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A view of the Kingsbridge Road subway station of the 4 Train, close to Lehman's entrance to the Student Life Building and Sports Field. Photo by Perla Tolentino. [Page 3]



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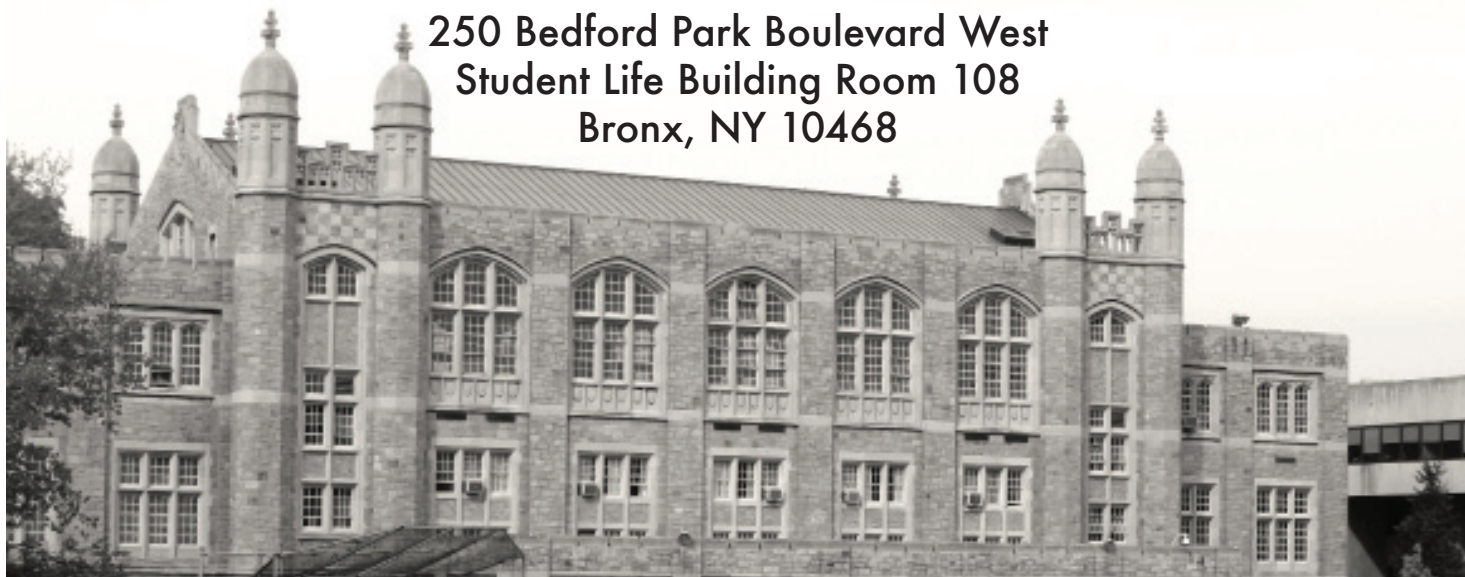
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Train Dysfunction Frustrates Lehmanites and Local Riders

By Perla Tolentino



Fordham Road D train subway station where a man was attacked with a hammer and an 11-year-old boy was robbed his phone. The D train also stops at Bedford Park Boulevard, which is connected to Lehman. Both incidents were reported by NBC News Channel 4. Photo by Perla Tolentino.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) transports more than 5.6 million New Yorkers on a daily basis. But recently, despite official pledges to improve the system, Lehman students and many other riders suffer the consequences of poor subway service on their daily commutes.

Jeanine Guido, a Bronx resident who takes the 4 and 6 trains daily, said, “Some of the main delays I experience everyday are due to medical emergencies and lots of investigations and train traffic issues... trains are running slow in the mornings and they are very unreliable. It’s almost certain that you will get to work late.”

Data released by Mass Transit Magazine shows a total of 65,487 train delays

this October alone, which is more than triple the average from six years ago. According to the Fiscal Brief of the New York City’s Independent Budget Office, the average number of delays per month in 2012 was approximately 20,000. This year, the MTA posted 6,229 times in their alerts section for the first 10 days of November. These accounted for elevator and escalator outages, NYPD investigations, sick passengers, signal problems and track incidents.

Three consecutive injuries were reported by the New York Post on Nov. 1. A man fell on the tracks at the 96th Street subway station of the 1 train around 2:47 p.m., causing major delays. He survived but bled profusely from his head. Two hours later, a passenger broke a leg on the train tracks of Jay Street, while another was

struck by an N train.

These incidents have been escalating, despite the “action plan” the MTA anticipated since July of last year. According to “Bloomberg Online”, the plan concluded that more than \$830 million was needed to fix the main causes of breakdowns and delays. This budget was also supposed to cover the expenses for new cars as a way to prevent overcrowding issues and to improve maintenance for elevators and escalators.

