

2001-2002

f I V E Y

The Literary Magazine of The 52nd Street Project

**fIVEY
Goes
to
Work**



||| Volume 4 |||

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Dream Jobs

by Julie Feldman-Abe, Editor

If you could have any job you wanted, what would it be? For this issue of *Fivey*, we asked the Project kids and adult partners to dream up work they'd love to do in the future. Although agreeing wholeheartedly with many kids' first choices, we declared jobs at the 52nd Street Project off-limits. They were way too close to home, plus we needed to stave off competition for at least a few more years. Instead, the pairs traipsed off to the far reaches of the city (even out to the World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. headquarters in Connecticut) to meet other people passion-

ate about their work. Thanks to the generosity of these fabulous Project Pals, the kids spent hours checking out "lock-down" with a homicide detective; trying on hats at the milliner's; editing video in a post-production house; drawing with a cartoonist; watching a dance tour rehearsal; discussing films with a screenwriter; and hanging out on the Wall Street trading floor. In the compelling interviews to follow, they break down some myths about fighting crime and fighting fires; studying rocks and playing rock; managing restaurants and other peoples' money; and protecting intellectual property and safeguarding justice. Read on to hear some options and realities for those pursuing fame and fortune in performance or professional sports. These kids have the inside scoop.

Happy Job Hunting!



Julie
Feldman-Abe,
editor

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Many thanks to the volunteer career interviewees who made this project possible: Taro Alexander, Samantha Bishopp, Trish Cooke, Mia Critelli, Dr. Betsy Cropper, Lauren A. Dienes-Middlen, Mark Dore, Linda Fairstein, Nancy Giles, Thea Grant, Tamara Jenkins, Michael Kehr, Tito Landrum, Cate Mowell, Jose Ramon Rosario, Victor Rojas, Judy Schiller, Veronica Stigeler, James Stevenson, Christine Tappen, Laura Valeroso, David Zayas.

Why My Goal Is Baseball

by Adrian Zambrano

We (Adrian and Joanna) went to go meet a baseball player. His name is Tito Landrum. He was a Major League baseball player in the 1980's. He played for the Baltimore Orioles and the St. Louis Cardinals. We met him at the Moonrock Diner, and talked for over an hour. We also had trouble finding him because of his name. We thought he was Hispanic, but he was African-American. He was a strong man with a great sense of humor. Now he works as a physical therapist, and he is also an assistant coach for NYU's baseball team.

Mr. Landrum was a great man, because famous people are usually sarcastic, but not him. He was very generous (he paid for our food). He let us see his championship rings from when he played for St. Louis and the Orioles in the World Series. They were heavy and gold, with a lot of diamonds in them.

Mr. Landrum has two daughters who are really smart. One is 19 and the other is 21. He is from many different places, because his dad was in the Air Force. Mr. Landrum said he was fortunate to have had his career, because in New Mexico, where he went to high school, he did

not play baseball at all. Baseball and track were at the same time, so he had to choose. He chose track! One time, a friend of his asked him to play in the summer baseball program. A scout saw him and he got a contract to play for the minor leagues association teams with the Cardinals, Pirates, and Cincinnati Reds. So he chose the Cardinals. He played in the minor leagues from October 1972 through 1980.

Mr. Landrum played in the "pros" starting in 1980. His first game was against the Dodgers. When he grounded out, he was very scared. But everyone gave him a standing ovation, because they were happy seeing a new player. Later, he played with Cal Ripken, Ozzie Smith, Eddie Murray, Gray Templeton, and Willie McGee. They all helped him physically and mentally. He wanted to be like them.

I asked Mr. Landrum what would be the best way to start my baseball career. "Number one is to stay in school. Number two," Tito Landrum said, "practice as



Alex Kehr as a baseball player.

hard as you can." He said that you should stay in college for four years, for the baseball program. You have to communicate with people. You have to understand other people's walks of life. There are lots of different kinds of people in a team.

I asked Mr. Landrum if he uses his playing methods in coaching. He said yes. He said it's important to stay positive, and learn from all the mistakes you have made. I asked him if he had any injuries. Yes, he said, at the end of his career he ruptured a disc, and so that's why his career ended.

Then I asked Mr. Landrum what it was like hitting a home run in the World Series. He said it was a great change in his career, because for the first time, cameras were flashing at him. Everyone was having an argument about where the ball hit, some people said it hit the upper deck, others said it hit middle deck. He didn't care where the ball hit. At least he had a good at-bat.

Who was Mr. Landrum's favorite player? Willie Mays. Then I asked him who his favorite players are now. He said Ken Griffey Junior, Barry Bonds, and Derek Jeter. I asked him what was it like, playing with Cal Ripken? He said it helped him a lot, and gave him courage.

For me, I will take all the advice Mr. Landrum told me. He inspired

me to stay in school. He said even if you strike out, you can keep on trying and trying—just don't be mad at yourself. He inspired me to be a baseball player—if someone else wants to be a baseball player, I hope they can be inspired by him, too, because he's a great man. f



"Number one is to stay in school. Number two," Tito Landrum said, "practice as hard as you can."

*Drawing by
Adrian
Zambrano.*

And Justice For All

By Osage Lewis-Ashley

One of my career choices in life is to be a lawyer, so when we had to choose a career for an article for *Fivey*, I immediately thought about interviewing a lawyer. When my Smart Partner, Stephen Graham, suggested interviewing Linda Fairstein, I didn't know who she was, but when my mom overheard me saying the name, she got very excited. My mom doesn't get excited about many people, but the name Linda Fairstein really got her. You

see, my mom likes a lot of mysteries, police stuff, etc., and her mom was the first woman to be a cop in her country. Linda Fairstein is a famous prosecutor. She runs the Sex Crimes unit of the District Attorney's office in Manhattan, and she is also a writer. Well, you know the rest: I HAD to interview Linda Fairstein!



Osage Lewis
as a lawyer.

Stephen (a.k.a. "MC Stevie G") picked me up after school and we went to downtown Manhattan to the Criminal Court Building at 100 Centre Street. We

had to go through metal detectors, and a couple of Court Officers asked me if Stephen was my lawyer. We rode the elevator up to Linda Fairstein's office and she met us right away. Stephen introduced us. She was a very interesting, light-hearted, resourceful woman in her early fifties. She seemed like a person who could handle her business. But she seemed compassionate, not mean-spirited: if you had a problem, she would understand. I liked her.

Linda had many motives for becoming a successful lawyer. When she was younger, her biggest influence was the J.F.K. inauguration speech. The line that was prominent in her mind was, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." Fairstein was about fifteen years old when she first heard that speech. She continued, "That made me start thinking at an early age that I wanted to do public service for a little while, and law is one of the great opportunities, both as a prosecutor and as a defense attorney, to do public service.

"Public defenders and legal aid attorneys aren't paid, like Johnnie Cochran or the really high-powered defense guys. So it's a good way to start, and do something for society," said Fairstein. Fairstein went to an all-girls' college, where they showed women in different lights: women doing the same jobs as men, including law. Her professors showed her that women could do anything as long as they stayed focused on the task at hand. At that time the feminist movement was picking up momentum, and a lot of the "manly jobs" were obtainable. But in the career of law, a lot of women were not prominent figures. Seeing the injustice, Linda Fairstein fought, and was successful in achieving her goal of working for the District Attorney's office.

Listening to what Linda Fairstein's motives were, I could relate to her. I feel that in the justice system people are sometimes not given

the fair opportunity to prove themselves. I want to be a defense attorney because I want to understand law, then be that person who can help the underdog.

Also, there are not enough black people in the law department, so I want to change that. One defense attorney that I look up to is Johnnie Cochrane, because he helps the people who look like they don't even have a chance of winning a case, and also because he is a successful black lawyer.

Linda Fairstein has been a sex crimes lawyer for thirty years. She has supervised thousands of cases, of which she personally has tried "forty or fifty." One of the most famous cases was the "Preppie" murder case. The case was about a rich preppie kid from the East Side of Manhattan, Robert Chambers, who took his girlfriend, Jennifer Leven, to Central Park and murdered her. He claimed she was killed by accident during "rough sex." Linda Fairstein did her best to bring justice to this case, and she succeeded. Robert Chambers went to jail for more than ten years.

One reason that Linda Fairstein is so good at what she does is that she knows how to prepare her cases. The first thing she does in preparing a case is to work on the closing argument—the final argument before the jury. "From the time you start working on the case," she explained, "you really start putting it together, almost like pieces of a puzzle, and building it to make it better so you can make your strongest argument at the end."

As an example, she mentioned a recent case, the sexual assault and murder of an old woman who lived in Harlem. In that case, the murderer left fingerprints and DNA evidence. Arguing the case before a jury, the prosecutor working under Ms. Fairstein reconstructed how the crime was committed, using photographs and scientific evidence. These factors all played into the closing argument. Then at the end, the prosecutor reminded the jury again about the victim: "Don't lose sight of this lady who died, who should have just been able to live a good life, and not die violently."

I asked Linda Fairstein why she chose to become a prosecutor rather than a defense attorney. She responded, "I really felt—and I still feel

today—that a prosecutor's main responsibility is to see that justice is done. It's not to convict people; it's not to put people in jail. You first have to look at every case and see that the right person is charged with the crime, and you have to look at every case and make sure that the evidence was collected properly, and see what the end result should be. A lot of people think that prosecutors just put people in jail. I have freed as many people as I have prosecuted, and I'm every bit as proud of that." So I think a prosecutor can do both. She pointed out that defense attorneys are paid to do whatever their clients tell them to do. This is a good thing if the client is innocent, but what if it's somebody who really belongs in jail?

As an example, Ms. Fairstein spoke again about the Harlem rape/murder case: "The guy on trial killed an eighty-one year-old woman. Broke into her apartment during the night, strangled her with the leash of her dog. She was eighty-one; she liked music; she liked her radio, her music; she liked flowers; she never hurt anybody in the world. I think this guy should go to jail for a very long time. His lawyer knows he's guilty: there's DNA, there are fingerprints, there's more evidence than I've ever had in a case. And I wouldn't want to be in the shoes of this defense attorney. Because I don't think it's a game; I don't think it's about getting him off; I think he's a guy who belongs in jail. So for me it's a more comfortable place to be because you can do both sides of things."

Linda Fairstein is a groundbreaking lawyer. She has defended the rights of women and has successfully opened the door for a lot of female lawyers. She is well respected, internationally, by both men and women.

After meeting Linda Fairstein, I realize what being a prosecutor feels like. Prosecutors have the power to put people in jail, and to keep people out. Linda Fairstein's job is not easy. She is not only a prosecutor, but runs her own division, so she has more power than the average lawyer who works for the state. Although I admire Ms. Fairstein greatly, I still want to be a defense attorney because people need to be defended. It is easy to point fingers at someone, but if people are being accused of something that they did not do, then they need backup. f

I want to be a defense attorney because I want to understand law, then be that person who can help the underdog.

The Project Takes Over W.W.E.

