

O N O U R S H O R T L I S T

Homecoming

Soccer's big event brings one journalist back to the States.

Last summer's World Cup brought international soccer to the United States and Brian Coleman back home. Coleman, a Belgium-based reporter for *The Wall Street Journal's* European edition, took a break from his normal focus on transportation and tourism to chronicle his favorite sport's grandest event.

"It was great being a foreign correspondent in my own country," says Coleman, a former *Daily Orange* editor-in-chief who received a bachelor's degree in political science and newspaper journalism from Syracuse University in 1989. He subsequently earned a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University and joined the *Journal* three years ago.

During the World Cup, Coleman witnessed 10 matches (including the final) and wrote about the people, events, technology—and sometimes the mystery—surrounding the month-long tournament.

"I went to Dallas, home of America's team, the Cowboys, to see how people were reacting to another kind of football," says Coleman. "The answer was not very well.

"In the middle of the World Cup you'd think all the attention would be on soccer in one of the host cities. Instead, there was this enormous basketball tournament taking place. I was amazed to discover that many people didn't even *know* about the World Cup."

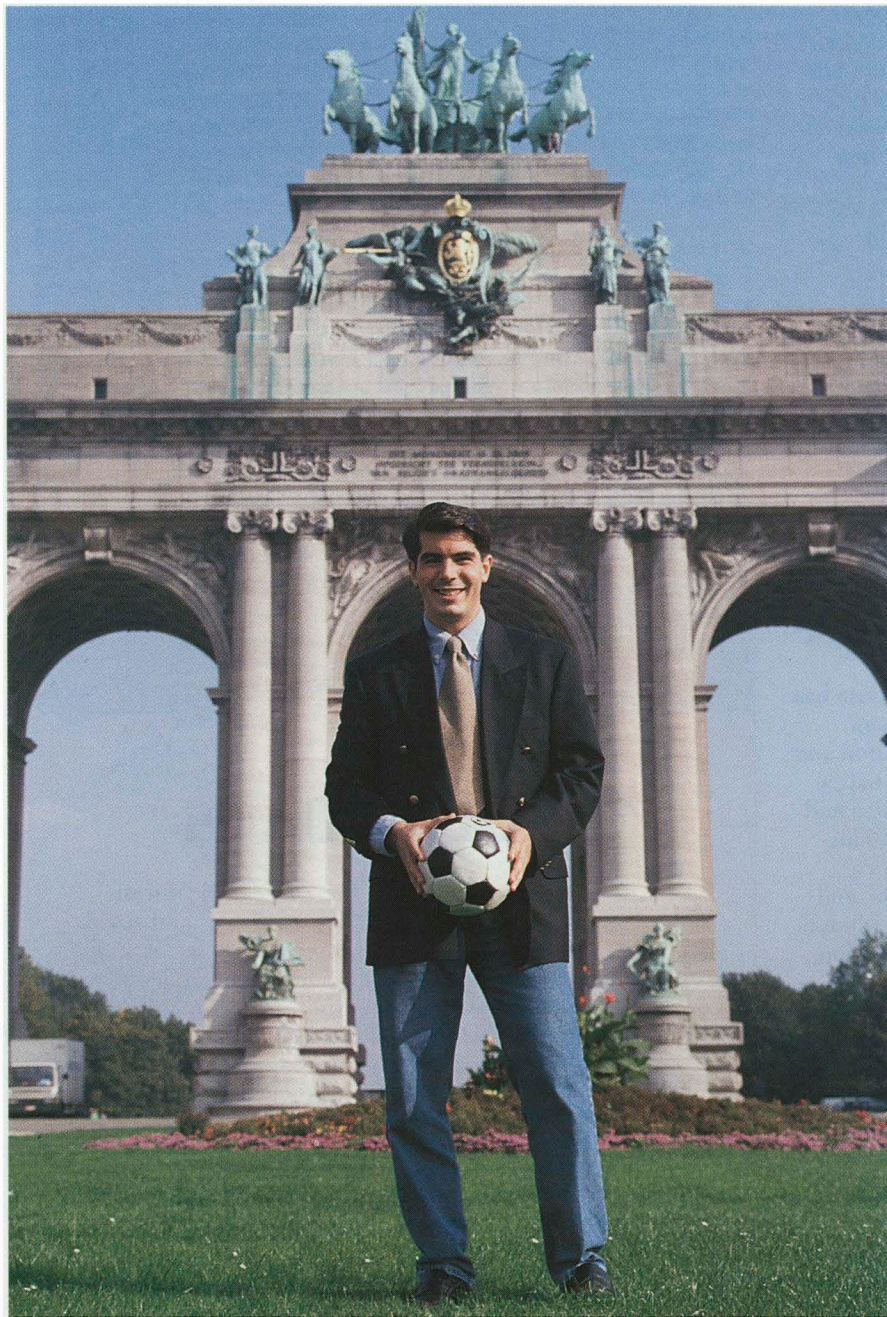
The World Cup wasn't Coleman's usual bill of fare. More typically, his work takes him to places like Spain, Italy, Germany, and Russia. "Two years ago I was in the middle of nowhere, in the town where Lenin was born about 500 miles east of Moscow," he says. "I was covering a story on Russia's aerospace industry, on how they made planes. It was snowing and freezing and I got stranded there. I spent four nights eating cabbage and drinking vodka while waiting for fuel to arrive."

