

stories, because she didn't like the way they ended."

Sharpe, who was busy pursuing a doctorate in conservation biology, had just the right story in mind: *The Goat-Faced Girl*, in which a fairy disguised as a lizard takes a peasant daughter off the hands of her parents and raises her in riches.

"I was rooting for my mom to do a fairy tale," says Sharpe, who transformed the classic to give it a distinctly modern twist,

She strives for "a roundness" to her figures. "It brings a certain emotion to it that I'm trying to get, a sort of an intimacy, a way of bringing readers in."

and finds her mother's "fantastical" style to be well-suited to the fairy tale genre.

"With illustration, you have the responsibility to enhance the word," says Marinsky. "There is a sort of conscious, deliberate way of drawing, like making the arms smaller than they would be and the hands tiny," she says. And she strives for "a roundness" to


her figures. "It brings a certain emotion to it that I'm trying to get, a sort of an intimacy, a way of bringing readers in."

Marinsky says her passion for drawing dates back to her adolescence, when she found inspiration in the pencil drawings of Italian Renaissance masters Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. A Buffalo native, she followed the path of her older sister, **Elyse Marinsky Friedman '67**, enrolling at Rochester, where she could major in art while getting a broader education. She married **Dan Sharpe '70** and established herself first as a graphic designer, then later, as an illustrator.

Illustration is a fast-changing field, in which the ability to use a variety of computer software programs at times can seem to overtake "old-fashioned" tactile skill with a pencil or brush. But Marinsky finds a place for both.

"If I want to do a quick color sketch, I scan in my hand drawing and use Photoshop to try to get an idea of what colors I want to use and where."

She teaches her students marketable skills, such as how to create animatic storyboards.

But in the end, she says, "I love having the tactile ability to draw these little patterns. And I think people still respond to hand drawn things." 



MIXED MEDIA: Marinsky cites the masters Brueghel, Chagall, and Rousseau as influences, but she adds her own touches as well, a style that can be seen in the opening illustration (above) for *The Goat-Faced Girl*.

Resolution: Mission of Burma is a Rock Legend

Clint Conley '77 is a cofounder of one of the most influential bands of the post-punk era. Or so says the Boston City Council.

By **Karen McCally '02 (PhD)**

Be it resolved: Whereas some bands make the charts, Mission of Burma makes waves.

At Rochester, **Clint Conley '77** could be seen often on River Campus, playing at dances in the funk bands Mocha Shake and the Broad Street Stroke. But after graduating with his degree in English, the self-described "music wonk" moved to Boston to try his hand at his greater musical love: punk rock.

"As a career move, it was ridiculous to graduate from college and want to join a band and make this kind of music that the world made plain it had no use for," says Conley. But three decades later, people are still talking about the music Conley made—and still makes—with the band Mission of Burma.

The band's career began in sweat-filled basement clubs in Boston, and culminated three decades later with the Boston City Council's formal declaration of October 4, 2009, as "Mission of Burma Day": a day to recognize the band that has inspired the likes of R.E.M., Nirvana, U2, and the Pixies, and has helped bring renown to Boston's music scene.

"We're referred to as post-punk in that we came in the years after that initial noisy beginning, after the Ramones and the Sex Pistols," says Conley, referring to two path-breaking punk groups of the mid-1970s.

But he finds the label awkward. And so too do some of the band's admirers, such as John Covach, a professor of music with a joint appointment at the Eastman School and the College of Arts and Sciences.

"Mission of Burma is a lot more like the

Velvet Underground or early Pink Floyd than like the Sex Pistols or the Ramones,” says Covach, who is also a classically trained rock guitarist and author of *What’s that Sound?: An Introduction to Rock and its History* (W. W. Norton). “The music has plenty of raw punk power, but there’s also a level of sophistication to the tracks that makes them an interesting blend of punk and avant-garde music. It’s like they set out to employ the simplest possible musical textures but in the most unconventional manner possible.”

when, for reasons neither Conley nor his bandmates can pinpoint, three of the four of them reunited. Since then, they’ve produced three studio “albums” (“I still call them albums,” admits Conley), including most recently, *The Sound, The Speed, The Light* (Matador Records, 2009).

But there’s no question the band’s reputation is firmly rooted in their initial years.

“It was just a tremendously exciting time in rock music,” Conley says of the late 1970s and early 1980s. “Most of the world didn’t know it, because it was a very, very small

so clunky, and so Pony Express. But there’s this undeniable romance about the drive it took and the personal investment one had to make to find this rare, obscure music, and it was really like finding little gold nuggets in the stream.”

Today Conley is an Emmy Award-winning field producer for the magazine show, *Chronicle*, at Boston’s ABC-affiliated station, WCVB-TV.

And he lives in the Boston suburb of Concord, along with his wife, Deborah, and their daughter, Caroline, 14. Their old-



Michael Azerrad, a bestselling author and rock journalist who included a chapter on Mission of Burma in his 2001 book, *Our Band Could Be Your Life: Scenes from the American Indie Underground, 1981–1991* (Little Brown & Co.), strikes a similar chord. “Their volume and speed connected them to some bands, their occasional pop hooks tied them to others,” he wrote. “But no one else combined the two.”

The group recorded and played live from 1979 to 1983, then disbanded, until 2001

▲ **DOUBLE MAJOR:** “I majored in English and minored in House of Guitars,” says Conley (center), referring to the Rochester specialty guitar shop.

scene at that time. But there were so many new ideas flying around.”

The band attracted a strong fan base in Boston, with clusters of followers in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast. But in those days, before home computers were widespread (to say nothing of the Internet and digital music) the numbers were never large.

Conley doesn’t regret that he didn’t have access to those tools. Describing the life of an underground music connoisseur in those days, he says: “You’d hear about something that was cool out in Cleveland, and you’d write a letter, and you’d wait a month, and maybe you’d get the 45, or maybe you wouldn’t. And it sounds so old-fashioned,

er daughter, Brinna, 18, is a freshman at Greensboro College in North Carolina.

While the group has been prolific, it’s not a full-time job, says Conley. “We go out once every couple of months, on average. We’re weekend, for the most part.” The band will perform in Europe twice this spring.

The crowds are a mixture of young and old. That said, Conley notes that at a festival in Kentucky last fall, “We crossed a benchmark: our first fan with a walker, with a gray ponytail. He was rocking away, and we thought, ‘well, it had to happen some day.’ But what a wonderful thing.”

For now, Burma plans to stay the course. But, Conley adds, “I hope we stop before the snickering starts in the wings.” ®