

# The Mac Weekly

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## Solo performance will bring revolutionary figure to life

By ADAM FEDERMAN

In describing "A Huey P. Newton Story," Assistant Professor of Dramatic Arts and Dance Beth Cleary said, "It's what live performance is all about." That performance will be brought to Macalester this Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. on the MainStage Theater in the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Building. Sunday's performance will be followed by a panel discussion. At press time yesterday afternoon, approximately 20 tickets were left for each show. They can be obtained free through the history department. "Students even if they don't have tickets should still come at 15 minutes before curtain for both shows," said History Professor Peter Rachleff. "Students without tickets will be admitted to the number of empty seats."

Created and performed by Roger Guenveur Smith (*Get on the Bus, Do the Right Thing, Malcolm X*), "A Huey P. Newton Story" is an intimate portrait of Huey P. Newton, the late co-founder of the Black Panther Party.

"He [Smith] makes choices about what to show about Huey Newton the political figure, the intellectual figure, the humorous man, the lonely man, that add up to an artistic tour de force. It's nothing short of that," said Cleary who saw the play last spring.

"It was the best piece of theater I saw in New York over a period of six months," said Andrew Price '98 who has seen the play twice.

What makes the performance unique

is the fact that each one is different depending on the audience and even contemporary issues, according to Price. "They were both totally different," said Price of the shows he saw. "I can't wait to see what he's going to do this time."

"He's a virtuosic actor," said Cleary. "No role is too difficult for him. Also his imagination and his physical intuitive



Roger Guenveur Smith presents "A Huey P. Newton Story" Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m.

sense are so keenly tuned that you really are in the presence of this performance of an actor working out an encounter with a really important figure."

Largely drawn from Newton's own writings and interviews the performance is accompanied by Marc Anthony Thompson's live mix of archival sounds and original music. "A Huey P. Newton

*Newton cont. on page 3*

## Service on Friday for Paul Gerdes

The following statement was released by the Dean's Office yesterday regarding the February 4 disappearance of Paul Gerdes '98.

On Friday, February 6, the Safety and Security Office was notified by a Macalester student that Paul Gerdes '98 had been missing since around midnight on Wednesday, February 4. Terry Gorman, director of safety and security, contacted Dean of Students Laurie Hamre about the missing student.

Before calling security, Paul's friends and roommates had contacted his professors and friends from other colleges to see if they knew of his whereabouts. It was then determined that no one had seen Paul since around midnight on Wednesday evening. Hamre called his parents in Denver to see if they had recent contact with him. Learning they had not, Gorman and Hamre met the St. Paul Police at Paul's apartment to assist his roommates in filing a missing person report. There was a letter found in Paul's bedroom that indicated he may have taken his own life.

Paul. Paul's bank account was checked for recent activity, hospitals and mental health institutions in the area were contacted, his friends walked the river banks, the airport and bus station were checked and his friends posted "Have You Seen Paul" flyers throughout the Twin Cities area. A number to call with information about Paul was given on the flyers.

On Sunday, after spending time with Paul's friends and conversations with the police and a private investigator, Paul's parents flew back to Denver. It was determined that there would not be a media release about Paul's disappearance at this time because of family and friends in the area that had not yet been notified. Also, there were several conversations with the police and water safety bureau about searching the river and surrounding area. On the advice of the police, no action was taken on this because of the water temperature and there was no clue as to where to begin such a search.

A service of support was held in the chapel on February 9. At 7:30 p.m. on February 13, the college community will gather with Paul's family in the chapel for a service of remembrance and hope.

## Students select Martin Zellar to headline Springfest '98

By BILL KINNEY

Springfest was almost not a reality this year. But due to the efforts of ACE and several other students, the event will go on as scheduled on April 26.

Bands at Springfest include headliner Martin Zellar, the Freshwater Collins, Little Blue Crunchy Things, Big Wu and Culture Stone. Zellar is the former lead singer of The Gear Daddies, a local Minnesota group. Little Blue Crunchy Things and the Freshwater Collins are funk bands from Milwaukee. The Big Wu is another local band that plays funk long-jam style music, and Culture Stone, a reggae group.

Zellar was chosen as the headliner by a student vote which was conducted last week by the Springfest committee.

Springfest will begin at 1 p.m. Bands will play throughout the day, with Zellar playing at 7:15 as the final act.

The initial lack of a Springfest committee chair was solved when Steve Vorpahl '99 stepped up to take the position. Since early February, the committee has found all of the bands, and set up all of the logistics for the event. "It's almost to the point where we are just on cruise control until April 26," said Vorpahl.