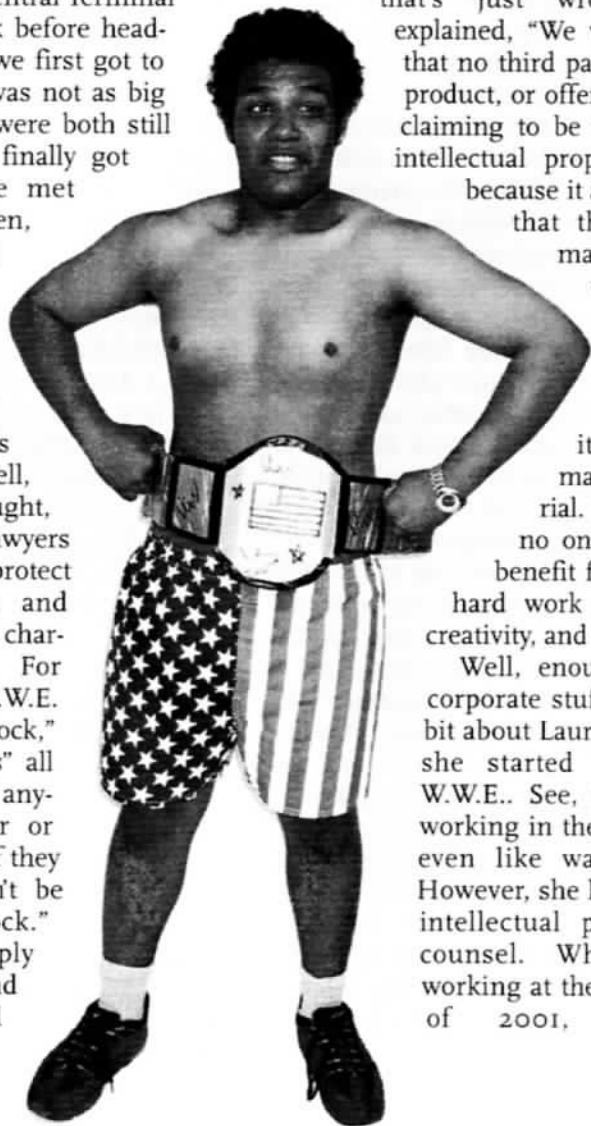
By Noel Polanco

Well, not really. But we did pay them a visit. I knew a lot about the World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (W.W.E.), formerly known as the World Wrestling Federation Entertainment, Inc., but I wanted to learn more about the inside world of this intriguing company. My Smart Partner George and I decided to pay a little visit to W.W.E. headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut. George and I rode our bikes that morning to Grand Central Terminal and met on the sidewalk before heading to Stamford. When we first got to W.W.E. headquarters it was not as big as we expected, but we were both still very excited. When we finally got inside the building we met Lauren A. Dienes-Middlen, a lawyer that works for the W.W.E. Her exact title is "Intellectual Property Associate Counsel." Now you're probably asking yourself "What in the world is intellectual property?" Well, see, basically it's a thought, idea, or trademark. The lawyers in Lauren's department protect those thoughts, ideas, and trademarks, like a certain character, story line, etc. For instance, before the W.W.E. could introduce "The Rock," they had to do "searches" all over the world to see if anybody had that character or something similar to it. If they did, the W.W.E. wouldn't be able to use "The Rock." Trademarks are simply logos, stuff like The 52nd Street Project's "Fivey and

Twoey." For the W.W.E., it's the W.W.E. "scratch logo"—the letters drawn in a distinctive scratchy style.

You're probably saying to yourself "Why would the W.W.E. want to protect this stuff?" Well, I asked Lauren and she said "Not only for financial reasons, but also the W.W.E. cares about their consumers!" I sort of agree. See, if someone is out there using false logos and false W.W.E. products and selling them, that's just wrong. As Lauren explained, "We want to make sure that no third party starts to make a product, or offer wrestling services, claiming to be us. [Protecting our intellectual property] is important because it alerts the consumer that the product is not made by us. We don't want someone to buy something, thinking it's our product, and getting hurt, because it turns out to be made of inferior material. It also ensures that no one else can unfairly benefit financially from the hard work of our company's creativity, and our Superstars."

Well, enough about all that corporate stuff. Let's talk a little bit about Lauren before and after she started working for the W.W.E.. See, before she started working in the W.W.E. she didn't even like watching wrestling. However, she has always been an intellectual property associate counsel. When she started working at the W.W.E. in the fall of 2001, she had to



Noel Polanco
as the master of
the universe.



W.W.E.
Intellectual
Property
Associate
Counsel Lauren
A. Dienes-
Middlen.

start watching wrestling, to see if they were introducing a new character or logo or idea. Part of her job is to be up-to-date.

After George and I finished interviewing Lauren, she gave us a tour of the headquarters, which was probably the coolest thing that day. We first saw the cafeteria (the food looked really tasty) and then we went to the roof. It had a great view and a cool patio (good for the summer, bad for the winter). As we were strolling through the headquarters we passed Vince's office (he was nowhere in sight) and lastly we went to the gym which was well-equipped, indeed. Lauren informed us that some wrestlers work out there but mostly Vince works out a lot. This gym was huge! This is pretty funny because when we first saw the head quarters from the outside we thought it was pretty small. There's a lesson to be learned in this: looks can be deceiving.

To wrap all of this up, I think that this job "totally reeks of awesomeness" (a catchphrase of Edge, Lauren's favorite wrestler). In Lauren's own words, "the feel to the company is very young-spirited." You know, there's nothing better in life than getting up in

the morning and wanting to go to work because you know it's a good job, and it's fun, and it's what you want to do. I could see myself working in a place like this.

In doing this interview, I realized that I don't know everything about wrestling. I didn't realize how much Lauren and the rest of the staff are devoted to making W.W.E. successful. In the ring, there's dedication. Backstage, there's dedication. Even the mail-carrier we passed in the hallway was dedicated in his own quiet way. See, the hard work and dedication made this corporation successful. What I'm trying to say is if you're dedicated, you could be successful in anything. World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. is dedicated, so they're successful. The Arizona Diamondbacks were dedicated, so they won the World Series. Director of Education Julie Feldman-Abe was dedicated in finishing her dissertation, so now she can call herself DOCTOR Feldman-Abe. Maybe YOU should

try to reach your potential, and then you'll be successful, too. And that, my friend, is true. "It's true, it's true" (as my good friend W.W.E. Superstar Kurt Angle says). f



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Taking Pictures

By Alejandra Rodriguez



Jennifer Jimenez as a photographer.

Photography to me is capturing a moment in time that will never return. It shows happiness and sadness and other emotions. I like looking at pictures and making stories out of them. I like admiring people and objects. I don't know why I like to do this. I find it amusing.

I have always been excited about photography, so I decided to interview Judy Schiller, a professional photographer, at her home. Judy is a music photographer. She takes pictures of famous musicians, for example Aaliyah, Cassandra Wilson, Ron Carter, and Shade of Soul.

Originally Judy started out as a painter but became interested in photography. She felt it was difficult to make a living as a painter. She discovered that photography combined her interest in visual arts and her ambitions for a career. Judy graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1981 with a B.A. in photography. She worked as an assistant for a few years before she went out on her own.

First, Judy was a fashion photographer, but felt the people in the industry were too serious. Judy is a very joyful person. She likes to have fun at her photo shoots. Her passion and appreciation for music led her to musicians. One of her clients, musician Rick Margitza, described her enthusiasm on her website www.fotoqueen.com: "She got me to take my shirt off, and she made me laugh."

Judy has been working as a music photographer since 1988. She isn't really picky about what type of music artist she photographs. I don't think that it would matter to me either. Taking pictures of musicians isn't all about the "looks." It consists of different things such as revealing personalities, emotions, and how they feel about their music. I think Judy's work is very successful because she does just that. I love her work. **f**

My favorite shot in her portfolio is of Cassandra Wilson. When I look at the picture I see her being relaxed and being herself, not putting on a show. That makes me feel relaxed and like I don't have to put on a show. Looking at Judy's website, I found I'm not the only one who thinks this way. Verna Gillis, from *Soundscape*, says that "Judy Schiller's photos are intimate, moody, beautiful. The subjects of her photos are obviously remarkably relaxed and comfortable in her presence and the results are classic photos of these great musical personalities."

Judy is not trying to make the person look perfect. Sometimes artists appear in pictures that make them look perfect, but nothing and nobody is perfect. Sometimes artists appear in photographs looking glamorous, false, with a lot of make-up, not even showing a dot on their face. The picture looks unnatural, as if they don't want to be themselves. When we see the person for real it's a different look. But Judy is not trying to make the person look perfect. Another quote from her website: "These photos are pure pictures!!" says Ron Carter.

I participated in a one-week photography class with The 52nd Street Project. The class went on trips exploring how to take pictures and how to look at pictures. On one photo shoot day, Judy came in and gave us a little lesson on how to be a better photographer. She turned one of the rooms of the clubhouse into a studio. She brought lights, cameras, and created a studio by pulling down a big sheet of white paper and using it as a background.

Working with Judy was so much fun that it made me realize that if I do pursue a profession in photography, I wouldn't be as challenged as I want to be. I like to be challenged and there is something about being

challenged that makes me feel not empty inside. I like to have fun in life, but fun has its limits. I am used to hard work and that makes me feel that I am growing. I need that. It's not that photography is not difficult. It is demanding. Carrying the equipment, taking the right picture, going into the dark room and the developing process are all demanding. I just don't want photography to be my number one priority. I want to be a pediatrician.

I would like to thank Judy Schiller for letting me interview her and being so generous and enthusiastic. My experience with Judy gave me a lot to think about. Before our interview, I was really confused about what I wanted to do. She helped me to realize that photography is something I would like to fall back on or keep as a hobby.

What does a music photographer and a pediatrician have in common? They both love people. f

She likes to have fun at her photo shoots.



Judy Schiller, Lorraine Calderon, and Alejandra Rodriguez at the Project photo shoot.

Making Movies

By Jennifer Jimenez

Tamara Jenkins is the writer and director of *Slums of Beverly Hills*, a somewhat autobiographical movie about her family and her teenage years. My Smart Partner Susan McGinnis and I rented the video, then paid a visit to Tamara's apartment on the Lower East Side where she lives and works. I wanted to learn about the life of a writer and a director.

Tamara's been a writer since she was very young. She showed me tons of different journals she kept growing up, and even one she keeps now. She told me that when she was a teenager, every single day she used to write what happened in her journal. She has a separate notebook she keeps for her movie ideas.

Tamara showed me the script and the storyboard from *Slums of Beverly Hills*. A storyboard is a thick book that has every single camera shot that makes up a movie. It

was amazing to see every single shot of a movie drawn out. Tamara told me that every movie has a story board. I thought they just turned the camera on and started filming. But in reality, everything, even the tiniest moment, is planned out. To create one minute in a movie costs about one thousand dollars (for the setting, the actors, the cameras, the effects, etc.). That's why writers and directors have to be extremely organized, like Tamara.

Tamara Jenkins went to NYU Film School. Prior to film school, she was more interested in writing than in making movies. Unlike many of her fellow students, she hardly ever went to the movies as a kid, and didn't even have a still camera growing up. This is because her family was somewhat struggling economically. However, she was involved in theater. She would create her own shows, which



SLUMS
of
beverly hills

Editing Films

by Jonathan Villanueva

eventually made her interested in film work.

While at NYU, Tamara strived against the odds. It was intimidating being a woman in film school because the guys were like "film jocks." They had the nice cameras and high tech equipment. Tamara felt like NYU was a school for rich kids, and she was not that. For example, after leaving Beverly Hills, her oldest brother (who isn't in the film) adopted her

I thought they just turned the camera on and started filming. But in reality, everything, even the tiniest moment, is planned out.

because her dad kept moving around and wasn't financially fit. It also seemed to Tamara that a lot of the kids in her film classes were only interested in "the business" while she just enjoyed doing her "little art works."

Tamara is a one of a kind writer and director. Her movies are realistic. A lot of movies today are about the Mafia or secret agents, things that are not believable. People can actually relate Tamara's writing to their own lives.

