

THE Concordia Courier

Investigate. Inform. Ignite. Involve.

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Volume 6, Issue 9

Concordia University Irvine

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

ASCUI candidates run uncontested

Each of the five cabinet positions will be awarded after mandatory election process Fri. Feb. 10

Faculty searches underway

BY ETHAN SCHERCH
STAFF WRITER

Due to Concordia's growth, the administration is looking to fill 15 professor positions across multiple departments over the next year. An 11-goal strategic plan will impact multiple areas of the campus. These goals will lead Concordia to better fit the mission and visionary statement. One way of doing so is by providing smaller class sizes and opportunities for long lasting personal lessons. By creating an environment that benefits students through interaction with professors, Concordia is upholding its vision statement.

Currently, each full-time professor is required to teach at least 12 units per semester. Due to large enrollment numbers, most professors are well over that amount. A majority of professors are working overtime in order to teach the amount of students who need classes. The addition of new faculty will ease the workload of current professors and allow them more time to serve the students in their selected courses.

The hiring process at Concordia is focused on the quality of a professor as opposed to quantity of professors, and the list of requirements is rather extensive. The process begins with postings of openings on Concordia's website, along with that of the LCMS. "The search begins as a large net," said Pam Clavir, Director of Human Resources. "It's amazing to take a step back and watch [God] put this together." The hiring committee searches for professors with specific teaching credentials who also model a strong Christian faith. Finding the right fit is often quite difficult, especially when adding in the costs of living in Southern California.

Resumes and applications are funneled in through the Office of the Provost before being handed down to the Dean of each specific school. As the Dean establishes credibility, the applicant's information is given to a search committee. This committee then puts the applicant through nearly two days of interviews and tests, part of which involves teaching a class. At this time, evaluators monitor teaching styles and interaction with students. One of the most important parts of the application process is a simple question: How do you integrate your faith into the classroom?

This statement works to uphold the values of which Concordia was founded on—the calling of the Great Commission. The call of every professor on this campus is to instill applicable skills and values into their students. "I begin every class with prayer and try to encourage the high road on students' assignments," said Dr. Martin Schramm, Professor of Communications. Interviews of prospective faculty are already underway, and will continue until positions are filled for the 2012-2013 academic year.

PRESIDENT

Candidate name:

Elyssa Sullivan

Hometown:

Bakersfield, CA

Class Standing:

Junior

Major:

History, Theology
Minor, Secondary Education
Credential through
CCI



What inspired you to run for this position?

I am passionate about what it means to be a student at Concordia University Irvine. I not only want to continue living that out as a student, but I want to represent this passion and encourage it in others through my presidency.

What do you hope to emphasize?

The position of presidency is one with huge potential, and I don't want to waste that opportunity. My predecessors have been amazing. The standard they have set for this leadership role is high, so I only hope that I can go beyond what is expected of me. I like seeing how far I can take things, and my

leadership roles are no exception to that mentality.

What specific skills qualify you for the position which you are running for?

From what I can tell, the president needs to be humble, a listener, slow to anger, passionate, honest, articulate, and professional. There is so much more than I can know right now though. Ask me in a year.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

I would go to Ireland. It comes with being a Sullivan.

VICE PRESIDENT

Candidate Name:

Brianna Lamanna

Hometown:

Las Vegas, NV

Class Standing:

Junior

Major:

Communication and General Behavioral Science



What inspired you to run for this position?

I was inspired to run for Vice President by the great work I saw from the former two Vice Presidents. I want to continue working with senate to fulfill students' needs.

What do you hope to emphasize?

If elected, I hope to continue working hard for the student body. I want to emphasize a focus on ASCUI's Student Senate and try to bring more attention towards the great things they accomplish for the student body. I also hope to emphasize the legacy the ASCUI Executive Boards have created the last couple years. I hope to build on the work done this year and continue growing and improving our school.

What specific skills qualify you for the position which you are running for?

I have been on senate for two years now and I was a PAL for a year. Both of these experiences have given me insight into what fellow students want and what I can do to help improve the school. I was also vice president to many clubs during high school, so I have experience working with others on achieving the goals of the school.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

I would love to travel to Italy. I think it is a beautiful country and I love the culture and food.

TREASURER

Nick Kopinski

Hometown:

Aliso Viejo, CA

Class Standing:

Junior

Major:

Business



What inspired you to run for this position?

I was inspired to run for this position because of the available opportunity to grow and learn more about myself, but more importantly to give back to the Concordia community.

What do you hope to emphasize?

I plan to emphasize good ethical Christian decisions, act in a responsible mature manner, as well as give back to the school. I will also provide strong communication skills to ensure the money being spent is being put to efficient use and will work to decrease the amount of unnecessary spending.

What specific skills qualify you for the position which you are running for?

I feel that being a Peer Advising Leader for the past two years, my work experience at Chick-Fil-A for almost two years, and my Eagle Scout experiences qualify me for the position I am running for. My experience as a PAL has helped increase my communication skills, while my Chick-Fil-A experience has increased my customer service abilities, and my Eagle Scout experience has enhanced my leadership skills.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

I would love to travel to Antarctica to witness what the bottom of the Earth has to offer, despite its chilly weather.

SECRETARY

Candidate name:

Breanna Wengel

Hometown:

Clackamas, OR

Class Standing:

Junior

Major:

History



What inspired you to run for this position?

I was inspired to run for ASCUI secretary because I love leadership at CUI and I wanted a position that could bring me a challenge.

What do you hope to emphasize?

I want to emphasize servant leadership at this school and show what the student government can do for the students. I believe that students have a voice and they should use it more. I really want next year's executive board to focus on student voices.

What specific skills qualify you for the position which you are running for?

I am very organized, which is a huge responsibility for the secretary. I also like to play a supporting role in any aspect of leadership I am in; I enjoy seeing things get done. I also have a strong passion for Concordia and all the fantastic people I have met here.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

My grandparent's apple orchard in New Mexico. It's so beautiful and I have so many great memories there.

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Candidate name:

Jamie Rivera

Hometown:

Cypress, Ca.

Class Standing:

Sophomore

Major:

History & Political Science



What inspired you to run for this position?

I was inspired to run for this position because of my current involvement in student leadership as a PAL. I have a strong love for our university, and want to serve our university as Communications Director.

What do you hope to emphasize?

I hope to emphasize our university as a family. CUI is a family which I have grown to love and be a part of. With the recognition of CUI's bond, I am applying for Communications Director to ensure that our family is well informed of upcoming events and activities in order to keep our community strong.

What specific skills qualify you for the position which you are running for?

