

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## The Playlist

A LOOK AT THE WORLD OF MUSIC, FROM THE OBSCURE TO THE OBSCENE, THE NEW AND THE OLD.

# The Hot 8

### NEW ORLEANS' BRASS BAND ADDS SOME CAJUN SPICE TO BEHREND

continued from page 1.

and formed what became Hot 8." The band remained relatively unknown until after the events following Hurricane Katrina.

According to the Logan Series pamphlet, the "Hot 8 Brass Band was propelled to international prominence after appearing in *When the Levees Broke*," a documentary on Hurricane Katrina.

"I had seen them in Spike Lee's movie," says Viebranz. Shortly after he saw the movie, Viebranz says that he received an email informing him that the band was under professional management and that they were definitely ready to perform at venues (such as the Logan Series).

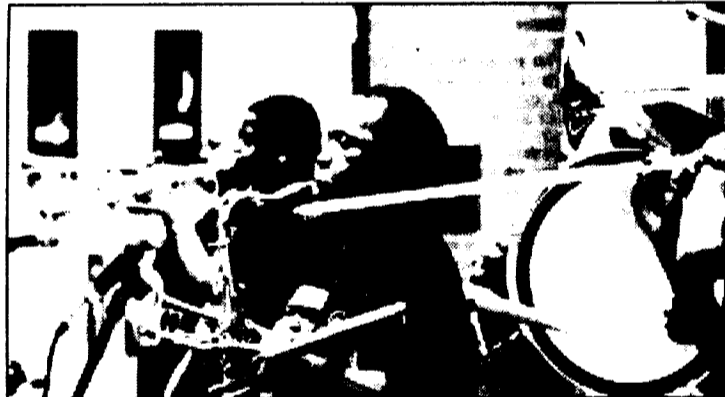
Like all of New Orleans, Hot 8 had its share of tragedy in the aftermath of the devastating hurricane. In addition to losing a lot of business in an economically and violence-stricken New Orleans, original drummer Dinerral Shavers was shot and killed in late 2006 while driving with his wife and child in the city. Two other members of the band also lost their lives due to violence on the city streets. According to their webpage, "The Hot 8 Brass Band has recommitted itself to bringing people together through their unique brand of music to celebrate, to heal and to learn" as a response to all of their unfortunate setbacks. Pete says that the message they want to get across is "in the music."

"Determination. Perseverance. We've been through so much," recalls Pete. "We've lost four members. The strength of the music kept us playing." Samuel Cyrus, snare drummer, says he continues to play because he loves the music. "I grew up around it, like everyday. Where we come from, you grow up with bands playing at the church. What we got," states Cyrus, "is brewed from gospel and marches. I mean, the bands played church songs," laughed Cyrus.

The band also expresses the ability to overcome any adversity. Newest member and trumpeter, Terrell Batiste, lost his legs and is confined to a wheelchair. That doesn't stop him from doing what he loves. "I've always wanted to play with the Hot 8. They were well-known. [Former member] Jerome came to my house for a family visit," expressed Batiste. He mentioned that it was this quality - big, interconnected families - that helped to produce some of Hot 8's fan base. "I played baritone, but I taught myself to play trumpet because Hot 8 needed a trumpet player."

Batiste explains that "in the chair, you can do what you wanna do. I wanted to share the culture. [This chair] won't stop me. It's deeper than just playing music. What I'm doing," he says, "what I'm doing is showing that anyone can get up here and play. You don't have to be the best of the best."

When it comes to the executive decision, Dr. Gary Viebranz holds most of the responsibility of who gets to perform in the Logan Series. While "the decision is mostly mine," says Viebranz, "the advisory board still reviews the selections I make.



From left to right: JonPai Brooks, Raymond Williams, and Wendell Stewart.

From time to time, Mrs. Logan will provide some input on who I've picked out, but she mostly stays out of [the decision making]."

