

Blue Valentine paints intimate portrait of close relationships

By Rebecca Waterloo
A&E EDITOR

There's a blue hue that covers over the movie *Blue Valentine* as you examine the contemporary life of husband and wife. Ryan Gosling and Michelle Williams dive deep into their roles as Cindy and Dean, completely engaged and focused in their roles as a young couple brought together by fate, coincidence, or accident, whatever the perspective may be. Their performance of falling in and out of love during the movie is enhanced due the work of director Derek Cianfrance. The movie starts as a messy day in the life of a married couple and their six year old daughter, Frankie, as Cindy (Williams) is beyond exhausted and Dean (Gosling) shows less than a below average amount of aspiration in his life.

The plot is simple: a night in a cheesy, run-down hotel while trying to patch up their marriage with a night of intimacy and alcohol. The complexity, however, starts as we're brought not just to the hotel room, but through their story, suffocating us with their poisonous dysfunction until we plunge into a warm, clean story of love, dedication and devotion (coming mostly from Gosling's side). Cianfrance lets us get to know too little or way too much information of their life. The bouncing of black to white, left to right, his side-her side leaves a large responsibility for the user to determine the actual narrative that happens in the middle. The story unravels the hardship of a relationship, marriage and the sad truth that some people may just fall out of love no matter how much they try to keep it together.

This movie is full of fights, love (making), communication, silence, judgment and understanding, good guys, bad guys and everything you don't want in between. It requires an open mind and a realist's point of view as it's not an easy story. Is any situation in life? *Blue Valentine* is exactly what it sounds like.



Photo courtesy movies.nytimes.com

Documentary celebrates local talent

By Udayan Das
STAFF WRITER

The after-show program of the *Louder Than A Bomb* poetry slam consisted of a performance of a poem called "Stepping" by Lamar Jordan, which is an amazing poem, and as performed by Lamar, is worth the price of entry alone. Add to this the presence of the filmmakers Greg Jacobs and Jon Siskel, (the co-founder of the Louder Than a Bomb poetry slam competition) Kevin Coval, and finally another poem performed by Nate Marshall; you begin to see that the whole *LTAB* experience is even louder than the flyers claim to be.

of the poetry as competition, is a microcosm of young people at work, stretched to its limits, but doing what they like and know how to do best. Because the filmmakers stay away from gimmicky editing and flashiness of any kind, letting the words stand on their own and adopting a simple documentary approach: you are allowed to feel a lot, a successful documentary having done its work.

The talent that these kids display, the sheer passion for the work (which after all is most important), is simply amazing. After all, there

Photo courtesy louderthanabombfilm.com



Lamar and Nate are both seen in the documentary *LTAB* which follows the *LTAB* competition held in Chicago in 2008. *LTAB* is the largest poetry slam competition in the world. In Chicago, teams from dozens of high schools participate in it every year. It is almost as important as anything in those high schools sporting calendars. It is an amazing competition and involves great emotion, great works of poetry, and great characters. Some of these characters are to be seen in *LTAB* the documentary. Apart from Lamar and Nate, we follow two other young talented Chicago poets, Nova and Adam. Each of these four are part of intriguing stories that are far more interesting than a Hollywood film. What we see beyond the quality of the poetry, and the excitement

is a little bit of everything. What is good to see is that the ego is not inflated out of control, so that the most competitive have a mutual respect for each other. This, possibly more than anything else, invites the deep involvement of the audience in the performance that is *LTAB* the film.

* *Louder Than a Bomb* (the documentary) is playing this week at the Gene Siskel Film Center: <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/louderthanabomb> - Siskel and Jacobs will be answering questions, and there will be student poets performing.

* *Louder Than a Bomb* (the competition) will be taking place from February 19 to March 12, organized once again by the wonderful Young Chicago Authors. You can find their

Coffee Club: The Wormhole

By Harshita Iyer
TECHNEWS WRITER

Last Sunday the Coffee Club ventured to a place called The Wormhole, just a short way off the Blue line at the Damen stop.