I feel that I have strengths in my ambition and ability to follow through. I always aim high and try to maintain a persona of a visionary. Further, I am a confident and respectful communicator. With these strengths, I can ensure reliability--I try to maintain organized so that when tasks are given to me I can be accountable to get them done in a timely manner.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would it be?

At this moment in time, I would travel home. I miss my dogs!

A Night for Valentine's Concert

Good Shepherd Chapel

February 17 and 18 @ 7:30 pm

-Women's Ensemble

-Men's Chorus

-Dr. Marin Jacobson, conductor

Editorial: Thy will be done...wait!

BY STEPHEN PULS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Monday chapels this semester, Pastor Mark Manning has been guiding the community through the book of Hosea. The chronicle of the Old Testament prophet serves as a beautiful caricature of God's love for his people. It is infused with Messianic connections to the point that the names Hosea and Jesus are both derived from the same Hebrew root. Other than a somewhat distant Assyrian threat, the context involves a period of peace and prosperity throughout the northern Kingdom of Israel. Despite living out numerous instances of God's deliverance, Israelite faithfulness had grown soft amongst the comfort of divine blessings. Scripture states that they had been cared for, became satisfied, grew proud, and then forgot God (Hosea 13:6). As a result, the Lord outlines his judgment, and ultimate mercy, through the life of Hosea.

The story confronts believers with a challenge we might not want to hear. While God certainly desires to shower His children with earthly blessings, these gifts often morph into products of unfaithfulness—in some cases becoming idols themselves. Jesus even states that it is much harder for a wealthy, comfortable man to enter God's kingdom (Matthew 19). On the other hand, hardship commonly works to instill a new focus of heavenly reliance. When things are bad, it can be easier to stay "tuned in" to God. So how can a Christian work

to carry out the same level of faithfulness experienced during tribulation in times of prosperity?

Hardship is certainly not absent from our lives, but how often do we really think about the blessings that surround us with abundance each day? There is never a worry over of whether or not we will have food to eat or shelter over our heads. In fact, most of these services are conveniently done for us by butchers, store clerks, or electricians. As American citizens, we can be considered the world's "one percent," (as our OWS friends would put it) and unless you are a first-generation citizen, you really had nothing to do with it.

How different would my life be if I was born in India, a nation destitute with poverty and bleak worldviews surrounding reincarnation? Or in China, where any religious practice is tightly controlled by government authorities? God is at work everywhere (in fact, there are more Christians in China than people in the United States), but our faith often does not correspond with the earthly blessings that He has surrounded us with.

The truth is, Satan will find footholds in any culture, regardless of economic class. The Israelites let Baal take the place of God, just as we idolize our sports teams, personal image, or clothing. We are easily distracted, and justifiably so. Insurance policies, 401 Ks, and good credit blind us from our desperate reliance on God on a daily basis (not to say that these are necessarily bad things). It is quickly tempting to grow apathetic when we have

a full wallet, healthy family, and loving spouse as we use blessings to cover up the effects of sin, and our need for a Savior.

Hardships have the power eat away at the soul of an individual. I have personally been blessed to have dealt with very few so far in my lifetime, and cannot comprehend the toll that such pain can have on someone's heart. It would seem irrational to pray to be stricken with crisis (I sure won't be doing anything like that anytime soon), so how are we to go about challenging ourselves to hold fast in faithfulness towards our heavenly Father? A tough question indeed.

While there is nothing wrong with praying for earthly blessings, we can be sure that there will not be complete "peace on earth" until Christ's return (regardless of how many basketball players pledge to change their name). Perhaps this response can involve a simple change in mindset. In his book "Crazy Love," Francis Chan suggests a potential application of this into prayer before travel. Instead of concentrating on personal safety, he proposes praying "God, bring me closer to you during this trip, whatever it takes"—because in the end it's not about you or me, but Him.

For now, we can anticipate future heavenly peace by attempting to respond to the gift already given to us through Jesus.

I invite you to join us to deal these questions together at Plug-In Bible Study, Mondays at 10:30 in the CU Center.

Handing out holidays like candy

BY EMILY GESKE
EVERYTHING EAGLES EDITOR

Many things have changed in our country during the past century or so—the invention of the airplane, civil rights movements, the dawn of the pizookie—but one of the most overlooked events is the evolution of the holiday we've come to regard as Presidents' Day. Come Mon., Feb. 20, does anyone know what we will actually be celebrating?

The holiday originated in 1885 when Chester Arthur (the President at that time, for those unaware) declared Washington's birthday a federal affair.

As time progressed and Congress realized they ran out of important issues to discuss, a bill was passed, effective 1971, which moved the observance of Washington's birthday to the third Monday in February in order to give federal employees more three-day weekends. Recognizing that Lincoln's birthday was close enough, some states rolled the two Presidents' escapes from the womb into a single day of remembrance. Though Lincoln's day was never observed federally, some states had chosen to honor him anyway. In the name of equality, some courageous soul suggested that all Presidents, from Roosevelt to Harrison—take your pick between Ben and Will—should be remembered on this most auspicious series of February days. Ultimately, Americans are celebrating different holidays, and it seems that this fact horrifies hardly anyone.

Perhaps it is as a protest to this confusion that Concordia refuses to follow in Uncle Sam's footsteps of handing out holidays like candy on Halloween. We should all feel privileged to be part

of an institution that dares to question tradition, especially those rituals marred by patriotism. You may be able to get 60% off at Sears, but if you're a student or employee at Concordia, you won't be getting this day off. Anyone wishing to reflect on the occasion must do so in between classes and meetings.

So on this Presidents' Day, whether you choose

to acknowledge all our nation's past leaders or only Washington and/or Lincoln, do so confidently and with pride. Do so knowing what a great country the United States has become under the leadership of a few elected men. Do so with the understanding of how much is owed to our predecessors. But, most importantly, do so on your own time because the academic calendar won't break for just anything.



THE Concordia Courier

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Comments? Suggestions?
We want to hear from you.
Write a "Letter to the Editor."
newspaper@cui.edu

Boss' Basics



Joshua Young
Staff Writer

Dare to be great

During the last two semesters, I have been asking Concordia Students what their plans are for when they finish school, and more generally what they would like to accomplish with their post-college life. It seems that a lot of people are just looking to get their degree, find an apartment, find a spouse and have some kids. Now don't get me wrong, all of those things are great, and they should be things that you aspire to attain throughout the course of life, but my point is that we all have the potential to do so much more with our short time in this world. My goal is simply to put forth a different point of view—you have the ability to take it or leave it.

All around us, there are opportunities to make the world a better place. They could be small opportunities that require very little effort such as holding a door open, or telling someone you don't know to have a nice day. Or, they could be something more involved such as helping a stranger push their car off of the road. It is important to remember that not every "dare to be great" situation will be brought to your attention, sometimes we have to seek them out.