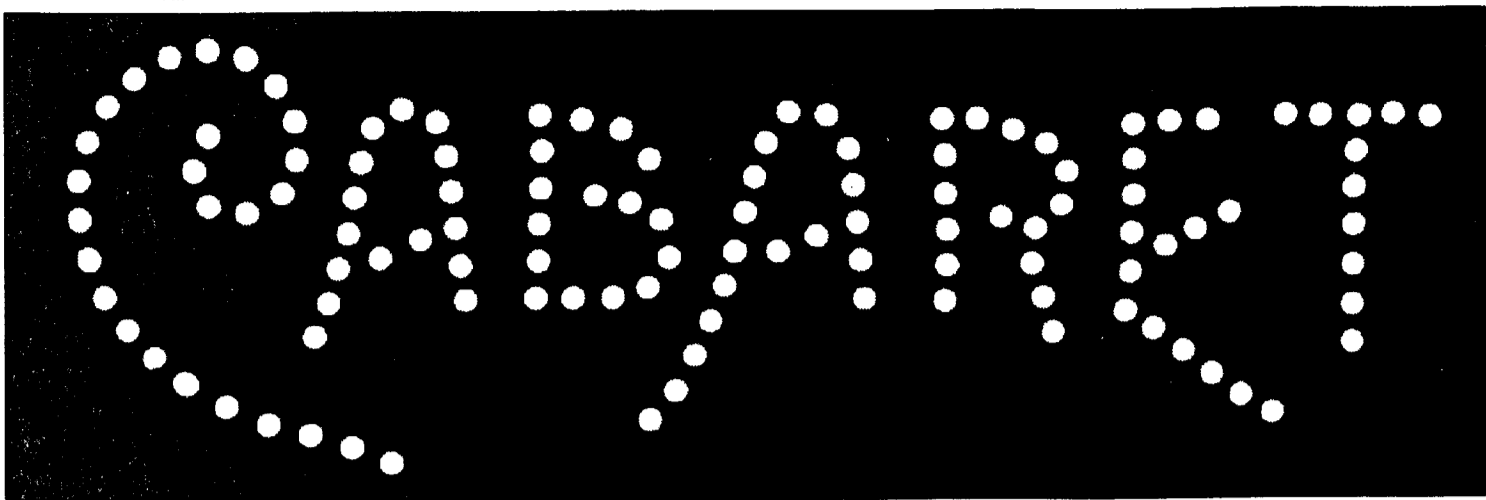
Professors like Viebranz and Dr. Jason Bishop, who teach many of the music classes on campus will often require their students to attend such performances. According to Viebranz, the "whole series ties together with our music program."

The actual performance, which drew in more than 300 attendees, incorporated not only the hip-hop and jazz style they're known for, but singing as well. The majority of the vocals came from tenor sax player, Wendell Stewart, but everyone in the Hot 8 has their part. The show opened with "Rock with the Hot 8," a remix of a Snoop Dogg classic. Stewart, who spent an equal amount of time both playing and singing, coaxed the audience into joining the chorus with catchy phrases. "Bourbon Street Parade" showed off the marching band roots of the group, featuring the trumpet players and drummers. "Fly Away," one such instance of the blend of gospel and march, featured the often repeated refrain of "Gloria, fly away, oh Gloria. I'll fly away in the mornin' When I die, hallelujah, by-and-by. I'll fly away."

The fourth piece on the set list, "Feel Like Funkin' it Up," featured a number of soloists (as did most of their pieces) that mostly incorporated the tenor sax, trumpets, and trombone. Frequently in the song, Stewart would chant "hey" eight times and end the phrase in "move yo' body!" which coaxed the audience into clapping in rhythm. The final piece of the performance, the classic "Saints Go Marching," featured much vocal progression and a solo from every instrumentalist in the band. As the solo went on, Stewart sang along: "mama don't allow no [instrument] playin' round here. Oh, mama don't allow no [instrument] playin' round here. well, we don't care what mama say. we gonna play that [instrument] anyway. oh, mama don't allow no [instrument] playin' round here." The group went out with a bang in the final measures of this song by breaking out into a can-can.

Steel Flynn, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, says that though he needed to see the group in order to write a paper for his class, "Hot 8 seemed to me like a fun and enjoyable show to see. For someone like me that isn't big on jazz, I thought the show was amazing. 'Fly Away' was the one that I loved the most though."

"We hope these concerts will allow students an opportunity to broaden their horizons, and appreciate styles of music that may be unfamiliar to them. Over the course of a year, the Logan Series and other concerts on campus really expose students to a wide variety of musical genres and performers," says Flynn. As for the last show in the Logan Series, Viebranz says he wanted to "kick it out in party mode, you know? Go out with a bang."



## Behrend's spring musical opens and brings the message of love, sex, and Nazism.

By Jennifer Juncosa  
perspectives editor  
jj5061@psu.edu

Penn State Behrend's spring performance of *Cabaret* opened April 16 in the Studio Theater. The intimate cast of 17, under the direction of Chrystyna Dail, brings a provocative and political musical to Behrend.

*Cabaret* music and lyrics by John Kander and Fred Ebb and book by Joe Masteroff, is about the Kit Kat Klub during the rise of Hitler. Sally Bowles (Cassie Kosmal) is a dancer at the Kit Kat Klub. Clifford Bradshaw (Darius K. Martin) is a struggling writer trying to find inspiration in Berlin. During his stay, Bradshaw stays in an apartment owned by Fraulein Schneider (Alanna Stecura). Schneider is a friend of Herr Shultz (Michael Bilz), the owner of a fruit shop.

Another character worth mentioning was the Master of Ceremonies (Dr. John Champagne), a flamboyant host that sings and dances throughout the performance. He was the only one of the actors that was a professor rather than a student. "I have always been inter-

ested in the show itself, and the attempt to perform a musical that has a political bend to it." Champagne is an English professor who typically works with students in an academic way. "It was fun to interact with students in a different way," he said.

Around the start of the New Year, Bradshaw goes to the Kit Kat Klub after getting a recommendation from Ernst Ludwig (Michael Bilz), a German he meets on a train when coming to Berlin. While at the Kit Kat Klub, Bradshaw meets Bowles. Soon after the start of the New Year, Bowles shows up at Bradshaw's apartment saying she left the club and could be his inspiration for the book.