With these costly projects and the continuous decrease in riders, the MTA’s debt is projected to reach \$3.3 billion by 2022, according to the comptroller’s office. The surprise resignation of MTA chairman Joseph J. Lhota the day after midterm elections, poses another

challenge for the MTA regarding the end of incidents and delays.

The result of such incidents is an increase in rider frustration. “The 4 trains are always crowded and delayed,” complained Michael Spencer, a Bronx resident who travels to Brooklyn every day. “People are rude due to constant pushing, causing fights, accidents and more delays. I’ve been late to work so many times due to signal problems and sick passengers that I decided to use another route instead.”

“I usually ride the 2 train in the mornings and the 4 in the afternoons. Sometimes the 2 train doesn’t work on the weekends and we have to take a bus, so getting to our destination takes extra time,” said 25-year-old Ellieth Recarte, a junior English major at Lehman. She added, “Most of my friends come from Brooklyn all the way to the Bronx and they experience horrible delays.”

For those Lehmanites residing in New Jersey, the story is the same, but the commute is even longer. Joseph Yeboah-Mensah, an adjunct professor of mathematics, says, “My biggest frustration is when I have to come in the mornings. There is always some kind

of delay. I usually take the NJT, A and 4 train to come to Lehman. [At night] sometimes I get home by midnight when I finish my 7:50 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. statistics class.”

Maria Sarmiento is another NJ resident who works in Brooklyn. She was on the New Jersey Transit the day a man was struck and killed on the tracks near Brick Church on Oct. 2. “I remember I took the train around 6:15 p.m. and made it home by 10 p.m. since we were forced to take a longer alternative route.”

Claudia Drobchinskaya, a Brooklyn resident who rides the D and B trains, talked about difficulties with both lines. “I take the D and B train daily. Trains are always late and crowded, you have to ride standing in one leg and with your bags on top of your head if possible [and there] is always a sick passenger or a police investigation.” She continued, “When the D or B trains are down, I take the F, but I feel unsafe since there’s many substance abusing passengers.”

Lidia Ochoa, a 25-year-old CUNY LaGuardia Community College student from Queens who rides the F train daily, concurred. “There are many crazy people in the F trains, either because of

drugs or mental problems. They scream or start acting weird on the trains, it is very uncomfortable”.

Some platforms have also proved more dangerous. New York Daily News reported the case of 55-year-old Edwin Pinez who was pushed to the tracks by a younger suspect for no apparent reason. The incident took place on the 4, 5 and 6 train Brooklyn platform before 8:00 am on Nov. 9, 2018. Pinez was later treated at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

Meanwhile, the MTA continues to search for solutions. NYC Transit Authority’s CEO Andy Byford told the New York Times that delays can take up to 90 minutes to fix depending on the nature of the accident. His main goal is to reduce the number of delays by 10,000 every month. Byford had proposed platform doors as a solution to track accidents and stated that the cost of installing of these across all stations would be more than \$1 billion. This proposal has now been postponed, with Byford instead investing in more elevators and escalators.

“It’s fair to complain,” Recarte said, “since we’ll have to pay \$126 dollars for a monthly metro card, but the service doesn’t change.”



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Bullet Shatters Glass in Carman Hall

By Jonathan Rivera



Carman Hall. Photo by Jonathan Rivera.

On Oct. 23, Professor Amod Choudhury discovered a bullet in his office in Carman Hall.

“I was on a phone call with the Dean’s office when I noticed a copper-like bullet on the ground near the window,” said Choudhury. Upon further review he noticed a small hole in the pane of glass near him.

Public Safety quickly dispatched three officers to complete an initial investigation. Director of Public Safety, Fausto Ramirez then contacted the 52nd Precinct. Its forensic team was able to extract the pane of glass for laboratory examination. They figured out that the bullet was fired from a distance.

Ramirez said, “The act is believed to have occurred in an adjacent neighborhood across Reservoir Avenue.” The NYPD declared the incident as a violation of the Penal code 120.25, defined as reckless endangerment in the first degree.

Ramirez questioned the 50th and 52nd precincts about any possible gunfire activities during the discovery of the

metal fragment. He told The Meridian that no report of this was confirmed.

Ramirez recalled the tragic death of Paula Soto, a former Lehman student. On March 19, 1991 Soto was killed by a stray .22 mm bullet shot from the 4 train while playing softball on the campus field 150 yards away. Ramirez, a public safety officer at the time, was the responding officer to the shooting. He explained that Soto was rushed to the hospital but died four hours later. A memorial in her honor was placed near the Shuster Hall building.