Coleman has written stories on everything from Euro Disney and Romanian health spas to Italian elections. He speaks fluent French and Italian and loves working abroad, traveling throughout Europe, and writing for the *Journal*.

"I'm doing what I've always wanted to do, and I'm doing it sooner than I ever expected," he says. "I figured I'd be 40 before I ever saw a reporting job in Europe. I hoped something like this would one day be the crowning point of my career."

Now it's simply the launching point.

—BOB HILL



Former *Daily Orange* editor-in-chief and 1989 graduate Brian Coleman lives in Brussels, Belgium, where he writes for *The Wall Street Journal*. Last summer he came home to cover his favorite sport's biggest spectacle, the World Cup.

No Little-Town Blues

Laurie Gibson '84

In the United States, a thriving opera company is typically the luxury of a large metropolitan city. Opera companies may exist in smaller cities, but their resources and programs are often limited. Not so in Austria and Germany, where opera is government supported and an integral part of the culture.

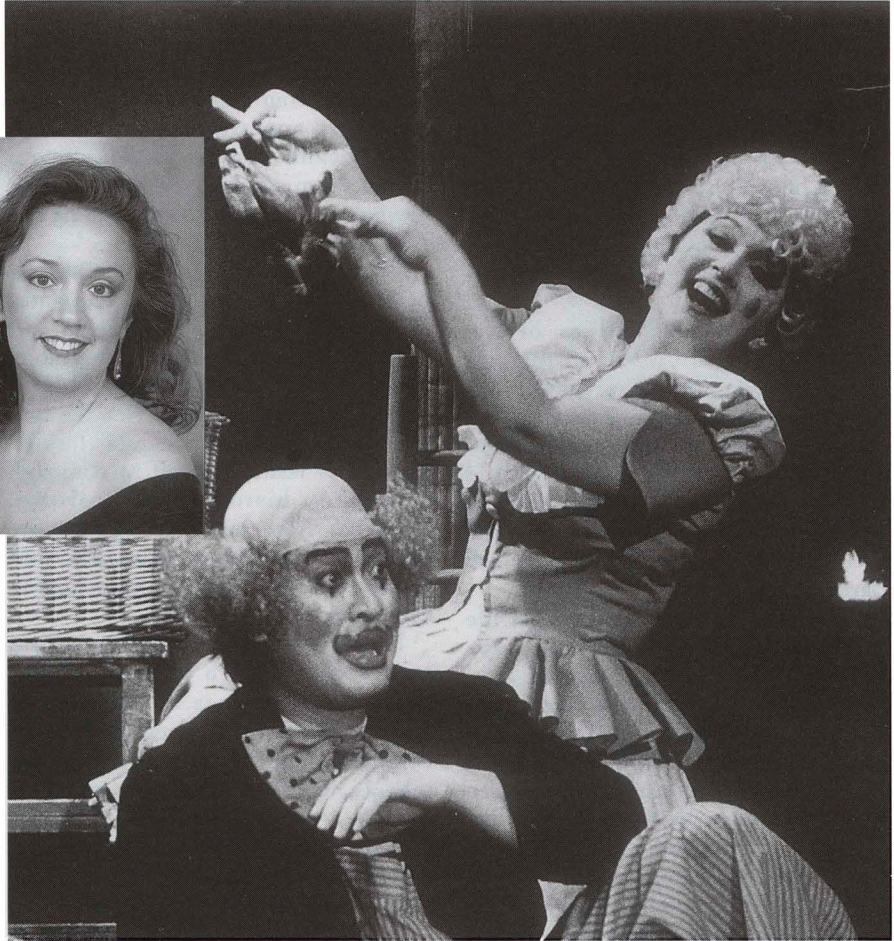
"Almost every little town has its own theater. Every day something is playing and almost everyone attends on a regular basis," says Laurie Gibson, a 1984 graduate of the School of Music who has been singing opera in Europe since 1990. "Because opera is something people support with their tax money, they feel they should be a lot more involved."