Initially, Springfest was being planned for the field house. These plans have now changed and the festival will again be held on Shaw Field.

Springfest will again feature a beer garden where students of legal age will be able to purchase beer. Consumption of beer will be limited to the beer garden, as it was last year.

Per Springfest tradition, there will be various games. This year, there will be the bungee run, bouncy boxing, human bowling, the bungee run, moon walk and human darts.

The group will be searching for Macalester related bands to play on the second stage at Springfest. There will be an open audition process to play on the second stage. Interested bands are encouraged to call the Springfest Hotline at x8287. Also planned for the second stage is an excerpt from a play by the Mac Players.

There was some difficulty with the funding for Springfest. Because there was no chair for committee the Macalester College Student Government (MCSG) budgeting process at the end of last semester, MCSG allocated a set amount. This amount turned out to be less than last year. The Springfest committee approached MCSG about getting more funding. MCSG allo-



Steve Vorpahl '99 is the chair of the Springfest committee.

cated an additional \$1,500 to the event, and told the Springfest Committee to come back to them in several weeks if they needed more money. Between those dates, MCSG ended up allocated the rest of the remaining money from the special budget requests fund, leaving Springfest with no additional money other than the original \$1,500 that MCSG had previously allocated. "They just gave it all away," said Vorpahl.

The planners are optimistic about the event, even though there was a very late start. "It's really starting to fall into place," said Vorpahl.

The biggest push for the committee at this point is to get volunteers. People are needed for everything from serving beer to working at the front gate, to doing other miscellaneous tasks. Students must be 21 to serve alcohol, a change that has been made from last year. Interested students are being asked to call the Springfest Hotline at x8287 for more information.

Macalester once had over two hundred students of color and was known in local slang as "Blackalester." This multicultural Macalester was the result of a vastly ambitious scholarship program called Equal Educational Opportunities (EEO).

The EEO years coincided with Vietnam, the proliferation of campus drug use and an unprecedented budget crisis.

EEO and its legacy.  
What really happened?

## EXHUMING E.E.O.

The first of a four part series. See page 4.

## EXHUMING E.E.O.

Part one of four

## Unanimous Disunity

1968-1969

*EEO, standing for Equal Educational Opportunities, was a scholarship program for underprivileged students that started during the tenure of President Arthur Flemming. During the turbulent late-60s, Flemming spent with abandon on a dream of a truly multicultural college. This is the story of the origins of EEO and the college before EEO.*

By DAN GEARINO

In 1985 Macalester College celebrated its centennial, an event which brought together every living president of the college. The six living presidents posed for a photograph in academy robes and smiled for the cameras. Present were familiar names: Turck, Rice, Davis, Gavin. Turck and Rice's names adorn campus buildings; Davis and Gavin can probably envision the same. The four each served as president for an average of 12 years and were part of the college history that gets described in public relations materials and smiling reminiscences.

The picture is not complete, though, as two men remain in the photo: Arthur Flemming and James Robinson; two men who do not, and likely will not, have buildings named in their honor. Two men who are part of the college's history that many believe is best forgotten.

A student entering Macalester in 1968 and taking four years to graduate saw the beginning and end of Flemming's tenure. The same goes for Robinson, who arrived in 1971 and departed in 1974. Flemming and Robinson are both smiling in the centennial photo, but clearly have a far less laudable standing in the history of the college than their four colleagues. What happened to make their tenures so short?

Many say it was the chaotic times, with the Vietnam War and the mounting conservative backlash of the Nixon years. Many say that it was gross financial mismanagement which led to the subsequent loss of Dewitt Wallace's support. And some say simply: EEO.

Those three letters, standing for Equal Educational Opportunities, were the name of a vastly ambitious minority scholarship program undertaken by Flemming soon after he arrived. The program brought several hundred students of color to Macalester, then was systematically chipped away, eventually inciting a 12-day takeover of the college's business office by students incensed at the fate of the program which was paying for their educations.

Some say EEO tried to do too much too soon. Some say EEO should never have been started. Others, the recipients of EEO scholarships, say that EEO offered them vital opportunities that have profoundly changed their lives.

How did EEO begin? How did it end? How has it effected minority recruitment and

programming policy in the years since? Through interviewing first-hand witnesses and looking at documents from the era, these questions can begin to be answered and we can understand why Flemming and Robinson had such abbreviated, discombobulated tenures.

Arthur Flemming arrived at Macalester in the summer of 1968, bringing with him a diverse and impressive resume. In the 1930s he was on the editorial staff of *U.S. Daily*, which would later become *U.S. News and World Report*. Two decades later, he was named Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the

ered Flemming a friend.