They can digest it. For example, I can relate to the character in *Slums* as a teenager growing up thinking how dysfunctional your family really is.

Tamara was in the same situation as many inner-city children today. She wasn't very experienced, but once she tried her work, it turned out meaningful. What I learned while interviewing Tamara was it takes a lot of persistence to do what she does. When you're making movies, all you are doing is living and breathing your movie, just like when you're in school, you're living and breathing school. Making movies is definitely not fast money. f

Movie editing was not what I thought it was. Editing requires long hours in a cramped room watching the same takes over and over again. The chances of making it big in editing are slim. "You can make a living," said Trish Cooke. She has worked on many films, most of which were for the Coen brothers. She has worked on films like *Fargo* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Both are major Hollywood films.

Editing nowadays is done on an AVID, which is a big master computer that is linked to two televisions. On this, every take of every scene is loaded into the program. The AVID allows you to control the scene or takes you want. Then you can cut and paste them wherever you please. The AVID can do much more than that though, it can also have features that can cut down your editing time a lot. Without an AVID it would take you days to edit a couple scenes. You would literally look at every frame of actual film and cut with a knife, then paste it where you wanted it to be. This method is really outdated.

Editing jobs can be high-paying. An editor working for Steven Spielberg probably makes \$250,000 a movie. An editor for an independent film can make as low as a couple hundred. If you want to get into editing for the money, don't. You will most likely be disappointed. Get into it because you like film.

If you want to get into editing for the money, don't. You will most likely be disappointed. Get into it because you like film.

I personally would not become an editor. I have too much energy to sit down in a room for hours watching the same take over and over and over. Editing is a good job though. It can pay substantially and if you like film, it can be your dream job. Everyone has their own thing, editing is not mine. f

Drawing Cartoons

By Justin Aponte and Ed Vassallo

Justin and Ed's trip began with a drive up the Merrit Parkway to Cos Cob, Connecticut. After a couple of wrong turns and a solid hour of hip-hop and R+B, they arrived at James Stevenson's house. Before they got down to business, James gave them a tour of his lovely house and the beautiful grounds. Justin was particularly fond of the pond, and almost fell in. They went to his studio, which was over his garage, and began the interview.

Justin began with the most important question, "Do you like your job?" James did not hesitate. He said he loves it, and has always loved it. He was a gag-man who wrote jokes early in his career, then switched to being a cartoonist for *New Yorker* magazine. He also writes and illustrates his own children's books, a few of which he gave Justin as a gift. Justin is an avid drawer, and was very excited by the books.

James went to an encouraging school where he could try everything, and found the job he always wanted to do. Justin then asked if it took practice. James answered, "If

it wasn't hard, everyone would do it." He said that drawing is a release, and Justin agreed. He told Justin that it's about really looking at everything you see. After that, it gets easier. He said he can't just draw an elephant, but if he's looking at one, it comes to life. You must find out from the elephant what it looks like, and not impose your own thoughts. As James so eloquently put it, "A made-up head of lettuce is far worse than a real head of lettuce!!"

James also told us about a trip he took cross-country, and showed us a book of all the different salt and pepper shakers he saw at every place they stopped to eat. These illustrations brought a big smile to Justin's face, as he too draws everything he sees. Justin asked the practical question, "How do you draw?" James said he uses a hard pen with a hard line, so it doesn't run. Then he can paint watercolors over the illustration. He stated that the hard part was to draw expression—to make people laugh and cry, or feel what the character feels. Justin said that he can't make characters walk, and James told Justin to "never say never." He explained that you use the arm motion and leg motion of an actual walk. Draw loosely, and put your feelings into it. Like a sport, you can't do it if you think about the moves. You have to let go and do it. After one quick lesson Justin was drawing characters in motion. Justin's respect and admiration for James shot through the roof and a friendship was immediately formed.

On the drive back home Ed realized that he had a *New Yorker* date book, and they rifled through it looking for a Stevenson original. Sure enough there it was, a group of executives sitting in what appears to be a hot tub in Hell, with this quote underneath "It's an amazing coincidence, isn't it, that we all served on the same board of directors?" f

You must find out from the elephant what it looks like, and not impose your own thoughts.



Drawing courtesy of James Stevenson.

The Day I Met Detective Rosario

By Joseph Mohamed

An N.Y.P.D. homicide detective—what did I expect? A guy with a suit and tie and a long black trench coat. But when I arrived on the scene at the 13th Precinct to meet detective Jose Ramon Rosario, I saw a guy wearing faded boot-cut jeans, cowboy boots that were pointed like an arrow, a bright white dress shirt and a double breasted blue blazer. He had a round face and big brown eyes. He was bald with short and puffy bushes of hair on the sides of his head with a touch of gray just like his moustache.

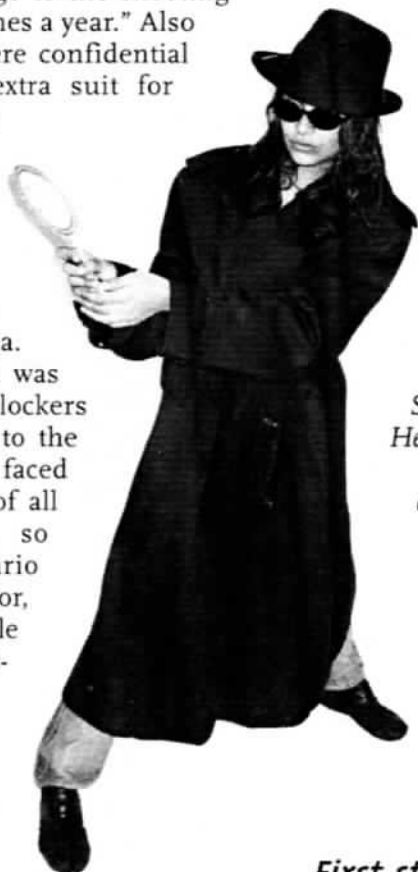
After I met Officer Rosario, he brought us on a tour. First stop was the holding cell where you get fingerprinted and put through the system. It was a small room with video cameras, a few computers and two cells. Before you bring in the person you arrested, the officer must release himself of all weapons. And the door must always be open.

The next stop was the “dorm” where Officer Rosario slept when he did overnights. It looked like a little jail cell about 10 feet wide by 11 feet long with two single beds and one bunk bed. The room had dirty gray walls and blacked-out windows. Officer Rosario said, “When I work over nights, I try to get a single bed first. If that’s taken, I try to get the bottom bunk.”

When we exited the dorm, we checked out the lockers for all the cops. Officer Rosario, unlike everyone else, had three lockers because of his seniority of 22 years on the force. In his first locker, he kept his Smith and Wesson academy gun and his service revolver which was bought by his mother upon his graduation. When he showed us the guns, he had to remove all six rounds. The guns held weight. One of his guns was a 25 Barreta, which he used when he worked for undercover narcotics. To make it look like a street gun he ripped

the rubber grip off and replaced it with cardboard and newspaper and wrapped it with tape, instead of leaving it like a flossy new gun out of the box. When we asked him how often he fired his gun he told us, “We are required to go to the shooting gallery at least two times a year.” Also in the first locker were confidential paperwork and an extra suit for when he worked over nights. His second locker, five lockers to the left and turned at a 90-degree angle, provides Officer Rosario with a changing area. The way this worked was that all the rest of the lockers had their back sides to the wall, but this locker faced sideways at the end of all the other lockers, so when Officer Rosario opened the locker door, he would have a little vestibule which created a changing area.

Officer Rosario’s third locker, which was closest to the door, contained his patrolman’s uniform, more suits, and big yellow boots distributed to him by the N.Y.P.D. in order to look over the debris from the World Trade Center incident, that was delivered to Fresh Kills Landfill in Staten Island. However, Officer Rosario was not able to use those boots because he was chosen to join the F.B.I.’s Joint Terror Task Force (J.T.T.F.), and he would be wearing a suit,



Shevonne Hernandez as a detective.

First stop was the holding cell where you get fingerprinted and put through the system.

It looked like an insane asylum room, because of the bright white walls and bright light.

tie and shoes, instead of old clothes and big yellow boots.

After we left the locker room, we went upstairs to the offices. Officer Rosario said, "My day starts when I call the office from home to find out what's going on." He showed us the new way to reserve mug shots, which is to scan them into a computer. Then he brought us into the interrogation room where they question the suspects. As I looked through the one-way mirror, I saw a table and two chairs in a 12 foot by 8 foot room. It looked like an insane asylum room, because of the bright white walls and bright light.

When we left the interrogation room, I noticed that there was someone in the upstairs holding cell. Officer Rosario told us that he was a bootlegger selling bootleg CD's, and had violated a "quality of life" crime. We left the offices to tour the rest of the 13th Precinct, which runs from 20th to 21st Streets. Half of the building houses the Police Academy.

We left the precinct and headed to the coffee shop. I asked Officer Rosario if he carries his gun with him when he's off duty. He said, "No, because it becomes a hassle when I go to costume fittings." (Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you Officer Rosario is also an actor. He has appeared in many films, TV shows, commercials, and off-Broadway shows, most recently at the Pan-Asian Repertory Company, where he got really good reviews.)

He told us that when he went to a costume fitting the designer was measuring him and she felt the gun and said, "Excuse me, sir, you have a gun on you." Then he had to explain how he was a cop and there's no need to call the police. When we sat down at the coffee shop, I "interrogated" Officer Rosario.

Q How long have you been a police officer, and what got you interested in the first place?

A For more than 20 years. I needed a job and had been a sergeant at the age of 17 for the Marines in Vietnam. Since I was also

an actor, I became an undercover cop right away. After being an undercover narcotics cop for two years, I made detective.

Q What has been the major event of your career as an officer?

A Working as a homicide detective, because homicide is the ultimate crime. In the homicide detective office there is a sign on the wall that says, "We Work for God" and that gives satisfaction when we get the guy.

Q How has your work changed since September 11th?

A I was in the process of retiring but not now. It's become personal because I've been in the eye of the storm since day one. My son's best friend's father was lost and I've been very moved by the destruction.

Q What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

A Helping people.

Q What is the most difficult aspect of your job?

A When I have to notify someone that his or her family member has been a victim of a homicide.

Q How do you combine your police career and your acting career?

A I juggle them.

Q Have you ever had to arrest anyone or otherwise "deal with" a situation while working as an actor?

A No.

Q Do you ever work as a technical advisor in film and TV?

A I once helped train Jennifer Esposito before a movie in which she was playing a cop.

Q What's next for you as a cop?

A More work with the F.B.I. and then retirement.

Q What's next for you as an actor?

A I have to get up real early tomorrow to catch a van to New Jersey to shoot a Dunkin' Donuts commercial.

Now that I look at it, a cop's job is really hard and takes a lot of effort. It's not what I expected it to be. I thought it would be a lot more like TV. But this was real—real robbery, real crimes, real murder. **f**

A Police Officer Who Plays a Criminal on TV

By Jayme Rosado

While watching *Oz* one night, which is an H.B.O. television show about what life is like in jail, I saw a Project volunteer, David Zayas, on it. I was really excited that I had seen him. Once I saw him, I wanted to meet him. So what a coincidence that I saw him at The 52nd Street Project the next day! I wanted to talk to David about being an actor and realized he had been a New York City cop, and since that's something that I was interested in being, I decided to interview him for this article.