Gibson, a Syracuse native, launched her European career as a member of the Opernhaus Zurich in Switzerland, then moved to the Landestheater Linz in Austria. For the last two years she has been a guest performer at the state theater in Bielefeld, Germany, where she now lives.

"In small towns like Bielefeld, they don't usually hire a lot of guests because the budget isn't as big," she says. "That means you're seen and talked about a lot and the town is proud to have you."

Gibson, a soprano, sang the role Cio-Cio San in *Madame Butterfly* last season. This year she stars in *The Fan*, a modern opera in German about a young Chinese woman who loses her husband.

Germany is a great place to be an opera performer, says Gibson. "Because of the government support, there's usually more money for each production. There's a lot of modern staging—really off-the-wall and surrealistic things—and it's affordable because the season is so full. If one production doesn't do well it's not going to break them. Most of the time they are very well done. You see a lot of operas here you've never heard of before."
—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY



Opera singer Laurie Gibson, a 1984 graduate of the School of Music living in Bielefeld, Germany, has been performing in Europe since 1990. Here the soprano sings in *I Paglacci* in Linz, Austria, where she previously lived.

HARD COPY

➤ *When former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imprisoned more than 150,000 people in 1976 for voicing opposition to her government, Arun Shourie began publishing an underground publication protesting Gandhi's actions.*

Three years later he became executive editor of India's third largest newspaper chain, the *Indian Express*, and continued his written assault on government corruption. As executive editor, he won dozens of international awards while the *Indian Express* endured more than 300 government-prompted lawsuits and one attack by acid-tossing terrorists.

Shourie, who earned a master's degree in economics in 1965 and a doctoral degree in economics in 1966 from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, now writes a syndicated political column carried by 37 Indian newspapers and lectures before thousands. He has also written a dozen books. His work remains controversial—death threats force him to live in a heavily guarded home, and he travels under strict police protection. Despite such obstacles and danger, he says his work "is always worth it."
—Sheila Gibson

O N O U R S H O R T L I S T

Roots

Khaled Bounar '80, G'85, G'89

Khaled Bounar devotes his days to researching the upper atmosphere for a United States government agency in suburban Boston. He spends much of his remaining time reconnecting with his Algerian roots.

As a founding member of the Amazigh Cultural Council in America (ACCA), Bounar participates in a rapidly growing network of Algerian refugees, exiles, immigrants, and students. Many have become United States citizens and professionals. All share a common concern for the preservation of what Westerners call Berber culture.