According to a report released by the 52nd Precinct, there were 15 shootings in 2017 and 2018. The report also states that these numbers reflect a 42.3 percent drop over the past eight years and an 80 percent drop over the last 25 years.

Lehman currently has 144 operational video cameras and 188 call boxes all throughout Lehman College to help ensure student safety. The NYPD also dispatches sector cars to patrol the perimeter of the Lehman campus during the evening hours.

Despite these measures, the most recent incident has raised concerns among students, with some stating that a checkpoint should be implemented where students must swipe their ID cards to gain entry to the campus. Senior Neil Omacharan, a Diet and Nutrition major, said, “I don’t like the idea of not having a swipe system when it concerns my safety.”



Memorial of Paula Soto. Photo by Jonathan Rivera.

Lehman Soccer Regroups After Playoffs Loss

By Emmet O'Boy



The Lehman Lightning. Picture courtesy of Lehman Athletics Page

After three long months, Lehman's men's soccer season ended at the semifinals of the City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) playoffs.

After winning the playoffs two years in a row, "this loss was especially disappointing," Lehman Lightning head coach Toma Gojcevic told *The Meridian*. On Gojcevic's desk sit the two first-place trophies from 2016 and 2017 for the CUNYAC. Currently on his second term as head coach, Gojcevic looked up and sighed, "I thought we were gonna add a third one this year."

Lehman Lightning finished the 2018 season with a 6-10-2, a record that earned them a spot in the playoffs. They had high hopes for another victorious season after winning the CUNYAC finals for two consecutive seasons. But after the loss of some team members, Gojcevic was skeptical about whether the team was prepared. He was not pleased with the results of the 2018 season and was frustrated at losing more than half of the games.

During the playoffs, Gojcevic's fears came true when the Lightning suffered

a 0-2 loss to Baruch College on Oct. 30. Defeat prevailed when Lehman received a handball, which resulted in a penalty kick that Baruch scored. Towards the end of the game, Lehman went on total offense and put most of their men forward to try to tie up the game. With about nine minutes left in the game, Baruch then got a long ball down the field and scored again.

Gojcevic already has his sights set on next year. During a rundown of the returning players, he talked about how the Lightning only has 14 players on the current roster for next season. "One of the hardest things for me as a coach was

"No CUNY has ever won a game in the NCAA Tournament out of any CUNY school. We want to be the first team to do that."

**— Lehman Lightning head coach
Toma Gojcevic**

that I couldn't get certain players to buy in."

After losing Rafael Emiliano, Omar Moro, and Salh Alzubidi, Gojcevic is looking to "restructure the defensive line, and find new goal scorers." He hopes to add new players who are willing to buy into the program he is building. Although it is a tall order, he and his coaching staff are already in the process of recruitment for next season.

With new talent also comes an increased need for leadership on the field, so Gojcevic is looking at his returning seniors for help. Rising senior Chris Mulholland is someone whom Gojcevic believes could take on this role. Originally a midfielder, Mulholland switched to the goal position for the Lightning because the former player was injured.

Gojcevic will not rest until he is back at the top of the CUNYAC. He wants to make an impact that exceeds CUNY schools and reaches national level. "No CUNY has ever won a game in the NCAA Tournament out of any CUNY school," he said. "We want to be the first team to do that."

The Charmed Ones Return to Fight New Battles

By Kimberlee Mendez



The Charmed logo. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

The most powerful witches of all the magical realms, aka the Charmed Ones, are back and reimagined for 2018. A definite must-see, this reboot showcases the power of sisterhood with all the special effects a fantasy show needs.

Gracing the WB network, now the CW network, for eight seasons in the 90s, the original Charmed Ones—sisters and witches by birth -- fought demons, warlocks and everything evil using unique spells. Prue, Piper and Phoebe each had a different power: telekinesis, freezing the flow of time, and foresight, respectively.

The new series features new names, new faces and some new magic. In episode one, biological sisters Melanie and Maggie Vera reunite with Macy, who has lived alone for most of her life, after their mother is murdered by a demon

from the Underworld. These sisters have the same abilities as the original trio, but Maggie can also read people's thoughts.

One defining moment from the original pilot episode recurs in the reboot: the night all the sisters are reunited in their home, all the lights go out. This shows the Power of Three is formed and united, allowing their powers to be awakened. This Power defines what the Charmed Ones are: their combined powers makes them unstoppable to any demon they face.