The relationship between Bradshaw and Bowles is not the only one that grows throughout the play; Schneider and Shultz get engaged. But during the engagement party, Ludwig reveals he is a Nazi. Fraulein Kost (Sonia Rosales), a tenant in Schneider's building with many male visitors, tells Ludwig that Shultz is a Jew. Ludwig immediately tells Schneider that the wedding can't happen.

*Cabaret* takes place during the rise of Hitler. The musical starts with a light-hearted and provocative comedy but ends with the dark reality of his power. Even though the total extermination of Jews wasn't at the start of Hitler's regime, thousands of Jews were robbed, beaten, and murdered. By the second half of the play, there is no longer light-hearted comedy; there is the dark reality of the tension between the Jewish and non-Jewish characters.

Just like *The Dispute* held at the Studio Theater in spring, *Cabaret* was avant-garde. Prior to the start of the play, the Kit Kat Klub dancers (Brooke Barnes, Molly Bonavita, Ashley Boughner, Esther Laupp, and Hannah White) were in the audience saying things like "come here often" and "I bet you've got nice legs." Other members of the Ensemble were walking around the stage saying things like "I call dibs on the one in the back." The only other audience participation is if the Master of Ceremonies grabs you and makes your dance with him on stage in the beginning of the per-

formance.

The environment of the musical was personal due to the small space in the Studio Theater across from the Glenhill Farm House. The musical was lit with bright lights in the beginning of the play to compliment the light comedy. Towards act two, the lights were dim and with a tint of red when talking about Hitler and the Nazis. Live piano was performed throughout the entire musical, played by the musical director, Mary Jo Laupp.

When asked why Dale chose such a dark play she said, "It is important to examine the horrendous aspects of humanity, to confront them in an artistic setting, in order to cherish the beauty in our everyday lives."

Champagne added, "It's a strange show, it's funny and serious at the same time. It's a show that tries to move you emotionally and intellectually."

*Cabaret* opened last night and will continue to show through April 24. Tickets are on sale at the RUB desk.

Tickets are seven dollars for students and ten dollars for general admission.

## House of Sand debuts in Reed, surrounding controversy subsides

By Heather McGovern  
staff writer  
ham5084@psu.edu

Behrend's International Women's Film Series played *The House of Sand* in Reed 117 last Monday, April 13. *The House of Sand* is a movie set in the solitude of northern Brazil's vast deserts. The plot entails the portrayal of the developing relationship between a mother and her daughter as surrounding events continually change each others' viewpoints. The film contained a few sexually explicit scenes; however, the adult content was not the focus of the film and only a small event within the plot. This was the last film played in Reed 117 for the Film Series.

The story, set in 1910, follows the numerous struggles a woman from Brazil, Aurea, endures throughout her lifetime. Her husband, Vasco, leads the family into the vast, sandy terrain of Maranhão to form a new life. A caravan travels with Vasco, Aurea and Dona Maria, her mother; however, the caravan soon abandons the family when locals threaten Vasco to leave the land he paid for. The family is left to fend for themselves, but Vasco soon passes away after an incident of knocking the front porch roof down in anger. Aurea is left all alone to take care of her mother and the new baby on the way.

The story unfolds as Dona Maria ventures beyond their dune residing house. She discovers a settlement, originally

established by runaway slaves, and meets a man named Massu who offers his own assistance. His father, Chico, is a salt tradesman and offers Aurea passage with him away from the sandy dunes. Aurea anxiously waits to leave with her daughter when she is old enough to make the journey. Sadly, Chico passes away and her escape from the desert is foiled. In desperation to find Chico, Aurea travels for two days across the desert and runs

into a caravan of scientists, astronomers to be exact. She meets Lieutenant Luiz and an affair unravels during their short encounter with each other. Luiz offers an escape from the desert and Aurea readily agrees and leaves to bring her daughter and mother along for the trip. Upon her return, her house is halfway filled with sand and Maria and Dona Maria are missing for a few hours until finally returning to the house. Her escape

from the desert is foiled as the caravan leaves before the ladies return to the scene.

Years pass and the more Aurea becomes acquainted with the sandy plains, the less she considers leaving. Massu and Aurea make passionate love in one scene and continue creating a family together, which completely roots Aurea to her sandy paradise. Many more years pass by and Maria grows into a beautiful woman, similar in appearance to her mother. Luiz returns on duty to find a missing body from a plane crash in the area. He discovers that Aurea lives there with her family. Aurea requests that he take Maria with him so that she may start a new life elsewhere. The sandy plains are no place for a girl like Maria. She needs the opportunity for a new life. Luiz reluctantly agrees due to his current marital status and the mother and daughter do not reunite until many years later when both are old in age.

This foreign film was not my favorite; however, it was a very touching story about a mother and daughter's relationship. Living in harsh conditions within the sandy plains of Brazil is not a luxurious lifestyle to say the least. The way each of these women handle the situations life throws their way is remarkable. Thanks to the International Women's Film Series, Behrend students were given the opportunity to view these overseas treasures in the comforts of our own Reed building.



House of Sand originally debuted in Portuguese.

# Stratosphere

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