That being said, sometimes "dare to be great" scenarios are put in front of us and then that happens, we should not be afraid to reach out and take advantage of it. Imagine for a moment, that you've just graduated college, your public speaking skills are poor—at best—and a member of your church asks you to be the president of a nationwide movement for a good cause. This movement would involve speaking at rallies, sometimes in front of thousands, or even televised nationwide. Now ask yourself, would you have accepted? 60 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. was in that exact situation, and had he turned down that offer, the world we live in today might have been drastically different—probably not for the better.

It's time that we all start seeking out our "dare to be great" opportunities. Trust me, your two-bedroom apartment and your 8-5 entry level positions are not going anywhere. It doesn't necessarily have to be spearheading the next big civil rights movement, but it does have to be something more involved than watching a Law and Order marathon, or never missing a Jersday to see Snooki do something dumb.

Who's to say that you couldn't be the first Concordia student to climb Mount Everest or fly in outer space (FYI: NASA is hiring astronauts). Even if all I can convince you to do is get a pen pal, go do it! Get out in the world and make something happen. I want you to do it, and I want you to want to do it, but that's not why you should do it. You should go find your dare to be great moment because this is our world and we only get one shot to do something cool with it!

Place a classified ad!

- Selling a book?
- Need a job?
- Have a cool idea?

Email newspaper@cui.edu to have an ad placed in the next issue.

Ammann wins 300th, team not finished

BY DAETONA LAURENCE
STAFF WRITER

Ken Ammann, Head Coach of Men's Basketball, won his 300th game at Concordia on Tues., Jan. 24, with a victory over Point Loma Nazarene. Ammann is in his eleventh season at Concordia and has an overall record of 302-75. "Over the years I've become more organized, but I try to keep the same goals," said Ammann. "We want to get the best players to compete for conference championships, win nationals, and represent Concordia."

The men's basketball team is currently tied for second place with Azusa Pacific and The Masters College in the GSAC this season with an overall record of 18-5, and a conference record of 8-4. Ammann's achievement is certainly worthy of recognition.

"It's not about the numbers. It's about building relationships with the guys, assistant coaches, and my peers. I honestly forgot about the 300th win until after we got back from the Point Loma game," said Ammann.

Both Ammann and his players have their goals set on much higher things as they enter the second half of conference play. "We hope to win every championship we come across through hard work, work ethic, and belief," said Austin Simon, senior. Simon is leading the team, averaging 16 points per game this year. Tim Harris, junior, said, "We hope to win the conference championship and then nationals."

The Eagles current winning record, along with Ammann's recent milestone, illustrate the team's strength and determination, "We play hard, extremely hard," said Harris. "Coach pushes us each and every practice." Ammann recorded a career-



Ammann is currently in his eleventh year of coaching at Concordia.

high 19 conference wins as a part of a GSAC regular season championship last year. "Coach gives motivational speeches, and if that fails, he yells, but we understand," said Simon.

After falling to BIOLA at home last Saturday, the Eagles remain one game behind Westmont in the GSAC standings. "Each year is its own journey. This year's team is probably one of the closest groups we've had. It really makes it more fun for the coaches and the players when the team gets along," said Ammann. "Everybody is a lot closer

this year. Our personalities fit well together, and all the guys have a sense of humor," said Simon. "The coaches are all focused on the win and doing what it takes to get there," said Simon. Simon went on to state that the Eagles' biggest strength is that they have the ability to move on and play unfazed throughout the game.

The Men's Basketball team will play their next game tonight against Master's College before hosting Azusa Pacific this Saturday. Both games will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Baseball's title defense underway

BY BRIANNA LAMANNA
STAFF WRITER

The Concordia baseball team has begun its season with ambition of winning another national championship. The team started its season with a win on Tues., Jan. 24, against Simpson University. The Eagles went on to win their double header the following Sunday, Jan. 29, against Arizona Christian. The team outscored its opponents by a total of 30-12 over the three-game stretch.

Winning the first three games of the season has really excited the players. "It feels great," said Keith Murakami, senior catcher. "There's always room for improvement, but we have seen a lot of up-side in the first couple games."

Mike Grahovac, Head Coach, is ready for the many challenges this season brings. "The main challenge is not getting complacent, not living off of last year's win," Grahovac said. The team faces another difficulty of revamping a roster which graduated 13 players last year. "We are basically starting all over again with new players," said Grahovac. "This year's team is more athletic, bigger, stronger and has more depth than last year's team."

Despite the changes in personnel, the Eagles will plan to incorporate the same strategy that guided their run in Idaho last May. "We still have the same team philosophy, and we all have the same goal - to get back to the World Series," said Josh White, senior pitcher. Both White and Kyle Konicek, senior left-fielder, are the only two players who have been on the team for four years.

Konicek stated that he is looking forward to playing at Cal Baptist University. Last year, the team lost to Cal Baptist in all four games of conference play. "Not only are they out of our conference now, but that was our home field last year, where we won the GSAC Championships and Regionals in order to get to the World Series," said Konicek. The non-conference double header against Cal Baptist will take place in April.

The team will play 49 games against 16 schools this season. Other notable conference games include matchups against Biola University, Azusa Pacific University, and Vanguard University, all taking place in March. The GSAC Playoffs and the NAIA regionals will take place at the beginning of May.

The Eagles will travel to Cal-State Los Angeles for a game tomorrow before beginning a three-game series with Cal-Poly Pomona over the weekend. Saturday's games will consist of a double-header, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at CU Field.

JJ takes game to NBA's Developmental League

BY SARINA GRANT
STAFF WRITER

Justin Johnson, '11, is currently playing guard for the Dakota Wizards of the NBA's Developmental League, an affiliate of the Golden State Warriors.

Johnson played basketball at Concordia for two seasons, and graduated with several titles, including NAIA Player of the Year during his senior year. He averaged nearly 16 points per game in his senior season, leading the Eagles to both a regular and postseason GSAC championships. During his Concordia career, Johnson notably hit game-winning, buzzer-beater shots against both Fresno Pacific and California Baptist. Since moving to the Wizards, Johnson has been deemed Player of the Game twice.

According to the NBA website, "the NBA D-League is an engaging and innovative sports property that embodies the dedication and passion for basketball shared by its promising and talented players." Johnson is part of an organization that "prides itself on its deep roots to the NBA, the bonds that its teams forge with their local communities, and the accessibility and excitement it

provides to fans and partners."

Things have been different for Johnson since being recruited for the Dakota Wizards. "Professional basketball is different from college basketball because of the longer time length of the game, and the advertisements during the game, which make it slower," said Johnson. "Plus, the competition is stronger, bigger, faster, there are more games in pro basketball."

