Pitt-sponsored *Fly Boys* Has World Premiere Screening Feb.1

By John Harvith

The world premiere screening of the WQED-produced video documentary *Fly Boys: Western Pennsylvania’s Tuskegee Airmen*—which was made possible through major funding from the University of Pittsburgh with additional support from the Alcoa Foundation and the Pittsburgh Foundation—will be Pitt’s inaugural event in the K. Leroy Irvin Black History Month Program. The by-invitation event, cohosted by Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and WQED Multimedia President and CEO and Pitt Trustee George L. Miles Jr., will be held on Feb. 1 in the Soldiers and Sailors Military Museum and Memorial in Oakland.

*Fly Boys* will have its broadcast premiere on WQED-TV at 8 p.m. Feb. 7 and also will be streamed live at that time on WQED Interact at www.wqed.org.

The documentary takes viewers back to early 1941, during the Jim Crow “separate but equal” days prior to America’s entry in World War II, when the Roosevelt Administration established an all-Black flight training program at Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Alabama. Tuskegee was a logical location for the pioneering venture, because it had previously started its own civilian pilot training program under the direction of Charles Alfred “Chief” Anderson (1907-1996), a native of Bryn Mawr, Pa., who was known as the father of Black aviation. He was the first African American to earn a commercial pilot’s license; he and Albert E. Forrythe made the first round-trip transcontinental flight east by Black pilots, flying from Atlantic City to Los Angeles and back without the aid of landing lights, parachutes, radios, or blind-flying instruments; and he would train the Tuskegee Airmen.

Because studies commissioned earlier by the Army War College concluded that Blacks were unfit for military leadership roles and incapable of piloting aircraft, the Tuskegee Airmen training program went forward on the assumption by the military establishment that the experiment would prove African Americans incapable of operating complex combat planes.

But Eleanor Roosevelt knew better.

On April 19, 1941, the First Lady visited Tuskegee Army Air Field and, against the advice of the Secret Service, asked Charles Anderson to take her up in a plane. That flight over Alabama lasted more than an hour and proved to Mrs. Roosevelt that Blacks could indeed fly aircraft. She had a photograph of herself taken with Anderson, showed it to FDR, and became a staunch champion of the Tuskegee Airmen, who distinguished themselves as the best escort plane service in the U.S. military during World War II, ensuring that bombing missions in North Africa and Europe succeeded. It was not for nothing that the Germans, who called the Airmen “Black Birdmen,” avoided the Tuskegee pilots with their distinctive red-tailed aircraft whenever possible.

Between 1941 and 1946, more than 2,000 African Americans completed training at Tuskegee, nearly 1,000 of them qualifying as pilots and the rest trained to fill positions of navigators, mechanics, radio operators, and more.

"Continued on Page 6"

UPCI Researchers Discover Virus Linked to Deadly Skin Cancer

By Michele D. Baum

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI), employing a new strategy to hunt for human viruses, have discovered a previously unidentified virus strongly associated with a rare but deadly skin cancer called Merkel cell carcinoma.

The strategy was described in a recent issue of the journal Science by UPCI’s Yuan Chang, Patrick Moore, Huichen Feng, and Masahiro Shuda. This is the second tumor-associated virus discovered by Moore and Chang, a husband-and-wife research team who also discovered the cause of Kaposi’s sarcoma, another rare and deadly skin cancer.

The *Science* article explains a nearly decade-long effort to harness the sequencing technology to identify the new virus, which the researchers call Merkel cell polyomavirus (MCV). While the research team emphasizes that its work does not prove MCV to be the cause of Merkel cell carcinoma, if the findings are confirmed, they may lead to new cancer treatment and prevention options.

"This is the first polyomavirus to be strongly associated with a particular type of human tumor," said Moore, professor of microbiology and molecular genetics in Pitt’s School of Medicine and leader of the molecular virology program at UPCI. "Although polyomaviruses have been studied in relation to cancer development for years, the weight of scientific evidence had been leaning toward the view that these viruses do not cause human cancers."

