

- The Oscar nominations are out! Check out who we think will win. **Style | 7**
- What is the worst thing about concerts? See what columnist Andy Minor thinks! **Style | 7**
- Read our review of *Last Comic Standing* star Jeff Dye's Mason performance! **Style | 11**

Number of days until the 81st Annual Academy Awards in Los Angeles, Calif.

# Michelle Obama is Runway Ready

*Is Our New First Lady the New Jackie O.?*

DANIEL ODOM  
Staff Writer

In 2008, we here at *Broadside* have fawned over and debated much of the style choices of the past election.

From Hillary Clinton's questionable coral jacket to Sarah Palin's Chairman Mao-inspired suits, fashion from this past election has been full of some rather questionable choices.

While I marveled at the 100-times-more-expensive-than-my-entire-college-career chaireuse atrocity worn by Cindy McCain during the Republican primary, I realized that the only real political

trendsetter worth discussing is First Lady Michelle Obama.

Aside from the historical circumstances surrounding her husband's election, Mrs. Obama has demonstrated a new era of fashionable change and stylized hope for us meager fashion lovers.

All one has to do is check out her signature, innovative style during Inauguration Day to see why.

First, let's consider her infamous (or perhaps famous) Narciso Rodriguez dress worn on election night.

While this sequin-detailed red and black dress raised some eyebrows and caused many to speculate if the First Lady was concealing a pregnancy, the

dress gave the public a definable glimpse into her decidedly stylish mind.

It showcased her penchant for bold colors and juxtaposed textures in her outfit choices.

Then, there was the first of the inaugural day outfits. Her sunshine yellow and olive green Isabel Toledo/ J.Crew wardrobe was refreshing for many reasons.

First, the color choice and textures harkened back to her Election Night dress; she subtly used sequins to bring interest to the cheerful jacket which made me exhale with a sigh of relief to the time-worn black, white, and camel jackets typical of most inaugural swearing in jackets.

Furthermore, in 20-degree

weather with far too much wind, I could not help but think to myself, "Thank God! A First Lady who is willing to freeze her poor, Jimmy Choo-clad legs off in order to look good!"

Lastly, in dire economic times, Michelle paired the designer piece with green J.Crew gloves, thereby demonstrating to all of us that it doesn't cost over \$500,000 or a crazy studded bow hat to look good.

My favorite of all of Mrs. Obama's fashion choices, however, was her beyond gorgeous Jason Wu gown worn during the Inaugural Balls.

With its fabulous color, subtle sequin details and rouching, Michelle picked a

gown that fit in her fashion vernacular. Additionally, I found it refreshing that she decided to avoid the skintight all sequins let's-go-disco gowns worn by first ladies of yore.

She made a statement which left a glamorous and innovative touch on the otherwise, predictable first lady style.

Lastly, let it be known that Mrs. Obama has not been immune from her share of fashion mishaps.

Recall the cerulean blue jean, canary yellow cardigan ensemble worn during her husband's campaign.

While I appreciate the risk and appreciation for cost-effective J.Crew wardrobe, the

entire outfit screamed, "The Crayola company dressed me."

At the same time, it is this wacky sense of style and comfort with bold color choices that makes this style maven tip his sartorial cap to First Lady Obama.

Gone are the days of bland beige dresses and garish metallic suits and in their place is a simply lovely expression of fashionable change.

To see all Michelle Obama's courageous fashion choices visit [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com) and search for "Michelle Obama's Inauguration outfits" to view a slideshow of our new fashion forward First Lady.

# Life After Death

*The Notorious B.I.G.'s Life Chronicled in New Film*

ROSS BONAIME  
Staff Writer

*Notorious* is noteworthy for being a musical biopic to a modern day musical legend. Usually films of this style discuss a musician who has been around for years and shows the impact and importance of the artist's music over decades such as Taylor Hackford's *Ray*, James Mangold's *Walk the Line* or even Todd Haynes' 2007 ensemble masterpiece *I'm Not There*. What is so unique about *Notorious* is that it is about a musician who is considered legendary and genre-defining after releasing only one album before his death, showing the utter importance of B.I.G. to hip-hop.