Sandy Hill '57, who is currently Assistant to the President, worked in the Alumni office at the time of Flemming's arrival. "At that time, no president would have been hired here unless they were essentially approved by the Wallaces," Hill said. "There was not a public search like they do now."

The fact that the Wallaces were acquainted with Flemming and aware of his attitudes on racial equal opportunity, goes against the widely held belief that the conservative Wallaces disapproved—at least in theory—of Flemming's subsequent EEO program. Quite to the contrary, Hill said, "I think that was part of his [Flemming's]



Macalester's six living presidents at the college's centennial in 1985. Front row, left to right: Harvey Rice ('58-'68), Charles Turck ('39-'58). Back row, left to right: James Robinson ('71-'74), Arthur Flemming ('68-'71), John Davis ('75-'84), Robert Gavin ('84-'96). What happened to make Flemming and Robinson's tenures so short?

Eisenhower administration. After leaving politics, Flemming became President of Ohio Wesleyan University, his alma mater, and then moved on to the University of Oregon.

At Oregon, Flemming was a controversial figure, espousing racial equal opportunity and inviting controversial speakers to campus, such as communist Gus Hall. The controversy came primarily from alumni and faculty, as Flemming maintained a very positive rapport with students.

Flemming had briefly served on Macalester's Board of Trustees while at Oregon and was familiar with Macalester's administration and donors, including Lila Wallace, wife of Dewitt Wallace, who consid-

agenda when he came. And I remember discussions where the Wallaces were very supportive of it." History Professor James Stewart also dismisses the idea that the Wallaces were against EEO. "[Wallace] had no quarrels with African-Americans and I never sensed an ounce of bigotry in him," Stewart said.

Instead of disapproving of any specific policy action, the Wallaces were becoming disenchanted with private higher education in general and were considering turning their ample resources toward other philanthropic projects. Macalester's fiscal irresponsibility undoubtedly fueled this disenchantment.

Stewart described several examples of

gratuitous spending of the era. Faculty were able to buy any book for \$1 and the college would pay the rest. Also, through a foreign fellowship program, faculty could fill out an easy application and, "waltz out of the college for a semester and end up in Europe or South America while part-time faculty were hired to take up the course load," Stewart said.

On top of faculty perks, Wallace funds were being used for other than their intended purpose. The High Winds Fund was set up by Wallace to buy and refurbish local housing so that faculty could live close to campus. The college used High Winds money to demolish several houses and build a parking lot. "It was very bad management and spending a lot of money on things that were basically wastes of money that didn't strengthen the college at all," Stewart said. "[Wallace] was basically shoveling money into a college that didn't know how to spend it responsibly."

Macalester's culture of financial mismanagement had existed since the mid-60s. Chuck Green, a professor in the political science department since 1965, remembers that by '66, "the college was running an annual deficit of some size that was largely getting picked up by Mr. Wallace."

The deficits would become much more pronounced after the arrival of Arthur Flemming, a man who believed that he had Dewitt Wallace's blessing and that money was no object. According to Green, "There was an understanding when Flemming came that he had an expectation that he would have sufficient support [from Wallace] to make some moves." Whatever Flemming's understanding of his relationship with Wallace, the Wallace monies would soon cease with a devastating effect on the college and the soon-to-be realized EEO program.

By most estimates, the class entering in '68—Flemming's first year as President—had more minority students than any class in the college's history up to that point. The class had eight African-American students and fewer, if any, Latino or Native American students. According to history faculty member Mahmoud El-Kati, "Before EEO, black students at Macalester were as scarce as buffaloes." At the time, El-Kati, a well-known Twin Cities activist, was an unofficial counselor to the handful of African-American Macalester students, leading a discussion group and helping with academic issues.

The Black Liberation Affairs Committee (BLAC) formed during in the '67-'68 school year and was one of the more visible student organizations on campus. Despite its small numbers, BLAC was quite active in raising awareness of racial issues and contributed to a campus-wide interest in the civil-rights movement among students and faculty.

Several sources assert that Flemming was a conservative man who became enlightened to support the EEO initiative after reading an editorial in *The Mac Weekly* entitled "Black not Negro," published two months into his first academic year. While this article may have indeed moved Flemming, he already had a record as a proponent of equal opportunity. Also, faculty/staff committees were drafting proposals for what would eventually be EEO before the article appeared. Within a week of the article's printing, the proposal had been written and Flemming had given it his blessing, making the tale of the "Black not Negro" epiphany doubtful at best.