David Zayas lives in N.Y.C.; he was a cop for 15 years and is now an actor on the H.B.O. series *Oz*. David always wanted to be an actor and a cop, therefore, he became both. Before anyone can become a police officer you must spend six months in the Police Academy, have at least two years of college, 2 years of military service, take police science classes, social science, learn the New York State laws, and work out in a gym as part of your training. Each day in the Police Academy consists of eight hours in uniform, ready to work. After Police Academy, a potential police officer is on probation for two years. A cop's starting salary can range from \$40-\$60,000, and after serving for 20 years you are eligible for benefits for the rest of your life. David was an officer in the Air Force for four years and loved the camaraderie between the guys, but was disappointed at how different being a cop was in a precinct.

Although he really enjoyed serving the public and being out on the streets, he was not happy with the fact that he had no control after arresting someone. David misses the diversity of the job, the authority to make a bad situation good, and serving the public. **f**

*Not all cops
are crooked;
there are defi-
nitely good
ones that really
love what they
do.*



Adrian
Zambrano
as a cop.

Being a cop is not just going out there and arresting people.



A couple of things that David would like people to know is that not all cops are crooked; there are definitely good ones that really love what they do and enjoy serving the people. He wants people to realize that cops are just regular people, they have the same difficulties and stress as everyone else. Even though cops may put themselves in emotional situations, professionalism has to be top priority. Cops cannot put any emotions into the job.

David has been lucky enough to never have been shot or had to shoot anyone, but he has been in situations where sometimes he has pulled over cars and found guns. He's been in riots. Basically, officers in general have to depend on the training they've been given and treat every situation in a calm and professional manner.

We also talked about how people feel about cops. Things like how some rap songs talk about cops killing innocent people, or police brutality. David feels that everyone should have a right to their opinion. Songs about cops don't bother him in any way, but

he does wonder why people have so many bad feelings towards cops. Is it the institution of law enforcement or the fact that a cop has so much authority over them? He feels that people shouldn't generalize because cops are not all the same.

After all this, I decided to tell David that what I really wanted to do was become an undercover cop. He thought that it was a great idea. He told me that I would have to apply for it just like I would any other job, be on probation for two years, study narcotics, and street crimes, and be really determined to put my life on the line.

One of the most important things we talked about was what it was like to see what happened on September 11th. David said that he would've gone into the Towers to do his job, not thinking that they would collapse.

In conclusion, this interview made me think that being a cop is not just going out there and arresting people. It takes dedication, hard work, and commitment. You have to have discipline to make it through college and all the training classes.

But no college or training class is going to stop me from accomplishing my dream. Thanks to David Zayas, he has motivated me to accomplish my goal. **f**

Jayme Rosado and David Zayas after the interview.



The Woman Behind the Voice

By Allary Seda

Nancy Giles has been doing voice-overs for 16 of her 20 years of acting. While performing in a show called, "Oh You Hostage!" an agent approached her and asked her if she would like to try voice-overs. She desperately needed the money. She told me in our interview, "When you choose to try to make a living with acting, it can be very hard to support yourself. You try to figure out as many different ways as you can to make money at your profession."

In the '80's, Nancy moved out to Los Angeles and did more commercials and television for a while and stopped doing voice-overs. Nancy feels more comfortable here in New York City. She likes the city's vibe.

Nancy had no problem doing voice-overs. She said she would rather do voice-overs because "You don't have to worry about how you look."

Nancy says "What is really nice for me in voice-overs is that your appearance doesn't count as much, and as a black actor, sometimes who I was didn't match what people heard on tape." She continues "The wonderful thing about voice-overs is it's just about your voice. That's how it's supposed to be. The bad part is that people expect you to sound a different way." Nancy once decided to send out a photo with a demo tape so people could see what she looked like. When they saw that she was black, they would only call her for commercials for hair relaxer.

Nancy didn't go to a special school for voice-overs, but there are classes that you can take. If you are interested in voice-overs...

Step 1: Listen to commercials and start to hear what sounds like you: young or old, deep and raspy, or sweet, etc.

Step 2: Go through magazines and pick out advertisements that match your type.

Step 3: Practice reading those advertisements and record how you sound.

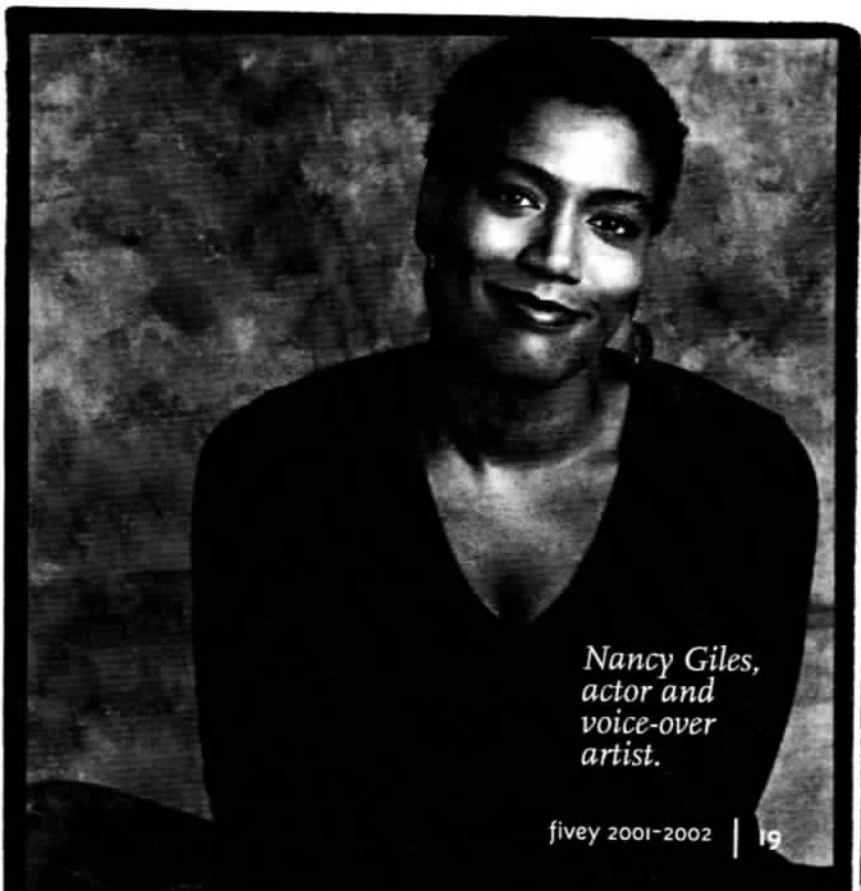
Step 4: When you choose the best advertisements, put them together on tape to create a demo. NOTE: Demo tapes/C.D.'s are made in professional studios.

Step 5: Send the demo tape to commercial agents or casting directors.

Voice-over agents try to make sure they don't have more than one person with the same sounding voice. A voice-over job usually doesn't take more than two hours.

Before my interview, I thought voice-overs were going to be easy and really fun. But when I talked to Nancy, she said it takes a lot of talent, patience, and time. Although I learned voice-overs aren't for me, it is a good job for someone who has a unique voice. f

When you choose to try to make a living with acting, you try to figure out as many different ways as you can to make money at your profession.



*Nancy Giles,
actor and
voice-over
artist.*

Acting, Dancing, Jumping, and Stomping

By Liz Bell

For all of you who know you want to do something in theater, but can't decide which career is best—Taro Alexander is the guy you need to read about.

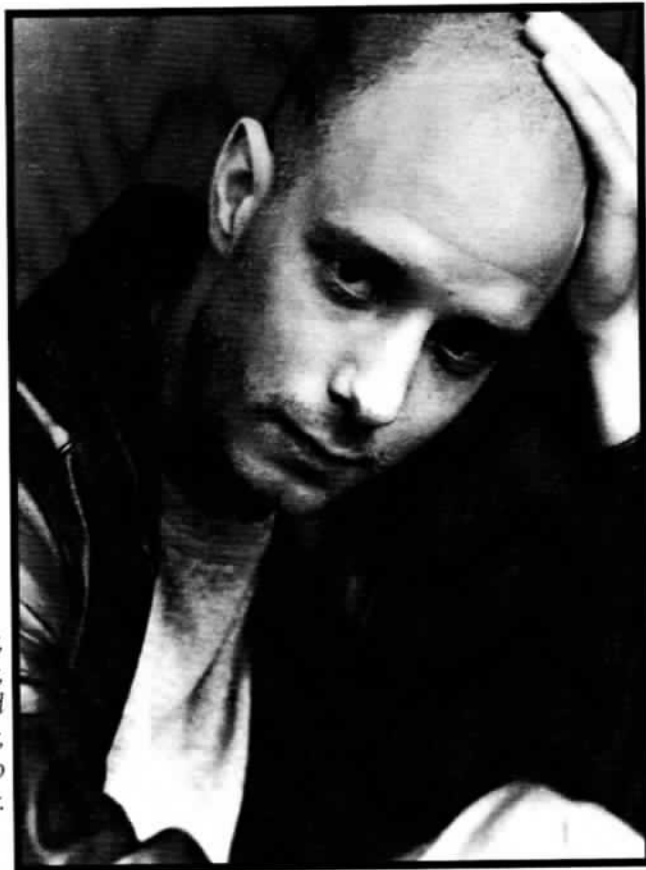
When my Smart Partner Steven Vasquez and I first got our *Fivey* assignment, we decided to interview Taro Alexander. We knew Taro was currently in the off-Broadway show, *Stomp*, and that he was also a choreographer—someone who creates and teaches dance routines, or just patterns of body movements in a piece of theater (like a fight scene, for example). Taro is truly a “jack of all trades” when it comes to the theater arts! For all of you kids who know you want to do something in the theater business, but can't decide which career is best for you—Taro is the guy you need to read about.

Steven got right to the point, and asked him, “What do you like about acting?” before Taro had even settled himself into his chair. Taro

quickly responded that he loves how acting gives you the chance to pretend to be someone else, someone very different from yourself. He likes to “look at the world from another character's point of view,” and he told Steven it's really fun to do and say things you never would in real life. “You can be mean and curse someone out, for example,” he said slyly (not that you kids would ever want to do that).

Taro's whole family was into the arts. His dad founded a theater company in Washington, D.C., where he grew up, so he was always immersed in the theater world. But it wasn't automatically the thing he wanted to do when he grew up. Did you guys know that as a kid, Taro dreamed of becoming a pro tennis player? He couldn't decide if he wanted to act or play tennis. But when his coach told him he would have to practice every day for eight hours, his mind was made up. He quit tennis and devoted himself to acting at age fifteen.

Taro went to a high school for the arts and majored in theater. There were four floors in his school, and each one was for a different art form—like music, dance, theater, and fine arts. Even then, he was interested in all forms of performing arts. He liked to visit his friends on the other floors, to find out about the music and dance they were studying. Today, this multi-talented guy gets to mix it up in *Stomp*, which allows him to use his acting, dancing, and musical skills. Taro plays a very funny character in the play, but he never even says a word! He and seven other actors use props like brooms, garbage can lids, and even sinks—not to mention their stomping feet and clapping hands—to make rhythms and dance. When Steven asked Taro what kind of style he uses in *Stomp*, Taro said, “That's really hard to describe. I guess you could kind of compare it to tap, in a way. Except that you're making music out of ordinary objects. So the choreography isn't straight up dancing, it's like



Actor,
Dancer,
Jumper and
Stomper,
Taro
Alexander.

how your body moves when you're making music. It definitely has a hip-hop, street, urban feel to it." Taro's favorite dance style is hip-hop. But he laughed, admitting, "All my different hip-hop moves are old—like from the late 80's to early 90's. I don't really know the current ones. So it's kind of embarrassing when I go to a club or party, people will be like, 'Oh, I remember that!'" He's not joking, either. He whipped out an old-school "snake" maneuver (a dance move circa 1988, I think it was first seen in Janet Jackson's *Nasty Boys* video). Fortunately for Taro, Steven gave him a little lesson on the "Harlem Shake." I tried to do it myself, but they both just laughed at me. I'm not embarrassed though, because when I went to see Taro a month later in *Stomp*, I noticed he hadn't put the "shake" into his performance—it's a pretty tough move.