In this version, they are also facing a social scene set in today's age of social media. The sisters are regularly online, and a lot of women-driven movements such as #MeToo are shown making headlines. One subplot introduces a protest movement starting in the college that Mel and Maggie attend. The

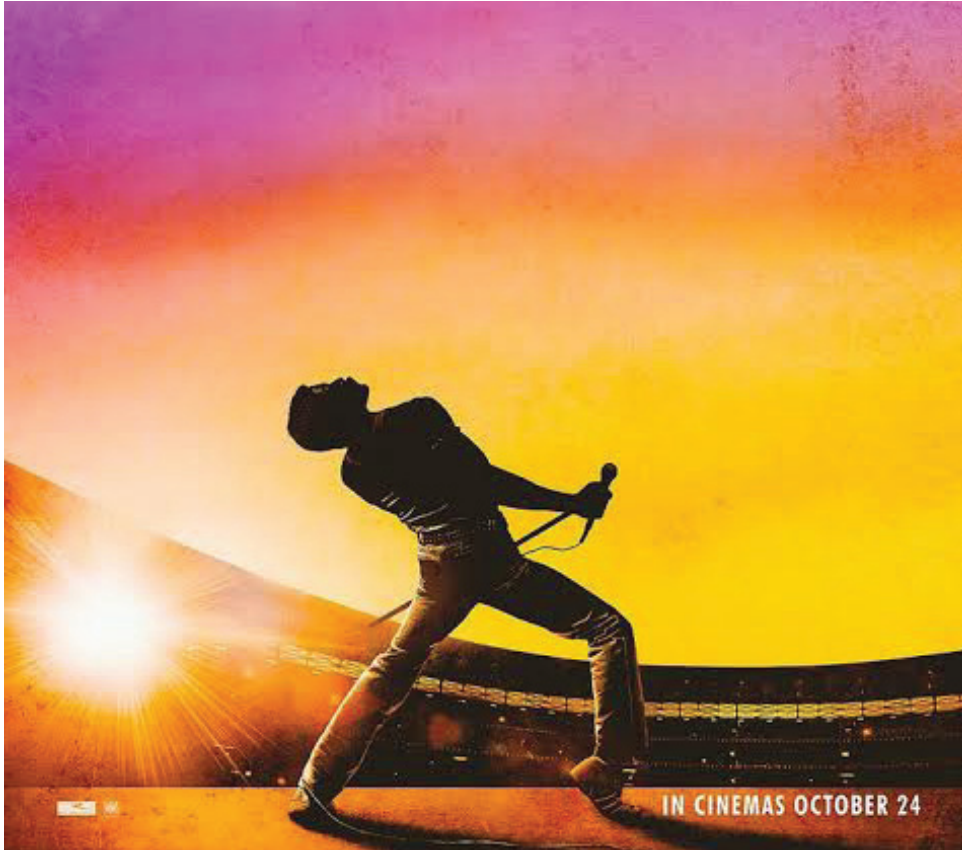
protestors demand that a professor who has molested a student be removed from his position and Mel is shown protesting all over campus.

Mel is also openly gay and in a relationship with the homicide detective, Niko Hamada, who was her girlfriend before Mel knew of her own magic and the case of her mother. Their relationship becomes strained after Mel's mother is murdered and three months later Niko leaves Mel. The new sisters also have a different ethnic background and different skin tones than other main characters, something that was not seen in the previous show.

This updated show promises all girls that they have a little magic within them and proves that sisterhood is worth more than anything. It should certainly be on your DVR list to watch this month.

Malek Shines as Mercury in Queen Biopic

By Michael Omoruan



A poster for the UK release of “Bohemian Rhapsody.” Photo courtesy of Flickr.

According to a report from Deadline, the biopic on the British rock band Queen was in its development stage for almost 10 years. Now the wait is finally over. The film, called “Bohemian Rhapsody” after one of the band’s most well-known songs, features Rami Malek in the lead role of Freddie Mercury. Best known for his Emmy award-winning portrayal of Elliot Alderson, an introverted cybersecurity engineer on USA Network’s “Mr. Robot”, Malek plays one of the most charismatic and legendary performers in rock ‘n’ roll history. He plays the role almost effortlessly, from Mercury’s humble beginnings as a baggage handler to his set at the Live Aid benefit concert.

Malek is joined by Ben Hardy as Roger Taylor; Joseph Mazzello as John Deacon; and Gwilym Lee as Brian May, who

were Mercury’s bandmates. A cameo appearance from Mike Myers is a golden nugget for Queen fans. In 1992, Myers starred in “Wayne’s World”, a motion picture spin-off of his “Saturday Night Live” character, Wayne Campbell. In the iconic scene, Campbell, along with his best friend Garth Algar, played by Dana Carvey, sing along to the Queen song “Bohemian Rhapsody” in Garth’s AMC Pacer. However, in the film “Rhapsody”, Myers plays EMI record executive Ray Foster.

