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September 11th: Students Reflect One Year Later

How We've Dealt: A Personal Loss

By Ayelet Rivka Jaye

People were gathered in groups on the streets of midtown Manhattan. Individuals here and there talked excitedly into their cell phones. There was an electricity, a nervous pulse in the air. I caught random pieces of conversation as I continued walking toward the school building.

"Did you see the smoke? Look, you can see it, right there!"

"...the World Trade Center..."

"...plane crash...Twin Towers collapsed..."

I actually entertained the thought for a moment that I had somehow mistakenly walked right into an outdoor movie filming. I even remember joking to a friend who I passed on the street that I felt like I was on the set of *Independence Day*. I mean, come on, was this for real?

But the laughter and joking ended there. This was for real.

A strange kind of sickening feeling began to grow inside of me, but I was too confused to focus on it and I kept walking.

It was all everyone was talking about when I reached school. As the story fleshed out with each new detail that surfaced, my confusion was quickly replaced with a newly intensified nausea as I numbly registered the fact that my brother-in-law worked in the

World Trade Center. But like most of us then, I had not yet fully comprehended the magnitude of what had occurred.

After trying to call my sister at her office, I even managed to sit through my first period class, something which, looking back upon now, appears rather ludicrous. But at that early stage, I simply had no idea of the horrific reality of the situation. As I sat in class, I repeatedly told myself that this had just been a little scare, that's all. He probably was able to escape in time and he's fine. Everything will be fine.

That hope stayed with me for weeks after September 11th, but it did not hold a steady presence. At times it emerged, a small flicker of light, and we believed he had a chance, he was alive somewhere, we would see him again. Then it would disappear, and again we would feel the bitter sting of despair as we realized that the speck of hope had only been teasing us, only pretending to lead us out of our misery.

This was most painfully experienced when we discovered on Wednesday, September 12th, that my brother-in-law's name appeared on a list of registered patients at one of the local hospitals. My sister, along with a few others, set out for the hospital while the rest of us stayed behind to

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Let the Painting Tell the Year's Story

Student Artwork Reflects on Terror

By Miriam Colton

his year, Tamar Melmed is not certain how she will commemorate 9/11; she may attend a memorial service at Ground Zero site, or just take time out for personal reflection. But one thing is for sure. The SCW senior will seize a few moments to stop at the Art Annex to view the painting she made last spring.

Her painting, untitled, leans against a wall in the Art Annex, one of the many student artworks on display for visitors and students. The various figures and intricate brushstrokes not only tell of hours of effort, but also of Melmed's feelings in the wake of a year filled with terror, both for America and Israel.

"I needed to do something terror related," she says. "It was a heavy year and I needed to respond." When she was assigned a painting for an art class in the spring semester, she knew the subject matter. Melmed was apprehensive to describe her painting in the *Observer*, she was unsure whether she wanted to expose the raw emotions to the public, emotions with which she is still grappling.

Jewish students have tried various methods to deal with a year of suicide bombs in Israel and of a terrorism scare globally. A few have become voracious readers of newspapers, sometimes quelling their fear with an obsession for facts, while some have volunteered for community relief projects. Others, like Melmed, an art major, have turned to their talents to face the reality of the past year.

While Melmed had done a response piece immediately following 9/11, she now sought a serious painting involving "a lot of thinking time." So like many art students at SCW, she sat painting for hours at a time, sometimes into the wee hours of morning. The airy and spacious studio in the Art Annex,

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Memorial wall at St. Paul's Cathedral near Ground Zero pays tribute to the 9/11 victims, one year later

Bringing I Home

As the infamous day loomed on the horizon, we, as editors, faced the decision of whether or not to publish an issue commemorating this overwhelming day. Initially, we felt so much had already been said, so much will still be said, and for us, as college students, there is little left to add. Hard core news would be too harsh, opinion pieces too cliché, and reflections would be written better in numerous New York papers.

However, as a college paper, there was still one more place to turn, and it was there that inspiration lay - the SCW community. We turned to our students and professors to see how they dealt with the tragedy through what defines the college experience – the expression of oneself through skills and talents. In the end, it was the students' and professors' paintings, poetry, writing and personal accounts that demanded a forum of expression. While one can only speak about her personal experiences, that is what other people really want to hear anyway.