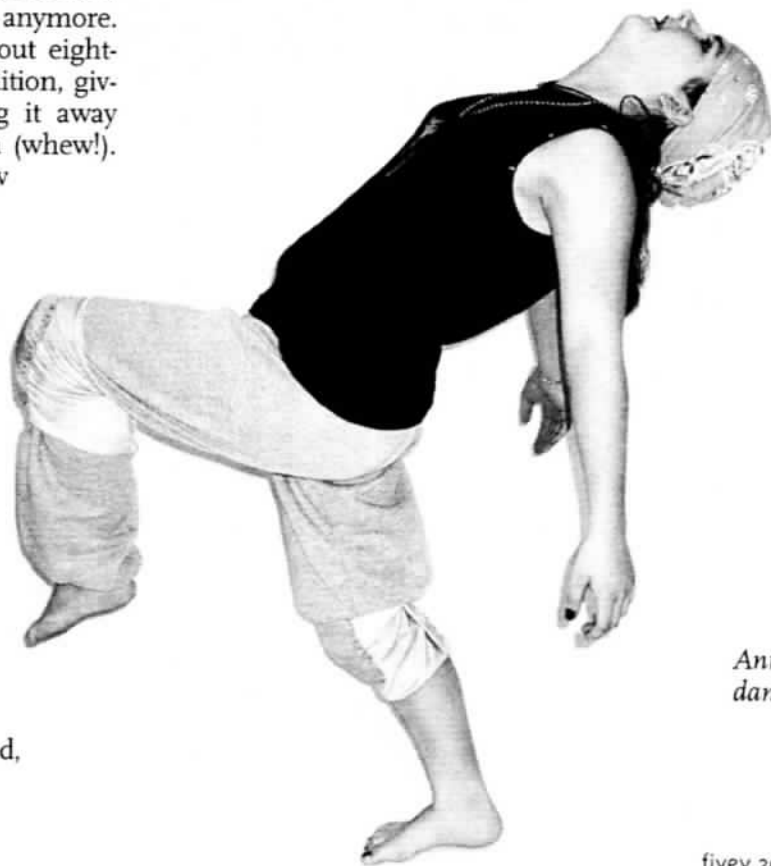
Taro told us it was really hard to get his role in *Stomp*. He went to an open-call audition, and did really well, making it all the way through the final call. Then three months later they invited him to be in *Stomp*. Of course he said yes. But two weeks later, they called back to tell him they didn't need him anymore. They tortured him like this for about eight-months, calling him back to re-audition, giving him the part and then taking it away again—until finally they hired him (whew!). This is just another example of how Taro is a huge believer in going after your dreams all the way, no matter how frustrating it can be. Here is some important advice from Taro:

"If there's something you really want to do, and it's important to you, and you're serious about it... you need to go for it 100 percent." He doesn't think you should limit yourself to only one possibility, though, explaining that this "doesn't mean that you shouldn't be a well-rounded person." Taro had some friends from high school who, as they were pursuing acting, found they didn't really like it. Instead,

they discovered careers perfect for themselves working behind the scenes—as a cameraperson, director, choreographer, producer, playwright, etc. If you really want to have a dream job in the theater, Taro says, you should "get up every morning and actively do things to help your career, you have to be strong and keep acting and keep creating."

For Taro, an actor should really work in all different areas of their art, and he practices what he preaches. Taro's latest addition to his list of job titles? He is the founder and Artistic Director of "Our Time Theater Company: an artistic home for people who stutter." Taro has stuttered since he was five years old. His theater company is a safe place for other adult and teen artists who stutter. The members meet weekly to study acting, dancing, singing, and playwriting, and they use their lessons to write and perform their own plays. I got to check out their first public performance, and like Taro Alexander himself, the playwright-actors were creative, brave, and inspiring!

f



Ani Kehr as a dancer.

Dancing for a Living

By Ivana Granados

Hi, my name is Ivana Granados. I am twelve years old. In this article, I will be discussing the true life of becoming a professional dancer. Have you ever wanted to become a professional dancer? If so, then let me fill you in. Victor Rojas, a pro-dancer, is a very good friend of mine. Since I love to dance, I decided to interview him. Victor wanted to become a professional dancer since he was a little boy. He has had dancing in his body all of his life. When Victor was about eight years of age, he and his sister Diana would sit in front of the TV and watch music videos and he would practice the moves. A lot of things have happened since then that have gotten him to where he is now.

Victor Rojas started coming to The 52nd Street Project at the age of eight and has done all of the classes there.

One day at the Project, someone by the name of Taro (see page 20) came in and showed Victor and a couple of other kids some moves, and that is what got him started.

Victor asked The 52nd Street Project founder Willie Reale to write him a recommendation letter to LaGuardia High School for drama. After LaGuardia, he took a whole semester at Tisch School at N.Y.U. for drama as well, but then decided to leave to start pursuing his dancing career.

After Victor left N.Y.U. for his dancing career, he studied dancing for four years at the Broadway

Dance Center. He had classes in jazz, ballet, breaking and modern. He has been professionally dancing for one year. His friend helped him get his first job. He then got more jobs through exposure. He got picked up from a Los Angeles agency called Block, that is now starting a branch in New York. Victor's current job now is as a back-up dancer for Alicia Keys. When I got a chance to see him rehearse I was amazed by his talent, personality, and ability. I think it is very hard work. They were rehearsing for thirteen hours a day, and I am surprised that they could last that long.

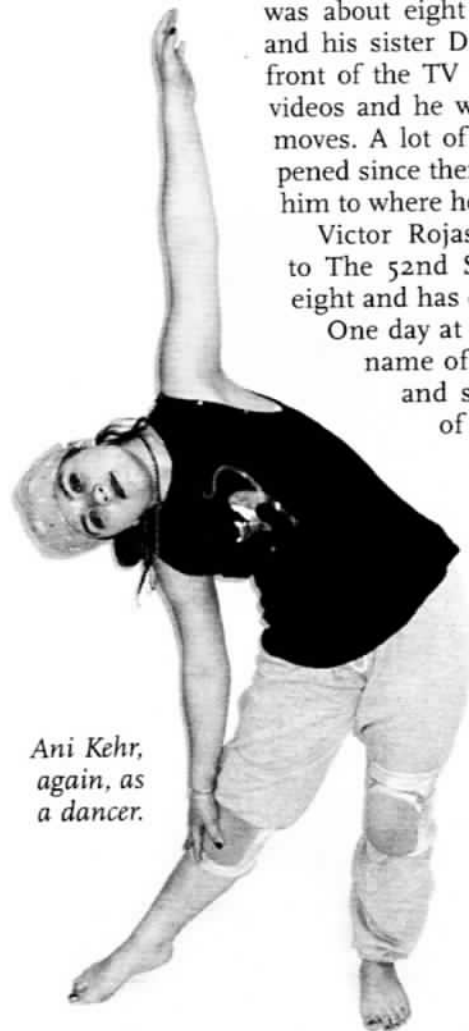
When Victor has spare time he usually sleeps and eats. He also hangs out with his friends. Also at the interview, Victor

said that he has to rehearse and work out by himself. He has made his house into a studio, and he basically does it by himself.

Victor hopes very deeply that he can last ninety years and still be dancing. Victor has told me so many inspirational things and I quote, "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do anything that you want to do. The only one that can hold you back from doing something is yourself. Reach your goals and be successful."

I thought Victor was a very amazing dancer because he has learned lots of different dances/choreography and he really shows that he's having fun while he's dancing. From what I saw and from what Victor has told me about his life experience as a dancer, he has inspired me to do it even more. He has also made me realize that it is not easy to become a pro-dancer because you have to practice and you don't have a lot of time for your friends and family. I admire Victor and wish him luck in the future. Victor is my idol.

Victor hopes very deeply that he can last ninety years and still be dancing.



Ani Kehr, again, as a dancer.

My Dad, the Restaurant Manager

By Ani Kehr

I went with my Smart Partner Becky White to interview my dad at his job. My dad, Michael Kehr, works at a very fancy restaurant, Rothmann's Steakhouse. My dad is the Assistant Manager at Rothmann's. While we were there we didn't just sit and talk, we went around the whole restaurant for a tour. We went to see the wine room (which I must say was my favorite room because they had over \$250,000 worth of wine there!). We also saw the kitchen, which by the way was very big and it had this enormous salad bowl that they would prepare salads in. The salad bowl was so huge that it would fit ME and BECKY in there! Later, we actually got to eat dessert, which was AWESOME!! And, we obviously asked him about a million questions.

As the Assistant Manager, my dad makes sure that everyone he hires comes to work on time and that they're doing their job right. He also makes sure that customers don't have to wait for a table for too long. When my dad works, he tries to enjoy it and keep the customers happy, and he likes to be one step ahead of what his customers want. Part of my dad's job is to be very sunshiny and jolly, not to mention very perky. Although that is part of my

Jennifer Jimenez as a mechanic, obviously on the wrong page, but still looking cool.



father's job, another part of it is to be strict with some of the customers by enforcing the rules of the restaurant. For example, if someone is being loud and obnoxious, my dad must approach them and ask them to leave. My dad told me that working at Rothmann's is like working on a BIG PUZZLE, and he's fitting the pieces back together. For example, he must make sure there are tables available when they are needed, and time their meal just right.

Like any other normal person my dad thinks work is tiring, but he likes to work, and likes to work with the people at his job not only because they respect him, but because of the friendly atmosphere. For example, many of the other employees always make fun of my father's height, but he doesn't take it as personally as others might. My dad has always had one of the best senses of humor that I know of. I think my dad likes Rothmann's better than any of his previous jobs, because Rothmann's is well run and very efficient. From what you've heard so far, my dad likes his job very much.

Becky and I had the time of our lives on our interview. If you go to Rothmann's, you probably will too. f

My dad told me that working at Rothmann's is like working on a BIG PUZZLE.

Punk Rocker

By Ani Kehr

Veronica Stigeler is in a band called Queen V. In her band there are four guys (and her, of course). Veronica's been playing the guitar and singing since she was five years old. She actually started out with the piano first. She told me she likes getting people excited when she's on stage. Veronica feels happy and "alive" when she's on stage too.

