



**June/July 2010  
Issue 4**

**The U.S. Information Resource Center (IRC) of the American Embassy in Athens is happy to provide you with *Latest on Humanities*, a bulletin focused on American society and culture. This publication is a bi-monthly compilation of recent articles from a wide range of authoritative journals and periodicals. By organizing and disseminating one more thematic publication about the United States, IRC seeks to promote better understanding of the principles and institutions that shape American values.**

**1. How Pixar Works: Inside the Blockbuster Industry**

(*Wired*, June 2010, pg. 139)

Every Pixar blockbuster requires years of brainstorming and fine-tuning. Every bag of Cheetos tumbles off a highly calibrated production line. Every stand-up comedian develops a unique method for honing jokes. Life's most interesting action happens behind the scenes—here's a look at the hidden processes of remarkable things.

**2. Ghosts of New York**

By John Freeman Gill

(*The Atlantic*, June 2010, pg. 86)

At the turn of the last century, New York City was home to a remarkable flowering of architectural creativity. All across the city, immigrant craftsmen, mostly anonymous, created exuberant works of art out of terra cotta and the humble stone of tenements and rowhouses—art that ennobled the public and enlivened the streets in a vibrant new way. Now, as a very different era dawns in New York, the only major public collection of this work is about to be scattered to private bidders around the world.

**3. A Band Apart**

By Stephen Elliott

(*Spin*, June 2010, pg. 53)

Seven years after their messy breakup, Stone Temple Pilots have found a way not only to coexist but, surprisingly, thrive. The multiplatinum alt-rock whipping boys reflect on their fragile peace and why they matter.

**4. Spirit Made Visible: Ronald K. Brown's Company, Evidence, Celebrates 25 years**

By Karyn D. Collins

(*Dance Magazine*, June 2010, pg. 46)

"These days nothing is getting in Brown's way. He's one of the hottest choreographers in contemporary dance. His kinetically exciting style—a fusion of African and Caribbean dance, hip hop and modern dance—has been embraced as much for its rich cultural context as for its overt spirituality. The company has performed all over the world, and Brown himself is in demand as a choreographer, teacher, and mentor."

**5. In Katrina's Wake**

By Christopher Wallenberger

(*American Theatre*, May/June 2010, pg. 54)

When the levees broke in August 2005, everything seemed lost. But a jolt of new theatrical activity is offering New

Orleanians fresh perspectives on the disaster and its aftermath.

### **6. National Defense**

By Hampton Sides

(*The New Yorker*, June 7, 2010, pg. 52)

On June 12th, the United States men's national soccer team faces England in Rustenburg, South Africa, in a match that is expected to draw one of the largest audiences in the history of televised sports. The last time the Yanks met in England in a World Cup was sixty years ago, in June, 1950, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The Americans beat England 1-0 in what was regarded as the greatest upset in the history of World Cup soccer. The U.S. men's soccer team did not make another appearance in a World Cup for forty years. Next week in South Africa, the Americans will need another miracle.

### **7. Where the Art Happens**

By Ann Landi

(*ArtNews*, June 2010, pg. 76)

"Today museums are using the Internet to connect visitors with the artist's interior world: point and click and you can pull up images, watch a video, or send comments. Even the nature of the studio visit has changed enormously in the online era. "Basically, you sit down with the artist, and out comes the laptop," notes Harry Philbrick, director of the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut."

### **8. The Real Critter**

By Christopher Benfey

(*The New York Review of Books*, June 18, 2010, pg. 18)

Whitman died in 1892 at the age of seventy-two, but the crest of the wave caught him anyway. It now seems obvious, though it hardly did when the self-published first edition of *Leaves of Grass* appeared to almost no notice in 1855 (beyond a couple of enthusiastic reviews that Whitman himself wrote anonymously), that American poetry began with Whitman. It is simply impossible, in a way that it is with no other poet—not Bradstreet or Dickinson, Melville or Poe—to conceive of American poetry without him. As Ezra Pound, no particular fan of Whitman, wrote, "It was you that broke the new wood," though he couldn't resist adding—as though Whitman were a ham-fisted lumberjack rather than a meticulous sculptor like himself—"Now is a time for carving."

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