Through their talents, these students and professors pay tribute to those who lost their lives on 9/11, in the only way they, and we, know how.

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm

Excerpt from September 11th, 2001 Address to Wilf Campus Students

"So we pray that, our Father in Heaven not forget us; that Israel find safe haven in its current worrisome crisis, that America be spared any future pain; that the survivors and families of the victims of the attack be blessed with His love. We shall endeavor never to forget You, O God. And do not, we pray,

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The Observer

would like to wish the entire

Yeshiva community
peaceful & happy year

Student Art

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where soft classical or rock music plays in the background, provides a haven for students from a suffering world and a place for reflection.

Melmed's painting is well done in the technical sense of balance, harmony, color and the like, but it is her detailed and emotional explanation of its meaning that draws one in. "To me the painting is almost childlike and not realistic," says Melmed. "The focus was the expression, more than producing a finely crafted painting."

The painting is divided into three segments, with the two outer ones contrasting each other. The right side, painted in spotted muted purples and grays, is "how I think of the destruction of the World Trade Center — sooty and unclear." Floating above are the words *El Maleh Rachamim*, God of Mercy, an ancient memorial prayer recited at funerals.

To Melmed the words also bring to mind a poem by the Israeli poet Yehudah Amichai, entitled "El Melah Rachamim," in which he ironically twists this ancient prayer to question a God of Mercy in a world burdened with suffering. "One can't help but ask how these senseless murders can happen," says Melmed, whose articulate explanations take on an almost soulful tone, as she becomes lost in the painting.

A Jewish mother stands underneath, crying out these words, as she mourns over the body of her dead son, in a coffin draped with the Israeli flag.

The middle segment realistically depicts the Twin Towers, while an abstract figure in a fetal pose hangs suspended in the center of the canvas. "She's suspended in everything," says Melmed. "She's overwhelmed, desperate, questioning."

In the last segment of the painting, Melmed depicts a fire in bright oranges and thick brush strokes, with musical notes hidden in the flames. The fire, which has destroyed much in the past year, is also a symbol of creation and renewal, and the musical notes a sign of hope. "It's the light of *geulah*, redemption," notes Melmed. "It tells of rebirth and hope. I do believe we're suffering now, but ultimately it will be for the good.

"The question exists: God, you're filled with Mercy, but where is that mercy? But that's a temporal question of now. Ultimately, we'll one day be in peace, rejoicing over our redemption."

As one dark-colored and murky outer panel of the painting question God's



Melmed's painting, a response to the terror of this past year

mercy, the other, painted in bright oranges, offers the reply that the destruction will soon give birth to recreation.

Melmed, a joint Judaic Studies major, says the fire reminded her of the familiar epigram from Psalms, "Those who sow in tears, shall reap in joy." Deeply affected by the murder of Shalhevet Pass (whose name means flame), a ten-month old Israeli girl killed during the Intifada, Melmed thought of her while painting the fire.

An aspiring art therapist, Melmed can attest to the therapeutic effect of painting. For her, the hours of painting were intense. "Something was screaming inside and I needed to get it out," she says.

While one might have thought that therapists would be flooded following 9/11, Melmed notes that they were not. According to various theories, Americans are still in partial denial over the enormous

tragedy. "I'm still very emotional," Melmed says. "I can see a picture on the subway and start crying. The enormity of the tragedy is so huge that is will take years for it to sink in."

Still grappling with the raw emotions so evident in the painting, Melmed has recently taken to turning the painting to face the wall so it is not visible to others. "I still don't know whether the painting was an appropriate expression," she remarks, glancing at the painting. "I just don't know."

A full-fledged Zionist, one who has chosen a career in art therapy partly because of its popularity in Israel, Melmed is somewhat flustered by the association she makes between Israel and America in her painting. "They're each tragedies and they each deserve their own painting," she says.

Israeli-orientated, Melmed was surprised to find herself with strong feelings of patriotism for America. Many students on Yeshiva's campus have been struggling to balance this dual loyalty. "It was the first time I was ever proud to be in New York," jokes the Los Angeles native.

Melmed has utilized the pain she feels from the 9/11 attacks to feel more connected to the pain in Israel. "When piguim [attacks] occurred in Israel last year and I felt disconnected, I used to go down to the World Trade Center site, and try to connect and feel the pain from there," says Melmed.