Being a rock star is VERY hard work and not just fun and games. Veronica says, "You have to work to make it happen, I can't say it enough." Veronica writes her own songs and is constantly working on her music. She performs in concerts all around New York and spends countless hours rehearsing with her band. Not only does Veronica have to stay on top of the artistic part of her job, but she also has to work on the business part of her job too. Veronica must promote herself so other people can know about her music. For example, she sends out flyers of gigs she plays and sends out demos of her C.D.'s to producers and club owners, and other people like that. She has an office where she works on organizing her band and maintaining her website. She also says, "It's so much more work than I ever thought it would be, but it's a lot more fun too." It's hard setting up a music business, so during her spare time, Veronica (or "V") likes to stay at home, hang out with her friends, and the one special

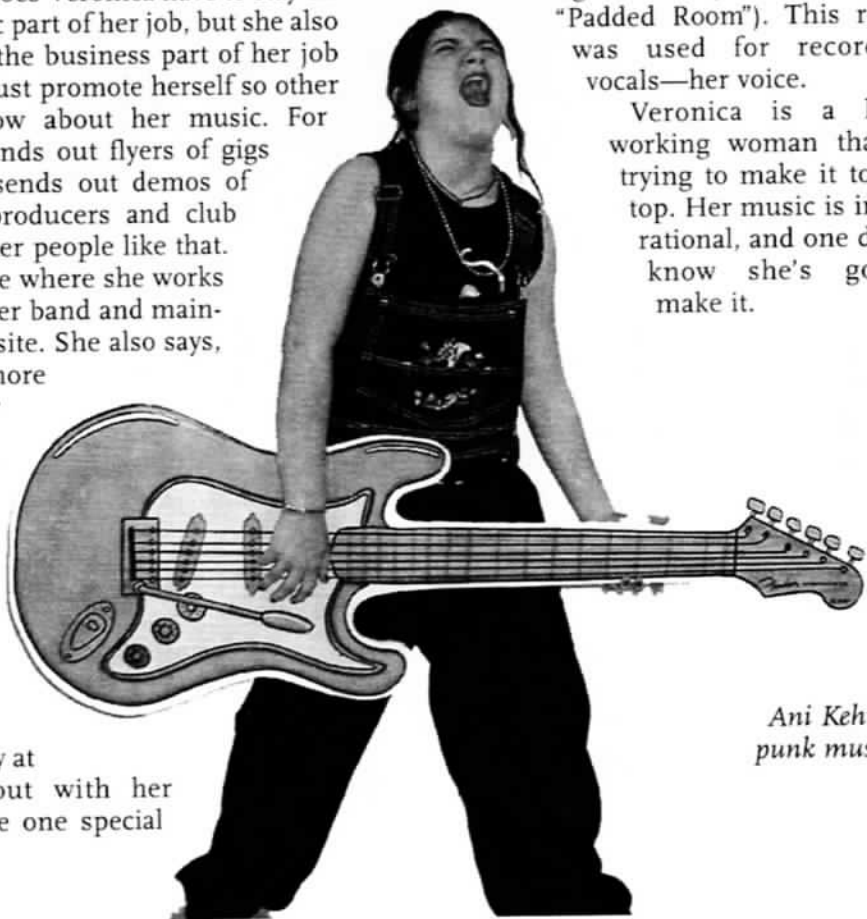
thing that everyone likes to do... SLEEP!!!

Veronica and her band members do not have a record deal yet, but they do have a production deal that will help them put out their C.D. The band "Queen V" has been working on their new C.D. for three years!

Veronica feels happy and "alive" when she's on stage.

During the interview, we were taken on a tour around the studio. Veronica showed us the recording room, where the engineers were in the middle of working on the tracks of their album. She also showed us this room that was packed with this soft, but rough stuff. (I call this the "Padded Room"). This room was used for recording vocals—her voice.

Veronica is a hard working woman that is trying to make it to the top. Her music is inspirational, and one day, I know she's gonna make it. **f**



Ani Kehr as a punk musician

Geologist

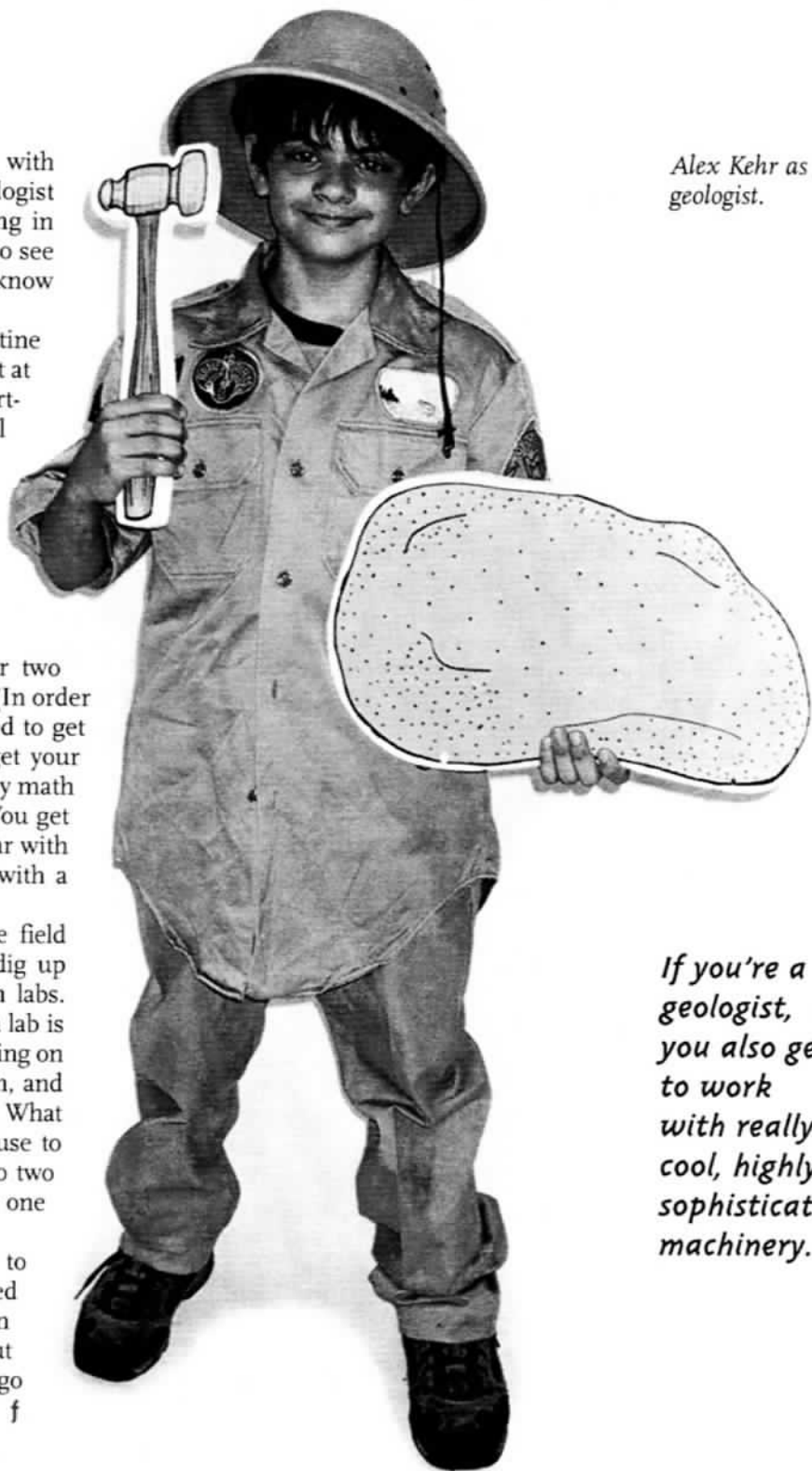
By Alex Kehr

A geologist is a person who works with stones. I want to become a geologist because I like digging and working in labs. I wanted to interview a geologist to see how to become one, and I wanted to know more about geology than I already do.

The person I interviewed was Christine Tappen. Her job is a Scientific Assistant at the Earth and Planetary Science department at the Museum of Natural History. The reason she became a geologist is because she liked all the different colors and the shapes of the stones and was interested in how they formed. The way she became a geologist is she first went to college. Her major was geology. And then she went to graduate school for two years and she got her Master's Degree. (In order to become a doctor in geology you need to get your Ph.D. It's another five years to get your Ph.D. in geology.) You also need to study math and chemistry to become a geologist. You get paid fifty to sixty thousand dollars a year with a Ph.D., and thirty to forty thousand with a Master's.

The different types of geologists are field geologists who work in the field and dig up stones, and lab geologists who work in labs. The steps to doing a geology project in a lab is first forming your hypothesis, then working on your methods, then doing your research, and then doing an analysis of your research. What you find in your research is what you use to write the paper. It can take about one to two years to do research. Some projects take one to five years.

If you're a geologist, you also get to work with really cool, highly sophisticated machinery. One of them is the electron microscope. Well, if you want to find out what the electron microscope is, then go do the same thing I did. f



Alex Kehr as a geologist.

If you're a geologist, you also get to work with really cool, highly sophisticated machinery.

Science and Sea Slugs

By Stephen Graham

My Smart Partner Osage and I went to visit Dr. Cropper in her lab at Mt. Sinai, to find out what it's like to be a neurobiologist. Neurobiologists study the nervous system, which includes the brain. Like most people, I'm fascinated by the brain. How can you not be? It's the brain, the self, the center of everything. So I assumed that neurobiologists would have pretty interesting lives, spending their days figuring out how thoughts, sensations, and memories work, how to make people smarter, cure Alzheimer's, and so on.

Dr. Betsy Cropper works with sea slugs. At first this struck me as considerably less glamorous than analyzing human brains. The sea slug doesn't even have the kind of centralized, directing brain that human beings have, Dr. Cropper explained to us; just a network of neurons (nerve cells) connected to various parts of its body that enables it to move, eat, and mate, which is about all that sea slugs have to do. But neurons are the essential components of all brains. And Aplysia neurons function pretty similarly to human ones, except that they're larger, and there aren't nearly as many of them. Dr. Cropper explained that, because Aplysiae have simple anatomies and very slow metabolisms, "You can take out the network, and the structure that's controlled, and make a preparation where you can study something in a dish," under a microscope. This is what Dr. Cropper spends much of her time doing. Right now, Dr. Cropper and her colleagues are studying feeding behavior, with a microscope they can actually watch the neurons interact, exchanging the electrical and

chemical signals that enable the slug to find and ingest food.

Osage and I wondered why Dr. Cropper doesn't get bored with mollusks and experiment on, say, dogs, or monkeys, or even people? She explained that animal rights activists have made vertebrate research very difficult: "You go through an internal committee; everything has to be housed on one floor... You go through security cameras to get in. And there are procedures for how the animals are kept: how many can be in a cage, when they're fed... they have to be handled, they can't just be kept in the cage, there are a lot of very strict rules about it."

But with sea slugs Dr. Cropper has a free hand, since, she explained, "no one cares about mollusks. They

are not cute." Insects, lobsters, and crayfish are also popular with research biologists, for the same reasons.