"The word Berber comes from the Roman word for barbarian," says Bounar. "The Romans were not fond of us. But the true name for our people is Amazigh [pronounced AH-ma-zia]. You'll find people of Amazigh descent throughout the countries of northern Africa, but more than 6.5 million live in Algeria, where we represent about one-quarter of the population."

Bounar's reconnection began with an electronic-mail network he joined

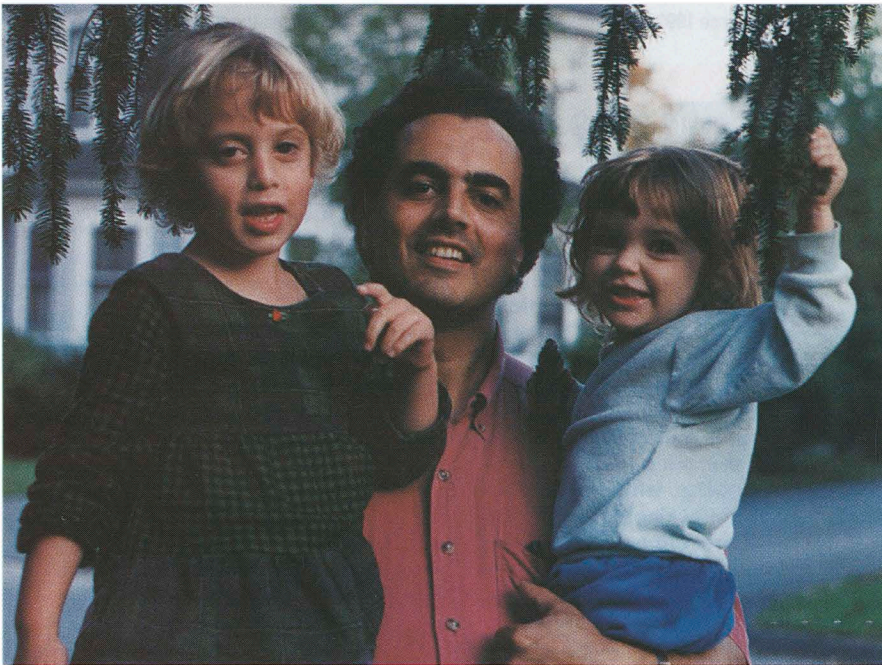
while studying for his third engineering degree from Syracuse University, a doctorate that he received in 1989. Messages from other Amazigh Algerians began appearing on his screen. It soon became clear to Bounar that a better communication forum was needed, so he went about forming the ACCA.

For three years the ACCA has printed a newsletter offering updates on Amazigh culture in Algeria and providing lessons in their language, Tamazight. Two years ago, Bounar helped establish Amazigh-Net, the first electronic forum to promote the discussion of issues related to Amazigh language, history, and culture. Amazigh Algerians throughout the United States, France, Australia, and Japan have been sharing information ever since.

In addition, the ACCA has raised money for Amazigh culture and language departments at colleges in Algeria and started a program to send computers and textbooks to Algerian schools, where funding for such items is rare.

"We are simply working to promote the culture, the language, and the history of the Amazigh," says Bounar.

—CHRIS ZENOWICH



Khaled Bounar, pictured here with his daughters Maya and Anya, helped found an organization that connects and informs Algerian refugees, exiles, immigrants, and students in several countries, including the United States.



David Farhat, a former Liberian government official, hopes to return after the country's civil war concludes.

Out of Africa

David Farhat G'74, G'79

David Farhat was Liberia's deputy commerce secretary when a *coup d'état* claimed the lives of several ranking government officials, including his boss and the president. Farhat lived, but spent a year in jail as a political prisoner.

Five years later, another coup landed Farhat a second prison stay, this time for two months. When civil war erupted in 1989, Farhat left the country and traveled to Syracuse, where he had earned one master's degree in accounting and finance from the School of Management in 1974 and another in economics from the Maxwell School in 1979. When it became apparent that Liberia's warring ways wouldn't soon end, he moved to Baltimore, where he now owns a company that operates a chain of gas stations.