Melmed's painting addresses complex human emotions: doubt, confusion, fear and grief. But as one reads across the canvas to the bright orange flames and its hidden musical notes, the final message is that of hope.

Response Collages

Two collages from a series by SCW graduate '02 Babette Marciano, on display at the Art Annex





All in Words

All Over the World

By Madeleine Beckman, SCW English Professor

They do it for themselves these women wearing sheer stockings, shoes dusted of rubble that had been their stoves, bookshelves, booties crocheted for the first, second now dead in rubble they walk through, these women in shoes dusted off and stockings, carrying their lives in sheets they once pressed crisp, flung across a wedding bed, memories of their first night still bright in their minds they cling to like scalloped sheets in their hands; cling to a community of souls, each reaching deep down in a way they never knew was in them, could never know was possible, like their universe gone in a gulp, but not the bed's memories or laughter over tables set with "good china," filled with hot bread, lentil soup, garlic like a sweet drug, strong but not strong enough.

These women walk, have been walking through centuries through streets over mountains across deserts, hiding, while feeding infants from breasts in name only; these women remember giddy gossip, remember where they hid birthday cakes to surprise the innocent.

They are walking still caring for their last pair of stockings, as one covets a scrap of love letter, the rest lost in a fire or flood or who knows where. They covet this luxury not out of vanity, but for love of the lost, for sanity, for hope no matter how sheer, sheerer even than the air they now breathe.

These stockings, not good for anything, really, not good to hold water or bolster a sinking roof or heart.

Still, these women, with faces no longer pink, but gray with shadow dust off their shoes slip on their stockings.

New York City, September, 2001

Washington Square Park Vigil: Journal Entry

By Bella Tendler

9/12/01

Yesterday was panic. Millions of people scrambling across the bridges by foot. Away, running away, as far away as they can get from the scene. Sirens shrieking, people running, not knowing what to do, not being able to reach their families to tell them they are o.k. Not knowing if their mother, father, brother, cousin, friend, lover was alive or dead or trapped. No one will forget it. Ever. It was like the end of the world had arrived.

Today is silent. Biting nails silent. Waiting for news silent. Waiting for answers. People hanging up signs at the bus stops and on the phone booths. Have you seen my brother? Tom White/ 5'11"/ 87th floor/ Tower #2. Vigil silence. Candles on every ledge of the city silence. Strangers sit together and pray. They strum guitars and play bongo and get high. What else can they do? Go home? They can't. And even if they could, what comfort does home offer?

So yesterday was panic, today is silence. What will tomorrow be? Who knows.

Ready and Willing... But No One to Help

By Tova Warburg

f I were asked how it was to "work" as an Emergency Medical Technician(EMT) on September 11th, I would have difficulty answering the question.

That day, which I spent at Chelsea Piers, is still vivid in my mind. The first few hours were spent by us—a conglomeration of doctors, nurses, paramedics, EMTs and other people who just wanted to help— setting up a large room as a hospital—trauma section, operating room, etc., which we all assumed would be flooded with patients in the upcoming moments.

Each time one of the Incident Commanders got up to speak, the room immediately fell silent, he or she would say something along the lines of, "we expect people to be coming in soon," and would then proceed to give instructions as to where we would direct them.

These announcements tended to be followed by a burst of movement and excitement, as each of us felt the need to check and re-check our stations, making sure that they were ready. There was a sense of tension—even fear—in the air; what were the types of injuries that we would see, and would we be able to properly deal with them?

I recall one of the people at my station asking me "are you OK?" and then proceeding to offer advice as to how to remain calm when exposed to horrendous human injuries.

At around five o'clock, I began to contemplate leaving. Unfortunately and ironically - It didn't seem that I was needed. There were no patients. The Incident Commanders had even stopped accepting volunteers.

However, I felt compelled to stay, on what now seemed to be the slight chance that I would be of assistance. At around 8:30, after spending nearly ten hours in the large room with hundreds of other volunteers, I left my station.

The image that remains in my mind is exactly that: hundreds of volunteers—good, caring people, filled with a sincere desire to help others—and no one for them to help.