Polyomaviruses are a group of viruses that have been shown to cause cancers in animals for more than 50 years. But Moore noted that additional research is needed to determine what role, if any, MCV plays in human cancer development.

A rare but extremely aggressive cancer that spreads rapidly into other tissues and organs, Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC) develops from specialized nerve cells that respond to touch or pressure. The incidence of MCC has tripled over the past 20 years to about 1,500 cases a year, especially among people whose immune systems are compromised by AIDS or transplant-related immunosuppressant drugs. About half of patients with advanced MCC live nine months or less, and some two-thirds of MCC patients die within five years.

"If these findings are confirmed, we can look at how this new virus contributes to a very bad cancer with high mortality, and, just as importantly, use it as a model to understand how cancers occur and the cell pathways that are targeted. Information that we gain could possibly lead to a blood test or vaccine that improves disease management and aids in prevention."

“Continued on Page 6"
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a five-year grant to the University of Pittsburgh Press for a publishing initiative in Russian, Eastern and Central European studies.

The $390,000 grant will be used to improve and promote our work to the widest possible audience.

The grant will support publication of first books in the humanities—by providing resources for the editorial development of manuscripts, to include more illustrations, and to produce reasonably priced editions, including paperbacks where appropriate. Funds are also available for marketing and advertising and lecture tours by the authors.

Global Studies Program
Sponsors Lecture on Burma

Pitt’s Global Studies Program will host Monaeen Aung-Thwin, director of the Burma Project, Southeast Asia Initiative of the Open Society Institute, in a lecture titled “Waving on the Saffron Revolution: Is There Hope for Burma?” The talk will be held at 7 p.m. Feb. 5 in 4130 Posvar Hall. The free and public lecture is part of the Global Issues Lecture Series.

Aung-Thwin was born in Yangon, Myanmar, but was raised in Yorklyn, Del. He received his MFA degree from the University of Iowa, and a doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Varallo is an assistant professor of English at the College of Charleston and the fiction editor for Christophers, an influential magazine of fiction, poetry, and essays published by the college.

Anthony Varallo was named the winner of the University Center for International Studies’ 2002 Pitt Out Loud Poetry Award. His book, This Day (University of Iowa Press, 2005), was a finalist for the 2006 Paterson Fiction Prize. His stories have appeared in Epoch, Story Quarterly, The Atlantic Monthly, and have been interviewed by the New York Times, Good Cops: The Case for Preventive Policing, and will be available at www.wbduq.org.

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Drug-coated Stents Better Than Bare Stents For High-risk Heart Patients, Pitt Study Finds

By Maureen McGoffin

The use of drug-coated stents in patients with complex heart disease is associated with a lower rate of repeat procedures without an increased risk of death or heart attacks compared to bare metal stents, according to a study by University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine researchers.

The findings were reported in the Jan. 24 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine. The study is the largest and most detailed analysis comparing the safety and efficacy of drug-coated and bare metal stents for off-label indications, that is, when used for patients with complex disease.

“This study shows that drug-coated stents, even when used for patients with complex disease (off-label fashion), is a more effective strategy in reducing re-narrowing of the coronary arteries, without an increased risk of heart attacks or death at one year compared to bare metal stents,” said the study’s lead author, Oscar C. Marroquin, Pitt assistant professor of medicine, and director of the Center for Interventional Cardiology Research at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center’s Cardiovascular Institute.

“Furthermore, we feel that our study supports the continued use of drug-coated stents for patients with these complex heart issues.”

Stents are tiny metal mesh tubes used to treat blocked heart arteries caused by atherosclerosis—the buildup of cholesterol plaque in the arterial wall, which causes the arteries to harden and eventually become blocked. Stents, which are implanted during cardiac catheterization procedures, prop open blocked arteries. The wire mesh is used as a scaffolding device to keep an artery open. Even when the procedure is successful, the stented area can suffer re-narrowing over time caused by excess scar tissue formation that the body forms in response to the stent. It is accepted knowledge that when these stents are used in higher risk patients, the risk of re-narrowing is greater than when they are used in patients with fewer medical complications. The drug-coated stents, often preferred by cardiologists, reduce the amount of scar tissue formation, resulting in a lower likelihood of artery re-narrowing over time, compared to bare metal stents.