The experience overall has been a positive one for Johnson. "Traveling to different arenas across the world is fun. The competition playing against ex-NBA players gives motivation too," he said. Johnson is currently averaging just under 13 points per game through the first 18 games of the season.

Having a Concordia graduate involved in professional sports is exciting to many students. "I think it's pretty awesome that someone from such a small school can make it that far," said Morgan Dickens, sophomore. The Wizards play their home games in Bismarck, ND.

Lauren Hendrix, sophomore, said, "Justin always seemed determined to win, and strived for the best for both himself, and his team."

To find out more about Johnson and his performance in the D-League, visit dakotawizards.com.



Justin Johnson, '11

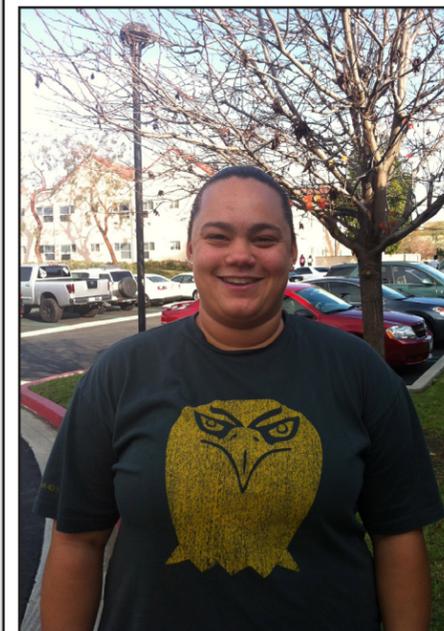
Davis pioneers female throwing at Concordia

BY JENNA SIETS
STAFF WRITER

Mikaila Davis, sophomore, is the first female thrower for the Track and Field team. Davis, a groundbreaking Concordia athlete, is from Santa Maria, CA, and attended Allen Hancock Junior College before transferring to Concordia this semester. She started shot putting in her junior year of high school during her off-season of basketball. "My brother, who was a track sprinter, really pushed me into the sport," Davis said. "I just did it and fell in love with it."

Rachel Brewer, Assistant Coach of Track and Field, is excited to see Davis compete. "Right from the start, she has connected with the team, despite being the only female thrower," Brewer said. Davis is the start of an establishment of a female throwing team. "You could not ask for anything more," she said, "than her willingness to come out and help with the establishment of the women throwers program, as well as work great with the rest of the team." Cody Summerville, Assistant Coach, has been seeing many improvements with Davis during the time he has spent with her. Summerville sees her joy for the sport everyday at practice, "She shows up everyday with a smile on her face and is ready to learn," he said. Having her will help the team in competition by giving a chance to score points in an area where it would have been scoreless before.

Coming to Concordia was a surprise to Davis. "It was totally God; it wasn't me." She also enjoys attending church on campus because, as she says, "God is my number one." Davis loves being a part of the Concordia atmosphere. "It really is a family down here," she said. "It's different than any other team I have been on." Jim Brewer, Head Coach of Track and Field, is excited for the spring of his first season. Jim Brewer sees Davis as a real positive, upbeat person. "Faith is definitely an important part of her," he said. "I am hoping to see Davis do some work with the discus and the javelin, as well with the shot-put."



Mikaila Davis, sophomore

Davis is currently studying athletic training. "My favorite professor so far would be Dr. Tammen who teaches Sports Psychology," she said. Aside from throwing, Davis enjoys going to the beach with friends as well as playing and watching basketball. She is very close to her family and has two brothers and one sister. "I love it here and I love it there," said Davis.

Davis stated that she is dedicated to improvement, in every aspect of her life. "I am putting in the work, so if God is there, I am too. With the right coaching from Coach Cody, I can make it." Overall, Davis wants to be successful on and off the field. "I want to improve on all my marks in all of the throws, as well as have good academics during season." Proverbs 3:5-6 is a verse that has always been a refuge for her. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and He will make your path straight."

Men's Basketball
vs.
Azusa Pacific
Sat. Feb. 11 @ 7:30 pm
CU Arena

Artist Spotlight

An interview with The Slow Waltz

Zach Borst: How did you get into music?

Drew Williams: My parents actually met while on a touring musical group after college, so I guess music has always been a huge part of my family. I started playing instruments when I was 9 or 10.

Megan Atlakson: When I was in junior high, I started to learn how to play the piano from my pastor's wife. I played on the worship team and I slowly began to write songs, some good, some hopefully to never be heard again.

ZB: What inspired you two to come together as a group?

DW: I was a sophomore and was in a "band" at the time, and I heard Megan play at an open mic night. I thought, "Wow, she should totally join our band." She didn't really seem keen on the idea at the time, so we didn't end up playing together until months later. I asked her if she would like to do a little acoustic thing for the inaugural Rock the Amp, and she agreed. We played each other's songs, and it seemed to click. Other people enjoyed the sound, and we both enjoyed the process of writing and playing together.

MA: He and I collaborated well from the beginning. He is great on taking ideas and building off them.

ZB: Why the name The Slow Waltz?

DW: That's my fault. We wanted to have a cool name for the first time we played, and so we started racking our brains. At the time, I thought it was poetic and deep. Megan laughed and didn't know what to think at first. She only allowed it as a placeholder until we thought of something better. But then it just stuck.

MA: I still don't know.

ZB: How would you describe your sound?

DW: Definitely acoustic dubstep. But seriously, we like to write songs about simple, raw emotions and our sound reflects that.

MA: I don't know how to describe it exactly, but we use a lot of harmonies, and try to keep it simple with acoustic instruments. I guess the closest musical genre terms would be folk or indie...or dubstep.

ZB: What musical influences does The Slow Waltz have? Which artists have influenced each of you in becoming musicians?

DW: I used to listen to a lot of different types of music, including acoustic emo and trance house music, but I was influenced most by songwriters who told stories through their music—people like Chris Carraba, Bob Dylan and Justin Vernon.

MA: Together, Drew and I have The Civil Wars as an influence. I have been influenced by many female vocalists such as Imogen Heap, Sia, Adele, Brooke Fraser and Stevie Nicks.

ZB: Where do you play? Where can CUI students see you perform?

DW: We're booking some shows at different OC locations right now, which people can find

on our website and Facebook page, but we're going to make an appearance at A Night of Hope in April.

ZB: What was it like working on recording your self-titled EP?

DW: It was hard work trying to get each and every song to sound just right, which is why it took a really long time for me to track the guitars. Then Megan got up and knocked out all her piano parts in less than half the time it took me. Lame.

