New professor utilizes technology to advance education

By Vincent Civitillo
Features Editor

Some students travel quite a distance to get their college degrees. Dr. Yun Xia, one of Rider’s newest faculty members, traveled halfway across the world.

Born in Sichuan, China, Xia (pronounced Sh-ah) traveled to America in 1998 to get a doctorate degree in Communication at Southern Illinois University. However, after reading a three-line Internet advertisement for employment at Rider, Xia became immediately interested and packed his bags for New Jersey.

“God is so humorous. We have a National Communications Association, which members can subscribe to, that has job ads and last September I saw an advertisement in my mailbox for Rider,” he said. “I thought, ‘what is Rider?’ I never even heard of it. So I started to send e-mails asking what it was.”

Although the professor has a doctorate in Speech Communication, his main field of study is technology and how one can use it to better not only their education, but their lives as well.

“My ultimate goal is to use technology to encourage people to communicate and to exchange cultural information,” he said. “I believe this is a technological age, and the question is how do we best take advantage of that technology?”

“I realized technology makes my life much easier and comfortable while my wife was in China when I came here for the first half a year. We had a hard time communicating because international telephone is so expensive, so I really had to depend on e-mail to stay in touch. We e-mailed each other at least three or four times each day and felt so close to each other that in my second e-mail, I asked her to marry me.” Xia has decided that the best way to utilize this technology as a professor is to integrate it into classroom use.

“If I lecture to someone for an hour and a half, they’re just going to get bored, but if I include computer exercises, they’ll have something extra to learn with, that will make it much more exciting and real,” Xia said.

At Rider, Xia begins his first semester this fall teaching Publication Design and Digital Media for the Internet, and enjoys the student-teacher relationship that the University’s size provides.

“The very first thing I noticed about Rider was the relationship between the instructor and student, which is on a very interpersonal level, rather than an institutional level,” he said. “At my last school in Illinois, we had 22,000 students. In one class there are pretty much 50 or 60 students. If a professor teaches 200 students at once, the students don’t ever have the opportunity to talk with the professor. "Rider’s student-teacher relationship is going to be very helpful because students come to school not only for education, but to establish connections and socialize with their professors and colleagues to establish social learning.”

However, that same small-campus advantage is, ironically, also what Xia believes will take the greatest effort in adapting to as he begins his new job.

“I’m used to seeing a huge campus. When I taught in college, the University had about 15,000 students, and then in the school I got my degree in there were 22,000 students. I just don’t like this crowded feel there is around here. Everything is in such a small area...may-be you can expand it,” he laughed.

![Photo by Jennifer Kuhn](image-url)
Asian Weezer performance immigrates through live album

By Michael D. Lovullo
Assistant News Editor

In a post-grunge era, Weezer quickly gained momentum with their debut self-titled album. Bearing the reserved four before a sky blue backdrop, this release would come to find a home in many a rocker’s (metal, punk, pop, etc.) album binder and take the obvious title of “old blue” among fans around the world. The group’s sound, however, was not easily defined.

Critics and rock connoisseurs alike felt the group contained an element distinguishable from the outside yet not powerful enough to affect the organism as a whole, which distanced them from the conventional categories of pop-punk, alternative rock or the quickly fading grunge.

The first year of fame was a great commercial success, as it would be with any group releasing three hits from their debut album, but after the commercial failure of their sophomore album, Pinkerton, the group would take a break after finishing their 1997 tour.

Unlike many one-hit wonders that fade away after their second album plummets, Weezer became the talk of the alternative culture. And although the charts, cash registers and ticket sales would indicate otherwise, Pinkerton was getting noticed. Its grittier sound and heart wrenching lyrics (i.e. “I’m dumb, she’s a lesbian. I thought I had found the one.”) were critically celebrated.

Years passed and the group returned with a new bassist and new hit (“Hash Pipe”). Paying no mind to the charts, the group, led by a changed man who has shed his existential shell and no longer displays shame of his cult following, they take to the stage a newfound confidence that they will not be soon forgotten.

Their most current release, The Lion and the Witch, is, if anything, a tribute to their new philosophy. The extended edition of alternate tracks by an artist, which showcases six live songs from their World Cup tour in Japan, transcends the overall sound of the group, apparent in any of their four albums. The vivacity with which the songs are played live convey the nature of the group perfectly and answer the age old question: what is this music...rock?

Packaged in a folder case, the illustrations alone indicate that Weezer (or Cuomo at least) has gone back to the land that inspired their sophomore phenomenon. Included inside are fan reviews from four of the cities the band toured in Japan. Serving as a preface to the E.P., these reports prove, without fail, that rock knows no boundaries.

Containing songs from each of the albums, the E.P. opens with a soothing two-minute plus introduction before Rippling into “Dope Nose.” Each of the songs are represented marvelously live, discounting “El Scorcho” in which Cuomo forgets the second verse (“I asked you to go to the Green Day concert. You said you never heard of them. How cool is that?”).

However, this release is a must for any serious rock fan that hasn’t yet had the pleasure of hearing the group live.
Best of the King remastered for all-new generation

By Roger Alvarado
Staff Writer

With just a glance at the pop charts, one can see that there is more than just “A Little Less Conversation” about the “King of Rock ‘n’ Roll” these days.

Now, 23 years since his death, Elvis Presley is back with Elvis: 30 #1 Hits. Much like the Beatles’ 2000 release 1 that has sold 8.2 million copies in the U.S., it collects all of Presley’s U.S. and U.K. number ones, and aspires to be the offer no music fan will refuse.

The release is the latest salvo aimed at the coveted 18-25 demographic that Elvis Presley Enterprises and RCA Records so desperately need to keep cash registers ringing into this century.

