

carpet. "If you were to call a foul every time they relieved themselves, you'd never get anything done," Schachner said. "You've got to pick your battles."

The Puppy Bowl is not a game of strategy. Players are let loose, ten at a time, on a three-by-six-yard "field" strewn with chew toys. Though the puppies don't know it, their objective is to drag one of the chew toys into either end zone. There are no teams and no uniforms, and everyone is a running back. If two players are in contact with a toy when it crosses the goal line, Schachner awards a double touchdown. There is a water bowl on the ten-yard line, in case anyone gets thirsty.

"Most of the magic happens in the editing room," Toporoff said—ninety hours are condensed to less than two. The magic does not reliably happen on the field, because puppies are unreliable. They can be aggressive one minute—an offscreen American Humane Association observer breaks up fights, usually by clapping—and listless the next. Trying to put a hopeful spin on several scoreless minutes, Schachner said, "It's a defensive battle!" It looked more like a sniffing-and-napping battle.

This year, the cast includes sixty-three puppies, twenty-one kittens, and nine baby hedgehogs. There were also dozens of humans, who wrangled, styled, photographed, and cleaned up after the talent. The dogs, all from shelters, were between eight and fifteen weeks old. "We get tons of calls from people wanting to adopt them," Toporoff said.

Brian Williams, the news anchor and a longtime Puppy Bowl fan, showed up to tape a segment for "NBC Nightly News." "Has anyone said already that these guys are doing better than the Jets and the Giants yesterday?" he asked. He looked around at the quadrupedal athletes. "You'd have to be Saddam Hussein to not love these puppies."

Toporoff showed Williams to the set. "Don't kneel, because there's a lot of pee," she said. Williams, crouching, said, "The Puppy Bowl is like a Friday night in any big city—there's drinking, there's humping." He paused, and then asked his crew to edit that out.

His daughter Allison, a star of the HBO series "Girls," had come with him. She was holding a sleeping Catahoula-Lab mix named Pearl. "Every year, I

swear, it's more Puppy Bowl than Super Bowl." When her father finished taping, she approached him, carrying Pearl.

"She is ridiculously cute," Williams said. Pearl woke up, yawned, and rearranged herself in Allison's arms. Smiling giddily, Allison said, "Oh. My. God."

Turning to Toporoff, her father said, "Thank you for ruining our lives."

"Now is the time when you tell the daughter, 'You can't have the puppy,'" Allison said.

Williams snapped a photo and e-mailed it to his wife. "Let's talk to Mommy tonight," he said.

—Andrew Marantz

THE PICTURES PARTICLE FOLLIES



Walter Murch, the veteran film editor and sound designer, who has won Academy Awards for his contributions to "Apocalypse Now" and "The English Patient," spent a few months last summer in an editing suite on West Twenty-fifth Street, doing post-production on a documentary about the Large Hadron Collider. The movie, "Particle Fever," charts the progress of a group of theoretical and experimental physicists over five years, covering the L.H.C.'s construction, its switching on, its almost immediate and horrifying breaking down, in 2008, and its repair and restoration. The film concludes with the announcement, last July, that repeated particle collisions had, finally, made it possible to detect the existence of the elusive Higgs field, which was theorized by physicists as long ago as the nineteen-sixties—and which, physicists say, gave rise to all the matter in the universe—but had never been proved experimentally. The result, the filmmakers hope, is a scientific story that's comprehensible to the layperson: the ultimate reality movie, as the film's tagline says.

Recently, over lunch at Milanes, a Dominican restaurant near the studio, Murch reflected on the sound qualities of the L.H.C., which lies underground near Geneva, and the work being done there. He explained that scientists have sonified the data output of the L.H.C., and tuned

it so that it falls within the acoustic spectrum, in the hope of recognizing patterns that might not otherwise be evident. "This means we can hear the music of this machine," he said. "It has a rhythm and a harmonic pulse that is very intriguing." When asked if it sounded like anything he recognized, Murch said, "If you played it to me without my knowing anything more, I would say that it is from Brazil. You are tapping into the heart of the universe, so maybe the universe is Brazilian. The door to it just happened to be in Switzerland."

The most challenging aspect of editing such a movie, Murch said, was combining the elucidation of particle physics with a human narrative. Murch's own education was in Romance languages and literature, but he has long read science for fun. In 1986, while he was working on "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," in France, he came across a French book on cosmology, in which the author explained the Higgs field by quoting a story from "Kaputt," an often lyrical account of the Second World War by Curzio Malaparte, the Italian journalist and provocateur. In Malaparte's telling, there was, during the Siege of Leningrad, a sudden cold snap. "When that happens, if water is very pure it can drop below the point of freezing without freezing," Murch said. "Then all it takes is some agitation or impurity to tap the water on the shoulder and say, 'You should be frozen now,' and it will suddenly, instantly freeze. So during the Siege of Leningrad there happened to be a forest fire, and hundreds of Soviet horses ran into the lake, and that was enough to cause the lake to freeze. In the morning, it was like a diabolical Greek sculpture garden, with horses in a position of agony, having been flash-frozen. The Higgs field is a similar kind of instantaneous freezing of the quark soup right after the big bang." Murch took a bite of his Cuban sandwich. "Electrons acquire mass, and now they are kind of like the horses stuck in the water."