This study was conducted in response to an FDA call for more data on what has become common practice by cardiologists worldwide—using stents, particularly drug-eluting stents, in high-risk patients with complex conditions.

Using data from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Dynamic Registry, which is managed by the Epidemiology Data Center at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, Marroquin and colleagues analyzed records from 6,551 patients who were treated with either drug-coated stents or bare metal stents and whether the use was standard or off-label. Patients were followed for adverse cardiac events and death for one year after their procedures. Off-label use occurred in 55 percent of all bare metal stent patients and 49 percent of drug-coated stent patients. Compared to bare metal stent patients, drug-coated stent patients had a higher prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, renal disease, prior percutaneous coronary intervention and coronary artery bypass graft, and multi-vessel coronary artery disease. At one-year, however, there were no significant differences in the adjusted risk of death and heart attack in drug-coated stents compared to bare metal stent patients. Repeat procedures to restore blood flow also were significantly lower in drug-coated stent patients.

The research findings support the use of drug-coated stents for off-label indications.

This study was funded by the NHLBI. In addition to Marroquin, collaborators on the study included: Helen A. Vlachos, Faith Selzer, and Sheryl F. Kelsey, all from Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health, Elizabeth M. Holper, University of Texas Southwest Medical Center, Dallas; J. Dawn Abbott and David O. Williams, both from the Rhode Island Hospital, Providence, R.I.; William D. Anderson, Joon Sup Lee, Suresh R. Mulukutla, and A. Conrad Smith, all from UPMC’s Cardiovascular Institute; Jean-Francois Tanguy, Montreal Heart Institute; Robert L. Wilensky, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; and Kevin E. Kip, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla.

“The study shows that drug-coated stents, even when used for patients with complex disease (off-label fashion), is a more effective strategy in reducing re-narrowing of the coronary arteries, without an increased risk of heart attacks or death at one year compared to bare metal stents.”

—Oscar C. Marroquin
He retired from the military in the Distinguished Unit Citation, the Distinguished Flying Cross, destroying six enemy aircraft on German Messerschmitt Bf 109's. He is the only confirmed ace of the Tuskegee Airmen, with five confirmed victories.

He completed a Pitt finance certificate while in Los Angeles. Now retired and living in Pittsburgh, he is 71; of those 71—who came from such distinguished family. His brother, Mitchell, went to engineering, dentistry, pharmacy, education, the military, and politics.

The total number of Tuskegee Airmen known to have been to Western Pennsylvania is 71; of those 71—who came from such communities as the Hill District, Sewickley, Beallsville, and Homewood—20 are Pitt alumni, and six of the alumni are still living. They are:

• Ed Harris, College of Arts and Sciences ’52, who first taught, then became a high school principal, and went on to serve as assistant superintendent for the Los Angeles School District;

• Robert Higginbotham, School of Medicine ’77, who by the military during the Korean War and ended his service as a first lieutenant, went on to become the first African American intern and resident at Sewickley Valley Hospital and then was a leading orthopedic surgeon in Los Angeles. Now retired and living in Rancho Mirage, Calif., he is part of a distinguished family. His brother, Mitchell, also a Tuskegee Airman, was commissioned as a second lieutenant, and now serves as an Ambassador of Goodwill for the Tuskegee Airmen. Robert Higginbotham’s niece is Monique Higginbotham, an assistant professor of pediatrics in Pitt’s School of Medicine and part of the Child Advocacy Center within Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. Another relative is a NASA astronaut, Joan Higginbotham. And the brothers’ cousin was prominent author, civil rights advocate, and federal judge A. Leon Higginbotham (1928-1998), the first Black judge and youngest person ever appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; the first Black trustee of Yale University; the first African American appointed to any federal regulatory commission when President Kennedy appointed him to be a commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission; a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit through appointment by President Carter in 1977 and chief judge of that court from 1990 to 1991; and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Clinton in 1995.