Although Farhat says he likes living in the United States, he remains loyal to Liberia and plans to return as soon as the civil war is over.

"I am very hopeful the war will end, but there has been a lot of destruction and a lot of rebuilding will be needed," he says. "The institutions, universities, and government system will need to be rebuilt, and we'll need some good people in government."

Farhat may be one of those people. "I'll work wherever I can be of service to the rebuilding process."

—ANDREA C. MARSH

Cooling Communism

Grace Yongmei Zhao G'93

Carrier Corporation's bid to install air conditioning in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, the center of government in the communist state, immediately piqued the interest of Grace Yongmei Zhao (pronounced YONG-may jow).

As a manager of business development at Carrier's suburban Syracuse plant, Zhao wanted to make sure that Carrier's China-based personnel fully understood the scope of this project and the nuances of the product. As a native of China, she also wanted to bridge the cultural gap between American and Chinese businesspeople. Her efforts helped Carrier land a \$1.2 billion deal and established the company as the premier supplier of commercial air conditioning equipment in China.

"I helped both sides understand the other better," says Zhao. "Our customers on that job are from China, and even though we have Carrier China people working on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, the products are from here. The key was to understand the real need of the customers, and part of that was to help them understand American corporate culture."

Zhao, who received a master's degree in business administration from SU's School of Management in 1993 and is working toward a doctorate in the humanities program, says cultural understanding is a key ingredient in successful international business endeavors.

It's also a key to her career aspirations. She's currently involved in Carrier's corporate management training program and hopes to eventually attain a top position in the company's global systems operations, working in either global product development and promotion or in one of the corporation's operational satellites.

"My philosophy is that when we do overseas business, we must sell more than our products," she says.

"The first thing we should sell is the fact we actually understand the overseas company, its needs for the products, and its needs as a customer."

—ANDREA C. MARSH



MARK TURNEY

Intercultural understanding is one key to successful business transactions in today's global market, says 1993 graduate Grace Yongmei Zhao, who recently helped Carrier Corporation close a \$1.2 billion deal in Beijing, China.

CORPORATE FITNESS

➤ *Sports have played a big role* in José Irizarry's life. He has been a competitive baseball player, tennis player, runner, and, most recently, a triathlete—he was the first Puerto Rican to compete in the Ironman World Championship Triathlon. But Irizarry's love of sport goes beyond competition. As president and founder of International Health Promotion Associates, he teaches corporate employees how to get fit and stay fit.

Irizarry launched his bilingual fitness firm in 1990 for companies throughout Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, including Citibank, Texaco, American Airlines, and Smithkline Beecham Pharmaceuticals.

"Wellness is a very broad type of service," says Irizarry, who received a master's degree in exercise physiology from the School of Education in 1982. "It can include a fitness program with management, a health promotion with an educational component, or a recreational component such as a volleyball tournament. I feel that if I can help improve a person's quality of life, then I am contributing to the well-being of my country."

—Andrea C. Marsh

O N O U R S H O R T L I S T

Magic Carpet Ride

Tony Yeh G'49

Tony Yeh can sleep anywhere. He'll tell you that's the secret to his success, and considering he's on the road more than 200 days a year, he's probably only half joking.

"I travel by air. One half-day a city. That's enough time for a board meeting," says Yeh. He just gets on the plane and sleeps. "No jet lag," he says.

Yeh is among Hong Kong's most successful businessmen. He is chairman of the board of Hong Kong Carpet Manufacturers, a company he helped build. Hong Kong Carpet is best known for its trademarked Tai Ping carpet, which can be made with intricate designs in enormous sizes. There are Tai Ping carpets in Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, and nearly every five-star hotel lobby in the world. The largest carpet—71,000 square feet—was made for the Riyadh International Airport mosque in Saudi Arabia. If there's a truck or ship big enough to transport it, a Tai Ping carpet can be made to size.