MA: It was absolutely wonderful. Drew and I have been playing our songs for over two years and it was great to finally record them. The recording process went for three long days, sometimes over 12 hours at a time. Our producer, Jon O'Brien, recorded each instrument separately for each song. So day one was the guitar for six hours. Next was the piano, then vocals, then the glockenspiel and so on.

ZB: What is your favorite song on the EP? Why?

DW: My favorite song right now is probably "Stuck on You." It was the last one we wrote, and a last minute addition to the album. Honestly, it came from a simple little hook that Megan wrote which became the chorus and just grew from there. We usually focus on the lyrics and the story they tell, but this one leans more heavily on the musical movements. The whole song is so simple, but it was fun to stomp and clap and add a fullness to it that sets it apart from the other songs on the EP.

MA: Probably the seventh song "You Just Smile." It's a slow build and has a gracefulness about it. I also love the reverb our producer used on the vocals.

ZB: Where can we get your album? Do you have a website?

MA: The best way to get our album is directly from us on our website, theslowwaltz.com, where you can preview the whole thing for free. If you have gift cards you want to spend, we can also be found on iTunes, AmazonMP3 and CDBaby.

ZB: What underrated album or band would you recommend to Concordia students?

DW: We are both really enjoying Noah Gunderson right now. He is getting some notice outside of his Seattle roots, but more people need to listen to his music.

ZB: What is next on the agenda for The Slow Waltz? What do you two aspire to do as musicians?

DW: We're definitely playing more shows this year. Our schedules don't always line up, but we're working out as many shows as we can. A couple trips are even in the works to play outside of the SoCal area.

MA: This is a new year full of exciting things. We definitely would like to keep writing and playing at new venues with new faces. I am always ready to start working on the first Slow Waltz Christmas album. It's not too early right?

Spencer's *Princess and the Pea* a simple success

BY TAYLOR BUNDY
STAFF WRITER

The Concordia theater department presented a modern adaptation of "The Princess and the Pea" from Feb. 2-4. Directed by Sarah Spenser, senior, it was the first student-directed play of the 2011-12 school year. It also debuted freshmen actresses Alexandra Dominguez, Victoria Jurkowski and Faith McAllister.

The play opens with Donald Dunce, played by Nick Scutti, sophomore, heralding the audience with his excited voice and little kazoo. Soon after, the audience finds that the royal family's Book of Wisdom indicates that Prince Valiant, played by Sean Derbyshire, sophomore, must go on a quest to find a princess to marry. His father, the King, and "Granny," the Old Queen (humorously played by Andy Zanca, junior, and Katie Foggiano, freshman), see the Prince and Donald off on their journey. Just before leaving, Granny gives the Prince a scroll with words of wisdom to assist in times of distress.

Apparently, Prince Valiant and Donald Dunce encounter dragons, but the young prospective brides are much harder to fight off. The first girl he encounters is the very intelligent Princess Minerva, played by Jurkowski, and Valiant is intimidated by her expansive vocabulary. The next princess is not much better. Melissa Cheffers, junior, plays Prin-

cess Diana, an incredibly colorful and giggly young lady. To get out of the situation, the scroll advises him to say, "Don't call us, we'll call you." Prince Valiant then meets a third princess (Robyn Cornish, sophomore) whose beauty radiates conceit. Lastly, he meets Princess Stella, played by McAllister, freshman, who is so strong she hurts Valiant with her crippling handshakes and pats on the back. Tired and worn out, Prince Valiant returns home without a bride.

Sometimes we go looking for love, but this play shows that love may also come when you least expect it. As soon as the Prince and Donald return, they hear a knock on their castle gates. The King finds a drenched princess and her maid outside. It is love at first sight for Prince Valiant and Princess Olivia, played by Dominguez, freshman. However, the Book of Wisdom says the princess must pass the Secret Test before the two can be married. What follows is a hilarious situation including multiple mattresses and a tiny pea.

The set was very simple, containing a deep red curtain upstage and gold pillars on either side of the stage, but the actors brought the set to life with their electrifying portrayal of the characters. It was also really fun to see a contrast of the old-looking costumes with the modern comedic devices. The play was well received with nearly all shows having a full-house.



Actors perform on Sat. Feb. 4.



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Ten prep for East Africa Stonehenge anthropologist holds lecture at Concordia

BY TATIANA TOSCANO
STAFF WRITER

Adam Lee, Professor of English, and a team of 10 are headed on a mission trip to East Africa beginning May 9. They are expected to return to California July 4. The team will be traveling through the countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. A majority of the trip has already been planned out. The team will be working alongside FIKISHA—a non-profit organization founded by Sam Bretzmann, '10. They will also be touching base with the Peace Corps in Kenya through the connection of Kristen Turner, '11.

Concordia students have been present in Kenya every summer since 2009, firmly planting the fellowship between the university and the people they have reached. "The youth there are valued and loved and completely wonderful, but that is often lost and marred in the dirt of the slums," said Bretzmann, "Concordia students traveling across oceans to come and spend time with them, investing in them, getting to know them, that speaks so loudly against the lies that surround them. It shows them they are worthy and valuable and special in ways that you cannot do through a letter."

Connecting primarily with the Kawangware Lutheran Church in Nairobi, the team will be serving alongside Bishop Rev. Francis Nyamwaro Onderi. Onderi received his honorary doctorate from Concordia in 2010. Many villages in this area do

not have access to a literary translation of the Bible. The group will transform Bible stories into skits to share with the local churches, teaching the Gospel through art.

Each team member is covering their own expenses and sacrificing eight weeks of their summer. They have already started meeting every Tuesday for devotionals, learning songs and phrases in Swahili and discussing their plans to insure a safe and fruitful trip. In addition to praying for each other's personal needs, they are focusing on praying for the places and people they will be among. "I, for one, am excited to continue this ministry. And it doesn't end after this summer," said Ben Bolognini, junior.

About half of the team, including Bolognini, has travelled with Lee before on either a study abroad semester or a service mission trip. The team is working well together, and according to Lee, they have no concerns with getting to know each other. "Everyone has some cool experience that they are bringing. We're just flying in and jumping directly into service," Lee said.

Bolognini reiterated some of the same feelings about the team that has been put together. "We each bring uniqueness to the full picture. I can confidently stand side by side any of the team members," he said. The East Africa mission is one of nine trips that will be taking place this summer through Abeywest and the Office of Global Programs.

Bookstore shirt supports ATW

BY AUDREY BIESK
STAFF WRITER

The Founder's Bookstore is currently selling Great Commission t-shirts to benefit the Around-the-World scholarship fund. Emily Moore, junior, designed the t-shirt. She is double majoring in art and business. "I feel so blessed to have had my design chosen for the shirt because it makes me feel like I contributed in the fundraising process for Concordia students to travel around the world and spread the word of God," said Moore.