• Lynn K. Rose, College of Arts and Sciences ’51, who went on to graduate from Wayne State University law school, became a member of the Michigan bar, pursued a career as a successful lawyer in Detroit, and served as a district magistrate in Detroit; and

• Henry McCullough, College of Business Administration ’36, of Pittsburgh. In addition to the six alumni, former Pitt Trustee Wendell Freeland, a leading Pittsburgh attorney and civil rights activist who has been a member of the Pitt School of Social Work Board of Visitors since 1994, was a Tuskegee Airman.

Fly Boys includes the commentary of Archer, Harris, Robert and Mitchell Higginbotham, and Freeland.

“Let’s get this clear,” Robert Higginbotham says toward the beginning of the documentary. “It was an experiment. They didn’t believe you could fly. They didn’t believe you were smart enough to handle complicated machinery. Now who am I supposed to believe? Those people? Or am I supposed to believe me? Don’t listen to what they think you can do. Do what you know you can do.”

And that can-do attitude fostered by Tuskegee Institute founder Booker T. Washington. It is what the Tuskegee Airmen ventured was all about, according to Fly Boys producer and host Chris Moore.

“The documentary starts with Tuskegee and the spirit of Booker T. Washington, proposition of making a person as self-reliant as possible,” says Moore. “There are buildings still in use on [the Tuskegee] campus today that were made from lumber students cut down, bricks they made, nails they made. Part of his self-reliant spirit was instilled in the Tuskegee Airmen: ‘Yes, we can’.

“They [the airmen] were disciplined, trained, and trained, and over-trained, because no general really wanted them in the combat theater. But that’s probably what made them so good when they finally got into combat. With all the discrimination that kept them back, they were trained so much better than the other [White] pilots that were rushed into combat. They [the airmen] weren’t allowed in combat until April 1943, serving in North Africa. At first, they were used to fly close air cover support for ground combat groups, then to support bomber pilots in the reinvasion of Italy. By the end of 1943 and 1944, they were escorting bombers from Italy to Berlin.

“The Tuskegee Airmen made an original contribution to the Civil Rights Movement long before Dr. King,” Moore adds. The first portion of Fly Boys details the background of the Tuskegee program, the discrimination the airmen had endured, and their sterling combat record—including testimonials from White pilots whose lives they saved. The rest of the documentary concerns itself with the discrimination that persisted after the war, how the airmen dealt with it, and their contribution to the Civil Rights Movement.

In the documentary, the Western Pennsylvania Tuskegee Airmen explain “why they fought for the United States and are still very proud of what they did,” Moore says. “These are very proud Americans who did what they had to do at a time when Fascism threatened to take over the world and, at the same time, they found discrimination at home. As a [Vietnam] veteran, I’m very proud of them and all that they did for this country.”

Fly Boys concludes with the March 29, 2007, ceremony during which President Bush awarded the airmen gold medals on behalf of Congress, acknowledging the nation’s debt to them and saying that “your story will be told and honored for generations to come.”

The men also will be honored at “A Gathering of Eagles,” a by-invitation luncheon to be held Saturday, Feb. 2, at the Senator John Heinz History Center. The event is being organized by Regis Bobonis Sr., vice president of the Daniel B. Matthews Historical Society in Sewickley, Pa. Bobonis has done extensive research on the Tuskegee Airmen, including those who graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, and he served as historical consultant and an expert on-camera commentator for the Fly Boys documentary.

The program of Black History Month observances that the University of Pittsburgh inaugurated in 2004 was recently established as the K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program to honor the memory of the legendary Pennsylvania legislative leader and Pitt alumnus and former trustee.

Irvis, who in 1977 became the first African American speaker of the House in Pennsylvania and the first Black speaker of any state house since Reconstruction, sponsored in 1966 the bill that made Pitt a state-related institution of higher education, thus saving the University from economic ruin.