*Notorious* follows Christopher Wallace from the streets of Brooklyn to the world-wide phenomenon that would become known as the Notorious B.I.G. We first see Wallace as a child, played by the late rapper's son, being told he is "too fat, too black and too ugly" to be as successful as the musicians he glamorizes in hip-hop magazines. As he grows older, he begins to sell crack to live the lifestyle he has always dreamed of. While hustling, he shows a profound ability to create incredible rhymes, making his friends insist that he leave the lifestyle that is destined to send him to jail once again. With a new goal for his life, Biggie, played by newcomer Jamal Woolard, meets with up-and-coming



Derek Luke, left, and Jamal Woolard in *Notorious*.

producer Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs, portrayed by *Friday Night Lights*' Derek Luke, which leads to his legendary success, friendship and betrayal with Tupac Shakur and ultimately, his untimely death.

The infamous rivalry between Tupac and Biggie has been well-documented and does not take up the majority of this film. Therefore, director George Tillman, Jr. focuses on Wallace's rise to fame. We see the relationships and people who make him who he is. Relationships with Lil' Kim and wife Faith Evans, played by Naturi Naughton and Antonique Smith, respectively,

and the most important woman in his life, his mother, played by Angela Bassett, show Wallace's rise to the top as well as friendships with Combs and others.

B.I.G. never made any attempt to hide his love for his mother and Tillman's film recreates their strong bond well when Woolard and Bassett play opposite of each other.

Woolard already looks like Wallace, yet he studied several months at Juilliard to get his sound down perfectly and he sells every line. Bassett looks like what a younger version of Voletta Wallace would look like and shows equal parts compassion and tough love for

her son in the movie, trying to set him down the right path, no matter how he strays.

While it is a welcome change to see a piece of media about the Notorious B.I.G., the film could have easily shown more of the relationship between Shakur and the famous East Coast rapper. With the exception of a few party scenes and random encounters, it is never truly acknowledged just how close the two were. Also, while the entire East Coast-West Coast rap rivalry does factor into that, more could have been shown to indicate the importance of this feud in hip-hop music history. But of course, as with any film about a musician, the greatest aspect of *Notorious* is the music. Every song is used in context and gives deeper meaning to the lyrics. We see a musical prodigy creating art in a way that few before him had. We see the cogs of hip-hop turning and changing the music into something that it had never been before and an artist who changed everything. *Notorious* shows what B.I.G. did for rap and makes current hip-hop chart-toppers look like jokes. *Notorious* fantastically illustrates that while Wallace's career was short, he was nonetheless revolutionary and that his music and legend still truly do have a life after death.

A B C D  
☐ ☒ ☐ ☐

# A Load of Bull

*Red Bull Cola Revealed*

DYLAN HARES  
Staff Writer

The staple for the college diet is normally an amalgam of Ramen noodles or other instant midnight meals and energy drinks; and when you think of energy drinks, you think of Red Bull. Originally introduced in 1987, Red Bull is aptly named for its main ingredient, taurine, which is a naturally occurring acid in the body usually used during physical exertion and originally isolated from bulls. The ingredient is produced synthetically and is used in conjunction with caffeine to "combat mental and physical fatigue." We've all seen the ads claiming that "Red Bull gives you wings" to study harder, be smarter, fly, or enjoy nighttime activities. All-in-all, the

combination keeps you wired and is commonly used for all-nighters.

I always enjoyed the occasional Red Bull because of its fruity and tangy taste; it is kind of like a fruity soda that goes down relatively easy and keeps me going for another hour or so. While there have never been any negative effects proven, it is cautioned that you shouldn't enjoy Red Bull while you're pregnant, have heart or liver conditions, or if you're a small, vulnerable youngster. And despite the incredible cost of the product (especially the individual cans sold at the JC and Chesapeake Convenience stores), it remains popular.