Murch is working with slightly less cinematic imagery in "Particle Fever"—there is a lot of footage of scientists in conference rooms—though the L.H.C. itself, with all its minuscule components making a looming, awesome whole, looks as if it were made for the movies: "Metropolis" meets the Death Star. Its subatomic product, the Higgs boson, has been called the

"God particle" by one prominent physicist, Leon Lederman. When he was asked whether his sense of reverence had been increased or diminished by contemplating the L.H.C., Murch paused. "I think of a Muriel Rukeyser quote, where she says the universe is made of stories, not of atoms," he said. "The tension is between finding ever more detail about atomic structure, and the story. It could be the equivalent of somebody looking at an old film, and realizing that the film came from a projector, and discovering that there is an image in the projector, and that it's made of molecules of grains of film—and then trying to find the mystery of the story by looking at ever more detailed molecules of film, thinking, If I finally get to the heart of that, will it tell me where my story comes from? While we know these are two separate universes."

He took another bite of his sandwich before heading back to the editing room. "It may be that our story, whatever that is—existence—depends on the Higgs boson and atoms, but it depends on it the way the film depends on the molecular structure of the celluloid," he went on. "That just happens to be the medium through which it is manifest, but the story predates the film and, in fact, actually created the film itself."

—Rebecca Mead

COMEBACK DEPT. TARRYTOWN BOY



In Tarrytown, in the early nineteen-sixties, there lived a young Brazilian musician named Tim Maia, who was destined for greatness, although few who knew him at the time would have guessed it. His living circumstances were inauspicious—he slept on friends' couches, and a local floozy took him in for a while; and his ambition, buoyed by a passion for American soul music and knowledge of Brazilian bossa nova, seemed quixotic at best. He sang in a vocal-harmony group called the Ideals, and wrote the words to the group's only recorded song, "New Love," whose rhythm reflected Maia's world-music aspirations; somehow, he had persuaded

the great Brazilian drummer Milton Banana to play on the demo. But not long after making the recording *Maia* was busted in Daytona Beach, Florida, for smoking pot in a stolen car, and after six months in jail he was deported to Brazil. There his music flowered. One critic described his 1970 debut album as a "cannonball in the pool" of Brazilian pop, and he went on to achieve his dream of creating Brazilian soul music, before dying of a heart attack, suffered onstage, in 1998, at the age of fifty-five. But his old friends in Tarrytown didn't know about any of that; as far as they were concerned, "Jimmy the Brazilian," as he was known around town, had disappeared without a trace.

That is where the Tarrytown segment of the Tim Maia saga would have ended, were it not for Allen Thayer, a music writer and a Maia superfan. In 2007, in the course of researching an article on Maia for *Wax Poetics*, a music journal, Thayer learned about the long-lost Tarrytown recording and resolved to track it down. Maia had re-recorded "New Love" in 1973, and listed as co-writer one Roger Bruno, another member of the Ideals. Thayer Googled Bruno and came up with a Web site for a musical duo called Too Human that featured a Roger Bruno who seemed about the right age, and his wife, Ellen. Thayer sent an e-mail—"This wouldn't happen to be the same Roger, would it?" Bruno responded that he was indeed that Roger. So they arranged to meet at Coffee Labs, on Tarrytown's Main Street.

Not long after Maia disappeared, Bruno replaced him with another singer, and the Ideals became the Meridians. They recorded a couple of sides, which got them some radio play and a small tour, opening for the Duprees. But by then vocal-harmony groups were giving way to rock bands. Bruno went out to Hollywood, where he and Ellen had some success as songwriters. At the time that Thayer's e-mail reached Bruno, they had settled in Springfield, Massachusetts, where they make a living performing jazz standards in small concerts, "For people who actually want to listen to the music," as Bruno put it.

As for the recording of "New Love," the studio had only ever made a single acetate, and that had somehow ended

up in the possession of Bruno's ex-girlfriend, Carey Culhane, whom he hadn't spoken to in almost forty years. She still had the acetate, and Bruno arranged to meet her and made an MP3 from it. However, he didn't want to send the MP3 to Thayer. "I think Roger was embarrassed by it," Thayer said.

Since that meeting, Maia's legend has continued to grow. The Brazilian



Tim Maia

producer Nelson Motta published a biography in Portuguese, in which he noted that in the last year of his life Maia made a trip back to Tarrytown, in the hope of finding Bruno, but was told that he had died. (In fact, Bruno was in town at the time.) A musical based on the book is now a hit in Brazil, and a biopic about Maia's life is in the works. This past fall, Luaka Bop, the world-music label founded by David Byrne, put out a Tim Maia compilation called "Nobody Can Live Forever."

Not long ago, Bruno and his wife were back at Coffee Labs, and this time they had brought along the original "New Love," on her MP3 player. Bruno recalled the candy store, Mac's, just down the street, where the Ideals used to rehearse, and he remembered sitting with Maia on the curb outside the Shiloh Baptist Church, listening to the beautiful singing. He and Ellen walked across the street to the parking lot, where the Ideals had posed together for a photograph, one of the few surviving artifacts of the group. Finally, they got into their car, cued up "New Love" on the stereo, and hit Play.

—John Seabrook