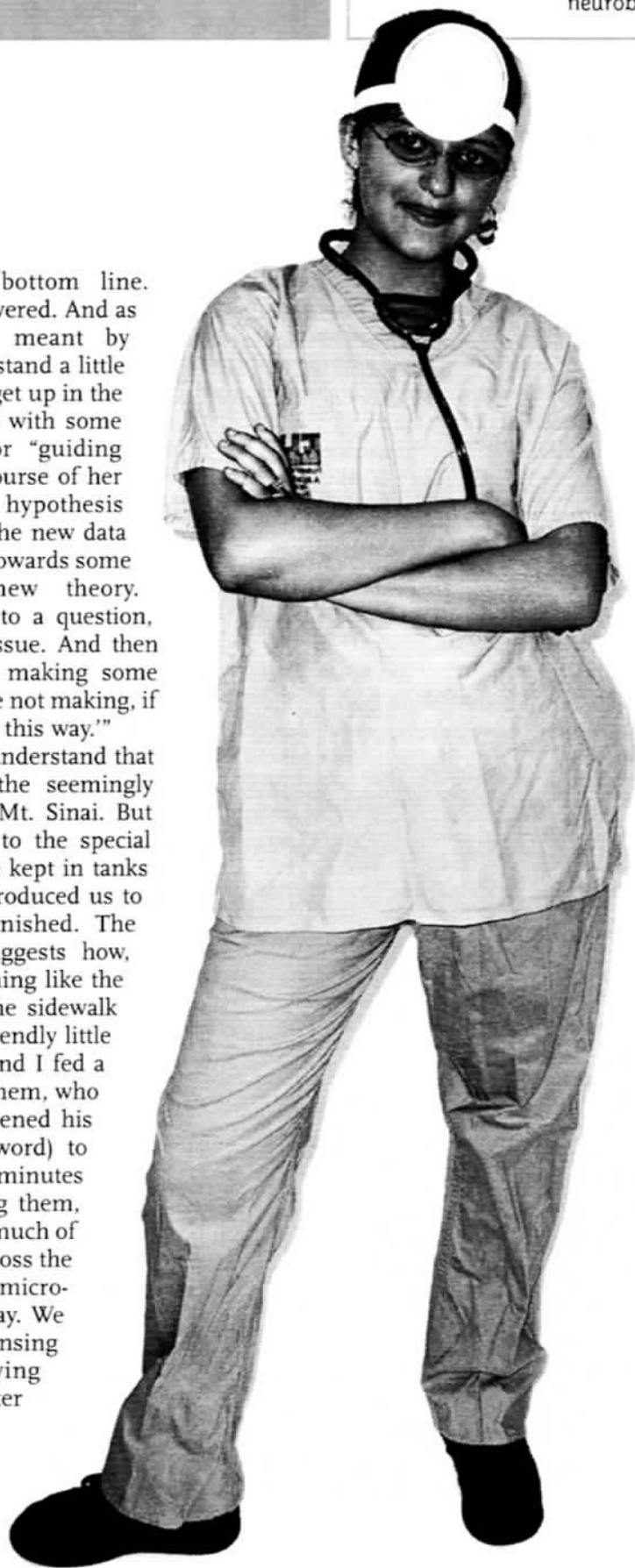
But even the world of invertebrate research has its pressures: Dr. Cropper has to apply for research grants from the government, and show the kind of progress that will ensure that her grants will get renewed. That means publishing articles in scientific journals at least once per year as well as traveling to scientific conferences and giving presentations. Mt. Sinai expects results: "We are given very specific goals: this is how much grant money you have to bring in, this is how many dollars you have to bring in per square foot of space that you get. They're very specific."

Cutting up sea slugs, writing grant applications; at this point, both Osage and I were starting to think, hmm, maybe neurobiology isn't for us. "What is your main goal?" asked

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by the brain. How
can you not be?
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of everything.*

Osage, looking for the bottom line. "Progress," Dr. Cropper answered. And as she explained what she meant by progress, we began to understand a little bit of what makes scientists get up in the morning. Dr. Cropper starts with some kind of working theory, or "guiding hypothesis." Often, in the course of her experiments, the original hypothesis turns out to be wrong, but the new data she has gathered may point towards some completely unexpected new theory. "Sometimes it's an answer to a question, sometimes it's a technical issue. And then you say, 'Wow, I can start making some progress that other people are not making, if I just apply this technique in this way.'"

Now we were starting to understand that excitement lurked behind the seemingly bland institutional walls of Mt. Sinai. But when Dr. Cropper took us to the special room where the *Aplysia* are kept in tanks of chilled salt water, and introduced us to them, our final doubts vanished. The name "sea slug" hardly suggests how, well, cute they are: not anything like the kind of slugs you find on the sidewalk after a rainstorm, but like friendly little purple-green aliens. Osage and I fed a blade of sea grass to one of them, who swam to the surface and opened his mouth (if that's the right word) to receive it. We spent a few minutes gazing at them, even petting them, while trying not to think too much of the fate that awaited them across the room, where Dr. Cropper's microscope and examining table lay. We bonded with those slugs, sensing our commonality as living things. Neurobiology is, after all, about us. f



Marilyn
Sanchez
as a Doctor

The name "sea slug" hardly suggests how, well, cute they are: not anything like the kind of slugs you find on the sidewalk after a rainstorm, but like friendly little purple-green aliens.

Interview with Fireman Mark

By Frankie Ventura

Today my Smart Partner Mike Brown and I interviewed a fireman at the 48th Street and 8th Avenue station. His name was Mark Dore, and he was pretty young and really skinny. He was really nice and we were allowed to ask him questions. We asked him a lot of questions, and here they are:

What was the worst fire you've been in?

He said, "Aside from September 11th, was the one on 55th & 8th. I was the first one in the door, and several of the firemen were burned pretty badly."

Were you at the World Trade Center on September 11th?

He said it was his first day as a fireman and he was scared by the disaster. He had just finished the Fire Academy the Friday before. He

didn't know what to expect on the first day of his job, and also guys he had just seen days before were suddenly gone.

Why did you decide to become a fireman?

He told us he had wanted to his whole life, "ever since I was a little boy." He said that he's someone who never outgrew the childhood dream of becoming a fireman, and that "it's the best job in the world."

What is your best part of the day?

He said, "Helping people, and saving lives. It gets better every day."

What is the worst part of the job?

"Watching people die, and people lose property."

What are the different trucks in the firehouse?

The Ladder truck has a ladder that raises to 100 feet. It carries axes, tools, halogens, airbags, and the "jaws of life." It is called "the truck." It also has forcible entry tools. The Engine truck (called "the pumper") holds 500 gallons of water and hoses. The chief's truck is a Ford Excursion truck, and he has a driver drive him around.

Did you go to school to become a fireman?

He said that he took classes that related to it, but were not just for being a fireman. He was an "arson investigation" major, and a "criminal justice" minor in college.

Is anyone else in your family a fireman?

He said that his father is one in New Jersey.

The last question we asked Mark was, *What is a wrong assumption of the public about a fireman?* He said, "People think firemen sleep and hang out all day, waiting for the next call." But they do lots of other things, like they also check the engines, clean the tools, and build new shelves in the house.

When I left the firehouse, it made me feel like I wanted to be a fireman even more. They're brave, they've got a lot of courage and they're loved by America. **f**

Frankie Ventura posing as a fireman.



Hat-Making at the Milliner's

By Jilian Gersten

When I was growing up, I used to love to make little things. One of my favorite pastimes was making, decorating, and, of course, playing with a little doll house that I made in my carpentry class at school. The dollhouse was peopled with little mice that I would buy at a neighborhood toy store. In addition to the already-dressed mice, you could buy plain (undressed) mice and so I made their clothes myself, using ribbons and other notions I would pick up at the trimmings shop. In order to complete their outfits, I decided they needed some hats. So, using felt, glue, needlepoint canvas, paints, ribbons, flowers, and little "molds" that were actually board game pieces, I figured out a way to fashion some pretty cute little hats. I even glued in little labels and sold a few to my friend!

When Fivey asked us to explore alternative career paths, I thought it would be fun to visit a milliner (hat-maker). So, my Smart Partner Yazzy Troché and I paid a visit to Thea Grant. For the past two years, she has been the Assistant to Lola Ehrlich, founder and designer of Lola Millinery, a hat-making company in New York whose hats are sold all over the world. Here are some highlights from our interview.

We asked Thea how she got started, and here's what she told us: "I didn't study millinery (hat-making) per se, but I studied sculpture and fashion history in school so that really helped, and I also had experience in all of the office things you need to know to support the creative side. This is such a small company that you don't always get to work just on the hats all the time, you do all kinds of things. So it was a great combination of being an art student and having fashion history and having worked in the fashion business that allows me to move from designing hats and sewing and work-

ing on patterns, to then shipping orders and writing invoices, and labeling and marketing. Traditionally if you want to become a milliner you go to a millinery program of some kind, such as the one at Fashion Institute of Technology or Parsons School of Design. There's also a very big school in London where my boss got started. It's such a combination of clothing and sculpture. Fabric hats are cut and sewn, and felt and straw hats are blocked [molded]. You learn as you go, as in anything. You could have studied it and you still won't know what happens when you're on the job."

Thea seemed to be really comfortable in her job. The office is in the same space as the workshop, where many of the hats are actually made, so it has a very old-fashioned feeling, like a small family business. From her desk, Thea can see the hats that she's responsible for helping to market being

In one day, I'll go from working with Britney Spears' stylist on her tour hats, to making a beret for an older lady who is a long-time customer.



Smart Partners
Jilian Gersten
and Yazzy
Troché.

made right in front of her (and sometimes she works on a hat or two right at her own desk!).

We asked Thea what she most enjoys about her job: "I love that there's so much going on. In one day I'll go from working with Britney Spears' stylist on her tour hats to making a beret for an older lady who is a long-time customer from years ago, and then I'll race off into the garment district to buy five different colors of ribbon and then run back here; it's just a non-stop day and I'm a non-stop kind of person. But I also love that you get to deal in all these beautiful things, and I get to help people see them and realize how great they are. It's definitely a hard job, but I definitely like it for all those reasons."

We wondered where all these hats are sold: "We sell out hats all over the world at this point. We sell in big department stores in NYC and around the country and in Canada. We also sell to little stores, and then to many stores in Japan because Japanese ladies all wear hats. And we do very well in France and England." Thea gets to travel as part of her work, a big bonus of working in this industry. "I get to go to Paris, which is a very big perk."

We wondered if Thea was able to learn

*Hat-maker
Thea Grant
and lots of hats.*



what she needed to know while on the job: "Yes, like with any job. I came with knowledge of clothes and how the fashion industry works, and knowledge of sculptural

forms, so that was a good foundation. But from there, you just have to help the stylists that come in and make them think that they're going to have the best photograph and the best credit in a magazine. But you learn all those things as you go along, and you learn to adjust. And the business adjusts. In the time I've worked here, we have doubled our volume. We're almost bursting at the seams in here with all these stacks of hats!"

She wasn't kidding! The walls of Lola's studio are piled high with the different kinds of molds they use to block (shape) hat forms, and the place was filled with all kinds of hats in various stages of construction. In the back of the studio, there was a display of about a hundred different styles of hats. As we walked around the workshop, Thea taught us about the basic hat-making techniques: basic forms in felt and straw, blocking, lining, trimming, and finishing. We learned that most straw hat basic forms are made in Latin America, and that the best felt is made from rabbit fur. Then we tried on hats worn by some of Lola's famous clients. Yazzy tried on hats worn by Jennifer Lopez and Alicia Keys, and she looked great in them!

f

Renaissance Woman

By Shevonne Hernandez and Megan Sandberg-Zakian

My dream is to become a Renaissance woman and for those who don't know what a Renaissance woman is, it is a person who accomplishes many things in her lifetime. I want to be a fashion designer and an actress; I want to pursue modeling; I want to have my own line of clothing and own a business. My ultimate dream which I am extremely determined to accomplish is to own an orphanage.

Being interested in all of these professions and passions, Megan and I decided to interview one person who works in the fashion industry and one who works at an orphanage. We began by interviewing Samantha Bishopp and Cate Mowell, the fashion and accessories assistants at *Seventeen Magazine*.

The building and environment at *Seventeen* were nice. It is on 40th Street and Broadway in a private building. The floor on which *Seventeen Magazine* is located is very modern. Megan and I noticed that all the employees were female, with the exception of the mailman. In my observation of the surroundings, I noticed no one was ugly, everyone was good-looking and very well dressed, and they were almost all white. When we walked around, we noticed many bins of bras and accessories. After the interview, we got to look at the

racks of clothes. There were racks and racks of denim for the ladies and one quarter of a rack with three mens shirts.