Apparently someone at the Red Bull marketing department had a little too much and decided that they should throw out the traditional product and start over with "Red Bull Cola." Now, I thought that "sugar-free"

Red Bull was going too far when they took out the thing I sought most, but when students were handing out free cans of the new Red Bull Cola this week around campus, I couldn't help but be entranced by the idea. The fact is, I love soda and I really like Red Bull. What could go wrong? How could we lose? Someone had the brilliant idea of combining soda and Red Bull, which is amazing. I raced to my dorm and sat at my desk, staring at the can in anticipation. I popped the cap and took a huge swig, getting completely familiar as the liquid washed over my taste buds.

Almost immediately after taking the first drink, my tongue set off an alarm telling me something was wrong. I waged an epic battle with my mouth trying to choke down the first sip. It was a unique taste that was bland and bitter at the same time. It had some

fruitiness of the original Red Bull but tasted more like it was mixed with a watered-down diet soda or some variant. The reason it was so awful, I think, is because it had no Red Bull whatsoever. It's "100% all natural" soda with the name "Red Bull" on it. It has some caffeine in it, but really it's just carbonated water with vanilla, cocoa, licorice, cinnamon, lemon, ginger, orange, pine, cardamom, mace, clove, and lemon juice concentrate. Now that I think of it, how could it not taste awful when you just push all the leftover spices from your countertop into a pot and call it soda? Regular Coca-Cola has water, corn syrup, caramel color, natural flavors, and caffeine. That, my friends, is the recipe for deliciousness. Red Bull, please don't mess with it.



# For One Night Only

*World Renowned Dance Company Coming to Mason*

PEARSON JONES  
Asst. Style Editor

The internationally revered Philadelphia Dance Company, Philadanco, is bringing its extraordinary technique and style to George Mason University for a one-night show. The dance company's endless repertoire of classic and contemporary dance performances have been praised by critics as powerful, unique and a show that simply lights up the stage. Founded in 1970 by Joan Myers Brown, Philadanco has become one of the most renowned modern dance

companies in the world, integrating numerous cultural influences into their performances thereby reflecting their unique diversity.

The group's performance will feature works by contemporary choreographers such as Gene Hill Sagan whose romantic ballet "Ritornello," will include music by Johann Sebastian Bach and Christopher L. Huggins' explosive "Enemy Behind the Gates."

The Philadanco dancers will perform Jan. 31 at 8 p.m. at the Center for the Arts. A pre-performance discussion will be held 45 minutes prior to the

show for all ticket holders at the Center's Grand Tier III. Tickets are available by phone at 888-945-2468 or at [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com).

From Feb. 2 through Feb. 28, the Fine Arts Gallery will display "Constructs VI," a traveling art exhibit which features abstract paintings by Virginia and Washington, D.C. area artists.

"A construct is an object or a work that implies a process of building or layering," said Walter Kravitz, director of the Fine Arts Gallery in a press release. "Each artist in the 'Constructs' group maintains his or her voice in this process while

still maintaining a belief in the abstract message."

On Tuesday, Feb. 3 there will be an opening reception from 4-6 p.m. followed by a panel discussion from 6-7 p.m.

The exhibition features paintings by Sally Bowring, Don Crow, Steve Cushner, Chris Gregson, Steve Griffin, Reni Grower, Ron Johnson, , Ray Kass, Paul Ryan, Xavier Tapia and Dan Treado. Each exhibition presents different collections, assemblages and new series.

The exhibition, open on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. is free and open to the public.

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ANDY MINOR, STYLE COLUMNIST

# LIFE IN A. MINOR

## FANS: MAKING CONCERTS ANNOYING SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME

Many times before have you fine readers heard me ramble on about the importance of live music and attending shows. How it is the ideal arena for contact between artist and listener, how it can make or break how a band is perceived, et cetera, et cetera. And while I don't mean to reiterate myself, there is a large element of the show-going experience which I have yet to comment on: fans.