Pitt-sponsored Fly Boys Has World Premiere Screening Feb. 1
Robert Hill, Pitt’s vice chancellor for public affairs, has been selected to participate in the final judging session for the MERCURY 2007/08 Awards, an international competition honoring outstanding achievement in corporate communications and public relations. The judging will take place Feb. 7 at the Ritz Carlton Battery Park Hotel in New York City.

Savio Woo, a University Professor of bioengineering in Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering, received the inaugural Diamond Award for Distinguished Achievement in Academia from the University of Washington’s (UW) College of Engineering for his research in bioengineering. Woo received a master’s degree in mechanical engineering and his doctoral degree in bioengineering from UW in 1966 and 1971, respectively.

Established in 2006, the Diamond Award honors outstanding alumni in industry in five categories. This year, the award was extended to recognize Woo and the four other Diamond Award recipients who will be recognized at an event at UW May 30.

Throughout his career, Woo has focused on knee ligament healing and repair, particularly medial collateral and anterior cruciate ligaments (ACL), two of the knee’s four major ligaments. More recently, his work has centered on functional tissue engineering of ligament healing and regeneration by examining the processes from molecular and cellular to tissue and organ levels, as well as the use of robotic technology to examine the function of the ACL replacement grafts.

He founded and directs Pitt’s Musculoskeletal Research Center, a multidisciplinary research and educational center that has hosted more than 450 orthopaedic surgeons, bioengineering students, and staff. In 1990, Woo joined the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in Pitt’s School of Medicine as the inaugural A. B. Ferguson Professor after 20 years at the University of California at San Diego. In 2004, Woo moved to Pitt’s School of Engineering as a senior faculty member in the bioengineering department. Last year, Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg appointed him University Professor, which is given in recognition of eminence in several fields of study, transcending accomplishment in, and contributions to, a single discipline.

George A. Huber, a professor of public health practice in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH), has been appointed a Damean for public policy. In his new role, Huber will work to develop collaborations between GSPH and business, government, and nonprofit organizations to increase the school’s impact on public health policy and practice.

At GSPH, Huber is leading a team to address complex public health issues related to the management and delivery of public services at the local, state, and national levels. He also will assist in the translation of research findings to help improve public health.

Prior to joining GSPH, Huber retired from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where he was a senior vice president and general counsel for more than 30 years. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Naval Academy, master’s degrees in industrial engineering and systems management from Pitt and the University of Southern California, respectively, and a juris doctorate degree from Duquesne University School of Law.

Dennis Curran, Distinguished Service Professor of Chemistry and Bayer Professor at the University of Pittsburgh, won the 2007 Harry and Carol Mosher Award. The Mosher award is given annually by the Santa Clara Valley (California) section of the American Chemical Society (ACS). The award is given to those who recognize and encourage outstanding work in chemistry, advance chemistry as a profession, and provide service to ACS. Curran’s research focuses on natural products total synthesis, new synthetic methods, and stereochemistry.

The award is named for the late Harry S. Mosher of Stanford University, Palo Alto, Calif., and his wife, Carol W. Mosher of SRI International, Menlo Park, Calif., charter members and long-time supporters of the ACS Santa Clara Valley section.

The Modern Language Association of America (MLA) presented an award to the University of Toronto Press, the publisher of Pitt professor Line N. Insana’s book, Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony.

The MLA’s 10th Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Series carries an $8,000 cash award. Insana, an assistant professor of Italian, received a check for $2,000 and a certificate.

The citation by the MLA selection committee stated Insana’s Arduous Tasks “constitutes a significant contribution both to our understanding of Primo Levi’s work and to the study of the Holocaust.”

Insana received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Pitt and her doctorate degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Patricia D. Kroboth, dean of the University’s School of Pharmacy, has been elected the 2008 Council of Deans chair for the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), the national organization representing the interests of pharmacy educators and educators comprising all 105 U.S. colleges and schools of pharmacy. AACP was founded in 1900 and is committed to excellence in pharmacy education.