For this job, Sam and Cate both went to a four-year liberal arts college. Many of their co-workers also went to regular colleges, rather than an art school, unlike the interns who work there now, who are from the Fashion Institute of Technology and Parsons (design and fashion schools).

What Cate and Sam actually do is: Cate is the accessory assistant and Sam is the fashion assistant. They are responsible for almost every step of putting together a *Seventeen* article except for actually writing it. First, they "call in" all merchandise for fashion layouts. They "style the stories," which means that they are given a theme or story title and they have to find everything that fits the story, and then the next step is that the writer has to choose what actually gets "shot" (what they take pictures of). So they spend lots of time on the phone doing "call-ins" to

After I'm successful as a fashion designer, model, and actress, I'll be able to open my own orphanage.



Shevonne Hernandez as a Renaissance woman.

ask for the clothes or accessories they need. They also go to showrooms in person to look at new lines. (They basically go to fashion shows.) Once the story is ready to be photographed, Sam and Cate go on the photo shoots and assist the editors. They provide second opinions about the shoot, what looks nice on the model, what fits, etc. Later, they do credits for the stories, which takes up about a third of their time. The credits are the part at the back of the magazine where it says what designer made the clothing, how much it costs, and where you can buy it. They also are responsible for the "win it" page which is when they have contests to give things away. Lastly, they manage their interns. Interns are responsible for the flow of samples that come in and out of the office.

Every question I asked was answered very straight-forwardly and calmly except when I asked, "Is it fun?" Then they got extremely

excited for no apparent reason. They said that they find their job fun. What makes it fun is that you're working with a group of really fun people. Cate said, "It's repetitive, so you have to find ways to make it creative." The most stressful thing about the job, they said, is being financially responsible for things that they borrow from big designers, which they have to return after the shoot. Other stressful aspects of the job are the deadlines, turning things around, and shoot dates.

Sam and Cate are at the bottom of the pole. Above them there is an associate editor, market editor, fashion editor, and fashion director. The only way to move up in the industry is letting people know you are creative and on top of things, in other words, be creative and on the ball. In this field of work, people often jump around. It's important to know that it is a very young industry. In Cate's and Sam's departments (clothes and accessories), everyone is under 30. People change jobs quickly; every six months is usual.

Since what I really want to become is a fashion designer, at the end of the interview Cate and Sam gave me some advice: the key to designing is inspiration due to personal experiences.

For the second interview, I wanted to meet with someone in an orphanage. There aren't any orphanages in New York anymore, there is something very similar, called foster care. Foster care is a temporary place for children whose parents for some reason can't take care of them, and a foster parent takes a temporary place as the parent while the biological parent takes care of (for example) "rehab," therapy, court, etc. The reason I know this is because my Smart Partner Megan and I did some research and found an organization called ABC Variety Cody Gifford House. It is a foster care funded partially by Kathy Lee

*Octavia
Rodriguez as a
super-model.*



Gifford. They have two buildings located on the Upper East Side.

When we visited, I was surprised by how small the buildings were. I expected it to be bigger, and to be more modern looking. But I liked how it felt like a house. There was a kitchen and you could smell the food cooking. They had a nice backyard with toys for the kids. There was one apartment where the kids stay in between foster care placements. Each of the kids has their own private room, and the people who take care of them do nice things with them like take them to the movies.

She has pictures on her desk of some of the families who've adopted kids.

The woman I interviewed is Mia Critelli. She handles the adoptions in this organization. Unlike the case-workers who meet directly with the kids and families to see how they're doing along the way, Mia's job is basically the paperwork, the behind-the-scenes type of thing. She either puts the kid with a permanent foster parent or temporary one while the parent deals with his/her problems. The purpose of the temporary foster parent and not staying in the old-fashioned orphanage is for the child to grow up in a family-like setting. But there are a few exceptions: some kids stay in group homes, which are more like an orphanage for the older kids. After the child has spent a certain amount of time in foster care or a group home, if the parent still hasn't shaped up, then Mia starts the process of getting the kid adopted. Sometimes the foster parent adopts the kid, and sometimes it is someone else.

Mia was very warm and open and she explained everything about her job really well. She got into doing this kind of work basically by interning and working at other

similar organizations and figuring out what she liked. Her favorite part of the job is when it works out for foster parents to adopt the children who have been placed with them. She has pictures on her desk of some of the families who've adopted kids. One mom made a big cake for the little boy she was adopting that said "Now we are Family." On the downside, Mia said that it is hard to see so many parents with problems that cause their kids to be taken from them. And to top it off, even some of the foster parents have problems. Sometimes people apply to be foster parents when they have had kids taken away from them in the past. Now the state does a background check to make sure anyone who applies is fit to be a foster parent. Before they used to do this, they had some bad situations, like foster parents abusing their foster children.

Overall, I really enjoyed speaking to Mia, and I was inspired by seeing the kind of work that she does. When I have an orphanage, I want it to be different from ABC Variety House (it would be in a big building, like the buildings along 10th Avenue between 51st and 52nd that are boarded up. I want to have lots of kids from diverse backgrounds and many countries), but still, I got a lot of ideas from Mia. I still want to go to a design school like F.I.T. or Parsons, but I'll also do an internship while I'm there at Variety House or another place like it in the city. After I graduate, I'll also continue to intern, volunteer, or work part time with kids so I get more experience. Then eventually, after I'm successful as a fashion designer, model, and actress, I'll be able to open my own orphanage. These interviews convinced me that I really can do it all, be independent, and accomplish all of my goals in life. I look forward to becoming the Renaissance woman of the 21st century!

f

For Math and Money

By Yazzy Troché

Ever since I was young, my favorite subject in school was math. Also I love money. At the age of two, if anyone offered me money and gave me the choice of a quarter or a dollar bill, I would take the dollar bill. Most kids would take the quarter because it was round and made noise when thrown to the floor, but, being who I am, having this love for money, I would take the bill. I sure did know the difference.

As I got a little older and went into high school, I always asked myself what it was that I wanted to do with myself in the future. At this point, I had to first find out what it was I liked to do, so finally I came up with a list of a few things. I know I have this love for money and I know I have this liking for math (even if it is harder in high school). Also I like taking care of people and helping them manage their budgets, so I believe I belong in the stock market on Wall Street.

Encouraged by what I believed I wanted to do, I thought it would be a good idea to see what really goes on in the stock market and to find out what it was like to be a stock

broker. So with my questions in hand, and my Smart Partner Jilian Gersten with me, I visited Ms. Laura Valeroso, who works at The American Stock Exchange.

Laura Valeroso is a trader for the Susquehanna Investment Group. She went to all four years of high school, also four years of college, and then she went to three years of law school. At this point, she was all ready to become a lawyer who was going to work with a criminal defense attorney, when she was then told that they couldn't hire her. This was so upsetting, but it all worked out for the better. Since she had some friends in the stock market, and she was 24 and therefore didn't want to stay home, she came to the stock market and gave it a chance. She worked as a clerk on the floor for about four months until she realized this is what she could do. Ever since then, as she said, "I've not looked back and I am happy."

At times, I tend to believe that maybe I don't belong in the stock market because as my grade levels go up, math just gets harder and I begin to dislike it. So given that at times I hate math, I asked Laura if she liked math and her response was "no." Laura said that she actually hated math and she's very surprised that she's in a field that uses math. When she first started, everything was done using your brain, but as technology increased, everything is now done using the computer. Before, everything was traded in fractions, now it's done in pennies, which is a lot easier.

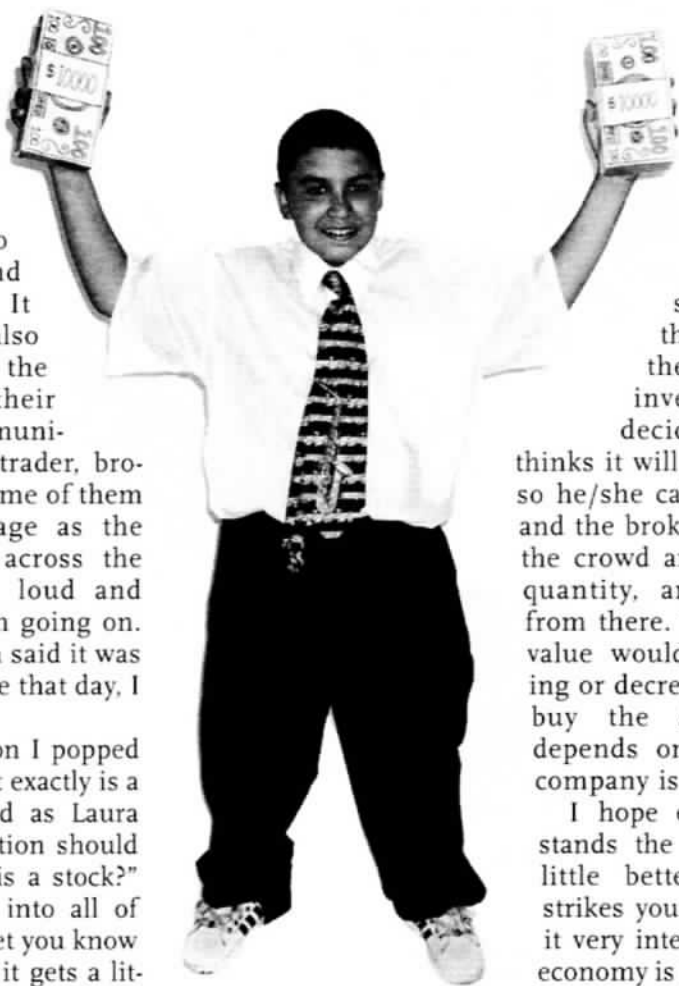
The first thing Laura told us was that, in the American Stock Exchange, there were tons of men and that they were sloppy and acted like a bunch of pigs. As she said, "It's very locker room down here." She also mentioned that the people cursed all day long and threw their food around, but because she has been there for so long, she's

Yazzy Troché as herself, standing on Wall Street.



used to it. One thing that caught my eye on my visit was that each person had at least three computers and there were so many phones and wires all around. It was amazing. I also realized that all the companies had their own way of communicating with their trader, broker, and buyer. Some of them used sign language as the others screamed across the room. It was so loud and there was so much going on. Even though Laura said it was pretty dead in there that day, I found it chaotic.

The next question I popped up with was, "What exactly is a stock market?" and as Laura said, the real question should be, "What exactly is a stock?" Now before I get into all of that, I'm going to let you know ahead of time that it gets a little confusing, so bear with me. The main idea of the stock market is that when a company makes a product, a brokerage house finds out how much money the company and its product are worth, and then they take it from there. At this point, the company has gone public and it is divided up into different shares, and they charge, for example, \$25



Some of them used sign language as the others screamed across the room.

It was so loud and there was so much going on.

*Jeremy Butler
as a stock
broker*

for each share, and the company has 4,000,000 shares. Then they begin to sell the shares. An investor one day decides he/she thinks it will be worth more, so he/she calls their broker, and the broker goes down to the crowd and buys a large quantity, and it goes on from there. Your company's value would alter, increasing or decreasing, as people buy the shares. It all depends on how well the company is perceived.

I hope everyone understands the stock market a little better and that it strikes your interest. I find it very interesting how our economy is intertwined with the stock market. When things start going bad for the economy, then the stock market tends to decline. During my visit and talk with Laura, she increased my interest even more. I'm more excited about working in the stock market as a trader. I think I can perform the job, because I have this love for math and money. f

fIVEY goes to work



theater performer
fashion designer
baseball player
musician
lawyer
danger
detective
screenwriter
restaurant manager
film editor

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