks : ____
22. Ornamental vase
23. Cry from 24-Down
24. Ram's daughter
25. Area 51 loc.
26. Bacterium (by definition)
31. Suffice with mod or glob
33. Where a magazine may be found
35. "The Professor and the Madman" subj.
37. See-thru? (a word not found in 35-Down)
38. Recipient of 68-Across 50-Across, in Chemistry (1954) and Peace (1962)
39. It makes the heart grow fonder, they say
40. Film (1982) in which Dustin was Dorothy
42. Bit of truth decay?
43. "New Yorker" cartoonist Chast
44. Word after a name-dropper's name?
45. Per Dickens's Mr. Bumble, "the law is a ____"
48. Older's counterpart
51. Ken and Lena of Hollywood
52. U.K. coll. founded in 1845 with programmes in equine, food, and land mgmt.
54. Luther forerunner Jan
57. Surfing site
58. Short
59. Schubert's "The ____-King"
60. What a tilde signifies in logical representation
61. Intimidate
62. As a conscientious objector, 16-Across was not req'd to serve here