In an interview Myers gave on the Late Show with Stephen Colbert, he described the character as “fictional,” based on a number of record label executives who doubted that anyone would enjoy the ambitious, revolutionary

sound of Bohemian Rhapsody. In this role, Myers crushes it doing what can be best described as Shrek if he were raised in Liverpool during the 1970s.

Ironically, this cast was not part of the original vision of the film. Instead, according to Deadline, big names like David Fincher, director of “Social Network” and “Gone Girl”, were. Eventually, 20th Century Fox settled on “X-Men: Apocalypse” director Bryan Singer to helm the film, which was plagued with production issues. After halting production due to his inability to arrive on set in London, Singer was replaced by “Eddie the Eagle” and “Rocketman” director, Dexter Fletcher for the remaining scenes. Although Singer still holds the title of director, Fletcher was given the executive producer credit.

Various audiences were on the edge of their seats after seeing the embodiment of timeless classics like “We Will Rock You” and the eponymous title song. The sound mixing and cinematography was impressive. The dazzling display of lights brought it all together and the Dolby theater speakers made it feel like a live performance was taking place.

The film brilliantly conveys the dark side of fame and fortune, as well as Freddie Mercury’s promiscuity. When Malek comes to terms with his AIDS diagnosis, the audience sees his true acting ability, as the vulnerability in his eyes is palpable. All of the band members were played exceptionally well, and one can definitely foresee Oscar nominations for Malek and costume designer Julian Day. The issues and conflicts that halted production on this film are barely noticeable. Anyone who’s a true a rock n’ roll fan or loves a great biopic will love this one.

New Halloween Is the Goriest Yet

By Hector Bello



Promotional poster for "Halloween." Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

Four decades after its original release in 1978, "Halloween" leaves fans with mixed feelings.

"Halloween" tells the story of sixty-year-old serial killer Michael Myers, who murdered his sister Judith in 1963 and was locked up until his escape in 1978. Since then, Myers continuously returns to his quiet hometown in Illinois to prey on new victims. In its 40-year run, the franchise has had tremendous success with 11 films about the infamous Michael Myers, played by actor Nick Castle. The first movie grossed a total of \$70 million worldwide.

The newest movie grossed a total of \$77.5 million in its first week, topping the box office for the month of October.

Michael Myers kills the most people in the 2018 film -- a total of 17. Throughout the movie, Myers sadistically terrorizes his victims. In one scene, he steps on his psychiatrist's head. In another, he pins one of his victims to the wall with a knife. He also destroys a man's jaw and takes out all the teeth of another man.

The gruesome, bloody scenes evoked skepticism in audience members like Lisa Sheridan, a student from the CUNY

Graduate Center. She commented: "Long on gore, short on plot. The movie serves its market 'date night movies for high schoolers'. I tend to fuse 'Friday the 13th' and 'Halloween' in my mind because they were so similar."

Other students appreciated the film's dark humor. Alana Johnson, a York College graduate, said, "my favorite scene was when the killer went into the house of the babysitter and the kid ran downstairs screaming that he saw the Boogeyman. That was funny."

Funny or not, the bloodshed is relentless. Michael Myers is shot and stabbed repeatedly in the movie but does not die. Spoiler alert: in the end, Myers' sister, Laurie Strode (played by Jamie Lee Curtis), locks him in a gas chamber inside her basement and burns him alive. Injured, she manages to make it out of the house alive after a final fight with the serial killer.

Her survival is an example of one way the film goes in a new direction. Most of the previous movies, with the exception of "Halloween III", show Strode running away from her brother, who wants to kill her after he murders her immediate family. However, this time their roles have been reversed, with Strode now much stronger and ready to defend herself against her brother.

The alteration satisfied some fans. "The new twist did a lot of justice to the franchise," said Jason Moreno. "It was a solid movie...[with] nothing stupid."

Johnson agreed, "I don't really like horror movies. However, it was a great movie and I don't regret coming."

To all the gore and horror fans, "Halloween" will not disappoint.

Contemporary Art Expresses Fantastical Reality

By Teresa Fanzo



Peter Hamlin's "Living Matrix Palace." Photo by Teresa Fanzo.

A new exhibit at Lehman College Art Gallery, *Castles in the Sky: Fantasy Architecture in Contemporary Art*, features architecture with a twist, conjuring an imaginative reality.

The show, which opened on October 13, 2018, highlights the work of artists from different backgrounds and aesthetics.

Lehman senior Eric Ramirez, a graphic design major, observed, "The artists are creating works that push the boundaries of architecture in ways that reflect their individual stories and life experiences".

Some artists chose to go to extreme lengths by making enormous sculptures while others created simple paintings

drenched with symbolism. Robert Hite's "River Tower, 2007" is an example of one of these huge sculptures. The impossible-seeming sculpture droops at the top, almost like a dying flower, representing the merging of fantasy and reality by standing tall despite its sad droopy quality.