Ellen Frank, professor of psychiatry and psychology in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, has been selected by the American College of Psychiatrists to receive the 2008 Award for Research in Mood Disorders. The award is given to an individual who has advanced the understanding and treatment of mood disorders. Frank has pursued a program of clinically relevant research on the psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy of recurrent mood disorders, resulting in significant changes in the treatment of depression and bipolar disorder.
Merkel cell tumors, most commonly found on a foreign organism. 

One sequence was similar to but distinct from all known viruses. The team went on to show that this sequence belonged to a new polyomavirus present in eight of 10 (80 percent) Merkel cell tumors they tested but only five of 59 (8 percent) control tissues from various body sites and four of 25 (16 percent) control skin tissues.

Although MCV is most commonly found in Merkel cell tumors, it also can be found in healthy people. The most important distinguishing feature is that MCV integrates into tumor cells in what is known as a monoclonal pattern, indicating that it infects the cell before the cell becomes cancerous. Tests on six of the eight MCV-positi

**Group of genetic transcripts that might be related to an African green monkey virus**

Although MCV is most commonly found in Merkel cell tumors, it also can be found in healthy people. The most important distinguishing feature is that MCV integrates into tumor cells in what is known as a monoclonal pattern, indicating that it infects the cell before the cell becomes cancerous. Tests on six of the eight MCV-positive tumors confirmed that viral DNA was integrated within the tumor genome in this monoclonal pattern, suggesting that infection with MCV could be a trigger for tumor formation. The Pittsburgh team subsequently has confirmed these results with additional tumor specimens.

**Clues from elsewhere in the biomedical literature point to the existence of MCV, which has a genetic structure that is closely related to an African green monkey virus found in Germany in the 1970s. Researchers have found antibody evidence from blood tests that indicates some 15 to 25 percent of adults are infected with the still undiscovered human relative of this monkey virus. If MCV turns out to be this long-sought infection, then more than 1 billion people worldwide could already be infected.**

“Again, look to the example of HPV,” said Moore. “Although up to 50 percent of sexually active young women are infected with HPV, a small proportion may actually get cervical cancer.”

Even if MCV is proven to play a role in MCC, Chang also cautioned that the virus is likely to be just a part of a much larger picture.

“Now we need to find out how it works,” she said. “Once the virus integrates, it could express an oncoprotein, or it could knock out a gene that suppresses tumor growth. Either way, the results are bound to be interesting.”

Moore and Chang discovered Kaposi’s sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV) in 1993. KSHV, which causes Kaposi’s sarcoma, is the most common malignancy in AIDS patients and the most common cancer in Africa. To find KSHV, Moore and Chang used a different method to physically subtract human genetic sequences from Kaposi’s sarcoma tumors, leaving fragments of viral DNA.

**Viruses, and some bacteria and parasites, are estimated to cause at least 20 percent of cancers worldwide. Over the past 40 years, few cancer-causing viruses have been confirmed in humans, including KSHV. Most of these viruses express cancer-causing proteins, called oncoproteins, in infected cells. Polyomaviruses, including MCV, possess an oncoprotein that has been shown to cause cancer after infection in animals. If MCV is confirmed to play a role in human cancer, it will be the eighth human tumor virus discovered.**

Funding for the study was provided by the National Institutes of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

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**UPC! Researchers Discover Virus Linked to Skin Cancer**

Moore and Chang discovered Kaposi’s sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV) in 1993. KSHV, which causes Kaposi’s sarcoma, is the most common malignancy in AIDS patients and the most common cancer in Africa. To find KSHV, Moore and Chang used a different method to physically subtract human genetic sequences from Kaposi’s sarcoma tumors, leaving fragments of viral DNA.