All sorts of different people from different walks of life wind up at shows, and I've had my fair share of experiences dealing with what can sometimes be clashing, show-going personalities. It doesn't always go well, and while there are several elements to the concert going experience, sometimes a single bad fan will ruin the whole show.

My first face-off with a fellow concert-goer was during the White Stripes tour way back in 2003. I was a junior in high school, my hair was twice as long as it was in my little picture at the top of this article and I got tickets to the show for my birthday. This was right after the Stripes' *Elephant* album was released, so they were the top dogs at that time and within the closed calls of the GWU Smith Center I found myself among Washington, D.C. show-going elitists, who were not going to put up with the obscene behavior of 16-year-olds.

This obscene behavior I mentioned was tossing my hair around in all directions to the beat of the music. In the metal world, this is "head banging." To the guy standing next to me, with his pseudo-hipster approach to life which, by this time, has

probably achieved him both an iPhone and a Prius, my irresponsible hair-management techniques were crossing a line. He told me to stop because my hair was "in [his] girlfriend's face" and my jumping "might hurt somebody." I have always been puzzled at this man's reaction to my visibly having a good time while he and his girlfriend stood like statues in the pit, careful not to show any signs of actual enjoyment.

This couple obviously went to shows to go to shows. What I mean by that is that they did not care about the music, atmosphere or people; they wanted to tell their friends the next day at the local Starbucks all about the show they went to the previous night.

This seems to be a big problem—at least in D.C.—because no matter where I go in the city, most of the time concert-goers refuse to dance and have a good time. If I wanted to go to a show where I didn't have to move, I'd go to the Kennedy Center for the National Symphony Orchestra. If I go see Chuck Brown at the 9:30 Club, I'm going to do my best to connect with the musicians in my ears, mind and body.

Sometimes people do get a little too into things though, and oftentimes they are simply fueled by the desire to be as close to the stage as possible. Being in the front row has its strong advantages, but I see no reason why being a few rows back is a bad thing. Maybe people feel that if they are in the front the lead singer will notice how cool they look and invite them on stage to

become best friends. I saw Muse a few years ago in Philadelphia and managed to be in the front row when they took the stage. This angered the middle-aged couple behind me, who proceeded to weave an arm between my friend and I and hang on to the front railing. This arm dug in my side for the entire two-hour set, and no matter how many times my hair went in this guy's wife's face, no matter how many elbows I railed into his wrist, he wouldn't move his arm.

While I admire his perseverance, I hope his bruised forearm taught him a lesson about being in pits at huge shows. He paid the price for making the concert uncomfortable for someone else, and if you can't put up with hair in your face, sweat in your mouth and bruises in places you didn't know you had, stay out of the pit.

I feel like I am simply using this column as an excuse to rant about annoying concert going experiences and, in a way, I am. However, I also know that several of my friends have met people at shows even more annoying than the two examples I've given you above. Why does there always seem to be someone at a concert who just plain sucks?

I'll go to other crowded events like movies and baseball games and never be annoyed by anyone, but rare is the concert where I can't pick out at least one person who gets in my music-appreciating way. So it goes at concerts, I guess, but it's not enough to stop me from going.

# Go Gold or Go Home

## Oscar Nominations: An Objective Analysis

KYLE RIDLEY  
Staff Writer

With the rotation of every calendar hung comes the onslaught of "Best Of" and "Top 10" lists while looking back on the year's greatest motion pictures. If you're like me, much of the winter break was spent cramming to catch the flood of remarkable films released just in time for award consideration. 2008 was a riveting year for movies and with the nominations for the 81st annual Academy Awards announced last Thursday, the Oscar race is officially on. Majestic epic *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* leads the pack with 13 nominations, followed by underdog favorite *Slumdog Millionaire*, with 10 nods. In preparing for Hollywood's biggest night, here's a look at a few of the major category predictions, deserving winners and snubs (Kate and Leo anyone?).