The proposal outlined a minority scholarship program unprecedented in size and scope. The specific goal of the program was to bring in African-American freshmen from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

## 1960s Macalester felt the generation gap

The following editorial was printed in the January 30, 1969 issue of the small-town Minnesota Messenger, then reprinted in the February 21, 1969 Mac Weekly. The author of the editorial was Gordon West, an alumnus from the class of '38.

There must be an error! The January 17th issue of *The Mac Weekly* which I am looking at cannot possibly be the same student newspaper of Macalester College in St. Paul which I was acquainted with while a student at that school quite some years ago.

Yet, it must be the same—in name only. The Macalester I know was a conservative church-oriented college where it was a crime of major concern to smoke on the campus outside the confines of a dormitory room.

A look at the present student newspaper though is a most revealing experience. About half of the front page is devoted to pictures and writeup of a campus appearance of Dick Gregory. His talk was part of a "Black Month" observance.

One of the new committees on campus meets each Monday evening—The Macalester Committee for Peace in Vietnam. This, too received front page space. The committee has endorsed the call for GI Civilian antiwar actions.

The front page also had room for a quote which they associate with former President Harry S. Truman who supposedly said, "Is God dead? Hell, I didn't even know he was sick."

Under the letters to the editor, one graduate of 30 years ago was critical of the Associate Chaplain. The Parson dresses in a Nehru jacket, long sideburns, mustache, medallion and other gimmicks, and apparently makes his office available to all of the offbeat movements.

Page three shook us a bit. It carried a cartoon which made no sense except that a naked female was the central attraction.

Page four of the paper was devoted mainly to sports reports which was about the only semblance we could see with the college newspaper as we knew it.

What a change in a matter of 30 years. We used to sit around the dorm and talk about such interesting subjects as girls. Apparently

the number one subject for those bull sessions now must be black power or possibly ways to stay far, far away from service in Vietnam.

I don't believe that Macalester is the only private college that has students thinking along these lines. I recall the team of students from Augustana College on TV's College Bowl which had representatives who apparently were frustrated at the sight of a scissors or a blade. Are their ideas as far out as they looked?

It costs a good deal more to attend a private college. Many parents, though, think it is worth the extra because these schools being church-oriented are better for the youth. One can't help but wonder.

Selected students would receive a full scholarship, including tuition, room and board. In addition, the college would provide a pre-freshman summer program to prepare these incoming students for the upcoming academic rigor of their class work.

The proposal described why Macalester needed more economically disadvantaged minority students: "Not only do such students need a liberal arts education, but Macalester College badly needs these students in its student body. The liberal arts college needs the involvement of these students if its total program is going to provide humane leadership and wisdom to tomorrow's society."

On December 5, 1968, a more refined version of the proposal was unanimously passed at an open faculty meeting. Despite the unanimous vote, many faculty either had reservations about the program or flat-out opposed it, an opinion they expressed by not voting at all. Green was the presiding officer at the faculty meeting. "If faculty said 'I abstain' from the vote, they were intimidated because many students and many students of color came in and sat around the outside of the faculty," Green said. "The fact is it was a unanimous vote and it was P.R.ed that



President Arthur Flemming ('68-'71), a firm believer in equal opportunity and a major force behind the creation of EEO.

already existed on campus. This seeming preference toward African-Americans would become more pronounced and complicated as many of the EEO counselors and other staffers being hired were African-American.

Among those hired, was James Holly—who was white—named interim coordinator of EEO until a national search for a permanent coordinator—preferably African-American—could be conducted. Holly took a leave of absence from his permanent post as Macalester's head librarian for the duration of his stint with EEO.

In a Spring '69 issue of the *Weyerhaeuser Library New Book List*, Holly wrote, "One of my rather frequently expressed criticisms of Macalester has been its avoidance of risk-taking. We have tended to play it safe, to follow the successes of others rather than to strike out fresh for ourselves with the consequent risk of falling flat on our institutional face, or failure."

Holly and the EEO staff worked with a newly appointed EEO advisory board to iron out the specifics of the program. Part of the funding was slated to come from students and faculty. To publicize the fund drive, EEO placed a full-page ad in the March 7, 1969 *Mac Weekly*. The ad, entitled "The EEO. What's it to You?" began by saying, "Macalester won't be the same next year. Not 97% white, 97% middle class, 97% insulated and isolated. You'll have to be awake."

"More tension? Probably? More confrontation? Probably. More dialogue? Probably. More differing views? Without a doubt." Later in the ad, the subject turned to funding. "And there's money. Money's always a problem. New programs aren't cheap. Not with full financial aid (\$3000) to seventy-five new students. With a new staff. With a new center. With a new academic program. All with the same high standards of education. Except made more flexible and individual. So everybody benefits. That costs."