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**Portraits of Local Influential Women at Heinz Center**

Portraits of E. Maeve Brooks (left), director of Pitt’s Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs, and Aracelpe Bolet (right), a graduate of Pitt’s School of Medicine and chair of Pitt’s Italian Nationality Room, are part of the Pittsburgh Revisited exhibition at the Senator John Heinz History Center. The show, which runs through the end of March, features artwork by members of the Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators. The exhibition is part of a year of festivities to celebrate the City of Pittsburgh’s 250-year history. Bolet is a medical student at Allegheny General Hospital. Artist Gina Antognoli Scanlon said of her entries, “I chose to paint a series of influential women representing various fields of accomplishment.” (Photos courtesy of Gina Antognoli Scanlon)

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**Journey of the Spirits: A Celebration of Gospel Music**

The University-based Kuntu Repertory Theatre continues its 2007-08 season with Journey of the Spirits: A Celebration of Gospel Music, written by Ernest McCarty. Performances continue through Feb. 9, running Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 4 p.m. and a Saturday, Feb. 2, matinee at 1 p.m.

They are held in the Seventh-Floor Auditorium of Alumni Hall. McCarty, a Chicago native, has authored more than 25 plays in a writing career that spans 30 years. McCarty is the recipient of two Onyx Awards—Best Director for Purlie Victorious and Best Producer for Charles Randolph Wright’s Blue. He was named the 1998 Prolific Playwright by In Pittsburgh. His play Recollection Rag (The Exchange) received the Hoyt W. Fuller One-Act Play Festival Award, and his play Madame Hortense received a Joseph Jefferson Award.

Multitalented performer Herb Newsome will serve as director of Journey of the Spirits. Newsome’s directorial credits include In Devil’s Heaven at the Manhattan Theatre Source; Forgivable Sins, which was a finalist in the Samuel French One-Act Festival; and a national tour of Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry for the National Theatre of Arts and Education. He also appeared in the film The Brother From Another Planet and had a role on the daily CBS serial Guiding Light. Newsome made his Kuntu directing debut with Sing Black Hammer in 2006.

Journey of the Spirits’ musicans will include McCarty and Patrick Sousoff, keyboards; Dwayne Dolphin, bass; Carlos Johnson, guitar; and William Jevon Rushton, drums. The cast includes actors Ben Blakey, Joseph Edgars, Marcia L. Jones, Katrina Bello, Teri Bridgett, Dante Snooks, Lamar “Quest” Fields, Stevie Akers, Jada Ginyard, Ashley Coney, Terri Smith, Tasha Michelle, Jacen Morris, Delana Flowers, and Twyla Glasgow.

Kuntu is celebrating 33 years of Black theatre with a season of new plays and old favorites. Admission is $20 for adults; $14 for Pitt staff and faculty; $13 for senior citizens, students, and children ages 4-18; and $5 for Pitt students with a valid ID. Groups of 10 or more receive 25 percent off the single-ticket price. For more information, call 412-624-7298.
The 12th of Paris, City Theater, through February 17

**Concerts**


The Baltimore Consort. Adew Dundee, Pianist, in an eclectic program of Scottish, 8 p.m. Feb. 2, Synod Hall, 125 N. Craig St., Oakland. Renaissance and Baroque Synod Hall, 125 N. Craig St., Oakland, 412-745-2525, www.rbsp.org.

**Exhibitions**


**Phelps**


**Space Gallery**

**Opera/Theater/Dance**


Colin MacCabe’s Film, Derek, to Show in Berlin After Sundance Premiere

By Patricia Lomando White

Derek, a documentary film produced by University of Pittsburgh Distinguished Professor of English and Film Colin MacCabe, will be screened at the Berlin International Film Festival in February. The film premiered Jan. 19 in the world documentary category at the Sundance Film Festival, held annually in Park City, Utah.

A tribute to British independent filmmaker Derek Jarman, the film was written and is narrated by internationally acclaimed actress Tilda Swinton; directed by Isaac Julien, a 2006 visiting Andrew Mellon Professor in Pitt’s Department of English in the School of Arts and Sciences; and produced, in addition to MacCabe, by Julien and Eliza Mellor.

The description from the Sundance Web site reads: “Derek is a glorious, yet fitting remembrance of one of independent film’s greatest treasures, Derek Jarman. It is lovingly crafted by filmmaker and friend Isaac Julien, who assembles a moving collage of rare home movies, film clips, and interviews, and a cinematic love letter from actress Tilda Swinton. Her input serves as the poetic overlay telling the whole truth about the life Jarman led, and the cultural abyss left by his absence.”