Gustavo Acosta's "Eclipse." Photo by Teresa Fanzo.

Julie Langsam expresses this idea more directly in her painting, "Gropius Landscape (Master's House Kandinsky / Klee), 2014," which shows a modern house with a cloudy sky. The bottom half of the painting is abstract with three big blocks, each containing different patterns made up of smaller blocks. The colors in the bottom half are similar to the ones in the top, a movement which represents reality shifting into the abstract.

Laurent Chéhère's painting "Cabaret, 2017" is smaller, at 90 x 90 cm. The painting shows a floating house with an elephant hanging at the bottom. The artist brings her own twist by adding things to fit the theme of a carnival, such as a doll face and a lollipop as well as the elephant, likewise showing the merging of reality and fantasy.

The strange elements are what seem unreal here, the doll face especially, all turning out to be real things. The fantasy element comes with floating sky. This modestly sized painting also shows that within the exhibition space, not one size or type of piece overpowers another.

All the pieces in the gallery use architecture to represent the idea of the convergence of fantasy and reality, while fostering an atmosphere of wonder. The artists featured in the exhibit created pieces that portrayed the unimaginable, impractical, and inspiring designs

for architecture that tests their own boundaries and reality itself in ways that are almost shocking.

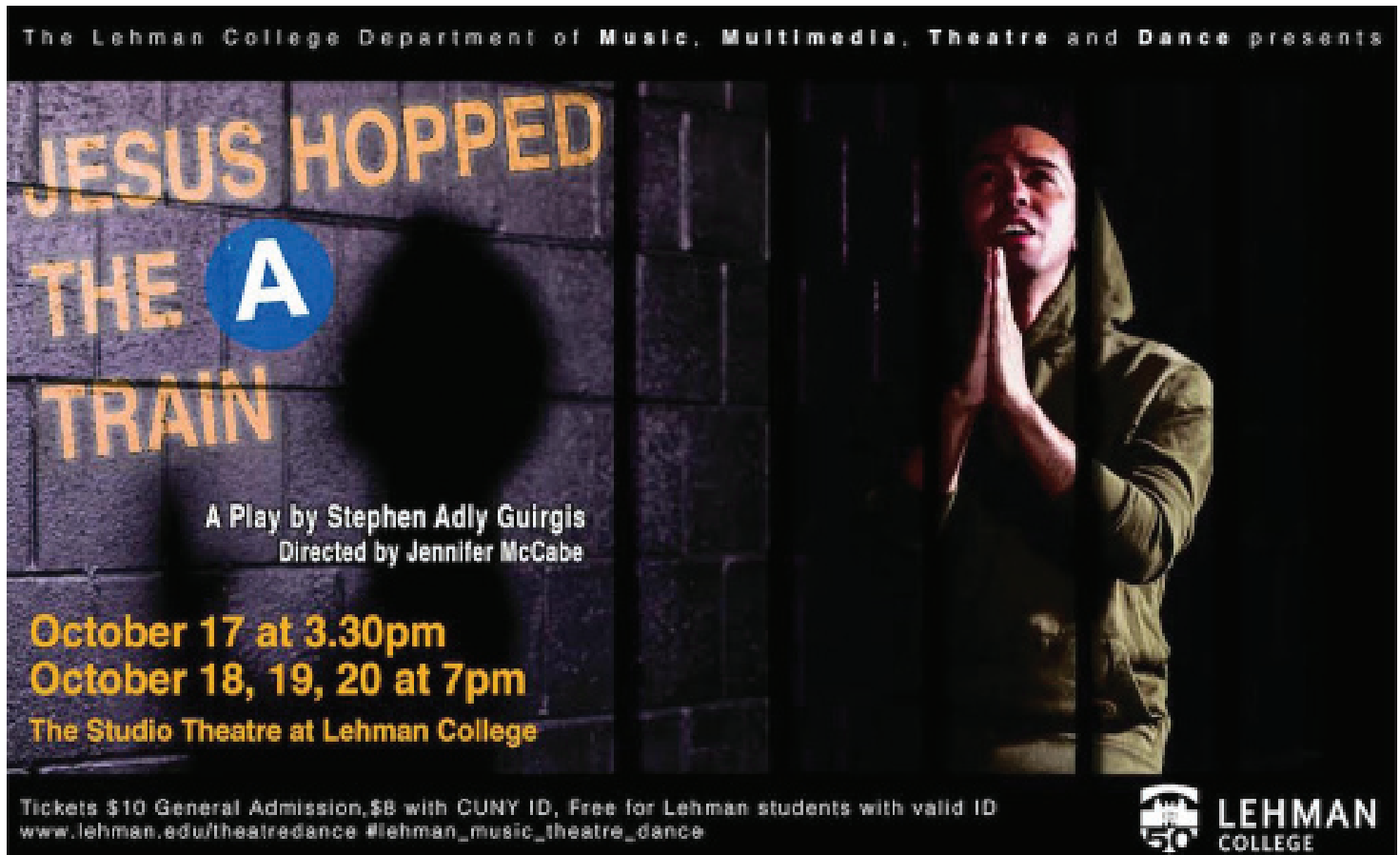
Lehman senior and art major Jadie Meprivert said, "Each piece is able to shine."