On the heels of two highly successful campaigns by Nike and Disney designed to introduce Elvis to younger audiences.

In the case of Nike, a remix of an obscure 1968 Presley recording, “A Little Less Conversation,” was used as part of a world wide ad campaign aired in June to coincide with the World Cup. It proved so popular that in nine countries, including England, it reached number one.

In a separate move, Elvis Presley Enterprises licensed six Presley recordings for use in Disney’s blockbuster Lilo & Stitch, to try and lay claim to an even younger generation of Elvis fans.

Most significantly, at a time when many younger fans simply lack emotional ties to Elvis or feel his music sounds dated, RCA has gone ahead and taken the unprecedented measure of remastering and, in many cases, remixing Elvis’ first generation master tapes for the first time.

The improvements are stunning. Many of the songs have a fuller sound and Elvis’ rich vocals have never sounded better. Songs like “Hound Dog,” “Can’t Help Falling in Love,” and “Suspicious Minds” now approximate Elvis’ vocal grandeur far better than the previously available wooden sounding recordings.

Born Jan. 8, 1935 in Tupelo, Miss., the legend is that while working as a truck driver, Presley passed a recording studio and saw a sign: “Make your own records-$2 for four songs.” Longing to record a song for his mother, he walked into Sam Phillips’ Sun Studios in Memphis. While there, he caught Phillips’ ear. When he and guitarist Scotty Moore and bassist Bill Black layered down “That’s All Right Mama,” a star was born.

Presley’s vocal range was in a league all its own. He could sing throat tearing rockers or tender ballads moving from one genre to the next without losing a step. In the process, he endowed each genre with a new style and grace that up to that point had not existed.

His effect on live performances was likewise profound. Presley’s performances were teeming with sexual electricity.

Defying his acoustic guitar as a prop, he would swing his hips violently while shouting his vocals and let the music take over his body.

In March of 1958, Presley was drafted into the Army, and consequently, new recordings were released far more sporadically. Having fulfilled his military obligations, Presley resumed his career in 1960 and further explored acting, something he had dabbled in prior to joining the Army.

During the ’60s, he made two or three movies a year that had little in the way of story, acting or social value. In time, his popularity waned and though he maintained a consistent presence on the charts throughout his career, his days of preeminence appeared over.

Just as it seemed Presley had lost touch and been left behind by the likes of the Beatles and Bob Dylan, he reclaimed his throne. Looking fit and clad in a black leather suit reminiscent of his halcyon days, he used the “1968 Comeback Special” to belt his greatest hits and remind the world why he was “the King.”

He also began performing live again and proved expert at filling arenas and Las Vegas showroom.

Excess and alcoholic dependency led to Presley’s steady decline and death on Aug. 16, 1977. However, as proven by the recent re-release of his greatest hits, his legacy would last forever.

The greatest hits of Elvis Presley, who will be forever immortalized as the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll, have been re-released in Elvis: 30 #1 Hits. The release, along with other moves such as the recent Disney film Lilo & Stitch, are part of a campaign by Elvis Presley Enterprises to introduce the legend’s work to a new league of audiences.

The unbalanced diet of college students

By Lacey Korevec
Staff Writer

When parents are no longer around to force-feed their children milk and vegetables, eating right is not exactly a piece of cake.

For many college students, a well-balanced meal is not a top priority. In fact, during a study in which several Rider students were asked what types of snacks and desserts they enjoy the most, results showed a lack of nutritional awareness among students.

A relative lack of healthy options at the university’s cafeteria, coupled with a focus on fun, caused students to make unhealthy choices.

For sophomore Kelly Maloney, sometimes making it to every meal can be a real effort.

“I usually skip [meals] twice a day. I really only eat dinner, and even then I only have a deli sandwich and fries,” she said.

Freshman Melanie Stone said that she usually does not eat breakfast because she does not have enough time in the morning to eat before class.

“Sleep is more important to me than food,” she said. “When I don’t go to breakfast I usually eat a cereal bar or a Granola bar, and if I miss lunch then I’ll usually make some Ramen Noodles. Overall, I just find myself eating less here than I do at home.”

According to Stone, sometimes students with classes scheduled around the lunch time free period are forced to skip meals because of Daly’s tendency to be overcrowded during peak meal times.

“I do tend to avoid Daly’s sometimes at lunch because it’s so busy. By the time you get your food, sit down, and eat, it’s already time for class,” she said.

From left to right, juniors James J. Lyons, Hugh J. Nastasi and Jeffrey P. Schnaars eat in Daly’s new cafeteria. However, according to freshman Melanie Stone, many students do not take advantage of the more nutritious dishes that can be found in the dining hall as the typical instinct of the college student is to gravitate towards the junk foods.

Even when students do find time to eat, Stone pointed out that many typically choose junk foods over nutritious ones.

“There are plenty of healthy options at Daly’s. I just think most people overlook them,” she said. “Since I’ve been here I haven’t been drinking milk as much as I used to, but I do try to have a salad at least once a day.”

For students who cannot always find time to go to Daly’s, a common solution is to snack; however, many students do not always stock up on healthy foods in their rooms, Maloney said.

“When I’m in my room I usually just eat popcorn and pretzels,” she added.

The Bronc Diner is always a popular place for students to eat between the hours of 7 p.m. and 2 a.m., although the limited hours usually mean longer waits.

“If I go to the diner, it’s usually around midnight because when I have an early dinner I get hungry late at night,” she said. “Still, I try not to go to sleep right after I eat.”

Although Daly’s serves all kinds of enticing, unhealthy foods, it also has many other options, like wraps, salads, and pasta dishes. There is no doubt about it; eating right in college is a difficult task, but it definitely can be done. All it takes is strong will power and a taste for the nutritious. 