**BEST PICTURE**

- *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*
- *Frost/Nixon*
- *Milk*
- *The Reader*
- *Slumdog Millionaire*

Will Win: Dark-horse-turned-fan-favorite *Slumdog Millionaire* has nabbed the majority of statues so far. Look for it to claim victory here as well.

Should Win: *Slumdog* and *Ben Button* are neck-in-neck in my book. Both offer the ideal blend of enthralling cast, awe-inspiring cinematography, and gripping storyline . . . a recipe made for Oscar gold.

Snubbed!: Detailing the unraveling of a marriage that can't escape the chains of predictability, Sam Mendes' devastatingly powerful *Revolutionary Road* was shamefully overlooked by the Academy. Also, despite each of its four-player ensemble receiving acting nods, John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt* is noticeably absent from this prestigious list.

**BEST ACTOR**

- Richard Jenkins: *The Visitor*

- Frank Langella: *Road*. Sally Hawkins' lovable Poppy in *Happy-Go-Lucky* also would have been a joy to see on the list.
- Sean Penn: *Milk*
- Brad Pitt: *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*
- Mickey Rourke: *The Wrestler*

Will Win: Rourke's startling portrayal of an aging wrestler struggling in the wake of his prime eerily mirrors that of his own acting career. Hollywood loves a comeback story, and with Rourke's star reignited, how fitting to welcome his return.

Should Win: Despite Rourke's knockout (literally) performance, Penn's heartrending portrayal of openly gay political activist, Harvey Milk, is the year's most mesmerizing.

Snubbed!: Although thrilled with Jenkins' recognition, Leonardo DiCaprio gives the performance of his career with a wrenching portrayal of a husband and father drowning in the void of ordinariness in *Revolutionary Road*.

**BEST ACTRESS**

- Anne Hathaway: *Rachel Getting Married*
- Angelina Jolie: *Changeling*
- Melissa Leo: *Frozen River*
- Meryl Streep: *Doubt*
- Kate Winslet: *The Reader*

Will Win: It's a close call for this dynamite bunch, all packing a powerhouse punch. Early enthusiasm had Hathaway as the one to beat, but Winslet (now on her sixth nomination with no wins) is gaining the edge with a flurry of support.

Should Win: Fresh off her double Golden Globe triumph, Winslet deserves to continue the streak by taking home Mr. Oscar for her haunting performance as an ex concentration camp guard in *The Reader*.

Snubbed!: Though it probably works in her favor that the Academy allows only one slot per category, Winslet is just as spellbinding, if not more, as a defeated '50s housewife desperate for change in *Revolutionary*

**BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR**

- Josh Brolin: *Milk*
- Robert Downey Jr.: *Tropic Thunder*
- Philip Seymour Hoffman: *Doubt*
- Heath Ledger: *The Dark Knight*
- Michael Shannon: *Revolutionary Road*

Will Win: Ledger, hands down.

Should Win: Ledger, and not because of his untimely passing. It's always tricky to judge an award given posthumously, but his sinister portrayal of The Joker is one that will prove eternal in its brilliance.

Snubbed!: Thumbs up Oscar—you got it right.

**BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS**

- Amy Adams: *Doubt*
- Penélope Cruz: *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*
- Viola Davis: *Doubt*
- Taraji P. Henson: *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*
- Marisa Tomei: *The Wrestler*

Will Win: Tough call considering Kate Winslet, who has been sweeping this category for *The Reader*, is now up for Best Actress. Expect Davis' unsettling head-to-head with Meryl Streep to capture the vote. Her role may be brief, but is nothing short of paramount.

Should Win: Henson as the mother of man aging backward in the magical *Ben Button*. Her character's warmth and unconditional love brightens every scene in what is truly an enchanting performance.

Snubbed!: Though she probably has an award-filled career ahead of her, 14-year-old Dakota Fanning displays gifts of a veteran actor as the emotionally troubled Lily Owens in *The Secret Life of Bees*.