Robert Hite's "River Tower." Photo courtesy of Marie-Claire Milius.

Jesus Hopped the A Train Wows Audience

By Jonathan Rivera



Poster courtesy of Lehman Stages.

“Jesus Hopped the A Train” opened in the Studio Theatre Oct. 17. The production received a standing ovation once the curtain fell. The contemporary play was written by Stephen Adly Guirgis, who has been part of the New York theatre scene for the past 20 years. He won the 2015 Pulitzer for drama for “Between Riverside and Crazy”. This play is the third Guirgis original to grace a Lehman stage, following “Motherfucker with the Hat” in fall of 2013 and “Our Lady of 121 Street” in the winter of 2008.

Directed by Lehman Theatre professor Jennifer McCabe, the play entailed

moments of humor as well as addressing serious themes like disillusionment in society.

“Jesus Hopped the A Train” follows the

“Carter does an amazing job relaying the inner conflict of his character.”

— **Lehman senior Albert Huertas, a history major**

lives of two convicts on Rikers Island: Angel Cruz, played by Giovanni Ortiz, Lucius Jenkins, played by Jonathan Carter. Cruz is a young Puerto Rican man arrested for shooting a religious leader, Reverend Kim, who he believes to be the leader of a cult that brainwashed his best friend. Matters take an unexpected turn when Reverend Kim dies during surgery, and Cruz is charged with his death.

Jenkins on the other hand is a serial killer who has connected with his lord and savior, Jesus Christ. Cruz must come to terms with the consequences of his actions, while Jenkins fails to take

responsibility for his own. Both men are transformed by the sadistic Officer Valdez, played by Shantelle Watkins. She takes them on a journey that causes them to accept their circumstances.

Ortiz and Carter put on rousing performances as murderers. McCabe implemented serious themes, while incorporating levity and humor. The initial exchange between Jenkins and Cruz was tense yet humorous. Lou's positive spirit complemented Angel's pessimism in a comedic way. McCabe was able to direct the actors in a way that created a balance between the gravity

of the situation and the lighthearted moments. The audience was overcome with laughter when Valdez was attempting to break Jenkins spirit and Lou commented, "I have rights."

The revelation about Lou's fate resulted in gasps from the audience. Senior Albert Huertas, a history major, said, "I was shocked, I thought Lou was gonna beat it. Carter does an amazing job relaying the inner conflict of his character."

Lehman alumna Cynthia La Cruz Jimenez said, "It was so great! They did an amazing job." Albert Huertas

agreed: "I don't normally like plays, but this was freaking sweet!"

The eight student actors were transformed by their onstage experiences. Watkins said, "My journey has been impactful. I believe in [McCabe's] vision. She allowed us to grow as actors and as students."

Senior Christine D'Onofrio, who played Mary Jane Hanrahan, concurred: "This experience has been life changing and eye opening to me...[McCabe] is extremely good at constructive criticism. We respect and trust her."



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Is Dining Dollars a Wise Investment?

By Jonathan Rivera



Dining Dollars poster. Photo by Jonathan Rivera.

Lehman's Dining Dollars, a system first implemented in the fall of 2016, offers students tax-free meals and 5 percent back for every \$50 they deposit. The program has the potential to help alleviate the financial burden that many Lehman students experience. However, its two major incentives, tax-free dining and bonus dollars, may not be enough to convince the student body to buy into it.

Students can enroll by downloading the Blackboard Transact eAccounts app from the App Store or Google Play. They can then use their Lehman logins to access their Dining Dollars

accounts and add funds to their cards through any cafeteria cashier or at kiosk stations located on campus.

Director of Administrative Operations, Diane Clarke, stated that, "Students are able to save more from [tax-free] dining than the bonus dollars of the program." But while the program promotes savings of approximately \$150 every semester, many students are unaware of its existence.

"Never heard of it," said senior English major Nelson Fernandez.

The price, quantity, and quality of

the food offered at the cafeterias may explain the low enrollment. "It sucks," commented Crystal Jackson, a CUNY office assistant for the School of Education. "The quality isn't worth the price. They're overcharging us for garbage."