Retreating to the Notes

Making Sense of Music: Interview with Dr. Glaser

By Caryn Litt



Dr. David Glaser, SCW music professor, explains his ideas about musical expression after a tragedy to the *Observer*.

How did music factor into your response to 9/11?

Dr. David Glaser

My girlfriend's brother and his girlfriend were visiting New York,

and they were supposed to leave on the 11th. They were stuck. They couldn't go back to their hotel because the hotel said they needed the room, which is a little ridiculous, since no one was coming into New York. When I got home that day, I found this couple camping out in our living room in our very small apartment, and I didn't know how many days they would be staying there. I needed something to shift my attention away from everything that was going on, so I listened to some music.

What did you listen to?

The piece I chose was the Goldberg Variations by Bach, which was originally written for a harpsichordist named Goldberg. It's a long piece, and a piece that requires a lot of concentration. I didn't think too much about it at the time, I just knew what I wanted to listen to. In retrospect, though, it was because it requires a lot of concentration. What I needed was to shift my attention to something that was absorbing, but less than overtly emotional.

How is the way you think of music in times of tragedy different from the general perception of music as a source of solace?

A lot of people do use music as an escape, and that certainly is one purpose that music serves. It's a way of taking yourself out of any situation you find yourself in. It doesn't happen for me the way it happens for a "civilian." For them, the escape comes from unplugging their minds, and letting music be like a bath that washes over them. For me, music is compelling because it's something I can focus my attention on.

After 9/11 there were some tribute concerts, and now a lot of the memorials planned involve concerts or musical components. What's your take on this?

I have no problem with people memorializing the event and using music as one element in putting together a program. Music is so abstract, it becomes easy for music to be used in a way to evoke feelings or sentiments. That's why its use for memorials is so common. I think people turn to it because of its non-specificity, because it's so general that it evokes emotions that will be different for different people. By being more nebulous, it can work to create those moods in a way that the other arts don't.

Chopin and Piano Sooth the Pain

By Miriam Colton



The Observer interviewed SCW senior Sara Strapp Schwell, a music minor, to discuss her musical responses over the past year.

Has music helped you deal with 9/11 and a year of terrorism?

It definitely has. My husband, who I was engaged to at the time, worked in the World Trade Center. Thank God, he

Sara Strapp Schwell

was able to get out of the building. Music really helped me deal with the anxiety of those weeks. Not just playing piano and studying music, but even listening to music, which helps me to relax and unwind. My piano teacher used to say that no matter where you go, piano and music will be your best friend. It has been true for me since I was five and has been amplified umpteen times since 9/11.

Did you particularly use this form of self-expression on that overwhelming day last September?

I don't remember much from that day except trying to find out if my fiancé was okay. Afterwards, we went to his parents' house in Far Rockaway. The first thing I remember doing is sitting down by the piano and playing "Nocturne" by Chopin. It's a piece that's quiet, emotional and moving. It's a piece that has meant something to me for many years, but on that day took on a totally new emotion.

Have you composed any pieces in response to terrorism?

My strength is not composing. With composers like Beethoven and Chopin that so eloquently express emotions, why mess with a good thing, as they say.

Does listening to music do that same thing for you as playing? What kind of music have you listened to over the past year?

For me, playing comes first, listening comes second. I listen to classical music like Chopin, as well as some modern artists, like Norah Jones whose music label is under jazz. I look for music that has depth and content. Professor David Glaser often says in the name of Professor Ed Levy that music that you listen to once is nice. But music that makes you come back again and again is something special.

I know you're an art major, and I'm curious - what it is about music as an art form that so captivates you?

Music will always affect my growth as a person and as a musician. It's the ability to lose myself in a piece and sometimes realize that hours have gone by is really special. For me, it's the ability to say something, without having to know what you need to say.

The SCW Community

is invited to attend
a 9/11 memorial service
on Wednesday,
September 11th,
Schottenstein Cultural Center

Program to Begin at 8:15 a.m.

Schedule of Program:

Recitation of Tehillim
Opening Remarks by SCWSC President Sharon Weiss
Singing of National Anthem
Shofar Blowing by Rabbi Alter Metzger

City-Wide Moment of Silence at 8:46 Followed by Address by Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm, Yeshiva University President

> Singing of Hatikvah Closing Remarks by SSSBSC President Elly Nyer Slide Show Tribute

Student's Personal Account

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cover the phones. I opened up my *Tehillim* to psalm six on the page I had bookmarked.