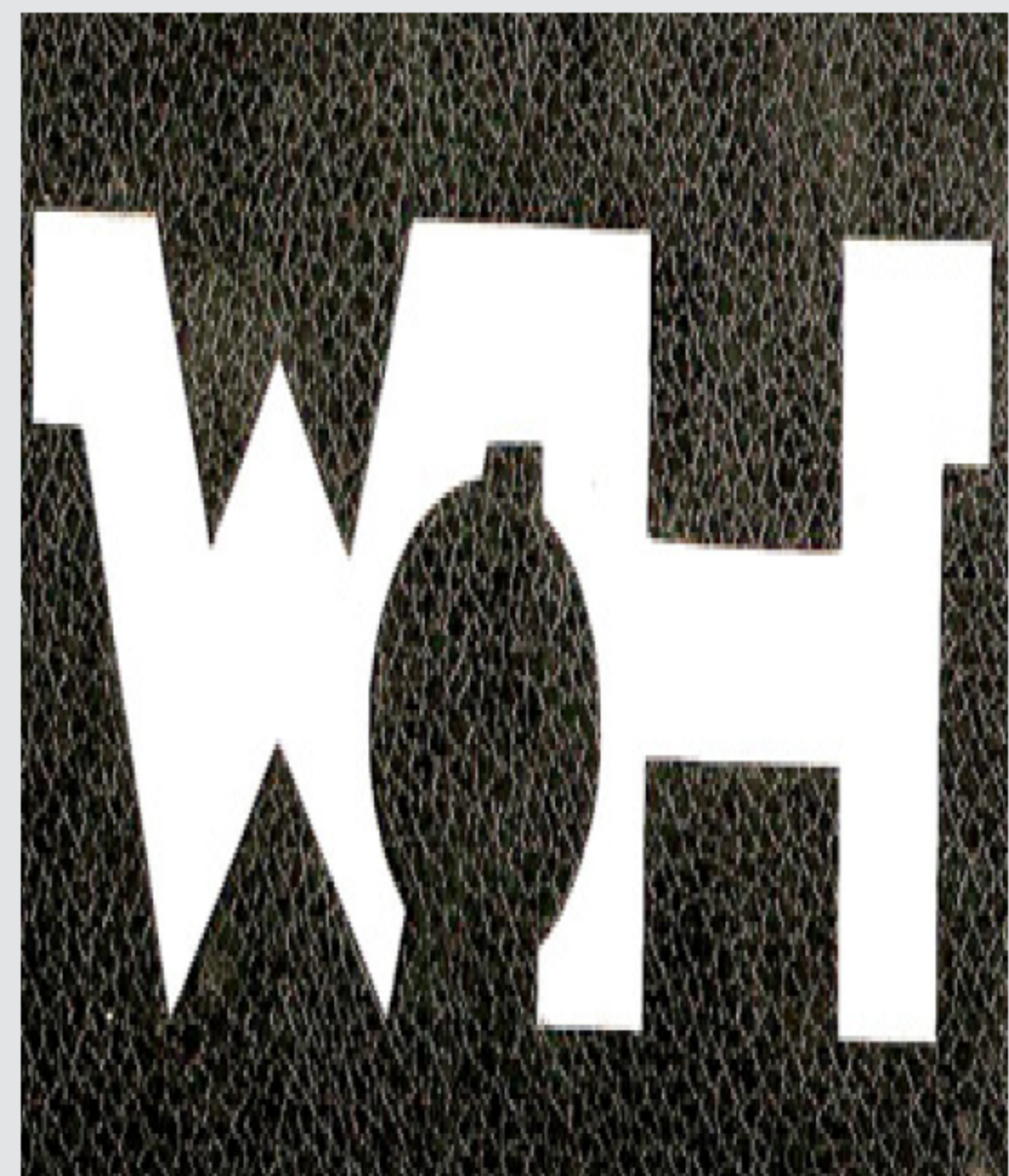
As expected, it was a great atmosphere, and had great coffee. The place was oozing with a retro, messy but comfortable feel, with an unique arrangement of random couches. There was a long line for the Coffee Club, something that is not normal in coffee shops around Chicago. Could that be an obvious sign of a popular spot? The prices were reasonable, for a café (under \$9 for a coffee and pastries).

An exciting discovery was made there: they have a Nintendo! The "ancient" but familiar version of our generation was what made it even better. The decor was unique and customer-friendly - mugs with faces on them, walls lined with old games in their boxes, and the clutter made everything seem to be in place. After an intense game of Tetris, followed by a game of Super Ma-

rio and many cups of coffee, the Coffee Club called it a day.

Another successful coffee trip for the club; the shop is highly recommended by them. The Wormhole is located in Bucktown/Wicker Park, 1462 N. Milwaukee Ave. There is Wi-Fi available for students who need to get an internet fix in addition to caffeine off campus. The Wormhole is open from 7 A.M.

Photo courtesy thewormholecoffee.com



until midnight on weekdays, and 9 A.M. until midnight on weekends. You can find out more information on their website at www.thewormholecoffee.com, or search for them on Facebook and Twitter.

Coffee Club is the perfect break from the mundane and a great way to see the little places you might miss out on oth-

erwise. So if you want to join in, just email iitcoffeeclub@gmail.com to be added to their mailing list. Or even easier, just show up at 11 a.m. at the MTCC, next to Global Grounds on a Saturday or Sunday, and tag along with the group of people you see, onto the next coffee adventure.