Lehman senior Alice Tharay, an English major, agreed: "[The food] is mediocre for the price we have to pay. [It's] worth less than we pay."

Junior Davidia Boykins, a biology major, said, "I feel that the food is delicious but overpriced."

The average price of a simple breakfast like coffee and a bagel with cream cheese can range between \$2.75 and \$5.50, while lunch and dinner costs from \$6.85 to \$11.75. As a result, students are upset that the quality of the meals is not worth the weekly financial burden. High prices and subpar quality cause students to purchase food off campus.

Another downside to Dining Dollars is that it requires students to use up the entirety of their funds before the end of the semester or forfeit them to the system. Senior Yesnuel Ramirez, a Computer Information Systems major, exclaimed, "That's unfair, man. That's actual dollars spent. Tangible money. If it doesn't roll over, where does it go?"

Lehman senior and film major Robert Velasquez disagreed: "It's a good program...If you forget your cash, you're able to use the card to buy some food."

Junior Waverliey Torres, a Biology major who has used Dining Dollars in the past, commented: "It's nothing amazing. I don't really eat at the café too often anymore, so I don't know how much I'm saving."

Lehman Counseling Center Increases Campus Presence with Group Initiatives

By Kathryn Fornier



The Lehman College Counseling Center logo. Photo courtesy of the Lehman website.

This semester, Lehman's Counseling Center has opened its doors to a wide variety of student groups and workshops in an effort to build a safe, supportive space for students.

Currently, there are 11 groups at the Counseling Center targeting mental health and wellness. Karen Smith Moore, the Director of the Counseling Center commented, "Students fill out a questionnaire and the counselors and I develop the groups based on survey feedback from students." She added, "I think everyone can benefit from self-care...wellness and taking care of their emotional well-being, so we try to develop a range of groups that will support students."

There is a Mindful Cooking and Eating group, hosted every Tuesday at noon, which teaches students how to decrease their spending on food while using stress free recipes, which are simple and easy to follow cooking instructions with

minimal ingredients. Attendees can also find ingredients for healthy meals at the group meetings. "The counseling center purchases the food and it is a part of a campaign and health and wellness initiative called Healthy Lehman" explained Moore.

On Wednesdays, mats for stretching and meditation are offered to those who attend the yoga group. Lehman senior Ismelda Liz, a Sociology major, commented, "They really set the mood, they dim the lights and put music. With the music and the aromatherapy it really comes together...It's really no-experience needed...[we do] stretches that are comfortable for people."

Counselor Hawa Niangado explained that the groups also serve as an opportunity to explore and build new relationships. She noted that the Art Therapy group she leads has some of the highest attendance numbers, attracting both returning members and newcomers. "The first year that I did this it was a lot of new students...but [students] have come back again," she said. "Because it was so successful, the following semester we decided to have two groups with one on Thursday and one on Friday."

The other groups offered are the Meditation Group, Worry Warriors, Digital Media Therapy, Healthy U, Keeping Your Cool, Multicultural Group, Stress Less, and U Connect. Their availability on campus helps students manage the expectations of their home lives, friends, and even themselves.

This is important given statistics indicating that student mental health

is an increasing issue on campuses nationally. According to a 2017 Healthy Minds survey, 94 percent of 8,000 first-year students with depression from 48 campuses reported that their mental health difficulties had impaired their academic performance.

Students have a lot of stressors to deal with that can be triggers of depression. In a 2017 article "Depression and College Students" for the journal Healthline, Michael Kerr writes, "Many students are unprepared for university life. Today's students face high debt. They also have fewer job prospects after graduation than previous generations."

David Rosenberg, a professor of psychiatry and neuroscience, agrees a 2018 article for The Conversation titled, "1 in 5 college students have anxiety or depression. Here's why". He states that of the main causes of depression and anxiety, "social media and technology are among the most dangerous of these factors. Excessive use of each tends to engender impaired social interactions and an increased sense of isolation."

To combat these factors, Moore said, "We at the Counseling Center do all kinds of things in individual sessions, group sessions, class presentations, and workshops arranged to give awareness to mental health topics. We also do outreach and campus wide events." She added, "All our services are free and confidential and in a safe environment."

Jasmine Galloway, a sophomore psychology major at Lehman who uses the counseling center services, said, "I find the groups offered to be super helpful and I recommend people should at least visit once."

The background is a solid yellow color. It is decorated with several small, five-pointed stars in red and dark blue. There are also four stylized pencils, each with a red body and a light blue eraser, positioned around the text. One pencil is in the top right, one in the top left, one in the bottom left, and one in the bottom right, all pointing towards the center.

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