I had been saying this chapter over and over again these past two days, in between making phone calls to the various hospitals, centers and hotlines. The day before, when I first opened up the Tehillim and came to this chapter, I immediately identified it as the "magic" mizmor, psalm; I was confident that saying it would have to work. What initially drew me to it was the English caption that introduced it: "Anyone who offers this prayer with heartfelt devotion is assured that God will accept it."

He probably was able to escape in time.
He's fine.
Everything will be fine.

As I said the words, I found that they so aptly expressed the depths of what we were feeling: "Be gracious to me, God, for I am desolate"; "And my soul is utterly terrified, and You, God, how long?"; "I am worn out with my sighing"; "With my tears, I melt my couch." I grew more hopeful each time I said the verse "God has heard my supplication, God will accept my prayer."

Now, however, certain that we had found him in the hospital, I was bursting with joy and song, and I happily removed the bookmark from where it had been and parted with psalm six. I said mizmor l'todah, a chapter of thanksgiving, instead, and, feeling deliciously relieved, sat down to eat my first meal in almost two days. We started talking about how we would celebrate when my brother-in-law would recover from the hospital: we would

take him and my sister out to dinner, we would buy him some spectacular gift, we would treat my sister to a girls' night out to see a show. I remember even declaring aloud: "This is the happiest day of my life!"

Then the phone rang. It turned out that my brother-inlaw had a fairly common name and that it wasn't him who had been in the hospital, after all. It was someone else with the same name.

Back to making phone calls, back to psalm six.

As the Yamim Noraim, the High Holidays, approached, this living nightmare continued. I still held onto a thin strand of hope that maybe he was still alive, although by then we had stopped calling the hospitals. Intellectually, I knew that the chances were virtually nil.

It was around Succoth time when it finally hit me that there really was no more hope. I was in our local kosher grocery store and ran into a woman from my community. She gave me a warm hug and asked with such love and sincerity how we were all doing. As soon as I began telling her how difficult things were, I started to cry, right there in the grocery store. We were standing by the cashier, who was now looking



Mark Rosenberg, alav hashalom, worked at Marsh & McLennan Cos. Inc. in the World Trade Center

at us quizzically. The woman explained to him: "Her brotherin-law died in the World Trade Center."

It was the first time I had heard anyone actually outright say that he had been *nifter*. But she had just said it, and with those words, any hope I had preserved thus far vanished.

Noting that our forefather Yaakov refused to be comforted over his missing son Joseph, the rabbis point out that people cannot accept consolation for someone they believe to be alive. Until one knows with absolute certainty that the other person is no longer in this world, then there is still hope, which one holds

onto that with all his strength, like a person who is ship-wrecked and holds on for dear life to a scrap of wood floating in the sea. As long as there is that remnant of hope, then one cannot fully mourn and the pain cannot go away, even with time.

In addition to the tragedy of losing my brother-in-law, the nightmarish experience that my family and my brother-inlaw's family had to go through of simply not knowing is an ongoing nightmare today for fellow Jews. Families of the Israeli Missing In Action (MIA) soldiers, who were brutally kidnapped and taken hostage by terrorists, have not seen their sons, husbands, fathers, in many years, some not for over twenty years. There is still this hope that these men are alive, and we therefore are unable to forget them - we must continue to pray that they be returned to their families.

There is a common Jewish philosophy that the suffering of young people provides kapparah, or atonement, for the rest of the nation. May the untimely death of my brother-in-law, Mark Rosenberg, alav hashalom, who passed away at the young age of 26, and all those who died al kiddush Hashem with him, serve as a kapparah for all of Klal Yisrael.

Memorial Events

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dent body perform the music of Leonard Bernstein, Cole Porter and Lennon and McCarthy, and read from works by Shakespeare, Sylvia Plath and W.H. Auden, among others.

Days of Awe: Reflections from Ground Zero by the Jewish Chaplains

6:30 p.m.

Center for Jewish History

15 W. 16th Street

917-606-8200

Jewish chaplains of the National Guard, Police Department and Fire Department share personal experiences from their time at Ground Zero.