Yeh, who earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from SU in 1949, was working as a textile engineer at a cotton mill when he was hired to assess the floundering carpet company. Although Yeh knew nothing about carpets, he had the reputation for being able to fix anything, and quickly reached a conclusion: The employees were simply too sophisticated for the simpleminded hand-knotting process. Boredom led to staff turnover



STEVE SARTORI

Tony Yeh is SU's first international trustee and chairman of the board of a carpet company whose wares cover floors in some of the world's most famous buildings, including Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, and the Taj Mahal (below).

and that led to problems.

Before long, Yeh developed a motorized process that produces a high-quality tufted carpet and mimics hand-knotted Orientals. The company grew quickly and now has factories in Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and showrooms around the world.

Carpets are no longer Yeh's daily concern. After spending 36 years running Hong Kong Carpet Manufacturers, he let his son Kent take over in 1992. "I retired and stayed home for three days," says Yeh. "Then I said, 'No, this is not my life.' I went to China and started all over again."

He launched 10 projects in China, seven of which he continues to pursue, including ventures in mineral water, mattresses, cosmetics, cement, and garment manufacturing. "After all these years, I've built up an instinct to know what's good and can make it," says Yeh. "But some are quite obvious. In China, tap water is not transparent. People boil it and let it sit because bottled water is very expensive."

Yeh found a source of water, dubbed it All Joy, and began to bottle and distribute it. It's now used by Chinese

airlines and throughout the mainland.

"In China there are 1.2 billion people," says Yeh. "Few of them use a mattress. In the south, they sleep on wood boards. In the central region, they use jute stretched on a wooden frame, which is very hard. In the north, because it's so cold, they sleep on bricks, and underneath the bricks is a furnace. But the younger ones are starting to use mattresses."

Production tripled in just one year. "Once they've had the feel of a mattress, they don't go back to bricks."

Yeh hires local people to run his companies and spends the bulk of his time at board meetings. A recent business trip included stops in San Francisco, Syracuse (he's SU's first international trustee), Atlanta, and New York City. Then it was on to Singapore, where Yeh is part of a group of Hong Kong entrepreneurs who developed a massive convention center. Completed in September, the \$1.5 billion SunTec City ranks among the world's largest convention and exhibition centers.

Does it have Tai Ping carpet in it? Yeh smiles. "Every inch of it."

—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY



Happy Trails

Helene Cincebeaux '59
Helen Zemek Baine '74

Helene Cincebeaux's first glimpse of Czechoslovakia came from a distant Polish mountaintop. Looking down through a part in the clouds, she vowed to one day visit her ancestral homeland. She has kept that promise—again and again.

Since 1969, Cincebeaux and her mother, Helen Zemek Baine, have visited the now-divided country 26 times. "We go almost every year," says Cincebeaux. "We wander into remote villages and talk to people about their customs, folk dress, and weddings."

They became particularly interested in the intricate designs of the native folk costumes, collecting headdresses, wedding gowns, and other outfits. Their collection has been featured at exhibitions throughout the United States, including Syracuse University.

In addition, the photographs they've taken are now featured in a book, *Treasures of Slovakia*. These and other

photos by Cincebeaux and Baine are the subject of another exhibition, which has already been shown in Canada, Hungary, the United States, and both the Czech and Slovak republics. It will be displayed this spring in Europe.

The mother-daughter team from upstate New York are both SU graduates. Cincebeaux earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and home economics from SU in 1959. Her mother earned a bachelor's degree in English in 1974. Seven years ago, they founded the Slovak Heritage and Folklore Society International. From an original mailing list of 50 people, Cincebeaux and Baine now distribute copies of their newsletter to some 1,200 members in 48 states and 10 countries.

"We've put a lot of families together, people who lost touch with their relatives back in the old country," Cincebeaux says. "My interest in my heritage has blossomed. It even led me to Lithuania last September to find my father's family."

Not surprisingly, she plans to visit again. —ANDREA C. MARSH

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The daughter-mother team of Helene Cincebeaux (left) and Helen Zemek Baine, both graduates of SU, have taken their Slovakian folk dress collection on the road, holding exhibits on campus, throughout the country, and in Europe.