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# On the Brightside

## The Killers to Play at Patriot Center

EMILY SHARRER  
Style Editor

On Wednesday, Jan. 28, The Killers, a rock band made famous by their 2004 album, *Hot Fuss*, will be playing at the Patriot Center alongside electronic rock group M83. The concert is slated to begin at 8 p.m. with M83, a band formed in 2001 in France opening the show.

Currently, M83 consists of original band member Anthony Gonzalez, whose signature style includes softly spoken lyrics delivered over loud instrumentals. Las Vegas rockers, The Killers will follow M83, playing from a catalogue of hits which includes "Mr. Brightside," "Somebody Told Me" and "When You Were Young."

The band, which consists of

vocalist and keyboardist Brandon Flowers, guitarist Dave Keuning, bassist Mark Stoermer and percussionist Ronnie Vannucci Jr., have released four albums to date, including 2004's *Hot Fuss* and 2006's *Sam's Town*, both of which have sold over 12 million copies worldwide.

For ticketing information visit [www.patriotcenter.com/tickets](http://www.patriotcenter.com/tickets).



DYLAN HARES  
Staff Writer

At this semester's first Every Freakin' Friday event, hosted by Program Board, *Last Comic Standing's* own Jeff Dye came to George Mason University's Johnson Center to entertain an eager crowd. By and large, the young newcomer to the comedy game definitely came, saw, and entertained us all.

Since 2003, NBC's *Last Comic Standing* has been searching for the best and funniest comedians all across the country. Like many on-air talent competitions, the final prize is a contract for a job with NBC and Comedy Central.

In the summer 2008 season, Dye was one of the five finalists, but unfortunately didn't make the cut for the esteemed title of "Last Comic Standing."

Dye took the stage in the Johnson Center Atrium to a surprisingly large crowd on Friday night. He started with the stereotypical hand, playing the beer, race, and college cards to the young audience.

He made some funny jokes about the people sitting in the "non-committal" seats on the third floor of the Johnson Center and made fun of people who walked by the stage. People seemed to like him and his similarities to the student body.



PHOTO BY DAMY JACKSON

Comedian Jeff Dye performed in the Johnson Center.

NEKESA MUMBI  
MOODY  
AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) To paraphrase Ronald Reagan, here we go again.

The revelation that millions of people who saw the inauguration of President Barack Obama were actually listening to recorded music instead of the actual performance of the Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman-led quartet has led to comparisons of lip-synching (though, in this case, might the correct term be hand-synching?) and drawn comparisons to other infamous cases, including Ashlee Simpson's "Saturday Night Live" debacle and perhaps music's most famous pantomimes, Milli Vanilli.

But Carole Florman, a spokeswoman for the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, says she doesn't understand what the

fuss is all about.

"I think this is a whole lot of nothin'," she said on Friday. "These are world-class performers who are playing in 19 degree weather and the technical requirements of their instruments made it impossible for them to have their music amplified and know that it would be in tune. So they made, what I think, was probably a difficult decision to play to tape."

A representative for Perlman echoed her comments Friday with the following statement: "Mr. Perlman was deeply honored to be a part of the inauguration ceremony. The brutal cold created the distinct possibility of broken or out of tune instruments and, in order to avoid a weather related issue detracting from the majesty of the day, a decision was reached to play along to the recording that the quartet had made earlier in the week."

Cellist Ma, violinist Perlman, pianist Gabriela Montero and Metropolitan

Opera clarinet player Anthony McGill performed "Air and Simple Gifts," a piece arranged by Oscar-winning composer John Williams. Montero was wearing gloves, but the rest of the quartet played their instruments barehanded in the frigid 28-degree weather.

Florman said they were indeed playing their instruments and not miming their moves. But those who saw the event did not hear that, but the recorded track.

Don Mischer of Don Mischer Productions, which produced the pre-Inauguration "We Are One" concert, the last few Super Bowl halftime performances as well as two Olympics, says some kind of recorded music is often used at major events, especially when there are poor weather conditions.

"The main thing is that you want the music to sound good, and there are some conditions in which the music will not sound good," he said.

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