The Great Commission is taken from Matthew 28, which is featured on the shirt. "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." The verse is also written in all the different languages of the countries the Around-the-World team will be traveling to. The words are in the shape of a cross across the

map of the world.

Adam Lee, Professor of English, will be teaching and traveling with the Around-the-World students. "Our university, since its formation, has been the Great Commission college. It's great these shirts are helping raise money for missions, but I am most excited about people seeing them being worn and being reminded of where our vision and purpose should be," Lee said.

Shirts are being sold for \$12.95, with half the amount going directly to the Around-the-World fund. This is the first time the bookstore has participated in such a program. Cyndi Tully, Bookstore Manager, is excited to be involved in funding a campus program. "The shirt is awesome and it is created by one of our students. We should be behind all of the students that are going on the trip and all of the other mission groups going out to serve as well," Tully said.

The Great Commission t-shirts will be sold until the end of the year in sizes S-XXL in the Founder's Bookstore. Youth sizes will be available soon.

BY ALICIA HARGER
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dr. Michael Parker Pearson, a worldwide expert on Stonehenge, visited campus from the University of Sheffield, England and reported on the most recent and exciting discoveries surrounding the mysterious monument. The talk was hosted by the Orange County branch of the Archeological Institute of America, and about 130 community members and students attended.

Pearson was the head of the Stonehenge Riverside Project from 2003-2009. This project did extensive excavation work at the Stonehenge site and at another nearby henge—Durrington Walls.

"I thought he was very interesting and I learned a lot of details about Stonehenge that I had never heard of before," said Shannon Alavi, freshman. Many of the students who attended took diligent notes and were very absorbed in the presentation.

One of the most consequential findings of the Riverside Project involved the site that the Stonehenge stones came from. Geologists were able to trace the stones to a specific area of southern Wales about 180 miles away from the Stonehenge site. When researchers conducted an excavation at the origin of the stones, they found the remnants of a quarry with a cut monolith and rails that could have been used to transport the stones. Pearson takes this as solid evidence that the stones were moved by builders and not deposited in the Stonehenge area by some ancient glacier, which had been a common theory.

"It was intriguing that the team found evidence

suggesting the glaciation theory was incorrect. Stonehenge is one of the most awe-inspiring feats that humans have achieved," Alavi said. The idea of basic tools and sheer manpower moving stones that weigh up to 4 tons is a testament to human will.

Some of the most exciting discoveries from Durrington Walls involved the presence of houses and evidence of garbage just outside the moment. The garbage mainly consisted of animal bones, indicative of feasting.

Further analysis of these animal remains revealed that the animals were raised as far away as northern Scotland. Pearson believes that people would travel to Durrington Walls from all over Britain for some sort of celebration, bringing their animals and slaughtering them specifically for these feasts.

One of the little known facts about Stonehenge is that it is actually a burial site. Pre-historic people were cremated and then buried around Stonehenge. When archeologists analyzed the remains of the cremations, they found several artifacts that would seem to indicate those buried had political or religious authority.

Pearson concluded his presentation with theories about the purposes of both Stonehenge and Durrington Walls. He hypothesized that Stonehenge was a place for the dead—it was a burial ground and there was no evidence of living areas nearby. Meanwhile, Durrington Walls was a place for the living as surrounding homes and evidence of feasts support this theory.



Duerr, Tawtel, study abroad

BY SALLY JEAN WARREN
STAFF WRITER

The Study Abroad program offers Concordia students a diverse variety of experiences in countries across the globe. Students who are or have been able to participate in the study abroad program know that it will strengthen their communication and life skills as they encounter another culture. There are four types of programs that Concordia offers: exchanges, faculty led programs, third party programs, and summer programs. Concordia enables students to have the opportunity to travel to France, South Korea, Ghana, Italy, Australia, Austria, and England. There are more countries that the Global Programs office is working on potentially being a part of that includes Germany, Spain, and Ireland. Italy and France seem to be the most popular semester exchange destinations for Concordia students. "Europe is a hot spot," said Faith McKinney, Director of Global Programs. If a student chooses to study abroad with a third party program, it allows them to travel to almost whatever country they wish.

"Studying abroad also gives the students a way to understand what it means to be an American," said Dan Waite, Executive Director of Global Programs. Waite believes that if someone experiences another country, it will help them have a better sense of who they are as an American citizen.

The period of time the student is gone depends on which specific study abroad program they participate in. Students usually choose to study abroad for a semester and are recommended to take no more than 15 credits. Two Concordia students studying abroad this semester include Mark Duerr, and Danielle Tawtel, juniors.

Duerr is currently studying theology through a

unique program at the Westfield House Seminary in Cambridge, England. He has the opportunity to learn about England's culture, as well as continuing his study of theology. He gets the chance to go to class and interact with England's daily life. On the other hand, traveling to other countries also has its challenges. "I have had to learn to shop for my own food, how to budget my money, and how to actually cook," he said. "At first it was annoying because I ended up eating sandwiches every day, but I'm starting to like it more and more." Traveling abroad can be very beneficial as it gives students a chance to broaden their perspective of the world through observing unique aspects of other cultures.

Duerr loves the chance to be surrounded by a diverse atmosphere, "I live with a group of fantastic individuals from all over the world," said Duerr. "I have had many conversations comparing my Southern California culture, with the cultures of Germany, Finland, Madagascar, and India." Studying with people with different backgrounds and cultures helps make a student culturally aware. McKinney also emphasized the importance of learning about other cultures in order to be successful in the workplace. "Employers are looking to see you have an experience outside your comfort zone," McKinney said.

Tawtel is currently studying abroad at the Lebanese American University in Lebanon. "I chose to study abroad because I want to broaden my horizons and study in a different environment," Tawtel said. "I thought it would be a great experience for me." She is enjoying her chance to study and experience new things. "I am enjoying skiing in the beautiful mountains of Lebanon," she said.

For more information studying abroad, as well as other international opportunities, visit the Global Programs office in Administration 120.



Martha James, junior, models the fundraiser shirt.