In 2006, Swinton visited Pitt for a screening and discussion of The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (2005), in which she starred as the witch. During her appearance, she, MacCabe, and Julien also participated in a dialogue and Pitt’s Film Studies Program screened Jarman’s Edward II (1991). The visit was a crucial part of the planning of Derek, said MacCabe.

Swinton began working with Jarman after a stint with the prestigious Royal Shakespeare Company in 1983 and had a starring role in his film Caravaggio, in 1986, which MacCabe executive produced. She worked for Jarman for the next seven years, concluding with her role in Edward II. Following Jarman’s death in 1990 and the birth of her children, Swinton withdrew from acting, but returned to the screen in 1998 in Love Is the Devil, directed by John Maybury. In 2005, Swinton played Penny in Jim Jarmusch’s Broken Flowers and housewife Audrey Cobb in the Mike Mills film adaptation of the novel Thumbsucker, in addition to her role in The Chronicles of Narnia. This year, her role as Karen Crowder in Michael Clayton earned her nominations for best supporting actress in the Golden Globes, the Oscars, and the British Academy of Film and Television.

MacCabe teaches literature and film at Pitt. His research interests include a history of English since 1500, psychoanalysis, James Joyce, and linguistics. MacCabe is the author of James Joyce and the Revolution of the Word (Palgrave, 2002, 2nd edition); Godard: Portrait of the Artist at 70 (Bloomsbury, 2002), and Diary of a Young Soul Rebel (British Film Institute, 1991) with Julien. MacCabe also edits the journal Critical Quarterly. His most recent books are T.S. Eliot (The British Council, 2006) and The Butcher Boy (Irish Film Institute, 2007).

A former head of research at the British Film Institute in London, MacCabe worked with Jarman on his award-winning Caravaggio. MacCabe’s A Personal Journey With Martin Scorsese Through American Movies, a 1995 documentation on the history of American cinema, was the centerpiece of a 16-part history of world cinema titled 100 Years of Cinema. In 2005, MacCabe co-organized and coproduced a world premiere media installation of the latest work by French filmmaker Chris Marker at The Museum of Modern Art in New York.

MacCabe worked with Julien on the Cannes prize-winning Young Soul Rebels (1991), and when MacCabe set up his own production company, Minerva Pictures, in 1998, one of his major ambitions was to get Julien working for the cinema again. The first result of this was the hit Baadasss! Cinema (Independent Film Channel, 2002).

During Julien’s visit to Pitt for the James Snead Conference in March 2003, MacCabe showed Julien footage from a daylong interview that he had recorded with Jarman in October 1990, to be used after Jarman’s death. According to MacCabe, Julien was entranced by the possibilities that the project offered. “It combined art and film, television and cinema, and it demanded a fine and detailed construction of a mosaic, which would also be the simple story of a life,” said Julien. “I felt that this film was what I had been moving towards for 20 years. I could use all my artistic investigations of color and form in this bricolage of formats. But I could also use my experiments in documentary and fiction to tell a story.”

MacCabe received a grant of $1,060,000 in 2007 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the United Kingdom to fund his research project, “Colonial Film: Moving Images of the British Empire.” With the award, MacCabe will catalogue a collection of more than 6,000 British films from pre-1900 productions to television-era programming.

Julien was born in London, where he lives and works. A 1984 graduate of St Martin’s School of Art, Julien studied painting and fine art film. He founded Sankofa Film and Video Collective, and was a founding member of Normal Films in 1999. Julien was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2001 for his films The Long Road to Macatlan (1999), made in collaboration with Javier de Frutos, and Vagabondia (2000), choreographed by de Frutos. Earlier works include Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask (1996), the acclaimed poetic documentary Looking for Langston (1989), and Young Soul Rebels. In 2001, he received the prestigious MIT Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts and in 2003 won the Grand Jury Prize at the Kunstfilm Biennale in Cologne for his single screen version of Baltimore.