The recommended faculty donation was \$100 and the recommended student donation was \$10. Considering that the trustees had already allocated almost \$1 million dollars to start up the program, student and faculty

contributions were essentially a token gesture of a campus wanting to appear to be unified in this monumental change in institutional emphasis.

Student / faculty donations were also part of an attempt to have EEO funding come from a diverse array of sources. Flemming's goal was for Macalester's EEO financial burden to eventually be eased by charitable foundations and federal government support. The startup funds were supposed to last three years and be the largest contribution of college money. While foundations and the government would eventually donate to EEO, their contributions would never shoulder a substantial portion of operating expenses.

Despite the grim financial realities that would soon be realized, the Spring of '69 was a time of optimism, anticipation and curiosity about the new Macalester that would arrive on campus in the fall. *Mac Weekly* co-editor Mike Johnston '71 shared these feelings and wrote an exhaustive multi-part series on St. Paul's African-American community. The series, entitled "Crisis in Black and White," explored the Summit-University neighbor-



Dewitt Wallace '11, founder of Reader's Digest and a major contributor to the college. Wallace initially went along with the idea of EEO.

hood, a place quite close to Macalester, but in an altogether different world.

Spring of '69 was also a time of housing marches. Several landlords in the Macalester-Groveland area refused to rent to African-Americans. The landlords often claimed the presence of these potential tenants would disturb other residents.

Leonard Hermann, a landlord of an apartment building at 1729 Hague, made the unfortunate mistake of denying two African-American Macalester students. In May of '69, over 80 students and faculty held a rally on campus then marched to picket Hermann's building. Present at the rally were President Flemming and former U.S. vice-president Hubert Humphrey, who was a visiting pro-

fessor of Political Science. For the next eight days, anywhere from 10 to 80 students picketed until Hermann capitulated and the two Macalester students were offered a lease.

Behind the scenes of public demonstrations like the housing march, the EEO advisory board was speeding toward readiness for the first semester of the program. It was decided that a separate admissions committee of minority staff would make admissions decisions for EEO students. To find applicants for the minority admission board, the newly hired EEO staffers traveled the country, mostly in nearby urban areas like Chicago, seeking students for the first EEO class.

Standards for admission for EEO students would be different from other Macalester students. As opposed to placing most of weight on grades and test scores, potential EEO students were evaluated more by interviews and recommendations.

Charles Norman, who is currently Director of the Learning Center, was on the English faculty in '69. The EEO "acceptance rate was pretty high," according to Norman. Norman believed the program could have been more selective considering the immense value of an EEO scholarship to potential students. However, instead of doing a more thorough recruitment sweep, the recruiters just went to several urban recruitment pools.

Right before students left for summer break, John Warfield was hired as permanent coordinator of EEO. Warfield had a Ph.D. in counseling psychology and knew President Flemming from when both were at the University of Oregon. Warfield did not report to any dean or provost. The only person Warfield would answer to was the president.

Around the country, 75 soon-to-be EEO students were nervously anticipating their arrival in St. Paul, wondering how they might fit in, whether they would be able to make it through. At Macalester, faculty and staff were wondering the same questions.

In a few short weeks, this new face of Macalester would arrive for the summer prep program. Soon after, upperclassmen would return, and what would happen then? What would become of the first EEO class in the first EEO year? Macalester was making a bold move and many things could go very right or very wrong.

*El-Kati photo by Julie Gausebeck. All other photos courtesy of Macalester Archives.*



Mahmoud El-Kati, currently a history faculty member, was a mentor to Macalester's pre-EEO African-American students.

way [even though] a significant minority kept their hands down."

Flemming recommended the program to the Board of Trustees and at their January, 1969 meeting, the board approved it, now officially dubbed Equal Educational Opportunities. The board also approved \$900,000 from the college's unrestricted funds to get the program started.

The program as approved by the Board would provide full tuition scholarships to 75 underprivileged students from a variety of racial and regional backgrounds, including white. Also included were plans for an African-American studies program, a "black house," more African-American faculty and staff, and a series of programs addressing African-American issues.

Even though EEO was to bring a variety of groups, many of the non-tuition facets of the program addressed African-American students. This was perhaps because of the active African-American community which

### Next Week:

The first EEO class arrives. Macalester becomes a hub of African-American culture. White students and faculty respond to students of color. The college falls into a deep fiscal crisis. The future of EEO is questioned as budgets are slashed.