Highlights from MIU student visit



A group of ten students and professors from Mongolia International University visited Concordia from Jan. 30-Feb. 2

25 Fun Facts with Dakota Anderson

Scott Kolmer, Homecoming King Aimee Burdette, Homecoming Queen

1. Scott and Aimee are both transfers
2. Scott's dog name is Butkus
3. Aimee visited Michael Jordan's house when she was little
4. Scott got bit by a goose once
5. Aimee has an irrational fear of pigs
6. Scott is scared of mascots, banks and birds
7. Aimee loves sushi
8. Scott is going to be an Uncle
9. Aimee has 7 siblings and was home schooled
10. Scott's favorite movies include A Walk to Remember and Aladdin
11. Aimee's favorite books include The Hunger Games, Withering Heights and the Harry Potter series
12. Scott loves shaped macaroni and cheese because "It tastes way better!"
13. Aimee will run seven miles on Valentine's Day
14. Scott will hurl if he smells mustard
15. Aimee does not like mayonnaise
16. Scott has fractured his pinky twice
17. Aimee has shattered her face
18. Scott once had a turtle, lost it for two weeks in his room, and it survived
19. Aimee was once cleaning a fish bowl when her Beta fell in the garbage disposal. She forgot about it and later turned on the disposal.
20. Scott has never had coffee
21. Aimee's favorite beverage is a Cape Cod with a splash of lime
22. Scott has a man crush on Ryan Gosling and John Mayer...
Aimee has the same crushes
23. Scott would like to be in a boy band one day
24. Aimee had a childhood dream to be in Barney
25. Scott and Aimee are both single, and willing to accept dates on Valentine's Day to whomever deems themselves worthy

Trembath Lecture

Romans: It's not really about You...and that's a Good Thing!
presented by
The Rev. Dr. Mike Middendorf
Professor of Theology
Tuesday, February 7, 4:00 pm
De Nault Auditorium, Grimm Hall

Concordia's 2010-2011 Trembath Professor Rev. Dr. Mike Middendorf suggests a close reading of Paul's letter to the Romans reveals that it is more about community than the individual. Even more important, Paul's main emphasis is not upon humanity. Instead he directs our attention primarily toward God, his righteousness, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Middendorf has submitted a draft of his commentary on Romans 1-8 to Concordia Publishing House. This lecture will summarize some of his work on the first of two volumes in the Concordia Commentary series.



Dak finished behind Kolmer after being nominated for Homecoming King.

Pop Culture Vulture: Escape in film

BY ERIK OLSEN
STAFF WRITER

A lot of people say that the movies are an escape—an escape from reality, an escape from the stresses and worries of life, and the things that hold us back. It's a nice way to unwind for a few hours, before heading back out into the harsh light of day, ready to take on the world again. I've been hearing this for years now, and I've even believed it once or twice. But, more often than not, I have to say that I disagree. For me, personally, the movies are anything but. In fact, I do some of my best worrying when I'm at the movies.

If I have a presentation coming up, or I've got an issue with someone, it'll eat away at me as I sit there in the dark. No matter how engrossing the movie is, or how much I've been dying to see it. As I wrote this, I had plans to go to the movies on Feb. 4th, to see Harry Potter vs. The Woman in Black. It's a film I'd been looking forward to for quite awhile. You can bet I was nervous and on edge, but it most likely wasn't due to the action on-screen.

I knew what's going to happen: My mind was going to be focused solely on the Super Bowl, and how the Giants would do—whether or not they'll win, whether or not I'll be able to get that Justin

Tuck Super Bowl jersey, whether or not I'll have to endure the hateful gloating from a Bears fan friend of mine who is frustratingly anti-Giants. In all honesty, I'm probably gonna have to pay to see the film again.

Believe it or not, this makes me normal. Reuters.com recently took a poll to determine the number of people who view movies as an escape. They found that one in four of the people who were polled believed in the escape factor. However, 58% of those polled—a pretty solid majority—did not. I think that's really interesting. I'm actually kind of surprised that movies, in general, have gotten a reputation for being escapist entertainment. If anything, I would think they would only remind us of the lives we lead outside.

Nowadays, it seems like we can't open our mouths without offending someone, somewhere, who cares about some obscure thing or another. The same can be said for movies. Someone, somewhere, is always going to be impacted in some way by something they see on the big screen—even those special one-out-of-four people who go to the movies to escape.

Frankly, I think it's impossible to see a movie without linking it back to some type of life experience. That's what makes films so important and so

memorable in the first place.

Cinema is an Art form because we can relate to it. It's an Art form because it can make us think, and feel, and react. I don't care if it's something as perfect as Pulp Fiction, or as low-brow as Tromeo & Juliet. Every movie has a story to tell. Not just about itself, but about us, as well. Yeah, I know, some movies are just flat-out terrible. The aforementioned Tromeo & Juliet comes to mind. But, even as you sit there watching them butcher Shakespeare, I'd defy you to not flashback to a simpler time when you were in Dr. Tom's class pondering The Tempest, or on a stage in your high school's gym, reciting "To be, or not to be."

I admit that not all movies are supposed to be life-changing. Some are made solely for entertainment value, or to make a quick buck. I acknowledge that fully. But my point remains the same. Every movie offers a different experience. Every movie is a reminder, and a memory. Like our daily interactions with everyone we meet, there is something to be gained, and learned, and shared from each and every one of them. So, are the movies really an escape from life? Nahh, dude. Not at all. The movies are life.

Everything says "wow" at Z'Tejas

BY JOSHUA YOUNG
STAFF WRITER

Z'Tejas is a self-proclaimed "Southwestern Grill" tucked away on the Bristol Street side of South Coast Plaza. They got their start in an old Victorian house on 6th Street in Austin, Texas in 1989, taking influences from the flavors of California, Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Arizona. Staying true to their Southwestern mantra, they offer a number of dishes featuring catfish, shrimp, avocados and different peppers.

To start, each table gets a fresh out-of-the-oven plate of cornbread and honey-butter just like mamma makes. As far as the appetizers go, the Catfish Tacos are off the hook. Bringing together the best of the south, they stuff blackened catfish in with jalapeno mayo, some cut veggies in lime juice and topped with a tangy ginger sauce. As far as fish tacos go, these are as good as it gets.

Keeping in with the fish theme, Z'Tejas has a

Sesame Seared Ahi tuna entrée (off the menu: just ask!). The fish is always cooked just right, a little crunch on the outside and nearly raw like sashimi in the middle. The tuna is seared in a sesame and pepper rub giving it a great flavor and an even better kick! You won't be able to tell until you try it, but when this place does fish, they do it right.

You probably will not be able to eat all of this in one sitting, but now we are on to the main courses. Out of all of the things on the menu that I have tried, the Z' Burger is an all-around awesome way to spend your dinner.

It starts with a hefty meat patty with cheese, lettuce, tomato, onion, and bacon, which on its own would make a decent burger. They then toss in their signature jalapeno mayo and you have yourself a burger fit for a king.

Z'Tejas has a few fairly traditional American restaurant desserts such as lava cake or peach cobbler, but if you are looking for a real treat they have one last trick up their sleeves. The last two items

on the menu are the House Cheesecake and the Chef's Dessert. The House Cheesecake varies from day-to-day and when I went, they were offering a coconut cheesecake which was without a doubt on par with something one might get at the Cheesecake Factory. The Chef's Dessert is a unique and innovative treat specially prepared by the chef at the time.