Candlelight Vigil and Tribute Concert

Sunset (7:12 p.m.) Central Park

59th Street and 5th Avenue (Grand Army

Plaza Entrance)

Orchestra of St. Lukes



Lighting of the Eternal Flame

Sunset (7:12 p.m.) Battery Park 75 Battery Place

A memorial service featur-

ing many heads of state, including President George Bush and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, with readings.

International Students Lend Different Perspective to 9/11

By Caryn Litt

ohanna Amar has not returned home since September 11th. With new United States laws in place which make it difficult for Moroccan citizens to obtain visas, the SCW junior fears she may not be let back to the U.S. for at least several months if she leaves. Many of her friends have, in fact, been denied visas.

"It's turning out to be scary," says Amar. As Yeshiva students joined other Americans after the September 11th terror attacks in dramatic displays of patriotism, there were some who could not help but remain somewhat on the fringes: the 140 international students at both campuses. The international students' inherent detachment from the national crisis afforded them a unique perspective to September 11th.

"To us, America is a symbol of stability," says Belarus native Tanya Bayeva, an SCW senior. "New York has always been closed off from the whole world. The day after the attacks, though, I saw normal faces, that they can also suffer."

While Bayeva feels sympathy for America, she, like many other foreign students, has had to straddle both American patriotism and her own country's perception of the United States.

"There is propaganda in both countries – in America I get one piece of information, in Belarus I get different information," says Bayeva. "In our country, there is the perspective that America responded to September 11th without thinking, that they wanted blood and chose a country that would be a good victim, just so they could prove they're still a superpower."

Even for students from countries generally sympathetic to the U.S., questions of dual loyalty have arisen.

SCW junior Michal Jakobov, who is originally from Israel, recalls thinking at the time of September 11th that the terror attacks were actually beneficial to the Israeli cause.

"I thought that Americans would understand better what Israel goes through, and I think they have," says Jakobov. "My friends in Israel said at the time that in one way the attacks weren't good, but in another way, it would open America's eyes."

Now, says Jakobov, "the mentality has changed in New York. They see more that all the terrorists are the same. In Israel they use buses, here they use planes."



International SCW students, pictured above, (I-r) Laurence Baloul, Jessica Banon and Johanna Nachmias plan to commemorate 9/11

That they are accustomed to terrorism influenced the way the Israeli students coped with the September 11th terror attacks, as well. For Israeli Anna Raskin, SCW senior, the fear was greatly dulled.

"It was kind of shocking, but it was easier for me to deal with it than other people, because I'm used to it," says Raskin. "You

learn how to deal with these kind of situations, you have to go on with your normal business. People just have to deal with it."

Bayeva, too, suggests that her perspective on how to cope with September 11th differed because she is from Belarus.

"I'm from a country struck by political and economic strife, a country where Jews were persecuted," says Bayeva. "Americans were never in trouble, they were always successful. I have more experience dealing with big events. For me, it wasn't as bad as for other people."

Since September 11th, many international students have come to identify with America more, claiming they now feel a connection. They point out that the tragedy occurred in a location at which they could have been, and that the terrorists attacked not just America, but the values it represents, such as democracy.

Even though Amar gets suspicious looks from people when they discover she is from Morocco, she says September 11th made her feel closer to her temporary home.

"Before September 11th I didn't feel patriotic for America at all," says Amar. "But now, sometimes I feel American. September 11th really brought everyone together."

September 11th Memorial Events in Manhattan

Below is a sampling of events, ranging from memorial services to tribute concerts, which offer the opportunity to honor the victims and heroes of 9/11.



Memorial Service at Ground Zero 8:46 a.m.

100 Liberty Street A memorial service involving New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, New York Governor George Pataki and New Jersey

Governor James McGreevey, with a moment of silence and readings of the Gettysburg Address and the Declaration of Independence. As the World Looked On

Noon-6:00 p.m. Museum of Television and Radio 25 W. 52nd Street 212-621-6880

Over 500 hours of radio and television programming from thirty-two countries documenting the events and aftermath of 9/11 are being shown. Sources include China, Cuba, Finland, Iran, Russia, Spain and the U.S.

Spring Will Come Again: An Evening of Song and Poetry

6:00 p.m.

Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, Lincoln Center

Rose Building, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza 165 W. 65th Street Members of the Julliard faculty and stu-

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