With Valentine's Day coming up, you might be looking for somewhere unique to take that special someone. This restaurant has a cool atmosphere that isn't too loud and would make a neat place to take a date.

For some perspective, this is the only restaurant that I have ever been to that I could not find one thing on the menu that didn't make me say "wow!" For lunch or dinner, one might expect to pay \$10-\$15 per person, which is a bit much for a student, but this one is definitely worth skipping a few late night In-N-Out runs for. Z'Tejas passes the taste test with flying colors! Five stars out of five!

The Slow Waltz dances in debut

BY ZACH BORST
ARTS EDITOR

The Slow Waltz, a band made up of Concordia alumni Drew Williams and Megan Atlakson, released their debut EP "The Slow Waltz EP" Dec. 20, 2011. The group has been together for two years, but only recently recorded their album with producer Jonathon O'Brien.

The Slow Waltz's self-titled EP begins with Williams' and Atlakson's harmonizing vocals in a long-held "Oh." Williams' warm, acoustic guitar strumming and Atlakson's accompaniment on the piano complement each other as they sing: "I think you're worth the wait, if it doesn't turn to hate. It might be love." The opening track "Might Be Love" is pleasant like a twangy coffee-house band; Williams and Atlakson furiously play their dynamic instruments, halting only for gorgeous vocal melodies. Halfway through the song, the group sings "this is not a test" pianissimo, eventually leading to the familiar chord structure. "Might Be Love" sounds more serious in parts than singer/songwriter Matt Costa, but the gorgeous vocal harmonies fill out the track like Costa does in his album "Songs We Sing."

"Stuck on You" picks up the soberness that The Slow Waltz flirted with in "Might Be Love," as Atlakson plays the piano softly as Williams draws out: "Baby, my eyes are stuck on you. I'll rendezvous, nothing to do." After the beginning of the track, I assumed "Stuck on You" would be sad and quiet. After Williams opens the track with his vocals, Atlakson hits her keys in staccato and is joined with the guitar and some up-beat handclapping. Suddenly Atlakson and Williams sing the same, simple lyrics as before, yet they seem more joyful: "Baby, my eyes are stuck on you. They're locked and glued, nothing to do." The mixture of handclapping, acoustic guitar and piano makes this indie duet a fun song with some complexity because of its quieter moments. "Stuck on You" shows The Slow Waltz's dynamic ability to be both acoustic and striking. The handclapping strikes similarities with the percussive ability of the indie, and also mostly acoustic, band The Dodos. This song could

use some bongo or djembe instrumentals, but it is fun to sing and clap to as it is.

"Honey, Honey" begins with Atlakson's sweet vocals, "Honey, honey, kiss me with those eyes and love me from across the floor," as Williams plucks and mutes his guitar. Williams enters the vocals and "Honey, Honey" begins to sound a little like "Once" as they sing: "Our eyes meet in between the seas of people around." The harmony fades as Williams continues plucking and Atlakson picks up her musical line, "Honey, honey, touch me, hold my hand and love me across the floor." The lyrics are repetitive like "Stuck on You" but with a completely different effect. The Slow Waltz aren't withdrawn in "Honey, Honey," but their energy is muted and quieted with an introspective track. As I listen to this song, I eagerly await Atlakson's vocal riff of "honey, honey." She nicely bookends her duet with Williams and shows off as a female vocalist with

the charm of someone like Ingrid Michaelson.

"The Slow Waltz EP" ends with the track "You Just Smile." Although the hook is soft and melancholic, Williams opens with some of his best guitar playing on the album. The dexterously maneuvered guitar line makes way for Atlakson to hauntingly sing, "What am I doing here? What do I say I am afraid of losing?" "You Just Smile" perfectly sums The Slow Waltz's skill sets: A melodic harmony crescendos as the duo sing the slightly altered lyrics, "What are we doing here?"

Although the lyrics to the album are simple overall, "The Slow Waltz EP" is a powerful debut. Concordia alumni Drew Williams and Megan Atlakson play off each other well in their harmonies and as they switch off vocals. Their guitar and piano-playing are also well-matched. At times the album is slow, but the lyrics are sweet, the harmonies gorgeous and the songs are fun.



Core book Review:

Sorrows of Young Werther

NATANYA MOODY
STAFF WRITER

Reading a story as tragic as "The Sorrows of Young Werther" should not be so enjoyable, yet thousands of readers, including myself, have found the book a pleasure to read in spite of—or truly because of—the sorrows young Werther must face. While this seems strange, tragedies have had a long history of pleasing audiences—from "Oedipus" to "Hamlet" and most of the Coen brothers' films.

According to Aristotle, watching (or reading) a tragedy is an extremely complex experience involving mimesis, catharsis, spoudaios, etc. It will suffice here to tell you that, however strange, the unique human state of pleasure-pain as we pity the characters we watch and fear the outcome of their actions is good for your soul. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, author of "Young Werther," is a trustworthy acolyte of the tragic tradition.

The Editor, a fictional character in "Young Werther," is our guide throughout the novel. He has pieced together the many letters written by Werther—who is young, artistic, and in love—to his best friend Wilhelm. In his letters to Wilhelm, Werther narrates his odyssey in the German countryside, where he has come to escape an awkward love triangle featuring two sisters as well as read Homer and experience country life through his art.

Although the Editor never shows us a letter from Werther's friend, Wilhelm, we know that Wilhelm must be an intelligent, thoughtful man if he is to keep pace with Werther's passionate and provoking discourse. Wilhelm must also be a genius comforter if he is to console Werther in all the dreadful travails the young man faces. We can also thank Wilhelm for being our surrogate, as he is obliged to ask Werther to clarify certain points, demands more details from him and perpetuates scintillating debates.

In the fashion of the epistolary novel (a novel comprised of letters), the narrative is not driven by plot but by thought, specifically Werther's thoughts. His letters are the only ones the Editor presents to us. Werther does tell many stories, and a course of action can certainly be plotted, but the strength of the narrative is in the intense philosophical yarns Werther spins about art, love, nature and morality—*surtout*, the truth of existence—while being irrevocably in love with the beautiful, kind Lotte, who is engaged to another man.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe has an incredible range of intellect encompassing fields like biology, physics, math, poetry and philosophy. In the landscape of Goethe's writings, "Young Werther" is perhaps the most accessible place to meet the mind of this genius. He reaches into the universal human experience, draws out all we are familiar with—love, death, art, jealousy—and wrestles with it until our beloved character's life collapses before our reading eyes.

The Sorrows of Young Werther



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe